



2008-2013

The Boulder County Human Services

Strategic Plan

Dedication

We dedicate this plan to the memory of Commissioner Tom Mayer (1951-2007) who served Boulder County with a tireless passion and dedication to public service. Tom's interest in, and advocacy for social justice, early childhood education, mental health issues and human services paved the way for this plan.



Tom portrayed the "Angel of What is Possible" at the April 2007 Future Search Conference

Plan's Adoption

The Boulder County Human Services Strategic Plan has been adopted by the following policymakers and community leadership groups:

Boulder County Board of County Commissioners
Boulder City Council
Lafayette City Council
Longmont City Council
Foothills United Way Board of Directors
Foothills United Way Foundation Board of Trustees
The Community Foundation Serving Boulder County Board of Trustees

And supported by resolution:

Boulder County Consortium of Cities

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Attachments

The Needs Report: A Five Year Retrospective of Human Services Needs in Boulder County:
Summary and Synthesis of Research
Financial Map
Human Services Policy Statements

Acknowledgements

Steering Committee:

This group of representatives from many different entities provided outstanding leadership – it was their proven commitment and dedication to the goals and vision of the plan and the planning process that brought this enormous undertaking to completion.

- Robin Bohannan,
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Chair, Boulder County Human Services Alliance
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- Megan Davis,
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Vice President of Community Impact, Foothills
United Way
- Michele Seipp,
Director, City of Lafayette Community Life
Department
- Jane Uitti,
Boulder County Commissioners Office (retired)

Participants:

Hundreds of individuals and organizations participated in the development of the 2008-2013 Boulder County Human Services Strategic Plan. Their hard work and collaboration will help ensure the success of this plan to make Boulder County a livable and sustainable community.

Consulting Team:

Building Caring and Livable Communities depended on its consulting team, The Colorado Foundation for Families and Children – Ken Seeley, Carol Mehesy, Rita Schweitz, and Stephen Heiling, to design a framework for the plan and planning process, and to facilitate the many meetings involved in this process.

Community Planners and Program Experts:

This plan builds upon other existing plans, commissions, councils' recommendations and task force reports; the contributions of the organizations and planning entities whose work complements the BCHSSP was invaluable in making this plan as thorough as it is. Their work provided the foundation for identification of service needs, best practices and challenges facing our community, and was the groundwork from which this plan took shape.

Thank you to everyone who was involved in this forward-thinking undertaking; Boulder County will be a more humane and caring community as a result of this plan.



Introduction

For several years, human service funders including Boulder County, several municipalities, and major community funders have been discussing ways to better plan and coordinate funding and grant application/outcomes measurements for human service organizations. Nonprofit service providers have also grappled with the need for comprehensive and inclusive program planning, coordinated service delivery, addressing resource challenges created by the need for applying for grants from funders who ask for program, financial, and client data in all different ways, as well as being able to communicate to the public that funds are effectively and efficiently used and that services are not duplicated.

The idea of countywide comprehensive human services planning is not new; in fact many folks in our sector would say this conversation began 15 years ago, with the formation of the Human Services Coordinating Council.



The following guiding principles guide the implementation of the strategic plan and coordinated human services system.

- Our human services system maintains a safety net of services for Boulder County's most vulnerable residents, while remaining flexible enough to identify and respond to emerging needs.
- Our human services system honors and respects the rich diversity within Boulder County and, with the involvement of the various communities, strives to make all our services accessible, timely, and culturally relevant.
- Our human services system recognizes, respects, and builds on the strengths of individuals, families, and communities.
- Our human services system values moving people along the continuum toward self-sufficiency or stability, while providing ongoing support to those who need it in a manner that promotes maximum independence.
- Our human services system is responsive and accountable to the public for the best use of available resources in providing quality services.
- Our human services system values and promotes collaboration and coordination on every level including among local governments, private funders, non-profit community organizations, and our residents and consumers.

Using an inclusive and broad collaborative process, our mission is to develop a process that will result in a dynamic, accessible, coordinated, community-wide human service delivery system. The strategic planning process will ultimately result in:

- A shared vision and principles for a comprehensive human services system;
- An integrated and coordinated funding and delivery model that uses evidence based service and funding approaches with improved efficiencies;
- A safety net of services for Boulder County's most vulnerable residents;
- A comprehensive overview of needs and financial map of the major sources of support for human services by type of service;
- A unified application process for all funders to use with service providers;
- A plan for a unified performance measurement system;
- Maximum public benefit from all planning efforts;
- Flexibility to address emerging needs over time; and
- A collaborative governance model to manage the new system.

Background and Process

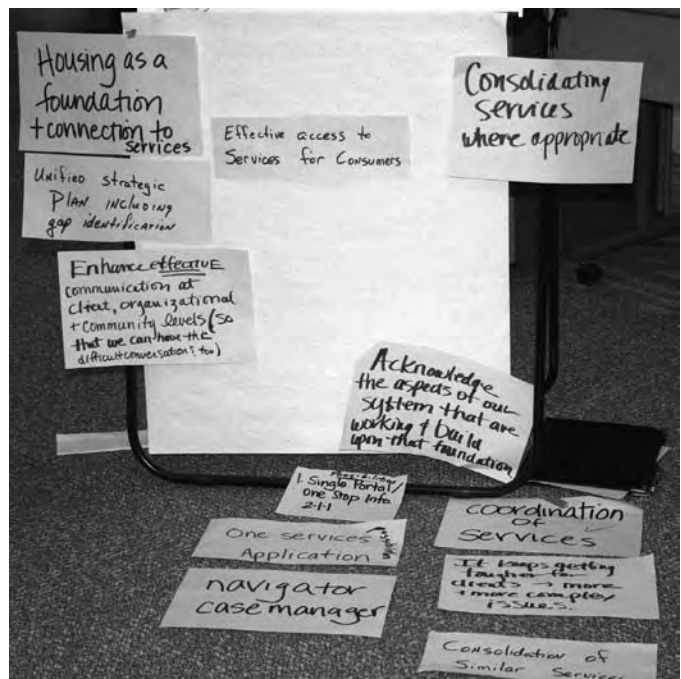
In December, 2006, the Human Services Coordinating Council appointed a Steering Committee to establish a coordinated human services planning process in order to improve the community based organization funding process in a way that would maximize the countywide investments in social and human services. The steering committee represented a broad-based group of municipalities, funders, and nonprofits. In order to support this effort, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was released and the steering committee selected the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children as its consulting team.

Developing a strategic plan for human services in Boulder County began as a community based approach that included multiple venues for community input. The initial core of this process was a very intensive two-day community-wide planning process known as a “Future Search”. The Future Search brought together 64 people representing a cross-section of the Boulder County community including: human service providers, funders, businesses, consumers, policy makers, educators, and multi-ethnic and cultural perspectives. The Future Search participants spent two days identifying Boulder County’s current needs and capacities, emerging trends and opportunities, and prioritizing areas of needed action. The Future Search identified seven priority areas to be addressed in the strategic plan including: self-sufficiency, education, prevention, advocacy, inclusiveness, coordinated services, and funding. Action Groups were then formed to address each of these priority areas following the Future Search (the



Prevention group merged with the Education group for a total of six). Each Action Group was open to anyone in the community and each group met 2-5 times to develop specific goals strategies, benchmarks and outcomes for each of the priority areas. In addition to the Future Search and resulting Action Groups, four community forums and a half-day non-profit/funder summit were held to gather input into community priorities and the development of the strategic plan.

Throughout the process, a public website – www.buildinglivablecommunities.org – was created, maintained, and updated to ensure that anyone who was interested in reviewing and participating in the ongoing work of the plan could do so.



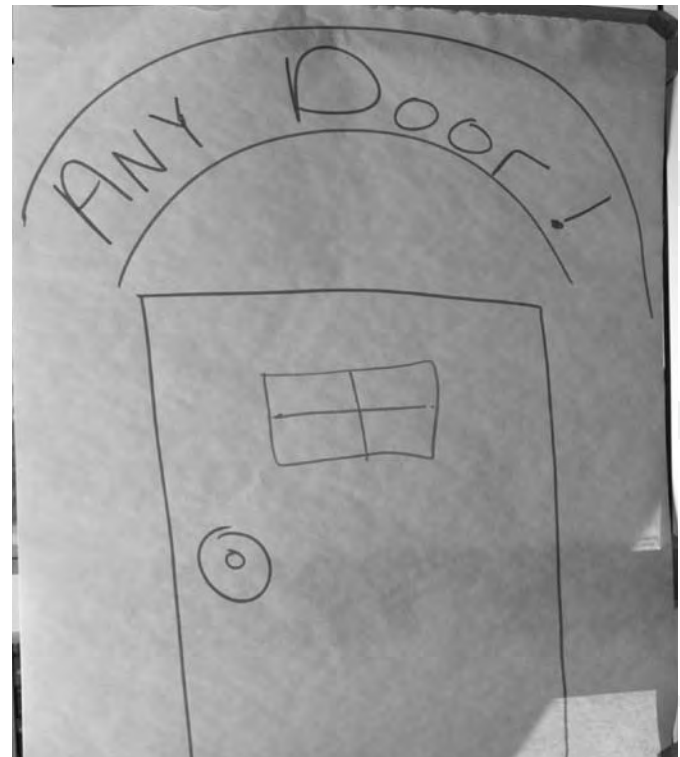
The critical objectives of our initial planning process were cross-systems administrative reforms (reducing fragmentation, duplication and ineffective delivery of services while improving efficiency) and this work was informed and completed by the action planning groups that were formed after the Future Search. An additional piece of work was added based upon input from community partners. A broad template of goals, strategies and recommended Possible Action Steps for Communities

were created based upon key human service issue areas – meeting basic needs, improving access to health care, promoting economic well being and self sufficiency, and community safety. These issue areas were consolidated from the 11 that were identified in the Five Year Retrospective Needs Report as current human service challenges (based upon the data). This report provides a summary and synthesis of the most recent information about human services needs in Boulder County. Its intent is to inform and help guide the planning process. Three types of information were used: Need and resource assessments targeted at specific service areas, populations, or both; surveys; and quantitative data on prevalence and trends generated by local and state agencies

The report's content was limited, of necessity, by existing information. Topics and populations that were included and those that were not in no way reflected their importance, but rather the availability of data.

These topic areas will require further attention by service providers, advocates, government agencies, and people in need. It is the hope that the beginning of the Boulder County Human Services Strategic Planning process will provide a structure in which to bring together all of those working in, or concerned about, a particular human services area, on a continuing basis in a structured forum to discuss issues and share practices that work best. It is the vision of this planning process that we will be able to analyze current needs, identify effective strategies to meet those needs and measure our accomplishments – in order to increase the efficiency and accountability of social investments in health and human services, reduce fragmentation and duplication across the funding flows, and relieve the administrative burden of providing services. This will support yet another goal of the planning process – to communicate to funders, partners, taxpayers and clients how the overall community impact of public funds invested in human services can be better gauged and reported.

In addition to understanding how a system of coordinated services and funding could enhance broad community outcomes and quality of life measures, to reviewing recent data in a comprehensive manner, it was also the goal of the planning process to understand comprehensively how funds were allocated by Boulder County public moneys and private foundations/organizations. This “financial map,” is the beginning of an annual analysis of resources and in this first phase, focuses on funding provided by Boulder County, City of Longmont, City of Boulder, Foothills United Way, and the Community Foundation Serving Boulder County.

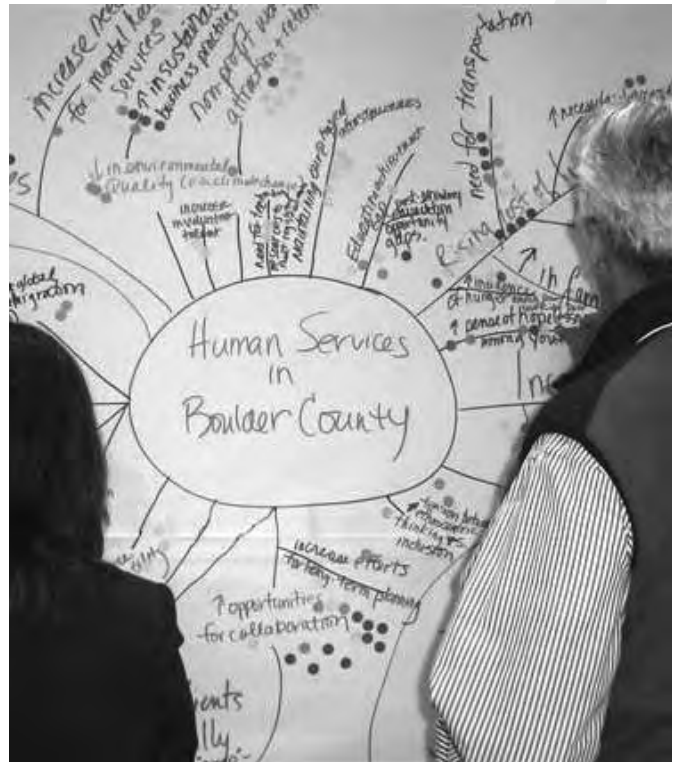


Next Steps and Implementation

Completing the 2008-2013 Boulder County Human Services Strategic Plan (BCHSSP) represents accomplishment of the first step of the planning process and the beginning of the next. Planning success is a function of community acceptance and implementation.

Phase II of the BCHSSP will include convening meetings to further develop human services cluster topics action steps, outcome measures, funding and policy implementation strategies to achieve the goals and outcomes established in the BCHSSP. Technical assistance training will be developed to help organizations use the BCHSSP as a tool to examine and determine strategic direction.

The sponsors of the strategic plan are aware that these goals cannot be achieved without the collaboration of everyone in the community. Implementation of a livable community blueprint involves all sectors of the community - private and public, for profit and not-for-profit, neighborhood by neighborhood. Enhancing quality of life for ALL means understanding, and then marshalling, the connections between individual and neighborhood, neighborhood and community, com-



munity and region, as well as among the multiplicity of people, institutions and systems that all factor into making change happen.

The next steps in building a livable community for ALL are to develop implementation plans that will prioritize human services needs and issues for funding decisions and advocacy activities. To accomplish this, the steering committee will continue to:

- Identify strategies to inform, educate and foster participation from all stakeholders;
- Engage and facilitate consumers, government, providers and community leaders in continuous dialogue and joint action to better connect human services with other systems within a livable community context;
- Identify priorities through needs assessment and similar research;
- Measure progress by identifying and reporting changes in neighborhood and community achievements; and
- Seek continuous improvement in the process through regular reevaluation.



The Plans

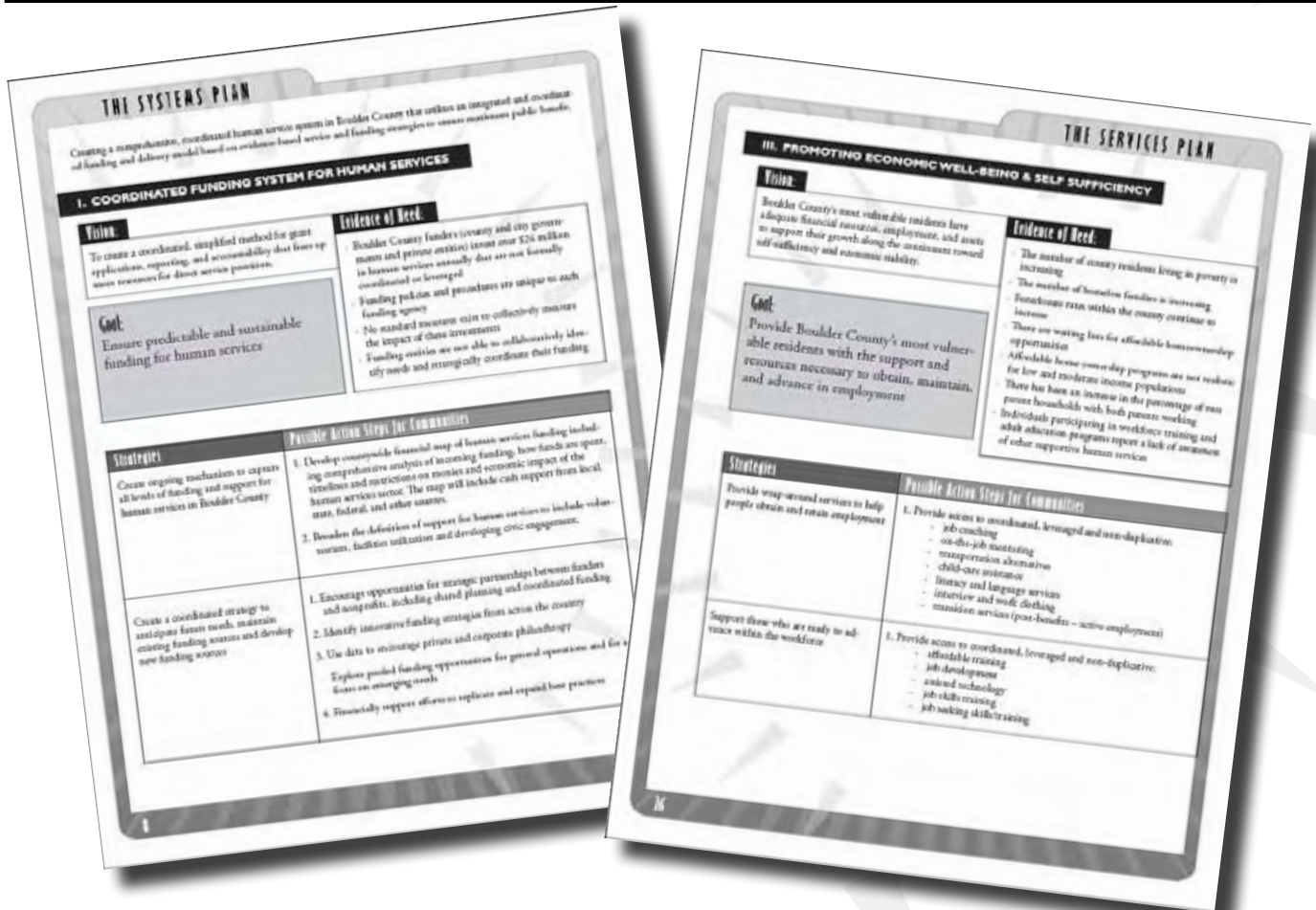
While reviewing the Systems and Services Plans, the reader should consider that the overall goals and strategies are not prioritized, and that the numbers are used simply for easier reference to and discussion of these items. The reader will also notice a certain, and intended, consistency in the general needs across all areas, the need to increase the level of awareness throughout the community (including providers and clients) of available services; expand the availability of services through better coordination, efficiencies and decreased duplication; and improve clients' ability to access services.

The planning framework also acknowledges that additional work is essential for the successful implementation of the plan. Redrafting and fine-tuning goals, prioritizing strategies and action steps, deciding on outcomes that are realistically achievable, and choosing indicators that can be used as benchmarks and measurements will be

the work of the cluster groups, composed of expert service providers and convened and supported by the steering committee.

We hope that this initial work has developed a foundation on which a sustainable and ongoing planning process can successfully build.

Each Plan includes an overall plan definition, topic areas, a vision for each topic area, a consolidated list of evidence of need (identified through the 5 Year Restropective Needs Report), broad goals, strategies, suggested community action steps, and a consolidated list of what might change if we reached our goals. The latter is a consolidation of various community indicators that are currently tracked for Boulder County, and are not meant to be quantifiable outcomes or measures of success. Plan updates will include specific outcomes that are achievable and measurable.



THE SYSTEMS PLAN

Creating a comprehensive, coordinated human service system in Boulder County that utilizes an integrated and coordinated funding and delivery model based on evidence-based service and funding strategies to ensure maximum public benefit.

I. COORDINATED FUNDING SYSTEM FOR HUMAN SERVICES

Vision:

To create a coordinated, simplified method for grant applications, reporting, and accountability that frees up more resources for direct service provision.

Goal:

Ensure predictable and sustainable funding for human services

Evidence of Need:

- Boulder County funders (county and city governments and private entities) invest over \$26 million in human services annually that are not formally coordinated or leveraged
- Funding policies and procedures are unique to each funding agency
- No standard measures exist to collectively measure the impact of these investments
- Funding entities are not able to collaboratively identify needs and strategically coordinate their funding

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
<p>Create ongoing mechanism to capture all levels of funding and support for human services in Boulder County</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop countywide financial map of human services funding including comprehensive analysis of incoming funding, how funds are spent, timelines and restrictions on monies and economic impact of the human services sector. The map will include cash support from local, state, federal, and other sources 2. Broaden the definition of support for human services to include volunteerism, facilities utilization and developing civic engagement
<p>Create a coordinated strategy to anticipate future needs, maintain existing funding sources and develop new funding sources</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage opportunities for strategic partnerships between funders and nonprofits, including shared planning and coordinated funding 2. Identify innovative funding strategies from across the country 3. Use data to encourage private and corporate philanthropy 4. Explore pooled funding opportunities for general operations and for a focus on emerging needs 5. Financially support efforts to replicate and expand best practices

I. COORDINATED FUNDING SYSTEM FOR HUMAN SERVICES *cont.*

Goal:

Provide maximum accessibility and accountability related to funding

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Create a common application process	1. Utilize a unified, online grant application, with coordinated deadlines and reporting
Establish countywide accountability criteria	1. Outline the components of a community-wide evaluation plan 2. Identify accountability indicators, measures, and outcomes 3. Gather and report data using this agreed-upon format
Demonstrate the impact of human services funding	1. Gather and report compelling human interest stories 2. Prepare an annual report on investments and outcomes 3. Establish methods for distributing information to the media, the public, and other venues

How our community benefits

- 1 Local funding sources are predictable and sustainable
- 2 Allocations and funding decisions are more streamlined than in previous years
- 3 Funding decisions are clearly aligned with the BCHSSP, recognizing local priorities first
- 4 Coordinated funding system is flexible enough to respond to changing needs while maintaining core and safety net services
- 5 Funders utilize data on needs and impacts to direct strategic funding decisions
- 6 The community at large, including funders and nonprofits, demonstrate a clear understanding of how resources have impacted lives and improved specific outcomes

II. INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED DELIVERY OF HUMAN SERVICES

Vision:

Human Services in Boulder County are delivered via a system that ensures effective and equitable access to services, efficient use of resources, and effective communication between clients, organizations, and the community at large. Services are prioritized through a unified strategic plan that emphasizes best practices.

Evidence of Need:

- More than 100 human services agencies operate in Boulder County
- Awareness of available services and resources is not always thorough nor accurate
- Not all eligible individuals are enrolled or participating in programs, particularly those in special-needs groups
- Consumers are required to complete different, and sometimes duplicative, applications at each agency they contact
- No formal referral system among agencies exists
- A formal process for collectively identifying and responding to consumer and community needs does not exist
- Many agencies lack the capacity to gather and report data on consumer needs, usage, and outcomes

Goal:

Create a coordinated continuum of care for human services

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Create a comprehensive referral system among providers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain a comprehensive directory of services and resources 2. Develop a tool that organizes the spectrum of available services 3. Systematically identify and address gaps in services 4. Assess and identify current opportunities for integration and consolidation of referral services 5. Identify linkages between criminal justice system and human services system
Create mechanisms to gather data on consumer needs, service utilization, and outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop common intake forms 2. Develop countywide database of consumers that recognizes privacy and safety issues 3. Determine whether 211 can track client needs and service utilization 4. Utilize existing safety data in human services planning 5. Develop systems level outcomes and a plan to measure those outcomes
Create mechanisms that identify and respond to ongoing and emerging human services needs in Boulder County	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct annual countywide needs assessment to identify needs, assets, gaps, and redundancies 2. Prioritize financial support to programs demonstrate outcomes and reporting

THE SYSTEMS PLAN

II. INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED DELIVERY OF HUMAN SERVICES, cont.

Goal:

Increase the effectiveness and sustainability of human service agencies through collaborative support

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Explore a mechanism for technical assistance that provides affordable capacity building services to local agencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide training and technical assistance on best practices 2. Offer training and technical assistance so that agencies can respond to funder-initiated planning and evaluation requirements 3. Collect and organize information about funding opportunities
Promote cross-agency collaboration to improve service delivery and sustainability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and catalyze opportunities for cross-agency programming 2. Organize a forum to investigate the potential for shared administrative functions 3. Develop memorandums of understanding (MOU's) between nonprofits to formalize resource sharing 4. Standardize definitions of collaboration among funders and educate nonprofits on expectations of collaboration

Goal:

Maximize consumers' access to the human services they need

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Develop and implement a cross-systems approach to case management/navigation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the roles of navigators, case managers, and advocates 2. Develop consumer friendly standards of practice that focus on consumer strengths and culture 3. Adopt a common language for services, referrals, and outcomes that is consumer friendly 4. Develop a common approach to case management and navigation including training and certification
Develop policies that promote maximum consumer access to services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop similar countywide service delivery policies to institutionalize best practices and ensure that no consumers are marginalized 2. Develop an agreement across municipalities and county government including guidelines for responding to State or National policies impacting service access

II. INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED DELIVERY OF HUMAN SERVICES, cont.

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Increase the level of awareness throughout the community (including providers and clients) of available services	1. Develop accessible database of services (211, self-service information kiosks or similar mechanisms) throughout the county

How our community benefits

- 1 All people in need have equitable access to human services
- 2 The majority of consumers are able to access needed services regardless of the agency they first approach
- 3 Quantifiable data demonstrates the benefits of enrolling people in more than one available program
- 4 There is an increase in the number of countywide policies adopted by all agencies involved in that service or issue - How does that demonstrate effectiveness?
- 5 There is evidence of multi-agency collaboration to implement best practices, respond to emerging needs and gather and report data demonstrating their impact

III. INCLUSIVENESS IN SERVICE DELIVERY AND DECISION MAKING

Vision:

All members of the community, especially clients and consumers, are represented and engaged in policy and decision-making, developing resources, and delivering services. People involved in human services are aware of, and willing to confront, issues of racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, homophobia and all forms of oppression.

Goal:

Increase inclusive representation on local boards and decision-making bodies to better represent and serve the community

Evidence of Need:

- Boulder County's population is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse
- Boulder County's senior population is growing
- Boulder County communities value diversity, inclusivity and social equity as evidenced by inclusivity task forces and proclamations and are increasingly concerned about ensuring inclusion and access
- Diversity and inclusiveness contribute to the vibrancy and economic development of a community
- Disparity in representation—is prominent at the level of policy making and governing bodies

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Assess representation and gaps on boards and decision-making bodies	1. Establish a baseline assessment of diversity on governing and advisory groups
Identify and address barriers to participation	1. Identify common barriers that discourage people from participating in governing and advisory groups 2. Provide resources to minimize specific barriers 3. Support creative ways of soliciting input from wider audiences
Support individuals in under-represented groups who want to become involved	1. Create training programs that prepare individuals for roles in governing and advisory groups 2. Mentor individuals interested in serving on governing and advisory groups
Increase recruitment of and participation by a more diverse applicant pool of community members	1. Provide training for boards, governing bodies, and organizations on how to create and grow a more inclusive board or organization

III. INCLUSIVENESS IN SERVICE DELIVERY AND DECISION MAKING, cont.

Goal:

Improve inclusivity within the human service delivery system

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
<p>Coordinate or leverage existing services and programs to educate and build awareness within the community on the value of inclusiveness to successful human services</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request that municipalities adopt inclusiveness proclamations 2. Host community dialogue sessions on topics related to inclusivity in human services 3. Develop a “branding” logo and byline that can be used by groups supporting inclusivity 4. Adopt consistent measures of inclusivity within services and decision-making
<p>Provide technical assistance to non-profit agencies and businesses to implement best practices in service delivery to diverse populations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop best practices and guidelines for how to address the needs of all groups 2. Develop a registry of cultural competency and inclusivity trainings and explore resources for non-profits to access these trainings

How our community benefits

- 1 Individuals involved in local governments and human service agencies can articulate a common understanding of inclusivity and its importance to their work
- 2 Human services consumers rate providers as generally inclusive
- 3 The majority of governments and human services organizations have adopted policies that promote inclusivity
- 4 Boards and governing bodies have increased representation from people of color, elders, youth, persons with disabilities and GLBTQ communities

IV. INCREASED ADVOCACY FOR HUMAN SERVICES

Vision:

Human services rank among the top priorities at all levels within Boulder County.

Evidence of Need:

- Human services receives over 17 million in tax dollar support, much of which must be reallocated on an annual basis by county and city officials
- An increase in legislation and policies that restrict the delivery of human services leave too many Boulder County residents without services The number of residents living below poverty levels is increasing
- Support from other levels of government (state and federal) is not keeping pace with the increase in demand for services at the local level
- Costs to deliver services are increasing disproportionately to the consumer price index
- Reduced awareness of human services options leads to an emphasis on treatment rather than prevention

Goal:

Build public support to ensure human services is a top priority for policy makers and the general public.

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
<p>Make it easier for community members and consumers to engage in advocacy efforts for human services related issues</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train professionals, board members, and community members in advocacy to maximize skills 2. Create issue-specific task forces to engage people in advocacy activities 3. Hold regular community forums for policy makers and community members on key issues related to human services 4. Solicit community input through additional online options 5. Remove specific barriers to participation 6. Market opportunities for diverse communities
<p>Educate the public and policy makers on the need for, and social and economic impact of, human services in Boulder County</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore focus and mission of Human Services Coordinating Council in order to increase input to governing bodies on human services issues 2. Coordinate and leverage current coalitions' roles of advocacy for human services

IV. INCREASED ADVOCACY FOR HUMAN SERVICES, cont.

Goal:

Advocate for policies and legislation at all levels that ensures equitable access to human services² for all Boulder County residents

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
<p>Begin by advocating for improved health and mental health care access for all people in Boulder County with an emphasis on wellness and overall health</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocate for increases in reimbursement rates for Medicaid/Medicare, health and mental health care 2. Advocate for additional support of Colorado's medical and nursing schools 3. Host community forums with legislators and local policy makers to discuss health care and health issues 4. Suggest strategies that increase access to health and mental health care and emphasize prevention and education 5. Advocate for wellness care, physical activity, nutrition, and positive life choices to be embedded in all health and mental health care activities 6. Advocate for maintaining support for long term health care needs such as severe mental illness, disabilities and hospice
<p>Advocate for policy and legislation changes that allow human services agencies to serve anyone in need regardless of their immigration status</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a broad coalition and cultivate champions to advocate for immigration reform 2. Educate the broader community on immigration including the impact of immigration (costs and contributions) and how immigrant families have been impacted by recent legislation 3. Advocate for the development of a consistent interpretation of immigration laws and regulations for Boulder County and all municipalities within Boulder County that best support clients and agencies within the law 4. Support non-profits in providing human services to immigrants within the confines of the law with linguistically appropriate services

² Health and Immigration focus was chosen as current and timely. As with any plan, specific and emerging topics will influence plan implementation.

V. COORDINATING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Vision:

Human services are integrated with education to align opportunities that support, encourage, and empower continuous learning throughout everyone's life.

Evidence of Need:

- Opportunities for academic and life skill development for postsecondary and beyond
- Need for accessible, culturally competent service providers
- Lack of adult education opportunities that support self-sufficiency
- Need for a safe and structured array of activities for youth
- Need to connect students, families, and community members to educational system
- Need for comprehensive health education
- Need for easily identifiable and accessible human services in support of all learners

Goal:

Ensure all children in Boulder County (0-5) are provided education, early intervention, and/or developmentally appropriate services to maximize health and readiness to learn

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
<p>Implement Early Childhood Education Council of Boulder County Strategic Plan Goals, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready Children: the child arrives ready for school healthy, well-adjusted and exposed to the fundamentals of learning • Ready Family: The family is empowered to nurture, grow and advocate for their children, as their child's first and best teacher • Ready Pre-school: High quality early education programs and services are available, affordable, and accessible to families • Ready Community: The community recognizes (through resource allocation and public policy) early childhood as a core value fundamental to quality of life 	<p>Currently under development by the Early Childhood Education Council</p>

V. COORDINATING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, cont.

Goal:

All children in Boulder County have sufficient support to succeed in school

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
<p>Provide youth with the support they need to be successful in school</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involve more non-traditional, uninvolved students in school sponsored and after school activities 2. Address access issues such as transportation, cost of materials, classes, etc. 3. Strengthen coordination between schools and agencies to ensure that kids have access to existing human services and programs or create new opportunities. 4. Advocate for comprehensive health education in both school districts.
<p>Ensure youth successfully navigate key transitions between grades and levels</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mentor students and parents at key transition points 2. Engage parents with schools at key transition points in order to close achievement gaps and improve education outcomes 3. Engage community partners in addressing the needs of expelled and suspended students. 4. Provide culturally appropriate educational counseling
<p>Ensure students leave school ready to succeed as positive, productive and engaged citizens in the 21st century</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish expectations and goals for students at all levels to attain career technical and/or post-secondary education degrees 2. Build collaborative partnerships among educational systems, government, businesses and community organizations to ensure that students have the resources, programs and opportunities to be successful in their career, including technical and/or post-secondary educational pursuits 3. Increase availability of information about post-secondary and career technical education options for high school students, and provide assistance to navigate through this information

V. COORDINATING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, cont.

Goal:

Support Boulder County parents to obtain the resources and help necessary to support their children's learning

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Empower and encourage parent involvement and culturally sensitive communication with schools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build trusting relationships and two-way communications among teachers, families and community members 2. Ensure that families have multiple learning opportunities to understand how to support their children's learning 3. Establish expectations for parents to be involved in school improvement decisions and to monitor and assist with school improvement
Support BVSD and SVVSD equity initiatives so that cultural competency of education services is visible and provided routinely	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize the role that all school building staff have in ensuring safety, inclusion and support for all children 2. Provide interpreters for parent meetings and parent teacher conferences

Goal:

Provide Boulder County adults with opportunities for re-training and refreshing skills for successful career transitions throughout their lifetimes

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Increase awareness of adult education and lifelong learning resources (literacy, retraining, enrichment)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore creating a countywide clearinghouse "one-stop shop" to make it easier for the community to find, access and/or post educational opportunities and resources, such as lifelongmontlearning.com 2. Strengthen partnerships among schools, government, businesses and community organizations to enhance educational access to all (e.g. shared resources and facilities)

How our community benefits

- 1 Accessible, culturally competent human and educational services
- 2 Increase in school connectedness among students and families
- 3 Support social, cultural, emotional factors in education success
- 4 Financial support to enhance best practices
- 5 Increase in the number of adults receiving educational access
- 6 Increased number of students will leave school with a readiness for adult responsibilities

I. MEETING BASIC NEEDS OF FOOD AND SHELTER

Vision:

Any Boulder County resident needing food and shelter will know where to find assistance, be able to request it, and will have these basic needs met.

Goal:

Provide Boulder County's most vulnerable residents with access to adequate and nutritious food

Evidence of Need:

- The number of families who are not economically self-sufficient is increasing
- There has been a significant increase in the percentage of households with children and elderly that are receiving food assistance
- Over 40% of families eligible for food stamps do not receive them
- Demand for affordable, quality rental housing exceeds the supply
- Waiting lists exist for affordable housing that is accessible, transitional, or with supportive services for populations with special needs
- Current services do not adequately meet the specialized needs of groups such as new immigrants, GBLTQI, people in mountain and rural areas, people with disabilities, aging adults, and youth

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
<p>Reduce food insecurity for individuals and the agencies that serve them</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support community food banks' efforts in outreach and alternative service provision 2. Increase the number of eligible people who participate in the food stamp program 3. Expand programs that reduce the cost and increase availability of food to children and elderly 4. Make the reduced-cost school meal program more accessible by minimizing its stigma and simplifying enrollment procedures
<p>Improve general knowledge of nutritional food options</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide classes on nutrition, menu planning, and nutrition-related budget strategies to low-income individuals 2. Expand education and outreach activities regarding the benefits of local, healthy food sources 3. Create access to economical local, healthy food sources

I. MEETING BASIC NEEDS OF FOOD AND SHELTER, cont.

Goal:

Provide Boulder County's most vulnerable residents with the support and resources necessary to live in safe, well-maintained, affordable housing

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Provide emergency and transitional housing for individuals who are homeless	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support prevention and intervention services that prevent homelessness 2. Reduce duplication of services 3. Create and implement recommendations of a regional plan for ending homelessness 4. Ensure access to transitional housing for people with special needs
Increase access to affordable home ownership opportunities for low-income households	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to acquire units for low-income home ownership programs 2. Continue to provide outreach and financial information to low income households
Offer services and resources that help people retain housing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide case management to individuals in need of housing services, from emergency to long-term 2. Provide financial literacy classes to individuals accessing housing services 3. Provide emergency assistance for utilities or one-time rent/mortgage payments to individuals at risk of losing housing due to unexpected circumstances 4. Provide weatherization and energy efficiency assistance to reduce costs of housing 5. Provide home modifications for seniors and people with disabilities who want to stay in their homes

I. MEETING BASIC NEEDS OF FOOD AND SHELTER, cont.

Goal:

Support Boulder County's most vulnerable residents' efforts to enter and maintain a continuum of self-sufficiency and stability

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Provide a safety net of integrated services needed by the most vulnerable individuals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify current needs for safety net services beyond food and shelter 2. Utilize trained system navigators
Provide a continuum of options for transportation access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement the countywide transportation plan 2. Analyze the countywide transportation plan to ensure that the increasing needs of transit dependent residents are addressed and services are appropriately adapted

How our community benefits

- 1 Economic self-sufficiency and affordability of food is improved, especially for families with children, and elderly
- 2 Higher participation in appropriate, available food assistance programs for those in need
- 3 The number of ways people can obtain nutritious, daily meals will increase
- 4 The percentage of income spent on housing will show a decrease among low-income households
- 5 The number of affordable, well-maintained rental units available at any given time will increase
- 6 Foreclosure rates will decrease
- 7 The waiting list for emergency, transitional, or assisted housing will be reduced.
- 8 People with special needs are able to find affordable, quality, and accessible housing in a shorter period of time

II. IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Vision:

Boulder County's most vulnerable residents will have access to health care with an emphasis on wellness and overall health.

Goal:

Increase the ability of Boulder County's most vulnerable residents to access affordable health, dental health, and mental health services

Evidence of Need:

- The number of families who are not self-sufficient is increasing while health care costs also are increasing
- Need for increased access to sub-specialty care
- The County's population is aging
- The need for multi-lingual, culturally competent services outpaces the providers ability to offer it
- The number of personal caregivers is increasing significantly, creating a new category of need for support and resources
- Pregnant teenagers are underutilizing available prenatal health care
- Boulder County data shows higher than average levels of risk-associated behaviors among youth
- Colorado ranks low in levels of funding for all services
- Minimal services exist for less-acute mental health problems
- Specialized needs for mental health services for various populations

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Increase the availability of low-cost or sliding-scale medical care aligned with people's ability to pay	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support existing clinics that provide low-cost or sliding scale medical care 2. Provide opportunities that bring medical care to community based locations
Support access to medical care, including dental, and mental health services, for those least able to afford it	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add enrollment sites for available health insurance programs (CHP+) 2. Ensure that clients needing a medical/dental home are referred to an appropriate agency 3. Incorporate mental health and dental health into primary health care visits 4. Increase services to those with less acute mental health problems 5. Provide multiple language and culturally competent access to medical care 6. Support the establishment of more efficient methods of maintaining electronic medical records including interoperability between records, including case management records
Provide targeted programs that address the health needs of special populations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide screening, early intervention, prevention, and treatment programs tailored to Seniors, Children and Youth, and People with Disabilities

II. IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE, cont.

Goal:

Improve healthy behaviors and reduce health risks among Boulder County's most vulnerable residents

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Embed wellness care, physical activity, nutrition, and positive life choices in all health care activities and strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer regular community health fairs and prevention screenings 2. Develop and schedule health education classes 3. Promote increased physical activity for all individuals
Provide convenient locations for families to obtain information about children's health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create more resources about childhood health aimed at families 2. Distribute health information at early childhood care and education centers 3. Disseminate health information at the workplace
Provide services to build resiliency and reduce risk for youth in Boulder County	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to administer the Youth Risk Behavior Survey in area schools 2. Implement recommendations of the 'Building Connections'¹ report
Implement strategic plan 'Creating Vibrant Communities in Which We All Age Well' ²	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide recommended wrap-around services identified in the Plan
Expand public education and awareness mental health issues	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance and leverage the work being done by countywide approaches to increase community awareness of mental illness and its symptoms 2. Support anti-stigma projects
Provide health information in multiple languages and in culturally appropriate formats	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Translate written information for population served 2. Provide bi-lingual staff reflecting population served 3. Train staff to be more sensitive of cultural differences and preferences among customers
Increase levels of support for substance abuse prevention and sobriety maintenance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide outreach and services to those abusing substances and their families. 2. Enhance access to current treatment and support services 3. Increase the availability of affordable treatment options

¹ A countywide plan for addressing youth at risk behaviors (see appendix)

² A countywide strategic plan for addressing the growing aging population (see appendix)

II. IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE, cont.**How our community benefits**

- 1 Comparison of local data to the national Healthy People 2010 will show better than targeted results
- 2 The number of people with an identified primary medical care location will increase
- 3 There will be additional programs addressing health care affordability for low-income people
- 4 There will be an increase in community health education programs where participants rate the information received as useful
- 5 More mothers, particularly teens, will participate in prenatal and infant care programs
- 6 The prevalence of youth risk behaviors reported in the YRB Survey in area schools and in health assessments will decline
- 7 The availability of senior services will increase at the same rate of the need for services
- 8 Special needs populations will report higher satisfaction with the health care they receive
An increased number of individuals and families will seek treatment for early signs of mental health distress
- 10 More information, in all formats, will be available in multiple languages, and consumers will report an increase in the ease of obtaining information in a format usable by them
- 11 Substance abuse reports will show a decline in relation to homelessness, domestic abuse, youth risk behaviors, crime and traffic statistics, and health assessments. There will be a demonstrated increase in the number and variety of specialized health care services available in the county
- 12 Personal caregivers will report an increase in their level of confidence, knowledge of support services, and emotional well-being

III. PROMOTING ECONOMIC WELL-BEING & SELF SUFFICIENCY

Vision:

Boulder County’s most vulnerable residents have adequate financial resources, employment, and assets to support their growth along the continuum toward self-sufficiency and economic stability.

Goal:

Provide Boulder County’s most vulnerable residents with the support and resources necessary to obtain, maintain, and advance in employment

Evidence of Need:

- The number of county residents living in poverty is increasing
- The number of homeless families is increasing
- Foreclosure rates within the county continue to increase
- There are waiting lists for affordable homeownership opportunities
- Affordable home ownership programs are not realistic for low and moderate income populations
- There has been an increase in the percentage of two parent households with both parents working
- Individuals participating in workforce training and adult education programs report a lack of awareness of other supportive human services

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Provide wrap-around services to help people obtain and retain employment	1. Provide access to coordinated, leveraged and non-duplicative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · job coaching · on-the-job mentoring · transportation alternatives · child-care assistance · literacy and language services · interview and work clothing · transition services (post-benefits – active employment)
Support those who are ready to advance within the workforce	1. Provide access to coordinated, leveraged and non-duplicative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · affordable training · job development · assisted technology · job skills training · job seeking skills/training

III. PROMOTING ECONOMIC WELL-BEING & SELF SUFFICIENCY, cont.

Goal:

Provide tools and mechanisms that empower low-income individuals to save and build assets that support their economic stability

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Provide programs that encourage savings and the development of longer-term assets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinate and leverage existing financial literacy classes 2. Coordinate and leverage existing classes on mortgages, loans, and foreclosure prevention 3. Increase the availability of individual development accounts (IDA)
Reduce the percentage of income (at or below 30%) that is devoted to housing within low-income households	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase monies available for rent subsidies 2. Reduce specific restrictions that prevent individuals and families from eligibility for housing programs

How our community benefits

- 1 The percentage of households with bank accounts and savings will increase
- 2 The percentage of households owning a home will increase
- 3 Foreclosures will decrease among low-income households
- 4 The percentage of families living below poverty levels will decrease
- 5 The percentage of families earning self-sufficiency wage will increase
- 6 The percentage of homeless families and individuals will decrease

IV. COMMUNITY SAFETY

Vision:

Human Services support safe and stable communities in partnership with the criminal justice system

Goal:

Cooperatively address human service issues related to residents' safety in their communities

Evidence of Need:

- Reports of crime targeting seniors, especially financial exploitation, are higher than expected
- The number of youth responding on the YRBS that they feel unsafe at school has increased
- Report evidence of link between domestic and substance abuse
- Report evidence of link between child abuse/neglect and factors of domestic abuse and substance abuse
- Lack of services provided during recent natural and man-made disasters
- Lack of awareness/education of existing emergency plans in place to respond to disasters

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
<p>Create collaborations among the criminal justice system, emergency service providers and human service providers</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and address barriers between human services and criminal justice systems 2. Create partnerships that expand the potential for addressing needs more comprehensively
<p>Support alternative dispute resolution efforts that offer education, prevention and intervention</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the availability of appropriate arbitration, mediation and restorative justice programs 2. Support alternative criminal justice services that link to existing human services
<p>Develop outreach, education, prevention, and intervention programs to encourage home safety</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide parent and caregiver education classes in home safety 2. Provide conflict resolution courses 3. Provide domestic violence prevention resources 4. Provide parent education classes on various discipline approaches 5. Provide crisis intervention and safe places for abused people 6. Provide home safety and disaster preparedness information for seniors and other at risk populations

IV. COMMUNITY SAFETY, cont.

Strategies	Possible Action Steps for Communities
Evaluate and address substance abuse as it relates to human service issues	1. Continue to use substance abuse data as part of the evaluation of risk behaviors and crimes when planning for increased services
Reduce the number of youth affected by, or involved in, criminal activities	1. Support crime prevention efforts for youth 2. Create youth programs that address factors contributing to unsafe behaviors 3. Encourage alternative criminal justice services to remediate youthful offenders where advisable
Increase attention paid to crimes against vulnerable populations	1. Provide outreach to seniors and other vulnerable populations to inform them of crimes targeted at these populations, and refer them to services providing education and intervention 2. Partner with criminal justice agencies to address incidences of elder abuse and crime

How our community benefits

- 1 Community surveys will report a higher satisfaction with treatment by, or interactions with, law enforcement agencies.
- 2 The number of cases resolved through alternative justice programs increase
- 3 An increased number of residents will participate in programs that create safe communities, especially residents in under-represented sectors
- 4 Cases of domestic abuse and child abuse/neglect will decrease.
- 5 Additional services related to abuse prevention will be available
- 6 Data will show decreases in youth risk and criminal behaviors
- 7 The availability of youth education, information, alternatives and opportunities will increase
- 8 Crimes against seniors will decrease, and seniors will report an increased sense of safety
- 9 Data about crimes among vulnerable populations will be collected and organized
- 10 The recidivism rate will be reduced as ex-offenders are linked to community based services
- 11 Community readiness during disasters will increase