First 5 LA Strategic Plan
FY 2009 – 2015

Implementation Plan

FIRST 5 LA
Champions For Our Children
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Introduction

June 2010 marks a significant milestone in First 5 LA’s transition from an initiative-based grantmaker to one that focuses on long-term change for all of LA County’s youngest children and their families. We will achieve this through a place-based approach that is linked to a larger systems change effort. This transition began with the Commission’s approval of a six-year strategic plan in June 2009. The change in approach is so consequential that it touches all of the Commission’s programs, staff, leadership, and stakeholders. Thus, the Commission decided to undertake a one-year implementation planning period in order to carefully and thoughtfully map out the details of the implementation plan that will launch in July 2010. Over the past year since the Strategic Plan was approved, First 5 LA staff and Commissioners have researched, vetted, and discussed the many elements needed for implementation.

This document represents the outcome of the one year of implementation planning and is a summary of the plans developed to implement the Strategic Plan. The primary components of this implementation plan are:

- The five-year Budget Allocation and the FY 2010-2011 Programmatic Budget
- The Accountability and Learning Framework designed to measure success of the plan
- The Countywide Approach outlining strategies to be implemented countywide
- The Place-Based Approach outlining strategies to be implemented in the target communities
- The Transition Plan detailing the transition from an initiative-based portfolio
- The Five Year Timeline for implementation

During the course of the last year, staff and Commissioners have had numerous Commission and Special Planning meetings, as well as other informal opportunities, to discuss most of the components of the implementation plan outlined above. Only three of the components have not yet been fully vetted and are included in this document for review for the first time. These three are:

- The Accountability and Learning Framework (Section IV)
- The Family Strengthening strategies (Section VI)
- The Year 1 implementation activities for the place-based approach (Section VI)

An assumption of the plan, and indeed a tenet of successful place-based work, is that many of the details of the strategies contained herein and their implementation will be consistently and constantly revised, updated, and renewed as the work unfolds. All of the research on community-based and community-driven work indicates that we will be more likely to achieve our goals if we actively engage with community partners in a way that enables on-going refinements to our practice and incorporates real-time learning from the field into the plan. It is our expectation that over the course of the plan’s five years, much about it will change as we learn, listen, and interact with our community stakeholders around its core principles and goals. However, one aspect of the plan will not change -- the commitment to improving the lives of children prenatal through five and their families in LA County.
I. Overview of FY 2009-2015 Strategic Plan

On June 11, 2009, the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners approved a new, six-year strategic plan. The intent of the Strategic Plan is to improve the lives of young children and their families by positively impacting the systems and environments in which they live, learn, and play. These may include medical and social service systems, as well as neighborhood housing, parks, and schools. To a greater extent than in previous plans, this one is designed to build upon and bolster existing services and infrastructures in LA County that have already benefited from First 5 LA funding, as well as to improve their integration. While First 5 LA’s vision for strengthened families and communities remains the same, this plan narrows the focus of the Commission’s outcomes and strategies in order to increase its capacity to, and likelihood of, more deeply impacting children in high-need communities in LA County.¹

With this new Strategic Plan, First 5 LA joins a movement of public and private funders across the United States and internationally who are prioritizing funding to specific geographic regions. This “place-based” approach is designed not just to provide geographic parameters for direct services, but also to build the capacity of communities to create and sustain safe and nurturing places for children to grow. Research continues to show that place matters to the healthy development of young children. Health researchers, for instance, have shown that a child’s long-term health outcomes are mostly due to the social and environmental circumstances of their upbringing as opposed to their insurance status or congenital health factors. First 5 LA’s place-based approach, therefore, is meant to impact these circumstances directly in places and to expand those impacts to all children countywide through public policy, education, and systems reform.

Indeed, the experiences of other organizations and foundations that have implemented comprehensive community initiatives reveal that funding place-based projects that are disconnected from the local and regional context in which they are imbedded does not result in long-term, sustainable change in that community. Nor does it create a movement whereby improved outcomes in one community results in positive change for the neighborhoods surrounding it. Therefore, it is crucial that the place-based approach be jointly implemented with a “countywide” approach.

For First 5 LA, the countywide approach represents an opportunity to connect and support the work happening in communities with larger systemic change. These investments allow the Commission to utilize its unique position in the County to advocate for young children by building public will for investing in this population, supporting the improved functioning of systems serving families and children, and working for changes in policies that impact families. In addition, the countywide strategies are designed to sustain First 5 LA’s impact in communities by promoting policy change, the integration of systems, and other activities to improve the places where children live.

¹ Appendix A contains the Theory of Change Pathway, the Prioritized Pathway (for new funding), and the Strategies Framework. Together, these three documents illustrate the four overall goals for the plan, the intermediate outcomes expected to be achieved in pursuit of the goals, and the strategies to be employed to create change in those outcomes.
Our initial fact-finding in preparation for the development of this plan strongly revealed that our traditional approach to grantmaking, our initiatives, our evaluation, our budgeting process, and our organizational structure have all tended to create a practice in which our efforts, our staffing, and our allocation of resources have existed in silos. It further revealed that this tendency has not only negatively affected our ability to measure our impact over the last ten years, but has also limited our ability to create strong and enduring partnerships with key stakeholders and collaborators. This new plan is designed to create a more holistic and integrated approach to our work that results in greater impact and more accountability. Accordingly, we are moving forward by assuming that the totality of our efforts, including projects created under prior strategic plans, will now be considered as a full portfolio. Not unlike a typical investment portfolio, we will view our investments as disbursed across a variety of approaches (place-based and countywide) using strategies that carry varying levels of risk (direct services, community capacity building, etc.) and that maintain historic commitments to agencies and initiatives that we care about (e.g., Healthy Kids, 211, LAUP). In addition, we have created an accountability framework that enables us to measure our return on investment in numerous ways and at different points in the duration of the plan.

Implementation Plan Key Components
First 5 LA’s implementation planning has involved a large staff and consultant team working in a coordinated manner to identify how our resources can be invested across a number of strategies to foster change in the priority outcomes approved as a part of the Strategic Plan. These strategies, whether designed for places, for the county, or for both, are tied together by several threads that are woven throughout the plan. In numerous places throughout this document, these threads will be called out in order to highlight the interconnectivity and interdependence of the key components of the total plan. They are:

1. Outcomes: In November 2008, the Commission approved four long-term priority outcomes for the Strategic Plan:
   - Children are born healthy.
   - Children maintain a healthy weight.
   - Children are safe from abuse and neglect.
   - Children are ready for Kindergarten.

In addition, the Commission approved a pathway (see Appendix A) outlining how change to these priority outcomes would be realized. As staff have developed plans for the various approved strategies this year, we have designated milestones reflecting the short and mid-term change that will occur and be tracked as these strategies are implemented. In addition, as we have progressed in our planning some of the elements along the pathway have been refined to more accurately reflect expected changes. Specifically, staff are recommending a change to the “building blocks” of the pathway which represent goals for countywide and community capacity building work.² These proposed revisions are:

² These proposed outcomes would replace the originally approved outcomes: Informal community supports are in place; Collaboratives between and among traditional and non-traditional partners are present in communities; and Countywide service systems are better integrated to serve at-risk families.
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- Communities are supportive of families
- Policies that impact the prenatal to five population are improved
- Increased integration and accessibility of the multiple systems that benefit the prenatal to five population

All of the components presented are focused on realizing change in these outcomes or to their intermediate outcomes.

2. Accountability: As a public entity funded by tax dollars, and in a budget climate in which its resources are under constant pressure, First 5 LA recognizes the importance of being accountable to the general public, elected representatives and ultimately the children and families of LA County not only for how it spends those resources, but also for the impact achieved with them. Therefore, benchmarks for success have been developed for each section of the implementation plan along with a detailed accountability plan designed to measure the progress of First 5 LA’s investments and the level of change in the priority outcomes.

3. Interdependency of Approaches: It cannot be over-emphasized how the place-based and countywide approaches are highly integrated and mutually dependent. While various components are presented independently, no single piece of this plan can exist on its own without changing the expected impact. Success in the target communities requires that systems change occurs countywide in order to achieve sustained and long-term improved outcomes for children in those communities. Likewise, enduring systems changes are most successful when they are informed by, and grow out of, culturally competent, community-based and resident-driven models for strengthening families. Thus in its vision, anticipated outcomes, strategies, implementation plans, allocations, and organizational structure, the Strategic Plan requires that all elements share equal priority in order to maximize the likelihood of achieving its stated goals.

4. Partnership: Although First 5 LA has substantial resources to address the challenges facing young children, currently its direct service programs are estimated to only touch 10% of children in the County. The size, scale, and diversity of the County necessitates that we rethink how we can touch all of the youngest lives here. The strategic plan’s two-pronged approach of place-based and countywide investments certainly increases the opportunities to do so. But even with a revamped investment strategy and an accountability plan to enable on-going and real-time adjustments to it, we cannot hope to achieve and sustain our vision without engaging more deeply with and mobilizing partners. The Commission’s relationships with community groups and networks, residents, service providers, policy makers, public agencies, private philanthropy, and the business sector all must be strengthened in order to register greater impact on more children and their families. The real power and potential of the new plan would be undermined, and the impact to which it aspires will not be realized, if we do not partner meaningfully with other advocates for children. First 5 LA must assume not only the role of funder, but also that of leader in bringing together natural allies on behalf of all of the children in LA County.
II. Process for Developing the Implementation Plan

This implementation plan is the culmination of 12 months of collaboration between staff, executive leadership, and Commissioners of First 5 LA with the assistance of numerous expert consultants and input from grantees, strategic partners, contractors, and other stakeholders.

The planning process was coordinated by the Planning and Development Department. A Steering Committee consisting of the Executive Director, Department Directors, and other key staff oversaw the process and guided the work of three committees. The majority of the planning took place in these cross-disciplinary and cross-departmental committees: Place-Based, Countywide, and Transition. Each committee formed sub-committees as needed to develop individual components of the plan. In addition, at numerous times during the planning period, all of the Committees came together to share information, discuss critical issues of importance across the plan and brainstorm about emerging questions. Because of this coordinated planning effort, we were able to create a plan of highly integrated strategies designed for coordinated implementation. For each of the strategies, a complete report exists that provides more detail about the process of its creation and development. These reports have been edited for inclusion in this comprehensive implementation plan.

During the course of the development of the plan, the following activities were conducted to inform its content (please see Appendices B and G for more detail):

**Board of Commissioners Meetings**
- **September 10, 2009:** Discussion of the place-based approach with special presentation by Dr. Robert Ross, President and CEO of The California Endowment

- **October 8, 2009:** Approval of community selection principles and governance discussion

- **November 12, 2009:** Approval of community selection criteria and process

- **February 11, 2010:** Approval of allocations percentages

- **March 11, 2010:** Direct service strategies presentation, Dr. Deborah Daro, home visitation expert from Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

- **April 8, 2010:** Discussion of the transition plan and target community selection methodology

- **May 13, 2010:** Approval of the transition plan for initiatives and a discussion of allocations

**Board of Commissioner Strategic Plan Special Planning Meetings**
- **July 15, 2009** – Topics included:
  - Community selection
  - Program model selection
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- **September 17, 2009** – Topics included:
  - Community selection
  - Magnitude of change
  - Best Start LA and strategic plan expansion

- **October 15, 2009** – Topics included:
  - Home visitation with a presentation by Dr. Deborah Daro
  - Program model selection principles

- **November 19, 2009** – Topics included:
  - Expert panel on community capacity building, featuring:
    - Dr. Robert Chaskin, Chapin Hall Research Fellow and Associate Professor at the University of Chicago
    - Marqueece Dawson, Executive Director of Community Coalition
    - Diana Marie Lee, former Vice President of Programs at the National Community Development Institute
  - Discussion on the development of the community capacity building strategies

- **January 21, 2010** – Non-direct service strategies in the target communities

- **March 18, 2010** – Topics included:
  - Transition plan
  - Countywide strategies (including policy agenda, public education plan, data systems integration and workforce development plan)

- **April 8, 2010** – Topics included:
  - Community capacity building framework presented by Diana Marie Lee
  - Countywide strategies activities matrix

- **May 20, 2010** – Topics included:
  - Overview of the implementation plan
  - FY 2010-2011 programmatic budget

**Consultants**

**Overall Implementation Plan Development**: Gwen Walden, Principal & Founder, Walden Philanthropy Advisors, Inc.

**Community Capacity Building**: Diana Marie Lee, Independent consultant and former Vice President of Programs, National Community Development Institute

**Home Visitation/Program Models**: Dr. Deborah Daro, Associate Professor and Research Fellow, Chapin Hall, University of Chicago

**Target Community Selection Methodology and Data Collection**: Advancement Project (Healthy City) and Special Services for Groups

Research Agenda and Data Systems Integration: Cheryl Wold, Independent consultant

Public Education/Policy: Julie Tugend, Independent consultant

Community Input

- Focus groups:
  - Community Resource & Referral (February 6-13, 2010): Participants represented First 5 LA grantees and partners from across LA County
  - Home Visitation (April 14 and 15, 2010): Attended by grantees of Partnership for Families, Family Literacy, School Readiness, and Healthy Births Initiatives
  - Target Community Selection (January 19 – March 4, 2010): Participants included community-based agencies, residents, elected officials, and others representing each community

- Online survey (October 2009): Survey gathered input on criteria for target community selection from grantees and other community stakeholders

- Policy Roundtable (November 16, 2009): Participants included community-based organizations, First 5 LA Commissioners, and grantees

- Key Informant Community Selection interviews (January-March 2010): Participants included Supervisor deputies, agency directors, and regional community leaders

- Expert Interviews: Due to the extensive nature of this list, please reference Appendix B.
III. The Five-Year Budget and FY 2010 - 2011 Programmatic Budget

In its ten-year history, First 5 LA has created three strategic plans. While this fourth plan aligns with the five-year cycle of the previous plan, its vision is much longer term. The likelihood of achieving the priority outcomes will be greater if its duration is viewed as extending beyond the initial five years of implementation. It is equally important for the plan’s success that accountability and flexibility be built into the implementation so that ongoing evaluation findings and learning opportunities can be incorporated to enable for timely changes and quality improvements to the implementation activities on the ground.

Accordingly, the budget and the implementation timeline (see Section VIII) are constructed to provide the Commission with greater detail and discretion over implementation activities and the budget on a year-over-year basis. This way, critical policy and allocation decisions will be made with deeper and timelier information. This annual budgeting approach provides the Commission with a higher level of accountability in the allocation of resources to the plan, as well as greater flexibility and responsiveness to events as they unfold in the target communities and the County. This new zero-based budgeting platform also provides the Commission with an annual planning process that will foster cross-departmental and agency-wide discussion and vetting of goals, allocations, and performance-based measures.

As approved by Commissioners on February 11, 2010, the five-year budget allocation (projections over the five years are in parentheses) for the plan will be:

**Countywide Activities: 30-45% ($270 - 405 million)**

This allocation consists of the costs of countywide activities (see Section V) related to:

- public policy
- public education
- resource mobilization
- workforce development
- data systems integration
- information resource and referral
- health access
- transition of current grantees outside the targeted areas to the new plan

**Place-Based Activities: 45-60% ($405 - 540 million)**

This allocation consists of the costs in target communities (see Section VI) related to:

- direct services,
- community capacity building activities
- policy and systems integration activities
- data systems integration
- public education
- transition of current grantees to the new plan.
The place-based approach will be phased in and begin with a partnership development phase starting in FY 10-11. This time period will require less funding than subsequent years. The costs for the work in the target communities will increase incrementally until the plan is in full implementation.

**Research and Evaluation: 5% ($45 million)**

This allocation consists of the costs of research and evaluation incurred to:

- measure the success of funded activities based upon the accountability framework (described below in Section IV)
- collect data required for reporting to state and local stakeholders.

Customarily, First 5 LA has allocated 5% of its program budget for research and evaluation. This practice is the industry standard observed at private foundations and among large Federal grantmaking initiatives. Under previous strategic plans, staff has successfully operated within the 5% allocation and the corresponding resources have allowed the Commission to comply with the legal mandate of measuring and reporting outcomes as outlined in the original Proposition 10 legislation.

**Administration/Reorganization: 5% ($45 million)**

This allocation consists of the costs related to:

- costs incurred in support of the general management and administration of First 5 LA activities (i.e. human resources, finance, contracts and compliance, etc.)
- organizational restructuring to support the countywide and place-based goals of the strategic plan.

The organizational restructuring provides for four new departments – Program Development, Best Start Communities, Community Investments, and Information Technology – and eliminates the Grants Management and Planning & Development departments as they are currently configured. The restructuring supports the inter-departmental team approaches needed to support the countywide and place-based strategies and requires an increase of 15 employees overall. (See Appendix F for descriptions of departments and positions). The restructuring provides for staff to continue support for current grants that have been extended through June 2011.

**Funding Allocation Methodology**

This recommendation of a percentage range for funding arose as the best of several alternatives for determining the total level investment to the place-based and countywide strategies across five years. This flexible allocation strategy will allow the Commission to address unforeseen events, such as fluctuations in First 5 LA’s funding stream over the next five years.

The table below outlines the allocations being requested for FY 2010-2011. Details of how this allocation will be spent are contained in Sections IV, V, and VI of this document.
## PROGRAMMATIC BUDGET

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<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>FY 2010-2011</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Countywide Investments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Policy</td>
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<td>Public Education</td>
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<td>Resource Mobilization</td>
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<td>Workforce Development</td>
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<td>Health Access</td>
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<td>Information Resource and Referral*</td>
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<td>Transition</td>
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<td><strong>Total Countywide Allocation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Place-Based Investments</strong></td>
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<td>Partnership Development Process</td>
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<td>Community Capacity Building</td>
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<td>Public Education</td>
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<td>Transition</td>
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<td><strong>Total Place-Based Allocation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total New Strategic Plan FY 2010-2011</strong></td>
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<td>Prior Strategic Plan Investments</td>
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<td>LAUP</td>
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<td><strong>Total FY 2010-2011 Programmatic Budget</strong></td>
<td>$ 162,925,000</td>
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* There will also be a no cost extension to the contractor in the amount of $849,512.
IV. The Accountability and Learning Framework

As described earlier, the Strategic Plan represents a major shift in the way First 5 LA will work to achieve our goal of enhancing the lives of expectant parents, children prenatal through five and their families. Our experience of nearly ten years of working in LA County has helped us to better understand that our existing approach to funding programmatic initiatives through grants to individual organizations across the County is not producing the level of change we desire for children and families. Likewise, an accountability approach which is focused on studying each programmatic initiative separately has not enabled us to demonstrate the collective impact of our investments. The Commission’s decision to move to an integrated place-based and countywide funding approach, as opposed to initiative-based funding, is an effort to more intentionally focus on impacting the well-being of families and children by improving communities. Thus, our FY 2010-2015 Accountability and Learning framework (see diagram below) reflects an emphasis on place-based evaluation and understanding how we are improving outcomes countywide, as well as a strengthened emphasis on using results from evaluation and research projects to learn and improve our approach on an ongoing basis.

This implementation plan outlines the major types of activities we will engage in over the course of the Strategic Plan, as well as the tools we will use in support of these activities, specifically: a) a longitudinal study; b) place-based and strategic evaluations; c) research projects; d) dissemination activities; e) a research advisory committee (RAC); and f) the learning and improvement process.
Longitudinal Outcome Evaluation

The purpose of the longitudinal study is to evaluate the collective impact of our investments by studying changes experienced by young children and families within our target communities over time. We will do this by following a cohort of families within our target communities and a comparison group of families from outside our target communities from birth through third grade. A broad range of methods will be used, including but not limited to regular surveys of parents, direct child assessments and observations at various points throughout the child’s development. In addition, we will explore the use of innovative qualitative data collection strategies such as digital storytelling to tell the story of how families and communities are changing over time and in response to our investments.

Place-Based and Strategic Evaluations

In addition to evaluating the impact of our investments through a longitudinal outcome evaluation, we will also engage in formative process evaluations to gather information about our place-based approach as well as to evaluate key countywide strategies. These evaluations will be long-term, comprehensive studies that offer a holistic understanding of the implementation of both the place-based approach on which we are embarking and the progress of our family strengthening (direct service) strategies.

The place-based evaluation will study the roll-out of our Strategic Plan from the perspective of our grantees, strategic partners, First 5 LA staff and Commissioners. The purpose of this investigation is to gather information that will document our process, and in turn help us improve the implementation of our investments in real time. The emphasis will be on qualitative data collection approaches using a participatory approach to evaluation.

In addition to the global place-based evaluation, we will conduct comprehensive evaluations of our place-based and countywide high investment strategies (e.g., the policy agenda). The purpose of these strategic evaluations is to understand the degree to which these strategies have been implemented successfully, to identify barriers and opportunities to change approaches as needed, and to document successful outcomes.

Research Projects

In addition to our evaluations which focus on studying the implementation and outcomes of our investments, we will also devote time and resources toward completing focused research projects that will be designed to respond to policy or program issues arising out of our evaluation work. These studies will be prioritized based on their feasibility, timeliness, opportunity for furthering the field, and the possibility of leveraging existing research partnerships. In the near term, Research and Evaluation staff have identified research projects focused on developing and identifying indicators and measures related to the newly designed dashboard, described below. Research in the area of measurement development will not only allow First 5 LA to better track our progress, but it will also contribute to the general knowledge base of those interested in the field of early childhood development.

Data System

To support our efforts, Research and Evaluation staff will rely on the comprehensive data system being developed by First 5 LA to collect data from grantees and share information
about resources available for young children and families. This tool is designed to improve the quality of data First 5 LA collects from grantees and increase the availability of information about resources available in our target communities. This data will be used by both First 5 LA and our grantees to evaluate progress and to modify programs as needed. Data collected through the data system will also support monitoring functions across the organization including contract, fiscal, and programmatic monitoring and compliance. While the Research and Evaluation staff will be responsible for monitoring the quality of the data collected, monitoring compliance will be the responsibility of other staff within the organization.

Research Advisory Committee (RAC)
The First 5 LA Research Advisory Committee (RAC), which was originally established to support research and evaluation activities for our preschool investments, will be realigned to support our overall efforts. The RAC will provide technical input, guidance, and advice to First 5 LA on early childhood research issues relevant to LA County and our strategic plan in particular. By utilizing both locally and nationally recognized early childhood experts, the RAC will provide essential technical knowledge to our work as well as increase the visibility and prominence of First 5 LA’s research and evaluation efforts. In June 2010, Research and Evaluation staff will disseminate widely a request for nominations to identify qualified candidates for the RAC. The final RAC members will be announced in August 2010. The RAC will meet between one and three times per year for day-long meetings in Los Angeles, with the possibility of additional topical workgroup conference calls. First 5 LA’s Research and Evaluation staff will set the meeting agenda and dates on an annual basis.

Dissemination Activities
A major goal of the FY 2010-2015 Accountability and Learning Framework is the timely dissemination of findings to community partners, First 5 LA staff, Commissioners, and the general public. A core approach to disseminating what we are learning will be the development of a dashboard as well as a coordinated plan for sharing findings via internal discussions, presentations, briefs and articles. The dashboard will help us track our progress toward making change in our priority measures and to promote our own learning and improvement. Through the dashboard, we will monitor changes in key indicators within the target communities as well as countywide trends. First 5 LA will also set goals for change on each of our priority measures, and will track progress towards making change on those goals via the dashboard. In addition to the dashboard, First 5 LA will continue to disseminate findings from the various projects through research briefs, reports, presentations, and publications in peer reviewed journals.

Learning and Improvement
Research and Evaluation staff will also facilitate the formation of an internal Learning and Improvement team in order to capitalize on staff expertise and promote meaningful use of our findings. The team will be comprised of key staff from across the agency and will meet on a regular basis to discuss study approaches, data collection questions, and to review recent findings. The team will also play an important role in dissemination activities.

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3 For a detailed discussion of the proposed First 5 LA data system, see Section VI.
Accountability and Learning Implementation Plan Activities
Appendix C-1 to C-5 outlines activities related to the Accountability and Learning Implementation Plan for First 5 LA. These tables summarize the major projects and investments Research and Evaluation staff will be involved in throughout the course of the Strategic Plan. These activities support the accountability, learning, and improvement of the organization, its investments in target communities and its work across the County.
V. The Countywide Approach

The Strategic Plan outlines the critical role of strong, coordinated and responsive systems in supporting families and improving outcomes for children prenatal through five. These systems include the actual structures through which health and human services are provided in LA County, as well as to less formalized systems, such as the economic system, the policy environment, and overall public will for early childhood issues. By focusing on countywide systems improvement and change, strategic plan investments can have a widespread impact on children across LA County while improving the sustainability of the place-based approach and outcomes. Success in the selected communities requires that systems change occurs countywide in order to achieve sustained and long-term improved outcomes for children in those communities. Likewise, we know that enduring systems changes are most successful when they are informed by, and grow out of, close-to-the ground, culturally competent, community-based and resident-driven models for strengthening families, such as those we will be supporting in our target communities.

The implementation plan for the countywide approach represents a comprehensive effort to address systems improvement in LA County through the following seven strategies:

A. Public Policy: To define and pursue First 5 LA’s priorities for policy change that support families within the four priority goal areas.

B. Public Education: To build public will and promote knowledge around issues facing children and families.

C. Resource Mobilization: To support and enhance the impact of the total portfolio of First 5 LA investments through effective, strategic partnerships; and by leveraging social and financial capital.

D. Workforce Development: To improve the knowledge and skills of the countywide prenatal to five workforce to strengthen families and support children’s healthy development.

E. Data Systems Integration: To support improvement of the quality and usefulness of data collected about children and families throughout LA County and the programs, projects and services that support them.

F. Health Access: To increase access to health insurance for children 0-5 by assisting families in obtaining coverage, and potentially subsidizing insurance for children not covered by other insurance.

4 Systems integration was also approved and developed as a strategy. For this plan, the activities associated with this strategy have been integrated into public policy, resource mobilization and workforce development to avoid duplication of effort.

5 Resource mobilization was not approved as a strategy in the strategic plan. Because of its importance to sustaining our impact, we are recommending that it be approved as an additional countywide strategy.

6 Workforce development was approved as a strategy but not prioritized for funding in the strategic plan. Due to its importance in reaching our outcomes, staff is recommending that this strategy also receive new funding.
G. **Information Resource and Referral:** To provide telephone lines or printed/online resource directories which community members can access in order to get information about resources available to them.

These strategies address countywide systems improvement from various points within these systems, yet work in a coordinated manner. Combined, they constitute a coordinated approach for First 5 LA to leverage opportunities, advocate for change, instill knowledge and raise awareness about how best to strengthen families with young children. In addition, while these strategies were approved as “countywide,” some of the activities will be specifically targeted to support the place-based approach.

**COUNTYWIDE APPROACH PLAN**

The seven countywide strategies include opportunities for us to partner across multiple public and private sector agencies, with other funders, and with community-based organizations (CBOs) in order to leverage new and existing initiatives, strengthen the infrastructure needed to implement systems improvements, and foster linkages among key partners and collaboratives. The interrelationship of the strategies is further highlighted within each strategy description. It is anticipated that unforeseen opportunities will arise during the next five years in each of these areas. Therefore, the countywide strategy plans, as with all of the plans related to implementation, will continue to be updated on an annual basis. For detailed information about the activities that will be implemented to support each of these strategies, see Appendix D-1.

**A. Public Policy**

To achieve large scale and lasting change in the lives of children, families and communities, First 5 LA must proactively seek long-term public policy change. First 5 LA will use its unique role to build public support for policies and programs that benefit children prenatal through five and their families utilizing efforts that complement First 5 LA’s place-based investments. Through collaboration with stakeholders, local experts and the leadership of Commissioners, we will contribute to positive change for children and families. This work highlights that we are more than a public foundation; we are an advocate organization for young children.

The ten broad goals of the FY 2010-2015 Public Policy Agenda are (see Appendix D-2 for the complete Policy Agenda):

1. Support comprehensive, affordable health insurance for all
2. Increase access to healthy food options and physical activity
3. Promote reductions in drug, alcohol and tobacco use by parents/caregivers
4. Expand access and improve quality of early care & education programs
5. Expand voluntary home visiting
6. Support data integration and sharing
7. Strengthen the prenatal to five workforce
8. Increase supports for breastfeeding
9. Expand early identification and intervention
10. Promote integration of family strengthening principles and prevention practices into the child welfare system

The Commission’s policy efforts will be pursued through the following activities:

- **Policy Development:** Our activities will include research and analysis of issues, proposals, and legislation; environmental assessments of the policy landscape; review of policy research; identification of barriers; and formulation of policy recommendations/positions. Convening and consulting experts and grantees, as well as engaging in coalitions and task forces will inform this work.

- **Issue Education:** Efforts to build public will among key stakeholders and the general public will include conducting issue education campaigns; sponsoring forums, trainings and policy conferences; publishing white papers, policy briefs and fact sheets; and collecting and sharing research to document the need for policy change.

- **Advocacy:** Our strategies will include convening and consulting stakeholders to collaborate on advocacy strategies; creating media visibility for policy positions; engaging grantees in issue education; communicating directly with policymakers; and promoting leadership development in advocacy in our targeted communities, as well as at the countywide levels.

- **Public Policy Grantmaking:** We will explore opportunities to fund others in support of First 5 LA’s policy goals, including funding for coalitions, projects to identify policy solutions, regional or local campaigns to build support for the Policy Agenda goals, professional advocates, leadership development in policy/advocacy, efforts to build media visibility on problems and potential solutions, and research to inform and create movement towards policy change related to the ten policy goals.

- **Collaboration:** First 5 LA recognizes the critical role partnerships and coalitions play in advancing our policy goals and improving systems. As such, First 5 LA will identify and actively participate in existing collaborations and seek out new and expanded partnerships and relationships with County agencies, other funders, nonprofits and community-based organizations.

### B. Public Education

The FY 2010-2015 Public Education Plan provides a framework for First 5 LA’s communications, education and outreach efforts in support of our strategic plan goals. As articulated in the Strategic Plan, the purpose of public education is “to create awareness of specific issues affecting children and families or to motivate people to change their behavior.” This is accomplished through the use of mass media and/or targeted outreach methods (i.e., brochures, posters, meetings with elected officials, partnership arrangements, community presentations, etc.) and the use of other social marketing and communications-related education tactics. This plan supports the goal areas and strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan.
First 5 LA's public education efforts are aimed at a diverse audience of parents/primary caregivers, grantees, policy makers, stakeholders in the early childhood area and members of the general public. The Public Education Plan utilizes the following components to reach these audiences:

- **Marketing**: The goal of our social marketing efforts is to positively influence public behavior while promoting the vision and goals of First 5 LA and the goals of our grantees. The Social Marketing Institute defines social marketing as “the planning and implementation of programs designed to bring about social change using concepts from commercial marketing.” In social marketing, action is the objective. Our marketing efforts will include the creation and distribution of all collateral materials (either printed or online), all paid and otherwise brokered advertising (print, television, radio, online, outdoor), along with promotional partnerships (including corporate, small business, community, non-profit, foundations and others).

- **Media**: All traditional media information platforms, including TV and radio news outlets and public affairs shows, newspapers, specialized publications (academic, trade), and selected bloggers.

- **Social/New Media**: Utilizing social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, we will provide target audiences with greater sense of community, enhanced connections to others and conversation around issues concerning children prenatal to five and their families. The goal is to encourage “followers” to visit www.First5la.org, the Monday Morning Report, the Ready.Set.Grow! web site and proposed Best Start community microsites for more information and interaction. Social media also includes efforts to reach parents and other audiences if they opt in by texting from their cell phones.

- **Community Outreach**: Our efforts to reach out directly to our stakeholder groups, include (but are not limited to) parents/caregivers, educators, community-based organizations, child care providers, foundations, non-profits and government officials. Some of these efforts include community events attended by our target audiences along with educational conferences (some of which are co-funded by First 5 LA). In addition, this includes efforts to mobilize the community around specific issues of interest to stakeholders in the prenatal through five community. These community mobilization efforts may involve the building of additional coalitions and partnerships.

- **Government Affairs**: We will engage in relationship-building, education, early childhood advocacy efforts, all aimed specifically at elected officials on all levels of government, including staff, appointed officials of administrative agencies, and community advocacy groups who influence these elected officials and administrative agency personnel.
C. Resource Mobilization

Although First 5 LA has considerable financial resources to address the challenges facing young children, our initiatives are estimated to currently touch only 10% of children in the County. The size, scale, and diversity of the County necessitates that we completely rethink how we can touch all of the youngest lives here. But even with a revamped funding approach, and an accountability plan to enable ongoing and real-time adjustments to it, First 5 LA cannot achieve and sustain its goals without engaging more deeply with and mobilizing partners. Our relationships with community groups and networks, residents, service providers, policy makers, public agencies, private philanthropy, and the business sector all must be strengthened in order to register greater impact on more children and their families. Due to our established pattern of creating initiatives and solely funding them, we have learned that to harness the real power and potential of the new plan, we must partner meaningfully with other advocates across multiple sectors for children. We must assume not only the role of funder, but also that of leader in bringing together our natural allies on behalf of all of the children in LA County.

The Strategic Plan defines sustainability as the continuation, strengthening, and/or furthering of impact on the well-being of children and families over an extended period of time. Our focus is on outcomes being maintained or improved beyond our initial investment. Integrating the sustainability strategies of organizational capacity building, community capacity building, policy change and resource mobilization, First 5 LA will work together with a variety of partners (i.e. grantees, county agencies, public, private) to ensure the impact of our investments.

In order to leverage social and financial capital that supports and enhances the total portfolio of First 5 LA investments, the role of the resource mobilization strategy is to initiate, develop and sustain strong and effective, strategic partnerships with key stakeholders at local, state, and national levels. Resource Mobilization efforts would include:

- **Analyze existing and emergent partnership development opportunities** that are aligned with the First 5 LA strategic plan to build social and financial capital for place-based and countywide strategies

- **Examine the level of First 5 LA investment across current programs and projects**, including other Commission projects, as appropriate, to identify resource mobilization and leveraging partnership options

- **Facilitate community and grantee efforts to leverage fiscal and non-fiscal resources** in order to ensure the sustainability of their work supporting young children and their families

- **Develop a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy and associated recommendations** to support First 5 LA investments, particularly focused on those efforts within the target communities

- **Establish relevant partnerships that enhance existing collaborations and/or build new joint venture opportunities** with public and private groups
that support the sustainability of First 5 LA's countywide and place-based investments

Prioritizing resource mobilization along with community capacity building and policy efforts, and coordinating efforts across these strategies, increases the potential of First 5 LA to support the sustainability of outcomes beyond our initial investment.

D. Workforce Development

The prenatal through five workforce is a critical foundation to improving outcomes for children, although it is also vast in size and complexity. The workforce is primarily comprised of five sectors, each of which impacts the care and education of young children and their families – physical health, mental health, early care and education, child welfare/social services, and early intervention. Given the magnitude of the workforce and the diverse and complex issues it faces, First 5 LA has identified, as a common thread across the sectors, the need to ensure that providers who contribute to the care and support of the prenatal through five population have the necessary knowledge and skills to meet children’s developmental needs.

As a leader in this field, First 5 LA is in a unique position to strengthen its investments through the following activities:

- **Refine core competencies to strengthen knowledge and practice of the prenatal through five workforce to better support their work with children and families.** This effort would include further development and vetting of the core competencies and accompanying curriculum created under the Best Start LA Workforce Development Project.

- **Integrate and embed core competencies** within the County health and human service delivery system and community-based organizations. Activities would include the development and dissemination of training modules, provision of technical assistance, and advocating for policy change. These efforts would ensure that the workforce has the information and tools needed to effectively interact with children, prenatal through five, and families and link them to appropriate services and supports.

To date, First 5 LA has made significant investments in strengthening the prenatal through five workforce, including Best Start LA Workforce Development Project, Early Developmental Screening and Intervention (EDSI), LA Unified Preschool (LAUP) and ECE Career Development Initiative. The Workforce Development strategy in the Strategic Plan seeks to build on the information and resources that we have developed to date through these investments and align them with the Strategic Plan goals and outcomes. By doing so, the Commission will be better positioned to make substantive change in key workforce areas that impact all five sectors and that support the place-based approach.
E. Data Systems Integration
This strategy is designed to support the improvement of the quality and usefulness of data collected about children and families in LA County and the programs, projects and services that support them. This includes integrating data collection and tracking systems about children and families; standardizing measurement of child outcomes, especially kindergarten readiness; and improving the availability of data about children prenatal through five and their families.

The following approach provides First 5 LA with an opportunity to strengthen the quality of data both countywide and within First 5 LA’s target communities:

- **Develop Grantee and Contractor Data Collection System** to collect a set of common data measures from all grantee organizations that will be fed into a database that will populate First 5 LA dashboards. Grantees will be assessed for data and technology capacity, then provided with technical assistance, training and grant support to develop capacity, as needed.

- **Launch Community Data System** to provide a data “home” for all community partners to upload, share and analyze the information they collect about their community and clients. Community needs, interests and capacity will drive this data system. This system will support the expanded information and referral strategy.

- **Develop an Internal Information and Technology Plan** to support the implementation of external data systems integration efforts. An organization-wide technology plan will be developed based on a comprehensive review of First 5 LA’s information and data needs. First 5 LA data systems will be updated over the five years according to our technology plan.

- **Engage in countywide Data Systems Integration Partnerships.** We will review data sharing partnerships taking place among countywide public agencies, foundation and nonprofit organizations, and determine an appropriate role for First 5 LA. This may include supporting a partnership, participating in it or partially funding it. These efforts are supported within the First 5 LA Public Policy Agenda.

Appendix D-3 illustrates the key components of the data systems integration plan.

F. Health Access
In July, 2002, the Commission approved a $100 million allocation over five years for the development and implementation of the Healthy Kids Initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to 1) achieve health insurance coverage for all children ages birth through five residing in LA County whose family incomes are at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), 2) optimize children’s health and development by increasing access to coordinated and quality health care; and 3) support the health care safety net by increasing the pool of insured children. Subsequent funding efforts by the Children’s Health Initiative (CHI) Coalition of greater Los Angeles raised an additional $120 million, expanding the program to children ages 6 through 18 in May 2004.
Healthy Kids has had many positive impacts on children, including improvements in their access to and use of medical services and reductions in their unmet need for care. Healthy Kids has also increased parents’ confidence in getting care, and their satisfaction with the quality of the care their children received. There is also substantial evidence that Healthy Kids has improved the health status (as perceived by parents) of children both in their first and into their second year of enrollment in the program. A broad range of evaluation activities have been conducted over the span of the Healthy Kids initiative including case studies of implementation, parent focus groups, a longitudinal household survey and ongoing process monitoring of the outreach, enrollment and service delivery systems. Collectively, they demonstrate the success of Healthy Kids in LA County. Within its first five years, Healthy Kids achievements are well documented not only in improving children’s access and use of care, but also reducing parents’ concerns about obtaining care for their children and ultimately improving the health status of enrolled children.

The Health Access strategy in the Strategic Plan proposes the following activity:

- **To maintain these achievements in countywide health coverage and access** for children birth to five through continued support of current strategic partnerships with LA Care, the Healthy Kids administrator, and the Los Angeles Department of Public Health, as the outreach administrator. Sustaining these investments will carry on health insurance coverage for all children ages birth to five living in families with incomes at or below 300% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) who are ineligible for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families.

G. Information Resource and Referral
First 5 LA has historically acknowledged the importance of supporting an integrated, coordinated, and comprehensive service to provide information and referrals to families of children prenatal through five. In preparation for the implementation of the Plan, staff conducted focus groups, surveyed the work of other First 5 Commissions, reviewed research and evaluated our current investment in information and referral services. Focus groups were charged with exploring what is meant by “information and referral” and to determine effective strategies for the dissemination of information and referrals across the County. The team conducted research and also designed, coordinated and conducted focus group discussions with 43 grantees and partners to explore these strategies.

Research and information gathered from the focus groups revealed that the majority of residents in communities of need get their information from individuals whom they know well and trust - neighbors, friends, and/or local community centers. Based on this information, a place-based approach to providing information and referral at the local level could be a valuable component in the targeted communities. Additionally, a countywide provision of telephonic and/or electronic dissemination of information and referrals to programs and services that benefit children prenatal through five and their families would also be beneficial to meet the overarching goals of the Strategic Plan.

It is clear that an integrated, multi-pronged approach to information and referral is needed in a County as diverse as Los Angeles. Countywide information and referral services will be
strengthened to best meet the needs of families with children prenatal through five across the County in two ways:

- **Capacity building efforts** within targeted communities for the provision of information and referral services

- **Countywide information and referral service delivery**, specifically those aimed at households with families of children prenatal through five, will be available to all LA County residents. The provision of these services will include, but will not be limited to, the following: early childhood education, parenting support groups and classes, prenatal services, hospitals/clinics and health screenings, immunization, food and shelter and other health supportive services.
VI. The Place-Based Approach

The First 5 LA Board of Commissioners has adopted a place-based approach as one of two central approaches in its new strategic plan. The research and promising practices emerging from decades of place-based efforts makes a strong case for First 5 LA’s shift of a significant amount of its resources to this funding mechanism. A place-based approach focuses on the places in which families live, combining efforts to strengthen families with those building the capacity of communities to create and sustain thriving and healthy environments for all children. The place-based approach allows First 5 LA to focus on families most in need; to create a seamless pipeline for children through which we can more effectively serve families along the continuum of a child’s development; to create unique partnerships with families, community residents and other funders; and to better measure our impact across funding areas.

Our Place-Based Approach will be implemented through two primary mechanisms: Family Strengthening and Community Capacity Building (CCB). In addition, as was described in the previous section, the Countywide Approach is a critical element in achieving the overall goals of the Strategic Plan.

A. Family Strengthening: Family Strengthening strategies (also referred to as program models or direct service strategies) are designed to impact the most fundamental influence on the lives of young children: their families. Stable, safe and reliable relationships with adults and caregivers are a critical factor in children’s optimal development and well-being. While all families have strengths, some also struggle with factors that, without intervention, can diminish a child’s well-being. The Family Strengthening strategies are designed to assist parents in bonding with their children and supporting all aspects of their child’s development in the context of their environment.

B. Community Capacity Building (CCB): Community Capacity Building is a way to improve the quality of life in a particular place – a neighborhood or a community. CCB helps to increase the effectiveness of program services, resources and policies designed to foster optimal child development and well-being. CCB is a vehicle for First 5 LA to shift its role and perception in the community – to partner more strategically with communities, connecting and leveraging community assets to change how people (caregivers, providers and community members) and systems (families, organizations and networks) think, feel and behave related to children. CCB also helps to build the skills and experience of resident families to advocate on behalf of themselves, their neighbors, and their communities to improve the social and environmental circumstances in which they live. In this way, it serves as a critical link between our place-based activities and our efforts to influence countywide systems on behalf of all children in the County.

C. Countywide Approach: As outlined above, countywide systems refer to the actual structures through which health and human services are provided in the County, as well as to less formalized systems, such as the economic system, the policy environment, and overall public will for early childhood issues. While these
strategies are operationalized on a countywide level, all of them also have a role in achieving impact and sustainability within the target communities. See Section V.

To maximize the place-based approach, considerable time and attention has been paid to the coordination of staff, time, activities and allocation of resources to implement the Strategic Plan. These strategies and their related activities are designed to be implemented as a coherent, integrated set of activities within each community.

PLACE-BASED APPROACH PLAN

A. Family Strengthening
Providing families access to high quality interventions is an essential component to improving child and family outcomes. To that end, the Strategic Plan calls for a continuum of direct services that begin at pregnancy and continue through the child’s first five years for the purpose of strengthening families and maximizing child development (see Appendix A-4 for Strategies Definitions). The strategic decision to focus on select communities in LA County and the Commission’s proposed level of investment offers a unique opportunity to provide a strong foundation for all children in these communities that is far richer and more integrated than past efforts. Two distinct pathways will be further developed to ensure that all families with young children residing within the target communities have access to needed support, as described below:

Pathway #1: Emphasis will be placed on meeting the needs of all new births occurring in the target communities. A rich and growing body of research suggests that maximum developmental outcomes can be achieved by initiating services at the time a woman becomes pregnant or when a child is born. Key features of these early intervention systems include a systematic assessment at the time a woman enrolls in prenatal care or the provision of information regarding infant care and community resources at the time of the child’s birth. Supportive services will be provided as needed to address personal and environmental risk factors that may limit parental capacity, child safety or optimal child development. Although there are a number of ways to accomplish these objectives, home-based interventions are widely used with this population and have been found effective in achieving many of the core outcomes targeted by the Strategic Plan.

Pathway #2: A variety of interventions will be funded to extend the level of support initiated at the time of birth for all children 0-5 years old in the target communities. Similar to the services offered to newborns and their parents, these services also will address a range of personal and contextual challenges parents face in providing safe and nurturing care for their young children. Depending on a family’s needs and community capacity, this support may come in the form of parenting education classes, parent support groups, parent-to-parent mentoring programs, home-based interventions to promote a child’s early learning, and individual case management services. A key strategy for improving access to these services will be the potential use of home and center-based ECE settings to co-locate a broad range of agencies and professionals, such as social workers, mental health consultants and parent advocates.

Currently these strategies are at various stages of development. Due to the sheer volume of information being presented to the Commissioners at meetings this year, time has not
allowed for a thorough overview of this overall approach. Therefore the appropriate array of services will continue to be developed through the end of this calendar year. In addition, the final selection of specific direct service models and approaches for each community will be, in part, a function of the resources, needs and priorities of those living and working in the target communities.

For the past several months, work in this domain has focused on the potential range of options for addressing the needs of pregnant women and newborns and the particular role of home visiting interventions within this context. To guide this discussion, we have identified a set of considerations that have implications on the scope of the Commission’s eventual investment in this, and other, direct service strategies. For the full set of information on the home visitation selection guidelines and considerations, please see Appendix E-1. The Commission will have the opportunity to give input on these options at the Special Planning Meeting on June 17th and the Commission Meeting on July 22nd.

B. Community Capacity Building
Community Capacity Building (CCB) is a method and means to improve the quality of life in a particular place – a neighborhood or a community. Children and families living in the communities we serve face daunting challenges. The model of community capacity building proposed here provides an opportunity to engage with community residents by focusing on creating relationships to ensure that authentic individual, organizational and community voices will be heard, understood, affirmed and engaged in ways that promote sustainable community-led change. This new commitment toward this CCB model is driven by our belief, supported by research, that children are strong when they live in safe and thriving families and neighborhoods. Therefore, First 5 LA will focus on strengthening families (as outlined above), while also building the capacity of the communities where families reside.

This effort gives us an opportunity to increase the effectiveness of program services, resources and policies designed to foster optimal child development and well-being. CCB is a vehicle for First 5 LA to shift its role and perception in the community – to partner more strategically with communities, connecting and leveraging community assets to change how people (caregivers, providers and community members) and systems (families, organizations and networks) think, feel and behave related to children.

CCB is an investment in more powerful and long-lasting results for children. To maximize this investment, considerable time and attention must be paid to the coordination of staff, time, activities and allocation of resources to implement the Strategic Plan. Family Strengthening, the Countywide Approach and Community Capacity Building must not operate in silos; rather, First 5 LA must develop one unifying framework and plan that connects these complimentary strategies to each other as well as Resource Mobilization, our Accountability and Learning Framework, and Public Affairs.

The process of developing the CCB Framework is viewed as a capacity-building change process which includes an element of co-design. Co-design involves jointly defining an overall strategy or process in partnership with the core constituency. The community capacity building framework has been developed by a staff-consultant team engaged in the first stages of a co-design process to develop the framework and implementation plan for community capacity building, modeling some of the key guiding principles of community
capacity building (See Appendix E-2).

Definition of Community Capacity Building
Community Capacity Building is a community-centered collaborative process which connects, strengthens and leverages existing local assets and resources of families, and the informal and formal systems (i.e., organizations and networks) which serve them. The process aims to facilitate stronger and new community relationships to promote more effective collective action on behalf of children prenatal through five and their families. A glossary of other terms related to community capacity building is found in Appendix E-2.

Approach to Community Capacity Building
First 5 LA’s approach to community capacity building requires leadership from various sectors in a given geographic area (e.g., local selected community) to come together to engage residents in order to implement programs and strategies that would result in positive changes in the community, ultimately benefiting children prenatal through five and their families. It also requires a high degree of alignment and coordination with resource mobilization, systems improvement and family strengthening strategies within First 5 LA.

The guiding principles for the CCB framework are:
1. Communities are the best source for community-based solutions to local problems.
2. Each family has existing assets and resources which can be identified and connected to support optimal child development and well-being.
3. Each community has existing assets and resources which can be identified and connected to support partnership and collaboration.
4. All communities have deeper structures informed by culture that impact how people think and behave.
5. Local conditions impacting child development and well-being are often a result of changing material and social conditions, power relationships, cultural norms and institutional practices that perpetuate inequities.
6. A community with strong and effective leaders and systems (organizations and networks) is better able to mobilize and effectively serve and advocate for children and families.
7. The value of capacity building rests on the assumption that effective leaders and systems are generally better able to serve their constituencies and work together toward shared outcomes.
8. Creating opportunities for the development of authentic relationships and mutual discovery and learning at every stage of the process facilitates shared accountability for the results of our investments.

Community Capacity Building Framework
The Community Capacity Building Framework in Table 1 below provides a detailed overview of the plan and activities for Community Capacity Building. Community Capacity Building will incorporate the seven strategies approved in the Strategic Plan to implement activities that build capacity in four areas:

Community Engagement: Supporting relationship building and partnerships among and across families, other community members and systems (organizations and networks).
**Community Leadership:** Identifying, supporting and developing leaders within and from the local community.

**Community Infrastructure:** Strengthening, connecting and mobilizing local community-based resources (money, time and talent).

**Community Investment:** Mobilizing and connecting external resources (money, time and talent) of nonprofit, for-profit, government, and non-traditional partners to local community-based resources.

The framework organizes Community Capacity Building into the following components by core community capacity: First 5 LA Roles, Proposed Activities, Potential Milestones and Guiding Questions.

*First 5 LA Roles:* As the table illustrates, Community Capacity Building has implications for the roles First 5 LA will play within the implementation of its strategic plan.

*Proposed Activities:* The activities reflect the proposed work during the 18-month initial partnership development phase, from July 1, 2010 through December 31, 2011.

*Potential Milestones:* The milestones are measures to track the progress during the initial stages of the community capacity building activities toward achieving short and long term outcomes which serve as building blocks to support the goals of the Strategic Plan. The proposed measures reflect the activities of the initial 18-month period only.

*Guiding Questions:* To develop a complementary learning system which ensures supports for families and communities are more intentionally connected, First 5 LA has developed a set of learning questions to guide planning and evaluation for learning. Intentional tracking of data to help First 5 LA answer these questions over the next five years and beyond will support complementary learning amongst all stakeholders.

This process takes a very long time. We must contemplate how to move towards more long range strategic thinking and planning. Research and promising practices indicate that a minimum of ten years with considerable escalation of investments (fiscal and non-fiscal) are truly necessary to achieve the goals in our Strategic Plan.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Capacity</th>
<th>Potential Proposal Development Phase Activities</th>
<th>Potential Proposal Development Phase Milestones</th>
<th>Guiding Questions for Planning and Evaluation for Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement: Supporting relationship building and partnerships among and across families, other community members and systems (organizations and networks).</td>
<td>1. Conduct Community Assessments that factor in Dashboard and Community Selection data to:</td>
<td>Increased knowledge and awareness within the community about:</td>
<td>What support is most desired and helpful to leaders (providers and other organizational leaders) and systems (organizations, institutions, networks) to promote their engagement with parents and other community members in their service to children ages P-5?</td>
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<td>- Identify available resources/services, including those that are culturally and linguistically appropriate</td>
<td>- Community assets</td>
<td>How do communities most effectively deliver information and resources to culturally and linguistically diverse families and other community members?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Determine where families congregate and get information</td>
<td>- F5LA place-based approach</td>
<td>How do communities most effectively establish, maintain, and repair trusting relationships between families of children ages P-5 and providers/ leaders/ systems? Amongst various racial, cultural and other identity groups within a community?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Identify any barriers to accessing resources/services</td>
<td>- Community needs</td>
<td>What information most effectively builds public will and civic engagement to support policies that support young children and their families?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Map current community relationships</td>
<td>- Four priority measures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Identify assets which can be leveraged to address barriers</td>
<td>- Community relationships</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Determine community needs and assets</td>
<td>Community utilizes results from assessment in community plan development.</td>
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<td>- Identify family-centered neighborhood associations and other groups (formal and informal)</td>
<td>Traditional and non-traditional community stakeholders participate in assessment and planning process. (Internally, need to coordinate participation of Public Affairs, CCB and Program Model)</td>
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<td>- Identify family resource centers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Conduct Community Outreach and Education, using local media and information sessions (in coordination with Public Education efforts) to:</td>
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<td>- Educate about F5LA’s place-based investment approach</td>
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<td>- Connect community data on local conditions with the four priority areas</td>
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<td>- Launch awareness campaign on available community resources (e.g., photo essays, tours, radio program messages)</td>
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<td>- Engage community members in the planning process, including providing support for inclusion of diverse community members (e.g., food, childcare, supplies, transportation, language support)</td>
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<td>3. Provide support to Data Systems</td>
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- Ensure that all engagement activities are culturally and linguistically appropriate for the diversity of families in the target communities.
- Foster the use of collaborative approaches to provide resources and referrals to families that build upon existing communication infrastructure in the community.
- Strengthen the ability of leaders and systems (formal and informal) to access and use local resources and information to support parents and families.
- Promote peer support activities as a way to stabilize efforts of providers/systems to engage families in meaningful ways to strengthen quality of services and resources.
- Use participatory processes to connect parents, other community residents, service providers, community-
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|               | based and grassroots organizations, agencies and institutions. | integration to:  
- Create awareness about and promote use of online community presence  
- Monthly gatherings for community families. | Increased knowledge and awareness within the community about:  
- availability of support for leaders  
- who provides support for leaders and leadership development  
- leaders within and beyond early childhood development field  
- community’s experience in advocacy and organizing efforts | What leadership support is most desired and helpful to families and other community members to strengthen the well being of children and families?  
What leadership support is most desired and helpful to providers and systems (organizations and networks) to strengthen the well being of children and families?  
How are parents and other community members best engaged to serve meaningful leadership roles to influence the informal and formal systems of care for children ages P-5?  
What information most effectively builds public |
| Community Leadership: Identifying, supporting and developing leaders within and from the local community. | Use participatory processes to connect parents, other community residents, service providers, community-based and grassroots organizations, agencies and institutions.  
Strengthen the ability of leaders and systems (formal and informal) to access and use local resources and information to support parents and other families.  
Foster leadership of families, other community members and providers in all aspects of the community capacity building work, paying attention to cultural beliefs, values, norms, strategies and practices.  
Ensure that all leadership development activities are culturally and linguistically appropriate for the diversity of families | 1. Conduct Community Assessments to:  
- Identify current formal and informal systems (organizations and networks) with a strong presence in the community  
- Identify current formal and informal parent and community leaders with a strong presence in the community  
- Identify current providers who are identified by families, other community members as leaders  
- Identify providers who engage community members as leaders  
- Identify emerging and future leaders  
- Determine community assets and needs related to leadership  
- Identify opportunities and barriers for conducting advocacy and organizing work supporting children and families  
- Identify potential family mentors  
2. Conduct Community Outreach and Education using results of community assessments, to determine leadership development topics for each community (in coordination with Policy and other countywide efforts) such as:  
- Collaboration  
- Advocacy, Organizing and Power Analysis  
- Coaching  
- Conflict Resolution  
- Cultural Competency  
- Teambuilding and Facilitation  
- Community-based Leadership Models | Community facilitators, organizers and communications representatives are ready to guide and support the community planning process.  
Community Partnership will identify a decision-making structure and process.  
Community utilizes results from assessment to identify leadership development focus areas and topics. | What leadership support is most desired and helpful to families and other community members to strengthen the well being of children and families?  
What leadership support is most desired and helpful to providers and systems (organizations and networks) to strengthen the well being of children and families?  
How are parents and other community members best engaged to serve meaningful leadership roles to influence the informal and formal systems of care for children ages P-5?  
What information most effectively builds public |
### FY 2009-2015 Strategic Plan
#### Implementation Plan

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|               | in the target communities. | - Other Leadership Training  
- Identify and train community facilitators, organizers and communications representatives  
- Support development and strengthening of Community Partnerships  
- Training on the Community Partnership decision-making structures and processes | - Community Partnership is created with diverse membership.  
- A wide range of organizations and networks participate in the community assessment  
- Organizations and networks receive a preliminary survey of organizational capacity  
- The community assessment identifies key existing systems (organizations and networks).  
- A preliminary survey of existing collaboratives is conducted to determine interest to participate as part of the partnership development phase.  
- The Community Partnership receives coaching to improve likelihood of sustainability. | - What support is most desired and helpful to local communities to develop and maintain diverse intra- and cross-community collaborations in support of children ages P-5 and their families? |

#### Community Infrastructure:
- Strengthening, connecting and mobilizing local community-based resources (money, time and talent).  
- Support effectiveness and stability of systems (organizations and networks) through the provision of ongoing provider and organizational development.  
- Support leveraging of resources for systems (organizations and networks) to strengthen services and resources available to families and communities.  
- Provide ongoing support to sustain collaborative efforts and infrastructure in support of children and families.

1. Conduct community assessments to:  
   - Assess interest of existing and emerging organizations, networks, collaboratives and other systems to engage in the Community Partnership’s work  
   - Identify assets and barriers related to infrastructure development  
   - Map the number and diversity of existing resources (money, time and talent) available to families and the community  
   - Administer organizational and networks survey
2. Implement customized professional development and technical assistance:  
   - Identify TA needs from surveys and research potential TA providers  
   - Continue to research and develop relationships with professional development and TA providers to develop list of preferred providers  
   - Select preferred TA providers  
   - Provide coaching and training as necessary to preferred TA providers  
   - Coordinate technical assistance and professional development efforts, as relevant, with Countywide Workforce Development.
3. TA Institute programs may continue

- What support is most desired and helpful to local communities to develop and maintain diverse intra-and cross-community collaborations in support of children ages P-5 and their families?  
- What support is most desired and helpful to families, other community members, providers and systems to limit barriers and improve the networks for accessing information and resources?  
- How do communities most effectively foster mutual learning amongst community stakeholders to inform collaborative efforts in support of children and families?  
- How do communities most effectively diversify revenue resources for
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<td>Community Investment:</td>
<td>Provide ongoing support to sustain communities’ organizing and systems change efforts that address local conditions impacting child development and well-being.</td>
<td>functioning in a Countywide context</td>
<td>Identify traditional and non-traditional community based funders and what is being funded.</td>
<td>Which local conditions most impact the ability of direct services and systems improvement work to effectively impact child development and well being?</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Identify needs</td>
<td>What support is most desired and helpful to communities to develop and leverage powerful relationships and pursue policy agendas to address local conditions?</td>
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<td>Conduct regional funders meetings in each region</td>
<td>How can local systems (organizations, networks and community collaboratives) most effectively diversify revenue resources to pursue policy agendas?</td>
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<td>Identify resource mobilization advisory board</td>
<td>What local community organizing and systems change efforts are most effective in addressing the local conditions impacting child development and well being?</td>
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## FY 2009-2015 Strategic Plan
### Implementation Plan

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<td>efforts to secure resources</td>
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<td>What information is most important to build local</td>
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<td>4. Use the preferred TA provider network to</td>
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<td>public will and support for services and policies</td>
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<td>provide customized capacity building for</td>
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<td>that support children ages P-5 and their families?</td>
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<td>collaboration.</td>
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<td>5. Coordinate community investment efforts with</td>
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<td>Resource Mobilization Team</td>
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<td>6. Coordinate community investment efforts with</td>
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<td>Policy Department</td>
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PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PHASE

Following approval of the implementation plan, staff will immediately begin early implementation in the approved target communities. This “Partnership Development” phase will include the following activities:

- Community outreach to ensure participation by a broad base of stakeholders
- Orientation for all participants to First 5 LA, the long-term and intermediate outcomes of the Commission’s Strategic Plan and the place-based approach
- Identification of and compensation for a team of community representatives, including fiscal agents, facilitators, community organizers and communication specialists who will support participants in the establishment of the partnership and achievement of the tasks outlined by the Commission for this phase
- Assessments and development of baseline data key to 1) adopting effective strategies and community-specific objectives within the place-based plan and 2) ensuring the community and the Commission’s ability to measure the magnitude of change and maintain accountability for its investments
- Assessment and, if needed, adjustments to the specified geographic boundaries of the target area
- The development of an initial community governance structure to guide the decision-making process for the writing of a proposal for long-term implementation
- Identification of roles and responsibilities for long-term implementation and planning

First 5 LA, with support from key contractors, will facilitate the Partnership Development phase, prioritizing the development of a strong partnership that will be responsible for the implementation of the Place-Based Approach plan within each community. Lessons learned from place-based comprehensive community initiatives indicate that the strength of this community-level governance, or decision-making structure, is crucial to ensuring that implementation reflects the community’s strengths and areas of interest and reduces confusion, duplication and conflict. The quality of work completed during this phase will have a lasting impact on the successful implementation of the full plan. The Partnership Development Phase will be accomplished through the following process:

Community Outreach: In order to ensure that the Commission’s place-based investment in these communities is successful, First 5 LA will launch its efforts in the targeted areas with extensive outreach, allowing the Commission to build relationships with a broad array of stakeholders. The strength of these relationships, as well as those between residents, staff and contractors, is essential for successful implementation. Outreach will begin on a regional level, recognizing that some of the target communities will benefit from being aware of one another and opportunities for joint and/or complementary planning. Outreach will continue to deepen as First 5 LA and the growing cadre of representatives from within the community to continue to recruit additional participants, targeting individuals and groups from a wide variety of sectors. This outreach will be an ongoing activity that will require attention and maintenance throughout the life of our investment and beyond.

Orientation Sessions: We recognize that as the pool of participants within the community expands there will be a wide range of familiarity with First 5 LA and the Place-Based Approach. For this reason, a series of orientation sessions will be developed and provided to
ensure that interested participants can increase their knowledge of topics essential to being an informed contributor in the Partnership Development and all future phases. The orientation sessions will build on one another and provide opportunities for attendees to be refreshed on material from previous sessions. The orientation sessions will be offered as many times as necessary based on interest. Potential topics for the orientations include:

- First 5 LA and the field of early childhood development;
- The Place-Based Approach and Best Start;
- The Commission’s priority outcomes with a focus on community-level data;
- The purpose and process for finalizing the community’s geographic boundaries;
- Community Based Action Research and its role in Best Start; and
- The content of the Request for Proposal and the process for its completion.

**Initial Partnership Development:** In each community, once outreach has yielded a critical mass of key participants (including parents, residents and other leaders from faith-based, non-profit and business sectors), the process of developing a meaningful community partnership to build and guide the place-based investment in the target area will be launched. Lessons learned from other place-based efforts indicate that partnership development is most successful when communities have tangible and productive work in which to engage, while creating space for reflection, capacity building, problem-solving and conflict resolution. Therefore, the Partnership Development phase will be the opportunity for partnership participants to begin work on the key components of their unified response to the Request for Proposal (RFP), as described below. The RFP will be released by First 5 LA and will outline our expectations for achieving the desired outcomes and objectives.

**Community Assessment and Strengths Identification:** In order to support the development of a healthy and productive partnership, we will work with communities to conduct a community assessment to identify strengths and ensure that there is widespread acknowledgment and agreement of these strengths by participants and within the community, as appropriate. Clear communication around these strengths will play a key role in establishing the partnership, as well as the cooperative development of a single proposal from the community. Further, the partnership members will be supported in acknowledging and working through major issues related to power, competition and ownership. These issues, when not addressed in a transparent and direct manner, can have long-term negative effects on effective implementation of strategies and the ability of the community to sustain its efforts and outcomes.

**Community Capacity Building Activities:** Community representatives will also have an opportunity to identify areas where they are interested in growing their capacity. As outlined above, we are proposing four core capacities that communities will be expected to focus on (see Community Capacity section above for more information about these Core Capacities):

- Community Engagement
- Community Leadership
- Community Infrastructure
- Community Investment
While community partnerships identify aspects of these core capacities where they would like to enhance their existing strengths, we will conduct an assessment to support the community in making these appraisals to initiate early enhancements and growth.

**Baseline Data Collection:** Further, baseline data related to the desired community capacity building milestones and the intermediate outcomes will be completed in the Partnership Development phase. A First 5 LA contractor will collect this data in a manner that engages community participants and residents and ensures that they are both invested in the data points collected and are provided with information that is objective and useful to ongoing planning and implementation in the community.

**Completion of the Proposal:** One of the significant objectives of the Partnership Development phase will be the completion of a proposal to the Commission that will reflect the cooperation of participants, a clear understanding of the Strategic Plan outcomes and objectives, implementation strategies that reflect the unique nature of the community and its current strengths and challenges, and adherence to the Commission’s criteria in each content area within the proposal. Content areas include

- Five- and Ten-Year Visions for the community, which reflect the Commission’s five-year investment and the community’s subsequent plan for ongoing investment
- Family Strengthening, which consists of services to be provided directly to families with home visitation as a centerpiece for the provision of parent engagement, education and support
- Community Capacity Building, based on the core capacities
- A Community-Based Action Research agenda with a focus on access to healthy foods and enhanced opportunities for physical activity
- Integration with the Commission’s Countywide strategies
- An approach to ensuring community-level accountability for results

Staff has developed a timeline for the Partnership Development Phase based on a community with a high level of collaboration, coordination and experience with community-wide visioning. However, we expect that many communities will feel that additional time will yield more effective implementation and better results. Our proposed timeline can be found below.
PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PHASE

June 2010 - December 2011
Community Outreach and Community Capacity Building Activities

October 2010 - November 2011
Community Capacity Building Training

January 2011 - July 2011
Initial Partnership Development

September 2010 - February 2011
Orientation Sessions

January 2011 - August 2011
Baseline Data Collection
Community Assessment

November 2011 Proposal Due Date
TARGET COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS

At the center of the Place-Based and Countywide approaches are the target communities recommended to the Commission for funding through the Strategic Plan to impact the well-being of families and children by creating healthy environments for children within communities. A description of each of these communities is found in Appendix E-4.

Collectively, the 14 target communities contain approximately 163,000 children ages zero-to-five, which represents 19% of the children ages zero-to-five in LA County. The collective need of the target communities are demonstrated by the following key statistics:

- 22% of families with children in the target communities live in poverty compared to 12% of families in LA County in 2009
- 54% of adults over age 25 in the target communities have less than a high school education compared to 31% in LA County
- 41% of 3rd grade students scoring below basic or far below basic in English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency in the target communities compared to 30% in the County
- 76.2 low birthweight (<2500 grams) births per 1,000 births in the target communities compared to 73.5 in the County

While each of the target communities is a high-need area, they also represent differing levels of existing strengths that will provide First 5 LA with a range of opportunities to leverage existing capacity and build new capacity.

Please reference the Community Selection Board Approval Memo for more information about the community selection process and the recommended target communities.
VII. The Transition Plan

The strategic plan stated that, “a Transition Plan will be developed during implementation planning to ensure continuity and that grantees will continue to be supported through high-level capacity building and sustainability assistance.” On May 13, 2010, the Commission approved a Transition Plan that moves First 5 LA from an initiative-based to a strategies-based portfolio. The approved Transition Plan addresses a specific set of initiatives that are scheduled to end prior to July 1, 2011. These initiatives are as follows:

- Family Friends and Neighbors (FFN)
- Family Literacy
- Healthy Births
- Partnerships for Families (PFF)

The approved Transition Plan includes the following components:

1. **In-Target Community Grantees:** All grantees serving families in the target communities will be given additional funding to continue services until June 30, 2011 or through the end of the partnership development phase. This continuation will allow them to maintain their capacity while participating in the planning process.

2. **Non-Target Community Grantees:** All grantees in the non-targeted communities will receive an extension to their current grant for the same scope of work and services through June 30, 2011.

3. **Opportunities for Non-Target Community Grantees:** During this extension year, grantees in the non-targeted communities will also have the opportunity to participate in either Option #1 or #2 as outlined below.

   **Option #1**
   This option consists of two phases, the second building off of the information gathered during the first. During the first phase, grantees, in consultation with their Program Officer, would select one of three programs designed to identify potential organizational or infrastructure support needs. More detail is provided below:

   **Phase 1: Technical Assistance and Training**
   Grantees would select one of the following options:

   a. **Organizational Assessment:** A multifaceted organizational assessment model that considers internal and external aspects of nonprofit operations, including governance, management, programs, financial management, legal and technical capacity (up to $40,000 per participating organization).

   b. **Social Enterprise:** A program designed to help organizations select and develop viable, mission-related revenue-generating ventures that can be used to expand their income (up to $15,000 per participating organization).
c. **Customized Consulting Program:** A group of programs that offers customized consulting services in the following areas (up to $15,000 per participating organization):

- Increasing support from individual donors
- Conducting strategic financial analysis and management to improve planning and operations
- Accomplishing strategic communications projects to enhance an organization’s communications capacity, increase visibility and/or improve internal resources for communications and marketing

**Phase 2: Capacity Building Grant**

These grants would allow grantees to implement projects or efforts that build on the results of the work completed in one of the three capacity building programs above. A maximum of $75,000 per grantee will be awarded for up to one year in Phase 2, on top of the funds expended in Phase 1.

**OPTION #2**

**One-time Community Investment:** This opportunity will be provided for capital or information technology improvements to increase eligibility of grantees for specific sources of funding. These projects could include, for example, minor building renovations, outdoor improvements like playgrounds, or computer and related equipment upgrades. The intent of this grant is to increase the long-term sustainability of Non-Target Community Grantees by strengthening their infrastructure and increasing their ability to obtain a specific source of funding. For example, ADA compliance can make grantees eligible for a range of State and Federal funds. However, unlike a matching grant, it will not be necessary that they actually receive funding. The maximum funding amount per grantee will be $75,000 and must be spent within one year. A concrete list of eligible and ineligible projects will be developed to ensure that funding is used appropriately and as intended.

Grantees can apply for either capacity building or one-time investments, not both.
FY 2009-2015 Strategic Plan
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VIII. FY 2010 – 2015 Timeline

The timeline below represented the five year roll-out of all activities represented in the implementation plan.