

TOPICS IN

# Crime Prevention

A series of timely reports to meet the needs of people working to build safer communities...

## Making It Happen

### How States Can Encourage and Benefit From Local Planning and Action To Prevent Crime

#### THIS REPORT

- How do states benefit by promoting and helping communities carry out locally grounded, comprehensive crime prevention planning?
- Why is the time right for states to vigorously encourage local government-grassroots plans that generate preventive action?
- What can states do to promote local action-focused planning? What roles do they play?

This report answers these questions, as well as examines what local action should be promoted, what characterizes an effective community plan, and how state officials can begin the process of supporting local comprehensive planning and action to prevent crime.

In an increasing number of local jurisdictions, comprehensive planning that focuses on action and bases itself in a government-grassroots partnership is demonstrating remarkable success. Indeed, many have attributed a significant share of the recent drop in crime rates to these efforts. They have been termed one of the most promising developments in crime prevention.<sup>1</sup>

State leaders—governors, attorneys general, public safety secretaries, and other officials—can encourage and support this local action in a variety of ways, and states will benefit from it in an equally wide range of ways.

What benefits should states expect? Why is the time right for such action? What can states do? What kinds of local planning and implementation are involved? This document answers those questions and gives examples of ways states have already encouraged local action.

Why should states try to spur local, comprehensively grounded, planning and action against crime? Simply put, that is where many of the proven preventive strategies can be best put into practice. Wisconsin Attorney General James Doyle told

his peers at a conference, “This (struggle against crime) will not be won by anyone except those in the community, those on the street. . . . We on the state level have to get out of the way to help citizens make it happen.”<sup>2</sup> Part of “making it happen” can be steps to create a climate at the state level that shows the way and supports the action.

Almost everyone in any community favors preventing crime. That goal can become a rallying point or a starting point for community action on a whole range of issues that link to the prevention goal. The Urban Institute’s report, “Confronting the Nation’s Urban Crisis” (1992), observes that:

*Community-focused crime and drug control programs show more promise than redevelopment programs as neighborhood strategies. These appeal to what might be called the conjunction of the physical neighborhood and the social neighborhood. They combat the community disorganization and fear that have crippled large parts of the inner city and have estranged affected neighborhoods from the rest of the urban region.<sup>3</sup>*

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State governments can serve as catalysts for and facilitators of local action. In doing so, they will also benefit in a variety of ways, including safer and more productive communities, improved tax bases, reduced demand (or reduced growth in demand) for services, and development of local resources.

### How Do States Benefit?

Promoting and helping communities carry out locally grounded, comprehensive planning, can reap a number of benefits for states:

- Leveraging of resources as local communities both reduce the problems and develop more creative ways to fund programs, build partnerships, and address overlapping problems
  - Opportunities for inter-jurisdictional coordination on problem solving, as communities identify shared issues and the need to address them jointly
  - Resources to spread good practice through “peer technical assistance” (one jurisdiction’s group helping another’s)
  - Help with problems that concern the state as well as the community
  - Investment by and commitment from local residents and leaders in solutions that they have helped to identify and address
  - Local residents who are more knowledgeable about the complexities of issues, their interrelationships, and possible solutions
  - Liberation (at least to some extent) from reactive “crime of the month” demands for random services and programs
  - Support for cooperation among state-level agencies to help in problem solving
- Less dependence on state-sponsored “solutions” as communities identify and tap their own resources and approaches
  - Better information upon which states can base spending and policies related to crime and its prevention
  - Healthier, more productive communities, leading to more stable tax bases.

These benefits are real. Local planning and action produce tangible results that help improve communities and advance states’ goals. Cabell Cropper, executive director of the National Criminal Justice Association, points out, “State criminal justice agencies are increasingly discovering that engaging local governments and citizens in solving problems and meeting needs is highly productive for everyone—a true win-win situation.”

For example, Massachusetts was able to direct resources into a healthy planning and action partnership (the Boston Violence Prevention Project) to leverage local efforts to promote community policing, to prosecute drug traffickers who were disrupting many neighborhoods, and to support an anti-gang violence effort that resulted in cutting juvenile firearms-related homicides from 16 in 1993 to zero from July 1995 through September 1997.

Metro Denver’s communities, concerned about what was termed the “Summer of Violence” in 1991, were able to work collaboratively to not only establish a uniform youth curfew but to agree on how to most effectively handle curfew violators who lived in other jurisdictions than those where they were detained. The central facilities allowed police officers to proceed with other duties while

providing specific sites for parental pick-up. The project was conceived and implemented within just a few months because the collaborative planning framework had already put the partnerships into place.

Erie County, Pennsylvania, has established the Erie County Policy and Planning Council for Families and Children, in which government agencies work hand-in-hand with a voluntary association of community leaders and parents to prioritize issues, establish effective service delivery systems, and coordinate policies to help ensure that parents and children have the ability to live safe and healthy lives. The Council grew out of the success of the county’s Delinquency Prevention Policy Board and the state-sponsored Family Service Systems Reform initiative implemented in that county. Among the credits to the council thus far is a juvenile justice system study that led to cost-saving initiatives in alternative detention and placement.

In Hartford, Connecticut, public health agencies, private health care providers, social service agencies, child abuse prevention agencies, Yale University’s Child Study Center, and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving created the Violence Intervention Project for Children. Police officers concerned about the trauma to a child who has witnessed a violent act have 24-hour access to a clinician who can provide assessment and arrange for on-site or follow-up services as appropriate.

Omaha, Nebraska, by bringing together law enforcement agencies, county attorneys, the state Department of Social Services, and the medical communities of two counties, created a freestanding outpatient

clinic, Project Harmony, that provides single-source medical examinations and interviews for suspected victims of child abuse. The center reduces from nine to one the interviews that young victims may have to encounter, and that local and state agencies have to fund and staff.

These are just a few examples of how local partnerships can benefit states' interests as they improve the quality of community life.

How does a state reap these benefits? By promoting, encouraging, and rewarding both the planning itself and the projects that planning generates. When should a state start? Right now.

### The Time Is Right for Action

For at least ten reasons, the time is right for states to move vigorously to encourage local government-grassroots plans that generate prevention action. These reasons include

- persistent community concern about crime and fear of crime
- dramatic growth in community policing and in its acceptance as the law enforcement strategy of choice
- increasing decentralization of government services into communities and neighborhoods
- increased emphasis on community-based justice
- the uneven nature and texture of the crime problems between and within jurisdictions
- research documenting the need for community-based actions in order to reduce violence
- increased recognition that crime prevention is a community, not just a police, function
- emergence of a variety of successful government-grassroots anti-crime partnerships

- substantial improvement in the style and basis of the planning process over the government-based, grant-driven planning of the 1970s
- limited financial and personnel resources at state and local levels.

First, residents' concerns about crime and the quality of their lives have persistently emerged high in polling about serious problems confronting the nation. A *Wall Street Journal* special report highlighted the extent to which crime has persisted through the past decade as a major public concern.<sup>4</sup> Even those who live in what they perceive to be relatively safe neighborhoods worry about crime's incursions. There is little question that communities that feel unsafe forego civic life and actually contribute to their own decline because of the powerful effects of both fear and crime itself.

A second major development, community policing, has focused on police interaction with community residents to provide a greater sense of security, to build local partnerships, and to help residents identify and solve problems. Law enforcement agencies throughout the country have enthusiastically embraced this concept. Just as important, residents have welcomed this change in policing and have accepted a significant role in setting neighborhood priorities and addressing neighborhood problems. The problem-solving aspects of community policing often require coordinated action by municipal and private groups—action made easier if the groups are already working in a mutually agreed-upon framework like that offered by a comprehensive plan.

A third trend is the increasing decentralization of government services. Neighborhood-based service

centers providing access to numerous government services at convenient nearby sites throughout the jurisdiction have sprung up in many communities. Driver's licenses are renewed at local shopping malls; social service workers are collocated in police stations; voters can cast absentee ballots at more than a dozen sites throughout their county. Police, moving into closer contact with the community, have established satellite offices and workstations in local community, public housing, and business settings.

A fourth development is an increased emphasis on community-based criminal justice, beyond the concept of community policing. Prosecutors, juvenile justice authorities, corrections administrators, parole and probation officers, judges, and others throughout the system are more attuned to bringing the community and its residents into the justice process. To do so helps to infuse local control, restore and refresh faith in the justice system, build more effective restitution and restorative justice<sup>5</sup> opportunities, and clarify and assert community values more vigorously.

Fifth, data increasingly document the uneven nature and intensity of crime problems in local jurisdictions, and even by neighborhoods within these jurisdictions. The Committee for Economic Development, examining America's 100 largest cities, found that "On average, in these cities, distressed neighborhoods are home to only 11.1 percent of a city's population."<sup>6</sup> In other words, it is not entire cities but specific neighborhoods that disproportionately bear crime's costs. Analysis of calls for police service in a number of cities has documented the

prevalence of “hot spots,” locations at which disproportionate numbers of crimes occur.

Sixth, research suggests that for many of the causes of violence, the community should be the primary base for prevention action. The National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences noted in *Understanding and Preventing Violence*<sup>7</sup> that community interactions and conditions account for a significant number of the identified causes of violence.

A seventh development is the emergence of a broader definition both of the responsibility for crime prevention and the need for community involvement. The Crime Prevention Coalition of America has defined crime prevention as

*a pattern of attitudes and behaviors directed both at reducing the threat of crime and enhancing the sense of safety and security, to influence positively the quality of life in our society and to help develop environments where crime cannot flourish.*<sup>8</sup>

This definition pushes far beyond the task of law enforcement. It recognizes the role of community standards and expectations, the need to address not just the crime event itself but residents’ perception of community safety, and the importance of considering crime in the context of the community’s overall quality of life.

An eighth factor is the emergence of a variety of successful examples of this kind of planning. Many of these were funded as demonstration efforts through the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, and related Justice agencies.

Seven major cities in the Texas City Action Plan to Reduce Crime brought together all sectors of the community to produce exciting results, including productive partnerships, new resources for the communities involved, and actual reductions in crime.<sup>9</sup> Sixteen cities engaged in comprehensive planning and action through the Comprehensive Communities Program.<sup>10</sup> The Weed and Seed program recognizes more than 180 communities for their neighborhood-based comprehensive planning and action efforts, even funding a number of these each year.<sup>11</sup> Each demonstration effort has yielded a rich supply of lessons that better light the way for local efforts across the country. The National Funding Collaborative Against Violence, which includes over a dozen foundations and two federal agencies (the Departments of Justice and Housing and Urban Development), has established government-grassroots partnerships in a dozen jurisdictions around the country.

A ninth point is that the planning of today is significantly different from that which prevailed in the 1970s. Such planning has been criticized as driven by federal grant priorities and bureaucratic concerns at federal, state, and local levels. The planning model of today is based in

- full involvement of government and private sector agencies, businesses, civic groups, and community leaders
- intensive, extensive exploration of the problems facing the community and alternative solutions to those problems, not just the priorities of potential funders
- an emphasis on partnerships and leveraging of resources, directed at action that results in collaboratively

solving problems and preventing them

- a respect for and intelligent application of research and evaluation about what works
- accountability to each other and to community residents.

A tenth reason the time is right is that local and state resources are limited. Preventing crime reduces the strain on those resources. This situation can be found in all kinds of communities—rural, suburban, and urban. In some areas, the tax base has eroded in part due to crime and fear of crime that drives out businesses and residents. In others, local voters have restrained the taxing powers of their governments. In still others, funds have been diverted to other urgent needs. Population shifts to and from rural areas and around and within major cities have created major resource demands or deficits. Some locales face a mixture of these problems. Some face all of them. Whatever the cause, the funds just are not there for “business as usual.”

### **What Can States Do To Promote Local Action-Focused Planning?**

States can play vital roles in three areas to stimulate local planning efforts. First, the state can establish conditions that encourage, entice, or mandate local initiation and completion of planning efforts, as well as implementation of those efforts. Second, states can themselves model the partnership, joint planning, and mutually beneficial work products that they want to encourage local jurisdictions to emulate. Third, states can remove barriers that make full participation by state officials in local initiatives difficult, cumbersome, or impossible.

## INCENTIVES, SUPPORTS, AND MANDATES

These actions present the state as an advocate of local comprehensive planning and its implementation. In general the more concrete the state action, the more concrete the local impact.

**Inspiration:** State and even national leaders can share examples of success both within the state and from outside it, holding up results and translating them to their potential positive impact on the state's communities. The bully pulpit—speeches by leading elected officials and criminal justice figures that endorse and promote the concept—can help build a climate for local action. For instance, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority's director appeared at the planning kick-off in Freeport, a small community west of Chicago, to applaud the initiative of local civic leaders, promise appropriate help from the agency, and indicate his agency's enthusiasm for the process.

**Instruction:** By offering various levels of training in comprehensive local planning and related skills, states can provide a knowledge base and the know-how that can help local jurisdictions build successful plans that yield productive action. Technical assistance (advice, guidance, and helpful materials) that aids in developing and implementing local plans, using extant state resources, other states' experienced staff, or national organizations, can be an excellent investment. Training in collaborative partnerships by the Colorado Department of Public Safety has helped communities throughout the state both with comprehensive planning and with day-to-day working relationships. Colorado has also

developed a World Wide Web site that offers definitions, examples, operational suggestions, and resource ideas for communities interested in undertaking comprehensive planning.<sup>12</sup>

**Information:** Sharing news of progress, challenges overcome, results achieved, both with plans and implementation under way in-state and with similar activities elsewhere, can not only enhance the climate for action but provide important know-how from the field. A sense of friendly "competition" can sometimes spur all parties to greater heights of achievement. Nebraska's Department of Health and Human Services publishes a newsletter about its ongoing reorganization that is shared with the criminal justice community and other interested groups. The 16 sites of the Comprehensive Communities Program report that the program's quarterly bulletin both spurs them to achievements and helps them solve problems.

**Mentoring:** Either through a state agency or via peers, establishing a mentor who can act as coach, cheerleader, and even troubleshooter for a community engaged in planning offers a solid and individualized source of ongoing support. The mentor can even become a neutral party to help resolve problems within the local group or lead them toward a resolution.

**Financial or In-Kind Support:** Providing modest seed grants to help initiate local planning processes can make it possible for a group of concerned civic leaders to generate the initial effort necessary to put a planning process in place. State "Section 421" funds in Texas can be

provided for crime prevention as well as other criminal justice planning grants. Technical assistance through appropriate state agencies—communication support, knowledge about effective strategies, statistics to help analyze problems and monitor results, for example—could reduce demands on limited local cash. Even local funding is possible. A prevention-focused local tax can be imposed, as was the case in Fort Worth (Tarrant County), Texas; Wichita, Kansas; and Jackson County, Missouri (Kansas City).

**Rewards:** Rewards can range from special consideration for available state funds to waiver of some grant or program conditions. The Governor's Alliance on Substance Abuse in Iowa operates six major federal funding initiatives. Communities that have achieved "SAFE Community" status, which includes comprehensive anti-drug, anti-violence plans, are more likely to be considered for discretionary funds distributed through the Alliance. Oregon's Benchmarks system (see page 6) led to a federal government agreement that the state's plan could meet all needs analysis and planning requirements for federal funding. A similar waiver could be granted to local governments that produce plans with satisfactory specificity of goals and benchmarks.

**Sanctions:** A penalty could be attached to an application for funds or to participation in a program that either reduces funds or restricts participation if the community does not have a comprehensive plan in place.

**Mandates:** The Texas state government now requires development of community plans in order for localities to receive any funds under its var-

ious programs. As the state criminal justice plan for 1997 puts it, the Criminal Justice Division will "base funding decisions for local and regional projects on how agencies and citizens work together as part of an overall community strategy to address an identified problem.... The (community) plan should provide for community-wide cooperation in a comprehensive approach to solving local problems...."<sup>13</sup> North Carolina's Department of Crime Control and Public Safety and its Juvenile Justice Commission recommended the creation of the Office of Juvenile Justice. As part of the creative legislation, each of the state's 100 counties must form a Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. Membership includes key local administrators, law enforcement agencies, and juvenile court counselors, as well as other community leaders. These councils develop comprehensive needs assessments and plans in order to compete for more than \$17 million in state funding.

**LEADING BY EXAMPLE**

Perhaps the strongest signal that a state can send is to model the behavior. The modeling may emerge through combined planning, coordination of workloads, or joint projects. The following examples illustrate the kinds of state planning that can stimulate local action while they benefit the state's own work.

The Governor's Alliance on Substance Abuse in Iowa has become the coordinating point for work of the state's departments of corrections, education, human services, public health, and public safety. They, along with a licensed substance abuse treatment specialist, a prosecuting attorney, and a law enforcement officer,

constitute the Drug Policy Council. This body also serves, with the addition of a judicial officer, as the state's drug and violence crime policy board, charged with distributing Edward F. Byrne Memorial Fund grants within the state. It conducts the Iowa SAFE (Substance Abuse Free Environment) Community Program, helping more than 50 communities within the state develop coordinated, comprehensive plans tailored to each community's needs. In addition, it manages the state's allocation under the Federal STOP Violence Against Women grants program.<sup>14</sup>

Oregon has developed a statewide benchmarks program, in which key indicators document the state's progress toward its desired goals and objectives. Crime reduction is among its core benchmarks. The 1995 report points out that "Reducing crime is a core benchmark because a low crime rate improves a community's livability and economy, and it serves as a central indicator of the community's social health."<sup>15</sup> Laying out the benchmarks for planning helps identify trends, build a base for local self-assessment, and indicate areas in which state energies are likely to be focused. The state's example not only provides useful guideposts but models actions that local jurisdictions can take. Indeed, more than 50 cities in Oregon have established their own benchmarking programs.

In Maryland, the governor has brought together seven cabinet agencies as well as half a dozen federal funding sources to help communities throughout the state address crime hot spots. Assessing action sites on the basis of level of crime, level of fear, and potential for community mobilization, the state will focus its

resources, in partnership with the county or city, on the hot spot with the goal of not just driving crime out but enabling community residents to work together with local governments and state agencies to secure their futures by addressing local needs. This program, which initially included 18 sites throughout the state, will double in size during 1999. In addition to funding coordination and service integration, the state provides extensive technical assistance through conferences, trainings, and other services.

The State of Nebraska's PACT (Pulling America's Communities Together) initiative, undertaken with some assistance from the U.S. Department of Justice, brought together a remarkably broad and deep set of partnerships. Organizations involved included the state departments of health, social services, juvenile justice, public institutions, and education; associations of police, sheriffs, county attorneys, district court judges, juvenile court judges, county officials, mayors, and others; universities and local school districts; Indian and Mexican American Commissions; the Crime Commission; and the Governor's Office. The U.S. Attorney for Nebraska also played a pivotal role both as a part of the process and as a link to other Federal agencies. Wide-ranging opportunities for average citizens to be heard were peppered throughout the process. That process produced a detailed, specific plan with measurable objectives and assigned responsibilities, a plan that was implemented statewide. Another result of PACT is the SafeFutures Coalition in the greater Omaha area, designed to provide similar coordination of goals, resources, and services to focus on needs of that community's children.

By executive order, Pennsylvania's governor established The Governor's Community Partnership for Safe Children, directed at reducing incidents of violence committed by and against children. The partnership committed state agencies to work together with local jurisdictions and link communities with experience in comprehensive planning for the safety of children with those in the early stages of the process. The leadership role of the state was clear in the Governor's announcement:

*Pennsylvania is committed to saving its children from lives plagued by violence by empowering communities to attack the problem at the root, thereby enabling parents to provide a safe and nurturing environment for their children.*

This inspirational call to local action, backed with state agencies' commitment to empower local communities, provides a promising base for promoting comprehensive, strategic planning and action in communities throughout the state. The Children's Partnership directly controls \$4 million in state funds with which it makes grants for local communities to replicate proven prevention programs. In addition, its recommendations influence the prevention funding priorities of state agencies ranging from the Department of Health to the Economic Development Office.

One key to the new version of state planning is that it, like desirable local planning, is built on a partnership in which people in relatively grassroots-level positions are brought to the table. The process is inclusive, extensive, based in local needs, and iterative—that is, plans must be

revisited, revised, and renewed in implementation. It focuses on problems and solutions rather than budget cycles. Models like these at the state level put forward a persuasive argument for local governments to emulate them.

It is equally important to note, however, that the more intensive and extensive the state commitment, the greater the demand on state resources. Although combining resources as Maryland has done or requiring local input as many states have done can ease the burden, there is no question that staffing and staff capacities at the state level must be adequate. An understaffed effort will too quickly fail to meet community needs; an untrained staff will find itself unable (or not confident) to give sound guidance and referrals.

#### REMOVING OBSTACLES

State agencies can often provide substantial assistance by revising or relaxing regulations and procedural requirements that prevent local groups from working effectively with local representatives of state government or from maximizing the usefulness of state and federal grants and other programs. This approach may be weaker in some respects than the ones outlined above. It relies on field identification of disruptive rules or policies and on a process for bringing those to the attention of the appropriate decision maker. But if the state criminal justice agency has developed rapport or even formal working relationships with other agencies at the state level, its ability to negotiate effective "on-the-ground" working relationships that benefit local planning and action is substantially enhanced.

#### What Local Action Should Be Promoted?

The emphasis of local action should be on problem solving and prevention, on active rather than reactive engagement of all sectors of the community to keep crime from happening. It cannot be action devoid of planning; neither can it be planning devoid of action.

The concept is simple: Local communities generate plans to address the immediate and longer-term causes of violence, drugs, and other crimes. They then marshal the resources and the initiatives to make that plan a reality, and they monitor and assess progress, adjusting the plan as necessary. The planning process seeks to help the community reshape and reformulate its ways of addressing crime and the problems that accompany it.

Local officials beyond the criminal justice system are coming to see that such a shift is essential. Mark O'Connell, president of the United Way of Metro Atlanta, observed that "We consistently let tens of thousands of people fail, and this is not going to change just by adding more social agencies and raising more money. The answer is in how we use the resources we already have and in how we value people."<sup>16</sup>

A policy panel of Join Together, an anti-drug clearinghouse, on the role of the criminal justice system in reducing substance abuse emphasized the need for a new, community-grounded approach for that system:

*The criminal justice system must include the entire community in ensuring public safety—not merely those in traditional law enforcement roles, but also teachers, clergy, business*

*people, neighborhood activists, homeowners, and tenants—anyone with a stake in the safety of their neighborhoods and the well-being of their neighbors.*<sup>17</sup>

### What Characterizes an Effective Community Plan?

Eleven characteristics tend to be indicative of effective community plans—those that bring the community together in action to reduce or prevent crime:

- An inclusive attitude about who belongs in the process—any group that wants a seat at the table is welcomed
- A sense that power is shared, not hoarded
- A comprehensive outlook that encompasses all community systems, permits a wide variety of problems at the table, looks at an equally wide variety of possible solutions
- A strategic approach, in which long-term and short-term goals and objectives are blended toward ultimate, articulated aims
- A holistic approach that encourages and stimulates interlinked problem-solving approaches and helps participant groups identify shared interests and goals
- Visible support (even championship) from top officials, such as the chief executive, other key officials, and senior legislators of the jurisdiction
- A specific process, to which the group members subscribe, that permits input from many sectors and individuals, focuses energy on identifying solutions rather than placing blame
- A built-in system for monitoring progress, evaluating outcomes, and revising or revisiting goals and objectives

- Goals and objectives that are specific, measurable, and doable, including short-term (e.g., retaking a park) as well as long-term (e.g., after-school programs) commitments
- Resources, whether cash or in-kind, at a sufficient level so that participants in the plan's development do not see the plan and the process as added burdens on their own resources

Thoughtful use of data in ways that help describe effectively and insightfully neighborhood and community problems and assets. Not all plans have all these features, but the more that are present, the greater the likelihood of success in both formulating a useful plan and getting that plan implemented.

### Who Does the Planning?

Most simply put, anyone affected by the crime in the jurisdiction should be involved or represented somehow. Some organizations (or at least their representatives) need to be engaged even if their participation must be solicited or directed. Here are the kinds of organizations that should be represented on a planning group:

#### Government

- the local chief executive
- council members or other legislators
- police and sheriff's departments
- prosecutor's office
- adult, family, and juvenile court judges
- probation and parole departments
- corrections agencies for juveniles and adults
- state criminal justice planning agencies (even if only advisory or indirectly)
- local and regional planning agencies
- schools (instructional and administrative personnel, private and public)
- social service agencies (private and public)
- recreation and parks departments
- public housing agencies
- street, traffic management, and highway departments
- multi-service centers
- sanitation departments
- public transit agencies
- publicly funded health and mental health services
- drug treatment and related services
- community development agencies

#### Community-wide Groups

- United Way and similar agencies
- civic improvement groups, associations, and clubs
- faith community institutions
- community-wide topical groups (e.g., professional associations)

#### Businesses and Related Organizations

- retail merchants
- manufacturers
- service industries
- utilities
- landlords and other real estate owners
- mass communications media (e.g., newspaper, radio, television)
- business organizations

#### Neighborhood-based and Social Organizations

- neighborhood improvement associations and watch groups
- tenant groups
- residents
- social groups (including fraternal groups)

#### Youth and Groups That Serve or Involve Them

- youth-serving organizations
- youth membership organizations
- youth themselves

## HOW DOES THE WORK GET DONE?

Planning models should be customized for local needs and situations. In all but the smallest communities, there should be staff assigned who can devote a significant amount of time to helping the group do its work.

Work styles and organizational structures can vary. They should be based on resources available and on coherent and consistent organizing principles. Groups may deliberate as a whole, develop task forces from among their members, or enlist others in the community to serve on task forces. Task forces may organize by sector, by major problem groupings, or by topics of concern. They may hold public hearings, conduct surveys, make site visits, review reports and statistics already compiled by others, or commission gathering of new or updated data.

The eleven characteristics of success outlined above tend to be potent indicators of whether a plan will gain community support and whether it will translate into impactful action.<sup>18</sup> The planning group needs to examine both the process and the result with an eye toward these indicators; state officials can use these characteristics to help identify kinds of planning and action efforts they wish to encourage and support.

### Stepping Into Action

What steps can an interested state official take to begin the process of supporting local comprehensive planning and action to reduce crime? James Thomas, executive director of Pennsylvania's Commission on Crime and Delinquency, framed it this way: "Commitment to the idea of local planning and collaboration is

the most important step. Second, develop a trust with local government and communities and listen to what they say. Committed state agencies can take a variety of encouraging steps with relatively little resource investment that can generate a high payoff in local action."

There are five arenas in which state-level organizations should generate action: research, outreach, partnership building, goal setting, and strategy selection.

*Research* includes finding out about local planning initiatives both within the state and in nearby states. It includes following up on national demonstration initiatives to find out about lessons learned, talking with local leaders about how they benefited from state and federal help (or how they could have benefitted), and identifying sources of training and planning assistance. Research should also help pin down specific benefits that the state might expect or desire from local comprehensive planning—increased leveraging of funds, more focused and intentional use of grant monies, partnerships with both state and local agencies that actually solve community problems and reduce burdens on local and state resources, to name a few.

*Outreach* includes bringing together partners on the state level who would be likely to support such an effort. Key legislative leaders, heads of agencies and departments whose work is affected by crime (health, mental health, public health, public safety, highways, parks and recreation, to name a few), statewide groups of local officials (mayors, police chiefs and sheriffs, county executives, county and city council members, special district chiefs, and the like), and statewide civic, labor,

and business associations (e.g., parent-teacher associations, chambers of commerce, community action councils of labor groups).

Having briefed these groups, formation of *partnerships* to promote and support local comprehensive planning could provide an important next step. States have proceeded without such partnerships, but partnerships offer the benefit of informal networks and mutual reinforcement that can turn a good idea into a vigorous movement. These may be informal arrangements or formal relationships established through memoranda of understanding.

*Goal-setting* need not be an elaborate process at the state level, but it can help focus energies to determine targets for numbers of localities educated about the benefits of comprehensive planning, incentives the state can or would like to offer for localities to initiate such planning (including legislation needed, if any), and numbers of jurisdictions actually committed to and actively engaged in the process. These goals may be modest at first, or they encompass the entire state and all its subdivisions.

*Strategy selection*, obviously, relates to the goals desired and the resources available to reach them. Experience suggests that even with energetic support from the state, it will take time for local governments and local citizens to develop their own enthusiasm for the idea. Strategies for enlisting them and for demonstrating the local rather than state-level benefits of comprehensive, strategic planning should be among the earliest identified and pursued. Indeed, it may be preferable to select strategies that concentrate on a few communities to serve as in-state lead-

ers rather than to push the concept with everyone without the benefit of demonstrable local results. Strategies at the state level should include mechanisms for feedback from local communities, both to celebrate successes and to identify areas for improvement. Identifying benefits to state agencies should also be a strategic priority.

Keep in view the goal and the benefits to each party. Less crime, greater leveraging of limited resources, improved quality of life, and healthier, more stable communities are worthy results that pay big dividends to everyone involved.

## Resources

### American Probation and Parole Association

PO Box 11910  
Lexington, KY 40578-8410  
606-244-8216  
Web site: <http://www.csg.org/appa/appa.html>

### American Planning Association

122 South Michigan Avenue  
Suite 1600  
Chicago, IL 60603-6107  
312-431-9100  
Web site: <http://www.planning.org>

### Bureau of Justice Assistance Office of Justice Programs U.S. Department of Justice

810 Seventh Street, NW  
Fourth Floor  
Washington, DC 20531  
202-307-6500  
Web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA>

### Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse

PO Box 6000  
Rockville, MD 20849-6000  
800-688-4252  
Web site: <http://www.ncjrs.org>

Categorical and Comprehensive Programming	
SOME KEY DIFFERENCES	
<i>Categorical Programming</i>	<i>Comprehensive Programming</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ prescriptive</li> <li>■ reactive</li> <li>■ fragmented</li> <li>■ narrow funding niches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ developmental</li> <li>■ proactive</li> <li>■ collaborative</li> <li>■ shared funding from diverse sources</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ selection of services based on internal focus</li> <li>■ evaluation driven by input and output</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ selection of services based on analysis of environment</li> <li>■ evaluation driven by outcomes, stakeholder goals and needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ vertical decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ horizontal or collegial decision making</li> </ul>

### Center for the Community Interest

1000 16th Street, NW, Suite 415  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-785-4370  
Web site: <http://www.communityinterest.org>

### Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America

901 North Pitt Street, Suite 300  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
703-706-0560  
Web site: <http://www.cadca.org>

### Community Policing Consortium

1726 M Street, NW, Suite 801  
Washington, DC 20035  
202-833-3305  
Web site: <http://www.communitypolicing.org>

### Council on Foundations

1828 L Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-466-6512  
Web site: <http://www.cof.org>

### HUD Drug Information and Strategy Clearinghouse

PO Box 6424  
Rockville, MD 20850  
800-955-2232  
Web site: <http://www.hud.gov>

### International City/County Management Association

777 North Capitol Street, NW  
Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20002-4201  
202-962-3531  
Web site: <http://www.icma.org>

### Join Together

441 Stuart Street, Sixth Floor  
Boston, MA 02116  
617-437-1500  
Web site: <http://www.jointogether.org>

### Justice Research and Statistics Association

444 North Capitol Street, NW  
Suite 445  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-624-8560  
Web site: <http://www.jrsa.org>

### National Alliance of Business

1201 New York Avenue, NW  
Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-289-2888  
Web site: <http://www.nab.com>

**National Association of Attorneys General**

750 First Street, NE, Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-326-6000  
Web site: <http://www.naag.org>

**National Association of Counties**

440 First Street, NW, Eighth Floor  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-393-6226  
Web site: <http://www.NACo.org/>

**National Conference of State Legislatures**

1560 Broadway, Suite 700  
Denver, CO 80202  
303-830-2200  
Web site: <http://www.ncsl.org>

**National Civic League**

1445 Market Street, Suite 200  
Denver, CO 80202-1728  
800-223-6004  
Web site: <http://www.ncl.org/ncl>

**National Crime Prevention Council**

1700 K Street NW, Second Floor  
Washington, DC 20006-3817  
202-466-6272  
Web site: <http://www.ncpc.org>

**National Criminal Justice Association**

444 North Capitol Street, NW  
Suite 618  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-624-1440  
Web site: <http://www.sso.org/ncja/>

**National District Attorneys Association**

99 Canal Center Plaza, Suite 570  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
703-549-9222  
Web site: <http://www.ndaa.org/ndaa.htm>

**National League of Cities**

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004-1763  
202-626-3043  
Web site: <http://www.nlc.org>

**National Organization for Victim Assistance**

1757 Park Road, NW  
Washington, DC 20010  
800-TRY-NOVA  
Web site: <http://www.access.digex.net/~nova>

**National Center for Victims of Crime**

2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201  
703-276-2880  
Web site: <http://www.nvc.org>

**Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice**

810 Seventh Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20531  
202-307-5911  
Web site: <http://www.ncjrs.org/ojjhome.htm>

**Police Executive Research Forum**

1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 930  
Washington, DC 20036-3923  
202-466-7820  
Web site: <http://www.policeforum.org>

**Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program**

**U.S. Department of Education**  
400 Maryland Avenue, NW,  
Room 1073  
Washington, DC 20202  
202-260-1856  
Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS>

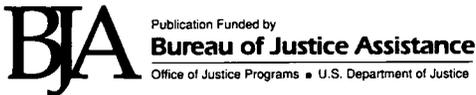
**United Way of America**

701 North Fairfax Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-2045  
703-836-7100  
Web site: <http://www.unitedway.org>

**End Notes**

1. Lawrence Sherman, editor. *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, 1997.
2. Statement during discussions at National Association of Attorneys General Presidential Summit: Responding to a Culture of Violence. Long Beach, California, April 18, 1996.
3. The Urban Institute. *Confronting the Nation's Urban Crisis*. Washington, DC: Author, 1992, Page 3.
4. *Wall Street Journal*. "American Opinion" section (special quarterly report), December 13, 1996.
5. Restorative justice is a concept that focuses on re-establishing the health of the community after a crime event, not merely on reacting to the event on a personal (victim/victimizer) level.
6. Committee for Economic Development. *Rebuilding Inner City Communities: A New Approach to the Nation's Urban Crisis*. New York: Author, 1995, Page 10.
7. National Research Council. *Understanding and Preventing Violence*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences, 1993.
8. Crime Prevention Coalition of America. *Crime Prevention in America: Foundations for Action*. Washington, DC: National Crime Prevention Council, 1990. [Published under the organization's former name, Crime Prevention Coalition.] The Crime Prevention Coalition of America is an umbrella organization of 123 federal, national, and state constituency groups who are committed to preventing crime and agree to take active leadership roles in that work.
9. The National Crime Prevention Council managed or helped to manage or provided technical assistance to many of these initiatives. Its book,

- Taking the Offensive To Prevent Crime: How Seven Cities Did It* (author, 1994), describes one such major initiative. *Creating a Blueprint for Community Safety* (NCPC, 1998) frames the lessons derived from numerous planning initiatives.
10. The Comprehensive Communities Program was managed by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC.
  11. Executive Office of Weed and Seed, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC.
  12. This site's Web address is [http://www.state.co.us/gov\\_dir/cdps/straplan.htm](http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/cdps/straplan.htm).
  13. *Texas Criminal Justice Plan for Fiscal 1997*, Page 2.
  14. Information provided by Governor's Alliance on Substance Abuse Web site (<http://www.state.ia.us/government/gasa/index.html>) on pages updated January 13, 1995; accessed May 9, 1996.
  15. Oregon Progress Board. *Oregon Benchmarks Report to the 1995 Legislature*. Salem, Oregon: Author, 1995, Page 8.
  16. *Because There Is Hope: Gearing Up To Renew Urban America, A Report of The Atlanta Project*. Atlanta, Georgia: Carter Collaboration Center, 1993, Page 40.
  17. Join Together Criminal Justice Policy Panel. *Fixing a Failing System: How the Criminal Justice System Should Work with Communities to Reduce Substance Abuse*. Boston, Massachusetts: Author, 1996, Page 21. Join Together, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson foundation, provides clearinghouse services and develops action materials and policy documents that are distributed to thousands of community, state, and national leaders.
  18. Much has been written about leading and managing local planning groups. State officials who want to promote their benefits should be familiar with their operation and requirements. See NCPC, *Taking the Offensive...* and *Creating a Blueprint...* (Note 9); Center for Substance Abuse partnerships; Join Together, Boston, MA, resources, among others.



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The National Crime Prevention Council is a private, nonprofit tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] organization whose principal mission is to enable people to prevent crime and build safer, more caring communities. NCPC publishes books, kits of camera-ready program materials, posters, and informational and policy reports on a variety of crime prevention and community-building subjects. NCPC offers training, technical assistance, and national focus for crime prevention; it acts as secretariat for the Crime Prevention Coalition of America, more than 123 national, federal, and state organizations committed to preventing crime. It also operates demonstration programs and takes a major leadership role in youth crime prevention. NCPC manages the National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign, which includes the McGruff "Take A Bite Out of Crime" public service advertising. This campaign is substantially funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

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