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***PARTIAL DRAFT***

March 22, 2010

Mr. Steve Jenkins  
Deputy City Manager  
City of Oak Ridge  
Oak Ridge, TN 37830

**Subject: Ultra fast Google for city?**

Dear Mr. Jenkins,

The immense potential benefit of an ultra fast internet to the Oak Ridge community and beyond, is limited only by our imaginations, shared visions and collective will to bring our visions to fruition.

The intent of this letter is to share a seed of, at least, one idea which will strengthen Oak Ridge's case for selection as a Google, ultra fast internet, demonstration site.

As of March 22, the letter consists of an outline listing several categories of thinking, plus details in four project areas showing the depth of thinking which I had hoped to provide for the full outline.

Due to the March 26<sup>th</sup> RFI deadline this letter is being emailed now and an [online version](#) has been posted. If I am able to fill out more of the outline later, it will be updated online. However, should you, or anyone working on the RFI have interest in further elaboration, it would best to email or call me. (URL - <http://davidsperry.home.comcast.net/oakridgetn/UFGoogle4OR.pdf> )

The ideas in this letter are organized around:

- Projects: An overall best practices project with sub-projects related to learning, community development and peacebuilding;
- Why Oak Ridge is such a great community in which to live, learn and serve humanity; and
- Random thoughts

**Projects** - this portion of this letter are further organized as follows:

- 1) Best practice identification, dissemination and development project
  - 1.1) Integrated learning technologies and systems project
    - 1.1.1) CommUnity Learning Project
      - 1.1.1.1) Emory Valley Center Development
    - 1.2) Dynamic, vision-led community development & documentation project
      - 1.2.1) Continuous Oak Ridge visioning, intergration and prioritization project
        - 1.2.1.1) Neighborhood to city hall, collaborative vision realization
      - 1.3) Peacebuilding proven practices and options project
        - 1.3.1) Removal and mitigation of obstacles to peace and development project
          - 1.3.1.1) Transforming distructive power into forces for the common good project project

- 1) **Best practice identification, dissemination and development project** – In a world where we are increasingly flooded with information and so many of us are stretched so thin, just focusing on the fundamental aspects of our work, there is minimal time to find and apply the best practices that would free up our time to be more creative and effective in our work. When a detailed Google search will yield thousands of hits, much of which is useless due to an abundance of deceptive keyword generator used by internet marketers, it can be excessively time consuming to get the information we are searching for. Just because something is popular, stated boldly and authoritatively, or presented with amazing graphics and special effects, does not make it true, ethical, beneficial or best for the common good. While internet source documentation and sharing tools are increasingly available and improving, for most of us, our ability to quickly find, utilize and attribute internet source material in various sharable formats is still cumbersome and time consuming. In short, there is a wealth of opportunity for people to become much more proficient in identifying and sharing best practices in everything we do.
  - 1.1) **Integrated learning technologies and systems project** – The internet is an exceptional learning tool with great capacity to integrate learning resources, technologies and systems. It can be difficult to integrate technologies and systems, but the payoff can be immense (Senge). Since training is most effective when done in a realistic, if not actual situation; video (specifically, realtime, and on-demand, task-specific video) access can be a very effective learning tool.
    - 1.1.1) **CommUnity Learning Project** – We live in a time when it is becoming increasingly essential to not only be effective individual learners, but to be actively engaged in effective learning groups. Face to face meetings where participants have a common objective and the resources available to meet that objective are the most effective, but without the communication technology, are limited by time and space. With high-speed, ubiquitous internet and easy to use, multimedia communication tools it is possible to bring together people with a common objective, in both real and historical time, with access the worlds informaton resources and the best tools available for learning and problem solving. Subsets of this project include:
      - Identification and development of best practices in collaborative learning which builds unity in the community (family, organization, neighborhood, city, nation and world).
      - Application and devopment of commUnity learning principles and practices in communities of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The value of this focus is twofold:
        1. It focuses some of the worlds best resources on supporting a community which requires significant support for its survival and effective integration into society.
        2. It is much easier for the general population to apply practices which have been proven effective in a significantly challenged population, than to apply practices which are proven effective in the general population, but which are poor fit for people with intellectual and developmenal disabilities (without additional adaptation). (Principle: It is much easier to take tools from a complex system and apply them to a simple challenge, than to integrate tool which were created without thought toward the integration necessary to solve a complex problem.)
- 1.1.1.1) **Emory Valley Center (EVC) Development** – Since its start by concerned families in 1955, Emory Valley Center has grown to provide a wide variety of programs including a sheltered workshop (which assists participants in preparing workplace skills), supported living, residential habilitation, facility-based and community-based day services, supported employment, which provides jobs and job coaching for people with disabilities in the community, case management, skilled nursing services to individuals requiring daily nursing interventions and on an as-needed basis for injuries, early intervention services for children from birth to age 4, and family support services which provides assistance to families in a

10-county region in their role as caregivers. The following information comes from [www.emoryvalleycenter.com](http://www.emoryvalleycenter.com), historical article published in [The Oak Ridger, March 9](#) and [March 16](#), 2010, and opinion of the writer (a one-year EVC employee and House Manager).

- EVC's mission statement is: *Supporting People, Supporting Dreams - Empowering Self-Sufficiency for Integrated Communities Working Together for What We Cannot Reach Alone - Creating Quality Lives Every Day For Striving People In A Challenged World*
- EVC's vision is: *Maximizing Human Abilities*
- Currently many of EVC's day services, supported employment, early intervention program and nursing services are operated out of a facility which is scheduled to be demolished within five years.
- EVC is planning to build new facilities for its programs and services which will be displaced. While land has been purchased, planning for the facilities and fund raising is still in the early stages.
- Although Oak Ridge, TN is home to EVC, [ORNL](#) (and the world's fastest computer), [ORAU](#), [OSTI](#), [ORICL](#), and a leading, technology-rich, [Oak Ridge Schools](#) system, ***EVC's service recipients do not have access to digital technologies or internet resources at EVC facilities.***
- Emory Valley Center now owns or leases 38 buildings and provides housing in a community setting for 80 residents in 31 sites. While EVC does have a computer network in its executive office and day service facilities, ***there is no digital network linking its residential sites with its central office.***
- With the exception of face to face, telephone and cellular text, ***all operational, medical and legal communication between EVC's residential services and its central office is via paper***, generally involving multiple copies to be filed in various binders.
- Due to funding and payrates in agencies supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, it is extremely difficult to find and kept qualified, dedicated and competent staff to do work which involves far more responsibility, risk, complexity and difficulty than may jobs for which people are paid substantially more.
- ***If EVC could find a way to coordinate the:***
  1. expansion of its learning community and community of engaged friends,
  2. integration of lean manufacturing/operations thinking into its culture,
  3. application of additional, cost-saving, "best practice" technologies to support its services and operations,
  4. planning, development and implementation of its new facilities, and
  5. documentation of this development project in a way that would assist other agencies in replicating its successes,

***EVC could provide:***

- ***a much higher level of benefit to its service recipients in less time and at a lower operational cost,***
- ***attract a waiting list of potential employees who would be willing to provide dedicated, competent services at a relatively low wage,***
- ***attract the resources it needs to sustain operations in an economically challenged environment, and***
- ***become a model to which people around the region and world turn, to observe best practice services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.***

1.2) Dynamic, vision-led community development & documentation project

1.2.1) Continuous Oak Ridge visioning, intergration and prioritization project

1.2.1.1) Neighborhood to city hall, collaborative vision realization

1.3) Peacebuilding proven practices and options project

1.3.1) Removal and mitigation of obstacles to peace and development project

1.3.1.1) Transforming distructive power into forces for the common good project project

### **Why Oak Ridge is such a great community in which to live, learn and serve humanity -**

- (Summary) When considering the Oak Ridge community's natural environment, temporate climate, exceptionally diverse population, educational resources, community organizations, businesses, governmental operations and geographic location, there are some of us who have moved here specifically for this community and believe that Oak Ridge, Tennessee, is one of the best places, if not the best place on the planet to live.

### **Random thoughts**

- Oak Ridge has exceptional potential to be a world renowned community development workshop Supporting information in the “Your Views” section of *The Oak Ridger: Appeals for community unity* ([pdf](#)) ([August 27, 2002](#)) and **Potential OR Center of Excellence in community learning & resource development** ([pdf](#)) ([September 2, 2002](#)).
- ['Alternative education' not just for 'bad kids'](#) - All students are capable of learning; they just have different learning styles and abilities. That's just one reason the term "alternative education" exists today. (*The Oak Ridger*, March 16, 2010) For years, “special needs” and “at risk” students have had individualized development plans for years. If more of us utilized individualized life-time development plans, it would likely be beneficial to society. Increased internet access could assist in making this more practical.
- NASCAR drivers have pit crews to help them be their best when the race. Internet access, resouces and social networking tools can assist more people in assembling virtual pit crew and support team to assist them implementing their individualized development plans. (Idea seed from “Tank”)
- In a video entitled “Beyond War” (1970s?), astronaut Russell Schweickart shared an insight he had when observing the Earth on a space walk during a commuications malfunction: (paraphrased) “We are all sensing organisms for the body of mankind. It is our priviledge to experience what we do. It is our responsibility to share what we learn.”
- Doing no evil is a good start for becoming peacemakers, and community development catalysts.
- Investment in community is one of the best investments a person can make.
- Getting digital assists in transcending language and cultural obstacles