2021

TCI Re-envisioning Study:
Price Community Report

College of Humanities & Social Sciences
Transforming Communities Institute
Utah State University

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About the TCI Re-envisioning Study

Transforming Communities Initiative, now known as Transforming Communities Institute (TCI), was founded in 2014 by faculty in the Department of Social Work at Utah State University (USU). TCI aimed to conduct research in and for the community while teaching the next generation of social work leaders to be data-driven and civically engaged.

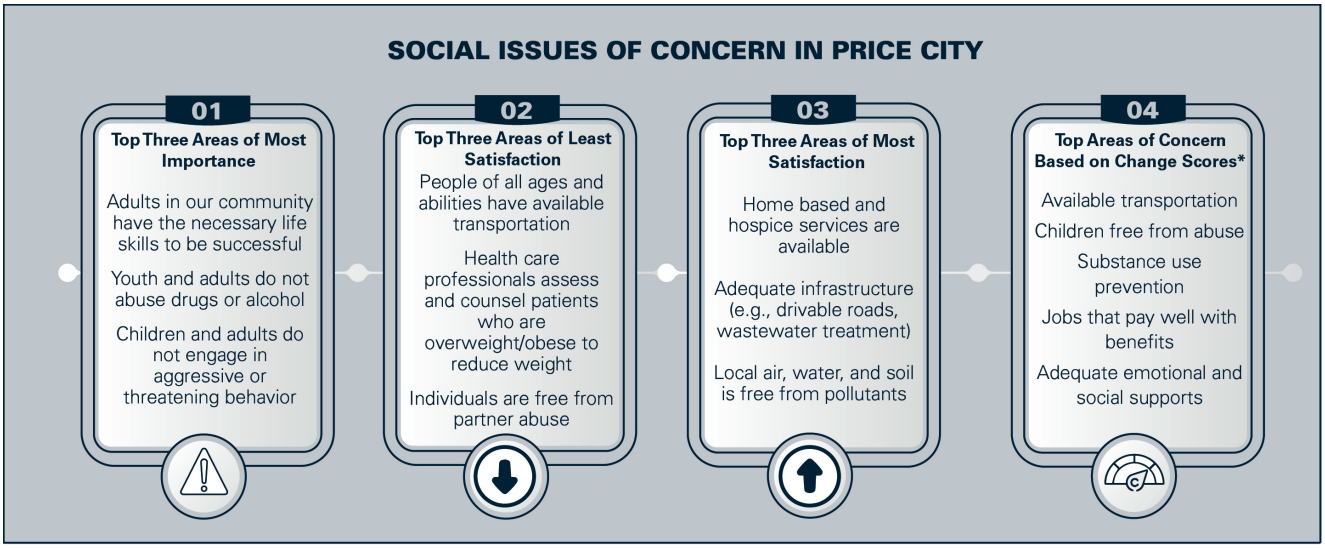
After several years of successful projects and changes in Utah communities, a need existed to re-examine the mission and strategy of TCI. Recently, TCI faculty leadership petitioned USU to advance from an initiative to an institute, with confirmation in February 2022. As part of this growth process, TCI was reimagined through a community-engaged research project to ensure relevancy and maximum impact in Utah communities.

The project was a mixed-methods study that sought to understand 1) the social challenges and resources of Utah communities and 2) ways in which TCI may integrate more fully into communities to meet their needs and expand on their strengths. Survey and focus group data were collected from community decision makers and non-profit leaders who work in Blanding, Brigham City, Logan, Moab, Price, Tooele, and Uintah Basin. The present report shares the survey and focus group findings from the Price area.

Survey Findings

Price had seven responses from the Community Decision Makers, and nine responses from the Nonprofits surveyed. The mean age of participants was 51.14 (SD= 11.65), and the mean time for working in their community was 30.29 years (SD= 22.96). The majority (57.1%) of the participants were women and all (100%) identified as white. Regarding level of education received, 71.4% reported obtaining an advanced/professional degree. About 57.1% of respondents selected $50,000-$74,999 as their yearly household income.

Of the Decision Maker respondents, 83.3% of participants somewhat agree that community members have a voice, and of the Nonprofit respondents, 75% reported the same. All of the Nonprofit respondents somewhat to strongly agreed that USU is an asset in their community, and 66.7% of Decision Makers reported the same. While 75% of Nonprofits felt connected to the USU campus in their area, only 50% of Decision Makers reported the same.



*subtracting the overall satisfaction score from the importance scores

Focus Group Findings

In the focus group for the Price area, there were three participants: one government representative, one nonprofit worker, and one healthcare worker. The two topics the group chose to discuss were children and youth free from abuse and jobs.

Children free from abuse

Participants indicated that preventing child abuse is a major focus in their community. With the COVID-19 pandemic and economic depression, rates of abuse and neglect have increased. Two participants note that abuse may be particularly prevalent in low-income neighborhoods and single-parent households. The community is focusing on prevention programs to help combat child mistreatment including youth council and community and faith programs that offer parenting classes and youth programming. Although these efforts are beneficial, having more obtainable data from the health department and school districts would be beneficial for collaboration. Participant 2 stated about prevention resources:

> ***"Part of it is protecting kids with these initiatives... but it's also, most of it happens in the home at the hands of caregivers. So, is more education needed? Are more mental health services needed? I would say yes. Parenting classes... 211... there's also an app, and they offer parenting tips. Help Me Grow Utah is also a free resource... it's a real patchwork right now." (Participant 2)***

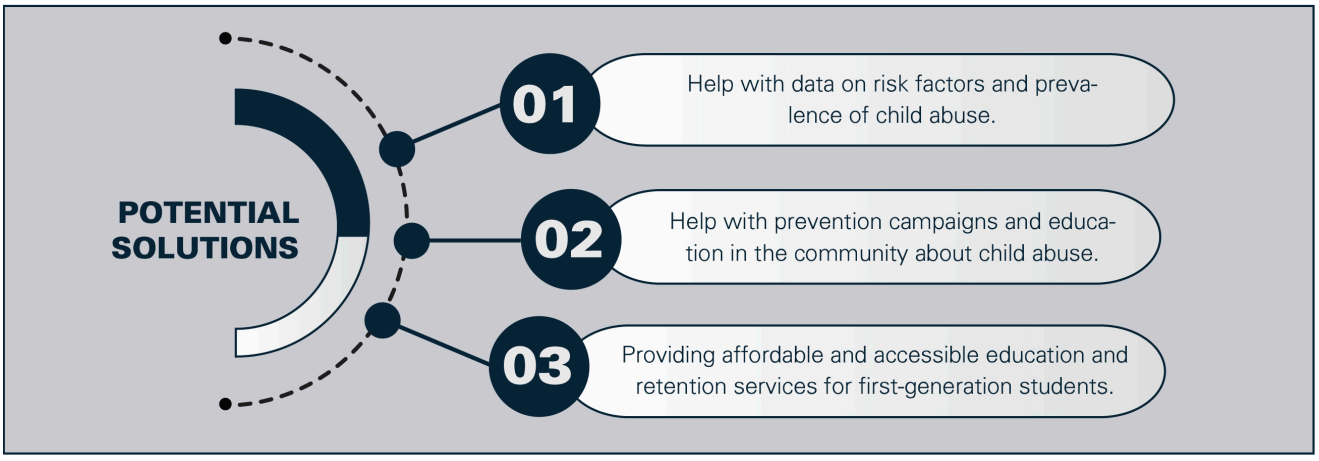
Jobs

Participants agreed that many jobs do not offer living wages or benefits, which hurts the community. One participant noted that many jobs in the community lack upward mobility. Low wages particularly affect single parents and households with two working parents because of the increased stress and lack of child supervision. Participants identified that the association of local government, workforce services, and some local business owners are working to provide job training, support, and increase wages. Participant 2 shared:

> ***"When I look at Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the base is physiological. And no, money doesn't fix everything, but if someone has a stable job and is able to pay for the basics, shelter, utilities, food, then we are better able to meet challenges head on...When people have secure employment, it's no secret, they are better able to take care of the things... when you have that stress of not having a good paying job, when you have the stress of not knowing how you're going to pay bills, or meet rent, or make a car payment...it's a pretty dark place." (Participant 2)***

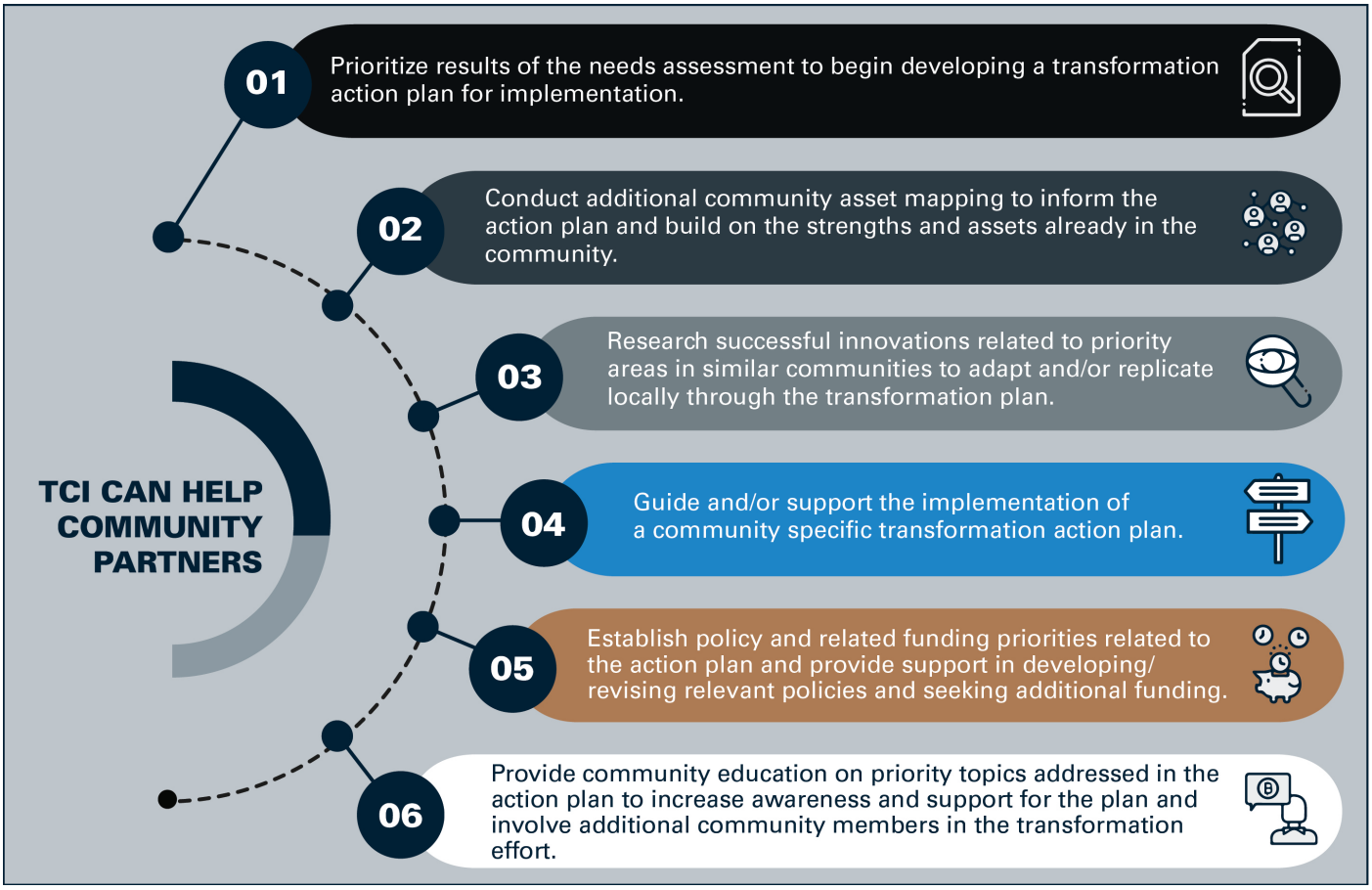
Potential Solutions Proposed by Communities

Participants discussed potential solutions and ways that USU, TCI, and other entities could help address challenges in the Price area.



How TCI Can Help

At TCI, we are committed to working with and supporting our community partners through all stages of transformation. This includes working with key stakeholders from initial assessment to implementation of innovative ideas, all the way through to evaluating transformation outcomes. We are interested in providing our community partners with actionable suggestions on how they might apply the results of the most current round of community assessments to advance transformation activities at the local level. Below are several ways that TCI can support key stakeholders to build on the results of this report to cultivate change in their communities:



As community partners consider the next steps for their communities to take in creating meaningful change, TCI is ready to collaborate intentionally and effectively to improve community-identified key outcomes. Together, we can build vibrant, strong, resilient, and inclusive communities where all Utahns can thrive.

To read the full report of the TCI Re-envisioning study, please visit:

https://chass.usu.edu/social-work/transforming-communities-institute/

To connect with TCI, reach out to our director, Dr. Jayme Walters, at jayme.walters@usu.edu or 435-797-7693.