2019 Summit
Age-Friendly Minnesota – Engaging All Voices and Communities

Thank you to our sponsors

Welcome
Amanda Vickstrom
Chair
MN Leadership Council on Aging
Age-Friendly Minnesota

Kari Benson
Executive Director
MN Board on Aging

Age-Friendly Minnesota
Designation

Governor Tim Walz

Engaging Community in
Becoming Great for People of
All Ages

Laura Poskin
Director
Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh
Engaging Communities to Include All Ages
Laura Poskin, MPSG
Director of Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh

Close your eyes.

This is about us.
It’s about making our world more inclusive and respectful of every generation.
Our job is to change how we view aging and how we plan our communities for it.

Every day, 10,000 Baby Boomers turn 65.

Source: Pew Research Center

Super-aged society

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
In Minnesota, 65+ population surpasses school-age population in 2020.

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center
New demographic reality

Source: AMA Manual of Style

Language matters

Source: Psychology & Aging, 2011
We are all aging.
Listen. Listen again.
Build on strengths.

Celebrate your story.

Thank you!
Laura Poskin, MPSG
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HILLMAN FAMILY FOUNDATIONS  SWPPA
Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging
Age-Friendly Minnesota State Leaders Panel

Aging Together Minnesota: Confronting Disparities in Systems & Communities Panel

Action Planning Breakout Sessions
How One Community is Embracing Age-Friendly Communities

Susan Pha
Council Member
City of Brooklyn Park

Brooklyn Park: Living & Aging Together, Differently

Susan Pha
Brooklyn Park City Council

Presentation Overview

• **Introduction:** Who am I, and why does this work matter to me?
• **Brooklyn Park: Who Are We?**
• **Cities' Role in Age-Friendly Work**
• **BP's Engagement:** What We Did and What We Learned
• **Examples of Our Work**
• **Closing**
Who is BP?

- NW Hennepin County
- 6th biggest city in MN (80,610 pop.)
- 49% White ("Majority minority")
- 21.5% aged 55+

Brooklyn Park’s increasing diversity: 2000 to 2017

Population by Race:
Brooklyn Park, Hennepin County, State of MN
Our context for age-friendly work

Racial, ethnic and cultural diversity
Economic diversity and disparity

Varied experiences, needs, and priorities
Fragmented landscape

“Cities are ground zero for the demographic shift that is changing America and the world.

Too many local leaders still overlook the connection between aging policies and their cities’ vitality and sustainability.

Cities can take the lead to integrate older adults into policies and planning across multiple domains.”

— Kathryn Lawler, “Go Big or Go Home,” Public Policy Aging Report, 2015

“Age-friendly must be defined not as a new program or a new trend in service delivery but as a fundamental rethinking of how we live together.”

— Kathryn Lawler, “Go Big or Go Home,” Public Policy Aging Report, 2015
BP’s timeline: quick overview

- **2015**: Task Force on Aging created & made recommendations
- **2018**: Conducted extensive community needs assessment; developed recommendations report
- **2019**: Look inside local government: What does age-friendly mean for each department?
- **2020**: Building community involvement

Aligns with other City strategic initiatives:
- BP 2025 (community planning process)
- Customer Service Initiative
- Continuous Improvement
- Racial Equity

 Brooklyn Park’s Age-Friendly Engagement Process

Gathering Community Input

**External (Community) Engagement:**

**Residents:**
- CAC class participants
- Community Assembly attendees
- Meals on Wheels volunteer drivers
- Immigrant/refugee focus groups: Lao, Liberian, SE Asian
- Dynamic Aging Resource Fair attendees
- Focus groups at senior housing: Brooks Landing, SummerCrest, Tradition

**Community Partners and Key Stakeholders:**
- Allina Health – Faith Nurse Program
- CAC Fitness Instructors
- Community Ed (Osseo & Anoka-Hennepin)
- CEEP
- Creekside Gables
- Hennepin County Dept. of Public Health
- Hennepin County Library
- Hennepin Health
- Hy-Vee
- Lao Assistance Center of MN
- Liberian Health Initiative
- NAMI
- North Hennepin Community College
- Saint Al’s Church
- Saint Therese at Oxbow Lakes
- Sierra Leone Nurses Association of MN
- Tradition (senior housing)
- The Waterford (senior housing)
Key Takeaways:
Commons lessons from older low-income residents and residents of color, including immigrants and refugees

- General disconnect or lack of interest in City programs/offerings
- Most comfortable within their own cultural groups.
- Language matters. A lot.
- Immigrants & refugees can be vulnerable due to language and lack of understanding about systems and rights

Recommendations:
How does the City respond?

- Allow staff additional time to develop relationships and meaningfully engage people
- Don’t create; facilitate. Support existing events/activities.
- Better support and utilize partner organizations
- Redefine what success looks like

A new lens, not just new services

Put an age-friendly lens on work that would be done anyway.
City Hall remodeling project: How do we make sure it works well for older visitors?

- ADA isn’t enough.
- How easily can people actually...
  - Enter/exit the building?
  - Complete their business in the building?
  - Get the assistance they might need?
- Consider seating: Where is it? Is it easy to sit down in and get up from?

$26 mill. park bond referendum: How do we make sure it works well for older residents?

- Trails get better signage, lighting, and seating
- Community Activity Center remodeled with Universal Design principles
- Neighborhood park redevelopments: make appealing to older residents

Examples of BP’s support of older residents

- Senior homeowner loan program for home modifications ($150K for 2020)
- Providing space to Sierra Leone Nurses Association to meet with elders
- A beloved Community Center with many classes for 55+
Understandings that must shape the work

- “Seniors” aren’t one monolithic group.
- Older adults help drive local economies.
- People want to give and have purpose. Create pathways to make that possible.
- Age-friendly improvements benefit all ages.
- Aging is universal. This is all of us.

Thank you!

Susan Pha, Brooklyn Park City Council
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Moving towards Age-Friendly Minnesota & the work of the Council

Rajean Moone
MNLCOA Executive Director
Putting it Together

MNLCOA’s Pledge
1. Create an Age-Friendly MN listserv to keep the momentum going and connect us all
2. Establish foundation for an Age-Friendly MN application including results from today’s summit
3. Designate the 2020 Summit as Moving Age-Friendly MN Forward Together
4. Support Age-Friendly MN systems and policy changes

Stay Involved
1. Join the Age-Friendly MN listserv
2. Show up to convenings and events to support Age-Friendly MN
3. Advocate for your community to become an Age-Friendly Community