



Benton County - Criminal Justice System Assessment

Summary of Participants' Feedback

Project Launch and Community Meeting, February 20, 2018

TOPIC / QUESTIONS	FOLLOW-UP
Who will be interviewed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key stakeholders such as law enforcement, jail staff, probation and parole, court staff, etc. • In addition, community meetings will be used to collect perceptions and insights from citizens • Lastly, people can use the “comment” section of the web page to send anonymous comments regarding the assessment to the consultants
There are many other people who could be on the steering committee – several individuals were mentioned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The steering committee has reviewed its composition and identified the need to include someone from the rural area and someone to bring more diversity to the committee • The full list of groups and people mentioned as prospective members would make the committee significantly larger – so much so that it would be difficult to convene everyone and make decisions • In addition, no single person can fully represent different community groups • In order to address these issues and make the process as inclusive as possible, the project managers will set up a variety of community meetings to gather input from broad-based community representation
How will people with “lived-experiences” be included – why are they not part of the steering committee?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The follow-up to the steering committee is listed above • People with lived experiences will be included in the assessment – the community outreach will include interviews with people in the jail, those who have been through treatment court, people in recovery, and others who have direct and personal experience with the corrections system
What was the process for selecting the consultants – CGL?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A request for proposals was made available and proposals were collected. CGL was the only firm that had multi-faceted expertise with corrections assessments • This supports Benton’s goal to focus on the comprehensive system analysis
There is a perception among some community members that the results have already been decided and the assessment will serve to validate that result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benton County is committed to an extensive and multi-faceted analysis. The work plan includes a full assessment including comprehensive corrections needs, treatment options, evidence-based practices, and community input • All this information will be synthesized and three options will be presented. There will be respective cost-benefit analysis with each option • Several community forums will be used to share intermediate assessment findings so the community can track progress

What about national issues related to police practices and corrections – like overrepresentation of groups of people based on race / ethnicity – and the concerns that arrests are driven by policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which these and other national issues are prevalent in Benton County is not completely known – the assessment will include an analysis of these and other issues so decisions can be made on local empirical information rather than national problems within the system
Will the community engagement include victims of crimes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community engagement includes both open forums and meetings with community groups. This suggestion will be added to the list of community groups
Will the juvenile justice system be included in the analysis?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus of this assessment is on the adult corrections system • There is a group of youth transitioning out of the juvenile system and at high risk of future crime as adults. The study will look at these data to the extent possible
Appreciate seeing both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of this assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you
What about Spanish speaking populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will hold community engagement meetings in Spanish – date and time to be listed on the Benton County Web page
In the past, the county used a PR firm to “sell” an idea – this is the first comprehensive review of data and community input – much better approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you
It would be good to include something in the assessment that looks at more than jails – will diversion and treatment be included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absolutely – as mentioned, this is a comprehensive system-wide analysis
Getting broad-based community input is important but people who have been marginalized will not typically attend a community meeting – what will you do to reach out to these communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to having the open forum meetings with assessment updates, the assessment includes collecting community input by attending a variety of existing group meetings • People in the jails will also be included in the assessment • Outreach to a variety of community groups including abuse survivors, LGBTQ community, spiritual communities, homeless community, people with disabilities, mental health, chronic illnesses, addictions, etc. will be conducted • We will work with existing non-profits, faith communities, other community groups to collect community feedback • People at the kick-off were encouraged to name different groups that should be contacted
Will the restorative justice approach be included in the analysis – it should.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, a complete review of evidence-based programs will be included in the assessment
Are sentencing policies and criteria within the scope of the county assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, policies and procedures are part of this assessment