Community Action Councils
Executive Summary

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www.TheStatesmenProject.org

The Statesmen Project is an international movement of concerned citizens responding to the growing economic and social crises with practical, biblical principles that solve specific community and national problems. By accomplishing these tasks, we will contribute to the proof of God's relevance in shaping societies towards freedom, sustainable prosperity, justice, and peace.

This Executive Summary is designed as an introduction to leaders or to further advise those who are already familiar with The Statesmen Project's mission to serve communities with what we call "Community Action Councils." This Executive Summary is specifically written for church and business leaders.

The Statesmen Project's General Definition of a Community Action Council (CAC):

A Community Action Council is composed of a group of local citizens from both private and public sectors who are committed to strategically serving the needs of their local community.

Community Action Councils exist by various names depending on the designated community service or the target audience selected by the local CAC. They are frequently comprised of non-profit or educational groups, church leaders, cooperating civic officials, local business organizations, or interested citizens who are willing to voluntarily supply time, energy and resources for CAC projects within their community. Centered in the purpose of mobilizing local citizens and strengthening community cooperative efforts, Community Action Councils seek to collaborate with and support other groups or projects within their communities that are aligned with current CAC projects.

Community Action Councils, while held together by strong relational ties, are not comprised solely of community groups or individuals who hold a set of beliefs or specific doctrines as the basis of their fellowship. They are not an educational organization, though they offer and encourage an active educated citizenry and offer outstanding education services. The Councils are also not political, although their labors serve a civic function. They are primarily designed to strategically serve the community through cooperative service projects, strategic problem-solving, empowerment of people groups, the building of relational bridges, encouragement of economic growth, and the alignment of work serving the welfare of the community in non-partisan social development.

The purpose of this Executive Summary is to help people, especially local leaders, either start a CAC in their community or redesign what they are currently doing to achieve greater community impact. I strongly recommend that you review this document and discuss it with a representative of The Statesmen Project before you present this vision to other leaders who may want to build out or upgrade their current work in communities. Some make this project unnecessarily complicated. Based upon past experiences over the decades, I will be presenting the remainder of this Executive Summary in a sequential format.

Three Core Strategic Activities That Can Change and Strengthen the Spiritual Infrastructure of Communities and Nations:

The Statesmen Project is operated through the ministry of GoStrategic, our prophetic organization founded in 1979. The International Alliance of Community Action Councils has multiple leaders representing numerous cities globally. They offer a host of activities and services. Two members of our leadership CAC Alliance Team are representative of the effective diversity of The Statesmen CAC Project. Doug Stringer (www.somebodycares.org) leads an incredible global-first responder group, and Mark Beliles (American Transformation Company, www.americacompany.org) offers citizen education products to multiple nations. Beyond coordinating this Alliance as a part of The Statesmen Project, we also are building out core strategic activities driven by GoStrategic. This includes our School of Business Leadership (www.businessleadershipschool.org) and School of Strategic Living, our worldview school (www.strategiclifetraining.com), as well as a wide variety of educational products. In our injection of energy into the CAC project, we are focusing on three fundamental concepts:

1. **Service-Based Evangelism:** The CAC movement seeks to disciple nations (Matthew 28:18-20; 25:31-46) through meeting social needs. This is evidenced by our *Survey of Services* attached in the Appendix.

2. **Citizen Education:** Christians, like the Apostle Paul, are dual citizens of God's Kingdom and their nations. Discipling nations requires educated and activated citizens. We offer educational and consultant services to community leaders designed to strengthen community leaders and serve them in community problem-solving through jurisdictional problem-solving. A brief one- page document in the Appendix, *The Twelve Master Principles for Building Lives and Organizations*, speaks to this wonderful tool.

3. **Spiritually-Based Government Through Prayer:** We, like you, are sure that effective prayer is what God uses to change people and nations. Virtually all Christian groups meeting in cities and communities are prayer driven. We are in the process of connecting representatives of their leadership for strategic impact.

PHASE ONE: The Start Up or Remodeling Phase –
Actions That Have Proved Very Helpful:

1. Discover other social organizations that exist in your community, who leads them, and how you might cooperate with them.

2. Present the vision of a CAC and how it might operate in your community to a group of other spiritual leaders in your community. Pastors should include their leadership team, close business colleagues, prayer intercessors, and local officials who are known to them. The Statesmen Project International Alliance has CAC presenters to help you successfully cast this vision and achieve survival maturity as an organization. I encourage relational alliances for impact and support.

3. Form a leadership team from your initial conveners. It is sometimes wise to hold these leadership positions "lightly" since competency and commitment will reveal clearly over time who should be in these positions. Decide if you will use rotating leadership, elected leadership, or more permanent forms of leadership. A representative from The Statesmen Project can go through the strengths and weaknesses of these various forms with you, as well as help you understand some of the challenging spiritual warfare you may encounter from within the wider "spiritual" community and the secular culture.

4. Build, select, re-order, or adjust to fit your situation a strong intercessory prayer team that can both serve the CAC mission and handle the regular prayer that will be needed to accompany an active CAC.

5. Discover the existence of strong ministerial or pastors' groups in your city that have created effective relational ties and a solid reputation in the community. A pastors' fellowship is <u>not</u> a Community Action Council and should not try to become one. Most pastors' groups properly serve the relation needs of their group. CAC's purposes are significantly different from most pastors' groups because a CAC is comprised of many different leadership vocations. No one vocational group can dominate a truly matured CAC, especially since an effective CAC encompasses both public-sector associates and service partners. That being said, essential values, spiritual virtues, and principle-based policies are absolutely essential for the creation and ongoing success of a Community Action Council.

6. Determine financial operations for the CAC as it encounters its goals, projects, and ongoing services to the community. Larger councils may raise funds for administration. CACs are privately funded and publicly funded based on their projects, cooperative efforts, and access to resources. The Councils are usually non-profit and funded by donations from all sectors.

7. Avoid creating unnecessary infrastructures or doing projects beyond or outside current capacities. Many CACs meet monthly with regular phone or tech communications as needed.

Connecting with Community and Other Organizational Leaders:

Whether you are just beginning a CAC or you are looking to further develop what you are already doing within your community, I am sure that you, your leadership team, and your extended members are already connected with numerous leaders and groups within your community. Please remember that you want to build on small successes before you attempt to do too much. My experience has been that city and county officials and administrators are more willing to cooperate once they trust you and see that your group has a true servant agenda.

Three essential elements in earning that trust:

1) Your group represents a multiple set of people rather than just one group, organization, business, or church.

2) You are not there to ask for funding but rather to offer help for a need within the community.

3) Your group should not misuse the officials by using their names in your publications, events, or messages for your fundraising causes or to boost your personal or ministry reputation.

I cannot overestimate how important **trust** is to the success of these endeavors. Community officials, servants, and police and fire departments have deep commitments to their cities. We honor them by building relationally based infrastructure in their cities.

The Statesmen Project has a library or inventory that has been compiled from participants in many cities and nations where Community Action Councils have been developed. These resources are available to help you start or continue your own CAC. This library is filled with good advice from those already succeeding in their efforts at community service. Numbers of CACs began by organizers going to their mayors, city councils, or other community leaders to inquire how they could help in the community. Attached in the Appendix is a sample of activities in which many of the International Alliance members have engaged. No city I know does all of them, but this listing allows CAC leaders to become acquainted with or even work with similar ministries in other communities. I would also encourage you to connect with The Statesmen Project to tell your story about your Community Action Council so that others will have the opportunity to connect with you.

PHASE TWO - Ongoing Operations:

CAC services and projects offer assistance to community social issues and to challenges in local decision making. However, Community Action Councils operate in the context of the national and international political-economic environment. Therefore, some local projects might be selected because state or federal decisions are pressing upon the city. Each CAC must also be knowledgeable regarding the responsibilities and legal requirements that the county, state, or federal government has placed on the local community in reference to the area of CAC community service. As Community Action Councils gain community influence, leaders may face challenges similar to those encountered by City Councils or County Supervisors. Therefore, I strongly encourage CAC collaboration and alliances for the sake of trading answers, assistance in problem-solving, comparing common problems, and fellowship based upon principle-based solutions.

As we watch the consequences of increasing secularism globally and the spiritual warfare accompanying it, this is a *Kyros* moment historically for the church to engage the process of discipling nations. All over the world church leaders are beginning to come together to seek God for leadership guidance, fellowship, and greater social-evangelistic relevance. CACs are surely a part of God's answer to our prayers.

In multiple cities and communities, we see spiritual leadership responding and adopting to increased social needs, spiritual-values conflicts, and a desire to truly make a difference for Christ. Ongoing operations in multiple places have one major thing in common—the fact that unity requires true maturity, spirit-led wisdom, and priestly and kingly responses from God's leaders and people. May we all serve these needs in an ever-widening circle of spiritual collaboration.

Contact Our Office for More Information on How to Get Connected:

The International Community Action Council Alliance is available to assist local leaders to advance or begin a CAC in their local community. If you or someone you know is interested in what The Statesmen Project is doing in this international CAC movement, please contact us at GoStrategic and connect with Kim Beary who works directly with me (kbeary@gostrategic.org | 707-578-7700| www.gostrategic.org). In these rapidly changing times of political and economic turmoil, strengthening our local communities is an essential endeavor and an incredible witness.

> ***Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations;***
> ***you will be called Repairer of broken walls, Restorer of streets with dwellings.***
> ***—Isaiah 58:12 NIV***

For more details on City Action Councils, you may be interested to purchase the City Action Councils MP3 audio series from GoStrategic: https://www.gostrategic.org/product/city-action-councils-mp3/

Appendix Contents:

1. ***Community Action Council Alliance – Survey of Services*** (Offered by Alliance Members)
2. *Jurisdictional Problem Solving and the Power of Gradualism*
3. ***The Five Foundations For Building Strong Communities*** (GoStrategic, 1988)
4. ***The Ten Master Principles For Building Lives and Organizations*** (March, latest version)

Historically, many political scientists, sociologists, and educators have viewed society as being comprised of five interrelated "governments" or jurisdictions of authority. They are:

The Private Sector:

1. The individual (self-government)
2. The nuclear family (family government)
3. The business community (economic government)
4. The church (ecclesiastic government)

The Public Sector:

5. The civil government (civil authority)

Tyranny is defined as the encroachment of authority or power from one sphere of government or jurisdiction upon another. Many feel that today's civil government continues to centralize more and more power as it financially increases huge deficits. Those who observe the civil outreach or tyranny imposed on the other four jurisdictions feel that localism, or local decision-making, must increase to offset the trends of debt and bureaucratic inefficiencies. This situation has made the advent of Community Action Councils more and more desirable.

Problem Solving:

Therefore, I strongly recommend a jurisdictional approach to community problem-solving using the following basic model to sort out how problems can lead to much, much stronger communities:

1. How is each governmental sphere involved in both the problem and its potential solution?
2. What are the benefits or penalties promised by God's Word that help you identify the root causes of this problem and that will motivate participants to solve it?
3. How will your proposed action:
   a. Promote self-government and personal responsibility?
   b. Encourage relationships and solidify the nuclear family?
   c. Encourage Christians to lead the way in serving needs?
   d. Encourage the private sector to effectively apply its resources to this situation so as to stimulate the wealth generation of those being helped?
   e. Encourage civil government to be most effective yet reduce dependency upon itself in this situation?

The Power of Gradualism:

Problem solving should be approached in term of gradualism. Most major problems have taken years to form and they usually take multiple steps to unwind. CAC leaders need to approach problem solving with patience and humility. Many of those problems are not easily unwound. To further complicate things, most of the political left-right solutions have not been carefully examined in terms of their core concepts or the principles behind them. Most participants in the CAC movement want to restart a public discussion that carefully takes apart many of these problems so as to see them with new eyes. The Appendix contains several documents that are designed to re-examine a number of core problems using a principle-based policy approach. These two documents, **The Five Foundations For Building Strong Communities** and **The Ten Master Principles**, are educational materials that provide foundational presuppositions from which to open discussions and to seek resolutions for many current problems that face communities.

Five Foundations for Building Strong Communities:

(From GoStrategic, Inc. 1988 Policy Statement)

1. Freedom begins in self–government under God.

2. The family unit is the basic building block of a healthy society.

3. The stewardship of private property is essential to personal and societal maturity.

4. Rebuilding a nation begins with rebuilding local communities.

5. The local church is the primary equipping center for effective Christian service.

TWELVE MASTER PRINCIPLES FOR BUILDING LIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS (NATIONS)

Addressing values, principles, responsibility, decision-making, and sustainability
To be applied to the "Seven Mountains" of religion, family, education, government, business, media, and arts/entertainment

MASTER PRINCIPLE:	VALUES, PRINCIPLES:	RELATED ISSUES:
1. Transcendence (Absolutes) ○ Man's inherent rights ○ Supreme issues ○ The starting point for all strategic planning	**Transcendent Values:** The recognition of primary, fundamental, and widely adhered-to ideas and beliefs that define, limit, or interpret all lesser values and which serve to create unity for a group of people and guide their behavior. Examples: Christ definition of the "Greatest Commandment"; the Ten Commandments; the US Constitution; the Hippocratic Oath for medical professionals; the Code of Conduct of the US Military.	Citizenship; case law and legal systems; axioms with corollaries; spiritual law over natural law; immigration policy; voting rights; educational curriculum
2. Choice	**Choice:** The internal and free commitment to actions and opportunities which set directions on a particular course. The power behind love, sacrifice, will, endurance, and the ownership of principles and vision. That which makes us responsible for the outcomes of our thoughts or actions. Economically speaking, the source of commitment to choices and sacrificial or risk investments. Politically speaking, the core principle of human freedom and intellectual integrity.	
3. Reciprocity	**Reciprocity:** The recognition of a mutual responsibility to others to relate to them on behalf of what is just and fair for them because they are doing so for us out of our common bond and commitment. The principle behind the "golden rule" of "do do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Luke 6:31). The core principle of covenant and community and, both economically and politically speaking, the highest "glue" (trust) which holds mutual agreements and social systems together (e.g., the Bridge of Trust).	
4. Jurisdictional Government (Responsibility) ○ Self-government ○ Nuclear family government ○ Ecclesiastic government ○ Civil government ○ Responsibility & functioning social order	**Jurisdictional Government:** The four different forms of human government, as referenced by the Bible, that are required to govern society. These four different governmental forms are inter-related, have clearly established boundaries, and were created to maximize efficiencies (the division of labor), minimize the abuse of power (the separation of governmental powers), create specific responsibilities and function, and allow diversities of gifts/talents/influence to shape individuals and society at large. The biblical jurisdictions/governmental forms are: 1) self-government, 2) nuclear family government, 3) ecclesiastic government, and 4) civil government. **Self-Government:** The internal values, disciplines, and practices of an individual creating the foundation of all other governments. **Nuclear Family Government:** The context and origin of peoples' social skill sets and values **Ecclesiastic Government:** A primary institution shaping the spiritual values and conscience of a society. **Civil Government:** The government of the citizens carrying the responsibility for their rights, welfare, and protection (economic oversight).	Division of labor; separation of power; jurisdictional problem solving and finance; decentralization; redundancies; mutuality; edification; jurisdictional organization of the legal systems; welfare policy
5. The Separation of Powers (Freedom) ○ The counter-balancing division of government designed to limit tyranny.	**Dealing with Conflicts of Interest** ○ Recusal ○ Executive–Legislative–Judicial Branches of Government ○ Legal Corporation by Laws (No President, Treasurer) ○ The Function of an Independent Media (Reporter	The lessening of oversight and efficiencies of all external laws; reduction of policing; crime; drugs; dependencies; character; focused energy and efficiencies; "staked tree" principle; impartation-discipleship; freedom of speech

6. **Localism–Centralization (Choice)** ○ Pressing decision-making to those most affected by the decision or application of others' decisions.	**Localism:** The practice of pushing decision making and provision down to the lowest level where people or organizations are actually living and practically responding to current needs and challenges (e.g., onsite). Localism is based on the notion that those closest to the issues are best equipped to handle them. It results in the empowering of people living the reality of situations to deal with them, based on first-hand observation and assessment. Localism is in contrast to centralism where key decisions are made for people in diverse locales by one central body, far removed from actually living the needs and challenges.	Centralism vs. localism; authoritarianism vs. self-empowerment; duplication and redundancies; inefficiencies through bureaucracies; legal and welfare injustices; the Old Testament "poor tax"; Federalism vs. states' rights; taxation policy; division of labor, mandated federal spending
7. **The Division of Labor (Engiftment/Efficiency)** ○ The efficiency and productivity created by skill-endowed labor, singular-product focus, and coordinated teamwork.	**Division of Labor:** Strategic deployment, etc., recognition of gifts, callings, skill sets, training, competitive advantages	
8. **Service-Based Power (Love)** ○ The use f authority and power to enhance the value and welfare of others.	**Service-Based Power:** Service-based power is the use of both authority and power to enhance the value, skill sets, resource base, and capacities of those under the authority of a person or organization. Christ Himself is exhibit "A" of one embodying and exercising this unique use of power (Philippians 2:3-11). It is the deliberate use of authority and its associated power to serve those under the authority to help people help themselves to act in compliance with the group's values rather than just use authority and power to force compliance.	Empowerment vs. self-centered gain, organizational-relational culture; obedience vs. loyalty; relational leverage; love vs. authoritarianism
9. **Limits (Safety, Goals, Sustainability)** ○ The concept protecting us from harm ○ The concept that limits can hinder us from progress or freedom	**Limits:** The recognition that limits both protect us from harm and protect us from harming others. Well-defined limits take into account different capacities, gifts, training, motivations, needs, challenges, jurisdictions of authority, etc.	The governmental separation of powers; tyranny; division of labor; law of diminishing returns; banking, currency, leverage limits; taxation policy; laws in all forms; presumptuous sin; foreign policy; environmentalism; sustainability
10. **Justice-Equality (Inputs, Rewards, Common Accountability)** ○ Due rewards or penalties ○ Common human value and rights	**Justice-Equality:** Justice is the concept that people are rewarded or punished as a result of their own specific actions, and the rewards or punishments are correctly and appropriately applied using a commonly accepted standard. Equality is the concept of treating all people equally through the establishment of common rights, responsibilities, and opportunities without privilege or discrimination for certain groups. Justice deals with receiving one's proper due; equality deals with everyone receiving the same treatment.	Taxation policy; criminal law; special-interest inequalities; racism; sexism; unequal wages; entitlements; exploitation; systemic injustices; community; liberty; respect vs. envy; competition (capitalism) vs. socialism (authoritarian redistribution); market equilibrium vs. planned allocation; egalitarianism vs. exploitation
11. **Results-Based Reality (Truth)** ○ Performance-based evaluations ○ Truth in action	**Results-Based Policies:** The belief that theories, ideas, programs, or actions should be tested and then evaluated based on factual results rather than hopes, bias, projections, or ideological paradigms. If the known variable factors have been properly tested, the results should be allowed to "speak for themselves." Policies are then either applied or discarded based on the factual results.	Ideologies; religious concepts; economic/social/environmental theory of all sorts; political parties; scientific method; self-interest and delusion; ideas and ideologies must be measured by results.
12. **Bridge of Trust (Relational Building)** ○ Relational confidence in people, systems, or Ideas	**The Bridge of Trust:** All successful, healthy, mutual relationships—be they personal, organizational, national or international—are held together by trust between the parties. The trust can be evaluated by what pressures and challenges those relationships can withstand and remain intact without becoming "broken." The "bridge of trust" is a model for understanding how trust can be built and broken between people; a bridge can be a safe passageway of interaction between two parties or become broken, preventing successful engagement.	Organization; unity; personal relationships; national trust in political, economic, and legal systems; contracts of all sorts; scale of action related to competency and character; all relationships have "load limits"