

COMMUNITY HUB

STRATHCONA COUNTY COMMUNITY HUB STUDY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Strathcona County Community Hub Study* examines the potential for the creation of a Community Hub for Strathcona County. Building upon the direction of the Strathcona County Social Framework and the goals of the Strathcona County Strategic Plan, the Study provides an overview of the key elements for a potential Community Hub. This document incorporates and further explores the feedback received from community stakeholders, best practice research and the application of key frameworks for achieving improved outcomes within a complex social system.

The Community Hub process built upon an extensive stakeholder engagement process. Through an iterative conversation with a wide variety of community organizations, clear interest and enthusiasm for a Community Hub was established. The insights of stakeholders fundamentally informed the insights found throughout this report.

Research on the experience of community hubs across Canada also provided insights into how Strathcona County can approach a community hub. The information gathered through the best practice research shows that there is no conclusive “formula” for the creation of a community hub. While hubs materialize as a response to local conditions, almost every hub has a core service or mandate which all of the other services complement.

Starting with a vision, the purpose of the community hub is defined through an interrelated set of three key elements. Designed to meet the needs of Strathcona County residents and their experience within the hub, these elements are:

Service

The services that can be found in the community hub. The core services recommended for Strathcona County include early childhood and parenting, youth and seniors.

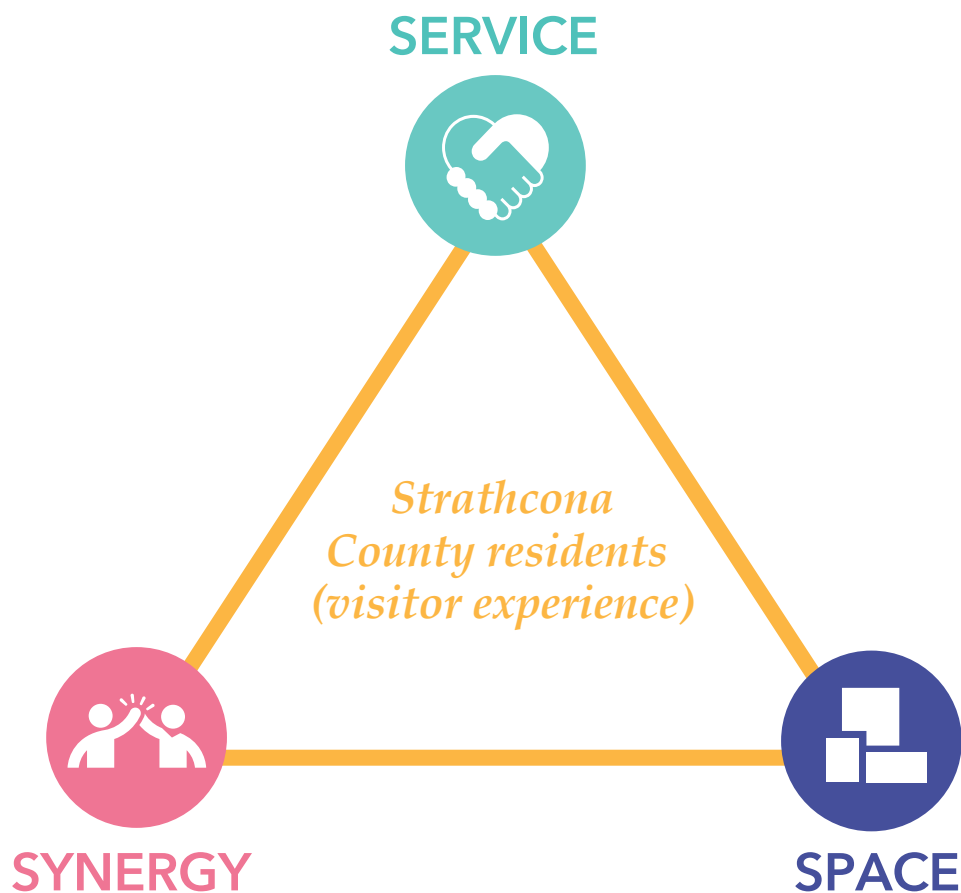
Synergy

The dynamic that exists between everyone who participates in the community hub, resulting in enhanced outcomes that are stronger than what could be achieved if everyone acted in isolation.

Space

The physical areas that define the spaces of the community hub.

The triangle is a mutually beneficial, three-way relationship between service, synergy and space. To achieve the full potential of The Hub and best meet the needs of the residents of Strathcona County, each element needs to be considered within the context of the other factors. The model of these interrelated elements is found below.



Vision for a Community Hub in Strathcona County

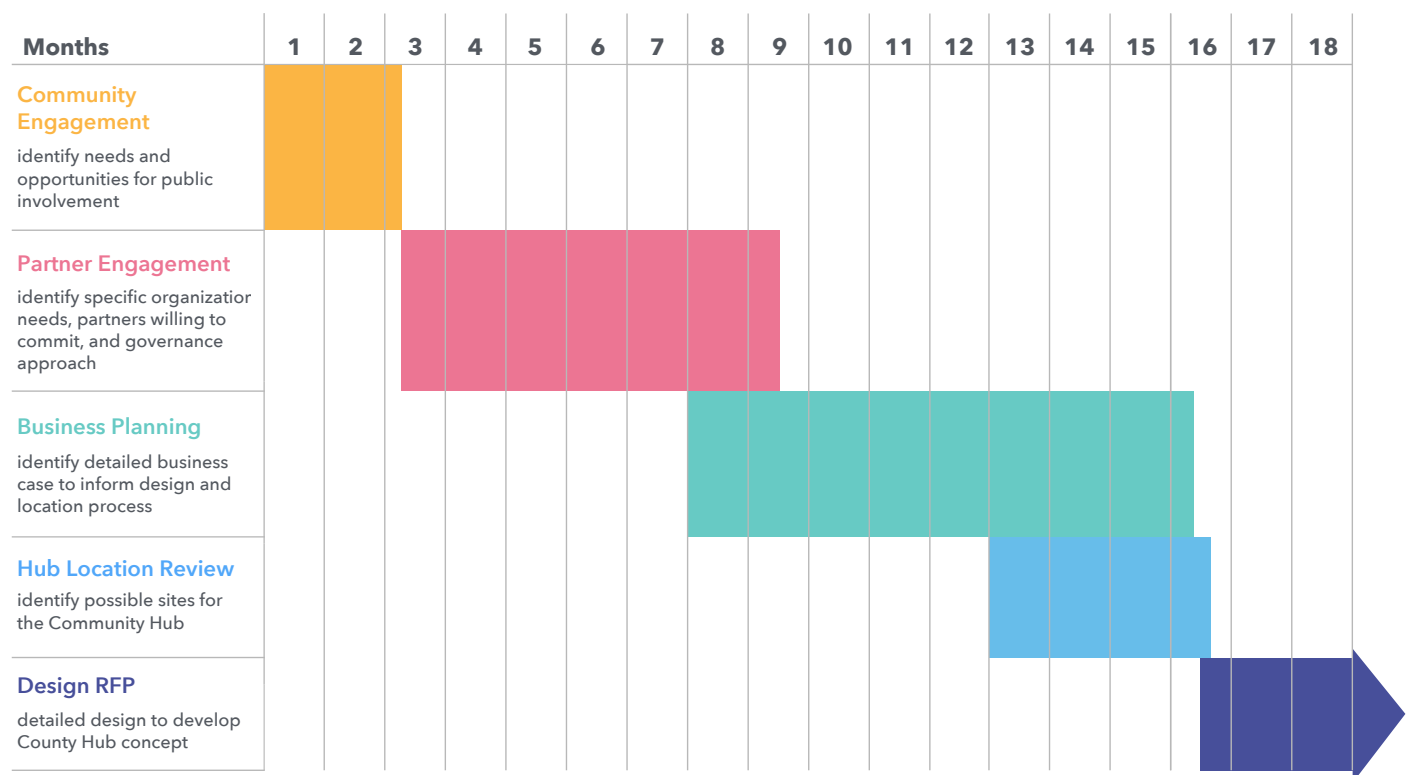
The Strathcona County Community Hub is a gathering place for the community. It is a welcoming place that promotes a culture of acceptance and celebrates diversity. The Hub promotes inclusivity and accessibility for clients, community members and staff. It represents a new model of collaboration, information sharing and the cooperative delivery of key social services in Strathcona County. Integrating the County's assets, connections and resources with community partners within one hub provides community members with new opportunities to create value in their own lives and in the lives of others.

Two key roles in the Community Hub are the Wayfinder and the Navigator. The Wayfinder acts as a concierge of sorts, providing a welcoming, friendly and informative experience for visitors. Navigators focus on providing visitors with a customized social service experience. These individuals increase accessibility by identifying solutions to reduce barriers to services and help build capacity and skills for visitors.

The Study explores how this vision to address complex social issues can be realized in Strathcona County. In addition to exploring the key elements of service, synergy and space, the Study provides direction on the following:

- Location of a Community Hub within Strathcona County, including consideration of access to transportation options, proximity to other services and amenities, as well as delivery models that serve rural residents
- Governance considerations, including models that range from single funder to shared contributions of multiple organizations

The community hub concept exemplifies what can be achieved when organizations and individuals come together for the collective good. The hub would reflect a shift in the way organizations, community groups and individuals think, behave, and convene as described in the Social Framework. Partners should share a vision, be well versed in each other’s role and share ownership, decision making and resources. Service providers should be bold, sensitive, foster innovation and commit to supporting internal structures. To date, over 30 organizations have expressed interest in co-locating. As the discussion shifts from exploratory to the tangible, consideration around which partners have the interest and capacity to contribute will become an important topic. A decision tree will guide how conversations on the Community Hub’s business planning, location decision, and design unfold. The overall work plan to guide and define the next steps – including details on governance—are identified in the chart below:



As Strathcona County and its community stakeholders continue to consider the potential of a Community Hub, this Study can act as a guide to explore, assess and consider The Hub’s possibilities.

INTRO



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document, the *Strathcona County Community Hub Study*, has been developed to provide Strathcona County with an overview of those considerations that will be important factors in the development of a Community Hub. This document will serve two primary purposes:

- Act as a decision guide for the County to use as they continue to explore and assess how a Community Hub can be developed. This builds upon characteristics and features that have resonated through the process.
- Serve as a tool to introduce the idea of a Community Hub with Council, potential partners and the community at large, providing tangible opportunities to begin conversations, further explore relevant ideas and examine project considerations.

This section provides an overview of the process to develop the Study, the guiding direction found in Strathcona County policies and plans, an overview of supporting frameworks used within the process and the experiences of community hubs across Canada.

1.1 THE PROCESS

The process to develop the *Strathcona County Community Hub Study* reflects an integration of community engagement, best practice research and strategic analysis of the Strathcona County context. This process occurred across three distinct phases, from January 2018 to September 2018.



Phase 1: Defining the Stakeholders

Phase 1 began with initial research into the potential for a Community Hub in Strathcona County. To initiate a community conversation about a hub, a group of 25 local stakeholders were invited to attend a workshop with the goal of determining the appropriate range of organizations that should be invited to participate in future consultations. As a result of this initial conversation, 175 organizations were invited to participate in a subsequent workshop, ensuring that the project team had access to a tremendous diversity of views and mandates to inform the process.

The community sectors that were represented in Phase 1 of the process included:

- Addiction
- Arts and culture
- Business
- Children's services
- Communications/media
- Community building
- Diversity and inclusion
- Education
- Faith-based organizations
- Family supports
- Government
- Health/medical
- Housing
- Home support
- Justice/safety
- Mental health
- Non-profit
- Recreation
- Rural
- Seniors
- Social serving organizations
- Vulnerable populations
- Youth

A complete listing of the organizations involved in the engagement process can be found in Appendix A (complete listing of organizational participation). Summaries of the varied engagement approaches can be found in Appendix B.

Phase 1 also included preliminary research on relevant frameworks and examples of community hubs, with a focus on the Canadian experience. This research focused on the understanding the rationale for initiating community hubs as well as studying the realities of operating these kinds of facilities. Detailed findings of this research can be found in Section 1.4 of this report.

Finally, Phase 1 focused on an examination of applicable information on the Strathcona County context, including the review of previous engagement on the Social Framework, the County's Strategic Plan and other applicable policy direction. More detail on the Strathcona County context can be found in Section 1.2 of this report.



Phase 2: Growing the Conversation

Phase 2 of the *Strathcona County Community Hub Study* project saw the launch of a multi-staged conversation with community stakeholders. The first workshop, held in April 2018, explored key elements of the purpose of a Community Hub within the Strathcona County context. Prior to the workshop, key findings of the research conducted in Phase 1 were shared with participants in a podcast format. This podcast featured interviews with representatives of the Elmwood Resource Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba and The Mount Community Centre in Peterborough, Ontario. Starting with a discussion on the data and realities of Strathcona County, the workshop moved to focus on initial ideas for ways a Community Hub can best address and accommodate local realities.

To capture a broader range of feedback, the April workshop was paired with an online survey. This survey was open to anyone living or working in Strathcona County and was intended to measure the public's perception on the idea of Community Hub. The survey was available from April 11th to April 30th and received 633 completed surveys. The survey provided insights into the desire for various social programs and services in a hub, barriers to accessing programs and services, and demonstrated support for providing many programs and services in a single location.

The project team refined this information from stakeholders and the broader community to build an initial purpose for a Community Hub in the County. This initial purpose was shared with stakeholders via an online questionnaire, which was shared in May 2018. Participants were given a chance to provide their perspectives on the draft, which led to the creation of a refined statement of purpose for the Strathcona County Community Hub.

A second conversation was held with stakeholders in June 2018. This workshop began with an exploration of key services, in order to understand if stakeholders could agree upon a core set of services that would be essential for the community hub. Workshop participants were then asked to prototype ideas for a community hub in order to test the purpose in more tangible ways. After a review of the various prototypes created, participants then tested their own prototypes by walking a theoretical visitor of the hub through an example of a common interaction. This provided insights into the effectiveness of their ideas, with the objective of refining the approach to create a meaningful experience for their test visitor.

Following the June 2018 workshop, a final set of feedback was solicited from participants with a second online questionnaire. Building on the insights to date, the questionnaire focused on organization-specific responses to the issues of operating a community hub. This addressed opportunities and barriers for their organization around participating in a community hub, incorporating issues such as conflict with other services, space requirements, governance considerations and lease rates.



Phase 3: Refining the Findings

Phase 3 of the *Strathcona County Community Hub Study* process was focused on reviewing and analyzing the findings of Phases 1 and 2. The goal was to use this information to create a document that provides direction for future steps in the exploration and development of a Community Hub in Strathcona County.

The information and insights gathered in the first two phases are reflected throughout subsequent sections of this document.

1.2 THE STRATHCONA COUNTY CONTEXT

Support for the exploration of a Community Hub in Strathcona County is seen in direction from the County as well as through the assessment of best practices in other comparable communities. In Strathcona County, the direction for a Community Hub aligns with two key strategic documents: the Strathcona County Social Framework and the Strathcona County Strategic Plan. The following section illustrates the connections between the Community Hub Study and these documents.

The Strathcona County Social Framework

In 2016, Strathcona County undertook Community Talk, a process that engaged nearly 8,000 people who live and work in the County. The goal of the process was to better understand residents' social priorities and current experiences. Within this process, number of respondents suggested a single location could be created where all the programs and services would be available under one roof.¹

As a result of this engagement, the County developed a renewed social framework. The resulting *Social Framework: A platform to unlock the ingenuity of the community* is based on a systems approach which recognizes that all social organizations (and the individuals within) are connected, forming a complex whole. The foundational belief is that when agencies are able to consider non-traditional partnerships and forge new interdependent relationships, positive change can happen.

Subtle shifts can happen all at once or can occur incrementally, in key areas. At the systems level, when contributing organizations work together to see beyond silos, they can identify areas where it is possible to achieve greater impact, and where outcomes can be system-wide and collective. This approach formed the basis of Strathcona County's Social Framework. It is essential in building a community space which will foster these interdependent relationships, provide a venue for collaboration, and improve social and community outcomes for the citizens of the County.

The Social Framework established four key outcomes for the community:

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

A proposed 'Change Story' – a newly proposed initiative to put the Social Framework into action – identified the community hub as a potential approach to addressing the desired outcome of improved access to programs and services. As outlined in the Social Framework:

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.²

¹ Strathcona County, *Community Talk: What We Heard - Social Framework Renewal* (2017), 23.

² Strathcona County, *Social Framework: A platform to unlock the ingenuity of the community* (2017), 14.

As the Community Hub concept evolves, maintaining focus on the desired outcomes of the Social Framework will ensure that this new approach to addressing community and social issues aligns with the direction that is set for the County.

The Strathcona County Strategic Plan

Strathcona County's current Strategic Plan was approved by Council in April 2013, and refined in May 2018. The strategic plan is Strathcona County's principal guiding document for governance, community development, infrastructure and program/service delivery. It serves as the foundation on which the County's corporate business plan, department business plans, master plans and budgets are developed and approved.

The eight prioritized strategic goals in the Strategic Plan guide business planning in Strathcona County. The *Strathcona County Community Hub Study* most closely aligns with the following goals of the Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: Build strong communities to support the diverse needs of residents

Community hub potential impacts:

- » Opportunities for meaningful connections within communities
- » Diverse and inclusive communities
- » Appropriate access to the social service system through partnerships
- » Affordable basic municipal services
- » Programming that meets the changing needs of residents

Goal 2: Manage, invest and plan for sustainable municipal infrastructure

Community hub potential impacts:

- » Support the creation of accessible cultural, recreational and social infrastructure

Goal 5: Foster collaboration through regional, community and governmental partnerships

Community hub potential impacts:

- » Support community partnerships leveraged to expand the County's ability to respond to the changing needs of the community
- » Opportunity to develop municipal and provincial social services from one location and in new and innovative ways
- » Reduce duplication of service delivery and programming.

Goal 6: Provide facilities and services that are available and accessible to residents

Community hub potential impacts:

- » Enhance community interactions and connectedness

Goal 8: Foster an environment for safe communities

Community hub potential impacts:

- » Support the creation of an environment where citizens feel safe to express themselves in ways that represent their values, beliefs, and lifestyles

1.3 SUPPORTING FRAMEWORKS

In addition to strategic direction that is specific to Strathcona County, the Community Hub Study has been informed by a series of supporting frameworks that have helped guide and shape the development of the study:

Collective Impact

Collective Impact (CI) is a framework designed to enable system-level change on complex social issues. It seeks to establish a way for diverse sectors, organizations and individuals to collaborate more effectively to create meaningful change. As practitioners have applied CI to a diverse range of social challenges, there has been an evolution of the framework based on lessons learned in the field. In 2016, Mark Cabaj and Liz Weaver explored these changes and proposed an updated approach to Collective Impact.³³ The key elements are as follows:

Leadership is focused on building a movement: Movement-building leaders bring together a diverse group of stakeholders, including those not in traditional institutions or seats of power, to build a vision of the future based on common values and narratives.⁴

Authentic community engagement: Collective impact creates a broader constituency for change – so critical in any effort to disrupt and change systems. It cultivates broad ownership and long-term commitment to the change process which is essential when the initial excitement begins to flag and the going gets tough. Most importantly, the idea that those most affected by an issue should participate fully in attempts to address it (i.e., ‘nothing about us without us!’) is a fundamental democratic and moral principle.⁵

Shared aspiration among a variety of community actors: This requires participants to develop outcomes that are based on community values sufficiently ambitious that they cannot be realized through ‘business as usual’. A solid community aspiration can also create the kind of ‘big tent’ under which a wide range of participants can pursue the interdependent challenges underlying tough issues.⁶

Strategic learning that includes, but isn’t a slave to, measurement: A robust learning and evaluation process is even more critical in community-wide change efforts. Unlike the relatively routinized nature of an automotive production line, social innovators are trying to change the dynamic and complex systems that underlie social problems.⁷

Focus on high leverage activities and establish relationships appropriate to the intended impact:

The late Brenda Zimmerman, a world expert on managing complex systems, concluded that one of the key attributes of successful social innovators was their ability to know when and how to ‘mix cooperation with competition’. This flies in the face of conventional wisdom, which suggests that collaboration is always the best response. So it may well be that conventional wisdom is a barrier to what appears to be a critical condition of Collective Impact 3.0: a focus on high-leverage strategies, and permission to participants that they work as loosely or as tightly as the situation requires.⁸

Establish a ‘container for change’ that enables: Bill O’Brien, a well-regarded business leader, noted: “The success of an intervention depends on the inner conditions of the intervenor.” In the same vein, the success of the next generation of collective impact initiatives depends on the ability of backbone teams to create the strong containers for change that support participants to dig deep when tackling stubborn social challenges.⁹

3 Cabaj, Mark and Liz Weaver “Collective Impact 3.0: An Evolving Framework for Community Change.” (2016).

4 Ibid, p. 4.

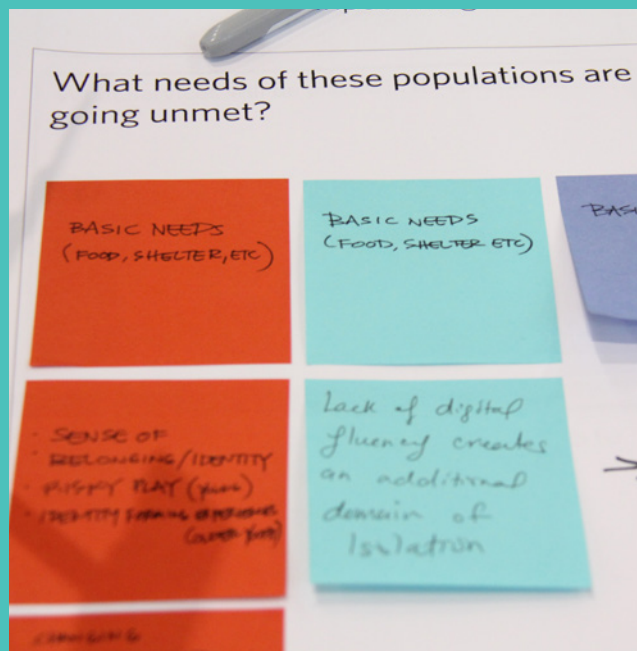
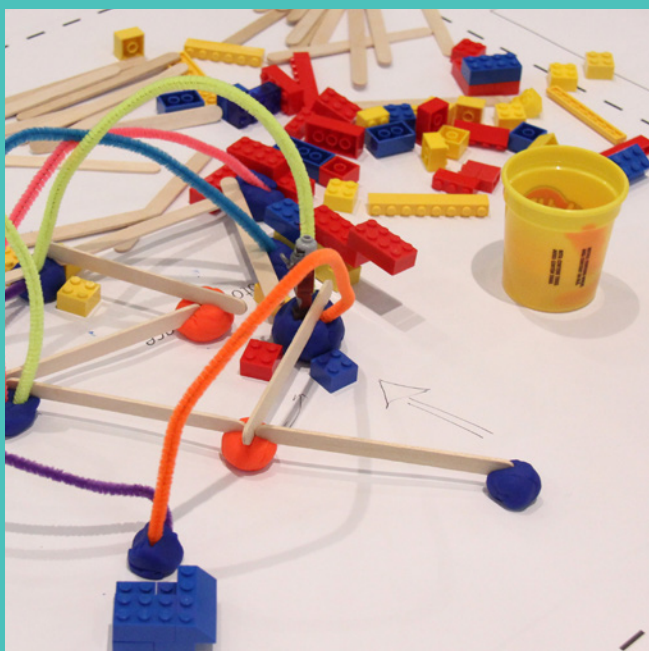
5 Ibid, p. 5.

6 Ibid, p. 6.

7 Ibid, p. 7.

8 Ibid, p. 9.

9 Ibid, p. 11.



These reflections on Collective Impact align with the intention of the Social Framework, and framed thinking and discussions throughout the development of the *Strathcona County Community Hub Study*. The specific elements of a hub, outlined in Section 2, reflect the Collective Impact elements within the Strathcona County context.

As further exploration of the Community Hub concept continues, application of the collective impact lens will provide structure to the challenges of creating meaningful social change in Strathcona County.

Design Thinking

Design thinking is a process for creative problem solving.¹⁰ Also called human-centred design, this approach starts with empathy for the user of a product or service. In the case of the community hub project, potential users of this facility were specifically considered. This focus helped ensure that ideas, approaches and concepts were tailored to address the needs of Strathcona County residents. Another key element of design thinking is ideation, or the generation of a number of ideas. Through collaborative workshops and online engagement, a diversity of ideas were generated by stakeholders in the Strathcona community. This provided the raw materials for the elements of this strategy.

Finally, design thinking uses an approach called ‘prototyping’ that includes the building of models or examples of the solution being explored. During the final stakeholder workshop, participants developed a variety of prototypes of how a community hub could look, function and feel. This provided an opportunity to explore and test the ideas raised by participants.

The use of design thinking in the development of the community hub study provided a structured approach to examining and testing a variety of ideas. This supported a clearer understanding of potential implications and tradeoffs. As the development of a community hub idea moves ahead, the continued application of design thinking will enable Strathcona County to maintain focus on the visitors of the Hub, and will provide a structure for experimentation through the process. This approach is expanded further in Section 3 of this report.

¹⁰ IDEO U. “What is Design Thinking?” Reviewed online August 10, 2018. <https://www.ideo.com/blogs/inspiration/what-is-design-thinking>

1.4 THE EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNITY HUBS ACROSS CANADA

To further understand how to best create a Community Hub in Strathcona County, community hubs across the country were examined. For the purposes of this best practice research, a community hub is defined as a social service centre, potentially complemented by other sectors. The following hubs were examined:

- Bathurst-Finch Community Hub, Toronto, ON
- Centre Communautaire de Loisir Sherbrooke, Sherbrook, QC
- Dorset Park Community Hub, Toronto, ON
- Elmwood Resource Centre, Winnipeg, MB
- Evergreen Brickworks, Toronto, ON
- Langs, Cambridge, ON
- The Orange Hub, Edmonton, AB
- Orange Tree Village, Regina, SK
- Station 20 West, Saskatoon, SK
- The Mount Community Centre, Peterborough, ON
- The Tannery, Kitchener-Waterloo, ON
- Timm's Community Centre, Langley, BC

This research sought to uncover the origin stories, services provided, design characteristics, governance model, organization type, tenancy model and key learnings inspired by each hub. Throughout this document, practices from the above hubs will be referenced. In particular, the range of services, amenities and the different governance models will be explored further in *Section 2*.

Community Hub Review: In Summary

The 12 community hubs that were researched vary in terms of services provided, governance and tenancy models, organization type and physical size. In quick summary:

- 9 out of 12 are non-profit organizations
- 2 out of 12 are municipally run
- 1 out of 12 is privately run
- The smallest hub size identified is 10,000 square feet
- The largest hub size identified is 330,986 square feet

Hub Name	Year of creation	Services*	Organizational Structure	Governance Model	Tenancy	Square footage
Elmwood Resource Centre (Winnipeg, MB)	2001	Youth, Early Childhood, Education, Ethnic Diversity, Other	Board of Directors & 13 staff	Non-profit, public funding support	Building is City-owned, Elmwood pays subsidized rent Space shared with Parks & Recreation Department 19 organizations operate out of the hub	Not available
Evergreen Brickworks (Toronto, ON)	2010	Education, Environmental Stewardship, Food Security	Board of Directors & leadership team	Existing non-profit, public funding support	Evergreen leases the land from City of Toronto for \$1/ year Commercial, public and non-profit tenants Tenants pay \$37.00/sq. ft. (slightly below typical Toronto rate)	53,000 sq. ft.
Timm's Community Centre (Langley BC)	2016	Recreation, Food, Youth, Other	Not found	A government department or agency (City of Langley)	City-run, no rentals to private companies	35,000 sq. ft.
Centre Communautaire de Loisir Sherbrooke (Sherbrooke QC)	1963	Youth, Education, Health, Food Security, Sports, Art & Culture	14 employees, 100+ instructors, 300 volunteers	New non-profit 90% self-funded by membership in its programs	Private and community-based service operators	35,500 sq. ft.
The Tannery (Kitchener, ON)	2011	Education, Art & Culture, Community, Financial, Technology, Health	Not found	Single Funder (Allied Properties Real Estate Investment Trust)	Private and public service operators	330,986 sq. ft.
Langs (Cambridge, ON)	1978	Health, Social, Education, Other	17 board members, staff member numbers unknown	Existing non-profit	Public, non-profit & community-based operators 20 agencies leasing 1 or more office. 27 additional groups rent meeting space Approximately \$22.00/sq. ft. for tenants (all-inclusive)	66,000 sq. ft.

Hub Name	Year of creation	Services*	Organizational Structure	Governance Model	Tenancy	Square footage
The Mount Community Centre (Peterborough, ON)	2013	Housing, Business, Community, Food Security	13 board members 7 volunteer committees, each with 12 members. 200+ additional volunteers	New non-profit organization	8 organizations on full-time lease agreements 3 organizations rent office space on a flexible "License to Occupy" arrangement 11 organizations rent community rooms on recurring rental basis (weekly and monthly) 43 residential apartments at affordable or market rates	132,000 sq. ft. 10 acres of green space
Bathurst-Finch Community Hub (Toronto, ON)	2006	Diversity, Justice, Social, Financial & Employment, Health, Food Security	12 board members, volunteers	Existing non-profit, publicly funded	Public, non-profit, & community-based operators 10 permanent tenants 3 organizations offer programs and services on a scheduled basis	Not available
Station 20 West (Saskatoon, SK)	2012	Food Security, Health, Early Childhood, Employment & Finance, Other	7 board members, 2 co-managers	Non-profit	Public, non-profit & community-based operators	Not available
Dorset Park Community Hub (Toronto, ON)	2012	Technology, Education, Early Childhood, Social, Financial & Employment, Food Security, Newcomers, Community Clubs	Lead Agency: Agincourt Community Services Association Board of Directors Steering Committee	New non-profit, supported primarily by United Way	Public, non-profit & community-based operators 10 organizations operating in the hub All organizations pay market rate Space is rented in a commercial building	10,000 sq. ft.
Orange Tree Village (Regina, SK)	Unknown	Education, Health, Housing, Food, Other	7 primary staff members	Private company	Primarily private operators	Not available

continued...

Hub Name	Year of creation	Services*	Organizational Structure	Governance Model	Tenancy	Square footage
The Orange Hub (Edmonton, AB)	2018	Technology, Arts & Culture, Diversity	The City of Edmonton	A government department or agency (City of Edmonton) Will transition to a non-profit after 5 years	Public, non-profit, & community-based operators \$15.62/sq. ft. for not-for-profits and \$25.00/sq. ft. for commercial tenants. (80% leased to non-profit, 20% leased to market-rate tenants) 13 organizations	257,000 sq. ft.

* Service Categories Considered:

Technology, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Housing, Sports Organizations, Business Community, Early Childhood, Arts & Culture; Social, Transportation, Faith Communities, Financial and Employment, Agricultural Societies, organizations; Rural Supports, Media, Justice, Seniors, Social Enterprise, Youth, Community Leagues/Clubs, Basic Needs, Food Security, Health, Diversity (including Newcomers, Underrepresented Populations)

Key Takeaways

The information gathered through the best practice research shows that there is no conclusive “formula” for the creation of a community hub. Hubs materialize as a response to local conditions, and therefore are different for each community. Some hubs emerged based on municipal social/economic strategies while others emerged from land opportunities or very specific community concerns, such as vandalism. Almost every hub has a core service or mandate which all of the other services complement.

The importance of synergy and collaboration is found across all hubs. The majority of hubs are nonprofits, organized by a Board of Directors. Some hubs are partially private, to help financially sustain the hub. For example, The Mount Community Centre rents out space for events and meetings at a market rate. Overall, the hub model (in terms of operation, servicing, tenancy and governance) varies based on the context of the specific community.



2.0 EXPLORING A COMMUNITY HUB FOR STRATHCONA COUNTY

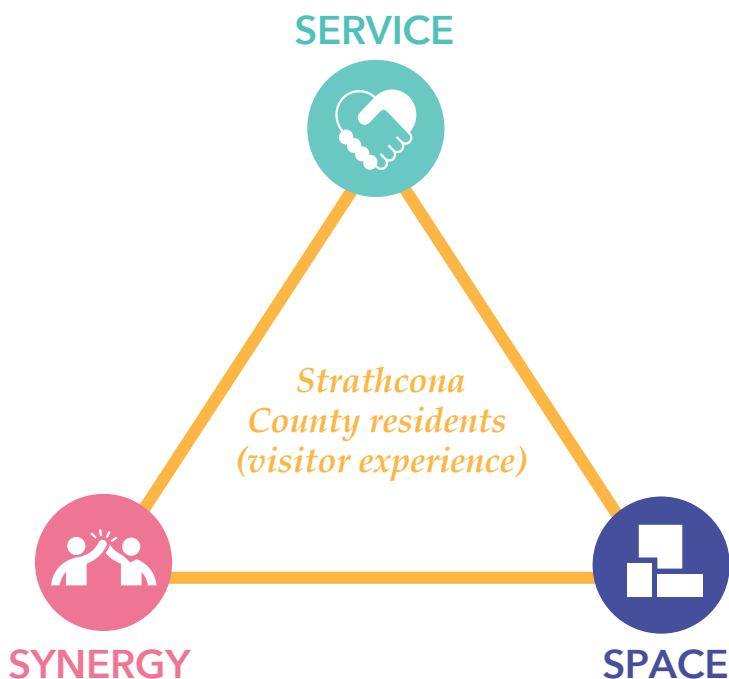
This section of the *Strathcona County Community Hub Study* report will provide ideas for the County to consider in exploring a Community Hub. Each section was developed using a combination of stakeholder feedback, best practice research and strategic recommendations that are based on an understanding of the County context.

2.1 A VISION FOR A COMMUNITY HUB

Starting with a vision, the purpose of the Community Hub is defined through an interrelated set of three key elements. Designed to meet the needs of Strathcona County residents and their experience within the hub, these elements are:

- Service:** The services that can be found in the community hub
- Synergy:** The dynamic that exists between everyone who participates in the community hub, resulting in enhanced outcomes that are stronger than what could be achieved if everyone acted in isolation
- Space:** The physical areas that define the spaces of the community hub

These elements reflect a true ‘three-legged stool’ of purpose for the community hub. To achieve the full potential of the hub and best meet the needs of the residents of Strathcona County, each element needs to be considered within the context of the other factors. The model of these interrelated elements is found below.



INTRODUCING THE

HUB

STORIES

Throughout this document, “Hub Stories” have been included to illustrate the desired experience of possible hub visitors. These vignettes help build an understanding of the potential of a community hub to support visitors through their unique journeys.

These Hub Stories are adapted from the exploration workshop that was held in June 2018. In this workshop, stakeholders were asked to create a prototype Hub by considering services, space and synergy. Stakeholders were then challenged to explain the journey that an assigned visitor would embark on while moving through the hub. The Hub Stories can be found in *Sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.5*.

Vision for a Community Hub in Strathcona County

The Strathcona County Community Hub is a gathering place for the community. It is a welcoming place that promotes a culture of acceptance and celebrates diversity. The hub promotes inclusivity and accessibility for clients, community members, and staff. The hub represents a new model of collaboration, information sharing, and the co-delivery of key social services in Strathcona County. Integrating the County's assets, connections, and resources with community partners into one hub to address complex social issues provides new opportunities for community members to create value in their own lives and the lives of others.

Community Hub Purpose: Visitor Experience

At its core, the Community Hub is about serving the needs of Strathcona County residents and building community. The ideal visitor experience in the Community Hub is highlighted by three aspects:

Sense of belonging. Whether using specific social services or just relaxing, visitors feel they belong in the community hub and feel comfortable spending time there.

Clear. Each individual's journey through the community hub is unique. Through space design and seamless service delivery between diverse organizations, every visitor can clearly understand how to meet their needs.

Safe and supported. Everyone in the community hub is able to feel that they are in a safe space and that they are part of a community that cares about them.

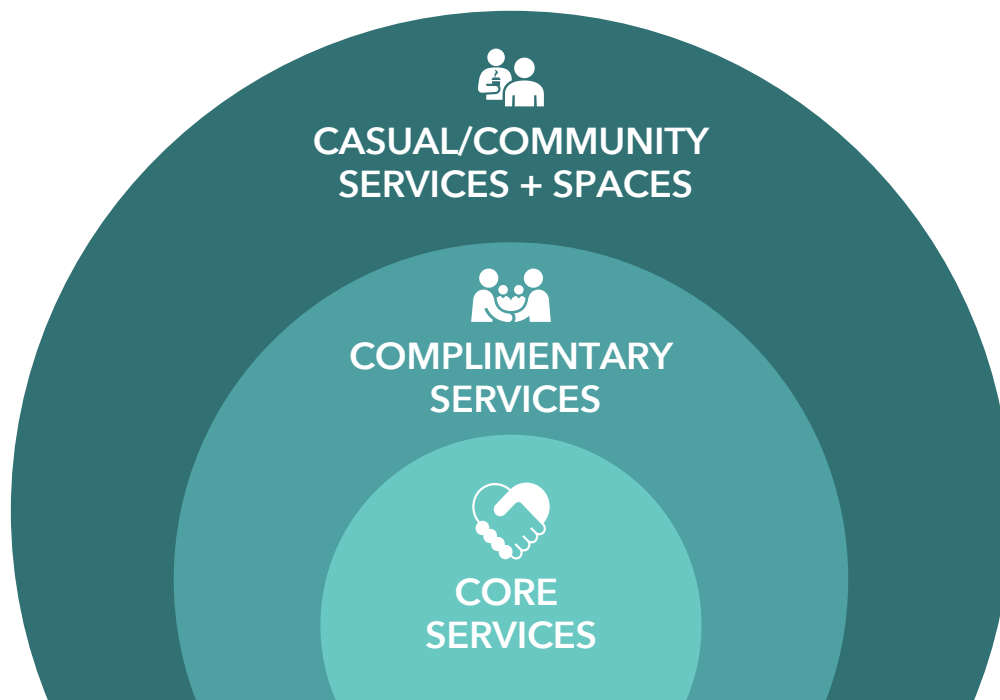


Community Hub Purpose: Services

The Community Hub seeks to support three areas of service:

- Core services
- Complimentary services
- Casual interactions/community-building activities

Effectively structuring the hub in a way that considers how these three levels can complement each other will be key to its success.



Core services are the critical building blocks of the hub. They are the foundation of the hub's purpose, offering visitors support and skill building opportunities as they navigate life's many challenges. The core services should be available to residents at all life stages - from early childhood through the senior years. By having a variety of services in a single location, including universal services for all residents, there is a reduced stigma for those accessing social services in the hub.

A critical element of core services includes ensuring the visitor has the ability to effectively navigate social service programming (see *Section 2.2, Meet the Navigators*, for additional detail). A key service delivery goal focuses on providing visitors with a customized experience that meets their specific needs. In particular, navigators help residents realize the approach that is envisioned in the Social Framework:



*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?*¹¹

Complimentary services are the structured services, businesses and activities that supplement core services. They also provide reasons for residents to visit the hub beyond simply accessing social services. These complimentary services could include yoga studios, coffee shops, library, job skills training or medical offices, among many potential uses.

Casual interactions / community building activities give community members an opportunity to 'hang out' in ways that appeal to them. These organic interactions reflect the intention that everyone is welcome, feels they belong and should feel safe and comfortable.



Community Hub Purpose: Synergy

The Community Hub concept exemplifies what can be achieved when organizations and individuals come together for the collective good. Through communication, governance and a shared commitment to more positive social outcomes, synergy is realized in the hub in a number of ways:

- The Community Hub operates with a shared vision through the co-creation of the Social Framework between partners. It functions in a coordinated manner to offer a single access point to many social service organizations. Community hub visitors can connect to the services they need through well-informed staff navigators.
- Community hub service partners are well versed in each other's roles, processes and pressures. Information and knowledge sharing is key to the hub's operation. A keen understanding of community trends and issues drives the hub's partners to think in new and innovative ways and to respond to the changing needs of residents.

¹¹ Strathcona County, *Social Framework: A platform to unlock the ingenuity of the community* (2017), 14.



- Partners in the Community Hub can include government, not-for-profit agencies, faith-based organizations and private businesses. Community hub partners share ownership, decision-making and resources. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each organization in order to help achieve the hub's collective vision and implementation of the Social Framework.
- The community hub is flexible and accountable. The ongoing evaluation of programs, services and supports allows the Hub to stay relevant and impactful.
- Hub visitors come first. Breaking silos and cross-training staff and volunteers makes the social service experience seamless for visitors.



Community Hub Purpose: Space

The physical space of the community hub is a manifestation of the intention behind the concept itself – it is welcoming, accessible and dynamic. There are a number of key qualities that are priorities for the hub space:

- The Community Hub has a range of flexible meeting and gathering spaces. It has both indoor and outdoor elements, it has temporary and permanent components, it has public and private areas, and the hub effectively facilitates eating, sharing, learning and lounging.
- The Community Hub serves both the urban and rural residents of Strathcona County, using creative approaches like pop-up locations to meet the emerging needs of all County residents.
- The Community Hub is located where visitors can easily access services by using a variety of modes of transportation.
- Clear way-finding and barrier-free design allow visitors to effortlessly find their way around the hub.
- The Community Hub operates at hours that meet people's needs.
- The community hub is for people of all ages, incomes, genders and ethnicities. It has a casual and inviting atmosphere that promotes authentic interactions between community members.

Lang's is a community hub in Cambridge, Ontario that provides a variety of services, including education, health and social services.



2.2 SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

As outlined in Section 2.1, the service providers operating within the hub would deliver a wide cross-section of programs and activities to support residents of all ages and backgrounds. These services would range in purpose from core services (social services) to complimentary services (amenities and businesses) while also providing casual community spaces for conversations and connections. This variety of offerings will make the hub appealing to many visitor groups.

Meet the Wayfinders

During the engagement process, strong opinions arose around the need for a 'wayfinder' to act as a concierge of the hub. This function would include a person or team who greets individuals upon their arrival at the hub and assists them in accessing the available services. Wayfinders would ensure each person's unique journey is recognized and facilitated. For every visit, the wayfinders would help guide a welcoming, friendly and informative experience for those visiting the space. The team of wayfinders would be supported by the hub governance structure and partner agencies in their efforts to put the needs of visitors first.

Meet the Navigators

In response to the Strathcona County Social Framework, the Solutions Navigator assists participants including youth, adults and seniors explore everyday social challenges with a focus on empowering people to find solutions that work for them through outreach and office meetings. The position develops, implements and evaluates capacity building approaches including psycho-educational skill building sessions, workshops and practice sessions with a focus on prevention and early intervention. The Solution Navigator also identifies and develops solutions to reduce barriers to service delivery within the County and with partnering social serving organizations. Project work and committee work, as well as mentoring students and volunteers are opportunities within this position.

Lessons Learned

The Strathcona County Family and Community Services (FCS) team is currently employing this customized approach through their solutions navigation program. FCS has a team of navigators ready to listen and develop an action plan tailored for each individual's needs.¹² This new, innovative interaction between the visitor and the service provider helps achieve a unique and focused service delivery and skill building plan.¹³ The FCS navigators are available free of charge to all residents, and can be reached every weekday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.¹⁴ The navigation program models the kind of organizational behaviour that emphasizes empathy for the unique circumstances and needs of each individual who engages with FCS, without judgement or discrimination.

WHAT WE HEARD....

There is a lack of awareness of transportation available to seniors

Connecting with people where they are – getting them where they need to be

[Seniors] LGBTQ2S+ services are lacking – pushback from peers, lack of personal support

[Families] not fitting into categories of services or having the knowledge of how to find services

Proactively educating people on resources before they get to point of stress

Circle of support. Holistic supports in order to make sure there are different supports available for all groups, but especially the groups identified (seniors, young families, youth)

Information booth in the middle staffed by volunteers and translators to help navigate people to services, ensure accessibility

¹² Strathcona County. "Solutions Navigation: finding the right support services for you" Reviewed online August 8, 2018. <https://www.strathcona.ca/community-families/well-being-and-mental-health/navigation/>

¹³ Strathcona County FCS Mission. June 2018

¹⁴ Strathcona County. "Solutions Navigation: finding the right support services for you" Reviewed online August 8, 2018. <https://www.strathcona.ca/community-families/well-being-and-mental-health/navigation/>

Support For All Life Stages

The critical building blocks of the hub, the core services, would offer support for residents at all stages of life, with an emphasis on early childhood and parenting, youth and seniors. Where possible and appropriate, individual needs will be assessed and met alongside those of the client's family members, with an emphasis on a holistic approach to providing services.

The notion of providing support and skill building through various life stages was raised repeatedly in conversations with a range of stakeholders during phases 1 and 2 of the *Strathcona County Community Hub Study* report development process. Throughout the consultations, stakeholders were hesitant to prematurely narrow the options for services within a hub, but the project Steering Committee supported the identification of core services using life stages as a frame. This decision was widely supported by stakeholders, given that the range of services is not limited by broadly identifying what groups would be served.

As the community hub process progresses, decisions regarding the core services will be guided by the criteria for participation (described in Section 2.3), decisions surrounding governance (described in Section 2.6) and additional discussions with potential partners (described in Section 3.3).

Service Opportunities

While social services are considered the nucleus of a community hub, achieving the hub's full potential in terms of range of services and synergistic approaches will be prioritized. A diversity of lenses open to immersive experience and evolution will help create an enhanced visitor experience, that leads to more positive outcomes than simply having many social services under one roof.

To that end, accommodating the privacy needs of visitors will remain a priority when considering design choices for the hub space.

Complimentary services – those that supplement core services – will help a wider range of residents feel connected to the hub. In conversations with stakeholders, many types of businesses and amenities were suggested for inclusion within the Hub. It is worth noting that this variety included both social services and other public or community services, as well as commercial enterprises. Many of the community hubs examined during this study found their governance structures prevented the inclusion of commercial activities in the facility.¹⁵ This can provide a challenge in drawing community members who are not using the core services and can also limit revenue opportunities for the facility.

The following suggestions for complimentary services received the most support from stakeholders during the Phase 1 and 2 consultation processes:

Community Kitchen. A community kitchen can serve as the soul of a community hub, where skills are built and treats are made. It is an amenity that can be used by multiple organizations and individuals during both organized and informal gatherings.

Child Care. Many stakeholders noted that lack of childcare can be a barrier to accessing community hub services. As a supplemental service, drop in child care, daycare and play spaces can help provide fun, active play opportunities for kids, and give their parents the time and opportunity to access the services they need.

Cafe or Restaurant. Healthy, delicious and affordable food and beverage options can provide a valuable service for community hub visitors while at the same time attracting new visitors to the hub. Businesses that operate as a social enterprise could be a particularly effective fit for a community hub.

Wellness facilities and services. Businesses that support improved health and wellness, such as yoga studios, gyms and wellness clinics were frequently cited as being positive and logical additions to hub services to support physical, mental and spiritual health.

¹⁵ Province of Ontario. "Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan." p.26.

Art Gallery, Library or Museum.

Sharing space with other cultural organizations aligns with the hub's vision of integrating assets and providing means for members to create value in their own lives. The positive potential of incorporating local artists' works throughout the hub was suggested during many conversations. Additionally, integrating art with social innovation could further cement the intention of The Hub in compelling ways.

Lend and Swap Shop. A shop that connects sellers and buyers of new and used items can promote the benefits of a sharing economy, incorporating items like books, clothes, tools and other items that can be donated, lent or exchanged. Not only is this approach more sustainable, but it also provides affordable options for hub visitors.

Training and Education. Inclusion of post secondary institutions, job training programs and skills development aligns with the holistic approach to developing more resilient community members.

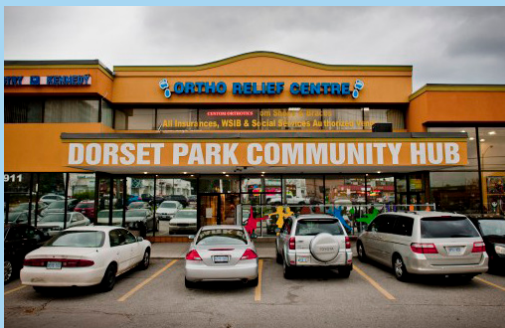
Community Building

The third key element within the hub structure focuses on casual interactions and community-building activities. Organized effectively, a community hub presents an opportunity for these interactions to occur in a more natural and organic fashion. This more relaxed approach to providing opportunities for individuals to connect and converse serves as an effective complement to some of the more formal activities found in the core and complementary services.

The ability to create a hub that functions as a comfortable, safe and inviting space relates in large part to the design of the space itself (see Section 2.5).

THE EXPERIENCE OF

COMMUNITY HUBS^{IN}



Dorset Park Community Centre in Toronto

Across Canada, community hubs are serving a multitude of populations and needs. Most hubs deliver a range of programs to varied demographic groups. Many of the hubs that were reviewed for the

preparation of this report had a wide variety of programming categories that stakeholders felt could be considered for adoption within Strathcona County.

One hub that takes on a wide spectrum of services is Dorset Park Community Centre in Toronto, Ontario. They provide nine service areas including early childhood, financial & employment, newcomers and technology.¹⁶ This Community Centre offers support to at-risk individuals while also hosting community clubs.

Another hub that was reviewed during this process, Bathurst-Finch Community Hub, features six primary service areas and outpost spaces around the City.¹⁷

Only three of the 15 hubs reviewed during this study offer three or fewer categories of services. Considering what layers of service are appropriate within the Strathcona County context will be an important consideration in the planning process. Prioritizing the full potential of services and synergy in the hub ensures an emphasis on visitors over providers. This correlates to a goal of the Langs Centre in Cambridge, Ontario that "works to ensure that co-location with partner agencies yields maximum benefit for patients and participants."¹⁸

¹⁶ City of Toronto. "2011 Neighbourhood Improvement Area Snapshot December," (2013) Reviewed online March 13, 2018. <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/8faf-2011-NIA-DorsetPark.pdf>.

¹⁷ *ibid*

¹⁸ Langs. "A Quick Guide to Langs Partners" (2016) Reviewed online July 30, 2018.

HUB STORIES

CHARLOTTE AND JOSEPH

Charlotte and Joseph just had a baby. Joseph worked in Fort McMurray for over a decade. Last month, he lost his job. New to Strathcona County, they own an acreage just outside Sherwood Park that they can no longer afford. Financial concerns strain their relationship. Joseph is embarrassed about not being able to provide for his family.

Charlotte hears about the community hub from her doctor. She takes her family to a drop-in meeting with a hub navigator. When they arrive, the kids are dropped off at the hub's drop-in childcare centre, which provides subsidized services. The navigator assesses the family's needs, and suggests Joseph join an employment training program that is offered weekly at the hub. Charlotte learns about parenting supports, where she can receive post-partum and child development supports. The navigator also tells Charlotte and Joseph about the complementary services, and explains how the two of them can sign up for gym classes, cooking classes or day-care services.

After a hopeful meeting with the navigator, Charlotte and Joseph meet another young family with a newborn baby. The two families arrange a playdate for their kids the following week.

Services: Considerations Moving Forward

As the community hub process moves forward into the future steps outlined in *Section 3*, there are a series of considerations that should be addressed with regard to service provision.

Address Root Causes. As the Social Framework states: "A systems approach recognizes that all social organizations and the individuals within them are connected and form a complex whole. At the organizational level, when agencies are able to consider non-traditional partnerships and forge new interdependent relationships, positive change can happen."¹⁹

Core Brain Science illustrates that positioning adults for success intrinsically eases the lives of their dependents.²⁰ Providing services tied to immediate outcomes such as job postings, income supports, food and family resources is integral to improved results. This aligns with the hub's vision of setting adults up for success by addressing and, when possible, preventing the root causes of individual social problems.

Core Brain Science research and science also indicates that early intervention and skill-building are necessary to prepare individuals for the challenges they will experience in life.²¹ This research underscores a key reason why focusing on parenting and early childhood as well as youth development will lead to greater community impact through The Hub.

Provide Variety That Encourages Opportunity. Other services that could benefit a hub but which focus less on immediate need within the core services realm include small business supports, varying levels of education, literacy, employment training, and networking / connecting events. Although these elements typically exist in isolation, the Synergy section of this study highlights how cross-delivery of services would draw more diverse individuals to explore and participate in the hub. What if an entrepreneurial individual sought advice on launching a business next to a student seeking assistance for school loan applications? Building in these opportunities for connections provides variety as well as encouraging cross-generational encounters that help strengthen community ties.

¹⁹ Strathcona County, *Social Framework: A platform to unlock the ingenuity of the community* (2017), 7.

²⁰ Alberta Family Wellness Core Brain Science. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmVWOe1ky8s>. Accessed August 8, 2018.

²¹ *ibid*

Empower Visitor Groups. While the hub will always provide a foundation of core services, flexibility is required to ensure services meet the needs of as many visitors as possible. This requires an intention to build resilience – both for the visitors of the hub and within the organization of the hub itself. Beyond the demonstration of community responsiveness, the hub must expose and connect its visitors to the opportunity to pursue their own dreams and ideas. Considering cross-client connection and encouraging mentoring and skill sharing among visitors supports a more robust hub that goes beyond serving into empowerment.

Use a Principle-Based Approach. With a diversity of stakeholders, the potential for conflicts between various services and providers is increased. From big issues – like the perception of reduced autonomy to smaller problems, like hosting animals in a space where patrons may have allergies – challenges must be faced directly. By using a principle-based approach that focuses on learning through challenges, the resources and relationships within The Hub will improve over time.

Plan Through a Long-Term Lens. Focusing on the services that will occupy the space on opening day only provides a snapshot of the hub’s value. The hub is a place that requires long-term thinking and investment. Being flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the community will promote greater sustainability. This focus on a long-term perspective includes the ongoing identification of potential new partners, the governance approach and the design of the physical space, all of which will help ensure that the hub’s services remain relevant, focused and responsive over time.

2.3 SYNERGY

Creating synergy between service providers is an essential consideration for the hub – it is what makes a community hub different from simple co-location. As discussed in *Section 2.1*, the hub realizes its potential when organizations and individuals come together for the collective good. Everyone involved in the hub is responsible for ensuring smooth service delivery and operational accountability. This shared responsibility from all parties starts with a shared agreement among partners. A clear agreement acts as a guide for agencies and operators in the hub as they work cooperatively toward their shared vision.

For the collective impact approach outlined in *Section 1.3*, The Hub would reflect a shift described in the Social Framework in the way that organizations, community groups, and individuals think, behave, and convene. This shift is reflected below:

Shifts FROM:	Shifts TO:
Programmatic responses	Systemic thinking
Do <i>for</i> people	Do <i>with</i> people
Incremental, organization-level outcomes	High aspiration and community-wide outcomes
Working in silos	Collective ownership
Focus on symptoms	Focus on root causes

These shifts will reflect a new way of working for many potential partner organizations. Partners in the hub must be willing to collectively commit to this approach and develop the necessary capacities to identify, plan and deliver effective programming for hub visitors.

Beyond service and operational mandates, partners must also be prepared to identify how to attract visitors to the hub. This includes identifying the changing needs and aspirations of the current visitors of core services while also inspiring the not-so-usual suspects to become intrigued and excited about the hub. All staff in the space will be expected to offer a warm and welcoming impression, similar to the hub wayfinder (see *Section 2.2*). The ultimate objective for the hub is that it becomes a community-building centre where those who require the core services feel welcome and safe, and where people feel empowered to contribute their strengths.

WHAT WE HEARD....

Set time and date for organizations to gather, collaborate, learn and meal share

Building relationships with youth and businesses and community services

Support mentorship opportunities

Get youth involved in planning. They don't want before and after school care, they want to hang out with their age group

Utilize intergenerational opportunities as much as possible

In addition to attracting potential hub visitors, success requires all partners to leverage networks and connections outside of the space. Whether it be schools, businesses or any other local stakeholders, outreach is required from those within the hub to ensure other pertinent players become involved. Workshop participants shared ideas including mentoring, operating out of schools and delivering mobile services as ways to help create a strong reputation for the hub. The Tamarack Institute references assessments that take a close look at where local partners have the knowledge, networks and resources to contribute to difference-making.²²

Synergy: Considerations Moving Forward

As the community hub process moves forward into the future steps outlined in Section 3, there are a series of considerations that should be addressed to maximize the potential of hub synergies.

Be Bold. A theme of boldness around decision-making emerged in conversations with stakeholders. Advocating for the hub means stakeholders pushing each other to selflessly act toward greater outcomes for the community, together.

Be Sensitive. Any stigma within the social service realm can be addressed through cultural competency training. In addition, the experiences hub partners and participants share in a unique and comfortable community space will help build empathy and understanding over time.

Foster Innovation. The importance of promoting innovation was cited many times in conversations with stakeholders. Entrepreneurialism and creative problem-solving must be encouraged. This could be achieved at occasional workshops like a Social Innovation Lab²³ or a Makerspace²⁴ or in a dedicated place for young entrepreneurs to develop business opportunities. Whatever the format, cultivating economic diversification and creative problem-solving is key.

Commit to Supporting Structures. The Tamarack Institute identifies backbone staff as being key to the effective management of collective impact.²⁵ These individuals possess specific skills to coordinate between partner groups. There are few cases where collective impact has succeeded without the presence of supporting infrastructure. As part of the evolution of practice in collective impact, Mark Cabaj and Liz Weaver identify key aspects of backbone leadership to realize improved outcomes.²⁶ These include:

- The mobilization of a diverse group of funders, backbone sponsors and stewardship arrangements that demonstrate cross-sectoral leadership on the issue
- The facilitation of the participants' inner journey of change, including the discovery and letting go of their own mental models and cultural/emotional biases, required for them to be open to fundamentally new ways of doing things
- Processes to cultivate trust and empathy among participants so they can freely share perspectives, engage in fierce conversations and navigate differences in power

22 Cabaj, Mark and Liz Weaver "Collective Impact 3.0: An Evolving Framework for Community Change." (2016). Pg 8.

23 Westley, F. Laban, S Social Innovation Lab Guide (2015). Reviewed August 6, 2018. <https://socialinnovationinstitute.app.box.com/s/7kj10o1hs2bavzcyuh7krdb0nuw9h13x>

24 A Makerspace can be defined as: a place in which people with shared interests, especially in computing or technology, can gather to work on projects while sharing ideas, equipment, and knowledge. In Calgary, a community hub is being developed in the Fuse 33 Makerspace.

25 Cabaj, Mark and Liz Weaver "Collective Impact 3.0: An Evolving Framework for Community Change." (2016).

26 Ibid, p.10.

- Using the many dilemmas and paradoxes of community change – such as the need to achieve short-term wins while involved in the longer-term work of system change – as creative tensions to drive people to seek new approaches to vexing challenges without being overwhelmed

From the outset, the partners and structures of the community hub will need to be intentional and realistic about the resources required to support the work of partners in service of improved community outcomes.

Apply Criteria for Participation. In addition to having a common narrative and committing to routine information and knowledge sharing, the following criteria are proposed as requirements for organizations wishing to participate in the hub. While the criteria provides structure for discussing participation in the hub, it does not represent an iron-clad formula for involvement. However, any response of ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ should represent a red flag around organizational alignment with the purpose of the hub.

Criteria	Evaluation Rank			
	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly Agree
My organization is committed to implementing the Strathcona County Social Framework.				
My organization supports our staff being accountable to the hub’s success. We see our staff as hub experts, delivering informed insights to visitors through comprehensive training.				
My organization will contribute staff time and resourcing to shared hub objectives. We will learn, share, and coordinate with hub partners and navigators for succinct messaging and direction.				
My organization supports regular information and knowledge sharing. We will have open dialogue among other hub-based services.				
My organization seeks to level the playing field. We will work to avoid typical power dynamics among partners and operate with the visitor’s best interest in mind.				
My organization is eager to challenge complexity. We will find new and better ways of working efficiently with our hub colleagues.				
My organization wants to use its assets, connections and resources to work collaboratively and creatively with our hub colleagues.				
My organization can better serve its target population by co-locating with other service agencies.				
My organizations seeks to use data to support evidence-based decision making.				
My organization seeks to empower its user groups. We will harness the opportunity for individuals (employee, volunteer or participant) to contribute their strengths to the hub and create value in their own lives.				
My organization wants to build a movement. We will rally positive public perception about the work of the hub.				
My organization wants to promote cultural acceptance and celebrate diversity.				

HUB STORIES

AMIRA

Amira is a senior living in rural Strathcona County who recently lost her husband. She enjoys cooking and would love to share her passion for food with others. She has lived in Strathcona County all her life, but longs for more connection with her community. With extra time on her hands, she wants to give back to her neighbours, but she doesn't know where to start. Amira's house needs some repairs and she is looking for a volunteer to help her.

Amira learns about the community hub when a mobile version visits Josephburg one weekend. She wants to see the permanent space, so she carools to the hub with a neighbour for her first visit. Amira is greeted by a navigator and the two of them have an informal conversation about the hub. The navigator gives Amira a tour of the space, showing her the garden, community kitchen and play space. From this short conversation, the navigator listens to Amira's strengths, needs and hopes, understanding that she is an avid cook and might need help with financial advice, grief

counselling and other services. The navigator recommends that Amira join a weekly cooking group, mentioning that her grandkids, whom she looks after during the day, could be supervised in the play space while she cooks.

A few days later, Amira's son drives her to the weekly cooking group. She quickly learns that the mobile version of the hub is about to start a program that brings freshly cooked meals to rural families in need. Amira also meets two people in the cooking group that live near her rural home, one senior and one young adult. They offer to give her rides to the cooking group each week. Also during this visit, Amira follows up with the hub navigator about her need for affordable home repairs. Although the hub does not offer home repair services, information about local repair company is available. The navigator gives Amira the details she needs to connect with a reliable home repair service.

THE EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNITY HUBS_{IN} CANADA

Lessons from other hubs across the country can help identify how to best cultivate synergy within the Strathcona County Community Hub. In many precedent hubs, the organization has defined roles and responsibilities that help achieve the hub's collective vision. The roles align with the strengths of each organization, with the shared goal of best serving the visitors of the hub. These roles require an alternative view to the power dynamics typically seen in organizations.

Another key takeaway from best practice research is the importance of building a shared vision or movement that many people can rally behind. The vision represented in this study will provide that fundamental starting point for Strathcona County.

The Elmwood Resource Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba has been operating since 2001, and has recently undergone a physical expansion.²⁷ Their services stem from 19 different partner providers programming from this space and others. The levels of participation are varied, but partners level the playing field by working together to prioritize the client's best interests.

In Hamilton, Ontario, the City's poverty reduction strategy focuses on the impacts that benefit the most vulnerable groups experiencing the greatest social struggles. Their movement was coined 'Making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child',²⁸



The Langs Centre in Cambridge in Cambridge, Ontario

an objective people could rally around. Identifying a movement and finding shared goals aligns with the collective impact model the hub process embraces. Creating a movement for the hub will require dynamic language that works across agencies and which can be positively received by many generations of hub visitors.

The Langs Centre (Cambridge, Ontario) is working to "solidify and grow expertise to have impact in chronic disease, mental health and school completion."²⁹ With their emphasis on a people-centric approach, these areas of health contribute to shaping Langs' movement. Langs connects local residents with the social supports and health services they need. They build a strong presence for service providers with the goal of achieving greater participation through recognition³⁰.

27 Elmwood Resource Centre "About". Reviewed online July 31, 2018. <http://elmwoodcrc.ca/about-us/>.

28 Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction "Making Hamilton the Best Places to Raise A Child" (2007). Reviewed July 31, 2018. <http://ideas.typepad.com/poverty/RoundtableReport.pdf>.

29 Langs Centre "About". Reviewed online July 31, 2018. <http://www.langs.org/about-langs/>.

30 *ibid*

2.4 LOCATION IN THE COMMUNITY

A critical component of a community hub is its physical location within Strathcona County. As a specialized municipality that includes both a large urban centre and a significant rural area and population, locating a community hub presents a unique challenge. As discussed earlier, a key outcome of the Social Framework is that citizens have straightforward access to programs and services that are easy to find. Balancing the needs of both urban and rural populations will be an important consideration in the location of a future community hub.

Sherwood Park contains more than 70% of the population in Strathcona County. Given the concentration of population within this urban service area, locating the Community Hub in Sherwood Park provides convenient proximity for the majority of the County's population.

Within Sherwood Park, the location of a hub should have three key considerations: transportation options, proximity to services and proximity to amenity spaces.

Transportation Options

Removing barriers to accessing the Community Hub will be an important consideration for the location of the facility. Selection of a location that includes a variety of transportation options will allow for the most inclusive approach possible. This can include:

- **Proximity to transit.** While improving the transit system was identified as a key theme during the *Community Talk* process, considering access to transit services provides a foundational option for residents who lack access to a private vehicle. Many transit guides suggest that a walking distance of five minutes (400m) be used as a guide for how far individuals are willing to walk to transit.³¹ Locating the Community Hub in proximity to locations with higher intensities of transit routes, such as the Bethel Transit Terminal, would improve resident access to the Community Hub.
- **Access to parking and drop-off facilities.** While proximity to transit removes access barriers for many residents, the current reality is that the majority of travel in the County is through private vehicles (91.5% of the population cite a private vehicle as their main mode of commuting in Strathcona County)³². Placing the hub in a location where parking and drop-off facilities are available will reflect the current reality of the County and will not inadvertently provide barriers to access.
- **Proximity to pathways and provision of cycling infrastructure.** With families and youth identified as key users of core services within the hub, walking and cycling must be considered as potential modes of transportation. Ensuring the Community Hub is in a location that is accessible by active modes of transportation also aligns with the objective of helping create healthy individuals in all aspects of their life. Proximity to pathways and the provisioning of excellent cycling infrastructure (such as bike lockers) enables residents to access the services in yet another way.

Proximity to Services

As described in Section 2.2, Services and Activities, the intention is for the Community Hub to function as a facility that houses a variety of complementary services. This approach will help to create an environment where residents can meet many of their needs in one location.

31 *Trans Link Strategic Planning and Policy, Transit-Oriented Communities Design Guidelines (July 2012)* 113. Reviewed online August 8, 2018. https://www.translink.ca/~media/documents/plans_and_projects/transit_oriented_communities/transit_oriented_communities_design_guidelines.ashx.

32 *Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2016 Census, Strathcona County, Specialized Municipality, Main Mode of Commuting (2016)*. Reviewed online August 8, 2018. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4811052&Geo2=PR&Code2=48&Data=Count&SearchText=Strathcona%20County&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=4811052&TABID=1>

The services that complement the Community Hub can include a wide range of commercial, institutional and community support activities. From a land use perspective, the zoning districts with the greatest potential for complementary uses, subject to the provision of the Heavy Industrial Overlay, include:

- C1 - Community Commercial
- C2 - Arterial Commercial
- C4 - Major Commercial
- C5 - Service Commercial
- PR - Recreation District
- PS - Public Services District
- UV1 - Centre in the Park Zoning District
- UV2 - Emerald Hills Zoning District
- UV4 - Salisbury Village Zoning District

In addition, Sherwood Park has a number of pockets with higher than average population density including Centre in the Park, Emerald Hills Urban Village, Salisbury Urban Village, Strathcona Centre and the Palisades. Locating in close proximity to these areas will increase the probability of a higher number of visitors traveling to The Hub via active transportation.

Schools may also be considered as a complementary use to The Hub. In addition to the likelihood of shared goals, Strathcona County has seen increased interest from the school boards regarding the shared use of school sites with public facilities.

Proximity to Amenity Spaces

While there is a definite programmatic focus for the facility itself, providing 'un-programmed' spaces for residents to socialize and relax is a key element to successfully developing the community hub. These kinds of spaces are described in Section 2.5 as it pertains to the design and function of the hub itself, but the location of the facility can also consider proximity to amenity spaces. These can include parks, plazas and other natural spaces where the community can gather. Locating the hub near these kinds of amenity spaces will only enhance the experience of individual visitors of the facility and further establish the hub as a centre of activity for the County.

Engaging Rural Citizens

The above locational considerations all apply to a physical hub facility that can serve as the focal point for activities as described in the vision for a community hub. However, providing access to rural residents is an essential element of a successful hub approach. A key consideration that applies to all aspects of the *Strathcona County Community Hub Study* is: How can the hub support Strathcona County's rural population?

Based on the latest available census report (2015), Strathcona County's total population is 95,597, which can be broken into those living in Sherwood Park and those living in rural Strathcona. The majority of residents, 72% (68,782 residents), live in the urban area of Sherwood Park. In rural Strathcona, the population is 26,815 (28%), with 2,001 people living in the eight county hamlets (Antler Lake, Ardossan, Collingwood Cove, South Cooking Lake, Half Moon Lake, Josephburg, Hastings Lake and North Cooking Lake). An additional 23,203 people live on country residential estates, with 1,611 citizens living on farms (including Hutterite colonies).³³

The rural areas of Strathcona County enable a unique way of life, and The Hub would need to consider how to best serve these residents.

³³ *Strathcona County, Census 2015, Overall Results (2015)*. Reviewed online July 4, 2018. https://www.strathcona.ca/files/files/at-lls-2015_municipal_census_report.pdf.

During the engagement process, many key stakeholders emphasized that the rural population must not be ignored in the development of the Community Hub. To provide support for rural residents, two models are recommended for consideration in addition to a physical hub located within Sherwood Park: a pop up Community Hub and a Digital Community Hub.



Pop Up Community Hub

A pop up hub would take advantage of facilities and locations that residents already know and use in their communities. The pop up hub would be placed in the rural community halls, and could occur on a regular basis at these locations.

Strathcona County has 14 community halls (A.J. Ottewell Community Centre, Antler Lake Uncas Community Hall, Ardossan Memorial Hall, Brookville Community Hall, Colchester Community Hall, Deville North Cooking Lake Community Hall, Good Hope Community Hall, Hastings Lake Community Hall, Josephburg Community Hall, Partridge Hill Community Hall, Sherwood Park-Log Cabin, South Cooking Lake Community Hall, Whitecroft Community Hall and Wye Community Hall). All or a selection of these community halls could serve as the location(s) of the pop up hub.

A pop up hub would function with a traveling team, incorporating many of the services available in the central hub. This team would set up residence in a community hall for a short period of time, providing services to that community before moving on to the next location. This would provide all rural communities with access to services that would otherwise be difficult to obtain. There would need to be coordination between the hub and their representative organizations to organize rental of the community halls.

It may not be possible to co-locate all services from the hub in one community hall for every pop up hub. As a result, the needs of the rural populations must continuously be assessed, ensuring a clear understanding of what combination of services are most needed in the rural communities.



Digital Community Hub

A digital community hub would provide services through a digital portal. This model would serve to reach everyone in the County with relative ease, with online resources for the different services to ensure easy access. The two main limitations to this model are the need for internet access and the inability to create synergy around services.

During the community and stakeholder engagement process, many people cited poor internet service in many of Strathcona County's rural communities. This suggests that an online hub service may not effectively reach these communities.

While a digital hub has the opportunity to serve the County by providing useful information and services in an online format, the intended results would be less optimal for rural visitors than for urban residents.

2.5 SPACE CONSIDERATIONS

Given the diversity of organizations who would be based in the Community Hub, a significant challenge is to understand the kinds of spaces each individual organization requires and communal spaces for organizations and visitors. Through the process and in conversation with a variety of community stakeholders, a number of kinds and qualities of space were identified as important to a community hub. Ultimately, the physical space of the community hub needs to support and enhance the service and synergy aspects, as identified earlier in this report. Shared space and resources would not only lead to a more collaborative and efficient service delivery for partner organizations, but would also lead to a drastically improved visitor experience for the residents of Strathcona County.

To explore the space component of The Hub, two key considerations are important to discuss: the variety of spaces and the attributes of space.

A Variety of Spaces

The organization of diverse programs in a single building is a great challenge. As well as direct interaction with stakeholders, the design should encourage and enable cooperation between the user groups, to allow for shared multi-use spaces and facilities, and create a common vision that benefits individual aspirations as well as those of the broader community. To address this challenge, a variety of different spaces should be considered:

- **Private spaces:** Sensitive interactions, such as counselling with a social worker, requires space that is separate, private and is used exclusively for a specific purpose. Inclusion of these spaces will be vital in order to support the core services and those who need these supports. These spaces would feature more fixed design elements, given the exclusive use nature of these areas.
- **Semi-private spaces:** These spaces would be available to Hub partners and visitors to book for both private and public functions, but would not be 'owned' by a particular organization. Given the variety of partners who would use these spaces, a somewhat flexible design would be important.
- **Public spaces:** In order for communal activities to take place - both programmed and organic - there needs to be adequate space that is available to Hub organizations, regular visitors and the broader community. These spaces could have a fixed nature for specific purposes that have public interactions, such as a community kitchen. Some of these spaces should possess very flexible design qualities in order to enable a wide variety of activities.

Attributes of Space

With the above mentioned kinds of space in mind, there were a number of qualities to The Hub that participants in the process felt were important to realize the full potential of the idea. These attributes can be used to guide detailed design processes in future.

Inside The Hub

In many instances, social services are delivered in institutional spaces. In order to realize its full potential between core, complementary and casual services, the physical space of the community hub would need to provide a different model - a warmer and more welcoming environment. Light, sight lines, texture and decor can be used to set a positive mood for all those who find themselves in The Hub, for whatever reason. The following attributes of the interior of the Hub would enable the vision to enable improved social impacts.



OPEN COMMUNAL SPACE

A large, open space that is welcoming and comfortable for visitors. This space should include opportunities for private conversations to large community events.

COMFORTABLE SPACES

The Hub should provide elements that make visitors comfortable and want to spend time. This includes seating, tables, benches and greenery.



AN INFORMATION CENTRE

A bulletin board or online screen to inform people about programs, events, volunteer opportunities, etc.

A WELCOME KIOSK

Designed in a friendly and inviting way, this would provide a visual cue to visitors about where they can find a Wayfinder, who can provide information that they need for their own experience.



PUBLICLY DISPLAYED ART

This can feature the talent of local creators as well as provoke thought on issues that relate to challenges that Hub partners are attempting to address.



INTUITIVE WAYFINDING

Thoughtful design of information can assist those who do not want to discuss their needs with others, such as the Wayfinders.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARING

These can include spaces with a specific purpose, such as a community kitchen, where people can learn to cook and share food together. These can also include more informal elements, such as a Little Free Library or community closet.

Outside The Hub

By its nature, The Hub is a building that has a fluid relationship with the broader community. Intentionally extending activities outside the walls of the building further expresses the message that The hub is a place that is welcoming, safe and interesting. The following attributes of the exterior of the Hub would contribute to the shared direction of The Hub.

COMFORTABLE SPACES

As with the interior of The Hub, outdoor areas, should provide places for people to relax and enjoy nature. Consideration for shade and microclimate should be included to maximize comfort. This can include private seating areas with trees and shrubs and shade in order to give people privacy to have counselling or important conversations without being limited to an office environment.



FOOD PRODUCTION

A community garden or greenhouse provides an opportunity for community members to gather in a healthy, shared purpose. This can complement food-related activities within The Hub, such as a community kitchen or social enterprise restaurant.

PLAY SPACE

Ranging from playgrounds to skate parks, this provides opportunities to recreate and can be a place for children and youth to gather in ways that are appealing to them.





EVENT SPACE

This can include opportunity for larger-scale community events or smaller gathering opportunities, such as organizational BBQ's.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARING

In an outdoor context, sharing opportunities can include a tool library or a Little Free Pantry.



PUBLIC ART OR LANDSCAPE FEATURE

This can provide a gathering or focal point for the building and contribute to its identity in the community. These features can also be considered as part of the overall intent and function of The Hub. For example, a water feature or fountain can serve to conceal sensitive conversations.

THE EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNITY HUBS^{IN} CANADA



Evergreen Brick Works in Toronto

With the need to serve as both a private and shared space, the layout of the hub will require a great degree of flexibility to maximize the programming and use opportunities. Stakeholders have expressed a desire to see vegetation and play spaces, particularly gardens with seats for folks to meet and relax. A great example of bringing these elements together is seen at Evergreen Brick Works in Toronto, Ontario. Their plan for this renovated factory space speaks of community participation in the design and upkeep of greenery and garden spaces. "School groups, community groups, home gardeners and families will participate in the planting and maintenance of these accessible gardens. In the winter, a playful skating trail will wind through the space."³⁴ Organizers have paired this garden space with a natural playground where kids can get their hands dirty.³⁵ Tunnels, passageways, mazes and a tree house are just some of the ways children were considered in the design of the programming and space.

Similarly, the Langs Centre in Cambridge, Ontario gave much thought to greenery and outdoor spaces in addition to the inviting and flexible indoor spaces they created. With amenities like a living wall, outdoor courtyard and green roofs, the space embodies peace and tranquility in many forms.³⁶ In addition to green spaces, other means

of accommodating core services, complementary services and casual interactions include bookable meeting rooms (available seven days a week), a grand atrium and lounge, and an indoor walking track.³⁷

The Bathurst-Finch Community Hub (Unison) in Toronto, Ontario stands out because of its many community rooms, its community kitchen space and the children's playroom.³⁸ These spaces go beyond being accessories and bolster the core services Bathurst-Finch provides. This approach allowed them to serve 12,000 primary care clients and 8,000 program participants in 2015 and 2016 alone.³⁹

Some of these example hubs showcase newly built infrastructure, while some are restored and revitalized spaces. The Dorset Park Community Hub is unique, operating out of a rented commercial building in a Toronto strip mall. Close to transit and boasting 10,000 square feet of programmable space, this centre has nine delivery partners and has a number of amenities, including community kitchen space, a low-vision clinic and computer labs.⁴⁰ Located close to transit and amid other commercial operations, this hub emphasizes easy access and convenient connections.

³⁴ Evergreen Brick Works, *Transformation: The Story of Creating Evergreen Brick Works*. Reviewed online August 8, 2018. <https://www.evergreen.ca/downloads/pdfs/Transformation-EBW.pdf>.

³⁵ *ibid*

³⁶ Langs, *History of Organization*. Reviewed online August 8, 2018. <http://www.langs.org/about-langs/>.

³⁷ *ibid*

³⁸ Unison Health and Community Services, *Bathurst-Finch Hub*. Reviewed online August 8, 2018. <https://unisonhcs.org/programs-services/bathurst-finch-hub/>.

³⁹ *ibid*

⁴⁰ City of Toronto, *2011 Neighbourhood Improvement Area Snapshot, (December 2013)*. Reviewed online March 13, 2018. <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/8faf-2011-NIA-DorsetPark.pdf>.

HUB STORIES

MARCO

Marco has lived in Strathcona County for several years and has raised his family here. His local business is thriving, and he is ready to give back to the community that has supported him. He would love for his team of employees to be involved in a small initiative that does not require a huge commitment, financial investment or large amounts of time. He also has teenage sons looking for a place to hang out and explore their creative talents. He wants to encourage his sons to give back to the community through volunteer programs or mentorships. His one son loves sports. The other is a talented musician.

Marco hears about the hub from an employee. He thinks the hub might be a good starting point for giving back. When Marco visits, he is intrigued by the artwork on the walls and the warm atmosphere within the hub. He learns about the flexible programmable spaces and sees an Opportunities Board near the entrance. On the board, he sees that an organization is accepting donations for school

supplies. He encourages his kids to coordinate a donation.

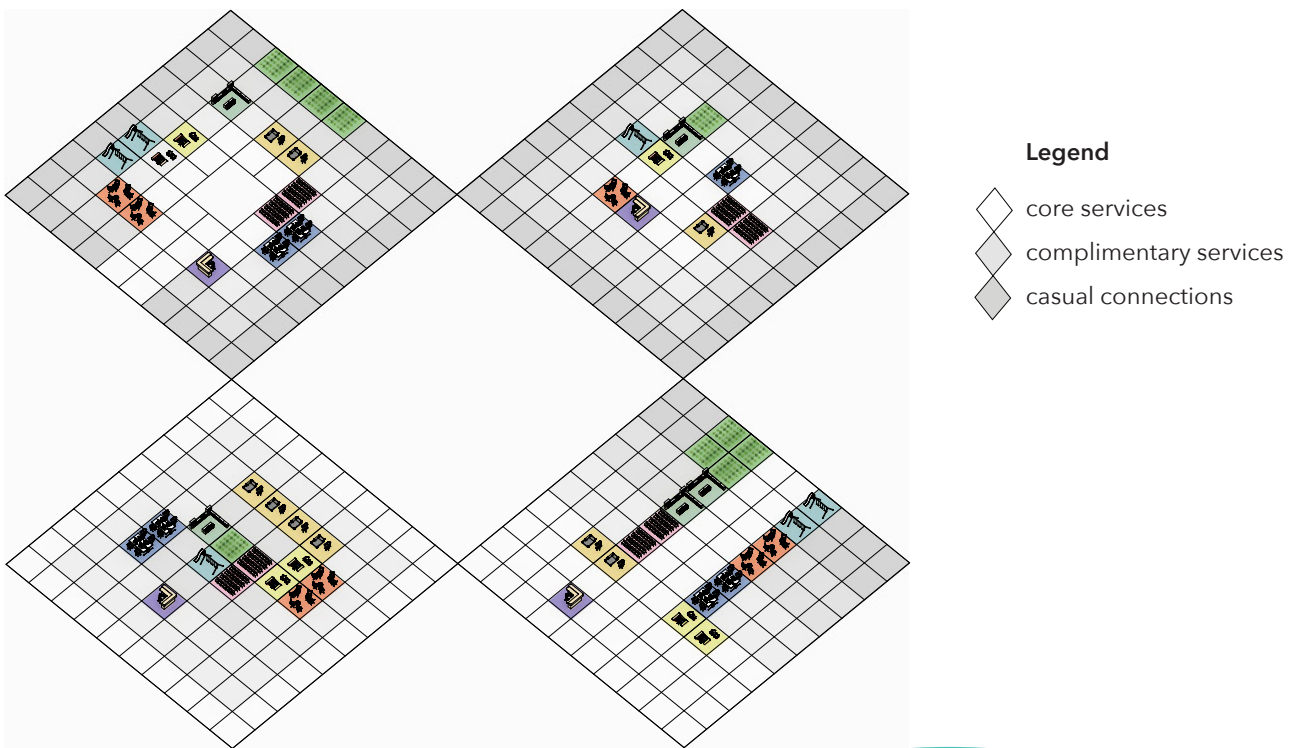
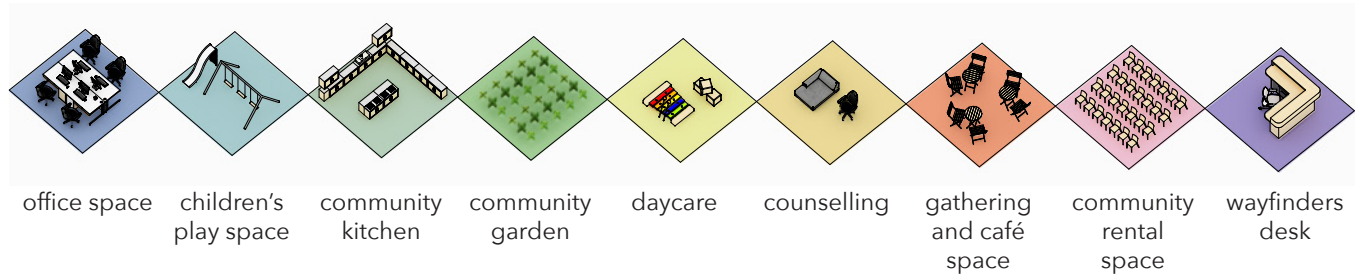
Marco consults his team to discuss possible community initiatives that could occur through the hub. They talk about an 'entrepreneurial innovation workshop' where Marco could teach participants some basic business skills and challenge them to work together to solve a social issue within Strathcona County.

Doug shares his idea with the hub coordinators who are excited about his idea, and offer him programmable space within The Hub to host the workshop. During the first workshop he hosts, Marco's kids come to the hub and hang out at the cafe. They meet other teenagers who share similar interests. Marco's musical son is encouraged to sign up for open mic night at the cafe. Marco's athletic son meets a younger boy who wants to learn more about soccer.

All three family members leave the hub feeling happy, satisfied and fulfilled.

Conceptual Model

The following is a conceptual representation of the possible combinations of programming elements that could happen in a physical hub. The nine coloured squares constitute a variety of programs the Hub could host as described throughout this document. Although these are only a handful of potential options, they represent elements the majority of stakeholders' incorporated into their own prototypes of the space.



WHAT WE HEARD....

Option to enter quiet, calm space when needed

Community kitchen as a way to build and learn from stuff grown in community garden, kitchen can also help support social enterprise

No lines, counters, barriers. Couches, open space conversation tables, tea, something for kids, growing space (flowers) to make it welcoming

Places to hold community events (flexible space for movie nights, hang out space) free of charge

Play areas and food options that broaden the audience of who enters the doors (not just those seeking information)

Collaborative/rotating space for different "start up" services

Community board/messaging board when you walk in - if you have skills to swap or something you want to advertise, or volunteer opportunities you can see it when you walk into the hub

Having big signs/visual cues within the space for people whose second language is english can understand where to go to access the services

2.6 GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Given the diversity of partners within a community hub, it will be essential to identify the roles, responsibilities and decision-making structures necessary to achieve the vision. In considering approaches for the governance model of a community hub, it is important to give thought to the premise of collective impact, as discussed in *Section 1*.

The concept of a 'backbone organization' is central to the collective impact approach. It can be defined as: "a separate organization dedicated to coordinating the various dimensions and collaborators involved in the initiative. Supporting backbone infrastructure is essential to ensuring the collective impact effort maintains momentum and facilitates impact."⁴¹ In the context of a community hub, considering the governance structures as a backbone structure can help maintain a continued focus on large-scale community outcomes as a hub develops, operates and evolves.

In order to establish an effective governance structure and system, a shared set of principles is needed to ground the diverse set of partners who would come together in the hub to address community needs. The Tamarack Institute provides initial broad values and principle statements that should be considered in collective impact. These include:⁴²

- Transparency and Accountability: Decisions take place in the public eye
- Equity and Inclusiveness: All interests who are needed and willing contribute to solutions
- Effectiveness and Efficiency: Solutions are tested to make sure they make practical sense
- Responsiveness: Public concerns are authentically addressed
- Forum Neutrality: Different perspectives are welcome; the process itself has no bias
- Consensus-Based: Decisions are made through consensus rather than majority rule

As the Strathcona County process progresses, hub partners can develop their own unique set of governing principles that reflect the values of those involved and the community at large.

The governance structure of a community hub can take many forms. Vibrant Communities Calgary provides the following set of potential governance models that can be considered for a community hub:⁴³

Single funder

A single funder does all of the planning, financing and bringing people together to support the hub. This can help avoid the challenge of pulling together start-up funding (because the single funder provides it) but can potentially affect the long-term sustainability of the hub (since it depends on a single funder). However, it is always possible to bring in other sources of funding if needed.

Existing non-profit organization

An already established non-profit takes charge of the hub. This can be effective if that organization has credibility in the community and a well-supported, existing infrastructure in place. A possible drawback is that the non-profit will have competing priorities and other projects, which could mean the hub doesn't get the funding or attention it needs.

New non-profit organization

A brand-new organization is created to run the hub, usually through private funding. This new entity will have a

41 Collaboration for Impact, *The Backbone Organization*. Reviewed online August 11, 2018. <http://www.collaborationforimpact.com/collective-impact/the-backbone-organisation/>.

42 The Tamarack Institute, *Collective Impact Backbones - Different Approaches*. Reviewed online August 8, 2018. <http://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/latest/collective-impact-backbones-different-approaches-and-lots-of-complexity>.

43 Vibrant Communities Calgary, *Community Hubs by Design*, (2011) 36.

crystal-clear focus: running the community hub in pursuit of its vision. The new non-profit will need a dependable stream of funding to support the hub, and local not-for-profits could see it as competition.

Steering Committee

A steering committee that includes members of the community can help ensure the hub continues to meet people's needs by giving the community power to make decisions about the hub's future. A possible challenge is that having multiple people responsible for the hub can cause confusion around accountability – which could mean not as much work getting done to make the hub the best it can be.

Multiple Organizations

Having more than one organization share ownership of the hub has several benefits, including that each party will have to put less resources into the hub and there will be a broader pool of expertise at the helm. However, with more players at the table, accountability may be less clear and coordination may be a challenge, potentially making the hub less effective than it could be.

A government department or agency

A local or provincial government body manages the hub. A hub backed by government may have an easier time getting permits and other approvals for activities and programming. It might also have existing infrastructure at its disposal. On the other hand, needing to follow government processes could slow progress – and public funding is not always a given.

A review of precedent hubs from across Canada shows that 11 of the 15 examples studied for this report are structured by a non-profit organization, either through a previously existing non-profit or through the creation of a new non-profit organization to lead the hub. Two of the reviewed hubs were led by municipal government, with one of those (The Orange Hub in Edmonton) planning to transition to a non-profit after five years.

In the July 2018 survey, respondents did not indicate a strong preference for a specific governance model

at this stage. As clarity on partners emerges through subsequent stages in the hub development process, considerations around the most appropriate governance model can be explored. To date, efforts on the Community Hub have been led by Strathcona County, with significant enthusiasm from community stakeholders. As the discussion shifts from the exploratory to the tangible, consideration around which partners have the interest and capacity to contribute to hub governance will be an important topic.



FUTURE

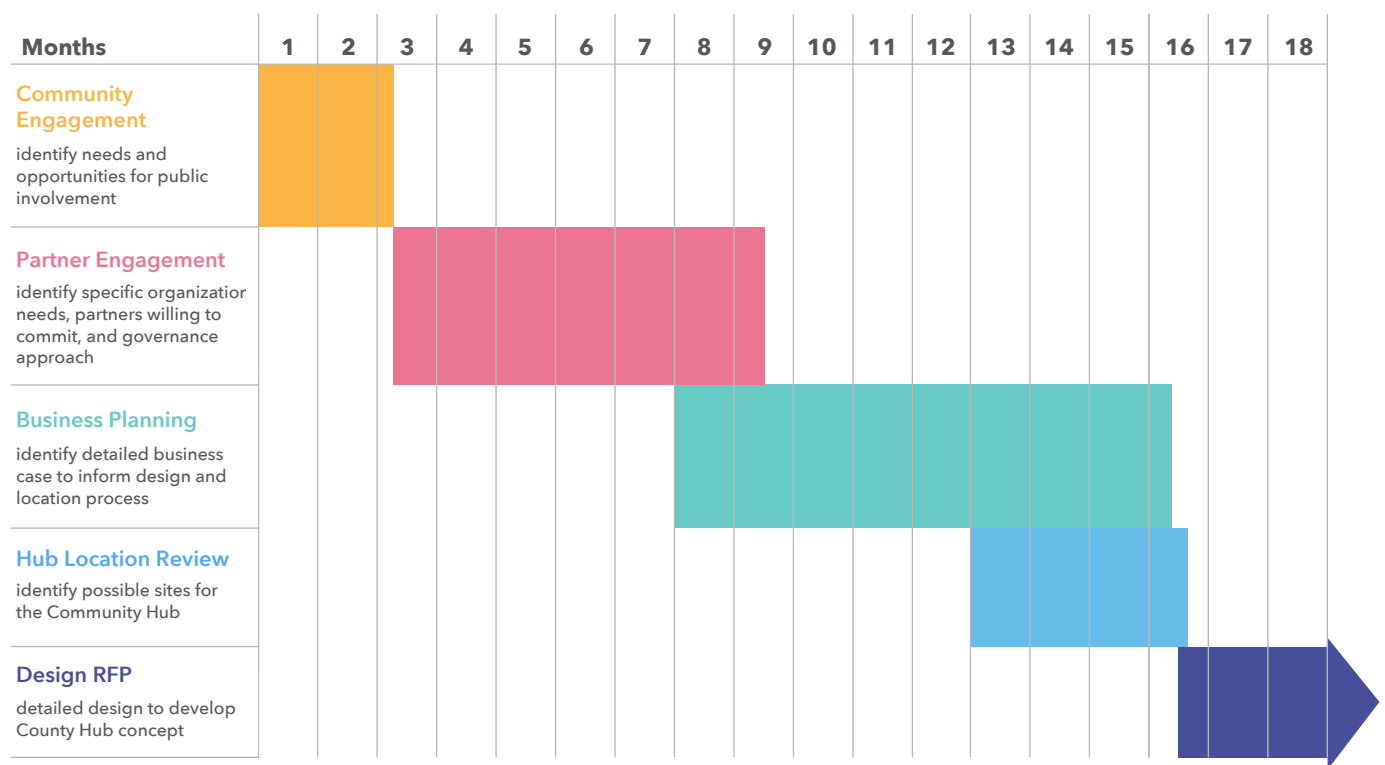


3.0 FUTURE STEPS TO DEVELOP A COMMUNITY HUB

The *Strathcona County Community Hub Study* report has been developed to provide a foundation on which to base ongoing work in the development of a Community Hub. The following elements outline future work that will be required to make the vision of a Strathcona County Community Hub a reality. These phases include:

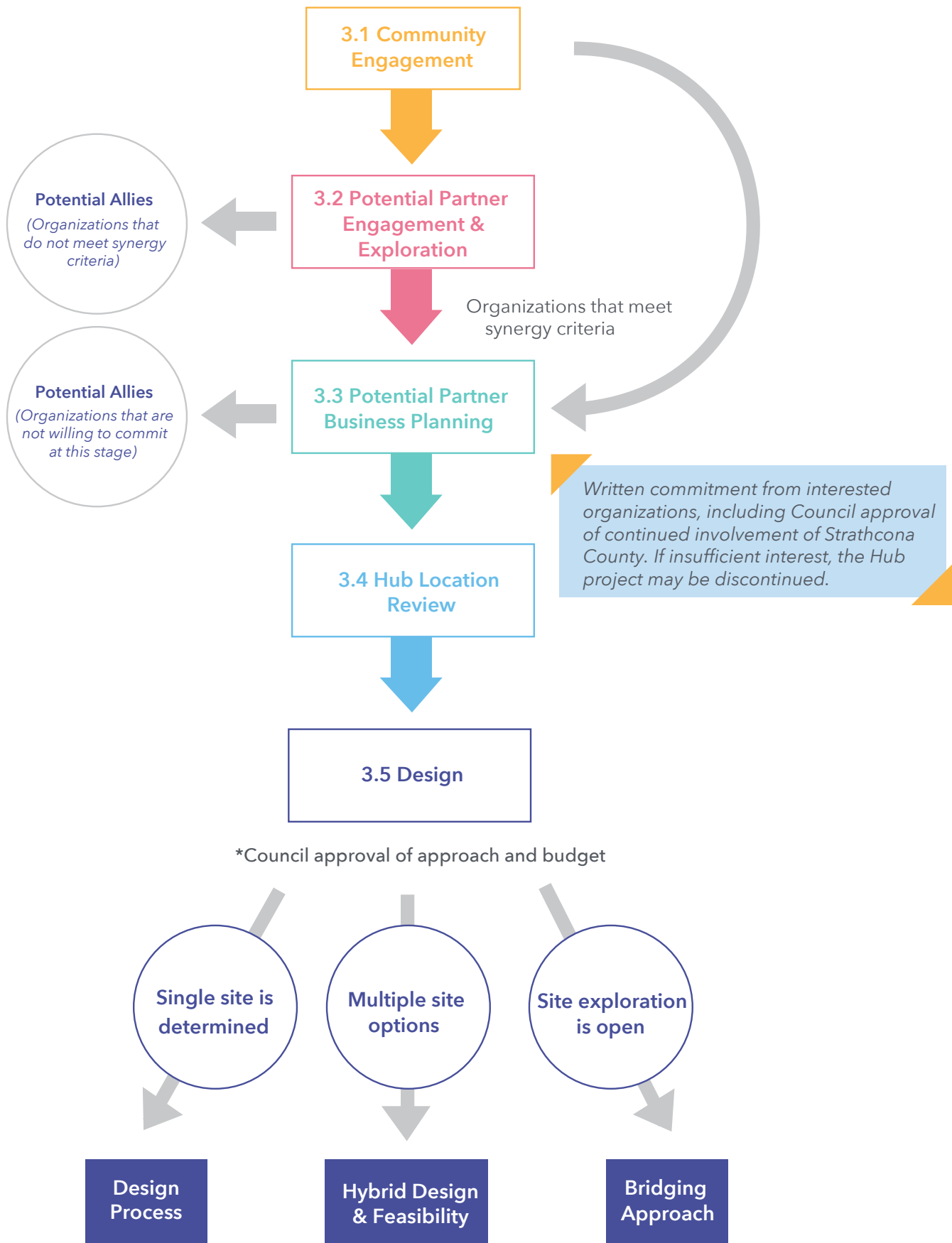
- Community Engagement
- Potential Partner Engagement and Exploration
- Potential Partner Business Planning
- Hub Location Review
- Design

An estimated timeline for these elements of work is identified below.



Through the steps identified, there are points where potential Partners may step away from the process and where County Council will make key decisions to move onto the next phase. This workflow is illustrated on the next page.

Workflow



3.1 PROPOSED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Building on the extensive public engagement that occurred through the Community Talk process in 2016, the engagement focus within Phase 1 and 2 of the *Strathcona County Community Hub Study* process shifted to a more focused conversation with potential partners.

In launching this next phase of Community Hub planning, it will be imperative to host a community-wide conversation. Kicking off in this way makes for an inclusive and welcoming process, which results in a more publicly sought after outcome and ensures alignment with Strathcona County's Strategic Plan Goal 7: *Provide opportunities for public engagement and communication*.

This broader community discussion should occur as a leading step, using the direction and content emerging from this report as the basis for conversation. This will not only confirm whether a Community Hub in Strathcona County is supported, it can strengthen the overall public support and ownership. This approach allows decision-makers to understand the community desire for complimentary services and casual interaction spaces.

The established vision (Section 2.1), services and activities (Section 2.2), location in the community (Section 2.4), and space considerations (Section 2.5) are the foundation of the community conversation. Exploratory questions can include ideas for design, opportunities to make a hub welcoming and appealing to all residents, preferred physical location in the County and community space programming.

The feedback obtained in this step should be integrated into business planning (section 3.3), as part of continued exploration and decision-making process.

3.2 PROPOSED PARTNER ENGAGEMENT AND EXPLORATION

During Phase 2 of the Community Hub Study process, participants in the April workshop were asked to express their level of interest in being involved in an eventual Community Hub. In total, 33 of the 35 organizations that responded were 'definitely interested' or 'possibly interested.' While the responses do not represent a formal commitment of any kind, the results were encouraging for continued collaboration and exploration of the Community Hub concept.

As the conversation with community stakeholders continues, it will be important to develop a more clearly defined understanding of the needs and commitments expected of organizations that choose to participate in a community hub. While there is a significant level of interest among organizations who have participated in the process to date, this stage will begin to distinguish between those that are able and willing to commit to the concept and those that are supportive of the concept. This exploration will require the knowledge and involvement of the Board or Executive level of participating organizations, given the potential implications of a Community Hub. With this in mind, more time should be allocated for this work in order to give adequate time for organizational leadership to review information and provide clear direction for the Hub process.

The following steps will focus on establishing a level of commitment for the continued development of a Community Hub.

Establish commitment to the Community Hub approach to synergy

The 'criteria for participation' outlined in Section 2.3 provides a vital filter to understand whether interested organizations are in fact able to commit to the new way of working that is embodied in the Community Hub and Social Framework. At minimum, organizations that are interested in becoming part of the Hub should answer 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to all elements of the criteria. This ensures that the organizations that continue with the planning process are aligned with the commitment to working differently. Those organizations that meet the synergy criteria would then continue on to the next step. Organizations that did not meet the criteria would not participate in subsequent steps, but would stay informed of the Hub process.

Identify organizational needs

Within the scope of the initial Community Hub work, understanding around the specific needs and limitations of physical space and lease rate requirements was limited. As discussions continue with community organizations, detailed exploration of these spatial and financial realities and requirements should occur. This will provide important input into the business planning and design process.

The organizations that emerge from the application of synergy criteria would proceed to the next step; understanding the needs of these respective organizations. Key areas of clarity include:

- **Current and projected space needs.** This includes identification of the square footage required for both exclusive and shared use.
- **Cost expectations.** This includes an understanding of the range of lease rates that would be acceptable to each organization.
- **Space considerations.** This builds on the attributes outlined in Section 2.5 and includes an understanding of specific design and programming needs of the organization.
- **Timing considerations.** This includes consideration for timing issues surrounding existing leases, programming and funding for each organization.

This information can then be used to illustrate specific needs of various organizations that are interested in participating and align with the commitment to synergy. This will provide an increased clarity on the spatial, economic, design and temporal requirements of a Community Hub.

Identify community space needs

As identified in Section 2.5, there is a variety of space ‘ownership’ within a Hub - private, semi-private and public. With the previous step completed, partnering organizations can explore the kinds of public spaces that would complement the organization and service-specific needs that have been established. Guidance for these kinds of spaces will be drawn from the Hub process identified in this report, as well as the public engagement identified earlier in Section 3.1.

Establish Potential Partners

In their document “Community Hubs by Design,” Vibrant Communities Calgary identifies a helpful way to make the distinction by categorizing stakeholders as either partners or allies. The differences between these two categories are found in the table below.

While both partners and allies should align with the vision and synergy criteria, partners will need to be more fundamentally committed in order to support the realization of the community hub vision. At this stage, a written commitment to continue the process should be made by the organizations that identify themselves as potential partners, rather than allies. This would include Strathcona County, which would require Council approval to proceed as a partner in the Community Hub initiative. These organizations will then collaboratively explore governance options.

Partner	Ally
Contributes funding, expertise and resources	Contributes expertise, connections and ideas
Is tied to an agreement	Does not require signing an agreement
Must follow terms laid out in an agreement	Is symbolic
Is typically a group, agency or other nonprofit	Can be an individual or an organization

Governance

Building on the consideration of governance structures outlined in Section 2.6, potential partner organizations would collaboratively explore options for how a Community Hub could best be governed. Through this exploration, a preferred governance option would be identified, functionally establishing a 'Governing Body' for the project. This preferred option would then inform the business planning activities in the next phase of work, as well as all future phases of activity.

3.3 BUSINESS PLANNING

In order to ensure a sustainable community hub, an understanding of the sources of funding and the anticipated costs to operate the hub are key considerations. A hub will face the same costs of construction and operation as any building, but the integrated nature of the facility and the diversity of the organizations involved adds significant complexity to the process.

In *Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan*, the Province of Ontario identified a number of observed barriers for community hubs. As it pertains to business planning, these barriers included the following:

Start-up funding. Any initiative requires funding to begin, but there can also be additional costs associated with the establishment of integrating services among varied organizations.

Funding silos. Funding restrictions can lead to restrictions of integrating services due to rigid criteria for support. In this reality, partners in a community hub can eventually become competitors for funding or have diminished opportunity for funding, due to a 'diluted' mandate, thanks to participation with other organizations.

Sustainable funding. Hubs need to be adaptable and flexible over time in order to meet evolving community needs. This also requires an evolution of funding sources. In addition, it is recommended that hubs allow for commercial operations that support the vision of the facility, which can assist with the cost of operation. In addition, hubs can benefit from 'anchor tenants' that provide a reliable revenue stream. This can include commercial operations, but also can include government services.

Property management, liability and security issues. Given the inherent complexity of a facility with a diversity of organizations within, it is recommended that funding for a 'property manager' be included in order to navigate the challenges of various liability and security issues within a community hub.

With the above considerations in mind, the following elements should be included in an initial business planning process for a Community Hub:

Identify revenue sources. This would include funding from potential partners, based on the previous conversations and would also include potential grants or external funds. An opportunity to obtain funding to support work on the development of a community hub may be available through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. Under this program, Alberta will receive \$140.6 million for community, culture and recreation projects over 10 years. The Strathcona County community hub initiative aligns very well as "communities can apply for funding to support new, expanded or renewed community centres and hubs, amateur sport, cultural and recreational installations and facilities." Within the anticipated timelines of this project, the County may be able to apply for funding under this program to continue this work.

Identify expenditures. This would include capital costs as well as operating costs. Included in this would also be an identification of potential building types, including a new build, retrofit of an existing facility or leasing space.

Identify risks. With an initial understanding of the potential revenue and expenditure levels for a Community Hub, an identification and evaluation of the varied risks would be established. Included in this assessment would be mitigation measures to address these risks.

As part of the business planning process, there is an opportunity to prototype activities and relationships between potential partners of the hub. This could include the coming together of multiple organizations to co-deliver services or to explore shared space. Currently, FCS is prototyping a version of the hub in their offices. Co-located partners include:

- Community Adult Learning & Literacy Society (CALLS)
- Community Mediation Society
- Parents Empowering Parents Society (PEP)
- Strathcona Youth Justice Committee
- The altView Foundation
- Future Co-located partner - Resolution Services within the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General (Justice System Navigators)

This exemplifies the kind of activity that could occur to test ideas during the business planning process.

3.4 HUB LOCATION REVIEW

As described in Section 2.4, there are a number of locational criteria that can be applied to decision-making on where the Hub could be located. With an increased understanding of varied organizational needs and initial business planning completed, a review of potential locations would move the process towards a fully-built Hub.

Currently, there is no definitive site for the Community Hub. As the Hub exploration proceeds to this stage, there are likely three possibilities for locating the facility. These are:

1. A single site has been identified for the Hub.
2. Multiple candidate sites have been identified for the Hub.
3. There is uncertainty of possible Hub site locations.

The status of the option(s) for the Hub will then inform the subsequent design work, which follows.

3.5 HUB DESIGN

The following is an outline of three distinct possibilities for pursuing the building design procurement process. The three options for transitioning to design are as follows and will all include ongoing touch-points with the Governing Body.

Scenario 1 – Design Process

A single site has been identified for the Hub. A detailed facility design is established through this process.

Scenario 2 - Hybrid Feasibility & Design

Multiple candidate sites have been identified for the Hub. Analysis of each site is completed, followed by detailed facility design.

Scenario 3 - Bridging Approach

There is uncertainty of possible Hub site locations. This process will define design outcomes, preferred site and project budget.

The following options work on the assumption that the County will, at minimum, co-lead the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The processes that follow are in addition to the standard RFP process outlined per the County's Procurement Policy, handled by the County's Financial Services and Legislative & Legal Services. These standards cover the County's terms of the submission including: consultant requirements, contract conditions, evaluation mechanisms and the selection approach.

3.5.1 SCENARIO 1: DESIGN PROCESS

Once a Hub site had been selected by the Governing Body, a detailed RFP can be released to attain a design team (architectural, structural, mechanical, electrical, and civil services) for detailed building design. This RFP will require a comprehensive description of the project (e.g. functional program, building area, anticipated budget, etc.) and list of scheduled milestones and deliverables that are expected of the consultant team designing the facility.

The following outlines the scope of a design RFP that can ensure strong and robust submissions are made, with clear outlines as to how the proponent can deliver the Hub vision through physical design.

RFP Background and Scope

Key information the County will need to share with prospective proponents to set the stage for applicants seeking to respond to the RFP. Key details include:

- The vision of the Hub and the goals of the design (as per section 2.1).
- A road map outlining the process from beginning to end. Social Framework through to the Hub Study. When and how the idea of the Community Hub came to be, vision created, previous work completed, foundational business decisions made, where design falls within this process, and the process that is yet to be completed that might bring us to the construction of a new facility.
- Subject site details including but not limited to geo-technical reports, site surveys, etc.

Milestones + High-Level Deliverables

Milestone 1: Build Context

- review existing County and community studies, reports and strategic plans
- understand guiding documents
- undertake a market and inventory analysis
- identify current trends and impact analysis (multi-functional community facility precedents)

Milestone 2: Facility and Site Assessment

- site plans (e.g. sections, elevations, etc.)
- present lifecycle cost estimate for capital renewal and maintenance of facility that will inform option
- structural assessment (if in an existing facility)

Milestone 3: Draft Solutions

- floor plans
- diagrams, renderings, models
- detailed building code compliance
- recommend best solution

Milestone 4: Operational and Financial Analysis of Preferred Solution

- develop detailed construction drawings and specifications
- create life-cycle technical reports for selected main systems
- identify lifecycle cost for maintenance of facility

Milestone 5: Public Engagement

- review solution with public audience
- analyze results and adapt design
- review adaptation with decision-makers

Milestone 6: Final Design

- revise design (as per decision-maker review)
- present final design

3.5.2 SCENARIO 2: HYBRID DESIGN & FEASIBILITY

Should a number of candidate sites be identified, but no decision has been made, a hybrid approach would provide necessary insights to move towards site selection and subsequent design. A consultant (or consultant team) is retained to analyze candidate sites and develop facility design opportunities for the preferred site.

Key considerations

- The scope of this RFP would be structured as a fixed fee feasibility analysis.
- Include a caveat of an expiry date for the agreement. This would allow the County to elect by written notice, at the completion of any phase, not to proceed with any or all of the subsequent phases previously anticipated (e.g. facility design on the preferred site).
- The study would require at minimum six to eight weeks per candidate location.
- Work will include details on site layout, functional program, quantitative space requirements, scheduling, budget and innovative technologies.

Milestones + High-Level Deliverables

Milestone 1: Build Context

- review existing County and community studies, reports and strategic plans
- understanding guiding documents
- undertake a market and inventory analysis
- identify current trends and impact analysis (multi-functional community facility precedents)

Milestone 2: Candidate Site Assessments (each site would receive the following analysis)

- test possibility of site
- structural assessment (if in an existing facility)
- present lifecycle cost estimate for capital renewal and maintenance of facility that will inform option

DECISION POINT. The County / Governing Body selects a preferred site and either retains the consultants for the design work or secures a new consultant through a refreshed procurement process. If the consultant is retained, proceed with Milestone 3. If a new consultant procurement process is required, move to Scenario 1 - Design Process.

Milestone 3: Draft Facility Solutions

- floor plans
- diagrams, renderings, models
- detailed building code compliance
- recommend best solution

Milestone 4: Operational and Financial Analysis of Preferred Solution

- develop detailed construction drawings and specifications
- create life-cycle technical reports for selected main systems
- identify lifecycle cost for maintenance of facility

Milestone 5: Public Engagement

- review solution with public audience
- analyze results and adapt design
- review adaptation with decision-makers

Milestone 6: Final Design

- revise design (as per decision-maker review)
- present final design

3.5.3 SCENARIO 3: BRIDGING APPROACH

Should no candidate sites be identified or the Governing Body wishes to explore the widest potential options for locating the Hub, a bridging approach could be applied. With this approach, a consultant (or consultant team) identifies a preferred site through an iterative process with the County / Governing Body, with the aim of defining the scope for a Design RFP. It is expected that their work will test the site layout, functional program, quantitative space requirements, scheduling, budget, identify suitable facility systems and list innovative technologies that the design consultant should consider.

Key considerations

- There is potential for the proponent to broker land and/or pursue alternative build-scenarios (e.g. Public-private partnerships).
- The proponent could review the business plan created in Section 3.3 and provide additional insights based on professional expertise.
- This service could come from a range of professions depending on what the procurement team wants to emphasize (e.g. an architect, a management consultant, a land economist or similar).

Milestones + High-Level Deliverables

Milestone 1: Build Context

- review existing County and community studies, reports and strategic plans
- understanding guiding documents
- undertake a market and inventory analysis
- identify current trends and impact analysis (multi-functional community facility precedents)
- explore available land and lease holdings
- explore alternative model viability
- business plan review

Milestone 2: Select Site

- choose a single site to pursue
- identify site plan requirements (e.g. sections, elevations, etc.)
- identify building design requirements (e.g. number of rooms, program, cost/ft²)

Milestone 3: Create Design RFP

- see Section 3.5.1 for details

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF PROCESS PARTICIPANTS

Community Hub Engagement

Community Hub Engagement				Addiction	Arts& Culture	Business	Children's Service	Community Building	Diversity & Inclusion	Education	Faith	Family Supports	Government	Health/Medical	Housing	Home Support	Justice/Safety	Comms/Media	Mental Health	Non-Profit	Recreation	Rural	Seniors	Steering Committee	Vulnerable Popul	Youth
Agency Name	Invited April 19	Sent Survey	Invited June 26																							
A Safe Place	1	1						X				X			X	X		X	X						X	
Adult Day Support Programs - Fort Saskatchewan, Sherwood Park, Leduc and A Day in the Park	1	1	1																X							
AHS Addictions & Mental Health	1	1	1	X										X					X							
AHS Addictions & Mental Health - Child, Youth & Families	1	1	1	X			X					X	X						X						X	
AHS Addictions & Mental Health - Children's Services	1	1	1	X			X					X	X						X						X	
AHS Addictions & Mental Health - Prevention	1	1	1	X										X					X							
AHS Adult Community Services	1	1	1	X										X					X							
AHS Home Care	2	2	3											X		X						X	X		X	
AISH Delivery Supports	2	2	2									X	X		X										X	
Alberta Government - Alberta Supports	3	3	3									X	X		X				X							
Alberta Government - Community And Social Services	1	1	1				X					X	X	X					X							
Alberta Government - Family and Community Services Branch	1	1	1				X					X	X	X					X						X	
Alberta Government - Ministry of Community and Social Services	1	1	1									X	X	X					X							
Alberta Government - Persons with Developmental Disabilities	1	1	1						X			X	X		X				X						X	
Alberta Government Alberta Works	1	1	1						X			X	X	X					X							
Alberta Government Child and Family Services	1	3	3				X					X	X						X			X				
Alberta Government Provincial Disabilities Supports Initiatives	1	1	1						X			X	X						X						X	
Alberta Justice Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta	1	1	1														X									
Alberta Rural Development Network	1	1	1	X				X	X	X	X							X				X				
altView Foundation	1	1	1									X							X						X	
Anishnawbe Giikenimowgaywin	2	2	2		X			X	X											X						
Antler Lake/Uncas Community League	1	1	1					X												X		X				
Anxiety Support Group for Strathcona County	1	1	1					X											X	X						
Ardrossan 55+	1	1	1					X													X	X	X			
Ardrossan Recreation & Agricultural Society	1	1	1					X													X	X				
Art Society of Strathcona County	1	1	1		X			X																		
Beaver Hills Initiative	1	1	1																	X						
Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters	3	3	3				X	X				X													X	
Boys and Girls Club of Strathcona County	2	2	2					X	X			X													X	
Brookville Community League	1	1	1		X			X													X	X				
Burial Options Society of Strathcona & Caregiver Coffee Group	1	1	1									X									X					
CALLS: Community Adult Learning & Literacy Fort Saskatchewan & Strathcona County (CALLS)	1	1	1						X	X									X							
Care for a Ride	1	1	1			X	X																		X	
Careers Under Construction	1	1	2							X													X			
Chamber of Commerce	1	1	1				X																			
CHIMO Youth Retreat Centre Family Wellness	2	2	2	X								X			X				X	X					X	
Colchester Community League	1	1	1		X			X												X	X	X				
Common Ground Café	1	1	1		X	X		X	X											X			X		X	
Community Hub Steering Committee - Director of Family and Community Services	1	1	1					X					X										X			
Community Hub Steering Committee - Strathcona County Communications	1	1	1										X						X					X		
Community Hub Steering Committee - Community and Social Innovation	1	1	1					X				X	X												X	
Community Hub Steering Committee - Strathcona County Facilities	1	1	1									X													X	
Community Hub Steering Committee - Finance	1	1	1									X												X		
COUNCIL - Strathcona County Elected Officials	8		8										X													
County Clothes Line	1	1	1			X						X														
Deville/North Cooking Lake Community League	1	1	1		X			X												X	X					
Diversity Committee	5	5	5		X			X	X											X	X					
École Claudette-et-Denis-Tardif	1	2	2							X															X	
Edmonton and area Fetal Alcohol Network Society	1	1	1	X									X											X	X	
Edmonton Immigrant Service Association	1	1	1						X																	
Elk Island Catholic Schools	4	4	5							X	X	X							X						X	

Community Hub Engagement

Agency Name	Invited April 19	Sent Survey	Invited June 26	Addiction	Arts & Culture	Business	Children's Service	Community Building	Diversity & Inclusion	Education	Faith	Family Supports	Government	Health/Medical	Housing	Home Support	Justice/Safety	Comms/Media	Mental Health	Non-Profit	Recreation	Rural	Seniors	Steering Committee	Vulnerable Popula	Youth
Elk Island Public Schools	5	5	5							X		X		X					X							X
Executive Team	5		5										X							X	X					
Family and Community Services - Early Childhood Dev. & Family Supports	1	1	1				X	X				X							X	X						
Family and Community Services - Community and Social Innovation	1	1	1	X				X														X	X			X
Family and Community Services - Civic Engagement	2	2	2					X	X																	X
Family and Community Services - Counselling	1	1	1																X			X	X		X	X
Family and Community Services - Design and Evaluation			1																X	X						
Family and Community Services - Human Services and Innovation	1	1	1									X					X	X					X		X	X
Family and Community Services - Navigation Services	1	1	1									X					X	X					X		X	X
Family and Community Services - Parent Link	1	1	1				X					X									X					X
Family and Community Services - Senior Supports & Outreach	1	1	1													X		X					X		X	X
Friends of Elk Island	1	1	1																			X				
Good Hope Community League	1	1	1		X			X													X	X				
Hastings Lake Community Association	1	1	1		X			X													X	X				
Heartland Alliance Church	1	1	1				X	X			X	X														X
Heartland Alliance Church - Youth	1										X															X
Heartland Housing Foundation	1	1	1												X					X				X		
Heartland Housing Registry Home Connector	1	1	1												X					X						
Hope in Strathcona & Rotary Club	1	1	1	X								X		X						X						
Information and Volunteer Centre (IVC)	1	1	1					X				X								X			X	X		X
Josephburg Ag Society	1	1	1																	X						
Josephburg Seniors	1	1	1																		X	X	X			
Legislative Assembly MLA McKittrick - Representative	1	1	1										X	X			X						X		X	X
Linking Generations	1	1	1																				X			X
Lives in Transition	1	1	1						X																X	
Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahai's of Strathcona County	1	1	1				X	X			X															
Masjid in the Park Mosque	1	1	1				X	X			X															
Men as Allies Committee	1	1	1					X	X																	
Ministerial Association	2	2	2					X			X															
Moms Stop The Harm	1	1	1	X								X														X
MS Society of Canada	1	1	1											X						X					X	X
NorQuest College	3	2	2		X				X																	
Office of Mayor	2		2										X													
Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Society	1	1	1	X								X								X						
Partridge Hill Community Club	1	1	1	X			X														X	X				
Pilgrims BriarPatch Centre for Grieving Families	1	1	1									X								X						
Primary Care Network	1	1	1	X						X				X					X							
Primary Care Network Mental Health Services	1	1	1	X						X				X					X							
RCMP	3	3	3														X									
Real Estate Board & Member of CLAC	1	1	1			X									X											
Robin Hood Association	3	3	3					X		X		X								X						X
Rotary Club	1	1	1																							
Saffron Centre	1	1	2				X					X					X			X					X	
Salvation Army	1	1	1								X															
Seniors Day Program at Silver Birch	1	1	1																				X			
Seniors United Now	2	2	2																				X			
Sherwood Park 55 Plus Club	3	3	3					X													X			X		
Sherwood Park Elks Club	1	1	1					X																X		
South Cooking Lake Community League	1	1	1					X													X	X				
South Cooking Lake Seniors	1	1	1					X														X	X			
Strategic Steps Inc.	1	1	1																	X			X			

Community Hub Engagement

Agency Name	Invited April 19	Sent Survey	Invited June 26	Addiction	Arts & Culture	Business	Children's Service	Community Building	Diversity & Inclusion	Education	Faith	Family Supports	Government	Health/Medical	Housing	Home Support	Justice/Safety	Comms/Media	Mental Health	Non-Profit	Recreation	Rural	Seniors	Steering Committee	Vulnerable Popula	Youth
Strathcona County Communications & Recreation, Parks and Culture	1	1	1					X										X			X					
Strathcona County Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs	1	1										X														
Strathcona County Crime Watch			1					X									X									
Strathcona County Cultural Services			1														X									
Strathcona County Economic Development and Tourism	3	3	3			X							X													
Strathcona County Food Bank	1	1	1									X													X	
Strathcona County Heritage Foundation	1	3	3	X																						
Strathcona County IT Department	1	1	1										X													
Strathcona County Library	3	3	3				X	X		X		X														X
Strathcona County Library Bookmobile	1	1	1					X		X												X				
Strathcona County Recreation, Parks and Culture	2	2	2				X	X													X					X
Strathcona County Transit	1	1	1																						X	X
The Park Church			1					X			X	X														
United Way of the Alberta Capital Region	1	1	1					X				X								X	X					
Victim Services	3	3	3														X		X						X	
Whitcroft Community Hall	1	1	1		X			X													X	X				
Wye Community League	1	1	1		X			X														X				
Youth Justice Strathcona County Community Mediation Society	1	1	1														X			X						X
Intelligent Futures and Studio North																	X			X						X
Final Workshop Attendance	162	151	175																							
	85		63																							

APPENDIX B

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS SUMMARIES

1.0

Introduction

The Community Hub Strategy emerged as a recommendation from the May 2017 Council-approved Social Strategic Framework. This Framework for Strathcona County expresses four desired community outcomes:

- Affordability
- Access to programs and services
- Safety
- Connectedness and inclusion

These outcomes have set a direction for Strathcona County and will guide decision-making and action moving forward. The Community Hub concept is a potential action for the County to generate movement towards these desired community outcomes - in particular, providing citizens with access to programs and services, and creating conditions for connectedness and inclusion.

The development of a Community Hub Strategy is the first step to realizing the desired outcomes identified in the Social Framework. This strategy will depend on the knowledge and expertise of many key social service sector stakeholders. To start the conversation with these stakeholders and the broader public, a Community Hub purpose workshop and survey were delivered. The following document highlights feedback collected in this Community Hub purpose engagement phase.

2.0

Methods

Workshop

Building on the principle of co-creation that was used in the development of the Social Framework, this workshop brought together County departments, government partners, and non-profit agencies to explore the purpose of a Community Hub in Strathcona County.

Given the diversity of stakeholders involved and the community issues they are trying to collectively address, a 'data walk' exercise was used to facilitate a rich, fact-based conversation about a Community Hub in Strathcona County. The use of data walks with key County departments and partners allowed the information and knowledge represented by these groups to be shared in an interactive way, providing increased understanding and capacity. In turn, insights from diverse participants shed new light on the data that has been gathered to date, providing an understanding of how and why a Community Hub can develop in the County.

Building off the identified functions for the Community Hub, the workshop focused on questions that provide additional clarity for what these three functions mean in the Strathcona County context. Workshop questions included:

Service

What key services are most important to locate in a Community Hub?
Select the top 5 as a group and identify why.

Describe key elements of the experience you would envision for service users of a Community Hub.

Space

Describe the most important qualities about the physical space a Community Hub that would help achieve the desired experiences and outcomes that you have discussed.

Synergy

Please describe key elements of how service provider organizations would ideally work together in a Community Hub in order to achieve better outcomes for the people we aim to serve?

Survey

To capture a broader range of feedback, the workshop was paired with an online survey. This survey was open to all residents of Strathcona County and was intended to measure the public's perception on the idea of Community Hub. The survey was available from April 11th to April 30th and included seven questions including three demographic questions. The completion rate for this survey was 98.3% with 633 surveys completed.

The four core questions asked in the survey included:

1. From a list of social programs and services identified in previous public engagements: *select up to three that are most important to your household.*
2. Given the same list of social programs and services as above: *select the top three categories that you believe are the most essential for Strathcona County residents to access in a single location.*
3. Using a Likert scale: *Indicate how helpful it would be for Strathcona County residents to access multiple social services in a single physical location.*
4. *Select up to three barriers that would prevent your household from accessing needed social programs and services.*

3.0

Findings

Workshop

The workshop results provided the project team with a great deal of insight and ideas about what the Community Hub could be, who it is for, and how it could work to deliver quality programs and services seamlessly.

The workshop focused on four key questions (see 2.0 Methods) and was supplemented with a number of thought provoking data-related questions. Many details about service, space and synergy were shared, along with ways to respond to the shifting trends in the County. Across all of these conversations, three strong overarching themes surfaced. These were that the hub must be comfortable, clear, and safe.

Comfortable. Whether using social services or just hanging out, visitors are comfortable coming to, and spending time in the Community Hub.

Clear. Each individual's journey through the Community Hub is unique. Through space design and service delivery, everyone can clearly understand how to meet their needs.

Safe and supportive. Everyone in the Community Hub is able to feel that they are in a space and part of a community that cares about them.

WORKSHOP FINDINGS

Data Walks

Responses gathered during this exercise strongly related to the specific data that participants were reviewing. For instance, where we displayed information about home prices and asked for insights on housing affordability, we heard about new and interesting housing models and supports - from co-housing and shared accommodation to financial literacy and rental referral programs. Where we asked about serving those who are commuting out of the County for work, we heard ideas around ride sharing, extending hours of program offerings and having online/virtual services. This feedback was used by the project team in developing the foundations for service, synergy, and space planning objectives.

WORKSHOP FINDINGS

Services

The biggest challenge most groups at the workshop faced was prioritizing service types for the Hub. Most participants believed that many of the supports and programs are interconnected and should be offered as a suite of services. Generally, participants hope to see a diversity of offerings and options for a wide range of individuals.

Services that were chosen in the top 5 by two or more workshop groups included:

- Social service program navigation
- Early childhood and parenting
- Youth supports
- Seniors supports
- Volunteering
- A place to connect
- Mental health and well-being
- Counselling supports
- Emergency shelter
- Home supports
- People supports
- Newcomers supports
- Access to information
- Community kitchen
- Meeting and gathering rooms
- Neighbourhood building support
- Financial referral

Services emphasized by participants had a common element of being available to residents of all ages and at all life stages.

The project team observed that there are three levels of service needed to best achieve the desired Community Hub. These include core services, complimentary services and casual interactions/community building activities.

Core services are the critical building blocks of the Hub. They lay the foundation of the Hub's purpose, offering support through life's many challenges. Examples include: counselling support, seniors support, and early childhood and parenting programs.

Complimentary services are the structured services, businesses and activities that supplement core services, but also provide reasons for residents who are not utilizing social services to be present in the Hub.

Casual interactions enable community members an opportunity to 'hang out' in ways that appeal to them. These organic interactions reflect the intention that everyone is welcome and has the right to be safe and comfortable.

WORKSHOP FINDINGS

Synergy

Discussion around synergy came natural to workshop participants. This exercise uncovered many opportunities for agencies and partners to work together to deliver a seamless service experience. Based on the key themes heard around co-delivery, collaboration, information sharing, and unity the following statements were created to reflect the essence of the Hub's synergy.

- The Community Hub operates with a shared vision between partners. It functions in a coordinated manner to offer a single access point to many social service organizations. Community Hub users can connect to the services they need through well-informed staff navigators.
- Community Hub service partners are well versed in each other's happenings. Routine information and knowledge sharing is core to the Hub's operation. Understanding community trends drives the Hub to respond to the changing needs of residents.
- Partners in the Community Hub include government, not for profit agencies, and private businesses. These Community Hub partners share ownership, decision-making and resources. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each organization to help achieve the Hub's collective vision.
- The Community Hub is flexible and accountable. The ongoing evaluation of programs, services, and supports allows the Hub to stay relevant and impactful.
- Hub users come first, breaking silos and cross-training staff and volunteers makes the social service experience seamless.

WORKSHOP FINDINGS

Space

The physical space was identified as by stakeholders as needing to be - welcoming, accessible and dynamic. From the many suggestions on how this could be achieved, the project team created the following statements to capture the essence of the space:

- The Community Hub has a range of flexible meeting and gathering spaces. It's indoor and outdoors, it's temporary and permanent, it's public and private, and it facilitates eating, sharing, learning and lounging.
- The Community Hub is a physical and mobile space that serves the urban and rural residents of Strathcona County. It actively seeks to effectively use resources to deliver services to all County residents.
- The Community Hub is located where users are able to get to the Hub through multiple modes of transportation.

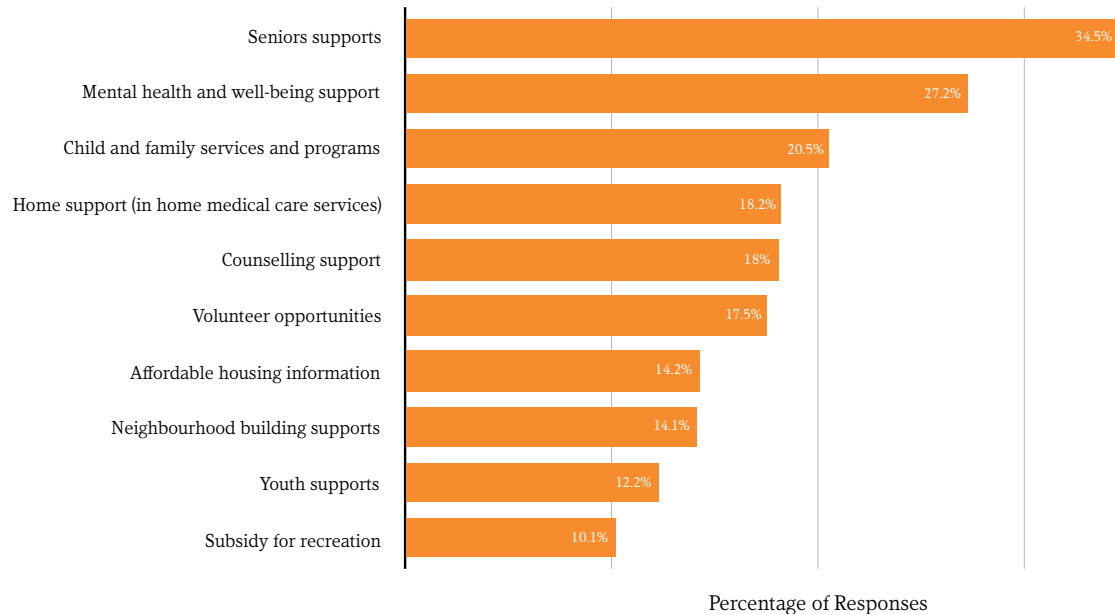
- Clear way finding and barrier free design allow users to find their way around the Hub effortlessly.
- The Community Hub operates at hours that meet people's needs.
- The Community Hub is for all ages and ethnicities. It has a casual and inviting atmosphere that promotes informal interactions between community members.

Survey

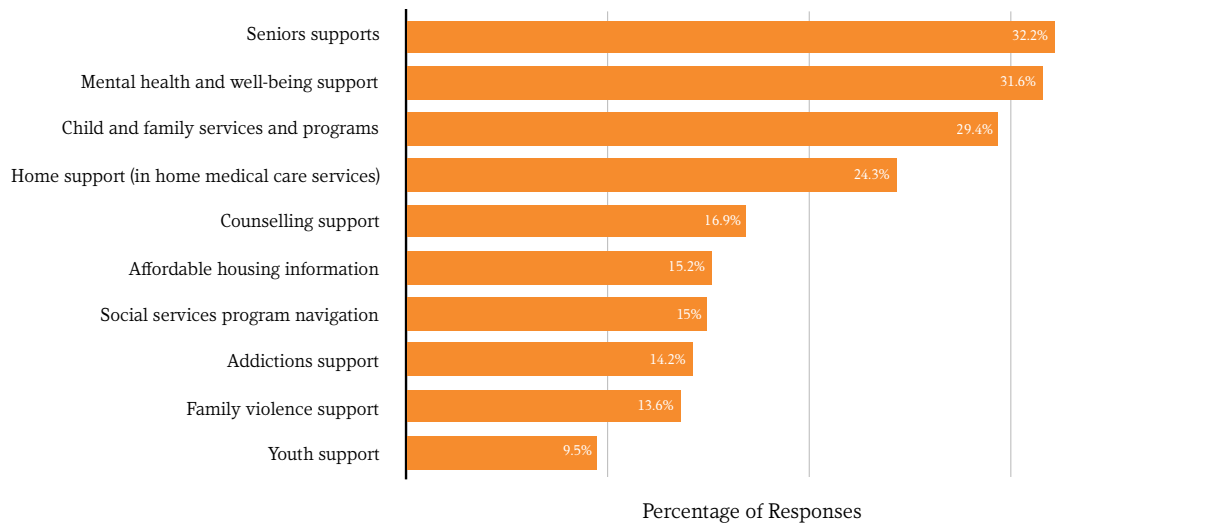
To obtain input from a broader spectrum of stakeholders, the Community Hub Purpose engagement process included a public survey. The following are the responses heard to the key questions.

Approximately 8 out of 10 respondents believed that it would be helpful to have access to multiple social services in a single physical location.

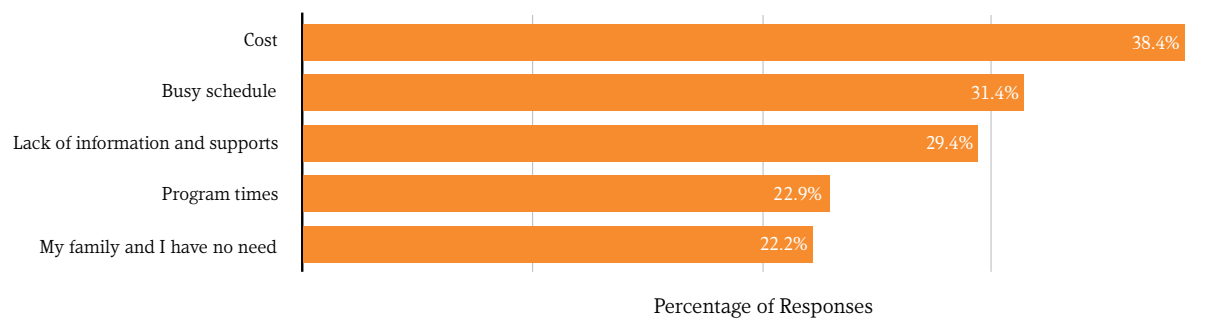
The top 10 most frequently selected responses to what social programs and services are most important to households were:



The top 10 most frequently selected responses to choosing the top three categories that participants believed were the most essential for Strathcona County residents to access in a single location were:



The top five most frequently selected responses to what barriers prevent your household from accessing services were:



4.0

Next Steps

The results of this engagement work, along with insights from the best practice research and existing policy framework review have informed the way the Hub will be defined. This definition is what the project team will use to move forward in designing potential solutions for the hub and drafting the final strategy.

A draft Community Hub 'purpose package' has been developed and will be shared with workshop participants and County stakeholders for verification. With the verification and possible refinement of the Hub purpose, the project team will proceed with an exploration of how this purpose could be realized in three distinct solutions, which will be further explored with stakeholders at a workshop on June 8.

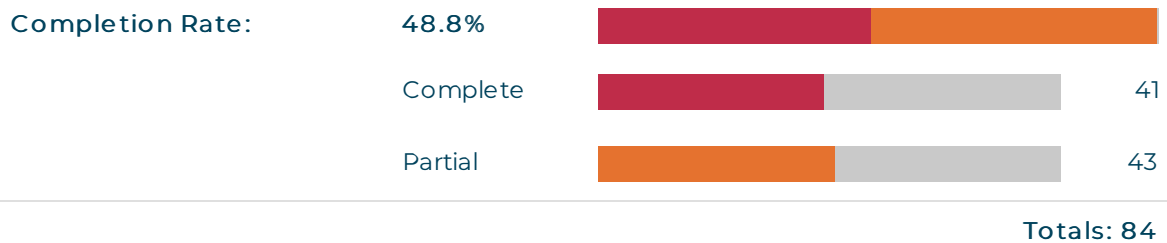
Community Hub Draft Purpose: Survey Results

The following outlines the result of an online survey that asked community stakeholders to provide feedback on a draft purpose for the Community Hub, which emerged from the April workshop.

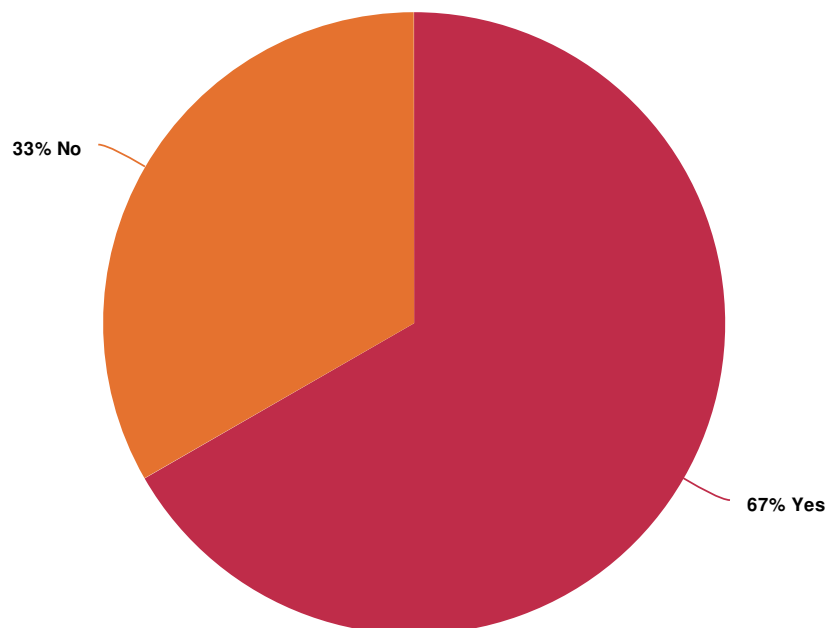




Report for Strathcona County Community Hub Purpose

Response Counts

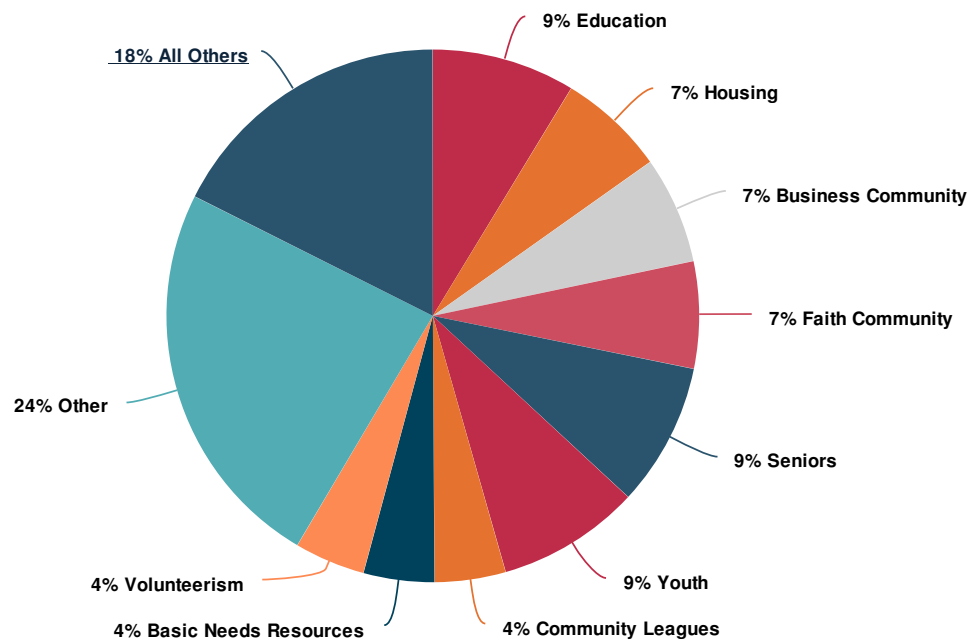




















1. Did you attend the April 19 stakeholder meeting?



Value		Percent	Responses
Yes		66.7%	32
No		33.3%	16
Totals: 48			

2. Which sector do you represent?



Value		Percent	Responses
Education		8.7%	4
Housing		6.5%	3
Business Community		6.5%	3
Faith Community		6.5%	3
Seniors		8.7%	4
Youth		8.7%	4
Community Leagues		4.3%	2
Basic Needs Resources		4.3%	2
Volunteerism		4.3%	2
Other		23.9%	11
Arts and Culture		2.2%	1
Financial and Employment		2.2%	1
Agriculture		2.2%	1
Social Enterprise		2.2%	1
Health Supports		2.2%	1
Addictions and Mental Health		2.2%	1
Parenting Information and Supports		2.2%	1
Recreation		2.2%	1

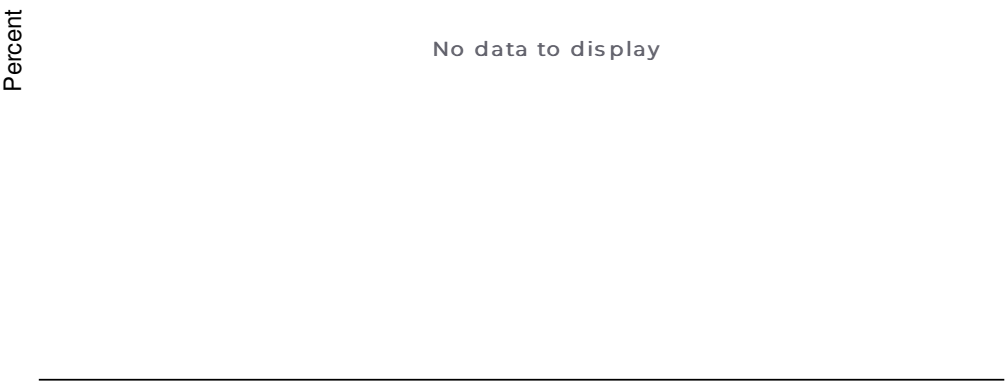
Totals: 46

3. If you chose other please specify.

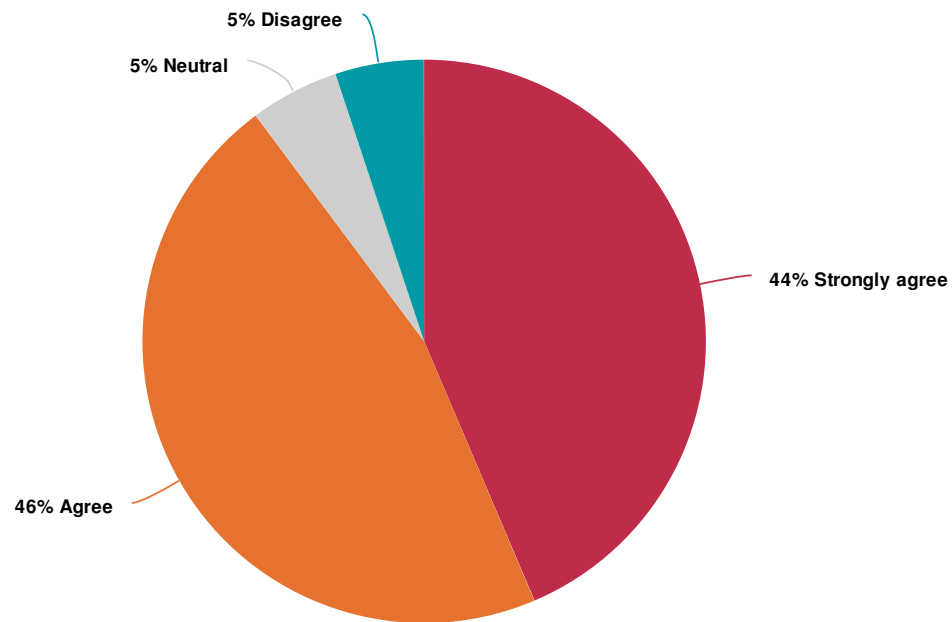


Count	Response
1	Community Disability Services
1	Disability
1	Diversity Committee
1	Family Resource Centre, Grief Supports, Counselling Supports, Education and Mental Health
1	I'm a youth
1	Library
1	Library, so would fit in multiple of the sectors you provided: education, arts and culture, newcomers
1	Na
1	Nonprofit working with youth
1	RCMP & Enforcement Services
1	Volenter
1	i did not attend the session but staff from our agency did attend
1	municipality

4. If you chose other please specify. - Text Analysis



5. To what extent do you agree with the following Vision Statement for the Community Hub: The Strathcona County Community Hub is the kitchen table of the community. It is a welcoming place that promotes a culture of acceptance and celebrates diversity. The Hub promotes inclusivity and accessibility for clients, community members, and staff. The Hub represents a new model of collaboration, information sharing, and co-delivery of key social services in Strathcona County. Integrating the County's assets, connections, and resources with community partners into one Hub to address complex social issues provides new opportunities for community members to create value in their own lives and the lives of others.



6. Is there anything missing from the vision?

A word cloud visualization of terms related to a community hub study. The words are arranged in a roughly triangular shape, with 'servicespace' at the bottom and 'vision' at the top. The words vary in size and color, with larger words indicating higher frequency or importance. The colors include shades of blue, orange, red, and teal.

vision arts support child social
business rural organizations accessed
building assets hub or other
attend access community activities
piece county asset
affordable agencies
servicespace

ResponseID Response

22	This sounds quaint.
25	I believe the vision needs to be more specific on the physical space. How are we envisioning the "place-making" of the Hub other than it being "welcoming"?
26	No
32	Must support access to a hub for rural community somehow
36	The general public won't use this space if it is designated specifically for the co-delivery of key social services. There needs to be more. Affordable child-minding, arts programming, social activities...
41	No, it is however a little lengthy
45	I really like the vision statement. I might take out the kitchen table piece.
49	A little vague on how the integration works.
51	May be can't say now
53	Hub does not have to be a model of collaboration, it can also be a piece of technology like what is used in the malls, with all the services that are available in the County and a video that explains what each service is about and how each can be accessed. This can be in the County building/library and also an internet site that can be accessed from home.
55	I think that a focus needs to be put on rural inclusion and support
62	I can't tell from the first part of this survey if the goal will be to deal with the things our community does not have and needs, or to house like minded existing organizations under one roof.
76	Referral to all other credible agencies in the community
82	Not sure what's included in "county assets, connections and resources" - could that include business for example? What potential might emerge from business (which could be a County asset or resource) and a not-for-profit social services organization collaborating on something that would create value.
84	What is missing is the county does not have work with the volunteer organizations for space to have events or meetings. There is no representative from the county when they are invited to attend events.

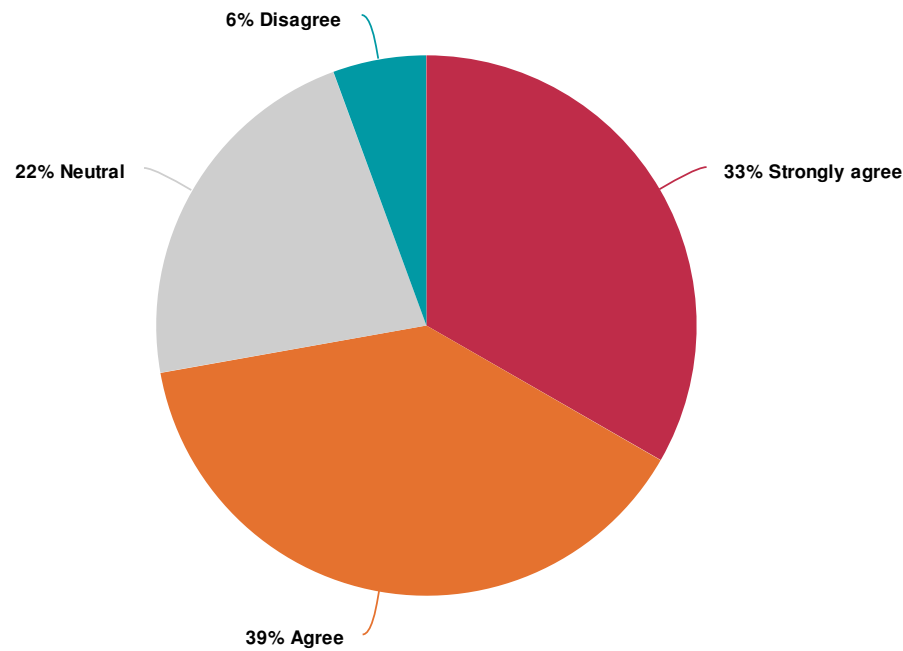
7. Do you disagree with any of the vision? Why?



ResponseID Response

22	The kitchen table won't be big enough. Rural will be challenged to use this model. We need the contact offices to be our kitchen tables. We don't come into Sherwood Park unless we have to. We are busy farming in this specialized muni and that is a year-round job.
26	No
36	Having only one HUB won't accomplish this in my mind. There needs to be a HUB in each smaller community within walking distance where neighbors can gather and get to know each other. Otherwise, this is no different than the current FCS facility that already exists.
49	Dislike separation of community members and clients - all community members are potential clients, all clients are community members
51	No
55	No
58	The vision is too long. If it's to be a statement of success some years into the future, it needs to be more focused. There is no way I can remember or recite this vision. This statement looks more like a comprehensive statement of purpose than a true vision.
62	I chose neutral because at this stage of survey, I don't know what more will be clarified. This sounds like trying to do too many things in one space. I'm not sure "kitchen table" is the best metaphor. I really thought of a community kitchen facility. If this is the what the focus will be, then it works.
67	It's too long with redundancy.
73	The above statement is more of a descriptor of the initiative than it is a vision. A vision statement is short and concise, and focuses on what the organization would ultimately want to achieve. In terms of an overarching list of objectives, it works well.
80	wondering about the phrase "clients, community members, and staff" - are clients not community members?
82	On a quick read, sounds okay. Stumbled on "kitchen table" a bit and will need to think about connotations of that and whether that leaves anyone out. We may need to be cautious of colloquial analogies in a vision statement from an inclusion perspective.
84	Somewhat disagree as I feel that the volunteer organizations could make a strong impact when working together. Tried to get this organized but the county went astray at the first meeting and made it about them.

8. To what extent do you agree with the following being the Core Services for the Community Hub:- early childhood and parenting programs - youth support - seniors support - walk-in counselling - volunteerism



Value		Percent	Responses
Strongly agree	<div><div></div></div>	33.3%	12
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	38.9%	14
Neutral	<div><div></div></div>	22.2%	8
Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	5.6%	2
Totals: 36			

9. Do you have comments about any of these services? If so, please explain.



ResponseID Response

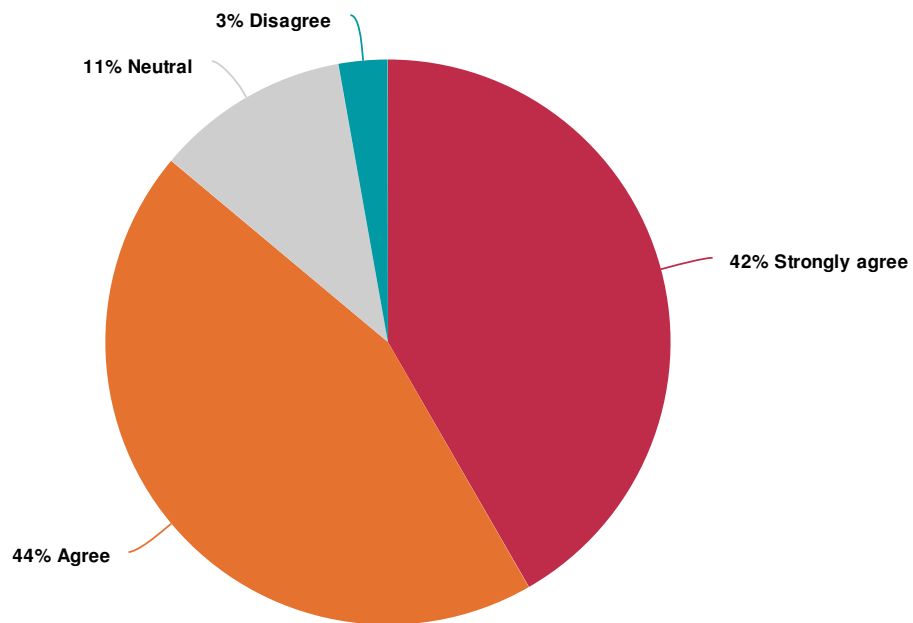
22	They are core but need to be offered where the entire community can get to them. That isn't in Sherwood Park alone. The contact offices should be utilized.
25	This looks similar to the services already being offered by FCS.
26	It would be great to include some services related to basic needs (ie. food security, housing, affordability in general), but otherwise these are services that I agree are most crucial.
32	Walk in counselling is only successful for a segment of the population. Establishing affordable ongoing consistent counselling is needed for more vulnerable population
36	Seems like a narrow focus
37	I thought parenting programs are held through Alberta Health and would seem redundant at the community hub. Similar to walk-in counselling which is currently done at FCSS in the Community Centre. Again maybe redundant?
39	not sure about volunteerism as a Core Service
40	I believe it will be very difficult to run effective youth programs with early childhood programs in the same space. Youth will not be engaged in a space for "babies and young children". I believe youth should be the main focus of the hub.
41	I think these reflect the key areas that would be of interest to the community.

45	Perhaps the "support" might be defined or examples given i.e. assisting with financial aid/medication coverage? or helping to find work...some description of the range of support offered.
46	Not quite sure how volunteerism fits, but I'm sure this will become more clear over time
49	Needs to be separate and distinguishable from existing early childhood and seniors centres.
53	Few services are missing, such as new comers support, disability support, mental health, addiction, homelessness, conflict resolution, et.
58	if it is a true community hub, I think the services should be broader. The hub should connect people to county services - be a one-stop shop. I would also see benefit in involving other community groups/organizations that don't deal specifically with social-based services. Most of what's in this list is FCS, yet i see the opportunity being broader than that.
60	Would this include other supports such as food bank and would it expand into employment as well?
62	Again, I chose neutral because I need more information. I'm not sure what "youth support" is. If we are talking about tackling the issue of homelessness for youth and adults, some of whom may be seniors (a shelter), then that is OK. If we are talking about better mental health support for all ages, which fits well with walk-in counselling, then OK. Or are we talking about simply housing existing services in a common space? Then that would be OK (hence my choice of Neutral) because that would serve a purpose, but is it the most important thing we can do?
65	Youth support should remain separated from early childhood support otherwise youth will not be drawn to gather there.
67	accessibility to them, and confidentiality will be key
68	financial supports need to be included
73	Don't necessarily see how volunteerism would fit in - would the current IVC also be located or repurposed, then? Rather than including volunteerism, we suggest that the County consider "newcomer services" like those currently coordinated out of the library.
76	include addiction support and counseling

ResponseID Response

82	I'm not sure about volunteerism given the existence of IVC. Also, I'd be interested to know what clients of FCS and the various social service organizations would expect to see in a Hub. And I'm not sure the term Community Hub actually resonates with folks who may wish to access social services. Has that term been tested with clients? If this is a community hub, is it just about services? Or could there be other aspects such as a library, a cafe, a youth entrepreneurship incubator, etc.
84	There are families in our community that need special support but there is no services for these except for the volunteers that care enough to raise money to support them

10. To what extent do you agree with the following objectives around Synergy in the Community Hub: The Community Hub operates with a shared vision between partners. It functions in a coordinated manner to offer a single access point to many social service organizations. Community Hub users can connect to the services they need through well-informed staff navigators. The Community Hub service partners are well versed in each other's happenings. Routine information and knowledge sharing is core to the Hub's operation. Understanding community trends drives the Hub to respond to the changing needs of residents. Partners in the Community Hub include government, not for profit agencies, and private businesses. These Community Hub partners share ownership, decision-making and resources. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each organization to help achieve the Hub's collective vision. The Community Hub is flexible and accountable. The ongoing evaluation of programs, services, and supports allows the Hub to stay relevant and impactful. Community Hub users come first, breaking silos and cross-training staff and volunteers makes the social service experience seamless.



11. Do you have any comments about the objectives? If so, please explain.



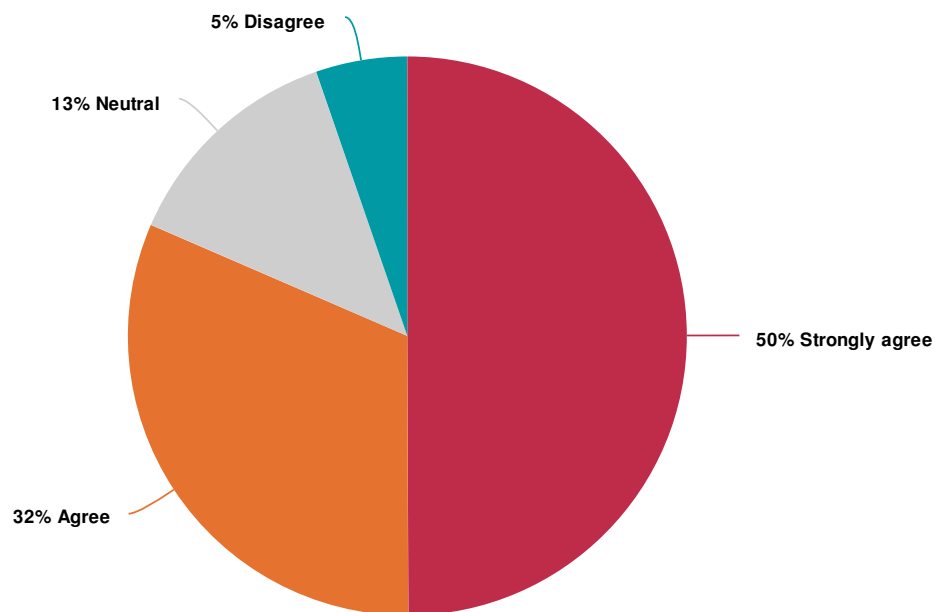
ResponseID Response





22	The theory is there. Will rural be represented?
32	Not understanding partners in sharing ownership, decision-making and resources. Agree we need to share clearly defined roles and responsibilities
34	The community hub is accessible for/to all and is not "an office space" for all the partners.
36	Curious what type of private businesses would operate at the HUB?
49	Our table had talked a bit about the importance of casual encounters, as opposed to formal referrals. Would like to see synchronicity of a diversity of supports explicitly mentioned as an objective - a focus on encounters and sampling potential services, rather than a more formal navigation for community members.
53	Agree with all except Community partners. excess of partners adds complexity to the work.
58	the first objective talks about being an access point for social service organizations, yet the third mentions private business. I see this as an inconsistency. To me, the broader the scope, the better. This isn't the keeper of knowledge, it's the broker between the individual and the programs/services they need, regardless of their location.
60	FOIP is always an issue and having staff represent a larger spectrum will help to have staff direct more holistic family support instead of just to an individual.

ResponseID Response

62	I like the availability of well-informed staff navigators and aiming for seamless service. It is important for the partners in the Hub to respond to changing needs. Interesting to allow for multiple types of partners. What important community issues will this synergy address? I think that is more important than who the audiences and the partners are.
68	I think it will be difficult to include private business in the Hub in ways that are inexpensive / affordable
73	Beyond having services of this nature centrally located, we would like to suggest that citizens accessing the services would be better served by having a navigator/navigation system in place. Not everyone will know which services they need or who to talk to, but a navigator would guide them through a multi-pronged (or 'spoked,' if the hub description is used) system to find what they need. That would be more important than having every single service under one roof.
80	I think the navigation piece is crucial - not all services can be provided in the hub but ideally it will be a one stop shopping place for information, if not the actual services
82	Now the term "user" has been introduced, in an earlier question "client" was used. Perhaps user is meant to reflect that the Hub may be a place where there are other things going on - you may not be a client accessing a social service. I'm just curious about the term "user". It may be better than "client". I also wonder about accountability given the various partners identified. It raises questions in terms of collectively, who are the partners accountable to. What is the governance of a Community Hub. Who is requiring the ongoing evaluation of programs for example. Who is requiring the cross-training of staff across organizations - I can imagine a number of complexities may arise around this.
84	Our organization asked for project to do within the community and it took council over a year to get back to us and that is only when we approached them again.

12. To what extent do you agree with the following Community Hub Objectives: The Community Hub has a range of flexible meeting and gathering spaces. It's indoor and outdoors, it's temporary and permanent, it's public and private, and it facilitates eating, sharing, learning and lounging. The Community Hub is a physical and mobile space that serves the urban and rural residents of Strathcona County. It actively seeks to effectively use resources to deliver services to all County residents. The Community Hub is located where users are able to get to the Hub through multiple modes of transportation (e.g. bus, bike, car). Clear way-finding and barrier-free design allow users to find their way around the Hub effortlessly. The Community Hub operates at hours that meet people's needs. The Community Hub is for all ages and ethnicities. It has a casual and inviting atmosphere that promotes informal interactions between community members.



Value		Percent	Responses
Strongly agree		50.0%	19
Agree		31.6%	12
Neutral		13.2%	5
Disagree		5.3%	2

Totals: 38

13. Do you have comments about any of these objectives? If so, please explain.



ResponseID Response

22	You've just described Community Halls and rural contact offices to us rural residents. Why reinvent the wheel? What is urban missing presently that this has been deemed necessary?
29	Barrier free design speaks to the physical/built environment. Remember to include accessibility in all aspects; print, online access, vision loss and hearing loss.
45	Great objectives!

ResponseID Response

49	This is excellent. I think the part about the kitchen table in the vision links well to this. However, would not specify ages and ethnicities - would instead say something about 'We (first person) are a diverse and welcoming space.'
53	If Hub is referred to as a space only, agree with the content. Only change would be "delivers services to County members needing special services"
55	Again, I stress rural inclusion and accessibility.
58	These objectives don't really mean anything to me. They are so vague as to identify any physical location of any size in any place in the county.
60	Transportation is always a barrier for individuals and families to receive services.
62	Again, I went for neutral. I really needed the 5 point scale for each of the individual objectives, not one chance to agree or disagree to the whole shopping list. I don't think some of the objectives are compatible. Yes, it should operate at the hours that meet people's needs and their should be good wayfinding, plus good transportation access. However, creating a space for learning and lounging might not be compatible with dealing with people under great stress. Young families might not feel comfortable, depending on the social challenges that are being tackled. I very much support keeping rural and urban residents in mind.
68	like the mobility feature
73	These are motherhood statements as opposed to practical objectives. How will each of these items be achieved? What tools/tactics will be used. The first paragraph should stop at, "...spaces." Remove, "...is a physical and mobile space" from paragraph 2. Transportation would continue to be a challenge, particularly for those with limited means in rural areas. Agree wholeheartedly that the system needs to be accessible during times when people can access it and/or need it most.
80	I just wonder how possible it is to have all of these at the same time
82	Most of these objectives relate to a physical space and accessibility of that space. The reference to mobile space is unclear. Is a mobile version envisioned, like a bus? Or will it be a hub and spoke model? With satellite "hubs" in other communities?

Community Hub Prototype



Community Hub Engagement Summary: Exploration Workshop

Exploration Workshop Summary

On June 26, 2018, a workshop was held with a variety of community stakeholders to build on prior conversations and explore possibilities for a Community Hub in Strathcona County.

After an initial discussion of potential services in the Hub, a prototyping activity took place. Small groups of participants were asked to physically build small scale models of what a Community Hub could look like or represent, including all features they would like to see in a Community Hub. These Hubs were then discussed with the full group, allowing participants to explore new ideas. Participant groups were then given an identity of a fictional Hub visitor, which allowed for a testing of the prototype to determine whether it had all the services and amenities required for the participant to access the Hub with ease. Using the information from the test, the group discussed how they would adapt their model further to better serve their sample participant. The following summary encompasses the common themes that were developed by the groups through the prototyping and testing exercises.

There were three main themes that arose from the prototyping workshop; features for inside the Hub, features for outside of the Hub, and ways to connect the County to the Hub.

Features Inside the Hub

There was a large focus on making the Hub a welcoming and comfortable space, where people would choose to spend time even if not accessing a service. This would activate the space at all times of the day, and help make people feel at ease when accessing the Hub. The majority of the groups built a model with a central public space for using casually, and more programable or private spaces around the exterior or second floor for privacy. Key features for the interior of the Hub that came from the workshop are as followed:

- Public space with lots of seating, tables, trees, bookshelves; features to help make the space feel welcoming and comfortable to spend time in.
- Cafe or restaurant to draw people in, and promote regular use of the space.
- Greeter or facilitator in the Hub to welcome people to the space, and help inform and navigate through the different services available.
- Screen or bulletin board to inform people about services, events and volunteer opportunities available in the Hub.
- Programable or rentable (for a low fee to ensure wide use) space, that can be flexible in the uses. This will allow many different events and groups to utilize the Hub and keep the space vibrant.
- Community kitchen to provide opportunities to learn how too cook, share meals and work collaboratively with other people from the community.
- Work/computer stations, with access to wifi, phones and printers. This is to provide technological services to people that don't have access to such.

- Offices and counselling rooms, to provide a space to have conversations in privacy and safety from others. Offices and rooms could be permanent or rentable spaces depending on frequency of need.
- Other amenities suggested: gym/yoga, games/board-games room, library, stage, meditation centre, art gallery, museum, book swap, closet swap.

These features were the common features of the participant groups, all with the focus to ensure that it is a comfortable and easy space to use. There was a strong stress on keeping the area flexible to ensure that it can be utilized for a wide array of purposes.

Features Outside the Hub

Ensuring both the interior and exterior of the Hub were welcoming was a big priority for groups, thus ensuring that the Hub is utilized to its maximum capacity. The outside of the Hub is important for drawing people into the Hub and to accessing the services provided. The outdoor features were focused around methods to add more functionality to the Hub. Key features proposed to include in the exterior of the Hub are as followed:

- Community garden/greenhouse for teaching people about food production, and collaborating with others. This community garden could work closely with the community kitchen proposed above.
- Outdoor seating areas, with a variety of shaded and private spots. These could provide another location to have private conversations with people without having to be inside an office.
- Playground area with ample seating for parents, this would help attract people to the space regularly and promote the multi-uses of the Hub.
- BBQ, picnic, fire-pit area; to provide an outdoor space to host events, and for groups of people to enjoy during the warm months.
- Tool shed library; somewhere where people can rent tools for home improvements, could also serve to teach people how to use these tools.
- Other amenities suggested: water fountain, skate park, market space, workshop, rooftop garden, patio/lounge space, outdoor screen.

These were the themes that the groups focused on when discussing the exterior of their Hubs. All of these are aimed at increasing the uses of the Hub, to ensure it is utilized to the maximum of its extent.

Connecting the County

From the majority of the groups, there was a highlight to ensure that the Hub serves everyone in the County. Strathcona County being so large, there is a concern that the Hub won't be able to access everyone in the community. A few ideas arose from the prototyping process in order to ensure that services are accessible for everyone.

Having not one central Hub, rather having a multi-Hub model. This multi-Hub model would utilize community halls throughout the County, offering services throughout Strathcona County, all working within the same ecosystem. Having a mobile Hub unit, which would be used to either bring people to the Hub, or bring services from the Hub out to the people. This would help with far out communities and people with limited mobility access the services of the Hub.

Online Hub, in where people can learn and access resources virtually, thus connecting the County at large. This would provide people who can not make it into the Hub an opportunity to access services from the comfort of their home. These options were all focused on connectivity, and looking for innovative ways to ensure that everyone in the community gets equal access to the services provided.

The following pages illustrate the prototypes that emerged from the workshop.

