

## **Transforming Safety SE Colorado Springs Local Planning Team – First Meeting – January 13, 2018**

LPT Members Attending: Andrea Adkins, Shane Alvarez, Robert Bentley, Wendy Birhanzel, Robert M. Burns, Bill Chancy, Jody Derington, Rachel Flood, Jim Hinkle, Jeannette Holtham, Kristiana Huitron, Lisa Jenkins, Patience Kabwasa, Chauncey LaBrie, Promise Lee, Mina Liebert, Lisa Medina, Juaquin Mobley, Linda Perkins, Julie Ramirez, Wilfred Romero, Joyce Salazar, Abby Simpson, Taj Stokes, Teresa Thomas,

LPT Members Not Attending: None

Guests/Helpers : Shannon Ross – Latino Coalition for Community Leadership, evaluation and capacity building team for Transforming Safety; Patrick Horvath – The Denver Foundation; Christie Donner – Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition; Eula Tatman – Pikes Peak Community Foundation

Wendy Talley and Jeannie Orozco introduced themselves, as did the guests/helpers. The whole group then introduced themselves to one another in rotating groups of four through a conversation exercise.

Wendy went over logistics and encouraged LPT members to visit [www.transformingsafety.org](http://www.transformingsafety.org) to keep up to date on everything related to this process, especially if a member has to miss a meeting. She also noted that she will post a PowerPoint on the site with background on the Transforming Safety legislation.

Christie Donner provided background on the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition and the Transforming Safety legislation, including the motivation behind the bill, the source of the funds from savings (the Colorado State Department of Corrections parole budget), and the reasons for choosing the two communities, North Aurora and SE Colorado Springs, that are the demonstration communities. She walked the LPT through the legislative parameters that provide the outlines for the grant program for which the LPT will be setting priorities, and stressed the importance of locating this work within the community for both deciding on the community parameters and developing and administering the grant program. Christie stressed that this is specifically a place-based program. It is not chasing a problem, but trying to help the community devise its own solutions to public safety. She noted that the areas of focus in the legislation – academic achievement, community services, neighborhood connections and leadership, and public spaces – are based on research that has shown successful outcomes for community justice reinvestment. The grant fund is about \$1.3 million in each community for three years, but Christie noted that there may be an additional \$1.7 million in a parking lot fund that will be available if the Department of Corrections realizes savings beyond those anticipated in the legislation. She also reported that year 2 funding for this bill that includes the additional \$1.7 million will be negotiated and decided on in the current legislative session, with a final decision in March for the 2018-19 Transforming Safety budget for 2018-2019.

A number of LPT members shared their reflections on the importance of the Transforming Safety project and of the fact that it is so directly grounded in community leadership and community decision-making.

Patrick Horvath from The Denver Foundation provided an overview of the community foundations' roles (Denver and Pikes Peak), which focus on selecting and facilitating the LPT process and the creation of the grant guidelines, and administering the grant program.

Wendy then led the group through a discussion on group agreements and group process. Two agreements written on the wall: "Get comfortable being uncomfortable," and "You won't get what you hope for, you will only get what you are willing to take."

The group then discussed approaches to listening in a group. Wendy asked the group to consider listening like your life depended on it, and asked the group to consider what the value of listening like this would be.

Wendy then led the LPT through a series of listening exercises focused on learning to listen like your life depended on it. One of the exercises involved dividing into pairs to listen to another person while that person complained about a problem they have had with collaboration. She suggested that complaints are usually the end result of a sense of commitment that has been crushed by lack of results or disappointment. In the exercises the listening member of the pair was asked to listen for the commitment behind the complaint.

At the end of this exercise, Wendy suggested to the group that they consider asking another person with whom you are having a conversation for their permission before giving advice or sharing your perspective on a topic on which you do not agree. She concluded with the following two suggestions for good listening:

- Listen to how you are listening
- Listen for the commitment behind the complaint

At this point the LPT meeting broke for lunch. After a brief break, the LPT members went around the circle and gave a more substantive introduction of their backgrounds and what motivated them to be interested in joining the LPT. With nearly 30 people in the room, this took a long time.

In the final exercise of the meeting, LPT members gathered in groups of five to six to discuss what we need to start doing to make our community stronger, what we need to stop doing, and what do we need to continue doing. The groups recorded their answers on a response sheet. These responses are included at the end of these notes.

The meeting concluded with LPT members giving a one-word answer to the question, “What are you taking away from today?” Responses:

- Encouraged
- Energy
- Community
- Hope
- Inspiration
- Excitement
- Possibilities
- Servant leadership at its best
- Collaboration
- Camaraderie
- Growth
- Empowering
- Tolerance

The next meeting of the Southeast Colorado Springs Local Planning Team is Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, from 10 am to 2 pm, **Panorama Middle School, [2145 S. Chelton Rd. Colorado Springs, CO 80916](https://www.google.com/maps/place/2145+S+Chelton+Rd,+Colorado+Springs,+CO+80916/@38.8544444,-104.875,15z)**. The focus of the meeting will be further discussion of agreements for the LPT's work, discussion of what's happening already in SE COS, and a first look at geographic boundaries for the Transforming Safety grant program.

## **Colorado Springs Local Planning Team Summary of Responses:**

**Saturday, January 13, 2017**

The Local Planning Team was asked when considering community safety what do we need to start doing, stop doing and continue doing.

### **What do we need to start doing?**

- Identifying the indigenous healers (natural support) in the neighborhoods and empower them, create community advocates
- Empower families together – teach life skills to parents/kids
- More community block party events/ concerts / free to community- build sense of community
- More outreach to poor, community meetings
- Get people to understand the value of formal and non-formal education
- Identify the strengths of the people of the community, count on everyone's contribution
- Speak to City leaders to invest in this community
- Give youth a voice.
- Showcasing positive stories
- Start taking our self-respect
- Start analyzing
- Be intentional \ serious about relationships
- Start holding people accountable (kids and adults )
- Understand that different strengths are not threats
- Making living wages
- Getting the life skills needed
- Access to safe, stable housing
- Help teaching in schools (substitutes, prep periods)
- Pressure on service providers to be in the community
- Supporting our local business
- Making opportunities to make a living wage
- Empower young entrepreneurs
- Utilize vacant spaces
- Interact with our neighbors
- Create cultural shift, bring back connectedness, family, culture, pride of ownership/rebuild
- Don't wait for others to get started
- Create community indoor sports arena, healthy spaces
- Preparedness – neighbors caring about each other
- Bridge the gap between police and community / recognize police priorities

- Cultural awareness and sensitivity - landlord and tenant relationship and others seemingly opposed groups.
- Help those on welfare, how to use stamps most effectively (for example)
- Create the village to raise our children together.
- Tutor parents to help kids in school work
- Focus kids on what they do well
- Start those collaborations rather than working in silos
- Do more restorative justice as an alternative to incarceration

### **What do we need to stop doing?**

- Stop stigmatizing SE Colorado Springs
- Cops don't respond, mistrust, reduced empathy, disadvantages
- Media – they report SE crime differently
- Stop supporting leaders (political) who don't have the community's best interest at heart
- Stop talking down to ourselves
- Stop shamming
- Stop having blinders
- Stop teaching youth they can never get past stereo types (and all of us, police, lawmakers, DYC, DOC need to do this)
- Stop talking and start doing
- Stop telling kids they won't be a success, if they don't go to college – look at labor trades, trade schools and entrepreneurship.
- Stop killing imagination
- Stop labeling the S.E. as negative narratives
- Stop forgetting south east Colorado Springs
- Stop big non-profits from taking over and using up all the resources

### **What do we need to continue doing?**

- Growth – neighborhoods, businesses, opportunities
- Groups like this one – to share ideas, issues & solutions
- Community resources groups.
- Bringing attention to the area- positive as well as issues
- Continue to connect – instead of re-inventing the wheel- true collaboration – integration.
- Continue advocacy for systems change
- Purposely speak into each other's and all the children's lives
- Get better communication, connection in our neighborhood