“The modern settlement house is at the nexus of healing, civic engagement and sustainable community development, providing engaging neighborhood social spaces for people to explore identity, recover from trauma, create positive relationships, build economic security and take social action.”

– The International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers
MISSION
Mission Neighborhood Centers delivers culturally sensitive, multi-generational, community based services focused on low-income families. We develop and promote leadership skills that empower families to build strong, healthy and vibrant neighborhoods.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
- Honor the lives and experiences of the multi-ethnic, cross-generational population we serve.
- Provide safe, family-like environments that promote and engage our clients.
- Uphold the legacy of our settlement house roots.
- Set measurable goals and be accountable for delivering results.
- Practice good stewardship and administer the resources that result in the greatest benefit for individuals most in need.
- Embrace and facilitate positive change to address the emerging needs of our community.

CORE VALUES
- RESPECT
- INTEGRITY
- COMPASSION
- EMPOWERMENT

OUR WORK
We accompany families in their transition from poverty and isolation to prosperity and participation, by:
- Providing adults and children with educational opportunities and supports
- Mentoring youth at an early age
- Connecting people to social services and bringing provider partners on site
- Shaping city and county policies that validate the contributions of people of all ethnicities, particularly immigrants and vulnerable families.

DURING THIS LEGACY PLANNING, THE MOST STRIKING FEEDBACK FROM OUR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS OF ALL AGES HAS BEEN THAT THEY FEEL A PART OF AN EXTENDED FAMILY. THIS IS OUR PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT, AND THE FOUNDATION ON WHICH WE PLAN TO BUILD.
To the Mission Neighborhood Centers Community,

MNC is facing a critical juncture in both its organizational development and the neighborhoods in which it is located. Therefore we embarked on an 18 month planning process to make vital decisions and develop this roadmap for the coming era.

We have called this “Legacy Planning.” It has involved over 300 diverse stakeholders and over 80 meetings, including individual meetings with funders and partners, group meetings with “thought leaders,” 6 client focus groups, 3 extended planning sessions with the Board of Directors, 25 group and individual meetings with staff, and research into relevant national trends. As the work unfolded, the process became as important as a final plan, ensuring significant engagement and “buy-in” both within the agency and within the community.

This process reaffirmed MNC’s proud legacy, and was built on significant organizational progress made since its 2009 Strategic Plan. This progress included:

- Capacity building – improving fiscal management and skills of leadership staff, creating new management structures and staff.
- Raising private dollars from foundations, local businesses and individuals.
- Expanding early care and education through a $4.5M award to become a grantee agency for Head Start and Early Head Start.
- Stabilizing core programs for youth, seniors and families with young children.
- Enriching our role as a cultural anchor of the Latino community.
- Expanding partnerships in the Mission and city-wide.
- Implementing data collection and planning strategies.

Major themes of the planning process emerged which frame the blueprint moving forward:

- Social justice
- Integrated services
- Family focus
- Long term sustainability
- Quality enhancement
- Documenting impact
- Strengthened governance

MNC is committed to undertaking a transformative process that will ensure a vibrant institution – a pillar of the Mission District and beyond. We know it will not be easy, and that it will take time. We invite you to review the six goals and thirty-six action steps outlined in the executive summary of our plan, and to join us in making these goals a reality.

Sincerely,

Santiago Ruiz
Executive Director

Beverly Hayon
President, Board of Directors
MISSION NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS EMBRACES CHANGE

MNC has a legacy dating back over 100 years as a multi-service, multi-generational center in the settlement house tradition. Starting as a haven for Jewish girls and evolving into a cultural anchor in the heart of the Mission and beyond, it now serves 3000 low income seniors, youth and families with young children at 11 sites in the southeast sector of the city. Its core values have remained unchanged: empowerment, integrity, compassion, and respect, and a philosophy of never giving up on anyone, while offering multiple opportunities for change.

Mission Neighborhood Centers was formally incorporated as a non-profit agency in 1959. Under the leadership of Executive Director, Santiago Ruiz since 1980, MNC has carried out successful programs and projects; nurtured partnerships with diverse organizations and community leaders; and has enjoyed steady growth.

But times change. Non-profits are being called upon to evolve and respond to new economic and financial realities, new demands for accountability, new evidence about best practices, changing populations, and more.

MNC has changed from being a moderate-sized non-profit, to being what is considered in San Francisco to be a large non-profit - with an annual budget now exceeding $14 million. The agency recognizes that its policies, administration and governance must reflect that change in its status.

And San Francisco is changing too, especially its Mission District. Yet, despite all the change, hidden behind the new restaurants and expensive housing are thousands of low income and disenfranchised families and seniors, particularly Latino residents, in great need of support and opportunity — support that must be provided by Mission Neighborhood Centers.

We are committed to serving families of all ethnicities, with a focus on San Francisco’s most vulnerable families and an emphasis on Latino families.

MNC has been rooted in the Mission District, with Latino families as its core population. Yet, when confronted by urgent needs, MNC has reached out to help. Currently, the Senior and Head Start/Early Head Start programs serve predominantly mono-lingual Spanish-speaking immigrants, while the youth programs serve African-American, Samoan, and Filipino youth, in addition to the core population of Latino youth.

While retaining its primary identity as a Latino cultural anchor for the city, moving forward, MNC will continue to respond to emerging needs: as the Mission District changes, as many city neighborhoods become more ethnically heterogeneous and as MNC’s programs are needed by a more diverse population.
GOAL I

Provide quality family-focused services to every program participant in a model 21st century neighborhood center.

AN AGENCY-WIDE INTEGRATED APPROACH

1. Respond to the needs of the whole family.
   - Enact new protocols and re-organize staff to facilitate a family focus across the agency.
   - Institute a family assessment for every person entering MNC’s programs.
   - Ensure that MNC’s programs remain a “home base” to which program participants can return as often as needed.

2. Increase the integration and alignment of services among all program strands of the agency to ensure an intergenerational approach.
   - Align outreach, intake, registration and intra and inter-agency referrals within and among program divisions.
   - Coordinate family support services.

3. Build and expand on current partnerships that will strengthen specific program opportunities and supports, as well as develop the capacity, network and offerings of the agency as a whole. Consider a variety of partnerships ranging from informal referrals, to joint programming, to various types of mergers.

CREATE A FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER IN THE HEART OF THE MISSION DISTRICT — WHERE BEST PRACTICES IN SERVICE INTEGRATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT WILL BE CULTIVATED AND REPLICATED STRATEGICALLY THROUGHOUT THE AGENCY.
SERVICE POPULATIONS

4 Young children: Use MNC’s new status as a Head Start/Early Head Start Grantee agency to achieve excellence through a comprehensive early care continuum of care.

▪ Place an increasing focus on school readiness and the critical role of parents as the cornerstone of that effort.
▪ Continue to develop strategies for staff recruitment and training, program evaluation and documentation, and family support.
▪ Build on successful efforts to integrate fee-paying families into the Child Development sites.
▪ As the city focuses on the challenges of license-exempt providers, explore strategies to provide services to the many Latino families providing this type of care.

5 Youth: Provide trauma-informed, strength-based, comprehensive services to the city’s most disconnected youth, with an emphasis on disadvantages related to gender, exposure to violence, and involvement in the juvenile justice system.

▪ Provide more intensive support to young parents and other transitional age youth.
▪ Build capacity to serve youth with mental health and behavioral health needs.
▪ Continue to build Mission Girls, an exemplary gender-responsive service, by expanding partnerships, engaging women leaders, and getting girls appointed to leadership positions.
▪ Documenting best practices and youth curricula for all programs.
▪ Create youth advisory committees to expand youth engagement in program planning.

“MISSION YOUNG MEN OF COLOR” — BRING MNC’S EXPERTISE IN GENDER-RESPONSIVE SERVICES TO YOUNG MEN.

CONTINUE TO ASSESS AND DEFINE THE TARGET POPULATION OF YOUTH SERVICES, AND ADAPT OUTREACH AND REFERRAL SYSTEMS TO ENSURE THAT YOUNG PEOPLE WHO MOST NEED MNC’S UNIQUE SERVICES ARE BEING REACHED.

GRADUALLY SHIFT HOME-BASED EARLY CARE TO INFANT/TODDLER CENTER-BASED CARE, RESPONDING TO BOTH COMMUNITY NEEDS AND THE CHANGING STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES.
6 **Seniors:** Provide daily opportunities for a healthy aging process through participation in a tightly-knit supportive community. Gradually build the program in the following areas:
- Transportation.
- More diverse healthy food offerings.
- Field trips.
- Technology and more specialized arts.
- Case management.

7 **Workforce:** Expand, diversify and develop a more coordinated approach to supporting transitions to fulfilling good-paying jobs – for high risk young adults and parents of MNC program participants.
- Capture the opportunities created by the building and economic boom in San Francisco to expand training and job placement opportunities in the building trades and related sectors.
- Cultivate partnerships with organized labor and other employment programs.
- Expand assessment, pre-employment and training opportunities, especially in non-traditional sectors.

BUILD CASA DE LA MISIÓN, A MIXED USE PROJECT THAT WILL INCLUDE HOUSING UNITS FOR HOMELESS SENIORS, IN COLLABORATION WITH MERCY HOUSING.

DEVELOP AN AGENCY-WIDE PLAN FOR WORKFORCE SERVICES, PARTICULARLY FOR YOUTH AND PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN.
Remain a vibrant cultural anchor for the Latino community in San Francisco.

8. Make cultural enrichment and civic engagement a part of every program.

9. Ensure that the hiring and staff development practices continue to reflect the need to prioritize civic leadership skills and competence on Latino culture and traditions.
   - Continue the tradition of hiring staff from qualified program “graduates” of the agency, and supporting their professional growth and development.

10. Expand initiatives that share Latino culture throughout San Francisco and promote cross-cultural enrichment.

11. Explore expansion to new communities and the creation of new partnerships when it is necessary to follow the clients.

EXPAND CROSS-PROGRAM COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS AND STRATEGIES THAT PROVIDE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.
Provide policy and community leadership from a social justice perspective at the neighborhood, city, state and national level.

12 Monitor policy developments and take agency positions and actions on important issues when a voice for vulnerable families, particularly Latino families, is needed.
   ▪ Ensure the Board of Directors regularly reviews current issues so that it can develop and be involved in advocating a robust public policy agenda for the agency.

13 Continue and increase community leadership through participation in community initiatives and cultural events, such as the Cinco de Mayo celebration in the Mission.

14 Engage new community members of the Mission District – individuals and companies – in cultural, civic and collaborative community problem-solving activities.

15 Continue and increase opportunities to make 362 Capp Street a hub for cultural and civic events and meetings.

INSTITUTIONALIZE BOARD AND STAFF ROLES AS AMBASSADORS AND LEADERS IN FORUMS WHERE POLICY IS DELIBERATED AND MADE.
Continue to build a stable financial base and implement a comprehensive plan to diversify funding sources and leverage existing resources.

16 Create an External Relations/Fund Development position to build and diversify funding sources, create a culture of coordinated fundraising and cultivate community relationships.

17 Implement a comprehensive plan to improve and leverage the use of MNC’s real estate resources.

MNC owns property at five locations in the City of San Francisco. MNC recognizes that agency-owned property is an extremely valuable asset and should be maximized in carrying out the mission of the agency.

- A real estate committee has been created to advise on specific plans for all pieces of property and to ensure timely decision-making.

SOME REALITIES

While the core financial goal of the agency is to support its programs with adequate staffing, facilities, and administrative infrastructure, MNC has several additional financial goals: one time immediate goal of $2 M to retire its debt, support a succession planning process, create an agency reserve, and undertake basic upgrades to current facilities and necessary program improvements.

Furthermore, over and above its current budget, the agency requires an annual increase of $1 M to address its ongoing infrastructure needs – including a Deputy Director, Fund Developer/External Relations Director, and a Quality and Systems Manager position, as well as competitive staff compensation and benefits.

While MNC has grown and been extremely adaptable to changing needs and circumstances, its funding base is primarily public funds. MNC is committed to addressing this imbalance in funding sources.
Put the primary focus for new funds on residents and companies in the Mission.

- Utilize the talents of the Board of Directors, Executive Director and the new Fund Development/External Relations Director to make, nurture and sustain relationships.

Launch a multi-year $25 Million fundraising drive to support one-time upgrades to MNC’s properties and new program sites, and enhance the ongoing operations budget. Early implementation strategies will include:

- Create a Development Advisory Committee to steer and participate in the campaign.
- Develop a campaign prospectus.
- Solicit lead gifts to launch the campaign.

Explore the potential of new Early Care financing models to best leverage resources.

Develop a system to nurture current and past individual and corporate supporters to continue and increase their investment in MNC.

Maintain strong collaborative and accountable relationships with public agencies as a source of core support.

- Work with public agency leaders to develop a common vision and program plans that are consistent with the city’s needs and MNC’s core competencies. This includes: Juvenile Probation; Department of Children, Youth and Their Families; Mayor’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development; Department of Public Health; Mayor’s Office of Housing; Office of Aging and Adult Services; San Francisco Unified School District; Department of Public Works; City College; First 5, and the Office of Early Care and Education.

DEVELOP “ON RAMPS” FOR NEW RESIDENTS OF THE MISSION AND MISSION-BASED COMPANIES TO SUPPORT MNC – AS VOLUNTEERS, MEMBERS OF THE BOARD, INVESTOR CHAMPIONS IN SPECIFIC PROGRAMS, AND ONGOING DONORS.
Manage growth and change to strategically support the agency mission and current priorities, and to fully cover the cost of the expansion.

- Apply strict criteria for new opportunities and programs, and have them adopted by the Board of Directors.
- In the coming decade, consider “expansion” in terms of improving and deepening current services and support of current populations.

Enlist support of foundations for short-term purposes, i.e. time-limited bridge funding to put in place recommendations from this plan; and seed money for new or expanded services that have been vetted by the Board of Directors, the community and primary supporters.

Explore the possibility of transferring responsibility for programs that cannot be supported financially and for which there is another quality provider that can respond to the needs of participants.

- Assess the landscape of current MNC programs to determine which services might no longer be provided by MNC, in order to focus on those services for which MNC is most uniquely positioned to offer.
- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine which programs have inadequate financial support.
- Assess the needs of the participants in those programs to determine whether other agencies can meet those needs.
- Negotiate with agencies and funders to transfer those responsibilities, as appropriate.
ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

GOAL V

To ensure continuous improvement, implement systems to measure performance and outcomes, and recruit, develop, supervise and support staff.

26 Create a Quality and Systems Manager position to develop and oversee a program improvement strategy and assist in the implementation of the objectives listed above.

27 Integrate, strengthen, and standardize recruitment, selection, orientation, retention, professional development and HR processes and practices across the agency.
   - Continue to improve staff supervision and evaluation.
   - Incorporate more extensive staff training and coaching agency-wide. Continue to maximize opportunities provided by funders and others, including special certificate programs.
   - Work with public and non-profit partners to address city-wide issues related to staff recruitment and retention in order to ensure the highest level of talent acquisition.
   - Continue and improve HR policies to ensure MNC’s labor practices are consistent with its social justice values.

28 Bolster mechanisms for ongoing process and outcome evaluations and reporting that allows comparison across programs.
   - Develop a manageable and realistic agency-wide data collection and outcome measurement system building on the systems currently in place.
   - Undertake a regular program by program review in order to determine the best growth, staffing and restructuring strategies.
   - Train staff in the principles of “theory of change” and incorporate an ongoing process through which all programs develop and articulate their theory of change.

29 Regularly communicate findings of evaluations throughout agency, to the Board of Directors, to funders and to the community.

BUILD AN AGENCY-WIDE EVALUATION SYSTEM THAT MEASURES QUALITY AND PARTICIPANT IMPROVEMENT OVER TIME, AND PROVIDES A LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SERVICES.
Transition to the infrastructure and governance needed by a large non-profit agency in order to facilitate high quality programming.

30 Create a Deputy Director position to oversee the program development, quality accountability, manager supervision, and the coordination of functions and services.

31 Strengthen the governance and fundraising capacity of the Board of Directors.
   ▪ Implement a policy of having all Board members contribute annually to the agency.
   ▪ Conduct trainings in facilitation, roles of non-profit boards, finances, and fund development.
   ▪ Gradually expand and diversify the Board.
   ▪ Review and revitalize standing committees, and create ad-hoc committees that allow the Board to address special and emerging issues.
   ▪ Create a stronger link between the Board and the ongoing programs of the agency.

32 Ensure equal administrative support for all programs.

33 Improve internal communication systems to ensure all staff can contribute their insights and skills to the overall functioning of the agency.

34 Inventory the space requirements and equipment and technology needs of each program in each site. Develop a priority list for implementing improvements.

35 Integrate structures, program supports and infrastructure, such as data collection, technology, publicity, purchasing, maintenance, nutrition resources, and a future agency-wide transportation system.

36 Develop a coordinated external communications system that will inspire supporters, potential program participants, funders, neighbors, peers, and city leaders about the successes of the past and the dreams of the future.
   ▪ Create a working group to refine and refresh key agency messages with the goal of jump-starting a “renewed vision” campaign – include staff, Board, clients, managers, and other supporters.
   ▪ Conduct an outreach campaign among stakeholders with the renewed vision.
   ▪ Develop, and keep updated, accessible materials and strategies that tell the MNC story
   ▪ Train members of the Board of Directors, as well as staff and program participants, as ambassadors and engage them actively in an ongoing outreach effort.
THE IMPORTANCE OF TELLING THE STORY:

The story of MNC is compelling – its settlement history, its Jewish community roots, its responsiveness to the city’s many crises from violence to displacement, the current city leaders and staff who grew up within MNC, and its 11 hubs of work. It is a story of the courage to take risks, ongoing learning and maturation, and the ability to overcome enormous challenges to build a lasting community institution.

For more on the MNC story: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wy0PHHcdGaE

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The MNC legacy planning process was facilitated by Margaret Brodkin and Associates, with Margaret Brodkin and Nancy Rubin.
OUR GOALS MOVING FORWARD

GOAL I
Provide quality family-focused services to every program participant in a model 21st century neighborhood center.

GOAL II
 Remain a vibrant cultural anchor for the Latino community of San Francisco.

GOAL III
Provide policy and community leadership from a social justice perspective at the neighborhood, city, state and national level on behalf of vulnerable families.

GOAL IV
Continue to build a stable financial base and implement a comprehensive plan to diversify funding sources and leverage existing resources.

GOAL V
To ensure continuous improvement, implement systems to measure performance and outcomes, and recruit, develop, supervise and support staff.

GOAL VI
Transition to the infrastructure and governance needed by a large non-profit agency in order to facilitate high quality programming.