

Transforming Safety North Aurora Local Planning Team Meeting 4 – February 1, 2018

LPT Members Attending: Tonya Rozencwajg, Ken Crawford, Harry Glidden, Reid Hettich, Hanni Raley, Robert Andrews, Yemane Habtezgi, Nancy Jackson, Debi Hunter-Holen, Dara Goldsby, Crystal Murillo, Molli Barker, Dana Jenkins, Hassan Latif, Omar Montgomery, Brian Arnold

LPT Members Not Attending: Ronald Blan, LaKeshia Hodge, Fardus Ahmed

Guests Attending: Ernie Duff, Bob Hagedorn, Julie Stone and Ageno Otii (Work Options for Women), Jimmy Naccaratto (Aurora Mental Health), Vanessa Quitana

Helpers Attending: Richard Morales – Latino Coalition for Community Leadership, evaluation and capacity building team; Patrick Horvath – The Denver Foundation; Christie Donner – Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition; Alex Wise – CEDS (Transforming Safety business lending partner for North Aurora)

Facilitators: Wendy Talley and LaDawn Sullivan.

Welcome and Introductions: Wendy led the group through a round of introductions.

Video Feedback: Wendy asked for reaction to the video that was assigned as homework, “How Can Groups Make Good Decisions.” Participants shared their observations.

Data Updates: Wendy identified the four sets of data/information that group members brought for the LPT’s consideration.

Service Information: Debi handed out several documents that listed services provided in Aurora and Arapahoe County.

Education Data: Patrick shared four documents on suspensions and expulsions in APS schools. One conclusion that the data suggests is that suspensions and expulsions are persistently higher for Black students than either White or Latino students, even when interventions such as restorative justice are applied.

Juvenile Assessment Center Data: Molli distributed data on young people who are referred to the JAC. The data showed significant disparities in treatment of juveniles by race.

Aurora Police Department Crime Data: Harry handed around several charts showing crime data broken down by the four beats in District 1, which encompasses Original Aurora. The data tracked eight violent crimes by geography.

Wendy asked if there were any other comments or data requests? Crystal stated that she would like to provide further information on urban renewal areas within the City of Aurora. She reported that Ward 1 is designated as an urban renewal area, and she will share information with the group about what that means. Nancy wondered about any potential correlation between areas where people experiencing homelessness congregate. Harry reported that there is no correlation between homelessness and crime, and that the Aurora Police Department does everything in its power not to criminalize homelessness.

Priority Setting Activity: Wendy divided the LPT members into groups to start sharing their priorities for transforming safety in North Aurora. As homework, the LPT members were asked to consider the data that had been presented, to interpret the data in light of their experience and knowledge of their community, and to identify their top five priorities that they think should be the focus for efforts to

transform safety in North Aurora. In their small groups the LPT members shared each of their priorities, looked for themes and overlap, and built consensus around the top priorities. Group members then walked around the room and reviewed the other groups' priorities. The groups then shared their top priorities.

Group 1: Priority 1: Jobs, job training, vocational training – funding to support training and job access for all residents of the community; Priority 2 – tie between community building and development, mental health, and education/after school services (including efforts to address the school to prison pipeline, etc.)

Group 2: Priority 1: Substance abuse treatment, all ages, all types of treatment, with a particular focus on in-patient treatment, which is largely absent from the Aurora community; Priority 2: lack of integration and collaboration and networks to disseminate information

Group 3: Priority 1: Community development, how to engage the North Aurora community to build wealth in the community; Priority 2 – jobs and academic achievement

Key themes – jobs, youth (academic achievement, restorative justice), substance abuse and mental health. There was additional discussion about the use of public spaces and the importance of safe and occupied public spaces in preventing crime, public beautification projects, especially to the extent that they employ local residents, urban gardens.

Christie Donner from CCJRC addressed the group. She reminded LPT members that they have \$1.3 million each year in the Transforming Safety grant program. She noted that the programs funded by Transforming Safety must have documentable outcomes that show the benefit of the approaches. She urged the group to think about how they can focus grant resources on the people who have returned from prison to keep them from reoffending, and on preventing crime in the first place. This may require a narrowing of program goals and target populations.

Nancy emphasized the point that whatever programs are funded will need to be closely evaluated and capable of being sustained.

Wendy suggested that the group think about bigger outcomes that they would like to achieve in this broad area of community reinvestment. Are there larger ideas that could be funded with larger grants, perhaps even over multiple years, to take action on the biggest problems.

Omar wondered if these larger grant programs could be combined with a mini-grant program that would help non-traditional groups to receive smaller amounts of funding to develop their ideas.

Wendy reminded the group that significant capacity building resources will be available through the Latino Coalition to help smaller non-traditional organizations.

Robert suggested that once the group agreed on priorities, could the LPT dive into determining the most effective ways to move the needle within those priorities.

There was additional discussion about the permissible uses of funding in the Transforming Safety legislation. Christie pointed out that these broad categories are research-based and sound, but they are large and non-specific. The challenge of the LPT is to dig into these categories to change the dynamic in communities to improve public safety, by addressing those who have committed crimes, those who might be at risk of committing crimes, and the victims of crime. So a jobs program or a substance abuse program on its own is not going to be sufficient. A jobs program focused on returning citizens or a

substance abuse program that diverts people from the criminal justice system would narrow the priorities.

Crystal made the point that the program will have the best chance of success if it has a clear understanding of what success means. As she has analyzed this program, she has tried to identify the problem we are trying to solve for, identify the potential solutions to the problem, identify how to measure the outcomes of the proposed solutions, and then identify leverage opportunities for program impact and funding.

Harry reminded the group that they still had to focus the geography of North Aurora, and he encouraged this focus to be smaller and more concentrated. He believed this will enable grant funded programs to have the best possibility of success.

Omar suggested that the LPT focus on the zip codes of 80010, 80011, and 80012 in the first year.

Nancy noted a lot of interest in focusing on young people who have been justice-involved or at risk or being justice-involved.

Ken made the comment that he feels like the LPT just needs to get moving and focus, that we are close to getting priorities set, but sometimes it seems like we are moving away.

Hanni asked if the group members could go back and look at the data that has been provided in light of today's discussion, and then come back at the next meeting with another take on the priorities.

Hassan told the group about the sunseting process, which he has experienced through another legislative program. The focus should be on achieving maximum results, and this may be more possible if the location is smaller.

Wendy asked if the group would like to go back and do some re-thinking in light of the data and the information that was shared today, with a very specific focus on crime prevention and public safety. There was consensus to do this, and the LPT members agreed to come back with three priorities that would help move safety measurements in the focus area. Members were asked to focus their thinking in light of the remarks about public safety, crime prevention, and the need for focused work that gives the best chance for significant impact.

The next meeting of the North Aurora LPT will be on Tuesday, February 13, 2018. Please note that the next meeting is on a Tuesday! The meeting will be at the Village Exchange Center from 5:30 – 8:30 pm. If any non-LPT members would like to attend and would need interpretation and/or childcare should notify LaDawn Sullivan at lsullivan@denverfoundation.org.