



MANNA FoodBank
Strategic Plan 2010-2013

May 26, 2010

HunterKemper Consulting

Introduction

MANNA FoodBank's study of hunger in the mountains shows that in a year, one in six people get help from an emergency food pantry MANNA supplies. Needs are skyrocketing. With 1 in 7 people in North Carolina on Food & Nutrition Services (previously called food stamps), MANNA FoodBank is a lifeline for many in our region. What MANNA literally does is help people live, to sustain themselves, and to live more full lives. Individuals can make contributions to their communities when they have adequate food. Children can learn and play and thrive when they have adequate food. Families can focus on raising children when they have adequate food.

As many individuals and families in our region continue to experience a profound need for food, MANNA FoodBank is prepared to address current and future needs in our community. To guide this work, MANNA FoodBank is pleased to have developed a strategic plan to guide staff and volunteers' efforts over the next three years.

Organization Context

MANNA FoodBank was created 28 years ago and serves a 16-county region of Western North Carolina. In the past 10 years the amount of food distributed has doubled to 7.6 million pounds (in 2009); the Reclaim Center (See Endnotes) has been incorporated into MANNA's work; programs for children have been developed; and public policy has become a priority. The number of partner agencies has increased by one-third. The operating budget is 162% higher than 10 years ago (\$3.4 million compared to \$1.3 million) and the number of the staff members has increased by 43% (to 43). With a significant increase in need due to the economic downturn and the increased challenges of securing food due to shifts in the food industry, MANNA is addressing a complex and dynamic future with this strategic plan.

Timeline

The Strategic Planning Process was conducted from December 2009 – May 2010 and involved soliciting feedback from constituents, collecting information and data about MANNA FoodBank operations, and engaging Board and staff members in assessing needs and opportunities for the future. This input was used to create a strategic plan to guide MANNA FoodBank from 2010–2013.

Highlights of Strategic Planning

A thorough strategic planning process was conducted that included collecting and synthesizing internal information, stakeholder input, and external trends; engaging Board and staff members; and creating a thoughtful strategic plan. Highlights include:

- More than 50 board and staff members actively participated in planning retreats and committee sessions;
- Input from more than 600 individuals representing nine different stakeholder groups was collected, synthesized, and utilized to develop the plan (see stakeholder list in endnotes);
- A timeline reflecting MANNA's history and trends was developed to inform strategic planning and future organization planning;
- Explicitly stated values were developed for the first time to guide MANNA's work;
- A focused plan was developed to galvanize efforts around MANNA FoodBank's seven current top priorities; and
- Benchmarks for measuring and monitoring progress on the strategic plan were developed to encourage a learning-driven approach.

Priority Strategic Issues

Through this process, seven core priority issues were identified as important influences on planning for the future:

1. Children/Youth Programs. Serving children and youth was identified as a priority because of their vulnerability. MANNA FoodBank will continue to invest resources to reach more children because it provides an access point for helping families by reducing the pressures and hunger in those families.
2. Food Supply. Given the continued increase in need for food and pressures on food supply, continuing to wisely secure food and financial resources was identified as a strategic priority. Securing food supply requires ongoing allocation of expenses and staff time.
3. Partner Agencies. Acquisition and distribution of food remain core priorities for MANNA FoodBank, and partner agencies are the primary vehicle for food distribution and accomplishing our goal of working to end hunger in Western North Carolina. Focusing on supporting and strengthening the partner agencies was identified as a strategic priority, particularly as the partner agencies face strains from the economic situation.
4. Public Policy. As an additional approach to addressing its mission of ending hunger in Western North Carolina, MANNA FoodBank has decided to increase its efforts to influence public policy. By focusing on changes in public policy affecting food and nutrition and addressing hunger, MANNA FoodBank is expanding its impact more broadly in our region.
5. Outreach throughout the 16-County Service Region. MANNA FoodBank will focus on increasing its presence and public awareness in all counties of the region, particularly beyond Buncombe County where there appears to be more awareness. This regional focus is intended to enhance fund raising, food-raising, volunteer engagement, as well as the public's understanding of how MANNA works, and how we work with our partner agencies.
6. Financial Resources. Increasing financial support is a priority to support the accomplishment of MANNA's work and the priorities in this plan.
7. Staff, Board and Volunteers. Strengthening internal processes, communication, and volunteer involvement was identified as a strategic priority. The organization has grown significantly over the past 10 years, with the annual budget more than 1.5 times larger and staffing increased by more than 40%. Increasing internal infrastructure and management processes will help respond, increase efficiency, and prepare for future growth. Refining board operations and expanding opportunities for volunteers will also strengthen the organization.

Report Overview

This report provides a summary of the Strategic Planning Process and the Strategic Plan. The report is organized in the following sections.

- Strategic Planning Process
- Overview of the Strategic Plan
- Detailed Strategic Plan
- Recommendations for Implementing the Strategic Plan

The appendices provide information developed during this strategic planning process.

Section 2: Overview of the Strategic Plan, 2010 – 2013

MANNA's strategic plan includes:

- vision statement,
- mission statement,
- values,
- seven core priorities and strategic goals,
- strategies that will support the accomplishment of the goals, and
- objectives that will support the accomplishment of the strategies.

All of these items except the objectives are summarized in this section; the objectives are detailed in the following section. This section and the subsequent detailed section have been provided electronically so that you can continue to adjust your strategic plan as needed.

Vision

The vision statement for MANNA's work was revised slightly to better reflect a unifying and inspiring image of success. This vision describes how this region would be improved and changed if MANNA FoodBank fully achieves its purpose.

Previous vision statement: Every person in Western North Carolina will have enough to eat for an adequate diet.

Revised vision statement: The vision of MANNA FoodBank is a hunger-free Western North Carolina.

Mission

The mission statement for MANNA was discussed and ratified without changes. A mission statement explains the organization's purpose and helps create a common understanding and a framework for decisions for the future.

Previous and current mission statement:

MANNA FoodBank's mission is to involve, educate, and unite people in the work of ending hunger in Western North Carolina.

Values

As part of the strategic planning process, explicitly stated values were developed for the first time for MANNA FoodBank.

In our work to end hunger in Western North Carolina, MANNA FoodBank exhibits these values with our staff and our stakeholders, and in the community:

- **Service**
- **Respect and Inclusiveness**
- **Stewardship and Effectiveness**
- **Integrity and Accountability**
- **Flexibility and Creativity**
- **Collective Power**
- **Passion and Dedication**

Together, we “smile and hustle”!

Moving forward, staff and board members plan to create descriptions to elaborate these values.

Key Priorities and Goals

Children/Youth Programs

- Strengthen programs that serve children.

Food Supply

- Increase food supply and refine distribution strategies.

Partner Agencies

- Increase support for MANNA's partner agencies.

Public Policy

- Increase MANNA's public policy impact.

Outreach throughout 16 -County Service Region

- Strengthen MANNA's marketing and outreach throughout the region of WNC.

Financial Resources

- Increase and diversify financial resources.

Staff, Board, and Volunteers

- Foster organizational practices that increase effectiveness of the staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers.

List of Goals and Strategies

<p>Goal 1: Strengthen programs that serve children.</p> <p>Strategy A: Expand and refine MANNA Packs Program.</p> <p>Strategy B: Implement new programs to increase food distribution to children</p> <p>Strategy C: Educate and advocate about child hunger in WNC.</p> <p>Strategy D: Secure financial and food resources from site partners for long-term sustainability.</p>
<p>Goal 2: Increase food supply and refine distribution strategies.</p> <p>Strategy A: Increase agricultural donations.</p> <p>Strategy B: Increase effectiveness of food drives.</p> <p>Strategy C: Strengthen store-level pickup program.</p> <p>Strategy D: Improve food management.</p> <p>Strategy E: Maximize efficiency of rural distribution.</p>
<p>Goal 3: Increase support for MANNA's partner agencies.</p> <p>Strategy A: Support and strengthen partner agencies in the work they do.</p> <p>Strategy B: Maximize usage of Franklin branch for agency services.</p> <p>Strategy C: Target gaps in delivery of agency food services in each county.</p>
<p>Goal 4: Increase MANNA's public policy impact.</p> <p>Strategy A: Increase participation in influencing legislative priorities and votes at the national and state levels about hunger issues.</p> <p>Strategy B: Improve MANNA's state- and county-level relationships with policy makers, lawmakers, and agencies to encourage decisions that will work to end hunger in Western North Carolina.</p> <p>Strategy C: Encourage increased use of government food and nutrition programs.</p>
<p>Goal 5: Strengthen MANNA's marketing and outreach throughout the region of WNC.</p> <p>Strategy A: Increase awareness of hunger and MANNA's mission, programs and brand throughout the service region.</p>
<p>Goal 6: Increase and diversify financial resources.</p> <p>Strategy A: Maintain and expand donor base.</p> <p>Strategy B: Improve technical tools and training to support fundraising work.</p> <p>Strategy C: Explore alternative revenue streams.</p>
<p>Goal 7: Foster organizational practices that increase effectiveness of the staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers.</p> <p>Strategy A: Strengthen internal communications and esprit de corps.</p> <p>Strategy B: Enhance staff skills and organizational leadership.</p> <p>Strategy C: Strengthen the Board of Directors.</p> <p>Strategy D: Actively recruit and cultivate persons of diverse backgrounds and characteristics for staff, board of directors, and volunteers.</p>

Endnotes

List of Stakeholders Surveyed for Strategic Planning:

1. Board of Directors
2. Staff Members
3. Partner Agencies
4. School counselors & social workers operating MANNA PACKS Program
5. Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Outreach Participating Agencies
6. Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Outreach Partner DSS Offices
7. Volunteers (Agency Relations Volunteer, MANNA Agency Relations, Council (MARC) and Public Policy Committee)
8. Food Donors
9. Financial Donors
10. Major Donors

Reclaim (or reclamation) Center – an explanation:

Supermarket, grocers, drug stores and mass merchandisers have for 25 years employed reclaim centers to audit unsold merchandise in order to claim credit from the vendors or manufacturers. Product is collected at store level (and warehouse distribution centers) and shipped to the reclaim center where it is bar-code scanned to produce a detail report to the vendor. Centers are operated by the retailers or third-parties under contract to the retailer.

MANNA FoodBank, one of just a handful of food banks, operates the reclaim center for the local supermarket chain, Ingles Markets. The contract ensures Ingles' payment to MANNA on a per-piece basis, and MANNA staff provides the labor and management of the center. MANNA Grocery Reclaim Center (MGR) contracts with a software company to produce and send it to Ingles the detailed scan report. In addition to cosmetically damaged and dated product, reclaimed goods may also include recalled product (which cannot be consumed/used). The volume varies by day, by season, by sales. The MGR is located at MANNA's second building ("623") in Asheville.

Currently MANNA receives 15% of its total stock from the reclaim center on a donation basis. This amount has declined from about 42% in 2004, largely due to supermarket changes. Technically, vendors make the donation, as the ownership of the product reverts back to the vendor at the point of scanning. (Instead they might choose to destroy, review, or pick up the merchandise. Most donate.) However, without the support of Ingles and the reclaim contract, it is unlikely the 1.5 million pounds of food would be donated.

MANNA volunteers cull, sort, categorize, and clean the donated goods for distribution to agencies. This work involves the community in important ways and requires approximately XXXX hours per month of volunteer labor along with MANNA staff supervision. The Volunteer Center also occupies the building at "623" Swannanoa River Road.