1.0   General Information

Committee Name:	Building Safer Communities Steering Committee
Reporting to:	Manager, Healthy City and Inclusion
Date of Formation:	August 2023
Meeting Frequency:	Monthly
Staff Lead:	Building Safer Communities Coordinator
Other Staff Liaison:	Building Safer Communities Research Data Analyst Others as deemed necessary by staff lead as per Section 4.2.1

2.0   Purpose

The City of St. John's will receive up to $1.83 million through the Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF) to facilitate a crime and violence prevention strategy in collaboration with community partners and stakeholders. The purpose of the project is to help prevent crime and violence in the municipality by addressing root causes (i.e., social determinants).

The Building Safer Communities Steering Committee will be solution oriented and provide information and recommendations to the City of St. John's on the best ways of addressing the social determinants of crime and violence. Areas of focus include:

- Advancing knowledge and evidence of what works in other jurisdictions in Canada as well as locally.
- Developing a data collection strategy and evaluation framework.
- Developing local and community–based strategies and key objectives for the prevention of violence and crime for local organizations that focus on:
  - Children, youth, young adults, and their families.
  - Vulnerable populations
  - Addressing the social determinants of violence and crime.
- Enhancing evidence-based and targeted prevention and intervention activities.
- Developing a public awareness campaign.

- Developing a sustainability plan for the Building Safer Communities strategy.

Specifically, the Committee will:
- Provide the perspective of persons with lived experience and populations most vulnerable to violence and/or crime.
- Provide advice and perspective to the City on its violence and crime prevention and intervention policies, plans, programs, and services and how these meet the needs of the community.
- Identify gaps and barriers and suggest solutions that allow for the full participation of vulnerable populations and individuals facing barriers to improve safety and inclusion.
- Liaise with external groups and organizations with an interest in the prevention of violence and crime to share information, research, best practices, and other resources.
- Disseminate information on civic matters that affect children, youth, young adults, their families, and other populations most vulnerable to violence and/or crime.
- Provide a forum for dialogue between persons with lived experience, vulnerable populations, relevant external organizations, and the City of St. John's.
- Support and promote an increased consciousness of safety and inclusion within the City of St. John's and among the public.

Steering Committee recommendations to the City of St. John's will occur in the manner defined by these Terms of Reference to best support City Policy. The purpose of the Building Safer Communities Steering Committee in relation to specific City policies, plans and strategies is as follows:

Steering Committee Relationship to Strategic Plan:
- A Connected City – A city where people feel connected, have a sense of belonging, and are actively engaged in community life.
- A Connected City: Develop and deliver programs, services and public spaces that build safe, healthy and vibrant communities.

Applicable Legislation/City Bylaws:
- City of St. John's Act

Other City Plans, Guides or Strategies:
- Healthy City Strategy
- 10-Year Affordable Housing Strategy, 2019 to 2028
- Envision St. John's Municipal Plan and the Envision St. John's Development Regulations, Amended 2022
- City of St. John's Declaration in Support of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Other Distinct Deliverables and Considerations:
1. The Committee will be consulted on the City's Building Safer Communities public engagement processes where persons with lived experience and populations most vulnerable to violence and/or crime are identified.
2. The Committee, working cooperatively with City staff and departments, will identify distinct opportunities to include the perspectives of persons with lived experience and populations vulnerable to violence and/or crime.
3. The Committee will work cooperatively with other relevant City committees on issues of mutual interest.

3.0   Membership and Composition

3.1   Composition

3.1.1 Committee Chair

This Steering Committee will be chaired by the Manager, Healthy City and Inclusion or a designated staff liaison. The staff member chairing this committee will have the responsibility of ensuring the committee carries out its work as per the Terms of Reference.

The Chair will ensure that matters requiring Council input and approval are brought forward for consideration, when required.

3.1.2 Public Members

The Steering Committee membership will be comprised of up to 12 total members from the following stakeholder groups:

- Individuals representing agencies relevant to children, youth, young adults, their families, and other populations vulnerable to violence and/or crime.
- Persons with lived experience and/or who represent diverse voices within the community.

Efforts will be made to include the following perspectives within the Steering Committee membership to the greatest extent possible:
- Women and girls
- Children and families
- Youth and young adults
- Newcomers
- Indigenous people
- Racialized people
- 2SLGBTQIA+
- Persons with disabilities
- Mental health and addictions
- Harm reduction
- Poverty and low income
- Social isolation
- Housing and homelessness
- Involvement with the justice system
- Employment
- Education
- Academia / research
- People with lived experience
- Seniors / older persons
- Recidivism prevention

Each organization may also appoint an alternate representative to attend Committee meetings if the primary member is unable to attend.

Youth Engagement Working Group

From time to time, the Steering Committee will benefit from the additional insight of the youth perspective. To this end, the Youth Engagement Working Group (YEWG) is available for consultation with the Steering Committee. The YEWG oversees implementation of the Youth Engagement Strategy and

provides ongoing advice and guidance on how to best engage youth on City matters.

Inclusion Advisory Committee

The Steering Committee will also benefit from the additional insight of an inclusion perspective. The Inclusion Advisory Committee provides information and advice to the Council on matters of inclusion and accessibility as they relate to City programs, policies, and services. City projects and initiatives related to public service can be vetted through this experienced and knowledgeable committee to ensure access for all residents and visitors.

Subcommittees

When deemed necessary, the Steering Committee may strike up a working committee or subcommittee to deal with specific issues or deliverables (e.g., public engagement, evaluation). Subcommittees must have at least one Steering Committee member. Composition may also include other members of the public and organizational representatives. Subcommittees shall meet as an independent group, reporting to the Steering Committee on specified meeting dates, or as deemed necessary by the Chair.

3.1.3 Staff and Council Members (Ex-Officio Members)

Staff Lead

The Building Safer Communities Coordinator will act as Lead Staff for the Steering Committee. Other staff support/attendance may be requested by the Lead Staff where required.

3.2   Length of Term

Public Members

Unless otherwise indicated, the Steering Committee term of appointment is two years. Recognizing the value of experience and the need for continuity, incumbents who are willing to seek reappointment may signify their intent to serve an additional two years, for a total of two two-year terms. In some cases,

members may be encouraged to provide guidance, expertise and attend in a bridging capacity following the end of their term.

Additional Considerations

- Midterm Appointments: When an appointment is made which does not coincide with the beginning of a term (i.e., to fill a vacancy) the partial term (i.e., less than two years) shall not count towards the maximum length of service or number of terms on the Committee for the appointee.
- Unless otherwise expressed in these Terms of Reference, the limit on the length of Steering Committee membership for any member of the public is two two-year consecutive terms.

Exceptions to the above terms are as follows: where there is an insufficient number new members able to participate; if a particular area of expertise is indispensable and there are no other suitable replacements; if the Steering Committee would suffer from a lack of continuity (i.e., more than half of all members are replaced at once); or if directly related to the Steering Committee's purpose as defined in its Terms of Reference.

4.0   Roles, Responsibilities and Reporting

4.1   Roles and Responsibilities

As a municipal advisory body, Steering Committee roles include:
- Advising and making recommendations to the City/Council in a manner that will support City policy matters relevant to the Committee's defined purpose.
- Providing resident and organizational-based expertise.
- Working within given resources.
- Knowledge sharing and evidence of what works in other jurisdictions in Canada as well as locally.
- Informing a data collection strategy and evaluation framework.
- Informing local and community–based strategies and initiatives.
- Informing evidence-based and targeted prevention and intervention activities.
- Contributing to a public awareness campaign.

Shared Member Responsibilities

Conduct

Members shall strive to serve the public interest by upholding Federal, Provincial and Municipal laws and policies. Steering Committee members are to be transparent in their duties to promote public confidence. Members are to respect the rights and opinions of other Committee members.

Preparation

Meeting agendas and accompanying materials will be circulated electronically one week prior to all meetings. Members are expected to review all distributed materials prior to meetings. Alternate material distribution methods will be made available upon request.

Agendas

- Agendas require focus with clear parameters for content and alignment with the Steering Committee Terms of Reference and purpose.
- Agendas will be finalized one week before Steering Committee meetings.
- Items and accompanying material that are received after the agenda has been prepared and distributed (but prior to the meeting) will be reviewed and added to the existing or next meeting's agenda, as determined on a case-by-case basis.
- All Committee members are to submit potential agenda items and related material to the Committee Chair for consideration.

Attendance and Participation

Active participation in Steering Committee meetings is expected of all members of the public. "Active participation" may refer to both meeting attendance and/or engagement. An effort should be made to attend meetings in person or remotely. If a member declines two consecutive attempts to schedule a meeting or is unable to attend two consecutive scheduled meetings without justified absence, that member may be retired from the Committee at the discretion of the Chair.

Committee members who wish to request a leave of absence for an extended period (3+ months) may submit such a request to the Chair.

Voting

Wherever possible, decision making will be achieved by group consensus. When consensus cannot be achieved a vote will be used. City and government department, agency and entity staff representatives are ex-officio and therefore non-voting members.

Government members include the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, Department of Education, Department of Justice and Public Safety, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, Department of Health and Community Services, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

4.2   Member Roles and Responsibilities

4.2.1 City Staff

Chair

The presiding officer of the Steering Committee will be referred to as "Chair". The Chair will:
- Uphold Steering Committee processes and functions in accordance with all terms presented, maintaining productivity and focus. This includes ensuring Committee members conduct themselves in a professional manner.
- Build and coordinate a work plan for the Steering Committee.
- Prepare and submit agenda items and accompanying materials to the assigned Legislative Services Staff
- Work with the Lead Staff in fulfilling committee requirements related to reporting processes (annual presentations, written reports, FAQs etc.).
- Assist in the development of content for Notice of Vacancy documents.
- Review the Steering Committee Terms of Reference at the end of each term and be prepared to propose amendments as needed.

Lead Staff

- The Building Safer Communities Coordinator will act as the Lead Staff for this committee.
- Act as a liaison between the Committee and the City, linking across departments on issues relevant to Committee work.
- Ensure the Committee is informed about City policy, procedure, and available resources in reference to specific agenda items and provide procedural and/or technical advice to assist the Committee where appropriate.
- Request additional staff support/attendance as needed.
- Develop agendas in cooperation with the Committee Chair.
- Incorporate input from the Steering Committee into ongoing City work where appropriate (e.g., projects, staff updates, publications).

Other Staff Liaison

- The work of other staff liaisons intersects the purpose of the Steering Committee and may be required to participate.

4.2.2 Public Members

Public Members

Public members are expected to inform City decision making, applying personal skills, knowledge, and experience in carrying out functions commensurate with the defined purpose of the Committee. Roles will include active participation in Committee meetings, representing select Committee interests in the community, and engaging with residents and experts when appropriate.

4.2.3 Council

In cases where an item of Committee business (as detailed in each meeting agenda) requires Council input or approval, it will be the responsibility of the Chair to bring it forward to Council.

4.2.4 Government Department, Agency, and Entity Members

In addition to community organizations and individual residents, and in consideration of jurisdictional responsibilities, the participation of key government departments, agencies, and entities is important to the work of the Steering Committee.

Representatives of the following government departments, agencies and entities are invited to participate in the Steering Committee as ex-officio, non-voting members, similar to City of St. John's staff:

- Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development
- Department of Justice and Public Safety
- Department of Education
- Newfoundland Labrador Housing Corporation
- Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services
- Royal Newfoundland Constabulary
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Department of Health and Community Services

4.3   Reporting

The final Building Safer Communities strategy will be presented to the Council for input and approval.

Note:
- Organizational representatives will be required to report to (i.e., maintain open communication with) their respective organizations regarding Committee work.

5.0   Committee Recruitment and Selection

5.1   Recruitment, Vacancies and Applications

When new public members are required, the Chair shall invite the participation of one or more additional members as appropriate and defined in Section 3.1.1: Public Members.

A vacancy on the Steering Committee may occur when a member resigns, vacates a position or when their resignation is requested by the Chair. Vacancies may occur at the date of resignation, the date the member ceases to be qualified (i.e., vacates their position with their respective organization), or the date Chair declares the position vacant due to lack of attendance or incapacitation.

5.2   Eligibility and Selection

Eligibility

Appointments to Steering Committee will be made providing adherence with the following eligibility requirements:
1. Individuals and/or organizations represented by Committee members must be based in or serve/do business within the City of St. John's.
2. Organizational representatives are not required to be residents of St. John's.
3. Organizational representatives must have decision-making authority with the agency that they represent.
4. The City of St. John's will ensure a broad perspective of ages and diverse perspectives will be included on the Steering Committee during the membership selection process.

Commitment to Equity and Inclusiveness

The City of St. John's is strongly committed to equity and inclusiveness. In selecting Steering Committee members, the City will aim to design processes that are transparent, accessible, respectful and free of discrimination, as well as seek to remove barriers to participation.

Selection Criteria

In addition to eligibility requirements, an individual's specific skills and experience will be important factors in Committee selection. While all who meet the eligibility requirements outlined above may be considered, individuals with demonstrated participation in groups or initiatives with goals relevant to the Steering Committee's purpose will be preferred. Some other considerations pertaining to general selection criteria include past professional and volunteer experience, the ability to perform required tasks, complementary skills, and/or competencies possessed. Those who are selected to serve on the Steering Committee will be invited by email.

6.0   Public Engagement

The City of St. John's recognizes that engagement between the City and its residents is an essential component of an effective municipal government. The City views public engagement as a process – one that facilitates dialogue with the right people, using the right tools, at the right time on subject areas of mutual interest.

In accordance with the City of St. John's Engage! Policy, the role of the Steering Committee in the spectrum of engagement will fall within the realm of "consultation". This means that the Committee will provide a forum for the public and additional partners and stakeholders to provide specific feedback on relevant City matters and to help inform Council decision making. As such, the Steering Committee will be based on the principles of commitment, accountability, clear and timely information, and inclusiveness.

The Steering Committee is only one of the ways to engage with the City. Where applicable the City will consider the use of other tools to gather perspectives and input. For more information on public engagement in the City of St. John's or to find out how to get involved or learn about what is coming up, check out the engagement page on the City's website. You can also check out the City's Engage! St. John's online engagement platform and connect with us on Twitter and Facebook.

7.0   Other Governance

7.1   Review of Terms

Considering recommendations from the Committee Chair, the Lead Staff will review the Steering Committee Terms of Reference documents annually. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that the operations and function of the Committee are still aligned with its defined purpose.

7.2   Meetings and Schedules

The Steering Committee will formally meet monthly. The exact timings of Steering Committee meetings will be determined by the Chair.

To meet the Committee meeting quorum, 50% + 1 voting member must be present. Unless otherwise specified (generally one week prior to a meeting) Steering Committee meetings shall be held at City facilities or via accessible video/virtual meeting platforms and shall be closed to the public. Meetings may be recorded.

7.3   Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest refers to situations in which personal, occupational, or financial considerations may affect or appear to affect the objectivity or fairness of decisions related to the committee activities. A conflict of interest may be real, potential, or perceived in nature. Conflict of Interest may occur when a Steering Committee member participates in discussions or decision making about a matter which may financially benefit that Member, an organization in which they are employed or represent (e.g., serve on the Board of Directors), a member of their family, or someone with whom the member has a close personal relationship directly or indirectly, regardless of the size of the benefit.

In cases where the Committee agenda or Committee discussions present a conflict of interest for a member, that member is required to declare such conflict; to abstain from discussion; and remove themself from the meeting room until the agenda item has been dealt with by the Committee.

Confidentiality

All Committee members are required to refrain from the use or transmission of any confidential or privileged information while serving on the Building Safer Communities Steering Committee.

The City of St. John's is subject to the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015.

7.4   Data Sharing

Where appropriate, the Steering Committee and relevant partners will formalize a data sharing agreement and work to share non-personal data that supports the defined purpose of the Committee. Any data collection or data sharing that takes place will be to inform decision makers on matters of Building a Safer Community. The Committee and partners will agree to share measurable outcomes, indicators, and regular reports to ensure that there is clear and consistent communication on impacts at the community level.

Staff Liaison Name:
Signature: Date:

Chair Name:
Signature: Date:

Manager Name:
Signature: Date:

Annex A

Social Determinants of Violence and Crime

The social determinants of violence and crime refer to the societal, cultural, economic, and environmental factors that influence or contribute to the likelihood or prevalence of criminal behavior and violent acts within a community or society. These determinants stem from various systemic issues, inequalities, and social structures that influence individuals' circumstances, opportunities, and behavior. Understanding these factors is crucial for addressing and preventing violence and crime effectively.

The complex interplay among these various factors not only influences individuals' propensity to engage in criminal activities but also significantly shapes their vulnerability to becoming victims of violence and/or crime. These determinants encompass a wide array of social, economic, and cultural aspects that impact individuals' lives, influencing their decisions, behaviors, and overall well-being.

Understanding these factors goes beyond identifying why individuals might turn to violent and/or criminal behavior; it also sheds light on the circumstances that render them susceptible to victimization within their communities. Examples of the social determinants include:

Income and Social Status: Lower income levels and social status often correlate with increased exposure to stressors, limited opportunities, and economic disparities. These conditions can lead individuals to resort to violence and/or crime for survival or improvement of their circumstances. Simultaneously, individuals with lower income or social standing might be more vulnerable to becoming victims of violence and/or crime due to their increased susceptibility in certain environments such as high-crime neighborhoods or due to inability to afford protective measures.

Employment and Working Conditions: Unemployment, underemployment, or poor working conditions can contribute to economic instability and stress, potentially increasing the likelihood of individuals engaging in violent and/or criminal activities to meet their needs or due to frustration and lack of opportunities. Simultaneously, individuals in unstable work environments might face increased risks of victimization.

Education and Literacy: Limited access to education and low literacy rates can result in diminished opportunities for employment and social mobility. Lack of education may lead to individuals' involvement in the informal or underground economy which involves labor-intensive jobs with minimal pay. Insufficient incomes that fail to meet basic needs may make some individuals inclined to turn to violent and/or criminal activities as a means of survival. Conversely, these jobs often lack legal protections, fair wages, or safe working conditions and pose risks of exploitation, underpayment, and abuse for individuals.

Childhood Experiences: Negative experiences during childhood, such as abuse, neglect, or exposure to violence, can significantly impact a person's mental health and behavior. Such exposure may potentially lead to aggressive or criminal tendencies later in life. Additionally, those who have experienced childhood trauma may be more vulnerable to becoming victims of violence due to their increased susceptibility and potential revictimization.

Physical Environments: Living in areas with high crime rates, inadequate infrastructure, lack of recreational spaces, or exposure to environmental hazards can contribute to a sense of insecurity and normalization of violent and/or criminal behavior, increasing the risk of involvement in crime. Similarly, residing in such neighborhoods can elevate the risk of victimization due to the prevalence of crime and violence in those environments.

Social Supports and Coping Skills: While typically seen as protective factors, lack of social support and coping skills can contribute to criminal behavior and victimization under certain circumstances. Lack of adequate social supports or healthy coping mechanisms may lead individuals to seek alternative means of support by turning to illicit groups or illegal behaviors to fulfill their needs for belonging or resources. Moreover, this lack of support renders individuals more vulnerable to victimization, making them easy targets for exploitation or harm due to their isolation and absence of protective networks within their communities.

Healthy Behaviors: Engaging in unhealthy behaviors such as substance abuse or risky activities due to limited access to resources or stressful environments can increase the likelihood of involvement in violent and /or criminal activities. Individuals might resort to criminal activities to sustain their habits or fulfill their needs. This compromised judgment and vulnerability often

make them targets for exploitation or victimization by others seeking to take advantage of their impaired state. Moreover, these individuals, due to their impaired decision-making, may inadvertently place themselves in risky situations, increasing their susceptibility to becoming victims due to reduced awareness or ability to protect themselves effectively.

Access to Health Services: Health problems, when left untreated, can lead to financial strain through lost income from being unable to work. This economic strain might push individuals towards criminal activities as a means of meeting their basic needs. Without proper healthcare support for addictions or substance abuse problems, individuals might turn to illegal activities to support their addictions or engage in criminal behavior under the influence. In some cases, individuals facing chronic health issues with no access to care might feel they have limited options for survival. This can lead to desperation, potentially resulting in violent and/or criminal acts to obtain necessities like medications or treatment. Access to healthcare services is also very important for victims of violence. Violence and abuse can have wide-reaching, damaging effects on the health and well-being of individuals including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and psychiatric impacts.

Biology and Genetic Endowment: While biological factors might predispose some individuals to certain behaviors (e.g. antisocial), social determinants can exacerbate these tendencies, impacting both their involvement in violent and/or criminal activities and their susceptibility to victimization.

Gender: Societal gender roles and inequalities can affect violence and/or crime. For instance, men are statistically more likely to engage in certain types of violent crimes, while women may face different types of violence due to gender-based discrimination. Moreover, gender-based discrimination and stereotypes might result in different forms of victimization, such as intimate partner violence or sexual assault, based on gender.

Culture: Cultural norms, values, and traditions can impact attitudes toward violence and influence behavior within a community or society. Additionally, specific cultural practices might expose individuals to unique forms of victimization based on traditions or societal expectations.

Race/Racism: Systemic racism, discrimination, and social inequalities based on race can lead to marginalization, exclusion, and reduced opportunities, contributing to their involvement in violent and/or criminal activities. Furthermore, racial or ethnic minorities might be more vulnerable to certain types of victimization due to societal biases and prejudices.

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Annex B

Building Safer Communities Anti-Oppression Framework

This anti-oppression framework is designed to guide and inform the work of the City of St. John's Building Safer Communities project. The framework is a set of principles, practices, and strategies designed to identify, challenge, and address oppression and systemic injustices in various contexts, such as social, political, and organizational settings. It seeks to create more equitable, inclusive, and just systems by addressing power imbalances, discrimination, and various forms of oppression.

An anti-oppression framework is the method and process by which we understand how systems of oppression such as colonialism, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, and ableism result in individual discriminatory actions and structural and systemic inequalities for certain groups in society. Anti-oppressive practices and goals seek to recognize and address such discriminatory actions and power imbalances.

This framework's main purpose is to analyze and address systemic structures rather than focusing solely on individual actions. Research has consistently shown that when efforts are channeled into addressing structural and systemic changes, the resulting impact is not only more significant but also more deeply ingrained. We aspire for this resource to complement the ongoing initiatives within the project and associated engagement processes. Addressing issues of power and privilege contributes to our collective progress towards a fairer and more equitable world.

Anti-oppressive practices and this framework should guide the work with an aim to identify strategies and solutions to address power and privilege to mitigate and address the systemic inequalities that often operate simultaneously and unconsciously at the individual, group, and institutional levels.

The Lens of Systemic Oppression

The lens of systemic oppression assumes that:

- Prejudice and bias, in their negative forms, are acquired behaviors and can therefore be unlearned.
- Oppression and injustice are products of human actions and can therefore be rectified.
- Systemic oppression operates within institutions through harmful policies and practices, cutting across interconnected structures like education, healthcare, transportation, and the economy, creating a reinforcing cycle over time.
- Oppression and systematic mistreatment, such as racism, classism, sexism, or homophobia, extend beyond individual prejudices; they result from larger systemic issues.
- Systemic oppression is systematic, rooted in history, and involves the deliberate disadvantaging of specific identity groups, while favoring members of dominant groups in areas such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and language.
- Systemic oppression is evident in economic, social, political, and cultural systems.
- Recognizing inequitable patterns and taking deliberate action to interrupt inequity can undo systemic oppression, fostering more democratic processes and systems supported by diverse multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual alliances and partnerships.
- Conversations about oppression and bias often elicit strong emotions.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of our anti-oppression framework are as follows:

➢ **Anti-Oppression**: Recognizing the oppression that exists in our society and attempting to equalize the power imbalance in our communities. Oppression operates at different levels (from individual to institutional to cultural) and so anti-oppression must as well.

➢ **Anti-Colonialism:** Recognizing and rectifying the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization. It emphasizes acknowledging historical injustices, centering Indigenous knowledge, and challenging Eurocentric ideologies. An anti-colonialism approach emphasizes the centrality of Indigenous voices, perspectives, and self-determination in engagement as well as other processes. Additionally, it promotes educational initiatives, collaborative partnerships, and solidarity to foster understanding and support for Indigenous communities' struggles for justice and self-determination within the broader efforts of addressing systemic oppression and fostering inclusive, equitable spaces.

➢ **Intersectionality:** Recognizing that individuals and communities often experience multiple forms of oppression simultaneously. Intersectionality acknowledges that social identities, such as race, gender, sexual orientation, class, and ability, intersect and compound to create unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.

➢ **Centering Marginalized Voices:** Prioritizing the voices and perspectives of marginalized and oppressed groups in decision-making processes and problem-solving. This means actively seeking out and valuing their lived experiences and insights.

➢ **Trauma-Informed Approaches**: Recognizing the impact of trauma resulting from oppression and integrating trauma-informed approaches into services and supports for affected individuals and communities.

➢ **Equity and Inclusion:** Striving for equity by addressing historical and systemic disparities and providing necessary support to individuals and groups who have been marginalized. Inclusion involves creating environments where all individuals feel welcomed, valued, and respected.

➢ **Accountability and Responsibility:** Holding individuals, organizations, and systems accountable for their role in perpetuating oppression. This includes acknowledging and addressing past injustices in order to make amends.

➢ **Allyship:** Encouraging individuals who do not directly experience oppression to support those who do, including advocating for change, listening, and learning about the experiences of marginalized groups.

➢ **Empowerment:** Promoting the empowerment of marginalized groups through education, advocacy, and support so that they can advocate for themselves and participate in decisions that affect their lives.

➢ **Cultural Competence:** Developing cultural competence and sensitivity to understand and respect the cultural differences and nuances that may contribute to oppression.

➢ **Critical Awareness:** Promoting critical thinking and awareness of the ways in which oppressive systems and biases operate. This involves understanding and questioning systemic structures, stereotypes, and biases that perpetuate oppression.

➢ **Continuous Learning and Improvement:** Committing to ongoing education, self-reflection, and adaptation of practices to better address oppression as understanding evolves.

➢ **Policy and Structural Change:** Advocating for and implementing policy changes and structural reforms at the systemic level to address oppressive practices and create more equitable systems.

The adoption of this anti-oppression framework helps support our vision of creating more just, inclusive, and equitable safer communities. By following these principles and strategies, we aim to address structures that perpetuate inequality and harm, ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

A safer community translates into an enhanced quality of life, expanded economic opportunities, and an increased overall sense of security. It is a collaborative endeavor involving various levels of government, community partners and individuals with far-reaching, positive consequences, highlighting the tangible impact of active engagement in community advancement.

Guidelines for Engaging with Vulnerable Populations

Before conducting engagement with vulnerable populations, it is crucial to establish a framework that ensures respect, sensitivity, and ethical considerations. Vulnerable populations may include individuals who face discrimination, marginalization, or are at a higher risk due to individual or societal factors. The following guidelines outline how to engage with vulnerable populations and protocols to follow during these discussions.

1. **Establish a Safe and Trusting Environment**
   - Choose a secure and comfortable location for the discussion.
   - Ensure privacy and confidentiality to encourage open and honest participation.
   - Communicate the purpose of the discussion and the principles of confidentiality and anonymity.

2. **Sensitivity to Power Imbalances**
   - Recognize and address any power imbalances between the facilitator and participants.
   - Foster a non-hierarchical environment where all voices are heard and respected.

3. **Trained Facilitation**
   - Ensure that facilitators are trained in cultural competence, trauma-informed care, and ethics.
   - Encourage facilitators to actively listen, empathize, and respond to participants' needs.

4. **Language and Communication**
   - Use plain and inclusive language that is accessible to all participants.
   - Provide interpreters or translators if needed.
   - Encourage participants to express themselves in their preferred language.

5. **Trauma-Informed Approach**
   - Be aware of the potential trauma that some participants may have experienced.

- Create a supportive atmosphere that does not retraumatize individuals.
- Use trigger warnings when discussing sensitive topics.

6. Questioning and Discussion
- Frame questions in a non-judgmental and non-leading manner.
- Encourage participants to share their experiences, perspectives, and concerns.
- As discussion of violence and crime may be triggering, ensure that a support worker is available to provide support to participants.

7. Supportive Resources
- Have information on support services available in case participants need additional assistance, counselling, or referrals.
- Provide contact information for relevant support organizations.

8. Record Keeping and Consent for Recording
- Keep records securely and confidentially, following legal, organizational, and ethical guidelines. As a public body governed by the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015* (*ATIPP Act*), the City of St. John's is committed to protecting personal information that will be collected, used, and disclosed in accordance with the Act.
- If recording discussions, obtain explicit consent from participants and inform them of how the recordings will be used.

9. Debriefing
- Offer a debriefing session after the discussion to address any emotional or psychological impact on participants.
- Share the results of the public engagement.

10. Analysis and Reporting
- Analyze and report findings while ensuring that individual participants remain anonymous.
- Use the information to advocate for changes that benefit the vulnerable population.

Engaging with vulnerable populations requires a sensitive and ethical approach. These guidelines aim to foster a safe and inclusive environment where the voices of marginalized individuals are valued and respected. By adhering to these protocols, we can gather valuable insights while minimizing harm and upholding the dignity of the participants.

City staff fully recognize and respect the diversity of approaches within our network of community-based service providers. Some organizations have developed their own research or engagement frameworks such as *First Light Research Policy Framework* and the *Canadian Alliance for Sex Work Law Reform Guidelines*. We encourage and support organizations in using their respective frameworks.

Participants are experts in their respective fields and/or experiences and possess invaluable insights, and their involvement is pivotal. Their feedback and expertise provide us with a deeper understanding of the nuances and complexities surrounding violence and crime.

Our collective goal is to foster a collaborative and adaptable environment that best serves the interests and needs of our community, and we remain committed to this collaborative spirit. In the long run, a successful violence and crime prevention strategy serves the broader interests of the entire community.

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