



LEDUC LINX
CONNECT CENTRE

What We Heard

Community Engagement Results

January 18, 2026

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Engagement Overview

Leduc LINX Connect Centre is developing a new strategic plan to guide its work in the coming five years (2026-2031), including revising its Mission, Vision, and Values statements. The new strategic plan will be informed by input from a cross-section of both internal and external stakeholders including clients, employers, community placement partners, other community partners (such as transit and housing agencies), staff, volunteers, and board members.

To this end, community engagement was conducted to:

- Engage with a variety of Leduc LINX Connect Centre’s stakeholders to identify client and community needs and inform the development of goals and objectives for the 2026-2031 Strategic Plan.
- Strengthen and enhance relationships between Leduc LINX Connect Centre and its external stakeholders, including to help inform the general public about the organization’s mission and services.
- Engage and energize internal stakeholders, including board members and staff, around a unified vision of goals for the coming five years.

Engagement activities included:

- Three focus groups and supplementary interviews to hear directly from stakeholders.
- Two online surveys.
- Three staff sessions.

Results from these engagement activities, summarized below, will be reviewed by the board and used to guide the strategic planning process.

Key Themes

- ❖ LINX is widely recognized as a leader in inclusion and accessibility. Clients feel safe and supported, and staff are praised for their commitment to individualized care and advocacy.
- ❖ LINX excels at tailoring services to meet individual client needs. Using a person-centred approach, staff work collaboratively with clients to set and achieve personal goals.
- ❖ Staff retention has improved, contributing to continuity and quality of care. Staff are proud of recent achievements, including accreditation for Level 2 and Chamber of Commerce award nominations. There is enthusiasm for continued growth and innovation.
- ❖ There is a limited public understanding of what LINX does and of the value of the services it provides. Opportunities exist for increased community engagement and marketing efforts.
- ❖ There is a strong demand for expanded youth programming and services, which presents an opportunity to increase LINX’s offerings.

Focus Groups and Interviews

Overview

Three focus groups were held in November – December 2025, each one targeting a specific stakeholder group. In addition, a small number of supplementary interviews were held to reach participants unable to attend focus group sessions. A total of 33 people participated. Attendance was as follows:

Clients and family members of clients	12 participants: 8 clients and 4 family members
Employers and community placement partners	7 participants: 4 employers and 3 organizations that provide volunteer positions for clients.
Community partners and agencies	7 participants, including representatives from agencies such as Family and Community Support Services (FCSS), Leduc Assisted Transit Service (LATS), and Leduc Regional Housing Foundation.
Interviews	3 participants: 1 client, 1 family member, and 1 representative of the Chamber of Commerce.

All three focus groups were asked a similar set of questions, with adjustments made for each stakeholder group to ensure questions were relevant. Responses have been summarized to preserve the confidentiality of participants.

Current LINX Services

The first part of each discussion provided LINX with feedback about its current services. The Executive Director provided each group with an overview of services provided by LINX and answered questions before leaving the session.

Overall, respondents indicated that LINX does a very good job serving individuals with developmental disabilities. In particular, LINX excels at:

- Creating an inclusive and supportive community for clients.
- Considering each individual’s needs and tailoring services to meet them. Staff are supportive of client needs and goals and work collaboratively with clients to find solutions for problems and issues. One participant estimated that more than half of clients would not be successful without the support LINX provides. One client said that with support from LINX, he has been able to get a job and live independently, two achievements he did not think would be possible when he was in high school.
- Providing employment supports to both clients and employers/community placement partners. Employers praised the assistance job coaches provide with the hiring process, including help developing appropriate job descriptions, short-listing candidates, and assisting candidates through the recruitment process (including providing support at interviews).

A client shared that they are willing to try new things, because “if I fail, I get more support.”

In addition, other local agencies that provide support to LINX clients appreciate the collaborative approach LINX takes to ensuring LINX clients can access other services. The Leduc Regional Housing Foundation provided the example of the services LINX provides to ensure individuals with complex needs can successfully live on their own, including tenants who have been with the foundation for more than fifteen years.

Participants across all groups acknowledged that LINX faces several challenges in providing services, including:

- There is a lack of understanding about the scope and value of services LINX provides in the broader community.
- Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) funding has rigid eligibility criteria and only funds specific services. These rules restrict both the client pool and services LINX can offer under this funding model.
- Limitations of the transit service (LATS) means that there can be capacity issues at peak times (such as the start and end of the day), and a lack of evening transit could be a barrier to expanding programming on evenings and weekends.
- There is a need for additional paid employment positions for clients. Some employers indicated that they can no longer offer paid positions due to specific situations or post-covid finances. One group wondered if there are grant programs to help off-set wages and if LINX could help employers apply for them.
- Some of these challenges (such as regulations around PDD funding) are outside of LINX's control; however, LINX must find ways to navigate them successfully.

Suggestions for improvement included:

- Add an instructor to allow for more class choices at the day program.
- Some clients indicated that they would like everyone to follow agreements such as respecting personal space and not sharing food consistently. Another client said they would like more flexibility in those rules, if there is consensus from everyone involved (i.e. high fives, etc.).
- A few family members indicated that they would like to be more involved in decision making processes (such as selecting classes) for their family member client. (Note: LINX prioritizes individual client's wants and goals, which can cause tension if they are not aligned with those of non-guardian family members).
- Clarify procedures for contacting LINX prior to 9 am and over the lunch hour.
- It was noted that individuals in high school cannot participate in work experience programs unless they can work independently. One group wondered if respite funding could be used to

supervise work experience, which has the potential to turn into paid employment after high school.

- One client and their family member wished that LINX would continue to provide the support home program.

The Next Five Years

The second part of each discussion asked participants to provide input into what LINX should prioritize in the coming five years, including community needs that LINX could help meet and ways LINX could expand its services.

Responses included:

- There is a need for more community awareness about what LINX does.
- Clients are very interested in additional field trips and weekend programming. One parent suggested additional social activities such as creating a baseball team to play in a local league to encourage connections between clients and with the broader community.
- Consider expanding services to individuals who may not meet PDD criteria or have higher medical needs, such individuals who may have a higher cognitive ability but lack capacity (i.e. individuals with autism). There is a need for programming for this group. Different funding streams may be required. There was also one request for there to be a psychologist to offer therapy on site.
- Look for opportunities to collaborate with other nonprofits to offer other types of programming and increase potential for grant funding. For example, there may be additional opportunities to work with The Chamber to increase awareness of the employment support services LINX provides and how they can help potential employers.
- Expand outreach to potential employers and develop supports to help overcome barriers to hiring individuals with disabilities including concerns around cost and potential liabilities. Continue to use stories from existing employers. One idea was to host a “reverse job fair” to allow employers to talk to clients about what kinds of jobs they are looking for. Another idea was to promote employment opportunities by providing employers with decals that indicate they are an inclusive employer. [Note: LINX already holds reverse job fairs and has decals for employers.]
- Consider supporting occasional and seasonal volunteer and paid work opportunities for clients. One group noted that many workers are part of the gig economy, and it would help LINX clients to build their resumes with small jobs. Paid opportunities could include snow shovelling and yard maintenance; volunteer opportunities might include events such as the Santa Claus Parade and Canada day. It was noted that evening and weekend supports would be needed for many of these types of jobs.

- There is a need for additional nonprofit group homes/residential services in Leduc.

Accessibility and Inclusion

The final part of the discussion participants about how LINX could be more welcoming and accessible. In addition, participants were asked about providing services to youth and potential approaches to Truth and Reconciliation.

All groups indicated that LINX is highly inclusive and accessible and is – as this quote indicates – a resource for other organizations. There may be additional opportunities for LINX to help community events to become more inclusive.

“LINX is a community leader in inclusion and accessibility. Other organizations look to LINX for best practices.”

Clients report feeling safe at LINX: staff are welcoming and everyone feels comfortable with each other. Clients appreciate being able to talk to staff if they are having a bad day and get their feelings out. There was a strong desire for LINX to continue to build trust and respect among clients and staff.

Comments about expanding services for youth included:

- Providing services to youth would help individuals become involved with LINX early and make the transition from high school to adult life easier. Providing support earlier would also lower the risk of systemic trauma.
- There is strong demand for respite services for youth. However, the most significant barrier is the long wait time to access Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) funding.
- There are opportunities to provide job exploration programs for youth that would allow them to try out jobs.
- Consider offering group activities for youth (for example, evening programs on a weekly basis).

Suggestions for further developing LINX’s approach to Truth and Reconciliation included:

- Make how you use a land acknowledgement more meaningful and not something that is just read out.
- Consider hosting a blanket exercise.
- Offer speakers and presentations as part of the day program to help them understand.
- Look at the calls to action and see how they relate to people with disabilities and focus on those areas. Pick one call to action and start with it.
- Help clients and staff to volunteer at related events.

Staff Sessions

Three staff sessions (two for front-line employees and one for the leadership team) were held to provide staff with an opportunity to provide input into the strategic planning process through a SOAR (Strengths, Opportunity, Aspirations, Results) exercise. Responses from all three sessions are summarized below.

Strengths

Participants were asked to identify LINX's biggest strengths and assets, including the services, values, and accomplishments they are most proud of. Responses included:

- Overall, participants agreed that LINX is working from a position of strength. Their comments reflected a desire to build on achievements, a drive to see LINX grow, and a passion to provide the best possible service to clients.
- LINX's person-centred approach and commitment to the well-being of clients is one of the organization's key strengths. Staff build trusting relationships with clients and encourage them to advocate for themselves.
- LINX has a culture of curiosity: of being open-minded and forward thinking and encouraging diverse ideas. It is a safe space for staff and clients to ask questions, and staff are willing to move out of their comfort zones and try new things.
- Staff retention has improved, resulting in more continuity for clients. Staff have appreciated increased training and professional development opportunities. Improvements have also been made to staff appreciation initiatives and the total compensation package to ensure uniformity and increase benefits.
- Numerous positive changes have been made in the past few years, including changes to how ISPs (Individual Support Plans) and PDD documentation are completed, updated policies, and improved budgeting processes.
- Staff at all levels were proud of achieving a Level 2 Accreditation for Adults with Disabilities from the Alberta Council of Disability Services. LINX has also been recognized by nominations for Chamber of Commerce awards two years in a row.

“One thing that sets us apart is that we really care.”

Opportunities

Participants were asked to answer the question: “in what ways can LINX better support individuals with developmental disabilities in Leduc?” They were also asked to identify additional services that LINX could provide to the community, partnerships that would enhance impact, and challenges that are getting in the way of LINX achieving its goals. Responses included:

- Increased communications and marketing about LINX's services and supports would result in increased community awareness about the value LINX provides.
- There is a huge need for additional youth services in Leduc. Providing services for youth would help build relationships with families early and ease the transition into adult programming at LINX. Furthermore, early intervention with the right supports may reduce an individual's need for supports as an adult. Challenges to expanding youth services include restrictions to FSCD

funding (for example no administration or training costs are covered) and the difficulty families have in obtaining FSCD funding.

- Another need is for adult services to be available to individuals who do not qualify for PDD funding (such as individuals with IQ scores above 70, those on the autism spectrum, etc.)
- There is a gap in local residential and housing supports, especially for aging individuals with developmental disabilities. There may be opportunities for LINX to partner with other organizations, where one nonprofit provides the facilities and LINX provides services to residents.
- Participants identified ways to expand existing services for adults, including providing more mental health supports for clients and getting clients into the community more (field trips, etc.).
- A LINX van or bus would help reduce transportation barriers as LATS is unable to fill all client transportation needs.
- Partnerships with other organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, schools, seniors' residences, etc. could provide additional employment opportunities for LINX clients. There is also room to work further with employers to improve client experiences.
- One significant gap identified by the leadership team is the need for succession planning and cross training needed for both the board and the leadership team in order to set LINX up for continued, sustainable success.
- In addition, participants made a variety of operational suggestions about communication, scheduling, ways to improve documentation practices, onboarding, etc. These have been forwarded to the leadership team for further discussion and consideration.

Aspirations and Results

Participants were asked to identify the opportunities that excited them the most and ways that LINX can advance those goals. Responses included:

- LINX is more visible to the rest of the community and there is increased awareness about the value LINX provides. Increase advocacy, communication, and marketing efforts.
- Continue to listen to clients with the intention to move on what we hear— “Not about me without me” is important. There was a strong desire to see clients thrive.
- Diversify revenue streams. Fully utilize PDD funding. Clarify purpose of reserves and consider utilizing some reserves to move LINX forward. Identify fundraising possibilities, needs, and goals.
- Expand youth programming so families in Leduc know where they can get help. Become more active in schools, focus on early intervention, and improve transitional services. Aim for slow, achievable growth by adding a few clients a year, to build strong relationships.
- Increase staffing capacity so LINX can expand services and increase hours (i.e. evenings and weekends) to better meet client needs.
- Additional staff capacity to focus on finding, training, and working with employers.

Surveys

In addition to the focus groups and staff sessions, LINX conducted two online surveys to reach as many stakeholders as possible: one aimed at clients, their families, employers, and other stakeholders; the second at staff. Both surveys were open from January 5 – 16, 2026.

Overall, the surveys confirm high satisfaction with LINX’s services.

Responses from Clients, Families, Employers, and Other Stakeholders

19 people responded to the survey, including:

- 5 clients.
- 8 family members/caregivers of clients.
- 1 person that works for an agency that provides a volunteer position for a LINX client.
- 1 person who works for an agency that partners with LINX to provide services.
- 2 members of the general public.
- 2 people with other connections to LINX.

For the ranking questions, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with each statement, from 5. Strongly Agree to 1. Strongly Disagree. The results below show the average ranking of responses provided.

Question	Average
I have a good understanding of the programs and services LINX offers.	4.44
Overall, LINX does a good job of meeting the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.	4.28
LINX provides effective employment supports for its clients.	4.39
The Day Program Classes LINX offers are excellent.	4.06
LINX provides valuable Community Access supports for its clients.	4.47
The Supported Independent Living (Outreach) program meets client needs.	4.11
Respite services LINX provides meet client needs.	3.94
Youth services LINX provides meet client needs.	3.63
LINX should expand services for Youth.	3.73

Responses to “What is LINX doing well?” included:

- Putting the needs of the clients first.
- Day program is great.
- Help me to someday live on my own.
- Getting out in the community and having a presence in Leduc and area.
- Leadership has improved.
- “They strive to meet an overwhelming and often overlooked need in helping those who can’t always help themselves.”

Responses to “What could LINX do better?” included:

- More transparency, allow clients more choices and freedoms.
- Better training for staff. More team building.
- “Youth services, there is a huge gap and lack of support for youth. Especially youth that are close to becoming adults and their parents who have zero idea how to navigate that.”
- “I think some of the programs you offer are not suitable to your clients’ needs—some of them are beyond their understanding or capabilities and they are bored.”

Responses to “What is something new or different you would like LINX to try in the next five years?” included:

- Perhaps some type of job rotations so clients can really see and learn different opportunities. An example would be going with another client to their job and shadowing them for a shift or two.
- Should be allowed once in a while to go into Edmonton for the day.
- Youth programming and more transit support for clients.
- More paid employment.
- “It would be really cool if there was a way to allow the general public to volunteer and expand community for clients.”
- “More things outside of LINX hours that clients can join in on. Like the Christmas lights event that just past.”

Responses to “How can LINX be more welcoming and accessible?” included:

- “LINX is already doing amazing things to be welcoming and accessible with the newsletters, social media, community activations, etc.”
- More functions that allow all to gather.
- Management be more accessible.
- I think you do very well now.

Additional comments included:

- Excellent support organization with wonderful staff.

Responses from Staff

9 staff members responded to the survey, including:

- 5 outreach workers.
- 3 job coaches.
- 1 day program class instructor.
- 1 team lead.

For the ranking questions, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with each statement, from 5. Strongly Agree to 1. Strongly Disagree. The results below show the average ranking of responses provided.

Question	Average
I have a good understanding of the programs and services LINX offers.	4.22
Overall, LINX does a good job of meeting the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.	4.00
LINX provides effective employment supports for its clients.	4.33
The Day Program Classes LINX offers are excellent.	3.89
LINX provides valuable Community Access supports for its clients.	4.00
The Supported Independent Living (Outreach) program meets client needs.	3.67
Respite services LINX provides meet client needs.	3.89
Youth services LINX provides meet client needs.	3.88
LINX should expand services for Youth.	4.33

Responses to “What is LINX doing well?” included:

- Several comments referenced creating a safe and inclusive environment.
- Professional development opportunities for staff.
- Offering individualized supports.
- Advocates for clients.
- Building community.
- Strong social media presence.
- Becoming more well known in the community.

Responses to “What could LINX do better?” included:

- Serve neighbouring communities.
- Staff training and team building for all departments.
- Increase community awareness of services.
- “Focus in on high school families that will be looking for supports in the near future.”

Responses to “What is something new or different you would like LINX to try in the next five years?” included:

- Expand services to more communities outside of Leduc. Beaumont was mentioned as one example.
- Expand youth programs, including working with schools and starting a summer youth program.
- A community garden for clients to care for and to provide vegetables for the cooking class.

Responses to “How can LINX be more welcoming and accessible?” included:

- Suggestions to increase visibility in the community by participating in more events and work more closely with schools.
- Suggestions to diversify program to include more pride support and representation of additional cultures.

- Suggestions to improve the ambience of the LINX facility by adding more colour, plants, etc. One respondent noted that improvements have been made: “Seeing more colour and personality coming to life through the building has been great!”

Additional comments included:

- “I love the direction LINX has been going and am excited to see what the future holds!”
- “LINX has grown by leaps and bounds under our current management.”

Operational suggestions from all questions have been forwarded to the leadership team for review and discussion.

What Happens Next

Thank you to all participants who participated in engagement activities and provided valuable feedback and ideas. Your voices have provided important perspectives about the work LINX does.

These results will be used by the LINX Board to inform the development of a new strategic plan to guide LINX’s work in the coming five years (2026-2031). The plan, which will provide a roadmap to shape how we continue supporting individuals with developmental disabilities, will help LINX grow and evolve as we continue to strengthen our collective impact and build a more inclusive, connected community for everyone.

The new strategic plan will be shared with all stakeholders, including clients, family members, employers, community partners, and staff, in Spring 2026.