Ending Homelessness in Northwest Michigan

NWCEH will work collaboratively to end homelessness by addressing housing issues through a community-based process that develops a comprehensive, coordinated continuum of care to individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in the community it serves.

NORTHWEST MICHIGAN COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

Our purpose is to ensure individuals and families have access to safe, decent, affordable housing and support services designed to help them become integrated socially and economically into their communities.

We strive to ensure the following conditions are met, as we believe they are critical for authentic systems change:

Practicing from a **COMMON AGENDA**

Adhering to a **SHARED MEASUREMENT SYSTEM**

Fostering **MUTUALLY REINFORCING ACTIVITIES**

Providing **CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION**

Having solid **BACKBONE SUPPORT**

END HOMELESSNESS

- Youth and Young Adult
- Families
- Veterans
- Survivors of Domestic Violence
- Chronic

Keep these questions in mind

Why aren't we having the collective impact we desire despite all the efforts we've made?

Despite our progress, why have we struggled to sustain/expand meaningful collaboration?

What if all providers and agencies are **acting like one** – sharing info. and resources and coordinating intensively with each other on a timely and regular basis

Data

PEOPLE HOMELESS AND ON BY NAME LIST IN EACH COUNTY/LWG

PEOPLE HOUSED FROM BY NAME LIST IN EACH COUNTY/LWG

LENGTH OF TIME HOMELESS

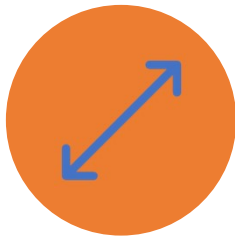# RETURNING TO HOMELESSNESS FROM PROGRAMS

PEOPLE BEING DIVERTED FROM HOMELESSNESS

MORE STATS FROM CALL CENTER: WHO/WHAT/WHERE? IF WE DON'T GO TO OUTREACH/NAVIGATION, WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM?

Themes from Community Surveys

PEOPLE HAVE A DESIRE TO ENGAGE ON A **DEEPER MORE SYSTEMIC LEVEL** BEYOND JUST "QUICK FIXES" OR TEMPORARY SOLUTIONS. THERE IS AN EAGERNESS TO HAVE BIGGER CONVERSATIONS (YOUTH SPECIFIC).

WE SEEM TO HAVE SOME COMMITTEES WITHIN THE COALITION, BUT THEY **DON'T REALLY REPORT BACK ON WHAT IS HAPPENING** AROUND THEIR WORK. HAVING THE LARGER MEETING SERVE AS A PLACE WHERE THESE COMMITTEES REPORT BACK AND UPDATE. COMMITTEE UPDATES RATHER THAN AGENCY UPDATES.

THE **SAME PEOPLE ARE BEING ENGAGED ON A HIGHER-UP LEVEL AND THAT INFORMATION IS NOT TRICKLING DOWN TO ON THE GROUND WORKERS** WHO DIRECTLY INTERACT WITH YOUTH. THOSE ON THE GROUND WORKERS WOULD LIKE MORE EDUCATION.
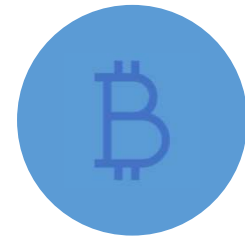
LACK OF UNDERSTANDING AROUND WHAT THE COALITION IS DOING (THIS MIGHT BE SPECIFIC TO STEERING COMMITTEE OR WHEN IT IS AROUND FUNDING).

Questions to Consider

How are we telling the story of the coalition?

Can you tell the story of the Coalition using these themes?

How many of these goals could be met by using a collective impact approach?

Who we are (Marketing, Outreach)

What we are doing and **why** we are doing it (Marketing, Outreach, Data)

When we are doing it (Outreach, Data)

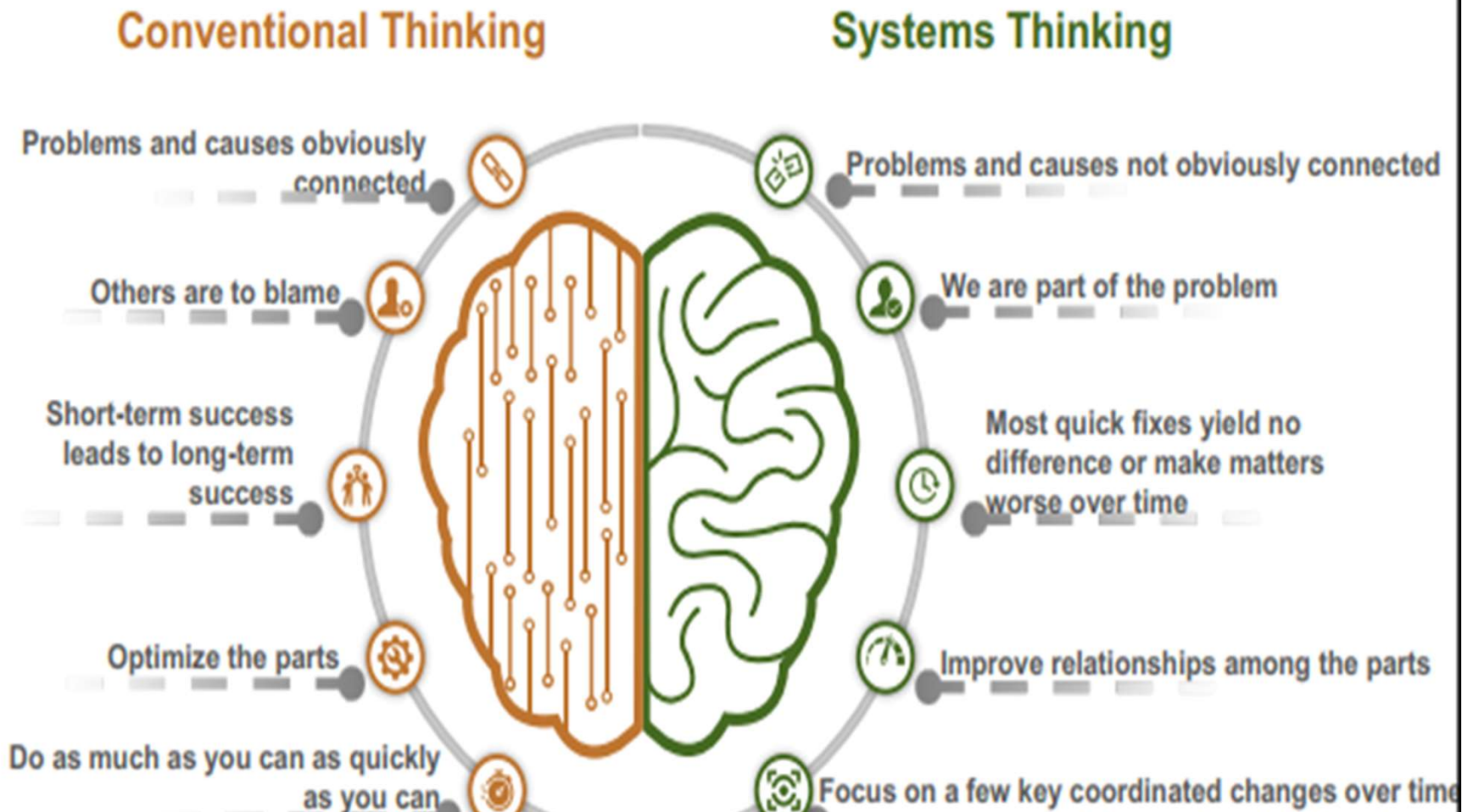**Where** we are doing it (Marketing, Outreach, Data)

How we are doing it (Marketing, Outreach, Data)

Collective Impact

"Collectively" how we will end homelessness

Conventional Thinking vs Systems Thinking

Conventional Thinking

- Problems and causes obviously connected
- Others are to blame
- Short-term success leads to long-term success
- Optimize the parts
- Do as much as you can as quickly as you can

Systems Thinking

- Problems and causes not obviously connected
- We are part of the problem
- Most quick fixes yield no difference or make matters worse over time
- Improve relationships among the parts
- Focus on a few key coordinated changes over time

Types of Problems:

Where does ending homelessness fall?

How do WE not make it feel overwhelming to other people?

SIMPLE: Baking a cake

COMPLICATED: Sending a rocket to the moon

COMPLEX: Raising a child

Collective Impact

Common Agenda — All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.

Shared Measurement — Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.

Mutually Reinforcing Activities — Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through mutually reinforcing plan of action.

Continuous Communication — Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives and appreciate common motivation.

Backbone Support — Creating and managing collective impact requires a dedicated staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies.

Isolated Impact

FUNDERS SELECT INDIVIDUAL GRANTEES

ORGANIZATIONS WORK SEPARATELY. OFTEN ATTEMPT TO ISOLATE A PARTICULAR ORGANIZATION'S IMPACT OR LACK OF

LARGE SCALE CHANGE IS ASSUMED TO DEPENDING ON SCALING ORGANIZATIONS

CORPORATE AND GOVERNMENT SECTORS ARE OFTEN DISCONNECTED FROM FOUNDATIONS AND NON-PROFITS

FUNDERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS UNDERSTAND THAT SOCIAL PROBLEMS - AND THEIR SOLUTIONS – ARISE FROM MULTIPLE INTERACTING FACTORS

CROSS-SECTOR ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT, NONPROFIT, PHILANTHROPIC AND CORPORATE SECTORS AS PARTNERS

ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVELY COORDINATING THEIR ACTIONS AND SHARING LESSONS LEARNED

ALL WORKING TOWARD THE SAME GOAL AND MEASURING THE SAME THINGS
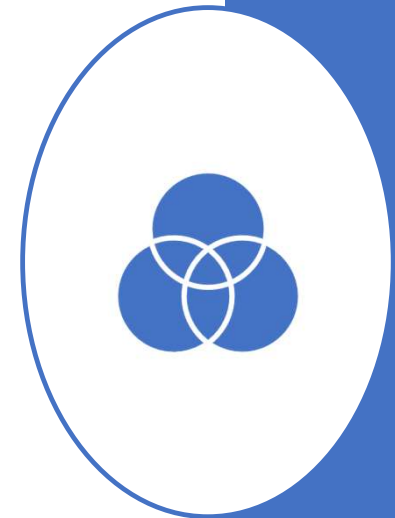
Collective Impact

COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN OUR WORK

Collective Impact recognizes that no single organization is responsible for a major social problem, so no single organization can cure it.

Real life example

Danielle's death in Traverse City

- Blame vs responsibility. Multi-layered: justice system, homelessness system, addiction, mental health, trauma, federal government, community, family, self.

Example of how one community used Collective Impact to work toward ending homelessness

https://www.usich.gov/news/harnessing-the-power-of-collective-impact-to-end-homelessness/

Discussion questions

- What do you see as the benefits to the **community** in taking a collective impact approach?

- What do you see as the benefits to the **coalition** in taking a collective impact approach?

- What do you see as the benefits to the **people** we have the privilege of serving in taking a collective impact approach?

- Deficits in any of these areas?

Criteria and Benchmarks

"Technically" how we will end homelessness

CRITERIA TO END HOMELESSNESS

1. Identification

2. Diversion and Shelter Access

3. Coordinated Entry/Housing Focused Service System

4. Permanent Housing

5. Community Plan

CRITERIA AND BENCHMARKS TO END HOMELESSNESS

- VETERANS
- FAMILY
- YOUTH
- CHRONIC

IDENTIFICATION

The community has identified all ____experiencing homelessness.

- Outreach
- In-reach
- Data sources
- Unsheltered, sheltered, or in transitional housing settings
- The community coordinates a comprehensive set of strategies spanning all connected service systems (Child welfare, justice system, health care, etc.)

DIVERSION & IMMEDIATE SHELTER ACCESS

The community uses diversion and prevention strategies whenever possible, and otherwise provides immediate access to low-barrier shelter services to anyone who needs and wants it.

- Comprehensive diversion
- Coordinated prevention efforts
- Low barrier, immediate shelter access
- All efforts are rooted in achieving housing stability

COORDINATED ENTRY/HOUSING FOCUSED SERVICE SYSTEM

- The community implements coordinated entry processes that include the full array of homeless serving systems and programs and uses assessment tools that are adapted for the population and their circumstances.

- The community has fully embraced a Housing First and low-barrier response across its system and all program types. The community assists populations to move into permanent housing without barrier to entry, using a Housing First response, and is actively implementing alternatives to the criminalization of homelessness.

PERMANENT HOUSING

The community has identified a permanent housing intervention for all people experiencing homelessness.

COMMUNITY PLAN

The community has resources, plans, and system capacity in place to prevent ___ homelessness from occurring and to ensure that individuals do not fall into homelessness again or, if they do, are quickly reconnected to permanent housing.

Discussion question

- Regarding the benchmarks and criteria, what challenges exist that prevent the community from being able to make progress in this area?

Backbone Support and Steering Committee

How we will have the "capacity" to end homelessness

Common Activities of Backbone Support

- Guide vision and strategy
- Support aligned activities
- Establish shared measurement practices
- Build public will
- Advance policy
- Mobilize funding

Common Characteristics of Effective Backbone Leadership

Visionary "In addition to setting the agenda items, she has a very clear vision of where we need to focus and has the ability to drive focus towards those."

Results-Oriented "This is a really results-oriented staff, and they are constantly pushing the community and all of us to not just talk about something, but to act on it."

Collaborative, Relationship Builder "[Her] style is a collaborator, consensus builder, she works very well with partners. We do a good job with making everyone feel like they're important."

Focused, but Adaptive "[There is a] combination of laser focus, a willingness to listen to almost any idea, [and an ability to] cut to the chase and not act on every idea. They are so focused on being sure that whatever is done is focused on the end goal."

Charismatic and Influential Communicator "[She] is extraordinarily articulate and passionate about her work and...she is a true leader in the field."

Politic "Probably a little political savvy, and more of an ability to filter what they say than I have. [He] understands when to listen."

Humble "[He] sees himself as a 'servant-leader'."

Figure 3

Sample Functions, Activities, and Roles for Backbone Staff

	Function	Activities
Executive Director	**Guide Vision and Strategy**	• Build a common understanding of the problem • Serve as a thought leader / standard bearer for the initiative • Ensure common agenda is updated as needed as strategy unfolds
	Advance Policy	• Advocate for an aligned policy agenda • Stay on top of policy developments that impact the effort
	Mobilize Resources	• Mobilize and align public and private resources to support initiative's goals (and the backbone itself)
Facilitator	**Build Community Engagement**	• Create a sense of urgency and articulate a call to action • Support community member engagement activities • Produce and manage communications (e.g., news releases, reports)
	Support Aligned Activities	• Coordinate and facilitate partners' continuous communication and collaboration (e.g., run taskforce meetings) • Recruit and convene partners and key external stakeholders • Seek out opportunities for alignment with other efforts • Ensure taskforces are being data driven
Data Manager	**Establish Shared Measurement Practices**	• Collect, analyze, interpret, and report data • Catalyze or develop shared measurement systems • Provide technical assistance for building partners' data capacity

What is a Steering Committee?

- The Steering Committee is a group comprised of cross-sector community partners representative of the relevant ecosystem that provides strategic direction for the Collective Impact initiative and champions its work. Alternative terms for this group include Advisory Group, Advisory Council, and Leadership Table.

Role of Steering Committee Members

Guidance, Vision, and Oversight

- Develop and refine Common Agenda for change, including problem statement, goal(s), and guiding principles
- Use data to inform strategy development and learning
- Track progress of work using agreed-upon indicators at Steering Committee and working group levels
- Make connections between working groups to ensure coordination and efficiency
- Interact with the backbone entity on strategy, community engagement, and shared measurement

Leadership

- Consider how your individual organization or those in your network can align with the Common Agenda
- Serve as a vocal champion of the collective impact effort in the community

Process

- Participate in-person in regularly scheduled meetings
- Review pre-read materials prior to meetings and come prepared for engaged discussion, active listening, and respectful dialogue
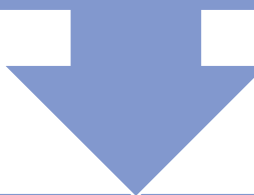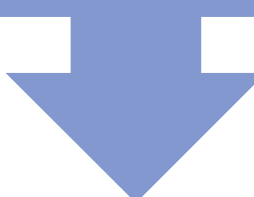- Commit to year-long membership in the Steering Committee

Steering Committee

	Government	Nonprofits	Business	Philanthropy	Existing Collaborations	Target Populations
Steering Committee						
Working Groups						
Champions						

Equity in Decision Making

How do we effectively integrate community voice into institution heavy collective impact efforts?

↓

How do we authentically and meaningfully involve communities who have historically been excluded from decision-making processes?

↓

How do we engage stakeholders in sensitive conversations about race, class, and culture without driving away those who need to sit at the problem-solving table

Discussion questions

- What role do you see the backbone support taking in advancing this work? *specific to each criteria and benchmark*

- Think about your role in either the board/steering committee or within a specific working committee. Do you see yourself in a different role now? Why or why not?
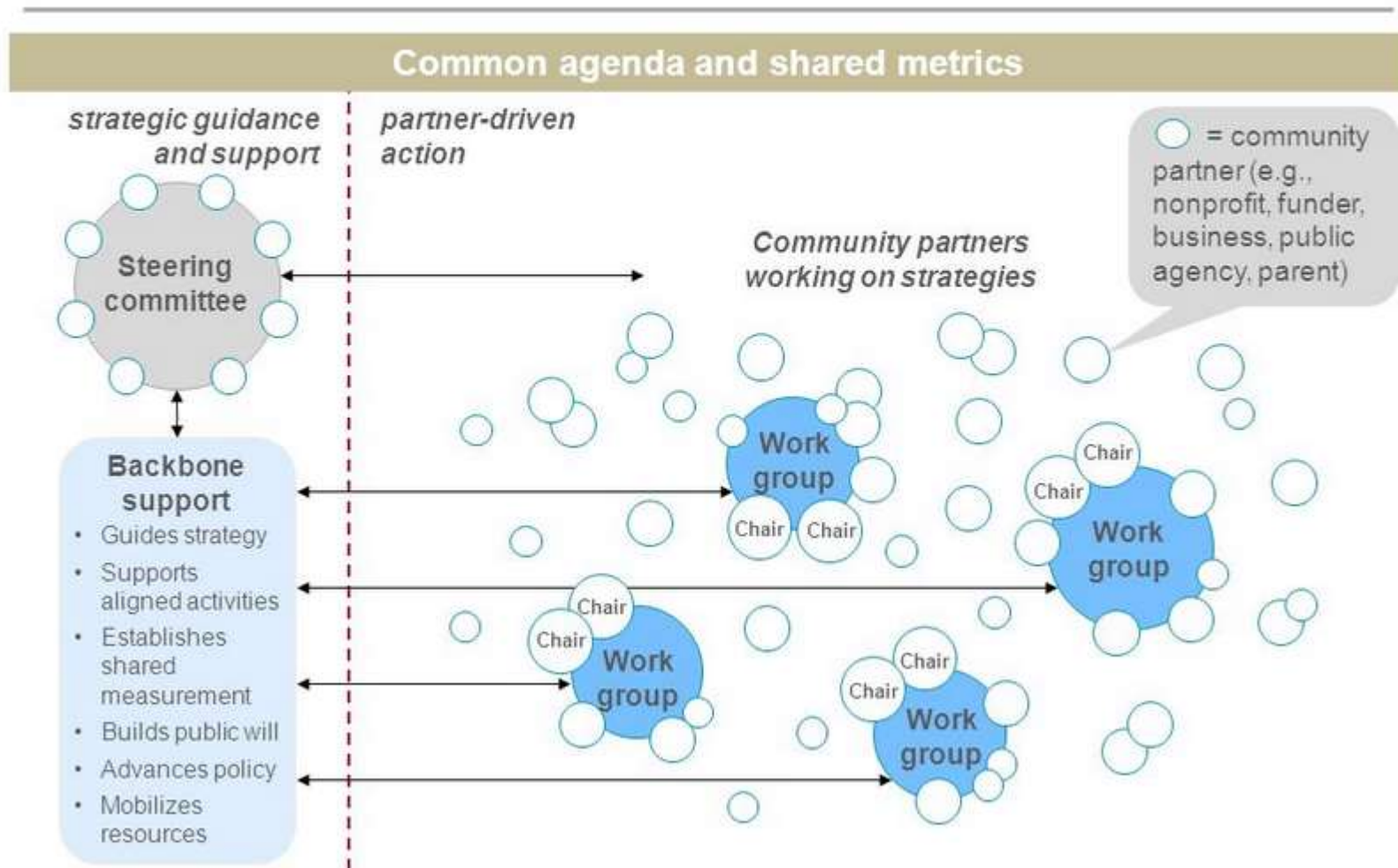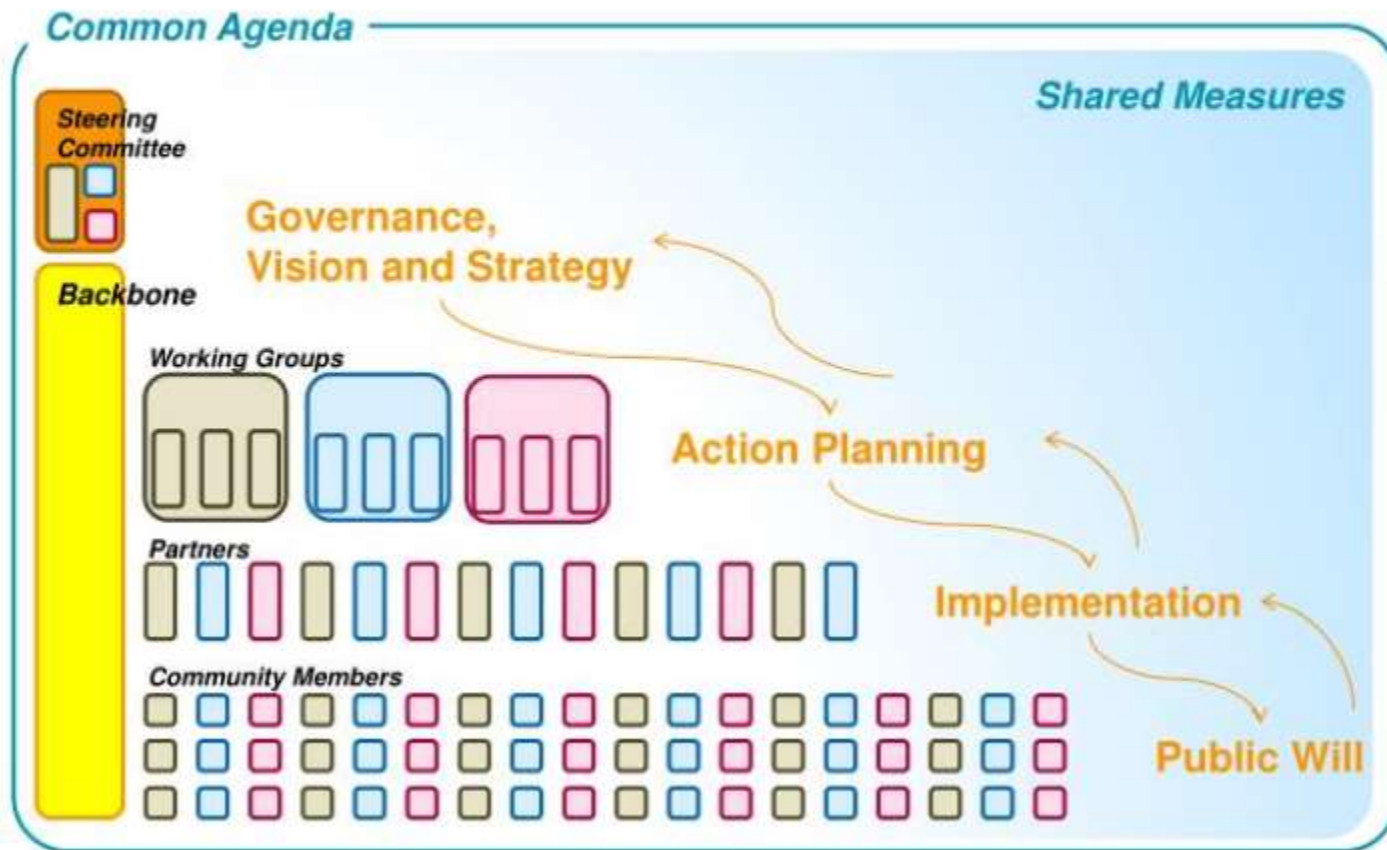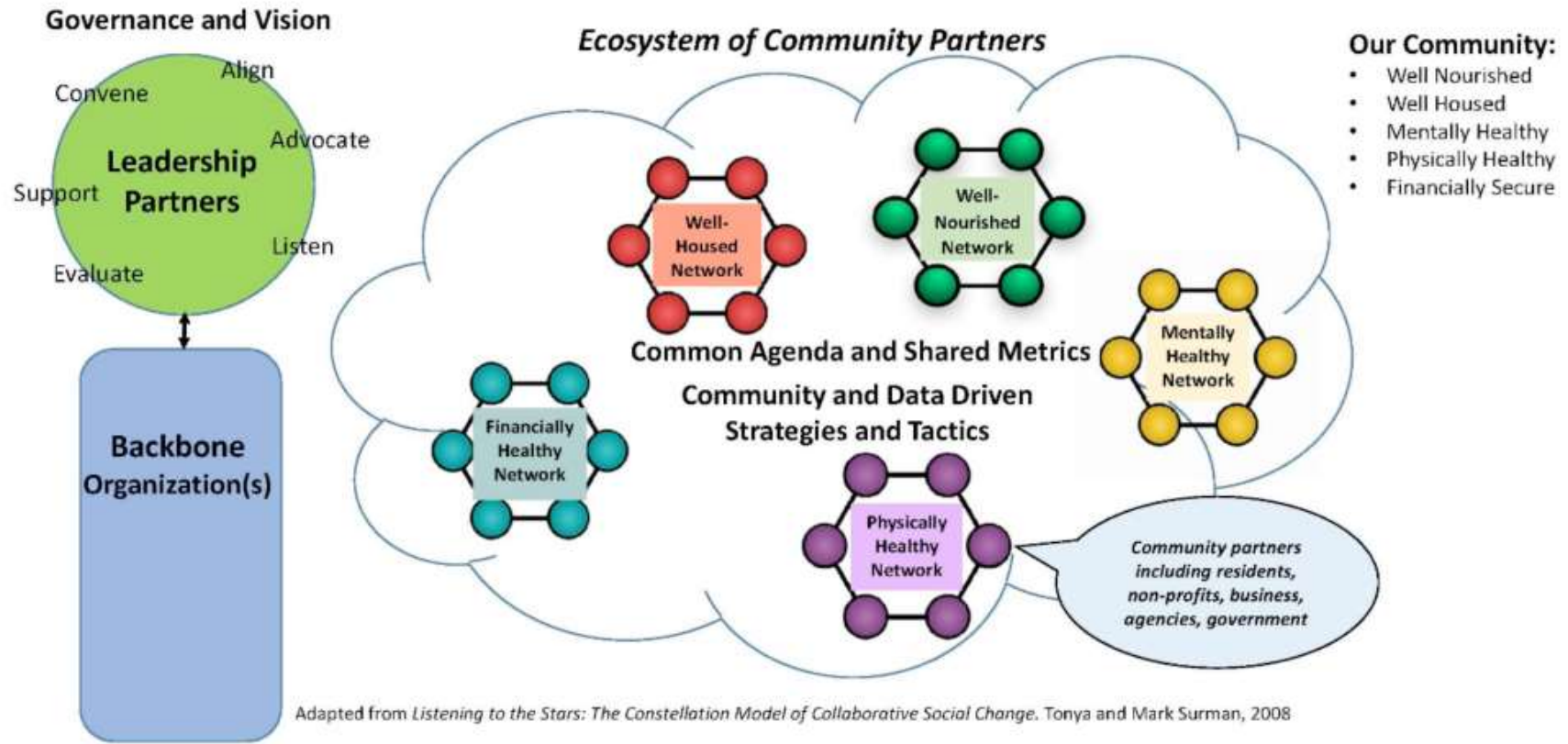
Structure

"Structurally" how we will end homelessness

Collective Impact Is Best Structured with Cascading Levels of Collaboration, with the Backbone Playing a Critical Role

NEK Prosper
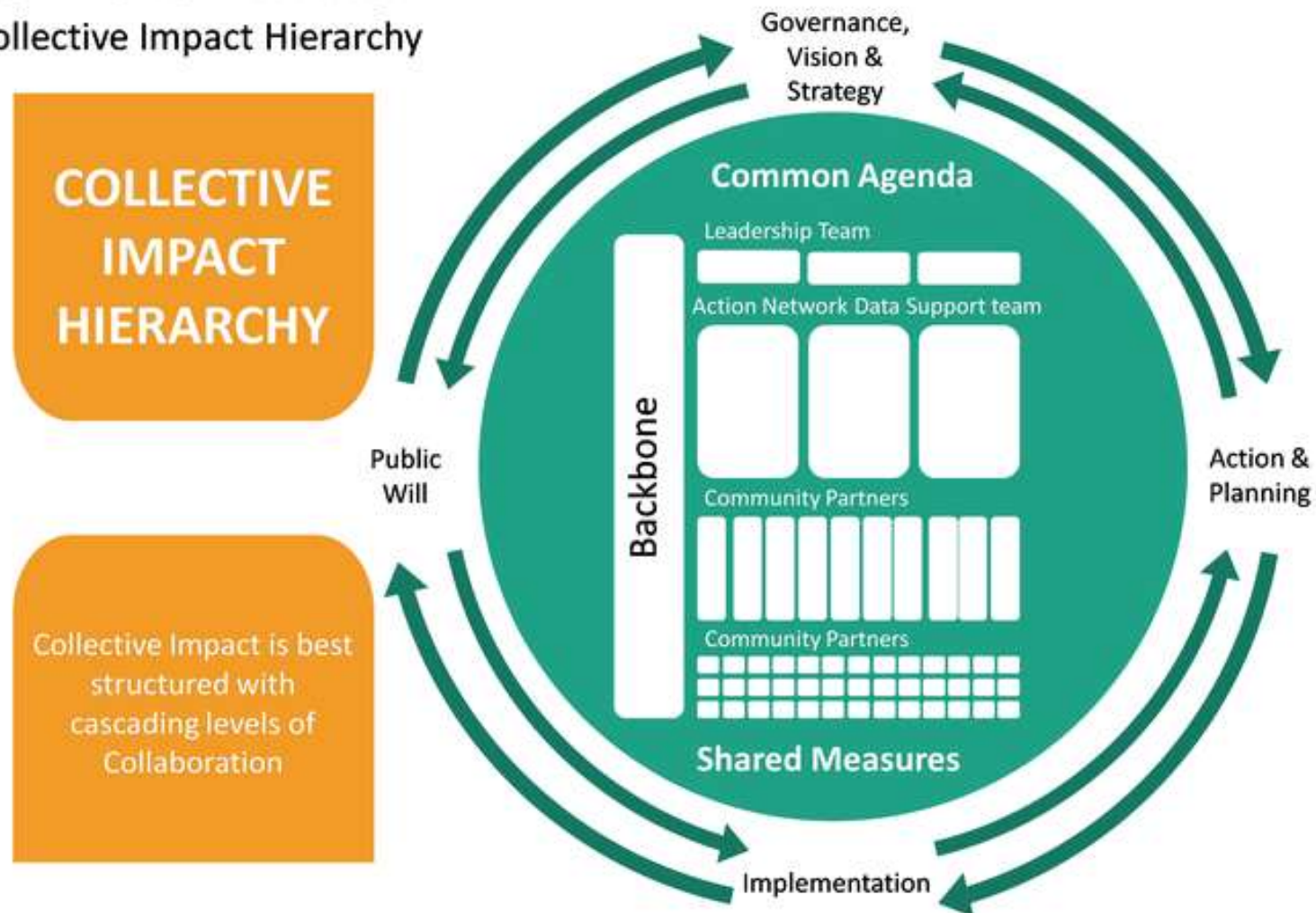Caledonia & So. Essex Accountable Health Community

Adapted from *Listening to the Stars: The Constellation Model of Collaborative Social Change.* Tonya and Mark Surman, 2008

Structure Example 3

Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness

Our purpose is to ensure individuals and families have access to safe, decent, affordable housing and support services designed to help them become integrated socially and economically into their communities. We aim to make homelessness RARE, BRIEF and ONE TIME across the 10 county service region.

Executive Committee
1. Funded Agency 1: Goodwill, Executive Director
2. Funded Agency 2: NMCAA, Executive Director
3. Funded Agency 3: NMSH, Executive Director
4. Slot 4: Housing North, Executive Director
5. Slot 5: Michigan Balance of State CoC, Coordinator

Steering Committee
Membership includes Chairs of each working group/committee listed below and the HCSB Coordinators.

VALUES: Accountability, Collaboration, and Data Driven Decision Making

Backbone Support Role

- Guide vision and strategy
- Support aligned activities
- Establish shared measurement practices
- Build public will
- Advance policy
- Mobilize funding

Backbone Support

Coalition Staff

1. Director, Ashley Halladay-Schmandt

2. Assistant Director, Dave Ransom

3. HMIS System Admin

4. Youth Action Board Chairs

Working Groups: Backbone support (Director or Asst. Director attending each work group meeting) helps guide this work and meets monthly with the group of Chairpersons. Each work group or committee is working toward the Criteria and Benchmarks of ending homelessness.

Working Groups of the NWCEH. Practicing from: common agenda, shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities, providing continuous communication and having solid backbone support.

- Communications / Marketing — Chair
- Innovative Projects — Chair
- Housing Resources — Chair
- Planning and Partnerships: — Chair
- Coordinated Entry — Chair
- Shelter and Diversion — Chair
- Outreach/ Identification — Chair
- Data and Standards