



City of  
Courtenay

# Building Community



Better  
*together*

Presented by:  
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July 31, 2024, City Council Meeting

# Purpose

- To provide an overview of a proposed approach for the creation of a Community and Social Development Framework and Action Plan.
- To seek Council approval of the scope of the proposed work and the next steps.

# A City In Transition

## What is Courtenay's Unique Identity & Approach?

- Moving from a small municipality to a large urban centre.
- Massive environmental, economic, social and technological changes.
- Significant federal and provincial policy directives to address.
- Visible Impact: Poverty, homelessness, food insecurity...
- Less Visible Impact: Erosion of the social contract, community connectivity and sense of belonging.
- Increasingly, local governments called to community and social issue tables for support.

# The Promise Of Community

“No Society has the money to buy, at market prices what it takes to raise children, make a neighbourhood safe, care for the elderly, make democracy work, or address systemic injustices...

The only way the world is going to address social problems is by enlisting the very people who are now classified as “clients” and “consumers” and converting them into co-workers, partners and rebuilders”

Asset Based Community Development For Local Authorities, 2020

# A Key Deliverable

A framework and an action plan, co-created by internal and external leads within the community and social development sector, designed to build community and to support social-well being of people living in Courtenay.


A long term integrated framework that helps us think, act and work together in new ways to change the conditions that impact the quality of life in Courtenay.

A plan that will enable the City to identify priorities; clarify our role with respect to community and social development; align tools to address complex issues; enhance partnerships and innovative approaches; and make decisions based on evidence.

# Strategic Context

# Courtenay's OCP

Provides vision, goals, and cardinal directions ...



**VISION**  
Courtenay is responsible for the future, supporting high quality of life with a low-carbon footprint for all.  
*Full OCP Vision stated on page 22*

**GOALS**

- Land is valued as a precious resource*
- Housing choices for all*
- Strong neighbourhoods*
- Functional transportation choices*
- More space for and time in nature*
- Love for local culture & places*
- A City for everyone*
- Economic success emerges from community values & place*
- Investing in relationships*

# Courtenay's OCP

Provides clear direction with respect to approach:

- Collective Asset Based Action
- Policy Addressing the Determinants of Health

Illuminates thematic policy areas aligned with the determinants of health

Significant volume of objectives and policies

- Requires strategic plan for action and implementation





# Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

- Community Driven
- **Relationship** Oriented
- Asset Based
- **Place** Based
- Inclusion Focused

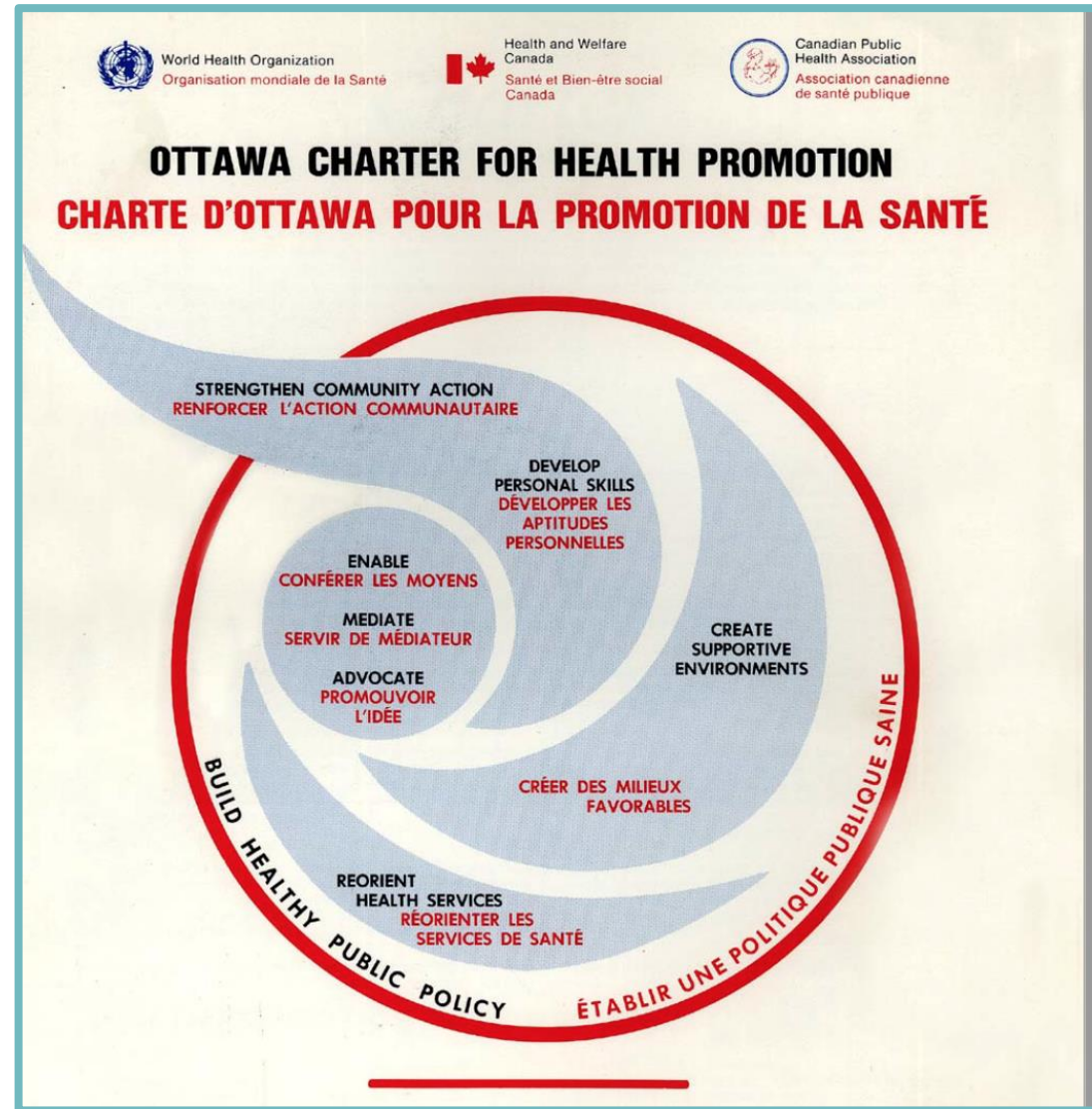
	Deficit Based	Asset Based
<b>Purpose</b>	Changing Community through increased services	Changing community through community involvement
<b>Method</b>	Institutional reform	Community -oriented production
<b>Accountability</b>	Leaders are professional staff accountable to institutional leads	Leaders are widening circles of volunteers accountable to the community
<b>Significance of Assets</b>	Assets are systems inputs. Asset mapping is data collection	Assets are relationships to be discovered and connected. Asset mapping is self-realization and leadership development.
<b>Production Resource</b>	Money is the key resource. Fails without money.	Relationships are the key resource. Falls apart when money is the focus.
<b>Operating Challenge</b>	How do we get community involved?	How do we channel and build on all of this community participation?
<b>System Dynamic</b>	Tends to Spread itself thinner over time	Tends to snowball over time
<b>Evaluation</b>	Success is service outcomes measured by institutional leaders	Success is capacity measured mostly by relationships.

# Determinants of Health Approach

Also known as  
a **Health Promotion (HP)**  
approach

Detailed in the **Ottawa  
Charter**

(Ottawa, 1986)

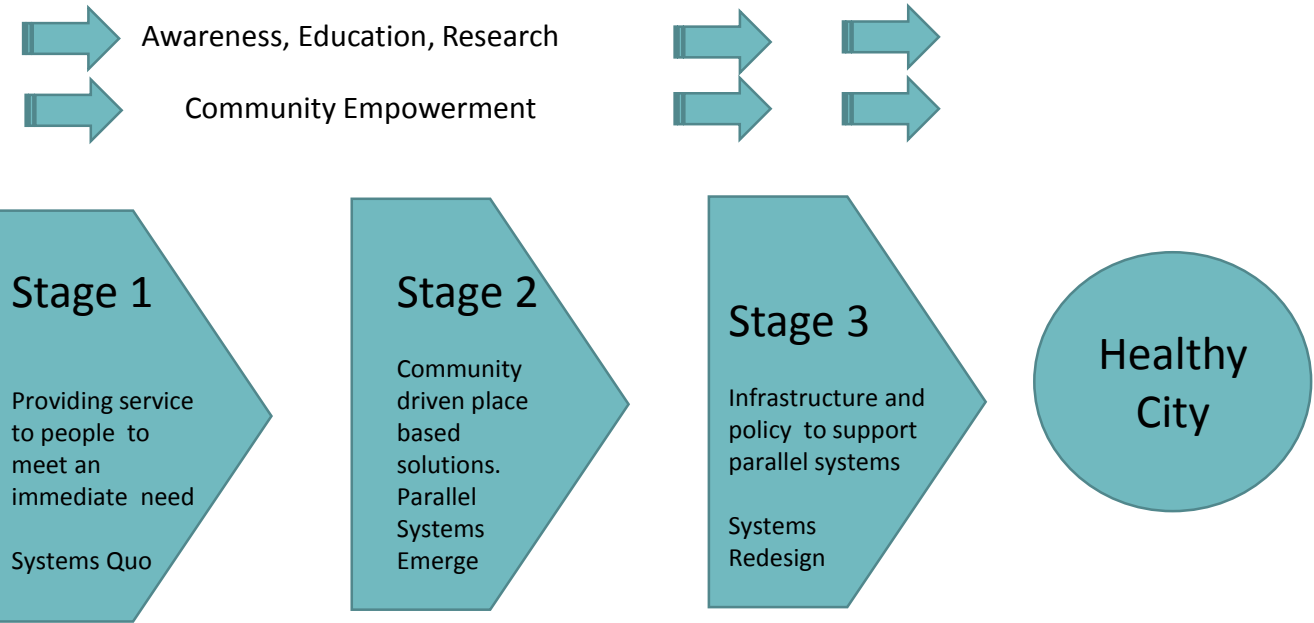


# ABCD & HP in Practice

## Community Builders & System Change Agents

- Convening
- Visioning
- Asset mapping
- Connecting assets
- Pollinating ideas

## Strengthening Community Action



Housing

Emergency Shelter – blankets, beds

HomeShare  
Habitat for Humanity  
Housing Co-ops

Provision of Land, buildings, to support parallel systems.

Food

Emergency Food - snacks, meals hampers

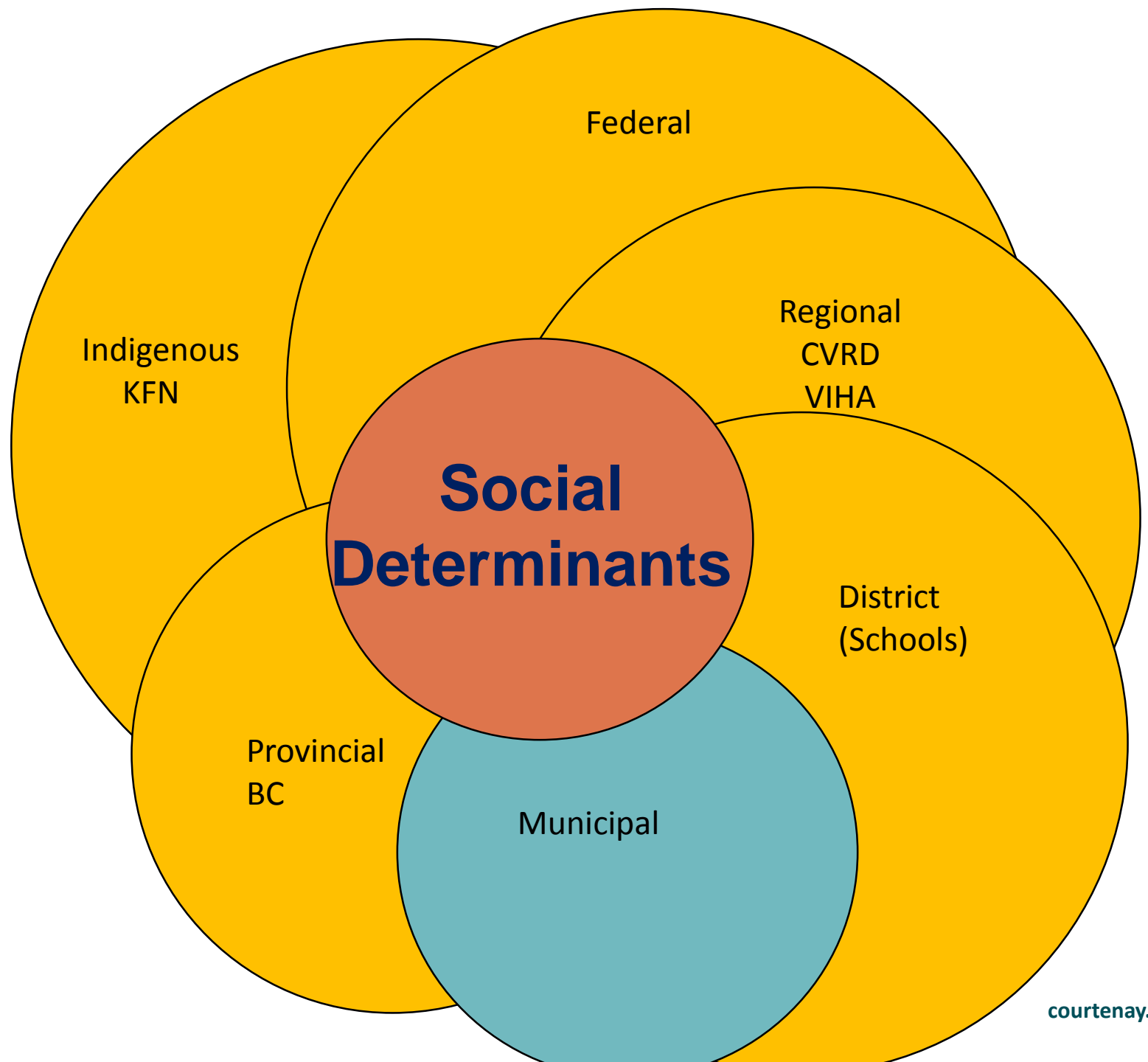
Community gardens, kitchens, food hubs, farmers markets

Realignment or creation of new, policy to support parallel systems

# Community Context

# The Political Context

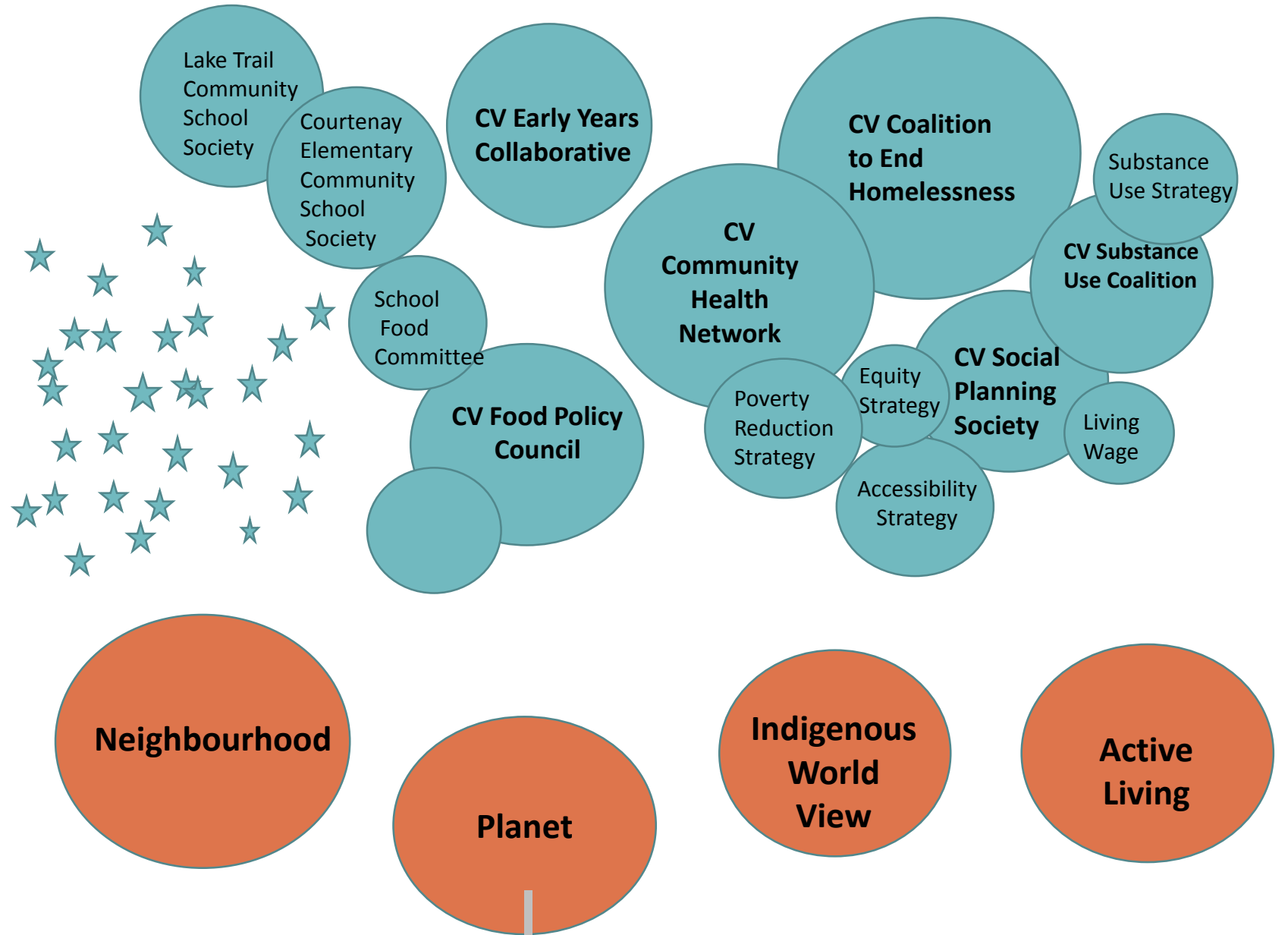
Multiple government agencies having varied & shared jurisdiction over social determinants



# A Caring Community Coming into View

191 Registered NPOs in  
Comox Valley

94 in Courtenay  
(Vital Signs, 2018)



# Community & Social Development

From Collective Framing to  
Collective Upstream Action

Across BC , municipalities are at tables with community collectively creating Community and Social Development frameworks, *strategies and plans.*

They seek to illuminate:

- The collective vision, principles, and priorities for work together;
- The collectively desired outcomes, and measures; and
- The roles, responsibilities and resources required of each partner.



Healthy City Framework (Vancouver, 2015)

Social Development Framework (Penticton, 2023)



# Emerging ABCD HP Framework For Courtenay

Two  
Emerging  
Strategies...

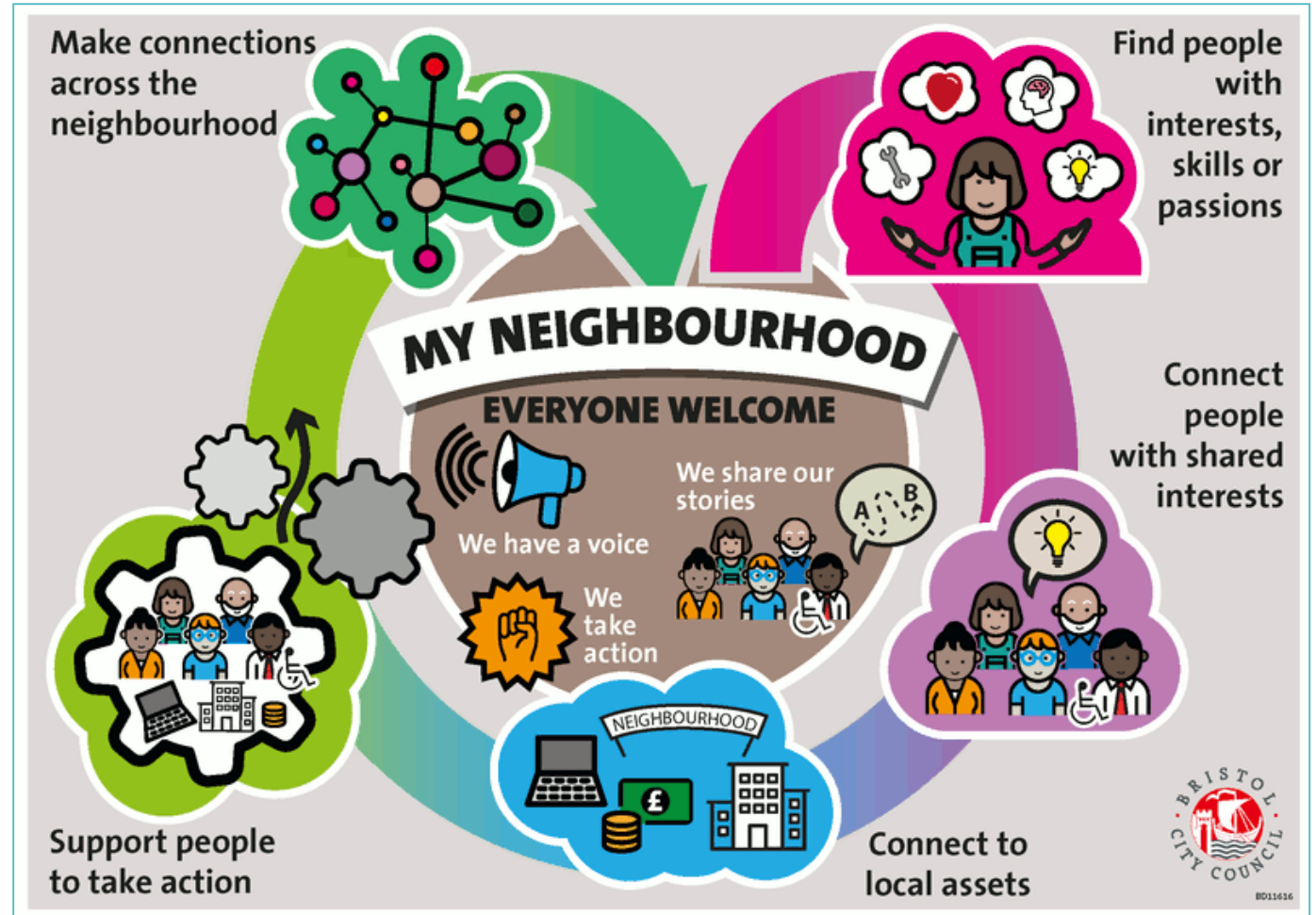


# Neighbourhood Network Strategy

## What:

A place-based strategy engaging neighbours in a variety of activities, strengthening relationships and increasing community resilience, and social wellbeing.

**Potential sites/opportunities:** to be combined with current planning work.



# Better Together Strategy

## What:

A strategy designed to strengthen relationships and build capacity amongst service providers working in the community and social development sectors – with a view to mobilize collective upstream action

## Potential Opportunities:

- Conference
- Lunch And Learns
- Mentoring program
- NIC HC program



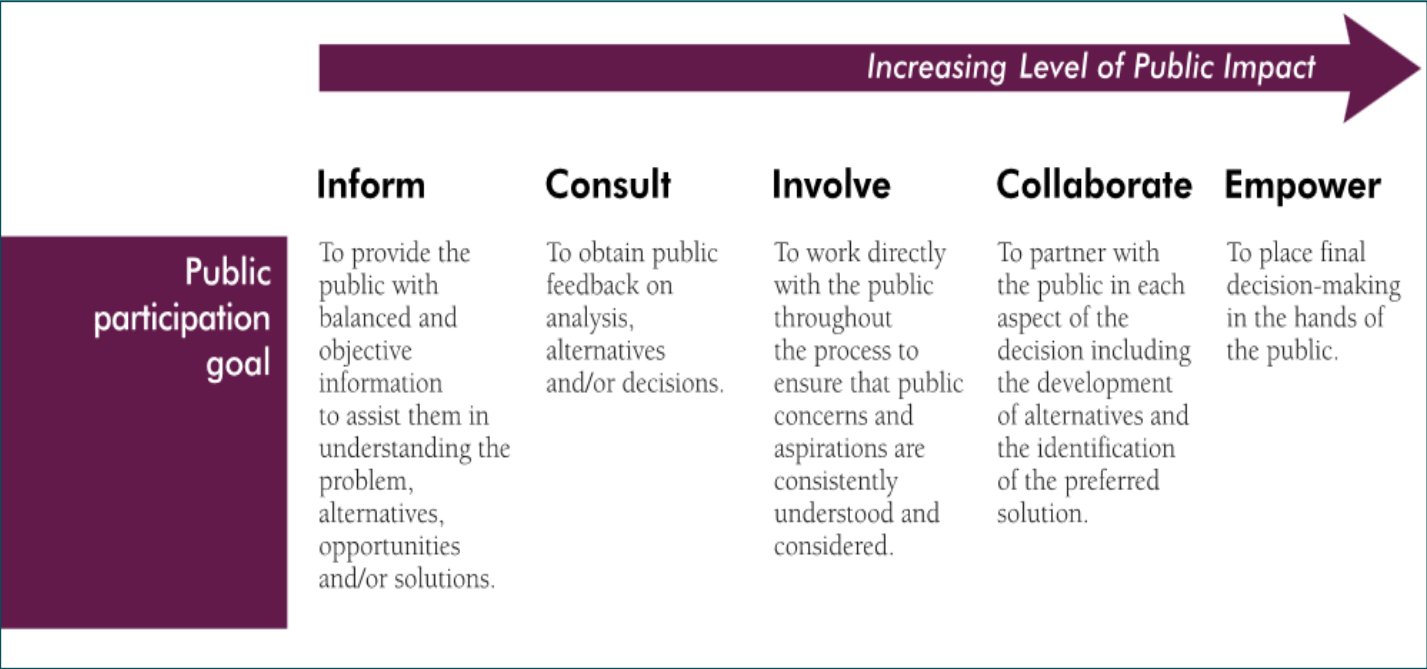
# How does it all come together?

Framework Foundations (Our Unique Approach)	City Role & Responsibility (Our Unique Self)	Strategies and Outcomes	Fit With OCP
Asset Based Community Development	Building relationships around place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Convening</li> <li>- Visioning</li> <li>- Asset mapping</li> <li>- Linking assets</li> <li>- Pollinating ideas</li> </ul>	<b>Neighbourhood Network Strategy</b> (Consider piloting work with planning activities, i.e. Harmston) <b>Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened relationships/trust</li> <li>• Increased neighbourhood capacity &amp; resilience</li> <li>• Enhanced communications</li> <li>• Alignment of City plans and policy with community aspirations, needs.</li> </ul>	Goals, Directions Approach  Policies Part C –SI 6,7, 8 and 16
Health Promotion/Determinants of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mobilizing Community Action towards systems change</li> <li>- Reorienting services</li> <li>- Creating healthy public policy</li> <li>- Building supportive environments</li> </ul>	<b>Better Together Strategy</b> (Support / facilitate capacity building and coordination of service providers) <b>Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened relationships/trust</li> <li>• Increased capacity</li> <li>• Enhanced communications</li> <li>• Map of assets, linkages amongst assets</li> <li>• Map of community action</li> <li>• Mobilization of collective upstream action</li> </ul>	Goals Directions, Approach  Policies Part C SI 1,6.7,8,14

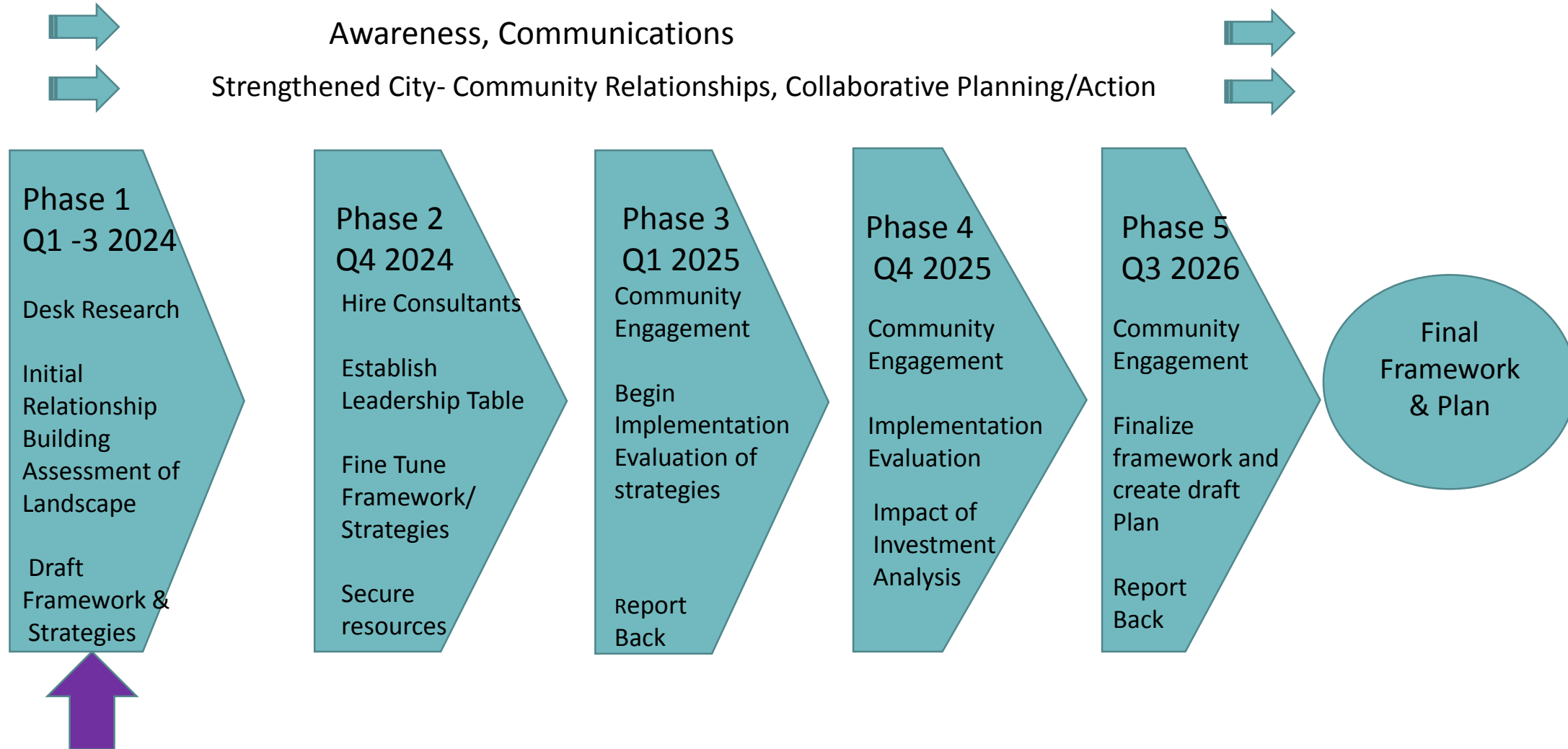
# Community & Partner Engagement Approach

Various levels of public input garnered through:

- A review of community engagement within City plans and strategies. (Public typically consulted)
- Leadership Table (Collaborate)
- Neighbourhood Network (Involve, Collaborate, Empower)
- Partners engaged with the Better Together Strategy (Involve, Collaborate)



# Project Timeline



# Summary

- Approach
  - ABCD & Health Promotion
  - Community & Partner Engagement
- Scope
  - City role & responsibility
  - Priorities
  - Resources
- Outcomes
  - Community and Social Development Framework and Action Plan
  - Neighbourhood Network Strategy
  - Better Together Strategy

*“A national reckoning is overdue. ... Communities must emerge as heroes in this crisis.... There is a pivotal role for individuals to help their neighbours and strengthen their communities and for policy makers to foster and enable these practices.”*

- “Community as the Superhero: Combatting Loneliness and Disconnection.” Tamarack Institute