

STARTING WITH RESEARCH WORKSHOP SUMMARY | 1.29.19



RECOVER

RECOVER is about the wellness of every person, neighbourhood, community and the businesses, social services and environments that support them.

Our RECOVER team spent the last year working in the five core neighbourhoods, **Boyle Street, Central McDougall, Downtown, McCauley** and **Queen Mary Park**.

Based on the success of the project's first year, and needs identified through our research, we've now expanded our work to include focus south of the river in **Strathcona**.

In the fall of 2018, we **hosted two workshops**: one for kicking off work in Strathcona, and the other to reconvene people who had been working in the core neighbourhoods last year.

We hosted a workshop at Trinity Lutheran Church on January 29, 2019 **bringing these two groups together** to start exploring some of our latest research insights.

GOALS FOR THE WORKSHOP

Our goals for the workshop were:

1. Update on RECOVER
2. Introduce our approach to ethnographic research
3. Start exploring some of the first insights from our two week research sprint.

The evening began with an overview of RECOVER and the work we completed in our first year with **grounded research**, **building strong relationships**, and **co-designing prototypes**.

After a quick intro to **ethnography**. We tried some of the tools our researchers use in the field, getting to know everyone in the room a little bit better by interviewing each other.

We then started to explore some of the raw data that emerged from our ethnography in Strathcona and City Centre Mall.

We closed the night, capturing what was most **promising**, what was **puzzling**, and what was **most alive**, and outlined our next steps.





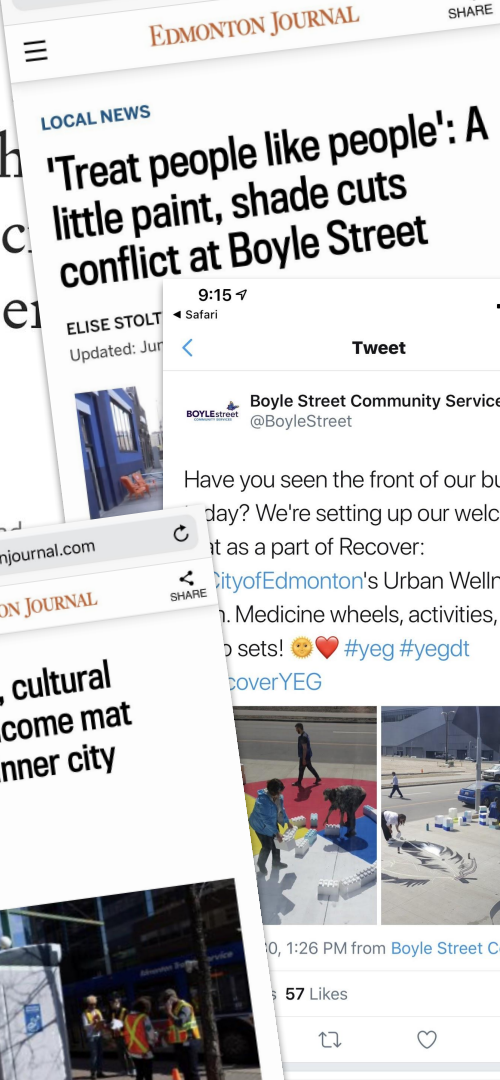
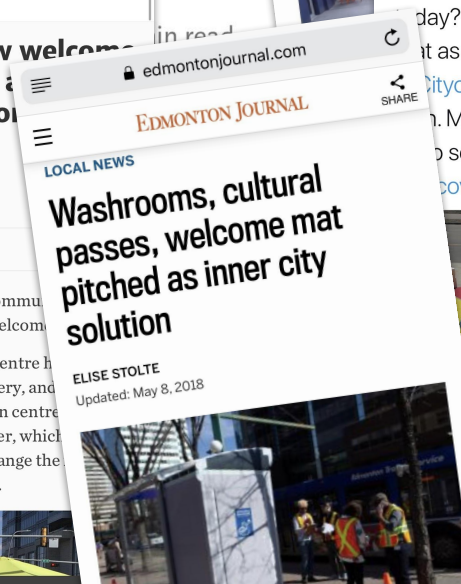
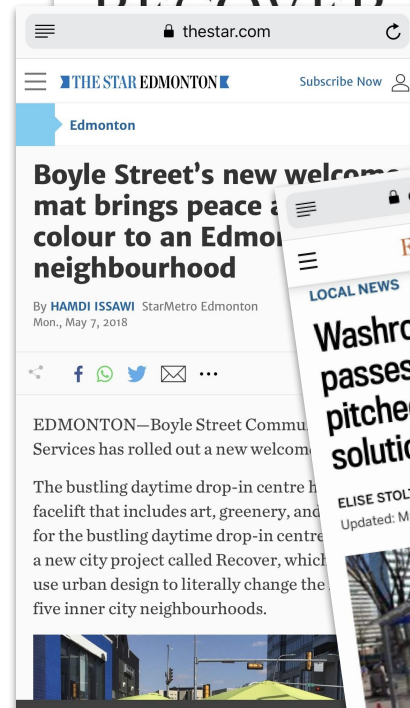
RECOVER TODAY

This past August our City Council approved the five recommendations supporting the continuation of RECOVER for the next four years.

Council was impressed with the work we accomplished in our first year. Our second year is starting from a space of increased understanding and empathy for each other.

This mindset will help us to design and implement better upstream supports where they are needed.

Polarization to
Lessons from the
Edmonton's social
innovation exper



WHO WAS IN THE ROOM

We had an extensive guest list for the event, and were excited to welcome **more than 80 people** in to the room.

People joined us from the communities that were the focus of the first year of RECOVER, **Boyle, McCauley, Central McDougall, Queen Mary Park, and Downtown**, as well as from **Strathcona and neighbouring communities**.

We welcomed business owners and operators, people from community organizations, and public servants. People in the room expressed both professional and personal interest in urban wellness.

Some of the hashtags people used to describe their **interests, disciplines and backgrounds** were:

#environmaniac #parenting #alwayshasaplan
#technology #indigenous #involved #changemaker
#education #cityplanner #enablement #artist
#small_business_advocate #medieval_art #music
#peacemaker #connecting #soccermom #youth
#torontoraptors #researcher #edmonton #seniors

INTRO TO ETHNOGRAPHY: STARTING WITH PEOPLE FIRST

One of the key parts of the RECOVER approach is that we are grounding our work in data. That data means looking at different sets of information, like heat maps of pickups from the 24/7 Crisis Diversion Team, or information gathered by Edmonton Police Services or census data.

But our data isn't just quantitative.

We also combine quantitative with qualitative using **ethnography**, talking to people in their own contexts to get insights on their daily patterns and start to generate ideas for opportunities to explore through prototyping.

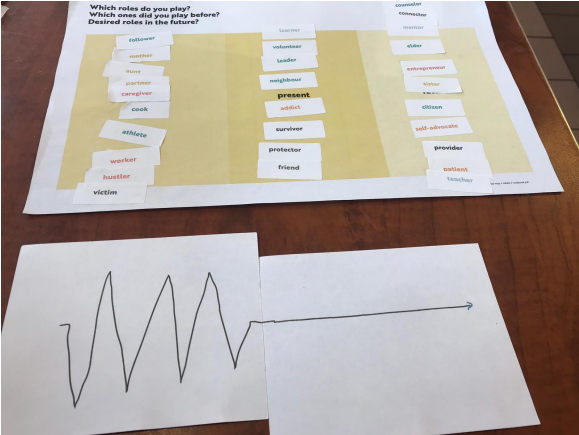
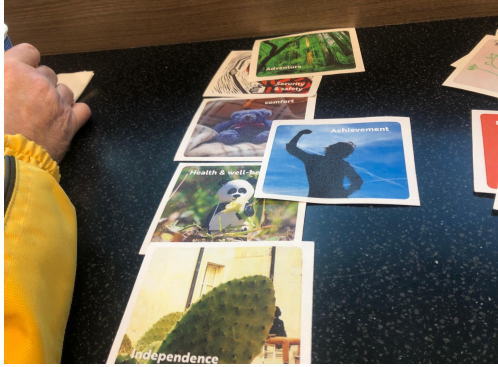
Starting with people means going to them.

During our first year, the InWithForward team had concentrated our ethnography with folks in Boyle Street, Central McDougall, Downtown, McCauley, and Queen Mary. This time, we were meeting folks in the Strathcona and in City Centre Mall.

In the two weeks of on-the-ground research, our researchers clocked **431 hours, completing 37 ethnographic profiles.**

INTRO TO ETHNOGRAPHY: GATHERING INSIGHTS

Our ethnographic approach really focuses on **finding people who are left out of traditional research**. More than just interviews, our researchers met people in their own contexts, starting where they hang out, and spending time to experience their daily lives to observe things that often go unsaid. While the bulk of our ethnographic research was focused on spending time with folks on the margins, we also spoke to others in their informal network like small business owners, service providers and other community members.



WHAT WE DID IN THE ROOM

During the workshop we:

- Chatted with each other over dinner and shared our connection to the **profile cards** we selected
- Learned who was in the room
- Caught up with Recover looking back at last year
- Got a taste for ethnography and the tools our researchers, InWithForward, use in the field, like:
 - **Community profiles**
 - **Value cards**
 - **Stressor chart**



Name: _____

hash tags of interests, disciplines, backgrounds

Emblematic quote

“

”

Description

About you

Where do you live? _____

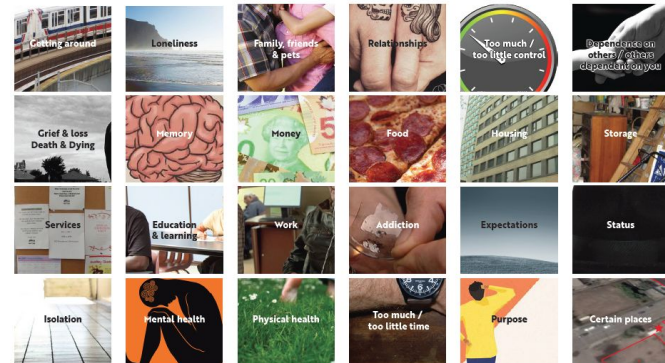
What are your different roles? _____

How do you to spend your time? _____

What stresses you out?

What are the top 3 things causing you stress at the moment?

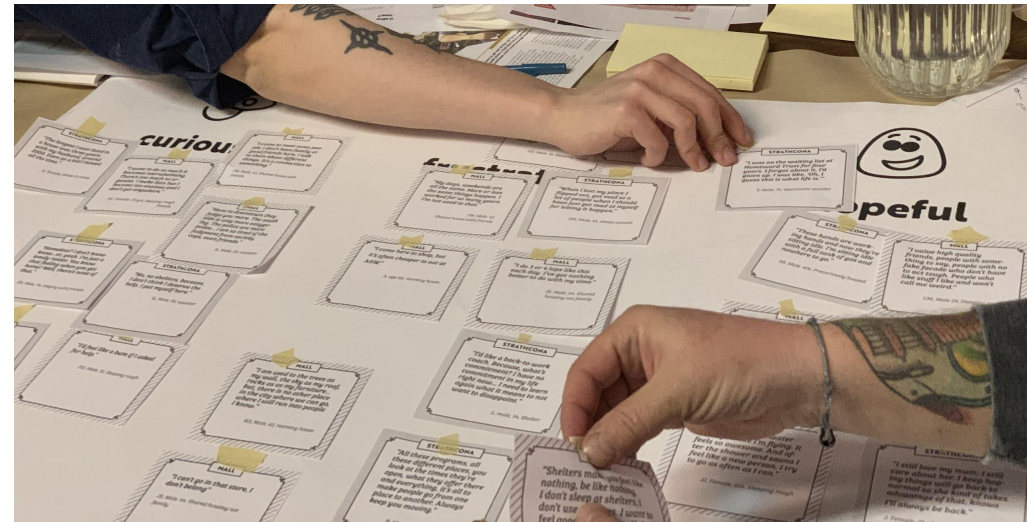
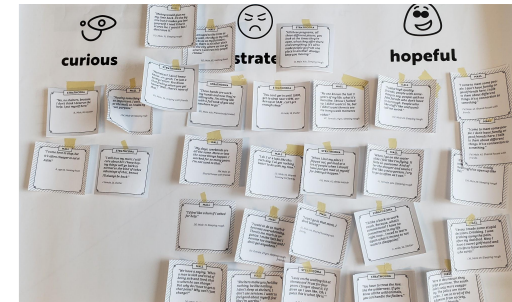
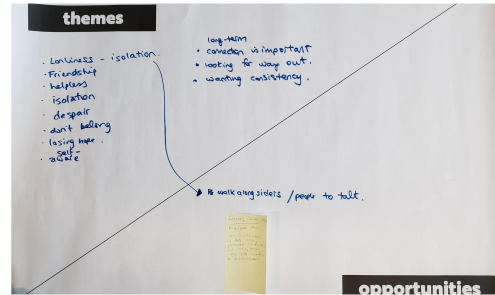
How much do you think things can change? What do you see in your control versus not?



WHAT WE DID IN THE ROOM

We also:

- Heard from the InWithForward ethnographers about emerging insights from Strathcona and the City Centre Mall.
- Explored the raw data collectively by sorting the **quote cards** into **“Curious,” “Frustrating,” and “Hopeful.”**
- Discussed the **themes** we saw from this segmentation and began to ponder possible **opportunity areas.**



REFLECTION

Throughout the session, we asked participants to reflect on a series of questions:

What's promising?

What's puzzling?

What's most alive for you right now?



REFLECTION | **WHAT'S PROMISING?**

Overall, people expressed interest in the process, the possibilities, and the potential of RECOVER. There was excitement about the variety of people and perspectives in the room gathering together to address the complex challenge of urban wellness through helping the most vulnerable and helping communities thrive. People also expressed appreciation for this new approach to addressing the complexity involved in a concept like “urban wellness.”

“Ethnography is the reality check that makes us rethink our assumptions and beliefs.”

“Starting with people and not with policy.”

“The number of people here.”

“Collaboration. Connection. Thick data.”

“We’ve seen success in 2018 - standing on the shoulders of giants”

“Starting with people yay!”

“Meeting people where they are.”

“Understanding the unintended consequences of what we’re currently doing.”

“Commitment of the City of Edmonton to the project.”

“So much important data collected that has the potential to change how we see and address community issues.”

REFLECTION | WHAT'S PUZZLING?

We also asked what was **puzzling**, and there were a number of questions around the short vs. long term impacts, why we were focusing on the areas of the city that we were, and the process we're using for RECOVER. Attendees also expressed curiosity (and empathy) about people experiencing homelessness and vulnerable circumstances.

"Why is homelessness still a concern? Why can't we solve this?"

"How to bridge resistance. Finding gaps and contradictions."

"How do people cope with boredom and a sense that their life is without purpose? Food, shelter, safety, etc. are important and so is... purpose."

"While stepping away from a 10-year plan is refreshing, I hope that there are long term considerations. What do you want your city to look like in 20, 40 years?"

"The process"

"The different feel of being in the margins."

"In Old Strathcona + downtown - how, why, more info please."

"This initiative only related to homelessness and the marginalized?"

"I am totally confused as to the outcomes and deliverables from this initiative."

"How can we broaden the knowledge base into the public (i.e., change societal views and beliefs as a whole?"

REFLECTION | WHAT'S MOST ALIVE FOR YOU RIGHT NOW?

We were also curious about what was **most alive** for people in the room.

People expressed enthusiasm for using social innovation as an approach, and about rooting our research in ethnography. People also commented on the level of interest and excitement in the room, shifting of mindsets (and heartsets), while also remembering that action is needed.

"Trampolines not safety nets"

"Filling in gaps, and having people inform policy, not have people fit into policy"

"Interesting info from ethnographic research quotes"

"Combination of people, organizations, and representation to co-think, co-create"

"The optimism of the people. Shift of paradigm"

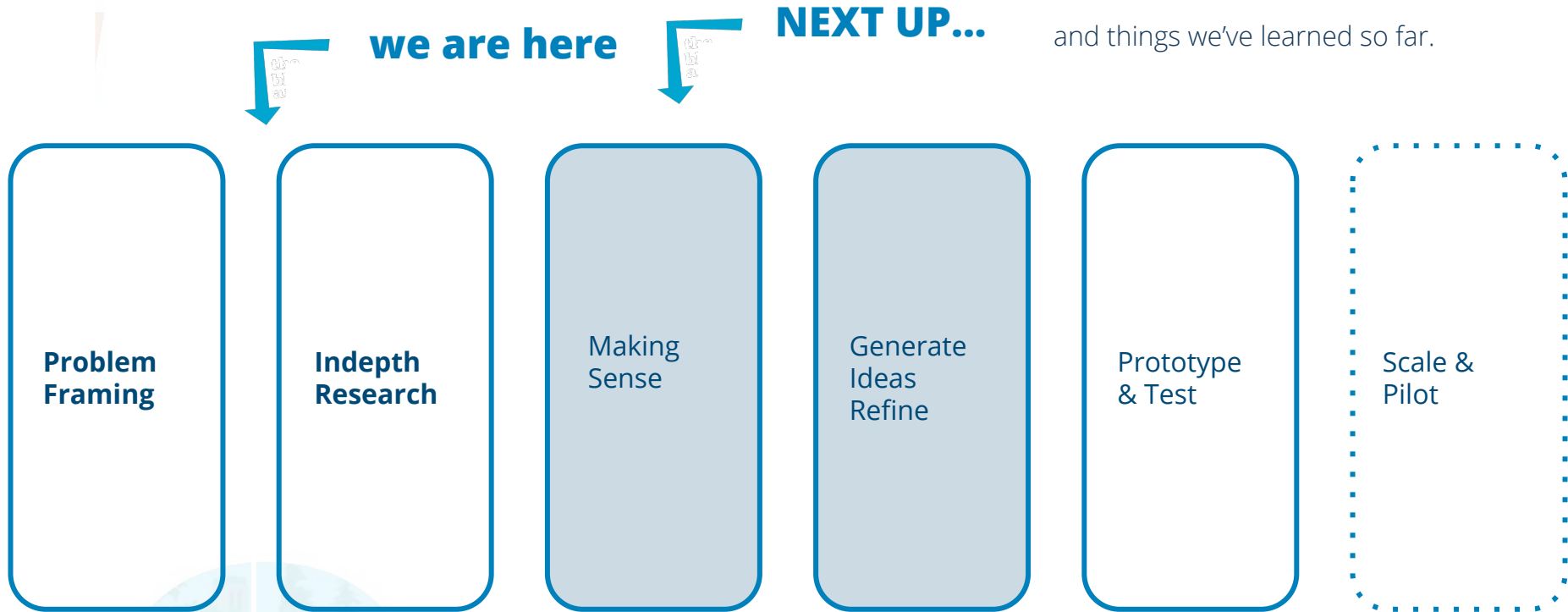
"Discussion and openness is good but the people on the streets in Old Strathcona need action! And those of us who live next to them want action too!"

"Feeling hopeful that meaningful changes may be on the horizon"

"What we frame as issues and problems are people - people who are trying to find their way just like any of us"

"The raw potential"

THE WORK AHEAD



We'll **come back together** as a community at the **end of March**, where we'll make sense of all of the research and things we've learned so far.

THE WORK AHEAD

We will finish this round of ethnographic research with InWithForward, **analyze and look at opportunity areas** that will emerge from that research, prototype and action them in the field, and continue to build relationships with stakeholders in that community.

Work will continue in the core neighbourhoods, focusing on the existing prototypes that are moving forward and taking in a second round of prototypes based on the opportunity areas in the last phase, and perhaps introduce some new ideas.

Through it all, we intend on having a stronger, intentional evaluation approach, ongoing reflection, communication, and maintaining ties with all of you.

We'll be inviting you back for another community workshop at the end of March.