

Appendix B

Feedback from Champions

January 19, 2016

“Is this still important to the region? Why? Or Why not?”

“This issue is still important to the region as we hope a stronger environment for economic growth is part of our future to provide opportunities for our citizens to be self-sufficient in the communities they want to call home.” Greg Bergman

“Yes, vitality and key to all other regional projects.” Sandy Voigt

“In 2004 CTC first partnered in the Brainerd ISD. Until that time CTC hadn’t reached out extensively seeking to work on major projects benefitting the community! The Champion meetings afford CTC an opportunity to be an active community participant to seek ways to expand the value we provide within the community.” Joe Buttweiler

“Yes! The collective, participatory planning process continues today in the on-the-ground projects and programs resulting from the original plan. This expectation and practice is evident in the work, the culture, and perhaps most importantly in the impacts we see in our communities. We all do better when we all do better.” Molly Zins

“Yes, this remains important to the region; however, I think we need a re-formatting of the process because it seems to have become somewhat perfunctory.” Jason Edens

“Yes – to learn what is happening around the region and see if there are connections with the work I am doing.” Phil Hunsicker

“Yes – there is much energy and synergy in the connections between the themes and the people who are doing the work. We have made impact, but we are still not finished engaging the next level of community builders.” Arlene Jones

“Yes – we continually demand more energy so efficient use is essential.” Keith Olander

“Absolutely – collaboration across all sectors, pools, resources ‘more with less’, power in numbers.” Anna Gruber

“Yes – getting back from others and presenting projects is a good way for people to reconnect on the work they are doing.” Deanna Hemmesch

“Yes, because I would not learn about other themes are doing and how we interconnect. I would not be getting together with other health facilities to have these discussions.” Tim Rice

“Now more than ever. We have collaboration, a sense of shared purpose for the larger good, we have traction, and we have engagement. NOW is when we gain a disproportionately large return on our efforts.” Bob McLean

“Ongoing community health remains a major issue especially in providing healthcare to the lower economic groups and those with mental illness. Even more important, is the aspect of

preventative health as this will be the key piece in reducing health care costs.” Dr. Pete Henry (guest)

“Yes the multi-disciplinary approach better represents the complexities of real life and real change.” Tim Houle

“Yes, we can collectively achieve our goals to meet mutual benefit w/ distributed leadership we all carry some of the water.” Cheryal Hills

“It is a great forum to bring together colleagues from across the 5 regions to collaborate on solutions to common problems or issues. Great to learn what other themes are working on as well.” Mike Larsen

“Yes, compels me to seek out and drive accomplishments for changing populations (including transit [where there is] significant need.” Dean Loidolt

“Yes, because all of us gather, share, find areas of collaboration, areas of concern and how we can make a difference in that area.” DeAnn Barry

“Yes, helps to connect the dots – working together – making sure that we keep the goals in front of us and others.” Dan Frank

“Yes – I think connecting on a regular basis is helpful to stay informed with what is happening in the Region.” Jennifer Bergman

“Yes, there are many in our region who need help with transportation, transit, and access to services.” Jarrett Leas

“Definitely – working together regionally across themes allows us to see the other ‘side of the coin’ and in turn make decisions that are regionally impactful.” Dawn Espe

“Yes, the work of carrying out/reflection/updating the Resilient Region Plan is important. I am happy to see this reflection component and evaluating effectiveness to date, as well as bringing fresh eyes to the current issues falling in our region.” Vicki Chepulis

“I don’t know if it’s important to the region, but it is important to Morrison County municipalities. If others can gain insight or ideas to help their cities, that is a plus. There are good things that have helped cities in Morrison County and we will continue to meet and explore ways to help our cities. Our group has extended to cities outside our region and as a result we have more resources to help cities.” Andrea Lauer

“Yes – very much. Still a lot of work to be done for broadband infrastructure, adoption such as telehealth, cyber security awareness, etc. And constant challenge to keep lawmakers up-to-date on all.” Pam Mahling

“Yes this Champions meeting is still important as we further gain perspective on the other Champion groups – share ideas and opportunities and increase services and support within the communities.” Janet Johnson

“I believe these meetings are VERY important.” Chad Coauette

“Yes, staying connected with other interested people is a huge key to our continued success. We need regular, face to face connection points. I think we should continue moving forward.” Paul Drange

The second question was, “What keeps you coming back to the Champion meetings?”

“Responsibility, desire to see a better future.” Greg Bergman

“Cheryal ☺ Learning, partnerships, connections.” Sandy Voigt

“Continued engagement allowing us to seek opportunities to grow the network or offer our knowledge to the community.” Joe Buttweiler

“Being a part of this work is both personally and professionally fulfilling.” Molly Zins

“The champion meetings are important to me because they are an ongoing and recurring opportunity for networking and cross pollination with other community leaders.” Jason Edens

“1) The networking/sharing opportunities. 2) Possibly learning about something that connects to my work – something I should know about that might make my own work more impactful.” Phil Hunsicker

“The connections between the leaders – not the champions, but those who are actually doing the work of connecting us to the systems in place, and the ideas which filter up through the thinkers – those who are thinking differently about our work. Our next task is to bring up a new set of leaders.” Arlene Jones

“I believe collaboration is vital to our sustainability and competitiveness. Networking throughout the region is key to my and our success long-term.” Keith Olander

“The opportunity to connect and stay connected with people across all sectors and themes. Opportunity to learn about ways we can work together and serve Region Five, together.” Anna Gruber

“I learn so much about opportunities and the way people/groups work together that I want to bring to the other parts of my service area.” Deanna Hemmesch

“Commitment to projects I sign up for. Believing that we can do great work together. Great things happen over time not right way.” Tim Rice

“All of the above!! AND we have great leadership throughout the region providing encouragement, energy, their time and talents ... It is inspiring!” Bob McLean

“The group and the notes of progress being made. May need to switch to meeting every six months or every 4 months.” Tim Houle

“This helps me get our work done efficiently by focusing on partnerships that can work together.” Cheryal Hills

“Great group of active leaders who are engaged in improving the quality of life in the region for individuals as well as private and public entities.” Mike Larsen

“Staying informed about actions in all of the theme areas/networking too, getting information that is significant and succinct to share with other groups in the region. Example: Meeting at/with St. Gabriel’s staff this morning in Little Falls and urging that organizations involvement.” Dean Loidolt

“To share how we are making a difference in the changing population’s area, mainly the aging demographics. To network with others; find out how we all are working in our community to make the changes that we see that are needed. Opportunities not difficulties.” DeAnn Barry

“Connecting. Face-to-face with others working on my theme team – and by all in one place – at one time – to get a snap shot of the many collaborative efforts going on in the Five County Region.” Dan Frank

“Unfortunately, I have missed most of the meetings in the last year and a half because these meetings are held at the same date and time as another standing meeting I have. This one happened to work. Again, I think sharing and new ideas is what continues to keep me interested in staying on the Champions group.” Jennifer Bergman

“I feel there is much to do related to transportation. I hope to be able to use my engineering experience to help.” Jarrett Leas

“From my first meeting – I have always awed at how well this group works together and shares common space – this group truly cares about the region they serve and I love being a part of that.” Dawn Espe

“To me this is ongoing work – planning, implementing, evaluating/reflecting, revise/update, plan implement, evaluate etc. Being open to new priorities and updating timelines on current plans is vital. The coordinated efforts, cross sector work, inter-county and city connections make this much more effective than the typical ‘silo’ efforts found in other parts of the nation. Why do I keep coming back? I believe the arts play an important role in a thriving region – impacting economic health, individual health and wellness, and all components of community development. Coming to the meetings affords me the opportunity to learn about what’s happening in the region and highlight that ‘the arts’ should be ‘at the table’ as each sector moves forward in planning, implementation, and evaluation.” Vicki Chepulis

“I learn so much from other theme areas. It is amazing how working/meetings with other themes help me as mayor.” Andrea Lauer

“It’s helpful to see our projects within a larger context. I always pick up tidbits that help to ‘connect the dots’ between different areas/themes. And sometimes those tidbits aren’t related to my theme but I’m able to pass them along to someone for whom it is relevant. But also, it is a really good group of people who GET THINGS DONE! A lot of positive energy. The overall goal of a ‘resilient region’ is idea for me personally.” Pam Mahling

“The opportunity to network with individuals who have a passion for their industries and to learn and support other projects. Realize the potential to grow opportunities in the smaller rural communities.” Janet Johnson

“Seeing people face to face and the things I learn.” Paul Drange

Discussion Worksheets:

When considering the work your theme group is doing to carry out the recommendations from the Resilient Region Plan:

Are we getting the work done:

Yes, because ...

"Projects are occurring consistent with some of the recommendations for our theme." Greg Bergman

"We are covering the dots." Dan Frank

"Secure grants; invest privately; participate BBC this group." Joe Buttweiler

"There are significant, innovative, clean energy projects, progress and 'impacts' across the region as a result of significant collaboration as well as cross-sector partnerships." Molly Zins

"We continue to do our work in the region, but now we have a multiplier in the form of the R.R. and its Champions." Jason Edens

"We are impacting low income growers financially, skill building and capacity (including business training SBDC/R5DC Core 4). We are also impacting numerous artists in skill building, capacity and placemaking (deeper community impact)." Arlene Jones

"Money is available – IF grants, LSOMC\$, etc." Phil Hunsicker

"NJPA has really stepped up to improve the efficiencies within our region. Yes, every theme as they collaborate and become more responsible – fiscally & cross-section – moves forward the efficiency and effectiveness theme." Melissa Rademacher

"New initiatives, across industry and education." Keith Orlander

"We are addressing affordable housing slowly but surely. Housing takes time to develop – so coordination and planning are key." Deanna Hemmesch

"Yes, we have improved effectiveness and efficiencies by promoting collaboration and pooling of resources/people." Anna Gruber

"Developing relationships, learning from other groups, similar philosophies to make a difference [even] if we compete." Tim Rice

"People are working together; people expanding the collaborative effort; even early resisters or unengaged are warming to the idea as they see the effectiveness of the collaborative effort." Bob McLean

"Most if not all of the goals and action steps are being addressed @ some stage/level. \$\$\$ coming in; students being impacted." Cheryal Hills

"We have identified subjects which are meaningful for each of the communities we serve – 'common purpose.'" Mike Larson

“Mostly we are driving a lot that folks working with/in their craft would’ve done anyway, but we have leveraged this with more \$\$s, e.g. Sprout, RREAL Solar?” Tim Houle

“Tad was, and now Staci is serving transportation committee as a Region 5 staff member.” Jarrett Leas

“Some of it – we have certainly made some impacts when it comes to rehab and some energy related work.” Jennifer Bergman

“Each person involved stays active in their areas.” Sandy Voigt

“We are making a difference, even if it is small because as I represent aging population I become informed on the progress ... we are all working in the right direction.” DeAnn Barry

“Of committee/networking; staying on task with politicians; prioritizing work.” Dean Loidolt

“Unsure.” Dawn Espe

“Additional awareness of the impact of mental health issues reduction in inappropriate opiate use.” Peggy Stebbins

“We have an amazing team lead (Stacey Stockdill) and great support (Pam Mahling). Connectivity is a thread woven through all of the other themes.” Janelle Riley

“We have focused faculty/staff assigned with financial resources via grants.” Peggy Kennedy

“Looks like many great things happening and more involved in some than others. We work individually with CLC, NJPA, and secondary and can do [more].” Jill Abbot

“We are accomplishing a number of things regionally that support the theme. Primarily creating/reinforcing pathways to the work plan.” Larry Lundblad

“[We have] made great progress within sustainable agriculture and local foods efforts.” Vicki Chepulis

“Awarded grants, expanding broadband, extending the reach.” Janet Johnson

“We’ve made great progress toward 95% broadband, laid a good groundwork for future building, and working on adoption via Blandin BBC project.” Pam Mahling

“Fill in for other city clerks, McTourism project, regional safety groups, speakers we bring in to share information.” Andrea Lauer

“Yes, becausewe have a committed group that has passion for broadband and what it can do to improve our region.” Paul Drange

No, because ...

Left Blank: Gerg Bergman, Jason Edens, Phil Hunsicker, Bob McLean, Tim Houle, Dean Loidolt, Dawn Espe, Peggy Stebbins, Janelle Riley, Jill Abbot, Janet Johnson,

"We have such a broad area to cover – and years (?) get [word]." Dan Frank

"We struggle with federal and state policy and uncertainty, lack funding to grow at rate we'd like." Joe Buttweiler

"Working with utilities continues to prove difficult in some cases and finding the common ground or understanding has been a challenge." Molly Zins

"We do not meet as a theme between meetings and our reports are fragmented. We need to learn to leverage each other's work better, deepening impact." AreIne Jones

"Upon further reflection – I do feel rather isolated from the Economic Engines 'team.' We all work very independently, with little communication between Champion meetings. It would be great to convene intermittently to do some '30,000 foot up' perspective work around the overarching goals in this theme." Vicki Chepulis

"It feels like we should have more targeted, specific goals and action plans to improve economic vitality in our poorest counties (ie Wadena and Todd)." Vicki Chepules

"Some are completely out of our control." Melissa Rademacher

"Need to be more inclusive in buy-in." Keith Olander

"We don't hear much about workforce housing or high-end housing – how are they addressing the goals, recommended." Deanna Hemmesch

"There isn't always funding for the 'BIG' dreams." Anna Gruber

"Time/not because of lack of interest; tough to find a common cause." Tim Rice

"Not a tone we wouldn't have already done already." Cheryal Hills

"Lacking consistent active participation from all key groups within Region 5. Competing time commitments & priorities. Need to refresh Theme goals." Mike Larson

"We struggle to find transportation projects that Tim and I can really contribute toward. Missed Meetings." Jarrett Leas

"The goals and recommendations are very wide in range and sometimes difficult to implement Region-wide. i.e. zoning and ordinance changes; not communicating among our team." Jennifer Bergman

"No other communication other than Champion meeting." Sandy Voigt

"Time retracts." DeAnn Barry

"Resources are limited and we would like a model that focuses on all students, not just a select few/handful." Peggy Kennedy

“Not sure we are looking for new opportunities collectively. Dominate by education and agency dominated.” Larry Landblad

“There is still a lot to do!” Pam Mahling

“I know what’s happening in Morrison County, but don’t know what other county groups are doing.” Andrea Lauer

One of our initial guiding principles was “Quality of Life for all in the region.” Please help us understand WHO is ultimately being impacted by our work?

“Each person we connect and those who connect to them.” Joe Buttweiler

“Impacts are broad ranging [] most communities and many interest groups across the region.” Molly Zins

“Improvements with energy benefit everyone. Reduction of fossil fuel use offers benefits to all.”

“Focusing on food insecure population and schools with high free and reduced, artists, consumers having access to food (all counties in choose health except Crow Wing!) Arlene Jones

“Those with an interest/passion for natural resources protection.” Phil Hunsicker

“The cities, counties both government and residents. As the cities become more efficient the community at large is impacted.” Melissa Radermacher

“All who consume energy – reduce carbon footprint.” Keith Olander

“Most of our report backs seem to be addressing affordable housing based on income.” Deanna Hemmesch

“Cities and Counties → indirectly = all residents. More efficient and effective government = more \$, more services” Anna Gruber

“Our communities, poverty, hungry, better health choices.” Tim Rice

“The collaborative participants to serve the broader diverse population – so yes all are intended to benefit.” Bob McLean

“Teachers → new tools for them. Students → all except LLBO in this theme area. Employers → these programs services ultimately help create a strong workforce. Sum of parts greater than the whole.” Cheryal Hills

“Creating a more attractive environment for business and individuals to come and stay in this region.” Mike Larson

“Pretty broad cross section; low income, seniors, schools, counties.....” Tim Houle

“SRT obviously impacts the whole communities in helping to get kids to schools safely.” Jarrett Leas

"Because I work primarily in Brainerd and some in CWC I see the impact being in Brainerd-homeowners." Jennifer Bergman

"Small businesses – potential employers" Sandy Voight

"For me it is an aging population that I want to make a difference in their quality of life." DeAnn Barry

"Primarily senior with spill over to all ages." Dean Loidolt

"Aging population, growers." Dawn Espe

"Residents of the areas." Peggy Stebbins

"Manty underserved populations that don't have quality high speed access." Janelle Riley

"Employees and employers []" Peggy Kennedy

"Youth, low income, seniors, under employed, employers." Jill Abbott

"For our theme – employees, employers, prospective employers, gainful employment expands the economy as new workers enter. The WF and spend within the region" Larry Lundblad

"From my perspective it appears that people from a wide variety of income levels, ethnic backgrounds, occupations are being impacted yet still feel lower income need more help." Vickie Chepulis

"School age – entrepreneurs – []" Janet Johnson

"Local [] → [] township, Fort Ripley township. High wage/ [] skill, Local Tel [] → Labor because 75% for labor, Blad Fn" Stacey Stockdill

"Residnets businesses, old, young, broad band impacts all." Pam Mahling

"When cities can get services through NJPA we save our tax dollars and that is a direct impact on our budgets/residents." Andrea Lauer

"We are impacting all residents in one way or another. And, as the work continues and expands, we continue to impact even more people." Paul Drange

Who should we be targeting to improve our impacts?

"It's a process that moves slow. \$20M – \$10M - \$100M? Education of government officials, Aitkin County." Joe Buttweiler

"If we effectively partner with more under-represented community groups, impacts will be more broadly owned and realized across all of our communities." Molly Zins

"LLBO."

"Getting those who we are impacting to help with the decision making on programs, process, policy and their improvements and do they even realize their contributions and that they benefit?" Arlene Jones

"Youth; those who don't have a passion for natural resources protection but should." Phil Hunsicker

"Cities and counties" Melissa Radermacher

"Homeowner [], Industry – what are they doing now? [] – large electrical bills" Keith Olander

"Maybe builders and realtors who are doing the work." Deanna Hemmesch

"Direct impacts? IE: RSSS position which is collaborating county public health contracts that provide PH services to patients..." Anna Gruber

"ACE – Youth →millennials, - seniors" Tim Rice

"Getting legislators and payers on board to recognize the long term positive impact of these upfront initiatives." Bob McLean

"Business, work force, legislators" Mike Larson

"Children?" Tim Houle

"I feel other themes may be the best source of places we could make a greater contributions." Jarrett Leas

"Different theme areas have different customers." Sandy Voigt

"Aging work force at large employers in the region. Do a study of the region to assess what areas are able or important to those 65+" DeAnn Barry

"Seniors" Dean Loidolt

"Schools/youth – larger use of our educational institutions – private and public." Dawn Espe

"Community Leaders, politicians" Peggy Stebbins

"This is a good target for our theme." Janelle Riley

"High schools and employers" Peggy Kennedy

"Early/Middle college." Jill Abbott

"Seasonal workers, under employed

"Wadena Co – why does it continue to be the poorest in the state." Vicki Chepulis

"Cities, lower income who can afford the connection." Janet Johnson

"Low income students and low income seniors and small towns held hostage by no local providers (century link), LLBO" Stacey Stockdill

"Young, poor, non-profits....skills and \$ help seniors need help with the technology." Pam Mahling

"We need to reach out to other counties to see what they are doing to share what we have accomplished." Andrea Lauer

"I think the more we can do with students and education entities the better." Paul Drange

What suggestions do you have to improve success?

“Need local champions in each project and geographic region.” Joe Buttweiler

“Broaden the choir, broaden the culture.” Molly Zins

*“?? Open to ideas. Bring back happenings of the champions group to our theme peeps.”
Melissa Radermacher*

“Solar kits, make available, law- [] one [] a solar array” Keith Olander

*“Ask a local regional builder/realtor to be part of the “champion” group or get their feedback.”
Deanna Hemmesch*

“Hold accountability/expectations, demand outcomes” Tim Rice

“Keep on keeping on. Get Legislators and payors to the table. Be sure the uninsured or those feeling stigmatized are welcome and engaged.” Bob McLean

“We might want/need to engage the LLBC Tribal collage. Creative thinking class, artists will they have ideas that help us solve problems.” Cheryal Hills

“Having key talking points which we can consistently use for communications with legislators or other key stake holders. Refocus our health care theme goals and recommendations” Mike Larson

*“Find more cross-pollination opportunities, make it relevant and actionable. Big question is how.”
Tim Houle*

“Consider transportation theme meeting with resilient region leadership to help focus our group direction, find some impact areas.” Jarrett Leas

“Narrow the scope/goals.” Jennifer Bergman

“Narrow success measures.” Sandy Voigt

“Realize the increase in the aging demographic.” DeAnn Berry

“Better reporting of Region Five Resilience activities to other groups.” Dean Loidolt

“More awareness of activities.” Peggy Stubbins

“It’s hard to beat \$4M going to our community. We are extremely fortunate to have the access that we do.” Janelle Riley.

“Implement an “early college” expansion model through the region – proven success – nationally based.” Peggy Kennedy

“More involvement from people being served, ask them.” Jill Abbott

“It is time to do some regional planning again.” Larry Lundblad

“Greater involvement from all [word] in area – how to get [word] and private [word] to work together and partner their efforts – so much a dog eat dog!” Janet Johnson

"What can we do to help low income gain access and skills? Maybe skills [words] at school. Use Harrison School as pilot since when we have NCW F BW now." Stacey Stockdill

"Email? Phone calls? Need other ideas." Andrea Lauer

When considering the effectiveness of our Champion meetings:

What is the role of the champion?

"To proactively promote our cause and help other causes." Joe Buttweiler

"To spread the word, broaden orgs/communities awareness and interest in getting involved." Molly Zinns

"Ambassador of Resilient Region spark plug for RR plan catalyst R connector for RR plan." Jason Edens

"Leader in the field and at the table." Arlene Jones

"To thoroughly understand theme and others working in that field." Phil Hunsicker

"To shore current happenings within theme areas, identify ways to work together that are unique and [word]" Melissa Radermacher

"Engage in project process/idea/resources/collaborate" Keith Olander

"Bring back info of what is happening in their relative field of work." Deanna Hemmesch

"To help move projects forward, connect resources and people, refer people and projects." Anna Gruber

"To establish measurable actions, reach consensus, set time lines, follow up." Tim Rice

"Advocate for the effective realization of the larger good creating a culture - environment for contributing to the long term good, define goals that serve." Bob McLean

"To cross pollinate and help each other brainstorm to solve bottlenecks." Cheryal Hills

"Keep the initiative moving forward, engage and account other theme areas. Periodically refresh goals." Mike Larson

"Facilitator, [word]" Tim Houle

"To connect resources, skills, contacts between theme groups." Jarrett Leas

"Share and collect information on what is happening in the region around your theme." Jennifer Bergman

"To bring the plate/table what you are working on. To bring what you feel are issues to the group or your focus area." Deann Barry

"Spear head relevant topical activities." Dean Loidolt

"To promote the idea of working across themes and to act regionally." Dawn Espe

“Represent/involve organization in helping to improve people’s lives in the area.” Peggy Stubbins

“Some are very active – others are supportive. It’s amazing that we still have such a great turnout after all this time.” Janelle Riley

“Unsure, report theme associated with? Who monitors?” Peggy Kennedy

“Unsure.” Jill Abbott

“Connect [word] with the theme members.” Larry Lundblad

“I view my role as champion to be an advocate for the role of arts [word] play as economic engines – Also to be a source of information about all aspects of the RR plan to anyone interested in learning more.” Vicki Chepulis

“Communicate initiative – success/struggles grow the interest – learn and share ideas.” Janet Johnson

“To lead the work...but unless it is part of their work and way to achieve their won mission something they can [word] to their work plan → hard to keep and to expect they will continue to lead.” Stacey Stockdill

“Serve as point person for projects and other themes. Work on goals and projects.” Pam Mahling

“Get plans for theme moving forward and find collaborators to get the work done – communication is key.” Andrea Lauer

How do we deepen the champion exchange?

“We need a way to continue the discussions between quarterly meetings and commitments to do so.” Joe Buttweiler

“Informal and formal. More networking opportunities for champions to connect across sectors to explore common goals, interests and opportunities to leverage efforts.” Molly Zinns

“Matchmaking process or more intentional cross pollination. Stick to two disparate champs together and see what emerges.” Jason Edens

“? Do we all feel flexibility and latitude in reaching out independently outside of meetings?” Arlene Jones

“More time with champions on different themes. Maybe do a rural case in themes?” Melissa Radermacher

“Blog? YouTube, Facebook – resources [?], lengthen the meeting. Website. Emails” Keith Olander

“Being more engaged with each other within our theme areas.” Deanna Hemmesch

“Maybe make it more project focused so we can hear about the good work?” Anna Gruber

“Update – redo issues – so broad, need to be updated.” Tim Rice

"Contribute measurable highlight progress to outcomes" Bob McLean

"Have people sit beside a different theme area champion." Cheryal Hills

"I like to 2 minute brief update. Cross section time for themes to communicate." Mike Larson

"Have to focus on outcomes and knowledge sharing that would not occur but for this effort" Tim Houle

"Be active, vocal, reach out, ask who needs my help." Jarrett Leas

"Better communication within our theme. Speed dating among champions" Jennifer Bergman

"Sharing of stories where the group has made a difference in a real life." DeAnn Barry

"More time for report [word]" Dean Loidolt

"Encourage connections outside of quarterly meetings. All "like" RR facebook page and share more info on there." Dawn Espe

"Offer additional networking opportunities. Newsletter or blog?" Peggy Stubbins

"Would like more specific deep content." Janelle Riley

"More coordination of effort. Reconvene?" Peggy Kennedy

"Quarterly conference call – keep it simple, wide geography." Jill Abbott

"Format is good." Larry Lundblad

"Info on collaboration? To learn more and connect more? Would love to meet between quarterly meetings (and not as prep meeting right before) to do a scan on current econ. sit. In our region, set goals and create plan to achieve those goals for targeted solutions under [word] section of our theme." Vicki Chepulis

"Hesitant asking questions simply because a [word timeframe – 2 minutes don't rock the boat in interest of time." Janet Johnson

"Maybe focus on cross theme initiatives such as low income access to f.bw" Stacey Stockdill

"Maybe more informal or table discussions? Or more meetings/phone calls/others?" Pam Mahling

"Info/collaboration. I'd like to see tables like we had today with reps from various themes talking about what's working and ideas on how to help others move forward." Andrea Lauer

What is working?

"Only my second meeting 😊" Joe Buttweiler

"Spectacular work, connection and impacts are happening." Molly Zins

"Schedule, networking, sharing." Jason Edens

"Quarterly meetings – work well" Arlene Jones

"Projects are getting done and connections are being made that weren't before." Phil Hunsicker

"2 minute reports." Melissa Radermacher

"Communications/limited collaboration." Keith Olander

"Affordable housing group is still working together and moving things forward. Taking opportunities to do things and plan." Deanna Hemmesch

"Bringing everyone together." Anna Gruber

"If we do not meet we will not focus- [word]" Tim Rice

"Keeping those who are collaborating and contributing engaged through mutual respect, mutual support of shared values" Bob McLean

"Things are happening and people are coming back." Cheryal Hills

"Strong but small group champions in this theme keeping projects going." Mike Larson

"knowledge sharing." Tim Houle

"Contacts and connections within the group." Jarrett Leas

"Sharing of information during champion meetings." Jennifer Berman

"Networking and collaboration." DeAnn Bary

"Quarterly sessions, overall format" Dean Loidolt

"Working within theme areas/networking. Meeting time and frequency work well." Dawn Espe

"Report outs from different areas. Meeting time/frequency." Peggy Stubbins

"I like the 4-6 pm meeting time and food! Also the group interaction and reporting. Some theme groups really accomplishing a lot." Peggy Kennedy

"Shorter meetings, clear outcomes." Jill Abbott

"Sustained the effort" Larry Lundblad

"Raise consciousness of opportunity for cross sector work, disseminating success, the reports." Vicki Chepulis

"Hearing about success and new ideas or opportunities, sharing of information." Janet Johnson

"Although may don't like the 2 minute reports: way to break out of silos and hear the collective work." Stacey Stockdill

“Resource packet helpful to go back and review 2 minute overviews highlight things that may be relevant to others.” Pam Mahling

“Reports are wonderful.” Andrea Lauer

“I think the current format is working just fine.” Paul Drange

What isn't working?

“We need more great work, connections and impacts happening (more people, orgs, communities' engaged).” Molly Zins

“Inclusiveness.” Jason Edens

“Centralized meetings, expand deeper into the region – at least try.” Arlene Jones

“No regular scheduled communication within the theme other than champion gatherings.” Phil Hunsicker

“Deeper dives.” Melissa Radermacher

“Sharing vision and goals annually.” Keith Olander

“Getting people engaged that don't understand their role in the “champion” leadership model.” Deanna Hemmesch

“We really don't have enough time (2 hours) to ‘connect.’” Anna Gruber

“LU theme and transportation are not cross pollinating – why? We need to tell the stories!” Cheryal Hills

“Broad representation from public health, V.A. Is distance to meetings a barrier for some?” Mike Larson

“Cross pollination as much as it could.” Tim Houle

“Time crunch – need more time.” Dean Loidolt

“Some groups communication. Time constraint of our jobs.” DeAnn Bary

“Connecting with our theme group on a regular basis.” Jennifer Bergman

“We rush through things. Don't always feel like I have an achievable goal.” Jarrett Leas

“Some themes have champions who are more active than others – recognize this early on to ‘beef up’ some less active themes.” Dawn Espe

“Unsure.” Peggy Stubbins

“Regional plan →priorities changing.” Larry Lundblad

“2 minute updates with timer – feels so tight, creates anxiety about asking questions – it's great to keep reports on the time track but it seems to be the priority over real exchange.” Vicki Chepulis

"The [word] no means for interaction--really need to review the documents to identify a connection." Janet Johnson

"Too few are carrying the load. 'Distributive' sometimes means no one takes charge and then falls back on lead champion. Fractures within tel co companies, competition → [word] not regional approach." Stacey Stockdill

"2 minutes of ten seems rushed – too superficial information to absorb. Need to maintain continuity with other themes." Pam Mahling

"Once I report on what's happening, then what? If no one offers suggestions we go back and continue as we've done before." Andrea Lauer

"I have been unable to make many meetings as they have been scheduled on the same dates as my NJPA board meeting. Scheduling time between meetings with other Champions has been difficult to do...and there has been/will be turnover among the members." Chad Coauette

"The transportation theme is difficult to have others involved unless there are people directly involved with projects/meetings through MnDOT." Staci Headley

What suggestions do you have to improve our meetings? What would a successful meeting look like?

"Identify action items, goals for next meetings and assign roles and responsibilities." Joe Buttweiler

"More meetings around more – potentially to communities we aim to better engage (ie. Leech Lake)" Molly Zins

"Meetings at Champion sites. Meetings at underrepresented communities. Eg. LLBO" Jason Edens

"Story telling? Monthly updates? Newsletters? RR Opportunities? Measuring deeper impact beyond \$ - create connections" Arlene Jones

"Move meetings around the region. Fewer meetings/year." Phil Hunsicker

"Need one of them to be more lengthy." Keith Olander

"Quarterly meetings work for me. It seems we have a good group every quarter. Still need a facilitator to move things along." Deanna Hemmesch

"Maybe 2 times a year we do conference calls and bi-annually we do a full day meeting to really connect and discuss projects and learn about what's going on – more time? Instead of short meetings do 1-2 longer more in depth meetings." Anna Gruber

"Givers need to see the impact of their work. Need to have people benefiting to come and present their story." Tim Rice

"Make the time between Champion meetings more productive. All 10 themes at one large table. (Have more than one table but with each theme represented at each table) 'World Café' around specific challenges. 'Speed theme dating' theme-story. Others give feedback." Bob McLean

"15 minutes for a 2 person exchange; speed date. Person 1: A What's keeping you up at night or what big RR strategy are you working on? Person 2: B The second person shares how they might help, an idea they have or alignment of person 2s work to person 1. 10:10- each give a report out. Tell more stories → from those being impacted." Cheryal Hills

"Use of web based meetings. Change up meeting themes." Mike Larson

"Facilitated cross- pollination small group discussions on 1-3 items per meeting asking what every theme could contribute to advancing a shared objective." Tim Houle

"Time crunch – need more time." Dean Loidolt

"I would suggest for myself, more [word] to working on the communication/between meetings/areas of concern." DeAnn Bary

"I like the theme updates – both written and verbal. This is so informative and great to hear what's going on in the region."

"I feel the meetings have great energy as is." Jarret Leas

"More small group interactions – more opportunity to connect across theme areas." Dawn Espe

"Re-evaluate priorities." Peggy Stubbins

"I think the meetings are very effective – I especially enjoy deep dives – I would like to see more deep dives." Janell Riley

"This is the only meeting I have attended. Well represented. Need reminder of purpose and plan (regional). Get theme groups together prior to quarterly meetings or during meetings. Coordinate." Peggy Kennedy

"New idea – early college model. Ask those impacted by work to help shape the work. Maybe this has been done recently and I'm not aware. 'The Blue Sweater.'" Jill Abbott

"Set up tables with a rep from each theme." Vicki Chepulis

"Open forum with 1 rep at each interest and ability to move and to discuss interactions or ways to combine efforts. Time for [word] for each group to [word] discuss opportunities?" Janet Johnson

"I'm not sure how to [triangle] – face to face [words] to feel [word.]" Stacey Stockdill

"More slightly informal discussion time – force people to talk to people they normally don't." Pam Mahling

"Theme champions mix – change pop/energy/etc. all at one table to share – then report." Andrea Lauer.

Are you willing to continue serving as a Champion through 2016?

Of the 34; 28 willing to continue, 2 New Champions (both from M-State), 2 “no”, 1 “unsure”, “1 no response.

Greg Bergman (Yes)
Dan Frank (Yes)
Phillip Hunsicker (No)
Todd Holman Per Phil (Yes, is still interested)
John Sumption Per Phil (No)
Arlene Jones (Yes)
Jason Edens (Yes)
Molly Zins (Yes)
Joe Buttweiler (Yes)
Melissa Radermacher (Yes)
Keith Olander (Yes)
Deanna Hemmesch (Yes)
Anna Gruber (Yes)
Tim Houle (Yes)
Mike Larson (Yes)
Cheryal Hills (Yes)
Bob McLean (Yes)
Tim Rice (Yes)
Jarrett Leas (Unsure)
Jennifer Bergman (Yes)
Sandy Voigt (Yes)
DeAnn Barry (Yes)
Dean Loidolt (Yes)
Larry Lundblad (Did not answer the question)
New: Jill Abbott (Yes) M-State
New: Peggy Kennedy (Yes) M-State
Janelle Riley (Yes)
Peggy Stebbins (Yes)
Dawn Espe (Yes)
Vicki Chepulis (Yes – if you think I can be of service)
Andrea Lauer (Yes)
Pam Mahling (Yes)
Stacey Stockdill (Yes)
Janet Johnson (Yes)
Staci Headley (Yes)
Paul Drange (Yes)

Full Group Discussion

In summary this is what we have learned to date regarding the work of the Champions:

When considering the work – are we getting the work done?

Yes because.

- The connectivity – yes mile and miles of fiber, Blandin Foundation grant, seeing measurable things happen
- See that initiatives continuing outside the existing structure
- The Champions involved don't need guidance – they are doing the work.
- People see successes – when common purposes – bringing in more grant money
- Number of project in process and specific goals in mind
- Significant projects – on ground enhanced by cross sector communication

No because.

- Don't feel we are reaching all poor, not Wadena County. (groups of people and geographic areas)
- Things are getting done but it is heavy dominated by education so the focus is too narrow
- Things are too broad hard to get arms around (city zoning)
- Time is a limiting factor therefore there is inconsistent participation by theme champions
- Project fragmented – and not always funding for the big picture
- Usual suspects engaged – often difficult to engage others.

Who should we be targeting to increase our impacts?

- Poor, Wadena county, reach out for the efficiency and effectiveness them to reach other counties (other small towns – some participate and some that don't – usual suspects)
- Youth and schools involvement
- Seniors
- We need better connections (we in the Changing Populations theme are working on transportation at the same time they in the transportation theme are working on transportation)
- Those who are paying for goods or services – not just the RR effort – the day to day work – folks paying for health care
- Housing: builders and realtors – minorities
- Tried – but not very successful – Leech Lake Band they are a big part of our community – but we have struggled – the Energy is the most successful – not as successful in other areas

Suggestions improve success

- A lot of talk about share – go back to resource lists – reaching out to others – expanding our circle. We had a lot of other people – but it is tough to get them engaged
- Start over with regional plan again – those around long time – need to be reminded why here and how community involvement happened – so need refresher/
- Narrow success measures scope and goals
- Engage more stakeholder groups – Leech Lake Tribe – Artist community; transportation stakeholders; health care – more engagement by those impacted by the work.
- Diversify and broaden this group
- Champion meetings hold them where we can engage those groups

What is the role of a Champion?

- Connect resources
- Advocates for area
- Spark plugs for pan
- Facilitators
- Leaders
- Problem solvers

How do we deepen Champion engagement?

- Engaging all champions even those who don't show up.
- Doing match making between themes – sit together and talk about possible connections
- Dan (I made a note – match making between champion meeting) if lunch/breakfast with another champion.
- Dean: to have a story with a face
- Get energy back – by getting community back together – so get energy back
- 30 tables
- Measureable outcomes
- Creating actionable items – focus on action – maybe take emphasis from financial impact but stories about how different