

**AGENDA
WYOMING PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
CITY OF WYOMING, MINNESOTA
MAY 3, 2021
7:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

CALL OF ROLL:

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

OPEN FORUM:

"An opportunity for members of the public to address the Park Advisory Commission on items not on the current Agenda. Items requiring Park Advisory Commission action maybe deferred to staff for research and future Wyoming Park Advisory Commission Agendas if appropriate."

CONSENT AGENDA: NONE

Items under the "Consent Agenda" will be adopted with one motion; however, members may request individual items to be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion and action if they choose.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Consider approving the minutes of the "Regular Meeting" of the Wyoming Park Advisory Commission for April 5, 2021.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Lion's Park Community Clean Up Project
2. Consider applications for Park Advisory Commission seat
3. Arbor Day/Sustainability Potential Initiative

OLD BUSINESS:

4. Resilient Communities Project Discussion

COMMUNICATIONS:

5. Railroad Park Project Update

ADJOURN

**NEXT MEETING:
June 7, 2021
7:00PM**



Date:
4/30/2021

To: Park Advisory Commission Members

Re: Staff Report

AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA: NONE

Items under the "Consent Agenda" will be adopted with one motion; however, members may request individual items to be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion and action if they choose.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Consider approving the minutes of the "Regular Meeting" of the Wyoming Park Advisory Commission for April 5, 2021.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Lion's Park Community Clean Up Project

The Wyoming Lion's Club is interested in organizing a community clean up project this spring/summer. The City has supported several group clean up initiatives in the past, sharing details on the events and publicizing the volunteer work on our social media.

2. Consider applications for Park Advisory Commission seat

The Park Advisory Commission has two applications for the vacant park advisory commission seat. The applicants. While only one applicant will be appointment to the seat, there are many upcoming opportunities for community engagement that we will be able to reach out to the individual who is not selected for potential participating. In addition, applicants who have applied to vacant board or commission seats but were not selected will be notified of future openings.

3. Arbor Day/Sustainability Potential Initiative

The Park Advisory Commission included an arbor day initiative as a part of the goals for 2021. It was proposed that this event would occur in the fall of 2021. If this is still an interest of the group, are there individuals who would like to form a committee (2-3 members) to develop the logistics for the event? The committee would partner with staff and present to the entire Commission of the proposed event details.

OLD BUSINESS:

4. Resilient Communities Project Discussion

During the last meeting of the Park Advisory Commission, the group expressed interest in further discussion about the feasibility and options available to the city through a partnership with the Resilient Communities Project. The Park Advisory Commission

specifically expressed interest in projects that related to seniors and aging in place. Attached to your packet are reports that have come out of previous resilient community projects that specifically related to topics that have been discussed. The reports included in your packet are examples to help show the types of work that can be done through the resilient communities partnership

1. Ramsey County: Building Community Resilience to Emergencies in Vulnerable Populations
2. Scott County: Researching Barriers to Park Access
3. Ramsey: Bee-ing Ramsey: Planning Pollinator Habitats
4. Little Canada: Pioneer Park Master Plan: Best Practices for Community Engagement

COMMUNICATIONS:

5. Railroad Park Project Update

The City has received multiple donations from businesses within the community to the Railroad Park Project. While there are still significant funds that need to be raised, the donations to the project have transformed the project. The City will continue with fundraising efforts and will be sharing this video on our social media. Residents will be able to provide donations to the city for the project and staff will also be researching logistics pertaining to a buy a brick program.

The Park Advisory Commission will see a video that the City has created for the project, celebrating the contributions and sharing the project with the community.

ADJOURN

**NEXT MEETING:
June 7, 2021
7:00PM**

DRAFT MINUTES
WYOMING PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
CITY OF WYOMING, MINNESOTA
APRIL 5, 2021
7:00PM

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Spangler called the Regular Meeting of the Wyoming Park Advisory Commission for April 5, 2021 to order at 7:00PM

CALL OF ROLL:

On a Call of the Roll the following members of the Wyoming Park Advisory Commission were present: Members Barb Williams, Bruce Spangler, Heather Vandenheuvel, and Claire Luger, Council Liaison

Absent: Amy Buccanero and Angie Schilling

Also Present: Kelly Dumais, Assistant City Administrator and Chuck Almhjeld, Public Works Superintendent

Visitors: None

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

Chair Spangler determined a Quorum was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

OPEN FORUM: NONE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY MEMBER SPANGLER, TO APPROVE THE PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 1, 2021 MEETING.

Chair Spangler suggested an amendment to the minutes to show that, on the last page, Mayor Iverson was the one who stated that she knew someone who was interested in submitting a proposal.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY MEMBER SPANGLER, TO APPROVE THE PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 1, 2021 MEETING, AS AMENDED.

Voting Aye: Spangler, Williams, and Vandenheuvel,

Voting Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Buccanero, Schilling

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

2. Resignation of Angie Plante Schilling

Assistant City Administrator Dumais explained that Member Schilling had submitted her resignation so there is another seat open on the PAC. She encouraged the members to spread the word about the opening

and noted that it will be posted on social media, newsletter, and the City website.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER SCHILLING, SECONDED BY MEMBER VANDENHEUVEL, TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF ANGIE PLANTE SCHILLING FROM THE PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION.

Voting Aye: Spangler, Williams, and Vandenheuvel

Voting Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Buccanero

3. Consider application for Park Advisory Commission seat

Assistant City Administrator Dumais introduced T.J. Malaskee who has submitted an application for the vacant PAC seat.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER VANDENHEUVAL, SECONDED BY MEMBER SPANGLER, TO RECOMMEND THE CITY COUNCIL APPOINT T.J. MALASKEE TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION.

Voting Aye: Spangler, Williams, and Vandenheuvel

Voting Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Buccanero

4. Resilient Communities Project Introduction

Assistant City Administrator Dumais gave an overview on the Resilient Communities project and asked for feedback from the PAC on whether this is something that they see value in and if so where they would like to see it applied within the community.

Member Vandenheuvel asked where the money for funding this program would come from.

Assistant City Administrator Dumais stated that this program is currently not included in the budget, so it would be something the City Council would have to decide to include in the next budget cycle.

Member Williams noted that one possible idea for where this program could be applied within the community is working on a way to bring seniors and kids together in the parks. She stated many of the City parks are geared towards kids and there have been discussion in the past about ways to bring seniors and kids together and had even talked about attempting to get the AARP Community Challenge grant.

Chair Spangler asked about the scope of work.

Assistant City Administrator Dumais gave an overview of how the University of Minnesota would utilize their student body for the various types of projects for the City.

Council Liaison Luger stated that in the past, the City has worked with WSB to plan parks and asked how this proposal would compare financially rather than going with an engineering firm.

Assistant City Administrator Dumais stated that it would be similar, but would have a smaller scope and the City could look at where leveraging the students versus the engineering firm would make the most sense.

Member Vandenhuevel asked for more examples of what the students can do through the Resilient Community projects.

After discussion, there was consensus of Park Advisory Commission that there is interest in exploring the possibility of taking a closer look at the Resilient Communities program.

5. Comprehensive Plan update with comments

Assistant City Administrator Dumais noted that the Parks, Trails, and Recreation section of the draft Comprehensive Plan update was included in the packet and asked for feedback from the PAC.

Member Williams stated that what stuck out to here was where it states, 'no additional public park land' and feels that this may not be a valid statement, because there have been conversations with the Planning Commission about adding additional parkland.

Chair Spangler noted that he had noticed the same phrase.

COMMUNICATIONS:

6. Public Works Tree Inventory Update

Public Works Superintendent Almhjeld gave an overview of the tree inventory project that will be completed through an intern this summer, rather with a part-time employee. He noted that the City has ordered its GIS unit and the software has been purchased so once the intern can begin, the City should be read to begin the tree inventory.

ADJOURN

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY MEMBER SPANGLER, TO ADJOURN THE APRIL 5, 2021 MEETING OF THE WYOMING, PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION AT 7:30 PM

Voting Aye: Spangler, Williams, and Vandenhuevel

Voting Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Buccanero

NEXT MEETING:

MAY 3, 2021

7:00PM

Lindsay Hobson
5570 273rd Street
Wyoming, MN 55092
612-805-5140
Lindsayhobson9@gmail.com

April 13th, 2021

Kelly Dumais
Assistant City Administrator
City of Wyoming
26885 Forest Blvd
Wyoming, MN 55092

Dear Kelly,

My name is Lindsay Hobson, and I am a new resident of the City of Wyoming who is looking to get involved within my community. I recently saw on the city website that there is an opening for a member of the Park Advisory Commission, and I would like to get involved.

I was raised in Lindstrom, MN and graduated from Chisago Lakes Senior High School. I later moved to St. Paul, MN and lived there while obtaining my Bachelor of Business Administration with a Concentration in Accounting from Hamline University. After I received my degree, my husband and I wanted to move back toward our hometown, and bought our first home here in Wyoming just last April.

I currently am working from home as a Tax Associate for Boulay, a small CPA firm based out of Eden Prairie. I've always tried to be involved in my community through volunteering and supporting local businesses. I worked as a Universal Banker for Lake Area Bank while in high school. Throughout my time at Hamline, I was dedicated to giving back my time to the university through work study employment and tutoring the students in our accounting classes.

As a young resident of Wyoming who has intentions of raising children in the area one day, I'd really like to be involved with the Park Advisory Commission. While I don't have any experience being a part of a group like this, I am very enthusiastic about helping the city to continue to provide a beautiful, safe community environment using my knowledge and work experience.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and please reach out with any questions you may have. I would be happy to offer my time for an informational interview if you so need.

Regards,
Lindsay Hobson

Jessica A. Bergan
26437 Forli Avenue
Wyoming, MN 55092
Jessica.a.bergan@gmail.com
507-226-2413

April 26, 2021

Kelly Dumais
Assistant City Administrator
City of Wyomgin
26885 Forest Blvd #8346
Wyoming, MN 55092

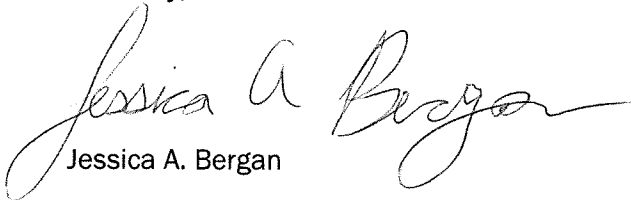
Dear Ms. Dumais:

I recently read about the opening within the Wyoming Park Advisory Commission, and was interested in assisting in this commission.

I have lived in Wyoming for four years and would like to give back to my community. During my time in this beautiful city, my family has made sure to attend many city events as well as spend time at our gorgeous parks. I hope by joining this commission I can be helpful and learn more about this great city I am privileged to call my home.

My resume is enclosed with this letter so you can review my education, work experience, and achievements. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you in the near future.

Sincerely,


Jessica A. Bergan

Jessica Bergan

26437 Forli Ave

Wyoming Mn 55092

5072262413

jessica.a.bergan@gmail.com

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Collins Law Office, P.A.

20 Lake Street S Ste 202 Forest Lake MN 55025

Paralegal: June 2019 to present

Answering phones, entering data, creating estate planning documents, e-filing documents for recording, scheduling appointments.

Hoglund Law

1781 County Rd B West Roseville MN 55113

Legal Assistant: January 2018 to June 2019

Answering phones, entering data, creating documents for court. Calling medical facilities for medical records for clients case. Processing billing and speaking with customer service representatives. Speaking with clients regarding the next steps of their case. Serving subpoena requests.

Donatelli's

2692 Co Rd E East, St Paul, MN 55110

Cashier: June 2016- January 2018

Answering phone calls to create orders for customers. Training new employees how to answer phones, create dessert dishes. Helping close down restaurant at the end of the night. Counting money in registers.

Yost & Baill

220 South 6th St, Ste 2050, Minneapolis MN 55402

Legal Assistant: December 2015 – May 2016

Creating files based on referrals from our clients. Engage in support duties for efficient courtroom processes including preparing legal documents, intercommunications with defendants and clients, and service legal documents. Utilize Circuit Court Administration software including court record entries, case management and limited billing.

Erickson Bell Beckman & Quinn

1700 West HWY 36 Roseville Minnesota

Receptionist: August 2014-December 2015

Answer phones, make copies for attorneys, create case data summaries, look over legal descriptions when asked, a bit of dictation as well.

Lighthouse of Mahtomedi Mahtomedi Minnesota

Caregiver: April 2014-July 2014

Care for residents including help with dressing, daily living, and activities.

Cleaning, laundry, dishes, serving meals

REM WISCONSIN River Falls Wisconsin United States

Direct Support Professional December 2013 - March 2014

Care for patients by changing bed linens, washing and ironing laundry, cleaning, or assisting with their personal care.

Administer prescribed oral medications, under the written direction of physician or as directed by home care nurse or aide, and ensure patients take their medicine.

Plan, purchase, prepare, or serve meals to patients or other family members, according to prescribed diets.

SURVEY RESEARCH CENTER River Falls Wisconsin United States

Student Assistant February 2013 - October 2013

Prepare, manipulate, and manage extensive databases.

Provide assistance with the preparation of project-related reports, manuscripts, and presentations.

Obtain informed consent of research subjects and/or their guardians.

Perform descriptive and multivariate statistical analyses of data, using computer software.

Prepare tables, graphs, fact sheets, and written reports summarizing research results.

Perform data entry and other clerical work as required for project completion.

EDUCATION

Saint Charles High School Minnesota United States

High School Diploma, Jun 2012

- GPA of 3.1, scholarships up to 500 dollars, soccer team member, One Act State Champion, lettered in Choir

University of Wisconsin River Falls Wisconsin United States

Completed coursework towards Political Science, Dec 2013

- Learn about different government procedures, member of Phi Mu Zeta Sigma fraternity, and Hall council vice president

Rasmussen College Lake Elmo Minnesota United States

Graduated with Associates Degree in Paralegal Studies September 2017 and Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice Leadership and Management September 2018

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

- Hard working, friendly, fast learner, good listener
- Efficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Outlook
- Worked with Client Profiles program
- Lexis Advance and Westlaw
- Fundraising experience

Building Community Resilience to Emergencies in Vulnerable Populations



Prepared by:

Hannah Chong
Akua Y. Opoku
Meghan Redmond
Megan Schossow

Students in PA8081-006:
Planning & Public Policy Capstone
Instructor: Dan Milz, Ph.D
Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs

Prepared in Collaboration with:

Karma Kumlin-Diers
Ramsey County Emergency Management Coordinator

The project on which this report is based was completed in collaboration with Ramsey County as part of the 2018–2019 Resilient Communities Project (RCP) partnership. RCP is a program at the University of Minnesota’s Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) that connects University faculty and students with Minnesota communities to address strategic projects that advance local resilience and sustainability.

The contents of this report represent the views of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of RCP, CURA, the Regents of the University of Minnesota, or Ramsey County.



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This publication may be available in alternate formats upon request.

Resilient Communities Project

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Resilient Communities Project

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Building Community-University Partnerships for Resilience

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

**Building Community Resilience to Emergencies in Vulnerable Populations:
A Human Centered Approach to Community Outreach and Engagement**

Capstone Paper

In Partial Fulfillment of Degree Requirements
The Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs
The University of Minnesota

Hannah Chong
Akua Y. Opoku
Meghan Redmond
Megan Schossow

10 May 2019

*Signature below of Paper Supervisor certifies successful completion of oral presentation **and** completion of final written version:*

Monday, April 29, 2019
Date of oral presentation

Dan Milz, Visiting Assistant Professor
Capstone Instructor

Friday, May 10, 2019
Approval date of final paper

Ramsey County Emergency Management and
Homeland Security
Client

Acknowledgement

Thank you to Ramsey County Emergency Management and Homeland Security (RCEMHS) and the Resilient Communities Project (RCP) for allowing up the opportunity to explore and research disaster preparedness resilience. Specifically, we would like to thank Karma Kumlin-Diers and Judd Freed from RCEMHS and Mike Greco from RCP. Additionally, we would like to thank Professor Dan Milz for his guidance and constructive suggestions. Lastly, we would like to sincerely thank the individuals and organizations we interviewed for this project. We appreciate their time and willingness to share their experiences with us.

Abstract

Ramsey County Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (RCEMHS) has a knowledge gap in vital information about preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters in vulnerable communities. This study focused on three key vulnerable communities within Ramsey County: older adults (60 years or older), children under five, and the Karen population. Qualitative analysis of interviews was conducted with individuals, organizations, and government departments within Ramsey County. Due to the trans-boundary and trans-jurisdictional nature of natural and human-caused disasters, coordination within agencies and with nonprofit and private organizations is necessary. The study found that many vulnerable populations interact with public benefit programs, providing insight into disaster resilience. These touch-points can be trust and resilience-building exchanges. The communities have a lack of knowledge of RCEMHS and emergency management, and which may reinforce complacency towards emergency preparedness. To counter a lack of knowledge and engagement in emergency preparedness by communities, we recommend RCEMHS adopt a human centered approach in preparation and planning activities, where communities hold valuable expertise about their assets and vulnerabilities in regard to disasters. This study developed five recommendations for more effective outreach and engagement in emergency management. Each of the recommendations can use human centered design strategies and are aligned within a community resilience framework.

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Introduction

At the center of disasters are communities dealing with the aftermath and not all communities feel the impact of disasters equally. Disaster preparedness knowledge is an important factor in successful recovery efforts. As the most densely populated and one of the most diverse counties in Minnesota, it is important for Ramsey County to engage effectively with all its communities to ensure that every resident is well prepared for natural and man-made disasters. Given the density and diversity, however, not all communities are being reached effectively. These gaps exist in part because disaster preparedness research is lacking for many of the county's vulnerable communities. Too little is known of what assets and social vulnerabilities exist within certain demographic groups in Ramsey County to help them prepare for and respond to natural and man-made disasters

To encourage and support community resilience to disasters across the county, Ramsey County Emergency Management and Homeland Security (RCEMHS) needs to identify the social vulnerabilities and assets that exist within each community. Our primary recommendation for RCEMHS is to use a human centered approach to identify vulnerabilities and assets. This approach will keep the needs of vulnerable communities, of whom are most impacted by disasters, at the center of its outreach. How communities prepare for and respond to disasters vary depending on which social vulnerabilities are present in the community. Vulnerabilities such as socioeconomic status of its members, housing, access to transportation and language; and assets including social networks all affect a community's disaster preparedness and response.

The mission of RCEMHS is to foster resilience in Ramsey County through the development of a community-wide culture of preparedness and the coordination of public safety efforts to prevent, plan for, respond to, mitigate and recover from all hazards, disasters and emergencies – whether natural or human-caused, accidental or intentional (Emergency Management & Homeland Security, 2019). RCEMHS is responsible for the development and maintenance of the Ramsey County Emergency Operations Plan (RCEOP). The RCEOP provides the framework by which Ramsey County and its communities manage major emergencies that threaten health, safety, property and resource (Emergency Management & Homeland Security, 2019). Within the RCEOP, Ramsey County identifies not only the importance of responding to communities' needs when a disaster occurs but also recognizes there are critical actions that need to take place for communities to build resilience prior to disasters.

Specific to Ramsey County, the core elements of this project will: (1) identify key social vulnerability indicators to inform the development of a social vulnerability index (2) determine assets and vulnerabilities for three demographic groups: older adults 60+, children under 5 years old, and the Karen community; (3) provide recommendations on community partnerships and models of how to engage with vulnerable communities to better improve emergency plan outreach and (4) provide recommendations for how to approach collaboration and management of County departments when engaging with vulnerable communities in regards to disaster preparedness and response.

Research Questions

Based on the four core elements of the project, the following research questions were developed:

1. *What assets and social vulnerabilities could inform Ramsey County emergency response to natural and man-made disasters?*
2. *What factors influence how communities build resilience and respond to natural and man-made disasters?*
3. *How have local governments effectively cross collaborated to build resilient communities and serve communities in times of disaster and recovery?*
4. *What outreach strategies are effective in reaching vulnerable communities?*

Background

Ramsey County's emergency and disaster management is laid out in the Ramsey County Emergency Operations Plan. The plan explains the common doctrine and structures used to coordinate activity across the various levels of government and provides information on how the county will manage emergencies that threaten county functions and services as well as efforts undertaken by each of the municipalities (*Ramsey County Emergency Operations Plan*, 2017). Disaster management refers to the relationship hazards and vulnerabilities have on the risk of a disaster, where risk increased with the magnitude of the hazard, amount of vulnerability, and resource scarcity (Flanagan et al, 2011). Generally, and for the scope of this project, a disaster is a natural or anthropogenic disaster. Disaster response, emergency management, and preparation have historically focused on the vulnerability of physical assets, like infrastructure (Flanagan et al, 2011). Using a community resilience framework emergency management moves from focusing exclusively on physical vulnerability to recognizing physical and social assets within communities. Using a community resilience framework helps emergency management to understand the social vulnerabilities, resiliency, and assets in a community, which enables precise resource allocation and outreach in preparation for, or response to, a disaster (Flanagan et al, 2011).

A social vulnerability refers to a community's resilience in response to external stress ("CDC's Social Vulnerability Index," 2018). A more intimate understanding of community vulnerabilities and assets provides an opportunity for building resiliency in such communities (Flanagan et al, 2011). This applied study of vulnerability provides insight into influences of vulnerability and resiliency in communities over time (Rygel, O'sullivan, & Yarnal, 2006).

The definition of community can vary greatly, referring to geographic location, membership, or a cultural group. For this project, community is defined as belonging to a specific group as defined by age or ethnicity. A vulnerable community will typically have fewer resources for preparation and mitigation (Rygel, O'Sullivan, & Yarnal, 2006), be more reliant on outside resources, less likely to receive outside resources during response, slower to recover, and more likely to have members of the community die (Flanagan et al, 2011).

The overall goal of RCEMHS emergency planning is to increase the resilience of

communities (*Ramsey County Emergency Operations Plan*, 2017). The concept of resilience has evolved in psychology and behavioral health as a means to understand what adaptive capacities allows some individuals to continue functioning effectively and display positive outcomes in the face of adversity (Plough et al, 2013). A supportive social context in a community prior to a disaster has emerged as a key component for resilience to move from being defined at the individual level to a community definition of resilience (Plough et al, 2013). Community resilience creates a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts, meaning a collection of resilient individuals does not guarantee a resilient community (Norris, Stevens, Pfefferbaum, Wyche, & Pfefferbaum, 2008).

Cutter et al (2013) defines community resilience as the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events. Resilience is a process linking a set of adaptive capacities to a positive trajectory of functioning and adaptation after a disturbance (Norris, Stevens, Pfefferbaum, Wyche, & Pfefferbaum, 2008). Resilience includes inherent conditions that allow the system to absorb impacts, cope with an event as well as post-event and adaptive processes that facilitate the ability of the system to re-organize, change and learn in response (Cutter et al, 2013). According to Manyena (2006) “viewing disaster resilience as a process (leading to desired outcomes) ... places emphasis on the human role in disasters. Disaster resilience is seen as a quality, characteristic or result that is generated or developed by the processes that foster or promote it.” Resilience is a process linking resources to an outcome.

While there is a general consensus on the definition of community resilience, there is less of an understanding on how to build resilient communities. In research conducted by Nuwayhid et al, collective identity, previous experience with adverse events, and social support networks contribute to building resilience. Community cohesiveness, social solidarity, and connected political leadership help to sustain resilience after an event (Plough et al, 2013). Building resilience has a participatory component based on who/where resilience is being built (Cutter et al, 2013). Responsibility for building and influencing community resilience is shared by individuals, families, government agencies, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and all levels of government (Cutter et al, 2013). RCEMHS accounts for community resilience as a mitigation activity (*Ramsey County Emergency Operations Plan*, 2017).

Inherent in resilient communities are principles of equity and social justice. The impact of a disaster on a community is determined by everyday patterns of social interaction and organization particularly by stratification paradigms which determine access to resources (Morrow, 1999). Communities with strong social and economic infrastructures have health insurance, stable housing, and other assets that make them better able to be resilient socially and economically than marginalized communities (Plough et al, 2013). The effect of a disaster on a household or community, therefore, results from a complex set of interacting conditions related to geography and location and social and economic characteristics of the people living there (Morrow, 1999).

Problem Description

RCEMHS seeks to understand social vulnerabilities and assets within the county to better prepare for, respond to, and build resilience against natural or human-caused disasters” (“RC 1 Building Community Resilience to Emergencies n Vulnerable Populations,” 2019). Pre-existing patterns of communities are increasingly recognized as the root of disaster vulnerability (Morrow, 1999). The impact of a disaster on a community is not random but determined by

everyday patterns of social interaction and organization related to socioeconomic status and access to resources (Morrow, 1999). Effective disaster response at the local level must include a comprehensive understanding of the patterns and social interactions within particular communities (Morrow, 1999).

Risk to disasters can be identified and aggregated into indicators. Such indicators include:

- (A) Limited economic and material resources. Households living in poverty have fewer financial resources to plan for a disaster and recover more slowly after a disaster takes place. Economic status is also often connected to poorly built housing or inadequately maintained housing. People living in poverty also may have less access to transportation to evacuate prior or to assist in connecting to relief efforts post disaster (Morrow, 1999).
- (B) Human or personal resources including physical ability, relevant experience, education and skills (Morrow, 1999). For example, the vulnerability of people of the age of 65 varies greatly based on their age and health status and on the other end of the spectrum, children have increased vulnerability based on age and their physical and emotional development.
- (C) Family and social resources including the extent to which households are embedded in larger social networks. Recent immigrant communities may be more vulnerable because they lack connections to the larger community and may hesitate to ask for government help (Morrow, 1999).
- (D) Membership in racial or ethnic communities results in social and economic marginality influencing the impact of a disaster and one's ability to recover. Minority groups are often not included in disaster planning and there are cultural differences with how people assess and respond to hazard risk (Morrow, 1999).

Overlap among indicators can also create a compounding effect, which places communities and at an even greater risk of vulnerability to a disaster. Understanding the composition of the county along with vulnerabilities and assets is critical to communicating with and serving communities to prevent residents from being disproportionately affected by a disaster in mitigation, response or recovery.

It is also important to place this project and community resilience in the context of Ramsey County's 2018 Strategic Plan. Priorities including inclusive, effective and meaningful community engagement, advancing racial and health equity in all decision-making, effective and efficient services that put residents first, enhanced data sharing and integration, access to service delivery and facilities, and comprehensive economic development to build prosperity (Ramsey County Strategic Plan, 2018) have the capacity to build community resilience in the county. It is beneficial for emergency management to reflect where their work with building resilience intersects with the priorities in the strategic plan, as work across departments could be leveraged for emergency management.

The question of how to build resilience in vulnerable populations is coming at a critical juncture for Ramsey County. Indicators correlated to disaster vulnerability are present within communities in Ramsey County and disaster magnitude and frequency will likely be exacerbated by climate change. The aging population is growing, there is an increasingly diverse population, and there are deep racial and economic disparities. Older adults, children under 5 years old, and the Karen community were included in this study based on the priorities of RCEMHS with consensus by the capstone team. These three communities exhibit the indicators outlined above to varying degrees. Different disciplines define and measure vulnerability differently (Alwang,

Siegel, & Jorgensen, 2001), meaning any given vulnerability indicator may not be appropriate for the communities in Ramsey County (Rygel, O'sullivan, & Yarnal, 2006). To address this variability, the Resilient Communities Project will: identify indicators of vulnerability and resiliency specific to the communities of Ramsey County; use these indicators to develop outreach methods appropriate for Ramsey County; and use the project data to inform recommendations related to outreach. Focusing on three communities, which represent both common and perhaps vulnerabilities specific to them, will serve as a starting point for Emergency Management to better understand and develop models and recommendations which can be applied to other vulnerable communities.

Methodology

Three main research activities were conducted for this project, including a literature review, interviews, and qualitative analysis. First, a literature review of emergency management, resilience, and effective outreach models was conducted. Second, interviews with government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community leaders were carried out. Third, using the literature review as a framework, the interviews were analyzed to find main themes within and across the three communities of focus: older adults 60+, children under 5 years old, and the Karen community.

Literature Review

The cross-jurisdictional nature of emergency management and disasters prompted a literature review on framework surrounding inter- and intra-agency collaboration and community engagement. This research provided a baseline knowledge of decision-making structures, network structures, case studies on the successful facilitation of collaborations with other public, private, and nonprofit organizations, and involvement of the community in decision-making processes. Peer-reviewed articles, case studies from other counties, and secondary literature from government agencies and nonprofits were used to inform the literature review and frame qualitative analysis. The RCEMHS team provided several academic articles on disaster preparedness and resilience that informed the research. For the peer-reviewed articles, we conducted an e-search of academic journals pertaining to resilience, vulnerability, disaster preparedness, emergency management, outreach, and government partnerships within the three demographic groups the project is focused.

Interviews

There is a significant amount of information available on this topic at the international, national, state, and regional level. The concern, however, is the lack of information available that could be directly applicable to local municipalities within Ramsey County. We used a case study approach in an effort to provide a narrative applicable to the experiences of communities in the county. Because the project's research questions were focused on qualitative data, interviews were conducted to find similar themes across the three groups.

Data Collection

In total, 46 agencies, organizations, and individuals were contacted, and 21 interviews were conducted. Interview questions were written to answer the four research questions. Three sets of interview questions were developed for individuals, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies. A matrix was then created to determine if the interview questions would inform the research questions. The client also reviewed the questions to ensure objectives were being met. See Appendix A for interview protocol and questions.

An initial database of organizations in Ramsey County was developed and RCEMHS provided connections with several organizations through email. Emails were sent out based on research of relevant organizations and agencies. RCEMHS did not have contacts with organizations that served the Karen community, but an initial Google search yielded leads that were used as launching points. Internet searches were also an initial starting point for families with children under 5. The goal from these comprehensive searches was to get a mixture of government and nonprofit organizations that served the project's targeted demographic groups.

Snowball sampling method was utilized to expand the research network by asking each initial interviewee if there was anyone else they recommended for an interview. This method allowed for the ease of procuring additional interviews and expanding the network of the research. For the Karen community, it helped to have a Karen "guide" to refer and connect to other potential interviewees. Additional methods of connecting with community organizations included researching websites and utilizing the available contact information or making a direct-reach through LinkedIn.

Analysis

NVivo, a qualitative analysis software was used to code each interview and determine the main themes from each group and overlapping themes across groups. We used a list of predetermined general codes to organize the interviews and created sub-codes during the analysis process. General codes included assets, barriers, emergency planning, engagement, government, outreach, partnerships, resilience, technology, volunteers, and vulnerability.

Limitations

The restricted timeline available to complete research was a limitation for the project. Given the limited time-period, the interview pool was only a subset of nonprofit organizations and government agencies that serve each demographic group. Researching appropriate organizations, contacting and scheduling an interview took anywhere from several days to two weeks. Because of the limited time, we engaged in snowball sampling by asking each interviewee to provide recommendations for future interviews. This reduced time looking for interviewees but biased the sample. Due to these limitations, the interview group is not a representative sample of each demographic population.

Another limitation to the research is the overall complexity of emergency management. With the large amount of research on the topic, it was a challenge to get a completely comprehensive and in-depth understanding in the limited time. There was also hesitancy from interviewees due to the "obscure" nature of the topic. Many contacts were reluctant to be interviewed due to feeling unqualified to speak on emergency management.

Emergency Management Models of Collaboration

Inter-Agency and Intra-Agency Partnerships

Disasters require varying degrees of response, depending on the scale and magnitude of the impact. Coordinated response efforts under times of stress, and preparatory resilience building takes place in communities where formal and informal networks are a part of daily decision-making. Response from multiple actors, either within the same agency, other government agencies, or nonprofits should be leveraged in such a manner that address community needs during vulnerable times. Structural organization, decision-making strategies, and network mapping provide insight into inter and intra-agency collaboration as it applies to disaster and emergency management.

In disasters, risk is shared between agencies and organizations because of perceived shared threat, which results in a shared response to the stressful event (Kapucu, 2006). Disasters of such scale, or transboundary disasters, engage stakeholders and resources from across jurisdictions and exceed the capacity of a single organization to respond (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017; Steigenberger, 2016). Disasters are characterized by complexity, dynamic conditions, unpredictability, and distributed information across jurisdictions (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017). This gives rationale for inter and intra-organizational response planning, in addition to developing social capital and networks that serve as assets and resilience-building factors. Despite the networked nature of disaster response, Incident Command System (ICS) coordinates response in disasters, which is a command and control tool discussed further in later sections (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017).

The complexity of disasters and their impact on communities necessitates response from a diversity of organizations and collaboration between them (Kapucu, 2006). Partnerships between organizations can be defined as two or more organizations contributing resources to a shared initiative or common goal (Kapucu, 2006). Successful partnerships often necessitate complementary resources (Kapucu, 2006). Large-scale disasters that cross jurisdictions require flexibility, distributed communication, ability to coordinate bilaterally, and acting as a collective unit (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017).

RCEMHS has identified the importance of partnerships and collaborative response through their guiding principles: engaged partnerships, tiered response, scalable, flexible, and adaptational capabilities, unity of effort through unified command, and readiness to act (*Ramsey County Emergency Operations Plan*, 2017). The Ramsey County Emergency Operations Plan further articulates the role of partnerships in community resilience in their response strategy: “Resilient communities begin with prepared individuals and depend on the leadership and engagement of local government, county government, NGO’s, and the private sector” (*Ramsey County Emergency Operations Plan*, 2017).

Intra-agency Partnerships

Relationship building among different agencies and departments within an entity or organization is a pre-disaster act that strengthens the efficacy of a response following a disaster, due to improved operational success (Kapucu, 2008). Pre-disaster communication between

agencies and organizations has been proven to drive effective mitigation, preparation, and response (Kapucu, 2008). Emergency management workers are routinely filtering whether information seems crucial or distracting, which is subjective and complicated (Bharosa, Lee, & Janssen, 2010); however, coordination across departments enhances disaster response in a number of ways. A responding agency may better allocate resources with stronger internal relationships, as departments will be aware of efforts beyond their field (Janssen, Lee, Bharosa, & Cresswell, 2010).

Graphical depictions establishing a general structure of a network can help others understand the network within an agency, or across agencies (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017). This analysis exposes excluded networks, gaps, or redundancy in the network of study. In addition, the exercise is able to expose the central actor in a response and who “key brokers” are. Key brokers connect to and disseminate information to actors not embedded in the network of the responding agency (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017). The benefits of stronger internal relationships and understandings translate to organizations outside of the responding organization, in public-private and other partnerships discussed later in this paper.

Coordination issues and challenges that hinder interagency collaboration and response to a disaster can result from a lack of leadership, stemming from factors like burnout or lack of experience (Steigenberger, 2016). Intentional staffing and training as a means of planning for a disaster can prevent ambiguity in roles and structures in a high-stress environment (Steigenberger, 2016). Coordination and response in an urban environment may benefit from a more centralized command structure with specialized outreach or key brokers, as discussed in the core-periphery model in the section below (Steigenberger, 2016). While having a complete plan for all disaster is difficult, having strengthened core functions of coordination, like communication, information sharing, and cultural competency, eliminate the likelihood of high-frequency errors in the response process (Steigenberger, 2016). Such training for disasters provides various utility. These exercises network interagency individuals and departments and encourages learning across the organization (Steigenberger, 2016).

Standardization of information sharing addresses issues within the agency. Individuals and departments may intake and prioritize information differently, for example: immediate task versus information processing (Bharosa, Lee, & Janssen, 2010). These differences in communication prevent information sharing due to differences in priority and understanding. To encourage information sharing and communication across departments, and ultimately agencies, “emotional rewards and acknowledgement of their credit” are methods to increase systems thinking and ultimately information sharing (Bharosa, Lee, & Janssen, 2010). These and the following insights on inter and intra-agency collaborations serve to inform effective partnerships, outreach, and resilience-building in the community, as identified in the research questions.

ICS and Core-Periphery

Incident command system (ICS) is the standard response procedure to disasters which has explicit chain-of-command, hierarchical structure, see Figure 1 (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017). Ramsey County Emergency Management’s guiding principles include “unity of effort through unified command,” which is the decision-making basis for the entire disaster cycle (Ramsey County Emergency Operations Plan, 2017). Literature has supported and criticized this setup, with apparent tradeoffs structure has been shown to be too rigid amid disasters, particularly when coordination across jurisdictions and networks are necessary (Nowell,

Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017). In addition, specific perspectives may be unintentionally excluded through a single actor leading a response (Kapucu, 2008). However, this system integrates and streamlines “facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications” and is considered critical to emergency response (“Incident Command System Resources FEMA.gov,” 2018).

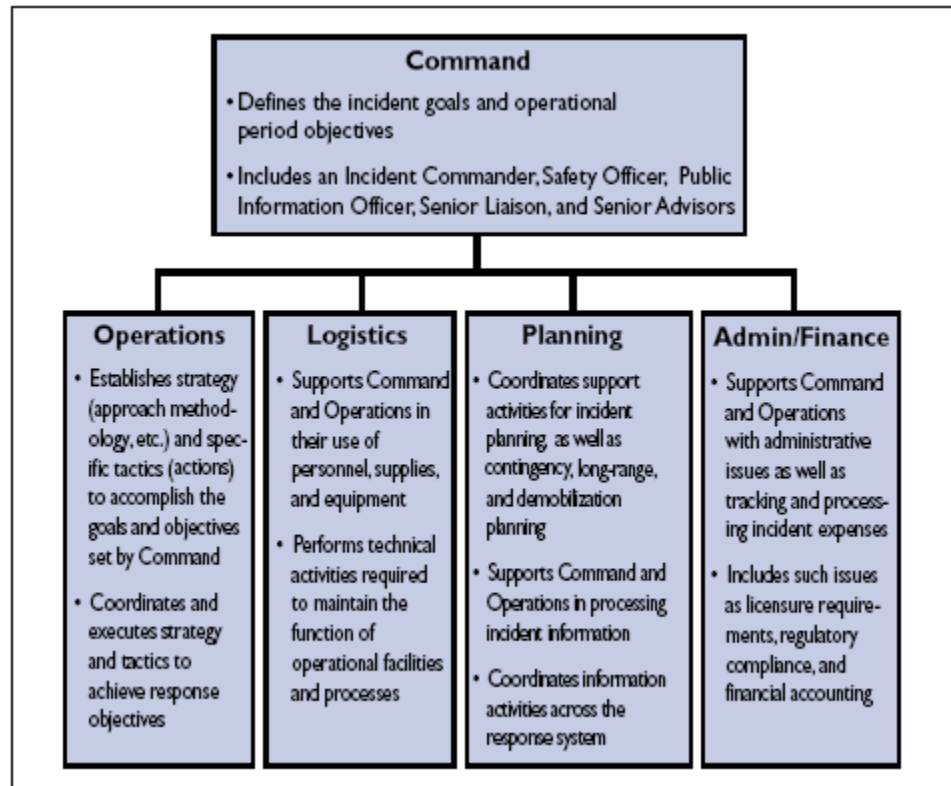


Figure : ICS Structure

A modified but appropriate network model for emergency management has been described as a “core-periphery” where several central stakeholders that are strongly networked act as brokers (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017). The periphery, connected to the core by the brokers, act functionally to the response. This structure has been more flexible to the changing dynamic of disasters while maintaining information flows and resiliency (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017). The core-periphery structure accomplished conflicting needs in a disaster: centralized coordination and networking of outside organizations (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017). Figure 2 compares the different network structures (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017).

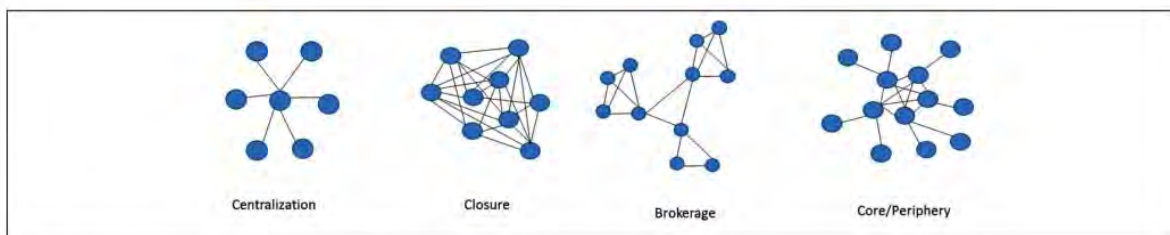


Figure 2: Network structures, including ICS (centralization) and Core/periphery

The makeup of the core, periphery, and brokers are determinative of coordination amid a disaster. The periphery efficacy is based on a network of functional, operational groups outside of the core (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017). A successful broker likely looks like an individual with an operational role and are embedded in the local network, like a sheriff. The capacity of a broker determines information flow (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017). Additionally, characteristics of the individuals impact functionality. Local networks are informative when outside management responds to a disaster while heterogeneity and size of core members need to increase as the disaster scale increases (Nowell, Steelman, Velez, & Yang, 2017).

Public-Nonprofit Partnerships (PNPs)

PNPs have a place in addressing societal problems through their ability to connect various networks, organizations, and resources (Kapucu, 2006). Many such partnerships rely on self-selection and are voluntary in nature, making resources and success dependent on the participants (Kapucu, 2006). PNPs have been shown to engage community members in decisions that concern their ways of life while contributing to priority setting (Kapucu, 2006). Such partnerships distribute decision-making horizontally, which has been shown to develop social capital and inclusivity, which is a strategic goal of Ramsey County (Kapucu, 2006). Social capital, in particular, trust and tight networks, build resilience in communities and enable them to better respond to disasters (Kapucu, 2006).

Mistrust in government institutions has historical factors, including scandals and failures to constituents (Youngblood & Youngblood, 2018). Specific to government involvement in emergency management, failures resulting before, during, and after Hurricane Katrina have eroded constituent response to government (Youngblood & Youngblood, 2018). Building of trust through PNPs enables more effective communication and strategy implementation in a disaster, but this work is most effective when done prior to a disaster or stressful situation (Kapucu, 2006). While these partnerships and relationships build trust and communication, independent information systems between organizations and agencies can isolate opportunities for communication (Janssen, Lee, Bharosa, & Cresswell, 2010).

Enterprise architecture (EA) aggregates information systems and communication into a streamlined platform that can be understood across organizations, though this requires a level of broadness and preparatory planning (Janssen, Lee, Bharosa, & Cresswell, 2010). Multiple systems have been created and utilized during trainings and demonstrations to share information across agencies. This technology can share information such as location, email, navigation, photos, assignments and roles, and more (Bharosa, Lee, & Janssen, 2010). While technology can

mitigate technological barriers in information sharing across organizations, value-judgments in communicating information result in critical gaps. Preventing centralized information flows may mitigate this, which promotes structures like the core-periphery discussed previously (Bharosa, Lee, & Janssen, 2010).

Nonprofit organizations often serve their communities and as such are embedded in the informal networks that exist among residents. These networks and relationships serve an important purpose in emergency preparedness and disaster response. Social capital and networks facilitate individual and organization response in disasters in several ways: by increasing interaction, communication, trust, reciprocity, dissemination of information, and resource access (Kapucu, 2006).

Following the disaster that unfolded in New York City on 9/11, the New York Mayor's Voluntary Action (MVAC) served as a coordinator to the responding nonprofit organizations (Kapucu, 2006). Key response coordination activities included information aggregation about responding organizations, leader identification, information session hosting, and volunteer referring (Kapucu, 2006). Another example of response from 9/11 came in the founding of "11 September fund" used network power to meet the needs of the community. The fund assessed needs through listening to nonprofit organizations.

Social capital built through PNPs enables community engagement in decisions that concern them and may increase participation in programs or make programs more fit to the community (Kapucu, 2006), this being a horizontal decision-making strategy. These activities build capacity and resilience within the community resulting in more effective decision making, program and project implementation, and community commitment.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

Private organizations and businesses have been an integral part of disaster response, where they have provided resources, volunteers, capital, and more. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has emphasized the importance of public-private partnerships themselves, indicating this trend will continue to improve the efficiency and efficacy of responses to disasters (Busch & Givens, 2013). PPPs are an effective way of allocating resources to those in disasters and positively impact the economy through business following a disaster (Busch & Givens, 2013).

These partnerships impact disaster management on all organizational levels of Integrated Planning Security (IPS) (Busch & Givens, 2013). As a result, this means activities can be performed or delegated outside of the government, especially when such tasks are negotiated prior to the event of a disaster (Busch & Givens, 2013). This strategy reduces decisions being made during an actual disaster (Busch & Givens, 2013).

There often is a lack of incentive to share information and communicate outside of an organization, even though stronger inter-organizational networks are better equipped to mitigate, prepare for and respond to disasters. Private organizations hesitate to share proprietary or sensitive information, and public agencies often underestimate the engagement of private businesses (*Public-Private Partnerships for Emergency Preparedness: Developing Partnerships*, 2014). A focus on social and cultural norms within an agency are an effective route in mitigating this. Encouraging norms and values of information sharing increases dissemination and reach of communications (Bharosa, Lee, & Janssen, 2010).

Best practices in developing public-private partnerships follow the preparatory and mitigation flows of the disaster cycle. Similar to other partnerships, identification of purpose, objectives, and appropriate partners represent appropriate first steps in this process (*Public-Private Partnerships for Emergency Preparedness: Developing Partnerships*, 2014). Engagement of the organization, third-party involvement, and continued joint activities are critical in maintaining the network and relationship. FEMA has developed a framework and foundational core attributes around public-private partnerships in recognition of the importance of this form of networking (FEMA, 2013). Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) have been structured as public-private partnerships in major urban areas like Dallas, TX (*Emergency Management Partnership Examples*, n.d.).

Fairfax County, Virginia, has utilized public-private partnerships in order to “prepare for, effectively respond to and quickly recover from emergency events” (“Fairfax County | Emergency Management,” n.d.). This county has an Office of Public Private Partnerships (OP3) with the purpose of encouraging innovation and civic involvement and responsibility (“Public Private Partnerships | Fairfax County,” n.d.)

Interview Analysis

Qualitative analysis of interviews indicated intra and inter-agency collaborations with RCEMHS support specific initiatives, like training. The county interacts with organizations and individuals very frequently, and these touchpoints have been identified as collaborative or engagement opportunities. A strong intra-agency relationship highlighted was Ramsey County Public Health/RCEMHS. A factor that strengthened this collaboration was a grant guiding the response to events that have a human impact. Internal to Ramsey County, partnerships have typically been initiated or managed through executive leadership teams, with a number of partnerships existing within a leadership team, like Health and Wellness. Other departments within Ramsey County have relationships and information on the communities that can inform what assets and social vulnerabilities RCEMHS is working with. Trusting other departments was discussed as a critical point, especially when time and resources are limited. Organizations outside of Ramsey County indicated their most frequent interaction and partnership with RCEMHS were in the form of drills, training, and exercises that are intended to be preparatory.

Identified barriers to stronger internal partnerships include time restraints, resources, relationships, language, information sharing, and organizational structure. Referring resources and working on multidisciplinary projects requires that departments are aware of each other’s initiatives and resources. When a relationship exists across departments, staff indicated that collaborations are more thoughtful and frequent. Information sharing may be limited by legal forces, like the Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and ensuring that information being shared does not need to go through a vetting process.

Summary

Strong partnerships build community resilience, strengthen coordination related to emergency management, and connect resources to those who need them in the community. Nonprofit and private organizations are networked into the communities they serve and work with, making them a valuable broker of resources and information to RCEMHS. These activities

increase interaction between the community and the government, in turn building social capital which is a key determinant of community resilience and how communities fare during disasters and emergencies. Interviews indicated that Ramsey County departments have a host of touchpoints with organizations and individuals in the community, which should be leveraged as partnerships. Interviewees mentioned collaboration on events and activities as a method of increasing RCEMHS awareness and reach, by intentionally co-hosting or sponsoring an event. Ramsey County staff discussed a monitoring process of existing organizations serving Ramsey County residents, which would serve as a database for potential partnerships while revealing existing gaps and redundancy. Such network mapping can be done in a visual way to reveal key community leaders, who should, in turn, be central to emergency management. Partnerships provide an opportunity to build relationships as a pre-disaster activity, delegate efforts throughout the disaster cycle, and reduce the frequency of errors and decisions that happen during an emergency.

Community-Based Engagement

Ramsey County's first priority in the 2018 Strategic Plan was "Inclusive, Effective and Meaningful Community Engagement" (Ramsey County Strategic Plan 2018, 2018). In a top-down, command and control approach to disaster management, the authority makes decisions based on their perception of the needs. In this model, communities are viewed as victims or receivers of aid (Pandey & Okazaki, 2012). As an alternative, community engagement can be a strategy for disaster prevention and mitigation activities, though it affects all stages of disaster cycle. Community engagement is a process that includes multiple techniques to promote the participation of residents in community life. Particularly those who are excluded or isolated by engaging them in collective action to create a healthy community (Nexus Community Partners, 2018). Using a community engagement model, communities are supported in analyzing their own hazardous conditions, vulnerabilities, and capacities as they see themselves (Pandey & Okazaki, 2012). During a disaster, people at the community level have more to lose because they are directly affected by the disaster and on the flipside, have the most to gain if they can reduce the impact of disasters in their community (Pandey & Okazaki, 2012).

Research has supported the notion that community engagement and coordination during non-disaster times improve the outcomes a community can expect to have in the event of a disaster (Kapucu, 2008). Community engagement in non-emergency times reinforces relationships between the community and government, which improves relationships, coordination, and empowers community members and organizations (Kapucu, 2008). During a disaster, community organizations and community members need to receive and relay information and resources. Engagement facilitates buy-in for planning activities, like response to warnings and evacuation plans (Kapucu, 2008).

A genuine concern and vulnerability in disaster planning is public complacency towards preparedness (Kapucu, 2008). Following spans of inactivity in terms of a disaster, communities have a tendency to minimize the risks and hazards presented (Kapucu, 2008). Lack of engagement in preparation and mitigation processes can result in increased devastation, disrupted communication channels, and underestimation of threats (Kapucu, 2008). However, the need for actively engaged community members and participation has direct and relevant consequences to the outcomes of the disaster and the efficacy of the responding agencies. When communities are prepared, engaged with or in relationship with the responding organizations, and facilitating

communication channels, resources are allocated to those who most need them, which reduces overall demands of responders and resource suppliers (Kapucu, 2008). Pre-disaster activities that inform constituents of hazards and action items have been implemented by emergency response personnel in the form of meetings, exercises, practice responses, and communications (Kapucu, 2008). Engagement with the community founded in school-systems has been identified as a strategy for wide-spread community information dissemination and preparedness, as it becomes “second nature” to children and their families (Kapucu, 2008). This strategy serves as an effective outreach method, collaborative effort, and capacity building activity that builds community resilience.

In addition to the emphasis of preparedness and disaster training effects that are purported to take place when training children, having an active Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in each community builds resilience and preparedness (Kapucu, 2008). These organizations facilitate the development of social capital, activities surrounding preparedness, and perpetuate protective factors especially in vulnerable communities (Kapucu, 2008).

Effective pre-disaster planning and preparedness builds a foundation of communication plans, trust, and relationships (Kapucu, 2008). This is particularly important for responding agencies, individuals and municipalities. Planning of communication will also facilitate preparation, as traditional communication channels will likely be impacted, and media training sends a more informed, consistent message. A key limitation in communication and disaster management is the lack of trust in government and execution of their recommendations (Kapucu, 2008). Emergency management has addressed this limitation by communicating with the community through other trusted sources: local media, local organizations, and local companies (Kapucu, 2008). Emergency management departments can utilize technology to both enhance communication in all stages of a disaster cycle, as well as build trust with constituents.

Having an accessible and user-friendly, portal-based website has been a determinant of credibility and trust in reviewing content, which is of particular interest in communicating information related to emergencies (Youngblood & Youngblood, 2018). Content standards (including information like location, contact information, external links, subscription to information) provide emergency management with baselines for online communication (Youngblood & Youngblood, 2018). In addition to these content necessities, the actual appearance of a platform is a predictor of credibility and usability (Youngblood & Youngblood, 2018). This study has considered the populations of children (ages five and under), elderly (ages 60 and up), and the Karen population. Accessibility of web-based information, and therefore outreach, has to consider different abilities in order to remain usable, particularly when “visual, motor, hearing, and cognitive” abilities vary across the audience and many users will be accessing information on a mobile device (Youngblood & Youngblood, 2018).

Case studies on communicating emergency information have determined that radio and television remain key sources of media, particularly among demographics that are not heavily utilizing smart-phones (Youngblood & Youngblood, 2018). However, social media has begun to fill gaps in information communication around emergencies and preparedness. Social media updates are perceived as being a more frequently updated source of information, though credibility challenges could be improved through the presence of emergency management or through the development of a “emergency communication toolkit” (Youngblood & Youngblood, 2018). Individuals in communities may often be uncertain of the role that emergency

management departments play in their community, so this building of credibility and intentional outreach has the potential to reach communities that RCEMHS currently does not.

What is Ramsey County currently doing for community outreach and engagement?

The Ramsey County Emergency Operations plan articulates opportunities for community outreach and engagement in the emergency management process and disaster cycle. Pre-incident, preparation, and mitigation activities where public participation or public audiences are considered include preparedness reports, gaps-analysis, general public information, alerts and warnings, and communications (“Incident Command System Resources | FEMA.gov,” 2018).

Ramsey County has been involved in community outreach and community engagement intentionally. Designated staff in specific departments work to network throughout the county with individuals, organizations, and issues happening in the communities. Activities like tabling, social media, newsletters, attending meetings, leading trainings, and participating in community events were discussed as methods of outreach and various levels of engagement. Engagement with the community was considered to be primarily project driven.

Interview Analysis



	INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 				
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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Figure 3: The IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

Qualitative analysis of interviews conducted revealed a number of themes and recommendations related to the Levels of Public Participation. Emergency management departments have rationale for utilizing various levels of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. Much of the necessary work involves sharing information that is critical for

constituents which requires no feedback, which falls in the level of informing. However, other levels on the spectrum provide insight, information, and feedback about the system that emergency management could use to perform activities that can better serve constituents in emergency and disaster situations. The levels, identified in Figure 3, inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower are discussed in relation to qualitative analysis of the interviews.

Inform

Emergency management frequently must share critical information with no feedback necessary, which falls under the “inform” spectrum (“What is the Spectrum of Public Participation?,” 2017). Informing the community may be more effective when the message is reiterated and communicated from different platforms. Analysis indicated that communities listen to trusted sources, which can be a government agency, but it may also be another organization, leader, or outlet. Additional identified outlets of communication include applications like Next Door, social media, email by neighborhoods, via organizations, television, newsletters, and letters in the mail. Barriers for providing the public with information include language, particularly with signage.

Consult

Consulting the community involved the intentional solicitation of comments and feedback (“What is the Spectrum of Public Participation?,” 2017). Examples of this level of public participation include public comment, focus groups, surveys, and public meetings. Interviewees discussed the importance of reducing barriers to public meetings or focus groups to obtain representative consultations. Barriers like language, capital, and transportation were frequently discussed.

Involve

Involvement with a community requires intentional work and incorporation of community input into a planning process (“What is the Spectrum of Public Participation?,” 2017). Involvement includes performing workshops or deliberative polling.

Collaborate

Collaboration with community and organizations in the community means involvement and power in establishing preferred solutions and alternatives (“What is the Spectrum of Public Participation?,” 2017). These activities include citizen advisory committees, consensus-building, and participatory decision-making. Collaborative community engagement via partnerships was discussed among interviews. Leveraging partnerships and relationships to co-host an event or lead an initiative. The product is owned by both entities at the end of the process. Asset mapping was an identified example of collaboration.

Empower

Empowerment is the most engaged a community becomes during a decision process (“What is the Spectrum of Public Participation?,” 2017). Decision-making power is either external to the county or shared, including citizen juries, ballots, and delegated decisions. An example of this activity is re-granting: a government-awarded grant is put into community leader or organizations’ hands. This kind of activity moves all the way to empowerment of the community, where they are making decisions that are implemented. Qualitative analysis of

interviews reiterated that community members hold expertise in their community, and this value should be compensated somehow. In the field of emergency management, re-granting can be implemented to perform preparatory projects or make changes that mitigate harm. Reaching the empowerment level of the engagement spectrum may also be accomplished through intentional recruitment of community members into organizations that represent them, which was discussed as a method of improving law enforcement outcome in the community.

Summary

Community engagement, particularly during the mitigatory and preparatory phases of the disaster cycle, build social capital through increased trust, partnerships, and public participation in making decisions about their own community. Much of the current community engagement falls in the category of “informing” and interview analysis, literature review, and recommendations of this report advise movement across the public participation spectrum, towards engagement. Community engagement mitigates complacency towards emergency management and facilitates buy-in for participation in all phases of the disaster cycle. Consideration of existing barriers to effective community engagement were identified in interviews. Transportation, capital, language, time, fear and more were discussed. Themes indicated that flows of information and feedback must go between government and communities, rather than being a flow of outputs with no feedback or an extractive seeking of information with no feedback. When the community is effectively engaged in the disaster cycle, resource allocation improves in efficiency and efficacy because resources match the need of the community and are directed in relation to need. Partnerships with community organizations and strengthened internal relationships will facilitate the process of community engagement.

The Older Adult Community

Background

Older adults are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as those 65 years and older. For this project, we include those 60 years or older based on the Older Americans Act (OAA) of 1965 (Fox-Grage & Ujvari, 2014). The OAA supports a variety of home and community-based services, including meals-on-wheels and other nutrition programs, in-home services, transportation, legal services, elder abuse prevention and caregiver support to people starting at age 60. The point at which people begin accessing services can be an indication of their vulnerability. Many of the agencies and community-based organizations providing these services are or can potentially be critical partners in developing resilience within Ramsey County’s older population.

Older adults are a critical population for emergency management to consider because the older population is growing at a dramatic rate. By 2030, the national population of individuals 65 and older is expected to double (Aldrich & Benson, 2008) and Minnesota mirrors this trend. By the year 2040, the number of people 65 years and older who are living in Ramsey County will double from current numbers (Wolfe, 2017). The population of older adults is also becoming more diverse than ever before. Until recently the older population in Ramsey County has been mostly White. In 1990, 13 percent of Ramsey County’s 65+ population were people of color. By

2014 this number increased to 30 percent and the Metropolitan Council predicts that number will rise to 45 percent by 2030 (Wolfe, 2017).

Along with the growing population other trends within aging encompass indicators of vulnerability and have the potential to influence the resilience of older adults in the face of a disaster. First, economic security is a concern. Fewer people are receiving retirement money provided by their employers and savings are at an all-time low. Nationally, 24% of people between the ages of 54-85 have insufficient retirement resources (Wolfe, 2017). In Minnesota 39% of workers in the private sector do not have an employee-sponsored retirement plan (John & Koenig, 2015) and Social Security is the only source of income for almost three in ten Minnesotans age 65+ (AARP, 2014). Older adults are going into retirement with less in savings and are on fixed incomes. In Ramsey County, 30% of people aged 65 and older have an annual income of \$25,000 (St. Paul -Ramsey County Public Health, 2017) and 12% of older adults (65+) in St. Paul live in poverty (Egbert, 2014). Economic status is often correlated with resilience and older adults on fixed income have a more limited capacity to rebuild post disaster.

More people are choosing to age in community. Aging in community can be staying in one's home or in alternative housing within their communities. This trend is driven at both the policy and the individual level. Minnesota has been at the forefront of shifting the care of older adults away from institutions to aging in community for as long as possible. In 2007 Minnesota started funding grants to help people live well at home (Crosby, 2018). It is widely reported that aging in place can lead to better health outcomes, life satisfaction, and self-esteem, compared with aging in a nursing home. In addition, aging in place is typically more affordable than moving to an assisted living facility or nursing home (Guzman, Viveiros, & Salomon, 2017). Minnesota now spends more than \$21 million a year through the federal Older Americans Act on programs and services that help older adults stay in their homes (Crosby 2018).

The policy changes to focus on home-based care and services also align with people's own preferences. Seventy-eight percent of adults aged 45 and older surveyed in 2014 stated that they would prefer to remain in their homes indefinitely as they age (Guzman, Viveiros, & Salomon, 2017). In Minnesota, a smaller number of people are living in housing designed for seniors. Nearly 89 percent of people surveyed in a 2015 Minnesota Board on Aging survey believed their neighborhood is a good place to live. Only 10 percent have plans to move in the next few years (Minnesota Board on Aging, 2015). According to the Census Bureau, 47% of adults 60 and older in Ramsey County live alone and if a person has not downsized in their 60s, they are likely to stay in their homes until age 85, when disabilities tend to increase (Crosby 2018).

The movement towards aging in community is widely seen as beneficial for the individual places increased reliance on family, informal social networks and formal home and community-based services to assist with daily living activities. According to the Minnesota Board on Aging 2015 survey:

- The majority of caregiving for older Minnesotans is provided by family and friends
- 83% of respondents age 60 and older who need assistance with activities of daily living (walking, dressing, bathing and feeding) or instrumental activities of daily living (managing medication, finances, transportation and meal preparation) receive some unpaid help, either alone or in combination with paid help
- 71% rely only on unpaid help

Furthermore, long term care needs increase with age as aging brings rising rates of disability among those who are living in community. Disability includes ambulatory, cognitive, hearing, vision, and self-care. Of Older Adults (Egbert, 2014):

- 20% of older adults age 65-74 have a disability
- 40% of older adults age 75-84 have a disability
- 60% of older adults age 85+ have a disability
- 32% of those ages 65 and older have one or more disability of any type.

The trends and statistics outlined for older adults including the growth of the aging population, lack of economic security and propensity to stay living in community are important considerations for emergency management. How and where older adults are living is changing. They are living in a variety of settings and are connected to varying levels of service through formal and informal networks. Emergency management, therefore, needs to be adaptive to the trends and changing needs of the population. The assets and vulnerabilities of this community impact response to disaster and how RCEMHS engages with them.

Older Adults and Emergency Management

Older adults are disproportionately vulnerable during disasters. During Hurricane Katrina, 71% of victims were older than 60 and 47% were older than 77. Most of these victims died in homes or communities (Gibson & Hayunga, 2006) and during the 1995 heat wave in the Midwest, the median age of the 465 people in Chicago whose deaths were heat related was 75 years old (Aldrich & Benson, 2008). A primary reason, older adults are particularly vulnerable both prior, during and after a disaster is because they are more likely to have chronic illnesses, functional limitations and sensory, physical and cognitive disabilities than of younger people (Gibson & Hayunga, 2006).

An estimated 14 million people aged 65 or older living outside an institution reported in the 2000 census to having some level of disability, mostly linked to chronic conditions including heart disease or arthritis (Aldrich & Benson, 2008). Similarly, the majority of Medicare beneficiaries age 65 and older experience two or more chronic conditions at the same time (Gibson & Hayunga, 2006). In addition, frailty is recognized as a physical condition that is distinct from both the normal aging process and disability. Characteristics of frailty include muscle weakness, slow walking, exhaustion and low physical activity (Gibson & Hayunga, 2006).

People with chronic conditions often need assistance with activities of daily living, however, multiple conditions are not necessarily correlated to a person's own assessment of poor health. In a study conducted by the New York Academy of Medicine, despite multiple chronic conditions, a majority of survey respondents rated their health as "excellent," "very good," or "good." This is an indication that even with multiple health issues people in normal circumstances are able to manage their care either on their own or through formal or informal networks. Yet, 13 million older adults aged 50 or older have said they would need help to evacuate during a disaster and about half of these would require help from someone outside the household (Pekovic et al, 2007).

After a disaster happens, conditions such as stress, lack of food and water, extreme temperatures and exposure to infections can cause a worsening of chronic illness (Aldrich and

Benson, 2008). The disruption to daily patterns, medication regimens, changes in nutritional intake can have a negative effect on a person's health (Evans, 2010). People aged 65 and older take three or more drugs per month. A change or disruptions in medication regimes can cause potentially serious and fatal complications (Gibson & Hayunga, 2006). Furthermore, certain disasters cause environmental pollution, including airborne particulate matter from large scale fires and collapsed buildings to mold spores from flood events. Both have the potential to cause and exacerbate respiratory functioning (Evans, 2010).

During response and recovery, older adults can struggle with standard relief efforts and amenities. Post Hurricane Sandy, older adults without transportation found it difficult to access distribution sites for food and water and in-person sites to access relief benefits. Another challenge was eating meals distributed by relief organizations, which contained excessive sodium, fat and calories for older adults. Access to medication and durable equipment being lost, damaged or left behind during an evacuation were also cited as concerns (Goldman, Finkelstein, Schafer, & Pugh, 2014).

A common denominator of how disasters affect older adults is the disruption of systems and services upon which older adults rely including transportation, communication, health care, and social supports (Goldman, Finkelstein, Schafer, & Pugh, 2014). When older adults are cut off from social networks due to loss of electricity or communication, they may be unable to maintain situational awareness and obtain resources. Older adults with stronger and more numerous connections are better able to have their needs met, whereas those with fewer and weaker connections are more likely to feel abandoned (Goldman, Finkelstein, Schafer, & Pugh, 2014).

Beyond the physical factors which make older adults vulnerable, socio economic factors also contribute to their vulnerability. Poverty is a risk factor for all people, but because poverty is strongly associated with poor health status, high poverty rates in older Americans make them particularly vulnerable (Goldman, Finkelstein, Schafer, & Pugh, 2014). Poverty is also generally associated with poorly constructed housing or older housing stock, a lack of insurance and decreased ability to recover economically after a disaster. A lack of income and savings makes preparing and recovering from a disaster even more difficult.

Additional factors which contribute to vulnerability are whether they live alone, have the ability to drive or access to transportation, lower literacy levels than the general population, and ESL proficiency (immigrants who are 65 and older may not speak English). All of these factors can affect one's ability to prepare and recover during a disaster.

Assets of Older Adults

It is easy to focus on the numerous vulnerabilities of the older population, but they are a heterogeneous group. It is important to understand the diversity and broad spectrum of the population as well. Older adults can be one of our greatest assets in preparing and recovering from disasters. Older adults have a desire to stay actively engaged in their communities. This is illustrated by their historically high rates of volunteerism and philanthropy. More than 6 out of 10 adults age 55 and older engage in some volunteer activity including a mix of formal and informal activities (Zedlewski & Schaner, 2006). In Minnesota, nearly 287,000 volunteers age 65 and older contribute an estimated \$459 million in donated labor every year (Minnesota Compass, 2014).

Older adults are underused resources in preparing for and responding to disaster. Experience and judgement increase with age and are important attributes in times of disaster (Gibson & Hayunga, 2006). There is also evidence to support the fact that older people are more psychologically resilient than younger people after a disaster due to being “inoculated” to stress over the years. Older adults who demonstrate this type of adaptability make ideal volunteers during response and recovery efforts (Goldman, Finkelstein, Schafer, & Pugh, 2014).

Interview Analysis

Based on interviews with organizations serving older adults the following themes were identified which contribute to the older population’s resilience to disasters. The themes are trust, technology and communication, isolation and social networks, resilience of older adults, and leveraging community-based organizations.

Trust

Trust was mentioned across the board as a vulnerability and barrier for older adults. Trust with the government and trust with people outside their networks or groups. Trust in government was specifically mentioned as a barrier for Hispanic and African Americans. Older adults do not trust people outside their network and are cautious towards other people they don’t know. As one staff stated, “They have their groups and stick with them.” Older adults connected with community-based organizations do have a strong level of trust in the organization and the staff. Through receiving services and attending events coordinated by the organizations, older adults get to know staff and over a period of time build a trusting relationship. Older adults look to the organization as a source of support and resources. They trust the messages and information that come from the community-based organizations, staff and volunteers. On the flipside, there was also concern for older adults being taken advantage of post disaster through disaster related fraud or scams.

Technology and Communication

A second theme that emerged is the lack of technology by older adults and reliance on landlines, network news and the newspaper. Landline phones are most prevalent with older adults. Organizations reported a small percentage have cell phones and of that, older flip phones are more common than smartphones. Email and social media are used by a small percentage of older adults receiving services by community-based organizations. If they do have email or are on social media, they may not access it regularly. It is not a primary source of communication. One organization cited economics as a reason in part for this. Older adults are on a fixed income and may not be able to afford internet in their home. Organizations rely on more traditional methods such as newsletters, flyers, and phone calls to communicate with clients.

Older adults are connected to the organizations and services through a variety of methods ranging from referrals through the county, family or caregivers, and through the organization's presence in the community. Organizations host events or provide services throughout the community and information spreads through word of mouth. The organizations themselves do not rely on email or social media as a reliable source of communication with clients, although they may use those tactics to communicate with families, caregivers and the broader community,

Isolation and Social Networks

As much as staff who were interviewed talked about the strong connection between the organizations and the older adults, staff also cited isolation as a vulnerability. Factors contributing to isolation include lack of transportation and mobility and/or functional disabilities such as loss of hearing or vision. Organizations provide formal networks through home visits, services, wellness events, but the presence of informal networks seemed to vary among older adults. Social networks were highlighted as a strength when present, but isolation was still a concern. In the case of one service provider in Ramsey County 70% of clients lived alone and in their annual survey of clients over half said the volunteer is the only person they see in a day. On the flipside, another organization highlighted that clients who were long-term homeowners were integrated into their community and there was a strong sense of neighbors helping neighbors. Common gathering places which facilitated connections for older adults included faith-based organizations, libraries, community centers and programs and activities provided by community-based service providers.

The presence of families varied, when present it is an asset, but many do not have family or are estranged which contributes to isolation. A disruption of services like Meals on Wheels, in home personal care, medication, and transportation services were all listed as vulnerabilities. In addition, a general reluctance to ask for help was highlighted as a vulnerability specifically unique to the older population. Descriptive phrases highlighted include, “I don’t really need help”, “I can do it”, “I can tough it out.” This attitude can be connected to their resilient nature through life experience. Service providers were also concerned with their lack of ability to advocate for themselves in an emergency or disaster situation. They could easily be taken advantage of.

In communities with a lower economic status there was greater concern on the effects of a disaster because of the general lack of resources. For example, where would people go if they lost their housing? In addition, compounded with a low socioeconomic status, interviewees highlighted the vulnerability of older adults who are illiterate, have Alzheimer’s/Dementia and those who do not have bank accounts.

Resilience of Older Adults

The primary asset of older adults cited in interviews was their resilience. Life experience has developed an inner strength and capacity for older adults to weather hardship. One interviewee stated they have “a strong reserve.” Multiple interviewees cited the Depression as developing coping skills and resilience in older adults. Phrases used to describe older adults included “tough cookies” and “they have wisdom to get through so much.”

Better Leverage Community Based Organizations

A primary result from the interview analysis is that community-based organizations are an under-utilized asset. There is a broad network of organizations that work within the aging community, yet they seem to have little connection or knowledge of emergency management. They engage with the county in a somewhat transactional nature in the form of referrals for services and resources for county case workers. Community based organizations are connecting with older adults on a regular and sometimes daily basis. They are seen as a trusted resource to older adults and thus should be a stakeholder at the table for emergency management planning.

Children Under the Age of 5

Background

Children represent almost a quarter of the U.S. population; however, their size and importance in communities is not reflected proportionally in many emergency planning and management processes (Bartenfield, Peacock, & Griese, 2014). In Ramsey County, children under 5 make up about 7% of the population, of that, 6.8% are domestic-born children and 0.2% are foreign-born. (“Ramsey County, MN,” n.d.)

Children under the age of 5 are considered vulnerable for a number of reasons that include anatomic (size and body surface area and skeletal), physiologic, immunologic, developmental and psychological issues. All these elements are important for planning for the care of children in disasters or multi-casualty incidents (Gausche-Hill, 2009). Characteristics of children in chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) emergencies make illnesses in children from these instances difficult to prevent, identify, and treat (Bartenfield, Peacock, & Griese, 2014). Due to their vulnerabilities, children’s needs should be imbedded into each stage of emergency planning and management.

There are many obstacles currently facing emergency preparedness with children. According to an analysis of patients presenting to disaster medical assistance teams, pediatric patients are more likely to have no record of severity of illness, making it difficult to provide them the correct services (Gausche-Hill, 2009). There is a risk in children experiencing underdevelopment in physical activity, communication, and in self-preservation instincts due to disasters (Bartenfield, Peacock, & Griese, 2014). The inability to embed the needs of children in disasters, if not addressed, could have side effects that are generational and surpass the disasters themselves. The concern of the wellbeing of children in all circumstances including disasters is a value supported by international actors like the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Penrose & Takaki, 2006). They recognized the importance of having emergency plans that are informed by the needs of children. Results from a study conducted by Plan International, indicate that children can alleviate losses in natural disasters and their involvement is essential to community recovery (Middleton & Burt, 2006).

Children Under the Age of 5 and Emergency Management

According to a policy report, out of all emergency departments, only 6% of them have all the equipment identified as important for the care of children (Middleton & Burt, 2006). The current status quo of many emergency departments in the U.S. is not sufficient or acceptable for serving children. There is room for current emergency management systems to show more dedication to providing the best services possible for children before, during, and after a natural or human-made disaster.

There are a variety of avenues on how to incorporate the needs of children into emergency planning and management to better serve children during disasters. One approach is to focus on the internal capability of an organization. In a systems approach, an organization can obtain Emergency Medical Services for Children Pediatric Facility Recognition and overall enhance pediatric disaster expertise (Gausche-Hill, 2009). Hiring a pediatric coordinator for

emergency care or developing a pediatric specific mass-casualty plan specifically for in schools can better inform planning and management (Allen, Parillo, Will, & Mohr, 2007). In combination with internal changes, externally, children are in many ways an underestimated resource for better informing emergency planning and management for children. There are findings that suggest the position of children in society as possible informants within various communication networks have been underutilized. Children can have a positive impact in disaster risk reduction (Mitchell, Haynes, Hall, Choong, & Oven, 2008). Children are able to enter intimate circles that are not always achievable by government entities by being valuable messengers of relaying information to their families (Izadkhah & Hosseini, 2005).

Interview Analysis

Children under 5 are a unique group because of their status as dependents. Legally, children are treated differently than adults (anyone over 18 years of age). Their capacity for resilience is dependent in part on their families' socioeconomic status and the systems (i.e. school, childcare,) and networks (community, familial) they are connected to. Based on interviews with organizations serving children under 5, we found themes in language, technology, and that fear can lead to a lack of information.

Languages

As one of the most diverse counties in Minnesota, Ramsey is experiencing an increase in Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations that primarily use another language other than English. Of the interviewees, organizations that serve young children were concerned by the challenges that language may pose to their ability to effectively provide service. A service provider noted that among the children their organization serves, a large number were from immigrant and refugee backgrounds, which contribute to the language challenges the organization faces. In all interviews, English was a barrier to some capacity to getting information out to families with young children. There were attempts to address it by adding staff that reflect the diversity in Ramsey County's workforce. The challenge still remains to continuously monitor language needs that could arise in order for organizations to effectively communicate information. If clients' language needs go unaddressed, a critical decline in service quality could grow, children could be separated from families, and people could be kicked out of their homes. Ultimately, the consequences of not monitoring language needs can potentially devastate families in Ramsey County.

Technology Usage

Technology is a critical part of a large majority of society as it has become essential to how individuals communicate. All organizations interviewed communicate with their clients through website, phone calls, and emails. There have been efforts to expand service abilities using technology. For example, some organizations mentioned interest in creating mobile applications to help with service delivery; however, texting is the most popular method to send updates and reminders to individuals. This kind of communication provides a direct, more immediate, and less disruptive form of contact with families.

The high poverty rate in Ramsey County can result in a more transient population, making it difficult for organizations to keep track of current mailing addresses. Interviewees noted that people do not change their phone number nearly as much as their address. An

interviewee pointed out that a phone number is one of the most consistent things an individual will have so it becomes a reliable source of communication, even more so than mailing, which could get lost or destroyed.

Fear Leads to a Lack of Information

A key theme in the interviews was a lack of awareness of resources by families, which an interviewee attributed to a fear of government or asking questions. This fear often leads to little knowledge of resources available to individuals and children in the community. An organization highlighted that immigrants who are refugees often come from countries where their government misled them, harmed them, and in turn, broke their trust in government entities. Refugees often bring their perception of government, good or bad, with them to the U.S. This tends to lead to communities of refugees or immigrants that are fearful and lack awareness of information. Interviewees did not mention an approach that has been particularly successful in addressing this concern.

The Karen Community

Background

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines refugees in the *1951 Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* as someone “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.” That is, a refugee is an individual that cannot return to their country due to persecution by the government because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a social group, or political opinions.

The Karen people are an ethnic minority group from Burma that were persecuted by the Burmese government (“Karen History,” n.d.). They were forced to leave the country due to the violence and oppression they were facing. Many fled to refugee camps in Thailand and eventually resettled in the United States and other countries (“Karen History,” n.d.). Karen immigration to the US started in the 2000’s, with the largest wave in 2005 and continues to this day (City of Saint Paul Communications Services, 2016). About 17,000 live in Minnesota and within the state, Saint Paul is estimated to have the largest concentrated population (“Karen History,” n.d.). Other densely populated cities are Roseville and Maplewood (City of Saint Paul Communications Services, 2016).

The Karen Community and Emergency Management

Because of their relatively recent (in the past 20 years) resettlement in the US, research on the Karen population and their relationship with disaster preparedness in the US does not exist. There are studies on generational differences between older and younger Karen refugees (Yarris, Stasiun, Musigdilok, & Win, 2015), engaging Karen students in the classroom (Harper

2017; (Smolen, Zhang, & Detwiler, 2013), effective collaboration methods between the Karen community and government agency (McCleary, Horn, Toe, Dwee, & Sniffen, 2018), Karen cultural resilience in the U.S. (Spivey & Lewis, 2016; Harper, 2016) and challenges of resettling in a new country (Mitschke, Mitschke, Slater, & Teboh, 2011).

Although these studies do not explicitly mention disaster preparedness, some do mention barriers to resettlement that can contribute the community's overall resilience to disasters. For example, in a qualitative study that interviewed twenty-one Karen adults living in the U.S., D.B. Mitschke et al (2011), found that disillusionment was a major theme in their interviewees. The interviewees thought their lives would be improved compared to their conditions in Burma and Thailand, but they were disappointed in their current living situation in the U.S. Many struggled to find employment and establish financial security. Among other concerns were access to affordable healthcare. Interviewees had trouble navigating the healthcare system because of its complexity and because of not being able to communicate in English. Language barriers also played a big part in successful acculturation (Mitschke, Mitschke, Slater, & Teboh, 2011; McCleary, Horn, Toe, Dwee, & Sniffen, 2018). Mitschke et al says, "According to participants, the language barrier is the most pervasive impediment to their success in the United States" (2011).

Secondary literature from the Karen Organization of Minnesota (KOM), the only Karen-based social services nonprofit in Minnesota, also states that employment related issues, housing and limited-to-no English proficiency are barriers the community experiences (City of Saint Paul Communications Services, 2016). KOM states that most Karen are low-income and there are often four to seven individuals living in one apartment (City of Saint Paul Communications Services, 2016).

Interview Analysis

Three main themes of resilience emerged during interviews with several organizations that serve the Karen population of Ramsey County. The themes are: the impact of the refugee experience on resiliency, importance of non-profit organizations, community connectedness.

The Refugee Experience

Vulnerabilities that are attached to the refugee experience in the U.S. were identified by interviewees as challenges to disaster preparedness and recovery. When asked about the observed vulnerabilities of the Karen community, one interviewee said, "...when people come here as refugees, they have already lived through more hardship and 'disasters' in life than we might be considering a 'disaster'. So emergency preparedness may be lost on them or they may really not want to hear about things that might scare them or their families." Another interviewee said, "Recency of arrival to the U.S. can [make it] more difficult in knowing how to deal with emergencies and/or crises." A Karen individual also reiterated the point by stating the newness of the community is what makes them vulnerable to impacts of a disaster. In other words, the length of time a community has been established is a factor in how well they can respond to emergencies.

Other vulnerabilities that are often a part of refugee experiences are language barriers, a lack of financial stability, and a lack of transportation. An interviewee mentioned that because systems of alerts are in English, it makes it difficult for Karen individuals to understand what is happening. Being low-income is another challenge to disaster recovery. Because many low-

income Karen individuals depend on social benefits, dependence on those benefits can impact how economically resilient the individual can be after a disaster. An interviewee said that living in poverty limits how Karen individuals can respond financially to a disaster. A Karen interviewee said that most families go to Ramsey County for food stamps and rent assistance so if there is a disaster, they would need assistance to make sure they were still getting those benefits.

Importance of Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofits play an important role in helping Karen families and individuals acclimate to a new country and access social benefit programs. Programs like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program and employment assistance programs were mentioned during the interviews as common benefit programs Karen families and individuals received. Because of the Karen people's respect for experts and leaders, the importance of these organizations cannot be understated. As one interviewee said the community tends to "defer to experts" and "tend to trust 'authority'."

The initial point-of-contact is during the first ninety days of arriving in the U.S. Families and individuals work with one of the four federally-contracted refugee resettlement organizations in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The organizations help families find housing, provide transportation from the airport, get children registered for school, connect adults with English classes, and apply for public benefits through the county. They also provide services essential to everyday life such as transporting clients to and from the grocery store and a cultural orientation. It was noted during the interview that the orientation curriculum is stipulated by the federal government. It includes topics such as learning how to budget, understanding the healthcare system, safety in the home, how to use appliances, the naturalization process, consequences of breaking the law, cultural norms, cultural adjustment, hygiene practices, and rights under refugee status.

KOM plays an especially crucial role in the community. The organization was specifically created to address the need to assist Karen individuals with resettlement. The organization provides services such as training on how to take the local transit system, applying for public benefits, finding employment, and locating housing. The organization was cited as an important resource by other nonprofits and government agencies that were interviewed. Many of those nonprofits and government agencies also have prior or currently existing partnerships with KOM. For example, the refugee resettlement organization has a contract with the State of Minnesota to partner with KOM to match clients to KOM's services. Currently, the organization serves about 3,000 individuals a year.

Despite offering a wide range of services organizations that were interviewed stated that they did not have a plan to help the community respond and recover from disasters. The organizations had their own internal plans in case of emergencies, but no such infrastructure exists externally.

Community Connectedness

The theme of connectedness is found throughout the emergency management process. Although no formal infrastructure for community-based disaster preparedness and recovery exists within the organizations, interviewees noted that in times of need, the community will depend on each other. When asked "*What resources or strengths does the community (or your*

organization) have to help respond to a man-made/natural disaster?” all interviewees cited the internal connectedness of the Karen community as the most mentioned strength. One interviewee said that, “They are a close-knit community – word travels fast.” Another interviewee pointed out that the Karen people have a deep respect for authority and have designated community leaders. This can be supported through an interview with a community leader who said that if there was any need in the community, he would know about it. He noted that his interaction with the community goes beyond his professional capacity. He often helps families fill out forms for social benefit programs and translate government mail.

Interviews revealed that religion provides an important platform to facilitate community connectedness. KOM estimates that 80% of the community is Christian and 20% is Buddhist. Their website lists two Karen temples and fourteen churches. An interviewee who is both a direct service provider and a church leader said that most Karen people receive their news through their church and the church plays a crucial role in helping newly arrived Karen families get resettled. The same interviewee said that their church plays a leading role in disaster recovery by starting donation and food collections.

Discussion

Three themes were consistent in the literature and across all the demographic groups studied: importance of public benefit programs, engagement with direct service providers, and overall lack of awareness of emergency management. In the next sections, the findings in the context of the project’s four main research questions and considerations for further analysis will be discussed. The research questions are: *1) What assets and social vulnerabilities could inform Ramsey County emergency response to natural and man-made disasters? 2) What factors influence how communities build resilience and respond to natural and man-made disasters? 3) How have local governments effectively cross collaborated to build resilient communities and serve communities in times of disaster and recovery? 4) What outreach strategies are effective in reaching vulnerable communities?*

Main Findings

Public Benefit Programs

A major overlapping theme for all three demographic groups was the usage of public benefit programs. It was found that individuals and families become connected with social insurance programs through a nonprofit service provider or adjacent programs such as Head Start. This touchpoint into the community serves as a potential effective outreach strategy. It can inform disaster resilience in these groups regarding the benefits they receive, how they receive it and how often. While RCEMHS does not administer these programs, intra-agency partnerships can utilize the insight and relationships that exist within the community to better serve them throughout the disaster cycle. As mentioned in the Karen interview analysis, an interviewee noted that people who depend on government assistance will most likely need to know how to access those benefits after a disaster. Having access to those benefits is crucial to economic resilience of vulnerable populations.

Direct Service Providers

The utilization of social insurance programs informs the important role of direct service providers in the everyday lives of our defined groups. Families and individuals in each group have some type of interaction with a government agency or a nonprofit that works with a government agency. Identifying these access points can be helpful in determining intra-agency and external outreach strategies. Providers gain valuable face time with the clients through required regular appointments. These face-to-face meetings help build trust and repertoire with clients who may have a history of government distrust. In groups where word-of-mouth is a reliable avenue for obtaining information, words of trust, credibility, and otherwise can spread quickly.

Lack of Knowledge

The last theme established through the interviews was the general lack of knowledge about RCEMHS and emergency management. When asked if they had any collaboration or interaction with RCEMHS, most organizations said no and some even stated being unaware the department existed. The organizations had their own internal plan for disaster preparedness but nothing community-focused. Several interviewees astutely pointed out that individuals who have faced and are facing hardship in their lives are not inclined to think long-term about disaster preparedness. They are simply trying to live day-to-day.

Considerations

One aspect that was not discussed is the importance of intersectionality between the demographic groups. Intersectionality is described by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) as the interconnection and interdependence of race, class, gender, and other socially constructed categories. Although the qualitative research did skew towards interviewing nonprofit service providers and agencies that serve a specific socioeconomic class, the report also does not discuss the varying social identities that exist within each group and the gaps that exist between sub-categories in each group. For example, within older adults over 60, there is a varying degree of how each person will respond and recover from disasters. Some adults over 60 with more monetary resources or support networks will experience disasters differently than an older adult that lives by themselves and is living on a small fixed monthly income. Interconnectedness exists between the demographic groups as well. Although each group was treated as independent of each other, there is a clear overlap in social identities of Karen individuals and adults over 60 as well as with Karen individuals and children under 5.

Despite the usage of public benefit programs providing insight into community assets, vulnerability, and resilience, there are individuals or communities that are not utilizing public benefit programs or strongly connected to community-based organizations. Across all communities, there will be people who are not connected to services for a variety of reasons. They may not need them, they may not qualify, or be aware of their existence. It is this population that is not accounted for in analyzing the various touch points highlighted in the report. A primary factor of community resilience is connectivity, yet often emergency management is focused on the preparedness of singular family units or individual. To get at communities of people who are not connected formally to services, it is important to increase connectivity among individuals across all communities. As an example, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health shifted their emergency preparedness messaging from “Just Be Ready” to a more community resilience focused message of “Know Your Neighbors. Plan

Together. Be Ready.” As part of the campaign residents were encouraged to meet with neighbors and to prepare individual and neighborhood disaster plans. Their campaign highlighted connectivity as a central feature of a community’s ability to mitigate and recover from a disaster (Plough et al, 2013).

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Recommendations

The following recommendations represent a paradigm shift in how Emergency Management engages with communities. In the same way that disasters are local and disaster response begins at the local level, building resilience is most effective if it starts with the local community and its residents (Cutter et al, 2013). Provided below are five recommendations which are aligned with the Rand Corporation’s Community Resilience Framework and focus on a human centered approach in engaging with communities. These recommendations focus on expanding the ways in which communities are engaged with emergency management, not just as a receiver of information, but in co-creating disaster management strategies. By engaging community in the process, Emergency Management will develop more effective community outreach and communications plans and partnerships leading to increased community resilience, thus answering to the established research questions about effective outreach, collaboration, and engagement.

Community Resilience Framework

Community resilience literature identifies numerous factors which are likely correlated with increasing a community's resilience. Yet, there is less clarity on specific strategies and tactics communities can implement to build resilience. To fill this gap, the Rand Corporation, developed a community resilience framework shown in Figure 4 below (Chandra, 2011). The framework identifies building blocks of community resilience that affect a community’s pre-event vulnerability to disaster and its adaptive capacity to recover. Their process for developing the framework included conducting a literature review, holding a series of focus groups across the United States and convening three meetings with subject matter experts. From the research conducted, they developed a framework composed of building blocks of community resilience and eight levers of action. The building blocks are physical and psychological health of the population, social and economic well-being, individual, family and community knowledge, attitudes regarding self-reliance and self-help, effective risk communication, social integration of government and nongovernmental organizations and social connectedness (Chandra, 2011).

In the framework, the eight levers of wellness, access, education, engagement, self-sufficiency, partnership, quality and efficiency are meant to strengthen the main building blocks, which are associated with community resilience. Activities related to the levers strengthen each component and moves a community closer to achieving community resilience as it conducts more activities. The process is in a circle because building resilience is iterative and ongoing (Chandra, 2011). Even though the framework was developed with health security in mind, it is transferable to emergency management. For the recommendations section, each recommendation is aligned to a lever of action. Using the framework creates a visual of how the recommendations interact and contribute to community resilience.

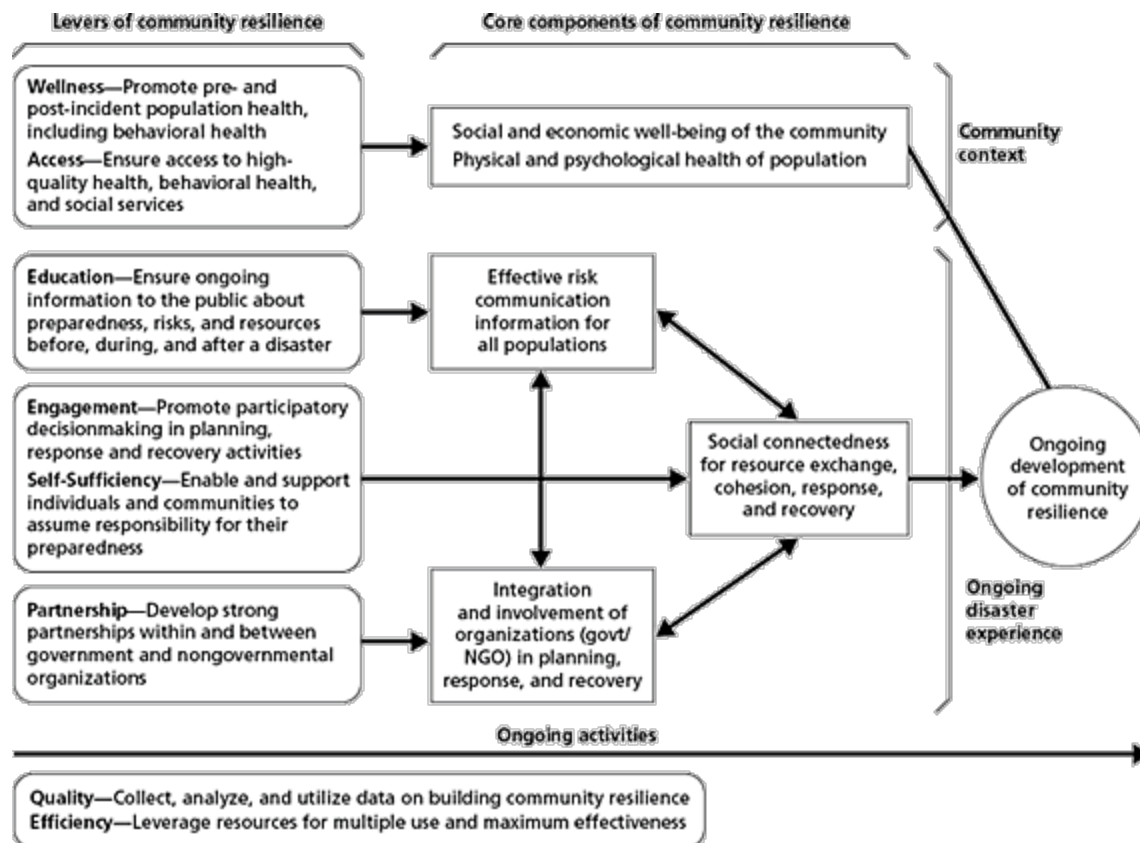


Figure 4: Rand Corporation's Community Resilience Framework

Use Human Centered Design Thinking

(Community Resilience Lever: Engagement)

Human centered design or “design thinking” is a process for innovation that prioritizes the needs and values of the people most affected (Vechakul et al, 2015). Adopting a human centered approach can help break agencies or institutions out of ingrained ways of thinking and doing. For example, if traditional outreach methods are not reaching a changing population, using design thinking methods can help understand the population in question and generate new ways of doing. It is an approach that develops solutions by involving the people for whom the problem is being solved in all steps of process. Human centered design recognizes that problems are increasingly complex and that solutions must be adaptive. It is not a standardized static process in which the same sequence of steps and methods are applied in all contexts but is fluid and most effective when it is adapted to suit different contexts (Vechakul, Patel Shrimali, & Sandhu, 2015).

One recognized framework for public service design by Christian Bason includes three phases, exploring the problem space, generating alternative scenarios and enacting new practices. In “exploring the problem space,” qualitative research tools play an important role to enable empathy with “end-user” experiences with services. Developing empathy for the end-user is a core foundation of design thinking. In “generating alternative scenarios,” a diverse set of stakeholders (including end-users) are engaged to co-create potential solutions. Working in diverse teams challenge assumptions and stimulate new ways of thinking. Design thinking as a creative process facilitates a wide divergence of ideas leading to the creation of alternative

scenarios or ideas. Finally, design thinking offers tools (i.e. concepts, systems maps, graphics, products, etc.) to help give form to new policies and services in practice. The phases of design thinking are not sequential, but are intertwined and overlap between design research, developing ideas for service and implementing ideas to engage a wider audience (Bason, 2017).

Design thinking is particularly suited for emergency management because of its complex and dynamic nature. Human centered design as an approach can respond to the complexities of emergency management and increase public value. If people are involved in the process, they are more likely to respond when needed. People need to see that they are part of the solution. A fundamental characteristic of Design Thinking is its focus on the collaborative way designers work and in participatory methods of co-creation. It encompasses an attitude from designing ‘for users’ to the human centered approach of designing ‘with users’ (Tschimmel, 2012). Design thinking is a structured and inclusive process that can leverage the strengths and insights of emergency management staff, organizations, and community members to increase the likelihood that solutions will be successful.

Design thinking methods can be incorporated into community engagement activities that RCEMHS conducts to co-develop effective outreach and communication plans. The d.school through Stanford University provides a toolkit of design thinking tools and processes that can be used to guide RCEMHS staff and collaborators.

1. Conduct a Community Engagement Assessment

(Community Resilience Lever: Engagement and Quality)

Internal assessment of existing relationships with the community will reveal where strong networks and ties exist and where a gap may exist, particularly among relations with vulnerable communities. A number of the following recommendations build on community engagement and outreach, so using tools to grow engagement further these processes. An existing tool and resource, the Nexus Community Partners Community Engagement Assessment Tool (Appendix B for assessment tool) can be used internally to determine where RCEMHS currently falls on the spectrum of community outreach and engagement. Such tools identify specific activities, limitations, and the purpose for engagement activities. Self-assessment reveals existing relationships, current activities, purpose for activities, and more to move towards a higher capacity of community engagement. Meaningful engagement with diverse organizations depends on the participants, which are often voluntary in nature, and this form of assessment can aid in the most efficient resource allocation (Kapucu, 2006). This exercise may also strengthen internal relationships, which are critical to coordination of projects and resources within Ramsey County.

Recommended strategies:

- Network mapping of RCEMHS relationships through a graphical depiction of network structure.
- Internal mapping or networking of projects, expertise areas, and individuals will allow RCEMHS to improve internal collaboration. Strengthened internal coordination and communication helps eliminate high-frequency errors during a stressful event, as previously discussed.
- Improve community engagement skills of emergency management staff to effectively implement design thinking strategies.

2. Cross collaboration within Ramsey County and with other agencies

(Community Resilience Level: Partnership)

Disasters are trans-boundary and jurisdictional in nature. As a result, organizations across varying degrees of authority are involved in a response. Increased community engagement for preparedness can be a platform for addressing neighborhood public safety/health concerns. Collaborative activities across departments can strengthen community social ties and improve dialogue and trust between the community and public agencies (Plough et al, 2013). Trust in community organizations make them a credible source to distribute resources and information, especially for communities that may be skeptical or distrusting of the government, or isolated intentionally or unintentionally from public affairs. These relationships also provide access into informal networks that are a part of the daily life of the communities RCEMHS serves. In addition, these relationships provide opportunities for delegation and a horizontal spread of action, which reduces the burden on an individual level responsible for emergency response.

Recommended Strategies:

- Leverage existing relationships in other departments that the County has crafted: there are many touch-points in the community every single day.
- Pre-disaster communication builds resilience in communities- but only if it is accessible. Multimedia communications, signs, etc. in inclusive languages help increase reach, especially into vulnerable populations. Content standards and different abilities are also necessary to consider, as discussed in the Community Engagement section in this report.
- Positive feedback for information sharing is sometimes the only incentive to continue doing so, so a culture of credit acknowledgment and emotional rewards reinforce systems thinking and information sharing.
- Having strong community partners and relationships across County departments brings RCEMHS into a core-periphery network. Strong partners act as brokers to the community at large, where existing relationships relay information and resources through trusted channels.
- Model New York's MVAC: a position that served as a coordinator for organizations that respond to disasters by aggregation of information and data, referring, and informing foundations of needs.
- Development of a product for the community with non-profits, private organizations, and the community:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/sites/emergencymanagement/files/assets/ceerg%20final%20jan%202030%20final.pdf>

3. Develop an Emergency Preparedness Coalition of Community-Based Organizations

(Community Resilience Lever: Engagement and Partnerships)

Akin to the regional Healthcare Coalitions, develop a coalition model to engage community-based organizations who serve identified vulnerable populations. The coalition can help facilitate engagement activities with community members (i.e. end-users) to develop and provide feedback on disaster communication, outreach, planning and response. There is also overlap between community-based organizations, social services and public health. Collaborate

to leverage the touch points that different agencies have with older adults, children under 5, and the Karen community.

Strategies to Leverage Community-Based Organizations:

- Organizational staff can assist with outreach - helping to craft and deliver the message.
- Organizations can serve as a secondary notification and communication point in emergencies.
- Organizations may not be able to release client-specific data due to data privacy laws but could provide aggregate data on people they serve within geographic boundaries of their service areas.
- Engage volunteers from community-based organizations. Provide training and define roles for current volunteers of community-based organizations in the case of an emergency or disaster.
- Organizations can assist connecting older adults to needed resources in the case of a disaster, act as advocates on behalf of individuals.
- Integrate outreach, training and information sharing into regular communication, events and programming conducted by community-based organizations.

Examples of Potential Collaboration:

- Some community-based organizations hold regular programming on topics of interest, RCEMHS could collaborate to deliver a workshop.
- Engage Meals on Wheels to share information in planning for emergencies and/or deliver emergency preparedness kits to clients.
- Emergency kits for members of the Karen population may look different than emergency kits for older adults, shelter amenities may need to be different to account for older adults' functional abilities, and dietary restriction for various populations may need to be taken into account for planning at shelters or potential food distribution sites. Coalition and community members can help define what makes sense for each population.
- Community-based organizations often have partnerships with private foundations. In times of disaster, the organizations could leverage their partnerships to support in response and recovery efforts.

4. Leverage Volunteer Capacity

(Community Resilience Lever: Engagement and Education)

If engaged effectively, volunteers can be an asset during the disaster because of their possible connection to the community. Many nonprofits rely on volunteers to run their programs and organize events, so the connection with individuals willing to volunteer already exists. Utilizing volunteers from other organizations is an opportunity to use resources already available. Engaging with volunteers have the ability to inform disaster preparedness and response in a more holistic way that is reflective of the area being served. These volunteers play a critical role in the ability to help in disaster preparedness and response largely in part because they are already a trusted person in the community.

Training and education are important to engage volunteers. Training should include cultural, linguistic, and developmental needs of the younger and older populations. Training should involve older adults and experts in geriatric care, experts in early childhood education and

pediatric care, as well as leaders of identified ethnic communities in the content development and delivery. Seasoned volunteers can be used to train new volunteers. Volunteers already involved in organizations are dedicated individuals living in the community with untapped knowledge and expertise of the community and can increase responder engagement for RCEMHS. For example, the medical reserve provides this service to the University of Minnesota: students, staff, and faculty are trained in emergency response (CPR, stopping bleeding). In the event of a disaster, a subset of civilians has training on response and can prevent further harm.

5. Community Engagement-Based Model for Emergency Preparedness

(Community Resilience Lever: Partnership, Education, Engagement)

Adopting a community-based disaster management model recognizes communities as stakeholders in disaster preparedness planning. It promotes a bottom up approach that works in collaboration with the top-down ICS model currently used by RCEMHS to address emergencies and disasters (Pandey & Okazaki, 2012). It is essential that government recognizes and that communities realize they have a role to play in emergency preparedness and building community resilience. In this approach communities take part in creating plans and decisions and are a player in the implementation. Community based engagement places more of a focus on relationships between government and the community, community context and long-term engagement. In reference to the IAP2 Spectrum of Participation, a community-based model for emergency preparedness moves RCEMHS from Informing to Involve, Collaborate or Empower stages.

Elements of a Community-Based Approach may include:

- Risk assessment process engaging local community members and incorporates their perception of vulnerability and capacity.
- Asset-mapping with communities.
- Disaster preparedness training/education aligned with objectives and needs of the community.
- Re-granting of funds to community organizations.

Community Engagement Models

The following are examples illustrating various community engagement strategies which empower communities and thus can increase community resilience. Elements of these strategies or modified versions of them could be implemented by RCEMHS in partnership with organizations and community members.

Better Bus stops (Appendix C for more information)

Better Bus Stops is a project of Metro Transit. The goal of the project is to enhance access to opportunity by investing in bus stop shelters, lighting, heat and pedestrian access. The project brought community members who are users of the transit system and traditionally under-represented in the decision-making process into the planning, decision-making and implementation of bus stop improvements. This model is an example of a government agency operating on the “Empower” end of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation.

The Better Bus Stops project was intentional to invest money in their community engagement activities. One innovative element was to develop a re-granting program. For the project there was a total of \$419,000 devoted to community engagement. Of that, \$217,250 was contracted to their established Community Engagement Team to be subcontracted out to community-based organizations. Organizations were then able to use money to develop and implement community engagement tactics appropriate for their communities to provide input and feedback to Metro Transit. Figure 5 illustrates the Better Best Stops Community Engagement Model.



Figure 5: Better Bus Stop Community Engagement Model

Brooklyn Park Community Engagement Initiative (See Appendix D for more information)

In 2009, the City of Brooklyn Park began the Community Engagement Initiative (CEI). The city was experiencing economic hardship along with a dramatically changing population. This initiative was developed to change the way the city engages with residents and address the lack of community in the city. Brooklyn Park is home to the largest Liberian population outside of Liberia. Today, 49% of the population is non-white and 21% of those are foreign-born (Alliance for Innovation, 2012). The city recognized that people of different backgrounds were living next to each other, but not engaging with each other. There was a lack of community connectedness – a primary indicator of community resilience.

The CEI team was intentionally composed of a diverse community of stakeholders to reflect the population of the city. The CEI held a series of Community Cafés in various accessible locations across the city. Over 400 people attended to provide input on what would enhance their quality of life, their opportunities, what characteristics contribute to their quality of life, what detract, and what did they not want to see change as the city planned for its future (Alliance for Innovation, 2012).

Today, there is a community engagement department within the city government and community engagement strategies are used across departments in planning and decision-making. Brooklyn Park's community engagement initiative falls across the "Involve", "Collaborate" and "Empower" areas of the IAP2 Spectrum. Residents were engaged in the planning; decision-making and community engagement has been institutionalized within the city. This is a model which could be used by RCEMHS in collaboration with other city departments to engage communities in identifying their own assets and vulnerabilities.

Nexus Community Partners (See Appendix E for more information)

Nexus is a nonprofit organization which supports strong, equitable and just communities in which all residents are engaged, recognized as leaders and have pathways to opportunities. One of their initiatives is the Community Engagement Institute, which strengthens communities and community leadership through equity-based community engagement.

Nexus has developed a model of community engagement which connects outcomes to authentic community engagement shown in Figure 6 (Nexus Community Partners, 2018). RCEMHS could use this model as a reference point within their community engagement work. This model also aligns with community engagement and equity priorities in the 2018 Ramsey County Strategic Plan.



Figure 6: Impacts of Community Engagement Model

Conclusion

Disasters affect everyone, but their consequences do not impact everyone equally. Factors such as network, socioeconomic status, employment, and housing influence how communities respond to those consequences. In a county as diverse and densely-populated as Ramsey, it can be hard to plan a specific outreach and engagement strategy to inform specific communities about disaster preparedness; however, there are similarities between communities

that can inform an effective plan. By prioritizing a human centered approach, RCEMHS can keep the communities at the forefront of their efforts. The models and recommendations provided can be implemented by Ramsey County as well as by or in coordination with emergency management staff of municipalities within the County.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Protocol and Questions

Appendix B: Nexus Community Partners Community Assessment Tool

Appendix C: Metro Transit Better Bus Stops

Appendix D: Brooklyn Park Community Engagement Guide & Initiative

Appendix E: Nexus Community Partners Model for Community Engagement

Appendix A: Interview Protocol and Questions

Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. We are conducting interviews as a part of our Master's capstone project with the Humphrey School of Public Affairs. The project is with Ramsey County Emergency Management & Homeland Security (RCEMHS). This project will assist Ramsey County in identifying social vulnerabilities and assets within targeted demographic groups to better prepare for, respond to, and build resilience against natural or man-made disasters. We are doing exploratory research including interviews with organizations, government agencies and community members. This interview should take no more than an hour. I can provide you contact information if you have any questions or would like more information about the research. Nothing you say will be directly attributed to you. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Nonprofit Organization Interview Questions

1. What is your relationship/position in the community? (Describe your work with the community)
2. What resources or strengths does the community (or your organization) have to help respond to a man-made/natural disaster? What are the barriers? Are there places where community members tend to gather/community networks? (Prompt resources can mean social i.e. networks, people generally help each other, strong feeling of connectedness or material i.e. faith-based orgs, accessible transportation)
3. What are the characteristics that make this community vulnerable to the impacts of a disaster?
4. How do you communicate with clients/those receiving services/community members? What outreach methods have worked for you?
5. What kind of interaction does your organization have with Ramsey County?
6. What information has your organization received on disaster/emergency preparedness? Who has delivered the information (another organization, government)?
 - a. What strengths or resources does your organization have to help the people you serve to prepare and recover from a disaster?
7. Is there anyone else you recommend us talking to?

Community Members Interview Questions

1. Are there common gathering spaces in your community? For example, churches, community centers, etc.

2. What do you believe are characteristics that make communities vulnerable to the impacts of a disaster?
3. What do you believe are characteristics that make communities be better able to mitigate and/or recover from a disaster?
 - a. What type of information is needed to help people be prepared/what would be most helpful?
4. Where do you receive your information, news, etc...?
5. What kind of interaction has your organization had with Ramsey County, if at all?
6. Are there any strategies you have to prepare or respond to a disaster? For example, do you have a plan for losing your home to a disaster? Where did you hear about/learn of that strategy?
7. Is there anyone else you recommend us talking to?

Gov't Agency Interview Questions

1. Can you talk about your relationship with the Ramsey County Emergency & Management? (Prompt: Do you collaborate on programs or initiatives, what is your department's role when an emergency or disaster happens?)
2. How do you collaborate with other departments to provide services to communities? Within the work you do, do you see areas where there may be natural intersection points to collaborate with Emergency Services around preparing people? Where are there barriers?
3. What are you doing for community outreach?
 - a. (Can follow with) In your experience, what challenges have you encountered in community outreach? What works well?
4. Has your department had any interaction with the elderly (60+), young children (under 5), and/or the Karen population? How did you communicate with these groups?
 - a. What do you observe are assets within the XXX community (structural and social capital) that could be of benefit in preparing and mitigating a disaster?
 - b. What do you observe are vulnerabilities within the XXX community (structural and social capital) that could hinder the ability for communities to be prepared for a disaster?
5. Are you aware of any outreach that takes place to educate vulnerable populations (elders, ethnic communities) on disaster preparedness?
 - a. Prompt: What are common and/or effective communication strategies that are currently used to connect with XXXX population? Where do people get their information from?

6. Is there anyone else you recommend us talking to?



WWW.NEXUSCP.ORG/NCEI

Contact: Avi Viswanathan, aviswanathan@nexuscp.org or Angie Brown, abrown@nexuscp.org

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

You are free to share, copy and distribute this material. We ask that you give appropriate credit to Nexus Community Engagement Institute and/or its partners.

We encourage you to share your feedback with us and tell us how you are using the tool or resource. Nexus Community Engagement Institute and our partners intend these documents and tools to introduce practitioners, funders, evaluators, and community members to community engagement and to give the field clarity in its language and principles. However, community engagement is not a field that can rely on written materials alone; it takes a community of practitioners to support one another in practicing community engagement effectively, meeting its challenges, and tapping the strengths within each unique context. We encourage you to seek out experienced practitioners to support you in implementing these tools, principles, and concepts.

Nexus Community Engagement Institute is available for consultation. Please contact us at www.nexuscp.org/ncei or email program director Avi Viswanathan at aviswanathan@nexuscp.org.

Nexus Community Engagement Institute is continuing the work of the Building the Field of Community Engagement (BTF) collaborative. The BTF collaborative was a partnership between Casa de Esperanza, the Cultural Wellness Center, Hope Community, Lyndale Neighborhood Association, the Native American Community Development Institute, and Nexus Community Partners.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

EVERY ORGANIZATION HAS THE CAPACITY TO DO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. Resource limitations can impact the ability to do this work, but commitment and creativity are the only real requirements. We encourage you to use this assessment tool without judgment of yourself or others within your organization. We offer the tool as a guide to help ourselves and our fellow practitioners grow in our understanding of community engagement and to be thoughtful about our own practice of engagement techniques.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS PRACTITIONERS AND ORGANIZATIONS CAN USE THIS TOOL:

- As an individual, to assess your strengths and areas for professional growth
- With the staff in your organization to see where there is agreement, disagreement or tensions about your community engagement efforts.
- With board members to begin or deepen a conversation about community engagement within your organization.
- With new staff or board members to assess what skills they can contribute to your efforts to engage your community.
- To assess where an external partnership could improve community engagement by closing a gap posed by the limitations of your organization.
- To identify where staff or board members require new knowledge or training.
- To glean lessons learned after an event, project or initiative.
- With potential partners (government agencies, nonprofits, community institutions, etc.) to assess whether your approaches are complementary.
- With community members, to assess how they see your work.

SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Under each question on pages 3-5 are a set of continua to rank your work from **“DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH”** through **“DOING CE”**.
2. **Put a check mark in the box** you believe best reflects where you or your organization is currently at. You may want to consider 1-2 examples to demonstrate why you selected that box.
3. If you are having trouble deciding which applies, it **may be helpful to consider how you think the community would describe your work**, rather than how you internally describe the work.
4. **Below is a key** to help decipher which column to select in each row.

SELF-ASSESSMENT KEY: “CE” = COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING:** Select this column if you don't know whether you work is outreach, community engagement, or in a stage somewhere in between.
- **DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH:** Select this column if most often you believe your work is mostly outreach rather than mostly community engagement.
- **BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE:** Select this column if you or others in your organization have begun seriously discussing an interest in or commitment to incorporating community engagement practices and principles, but have yet to implement any strategies or policies to do so.
- **WORKING TOWARD CE:** Select this column if you or your organization have begun to implement some community engagement practices, but your organization/team has yet to formally adopt community engagement principles to be at the core and forefront of all the work you do.
- **DOING CE:** Select this column if the vast majority of the time you or your organization are doing community engagement and have formally created systems and practices to continually learn and adapt through community engagement.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

Q: WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP DO YOU HAVE WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS?

OUTREACH	UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING	DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH	BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE	WORKING TOWARD CE	DOING CE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
• Relationships are primarily TRANSACTIONAL , for the purpose of completing a project.						• Relationships are FOUNDATIONAL , continually built between and among people and groups. Staff/institutions continually build the relationships they need to know their community.
• Relationships are often NOT INCLUSIVE of all racial or cultural groups in the community.						• Relationships reflect the DIVERSITY within the community.
• Relationships can be LIMITED to a few community members, often giving influence to those with the loudest voices.						• Relationships are built not just with current leaders, but also with people with an interest and/or POTENTIAL TO BE LEADERS .
• Relationships are SHORT-TERM , so staff have to rebuild them as other projects or issues come up.						• Relationships are transformational and LONG-TERM , so community leaders/members can engage in projects and issues as they come up.

Q: WHY ARE YOU ENGAGING PEOPLE?

OUTREACH	UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING	DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH	BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE	WORKING TOWARD CE	DOING CE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
• To accomplish a project or a SPECIFIC GOAL defined by the organization.						• To create space for people to CONNECT, RAISE CONCERNS, BUILD POWER and ACT IN THEIR OWN INTERESTS .
• To SEEK BUY-IN OR APPROVAL of something the organization has already planned.						• To CREATE SPACE for the community's assets to be recognized and utilized.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

Q: HOW ARE YOU GETTING PEOPLE INVOLVED? WHEN?

OUTREACH	UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING	DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH	BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE	WORKING TOWARD CE	DOING CE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
• Primary activities with community include FLYERING, SURVEYS, FOCUS GROUPS, WORKSHOPS , etc.						• Primary activities with community include LISTENING SESSIONS, ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS, CELEBRATIONS, LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY-BUILDING PROJECTS , etc.
• Information is given or feedback is requested AFTER A PROJECT IS PLANNED.						• Planning is done WITH THE COMMUNITY from the beginning

Q: HOW DO IDEAS GET GENERATED?

OUTREACH	UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING	DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH	BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE	WORKING TOWARD CE	DOING CE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
• STAFF/ INSTITUTIONS GENERATE IDEAS they think the community will support.						• Staff/institutions SUPPORT COMMUNITY MEMBERS in generating their own ideas.
• Staff/institutions generate SOLUTIONS TO A PROBLEM they have defined.						• Staff/institutions engage in CONTINUAL SELF-REFLECTION to respond to and incorporate people's ideas, feedback, talents, and challenges into the work.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

Q: HOW DO YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES AND STRUCTURES SUPPORT ENGAGEMENT?

OUTREACH	UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING	DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH	BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE	WORKING TOWARD CE	DOING CE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
• The organizational culture is primarily focused on OBTAINING SPECIFIC OUTCOMES .						• The organizational culture is focused on learning and it values EMERGENT AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES .
• Board and staff may NOT REPRESENT the community.						• Board and staff REFLECT the community.
• The organization ADHERES TO WAYS OF OPERATING that reflect the DOMINANT CULTURE , such as using Robert's Rules for meetings, prioritizing staff to speak, etc.						• The organization CREATES SPACE FOR DIFFERENT CULTURAL WAYS , such as offering cultural foods and social spaces/ times, giving elders a special role, etc.
• Racism and power may not be discussed or may be DEALT WITH SUPERFICIALLY .						• The organizational culture supports discussions to UNDERSTAND AND DISMANTLE structural racism, to help heal historical trauma and to claim individual and community power.
• The organization adheres to ORGANIZATION-DRIVEN policies and structures.						• The organization demonstrates a willingness to revisit organizational policies and structures to RESPOND TO COMMUNITY NEEDS AND IDEAS .

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF OR DISCUSS AS A GROUP AFTER COMPLETING YOUR ASSESSMENT:

- Why did you rank yourself or your organization as you did?
- Where do differences exist between your individual work and the overall work of the organization?
- What would you and/or your organization like to do differently?
- Do your responses align with your organization's mission? What changes could advance your mission?
- Where does the staff or board of the organization agree? Disagree? Where is there tension?
- Where does your organization need additional support?
- Where do you need to build the capacity of your organization?
- What are the opportunities for and challenges to doing community engagement?

BETTER STOPS

Community Engagement

What is Better Bus Stops?

A project to enhance access to opportunity by investing in bus stop shelters, lighting, heat and pedestrian access.

"Our front porch to our customers is the bus stop. That's where we present ourselves to our customers really for the first time."
 – Brian Lamb, Metro Transit General Manager

A community engagement process, active from March 2016 – March 2017, based in areas of concentrated poverty where more than half of the residents are people of color.

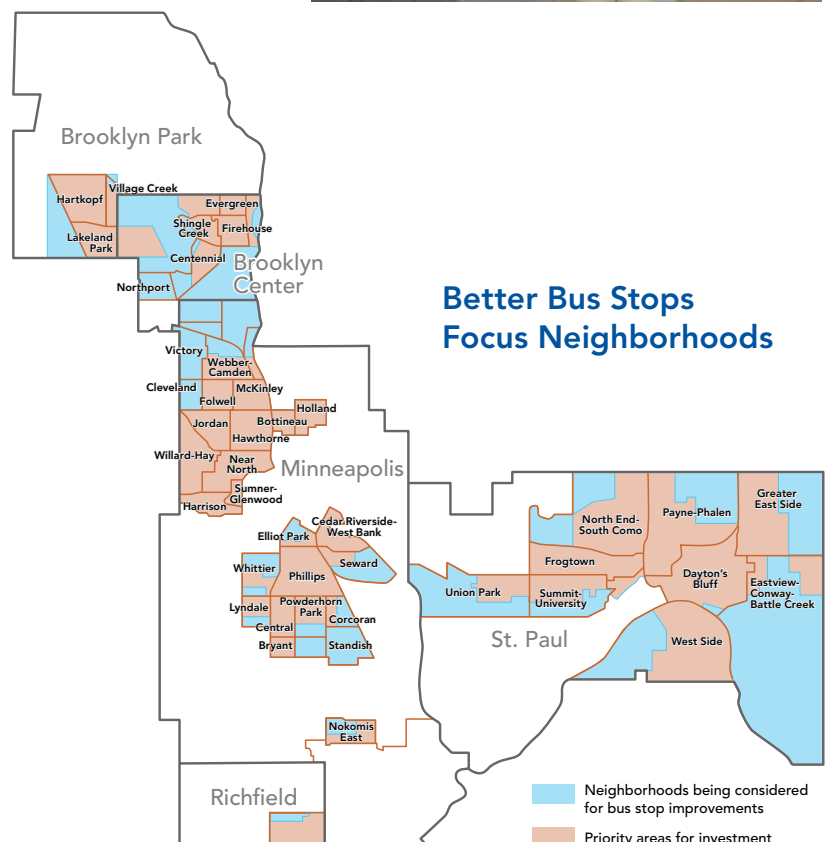


Why focus on community engagement?

To bring the community into the planning, decision-making and implementation of bus stop improvements and to influence the criteria the agency uses to prioritize shelter investments.

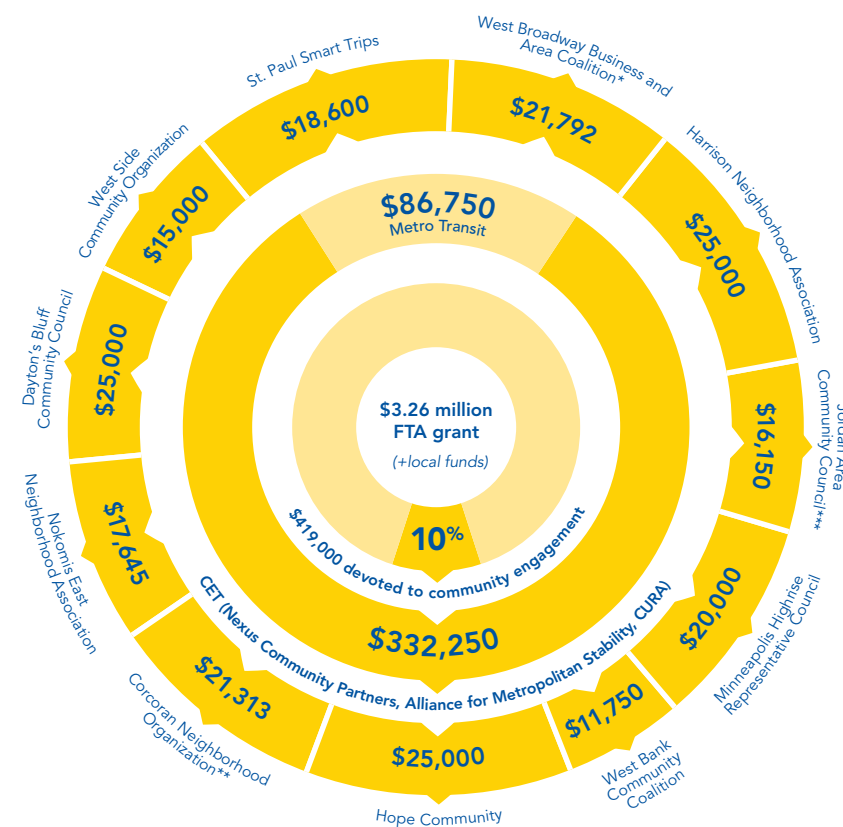
"Community engagement isn't something you check off. It really is the day in and the day out of being visible, asking good questions, and the follow up."
 – Community Organization

"The data's important but when you can align that with lived experience, lived outcomes, you get much better informed decision-making."
 – Community Engagement Team





Community Engagement Budget



- * partnered with Juxtaposition Arts
- ** partnered with Central Area Neighborhood Development Organization, Lyndale Neighborhood Association, Lake Street Council
- *** partnered with Hawthorne Neighborhood Council

\$419,000 devoted to community engagement

\$86,750

kept for Metro Transit, to do more traditional engagement and to provide engagement coverage for the entire Metro Transit service area (including a public engagement plan)

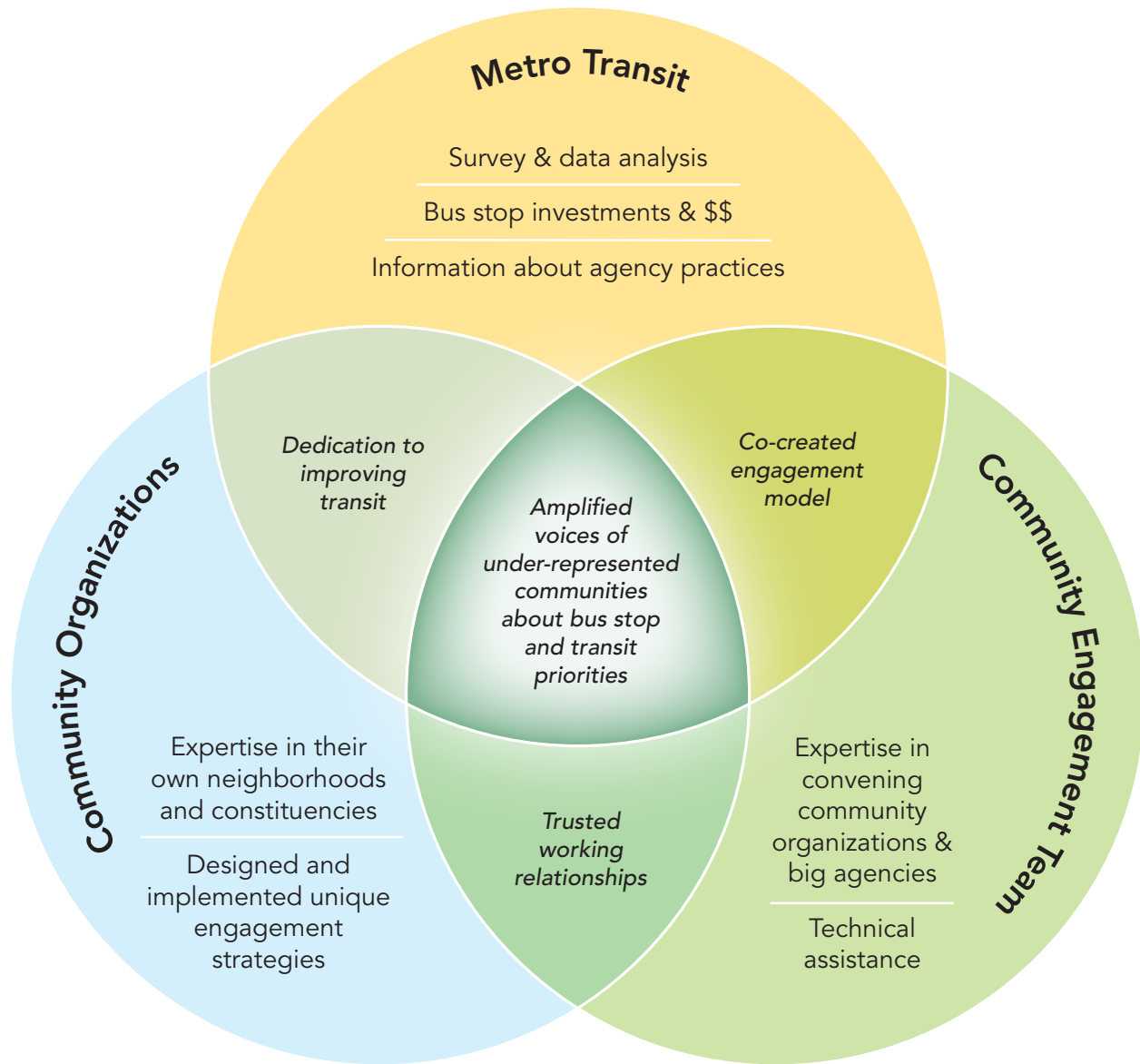
\$332,250

contracted to the CET (Nexus Community Partners, Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, CURA), with \$217,250 subcontracted out to community-based organizations

"All the players 'at the table' were paid to be there, rather than paid professional staff and volunteer community members. This created the conditions for leadership development and community ownership of the process – which ultimately yielded high quality results."

– Metro Transit staff

Community Engagement Model



"Co-creation of this model with the CET involved Metro Transit giving up decision-making power in several ways, which was essential in creating the conditions and space for community leadership and ownership of the work and outcomes.

Examples of this include who and how community engagement subcontracts were awarded, along with empowering community organizations to build off their expertise and create their own customized engagement plans for their constituencies."

– Metro Transit staff



Community Engagement Numbers



An estimated **7,000 people** participated in community engagement



2,013 Metro Transit surveys completed
+ 2,230 surveys customized by community organizations



Nearly 200 community engagement events

About the CET

Community Engagement Team (CET) is comprised of Nexus Community Partners, the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability and Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota. The CET's work is focused on supporting low-wealth populations, indigenous communities, communities of color, new immigrants and people with disabilities.

"That traditionally underrepresented communities are well represented in the survey is just one measure of the value brought by community organizations. They successfully brought the survey to their communities, and used their relationships in the community to have conversations in ways that would not have been possible had Metro Transit staff or transit consultants initiated the conversation."

– Metro Transit staff

Subcontracted Community Organizations

- West Broadway Business and Area Coalition with Juxtaposition Arts
- Harrison Neighborhood Association
- Jordan Area Community Council with Hawthorne Neighborhood Council
- Minneapolis Highrise Representative Council
- West Bank Community Coalition
- Hope Community
- Corcoran Neighborhood Organization with Central Area Neighborhood Development Organization, Lyndale Neighborhood Association and Lake Street Council
- Nokomis East Neighborhood Association
- St. Paul Smart Trips
- West Side Community Organization
- Dayton's Bluff Community Council

What did we learn?

PRIORITIES FOR WHERE TO LOCATE SHELTERS:

- Where many people wait for the bus.
- Near hospitals, healthcare clinics, social service centers, senior housing, housing and services for people with disabilities, where children are waiting.
- Where residents don't have a car, where residents have lower income.

"Even though ridership may not be as high, shelters are needed near senior housing."
– Survey participant

PRIORITIES FOR SHELTER AND BUS STOP FEATURES:

- Signage and information
- Benches
- Shelters
- Lighting
- Heaters
- Safe street crossings
- Maintenance at bus stops and shelters

"Bus shelters with lighting, heat, benches and maps are extremely helpful to those of us who rely on transit."
– Survey participant

PRIORITIES BEYOND BUS STOPS:

- Bus service and operations
- Equitable distribution of resources
- Fares
- Safety

"When buses run late or too early, peoples' livelihoods are at stake." – Community Organization

"Some people actually don't have cars ... and they rely on the light rail and the bus every day they wake up." – Community Organization

PRIORITIES FOR SHELTER STYLE AND BUS STOP DESIGN:

- A safe path to the bus stop, and safe environment at the bus stop
- Design for all ages and abilities
- Better weather protection

"Wider sidewalks are a must. Too often I can't be visible to flag the bus without being dangerously close to fast driving automobile traffic. When I have a toddler with me I'm 10 times more anxious doing this."
– Survey participant

"[The bus system] has helped my family to attend doctor appointments, grocery stores when there are no other options. It helps us survive."
– Survey participant

"Safety must be addressed through an equity lens because of the different ways that safety shapes and defines bus riders' experiences depending on their location, identity and other factors. We heard from the majority of subcontractors that safety was a top concern for their community members when using transit. The diversity of comments and suggestions on this topic show that safety is defined and addressed differently in every community."
– CET



Community engagement accomplishments

- Engaging and centering the people and communities who are traditionally under-represented in transit decision-making, but are most affected by these decisions.
- Engaging the community in discussions focusing on equity and policy surrounding the investment of resources at the bus stop level to influence the criteria the agency uses to prioritize bus stops improvements.
- Fostering greater transparency on Metro Transit decision-making and providing more information about bus stop improvements.
- Creating opportunities to build capacity within the community on transit issues, by compensating community organizations as full partners.
- Documenting and sharing lessons learned from this model of community engagement.

"[As a result of the Better Bus Stops project] we have closer relationships with individuals from Metro Transit itself, the Metropolitan Council, and from various neighborhood groups..."

– Community Organization

"A major success is that residents in the community feel that we are doing something positive by being out there in the streets engaging with them. We have heard comments such as 'It's nice to see people wanting to do something positive in the neighborhood,' multiple times from the community."

– Community Organization

For more information, the Better Bus Stops Community Engagement Final Report and video, visit the Better Bus Stops website at metrotransit.org/better-bus-stops.

Community Engagement Planning Guide

Working toward engaging the Brooklyn Park community in an authentic, equitable and meaningful way

Developed by Lidiya Girma, Neighborhood Relations Specialist, lidiya.girma@brooklynpark.org



About this guide

This guide serves as a resource to help staff think through the process of developing a community engagement (i.e. public outreach and participation) plan for City projects (policies, programs, infrastructure development, construction work, etc.) by providing questions and key points for consideration.

What is an engagement plan?

An engagement plan outlines a set of specific outreach and public participation strategies with assigned roles and a timeline for new or reoccurring projects that will impact the community either at the neighborhood or citywide level.

The Community Engagement team can help!

The Community Engagement (CE) team exists to assist all City departments and divisions develop and carry out effective community engagement strategies. Use this resource! Work through the questions outlined in this guide with one or more members of the team.

Step 1: do we need to engage the community?

How do we know if our project needs to incorporate some level of community engagement?

Yes	No	Does our project have potential environmental, economic, safety and/or health impacts on the community?
Yes	No	Have community members voiced interest, concerns or opposition to our project?
Yes	No	Would public participation help our project achieve equitable outcomes for our community members?
Yes	No	Will we be asking the community to provide additional funding for our project (i.e. assessment, tax increase, bond referendum, etc.)?

If the answer to at least one of the above questions is a yes, then contact the CE team. Let's create a plan!



Step 2: what we know and don't know about our project

Before we begin developing public outreach and participation strategies, let's think through what we know about our project. Skip the questions that do not apply.

Questions to consider

- What does our project seek to do for the community?
- What are the anticipated impacts (both positive and negative) at the neighborhood level? What about at the citywide level?
- What is the current level of community awareness about our project and its impact?
- What have our community engagement efforts looked like in the past for this or similar projects? Were they effective or ineffective?
- What are the possible consequences/outcomes (if any) of not engaging the community?
- How can our project timeline accommodate a community engagement process?
- What information is missing? What is still unknown about our project (i.e. funding, timeline, etc.)?



Step 3: identifying who to engage

Depending on the nature of our project, we will want to develop an understanding of either or both of the following:

- Relationship between the level of project impact community stakeholders experience and their current level of engagement (awareness and involvement) with our project or the City more generally (see illustration 1).
- Relationship between the impacted community stakeholders' influence on project outcomes and their current level of engagement with our project (see illustration 2).

Questions to consider

- Which specific community members/groups will be most impacted by our project?
 - Which groups are already engaged? Which are currently disengaged?
 - Which groups have a high influence on project outcomes? Which groups do we need to empower to have greater influence?
 - Which groups are easy for us to reach? Which are difficult for us to reach?
 - With which groups do we already have built relationships? With which groups do we need to begin developing connections?
- From the impacted community members/groups we identified, which need to be:
 - Provided printed and electronic information about our project?
 - Invited to give input and feedback on one or more aspects of our project?
 - Invited to help shape and/or carry out the community engagement effort?
 - Included in the development and decision making process of our project?
- Which City departments and external partner organizations should we collaborate with for our community engagement efforts to be successful?

Illustration 1

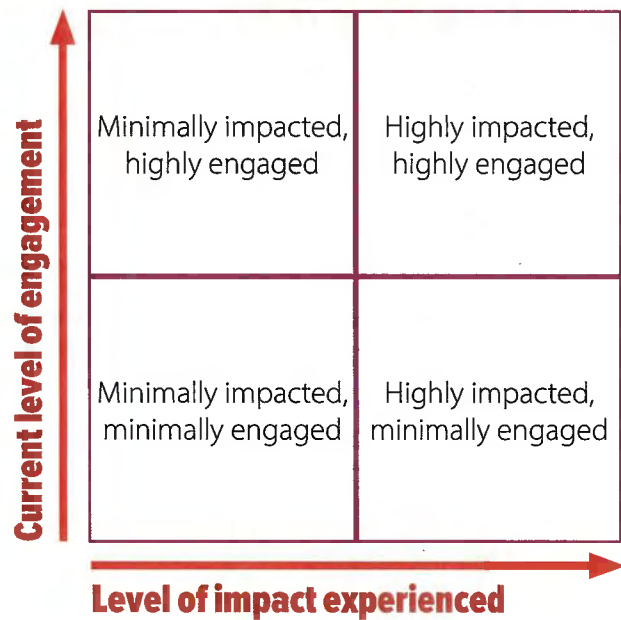
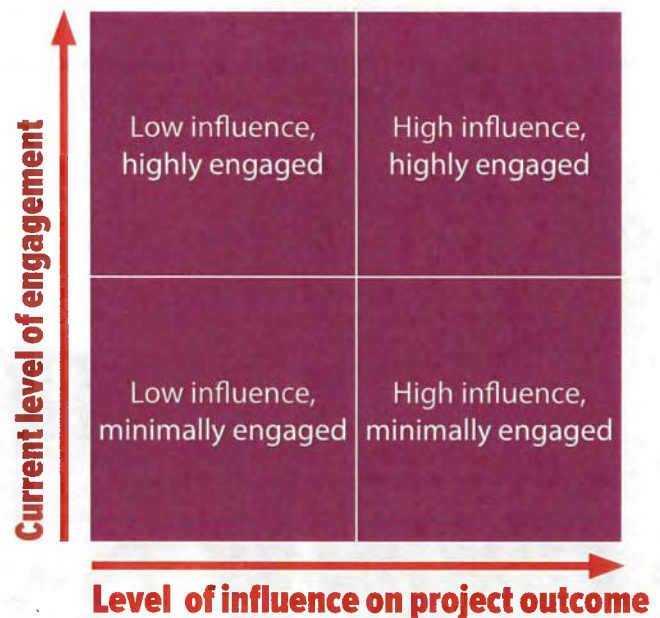


Illustration 2



Step 4: choosing the right community engagement strategies

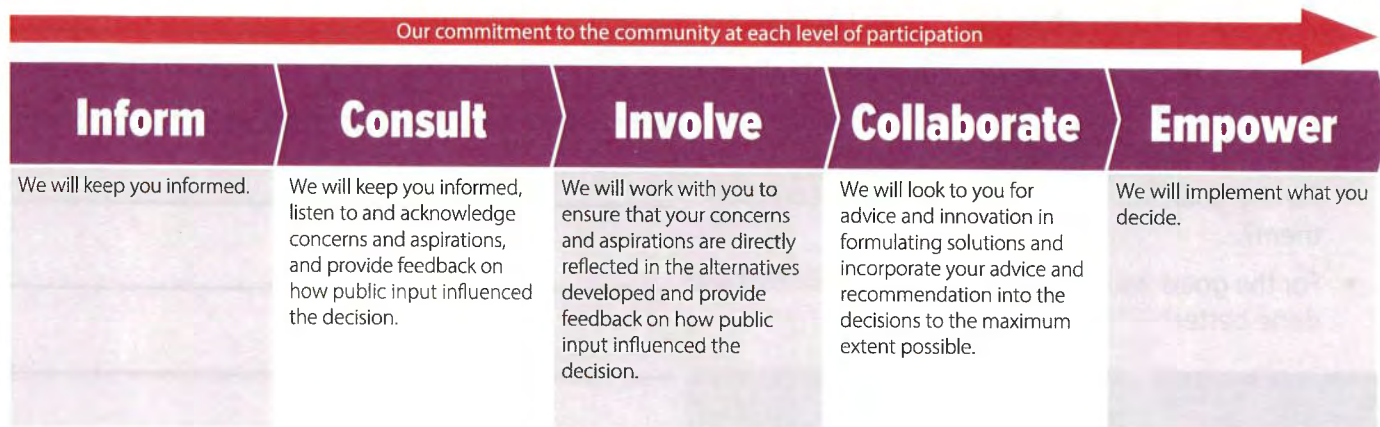
Our engagement strategies should seek to be dynamic, adaptive and responsive to resident needs and circumstances.

Barriers, challenges and opportunities

- There are transportation, language, technological, institutional and physical barriers that limit access to information and active engagement for socioeconomically disadvantaged populations, community members with disabilities, youth, the elderly, and communities of color.
- We have a culturally and racially diverse community that requires varying methods of information sharing and engagement opportunities. One strategy does not work for all.
- We can leverage existing relationships with community members/groups to reach out to and build new relationships with disengaged and under represented populations.

Setting expectations

We should strive to be transparent about the level of influence and control community members can exercise through their input and involvement on a city project. Set realistic expectations to prevent disappointment and frustration.



IAP2: Spectrum of Public Participation

Questions to consider

- Which communication outlets should we use? Will these outlets reach the intended community members/groups?
- For public meetings/gatherings, which physical locations/spaces (both indoor and outdoor) will be the most convenient/accessible for community members?
- For in-person outreach, during which times and days of the week will we be best able to reach the intended community groups?
- How will we make sure our engagement efforts are equitable? How can we limit barriers to public participation?

Step 5: what does success look like?

Assessing our efforts is an integral part of improving our outreach and engagement strategies. It helps us to understand what we are doing well and how we can improve. It also keeps us accountable to our selves and the community.

Questions to consider before the project starts

- If our community outreach and engagement efforts are successful, what outcomes will we see?
- What are the specific goals and objectives of our outreach and public participation efforts?
- What are some indicators (what we can see and measure) that let us know that we have achieved our engagement goals?

Assessing our efforts after the project is done

- Based on the goals we set for our outreach efforts at the beginning of this project, which did we meet and which did we not meet?
- For the goals we met, what helped us accomplish them?
- For the goals we did not meet, what could we have done better?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Community Engagement Initiative

Best Practices and Recommendations



Background

The City of Brooklyn Park was hit particularly hard by the recession, experiencing high rates of foreclosures, increased poverty, and decreased economic opportunity. The city was also experiencing a rapid demographic shift, as the proportion of residents identifying as white fell from 70% in 2000 to only 51% in 2010.

In December of 2009, Brooklyn Park began a five-year Community Engagement Initiative (CEI), bringing together community members, volunteers, and city staff to change the way that the City engages with residents.

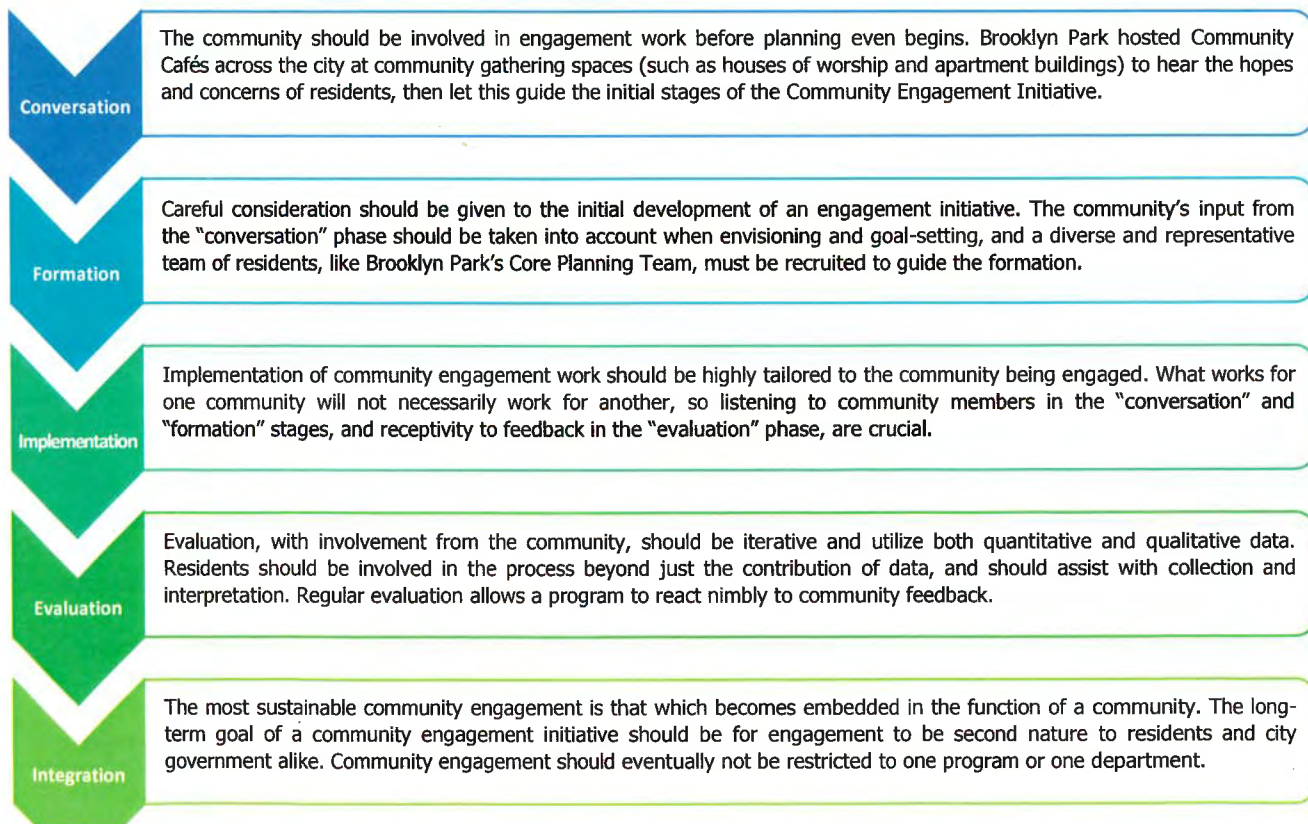
After holding a series of Community Cafés to learn from the community about the issues that are important to them, a core planning team was formed to set a direction for the new initiative. This team of residents, community leaders, and city staff created the strategic goals and structure that guided the initiative, and a new mission statement for the city.

Today the Community Engagement Department is an established part of city government, and departments across the city utilize community engagement in their planning and decision-making. CEI has had a lasting impact in Brooklyn Park through the events, organizations, and partnerships it began, and through the resulting shift in the city's culture.

Brooklyn Park Demographics

Population:	~80,000 (6 th largest city in MN)
Density:	2,906 people/mi ²
Race/Ethnicity:	White – 51% Black/African-American – 24% Asian – 15% Hispanic/Latino – 6% Two or More Races – 3%
Immigration Data:	21% foreign-born Cultural groups include Liberian, Hmong, Somali, Vietnamese, Latino, and other immigrant groups
Average Income:	\$54,196
Median Rent:	\$871 (58% of renters suffer Housing Cost Burden)
Median Age:	32.7 years

Key Stages



Findings

Planning Process

- The Core Planning Team's diversity was crucial. Because city staff and residents were involved in the planning in roughly equal numbers, and represented different major stakeholders in the Brooklyn Park community, a variety of key issues were addressed.
- Direct outreach to particular groups and individuals ensured that underrepresented groups were included in the process from the start.
- The consensus model used required greater time commitment, but resulted in greater buy-in from participants.
- Facilitation by an outside group was beneficial to the planning process.

Volunteer Support

- Participants often faced difficulties balancing the time commitment of volunteering with their other commitments.
- The city would benefit from a more organized and consistent system for engaging and mobilizing volunteers for programs and events, and could consider hiring a volunteer coordinator to reduce burden on other staff.

Resident Empowerment

- Participants feel as if they have a voice in City Hall, and feel more comfortable engaging in city business as a resident outside of CEI as well.
- Enthusiasm for the initiative has been at its strongest, participants said, when residents were driving its direction and programming.
- When transitioning from direct programming to integration across departments, find ways for residents to continue to lead.

Culture Change

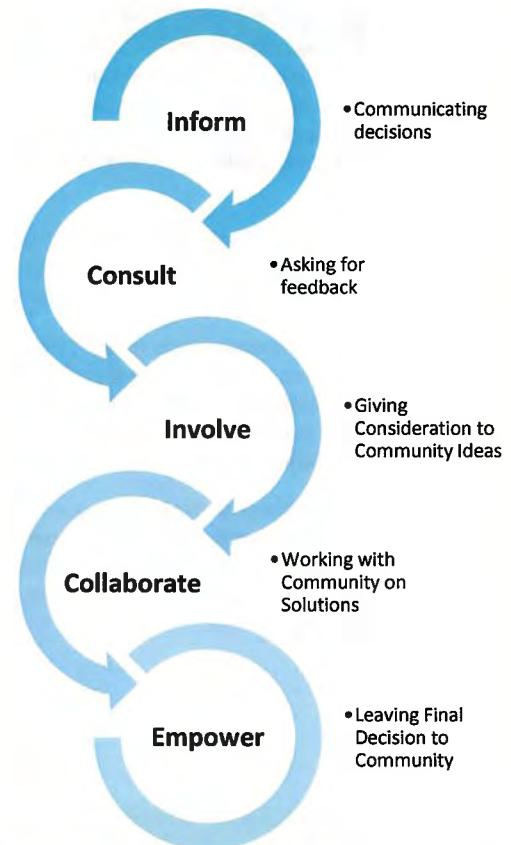
- A major positive result of the CEI was a shift within city government toward a culture of engagement, one in which community engagement became a part of every program rather than a separate activity.
- Staff and elected officials are more accessible to residents.

Diversity and Equity

- Residents noted that as result of CEI they were able to get to know the diverse cultural communities of Brooklyn Park, thanks to the early and sustained focus on diversity in initiative planning and implementation.
- In addition to increased familiarity, residents reported feeling more connected to community members that are different from themselves, and more willing to listen to new ideas and collaborate.

Spectrum of Participation

Adapted from IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum



Successes

Brooklyn Park Pride – Residents are prouder to tell others that they live in Brooklyn Park and feel more invested in the city's future.

Empowered Community Members – Participants feel comfortable in City Hall and feel like they can make a difference in the city.

Leadership Development – Residents received training and had access to new opportunities.

New Partnerships – Partnerships formed brought people and organizations together.

New and Deepened Relationships – Participants made friends and professional connections.

Engagement Embedded in City Culture – Community Engagement became part of how the city of Brooklyn Park functions.

Community Programs and Events – Community created new programs and events.

Celebrating Diversity – Residents got to know and work more closely with the unique cultural communities in Brooklyn Park.



Brooklyn Park CEI Participants at a celebration recognizing their work.

Evaluation of this initiative was made possible through a partnership between the City of Brooklyn Park and the Resilient Communities Project, part of the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. For the full report visit <http://rcp.umn.edu/>.

Community Engagement Initiative

Accomplishments



Background

In December of 2009, Brooklyn Park began a five-year Community Engagement Initiative (CEI), bringing together community members, volunteers, and city staff to change the way that the City engages with residents.

After holding a series of Community Cafés to learn from the community about the issues that are important to them, a core planning team was formed to set a direction for the new initiative. This team of residents, community leaders, and city staff created the strategic goals and structure that guided the initiative, and the mission statement and core values that continue to guide the city.

From 2010 to 2015, the youth, diversity, resources, and measurement teams, along with the core planning team, worked tirelessly to plan, implement, and evaluate strategies for meaningfully engaging and empowering Brooklyn Park residents.

Today the Community Engagement Division is an established part of city government, and departments across the city utilize community engagement in their planning and decision-making. CEI has had a lasting impact in Brooklyn Park through the events, organizations, and partnerships it began, and through the resulting shift in the city's culture.

Themes

Renewed Brooklyn Park Pride – Residents are prouder to tell others that they live in Brooklyn Park and feel more invested in the city's future.

Empowered Community Members – Participants feel comfortable in City Hall and feel like they can make a difference in the city.

Leadership Development – Residents received training and had access to new opportunities.

New Partnerships – Partnerships formed brought people and organizations together.

New and Deepened Relationships – Participants made friends and professional connections.

Engagement Embedded in City Culture – Community Engagement became part of how the city of Brooklyn Park functions.

Community Programs and Events – Community created new programs and events.

Celebrating Diversity – Residents got to know and work more closely with the unique cultural communities in Brooklyn Park.

*"We have to stop doing things to people
and start doing things with people."*

- Mayor Steve Lampi



Evaluation of this initiative was made possible through a partnership between the City of Brooklyn Park and the Resilient Communities Project, part of the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. For the full report visit <http://rcp.umn.edu/>.

Participation

Volunteers	Hundreds
Team Members	~80 at a time
Events Sponsored (2015)	62
Event Attendees (2015)	3,847
New Neighbors Welcomed	Over 5,300
Neighborhoods Named	31

Notable Accomplishments

A small sample of achievements to come out of CEI:

Goals Met

- 91% feel proud to live in Brooklyn Park.
- 92% feel it is a thriving community
- 91% feel they have opportunity to succeed

Events

- Diversity Fest
- Youth in Government Day
- Citywide Garage Sales

Programs

- Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth
- Neighborhoods Formation
- New Connect

Honors

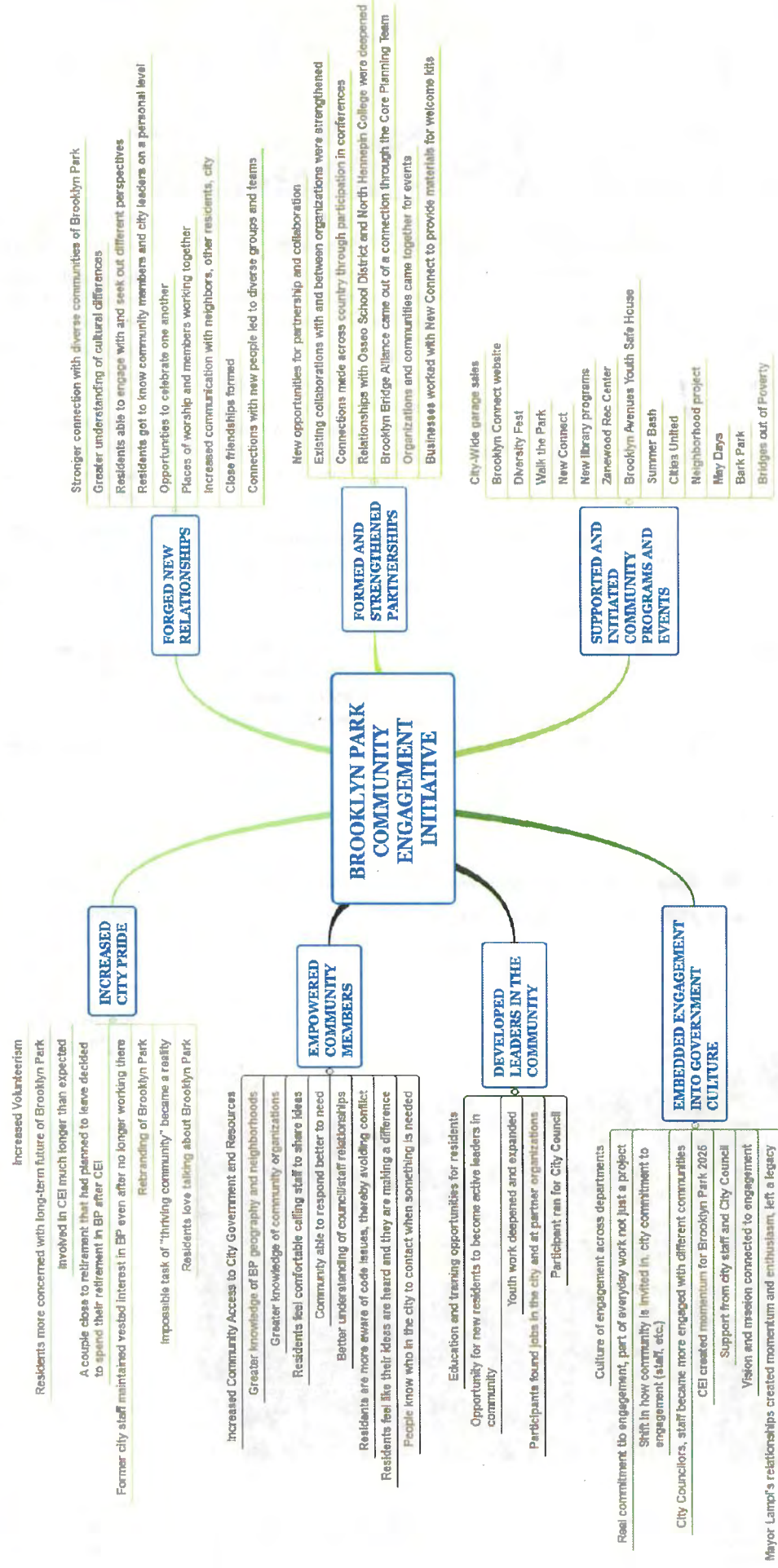
- Featured at 2013 Transforming Local Government national conference
- Invited to attend national Community Engagement Leadership Institute in 2012

Impact Map

Ripple Effect Mapping

Ripple Effect Mapping is an evaluation method that utilizes a combination of participant self-interview and collective discussion to create a visualization of the "ripples" of impact that extend outward from the immediate effects. Participants interview each other in pairs about successes, challenges, and unexpected results of a program, then as a group map out the relationships between the ideas that arose during their interviews. The participatory nature of the evaluation allows for the collective building up of themes and the tracing of chains of events that may have resulted from a program.

A Ripple Effect Mapping session was conducted with 38 CEI participants, volunteers, and team members. The following is a condensed version of the resulting map:





WWW.NEXUSCP.ORG/NCEI

Contact: Avi Viswanathan, aviswanathan@nexuscp.org or Angie Brown, abrown@nexuscp.org

IMPACTS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODEL

You are free to share, copy and distribute this material. We ask that you give appropriate credit to Nexus Community Engagement Institute and/or its partners.

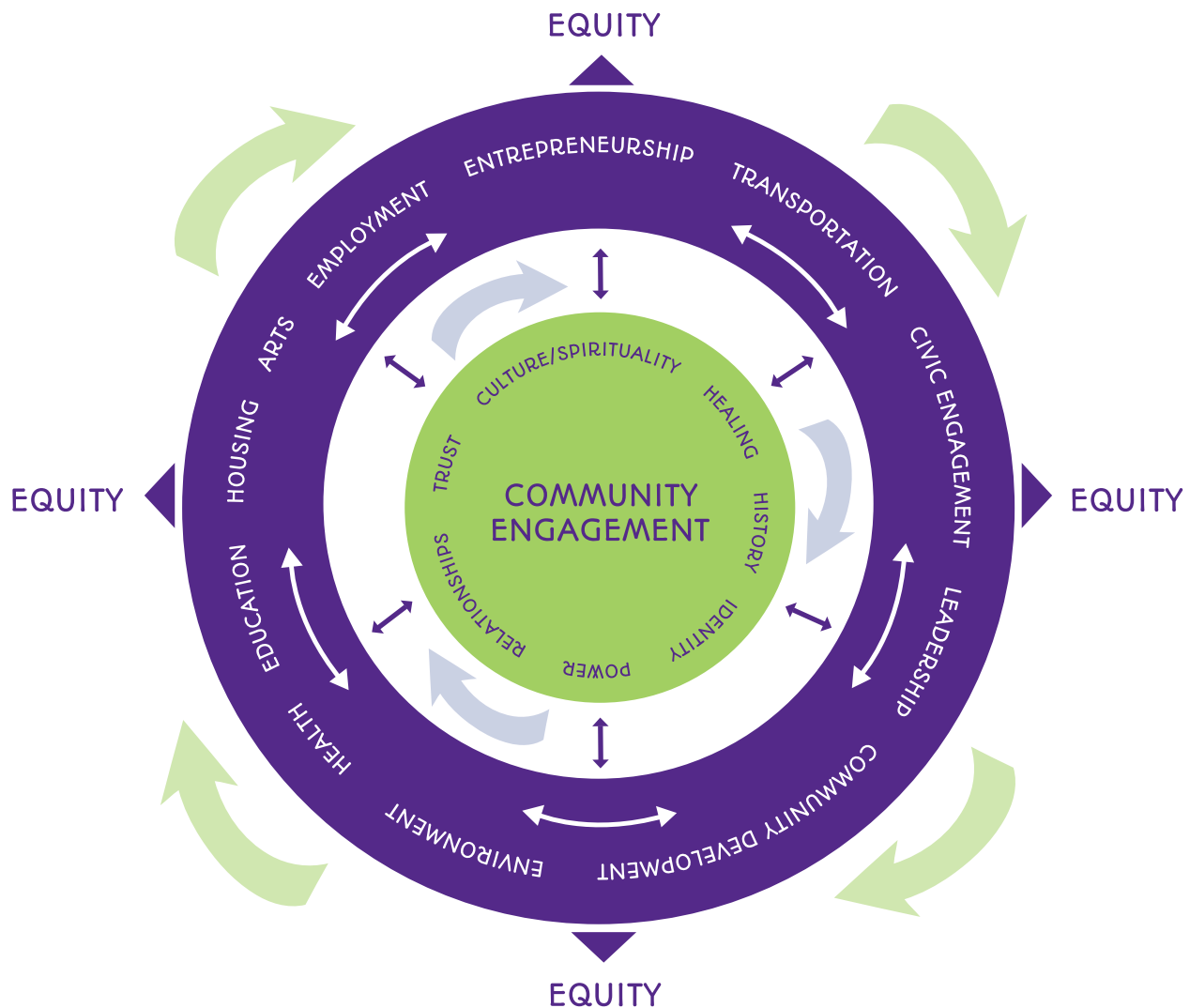
We encourage you to share your feedback with us and tell us how you are using the tool or resource. Nexus Community Engagement Institute and our partners intend these documents and tools to introduce practitioners, funders, evaluators, and community members to community engagement and to give the field clarity in its language and principles. However, community engagement is not a field that can rely on written materials alone; it takes a community of practitioners to support one another in practicing community engagement effectively, meeting its challenges, and tapping the strengths within each unique context. We encourage you to seek out experienced practitioners to support you in implementing these tools, principles, and concepts.

Nexus Community Engagement Institute is available for consultation. Please contact us at www.nexuscp.org/ncei or email program director Avi Viswanathan at aviswanathan@nexuscp.org.

Nexus Community Engagement Institute is continuing the work of the Building the Field of Community Engagement (BTF) collaborative. The BTF collaborative was a partnership between Casa de Esperanza, the Cultural Wellness Center, Hope Community, Lyndale Neighborhood Association, the Native American Community Development Institute, and Nexus Community Partners.

IMPACTS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODEL

As of May 29, 2018



The Impacts of Community Engagement model describes the outcomes that result from authentic community engagement.

The outer circle components are the tangible, visible goals of the work that community members do together.

The inner circle components are achieved in the process of doing the work and are foundational elements of a healthy community in their own right. These assets are the building blocks for positive change in all of the areas of the outer circle and need to be attended to and will be strengthened in a long-term process, during and beyond the process of achieving an outcome in the outer circle. The importance of these elements is often overlooked and communities' work in these areas is often under-resourced, but is vital in achieving equity.

The wheel as a whole is fluid and dynamic, demonstrating the perpetual interconnectedness of the elements. The model demonstrates the power of community engagement to impact multiple levels and systems, and to create sustained change that lasts beyond a project or campaign. This sustained systems change will impact all elements of an organization, institution, or system, including culture, structures, policies, rules, programs, staffing, and the allocation of resources.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DEFINITIONS

As of May 29, 2018

Community members and the Building the Field of Community Engagement partners (see cover) developed the following working definitions to describe the elements of the model. Coming to a collective understanding about what these terms mean and how to center them when engaging community will help build the field of community engagement and advance equity.

EQUITY: Fair access to resources and opportunities, full participation in the life and well-being of the community, and self-determination in meeting fundamental needs.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: A process that includes multiple techniques to promote the participation of residents in community life, especially those who are excluded and isolated, by engaging them in collective action to create a healthy community.

INNER CIRCLE DEFINITIONS: *Outcomes that are strengthened as a result of community engagement and are an essential part of the process.*

CULTURE/SPIRITUALITY

Community engagement nurtures the practices, beliefs, traditions, and ways of knowing that create cohesion and give people a vision across generations.

HEALING

Community engagement provides the space to draw meaning from a personal or collective story, and to recognize and build on strengths and resilience. It acknowledges and promotes wholeness.

HISTORY

Community engagement is a dialogue between the past, the present, and the future; acknowledging and learning from key events, sorrows, dreams, movements, influencers, victories and aspirations that have shaped how a community expresses its own culture and interacts with people and systems. Community engagement provides a path to healing and building from that history.

IDENTITY

Community engagement supports the maintenance, development, and/or reclamation of a healthy sense of self for individuals and includes a sense of belonging to groups that gives a person connection, continuity, and meaning.

POWER

Community engagement activates and exercises the ability to act for personal and community benefit.

RELATIONSHIPS

The practice of community engagement requires the building of authentic, long-term relationships involving truth, respect, and reciprocity.

TRUST

The practice of community engagement calls for transparency, honesty, and mutual learning and understanding between individuals, groups, organizations, and institutions. It requires being vulnerable and open to deepen relationships and strengthen mutual accountability.

Researching Barriers to Parks Access



Prepared by:

Daniel Mock
in PA 8991: Independent Research

Instructor: Dr. Yingling Fan, Professor
of Urban and Regional Affairs
Humphrey School of Public Affairs

Prepared in Collaboration with:

Nathan Moe
Scott County Parks Planner



The project on which this report is based was completed in collaboration with Scott County as part of the 2018–2019 Resilient Communities Project (RCP) partnership. RCP is a program at the University of Minnesota’s Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) that connects University faculty and students with Minnesota communities to address strategic projects that advance local resilience and sustainability.

The contents of this report represent the views of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of RCP, CURA, the Regents of the University of Minnesota, or Scott County.



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Resilient Communities Project

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Building Community-University Partnerships for Resilience

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Researching Barriers to Parks Access

A Journey of Data Collection, Stakeholder Engagement,
and Community Input

Daniel Mock
12MAY2019

Introduction and Opening Thoughts

As I began my analysis of Shakopee parks access for Scott County, I researched all the best practices, current topics, and local examples of how to address the issues. I realized halfway through my project that taking that approach was not doing justice to the situation in Shakopee. As a student in both Public Health and Planning, I wanted to see what was happening on location in Shakopee versus what a google search told me. I am focusing my Public Health education on environmental epidemiology, and as such, I took an epidemiologist approach to my research. By this I mean I wanted to play detective.

I conducted on-site inspections of playgrounds, attended sporting events, and interacted with the residents of Shakopee. Shakopee is painted as an affluent bedroom suburb of the Twin Cities and yes, for many of the residents this is true. Yet when I pressed deeper, I found examples of growing economic inequality, cultural bias, and lack of awareness of the changing make-up of Shakopee. I would argue that the city has created at best a pattern of ignorance to the changing demographics of Shakopee, or at worst a pattern of systemic racism reinforced by the allocation of resources, creation of recreational programming, and installation of park infrastructure.

Recommendations for Scott County

The Minnesota Department of Public Health created the “2017 Minnesota Statewide Health Assessment” (MNDPH, Minnesota Department of Public Health, 2017). That has guidance on addressing economic, cultural, and racial issues facing access to health outcomes for residents. I compared the City of Shakopee and other cities in Scott County against this as a good source of information.

Recommendations for further exploration

Scott County can create a visual resource to give the city that indicates the areas of issue, such as a GIS database, with the following:

1. Create a GIS resource that indicates the areas of high poverty, low income, and ethnic percentage.

A. Map of Shakopee Parks and their locations

2. Inventory of all park locations and how much spending each site takes from the Shakopee budget.

Creating a guide of best practices for addressing a shortcoming in a park's accessibility while addressing funding, political, and social resistance would enable the city to take steps forward.

1. Utilize the Metropolitan Council's equity toolkit or adapt one for the county
2. Potential health equity training at both county and city level

Summary of Shakopee

I was tasked with doing a policy scan and analysis of the Shakopee Parks and Recreation Department. What I found was a lack of policies, a lack of equity in recreation programming, park infrastructure investment, and the membership-based cost associated with the use of Shakopee's flagship recreation center and water park. This is my final report on the issues facing the Shakopee Parks and Recreation department. I began the report in February 2019 and concluded it in May 2019.

Shakopee Demographics

Ethnic Percentages

Over the last two decades, Shakopee saw a significant population shift. In 2000 the population was overwhelmingly Caucasian at 92% to 74% in 2017 (Table 1). This was a loss of 19%. Minority populations saw significant increases the Asian population with a 10% increase, and the Black and Hispanic population seeing a 4% increase. A logical assumption could be that this will increase even more so with the release of the 2020 Census. Shakopee needs to change the way it manages and approaches the population. Acknowledgment of the growing minority populations in Shakopee must happen.

Income Levels

The city of Shakopee saw a significant increase in the median salary of most residents (Table 1) and an almost double increase in the price of housing. While the median wage increased so did the number of those living in poverty. The areas of Shakopee with the highest poverty (figure 1) and the lowest median income (figure 2) are in what is referred to as downtown and old Shakopee. The location of much of the new or improved park infrastructure (figure 3) is located either in central Shakopee or on the south side of Interstate 169, the two areas of the highest income and lowest poverty (figure 1 and figure 2) in Shakopee.

Research

My research, analysis, and final recommendations, come in the form of three major groupings:

1. Parks programming
2. Parks infrastructure
3. Parks accessibility

Parks Programming

Sports

The city does not officially run any sports programs but does (as per the park's website) "oversees all city-affiliated sports associations" (Shakopee Parks and Recreation, 2019). These sports lack options outside of traditional western sports. Many of these programs have a high cost of entry and often involve travel at the expense of the participant or family. There is a lack of sports programming catering toward the rising minority population in Shakopee.

Non-sport Programming

There is a lack of non-sports related programming outside of the community center. The community center does offer several alternatives to sports, but the cost of a membership puts this option out of the reach of most.

Observance of Cultural, Religious, or National Events

The city has events for several national events such as July 4th, Labor Day, and Veterans Day plus others. The city appears to celebrate a westernized holiday such as Easter and Christmas. These two holidays are commonly viewed for their religious affiliation. There were no events to celebrate Ramadan, Hmong New Year's, or any of the many Latino associated holidays (very region specific).

Park Infrastructure

Infrastructure includes playgrounds, sports fields, swimming pools or splash pads, and the associated physical infrastructure. It is understandable that part of the new park infrastructure would be installed in new development neighborhoods in Shakopee. As the map indicates (figure 3), the majority of infrastructure is in new/relatively new development zones. In the photovoice, I document the lack of parks and aging infrastructure in the low income/high poverty areas. The

area north of Interstate 169 was where I found a pattern of little to no maintenance in parks and a lack of athletic fields.

Additionally, most of the parks in this zone also lacked basic safety amenities such as adequate lighting or emergency phones. Several of the restrooms were locked, which during the winter is understandable, however some were still closed after the snow had gone. On visits to several different parks, I noticed that the parks in the north Interstate 169 zone were heavily used and at times had more participants than the park itself could handle. On the inverse, I observed more than once the zone south of Interstate 169 parks not being utilized. It appeared to me that most of the resources in Shakopee were allocated to the big three: Shakopee Community Center, SandVenture Aquatic Park, and Lions Park.

Here are the takeaways I have from looking at infrastructure:

- A. The city has created a pattern of installing new, safer, and cleaner park infrastructure within neighborhoods with higher income base.
- B. Park infrastructure on the north side of Interstate 169 was not adequate to the resident's needs. Similarly, the south side of Interstate 169 had more than adequate infrastructure with some going unused in my visits.
- C. Resources appeared to be centered around the big three mentioned above.

Parks Accessibility

I have previously covered many of the issues impacting accessibility to parks in Shakopee. These include:

- 1. Physical infrastructure
- 2. Public Safety
- 3. Location of parks - most located on south Interstate 169 zone

The biggest hurdle, I feel, is the cost to use the Community Center and SandVenture Aquatic Park. I stated that most of the city's programming is centered around access to these two locations. The cost of a family membership to the community center is \$600 (table 2) for residents and add \$275.75 (table 3) for SandVenture, which totals almost \$900 to use these facilities. I did attempt to locate the operating cost of both locations, but I was not able to (I may have looked in the wrong locations). I would be interested to know if the cost of membership recovers the operating cost and if so, what the city is making from just these two locations. Could a percentage or all of the additional revenue be used to cover the cost with programming?

SWOT Analysis of Shakopee Parks

Using the Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threat (SWOT) method, I have determined the following status for Shakopee Parks.

Strengths

1. Location

Shakopee has many advantages to creating a robust and connected park system. Its location to natural amenities (Three Rivers, The Landing, Louisville Swamp, etc.) would allow for a connected network of the city, regional, and national parks. Having the Scott County government seat in the city also helps with large scale planning.

2. Community Engagement

Shakopee was very successful in gaining engagement and feedback during the comments community input section of the Envision Shakopee Plan. The success could transfer to creating a more robust parks plan and increasing community engagement.

3. Projected Growth of Scott County and Shakopee

Shakopee is arguably the largest and most influential city in Scott County. As the city continues to grow, the timing will be right to create a template for parks access for the entire county.

Weakness

1. Lack of Policies

Shakopee Parks and Recreation, as of now, is more of a “best practice” organization. While this is good in the sense they would be able to quickly adapt to community needs; it does leave the city susceptible to changing at political winds.

2. Lack of Transportation Options to Access Parks

Shakopee is an auto-centric city, meaning that it takes an automobile to move just about anywhere in Shakopee. The parks are no exception with the average time between them about 10 minutes by car, and that is for the ones in the main city area.

Opportunities

1. Management Shift – New Parks Director

The city of Shakopee recently hired a new Parks Director. The new Director has come in with years of experience in municipal government management and decades of government service. The new Director has stated that his goal is to make Shakopee an example in Scott County for Parks management.

2. Increasing City Footprint

Shakopee has made it clear that they are planning on annexing the townships of Jackson and Louisville. This would increase the amount of parks land and allow the city to offer services to

historically marginalized populations living in more impoverished rural areas. This would also increase the property tax footprint which could lead to increased revenue.

3. Outside Resources and Funding

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community and Canterbury Park group have invested substantial resources into Shakopee. Continuing this relationship can allow for resources to increase parks access.

Threats

1. Securing Funding and Staff

Shakopee is no different than the other growing Twin Cities suburbs/exurbs. The city has had a massive increase in population 20.5K in 2000 to 40.6K in 2010 (Census). Building new parks and recreational areas require funding and staffing. Finding staff that is trained or educated to run and build these parks is difficult.

2. Misallocation of resources

At the surface, it appears that Shakopee is putting the newest and most beautiful parks in affluent areas while the parks in lower-income portions of the city are declining. The city must ensure that resources are put into areas of low income and where racial disparities exist.

3. Non-inclusive Park Development

Shakopee demographics are changing and building parks in the areas of most prominent development is a good plan. I do understand that this is needed to attract new residents, but they must avoid alienating and underserving other groups in the city.

Barriers to Accessing Parks in Shakopee

1. Transportation infrastructure

Shakopee is cut in half by U.S. Highway 169. There are four crossing points with three having dedicated pedestrian bridges. The Northern portion of the city is outlined by Highway 101 which cuts off access to the Minnesota River. An issue I found was the need to drive to reach the city's parks. Shakopee is an auto-centric designed city.

2. Aging Park Infrastructure

Several of the Shakopee parks are not ADA compliant. The residents I spoke with also informed me that several parks are not taken care of during spring and summer months or only see sparse attention. Shakopee put a substantial amount of resources into the flagship park at Lions Park and Sand Adventure Aquatic Pool.

3. Disproportional City Resources Allocation

As I previously stated about resource allocation for Lions and Sand Adventure, the city appears to prefer to update and install new parks in upper income and new development areas. Examples include the Savannah Oaks Hiking Trail and the Southbridge dog park.

4. Lack of Diverse and Culturally Specific Programming

The city makes a substantial effort to create inclusive programming. The issue is that most of the programming is centered at the recreation center which has a high cost of membership. There are park specific events throughout the year, but these are also centered around traditional "Minnesota" hobbies. Examples include fishing events, summer recreational sports (with high cost to enter), water-centric events, and traditional "American" cultural holiday celebrations.

5. Cost of Programming, memberships, and sport leagues

I have addressed these in the above topics, but it should be of note that Shakopee is attempting to figure out ways to reduce the cost barriers.

Recommendations

General Recommendations

1. Invest in programming that includes the changing demographic situation for Shakopee
 - A. Observe more diverse cultural holidays
 - B. Offer more diverse sports (cricket, soccer, track)
 - C. Offer programming besides sports (computer programming, robotics, dance, etc.)
2. Install new park infrastructure in areas of high poverty and low income
3. Redirect profit from the community center and SandVenture to fund the points mentioned above.

Management Recommendations

I would recommend Shakopee look to the best practices provided by the National Recreation and Parks Association (Heller, 2015). The best practices I felt were the most applicable in Shakopee's situation are:

(All pulled from the NRPA website- <https://www.nrpa.org/blog/three-best-practices-for-parks/>)

1. Commit to Performance Management

The key takeaways from this idea are transparency and accountability. Making the long-term goal and short-term objectives clear to employees, management, elected officials, and residents will allow for success.

Raleigh, NC - Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resource Department

<https://www.raleighnc.gov/parks/content/Departments/Articles/ParksandRecreation.html>

2. Create a Culture of Innovation

When the goal is clear, and there are clear steps to getting their stakeholders, they are more likely to be innovative. Taking a risk with new ways to address accessibility, funding, staffing, and community engagement can lead to success.

The National Recreation and Parks Association has a fantastic site to assess your parks department and to find resources on how to change.

<https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/ParkMetrics/>

3. Develop a Management System

Shakopee has taken a step in the right direction and has allowed the new parks Director to put the first two practices in place. The next step is getting quantitative measurements on a park's performance. This would give the parks department a strong stance. Data such as cost per acre or park usage surveys would be an effective way to measure the communities park usage and find barriers to accessing.

Policy Recommendations

I would recommend that Shakopee takes steps to turn what it already uses as best practices and turn them into policy. Examples we have discussed with the park's Director have included:

1. Creation of a Subsidizing Programming and Recreation Center Cost to Residents

- A. Subsidizing membership to the recreation center for those below poverty.
- B. Subsidizing recreational programming in the summer.

Examples: City of Bloomington Program (City of Bloomington, 2019)

<https://www.bloomingtonmn.gov/pr/fee-assistance>

2. Increase Inclusive and Culturally Sensitive Programming

- A. Increasing recreational programming at parks that cater to various cultural and economic groups.

Examples: City of Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board – Racial Equity (City of Minneapolis, n.d.)

(https://www.minneapolisparks.org/about_us/racial_equity/)

3. A City Policy to Allocate Additional Tax Funding to the Parks Program

- A. Allocating funding to improving or redesigning of current park infrastructure in areas of lower income and reduced access.

Examples: Hennepin Youth Sports Grant / Tax Surcharge Target Field) (Hennepin County, n.d.)

(<https://www.mnsports.org/hennepin-county-youth-sports-grant/>)

Photovoice

My goal with the photovoice was to show the contrast between park infrastructures in the north and south zones of Shakopee. The north has the highest concentration of poverty and the lowest income, while the south zone has low poverty and high income. I also took photos of the three flagship projects to give imagery to the number of resources put into each one.



Prairie Bend Park (North Zone)

Green Meadows Park (South Zone)



Autumn Hill Park (North Zone)



Holmes Park (South Zone)



Lions Park
(North Zone)





Hubber Park
(North Zone)

Location
Directly
adjacent to a
flood plain

City of Shakopee Picture



1968-1969



Present

Sandventure Aquatic Park Shakopee

Shakopee Recreation Center

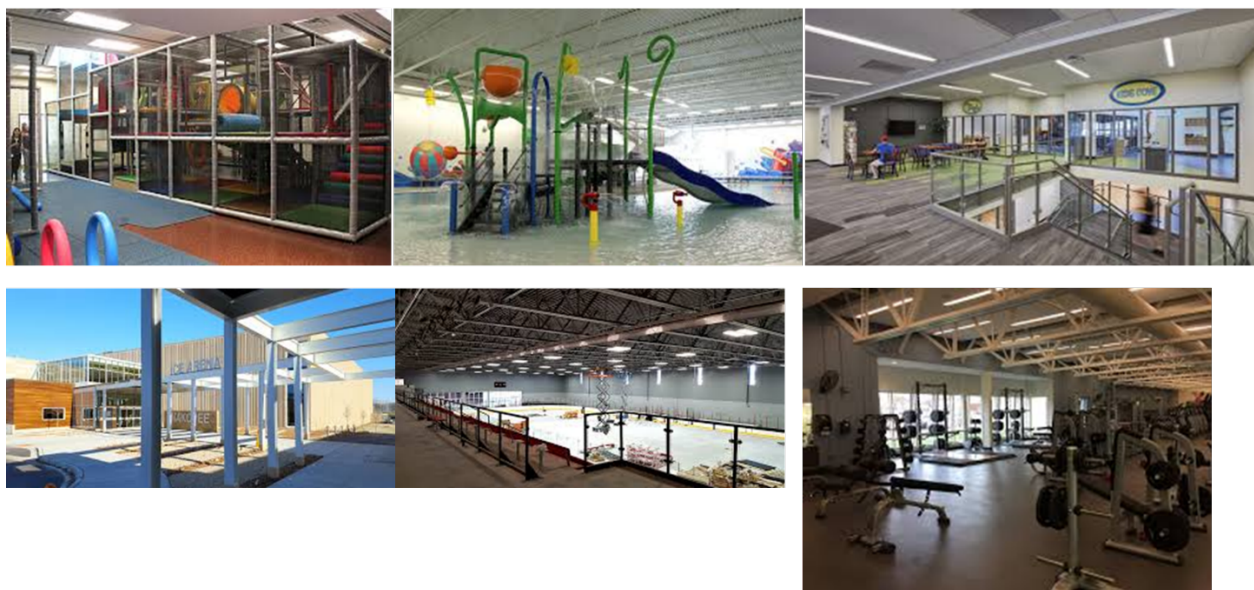


Table 1 – Demographic Shift 2000 Census and 2017 Projected

Demographic Category	2000 (census)	2017 (projected)	Percent Change from 2000 to 2017 (projected)
Population	20,568	40,893	99%
Median Age	32	32.2	1%
Median Family Size	3.12	3.03	-3%
Gender Percent	Female = 51.16%, Male = 48.84%	Female = 51.2%, Male = 48.8%	
Education Level		36% Bachelor's or higher	
Median Family Income	\$66,885.00	\$84,400	26%
Total # of housing units	7805	13,339	71%
Median Housing Price	\$141,300.00	\$241,100	71%
Median Rental Price	\$1,000.00	\$1,212	21%
Average Commute Time			
Ethnic Percentages			
American Indian	2.41%	1.20%	-50%
Asian	0.04%	10.20%	25400%
Black	0.94%	4.30%	357%
Other Race Alone	2.14%		
Two or More	1.54%	2.70%	75%
White Alone	91.60%	74.30%	-19%
Hispanic or Latino	4.40%	7.80%	77%

Table 2 – Membership Fees Shakopee Community Center (City of Shakopee, n.d.)

COMMUNITY CENTER FEES

Memberships (includes sales tax)

Include ice skating, gyms, fitness center, classes, indoor playground and open swim.

	Residents	Non-Residents
Family Membership (Immediate family residing at same address)	\$600	\$815
Adult Membership (18 to 59)	\$380	\$540
Youth Membership (1 to 17)	\$275	\$370
Senior Membership (60 and over) & Military	\$275	\$370
Family Monthly	\$55	\$73
Adult Monthly (18 to 59)	\$35	\$48
Youth Monthly (1 to 17) & Military	\$25	\$33
Senior Monthly (60 and over)	\$25	\$33
Adult + 1	\$490	\$680
Adult + 1 Monthly	\$45	\$62
3 Months Adult (18 and over)	\$160	\$225

- Enrollment fee for monthly membership \$30
- Early cancellation fee (if prior to year commitment) \$50

Table 3 – Membership Fees Shakopee SandVenture Aquatic Park (City of Shakopee, n.d.)

SANDVENTURE AQUATIC PARK

Daily Admission

- Under 48" or Senior (60 and over) \$5
- Under 48" or Senior Twilight (after 5 p.m.) \$3
- Over 48" \$7
- Over 48" Twilight (after 5 p.m.) \$5
- Ages 1 and under No charge

Aquatic Park Punch Cards (Fees include sales tax)

	Resident	Non-Resident
10 punches	\$50	\$60
20 punches	\$94	\$115

Aquatic Park Season Pass (Includes sales tax)

Community Center members receive 25 percent discount from rate.

	Resident	Non-Resident
Pass under 48" & Senior (65 and over)	\$52	\$69.50
Individual pass Over 48"	\$63.50	\$81
Family Pass (Four or more)	\$219	\$275.75

Figure 1 – Poverty Levels Shakopee 2010 Census (Census 2010)

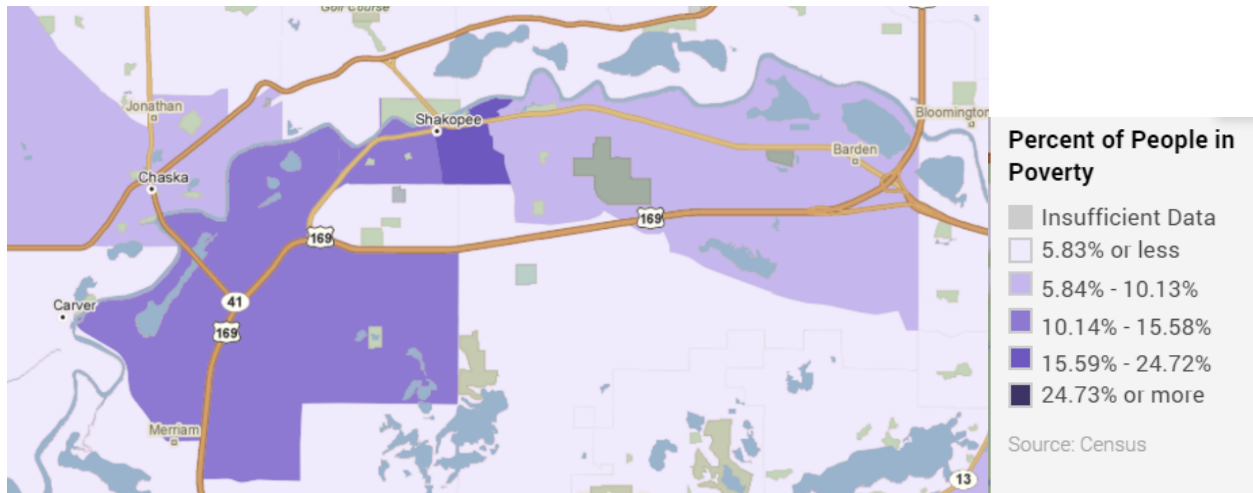


Figure 2 – Median Household Income Shakopee- American Fact Find

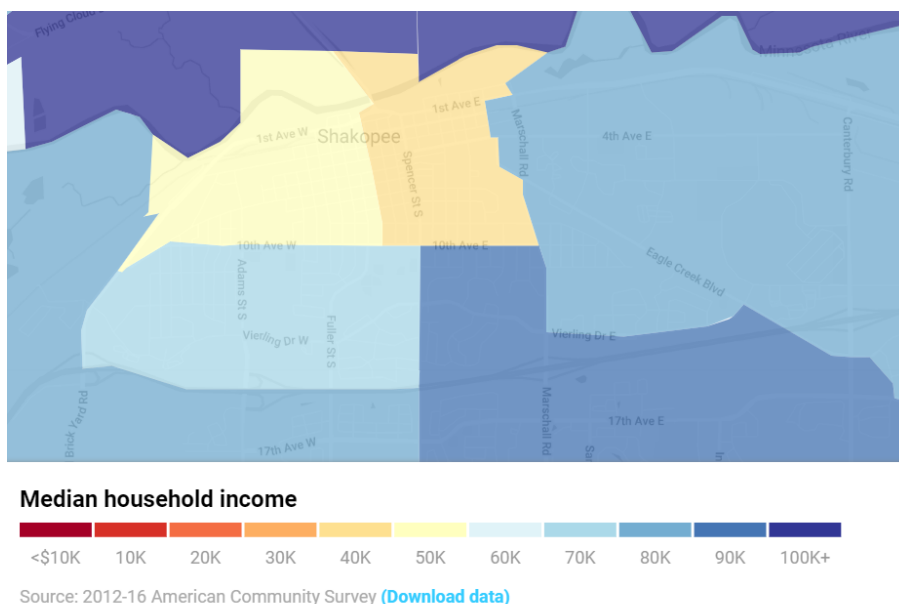
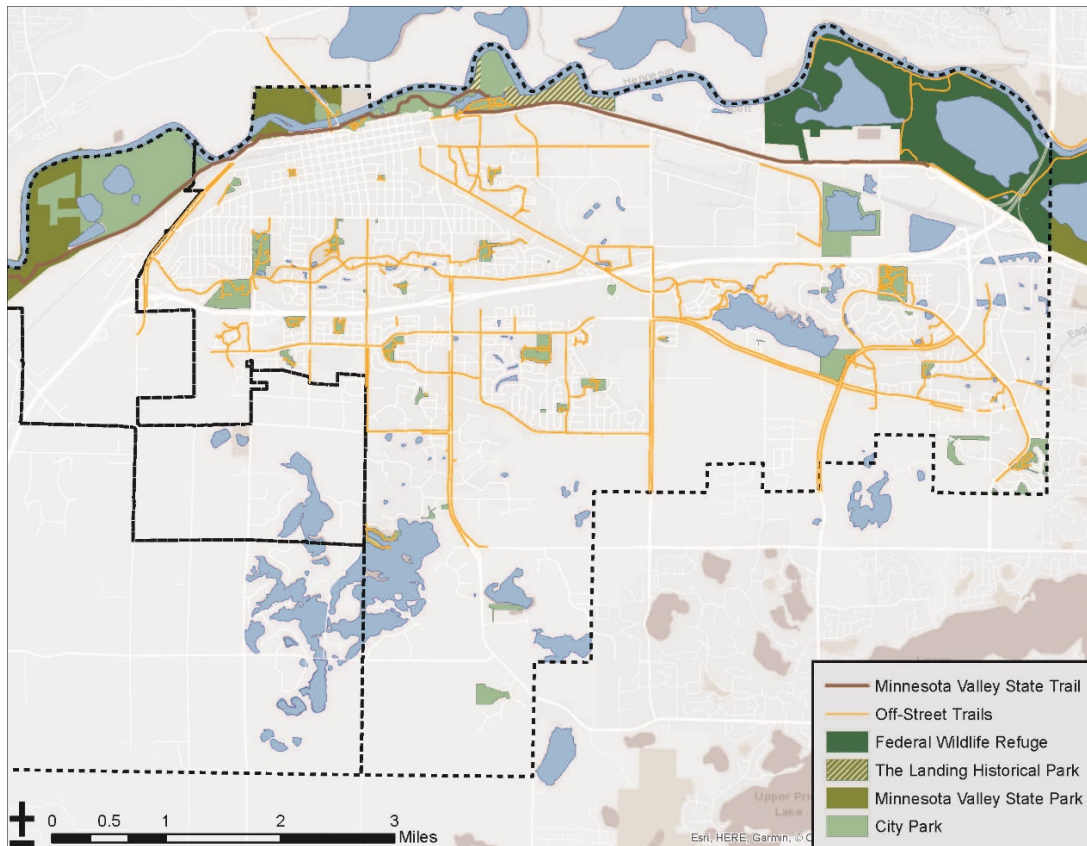


Figure 3 - Park and Trail(s) Layout Shakopee – City of Shakopee



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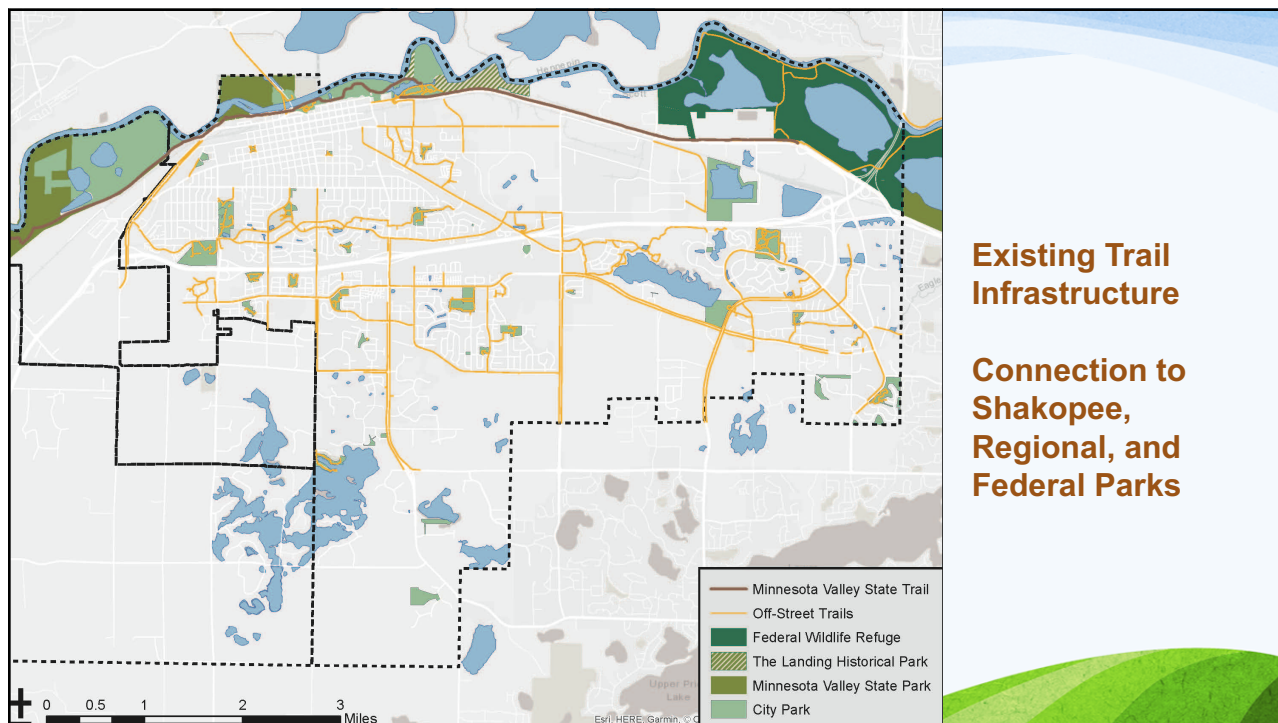
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Researching Barriers to Parks Access

A Journey of Data Collection, Stakeholder Engagement, and Community Input



Existing Trail Infrastructure

Connection to Shakopee, Regional, and Federal Parks

Regional and City Parks in Scott County

Regional Parks

1. Cedar Lake Farm
2. Cleary Lake
3. Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve
4. Spring Lake
5. Blakeley Bluffs Future Park Reserve (Planned)
6. Doyle-Kennefick Future Regional Park (Planned)

City Parks (Reported)

1. Belle Plaine: 21
2. Elko New Market: 10
3. Jordan: 13
4. New Prague: 8
5. Prior Lake: 55
6. Savage: 21
7. Shakopee: 34

What Are the Barriers to Access and Use of Parks and Recreational Infrastructure?

- Perceived and Actual Safety
- Economic Status and Level of Poverty
- Cultural, Religious, Ethnic Barriers
- Recreational Programming
- Physical Accessibility
- Location
- Physical Park Infrastructure

(Harrington, Jarvis, & Manson, 2017)
(Cohen, et al., 2016)
(Metropolitan Council, 2014)

Best Practices To Measure Equity and Accessibility

The Metropolitan Council Equity Tool-kit

Strategic Goals

1. Building Understanding
2. Shaping Choices
3. Making Decisions

(Metropolitan Council, 2016)

Survey Questions

Questions to Ask County or City?

1. What groups if any do you feel are underserved in your park(s) system?
2. What barriers do you feel currently restrict or deny access to your park system?
3. What are your current policies or best practices do you use to address access?
4. What are the barriers to creating policies or implementing more equitable parks plans?
5. Is a regional or State authority helping or inhibiting your plan?

Questions for Shakopee Residents

1. What do you like best about your cities parks?
2. Are there barriers to using parks in (insert city)?
3. Are there parks in the city that are more accommodating? Why?
4. Do you enjoy the programs offered (see examples)?
 - Ex. camps, summer sports, other recreational opportunities (fishing, hiking, ultimate frisbee)
5. Does the city maintain the parks?
6. Are the parks accessible for those with mobility issues?
7. Does the city address social, cultural, ethnic, religious issues?
8. What is one change you would like to see with the cities parks?

Timeline

*Stage One: Assess
Barriers in Shakopee
(insert any city)*

*Stage Two: Engage
Stakeholders on Actual
and Perceived Barriers
to Access and Equity*

*Stage Three:
Administer Equity
Surveys to Park
Attendees*

*Stage Four: Analyze
Data Collected to
Create Community
Needs Profile*

*Stage Five: Submit
Findings to City Council
or City Department*

*Stage Six: Implement
Changes in Current
Parks and Development
of Future Parks*

Potential Park Locations for In-Person Surveys

Lions Park, Shakopee

Lake O'Dowd Trail

Quarry Lake Trail

Analyzing the Data Key Takeaways

Targeted Points From Data

1. Barriers listed the most
2. Views of parks programming
3. Citizen recommendations (realistic)

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Location

Community Engagement

Projected Growth of Scott County and Shakopee

Weakness

Lack of policy solutions

- Examples of policies that could be adopted
 - A. Free or reduced community center memberships (income based)
 - B. Refurbish rather than build new park infrastructure

Lack of Transportation Options to Access Parks





Pheasant Run
Park, Shakopee



Huber Park
(North Zone)

Location
Directly adjacent
to a flood plain

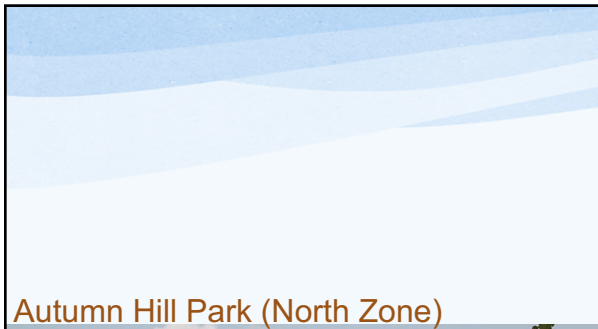
City of Shakopee Picture



Prairie Bend Park (North Zone)



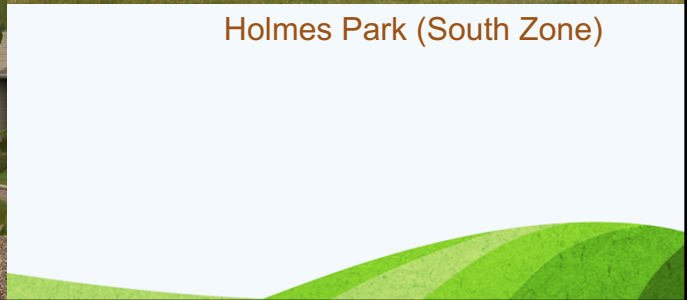
Green Meadows Park (South Zone)



Autumn Hill Park (North Zone)



Holmes Park (South Zone)





Lions Park
(North Zone)



1968-1969



Present

SandVenture Aquatic Park Shakopee

Shakopee Recreation Center



Policy Recommendations and Conclusion

I would recommend that Shakopee takes steps to turn what it already uses as best practices and turn them into policy. Examples we have discussed with the park's director have included:

Creation of a Subsidizing Programming and Recreation Center Cost to Residents

- Subsidizing membership to the recreation center for those below poverty.
- Subsidizing recreational programming in the summer.

Examples: City of Bloomington Program (<https://www.bloomingtonmn.gov/pr/fee-assistance>)

Increase Inclusive and Culturally Sensitive Programming

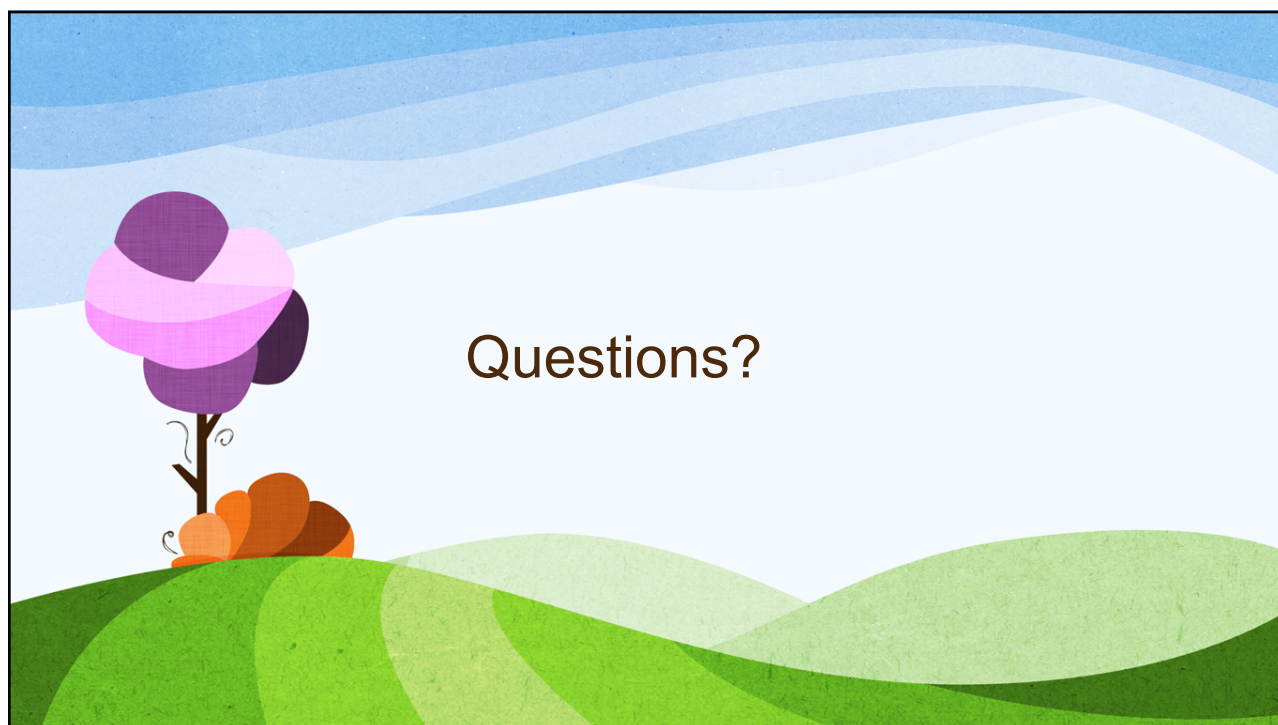
- Increasing recreational programming at parks that cater toward various cultural and economic groups.

Examples: City of Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board – Racial Equity

(<https://www.minneapolis-parks.org/about-us/racial-equity/>)

A City Policy to Allocate Additional Tax Funding to the Parks Program

- Allocating funding to improving or redesigning of current park infrastructure in areas of lower income and reduced access



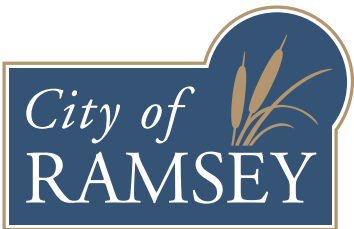
Bee-ing Ramsey: Planning Pollinator Habitats



Prepared by
Ally de Alcuaz, Katie Page, and
Blake Weaver

Students in PA 5211 Land Use Planning
Instructor: Dr. Fernando Burga
Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs

Prepared in Collaboration with
Chris Anderson
City Planner
City of Ramsey



The project on which this report is based was completed in collaboration with the City of Ramsey as part of the 2017–2018 Resilient Communities Project (RCP) partnership. RCP is a program at the University of Minnesota’s Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) that connects University faculty and students with Minnesota communities to address strategic projects that advance local resilience and sustainability.

The contents of this report represent the views of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of RCP, CURA, the Regents of the University of Minnesota, or the City of Ramsey.



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Bee-ing Ramsey

Planning Pollinator Habitats



The creation, protection, and renewal of pollinator habitats is critical to preserving and strengthening the rural roots of the City of Ramsey. Promoting pollinator habitats can be achieved by encouraging the conservation of natural environments and implementing sustainable landscapes in both rural and urban locations.

PROMOTING POLLINATOR HABITATS

Pollinators and their habitats play an important role in many aspects of daily life. In recent years their numbers have drastically declined, impacting the productivity of many rural landscapes.

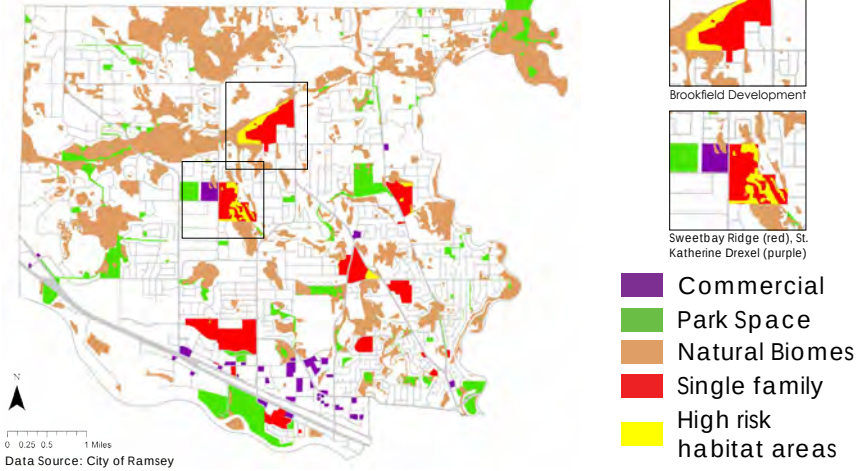
THE KEY FACTOR IN HABITAT LOSS

- **Clearing** of agricultural and natural land for development is a **major loss** in land suitable for pollinator habitats.
- Mono-cultural landscapes in urban developments provide **inadequate natural resources** for pollinator populations.
- Chemical treatment **damages** natural landscapes and **inhibits pollinators' biological functions** beyond initial location of the chemical application.

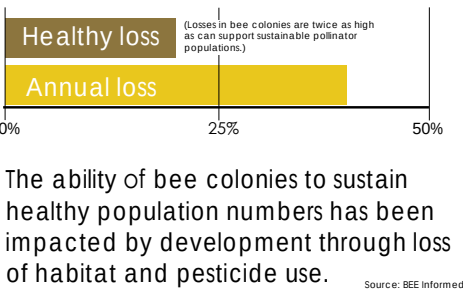
SUITABLE POLLINATOR HABITATS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Urban development in Ramsey has negatively impacted natural areas that are critical for pollinator health. It is important to consider conserving existing habitats and increasing native pollinator vegetation in existing developments.

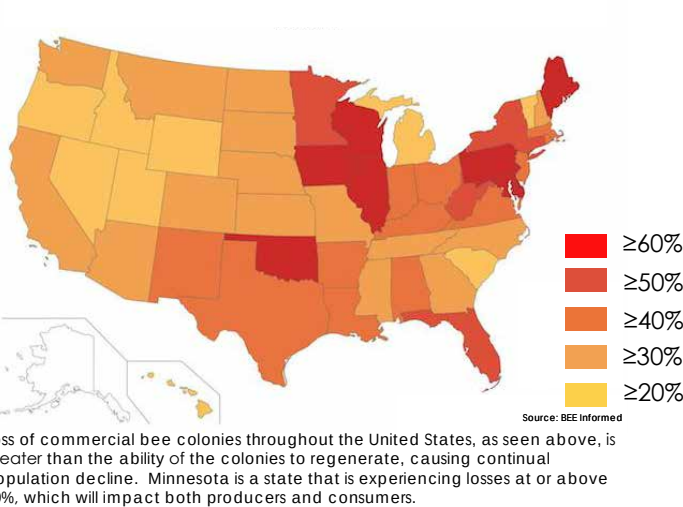
High-Risk Urban Development Sites Within Pollinator Habitats.



2014-15 Commercial Bee Colony Loss



Bee Colony Losses (%) in the U.S.



Native undeveloped landscapes provide resources for pollinators and other wildlife, as well as providing **economic** and **environmental benefits** in Ramsey. The city contains **significant areas of wetland** and other natural environments that are crucial for maintaining **environmental quality** for residents. They also provide centrally located pollinator habitats that are **highly visible** and **aesthetically pleasing**. Many of the future and recent urban developments in Ramsey are located near these **areas of significant natural resources**. Considering the possible negative impacts of urban development on the environment, the **rural character and landscape** that Ramsey residents hold in high regard may be at risk as the community develops.



Alpine Park



Rum River



Draw Pond

POLLINATOR LANDSCAPE STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING CITIES

The City of Ramsey is poised to be a leader in planning for pollinators by addressing urban expansion into its natural landscapes. Residents can advocate for pollinator landscape strategies to improve the productivity and abundance of the natural landscape in Ramsey.



Single-Family Residential

Standard suburban developments can provide small niches for pollinators.

- **Convert areas of turf to flowering grasses**
- **Leave decaying plant material in place**
- **Populate open soil with diverse natives**
- **Provide constructed dwellings for pollinators**



Open Space

Large, continuous natural landscapes provide the necessary resources for a pollinator to thrive.

- **Mix in native grasses and flowers turf**
- **Use larger plots for park space**



Apartment and Mixed Use

Large complexes can incorporate smaller green spaces not typically available to pollinators.

- **Use green roofs to support vegetation**
- **Use balcony spaces for native plantings**
- **Plant native trees and landscapes nearby**



Highways

Transportation corridors provide connections between different habitats, supporting increased diversity.

- **Line corridors with native flowering plants**
- **Loosely cover earth for ground dwellings**

Project outline:



Bee-ing Ramsey

Pollinators: Types and Habitats



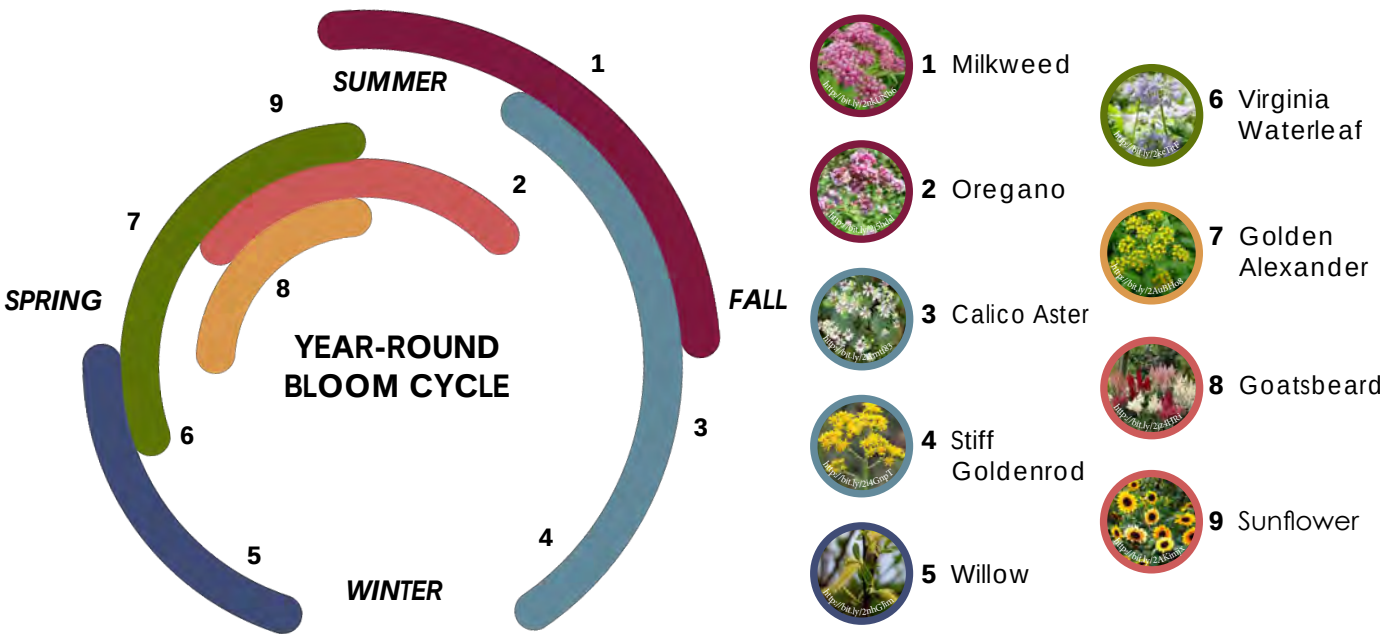
Pollinators contribute to a stable ecosystem by moving pollen from one plant to another, allowing plants that prevent soil erosion to reproduce. These plants are crucial for buffering waterways and facilitating habitats for other living organisms. In this poster we take a close look at pollinators and how they relate to landscape strategies.

ESSENTIAL POLLINATOR FLORA

Some essential flora for pollinators include **colorful flowering trees and shrubs, native grasses, and herbs.**

Ensuring that there are various types of **native flora year-round** in the city of Ramsey is a crucial strategy for maintaining pollinator habitats and populations. In addition, the **removal of invasive plant and weed species** will also aid in pollinator protection. Native plants can **withstand harsh winters**, and require less water.

The figure to the right offers some suggestions for plants that are native to Minnesota.



ESSENTIAL POLLINATOR FAUNA



BEES: With **400 native species** in Minnesota, bees are some of the best documented pollinators. They are **vital for agriculture** in the state. Unfortunately, there has been a **dramatic decline** in bee population in recent years due to **lack of floral resources** and **toxic pesticides**.



MOTHS: Moths are predominately **night-time pollinators**. They are mostly attracted to sweet-smelling, pale flowers that are more easily located after dark.



BUTTERFLIES: Butterflies, akin to moths, are diurnal and are primarily **attracted to brightly colored flowers** that exist in clusters. They require a **flat-landing surface** and enjoy living around **water permeated environments**.



BEETLES: Beetles play a role in pollinating **various types of plants**, including large, solitary day-opening flowers. Beetles rely strongly on their **sense of smell**, so they are associated with pollinating flowers that are aromatically sweet, spicy, or fermented.



FLIES: Flies are generalist pollinators, mainly pollinating flowers that **bloom in the shade**. They are essential for pollinating small, ornamental flowers with strong, putrid scents.



BIRDS: Birds are mainly pollinators for **tubular flowers**. Hummingbirds are a key player for these flower shapes. Due to their poor sense of smell, birds are not attracted to flowers by scent. However, **bright colors** and an **abundance of nectar** are attractors for birds.

HOTSPOTS: When identifying prospective locations for pollinator habitat, it is essential to maximize green space.



Residential: Residential gardens can offer small-scale, **edible food production**. Flower gardens are **simple additions** that benefit both the homeowner and pollinators.



Balconies: Urban rooftops and balconies can make use of **neglected space**. Due to the harsher environment, these spaces are **ideal for herbs** and other edibles, such as tomatoes.



Public Parks: Parks and trails allow for **bigger-scale plantings**, such as flowering trees and shrubs. In addition to providing pollinator habitat, they can provide a **cooling effect** in warmer months and **cleaner air** quality.



Infrastructure: Boulevard plantings allow for **native grasses** and **flowering species** that can simultaneously attract pollinators and the gaze of passersby.

There are many suitable pollinator environments found in Ramsey's urban and rural areas. In the next poster, we will look at existing biomes in Ramsey, as well as various programs and policies in place to protect the natural habitat.



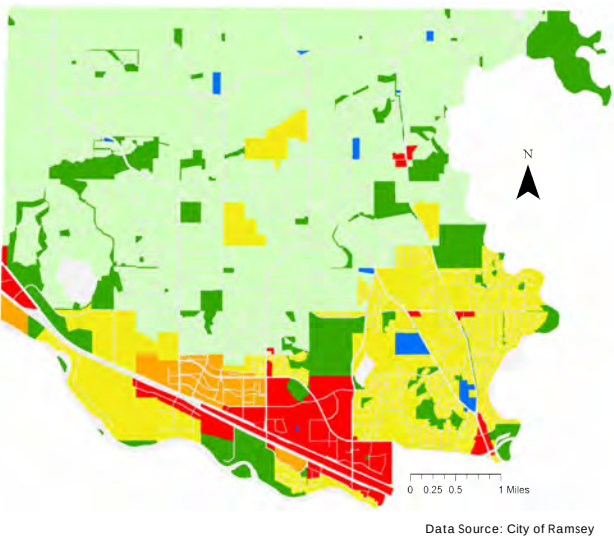
Bee-ing Ramsey

Promoting and Protecting Natural Habitat



Ramsey has diverse natural areas which are fundamental to the historic rural character of the city. This poster explores the make up of these natural areas, Ramsey’s pollinator policies, and the timeline of environmental policies that have promoted and protected the natural environment.

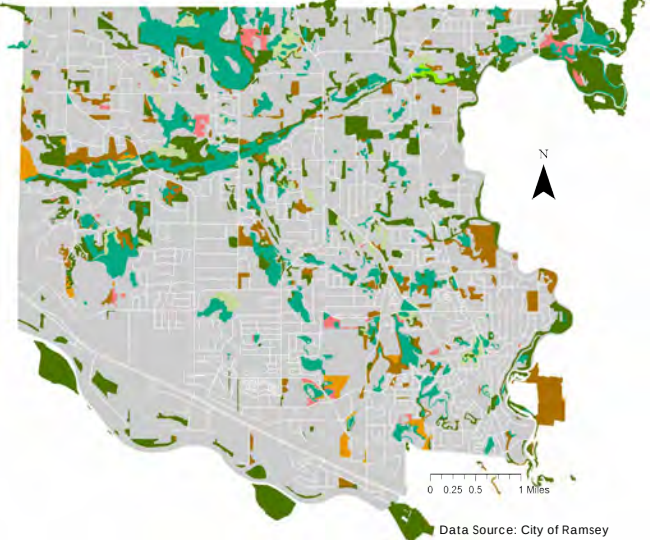
EXISTING BUILT ENVIRONMENTS



Residential Commercial Parks
Mixed Rural Public

- The *Existing Built Environments* map to the left shows a visual representation of the various uses of land, according to City of Ramsey officials.
- The **predominance of rural areas and parks** throughout the city indicates the potential for introducing pollinator friendly habitats in open spaces, but the **remaining residential, public, mixed, and commercial areas** are also suitable for incorporating pollinators.

EXISTING BIOMES AND CANOPY COVER



Savanna Grassland Wetland Forest
Woodland Prairie Native

- The *Existing Biomes and Canopy Cover* map to the left identifies biome types in Ramsey as well as areas with canopy cover – that is, the **area covered by the leaves of trees**.
- Knowing the locations of biomes and canopy coverage is important to **determine ideal plant species to inhabit areas**. Because pollinators have preferences for certain flowering plants, identifying areas where those plants can thrive is an initial step towards creating pollinator habitats.

POLLINATOR POLICIES IN RAMSEY: Policies that help local government and community to act in preserving and protecting pollinators.



MAYORS FOR MONARCHS

Mayors around the country are **pledging to create habitats for pollinators** and **educate their community members** regarding the importance of pollinators. Mayors commit to specific actions that fit their city to create a strategic plan. **Mayor Strommen** has identified potential actions below:

Link: <http://bit.ly/2AJTZSk>

Action Points for Ramsey

- Raise awareness of the decline of pollinators
- Plant a monarch demonstration garden
- Get citizens involved
- Native-plant friendly mowing practices
- Integrate milkweed on City property
- Ban neonicotinoid pesticides



TREE CITY USA

Tree City USA is a **national program** that recognizes cities and communities that are taking active steps to foster urban forests. **Ramsey has been a Tree City for 21 years** and counting.

Link: <http://bit.ly/2ASLvJq>

Benefits

- Urban forests planted around buildings can save the city and residents money on energy bills up to 25%.
- Trees also provide storm water management which reduces stress on infrastructure. (See *Rehydrate Ramsey*)



COMMUNITY GARDENS

There are **three community gardens in Ramsey** that **provide local food** and opportunities for **environmental education** for students and local residents.

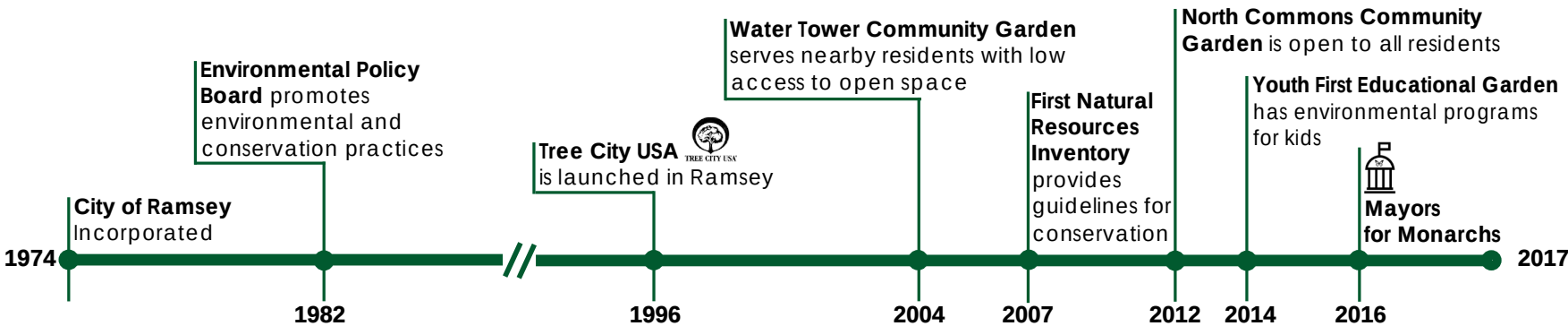
Youth First: <http://bit.ly/2KlM9ll>

North Commons: <http://bit.ly/2A0T3cL> Water Tower Gardens

Benefits

- Gardens decrease water runoff, improve soil and air quality, and provide diverse habitats for pollination, all which lead to more productive agriculture.
- **Water Tower** Established 2004
- **North Commons** Established 2012
- **Youth First Educational Garden** Established 2016

TIMELINE OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES IN RAMSEY: A majority of Ramsey’s environmental policies have been enacted within the past 20 years to protect the rural characteristics of the community.



Ramsey is working to formalize natural resource protection through community engagement, organizations, and pledges. We will be looking at four common land uses within Ramsey—single family residential, high density residential, public space, and highways—to address pollinator friendly policies and best practices.



Bee-ing Ramsey

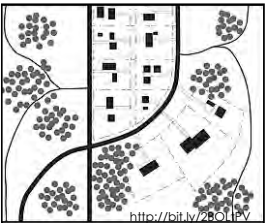
Municipal Ordinances and Best Practices



Many cities in Minnesota have adopted effective pollinator ordinances and policies. The City of Ramsey can learn from these best practices to preserve and protect pollinator habitats within the city. In this poster, we look at various municipal ordinances and best practices from communities within Minnesota.

POLLINATOR LANDSCAPE CASE STUDIES

Jackson Meadows



Characteristics:
Rural Residential
Scope of Work:
Planned unit development
Location:
St. Croix, MN

Jackson Meadows was a rural community that highly valued its surrounding open space.

Best Management Practices: Smaller cluster developments with placement close to neighboring lots. Surrounding landscape is leased for protection and designated for wildlife. These open spaces are connected by trail.

Regulation and Ordinances

- Implementation of cluster development
- Conservation easements were obtained to protect surrounding natural landscape.

Source: Jackson Meadows

Wildflower at Lake Elmo



Characteristics:
Urban Medium Density Residential
Scope of Work:
Planned Unit Development
Location:
Lake Elmo, MN

Wildflower encourages beneficial pollinator landscapes that support diverse wildlife and enrich residents' lives.

Best Management Practices: Creation of a native plant trail along a portion of the promenade. Conservation easements were given by developers for designated open space.

Regulations and Ordinances:

- Home sites required to contain at minimum 100 square feet of pollinator plantings
- Land easement given to City of Lake Elmo to preserve remaining wetland open space.

Source: Lake Elmo

Green Living Apartments



Characteristics:
Urban Complex
Scope of Work:
Apartment as built
Location:
St. Paul, MN

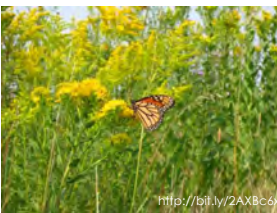
Green living apartments created pollinator habitat within the small plots of land outside the apartment buildings.

Best Management Practices: Creating areas of pollinator habitat within dense urban areas.

Regulations and Ordinances:

- Pollinator plantings are considered to be a "worthwhile aesthetic improvement" in line with St. Paul zoning requirements.

MnDOT Highway Pollinator Plantings



MnDOT manages open space throughout the state, including many pollinator friendly plantings.

C. L. Dees Nature Trail



This trail is located within the Sandhill Crane Wildlife Refuge, and is lined with native plants. The trail is an easy walk, making it accessible to most residents.

Edgewater Condominiums Green Roof



This green roof is 3,800 square feet and has saved over 70,000 gallons of water from entering the sewers by using native plants.

NATIVE LANDSCAPE ORDINANCES

The language in land use ordinances is very important for promoting and preserving pollinator habitat because it sets the rules and regulations for the appearance and quality of the habitat. The following cities throughout Minnesota have adopted ordinance language that promotes pollinators. Best practices are highlighted below.



Pollinators need large areas, with habitat and nesting grounds that are clearly delineated

Burnsville: Defining the Key Terms

- "Meadow Vegetation: Grasses and flowering broadleaf plants that are **native to, or adapted to the state of Minnesota**, and that are commonly found in **meadow and prairie plant communities**, except weeds."
- "Turf Grasses: Grasses commonly used in **regularly cut lawn areas**, such as bluegrass, fescue and rye grass blends, and non-woody vegetation interspersed with them."

Native Planting Ordinances

- "**The prior vegetation is eliminated** and the native vegetation is planted through **transplanting** or seed by human or mechanical means."
- "If weeds cover more than twenty five percent of the planting, it must be **cut to a height of no more than eight inches** (8") at least once per year."
- "A **sign is posted** on the property in a location likely to be **seen by the public**, advising that a meadow or prairie is being established."



Pollinators need connected habitats in order to travel. These need to be specifically designated.

White Bear Lake: Native Grass Ordinances

- "Native grasses **indigenous to Minnesota**, planted and maintained on any occupied lot or parcel of land, setback a **minimum of twenty feet** (20') feet from the front property line as part of a garden or landscape treatment are exempt from this ordinance."

St. Paul: Park Designation Criteria

- "Areas representing **significant landforms**, native plant communities, **sensitive habitat**, or historical events."
- "Areas containing **vegetation identified as endangered or threatened**, or that provide **habitat for animals** identified as endangered, threatened, or of special concern under 15 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq. or Minn. Stats. § 84.0895, and rules adopted under these respective laws."



Different pollinators need varying types of pollinating plants to provide different functions.

Mankato: Designing for a Greener Environment

- "**Preserving** existing healthy and long-lived trees whenever possible."
- "**Designing** drainage facilities to **promote** the use and **conservation** of natural watercourse and patterns of drainage."
- "**Minimizing** alterations to existing topography in environmentally sensitive areas."

Designing for Visually Pleasing Landscapes

- "Promoting the use of plant material **compatible with the climate** of the region and micro-climate conditions on the site."
- "**Ensuring** that plant material can be **maintained for long-term health** and continued growth."
- "Ensuring that the arrangement of required landscaping produces the **desired visual effect**."

Ramsey can expand on current practices and ordinance language to more fully promote and protect pollinator habitats within the city. In the following poster, we begin looking at how pollinator habitats can be integrated into residential landscapes.

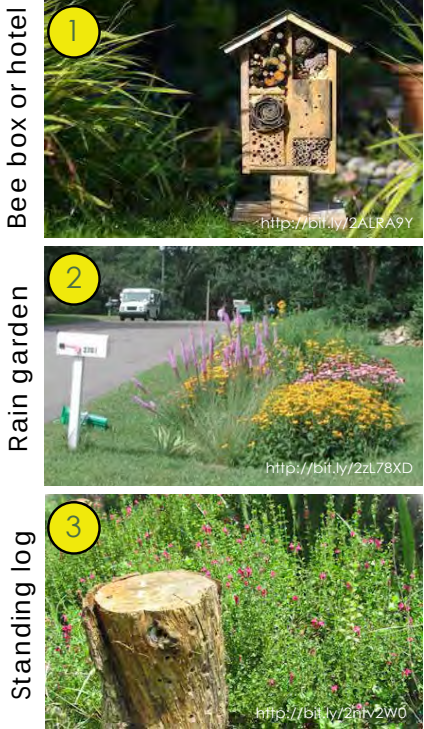


Bee-ing Ramsey

Single-Family Residential



Manicured yards do not have the capacity to sustain pollinator populations. There are many benefits to incorporating native plantings into a single-family home. This poster examines the landscapes of suburban homes and addresses how families can benefit environmentally, economically, and equitably by incorporating pollinator-friendly habitats.



ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Because native plants need **much less watering**, residential water usage will decrease, helping to **avoid high water bills**.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that over a 20-year period, the **cost of maintaining native landscapes** totals about \$3,000/acre, versus \$20,000/acre for non-native turf lawns.



ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- 20% of landfill waste is yard clippings. If yards are mowed less frequently, it will be a **win-win** for both residents and pollinators. Increased plant diversity will **improve soil quality**, resulting in **less water runoff** and replenishing ground water sources.
- Residents can help **improve air quality** throughout the entire city by cultivating native gardens. Native plants not only pull and store excess carbon dioxide from the air, they also help **mitigate air pollution** by eliminating the need for constant mowing.



EQUITABLE BENEFITS

- Inviting pollinator presence and pollination throughout the city, and effectively the county, will **provide healthy, locally grown produce to feed families**. This allows all residents of Ramsey to have **equal access to nutritious foods** free from excessive commercial pesticides.

CHALLENGES

- Building residential homes without considering natural resources reduces pollinator habitats, which provide nesting areas and environmental services.
- Open spaces ideal for pollinators are disconnected in residential areas, making it difficult for pollinators to access resources needed for survival.
- Increasing the diversity of plant types on private properties can dramatically increase pollinator presence.

OPPORTUNITIES



- Include habitat in built environments to maximize potential habitats for pollinators.



- Front and back yards can be useful connectors because they provide livable ecosystems for pollinators.



- There is an important distinction between unfettered growth of lawns and actively making the switch to native plants that require less grooming and provide more biodiversity.

IMPLEMENTATION



- Leave tree stumps and fallen logs for pollinator reproduction
- Use native flowering plants
- Fill a birdbath with gravel and water for pollinators
- Plant dense shrubs for nesting



- Apply landscaping ordinances in residential areas designed to maintain native plant species beneficial for pollinators



- Draft weed ordinances for Ramsey
- Encourage lawns to be at least 3.5"
- Incentivize native grasses over common turf-lawns

Native habitats in the landscape of single-family homes, both by City regulation and residential maintenance, will help preserve the rural character of Ramsey while decreasing economic costs of upkeep. In the next poster, we explore mixed-use developments and how they can maximize pollinator habitats in an urban space.

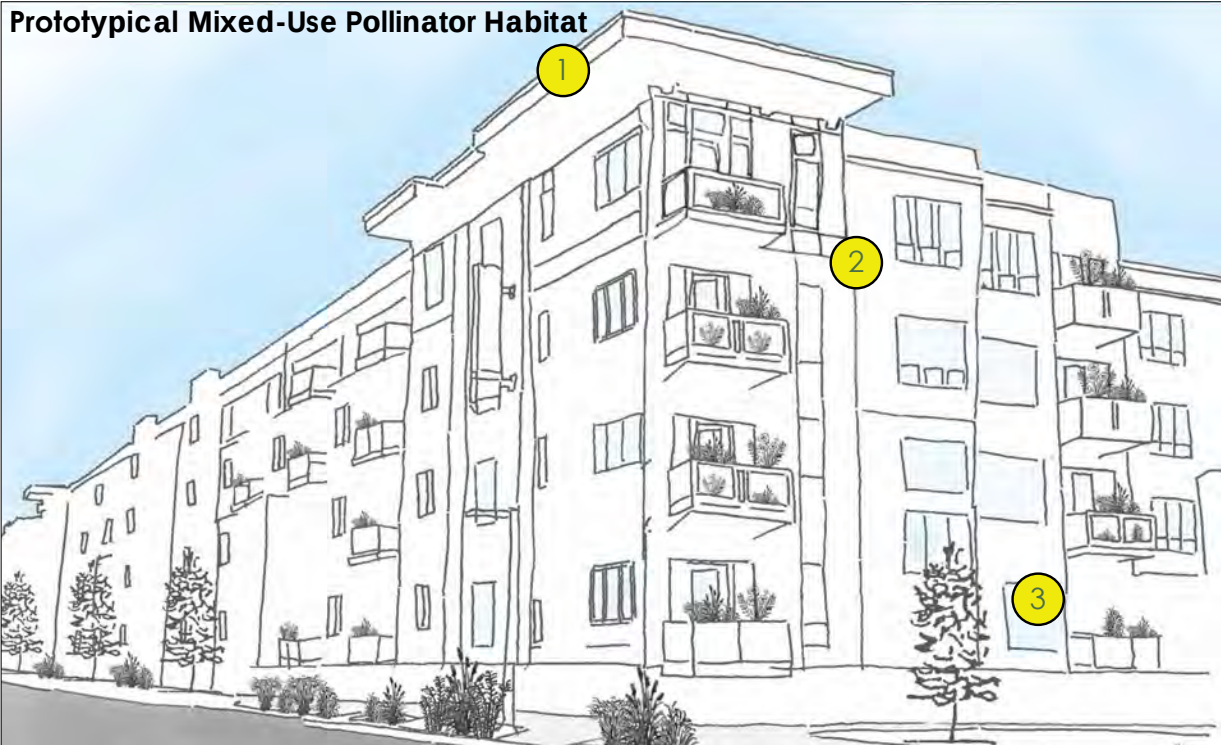
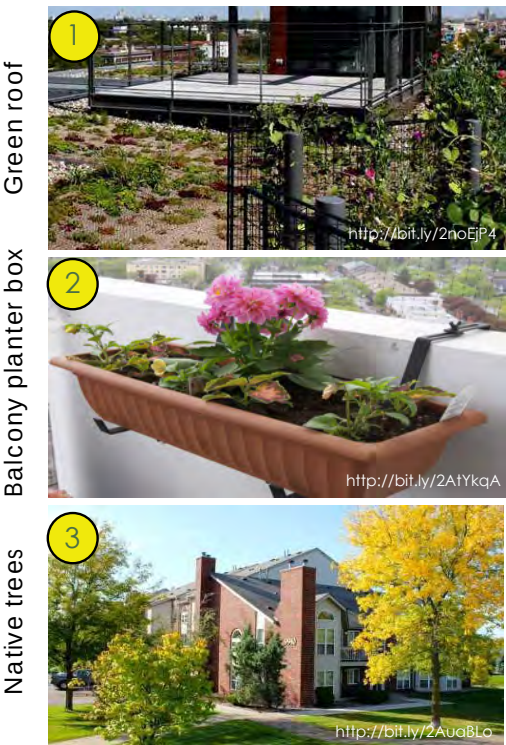


Bee-ing Ramsey

Apartments and Mixed-Use Developments



Natural, native habitats in apartment and mixed-use developments can be platforms to sustain pollinators. In this poster, we discuss solutions to three major challenges of pollinator implementation, in addition to the benefits the residents of Ramsey can realize by implementing small changes in mixed-use developments.



ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Local businesses, such as local plant nursery Green Valley Greenhouse, can benefit from residents purchasing their products to furnish their urban green spaces.
- Decreased water runoff from high-density buildings implementing pollinator habitats reduces stress on municipal storm water infrastructure.



ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Because smaller pollinators do not fly more than 200 yards away from their nest, providing bee boxes and hotels in an urban area can draw in pollinators and subsequent benefits into the city.
- Native plants in rain gardens are more water efficient compared to traditional plantings and control pollution from storm water runoff.
- Plantings absorb more water and are more stable, and the resulting improved soils allow ground water to be replenished more efficiently.



EQUITABLE BENEFITS

- Having pollinator habitat within dense urban centers allows pollinators to survive where they would otherwise be unable. This allows more people to enjoy the benefits of pollinators and the positive externalities they provide.
- Adding to existing landscaping, or changing the existing landscape to pollinator habitat, will make the city more sustainable by decreasing water usage, improving soil and air quality, and potentially increase pollination rates in local agriculture or gardens.

CHALLENGES

- Developing land without considering effects on natural resources reduces pollinator habitats, which provide nesting areas and environmental services.
- Mixed-use developments can disrupt pollinator habitat connectivity, making it difficult for pollinators to access essential resources.
- Using all available spaces within a mixed-use, urban development for pollinator habitats allows for increased biodiversity.

OPPORTUNITIES



- Apartments and mixed-use developments can use rooftops and balconies to provide nesting habitat for pollinators.

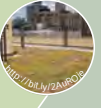


- Large buildings can provide refuge for pollinators traveling between open spaces, and can help establish urban pollinator populations.



- It is important to provide a wide range of native plant types. This accommodates the needs of many types of pollinators and fulfills the year-round bloom cycle.

IMPLEMENTATION



- Bee blocks
- Uncompacted soil in landscaping
- Bee hotels
- Green roofs



- Floor boxes on balconies
- Green roofs
- Landscaping ordinances for natural plants



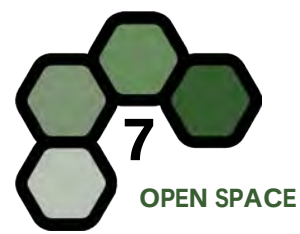
- Planter boxes with a variety of plants
- Prioritizing native species of plants

High-density, mixed-use developments provide a unique opportunity for native habitats within the Center of Ramsey (COR), allowing pollinators in Ramsey to thrive. In the next poster, we will look at how public park spaces can provide habitats for both humans and pollinators.



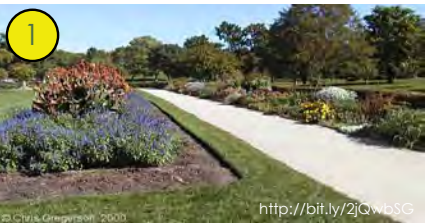
Bee-ing Ramsey

Open Space



 Public land offers larger swatches of open space that preserve natural landscapes for pollinators and improve living conditions for residents through exposure to diverse greenscapes. In this poster, we discuss strategies to create diverse habitats within public parks.

Native plants



1

<http://bit.ly/2jQwb5G>

Native trees



2

<http://bit.ly/2BjBZp9>

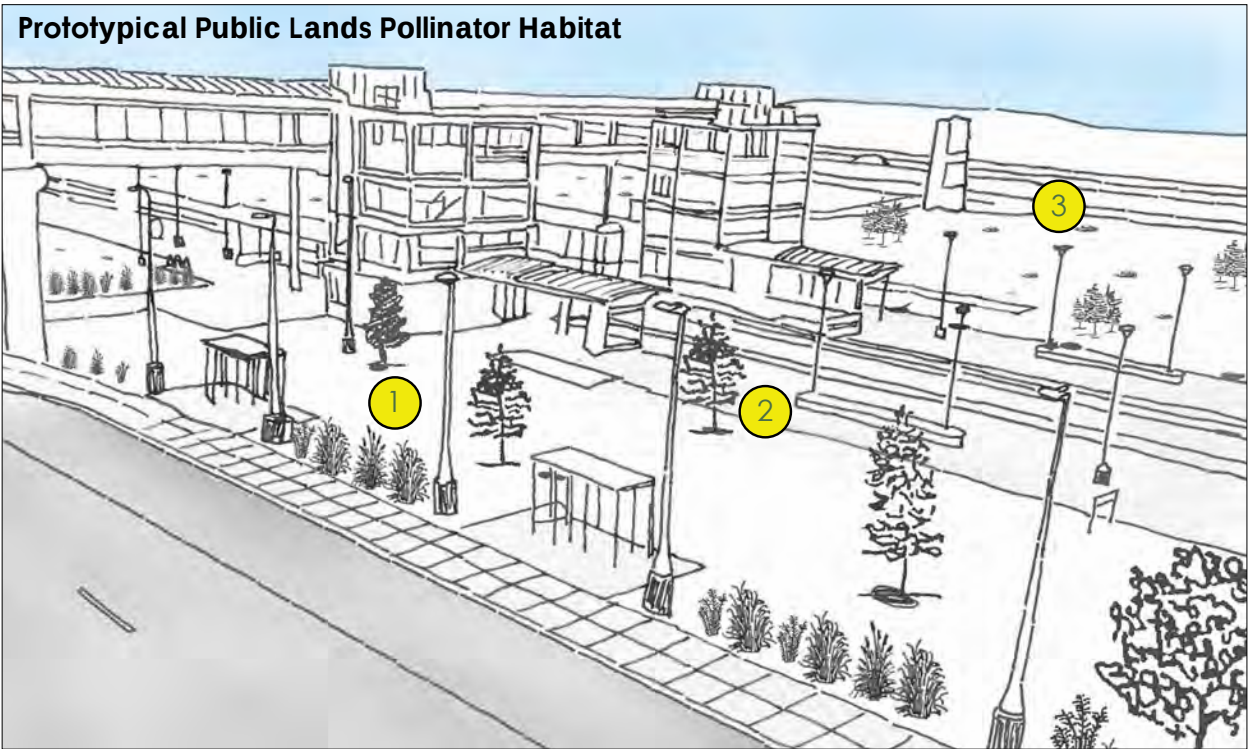
Greenways



3

<http://bit.ly/2AxqXVM>

(To explore greenway opportunities, see Circle of Ramsey posters)





ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Pollinator habitats are **better suited to natural environments** and are more efficient for drainage. Fields will be **usable more frequently** for recreation activity.
- Seeds can be collected from pollinator plants and used for **further expansion of native park landscapes**.
- Parks with pollinator habitat may require less maintenance, **minimizing cost** while providing greater **environmental benefits**.



ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Large patches of prairie provide **better water recharge capabilities**, and **double the infiltration rates** of standard turf grass.
- Pollinator grasses offer **increased resistance to drought and flooding**, and survive with **fewer resources and less maintenance**.



EQUITABLE BENEFITS

- Public landscapes provide **higher density developments access to open space**, while connecting the rural, agricultural landscapes in Ramsey with the urbanized areas near The COR.
- Open space provides **educational opportunities** for park-goers regarding the benefits of native plantings, as well as demonstration plots that show how they can **implement changes in their own yards**.

CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES	IMPLEMENTATION
• Open spaces designed without pollinator habitats diminish natural resources that provide nesting areas and environmental services.	 • Parklands can be planted with natural vegetation, thus mimicking the productive landscapes that were lost to development.	 • Create designated pollinator gardens within park space • Install large-scale bee boxes or hotels
• Open spaces ideal for pollinators are often disconnected, making it difficult for pollinators to access resources needed for survival.	 • Plant and preserve parklands located close to trails, natural corridors, and long transportation corridors.	 • Promote development of larger open spaces rather than small unproductive fragments.
• Not having enough native plant diversity in public parks decreases pollinator presence.	 • Increasing the diversity of plant types in public spaces can dramatically increase pollinator presence. • Mix in native landscapes with typical recreation park fields to create hybrids.	 • Plant native species that may be less desirable to homeowners

Open space can provide ecological connectivity within an urban environment and large areas of pollinator habitat. Pollinator habitats rely on movement of pollinators between landscapes to fulfill their productive capacities. In the next poster, we look at the final land use type: transportation corridors.



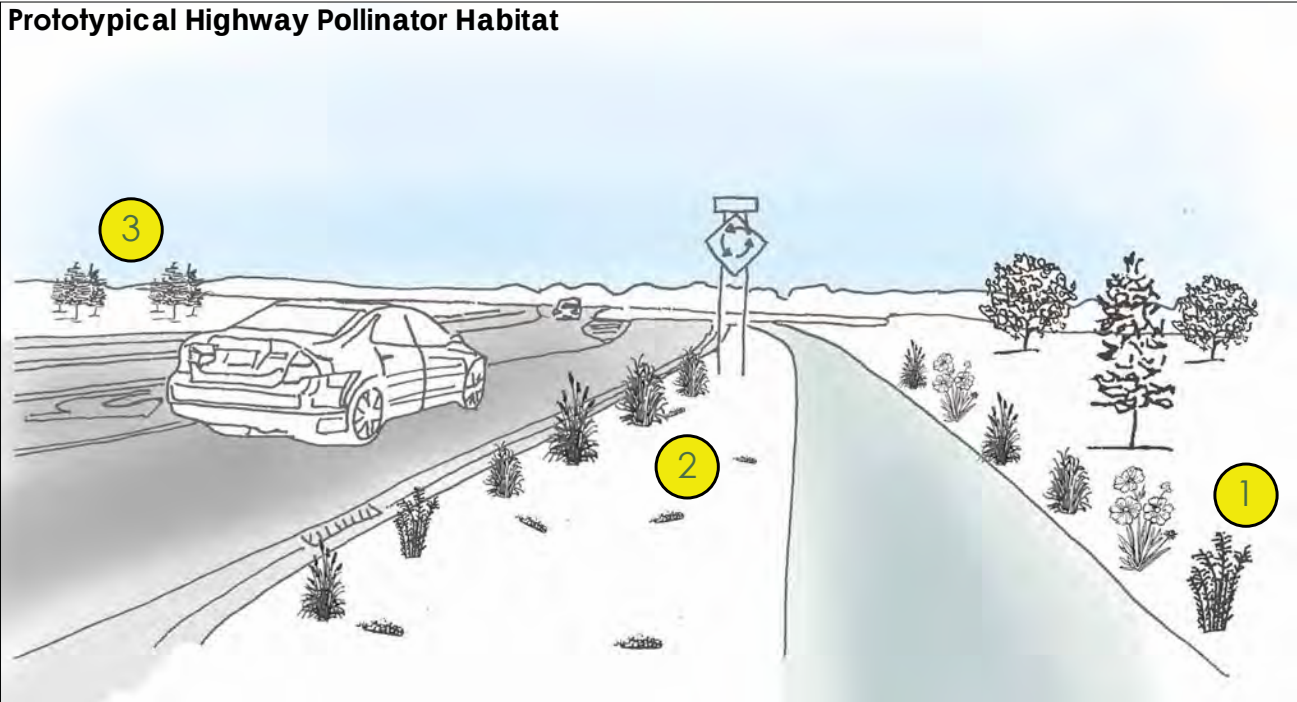
*See poster 9 for Ramsey-specific opportunities

Bee-ing Ramsey

Transportation Corridors



Creating pollinator habitats along transportation corridors can decrease costly maintenance while providing environmental benefits for both Ramsey and pollinators. In this poster, we examine ways that highways and medians provide extensive pollinator habitats with attention towards landscaping with native plants.



ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- The **cost of maintenance** along highways and corridors **will decrease** because established pollinator habitat will not need to be mowed frequently.
- Infrastructure costs will decrease** because more water will be filtered into the ground, reducing the need for storm water pipes.
- Roadside pollinator landscapes** reduce snow drifting and water overflow, lessening city service costs.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- There will be reduced greenhouse gas emissions from **less frequent mowing along highways and medians**.
- Improved soil quality will **replenish and filter** ground water and decrease soil erosion.
- Denser** plant and tree **coverage** near highways will help **decrease urban heat island effect**.
- Native canopy cover and plantings will provide habitat for pollinators of all types, **increasing biodiversity**.

EQUITABLE BENEFITS

- Connecting pollinators habitats within urban centers can **improve air and water quality**.
- Health benefits from access to open space** will be enjoyed by those living **in the core of the city as well as along the periphery**.
- Native plants decrease runoff from highways and reduce flooding** because of increased soil drainage. This can have dramatic effects for **localities prone to flooding**.

CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES	IMPLEMENTATION
Highway development without considering natural resources can reduce pollinator habitats which provide nesting areas and environmental services.	Green spaces along corridors and highways can be converted into native landscape to provide large amounts of nesting ground and improve the quality of the soil.	- Leave fallen trees for pollinator nests - Prevent soil from compacting and leave bare patches for ground nesters.
Roadside spaces next to highways are underutilized as patches of native plants that can connect pollinator habitats.	Long stretches of native habitat that run parallel to corridors and highways can connect pollinators to different urban areas and provide large quantities of resources.	Replace turf grass with native plants along stretches of highway
Current green spaces near highways have low diversity in plant types that can support pollinator species.	Increasing the diversity of plant types in public spaces can dramatically increase pollinator presence.	Sow native seed mixes that require minimal care

*See poster 9 for Ramsey-specific opportunities

There is ample space along highways that can be used to connect pollinator habitats throughout the city. In the final poster, we take a look at how these four land-use types and ordinances can work together to preserve Ramsey's natural resources.

Bee-ing Ramsey

What Ramsey Can Do



To protect pollinator habitat and natural resources, the City of Ramsey should implement ordinances that encourage natural landscapes on residential lots, apartments, open spaces, and along highways. The efficiency of pollinator plantings brings economic benefits to the city by decreasing maintenance, lowering water usage, and improving city infrastructure. Preserving and restoring native plants will increase soil and air quality throughout the city, and improve the health of all residents.

Pioneer Park Master Plan: Best Practices for Community Engagement



Prepared by RCP Fellows:

Vipasha Bansal, Catherine J. Bruns, Gunnar Carlson,
Kyle Franta, Kendra Klenz

Prepared in Collaboration with

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The project on which this report is based was completed in collaboration with City of Little Canada as part of the 2020–2021 Resilient Communities Project (RCP) partnership. RCP is a program at the University of Minnesota’s Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) that connects University faculty and students with Minnesota communities to address strategic projects that advance local resilience and sustainability.

The contents of this report represent the views of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of RCP, CURA, the Regents of the University of Minnesota, or City of Little Canada.



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Resilient Communities Project

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Building Community-University Partnerships for Resilience

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Pioneer Park Master Plan

Best Practices for Community Engagement

Prepared by

Vipasha Bansal, Catherine J. Bruns, Gunnar Carlson,
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Resilient Communities Project Fellows

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Introduction

Overview of RCP Fellows Program

This report is the result of a collaborative effort between the City of Little Canada and the [Resilient Communities Project \(RCP\) Fellows Program](#). The RCP Fellows Program organizes interdisciplinary teams of University of Minnesota-Twin Cities (UMN) graduate and professional students to assist local government agencies with projects and initiatives aimed at advancing their community's sustainability, livability, and resilience. This work was prepared by the Summer 2020 Fellows team, a group of five UMN graduate students with academic backgrounds in Communication Studies, Landscape Architecture, Linguistics, and Public Affairs; detailed team member biographies can be found in [Appendix A](#). Team members were selected via a rigorous application and interview process, with work beginning in mid-June 2020 and culminating at the end of August 2020.

Project Summary

The initial project presented to the RCP Fellows focused on the development of a Pioneer Park Master Plan. Specifically, the Fellows were asked to aid the City in identifying and testing COVID-19-approved community engagement tactics, the results of which would be used to inform the Master Plan. However, conversations with City staff, Council Members, and Parks and Recreation Commissioners, as well as exploratory research in academic and practitioner literature soon revealed that a shift in project objective may be required. After consulting with City staff, a decision was made to pivot the project goal from on-the-ground fieldwork to big picture engagement research and strategizing.

Our early research indicated that an examination of community engagement best practices was necessary in order to provide the City of Little Canada a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of its community engagement. This change in objective was prompted after the Fellows identified a lack of previous engagement with large sectors of Little Canada, including residents adjacent to Pioneer Park. Despite City awareness of and engagement with a majority of stakeholders, the Fellows became concerned that any engagement undertaken without first stepping back would overlook underrepresented or marginalized stakeholders whose needs and desires were currently unknown. Our team quickly recognized that failing to involve the voices of a significant portion of community members would render equitable park planning ineffective and could hinder improvement efforts for Pioneer Park - a public park that all community members should be able to access and enjoy. This concern led the Fellows to redirect the majority of their summer work to focus on the topic of generalized community engagement.

Over the course of the summer, the Fellows and City staff identified and compared key community stakeholders and began development of an overarching community engagement guide that includes targeted recommendations and considerations for the City of Little Canada as it pursues development of a Pioneer Park Master Plan. The following report details the results of this work.

Historical Context

The City of Little Canada

Positioning History

A first step in the RCP Fellows' work was to become familiar with the City of Little Canada and its people. At the outset of the project, the Fellows took a site visit to Pioneer Park; reviewed existing strategic documents such as the 2018 Park System Master Plan and 2019 Strategic Plan; and conversed with City staff, Council Members, and Commissioners on their vision for the Pioneer Park Master Plan. Overall, this early research revealed City pride for its community history, as demonstrated in the book *Little Canada: A Voyageur's Vision* (2018), and a desire to incorporate this history into an eventual redesign of Pioneer Park.

Our team took City interest in highlighting its community history seriously. To better inform ourselves and our work, our team conducted interviews and scoured existing documents to understand how Little Canada's history was incorporated in past community projects and initiatives. Our research was fruitful in that it revealed significant attention to City history in the Park System Master Plan; however, our group also noticed that the City's existing historical narratives excluded mentions of Indigenous and non-settler peoples. When an interview with Little Canada Historical Society President Curt Loschy revealed a lack of recorded information on these perspectives yet a desire to learn more about the history and lineage of Native Americans in the area, **our team conducted additional research on the City of Little Canada's past in an attempt to fill in some of these gaps.**

The results - which include in-depth explorations of the relationships between Native American, Dakota, and French Canadian peoples within the context of Little Canada - ground the findings and recommendations of our report and influenced our decision to develop community definitional language, which can be seen in the [Overview of Community Definitions](#) and [Appendix B](#) sections. We hope that our sharing of Little Canada's well-rounded and diverse history may guide City staff, Council Members, and Commissioners in future discussions regarding **how to appropriately recognize and honor the City's past, present, and future.**

Native American/Dakota History

Minnesota (or Mni Sota) is the homeland of the Dakota people and central to Dakota creation stories. Today, the Dakota have various groups spread across Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Nebraska, and Canada, which together form the Seven Council Fires. The Ojibwe also had (and still have) a presence and land in Minnesota.

Dakota land in Minnesota was systematically taken from the Dakota people through a series of treaties with the US government. This land stealing was enabled by the US government's failure to uphold their end of treaty agreements, which meant that Dakota land was never appropriately paid for. For example, a number of treaties underrepresented the true price of the Dakota land, which resulted in the Dakota being significantly underpaid. In addition, the government withheld most of their payments to the Dakota in order to "settle debts" that were never clearly defined. Furthermore, the Dakota were often unaware of the full terms of the treaties they were signing, as accurate and reliable treaty translations were provided infrequently, if at all. Although the Dakota expressed unwillingness to agree to these treaties, they were threatened with military force if they did not sign; consequently, their options appeared to be to sign the treaties and trust they would be paid the money and goods promised to them, or have the government take their land regardless.

Treaty of Traverse des Sioux and Treaty of Mendota

The Treaty of Traverse des Sioux and Treaty of Mendota, signed in 1851, were two of the most important treaties signed by the Dakota. Both treaties required the Dakota to hand over large amounts of land in exchange for money, goods, and resources. However, after these treaties were signed, the US government resold the land they had purchased for 15 times what they paid the Dakota for it.

The terms of the treaties originally signed by the Dakota left them with only two 10-mile strips of land. Yet after the treaties were signed, the government changed the terms and removed the allocation of two reservations of land for the Dakota, leaving them with nowhere to go. The Dakota were forced to approve this change in order to receive any of the cash and goods they had been promised. The government then "permitted" the Dakota to live on the land until it was needed for "white settlement."

The Traders' Paper

After signing the treaties of Traverse de Sioux and Mendota, the Dakota leaders were handed the Traders' Paper to sign. The Traders' Paper allowed the US government to use the money owed to the Dakota to instead pay debts to fur traders that they claimed the Dakota owed them. Even before these papers were signed, these "debts" to fur traders were a major reason that the Dakota were not paid for their land.

The Traders' Paper was not read or translated for the Dakota before signing; in fact, many Dakota thought it was another copy of the previous treaties. **In the decade following the signing of the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux, Treaty of Mendota, and Traders' Paper, over 100,000 white immigrants moved to Minnesota to live on land that was previously owned by Indigenous tribes.**

The US-Dakota War

A combination of crop failure, an inability to hunt on what was now US land, and the failure of the US government to provide promised food, supplies, and money caused the Dakota to starve. Out of options and running out of time, the Dakota declared war on the US in 1862 in a last-ditch effort to reclaim their land. The war lasted only six weeks; the Dakota lost.

Following this loss, a commission tried Dakota men who were accused of “participating in the war.” Although 303 men were sentenced to death, President Lincoln eventually reduced the number to 39 men, who were then executed. **After the war, the Dakota were forced to leave Minnesota altogether, and the US considered all treaty obligations to the Dakota null and void.**

City of Little Canada History

The Little Canada Historical Society website provides the following context for the emergence of the City of Little Canada:

The Mdewakanton Dakota from Little Crow's Village or Kaposia (seasonal home) made their summer home in the area that is today Little Canada because of the abundant fishing and hunting resources. The first white settlers in the region were French/Canadians. Many of the descendants of these settlers still reside in Little Canada. The city's largest lake, Lake Gervais, was named after Benjamin Gervais. He was the first white man to claim land here in 1844. (“Little Canada's History,” n.d.)

Little Crow was a prominent Dakota leader in the US-Dakota war and was also involved in many treaty signings. It is likely that there would have been interactions between Little Crow's village and the Canadian settlers who arrived on what is now Little Canada land. The quality of these interactions may or may not have been friendly - there is very little information available on this matter, so it is impossible to know for sure.

Additionally, the first person to claim land in Little Canada did so in 1844 - *before* the signing of the treaties of Traverse de Sioux and Mendota that gave Dakota land to the US government. Knowing this, it is quite possible that the Little Canada land that was settled could have belonged to the Dakota.

Residents of Maplewood, Minnesota have a similarly complicated history with early settlement. The Maplewood Area Historical Society website provides the following information regarding their town's history:

The written history of Maplewood begins about 165 years ago when European and French-Canadian settlers began farming in this area. Prior to this time, the land was inhabited by the Dakota Indians with occasional visits by French and English fur traders and explorers.

In 1850, a group of families ventured from St. Paul along an Indian trail that is now Hazelwood Street. They were the Bells, Caseys, Conlins and Vincents. At today's County Road C, they turned to the east and began to build their log cabins. The sound of their axes alerted the Dakota who had a hunting camp nearby and thought the land was still theirs.

The Dakota asked them to leave and the newcomers quickly retraced their steps. The settlers made repeated attempts to claim the land they had bought for two dollars per acre from the Federal government. Finally in 1853, after the Dakota moved to a reservation on the Minnesota River, the pioneers could build their cabins. ("History of Maplewood," 2020)

Maplewood's proximity to Little Canada suggests that the settling of Little Canada may have followed a similar path. Both the method of land acquisition and the likelihood of direct interaction between the founders of Little Canada and the local Dakota means that **the Dakota people likely played an important role in the town's history, thereby revealing an additional narrative that should be considered by current and future Little Canada community members.**

French Canadian History

Founding

Little Canada was founded by Benjamin Gervais in 1844, and his descendants still live in Little Canada. Gervais travelled to the US from what is now Winnipeg, along with 75 other French-speaking farmers. Before settling Little Canada, Gervais owned 500 acres in Pig's Eye - now known as St. Paul - after he provided funding for the area's first catholic church; a granite list of founding families can still be found in the cemetery.

When it was first founded, Little Canada was a French-speaking community, and remained that way into the 1900s. However, very few current Little Canada residents continue to speak French.

Major Events and Facts

- In the late 1800's, a tornado killed approximately six people.

- When the church was to be demolished and rebuilt, the demo crew misjudged the amount of dynamite needed; this resulted in many of the windows around town exploding.
- The first commercial grist mill in Minnesota was located in Little Canada. That area is now Grist Mill Park, which was Benjamin Gervais' homestead site.
- In 1976, Canadian Days was founded as a centennial celebration that turned into an annual event; this event is still growing annually.

Although the Little Canada Historical Society has put great effort into tracing the lineages of settlers in the Little Canada area, little to no effort has been made to trace and acknowledge those who were already in the area prior to Ben Gervais' purchase of the land. The Little Canada Historical Society acknowledges that many French-Canadian people also have Native American ancestry, but as of today, no discernible emphasis has been placed on this lineage. Dedicating more time to uncovering this piece of history, openly acknowledging the white French-Canadian settlers *and* the area's original Native American settlers, and expanding current and future community understanding of the multiple narratives that exist within the City of Little Canada will allow for a more robust, complete, and inclusive story to be told.

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Overview of Community Definitions

Creating shared vocabulary

Background

Early meetings of the RCP Fellows, City staff, Parks and Recreation Commission, and City Council frequently utilized “buzzwords” that are popular in today’s climate. However, our team became concerned that differences in interpretation as to the meanings of these words could create confusion during planning and decision making processes. After observing definitional sections within multiple community engagement guides (e.g. Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, 2019; Metropolitan Council, 2016), our team determined that the City of Little Canada would benefit from being able to reference and utilize a similar shared vocabulary, the results of which can be viewed in [Appendix B](#).

The RCP Fellows collaborated with City staff to identify and define words that often emerge during planning and decision making discussions. Many of these conversations were informed by definitions developed by other cities and community organizations. We hope that these terms and meanings will evolve with the development of the City and provide guidance for City residents and local officials as they work to achieve community goals and objectives.

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Review of Literature

What is “community engagement”?

Exploring Community Engagement

Developing community engagement (CE) opportunities that are equitable, accessible, and representative of all stakeholders can be a conundrum for those charged with designing and implementing them. Furthermore, constraints related to COVID-19 have rendered some CE tactics unusable, thus placing additional challenges on top of an already complicated problem.

With these considerations in mind, **our team researched CE strategies utilized by academics, practitioners, and individual communities in order to provide answers to common questions regarding effective CE.** The following section summarizes our findings and presents recommendations in the form of three phases of successful CE: Inclusion, Recruitment, and Consideration.

Inclusion: Who must be at the table?

Effective CE begins with identifying stakeholders and community members key to the issue. Because marginalized and diverse populations are often overlooked or underrepresented in CE efforts, this section reflects on what inclusive CE means, why acquiring feedback from diverse stakeholders is vital to a project's success, and how to better involve communities that are commonly underserved in CE processes.

Defining Inclusivity

Aspiring for inclusive CE demonstrates to citizens that their voice and opinion matters. McMonagle (2017) recommends that CE utilize a deliberative approach, whereby public conversations “must strive to be inclusive and represent the whole community, and participants must be considered equal during the deliberation” (p. 3). Although stakeholders should not expect to have their perspective represented in every CE effort, stakeholders should always be provided “a meaningful opportunity to participate in [the] process and to have their needs, concerns, and interest[s] understood by their fellows” (Briand, 1999, p. 75), even if they choose not to participate.

The Benefits of Including Diverse Stakeholders

Bringing diverse populations into the conversation has multiple advantages. McMonagle (2017) notes that including marginalized and underrepresented groups in public forums improves the quality of conversations, increases stakeholders' willingness to consider alternative perspectives

and ideas, and encourages participants to participate in future CE processes. By contrast, when a CE process is considered exclusionary, it may be labeled unfair or illegitimate, which can lead participants to dismiss the results, reject the adopted changes, or refuse to participate in the future (McMonagle, 2017).

Serving the Underserved

Previous research has noted that parks, monuments, and other outdoor recreation areas are frequented less often by marginalized and underrepresented groups, particularly racial and ethnic minorities (Pease, 2015). Roberts (2007) attributes this low attendance to a number of factors, including access limitations, such as transportation and cost restrictions; communication challenges, particularly lack of multi-language materials; fear of discrimination from other visitors and the space itself; lack of diversity in staffing; and generalized lack of knowledge, experience, and awareness about where to go and what to do. Overcoming barriers such as these begins by identifying and inviting underrepresented perspectives in CE efforts.

Expanding the involvement of racial and ethnic minorities in public engagement is a first step for many communities. In 2016, Smiley et al. analyzed survey data of low-income and minority groups' park preferences in urban Houston, Texas. Their analysis revealed that low-income and minority park users preferred improvement efforts that upgraded current park amenities over new accessibility projects that connected parks to neighborhoods and to one another (Smiley et al., 2016). By attending to the desires of majority-minority park users, the city of Houston was able to streamline the larger park planning process and prioritize improvement efforts that would benefit marginalized community members (Smiley et al., 2016).

Although socioeconomic demographics are instinctive considerations, stakeholders with other characteristics are also frequently overlooked. While seeking to identify best practices for conducting sustainability planning in the "Basin" of British Columbia, Canada, Davis (2010) conducted interviews with 35 local government elected officials and staff to identify three populations that often did not attend CE events: seniors, youths, and members of the business community. With this knowledge, Basin communities made sure to hold separate meetings and events to specifically involve these groups, including a business luncheon, a talk at a community senior center, school classroom visits, and a photography workshop for local high schoolers (Davis, 2010).

Including diverse and representative perspectives in public engagement processes requires introspection, investment, and a willingness to change. Yet identifying the necessary voices is only one part of the equation - the voices have to be willing to show up.

Recruitment: How do you bring them to the table?

It is not enough to identify diverse stakeholders if those invited to the conversation never make it. Broad CE goals of inclusivity, equity, and accessibility begin when community members are called in to CE opportunities, and they must be enacted consistently in order to ensure that marginalized and underrepresented populations are willing and able to fully participate in CE efforts. The next section identifies common barriers to equitable CE and suggestions for removing these constraints on participation.

Barriers to Community Engagement

Despite our best efforts to get all stakeholders to the table, factors such as education, socioeconomic status, and proximity to social networks greatly influence who is willing and able to participate (Ryfe & Stalsburg, 2010). McMonagle (2017) stresses that CE efforts that require community members to opt-in to participate - such as invitations to public forums or mailed surveys - tend to recruit wealthy, educated, and professional community members, which is often not a representative sample of the greater community. Factors such as these that influence and shape who is willing or able to participate in CE are known as *barriers*.

Barriers can be categorized in two ways: external and internal. External barriers impact a person's ability to receive or follow through on an invitation to the table. Timing, transportation and technology access, a person's trust in those managing the participation process, and one's belief that their contributions will make a difference are all examples of external barriers that may physically or emotionally prevent someone from participating in CE (McMonagle, 2017). By contrast, internal barriers are those that impact a person's ability to fully and effectively participate at the table once they have arrived. Common internal barriers to participation include inadequate or nonexistent facilitation, safety concerns, lack of language or communication accommodations, and feelings of tokenism (McMonagle, 2017). Luckily, scholars have dedicated time and resources to identifying solutions for overcoming these barriers.

Overcoming Community Engagement Barriers

One practical theory that has been useful in overcoming participatory barriers is Trinity of Voice (Senecah, 2004). Trinity of Voice evaluates the effectiveness of participatory processes based on their adherence to tenets of access, standing, and influence (Senecah, 2004). The first tenet, access, refers to internal and external barriers of "opportunity, potential, and safety" (Senecah, 2004, p. 23). According to Trinity of Voice, for a CE process to fully overcome access barriers, it must minimally include:

- An attitude of collaboration
- Convenient times
- Convenient places

- Readily *available* information and education
- Diverse *opportunities* to access information and education
- Technical assistance to gain a basic grasp on the issues and choices
- Adequate and widely disseminated notice
- *Early* public involvement, and
- Ongoing *opportunities* for involvement (Senecah, 2004, pp. 23-24)

Solutions for overcoming inclusivity barriers have similarly been proposed by Dougill et al. (2006) in their work on Peak District National Park. Peak Park's location in rural northern England summons a diverse grouping of retirees, vacationers, and younger unskilled workers, all of whom are valuable stakeholders in environmental management decisions yet bring their own conflicts, extremist politics, and intense opinions to the table (Dougill et al., 2006). To address these barriers, Dougill et al. (2006) recommend using social network analysis to identify conflicts among stakeholders and those who may be cut off from existing decision making relationships, which can reduce common internal barriers to participation. They also note that social network analysis can help recognize opinion leaders within a stakeholder group whose ideas and suggestions hold sway with other participants (Dougill et al., 2006).

Ideally, bringing marginalized and underrepresented groups to the table would ensure the inclusion of diverse and representative perspectives. However, these stakeholder voices also need additional support and attention in order to be heard and involved in the decision making process.

Consideration: When they're at the table, how do you make sure they're heard?

Seeking out and acquiring a diverse array of stakeholders and community members is an enormous step towards equitable CE. However, Smiley et al. (2016) note that inviting disadvantaged populations to the table is not enough: their voices and opinions must also be prioritized. The final section overviews strategies for fostering equitable participation during CE, considers the benefits and drawbacks of online CE tools, and suggests innovative CE tactics that have been successfully implemented in communities around the world.

Ensuring Equity

Even after ensuring the attendance and participation of diverse stakeholders, it can be difficult to guarantee that their voices will be equitably heard and hold sway on the final decision. Senecah's (2004) Trinity of Voice theory makes sense of this dilemma through its other two tenets, standing and influence. Standing, or "the civic legitimacy, the respect, the esteem, and the consideration that all stakeholders' perspectives should be given," works together with access to grant participants influence over the outcome (Senecah, 2004, p. 24). "If I have

access to a process but my participation in it is not accorded standing,” writes Senecah (2004), “then I might as well as not have access,” which can leave participants feeling frustrated, suspicious, or disenchanted by a process which they perceive they have no impact on (p. 24). However, when participants are successfully afforded access and standing, they experience feelings of influence, or a genuine belief that their ideas and suggestions have been equitably considered alongside others’, *even if* their contributions were unable to be incorporated in the final decision or outcome (Senecah, 2004).

The work of Johnston and Lane (2019) builds on Senecah’s (2004) Trinity of Voice by emphasizing the need for authenticity in the participatory process. Whereas Senecah (2004) asserts that CE processes must create space for the voice of participants, Johnston and Lane (2019) state that CE must go one step further and seek out *authentic* voices, or “the voices of diverse, quiet, and silent community members” (p. 4). In their research, Johnston and Lane (2019) interviewed CE practitioners to understand how the concepts of voice and authenticity play out in CE work. Two themes emerged during interviews: authenticity of process and authenticity of outcome (Johnston & Lane, 2019). The first theme, authenticity of process, describes CE practitioners’ responsibility to find the right community representatives, distinguish between dominant and underlying perspectives, and report accurate and nuanced findings (Johnston & Lane, 2019). By contrast, authenticity of outcome relates to Arnstein’s (1969) Ladder of Citizen Participation - which will be further discussed in the [Overview of Community Engagement Evaluation Tool](#) and [Appendix D](#) sections - and concerns of tokenism and predetermined decisions (Johnston & Lane, 2019). True authenticity of outcome occurs “when the conclusions drawn from CE are a reflection of group perspectives, and when those outcomes can make a difference” (Johnston & Lane, 2019, p. 8). Taken together, Johnston and Lane (2019) and Senecah (2004) establish the need to refine and reflect on the CE process so that the voices of marginalized and underrepresented citizens can confidently emerge.

Highlighting and adhering to the suggestions of underserved audiences is of particular importance in park planning. Khazaei, Joppe, and Elliot (2019) summarize that park planning and management is dominated by the voices of nonimmigrants and long-term park users, which can overshadow the insights of existing and potential marginalized park visitors. Their mapping and analyzing of CE efforts to establish Canada’s first urban park in Greater Toronto, Ontario, revealed that a broad strategy to engage multicultural communities, youths, and urban Canadians did not appropriately reflect “the diversity and heterogeneity of communities living in the neighborhoods adjacent to the Park or individual differences among immigrants,” which resulted in valuable viewpoints being left out of the planning process (Khazaei et al., 2019, p. 308). Had CE practitioners shifted from an equality-based mindset to an equity-based one, the park could have better accommodated for and invited in new and underserved park visitors (Khazaei et al., 2019). Thus, like Senecah (2004) and Johnston and Lane (2019), the work of Khazaei et al. (2019) stresses the need to intentionally involve the voices and views of diverse community members early on in park planning processes.

Community Engagement and Technology

Technology can be a valuable tool for designing participatory processes with equity at the forefront. In her white paper “The Promise and Problems of Deliberation,” Ohio University Professor Laura Black (2011) contends that internet growth and an increase in interactive tools have made it easier than ever for citizens to receive and share information and opinions on public issues, which has positive implications for CE and democracy itself.

One advantage to moving CE online is that information about decision making can be presented transparently and immediately, as participants can “read new stories, watch videos posted by other group members, or visit websites” while a participatory process is occurring (Black, 2011, p. 9), thus addressing Senecah’s (2004) recommendation of making information and education available and accessible through diverse mediums. Another benefit of technological CE is that participants can choose their level of anonymity or personalization, which can protect vulnerable participants, allow for more authentic opinion sharing, and foster closer relationships than may exist in face-to-face interaction (Black, 2011). Finally, incorporating technology into CE can overcome frequent barriers of time, place, and space: community members can involve themselves when and where they want, and the CE itself can be designed to accommodate large or unknown numbers of participants (Black, 2011).

Despite these advantages, technology still struggles to allow citizens to effectively “realize their disagreements are based on differing experience, recognize trade-offs, and make choices based on those realizations” (Black, 2011, p. 4). Consequently, it is important to consider the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing internet and technology for CE purposes; more detailed considerations on this subject can be found in the [COVID-19 Considerations](#) section and [Appendix F](#).

Community Engagement in Action

Identifying, inviting, and accommodating diverse stakeholders for CE can admittedly be overwhelming. However, there is evidence to suggest that innovative solutions for equitable CE is a worthwhile investment of time and resources:

- Gordon and Manosevitch (2010) explore a successful use of **augmented reality** in public participation. Their research examines a CE pilot project called Hub2, which used the online virtual world Second Life to facilitate the planning of a community park in Boston, Massachusetts (Gordon & Manosevitch, 2010).
- Menconi et al. (2020) demonstrate how **card games**, played both online and face-to-face, can aid citizen decision making. Their case study recounts the successful development and implementation of a card game to aid community discussion related to the renewal of a historic Italian urban park (Menconi et al., 2020).

- In 2009, the Eden Project, an “environmental and education charity and regeneration project,” created a 3-day **drop-in creative engagement event** to consult five parishes in England about the possible development of an Eco-town (Eden Project, n.d., p. 1). The Project coordinated with local councils, schools, workshop facilitators, and artists to “create an inviting and immersive environment” that collected participant feedback using stickers, drawings, verbal recordings, and flag placement, among many other tools (Eden Project, n.d., p. 3).
- Siders (2017) discusses the use of **structured deliberative forums** to understand citizen use of and access to Piatt Park in Cincinnati, Ohio. His story recounts the establishment of Community Conversations in Piatt Park, an hour-long open forum held at the public library that used probing questions and a guiding script to provide participants and potential moderators a model for future community conversations (Siders, 2017).

This review of academic, practitioner, and community research on approaches to CE creates a knowledge framework for the report that follows. Later sections will further the broad ideas presented in this segment by identifying specific engagement guides and tactics that may be useful to the City of Little Canada as it engages residents for the Pioneer Park Master Plan, as well as other future projects and initiatives.

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Review of Community Engagement Guides

How do others foster community engagement?

In addition to drawing on academic, practitioner, and community literature related to community engagement (CE) generally, the RCP Fellows also reviewed existing CE guides to identify specific community approaches to this work; detailed summaries of these guides can be found in [Appendix C](#). Our hope is that these existing CE guides and tested practices will help the City of Little Canada plan and model its own CE efforts for the development of the Pioneer Park Master Plan.

The CE guides reviewed by our team were developed by city officials, regional authorities, and CE specialists or organizations. Although not all of the guides reviewed are park-specific, some are. Many of the guides are city and region-specific and come from cities that have made large advancements in CE work, such as Pittsburgh and Austin. A CE guide created by the local Metropolitan Council is also included for a more local perspective. Finally, some guides produced by external groups present generalizable guidance that could be incorporated in cities such as Little Canada. Overall, **our team believes that these CE guides provide instrumental best practices and strategies for effective and inclusive engagement.**

Key takeaways for community engagement that emerged from existing guides include:

- Develop **definitions** of important terms
- Create an **engagement vision or mission statement**
- Use engagement to generate a **project vision**
- Consider **resources and goals** prior to initiating engagement
- Outline **staff responsibilities and capabilities** prior to engagement
- Refer to the **spectrum of public engagement** to orient what CE tactics to implement
 - *(Example: Is the goal of the CE to acquire community input or facilitate a process of co-creation?)*
- Identify **stakeholders**, assess **potential barriers** to engagement, and consider **strategies** for overcoming obstacles and conflicts
- Define a **replicable procedure** to evaluate the best type of CE for a project, create a plan, analyze input, and assess the engagement effectiveness
- Address how the public will be **notified** before, during, and after the engagement

Community Engagement Best Practices

Key takeaways of community engagement literature and guides

The term “community engagement” (CE) is referenced so frequently by universities, nonprofits, and government agencies that it is almost as if the term has lost its meaning. Exploring CE from a deep academic level as well as a broad applicative level was therefore necessary in order for our group to understand the City of Little Canada’s goal of engaging its community members in unique and innovative ways.

The findings of our literature review provide a solid framework for making sense of CE processes and common language. Our research broke CE into stages of inclusion, recruitment, and consideration, which allowed us to identify the ways that accessibility, equity, and sustainability shape CE from beginning to end. Specifically, our research showcased the importance of ensuring that diverse and marginalized populations such as racial and ethnic minorities, low-income residents, seniors, youths, and business representatives are at the CE table. Our findings also considered internal and external barriers that influence stakeholders’ ability to participate in CE efforts and suggested Trinity of Voice (Senecah, 2004) and social network analysis (Dougill et al., 2006) as possible aids in overcoming these obstacles. Finally, our review emphasized the need to prioritize and create space for diverse and marginalized communities to share their authentic experiences and the ways that technology can help and hinder these moves towards equity.

Our findings from various CE guides then demonstrated how the above suggestions have been accomplished in municipalities and organizations around the world. For example, cities such as Seattle have developed CE guides that require that community members, especially underserved and underrepresented populations, be involved in decision making processes early and often to shape the final outcome. Additionally, CE guides from organizations such as the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board have created procedures to assess the effectiveness of CE efforts in bringing in diverse perspectives, accommodating all community members, and measuring the quality of community outreach. Finally, CE guides across the board highlighted new and creative ways to engage community members outside of traditional quantitative surveying and mapping tools, many of which could be replicable and implemented both virtually or in-person in Little Canada.

The RCP Fellows’ attentiveness to both academic and practical understandings of CE was vital to our summer work. Overall, **our team believes that the literature and CE guides summarized in this report present the City of Little Canada with an exciting opportunity to think differently about CE and the relationships that are developed between those in power and those on the outskirts.**

Key best practices for community engagement that emerged from our exploratory research include:

- Develop and adhere to an **engagement vision or engagement mission** for all CE efforts
- **Expand understandings of diverse and marginalized stakeholders** to include youths, seniors, and members of the business community
- Prepare for the **existence of conflict and extremist opinions** among stakeholders and design CE with this past trauma in mind
- Identify and address **internal and external barriers** that may emerge throughout the CE process
- Consider who is advantaged and disadvantaged by the **use of technology for CE**
- Create space for the sharing of **authentic experiences** by prioritizing and protecting diverse and marginalized stakeholders
- Recognize **nuanced and underlying perspectives** that may be overshadowed by dominant voices or over-structured CE questioning
- Balance the use of measurable, highly targeted CE with unstructured, open-ended CE to **empower citizens as decision makers**

Overview of Community Engagement Evaluation Tool

How do we know if our community engagement is succeeding?

The American Psychological Association (2009) defines **civic engagement** as “individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern.” Civic engagement seeks to assess community outreach efforts and evaluate attempts to address the public issues that emerge during these community conversations. Specifically, civic engagement can be thought of as the efforts undertaken to involve all community members in decision making as much and as often as possible.

Although quantity of community involvement is of high importance, an additional layer of consideration is also the quality of community involvement. Civic engagement pushes back on community involvement that positions community members as passive consumers or uninformed contributors. Instead, civic engagement proposes community involvement efforts that are well-structured, appropriately guided, and hold decision makers accountable in honoring the needs and desires of the community they serve. It is not enough to host informational sessions or “listening forums” in which community feedback can be ignored - community members must be involved in shaping the decisions that impact their daily lives.

Civic engagement efforts such as these employ a concept known as **collaborative government**. Collaborative government involves transitioning from a top-down form of decision making towards a bottom-up approach that attends to and allows for the incorporation of community members’ diverse lived experiences in public dialogue and deliberation. Together, civic engagement and collaborative government are essential in creating and facilitating community engagement that is equitable, accessible, and reflective of a community’s breadth and depth.

In order to assess the effectiveness of community engagement efforts in the City of Little Canada, our team proposes utilizing an instrument known as the Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969); a document detailing this tool can be found in [Appendix D](#). This instrument merges civic engagement and collaborative government into an evaluative tool that considers the power of those making and participating in public decisions (Arnstein, 1969). The RCP Fellows suggest utilizing the Ladder of Citizen Participation in order to measure, design, and improve existing and future community engagement strategies and tactics.

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COVID-19 Considerations

Why must our community engagement adapt?

Engaging Community While Remaining Socially Distant

Public engagement has long been crucial to city planning and design processes. Facilitating a dialogue between community members and their public representatives is an opportunity to gather new ideas and diverse perspectives, clarify project details, and increase project buy-in from the community. But how can this vital part of the design and planning process remain intact in the age of social distancing?

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed everyday life for the City of Little Canada, the state of Minnesota, and the greater world. The virus has prompted top local and global medical experts to promote social distancing behaviors and enact limits on group gatherings, both of which have drastic impacts on the in-person events that communities often rely on to receive public feedback. Although restrictions on face-to-face events do not mean that community engagement (CE) must stop, they do require significant changes in well-established practices. Despite these challenges, reimagining public engagement during COVID-19 is also an opportunity for cities like Little Canada to design new ways of involving publics that will remain applicable even after the pandemic recedes.

Aware of Little Canada's commitment to developing the Pioneer Park Master Plan, **our team researched opportunities for CE that would be feasible to implement during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.** The following section summarizes strategies for responsible community engagement during COVID-19, considers the pros and cons of pandemic-approved community engagement tactics, and identifies additional resources for socially distant community engagement.

Summary of Community Engagement Precedents

COVID-19 has completely halted so many of our routines and events, but it should not halt community engagement. The RCP Fellows researched CE initiatives that have been undertaken by cities and organizations during the pandemic that may be applicable to Little Canada; the full results of this work can be found in [Appendix E](#). We also found CE examples that are non-pandemic related but could be easily adapted to adhere to social distancing guidelines if needed. Our exploration includes local cities such as Plymouth and Minneapolis; non-Minnesotan metropolitan cities such as Portland, Oregon and Flint, Michigan; and non-domestic areas such as the City of Thunder Bay in Canada.

Key takeaways for pandemic-approved community engagement include:

- Even during a pandemic, **public engagement should not just be a checkbox**, but rather, an essential part of the decision making process.
- **Bridge the digital divide.** Many events and public forums must move to digital platforms, and it is the responsibility of organizers to promote technological literacy to all residents to ensure that every citizen has access to the participatory platform.
- **Utilize social media.** This isn't just for sharing information or pretty pictures. Allow comments on posts for open forums, promote Twitter or Instagram polls, share information live on Facebook or Instagram, or have City officials participate in “ask me anything” sessions on Reddit. Social media is designed to communicate with a network of people, not just project information.
- **Use multiple mediums** to meet people where they are. Reach out to the community to discover how people can and want to connect. For people who are unable to connect via the internet, consider providing a phone call option or a text-message hotline. Put up physical posters in diverse locations or provide pin-up boards or drop-boxes for people to leave written messages.
- **Record online meetings** for people to watch on their own time. This ensures people with busy schedules or child-care responsibilities can also remain in the information loop. Provide subtitles, ideally in multiple languages, to accommodate hearing or language barriers.

Comparing Community Engagement Tactics

The precedents cited above highlight a number of CE tools and tactics for continuing successful public outreach amid COVID-19. Yet when deciding on an appropriate engagement medium, it is equally important to make sure that it is the right tool for the job.

Included in [Appendix F](#) is an infographic, developed by Black (2011), that **overviews CE technologies that may be useful in facilitating public participation in a time of social distancing**. The graphic evaluates tools on a scale of simplicity to complexity and proposes six different instances in which these tools may be needed for CE: Naming Problems, Framing Issues, Making Decisions Deliberately, Identifying and Committing Civic Resources, Organizing Civic Actions, and Learning Together. The graphic also outlines key advantages and disadvantages of using these tools, which is valuable when considering which marginalized stakeholders are crucial to a project and what access barriers they may encounter.

Our hope is that this graphic may aid the City of Little Canada in determining which CE tactic is best suited for which purpose and decrease the mental workload required to assess the use of CE technologies for the Pioneer Park Master Plan.

Additional Resources for Consideration

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Overview of Survey Questions

Questionnaire and focus group community engagement questions

Groves et al. (2004) define survey as “a systematic method for gathering information from (a sample of) entities for the purpose of constructing quantitative descriptors of the attributes of the large population of which the entities are members” (p. 2). Survey design, implementation, and analysis can vary widely, from the people and places being surveyed to the way the information is collected to how often data is collected and by whom (Stoop & Harrison, 2012). These variances were of particular import to the RCP Fellows’ summer work and resulted in our all-encompassing interpretation and use of the term “survey.” Specifically, **our team chose to view surveying as a catch-all for all forms of information gathering from a sample of a larger population**, including quantitative and qualitative questionnaires, stakeholder focus groups, and one-on-one interviews.

In the initial project presented to the Fellows, a key request from the City of Little Canada was to “provide unique and innovative ways to engage the community regarding planning for Pioneer Park.” Although the Fellows’ summer work shifted in project focus, our team understood the need to provide tangible next steps for collecting community feedback that could inform the Pioneer Park Master Plan. As a result, **our team developed a first draft of survey questions, which can be viewed in [Appendix G](#), that may be revised by and disseminated in the near future to aid Little Canada in furthering its creation of the Pioneer Park Master Plan.** In line with our open interpretation of surveying, we designed survey questions with considerable leeway, which we hope will enable some or all of the questions to be asked in an online or paper questionnaire format, during in-person and/or virtual focus groups and/or interviews, or during more creative and informal event settings.

Although surveying has significant advantages in community engagement, **designing, disseminating, and analyzing effective surveys does not ensure that the responses received will be an accurate or representative portrayal of all community ideas and concerns.** “Lurking sources of bias that are not sample-related” can greatly influence how survey results are interpreted and prioritized, which may lead to the overshadowing of nuanced perspectives from marginalized stakeholders (Gideon, 2012, para. 5). To help recognize and address potential bias, the following section overviews a planning evaluation tool that could be used to guide the assessment and prioritization of community feedback and ideas.

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Overview of Planning Evaluation Tool

How do we make sense of the feedback we receive from community members?

The purpose of the Planning Evaluation Tool is to assess community feedback and ideas so that community input can be strategically considered during the City planning process. The use of structured questions to assess and prioritize community feedback has proven to be an effective guide for strategic decision making and has been successfully employed by other municipalities (e.g. City of Ann Arbor, 2017; City of Palo Alto, 2016; Khazaei, Joppe, & Elliot, 2019; Naperville Park District, 2011). **The tool, which can be viewed in [Appendix H](#), presents guided questions that City staff and decision makers in the City of Little Canada should take into account when evaluating community feedback and ideas related to community parks.**

The tool aims to consider how community feedback and ideas relate to or fulfill community understandings of Equity, Accessibility, Sustainability, Diversity, and Community, as defined in [Appendix B](#). It also encourages decision makers to look beyond funding, cost, and other quantitative performance data (Parker, 2016) and instead consider how the feedback or idea reflects previous community input, amplifies the voices of marginalized stakeholders, and aligns with previously established City goals and recommendations.

It is important to note that **this tool does not weigh or offer criteria for prioritizing input**. However, the use of guided questions to analyze community feedback and ideas can reveal critical insights that make the prioritization process easier when comparing suggestions side-by-side.

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Overview of Stakeholder Analysis

Identifying key community groups for public outreach

Stakeholders are those “persons, groups, neighborhoods, organizations, institutions, societies, and...natural environment[s]” who share a relationship with a project, initiative, or similar situation (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997, p. 855). Stakeholder analysis examines a stakeholder’s influence (denoted as “power” on the accompanying graphic) and interest in relation to the influence and power of other stakeholders (Prell, Hubacek, & Reed, 2009). Visualizing the placement of stakeholders can be useful in identifying stakeholders who have been previously marginalized or excluded from decision making, discerning existing or potential conflicts among stakeholder groups, and discovering shared relationships among stakeholders that can be strengthened during community engagement (CE) efforts (Daniels & Walker, 2001; Grindle & Wellard, 1997; Stringer et al., 2006).



The stakeholder analysis model utilized by the RCP Fellows positions stakeholders based on scales of influence and interest. As a result, stakeholders are placed in one of four quadrants:

- **High Influence/High Interest:** Stakeholders in this quadrant have significant and/or direct interest in and influence on a project’s direction. It is recommended that communication and involvement with these stakeholders be closely managed and considered throughout the process.
- **High Influence/Low Interest:** Stakeholders in this quadrant have the potential to heavily shape a project’s direction, but their limited interest in the project reduces their wielding of influence. It is recommended to provide these stakeholders with consistent project updates and consider how planning decisions may impact their satisfaction.
- **Low Influence/High Interest:** Stakeholders in this quadrant are highly interested in the outcome or decision at hand, but lack the ability to shape or influence the decision making process. It is recommended to keep this group of stakeholders informed and evaluate barriers or constraints that may be impacting their lack of influential power.
- **Low Influence/Low Interest:** Stakeholders in this quadrant require minimum effort, as they have neither great power nor great influence on the final outcome. It is recommended to monitor stakeholders in this group and ascertain if providing additional knowledge influences their interest in the project.

Of the quadrants listed above, those in the low influence/high interest and low influence/low interest quadrants are of particular importance due to their lack of influence in the decision making process itself. Reduced influence could be attributed to various barriers outlined in previous sections of this report, such as language constraints, lack of invitation to the table, inaccessible participatory design, or previously damaged relationships with community engagement organizers. These considerations thus highlight **two goals for stakeholder relationship building and CE design**:

1. How can we elevate low influence/high interest stakeholders to have more power and influence?
2. How can we encourage low influence/low interest stakeholders to become more invested in the project or decision being discussed?

Guided by conversations with City of Little Canada staff, Parks and Recreation Commissioners, and City Council members, the RCP Fellows conducted their own stakeholder analysis for the Pioneer Park Master Plan, the results of which can be found in [Appendix I](#). Although our team made every effort to objectively identify and position a broad swath of stakeholders, it must be noted that **our analysis was inevitably shaped by our own interpretations and perceptions of the City of Little Canada, Pioneer Park, and the challenges revealed in the previous iteration of the Park System Master Plan**. Because of “the difficult dialectic between issue identification and stakeholder identification” (Prell, Hubacek, & Reed, 2009, p. 502), our team’s identification of project and stakeholder issues likely reflects our own interests and biases (Clarkson, 1995; Varvasovszky & Brugha, 2000). Our team thus urges the City of Little Canada to consider these limitations when reviewing the stakeholder analysis results and to conduct (and consistently revise) a stakeholder analysis of their own for Pioneer Park.

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Final Recommendations

Based on the findings outlined in this report, the RCP Fellows present the following recommendations to the City of Little Canada for its future community engagement (CE) work:

1. Investigate and emphasize a well-rounded community understanding of the City of Little Canada's diverse history

The RCP Fellows spent considerable time and effort exploring the City of Little Canada's history and culture from a variety of perspectives. The insight our team gained enriched our understanding of the community's culture, mission, and citizens, and it greatly influenced the direction of our work throughout the summer.

City staff, Council Members, and Commissioners have all noted the importance of Little Canada's history to its people and expressed a desire to include a historical theme in the redesign of Pioneer Park. Although our team supports this idea, we suggest first attending to community members' understanding of what and who that history involves. We believe it is important that any future historical representation extends current community knowledge of the City by appropriately recognizing diverse narratives and people who have not yet been given consideration. Considering that the Little Canada Historical Society supports efforts to learn more about the history and lineage of Native Americans in the area, our team suggests that the City engage with an American Indian historian to help research the local context and tell a more well-rounded story.

2. Identify and foster sustainable relationships with representatives among key stakeholder groups

Our team believes that developing and maintaining stakeholder relationships is critical to the long-term success of CE in the City of Little Canada. Previous conversations with City staff, City Council, and Commissioners have stressed to the RCP Fellows that previous efforts to foster these relationships have been unsuccessful; our team empathizes with how frustrating this can be and thus have invested time and resources this summer in considering new forms of outreach that can be initiated this fall.

The Fellows would like to support the implementation of this recommendation by identifying singular representatives or points of contact for large stakeholder groups and initiating conversations with these stakeholders this fall. After making initial connections, we would communicate to stakeholders the exact nature of the engagement activities planned to facilitate community feedback on the Pioneer Park Master Plan, as well as define the extent of citizen involvement in and control over the final outcome. Ultimately, our goal would be to build a bridge

between the City and stakeholder groups, which hopefully would allow for relationship building to continue after the RCP Fellows' eventual severance with the project. At this time, the RCP Fellows would suggest focusing these relational efforts on youth serving organizations, neighborhood associations, youth sports organizations, school boards, PTAs, and senior centers.

3. Design and prioritize community engagement efforts that are inductive rather than deductive

Our team suggests reallocating time and energy to CE efforts that reflect a bottom-up feedback model instead of a top-down model. Specifically, the RCP Fellows recommend balancing CE that is narrow and leading with CE that is more broad and open-ended. For example, although a survey question framed as "Would you support the inclusion of a splash pad in Pioneer Park?" provides specific and measurable results, it does not permit the sharing of qualitative and nuanced responses, which can tease out underlying thoughts and opinions that reflect the needs of vulnerable and underrepresented community members. Instead, our team would suggest using more open-ended questions such as "How would you feel about the inclusion of a splash pad in Pioneer Park?" or in a perfect world, the entirely unrestrained "What would you like to see included in Pioneer Park?"

Our team acknowledges that more unstructured forms of CE are not always possible and that they may not provide the immediate, quantifiable feedback that City staff, City Council, and Commissioners need as evidence of their tireless efforts to serve the City of Little Canada. However, intentionally designing CE efforts that empower citizens as decision makers and allow for the emergence of new ideas may ultimately lead to a stronger Pioneer Park Master Plan, which is vital considering the document's long-term impact on the future of Little Canada.

4. Conduct community engagement work with accessibility, sustainability, and equity at the forefront

The community definitions presented by the RCP Fellows, found in [Appendix B](#), include descriptions of the terms Accessibility, Sustainability, and Equity. From the very beginning, our team realized the crucial role these three ideas play in the successful design and implementation of CE that includes and reflects all community members of the City of Little Canada. Although our team understands the need to conduct CE quickly, we believe that taking the time to incorporate these three ideas will lead to the development of CE efforts that can be easily replicated for all projects and initiatives with little need for revision.

Overall, the root of this recommendation is a belief that attending to accessibility, sustainability, and equity early and often will result in richer feedback from citizens and enable the creation of a Pioneer Park that is accessed and enjoyed by all community members.

5. Develop a community engagement plan to direct and align all future City planning

The final recommendation presented by the RCP Fellows is likely the boldest: a suggestion that the City of Little Canada seek to develop an overarching community engagement plan that would direct and guide all of its CE efforts. Our team is highly aware of the time, energy, and resources that a project such as this requires, and furthermore, that any focus given to such a process would inevitably result in less focus to other equally important projects. Even so, our team firmly believes that developing a plan such as this would greatly benefit the City's longevity and demonstrate the City's commitment to involving and empowering its citizens as leaders and decision makers.

Even if City staff, Council Members, and Commissioners were to embrace this final recommendation, our team understands that the development of such a plan could not happen quickly. Considering this, we also present a smaller alternative option: the development of a community engagement mission statement that is grounded in the tools and strategies our team has outlined in this report. The creation of such a mission statement would aid in evaluating future engagement efforts on a more manageable scale, and if successful, could serve as the foundation for the development of a more thorough community engagement plan down the line.

Appendix A

Team Member Biographies

Vipasha Bansal (BA/BS University of Texas at Austin) is a second year masters student in Linguistics at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Her research currently focuses on the Hmong language, specifically the dialects spoken in Minnesota. She also has experience in marketing, nonprofits, and film production. In addition, she spent a year teaching English and German in India and Thailand. After her MA degree, Vipasha intends to continue on to a Linguistics PhD.

Catherine J. Bruns (BA Concordia College, MA James Madison University) is a Communication Studies doctoral student at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, where she studies environmental communication and advocacy. Her most recent publications include a chapter in the book *Water, Rhetoric, and Social Justice: A Critical Confluence* (2020) and a case study in the textbook *Cases in Public Relations: Translating Ethics Into Action* (2018). Outside of academics, she has worked with community arts nonprofits, served on local leadership boards, and assisted with Minnesota election turnout. She is a former college speech competitor and coach and is a 2015 initiate of the Omicron Delta Kappa national leadership honor society.

Gunnar Carlson (BA & MPA University of Minnesota-Twin Cities) spent the first seven years after receiving his Psychology degree as an adolescent therapist. He then transitioned to independent pharmacy management for the next 15 years before returning to graduate school in the Humphrey School of Public Affairs. Along the way, he has enjoyed service on many boards, including service as a two-time President of the Hopkins Rotary, founder and past chair of the Southwest Metro Chamber of Commerce, and current Vice President of the MN Off Road Cyclists. Since returning to school, Gunnar has enjoyed traveling to Ghana for his Capstone project, working as a research assistant for the Metropolitan Council and interning with the Center for Integrative Leadership and the MN Young American Leaders Program on an Arts Initiative in Greater MN.

Kyle Franta (BLA South Dakota State University, MLA Candidate University of Minnesota-Twin Cities) is a Master of Landscape Architecture student at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, where he studies ecological restoration and food sovereignty through the lens of planning and design. Kyle currently works as a Landscape Design Assistant and is active in the Minnesota Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architect's Equity Planning Group that focuses on enhancing equity among the landscape architecture industry's professionals, educators, and students. Kyle has also advocated for city planning that facilitates creating healthy communities in small rural towns in a collaborative project titled *Healthy Communities, A Guidebook for Small Towns*. This work was presented at the 2018 International Conference for the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture.

Kendra Klentz (BA St. Olaf College, MLA Candidate University of Minnesota-Twin Cities) is a Master of Landscape Architecture student at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, where she is interested in land value and ownership as well as small-scale and public spaces. Her undergraduate degree is in economics and environmental studies. She has experience in large-scale community outreach and planning for waste and recycling infrastructure in Northeastern Minnesota through Minnesota GreenCorps. Her experience in community-centered work continued in 2018 with an award-winning design/build project in rural Sweden in collaboration with architecture and design students. Kendra also has experience in ecological restoration and research and works as a gardener.

Appendix B

Community Definitions

1. Community

Community means...

The co-constructed identity that connects those who live, work, and/or play within a particular place and at a particular time.

Community involves...

- Acknowledging past, present, and future histories, experiences, and traumas
- Establishing, maintaining, and revising shared traditions, norms, and relationships
- Having one's individual needs, desires, and ideas considered by and reflected in a greater collective narrative

Questions to consider

1. Who does our identity include, who does our identity exclude, and who are we forgetting right now?
2. What structural and systemic disparities and differences exist in our space?
3. What beliefs, values, and goals motivate those in our space?
4. How does our ideal community vision align with our current community realities?
5. How do community advancement efforts represent, accommodate, and respond to existing community demographics?

2. Engagement

Engagement means...

Actively calling in community members in community problem solving, knowledge gathering, and decision making.

Engagement involves...

- Empowering community members to share their honest thoughts and experiences and allowing the feedback obtained to inform the final outcome
- Developing and implementing varied and accessible public participation opportunities throughout all stages of a project or initiative

- Evaluating community feedback based on openly available, measurable, and equitable criteria that community members have aided in creating

Questions to consider

1. What individuals, community groups, constituencies, and organizations must be at the table and what support must be provided to facilitate their involvement?
2. Who traditionally has not been at the table and what factors may have caused or contributed to their lack of involvement?
3. Is/are knowledge, resources, and power being mutually and beneficially exchanged among all parties?
4. How much influence should/do community members have in shaping a final outcome or decision?
5. What strategies and tactics exist to involve community members and what gaps do they create that must still be addressed?

3. Equity

Equity means...

Committing to the creation of a community that openly acknowledges and actively combats the everyday realities of systemic injustice.

Equity involves...

- Reallocating community resources and decision making power with the goal of bridging opportunity gaps among community members
- Evaluating decision making processes and procedures for unintended bias and dedicating time and energy to improving these systems
- Prioritizing the development of community initiatives and projects that address existing disparities related to access and advancement

Questions to consider

1. How does the issue or decision at hand help, hurt, or otherwise impact various community members?
2. Have current community needs been adequately considered and addressed before current and/or future community desires?
3. Are the interests of all community members being represented accurately and proportionately?
4. Are all community members able to share authentic insights without fear of prejudice or retribution?

5. How do engagement opportunities account for disparities and differences among community members?

4. Diversity

Diversity means...

The equitable representation of internal and external characteristics, perspectives, and experiences.

Diversity involves...

- Purposefully seeking out feedback from an array of types, abilities, and backgrounds regardless of how it advantages or disadvantages the final outcome
- Actively demonstrating a desire to hear and learn from community members' lived experiences during all phases of community engagement
- Resolving to adjust or redesign current and future projects and initiatives that do not adequately incorporate the breadth and depth of the community

Questions to consider

1. What voices and perspectives must be prioritized and what is being done to ensure this occurs?
2. What social capital and connections must be (re)built to support the interest and involvement of a representative community?
3. Which socioeconomic and demographic characteristics are being over-represented, under-represented, or forgotten in community engagement efforts?
4. Is diversity adequately displayed throughout all levels of community leadership and decision making?
5. Are diverse suggestions and ideas making their way out of internal community conversations and into external community projects and initiatives?

5. Accessibility

Accessibility means...

A conscious community consideration for the widest range of abilities within the widest range of situations to the fullest extent possible.

Accessibility involves...

- Acknowledging, reflecting, and accommodating the needs of community members in public community spaces
- Anticipating and addressing internal and external barriers that may hinder community members from participating in community life
- Providing information and data relevant to community decision making transparently, in multiple formats, and in a timely manner

Questions to consider

1. Is accessibility a consideration during all stages or merely the final product?
2. Who or what is not being addressed or involved and why?
3. Is the information being shared about the project and process understandable to all community members?
4. How much, how often, and what type of technology is appropriate?
5. What type of financial limitations exist?

6. Sustainability

Sustainability means...

Constructing a community that responds to the needs and constraints of the present day while predicting the wants and challenges of the future.

Sustainability involves...

- Weighing environmental and community interests against available community resources
- Initiating and maintaining processes that support a seamless transfer of knowledge to future leaders and community members
- Envisioning and aligning projects and initiatives that transcend the community's current legacy and contribute to the well-being of future generations

Questions to consider

1. How does the project or initiative serve multiple communities and will it leave each better off than they are now?
2. Is the project or initiative being discussed financially and logistically feasible?
3. Is the decision making or implementation process repeatable and reasonably modifiable?

4. How might the final result represent or be viewed by the community in five years? 10 years? 50 years?
5. How might the use or purpose of the final product evolve or transition in five years? 10 years? 50 years?

Appendix C

Community Engagement Guides

City of Seattle Public Involvement Policy for Parks Planning Processes

Mission Statement: *Seattle Parks and Recreation (Parks) will work with all citizens to be good stewards of our environment, and to provide safe and welcoming opportunities to play, learn, contemplate, and build community.*

This is the City of Seattle's official policy on public engagement; it is aimed specifically at Parks Planning. Its purpose is to describe the role of park users and neighbors in the planning process and outline situations in which public input will not be solicited. Although this policy was first adopted in July 1999, it has been amended many times since then; the most recent version is from July 2012.

The document lists relevant stakeholders and the potential responsibilities of Parks staff. It also contains a step-by-step list of procedures for developing a community engagement plan. **An important point made in this section is that community engagement must be inclusive, diverse, and racially equitable.**

In addition, the document provides examples of community engagement tactics that may be used, including public meetings and workshops, emails to neighborhood organizations, user groups and councils, online surveys, news releases, and social media. The document also provides questions that help assess the extent of public involvement that is required for any given project. **An important question that should be considered here is: What are the unintended consequences of including or excluding the public in the decision making process?**

Finally, the document outlines what materials should be created for public meetings (such as signs and fliers), what information the materials should contain, and a timeline for their distribution.

Key Takeaways:

- Public involvement should be encouraged in the planning process of any project that would substantially modify the property's use or appearance.

- Stakeholders - including those who do not usually participate in park planning efforts, such as immigrant and refugee populations - should be provided early and thorough notification of all projects and proposals.
- Funding to carry out community engagement in communities where 5% of the population speaks a specific language other than English should be encouraged.
- Whenever possible, the community should be asked for ideas rather than presented with a list of options to choose from.

Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board

Community Engagement Policy

Guiding Statement on Community Engagement: *A well-designed and consistently implemented community engagement process aligns agency decisions with the interests and priorities of Minneapolis residents and park users.*

This is the City of Minneapolis Parks and Recreation's official policy on community engagement. It is reviewed every five years; the most recent review was in March 2019.

Overall, this policy outlines required levels of community engagement that should be undertaken for different types of projects. **The document identifies four levels of community engagement: Inform, Consult, Involve, and Partner.** These go from least to most engagement; the level of engagement required depends on the project. The policy outlines the engagement goal for each level, as well as MPRB's commitments for each.

One key element of this document is its defining of terms related to community engagement. Specifically, **the document provides definitions for Community Engagement, Community Outreach, Consensus, and Stakeholder.** It is important to note that engagement and outreach have been given very different definitions here.

The document also outlines procedures that should be followed for different stages of the project and engagement, such as project assessment, engagement planning, establishment of advisory committees, public notice, and evaluation of a project and the community engagement. It also describes the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the engagement process, including both stakeholders and city staff.

Key Takeaways:

- The key to engaging communities is to ensure that the decision making process is visible, transparent, uses multiple communication channels, recognizes power dynamics, ensures fairness and equitable access to participation, respects viewpoints, and provides opportunities for every stakeholder to voice their opinion.

- Equity and the inclusion of underrepresented groups is defined and deemed critical to the process.
- There is no single formula for determining the most effective engagement strategy for any given project; instead, it should be measured based on the quality and level of participation. This effectiveness should be evaluated from both the stakeholder's and the organization's point of view.

Making Austin: Public Participation in a New Comprehensive Plan

Plan Goal: *To develop a plan that reflects the values and aspirations of the entire Austin community.*

This community engagement guide, written in September 2009, was developed by the City of Austin to outline the role of public engagement in creating a comprehensive plan for the city. Each stage of creating the comprehensive plan is outlined in detail, along with the public engagement activities that will occur at each stage and the materials and information that will be distributed.

The guide summarizes what community engagement activities have already taken place in Austin, as well as those that the city plans to utilize in the future. It also presents a detailed plan of the organization and timeline for community engagement events, detailing four planned community forum series, what events they will include, the goals of each forum, and intended outcomes.

This guide is particularly useful in that it provides a concrete list of community engagement strategies and ideas. **An important point made in this guide is that “citizens must understand what the plan is in order to effectively provide input”; in other words, the project must be clearly explained to the community in order to set them up for success.** To achieve this, the guide divides community engagement into two stages: outreach and education, and information gathering. In each stage, specific suggestions for community engagement tactics, such as utilizing the local media and arranging meetings-in-a-box, are presented.

Key Takeaways:

- Community engagement should be inclusive and open to all, regardless of demographics, location, finances, etc; engaging underrepresented groups who are often uninvolved in city planning is particularly important. The guide presents concrete ideas to achieve this, such as holding community forums in different locations in the city and at different times, pursuing relationships with community leaders, offering translation

options for non-English speakers, and recruiting specific groups to participate in workshops.

- Transparency is important: is the public input being taken into account? Again, strategies to achieve transparency are included.
- Finally, it is important for the process to be fun! There is no need for engagement events to be dry, the more enjoyable it is for participants, the more enthusiasm the project will receive.

Metropolitan Council Public Engagement Plan

Plan Goal: *The goal of this Metropolitan Council Public Engagement Plan is to make a shift in the planning process from thinking about traditional outreach and participation processes to an engagement model that fosters shared problem solving, supportive partnerships and reciprocal relationships.*

This public engagement guide was developed by the Metropolitan Council as part of their preparation to create a comprehensive development guide for the Twin Cities metropolitan area called Thrive MSP 2040. The community engagement plan outlined here is what the council plans to use for this project.

The main argument made in this document is that the needs of the people are the most important part of regional planning, and that **public engagement needs to be a collaborative, equitable process centered on people and communities, rather than on what sort of new infrastructure or facilities will be created.** The guide argues for shifting the community engagement process from more traditional outreach to a model that focuses on collaboration, problem solving and strong community relationships.

The overall message of this guide can be understood through the following quotes:

- A regional public engagement strategy that assures policies are **reflective of all the region's residents and supports prosperity for all** (p. 3)
- In public decision-making processes, **community engagement is an intentional, strategic, purposeful process to connect and empower** individuals and communities (p. 4)
- This Public Engagement Plan recognizes **people as full and equal partners in the region's decision-making processes** at all levels (p. 5)

Key Takeaways:

- Diversity and equity are extremely important. Organizations should actively engage with historically underrepresented communities, as well as people of all ages, backgrounds, and income levels.

- Community definitions are also provided. Of particular note is that Engagement and Outreach are defined separately: Engagement is described as a much more collaborative process that aims to generate new ideas and build lasting relationships within the community.
- The plan outlines eight principles for conducting and achieving meaningful engagement: Equity, Respect, Transparency, Relevance, Accountability, Collaboration, Inclusion, Cultural Competence
- Strategies to strengthen the role of community engagement in the planning process are explained, as well as what is involved in each one. Some of these strategies include: have a better presence in communities, leverage existing partnerships, highlight best practices in the field, and use online interactive spaces.
- A list of steps that can be taken before, during, and after a project to measure and evaluate the success of public engagement efforts is provided.

City of Pittsburgh Public Engagement Guide

Guide Goal: *To provide recommendations and resources for equitable, transparent and inclusive engagement for planning and policy development.*

This guide was developed by the City of Pittsburgh in July 2019. This guide is slightly longer than others, but contains rich information, resources, and definitions.

This guide pays particular attention to diversity and equity. Conducting equitable engagement is one of the main focuses of this guide. Equity is defined as “when everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their wellbeing and achieve their full potential” (p. 22). **The guide argues that it is the City’s responsibility to engage all communities and make sure underrepresented groups are heard.** It provides a list of factors related to equity, and details strategies for ensuring equitable public engagement, how to achieve them (with examples), and how to determine the success of each one.

At the end of the guide there are **multiple resources that can be used by organizations for their own public engagement timelines.** Some of these resources include example timelines, stakeholder worksheets, a public impact assessment worksheet, an engagement process planning worksheet, a sample communications strategy, a sample website, and a sample survey. Finally, this guide provides a comprehensive list of what makes public engagement effective and sustainable, which are useful evaluation criteria to keep in mind.

Key Takeaways:

- Public engagement is a two-way conversation.
- Best practice is to define from the beginning of a process the intended engagement plan and to make that information available to the public

- There are three foundations for public engagement: Values Based, Decision Oriented, and Goal Driven. An explanation of what these mean is provided in the guide.
- Five different levels of community engagement are outlined, as well as the goals of each type and the responsibilities of the city in each case. From least to most engaged, these levels are: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower.
- Finally, descriptions of the stages of a public engagement process are provided, with detailed information on each step.

Community Planning Toolkit: Community Engagement

This guide to community engagement was developed in 2014 by an organization in Belfast, Ireland called Community Places as part of a larger community planning toolkit.

The guide presents a list of community engagement strategies and a comprehensive analysis of each. In addition to a **detailed explanation of how to carry out each tactic, the document includes the strengths and weaknesses of each, as well as the overall appropriateness of the method and in what situations it would be the most effective.** Some of the most innovative tactics include street stalls, community mapping, Planning for Real (constructing a model of the area in question with ideas written in appropriate locations), and citizen's juries. Some of the suggestions are more applicable to Little Canada than others, but many of the ideas are unique and hands on.

The guide also presents **an evaluation tool of 10 standards to use when evaluating the quality of community engagement.**

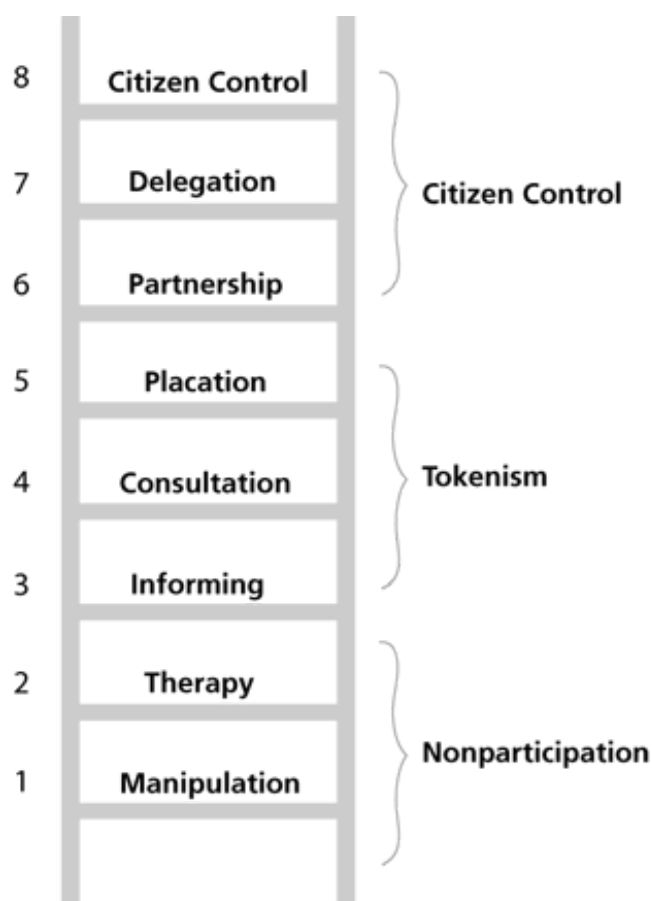
Key Takeaways:

- It is important to define a clear purpose for the community engagement process.
- There are five suggested levels of community engagement. From least to most engaged, these are: Being Informed, Being Asked, Commenting on Decisions, Developing Solutions, and Delivering Services.
- Local community development networks and support organizations should be involved in identifying community stakeholders, their particular interests and needs, and how best to engage with them
- Inclusiveness is important. The guide outlines potential barriers to engagement and suggests various factors that address these barriers when designing engagement.

Appendix D

Tool for Evaluating Community Engagement

The Ladder of Citizen Participation



Arnstein's Ladder (1969)
Degrees of Citizen Participation

The Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969) imagines community engagement efforts as rungs on a ladder. Each of the eight rungs designates a different degree of community engagement, from bottom-tier Manipulation and Therapy that minimizes the impact of citizen contributions to top-tier Partnership and Delegation efforts that empower citizens.

Ideally, all community engagement strategies and tactics would aim for the Citizen Control rung at the top, but reaching that rung is not always feasible. This makes it critical that cities identify opportunities when citizen power *can* be strengthened and consider what type of community relationship is being created. When lower rungs of citizen participation are unavoidable, the engagement must still strive to maintain open and transparent communication so that Tokenism and Nonparticipation can be avoided.

Aiming for the top tier and striving to disperse other citizen participation opportunities appropriately across the Ladder creates realistic expectations for citizens at the outset, which may

decrease the chance that community members will be frustrated by or feel left out of the decision making process. In all cases, **facilitating open communication about decision making processes can help citizens feel more engaged in their participation and to their community, even if they cannot be directly involved in the final decision.**

Ladder Rungs

Nonparticipation

Manipulation

The bottom rung of the Ladder of Citizen Participation disguises public relations efforts as community engagement. In this rung, community engagement serves as a vehicle for those in power to coerce citizens to arrive at a predetermined conclusion.

Example

A marketing campaign on a community's need for a new playground that is being paid for by the company that wants to install the playground.

Therapy

Engagement in this rung contends that citizen frustration with the engagement process is because of the citizens themselves, not the process. In this rung, citizens are highly involved, yet only in ways that fit pre-established engagement norms.

Example

Community engagement surveys are disseminated in English even though the disseminators know that a significant portion of the community speaks only Spanish.

Tokenism

Informing

This first rung of the Tokenism segment of the Ladder is a top-down flow of information from city officials to citizens. Engagement in this rung often happens too late in the decision making process for citizens to provide feedback or contribute to the final outcome and instead is used to notify citizens about the decision itself.

Example

An open house notifies citizens about a new traffic pattern that is currently under construction in order to help community members understand the past problem and in-progress solution.

Consultation

Engagement in this rung creates opportunities for citizen involvement whose results can be measured quantitatively, such as surveys, “listening sessions,” or public forums. Although these forms of engagement may be deemed successful due to high levels of attendance or response rate, they do not account for citizen satisfaction with the engagement process itself.

Example

A public comment period asks for citizen feedback on a list of pre-selected names for a new community building.

Placation

This Ladder rung involves citizens in decision making by placing citizens with less power on community advisory committees or boards. Incorporating marginalized voices in decision making spaces is a valuable step towards equitable community engagement, but it does not guarantee that a citizen’s voice will be heard or that their input will be represented in the final decision.

Example

A female Somali citizen serves on a community advisory board that presents recommendations to an all-White, all-male board with final decision making power.

Citizen Control

Partnership

The first rung of the Citizen Control segment of the Ladder enables power sharing between citizens and officials through dialogue and deliberation. In this rung, decisions manifest through combined input rather than unilateral decision making. Additionally, community representatives in the decision making process are directly accountable to the community members they represent.

Example

A community advisory committee is equally composed of city officials and community-appointed representatives and makes decisions after input is received from all board members.

Delegation

Engagement efforts in this rung place the majority of decision making power in the hands of the citizens whom the decision affects.

Example

A citizen advisory committee is majority community-appointed representatives and minority city officials and makes decisions after input is received from all board members.

Citizen Control

The final top-tier Ladder rung is the most ambitious degree of community engagement and involves placing all decision making control and responsibility in the hands of citizens. Citizen Control is normally accomplished with the assistance of an external corporation or governing agency that designs the program and facilitates citizen-led implementation of the initiative. In true Citizen Control, city officials are only involved as monitors and managers of the end result.

Example

A ballot measure proposes to change the public park opening hour from 7 AM to 8 AM and will be voted on by all citizens.

Appendix E

Community Engagement Precedents

COVID-19 Specific

[Cedar Lake-Lake of the Isles Master Plan](#)

In winter 2019, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation initiated the Cedar-Isles Master Plan project to guide improvements and stewardship at Cedar Lake, Lake of the Isles and surrounding parkland, parkways and trails for the next 20+ years. Following the emergence of COVID-19, the project engaged the public through virtual Community Advisory Committee meetings and an online ArcGIS mapping tool; both tactics were publicized on social media and the project website. The mapping tool specifically invited community members to share memories, ideas, and concerns related to the Cedar-Isles Master Plan; upload photos to explain their comments; and agree with or reply to already submitted comments.

[Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan](#)

In 2018, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation initiated the Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan project to guide capital improvements in the regional trail area over the next 20-30 years. In June 2020, a draft version of the plan was published online and released for a 45-day public comment period. Due to the pandemic, comments were accepted via an online survey, as well as by emailing or calling the project manager. Printed materials were also available to be mailed or delivered in a “COVID-19-safe manner.”

[Plymouth City Center](#)

In early 2020, the city of Plymouth began developing a long-term vision for its existing Plymouth City Center site. City residents were directed to the project website to take a survey, leave a comment on an online mapping tool, or comment on an online idea board. The idea board structured comments around topics of value, serious concern, big change, and vision for the future; contributors could include a descriptive photo and submit their contact info for future follow up, as well as engage in the comments made by others.

[Crim Fitness Foundation \(Flint, MI\)](#)

Crim Fitness Foundation is a non-profit dedicated to advancing the national agenda for improving community health. During the pandemic, Crim held live-stream “community conversations,” digital lunches, and online instructional sessions to teach people how to use

Zoom and other remote technologies. In response to community need to connect remotely through mindful practices, a Crim Mindfulness Team was created that recorded video series on subjects such as yoga, guided meditation, and mindfulness and nutrition. Between March and July 2020, over 2,400 people participated in the Crim Mindfulness offerings; a follow-up survey completed by 643 of these participants found that “over 90% of individuals who participated in a live-streamed class reported a significant increase in overall wellness.”

[North Bay Parks Master Plan \(Ontario, Canada\)](#)

In June 2020, the city of North Bay began developing a Parks Master Plan to guide city programming and investment in its parks for the next 20 years. To gather community feedback, the city created an online survey and hosted five online community work sessions (one session per city region) on Facebook Live. During each session, project members presented preliminary development themes that had emerged through survey results and private meetings, and community members were invited to ask questions and share comments.

Applicable Non-COVID-19

[Washington Park Master Plan \(Portland, OR\)](#)

In April 2017, Portland Parks and Recreation began public outreach to update its previous Master Plan, which was developed 25 years ago. Engagement efforts included a Party in the Park event, an online Party in the Park event, solicitation of comments via social media, tabling at the local Farmer’s Market, and focus group meetings held in three languages. Public engagement took 18 months, was conducted in four languages, and involved more than 2,500 people. Although the project was completed prior to COVID-19, many of its online engagement efforts, particularly its online event development, function well within pandemic constraints.

[Burlingame Master Parks Plan \(Burlingame, CA\)](#)

In 2018, the Burlingame Parks and Recreation Department began development of its first Parks Master Plan. To engage the community, the city first held in-person individual and small group stakeholder interviews with City staff, Commissioners, community business owners, field users, recreation groups, and school representatives. The city next hosted eight pop-up events at parks, recreation facilities, and community events over the course of three months, which successfully gathered input from over 300 people. An online map survey was also disseminated using Mapita and received more than 540 responses. Later, the city held a public workshop for community members to learn about and contribute to the planning process; this was followed by a second survey circulated via telephone, online, and paper. Burlingame stands as a model for

thorough and staged community engagement, much of which can be conducted during and after COVID-19.

Northwood Playfield Splash Pad (City of Thunder Bay, Canada)

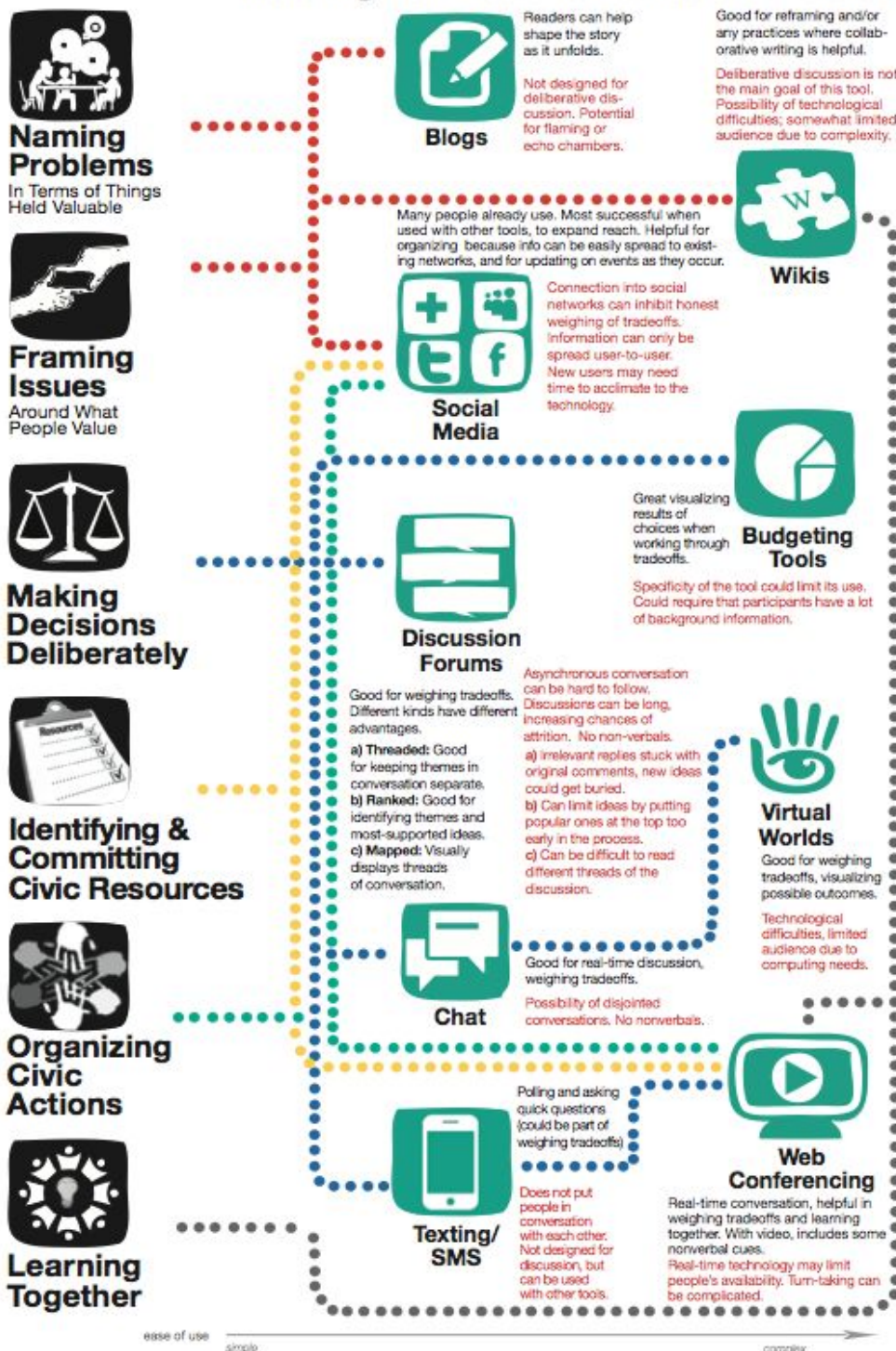
The City of Thunder Bay has previously identified a need to provide splash pads across the City. After the City's Parks & Recreation Open Spaces recommended that the next splash pad be located in Northwood Playfield, the City sought community feedback from residents and the general public on the appropriateness of the location for installation of a splash pad and thoughts on general Northwood Playfield features. To engage community members, the City hosted a public open house at a local youth centre in July 2019. An additional online survey was also made available for those unable to attend the event; the survey was conducted using Bang the Table and made available for roughly one month. Project updates were provided on the project website. Thunder Bay has long been viewed by Little Canada as a city planning model to strive for and highlights the importance of *supplementing* community engagement events with survey feedback instead of *prioritizing* survey data. The two community engagement efforts undertaken by the City of Thunder Bay could also be easily adapted by the City of Little Canada for implementation during or after the pandemic.

Appendix F

Tool for Evaluating Community Engagement Tactics

The Right Tool for the Job

Matching New Media To Democratic Practice



Appendix G

Survey Questions

Focus Group Questions

1. What is your favorite part about living in the Little Canada community?
2. Do you know anything about the history of Little Canada?
Is knowing a community's history important to you?
3. What do you believe is the role of a public park to its community?
4. Have you been to Pioneer Park before?
If so, how often do you visit and what brings you there?
5. What bothers you about Pioneer Park and/or the City of Little Canada?
How does this affect you?
What would help alleviate the problem?
6. When you think of your ideal park, what would it look like?
What features would it have? *Or,*
What is your favorite park and why?

Pioneer Park Survey Questions

Questions about Pioneer Park *specifically*

1. When was the last time you visited Pioneer Park?
 - a. Within last month
 - b. Within last 6 months
 - c. Within last year
 - d. I have not visited Pioneer Park
2. Do you feel safe when you visit Pioneer Park?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Unsure

3. Do you feel welcome when you visit Pioneer Park?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unsure

4. What are your top 3 favorite activities to do in a park?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

5. Of the options below, please choose the top 3 activities/equipment you currently enjoy in Pioneer Park:

Bike Pump Track	Natural Area	Children's Play Area	Basketball Court	Volleyball Court	Outdoor Exercise Equipment
Soccer Field	Multi-Purpose Field	Pavilion/ Covered Shelter Area	Community Room	Walking/ Running Path with Distance Markers	

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

6. What is not available in Pioneer Park that you would like to see added?

7. What would make you want to visit Pioneer Park more often?

Appendix H

Planning Evaluation Tool

This tool presents Yes or No questions for City planning decision makers to consider when evaluating community feedback - all in the context of the community member's power and position in the decision making process.

Before answering the following questions, consider:

1. *Who* is the community member providing input?

2. *Where* does the community member exist on the Stakeholder Analysis?

Section 1: Community Member

Knowledge

- ☐YES ☐NO Does this community member live in the City of Little Canada?
- ☐YES ☐NO Does this community member live near the area their feedback impacts?
- ☐YES ☐NO Does this community member have a strong relationship to the community?
- ☐YES ☐NO Is this community member a current park user?
- ☐YES ☐NO Was this feedback solicited? **Consider whether the input emerged out of a specific community engagement effort or was provided unprompted**
- ☐YES ☐NO Has this community member given feedback before?

Power

- ☐YES ☐NO Does this community member currently have power or influence in City decision making?
- ☐YES ☐NO Is this community member part of a stakeholder group that is currently underrepresented in City planning or decision making?
- ☐YES ☐NO Is this community member part of a stakeholder group that is currently underrepresented in the community?

Section 2: City

Vision and Plan

- ☐YES ☐NO Is the idea consistent with the park's vision statement?
- ☐YES ☐NO Is the idea consistent with the goals and/or recommendations outlined in the [City of Little Canada Park System Master Plan](#)?
- ☐YES ☐NO Is the idea consistent with the goals and/or recommendations outlined in the [City of Little Canada Strategic Plan](#)?
- ☐YES ☐NO Does this idea fulfill or address multiple City goals and/or recommendations?
- ☐YES ☐NO Does this idea contribute to long-term community needs?

Maintenance and Funding

- ☐YES ☐NO Does this idea complement existing park elements and/or programs?
- ☐YES ☐NO Does this idea address an existing park amenity that is currently in poor condition?
- ☐YES ☐NO Would maintaining this idea be a reasonable and feasible expense?
- ☐YES ☐NO Does funding for this idea currently exist?
- ☐YES ☐NO Would it be possible to share funds and/or develop or leverage partnerships to make this idea happen?
- ☐YES ☐NO Does this idea have the potential to generate revenue?
- ☐YES ☐NO Will this idea create a revenue stream sufficient enough to justify an initial investment?

Precedents and Timeline

- ☐YES ☐NO Has this feedback or idea been shared before?
- ☐YES ☐NO Does this feedback or idea relate to previously shared feedback or ideas?
- ☐YES ☐NO Are efforts underway to implement this idea elsewhere and/or in the future?
- ☐YES ☐NO Is this idea time-sensitive? **Consider whether the opportunity for implementation will be lost**

- ☐YES ☐NO Is there current enthusiasm for this idea among other community members?
- ☐YES ☐NO Is there current enthusiasm for this idea among City staff and officials?

Section 3: Guiding Definitions

This section refers to the Community Definitions outlined in the RCP Fellows Final Report.

- ☐YES ☐NO Does the feedback or idea serve the *Community*?
- ☐YES ☐NO Does the feedback or idea promote *Diversity*?
- ☐YES ☐NO Does the feedback or idea support notions of *Equity*?
- ☐YES ☐NO Is the idea *Accessible*?
- ☐YES ☐NO Is the idea *Sustainable*?

Concluding Thoughts / Notes:

Appendix I

RCP Fellows Stakeholder Analysis

Color Key:

Orange: General population groups and community organizations

Pink: Business and government

Green: Sports and recreation

Blue: Housing developments, neighborhoods, and complexes

Yellow: Schools

