CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE

COEURAJ

Designing a way to Evaluate Safety, Cleanliness & Inclusion Initiatives in Prince George

EVALUATION GUIDEBOOK

This document has been prepared by Coeuraj, a consultancy firm and transformation practice who worked with the Prince George community to develop the Prince George Safety, Cleanliness, and Inclusion (PGSCI) Evaluation Framework. This work was funded by the COVID-19 Restart Funding For Local Governments - Strengthening Communities' Services Grant, administered by the Union of BC Municipalities.

We'd like to respectfully acknowledge that this work took place on the unceded ancestral lands of the Lheidli T'enneh, on whose land we live, work and play.

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Introduction

The City of Prince George is dealing with numerous complex and interrelated social issues that are affecting safety, cleanliness, and inclusion of all members of the community. In response, the City has funded and implemented a variety of interventions aimed at increasing health, well-being, and safety in the community. Currently, there is no formal system in place to measure outcomes and impact – up to this point, it has not been clear what should be measured, or what constitutes success.

In 2021, the Civic Initiatives & Partnerships Division of the City of Prince George initiated a co-design process to develop an **evaluation framework** to determine if the City's *Safety, Cleanliness, and Inclusion* (SCI) interventions are achieving the desired results and are supporting systems change, as defined by the community.

There were five phases to building the evaluation framework:

1. Introducing stakeholders to the project and creating public interest to participate in the co-design process.
2. An initial data study with focused secondary and primary research to better understand the scope and rationale of existing interventions, challenges experienced in the community, and any existing evaluation processes used by the City.
3. A series of co-design sessions to enable stakeholders to collaborate on a Theory of Change and corresponding evaluation framework, including indicators of change and methods for evaluating them.
4. A series of three 'evaluation sprints' to test the framework and City interventions[1].
5. A report of the project findings as informed by the community, and recommended next steps.

This document introduces the Prince George Safety, Cleanliness, and Inclusion (PGSCI) Evaluation Framework and provides practical guidelines that the City can use to evaluate its current and future SCI interventions. It also includes some of the relevant content from its development process to provide context for future program development and evaluations.

The foundational elements of the PGCSI Evaluation Framework are:

- **Scope:** Defines the overall purpose of the City's SCI evaluation that the framework was designed to enable.
- **Systems Evaluation and Program Evaluation Frames:** Presents a conceptual approach for connecting the outcomes of individual interventions with impacts at a system or population level.
- **Prince George Systems Theory of Change:** Describes a vision and strategy to create sustainable change within Prince George that was developed by the community, for the community.

[1] The Community Safety Hub, Downtown Prince George Clean-up, Increased Bylaw Patrols

After providing an overview of these elements, this guidebook will outline key steps and tools for City evaluators wishing to use this framework to continue the evaluation work that has been started during the project, or begin evaluating new interventions.

Getting to know the 'Evaluation Framework'

Evaluation refers to a systematic process of collecting evidence to inform decision-making and enable the continuous improvement of services. At its core, evaluation is about asking questions about programs and gathering the best evidence, data and stories to provide answers that can drive actions and inform strategic learning. There is a vast array of possible and relevant questions that can be asked about any intervention or program, such as *"is the program achieving expected results, how many people does the program reach, which groups are affected by the service, are resources being used efficiently, is the program affected people's attitudes or behavior"* etc. As such, evaluators must be able to determine which are the right questions to ask and what are the most appropriate means to collect, analyze and interpret the available evidence.

An **evaluation framework** is a system of principles, tools and processes for determining what evaluation questions need to be answered, the outcomes intended for programs, indicators of change, data sources for qualitative and quantitative information, as well as data collection methods, and a plan for disseminating the results. An evaluation framework should provide a set of guiding principles and key concepts and a practical "toolbox" to allow an organization to plan and conduct its evaluations in a consistent manner so that its findings can contribute to a shared body of knowledge and evidence to support strategic learning.

The Scope of the Framework

The Prince George Safety, Cleanliness, and Inclusion (PGSCI) Evaluation Framework described in this guidebook was custom designed to support the community of Prince George in evaluating the current and future SCI interventions within the downtown core. The design process was initiated by the City of Prince George with the intent of creating a resource that could be used by partner agencies and social impact groups across the community. The key objective was to create a framework that would enable the community groups to conduct their own evaluations focused on strategic learning as represented by these overarching evaluation questions:

For the City, the scope of the evaluation framework focused on evaluating:

1. **Do the current interventions contribute to the systems change we want to see?**
2. **Are we allocating resources effectively to contribute to this change?**
3. **Where do we need to go to realize our shared vision for safety, cleanliness, and inclusion?**

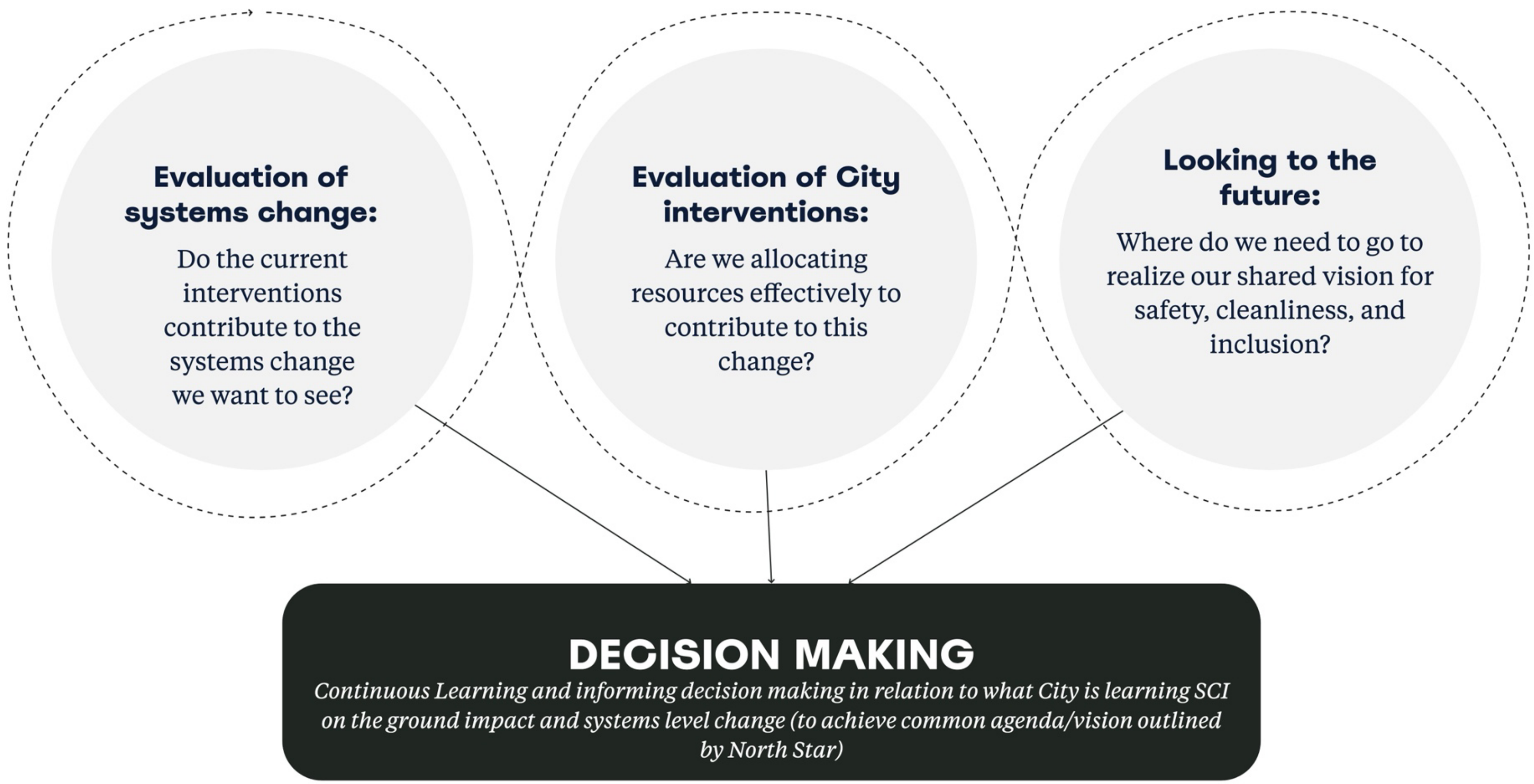
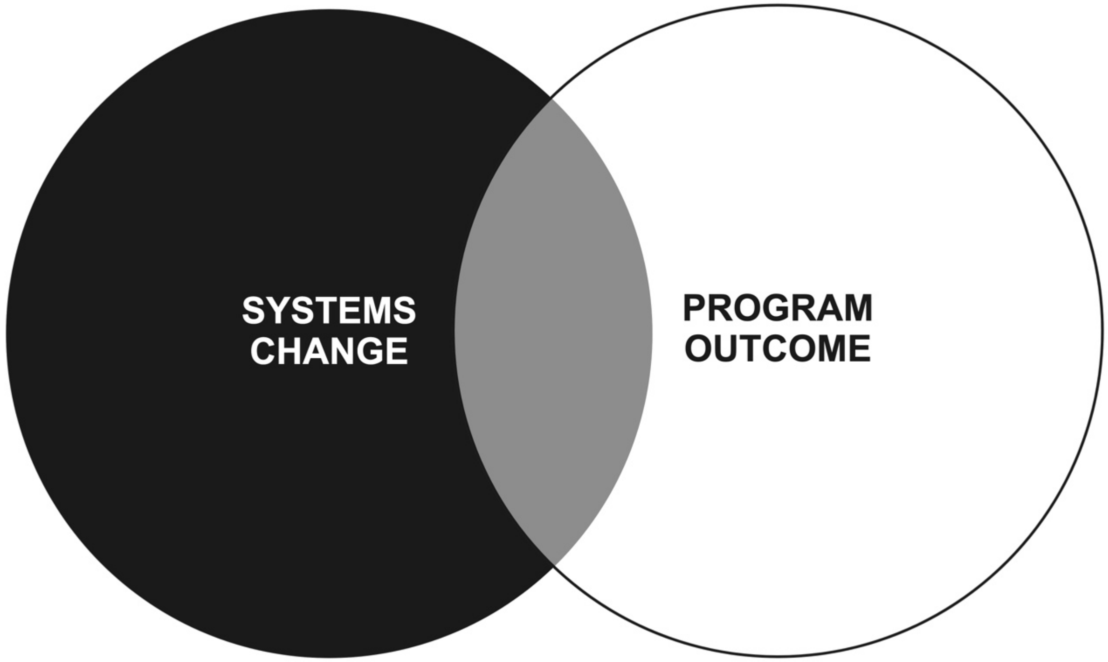


Figure 1 The scope of the Prince George Safety, Cleanliness, and Inclusion Evaluation Framework

The challenges that the community is currently experiencing (regarding safety, cleanliness, and inclusion) are systemic in nature, stemming from major factors such as housing instability, drug and overdose crises, struggles with mental health and addictions, and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. As such, the impacts of these challenges are much greater than any single intervention can address. However, the combined effects of several interventions, when designed according to a mutual vision and strategy, can work together to create an impact at a system level.

Therefore, this evaluation framework has been specifically designed to enable the organizations within Prince George to monitor systems change, evaluate how their current interventions contribute to this change, and inform the development of new interventions. It accomplishes this by



considering SCI evaluation as occurring within two frames, **systems evaluation** and **program evaluation,** and exploring where they intersect (Figure 2).

Figure 2 The intersection of systems change and program outcomes

Systems Evaluation

A *system* is a collection of networks, structures, processes, and elements across different sectors and disciplines and the relationships between them. Despite the multiplicity of the definition of systems, there are a few enduring foundations: a system is a configuration of interacting, interdependent parts that are connected through relationships that exhibits emergence – where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

When we refer to a “system” we are describing a collection of elements that, distinctly, are strongly interconnected and interdependent. The strength of these relationships means that observed effects may stem from multiple, reinforcing causes and that problems which directly affect one group of people often have indirect consequences for the wider community or population.

Systems evaluation seeks to monitor changes that occur within systems and deepen our understanding of the conditions, elements, and dynamics of the situation, how they evolve and who they affect. System-level challenges are often harder to tackle directly and slow to change due to strong, interdependent factors that seem to “hold problems in place”. This means that the methods and timing for conducting systems evaluation efforts may be somewhat different from other forms of evaluation.

Program Evaluation

In this guidebook, we define a program to be a specific set of activities expressly intended to achieve a specific and deliberate outcome. There are many kinds of programs that can range from broad policy changes to delivering very specific services or resources directly to those who need them. Programs are distinct and deliberate and often referred to by the City as “interventions”. This evaluation framework was specifically designed to support the evaluation of the City’s safety, cleanliness, and inclusion interventions.

Program evaluation is a systematic method of collecting and analyzing information about the specific activities, characteristics, and outcomes of a program to improve effectiveness and inform decisions about the program. A program evaluation tries to demonstrate that the observed outcomes are caused by the program activities. Establishing a strong relationship between activities and outcomes helps evaluate questions regarding the allocation of resources to the program (Scope Question 2) and inform decision-making about whether to stop, continue or modify the program the improve the outcomes (Scope Question 3).

Where They intersect

The City of Prince George is interested in understanding the extent that community SCI interventions are contributing to desired systems change, which requires integrating systems evaluation and program evaluation. However, due to the highly connected and emergent nature of systems, it would be impossible to *attribute* any observed systems changes to the activities of a given program. Instead, this evaluation framework enables evaluators to build data-driven evidence to demonstrate that interventions make notable *contributions* to systems-level impact.

Essentially, the evaluation framework considers these two frames, and where they intersect to evaluate if each program (within the defined scope) is delivering its desired outcomes (program evaluation); monitor key systems-level indicators to observe the desired systems changes (systems evaluation), and take explicit logical connections between program outcomes and the desired systems change and testing those connections (intersection). With this knowledge, The City and the community can better design and implement interventions and understand how they contribute (or not) to the community's vision of change.

The Systems Theory of Change

The Theory of Change was developed through extensive engagement between the City, partner agencies and community members, based on their understanding of the key issues within Prince George, the conditions that are holding the problems in place, and their desired outcomes. It represents a shared vision for Prince George that was developed for the community, by the community. It is a foundational element for the evaluation framework as it shows the strategy for delivering systems-level impact and defines short and medium-term outcomes to track the City's safety, cleanliness, and inclusion interventions. Perhaps more importantly, the Theory of Change describes the "**why"** and **"how"** that connect different activities to goals in a way that allows key assumptions to be tested and progress to be monitored through selected indicators.

The Theory of Change is shown in **Figure 3.** It shows the collective vision of systems change, which was co-designed with community stakeholders, and distilled into a clear and inspiring statement referred to as the Guiding Star. Based on the Theory of Change, we can determine indicators of systems change and begin to outline program outcomes that contribute to the Guiding Star, which informs how data will be collected and interpreted within the evaluation framework.

The Theory of Change was designed to serve as an anchoring point of reference or "ground truth" for both the conduct of evaluations but also for strategic learning. Both evaluation and strategic learning are aimed at service improvement and to support the City and other agencies in ensuring that it is always "doing the right things". However, the "right thing" can be subjective and may differ between the perspectives of individuals and groups. As the Theory of Change was *co*-developed by a diverse group of community stakeholders, representing a variety of opinions, mandates and lived experiences, it can be considered as an artifact of what the community itself considers the "right way" to pursue SCI initiatives.

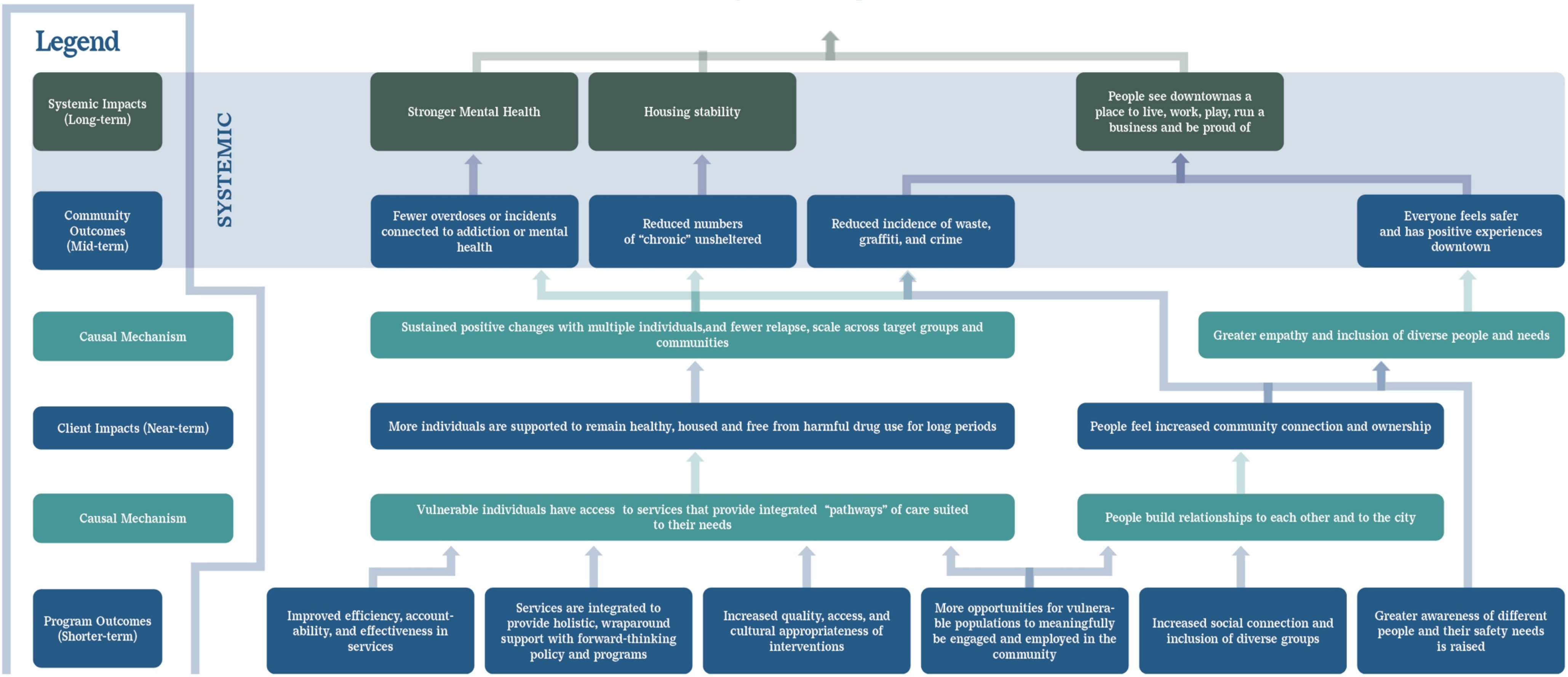
Theory of Change

CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE

Guiding Star Objective

Everyone is seen as a member of the community, deserving of social connection and support, where everyone feels safety, purpose, and a sense of belonging.

We envision a community where everyone can say "I am a proud member of Prince George and am responsible for its future."



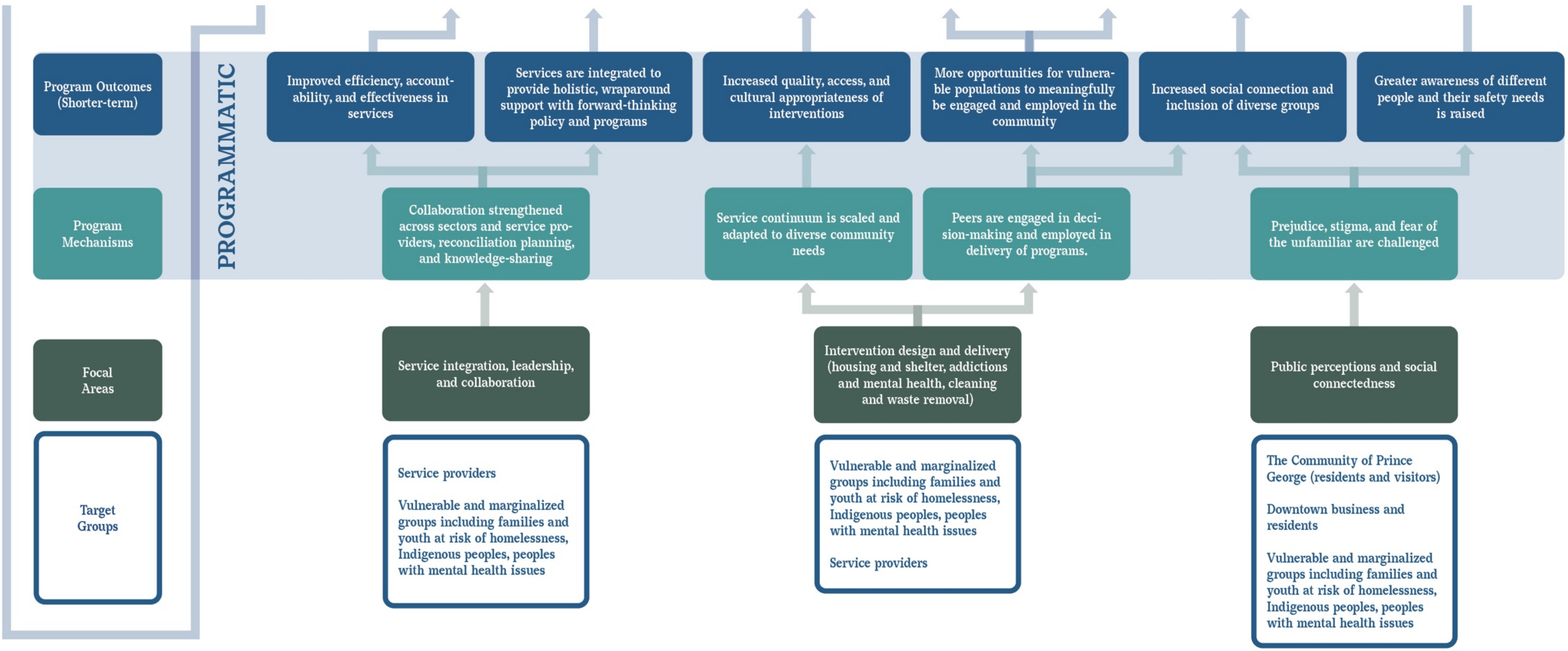


Figure 3 Theory of Change and Guiding Star objective

How to conduct a PGSCI Evaluation: Steps within the Evaluation Framework

Program evaluation is a well-developed and mature field and there are numerous excellent resources on how to approach and conduct evaluations, and we encourage the reader to learn from those referenced in the bibliography. However, the PGSCI Evaluation Framework was developed to enable a consistent and aligned approach to evaluation for all current and future City SCI interventions and to continue to track progress towards the shared vision described in the Systems Theory of Change. Therefore, this document will provide some specific processes, principles, and practices for conducting evaluations using the PGCSI framework. This is the start of an ongoing evaluation process The City and its programs should employ to deeply understand the program and systems change impacts on safety, cleanliness, and inclusion.

The basic steps for conducting an evaluation are:

- **Step 1: Framing the Change Logic**
- **Step 2: Engaging the Evaluation Team**
- **Step 3: Setting the Evaluation Questions and Collecting Data**
- **Step 4: Sense-making and Interpretation**
- **Step 5: Communications and Reporting**

The following document describes each of the steps for conducting a basic evaluation.

1. Framing the Change Logic

Defining key evaluation questions at the system change and program-level outcomes. Outlining primary and secondary research to gather evidence and frame the context of challenges in the community.

A key characteristic of any intervention, or system of interventions, is that activities are intended to achieve the desired outcomes. This intent requires that the people commissioning and delivering the intervention believe there is some logical connection between their actions and the expected results. This rationale may be based on the success of similar programs elsewhere or in the past, come from lived experience, or be drawn from a body of research, and it may be a well-established pattern or a hypothesis to be tested. In all cases, designing an evaluation requires a firm understanding of why and how the intervention is assumed to work. In the case of systems change initiatives, the path linking individual outcomes (such as providing food to an individual at a food bank) and systemic factors (such as community safety) often involves multiple steps of indirect cause and effect.

This framework refers to these casual "paths" as Change Logics and provides two distinct formats for City evaluators to reference and use:

- For systems evaluation, the fundamental change logic is the **Theory of Change** described above.
- From program evaluation, the use of **Logic Models** is suggested.

Logic Models

A change logic model represents the resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact of a program, depicting the relationship between a program's activities and its intended effects. The logic model provides a summary of how a specific program operates, who it is designed to benefit, who is involved, and the key milestones it is expected to achieve in delivering change. The logic model template provided in this framework also provides space for noting the assumptions that underlie the intervention so they can be tested, identifying factors that are external to the program yet may have a strong influence on the outcomes and cataloguing relevant and available data sources.

In the early stages of conducting an evaluation, the logic model template (Figure 4) should be completed for each intervention and reiterated as needed throughout the evaluation. Completing the logic model requires a significant amount of knowledge and depth of understanding regarding the intervention and the stakeholders involved in its delivery and the target groups it is intended to benefit. Therefore, during an evaluation, sufficient time should be committed to dedicated research regarding the intervention and the context in which it is to operate. This research should involve both reviews of relevant documents and interviews with program staff accountable for the intervention, stakeholders involved in its delivery, and the target beneficiaries. An example of a completed logic model can be found in Appendix A. It should be noted that the boxes of the logic model template guide the types of information this research should aim to collect.

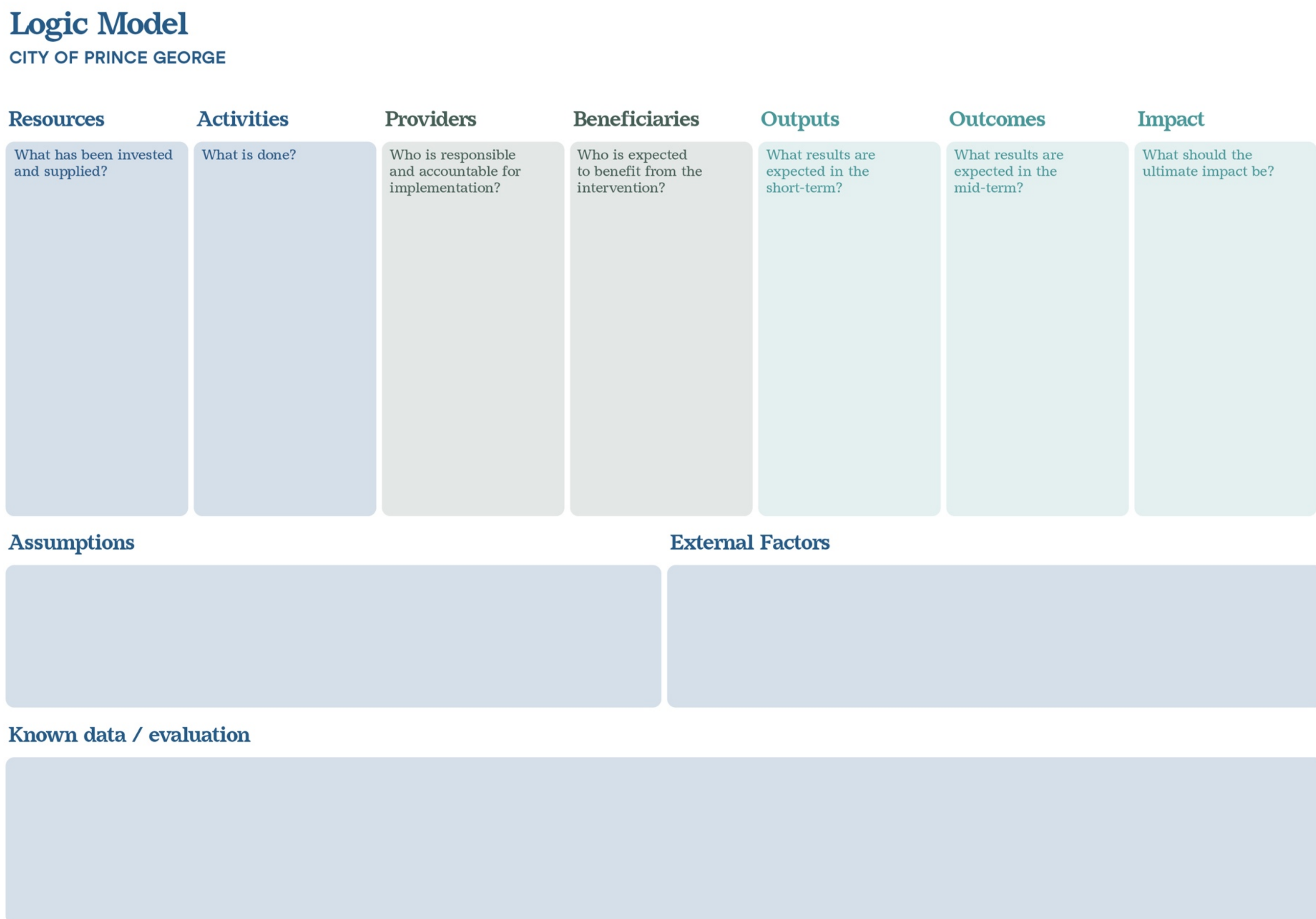


Figure 4 Logic model template

Creating a logic model can also provide a great deal of value in the design of new interventions as it provides clarity regarding a project's objectives and activities and so can be an excellent tool for building alignment amongst the intervention's stakeholders, funders and delivery team. Completing the template can also expose any gaps and allow any core assumptions to be sense-checked in the planning stages, such as *"Are the resources listed sufficient to support the planned activities?"*

Using the logic model, indicators of change (outputs, outcomes, impact) can be derived for the program evaluations (see Appendix A for a completed example). During, or after, creating the logic model the *outcomes* and *impacts* described for the intervention should be compared with the community and systemic outcomes described within the Theory of Change. This is key for connecting evaluations so that individual interventions can be compared with progress towards systems-level change. As shown in the Venn diagram in Figure 2, it is not necessary for all of the interventions' outcomes and/or impacts to align with the Theory of Change, however, it is important that some correspondence between the intervention and systems change logics are identified and highlighted.

Fundamentally, by explicitly stating how the outcomes of individual interventions are aligned with the strategy described by the Theory of Change, a hypothesis for how one or more programs can be said to drive systemic change is produced. Then, through the course of conducting measurement and evaluation of the program and the relevant systemic change, the results can be compared to develop evidence for the *contribution* of the City's efforts to delivering the community vision for change.

2. Engaging the Right Stakeholders

Determining who needs the be involved to design and implement a successful evaluation

It is important to have a diversity of stakeholders involved throughout the evaluation process to ensure that the evaluation explores the right questions in the right way. The City must leverage its networks to include partnering NGO and government agencies, peers with lived experience of the issues, and business owners and community members. Taking time to think about who the key stakeholders are for an evaluation process is an important step to ensure the results reflect the different views and experiences within the community.

Last, it is essential to have a backbone of the evaluation to coordinate and facilitate the process of developing and employing the framework. This ensures consistency and accountability to the community in the process of employing the framework and to ensuring that the outcomes are translated into change and decision-making. The City could work with an external consultant for evaluation and research support, in combination with local evaluators who are from and within Prince George to leverage relationships and increase engagement, particularly when collecting data from community members.

This requires support and coordination from the evaluation backbone team, as well as evaluation training for the on-the-ground evaluators. Evaluation training should cover the following topics:

1. Evaluation scope and process to date to ensure the evaluators have the necessary background information
2. Outline roles and responsibilities for the data collection
   a. Collecting data through surveys and interviews with the community, business owners, project coordinators/managers, and intervention clients
   b. Helping people work through surveys, answering questions that people might have about the evaluation
   c. Keeping track of who you are engaging to ensure adequate representation
   d. Developmental evaluation and taking notes about the evaluation process – What is challenging? Which questions do people find tough? Are people taking this seriously?
   e. Inputting the data into the City's portal
3. An opportunity to ask questions

These evaluation sprints include all data collection processes, including community and organization-wide surveys, key informant interviews, and focus-group conversations. A few considerations when collecting data:

- It is important to approach respondents with enthusiasm and explain why this was done and what the information will be used for by the City
- Ensure that the surveys take no longer than 10 minutes to complete and remove duplication of questions
- Technology skills/texting skills are helpful – online survey platforms have the option to use talk-to-text or manual transcribing
- Sometimes, it could be helpful to have a neutral evaluator so that people can freely share what they think
- Having evaluators with existing relationships with target groups increases trust with those individuals, making them more likely to participate

3. Setting Evaluation Questions and Collecting Data

Defining what to evaluate and how, following four steps: (1) defining evaluation questions, (2) defining indicators (3) Creating data collection methods and (4) conducting data analysis and validation

Defining evaluation questions

As with other forms of research or investigation, the heart of evaluation is in collecting evidence to answer questions. To ensure that we are measuring the right things to support strategic learning, we must determine the right questions to ask by defining our Evaluation Questions. In this evaluation framework, it is assumed that each intervention will require its own set of evaluation questions but those questions are aligned with the overarching Evaluation Questions for the framework.

While planning an evaluation, evaluators will need to refine their own Evaluation Questions in the context of their subject and the scope of their evaluation. However, this framework can offer some guidance to support generating suitable questions using the Theory of Change and the Logic Model for the given intervention.

Recall that the Theory of Change and the Logic Models each describe the path to the desired impact in terms of distinct steps or milestone outcomes. As an evaluation team, examine each of these intermediate changes and consider the following prompts to get started:

- **Is the change occurring?**
    - If so, by how much?
    - Are things changing for better or worse? How is it received by those it affects?
    - Who does the change impact? Is it reaching the right target groups? Who else does it affect?
    - Is it changing people's attitudes, behaviors, or understanding?
- **Is the change connected to the activities of the program, and vice versa?**
    - Is the observed change correlated with program performance?
    - Are those delivering the intervention gathering feedback and data? Are they using this information to adapt their operations?
    - How is the delivery process performing? What should be strengthened and what can be improved?

Again, these are prompts to support evaluators in generating their own evaluation questions as suited to their scope. Not all of the above questions need to be used and may not be relevant in the given context. The specific context may also suggest other relevant questions that do not correspond to any on the list. The important element here is that evaluators create questions that are phrased with language that speaks directly to the topic of the evaluation.

For example, the Community Safety Hub facilitates a number of working groups involving agencies and service providers working within the city with the aim of increasing collaboration between those agencies and throughout the city.

Program Output: Community Safety Hub working groups build relationships and increase collaboration.
Possible Evaluation Questions:

- Which agencies are being brought together through working groups and how often?
- What do these agencies consider valuable about these working groups? What have been the results?
- What is the experience of these meetings, and what can be done to support or improve the process?

Program Outcome: Increased information sharing and coordination between partner agencies.
Possible Evaluation Questions:

- Which agencies have been collaborating with each other outside of the Community Safety Hub and how?
- Has collaboration been increasing and in what way?

Defining Indicators

An indicator represents some value that could, directly or indirectly, be measured or monitored as a means of tracking the progress of the systems change initiative or interventions. Evaluation questions and indicators go hand-in-hand, as indicators can typically be inferred from well-developed evaluation questions but considering how indicators can vary by category or across target groups could also help refine evaluation questions. Therefore, this is a process that benefits from one or two cycles of iteration, which should be conducted with participation from the key stakeholders who can validate the questions and advise on available data sources for the proposed indicators (Table 1).

Evaluation Question	Example Indicators
Are there notable trends in bylaw incidents over time?	“Number of bylaw incidents” (Type of bylaw incidents)
Are people satisfied with the cleanup services downtown?	“Community satisfaction” (Satisfaction broken by demographic groups)
What do partner agencies find valuable about the community safety hub?	“Comments and perspectives from agency members”

Table 1 Example Evaluation Questions and corresponding Indicators

Creating Data Collection Methods

As evaluation questions help inform the selection of indicators, indicators often suggest how data can be collected, for example, if data could be collected from existing data tracked during program delivery or via community surveys or interviews. There are many possible methods and approaches used to collect data for use in evaluation; for simplicity, we list some common approaches that can be highly effective when used correctly.

Program data: Program data refers to data that is collected during the routine operation of an intervention. This data is often, but not always, quantitative as can be used to answer questions relating to the scale, reach, speed, and variety of incidents or services. During the early stages of planning an evaluation it is important to engage with stakeholders (e.g., the City’s GIS services) who may have access to relevant databases or advise on available data.

Existing documents: Evaluations do not occur in a vacuum and other municipal, provincial, or national organizations may be collecting and publishing data relevant to the proposed evaluation. These documents can apply to individual interventions but are especially useful for data relevant to the systemic evaluation. Possible examples could include the quarterly clean-up reports from Downtown Prince George, the City of Prince George Housing Needs Report, BC Integrated Data Project: Preventing and Reducing Homelessness: An Integrated Data Project, or the National Census. When considering such existing data sources it is useful to note if the report is a standalone document or part of a regular commitment (e.g., the census), as this would allow evaluators to more easily track changes in relevant indicators over time.

Surveys: Surveys provide a convenient and scalable means of collecting data from individuals who are most affected by systemic challenges or specific interventions. Surveys are flexible and can be delivered in a number of ways as needed, for example, delivered to the whole community via social media, targeted to specific groups via email, or face-to-face, with the latter being especially relevant when engaging with vulnerable populations.

Interviews: A key principle in this evaluation framework was to balance quantitative data with gathering stories from a variety of individuals who can speak to their diverse lived experiences. Interviews are the best approach to gather these stories and we suggest using semi-structured interviews, which make use of a small number of specific questions but also allow for the conversations to proceed forward naturally and encourage the interviewer to ask unscripted “follow-ups” based on the participants' responses. An example interview guide used in the development of the evaluation framework is provided in Appendix B.

When determining the methods and data collection tools for the evaluation a useful design principle is *triangulation*. This involves approaching the same indicator or evaluation question using multiple methods that provide independent validation of the findings, as well as allowing the issue to be investigated more richly. For example, surveys can be used to ask stakeholders' opinions or satisfaction on service delivery and cross-referenced with trends seen in program data; follow-up interviews could then be used to ask a subset of participants why they were satisfied or unsatisfied or to understand their perspectives of the observed trends.

Data collection methods will depend on each intervention being evaluated and whether or not data is regularly collected as part of the intervention. When interventions do not conduct regular data collection, we recommend collecting baseline data within evaluation sprints over a 3-4 week period, based on the data collection methods created for each program and system change outcome. Otherwise, as a best practice, is it helpful to have reliable and consistent data collection processes embedded within interventions. That way, the data collection process during an evaluation can be coordinated with existing data sources from interventions.

The final step is to validate the questions with key stakeholders, checking for relevance and applicability, readability, and a general sense check that these measures to be included will produce data to help us understand the initial scope and purpose of the evaluation. This also includes adding any specific questions for each intervention that the City wants to explore based on their contextual knowledge of the program.

Once the evaluation questions, indicators, and data collection methods have been selected and validated by stakeholders, it is useful to summarize this information together using a form, such as the template below, showing an example (Table 2).

Program Outcomes (Logic Model)	Evaluation Question	Indicator	Method and Data Source	Survey/Interview Questions (I.A.)	Notes
Increase in Bylaw Patrols	Are there notable trends in bylaw incidents over time?	"Number of bylaw incidents" (Type of bylaw incidents)	Quantitative program data	Number of incidents by category	
Program Outcomes (Logic Model)	**Evaluation Question**	**Indicator**	**Method and Data Source**	**Survey/Interview Questions (I.A.)**	**Notes**
Everyone feels safer and has positive experiences downtown	How do community members perceive safety in downtown Prince George?	Everyone feels safer and has positive experiences downtown	Quantitative and qualitative community surveys	How safe do you feel downtown? What contributes to your sense of safety downtown?	

Table 2 Example summary of Evaluation Questions, indicators, methods and data sources, survey/interview questions, and notes for program and systems outcomes

Conducting Data Analysis and Validation

Once the data have been collected, it needs to undergo a basic cleaning and consolidation, and quantitative and qualitative analysis. Cleaning the data involves ensuring that the data is complete and editing the transcripts, so they are legible and have correct spelling and grammar. The quantitative analysis involves creating basic visualizations and descriptive statistics from the findings – graphs, pie charts, averages, medians, modes, sample size, etc. The qualitative analysis typically takes the form of *thematic analysis* – finding the key themes within the long-answer data that entails searching across a data set to identify, analyze, and report repeated patterns.

There are various approaches to conducting thematic analysis, but the most common form follows a six-step process, first outlined by academics Braun and Clarke: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up.

1. **Familiarization:** Transcribing data: reading and re-reading; this step requires the researcher to be fully immersed and actively engaged in the data by firstly transcribing the interactions and then reading (and re-reading) the transcripts and/or listening to the recordings. Initial ideas should be noted down.
2. **Coding:** Noting down initial codes, which are the features of the data that appear interesting and meaningful.
3. **Generating themes:** Start the interpretive analysis of the collated codes, sorting and combining the codes into overarching themes that represent relationships and patterns in the data and recording key supporting quotations for each.
4. **Reviewing themes:** Working with diverse stakeholders to review the themes and the data within them to ensure that the themes are coherent and robust.
5. **Defining and naming themes:** Reviewing the themes and generating concise language and clear names and definitions for each.
6. **Writing up:** Prepare a write-up of the themes, including supporting quotations and the preliminary analysis of the data.

Once the preliminary quantitative and qualitative data have been created, they need to be validated by the evaluation team as a group, to ensure that the findings represent the sentiment of what they heard on the ground. This review could be held in a group conversation or asynchronously, with evaluators providing comments and feedback on findings.

4. Sensemaking and Interpretation

Sensemaking with diverse stakeholders to explore the data and make meaning from the evaluation findings.

Sensemaking is a process by which people give meaning to their collective experiences. In this framework, collective sensemaking is an essential step to ensure that the evaluation conclusions are community-informed and directed. The collective sensemaking process is similar to the co-design sessions involving key stakeholders from across the system – we will engage as many stakeholders as possible in the interpretation of the evaluation findings to derive meaning and inform decision-making. This collective meaning-making will help to explore how the current interventions contribute to the systems change we want to see, how resources can be better allocated, and what we need to do to realize our shared vision for safety, cleanliness, and inclusion.

Collective Sensemaking Process and Questions

This step involves hosting and facilitating a participatory session with diverse stakeholders to explore the data, key themes and patterns, and make meaning from the evaluation findings. This will involve three levels of thinking:

1. **What is happening?** Gathering descriptions about the data and what they see.
2. **So what?** Gathering insight, interpretation, and judgement of the key evaluation questions.
3. **Now what?** Action-focused discussion about recommendations on where to go from here.

Participants

For the baseline collective sensemaking workshop, participants from the original co-design sessions were invited to participate in a 2-hour workshop to look at the sprint data. Participant diversity should consider:

- Users and stakeholders of the service, intervention, or program
- People involved in making decisions about the design of the service
- People whose work will be directly affected by the outcomes of the evaluation, such as community members, unsheltered people, service providers, and business owners

Facilitation of the Collective Sensemaking Workshop

Facilitators should be a neutral body to encourage collaboration and sharing – the purpose of sensemaking is to hear from as many people as possible and to ask questions about why patterns exist. The facilitator should pose questions related to the initial scope of the evaluation, including the intervention outcomes, strategic learning, and systems change which could lead to the following results:

- Improvements to the quality of intervention delivery
- Reallocation of City resources
- Development of a new intervention
- Expansion of an existing intervention

The sensemaking workshop could be hosted in person, or an online environment using suitable software tools. The workshop should have a main plenary space and breakout space for smaller, more targeted conversations. See Appendix C for an example agenda for a sensemaking workshop.

Drawing Recommendations

Once the data has been analyzed and the sensemaking workshop is complete, the next step is to review the input from the community sensemaking, integrate these findings with the analysis and synthesis conducted by the evaluation team, draw conclusions and make recommendations for change. These recommendations should be based on the trends, patterns, and themes from the data collective sensemaking interpretations and the gathered evidence.

The dual approach of combining evaluator analysis with community sensemaking ensures that decisions and recommendations that affect the community are not solely left to “expert analysts” and that feedback from the community is validated and contextualized in terms of the available evidence. Recommendations translate these evaluation findings into action – including program funding and resource decisions, program modifications and improvements, and how to fill gaps in service delivery.

Some simple steps for making recommendations include:

1. Review program logics and evaluation goals
2. Review data
3. Review sensemaking content
4. Extract any action items from the findings
5. Triangulate these action items and ensure they are well supported from the findings
6. Explore what the recommendation *could* do in the community and ensure that it matches the Guiding Star Objective and Systems Change
7. Validate the recommendation with diverse stakeholders

5. Reporting and Communications

Sharing findings back to the community to influence change

Reporting describes how the evaluation data and findings will be presented back to the community. It is an important step of the PGCSI framework because it will ensure that the evaluation is translated to influence change and inform decisions. There are a few key considerations to guide the evaluation report development process:

- Target audience
- Purpose of the evaluation
- Communications tools

It is recommended that there are two versions of the evaluation report – the full report that includes all data and interpretations and a summary that is written to be high-level and more accessible for community use. The summary should present key findings only in accessible language so that the community can use the information to inform their decisions and programs. The reports should describe, in varying detail:

1. **Summary** – to succinctly inform the audience about the highlights of the evaluation
2. **Background** – the overview or introduction to describe the purpose and context for which the evaluation was undertaken and why it was done, as well as introducing any programs that are being evaluated
3. **Methodology** – the approach taken to answer the evaluation questions and data collection tools
4. **Key findings and interpretations** – to convey the most important results and sensemaking findings and to explore what the results mean in relation to the evaluation questions
5. **Conclusions** – recommendations and lessons learned, describing how the data can inform future decisions around programs and services

For both versions, it is important to source data and prepare the reports according to accessibility standards.

Communications

Effective translation and dissemination of the evaluation findings require a plan to get the right knowledge to the right people at the right time. Being intentional about communications mechanisms will ensure that the report is shared with the community and is accessible to multiple stakeholders including The City of Prince George, the users of the City's interventions and the respective program agencies and coordinators, and the public (e.g. other community members, researchers, partnering agencies, and external stakeholders). The information must be communicated clearly and on media accessible to them. Suggested tools include:

- Share the formal report with City councilors to inform future decisions around City priorities and funding
- Host a community report launch evening at The City, for community members to learn about the evaluation process and receive a copy of the report
- Share highlights on social media and the City's Open Data dashboards
- Circulate the reports among the program agencies and coordinators

Conclusion

This document provided some specific processes, principles, and practices for conducting evaluations using the PGCSI framework. The basic steps for conducting an evaluation are:

- **Step 1: Framing the Change Logic**
- **Step 2: Engaging the Evaluation Team**
- **Step 3: Setting the Evaluation Questions and Collecting Data**
- **Step 4: Sense-making and Interpretation**
- **Step 5: Communications and Reporting**

It is also important to continually "evaluate the evaluation" process, building in collective retrospection after an evaluation to determine how to refine the evaluation process based on what we have learned. Topics could include:

- Refinements to the Theory of Change — defining new outcomes and indicators that are more specific and relevant to the shared vision for the community
- Refinements to the data collection process — identifying different sources of qualitative and/or quantitative data that better align with the Theory of Change, allow for a more complete or more accurate representation of the situation, or engages with a larger number of people or target underrepresented perspectives.

This is the start of an ongoing evaluation process The City and its programs should employ to deeply understand the program and systems change impacts on safety, cleanliness, and inclusion. Ultimately, the better the data, the better the evaluation and we recommend embedding data collection processes into programs and within the community so there is more collective data to explore as a community and inform strategic learnings and future decisions.

Appendix A: Example Logic Model

Logic Model

CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE

Resources	Activities	Providers	Beneficiaries	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
The raw materials that have been invested or need to be invested to deliver the program. This can include: • Funding • Physical materials (e.g. building supplies) • Infrastructure (such as software tools) • Specific skills and/or expertise • The time of staff and collaborators. e.g. Funding and construction materials to build new sheltered housing for vulnerable groups.	The distinct services or actions that are delivered by program staff to deliver the program. Some programs serve to support or facilitate other services and it is important to separate the program activities from those of the service they support in the logic model. e.g. The building and maintenance of new housing, assessing client needs and distributing available "units" accordingly, administration and management.	The agencies or organizations accountable for the delivery of the program, e.g. BC Housing which fund and maintain the new housing.	These are the groups that the program is in service of and whose outcomes will be positively impacted by the success of the program. In some circumstances, it may be helpful to distinguish between the primary beneficiary who are the individuals in direct receipt of the service and others who will benefit from more downstream effects. e.g. Unsheltered individuals who require stable housing whilst undergoing mental health treatment.	The desired results from your target individuals' interaction with the program's services or activities. Outcomes often relate to the successful receipt of a service or use of resources provided and if that service/resource was perceived positively. e.g. Increased access to safe stable housing is provided to those who need it.	Outcomes are the follow-on effects from an individual having engaged with the program activities i.e. having received a service/resource what the individual or group expected to do next. How should their immediate behaviours or attitudes change? e.g. Providing stable housing leads to better treatment	Indicate downstream effects of the program and refer to how positive outcomes may spread from an individual to target groups or from target groups to the wider population or shift conditions within the system. e.g. More vulnerable individuals have improved mental health and feel more engaged and welcome within the community.

Assumptions

External Factors

Known data / evaluation

Appendix B: Interview Guide for Primary Research

Design Team Interview Questions

Before Interview: Introduction and project background

- Thank the participant for setting time aside
- Introduce self and role
- Provide project background and explain the purpose of the interview
- Explain that the interview is private and that findings will be presented in aggregate
- Point out that the interviewee does not have to answer any questions or provide information that they do not feel comfortable sharing

Part 1: Unpacking Cleanliness, Safety, and Inclusion

Goal: understand each individual's perspective on cleanliness, safety, and inclusion; begin to unearth what each individual understands of the root causes of the issues Prince George is facing.

1. We would love to know a bit more about you before we get into things. How long have you lived in Prince George? How long have you been in your current role?
2. In the context of Prince George and from your own perspective, what does cleanliness mean? What does safety mean? What does inclusion mean?
3. From your own perspective, what do you think is the most pressing issue that the city of Prince George is facing? Why do you think this is the most pressing issue?

Part 2: Exploring Interventions

Goal: uncover assumptions that are implicit in existing interventions; understand the role that different stakeholders play in City interventions

1. Depending on the interviewee, mention the city interventions they are involved in and ask what they consider the goal of the intervention.
    - 1.1 Can you think of some of the assumptions that have been made in relation to these interventions?
    - 1.2 Are you aware of any current data or indicators that are being used to monitor this intervention? What are you responsible for measuring? Who provides funding? Who are the external bodies that you need to report to?

2. Do you think there are any conflicts between this intervention and any others you're aware of? Do any interventions work against each other?
3. "What is the definition of done, what needs to be different for you to think that this intervention is not needed anymore?"

Part 3: Understanding Relationships

Goal: identify the existing networks of collaboration that exist, including areas of possible tension and misalignment; understand how stakeholders want to work together

1. Who else do you work closely with on existing interventions?
    - 1.1 How do you work together? Are you responsible for different aspects of implementing an intervention?
    - 1.2 Is there anything you would do to improve the collaboration you have with this other organization?
    - 1.3 How do you deal with conflicting priorities when working with other stakeholders?
2. Where do you see a need for stronger collaboration and coordination across different groups that could help to advance the goals of the interventions?

Part 4: Other Resources

Goal: identify who else in the community we should engage with; participant list for co-design sessions; other sources of information

1. Of all the organizations and individuals we've mentioned so far, is there any you think we've missed and should take more time to look into?
2. Depending on how we decide to curate the participant list - Do you have any names of individuals that you think should be attending the co-design sessions?
3. Are there any sources of information that you think would be helpful for us to use as we continue our research? This could be raw data sources, articles, thought papers, or Facebook groups.

Community Member Interview Questions

Before Interview: Introduction and project background

1. Thank the participant for setting time aside
2. Introduce self and role
3. Provide project background and explain the purpose of the interview

4. Explain that the interview is private and that findings will be presented in aggregate
5. Point out that the interviewee does not have to answer any questions or provide information that they do not feel comfortable sharing

Part 1: Unpacking Cleanliness, Safety, and Inclusion

Goal: understand each individual's perspective on cleanliness, safety, and inclusion; begin to unearth what each individual understands of the root causes of the issues Prince George is facing.

1. We would love to know a bit more about you before we get into things. How long have you lived in Prince George? How long have you been in your current role? We want to know your understanding of the current reality, inclusive of all the different roles you might play. Not just as the [role], but as a community member as well.
2. In the context of Prince George and from your own perspective, what does cleanliness mean? What does safety mean? What does inclusion mean?
3. From your own perspective, what do you think is the most pressing issue that the city of Prince George is facing? Why do you think this is the most pressing issue?

Part 2: Exploring Interventions

Goal: uncover assumptions that are implicit in existing interventions; understand the role that different stakeholders play in City interventions

1. A lot of the research we've done so far is on different interventions or initiatives that the city and other community groups have implemented to improve conditions of safety, cleanliness, and inclusion. In your opinion, can you speak to some of the interventions you're aware of that you think have been successful?
    - 1.1 Why do you think it was successful?
    - 1.2. Is it still operating?
    - 1.3. What needs to be different for you to think that this intervention isn't needed anymore?

2. What about interventions or initiatives that you think have failed or just not worked out the way you imagined?
    - 2.1 Why do you think it failed?
    - 2.2. Is it still operating? Why? If not, was it replaced by something else?

Part 3: Understanding Relationships

Goal: identify the existing networks of collaboration that exist, including areas of possible tension and misalignment; understand how stakeholders want to work together

1. As [your role, position] what do you see as your role in improving the conditions of cleanliness, safety, and inclusion in Prince George?
2. Are there voices that you think are not being listened to as much as others? Do you have any thoughts on how those voices and perspectives can be better heard?
3. Where are the major sources of tension and conflict when it comes to improving the conditions of cleanliness, safety, and inclusion? How do you deal with conflicting priorities?
4. Do you foresee any sources of tension with the group of stakeholders we have invited to the workshops? I.e. with police, city, and Indigenous organizations in the same room working together?
5. Where do you see a need for stronger collaboration and coordination across different groups that could help to advance the goals and outcomes of improving conditions of safety, cleanliness, and inclusion in Prince George?

Part 4: Impact and evaluation

Goal: understand different perspectives of what impact can look like

1. Part of the work we are doing in collaboration with the team from the city of Prince George and other community members is actually building an evaluation framework. Do you have any previous experience conducting evaluations or using evaluation frameworks in your past work? If yes, what did you use it for? Was it a useful framework?
2. In terms of this project and the problems that the Prince George community is facing, what do you foresee as the intended purpose of evaluation? What is the impact you want to see out of this process?
3. What questions do you want the evaluation process to address?
4. What is it about an evaluation framework that you think might yield different results or outcomes than previous work?

Appendix C: Collective Sensemaking Workshop Agenda

Sensemaking overview agenda:

1. **Welcome and project introduction**
    - Welcome and introduce the facilitation team
    - Review the scope of evaluation
    - Overview of the process of developing the Theory of Change and data collection methods
2. **Purpose of today**
    - Brief explanation of what is sensemaking and why it is important
    - Review the flow of the day and agenda
3. **Break into smaller breakout groups** (5-8 participants)
    - Quick introductions
    - Review the preliminary evaluation data
    - Provide individuals time to review the evaluation results and preliminary data
    - Offer quick Q+A to clarify any outstanding questions about the data

4. **Breakout working session 1:** Program evaluation outcomes, collecting all content on Miro and encouraging as many people to share their ideas as possible for each of the three interventions
    - **What is happening?**
        - What patterns do you see?
        - What surprised you about the data?
        - What confirmed what you already know?
    - **So what?**
        - Why are these themes present?
        - What do these findings tell us about the program's effectiveness?
    - **Now what?**
        - What conclusions can we draw from this data?
        - What changes could be made to the program to increase its effectiveness?
5. **Plenary reflections**
    - Offer each group a few minutes to share any key learnings or insights
6. **Breakout working session 2: Systems evaluation outcomes**

- **What is happening?**
    - What patterns do you see?
    - What surprised you about the data?
    - What confirmed what you already know?
- **So what?**
    - Why are these themes present?
- **Now what?**
    - What conclusions can we draw from this data?
    - What changes could the City make to increase safety, cleanliness, and inclusion and achieve our community vision for systems change?

7. **Plenary reflections**
    - Offer each group a few minutes to share any key learnings or insights
8. **Wrap-up and next steps**
    - Thank everyone for participating
    - Share the process for synthesizing the content and writing the final report

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