



**COMMUNITY  
RELATIONS  
COMMISSION**  
CITY OF GOSHEN

January 10, 2018 - The recent rezoning application by CoreCivic to permit an immigration detention center in Elkhart County has touched off a community-wide examination of the kind of place Elkhart County is, and the kind of place we want to see it become.

The Community Relations Commission of Goshen (CRC) is appointed by the Mayor of Goshen and Goshen City Council. Identifying and working towards our common values is work that the CRC has pursued for many years. In 2014 we initiated a visioning process that asked hundreds of residents how they saw Goshen's future. At the center of this work is the value that "Goshen is a vibrant and dynamic community. Together we strive to promote vitality, safety, and wholeness."<sup>1</sup>

In considering the CoreCivic application through the lens of this Vision, the CRC has concluded that CoreCivic's presence in our community will negatively impact the pursuit of this Vision; in particular the promotion of vitality, safety, and wholeness in the community.

There is ample evidence that CoreCivic has failed repeatedly to provide for the safety of the community, their staff, and inmates. For example, an April 2017 Department of Justice (DOJ) audit of CoreCivic's Leavenworth Detention Center, found that "an overtly confrontational prisoner spirit suggest[s] [that] the ongoing shortage (as high as 23%) of correctional officers is having an impact on the facility's operational climate."<sup>2</sup> The same audit found that CoreCivic intentionally subverted standards for usable space per occupant and ventilation per occupant in the interest of increasing population capacity at their Leavenworth facility.<sup>3</sup>

The Tennessee Department of Corrections audited CoreCivic facilities in that state in 2017. In one of their five findings against CoreCivic they reported that two facilities "managed by CoreCivic, operated with fewer than approved correctional officer staff, did not have all staffing rosters, did not follow staffing pattern guidelines, and left critical posts unstaffed."<sup>4</sup>

These are only a few of the many reliable, publicly-available documents describing the substandard performance of CoreCivic. Goshen is the county seat and the geographic center of the county. The facility will be located only a few miles from Northwest edge of city limits. Given this proximity and the track record of CoreCivic, the CRC believes that CoreCivic operating a private, for-profit detention center in our county is a threat to our values of vitality, safety and wholeness. We encourage the county to reject the rezoning permit and do everything possible to keep CoreCivic out of our community.

About the Community Relations Commission: The mission of the CRC is to foster a climate of positive community relationships and non-discrimination in which all Goshen citizens enjoy equal opportunity.

<sup>1</sup>Community Relations Commission, Goshen, Indiana website. <https://goshenindiana.org/community-relations-commission>

<sup>2</sup>Audit of the United States Marshals Service Contract No. DJJODT7C0002 with CoreCivic, Inc., to Operate the Leavenworth Detention Center, Leavenworth, Kansas. Published April 2017. <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/2017/a1722.pdf#page=2>. Page 53. Accessed 20 December 2017.

<sup>3</sup>Audit of the United States Marshals Service Contract No. DJJODT7C0002. Page 60.

<sup>4</sup>STATE OF TENNESSEE COMPTROLLER OF THE TREASURY, DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION, Performance Audit Report, November 2017. <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/repository/SA/pa17275.pdf>. Page 4. Accessed 20 December 2017.