

Learning Themes

BC Capital Region's Quality of Life CHALLENGE: Leadership – bottom-up and sideways

A number of issues emerge from the story of government-community collaboration through the Quality of Life CHALLENGE. These questions are likely not unique to the experiences of BC's Capital Region. The following themes may point to helpful lessons and important considerations in other contexts, as well.

The CHALLENGE provides a real example of both the potential and challenges in working collaboratively within sectors that affect quality of life.

- Strategic and selective decisions regarding which initiatives and partnerships to pursue may need to be made to ensure deep and significant contributions. What might guide this decision-making process?

What might be some of the factors in BC's Capital Region and elsewhere that contribute to a culture of collaboration?

- The presence of allocated staff, other resources or dedicated infrastructure? Previous relationships or joint institutions in particular sectors (e.g., housing)? A broad definition of mandate? Good research and data? Co-hosting forums or other events? A regional (or "island") mentality?
- What might be some of the factors that take away from a culture of collaboration? A competition for resources? Time constraints?

Organizing collaborative action is not a clear-cut process.

- What organizational structures and practices may encourage collaborative processes and/or discourage silo-based approaches?
- Is a particular government level or type of community-based organization best suited?
- Do the source(s) of funding and the particular responsibilities associated with a position make a difference?
- How might governments and the community best be brought together?

In its work on the Quality of Life CHALLENGE, Service Canada has distinguished between its role as funder and community participant/partner.

- What are the strengths and challenges in having done this? Are there other steps that could be taken by other organizations to facilitate both mandate-driven activities and those of broader collaborations?