A Closer Look at Redwood City 2000
1995-98

California Healthy City Award - Winner 1997
REDWOOD CITY 2000 VISION STATEMENT
Adopted Jan. 27, 1997

Redwood City puts people first. Our commonality binds us as individuals and neighbors. We value our diversity. In an environment that feels secure, we seek to nurture the zestful pursuit of personal excellence. We also choose to respect, preserve and enhance the natural beauty of our city. As citizens, we claim the privilege of shaping our quality of life, now and in the future.

- Community leaders at all levels reflect our diversity.
- We support and advocate for the welfare of one another.
- We insist on quality education for our children.
- Youth are empowered and nurtured, educationally and physically, in environments that develop their interests, strengths and creativity.
- Our community takes pride in its neighborhoods, which are clean, safe and attractive.
- Our community supports meeting the housing needs of our residents.
- We encourage community involvement and service by residents, business and the community at large.
- Economic vitality is ensured by diverse businesses which encourage a vibrant downtown, innovative technology and entrepreneurial spirit.
- Our air is clean, our water and soil are free of contaminants and natural resources are sustainable for the benefit of this and future generations.
- All areas of Redwood City are safely accessible by various modes of transportation.

'A Closer Look'
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An Introduction

"The most significant success of Redwood City 2000 has been bringing county, schools and community together with a common vision and commitment to improving the city's future."

− Maureen Borland, Director Human Services Agency of San Mateo County.

The Redwood City 2000 collaborative was formed in 1995 to respond to the opportunities and challenges faced by our community. Our aim has been to provide a forum for representatives of public agencies, non-profit providers, business and active citizens to work together to identify ways to improve the quality of life of Redwood City. This collaborative effort has organized the community to implement several projects it has deemed important. Projects identified have included the development of Healthy Start family resource centers at school sites; violence prevention; teen pregnancy prevention; downtown revitalization; after-school enrichment activities and leadership development.

Redwood City 2000 supports activities identified by our members by providing programmatic and staff support to community based efforts in the areas of collaboration, organizational development, community involvement, program design and resource development. The project has evolved into a highly effective citizen volunteer committee called the Community Action and Resource Council that is responsible for planning and starting activities that contribute to the quality of life of the city.

Redwood City 2000’s first goal as a collaborative was to provide support and coordination to interagency activities that already had been started in the city. Activities were identified that involved two or more of our core funding partners; the City of Redwood City, San Mateo County, the Redwood City School District and the Sequoia Union High School District. These projects include: Healthy Start school-linked services, the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of San Mateo County and the Violence Prevention Campaign of San Mateo County.

In 1996, Redwood City 2000 joined together with Healthy Start to become the local site for Peninsula Partnership for Children, Youth and Family activities.

Redwood City Healthy Start Network
COMMUNITY IMPACT & SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS 1995-1998

Redwood City 2000’s partner agencies joined together to create a Family Resource Center at Taft School which began in the fall of 1995. The Family Resource Center is a community-based project that empowers families and children to find solutions to local health, education and family concerns. The center supports families through family service coordination / mental health services, parent and community involvement projects, pediatric health services and cultural programs.

Since opening its doors in the fall of 1995, the Taft School Family Resource Center has achieved the following:

■ Established school-linked, family-centered, case-managed services and a single entry point referral system.

■ Provided family support and mental health services to 197 families. Assistance included support in accessing adult education, English-as-a-Second Language classes and literacy programs; vocational training; food, clothing, housing; employment; counseling; and health, citizenship and legal services.

■ Established a pediatric health clinic that provides health services to 600-plus children from the Taft School Friendly Acres neighborhood.

■ Delivered crisis intervention and drop-in services to 40-plus families facing sudden death, loss and separation; homelessness; unemployment; and health and mental health issues.

■ Conducted 33 student support groups to help children with adjustment, emotional and behavioral issues.
Established a Community-Parent Partnership Program that started a school-based parent organization, Mano-a-Mano/Parent-to-Parent; produced two community-wide events and four neighborhood beautification days; and recruited more than 130 volunteers who donated 5,040 service hours.

**Measurable Results**

A comprehensive outside evaluation of the first 18 months of the project has been completed, and the results were significant. Students participating in the program have demonstrated statistically significant improvement in their academic performance. There have been measurable improvements in the interpersonal skills of children served. Among families, there has been a dramatic decline in domestic discord and encounters with law enforcement. The neighborhood association chairs report that there has been a visible increase in community safety and neighborhood beautification.

**Intergovernmental Collaboration**

The Family Resource Center at Taft is made possible in large part to the redirection of personnel and the pooling of funding from Redwood City 2000 partner agencies. The Human Services Agency of San Mateo County has redirected personnel to provide income and employment services linked to welfare reform and case-managed mental health services. The Redwood City School District provides space for – and purchased – the Family Resource Center facility. The Health Services Agency of San Mateo County developed and staffs a satellite pediatric health clinic, and Kaiser Permanente generously donated $25,000 in cash to the project. The City of Redwood City increased community policing efforts in the neighborhood to improve community safety. This effort included organizing the highly successful Silent Night Campaign to deter random gunfire during the holiday season.

The Redwood City 2000 collaborative assists with the development of programs and the identification of resources to support those programs. It is anticipated that the project, which began with grant funding, will be sustained by an interagency agreement among the City of Redwood City, the Redwood City School District and the County of San Mateo. Each funding partner is interested in contributing financial resources to support the overall coordination of the effort. Also as a result of our efforts, we were able to expand coordinated services to two additional school sites, Fair Oaks and Hoover, during the fall of 1997. Other activities within Redwood City 2000’s embrace:

- Teen Pregnancy Coalition of San Mateo County: Helping youth make healthy choices through the provision of educational programs for youth on pregnancy prevention.
- Peninsula Partnership for Children, Youth and Families: Facilitating the design and implementation of an integrated children’s service delivery system to provide children, youth and families in San Mateo County with the assistance they need to thrive.
- Violence Prevention Campaign of San Mateo County/Center for Abuse Prevention, a program of Youth and Family Assistance: Creating healthier communities by developing a coordinated response to address all forms of violence in the community.

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**Community Involvement Perspective**

Collaboration and community involvement are the cornerstones of all of Redwood City 2000’s efforts. After organizing ourselves to provide support to existing collaborative programs in the City, we looked at ways we could increase the participation of community members in our work. The following is an overview of Redwood City 2000’s perspective on community involvement.

* * *

"Local government must learn to share its decision-making authority, and citizens must learn how to practice decision-making behaviors."

– Ed Everett, City Manager, Redwood City

Redwood City is a community representing many spectrums of diversity including: age, culture, education, skills, language, religion and sexual orientation. It is a city that it is both rich and poor. It is a city with few resources (the Redwood City Elementary School District has the lowest per-pupil funding expenditure in San Mateo County) and large resources (we are fast becoming the software-creation capital of the nation). Finally, given our diversity, we are a city with incredible potential.

Our challenge has been utilizing our diversity in a manner that allows community members to be apart of an uncommon community movement; a movement that not only works with
local government in the process of change but becomes the impetus and motivating factor for change. In building on our main asset — diversity — our desire is to create an atmosphere of mutual respect in which government learns to involve citizens in decision-making and citizens, in turn, learn to spend the time and energy to do the tough (and the sometimes not-so-fun) work of problem solving. At Redwood City 2000, this means that all participants are equal decision makers.

Redwood City 2000 also believes that no one group should be targeted and that the entire community is at-risk if we are not meeting the needs of all our residents. We understand that if the Latino population has no supports in place for its children’s cultural development, or no services in their language for their elders, then they are left outside the embrace that makes us a community. With this understanding, we looked at how we could continue to collectively utilize each other's resources, ideas and cultural understanding to find innovative solutions to traditional urban challenges. In response, we created an holistic approach in which Redwood City 2000 combines citywide planning with the implementation of neighborhood-specific projects to address the needs of underserved communities.

Our desired approach led to the initiation of a community-wide planning effort. A volunteer Community Action Team was mobilized and began work in June 1996 on the development of a strategic plan to continue to improve the quality of life of the city. The team included individuals who are traditionally under-represented, high- and low-income levels, the educated and self taught. People who never before had been involved in a community project have found themselves working with seasoned community activists.

Community Planning Process
AN OVERVIEW

"We are committed to working together to involving others in the community to improve the quality of life of Redwood City. We are doing this by becoming educated about needs of others, designing projects to address those needs and working to complete those projects."

— Community volunteers

The Redwood City 2000 Community Action Team came together on June 8, 1996 for its first all-day meeting. That day some 45 community members came together to learn more about Redwood City 2000 and the role they were being invited to play. These Redwood City stakeholders, some appointed by our sponsoring agencies and others who had applied for membership, were the members of the Redwood City 2000 Community Action Team (CAT).

The CAT was appointed by the Coordinating Committee of Redwood City 2000. The Coordinating Committee, made up of people who individually or through their organizations or agencies were working to make Redwood City a healthier community, asked the members of the CAT to develop a Vision Statement and Strategic Plan which would result in an improved quality of life for all Redwood City residents.

The CAT focused its planning efforts on the geographic areas of incorporated and unincorporated Redwood City and the Redwood City School District attendance area. The first session provided excellent information and an orientation for those who had volunteered to serve. Participants introduced themselves and were given information on the goals, parameters and expectations of the CAT. The 45 volunteers were asked to use the day to decide whether or not they could commit the time and effort the Planning Process would require.

Working in small teams, volunteers began the community planning process by identifying and sharing their common beliefs about community quality of life. Next, they identified key challenges to community quality of life. Using their discussions as a guide, the group developed a first draft of a Vision Statement for Redwood City 2000. This draft was to undergo much work and several revisions before it would be shared at a Town Hall meeting held at Cañada College. Using their previous discussions as a guide, they incorporated suggestions from the Town Hall participants. On Jan. 27, 1997, the Vision Statement was officially adopted by the CAT.

The June 8 meeting was an excellent beginning. A strong foundation was laid for the work of the next 12 months. Monthly for three or four hours the CAT would come together for dinner and work. There was a well-developed set of goals for each meeting. Each meeting was ably facilitated, and members were actively involved in large and small group activities. When differences arose, the members discussed them and tried to reach agreement. When this did not happen, a vote was taken, and 80 percent of the participants had to support a position before the CAT adopted it. CAT members held work sessions between meetings to work on specific tasks.

December was the halfway point and a very important month for the CAT. The members began the move from research and vision to action planning. They identified the gaps and challenges in the community that were preventing the implementation of the vision. A first draft of eight strategic directions for bridging the gaps and overcoming the challenges
Redwood City 2000 Guiding Principles

Adopted Sept. 24, 1996

The members of Redwood City 2000 have agreed that the following characteristics signify a healthy city. These characteristics express the core beliefs of those participating in the process. The statements which synthesize the groups’ core beliefs have served as the guiding principles for all discussions and deliberations held by the group.

A healthy community is one in which all members:

- Take responsibility for their physical, emotional and spiritual health and that of their families;
- Have access to resources which allow them to satisfy their basic human needs;
- Are provided with appropriate resources when they are not able to satisfy their basic human needs;
- Are respected for their uniqueness and are treated fairly;
- Are provided with equal opportunity for a quality education
- Have access to cultural and recreational activities;
- Are well informed, have meaningful representation in all levels of community decision-making and contribute their time and talents to the community;
- Are able to participate in a diverse economic environment where business and industries work in partnership with the community to ensure quality of life for all members;
- Demonstrate care and concern for the natural environment.

was developed. Each CAT member selected one of the eight as his/her area of focus over the next six months. This process resulted in the formation of four Strategic Direction Teams.

CAT members spent the months between January and May in developing Strategic Direction Statements, selecting a specific priority project which best fulfilled the Strategic Direction, sharing the projects with community focus groups and other CAT members in revising the project in light of feedback received.

On June 5, 1997, an evening dinner celebration event was held at the Foresters’ Hall to recognize the exceptional efforts of the Community Action Team. Jack Greenalch had been unanimously selected by the team to be their chairman in the coming year. The volunteer celebration event marked the first evening of Jack’s role as chair. The celebration was both an ending and a beginning. It was the ending of the Strategic Planning Process. It was the beginning of the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

One of the goals of our community planning effort was to create a living strategic plan, not simply a hefty document that sat on the shelf.

We have accomplished this! An unintended outcome of our efforts has been the exceptional level of commitment demonstrated by our volunteers, who agreed not only to develop the plan, but to take responsibility for its implementation and success. How it works is shown on the following pages.

From Planning To Action

“Where the people have no vision they perish. Where a vision has no one willing to work to make it real, it languishes. When people of goodwill come together to accept personal responsibility and work to transform their vision into reality, a healthier community emerges.”

- Jack Greenalch, Redwood City 2000 Chairman 1998

Our community planning process led to the development of four strategic direction teams. Each Team is engaged in designing and starting projects within these priority areas to improve the quality of life of Redwood City. The following pages provide an overview of the projects each team has chosen to undertake, how each team intends to measure their success and their accomplishments to date. Each team already has evolved beyond its original goals, involved additional volunteers and in some cases has begun work on a second-priority project within the original focus area.
Redwood City 2000: Radiating Communication on Impact

"It's powerful to get a group of regular citizens, get a plan and go for it."
— A community volunteer

The Redwood City 2000 Vision Statement defines the boundary limits of all our efforts. Our aim is to create an atmosphere of inspiration in which people explore their own areas of interest and then receive assistance in identifying the resources they need to start the community improvement projects they deem important.

We are convinced that the ideas of an individual — which then result in a project — and the commitment of people to their projects, are the start of community action.

In our model, as individuals or teams begin projects they believe will have a positive impact in the community, communication about each project ripples through our community.

We envision this "down-to-earth" concept as if each project is dropped into the community "pool" and radiates communication upon impact. In this model, as one moves away from the activity at the core of each project, communication about the project becomes more critical and assumes the identity of the project. How we talk to each other about what we are doing and how we communicate the impacts of our efforts becomes increasingly important.
OUR VISION

Redwood City puts people first. Our commonality binds us as individuals and neighbors. We value our diversity. In an environment that feels secure we seek to nurture the zestful pursuit of personal excellence. We also choose to respect, preserve and enhance the natural beauty of our city. As citizens we claim the privilege of shaping our quality of life, now and in the future.

Redwood City 2000 is . . .

A meeting place where Redwood City community members of any culture, profession or income level may exchange ideas and identify ways to improve the quality of life in their city. They also may take action on projects if they chose to do so.

A facilitator for community groups, individuals and organizations working on similar goals, such as neighborhood and environmental improvement projects, positive youth development opportunities and improved relations among diverse cultures.

Maintained by the volunteer work of 60+ active citizens and supported by funding and collaboration from the City of Redwood City, the County of San Mateo, the Redwood City School District, the Sequoia Union High School District, the Peninsula Community Foundation, the Luke B. Hancock Foundation and the United Way of San Mateo County.

Selected Achievements

Has raised overall awareness of the need for community involvement in the continuing improvement of Redwood City.

Created a Community Action and Resource Council and developed a strategic plan to improve the quality of life in Redwood City.

Facilitated the expansion of Healthy Start to two additional school sites, Fair Oaks and Hoover.

Developed the innovative Frontiers In Leadership Program for people of color interested in civic affairs.
I. Civic Engagement and Community Action

Community Dialogue: Community Conversations, Topical Discussions and Action Dialogues

Redwood City 2000 (RC 2000), in collaboration with the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC), has developed a model for Civic Engagement and Community Change. Our model is based on the premise that the first step in any community change effort begins when two or more community members exchange through conversation their hopes and concerns for the future of their communities. As a conversation progresses, community members begin to assess their level of commitment to an identified issue such as education, housing, etc. They also begin to evaluate their need for additional information or data to inform their discussions on a given topic. In our model, as the level of an individual or group’s commitment to an issue and interest in becoming informed increases, the potential that the individual or group will take action, that leads to change, also increases. Community action is further supported with opportunities for leadership development and by action planning tools such as facilitation, data gathering, project planning and resource development.

While any number of conversation topics might be generated in the community, RC 2000 will formally support the organization of Community Conversations, Topical Discussions and Action Dialogues around a manageable number of broad topics that are related to our vision of quality of life. Current topics have included, education, youth, housing, culture, race relations and early childhood. We have organized conversations and dialogue into a civic engagement continuum.

The Civic Engagement Continuum

The first component of our developmental Civic Engagement Model begins with conversations that are designed to help community members connect with one another. These conversations grow into opportunities for participants to develop deeper understandings and commitments to issues, which eventually lead to taking specific action steps. The developmental steps of the Civic Engagement Continuum were
strategically designed to allow for dynamic movement from conversation to action. These steps are called Community Conversations, Topical Discussions and Action Dialogue. A description of each step follows:

**Community Conversation**

A Community Conversation allows participants to connect with other community members in an informal conversation or discussion around a very broad topic of interest. It is designed to bring out individuals' personal experiences, hopes, aspirations and concerns. The only intended outcome of this form of Civic Engagement is for participants to have a satisfying experience of talking and listening to one another around a topic of shared interest. Many times this will lead to a shared interest in receiving more information about the topic discussed.

In order for a Community Conversation to be successful it must:

- Be congruent—the topic and purpose must match what the participant felt s/he was going to get when s/he decided to come;
- Provide time to talk—participants must have opportunities to participate comfortably;
- Build understanding and awareness of participants;
- Provide hope—participants should walk away feeling something good can come from this situation.

**Topical Discussion**

A Topical Discussion is a conversation that often originates from a Community Conversation. It is held around a broad or specific topic where some information/data are shared and discussed to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of the topic. The intended outcome for this form of Civic Engagement is for participants to have a clearer and informed understanding of the topic or social issue discussed. Many times this will also lead to a willingness to commit more time and energy to the topic.

In order for a Topical Dialogue to be successful it must include all of the elements of the Community Conversation and:

- Allow for an exchange of information and identification of people that might influence the situation;
- Leave participants with a clear understanding of whether the group will meet again;
- End with some clarity about possible next steps—no commitment to action is necessary, but personal or group declaration of possible future steps is likely.
Action Dialogue

An Action Dialogue is a conversation that usually originates from a Topical Discussion. At this point the group is prepared to analyze a specific issue in an in-depth way. Information is brought into the group regarding best practices and leads to actions, changes and/or new policies. The intended outcome for this form of Civic Engagement is for participants to gain a deeper understanding of complex issues and to establish clearly defined next steps in relation to that issue. This leads to individual and/or collective actions by the participants and will involve a commitment of resources (time, money, people).

In order for an Action Dialogue to be successful it must include all of the elements of the Topical Discussion and lead to an eventual shared workplan (perhaps after several more meetings) among participants—where they agree to specific actions related to the topic discussed.

The following is an example of our model in action that began with a conversation about youth and their needs after school hours.

Redwood City community members identified the desire to support youth performing arts by creating Redwood City’s own youth theater to be based out of the newly renovated theater on the McKinley School Campus. As a preliminary step, the Performing Arts Group (PAG) sponsored acting classes and summer camps through the Parks and Recreation Department. To the group’s surprise, attendance at these sponsored activities was low and in some cases classes needed to be cancelled. Despite this set back, the group remained committed. They evaluated their efforts and realized that they needed additional information about the need for performing arts and youth habits, before moving forward with their project. They decided to expand the conversation to include people in the community involved with the performing arts. The expanded conversation included school teachers, Cañada College, the Peninsula Center Stage and others.

From these expanded conversations, the group learned that at least at the onset, youth would most likely attend classes that were held on their school campuses. The first round of classes had been held at the Veterans Memorial Senior Center. It was also recommended that to facilitate registration, it would be beneficial to identify a teacher or parent on the school campus who would be responsible for identifying students and registering them in the classes. It was recommended that community support would increase if the classes led to a performance. For this reason, the group chose to host a performing arts review at Cañada College that would highlight the work of these classes as well as other youth groups in the community. Additional activities will be acted upon as stepping stones to creating a more comprehensive program.

Community conversations, topical discussions and action dialogues are supported by the second strategy identified in our model, the Community Action Network.
Community Action Network: where conversations and initiatives turn to action

The second strategy of our model is the Community Action Network (Network), a vibrant network focused on improving the quality of life of the City. RC 2000 has heard from community members already involved in our efforts that they benefit from regular opportunities to network and problem solve with others working on community improvement projects. RC 2000 will support this community desire by providing staff support to assist in the overall coordination of the Network.

The Community Action Network will serve an important convening function by bringing people and groups together with like ideas and allowing natural networks to form. The Network will support a variety of groups develop projects of their own choosing, while simultaneously facilitating linkages and resource sharing among participants.

The following are some examples of programs already underway that have been supported by our initial efforts to develop a formal network:

The Redwood City Healthy Start Network and the Even Start Family Literacy Program at John Gill School are two programs currently supported by RC 2000. These efforts are similar in that they are both located at schools, they are serving similar populations and they have an early intervention/prevention focus. Through RC 2000, these two programs are working together to develop parent-child participation classes to prepare Kindergarten children for school.

The Peninsula Covenant Church (PCC) has a state of the art community center and athletic facility. As result of the church’s interest in becoming more involved in the whole community, a member of the PCC board joined the RC 2000 Youth Master Plan for after school recreation and enrichment (YMP) committee. One of PCC’s goals for becoming involved in the YMP committee was to identify opportunities for PCC to share their athletic resources with other groups who do not currently have access to these resources. In particular PCC has an excellent swimming and tennis program. Through their participation in RC 2000, PCC has
begun discussions with the City about possibly taking over administration of the (Hoover pool) and converting it to a year round facility, thereby increasing access to the pool by low income children. PCC is also exploring a partnership with the Sequoia YMCA and City Parks and Recreation, to teach all fourth grade children to swim. RC 2000 will help by assisting these new partners in further developing their campaign and accessing needed resources to pilot the project.

Sometimes, even the most exciting community generated ideas are not feasible at a given time. RC 2000 sponsored a downtown team who had a dream of creating a summer, weekly, Thursday night marketplace. At first this volunteer committee experienced lots of success. They were instrumental in bringing together a new and revitalized downtown business group. They organized and sponsored two downtown events intended to lead to a downtown marketplace. Despite these successes, the Team ran into insurmountable politics and bickering between emerging merchant groups that made developing a marketplace unfeasible at the time. A vibrant network can, however, help turn disappointments into new possibilities. The dream for creating a marketplace has been kept alive through RC 2000’s co-sponsorship of a summer evening concert series in City Center Plaza. More than a concert series, the program offered children’s activities including a literacy night and Halloween festivities focused on the 250 low income children living in the City Center Plaza apartment building. Projects such as the City Center Plaza Summer Concert Series can be sustained with minimal financial support and may not require the ongoing attention of the Community Action Network or the Coordinating Council to be successful.

Community action groups that form as a result of our civic engagement efforts will be offered assistance by RC 2000 Community Mentors. Mentors, community members who are passionate about improving their communities and have a willingness to learn new leadership skills, will be asked to participate in a Community Mentor Leadership Institute. As participants in the Leadership Institute they will develop skills in facilitation, project development, and accessing community resources. They will then be paid a stipend to provide consultation and support to groups working on projects that have been identified by groups in the Community Action Network.

Projects identified through our civic engagement efforts, that have proven successful through evaluation, have demonstrated community support and have achieved a place in their development where they require additional resources to be taken to scale or institutionalized, will be brought to the Coordinating Council for action. For example, expansion of school linked health and human services such as those offered through the Redwood City Healthy Start Network have been identified as part of our first spotlight initiative; Youth Development and Education. The third strategy of our model, the Coordinating Council and Policy Boards will provide focus and clarity to opportunities identified by the Community Action Network.
Supportive Governance Structure: Coordinating Council and Local Policy Boards

The governance structure we are proposing has two essential components: a Coordinating Council and the engagement of local policy makers. The Coordinating Council is designed to bring together a collaborative of community and agency members, as well as people who sit on policy boards, to provide focus and clarity to our work. The Coordinating Council membership is defined as stakeholders who are representatives of the community, and/or organizations and institutions that have a major influence on the quality of life of Redwood City and its immediate sphere of influence. Members must also demonstrate a willingness and capability to work together to implement the recommendations identified by the community as a result of our Civic Engagement efforts.

The Coordinating Council will have broad authority to consider issues and develop recommendations and strategies that are focused, and impact quality of life. The Coordinating Council will specifically be charged with identifying “Spotlight Initiatives” and making recommendations to policy makers for taking pilot projects organized through the Community Action Network to scale. They will also provide assistance with problem solving, organizational development, strategic planning/goal setting, program expansion, resource development, publicity and public relations.
Our model in action continued:

Imagine that at a future date, the Performing Arts Group has piloted performing arts classes in the City and found that there is a demand for more related activities. The group has gathered additional community support through their sponsorship of an annual performing arts review at Cañada College. They have also found through evaluation that the classes have been effective in meeting their goals for supporting student achievement. Evaluation results find that participating students have more confidence presenting themselves before groups, they have developed team building skills and are creative problem solvers, all skills that are supportive of their success in school.

The PAG has reached a point where they now feel they are ready to take their project to scale and create a city-wide Youth Theater. They recognize that to do so will require additional resources and policy level support. In our model the next step for the group to take would be to bring their plans before the RC 2000 Coordinating Council.

The Coordinating Council would work with the PAG, and together they would evaluate the merits of taking the project to the scale, modifying the project, applying or developing additional resources, or perhaps choosing to continue the project at the same level of service.
II. “Spotlight Initiatives”

The second component of our work calls for the implementation of spotlight initiatives. Spotlights are constellations of programs or activities that have been identified through our civic engagement efforts and/or the Community Action Network, are deemed likely to be successful, and have demonstrated community and policy makers’ support. Spotlight initiatives must have enough “momentum” such that there already exists some tried activities related to the initiative, but where additional resources are needed in order to take the initiative to scale and/or institutionalize it. Spotlights that will be undertaken by RC 2000 will have established outcomes, targets and plans for sustainability. While any number of Spotlights could be initiated by RC 2000, our first Spotlight is focused on “Youth Development and Education”.

As our civic engagement model unfolds, additional Spotlights will be added to our scope of work.
The following is an example of the second component of our model in action

In 1995, RC 2000 and our partners established a Family Resource Center and Health Clinic at Taft School as part of the State Healthy Start Initiative. A comprehensive, independent evaluation of the program was conducted after the first 18 and 30 months of service. Both evaluations demonstrated very positive results. Children who received case managed services showed a statistically significant improvement in their academic performance. Children participating in groups increased their social skills. Parent and community participation in the school went up.

From the start the program has organized a great deal of community support. The Friendly Acres Neighborhood Association was instrumental in designing services. Parents helped to raise funds for the Family Resource Center through creative projects like sewing and then selling computer covers for the school’s computers. Public and private agencies redirected staff and resources. The combination of community support for the program and a positive evaluation were very valuable. Over time, policy makers agreed to make a financial commitment to the program and an interagency agreement was developed to fund the core administration of the program. This agreement allowed the program to expand to two additional schools, Fair Oaks and Hoover, and become what we now call the Redwood City Healthy Start Network.

We have identified school linked health and human services as one ray of our Spotlight on Youth and Education. Once again, the Redwood City Healthy Start Network is at a point of transition. We are nearing the end of State funding for the program. At the same time, we would like to expand services to additional schools. To accomplish this will require continued community support and an ongoing and vigorous evaluation process. In addition, as outlined in our model, sustainability will require the development of a powerful learning community (Coordinating Council/Policy Makers) that can plan strategically and redirect resources, and together with the Community Action Network, ultimately sustain the effort.
Spotlight Initiatives
Leadership Team
Policy Makers and Collaborative Structure:
Supportive Governance Structure: members
Representative set of community by an ever increasing and
Civic Engagement: Leading to action
Civic Engagement Model
Elements of a Powerful Civic
Policy boards
Council to present ideas to
Work with coordinating groups
Design and implement
Focus on common issues
Increasing information
Conversational to action
Moving from
Set of community members
Action by an ever increasing and representative
Element #1: Civic Engagement Leadership to
Coordinating Council Team (Coordinating Council)

Policy Makers and Collaborative Leadership

Element #2: Supportive Governance Structure:
Element #3: Spotlight Initiatives

- Participation
- Broaden community involvement
- Conversations to engagement
- Cycles back to civic
- Results
- Tied to measurable
- Strategic/business plan
The Civic Engagement Model