

History and Accomplishments

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History and Philosophy of MAN From its beginnings in 1992, the Mutual Assistance Network has consistently demonstrated a commitment to forging partnerships between agencies or individuals that may not have worked together previously and to enlisting the input of the community at large in the decision-making process. These changes in the "way things are done" in Del Paso Heights have fundamentally altered the process for providing resources to the neighborhood and illustrate MAN's commitment to a grassroots approach to community development. MAN was born out of a collaborative spirit. In an effort to find new ways to improve the quality of life in high-risk neighborhoods like Del Paso Heights, the Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance conceived an innovative plan in 1992 to consolidate and localize its many scattered programs into multifaceted, integrated neighborhood centers. From the outset, the County saw the need for a private partner to complement its services, a private, neighborhood-based agency less hindered by bureaucracy that could forge close ties with local residents. During the first two years MAN operated as an unincorporated, informal organization, housed at the County's Neighborhood Service Agency. It was staffed by local residents and graduate student interns from the School of Social Work (California State University, Sacramento). MAN's office moved to a small house on High Street in the neighborhood in 1993. Shortly thereafter, in 1994, MAN incorporated as a private non-profit, community development corporation with designated 501(c)(3) status. In the years since its incorporation, MAN's programs, activities and budget have expanded dramatically, enabling it to be one of the largest private employers in the Del Paso Heights neighborhood. MAN occupies a large office space in the heart of the neighborhood and has staff that work with other organizations at different locations in the area. Furthermore, over half of MAN's employees and 70 percent of the Board members are Del Paso Heights residents. MAN currently operates several programs in areas that include Family Support Services, Youth Programs, Employment Services, and Economic Development.