

Zone 1 Blitz! Communication Team Sept. 15, 2015

Committee Members

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Purpose

Create a plan to inform the residents of Zone 1 about Community Listen by providing information about the problems, alternatives, opportunities and solutions in the Zone Blitz Plan. Consult with residents and partners by obtaining feedback and educating stakeholders on their roles in addressing the problems, including showing them how they can participate in solutions in the Zone Blitz Plan. Draft a plan to consistently communicate to the public about the entire initiative.

The team first discussed the overall message that we want to communicate about Zone 1 Blitz and came up with the below mission statement.

Zone 1 Blitz Communication Plan Mission Statement

Raising quality of life for Springfield's neighborhoods – Chapter 1, Zone 1.

This was chosen to convey that while we are starting with Zone 1, the blitz campaign may eventually extend into the other City Council zones to address issues and improve quality of life in those neighborhoods as well.

The team then identified the barriers to getting messages out to Zone 1 residents about the blitz activities and services.

Barriers

- Divided neighborhoods (example: Midtown, between those who live in large stately homes and those who do not).
- Transitional population.
- Lack of access to key communication channels.

- Lack of networks.
- Lack of trust.

The team then brainstormed possible communication channels to circumvent the barriers listed above. It was determined that most of the communication for Zone 1 Blitz needs to be at the grassroots level (possibly even door to door) to ensure the messages reach their intended audience.

The team also discussed the need to get the message out to Zone 1 residents about the existence of the United Way's 211 help line, which several committee members were also unaware of. Dialing 211 connects people to resources 24 hours a day, seven days a week. See Exhibit A for the full list of resources that 211 connects its callers to. 211 is also available online and as a mobile app.

Communication channels

- Communication team members and Blitz partners host Neighborhood Involvement Nights through neighborhood organizations at schools.
- Meet folks where they are to bring the information to them.
 - Schools
 - Churches
 - Laundromats
 - Barber Shops
 - Beauty Shops
 - Parks
 - Community gardens
 - Libraries
 - Neighborhood clean-up events
 - JVCHC/WIC
 - Medical clinics
 - Head Starts
 - Mobile food pantries
 - CU buses and bus stops
 - Neighborhood centers
- Reach out to citizens via:
 - Yard signs throughout neighborhood promoting Zone 1 Blitz and directing them where residents can get info.
 - Regular physical presence by partners at neighborhood events.
 - Partners facilitate whiteboards at neighborhood events or gathering places with one column listing "I need ..." and another column listing "I want ..." which will help connect residents to share services and help each other when possible.
 - The use of "information hubs or huddles" (football terminology) throughout neighborhoods that could either be the places listed above, or in a format similar to the Little Free Library model. Hubs would:
 - Have flexible hours of operation.

- Possibly be electronic, as kiosks, if funding allows.
- Serve as connection point for shared services/resources.
- Contain info packets about 211 and Zone 1 Blitz! services and activities.
 - Customizable based on “heat map” data from neighborhoods.
- Firefighters during calls.
- BDS inspectors during calls.

Takeaways

- Develop “hubs” for information sharing at identified locations within Zone 1.
- Develop PR/communication plan for promotion of Zone Blitz! activities and purpose to external audiences.
- Heavily promote the 211 system.
- Go to where the neighbors are.

Exhibit A: Full list of resources that 211 connects users to:

Basic Needs

- Food pantries
- Shelters
- Rent assistance
- Utility assistance
- Mortgage assistance

Physical and mental health resources

- Medicaid
- Medicare
- Prenatal care
- Crisis intervention
- Support groups
- Counseling
- Alcohol and drug rehabilitation

Jobs programs

- Educational and vocational training programs
- English as a second language classes
- Job training
- General Education Development (GED) preparation
- Financial and transportation assistance

Support for seniors and those with disabilities

- Centers for independent living
- Adult day care
- Meals at home
- Respite care
- Home health care
- Transportation and recreation

Support for children, youth and families

- After-school programs
- Tutoring
- Mentorship programs
- Family resource centers
- Protective services
- Counseling
- Early childhood learning programs
- Child care referral centers

- Recreation