



Momentum

Medicine Hat Community Well-Being Plan

PLAN SUMMARY

Executive Summary

This summary outlines the City of Medicine Hat's Well-Being Plan, *Momentum*, a comprehensive strategy to enhance community well-being over the next ten years. *Momentum* is an essential plan that helps prioritize tasks, set policies, and define expectations both within the city government and for the public, while providing the necessary information and goals to support the well-being of all residents.

Well-Being was left undefined during the initial stages of the project, leaving it to participants to define and interpret the concept without any limits or barriers. Without a set definition, the community took the opportunity to share what well-being means to them. Insights gathered from the Understanding Well-Being in Medicine Hat Background Report and community feedback were synthesized to develop a definition of well-being that is unique to the community.

The findings from the Understanding Well-Being in Medicine Hat Background Report and community engagement also identified several wide-ranging areas that need improvement to enhance both individual and community well-being in Medicine Hat.

***Momentum* provides an overview of the current state of well-being in Medicine Hat by:**

- Developing a clear understanding of well-being in Medicine Hat, including the current context and factors/conditions that impact well-being in the community.
- Creating a renewed definition and vision of well-being in Medicine Hat that reflects the diversity of the community.
- Establishing tangible and forward-looking Strategic Objectives based on community needs and inputs, as well as specific actions required to realize the vision of well-being in Medicine Hat.
- Identifying roles, responsibilities, and developing an evaluation and monitoring framework for implementation.

The comprehensive 'Momentum: Medicine Hat Community Well-Being Plan', 'Understanding Well-Being in Medicine Hat Background Report', and the 'What We Learned Reported: Medicine Hat Community Well-Being Plan' can be accessed through the City of Medicine Hat.



Acknowledgements

Land Acknowledgement

The City of Medicine Hat acknowledges that we live and work on treaty territory. The City pays respect to all Indigenous Peoples and honours their past, present and future. We recognize and respect their cultural heritages and relationships to the land.

Medicine Hat is situated on:

- Treaty 7 and neighbour to Treaty 4 territory
- Traditional lands of the Siksika (Blackfoot), Kainai (Blood), Piikani (Peigan), Stoney Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina (Sarcee) as well as the Cree, Sioux, and the Saulteaux bands of the Ojibwa peoples
- Homelands of the Métis Nation

Committee and Participant Acknowledgement

The process of creating *Momentum* would not have been possible without the enthusiasm, involvement, and thoughtfulness of the close to 1,200 interested parties, community organizations, and community members who co-created this plan through their participation in workshops, interviews, open houses, surveys, and collaborative activities. Well-Being plans are developed with the community, for the community, and we are very grateful to those who have shared their lived/living experience and perspectives.



What Are We Trying to Achieve?

Momentum seeks to achieve the following:

Refresh our Understanding of Well-Being in

Medicine Hat: Review data, plans, and strategies, to understand what has changed in Medicine Hat since Thrive (2017), as well as to establish the current context and factors affecting well-being in Medicine Hat today.

Articulate a Renewed Vision and Definition:

Building off of Thrive, *Momentum* presents a renewed vision, guiding principles, and definition of well-being that reflects the community's diverse perspectives and the changes that have occurred in Medicine Hat since 2017.

Create a Forward-Looking Strategy: *Momentum*

outlines Strategic Objectives for action based on community needs and input, detailing potential actions to achieve the vision of well-being in Medicine Hat while looking forward over the next 10 years.

Develop an Evaluation and Monitoring

Framework: Strategic Objectives are situated within an evaluation and monitoring framework that defines roles and responsibilities, identifying measures and indicators to help the community evaluate success and monitor the impacts of plan implementation.



Through the engagement process, Hatters collectively contributed to a mission to guide what *Momentum* hopes to accomplish:

MISSION

Working together, we strive to ensure that everyone feels safe, economically secure, and has a deep sense of belonging. By embracing change and looking out for each other, all Hatters can meet their basic needs and are supported, empowered, and free to participate fully in the community.

Who is this Plan for?

The overarching objective of *Momentum* is to articulate a shared vision and strategy for well-being in Medicine Hat. This document identifies priority areas for action based on community needs, both current and anticipated over the next ten years. *Momentum* is a community plan: this means that anyone in Medicine Hat and beyond should be able to read this document and understand community priorities and opportunities for action.

City of Medicine Hat

Momentum provides a roadmap for action, decision-making and priority setting. It identifies areas where the City may choose to dedicate efforts and resources to enhance well-being for Medicine Hat residents.

Community Organizations

Momentum illustrates City priorities and areas of alignment with ongoing efforts being made by community organizations. Many Strategic Objectives presented create opportunities for collaboration between community organizations and the City.

Community Members

Momentum reflects what was learned through engagement by identifying priorities that resonate with and respond to community well-being needs. It identifies opportunities for action and communicates what steps may be taken, and when, to enhance well-being in Medicine Hat.

Other Levels of Government

Momentum identifies shared priorities across the community and opportunities for other levels of government to take action that will have wide-ranging benefits in Medicine Hat.



What is *important* to Hatters?

Community engagement was important when developing the Community Well-Being Plan and was used to understand what well-being truly means to community members within the context of living in Medicine Hat. Engagement was conducted with the understanding that the Community Well-Being Plan should be developed through the diverse voices and perspectives of the community, and engagement was facilitated with the general public, community leaders, youth, seniors, and social service representatives including Indigenous organizations, seniors services, newcomer organizations, poverty reduction services, disability support organizations, and supportive housing providers. Additional engagement was conducted with individuals who have lived and living experience with well-being challenges. In total, over 1,200 Medicine Hat residents contributed their input on well-being opportunities to inform the development of *Momentum*.

Early in the project, community members were engaged about the definition of well-being in Medicine Hat, where community members collectively established the following definition of well-being.

Well-Being in Medicine Hat is connected to mental and physical health, safety and stability, financial security, social connections, accessibility, inclusivity, and support for vulnerable populations.

An inclusive community was described as one that offers equitable access to services, promotes social unity, and ensures safety and stability for all residents.

—Medicine Hat Community Members



Medicine Hat residents also shared their experiences around the complex well-being challenges they witness and experience in the community, which was used to inform *Momentum's* Strategic Objectives and Actions.

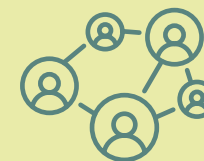


A fulsome summary of engagement conducted to inform Momentum can be found in the 'What We Learned Report: Medicine Hat Community Well-Being Plan' and can be accessed through the City of Medicine Hat.

Where do we want to go?

Pillars of Well-Being in Medicine Hat

Pillars of well-being are foundational elements that contribute to an individual's overall quality of life. These pillars encompass various dimensions, each addressing different aspects of a person's physical, mental, emotional, and social health. The seven pillars of well-being in Medicine Hat are: basic needs, safety, education, employment, health, equity, and connection.



Connection



Equity



Health



Employment



Basic Needs



Education



Safety

How do we get there?

Each Strategic Objective is presented with context as to why the objective is important and connections to what we heard from the community when it comes to well-being needs.

The information presented is a summary of the Strategic Objectives and Actions identified in Momentum. For a complete list of Strategic Objectives and Action descriptions, please refer to 'Momentum: Medicine Hat's Community Well-Being Plan' through the City of Medicine Hat.



OBJECTIVE 1:

Reduce Poverty in Medicine Hat

Poverty is the absence of resources and opportunities needed for full participation in society, spanning economic, social, cultural, educational, and political spheres. Rooted in complex factors like education, health, safety, and social norms, it extends beyond income levels. Many residents face rising living costs, with community organizations reporting unprecedented demand for support. Addressing poverty requires both immediate aid and long-term solutions, such as expanding affordable housing, strengthening food security, and challenging stigmas that hinder access to essential resources.

Actions

- 1a. Modernize Housing Policies to Promote Affordable Options
- 1b. Be Engaged in the Medicine Hat Housing Strategy
- 1c. Transform Underutilized Land into Affordable and Accessible Housing
- 1d. Promote Fair Rental Practices
- 1e. Advocate for Income Supports
- 1f. Promote Living Wage Employers
- 1g. Enhance Food Security Through Collaboration
- 1h. Empower Residents with Food Knowledge
- 1i. Enhance Access to Public Services
- 1j. Expand the Range of Transportation Solutions
- 1k. Promote Energy Conservation and Awareness

OBJECTIVE 2:

Enhance Community Safety

Criminal and disruptive activities threaten the safety and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. Rooted in factors like social inequity, economic stress, mental health challenges, and systemic discrimination, harmful behaviour affects everyone regardless of background, age, gender, and sexual orientation. In Medicine Hat, fostering safety requires addressing immediate threats while creating environments that prevent harm before it occurs. This involves a balanced approach of prevention, intervention, and enforcement, alongside efforts to tackle root causes like trauma, mental health, addiction, social cohesion, access to safe spaces, and the stigmas that fuel crime and disruptive behaviour. Ensuring everyone feels safe in their homes, neighbourhoods, and public spaces is vital for a resilient and thriving Medicine Hat.

Actions:

- 2a. Educate and Empower Residents
- 2b. Explore Alternative Models to Traditional Police Response
- 2c. Design Physical Environments with Safety in Mind
- 2d. Work to Promote Inclusion and Address Stigma

OBJECTIVE 3:

Promote Health & Wellness

Health and wellness contribute to both individual quality of life and community well-being. For individuals, it means maintaining physical health, mental resilience, and independence. For communities, it enables ongoing contributions to social and economic activities. Medicine Hat can promote health and wellness by creating environments that prioritize healthy development, physical activity, and mobility. By improving health care access, expanding recreation opportunities, and developing transportation options, the City can ensure residents can be active and engaged at any age.

Actions:

- 3a. Foster Physical Literacy for All
- 3b. Improve Active Transportation Networks
- 3c. Support Mental Health and Addiction Programs and Resources
- 3d. Support Recruitment of Health Care Professionals
- 3e. Foster Innovation in Health Care
- 3f. Advocate for Senior Support Programs
- 3g. Protect and Maintain a Healthy Environment

OBJECTIVE 4:

Lifelong Learning of All Residents

Lifelong learning is the continuous pursuit of knowledge through formal education and informal methods like workshops, reading, and practical experiences. This ongoing process helps individuals adapt to change, build resilience, and enhance their skills in a dynamic world. To support lifelong learning, Medicine Hat must collaborate with community partners to expand opportunities for personal growth across all ages and backgrounds. By improving access to diverse resources offered by libraries, educational centres, and community organizations, we can empower residents to navigate challenges, refine their skills, and pursue their passions. Expanding these opportunities ensures Hatters can thrive, contribute to their communities, and reach their full potential.

Actions:

- 4a. Build Connections with Educational Institutions
- 4b. Identify and Address Youth Support Needs
- 4c. Promote Individual/Family Capacity Building
- 4d. Support Development and Delivery of Learning Opportunities
- 4e. Promote Inter-Generational Learning

OBJECTIVE 5:

Create & Enhance Economic Opportunities in Medicine Hat

Economic opportunities create pathways for individuals, businesses, and communities to enhance financial well-being and security. Access to employment, entrepreneurship, and business development strengthens financial stability, reduces poverty, and improves quality of life. Communities with diverse economic prospects attract investment and talent, driving improvements in education, health care, and housing while fostering growth and cohesion. Medicine Hat can achieve this by developing strategies that stimulate job creation, support entrepreneurship, and attract investment. By investing in infrastructure, education, and skills training, the community can build a workforce ready to meet current and future demands. Collaborating with educational institutions ensures alignment with industry needs, positioning Medicine Hat as a thriving economic hub, where innovation and collaboration fuel sustainable growth.

Actions:

- 5a. Develop Local Business and Industry
- 5b. Grow and Support the Workforce
- 5c. Attract Investment
- 5d. Be Ready for Investment and Growth
- 5e. Support Social Enterprise Development
- 5f. Support Equity-Deserving Entrepreneurs

OBJECTIVE 6:

Embrace and Celebrate the Diversity of Medicine Hat

Diversity reflects the unique differences among individuals and groups, including race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, and cultural background. Embracing diversity means valuing these differences as vital to the community's richness, driving innovation, creativity, and equity. Achieving this vision requires collaboration between the City, interested parties, and community organizations, alongside ongoing engagement, and dialogue with residents to ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute and thrive.

Actions:

- 6a. Design Inclusive City Spaces Alongside Equity-Deserving Groups
- 6b. Address Existing Accessibility Barriers in City Spaces
- 6c. Develop a City of Medicine Hat Inclusive Policy and Framework
- 6d. Pursue Inclusive Community Designations

OBJECTIVE 7:

Take Meaningful Action Towards Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a shared commitment to addressing the historical and ongoing impacts of colonialism by rebuilding relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples with respect and equity. It requires collective action from governments, organizations, individuals, and communities to engage in meaningful dialogue, support Indigenous-led initiatives, and implement strategies that promote equity and redress injustices. The City of Medicine Hat is committed to advancing reconciliation by fostering active participation from community partners and residents, challenging racism, and dismantling systemic discrimination. Through these efforts, Medicine Hat strives to create a more inclusive and equitable future for all.

Actions:

- 7a. Support Truth and Reconciliation Efforts
- 7b. Provide Education and Training for City Staff
- 7c. Build Respectful Relationships with Indigenous Peoples
- 7d. Engage with Indigenous Peoples on Matters of Importance to Them
- 7e. Celebrate Indigenous Histories and Culture

OBJECTIVE 8:

Empower Residents to be Engaged Participants in the Community

Engaged community members actively contribute to the social, cultural, and economic life of their community, fostering a strong sense of belonging and shared responsibility. High engagement builds social cohesion, resilience, and a vibrant, supportive environment, while low engagement can lead to disconnection and reduced community strength. Medicine Hat can enhance engagement by creating inclusive opportunities for civic participation, encouraging volunteerism, and supporting local initiatives. By providing platforms for residents to voice their opinions, share their skills, and influence decision-making, the City can cultivate a dynamic, resilient community that improves quality of life and well-being for all.

Actions:

- 8a. Encourage Civic Participation and Engagement
- 8b. Incorporate Inclusive Input in Policy and Program Development
- 8c. Strengthen Volunteerism Across the City
- 8d. Expand Opportunities for Neighbourhood Engagement

OBJECTIVE 9:

Enhance Organizational Efforts to Support Well-Being

Strengthening the City of Medicine Hat's capacity to promote community well-being means clearly defining roles, adopting preventive and systemic approaches, championing necessary change, and modernizing policies. This involves leveraging data, community input, and best practices in decision-making while aligning resources effectively and measuring meaningful outcomes to ensure sustained improvement in the well-being of individuals and families.

Actions:

- 9a. Clarify and Communicate the Municipality's Purpose, Role, and Responsibilities
- 9b. Support a Community Systems Approach
- 9c. Adopt a Prevention-Focused Lens
- 9d. Be a Bold Advocate and Community Partner
- 9e. Modernize Policies to Promote Well-Being
- 9f. Utilize Multiple Inputs in Decision Making
- 9g. Align Resources with Community Well-Being Needs
- 9h. Measure What Matters to Track Progress