

# Neighbourhood Resource Center

Collective Impact Assessment  
Findings to date

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# Overview

## Research phases:

- 1) Organizational Development Process
- 2) Developmental Reports based on Observations
- 3) Interviews and Focus groups

Collective Impact research design that presents preliminary conclusions

# Research Methodology

Utilizing Collective Impact framework and developmental evaluations

Observations were carried out over 6 months and include:

- \* Dissemination of 3 monthly developmental feedback evaluations covering 4 months of observations
- \* 16 Organizational development and service delivery meetings with the NRC Collaborative
- \* 6 Community Context meetings

# Research Methodology Cont.,

- \* 12 Semi-structured Interviews with Business Owners, Residents, Volunteers and External Organizations, and an agency representative.
- \* Two focus groups: 1 external organization comprised of 4 frontline workers, 1 external organization comprised of the general manager and three clients

# Research Contributions

During the process, the research contributed to:

- \* Educating research participants (interviewees, focus groups & agency personnel) about what specific services the NRC provides and what agencies are present
- \* How people can get involved in the NRC's activities and/or partner with the NRC
- \* Preliminary report acted as a resource for NRC Core agencies when applying for funding opportunities

# Context for the NRC Development

## The Gore street Community:

- \* Perception of Self & Community Connection
- \* Belief regarding service delivery
- \* Overview of NRC service delivery

# The Gore Street Community

“People get into this kind of a neighbourhood and they just get stuck in a way of thinking and way of life and there’s drugs. It’s not a good place because people that are here are forced to be here...I feel like there has been a lot of people here who have been here for a long time...and they don’t have a lot of hope for the future or self-worth.” (NRC03, Business Owner)

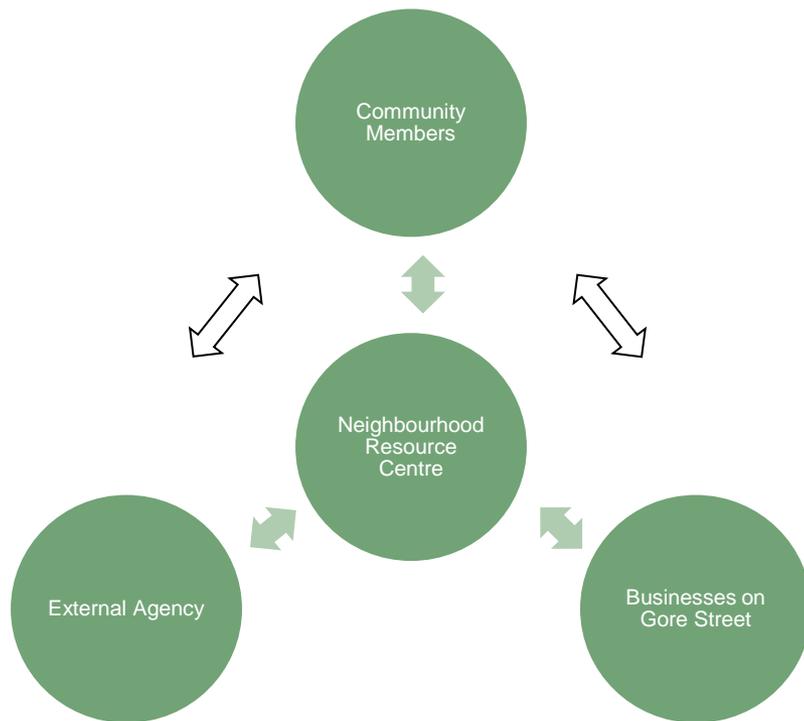
# Gore Street Community Cont.,

“Collectivity...there’s no more anymore, you’re considered a rat if you’re a neighbourhood watch. There’s no collectivity, there’s no neighbours getting together cleaning up a neighbourhood anymore...I think if we were more collective things would change.” (NRC09, Community Member)

# Gore Street Community--Beliefs

“Most government offices you’re treated like a [perjorative] number, you’ve got to repeat your story 12 frickin’ times before you get to the person who MIGHT help you and a good 50% of the time you don’t get any help so you’ve wasted your whole day and your breath and your pain and your anguish repeating your story over and over.”(NRC07, Volunteer)

# Neighbourhood Resource Centre



## NRC Core Agencies include:

- \* SSMPS
- \* Algoma Public Health
- \* John Howard Society
- \* Canadian Mental Health Association
- \* Algoma Family Services
- \* Children's Aid Society of Algoma
- \* Algoma Legal Clinic
- \* Ontario Works
- \* Phoenix Rising NP Homes
- \* Victim Services of Algoma
- \* United Way
- \* March of Dimes
- \* Indigenous Friendship Centre

# Collective Impact Assessment

1. Common Agenda
2. Shared Measurement
3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities
4. Continuous Communication
5. Backbone Organization

# Common Agenda

## Neighbourhood Resource Center

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### Vision Statement:

To encourage partnerships and activities that support the health and well-being of all in the neighbourhood.

### Goal:

To provide access to services and activities which enhance the safety and well-being of the Gore – Albert Street neighbourhood.

### Objectives:

1. Work with a variety of community members by developing trusting and respectful relationships.
  - Relationships between neighbours
  - Relationships between agencies and neighbours (including individuals, businesses and organizations, etc.)
  - Relationships between agencies
2. Agencies will work together to provide services that are easily accessed and directed by the neighbourhood. Services will be culturally appropriate (including different genders, indigenous and language, etc.)
3. Improve the well-being and safety of the neighbourhood.
4. Provide advocacy, support and activities for families that result in healthy growing children.
5. Increase chances for employment in the downtown/canal district area.
6. Create partnerships that ensure that the NRC remains in operation.

- \* Organizational Development Meetings & Visioning Sessions with core agencies & the neighbourhood
- \* Vision, Goals and Objectives finalized January, 2015
- \* 7 NORDIK facilitated organizational development meetings

# Shared Measurement

## Developmental Evaluation:

These include:

- ❖ Highlighting community engagement
  - ❖ Increasing female frontline/volunteer visibility
  - ❖ Consistent hours of operation
  - ❖ Advancing cultural inclusion
  - ❖ Privacy and confidentiality through creation of safe spaces on site
  - ❖ Progression of establishing a communications plan and social networking
- \* Development of the Longitudinal Indicator Tool



# Backbone Organization

## Sault Ste. Marie Police Services:

- \* Main point of contact
- \* Majority of planning, development, direction and implementation
- \* Mobilized the community

# Perception of the Police at the NRC

“Pretty much everybody I talk to just thinks it’s that cop shop so nobody bothers with it. The cops set it up so they can keep a better eye on our town.”(NRC06, Resident)

“I don’t know if that works with our people. Just because it’s like when you see a police officer sitting there, they’re not going to come in...”(FG1-02, External Organization discussing Aboriginal person’s perception)

# Perception of police can change

“It’s good to have police who are down here who aren’t necessarily just enforcing, just arresting people. It’s good to have a presence down here that’s more helpful and in that sense I think it’s changing day by day. Changing people’s attitude towards the police.”(NRC03, Business Owner)

# Helping change the perception

“The police are there. A lot of clients are not too fond of that but when we discuss it with our clients... they’re a resource and that’s what we tell them. They’re here to help. They’re not here really to do other things.”(NRC05, External Organization)

# A change in perception

“I’m seeing a lot less of the attitude that you get everywhere else which is, if you you’ve got a mental health issue you’re just going to jail for housing. That’s not the attitude of the police that are involved here. It’s not you’re going to jail because you’re homeless and you have mental health issues, it’s you’re homeless and you have mental health issues so how the hell can we help you?”(NRC07, Volunteer)

# Safety

“I was feeling more safer knowing the police were here and close to the neighbourhood.”(NRC08, Resident)

“I think even for my customers just having a presence here they’re feeling more comfortable coming down here...my customers were scared to come down here and now I’m not hearing that anymore.”(NRC04, Business Owner)

# Safety cont.,

“...it’s the fact that knowing that the community itself knows that there’s something it could land on if it had to.”(NRC09, Resident)

“Knowing that there is somebody if you really need them that somebody would be able to get here to help you.”(NRC12, Volunteer)

# Mutually Reinforcing Activities

- \* Social Innovation: Accessibility, Person Centered Service Delivery, Agency Collaboration
- \* Partnerships
- \* Emerging Human Assets
- \* Perception of Change

# Social Innovation—'Breaking the silo'

- \* Cross agency synergy and collaboration
- \* Unique service delivery: customized to the community, agency availability, outside the center, evening programming (non-traditional hours)

# The NRC breaks the silo:

“They treat you like a person when you come in. Have a cup of coffee, sit down, talk to us, what’s your problem? Well we can hook you up with this person or that person. It’s not just blowing smoke, they actually are accomplishing it. They are actually picking up the phone saying we need someone from your department here now...They’re actually working together. That’s unheard of with government agencies from the point of view of the community.”(NRC07, Volunteer)

# Person-Centered

“[NRC Staff] has been a huge support throughout the entire process since I walked in the door the first time. He kind of identified me as somebody and talked to me like I was a normal human being right? Even when I was in a bad state when I first come in, he’s treated me like a normal person.”--NRC10, Agency Representative

# Agency Collaboration

- \* “You can walk in here and repeat your story once and it disseminates to who needs it and they jump in and help.”-- NRC07, Volunteer
- \* “They always try to help, do what they can. I’ve always seen them go out beyond what their needs are to be here...the people that work here from the agencies they seem to pick up more all the time...go beyond what they need to do.”— NRC12, Volunteer

# Accessibility

- \* Multiple programming initiatives and service delivery including the walk-in clinic, dental hygienist, women's workshops, milk program, good food boxes etc.
- \* Introducing culturally appropriate services
- \* High traffic area
- \* Walk-ins, clients and other agency personnel
- \* Case conferencing table

# Accessibility

- \* “I’ve used them on probably 3 or 4 different occasions, 3 or 4 different services coming out of the NRC just by coming and talking to [NRC Staff] about stuff that he was needing [to support me], I’d see what was available and know that I could come back here and be able to use them.”—NRC10, Agency Representative
- \* “...one of the best things about the center is that they can get what is needed very fast and brought into the situation fast even more than we can do here actually at this point.”—NRC02, External Organization

# Culturally competent services

“I noticed the Aboriginal people aren’t being left out as much...Whereas before you’re like ‘oh this person is native? Yeah we tried to help, we can’t.’ But when there’s 4 or 5 other agencies including the friendship center there they can’t just say ‘oh we tried’.”—FG01-04, External Organization

# Emerging Human Assets

- \* Inclusion with the NRC is developed through the drop-in atmosphere of the NRC
- \* Community events: community clean-up, flower bombing, dinners
- \* Volunteerism
- \* Community meetings

# Emerging Human Assets

- \* **Events**: “I know they had the flower bomb last year, brought a lot of people to the area but then...look around you, see all the old pots and the flowers, nobody is doing anything about it...”—NRC04, Business Owner
- \* **Volunteerism**: “It’s the best way to get everybody a little more engaged, build unity and community.”—NRC02, External Organization
- \* **Community Input**: “They’re definitely listening. I’ve never in my life seen people actually act on suggestions as quickly and I’ve made many...”—NRC07, Volunteer

# Creating Partnerships

- \* In-kind services: meal preparation, donation of goods to furnish the NRC, volunteers
- \* Providing employment and skill based opportunities
- \* Joint funding applications
- \* New and emerging partnerships based community feedback such as key partnerships with Superior Medical Health Team and Lake Superior Dental Hygiene

# Partnerships

“And I was going to suggest a monthly schedule. Like if they already have something mapped out at the resource center, where do we fit in? What nights, what programs would go and do something?”—FG1-02, External Organization

# Continuous Communication

- \* NRC communicates via greeting cards, flyers, pamphlets, signage and digital display, community meetings and bi-weekly agency meetings, email
- \* General email
- \* Google calendar
- \* 3<sup>rd</sup> party use of the NRC policy
- \* Vision, goal and objectives
- \* Acknowledge a need for a Communications Plan

# Communication: Outreach

- \* “I’ve actually experienced very little outreach from the NRC...We haven’t seen them come and try to promote any of their services or any events here or seen any sort of presence except for the recent sandwich board.”—NRC01, Business Owner
- \* “We found out about the Christmas dinner because they sent out flyers in the neighbourhood.”—NRC08, Resident

# Communication: Referrals

\* “No, because nobody ever thinks of it, nobody knows it because everyone thinks it’s a cop shop. They don’t know it’s a resource center, they just think they put that name instead of saying a police station.”—NRC06, Resident, when asked if this person would refer anyone to the NRC

❖ According to NRC Data, 43.5% of those attending the NRC were self referred/walk ins.

# Perception of the NRC

- \* “I think it’s a center for people who live in this general area or to have access to resources, things like counsellors, maybe an information center. Where people can go to get information on where they can go, what kind of steps they can take to utilize the services that are offered in there.”—NRC03, Business Owner
- \* “The NRC is like a drop-in center but it’s a safe space to go if you want to be social. It provides a lot of resources for people in the city or in the neighbourhood.”—NRC09, Resident

# External Agency/Organization's Perception

- \* "...we'll use them as a resource on particular items that some of the clients are in need of... they'll help us out in putting our client in the right direction where he needs to go."—NRC05, External Organization
- \* "...there is an awful lot of different organizations at their table...but when they're called upon they can send somebody who can do whatever needs to be done at that point..."—NRC02, External Organization

# Collective Impact?

Assessing the 5 Condition of Collective Impact and the NRC contributions :

1. Has there been any change?
2. What are the outcomes to date?

# Changes?

- \* “I’ve walked into more places just since the NRC’s been there.”—NRC09, Resident on entering more businesses in the Gore Street area
- \* “...some of them have got to become more friendlier with each other...It’s a little more intimate there, they can get to know each other a little bit on a smaller scale.”—NRC02, External Organization discussing changes in relationships between community members

# Positive outcomes associated with NRC

- \* “It’s changed how I approach everyone because “it’s no longer leave me alone I’m just going back to my corner of the world”. Now it’s like, I’m a member of the community and I’m f\*\*king proud of it.”—NRC07, Volunteer
- \* “By my count there’s been roughly **8** people who have come in and just saw the sign and walked in right off the street and of those **8**, **three** of those people are still here.”—NRC10, Agency Representative discussing a programming initiative

# A Positive Outlook

“...if communities come together and work together like they used to in the old times. Someone moved on to your block you got a knock on the door, someone handed you fresh baked goods and they were welcoming you to the neighbourhood. Now when someone comes and moves in they're skeptical about who they are and what they've done in the past and maybe it's small acts like this of kindness and rejuvenation that bring old communities like that back to life.”—NRC11, Resident

# Change takes time

“I think it needs patience. It needs time to be able to provide all the services it needs and for the community to understand what their purpose is there. Sometimes you know its there but because you don't need it you just know its there, that's all you know...I think that it takes time. It just doesn't happen.”—NRC05, External Organization

# Summary of Key Findings

- \* The NRC provides: person centered & accessible services, variety, a safe space for socialization
- \* Agencies work collaboratively, respond quickly, create opportunity for connection
- \* Unaware of specific services/agencies attending the NRC or how to become involved
- \* Subtle changes in community members relationships between one another and with businesses. Businesses perceive no changes in relationships.
- \* No deliberate, on-going outreach
- \* The perception of the police is slowly changing.
- \* Volunteerism and events are creating community connection and unity

# References

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