SEEKING THE WHOLENESS OF THE CITY

"Aligning Community Resources for Maximum Impact"

FOREWORD

What do a couple of engineers know about city transformation? Not much, as it turns out. However, what is often more important than what you know are the questions you ask. That is the essence of this report. When presented with the challenge of considering a model for city transformation, we did what organization and system design consultants always do, we asked questions. Specifically we asked:

1. What can we learn from scriptural models of city transformation (or restoration)?
2. What are the core functions (or reasons for existence) of a city in the first place?
3. What system design principles can we draw from the experience of others that have been actively engaged in city transformation?

The result of our search for answers to these questions is at best an additional perspective on the subject of city transformation that adds to an already rich and ongoing dialogue. Our conclusions represent a perspective shaped by our experiences in facilitating organization and system design in both the private and social sectors. We think and see systems, structure, and organization. While this is a valuable perspective, it no doubt comes with blind spots. This is a case-in-point for the need of the Body of Christ to bring its fullness to bear on the subject of being God's agents of change in the cities of His world.

The research for this report was commissioned by the National Christian Foundation, East Tennessee, for that we are grateful. This report is the completion of the initial phase of a much longer process of organizing Knoxville and the surrounding region for transformation. The model presented in this report should be viewed as a conceptual framework, and is not yet a working model. The next steps in our process are to build out the systems, processes, and structure that will facilitate city transformation in the coming months and years. We are in the process of building a roadmap for this journey, and there is much work yet to be done.

Thank you for your interest in city transformation. We pray that the ideas presented in this report will stimulate your thinking and open your eyes to fresh ways that God may be moving in our cities.

Blessings,

Brad Greene & Adam Kuhn

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"God desires for His people to advance His kingdom in the city by creating systems that are life-giving and by destroying the systems that are destructive. This is God's intention; this is the work of city transformation."

-Jon Lawler

In May 2011, Greene & Associates was asked to begin the work of creating a comprehensive plan for city transformation on behalf of the National Christian Foundation, East Tennessee. It has been our honor to be used for a work as significant as this, and we hope and pray that God will bless the work of our hands. This report is an update on our progress toward building that plan. It is our hope that this is the beginning of a movement; one in which the people of Knoxville can experience the joy of partnering with God and working alongside each other to bring about the presence of His kingdom in and through this great city.

OVERVIEW

This report outlines a set of system design principles and a conceptual model for organizing the city for systemic transformation, as well as proposed next steps for facilitating change of this magnitude. Four main sources were used to develop the design principles and conceptual model:

1. We searched for **scriptural models** for city transformation, in particular, the story of the restoration of Jerusalem as the exiles returned from Babylon as told in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.
2. We performed a **functional analysis** (a system engineering tool used in our system design process) of the city as a human ecosystem.
3. We **interviewed leaders representing five cities** at various stages of deploying a city "transformation" effort (Austin, Houston, Little Rock, Portland, San Diego).
4. We interviewed several local sources to uncovered **Knoxville's own "transformation" assets**.

We have consolidated the findings and principles resulting from the research across these four sources, into ten (10) key system design principles. Any effort to impact the city as a whole should be built on these principles. These ten key principles are embedded in the conceptual model that is outlined in the final section of this report.

Key System Design Principles

A model for the transformation of the city of Knoxville (or any city for that matter) should:

- **Establish a coalition of resources to serve as a neutral convener** - A "neutral convener" must be capable of supporting the common cause and community building efforts across the city by providing leadership, alignment, communication and measurement.

- **Leverage existing assets and integrate existing efforts** - All city assets or ongoing efforts useful to the city transformation movement should be identified (via asset mapping) and integrated wherever possible to maximize the utilization of community assets and reduce duplication of effort.

- **Include both a "common cause"** *and* **community focus** - Resources for the city transformation movement should be organized around and applied to both citywide "common cause" efforts and community-specific development efforts.

- **Include a well-defined process for aligning the city's resources to common cause** - Alignment of resources is a key leverage point in the city experiencing measurable impact across the city and within communities. The process of alignment is difficult, but it is vital.

- **Strive to establish a balance between stability, growth and holistic care** - These three functions represent the primary functions of the major sectors of a city - government, marketplace, and social and must always remain in balance.

- **Organize around the basic functions of the subsystems of the city** - Any effort should be organized, measured and lead with respect to the eleven basic functions of the subsystems of the city.

- **Include a comprehensive strategy for measuring city and community impact** - The performance of any system can and should be measured using both quantitative and qualitative measures.

- **Engage persons of good faith and persons of good will** - The efforts from both the people of good faith and people of good will must be leveraged, coordinated and combined wherever possible.

- **Include a comprehensive strategy for developing high capacity, servant leaders** – these leaders should be people of good faith and people of good will, who represent every facet of the city.

- **Include an aligned and organized "Church of the City"** - The local church should organize and align itself for pervasive *prayer* across the city, holistic *service* in and throughout the city, and for *teaching* and *equipping* the body to serve the city in the name of Christ.

SCRIPTURAL MODELS FOR CITY TRANSFORMATION

The initial research question we asked was "Can we find models for city transformation in scripture that provide insight into God's design of and heart for the city?" Our examination of the scriptures was not that of a theologian, but of system engineers seeking to find principles embedded in scriptural stories that might apply to the process of restoring a city. The two major examples of city transformation that we studied were:

- The restoration of Jerusalem by the exiles returning from Babylon and
- Isaiah's description of God's restoration of Jerusalem when He creates the new heavens and new earth (Isaiah 65:17-25).

Both of these examples provided key insights upon which the remainder of our work was built.

1. Restoration of Jerusalem by Exiles Returning from Babylon

The story of Jerusalem's restoration is found in four books of the Old Testament: Ezra (the story of restoration of the temple), Haggai and Zechariah (prophets during temple restoration), and Nehemiah (the story of rebuilding the wall around the city). In 586 BC, a little less than 400 years after Solomon erected the First Temple in Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian empire destroyed the city of Jerusalem, ransacked the temple of Solomon, and carried a small remnant of Jews into captivity in Babylon.

Seventy years and another empire later, Cyrus, king of the Persians issued an edict sending some of the Jews back from Babylon to their homeland with the resources necessary to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. The book of Ezra recounts the story of this first wave returning from exile to rebuild the temple. The two key characters in this story are Zerubbabel (the grandson of the King of Judah during the time that the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem) and Joshua, the high priest.

Almost another seventy years after the first wave, Nehemiah led another contingency of Jewish exiles from Babylon back to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall around the city. He joined Ezra, the high priest in working to restore the safety and boundaries of Jerusalem by rebuilding its wall. Rebuilding the wall also restored pride to the people because Nehemiah was insistent that the families be responsible for building the sections of the wall in front of their houses.

The story of God's people restoring the temple and city that would eventually receive Jesus, their Messiah, riding on a donkey on Palm Sunday, provided us with six insights for the key system design principles developed in this report. In the biblical story of city transformation:

1. The work of city transformation required rebuilding "the temple" and "the wall"
2. The leadership roles of the people of God were very clear
3. The leaders were servants of God and His people
4. God used a "pagan" king to fund the building of His temple and wall
5. The families of the city were engaged in the restoration process
6. The work of restoration was blessed by God

One of the fundamental techniques of system design is to uncover (and if necessary affect) the prevailing mental models or core beliefs of the people within a given system. Failure to do this, limits the impact of any change effort. And as we took the insights above and examined the state of the church today through that lens, we discovered several pervasive mental models that run counter to these principles. Five flawed mental models emerged. These flawed mental models must be addressed in the system design for city transformation to be possible.

1. Ezra is confused.
2. Nehemiah is asleep.
3. Artexerxes is ignored (or at best tolerated).
4. The families of the city are not engaged in its restoration.
5. The work of restoration is deemed "hopeless" or unspiritual.

Ezra is Confused and Nehemiah is Asleep

In the story of the rebuilding of the temple Joshua is the high priest and Zerubbabel, appointed by the Persian king Darius, is the governor. Throughout the entire book of Ezra, Zerubbabel is rarely mentioned when Joshua is not mentioned as well. The governor and the priest, both men of God, with clearly defined roles, are together tasked with rebuilding the temple.

The book of Nehemiah is primarily about rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem and establishing the security and identity of the people of the city. In this book, Ezra is the scribe sent to restore Mosaic Law, and Nehemiah is the governor appointed by the Persian king Artexerxes. Ezra's role is very clearly defined as reinstituting the sacrificial system within the temple, but the overwhelming majority of the story is about Nehemiah's leadership in pulling together the families of Jerusalem to rebuild the wall. And again we find the governor and the priest, both men of God, with clearly defined roles, working together.

Not only do the governor and priest serve together, they are also reprimanded together. In Haggai 1:1-4, God reprimands both Zerubbabel (the governor) and Joshua (the high priest) for halting the work on the temple saying, "Is it right for you to live in richly paneled houses, while my house lies in ruins?" God clearly holds both accountable for the execution of the work he has given them to complete.

But what we found during our research is that the Ezra Element of today's society, church leadership, often seemed *confused* about their role in city transformation. They have positioned themselves as the primary leaders of the city transformation effort. Church leadership is primarily gifted to "uphold the ceremonies of the temple", steward the story of God and His people, lead the Body of Christ in corporate prayer, and equip their flocks in the basics of the faith. What they are not equipped and/or designed to do is bring the fullness of Christ into the marketplace, the government, the social sector, the education system, and other key institutions of society. That is the role of the Nehemiah Element. So while church leadership may aspire to lead the city transformation effort, the model presented in scripture does not support this. Stated simply, "Ezra is confused."

This leads us to our second major observation: "Nehemiah is asleep". In the cities of our day, the Nehemiah (or Zerubbabel) Element is not a single person, but a group made up of the God-fearing, Christ-following leaders in every sector of society (i.e. government, business, social, education, etc.). These are the "kings" of our time. But from what we observe, the Nehemiah Element is not fully engaged. In order for a city to experience true restoration to God, we believe that the movement must permeate every facet of society, not just the church.

Channels of Cultural Influence

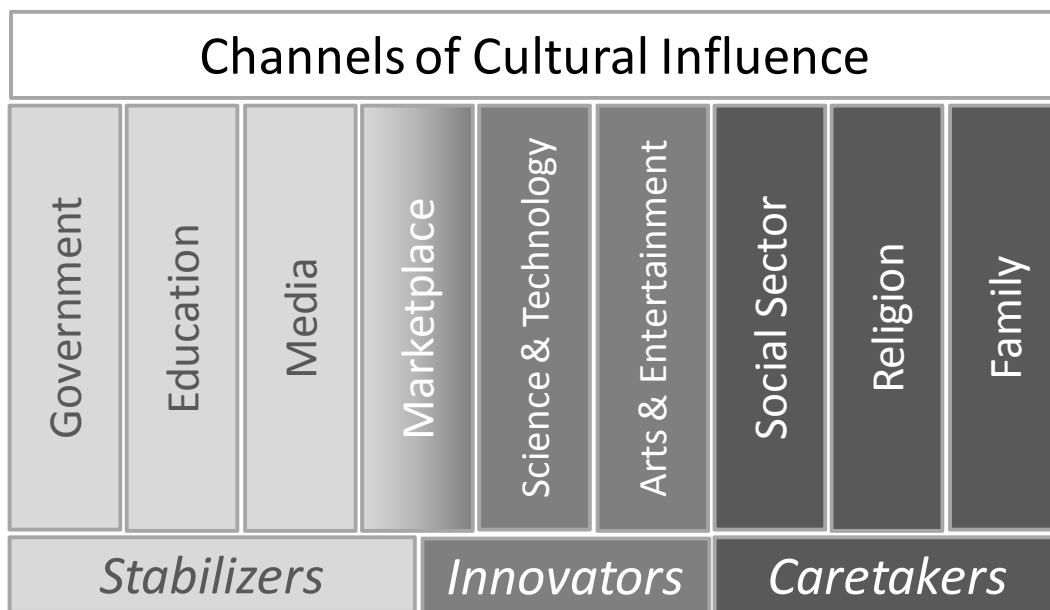| Government	Education	Media	Marketplace	Science & Technology	Arts & Entertainment	Social Sector	Religion	Family
Stabilizers			*Innovators*			*Caretakers*		

FIGURE 1: CHANNELS OF CULTURAL INFLUENCE

Figure 1 shows one model for describing the major channels of influence within a given society. Imagine if the Christ-following, Nehemiah Element woke up to their God-given calling to impact their spheres of influence for the kingdom. Then we would see the very fabric of our society changing. This would mean that leaders understand what it means to fully integrate their faith into their vocational calling and are weaving the principles of grace and truth into everything they do. As this becomes widespread, the very presence of Christ is felt, perhaps without His name even being uttered.

In our preliminary research in Knoxville and other cities like ours, there is recognition that the Nehemiah Element must be awakened. There are some attempts by "Marketplace Ministries" to bring this about, but we have yet to see any that have had broad citywide impact. One of the reasons we believe this is not happening is that the Ezra Element is trying to awaken Nehemiah. But Ezra does not have the influence or credibility in those contexts to awaken Nehemiah from his slumber. *We believe that it will take Nehemiah to awaken Nehemiah.*

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it should be recognized that there are two critical aspects to city transformation presented in this scriptural model: rebuilding the temple and rebuilding the wall. If we use the metaphor of the Body of Christ as the temple and the wall as the natural, healthy infrastructure of a city, then there needs to be two very distinct but integrated initiatives within an effective city transformation movement. We must simultaneously be about:

1. Restoring the Body of Christ and
2. Restoring the systems and infrastructure that create a healthy, safe, stable environment that promotes prosperity

If we view city transformation through this lens, then the roles and responsibilities of the Ezra and Nehemiah Elements begin to become clearer. The "temple building" activities should be primarily led by the Ezra Movement and supported by the Nehemiah Element, and the "wall-building" activities led by the Nehemiah Element and supported by the Ezra Element.

Primary activities of City Transfomation	Lead Role	Support Role
"Temple Building" - Building up the Body of Christ through prayer, teaching, and service - Creating a "Church of the City" - Covering the city in pervasive prayer - Caring for the spiritual needs of the city - Stewarding the spiritual story of the city - Caring for the poor and broken of the city	Ezra Element	Nehemiah Element
"Wall Building" - Building healthy infrastructure for a safe, vibrant, prosperous city - Stewarding the community story - Creating alignment across city domains - Catalyzing business, government, social, and other domains to action	Nehemiah Element	Ezra Element
Building the Next Generation of Servant Leadership	Ezra and Nehemiah Elements	

Applied Lessons:

- City Transformation requires a parallel effort of restoring "the temple" of the city and rebuilding "the wall".

- Church leadership (or the Ezra Element) must have a clearly defined role in a city's transformation, and it must step into that role, embracing what is theirs and releasing what is not.

- The Christ-following leaders already present in every sector of society (the Nehemiah Element), must be awakened to their role in bringing the Lordship of Christ into their spheres of influence.

Artexerxes is Ignored (or at Best Tolerated)

In the stories of the temple being restored and the city wall being rebuilt, the emphasis is primarily on the work of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah. But what can be easily overlooked in both stories is the role of the pagan kings. In the rebuilding of God's temple, it was the Persian king Cyrus that opened his treasury to underwrite the building supplies for the temple. In fact, in God's sovereign plan, he had prophesied through Jeremiah seventy years prior, (while Babylon was still in power) that a Persian king named Cyrus would rebuild His temple. The fact that God uses "pagan" kings for doing His kingdom work has enormous implications for today's city transformation movements. It reminds the modern church of the truth expressed in Proverbs 21:1 "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will."

One prevailing sentiment within the evangelical church today is that it should separate itself from the government and the world, so that it can maintain its purity. God's use of the pagan king to build His temple and restore His city's walls should show us that the government can and should have a major role to play in the transformation of our cities. The goals of the church and the goals of greater society can actually be aligned. The prophet Jeremiah spells this out very clearly to the exiles as they were going into Babylon (a pagan city):

> *Jeremiah 29:7 - "But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare."*

Applied Lesson:

A city transformation effort should begin with the alignment of community/government/societal goals, and the church should make "the welfare" of the city one of its core goals.

The Families of the City are not Engaged in its Transformation

In the rebuilding of the city walls, Nehemiah assigns the responsibility of building a section of the wall to each family. This strategy served at least two purposes: 1) it gave the families a sense of ownership of the city and 2) it divided up a large construction project into bite-sized pieces. Both of these principles can and should be applied in the restoration of a modern city.

Simply driving through all of the neighborhoods of the city of Knoxville would be a significant endeavor if tackled by only a handful of people. Transforming those neighborhoods will take an army. In addition, outsiders alone cannot hope to come into a community and affect meaningful or lasting change on their own. Therefore, any strategy for city transformation must include a strategy for empowering communities and perhaps even whole neighborhoods to "build their section of the wall". Citywide resources can facilitate, educate, and resource a specific community, but the implementation of change needs to be led at the neighborhood level.

Applied Lesson:

A city transformation effort should plan for the local communities and neighborhood to take ownership of implementing change in their community.

The Work of Transformation is Deemed "Hopeless" or Unspiritual

When the foundation of the new temple was built, God ordered (through Haggai) that those who had been alive to see Solomon's temple (seventy years earlier) be brought to witness the new foundation. The Lord says in Haggai 2:3 "Who among you survivors saw the former splendor of this temple? How does it look to you now? Isn't it nothing in comparison?" He purposefully called attention to the fact that the new temple would be a "shadow" of the former temple. And the survivors grieved at the sight. Two verses later, however, God declares to the leaders and the people to "Work, for I am with you. My Spirit remains in your midst." Interestingly, He then goes on to declare that there will be yet another temple and it will make Solomon's temple look like a shadow.

There is a very powerful message in this very simple passage of scripture that has significant implications in our modern efforts of transformation. There is a pervading belief held by many in the church that the work of city transformation is not worth the effort or the energy, because God will eventually destroy our current reality and replace it with His perfect reality. The belief is that any work in the current, "shadow" kingdom will only be destroyed as a part of God's long-term plan. Therefore, the best we can hope for is to "save" as many people as possible in this current state.

The result of this mindset is a church that recedes back into its own walls in order to protect itself from the evils of the world. In contrast, the words of God to the people of Israel in this instance were very clear: Work, for I am with you (in your work). The other part of the prevailing church argument is that the work itself is not spiritual. *This is one of the faulty mental models that trap the Nehemiah Element of a city; the lie that work is not spiritual.* Here we see God very clearly declare that His Spirit will be in their midst as they work on the "shadow" temple, which ironically would be the very temple in which Jesus himself would enter on Palm Sunday almost 600 years later.

Applied Lesson:

Work and especially the "work" of city transformation must begin to be embraced by the Body of Christ as essential, worthy, and even commanded by God.

2. The New Jerusalem - God's City Restored

Historians believe that the book of Isaiah was written about 100 years prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. In the beginning of the book we find prophesies of the impending doom of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The end of the book, however, is where many of the prophesies of the coming Messiah and His Kingdom are found. God is comforting His people and declaring that there will be a day that He restores His creation back to its original design. In one of the last chapters of the book, God shares a vision of Jerusalem after it has been completely restored. Embedded in this vision are markers of a healthy, albeit ideal, city that we believe can serve as a comprehensive set of goals and aspirations for any city.

New Heavens and New Earth

Isaiah 65:17-25

"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. *18* But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. *19* I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress.

20 No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.

21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. *22* They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23 They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the LORD, and their descendants with them.

24 Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear.

25 The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain," says the LORD.

In Isaiah 65:17-25, God describes Jerusalem as a healthy, safe community in which the people find enjoyable, rewarding work and enjoy unhindered communion with Him. We believe that three of the four themes outlined in this description of an ideal city are themes that every man, woman, and child could espouse regardless of their faith.

Ray Bakke, in his book A Theology as Big as a City, outlines the following themes with respect to this passage:

- Public celebrations and happiness (v 17-25)
- Public health for children and aged (v 20)
- Housing for all (v 21)
- Food for all (v 22)
- Family support systems (v23)
- Absence of violence (v 25

Applied Lesson:

From God's vision of His restored Jerusalem, we draw four basic attributes of a city: 1) healthy community, 2) enjoyable and rewarding work, 3) safe community, and 4) unhindered communion with God. The first three of the four themes are legitimate goals of city transformation in the now-but-not-yet world of today.[1]

Markers of a Healthy City

- *Healthy community*
  - *Physical Health*
  - *Vibrant neighborhoods*
  - *Sustainable living*
- *Enjoyable and rewarding work*
- *Safe community*
- *Unhindered communion with God*

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[1] The first three themes/markers informed the basic functions of: Stability, Growth, and Care discussed in the next section on Functional Analysis.

FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE CITY AS AN ECOSYSTEM

Functional Analysis is a technique from System Engineering, in which the system of study is analyzed by its basic functions or purpose. This technique is powerful because it forces you to view the system in an abstract way. When the system is viewed through the lens of its core functions, it provides a natural bridge into new insights about the current system design and whether or not it is performing as it was intended. For example, when we express that the functional purpose of a pencil is to Make Marks, it immediately opens the mind up to many different ways that one could Make Marks. The abstraction of function leads to new insights into the system and how those functions might be achieved by alternate means.

If we consider a city and all of its subsystems as a human ecosystem[2], then we can apply functional analysis to gain new insights into how the city works (or does not work) as a human ecosystem. It is important to note that different groups of people coming from different contexts will invariably analyze the same system and arrive at different results. So, we are not proposing that this is the only way to view the city, but rather a starting point to further discussion. The results of our Functional Analysis can be seen in the table below:

Basic Functions of City Systems	Basic Functions of Subsystems	City Subsystems
Create Stable Environment **(Stability)**	Establish sustainable infrastructure	Governing systems
	Create safe environment	Law enforcement
	Steward story	Government, Media, Community dialogue, Research, Education
Promote Healthy Growth **(Growth)**	Facilitate commerce	Marketplace of goods, services, technology, and development
	Exchange ideas	Media, Community dialogue, Research
	Express creative thought	Arts, Entertainment
Provide Holistic Care **(Care: Body, Mind, Soul, Spirit)**	Shepherd children	Family, Social Justice
	Provide soul/spiritual care	Faith, Family
	Teach children	Education, Family, Social Justice
	Support healthy living	Health & Wellness, Family, Social Justice
	Help poor/broken	Social Justice, Faith, Family

TABLE 1: FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

A set of subsystems emerged from the Functional Analysis that support or facilitate the basic functions of a city. These subsystems exist at a city-wide level, as well as at a community level. It is our recommendation that the way we determine the current "health" of a city and/or a community within the city is by evaluating how well each of these functions is being performed. The

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[2] *We recognize that the city is also part of the natural ecosystem and should also be analyzed in light of that, but our focus here is on how to transform the human systems within a city.*

subsystems that are represented each have a myriad of stakeholders that should be engaged in this process.

System Design Principle:

A city can be understood as a human ecosystem, with all of the interrelationships of a natural ecosystem.

The health of a natural ecosystem is determined by the degree of balance in its interrelationships. For example, when an insect overwhelms a forest, it creates an imbalance in the ecosystem. The insects kill the trees, which are the shelter for squirrels, birds, and other animals, which spread the seeds for other trees and undergrowth that provides food and shelter for other forest life, which provide food for the carnivorous animals in the forest. As a result, the imbalance created by the insect is felt throughout the system.
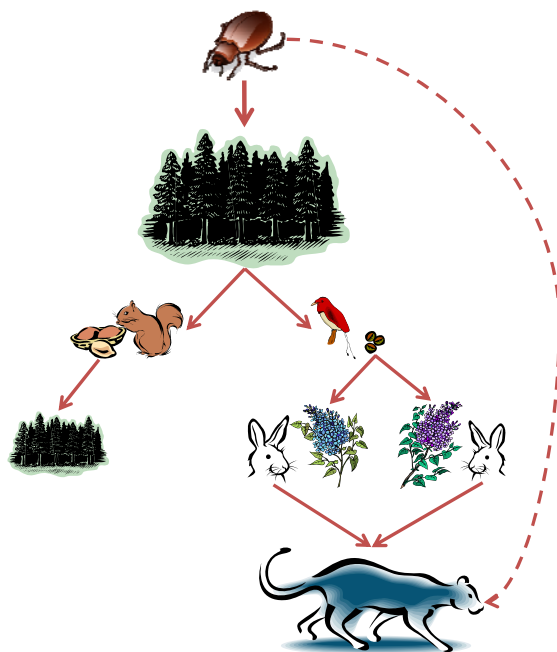

FIGURE 2: NATURAL ECOSYSTEM

The same symbiotic, systemic interrelationships exist within the human ecosystems such as a city or community. *Problems in one area of the system have a cause and effect relationship with other seemingly unconnected or unrelated areas in the system.* This is why we must view and understand the city as an ecosystem.

As a rule, we are not very good at finding root causes to problems in our human ecosystems, because the path to finding them is not straightforward. It might just be just like trying to connect a decrease in the cougar population to a pine beetle infestation. The difficulty is increased by the fact that the subsystems of the city (i.e. government, marketplace, social justice, etc.) tend to view the city only from their unique perspective.

This is why we must recognize the city as an interrelated ecosystem, and create a transformation system that takes this into account.

System Design Principle:

The health of a city and its communities can be measured by how well they perform the three Basic Functions: *Stability, Growth, and Care.*

Building on the concept of the city as a human ecosystem, and the results of the Functional Analysis, we believe that the health of the city and community can be measured by determining how well the subsystems of the city are: Creating Stable Environments, Promoting Healthy Growth, and Providing Holistic Care. One objective of the next phase of this project is to develop a process for measuring the "health" of a city and community by understanding how well the city/community subsystems are performing these three core functions.

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As with any ecosystem, a city is healthiest when all three of the functions Stability, Growth and Care are in balance, and recognized as interdependent. No one function should be sacrificed for the sake of another. If any one function is neglected, it is only a matter of time before the other two suffer as well.
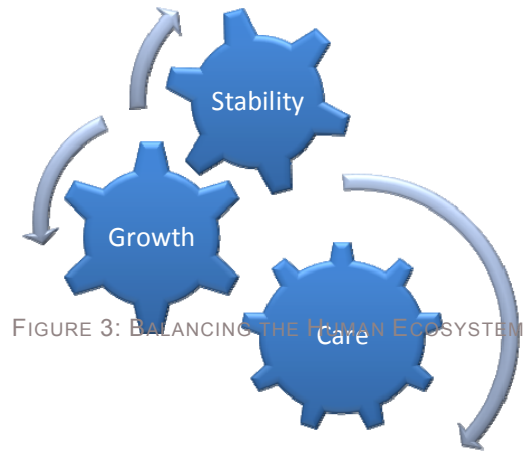
FIGURE 3: BALANCING THE HUMAN ECOSYSTEM

System Design Principle:

The organizing principle for aligning the city for transformation should be the system functions _(as opposed to domain or other categorical method)_

In their book, To Transform a City, Eric Swanson and Sam Williams listed the steel-framed building in the late 1800's, as one of three innovations that led to the development of the modern city. Architect Louis Sullivan, the father of the modern skyscraper, is credited with a quote that precisely captures the essence of this design principle. The most frequently used adaptation of his quote is: _"Form follows Function."_ Plainly stated, the ultimate purpose or core function of an object should be considered first before the shape, makeup, or composition of the object or system is determined.

But what we found through our interviews with other cities, as well as in our review of some city transformation literature, is that Form rather than Function is driving the organization of the city for transformation. Most of the cities that we interviewed had a similar organizing principle for aligning the city. They categorized their cities into 7-9 domains or channels of cultural influence (see Figure 4 for San Diego's model). All of them had the same fundamental flaw in their model; the categorical names are tied to preconceived roles (or people or organizations) that would need to participate in the city movement.

> "It is the pervading law of all things organic and inorganic,
> Of all things physical and metaphysical,
> Of all things human and all things super-human,
> Of all true manifestations of the head,
> Of the heart, of the soul,
> That the life is recognizable in its expression,
> That **form** ever **follows function.**
> This is the law."
>
> _- Louis Sullivan, Father of the modern skyscraper_

The problem with this logic is that organizations and leaders in the city cannot be easily forced into these explicit categories. For example, what subsystem is responsible for Establishing Sustainable Infrastructure? Our first thought was that this is clearly the role of the city government. However, is it not also the domain and responsibility of the construction industry?

In the end, the effectiveness of the city's subsystems to Establish Sustainable Infrastructure is where the focus should be placed rather than on who is responsible. Therefore, we are proposing

that we use the following functional model as an organizing framework for aligning city resources for transformation.
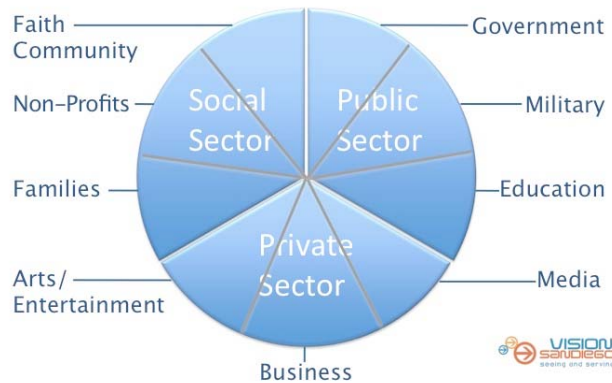

FIGURE 3: CATEGORICAL MODEL

FIGURE 4: FUNCTIONAL MODEL

City Movement Interviews

Each source that was used to develop the system design principles built on the others. The learning from studying the scriptural models informed the functional analysis, and in turn, both sets of principles then informed how we approached the cities in this study. Glenn Barth, author of <u>The Good City: Transforming Lives Transforming Communities</u>, served as a critical link for us to other cities further along on their journeys of city transformation. Glenn served as an entry point into a network of movement leaders.

Before we approached any city, we spent two days with Glenn at the Good Cities offices in Minneapolis. During this session with Glenn, we shaped and refined our hypotheses for an effective system for city transformation. Using his broad experience with cities all over the country, and adding our systems engineering perspective, we left Minneapolis with a solid framework for a systematic approach to city transformation.

To further test and refine our hypotheses, Glenn connected us with the leaders of five advanced city movements in other parts of the country. Each city was selected based on its distinct representation of one or more elements of our model or its similarity to Knoxville. What followed was a series of illuminating discussions that confirmed as well as tweaked our original system design ideas.

City	Leaders	Organization	Website
Austin	**Alan Nagel** – *Exec Director*	Austin Bridge Builders Alliance (ABBA)	www.abbaconnect.net
Houston	**Jim Herrington** – *Founding Director* **Steve Capper** – *Managing Director*	Mission Houston	www.missionhouston.org
Little Rock	**Charlie Conklin** – *Exec Director* **Ray Williams** – *Community Ministry Pastor, Fellowship Bible Church*	Nehemiah Network	www.nehemiahnetwork.org
Portland	**Kevin Palau** *President*	Luis Palau Association	www.palau.org
	Dennis Blevins *Founder*	Mission Portland	www.missionportland.org
San Diego	**Sam Williams** *Director* **Mike Carlisle** *Director*	Vision San Diego	www.visionsandiego.com

TABLE 2: CITY MOVEMENTS AND LEADERS

The interviews were conducted over a 4-week period in June, using the following set of questions to frame the discussion:

1. How is the city "organized" for transformation?
2. Do you have a roadmap for the movement and if so, what are the milestones?
3. How would you measure the maturity of the movement?
4. What do you consider the movement's greatest area of strength?
5. What do you consider the movement's greatest area of weakness?
6. What results have you seen and how are you measuring progress?

The story of each city was unique and the methods and results varied, but through the course of our discussions, ten themes emerged that significantly influenced the model proposed in this report:

1. Successful transformation requires **persistent leadership**.
2. Successful transformation requires strong **leadership development**.
3. A **neutral convener** that can bring together all critical domains of a city is a key factor to success
4. Systems for **measuring transformation** are insufficient
5. Leverage **existing assets and efforts**
6. Organize efforts around **common causes**
7. Organize efforts around **communities**
8. Organize common causes and communities by key **city domains**
9. Strategic use of **catalytic events** is effective to build momentum
10. Engage persons of **"good faith"** and of **"good will"**

Themes of City Transformation

1 - Persistent Leadership

"Everything rises and falls on leadership", says leadership guru, John Maxwell. So too does the success of city movements. Movements develop slowly and take years to achieve critical mass. As such, persistence in leadership is essential. It is vital that this leadership – in whatever forms it takes – shepherds the story of where the movement has come from and casts the vision for where it is going. Without strong, consistent, vocal and visible leadership, the movement will flounder at best and become insignificant at worst.

Some of the cities recounted 10, 15, and even 20 years of their movement, describing ebbs and flows, peaks and valleys. Each of the cities cited false starts and departures from the vision as common pitfalls. However, the momentum of the movement was only sustained to the degree that strong, persistent leadership was present.

2 - Leadership Development

No city has more leaders than there are opportunities to lead. The persistent leadership mentioned above requires numerous leaders at various times throughout the movement and at various levels within the movement. These leaders must also share a common lens or framework through which they view and approach the city.

For the city to be transformed, the Nehemiah Element in all walks of life must awaken to their unique calling in their spheres of influence. With the popularity of the Servant Leader and the Level 5 Leader concepts of Ken Blanchard and Jim Collins respectively, a leadership development pathway can be developed that is not specifically faith-based. This facilitates the inclusion of people of good faith and good will.

Regardless of the strategy, it is clear that a haphazard search for leaders or even a focused call for leaders will not suffice. The only reliable vehicle to deliver these leaders is an intensive leadership development effort.

3 -

Case Example: Vision San Diego

Ken Blanchard is a world-renowned leadership guru who resides in San Diego and has developed a close partnership with Vision San Diego. Through this partnership, Ken has developed a 3-year leadership development program for the leaders of San Diego that focuses on the three principles of Servant Leadership:

> *1) Leader as Servant*
> *2) Leader as Steward*
> *3) Leader as Shepherd*

Case Example: Mission Houston

The Leadership Development pathway in Houston that is targeted at Christian leaders across the city is called FaithWalking. In this 3-year discipleship journey, men and women are taught and coached on three aspects of their faith:

> *1) Radical Obedience that leads to a missional life*
> *2) A Reflective Life, where your word increasingly co-creates the world with God*
> *3) Authentic Community that leads to a shared vision*

Neutral Convener

All of the individuals we spoke with were a part of organizations that served the city movement by bringing together disparate members of the community to focus on that community's most pressing issues in a concerted way.   These conveners of resources are critical to the success of the movement because the community views them as unbiased. Their agenda is clear – to bring about the transformation of the city.

Among the five cities we identified there were two different categories of neutral convener: 1) a convener of the resources of the city-at-large, and 2) a convener of the Church of the City. While the roles of these two types of neutral convener are somewhat different, both types serve the purpose of bringing together resources to focus on the community's most pressing issues. While

none of the cities we studied had both types of organizations, *it is our recommendation that a comprehensive model for city transformation, should include a neutral convener focusing on the resources of the city-at-large and another focusing on the resources of the Church of the City.*

4 - Measurement Systems are Lacking

During our conversations, we asked each leader about the results they had seen and how they measured progress. We had discussions of inputs vs. outputs vs. outcomes as well as qualitative vs. quantitative measures. It was evident that each of the leadership teams had wrestled at some length with how to effectively measure progress in their city. Each city provided great evidence of progress and movement, but none had a well-developed systematic method for qualitative and quantitative measurement. One city remarked that if we could help develop an effective means and method of measurement that it would be the most significant contribution to city movements they could imagine.

5 - Leverage Existing Assets and Efforts

Communities that join in with and bolster efforts that are already underway produce results sooner than those that start from scratch. Likewise, communities should leverage all existing assets and employ them towards achieving movement targets and goals. But before either of these is possible, the community must understand what initiatives are already underway and what assets are available. Knoxville's Salt & Light guide produced by the Compassion Coalition is unquestionably one of the best resources devoted to uncovering and communicating all the ongoing efforts in an organized fashion. In fact, several of the cities that we interviewed considered the Salt & Light guide as best-in-class in this arena. Regardless of how it is done, it is apparent that the most effective means of creating momentum in a city movement is to join other ongoing efforts whenever possible, rather than creating new, separate initiatives.

6 - Common Cause Initiatives

Merging or aligning parallel efforts focused on a common cause, eliminates overlap and multiplies impact. Currently, due to lack of visibility and poor collaboration, many organizations and individuals labor for years not realizing the benefit of partnering with others of like mind. Results are often less than spectacular, but could be improved dramatically through the development and execution of a coordinated strategy. For collaborations to form and thrive, however, those involved must focus on what they share in common rather than their differences. The model needs to shift from Bounded Set thinking to Centered set thinking.

According to the Strategy overview of Vision San Diego, "In Bounded Set thinking, the question asked is "Do you believe like I believe?" If you do, you are in. If not, you are out." In the Figure 6, the heart in the centered set represents the Common Cause. The multiple arrows point toward the dot, representing different sectors, domains, organizations and individuals who share a passion for that cause.

FIGURE 4: BOUNDED SETS VS. CENTERED SETS
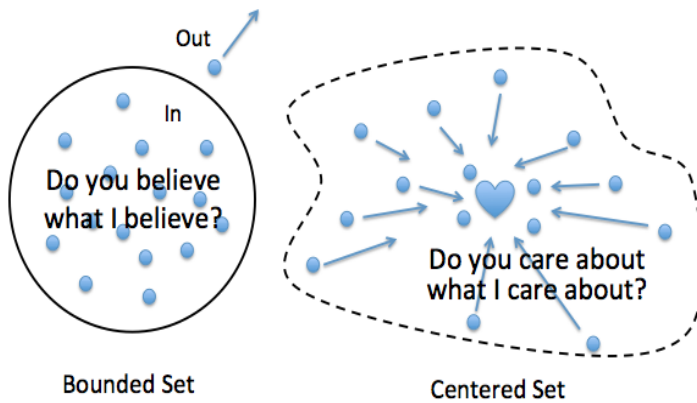
The problem with bounded sets is that over time they get smaller and multiply rapidly. The longer you are in a circle with people the more likely you are to discover differences in beliefs, and then someone has to leave the circle. This explains why we have multiple organizations trying to solve the same problem in a community, competing with each other for time, talent and treasure, and all the while lacking a comprehensive strategy."

Each city that we spoke with had identified some Common Causes across the city that they were supporting by convening resources and directing them towards the effort. In most of these areas, the city movement was simply coming alongside an initiative that was already in place.

In centered sets, people do not abandon their belief systems, they simply find the common ground they can stand on in order to focus their shared passion to solve the problems that plague the city and hurt the lives of people. They believe that uniting around the cause is more important than dividing around the differences.

- Vision San Diego
www.visionsandiego.com

Austin	Affordable Housing Education Health
Houston	Children & Education Whole & Healthy Children
Little Rock	Fatherhood K-5 Literacy
Portland	Education/Schools Health & Wellness Homelessness Human Trafficking Hunger/Poverty Neighborhood Revitalization
San Diego	Elder care Third grade literacy

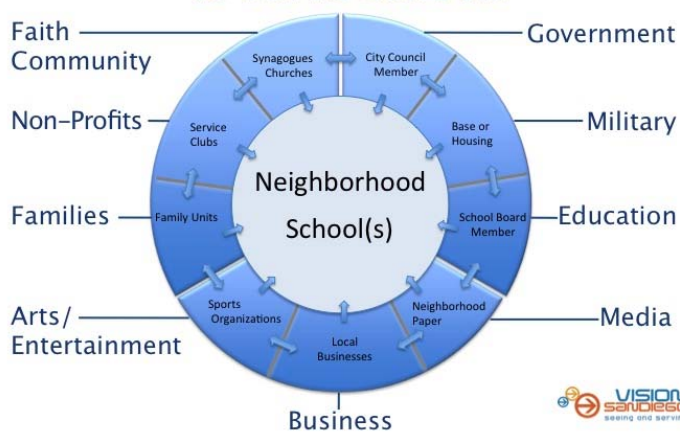## 7 - Community-Specific Development Efforts

FIGURE 6: ORGANIZING THE CITY BY GEOGRAPHY

Considering the city as a whole is an overwhelming proposition. In addition, the root causes of many of the Common Cause issues are embedded in the systems of the local communities themselves. Because of this, Vision San Diego and Mission Houston had begun organizing their city transformation efforts around communities in addition to the city-wide Common Causes themes. In San Diego, they segmented their communities by elementary school districts. San Diego County has almost 450 elementary schools, and Vision San Diego has kicked off an initiative to organize around and serve every one of them. Their hope is that

the initiative would eventually spread beyond serving the schools to include other community concerns. Vision San Diego is also forming leadership teams in each of these areas that reflect their citywide leadership structure.

In Houston, the Houston Profile Project led to the identification of 45 Community Service Areas organized by geography and societal characteristics. This research effort was led by the Center for Community Research and Development of Baylor University. Mission Houston uses this information to connect churches to areas of need across the city.
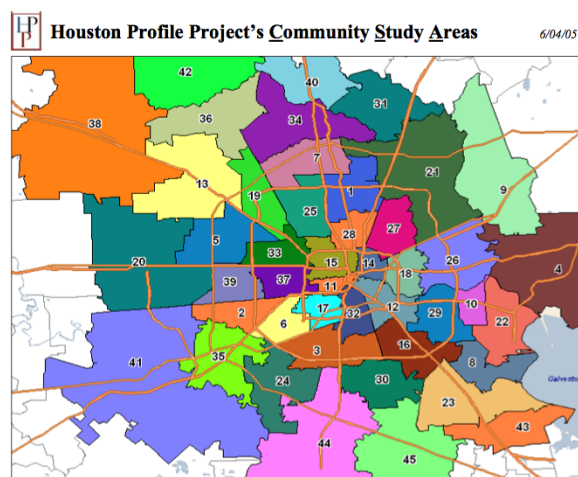

FIGURE 7: ORGANIZING THE CITY BY GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHICS

8 - Organize Communities and Common Cause by key City Domains

The concept of city transformation is an overwhelming thought considering the vast number of complexities that exist within a neighborhood, much less the entire city. In order to break the city down into manageable parts for transformation, two of the five cities we interviewed have divided their city by geography *and* common cause. However, all five cities used some version of city domains or channels of influence to organize their efforts. Part of Vision San Diego's strategy is to form a leadership teams at the city and community-level based on their nine domains as shown in Figure 8. This makes the concept of city transformation more manageable and allows the efforts at both the city and community levels to be more focused and accountable.

FIGURE 8: ORGANIZING THE CITY BY SECTOR/DOMAIN

How the city is categorized or divided should be well thought out, as it will drive decisions about leadership, measurement, and even priority. In the section of this report on the Functional Analysis of the city, we make the argument for a functional organization rather than a categorical or domain-driven organization (see Figure 9).

The benefit of a domain-driven organization is that leadership and responsibility is easy to see. However, measuring a domain such as Faith Community becomes more difficult, especially as it pertains to the impact on the city as a system. This is the main reason that we are advocating organization around city functions. For example, measuring the effectiveness of Sustainable Infrastructure is much easier than measuring the effectiveness of Government. In addition, a functional organization allows for leadership to be defined across Public, Private, and Social
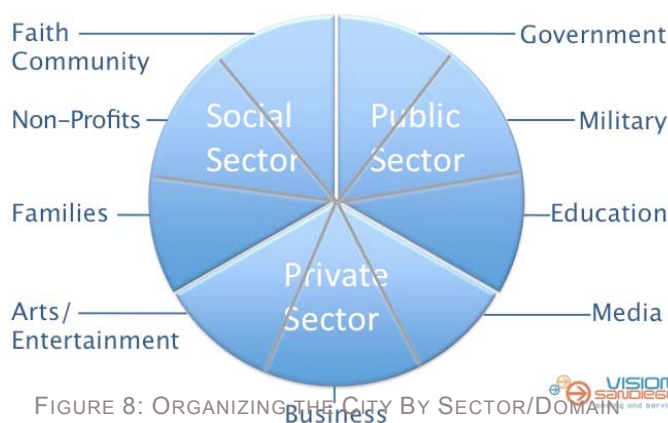
Stability · Growth

Establish sustainable infrastructure · Facilitate commerce · Enable exchange of ideas

Maintain safe environment · Express creative thought

Steward the story · Shepherd children

Help poor and broken · Provide soul/spiritual care

Support healthy living · Teach next generation

Holistic Care

FIGURE 9: ORGANIZING THE CITY BY FUNCTION

sectors. This is necessary because a function such as "Establish Sustainable Infrastructure" may seem to be the sole domain of government, but there are private construction companies, neighborhoods and non-profits that are also constituents in that city function.

The lesson from other cities is that the city transformation strategy must be broken down in some way that works at both a city and community level. The city transformation strategy should also be organized in a manner that helps to organize leadership and measurement. There is more work to be done here to develop a robust framework to accomplish all of these objectives. But the shift from a domain-driven to and function-driven orientation is the first step.

9 - Catalytic Events

Several of the cities that we interviewed utilized what they called "catalytic events" to provide momentum for their city movements. A catalytic event is a focused time of service (a day, a month or even several months) in which the church is rallied to serve across the city in specific areas of need identified by city leadership. Providing a focused time and area of need gives individuals, families, and churches a straightforward, structured and impactful way to take part in the movement. The hope is that as individuals come alongside one another to serve others, the sense of community grows as they see their effort in the context of a larger work that is improving their city and the lives of their neighbors. If done well and repeated regularly, this type of event can become a self-reinforcing engine that creates momentum for the movement.

The one caveat that was expressed by three out of five cities that we interviewed is that catalytic events in and of themselves are not city transformation. In fact, these five cities cautioned against using catalytic events because of the danger that they become the totality of the movement. It was their contention that a city can only be transformed by a holistic change in mindset that becomes integrated into everyday life. The leaders of the city movements in each of these five cities are seeking lifestyle change in the people of the city. For this reason, the advice was that catalytic events should only be used very strategically and must be undergirded with a holistic approach to discipleship in the church-of-the-city that leads to a lifestyle of service and seeking God's heart for the city.

Case Example: Portland

Dennis Blevins (Mission Portland) has been working in and around the churches of the city since 1989. He has seen every phase of their city's movement emerge over the last 20 years. It began with a movement of prayer summits across the city, and has moved along through building relationships and informal networking among the churches. However, there have been a series of Catalytic Events that have created surges in momentum at key points along the way. In 1992, the Billy Graham crusade served as the first of a series of events. Two years later Promise Keepers held the first of three (3) events over the next three (3) years. According to Dennis, the combination of the grass roots effort, and these big, catalytic events created the kindling for the spark that was to come.

In 2007, the Luis Palau Crusade, which is headquartered in Portland, began to awaken to God's heart for the city. The Palau organization used its influence with the local church to bring together a coalition that would approach the mayor of Portland with an offer that he could not refuse. The church of Portland and the Palau organization promised to mobilize at least 15,000 volunteers to serve in whatever areas were the mayor's top priorities. The first "Season of Service" was launched in the spring of 2008 and ended with a Luis Palau Festival in August that drew over 100,000 to the city's waterfront. The Church of Portland provided over 27,000 volunteers to work on such areas of Hunger/Poverty, Homelessness, Education/Schools, and Neighborhood Revitalization. The story of Portland, "the very liberal town where an openly gay mayor and the evangelical church would begin working together in ways that would begin to make a difference in the city" has become a national topic of dialogue which will be further fueled by a yet-to-be-released feature with ABC's Diane Sawyer.

The "Season of Service" that was launched in 2008 is now an annual event, and has been extended to 6-months from May 1 – October 1. The Luis Palau Association has now begun to take this concept to other cities, three of which are cities that were interviewed for this report: San Diego, Houston, and Little Rock.

10 - People of Good Faith and Good Will

One of the most important lessons learned from the city interviews is the importance of engaging the broadest spectrum of the city as possible. Vision San Diego uses the terms "People of Good Faith" and "People of Good Will". By this they mean that faith and religion should not preclude someone with passion and conviction for the city from being a part of the city transformation. This message is mainly for the Church of the City, which can have the reputation of disengaging from the affairs of the city because of competing belief sets. In the section on Common Cause initiatives, the concept of Centered Sets versus Bounded Sets was discussed. This principle of People of Good Faith and Good Will is a Centered Set philosophy. Anyone who is passionate about the same cause as I am is an ally and friend. We don't have completely overlapping value sets, but we find that when it comes to the Common Cause, there is more to which we agree than disagree.

This concept also parallels one of the lessons from scripture that was described earlier as "the Artexerxes Principle". For the church, the lesson is that the sovereign God is directing everything

to His purposes, even the heart of the pagan king. In light of this, the church of the city should be willing to work with everyone who is in alignment with the His kingdom purposes, even if the individuals do not recognize it as kingdom work.

Role of the Church in City Transformation

Through the course of the interviews with the five cities in this study, we also learned some lessons about the role of the church in city transformation. The five lessons detailed in this section are not intended to be a complete description of what the church of the city should be, but more guidelines for who the church and church leadership should and shouldn't be as it relates to city transformation. We feel it is also important to note that the majority of those interviewed in this process were either current or former pastors.

1. Holistic city transformation cannot be solely **pastor-led.**
2. The Church of City should be **invited** into the effort rather than initiating or defining the terms.
3. Organizing **pervasive prayer** is a critical role of the Church of the City.
4. **Mobilizing the body to serve the city** is another critical role of the Church of the City.
5. The Church of the City should **teach and equip** the body to see God's heart for the city.

1 - Holistic city transformation cannot be solely Pastor-led

This was a very consistent theme throughout the city interviews. The church has an indispensible role to play in transformation, but church leaders cannot lead a holistic city transformation movement. What makes this observation even more profound is that the majority of the interviewees were former or current pastors. This observation was also in line with our own observations of the scriptural models for city restoration. Nehemiah (the governor) and Ezra (the high priest) each had distinctly different roles in the process of restoring Jerusalem. Nehemiah used his positional influence, his God-given leadership ability and combined it with his spiritual wisdom and integrity to organize the people and resources necessary to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Ezra's role was to restore the system of sacrifices in the temple, and to lead the people of Jerusalem spiritually. *We believe that the relationship between Nehemiah and Ezra is the model for the relationship of positional leadership in the city and positional leadership within the Church of the City: side-by-side with clarity of calling, mission, and purpose.*

2 - Church-of-the-City should be ''Invited In''

The organized church often arrives on the scene with a detailed plan of action to address an area of great concern to their members, be it poverty, at-risk youth, homelessness or the like, without fully understanding the needs of the individuals being served. The unintended consequences of this well-meaning behavior are often strained relationships and a lack of trust.   The cities that we

interviewed have taken a different approach. In the case of Portland, the Church of the City reached out to the mayor and asked a simple question, "How can we help?" The posture of humility was disarming, and began the process of establishing trust. The second key to the relationship in Portland was that the church over delivered on its promise. They promised 15,000 volunteers and brought almost twice that amount (27,000).

3 - Pervasive Prayer is a Critical Role

Without exception, each city we interviewed identified prayer as a core strategic theme. Besides the obvious spiritual power in pervasive prayer that is necessary to undergird a city's transformation, the interviewees indicated that prayer helped in other ways as well. By its very nature, praying for parts of the city begins to bring the heart of the church to a different posture about the city. Additionally it breaks down barriers between the churches as they unite in praying for a common purpose. Finally, it is through prayer that the Church of the City begins to awaken to God's heart and purposes for the city itself. It is important to note that in every city we interviewed, prayer was not only a strategic theme, but it was the place they began. Combined with the other lessons learned about organizing the city for transformation, pervasive prayer in and across every community, neighborhood, and school, and in support of every common cause should be at the heart of the church's strategy for city transformation.

4 - Mobilizing Church to Serve

The two most common themes to surface during our interviews were the power of prayer and the power of service. Both bring together the Church of the City, but it takes service for the church to be a blessing to the city. Several of the cities noted that while some churches were drawn to pray, others were drawn serve. This would seem to be a beautiful picture of the diversity of the Body of Christ, and should be leveraged. The city should feel the impact of the Church of the City being mobilized to serve. The poor and the broken and the humble should experience the love of Christ through the hands and feet of the church. Eric Swanson's book, The Externally Focused Church is one of many resources the church can look to and to find examples of the power of the serving church.

5 - Teaching and Equipping the church of the city to see God's heart for the city

The final lesson-learned for the Church of the City is that it must teach and equip the body to see God's heart for the city, and how they are purposed to impact it. Ray Bakke and others have written about the theology of the city in books. Teachers such as Tim Keller of Redeemer Church in Manhattan, are expanding on those thoughts and ideas using models such as the Gospel Ecosystem.

Pockets of the church are starting to awaken to see the city through God's eyes. However, this teaching must become much more widespread for the Body of Christ to be fully deployed throughout the city. As this happens, the individual members of the Body of Christ will be awakened to how their own talents, gifts, treasure, and influence can be used for the Kingdom of God. City transformation starts with transformed lives in the boardrooms, restaurants, retail shops, factories, and classrooms of our city. The importance of the church's role in awakening the

City transformation starts with transformed lives in the boardrooms, restaurants, retail shops, factories, and classrooms of a city.

body to their part in the work of city transformation cannot be over emphasized.

KNOXVILLE'S "TRANSFORMATION" ASSETS

System design theory states that it is impossible for any one person or perspective to completely define and understand a complex system. This holds true for a city, as it is a complex system or even a set of complex systems. Therefore, when analyzing the city's "Current State" we should include as many perspectives as possible, believing that weaving together the various perspectives creates a truer composite picture, much like a mosaic.

In this section we have synthesized three perspectives of the city of Knoxville into a list of ten (10) strengths or Transformational Assets and three (3) weaknesses to improve upon. The sources of the three perspectives are the summary report of the Nine Counties. One Vision. initiative from 2005, the 2008 study of Knoxville from the Cornerstone Foundation, and the 2009 edition of the Compassion Coalitions Salt and Light Guide. In addition to these summary reports, we held interviews with key individuals from within these initiatives. Interestingly, each of these initiatives actually represent hundreds of perspectives, as each utilized some form of community-based interviewing or focus groups to arrive at their understanding of Knoxville, Knox County, and even the region.

This list of Knoxville's strengths and weaknesses as it relates to city transformation is our own composite list synthesized from these three sources. While the ideas and concepts stem from these three sources we are also introducing our own perspective in translating and synthesizing concepts from each of these three studies into one list. Explicitly stated, our perspective is to ask the question, "What are the strengths on which to build? And the weaknesses that need to improve?" for transformation to become a reality in the city of Knoxville and surrounding region.

"Transformation" Assets – Strengths on which to Build

Knoxville and the surrounding region have a number of strengths on which to build that are outlined in each of the three resources from which we drew. The nine that are highlighted in Table 3 are not exhaustive by any means, but represent a focused set that we believe should be used to inform a path of transformation. The research of the Cornerstone Foundation and the Salt and Light guide each provide a much more in-depth account of the assets of the region.

Strengths to Build On	Description	Functions of City
Heritage and Culture	Knoxville and the surrounding area has a rich cultural heritage that has shaped its past and is shaping its present and future. The history of the region and its Appalachian heritage have left the deeply ingrained values of a rugged independence and a strong work ethic, which are in the same token strengths and weaknesses. The culture is expressed in its music (heart bed of Americana music) as well as its art and politics. As well, there is an emerging diversity that is making Knoxville much more cosmopolitan than ever before. The story of Knoxville in culture and heritage are a significant strength on which to build.	Maintain a **Stable** Environment by • Establishing sustainable infrastructure • Maintaining a safe environment • Stewarding the story
Natural beauty and resources of region	Knoxville and the surrounding area generate over $2.5 billion per year in revenue from tourism, largely due to the natural beauty of the region. Sevier County alone generates over half of this revenue. Newcomers to Knoxville routinely cite the natural beauty of the region as a significant draw.	
Civic-minded community	The Knoxville community demands to be heard by its leaders, and is not shy about voicing its displeasure when things go awry or are not functioning in a forthright and open manner. The political struggles of the last several years have created a community that demands a voice in public affairs, which is a significant strength on which to build.	
Downtown revitalization	Market Square stimulates economic and cultural growth. By creating a venue that allows people of all walks of life to gather, it truly represents all three marketplaces of a city: 1) the marketplace of goods and services, 2) of ideas, and 3) of expression. And the rest of downtown beyond Market Square is emerging as an attraction for young, talented people that will make significant contributions to the future of Knoxville.	Promote Healthy **Growth** by • Facilitating commerce • Enabling the exchange of ideas • Allowing the expression of creative thought
Economic Building Blocks	In addition to the revitalization of downtown, Knoxville and the surrounding region is rich with economic potential. The UT/ORNL partnership has built a bridge that forms Innovation Valley. It has served as a colossal technology corridor attracting people and resources that will re-form and re-shape the city and region for years to come.	
University of Tennessee	As a major research institution and the flagship university in the state, UT provides education, intellectual horsepower, youthful energy, technology, jobs, and so many other things inherent to a major university. UT's contributes to all three modes of promoting healthy growth in addition to Teaching the next generation.	
Generous community	Knoxville has a reputation for being a generous and giving community. In addition to the unusually large population of churches (600+), Knoxville is home to more than 2000 non-profit organizations that seek to serve unmet societal needs. According to the Salt & Light Guide, there are over 90 private foundations in the city of Knoxville that serve to fund the non-profit organizations that are active in almost every facet of society, including music and the arts, education, social services, health, environment, religion, and even sports.	Provide Holistic **Care** by • Shepherding children • Providing soul/spiritual care • Teaching the next generation • Supporting healthy living • Helping the poor, broken, and estranged
Strong faith-based community	Knoxville itself is home to over 600 churches. But more than just numbers, there is a history of churches praying and serving together that began over 15 years ago, that crosses denominational, geographic and cultural boundaries. Compassion Coalition is an organization whose sole reason for existence is to bring together the "church of Knoxville".	
Recent history of cooperative community efforts	Nine Counties. One Vision. sparked a host of initiatives that have begun to transform Knoxville, such as the revitalization of downtown, Project GRAD, creation and branding of Knoxville/Oak Ridge partnership and Innovation Valley among many others. More recently, Compassion Knoxville gave voice to the community about the issue of homelessness.	

TABLE 3: STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

Weaknesses to Improve Upon

The strengths of an organization, community or individual often have a flip-side weakness that should be understood and considered, but not fixated upon. The same is true of the strengths found in Table 4. For example, the strong cultural value of rugged individualism from East Tennessee's heritage carries with it a tendency to isolate from one another. This leads to an assortment of counterproductive behaviors, such as, attacking the same problem over and over again each time utilizing new resources. Likewise, the strength of a civic-minded community can be countered by an overly cynical community that distrusts leadership and experts assuming there is a conspiracy behind every initiative.

In reviewing the three sources, we identified three (3) characteristics of the city-at-large that are weaknesses that should be accounted for in the transformation effort.

1. Polarization of Knoxville's communities by geographic region (North, South, East, West), culture and ethnicity, and socioeconomics
2. Existence of the "Shadow Worlds of Knoxville" (*working poor, generationally poor, homeless, mentally ill, physically disabled, addicted, etc*.)
3. Misalignment of community resources

Polarization of Knoxville's Communities

One of the strengths of the city listed in the previous section is a recent history of cooperative community efforts. There has been intentionality to bring together the city of Knoxville across geographic, culture, ethnic and even socioeconomic boundaries through initiatives such as Nine Counties. One Vision. However, much more work needs to be done before there is a meaningful level of cross-boundary cooperation. This report will not detail a specific strategy targeting this weakness, but the recognition of this area of weakness has to inform any city transformation strategy. Instead of an initiative targeting this polarization, every effort should be made to consider this variable when pulling together community or cross-city teams. Including the representation of voices and perspectives from these different parts of the city is the best first step towards addressing this weakness. In fact, bringing together different parts of the city to tackle a common mission is one of the quickest ways to build bridges among communities.

The Shadow Worlds

Today, too many of our citizens do not fully experience the strengths of the city and region. Many of the poor and broken men, women, and children of the city live in unsafe, unhealthy environments and this cannot be tolerated if Knoxville is going to reach its God-given potential as a community. There are many churches, non-profit organizations and government agencies in the city that serve the poor and broken people of our city, but the needs always seem to outweigh the resources that are brought to bear.

Misalignment of Community Resources

Three of the strengths identified for the city of Knoxville relate to the generous nature of the people, the strong, faith-based community, and the recent history of cooperative community efforts. These three strengths create significant potential for Knoxville to become a city that "Provides Holistic Care" to its next generation, to its families, and to the poor and broken. However, we could squander that potential if we don't address the misalignment of our community resources.

The bubbles in Figure 10 to the right represent some of the many community initiatives in our city. Some of these initiatives have been formalized, but others, such as At-Risk Youth, have never been formally organized, but rather are composed of many different organizations working independently on an issue.

FIGURE 10: MISALIGNMENT OF RESOURCES

Whether formally organized or not, many of these initiatives have strong beginnings, but fail to deliver significant long-term results. So, if we are a very generous, faith-based community, why are we not experiencing measurable transformation in these areas? The answer is not in the amount of resources (people, time, money) being spent on a given initiative, but in the alignment of those resources toward common mission. Turning this weakness into strength is one of the key leverage points to Knoxville reaching its God-given potential.
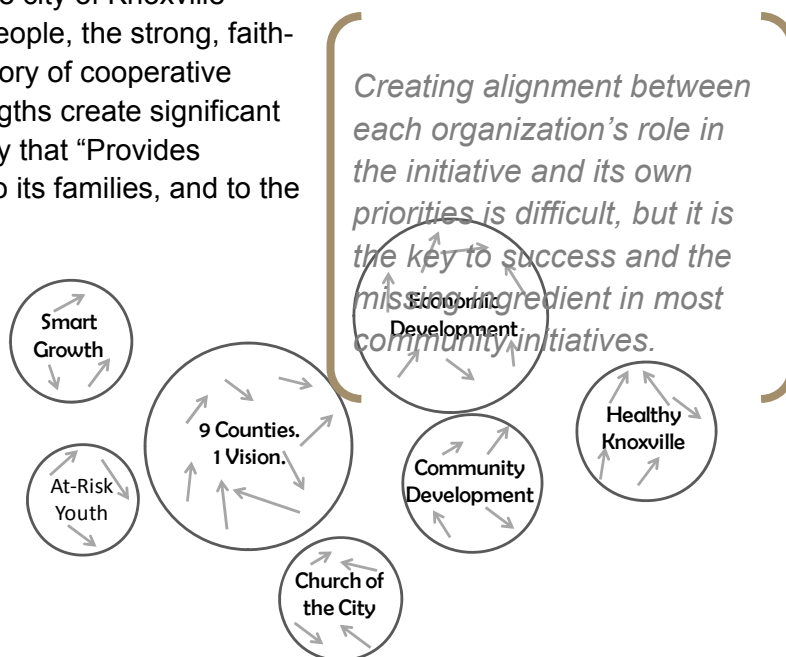
Figure 11 outlines the process that a typical community initiative goes through to organize itself around a common mission, such as Decreasing the Rate of Obesity. The first phase of the initiative is to "identify" and prioritize the critical issues impacting the area of focus. The steering team then "organizes" the initiative around specific goals and objectives focused on tackling the prioritized issues. Leaders in the form of organizations or individuals are then identified to spearhead initiatives to achieve the specific goals and objectives. Finally, progress is "measured" by tracking the achievement of the stated goals and objectives.

Identify	Organize	Measure
Assess – *(high level)*	Define goals/objectives	Define critical system metrics
Prioritize – *(high level)*	Identify leadership	Develop new methods to measure

FIGURE 11: TYPICAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

At this point, it is up to the individuals and/or organizations to design programs and processes to meet the specific goals and objectives. Up until this point there may have been a lot of collaboration, but now the individual organization are left to develop individual solutions and the power of the collective is lost.

Devotion to the common mission of the initiative is also susceptible to changing priorities within the individual organizations. If internal organizational priorities become more urgent, then the

community initiative can be placed on the backburner. However, if the role the organization plays in the community initiative is in alignment with its own priorities, then that organization is much more likely to remain highly motivated and engaged. Creating this alignment between each organization's role in the initiative and its own priorities is difficult, but it is the key to success and the missing ingredient in most community initiatives.

Community initiatives can also get tangled up in measurement. If new programs or processes are put in place, measurement is often put in place to determine their effectiveness. Many times however, these metrics are more about outputs than outcomes. For instance, the number of individuals served by a new program may be captured, but this yields no meaningful information about the impact or effectiveness of that service. Effective measurement systems are difficult to construct, but are the only means to truly understand whether or not the initiative is making true, sustainable impact.

What is missing in the typical process of community initiatives is a systematic approach to Aligning, Measuring and Improving. These are vitally important steps that when omitted can significantly inhibit the ability of the initiative to deliver results.

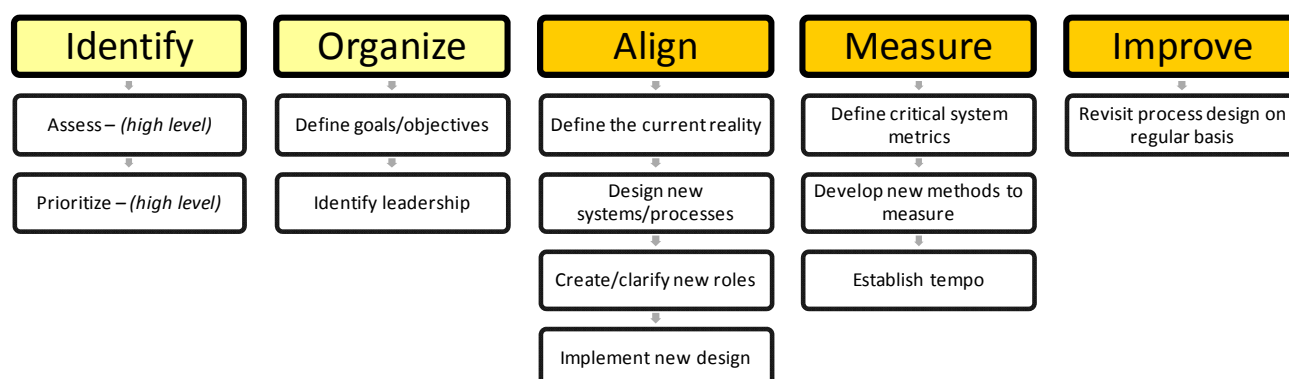| Identify	Organize	Align	Measure	Improve
Assess – *(high level)*	Define goals/objectives	Define the current reality	Define critical system metrics	Revisit process design on regular basis
Prioritize – *(high level)*	Identify leadership	Design new systems/processes	Develop new methods to measure	
		Create/clarify new roles	Establish tempo	
		Implement new design		

FIGURE 12: COMMUNITY INITIATIVE WITH ALIGNMENT

The process of Alignment is most often overlooked or avoided because it is difficult. It requires individuals and organizations to take a hard, but realistic look at their current reality, what they do well and what they do not do well. It may cause them to cease doing an activity or program, because another organization is better equipped or skilled to do so. Being brutally honest with yourself and with those around you is hard, and it rarely happens in an organizational context without skillful facilitation through a clearly defined process.

In our experience with for-profit organizations, aligning processes to eliminate misallocated or wasted "capacity", routinely provides a 200-300% increase in productivity. As a result, the same level of staffing can produce 2-3 times more output than it did with the misaligned process. The businesses often reallocate that formerly wasted capacity to new product lines or other areas of new business growth. In the non-profit world, this freed-up capacity increases their ability to impact a given area of need, and allows for expansion of the ministry to reach other areas of need.

Alignment also provides two additional benefits. First, an aligned system or process is much easier to measure. In a misaligned system or process, there is a tremendous amount of noise and

metrics that are used are often full of confounding variables. This makes it difficult to attribute cause to anything specific, which effectively renders the metrics useless. In an aligned system, cause-and-effect relationships are much easier to see, and therefore measurement becomes very useful in understanding how and where to improve the process. This is when Improvement becomes possible and allows the front-line workers in a given system to see and make significant changed to the system that are real improvements.

The process of alignment is difficult and messy, which is why most initiatives don't undertake it. But lack of alignment is the number one cause of community-based initiatives not reaching their full potential. Choosing to live with misalignment also leads to significant amounts of time and dollars being needlessly consumed.

Source	System Design Principles

Scriptural Models for City Transformation	**Restoration of Jerusalem as Exiles Return from Babylon**
	
	- City Transformation requires a parallel effort of **restoring "the temple"** of the city and **rebuilding "the wall"**.
	
	- **Church leadership** (or the "Ezra" element) must have a clearly defined role in a city's transformation, and it must embrace what is theirs and release what is not.
	
	- The **Christ-following leaders** (the "Nehemiahs") that are already in every sector of society, must be awakened to their role in bringing the Lordship of Christ into their spheres of influence.
	
	- A city transformation effort should include the **alignment of community/government/societal goals**, and the church should make "the welfare" of the city one of its core goals.
	
	- A city transformation effort should allow for the **local communities and neighborhood to take ownership** of implementing change in their community, even while it can be aligned to the city's overall plan.
	
	- Work and especially the "work" of **city transformation** must begin to be **embraced by the Body of Christ** as essential, worthy, and even commanded by God of His people.
	
	God's Plan for Restoration of the New Jerusalem (Isaiah 65:17-25)
	
	- Healthy community
	   . Physical Health
	   . Vibrant neighborhoods
	   . Sustainable living
	- Enjoyable and rewarding work
	- Safe community
	- Unhindered communion with God

Functional Analysis	1. A city can be understood as a human ecosystem, with all of the interrelationships of a natural ecosystem. 2. The health of a city and/or community can be measured by how well it performs the three Basic Functions: *Stability, Growth, and Care.* 3. The organizing principle for aligning the city for transformation should be by system function (as opposed to domain or other categorical method)
Source	**System Design Principles (cont'd)**

Interviews with Other Cities	<u>Lessons Learned</u> 1. Successful transformation requires **persistent leadership**. 2. Successful transformation requires strong **leadership development**. 3. The role of a **neutral convener** that can bring together resources of the city to focus on issues of common interest is vitally important 4. Systems for **measuring transformation** are insufficient 5. Leverage **existing assets and efforts** 6. Organize efforts around **common causes** 7. Organize efforts around **communities** 8. Organize common causes and communities by key **city domains** 9. Strategic use of **catalytic events** is effective to build momentum 10. Engage persons of **"good faith"** and of **"good will"** <u>Role of Church in City Transformation</u> 1. Holistic city transformation cannot be solely **pastor-led** 2. The Church of City must be **invited** into effort rather than initiating or defining the terms 3. Organizing **pervasive prayer** is a critical role of the Church of the City 4. **Mobilizing church to serve the city** is another critical role of the Church of the City
Knoxville's Transformation Assets	<u>Strengths to Build On</u> - **Generous** community - Appalachian heritage of rugged **independence** and **strong work ethic** - Emerging **diversity** - Burgeoning **downtown revitalization** - University of Tennessee - **Civic-minded** community - **Culturally rich** community - **Natural beauty** and resources of the region - History of successfully organizing around **common cause** (i.e Nine Counties/One Vision) - Significant **church presence** <u>Weaknesses to Improve</u> - **Misalignment** of community resources - **Polarization** of Knoxville's communities by geographic region (North, South, East, West), culture and ethnicity, and socioeconomics " - **"Shadow Worlds** of Knoxville" (*working poor, generationally poor, homeless, mentally ill and physically disabled, addicted*)

Key System Design Principles

We have consolidated the findings and principles from the research into ten (10) key design principles that were used to build the conceptual model in the next section. A model for the transformation of the city of Knoxville (or any city for that matter) should:

- **Establish a coalition of resources to serve as a neutral convener** - A "neutral convener" must be capable of supporting the common cause and community building efforts across the city by providing leadership, alignment, communication and measurement.

- **Leverage existing assets and integrate existing efforts** - All city assets or ongoing efforts useful to the city transformation movement should be identified (via asset mapping) and integrated wherever possible to maximize the utilization of community assets and reduce duplication of effort.

- **Include both a "common cause"** *and* **community focus** - Resources for the city transformation movement should be organized around and applied to both citywide "common cause" efforts and community-specific development efforts.

- **Include a well-defined process for aligning the city's resources to common cause** - Alignment of resources is a key leverage point in the city experiencing measurable impact across the city and within communities. The process of alignment is difficult, but it is vital.

- **Strive to establish a balance between stability, growth and holistic care** - These three functions represent the primary functions of the major sectors of a city - government, marketplace, and social and must always remain in balance.

- **Organize around the basic functions of the subsystems of the city** - Any effort should be organized, measured and lead with respect to the eleven basic functions of the subsystems of the city.

- **Include a comprehensive strategy for measuring city and community impact** - The performance of any system can and should be measured using both quantitative and qualitative measures.

- **Engage persons of good faith and persons of good will** - The efforts from both the people of good faith and people of good will must be leveraged, coordinated and combined wherever possible.

- **Include a comprehensive strategy for developing high capacity, servant leaders** – these leaders should be people of good faith and people of good will, who represent every facet of the city.

- **Include an aligned and organized "Church of the City"** - The local church should organize and align itself for pervasive *prayer* across the city, holistic *service* in and throughout the city, and for *teaching* and *equipping* the body to serve the city in the name of Christ.

REBUILDING THE WALL & RESTORING THE TEMPLE: A MODEL FOR CITY TRANSFORMATION

As stated earlier, one of Knoxville's greatest strengths is its generosity, but the counter to this strength is the weakness of misalignment. Individuals and organizations are working diligently to address particular issues without understanding how their efforts coordinate, complement or even conflict with the others working to address those same needs. This is not effective use of our resources. And due to this lack of alignment, organizations are often times providing services or work in areas for which they are not particularly well equipped. Operating outside their area of strength strains the organization and takes them away from what they do well. Additionally there is the potential for overlap of services. There is a better way.

The problem with Knoxville is not lack of resources, but alignment of those resources towards. True alignment is not easy to achieve. It is hard work that requires commitment at many levels of the community. However, it is through the hard work of alignment that life-giving systems are created and destructive systems destroyed. **We believe that our greatest point of leverage for bringing about measurable transformation in Knoxville is aligning its resources to focused mission.**

What is Alignment?

An aligned system is one in which the individual parts of the system are integrated so that their core function supports the overall purpose of the system. Alignment has at least two parts:

> 1) Clear definition of each part of system, including strengths and weaknesses and
> 2) Clear definition of how each part integrates to the overall system

In human systems, individuals and organizations often spend the majority of their time and energy defining who *they* are and where *they* are going, and little-to-no time or energy determining how they fit into the larger purpose or mission. In social systems, where there is most often a larger mission or purpose, failure to adequately define how the parts function and fit together leads to ineffectiveness of the overall system.

To illustrate this, imagine your dream car. Let's say it's a red Porsche Boxster. One afternoon a truck delivers all of the parts necessary to build your dream car and deposits them in your driveway. You unpack the parts and in your joy you see that every individual part has been well designed and perfectly machined. But your joy quickly turns to dismay as you realize that this collection of parts is not your dream car. The parts do not operate as a vehicle until the function of each part is determined AND it is assembled in its appropriate place within the rest of the parts. Only then do you have your high performance European roadster.

Human systems are no different. Until each organization in a common cause effort such as Ending Homelessness has "engineered" its organization to be a functioning part of the system AND understands how it fits (or integrates) with every other part of the system, the goal of Ending Homelessness is impossible. But if the various "parts" of the system understand their function and are fit together as an integrated system, then that resulting system will be a joy to drive!

The three diagrams below provide a more poignant illustration of how and why alignment does not happen within and across the systems of our city. Simply put, left to our own devices we are most likely to focus only on our own individual or organizational existence. It requires a great deal of force to overcome this most natural of human tendencies. The only way to overcome the inertia for the "object of self-preservation" to stay "at rest" is for the parts of a system to unite in the pursuit of a common, transcendent purpose that is clear and compelling enough to overcome the natural tendency toward focusing inwardly.
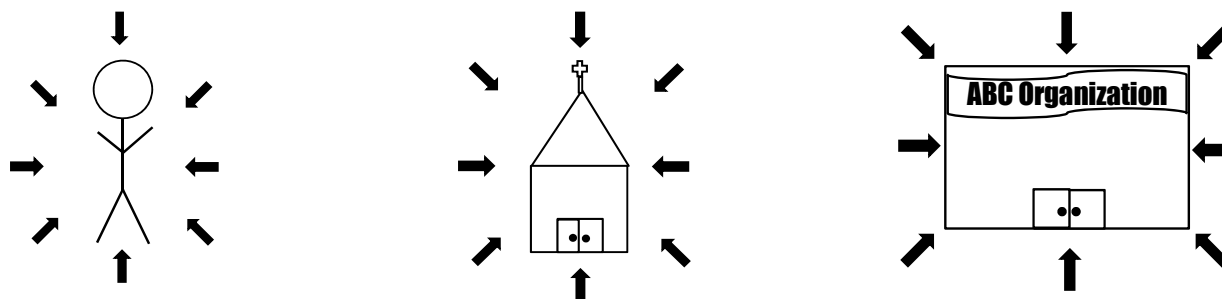

FIGURE 13: SELF PRESERVATION AS THE COUNTERFORCE TO ALIGNMENT

As stated before, the process of alignment occurs in two phases. The first part of the process requires individuals and organizations to examine their own internal processes and programs to determine who they are and who they are not in light of their mission. This can be a difficult process because many organizations suffer from some level of "mission creep." Over time they have pursued activities and opportunities for one reason or another that are not consistent with their core mission and purpose. So, as the organization digs in it realizes that many of their daily activities are not in alignment with their core mission or purpose, difficult decisions arise. Often times, deciding what to stop doing is more difficult that deciding what to do. But after a real, honest

FIGURE 14: PARTS OF THE SYSTEM ALIGNED TO COMMON CAUSE

look at the current reality, the organization has a clear picture of their core competencies and can be refocused on operating in those areas of strength.
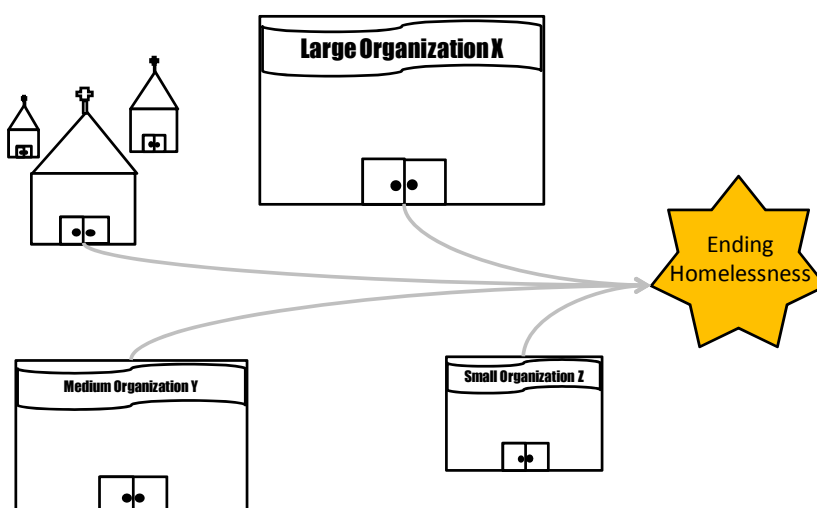
The second part of the process is perhaps even more difficult, because it requires individuals and organizations to share with each other "who they are and who they are not". This is a very vulnerable process for individuals, much less for organizations. It is also at this stage of the process, where significant differences in organizational philosophy, strategy, and values can emerge that are significant (i.e. faith-based vs. government agencies). This part of the process

must be managed well, and usually requires a skilled AND empowered facilitator. If a collaborative community can make it through defining themselves and then understanding one another and respecting their differences, *then* the real work of alignment can begin: **defining new, integrated systems and processes to impact the transcendent cause**. On the other side of the alignment process, a coordinated system capable of delivering significant measurable impact is not only possible but probable.

In the next section, we will outline a conceptual model for city transformation that includes well-defined processes for creating alignment across Common Cause initiatives and Community Building efforts.

City Transformation Model

This model for city transformation is a conceptual framework for aligning the city's resources to focused mission with measurable impact. As a conceptual framework there is still a tremendous amount of detail to be developed in order to produce a working model. In the last section titled Recommendations and Next Steps, developing the detailed design of each component of the city transformation model is identified as the next phase of this process.

The conceptual model for city transformation that will be discussed in this section four components: two (2) organizations that serve to organize the resources of the city and two (2) sets of initiatives through which the work of transformation is carried out. The four model components are:

- The Neutral Convener ("Building the Wall"
- The Church of the City ("Restoring the Temple"
- Common Cause Initiatives
- Community Building Initiatives
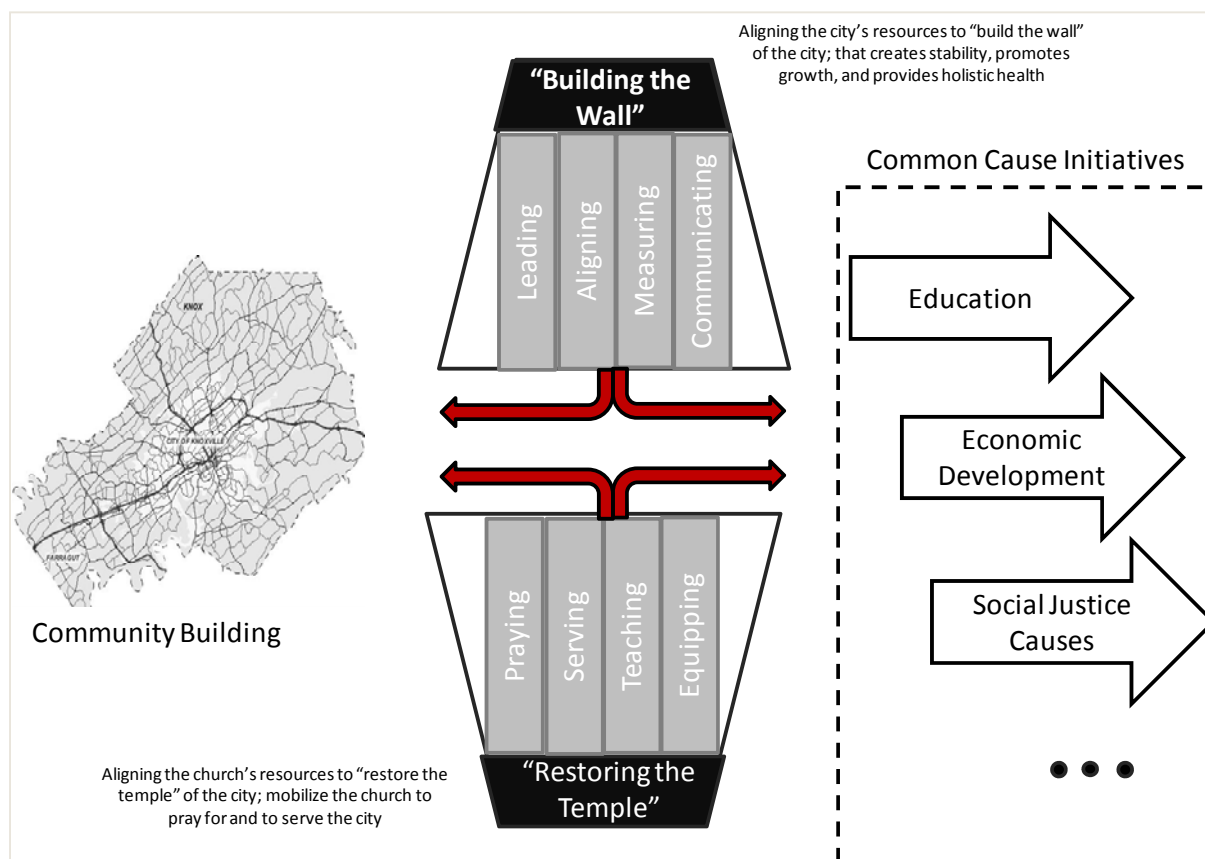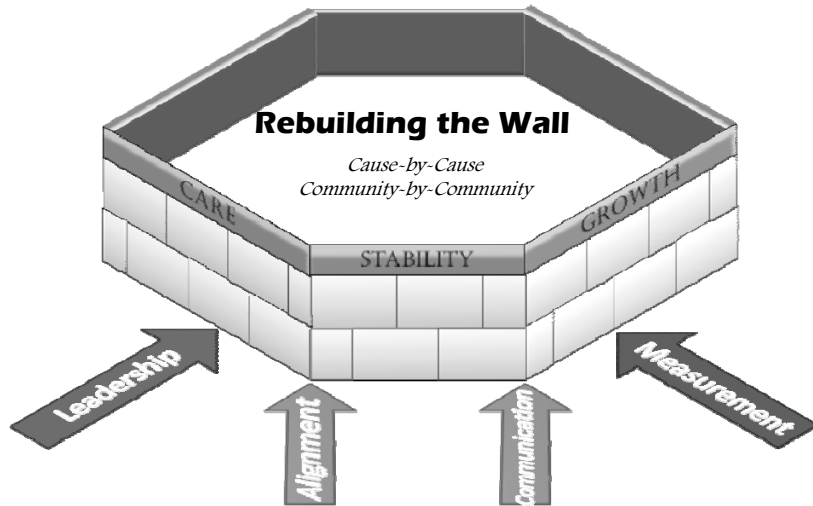
The four model components are shown in Figure 15 below.

Aligning the city's resources to "build the wall" of the city; that creates stability, promotes growth, and provides holistic health

"Building the Wall"

Leading · Aligning · Measuring · Communicating

Common Cause Initiatives

Education

Economic Development

Social Justice Causes

Community Building

Praying · Serving · Teaching · Equipping

Aligning the church's resources to "restore the temple" of the city; mobilize the church to pray for and to serve the city

"Restoring the Temple"

FIGURE 15: CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR CITY TRANSFORMATION

Neutral Convener for the City

Rebuilding the Wall

Cause-by-Cause
Community-by-Community

CARE GROWTH
STABILITY
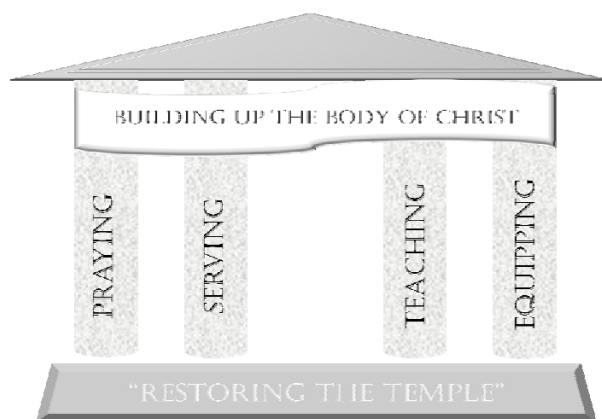Leadership Alignment Communication Measurement

The first part of the model calls for the formation of an organization within the city that has enough influence and resources to fully support the hard work of alignment around Common Cause and Community Building initiatives. The "wall" is nothing more than a metaphor for healthy, life-giving systems within all parts of the city, Public, Private, and Social, that: create a stable environment, promote healthy growth, and provide holistic care.

There are five basic roles and responsibilities of the Neutral Convener for the city:

1) Promote a city-focused leadership development process
2) Provide a facilitated alignment process for Common Causes and Communities
3) Support a city-wide system of measurement to provide a source of accountability and overarching alignment for Common Cause and Community initiatives
4) Support a holistic communication effort for telling the story of Knoxville's past, present, and future
5) Engage the Church of the City to support overall city transformation initiative

The specific details of the Neutral Convener need to be worked out in the coming months, but the basic vision is for it to be a fairly small organization with 1) a strong, representative, and engaged board of directors and 2) a set of strategic partners that deliver services such as facilitating alignment, measurement, and communication.

BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST

PRAYING SERVING TEACHING EQUIPPING

"RESTORING THE TEMPLE"

Organizing the Church of the City

The second part of the model identifies the need for an organization within the city that has enough influence and resources to bring together the Church of the City. The Church of the City has more potential for impact than any other single organization in the city. The story of the church of Portland approaching the mayor and asking how they could serve (see case study on pg 25) is a great example of the untapped potential that lies within the church. The focus of organizing the Church of the City should be to "Restore the temple" of the city, where the "temple" represents the Body of Christ throughout the city.

In our opinion, there are five basic roles and responsibilities for the Church of the City:

1) Organize the church to provide pervasive prayer across every community and for every common cause in the city
2) Mobilize the Body of Christ to serve the city through Common Cause and Community Building efforts
3) Teach the theology of the city
4) Equip the "saints" of the city by awakening the Body of Christ to their individual and corporate role in transforming the city.

The specific details of how the Church of the City is organized to perform these four basic roles are not within the scope of this research. Knoxville does have a number of churches and church leaders that already have a vision for this. Whatever form that vision takes, it is paramount that the effort to organize the Church of the City and the organization of the Neutral Convener for the city are in strategic alignment and partnership, just *as Nehemiah and Ezra worked shoulder-to-shoulder in different roles but with the same purposes.*

The Work of City Transformation: Cause-by-Cause and Community-by-Community

The two organizations that have been described are vital to city transformation, but the work of city transformation is to be performed cause-by-cause and community-by-community by "creating systems that are life-giving" and by "destroying the systems that are destructive".

Common Cause Initiatives

Projects like Knoxville's Ten-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness and Together! Healthy Knox bring together multiple groups to focus on an issue involving the Holistic Care subsystems within the city. While this is often what is thought of when the term Common Cause is invoked, Common Causes could also be applied to issues surrounding Growth and Stability. Safe Neighborhood, Smart Growth, and Economic Development are all Common Causes that may have "destructive systems" that need to be destroyed and/or "life-giving" systems that need to be created.

Common Cause Initiatives

Education

Economic Development

Social Justice Causes

● ● ●

One of the first roles of the Neutral Convener for the City should be to identify and prioritize the 5-10 most pressing issues across the city of Knoxville. This list could be generated either through existing research (such as the Salt and Light guide and/or the Cornerstone research that was reviewed in the Transformation Assets section of this report) or through a new effort. Either way, the list of priorities should be determined, and then the alignment process should be initiated. The process of determining the list of city priorities should be revisited approximately every five (5) years in order to capture new themes and report on the progress of others.
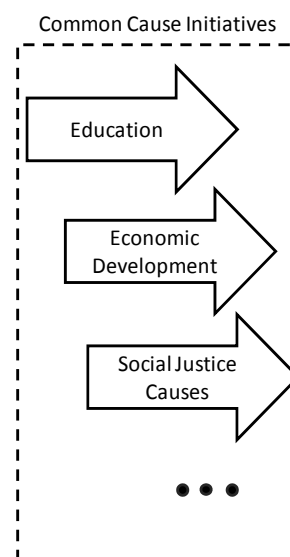
Community Building Initiatives

Community development is not a new idea. What we are suggesting with this model, however, is a new way to think about community development. We are suggesting that community development should:

1. Take place in every community throughout the city (and county); in inner-city, suburban, and rural contexts. We should consider using elementary school districts (47 elementary schools in Knox County) as a method for dividing up the city, although this might not be as effective in suburban context.
2. Be organized using the Functional Model of a city and its subsystems (see Table 1 and Figure 4). This means that the Community Building teams should be reflective of the major subsystems of the community (i.e. Local Government, Law Enforcement, Education, Social Services and Non-Profit, Church, Family, Marketplaces of Goods & Services, Ideas, and Expression, etc.)
3. Should be facilitated using a similar, but contextualized version of the alignment process for Common Causes
4. Should be supported by both the Neutral Convener of the City and by the Church of the City
5. Should result in measureable impact and have an effective measurement system in place to provide accountability and system feedback for improvement opportunities.
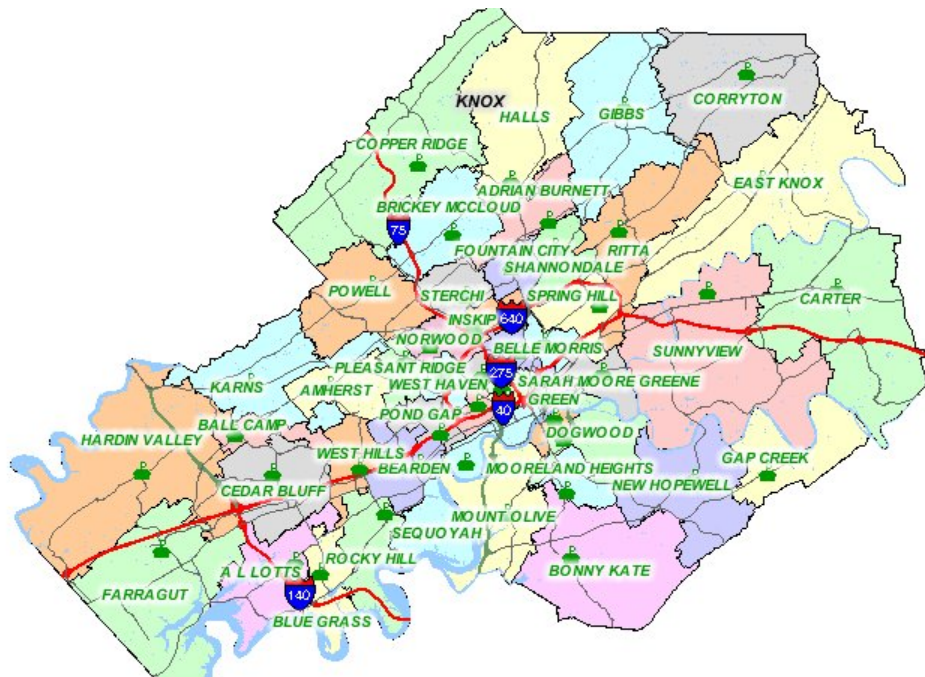

FIGURE 16: MAP OF COUNTY BY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The main purpose of this report was to provide an update on the research that we have done on city transformation and the ten (10) key design principles that were developed for a city transformation model. The next phase of this project is to build a detailed, executable plan for the conceptual model. These are our recommended steps to doing this:

	Next Steps
1	Design, build, and launch the Neutral Convener of the City (9-12 months) Part of the design of the Neutral Convener will be to provide a detailed plan for initiating Steps 2-6.
2	Design and field test the Community Building process (package for replication)
3	Design and field test the Common Cause process (package for replication)
4	Design a city-wide measurement system
5	Develop and design a city-focused Leadership Development process
6	Develop capabilities to capture the story of city transformation and communicate both the story and vision