



Applying Well-being Thinking to the Community Safety and Well-being Task Force Recommendations

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Task Force Recommendations into Implementation Actions

The RECOVER Catalyst Group reviewed the 14 recommendations from the Community Safety and Well-being Task Force. They focused on the six recommendations that could benefit from more community involvement and collaboration. The RECOVER Catalyst Group provided their insights and expertise to help develop the implementation actions in this attachment.

The RECOVER Catalyst Group and their Task

The RECOVER Catalyst Group is a diverse group of community leaders working to shift the well-being landscape, support prototypes, and learning. Their main roles are to act as advisers, networkers, funders and constructive critics. They met on April 27, 2021, to discuss the recommendations of the Community Safety and Well-being Task Force's Safer for All report. The group's task was to identify how RECOVER Urban Wellness might support the implementation of the recommended actions. Catalyst members identified ways to bring well-being thinking into the City of Edmonton's implementation plan.

Catalyst Group Insights on Community Safety

"I've found that grounding the conventional definition of public safety in actual communities to be both generative and illuminating. It becomes exceedingly clear that public safety is not merely the absence of physical threat; it is the presence of inclusive places shaped by equitable urban placemaking and policy. It is the visceral yet indescribable sense of belonging that is experienced in spaces which invite rather than tolerate differences. These places are concurrently sites of delight and community care, sites where we joyfully claim and cede space. Public safety is also characterized by grace and justice, where survival-based crimes like petty theft or sleeping on a park bench don't lead to state-sanctioned shaming or death. Ironically, public safety is not primarily achieved by the blunt force of law but by the stewardship and compassion of everyday people invested in collective community well-being."

- Jay Pitter, urbanist

This perspective articulated by urbanist Jay Pitter aligns with RECOVER Urban Wellness. Catalyst members agreed that community safety can only be achieved with the involvement of people/neighbours in communities.

Catalyst members shared many insights related to harnessing the power of community when trying to improve community safety. They shared ideas on the spectrum of possibilities that might exist adjacent to the status quo, ranging from quicker actionable shifts to longer-term systems changes.

Catalyst members said that if community safety is a three-legged stool, with two of the legs being police and social services, then we need to create the conditions for the third/community leg to grow. It is not about replacing professional services, but the need for *all* the legs to make it work.



Catalyst members said that we need to create the conditions for people to interact - neighbour-to-neighbour and peer-to-peer in communities. The interactions in communities could centre on reconciliation and should include all. The need for social infrastructure to support such networks was discussed (Examples can be found [here](#)). Social infrastructure is about relationships, trust, community networks and involves spaces, places, intentions and supports. It is about creating the conditions for better interventions, for stronger connections and relationships. It's also about bringing people together that aren't used to being together and/or working together.

It was suggested that the City could connect with communities that have a high sense of safety and community and have them share their lessons, learnings, approaches, with other communities, what their roles are, the steps they take to build relationships within their communities.

It was noted that communities need to feel they have a role; they need an invitation. We need to be really intentional with consultation/engagement with communities - ask them about what infrastructure they want/need. This includes communication and awareness and also goes beyond this.

Finally, catalyst members acknowledge that we need to create a progression for making the changes - that there are little steps along the way in creating the conditions for community safety, and that it is important to celebrate progress and learnings along the way.

Catalyst Group Insights on Well-being

Catalyst members felt that we needed to break down existing paradigms and apply the RECOVER [Well-being Framework](#) to the recommendations. **Thinking about the six kinds of connections and ALL of the tools/levers in the Well-being Framework was important.** Everyone agreed that the framework can act as a well-being lens and help build actionable items to support the Task Force recommendations.

Catalyst members commented that the theme of connection, which is at the heart of the framework, is important; that it is important to understand disconnection as a root cause for the lack of well-being and many safety issues. One member stated that relationship is everything and it is critical to connect people back to their home communities.

Catalyst members agreed that instead of focusing on coordination and other business practices, that things like healing, meaning, and culture need much more attention - and activities that support these things deserve to be funded.

Catalyst members shared many specific ideas for bringing the well-being lens into the development of the implementation plan. They said that to facilitate well-being that people in the community and in agencies who know street-involved people need to be involved. They could be activated to support follow-up from crisis calls, and even better, to provide upstream supports. It was emphasized that community-based efforts require more funding and resources.

One catalyst member asked how we might incentivize well-being outcomes. Many said that data is integral and should be a focus. One member emphasized that physical infrastructure has a role to play as well. Everyone agreed that even though we are trying to implement the recommendations fast, we need to do it right.

The Levers in RECOVER's Well-being Framework

Well-being isn't only shaped by physical infrastructure and social programming. It is also shaped by the stories we tell, the meanings we hold, the spaces we create, the rituals we practice, the norms we set, the roles we take on and the human moments we enable.

Well-being is not the sole responsibility of paid professionals nor the domain of one sector or one government department. It is a collective pursuit.

The levers that can be used to make changes are summarized below. Primary levers are assigned to each implementation action, even though several levers will be used for each action.

Laws, Regulations, and Incentives Lever

If community well-being is to be nurtured where people can connect, belong and flourish, then we need to research and test how to use governments' authorities and tools better. At a landscape level, changing the laws, regulations and incentives in a way that reinforces positive behaviours that strengthen well-being outcomes and disincentivize or punishes the creation of conditions of vulnerability, such as derelict housing. By reimagining the enforcement interactions that peace and bylaw officers must engage in, they can be leveraged as opportunities for engagement, learning and connection.

Roles and Resources Lever

As important as integrated service delivery models are, one risk is that they can centre on professional ways of knowing. When relying on professionals to run call evaluation and dispatch services, certain ways of framing or biases can flourish. What if we could bring lived experience and peer supports into the fold? What if people with lived experience could help to shape practices and scripts, bringing in their first-hand knowledge as service recipients? It is also about looking at our resources and if they are the best ones for getting at well-being outcomes. There are many community resources that could be tapped into.

Routines and Repertoires Lever

Routines refer to things that happen on a recurring basis; they reflect the patterns in our systems. Repertoires are the cache of actions and strategies people know to deploy in any given situation. When faced with a situation, and needing to act, we flip through our mental binder of options - possibly falling back on the old strategies, even if they don't really further our well-being. It is important to widen and deepen our repertoires. This can happen in a variety of ways including cultural learning, peer modelling, and positive feedback.

Interactions and Environments Lever

Interactions are what we come into contact with – from objects to other people. Your day is made up of hundreds of interactions: with your alarm clock, phone, shower, bus driver, barista, dog, pharmacist, park bench, the grass. It's through interactions that values get expressed or discarded. The kind nod from the bus driver versus the rushed, unempathetic pharmacist. Adding up all these interactions either gets us closer to or further away from different conceptions of wellness. With a different articulation of the pharmacist's role or changing the order so that a shower comes before making a phone call, we might arrive at a different kind of day.

Knowledge and Meanings Lever

It is a challenge to remove bias from data. At a time when we are being called to disrupt long-standing patterns of marginalization, we must commit to changing who and what we value and count. To measure what matters means moving beyond economic measures to ones that encompass human well-being and connection. This means valuing voice and experience and recognizing that well-being is dynamic, fluctuating over time and with context.

Frames and Narratives Lever

Frames and the dominant narratives related to them are the underlying mental models - the conscious and unconscious stories that we tell ourselves and others about any given situation. Framing leads us to focus on some aspects of a situation in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, possibly ascribe cause (and also moral evaluation), as well as the recommended course of action. Narratives are stories linked to social identity and reveal how people see experiences, constraints and opportunities. It is important to examine the frames and narratives, and in this case, to change them.

RECOVER Implementation Actions

RECOVER Catalyst Group members suggested actions and external partners who could be part of implementing the actions. These partners include REACH, post-secondary institutions, the public sector, social services agencies, community organizations and citizens. Many areas within Administration are also needed to move these actions forward.

These actions represent initial thinking and have not been vetted against feasibility or capacity to do the work within existing resources. Administration will undertake this work to determine which actions will have the greatest impact and align with other Community Safety and Well-being Task Force implementation actions.

Action Areas	Actions	Time Frame	Levers	Buckets
Different Ways of Thinking	Collaborate deeply and meaningfully with the people at the centre of the policies and strategies, designing solutions with them, instead of for them.	Long-term	Roles and Resources	Cross-Cutting Themes
	Refocus efforts from the question of 'how do we support vulnerable people' to the 'how do we stop people with resources and power from creating conditions of vulnerability'. This includes ensuring that affected/vulnerable people are at the decision-making and action tables.	Long-term	Laws, Regulations and Incentives	Prevention and Support
	Change the narrative of community safety towards understanding that community safety stems from the cultivation of trusting relationships, and being in kinship with each other.	Short-term	Frames and Narratives	Cross-Cutting Themes
Dispatch Centre	Increase the type of services that can be dispatched to include alternative care and social supports. This would include supporting mutual-aid collectives and working with communities to have them define and contribute to preventive approaches to community safety and well-being.	Medium-term	Roles and Resources	Integrated System & Coordinated Response
	Involve people with lived experience in reviewing and improving scripts for the call evaluation and dispatch staff. Create a feedback loop to learn from the experience of people calling dispatch to improve well-being outcomes for those on the receiving end of services.	Medium-term	Roles and Resources	Cross-Cutting Themes

	Determine the feasibility of hiring dispatch staff who have lived experience. This includes non-police staff and people with lived experiences of marginalization.	Medium-term	Roles and Resources	Integrated System & Coordinated Response
Financing	Using outcomes financing as a guide, work with the City and other funders to create more variety and fewer barriers for receiving funding. Create opportunities for sustainable funding that recognize the importance of investing time to develop relationships and nurture community trust.	Medium-term	Roles and Resources	Organizational Culture
	Invest in prototypes like Soloss, that promote new ways of understanding how community members can support each other to enhance community safety and well-being.	Short-term	Interactions and Environments	Social Responsibility
Community-Led Safety and Care	Research, design and test a separate entity offering alternative care for street-involved people, a mobile crisis response program, similar to CAHOOTS - Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets in Eugene, Oregon. The CAHOOTS team that responds consists of one medic (usually a nurse or EMT), with a crisis responder trained in behavioural health.	Long-term	Routines and Repertoires	Integrated System and Coordinated Response
	Invest in helping communities build their own safety plans/priorities, support the design and testing of neighbourhood-based approaches, and learn from those who have already begun.	Medium-term	Interactions and Environments	Social Responsibility
	Identify and support current and emerging neighbourhood/community-level mutual aid networks. Invest in follow-up support and prototype a community after-crisis care network that fosters community-based supports focused on well-being connections for those who have experienced crises.	Long-term	Interactions and Environments	Social Responsibility
Alternative Evaluation	Learn from RECOVER's evaluation prototype, Auricle, and look for opportunities to apply the learning. This involves: a) exploring data collection methods that are mutually beneficial to the people the data is being collected from, not just benefitting the data collector. b) collecting data in new ways that make more space for qualitative, experiential information.	Medium-term	Knowledge and Meanings	Social Responsibility

	c) apply the evaluation learnings to the alternative funding models and other new prototypes suggested in these actions.			
Healing Informed Care	Explore and test the concept of healing-informed practice with organizations, to supplement trauma-informed care. While understanding the influence of trauma is critical, providers also can build collective strengths — being mindful not to look at communities through a deficit-based lens.	Short-term	Frames and Narratives	Cross-Cutting Themes
Tickets to Well-being Prototype	Undertake a prototype that uses a ticketing interaction to strengthen well-being outcomes. Research the diversity of impacts of those that get ticketed and design and prototype new interactions that promote dignity, respect and connections to well-being. Engage the community in this prototype where citizens can offer wellness experiences to those receiving “tickets to well-being”.	Medium-term	Laws, Regulations and Incentives	Prevention and Support
Data Collection	Develop controls in the way the data is collected, used, stored, aggregated, and disposed of, so that data will not have the potential to be misused or abused in the future.	Medium-term	Knowledge and Meanings	Social Responsibility