



# Community Involvement Committee

## FY26 Planning Retreat

Saturday, September 28, 2025, 9am-2:30pm

Location: Multnomah Building (501 SE Hawthorne Blvd) and on Zoom

### **Attendance:**

**Present (15 members, 8 for quorum):** Ann Singer, Brian Romer, Jen Mair, Jenny Shadley, Nina Gallo, Renai Bell, Quay'Roel Matthews, Diego Martinez, Quay'Roel Matthews, David Hoang, Anand Jain, Chase Landrey, Frank Stevens

**Absent:** Angel Brophy

**Excused:** Pau Thang, Diego Martinez

**Staff:** KellyAnn Cameron (OCI), Amara Perez (OCI), Sara Ryan (Chair's Office)

### **Materials:**

- [Slide deck](#)
- Agenda
- Worksheet
- [Recording of meeting for complete transcript](#)

### **Agenda:**

9:10-9:30: welcome and agenda!  
9:30-10:00: Introductions/Ice Breaker  
10:00-10:40: Mapping Multnomah County Activity  
10:40-10:45: Break!  
10:45-11:15: Report-back and Priorities from Chair & OCI  
11:15-11:45: Subcommittee Discussion- recap of ideas  
11:45-12:45: Lunch!  
12:45-1:00: Mini-trivia  
1:00-2:00: Breakout groups & Deciding Subcommittees  
2:00-2:05: Break  
2:05-2:30: Next steps, public/final comment, and close!

### **DRAFT Minutes:**

#### **Welcome & Introductions**

KA welcomed everyone to the CIC Retreat!

Renai shared that the [agenda](#) and materials are in their packet, and reminded folks to please take body breaks as needed.

Included in materials is a copy of the CIC Agreements from last year that we will use for this meeting- these, in addition to our bylaws and policies, help inform how CIC meetings are run, our expectations for ourselves, staff, and guests. She reminded

people to please keep in mind we will be crafting or amending these for the coming year - if you get ideas for more agreements please write them down.

All 10 members in attendance voted 5 to approve the agenda

### **Team Building Activity**

Nina introduced the summer slideshow activity, everyone shared about their summers.

### **Mapping Multnomah Activity**

Everyone Divided into 4 groups, each Assigned a district, and were given the directions:

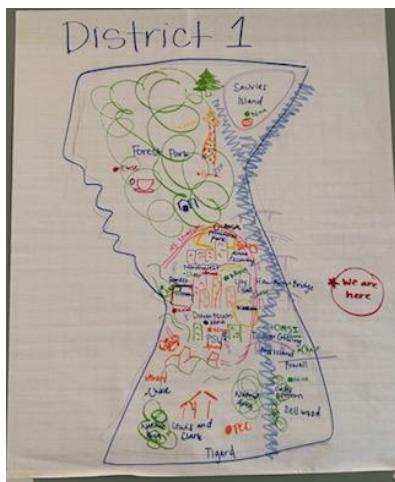
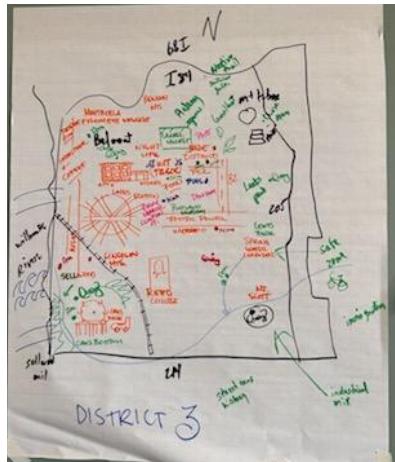
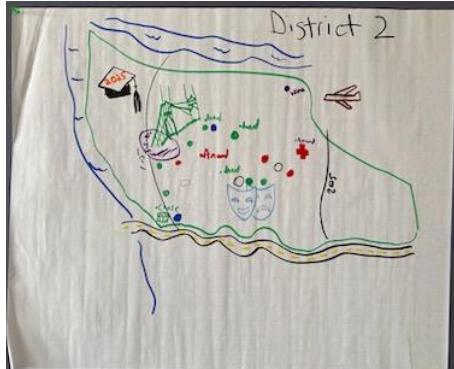
1. Draw the perimeter (draw and label where the boundary ends)
2. Sketch the shape of the district - represent the district spatially
3. Illustrate graphically what characterizes the district (landmarks, key roads/transit avenues, parks, fun facts, county buildings, etc.)

\*group took a 10 minute break\*

### **Report Back from Chair Vega Pederson's Office**

Debrief: how was the activity?

- Fun, trying to think of all the things I do in the district was fun.
- We all knew different things
- It was cool to hear from people who'd been in the district more than me



D4 photo missing

#### District 4 (Jen and Ann)

- Jen drew in all the natural things, Oxbrow Park, McMinimins, the towns in District 4. Ann has lived here 16 years and didn't know about Corbett!
- Ann: we drew in the urban areas, cute markets etc. I've been to Gresham main street.
- Jen: We thought if you know more you can tell us! We know there is Portland urban sprawl.
- Frank: I'd add Rockwood which is a huge expanding area, we've invested a lot of time and effort into it- a little NE of Gresham. I'd add Mount Hood Community College! Can also add in small communities that used to be farm land- a lot of this has changed in the last few decades, when I moved in the 90s there was way more farmland.
- Ann: there are perceptions of parts of Gresham being rough
  - Frank: People say south of Powell is higher income, north is lower income.
  - Jenny: My husband grew up in the 70s and 80s in that area and it was just called East County. It's a beautiful area,
- Nina: There's also a small Japanese garden which is beautiful!
  - Jenny: Leech Botanical garden is also out in District 4 or 3
- Frank: there's the scenic highway as well!
- Quay: is Troutdale in D4? Yes!

#### District 2: (Anand, Renai, Brian)

- Anand: pretty big district, UP, cathedral park, hospitals including the biggest private hospital in the state, arts district in Hollywood, the best airport in the country. Also the costco, IKEA.
- Renai: I also learned it has the highest population of coyote sightings.
- Jenny: There's also great Pho in the area! NAYA is also up there, the animal shelter, industrial areas meeting nature. They're also working on the superfund site on the Willamette, and building a botanical garden in that area.
- Renai: we were talking about how all the districts have totally different neighborhoods within them. There's a lot of diversity.

#### District 3: (Frank, Chase, Jenny)

- Frank: I notice that after 205 you're in the 'safe zone' of infrastructure for bikes. You also see the neighborhoods have very different vibes and energy. I also wanted to highlight that a lot of the roads are indigenous trails and then streetcars, but are now roads.
- Jenny: I love that there's so much food and multicultural foods especially around 82nd and the mercado. There's also a lot of dense housing on the western side. Ladd's isn't as dense but also has a lot of apartments around it. Oaks Bottom is also pretty big and there are lots of green spaces within there.
- Quay'Roene: there's also some great recovery efforts along 82nd, and tiny homes things like that.
- Jenny: there's also a lot of schools!

#### District 1: (Nina, David, Quay'Roene)

- Nina: We have the Willamette - we concentrated on the downtown area. Forrest park is also there. We have more suburban areas as well. Also Lewis and Clark
- David: we divided it into 3- the center is downtown, parts of Northwest, where there's more business/schools/tourism. Then there's up top nature/zoo/gardens and south is more suburban.
- Quay'Roene: PSU, humanities in perspective, etc.

Everyone took 10 minutes to add dots to the map and/or landmarks:

- Red: somewhere you have lived
- Blue: where you connect spiritually
- Yellow: where your loved ones live
- Green: where you like to play or party
- Orange: where you got schooled, educated or trained
- Purple: where you have worked (or work) or volunteered
- Grey/black: where you otherwise spend time or have connection to (surprise!)

Chase: I love this about the county, it's not just about where you live but also where we all are connected.

And also took a break!

## Updates from Chair's Office

Sara introduced herself: she worked with former commissioner Jayapal for many years, then the interim commissioner Jesse Beeson for longer than expected due to a runoff primary for D2. When Commissioner Singleton won in November and started in December Sara moved to the Chair's office as the Budget Director for the Chair's office. Worked on the budget for 6mo during the most intense budget work in the spring - budget production, amendments, and adoption. My colleague moved to the interim COOs office and has been the deputy managing the policy team. My passion is more the policy team.

Show of hands for each district represented!

This time if for you all to ask questions about your work, engagement, other things the Chair is working on.

I've been here 7 years and every year we get your letters and they are helpful - on the 6th floor with the electeds they are all pretty high level focused on the policy. In this system it's important to hear from the advisory committees to see who they are seeing, hearing, and thinking about. You all are unique in that you get to work n things longer - last year for example we were able to convert a LDA employee to permanent in part due to your recommendation, so it is no small thing to make that change in a restraint year.

Brian: what can we do as an advisory group to make sure our recs are heard, beyond the recommendation letter and presentation. How much can we align recommendations with the likelihood that they're recommended?

- Sara; I'd recommend being even more targeted and direct. If something is a #1 priority, listing them out in ranking is helpful - we ask departments and the public to do that too. When there's 20 recommendations it can dilute them.
- Renai: we did try that in our last one- directed more to OCI and then a few to the Board.

Brian: Are there triggers, key words, key concepts or concerns that we should make sure we have.

- Sara: Know your audience- what are the commissioner's priorities, can someone be a champion for a recommendation or an issue? That's a political question.

Jenny: I've been on this committee a long time and it often feels like we're searching in the dark for our purpose and who we are. We're often very problem focused, but I am hearing that being recommendation focused is also important. I feel like I hold a lot of knowledge on some things, and it's not always involving the whole community on it, rather than having the commissioners hear from the public themselves. It feels like we sometimes amplify the County's own problems and not the community voice - my point is how do we focus our energy in a way that is productive for everyone here.

- Amara: I'm very new, but another strategy to keep in mind is that you all really advise me, as director of OCI. I think having a close relationship with OCI and the programmatic, strategic areas that we can influence over time. There's also some interest in building up the infrastructure committee which has had a big impact on OCI. The more you see your role as advising us to be strategic in carrying out the mission vision values of this office is helpful.

- Sara: The commissioners do hear from a lot of different parties - unions, nonprofits, etc. I do think making sure recommendations align with departments on the frontlines is very important. It's very important to bring department staff along on community engagement - and part of OCI's role is to support departments in engagement. It can be a big transition for a 6,000 person organization, it takes a lot to turn the ship. Having more slowly go to OCI and have them supporting/influencing how things are moving is important.

Jen: I have been here 2 years and there's a marked difference between year 1 and year 2, year 1 was also the chair's first year. It seems like there's a stronger commitment to community involvement right now because of the chair - it seems like that plus hiring Amara. In year 1 I headed a subcommittee with Brian and it felt more like we weren't going to be taken seriously, but year 2 felt more movement. I want to check if that's what you're seeing as well.

- Sara: I hope so! I think having OCI be more stable right now is really great.

Brian: If we want to build a champion or connect at that level, is that more effective from the CIC or the OCI?

- Sara: I think it depends on what you're trying to do! OCI will have a workplan based on the strategic plan - it's new and has been funded over the last couple years. So OCI will have goals and outcomes that align with the rest of the organization. They call them KPI's now "Key Performance Indicators" - so if there's something the CIC thinks should be in OCI's workplan that is where to keep it.

Sara: Another big thing coming up is Charter Review. There's a Charter Reform/Review commission, which is a group of volunteers who can open up the charter and look at what they might want to improve. People are more interested in the county than ever before. Since the Board is pretty new, only one has been through a Charter review process before - it could be helpful and very interesting to have a report on past Charter Reviews and advise OCI in how to set up a dynamic recruitment and engagement process around the Charter.

- Amara: right we would be recruiting for it next summer
- Jenny: it would be sent to the voters, right? (Yes)
- Brian: I was involved in some of the City review things, so it would be interesting to see the County's process

(FILL IN FROM NOTES)

Anand: what is the relationship between the County and City - I partially joined this because it is so confusing and complicated who to call for what!

- Sara: the commissioners in the county and the city councils have actually decent relationships - they're working together and with other committees that advise on things. But it is pretty complicated. The city and county work together on 211 and 311, but there's a lot of disagreement about who pays for them. The cuts over the next 3 years will be pretty bare bones, there will be a lot of cuts. With the ARPA funds we were able to experiment and do more, especially more preventative services, those are now gone or about to go. Hopefully we'll be able to keep working on things and making things more efficient. Unfortunately one example is scaling back vaccination clinics.

Chase: you spoke to your commitment to engagement and your background - I'm curious what the conversation has been about preserving and expanding volunteering opportunities to keep maintain staffing. I think volunteering staff and programs often get cut, but I'm curious.

- Sara: I worked at SOLVE for 5 years and was a volunteer manager at a clinic. Volunteers are amazing! In the public sector it's hard- we have a pretty robust volunteer program in the animal shelter because we need so many people to hang out with the dogs- it's a liability because the animals can be unpredictable. A lot of opportunities in government require high levels of skill, and we also have labor union considerations so volunteering doesn't replace jobs. It could be interesting for the CIC to look into opportunities for volunteers.
- Amara: We also know there's over 1,000 volunteers in the Library, more than staff!

Amara: I also wanted to back up a little bit - OCI is strategically located on the Chair's team. There are a lot of fabulous programs who aren't placed in this position of power. OCI's priorities for this year for you:

1. OCI is initiating a collaborative workgroup with District Offices to develop a collaborative budget engagement plan. Working with all 4 districts to create best practices for hearings and other engagements, developing a county-wide Budget 101 curriculum, and doing skill mapping on what is the expertise that the Chair's office has right now in the work of budget engagement.
2. Continuing CBAC improvement. Last thing that happened was the recommendations from the CCBAC - they gave us some more code improvements including the addition of the new membership language
3. Charter Review process is going to be HUGE. We probably won't get a lot of support financially for this. So the goals are for next spring to raise awareness and begin to recruit - I imagine it will be very politicized. We need recommendations for how to do recruitment, which people will also be sending us. Amara will send with us all a 1 page overview.
  - a. Spring: recruitment. We will likely get MANY applications in, there are no interviews.
    - i. Jenny: how is that equitable?
    - ii. Jen: how do you know their communication styles?
    - iii. Amara: not sure if we can change our questions or process. If you all want to be involved in diving into the Charter process it will be a lot of coming along with OCI to develop the recruitment, evaluation, etc process. The OCI then recommends to the Board.
  - b. Brian: can OCI learn from the city?
    - i. Amara: we've reached out to the city about it! A lot of people are telling me we have a lot of time but I feel like I need to meet with them!
  - c. Amara: we'll have some criteria for new candidates
4. Strategic plan: it seems ot be still evolving - we don't know where it is going to go. There is a whole initiative on community engagement. Full transparency OCI has not been brought to the table to work on this - maybe it would be good to **bring them to the CIC to do a presentation on that** and how the CIC/OCI can support it.

5. Volunteer work: continuing to understand how many advisory committees there are, we have 59. We're also working with the COOs office to adopt Better Impact for the County so we can have a better idea how many people are volunteering for the County. We're interested in building a little knowledge. It will take years to get to the place we want, but we're starting the ball there. That is a big part of what we're doing right now. We're also advocating for a volunteer manager person who can coordinate volunteering across the County in OCI or elsewhere.
  - a. Brian: The City has a lot of lessons to learn from what they've done right and wrong. I hope OCI can learn from their lessons and also model what has gone well.
6. Communities of Practice: we support 3 of staff who do similar work - 1 for volunteers, 1 that staffs advisory committee, and 1 larger one of all engagement practitioners in the county. We're trying to build trust and camaraderie with other departments and county colleagues and staff who do the work on the ground.

Comments:

Jenny: I know Brian and Jen and their team did a lot of work around that - I'd love for some of that, like participatory budgeting, be put into how people do feedback. I think there are great recommendations in there and deserve another look. And you can do really good feedback on that.

- Jen: the survey they did did a great job of tradeoff (Amara- over 4,000 people did it)
- Brian: What Sara said made me want to cut down things.
- Jen: I am looking at our letter and seeing what happened, it has been happening! We did have to assess what the current priorities are going in. We knew the Chair was focused on the budget, so focusing on that helped us be more effective. How do we find alignment between us and our interest, and align with leadership.

Chase: as a former public employee I really appreciate the approach of building trust and relationships. The approach you're taking seems wise and will hopefully go well.

- Amara: Thank you! we have been doing this a lot with the CBAC coordinators, bringing them together to work on the

## LUNCH!

Everyone grabbed lunch and spent 45min eating, working on maps, chatting, and addressing personal needs.

## Framing and Grounding for Choosing Subcommittees

KA framed the Committee (SEE SLIDES)

Chase: is there any role for the CIC in the communities of practice?

- Amara: those spaces are meant to be pretty employee driven, but there could be a role of the CIC there?

Renai: what would a CIC subcommittee look like on the Charter process?

- Amara: that would probably culminate in a plan for outreach and recruitment for the process, more than a recommendation letter. So it would
- Renai: similar to our membership work?
- Brian: would that be on a different timeline?
- Amara: yeah we would likely work together to come up with a work plan

David: so we're picking subcommittees, then those subcommittees look into things? Would there be any things from last year that we could continue? Or topics not selected last year?

- Jen: I'm curious if the infrastructure subcommittee from last year would be a piggy back subject. Maybe carrying forward the work of this body. Is there another year to be spent institutionalizing the engagement? How can we support Amara and OCI.
- Amara: my first thought is yes- though we should look into the priority.
  - 1. There is still a need for understanding what is going on in the county
  - 2. We would benefit from folks who are interested in compiling engagement resources

(view [recording](#))

## **Subcommittee decision: small group breakouts**

(Discussion on recording)

Small group breakout activity. Groups took the poll results and reflected on the following questions:

1. What are your initial thoughts or feelings about the top rated topics from the poll?
2. What do you already know, if anything, about Multnomah County's work and engagement practices on your favorite (or the most popular) topics?
3. Do any of the topics seem especially within the CIC's scope as Multnomah County's advisory body on community involvement and engagement? If so, why?
4. Do any topics seem like a better fit for another advisory body or space - such as one that works on policy for the issue area, or budgeting?
5. As a small group, what are the top topics you would recommend for the CIC to explore this year in subcommittees, with your top choice first?

Everyone met in small groups

## **Subcommittee decision: large group and voting**

Jen called folks back together after 20 minutes of breakout groups.

We know we have 2 committees that will be ad hoc - so we're looking for 2ish more topic ideas to work on with 4+ people in the room willing to work on.

Group 1 (Renai, Quay'Roel, Frank, Brian):

- Support **charter review** process (whatever that looks like)
- **Rural engagement**, especially outer east county: "how does the county engage the rural community?" - seems to be a common topic when people do outreach but there aren't clear supports around that. We could look at other counties which have rural populations.
- Discussed "livability" but weren't sure what that really means. It would need to be narrowed significantly. Couldn't define what the engagement angle is on that.
  - Chase: one thing to do around livability is how the county does/doesn't **engage people with disabilities**. There's a lot of downstream effects.

Group 2: (Nina, Chase, Jenny, Ann)

- Jail and justice - how are **people impacted by incarceration being engaged**, what are feedback loops with that.
  - Nina: I interned in the jail and the services felt really disconnected, it was like incarceration was happening in a vacuum and they weren't able to impact the system - I was curious how the county engages people who are incarcerated and their communities to improve how all this is functioning. LPSCC exists but is high level, they have a community position but I don't know that the County has an advisory group or other space that is really made up of people who have been incarcerated in the county. There's a missing piece in the jail around capturing people's experiences - folks are in one place. I saw things which are like, I can't believe we're letting people live like this. There are opportunities there for something more restorative or involved.
  - Who might be doing engagement now/could do engagement? DCJ has a volunteer team, not sure about engagement. Sheriff's office maybe. Maybe the DA. Are there nonprofits who try to fill some of those gaps, and does the county contract with them?
    - Question about communication and mail - trying to move to tablets to address staffing shortages.
  - Jenny: this could also follow up on the Recovery & Addiction subcommittee - we had some recommendations around lived experience and volunteerism, and peer group work, that could overlap with this. So we could do a second year with this lens. And before that public safety and gun violence. We need to make sure they're getting feedback from people who receive services.
  - Directly impacted people involvement in feedback around services - impacted including those who are/have been in the jail as well as their families/communities.
- Education around the multi-jurisdictional nature of what is going on - how to help the community understand this system. **Education as a component of engagement**- how to help people be set up to be civically engaged. What is the county's role in educating the community to engage with them?
  - Jenny: how is the County integrated into and engaging with k-12 and college educational systems. Not just a 101 about the government but

making sure our community is getting the ed they need around govt and what they do. County would have to work closely with PPS and other districts to create curriculum. Libraries and other places can be part of it.

- Jen: one of the Budget 101 recs was a 'citizen education program' which is often run out of sheriffs which is interesting.
- Connection to OCI: it would be around prioritizing this work, some recommendations around where it goes. May be hard to make it as part of the CIC and OCI scope. Is this an engagement problem or a social/society wide problem.
  - Anand: How do we make sure that we're reaching the people who are affected by living in the county?
  - Jenny: Everyone lives in the county and nobody knows the services or what the county does. If we start with youth we will have a better base.
  - Chase: It could be like Seattle, the city runs a **people's academy for civic engagement** it's in their engagement department - it's a program for teaching people who to talk to, meet electeds, etc.
- Youth engagement - engaging young people: interesting because there is a Multnomah County Commission and it's a very small group.

Group 3: (Anand, Jen, David)

- **Assessing siloing and who is doing what in Community Engagement**
  - Who is doing what? How are staff engaging Data based?
  - Guiding question: How do we engage those most impacted?
  - Continuation of the Infrastructure subcommittee- what is the OCI data-lane?
  - Anand: gets to the heart of what I raised- how do we assess community concerns and understand the system.
  - Interjurisdictional: who does what?

Other ideas

- Food deserts: what is the impact? How is the County engaging people on this issue and making sure people get services.
  - Food deserts could be a topic for a meeting, so we can learn more about it
- Drugs, Alcohol and public health
- Some of these topics could fall under 'livability and justice'

Temp check: when you are envisioning the CIC meetings. People are often on one or two subcommittees - they do take a lot of time to grapple with what we're talking about and working on recommendations.

- Charter: 8
- Rural and East County Engagement: 6
- Assessing infrastructure (continuation of FY25): 6
- Justice/Incarceration: 3
- Livability: 3

- Education/People's Academy: 3
- Drugs, Alcohol, MH: 1
- Food Deserts: 1

Discussion:

- Jenny: The ones with smaller numbers can be line-up for the CIC meetings.
- Amara: Charter would be furious and fast. I'd appreciate that support!
- Jen: does anyone see a way to collapse these into 2?
  - Doesn't seem like we can collapse them
- Chase: we could potentially drop this to 2, what if the assessing CE was ongoing. What if each year it's assessing engagement on a sub-area or community of interest. That could be a
- Renai: note Thang, Angel, Diego and MacKenzie aren't here.
- Brian: KA and I tried last year to do a liaison to another advisory group, where the liaison was continually uplifting engagement in their groups. Maybe there are other advisory committees on these topics and see if that works out.

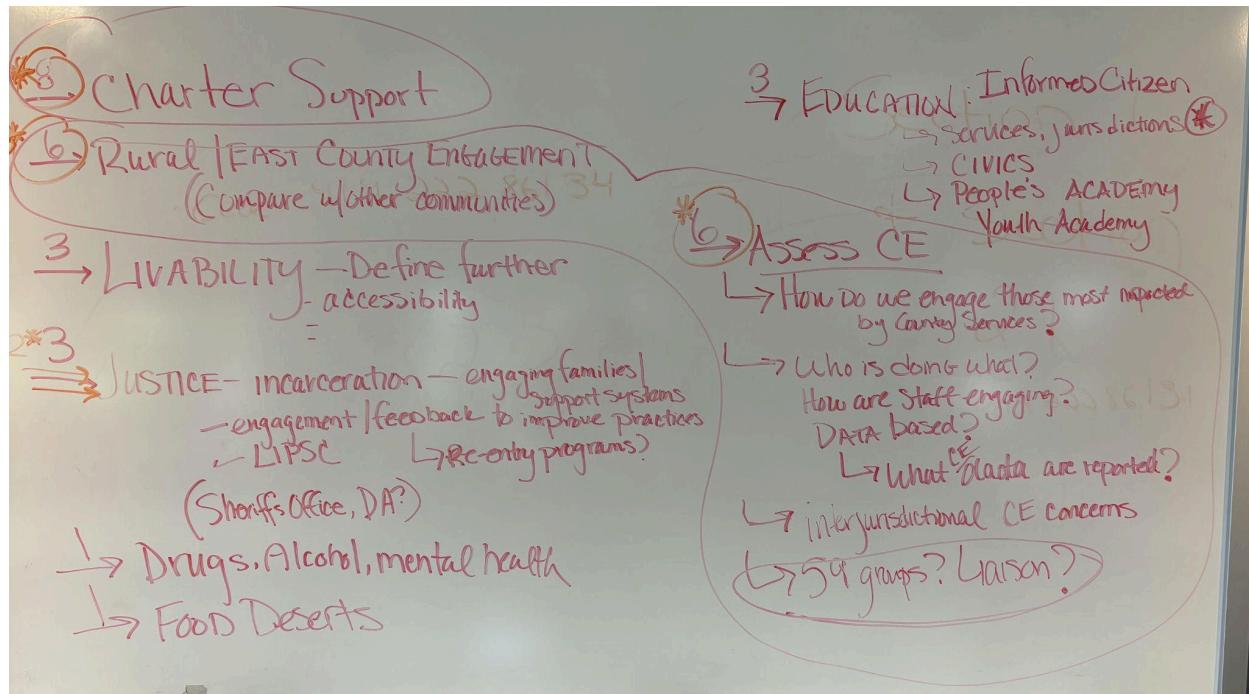
Second temp check:

- Charter support: 8 people still
- Rural/East County engagement: 3
- Assess engagement processes: 6
  - Might not be making recommendations as much as telling the county about itself
- Justice/Incarceration: 3

Can we move the Rural to Assessing engagement processes- focusing on rural engagement.

- KA: we'll work on the first few meetings in narrowing scope/focus
- Frank: that could be workable

Frank: Could we do a liaison for opportunity? Where it's just informative and addressing current issues. Maybe we could do that with justice. Maybe we can keep fact finding, or if we're surveying, we can look for info to support this more.



## Next Steps

KA thanked everyone for a great retreat! Looking ahead to our next steps - they will send out a poll in the next few days for us to sign up for subcommittees, and then for subcommittee members to schedule their first meeting - the first subcommittee meeting will be remote and the group will decide their recurring meeting date and time, whether meetings will be hybrid/remote or a mix, their subcommittee chair(s), and start to brainstorm what they need to learn and who they need to meet with this year. Interest in the ad hoc membership subcommittee, which includes reviewing materials, applications, and interviewing candidates, will also be included in the poll.

Nina shared that in that poll we will also accept nominations (of yourself or others!) for CIC Co-Chairs in this poll - please see the CIC position descriptions in the binder and website, or reach out to KA if you want to talk through being a Co-Chair!

Past co-chairs have any comments: none