

# **Murrah Federal Building Memorial Task Force**

## **Memorial Mission Statement**



*Adopted March 26, 1996*  
**Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

# Murrah Federal Building Memorial Task Force

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## PREFACE

In the aftermath of the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Mayor Ron Norick appointed a 350-member Memorial Task Force charged with developing an appropriate memorial to honor those touched by the event. Members of the Task Force include family members of those killed in the bombing, survivors of the blast and volunteers with expertise in areas ranging from mental health, law and the arts, to fund-raising, business, communications and government.

From summer 1995 until spring 1996, members of the Memorial Task Force conducted a very intensive, deliberate and inclusive listening process to gather from families, survivors and the general public throughout the world ideas about what visitors to the bombing Memorial should feel and experience. Using comments gathered from numerous family and survivors meetings, general citizens meetings and thousands of written and Internet survey responses, the subcommittee responsible for drafting the Mission Statement met for weeks and revised the statement several times based upon comments from the Task Force as a whole.

The following Memorial Mission Statement was approved unanimously at a meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Memorial Task Force on March 26, 1996.

The Mission Statement will be the cornerstone document in shaping the meaning and guiding the design and development of the Memorial. It represents a remarkable community consensus document which evolved under the most difficult circumstances.

# Murrah Federal Building Memorial Task Force

## Memorial Mission Statement

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*We come here to remember  
those who were killed, those who survived and those changed forever.  
May all who leave here know the impact of violence.  
May this memorial offer comfort, strength, peace, hope and serenity.*



### **Context**

Few events in the past quarter-century have rocked Americans' perception of themselves and their institutions, and brought together the people of our nation with greater intensity than the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City.

The resulting deaths of 168 people, some of whom were children, immediately touched thousands of family members whose lives will forever bear the scars of having had those precious to them taken away so brutally.

Suffering with such families are countless survivors, including children, who struggle not only with the suffering around them, but with their own physical and emotional injuries and with shaping a life beyond April 19. Such losses and struggles are personal and, since they resulted from so public an attack, they also are shared with a community, a nation and the world.

But the story of the bombing does not stop with the attack itself or with the many losses it caused. The responses of Oklahoma's public servants and private citizens, and those from throughout the nation remain as a testament to the sense of unity, compassion, even heroism, that characterized the rescue and recovery following the bombing.

In the aftermath of the bombing, people of all colors, ages, religions and political philosophies reached out in love -- from co-workers, bystanders and professionals who appeared almost instantly to help at the site, to individuals thousands of miles away who sent letters of support or funds to provide for devastated families.

Within days of the bombing, the Mayor's office, the Governor's office, non-profit agencies and citizens of Oklahoma City began to receive suggestions, ideas and offers of donations related to the creation of a memorial.

Mindful of the far-reaching impact of the bombing and aware of the historic nature of the event, Oklahoma City Mayor Ron Norick appointed a 350-member volunteer task force charged with developing an appropriate memorial.

Specifically, the Task Force was called to: ensure that everyone could participate in the planning process; gather extensive input from families, survivors and the public about what visitors to the memorial should think, feel or experience; develop a mission statement for the memorial; carry out a design-solicitation process based upon objectives in the mission statement; and recommend to the Mayor and Oklahoma City Council a plan for design, construction, administration and maintenance of the memorial, including citizen oversight during the construction.

The Task Force includes 11 subcommittees, each responsible for researching and forming recommendations related to different components of the memorial development process. Reports from two such subcommittees are the foundation for this Mission Statement.

The Families and Survivors Liaison Subcommittee and the Memorial Ideas Input Subcommittee spent eight months gathering ideas from family members of those killed, survivors and the general public across America and throughout the world regarding what the bombing memorial should strive to accomplish.

Priorities identified through that idea-gathering process are outlined in detail in the two subcommittee reports which are summarized in the section of this Mission Statement entitled "Guidance: Themes." The full reports are available as appendices to this Mission Statement (*see Appendices A and B*).

By summarizing the reports as part of this Mission Statement, the Mission Statement Drafting Subcommittee wished to stress the importance of the public idea-gathering process in development of the Memorial and, most important, reinforce the families' and survivors' wishes in shaping the meaning of the memorial.

### ***Guidance: Priorities***

First and foremost, the Memorial shall honor and respect the work of the Families and Survivors Liaison Subcommittee and the Memorial Ideas Input Subcommittee, and shall reflect the priorities identified by the subcommittees in their reports.

Second, the Memorial shall comply with two resolutions passed by the Memorial Advisory Committee. These resolutions concern an information center and inclusion of a tree, and they are summarized in the section of this Mission Statement entitled "Guidance: Resolutions." Their full text is provided in Appendices C and D.

Third, the general site for the overall Memorial Complex *should* include the Murrah Building block, the south half of the Journal Record Building block, including the Oklahoma Water Resources Board Building and the Athenian Building, and Fifth Street between the two blocks.

Fourth, the Memorial Complex, and especially where the Murrah Building stood, is "sacred ground" -- a hallowed place deserving of the respect and solemnity associated with great loss. In that vein, families, survivors and others prefer that: the Memorial itself be located completely or partially on the spot where the Murrah Building stood; and the information center be located off the site of the Murrah Building, but within or very near the overall Memorial Complex.

Fifth, the Memorial itself or the site where the Murrah Building stood *must* incorporate the names of those who died (noting in some way, if the family desires, each victim who was carrying an unborn child). The Memorial or the site where the Murrah Building stood also *must* incorporate the names of survivors and must do so in a manner separate, distinct and apart from the tribute to and presentation of the names of those who died.

Finally, it is the wish of the Memorial Task Force that, after completion of the Memorial and Memorial Complex, the entire facility be designated as a National Monument to be operated and maintained by the National Parks Service. Such an arrangement is seen as the best way to ensure perpetual high-quality care for a Memorial Complex of national and historic significance.

### ***Guidance: Themes***

After eight months of conducting public surveys, community meetings and small group discussions to gather ideas about what the Memorial should evoke, Task Force members found that the hopes of the general public mirrored almost identically those outlined by the Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee.

The result is a description of what visitors to the Memorial Complex should feel, experience and encounter. Participants made a solid effort to avoid discussing what the Memorial should *look* like, feeling deeply that talented designers were better qualified to suggest meaningful ways to evoke feelings and create memorable experiences.

Families, survivors and the public wish for the Memorial Complex to be a place of:

- ☛ ***Remembrance*** -- The Memorial Complex should have on the site where the Murrah Building stood a beautiful universal symbol as a Memorial focusing on victims and survivors of the April 19 blast. The symbol should be enduring in its form and content, and it should be appropriate to the culture and environment of the Oklahoma City community. Visitors to the Memorial Complex should develop an understanding of victims and survivors as *individuals* with many roles -- family members, friends, co-workers and neighbors. The range of cultures, races and ages of those attacked should be evident.
- ☛ ***Peace*** -- The Memorial Complex should provide a quiet, peaceful setting where visitors have opportunity for reflection. Many participants suggest using natural elements, such as trees, flowers, gardens or water, to create a serene atmosphere.
- ☛ ***Spirituality and Hope*** -- The Memorial should be powerful, awe-inspiring and convey the sense of deep loss caused by the bombing. By the same token, it should evoke feelings of compassion and hope, and inspire visitors to live their lives more meaningfully. It should speak of the spirituality of the community and nation that was so evident in the wake of the attack.



☛ ***Cherished Children*** -- Families, survivors and individuals across the globe agree that the Memorial Complex should include a special place for children. The Memorial Complex should have a component designed to reach kids on “their level,” both physically and cognitively. The component should help children learn and feel something they can carry with them as they grow and should offer them assurance that the world holds far more good than bad.

☛ ***Comfort*** -- The Memorial Complex should provide comfort to visitors and should ultimately offer an uplifting experience -- elevating the memory of the dead and survivors and, in some way too, the spirit of those who visit.

☛ ***Recognition*** -- The Memorial Complex should include a tribute to those who helped. It should honor professionals who worked to rescue and treat survivors and to recover victims of the blast. Such recognition also should extend to the many volunteers who supported rescue, recovery and medical personnel by providing supplies, food and shelter, as well as emotional and spiritual support. Also, the tribute should honor the spirit of unity that characterized the response of the community and nation following the attack, and it should reflect the sense of pride such responses created. It is important that such a tribute in no way diminish the tragedy, but rather, that it offer an inspiring contrast between the brutality of the evil and the tenderness of the response.

☛ ***Learning*** -- The Memorial Complex should include an information center that records important facts and

observations about the bombing and teaches visitors never to forget the event or the people it touched. Educational information should include, among other elements, personal stories about those who died and those who survived (*see “Guidance: Resolutions” section for more detail*); “before and after” information about the Murrah Building and surrounding areas; and the immediate aftermath of the blast. The educational area should tell visitors about the loss of a sense of innocence and security that can follow a terrorist attack. Such a learning center should be participatory and should instill an understanding of the senselessness of violence, especially as a means of effecting government change. It should convey the imperative to reject violence.

As much as possible, the Memorial Complex and, where appropriate, the Memorial itself must incorporate the themes outlined above.

The wishes of the Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee are to be given the greatest weight in the Memorial planning and development process. That has been a fundamental philosophy of the Memorial Task Force since its inception.

Ensuring that families and survivors are involved to the greatest degree feasible in development, design, funding, construction and maintenance of the Memorial is one way to honor those who died, those who survived and those who love them.

#### ***Guidance: Resolutions***

Memorial Complex designs must comply with the two resolutions of the Memorial Task Force Advisory

Committee. The first resolution pertains to incorporating biographies and photos of victims, and stories and photos of survivors within a Memorial information center. The second resolution relates to incorporating within the Memorial Complex the "Survivor Tree" located in the south portion of the Journal Record Building block.

Following are pertinent portions of each resolution. Complete text of the resolutions is provided in Appendices C and D.

**November 14, 1995 Resolution:  
Stories and Photographs of  
Victims and Survivors**

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT the Memorial Mission Statement will include a requirement that one of the components of the Memorial must be an information center, which, in part, would include a segment consisting of: (a) biographies of the victims written by the families of the victims and photographic representations of the victims, and (b) stories of the survivors written by the survivors and photographic representations of the survivors.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee, in consultation with the Archives Subcommittee, develop guidelines for format and length of such biographies and stories for distribution to families of victims and survivors.

**January 16, 1996 Resolution:**

**The Survivor Tree**

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT the Memorial Mission Statement will include a requirement that one of the components of the Memorial must be the "Survivor Tree" located on the south half of the Journal Record Building block.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Advisory Committee take steps to protect and preserve such Survivor Tree.



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(approved by Advisory Committee 3/26/96)

# Murrah Federal Building Memorial Task Force Memorial Mission Statement

[Appendix A]

## **FINAL REPORT of the Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee**

*March 1, 1996*

### INTRODUCTION

The following report is an overview of the last 8 months of meetings of the Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee ("FSL" or "Committee") the initial commitment that the FSL would be a part of every step of the process and anyone from this Committee would be urged and welcome to serve on any and all of the other subcommittees laid out in the initial structure of the Task Force. We began with a lot of anger and distrust and we have progressed to working as a family unit. Please accept this as a historical record of the process we have gone through to reach this point.

### HISTORY

On July 17, 1995, the first meeting of the Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee met at the First Christian Church at 36th & Walker. Phillip Thompson and Toby Thompson facilitated the meeting and introductions of the respective committee chairs were made to a group of approximately 150 people. Bob Johnson came and explained the Task Force structure to the group and fielded questions from the floor. Mayor Norick also spoke to the families and survivors and assured them that they were necessary to the process and that over the course of the following months, the Committee chairmen would be organizing their committees and needed the names, addresses and phone numbers of any family/survivor who wished to be a part of the process.

The group then went into an open discussion of a list of Opportunities and Challenges that would face us over the course of the next few months. We recognized then that controlling our anger and keeping an open mind would be a true challenge. We saw a need to identify how we would be involved in the process, and how we would communicate between the various Task Force committees and families/survivors. We identified the need for a time line to set the mission statement and how we would keep an open mind and be objective. We reminded each other that we needed to be inclusive to all and that we needed to find the spirituality of the event. Reverence to the rescue was important to the process. We did not want to honor the criminals, or memorialize them in any way. We said that the need to listen and be respectful of each other was very important. We also identified a list of opportunities which later became the framework for the Survey that the Memorial Ideas Input committee used for its input. We concluded the meeting by setting the date of our next meeting of August 14, 1995.



At the August 14th meeting, we requested volunteers for each of the subcommittee. Several of the different committee chairs were there to take names of people interested in being on their committees. We spent time going over the materials from the previous meeting for those who could not attend. Philip Thompson issued a request for someone to do a database. Kathleen Treanor volunteered to do this for FSL and to try to produce a newsletter for the Memorial. We concluded this meeting by also identifying our next meeting date of September 18, 1995.

At the September 18th meeting we had sent our first newsletter with terrific response. The database had over 250 names at that time and we were still trying to identify names of survivors and victims families. A "Search for Survivors" was sent out to the local newspapers and response was coming in but we saw a greater need for the word of mouth spread for requesting names for the database. Feelings of anger and distrust ran high and we saw a need to draw more victims families/survivors into the Memorial Task Force. At that time we saw that it was of great importance to identify people from our group who were willing and able to serve as subcommittee chairmen on the other subcommittees and we started measures to identify those people. We concluded this meeting as usual with setting the next meeting date of October 16, 1995.

At our October 16th meeting, we began working in small group settings. We decided to use the smaller groups to promote intimacy and familiarity among victims families and survivors. This was the process we chose to use to put our feelings and concepts down on paper. Counselors came to act as facilitators and to allow us to speak freely without reservation and without distraction. They were the recorders at the different tables putting the committee's feelings into words. We also adjourned this meeting with the date planned for our next meeting, which was November 13, 1995.

At our November 13 meeting we continued with our group discussions on our feelings and interpretations of the Memorial. It was also brought to the attention of the committee that a compilation should be written by the victims families and survivors. Such material would be made available for review by any design team prior to submission of a proposed design for the Memorial. Also at this meeting a proposal from the Coordinating Committee was brought before the FSL by Bob Johnson. This proposal was that the stories of the victims as told by the families and the survivors as told by the survivors, and the photographs of the victims and survivors be included in any information center, as one component of the Memorial. This proposal was unanimously received by the FSL. This was also accepted with the stipulation that the Archives committee and the FSL come to an agreement as to content and length. A resolution setting forth the proposal was approved by the Advisory Committee on November 14, 1995. See attached Appendix "A" to this report.

The next meeting was held on December 11th. At this meeting we narrowed down the ideas and themes to the top five ideas in our small groups. From that we proceeded to our next meeting of January 8th.

The next meeting was held on January 8, 1996. From the five themes an overall trend was noticed. There were 20 things that were repeated in all the groups. So we had inadvertently

narrowed down our feelings and themes to these final 20 selections. The group used a multi-voting process using seven votes that they could place on any of the 20 themes as they wished. They were allowed, if they chose, to put all their votes on one selection or they could disperse their votes to several categories as they wished. This method was designed to allow participants to take ownership in the finalization process. This month it was also brought to our attention that a tree, which was a forgotten survivor of the blast, was still living. It was requested that we take measures to save the tree and incorporate it as a living element to the Memorial. This was also voted in unanimously. Hence we had identified the second element of the Memorial. The Survivor Tree. A resolution regarding The Survivor Tree was adopted by the Advisory Committee at its meeting on January 16, 1996.

At our February 19th meeting, from our voting the month before, we narrowed down our feelings to the top ten recurring themes, those being:

1. Focus on victims and survivors
2. Never forget/always remember
3. Quiet, peaceful, serene, sacred
4. Hope, spiritual
5. Something special for the children
6. Universal Symbol
7. Comforting
8. Sense of Pride
9. Educational (study of non-violence)
10. Loss of innocence/security

Also at the February 19 meeting, the Coordinating Committee presented the design selection methodology structure, which was adopted by the Advisory Committee on January 16, 1996, subject to review and approval by the Families/ Survivors Liaison Subcommittee. A copy of such design selection methodology is attached as Appendix B. After a discussion, the resolution was passed with a small addition. The addition would be that after the Evaluation Panel narrows the field down to 10 honorable mentions and 3 finalists, the families and survivors would be asked to view the final three and each participant would be asked to write comments on the three finalists. The Final Selection committee would then consider these written recommendations prior to selecting the winner. We ended the meeting by everyone writing down their individual feelings on the memorial. These will be compiled and submitted to the Design Solicitation Committee for the potential designers to read and know our feelings.

Therefore, after reviewing the many months of notes and statements written by the families and survivors, this Committee strongly believes that the Mission Statement should include the following: The Memorial should include a beautiful universal symbol that focuses on the Victims and Survivors. The Memorial Site should include a quiet, peaceful, serene and sacred place of learning located away from the “footprint” of the Alfred P. Murrah Building. It should teach us to never forget/always remember. The Memorial should memorialize those who are lost and remember those survived. There should be an area set aside for the children where they can learn and grow and be assured that there is more good in the world than bad. The Memorial should also include an information center, and one of the exhibits contained therein shall be the biographies of the victims (written by the families), the stories of the survivors (written by the survivors), and the photographs of the victims and survivors. The Memorial shall

also include information about those involved in the rescue effort which inspired a sense of pride in our state and fellow man. The Survivor Tree located north of N.W. 5th Street should be preserved as a part of the Memorial.

In conclusion, we respectfully submit our above recommendation to be included within the Mission statement for the Memorial in some form, however that may be.

The Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee

# Murrah Federal Building Memorial Task Force Memorial Mission Statement

[Appendix B]

## **FINAL REPORT OF The Murrah Federal Building Memorial Task Force Memorial Ideas Input Subcommittee March 1, 1996**

At 9:02 a.m. on April 19, 1995, the horror of domestic terrorism struck deeply into the heart of Oklahoma City--and all of our lives were immediately changed forever. The grief, loss and helplessness we individually and collectively suffered as a result of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, and from the mass murders of our family members, friends and fellow workers, was a suffering that no other American city had ever experienced. Our public servants and private citizens, along with those from other towns and cities throughout this great nation, responded quickly and effectively with acts of heroism and deeds of compassion. And the world seemed to marvel at the way in which Oklahoma City and the State of Oklahoma carried itself with dignity and generosity through this time of tragedy--coming to describe it as the "Oklahoma Standard."

Before the sun set on the day after the bomb exploded, the Oklahoma City Mayor's office, the Governor's office, directors of non-profit agencies, and citizens throughout the City began to receive suggestions and ideas, and offers of donations and assistance, about the creation of a memorial to be built in response to the bombing. The number of memorial ideas and specific design proposals being submitted by interested persons increased substantially over the next few weeks. When the process of dealing with the removal of the victims and the demolition of the building had been completed, and the initial mechanisms for delivering financial assistance to the victims' families and survivors had been instituted, Mayor Ron Norick was able to turn his attention to the memorial process.

In mid-July, Mayor Norick appointed the initial members of the Murrah Federal Building Memorial Task Force (the "Task Force"), chaired by Robert M. Johnson, with Karen Luke as its Vice Chair. The Task Force was charged to (i) coordinate and unify the Memorial process, so that all constituencies could participate in the process, (ii) obtain extensive input from the victims' families and the public about what the memorial should remember and what visitors to it should feel, think and experience, (iii) develop a Memorial Mission Statement of the objectives to be achieved by the completed Memorial, (iv) carry out the design solicitation process based on the objectives in the Mission Statement, and (v) ultimately recommend to the Mayor and the Oklahoma City Council a Memorial Plan addressing the design, components, funding, administration and maintenance of the Memorial, including citizens' oversight during the construction of the Memorial.

The Task Force was fortunate that several of its members had the opportunity to attend a national conference in San Jose, California in June on the development of memorials, which was sponsored by the National Association of Local Arts Agencies. They gained valuable insights into some of the most common of the potential pitfalls in any memorialization process. First, that the memorials which had the least acceptance and most opposition appeared to be those which lacked significant citizen/constituent involvement in the overall memorialization process. Second, that the memorialization process itself, if handled with sensitivity and inclusiveness, can be as positive and enduring as the final memorial eventually created. Third, that Oklahoma City was embarking on a process with the development of its memorial that no community had ever attempted before--while the emotions of grief, anger, despair and hopelessness still ran strongly through the families, friends and neighborhoods of those who had been attacked. Even before we knew individually or collectively how this tragedy had changed us in the deepest ways, we would begin the process of forging a community-wide effort to develop a memorial which would be fitting for and respectful of those who lost their lives in or were survivors of the attack, to their families, and to the City of Oklahoma City.

The Memorial Ideas Input Subcommittee was created as an integral part of the Task Force. Its initial task was to prepare a plan for the solicitation of ideas and opinions from the public regarding the values, themes and messages to be reflected by the Memorial--a plan that must create widespread public participation and help develop a sense of ownership by the public in the resulting Memorial. It was to present the plan to the Advisory Committee of the Task Force, implement the Plan after initial approval of its general concepts, and finally issue a report to the Advisory Committee reflecting the objectives and opinions expressed by the public, including recommendations as to the general objectives to be achieved in the creation of the Memorial.

The Co-Chairs of the Subcommittee are Sydney Dobson, Polly Nichols, and Jimmy Goodman. A list of active Subcommittee Volunteers is included in the Appendix to this report.

#### **History of Subcommittee Meetings/Actions**

The first meeting of the Subcommittee was held on August 17, 1995. The members were advised that the essential functions of the Subcommittee would be:

- to provide every opportunity possible for people to share their feelings and ideas about what the memorial should remember and represent
- to listen carefully and record accurately the responses received, and
- to maintain an approach of sensitivity and inclusiveness in all stages of the process.

All Subcommittee members understood from the first meeting that this report would be used to help develop a Memorial Mission Statement that the Design Solicitation



Subcommittee would use in the memorial design process. Consequently, the focus of the Subcommittee did not include obtaining input about the physical appearance and content of the memorial.

Based on the discussion at the initial meeting, the Co-Chairs decided to divide the Subcommittee's task into three working Subgroups: Community Meetings, Memorial Constituents, and Memorial Survey. Respectively, Beth Shortt, Barbara Naranche, and Larry Jeffries, Subcommittee members, agreed to chair these three Subgroups. The concentrated efforts of these three Subgroups formed the foundation of the Subcommittee's outreach and their respective reports are included in the Appendix to this report.

After the initial meeting held at 4:00 p.m., in the City Bank & Trust board room at Park Avenue and Robinson in downtown Oklahoma City, it was decided to make the time and place of the meetings convenient for the majority of the members. All further Subcommittee meetings were held at 5:15 p.m. in the Youth Services for Oklahoma County building at 201 N.E. 50th Street. We are especially grateful to Youth Services for accommodating our meeting needs with the generous donation of their space as needed. A total of eight Subcommittee meetings were held, with attendance varying from 40 to 3 participants. Separate Subgroup meetings were held at other times as necessary. The final Subcommittee meeting was held on February 27, 1996, at which time this report received final approval.

### **Community Meetings**

The Community Meetings Subgroup was assigned the task to develop the format for, make the arrangements for, and publicize and coordinate the presentation of community meetings throughout the greater Oklahoma City area in order to help obtain public input about the Memorial. It made every effort to plan and publicize the community meetings so that they were as convenient as possible for the public--varying the geographic locations and times of the meetings. All meetings were held in buildings thought to be unthreatening to public access.

Publicity was coordinated through the Public Relations Subcommittee. Press releases about each meeting were sent to the local media, including newspaper, television and radio. In addition, several members of the Task Force were able to publicize the meetings during interviews with television and radio that were arranged by the Public Relations Subcommittee.

The meetings were staffed entirely by volunteers. Beth Shortt prepared all of the necessary written materials and facilitated each meeting. While total attendance was less than expected, the quality of the input and participation of those who did attend was excellent, and will be of great use in developing the Mission Statement. Regardless of the numbers who chose this particular medium, all who heard of the meetings did have the opportunity to participate in this way if they wished.

In summary, we feel that the results of the community meetings process are:

- The memorialization process has been made open to the public.
- Public input has been solicited and obtained.
- A process for obtaining individual input in a group setting has been tested.
- The quality of the input received is excellent.
- Those who participated appreciated the opportunity and benefited from the process.

A complete copy of the Subgroup Report is included in the Appendix to this Report.

### **Memorial Constituents**

Memorial Constituents were defined as those groups of people who, by virtue of their experience with the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building, had a particular perspective to share. The Subcommittee agreed that these particular groups warranted a special contact to obtain their ideas. The Subgroup attempted to contact as many members of each constituent group as possible to encourage their input and their involvement in the process.

The Subgroup's objectives were:

- to encourage and gather input from each group of constituents about what they want visitors to the memorial to learn and feel
- to provide a variety of opportunities for those closely involved groups to voice their opinions about feelings the memorial should evoke, and
- to listen to and value each contribution made.

The Subgroup was gratified by the response of those who were contacted. Available methods to obtain the input included: the memorial survey, group meetings, focus groups for a smaller representative sample, and personal communication or conversation. In most cases, the memorial survey turned out to be the instrument used. In those instances, the responses of the various groups will be included in the compilation of all survey responses. The Subgroup believes that most of the targeted constituents were reached and offered the chance to have input in some manner. It feels that the process of sharing and the quality of the meetings and contacts with the Memorial constituents fulfilled their intended purposes, and the effort was successful and worthwhile. A complete list of the various memorial constituent groups included in this outreach is included in the Subgroup Report included in the Appendix to this Report.

### Memorial Survey

The subcommittee Co-Chairs agreed that a survey could be an excellent tool to help achieve the goal of gathering ideas and feelings about what the memorial should remember and represent. They agreed to draft a survey for discussion at the first Subcommittee meeting on August 17, 1995.

To gain ideas about the contents of the survey, Subcommittee Co-Chairs attended the first Families and Survivors Subcommittee meeting on July 24, 1995 and listened to the ideas and feelings expressed by that group--which had been most deeply affected by the bombing. Their comments and ideas formed the basis for the survey's first draft.

A Memorial Survey Subgroup was formed

- To make certain that every person involved in the memorial process, especially the families and survivors, was given the opportunity to review and make suggestions for revision of the one-page draft survey;
- To solicit printing donors; and
- To plan and implement a worldwide distribution system.

With only minor changes, the final survey was essentially the same as the first draft. The survey received final approval in late November and the Subgroup turned its focus to printing and distribution.

Survey distribution methods were:

- Press releases to both print and electronic media (resulting in the survey being reprinted in full in both local and Tulsa area newspapers);
- A homepage on the worldwide web Internet with local, national and international access;
- 17 U.S. Postal Service locations in the metro area;
- 12 Metropolitan Library branches; and
- The Memorial post box address where anyone could send a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Survey results were tabulated by city, state, national, and international input. This will ensure that the input of the people of Oklahoma City may be clearly defined. In addition, handwritten comments were individually read and the written suggestions most often submitted were also summarized and included in the Subgroup's Report. The full

Memorial Survey Subgroup Report is included in the Appendix to this Report.

### **Summary of Public Input**

The Subcommittee believes that the following principal themes consistently repeat themselves throughout the public suggestions as to what the Memorial should represent and remember:

- Remembrance of the individuals who were attacked on April 19, 1995--Visitors should learn their individual life stories, and leave the Memorial with a strong and clear sense of who they were/are--not just as names, but as individuals, and as our family members, loved ones, friends, neighbors and co-workers. The multicultural cross-section of those attacked should be acknowledged and recorded.
- Honoring those who helped--Many suggestions focused on honoring those who helped in response to the bombing, especially the rescue, medical and recovery workers. But participants also included, to a lesser extent, the many general citizen volunteers who acted in support of the rescue/recovery teams, and generously and freely provided them with the necessary supplies, clothing, food and shelter while they carried out their grueling tasks.
- Community--Without negating in any way the tragic loss the bomb caused, to record and commemorate the spirit of community and unity which characterized the reaction, locally and nationally, in response to the bombing.
- Serenity, Peacefulness and Reflection--Visitors should be able to encounter a space where they have the opportunity to experience serenity and peacefulness and engage in reflection. (Many suggested the use of natural elements such as trees, flowers, gardens, and water as a means of accomplishing this desired end.)
- Something for the Children--This addresses two different but related concepts: First, there should be some component which relates to children on their level, both physically and cognitively. From this they should feel and learn something which they will take away with them and remember for years to come. Second, some component of the memorial should openly and obviously be a special place or space which is just "for" the children.
- Historical/Educational--There should be a component to the Memorial which teaches and records the important historical facts, and resulting observations, about these events; including, for example, information about the Murrah Federal Building, the individuals who died, the survivors, the bombing and its immediate aftermath, the magnitude of the attack on people and property, the response, the area in the immediate vicinity before and after the bombing--and puts it all in the context of the futility and senselessness of domestic terrorism--killing government servants-- as a means of effecting political change in our nation. ( Many thought that this could be on

a site separate from where the building was located.)

- Inspiration/Emotion--Many suggestions centered on a hope that the Memorial would be powerful and awe-inspiring, and that visitors would experience not only the various feelings of compassion, hope, peacefulness, and serenity, but also the sense of loss caused by this tragedy--and leave the Memorial personally inspired to live their lives in some meaningful way differently than they had intended before their visit.
- That the Memorial be spiritual, participatory and positive was also mentioned by a significant number of the participants.

### **Recommendations to Advisory Committee**

The Subcommittee makes the following recommendations of the general objectives to be achieved in the creation of the Memorial:

- First and foremost, it must be sensitive to those most directly affected by the bombing, as the Task Force has always intended.
- Second, it should be enduring in its form and content, and appropriate to the unique and special Oklahoma City community in which it will be located.
- Third, it should incorporate as many of the above-summarized major themes, ideas and opinions suggested by the public as possible--keeping in mind that they must be compatible with the suggestions in the companion report being submitted by the Families and Survivors Subcommittee and the first two goals noted above.
- Fourth, that the remaining steps in the memorialization process continue to involve those most directly affected to the greatest extent feasible in all important aspects of the development, design, funding, construction and maintenance of the Memorial.

### **Parting Thoughts**

In addition to the specific charge to be accomplished by the Subcommittee, the Co-Chairs and members present at the final meeting voted to share the following impressions with the Advisory Committee:

- Subcommittee members are grateful that the Families and Survivors Subcommittee was formed and has continued to meet and will prepare its own report about what the memorial should remember and represent. It is the belief of the Memorial Ideas Input Subcommittee that no one else could represent adequately this very special group so directly affected by the bombing.
- Subcommittee volunteers agreed that it was most important that every family member of a victim or bombing survivor be asked to participate, even though some did not want to participate in the process during this initial phase. For that same reason, the



Memorial Constituents Subgroup made every effort to solicit input from every group directly affected by or involved in the bombing.

- While general public participation in the input process was in some ways less than originally anticipated, the Subcommittee members believe that every person interested in sharing his or her ideas and feelings about the Memorial had that opportunity.
- At the Community Meetings, Subcommittee volunteers were touched by the grateful appreciation expressed by the people who did participate and had the opportunity to connect with other citizens and express their feelings. In addition, the Community Meetings served other purposes, and some victim's family members learned of the opportunity to participate in the Families and Survivors Subcommittee of the Task Force as a result of such meetings.
- Your Subcommittee Co-Chairs, and all Subcommittee members are deeply honored, and most proud, to have been given the chance to serve on this Task Force, and to help in some small measure to ensure that the Memorial created in and for Oklahoma City in response to the events of April 19, 1995 and following will be something that we can be proud of for decades to come.

# Murrah Federal Building Memorial Task Force

## Memorial Mission Statement

[Appendix C]

### **RESOLUTION**

Adopted by Advisory Committee per Request of  
Families / Survivors Liaison Subcommittee  
November 14, 1995

Whereas, the Advisory Committee has responsibility for adoption of a Memorial Mission Statement setting forth the objectives to be achieved by the Memorial, which Mission Statement is scheduled for completion during the month of March, 1996;

Whereas, the Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee met on November 13, 1995, and unanimously voted to request a resolution of the Advisory Committee to include in the Memorial Mission Statement a requirement that one of the components of the Memorial must be an information center, which, in part, would include a living memorial segment consisting of: (a) biographies of the victims written by the families of the victims and photographic representations of the victims, and (b) stories of the survivors written by the survivors and photographic representations of the survivors; and

Whereas, the Advisory Committee has determined that it is appropriate to adopt at this time the following segment of the Memorial Mission Statement and to reserve for consideration in March, 1996 the remainder of the Mission Statement after the public outreach programs of the Families/ Survivors Liaison Subcommittee and the Memorial Ideas Input Subcommittee have been completed.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT** the Memorial Mission Statement will include a requirement that one of the components of the Memorial must be an information center, which, in part, would include a segment consisting of: (a) biographies of the victims written by the families of the victims and photographic representations of the victims, and (b) stories of the survivors written by the survivors and photographic representations of the survivors.

**IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Families / Survivors Liaison Subcommittee, in consultation with the Archives Subcommittee, develop guidelines for format and length of such biographies and stories for distribution to families of victims and survivors.

# Murrah Federal Building Memorial Task Force Memorial Mission Statement

[Appendix D]

## **RESOLUTION**

Adopted by Advisory Committee Per Request  
of  
Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee  
January 16, 1996

Whereas, the Advisory Committee has responsibility for adoption of a Memorial Mission Statement setting forth the objectives to be achieved by the Memorial, which Mission Statement is scheduled for completion during the month of March, 1996;

Whereas, the Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee met on January 8, 1996, and unanimously voted to request a resolution of the Advisory Committee to include in the Memorial Mission Statement a requirement that one of the components of the Memorial must be the preservation of a tree located on the south half of the Journal Record Building block, which tree has special symbolic meaning as a survivor of the bombing; and

Whereas, the Advisory Committee has determined that it is appropriate to adopt at this time the following additional segment of the Memorial Mission Statement and to reserve for consideration in March, 1996 the remainder of the Mission Statement after the public outreach programs of the Families/Survivors Liaison Subcommittee and the Memorial Ideas Input Subcommittee have been completed.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT** the Memorial Mission Statement will include a requirement that one of the components of the Memorial must be the "Survivor Tree" located on the south half of the Journal Record Building block.

**IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Advisory Committee take steps to protect and preserve such Survivor Tree.

-end-