



EMCN

EMCN STRATEGIC PLAN

2020-2023

EDMONTON

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MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR

Everything we do at EMCN helps support newcomers to thrive in Edmonton. The transition to life in Canada can be difficult and scary for an immigrant, but because of the good work of EMCN – its staff, volunteers, and board of directors – they are not alone. Our core values of social justice, diversity, compassion and responsibility inform everything in our work. We take a client-centered approach in all of our programs and services to ensure that newcomers receive the highest quality support as they settle in Edmonton.

EMCN has grown tremendously over the last forty years; from a small operation in the founders' basement, to a large, complex, multi-faceted organization, EMCN is now recognized for its role and expertise in settling newcomers. This could not have been accomplished without the passion, hard work and commitment of the staff and volunteers. As we approach our 40th anniversary in 2021, we want to recognize and celebrate the success of our organization. It is with great pride and satisfaction that we mark this momentous occasion in our history.

The Strategic Plan envisions EMCN as a strong, cohesive community that works together to support the many and complex needs of newcomers. Because of the rapid growth of our organization over the last ten years, we have decided to take stock and really focus on building a strong, cohesive, and stable internal culture within EMCN. We describe what we want to see within our organization and how it can continue to sustain itself now and in the future. We identify areas we believe we must improve within the next three years, what we will do about each, and how we will measure our success along the way.

This document is a three-year rolling plan that will be updated annually and reviewed regularly by our Board of Directors and senior management team. It will drive our annual Operations Plan and budget, and ensure that as we carry out our operations, we also remain focused on our broader goals and strategic direction. It will help us ensure we continue to remain focused on our mandate, which is to enhance the quality of life for newcomers to Canada.

This plan is also intended to provide insight for our many partners and stakeholders, who we recognize as being integral to our success. By publicly setting goals for our organization and expressing the direction we intend to follow, this plan will help us more effectively work together as part of Alberta's larger settlement community.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors and the EMCN senior management team for their valuable input and contribution to this plan.

Dr. Jennifer Braun

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ABOUT EMCN

In the 1980s North America was welcoming a whole new culture of people – the Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian refugees of a long-protracted war in their homelands. The Canadian and Edmonton community was doing their part to welcome these new arrivals, but some realized there was little in place to help them settle. Mennonites – with a persecuted past, as well as international relief experience through Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) - understood the problem as well as the potential for response. Several Mennonite church members met, adding the wisdom of Ann Falk, who understood the Vietnamese people, the Vietnamese culture as well as the language through her time as an MCC volunteer in Vietnam. That was the beginning of the Edmonton Mennonite churches' response. The Centre started with one and a half staff in 1980 under the direction of a board consisting of appointees from First Mennonite Church, Holyrood Mennonite Church and Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church.

And so the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN) was born – to walk with newcomers in their integration process – to fill out forms they couldn't understand – to advocate for newcomers when the system did not serve them adequately – to build relationships through language classes taught by volunteers – to pile newcomers into cars in the search of employment – to reflect the new cultural landscape by hiring first, Vietnamese, and later other nationalities who were now established and who could mentor newcomers – and to support the community as they established their own organizations.

Our main pillars of EMCN today include: language, employment, settlement, community engagement, and an ethnically diverse staff that reflects the groups coming to Canada. At first, EMCN operated through 1.5 paid staff and many volunteers. Soon after, by shifting to a community agency model, government funding grants allowed EMCN to grow its paid staff as needs and opportunities allowed.

EMCN works with up to 17,000 newcomers each year, from all parts of the world, out of three locations and various community locations. We currently have a staff of 230 that together, speak over 60 languages.

VISION, CORE PURPOSE AND VALUES

VISION

We see a future where citizens walk with newcomers to bridge their transition into the community.

CORE PURPOSE

To enhance the quality of life for Newcomers and all Canadians.

VALUES

Our goal is to create a society that is based on the dignity of every human being. We do this through our values:

- ▶ Social Justice
- ▶ Diversity
- ▶ Compassion
- ▶ Responsibility

WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE

Leveraging the engagement and skills of our staff, volunteers, and board to ensure newcomers achieve successful integration into our communities, EMCN will aim to demonstrate the following commitments:

WE ARE EXPERTS IN OUR FIELD

EMCN has built a strong reputation for providing responsive services in the Edmonton and surrounding area. We are experts in our field and our input is regularly sought out for program and policy level decisions both provincially and nationally.

WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

EMCN's programs and services deliver on their promise to make a difference in the lives of newcomers and provide them with some of the necessary tools to transition to our province and country. Where appropriate we will also provide employment opportunities for newcomers.

WE ARE A TOP EMPLOYER AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

EMCN's strongest asset is the people that work and volunteer for the organization. We want to make sure that all employees know who we are and where we are going by providing them with meaningful objectives that guide their day to day activities. We will continue to celebrate our successes and recognize our failures as opportunities for improvement.

WE ARE RESILIENT TO CHANGES IN FUNDING

EMCN's recent purchase of the 82nd Street building is a step towards enhancing the financial sustainability of the organization. EMCN will continue to diversify its funding sources so that it can continue and enhance its current suite of programs, as well as respond to any existing or future needs.

THE ROADMAP

This strategic plan will provide guidance to the organization to achieve the stated outcomes. EMCN will focus on these key priorities over the next three years and target the strategic areas of improvement. This plan will be reported on and reviewed regularly ensuring the target remains relevant, making changes as needed. Some of the activities described in the strategic plan will commence immediately as they have a degree of urgency. The plan is designed to carry the organization until fiscal year 2022/2023.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH

EMCN will grow and enhance the capacity of the organization to continue delivering effective and efficient programs and services within the community.

2. RELATIONSHIPS

In addition to maintaining relationships with its C5 partners, its funders, and members of municipal, provincial, and federal government, EMCN will strengthen and expand its relationships internally and externally.

3. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The programs and services provided by EMCN demonstrate qualitative and quantitative meaningful positive impact to newcomers.

4. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Funding for the programs and services provided by EMCN are less dependent on traditional government funding and continue to meet our ongoing financial obligations.

KEY OUTCOMES

The key outcomes defined below address some of the gaps and challenges that need to be resolved so that EMCN can continue to work towards achieving its vision.

1. RECRUITMENT OF A NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The existing Executive Director has provided notice of his departure in early 2020. It is imperative that the Board of Directors move to immediately fill this position so that the organization can continue to operate with a strong leader in place.

2. CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING IS TRAINED AND EXECUTED

EMCN is an organization that believes in career development for its employees. As a first step to identifying the future leaders of the organization, the leadership team will be provided with training and resources on how to identify potential successors and how to plan for their career development needs.

3. ORGANIZATION IS STRUCTURED AND OPERATED EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY

EMCN has grown substantially over the past number of years. The organization has changed and requires a review of the structure and supports that enable its success. It is necessary for staff to understand their role within the organization and how their work contributes to meeting the established organizational goals and objectives.

4. IMPROVED INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors require regular and timely information about the organization so that they can understand the role they play achieving the goals and objectives of the organization.

5. INCREASED ENGAGEMENT AND CAPACITY OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board members are likely to provide meaningful assistance with achieving the vision of the organization when they are engaged and provided with opportunities for development.

6. ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

EMCN has served thousands of newcomers over their nearly 40-year history. Many of these individuals have gone on to have successful careers, families, and lives in Canada. Providing an opportunity for these alumni to participate in the future success of EMCN represents a unique opportunity to demonstrate the long-term impact of their programs and services while providing an opportunity for the alumni to give back.

7. MEANINGFUL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

EMCN provides programs and services in multiple communities across the Edmonton region. In this instance, communities do not simply represent a geographical region, instead the communities impacted by EMCN programs and services can include churches, members of the LGBTQ2S society, or other various cultural groups. Providing a membership program for these groups will increase the knowledge and potential participation of the broad community with respect to the impact of the programs and services provided by EMCN.

8. CELEBRATION OF EMCN 40TH ANNIVERSARY

In May of 2021, EMCN will celebrate its 40th year of providing services in the Edmonton region. The organization will celebrate the journey from humble beginnings with a few founding members to the organization that it is today, providing services across a large geographical area to thousands of individuals on an annual basis.

9. EMCN IS ABLE TO CLEARLY ARTICULATE THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IT PROVIDES

It is essential that EMCN continue to evolve the measurement and evaluation of the programs and services it is providing. This will allow the organization to demonstrate its value across the sector to funders, communities, and other stakeholders.

10. RENOVATED 82ND STREET BUILDING

EMCN took the bold step of purchasing the building on 82nd Street. The building requires some renovations that will better serve the needs of the programs and services provided out of that space.

11. ALTERNATIVE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IMPLEMENTED

EMCN, like many similar not-for-profits is heavily reliant on funding from government sources. This funding is often reliant on priorities of the current government and can change unexpectedly. Sourcing alternative funding opportunities or fundraising could allow EMCN to fill gaps in services not funded by traditional means or support other costs that the organization incurs.

STRATEGIES AND MEASURES

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1

ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH

EMCN will grow and enhance the capacity of the organization to continue delivering effective and efficient programs and services within the community.

KEY OUTCOMES

1. Recruitment of a new Executive Director
2. Career development and training in succession planning
3. Organization is structured and operated effectively and efficiently
4. Improved internal communications
5. Increased engagement and capacity of the Board of Directors

STRATEGIES

1. The Board of Directors will immediately engage a recruitment firm to conduct an executive search for a new Executive Director of the organization.
2. Training and resources will be provided to EMCN Senior Leadership to identify future successors with the organization and plan for their career development.
3. An external consultant will be engaged to conduct an organizational review of the management structure and capacity.
4. A corporate operational plan will be prepared that links to this strategic plan which details service outcomes, targets and accountabilities that are integrated into annual performance reviews for staff and programs.
5. A comprehensive internal communications plan will be developed that considers the needs of employees, volunteers, and the Board of Directors.
6. Board development opportunities will be identified and regularly scheduled.

FIRST YEAR EXPECTED RESULTS

Q1 – APRIL 2020 – JUNE 2020

- ▶ New Executive Director identified and onboarded
- ▶ Organizational review completed with plan for implementation of accepted recommendations
- ▶ Operational plan created for fiscal year 2020/2021
- ▶ Board development opportunities scheduled for minimally two times per year

Q2 – JULY 2020 – SEPTEMBER 2020

- ▶ Audit of current internal communications complete

Q3 – OCTOBER 2020 – DECEMBER 2020

- ▶ New internal communication plan approved
- ▶ Succession planning policy and procedure established
- ▶ Staff and program review process developed

Q4 – JANUARY 2021 – MARCH 2021

- ▶ Internal communication plan implemented
- ▶ Future successors identified with career development plans in place
- ▶ Performance measurement under new plan

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2

RELATIONSHIPS

In addition to maintaining relationships with its C5 partners, its funders, and members of municipal, provincial, and federal government, EMCN will strengthen and expand its relationships internally and externally.

KEY OUTCOMES

1. Alumni engagement program implementation
2. Meaningful membership program implementation
3. Celebration of EMCN 40th Anniversary

STRATEGIES

1. An Alumni Engagement Program is implemented
2. New Membership Program launched
3. 40th Anniversary celebration events planned and executed

FIRST YEAR EXPECTED RESULTS

Q3 – OCTOBER 2020 – DECEMBER 2020

- ▶ Alumni Engagement Program plan developed and presented to Board of Directors
- ▶ Membership Program developed and presented to Board of Directors
- ▶ Budget approval for 40th anniversary celebrations

Q4 – JANUARY 2021 – MARCH 2021

- ▶ Alumni Engagement Program launched
- ▶ Membership Program launched
- ▶ Ready to commence 40th anniversary celebrations

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The programs and services provided by EMCN are able to demonstrate qualitative and quantitative meaningful positive impact to newcomers.

KEY OUTCOMES

1. EMCN is able to clearly articulate the impact of the programs and services it provides

STRATEGIES

1. Measurable outcomes and targets will be identified for each program as part of the annual business planning process
2. All reporting will include highlights of the qualitative and quantitative impact of programs and services provided by EMCN

FIRST YEAR EXPECTED RESULTS

Q1 – APRIL 2020 – JUNE 2020

- 2019/2020 Annual report will highlight key measurable outcomes for the organization

Q2 – JULY 2020 – SEPTEMBER 2020

- Operations planning template will include approved measurable outcome targets

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Funding for the programs and services provided by EMCN are less dependent on traditional government funding and continue to meet ongoing financial obligations.

KEY OUTCOMES

1. Alternative funding opportunities implemented
2. Sufficient funds are available to complete 82nd Street building renovations

STRATEGIES

1. Existing fundraising activities evaluated for effectiveness
2. Annual fundraising plan developed and executed
3. Alternative funding opportunities identified
4. Selected alternative funding opportunities implemented

FIRST YEAR EXPECTED RESULTS

Q1 – APRIL 2020 – JUNE 2020

- ▶ Current fundraising initiatives evaluated

Q2 – JULY 2020 – SEPTEMBER 2020

- ▶ Annual fundraising plan approved
- ▶ Alternative funding opportunities recommended to Board of Directors

Q3 – OCTOBER 2020 – DECEMBER 2020

- ▶ Implementation of fundraising plan
- ▶ Implementation plan for alternative funding opportunities approved

Q4 – JANUARY 2021 – MARCH 2021

- ▶ First alternative funding opportunity started

