DESIGNING A WAY TO EVALUATE SAFETY, CLEANLINESS & INCLUSION INITIATIVES IN PRINCE GEORGE

Event Journal

April 21 & May 11, 2022

Facilitated by Coeuraj

A **synopsis** of why and how we gathered over two days of virtual workshops

We convened participants from across Prince George over two half-day virtual workshops, building off our in-person workshops 1 and 2 in March

*This included **24 participants in Workshop 3** and **29 participants in Workshop 4** across municipal and provincial government agencies, NGO organizations, business, and peers groups.*

PARTICIPANTS

- Axis
- BC Housing
- BC Schizophrenia Society Prince George Branch
- Carrier Sekani Family Services
- Chu Cho Environmental
- City of Prince George Bylaw Services Team
- City of Prince George Downtown Economics
- City of Prince George Outreach Workers
- Community Arts Council
- Connective
- Downtown Prince George - Business & Property Owners
- First Nations Health Authority
- Homespun Refillery
- Lheidli T'enneh Band
- Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction
- Northern Health
- Northern John Howard Society
- Positive Living North
- Pounds Project Society
- Prince George Chamber of Commerce
- RCMP
- Select Committee on a Clean, Safe & Inclusive Community
- YMCA of Northern BC

Our core team co-designed this journey

DESIGN TEAM

- **Charlotte Peters,** Manager Bylaw Services, City of Prince George
- **Chris Wetmore**, Coordinated Access & Assessment Manager, BC Housing
- **Christina Doll**, Workforce Development Officer, Economic Development, City of Prince George
- **Colleen Van Mook**, Executive Director, Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association
- **Eoin Foley**, Nancy O's, Betulla Burning, Birch & Boar Restaurant/Business Owner, Restaurateur, Prince George (all downtown locations) and President of the executive board for the Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association
- **Nicole Doucette**, Aboriginal Homelessness Team Lead, PGNAETA- Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment and Training Association
- **Shane DeMeyer**, Director of Specialized Services, Northern Health Authority
- Chief Superintendent **Warren Brown**, District Commander, "E" Division North District, RCMP

COEURAJ FACILITATION TEAM

- Adam Shaw
- Dani Prapavessis
- Elena Dudarenko
- Gina Doxtator
- John Hibble
- Karli Ferriolo
- Max Lindley-Peart
- Nikkie To

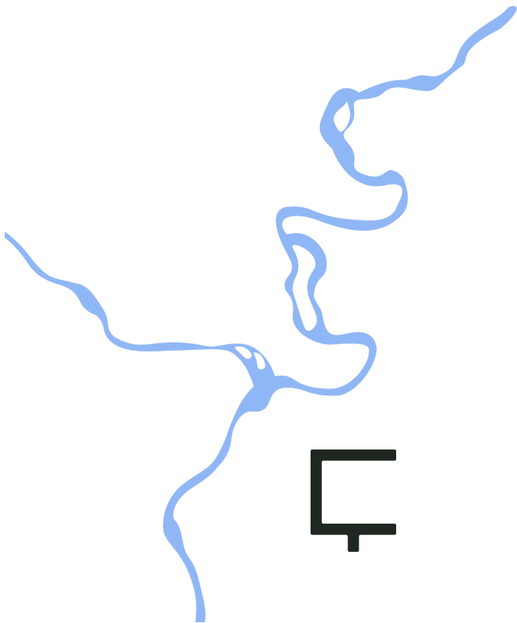
CORE CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE TEAM

- Bonnie Mercedes
- Chris Bone
- Sarah Brown

Based on our first workshops, we had some more specific questions about change in Prince George

Questions we are asking:

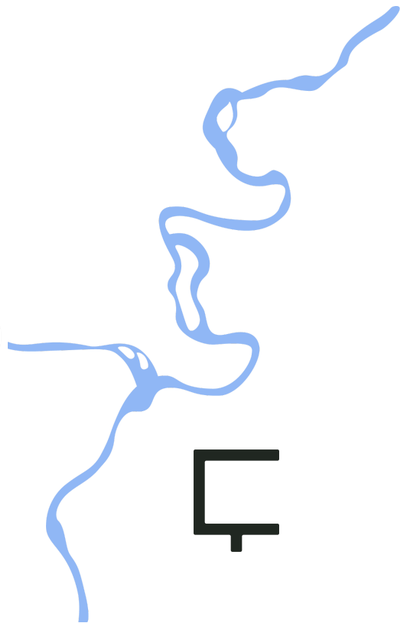
- How can we enhance safety, cleanliness, and inclusion (SCI) efforts? What do these things mean to you?
- How can we understand the impact of safety, cleanliness, and inclusion interventions and initiatives?
- What does social change mean to you? What types of change do you want to see in Prince George?
- How can we increase relationships across the system?
- How can we move from collective intent to collective action?



OBJECTIVES WORKSHOPS 3 and 4

Together, we will...

- Learn about a case study that illustrates an approach to an evaluation framework
- Focus and refine the work we've done on each theme for the problem, aspiration and solution spaces.
- Review our starting point for an evaluation framework
- Review our current change logic and make sure we are measuring the right things
- Share our perspectives on how we might prioritize within our evaluation scope
- Learn about our baseline evaluation capacity (process, data, and skills)
- Understand the remaining evaluation plan ('sprints') for this year



OUTCOMES

Together, we will...

- Gain clarity on the systemic conditions that we need to focus on for systemic change
- Refine our definition and greater alignment on the problem, aspiration and solution spaces for each theme
- Increase our capacity in systems thinking and evaluation frameworks
- Agree upon our draft evaluation framework
- Focus our change-logic
- Create a list of evaluation tools, data, and skills we have
- Develop a preliminary plan for the evaluation sprints and the work ahead

Our agenda for the two workshops built upon and refined the work from previous sessions

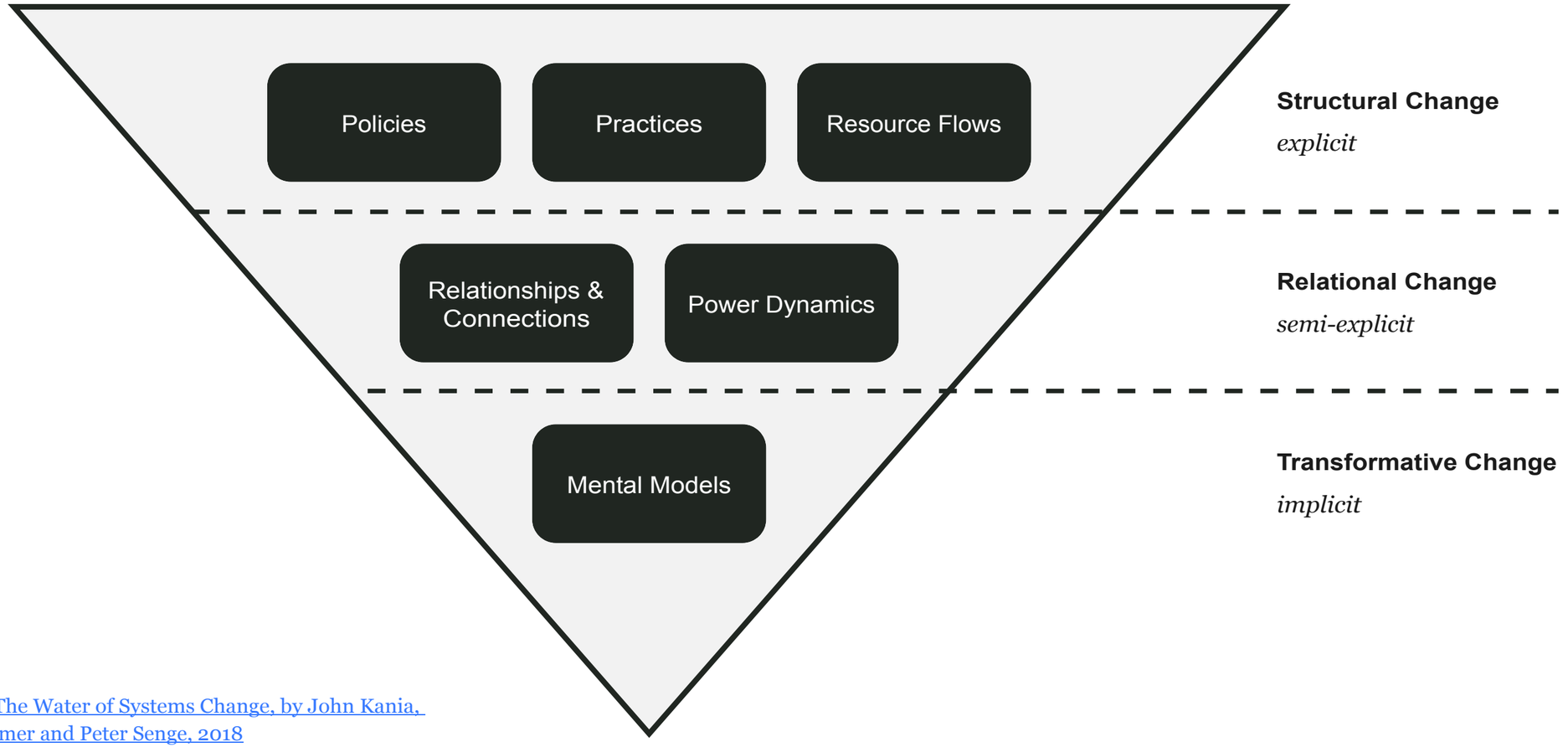
WORKSHOP 3
April 21 at 9:00 - 12:00

- Welcome and opening
- Check-in
- Case study
- Establishing a baseline
- Refining problem space
- Refining aspiration space
- Share
- Close

WORKSHOP 4
May 11 at 8:30 - 1:00

- Welcome and opening
- Check-in
- Refining North Star
- Prioritization
- Capacity evaluation
- Identifying actors
- Share
- Close

We explored the 6 Conditions model to determine what is holding the problem in place



Source: The Water of Systems Change, by John Kania, Mark Kramer and Peter Senge, 2018

What are the conditions that are holding the problem in place?

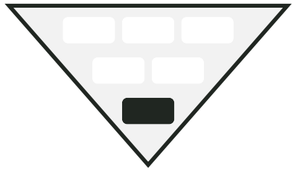
Policies: Government, institutional and organizational rules, regulations, and priorities that guide the entity's own and others' actions.

Practices: Espoused activities of institutions, coalitions, networks, and other entities targeted to improving social and environmental progress. Also, within the entity, the procedures, guidelines, or informal shared habits that comprise their work.

Resource Flows: How money, people, knowledge, information, and other assets such as infrastructure are allocated and distributed.

Relationships & Connections: Quality of connections and communication occurring among actors in the system, especially among those with differing histories and viewpoints.

Power Dynamics: The distribution of decision-making power, authority, and both formal and informal influence among individuals and organizations.



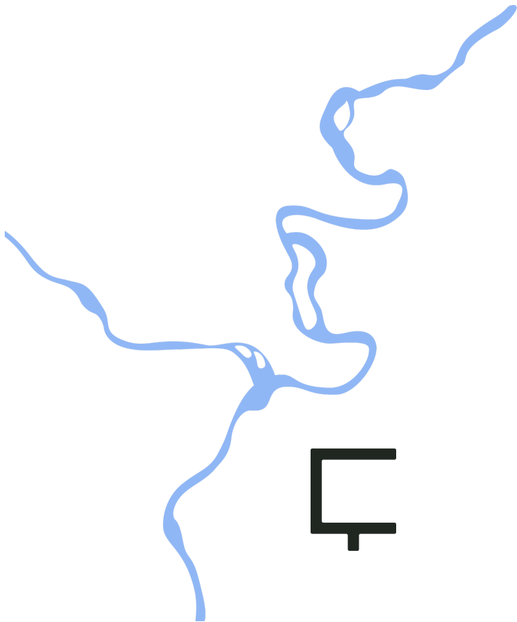
Mental Models: Habits of thought—deeply held beliefs and assumptions and taken-for-granted ways of operating that influence how we think, what we do, and how we talk.

Source: *The Water of Systems Change, by John Kania, Mark Kramer and Peter Senge, 2018*

We set the stage by evaluating the state of the five themes derived from our research and work with the design team in Prince George

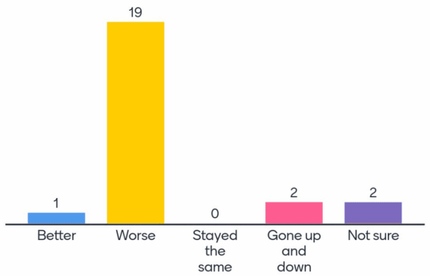
Participants shared their thoughts in a survey which asked, “Over the past 5-10 years in Prince George, have the circumstances for each of the following conditions gotten better or worse?”

1. Perception of safety
2. Opioids and mental health
3. Housing crisis and unsheltered peoples
4. Graffiti, garbage, needles, and biohazards
5. Downtown lacks vibrancy

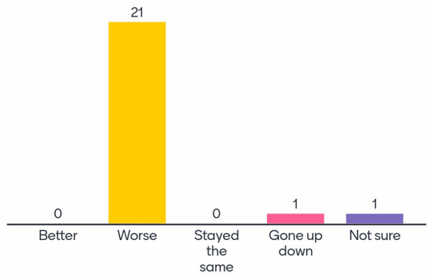


Each theme has gotten worse over the last 10-15 years

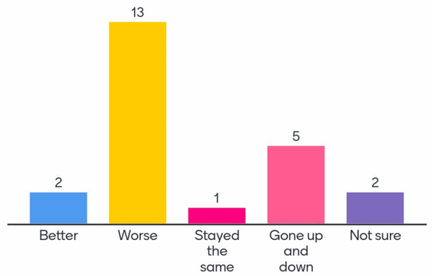
Over the past 5-10 years in Prince George, have circumstances for unsheltered peoples gotten...



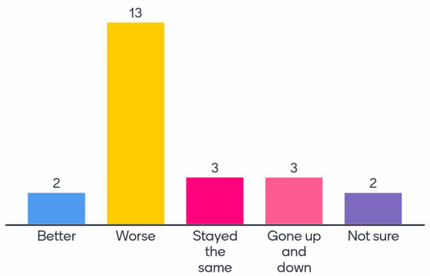
Over the past 5-10 years in Prince George, has the situation with opiods and mental health gotten...



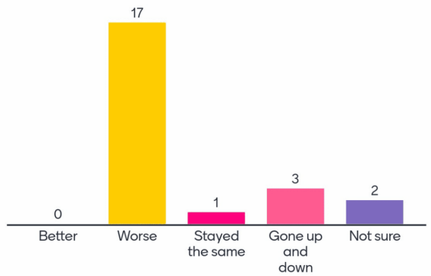
Over the past 5-10 years in Prince George, has the vibrancy in downtown gotten...



Over the past 5-10 years in Prince George, has your perception of safety gotten...



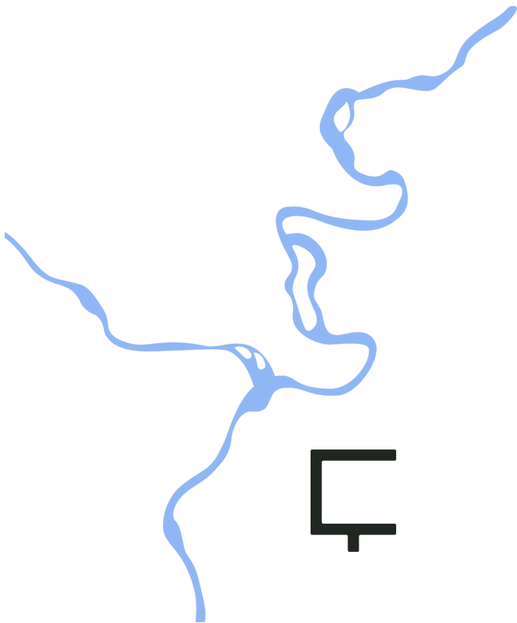
Over the past 5-10 years in Prince George, has grafitti, garbage, needles and biohazards in downtown gotten...



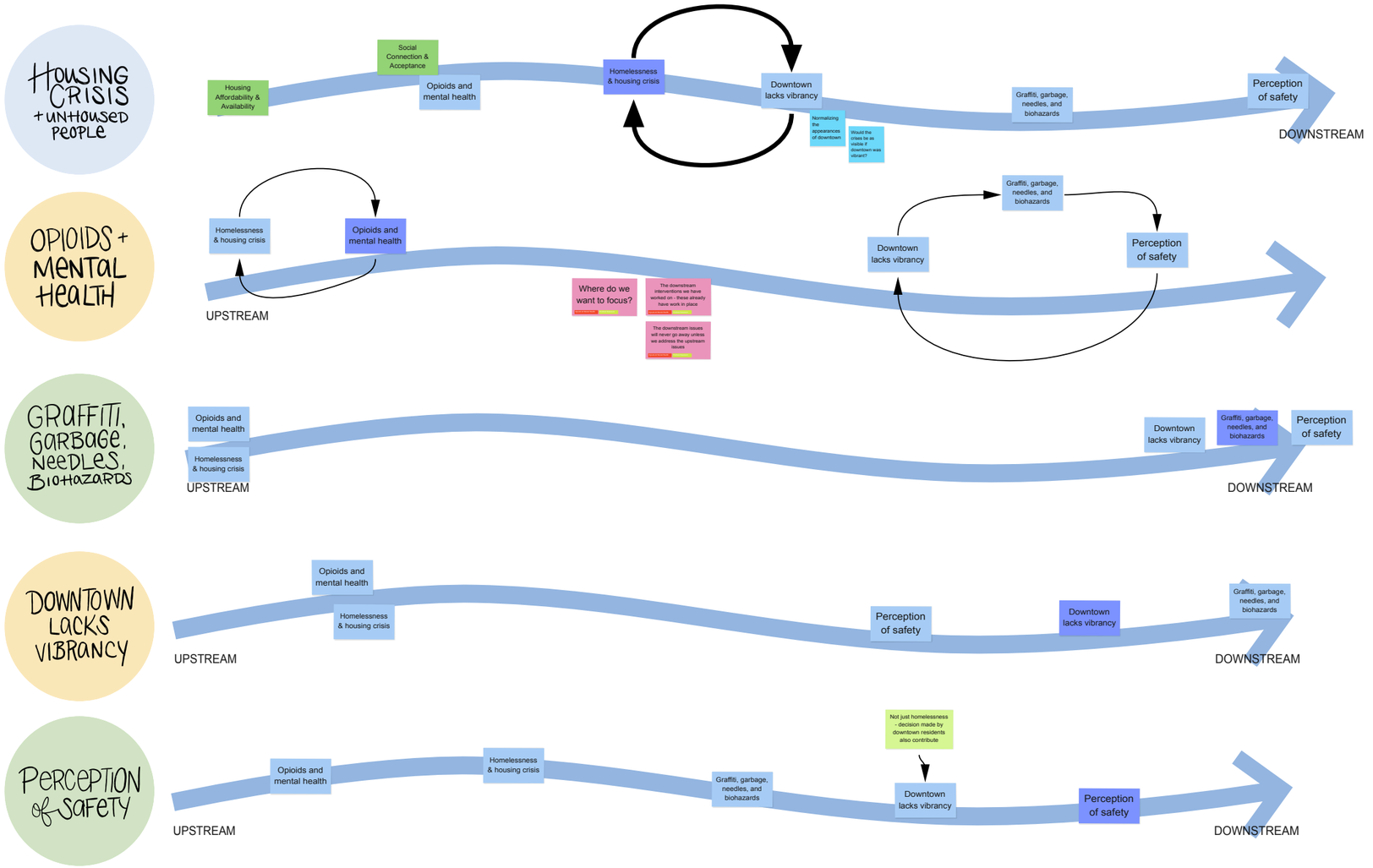
Through individual and small group work, we began by defining problems and aspirations for each of these themes

In breakout groups, participants did a deep dive into a specific challenge area, working through the following activity prompts:

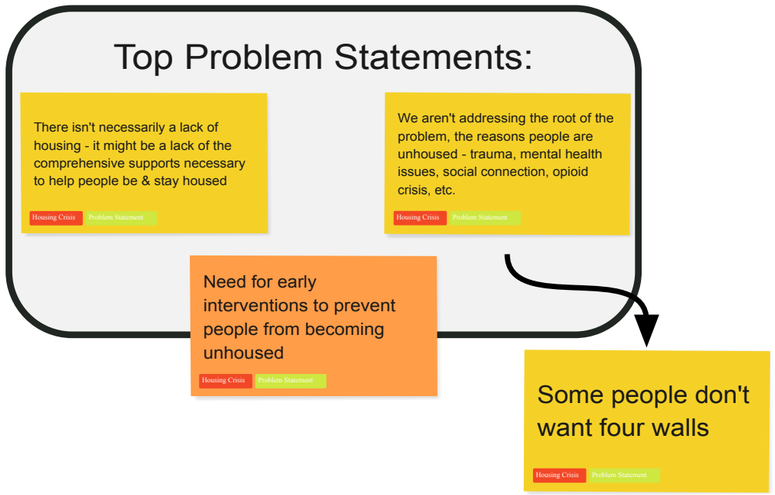
- Identify the conditions that are holding the problem in place
- Refine our problem statement and target groups
- Refine our long-term and immediate changes (outcomes)
- Map our existing interventions

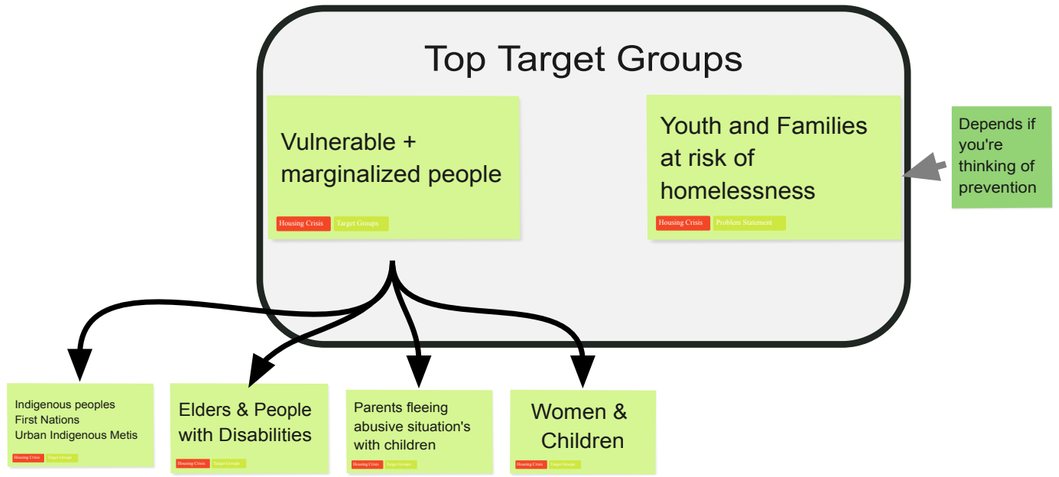


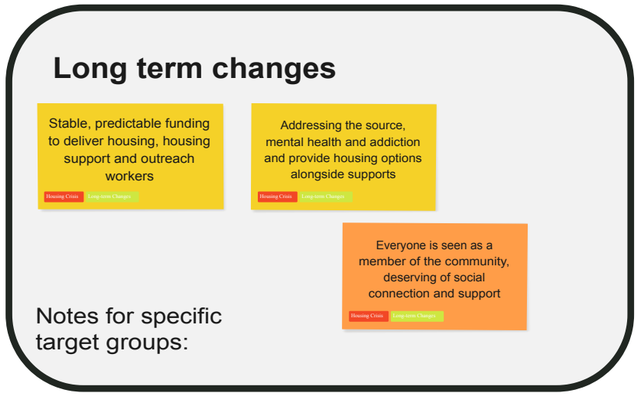
Each group mapped housing and opioids and mental health as upstream issues

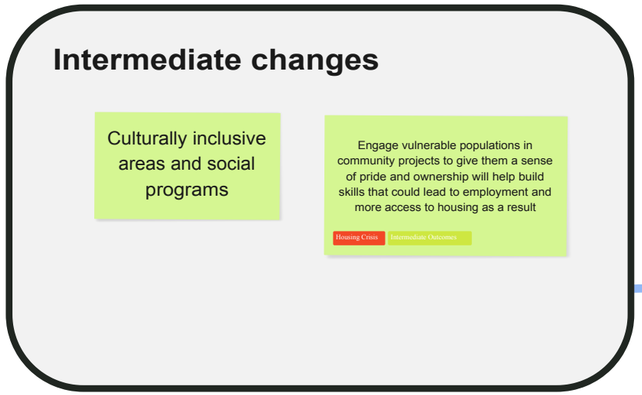


Homelessness & Housing Crisis



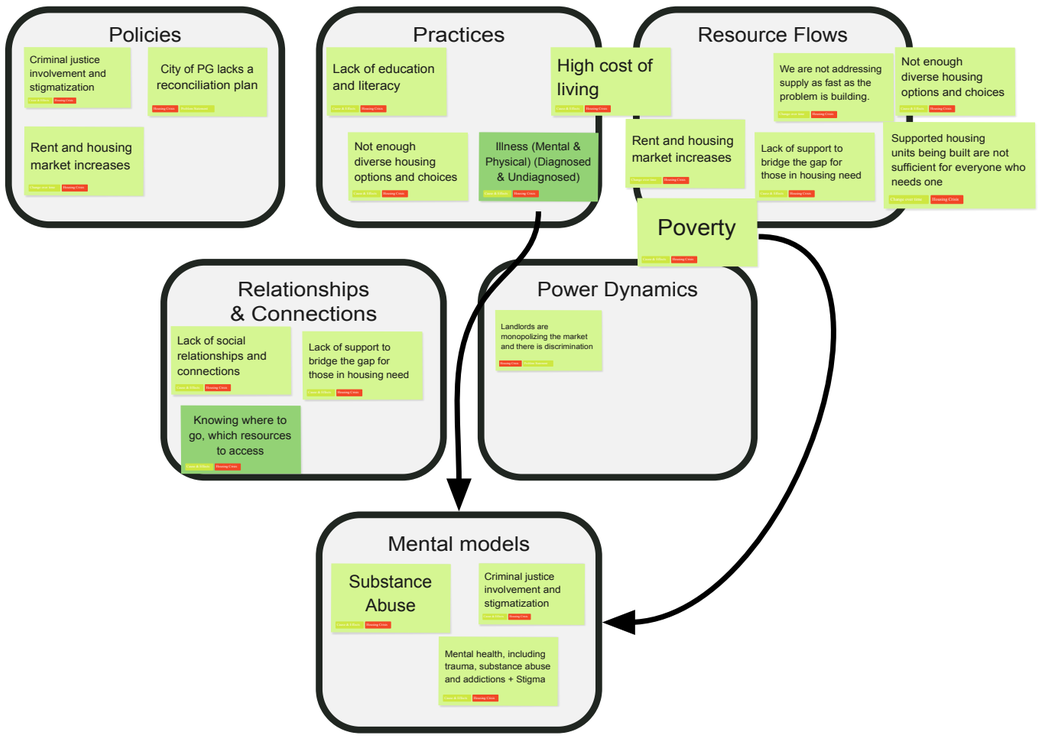




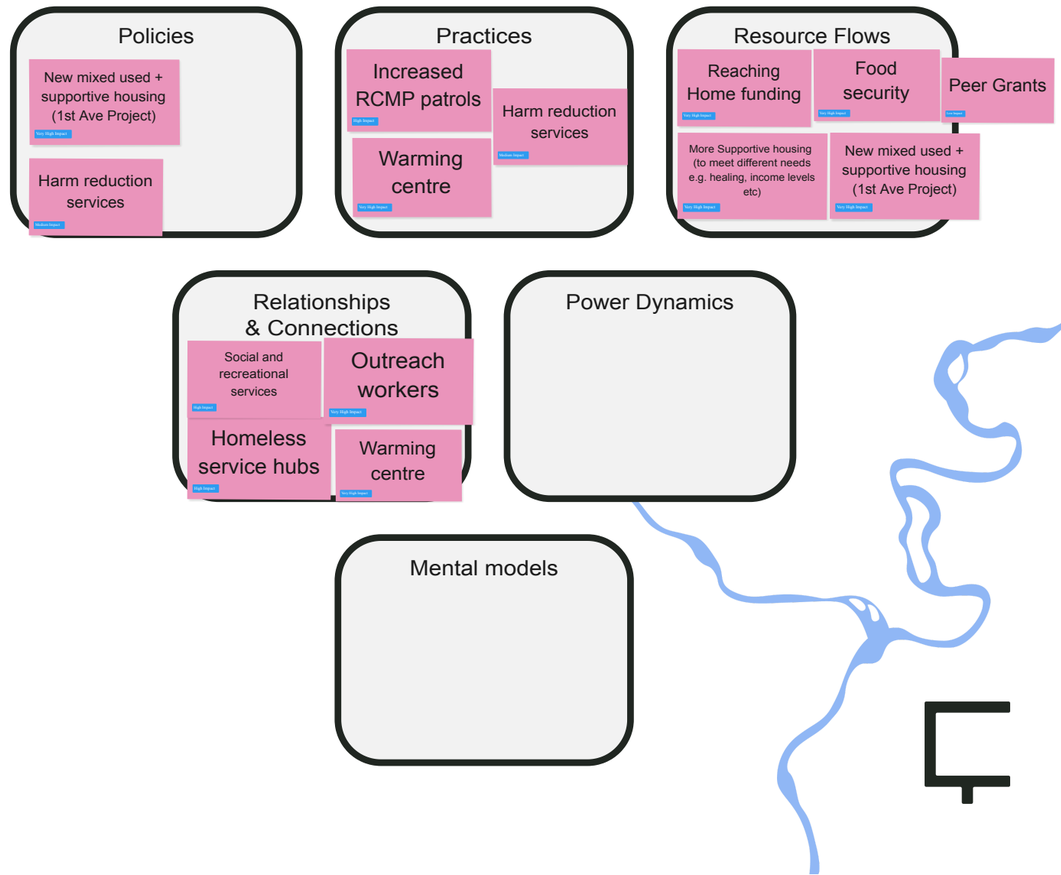


Homelessness & Housing Crisis

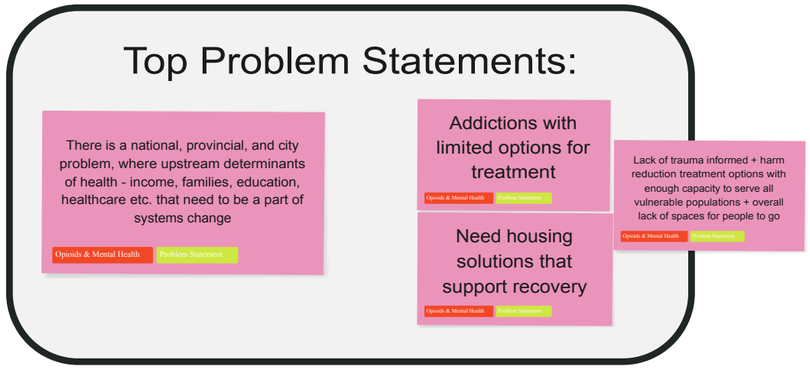
Identified Causes:

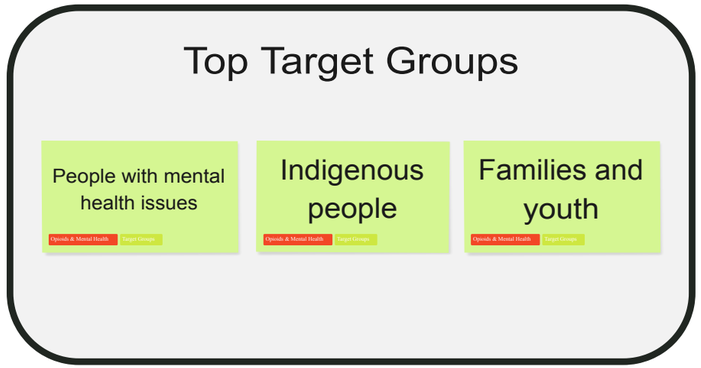


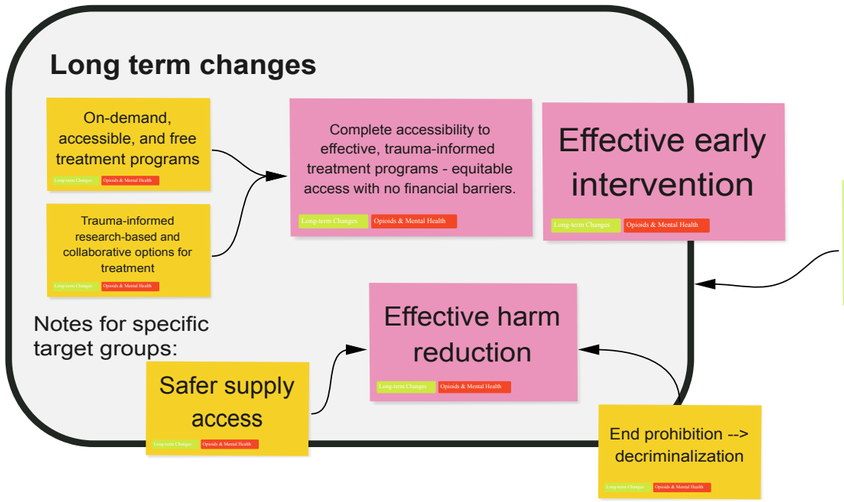
Ranked Interventions:

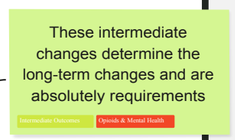


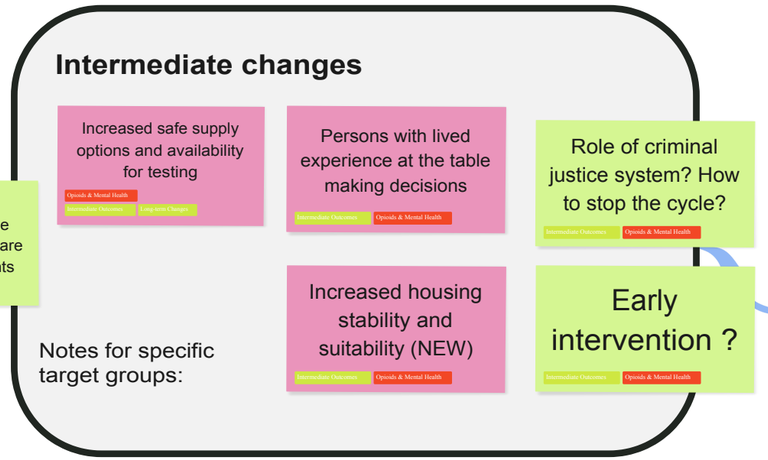
Opioids & Mental Health





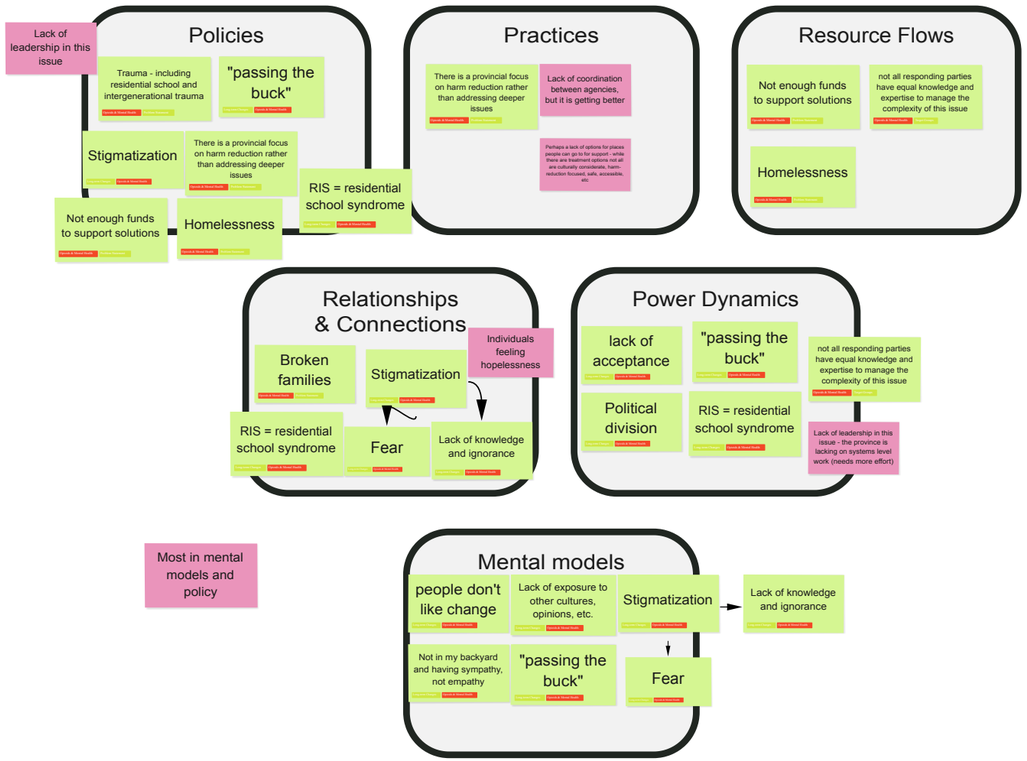




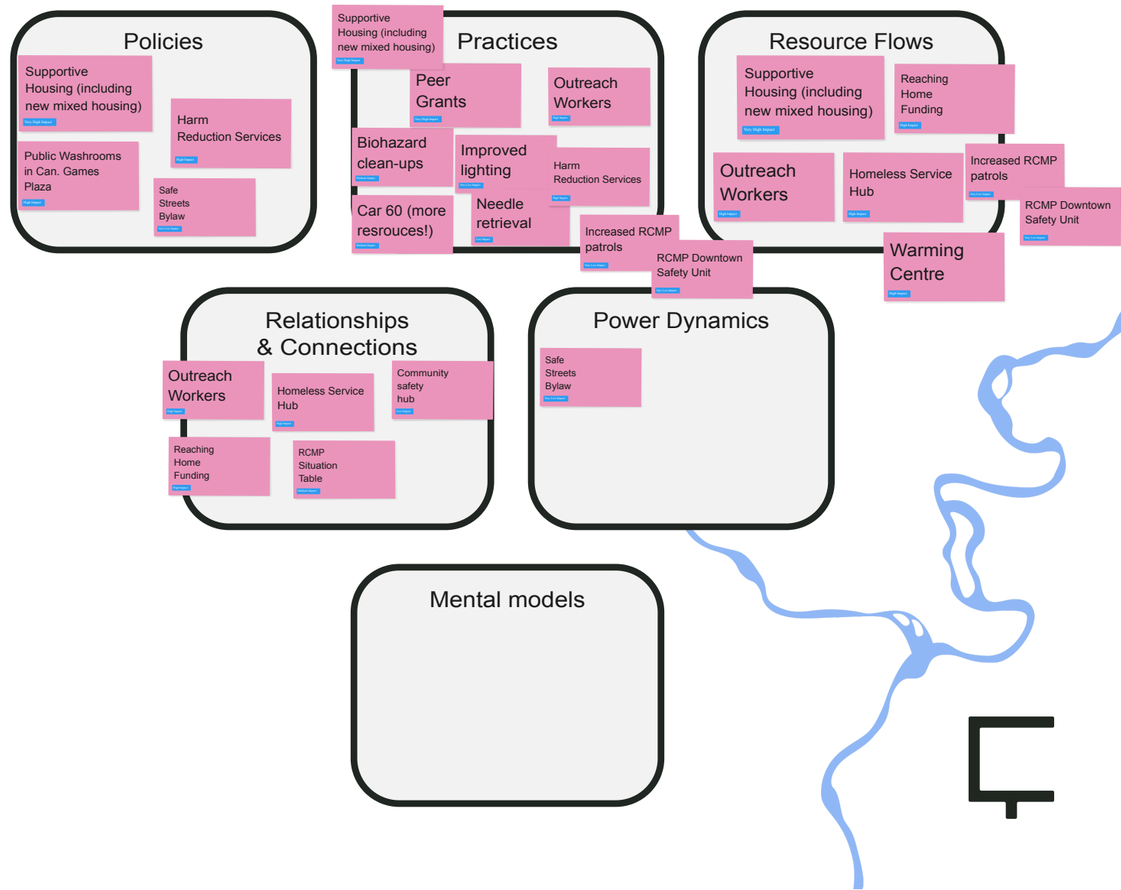


Opioids & Mental Health

Identified Causes:



Ranked Interventions:



Graffiti, garbage, needles, and biohazards

Top Problem Statements:

- Not enough resources to help solve overflowing garbage issues
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Problem Statement
- Lack of options that enhance cleanliness: garbage cans, sharps bins etc.
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Problem Statement

Top Target Groups

- Persons with Addictions
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Target Groups
- Downtown Businesses
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Target Groups
- Visitors, Residents
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Target Groups

Long term changes

- Downtown is more inviting and positively perceived
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Long-term Changes
- Ownership + Pride of place by folks who live downtown to keep it clean
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Long-term Changes
- Increased efficiency and accountability across service providers
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Upstream Barriers

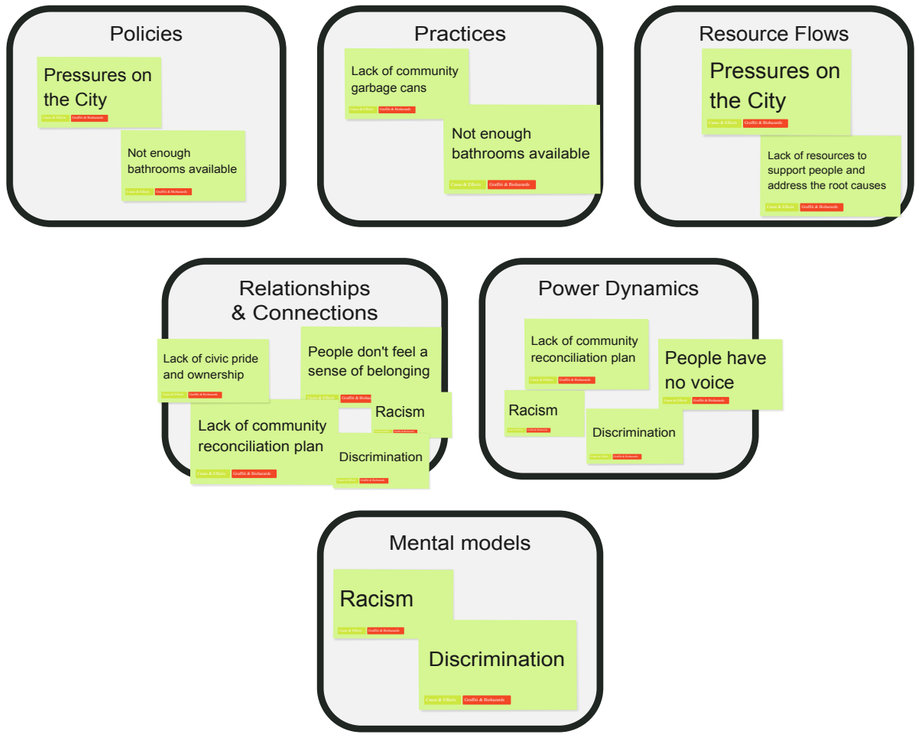
Notes for specific target groups:

Intermediate changes

- Hire homeless population to help clean up
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Intermediate Outcomes
- More funding - in the right places
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Intermediate Outcomes
- Murals created by people living downtown
  Graffiti & Biohazards · Intermediate Outcomes

Graffiti, garbage, needles, and biohazards

Identified Causes:



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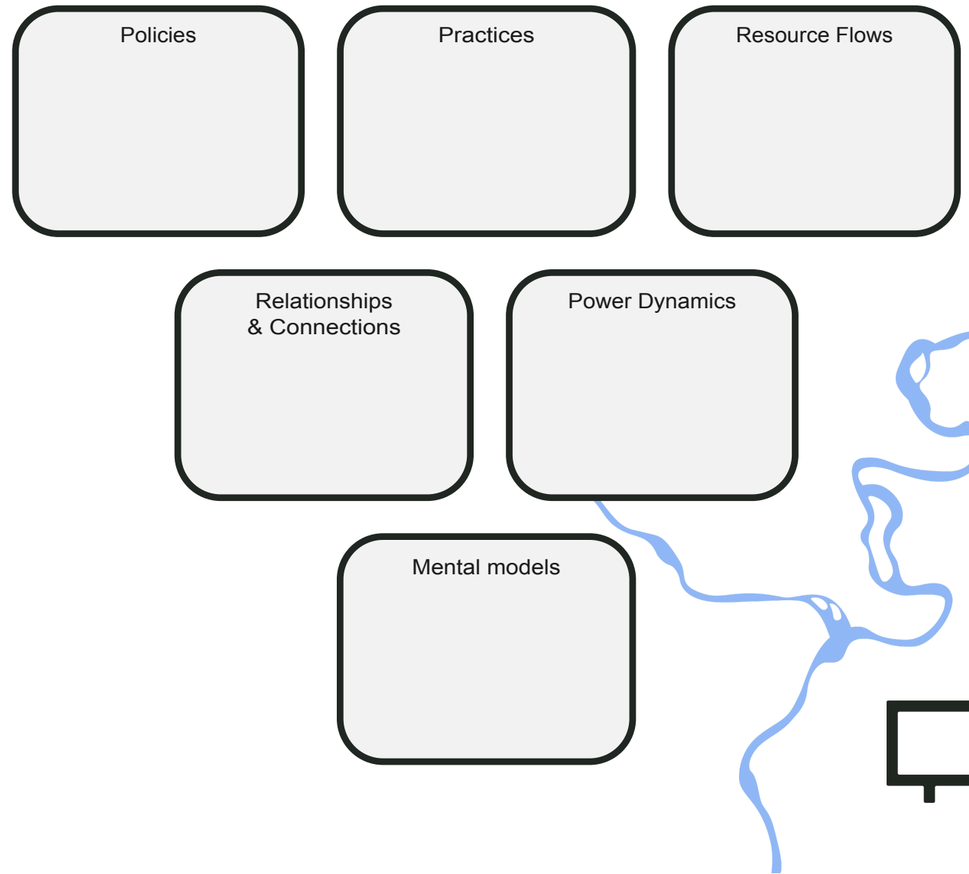


Downtown Lacks Vibrancy

Top Problem Statements:

If we address other issues (i.e. addiction and mental health) people and business will come back

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Problem Statement

There is a lack of housing options and access to amenities causing downtown to lack vibrancy. Prince George smells gross - pollution, not enough bathrooms for unsheltered population

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Problem Statement

with the current demand of housing and a lot of units being build with high cost of rent and not enough rental units for low subsidy

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Target Groups

Lack of presence of people shopping, walking the streets - Prince George is low density and sprawled with no clustering of services and businesses.

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Problem Statement

Lack of a key attraction, major facility, or event space that acts as a draw, especially during the winter

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Problem Statement

Top Target Groups

Residents of Prince George

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Target Groups

People with mental health issues

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Target Groups

Long term changes

A safe and inclusive environment (universally) where people want to be

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Long-term Changes

No one living on the street

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Long-term Changes

More small businesses

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Long-term Changes

Notes for specific target groups:

Intermediate changes

Focus on the layout/design of Downtown
- Food District Cluster
- Arts / Cultural District
- Night Club Focus

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Intermediate Outcomes

Collective vision supported by all citizens & government

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Intermediate Outcomes

Community pride

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Intermediate Outcomes

More attractions spaces and infrastructure to attract people

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Intermediate Outcomes

More cultural activities and downtown nights where everyone is invited

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Intermediate Outcomes

Brings people closer to healing and health

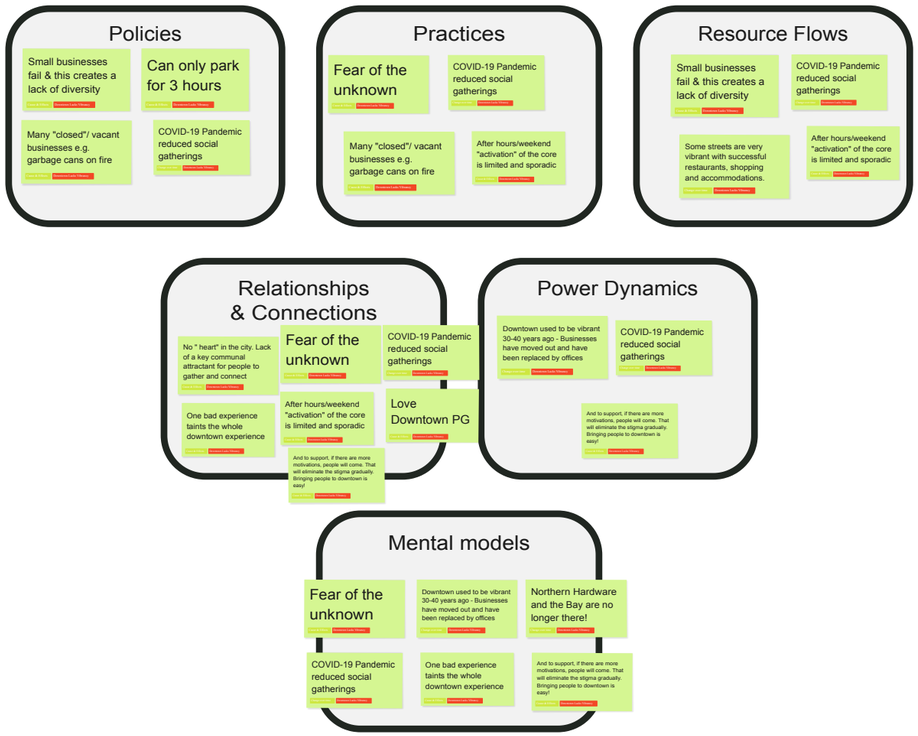
Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Intermediate Outcomes

Art it up! (Garbage cans, fire hydrants, banners) -- a memorial, write messages. Acknowleding that these things happened.

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy | Intermediate Outcomes

Downtown Lacks Vibrancy

Identified Causes:



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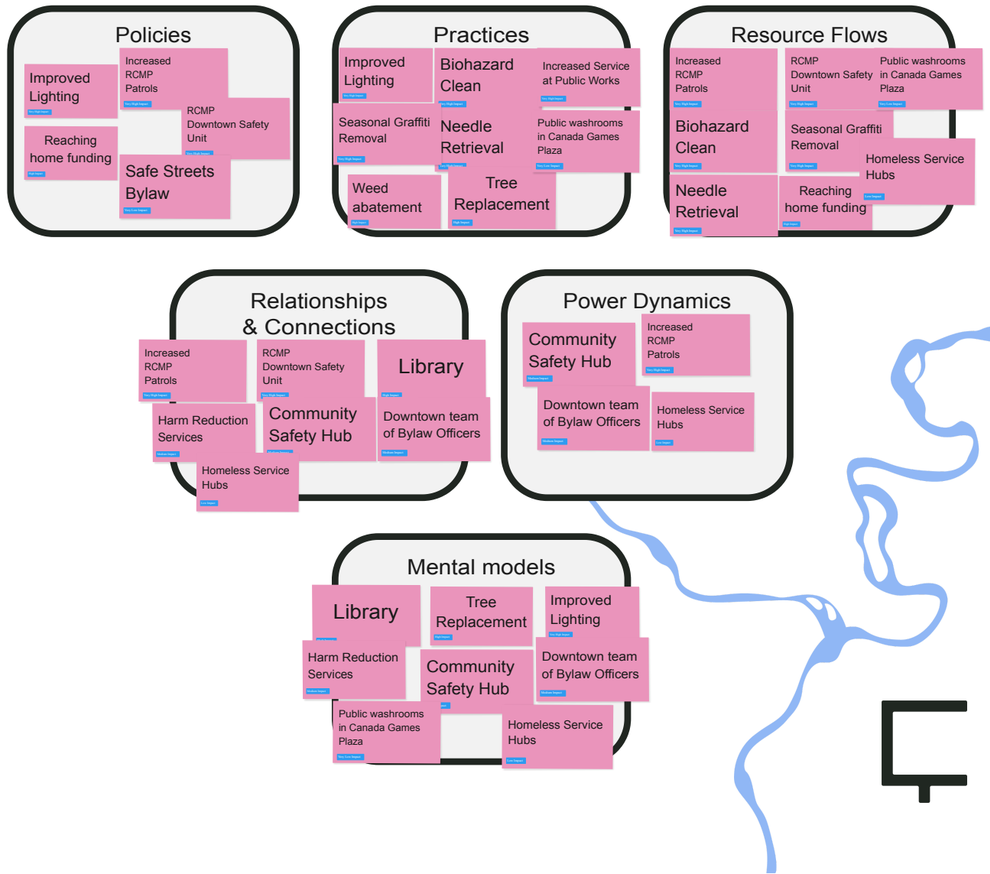


Perception of Safety

Top Problem Statements:

People have different definitions and perceptions of safety and the unknown/unfamiliar.

Stigma, racism, prejudice + misperception that reinforces existing issues

Perception of Safety | Problem Statement

Top Target Groups

Business owners

Perception of Safety | Target Groups

Residents of PG

Perception of Safety | Target Groups

Long term changes

Increased safety + the perception of safety

Long-term Changes | Perception of Safety

Plentiful housing with appropriate support so people stay housed

Long-term Changes | Perception of Safety

Increased Mental Health

Long-term Changes | Perception of Safety

Notes for specific target groups:

More positive experience for all people downtown, where downtown is a destination

Intermediate Outcomes | Perception of Safety

Intermediate changes

Creating safe, inclusive, and judgement free spaces

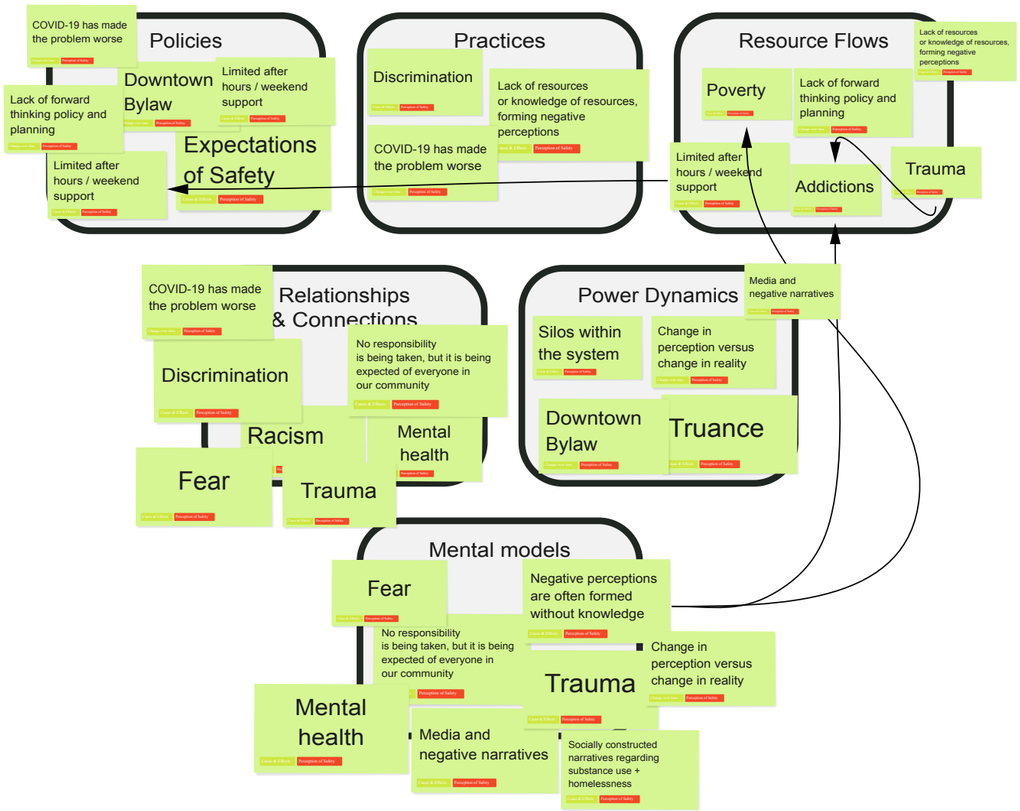
Intermediate Outcomes | Perception of Safety

Imoproved accessibility mental health support

Intermediate Outcomes | Perception of Safety

Perception of Safety

Identified Causes:



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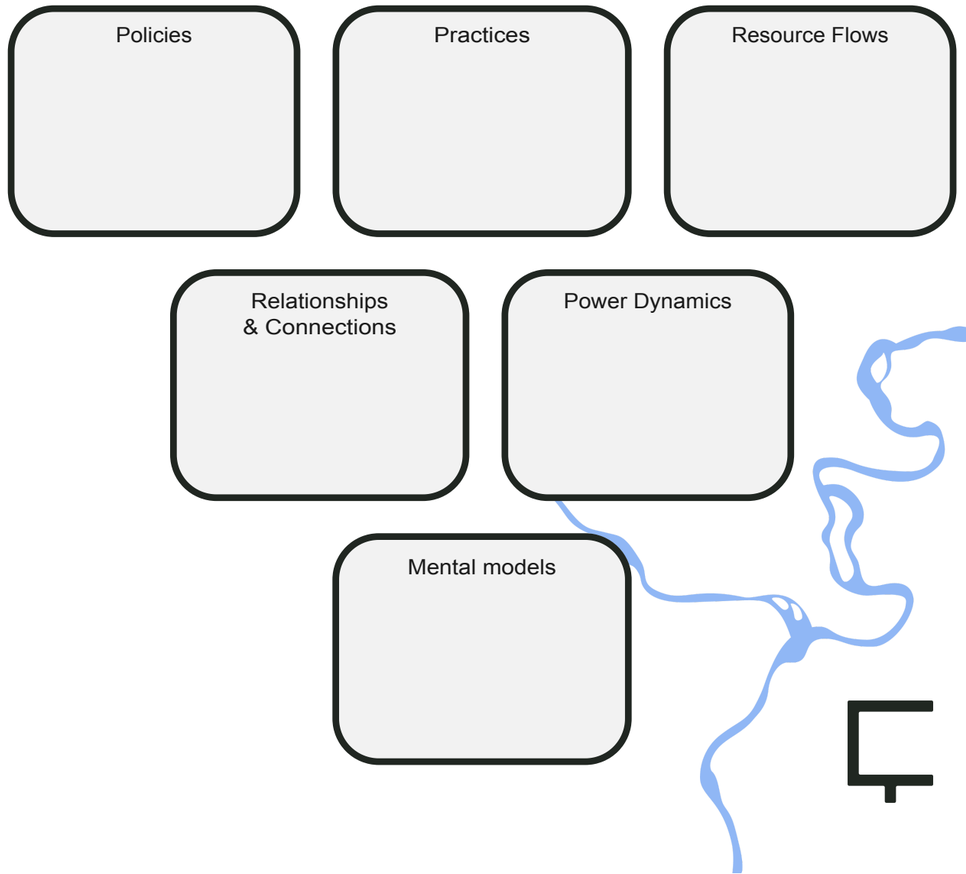


A North Star was created to guide the impact you want to see in Prince George.

Everyone is seen as a member of the community, deserving of social connection and support, and everyone feels safe and proud to be a part of the community. We envision a place where **everyone can say "I feel like a member of our community."**

Through thoughtful conversation, we expanded and strengthened this shared vision to include belonging, a more refined definition of *everyone, **and a component of*** accountability

Is the North Star representative of the **long-term vision** for Prince George?

- Important for the inclusivity part
- safe and proud is an important part of the statement
- If people are encroaching on safety and pride, for the purpose of inclusion we wont be safe and proud.
- Who is "everyone"?
- What about people who are visitors, are they members of the community?
- People may not want to be active community members, but they shouldn't be excluded
- Not likely that "everyone" in the community today would agree with this
- Is it "comfort" over belonging?
- "Everyone has the OPPORTUNITY to be..."
- It's lofty and aspirational...a very good North Star
- "Everyone feels safe, and proud to be part of the community and we envision a place where community members have social connection..."
- Even the quietest voices are heard - everyone is heard equally
- Does the community know what it means to be "a part of the community" in the broader sense
- Community is about **inclusion**, involvement, and building a shared space
- Initially it might seem large in scope, but it is actually a really great quality of this statement and provides a guide/north star
- What belonging and community means for one might be different for someone else and the large scope allows to work toward inclusion for all.
- Collaboration is a really important aspect of this work and building community

What do you **like** about it?
What is **missing**?

- Social connection and support is important and seen here
- Certain boundaries to ensure everyone feels safe and proud
- We may need to take a stand against inclusivity as the core, to accepting bad behaviour.
- Can't be individuals that compromise safety, or services downtown. Cannot have disruptive people who thwart our CI (willingly) and still reward them under inclusivity.
- It can feel like inclusivity is a reward even for not helpful behaviour
- Long term goal - this fit, but the short term goals (clean and safe) THAT AREN'T HAPPENING I AM CONCERNED THIS ISN'T REPRESENTATIVE
- How do we separate between a bad day, bad person to rewarding inclusion?
- Reality of conflicting interests in a community -- one person's safety could be unsafe for someone else
- An aspirational statement - gives us something to work towards
- Difficult to measure success on "feelings"
- Healthy communities have options for people to participate - can be in small and large ways. Exchange and help each other
- Not superficial - no sheen
- Not everyone is at the same place
- Where's the contribution. Accountability? Opportunity?
- Where do people feel purpose?
- "Feel safe and proud to contribute to a community".
- Educating marginalized communities about what resources and services are available
- But some people don't want to be educated! And to remain in a bubble...ignorance.
- "Consistent". We tend to be reactive to the loudest voices. To fairly evaluate our scope rather than reacting to.
- Becomes hard to trust anyone - a vicious cycle...takes a lot of consistent work.
- Trust is a big issue here - in others and also in yourself to make good choices for yourself.
- Change is scary and uncomfortable even if it is a good thing...people get used to living with addiction
- It's aspirational which is what we want and need
- It challenges the fact that there are inherently 'bad people'
- There are people who won't be interested. No interest in being part of an overall community.
- Separate the bona fide marginalised from those who are taking advantage of these groups
- Predator and prey. A way to discern the difference but this is difficult.
- Not painting everyone with the same brush.
- People who are prey might need to become predators to survive
- People taking advtange of policies which, for example, not prosectuted for minor offences -- BC being seen as 'soft'.
- Something that stood out is a lack of ownership. How can we be explicit about ownership?
- Like that there's a sense of belonging
- Perhaps change to "I am a proud member of our community"
- Awareness and/or education would be great to include to capture resourcing and aspects that are causing barriers and harm. How do we address this?
- Really like that it's individualized, using the word "I"
- Really like the first phrase "Everyone is seen.... deserving of social connection and support"

We then reviewed the 6 conditions of systems change and prioritized the key targets that would create the biggest impact

Here are the top ranked targets for each condition and some of the rationale why from the breakout group discussions

Policies

Government, institutional and organizational rules, regulations, and priorities that guide the entity's own and others' actions.

City of PG lacks a reconciliation plan

Lack of forward thinking policy and planning

Lack of coordinated leadership in this issue

With the right leadership comes the right resources

The City cannot make a reconciliation plan for the community. The community needs to make a reconciliation plan for the community. But a plan IS needed.

There is a lack of coordination and we need leadership to help collectively do this work

Not just civic coordination also provincial, federal too.

Health regions are empire building, but ministry of health has to steer it and it isnt happening as it should

Too many resources that are being diluted and not coordinated

Lack of forward policy - what we do now is reactionary and we need to plan ahead, be more proactive to ensure people don't end up on the streets

Focusing on a lack of **clear, actionable,** coordinated and **collaborative** leadership would lead to forward thinking policies and planning

Would not vote for city of PG reconciliation plan as this work is starting to take shape

Passing the buck - who owns what?

Manging perceptions AND expectations of C,S &I

At a local level, agencies work together quite often. Provincial and federal leadership can make decisions in a way that is uncoordinated or mismatched with what is needed in the community

We don't just need people in the room, we need the "right" people in the room with the "right" leadership

Need for treatment options not just harm reduction

Proper triage

Practices

Espoused activities of institutions, coalitions, networks, and other entities targeted to improving social and environmental progress. Also, within the entity, the procedures, guidelines, or informal shared habits that comprise their work.

Lack of options for places people can go to for support - while there are treatment options not all are culturally considerate, harm-reduction focused, safe, accessible, etc

Not enough diverse housing options and choices

Lack of coordination between agencies, but it is getting better

Lack of resources or knowledge of resources, forming negative perceptions

Deeper issues are the root cause of issues like addiction

"Diversity" includes coordination and integration of other supports - not just shelter.

People have preconceptions that are not necessarily the reality today - how can we address this to better reflect the reality

Once we're able to address the upstream issue of housing, it will also help address many of the other issues noted here

Secure counselling

We rarely talk about treatment options in the context of mental health and addiction

People don't just want a house they want a community.

Lack of options for places -- why isn't there somewhere that anyone can go to just sit on the couch and have a coffee? That would lead to improved relationships and connections

There are a lot of services, but not enough treatment options locally and culturally appropraite

Support concerning trauma

Diagnosis - Focus on harmd reduction and lack of resources go together

This could incorporate other elements such as bathrooms of garbage.

Housing, treatment options; there is an overall lack of options and diversity

Need a place to go to after treatment

A place to go between services (half way)

Resource Flows

How money, people, knowledge, information, and other assets such as infrastructure are allocated and distributed.

Not all responding parties have equal knowledge and expertise to manage the complexity of this issue

Lack of forward thinking policy and planning

Lack of resources to support people and address the root causes

We're reactive because we have little bits of knowledge but not of the whole issue

What's working elsewhere that IS actually working? We're fairly isolated here in PG. The broader scan. The courage to be on the leading edge which is very hard for local government.

Focus money on upstream efforts rather than downstream symptoms.

How do we get at the root before things get bad?

Action and resources are dependent on operational dollars that come from higher levels of gov't

The issue is complex and everyone (individuals and agencies) have their role to play -- Silos lead to miscommunication and a lack of shared understanding. Need interdisciplinary coordination

If we had more forward thinking policies, we can address these larger problems such as lack of resources, be forward thinking about the city's issues, etc.

The funding and options are there, but there is a lack of direction on where to go from there. There is a lack of planning around how funding and resources are utilized.

This would probably lead to more supports downtown i.e. unsheltered population, access to services/resources

This would also lead to a cycle of positive change i.e. more funds, as well as the ability to get feedback on initiatives and improving upon them

We do not have the money

When people want the help they want it right now, but we don't have enough "detox beds" = resources to service the size and scope of the problem

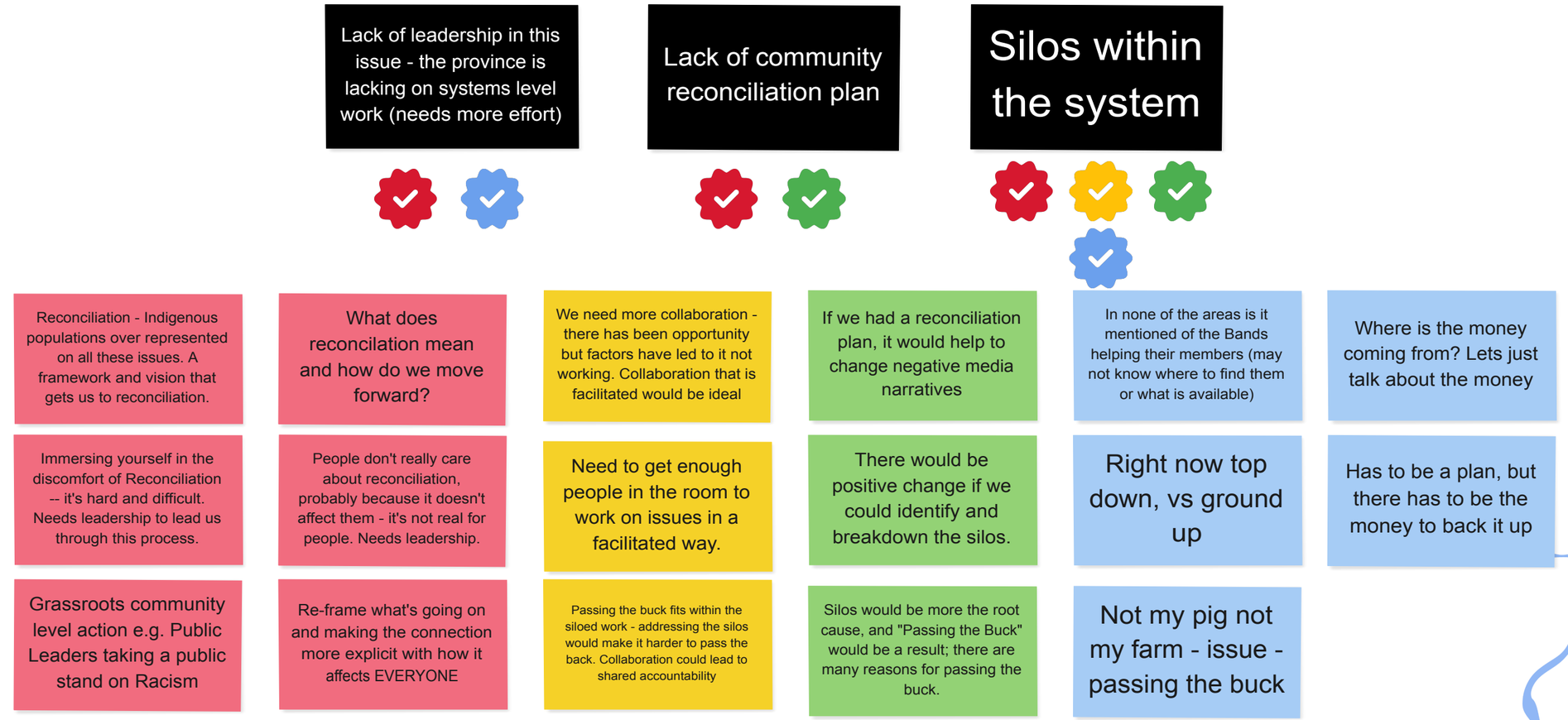
If an agency doesnt have the expertise they will connect person to the next agency - filling the gap on knowledge. People do lean on each other

Relationships & Connections

Quality of connections and communication occurring among actors in the system, especially among those with differing histories and viewpoints.

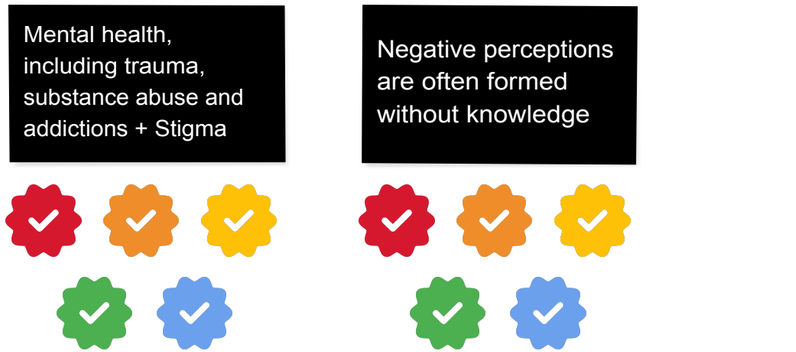
Power Dynamics

The distribution of decision-making power, authority, and both formal and informal influence among individuals and organizations.



Mental Models

Habits of thought—deeply held beliefs and assumptions and taken-for-granted ways of operating that influence how we think, what we do, and how we talk.



People just want the old way and how it used to be - people who are our allies, actually aren't. We tend to forget the bad things that used to happen.

Not just without knowledge, but also being fed the wrong knowledge and also lack of empathy.

When individuals don't feel part of the community or cared for, it can be really challenging for mental health and increases individuals wanting to be isolated/left alone

'Racism' can be encapsulated in 'negative perceptions are often..."

How we got here -- trauma leads to mental health issues, including addiction and these are the issues that we are dealing with now

Negative perceptions: This is connected to fear of the unknown and stigmatization and NIMBY

With privelege, comes responsibility. Entitlement without a sense of respnsibility.

Often you hear there's nothing to do in PG, but there's plenty of opportunity to do things, many people just assume there is nothing. This applies to a lot of the social issues as well.

We surveyed participants to understand the baseline of our evaluation capability and the roles that actors will play

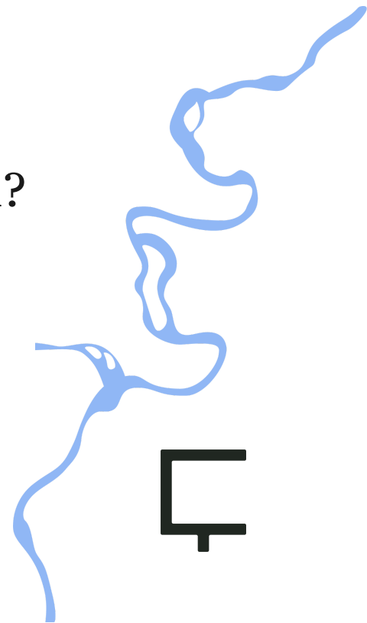
The two surveys provided insight into the following questions:

BASELINE EVALUATION CAPACITY

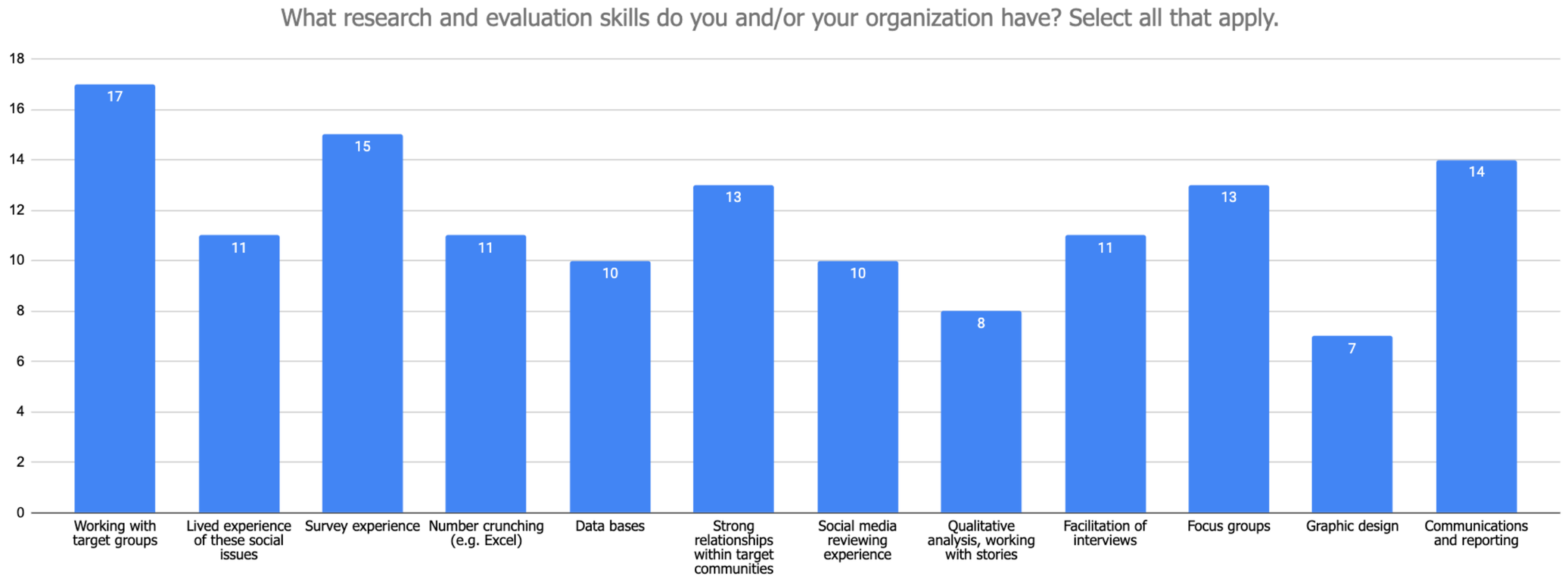
- How is data collected and accessed?
- Who is included and impacted?
- What research and evaluation skills do we have or need to develop?
- What additional existing networks and data sources can we draw from for this evaluation work?

BEING AN ACTOR

- What role(s) will actors play in this evaluation framework?
- What barriers and supports prevent or enable participation?
- How might we focus the scope for this evaluation?



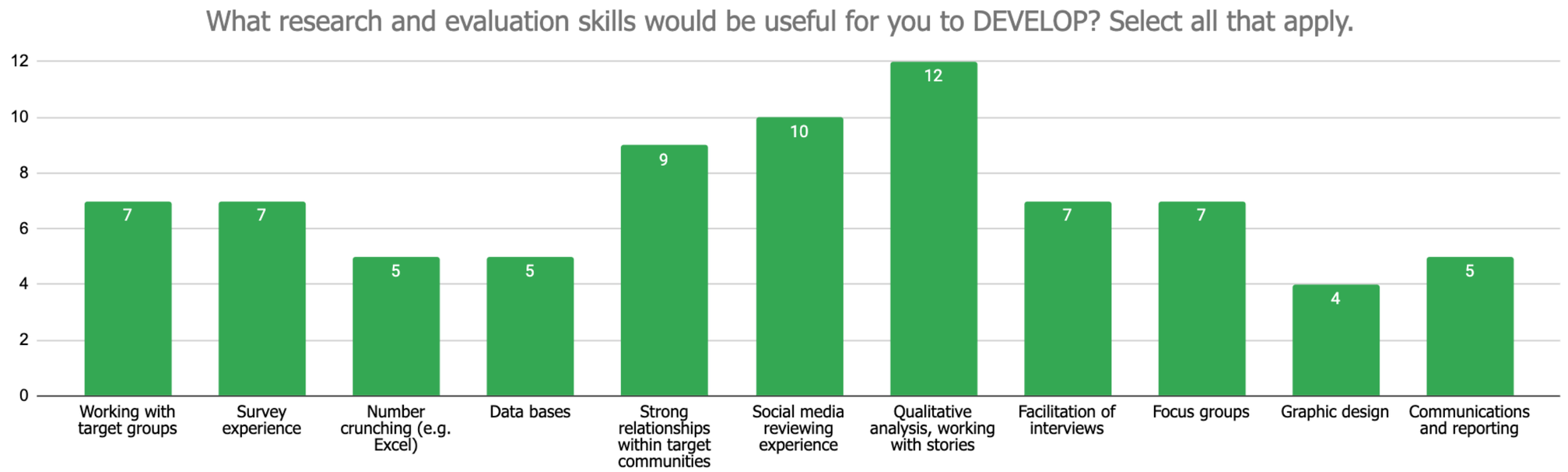
Our top skills are working with target groups, survey experience, and communications and reporting



Our participants also had skills in:

- Storytelling and anecdotal shared experiences
- Access to Provincial government research and data
- Eyes on the street daily
- Research/evaluation design and methods
- Marketing campaigns, advertising, writing, reports

Our participants shared that qualitative analysis, social media, and building strong relationships with target groups are the skills that would be most useful to develop



We will be using this data to design our Evaluation sprints **- testing our framework**

- We will present and launch the framework over a lunch session (date and time TBD) – this is also a time to meet and celebrate the work we have done

- Phase 4 will involve a series of Evaluation Sprints to implement, monitor, and act on the evaluation framework.

We appreciate the time, care, and engagement from all of our participants.

Thank you for starting this journey with us.

We look forward to planning and preparing the sprints together.