

SOCIAL FRAMEWORK

A PLATFORM TO UNLOCK THE INGENUITY OF THE COMMUNITY

The world has changed dramatically over the past ten years, and change itself continues at an ever-increasing pace. We are working in a rapidly changing world where pathways for creating social and communal well-being are far from straightforward.

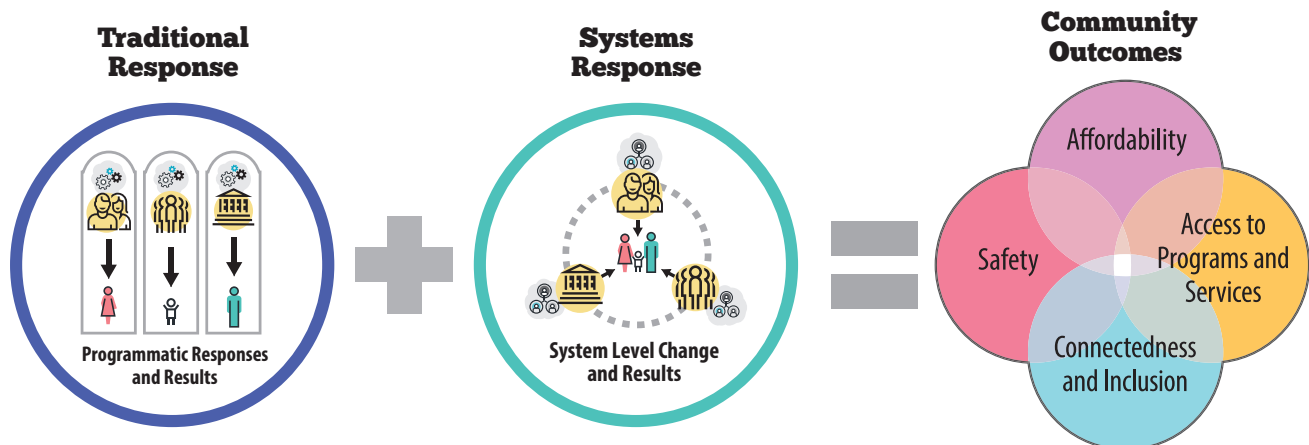
From individual citizens to large social serving organization, we can shift our behaviours with each other and those we serve to improve outcomes and have a collective impact. The Social Framework for Strathcona County endeavours to outline a potential path to make this happen.

To understand community perspectives, Strathcona County undertook Community Talk, the largest public-engagement campaign in the County's history that engaged 8,000 residents, to better understand social priorities and current experiences. The themes that emerged now form the community outcomes of affordability, access to programs and services, safety, and connectedness and inclusion.

The need for a New Approach

Today's service system can be described as a number of service silos: a collection of separate programs with discrete objectives offered by different organizations. In this traditional model, community organizations would continue to develop and adjust programs to align with and contribute to community-level outcomes.

A systems approach recognizes that all social organizations and the individuals within them are connected and form a complex whole. Zooming out to the systems level, when contributing organizations work together to see beyond silos, they can identify areas for greater, system-wide, collective impact. Organizational and system-level impacts will be the focus for the Social Framework. This approach is presented in the prototype on the following pages.



Strathcona County Social Framework Prototype

Together, we strive to create a supported, safe, and connected community by achieving four outcomes:

- **Affordability** - citizens have an increased capacity to meet their basic needs.
- **Access to Programs and Services** - citizens have straightforward access to programs and services that are easy to find.
- **Safety** - citizens feel physically, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally safe.
- **Connectedness and Inclusion** - citizens are connected to one another, and their individual differences are valued and respected.

Our current structures and processes are perfectly designed to achieve the outcomes we are currently experiencing. To achieve new outcomes, we require a "**shift**" in the way we think, behave, and convene as organizations, community groups, and individuals.

Shifts Proposed:

FROM

- Programmatic responses
- Do *for* people
- Incremental, organization-level outcomes
- Working in silos
- Focus on symptoms

TO

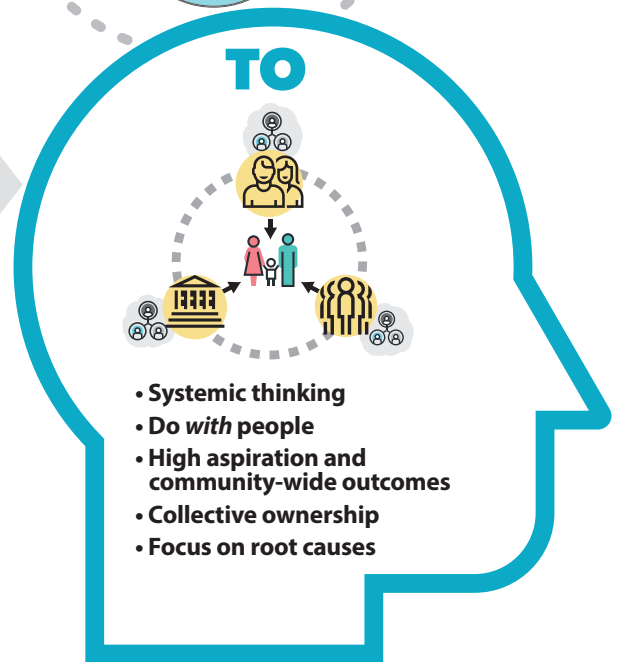
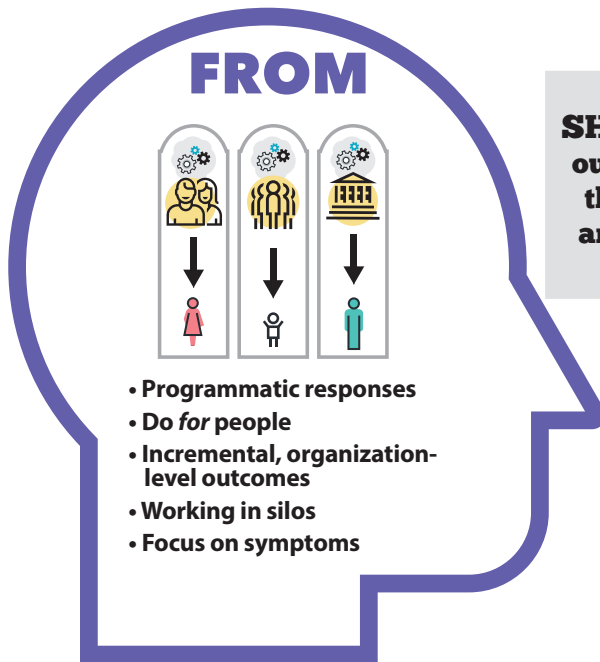
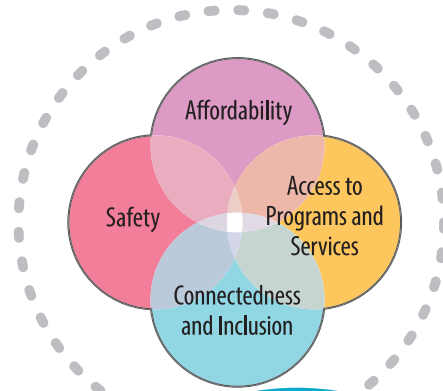
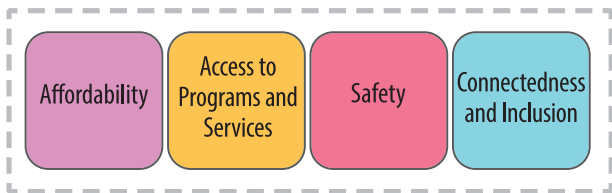
- Systemic thinking
- Do *with* people
- High aspiration and community-wide outcomes
- Collective ownership
- Focus on root causes

Working in this new way requires backbone support from one or more organizations, with roles and skills focused on community-change efforts. This backbone function involves hosting processes that allow interested individual citizens and organizations to build networks and relationships around shared outcomes. The backbone organization(s) will ultimately guide the Social Framework vision, create Networks for Participation, harness public will, advance policy recommendations, and establish learning processes.

The Networks for Participation will serve as an entry point for individuals, organizations, and institutions to come together to achieve the Social Framework outcomes. Through these networks, stakeholders will build connections, align individual efforts, and produce new and more effective actions and initiatives.

Timely strategic learning cycles will build the capacity of community partners to work together through a process of learning by doing. Key issues and learning will be identified with corresponding planning, implementation, and evaluation of action plans.

TOGETHER WE CREATE A **SUPPORTED, SAFE, AND** **CONNECTED** COMMUNITY



Change Stories

THE SOCIAL FRAMEWORK IN ACTION

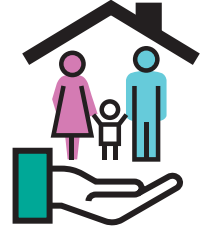
The following stories, either existing or newly proposed initiatives, illustrate the Social Framework in action.

Bridging Gaps

Increasing Affordability

What if ... there was a way to combine local efforts to better support those who are fleeing violence and need local housing that is affordable?

A Safe Place, Heartland Housing Foundation, and two local churches are partnering to provide stable, affordable housing while women and their children start a new, violence-free chapter in their lives. A Safe Place provides emotional support to the mother, while Heartland Housing Foundation will lease the home and act as property manager. The churches will provide a rent supplement that will make the home affordable for the family in transition.



Community Hub

Increasing Access to Programs and Services

What if ... there was a single location in Strathcona County where someone could help you navigate and recommend services and supports that best address your needs? What if you didn't have to re-explain your situation at every stage in your journey?

Strathcona County is exploring a 'community hub' model of services to better meet our community's needs. This one-stop shop could be a physical location as well as a virtual online portal, where social support and information would be available to citizens when and where they need it.



Looking Inward

Increasing Access to Programs and Services

What if ... there was a better way to meet the social needs of our community?

Family and Community Services is exploring how its staff and programming can better integrate with community social agencies to provide the needed backbone structures and social supports for Strathcona County residents. An organizational review will examine how Family and Community Services can best contribute to the four community outcomes of affordability, access to programs and services, safety, and connectedness and inclusion.

