

2022 BJA COMMUNITY COURTS INITIATIVE

Presented to Criminal Justice Council – Racial Disparities Subcommittee

May 23, 2022



Community Justice Center Needs Assessment Steps and Timeline

Dane County has partnered with the Center for Court Innovation since 2013; this partnership led to the creation and implementation of the Community Restorative Court (CRC).



Initiatives to Address Racial Disparities in Dane County Criminal Justice

2009

- Dane County Task Force on Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System releases a report
Report issued

2013

- Report released on “Findings and Recommendations from the Mapping Project” CEPP

2015

- Report on racial disparities and mental health concerns in the Dane County Jail
- Resolution 556 created the CJC Research Analyst position

2016

- Pilot the Community Restorative Court (CRC), a diversion program based in restorative justice aimed at 17- to 26-year-old misdemeanants to reduce racial disparities in diversion

2019

- The Dane County Board of Supervisors allocates \$100,000 to complete a needs assessment for a community justice center.

2021

- Dane County contracts with the Center for Court Innovation to complete the needs assessment of the community justice center and make recommendations.

What the Community Justice Center Can Be:

"If this model is embraced, and embraced fully, it could be a **positive thing**, but they are really skeptical that it will be fully embraced." - Linda Ketcham, JustDane

"Can be the hub of a lot of opportunities and resources for our community for people in need. This would indeed change the mindset because this isn't a policy thing or behavior thing, it's really a **heart thing**."
- Walter Williams, Charles Hamilton Houston Institute

"A lot of people are open to it and **look forward** to it, they just really want to make sure it just needs to be done correctly the first time."
- Alex Booker, Urban Triage

"So many people wanted to see, could there be educational services at the center to really **educate folks** about the process and about a person's legal rights." - Peng Her, Hmong Institute

"Discrimination or racism and how that often times makes them feel dehumanized by the process or system and there was a lot of conversation about what the experience is in ways in ways the systems would support them ... this would be a way of **humanizing and supporting** immigrant communities."
- Evelyn Cruz, Centro Hispano

"The people loved the fact that the community center will be overseen by someone in their neighborhood that they know and feel they can **trust**."
- Lisa Burrell, Families Back to the Table

FY 2022 BJA COMMUNITY COURTS INITIATIVE

- Deadline: June 21, 2022
- Category: Planning and Implementation
- Number of Awards: 4
- Dollar Amount of Award: \$600,000 (Required 25% cash or in-kind match)
- Performance Start Date: 10/1/2022
- Performance Duration (in Months): 48

FY 2022 BJA COMMUNITY COURTS INITIATIVE

- The Community Courts Initiative supports efforts by state, local, and federally recognized American Indian tribal governments to establish and enhance community courts in their jurisdictions. Community courts are neighborhood-focused court programs that combine the power of the community and the justice system to address local problems. They connect persons committing less serious crimes — often misdemeanor cases — to judicially supervised substance use disorder treatment, alternative sanctions, and other community-based services.
- By engaging communities in planning and operational processes, they provide justice system officials with more effective options in dealing with lower-level offenses, enhance public trust in the conduct of justice, and help to reduce unnecessary incarceration. The types of cases community courts accept vary depending on the communities that they serve. Courts in residential neighborhoods are more likely to address housing, environmental issues, and youth crime, whereas those in downtown areas prioritize issues such as homelessness and disorderly conduct.

COMMUNITY COURT PRINCIPLES

- Enhanced Information
- Community Engagement
- Collaboration
- Individualized Justice
- Accountability
- Outcomes

POTENTIAL OBSTACLES

- CCI Report:
 - Defining Roles
 - Looking at the Big Picture
 - Legal and Professional Concerns
 - Tension between Social Work and Criminal Justice
 - Taking Full Advantage of Technology
 - Limited Resources
- Others?

TIMELINE

- May 30-June 6: Reach out to Stakeholders
- June 21: Deadline for submission
- Oct 1, 2022: If awarded, performance start date
 - 6 month planning process (through March, 2023)