

# Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness

## SUCCESS STORY

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

### Meta-Leadership Summit Launches the Downtown Emergency Advisory Committee

Contributor: Bill Anderson

*"...there was a time when the government could fund everything, but those days are gone. Today is the day of collaboration among sectors."*

The Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District (DID) is a non-profit entity that supports, preserves, creates, and enhances a vibrant, competitive, and thriving downtown that attracts and retains businesses, employees, residents, and visitors. Committed to their mission of maintaining a strong downtown, DID members recognized the need to tackle the issue of preparedness and safety for residents, business owners, and visitors, and in 2009 planned to create a Downtown Emergency Advisory Committee (DEAC) dedicated to this task.

#### Meta-Leadership and the "Whole Community"

The November 2009 Minneapolis Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness provided the vehicle to launch the new Downtown Emergency Advisory Committee (DEAC) and a "whole community" approach to preparedness. As Bill Anderson, Emergency Management for the City of Minneapolis, DEAC member, and member of the Summit planning committee described, "The Summit provided a perfect launch pad for the DEAC. We promoted the DEAC at the Summit which included attendees who represented key businesses and organizations with whom we wanted to partner."

#### The Summit connected and engaged a broader audience

Anderson also credited the Summit for highlighting the importance of engaging non-profit partners in preparedness planning. He stated that although emergency management and traditional response agencies were aware of non-profit partners, the Summit provided the opportunity to build stronger working relationships with organizations such as the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Animal Disaster Coalition, and other groups such as those dedicated to serving persons with disabilities.

#### Meta-Leadership continues in Minneapolis today

Today, the DEAC is comprised of approximately 25 members who represent top Fortune 500 companies that have a strong presence in Minneapolis, such as Target and Brookfield Properties, as well as leaders from the public and non-profit sectors. The group works to conduct trainings – some geared toward residents, others to building operators, engineers, and building owners – on how to be better prepared. Annually, the DEAC hosts a "Prepare Fair" in downtown Minneapolis in September which showcases displays, emergency vehicles, equipment, and offers courses on topics ranging from behavioral health, to public health, and general preparedness.

#### Moving forward with plans for the future

The DEAC events are made possible through a variety of generous donations from public and private entities. Anderson credits the community for seeing the merit of investing in preparedness after



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experiencing a multitude of first-hand emergencies and public events in the past 5 years, such as the 2009 and 2011 tornados, the 2008 Republican National Convention, and the 2007 I-35W bridge collapse. Moving forward, the DEAC plans to continue identifying innovative ways to enhance the preparedness capabilities of all downtown inhabitants, including using social media and technology to provide just-in-time emergency communications.

### Collaboration is the key

Anderson, who also serves as President of the National Urban Area Security Initiative Association, which represents local emergency managers and homeland security officials in the Nation's 64 largest metro areas, (a Department of Homeland Security Initiative), reflects that "there was a time when the government could fund everything, but those days are gone and today is the day of collaboration between sectors." Anderson hopes to promote the need for cross-sector collaboration as well as disseminate the lessons learned from the Minneapolis DEAC through the nationwide platform of UASI and a whole community approach to emergency management.

*The Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness empowered business, government and nonprofit leaders to act together in times of crisis. The five-year initiative connected 5,000 business, government and nonprofit leaders in 36 communities. For resources and more information about Meta-Leadership visit the [CDC Foundation Meta-Leadership Website](#).*



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