



Proposal: Clintonville Area Commission: Community Conversations
To: CAC Chair B.J. White and CAC Membership
From: Commissioner Brittany Boulton, District 5 Area Commissioner
Date: April 12, 2021 (revised 5/2/21)

Background: In spring 2021, Clintonville Area Commission (CAC) received a number of inquiries about panhandling and homelessness, particularly along Clintonville's highway exits and commercial corridors. Residents expressed concern about health and safety and also in helping their fellow neighbors in economic or other crisis.

Purpose: This Community Conversations series will serve as a place for factual, compassionate community dialogues. Members will examine the state of homelessness in Clintonville and our broader area community, address resident questions and concerns, and respect the dignity of all Clintonville area residents regardless of their housing or economic status. Community Conversations will serve as a connector for residents and service providers, and may result in community building events such as clean-up days or resource kit creation.

Timeline: The first meeting will be held in late spring/early summer 2021, with follow-up meetings held quarterly.

Structure: In keeping with the CAC Community Conversations' purpose to create a space for factual and compassionate community dialogue, meetings will focus on two components:

- Panels from experts working with individuals and families facing homelessness
- Q&A from Clintonville area residents

Members of the planning committee and panels will be CAC Commissioners appointed at the pleasure of the CAC Chair.

Speakers: The Community Conversations planning committee will solicit Clintonville area residents for ideas on speakers they would like to see discuss this topic. An initial tentative list of local leaders to invite include:

- State of Homelessness: Michelle Heritage / Sara Loken (Community Shelter Board) – CSB leads the community census and data collection on individuals facing homelessness. Michelle is also a former Clintonville resident. Carlie Boos (Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio) collects data from her members across the housing spectrum, from homelessness to housing development and availability.
- Service providers: Ann Bischoff (Star House, 24/7 youth drop-in center) and Sonya Thesing (Huckleberry House – youth homelessness) focus on youth homelessness. Beth Fetzer-Rice (Homeless Families Foundation), Bill Owens (Clintonville Resource Center), YWCA, YMCA
- Public Safety: Sandra Lopez (City of Columbus), Officer Chris Riley (Neighborhood Police Liaison), Parks & Recreation representative
- Local Faith Leadership

- Leaders from Other Neighborhoods: University Area Commission - The University Area Commission (UAC) has heard similar comments from their residents and CAC and UAC is located directly adjacent to CAC's south end and has social workers with a background on this topic; Trent Smith (Franklinton Board of Trade) – five local communities recently utilized CARES Act dollars to pay local residents to do litter cleanup ([Dispatch coverage](#)).

Other Logistics: The planning committee will determine whether each meeting will take place via Zoom or in an outdoor space where social distancing will be possible and audio acceptable. Outdoor, in-person venues may include the Clintonville Woman's Club, Peace Park, Whetstone Park of Roses, and Clinton-Como Park. Resident participants are encouraged to share other location ideas. Agendas will be promoted through CAC social media channels and website and promoted to local media.