EVERGREEN

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Places4Wellbeing:
Measuring Subjective Wellbeing Impacts of Public Places

A framework to guide you on evaluating the Subjective Wellbeing impacts of your public place initiative

March 2025

Supported by:

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Acknowledgement of Indigenous Lands and Treaties Across Canada

The sacred lands and waterways upon which Evergreen operates and the built communities and cities across the country, are the traditional territories, homelands and nunangat of the respective First Nations, Métis Nations and Inuit who are the long-time stewards of these lands. These lands are occupied lands and subject to inherent rights, covenants, treaties and self-government agreements to peaceably share and care for the lands and resources across Turtle Island. These regions are still home to diverse Indigenous peoples, who are still fighting for their sovereign rights and tirelessly protecting their traditional territories. As uninvited guests who live and work on these lands, we have a responsibility to know the treaties that tie us together, advocate for Indigenous rights and commit to learning our responsibilities to each other.

Acknowlegements

We believe that collaboration is the key to building great public places, community and connection. This toolkit is no exception.

The Places4Wellbeing Toolkit was created by Evergreen and Davis Pier Consulting. Evergreen is a national non-profit transforming public spaces in our cities to build a healthier future for people and our planet. Davis Pier Consulting is a Canadian consulting and social impact agency that solves complex government and social challenges. It was written by Ilse van Winssen (Davis Pier) and Dr. Raquel Rosas (Davis Pier) with support from Dicle Han (Evergreen), Angela Parillo (Evergreen) and Alison Herr (Evergreen).

This work, is driven by a shared commitment to great public places—people are at the centre of how we work. Through this partnership, we developed a framework that measures the subjective wellbeing impacts of public place initiatives. This framework is inclusive, reflective of diverse community perspectives and capable of capturing the true value of investing in social and economic infrastructure.

Evergreen's Public Space Evaluation Toolkit

Executive Summary

Evergreen's Public Space Evaluation Toolkit aims to showcase the importance of public spaces for the wellbeing of people and the planet. The toolkit is intended for anyone who are interested in building and improving multi-solving public spaces. The aim is to create measurable and actionable resources for users to improve their understanding of the quantifiable benefits of public spaces.

The toolkit is a dynamic resource comprised of multiple tools that guide users in their evaluation and management of public spaces. The tools are developed by Evergreen and expert partners who lend their knowledge and experience in creating practical and actionable tools to support users in building better public spaces.

Places4Wellbeing: Measuring Subjective Wellbeing Impacts of Public Places

By Davis Pier and Evergreen

The Places4Wellbeing tool is designed to demonstrate the impacts of public spaces on subjective wellbeing. Subjective wellbeing is a measure of how people experience and perceive their lives. The tool was developed using a phased approach including interviews with community practitioners and a literature review to inform the methodology of the tool. Key insights from the research include the value of community engagement in wellbeing, the role of public spaces in building social cohesion, the sense of belonging through cultural activities and spaces, the importance of green spaces in nurturing climate resilience and the connection to nature and the opportunity of enhanced livability through economic development.

Drawing from existing research and literature, and engagement with community practitioners, the tool includes the following Public Place Indicators along with accompanying survey questions:

- Place Identity and Belonging
- Social Cohesion and Interaction
- Community Co-design
- Urban Green Spaces
- Place-based Learning
- Anticipation to Return

The tool focuses on four wellbeing indicators: happiness, life satisfaction, worthwhileness and anxiety. Using the Public Place Indicators, users of the tool are encouraged to select 2–3 key questions alongside the wellbeing and relevant sociodemographic questions to build a questionnaire to assess the subjective wellbeing of visitors of their public space. When applied, the tool allows not only to measure the subjective wellbeing of those in a public place but also to assess what in that public place—its green space, its collaborative design with community, its potential to foster social cohesion—is impacting the subjective wellbeing of these people.

Using the test case as a basis, users of the tool are encouraged to apply the approach within an identified public space using the guidelines and tips included. The tool provides a suite of recommendations on tailoring and conducting a survey as well as step-by-step instructions for implementing the tool including guidelines for data analysis.

What you'll find in this toolkit:

SECTION 1

Why Measure Public Place Impacts?

1.1 MAKING THE CASE FOR PLACE

Evergreen is dedicated to empowering communities in Canada to meet their climate resilience, housing and social infrastructure goals. Evergreen believes in the power of public spaces to connect people and communities—to nature and to one another. When done well, public spaces can provide multiple benefits to people and support public priorities.

They foster a rich social fabric where all communities share a sense of belonging and participation in the communities they enrich. Evidence has shown that actively involved communities are healthier and live happier lives, showing an increased sense of ownership and community wellbeing.[1] Public spaces also promote mental and physical wellbeing and create liveable communities through championing public health and safety.

They improve climate resilience, energy efficiency, integrate sustainable design, renewable technologies and nature-based solutions to support the needs and sustainability of communities. As multifunctional assets, public spaces can improve wellbeing by providing connections to nature and opportunities for physical activity and social interactions.[2]

They are necessary features of sustainable urban living; serving a connective function within society for people living close to one another and making densification desirable.

They support local economies and create economic development opportunities that benefit communities. They also enhance livability of the local area and strengthen local communities' assets.[3]

In 2023, Evergreen conducted research on the public space landscape across Canada to better understand how cities are classifying and evaluating the performance of their public spaces. Through this, Evergreen identified the need for a clear and simple methodology for assessing the impact that strong public spaces have on individuals and communities. Being able to quantify the social impacts of our public places can enable evidence-based decision-making.

This tool has the potential to standardize how place-based organizations quantify social impact alongside traditional measures of economic development. This standardization on impact measurement will enable these organizations to compare their place-based initiatives and their impacts with other social infrastructure investments. It also supports the case for place—working to influence policy, engage decision-makers and unlock investment in social infrastructure.

The **Places4Wellbeing** tool aims to demonstrate how to transform public spaces in our cities for the health and subjective wellbeing of people and provide valuable evidence to advocate for investment in creating and maintaining great public places. This tool is designed to measure the subjective wellbeing of individuals aged 18 or older.

The tool was developed in collaboration with Davis Pier Consulting, which offers expertise in applying wellbeing economics in practice.
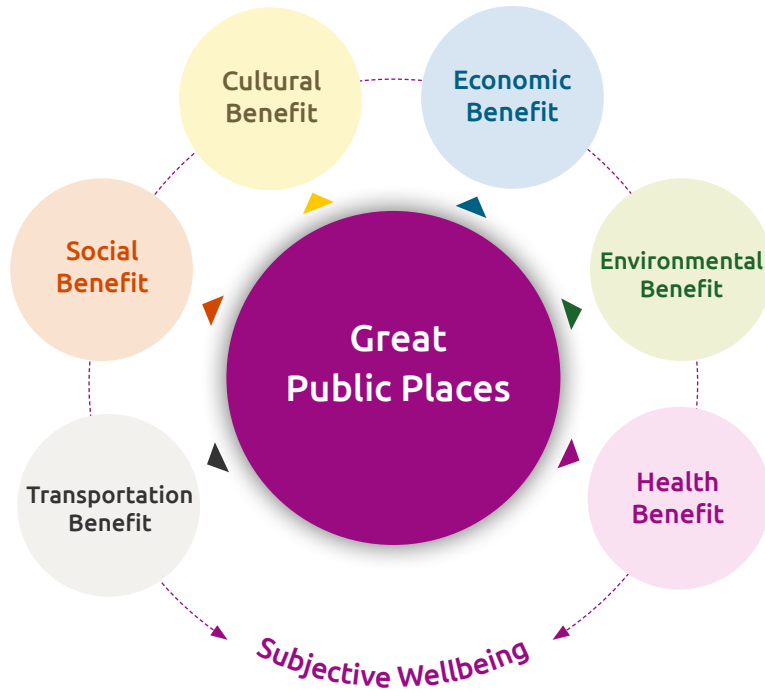
1.2 WHY MEASURE THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC PLACES

The Challenge: Measuring Impact

People and organizations that steward public places are well aware of their value and benefit. Showcasing the power of public place transformation and how it can impact people and their subjective wellbeing is critical to making the case for investment in public places. Community organizations that plan, develop and steward public places are increasingly expected to demonstrate the impact and value of their programs. Over the past decade, there has been a growing understanding that traditional tools for evaluating public policies often fail to capture the positive, non-monetary outcomes of public place initiatives. Where other public investments are quantified easily with economic benefits (i.e. infrastructure, health projects, etc.), the value of public places is less conducive to being captured by purely economic measures. Outcomes like community cohesion, sustainability and an increased sense of safety are often not measured by traditional economic indicators of progress. As a result, these positive outcomes are often undervalued when compared to other investments. This raises the question: **How can you measure the holistic impact of public places in people's lives in a quantifiable way?**

The Solution: Subjective Wellbeing Measurement

In recognition of this challenge, there has been an international push for the use of subjective wellbeing to better measure the true impact of policies and initiatives. The United Nations (UN), Organisation for Economic Co-operation (OECD) and Government

Cultural Benefit

Economic Benefit

Social Benefit

Environmental Benefit

Great Public Places

Transportation Benefit

Health Benefit

Subjective Wellbeing

of Canada, among many other international governments and organizations, have created recommendations and tools to support the increased use of subjective wellbeing measures to evaluate public policies. Great public places bring both direct and indirect benefits to individuals and their communities, so they are well suited to subjective wellbeing assessments.[4] This includes economic, environmental, health, transportation, social and cultural benefits, all of which significantly impact people's subjective wellbeing. These multi-faceted outcomes can and should be measured and considered when evaluating the benefits that place enhancement creates for a community.

This tool is designed to support organizations that develop public places.

The Innovation Behind This Tool:
Public Place Indicators for Subjective Wellbeing Impacts

Assessing if public places are positively impacting visitors' subjective wellbeing is good—but not enough. To uncover what exactly about a place is impacting people's subjective wellbeing, we need to identify which specific feature(s) of that public place programming contributes to increased happiness and life satisfaction among visitors. For that reason, this tool includes **Public Place Indicators** directly associated with the programming and features of place-based initiatives.

Places4Wellbeing

Subjective Wellbeing

Public Place Indicators

Social Cohesion and Interaction	Place Identity and Belonging
Community Co-Design	Anticipation to Return
Urban Green Spaces	Place-based Learning

Order of the survey questions

Sociodemographic Data
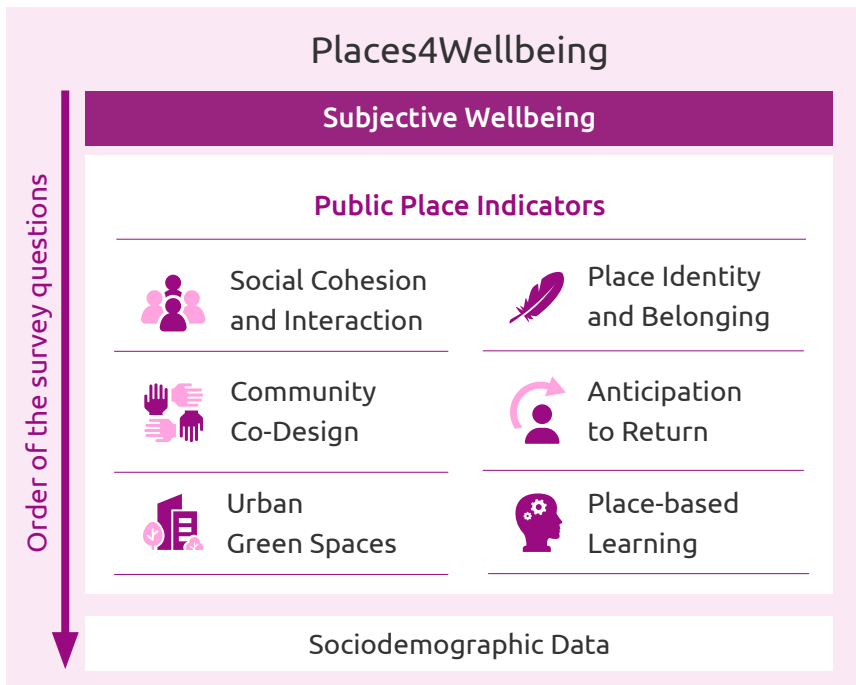
The use of these Public Place Indicators helps to pinpoint which specific features of a public space activation are connected to impacts on people's subjective wellbeing—this approach is what makes this tool unique.

Using a quantifiable metric of subjective wellbeing and tailored Public Place Indicators will allow you to identify which type of public place enhancements:

➡ Maximize individual and community wellbeing

➡ Decrease anxiety levels

➡ Improve feelings of individual purpose

Beyond individual and community insights, this approach to subjective wellbeing measurement will:

➡ Support the development and transformation of public spaces into the future

➡ Providing insights and quantifiable impacts that can influence decision-making around investment

➡ Prioritization of social infrastructure and place-based initiatives.

The next sections explain how this tool was developed and tested, and how you can use it to help you make the case for place.

SECTION ②

Subjective Wellbeing Measurement

Exploring the Concept: What is Subjective Wellbeing?

Subjective wellbeing measurement captures how people personally experience and evaluate their own lives. It consists of an individual's assessment of how they feel based on their preferences and desires, their physical and mental health and the circumstances in which they live.[5]

Wellbeing science is a relatively new and emerging interdisciplinary field. It builds on the evidence of long-standing fields of psychology, sociology, economics and statistics.

Though recent, an extensive body of research has already been generated and the use of subjective wellbeing measurement has gained significant global traction as a robust approach for assessing social welfare.

Governments and non-governmental organizations are steadily adopting subjective wellbeing metrics to gain a holistic understanding of the quality of life of their population, and which policies and programs are most effective for improving quality of life. A few recent examples include:

The United Kingdom (UK) government, which has been incorporating the Measuring Wellbeing Programme in their Annual Population Survey since 2011.[6]

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) developed the Better Life Index to assess life satisfaction.[7]

The partnership between Gallup and the Wellbeing for Planet Earth which convened the principles of wellbeing as part of the **Gallup World Poll of 2022**.[8]

The New Zealand government with the introduction of the Wellbeing Budget in 2019.[9]

Subjective wellbeing is a dynamic state—it will vary from person to person and across cultures. Research in this field has shown that subjective wellbeing has traditionally been influenced by Western perspectives and rooted in individualist cultures. However, in collectivist societies, subjective wellbeing often revolves around social relationships and a sense of shared purpose in life. From the perspective of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, Aotearoa (New Zealand) and the United States, subjective wellbeing encompasses the interconnectedness of health, land, culture and community.[10] Aligned with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) underlines the importance of cultural and community wellbeing as part of human rights and reconciliation efforts.[11] The strength of community relationships and the participation in cultural practices are crucial indicators for subjective wellbeing measurement among Indigenous communities. Evidence also demonstrates that engaging in cultural activities plays a crucial role in enhancing subjective wellbeing, showing that participation fosters a stronger sense of identity, social cohesion and individual purpose.

Acknowledging the nuances of different perspectives on subjective wellbeing is essential to understanding the impact of public places at the community level. **Our co-created approach provides a valuable lens to ensure these nuances are incorporated into measuring the impact of public places.**

Co-creating the Approach: A Team Effort

To develop Places4Wellbeing, Evergreen and Davis Pier used a collaborative, evidence-based approach, drawing insights from community practitioners and Evergreen's program leads, alongside scientific research and academic advisors. The goal was to develop a wellbeing framework to measure subjective wellbeing impacts of public space initiatives. Through primary and secondary research, Evergreen and Davis Pier developed a robust framework that is inclusive and reflective of perspectives of all community members to capture the true value of great public places.

All the knowledge gathered from both streams of evidence was leveraged to design this tool—grounding it in scientific methodologies while ensuring practical application to public space organizations and initiatives.

Understanding the Methodology: Essential Questions to Measure Wellbeing

If subjective wellbeing is defined as how we are doing as individuals and as communities, what are the questions we need to be asking to measure it?

Self-reported measures play a vital role in assessing wellbeing by providing valuable subjective insights that objective metrics alone cannot capture. Asking people how they are doing allows them to decide what is an accurate reflection of how they feel and integrate that in the evaluation of their wellbeing.

Multiple studies have shown that self-reported measures of wellbeing are reliable and valid.[12] These measures are also accessible and approachable for the general public and provide valuable data that policymakers and practitioners can use to make informed decisions.

Grounding Places4Wellbeing in an evidence-based lens, this tool utilizes the four standardized questions developed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as part of UK's Annual Population Survey and known as "ONS4", including life satisfaction, happiness, purpose (worthiness) and anxiety *(Table 1)*. This self-reporting measure allows for an approach to social impact assessment that is simple to understand, easy to conduct and scalable to account for broader implementation.

The ONS4 questions displayed in Table 1 comprehend the self-reported measure that will allow to assess subjective wellbeing.
These questions represent the core of the Places4Wellbeing tool—Subjective Wellbeing.

Table 1: United Kingdom's Office for National Statistics four standardized questions (ONS4) to measure subjective wellbeing	
Measure	**Question**
Life Satisfaction	**Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?** Not at all satisfied ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ Extremely satisfied
Worthwhile	**Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?** Not at all worthwhile ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ Extremely worthwhile
Happiness	**Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?** Not at all happy ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ Extremely happy
Anxiety	**Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?** Not at all anxious ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ Extremely anxious

SECTION ❸

A Subjective Wellbeing Framework for Public Places:

The Places4Wellbeing Tool

Building a measurement approach is not only about the output, but about the process, the thinking and the learning that happens along the way. The Places4Wellbeing tool is rooted in both practice and evidence to ensure the tool is both effective and appropriate. Testing is an important step in tool development in determining the tools' robustness and effectiveness. Understanding how the tool has been developed will help you apply the tool to your own initiative.

Developing Places4Wellbeing

To support the development of a well-informed tool, our approach was guided by the voices and perspectives of community practitioners (Phase 1) and included recommendations from research (Phase 2).

Phase 1: Engagements

Community Practitioners

Evergreen Program Leads

Phase 2: Literature Review

Scientific Research & Academic Advisors
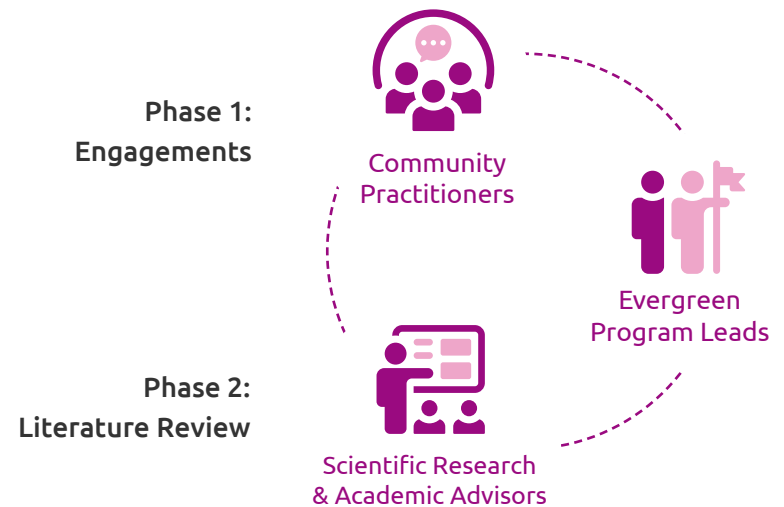
	Phase 1: Engagements	Phase 2: Literature Review
GOAL:	Learn from in-field perspectives on the purpose of public place initiatives, who they are developed for and what this tool be used for.	Gathering evidence on the relationship between dimensions of public place enhancement and how they contribute to improving people's wellbeing.
ACTIVITIES:	Interviews with community practitioners from across Canada who represented organizations with the mission of improving social infrastructure and public spaces. These conversations identified key features of active public places that are expected to impact people's lives such as: • **Intentionally designed places** that employ inclusive design practices to welcome and engage diverse audiences • **Safe spaces** to empower community connection and promote a sense belonging • **Green spaces** to enable connections to nature	Literature review covering peer-reviewed articles, academic publications, reports from internationally acknowledged wellbeing entities, case studies and studies on methodology and practical considerations for measuring wellbeing in public spaces. Key findings highlighted the relationship between public places and wellbeing, including: • Organizations that promote **participatory approaches** encounter a range of benefits, including building social capital and reaching populations at risk for lower levels of wellbeing[13] • Societies with higher trust levels and **social cohesion** among their members are happier and have higher levels of wellbeing[14] • The frequent use of **third spaces** that allow a community to gather outside of home or work promote **social connection** and improved life satisfaction[15] • Spaces that play a critical role in preserving **cultural identity promote sense of belonging** and enhance community wellbeing[16] • Greater proximity to **urban green spaces** has demonstrated significant wellbeing benefits[17] • Prioritizing the creation and revitalization of appealing, inclusive, and multifunctional public places can have lasting and positive **impact on local economies,** increasing economic activity, labour market participation, and overall quality of life in a community[18]
OUTCOME:	Our engagement with practitioners paved the way for a tool that integrates with the practicalities of the work and supports great public places.	A comprehensive understanding of the subjective wellbeing measurement field.

Wellbeing Measurement: Learnings from Worldwide Usability

Let's dig into some real-world examples of wellbeing measurement for active programming in public spaces.

Migrants' Wellbeing in Third Places (Canada)

Evidence has shown that Indian Canadian migrants' wellbeing is impacted by the lack of third places (neither home nor work spaces) that were considerate of social and cultural dualities. A recent study in smaller Canadian cities collected experiences of third places among adult migrants from 13 different countries and assessed how these relate to migrant wellbeing. From a qualitative perspective, this study captured how migrants pursue and even create their own unique third places in their communities to build connections to their cultural identity and seek opportunities to engage with the wider community.[19] This has demonstrated to increase their satisfaction, happiness and health benefits.

Neighbourhood Green Spaces (UK)

Using data from an Annual Population Survey, a UK study examined the influence of neighbourhood green space on resident's wellbeing with more than 25,000 adults. Holding respondents' socioeconomic and demographic characteristics constant, results indicated that each additional hectare of green space within 300 meters of home increased life satisfaction (0.81 points in a 10-point scale), feelings of worthwhileness (0.74 points in a 10-point scale) and happiness (0.52 points in a 10-point scale).[20]

Wellbeing Measurement: Learnings from the Literature

In addition to exploring the connection between public places and wellbeing, the literature review also uncovered methodological insights and practical considerations for wellbeing measurement.

Survey Purpose: Beyond Observation

From a methodological standpoint, we learned that a comprehensive measurement approach must consider both observable factors (e.g., objective measures like the number of library visits) and non-observable factors (e.g., subjective experiences like a visitor's emotional connection to the library). Using validated measures to assess wellbeing that are backed by research and based on evidence is necessary for a standardized and reliable evaluation.[21]

Learnings on practical considerations focused on best practices for survey design, how to setup data collection and how to do survey administration.[22]

Survey Design: Ordering the Questions

The order of the survey questions matter. Subjective wellbeing questions should be placed before key demographic questions in surveys to reduce the risk of personal characteristics and household questions impacting the response to wellbeing questions (see the sub-section implementing Places4Wellbeing for reference on *sociodemographic questions* to use on your application of the tool).

Survey Administration: Paper vs Digital

As the aim is to measure the impact of a physical place it is important to conduct the surveys on the site that is being evaluated.

There are benefits and challenges to every approach to survey administration, as well as literacy and accessibility requirements of the target population need to be prioritized. Approaches that include face-to-face engagements might be subject to response bias and social desirability.This refers to to the tendency for people to respond to questions guided by how they think they should respond rather than how they actually feel. Ultimately, choosing the best way to measure wellbeing is based on different factors, including available resources, data requirements and the characteristics of the respondents to be surveyed.

Paper surveys may be perceived as longer due to the physical presence of multiple pages or sections. Respondents may also view paper surveys as more inconvenient to complete due to the need for physical handling. On the contrary, surveys on digital platforms tend have interactive elements, such as drag-and-drop features or interactive sliders,which can make the survey experience more engaging and may mitigate perceptions of lengthiness.

Considering these factors, the current recommendation is to allow survey respondents to complete the survey autonomously through in-person interaction with a digital device while at the location where data collection takes place.

The learnings from the engagements and the literature review, combined with insights from ongoing input from Evergreen, helped uncover key public place features that have demonstrated a positive impact on individual and community wellbeing. These key features are the core of public place activation initiatives and have the potential to create meaningful impact in people's lives.

These are our Public Place Indicators:

	Place Identity and Belonging	Sense of place belonging, Sense of place identity
	Social Cohesion and Interaction	Sense of trust, Sense of safety, Interaction
	Community Co-design	Sense of involvement and engagement
	Urban Green Spaces	Connection to nature, Outdoors activities, Scenic quality
	Place-based Learning	Skill learning, Historic connection, Environmental literacy
	Anticipation to Return	Anticipation to return

Table 2: Public Place Indicators, descriptors, and respective questions to select from and include in your customized Places4Wellbeing tool

Public Place Indicator	This Indicator Entails	Questions to Include in Your Places4Wellbeing Tool *(10-point scale, 0 = completely disagree and 10 = completely agree)*
A Place Identity and Belonging	A1. Sense of place belonging A2. Sense of place identity	A1. I feel welcome in this place [23] A2. This place reflects my community [24]
B Social Cohesion and Interaction	B1. Sense of trust B2. Sense of safety B3. Interaction	B1. I feel like I can trust the people in this place [25] B2. I feel safe here [26] B3. This is the kind of place where I would like to meet new people [27]
C Community Co-design	C1. Sense of involvement and engagement	C1. I wanted to be involved in the development of this place C2. I feel like I have been/was part of the development of this place [28]
D Urban Green Spaces	D1. Connection to nature D2. Outdoors activities D3. Scenic quality	D1. I feel connected to nature here [29] D2. This place motivates me to do physical activities outdoors [30] D3. This place is visually appealing to me [31]
E Place-based Learning	E1. Skill learning E2. Historic connection E3. Environmental literacy	E1. By visiting this place, I have learned a new skill [32] E2. By visiting this place, I have learned something new about the historical context of this place [33] E3. By visiting this place, I have learned something new about the environment [34]
F Anticipation to Return	F1. Anticipation to return	F1. I look forward to coming back to this place in the future [35]

Using Places4Wellbeing

Combining these newly created Public Place Indicators with the ONS4 metrics is the core innovation of the Places4Wellbeing tool. As they identify which key programming features impact people's happiness, the Public Place Indicators—and their tailored application to the specific purposes of the public place being measured—are crucial for the successful implementation of this tool.

Selecting Public Place Indicators: The specificity of the public place initiative should guide the selection of the Public Place Indicators. This selection is to be made based on the programming activities to be conducted in the public place initiative. The purpose is to explore the links of these indicators to subjective wellbeing. To avoid creating a lengthy tool that causes potential survey fatigue for respondents, it is recommended to select between a maximum of 2 and 3 questions to include in your survey (see column 3 in *Table 2*). At the end of this toolkit, an interactive worksheet (*Appendix 1*) and a customization diagram (*Appendix 2*) are available to help integrate the most appropriate and applicable Public Place Indicators to your public place, programming and/or activation.

Selecting Sociodemographic Questions: Knowing who your place-based initiatives are impacting is as important as measuring those impacts. Including demographic questions as part of the Places4Wellbeing tool will enable exploration of potential correlations of personal characteristics of users with both Public Place Indicators and subjective wellbeing. At the end of this tool, you can also find recommendations on how to develop sociodemographic questions to include in your survey when using the Places4Wellbeing tool (see *Appendix 3*).

Testing Places4Wellbeing

Implementing the Places4Wellbeing tool to test its practical application in real public place scenarios enabled learning opportunities to expand the tool for broader application to public place initiatives.

The next section showcases the testing of Places4Wellbeing at the Evergreen Brick Works. It also provides an up-close look at the testing approach, a description of the test cases, a demonstration of the customization of Public Place Indicators, an overview of the testing design and a summarized outlook of the testing findings.

Step-by-Step Roadmap

Before diving into Evergreen's approach to apply and test the Places4Wellbeing tool, take a look at this Step-by-Step roadmap of what you will need to do to use Places4Wellbeing and develop your own case study. This Step-by-Step roadmap is a summary version of the detailed steps you can find at Section 5. How you can use Places4Wellbeing to learn about the wellbeing impacts of your activities. Consult *Section 5* for a more detailed guide on how to implement and test the Places4Wellbeing tool.

Step 1   Design Your Impact Evaluation

Select Initiative: Identify which initiative you will want to measure wellbeing impacts from—this will be your Impact Case.

Select Design: After selecting your Impact Case, you can choose one of two options:

- Comparison Design compares your public place intervention with a similar public place that has not undergone enhancement (Comparative Case)

- Before-and-After Design compares the same place before (Pre-Measure) and after a public place intervention was introduced (Post-Measure).

Step 2   Integrate the Wellbeing Questions in Your Survey

Start designing your survey by adding the Wellbeing questions (also known as ONS4). Make sure to include the questions on Life Satisfaction, Worthwhile, Happiness, and Anxiety in their standardized format (see *page 12*). These four questions will be the opening questions in your survey. After adding the ONS4, you will be ready to start customization!

Step 3   Complete the Worksheet

Tailor Your Survey: Complete the Worksheet (*Appendix 1*) to develop a customized survey for evaluating the public place initiative using the Places4Wellbeing tool.

Step 4   Set a Data Collection Target

Select a Sample Size Target: Estimate the sample size (i.e., number of survey responses) you will require using the Rules of Thumb (*Section 5*).

Step 5   Preparing for Data Collection

Select a Platform: Choose a survey platform for your data collection and set up your survey on the platform. See examples of available platforms you can choose from (*Section 5*).

Schedule Data Collection:
Set a time to collect responses from survey respondents.

Select a Gratification Form:
Provide an appropriate incentive for your survey respondents.

Identify Data Collectors:
Determine who in your team will collect the data responses.

Step 6   Collect Data

Select a location: Find a good spot to engage with potential respondents (see what you will need to consider at *Section 5*).

Step 7   Data Analysis

You have completed your data collection—now, is time to explore!

Conduct data analysis: Gather some statistic knowledge and perform the analysis (see a high-level overview of all the analysis step at *Section 5*).

Step 8   Share Your Places4Wellbeing Insights

Collect your main findings and share them with your community!

SECTION ④

Testing **Places4Wellbeing** at Evergreen Brick Works

4.1 TESTING PLACES4WELLBEING

Evergreen's Test Cases

Applying the developed tool to two real test cases provided an opportunity to test and refine the tool. It also served as a demonstration or "proof of concept" of how the Places4Wellbeing tool can be used.

To test Places4Wellbeing we compared the Evergreen Brick Works without activations (Comparison Case) to two programmed events at the Evergreen Brick Works: Earth Day 2024 (Impact Case 1) and the Saturday Farmers Market (Impact Case 2).

Comparison Case: **Evergreen Brick Works** is a revitalized former industrial site nestled in the heart of the Don River Valley Park in Toronto, ON, which provides a variety of activities such as self-guided tours, public art displays, local vendors markets and trails. For this measure, all Public Place Indicators were collected, so that it can serve as a comparison for any type of activation in the space.

Impact Case 1: **Earth Day** 2024 was celebrated at the Evergreen Brick Works with a full day of family-friendly workshops and activities that provided access to nature and promoted sustainability and care for the environment. Activities included site tours, film screenings, a photo exhibition, installations, nature-based art, learning stations about composting and recycling, a clothing swap, litter pick up and a DIY bike tune up station.

Impact Case 2: Open year-round, Evergreen's weekly **Saturday Farmers Market** is the largest farmers market in Toronto, connecting residents to over 60 local farmers, producers, chefs and entrepreneurs.

Based on the purpose of the events, the following Public Place Indicators were selected for each event:

Table 3: Selected Public Place Indicators and respective questions included in the Places4Wellbeing tool for each case		
Case	**Selected Public Place Indicators**	**Rational for Selection**
Comparison Case: Evergreen Brick Works General Visitor Experience	All Public Place Indicators: Place Identity and Belonging Social Cohesion and Interaction Community Co-Design Urban Green Spaces Place-based Learning Anticipation to Return	To allow for comparison of wellbeing impacts and outcomes from all the Public Place Indicators against any specific initiative at the Brick Works.
Impact Case 1: Earth Day	D1. I feel connected to nature here E1. By visiting Earth Day at Evergreen Brick Works, I have learned a new skill (e.g., gardening) E3. By visiting Earth Day at Evergreen Brick Works, I have learned something new about the environment F1. I look forward to coming back to Evergreen's Earth Day in the future	This initiative aims to facilitate connection to nature and promote sustainability and care for the environment to its visitors. In accordance with this purpose, the Public Place Indicators concerning connection to nature (D1), learning new and environmental-related skills (E1 and E3) as well as willingness to return (F1) were included in the survey.
Impact Case 2: Farmers Market	B1. I feel like I can trust the people in this place B3. This is the kind of place where I would like to meet new people F1. I look forward to coming back to Evergreen's Farmers Market in the future	This initiative aims to foster connection between people in Toronto and local farmers a nd producers. According to this, Public Place Indicators concerning the sense of trust in others (B1), willingness to meet new people (B3) and to return to the event (F1) were included in the survey.

Testing Steps

Data Collection

Choice of how to administer the survey—We used a digital approach to collect data on all the cases by using multiple tablets and the online platform, SurveyMonkey. To minimize the risk of response bias and social desirability, survey respondents were invited to respond to the survey autonomously by interacting with a tablet. Respondents were also offered the option to reply to a verbally conducted survey while the data collection team inserted their responses in the digital device. The data collection team remained available during survey completion to help respondents with technology and to clarify any questions.

A total of 122 responses were collected for the Evergreen Brick Works General Visitors Experience (from end of April to the end of May 2024), 102 responses for Earth Day (on April 20th 2024), and 126 responses for the Farmer's Market (on May 11th and 18th 2024).

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using Excel and began with cleaning the data to ensure integrity. A data summary was created to describe central tendency, variability and data distribution for the Evergreen Brick Works, Earth Day and Farmers Market responses, allowing for comparison of these populations and ensuring consistency.

Next, a regression analysis of cross-sectional data was performed, controlling for demographic factors. This methodology enabled us to identify how different levels of wellbeing (i.e., life satisfaction, sense of worth, happiness and anxiety) are influenced by public place features captured by the Public Place Indicators. We only included the respondents that had been at the site for 15 minutes or longer in our analysis to ensure they had a chance to experience the place.

Findings

Implementing the Places4Wellbeing tool on real test cases was an important step to determine its effectiveness and reliability in the future.

Average values of wellbeing in each case—Below are the average scores for each wellbeing component (life satisfaction, sense of worth, happuness and anxiety) of the visitors at each test case who reported being at the event for 15 minutes or longer.

Farmers Market attendees had the highest life satisfaction (average score of 7.72 based on a 10-point scale), worthwhileness (average score of 7.89) and happiness scores (average score of 7.45) and the lowest anxiety scores (which is considered positive; average score of 3.35) across all cases. When analyzed against the Comparison Case scores, Earth Day had the lowest scores of life satisfaction (7.36 against to 7.61 in Comparison), happiness (7.27 against 7.33 in Comparison) and worthwhileness (7.60 against 7.80 in Comparison), and higher anxiety scores (4.58 against 3.98 in Comparison).

However, there was no statistically significant relationship between attending the Farmers Market and wellbeing levels compared to the Comparison Case. The same was found when comparing Earth Day to the Comparison Case. In our limitations sections we will dive into why this might be the case.

Relations Between Public Place Indicators and Wellbeing in Each Test Case

Correlation coefficients describe the strength and direction of a relationship between two variables. A regression-based correlation analysis demonstrated the statistically significant positive relationships we found between Public Place Indicators and wellbeing indicators by event. These findings provide some insights into which specific features may influence wellbeing.

- Our test case results suggest that **finding a space visually appealing, feeling connected to nature, experiencing a sense of safety and looking forward to returning** to the place are correlated with higher **feelings of life satisfaction**.

- When it comes to happiness, they indicate that **feeling a place reflects your community and feeling connected to nature** are both correlated with higher **feelings of happiness**.

- Concerning worthwhileness, **learning a new skill, feeling connected to nature, experiencing a sense of trust**, perceiving the site as a **good place to meet people and looking forward to returning** to the place are correlated with higher **feelings of worthwhileness**.

Finding a space visually appealing

Feeling connected to nature

Experiencing a sense of safety

Looking forward to returning

Life Satisfaction

Feeling a place reflects your community

Feeling connected to nature

Happiness

Learning a new skill

Feeling connected to nature

Experiencing a sense of trust

Good place to meet people

Looking forward to returning

Worthwhileness

Test Cases Limitations

Using Evergreen Brick Works General Visitors Experience as a comparison did not provide a proper control measurement. Since the site remained the same and the only difference was in the active programming of the space, the effect size will likely be less pronounced in comparisons between events like Earth Day or the Farmers Market and public places without any intentional place-keeping features. Combined with the smaller sample size, this makes it challenging to identify a small but potentially significant effect, as there may not be enough data to distinguish these effects from random noise.

Overview of Learned Lessons from the Test Cases

The purpose of applying the Places4Wellbeing tool to Evergreen's test cases was to test this newly developed tool and assess its robustness and effectiveness on measuring quantifiable wellbeing impacts from real public place initiatives. Testing Places4Wellbeing across comparison and impact cases also resulted in learnings on how this tool can be applied to other place-based sites and initiatives to demonstrate their impacts.

These testing opportunities provide valuable information on what the future can look like for wellbeing measurement for both Evergreen and other organizations, enabling a deeper understanding on what other projects can maximize people's wellbeing and make the case for place.

4.2 LESSONS FOR APPLICATION

Experimental Design

Selecting a Comparison Case

Applying Places4Wellbeing in distinct settings allows for the comparison of wellbeing impacts of different contexts and public place initiatives. A comparison case is frequently used in scientific methodologies and refers to a measurement that aims to capture regular conditions (i.e., a space with no active programming implemented) to allow for a comparison of wellbeing impacts of existent or new projects being implemented. In Evergreen's test cases, the comparison condition referred to the general visitor's experience on weekdays at Evergreen Brick Works. As a vibrant multi-sensory oasis, this location has permanent key characteristics that contribute to the space being an immersive experience of community and sustainability, such as public art displayed through the site and public gardens accessible to all visitors. To enable a more robust experimental design, it is recommended to select a Comparison Case that is more reflective of regular conditions featuring a place that is lacking space-based interventions.

Incentive Selection

The incentive strategies that appeared most successful were the immediate and guaranteed forms of gratification. However, prompting visitors to respond to survey by affirming the existence of an immediate token of appreciation could also lead to a higher risk of individual biases and social desirability on responses to the survey.

Survey Structure and Content

Framing Survey Opening

Some respondents were surprised by questions about subjective wellbeing while completing the survey. This highlights the importance of clearly explaining the survey's purpose to potential participants and informing them that it aims to capture their feelings about general life experiences and quality of life. This would allow respondents to be more informed about the scope of the survey, without inducing further response bias.

Reflecting on Survey Length

Survey fatigue can impact the number of complete responses. This impact will be greater if more sociodemographic requirements are included. Collecting surveys from responses on digital devices with smaller screens also impacted completion experience negatively. As a mitigation strategy, it is essential to limit survey length by only incorporating key indicators and select devices with sufficient screen size.

Integrating Sociodemographic Questions

Sociodemographic questions included in the Places4Wellbeing tool were in the format of multiple-choice questions and referred to specific aspects about the respondent's visit (such as frequency, current visit duration, transportation method) and about the visitors and their households (including age, education, place of residence, presence of children in the household, annual household income, place of birth, ethnicity, ability status, gender identity). However, to avoid survey fatigue and drop-outs, our recommendation is to only incorporate the questions about the visitors and their household (as these will serve as controls for the data analysis) and include the current visit duration.

Survey Administration

Delivering Informed Consent

Informed consent is a fundamental ethical requirement in research, ensuring that people are fully aware of what they are agreeing to participate in. As we mentioned above, some respondents were surprised by questions about subjective wellbeing while completing the survey. Therefore, it is important to not only include the purpose of the research in the informed consent form, which many people scroll through without fully reading, but also verbally informing them that the survey aims to capture their feelings about general life experiences and quality of life. At the end of this tool, an informed consent template is provided as a recommended resource (see *Appendix 4*).

Supporting Survey Respondents

Some respondents might require further clarity or help to understand the meaning of some questions and respective response categories (for example, categories regarding gender identity). It's key that the data collection team can clarify any questions and is advised to remind respondents that they can skip any questions they do not feel comfortable answering.

Internet Connection

To provide respondents with digital survey access, some platforms might require internet access. For Evergreen's test cases, lack of connection when distant from active infrastructures was an issue. To mitigate the risk of lack of survey accessibility, a survey station was created. This included a physical space exclusively dedicated to survey completion with a laptop and a data collection team member fully dedicated to facilitating respondents' experience on survey completion. The use of SIM cards and hotspot use were also identified as potential strategies to further mitigate this risk.

Interacting with Digital Devices

One of the identified challenges during outdoor survey engagements was ensuring visual accessibility. To address this issue, it is essential to utilize the maximum brightness setting on the devices.

Future Directions

The purpose of subjective wellbeing metrics is to demonstrate a holistic understanding of how policies, projects and initiatives—including place-based initiatives—impact citizens' wellbeing. The initial approach for this is to compare the average reported wellbeing of those impacted by the initiative (impact cases) relative to those who are not impacted (comparison case) while controlling the impact of factors such as age, gender and ethnicity in these calculations.

When this analysis shows a statistical relationship between your initiative and wellbeing you can equate the welfare changes with a monetary equivalent by calculating the dollar value of subjective wellbeing generated per year. This approach provides insights on the social return of investment (SROI) of that initiative. The SROI can be used in budget requests to demonstrate the monetary value of place-based initiatives, informing funding acquisition strategies and supporting your case for place. For this, the relationship between income changes and changes in wellbeing would inform the estimated monetary value associated with wellbeing improvements. By incorporating subjective wellbeing measures into economic valuations, we can achieve a more nuanced understanding of how income changes impact overall life satisfaction and happiness, ultimately leading to better-informed place-based programs that prioritize the welfare of people.

Since the application of the Places4Wellbeing tool enables these calculations, future guidelines on how to operationalize this approach will be developed and individualized guidance can be provided by *Davis Pier*.

SECTION ⑤

Using **Places4Wellbeing** to Learn about Wellbeing Impacts of Your Activities

Now that you've learned about how the Places4Wellbeing tool has been applied at Evergreen Brick Works, **let's use it to measure the impact of one of your initiatives**. The Places4Wellbeing tool is meant to help you quantify the wellbeing impacts of your public place initiative. When you use this tool for multiple initiatives it can help you uncover which features of your initiatives are having the greatest wellbeing impacts.

Step 1	Design Your Impact Evaluation
Step 2	Integrate the Wellbeing Questions in Your Survey
Step 3	Complete the Worksheet
Step 4	Set a Data Collection Target
Step 5	Preparing for Data Collection
Step 6	Collect Data
Step 7	Data Analysis
Step 8	Share Your Places4Wellbeing Insights
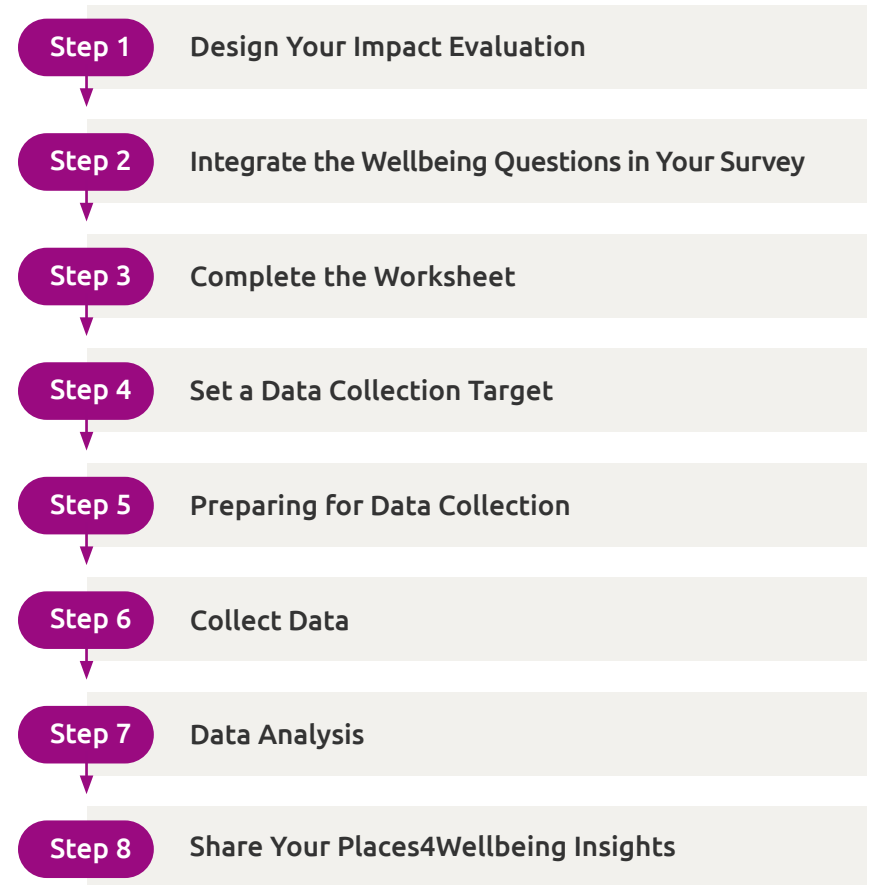
Step 1 **Design Your Impact Evaluation**

The first step will be to determine which initiative to measure wellbeing impacts. Once you know which initiative you would like to evaluate, it is time to determine the study design. The Places4Wellbeing tool can be used in two ways:

Option1: Compare a site with intentional public place design features to a place without those elements (Comparison Case).

Option 2: Assess the same place at two different points in time. This approach can be used if you know you are going to make changes to a place and are able to conduct a survey both before nd after the public place enhancement.

Step 2 **Integrate the Wellbeing Questions in Your Survey**

Start designing your survey by adding the Wellbeing questions (also known as ONS4). Make sure to include the questions on Life Satisfaction, Worthwhile, Happiness, and Anxiety in their standardized format (see page 10). These four questions will be the opening questions in your survey. After adding the ONS4, you will be ready to start customization!

Step 3 **Complete the Worksheet**

Develop a customized survey for evaluating the public place initiative using the Places4Wellbeing tool (See *Appendix 1*). When going through the worksheet, consider who you would like to involve. For example, program staff who have a deep understanding of the initiative's goals. If available, you may also include monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and/or research staff.

Step 4 **Set a Data Collection Target**

Sample size is the number of completed responses your survey receives. It represents the target population of visitors to your place. One of the most frequent problems when undertaking an evaluation is the determination of the appropriate sample size. Some guiding principles to consider when setting your target sample size:

1. A larger sample increases the statistical power of the evaluation.

2. For a given sample size, power is maximized when the sample is equally split between the Impact Case and Comparison Case.

3. Have at least 10 to 15 observations per variable included in your linear regression analysis, which will include the ONS4, your selected Public Place Indicators and any demographic questions you will use as a control variable. Control variables are variables that researchers include in a model to account for potential confounding effects. An important variable to control for is income, as it has a well-documented direct impact on wellbeing.

Step 5 **Preparing for Data Collection**

- Determine which survey platform you will use for your data collection and set up your survey on the platform. Examples of survey platforms are SurveyMonkey, Simple Survey and Qualtrics. It is important to test your survey prior to data collection—ask team members who are not involved in the evaluation to test your survey.

- Plan the timing of your data collection, aiming to keep conditions between your comparison and impact measurements as consistent as possible. Take into account factors such as weather, day of the week, time of day and events going on in the area.

- Selecting an appropriate incentive for your research participants is crucial for maximizing participation rates. Incentives can include gift cards, merchandise or entry into a raffle. Immediate rewards may motivate participation more effectively.

- The Places4Wellbeing tool collects personal information, which refers to any data that can describe or relate to an individual, but not necessarily identify them directly. Therefore, it is important to have a plan for how you will safely handle and store the data ensuring compliance with your organization's data privacy laws, regulations and internal policies. Include details of this plan in the consent form provided to survey participants. The consent form should cover the following key points:

  Purpose of the survey: Explain why the survey is being conducted and how the collected data will be used.

Data storage: Indicate where the data will be stored and the security measures in place.

Data access: Clarify who will have access to the data and whether it will be shared with any other organizations.

Contact information: Provide clear instructions on how survey participants can contact you with any questions or concerns.

Depending on how you set up your incentive (i.e. a draw), your tool might include personal identifiable information such as name and email. Including identifiable information means that your survey is not anonymous; the respondents can be identified by your team.

You can use the informed consent template provided in *Appendix 4* as your starting point to draft your own informed consent form.

- Determine who in your team will collect the data responses. Have a kickoff with your team to make sure that each team member is familiar with the survey, knows how to approach people, understands the informed consent process and is comfortable collecting data in a public setting. We also recommend that you role-play the data collection, so that each person can practice beforehand. A template of the framing used for Evergreen's comparison case can be found below—you can use this example to tailor this approach to your initiative:

"Hello, my name is X and I am a Program Coordinator at Evergreen. We are conducting a survey to learn more about your general life experiences and quality of life, and to know more about the impacts of Evergreen Brick Works on people who are visiting this place."

Step 6 **Collect Data**

Respondents Criteria
As this is a framework built for adults, make sure all potential survey respondents are 18 years or older.

Location
Finding a good spot for your data collection will increase the likelihood of participation. Some considerations:

- High traffic: Select a part of the location that experiences high traffic to maximize the number of potential respondents.

- Proximity to entrance: Avoid positioning yourself near the entrance, as people just arriving have not had a chance to experience the space. Instead, choose a spot where people have already spent some time and are more settled.

- Seating areas: Areas with seating are ideal, as people who are seated are generally more relaxed and likely to respond positively to your request. Avoid areas where people are in a rush and less likely to engage.

Safety Considerations
Always remember, you and your team's safety are a top priority. We recommend that you always have at least two people collecting data and that they stick together as a team. Sometimes people can react strongly to questions they are being asked. You can remind them that all questions are optional and that they can stop the survey at any point.

Step 7 **Data Analysis**

Congratulations, you completed the data collection! Now it is time to analyze the data. It will be helpful to have someone on your team who has intermediate knowledge of statistics, so that they can handle the analysis. Below is a high-level overview of all the analysis steps using Microsoft Excel:

1) **Export Your Data**
   Log into the data collection platform, select the relevant data file(s) and select the Excel export option.

2) **Original Data and Analysis Preparation**
   Save the original data set(s) and remove any personal identifiers (e.g., IP address).

3) **Recoding and Handling Missing Data**
   Standardize data, convert text to numerical, conditional format to replace missing data by averages and enable regression analysis.

4) **Detect and Handling Outliers**
   Use conditional formatting to highlight outliers and decide on using or correcting outliers based on context.

5) **Standardize Data**
   Ensure consistency in data formatting and manually re-code data if necessary.

6) **Align and Merge Datasets**
   Ensure compatibility when merging and create a master dataset for analysis of all the initiatives.

7) Descriptive Statistics

Summarize and describe the main features of the data. Specific summary statistics can be calculated in isolation.

8) Frequency Counts

Use count functions to draw response frequencies.

9) Regression Analysis

Explore relations between public place features variables and wellbeing variables including correlations and potential causality. For the regressions the wellbeing variables and Public Place Indicators are included as the dependent variables and the impact and comparison cases as independent variable coded in a binary fashion with your impact case being "1" and your comparison case being "0". Make sure to include controls when running your regressions.

Step 8   **Share Your Places4Wellbeing Insights**

Collect your main findings and share them with your community!

HOW WE CAN HELP

This tool was designed to empower you to apply Places4Wellbeing to your work and activities. By leveraging the resources provided, you can take a first step towards demonstrating the holistic impact of better public spaces on your community. Of course, you're not in it alone! If you have questions about the tool—or if you're interested in learning more about Davis Pier's approach and impact, get in touch.

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Appendix 1: Worksheet: Build Your Survey Using the Places4Wellbeing Tool

What is it?

This worksheet is a resource to help you select key questions and build your own customized survey using the Places4Wellbeing tool. It aims to help you to select the Public Place Indicators that are the most suitable for the space-based initiative for which you want to measure wellbeing impacts.

How does it work?

This worksheet is meant to be used as a step-by-step resource. As you engage with it, you will be able to identify which questions to include in your survey related to the Public Place Indicators selected (see *Table 1*).

To assemble your customized Places4Wellbeing tool, make sure you use the template for informed consen (*Appendix 4*) and the suggestions to develop adequate sociodemographic questions (*Appendix 3*).

Step 1: Reply to the questions provided. Make sure that your responses reflect a specific initiative that you are interested in measuring.

Step 2: Review your answers and ensure they reflect the features of your initiative that you expect to be drivers of wellbeing impacts.

Step 3: Use the **Places4Wellbeing Customization Diagram** to see what questions the worksheet recommends including in your survey according to the responses you provided.

Step 4: After reviewing your results using the Places4Wellbeing Customization Diagram, please consider the following recommendations accordingly:

If you have more than 3 questions to include in your survey, we encourage you to select the top 3 questions that relate the most to the purpose and scope of your initiative. This will help prevent survey fatigue of respondents and increase the potential to collect from more respondents.

If you have between 1 and 3 questions to include in your survey, you are ready to go!

Question 1

What is the name of the public place initiative you are looking to evaluate?

Question 2

What are the top 3 objectives of your initiative that you expect will have a positive impact on users' lives?

Objective 1:
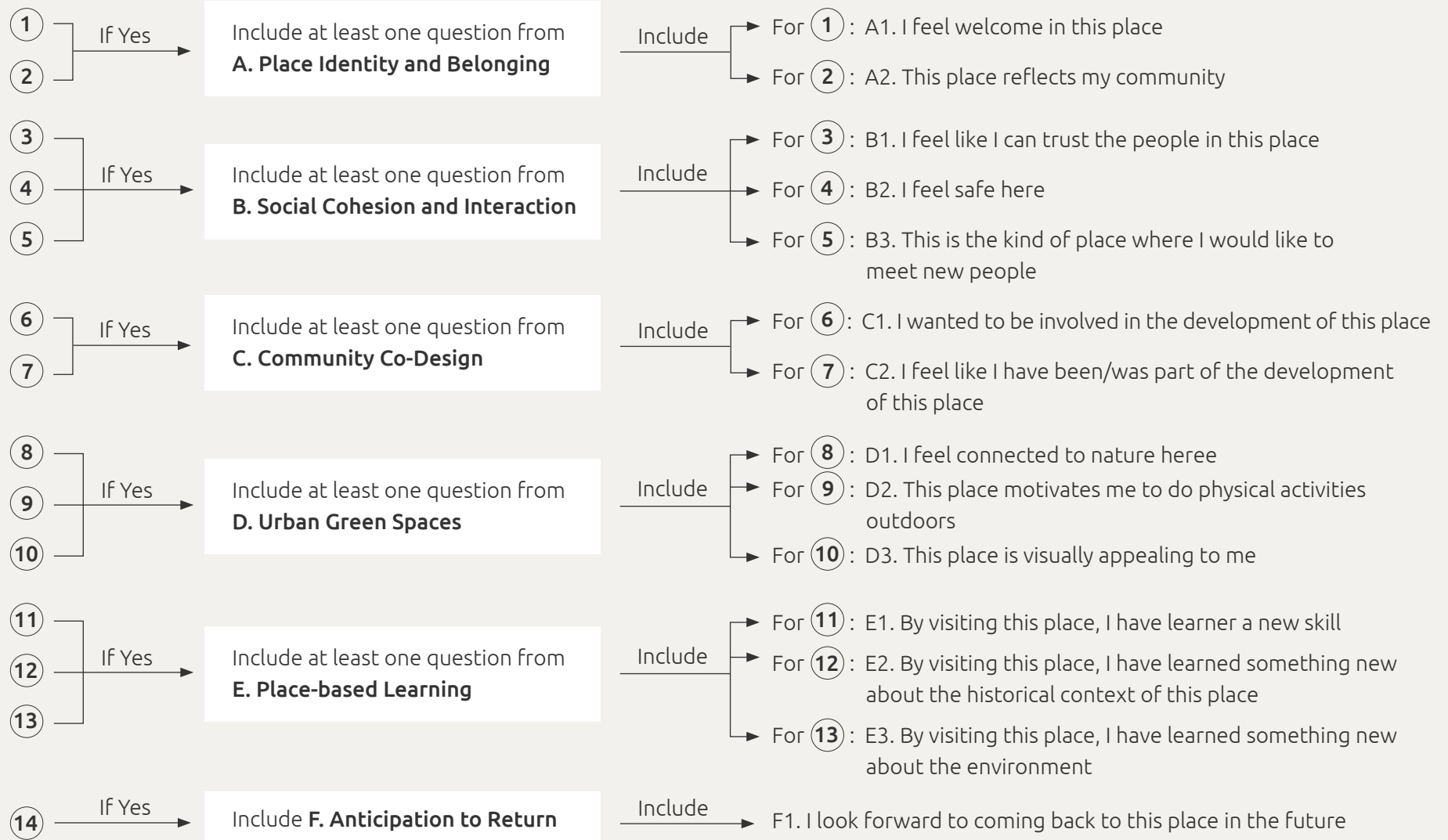
Objective 2:

Objective 3:

Question 3

Thinking about all the main features and characteristics of your initiative, is your initiative about:

①	Making people feel they are welcomed and accepted?	Yes	No
②	Making a place inclusive and empowering a community to feel seen?	Yes	No
③	Making people feel they can trust in one another?	Yes	No
④	Creating a safe space for people?	Yes	No
⑤	Enabling people to make new connections and relationships with others?	Yes	No
⑥	Developing a place collaboratively with and for community members?	Yes	No
⑦	Making people feel they were part of the development of your initiative?	Yes	No
⑧	Enabling or increasing people's connection with nature and environmental elements	Yes	No
⑨	Motivating people to be more active outdoors?	Yes	No
⑩	Increasing the visual beauty of a place?	Yes	No
⑪	Allowing people to learn a new skill?	Yes	No
⑫	Allowing people to learn about the historical context of a place?	Yes	No
⑬	Allowing people to learn about the environment?	Yes	No
⑭	Motivating people to come back to a place?	Yes	No

Appendix 2: Places4Wellbeing Customization Diagram

Answers from Question 3 in Appendix 1:

① ② — If Yes → Include at least one question from **A. Place Identity and Belonging** — Include → For ① : A1. I feel welcome in this place
For ② : A2. This place reflects my community

③ ④ ⑤ — If Yes → Include at least one question from **B. Social Cohesion and Interaction** — Include → For ③ : B1. I feel like I can trust the people in this place
For ④ : B2. I feel safe here
For ⑤ : B3. This is the kind of place where I would like to meet new people

⑥ ⑦ — If Yes → Include at least one question from **C. Community Co-Design** — Include → For ⑥ : C1. I wanted to be involved in the development of this place
For ⑦ : C2. I feel like I have been/was part of the development of this place

⑧ ⑨ ⑩ — If Yes → Include at least one question from **D. Urban Green Spaces** — Include → For ⑧ : D1. I feel connected to nature heree
For ⑨ : D2. This place motivates me to do physical activities outdoors
For ⑩ : D3. This place is visually appealing to me

⑪ ⑫ ⑬ — If Yes → Include at least one question from **E. Place-based Learning** — Include → For ⑪ : E1. By visiting this place, I have learner a new skill
For ⑫ : E2. By visiting this place, I have learned something new about the historical context of this place
For ⑬ : E3. By visiting this place, I have learned something new about the environment

⑭ — If Yes → Include **F. Anticipation to Return** — Include → F1. I look forward to coming back to this place in the future

Note that all items are measured on a 10-point scale, 0 = not at all satisfied and 10 = extremely satisfied.

Appendix 3: Suggestions for the Development of Sociodemographic Questions

Below is a set of suggested categories and respective resources that can be explored for the development of sociodemographic questions we recommend including in your survey.

About your visit to [insert initiative name]
When conducting an impact measure, it is important to ensure that your respondents had a chance to experience the place. We suggest including a question that asks how long they have been at the initiative. For ease of analysis, provide specific time intervals as response options. This approach allows you to include only those respondents who have spent the minimum required time to fully experience the initiative, while excluding those who have been involved for a shorter duration.

About you and your household
Collecting socio-demographic data is essential for understanding who participated in your survey, which aids in interpreting the results. Additionally, this data allows you to control for confounding variables when conducting wellbeing impact analyses, ensuring more accurate outcomes. Below is an overview of the sociodemographic questions we recommend including in your survey.

Note that some participants may feel uncomfortable to answer personal questions, therefore we recommend providing for an option to not respond the question (e.g., option Prefer not to say) for all sociodemographic data questions.

Age
Having a blank space to be filled by the respondents with their age is recommended.

Education Level
We suggest having pre-defined response categories. A detailed breakdown can be found and consulted at the *2016 Census Dictionary* and an example can be explored at the *Education Reference Guide 2016*.

Place of Residence and Place of Birth
Knowing the place of residence of your respondents and/or their place of birth might be useful for analysis interpretation. You can provide for categories that identify if your respondents live and/or were born in Canada and in the same province or regional area of the initiative you are evaluating. We recommend having an option where respondents can identify if they live and/or were born outside the country as well.

Annual Household Income
Income is one of the most important variables to control for the analysis as it is strong predictor of wellbeing.

For categorized response options on annual household income (from all sources, including government assistance, before tax and other deductions), we recommend using the *Federal Income Tax Brackets*. Categorized options make it easier for respondents to select their income range without needing to disclose specific figures. This can reduce hesitation or discomfort, leading to higher response rates and more accurate data.

Ethnicity

Providing for inclusive categories that accurately reflect respondents' ethnic or cultural origins is important. We recommend using the *Ethnic or Cultural Origin Reference Guide from the Census of Population 2021*.

Gender Identity

When establishing a response scale for gender identity, it is crucial to create categories that are inclusive and equitable to reflect the diverse experiences and identities of all individuals. Inclusive categories ensure that everyone can see themselves represented and respected in the options provided, which fosters a sense of belonging and validation. Equitable categorization also helps to eliminate biases that might marginalize or exclude certain gender identities, promoting a more just and accurate understanding of gender diversity. By prioritizing inclusivity and equity in these categories, we not only acknowledge the complexity and fluidity of gender but also uphold the dignity of all individuals.

Presenting gender identity categories, as the presented in the Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan 2022, is advised. We also recommend that questions concerning gender identity should be accompanied by the definitions of the designations, to provide for further understanding if required.

Appendix 4: Template for Informed Consent

Welcome to the survey!

Purpose of the survey
We are conducting a survey to learn more about your general life experiences and quality of life, and to know more about the impacts of the [insert name of the initiative] on people who are visiting this space.

How much time will it take to participate?
The survey should take between [insert minimum and maximum survey completion time] minutes.

Do I have to participate?
No, your participation is voluntary and there are no right or wrong answers. This means you can choose to not participate or stop the survey at any point.

What will be done with my information?
If you participate in this survey, [insert name of the organization(s) responsible for the application of the Places4Wellbeing tool] will collect, use, and disclose your personal information to research the impact of public spaces on people visiting them.

How will my information be stored?
Your personal information and responses are confidential. This means that your information will not be shared with third parties. All research records will be stored securely and only [responsible organization(s) that will lead the application of the Places4Wellbeing] will have access to these records.

Is there any compensation available for my participation?
When you complete the survey, you will receive [insert incentive] from [insert name of the organization(s) responsible for the application of the Places4Wellbeing tool].

Informed consent
Do you consent to participating in this survey?

Please note that by selecting "Yes", you are indicating you have read and understood the information on the previous page and agree to participate in this survey.

> Yes – I agree to participate.

> No – I do NOT agree to participate.

Appendix 5: Survey Example

This is an example of what the Places4Wellbeing can look like when applied to a specific initiative.

For illustrative purposes, this is a survey template of the tool applied to the Impact Case 1 (Earth Day at Evergreen Brick Works).

The customization of the tool is highly specific to the context of the initiative to which it aims to be applied. The most adequate sociodemographic survey questions will be the ones that are tailored to the initiative you intend to measure.

Consent Form
Each survey will start off with a welcome and a consent form. You can find an informed consent template in *Appendix 4*.

Part 1 | Wellbeing Questions

1.1 Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Not at all satisfied								Extremely satisfied			Prefer not to say

1.2 Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Not at all satisfied								Extremely satisfied			Prefer not to say

1.3 Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Not at all satisfied								Extremely satisfied			Prefer not to say

1.4 Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Not at all satisfied								Extremely satisfied			Prefer not to say

Part 2 | Public Place Indicators

Please select how much you agree with the following statements:

2.1 I feel connected to nature here.

```
   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
Not at all                    Extremely      Prefer
satisfied                     satisfied    not to say
```

2.2 By visiting the Earth Day event, I have learned a new skill
     (e.g., gardening, composing, recycling).

```
   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
Not at all                    Extremely      Prefer
satisfied                     satisfied    not to say
```

2.3 By visiting the Earth Day event, I have learned something new
     about the environment.

```
   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
Not at all                    Extremely      Prefer
satisfied                     satisfied    not to say
```

2.4 I look forward to coming back to the Earth Day event in the
     future.

```
   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
Not at all                    Extremely      Prefer
satisfied                     satisfied    not to say
```

Part 3 | About your Visit

3.1 How long have you been at Evergreen's Earth Day today?

    0 to 15 minutes

    15 minutes to 1 hour

    More than 1 hour

    Prefer not to say

Part 4 | Sociodemographic Questions

4.1 How old are you? _____ Years.
     (If you would prefer not to say, please enter 0.)

4.2 What is your highest level of formal education?

    Elementary school (PK–Grade 6)

    Junior-high school (Grade 7–9)

    High school (Grade 10–12)

    Post-secondary certificate, trade, or apprenticeship

    College diploma

    University degree (e.g., BA, BSc)

    Graduate degree (e.g., MA, MSc, PhD)

    Professional degree (e.g., Medicine, Law, Dentistry)

    Prefer not to say

4.3 Where do you live?

> Toronto
>
> Elsewhere in the Greater Toronto Area
>
> Elsewhere in Ontario
>
> Elsewhere in Canada
>
> Another country (please specify):
>
> (If you prefer not to say, please enter N/A)
>
> Prefer not to answer

[CONDITIONAL] For those who selected 'Toronto' in the previous question, further options are:

4.4 Please indicate the first 3 digits of your postal code:

> (If you prefer not to say, please enter N/A)

4.5 Which category best describes your annual household income (from all sources, including government assistance, before tax and other deductions)?

> $49,020 or less
>
> $49,020 to $98,040
>
> $98,040 to $151,978
>
> $151,978 to $216,511
>
> $216,511 or more

Answering this question will help us better understand how income impacts access to public spaces as well as how it impacts your general life experiences. Your response will be confidential.

4.6 Were you born in Canada?

> Yes
>
> No
>
> Prefer not to answer

[CONDITIONAL] Only to be asked if the respondents selected 'no' for the previous question:

4.7 If you were not born in Canada, have you moved to Canada within the last five years?

> Yes, I moved here within the last five years
>
> No, I moved to Canada more than five years ago

4.8 Which of the following ethnic or racial categories best describes how you self-identify? (Select all that are appropriate):

> Arab
>
> Asian
>
> Black
>
> Hispanic
>
> Indigenous
>
> Jewish
>
> Latino/Latina/Latinx/Latine
>
> Middle Eastern/North African (MENA)
>
> Multiracial
>
> Pacific Islander
>
> White

Prefer to self-describe:

Prefer not to answer

[CONDITIONAL]

For those who select Asian, the further options are:

East Asian (e.g. Chinese, Japanese, Korean)

South Asian (e.g. East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)

Southeast Asian (e.g. Indonesian, Thai, Vietnamese)

Prefer to self-describe:

Prefer not to answer

[CONDITIONAL]

For those who select Indigenous, the further options are:

Alaskan (e.g. Iñupiak, Yupik, Aleut, Eyak, Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, Northern Athabaskan)

First Nations

Inuit

Māori

Métis

Mexican

Oceania

Prefer to self-describe:

Prefer not to answer

[CONDITIONAL]

For those who select Jewish, the further options are:

Ashkenazi

Ethiopian

Mezrahi

Sephardi

Prefer to self-describe:

Prefer not to answer

4.9 Do you identify as 2SLGBTQIA+?

[2SLGBTQIA+ to have full description displayed, with the following text:

Stands for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and additional sexual orientations and gender identities.]

Yes

No

Prefer not to answer

4.10 How would you describe yourself? (Select all that are appropriate)

Gender-fluid

Man (cisgender man: man whose gender identity corresponds to their sex assigned at birth)

Man (transgender)

Non-binary

Questioning

Two-Spirit

Woman (cisgender woman: woman whose gender identity corresponds to their sex assigned at birth)

Woman (transgender)

Other(s):   (please specify)

Prefer not to say

Gender-fluid: A person whose gender identity varies over time and may include male, female and non-binary gender identities.

Transgender: A person whose gender identity is different from the gender typically associated with their sex assigned at birth.

Non-binary: A person whose gender identity does not align with a binary understanding of gender such as man or woman. It is a gender identity which may include man and woman, androgynous, fluid, multiple, no gender, or a different gender outside of the "woman—man" spectrum.

Two-Spirit: The term Two-Spirit has been used in different contexts and can have a number of meanings. In some cases, Two-Spirit is used as an umbrella term by Indigenous people who also identify with another gender identity. The term is also often used to refer to the specific cultural and community roles that Two-Spirit people play as individuals who are understood in many Indigenous traditions to embody both male and female energies.

Thank you!
Thank you for completing this survey! We hope you enjoy your receiving your [insert description of token of appreciation for respondents' time and investment in survey completion]!

If you would like to know more about the research or have any questions or concerns, please contact us at [insert email available for respondents to reach out if looking for more information]!

About Davis Pier

Davis Pier is a Canadian consulting and social impact agency that solves complex government and social challenges. They work across government, healthcare, and community-based service providers to drive meaningful outcomes for people.

Davis Pier leverages human-centered approaches to design and implement improved policy and programs in collaboration with clients and community. Their projects span from large-scale government transformations to community-based collaborations—all with a focus on delivering better results for those most in need.

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About Evergreen

Evergreen is a national non-profit transforming public spaces in our cities to build a healthier future for people and our planet.

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Places4Wellbeing:

Measuring Subjective Wellbeing Impacts of Public Places

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