

BUILDING BELONGING:

I.D.E.A. Framework & Action Plan

April 2026



HARRISON HOT SPRINGS

Naturally Refreshed

Harrison Hot Springs IDEA Framework & Action Plan

Preamble

The Village of Harrison Hot Springs is at an important point in its growth and identity. It is a small municipality with a strong sense of place, a high volume of visitors, and a growing responsibility to ensure that public life, services, spaces, and decisions are accessible, fair, and welcoming.

This framework has been shaped by what was heard through community engagement, staff and leadership dialogue, and early relational conversations with Sts'ailes. It is also informed by leading practices in municipal inclusion, accessibility, governance, reconciliation, anti-racism, and bias reduction work. Together, these inputs point to a clear truth: belonging does not happen by accident. It is built through choices, systems, relationships, and follow-through.

This framework is intended to help the Village move from intention to practice. It offers a shared foundation for how the Village communicates, serves, engages, plans, and leads in ways that reduce barriers, strengthen trust, reduce bias, support physical and social inclusion, and create more consistent experiences of dignity and belonging.

Purpose

This framework is a practical guide for how the Village of Harrison Hot Springs can strengthen inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) across governance, services, spaces, relationships, and everyday decision-making. It is grounded in community engagement, staff and leadership input, emerging dialogue with Sts'ailes, and municipal best practices.

It is designed to be clear enough for public understanding and strong enough to guide action.

Why This Framework Matters

The Village serves both residents and a high volume of visitors. That means access, communication, belonging, and trust matter every day. Community engagement showed that people want clearer information, more accessible participation, more transparent decision-making, safer and more welcoming spaces, stronger supports for seniors and visitors, better signage and navigation, attention to transportation-related barriers, more proactive disclosure, stronger staff capacity, and a more substantive approach to reconciliation.

This framework responds to those realities by setting a shared direction for change. It recognizes that IDEA work is not separate from good governance or good service. It is part of how a municipality builds credibility, responds to community needs, and creates the conditions for more people to participate fully in community life.

Vision

A Village where people can access services, participate in community life, and experience dignity, fairness, belonging, and respect.

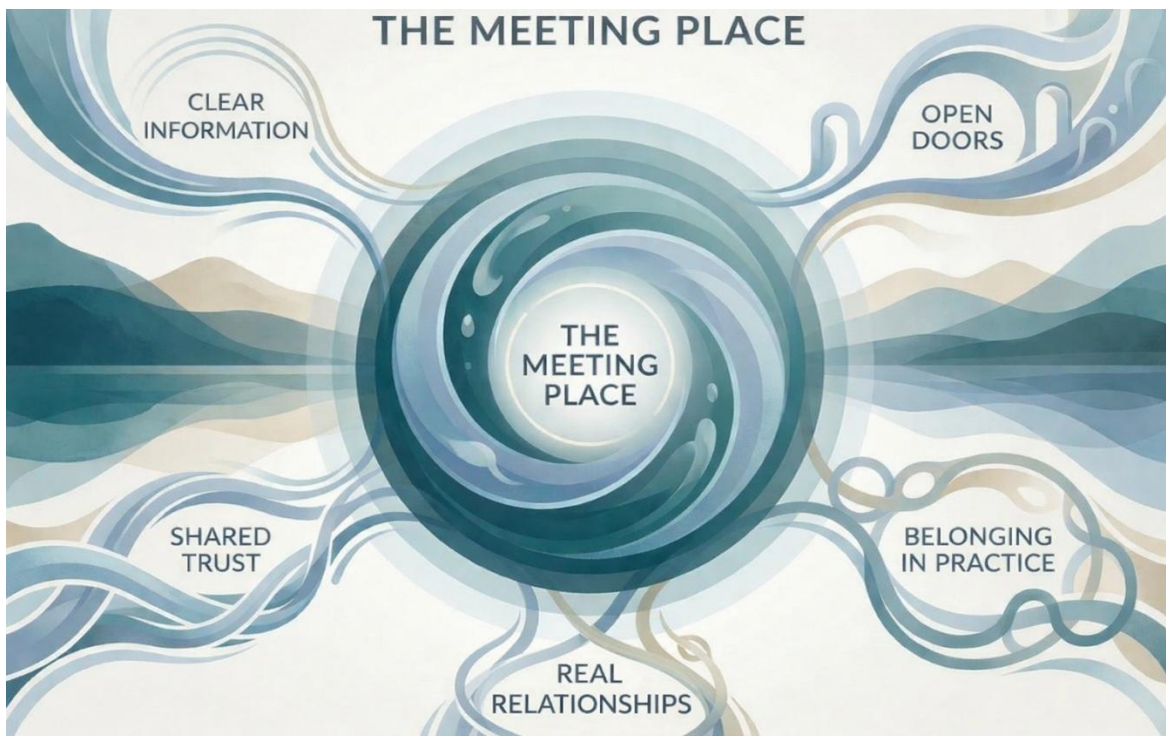
The Meeting Place

All paths in this framework are intended to lead to a shared meeting place.

This meeting place is not only a physical idea. It is also strategic and relational. It represents the kind of civic culture the Village is working to build through its decisions, services, relationships, and public life: a place where people can meet one another with clarity, safety, respect, accountability, and care.

In this meeting place:

- people can find their way in
- people can participate without unnecessary barriers
- people can access information in ways that are clear and usable
- people can move through public spaces with greater physical and social inclusion
- people can trust that commitments matter
- people can see themselves reflected in the life of the community
- people and communities can build relationship without being reduced, managed, or extracted from



This meeting place represents belonging in practice. It is where access meets trust, where inclusion meets accountability, where anti-racism and bias reduction are reflected in everyday decisions, and where relationship becomes part of how the Village operates, not only what it says. The five paths in this framework are different routes toward that shared place.

Guiding Principles

The Village will approach this work through the following principles:

- **Accessibility by design:** Build access in from the start rather than adding it later.
- **Plain language and clarity:** Make information easier to find, understand, and use.
- **Belonging in practice:** Focus not only on access, but on whether people feel safe, respected, and able to participate.
- **Bias-aware and equity-informed practice:** Identify and reduce barriers, assumptions, and patterns that exclude or disadvantage people.
- **Substantive reconciliation:** Prioritize relationship, responsibility, and action over symbolism.
- **Shared accountability:** Define responsibilities, measure progress, and report back publicly.
- **Continuous learning:** Improve over time using feedback, data, and lived experience.

Scope and Accountability

This framework applies across Village governance, administration, service delivery, communications, engagement, planning, and public-facing operations. It is intended to guide both internal practice and external relationship-building.

Council has a role in setting direction, reviewing progress, and supporting policy alignment. Leadership has a role in implementation, coordination, and organizational accountability. Staff have a role in applying the framework in everyday service, operations, planning, and communication. Over time, implementation should also be informed by continued dialogue with community members and partners, especially those whose experiences of exclusion, inaccessibility, racism, bias, or underrepresentation have been most significant.

This framework does not replace legal obligations, operational plans, or relationship-specific protocols. It is a guiding structure intended to inform them.

The Framework

The framework is organized into five connected paths. These paths reflect what was heard through engagement and align with leading practice in municipal IDEA work. Each path leads toward the same meeting place: a more accessible, trustworthy, welcoming, and relational Village.

1. Clear Information

People need to be able to find, understand, and use information.

This path focuses on communications, website access, forms, public notices, meeting materials, proactive disclosure, and how the Village explains decisions.

What this means

- Information is written in plain language.
- Key services and processes are easier to navigate.
- Public-facing materials are accessible in format and design.
- Residents can more easily understand what decisions are being made and why.

Strategic objective: Strengthen access to information so that residents, visitors, businesses, and partners can understand Village processes, services, and decisions more easily.

Priority outcomes

- Village information is easier to find and understand.
- Forms, notices, and service instructions are clearer.
- Public communication is more proactive and consistent.
- Residents can see how feedback has influenced decisions.

Example actions

- Review and simplify high-traffic web pages and forms.
- Adopt plain-language standards for public communication.
- Improve accessibility of agendas, minutes, notices, and reports.
- Create regular “You Said, We Did” public updates.
- Identify priority information for translation or alternative formats.

2. Open Doors

People need real access to civic life, services, and public spaces.

This path focuses on council meetings, engagement opportunities, facilities, signage, wayfinding, washrooms, transportation-related access, seniors resources and activities, tourist support, and service delivery.

What this means

- People can participate in civic processes without unnecessary barriers.
- Public spaces and services are easier to access and navigate.
- Accessibility is treated as a core service responsibility.
- The Village pays attention to both physical and social inclusion.

Strategic objective: Reduce barriers to participation and access so that more people can engage with Village services, spaces, and civic processes.

Priority outcomes

- Council meetings and public engagement are more accessible.
- Physical access barriers are identified and reduced.
- Public spaces are easier to navigate for residents and visitors.
- Village services are designed with a wider range of needs in mind.

Example actions

- Improve audio, timing, and participation options for council meetings.
- Explore hybrid or remote participation options where feasible.
- Conduct accessibility reviews of key public-facing spaces.
- Improve signage, wayfinding, and information about accessible features.
- Review washroom access, hours, and related public information.
- Consider transportation-related barriers that affect participation and access.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen seniors resources and activities.
- Explore support or ambassador-style approaches to help tourists navigate services and spaces.

3. Shared Trust

Trust grows when people can see how decisions are made and whether commitments are being kept.

This path focuses on governance, transparency, accountability, policy alignment, public confidence, and proactive communication.

What this means

- The Village communicates more openly about decisions, constraints, and progress.
- IDEA commitments are reflected in governance and operational practices.

- People know where to raise concerns and what follow-up to expect.

Strategic objective: Build public confidence by strengthening transparency, accountability, and consistency between commitments and action.

Priority outcomes

- Greater public confidence in Village processes.
- Clearer accountability for IDEA-related commitments.
- Better alignment between policy, practice, and public expectations.
- More transparent reporting on progress and next steps.

Example actions

- Establish an internal accountability structure for implementation.
- Define roles for leadership, staff, and Council oversight.
- Review relevant policies through an IDEA lens.
- Clarify pathways for reporting discrimination, harassment, or access concerns.
- Publish annual progress updates with clear measures and next steps.

4. Belonging in Practice

Inclusion is not only about being invited in. It is about whether people feel safe, respected, and able to participate fully.

This path focuses on workplace culture, staff capacity, respectful service, psychological safety, anti-racism, bias reduction, and everyday experiences of inclusion.

What this means

- Staff are supported to provide respectful, inclusive service.
- Internal culture enables learning, accountability, and psychological safety.
- The Village pays attention to who feels welcome, and who does not.

Strategic objective: Strengthen the everyday conditions that help people feel respected, welcomed, and able to participate in community and organizational life.

Priority outcomes

- Staff have stronger confidence and tools to serve diverse communities.
- Internal culture better supports respectful communication and learning.
- Residents and visitors experience more consistent signals of welcome and respect.
- Underrepresented groups see themselves more meaningfully reflected in Village practices.

Example actions

- Provide staff training on accessibility, respectful service, bias, anti-racism, and equity-informed practice.
- Strengthen onboarding for staff and elected officials.
- Review hiring, accommodation, and workplace practices for barriers.
- Build internal supports for respectful feedback and psychological safety.
- Identify practical ways to reflect inclusion in events, communications, and service interactions.

5. Real Relationships

This work must be grounded in relationship, responsibility, and respect.

This path focuses on reconciliation, Indigenous relationship-building, respectful engagement, shared communication with Sts'ailes where appropriate, and moving from symbolic to substantive action.

What this means

- The Village approaches reconciliation through relationship, consent, and accountability.
- Indigenous engagement is not extractive or performative.
- Actions are shaped by respectful process, clear boundaries, and long-term commitment.

Strategic objective: Build and sustain relationships that are respectful, reciprocal, and grounded in meaningful engagement rather than symbolism alone.

Priority outcomes

- Stronger and more respectful relationships with Indigenous partners.
- Better understanding of protocols, responsibilities, and appropriate engagement pathways.
- More substantive action related to visibility, participation, and shared learning.
- Greater care in language, representation, and public commitments.

Example actions

- Continue relationship-based dialogue with Sts'ailes and other relevant Indigenous partners.
- Develop internal guidance for respectful Indigenous engagement.
- Identify short-, medium-, and long-term reconciliation actions with care and consent.
- Review public language, acknowledgements, and representation practices.
- Create a reporting-back approach that reflects reciprocity and accountability.

- Explore shared communication opportunities with Sts'ailes where appropriate and welcomed.

Decision-Making Lens

This framework should be used in policy review, service design, planning, budgeting, engagement, and governance decisions. A simple decision-making lens includes:

1. Who benefits from this decision?
2. Who may face barriers, burden, or exclusion?
3. What assumptions or biases are built into the current approach?
4. What would make this clearer, fairer, safer, or more accessible?
5. Have the right people been involved early enough?
6. How will we know whether this made things better?

What We Heard Reflected in This Framework

This framework directly reflects recurring themes from engagement:

- information needs to be easier to find and understand
- council meetings and civic participation need to be more accessible
- transparency and trust matter deeply
- physical spaces need to be more accessible
- reconciliation must be substantive, not symbolic
- belonging is not equally felt across the community
- staff are a bridge between the Village and the community
- tourism and community life need to be in balance
- signage and navigation need improvement
- transportation barriers affect access and participation
- seniors need clearer supports, resources, and opportunities for connection

It also recognizes that some voices were underrepresented and that ongoing engagement is part of implementation, not separate from it.

Implementation Approach

This framework should be paired with a phased action plan. That action plan should include:

- short-term quick wins
- medium-term operational improvements
- longer-term systems and relationship work
- assigned responsibilities
- timelines

- measures of progress
- public reporting commitments

A practical implementation model could include:

- annual priority setting
- quarterly internal check-ins
- public progress reporting dashboard
- periodic review with staff, leadership, and community input

Measures of Progress

Progress should be measured through both quantitative and qualitative indicators, such as:

- website and communication improvements completed
- accessibility improvements to meetings and facilities
- staff participation in training and confidence measures
- number and type of policy or process reviews completed
- public feedback trends
- evidence of relationship-building and reporting back
- community perceptions of trust, access, and belonging over time

Bridging to the Action Plan

This framework sets the direction. The action plan should make that direction operational.

The action plan should translate each path into specific commitments, timelines, responsibilities, and measures. It should identify what can be done now, what requires additional planning or resources, and what must be built through longer-term relationship and systems work. It should also distinguish between public-facing actions, internal organizational improvements, and partnership-based commitments.

In this way, the framework provides the shared map, and the action plan identifies the next steps along each path toward the meeting place the Village is working to build.

Closing

A strong IDEA framework should be **understandable, usable, and accountable**. It should help the Village **make better decisions, reduce barriers, strengthen trust, and build a community** where more people can participate and belong.

If this work is done well, the result will not only be better policies or better processes. It will be a stronger civic culture: one where people can find their way in, feel respected when they arrive, and trust that their presence and participation matter.

That is the meeting place this framework is intended to support.

Appendix A: Harrison Hot Springs IDEA Action Plan Structure

This appendix is intended to support implementation of the IDEA Framework. It translates each framework path into a condition of belonging and a civic commitment, while leaving room for specific implementation examples, recommendations, timelines, and responsibilities to be confirmed by the Village.

How to Use This Appendix

This structure is intended to help the Village move from framework language to practical action. It can be used to:

- organize implementation priorities
- identify quick wins and longer-term actions
- assign responsibility across Council, leadership, and staff
- track progress over time
- add examples, recommendations, and measures as implementation evolves

Action Plan Structure

| Framework Path | Condition of Belonging | Civic Commitment | Strategic Focus | Possible Implementation Examples or Recommendations |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|---|
| Clear Information | Clarity | We communicate clearly | Improve access to information, public understanding, and ease of navigation across Village communications and processes. | Plain-language review of website and forms; improve accessibility of agendas and reports; create consistent public updates; identify priority translation or alternate-format needs. |
| Open Doors | Access | We open access | Reduce barriers to civic participation, service access, and use of public spaces. | Improve council meeting audio and participation options; review accessibility of facilities; improve signage, wayfinding, and washroom information; identify service access barriers; consider transportation and visitor navigation needs. |
| Shared Trust | Trust | We build trust | Strengthen transparency, accountability, and consistency between commitments and action. | Clarify reporting pathways; define internal accountability roles; review policies through an IDEA lens; establish annual public progress reporting; strengthen proactive disclosure. |

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|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Belonging in Practice | Belonging | We practice belonging | Improve the everyday experience of inclusion through service, culture, and organizational practice. | Staff training; onboarding improvements; review hiring and accommodation practices; strengthen respectful service expectations; identify visible and practical signals of welcome; reduce bias through training and review. |
| Real Relationships | Relationship | We build real relationships | Support respectful, reciprocal, and meaningful relationships, especially in reconciliation and community partnership work. | Continue relationship-based dialogue with Sts'ailes; develop guidance for respectful Indigenous engagement; review language and representation practices; identify substantive reconciliation actions; support shared communication where appropriate. |

Suggested Action Planning Fields

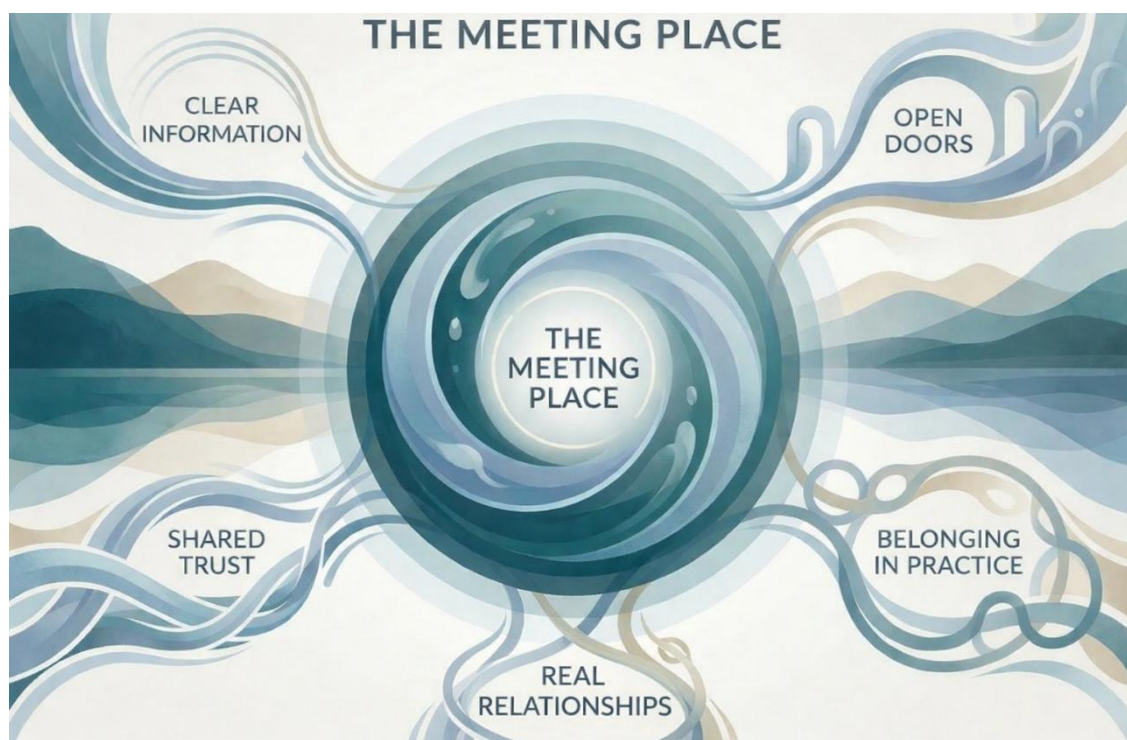
As the Village moves into implementation, each action can be further developed using the following fields:

| Field | Purpose |
|------------------------|--|
| Priority Action | The specific action or recommendation to be advanced |
| Path | Which framework path the action supports |
| Condition of Belonging | The broader outcome the action contributes to |
| Civic Commitment | The public-facing commitment reflected in the action |
| Strategic Focus | Policy, process, training, communication, infrastructure, engagement, or relationship-building |
| Timeline | Short-term, medium-term, or long-term |
| Lead | Primary department, role, or leadership responsibility |
| Partners | Internal or external partners involved |
| Measure of Success | How progress or impact will be assessed and what the reporting rhythm will be |
| Notes | Space for context, sequencing, dependencies, or recommendations |

Suggested Implementation Categories

To support sequencing, actions may also be grouped into the following categories:

- **Quick wins:** Actions that are visible, practical, and achievable in the near term
- **Operational improvements:** Changes to processes, communications, training, or service delivery
- **Systems work:** Deeper policy, governance, accountability, or organizational changes
- **Relationship-based work:** Actions that require trust-building, dialogue, consent, or partnership over time



Appendix B: Initial Priority Actions (Years 1–2)

This appendix provides a draft set of initial priority actions to support early implementation of the Harrison Hot Springs IDEA Framework. These actions are intended to be practical, visible, and achievable, while also laying the groundwork for longer-term systems and relationship-based work.

Priority Actions by Framework Path

| Priority Action | Path & Condition of Belonging | Civic Commitment | Time Period | Type | Measure of Success |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Review and simplify high-traffic website pages, forms, and key service information using plain-language principles. | Clear Information | We communicate clearly | Year 1 | Communication / Process | Priority pages updated; clearer navigation and fewer recurring information gaps. |
| Improve accessibility of agendas, minutes, notices, and public-facing reports. | Clear Information | We communicate clearly | Year 1 | Communication / Accessibility | Key documents are easier to access and read. |
| Introduce regular public “You Said, We Did” updates to show how feedback is being used. | Shared Trust | We build trust | Year 1 | Communication / Accountability | Public updates issued on a regular basis. |
| Improve council meeting accessibility through better audio, clearer participation instructions, and review of timing and format. | Open Doors | We open access | Year 1 | Governance / Accessibility | Fewer participation barriers and improved meeting experience. |
| Conduct an accessibility audit of key public-facing Village spaces and identify priority improvements. | Open Doors | We open access | Year 1 | Infrastructure / Service Access | Review completed and priority improvements identified. |
| Improve signage, wayfinding, and public information related to accessible features, washroom access, and key visitor navigation needs. | Open Doors | We open access | Years 1–2 | Infrastructure / Communication | Improved navigation and clearer public information. |
| Explore practical ways to address | Open Doors | We open access | Years 1–2 | Service Access / Community | Priority gaps identified and |

Village of Harrison Hot Springs IDEA Framework & Action Plan

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| transportation-related access barriers and strengthen information about seniors resources and activities. | | | | Inclusion | practical improvements advanced. |
| Clarify internal and public-facing pathways for reporting discrimination, harassment, and access concerns. | Shared Trust | We build trust | Year 1 | Policy / Process | Reporting pathways documented and communicated. |
| Establish an internal implementation and accountability structure for the IDEA Framework. | Shared Trust | We build trust | Year 1 | Governance / Accountability | Roles, responsibilities, and reporting cycle confirmed. |
| Provide staff training on accessibility, respectful service, anti-racism, bias reduction, and equity-informed practice. | Belonging in Practice | We practice belonging | Years 1-2 | Training / Culture | Staff training completed and confidence improved over time. |
| Strengthen onboarding for staff and elected officials to include IDEA responsibilities, respectful conduct, and service expectations. | Belonging in Practice | We practice belonging | Years 1-2 | Training / Governance | IDEA content integrated into onboarding. |
| Review selected workplace and service practices to identify barriers related to inclusion, accommodation, and respectful participation. | Belonging in Practice | We practice belonging | Years 1-2 | Process / Organizational Practice | Priority barriers identified and recommendations developed. |
| Continue relationship-based dialogue with Sts'ailes and identify respectful next steps for ongoing engagement and collaboration. | Real Relationships | We build real relationships | Years 1-2 | Relationship-building | Ongoing dialogue continues and next steps are confirmed collaboratively. |
| Develop internal guidance for respectful Indigenous engagement, including process, | Real Relationships | We build real relationships | Years 1-2 | Guidance / Relationship-building | Guidance developed to support more consistent practice. |

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| communication, reporting-back, and shared communication considerations where appropriate. | | | | | |
| Review public language, acknowledgements, and representation practices to support greater care, accuracy, and consistency. | Real Relationships | We build real relationships | Years 1-2 | Communication / Reconciliation | Priority language and representation updates identified and advanced. |

Sequencing Note

These actions are intended as a starting point. Some are visible quick wins, while others are foundational steps that support deeper policy, systems, and relationship work over time. Final sequencing, ownership, and resourcing should be confirmed by the Village.

The purpose of these initial actions is not to do everything at once. It is to begin in a way that is practical, credible, and aligned with what was heard. Early progress should build momentum, strengthen trust, and create a stronger foundation for longer-term implementation.