

Community  
Safety and  
Well-being  
Strategy

**Community  
Collaboration  
Model  
Guidebook**

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[https://www.edmonton.ca/city\\_government/initiatives\\_innovation/community-safety-well-being-strategy](https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/initiatives_innovation/community-safety-well-being-strategy)

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## Community Safety and Well-being Strategy

The Community Safety and Well-being Strategy (CSWB Strategy) was approved by Edmonton's City Council on May 24, 2022 as a transformative and city-wide roadmap. Rooted in reconciliation, anti-racism and equity, the CSWB Strategy balances the need to address immediate concerns of community safety and well-being today with a root cause, long-term, prevention-focused approach across seven interconnected pillars of action.

The vision of the CSWB Strategy is that each person making Edmonton home feels a sense of purpose, safety, and stability, curated through connectedness to self, land, culture and each other and rooted in reconciliation, anti-racism, removal of systemic barriers and transformation of thinking, interacting and being.

*It's about **how**  
we work  
together just as  
much as what  
we work  
together on*

Implementing the CSWB Strategy involves multiple partners, including the City of Edmonton (City), community organizations, businesses and others. Together, these organizations work to achieve outcomes that improve social inclusion, connection and belonging, and address complex, systemic social challenges, such as houselessness, safety and racism.

The CSWB Strategy is described through guiding principles, pillars, and outcomes:

- Guiding Principles articulate the City's overall values and commitment to being data-informed, equity-based, person-centred, trauma-informed, and community-driven.
- Pillars represent the essential elements for success:
  - Anti-Racism
  - Reconciliation
  - Pathways in and out of Poverty
  - Equitable Policies, Procedures, Standards and Guidelines
  - Well-being
  - Crime Prevention and Crisis Intervention
  - Safe and Inclusive Spaces.

## Why Collaboration?

Achieving the vision and complex outcomes of the CSWB strategy is not the work of just one organisation. It is a collective effort - spanning community agencies, grassroots organisations, researchers, the private sector, other orders of government, the City, and beyond. A key principle of the CSWB Strategy is to be community-driven. Thus, community voice, partnership and participation is key to the success of the strategy.

Experience in the communities-serving sectors and good practice indicate that it is critical to collaborate to achieve more effective sector and community outcomes. Collaboration is essential to pool resources and for participating groups to gain access to more people resources, funding and visibility. New ventures, interventions, skills and knowledge are often gained through collaborating across sectors.

CSWB Strategy collaboration is intended to improve the health, capacity and effectiveness of the community safety and well-being ecosystem by:

- Enabling stronger priority-setting within sectors, identifying gaps and priorities collectively.
- Addressing long-standing, systemic challenges that are not currently being addressed by a single organisation or initiative.
- Reducing silos through awareness-building.

## What is the Community Collaboration Model?

The Community Collaboration Model (CCM) is how the City of Edmonton (City) is working with community partners, organizations and leaders to achieve the Community Safety and Well-being Strategy (CSWB) vision and outcomes over the coming years.

In developing the CCM, the CSWB Project Team sought ideas and inspiration from various community organizations and partners between April and November 2023. Collaboration governance concepts from Collective Impact<sup>1</sup>, Constellation Model<sup>2</sup>, and Challenge-Led Innovation<sup>3</sup> were also incorporated.

A comprehensive overview of feedback from 2023 is available in the [What We're Hearing Report](#). Participants shared about the need for more formalised ways to bring diverse partners together, build on good work that has been happening for decades, and identify new ways to address challenges. Specific feedback that has informed the development of the Community Collaboration Model includes:

- Being tolerant of failure. Many participants identified that working together differently requires new approaches, and risks always accompany innovation,
- Being trauma-informed/trauma-focused,
- Convening regular and consistent spaces to build rapport, trust, to keep people engaged and to maintain momentum,
- Incorporating living and lived experience, including end users of programs and services, front line staff, and using Human Centred Design principles,
- Being flexible to accommodate changes in communities' capacity, direction and priorities,
- Being sustainable over time through adequate resourcing and clear documentation so that the work is sufficiently supported, and the history isn't lost when there is political and organisational turnover, and
- At all times, a Community Collaboration Model must be able to answer: What's next? Who is doing what? Where are we going?

Using the feedback received, the CCM does not create a new series of committees nor is it a traditional, structured, or hierarchical model. Rather it builds on existing structure and organisations in the CSWB ecosystem in Edmonton, adding formality and intention where necessary. It is a loose and adaptable structure of "spaces" designed to amplify and bring connection to individuals and organisations working

*Achieving the bold vision of the CSWB Strategy will require adaptable and creative approaches to collaboration.*

<sup>1</sup> Collective Impact Forum. *What Is Collective Impact?* Collective Impact Forum. <https://collectiveimpactforum.org/what-is-collective-impact/>

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Social Innovation. *Constellation Model of Governance*. <https://socialinnovation.org/about/innovations-publications/constellation-model-of-governance/>

<sup>3</sup> Griffith Centre for Systems Innovation, Burkett, I., McNeill, J., Frohman, R., & Price, A. (2023, November). *Challenge-led Innovation: Organising for Systems Innovation at Scale*. [https://www.griffith.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0033/1881573/GCSI-Challenge-Led-Innovation-Workbook.pdf](https://www.griffith.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0033/1881573/GCSI-Challenge-Led-Innovation-Workbook.pdf)

on various challenges that all contribute to the CSWB vision for Edmonton. Reflecting the feedback about tolerance for failure and flexibility and responsiveness to shifts, the structure is explicitly intended to evolve and adapt as participants in the model learn together.

## Our Guiding Principles

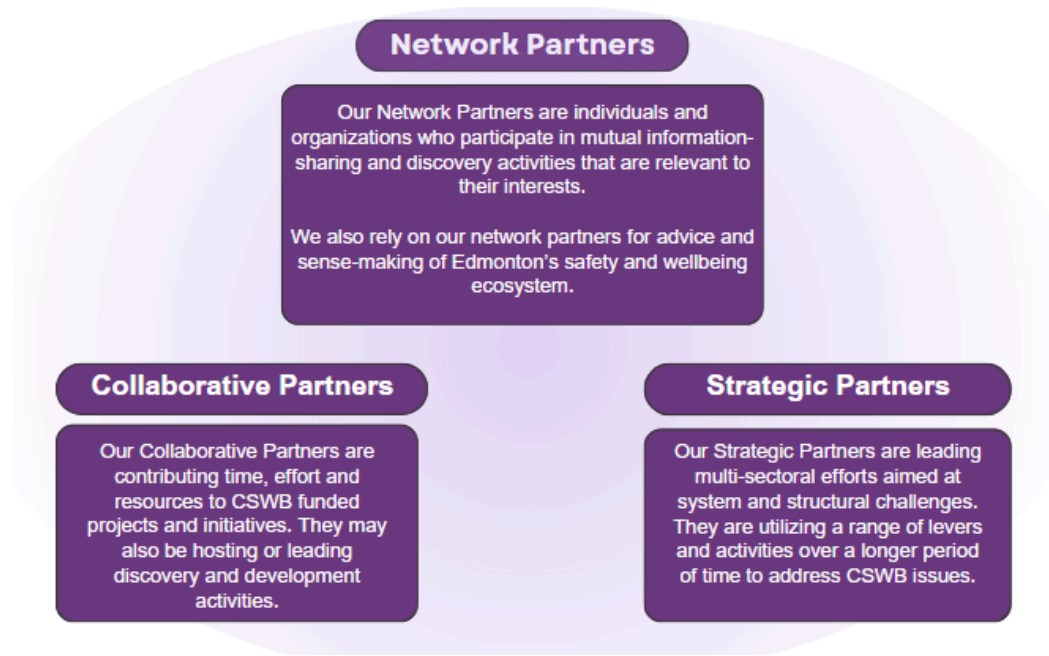
- **Community-driven:** The CCM will reflect CSWB's core principle of being community-driven and City-convened.
- **Building on existing collaborations:** The CCM builds on collaborations that have already been occurring for many years and is not intended to replace or disrupt collaborations, programs and activities. The model will build awareness and fill gaps, utilising capacity-building and convening to advance learning and allow for systems to adapt with fewer barriers.
- **Trust:** Collaborating requires time and relationship-building; collaboration will advance at the speed of trust.
- **Commitment to reconciliation:** Collaboration and relationship building will be done in a manner that lives up to the spirit and intent of the City's [Indigenous Framework](#).
- **Collective impact is the goal:** Individuals and organizations from different sectors and spheres will work together to achieve shared priorities.
- **Open invitation:** The CCM will operate with a principle of open invitation, striving to reduce and eliminate barriers to participation related to individual or organisational reputation, size, capacity and privilege.
- **Experience and knowledge:** Participation will be based on knowledge and experience, including lived and living experience, and the interest of organizations and individuals to participate and trust in the common desire to work towards the CSWB Strategy vision.

## Our Approach to Relationships and Partnerships

Safety and well-being is a collective responsibility of individuals, communities, non-profit agencies, educational bodies, Edmonton Police Service, businesses and all orders of government. It is only through working together can we achieve our goal of a more inclusive, equitable, compassionate, resilient and welcoming community for all.

Collaboration is a key feature of implementing the CSWB Strategy. The City alone does not have all the answers and must engage partners to develop solutions.

The CCM requires different individuals and groups getting involved and also the establishment of different types of partnerships. It is important to recognize that while each type of partnership involves different levels of time, effort, resources and trust, each type of partnership is valuable on its own merits.

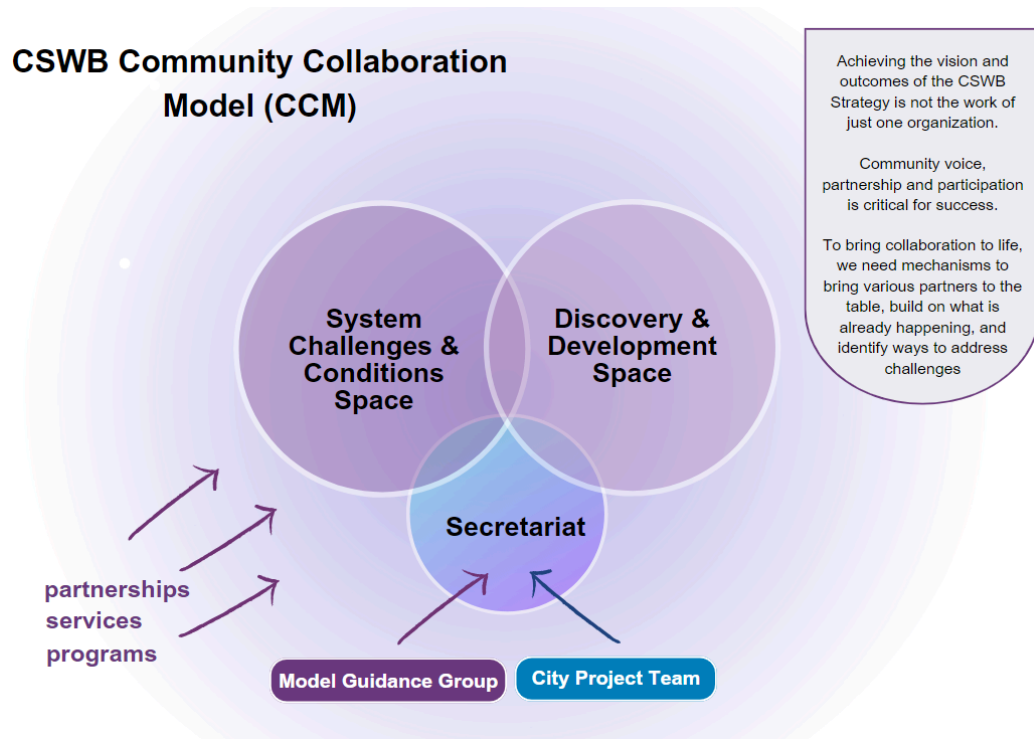


## Model Overview

The safety and well-being issues in Edmonton are complex and interconnected and solutions require cross-sector collaboration and shifts in relationships, power and decision-making. A model to guide collaboration at a systems level in a complex ecosystem is necessary to clearly outline processes, roles and responsibilities according to the community-driven, City-convened approach that is a core Strategy principle.

The CCM exists within a diverse ecosystem of existing and evolving programs, partnerships and services. Situating the CCM within this ecosystem is a recognition of the significant work already underway in Edmonton through various programs, partnerships and services. This is where the most tangible and immediate impact is felt by Edmontonians and where actions are taking place across all of the CSWB pillars.

The open invitation principle of CSWB collaboration allows individuals and organizations to participate in the way that best suits their mandates and capacity.



The two spaces in the CCM, the System Conditions, and Challenges Space (SCC) and the Discovery and Development (D&D) Space, respond to the feedback to convene regularly for relationship-building, sense-making, problem-solving and learning with an orientation to action and systems change. The spaces are not directed or led by the City, but through the networking of multiple partnerships with organisations and collaboratives, employ the shared leadership approach suggested by 2023 participant feedback.

### ***Discovery and Development Space***

The D&D space reflects 2023 feedback and strong interests in learning as part of the CCM. In this space we focus on learning that leads to action, problem solving, continuous improvement and eventual system change. A is gathering, sharing and mobilising assets, lived experience and communities' knowledge.

All of the D&D Space activities offer opportunities for collective learning, aligned with 2023 feedback. Opportunities include:

- Amplifying learning opportunities already happening locally or online
- Tailored training opportunities specific to CSWB outcomes
- Problem-solving, prototyping and service design efforts
- Learning and sharing on systems and structural challenges and issues

The D&D space also presents the most direct way to incorporate lived and living experience, such as end users of programs and services, front line staff, and employing Human Centred Design ideas, through learning opportunities such as design workshops, prototyping sessions, and lived experience engagement.

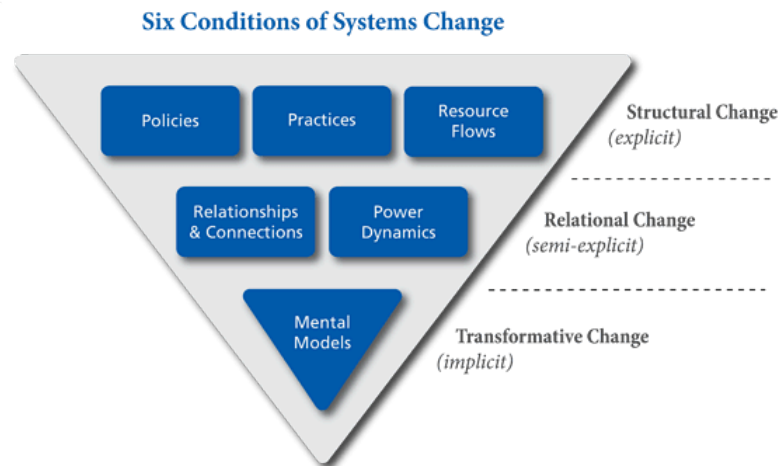


### What Might Participation Look Like?

- Leading sessions on program design or topics of interest
- Sharing information or perspectives from your daily work, projects or initiatives
- Learning from others in a multi-sectoral setting
- Engaging with and learning from those with lived experience
- Involvement in service design or prototype activities
- Bringing intelligence gained in discovery and development activities to bear on system change identification/refinement, and to inform priority change actions
- Learning more about the CSWB Strategy

### System Challenges and Conditions Space

The focus of the SCC Space is identifying, sense-making and amplifying the efforts of sectors and stakeholders that are shifting those conditions that perpetuate safety and wellbeing challenges and inequities in Edmonton. There are multiple ways that conditions of system change can be described. CSWB is currently utilising the model developed by FSG<sup>4</sup> to describe what conditions need to change in order to achieve the CSWB Pillar outcomes and vision.



The SCC Space focuses on drivers of change for these conditions (eg. data, advocacy, etc.) as well as issues-based system-change (eg. youth, mental health, immigration and settlement issues, etc.). Issues-based work can be scaled up based on interest and ecosystem needs/energy, again reflecting feedback to proceed incrementally, enabling the CSWB ecosystem and SCC participants to build learning and generate incremental successes.

### What Might Participation Look Like?

- Identifying and confirming the coherent set of actions and processes underway or that are still required to shift conditions within and across the seven CSWB pillars (our 'theory of change')

<sup>4</sup> Kania, J., Kramer, M., & Senge, P. (2018). *The Water of Systems Change*. FSG Reimagining Social Change. [https://www.fsg.org/resource/water\\_of\\_systems\\_change/#resource-downloads](https://www.fsg.org/resource/water_of_systems_change/#resource-downloads)

- Making sense of the complex ecosystem in which the CSWB work resides, based on the support of the Secretariat to describe and visualise connections, patterns, trends, and effects
- Participating in cross-CSWB Pillar discussions and sharing information about system change conditions, activities, priorities in the sector/issue area
- Accepting inputs from the CCM spaces to inform ongoing work, sector priorities or collaborative efforts
- Framing opportunities and priorities for collective effort to enact changes to policies, practices, resources, relationships, power, and mental models within Edmonton's CSWB ecosystem
- Exploring changes to funding criteria and processes
- Incorporating intelligence gained into policy and procedure changes, at an organisational or municipal level
- Assessing how and when system change conditions are occurring within the ecosystem
- Developing and championing shared advocacy or policy recommendations for the City or other orders of government

### ***Shared Secretariat***

The Shared Secretariat consists of the City's CSWB Strategy Implementation Team and an advisory Model Guidance Group composed of partner organizations. In 2023 many participants identified a need for a central coordinating function or body to coordinate the collaborative work and essentially serve a project management function. A shared leadership model was recommended for this central coordinating body.

#### **City Implementation Team**

The City provides administrative, reporting, information coordination, hosting/convening, evaluation and communications support.

The City will also form various partnerships with organisations that are active and interested in providing leadership in the SCC and D&D Spaces. And as one of many organisations active in this work, the City will also convene some SCC and D&D gatherings.

The City Implementation Team is also responsible to steward the feedback and intelligence gathered in the Spaces. This means ensuring broad sharing of information, recommendations and ongoing feedback to communities, City leadership and City Council.

#### **Model Guidance Group**

This group is composed of individuals interested in governance and providing advice on the operation of the CCM and its spaces. It operates as an accountability check in which those interested in governance and successful collaboration functions can offer expertise and guidance, and respond to the feedback for the model and its functions to evolve in response to community needs.

### What Might Participation Look Like?

- Attend meetings with the Implementation Team to advise and respond to formal/informal requests for strategic advice related to model operations and governance
- Implicitly gather information and share insights about the effectiveness of governance structures in the CCM and ongoing collaboration experiences for their organisations and others in their CSWB networks. This includes those actively participating in the CCM and those in the CSWB ecosystem where the impacts of the CCM spaces should be felt.
- With the support of the Implementation Team, help to scope and guide changes to the structures, functions, etc. of the CCM over time, in response to both informal feedback and formal evaluation and reporting on the CCM's achievements towards CSWB outcomes.

### How Information and Action Flows Within the CCM

An example may help to demonstrate how information and action flow within the CCM. This example is only for illustrative purposes, and the types of system issues to be identified and convenings for discovery and development should be driven by the needs of communities involved in the CCM and its partnerships.

After activating the CCM by forming strategic SCC partnerships with various existing collaboratives, the City convenes a conversation to discuss the system challenges that are relevant in different domains of community safety and well-being, such as youth services, immigration and settlement services, housing services, anti-racism work, etc. One challenge that emerges is around data - collection, sharing and reporting.

With the support of the Secretariat, a series of opportunities are then planned in the D&D space, such as problem-solving workshops, information sharing forums and/or prototyping sessions. An invitation to participate is shared with all CSWB Network Partners and beyond.

Once the gatherings occur, the results would be summarised and shared back to participants and also be used by the sector champions and strategic SCC partners. The results could inform action-planning for how to address the gaps and needs related to data, could inform advocacy or funding strategies to make inroads to address the gaps across sectors/topic areas, and could be used by individual SCC collaboratives to consider how to apply the findings or solutions within a specific domain such as improving data collection or tools for youth services, or new analyses needed for immigration and settlement services, or others.

The Model Guidance Group in the Secretariat would be monitoring how these system challenges and gatherings for learning are working across different topics and system issues over time. If there are improvements to how the learning offerings should occur, how system issues are identified, or how solutions are being implemented that changes in the functioning of the CCM could address, these Model Guidance Group members could inform shifts in who and how the entire CCM operates, so system challenges and discovery/development outcomes for CSWB could improve over time.

## 2024 Activation Plans

To activate the CCM and its Spaces, a number of specific tactics will be undertaken in 2024:

- Formalize Strategic and Collaborative partnerships through Letters of Understanding, MOUs or Funding Agreements
- Establish the Model Guidance Group
- Develop the system change-based theory of change with the System Challenges and Conditions Space
- Develop a work plan for Discovery and Development Space, and
- Continue relationship building and CSWB orienting activities with various organizations and sectors.

## Appendix 1: Definitions

**Collaboration:** the term used in CSWB Strategy implementation activities and the CCM itself to capture in the broadest sense, a wide range of activities involving working together by individuals or organisations (including, but not limited to the City or members of City Administration) to achieve objectives related to community safety and wellbeing in Edmonton. Collaboration can be episodic (one time), periodic (occasional) or sustained in duration, and more or less formalised in its structure.

**Community / Communities:** a focus on “community” is core to the CSWB Strategy, particularly expressed in the guiding principle for the implementation of the strategy to be “community driven”. The CSWB Strategy itself makes “a deliberate and concerted effort to put community at the centre of the model”. This promise is reflected in the design and intended function of the CCM. The CCM’s scope of community includes all individuals and organisations with interests in the CSWB Strategy’s vision and outcomes, which at some level includes every person and institution/organisation in Edmonton. Given the strategy’s equity focus, some individuals and organisations will have greater interests than others in achieving the vision of the strategy. In conversations with interested and affected parties in 2023 engagements, feedback reflected that the term “community” gives a false impression that there is or could be one single community voice or interest and it is a preferable approach to use the plural “communities”, to reinforce the diversity of interests, experiences, and expectations for community safety and well-being. Thus “communities” is the preferred CCM usage.

**Convene/Convening:** formally bringing together a group of people for a gathering with purpose and intention (could include meetings, workshops, design sessions, etc.). Convening gatherings to support the functioning of the system change and discovery and development in the CCM is one of the roles of the CCM’s Secretariat.

**Implementation:** a collective term used to describe all of the actions by all parties (including but not limited to the City of Edmonton) required to see the CSWB Strategy be realised or achieved, in the short, medium and long-term through actions. This includes collaboration activities, but also research, advocacy, funding, evaluation, reporting, administration, communications, and more. To steward the implementation of the CSWB Strategy, the City of Edmonton has allocated dedicated staff and budget as the municipal contribution, but as the strategy is intended to be community-driven, many actions, activities, decisions, and resources of and by the community will be required to implement the strategy.

**Interested and Affected Parties (I&AP):** an umbrella term to describe all those organisations, institutions, bodies and individuals who would be expected to have an interest in and/or might be affected by the domains expressed by the CSWB Strategy, including across its pillars, outcomes, and consistent with the vision and guiding principles. A typical term for this in government work is “stakeholders”, however, in 2023, that term was evaluated by the CSWB team in relation to its connections to Canada’s colonial history, and in context of the CSWB Strategy and City’s commitments to reconciliation. Settlers were historically encouraged to extract timber, minerals, water and fur and to establish farms by marking out the territory

they intended to occupy, with a series of stakes. They located these stakes on a map and then took the map to the land registry office to register their claim. That claim – referred to as a “stake” – once approved by the colonial government, gave settlers or “stakeholders” exclusive use to the lands. Within this context in mind, “interested and affected parties” is used as an alternate and descriptive umbrella term.

**Partnership:** partnership is defined in the CCM as an agreement between the City and one or more organisations, or amongst organisations active in the CCM, to advance common goals related to community safety and wellbeing. A partnership is a formalised example of sustained collaboration and has some degree of shared:

- Outcomes and objectives
- Decision-making
- Investment of resources and risk
- Accountability and results.

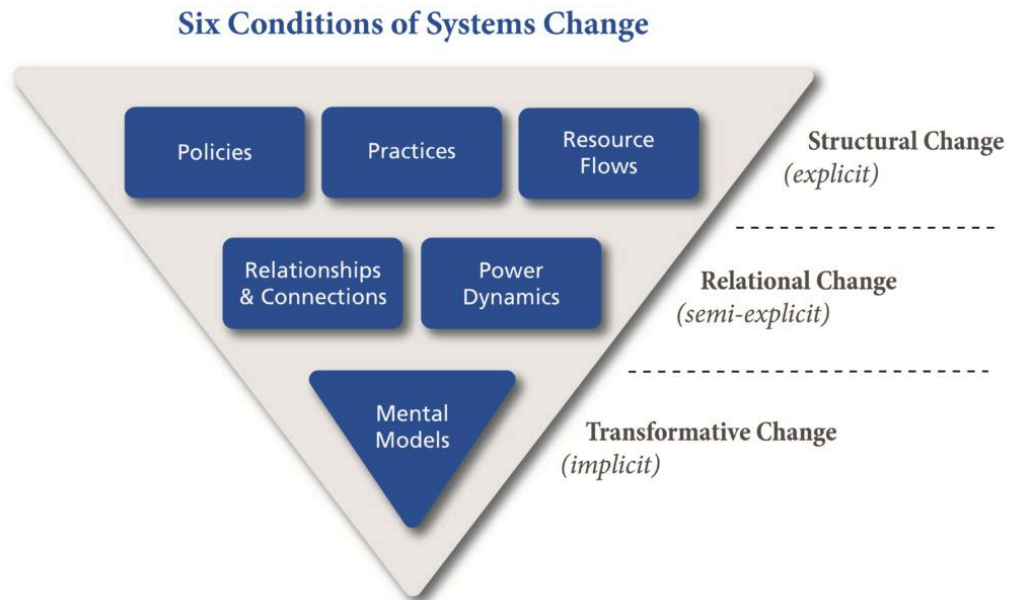
**Secretariat:** the administrative backbone component of the CCM, with a role to steward information flow, distribute resources, support collaboration, and foster partnerships. There are two components in the CCM’s Secretariat: the City of Edmonton component, which is where most of the City of Edmonton’s roles in the CCM are centralised; and the Model Guidance Group, which provides the avenue for advice and guidance by community leaders with governance and collaboration experience that will provide accountability and transparency for effective model functioning and ensure the ability for the model to adjust and respond to the communities’ needs over time. With these two components, the Secretariat is named as the “Shared Secretariat”, as functions are shared between the City and communities.

**Sector/Sub-sector:** sectors are a categorization used in Interested and Affected Parties mapping within CSWB Strategy implementation to help assess the major domains of interested organisations and institutions that are or may wish to be involved in CSWB Strategy implementation. The main breakdown of sectors includes For-profit/Business Sector, Government Sector, and Non-profit Sector. Within each main sector, sub-categories called “Sub-sectors” are applied to ensure that participation is comprehensive and inclusive of potential interests in community safety and wellbeing. The breakdown of sectors and sub-sectors is based on research and categorization systems used nationally and internationally, and then adapted for application to Edmonton’s organisational and institutional contexts.

**Sector Champions:** individuals who agree to champion system change in the CSWB ecosystem by convening to collectively identify and action system change needs and to work to make system changes within their participating organisations and by sharing and influencing their networks. They agree to take an organisation-agnostic approach, where the system conditions and change needs of the CSWB ecosystem are placed first. The invitation to this group will be based on personal interest and commitment, and full participation by equity-deserving groups, rather than on organisational representativeness. This is keeping with the collaboration principles for CSWB and the CCM. The rotational operations of this group will be confirmed by those participating in the group, and informed by insights from the Model Guidance Group (part of the CSWB Secretariat).

**Space:** the term space was selected as a way to describe one of the structured areas of the CCM where a group of defined activities will occur and where organisations and individuals with interests in CSWB will collaborate and potentially form partnerships in ways that are different from the way they currently do. Space implies a physical area but it is boundless and primarily is defined by the relative position and direction of its components or elements. This term was chosen instead of a more defined term such as body, board, committee, etc. to capture that these structuring elements of the CCM are intended to be loose, open and evolving. The components of the CCM balance some structure required to make decisions and take actions, but not to constrain or duplicate existing collaborations, energy, activities or priorities.

**System Change Conditions;** systems change can be defined as shifting component parts of a system — and the pattern of interactions between these parts — to ultimately form a new system that behaves in a qualitatively different way. Systems change is ultimately about advancing equity by shifting the conditions that hold a problem(s) in place. The system or systems in this case are the components of society and social, political, economic and other structures that shape community safety and well-being, broadly, and within Edmonton, specifically. The CSWB Strategy and the CCM’s context for systems change is currently rooted in the [ESG](#) model, which includes three levels and six types of change, as represented in the systems change triangle.

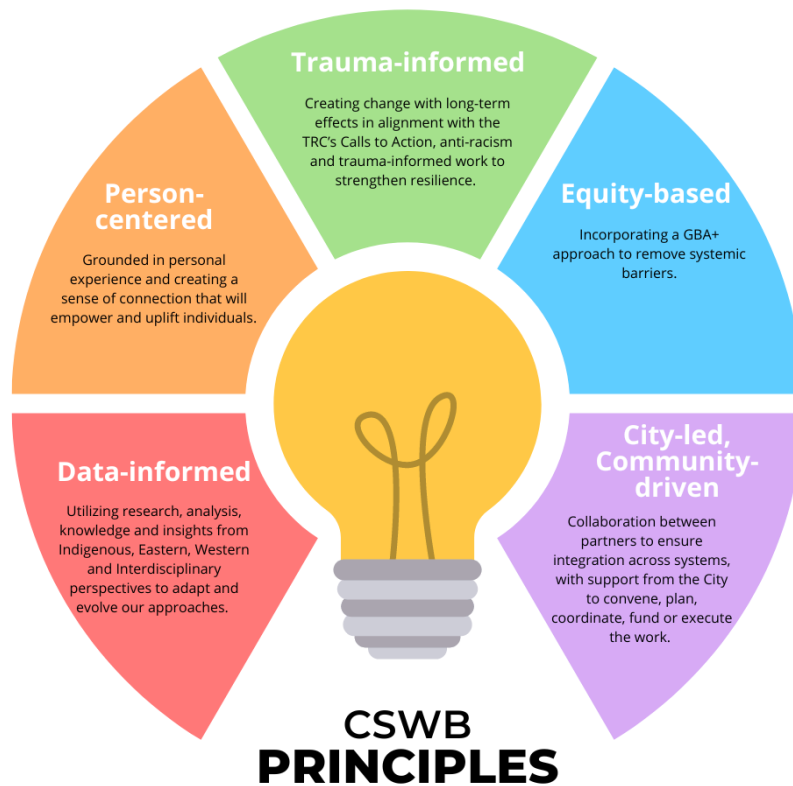


## Appendix 2: CSWB Strategy overview

All Edmontonians benefit when more people in our city feel safe and included. The [Community Safety and Well-being \(CSWB\) Strategy](#) is a collaboration among multiple partners to ensure each person who makes Edmonton home feels a sense of purpose, safety and stability. The strategy is rooted in reconciliation, anti-racism and equity and utilises a root cause, prevention-focused approach to improve social inclusion, connection and belonging, and address complex, systemic social challenges such as houselessness, safety concerns and racism.

### CSWB Vision and Principles

Each person making Edmonton home feels a sense of purpose, safety, and stability, curated through connectedness to self, land, culture and each other and rooted in reconciliation, anti-racism, removal of systemic barriers and transformation of thinking, interacting and being.





## Defining Safety and Well-Being

The Strategy aims to support the safety, well-being and stability of every Edmontonian — regardless of race, ethnicity, ability, gender, age, income, or sexual orientation.

Within the Strategy, safety includes:

- Cultural safety - all people feel respected and safe when they interact with systems. Culturally safe services are free of racism and discrimination. People are supported to draw strengths from their identity, culture and community.<sup>5</sup>
- Social and psychological safety - the sense of feeling safe with other people. A socially safe setting is one in which we feel secure and free to be ourselves.<sup>6</sup>
- Physical safety - describes the absence of physical injury or harm.

Well-being includes:

- Connection and belonging as described in the City's [Well-Being Framework](#)
- [Social Determinants of Health](#) which refer to various factors that contribute to well-being such as education, income and access to health services.

## CSWB Pillars and Outcomes

The Strategy is underpinned by a seven-pillar framework. Together, these pillars form the foundation by which CSWB can be advanced in Edmonton. The pillars are interdependent and represent the essential elements for success. Each pillar is connected to one or more **long-term outcomes** for safety and wellbeing in Edmonton.



## Systems Change

The Strategy focuses on influencing six domains to achieve long-term positive impact:

### Structural Change

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.indigenoushealthnh.ca/cultural-safety#cultural-safety>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.uclastresslab.org/social-safety-theory/>

- Legislation, principles, rules and guidelines including bylaws, policies, procedures and standards.
- Informal and formal practices.
- Resources including how money, people, knowledge, information and other assets are allocated and distributed.

**Relationships and Power**

- Relationships including the quality of connections and communication occurring between different actors in the system especially among those with differing histories and viewpoints.
- Power dynamics including the distribution of decision-making power, authority and both formal and informal influence among individuals and organisations.

**Transformative Change**

- Mental modes including 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.