Background

Generalist and Youth Community Social Workers (CSW) in each Neighbourhood Services office (East, North, South and West) fall under the Community & Social Development Program, funded by Family Community Support Services (FCSS). The CSW Core Services and Competencies had not been reviewed in many years and a Review team was established in 2009 to undertake this task. Additionally our funder FCSS asked all funded agencies and programs to create a Theory of Change (ToC). This created an opportunity to align the CSW Core Services and Competencies Review with the development of the ToC, as well as Council priorities, Community Services & Protective Services (CS&PS) business planning and Community & Neighbourhood Services (CNS) key lines of business.

An Advisory committee was formed and comprised of CSWs from each area office, two NS managers and external stakeholders. Additionally a consultant team was contracted to work on the review.

The Theory of Change articulates an approach to community development (CD) that in some cases is different than current practice. The job of The City of Calgary Community Social Workers is community development: an intentional approach helping community members to come together and achieve common goals that improve their collective economic, social, cultural and/or environmental situation. It is recognized the CSW will play a key role in engaging community members with the intention of increasing capacity to mobilize, devise and carry out plans to address specific issues identified by residents in the neighbourhood. Over the longer term, it is intended that communities will have sufficient knowledge, leadership, organizational and practical skills to resolve issues. Inherent in the Theory of Change is the recognition that CSWs are employed by the City of Calgary to perform Community Development within a Municipal context.
In order to build capacity within a community, the CSWs will need to further develop skills in the key areas as outlined in the Core Services and Competencies document. Capacity building support will be required to assist CSWs to shift to this new ‘way of working’. This CD approach requires both a philosophical reorientation as well as an organizational structure that not only supports CSWs but also provides the infrastructure and supervision required to transition to this new way of working. Mark Cabaj’s 1 table illustrates this central challenge in neighbourhood work - the balancing of two approaches and the opposing tensions inherent in formal institutions and neighbourhood environments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tendency of Formal Institutions (i.e. traditional social programming)</th>
<th>Nature of Community Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certainty</td>
<td>Unpredictable. Messy. Risky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term focus</td>
<td>Long term focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertical accountability</td>
<td>Multiple stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed, standardized responses</td>
<td>Customized and evolving responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City/region wide perspective</td>
<td>Neighbourhood perspective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Community development work is best viewed from a complexity lens with the ability to deal with uncertainty found in most CD endeavours. This new way of working requires learning and relearning of ‘how’ to build the capacity of neighbourhood residents and organizations to lead and produce changes. This requires a community orientation that may not always come naturally to those more familiar working within a program and service orientation.

The key is that community residents are recognized as agents of change, rather than just beneficiaries or clients. This requires CSWs to understand how to work with residents as co-partners in neighbourhood efforts. From a community partnership lens it is more about the relationship with the community, listening to and working with the community, along with a combination of organizational creativity, innovation and responsiveness. It requires the ability to execute, adapt and evaluate how the work is playing out in practice with communities. This work benefits from a practice grounded in an asset-based approach that is accountable to the community.

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Overview

The following provides an overview of the process used to develop the CSW Core Services and Competencies for The City of Calgary, Community & Neighbourhood Services, Community & Social Development Program.

Data Sources

Two main data sources contributed to the following Core Services and Competencies document:

- Synthesis of internal data sources: the information comes from meeting notes from April 6th, 2011 Neighbourhood Services (NS) CSWs/Managers meeting; meeting notes from the four NS Area Office conversations and a Youth CSW conversation conducted in April/May 2011 with CSWs/Managers; and a large group session with CSWs/NS Managers on June 1st, 2011.

- Synthesis of the literature on community development core services and competencies/skills: in particular, the information comes from Mississippi State University, the Government of Australia, the Government of the United Kingdom, and the City of Edmonton.

Approach

A collaborative approach was utilized for this phase of the work. Data was compiled from the above data sources, analyzed and then synthesized in order to identify and analyze key patterns. Data analysis used inductive methods, making sense of the data in an iterative process.

Process

CSWs and NS Managers were consulted on what they saw as best practices in the area of community development. This material was reviewed for patterns and linkages to the Community Development Theory of Change. Once this was completed the consultants reviewed the literature on CD initiatives (as noted above) in order to begin to identify best practices.

Participatory Validation Procedure

Step 1: The two draft reports (Area office input and Literature Review on core services) were brought to the Advisory Committee for preliminary discussion on May 11th, 2011. The Advisory Committee recommended that a comparison of the synthesized data from the two sources be conducted.

Step 2: The two draft reports and an analysis of similarities and differences between the two reports were brought to the four NS Managers for review, dialogue and input on May 16th, 2011. The NS Managers provided input and recommended a compilation report on core services be produced from the two data sources (Area Office and Literature).
Step 3: The compiled core services report was presented to a large group meeting of CSWs and NS Managers on June 1st, 2011 for further review, dialogue and input. The input received was incorporated into the document and draft competencies were added to the report. The competencies were reviewed against the literature and overall skills, abilities and knowledge areas identified.

Step 4: The revised and expanded compilation report of Core Services and Competencies was presented to the Advisory Committee on June 8th, 2011 and to the NS Managers on June 13th, 2011 for further review, dialogue and input. Minor revisions were made and the report was adopted by the NS Managers on June 13th, 2011.

Step 5: On June 27th, 2011 The Advisory Committee presented the Core Services and Competencies document to the Director of Community & Neighbourhood Services, FCSS Manager and 4 NS Managers. The document was adopted with suggested minor revisions.
Community Development Theory of Change

As described in the Community Development Theory of Change document (see Appendix), the community development process involves 7 distinct but inter-related steps. The following Core Services are derived from these steps.
Overview of Community Social Worker Core Services and Competencies

CSW Framework of Practice: Understanding and Facilitating community development to bring about change founded on social justice, equality & inclusion.

The CSW Framework of Practice is the overseeing function required to develop and manage community initiatives WITH residents. Guiding the Framework of Practice are core values and responsibilities that CSWs manage within a Municipal context as a City of Calgary employee. In order to successfully work within the CSW Framework of Practice, CSWs will have to work across all of the Core services and corresponding Competencies as explained below.

CORE SERVICES AND COMPETENCIES

Core Service: **Community Engagement & Participation**: Engaging and supporting a broad range of community members in community building strategies to ensure the community is always involved in deciding what needs to be done, then designing and delivering the solution and taking ownership of the solutions.

Competencies:

1. Community Context and Assessment: Get to Know the Community
2. Community Engagement: Build Relationships
3. Facilitate Participation: Convene, Connect, Commit

Core Service: **Community Capacity Building**: Providing community members with the opportunities to realize and share their assets, increase their skills/knowledge and strengths to build capacity towards collective action.

Competencies:

1. Developing Human Capital and Leadership
2. Determining Resource Needs
3. Supporting Neighbourhood Connections  (Supporting Bonding and Bridging Social Capital)
4. Supporting Organizational Development

Core Service: **Empowerment (Collective Efficacy) and Mobilization**: Supporting and mentoring community members to create and pursue a shared community action plan that addresses identified issue(s), articulates and identifies the steps/resources necessary to achieve the desired results.

Competencies:

1. Empowerment: Fostering and Supporting Neighbourhood Efforts
2. Mobilization: Facilitating Community Action

3. Supporting Community Advocacy

Core Service: **Action and Results**: Supporting and mentoring community members to implement the action plan based on the identified need(s) and evaluate/learn from the results.

Competencies:

1. Moving Planned Activities to Action

2. Evaluation & Reflection: Supporting Community Learning From Shared Experiences
COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORKER (CSW) FRAMEWORK OF PRACTICE

In alignment with the Community Development Theory of Change document, the CSW Core Services and Competencies are grounded in the following Framework of Practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSW Framework of Practice</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding &amp; facilitating community development to bring about change founded on social justice, equality &amp; inclusion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values that Guide the Framework of Practice
The CD process is underpinned by a set of values on which practice is based. These relate to CSW roles and actions. These values will guide the work of CSWs as they engage and mobilize community residents:

- Social Justice
- Equality & Anti-discrimination
- Trust, Respect & Openness
- Creative, Flexible & Responsive
- Strength-based
- Diversity, Inclusion & Participation
- Accessibility & Affordability
- Continuous Learning

CSW Responsibilities within the Framework of Practice
The mandate of The City of Calgary Community & Neighbourhood Services Community Social Workers is community development: an intentional approach helping community members to come together and achieve common goals that improve their collective economic, social, cultural and/or environmental situation. It is recognized the CSW plays a key role in engaging community members to increase resident capacity to mobilize, devise and carry out plans to address specific issues as identified by community. Over the longer term the intention of CD work is to support communities to gain sufficient knowledge, leadership, organizational/practical and advocacy skills to resolve issues. This Framework of Practice is conducted by CSWs within a municipal context as a City of Calgary employee.

Overall Framework of Practice
1. Understanding and Applying Community Development:
Knowing the values, processes and methods of community development in order to organize/mobilize resources for action and manage the complexities inherent in CD practice.

Sub components include:
- Communities: working with different communities, the history and dynamics of diverse communities, how to relate to diverse communities;
- Power, inequality and justice: able to navigate social justice issues/theory and how this impacts individuals and communities, power dynamics, poverty, structural and systemic barriers, oppression and discrimination, and systems interrelatedness;
- Decision making: able to utilize and role model democratic decision-making processes, participatory techniques, conflict management methods and diplomacy;
- Reflective practice: utilize a reflection and action process - a participatory technique for continuous learning though experiential opportunities with each other, including other colleagues, managers, partners and residents.

2. Developing Community Initiatives:
Understanding community development as a process that enables people to organize and work together to: (a) identify their own interests/issues related to improving their neighbourhood; (b) take action to exert influence on decisions that affect their lives; and, (c) improve the quality of their own lives and the community in which they live. An overseeing function is essential to develop and manage community initiatives with residents.

Sub components include:
- Work from values that underpin a CD practice;
- Create intentional engagement strategies;
- Facilitate broad-based participation bringing diverse representation to the table;
- Ensure democratic participatory planning, implementation and project management;
- Support and facilitate group process development;
- Develop and support community collaborations; and
- Evaluate community change - both process and outcome.
## OVERALL REQUIRED COMPETENCIES FOR CSW FRAMEWORK OF PRACTICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCY</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Process &amp; Method</td>
<td>Understand and apply the process of community development to the CSW role and areas of responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>Use skills and practices that help individuals to create a dynamic group setting in which people collaborate to develop creative solutions and make sound decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Management</td>
<td>Establish positive working relationships with key neighbourhood stakeholders (residents, agency partners, funders, formal and informal organizations etc.) that will help proactively prevent and/or manage conflicts within neighbourhood work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Communicating and listening in a compelling and articulate manner; ensuring the message is clear, understood and consistent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical &amp; Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Understand and analyze information; critically reflect on how to best develop methods and processes to address community needs and priorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td>Change own behaviour and opinion in light of new information, changing situations and/or different environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Thinking, Problem Solving &amp; Risk Taking</td>
<td>Respond to challenges with innovative solutions by questioning conventional measures and use intuition, experimentation / new perspectives to make decisions that involve risk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational &amp; External Awareness</td>
<td>Understand the alignment of the CSW work within the structure and culture of The City of Calgary as well as the local /global political, social and economic context. Ensure this information informs and guides the work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking &amp; Partnership Development</td>
<td>Seek and maintain working relationships and/or networks of contacts to build strategic partnerships and collaborative arrangements that are instrumental in achieving overall goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning, Organizing &amp; Resource Management</td>
<td>Plan the best way to achieve objectives by defining tasks and setting targets while ensuring the optimal use of resources such as financial, human, physical and information resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making &amp; Accountability</td>
<td>Make informed decisions in a responsive and open manner based upon a mixture of analysis, collaboration with others, experience and judgment. Take responsibility for these decisions and actions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2 The following skills, knowledge and abilities are based on an overview of key CD literature and the City of Calgary Competency Dictionary.
COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORKER (CSW) CORE SERVICES & COMPETENCIES

Within the CSW Framework of Practice there are four Core Services and corresponding Competencies. In order to successfully work within the framework CSWs must work across all of the four Core Services.

Core Service: Community Engagement & Participation
Engaging and supporting a broad range of community members in community building strategies to ensure the community is always involved in deciding what needs to be done, then designing and delivering the solution and taking ownership of the solutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Engagement &amp; Participation</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Community Context and Assessment: Get to Know the Community</strong></td>
<td><strong>I. Community Context and Assessment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maintain a community presence - get to know the community by being as present and visible as appropriate;</td>
<td>• Community assessment processes and methods - community mapping, environmental scans, stakeholder identification, community situational analysis;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Determine your own role(s) and changing roles in the CD process;</td>
<td>• Community dynamics (demographics, economics, power structure, resources and sustainability) ;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Build relationships – support mutual reciprocity opportunities between residents to build relationships across the community;</td>
<td>• Relationship building strategies;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn about the community context - the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental context and the subsequent impacts on communities;</td>
<td>• Social research knowledge &amp; understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Undertake community assessments - identify community needs, gaps, strengths and assets utilizing multiple means and tools;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Determine community readiness.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Community Engagement: Build Relationships</th>
<th>II. Community Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Utilize different methods/styles of engaging people, organizations /groups in communities to ensure diverse representation and participation;</td>
<td>• Community engagement processes and tactics (creative tools) - using social media as an engagement tool;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meet people where they are at, creating an atmosphere of safety to build relationships;</td>
<td>• Effective meeting skills and facilitation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop intentional processes to engage residents through facilitation and multiple engagement strategies/techniques;</td>
<td>• Program planning;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engage with people to identify what they are concerned about and what excites/mobilizes them;</td>
<td>• Conflict management;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify key stakeholders and resources, work with pre-existing groups, link groups and build networks;</td>
<td>• Relationship building strategies;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify community leaders – formal, informal, potential and emerging leaders;</td>
<td>• Community research;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify/address barriers and challenges to engagement;</td>
<td>• Community consultation processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop strategies to engage more isolated residents;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support groups beyond their differences by using proactive conflict management strategies, problem solving and diplomacy.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Facilitate Participation: Convene, Connect, Commit</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Create opportunities for people to come together, make connections and dialogue with each other;</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Ensure diverse participation representative of the community;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Work with people to find meaningful ways to contribute by harnessing their strengths, assets and motivation to get involved in their community;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Provide opportunities for community members to become involved with each other in their community through collective and participatory planning and organizing opportunities;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Support residents to collectively identify their interests and build their own community agenda - start with where the community is at;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Seek commitments from people to participate in community activities;</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Support community members to rally around an issue that is likely to be resolved successfully and/or shorter-term community building projects (quick wins) as means to building longer term participation;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Link and bring in networks - interested community organizations, agencies, businesses and stakeholders together with community members;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Identify potential partners - assess their collaborative potential, understanding of community development and willingness to work with community members as partners;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Support community members’ understanding of current and emerging community opportunities/efforts – issues that the residents may have concerns about, issues brought forward by other stakeholders (internal and external to the community), issues/initiatives in other communities;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Utilize communication skills to build strong relationships – active listening, asking probing questions, clarifying issues, identifying areas of need, being open, friendly, welcoming and encouraging.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Facilitate Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Collective / participatory planning and organizing techniques for involving people with different perspectives and needs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Role clarification and adjustment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Conflict management;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Participatory decision making processes;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Cultural competence and techniques for engaging diverse representation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Assessing community readiness;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Issue identification;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Facilitation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Effective meeting skills;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Network development;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Communication skills;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Asset development strategies and methods.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Core Service: Community Capacity Building**

Providing community members with the opportunities to realize and share their assets, increase their skills and knowledge and strengths to build capacity towards collective action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Capacity Building</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Developing Human Capital &amp; Leadership</strong></td>
<td><strong>I. Developing Human Capital &amp; Leadership</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Coordinate, nurture and support local informal/formal leadership development opportunities for both identified and potential leaders. Leadership development opportunities include but are not limited to building skills, knowledge and abilities in: problem solving; planning; organizing; financial, human resources management; collaborative relations/partnerships; and group process skills;</td>
<td>- Coaching;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Facilitate multiple paths/mechanisms for leadership development to occur;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Facilitate collective approaches to group dynamics;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Seek out ‘hands on’ experiential opportunities to practice learned skills, include mutual peer learning opportunities and build in reflective learning;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ensure volunteer opportunities that identify and build on leadership strengths and capacities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Determining Resource Needs</strong></td>
<td><strong>II. Determining Resource Needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Facilitate community members to be resources to one another;</td>
<td>- Project/program planning and management;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Determine with community members resources required for their undertaking(s) and assist with accessing these – these may be found within the community or external to the community;</td>
<td>- Human resource management;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Advocate for resources required when necessary;</td>
<td>- Financial management;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Meet information needs of the community - conduct needs/capacity assessments with community residents and partners;</td>
<td>- Resource / fund development support and training;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Assist community members to develop basic fundraisings and resource development skills;</td>
<td>- Event organization support and training;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Provide support in the development of presentations and grant proposals;</td>
<td>- Marketing / media promotion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Connect the group with various resources, knowledge, people and stakeholders;</td>
<td>- Basic advocacy skill development;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Share knowledge of processes and institutions to support residents in their planning and organizing;</td>
<td>- Research and information management;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Provide various roles depending on group needs - coordinator, broker, mobilizer, informant around resources/information sharing, informal leadership role, support, organizer, networker, connector, motivator, educator.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### III. Supporting Neighbourhood Connections (Bonding & Bridging Social Capital)

- Work with residents to create deliberate opportunities in establishing a higher level of connectivity in the neighbourhood;
- Identify/assist potential community partners (agencies, formal/informal organizations) to play a role in resident led initiatives;
- Assist community members to identify and establish connections to secure the support of high-level champions and external supporters such as members of the media, local schools, and local businesses, and to develop reciprocal supportive relationships with other communities;
- Identify and establish positive connections between community members and decision-makers, including political representatives and public service providers;
- Assist community members to form new and/or build on existing community associations/platforms/committees with cooperative/participatory decision-making structures and processes;
- Work with community to develop public relations and communications strategies;
- Represent community members and advocate effectively on their behalf to set the stage for residents to advocate for their community.

### IV. Supporting Organizational Development

- Support emerging and established groups with organizational capacity needs;
- Assist community groups with governance issues and board development;
- Provide information and support for incorporation;
- Provide information on funding/fundraising skill requirements and organizational sustainability planning;
- Coach and support organizational board and management skill development.

### III. Supporting Neighbourhood Connections (Bonding & Bridging Social Capital)

- Group processes, group dynamics;
- Facilitation;
- Conflict management;
- Media knowledge;
- Public speaking and presentations;
- Resident driven action planning techniques;
- Communication skills;
- Network building, relationship building and trust building;
- Collaboration & partnership development.

### IV. Supporting Organizational Development

- Organizational assessments;
- Board and management development;
- Fundraising and sustainability planning;
- Coaching;
- Facilitation;
- Organizational planning.
**Core Service: Empowerment (Collective Efficacy) & Mobilization**

Supporting and mentoring community members to create and pursue a shared community action plan that addresses identified issue(s), articulates and identifies the steps/resources necessary to achieve the desired result.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empowerment (Collective Efficacy) &amp; Mobilization</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Empowerment: Fostering and Supporting Neighbourhood Efforts</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Facilitate a process and understanding among community members that they do have influence and the collective power to affect change;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Identify opportunities to support residents to grow, build confidence and take on leadership roles;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work to involve community residents in decision making that impacts them and supports them to have a voice in issues affecting their lives;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support inclusive and collective CD approaches/practice;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Provide mentoring/ coaching and support to community groups planning community change efforts. Allow for small tangible outcomes and celebrate/acknowledge often;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote and support effective relationships between communities and public bodies;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work with citizens to navigate The City of Calgary departments as required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Mobilization: Facilitating Community Action</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support community leaders to work together in inclusive, mutually-supportive and constructive ways;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clarify/ manage expectations as well as negotiate/ balance different ideas and perspectives;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote group functioning, democratic processes, strategic planning and facilitation;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide flexible leadership that leads from behind by providing knowledge, direction and guidance;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop partnership with others that will assist in the community work;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Link and connect residents with different systems to enhance partnership efforts towards desired change;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bridge and link with internal and external stakeholders to mobilize resources – agencies, other levels of government and/or municipal government departments;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assist community members to complete any background research and documentation required to pursue community action.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I. Empowerment

- Facilitation;
- Leadership development and support;
- Mentoring / coaching;
- Project/program management;
- Community organizing approaches;
- System navigation;
- Inclusive practice techniques for diverse representation.

II. Mobilization

- Networking;
- Partnership development;
- Accessing and understanding research;
- Strategic planning;
- Facilitation;
- Conflict management;
- Marketing, promotional and communication planning;
- Democratic decision making;
- Action planning.
III. Supporting Community Advocacy
- Understand and use models of advocacy that are inclusive and support the empowerment of communities;
- Inform/educate community members on how public bodies are regulated and managed;
- Encourage and support public bodies to build effective relationships with community residents;
- Support community advocacy, community action and change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Supporting Community Advocacy</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Communication skills;</td>
<td>- Communication skills;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Understanding and applying different types and models of advocacy;</td>
<td>- Understanding and applying different types and models of advocacy;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Community action planning;</td>
<td>- Community action planning;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- System navigation;</td>
<td>- System navigation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Policy and legislative processes;</td>
<td>- Policy and legislative processes;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Relationship building;</td>
<td>- Relationship building;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Resident driven media engagement.</td>
<td>- Resident driven media engagement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core Service: Action & Results
Supporting and mentoring community members to implement the action plan based on the identified need(s) and evaluate/learn from the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action &amp; Results</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Moving Planned Activities to Action</td>
<td>I. Moving Planned Activities to Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Assist and provide support to residents in the on-going organization of the initiative;</td>
<td>▪ Participatory action research knowledge and skills;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Provide technical expertise as required for collective action, such as a petition or letter-writing campaigns;</td>
<td>▪ Project/program implementation and management;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Work with residents in securing funding/resources as required;</td>
<td>▪ System navigation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Provide policy support – to inform/advocate for policy and systems changes;</td>
<td>▪ Collective action techniques;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Support community members to effectively implement the community development plan;</td>
<td>▪ Organizational development skills;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Guide residents through transitions and leadership changes;</td>
<td>▪ Knowledge of policy and legislative processes;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Identify and secure connections/links/meetings with individuals who are responsible for making decisions about the identified community issue (e.g., elected officials, other City of Calgary departments, other levels of government);</td>
<td>▪ Coaching / mentoring;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Utilize inclusive/ participatory techniques to negotiate, agree, review / evaluate common objectives and planning to achieve shared goals;</td>
<td>▪ Supervision/volunteer management skills;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Monitor to ensure residents are the leaders in identifying, planning and taking action.</td>
<td>▪ Communication skills/public speaking;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Evaluation & Reflection: Supporting Community Learning From Shared Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Evaluation &amp; Reflection</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Celebrate community successes and acknowledge residents/partners throughout the process;</td>
<td>▪ Monitoring and evaluation - methods and practices – in particular participatory and collective evaluation and monitoring;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Use reflective, participatory evaluation methods for encouraging learning from diverse experiences, perspectives and practice;</td>
<td>▪ Report writing, accountability reporting;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Monitor and report on community improvements, thereby developing opportunities for learning among community members;</td>
<td>▪ Sustainable leadership development;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Share results to inform future community actions as well as inform social, political and other systems including other City of Calgary departments.</td>
<td>▪ Multi-media use;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Budgeting and financial reporting;</td>
<td>▪ Reflective practice processes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Development
Theory of Change

June 2011
The idea of community development has at its core the fundamental principles of social justice, defined in the *Budapest Declaration: Building European Civil Society Through Community Development* to include human rights, social inclusion, and equality and respect for diversity.1 “Community” may refer to a geographical community or a community of interest, identity, or affinity. Community development is premised on the assumption that “communities can be effective agents for change by influencing policies and practices that affect their quality of life, and that, when people are given the opportunity to work out their own problems, they will find solutions that will have a more lasting effect than when they are not involved in such problem-solving.”2 In its broadest sense, it is a way of strengthening democracy and civil society by ensuring that communities’ perspectives and actions are reflected in social, economic and environmental policy.3

While definitions of community development are legion, all focus on the process of bringing community members together to achieve a specific common goal, usually related to improving their quality of life. The literature is very clear that community development must be initiated and undertaken by community members.4 This is the key feature distinguishing community development from social programming approaches to community change: “Social programming approaches are organized around established institutions or service delivery systems and are controlled by the institutional or system heads. Although community members may be offered opportunities to participate on advisory councils, they generally have little control of the resources or the decision-making process.”5

Most descriptive and directional papers comment that, while some “quick wins” might be achieved through community development within a year or two, genuine, sustained development can take a decade, and for very comprehensive initiatives, sometimes even longer, depending on the pre-existing capacity of the community.6

It is also noted in the literature that, over the past several decades, the terms “community” and “community development” have been used somewhat ubiquitously, sometimes as a “spray-on additive,”7 in the context of a disparate range of activities that take place at the community level, whether or not such activities feature any sense of community ownership or reflect the core values of social justice.8
To ensure clarity of meaning and purpose within, this document combines two complementary and widely-used definitions of community development, as follows:

*Community development is a deliberate, democratic, developmental activity (i.e., a planned intervention) undertaken by an existing social or geographic grouping of people to improve their collective economic, social, cultural, and/or environmental situation.*

In addition, guided by The City of Calgary’s Social Sustainability Framework and Family Community Support Services (FCSS) 10-year priorities for investment—strong neighbourhoods and social inclusion—the focus for community development work within the Community & Social Development Program is at the neighbourhood level. In other words, work with communities of interest or affinity will be undertaken as one component of an overall, intentional process to strengthen a particular neighbourhood, ideally one with a high poverty level (26% - 39%), whether or not it has been identified by FCSS as a focus neighbourhood.

**The key components of a community development process**

It should be stressed from the outset that there is no single, “best” community development process. Among the many thousands of articles on community development in the published and “grey” literature bases, very few conceptualize the process in precisely the same way. The terminology used to describe the components and stages often differs, and the elements of each component can vary. For example, in this document, community capacity is defined to include five dimensions, whereas some researchers include up to 12 dimensions and others categorize some aspects of capacity as stand-alone components. Such variations are often attributable to the ultimate objective of the community development initiative described in an article. For example, the precise types of capacities required to economically revitalize a community may differ slightly from those required to improve the physical or environmental landscape, or to improve the physical health of community members. As another example, in this document, community mobilization is preceded by several other steps, including the engagement of community members and building a strong participant base, and building the capacity of those individuals, individually and collectively, to move forward. In some of the literature, community members have or are assumed to have sufficient skills and interests to immediately mobilize for change.

The following diagram provides a model of the community development process representing the key areas of agreement in the literature in the simplest form possible. Each of these components is described in more detail below. Readers with a keen interest in diverse and more complex models and conceptualizations of community development are encouraged to explore the bibliography at the end of this document.
Steps 1 and 2: Engagement and participation

Evaluations of community development initiatives confirm that early and sustained participation by community members is needed to bring about a sense of “ownership” among community members which is, in turn, crucial to the subsequent mobilization of members and the resolution of issues. There are several definitions of “community participation,” all of which essentially identify “a process along a continuum that enables communities to maximize their potential and progress from individual action to collective social and political change.” It is recognized that community participation may also be considered to be a short-term outcome along the pathway to social change. Community participation is also essential to and a vehicle for building community capacity, as discussed below.
Community participation is “the social process of taking part (voluntarily) in formal or informal activities, programs and/or discussions to bring about a planned change or improvement in community life, services and/or resources.”

Bracht, 1990

Community engagement refers to members participating in a meaningful way, as an active part of doing and being in the community. It may also include sense of belonging to the community and a commitment to work alongside others to achieve goals.

Tamarack Institute

People’s time and trust aren’t engaged by mere talk, no matter how friendly. The activities produce the social network, not the other way around.

LISC

Borrowing from the literature, in this document “community participation” is defined as “the social process of taking part (voluntarily) in formal or informal activities, programs and/or discussions to bring about a planned change or improvement in community life, services and/or resources.”

Examples of indicators of community participation include a strong participant base with broad representation (measured, for example, by the amount and duration of participation by individual members, diversity of the members participating, and so on), leadership by members of the community (rather than outside agents), and commitment from members who see themselves as stakeholders in the collective well-being of the group (degree of ownership) and the willingness of these members to participate actively in that role.

In most communities, participation is preceded and reinforced by thoughtful efforts to engage community members, particularly in low-capacity communities that are new to the community development process. For the most part, engagement begins with community members identifying one or more issues that require redress but, in some cases, outside help is required to move community members to the point where they are able to come together to clearly identify and articulate the issues, and to set the stage for community empowerment and mobilization, as discussed below. This document borrows from the Tamarack Institute and defines “community engagement” as “members participating in a meaningful way. In some cases, it may not specifically indicate that the community member was engaged in decision-making, but that they were an active part of doing and being in the community.”

Common early engagement strategies include involving community members in a community mapping or self-assessment process, surveying members about their needs and ideas, and organizing members to engage in small, achievable projects. While engagement strategies may necessarily include “soft” initiatives to increase members’ identification with their community or build social capital among members, which is important, research indicates that genuine engagement is spurred primarily by pursuing concrete projects. As pointed out by the U.S. Local Initiatives Support Corporation, “[t]he semantics of ‘community building’ can sometimes give the impression that the task is mostly personal, involving discussions and social gatherings in which people supposedly get to know and trust one another. In reality, comprehensive community initiatives generally ‘build community’ by pursuing concrete projects — anti-crime projects, graffiti removal, policy advocacy, retail promotion, and so on. People’s time and trust aren’t long engaged by mere talk, no matter how friendly. The activities produce the social network, not the other way around.”
The importance of “quick wins” is confirmed by research. Community members are not ready for action until they believe that change is possible. While it is unclear at this point whether early successes can be leveraged to generate more extensive community mobilization and policy change, they have been demonstrated to increase short-term participation and mobilization, along with sense of community and social capital. For example, some research has shown that community garden projects have increased sense of community, social capital, and positive social interactions in the neighbourhoods in which the gardens were located.

Indicators of community engagement are varied and often mirror those for community participation, but may also include measures of sense of belonging and satisfaction.

Steps 3, 4 and 5: Community capacity, empowerment, and mobilization

Three inter-related components of community development, which form the foundation for taking action to achieve results, are “capacity,” “empowerment,” and “mobilization,” with “capacity” reflecting the concrete skills and abilities of community members to shape and bring about change; “empowerment” referring to community members’ collective sense of efficacy, or the belief that they can, in fact, make a difference; and “mobilization” meaning the broad scale involvement of and leadership by community members in carrying out a plan to effect change.

It is generally agreed that the relationships among community capacity, empowerment, and mobilization can be intricate and non-linear. For example, some research has shown that increased participation is associated with increased skill development (one dimension of capacity), and increased skills are associated with increased participation, empowerment, and mobilization.

While all three components are mutually reinforcing, some degree of capacity and empowerment are necessary preconditions of mobilization. In other words, if community members don’t have both the requisite skills and the belief that they can make a difference, they are unlikely to make the effort in the first place.

As noted earlier, some community development models include up to 12 dimensions of community capacity, often depending on the ultimate objective of the community development initiative. For Community & Social Development Program’s purposes, community capacity is defined to include five inter-related dimensions: human capital, leadership, resources, bridging social capital, and bonding social capital/sense of community.
These dimensions are consistent with those identified by the leading researchers in the field although, here, some of the other models’ dimensions have been collapsed into one, or grouped under a different component of the community development process. The simplified model for the Community & Social Development Program also lends itself to more practical application and assessment within the Social Sustainability Framework and the Strong Neighbourhoods priority.

Although there is no single model for community capacity building, it generally involves equipping people with skills and competencies which they would not otherwise have, realizing existing skills and developing potential, promoting increased self-confidence, promoting people’s ability to take responsibility for identifying and meeting their own and other people’s needs, and encouraging people to become more involved in their community and the broader society.

In very high-capacity communities, little or no capacity building is required for members to identify and address common issues: The members simply come together, take action, and solve problems swiftly, capably and repeatedly. But members of high-capacity communities are rarely wrestling with serious social issues; rather, these people already have a political voice and they make frequent use of it to ensure that their position in the social order is maintained. For these reasons, community development is most often required by communities whose members are socially excluded and who may be the least likely to have the capacity to effect change for their common good.

Examples of indicators for each of the five dimensions of community capacity are as follows:

- **For human capital**, examples of indicators include the involvement of members with the ability to solve problems, organizational management skills, human resource management skills, and technical knowledge and skills.
- **For leadership**, examples of indicators include the involvement of members who represent the community with “hard” leadership skills, such as resource mobilization, policy and media advocacy, and data collection and analysis, along with members with “soft” leadership skills, such as conflict resolution and group facilitation, and the ability to engage and to galvanize support from other members.
- **For resources**, examples of indicators include community access to new funding and other supports, along with mobilization of existing resources in new ways (e.g., community members become resources to one another).
For *bridging social capital*, examples of indicators include overlap with networks within and beyond the community, established connections with external decision makers and champions (such as bureaucrats and elected government representatives), and the ability to represent members credibly and to advocate effectively on behalf of the community in the larger political arena.

For *bonding social capital* and *sense of community*, examples include strong inter-personal ties and reciprocity among community members, community members with a high sense of connection to the community and a high level of concern for community issues.

Examples of indicators of community mobilization include the involvement of all groups of people whose interests are affected by the issue, including individuals who experience barriers to participation and individuals in leadership positions have legitimacy in the eyes of those they represent and the authority to make decisions.²⁸

Examples of indicators of community empowerment are less consistent, as they often measure changes on the desired outcomes of the community development process: “Various empowerment outcomes can be encompassed, including political, economic, and psychological empowerment (i.e., enhanced control, influence, and capacity in one or more of these domains). Also, various levels of empowerment can be encompassed, both individual and collective.”²⁹ That being said, increased empowerment of community members can be most simply assessed by indicators of self-efficacy (e.g., belief in success, motivation, sense of agency) and knowledge of the issues and the proposed solutions in conjunction with measures of participation (e.g., mutual support, group identity, increased collective power) in the development and implementation of efforts to effect change.³⁰

**Steps 6 and 7: Activities and results**

Although the activities undertaken in a community development process and the results achieved are clearly the entire point of and, therefore, the most important components of the process, they are also the most difficult to succinctly summarize, as the activities amount to execution of a clear and feasible plan to effect change and bring about a specific outcome beyond the enhancement of community capacity. That being said, generic activities that are likely to be undertaken in any process include, for example, writing or compiling background documentation on the issue, creating a written case for support for dissemination publicly or to policy makers (e.g., governments), lobbying, and public outreach and education.

At the neighbourhood level, the ultimate goal of community development is to improve one or more of the components of strong neighbourhoods: social inclusion and cohesion; built and natural environment; amenities, programs, and services; and economic development. Clearly, a wide range of community development initiatives, from small to very comprehensive, could be undertaken to strengthen one or more of these four components, depending on the will and capacity of community members.
## Community development process summary table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7 Steps</th>
<th>Examples of what would be developing/happening in the community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 7. Results | • Improvements in one or more of the measurable components of strong neighbourhoods: social inclusion; built and natural environment; amenities, programs and services; and economic development  
  • E.g.; changes in service delivery or coordination, training, funding; changes in community conditions (economic well-being, educational opportunities, reduced racism); new or modified policies or legislation to reflect desired changes where appropriate |
| 6. Activities/self-advocacy to effect change | • Identifying the issue, summarizing the research/consultations with key leaders, reviewing the existing policies and programs  
  • Delineating priorities, options, and alternatives for action  
  • Setting out the agenda for change, undertaking change efforts, plan for monitoring progress and determining results |
| 5. Mobilization | Increased numbers of community members:  
  • involved in community organizing, coalition development  
  • organizing/attending/presenting at meetings  
  • reaching out beyond the community, e.g., participating in or represented on community and organization boards, councils, associations (e.g., school, sport, neighbourhood), wherever support for change can be obtained |
| 4. Empowerment (collective efficacy) | • The process of gaining influence over conditions that matter to people who share neighbourhoods, workplaces, experiences, or concerns PLUS  
  • The belief that members have the power to effect change |
| 3. Capacity building: 5 dimensions | **Human capital**  
  • Ability to solve problems  
  • Organizational management skills  
  • Technical knowledge and skills  
  • Financial and human resource management  
  **Leadership**  
  Skills (hard)  
  • data collection/analysis  
  • problem solving  
  • program planning  
  • resource mobilization  
  • policy and media advocacy  
  Skills (soft)  
  • group process, facilitation and conflict resolution skills  
  • member engagement and support  
  • responsive and accessible style participation from a diverse network of community participants  
  • sharing of information and resources by participants and organizations  
  • inclusion of formal and informal leaders and cultivate the development of new leaders  
  **Resources**  
  • Existing assets mobilized in new ways to achieve movement in a project  
  • Better utilization of internal and external resources  
  • Participants become resources to each other  
  • Improved grant applications and increased numbers from communities  
  • Attract new money  
  **Bridging social capital/networks/political ties and champions**  
  • Reciprocal links/mutual help with other groups  
  • Frequent supportive interactions  
  • Overlap with other networks within the community  
  • The ability to form new associations  
  • Cooperative decision-making processes  
  • Ability to represent members credibly and advocate effectively on their behalf in larger political arenas  
  **Bonding social capital/sense of community/cohesion among members**  
  • High level of concern for community issues  
  • Respect, generosity, and service to others  
  • Sense of connection with the place and people  
  • Fulfillment of needs through membership |
| 2. Participation | • Strong participant base with broad representation  
  • Commitment from members who see themselves as stakeholders in the collective well-being of the group and the willingness of these members to participate actively in that role |
| 1. Engagement | **STARTING POINT**  
  A process where community members come together to identify issue(s) and determine priorities |
Aligning the current CSW activities with the new CD model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current CSW activities (the 5 “bubbles”)</th>
<th>Where these activities occur in the new model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Creating opportunities for dialogue</td>
<td>The CSW may be called upon to create or facilitate opportunities dialogue from Step 1, Engagement to Step 4, Empowerment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Community assessment and planning</td>
<td>The CSW may be called upon to facilitate and support community assessment and planning in Steps 1 &amp; 2, Engagement and Participation. Note that assessment and planning can also contribute to Step 3, Capacity Building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community mobilization and planning</td>
<td>In the new model, “community mobilization” (Step 5) is something the community does, and the CSW can support, but it is not a CSW activity per se.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Planning” (extrapolated from above)</td>
<td>As a CSW activity, planning would occur with respect to identification of where and how Community &amp; Neighbourhood Services (CNS) resources should be directed. Otherwise, planning is something the community does from Step 1, Engagement to Step 6, Activities, and the CSW can support, but it is not a CSW activity per se.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Community initiatives</td>
<td>CSWs may spearhead basic initiatives to kick off a CD process and lay the foundation for Step 1, Engagement and Step 2, Participation. Otherwise, community initiatives are something the community does, mostly in Step 6, Activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Advocacy</td>
<td>The current description of advocacy as outlined in the CNS Advocacy Policy (2009) is consistent with Step 3, Capacity building, Step 4, Empowerment, and Step 6, Activities/self-advocacy: Empowering individuals and groups is a primary strategy for working towards desired changes. CNS staff will facilitate, through the promotion of self-advocacy, citizens to empower themselves and to act on their own behalf to gain greater control, power and ownership over all aspects of their lives and environment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENDNOTES


One compilation of engagement indicators used by 12 different initiatives is provided by The Tamarack Institute in Tamarack, An Institute For Community Engagement. nd. Approaches to Measuring More Community Engagement. (Toronto, ON: Tamarack Institute).


See, for example, Communities Scotland. nd. National Standards for Community Engagement. (Edinburgh, SC: Scottish Executive, Scottish Government).


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