

SECTION NINE: POLICY RESPONSES FROM ACROSS THE REGION

Sections One through Six of this document described the history, current situation and implications of the Twin Cities' region's place-based disparities by race and income. Section Seven outlined an array of the policy approaches that influence the distribution of access to opportunity. Section Eight discussed how the Metropolitan Council will respond to these issues while Section Nine outlines how other organizations and partnerships are taking action.

Partnership for Regional Opportunity

The new direction of the Partnership for Regional Opportunity, the successor organization to the successful Corridors of Opportunity partnership, represents one of the region's many approaches to advancing equity. The Partnership for Regional Opportunity has adopted a vision of "*Growing a prosperous, equitable, and sustainable region.*" The goals of the Partnership are to:

- Improve the economic prospects of low-income people and low-wealth communities
- Promote high quality development near existing assets (e.g. employment centers, transitways, and commercial and industrial corridors)
- Advance a 21st century transportation system

Taking the findings and learning from the Corridors of Opportunity projects, the Partnership has charged itself with creating systems change and embedding the equity-focused work into existing organizations. Aligning resources, policies, and programs will be a key strategy for implementation, and each participating organization has committed to finding opportunities to embed the work internally. One of the four Partnership for Regional Opportunity workgroups is focused on Regional Equity & Community Engagement; this group is co-chaired by Ramsey County and Nexus Community Partners (representing the Community Engagement Team).

The work of organizations and partners across the region

The following pages consist of unedited, voluntary submissions from organizations, government agencies, and other community partners from across the region who were asked to share their ongoing work concerning equity.

Submitted by:

Tom Fulton, President
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Established in 1980, the Family Housing Fund is a nonprofit organization that supports the cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, the Metropolitan Council, and Minnesota Housing in their efforts to meet the region's affordable housing needs. Originally created by The McKnight Foundation, the Family Housing Fund focused their work in the cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. With continued support from The McKnight Foundation, the Family Housing Fund officially expanded its service area in 1997 to include the entire Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area.

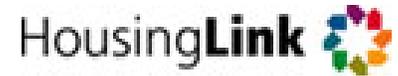
As a housing intermediary, the Family Housing Fund brings together people, money, and expertise to support the delivery of affordable housing. As a funder, the Family Housing Fund raises money from foundations and corporations to make targeted grants and loans for the creation and preservation of quality affordable housing. In addition to funding affordable housing in Minneapolis and Saint Paul, the Family Housing Fund's commitment to housing choice, equity and opportunity throughout the region is supported by our capital investments in high opportunity areas in the suburbs, totaling \$20,135,281 invested to date to contribute to the creation of 4,771 units of affordable housing.

As a convener and facilitator, the Family Housing Fund brings together individuals and organizations from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors to develop ways to meet the growing demand for sustainable housing and to identify and tackle strategic housing issues. As a member of the Corridors of Opportunity/Partnership for Regional Opportunity, the Family Housing Fund has facilitated the Affordable Housing and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Implementation Team, which in partnership with LISC and the TCC Land Bank deployed \$9.5 million in loans from a debt pool made up of program related investments and commercial debt to support equitable TOD projects. Additionally, the Implementation Team served as a forum for funders to align their participation in equitable TOD. These efforts will improve access to jobs, education, housing, and services for people of all backgrounds.

As an educator, the Fund provides information to community leaders and the general public about affordable housing needs and opportunities. The Family Housing Fund launched the website rethinkinghousing.org as a tool to facilitate the examination of best practices in equitable development. The Family Housing Fund has also published fact-sheets that community leaders use to explain that "Working Doesn't Always Pay for Home" and that "Affordable Housing Doesn't Lower Property Values", improving our ability and the ability of our partners to produce and preserve affordable housing across the region.

Equity is an important value to the Family Housing Fund and it drives our work as a funder, facilitator and convener, and educator.

Submitted by:



Sue Speakman-Gomez, President
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HousingLink's work is key in the Metropolitan Area to help further deconcentration of poverty and increase housing choice. HousingLink was also actively involved in contributing data to this process, and other community partners, on supply, location, and amount of affordable rental housing in the community.

HousingLink was established as a result of the 1995 Hollman v Cisneros Consent Decree, which sought improved housing conditions and greater location choice for families participating in the Section 8 voucher and public housing programs. Since that time, HousingLink has become the region's primary source for affordable housing-related data, information and resources. Our mission is to improve people's lives through information expanding their affordable rental choices. Our organization values are: **Housing Choice**. We empower renters to choose housing locations with access to good schools, employment, transportation and community resources. **Stability**. We help renters find affordable housing that leads to stability in all aspects of their lives. **Equity**. We believe communities are stronger when all renters have access to quality affordable and safe housing. **Reliability**. We are a trusted, objective source of accurate and reliable information that is easy to find. **Innovation**. We continually find new and better ways to provide affordable rental housing information.

HousingLink is uniquely positioned to provide information about affordable rental housing options to people in the community. Our core services are provided through our website, and we continue to see unprecedented numbers of visits and searches on the website. In 2013 there were over 2.6 pageviews on the website. Other key successes impacting the Twin Cities in 2013 are:

- 552,846 searches for housing in our community
- 30,850 listings available
- 78.8% of landlord entered listings willing to accept a voucher
- hAlert has sent over 2.7 million alerts since February 2011
- 52,185 views of our Housing Authority Waiting List report
- 38,793 times the Section 8 voucher maps & information were accessed
- 47,374 visits for information about subsidized housing programs
- Renter Resources were viewed 8,962 times
- Over 8,000 views of educational video's through Housing Hub (launched in July)
- 3,932 visits to access Fair Housing information

In addition to this HousingLink plays a critical in aggregating and analyzing data on the supply and location of affordable housing as well as research on access to transit, employment centers to inform policy making and planning.

HousingLink enables renters to make housing choices in locations with access to good schools, employment, transportation and community resources leading to greater equity in our community. We are honored to serve this role in the community and look forward to creating innovative new ways to provide renters the greatest housing choice possible.

Submitted by:

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Equity should be an unquestioned right of every resident in the Twin Cities Region. Ramsey County stands with the Metropolitan Council and all other committed partners that seek to create the more equitable future that will ultimately drive the Region's long-term prosperity.

As the most racially diverse county in the Twin Cities Region, Ramsey County reports that, when compared to the seven county area, it has the highest percentage of adults without a high school degree, the lowest test scores for 3rd, 5th and 8th grade students, and the highest proportion of census tracts defined as racially concentrated areas poverty. Regional dialogues link equity to future prosperity because more than one-third of the Region's population will be comprised of people of color by 2030. It is important to note that Ramsey County passed that demographic threshold in 2010, and approximately half of the County's total population in 2050 will be people of color. So the future is now.

There is no single factor that explains why the Twin Cities Region has experienced growth in many areas while some neighborhoods have been disconnected from that broader growth. However, the Region's affordable housing investments offer one example of how particular community assets, when over concentrated into particular areas, make it more difficult to cultivate mixed income communities that are connected to broader job growth and regional vitality.

- Ramsey County has 237 subsidized affordable housing units per 1000 acres of developed land. Hennepin County has 133 per 1000 acres with no other county above 49 per 1000.
- Ramsey County has 41 affordable housing units per 1000 people. Region, Hennepin County has 27 per 1000 people with no other county above 14 per 1000.

These geographic concentrations, particularly in areas with historically high proportions of residents of color, have not advanced the Region's vision of building strong mixed-income communities nor provided residents in search of affordable housing with opportunities throughout the Region to choose where they would like to live and establish a foundation for success.

Ramsey County built on years of previous work and unveiled a slate of initiatives in March 2014 in order to cultivate economic prosperity and eliminate concentrated poverty. All of the initiatives are focused on ensuring that every resident within the community is given every opportunity to contribute and thrive. These initiatives were highlighted by the announcement that work focused intentionally on race equity was integral to Ramsey County's future success; this recognition made it the first County in the Twin Cities Region to publically discuss, recognize and support the need for race equity work within its work. Most importantly, the County is prepared and excited to work with and support any other organizations within the Region that are willing to publically place equity at the core of its future success.

Submitted by:



Yvonne Cheung Ho, President and CEO
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One solution to address racial economic disparities is to build strong sustainable businesses owned by people of color. For 43 years, Meda has assisted entrepreneurs of color to start and grow successful businesses because successful entrepreneurs build personal and community wealth that becomes an intergenerational legacy. They serve not only as sustainable employers offering quality jobs but also as role models for those who will follow in their footsteps. Entrepreneurs of color create new jobs and about 50% of the time these jobs are offered to people of color, helping to narrow income and employment disparities. Some of the challenges faced by these business owners are access to business acumen, access to capital, and access to contracts in government and corporate sectors. Meda helps provide all three.

Through our professional consulting and financing services along with experts in government contracting, Meda builds capacity and connects our clients to contracts where they can compete for business. However, to create an equitable environment, we must remove obstacles that are faced by entrepreneurs of color.

Recent studies document that entrepreneurs of color face higher scrutiny by lenders, are declined more often, and, if successful in securing financing, pay a higher interest rate than Caucasian business owners, all things being equal. To respond to this, we expanded our loan fund to help mitigate perceived risks. In 2013 alone, Meda leveraged its capital by more than 40 times by participating in loans and by standing at our client's side throughout negotiations with lenders.

Another barrier faced in public projects is timely payment and the practice of retainage. Meda advocates collectively for our clients since many are hesitant to speak out for fear of being excluded from future opportunities. We help resolve contract issues and provide hard-to-obtain working capital for light rail subcontractors. With the help of the Minneapolis Foundation, Meda now provides working capital loans to minority subcontractors working on the People's (Vikings) Stadium. The Otto Bremer and the St. Paul Foundations have also provided low cost capital for Meda to deploy as the community continues to recognize the powerful impact of entrepreneurs of color.

The McKnight Foundation helped Meda become a catalyst to streamline access to certifications by fostering open discussion across state, county, city and regional jurisdictions.

As we advocate systemic changes that will eliminate barriers to full economic participation of entrepreneurs of color, we turn our attention to the next light rail line. We will continue to promote minority business participation, to direct attention to equitable business development along transit lines and to encourage corporate anchors to offer opportunities for these businesses to flourish. One of the surest ways to lift people out of poverty is to provide quality jobs - and entrepreneurs of color do just that!

Submitted by:

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The Central Corridor Funders Collaborative shares the Metropolitan Council's belief that widening access to opportunity and closing our racial and economic disparities are vitally important to our region's future.

The Funders Collaborative, a group of 12 local and national foundations working with partners to create places of opportunity along the Central Corridor (Green Line) light rail, believes that transit infrastructure, coupled with 'beyond the rails' investments can have a profound impact on access to opportunity, particularly for low-income communities and communities of color.

In pursuit of our mission, we have partnered with neighborhood and community organizations, public agencies, and business groups to invest in a number of initiatives that promote access to opportunity.

- We have invested in the production of long-term affordable housing near transit stops, so that low-income people can live near high quality, frequent transit that provides a link to educational, work and social amenities.
- We have invested in programs that connect low-income Corridor residents to job training and employment accessible via the new light rail line.
- We have invested in the educational and medical institutions in the Corridor who are combining their efforts to hire more employees and purchase more goods and services from the Corridor – increasing economic opportunity for local residents and businesses.
- We have invested in initiatives to build off of the cultural and historic assets of Corridor neighborhoods for local economic development – supporting efforts like the Little Mekong district at the Western Avenue stop of the Green Line and many other similar places.
- We have invested in efforts to improve biking, walking, and transit access from neighborhoods off of the Corridor to the Green Line stops, so that the access to opportunity provided by the light rail is shared by more residents in the local neighborhoods and our broader region.

Providing access to opportunity for all of our residents is vital for the future of our region. By collectively investing in critical infrastructure and related housing, economic development, and workforce initiatives, all of us can make an impact on spreading opportunity and closing the disparities in our region.

Submitted by:

Michael Langley, CEO
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GREATER MSP (Minneapolis Saint Paul Regional Economic Development Partnership) is a private non-profit organization (501C3) dedicated to providing public and private sector leadership, coordination and engagement to grow the economy of the 16-County Minneapolis-Saint Paul region. With our economic development partners throughout the region, GREATER MSP is advancing a coordinated regional economic development strategy, a coordinated regional brand to promote the region's assets, and a coordinated regional business retention, expansion, and recruitment program to stimulate capital investment and job creation in the region.

An important part of GREATER MSP's work is telling our region's story: business and people prosper here. It is our story because sustained, broad-based prosperity has been a regional tradition. Today, maintaining this tradition requires every organization and institution to do its part to close gaps in educational attainment and labor force participation between our region's white and minority residents.

GREATER MSP is making a commitment to build prosperity throughout our region that is shared across geographies, generations, and racial and ethnic communities. In January 2014, GREATER MSP began a new partnership with the McKnight Foundation within the Partnership for Regional Opportunity. GREATER MSP and McKnight are leading a new team of public, private and nonprofit sector organizations dedicated to improving the quality of our region's economic growth through two projects. First, we are building a set of regional indicators that will hold leaders to collective account for making progress on key economic, social and environmental measures. These indicators will place equity metrics on the same plane as economic fundamentals such as GRP (gross regional product). The second project will create an urban core strategy to drive job creation and capital investment in and around concentrated areas of poverty for the benefit of low-income residents, and the region as a whole. Together, the indicators and urban strategy will help move the region toward equity by embedding the principles of shared prosperity within our region's economic development strategy.



Submitted by:

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MICAHA—Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing
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MICAHA, the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing began in 1988 through the interfaith community, in response to the growing crisis of homelessness in the Minneapolis and St. Paul Metropolitan community.

MICAHA has for 26 years worked together with faith leaders, congregations, and the community to ensure that everyone, without exception, has a decent, safe, affordable and accessible home. We have refined our definition of home to be a place where all people have choices where they will live, access to safe, decent, affordable housing, livable incomes, affordable and accessible health care, human services, transit, excellent schools, environmentally safe communities, and where people's civil rights are honored and protected in a welcoming community. MICAHA believes we all have power as unique creations of God. We diligently work together to ensure that underrepresented communities have the opportunities and resources to be able to organize and advocate for themselves.

MICAHA has demonstrated our commitment to standing with and providing resources and opportunities to assist people in communities across the Metro area. We have worked with communities in developing land use plans and were actively involved in the Livable Communities Act enactment.

Housing Opportunities Made Equitable (HOME) is a multiyear project to increase the opportunities of people of Color and American Indians in obtaining decent, safe, accessible, and affordable housing in both the homeownership and rental sectors as well as increase economic opportunities for livable incomes and small businesses growth. Goals:

1. Increase the housing opportunities for people of Color and American Indians through homeownership and rental opportunities.
2. Develop power base within communities of stable homeowners and renters of people of Color and American Indians to increase financial and social assets and create a strong voting block to elect people that represent them at the local, state and federal level.
3. Expand the number of jobs and minority businesses that obtain contracts through the Corridors of Opportunity development in the Metropolitan area to be at least at the same percentage as people of color and American Indians living in the community at the time of the development.
4. Prevent displacement, demolition, and/or forcing out due to higher taxes of people of Color and American Indians in the Metropolitan Corridors of Opportunities and/or other developments in the Region.

Submitted by:

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Facing Race: A Renewed Commitment to Racial Equity

The Saint Paul Foundation and Minnesota Community Foundation, affiliates of Minnesota Philanthropy Partners, announced, in March 2014, a new racial equity framework to guide their work.

Adopted by the board of directors of the Foundations, the racial equity framework renews a long-standing commitment to fostering racial equity and outlines how racial equity is prioritized in decision-making and activities across the organizations.

"The new framework reflects a comprehensive approach to fostering racial equity that builds on the many years of our anti-racism work," said Carleen Rhodes, president and CEO of MN Partners. "We have been on this journey for a long time and know there is more work to be done. Racism today is hard to see, yet it affects how students are being educated and who has access to living-wage jobs. The framework enables us to infuse this work with new energy and expand our thinking on solutions."

Leadership is at the core of the new framework. The foundations' board of directors, president and CEO, and senior staff will be visible in fostering racial equity across the organization. The framework also outlines five key roles of community foundations and how racial equity will affect those roles. It defines foundations as community participants, economic entities, funders, employers and fundraisers.

A board-level task force comprised of community leaders from the public, private and nonprofit sectors researched and evaluated the Foundations' historical racial equity work and how they could be most effective in promoting racial equity in Minnesota going forward.

The task force met over the course of 10 months and ultimately presented a set of recommendations to the board of The Saint Paul Foundation and Minnesota Community Foundation. The board adopted the recommendations in October 2013, which will guide future activities.

For more information on the framework, please visit mnpartners.org.

Submitted by:

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Neighborhood Development Center (NDC) is a nonprofit organization established in Minnesota in 1993 to “Empower entrepreneurs and community partners to transform their low-income neighborhood economies from within.” NDC recognizes that residents in “all” communities have the talent, energy, and ideas to engage in revitalizing their own neighborhoods. However, NDC helps aspiring entrepreneurs overcome the economic equity barriers that prevent them from becoming self-sufficient, creating jobs, and building wealth by providing access to expert business knowledge, financial resources, and opportunity.

NDC accomplishes this through four ongoing, integrated programs: (1) Entrepreneur Training, (2) Lending and Financing, (3) Technical Assistance, and (4) Business Incubators. Over 80 percent of NDC’s programs have been deployed in some of the highest need neighborhoods and business corridors in the Twin Cities, such as South Minneapolis and the University Avenue Corridor in St. Paul.

NDC’s unique model of entrepreneurship is based on the following:

- Forging unique partnerships with civic and other cultural organizations as a means of entrepreneur recruitment and place-based program delivery.
- Designing culturally- and language-competent entrepreneur programs and delivering them through equally competent and diverse staff and consultants.
- Designing innovative entrepreneur financing programs.
- Providing long-term one-on-one business assistance.
- Creating “environments” where new entrepreneurs are supported and can grow.

As of the end of 2013, NDC had trained over 4,460 entrepreneurs; almost 500 of these alumni are currently in business, returning more than \$73 million to the Twin Cities area annually, according to Wilder Research (2013). Since 1993, NDC has also provided more than \$11.5 million in business loans and financing, more than 50,000 hours of technical assistance, and helped create an estimated 3,700 jobs. Additional impact—considering NDC’s business incubators, such as Midtown Global Market in Minneapolis—includes the establishment of community gathering places and the creation of leaders and role models within historically disengaged and marginalized communities.

In 2013, NDC received two national awards for its work:

- The Citi Microentrepreneurship Award for “Capital Access,” through the Association for Enterprise Opportunity. [<http://www.aeoawards.com/2013-award-winners/>]
- The E Pluribus Unum Prize for “Immigrant Integration” from the Migration Policy Institute. [<http://integrationawards.migrationpolicy.org/winners-NDC.cfm>]

NDC’s 2014-2016 Strategic Plan calls in part for expanding its unique technical assistance program (which now also includes branding and graphic design) to all the neighborhoods where it works, focusing its programs more deliberately on the highest need neighborhoods of North Minneapolis and the East Side of St. Paul, and taking its unique entrepreneurship and job creation model to other cities nationally.

Submitted by:

Louis King, President and CEO
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At Summit Academy OIC, our motto is: “the best social service program in the world is a job.” We help poor adults become self-sufficient citizens through rigorous 20-week training programs and job placement assistance in well-paying career fields—with no out-of-pocket costs or loans to pay back. But Summit Academy is more than a school. We’re a leader in developing workforce systems solutions. Our innovative approach bridges the gap between training institutions and industry associations, maximizing local economic benefits for low-income communities. Our work is driven by three realities:

- 1) **Industry Demand.** There are more than \$8 billion in scheduled construction projects for the nine-county metropolitan area in the next three years, and healthcare continues to be a primary and growing sector of employment for the Minnesota workforce.
- 2) **Employment Disparities.** The Twin Cities has the highest poverty rate among persons of color and the largest gap in the employment rate between persons of color and that of whites among the U.S.’s 25 largest metropolitan areas.
- 3) **Shifting Demographics.** By 2020, working-age communities of color will make up nearly 1/3 of the Twin Cities workforce, and 44% by 2014. At the same time, Baby Boomers will retire and the working-age white population will decrease.

We have a strong history of putting low-income people, women and people of color to work. Since 2010, we have enrolled 1,951 students, graduated 1,017 and placed 764 in well-paying jobs. By 2016, we will enroll 1,000 students, graduate 700 and place 560 every year.

Building a strong training institution is not enough to make a meaningful impact on persistent employment disparities. We have a three-pronged approach:

- 1) **People.** We prepare predominantly minority students for upwardly mobile careers in high demand industries. Students’ average annual income increases from \$3,000 before training to \$28,000 after training. We also help students eliminate barriers to employment and develop life skills to prepare them for sustainable self-sufficiency.
- 2) **Partnerships.** We utilize our partnerships with business, labor and government to ensure that people of color and women have equitable access to employment opportunities.
- 3) **Policy.** We are a leader in three policy change initiatives: 1) Twin Cities Construction Consortium – an effort to build the systems needed to meet the needs of the construction industry in the next decade; 2) HIRE-Minnesota – a collaborative dedicated to transforming the current workforce regulatory environment in the construction industry; 3) NCRT – a collaborative to reduce poverty and dependency in North Minneapolis by 25% by transforming the current “Work First” system.

Advancing racial equity is not just a moral imperative in the Twin Cities – it’s an economic necessity. We must recognize low-income communities as assets to be developed, rather than liabilities to be managed. Our collective future depends on it.

Submitted by:

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The City of Minneapolis STEP-UP Program:

Engaging the diverse and talented young people in the local workforce is a key strategy in Minneapolis' effort to compete in the global economy and address the economic disparities that currently exist in our community. STEP-UP recruits youth least connected to the workforce, preparing them for work, introducing them to business and community leaders, and helping them gain marketable 21st century skills through a meaningful, paid summer internship at one of over 230 employers.

As STEP-UP marks 10 years and 18,000 interns matched with jobs, we celebrate the successes of our youth and recognize the invaluable contributions of our partners and leaders in making STEP-UP a national model for youth employment. Focusing on moving the needle to address disparities, 92% of STEP-UP interns were youth of color and nearly 100% came from a low-income family.

The STEP-UP model emphasizes training and preparation of interns and leveraging investment from the private sector. The most innovative aspect of this preparation is the STEP-UP Work Readiness training. Through consultation with area businesses and the Twin Cities Regional Chamber of Commerce, a Chamber recognized work readiness curriculum and credential were developed. This training requires youth to develop resumes, cover-letters and do career planning. The youth are also interviewed by area business leaders and perform role-playing activities to develop their soft skills. The training also exposes youth to high-growth industries, career pipelines and familiarizes them with the education/skills required to succeed in these areas. After completing training, many of the youth are placed in summer internships where they further develop their skills.

STEP-UP successfully pairs public and private sector dollars to offer a variety of internships – from entry level positions in the public sector supported with public funds, to more advanced positions in the corporate community with wages paid by the employer. In 2013, STEP-UP interns earned a combined \$2.8 million in wages, of which \$1.1 was funded by private employers.



Submitted by:

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HPP is a public interest law firm dedicated to preserving and expanding the supply of affordable housing.

We have been deeply involved in helping to build the FHEA as a useful tool to more effectively connect low income households and communities of color to the Region's opportunity assets. We have also been involved in working in most of the region's "racially concentrated areas of poverty," working to improve conditions in those areas and to expand housing choices for RCAP residents. We do this both at the level of influencing government policy and at the level of assisting community organizations with particular neighborhood goals.



Submitted by:

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MSPWin is taking steps to address racial disparities and the impacts of concentrated poverty by supporting systemic changes to the workforce development system—to increase the number of adults earning family-sustaining wages, especially people of color—through policy changes and grants in four issue areas:

- **Competitive workforce:** We seek increased employer engagement and investment in workforce programs so that businesses have the skilled and diverse workers they need to compete.
- **Education and training:** We seek successful outcomes for low-income and low-skill adults so that all adults have the opportunity to increase their skills.
- **Increased income:** We seek more career pathways from basic skills education to industry-recognized credentials so that all adults have the opportunity to advance toward family-sustaining wages.
- **Reduced disparities:** We seek a community commitment to reduce disparities based on race so that we have an equitable labor market.

Check out www.mspwin.org to learn more about our latest investments, policy recommendations and demographic research.

About MSPWin

Minneapolis Saint Paul Regional Workforce Innovation Network (MSPWin) is a philanthropic collaborative that formed in 2013 to strengthen the workforce in the seven-county Minneapolis Saint Paul region through 2020.

MSPWin's vision is a prosperous and equitable region where businesses have the skilled workers they need to compete and all adults have the opportunity to participate in the workforce and advance toward family-sustaining wages. To achieve this vision, MSPWin seeks opportunities to dramatically increase the number of adults earning family-sustaining wages, especially people of color.

Due to significant economic changes and demographic trends occurring now and in the future, MSPWin believes that targeted action with regards to workforce is required for our region to stay competitive and our businesses to thrive over the long-term. These actions are also necessary to carry out the shared priorities of our philanthropic organizations to reduce poverty and promote economic opportunity for all.

Members include Bush Foundation, F. R. Bigelow Foundation, Greater Twin Cities United Way, The Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Minnesota, The Joyce Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, The Minneapolis Foundation, Northwest Area Foundation, Otto Bremer Foundation, The St. Paul Foundation, and Wells Fargo Foundation. Members work together to make investments and grants, engage in public policy and dialogue, build shared solutions, and promote learning.

Submitted by:



Jim Roth, Executive Director
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MCCD is the association of the nonprofit community developers. Our mission is “to work collectively to build strong stable communities by leveraging resources for the development of people and places.” The work of MCCD and our 48 members is focused on the issue of addressing racial disparities and the impacts of concentrated poverty. MCCD and our members: Provide access to TA and capital for emerging entrepreneurs who are unable to fully access the commercial banking system; and provide access to safe affordable housing throughout the metro area. Our members build and manage affordable rental and homeownership opportunities, and provide homeownership and foreclosure prevention counseling.

We advocate for increased resources for the preservation and development of affordable housing. Our members are engaged in communities, working with them to address their affordable housing challenges. They work to improve the housing conditions in our challenged neighborhoods, while creating affordable housing opportunities in urban and suburban communities. We believe the region should have safe affordable housing options throughout, and are committed to ensuring there are such options through increased funding and local policies that support such preservation and development.

For 25 years, MCCD has been small business lender providing access to loan capital to individuals who are underserved by traditional financial markets. Historically, much of our work was in the inner-city neighborhoods of Minneapolis, with a majority of loan clients being immigrants and people of color. In 2011, with the introduction of the Open to Business program, we made a significant expansion into the rapidly diversifying suburbs. By offering our services to the contracting municipality, our city partners can offer direct services to residents and businesses. Today, Open to Business is in 48 cities across Dakota, Scott, Carver and Hennepin counties (with Anoka County to be added later this year).

Through our work, we identified poor credit -- or for recent immigrants -- no credit, as a major barrier when attempting to qualify for financing. To address this problem, we piloted our Credit Builder program in 2010. Offered in conjunction with financial literacy counseling provided by our partners, MCCD makes small (\$240-\$300) interest free loans to be paid back over a year. With successful repayments reported to the credit bureaus, we are seeing scores improve by 30 points or more and new scores averaging 646.

In 2013, MCCD closed on 145 loans – a one-year record! – totaling \$2,007,745 including 75 Credit Builder loans – also a record! For the year, MCCD leveraged \$14,627,466 in additional financing including owners’ equity. In addition, our business borrowers retained or created 261 jobs. 88% of our Credit Builder loans were made to minorities and 68% were made to women. 55% of our business loans were made to minority-owned businesses.

Submitted by:

Beverly Oliver Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer
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Saint Paul, MN, 55104



Since 1967, Model Cities has been a comprehensive human services provider and community developer, based in St Paul's Summit-University and Frogtown neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are very diverse, in terms race, ethnicity and nationality, serving as home to significant proportions of the city's total populations of color. We are committed to improving the quality of life of both residents and businesses. Our work is embedded in the idea of furthering equitable development.

For close to 50 years, we have provided direct service, supportive and affordable housing to thousands of low income households, the majority of whom are from populations of color. Since 2000, we have provided affordable commercial space and support for small businesses and businesses of color. Our MCASA Homes program—a partnership between Model Cities and Aurora/St. Anthony NDC—has successfully transitioned emerging markets households, most notably African-American, into homeownership. MCASA Homes not only improves and stabilizes communities hardest hit by foreclosures with affordable well-built single family homes, but it also provides support services designed to ensure that these home purchasers become stable home owners for the long-term. Central Exchange and BROWNstone, our transit-oriented development projects along St Paul's Central Corridor, will provide affordable housing for residents and revitalize the neighborhood's economy. The 20,000 square feet of commercial space provided in these two sites will increase opportunities for small and entrepreneurs of color to establish and retain viable businesses, create jobs and continue forward progress on our economic recovery. Our development work not only leads to permanent jobs, but also provides construction work for Section 3 contractors and residents, and over the years, many have benefitted from our development efforts.

We believe that environmental and cultural amenities are interwoven in the fabric of healthy communities and these should be acknowledged and celebrated. And so, in our recent projects, we have decided to celebrate our area's cultural and artistic diversity, particularly the role of African Americans in the rail system, by incorporating public art and green spaces as an integral component of our development work. This is an excellent and unique way to engage the broader community while at the same time highlighting historical and cultural elements unique to the area in which we work.

Overall, the investments that Model Cities is making sends a message that our community is one where all people can thrive, where visitors can gain knowledge about a distinctive community, and where a wide variety of businesses and organizations will be successful.

Submitted by:

James Wilkinson, Supervising Attorney
Mid-Minnesota Legal Assistance
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Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid (MMLA) is a law firm that, without charge to clients, protects rights and improves lives of the Region's most vulnerable people, focusing on safety, dignity, shelter, health care, equality, income and education. MMLA litigates, educates and advocates for improved public policies in areas critical to clients' immediate needs and their future success. Nearly all clients are extremely poor, more than half are women, the majority are people of color and many are new immigrants. MMLA has projects focusing on the rights of seniors, youth and people with disabilities. Racially concentrated areas of poverty and the "green zones" set out in the Choice, Place & Opportunity report are home to many of the clients MMLA serves. MMLA addresses disparities and supports equity across its whole range of work.

MMLA's advocacy protects clients' interests in habitable and affordable housing by litigating to enforce tenants' and homeowners' rights. Clients who face problems with the IRS, creditors and public assistance programs get expert legal help to increase income, protect assets and obtain health coverage. People with disabilities and others in transition from welfare to work have their rights to effective employment programs enforced. New immigrants are helped to protect or improve their immigration status. MMLA enforces the right of clients with limited English to have agencies use inclusive language practices. Students with disabilities are represented to increase success in schools. MMLA comprehensively addresses domestic violence, working for clients in family and juvenile court and the immigration systems. Staff advocate for effective social and independent living services for children, seniors and people with disabilities. MMLA takes on cases to protect the civil rights and dignity of people in the fields of housing and public services.

In all fields, staff members provide client, community and professional education. MMLA works with partners across all these issues to improve local, state and federal laws and policies affecting clients.

See www.mylegalaid.org and www.lawhelpmn.org. New intake calls: (612) 334-5970.

Submitted by:

Leon Rodrigues, Chief Diversity Officer
Minnesota State Colleges & Universities
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Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

This contribution is a response to the request sent from Chair Susan Haigh of the Metropolitan Council for organizations and agencies to submit information about steps that have been taken to address racial disparities and the impact of concentrated poverty in the Twin Cities.

Since its founding, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) has focused on access to education, especially eliminating any achievement disparities of its students, across racial groups. This year the MnSCU system, under the leadership of Chancellor Steven Rosenstone, has set aggressive goals for addressing the disparity in achievement of students of color and white students on its campuses.

The MnSCU board, chancellor, presidents and key staff have been actively studying the problem and have made this a priority. MnSCU is intent on addressing achievement gap by 2018, and has agreed to the following goals:

- Eliminate the participation gap
- Reduce the persistence gap by one-half, and
- Reduce the completion gap by one quarter and; the elimination of all gaps in ten years, 2023

It will be challenging to meet these goals but given Minnesota's growing and pressing need for an educated workforce and the fact that underrepresented communities are the fastest growing populations in the state, we believe we must be aggressive. The key metrics to be used by MnSCU as a measure of their success will include the following:

- Student diversity: percent of students of color
- Student success: students of color compared to white student on persistence rates (second fall)
- Completion rates: students of color compared to white students
- Campus diversity climate: student opinion of the extent to which the college or university promotes engagement with diverse populations.
- Increase in employees representing diverse communities

These measures are part of the performance evaluation for college and university presidents.

The MnSCU system's enrollment of students of color has grown over the last 9 years to 83% and it serves more Minnesota students of color than all higher education institutions combined. While the gap between white students and students of color in the system has narrowed by 4.2%, the gap that remains is relatively small, at around 2%, but the participation of some populations such as American Indians, are noticeably lower than average for students of color and are in need of prompt attention.

An area that the MnSCU system is particularly trying to address is the completion rates for students of color. We are confident that it is moving in the right direction even if progress in these goal areas is inherently incremental.

Submitted by:

Tawanna Black, Director
Northside Funders Group
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The Northside Funders Group (NFG) is a collective of funders aligning their investments to catalyze comprehensive, sustainable change in North Minneapolis. We are one of the only place-based funding collaboratives in the nation. Founded in 2008, the NFG has grown to include 19 members, representing private, corporate, community, and youth philanthropy, as well as public sector investors including the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

We are committed to advancing equity for North Minneapolis residents by learning, leveraging, influencing and investing in ways that accelerate impact. Our work is centered around five priority focus areas:

- Growing Income & Assets
- Academic Success
- Thriving Businesses
- Health & Wellness
- Building Social Capital



Submitted by:

Alan Arthur, President and CEO
Aeon
901 North 3rd Street, Suite 150
Minneapolis, MN, 55401

Aeon exists so that every Minnesotan has a Home and is interconnected within community. We provide 2,106 homes in 36 properties within the Metropolitan Area to more than 4,000 people seeking affordable housing.

- 86 percent of households served by Aeon earned very low or extremely low incomes.
- 25 percent of homes serve formerly homeless individuals.
- Aeon's Resident Connections is available to more than 1,100 residents to stabilize their lives and help create home.

South Quarter: Transforming an Urban Core-Through a partnership between Aeon and Hope Community, the intersection of Franklin and Portland Avenues is being completely transformed. In its entirety, The South Quarter developments will create or preserve more than 300 apartment homes and home ownership options and provide new retail business and community spaces

At South Quarter we continue to engage with the community through urban agriculture to show people how to grow and use healthy vegetables to improve nutrition and health; and also complete the 12-year positive community transformation of an intersection that has been rife with drug-dealing and prostitution for at least three decades, by finishing the last of the four corners.

The Landing: Meeting the need for senior housing- Aeon is helping meet the growing demand for senior housing by constructing a high quality, sustainable development in Chaska. The Landing creates 54 affordable one-bedroom apartment homes for seniors, offering Chaska residents the opportunity to age within the community.

Refinancing Aeon's Portfolio: Aeon will refinance several properties in its portfolio in order to complete a moderate to substantial rehabilitation at each site. Aeon is committed to ensuring that its developments remain affordable and offer quality places to live. Preservation of existing properties, which are an integral part of the neighborhoods in which they are located, is more cost effective than constructing new buildings.

As Aeon creates affordable apartment homes, it invests millions of dollars in undercapitalized neighborhoods and transforms blighted areas into vibrant places to live and work. Our mission meets a critical need while strengthening lives and communities.



Submitted by:

Jeanne Aamodt, Customer Relations Manager
Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55126

Minnesota Olmstead Plan – MnDOT has made ADA compliance a priority several years ago and has greatly improved accessibility since then.

- Complete Streets – MnDOT has adopted a policy to ensure that the needs of all (for travel along and across our roads) are considered whenever we have projects that affect the state highway system.
- Arterial BRT Projects – Will improve the speed and reliability of transit service on some of the Twin Cities most heavily used transit corridors (such as Snelling Av., and West 7th in St. Paul - both state highways).
- MnDOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Workforce Collaborative – The Collaborative consists of eight stakeholder groups, including MnDOT and the FHWA, committed to delivering transformational, sustainable change. Project teams work to balance multiple interests to improve participation of DBEs and diverse workers on MnDOT projects.
- MnDOT's Seeds Program – Provides paid college-level student-worker positions to highly-motivated minority or economically disadvantaged college students; students who are recently separated veterans; or students with disabilities.
- MnDOT's Phoenix Program – This is an internship program for high school seniors who are attending Project Lead the Way. PLW is a national program that brings innovative curriculum to middle and high school students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.
- Mentor Protégé Program – Assists in establishing business partnerships between prime contractors and DBE firms. A Mentor/Protégé arrangement is created when an experienced company/individual (Mentor) provides assistance and training to a DBE (Protégé).
- Heading Home: Minnesota's Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness – As part of this statewide interagency effort, MnDOT is working to understand where transportation is a barrier to accessing services/resources and creating a plan to help address these issues.
- MnCARRS – This collaboration was created to build recruitment partnerships between MnDOT and communities that are underrepresented. Through these efforts more than 30 minority communities members were referred and placed; among them, four from the disability community.
- Minnesota Council on Transportation Access – MnDOT is a partner and active council member of MCOTA, an organization established by the Minnesota Legislature to study, evaluate, oversee, and make recommendations to improve the coordination, availability, accessibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and safety of transportation services provided to the transit public.

Submitted by:



Mary Tingerthal, Commissioner
Minnesota Housing
400 Sibley Street
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Minnesota Housing finances affordable housing for low- and moderate-income Minnesotans while fostering strong communities and provides a vast array of housing choices. In the homeownership area, Minnesota Housing allocated \$10.5 million for two initiatives to increase homeownership for traditionally underserved populations. The first effort is the Enhanced Financial Capacity Homeownership Initiative. While we have one of the best homeowner training systems of any state, many households need additional financial empowerment services to help them be successful homeowners. This new initiative will award \$500,000 to support community organizations that will help communities of color reach their homeownership goals. In addition, the agency has created the Targeted Mortgage Opportunity Program. This program will provide \$8 million in mortgage loans to households that have received Homeownership Capacity services and homeownership training, but still have barriers to homeownership under traditional mortgage programs. Both of these programs are being developed with input from community organizations that work with traditionally underserved populations. They expand on our traditional focus of providing financing to support successful homeownership and are will launch in the summer of 2014.

On the rental front, our Qualified Allocation Plan places an emphasis on economic integration and we've steadily increased the number of points available to encourage development of affordable housing in high income areas of the state. The most recent proposed version of the QAP increased points to encourage development in areas out of reach for low income families and create a range of housing choices throughout the region and the state.

We also have programs to address housing concerns that disproportionately affect communities of color. For example, people of color are incarcerated in disproportionately large numbers. In order to create greater stability for people who are reentering the community and reduce recidivism, we have created a pilot voucher program targeted at providing resources and breaking down barriers for ex-offenders. We have also created a new pilot program that provides rental vouchers for highly mobile families with school aged children to provide safe, stable, affordable housing and improve school performance. In the Metro Area, this effort aligns with Northside Achievement Zone and Saint Paul Promise Neighborhoods, to ensure that housing is connected to other family support and services.

Homelessness is another issue that has a disproportionate impact on communities of color. For example, African American youth represent 40% of the homeless youth population, while making up 7% of the total number of youth in the state. The new statewide plan to end homeless is a step in the right direction to eliminate homeless in Minnesota. Among the goals and strategies, we aim to end homelessness for families and unaccompanied youth by 2020.



St. Paul

Submitted by:

William L. Collins Jr., Chief Executive Officer
YWCA Saint Paul
375 Selby Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55102

YWCA programs in four core areas help people create positive change in their lives, respond to urgent community needs, and produce enduring benefits to the community

Housing & Supportive Services. YWCA combats homelessness by providing affordable housing and services for homeless families. More than providing a safe place to live, programs empower families to navigate crisis, stabilize their lives, build skills, decrease dependency on emergency services and keep families united and safe. Core programs: Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Rapid Re-housing.

Youth Development. Within our walls, youth are safe and supported as they overcome challenges, build new skills, gain experiences and develop the habits and attitudes that help them succeed in the classroom, workplace and community. Core programs: Youth Achievers Program, IMPACT and YW READS.

Employment & Economic Development. Programs equip hard to employ people with the skills to support self-sufficiency via employment. Core programs: YW Works; Driven to Succeed,; & YW JOBS.

Health & Wellness. In a community-driven, inclusive setting, people of all ages are empowered to live an active lifestyle, prevent and manage chronic medical conditions, reduce stress and grow strong in body and mind. Outreach and initiatives keep services accessible.

Submitted by:

Andriana Abariotes, Executive Director
Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation
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Saint Paul, MN 55104



Twin Cities LISC leads and supports comprehensive, collaborative and community-driven development throughout the region. This approach advances our vision of a region where all residents, regardless of geographic location or community of origin, are safe and healthy; can work and have opportunities to build wealth; live in quality homes that are affordable; are able to buy their necessities in strong, local marketplaces; have access to vibrant arts, recreational programs and usable open space; and are engaged in civic discourse and policy decisions that affects their daily lives.

We advance this work by 1) leveraging our core strength and investments in physical development to achieve visible results in neighborhoods; 2) ensuring economic opportunities and benefits are reached by low and moderate income families; and 3) maximizing the collective impact of many partners by working effectively together for lasting community transformation, regional prosperity and racial equity; all resulting in:

Improved Neighborhoods: Drawing from our national resources, we directly invest in the feasibility and financing of catalytic real estate projects that improve the built environment of a neighborhood and spur additional investment and market building. We ensure the success of these projects by investing in the organizations and partnerships that make these projects a reality. We also invest our staff resources providing assistance with project structuring and leveraging other financing and support.

Improved Lives: We directly invest in the financial stability of low income families through our Financial Opportunity Centers (FOC), a powerful service delivery strategy that helps families become financially stable through improvements in long-term job retention, net income, credit score and net worth. The centers provide individuals and families with services across three critical and interconnected areas: 1) Employment Placement, Job Retention and Skill Improvement; 2) Financial Coaching and Counseling; 3) Accessing Income Supports.

More diverse people working better together: We are actively supporting a more collaborative way of working in neighborhoods and across the region by 1) supporting regular peer-learning convenings, 2) utilizing a variety of communications channels to share learnings and to promote policy and systems change, and 3) building cross-sector relationships with partners in the arts, education and health sectors to improve quality of life.

Over our 26 year history Twin Cities LISC has invested \$477 million in grants, loans and equity, which has translated into the following results for the region:

- Over 11,800 affordable homes and apartments produced;
- Over 1.6 million square feet of commercial and community facilities developed;
- \$1.8 billion in total development costs leveraged;
- 4,400 individuals served by the Financial Opportunity Centers;
- 140 professionals of color have entered the community development field.

Submitted by:

Caren Dewar, Executive Director
Urban Land Institute Minnesota
81 South 9th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402

ULI MN partners to implement tools and strategies in support of thriving livable communities and supports the Regional Council of Mayors around key regional initiatives. We provide technical assistance communities and corridors focused on equitable development, e.g., Southwest Corridor Community Works, Prospect North Partnership, and suburban communities. In addition, we are partnering with the University of Minnesota to identify tools to connect culturally sensitive housing and communities. This work will inform our Housing Policy Toolbox located at http://www.housingpolicy.org/toolbox/index_MN.html

ULI Minnesota is committed to supporting equitable development and regional policies critical to future economic prosperity.

Submitted by:

Louis Jambois, President
Saint Paul Port Authority
380 Saint Peters Street, Suite 850
Saint Paul, MN 55102



For more than 82 years, the Saint Paul Port Authority has created sustainable growth opportunities for industry in Saint Paul. Industry contributes greatly to the cost of city services and amenities, and provides the easiest entry with the highest wages for workers with a high school diploma and additional technical training. In other words, industry offers a path out of poverty.

Poverty threatens the quality of life that makes Saint Paul so special. Nearly one-fourth of Saint Paul's population — or 67,000 residents — live below the poverty line, which is an annual income of \$23,850 for a family of four. Fighting poverty helps make our community stronger and the best way to do that is to employ people.

Industrial businesses provide jobs that pay well, which, in turn, enable people to reinvest in their homes, neighborhoods and communities. This domino effect helps strengthen public schools and community arts and recreation amenities. In essence, the positive economic impact of industrial development encompasses the entire Saint Paul community.

Based on a recent study we commissioned, the average Saint Paul job pays \$43,000 annually. The average industrial job pays \$47,000 annually. The average industrial job in a Port Authority business center pays nearly \$50,000 plus benefits.

To that end, we have redeveloped polluted and/or abandoned land in Saint Paul into 21 business centers. These centers today are home to 555 businesses, employing more than 24,000 people in good-paying jobs. In order to build in our centers, businesses must agree to pay their employees at least \$11 an hour plus benefits. The average weighted hourly production wage in our business centers is about \$20 an hour. These employers also must agree that 70 percent of their new hires over the life of our workforce agreements be Saint Paul residents.

The Port and its many partners work daily to close the educational, employment and income disparities between persons of color and the white population. All of our programs—including our New Markets Tax Credits financing for expanding businesses in economically disadvantaged areas—are geared to helping people with a least a high school diploma find good paying jobs that support families. We partner with all of the area technical and community colleges, as well as our business customers to ease the transition from the educational to the work environment.

Our business centers are designed to fit into the surrounding neighborhoods and provide job opportunities along major bus transit routes.

Sia Her, executive director of the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans, noted "we commend the Port Authority for the work it is doing in building meaningful relationships with a broad and diverse group of stakeholders. We look forward to working with the Port to ensure greater access to resources and economic opportunities within the Port's purview."

Submitted by:

Jennifer Franklin, Program Developer
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation
451 Lexington Parkway North
Saint Paul, MN 55104



The Amherst H. Wilder Foundation is employing many strategies to eliminate racial disparities and increase equity throughout our varied work – through applied social research, direct services, and community engagement. Some examples include:

Research and Trends:

- Minnesota Compass – A statewide indicators project that tracks trends in housing, health, economy and workforce, education, and other topics. The initiative provides breakdowns for age, race, place, income and gender to shine a light on disparities and inform programming and policies to ameliorate this problem.
- Other Applied Social Research – A host of other in-depth research around early childhood learning, housing and homelessness, such as the triennial Statewide Homeless Survey; studies on the achievement gap, social determinants of health, and others.

Training and Practice:

- The Clinical Institute – Wilder developed the Clinical Training Institute to train and coach mental health practitioners and professionals from cultural and ethnic minority communities. The Institute offers opportunities to learn about community mental health including specialized training in serving diverse urban populations and immigrant/refugee populations.
- The Social Healing Center – The Center offers an intentional therapeutic community that is responsive to unmet cultural and service needs in the Southeast Asian community. The Center creates a new access point for clients through a range of western and culturally-designed ways of healing, learning, and community-building. The Center has a full team of bilingual/bicultural Hmong, Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Karen staff who reflect its community participants.

Community Engagement:

- Community Initiatives – Several projects are taking a collective-impact and research-based approach to address deeply entrenched disparities. Examples include The Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood, which is working to address education disparities in a 250-block area of Saint Paul's Frogtown and Summit University Neighborhoods, and the African American Babies Coalition, which is a coalition of educators, service providers, and community advocates working to educate about early brain development in the African American community.
- Community Equity Pipeline (CEP) – This pilot project builds capacity and social capital by training people in communities of color and connecting them with the advocacy and legislative process to better address disparities in their communities.

These are just a few of the ways the Wilder Foundation is working to eliminate disparities and increase equity across the Twin Cities, to bolster our economic vitality and maintain a good quality of life in our region.



Submitted by:

Colleen Carey, President
The Cornerstone Group
7661 Bush Lake Drive
Bloomington, MN 55438

The Cornerstone Group is committed to creating healthy, resilient places for all people, regardless of race or income. We are working to develop new regional models for including affordable and market rate housing in our community development efforts. We also believe in incorporating art and artists, nature and open space, healthy food and healthy living and lifelong learning into our projects. Building beautiful buildings is not enough--we need to create healthy places for ALL people, places that contribute to the health and well-being of people and the planet.



Submitted by:

Patricia Brady, Director
Ramsey County Workforce Solutions
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North Saint Paul, MN 55109

Construction Hiring Connection Launched by Light RailWorks - Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, the employment and training department of Ramsey County, created a unique recruitment and hiring tool for the construction industry to be used by contractors. The tool, called Construction Hiring Connection (CHC), provides Metropolitan area contractors a database of skilled trades' workers from which minority and women can be easily identified and hired. Contractors that work on publicly funded construction projects are obligated to hire skilled minorities and women for these construction projects, and CHC is providing both workers and contractors an easy way to connect. The Metropolitan Council made this development possible when it invited Workforce Solutions to devise the LRTWorks database that has grown into CHC.

Everybody In (EI) – EI is a cross-sector, regional collaboration working to reduce racial employment disparities in the Minneapolis/St. Paul region by 2020. The work derives from a report that was produced in 2011 by the Ramsey County Blue Ribbon Commission detailing the extent of the gaps in employment facing the metro area. The City of Minneapolis, the City of St. Paul, several Workforce Investment Boards, and the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners joined forces to create equity in employment in the region. The EI Implementation Team includes over 40 representatives from the business community, local governments, state government, nonprofit organizations, community economic development organizations, foundations, education, and community members. Lead partners include the Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board, Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, the City of Saint Paul and the City of Minneapolis all of whom have contributed resources and staff support to the project.

Cultural Intervention - Ramsey County Public Assistance Employment Services continues to see a need for work to help reduce educational and employment disparities by creating multiple partnerships with community partners, such as American Indian Family Center, YWCA, and the Network for the Development of Children of African Descent, and community consultants to address culturally specific issues. Each partner received allocations to create specific plans to target disparities by providing culturally specific workshops that help people identify with their own culture, heal multiple years of trauma, and achieve self-sufficiency through education and employment. All of the service models are culturally specific, holistic and include home visiting models, mentorship models, cognitive skills development, literacy, and full family services. Each agency is rooted in helping families become best parents. Addressing parenting and family stability ultimately results in reaching education and employment outcomes. Each agency has a clear understanding that historical trauma has a direct impact on disparities and is working with families to help them heal.

Submitted by:



Myron Orfield, Director
Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity, University of Minnesota Law School
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The Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity (IMO) investigates ways to promote access to affordable housing, good jobs, high-performing schools, and high quality public services for all Americans. A core purpose for IMO's work is to ensure that all people have access to opportunity, especially people of color, the poor, and the disadvantaged – groups that have often been negatively affected by public policies and private actions in the past. IMO's work promotes regional approaches to policymaking, what we believe to be the best way to help places where disadvantaged populations live develop in ways that promote access to opportunity.

Recently, IMO has studied subsidized housing in the Twin Cities; racial and social change in developed suburbs in the 50 largest metro areas; public school open enrollment programs in Twin Cities schools; the impacts of urban sprawl; regional approaches to fair share housing, land-use planning, economic development and transportation; the performance of charter schools; the effects of the credit and foreclosure crisis on people of color and the poor; racial profiling in Minnesota; and transit equity. Institute staff regularly work with public officials, non-profit organizations and activist, parent and resident groups in these policy areas.

IMO's work is available at www.law.umn.edu/metro.

Examples of IMO's recent work:

- An update of “Communities in Crisis: Race and Mortgage Lending in the Twin Cities” (2009) – A report using recent Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data on lending in the Twin Cities to analyze racial disparities in lending practices in the Twin Cities.
- “Reforming Subsidized Housing Policy in the Twin Cities to Cut Costs and Reduce Segregation”, February 2014 – A report that documented the disproportionate share of subsidized housing located in low-income, predominantly nonwhite neighborhoods in the Twin Cities and analyzed city/suburb construction cost differences.
- “Charter Schools in the Twin Cities: 2013 Update” – An update of two earlier IMO studies on segregation and student performance in charter schools in the Twin Cities.
- “America's Racially Diverse Suburbs: Opportunities and Challenges,” – Research (published in Housing Policy Debate) that examined increasing racial diversity of suburban areas in the 50 largest metropolitan areas of the United States and analyzed the stability of racially diverse areas.
- “Open Enrollment and Racial Segregation in the Twin Cities: 2000 – 2010,” – A study of the effects of Minnesota's Open Enrollment program on racial and economic segregation in the 69 school districts in the Twin Cities between 2000 and 2010.
- *Region: Planning the Future of the Twin Cities*, University of Minnesota Press – A book documenting recent demographic trends in the Twin Cities and regional policies in the areas of regional land use planning, environmental policy, local fiscal issues, racial integration and segregation, transportation and jobs, and regional governance.

Submitted by:



Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor
City of Saint Paul
390 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Boulevard West
Saint Paul, MN 55

Eliminating racial disparities—in education, employment and wealth—has been at the top of Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman’s agenda since his election in 2005. Recognizing that the disparities themselves are rooted in systemic gaps, the City’s work has been to address the capacity of our most significant systems to more effectively engage people of color both within the racially concentrated areas of poverty and in the city as a whole. Key areas of work include:

Out of School Time Learning and Youth Employment—Recognizing that our children are out of school 80 percent of the time, the City has launched **Sprockets**, an extensive partnership designed to surround students with mentoring, tutoring and other skill-building opportunities at the local public library, recreation center, house of worship or community center.

For high school students, **Right Track** has been designed to create a progression of employment opportunities from working at a golf course concession to securing a summer internship at a Fortune 500 company in downtown Saint Paul. In its second summer, Right Track provides a diverse talent pipeline of work-ready skilled youth.

Digital Inclusion—In addition to providing accessible free Wi-Fi and over 400 computers, the Saint Paul Public Library supports job seekers with a range of services designed to strengthen their ability to secure employment. The **Northstar Digital Literacy Project** offers on-line assessments and certificates of mastery. Classes in computer and other technology skills build capacity in key areas, and one-on-one coaching helps individuals strengthen their resumes and prepare for their interviews.

Job Creation—In partnership with the Saint Paul Port Authority and a host of private commercial/industrial developers, the City is emphasizing the creation of employment opportunities in health care, manufacturing and transportation/distribution. At the same time, Saint Paul College and a number of non-profit partners are creating customized job training opportunities specifically designed for those jobs.

Small Business Development—The City is increasingly using its role as a development partner to leverage opportunities for small women- and minority-owned businesses—from awarding \$4.8 million in contracts in 2008 to \$104 million in 2013. That translated, in part, to 1.5 million hours of construction labor for minorities and women last year.

Entertainment and Cultural Development—Arts and culture represent one of Saint Paul’s strongest economic sectors, offering employment at all skill levels. Despite the recession, the City and its partners have made critical capital investments—Ordway Theatre expansion, Lowertown Regional Ballpark, Como Zoo—to ensure the growing vitality of the city’s economy.

Transit—Linking people to jobs and opportunity throughout the region—and bringing the region to cultural and retail services in Saint Paul—is the central focus of the emerging regional transit network. Construction of the Green Line through Saint Paul has been linked with building new affordable housing at station areas, developing cultural attractions along the line and renewing a focus on job development in the West Midway Industrial Area.

Each of these initiatives—and so many more—is distinguished by the wide array of partners who bring their knowledge, skills and resources to the table. Whether representing other units of government or a specific neighborhood or cultural community, all share a commitment to building economic prosperity that is deeply rooted and broadly shared among all those who call Saint Paul home.

Submitted by:

African Career, Education & Resources, INC, Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Center, Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, Community Stabilization Project, Frogtown Neighborhood Association, Hope Community, Housing Preservation Project, La Asamblea de Derechos Civiles, Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers, Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing, Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing, Native American Community Development Institute, The New American Academy, Northside Community Reinvestment Coalition, Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, Organizing Apprenticeship Project, Powderhorn Residents Group, Minnesotans Standing Together to End Poverty, and West Side Community Organization

The above organizations have been working together to ensure that the wisdom and expertise of low-wealth communities, communities of color, and the indigenous community are reflected in decision-making surrounding equitable opportunity.

We have been united by our recognition that too often resource and policy decisions which affect low-income communities and communities of color are made without significant input from those communities. One way in which we have been working to change this pattern has been through engagement with the Metropolitan Council in its creation of this document. We believe that engaging with the Metropolitan Council in its development of our region's FHEA is essential to the health of our communities and of our entire region. To that end we have convened community based partners from within racially concentrated areas of poverty, hosted a dinner and dialogue series with community partners and Metropolitan Council members, and developed community engagement and policy recommendations for investing in these geographies.

We have been pleased to see that involvement result in an agreement by the Metropolitan Council to host cross-jurisdictional public engagement gatherings in all racially concentrated areas of poverty and naming institutional racism in the final FHEA document as one of the historic barriers to opportunity for low income communities of color in our region.

Although it is essential to have this involvement in the front end of shaping the narrative and defining the problems, equally as important is what comes next – now that the “assessment” is done and policy and investment plans need to be created to address our region's growing racially concentrated areas of poverty or, as we call them, our communities.

This process continues to present the opportunity to bring together multiple stakeholders across jurisdictions and geographies, including the residents most affected by these disparities, to have honest discussions about the complex factors and history that create and reinforce racial inequality in the Twin Cities and to rethink the way we go about addressing the problems of race, place and poverty.

To that end we are committed to working with the Metropolitan Council and other stakeholders to develop comprehensive blue prints for equitable investments in all of our region's racially concentrated areas of poverty.

Submitted by:

Katie Clark Sieben, Commissioner
Department of Employment and Economic Development
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Saint Paul, MN, 55101



The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is committed to addressing racial disparity in employment, increasing skills development, and improving access to new employment opportunities for Minnesotans experiencing disproportionately high levels of unemployment and underemployment.

FastTRAC (training, resources, and credentialing) is geared toward preparing people for living-wage jobs with room for advancement. State, local, and national partners align resources to create both meaningful long-term outcomes for adults and lasting efficiencies across state systems.

The Adult Workforce Competitive Grant Program funds organizations providing training to people in targeted populations, including communities of color. Individuals making use of services funded by this program obtain, retain, and advance in unsubsidized employment or complete training along an educational path leading to an industry-recognized credential.

Minnesota Youth Workforce Development Competitive Grant Program seeks to provide work experience and to assist economically disadvantaged, deaf, hard-of-hearing, and deaf-blind individuals in job skills training. These funds provide vital experience and guidance to help prepare Minnesota's neediest young people to succeed.

Low-Income Worker Training Program aims to help individuals with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines receive training and additional skills in order to move up the career ladder to higher paying jobs and economic self-sufficiency.

Workforce Centers are Minnesota's job seeker hubs that are both free and open to the public. Each of these locations offers computer access, workshops for job seekers, job search assistance, and key networking opportunities. 13 workforce centers are located in the Twin Cities metro area.

State Small Business Credit Initiative programs are aimed at promoting small business development. DEED implemented an Emerging Entrepreneurs Fund that primarily supports micro-enterprise and small businesses with less than 50 employees. This program targets minority- and women-owned businesses and those located in economically distressed areas.

Business Development Competitive Grant Program provides grants to non-profits that provide technical assistance to underserved populations, focusing on small and emerging businesses in economically distressed areas.

Urban Initiative Loan Program was created to support the growth of minority-owned and operated businesses and to create jobs in economically distressed areas of the Twin Cities. DEED provides grant funds to non-profits that provide loans to startup and expanding businesses.

Small Business Development Centers are sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration. DEED's program in the Twin Cities is based at the University of St. Thomas. One of its satellite centers is the Metropolitan Economic Development Association, which works exclusively with minority entrepreneurs and small businesses.



Submitted by:

Russ Adams, Executive Director
Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
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The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability is a coalition of 33 organizations that work together to advance racial, economic and environmental justice in the way growth and development occurs in the Twin Cities region.

The Alliance believes that all communities deserve access to the Twin Cities region's many resources and opportunities. We partnered with the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs to convene a table of community-based organizations to provide deep and meaningful insight on how metropolitan opportunity was defined and ensure low-income people and people of color had a voice in shaping this important work.

Racial and economic disparities are a threat to Minnesota's cultural and economic prosperity. We work with our allied and member groups to reform public policies and practices to advance equity and to position low-income people and people of color as the experts on their own communities and experiences:

The Alliance, the Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing and Nexus Community Partners serve as the Corridors of Opportunity Community Engagement Team. Through that initiative, our region has invested almost \$1 million in grassroots groups rooted in communities of color and other underrepresented communities. Those community-led engagement efforts will ensure that the people most impacted by transitway development projects are actively involved in planning for and benefiting from them.

- As part of the Move MN coalition, an unprecedented effort seeking increased investment in Minnesota's comprehensive transportation system, the Alliance is working with our community partners to call for equal investment in bus and rail, expanded operating hours and frequency, and targeted local economic development for residents and neighborhoods hit hardest by the economic downturn.
- As one of the leaders of the HIRE Minnesota campaign, the Alliance is working with multiple government agencies on road, bridge, transitway and stadium construction projects to ensure a fair share of the jobs go to people of color.
- The Alliance aligns community-based groups and institutional partners to ensure major planning decisions and public projects, such as the North Minneapolis Greenway and the Central Corridor LRT, result in tangible community benefits.

Submitted by:



Repa Mekha, President and CEO
Nexus Community Partners
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As a community building intermediary, Nexus Community Partners implements and supports initiatives that advance equity and sustainable change for communities by focusing on three areas:

1. **Community Engagement:** Build and strengthen a community engagement infrastructure that fosters human, social and cultural capital.
2. **Asset building:** Support better-trained, more confident and more successful asset builders who are able to generate greater individual and community wealth.
3. **Connecting to regional initiatives and opportunities:** Link neighborhoods to regional institutions, decision-making and opportunities.

Our expertise lies in bridging these 3 areas to ensure that people participate in the economic, civic and social activities that contribute towards improving their communities and advancing racial, social and economic equity. In addition to providing financial support and capacity building expertise to individuals and organizations, Nexus is advancing equity and community engagement through 3 major initiatives:

- **Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute (BCLI).** The BCLI cultivates leadership from traditionally underrepresented communities to be a part of policy and systems change from the inside. Nexus believes that a key component of an equity agenda is having decision making structures representative of the communities in which they serve. The BCLI identifies, places and trains communities of color and other underrepresented communities on locally appointed boards and commissions that influence and impact equity in the areas of economic development, health, transportation, housing, and employment.
- **Transit and Equity.** Nexus is working closely with community, government, and philanthropy to anchor equity through transit planning and development along the Bottineau Corridor or Blue Line. Nexus' "Bottineau Transit-way Engagement Initiative," a multi-sector initiative, is designed to engage underrepresented communities in planning and development processes to ensure transit-related policies and opportunities benefit their community.
- **Building the Field of Community Engagement (BTF).** BTF is designed to magnify and elevate the power of community engagement (CE) to change the way problems are solved and resources are invested. Led by Nexus, the initiative includes five additional organizations: Casa de Esperanza, Cultural Wellness Center, Hope Community, Lyndale Neighborhood Association, and Native American Community Development Institute. The partners produced a film, "Community at the Center," which discusses the principles and values of CE, and they host the "Engaged Learning Series" – community conversations on critical CE topics.

As an active member of the Partnership for Regional Opportunity Policy Board and of the Corridors of Opportunity Community Engagement Team, Nexus is committed to helping community-based organizations, government and other stakeholders, better address issues of inequity in their communities.

Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Submitted by:

Ed Goetz, Director
Center for Urban and Regional Affairs
330 Humphrey Center, 301 19th Avenue South
Saint Paul, MN, 55455

The Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) envisions neighborhoods and communities throughout the Twin Cities where people are organized to identify and tackle local issues, building vital communities that value full participation and embody racial equity and economic justice. For the past two years we've been working alongside our partner the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability to support, challenge and strengthen the Metropolitan Council process to create this FHEA document.

CURA connects the resources of the University of Minnesota with the interests and needs of urban communities and the region for the benefit of all. CURA is founded on the belief that partnership between the university and the community is mutually beneficial. CURA pursues its urban and regional mission by facilitating and supporting connections between state and local governments, communities, nonprofit organizations, and relevant resources at the University, including faculty and students from appropriate campuses, colleges, centers or departments.

Central to our work is building and supporting an environment that links the skills and wisdom present within every community with the specialized knowledge and academic discipline of a vital urban university. Our center is home to a diverse array of community programs that together provide a rich, and unique blend of leadership, resources and technical support available to local communities at no cost. Through our research, community focused programs and collaborative partnerships; CURA's programs support innovative community designed solutions that promote equity and opportunity in communities throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan region.

These programs include:

1. The Kris Nelson Community Based Research Program, named in honor of its founding director, uses an engaged and collaborative research model that builds partnerships between community-based organizations or suburban government agencies and the University of Minnesota. The research and technical needs of community organizations are matched with student research assistants to carry out community-defined and guided projects.
2. The Community Geographic Information Systems (CGIS) program provides GIS data access, technical assistance, and educational and training opportunities to neighborhood groups, community organizations, and local government agencies in Minnesota.
3. The Artist and Neighborhood Partnership Initiative Small Grant program makes technical assistance and small grants (up to \$10,000) in support of community-based efforts that build partnerships that lead to increased engagement, power and influence of community members affected by racial, social and economic disparities.
4. The Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing program builds the capacity of residents and place-based organizations to successfully take on local and regional concerns by developing the skills of their organizers and leaders.

ITASCAproject

Submitted by:

Richard Davis, Chair
The Itasca Project
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The Itasca Project is an employer-led civic alliance whose mission is to build a thriving economy and quality of life and to reduce and eliminate socioeconomic disparities in the Greater MSP region. We focus our work on three areas: enhancing quality job growth, improving education, and advancing a comprehensive and aligned transportation system. All our work in those three areas is framed within the context of reducing and eliminating socioeconomic disparities.

We welcome the MetCouncil's increased focus on addressing these disparities, and the assessment it presents in "Choice, Place and Opportunity: An equity assessment of the Twin Cities region". We believe this added knowledge and emphasis from a regional partner will help us in our goals of closing socioeconomic disparities, and we are eager to support the MetCouncil as it works to address racial disparities and the impacts of concentrated poverty in the Greater Minneapolis-St Paul region.

The timing of this assessment is particularly fortuitous from our point of view, as the Itasca Project has recently elevated our focus on socioeconomic disparities. We have assembled a taskforce made up of private, public and non-profit sector leaders, charged with identifying specific, near-term steps employers can take to close the employment and labor force participation gaps between whites and people of color in the region. The group has been meeting for over a year, and is currently working on defining the regional "business case" for addressing disparities, catalyzing broad regional leadership commitment and elevating best practices.

The Itasca Project was launched over ten years ago with the objective of directing the collective efforts of our business and community leaders on the long term, strategic issues that impact our regional competitiveness and quality of life. Our underlying belief is that we can maximize impact by acting regionally, working collaboratively, and focusing on the most critical needs of the region. We believe that one of the most critical issues facing our region, and one that will take a long-term approach to solve, are the sharp socioeconomic disparities existing across our region, to which the MetCouncil's assessment draws attention. We welcome the leadership, expertise and partnership of the MetCouncil as we work to eliminate socioeconomic disparities in our region.

Submitted by:



Eleonore Wesslerle, Food Justice Project Coordinator
West Side Community Organization (WSCO)
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The West Side Community Organization (WSCO) is committed to setting organizational priorities based on the priorities of the community. When West Side residents of the major affordable housing complexes on the West Side raised their desire to grow food for their families, WSCO staff facilitated programming and communication with the housing staff to create community gardening on site. Notable for this document is that these are residents of the portion of the West Side designated as a "Racially Concentrated Area of Poverty." These residents are majority an immigrant population, mainly from East Asia and East Africa. For them, the term "gardening" does not fully describe what growing their own food means. In racially concentrated areas of wealth and whiteness, "gardening" is mainly perceived as a hobby, and is an option readily available to anyone owning a home. For Hmong and Karen, Oromo and Somali populations, it is a practice of cultural preservation, social connectedness, and self-elected family economic assistance. WSCO strongly believes that all people should be able to exercise the power to live the lives they want to live, where they want to live them, and for these West Side residents, the opportunity to garden is a priority for themselves and their families. WSCO is currently working in partnership with Ce Tempoxcalli to continue supporting under-resourced West Side residents in the priorities that are important to them, including facilitating gardening programming at affordable housing sites, as well as advocating for city, metro, and state policies that will remove the barriers that currently prevent resident of affordable housing to grow their own food if they would like to.

Submitted by:

Mayor Mary Hamann-Roland, Chair
Livable Communities Advisory Committee
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN, 55101



The 1995 Livable Communities Act (LCA) program of the Metropolitan Council funds community investment that revitalizes economies, creates affordable housing, and links different land uses and transportation. LCA's voluntary, incentive-based approach leverages partnerships and shared resources to help communities achieve their regional and local goals.

The Livable Communities Advisory Committee (LCAC) reviews and recommends funding awards to the Metropolitan Council through the Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA) and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) grant categories. The LCAC is a 13-member technical review group with broad land use and specialized expertise that reviews complex development and redevelopment proposals. The LCAC's review is guided by program criteria seeking higher intensity development patterns that link affordable and lifecycle housing choices with jobs and services.

The Council's TOD grants (LCA-TOD) promote moderate to high density development projects located within walking distance of major regional transit locations that typically include a mix of uses such as housing, jobs, restaurants, shops, and entertainment. TOD projects are directly connected to transit via community-based pedestrian friendly streets and public spaces. This access offers people of all ages, backgrounds, and incomes abundant, convenient, and affordable transportation choices and the opportunity to live active lives.

Equity is achieved by communities prioritizing access to vital activity areas including housing, employment, health care, recreation, and goods and services. The LCA emphasizes collaboration and incentives to achieve regional and local goals. Vibrant and livable communities are created by increasing linkages to transit and improving community connections. An emphasis on connection to the regional transit system, called "thickening," is accomplished by expanded local feeder service, improved bicycle and pedestrian connections, and transit locations and facilities that create a "sense of place" and encourage affordable ridership.

The LCA, LCAC, LCA-TOD program, committees, and funding support the equity sought by the Metropolitan Council in partnership with the local communities and their development partners.