

Innovation in Problem Solving: Using the Bloomberg-Harvard Innovation Cycle to Solve Big Problems while Enhancing Community Engagement



LOCAL GOVERNMENT
**HISPANIC
NETWORK**

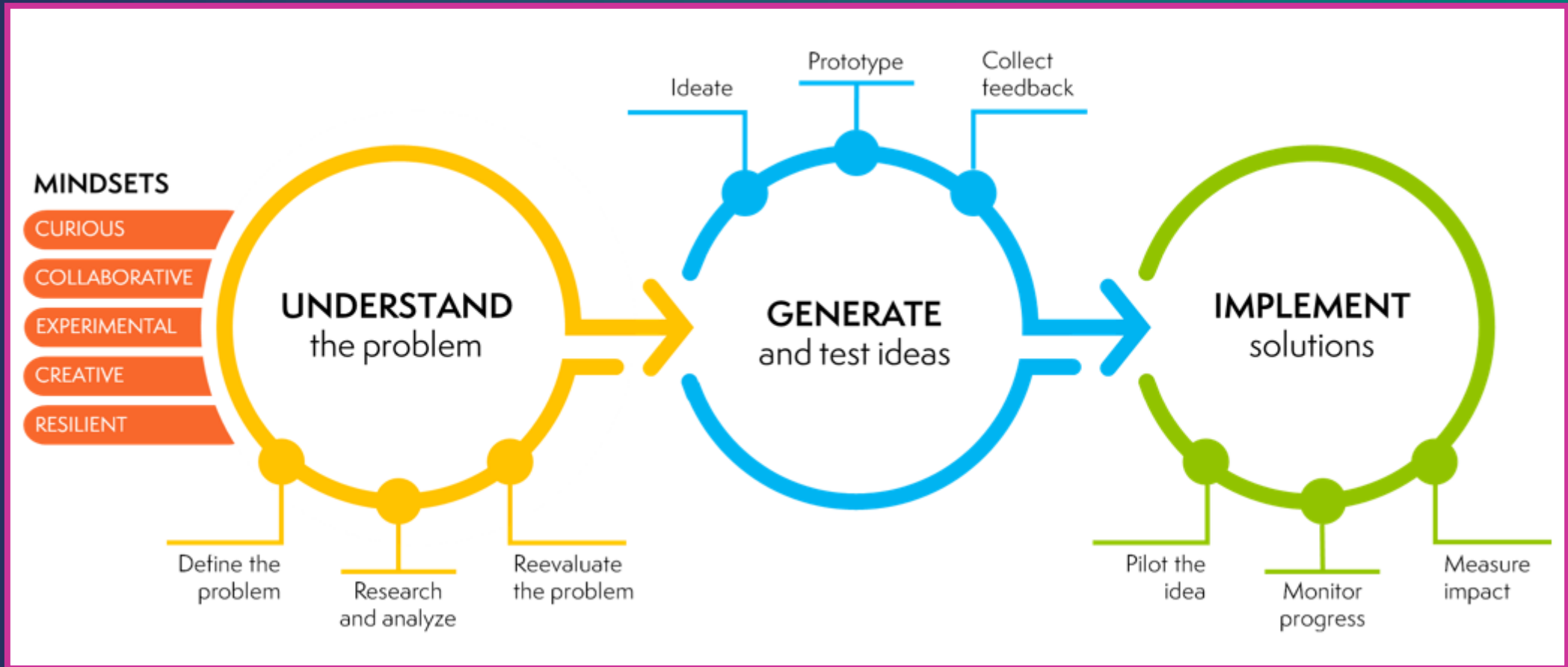
LGHN

Conference

January 27 – 29, 2025

Mesa Convention Center
MESA, ARIZONA

Innovation Cycle



Understanding the Problem

Understanding the Problem

- The problem is...
- This is a problem because...
- This is a problem for...



Chandler – problem statement for the customer service experience

The problem is that our absence of standard operating procedures for customer service citywide leads to several issues,

- 1) We lack shared clearly-defined expectations regarding our responses and follow-up to service requests,
- 2) Our approach to customer service is fragmented across departments resulting in a siloed delivery system, and
- 3) Our meticulous focus on individual service cases diverts staff attention and energy from working on broader city projects.

Chandler – problem statement continued

This is a problem first and foremost for staff who are frustrated by inconsistency of our internal processes and systems which, in turn, leads to unpredictable follow-up procedures. Additionally, it impacts any community member seeking services but not receiving adequate attention (or who should be seeking services but isn't).

This is also a problem because it exacerbates workload for staff, causing confusion among team members regarding the status of various processes. It also leaves residents uncertain about the resolution of their issues, potentially resulting in unaddressed concerns. Ultimately, these inconsistencies erode trust both internally among staff and externally within the community, undermining confidence in the city's ability to deliver effective services.



Fort Lauderdale – problem statement



“Neighbors express a decline in their feelings of safety in Fort Lauderdale.

They attribute this to perceived increases in the number of unhoused individuals, neglected infrastructure, lack of visible police presence, and longer than expected response times.

The disconnect between resident expectations and the city's delivery of services erodes trust and reduces the overall quality of life in Fort Lauderdale.”



Breakout Activity

Understanding the Problem

Write a problem statement for your table

- In this group activity you will draft a problem statement that is affecting your community.
- As a group, brainstorm your community's issues. You will select one community problem and frame the problem statement. Add all ideas on the sticky notes provided. One sticky note per idea.

Examples: More streetlights, safer neighborhoods, more sidewalks, more police presence, more fire stations, cleaner streets, etc.

- After brainstorming community issues, you will take the common denominator and draft a problem statement. The problem statement should include:
 - How residents feel about the issue...
 - What is causing them to feel that way...
 - Why they feel that way towards the issue...



Write a problem statement for your table

- Problem Statement must be:
 - Impact-Driven
 - Creative
 - People-Centered
 - Iterative
 - Collaborative

Example:

“Neighbors express a decline in their feelings of safety in Fort Lauderdale.

They attribute this to perceived increases in the number of unhoused individuals, neglected infrastructure, lack of visible police presence, and longer than expected response times.

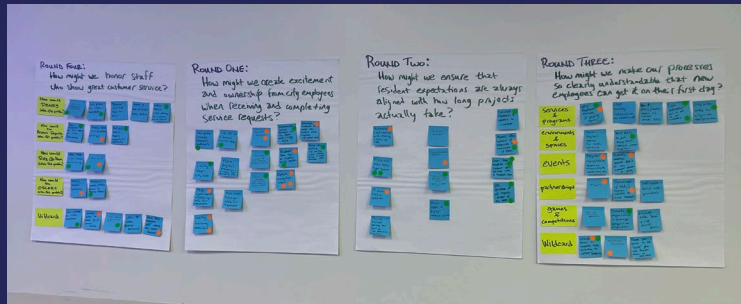
The disconnect between resident expectations and the city's delivery of services erodes trust and reduces the overall quality of life in Fort Lauderdale.”



Generate and Test New Ideas

How do you (re)frame the problem?

- Community engagement
- Used data and interviews (internal and external)
- Input from various departments



Improving the perception of Public Safety

From the understand phase, FTL has identified four factors impacting neighbor's perception of safety



58% of respondents identified homelessness as the top priority for the neighborhood

This is the **top issue** for **commission districts 1 & 2** in the FLPD Survey

“ The only thing that I can say about safety is **homelessness**. That's honestly the biggest issue that we have

- Business Owner



Majority of the people felt **unsafe at night** due to the lack of infrastructure, specifically lighting

“ I would feel "Very Safe" during nighttime hours if there were **safer sidewalks and better lighting**

- Faith-Based Organization

“ **Ample lighting** makes people feel safe because **there are too many dark spots**

- Professional



38% of respondents felt their neighborhood does not have enough police presence

This is one of the **top 3** issues for **commission districts 2 & 3**

“ Police **should have more presence** in the lower income communities that are not crime-related.

- Student

“ **They're not here** unless I call them.

- Business Owner



43% of residents felt that their 911 response is longer than expected – a **30% increase** compared to 2 years ago

“ I have seen law enforcement **take too long** to respond to non-emergency calls

- Residents

“ There's **just not enough people** for the call volume that we have

- Police Officer

Breakout Activity – Ideation

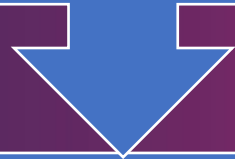
Ideation

As a team, produce 3 to 4 solutions to your problem

Practical
Possible
Probable (pie in the sky)

Generate and Test New Ideas

Team leader and notetaker – take your problem and ideas to another table to get their feedback



All input is good – it only makes your idea better



Breakout Activity – Yes, and...



1. Take 30sec and write a brief idea for improving/solving the challenge (or a part of the challenge)
2. When time is up, pass the paper to the person on your left
3. The next person changes/adds to the idea to make it even better
4. Continue until each person at the table has contributed to every idea 2 times
5. Tables share their favorite idea

Prototyping

From Ideation to Prototype:

- The goal of ideation is to break old patterns of thinking and push ourselves to uncover bold new possibilities for services, systems, or productions.
 - Ideation is based on research done in the community that explores this issue area
 - Requires letting go of real-world constraints!
 - Ideation helps us build a portfolio of ideas
- The best way to solve complex problems is to...

Create many ideas that tackle the different aspects of the challenge area to get the most impact possible.



From Ideation to Prototype:

3 long-term impacts

GENERAL

What did we hear from our community?

URGENCY

What outcomes are most urgent to residents? What would alleviate pain or bring joy?

VISIBILITY

What would be most visible to residents?
What would help build trust?

There is **no one solution** or way to prioritize solutions for complex social challenges.

The Art of Prototyping

Prototyping is the art of communicating an issue through visualization and critical thinking.

Prototype testing helps us achieve four key outcomes:

1. Build a shared understanding of an idea
2. Help us achieve real-world impact
3. Get feedback on an idea in a low-risk way
4. Optimize an idea with community feedback



Prototyping Methods

- There are multiple prototype methods:
 1. Storyboards
 2. Idea Cards
 3. Wireframes
 4. Communication Materials
 5. Simulations and Mockups
 6. Role-play

Prototyping is an iterative process. Different versions can be created.

As long as you learn something useful about how humans interact with what you made... your prototype is **successful**.



Prototyping Methods

Think-Aloud testing

- Observing how people think
- Provides insight into what goes through a person's mind as they use the prototype

Behavioral Observation

- An effective way to understand broad cultural and behavioral acceptance
- How people interact with the prototype of a new concept

Keeping this in mind...

- ✓ Which ideas do you still think will deliver impact for your community?
- ✓ What would be the best way to visualize the solution to your community?

Turning ideas (your portfolio) into prototypes

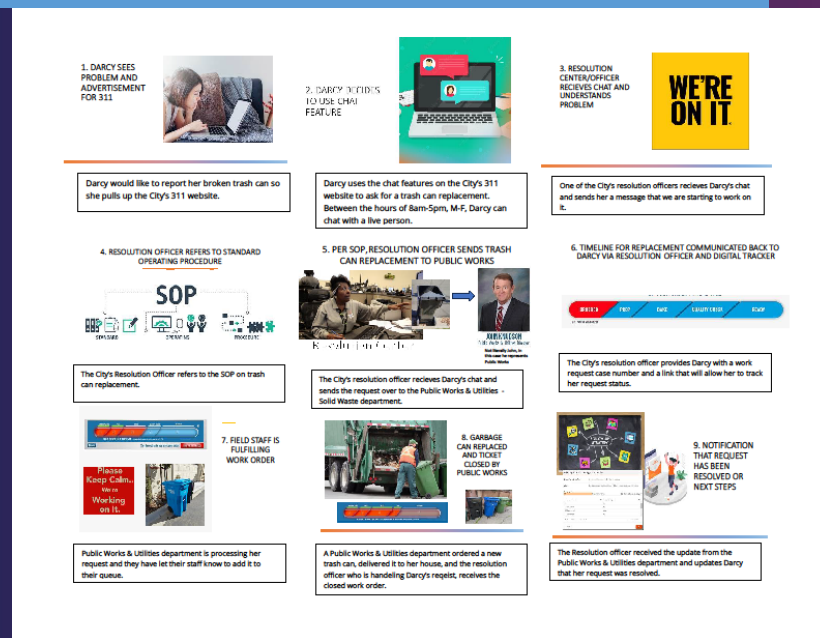


Draft Portfolio of Initiatives

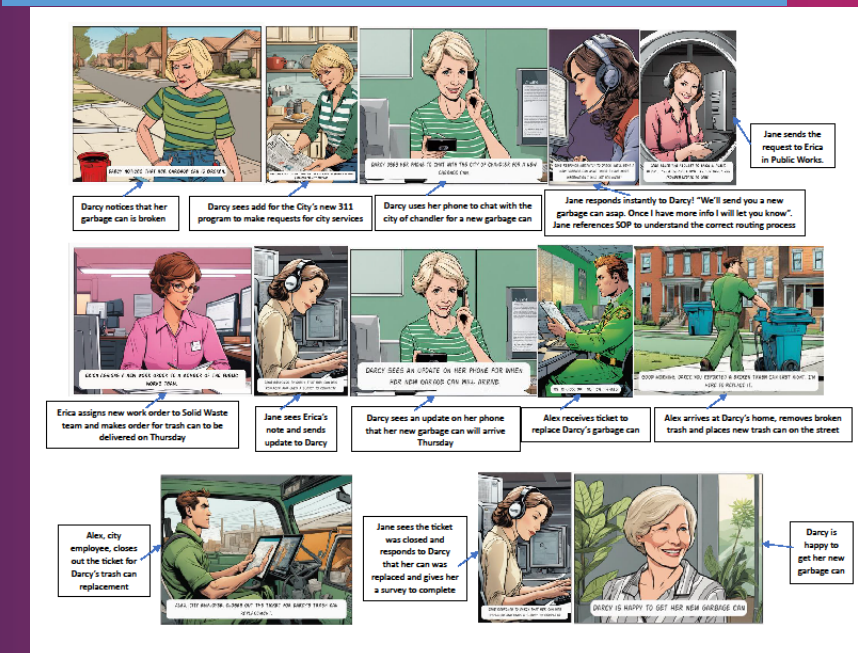


Chandler's Prototypes

Pizza Tracker



311 Call Center

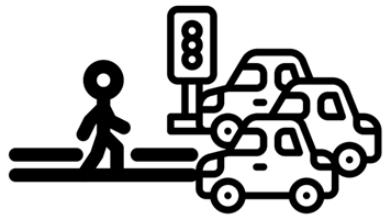


Fort Lauderdale's Prototypes

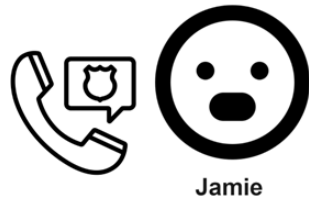
Residents have declining feelings toward public safety and attribute this to increased numbers of the unhoused, neglected infrastructure, lack of police presence, and police response times.

Co-Responder Model

Use non-sworn police personnel to address non-life-threatening concerns. Through prototyping, an emphasis was placed on concerns with the unhoused.



Jamie lives in Fort Lauderdale and frequently sees an unhoused individual blocking traffic by walking in the street.



Jamie

Jamie is concerned for the safety and well-being of the unhoused individual and calls 911.



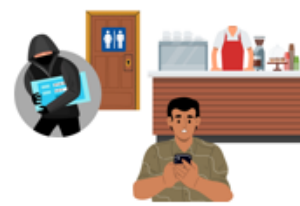
Instead of sending two officers to respond to the situation, as done in the past, a mental health clinician is sent in place of the second officer to help the individual connect with services more quickly.



Dispatch sends the community support team, which includes 1 mental health clinician and 1 police officer, to learn about the situation and help the individual.

"Door Dash" Model

Offer residents the ability to opt in to receive status updates about the expected response time and responding officer via text.



While using the restroom at his coffee shop, Javier's laptop is stolen from his table. He calls the Police to report the crime.



The dispatcher dispatches a unit to the coffee shop. He also asks, "Would you like to receive text updates on the status of the call?"



Javier responds, "Yes!" and immediately receives a notification that Officer Jones will be arriving at the coffee shop in 10 minutes.



However, Officer Jones is delayed due to a life-threatening call.



Javier receives another text message that Officer Jones will now be another 20 minutes.



Officer Jones arrives 25 minutes after the first call was placed.

Breakout Activity - Prototype

Review all ideas

1. Rank the ideas
 - Quick wins
 - Strategic planning
2. Identify two ideas to prototype

Aside from the two prototyped ideas, FLPD still has 4 quick wins that could be launched

	Ideas	Concrete ideas
Quick wins Does not require significant change in budget or resources	V9 Increase community engagement events	Build standard toolkit for visibility (e.g., ensure events are in City's event public calendar)
	V10 Leverage digital platforms to engage the community	Connect FLPD PIOs with FTL's PIO for best-practice sharing
	R7 Create an awareness campaign for alternatives to 911	Create cost-effective magnets with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emergency & non-emergency numbers• Self-service channels (e.g., online incident reporting center for identity theft)• Clarification when to use web vs. call and• If you call, what will the priority be
	R8 Increase the use of online incident reporting, added with dashboard on expected response time	Create a real-time dashboard that highlights the # of incidents police are actively handling to manage neighbors' expectation of response time if they call instead of using the online reporting
		Ensure the Online Incident Reporting is visible on the first fold of FLPD's webpage



More quick wins

After prototyping, Chandler found quick wins:

- Make sure website content is updated (phone numbers and resources)
- Set expectations and launch training for our internal work order system
- Regular reporting to department directors and City Manager to track response times for resident requests
- Quarterly meetings for frontline staff



Tell us all about it!

Each team can share, in 60 seconds:

- Your initial problem
- How it was reframed
- Your solutions
- Two prototypes



Key Takeaways

“In addition to learning new ways to innovate with our community, our interdisciplinary team learned about each others' areas of responsibility and were able to **build and improve relationships with each other and the community** that we serve. Knowing that this initiative originated with the mayor definitely escalated its importance.”

-Laura Reece, Acting Assistant City Manager, City of Fort Lauderdale

Proud Moment: The high level of engagement at co-creation sessions and the validation of how our ideas met resident experiences and concerns

Lesson Learned: Prototyping ideas and gathering feedback before assigning any resources for implementation will bring a higher level of success and stakeholder satisfaction

What We've Started: Aligning existing resources, funding, and grants to pilot the prototypes (for example: a grant is in place to pilot a co-responder program)

Pathways to Innovation

1. Create an organizational environment that embraces and champions innovation
2. Build staff capacity for innovation by applying best practices, tools, and approaches
3. Make collaborative problem solving the standard method of operating in the City
4. Maximize the impact of innovation by aligning work with established priorities and managing risk

Resources

Free resource to get more experience applying human-centered design to social issues

<https://acumenacademy.org/course/design-kit-human-centered-design/>

Ascendant

A small, certified woman owned a small business government innovation consulting boutique who led the creation of the innovation model you displayed in the presentation. They empower governments to build a culture of innovation, solve complex problems in new ways, and develop creative programs, experiences, and services that transform people's lives.

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Nava

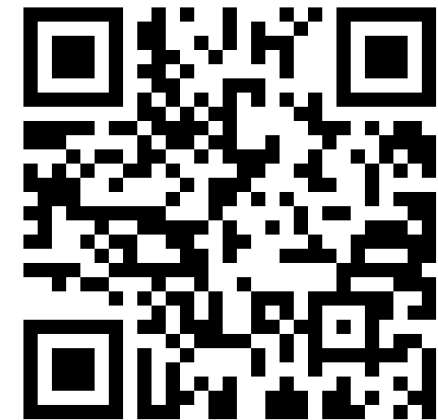
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Questions?

Thank You Panelists, Attendees and Sponsors

