



Canadian Archaeological Association
Association canadienne d'archéologie

Pathways for locating unmarked graves

CAA WORKING GROUP ON UNMARKED GRAVES

Respectful practices

RECOGNIZE

Recognize emotional impacts

FOLLOW

Follow community lead

HONOUR

Honour the importance of ceremony

INCLUDE

Include oral history & Indigenous knowledge

CLARIFY

Clarify expectations and possibilities

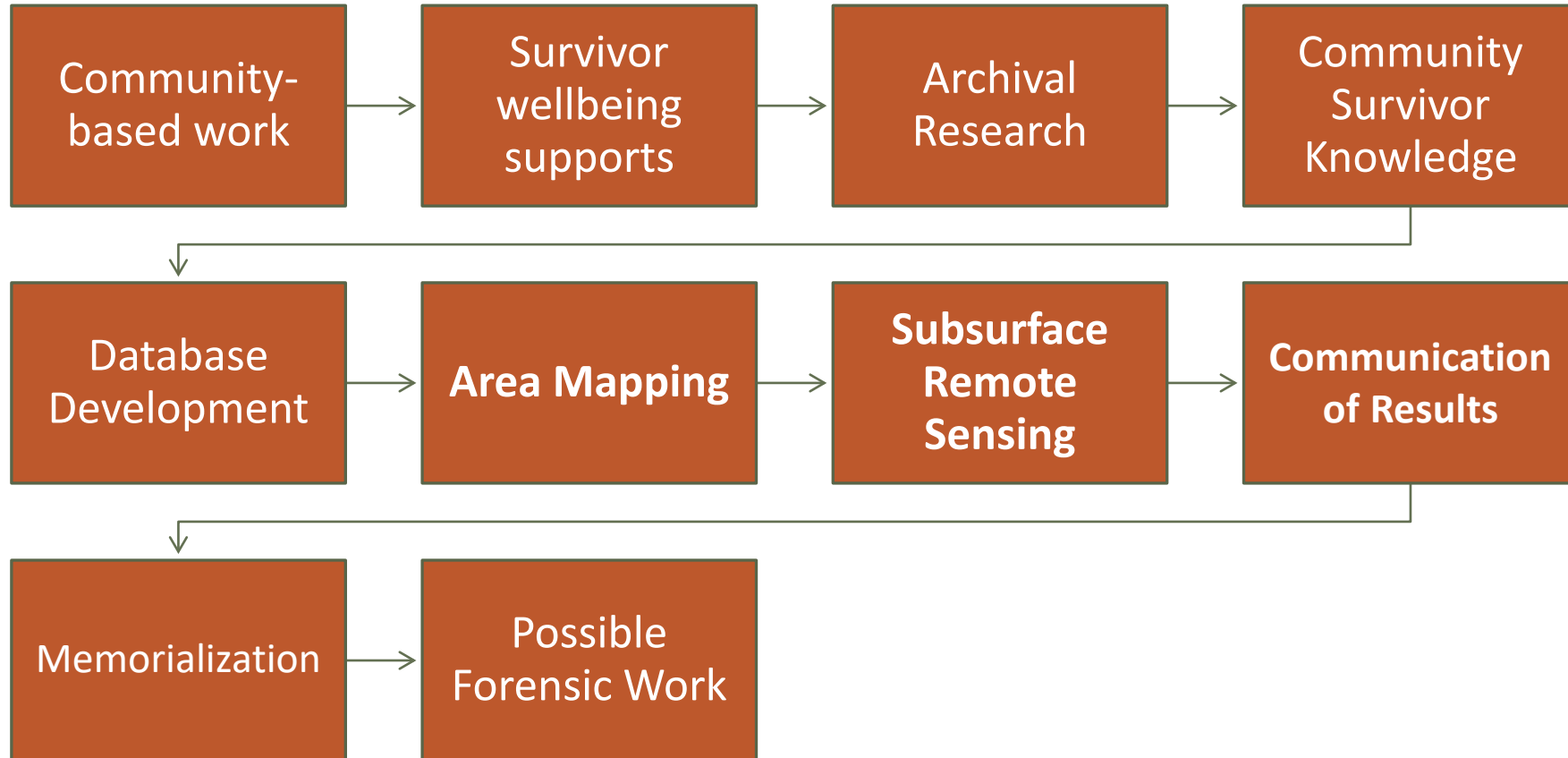
PROVIDE

Provide results as quickly as possible

DEVELOP

Develop clear data agreements

Pathways



Community-based work

- Appropriate permissions, protocols, ceremonies
- TRC recommends most impacted community lead; all communities with children at school involved in decision-making
- Training
- Scope of work agreement for each community




Well-being supports

- Efforts to locate missing children likely to re-traumatize survivors
- All necessary supports should be in place





Archival Research

- Information on location of missing children exists in archival records
 - Records held by communities, NCTR, governments, churches
 - Collection and analysis of archival documents & maps, building plans
 - Development of secure and accessible archives – OCAP principles
 - Implement long-term storage plans for archival data
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Survivor Knowledge

- Many survivors have knowledge of location of missing children
- Develop and implement appropriate recording protocols
- Provide survivors and their families with necessary supports







Spatial Database development

- Development of secure system for storing, analyzing and displaying a range of evidence linked to spatial information
- Typically done using a Geographical Information System (GIS)





Area Mapping

- Area around schools has often changed over time - need to know land use history
 - Compile info on local geology
 - Compile recorded impacts – construction, prior archaeological work etc
 - Create detailed surface topographic map of area
 - Walkover survey to locate former building layout and select priority areas for remote sensing
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Remote sensing

- Range of techniques that can help to establish the location of graves without disturbing ground surface
- e.g. GPR





Communication of results

- Report (written and verbal) to communities once work complete
 - Should include:
 - survey design
 - data collection methods
 - identified anomalies
 - interpretive logic
 - evaluation of confidence
 - map of anomalies
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Memorialization

- Could happen at any stage
- As decided by communities whose children went missing from or died at the school





Possible excavation and forensic work

- Some communities may wish to confirm identification of burials using excavation
- Some may wish to exhume missing children for identification and appropriate reburial
- Some may wish to conduct forensic investigations
- Excavation and recovery of human remains requires consideration of both heritage and medico-legal legislation and policy