



2015 FCSS Needs Assessment Research

Focus Groups

Final Report

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Banister

Research & Consulting Inc.

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1.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of Leduc's Strategic Plan recognizes Social Wellness as a goal. A strong focus is placed on encouraging well being and promoting active, healthy lifestyles while providing the appropriate level of support to address social needs in the community. With this in mind, the City has committed to conducting a social needs assessment every five years in order to measure citizen perceptions and satisfaction with Leduc Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) as well as other human services offered in the City of Leduc. The following were conducted by Banister Research in 2015 in support of this objective:

- Three (3) focus groups, one each with youth, young families, and ESL newcomers (n=31)¹;
- Interagency Web-Based Survey (n=42); and
- General Population Telephone Survey (n=400).

This report outlines the qualitative findings from three (3) focus groups, conducted with Leduc Youth, Young Families, and ESL Newcomers, as part of the 2015 FCSS Needs Assessment Research.

1.1 Methodology

Participants for the Youth focus group session (n=10, plus n=4 in an additional session facilitated by the City of Leduc) were recruited by City of Leduc staff, while participants for the Young Families (n=7) session were recruited by Banister Research, based on research participation lists gathered during the General Population Telephone Survey. These groups were conducted on May 19th, 2015, at the Leduc Recreation Centre. The ESL Newcomers focus group (n=14, plus n=3 assistant staff) took place during the regular June 2nd ESL meeting at the Leduc Public Library.

The focus groups lasted for approximately one and a half (1.5) hours each and were facilitated by Tracy With, Vice President of Banister Research. One (1) additional Youth focus group was facilitated by City of Leduc staff, the results of which were incorporated into this report.

The focus groups were based on moderators' guides, developed by Banister Research in conjunction with the Client. A copy of the Youth, Young Families, and ESL Newcomers moderators' guides have been provided in Appendices A, B, and C, respectively.

The following sections provide a summary of the key findings for each of the topic areas investigated with each audience.

¹ In addition, a second focus group with local youth was facilitated by the City of Leduc. Findings from this focus group have been included, where applicable.

Please Note: Readers of this report should be cautioned as to the interpretation of results obtained from the focus group process. Focus groups provide qualitative data, and, while valuable insights were gained through this process, the results cannot be considered statistically representative. The language used in the report is subjective in nature and should be read as indicators of key themes, rather than quantifiable measures. For example, a few participants would indicate that two (2) or three (3) participants (per group or overall, depending on the context) responded in a particular way. In contrast, the usage of the words “majority,” “typically,” or “mostly” indicate that approximately three-quarters or more of the participants felt similarly about a topic or theme.

2.0 FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

2.1 Participant Profile

Youth

A total of fourteen (n=14) local youth, aged 14 to 20, participated in two (2) focus group sessions conducted over May 19th (n=10) and 20th (n=4) at the Leduc Recreation Centre. While a couple of the youth were relatively new to the City of Leduc (i.e., had moved within the past year), most of them had lived in Leduc for between 5 and 10 years.

Young Families

Seven (n=7) parents – six (n=6) females and one (n=1) male – participated in a single focus group session conducted on May 19th at the Leduc Recreation Centre. The parents were between the ages of 29 to 41, and all had at least one child under the age of 18 (a few of the participants also had grown children). Six (n=6) of the seven (n=7) participants were married or living in a common-law partnership, and another six (n=6) owned their home. Most of the participants were employed full-time or part-time; a couple were homemakers, and one participant was unemployed. Most of the participants reported having lived in Leduc for 10 years or less (about half had moved to Leduc within the past 5 years).

ESL Newcomers

Fourteen (n=14) ESL Newcomers (i.e., those who had recently moved to Leduc from an international location and who were participating in an ESL learners’ session) attended the June 2nd discussion at the Leduc Public Library, in addition to three (n=3) female helpers and the regular meeting coordinator. The participants reported having moved to Leduc from Colombia, Mexico, China, Korea, Thailand, Cuba, and Ukraine. Most of them had moved to Canada within the past 2 years, though a couple had been in Canada for as long as 7 years. Eleven (n=11) of the ESL participants were female, while three (n=3) were male.

2.2 Life in the City of Leduc

To begin the discussions, participants were asked why they moved to Leduc and what they liked the most about living there. Nearly all of the participants in the Young Families session indicated that they had originally grown up in Leduc and chose to move back to raise their families, as they enjoyed their childhood there and had parenting support in terms of extended family. Many also noted that housing in Leduc was more affordable and that the real estate market was not as limited as in other locations considered in the Edmonton Capital Region (other areas referenced included Beaumont, Devon, Sherwood Park, and Edmonton). One of the Young Families participants noted that the Leduc Recreation Centre (LRC) was a big draw for raising active children.

"The people in Leduc are very friendly. [We have] known more people in one year here than in two years in Calgary."

- Young Families Participant

The ESL Newcomers most often reported having moved for work and family, and both the Young Families and ESL Newcomers reported proximity to Edmonton, when needed, and easy access to local services and amenities (e.g., Edmonton International Airport; LRC; Leduc Public Library, etc.) as major factors contributing to a high quality of life in Leduc. Participants also highlighted the "small city" feel of the community, friendly neighbours and perceptions of safety, and smaller class sizes for school-aged children.

Within the Youth group, participants also highlighted proximity to Edmonton and easy access to amenities (e.g., LRC) as some of the best things about living in Leduc, explaining that they are able to save some money on gas when traveling within the City or to and from Edmonton for bigger-city attractions. Similar to the Young Families and ESL Newcomers participants, some of the older youth also noted that rent is more affordable in Leduc than in other communities.

A Different Culture for Newcomers

When asked about the major differences in Leduc or Canada versus back home, the ESL Newcomers, top-of-mind, mentioned "democracy," "universal health care," "free education," "safety," and "nice people." Some of the more "neutral" differences included a general difference in culture, and the weather. In terms of the differences "here versus back home" that tended to be issues from their perspective, issues facing youth were highlighted in particular, such as: higher rates of drugs and smoking amongst teenagers; little enforcement of absenteeism amongst students (e.g., skipping class is common and students often feel pressured to join their friends); and more "judgment" between students and parents. For example, in countries like Korea and China, all students have the same school uniform and eat the same school-provided lunches. Whereas, in North America, freedom of dress and bringing ones' own food creates differences between students that lead to conflict and create distractions from their studies.

In general, the young parents in the ESL Newcomers group felt that education in North America is not taken as seriously as in some other cultures, and that “freedom is trouble.” It was commented, however, that stricter regulations for schoolchildren in countries like China can be problematic as well – for example, students may be pushed “too hard” and that there is also no privacy. Thus, while some parents struggle with a more lax approach to schooling in Canada, they are also aware that youth have more freedom of expression and are not faced with unrealistic expectations.

When asked if there are any services they have difficulty accessing, or people they are unable to communicate with because of language barriers, the Newcomers mentioned schools/teachers, healthcare/doctors, and banking. While it can be difficult, though, they explained the Canadians are often quite patient and helpful, and use hand signals and body language to communicate.

Participation in Community Activities

In terms of the types of activities they participate in, the Young Family and ESL Newcomer participants highlighted popular community events such as the Rodeo, Canada Day Parade, Christmas festivities, and neighbourhood block parties. They also reported participating in events or activities through church and the LRC. One of the participants in the Young Families group, a low-income and high-needs individual, noted that her neighbourhood (Tribute) seemed less neighbourly, and felt that there were not a lot of opportunities for community involvement. Some of the other Young Family participants, however, felt that it is often up to the individual to seek out opportunities, and that it can be easy for residents to be passive and unengaged.

When asked about specific types of activities for their households, the Young Families group most often mentioned participating in recreation or leisure activities (e.g., fitness or organized sports), followed by cultural activities (e.g., music and theatre). Approximately half of them participated in educational and social opportunities, though they were unsure of what types of activities or programs were considered “social.” Only a couple of the participants participated in creative opportunities, such as painting or woodworking, while none of them had any experience attending wellness activities or events (e.g., nutrition seminars). Participation in events or activities mostly occurred in Leduc, though one of the parents noted that sports opportunities can be limited for some age groups (e.g., soccer for younger children).

When asked if they felt there were any barriers to participating in community activities, the Young Families most often indicated a general lack of awareness of the services and programs, and limited public transportation for those without personal vehicles. Youth participants generally felt like there was a lack of opportunities, in terms of both indoor and outdoor recreation. While they participated in activities like biking, going to the movies, and sports/fitness at the LRC, they expressed an interest for activities like dirt biking, off-roading, rock climbing, paintball, laser tag, an arcade, and a carnival or amusement park with rides. The Youth participants reported often going to Edmonton on the weekends to access these kinds of activities.

Transportation in Leduc

Nearly all of the Young Families participants and about half of the ESL Newcomers participants had their own vehicles, while the others reported relying on public transportation in Leduc. Amongst the Youth, those who were not yet old enough to drive or who did not have friends with vehicles reported walking as a frequent mode of transportation; within this group, public transportation was widely considered a “last resort” that was suitable for older or disabled individuals (i.e., versus younger, able-bodied people). Those who do rely on public transportation noted that a limited schedule made it difficult to get to/from work or appointments during off-peak hours (e.g., evenings and weekends), especially for those accessing services in Edmonton. For one respondent with a high-needs child, this was of particular concern, because she felt limited in her ability to connect with service providers and engage her son in community events.

Volunteerism

A couple of the Young Families and Youth participants reported volunteering in the community, though the Youth were often “forced” into it by their parents or other authority figures (e.g., outreach workers, teachers). For the Youth, they were more willing to volunteer if they had a personal interest in the cause (e.g., animals, sporting events), and indicated that the best way to contact them for volunteering opportunities is through social media (Twitter and Instagram), e-mail, and postings or notices in the LRC.

2.3 Areas for Improvement

When thinking top-of-mind, areas for improvement and issues facing residents, in general, included keeping up with the growing population, limited public transportation, more options for grocery stores and “big-box” shopping (e.g., the residents get coupons for franchises in Edmonton), and healthcare (e.g., lack of walk-in clinics).

Issues Facing Unique Populations

The ESL Newcomers highlighted limited public transportation and language barriers as the major issues they face day-to-day in Leduc, especially for those who are newer to the community and have few established connections. Accessing critical services like health care can be time-consuming and frustrating, especially when services are not consolidated, so newcomers have to make multiple visits to different providers or organizations. School-aged children of Newcomers sometimes struggle to keep up with the curriculum – not because of a lack of ability, but because they have difficulty translating into English. The Newcomers also reported having experienced difficulty getting their children or other family members to Canada, because of strict or unclear immigration laws. While this is more of a federal than municipal social services issue, more local support for families in terms of helping them understand the process and complete documents, etc., would be beneficial for Newcomers and potential immigrants.

The Young Families reported that their major concerns involve recent provincial cuts to education (though funding has since been restored since under the recently-elected NDP government) and child-care, particularly for single-parent households and those with high-needs children. The respondent in the Young Families group who self-identified as low-income and high-barriered felt that housing was an issue, even with options provided by the Leduc Foundation difficult to afford (i.e., paying up to 75% of income towards shelter costs).

While they were aware that opportunities existed for parenting support services, the Young Families noted that they tended to be unaware of scheduling or how to access these services, particularly those for dads or male figures. For those who are co-parenting with a spouse or partner, job schedules often result in parents settling into stereotypical parenting roles, whereby the mother is the caretaker, housekeeper, and enforcer, and fathers tend to be less hands-on with disciplinary action and more hands-on with playtime and the “nice guy stuff.” This can be frustrating for some mothers, who do not always want to be thought of as the “bad guy.”

Those in the Young Families group referenced online articles, chat rooms, and Facebook groups as a source of easy-to-find, around-the-clock support and access to parenting advice, though they have to be careful to weed out the bad advice, and have witnessed the “ugly side” of the internet (e.g., online harassment).

The Youth participants reported experiencing difficulty finding jobs and recreational activities to occupy their time outside of school and work, in addition to being respected and treated fairly by adults in the community. For example, a few of the youth felt they were unfairly targeted by law enforcement and are often regarded suspiciously by adults, especially when their

“I think a lot of people look at [youth] and make a quick judgment about you based on how you dress, before they actually get to know you as a person.”

- Youth Participant

dress/appearance is less conventional (e.g., long hair on males; tattoos and piercings, etc.). One participant recalled a time where he sat in a nearly-empty hospital waiting room for 14 hours with a broken wrist because he did not have a parent with him. Another participant reported waiting 12 hours with pneumonia before he would be seen, and also felt it was because he was unaccompanied by an adult. Overall, all of the Youth agreed that they do not feel valued by adults in the community and felt that the way they get treated by authority is often “very stereotypical” in that it is assumed “they don’t know anything.” When asked what other, respectful adults do differently, the Youth mentioned that they listen, make eye contact, and smile when speaking with them.

Other social issues faced by Youth in Leduc included drugs, school-related stress and anxiety, general depression, and bullying (including online or through social media), which tends to be more verbal than

“[Adults that make you feel valued] respect you, so you respect them. They see you on their level, and not just as ‘some stupid kid’.”

- Youth Participant

physical in nature. Although they felt that bullying is less of a problem here than in some other urban areas (e.g., Toronto), it is still an issue that many of them struggle with day-to-day. Bullying, anxiety, and depression were all highlighted as issues that tend to be worse for students in junior high, as opposed to high school. It was also suggested that depression is higher in a smaller community like Leduc, because youth feel more disengaged than in the “big city,” where there are more niche opportunities for involvement.

2.4 Sense of Belonging

Between half (ESL Newcomers) and more than two-thirds (Young Families) of the focus group participants indicated some degree of familiarity with their neighbours, with the Young Families respondents adding that this sense of connection makes them feel much safer in their communities. The ESL Newcomers reported sometimes having difficulty making friends with their neighbours, who are sometimes “too busy” to talk or tired after a day of work. A couple of the participants in the Newcomers group – teenagers attending high school in Leduc – had mixed opinions on whether making friends was particularly difficult. It seemed that for those who are shy and less inclined to join activities, it can be particularly difficult, though those who are actively involved in sports or other clubs face less real or perceived stigmatization from their peers.

“[Leduc] is a small enough city that you can run into people you know at the grocery store. You know you’re a part of something when you can’t go out without seeing someone you know.”

- Young Families Participant

When asked what they felt “sense of belonging” meant, those in the Youth group suggested that it meant “you belong, you feel at home, and feel wanted.” Others felt that it meant having “good friends, a good family, and a good job.” When asked where they feel they most often belong,

responses included at home, at work, and at school. Interestingly, they showed some hesitation when asked if they felt like they belonged around their friends; when probed, some of the participants explained that good friends can be hard to come by. The Youth also reported that their peers sometimes make questionable choices or get involved in dangerous activity (e.g., breaking and entering; physical altercations with other youth), which can be unsettling. When asked how they would rate their sense of belonging in Leduc, using a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being “very weak”; 5 being “very strong”), responses ranged from 0 to 4.5 out of 5, with a mean rating of 2.42.

“[Having good neighbours] is almost like having an extra security system. They know to do something when they see activity that isn’t normal.”

- Young Families Participant

The Young Families were much more likely than the Youth to report a high sense of belonging, explaining that community involvement and getting to know ones’ neighbours is a major factor in this. It was acknowledged, though, that this can be difficult for those without a personal vehicle who have to rely on public transportation, and who are thus less likely to participate in community activities.

When asked if they are aware of anything the City of Leduc does that contributes to residents’ sense of belonging, the Young Family participants were generally unaware of opportunities provided by the City, and referenced sports clubs or parks, in general, as a way to meet people and get involved. It was reinforced that, to increase ones’ sense of belonging, residents should actively seek out activities for community engagement.

2.5 Human Services in Leduc

For the next part of the discussion, participants were asked about human services in Leduc (i.e., services designed to meet a physical, emotional, or social need that are provided for children, families, seniors, etc.). While they were provided this definition, it should be noted that a couple of the focus group participants in the Young Families and Youth groups raised concerns with access to healthcare (e.g., after-hours care or hospital wait times). Going forward, as the City works to continue raising awareness of human services and FCSS in Leduc, it will be important to distinguish these services from medical services or healthcare.

When asked what human services they feel are *well-provided* for in the City of Leduc, participants from the Young Families session mentioned the variety of recreational activities for residents of all ages (e.g., through the LRC). Events at City Hall and the Leduc Public Library were also mentioned, although the participants failed to name any particular types programs or activities by name. One of the participants in the Young Families group felt that physical opportunities are over-represented, and that there is a bigger need for mental or emotional support services. While one participant mentioned that there is a wide variety of services available, it was suggested that the stigma around mental health (“a taboo thing to talk about”) keeps awareness and promotion of services quite low. It was also suggested that it is easier to “turn a blind eye” towards emotional needs in smaller communities like Leduc, because those with needs are not as conspicuous as those in bigger cities (e.g., communities with noticeable or defined inner city populations).

Sources of Support

When they need help, most of those in the ESL Newcomers meeting reported coming to the regular meeting at the Leduc Public Library and/or touching base with the program coordinator/volunteer. A few of those in the Young Families and ESL Newcomers group reported accessing Catholic Social Services or their local church. Those in the Young Families group also tended to refer to pamphlets or written publications, such as those available in public health facilities. Another source of help for one individual in the Young Families group was the Black Gold School Division, which connected the respondent to a family liaison who referred the family to a variety of services, including Leduc Mental Health, who followed up with the family within the same day.

The Youth most often reported that they would attempt to deal with their problems themselves. If they were going to refer to anyone, they would most likely speak with their parents or an outreach worker.

Gaps in Human Services

When asked what particular populations they feel are under-served or what needs are not being met, suggestions in the Young Families group included specialized services (e.g., Speech Language Pathology), services for low-income residents, and services for seniors, including affordable housing (including a range of options for varying levels of care and income), and general support services.

In terms of what services they think will continue to be needed in the next five (5) years, participants mentioned ensuring that service providers and agencies are able to keep up with population growth, ensuring affordable housing for all residents, and reiterated the need for more services for seniors.

In terms of infrastructure, some of the Young Families participants also mentioned the need for an additional recreational facility in the coming years, explaining that programming at the LRC is often limited due to full capacity and conflicting schedule times. Another suggestion included building another French immersion school that is more easily accessible for those who live on the other side of town, i.e., opposite of Corinthian Park (currently the only option for French immersion in Leduc).

Services for Youth

The Youth participants were provided with a series of events or services for youth in Leduc, and were asked about their awareness and participation in each one. Programs or events that had the *highest* levels of awareness included: the Teen Swim (there was a high level of interest in bringing it back); Boys and Girls Club (“something for younger kids”); Leduc Recreation Centre Youth Drop-In (some have participated); and the Rock the Rails Youth Event (“kinda boring”).

Events or programs that garnered little to no awareness included: Leduc Public Library Youth Lock-In Night (all were aware of the library, but not of this event); FCSS Youth Development and Youth Outreach Program; Movie in the Park; Everybody Gets to Play; and Leduc Mental Health.

2.6 Awareness of FCSS

None of the respondents in the Young Families or ESL Newcomers focus groups were familiar with Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) as a program established to fund and support preventative social services in municipalities across Alberta. When informed about FCSS, participants wondered if services such as ParentLink, pre-natal care, and the food bank were associated with the program. Therefore, while awareness of FCSS itself is low, residents appear to have some sense of awareness of the services funded by FCSS. None of the respondents, however, were aware of the location of the FCSS office, nor were they aware of the 211 phone number, that is available to residents as a source of government and community-based health and social services. When provided with the 211 phone number, the participants in the ESL group expressed interest in it, with many of them writing down the phone number during the meeting.

2.7 Communicating with Residents

Those in the Newcomers session indicated that a magazine or catalogue of programs and services would be helpful; something that could be distributed at their regular ESL meetings at the Leduc Public Library. Those in the Young Families group indicated a preference for written materials, such as pamphlets or flyers, available through public facilities (e.g., LRC) and distributed to their children through schools.

The Youth reported that the most effective modes of communication for them included social media (particularly Twitter; Facebook is less commonly used amongst youth) and text messages. They also suggested erecting posters in schools and at popular places of employment for youth in Leduc.

Youth Directory

The Youth participants were also asked if they were aware of the Youth Directory. Only a couple of the participants felt like they had seen it before, though most of them indicated that they would dispose of it if it were personally handed to them. While they liked that it was small, they felt it needed to include things like an events calendar, coupons for youth activities (e.g., movie theatre), and job opportunities to get youth interested or willing to take one. Overall, the participants felt that the City would be better off putting the Youth Directory online or in an app, which are most often their go-to sources of information.

Youth Centre

All of the participants agreed that a Youth Centre in Leduc is needed, referencing similar facilities in Medicine Hat and Beaumont that youth could visit after school. Suggestions for activities or amenities (to be included with a free membership or registration) included: video gaming (e.g., PlayStation, Xbox) or an arcade (e.g., tournaments or competitions); guitars; pool tables; table tennis; computers and Wi-Fi; laser tag; paintball; movie nights; and couches for lounging. Many of the youth were also interested in accessing employment support services through the Youth Centre.

The Youth felt that the Centre should be staffed by young adults who are comfortable around teenagers and who have an understanding of their needs. They felt the rules/regulations should be straightforward, such as: no littering, smoking, drugs, drinking, or violence, and displaying common courtesy. It was suggested that the Centre operate different nights/events for different age groups (e.g., younger versus older youth). Finally, the Youth emphasized that the City should avoid calling it a “Youth Centre,” and should come up with a name that resonates with their personal interests without “sounding like they’re trying too hard” (suggestions included: “The Room”, “The Batcave”, and “Rumours”). Most of the Youth were interested and reported that they would visit the Centre.

2.8 Final Comments

Overall, residents (parents and newcomers) feel welcome in Leduc and feel that it is a safe and caring community. The small city feel and easy access to amenities and services were highlighted as some of the major benefits of living in Leduc. The recurring themes for areas of improvement were increasing the availability of public transportation – particularly during evenings and weekends – and increasing/creating overall awareness of the human services available in Leduc. When they need help, adult residents often turn to one another and are generally satisfied with the referrals they receive from their peers or service providers. While those in the ESL Newcomers group are most likely to refer to their regular meeting coordinator for help, this poses the question of where non-participating newcomers go if they have issues. Going forward, however, it will be important for the City of Leduc to increase general awareness of FCSS amongst residents, as there is an overall lack of knowledge of the types of human services, facilities, and programs available in Leduc.

While youth feel less engaged than adults in the community, they feel their issues (e.g., anxiety; depression; bullying) are often no more significant than youth in other communities. Youth in Leduc are more likely than any other age group to try to deal with their problems themselves, so finding ways to connect them with resources through popular social media will be one of the keys to addressing their needs. Finally, a Youth Centre may help reduce “boredom” amongst teenagers and improve their sense of belonging.

APPENDIX A – YOUTH MODERATOR’S GUIDE

Introduction

Hello, my name is _____ from Banister Research and Consulting. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you.

The City of Leduc is conducting a Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Needs Assessment. As part of the research, Banister Research & Consulting has been contracted to conduct a series of focus groups with City of Leduc residents, including youth. Findings from the focus groups will help the City assess the needs of youth to help improve services in the future.

Explain Process:

- It is an informal discussion that will be about 1.5 hours in length.
- There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.
- You don’t have to agree with others in the room – we want to know what you think.
- There is a recording to help complete the report. Everything is confidential – no names will be associated with any specific comment and you won’t hear your voice as part of a testimonial.

Ground Rules

- Please put your cell phones on silent and in your backpack or pocket.
- Respect each others’ opinions.
- Everyone’s opinion is valued.
- Listen carefully to one another (no side conversations).
- No interruptions. Raise your hand and the facilitator will note your turn to speak next.
- Facilitator reserves the right to “direct traffic.”

Introduction

Quickly go around the table/room to capture the following information:

- Your first name;
- Your age; and
- How long you have lived in the City of Leduc.

Section 1: Youth Activities and Hobbies

1) What types of activities do you like to do? What are your hobbies?

PROBES:

- a. Recreation or leisure – e.g., sports, fitness
- b. Culture or arts – e.g., drawing, painting, acting
- c. Others?

2) Where do you go in a typical day?

a. How do you get there?

i. Do you use Leduc Transit? Why or why not?

3) What is the best time/day you to participate in these activities, or other activities you would like to be involved in?

a. Would you only want to do some of these things in the summer or winter? Is your willingness to participate dependent on the weather?

i. What are your favorite activities or hobbies when it's cold outside?

4) What types of activities would you like to do that aren't currently available in Leduc? Where do you think is the best place for these activities?

Section 2: Volunteering

5) Do you currently volunteer in the City of Leduc?

6) **[IF YES:]** Why do you volunteer?

a. What is the nature of your volunteer work?

7) **[IF NO:]** Why not?

a. Is there anything preventing you from volunteering?

b. Would you like to? In what way?

c. How could the City approach you with volunteering opportunities? How would you prefer to find out about them?

Section 3: Sense of Belonging and Value

- 8) What do you think are the best things about living the City?
- 9) What things could be improved in the City? What are some issues for youth, in particular?
- 10) What does "sense of belonging" mean to you?
- 11) Overall, how would you rate your sense of belonging to the City of Leduc, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "very weak" and 5 means "very strong"?
 - a. Why do you say that?
- 12) How could your sense of belonging be improved or increased?
- 13) Do you feel valued by the adults in the community? Why or why not?
- 14) What would make you feel **more** valued?
- 15) How would you know when you are valued? What are the signs that adults value you?

Section 4: Issues Facing Youth

- 16) What do you think are the major mental and social issues facing youth in the City of Leduc?
 - a. **PROBES:**
 - i. Anxiety/depression
 - ii. Bullying
 - iii. Others?
 - b. Do you think these issues are bigger for some youth than others? Who? Why do you say that?

Section 5: Youth Supports

- 17) If you needed **help**, where would you go? Who would you ask?
- a. *Would* you ask for help? [**IF NO** – why not?]
- 18) What do you think are the best ways to provide information to teens or youth looking for help?
- 19) There are different kinds of activities, events, and support services for youth in Leduc. Have you heard about any of them anywhere? Where?

PROBES:

Boys and Girls Club
Leduc Public Library Youth Lock in Night
Leduc Recreation Centre Youth Drop-In
Rock the Rails Youth Event
FCSS youth development and youth outreach programs
Leduc Mental Health
Everybody Gets to Play
Movie in the Park

- 20) What about finding information about **activities, events, or programs** for youth, where would you go?
- 21) Have you seen or heard of the Youth Directory?

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- 22) What do you like about it?
- 23) What don't you like?
- a. How do you think it could be improved?
- 24) Where would you expect to be able to find it?
- 25) Would you use the Youth Directory? Why or why not?
- 26) What do you think are the best ways to provide information to youth looking for information on activities, events, or programs?
- 27) What , if anything, would make it easier for youth to access programs and services, in general?

Section 6: Youth Centre

- 28) What do you think about a Youth Centre?
- a. What would it look like?
 - b. What activities do you think it should offer?
 - c. Who do you think would use it? What ages?
 - d. Would you go?
- 29) **[IF TIME PERMITS]** Please draw a picture of what you think the Youth Centre would look like, in terms of layout/how the space is used, etc.,

Suggestions for Improvement and Final Comments

- 30) If you were Mayor for one day, what changes would you make to the City of Leduc?
- 31) Thinking about everything we have covered today, did you have any other comments or suggestions?

Thank you very much for your input and hard work. Your efforts are very much appreciated. Please note that on your way out, you will be given a \$10 Tim's gift card for your time.

APPENDIX B – YOUNG FAMILIES MODERATOR’S GUIDE

Introduction

Hello, my name is _____ from Banister Research and Consulting. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you.

As you already know, the City of Leduc is conducting a Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Needs Assessment. As part of the research, Banister Research & Consulting has been contracted to conduct a series of focus groups with City of Leduc residents. Findings from the focus groups will help the City in identifying the future and preventative social needs of the community.

Explain Process:

- It is an informal discussion that will be about 1.5 hours in length.
- There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.
- You don’t have to agree with others in the room – we want to know what you think.
- There is a recording to help complete the report. Everything is confidential – no names will be associated with any specific comment and you won’t hear your voice as part of a testimonial.

Ground Rules

- Please turn off your cell phone or put it on vibrate.
- Respect each others’ opinions.
- Everyone’s opinion is valued.
- Listen carefully to one another (no side conversations).
- No interruptions. Raise your hand and the facilitator will note your turn to speak next.
- Facilitator reserves the right to “direct traffic.”

Introduction

Quickly go around the table/room to capture the following information:

- Your name;
- How many people live in your household; and
- How long you have lived in the City of Leduc.

Section 1: City of Leduc (General)

READ: It is important to note that we are discussing **human services** today, or those services designed to meet a **physical, emotional or social need**, including social wellness. Please do not confuse this discussion with health care services, which would be outside of today's topic.

Please also note that *the City* refers to the City of Leduc. To begin, I'm going to ask a series of questions about the quality of life in the City of Leduc.

- 1) What are the main reasons you chose to live in the City of Leduc? Please explain.

PROBES:

- a. What about the cost of living or housing – is that a factor?
- b. The rural life/atmosphere?

- 2) What are the best things about living the City?

PROBES:

- a. Sense of belonging? What does that mean to you?

- 3) What things could be improved in the City? What are some issues for residents?

PROBES:

- a. Crime
- b. Safety
- c. Public transportation; transit
- d. Lack of sense of community/connectivity

Section 2: Sense of Belonging

- 4) Overall, how would you rate your sense of belonging to the City of Leduc, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "very weak" and 5 means "very strong"?

- e. Why do you say that?

- 5) How could your sense of belonging be improved or increased?

- a. **UNAIDED** [top-of-mind]

- b. Aided – **PROBE:**

- i. Volunteering
- ii. Participating in/joining a recreational program
- iii. Joining a club or team
- iv. Attending sporting events or other community events
- v. Neighborhood events
- vi. Church

vii. Are there any other opportunities or types of activities that you think would help to increase your sense of belonging?

- 6) How well do you know your neighbours? Do you want to know them better?
- a. How important do you feel it is to know your neighbours? Why do you say that?
- 7) Is there anything that the City does or offers that contributes to your sense of belonging?
- 8) Is there anything about the City that detracts, or takes away from, your sense of belonging?

Section 3: Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)

- 9) If I were to use the term FCSS, do you know what that refers to? What does FCSS stand for? [Family and Community Support Services]
- 10) What kinds of services would you associate with FCSS in the City of Leduc?
- 11) Where would you look if you needed access to human services? (i.e., services designed to meet a physical, emotional, or social need – NOT health services).
- 12) Do you know where the City FCSS office is located? (new location at Civic Centre – no longer at the Medical Arts Building)
- a. Has anyone ever accessed it? (called, visited, e-mailed, etc.)
- 13) Do you think you need more information about these services?
- a. What would be the best way to get information to you?

Section 4: Current Human Services

This next section is about human services. Again, human services are those services designed to meet a physical, emotional, or social need that are provided for children, families, seniors, etc. Please answer the following questions **not only from your own perspective, but also from what you have heard from others**. Again, these questions concern social wellness, and not health care or medical services.

- 14) What services do you think of when you hear the term “human services”? What are some examples?
- 15) What human services are well-provided for in the City?
- 16) Are there any human services that are difficult to access in the City?
- a. Which services?
- b. What makes these services difficult to access?

- 17) Are there any groups or specific populations in the community that are underserved? (i.e., their needs are currently not being met by current social services in the City)
- Which populations?
 - What services do they need/what services are not being provided or are inadequate?

18) Are there any services that are completely missing in the City altogether? Which services?

Section 5: Access to Services

- 19) Are there any barriers you can think of that make it difficult to access human services for families or parents, in general? (e.g., transportation, child care, etc.)
- 20) Do you or your children participate in any of the following types of activities? [**IF YES** – please specify]
- Social
 - Wellness (e.g., nutrition seminars)
 - Recreational/Leisure (e.g., fitness facilities, classes, sports)
 - Educational (e.g., lifetime learning)
 - Creative (e.g., painting, woodworking, scrapbooking)
 - Cultural (e.g., music, theatre, song, dance)

21) How or where do you/your children participate?

- 22) Are there any types of activities that you would like to participate in, or would like your children to participate in, but can't, due to certain barriers?
- What activities? What are the barriers?

Section 6: Issues Facing Families

- 23) What are the largest social and wellness issues currently facing families in particular?
- Let's discuss parenting. Are there areas with regards to parenting, in particular, where you or people you know could use more support?
- 24) For those who are co-parenting with a spouse/partner/someone else, how would you describe your parenting structure?
- What activities do you take the lead on? What about your partner?
 - Do you think fathers are adequately supported, in terms of parenting
 - How could the City of Leduc provide more support for fathers, specifically?
- 25) What are some tools, techniques, or training that the City of Leduc could provide to better support families?
- 26) How do you think the City of Leduc could better support the whole family – including parents, caregivers, grandparents, children, etc.?

[READ: The following questions are about family violence. We recognize that they may not apply to you personally, but we are interested in hearing your thoughts about the issue in the City of Leduc.]

- 27) Do you think family violence is an issue in the City of Leduc? What does “family violence” mean to you?
- What do you think are the impacts on children, when there is violence in the home?
 - What would you do if someone you knew was being abused? What do you think are the barriers that would prevent someone from seeking help if they needed it?

Section 7: Future Human Services

For the next set of questions, I'd like you to think about the needs of the City for the next five (5) years, as best as you can imagine.

- 28) Are there any services you think you might need over the next five (5) years that you do not currently access? Which services?
- 29) Are there any populations that you think will be underserved in the City in the next five (5) years? Which populations?
- 30) Based on your thoughts and opinions, are there any types of human services missing in the City that will be required over the next five (5) years? Which services are missing or will be hard to access?

Section 8: Access to Information

- 31) If you were looking to access human services in the City, where would you go to access information?
- Using what method? (e.g., e-mail inquiry, telephone, in-person visit, etc.)
 - Do you think there are any resources missing? What are they?
- 32) Who do you turn to for parenting advice, in particular?
- 33) What is the best way to reach you with information about programs, services, and events?
- 34) Do you have any suggestions that would make it easier to access resources?

Final Comments

- 35) Thinking about everything we have covered today, did you have any other comments or suggestions?

Volunteerism [TIME PERMITTING]

Do you currently volunteer in the City of Leduc?

What is the nature of your volunteer work?
How many hours do you volunteer per month?
How did you find out about the opportunity?

[IF NO:] Why not?

Is there anything preventing you from volunteering in the City of Leduc?
If you were to decide to volunteer, how would you go about looking for an opportunity?

Thank you very much for your input and hard work. Your efforts are very much appreciated. Please note that on your way out, you will be given a \$25 grocery gift card for your time.

APPENDIX C – ESL NEWCOMERS MODERATOR’S GUIDE

Introduction

Hello, my name is _____ from Banister Research and Consulting. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you.

The City of Leduc is conducting a Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Needs Assessment. As part of the research, Banister Research & Consulting has been contracted to conduct a series of focus groups with City of Leduc residents, including those who are newcomers to Leduc or to Canada. Findings from the focus groups will help the City improve services in the future.

Explain Process:

- It is an informal discussion that will be about 1.5 hours in length.
- There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.
- You don’t have to agree with others in the room – we want to know what you think.
- There is a recording to help complete the report. Everything is confidential – no names will be associated with any specific comment and you won’t hear your voice as part of a testimonial.

Ground Rules

- Please turn off your cell phone or put it on vibrate.
- Respect each others’ opinions.
- Everyone’s opinion is valued.
- Listen carefully to one another (no side conversations).
- No interruptions. Raise your hand and the facilitator will note your turn to speak next.
- Facilitator reserves the right to “direct traffic.”

Introduction

Quickly go around the table/room to capture the following information:

- Your first name;
- Where you are from; and
- How long you have lived in:
 - Canada
 - City of Leduc

Section 1: City of Leduc (General)

- 1) Why do you live in Leduc?
- 2) When you first moved to Leduc, what was that like for you?
 - a. What was the easiest part?
 - b. What was the hardest part?
 - c. Did you feel welcomed when you arrived in Leduc?
- 3) What about housing? Were you looking to buy a home at some point? Did you have difficulty renting?
- 4) What are the best things about living the City?
- 5) What things could be improved in the City?
- 6) What could make things easier or better for you?
- 7) Do you know your neighbours?
 - a. Is it important to know your neighbours?
- 8) Are you aware of any community events in your area?
- 9) Do you attend community events? What kinds of events do you go to?
 - a. **PROBES:**
 - i. Family Day
 - ii. Rodeo
 - iii. Community BBQs
 - iv. Others?
 - b. What is preventing you from going to more community events?
 - c. What would get you to attend more community events? What types of events would you like to go to?
- 10) How do you get around Leduc?
 - a. Do you use public transit? Is it "user-friendly"?
 - b. How do you get to work?
 - c. Do you ever commute to Edmonton? What are the main reasons you travel out of town?
- 11) Do you plan to stay in Leduc? Why or why not?

Section 2: Cultural/Language Barriers

- 12) What are the biggest differences in Canada, compared to back home?
- 13) What are the biggest challenges you face when talking to people here?

PROBES:

- a. Neighbours
- b. Employer/boss
- c. Childrens' teachers/schools
- d. Doctor/heath clinic
- e. Others?

- 14) What would make it easier?

Section 3: Family

- 15) What has been the best part about moving for your family?
- 16) What has been the worst part about moving for your family?
- 17) How are your children doing?
- 18) What are some of the differences parenting back home versus here? (e.g., norms, lingo, communicating with other parents)

Section 4: Human Services (General)

- 19) Where would you go if you needed help?
- 20) Do you know about 211? Have you ever called 211?
- 21) What services helped you when you first came to Canada?
- 22) What makes it hard to get help when you need it? (e.g., transportation, child care, language/communication barriers, etc.)
- 23) What is the best way to reach you?
- 24) Do you have any other suggestions that would make it easier to access resources?

Final Comments

- 25) Thinking about everything we have covered today, did you have any other comments or suggestions?