Prince George's County Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI)

Goal:

To achieve the County Executive's Vision of a Thriving Economy, Great Schools, Safe Neighborhoods and High Quality Healthcare by targeting cross-governmental resources to neighborhoods that have significant needs.

Objective:

The objective is to improve key indicators in the targeted areas. These indicators include violent crime, property crime, 3rd grade and 5th grade reading and math scores, school absentee rates, foreclosure rates, concentrations of Section 8 housing, income levels, pedestrian deaths/injuries and residents on public assistance. At different times, and perhaps in different locations, some indicators may be more important than others. These indicators will impact the major indicator of neighborhood health -- property values -- which we will also track over time. (Note these indicators are not all inclusive, but they are the ones that were available to us at the neighborhood level (Census Designated Place (CDP). We are open to adding indicators if the data is available by CDP).

Concept:

Many of the challenges that confront us are interrelated and, in areas of higher need, the preponderance of challenges severely inhibits the opportunities for neighborhoods and the individuals who live in them. Furthermore, elevated indicators like high crime, low test scores and blighted properties in the handful of higher need neighborhoods greatly impact our Countywide performance and the perception of our County from outsiders. So, alignment of department/agency efforts in areas of higher need is likely to result in better organizational efficiency, focused resources and greater success in making long-term transformation. For example, reducing foreclosure rates and crime in an area are likely to improve education in that area. Better education, job training and drug counseling will reduce crime. Reducing crime and raising property standards will attract investment. But we can only put the pieces of the puzzle together if we are all focused on the same puzzle at the same time.

Methodology:

Six areas of the County have been chosen as having significant needs: 1) Langley Park; 2) East Riverdale/Bladensburg; 3) Kentland/Palmer Park; 4) Suitland; 5) Hillcrest Heights/Marlow Heights; and 6) Glassmanor. These areas were chosen because they substantially affect violent crime rates Countywide. Violent crime was chosen as our lead indicator for this phase of the initiative because of its overall impact on investment in the County by businesses, developers and potential new residents. Education was a close second to violent crime but was not chosen as the initial indicator due to the structural independence of the school system and the ease/frequency of measurement of violent crime. But education (3rd grade and 5th grade test scores) was included in the second set of indicators.

Approach:

The six areas will have a neighborhood team assigned that will each be led by a Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) or Assistant DCAO. Although violent crime was the determining indicator in the neighborhood selection, our approach is interdisciplinary. That is, all agencies must bring their skills, powers and resources to the table. A template of basic need indicators will be provided. Using the template as a starting point, the team should take an inventory of the area and develop a neighborhood action plan designed to improve the need indicators. Local stakeholders, such as churches, towns, businesses and civic associations should have input into the plan.

Overall program success will be measured by the improvement in the need indicators. Interim program progress and success will be measured by output indicators that are specific to each neighborhood strategy. This is reflective of the idea that different neighborhoods have different needs and will therefore conduct different activities thus generating different outputs (i.e. number of code violations or number of sidewalks repaired). Team outputs will be collected and measured on a monthly basis through the use of a data warehouse developed by the Office of Information Technology and Communications (OITC).   These output indicators will be submitted by each team and reviewed on a monthly basis. The program will be reviewed every six (6) months to determine its impact on the local economy, the improvement of education, the safety of neighborhoods and the quality of health and human services. Annually, the program will be reviewed to determine if it should be continued.

Resources:

Each participating department/agency will be asked to have a middle to senior management representative on each of the six teams. It will be requested that at least three (3) people be assigned by each participating agency (1 person per 2 teams). If desired, the department/agency can assign more people (for example 6 people, 1 per team).

Team Member Responsibilities:

Attend bi-weekly meetings and coordinate within their respective agencies to communicate with the department/agency head and ensure that the department/agency is focusing adequate resources in the team's designated area. Also, to collaborate closely with the other team members to ensure that efforts are aligned and information is being shared. Please refer to the team roles, responsibilities and criteria which are shown below.

Processes:

The processes used within each department/agency will not necessarily be impacted by this program. In other words, whatever process the Police use to address gangs (for example) may not be impacted, but it will be done in collaboration with other agencies that may help. Or, whatever the schools are doing to improve test scores may not be impacted but it will be done in collaboration with other departments/agencies that may help. Departments/Agencies may decide that they want to change how they are doing something based on some idea or innovation that comes to light as a result of the team's work. So, in some cases, the Department/Agency may choose to change their processes to streamline or improve the effectiveness of their intra-departmental processes.

Neighborhood Team Roles, Responsibilities and Criteria

Responsibilities of the Neighborhood Team Leader:

- Lead the Neighborhood Team in the development of Neighborhood Strategy.
- Coordinate the efforts and activities of a Neighborhood Team to implement the Neighborhood strategy and achieve measurable results.
- Ensure that Neighborhood Team strategies and activities remain consistent with the Administration's seven priorities.
- Obtain and coordinate resources needed across the County government, quasi-government entities, non-profit organizations and other stakeholders that can contribute to program success.
- Coordinate with other Neighborhood Team leaders to collaborate, share information and ensure that team activities are being conducted in the most cost effective and efficient manner.
- Ensure that the teams are meeting on a regular basis and action items and follow up activities are documented.
- Ensure that team members are properly tracking their activities in the data warehouse.
- Serve as primary liaison to neighborhood partners.
- Provide monthly reports to the CAO on team status, activities, accomplishments, challenges and results.

Responsibilities of the Neighborhood Team Member:

- Understand the goals and objectives of the Transforming Neighborhoods Program.
- Be an engaged and active participant in the planning and execution of the Team's strategy.
- Attend meetings and complete assignments on a timely basis.
- Keep their Department/Agency management informed of the activities of the Team.
- Coordinate with other personnel and resources within their respective Department/Agency to ensure that the Team's activities are aligned with the departmental processes and resources.
- Inform and advise other Neighborhood Team Members on the best way to work with their respective Departments/Agencies to execute Team activities and strategies.
- Make the Neighborhood Team duties and activities one of their top priorities on a weekly basis.
- Inform the Neighborhood Team Leader of any conflicts with priorities or assignments given by their immediate supervisor (within their department/agency) or other department/agency head. In other words if there is a conflict in priorities, let the Department/Agency Head and Neighborhood Team Leader know so they can resolve the issue and do not just decide on their own which is more important.
- Keep accurate and timely records, including information properly entered into database systems.

Neighborhood Team Member Selection Criteria and Considerations:

- Department/Agency Heads should select middle or senior managers who have the following:
    - Knowledge of their department/agency's programs and processes
    - Knowledge of the neighborhood they are being assigned to and some of the current challenges and current activities being conducted in the area
    - The authority and/or respect within the Department/Agency and the communication skills to motivate people within their department
    - The ability to get things done while being a team player
    - Someone who is committed to the good of the County and not just to their department/agency
    - Someone who will get up from their desk and go out in the field and meet with citizens and other stakeholders
    - Someone who understands how to collaborate with people in other departments/agencies
    - Someone who is flexible and open to new ideas and approaches and will not just say "that's not how we do it" but rather "this is how we do it, but we don't have to do it that way"
- There will be six (6) Neighborhood Teams and the same person cannot be on all six teams. <u>At a minimum</u>, a department/agency should assign three (3) people across the six teams (each person could be on two teams).
- Departments/Agencies will also be expected to maintain focus on areas and issues within the County that are a priority to the Department/Agency based on their individual Department/Agency's goals, objectives and strategies.