DANE COUNTY COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER

NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Center
for
Court
Innovation

AUGUST 26, 2021

Timeline

EVENT	DATE
Data Review Stakeholder Interviews	May-June
CJC Presentation 1	June 24
Public Engagement Event 1	July 13
Public Engagement Event 2	July 27
CJC Presentation 2	August 26
County Board Presentation	September 9
Final Report Due	September 10

The Center's Role:
Needs Assessment & Implementation Planning

Steps taken to document assets, needs, areas of opportunity:

1. Stakeholder interviews
2. Community engagement sessions
3. Data review
4. Cost considerations

Initial Responses from Community Groups & Stakeholders

- Center the feedback provided through past needs assessment activities (focus groups, forums, interviews) when reviewing current problem-solving initiatives

- Work towards acknowledging racial and ethnic disparities has been ongoing but issues persist and must be the focus of any justice center planning and implementation

- There is an opportunity for enhanced collaboration between community-based organizations and city/county agencies that will be required for a justice center to provide comprehensive responses

- Focus of justice center should be on offenses not currently addressed by other alternative to incarceration responses like Community Restorative Court or deferred prosecution

Initial Responses from Community Groups & Stakeholders

- Mental health and substance use treatment resources are more accessible in certain areas of Dane County so any justice center response needs to be attentive to more rural/difficult to reach places
  - Intergenerational trauma and working with whole families in addition to individuals

- There is a need for more vocational/skill development opportunities and education around employment opportunities, especially for young people

- Any justice center should address gaps including:
  - Culturally competent programming
  - System navigation (across criminal/civil/housing court systems)

In one word, what other resources would you hope to see a community justice center offer?

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empowerment

non-judgemental-support

coordination

housing

innovative

person

community

collaboration-among-agencies

centered

trust

freedom

community-organizing-training

holistic bold

safe-spaces

peer-support system

resources equity

lgbtq-supports-for-justice-involved-individuals

Recommendations

Collaborative Planning

Convene a *core planning team* with representatives from all court agencies, community, and service providers to lead action steps towards data review, operations, and programming.

A separate *community advisory board* should be established for the core planning team to report out to and get feedback from during planning and implementation.

Planning must finalize a venue for the community justice center or several local agencies willing to host remote programming and rotating community justice center events.

Recommendations

Data Review

To inform eligibility criteria for which criminal cases the community justice center will address, the core planning team should review data from the District Attorney's Office, Public Defender, and local law enforcement

To inform services and address racial and ethnic disparities, the core planning team must
- review service provider data
- create intake assessments that accurately track demographics
- set benchmarks for reducing racial and ethnic disparities through community justice center programming.

The data used as inputs to inform planning as well as the data that reflect outputs of justice center programming should be shared with the community in a transparent, routine manner.

Recommendations

Operations & Policies

The core planning team needs to establish eligibility criteria/voluntary service engagement, communication channels for referrals by law enforcement and service providers, and funding streams and partner contributions to financially sustain the work of the community justice center.

Recommendations

Programming

The community is interested in co-located programming that includes coordination of these services

- ➤ mental health
- ➤ substance use treatment
- ➤ employment readiness
- ➤ civil legal aid including help navigating housing issues
- ➤ help securing identification documentation
- ➤ information on voting
- ➤ recreational opportunities
- ➤ peer-led groups
- ➤ resources for the LGBTQ population
- ➤ resources for survivors.

Recommendations

Accessibility

In order to expand access to service, the community justice center should offer programming in multiple languages led by culturally competent staff with an emphasis on peer/lived experience involvement, with flexible hours to account for work schedules and childcare, and at locations that are accessible to the population.

Safety should be prioritized, which will require a conversation about whether law enforcement is present at the community justice center and their role.

Recommendations

Messaging

The Community Advisory Board can help effectively communicate the function and goals of the community justice center to law enforcement, the court, and community is critical and requires continued information sharing throughout planning and implementation through
- town halls
- trainings
- presentations

about the center's progress to the rest of Dane County.

Recommendations

Requirements for Successful Operations

- Person-centered and procedurally just practices

- Services must reach and programming should be led by communities of color

- Feedback from participants, providers, court practitioners, and other stakeholders must be continuously collected

Recommendations

Cost Considerations

In order for the community justice center to serve people across the county, the County Board and the core planning team should facilitate discussions about blended funding opportunities to combine allocated funding from:
- City
- County
- Individual community-based organizations

Over time, the core planning team should conduct a cost savings analysis to assess program efficacy and system cost reductions from decreased jail stays, decreased police time, and decreased court time as a result of reduced recidivism.

Of the recommendations listed, which would you like to hear more about/give feedback on?

Collaborative planning

Data Review

Operations and Policies
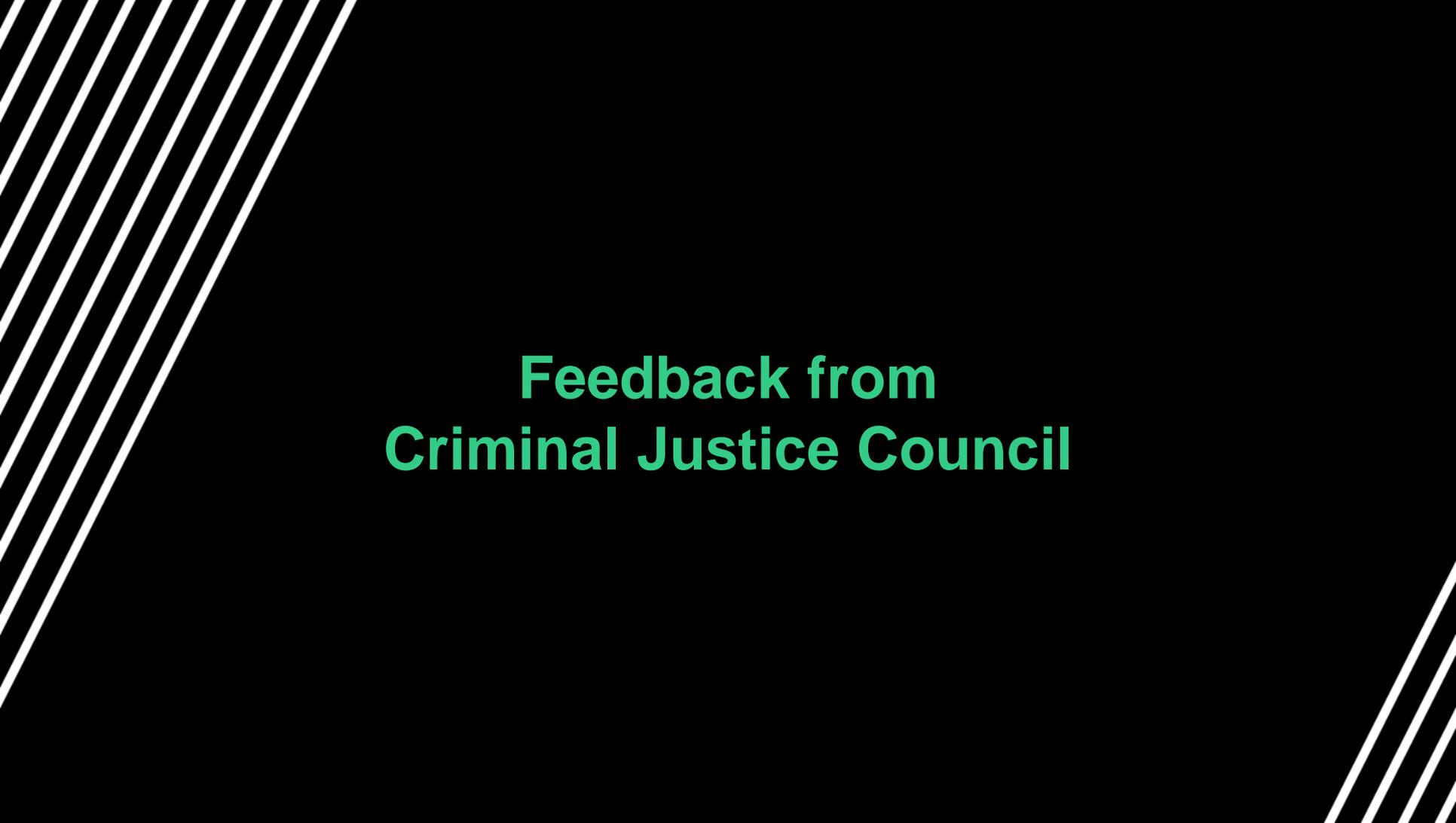
Programming

Accessibility

Messaging

Requirements for Successful Operations

Cost Considerations

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Feedback from
Criminal Justice Council