

Safe, Equitable and Thriving (SET) Communities
Task Force
November 3, 2016
Meeting Minutes

SET TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Stacey Walker, Mary Wilcynski, Dale Todd, Gary Hinzman, Leslie Wright, Jenny Schulz, John Tursi, Akwi Nji, Rodrick Dooley, Okpara Rice, Dorice Ramsey, Rafael Jacobo

SET TASK FORCE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Alphonse O'Bannon, Trace Pickering, LaSheila Yates, Karl Cassell, Carlos Grant, Paul Hayes, Ben Rogers

CITY LIASION:

Angie Charipar, Absent

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

Sgt. Cristy Hamblin, Administrative Assistant Jean Novak

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jenninfer Hemmingsen, Jerry Elsea, Vivica Maina

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Mary Wilcynski at 7:40 AM. Dale Todd moved to approve the minutes from October 6, 2016. Gary Hinzman seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jerry Elsea presented more information regarding the booklet entitled "If I Knew Then What Joining a Gang Really Meant", which was written by an inmate in a California prison. The booklet is available for purchase through the publisher (Eagle Books of Cedar Rapids, located on Camelot Drive) for \$7.95. Jerry feels that this booklet is very informative, and if could be put in the hands of a responsible parent, counselor, police officer, etc. it could help change lives by deterring young people from joining a gang.

Vivica Maina presented comments relating to human trafficking. She would like to organize an event to focus on human trafficking, possibly by piggybacking with events during the annual

Freedom Festival; however, she needs help with this. We celebrate freedom every year, but there are many people who are not free because of human trafficking.

Leslie brought a few copies of the United Way's Community Snapshot: Equity and Well Being Report. The United Way will send this out to their donors and stakeholders; however, she welcomes feedback on sharing it with the larger community. It is the United Way's intention to begin to create a platform for conversation for people to understand what the disparities look like across our community. Leslie also discussed the updates to the SET Priorities spreadsheet.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS (Rough Draft of Final Reports)

Housing

Dale discussed the Subcommittee's recommendations (attached). The items the Subcommittee are suggesting to be implemented are:

1. Measures to expand financial incentives for developers and non-profits who agree to build low-income housing that fits the needs of the general community should be encouraged.
2. Capacity (funding, staff) needs to be enhanced in social service agencies to improve supportive services programming for low income and vulnerable populations.
3. Annual landlord training should be conducted by the City of Cedar of Rapids.
4. Code enforcement of the City of Cedar Rapids Nuisance Abatement Program (Chapter 22) to help stabilize neighborhoods, improve housing stock and improve the quality of life for residents.
5. Affordable Housing Stock -- The continued use of non-profits and organizations that work to improve the condition of affordable housing stock and build new first time home ownership opportunities need to be supported and enhanced.
6. There is no coordinated collaborative unifying body or effort that develops and implements a strategic communitywide vision for affordable housing strategies and solutions in our community.

Law Enforcement & Public Safety

Gary discussed the Subcommittee's recommendations (attached). The items the Subcommittee are suggesting to be implemented are:

Policy Changes:

- Change laws to include progressive penalties for illegal gun possession; enhance penalties/sentences for violating permit/carry laws.
- Enhance/strengthen State Code as it pertains to the criminal/illegal use of firearms. This may include writing to the Governor or the State Legislature.

Practice Changes:

- Police Community Action Team (PCAT)
- Start Talking it Over with Police (STOP Program)
- Reviewing gun violence as a public health issue in cooperation with the Linn County Public Health Department.
- Police Department Outreach Programs:
 - Neighborhood Watch Program
 - Hands Off Program
 - Protect, Assist, and Listen Program (PAL Program)
 - School Resource Officers (SROs)
 - Citizens Police Academy
 - Youth Academies
 - Explorer Program
 - Implementing programs developed as result of the DMC (Georgetown Project)
- Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Program. This includes developing a mentoring academy, a mentoring hotline and pathways to success.
- Unsnapping Anger Management Program
- Juvenile WARN (Welcome and Re-entry Notification) Meetings
- Adult WARN (Welcome and Re-entry Notification) Meetings
- Reinstating Weed & Seed Concepts
- Develop sustainable youth mentor program to include pathways to success
- Strengthen Probation/Police partnership

Also listed on the attachment are more policy/practice changes, which will be reviewed by the Subcommittee at its next meeting in November.

Programming

Dorice discussed the Subcommittee's recommendations (attached). The items the Subcommittee are suggesting to be implemented are:

- Comprehensive list of programs that is real-time, editable and in a user friendly format.

Develop a Google doc that is editable and connect with funders to require grantees to fill out a form with identified key words that are searchable. Funders include: United Way, DHS, and Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation.

- Identify best platform for storing and dissemination of information.

Targeted mailings of materials, 2-1-1 (as a possible website), school district, City website, points of contacts where children receive services, churches, libraries, gap. Info submitted to 2-1-1 or approach Go Daddy for website at no costs.

- Committee will analyze gaps and make recommendations based upon needs of the community.

1. Basic identification of organizations and contacts for youth programs (contact major funders in Cedar Rapids)
2. Develop what we want to know:
 - a. What we have already put on the excel spread sheet.
 - b. Decide what needs to go on the final information gathering sheet.
3. Once #1 and #2 are completed, send out information to the contacts to get the information we need from them about their organizations:
 - a. Information could be gathered and stored on 211.
4. Collect, organize and map out the information we gathered.

- Develop recommendations to address program and funding gaps.

Committee identifies lack of investments from the City (tot lots), City sponsored recreation centers, commissions with a diverse balance of varying voices reflecting diversity.

- Programs tailored to draw and reach a more diverse audience.

Address barriers that prohibit children from attending: awareness, transportation, inclusion, etc.

TIMELINE:

Mary reported that she, Jennifer, and Stacey will begin to work on the draft. By early January, they hope to reconvene the group and present the draft report, so it could be signed off on. Then in early February, they will report out to the three entities: City, County, and School District.

ADJOURN:

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 AM.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jean Novak*

Safe, Equitable and Thriving Task Force Housing Subcommittee Recommendations

We believe that safe, affordable housing is a right for all regardless of race, gender, economic status, family size and other societal factors and that quality, well managed housing and home ownership can help enhance neighborhood stability and decrease crime.

Since the flood of 2008, significant efforts have been made to replace lost affordable housing stock with quality replacement housing; however significant deficiencies still exist in the affordable rental market. This is especially the case for those who fall below 60% of the area median income in Linn County and those who are limited in their housing options because of social and environmental stresses. Two additional factors fueling the need for more affordable housing units are the demographic shift from rural communities in Iowa to urban centers like Cedar Rapids and the continued migration of low income families from large regional centers like Chicago. The conclusion of our committee is that barriers to affordable housing currently exist in our community and efforts must be made to establish additional housing stock and options for those in need. We would suggest implementing the items below:

1. Measures to expand financial incentives for developers and non-profits who agree to build low-income housing that fits the needs of the general community should be encouraged. This will help with the current demand and provide additional housing opportunities for those in need. Efforts should be made to avoid concentrations of low income housing in particular locations and a scattered site approach should be implemented in conjunction with the newly updated City of Cedar Rapids Comprehensive Plan.
 2. Capacity (funding, staff) needs to be enhanced in social service agencies to improve supportive services programming low income and vulnerable populations. Programs like the Tenant Academy sponsored by Waypoint and the RISE Program sponsored by Fresh Start Ministries both exist today, but are relatively unknown and could accomplish much more with additional resources. These programs provide education and skills to both tenants and landlords. Public/private partnerships need to be enhanced with organizations such as the Landlords of Linn County, Legal Aid and municipal government in an effort to increase the net impact of these valuable programs.
 3. Annual landlord training should be conducted by the City of Cedar Rapids. Incentives to attend can be provided. This would allow interested landlords to learn more about programs and supportive services that exist in the community that could help them improve their bottom-line. This could also help eliminate pervasive myths and misconceptions about programs like Section 8 and provide continuing educational opportunities for and more dialogue between landlords, social service agencies and City government.
 4. The City of Cedar Rapids Nuisance Abatement Program and improvements in the enforcement of Chapter 22 have helped combat issues of blight and the deterioration of both rental and owner occupied housing stock in neighborhoods. While the vast majority of landlords have been compliant with the program, today an inordinate amount of time and resources is devoted to enforcing code violations against a small subset of landlords. Methods need to be explored, developed and enforced that allow the City of Cedar Rapids Nuisance Abatement and Code Enforcement divisions to compel affirmative legal actions in a more timely and effective manner. Successful code enforcement is a means to help stabilize neighborhoods, improve housing stock and improve the quality of life for residents.
 5. Much of our city's affordable housing stock exists in older core neighborhoods. Developed during the turn of the century, many of these homes and apartments are showing their age and need repairs to maintain their sustainability. The continued use of non-profits and organizations that work to improve the condition of affordable housing stock and build new first time home ownership opportunities in these locations needs to be supported and enhanced. This can provide job training opportunities and help prevent issues of gentrification and blight.
 6. There is no coordinated collaborative unifying body or effort that develops and implements a strategic communitywide vision for affordable housing strategies and solutions in our community. While numerous social service agencies meet to discuss collaborative efforts and the conditions in the affordable housing industry, no entity exists with any political capital that drives changes in public policy and politically supports this mission. For those who face housing challenges there appears to be no unifying voice or community body that tackles the issues associated with affordable housing in the political and public policy arena, this can have long term economic and social consequences on our communities sustainability and health.
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Worktable for SET Task Force

Law Enforcement/Public Safety	Strengthen trust between law enforcement and the community, and unify the community's effort to reduce violence; especially gun violence..
Purpose Statement	
Conditions To Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and attitude toward guns (security and coolness) • Decrease the level of gun violence
For Whom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole community • Subgroups/Population <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adults who are engaging in risky behavior and who have a history to engage in gun violence ○ Youth in our community who lack positive structure and supervision which leads them to turn resort to gun violence and who see that carrying a gun as a status symbol.

Conditions To Change	Policy Change	Practice Change
	Change laws to include progressive penalties for illegal gun possession; enhance penalties/sentences for violating permit/carry laws.	Police Community Action Team (PCAT)
	Enhance/strengthen State code as it pertains to the criminal/illegal use of firearms. This may include writing to the Governor or the state legislature.	Start Talking it Over with Police (STOP Program)
		Reviewing gun violence as a public health issue in cooperation with the Linn County Public Health Department.
		Police Department Outreach Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood Watch Program • Hands Off Program • Protect, Assist, and Listen (PAL Program) • School Resource Officers (SRO's)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens Police Academy • Youth Academies • Explorer Program • Implementing programs developed as result of the DMC (Georgetown Project)
		Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Program. This includes developing a mentoring academy, a mentoring hotline, and pathways to success.
		Unsnappin Anger Management Program
		Juvenile WARN (Welcome and Re-entry Notification) Meetings
		Adult WARN (Welcome and Re-entry Notification Meetings
		Reinstituting Weed & Seed concepts
		Develop sustainable youth mentor program to include pathways to success.
		Strengthen Probation/Police partnership

For each practice change there will be an attachment when appropriate.

Advocate the dismantling of silos.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy Changes / Practice Changes

- Reestablish Children of Promise type programs
- Develop educational program for students to know how to act/react when encountering police
- Develop and promote public service announcements to combat the ‘romantic’ notions of gun possession and use

- Coordinate efforts of law enforcement/juvenile probation/social service agencies to provide proactive support to children at potential risk of becoming offenders.
- Develop speaker's bureau of local community members who have a past record of jail/prison/gang membership, etc. – to tell their story to local youth, in church communities, in schools and existing youth programming
- Building community capacity to embrace the youth and providing support for them to adulthood. Beyond money, community members commit to an ongoing effort to support at risk youth.
- Provide education and support to parents, through churches, social service organizations, support networks, to promote and provide positive non-violent parenting models
- Work with identified at risk middle and high school youth to provide mentoring, support, guidance toward positive decision-making and positive community connections
- Preventative programming connects cognitive elements with behavior, connecting feelings with actions and knowledge.
- Clarify and promote SRO role and responsibilities with school communities
- Reestablish Children of Promise type programs
- Market current CRPD programming for youth
- Develop pathways to success for at-risk youth
- Interaction with law enforcement added to Driver Ed curriculum – with local entities and at the state policy level
- Promote responsible gun ownership – ex: security of personal firearms, training of proper care and use – through multiple avenues (schools, media, community clubs, etc.)
- Review and revise current gun law including imposing age limits, increasing and enhancing current gun laws, access to guns for persons
- Outreach programs directly to the youth, being cognizant of these approaches to change attitudes toward gun by digital media and PSA's
- On-going research and evaluation of ??
- Community policing at grass roots level with cultural and community events, within neighborhood experiences, in schools, etc.

S.E.T. Task Force Programming Subcommittee Recommendations

The continuing trend of parents working outside the home requires that youth have access to high quality programs and safe environments. It also leads parents to make tough choices on what to do with their children when they are away from the home. Burdened with the high cost of affordable housing, rising costs and low wages means that they will rely on programs offered through local governments, non-profits, churches, and other services to help ensure their children have access to environments that are high quality and safe. Programs that are high quality offer a variety of services which challenge youth, but for many families living in poverty those services and programs are not affordable and out of reach.

The development of a comprehensive listing of affordable community resources will provide a “cradle to career” network of programs that will embolden Cedar Rapids youth. Below are the subcommittee recommendations to implementation:

Programming	Develop a comprehensive listing of community programs and resources providing a cradle to career network of programs that will prepare Cedar Rapids youth for a successful transition to adulthood
Conditions To Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase awareness of youth programs ➤ Identify gaps in programming for targeted youth which address the full range of services from cradle to career ➤ Increase attendance of youth of color in programs
For Whom	Young people birth-25; Low Income; Children of Color

Conditions To Change	Policy Change	Practice Change	Strategies
1. Increase awareness of Youth Programs	None	<p>A comprehensive list of programs that is real-time, editable and in a user friendly format.</p> <p>Identify best platform for storing and dissemination of information</p>	<p>Develop a google doc that is editable and connect with funders to require grantees to fill out a form with identified key words that are searchable Funders include: United Way, DHS, and Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation.</p> <p>Targeted mailings of materials, 2-1-1 (as a possible website), school district, city website, points of contacts where children receive services, churches, libraries, gap. Info submitted to 2-1-1 or approach Go Daddy for website at no costs.</p>
2. Identify gaps in programming or funding sources Full range of services from cradle to career: Quality ECE Kindergarten Readiness Grade Level Reading Graduation Post Secondary Career Attainment Mental Health Mentoring		<p>Committee will analyze gaps and make recommendations based upon needs of the community</p> <p>Develop recommendations</p>	<p>1. Basic identification of organizations and contacts for youth programs (contact major funders in Cedar Rapids) 2. Develop what we want to know: a. What we have already put on the excel spread sheet b. Decide what needs to go on the final information gathering sheet. 3. Once #1 & #2 are completed send out information to the contacts to get the information we need from them about their organizations: a. Information could be gathered and stored on 211. 4. Collect, organize and map out the information we gathered:</p> <p>Committee identifies lack of investments from the city, (tot</p>

		to address Program and Funding gaps	lots), city sponsored recreation centers, commissions with a diverse balance of varying voices reflecting diversity
3. Increased attendance for youth of color		Programs tailored to draw and reach a more diverse audience	Address barriers that prohibit children from attending: awareness, transportation, inclusion, etc.