IST Diversion and Community-Based Restoration Infrastructure Project
Office Hours

Winning Community Acceptance –
Best Practices for Integrating Your IST Infrastructure Project

July 9, 2024
12 p.m. PT

Housekeeping

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Today's Presenters

Jennifer Christie

Senior Program Manager and Grantee Liaison

AHP

Alisa Cutright-Thompson
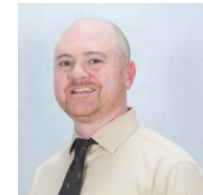
Senior Consultant and Grantee Liaison

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Deborah Jean Parsons

Deputy Director

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Michael Short

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Best Practices

1. **Community Acceptance** — Obstacles and Allies

2. **Preparation is Key** – Know the Community

3. **Integration** – Engagement and Effective Messaging

DSH IST Infrastructure Project

Our Shared Goal: to work **with communities** to create additional capacity for the large number of individuals deemed IST on felony charges and referred to DSH waiting for diversion or community-based restoration programs.

We Can't Move Forward Without Community Acceptance

Community Acceptance: the attitudes of community members who live and work in the vicinity of the proposed project or facility.

The proposed facility is being accepted into the community and should consider itself in relationship to the community.

Major Obstacle to Community Acceptance:
NIMBY (Not in My Backyard!)

Resistance or opposition stakeholders have to a proposed facility or project. Often, opposition forms in response to what people perceive is coming.

Causes of "NIMBYism"

Stigma surrounding mental health, substance use disorders, and homelessness

Potential Homeowner Concerns:
- Facility design, landscaping, security, and property value
- Increased traffic and public transportation, limited parking
- Lack of information about proposed operator and services provided
- Strain on emergency response system and law enforcement
- Physical safety and criminal activity — especially around children and schools

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The Community – Potential Allies

The County

- Superior Court
- District Attorney
- Public Defender (if applicable)
- County Administration
- Behavioral Health Department

Required for Project Proposal Recommendation Letters

Community Stakeholders

- Neighborhood Residents
- Town Leadership (City Council)
- Local Businesses and Organizations

Critical for Community Acceptance

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"… select the right communities, do your work upfront with the community, make sure that people are … compliant, and work very closely."

— Dr. Troy Vaughn,

Christ-Centered Ministries

Preparation — Questions to Ask Yourself *Before* Approaching Community Members

1 Do we have a stated purpose and community value?

2 Why should this project be located here?

3 Do we know who is:
- Most and least affected by this project?
- Most concerned?

4 Do we understand the core concerns of those most affected by the project?

5 What has already been communicated about the project?

6 What is the current community narrative/vibe?

7 Is there <u>misinformation</u> circulating about the proposal? Where is it coming from and what needs to be corrected?

8 Have we identified allies? Who does the community trust on these issues?

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Intentional Integration
Tips for Creating Community Acceptance

Build trust by showing up (town meetings, events).

Ask about issues important to the community (noise ordinance, facility upkeep are two examples) and offer to **create a shared agreement**.

Communicative and Transparent	Collaborative and Active in the Community
Respectful of Citizens and Local Ordinances	Responsive and Accessible
Clean, Secure, and Safe Facility	

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"… When you talk about CBR, you can't just erect any type of facility in the Community... you can get resistance and NIMBY-ism. We really tried to avoid that by attending Community meetings and establishing Community agreements ahead of time.... we honor our agreements throughout the tenure of the program and so far, we've never been asked to leave..."

- Dr. Troy Vaughn, CCM

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Messaging — Identifying Challenges

- Diversity of communities and perceptual "lenses"

- Different meanings in different cultures and environments

- Sources of potential pushback

- Stigma and bias associated with individuals deemed IST

- Complex treatment and service systems

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Messaging — Answering Difficult Questions

- How is this funded and by whom?

- Who will have oversight?

- Who will you be serving?
- Can you guarantee that our neighborhoods will remain safe?

- Who will be operating this program? What are their credentials and experience?

- How will you address our concerns, and inquiries, and respond to urgent needs?

- Who is our primary contact? How do we contact them?

- Is there going to be an increased police presence?

- How much traffic and parking are you going to generate?

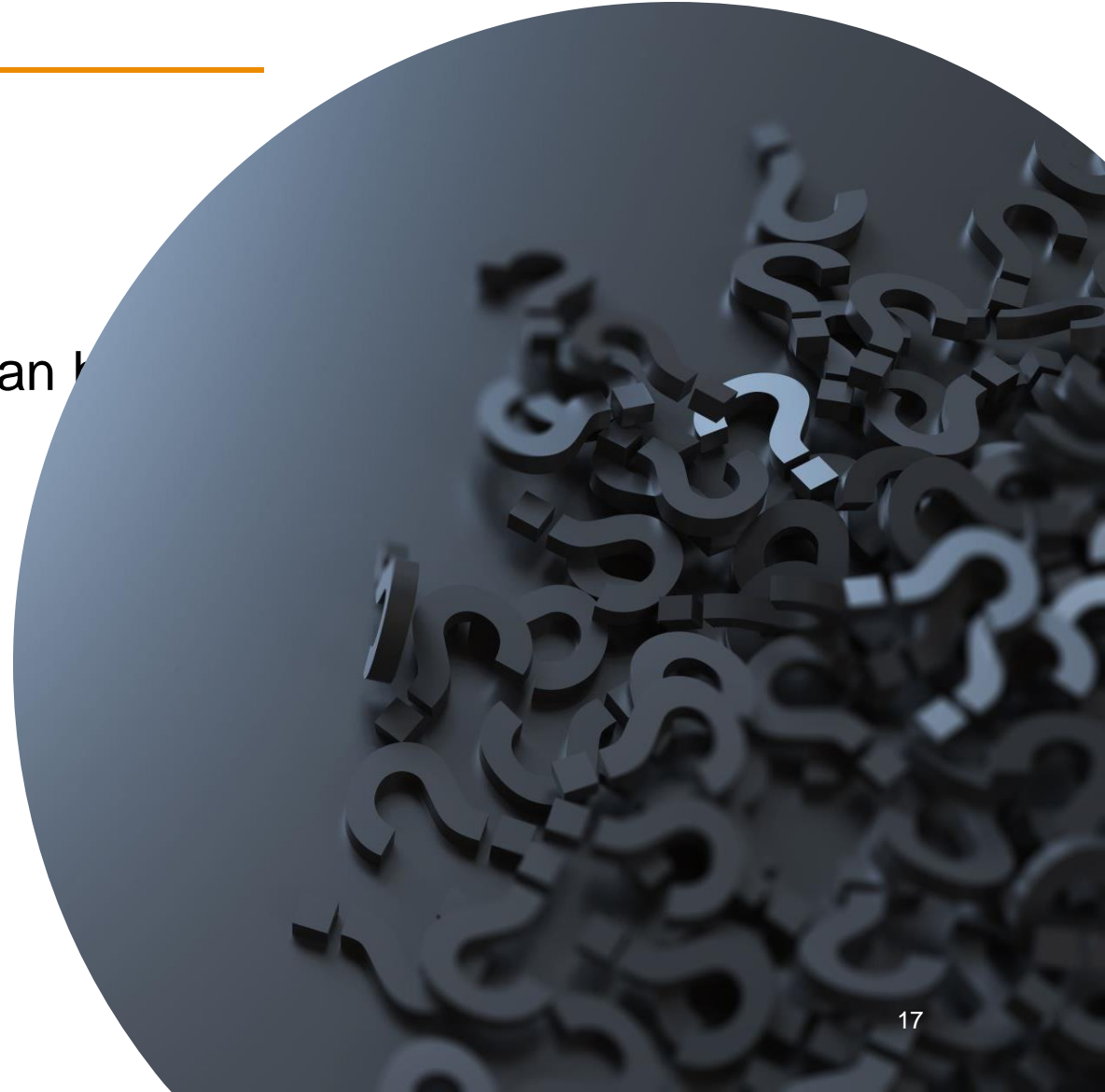- Did you consider any other locations? Why here?

What and Who Might Be Resources?

- Other Counties

- CBOs

- AHP: [Home - California Department of State Hospitals (buildingcaldsh.com)](buildingcaldsh.com)

Questions?

- Submit questions through the **Q&A Box**

- Any questions upon conclusion of Office Hours can be submitted via email: **IST@ahpnet.com**

- Contact the **Support Desk**: **https://buildingcaldsh.com/contact-us/**

Thank you!