

General Background On Minnesota Milestones

Minnesota Milestones was developed in the early 1990s. At the core are five central themes representing different dimensions of a vision for Minnesota's future. The vision was distilled from group interviews with thousands of Minnesotans from all areas of the state. The five central themes are;

- * Minnesota will be a community of people who respect and care for one another.
- * Our economic activity will create wealth and provide a good standard of living for all our people.
- * Our citizens will be good thinkers, creative, always learning, with the skills to compete internationally.
- * We will protect and enjoy the natural world.
- * Our government will be responsive, effective and close to the people.

The five central themes were further divided into 19 public policy goals. For example, under the second central theme, related to economic activity are five policy goals.

1. Minnesota will have sustainable, strong economic growth.
2. Minnesota's workforce will have the education and training to make the state a leader in the global economy.
3. All Minnesotans will have the economic means to maintain a reasonable standard of living
4. All Minnesotans will have decent, safe, affordable housing.
5. Rural areas, small cities and urban neighborhoods throughout the state will be economically viable places for people to live and work.

Each of the 19 public policy goals has associated with it at least two statistical indicator designed to indicate progress towards the public policy goal. So, for example, under the "Our economic activity will create wealth and provide a good standard of living for all our people" theme are five policy goals and progress towards the five policy goals is measured by 17 statistical indicators.

Minnesota Milestones began in 1991, with regular updates to the statistical indicators until 2002. The statistical indicators, web site and other elements of Milestones have not been maintained since 2002.

Working Group For Minnesota Milestones Process And Indicators

1. Working group convened in August
2. Working group composed of 21 professionals from several departments of state government and community organizations. Members include recognized experts in statistical indicators
3. Tom Gillaspay reorganized the 70 Milestones indicators into nine subject matter areas represented by the working group members. Each working group member received at least one subject matter area survey. For each indicator in that subject matter area, respondents were asked to indicate whether the indicator should be kept, deleted or modified.
4. To date, responses to 41 of the 70 indicators have been received. Only 21 indicators were marked to keep without substantial modification.

Preliminary Conclusions

- a. Of the indicators specifically reviewed to date, the advisory team recommends keeping half unchanged, deleting 15%, and substantially modifying 35%. Recommendations for new indicators have also been proposed.
- b. Indicators have not been updated since 2002, with the latest data points at 2000 or 2001 for most indicators.
- c. The internet interface for Milestones is dated (mid 1990s vintage) and needs substantial restructuring to bring it up to current standards.

In short, substantial effort would be required to modify and install new indicators, update all the indicators to the most recent data, and modernize the internet interface to current standards.

Possible Alternative

Minnesota Compass may be an alternative

1. Twin Cities Compass is an existing, up-to-date indicators project, hosted at Wilder Foundation and co-sponsored by several major foundations in Minnesota.
2. Development for Minnesota Compass (the statewide equivalent) has begun, with a preview planned for March or April 2009 and full implementation by fall 2009.
3. Minnesota Compass, like Twin Cities Compass is funded by several organizations and is therefore, likely to continue on a consistent basis.
4. The advisory group for Compass includes a number of recognized experts from academia, private sector, state and local government and the not-for-profit sector.
5. Staffing for Minnesota Compass is approximately 5 FTE for the development phase and 2 FTE for maintenance. Bringing Milestones back to a current and useful product would require a similar level of effort.

Goals and indicators at a glance

PEOPLE

Our children will not live in poverty.

1. Child poverty
2. Low-income schoolchildren

Families will provide a stable, supportive environment for their children.

3. Satisfaction with child care
4. School transfers
5. Child abuse and neglect
6. Teen pregnancy
7. Runaways

All children will be healthy and start school ready to learn.

8. Low birth weight
9. On-time immunization
10. Preschool child development

Minnesotans will excel in basic and challenging academic skills and knowledge.

11. Elementary school skills
12. Eighth-grade basic skills
13. College entrance scores
14. High school graduation

Minnesotans will be healthy.

15. Health insurance
16. Infant mortality
17. Life expectancy
18. Premature death
19. Smoking and tobacco use
20. Suicide

COMMUNITY AND DEMOCRACY

Our communities will be safe, friendly and caring.

21. Sense of safety
22. Violent and property crime
23. Juvenile apprehensions
24. Volunteer work

People in need will receive support that helps them live as independently as they can.

25. Nearby support
26. In-home help for older people
27. Welfare to work
28. Food shelf use
29. Homelessness

All people will be welcomed, respected and able to participate fully in Minnesota's communities and economy.

30. Bias crimes
31. Minority teachers
32. Employment of people with disabilities
33. Transportation for people with disabilities

People will participate in government and politics.

34. Voter turnout
35. Checkoff campaign contributions

Government in Minnesota will be cost-efficient, and services will be designed to meet the needs of the people who use them.

36. Satisfaction with government services
37. Price of government

ECONOMY

Minnesota will have sustainable, strong economic growth.

38. Growth of gross state product
39. Employment of working-age population
40. Energy efficiency of the economy

Minnesota's workforce will have the education and training to make the state a leader in the global economy.

41. Post-high school education and training
42. Job placement after two-year college
43. Adults with college education

All Minnesotans will have the economic means to maintain a reasonable standard of living.

44. Median family income compared to U.S. median
45. Poverty rate
46. Availability of full-time work

All Minnesotans will have decent, safe and affordable housing.

47. Housing costs
48. Home ownership

Rural areas, small cities and urban neighborhoods throughout the state will be economically viable places for people to live and work.

49. Counties losing population
50. Net gain in businesses
51. Regional disparity in unemployment
52. Unrestricted highways
53. Urban home values
54. Freeway congestion

ENVIRONMENT

Minnesotans will conserve natural resources to give future generations a healthy environment and a strong economy.

55. Energy use per person
56. Renewable energy sources
57. Vehicle miles
58. Air pollutants
59. Water use
60. Timber harvest
61. Solid waste and recycling
62. Toxic chemicals

Minnesotans will improve the quality of the air, water and earth.

63. Urban air pollution
64. Water quality in lakes and rivers
65. Nitrate in groundwater
66. Erosion of cropland

Minnesota will restore and maintain healthy ecosystems that support diverse plants and wildlife.

67. Wildlife habitat
68. Changes in land use

Minnesotans will have opportunities to enjoy the state's natural resources.

69. Parkland and open space
70. Recreational trails