Proposal
April 14, 2021

Strategic Planning Facilitation Services

Submitted By:
Patrick Ibarra
The Mejorando Group
7409 North 84th Avenue
Glendale, AZ 85305
925-518-0187
www.gettingbetterallthetime.com
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April 14, 2021

Harold Stewart
City Manager
City of Minot

Dear Harold:

On behalf of the Mejorando Group, I am pleased to offer our expertise to the City of Minot as a partner engaged to assist your efforts aimed at creating a Strategic Plan to ensure it reflects the governing body’s vision and direction for the community.

More than a project, strategic planning serves as a catalyst to marshal precious resources towards the desired goals. It is a process to toggle between being responsive and proactive while recognizing the limited capacity for City finances and staff time. It’s a priority-setting endeavor to enhance the quality of life for your residents and operationalizing intent into action. Our view is that strategic planning must be seen as both a product and a process. As a process, it can be a thought-provoking, introspective, and comprehensive register of the key issues confronting the City of Minot as well as a perspective on the resolution of the issues.

In brief, our approach entails us partnering with members of the governing body and City staff using a range of proven methods and guiding them through a process reflective of successful strategic planning:

- Policy makers members participate in collegial discussions about the future of Minot.
- The role of the governing body is clarified as a partner in the Council-City Manager form of government.
- A vision of the future is created.
- A mission statement is established.
- Goals and Objectives designed to move toward the vision are established.
- Action plans that emphasize results, are adopted to accomplish the goals and objectives.
The outcome is a strategic plan consisting of an agreed upon set of priorities which guides decision-making for the City of Minot in your pursuit of realizing the community's potential.

Our qualifications are highly relevant in terms of performing your specific tasks and providing quality deliverables that will be useful. The Mejorando Group has an extensive practice conducting Strategic Planning and has performed a number of similar engagements for local government organizations including for the cities of Bismarck (ND), Chandler (AZ), Durango (CO), Minnetonka (MN), McKinney (TX), Oro Valley (AZ) and Waukesha (WI). The Mejorando Group considers Strategic Planning facilitation services to be a core competency of our overall consulting practice.

Offering consultation, facilitation, and training, since 2002 our firm has provided organizational improvement services to client-partners that help achieve desired results. We take our name from the Spanish word, Mejorando, which means “Getting Better All the Time.” This reflects our commitment to our approach with clients who are seeking new ways to improve constantly.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this proposal or need more information, please contact me at 925-518-0187 or via e-mail at patrick@gettingbetterallthetime.com.

Sincerely,

Patrick Ibarra
Co-Founder and Partner
A. BACKGROUND AND UNDERSTANDING

“After I was elected, I was surprised to find out the City never had a comprehensive strategic plan. The Mayor and all the other commissioners agreed that we should have a roadmap in place for what we want the city to look like in five to ten years, especially because we’re experiencing rapid growth in the current oil boom. Patrick Ibarra had a clear vision for making the strategic planning process work so we could discover our own answers, and he made effective use of social media tools to promote the project and gather public input. The response has been tremendous...we have a real sense of ownership of the strategic plan, and we’re looking forward to using it to build a stronger community.”

Josh Askvig, City Commissioner
City of Bismarck, North Dakota

Organizations, such as the City of Minot, are continually presented with unexpected opportunities and unanticipated problems. Hard choices must be made, sometimes quickly, often under conditions in which little is certain; in particular, the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. It can be easy to become distracted by these challenges expending time, money, and energy on activities that divert people’s attention from the organization’s principal goals. To avoid these distractions, organization members – including staff from top to bottom – need to understand clearly what the organization’s goals are and what it will take to achieve them.

This is where convening members of the governing body along with the executive leadership team in a process to determine organizational priorities into the foreseeable future, is beneficial. Assembling these groups allows leaders to make fundamental decisions that guide them to a developed vision of the future. An effective and robust process will fortify relationships among members and increase a shared understanding about the future of Minot, serve to prioritize services and resources, and determine the best path forward in the collective quest to deliver high quality public services and programs.

Creating a shared understanding about the future of City of Minot and activating a path towards its realization is the ultimate outcome of preparing the strategic plan. Moreover, for any organization, the ability to concurrently run the business (i.e., government is in the business of public service) and reinvent it has become a determinant of long-term success.
B. APPROACH AND WORK PLAN

The Mejorando Group is uniquely qualified to provide Strategic Planning services for the City of Minot. We are experts at striking a healthy balance between our two roles: content and process. Based on our in-depth experience of local government and our extensive record of consulting with other governments we can provide substantive content to the Mayor and Council and Executive Leadership Team as they seek practical and imaginative solutions (i.e., content) to embed in the Strategic Plan. In regard to the process, we are well-versed in all facets of strategic planning including effective ways to shepherd the governing body through the various steps leading to the adoption of an overall Strategic Plan.

Besides the technical factors of strategic planning, however we also bring excellent rapport-building skills with organizational members and community stakeholders. Each team member has partnered with field-employees, middle management, up to senior management including elected officials along with both formal and informal groups of external stakeholders. We are capable of brokering and sustaining working relationships with a variety of individuals in helping the project be completed on time, within budget and offering practical means toward improvement.

Our approach merges the experience and insight from key stakeholders along with a reliable process for preparing the plan and the capable facilitation and consulting services from seasoned Mejorando Group consultants. These essentials combine for an effective, strategic planning process that will meet desired outcomes and enable the City of Minot to continue to execute its effort to build an even stronger community.

The process will involve leaders formally asking and responding to the following questions:

- What profound trends are or will influence our future?
- What needs to be preserved (the ‘roots’) and what needs to be changed (the ‘anchors’ weighing down progress)?
- What is our direction and response to these shifts?
- How will we describe our desired results in measurable terms?
- What are the best ways and means to get there?
- How will we measure progress?

Our approach and accompanying work plan in developing the list of priorities satisfies the criteria by which successful priority-setting efforts are evaluated and the City is seeking:

- Evaluates current conditions to identify opportunities to maximize and potential issues to mitigate.
- Leads to action that is both innovative and effective.
Vision for the future is established using an approach that results in a shared vision which is not the same as a vision shared.

Establish Mission statement.

Goals for the time frame identified.

Serves to organize and prioritize initiatives and resources.

Implementation plan that includes timelines and group or individual assignments.

Our work plan merges the experience and insight from key stakeholders along with a reliable process and the capable facilitation and consulting services from the Mejorando Group. Our Approach is based on the Four E’s:

1) **Enlist** (prior to the advance/retreat) key stakeholders by obtaining their input about expectations for the process and topics/areas to be strongly considered at the gathering of the group.

At the actual retreat/advance:

2) **Examine** – the focus of this segment of the session with policy makers and senior executive staff, is to examine the role of local government in general, City of Minot in particular, discuss the foundations of healthy governing bodies in their pursuit as community builders, refresh the roles in a Council-Manager form of government, reaffirm the role and value of strategic planning and examine the impacts from emerging trends.

3) **Explore** – the intent of this segment of the session is to explore the future of the community by establishing a vision and mission and identifying critical goals and objectives to consider for the next year and possibly beyond.

The City Manager, working with senior staff, though not during the actual Advance workshop but afterward, will then add a proposed schedule (including a progress update timetable) for each item identified in the draft strategic plan and
provide it for the Mayor and Council to consider. At that time, any adjustments will be made, and the draft should be transitioned into final version for the creation of a Strategic Plan.

4) **Execute** – Implement the Strategic Plan and provide periodic progress updates.

*More specific details are as follows:*

**1. Enlist - Obtain Input**

1) Essential to ensure the content of the Strategic Planning process and Advance workshop is aligned with the expectations of members of the governing body, individual interviews/meetings will be held with:

   1) Shaun Sipma, Mayor  
   2) Lisa Olson, (President)  
   3) Carrie Evans (Vice-President)  
   4) Mark Jantzer  
   5) Paul Pitner  
   6) Stephan Podrygula  
   7) Tom Ross  
   8) Harold Stewart, City Manager

   Interviews with small groups of department directors will also be held to obtain their input.

   All input will be summarized and shared with the City Manager to discuss the agenda for the two-day session.

Relying on the “no one washes a rental car” approach the intent is for each elected official to “have skin in the game” about the success of the process. This begins prior to the meeting, during the interviews, and the actual flow of the group meeting.

**2. & 3. Examine & Explore  
Design & Facilitate Advance Workshop**

1) **Facilitate a two-day Advance workshop involving Mayor, Council members, City Manager, and department directors.**

   While the input has not yet been gathered for this process, here is a sample agenda based on experience in similar situations with other local governments:
a) **Benefits of Good Government** – Group discussion about the positive impacts to the quality of life for residents in City of Minot, which are the result of decisions made by Mayor and Council.

b) **Strategies for Creating a More Credible, Effective Governing Body** – Discuss the various dimensions essential to ensure sufficient credibility by residents in the governing body.

c) **Refresher on the Council-Manager form of government** – Discuss the various roles and expectations of elected officials, city manager, department directors, city staff and community members.

d) **“Headwinds: Review external and internal factors”** - Similar to an environmental scan, factors will be examined to determine their individual and collective impact on the operations of the city both at the present and in the future. Types of questions that may be asked during this segment may include:

- What are the relevant population trends for the next two to five years? Five to 10 years?
- What types of services will residents require in the future that are not already provided? What might be required to fund and staff these services?
- What types of infrastructure additions or expansions will be required to handle our anticipated growth? What financial resources are required to fund this work?
- How reliable are funding sources?
- Which City processes and practices might need to change to serve a larger population?
- What can we do to make our community more attractive for business expansion or development opportunities?

e) **Create a Vision Statement** – Mayor and Council will explore the crafting of a vision. The purpose of a vision statement is to be both aspirational and inspirational enabling a community to pursue its potential. The recipe for a compelling vision:

1) **Captures imaginations and engages spirits.** It connects with people’s hopes and aspirations. To the extent it taps into a dream in which they can individually participate, it pulls them forward.

2) **Provides focus in an ever-changing world.** A vision is a place to return when faced with uncertainty or challenge. When people aren’t sure what to do, the vision gives them guidance.

3) **Enables people to evaluate their actions.** An effective vision enables people to see each day whether they are making decisions, acting, and achieving results that will help fulfill the vision.
4) **Challenges people to unite toward a common goal.** A bold vision should spur people to focus their individual and collaborative energies in ways that require extraordinary effort.

f) **Establish a Mission Statement** - The basic question to address in the mission statement will be, “What is the business of the City of Minot and who do we serve?” An accurate description of the organization’s purpose will drive the strategic plan. It will embody in a few words or sentences what the City of Minot is. Why does it exist at all? What is its function? Who does it serve (customers or stakeholders)? The mission statement shall be crafted so it’s clear, credible, and understandable, flexible but focused, and brief.

g) **“Our Strategic Priorities”** – Identify specific goals and objectives as a means to active the vision and mission. The City Manager will then, working department directors, add more detail such as a proposed schedule and resources necessary and return the draft Strategic Plan, to the Mayor and Council for their consideration and adoption.

The number of priorities cannot be predicted. Strategic plans may concentrate on four or five goals, or they may list dozens of areas that will component parts of the focus for Minot during the next several years. The plan must consist of what the Mayor and Council feel comfortable with and believes the City and community can implement over time.

Each of the goal statements in the strategic plan will be followed by one or more objectives. There is no set number of objectives that is appropriate for each goal. Some goal statements may have relatively few objectives attached to them, while some goal statements could have 10 or more objectives.

### 4. Execute – Implement

Subsequent to the workshop, the Mejorando Group partnering with City staff, will produce a written summary that summarizes the governing body’s deliberations, including an overview document that lists priorities. Based on the plan adopted implementation will ensue. Periodic progress updates on the various items in the Plan will be provided.

Overall, the strategic planning process will be a disciplined effort by members of the governing body and executive leadership team and the consultant that produce vision, mission, goals and objectives that will enhance the present and future operations of the City of Minot, specifically, and in general, the community. With a long-term planning process in place, fact-based, future-driven strategic decision making will become institutionalized within the organization and Minot will be poised for success, now and in the future.
C. **OUR APPROACH TO FACILITATION**

A passionate curiosity and relentlessly inquisitive mind are the hallmarks of success in interpreting the changes occurring. Increasingly, leaders are reconsidering their approach by referencing the following shift in mindset:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Mindset</th>
<th>Modern Mindset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adoption of the plan is the strategy.</td>
<td>Execution if the strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change is dangerous.</td>
<td>Stability is dangerous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An event.</td>
<td>A process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wish list – the longer the better.</td>
<td>Prioritize list – less is more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumption that existing advantages will persist.</td>
<td>Assumption that existing advantages will come under pressure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community is static</td>
<td>Community is dynamic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations that reinforce existing perspectives.</td>
<td>Conversations that candidly question the status quo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precise but slow.</td>
<td>Fast and roughly right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prediction oriented.</td>
<td>Discovery driven</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In brief, the benefits of our approach to successful strategic planning are to address the key factors:

- **Council management** – Is a springboard for helping the governing body be intentional, purposeful, and deliberate.
- **Goals and objectives** – Are a plan for what to do.
- **Decision aid** – Serves as a guide for making tough decisions in difficult situations such as where to invest energy, where to invest capital, and how to adjust to a rapidly changing environment.
- **Inspiration** – Acts as a tool for generating organization and community motivation and excitement.

As a **former city manager** who invested over fifteen years in local government management, and consultant for over eighteen years collaborating with leaders of public-sector agencies nationwide, I consider myself extremely effective as a catalyst partnering with groups by utilizing my in-depth understanding about local government operations with a highly interactive, stimulating, and practical approach to group facilitation. The result is a group recommitted to tackling, with a laser-like focus, today’s toughest challenges confronting local government leaders.

Beyond meeting facilitation, I bring expertise partnering with county managers and elected officials in navigating the priority-setting process – blending an efficient and
productive process with valuable and contemporary insight on how local governments nationwide are leveraging the headwinds of change into a tailwind.

We refer to the gatherings of elected and appointed officials we design and facilitate as an **Advance** as opposed to a Retreat the commonly referred term applied to these types of meetings. Our work is aimed at helping governing bodies perform better while satisfying individual needs at the same time.

My role as **facilitator** is an essential element to a successful process and achieving desired outcomes. These key skill sets reflect my philosophy and approach:

- Effective facilitation skills and meeting management
- Extensive knowledge of local government
- Add value during the discussion and throughout the process
- Fair, objective, and impartial to all participants
- Stimulate and encourage discussion and creative ideas

Selection of an experienced facilitator is key as they ensure all points of view are aired and considered. Consequently, I will utilize thought-provoking and relevant exercises to actively engage the group, use consensus decision-making techniques, guide group discussions to stay on track, manage conflict using a collaborative approach, and create an environment where members enjoy a positive, growing experience while they work to attain group goals. I possess a certification in Facilitation by Development Dimensions International, one of the leaders in the marketplace.

I will facilitate the workshop by utilizing an approach that encourages the full participation of attendees, creates a relaxed and productive meeting environment, and keeps the group on-track with accomplishing agreed upon objectives.
D. Fee

The Fee to design and facilitate the Strategic Planning process is $13,125. The fee for the provision of services is divided as follows:

- Hourly rate is @$275 and estimate is fifteen hours for interviews, agenda preparation, summary preparation, etc. Total fee is $4,125.

- Rate for facilitation services is $4,500 for full day. Intent is to have a two-day workshop; two days @ $4,500 per day = $9,000.

Travel reimbursement is in addition to the fee.

E. Dates Available

Dates available for a two-day workshop are:

- Friday, May 7th and Saturday, May 8th
- Monday, May 17th and Tuesday, May 18th
- Friday, May 21st and Saturday, May 22nd
- Thursday, May 27th and Friday, May 28th
F. REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

A sample list of client successes:

City of Waukesha, Wisconsin (pop. 72,663)

In 2018, the City retained Patrick Ibarra to design a strategic planning process that included several community forums and a two-day Advance workshop involving a fifteen-member governing body, City Administrator, and department directors. The primary focus was on revising the Strategic Plan which included the following areas of focus: land-use, economic development, infrastructure improvements, creating a stronger downtown and prioritizing quality of life amenities.

City of Durango, Colorado (pop. 18,588)

In early 2021, facilitated a Strategic Planning process to accelerate the transition of a newly appointed city manager in a community experiencing rapid growth. The focus was to create a shared list of priorities for the balance of 2021. Reference: Jose Madrigal, jose.madrigal@durangogov.org, 970.375.5009

Town of Oro Valley, Arizona (pop. 44,350)

In 2019, and again in 2020, designed and facilitated a Strategic Planning Advance process with the Mayor and Councilmembers. Prior to the two-day Advance, two community meetings were held to gather public input. Oro Valley has a large seasonal population which creates unique challenges. Those challenges along with other pressing opportunities were examined to generate short- and long-term goals/priorities included in a revised Strategic Plan.

City of Minnetonka, Minnesota (pop. 53,953)

In 2020, facilitated a strategic planning update process that was exclusively in a virtual setting. Patrick was also responsible for a majority of the design process for agendas, as well as facilitating the meetings. The outcome was an update to the City’s approach to building a stronger, more vibrant community. Reference: Geralyn Barone, City Manager, gbarone@minnetonkamn.gov 952-939-8209

City of Pittsburg, California (pop. 72,141)

Each year since 2019, facilitated a Strategic Planning Advance session with the Mayor and Councilmembers. The purpose was to help the group coalesce in their governance role and identify priorities for the balance of the year.
City of Rio Rancho, New Mexico (pop. 93,820)

The Mejorando Group was retained in 2017 and 2018 to design and facilitate a Strategic Planning process that included a Steering Committee/Task Force Chaired by Mayor Hull. The result was a forward-looking Strategic Plan to enable a rapidly growing community to sharpen its focus and proactively plan for its future. Reference: Peter Wells, Acting City Manager, 505.896-8727, PWELLS@RRNM.GOV

City of Richland, Washington (pop. 54,989)

In 2018, the City retained Patrick Ibarra to design and facilitate a Strategic Planning Advance meeting with members of the governing body, city manager and department directors. The purpose was to help clarify a shared direction including goal setting and a revised “Strategic Leadership Plan.”

Town of Queen Creek, Arizona (pop. 33,752)

In 2012, 2015, 2017 and 2018 designed and facilitated a Strategic Planning Advance meeting with the Mayor, Councilmembers, and members of the Town’s executive team (i.e., Town Manager and department directors) who serve in a growing community. The purpose was to update the current Strategic Plan with a special emphasis on economic development, public improvements, recreational amenities, and growth strategies. Reference: John Kross, Town Manager, 480-358-3000, John.kross@queencreek.org

A partial list of other cities in which strategic planning and goal setting facilitation services have been provided for elected officials include:

1) City of Alhambra, California (pop. 84,647) - each year since 2018
2) City of Antioch, California (pop. 111,200) – February 2021
3) City of Bismarck, North Dakota (pop. 72,777) - 2011
4) City of Brookings, South Dakota (24,108) – every year from 2010 to 2018
6) City of Coos Bay, Oregon (pop. 16,229) – March 2021
7) City of Fillmore, California (pop. 15,664) – January 2021
8) City of Kingman, Arizona (pop. 29,726) – February 2021
9) City of Kyle, Texas (pop. 42,706) – April 2021
10) City of Martinez, California (pop. 38,373) – January 2021
11) City of Montebello, California (pop. 62,742) – May 2021
12) City of Monterey Park, California (pop. 60,401) - July 2020
13) City of Norwalk, California (pop. 106,084) – October 2020
14) City of Palmdale, California (pop. 157,519) – February 2020
15) City of San Pablo, California (pop. 31,124) – February 2021
16) City of San Ramon, California (pop. 75,648) – March 2021
17) City of Tulare, California (pop. 63,547) – January 2021
G. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE MEJORANDO GROUP

Founded in 2002, the Mejorando Group, a Hispanic owned and Certified Minority-Business Enterprise (MBE), is a consulting practice focused on improving the management and operation of government organizations. Offering consultation, facilitation, and training services the Mejorando Group values building and sustaining customer relationships by helping align your most important resource – your people – so that your organization moves faster and more successfully toward accomplishing your goal of high-quality public service. We take our name from the Spanish word, Mejorando, which translated means “Getting Better All The Time.” This reflects our commitment to our approach with clients who are seeking new ways to improve constantly.

Against a backdrop of changing mission requirements, shifting workforce demographics and increased public expectations of what the government can deliver, local governments are striving to attain the next level of performance – incorporating mission changes while they implement new technologies, equip an emerging workforce, adapt operating practices, and maintain stable budgets and respond to fluctuating budgets. These multiple challenges are having a profound effect on the resources public sector agencies require, creating a need for organizations to adjust the size and mix of their workforce, leverage alternate workforce resources, and strengthen workforce capabilities.

We have earned a national reputation by delivering quality work products to our clients helping them accelerate high performance. We feature a proven record of partnering with organizations through the myriad of issues influencing individual performance, group/team interactions, and overall organizational effectiveness. Our “hands-on” approach and ability to collaborate with all levels, from field personnel to executive management, enable us to integrate strategy, structure, process, quality, and culture to the desired end: optimal performance.

The Mejorando Group is comprised of professionals that have served as executives and managers in organizations from both the public and private sector, and together have several years of experience working in all aspects of local government management. As a result, we bring you extensive experience, breadth of expertise, strong people management skills, seasoned judgment and a valuable perspective that provides for an immediate connection with your organization’s employees.

Our full range of services includes the following:

- **Facilitation Services** – Our approach to facilitation, from group development to strategic planning, enables a group to focus on future conditions and generate progressive strategies and innovative tactics to effectively anticipate and respond to those often-changing circumstances. This results in a proactive and dynamic
approach to sustaining a high-quality, high-performance organization. We are certified in Facilitation Skills from Development Dimensions International (DDI).

- **Talent Management Programs and Services:**
  
  o **Succession Planning Programs** – We are one of the country’s leading experts in effectively addressing the impacts from the changing workforce and designing succession planning programs. We design and implement all aspects of a robust Succession Planning Program which focuses on establishing job-level Competencies and recommending targeted improvements to Recruitment, Selection, Leadership Development, Workforce Learning/Training, and Promotional processes – in which all are synchronized towards equipping an agency’s workforce with the skills and capabilities to maintain high-quality service delivery and effective local government.

  o **Learning/Training – Design and Delivery** - We develop learning/training strategies, design workshops, deliver and evaluate training, and provide coaching to executives and managers. Our “instructor-led, participant centered” approach to training limits lecture and focuses on using a variety of instructional methods (e.g., discussions, video-clips, case studies, small group exercises, handouts to complete, skill-practices, and group discussions) to maximize the use of Adult Learning. Our goal is for participants to master the knowledge, skills and behaviors emphasized in the training program and apply them to their day-to-day activities. We feature over forty (40) competency-based training workshops for workforce members from all areas of your organization, front-line to executives.

  o **Leadership and Management Academy(ies)** – We design and implement Leadership and Management Academies including assisting with candidate selection processes, curriculum development, training delivery including an on-line/web-based component, and facilitation of action learning teams.

  o **Performance Coaching** – We provide coaching services to middle and senior level managers and seasoned executives designed to improve individual performance and organizational effectiveness. We are certified in Performance Assessment (i.e., 360-degree feedback processes) from the Center for Creative Leadership.

  o **Knowledge Transfer** – We provide leading edge practices enabling organizations to effectively transfer high value tacit knowledge essential for business continuity. Knowledge Transfer is a rapidly growing
occurrence within forward-thinking organizations concerned about the mitigating the impacts of the departure of seasoned employees.

- **Organizational Analysis and Process Improvement** – We review and analyze various functional areas within an organization to help discover more effective ways to manage and perform management and organizational activities. The Mejorando Group helps organizations succeed in their efforts to excel by utilizing a results-oriented approach that assesses the current effectiveness of existing strategies, structures, programs, work processes, and measurement systems. Strategies and tactics are provided to disrupt the status quo, and breakthrough practical solutions are implemented to align the organization’s people and work processes toward high performance.

- **Change Management** - Managing change is the most important aspect of any effort to improve employee performance and organizational effectiveness. We view change management as a process and help to guide implementation of change initiatives by utilizing and engendering in others the methods, tools, and expertise which focus on both the human and organizational aspects of the change. We provide a series of sequenced actions that will effectively disrupt the status quo and implement sustainable change.

Ours is a virtual consulting firm in which we blend our expertise and experience with that of other boutique-type firms to benefit our clients. This arrangement generates multiple dividends, including the application of extensive subject-matter experts and seasoned organizational development practitioners combined with the vast experience and expertise of former local government executives. Together, we help to effectively disrupt the status quo and bring leading-edge solutions to improve employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

Beyond our website which provides general information on our firm, services we provide, list of clients, and resources such as articles we have authored, we are extremely active in social media, providing relevant and timely content to those persons who are vigilant about “getting better all the time.” Finally, each quarter we author an e-newsletter, “Moving Forward” distributed to over 4,000 public sector professionals providing a path forward through the turbulent times impacting government.
Patrick Ibarra  
Co-Founder and Partner, The Mejorando Group

As co-founder and partner, Patrick Ibarra is responsible for Talent Management (i.e., Workforce and Succession Planning), Strategic Planning Processes and Facilitation and Organizational Effectiveness services. As a Consultant and Manager in both public and private sector organizations, including as a city manager and human resource director, Mr. Ibarra brings organizations over 35 years of experience and a shared understanding of the particular demands and constraints placed on organizations and their employees.

Patrick is an experienced facilitator with expertise in strategic planning and facilitating problem-solving and process improvement initiatives. Mr. Ibarra has directed and managed several Strategic Planning processes for organizations of all sizes including cities of Bismarck (ND), Brookings (SD), Carrollton (TX), Chandler (AZ), Coos Bay (OR), Durango (CO), McKinney (TX), Minnetonka (MN), Rio Rancho (NM), Tulare (CA), Queen Creek (AZ), and Waukesha (WI). He partners with elected officials and executive leadership team members in the design and execution of Strategic Planning including facilitating meetings in a highly interactive, thought provoking and practical approach enabling the group to achieve progress, along with steering community groups through the process culminating in credible and progressive plans to build stronger communities.

A Speaker, Author and Conference Presenter, Mr. Ibarra also serves on the adjunct faculty staff at Arizona State University. He teaches courses on organizational change.

Employment History

- The Mejorando Group Consulting Practice, Co-Founder and Partner
- City of Port Angeles, Washington City Manager
- City of Mason, Ohio Assistant City Manager/Human Resource Director
- City of Emporia, Kansas, Management Assistant, Office of the City Manager
- City of Phoenix, Arizona, Management Assistant, Public Works Department

Education

- Master of Human Resources and Organization Development, University of San Francisco
- Master of Public Administration, Arizona State University
- Bachelor of Science degree, Political Science, Central Missouri State University
- Graduate of the University of Virginia Senior Executive Institute for Public Service
• Certified to administer Assessment and Performance Support tools, Center for Creative Leadership
• Certified Facilitator, Development Dimensions International

Publications

• “Don’t Get Started, Get Going – Your Innovation Fitness Plan”, April 2021 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “We’ve Always Done It That Way Is Over: Part Four – Innovating Your Future” December 2020 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “We’ve Always Done It That Way Is Over: Part Three – Reimagining Your Community” August 2020 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “We’ve Always Done It That Way Is Over: Part Two - Building a Talent Centric Workforce” May 2020 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “We’ve Always Done It That Way Is Over: Part One - What’s Next; Leading Change is a Process, not an Event” February 2020 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “Every Employee is a Chief Experience Officer” November 2019 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “How to Create a Performance-Driven Workforce” July 2019 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “Drivers of High Performance - Pay Attention to Your Rock Stars” April 2019 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “Must Reads for Leaders – Part 2” December 2018 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “Must Reads for Leaders - Part 1” September 2018 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “Quality Government” June 2018 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “The Recipe for Success” March 2018 issue of Public Management by ICMA
• “The Future of Leadership Has Arrived” February 2018 issue of Texas Town and City published by the Texas Municipal League
• “Crafting a Healthy Workplace Culture” November 2017 issue of Public Management published by ICMA
• “The Changing Workplace” June 2017 issue of Public Management published by ICMA
• “Curating a Healthy Workplace Culture” June 13, 2017 issue of Governing.com
• “Make CLEAR Your Path?” March 2017 issue of Public Management published by ICMA
• “17 Local Government Predictions for a Successful 2017” published by ICMA
• “Building a 21st Century Workforce” December 2016 issue of CSMFO Magazine published by the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers
• “Cultivating Creative Leadership” December 2016 issue of Public management published by ICMA
• “Six Ways to Engineer Public-Employee Engagement” November 29, 2016 issue of Governing.com
- “Mission Critical Mentoring” September 2016 issue of Public Management published by ICMA
- “Building Governments Employer Value” August 16, 2016 Issue of Governing.com
- “How Fit are you to Advance?” June 2016 issue of Public Management published by ICMA
- “Getting More Value out of the Government HR Department” May 11, 2016 issue of Governing.com
- “Talent Management” March 2016 issue of Public Management published by ICMA
- “Next Generation Professionals: An Inside Look at What Matters to Them” August 2015 issue of Public Management published by ICMA
- “Career Management in the 21st Century” Texas Town and City February 2015 issue
- “Retaining A+ Performers in the Finance Department” February 2015 issue of Government Finance Review published by the Government Finance Officers Association
- “What Government can learn from the Culture of Apple” January 20, 2015 issues of Governing.com
- “How Governments Can Hold onto Their Top Performers” October 1, 2014 issue of Governing.com

**Conference Presentations - 2021**

- California Municipal Treasurers Association
- ICMA Regional Conferences – Midwest, Southeast and West Coast
- IPMA-HR, Virginia Chapter
- Minnesota City/County Management Association
I. THE MEJORANDO GROUP ADVANTAGE

The Mejorando Group is the firm most qualified to partner with the City of Minot in the creation of the strategic plan as evidenced by the following five factors:

- **Government Experience** - Our team members have extensive local government experience, serving in senior leadership and management positions, including as a city manager, and we blend this with excellent client-relations skills, first-rate facilitation capabilities and being well-versed in designing and helping execute strategic planning processes in a variety of communities.

- **Partnership** – We approach each engagement with our clients as a partnership fully understanding our role as a resource to the community and its leaders. We appreciate the existing culture in an organization and in a community, and forge productive relationships with key leaders to help effectively disrupt the status quo so sustainable change is achieved.

- **Strategic Planning Expertise** - We possess extensive strategic planning expertise and have a proven track record of partnering with elected officials in navigating the strategic planning route – blending an efficient and productive process with valuable and contemporary insight on how local governments nationwide are leveraging the headwinds of change into a tailwind.

- **Results-Based Approach** – Our approach for the City of Minot strategic planning process will ensure a genuinely collaborative process for input, while
maintaining a strong emphasis on creating a meaningful outcome – a credible strategic plan that accelerates the community’s upward trajectory towards an even better future.

- **Practical Innovation** – Our team operates from a practical innovation mind-set contributing ideas that reflect a “next practices” way of providing public service which enhances both the strategic planning process and enriches the dialogue culminating in the adoption of a forward-looking strategic plan.

Patrick Ibarra is an active speaker and authors, including at events and publications sponsored by NLC, ICMA, GFOA and Governing sharing emerging trends impacting local government and offering a series of targeted solutions designed to disrupt the status quo and make sustainable and significant changes. He speaks on community building, innovation, talent management, leadership, changing workforce, and communication.

Based on our experience with strategic planning and our understanding of the needs of Minot, a detailed plan of work has been prepared. The Mejorando Group will provide expert advice, facilitation, and preparation of the strategic plan document and all of its component parts. Throughout the engagement, we will collaborate with the City to ensure the desired results are achieved.