Talitha Consults
Interdisciplinary • Multilingual • People-centered

City of Burlington:
Public Safety & Police Commission Joint Committee
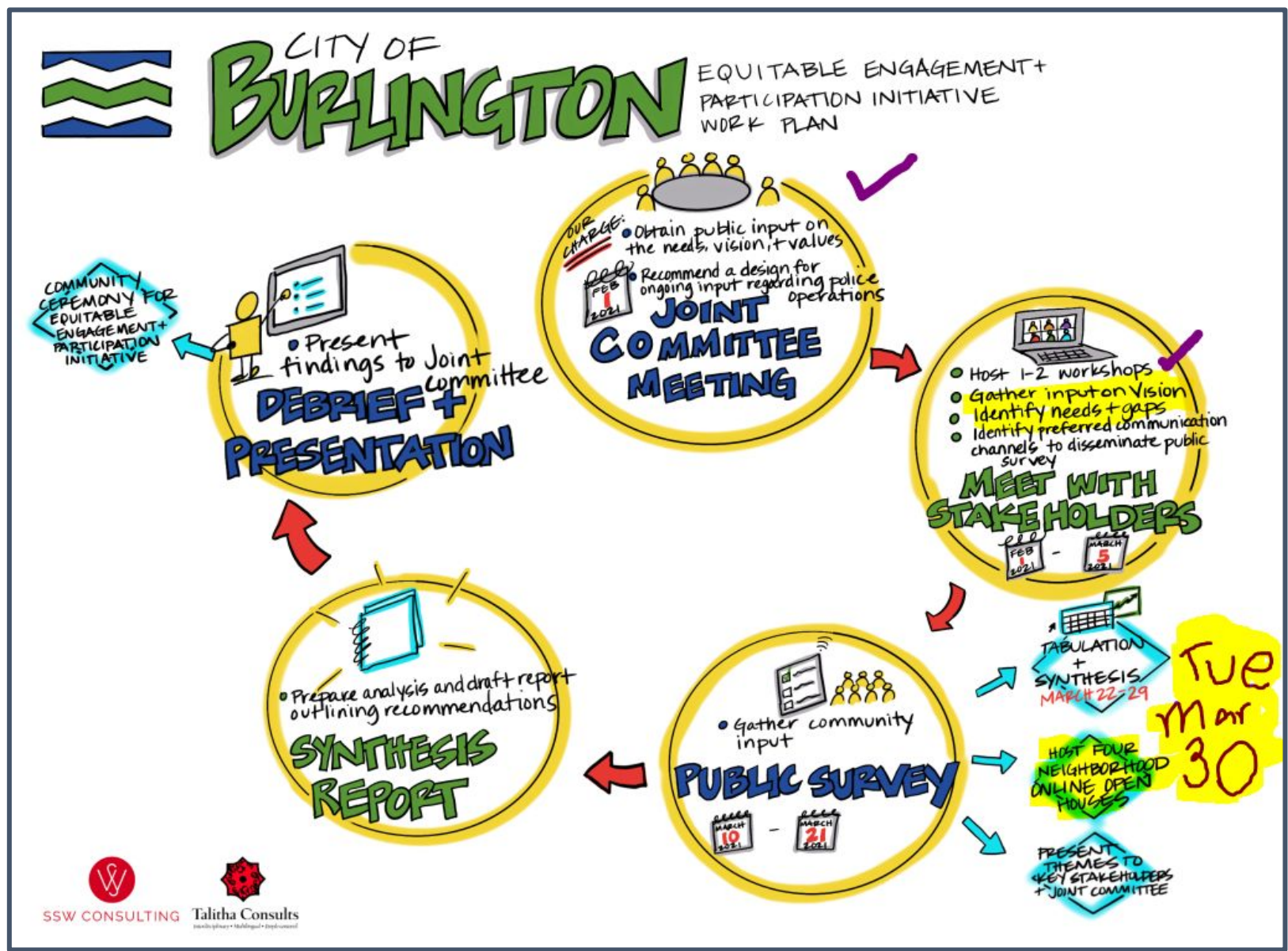
Date: 3/15/2021

PROCESS OVERVIEW

Participating Agencies
Key Takeaways
Summary of Key Learnings
Appendix

Process Overview

Stakeholder Workshop A (Tuesday, February 23, 2021)**:** 15 individuals representing 14 organizations and 1 unaffiliated.

Stakeholder Workshop B (Thursday, February 25, 2021)**:** 12 individuals representing 10 organizations and 1 unaffiliated.

In partnership with Sara Wilson (SSW), Talitha created the following mural link to take notes and illustrate the flow of the workshop and its outputs to the stakeholders. **<mural link DEMO>**

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Stakeholders Represented
(most affiliated to agencies and some not)

Stakeholder Workshop A (2/23/21)

Burlington Community Justice Center (Division of CEDO)
ANEW Place
Greater Burlington YMCA
Vermont Center for Independent Living
Outright Vermont
Turning Point Center of Chittenden County
Education Justice Coalition of Vermont
HOPEWORKS
Steps to End Domestic Violence
Burlington City Council
Food Not Bombs Burlington
Food Not Bombs
Women's Justice & Freedom Initiative
Racial Justice Foundation d/b/a Vermont Racial Justice Alliance
+1 unaffiliated

Stakeholder Workshop B (2/25/21)

Vermont Center for Independent Living
Community Health Centers of Burlington
Howard Center
Spectrum Youth and Family Services (two representatives present)
Boys and Girls Club of Burlington
Fair housing project of CVOEO
Pathways Vermont
Burlington City Council
Burlington City – Police Commissioner
City of Burlington – Racial Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Office
+1 unaffiliated
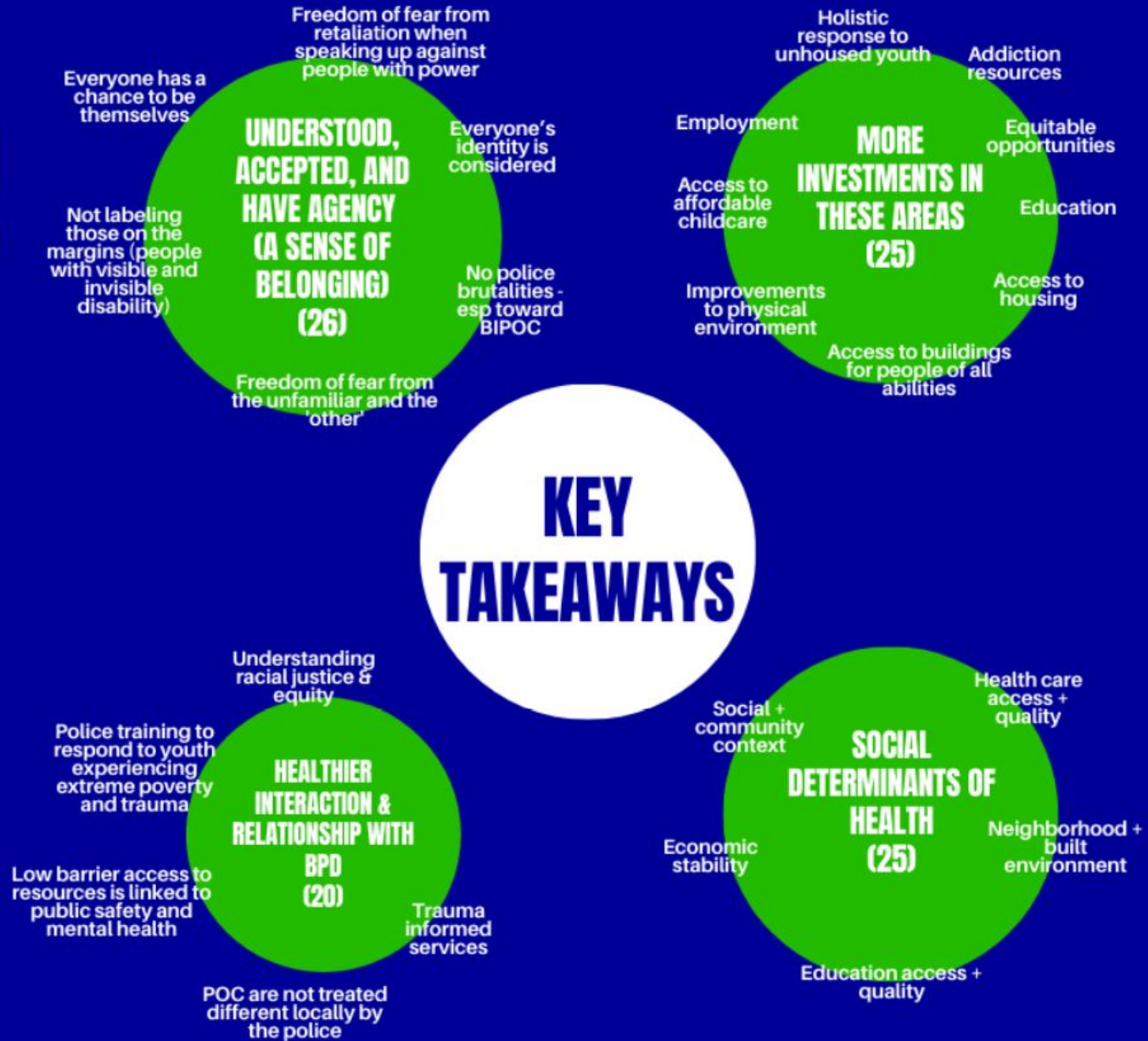
Project Overview
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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Summary of Key Learnings

Appendix

CITY OF BURLINGTON

What does it mean to be a healthy community?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

UNDERSTOOD, ACCEPTED, AND HAVE AGENCY (A SENSE OF BELONGING) (26)

- Freedom of fear from retaliation when speaking up against people with power
- Everyone has a chance to be themselves
- Everyone's identity is considered
- Not labeling those on the margins (people with visible and invisible disability)
- No police brutalities - esp toward BIPOC
- Freedom of fear from the unfamiliar and the 'other'

MORE INVESTMENTS IN THESE AREAS (25)

- Holistic response to unhoused youth
- Addiction resources
- Employment
- Equitable opportunities
- Access to affordable childcare
- Education
- Improvements to physical environment
- Access to housing
- Access to buildings for people of all abilities

HEALTHIER INTERACTION & RELATIONSHIP WITH BPD (20)

- Understanding racial justice & equity
- Police training to respond to youth experiencing extreme poverty and trauma
- Low barrier access to resources is linked to public safety and mental health
- Trauma informed services
- POC are not treated different locally by the police

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH (25)

- Social + community context
- Health care access + quality
- Economic stability
- Neighborhood + built environment
- Education access + quality

Key Takeaways
(Meaning of a **Healthy Community**)

3
2
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1

#	Themes	Frequency
1	Differentiated response to 911 calls	8
2	Eradicating structural racism	7
3	Eradicating systemic social inequity	12
4	Eradication of racial inequity in public health & safety	12
5	Freedom from fear of …	11
6	Healthier interaction & relationship with BPD	20
7	More investments in these areas	25
8	Proactive response to sustainability and climate action	2
9	Social Determinants of Health	25
10	Understood, accepted, and have agency (a sense of belonging)	26

Key Questions Discussed

What does a healthy community mean to you?

What does a safe community mean to you?

What needs are you filling in your community?

What needs need to be filled in the community (unmet needs)?

#1 Core Theme

| 1 | 10 | Understood, accepted and have agency (a sense of belonging) | 26 |

"Freedom of fear from the unfamiliar and the 'other'"

"Everyone has a chance to be themselves"

"Freedom of fear from retaliation when speaking up against people with power"

"No police brutalities - esp toward BIPOC"

"Not labeling those on the margins (people with visible and invisible disability)"

"Everyone's identity is not taken into consideration"

What does it mean to belong?

BELONGING

"Belonging means more than just being seen. Belonging entails having a meaningful voice and the opportunity to participate in the design of social and cultural structures. Belonging means having the right to contribute to, and make demands on, society and political institutions.

Belonging is more than just feeling included. In a legitimate democracy, belonging means that your well-being is considered and your ability to design and give meaning to its structures and institutions is realized."

- john powell

Othering & Belonging Institute
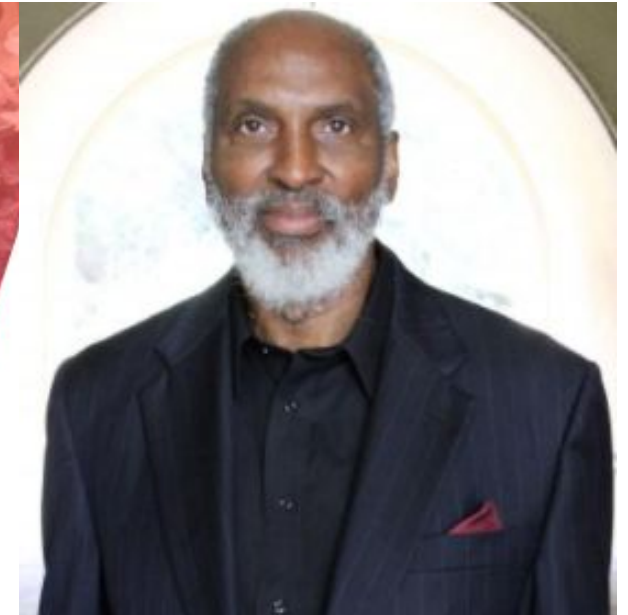
BLUEPRINT FOR BELONGING

Who is Being Othered in these Areas?

OTHERING

Othering is a set of dynamics, processes and structures that engender marginality and persistent inequality across any of the full range of human differences based on group identities. Important distinction: The opposite of "othering" is not "saming."

"We the people" never included all people.

Othering
&Belonging
Institute

BLUEPRINT FOR BELONGING

Health

Access

Services

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#2 Core Themes

| 7 | More investments in these areas | 25 |

"Employment"

"Holistic response to unhoused youth (beyond giving a referral to shelters)"

"Resources for drug addiction"

"Equitable opportunities"

"Access to affordable childcare"

"Education"

"Improve physical environment (housing & walkability)"

"Equal access to physical buildings for people of all abilities"

"Access to housing"

Social Determinants of Health

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

What are social determinants of health?

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.

SDOH can be grouped into 5 domains:

Economic Stability

Education Access and Quality
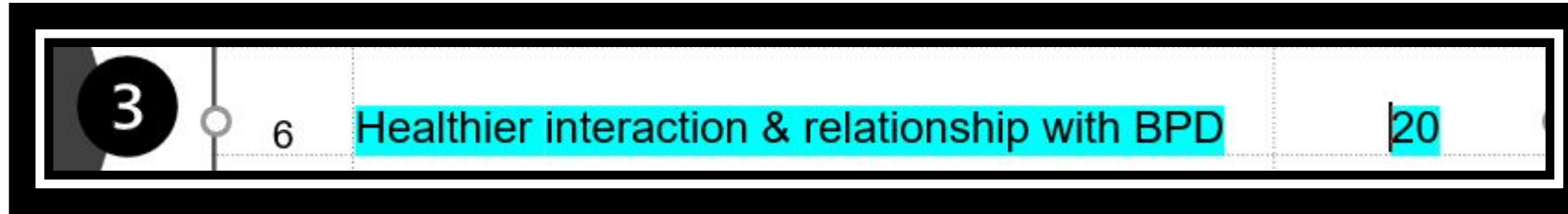
Health Care Access and Quality

Neighborhood and Built Environment

Social and Community Context

#3 Core Theme

| 3 | 6 | Healthier interaction & relationship with BPD | 20 |

"Trauma informed services"

"Police training to respond to youth experiencing extreme poverty and trauma"

"Low barrier access to resources is linked to public safety and mental health"

"In a healthy community, POC are not treated different locally by the police"

"Understanding racial justice & equity"

Breaking:

- Pulling away from other groups in ways that make it easier to tell and believe false stories of "us versus them
- To initiate or foster practices that reinforce othering and dehumanizes a manufactured "them"
- A manufactured or manipulated inter-personal and/or structural response to a perceived "Other"

Bridging:

- Relating to other groups based on deep listening, empathetic space, and recognition of suffering
- Rejects that there is a 'Them' while recognizing our unique differences
- A strategic or intentional response to reject Othering

Stories and Narrative:

- Narratives of shared humanity, optimism, opportunity, and inclusion can help counteract the fear and angry populism we see today—both of which have grown out of widespread "breaking" stories that warn of a dark and scary future or an untruthful and sentimental historical past.

Othering
& Belonging
Institute

Code 10: Understood, Accepted, and Have Agency (a sense of belonging)

"Allow space to vulnerable people. This can be applied to any circumstance. People in crisis should be allowed to experience vulnerability and have the support to move through it.

"Vermont is overwhelmingly white."

"I feel safe because of my multiracial identity"

"People with mental health issues are seen as 'unsafe' people."

"Individuals experiencing homelessness experience isolation also with mental health issues – feeling less safe…this group is no monolithic. They are individuals so it [what is needed] depends"

"Working with formerly incarcerated people. The state is looking at new prison construction and that doesn't make me feel safe, that the state is investing money in further incarceration."

"There are disproportionate impacts on marginalized people. Structures in the city need to be addressed. Democratic processes need to be inclusive. Systems and structures that engage people are the same ones that keep people safe and healthy."

"Everyone has a chance to be themselves.

"Kids feel safe and able to be themselves when they are at school"

"They struggle with resources and being understood, being labeled crazy. "

"Exclusion is making people feel unsafe (and it is unhealthy when everyone's identity is not taken into

Code 10: Understood, Accepted, and Have Agency (a sense of belonging)

Code 9: Social & _Racial_ Determinants of Health

POC are treated different locally by the police.. This makes people more distant from each other"

"Understanding the needs of the community"

"Respond to material needs of LGBTQ and disabled community members."

"Friendships – people who really know you and you really know them. Your neighbors are strangers. They know how they really are…messier to work through issues."

"Exclusion is making people feel unsafe (and it is unhealthy when everyone's identity is not taken into consideration)."

"Place where everyone has a home, food security, and basic needs met."

"Equitable opportunities. Access to employment and education. Access as defined by individuals."

"Access to resources, opportunities for interpersonal and community connection."

"Living wages to match the risks people are taking."

"Income stratification is reduced."

"Address high rents and income gaps."

"Access to affordable, high quality childcare. Access is key"

"More resource access: affordable housing, accessible mental health."

Frequency = 25

Code 9: Social & _Racial_ Determinants of Health

"Having support services, not BPD (police), coming out to give mental health support"

"Health services to combat drug addiction"

"Having support services, not BPD (police), coming out to give mental health support"

"Not everyone will go to shelters."

"Place where everyone has a home, food security, and basic needs met."

"Equitable opportunities. Access to employment and education. Access as defined by individuals

"Access to affordable, high quality childcare. Access is key."

"Equity of opportunity. Access to employment, education, home, food, and other security regardless of level of education or employment status."

"Mental health services and inclusive and diverse therapists."

"[Walkability across neighborhoods]Champlain Parkway is not as walkable, bikeable, and lacks access to public transportation. This requires regional coordination"

"Safe Harbor Clinic with Community Health Centers"

"Howard Center - community center in Burlington"

Frequency = 25

"We need other options. Safe community = more options and ritual around harm and crime"

Code 7: More Investment in These Areas

Code 6: Healthier interactions & relationships with BPD

"Understands effects of trauma to the brain across sectors"

"Trauma-informed services"

"More understanding around racial justice and equity…Cops having conversations with people and deescalating situations and giving people space to walk away"

"At-risk and homeless youth have a weary attitude toward law enforcement"

"Kids feel safe and able to be themselves when they are at school"

"De-escalation training for BPD"

"Police training to respond to youth experiencing extreme poverty and trauma"

"Accountability – what does it look like? It takes on different forms, not just punishment.

"More interaction with police outside of the troubled areas,
at community events to form community"

"Address politicians invested in protecting the police, people actively promoting misinformation campaigns."

Frequency =20

Code 6: Healthier interactions & relationships with BPD

Code 4: Eradication of Racial Inequities in Public Health & Safety

"COVID vaccination criteria not reflecting who is infected most."

"Highlighting cracks in the system, especially exacerbated during COVID. Hazard pay."

"Ex: Black therapists or other POC therapists for better representation in mental health services."

"Police officers are protected without consequence and target those who are marginalized."

"Safety and health overlap."

"We need other options. Safe community = more options and ritual around harm and crime."

Frequency = 12

Code 3: Eradicating Systemic Social Inequity

"Social fractures contribute to lack of safety and perpetuate concentration of poverty."

"Working with formerly incarcerated people. The state is looking at new prison construction and that doesn't make me feel safe, that the state is investing money in further incarceration."

"Use systems of power against people who do not fit in the systems."

"Increase engagement, not arrests."

"We need other options. Safe community = more options and ritual around harm and crime."

Frequency = 12

Code 1: Differentiated 911 calls

"Having support services, not BPD (police), coming out to give mental health support"

"Low barrier access to resources is linked to public safety and mental health"

"Having support services, not BPD (police), coming out to give mental health support."

"Mental health professionals and resources should be called upon in lieu of the police."

"Cops having conversations with people and deescalating situations and giving people space to walk away."

"People with mental health issues are seen as 'unsafe' people."

"Individuals experiencing homelessness experience isolation also with mental health issues – feeling less safe."

Frequency = 9

Code 2: Eradicating Structural Racism

"Structures in the city need to be addressed."

"Safe means no surveillance of Black and POC neighborhoods."

"Surveillance is predominantly used against POC and low-income communities which leads to faulty, disproportionate arrests."

"Current laws reinforce structures that perpetuate harm, not safety."

"Address systems targeting marginalized BIPOC communities....Democratic processes need to be inclusive. Systems and structures that engage people are the same ones that keep people safe and healthy."

Frequency = 8

Code 5: Freedom From Fear of ...

"Communities free from violence and engaged in anti-violence work."

"Police officers are protected without consequence and target those who are marginalized."

"Lawyers, medical professionals, etc. require liability insurance and police aren't required to have this which doesn't promote accountability."

"We need other options. Safe community = more options and ritual around harm and crime."

"There are disproportionate impacts on marginalized people."

"Systems and structures that engage people are the same ones that keep people safe and healthy."
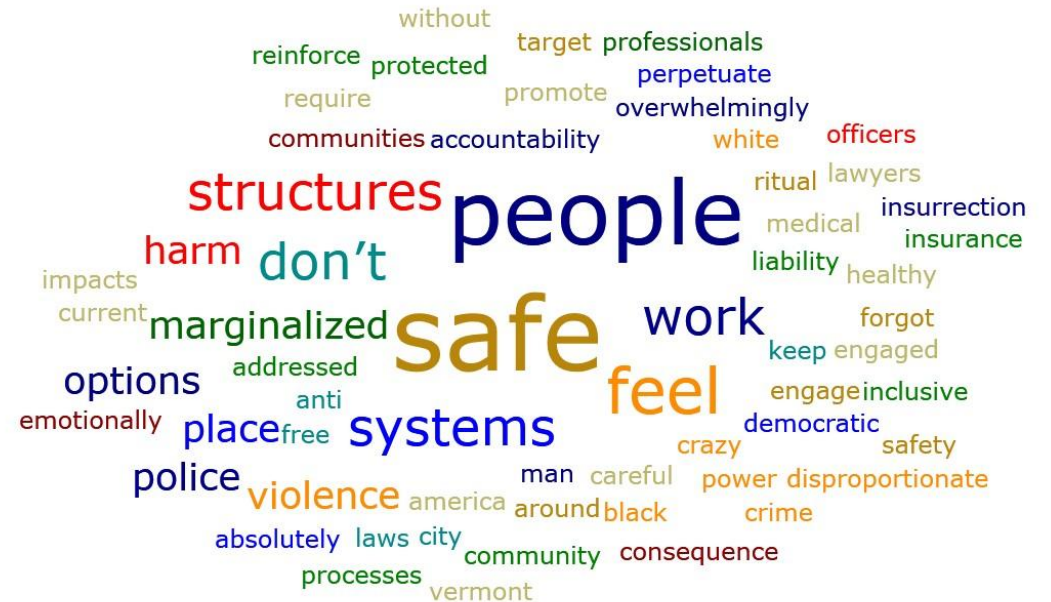
Frequency = 7

Code 8: Proactive Response to Sustainability and Climate Action

"Proactive response to sustainability and climate action."

"Address disproportionate effects of climate change on BIPOC people."

Frequency = 2

Key Takeaways

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Key Takeaways and Thoughts

"I am because we are"

Ubuntu

A person is a person through relationship with other people. This is an affirmation of one's humanity through recognition of an 'other' in his or her uniqueness and difference. Humanity is a quality we owe to each other. We create each other and need to sustain this otherness creation. And if we belong to each other, we participate in our creations: we are because you are, and since you are, definitely I am.
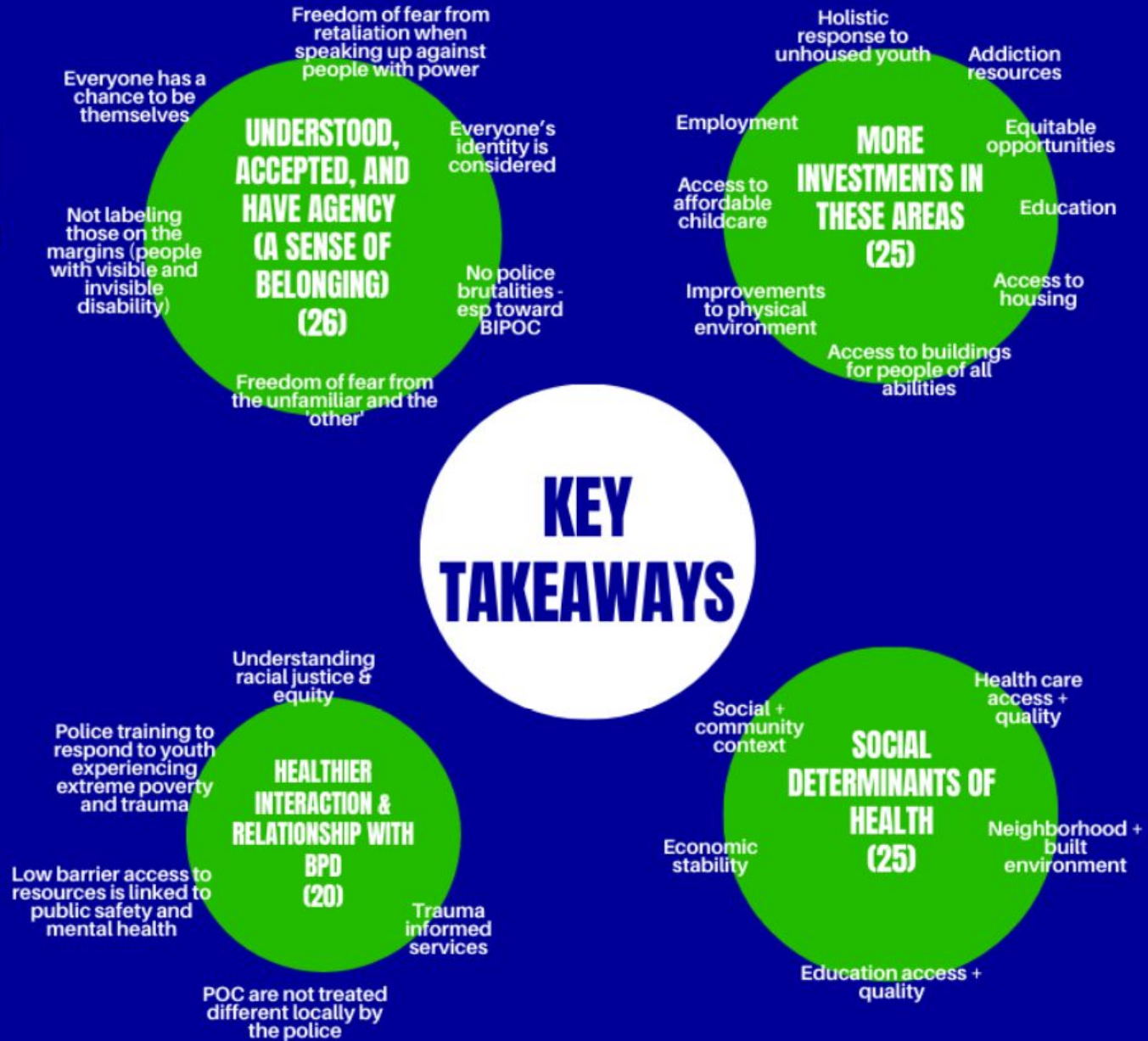
BLUEPRINT FOR BELONGING

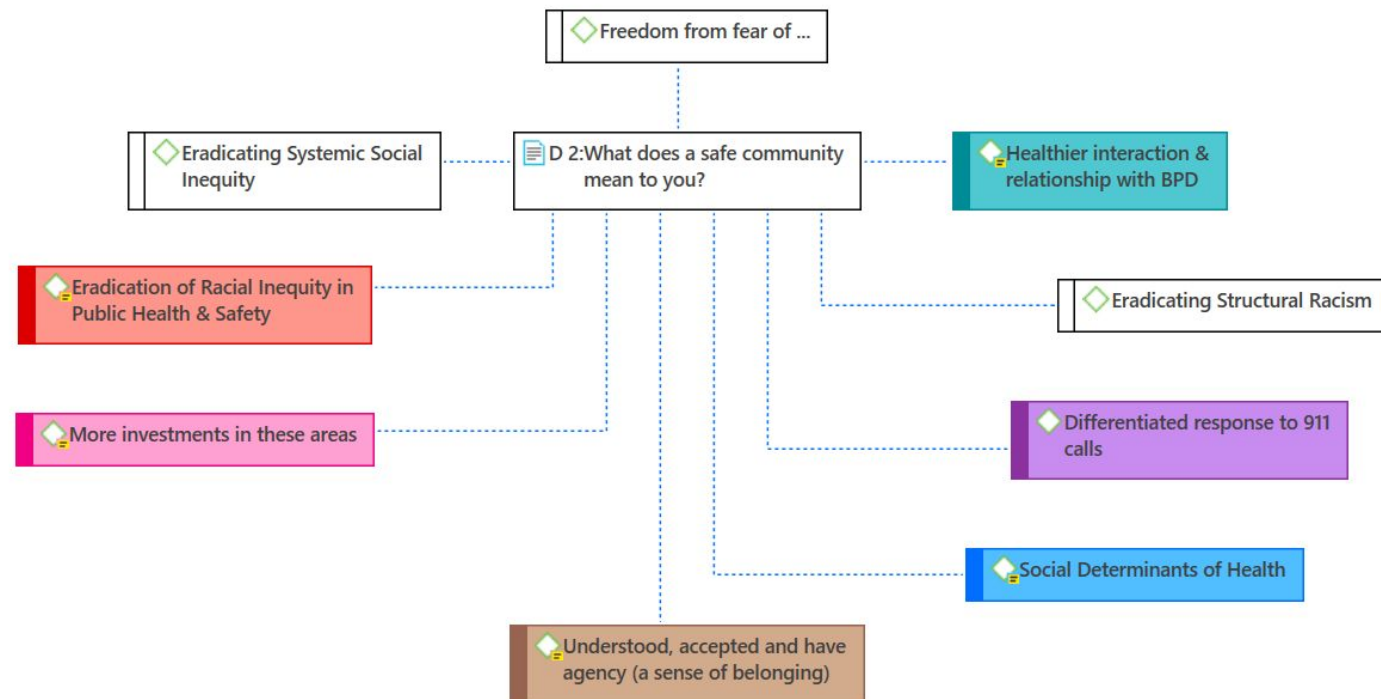Code 10: Understood, accepted and have agency (a sense of belonging)

The most frequency = 26

CITY OF BURLINGTON

What does it mean to be a healthy community?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

UNDERSTOOD, ACCEPTED, AND HAVE AGENCY (A SENSE OF BELONGING) (26)

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SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH (25)

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- Economic stability
- Neighborhood + built environment
- Education access + quality

What Does a Safe Community Mean to You?

Freedom from fear of ...

Eradicating Systemic Social Inequity

D 2:What does a safe community mean to you?

Healthier interaction & relationship with BPD

Eradication of Racial Inequity in Public Health & Safety

Eradicating Structural Racism

More investments in these areas

Differentiated response to 911 calls

Social Determinants of Health

Understood, accepted and have agency (a sense of belonging)

Key Takeaway

No comments regarding
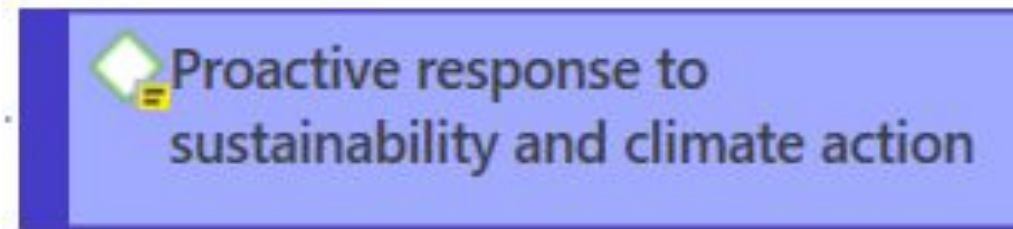
Proactive response to sustainability and climate action

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APPENDIX

References

- ➢ Othering & Belonging Institute (OBI)
  - ○ Slides 12, 13, 33,
- ➢ Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
  - ○ Slide 15

Appendix (all entries)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jkzxd7LF9FNTSF-O0qz5C0wSYHGpAevL/view?usp=sharing

What's next in the process?

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