

2009

## Nonprofit Survival Summit

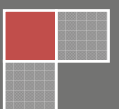
# REPORT

March 20, 2009

Bemidji, MN

United Way of Bemidji Area  
Community Resource Connections  
Beltrami Area Service Collaborative

Report Distributed: 3/26/2009



# attendees



Taking control  
of our economic  
future together

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# group discussion



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The following challenges were identified as the **TOP CHALLENGES** area nonprofits face in serving clients:

1. **Volunteer Management**  
- recruiting, aging, replacing, oversight, training, transportation costs
2. **Paying for Admin**
3. **Community Awareness/Perception of Nonprofits –  
Lack of Marketing/PR to community**
4. **Cash flow challenges – reimbursements**
5. **A. Cultural Awareness  
B. Facility Challenges (not enough space)**
6. **Increased reliance on fundraising**
7. **A. Increased client need  
B. Legislative uncertainty  
C. Staff stress**

The following are **ALL** the challenges that were shared by area nonprofits in serving clients. Please note the challenges are in no particular order of importance:

- Biased against new plans – ideas – services
- Cash flow challenges with reimbursements
- Increased reliance on fundraising when community is already so saturated
- Long range planning affected by current economic situation
- Lack of mental health services
- Lack of case management
- Lack of marketing/pr to community - show impact of nonprofits
- Vehicle for creative nonprofit collaboration
- Space – facility – not enough – no money to purchase
- Community perception
- Cost of facility
- Lack of transportation for clients
- Needs outpace capacity
- Lack of adequate infrastructure distracts us from clients services
- Cultural awareness
- Not enough staff
- Executive Directors – Generalists – more with less burns out people/agencies
- Geographic isolation
- Success breeds jealousy – competitiveness

- Need confidence in speaking to power
- Paying for admin
- Youth employment – education, housing, opportunities dry up
- Criminal penalty shifts
- Staff stress
- County approach to mandated and non-mandated services
- Funding competition affects collaboration
- Increased client needs
- Legislative uncertainties makes it hard to plan
- Expectation that services are free
- “Cliff” effect
- Lack of incentives for clients to do better
- Lack of budgeting education
- Lack of living wage jobs
- Education not keeping up with rapid job changing needs
- “Rent wise” – need more education for landlords and renters
- Volunteer Management – recruiting, aging, replacing, oversight, training, transportation costs
- Cost of city fees
- Reality of cutting programs/staff
- Understanding grant opportunities
- New nonprofit startups difficult
- New contracts – uncertainty of new clients
- Need to redefine each nonprofit needs – reshape services to adjust to new economy
- Sales of nonprofit products slow down with economy
- Transportation costs for agency’s staff

The following opportunities were identified as the **TOP OPPORTUNITIES** for working together to not only get through these distinct economic times, but to end up stronger:

1. **Analysis which identifies gaps/overlaps/assets/impact of area nonprofits**
  - would like the information but not a solution – nonprofits want to determine their own solutions
  - \*Outcome Measurement training*
2. **Community Resource Connections – Get the word out**
3. **Mechanism for getting nonprofit information to community – communicate value**
4. **Grant writing collaboration**
  - team of experienced grant writers – seek out grants, write, apply...
5. **County on-line eligibility calculator**
6. **A. Transportation Summit**  
**B. City-County Feedback loop**

**The following are ALL the opportunities that were identified and shared by area nonprofits. Please note the opportunities are in no particular order of importance:**

- Community Resource Connections – networking – enhance buying power – supplies, insurance, employee benefits
- Access used Furniture/office items – central location
- Share financial -budgets – accounting services
- Pool resources for transportation – leverage current transportation
- Cross display of agency brochures and information
- Co-location of like and smaller nonprofits – expertise to assist
- Nonprofits need to be recognized as economic development player – communicate this to the community
- Identify gaps/overlaps/impacts/assts in community services – identify issues before solutions
- Grant writing collaboration – TEAM based at a central located with broad knowledge – help with public partnerships
- Promote city council candidate who is an advocate of nonprofits
- Combine some agencies
- Measure, communicate value outcomes
- Volunteer center/website clearinghouse – social networks
- Support each other in facing local and state government
- BSU/MARS – Marketing – Social Return on Investment
- Partner with business community - identify opportunities
- Economic stimulus money – explain it to us soon!
- Transportation Summit – Let’s solve the problem – we have been talking about it for years
- County-City-community feedback loop - re: status of services
- County on-line eligibility calculator
- Annual training for board members with specific sessions (ie financial) convened by entity that will capture attention
- Ruby Payne training should be pervasive
- Combine – coordinate fundraising events
- Listserv of agencies to inform
- Prepare for the future – there will be growth after this economic crisis
- Mechanism to get nonprofit information out to community (media)
- Volunteer hours calculation
- Community Resource Connections – get the word out – put CRC on agency brochures/websites
- Include churches – often an untapped resource



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## The following is what the group identified should be next steps:

Identify and apply for a grant that will assist in an asset/impact analysis of all area nonprofits

Meet with the media about doing more articles on nonprofits – client stories – value to community

Nonprofits need to attend Community Resource Connections networking event – first Friday of every month, from 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. at Boys and Girls Club of the Bemidji Area

Identify grant opportunities for bringing in an outcome measurement/logic model training and a cost benefit analysis training for nonprofits

Create a listserv for area nonprofits to expand communications and share knowledge/resources

## What has happened since the Summit?

The nonprofit coalition, which includes Patrick Grundmeier (Beltrami Area Service Collaborative), Ashli Bowen (United Way), Ruth Sherman (Community Resource Connections) and Jeanne Edevold Larson (Nonprofit Consultant), met on Wednesday, March 26 to discuss the results of the Summit. We are advising a manageable plan to move forward which will address next steps as well as some of the other top opportunities and challenges identified by the Summit attendees. Updates will be delivered as the plan progresses.

## Articles – Media:

Katie Cater from KAXE published an article about the Summit on the Northern Community Internet website – [www.northerncommunityinternet.org](http://www.northerncommunityinternet.org), link under Bemidji

The Pioneer is working on a follow up story.



# additional resources



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## Community Resource Connections

[www.communityresourceconnections.org](http://www.communityresourceconnections.org)

## United Way of Bemidji Area

[www.liveunitedbemidji.org](http://www.liveunitedbemidji.org)

## Beltrami Area Service Collaborative

[www.beltrami.org](http://www.beltrami.org)

## Minnesota Council Nonprofits

[www.mncn.org](http://www.mncn.org)

## MN Office of Attorney General

[www.ag.state.mn.us](http://www.ag.state.mn.us) (mn charity laws, forms, policies, resources ...)

## Charities Review Council

[www.smartgivers.org](http://www.smartgivers.org) (nonprofit resources for the new 990)

## Ruby Payne – Understanding Poverty

[www.ahaprocess.com](http://www.ahaprocess.com)

## Outcome Measurement Information – from United Way of America

<http://www.liveunited.org/Outcomes/>

You can also do a search for *logic model* OR *outcome measurement* and find more information

## E democracy

<http://forums.e-democracy.org/groups/bemidji>

## Northern Community Internet (community news, calendar, etc.)

[www.northerncommunityinternet.org](http://www.northerncommunityinternet.org)



**Bridge to Benefits (NEW resource!** - Thanks Ruth Sherman for finding this for us!) – *Bridge to Benefits is a multi-state project by Children's Defense Fund Minnesota to improve the well-being of families and individuals by linking them to public work support programs and tax credits.*

To see if you or someone else may be eligible for public work support programs, click **START** to use the **Eligibility Screening Tool**. We will ask you a few simple questions but we will NOT ask you for information that identifies you. It's easy, confidential and free

<http://www.coveringallfamilies.org/>

## **MEETINGS NONPROFITS MAY BE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING:**

### **Nonprofit Networking Event for Directors**

**Day and Time:** first Friday of each month 7:30 a.m. – networking, 8-9:00 a.m. official meeting

**Location:** Boys and Girls Club of the Bemidji Area

**Next Meeting:** Friday, April 3, 2009

### **Interagency Meeting**

*Join Bemidji area services providers at Lueken's Village Foods Conference Room every second Wednesday of the month for networking. Come prepared to learn about area agencies and their programs and to share a little about your program and upcoming events. We hope to see you there!*

**Day and Time:** second Wednesday of each month 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

**Location:** Lueken's North Conference Room

**Next Meeting:** Friday, April 8, 2009