Champion Report

Theme Area: **Changing Populations**

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REPORTING PERIOD: January 19, 2016-April 5, 2016

Goals/Strategies or Action Steps:	What NEW success have you had in moving your theme goals forward over the reporting period?
Map transit needs and identify gaps (1A&B)	Our/Central MN Council on Aging Senior Linkage Line (that has about 3000 calls/visits a month) has reported that transit has been the number one or two ranking need forever back in time and as of last year it has now dropped to number 7. Our work to meet transit needs is showing. Additionally, I meet with transit/senior providers that cover the Region 5 area about quarterly to ensure I stay current on needs and help to drive changes as needed. Also, I keep Sue Siemers, Outstate Transit Manager, in a tight link to anything that would be of interest to her area of responsibility, potential expansion funding needs, etc.
Housing support services (2B)	Meet with legislative staff (ex. Senator Franken's staff in March advising them of housing need for seniors. I have done this at various points of contact with an emphasis on having some incremental HUD/MHFA funding for affordable housing. Note MHFA did just release and RFP on funding for a senior housing project they hope results in replicability.

Working with the University of MN Morris and other partners on a Housing symposium at the University of Morris this June. One of the main areas to be discussed is related to the changes in housing needs and availability that will be affected by an aging population and their future housing choices. |
| Diverse Work Force (3C) | Initiative Foundation secured a grant ($100,000) to help fund CLC over two years to recruit and train minority populations in Dental Fields.

The Initiative Foundations emerging Leaders program continues with helping diverse populations under age 40 write and implement personal Development plans. There will be a Celebration event April 22nd to share the progress of the 35 participants, 32% of whom are from diverse populations.

The Initiative Foundation, NJPA, Region Five and others are discussing a new program that would help provide a path to civic leadership for people under 40, including diverse populations. |
| Aging Boom How has it changed our area? | The Center is a sponsor with Lakeland Public Television on a forum to look- "Aging Boom: Are we Ready?" - is the title of a May 5 forum that will be held at The Center at 803 Kingwood St. in Brainerd. The forum, scheduled for 5:30 to 7 p.m. May 5, will feature a panel of experts who will offer insights on the challenges and opportunities posed by the increasing number of older citizens. An opportunity for dialogue on concerns related to this issue will also be available. Members of the panel are Don Samuelson of Brainerd, chair of the Minnesota Board on Aging and a former longtime state legislator; Josh Doty, Baxter community development director; Mark Ostgarden, Brainerd city planner; Tim Houle, Crow Wing County administrator; |

and Chet Bodin, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Regional Analysis and Outreach. Coordinating the discussion as facilitator will be Bob Gross, interim superintendent of the Brainerd School District. Topics that may be addressed at the May 5 forum include transportation, nursing homes/assisted living, health care, amenities/cultural activities, jobs, infrastructure and education. All ages are invited to attend this free event, which will be conducted in the Great Room at The Center. Snacks will be offered at the forum.

How are you working with any of the other RR Theme areas?

Much of Dean's work is meeting needs of the aging demographic and enhancing housing and transit options are probably top of the list. I have invited (i.e. Region 5 Resilience Team being OK with it) the three transit directors out of Wadena, Brainerd and Waite Park (i.e. Morrison County transit) to be a part of the Region 5 Resilience Team.

Dean has expanded my effort to be more involved with senior provider groups that already meet in Brainerd on housing and now includes transit.

List any Goals or Recommendations within the plan that your team of theme Champions are struggling to address?

We continue to have an interest in working with others in the area of older workforce issues. As worker participation and workforce numbers continue to decline those older workers with either a need or an interest in working longer can be a source of workers, though many will need training and support in order to fit into tomorrow's workforce (R4A&B).

Changing Populations

Changing Populations Issues
Changing populations: As our future workforce shrinks and ages, it is important that every citizen has the skills necessary to be productive, valued, and self-reliant, rather than dependent on society. Ethnic diversity will continue to grow and expand from existing clusters that are now mostly associated with areas of food processing jobs and will be an important source of future workforce growth. The region's aging population impacts every area for which we are planning. Housing, transportation, land use, and the current and future workforce will all be affected by the age of our population.

Changing Populations Goal
Changing populations: As the region's population changes, make adjustments to meet the need and seize the opportunities these changes present.

Recommendation 1

Public transit: **Focus on developing low-cost, reasonable access to transit service for communities, specifically to serve the aging population.**

Action Step A
Map transit system and identify gaps: Examine current data to map the region's existing and planned public transit system. Identify gaps in the systems and seek opportunities to provide appropriate forms

of public transit for the region's existing density pattern and that will support independence and self-reliance to the extent possible.

Action Step B
Funding: Work with county, state and federal transportation organizations to pursue funding for Public Transit and get regional needs on their plans. Consider the ability of some parts of the aging population to contribute toward the cost of these systems as they utilize them

Recommendation 2

Housing support services: **Provide housing support services to the elderly and mentally ill that would allow them the option of remaining as independent as possible under their circumstances.**

Action Step A
Map services and identify gaps: Map existing services for elderly and mentally ill individuals throughout the region. Identify any gaps in housing support services for the elderly and mentally ill populations.

Action Step B
Collaborate: Bring together organizations with an interest in these areas to collectively plan how to meet identified support service needs.

Recommendation 3

Diverse workforce: **As our population becomes more diverse and the need for new workers increases, the region must offer services and opportunities to welcome newcomers into our communities and workforce.**

Action Step A
Identify changes: Use data to track and identify areas in the region where newcomers are commonly locating.

Action Step B
Map services: Research and map existing and planned services for newcomers in areas where they live and/or tend to be locating.

Action Step C
Identify and address service gaps: Collaborate with local governments, schools, nonprofits, churches, and local businesses to identify and address gaps in services needed to incorporate newcomers into the social and work fabric of the region.

Recommendation 4

Older workers: **As the workforce in the region grows and many older workers need to continue working longer for financial reasons, or for personal satisfaction, the region will need to offer opportunities and services to update the skills of older workers.**

Action Step A
Identify and address skills gaps: Work with local and regional businesses to identify the gaps between the existing skills of older workers and the skills they will need to be productive workers in today's world. Support the efforts of local and regional educational organizations and businesses as they work together to address older workers' skill gaps in a way that is effective and timely

Action Step B

Funding: Gain and coordinate local support and advocate with federal elected officials to increase funding levels for effective programs for older workers.