

**Themes from
Reflection
Conversations**
(held partway through
MSH process)

October 2020

Prepared by

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What's inside ...

This document is not intended as a PowerPoint presentation; rather it is a visual way to report the themes from conversations held with individuals involved with Make Shift Happen (MSH).

Format of this report

- Pages 3 to 5 – a Snapshot (summary) of the themes from the conversations. *Read this Snapshot if you only want, or have time for, an overview.*
- Pages 6 to 23 – the detailed description of reflections, observations, ideas, and quotes from the conversations. *Read this section for deeper dive into the perspectives of the individuals who were interviewed.*
- The facilitator, Barb Pedersen, who conducted the conversations, has not interpreted the answers other than to cluster in themes. She has used wording as close as possible to the original statements. She clarified the use of the terms “money” or “money being available” as referring to action research funds.

A Snapshot of the Reflection Conversations ...

Purpose of the reflection conversations

- ✓ To document what has occurred to date from the perspectives of the individuals who were interviewed
- ✓ To provide information to adjust, improve, and create activities in the next stages of MSH initiative

Process

- Conversations were held in mid-September to early October 2020 with seven (7) individuals; all who are residents of the tri-communities (The Pas, OCN, RM of Kelsey) and involved in some capacity with Make Shift Happen.
- Conversations were conducted by Barbara Pedersen Facilitation Services Inc.



Snapshot of Main themes ...

- 1) Individuals became involved with Make Shift Happen (MSH) because:
 - a) They have a strong commitment to and belief in their communities.
 - b) They were specifically asked and invited.
- 2) Individuals are most aware of the following activities of MSH:
 - a) Interviews that Karen Driedger (MSH contractor) held with 100+ individuals
 - b) Social media campaign (Facebook, etc.)
 - c) Community Sharing Labs
- 3) Individuals best know what they are directly involved with.
 - a) Even people who are very involved in MSH don't know every aspect of it.
- 4) What stands out to date about MSH is primarily excitement and positivity and a bit of skepticism
 - a) Most prevalent is excitement and positivity about the activities and the potential transformation in the tri-communities
 - b) Touch of skepticism and concern about MSH being another one-time initiative that is not sustainable, and that discussions in the communities seem to continually return to homelessness and Oscar's Place
- 5) Individuals see themselves as contributors which aligns with the goals of MSH to have the community lead the process and to strengthen the capacity of individuals.
- 6) Some individuals identified ways that they are doing things differently because of MSH; others said they were not necessarily changing. However, all identified ways that they have benefitted from MSH.
- 7) All seven individuals identified ways that MSH is supporting organizations and the tri-communities as a whole.
- 8) All seven individuals spoke about the issues in downtown The Pas such as homelessness, Oscar's Place, crime. However, these issues did not dominate the majority of conversations, rather they were recognized as issues that MSH is, and will continue, to help. One person emphasized the need to involve individuals who are homeless and to understand their situations.

Snapshot of Main themes ... continued

Themes about how Make Shift Happens needs to evolve in next eight months (to mid-2021)

1. MSH could “go to” even more people through increased networking, individual invitations, and more sharing of results and successes. MSH needs to build more awareness and involvement.
2. MSH needs to find sustainable, long-term funding to continue its work.
3. If more funds are available to help people be involved, communicate that information as soon as possible. Give people more time to think about how they can contribute. Use the same format, a collaborative decision-making process, that was used at the start of MSH because it was fair.
4. Expand the composition of MSH “Committee” to include individuals who are homeless and on the street.
5. Continue to learn about and understand the social issues in the community.
6. Bring northern communities together.

Themes about hopes for the community: what will exist, who will be involved

1. People in the tri-communities have continued hope in their community. People see that there is a way to make things happen.
2. The three communities are working together at all levels: community organizations and political councils.
3. MSH has created beneficial outcomes for the tri-communities that reverberate throughout different sectors.
4. MSH is sustainable with ongoing funding, political commitment, and a paid person as a “catalyst and organizer”.

Detailed descriptions of the conversations ...

- Reflections
- Observations
- Ideas
- Quotes



Purpose of the MSH Reflection Conversations

- ✓ To document what has occurred to date from the perspectives of the individuals who were interviewed
- ✓ To “harvest” a sample of what has been learned to date (what is working, what isn’t, successes, concerns, stories, ideas, actions)
- ✓ To provide information to adjust, improve, and create activities in the next stages of MSH initiative
- ✓ To include in summary reports about the Make Shift Happen initiative.

Questions asked of the individuals

	<p>January to September 2020 (first 9 months)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How have you been involved with Make Shift Happen?2. What interaction have you had with Karen Driedger (MSH Contractor) and others?3. What are the activities and events of Make Shift Happen that you know about?
Reflective (So What)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. What stands out about Make Shift Happen to date? (What stories can you tell? What excites you? Worries you? What is transforming? What is working? What isn't working?)
Interpretive (So What)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. How are you contributing to, helping to lead, and influencing the activities of Make Shift Happen?6. What ideas has Make Shift Happen given you and how has it helped you do things differently?7. What is the impact of Make Shift Happen - personal, organizational, community as you see and feel it?
Decisional (Now What)	<p>Look ahead to spring 2021 when 'officially' completed (last 6 -8 months, the end and the beginning)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">8. How do you see Make Shift Happen evolving?9. Describe what you hope to see, where you hope community will be at, what will you be doing, who else might be involved .

Who, What, When, How

What, When, How

- 7 individuals: Telephone interviews with 6 individuals and 1 email submission
- Mid-September to early October 2020
- Conversations conducted by Barbara Pedersen Facilitation Services Inc.

Who did we talk with?

- All are residents of the tri-communities (The Pas, OCN, RM of Kelsey)
- All are involved in some capacity with Make Shift Happen

Perspectives of the individuals

- Community volunteers
- Social service providers
- Educators
- Law enforcement
- Business owners
- Indigenous community
- Long-term and recent residents

How have you been involved with Make Shift Happen?

Individuals are participating in:

- Youth projects
- Indigenous community activities
- Group sessions for community action research funds
- Presentation at Labs
- Solutions Labs
- Creation of Oscar's Place survey
- Research, communications, stories
- Zoom meetings
- SCAN meetings



Main theme: Why did people become involved?



Each had a strong commitment to and belief in their communities.



They were specifically asked and invited.

Quotes

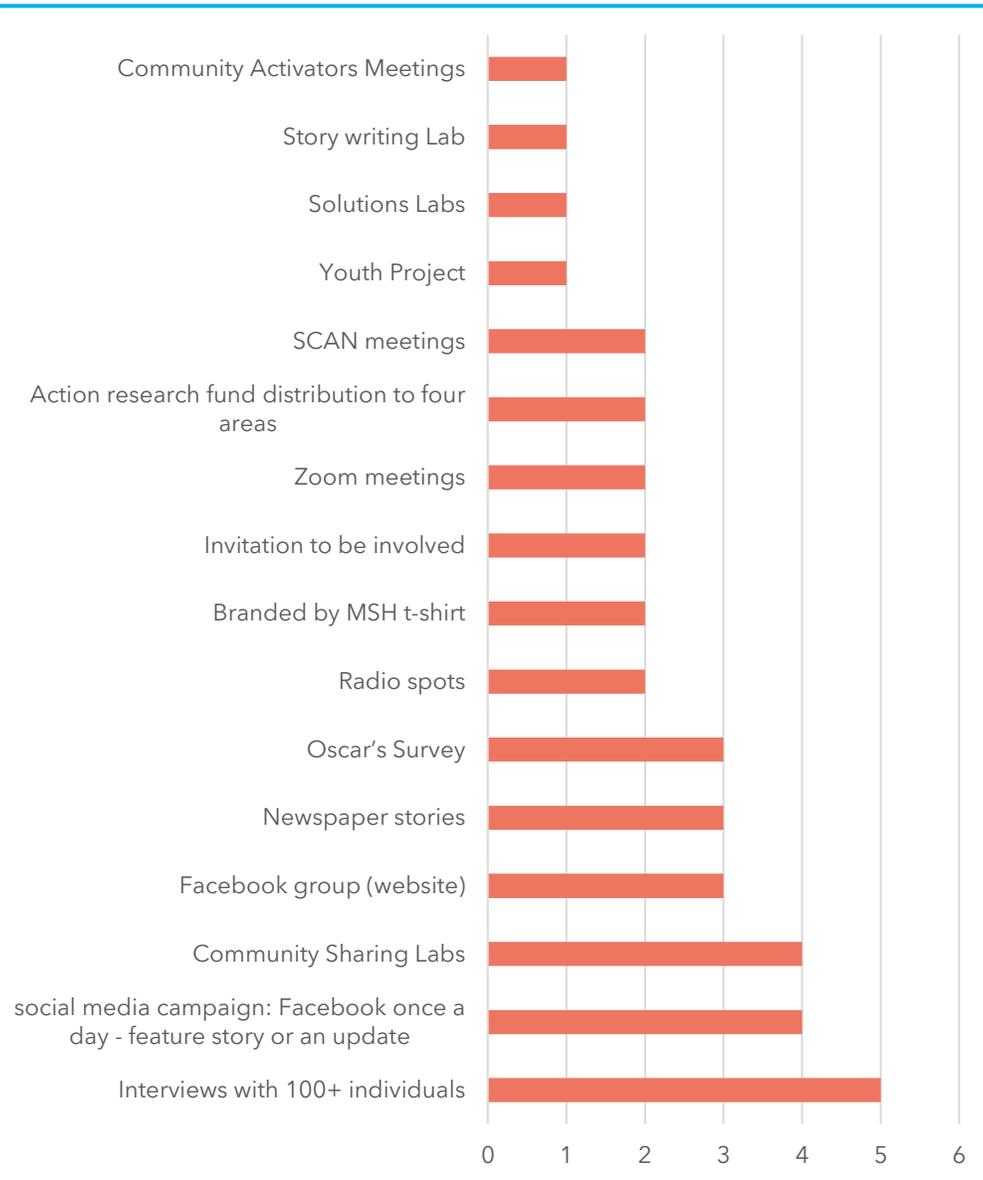
I was invited to participate because of knowledge and experience; e.g. living in the tri-communities, community planning, Indigenous, social services, business.

I was invited to participate because of my work with youth projects.

... started with a conversation with Karen asking about what she is doing

I've been participating in the group sessions to determine different projects that we could put in place in the community (i.e.. youth engagement, art focused projects, community ambassadors) to improve the safety and wellbeing of the community.

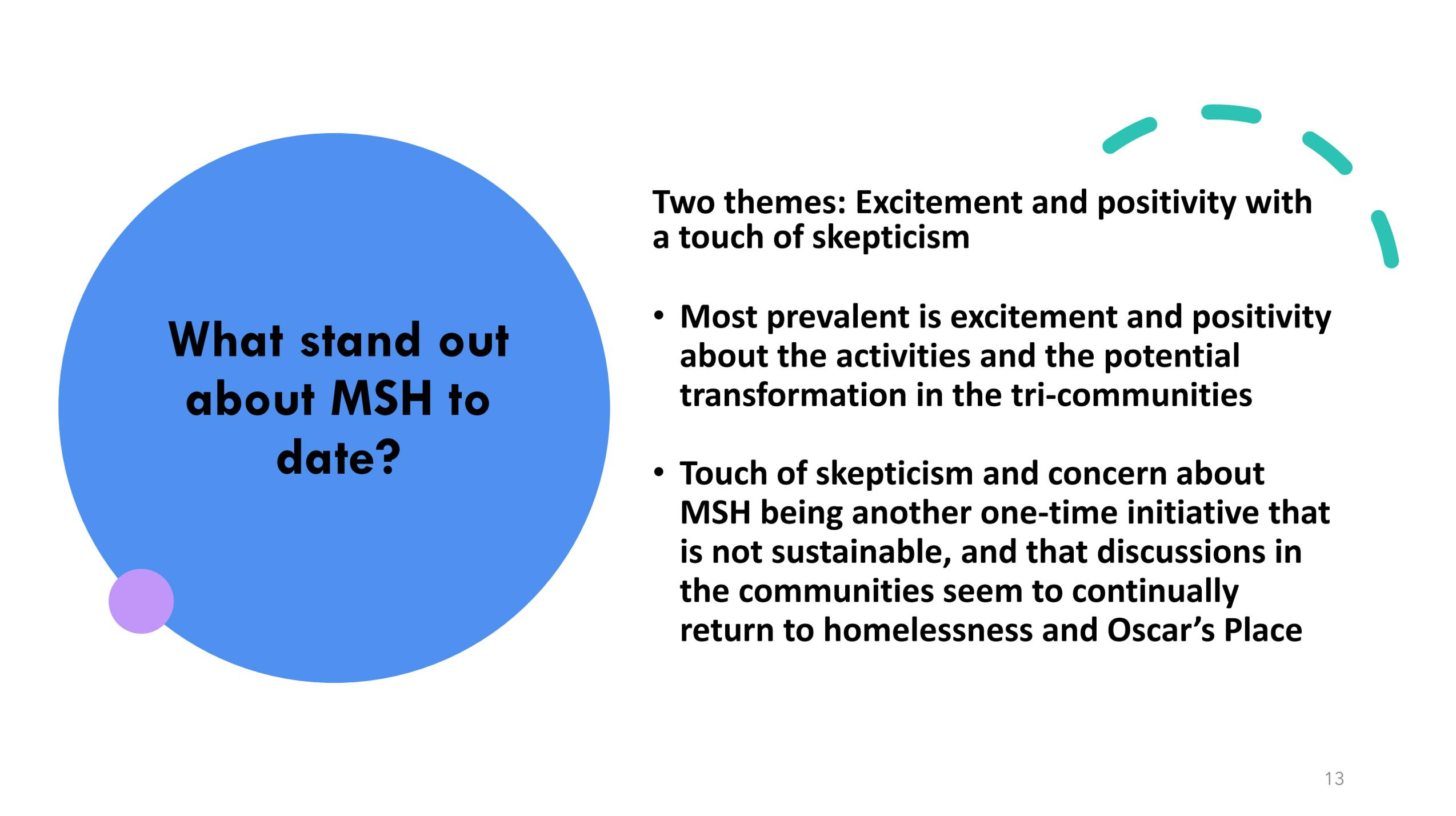
What MSH activities and events did individuals know?



Individuals are most aware of:

- **Interviews that Karen (MSH contractor) held with 100+ individuals**
- **Social media campaign (Facebook, etc.)**
- **Community Sharing Labs**

- **Individuals best know what they are directly involved with. Even people who are very involved don't know every aspect of MSH.**

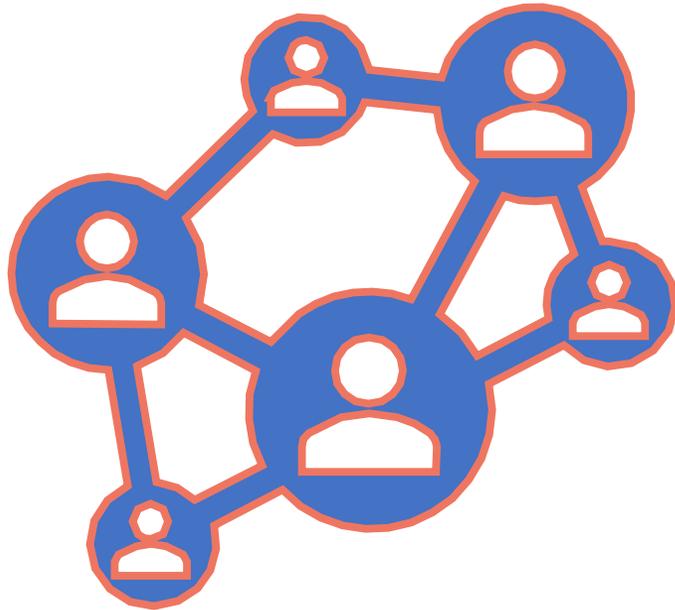


What stand out about MSH to date?

Two themes: Excitement and positivity with a touch of skepticism

- **Most prevalent is excitement and positivity about the activities and the potential transformation in the tri-communities**
- **Touch of skepticism and concern about MSH being another one-time initiative that is not sustainable, and that discussions in the communities seem to continually return to homelessness and Oscar's Place**

Positive aspects of MSH



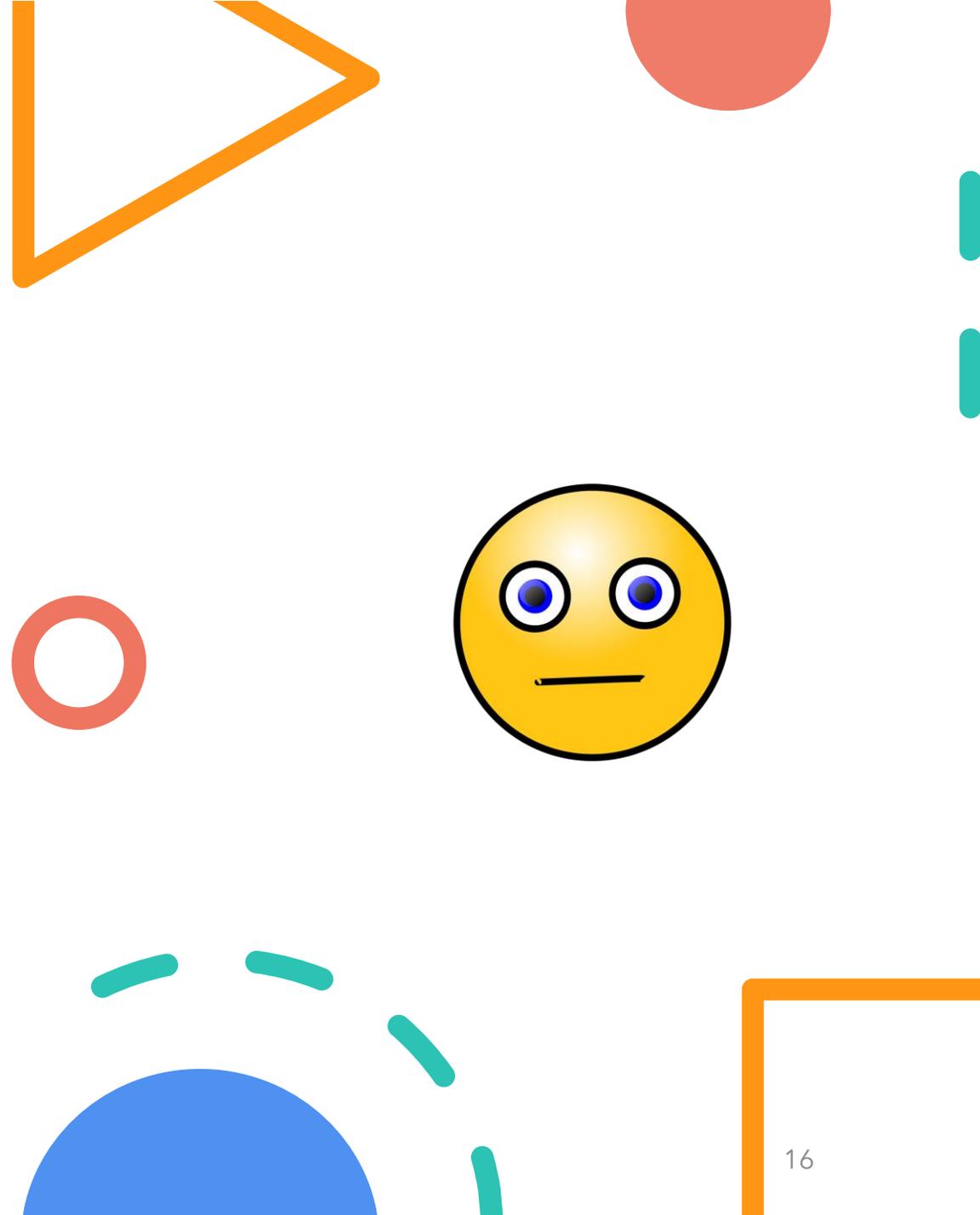
- Pulling together all service providers
- Connecting various aspects of the communities
- Community organizations and residents are talking about solutions
- Stories in the media are bringing attention to many groups doing things behind the scene in the community
- More beautification and cleanliness in The Pas
- Allocation of action research funds to four areas, rather than only one organization
- Learning that we have assets to help each other
- Action is happening through MSH
- Increased communication within the community
- The way that the Contractor (Karen Driedger) invites people to be involved, listens, connects, gives decision making to the community

Excitement and positivity quotes

- *The name is apt - We are in the beginning of the ball roll to make shift happen.*
- *MSH is working with an open mind as part of change; also open heart and at the end, the open will.*
- *For many years I have attended similar meetings where people in community talk about what is working and isn't working. MSH is the first time that actions are occurring. Very happy about it.*
- *I really appreciate the momentum it creates. There is a positive aura that surrounds Make Shift Happen, inspiring others to work together to create positive change.*
- *I like that MSH is consistent, needs to be able to connect with communities on many different levels; make relationships, help people feel connected in community. MSH does this well.*

Concerns about MSH

- The concentration on the downtown street problems (homeless, Oscar's Place, crime) that occurs in most community discussions and has also risen in MSH, taking too much of its resources
- Concerns about the negative attitudes of residents towards individuals who are homeless as evident in Oscar's Place Survey and some of the Community Labs
- Insufficient representation on MSH of individuals who are homeless and of Indigenous persons
- Sustainability of MSH in the future when current funds are finished





Concern quotes

- *Too much concentration on the downtown street problems (homeless, Oscar's Place, crime): Many of the conversations despite good intentions get funneled back to the downtown street problem. People are trying but we always seem to get bogged down in this conversation. We waste all the time and energy and resources that could be better spent on other initiatives.*
- *I have a big concern about the results of the survey, concerned about some of the comments in the labs (breakout groups). Some of the homeless people have lived here for 10 years and this is their community.*
- *What I see from MSH, there is not representation from the homeless people and the Indigenous people. Not sure if it was set up that way or just worked out.*

Contributing to MSH

Question: *How are you contributing to, helping to lead, and influencing the activities of Make Shift Happen?*

Main theme: Individuals see themselves as contributors which aligns with the goals of MSH to have the community lead the process and to strengthen the capacity of individuals.

Quotes

I contribute by the work I have done and knowledge I hold from the work.

I show inclusion by being an Indigenous person from an Indigenous community.

I see myself as a door opener and let people through.

I am hoping to contribute to the start of a couple programs/activities around the community,

I am providing an opinion and an understanding of working with the less fortunate in the community.

How MSH has helped the individual ...



Main theme: Some individuals identified ways that they are doing things differently because of MSH; others said they were not necessarily changing. However, all identified ways that they have benefitted from MSH.

Quotes

- *It is encouraging as I know now that I am not the only one doing the work. Our neighbouring municipality has reached out across the river that divides us. That is incredible.*
- *I'm not sure it has changed how I do things, but it has given me perspective as well as informed me of the groups in town and how much work the community is doing to improve the region.*
- *Being involved with MSH has given me different and fresh views of my own community.*
- *Because of MSH, I have involved in a project and am going "outside of the box" and will work with people that I am not familiar with. That is new and exciting.*

How MSH has helped organizations and the community...

Main theme: All seven individuals identified ways that MSH is supporting organizations and the tri-communities as a whole.

Quotes

Organizations

- *Many wonderful stories about individuals and organizations being brought into the limelight*
- *organizations - so fantastic; so many involved; getting money; making programs happen that won't otherwise.*
- *Breaking down some of the silos between groups. People are connecting.*
- *Have seen media stories about Oscar's Place and that how they are working to make it a bit place for homeless, etc.*

Community

- *Hope*
- *Seeing it happen. Stories in the paper and online are great to have*
- *Comments from people about the stories saying that is has encouraged a bit of community pride*
- *I think there is power in positivity, and power in numbers, and this initiative has involved both of those things in a community who is historically not positive and divided.*
- *Any dialogue about an issue gives new contacts, different perspective. It has fueled more talk in the community and that is the only way things changes.*
- *Connected many people; e.g. school counsellors with organizations; local business wanting to be involved*



Concerns

- *I haven't seen the impact other than assisting Oscar's Place.*
- *I don't know what money went to youth and what they did with it. I have no doubt that they did something, and I would like MSH to send out information about who was helped, who made the decisions, and the results.*

Future of MSH

Question: How do you see MSH evolving?

Main themes

- ✓ **Hope in the community**
- ✓ **All working together (individuals, organizations, councils)**
- ✓ **Sustainable funding**
- ✓ **Political commitment**
- ✓ **Catalyzing and organizing individual/s as paid staff or contractors**

How do you see Make Shift Happen evolving in next eight months? (to mid-2021)

1. **MSH could “go to” even more people through increased networking, individual invitations, and more sharing of results and successes. MSH needs to build more awareness and involvement.**

Ideas

- a) Conduct a mapping activity in a meeting about and with youth.
- b) Send the message out to the youth that the tri-communities are a great place to live. I never looked at it this way until MSH and now I see it.
- c) Communicate the great results of MSH even more than is currently done. Covid-19 presents challenges; use radio spots and online social media.
- d) Go beyond the same people in the community doing everything and being involved. Personal invitations seem to work.

2. **MSH needs to find sustainable, long-term funding to continue its work and to ensure paid staff or contract positions are in place.**

Quotes

- If MSH has permanent legs, it could go a long way. The problem of such initiatives is funding for three years, we get a good foundation, and then it disappears.
- We need someone like Karen who is vibrant and evokes energy to spearhead more positive things.

Ideas

- a) MSH needs to find someone to take it on as part of their work; maybe the tri-communities. All three need to fund the project. They need to put money into hiring two or three people to keep MSH going. Two part-time people: one to manage the Facebook page, one to write the stories.
- b) In January and February 2021, MSH needs to shift focus to deciding how it will continue.

3. **If funds are available to help people be involved, communicate that information as soon as possible. Give people more time to think about how they can contribute. Use the same format, a collaborative decision-making process, that was used at the start of MSH because it was fair.**

4. **Expand the composition of MSH “Committee” to include individuals who are homeless and on the street.**

Ideas

- a) Include one person from residents at Oscar’s Place, one person from the Food Bank

5. **Continue to learn about and understand the social issues in the community.**

Ideas

- a) Visit Oscar’s Place and talk to the residents

6. **Bring northern communities together.**

Ideas

- a) MSH is going in a good direction and could reach out and would with other northern communities, possibly a symposium of some type.

Describe what you hope to see, where you hope community will be at, what will you be doing, who else might be involved.

1. **People in the tri-communities have continued hope in their community. People see that there is a way to make things happen.**
2. **The three communities are working together at all levels: community organizations and political councils.**

Ideas

- a) Get the Community Ambassador Program “off the ground” in the next few years. It can help change the negative mindset of the downtown environment and can create connections between the homeless and non-homeless population.
- b) Obtain sponsorship from corporations (businesses)

Quotes

- The residents and organizations of the tri-communities will be less divided and will think more about people first, rather than location, race, status. MSH is helping to create this unity.
- We have amazing people in our communities. We have great business minds, political minds, great youth. We have lots of future here.
- I think that projects like the silhouettes can humanize people in our society who are most vulnerable and targeted as ‘problem’ populations.

3. **MSH has created beneficial outcomes for the tri-communities that reverberate throughout different sectors.**

Quotes

- I think the community is on an upward motion of sharing the positive news in the community, how people are working together to improve their surroundings, and coming together to share experiences and pain points. I think that notion needs to continue for a bit longer to really sink in, and to prove to some of the nay-sayers that the change starts from the inside.

4. **MSH is sustainable with ongoing funding and a paid person as a “catalyst and organizer”.**

Quotes

- I wish we could always have an MSH and the funds that go with it. it is a fantastic project. The Pas has many wonderful things that people are now aware of.



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF
KELSEY

