



Brandi Allen
 Conferences & Education Director
 Alliance for Innovation
 ballen@transformgov.org
 602- 496-1097

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Project Leader/Primary Contact

Name Brian Kates

Title Facility Director, Meadows Park Community Center

Phone Number 719-385-7942

Email bkates@springsgov.com

Mailing Address 1943 S El Paso Avenue / Colorado Springs / CO / 80905

Presentation Team Member #1

Name Scott Lovaas LCSW, PhD

Title Minister of Community Life

Phone Number 719-473-1807

Email slovaas@broadmoorchurch.org

Mailing Address 315 Lake Avenue / Colorado Springs / CO / 80906

Presentation Team Member #2 – N/A

Name _____

Title _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Mailing Address _____

Presentation Team Member #3 – N/A

Name _____

Title _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Mailing Address _____

Presentation Team Member #4 – N/A

Name _____

Title _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Mailing Address _____

Innovation Study Synopsis: Broad-Based Partnerships – A New Way Forward

The focus of local government is shifting throughout the country as a result of a debilitating decrease in public funding. During the final days of 2008, the focus of local government in Colorado Springs, Colorado virtually shifted overnight from one of service delivery to bridging a projected \$20-\$25 million dollar deficitⁱ, sparking both panic and debate while simultaneously creating a frenzy, especially amongst the masses who equated government with stability. As 2009 arrived, the bottom fell out altogether as the worst fears were realized, including low sales tax revenue, high unemployment and stalled building construction.

To address this challenge directly and swiftly, several severe measures were employed by the city. Over 500 full time employees (25% of the city's workforce) - nearly all from the non-public safety sector – were eliminated through either a reduction in force or voluntary attrition retirement program. The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department budget was reduced from \$19.7M in 2008 to a mere \$3.6M in 2010, an 81% decreaseⁱⁱ.

Consequently, measures were employed – some arguably quite radical in nature. City services such as community centers and municipal swimming pools were outsourced. Trash cans were removed from parks, approximately one of every three street lights were turned off and mass transit service was eliminated after six p.m. and throughout the weekend. A once fully serviced city quickly found itself against the wall. It was abundantly clear that a new business model needed to be developed and employed immediately or else the elimination of further services was imminent.

Out of this necessity, the Broad-Based Partnership (BBP) model was invented. At its core, BBP reduces the monetary amount and reliance of local government without reducing core, basic services. This is done through a strategic coordination of effort that interweaves private sector, public sector, and civil society. In contrast to outsourcing, in which services are managed by private entities this model incorporates insourcing, in which the same public-private partnerships are developed but with the public sector overseeing the process. In doing so, an influx of services from the greater community assists with the daily operation of the municipality with significantly more buy-in from community partners and less reliance on taxes and other forms of public funding.

Coordinated in 2010 and accepted by City Council to employ at Meadows Park Community Center (MPCC) in 2011, the results indicate that the model works just as well in application as it does in concept. This is perhaps most evident in the fact that the community center, in operation since 1982, is on pace to have record participation and volunteer support as well as hours of operation despite General Fund support being reduced by 66% (\$342K in 2009 to \$117.5K in 2011). In the face of severe reduction, expansion has even occurred, with a 1,800 ft. sq. satellite operation opened and operational in May, to serve an estimated additional 5,000 people annually in another local underserved neighborhood.

It should be noted that this success was likely to never have been realized had it not been the deployment of this model and active engagement of the community.

Between 2009 and 2010, MPCC was slated for full closure on no less than five occasions (2/09, 12/09, 3/10, 10/10, 12/10). Meetings took place to discuss such items as the amount of plywood deemed necessary to cover all glass windows and doors and procedures in winterizing HVAC units and setting up timelines to determine final program dates and customer communication. As dire as the situation became, the power of the people prevailed.

To achieve these unprecedented results, numerous equally unprecedented actions were taken. Financially, over \$70K in cash has been privately fundraised via grants, support from individuals and local for and non-profit businesses and special events. Over fifty individual partnerships have been developed that has provided direct services or direct support to City-run services with an in-kind value of over \$100K. Volunteers in the form of work-study students, community service agencies, school and service groups, faith-based organizations and local residents has reduced amount of paid government staff while also providing enriching experiences and transferrable skills to all participants.

Beyond the financial benefits of the BBP model, other less tangible benefits have emerged. Perhaps most prominent among them is the buy-in from the community that has been generated. Previously uninvolved neighbors have lent their time, skill, passion and expertise to help improve the services offered, the physical facility and the overall quality of life of center patrons.

Numerous residents and businesses on the outskirts of the immediate neighborhood in which the center is based have gone from passive and uninvolved to taking ownership of the effort. The “haves” are mobilizing resources to the “have-nots” and the “have-nots” are showcasing their strengths e.g. cultural richness, self-reliance in ways that previously did not take place. The result is a more vibrant and tolerant overall community, with fewer actual and perceived boundaries. A few examples to support this include:

- A personal trainer who was employed at MPCC over 15 years ago, who agreed to provide free fitness classes for local families weekly throughout the year
- A local low-income family in the concessionaire business providing a complimentary beverage machine and having allowing MPCC to maintain all proceeds
- Over \$47K in cash in in-kind support for the MPCC summer elementary day camp, including a complimentary Friday sports camp exclusively designed for center patrons, snacks and lunches from the local food bank, free bus passes, zoo and ice rink admission, 5-day overnight camp experience for 25 youth at a YMCA mountain location, entry into a learn-to-golf program and a badminton clinic provided by the United States Olympic Badminton team
- Computer, clothing, food, furniture school supply and holiday basket drives to support local families in need

With such a large consortium from all walks of life involved with the effort, MPCC has become a place where opportunities abound. However, with all opportunities there is

the possibility of threat. A commonly forecasted threat that has not been realized is the working relationship of faith communities and government, commonly referred to as “church and state”.

Though the possibility of calamity does exist with this and, to a degree all forged partnerships, thus far the tandem has reaped many more rewards than penalties. Though varying agendas have been brought forward at times, with a centralized focus on the task at hand that is of importance to each party e.g. combatting food insecurity, sending kids to camp such obstacles have been cleared rather easily. Perhaps the greatest contributors the center have been the faith community, who have provided significant volunteer and financial support as well as to increase civic engagement.

Another concern that has surfaced many times is that of losing the relative security of tax support for a model that carries a burden of community support, particularly in the area of financial underwriting. Though the possibility of not achieving the full level of support needed has and will exist, it has been proven that this same dynamic exists within the public sector, perhaps to even a greater degree within services of the organization not considered essential in nature. What is most critical is to ensure the portfolio of partners is diverse, which allows for unexpected challenges without it having a dire impact on the overall operation.

For greater detail and further examples of what has taken place thus far through the incorporation of the BBP model at MPCC, please refer to the enclosed paper that has been produced for all whom are interested.

ⁱ <http://www.springsgov.com/units/budget/2010/2010BudgetinBrief.pdf> Page 9

ⁱⁱ <http://www.springsgov.com/units/budget/2010/22-TranspandParks-Parks.pdf>

Innovation Study Components: Broad-Based Partnerships – A New Way Forward

1. Innovation/Creativity

As previously stated, the BBP model has allowed continuity and even expansion of core services to continue even in the midst of severe budget constraints. Furthermore, a change in delivery from provider to manager of services has in essence redefined the role of local government as one that seeks to be the primary provider to simply providing the infrastructure, with the greater community becoming the primary provider. Inherent in this paradigm shift is the ability to successfully involve traits that are often considered essentials in the private sector, including creativity, transparency, exceptional customer service, competitive pricing and something not often attributed to government – risk.

One action taken to incorporate these traits has been in the area of technology. Whereas most marketing previously was developed through costly print pieces, the majority of communication takes place currently through postings on the City website as well as social media, emails and text messages. The latter has been the most revolutionary, as instant communication has been able to be provided to patrons, an estimated 90% whom do not own or have

immediate access to a computer. With many customers not owning a land-line phone but this year owning a personal cell phone, instant text messaging that they “opt-in” to receive provides immediate information and updates on such areas as commodity allotment, field trips, program cancellation and amber alerts.

The grass roots approach to innovation and creativity that is currently being employed began by the efforts of a few, particularly MPCC staff and Mr. Lovaas of Broadmoor Community Church, Becky Fuller of SCORE and a small group of members from the community which has now become a well-functioning advisory committee. At no time was a paid consultant hired, nor was anyone else who required compensation.

2. Outcomes Achieved

While the MPCC budget was reduced by two thirds in 2011, the basic needs of local residents increased due to impacts caused by the downward economy. Immediately, MPCC staff and the advisory committee focused on seven core areas in which the center would concentrate to attempt to meet those needs and stay within its meager resources: food insecurity, public safety, technology, health/wellness, medical, early childhood and youth programming.

Inroads in all seven areas have been made thus far in the year. Examples include:

- Establishment of a food pantry, paid by private groups and staffed by volunteers under the coordination of MPCC staff with an estimated 50 people served each week and over 8,000 lbs. of food donated
- Expansion of commodity distribution program, serving over 150 people monthly
- Providing nutritious snacks to all youth age 18 and under each school day afternoon and backpacks filled with non-perishable food items each Friday for the weekend
- Raising funds to sponsor families with school-aged children without an in-house computer with both a computer and Internet connectivity throughout the year.
- Forming a partnership with a non-profit agency that provides low-cost preschool (\$150/month or less – sliding scale) to local families. To date, over \$40K has been provided by this group to improve the physical facility, pay for staffing, and provide scholarships to low-income families.
- Developing a partnership with the local police and fire departments and working collaboratively to address public safety needs in areas throughout southwest Colorado Springs
- Health care fair, mobile medical and dental care mobile and enrollment van on site through a partnership with Peak Vista Community Health.

Overall health of the community as a result of these and other efforts are widespread and offer, through prevention, a cost-effective way of addressing very costly issues including diabetes, obesity, respiratory ailments, home safety, access to technology and quality childcare.

Beyond the access of services and cost reductions provided through these partnerships, understanding and access to government in general has improved through the experiential learning that has occurred amongst providers, recipients and others throughout the community that has learned about the array of efforts taking place. In the last year the public has provided over 500 petition signatures, 50 letters of support and countless emails, phone calls and presentations at council meetings that attest to this fact.

At the conference presentation, a more thorough review of this activity will be provided, with an experiential learning exercise offered that will allow attendees to perhaps experience this phenomenon first hand.

3. Applicable Results and Real World Practicality

Of the many benefits of the BBP model, perhaps the greatest is its transferability. Be it a large city or small town, homogenous or diverse population, economically vibrant or struggling municipality, liberal or conservative community, BBP's can not only be developed, but thrive throughout the world. Utilizing recommended best practices from such respected authorities as the United Nations [Van Vliet, Willem. Broad-based partnerships as a strategy for urban liveability: An evaluation of best practices. (United Nations Human Settlements Programme: Nairobi, 2008), 1-12], this model has universal practicality.

An interactive step-by-step review of the process will be provided to attendees, with the goal of providing the template for designing a model that works within the parameters in existence at other municipalities. Though the work required to achieve success can be great, most are likely to see that the model at its core is simple to design and easy to understand.

Additional details on the model's potential results and real world practicality can be found within the enclosed paper.

4. Innovation Study Presentation

To best explain the format of this proposed innovation study presentation, it is perhaps easiest to explain what it will not resemble, which is a 75-minute lecture on the benefits of BBP. Rather, this presentation will be only one part overview, with the rest being interactive and seeking to apply the model in a way that is both meaningful and practical to attendees. This will occur through the following modes of delivery:

- PowerPoint. Both slides and video will be utilized that showcase the model through numbers, statistics, outcomes, media coverage and, most importantly, the people themselves whom have been both involved with the effort and beneficiaries of the services.
- Interactive group activity. An ~15 minute breakout activity will be provided that symbolically showcases the core emotion and strategy needed to employ

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- for the BBP model to be a success. Teamwork, concentration and transcendent thinking will all be employed during this exercise.
- Handout materials will not be necessary as everything will be provided electronically, with the option of receiving the presentation and paper via email after the conference. Having paper copies of the PowerPoint presentation and paper could take place if desired.
 - Live demonstration. To fully experience the BBP model, a psychodrama-like demonstration will be provided. Depending on the comfort level of the group, either the presenters will role-play and dramatize real-world issues or, attendees themselves will ad-lib issues in a fish-bowl environment with direct facilitation from the presenters.

Broad-Based Partnerships: A Way Forward Amidst a Changing Economy

Scott Lovaas and Brian Kates

DRAFT

During the final days of 2008, the focus of local government in Colorado Springs, Colorado virtually shifted overnight from service delivery to bridging a projected \$20-\$25 million dollar deficit, sparking both panic and debate while simultaneously creating a frenzy, especially amongst the masses who equated government with stability. As 2009 arrived, the bottom fell out altogether as the worst fears were realized, including low sales tax revenue, high unemployment and stalled building construction.

To address this challenge directly and swiftly, several severe measures were employed by the city. Over 500 full time employees (25% of the city's workforce) - nearly all from the non-public safety sector - were eliminated. City services such as community centers and municipal swimming pools were outsourced. Trash cans were removed from parks, approximately one of every three street lights were turned off and mass transit service was eliminated after six p.m. and throughout the weekend. A once fully serviced city quickly found itself against the wall.

Unfortunately, Colorado Springs is not alone. Many cities and local municipalities are facing increasing shortfalls in revenue that profoundly impair their ability to deliver fundamental services.¹ All but four States face budget shortfalls for 2011.² In order to balance budgets, states, counties, and cities across the country have reduced police and fire personnel, closed recreational services and parks, reduced or eliminated mass transit, and dropped or severely cut social programs altogether. Meanwhile, some cities have outsourced or privatized city services. Further compounding diminished tax receipts is the concerted attack on 'big government' from a variety of citizen groups. In the first quarter of 2011, elected politicians and 2012 presidential candidates have confronted state workers and their benefits calling them the "new privileged class in America."³ While much of the country is feeling the pinch of an unstable economy, government spending is an easy target for people who experience anxiety about the future.

It is our contention that decreased revenue streams and the assault on government will be the 'new normal,' and therefore new modalities in the delivery of basic services will be necessary. Over the last decade, economic globalization has redistributed power worldwide. As a result, the social, cultural and economic fabric of nations is rapidly changing in the developed, underdeveloped and developing world. Modern communication, computation technologies and logistics capabilities are serving as accelerators bringing fundamental, lasting, and profound shifts within the United States economy. Nearly every major social and economic indicator is fluctuating. Evidence of this new emerging economy can be found in fact that 30% of the US workforce was either unemployed or underemployed in 2010.⁴ Add to the list low job creation, outsourcing, soaring

home foreclosures, increased disparity between the wealthy and poor, educational shortfalls, and the picture is grim. Furthermore, 14.3% of the US population is now living in poverty, and one in six households now receive food stamps, both of which point to a changing economy for the entire population. In this new emerging economic order, governments, non-profits, and religious communities will all have less money and will have to re-think how they do business.

Regrettably, decreases in government and non-profit services disproportionately affect the poor and minorities more than those who are well off. Poverty is more than the lack of income. Historically, the poor have not always had the power or an effective voice in the decision-making process in the distributions of public services essentially rendering them disenfranchised citizens in their community. They are often invisible or live in forgotten neighborhoods with increased levels of crime, lawlessness, and substandard education. For every St. Louis there is an East St. Louis, for every Manhattan there is a Bronx. Whereas the wealthy can hire security firms, go to their private schools and gyms, or drive their SUVs to golf courses or second homes, the poor do not have these luxuries. Additionally, the poor often face discrimination and psychological stress by being from a certain neighborhood or part of town. While the current economic crisis has undeniably affected the upper class as well, it is the lower class that disproportionately feels the cuts in government services. Furthermore, many former middle class people now find themselves among the new poor due to being downsized, soaring debt levels and home foreclosures. The swelling ranks of the poor should be a concern for the citizenry.

Poverty and the lack of basic services are a threat to urban livability.⁵ If communities and governments fail to address basic human services and needs, social unrest may occur, and the consequences of social and civil unrest can be devastating. The Watts Riots of 1965, Newark in 1967, South Africa 2009, Greece and France in 2010, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and many others in 2011 demonstrate how quickly a society can spin out of control. US Congressman Paul Ryan of Wisconsin noted this recently during the massive protests over cutting collective bargaining and state employee benefits in Wisconsin by saying, "It looks like Cairo has moved to Madison." With increasingly larger number of citizens falling behind the economic curve combined with fundamental changes within the economy, government will need to be thoughtful in how they adapt to an economy that is in decline for the majority of the workforce. A quote that is attributed to Mahatma Gandhi helped keep us focused on bringing about meaningful change: "A nation's greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members." With this backdrop, we feel it is important for community leaders to step forward in addressing shared community interests.

With decreasing revenue, government arms/branches are increasingly retreating from their role within the community. However, basic human needs for the poor and ever decreasing middle class will persist and only increase in scope as the changing economic landscape shifts. Historically, faith communities and service groups have a long and rich history of reaching out to communities by providing basic services to the disenfranchised and the marginal of society.

Many faith communities do outreach, but the majority of that work has been decentralized, random, and short-term. Some large groups such as Catholic Charities, Jewish Family Services, Rotary, and Salvation Army, have been quite successful in helping the downtrodden over the long-run. However, these large organizations have a limited geographic reach and are not available in every community throughout the nation. The faith-based initiatives of the Clinton and Bush II administrations generated a great deal of interest and grant recipients several years ago when the economy was stable, but over time it became clear that creating new or alternative 'religious' social services was extremely difficult and inefficient.⁶

Does this mean there should not be any interaction between the faith community (or the larger category of civil society) and government in the implementation of social services? In fact, quite the contrary is the case. Now, more than ever, civil society and faith communities in particular are uniquely positioned to step up to the plate and provide moral leadership, financial support, and volunteers in the new emerging world. Rather than create or establish new services or replace government services, civil society can work with and enhance existing governmental structures to provide needed services to the community through insourcing.

This paper provides a new way forward for local communities to organize themselves in a new paradigm of limited financial resources. It is our hope that this paper will allow neighborhoods, communities, and organizations to replicate what has been done in southwest Colorado Springs, Colorado. The remainder of this article is broken down into three parts: establishing broad-based partnerships, praxis and ends with two examples.

Part One: Broad-Based Partnerships and Long-Term Sustainability

What are broad-based partnerships (BBP)?⁷ In short, it means bringing together the private sector, public sector, and civil society all under one banner. The private sector is made up of businesses, corporations, and individual citizens who, in general, run a business or entity for a financial profit and are not controlled by the government. The public sector is any local, municipal, county, state, and/or federal governmental entity such as public schools, public safety, or a county court house. In general, the public sector is not a profit-motivated entity. Civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and voluntary associations can be characterized as organizations that people voluntarily join and participate in. They are separate from the government and the market and they often act like an equilibrium between the two. Faith communities, charities, youth groups, service clubs, sports leagues, hobby groups, advocacy groups, political groups, environmental groups, neighborhood watch groups, and self-help groups, are all part of civil society. Each of these groups seeks to provide meaning, value, and/or enjoyment to its members. Some civil society groups contribute to the community in tangible ways. For example, Girl Scouts, Knights of Columbus, and The Shriners all provide extensive public service to the community. Many civil society groups address social problems and or mobilize

resources to meet community needs. Boys and Girls Club of America and YMCA/YWCA are good examples. As a result, many NGOs have the ability to organize grassroots support and draw upon a host of volunteers centered on or around common concerns.

Historically, when the economy was stable, these three sectors functioned separately. With recent changes in the economy, it will become increasingly necessary for these three sectors to work together, each bringing its own talents, expertise, and passions. There are many public-private partnerships throughout the country but few that integrate all three sectors. The strength of a broad-based partnership is that when people work together it provides tremendous synergy and efficiency. It expands the network of resources among the various groups. And with government increasingly being attacked, broad-based partnerships provide credibility and community champions for the project. Community leaders of the partnership also provide contacts, can help enlist new funds and provide access to other organizations. Furthermore, BBP is not dependent on one entity or person; rather it is spread out among all who participate. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme indicate that broad-based partnerships that include civil society are part of the 'best practices' because they allow

each partner to play supplementary roles in innovative initiatives, freeing up synergistic potential that leads to more effective problem-solving capacity. ...Inclusion of civil society groups as partners in cooperative programmes with the public and private sector holds greater potential for the alleviation of poverty and improving the liveability of the environments of the urban poor.⁸

Drawing in multiple partners from civil society will make all the difference in delivery of social services in an economy that has limits for both government and the private sector. Each can take ownership of the process and the organization.

However, with opportunity and the utilization of a multi-sector approach come potential threats. One in particular to be aware of is the possible emergence of power struggles and infighting, as collaborative groups jockey for control. The need for greater communication will need to be a foundation for partnerships to work along with the reminder that community service is the goal, not the creation of an empire. Starting small and going slowly while working in neighborhoods or sections of a town are essential. Some sectors to consider for partnerships are:

- Businesses
- Citizens
- Colleges/Universities/Community Colleges/Trade Schools
- Faith Communities
- Foundations
- Government (schools, public safety, parks and recreation)
- Non-Profits
- Prominent Citizens (philanthropists, celebrities, former politicians)
- Think tanks

Bringing in a wide swath of stakeholders helps ensure survival. If a program is centered on an individual or one group, it may flounder once that person leaves. Habitat for Humanity, for example, is not organized around a person; rather, it is organized around volunteers helping out their community. It is centered around the concept of community service. Since all Habitat for Humanity new homeowners are required to repay their interest-free loans and put in sweat equity, the work provided is not a hand-out but a hand-up. In a broad-based system, everyone has ownership; it is organic and indigenous; and it comes from within the community.

Building on the platform of broad-based partnerships is the basis for a new way forward in addressing socio-economic concerns. A place to start is working in teams. Teaming up with someone outside one's profession provides immediate synergy. It may be a city employee, a clergy person, a school person, a community leader—anyone who can tap into other resources or ideas. Working in pairs or threes has many advantages—support, reflection, diverse expertise, and focus. Furthermore, having two or more separate sectors working together adds legitimacy to the project in the community. Now the hard parts: conducting an assessment, visioning, selling the dream, and getting people to join and support the project. It is the area to which we now turn.

Part Two: Praxis

An Assessment (2 - 3 months)

Where does one start? Establish a new program? Keep open an existing program? Modify existing programs? These are hard questions, which are complicated by the complex reality of working with the underserved. A wide range of socio-economic factors have led people to be poor or living in poverty: financial hardship, debt, family history, mental illness, lack of jobs, lack of skills, lack of social supports, children, being a single parent, crime, substance abuse, poor education, discrimination, poor work history, or simply bad luck. While any one of these items may create difficulties, the poor often have a cluster of these items. Additionally, there is little money to be made from servicing this segment of the population. Starting with even one or two issues can be overwhelming, but 'a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.'

Strong and effective community programming comes from a thorough assessment of the environment. There are a variety of methods of attaining an assessment: surveys, studies, questionnaires, community forums, open houses, and demographics. One good method is simply talking to people face-to-face and recording their concerns. This means knocking on doors and talking with business owners, residents, community organizers, schools, and public safety personnel. Another informative method is an examination of city economic streams over the past five years along with an awareness in the number of new businesses arriving and or departing from town. The Chamber of Commerce often has statistics that may provide helpful insights. It is also useful to talk with people who are already providing services in the area. Eventually, through a

series of interviews and interaction with data, a picture will emerge for the community of which sectors services should center around, such as housing, job creation, medical issues, food insecurity, or youth programming.

The next step is to call a meeting of concerned stakeholders. It would be advisable to invite elected officials, city employees, and local media to cover and communicate about the event and the issue. At the first meeting, people will need to introduce themselves and how they are connected to the issue or community. At that meeting a preliminary vision of what new services are to be offered can be laid out and discussed. Ideally, attendees would sign up for interest groups, but people have a tendency to wait and see before jumping into anything new. The main point of the first meeting is to provide an accurate assessment of the community and identify possible unmet needs and potential ways forward. It is very easy to get side-tracked or derailed in this first process; people will naturally feel overwhelmed about the tasks of organizing something new. Additionally, it is natural for people to start throwing up roadblocks and reasons why change cannot happen. A positive can-do attitude is essential. Once the meeting is finished and contact details have been collected, set up another meeting. It is worthwhile to conclude with an upbeat personal short story about what you have discovered along the way.

A Plan (1 month)

At this point, a clear plan should emerge. The new plan should be simple and easily explained in less than five minutes to a complete stranger. Visuals are always helpful. We suggest that plans and service area be limited in scope. It is best to start small and go slow in the evolution process. It has been our experience that people will usually give or participate if it is local—within a few miles of their home or work. Generally, people are reluctant to drive across town to volunteer or drop off a bag a food. People want to see their effort make a difference in their local neighborhood. We suggest that new ventures start by addressing basic human services rooted in the community (Maslow). For example, the establishment of a food pantry to address food insecurity is an excellent place to start.

To receive buy-in and support from the local community, including funders, collaborative agencies, elected officials, and citizens themselves, measurable outcomes and goals will be indispensable. Should a food pantry be developed, for instance, issuing surveys and evaluations as well as creating baseline and target delivery hours and participation goals will allow for analysis of progress as it relates to improving access to food for underserved families.

Part of the plan will require laying out how the new programs are to be structured and governed. Will a single entity run the program, or will there be several entities? How the program is structured will make all the difference for long-term sustainability.

Selling the Vision (2 - 4 months)

People love to see passion and good ideas, but they are reluctant to be the first one to jump onto the boat concerning the establishment of a new social service. Seeking out those organizations or community leaders who are sympathetic to your cause and who are willing to sign on by a way of a letter or contribution can be very difficult initially. People lead busy lives and often do not have time, energy, or resources for a new program. However, there are a variety of ways to engage and receive support from people. Eventually, small little actions will lead to a tipping point of momentum. One way is for people to volunteer their time and/or expertise. They can refer other people to the venture. Money or material support can be contributed. Formal letters of support can be written.

Letters of support have multiple benefits: they can be shown to others to demonstrate progress; and they generate momentum. We suggest reaching for the sky and attempt to go to the top if you have a connection or a contact. Nothing moves things along more than if a large or big entity in town supports your project. Collecting endorsements is hard and requires a tremendous amount of energy and tenacity. We suggest meeting people in pairs when talking with foundations, corporations, city officials, or distinguished citizens.

In the beginning of any undertaking, it is easy to become discouraged. Do not be discouraged if people say no the first time. Instead, ask if you can come back in several months and show the progress that has been made. Nothing sells the dream like face-to-face contact and enthusiasm. The door-to-door selling needs to be broad-based—government, local leaders, businesses, non-profits, and the faith community. Like putting together a jigsaw puzzle, it will seem overwhelming at times, but slowly a picture emerges. We are reminded of the famous quote by American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world...Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.⁹

With each visit to a business, faith community, or school, it is essential to start plugging people into the vision and/or subcommittees drawing upon their own passions for the community. Frequent communication is important for all those who are involved. Once a plan has been put forward, we found it helpful to have a well-designed booklet produced by a professional for marketing purposes. We rotated our meetings to the various stakeholders' venues. Meetings were held at different churches, community centers, and schools, etc. This gave a sense of ownership to each person. Leaders and sub-committees may have to put together teams in the beginning, rather than waiting for volunteers. Asking or inviting specific people seems to work best. Additionally, we started by talking with progressive, forward looking groups and people to gain momentum.

Finally, the use of the media will be important in helping shape public opinion of both citizens and power brokers. It will be essential that leaders go to and make contact with radio, television, and print media outlets. The establishment of a good working relationship will be vital in any effort to move forward. One needs to be careful in how stories are presented in that it is easy for the story or the facts to be taken out of context. Providing the media with clearly written material will help keep the story straight. It also helps to invite the

media to come and see the location, talk with people and clients. The media like to run stories about solutions and happy endings. Send a thank you note to the journalist if the media run a positive story. If the story is slightly off, call, contact, or visit them face to face to straighten any errors. Provide the media with follow-up positive stories and images about the services provided.

Who Drives the Bus?

While faith community outreach is often well intentioned, we feel it is essential that government initially makes decisions about operations, personnel, policy, and grievances. As civil society elements insert themselves into the life of an agency, government provides healthy checks and balances between citizens, non-profits, and the faith community. They by their very nature are required to be neutral, non-discriminatory, and regulatory. While city governments may only provide 40-60% of the funding, they need to be the one deciding day-to-day operations of programs and policy.

Historically, government implements and enforces policies that are embodied in a system of laws and regulations. Government also produces routine regulatory actions, monitors compliance, and stops activities that do not meet regulatory standards. Non-profits, civil society organizations, and businesses often do the same, but generally not to the same degree. Government has a vital role in creating the physical, legal and social infrastructures that permit various players to function and flourish both within a business climate and the public sphere. In general, it provides legitimacy within the community. Other strengths of government are: technical expertise, data collection, and distribution, stability, transparency, and the rule of law. Often government agencies are comprehensive and look at the whole, not just the parts. Furthermore, government has a very large repertoire of resources to tap into.

At its core, government seeks to provide basic, core services to the general populace. Widespread debate regarding what these core services entail can and does occur, particularly during difficult economic times. For example, some would argue that public safety in the form of basic police and fire services is the lone function of government. Others would expand this list to include public schools, mass transit, road construction and repair. Still others would add parks, libraries, sidewalk repair, and community centers. Broad-based partnerships strengthen local government's ability to help the downtrodden, thus eliminating larger issues of social unrest, increased crime, and domestic violence.

Another hybrid version to consider is the establishment of a 501 (c) 3 that is contingent on government funding. The 501 would only function if government provides a percentage of revenue each and every year. The 501 would be dissolved if the government fails to live up to its obligations. The broad-based partnerships could be made up of government employees, civil society representatives, business leaders, and non-profits. We are concerned that if a separate 501 or a for-profit entity takes over the organization and/or service

government will absolve themselves of their responsibilities. In the new economy, everyone needs to contribute, especially government.

Part Three: Meadows Park Community Center and Stratmoor Hills Food Pantry

An illustration of the significant impact that the development of a BBP can have and how it can be operationalized is seen through Meadows Park Community Center and its efforts to address food insecurity.

Meadows Park Community Center (MPCC) is located three miles south of downtown Colorado Springs and has, since its inception in 1982, focused on serving the approximately 7,000 residents of the local Stratton Meadows neighborhood with an average annual household income of \$12,000. The modest single-family homes built during the post WWII housing boom surround an equally modest community center that is centrally located within this highly diverse, blue-collar neighborhood that maintains a strong sense of community, admirable work ethic but also high crime, poorly functioning schools, and high unemployment. Hemmed in by an interstate highway and other major thoroughfares, outsiders rarely venture into the area, leaving residents to live in relative seclusion.

The operational model throughout this time was for municipal staff to provide the majority of direct services to its customers, with over 90% of funding being provided by local government funding. The need for change in what became an unsustainable model began with the budget shortfalls of 2009 and 2010 which, amongst other things, resulted in five separate days when the center was slated for full closure.

Located just one mile to the west, and in many ways a direct contrast to the Stratton Meadows neighborhood lies the predominantly residential neighborhoods in and around the grounds of the historic, five-star Broadmoor Hotel, composed largely of wealthy upper-class residents who collectively possess great political currency within the larger community. What separates these two neighborhoods physically and emotionally is one street - Nevada Avenue, the "Mason Dixon Line" of southwest Colorado Springs. To engage the residents of both areas and mobilize resources to where they were most needed was a fundamental goal of the BBP model.

We felt that the people who live and work in the area needed to take responsibility for the part of town in which they reside. Now, less than one year after pursuing this vision, over 35 partnerships¹⁰ have been established and 30% of the operational budget generated through community vs. local government financial support. As a result of this BBP, volunteers and donations have increased and the community is much more aware of the underserved neighborhoods. The model we put forth became the model for the city and more importantly we have helped remove a barrier between two vibrant neighborhoods. Additionally, the interaction has built social and emotional capital, trust, and tolerance which are all vital for a functioning democracy.¹¹

Under a new BBP, MPCC has seven core areas of service and one of the areas is food insecurity. As indicated earlier, the changing economy has increased the need for food assistance within our community and MPCC wanted to strengthen their capacity to meet the needs of the community.

Stratmoor Hills Food Pantry

While many government agencies and services are in decline or retreating, MPCC decided to expand services to another underserved neighborhood two miles south of MPCC that historically had little or no services. The Stratmoor Hills area of Colorado Springs consists of pawn shops, convenient stores, tattoo parlors, a 'gentleman's' club and vacant buildings. The population is poor and transient and does not have a strong sense of community. Crime and substance abuse are prevalent. A fenced off rail road track further divides the neighborhood. One of the stabilizing forces in this neighborhood is a local public school—Stratton Meadows Elementary. After consulting with the school staff and the PTO, it was determined that the neighborhood could benefit from a food pantry. A team from the BBP located a vacant building, negotiated a reduced rate and opened up an 1,800 square foot satellite facility.

What is of interest is how the facility is operated, paid for and staffed. The cost is shared by two churches, a non-profit and MPCC. MPCC pays for the utilities, establishes policies and procedures, and provides support staffing. The pantry will be open two days a week or 104 days annually. Rather than paid staff, the pantry will be run by 12-15 volunteer groups from throughout the community, including Boy and Girl Scout troops, faith communities and sports teams, who each agree to assist with 7-10 distribution dates annually. Each of these groups and others will provide food to the pantry thus enabling buy-in from the local community and making the pantry sustainable over the long run. Furthermore, if one of the teams elects to withdraw its support the pantry does not collapse because it has broad-base support. In essence, the pantry is not a city pantry or a church pantry or made up of business leftovers, but rather it is a community pantry that draws in private, public and civil society.

Conclusion and Celebration

There are myriad advantages to developing broad-based partnerships—financial, political, social, and communal—particularly during challenging economic times. We consider it a success when a community comes together to work on a commonly shared community project or service. Furthermore, through collaboration, consensus, and a unified vision on what success looks like and how it is defined, stability can be developed even throughout the most volatile of times. To do this requires hard work, due diligence, confidence, and fluidity, not unlike qualities that are critical towards reaching one's individual pathway to success. Finally, if success has been achieved, it is vital that celebration festivities are in order for all who participated in the journey.

In sum, broad-based partnerships draw upon the best of each entity's limited attributes.

Through all the hard work, sweat, and heartache, we discovered that, if done right, the best of the human condition comes forth and blossoms. At the end of the day, our greatest satisfaction came from people suspending their own self interests for the interests of the community. It was truly transformative.

¹ Arianna Huffington writes in *Third World America*. (New York: Crown Publishers, 2010), pp. 10-12. 'America's states faced a cumulative budget gap of \$166 billion for fiscal 2010. Total shortfalls through fiscal 2011 are estimated at \$380 billion...California is eliminating CalWORKS, a financial assistance program for families in need, a cut that will affect 1.4 million people, two – thirds of whom are children. This plan would also cut state subsidies for child care, affecting 142,000 children. Minnesota has eliminated a program that provides health care to 21,500 low-income employed adults with no children. Rhode Island has cut health insurance for 1,000 low income families. Maine has cut education grants and funding for homeless shelters. Utah has cut Medicaid for physical and occupational therapies, as well as for speech and hearing services. Michigan, Nevada, California, and Utah have eliminated coverage of dental and vision services for those receiving Medicaid. Alabama has canceled services that allow 1,100 seniors to stay in their homes instead of being sent to nursing facilities. Arizona has cut cash assistance grants for 38,500 low income families. Virginia has decreased payments for people with mental retardation, mental health issues and problems with substance abuse. Illinois has cut funding for child welfare and youth services programs. Connecticut has cut programs that help prevent child abuse and provide legal services for foster children. Massachusetts is making cuts in Head Start, universal pre-K programs, and services to prepare special needs children.' Cities like Camden, NJ, Costa Mesa, CA, Sacramento, CA, and Phoenix, AZ have fared no better.

² "Where Budget Gaps, and People, Are Few." *New York Times* January 23, 2011.

³ Larson, Rob. "Classrooms," *Z Magazine* March 2011. The quote comes from Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels. In the same article Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker stated, "We can no longer live in a society where the public employees are the haves and taxpayers who foot the bills are the have-nots.' Former Minnesota Governor and 2012 presidential hopeful, Tim Pawlenty wrote in a December 13, 2010 *Wall Street Journal* editorial, "The moral case for unions—protecting working families from exploitation—does not apply to public employment. Government employees today are among the most protected well-paid employees in the country. Ironically, public-sector unions have become the exploiters, and working families once again need someone to stand up for them." Ohio, Tennessee, New Jersey, Michigan, Idaho, Alaska and other Republican led states are also attempting to limit or scale back public unions and collective bargaining. Ironically, the right to collectively bargain is recognized through international human rights conventions. Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights identifies the ability to organize trade unions as a fundamental human right. Item 2(a) of the International Labour Organization's *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* defines the "freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining" as an essential right of workers. In 2007 the Supreme Court of Canada declared collective bargaining a human right. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collective_bargaining

⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor reports that the unemployment rate for March 2010 was 9.7%. http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_04022010.pdf Gallup Daily tracking finds that 20.3% of the American workforce was underemployed. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/127091/underemployment-rises-march.aspx>

⁵ Van Vliet, Willem. *Broad-based partnerships as a strategy for urban liveability: An evaluation of best practices*. (United Nations Human Settlements Programme: Nairobi, 2008), 1-12.

⁶ "Thanks, but no thanks," *Christian Century* June 1, 2010. Duke University professor of sociology, religion and divinity Mark Chaves writes, 'The faith based initiative did not change congregations because it was based on flawed assumptions about churches' role in the social welfare system. One mistaken assumption was that congregation-based social services represented an alternative to the social welfare system. The reality is that there is no such alternative system in the religious world. Congregations long have occupied an important but limited place in community welfare systems. Far from constituting an alternative to the current system, congregational social service depends on the current system. Congregations pursue social ministries mainly by supporting other organizations with money, staff time or volunteers. It is much more common for a congregation to plug into an existing program than start a new one.

...A better informed faith-based initiative would focus on building up the social service delivery network as a whole.' Chaves goes on to say that congregations are not an endless supply of volunteers, they function best with short well defined tasks on a periodic basis.

⁷ Sometimes broad-based partnerships have been called Tri-Sector Partnerships or Multi-Sector Partnerships. See Caplan K., Heap S., Nicol A., Plummer J., Simpson S., and Weiser J. (201), *Flexibility by Design: Lessons from Multi-Sector Partnership in Water and Sanitation Projects*, Business Partners for Development: Water and Sanitation Cluster, Water Aid, London.

⁸ Van Vliet, Willem. *Broad-based partnerships as a strategy for urban liveability: An evaluation of best practices*. (United Nations Human Settlements Programme: Nairobi, 2008), 7, 69.

⁹ http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Margaret_Mead

¹⁰ Partnerships include private sector non-profit organizations such as three local colleges, Care & Share Food Bank, YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region, Peak Vista Community Health and the Housing Authority of Colorado Springs. Philanthropic support includes The J.H. Edmondson Foundation, The Myron Stratton Home and Pikes Peak Community Foundation. Civil society support includes the involvement of eight churches and two service clubs.

¹¹ See Robert D. Putnam, Robert Leonardi, Raffaella Y. Nanetti; Robert Leonardi, Raffaella Y. Nanetti (1994). *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton University Press. Robert Bellah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M Tipton (1985). *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.