



THE HILLHURST SUNNYSIDE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

REPORT TO COMMUNITY

20
23

Looking Back, Looking Forward:
Building Connection and Belonging



75 YEARS

OF BUILDING CONNECTION &
BELONGING



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Gladstone Road / 4 Ave NW follows a historical Indigenous path, crossing our community diagonally. This unique roadway breaks from the gridiron (rectangular) street layout of our inner-city community. Since time immemorial, many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people have walked these paths, stewarded this Land, built relationships and community. With these histories and ongoing relationships in mind, we respectfully acknowledge the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Iyârhe Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations). The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (Districts 5 and 6).

CONTENTS

Looking Back: Evolution of a Community Association - - - - -	3
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion - - - - -	4
Childcare - - - - -	5
Community Connections - - - - -	7
Snapshots from 2023: Stories in Pictures - - - - -	9
Engaged Residents - - - - -	10
Our Funders - - - - -	13



1948

HSCA is incorporated as a non-profit society. Changing cabins from 1912 were used as a gathering space.



1953-54

A small community hall is built as an addition. The association continued to define itself primarily through sport & recreation.



1961

The Federation of Calgary Communities (FCC) is incorporated to support growing community associations ([Calgary Communities, 2023](#)).

1970S-80S

The association's focus shifted beyond sport and recreation to advocacy, redevelopment, and social supports ([Hillhurst Sunnyside Remembers, 1978](#)).

1978

Addition of sport and recreation complex is built.



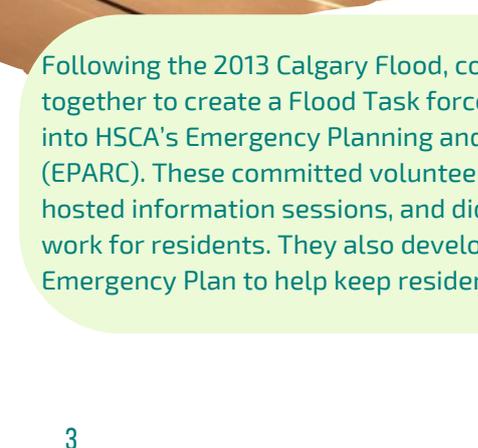
2000S

Growth in our food programming, including the 'reignition' of the Farmers' Market and development of a sustainable community food program.



2013

Following the 2013 Calgary Flood, community members came together to create a Flood Task force. This eventually evolved into HSCA's Emergency Planning and Response Committee (EPARC). These committed volunteers shared their expertise, hosted information sessions, and did important advocacy work for residents. They also developed a Community Emergency Plan to help keep residents safe and informed.



2020

HSCA experienced program shutdowns and staff layoffs. Staff, services, and programs slowly returned in phases. During this time, our organization faced challenges and financial uncertainty. Our community showed incredible resiliency and found creative ways to engage and build community.

*"I started [coming to] HSCA back in 2015 knowing nobody, but when we joined Neighbour Night, me and my children felt so welcomed and found our 'home away from home'. My children grew up in this community from daycare, [and] finished grade 6 at Hillhurst School. Now junior and senior high, and we are still here. We are still a part of all programs from [Sustainable Food Program], Sip 'n' Chat, Neighbour Night, and visit Flea Market too. Oh! We don't forget Farmers Market every Wednesday. As you can see, HSCA is pretty much a part of everyday life. [...] This is an awesome community where **we felt we belong**. I personally connect so many people I meet anywhere and guide/lead them to many programs that we have in HSCA." ~ Anonymous*

ANTI-RACISM AND EQUITY AUDIT AND STRATEGY BUILDING PROJECT

In 2023, HSCA received funding from the Government of Canada's Community Service Recovery Fund to support our strategic efforts in equity, diversity, and inclusion. HSCA began working with an Equity Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) consulting firm as part of our Anti-Racism and Equity Audit and Strategy Building project. In 2024, we will be conducting an audit, providing training sessions for HSCA staff and volunteers, and creating onboarding materials and resources to support our organization's initiatives in equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation. Our aim is to recognize our organization's gaps and barriers in achieving equity and reconciliation and to proactively integrate EDI considerations into our policies and programs. **We recognize this will be a continued learning process and the work in addressing systemic barriers is ongoing with no completion date.** We are hopeful that this strategy building project will lay the solid foundation required in building a better future for all.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

In 2023, HSCA continued work to enhance our capacity to support the 2SLGBTQ+ community through the Rainbow Ready program. Progress was made in developing our organizational Action Plan and we remain committed to this work moving into 2024.



MAKING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The Hillhurst Sunnyside community is the backdrop of our childcare programming and connecting and interacting with the community is an important part of HSCA's OOSC and Daycare programs. Not only do community connections support kids in developing social skills, but it also promotes a sense of belonging. It would be easy to overlook these 'every day' moments of community connections that occur in our programming, but **these moments matter**. Whether it's pointing out community landmarks on the way to and from school, saying 'hello' to residents on community walks, or decorating the sidewalk with chalk drawings, educators encourage children to feel part of their community.



THE LOOSE PARTS SHED: LOOK A LITTLE CLOSER

To a passerby, it looks like a place to store tools or even... junk. But to OOSC kids, it's **a place where imagination and play collide**. The 'loose parts shed' has a mix of natural and manufactured material, including buckets, branches, stones, fabric, funnels, and sporting equipment. Loose parts play has many benefits and gives children the chance to explore, create, collaborate, problem solve and have fun outside!

"They've created their own playground"
~Chelsea, OOSC Program Manager

BAKING CLUB: FINDING THE KEY INGREDIENTS

In April 2023, OOSC introduced a baking club. The kids had two key goals in mind: to sell their baked goods at the weekly Farmers' Market and to offer the items to volunteers and participants of HSCA's Sustainable Food Program. Along with getting creative in the kitchen, kids engaged in some money management skills (including conversations on how to spend the money), and had the opportunity to interact and share their creations with community members. **This project encouraged kids to get involved in the community and empowered them to decide how to do it.**



"It's their home away from home"
~Camie, OOSC Educator

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

In 2023, we saw an increase in our facility rentals. This meant spaces within the centre were limited more than years prior for childcare programming. Our childcare team saw this as an opportunity to utilize more outdoor spaces within the community.

A focus was placed on curating outdoor activities, play, and exploration for children.

Staff turnover, parental leaves, and retirement presented challenges to our Childcare team. Although this was a major transition, Daycare Manager Kerin Ching believes the team "came out stronger" and at the centre of this transition was communication and a willingness to share. Camie, OOSC Educator, echoed this and says, "In 2023, we built a rock-solid team. We can make it through challenges together and support one another".



EDI: CREATING EXPERIENCES

In 2023, our Daycare placed a focus on celebrating diversity and creating deeper cultural learning experiences within our programming. Daycare Manager Kerin Ching explains that this initiative leaned heavily on the diversity and knowledge of Daycare staff and celebrating them as individuals and important contributors in creating these experiences. The intent is to make these experiences intentional and meaningful—to go beyond a conversation or a section in a book. Our aim is to **"approach [cultural learning experiences] with curiosity and respect"** says Kerin. In November 2023, our Daycare staff integrated Diwali celebrations into our Daycare programming. Children were able to celebrate, learn, and experience Diwali customs and traditions made possible through the efforts and knowledge of staff.

KINDER CARE & SUN FUN

Kinder Care- We welcomed **19** kids into our Kinder program (up from **5** in 2022).

Sun Fun- We welcomed **42** children (up from 27 kids in 2022). Our summer program focused on outdoor programs and featured field trips, guest speakers, and bear safety classes. We expect that our Summer programming will continue to grow and look forward to more opportunities to connect and interact with the community.



"I am socially isolated due to caregiving for a spouse and only visit doctors, [the] library, food and medicine store. Chair yoga helps me see people and loosen my stiff joints. The yoga helps calm my anxiety and strengthen my balance to prevent my falling. Debbie is a great person to talk to before or after the session [. . .] Even just listening to other participants or talking about their life is as if I am having friends over to my house. I try and book appointments around chair yoga so that I hardly ever miss a session [. . .]. It's a wonderful program for home bound seniors. Thank you." ~2023 Chair Yoga Participant

EMERGENCY CONTACT

'List your emergency contact'. For some, this may seem like a standard field on an intake form and can be filled in without much thought. For others, it is not so simple and identifying an emergency contact presents challenges and can bring up feelings of isolation and loneliness.

During one of our Community programs, a participant shared they did not have a person to list as an emergency contact. Across Canada, the rates of social isolation and loneliness are growing with over a third of Canadians reporting that they are either often or always alone (Angus Reid, 2019). **With social isolation becoming more prevalent, inclusive spaces for connection are increasingly important.** These spaces allow people to connect and build meaningful relationships. Our Community Connections programs aim to reduce barriers to social inclusion by responding to participants' unique and diverse needs.

SIP 'N' CHAT: 'THE BASKET OF QUESTIONS'

"One person picks a question out of the basket, answer[s] it, and paper is passed around so everyone present gets a chance to answer. This has resulted in unbelievable discussions! Everyone answers from their perspectives, and this often leads to many interesting facets of our lives being discussed! The coffee, tea, and goodies, oranges always included is a highlight for those with food insecurity! However, everyone enjoys these treats! This group works so well, because it involves all age groups! I believe this is one of the keys to its success. We also come from many different countries and many different cultures. This enriches our discussions and opens our minds to new horizons! Of course, all good groups are led by good leaders. Thank you for all your hard work, Reiko".
~ 2023 Sip 'n' Chat Participant



CREATING A NETWORK OF SUPPORT

Our Sip 'n' Chat program provides a space to connect, sip a warm beverage, and chat. The weekly program offers a casual, low-committal, drop-in format where all are welcome. The connections and relationships that participants have sowed and seeded in our Hearth room have sprouted and extended far beyond the walls of HSCA. **"Participants have truly created a network of support"** says Community Connections Coordinator, Reiko Yamagishi. Many participants have shared that they feel welcomed, supported, and connected and appreciate the 'Basket of Questions' (see below).

NEIGHBOUR NIGHT



"After many years of living with family, I now live alone. I really appreciate being able to share a meal with others at Neighbour Night. It makes a big difference for me."~ 2023 Neighbour Night Participant

"The Neighbour Night event[s] helps me connect with community folks and I enjoy the meals, make friends and feel safe and belonged" - 2023 Neighbour Night Participant



Participants in our Community Connections programs come from diverse backgrounds, countries, and age ranges. Program Coordinator, Reiko Yamagishi explains that part of her role is recognizing and responding to the individual needs of participants. She continues, "[how] can I ensure [they] feel welcomed, supported, and included?" Part of this work is reflecting and celebrating diversity within our programming activities. In 2023, Neighbour Night hosted a variety of facilitators including: an Indigenous advocate and performer, an origami expert, a trauma counsellor, a dental hygienist, and a Vietnamese female entrepreneur.

Another key component of Neighbour Night is sitting down and sharing a meal. In 2023, Neighbour Night volunteers wanted to incorporate more ethnically diverse meals. These meals are used as **a vehicle for connection and community and allow people to come together, share, celebrate, and learn about diverse cultures through food.**

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS 2023

1744

Total volunteer hours in Community Connections program

12

Different Neighbour Night facilitators

15

The number of different countries of origin of participants

SNAPSHOTS FROM 2023

STORIES IN PICTURES

75 YEARS OF BUILDING CONNECTION & BELONGING

HSCA'S REPORT TO COMMUNITY 2023



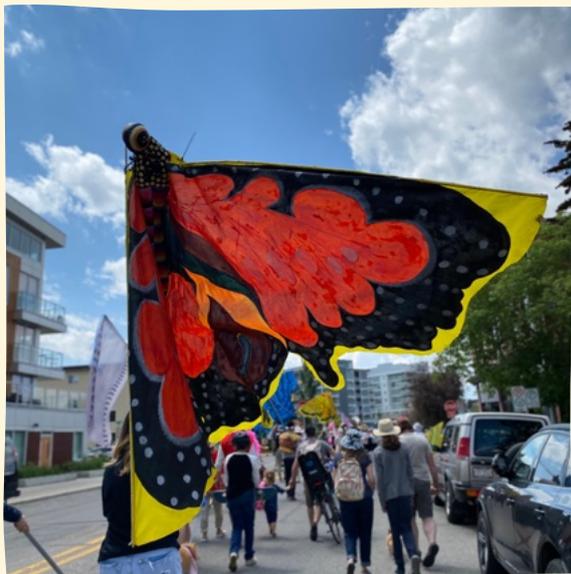


Photo by Buff Smith

CELEBRATING SUNNYSIDE'S RESILIENCY: 10-YEARS LATER

Neighbour Day is an important annual event in Sunnyside because it marks the tremendous support and community spirit that occurred following the 2013 floods. June 2023 marked the 10-year anniversary of the flood and the Sunnyside community gathered to march, connect, create, and celebrate their resiliency. An eclectic and vibrant display of costumes, music, and art were on full display along the parade route followed by a gathering at the containR site in Sunnyside.

In preparation for the Neighbour Day parade, participants of Neighbour Night worked to craft and create colourful props and flags to display. "With enough time and planning, we found all the flag-making props we needed within our community, and no money was spent on supplies" says Abir Bachir who co-facilitated this Neighbour Night event. Abir explains that fabric was repurposed from a costume shop, while sewing supplies were donated by a community member, and flag poles were supplied by the Arusha Centre.

"I am so grateful to everyone who organized and attended the Neighbour Night activity to make a flag or cape, and I am grateful that Neighbour Night repeats on Thursdays because it gives the people in our community [the opportunity] to connect and share resources [and to] brainstorm and problem solve."

- Abir Bachir, 2023 Neighbour Night Facilitator

Photo by Buff Smith



SUSTAINABLE FOOD PROGRAM: FRESH CHOICES MATCHING CAMPAIGN

In 2023, a community member heard about our Sustainable Food Program. He became passionate about what HSCA was doing with food access in our community and wanted to share our vision and communicate the need for support in continuing this program. He connected HSCA with the Prosser Foundation and HSCA partnered with them to launch a matching campaign fundraiser. With the help of passionate and generous community members and donors, our fundraising campaign raised **\$10,000** (including the Prosser Foundation's matching funds). These funds guaranteed the continuation of our Fresh Choices program for the year.



2 Repair Exchanges were hosted alongside the Sunday Flea Market

50 Farmers' Markets

50 Flea Markets

24 Blog submissions from community members and volunteers

100+ Hours of Committee meetings



GET INVOLVED

HSCA is always looking for volunteers for community initiatives, events, and programming. We also encourage community members to check out HSCA's committees and sub-committees and the important work they are doing, including our:

- **Board of Directors**
- **Planning Committee**
- **Mobility sub-committee**
- **Heritage Preservation sub-committee**
- **Sunnyside Brightening sub-committee**
- **EPARC Committee**

1. Visit our volunteer page at www.hsc.ca/volunteer for more details on how you can get involved with HSCA!
2. Sign up for **HSCA's monthly e-newsletter** to stay updated on exciting community programs, events, initiatives, and other ways to connect with your community!
3. We also encourage you to check out our **program and recreation calendar** for a full listing of programs, events, and markets!
4. Donate to HSCA (visit hsc.ca/donate or click the button below)

DONATE



COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT: HSCA'S MOBILITY SUB-COMMITTEE

The Mobility sub-committee represents the community's interests in seeking out equity for people moving about the neighbourhood, with particular interest in active means of transport (**HSCA's sub-committee, 2023**). In 2023, they continued to work with Hillhurst Sunnyside residents and the City of Calgary in identifying and creating safe routes and crossing points. This engaged and dedicated group has developed clear strategies and values and is committed to achieving results.

The Mobility sub-committee made three (3) important bike rack improvements in our community in 2023, including: **HSCA's, at Bowview Outdoor Pool, and Sunnyside School**. These important upgrades provide safer and more secure bike parking in our community.

Looking Ahead to 2024: 8 Ave Crosswalk on 10 St NW
As most residents know, attempting to cross 10 St NW (a 50 km/h street) between Sunnyside and Riley Park can feel extremely challenging and dangerous. Through successful advocacy, the HSCA Mobility team has achieved agreement from the City to build a safe crossing at this location. The projected timeline is to have a safe crossing built in 2024.



Bike rack photos by Tim Schaefer

"Change doesn't happen overnight, but it does happen through advocacy" - Becky Poshmann, HSCA's Planning Coordinator



HSCA LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

In 1978's 'Hillhurst-Sunnyside Remembers', Margaret Tanko expressed the important role and impact residents of Hillhurst Sunnyside had on their community, and almost 45 years later, the same rings true today. **"[Hillhurst Sunnyside] residents are organized and they have a common goal: in another eighty years, the residents want to be able to say that Hillhurst-Sunnyside is still a nice place to live"** (Tanko, 1978).

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS FUNDERS!

PARTNERS (>\$10K)

- Family & Community Support Services
- Province of Alberta
- City of Calgary
- Red Cross

SUPPORTERS (>\$1000 AND UP TO \$10K)

- Safeway Kensington
- COBS Kensington
- Safeway
- Stand & Command
- Kensington Commons Church
- Hillhurst United Church
- The Prosser Charitable Foundation

CONTRIBUTORS (>\$100 AND UP TO \$1000)

- Sunnyside Natural Market
- Anonymous donors