

Building Communities for a Lifetime in Minnesota
A Report to the 2010 Minnesota Legislature

Minnesota Board on Aging
February 28, 2010

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the process of completing this report to the Legislature, the [Minnesota Board on Aging](#) (MBA) confirmed that there is considerable interest in the Communities for a Lifetime (CFL) concept in Minnesota. MBA documented CFL activity occurring at the local, regional and state levels. Many individuals, organizations and communities across the state have developed expertise related to CFL. MBA would like to acknowledge the organizations and their representatives that contributed to this report:

Organization	Representative	Organization	Representative
AARP—Minnesota	Heidi Holste	Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging	Linda Giersdorf
Aging Services of Minnesota	Michele Kimball	Minnesota Senior Federation	Lee Graczyk
Alzheimer’s Association MINNESOTA-ND	Gayle Kvenvold	Minnesota Dept. of Administration	Tom Gillaspay
	Jennifer McNertney	Minnesota Dept. of Commerce	John Gross
	Jan Mueller	Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development	Sherri Mortensen-Brown
	Mary Birchard		Kari Howe
Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging	Catherine Sampson		Kathy Sweeney
Association of Minnesota Counties	Patricia Coldwell		Mark Lofthus
Care Providers of Minnesota	Larry Johnson	Minnesota Department of Health	Cara McNulty
	Patti Cullen		Janice Jones
Central MINNESOTA Council on Aging	Dean Loidolt		Kristen Tharaldson
	Jon Knopik		Kristine Gjerde
	Lori Vrolson		Maggie Diebel
DARTS	Mark Hoisser		Marie Maes-Voreis
ElderCare Development Partnership—Central Minnesota	Lynn Rohman		Mark Schoenbaum
Northeast Minnesota	Barb Caskey		Mary Manning
Northwest Minnesota	Darla Berquist		Pam York
Southeast Metro	Nan Just		Patricia Adams
Southwest Minnesota	Kate Selseth	Minnesota Dept of Human Services, Disability Services Division	Alex Bartolic
ElderCare Rights Alliance	Janet Golden		Mary Alice Mowry
Fredrikson & Byron, PA	Leia Christoffer	Minnesota Dept of Human Services, Aging and Adult Services Division	Jean Wood
HBS Consulting, Inc.	Helene Shear Noyola	Minnesota Dept. of Human Services, Transform 2010	LaRhae Knatterud
Heartland Home Care and Hospice	Edward Ratner	Minnesota Dept. of Transportation	Judy Ellison
Hospice Minnesota	Michele Fedderly	MINNESOTA Pollution Control Agency	Philipp Muessig
Land of the Dancing Sky AAA	Mark Tysver	MINNESOTA State Colleges and Universities	Todd Harmening
	Shannon Henrickson	State Council on Disability	Joan Willshire
League of Minnesota Cities	Jennifer O'Rourke	Northwest Hennepin Human Services Council	Kelly Schroepfer
	Mary Margaret Zindren	Senior Community Services	Matti Gurney
Lutheran Social Services	Jeri Schoonover	Southeast Minnesota Area Agency on Aging	Ben Withhart
	Kirsten Anderson-Stembridge		Connie Bagley
Marshall County	Sharon Bring		Dan Conway
Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging	Dawn Simonson	Southwest Center for Independent Living	Steven Thovson
	Kate Houston	Volunteers of America—Minnesota	Mike Weber
Minnesotans for a Fair Property Tax	David Sadler	Wilder Foundation	Leni Wilcox
Minnesota Home Care Association	Neil Johnson		

MBA would also like to thank the 684 individuals who completed the online survey in October 2009.

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 3.197 requires reports to the Legislature to identify the cost of preparing a report. The cost for preparing this report is \$11,500.00.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
II.	BACKGROUND.....	7
III.	FINDINGS.....	16
IV.	CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS.....	22
V.	ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS.....	24
VI.	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	26
VII.	APPENDICES.....	29

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

2009 Minnesota Statutes 256.975, subdivision 10 required the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA) to prepare a report to the Legislature on Communities for a Lifetime (CFL) including recommendations for a process for communities to request and receive CFL designation. The Statute specifically requires the MBA to:

- Consult with [Area Agencies on Aging \(AAAs\)](#), the [League of Minnesota Cities](#), and the state Departments of [Employment and Economic Development](#), [Health](#), and [Human Services \(DHS\)](#);
- Review senior-friendly community models locally and across the United States;
- Define a process for communities to request and receive designation as a CFL; and,
- Estimate the cost to administer the designation program.

Summary of Findings

Findings from direct consultation with mandated and other stakeholders

Stakeholders named in the Statute indicated that, more than recognition, community improvement is the real aim and reward of CFL work. These stakeholders saw CFL work as an ongoing process rather than an end in itself and therefore questioned the value of officially designating a community a CFL. The stakeholders also found the community characteristics named in the Statute too specific, and they did not support mandating prescriptive CFL principles as a part of any formal community planning functions. Finally, mandated stakeholders were skeptical that a recognition program alone would inspire new and meaningful local activity and viewed additional coordination of state-level programs that support CFL work as more productive. A few stakeholders remained interested in official designation, even while acknowledging that the administrative cost might be prohibitive, additional resources would be more effectively targeted to CFL projects, and that there are compelling alternative strategies to promote CFL.

Findings from state and national research

Research confirmed that extensive CFL activity is occurring in Minnesota at the local level—in neighborhoods, cities, towns and counties—and that a number of state and regional programs promote CFL principles. One important way that state programs support CFL work at the local level is through grant programs aligned with CFL principles (see [Appendix D](#)). According to results of surveys conducted by three Minnesota AAAs, 64 percent of local government respondents value funding for CFL projects more than any other form of support. The majority of respondents also value education on demographic trends and technical assistance, such as that which is provided by AAAs and DHS ElderCare Development Partnerships (EDPs). However, results from the same survey suggested that existing sources of assistance could be better promoted, with roughly half of respondents indicating that they were unaware of the AAA in their region. National level research uncovered various approaches to promoting CFL principles. Perhaps the most relevant national finding is that existing state-wide CFL recognition programs in Florida and Michigan were unable to demonstrate a measurable positive impact other than recognition.

Findings from the CFL online survey

In order to reach local level stakeholders MBA conducted an online survey in October 2009. 684 individuals from across the state completed the survey providing valuable feedback on CFL and approaches to formal recognition. As with the earlier AAA surveys, funding was ranked first by 58 percent

of survey respondents among six possible forms of recognition. Media attention was the next most favored form of recognition, with 15 percent of respondents ranking it first. Respondents also reported valuing education and technical assistance. If a recognition program were implemented, respondents indicated that they favored a program with various levels and categories of recognition. Finally, 84 percent of survey respondents indicated that CFL was a concept that applied to persons of all ages.

Conclusions & Recommendations

MBA designed a program to recognize CFL communities

The Legislature directed the MBA to design a program to designate communities as CFL. The “Building Communities for a Lifetime Recognition Program” described in [Appendix E](#) represents the general consensus of persons and groups consulted to produce this report, as well as the findings from the national review of state-wide recognition programs. The estimated cost of the program would be \$350,000 annually.

MBA does not recommend the creation of a CFL recognition program

Based on consultation with mandated and other stakeholders, surveys of local government representatives and other interested individuals, and the findings from state and national research, MBA does not recommend the creation of a program for communities to request and receive CFL designation at this time. MBA does not find this a cost effective approach, especially given that CFL activity is currently occurring without formal recognition and that communities and the state face historic budget challenges.

MBA identified alternatives to a CFL recognition program

Research demonstrated that alternative approaches to official designation or recognition address the core needs and interests of Minnesota stakeholders: (a) access to funding; (b) access to promising or best practices; (c) access to expert technical assistance, including contact with experienced peers; and, (d) access to relevant community planning resources and tools. Minnesota currently provides these forms of support through grants, publications, videoconferences and occasional public forums at the state level, and education and technical assistance at the regional level.

Based on report findings, MBA recommends an alternative approach to a formal recognition program. This approach would maintain the efforts of MBA and its state and regional partners to promote CFL principles without additional state funds by:

1. Maintaining existing state grant funds that support CFL principles;
 - Including grant programs listed in [Appendix D](#)
2. Providing education and technical assistance on CFL principles;
 - Including a new [initiative website](#), a biennial best practice publication, quarterly videoconference sessions, an annual public forum, and continued access to regional technical assistance through AAAs and EDPs
3. Pursuing coordination of state-level activities that promote CFL principles;
 - Including consolidation with the CAN DO initiative, increasing awareness of state programs outside MBA and DHS, and improving communication across state agencies

If available, MBA recommends additional funds for the following activities:

1. Increasing existing or establishing new innovative state grant funds that support CFL principles;
2. Enhancing education and technical assistance on CFL principles;
 - Including website enhancements, webinars and regularly scheduled public forums
3. Improving coordination of state-level activities that promote CFL principles;
 - Including development of new, strategic partnerships, better alignment of grant programs, and identification of state-level policy and regulatory barriers to local level CFL projects

II. BACKGROUND

Introduction

[2009 Minnesota Statutes 256.975, subdivision 10](#) (Statute), required the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA) to prepare a report to the Legislature on Communities for a Lifetime (CFL) including recommendations for a process for communities to request and receive CFL designation. The complete Statute is included as [Appendix A](#). The Statute specifically requires the MBA to:

- Consult with [Area Agencies on Aging](#), the [League of Minnesota Cities](#), and the state Departments of [Employment and Economic Development](#), [Health](#), and [Human Services](#);
- Review senior-friendly community models locally and across the United States;
- Define a process for communities to request and receive designation as a CFL; and,
- Estimate the cost to administer the designation program.

CFL has received national attention since the term was first used in 1999 in [Florida](#). Similar concepts by different names have a longer history, such as senior-friendly communities, aging in place, and naturally occurring retirement communities. All of these concepts promote community settings that foster healthy and successful aging. According to a recent [report](#) produced by [Transform 2010](#), a project of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), there are three key aspects of a community that underlie its ability to support aging residents: physical, social and service infrastructure.¹

As Minnesota communities determine the impact of an historic growing aging population, CFL has been viewed as a framework to help communities and their residents plan for the future. At the same time, many communities are recognizing that the application of CFL principles not only benefit older adults, even if community improvements are initiated with aging residents in mind. For example, community projects that improve accessibility, provide alternative forms of transportation, increase housing variety and affordability, and encourage flexible and supportive employment opportunities, benefit younger adults, working families, people with temporary or permanent disabilities, and older adults alike.

This report addresses the central question of instituting a formal process for designating CFL communities in Minnesota. In exploring this question, attention was paid to national and local models, stakeholder input, and requirements for administering such a program. Based on research and stakeholder findings, MBA offers recommendations.

Methods

As required by the Statute, MBA sought feedback from stakeholders and conducted research on senior-friendly community models, with special attention paid to those that incorporated formal recognition.

MBA consulted with stakeholders named in the Statute:

- League of Minnesota Cities (LMC)
- Minnesota Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)
- Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

¹ Minnesota Department of Human Services (2007, July). [A blueprint for 2010: Preparing Minnesota for the age wave](#).

- Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)

MBA also consulted representatives from the following organizations:

- Association of Minnesota Counties
- ElderCare Development Partnerships (EDPs)
- Minnesota Department of Administration
- Minnesota Department of Commerce
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging
- Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
- Minnesota State Council on Disability

MBA conducted national research on CFL and related concepts, e.g., senior-friendly communities, aging in place and livable communities. Ten relevant national models were reviewed in detail according to the following elements (see a two-page summary of national research results in [Appendix C](#)):

- Program/initiative description
- Definition of Communities for a Lifetime
- Arguments for Communities for a Lifetime
- Recognition program description (if applicable)
- Application and selection process (if applicable)
- Technical assistance
- Human and financial resources

In an effort to reach stakeholders at the community level, MBA conducted an online survey in October 2009. The complete survey is included as Appendix B. Figure 1 below shows basic information about the survey respondents.

Figure 1. Number and basic characteristics of survey respondents (N=684)

#	%	Description
241	35%	Community health and human services professional
211	31%	Citizen or community resident
87	13%	County health and human services professional
43	6%	Local government professional, outside of health and human services
39	6%	State, regional or local planner, in any discipline
24	4%	Elected official in local government
17	2%	Business owner
22	3%	Other
322	47%	Rural community
187	27%	Suburban community
174	26%	Urban community

Source: Minnesota Board on Aging Communities for a Lifetime SNAP Survey, 2009

Finally, the MBA reviewed CFL related activities occurring in Minnesota. MBA was interested in identifying existing initiatives at the state and regional level to promote CFL, but also in documenting activities underway at the community level.

National Models

Recognition Program Models

Research on CFL recognition/promotion programs uncovered ten of considerable interest: five models promoted CFL, at least in part, through some form of community recognition program.²

Florida and Michigan

The most relevant among these examples are two state-wide recognition programs sponsored by Florida and Michigan. [Florida's Communities for a Lifetime](#) recognition program was established in 1999 by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs in partnership with the Florida chapter of AARP. [Michigan's Elder Friendly Community Recognition Program](#) was modeled after Florida and was initiated by the Michigan Commission on Services to the Aging in 2007.

Florida's program organizes CFL according to five content areas, i.e., employment, health and wellness, housing, transportation and mobility, and volunteerism. Michigan articulates ten content areas. Though different in number and specific terminology, the themes between the two programs are complementary.

Florida's program is in almost all respects more robust than Michigan's. Florida offers a full-scale [program website](#), regional technical assistance workshops, and more complex forms of recognition, including local, public presentation of awards to communities. Florida has a well-developed public relations function to motivate communities to participate, and also to encourage media coverage of community achievements.

To qualify for recognition, both programs require applicants to complete specific steps: Florida's applicants need to demonstrate completion of ten steps, whereas Michigan's applicants need to document just three. The common elements between the two states' sets of requirements are: (a) conducting a community assessment, (b) engaging a broad base of stakeholders, and (c) demonstrating concrete community improvements under one of the CFL content areas. Applicants to the Michigan program are reviewed by a panel of judges located in state government, whereas Florida enlists a broad array of judges across the state and across sectors. Florida uses a point system and specific criteria to select its successful applicants. Michigan intentionally chose less-specific selection criteria to encourage community participation in its program.

The complexity and rigor of Florida's program is reflected in the state's investment of human and financial resources. Florida employs 12 state-level staff and has an annual program budget of \$750,000. A Michigan representative indicated that no additional funds were provided to administer their program, and that no staff members are devoted solely to CFL.

Alternative Models

Among the five remaining models, two additional state-level initiatives are of interest: [North Carolina Livable and Senior-Friendly Communities](#) and [Aging Indiana](#).³

² In addition to the two models discussed here, a national recognition program administered by the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) was also identified, along with two approaches that "[certify](#)" retirement communities. A matrix showing all five programs and how they compare to one another is included in Appendix C.

North Carolina and Indiana

North Carolina's program was launched by the state Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Aging and Adult Services in 2003. Their approach has been to promote CFL by embedding its principles in the [Aging Services Plan](#) and the Area Plans of the state's 17 AAAs. While the reach of this effort would seem to extend only to the formal aging services network, North Carolina representatives indicated that many counties, cities and towns had been influenced by the new framework and voluntarily adopted CFL principles in their own planning efforts.

The Aging Indiana initiative is similar to North Carolina's approach in that it emphasizes planning. The initiative began in 2006 as a collaborative effort of the Indiana University Center on Aging and Community, the state Division on Aging, and Indiana's 16 AAAs. Financial support was provided by the federal Administration on Aging, the Daniels Fund, and Indiana-based foundations including the Lilly Endowment. Funding partners have been important to Indiana's efforts, since their model relies on a relatively costly assessment tool, i.e., AdvantAge, first developed by the Visiting Nurse Service of New York's [Center for Home Care Policy and Research](#).

The [AdvantAge assessment tool](#) includes 33 indicators organized under four aspects of an elderly-friendly community: (a) addressing basic needs, (b) promoting independence and well being for those with frailty or disability, (c) promoting physical and mental health and well being, and (d) social and civic engagement. In 2008 Indiana conducted a state-wide [survey](#) of 5,000 residents age 60 and older which provided a benchmark for future survey results and a source of planning information for initiative partners and their constituents.

Minnesota Context for Communities for a Lifetime

Local Government Awareness and Initiatives

The greatest amount of CFL activity in Minnesota is occurring at the municipal level. Perhaps more than any other factor, demographic trends has spurred this activity.

The League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) created a [task force](#) in 2007 to explore the implications of demographic change—including population aging as well as in-migration and out-migration—for municipalities across the state. Their findings and subsequent technical assistance materials are posted on the [LMC website](#), and have been the focus of workshops at LMC's annual conference.

Also in 2007, three Minnesota AAAs conducted surveys of local governments to determine what steps they had taken to plan for population aging.⁴ The surveys included respondents from 272 cities and townships in 48 Minnesota counties.⁵ The majority of respondents indicated that they had taken concrete steps to prepare for the aging population, i.e., 89 percent in the central region, 84 percent in the Twin Cities area, and 64 percent in southwest Minnesota. Many municipalities reported creating community gathering spaces for older adults. Some local governments had conducted community assessments,

³ Three national initiatives were also identified: [AdvantAge](#), [Aging in Place](#) and [NORC](#). Like the state-level examples reviewed here, these initiatives promoted CFL principles by means other than a recognition program. A matrix showing all five programs and how they compare to one another is included in Appendix C.

⁴ While only three Minnesota AAAs implemented a survey, all Minnesota AAAs have in some manner tracked developments related to CFL in their region.

⁵ Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging (2008). [Communities for a lifetime](#); Central Minnesota Council on Aging (2008). [Communities for a lifetime](#); Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (2009). [Communities for a lifetime survey results](#).

begun a formal planning process, or created a task force or commission to focus on the issue. A select few municipalities indicated that they had hired a consultant to assist with planning efforts.

In addition to demographic trends, CFL activities can be attributed to a basic desire to improve one's own community. Communities and their residents want to achieve a high quality of life and attract and retain residents. Some see CFL as a vehicle for enhancing health and wellness across the life span, while others see it as a strategy for growing the local economy. The following are two examples of CFL activities at the municipal level.

- **Albert Lea.** In partnership with [AARP](#), [Blue Zones](#) and United Health Foundation, Albert Lea has received national attention for its [Vitality Project](#) which was launched in January 2009. The project is based on Blue Zones' research, which identified regions of the world with greater longevity and the suspected causes, i.e., outlook, social connection, nutrition and physical activity. The focus of the initiative has been to improve the health and longevity of residents across the lifespan through the use of an [online assessment tool](#), individual pledges, and community improvements.⁶
- **Brainerd.** With the support of the Central Minnesota Council on Aging, the City of Brainerd launched [Brainerd for a Lifetime](#) in 2007. The initiative arose in recognition of demographic trends and was funded in part by a grant from the Bremer Foundation. The focus of the initiative has been three-fold: health and wellness, transportation, and safety and security. Their process to date has included a community assessment, formation of a steering committee, public education, and creation of an action plan.

Neighborhood Level Initiatives

While CFL is commonly associated with municipalities, in larger cities, the physical, social and service infrastructure at the neighborhood level become more important. Along these lines, cities often promote neighborhood associations or block clubs to improve quality of life. These strategies align well with CFL principles. Faith communities and well-established businesses can also make neighborhoods more livable and support successful aging. The following are two examples of CFL activities at the neighborhood level.

- **Living at Home/Block Nurse Programs.** The development of this [nationally-recognized model](#) began in 1981 in St. Paul's St. Anthony Park neighborhood. LAH/BNPs help aging residents remain in their homes longer and preserve their social networks through the support of a nurse and a network of local volunteers. Several LAH/BNP features relate to CFL including: researching demographics, engaging a broad base of community members, making action plans, and forming a leadership body. There are [45 LAH/BNPs](#) across the state, including complete coverage of St. Paul.
- **Mill City Commons.** Downtown Minneapolis residents and [Ecumen](#), a nonprofit senior services provider, are partnering to translate the [Beacon Hill Village model](#), originally developed in Boston. Like Beacon Hill Village, [Mill City Commons](#) is a membership organization for neighborhood residents who choose to pay a fee in exchange for a menu of services. As members' needs evolve, the organization helps them find solutions, with an emphasis on maintaining health, aging in place, member-to-member assistance, and use of vetted, reputable providers. Mill City Commons officially launched in early 2009.

⁶ Notably, the project has yielded a reduction in health care usage and costs.

County Level Initiatives

Much like cities, counties are interested in improving quality of life and attracting and retaining residents. Counties are also increasingly aware of changing demographics. While an aging population poses certain challenges, many counties see opportunities as well. For example, it is expected that a larger proportion of baby boomers, i.e., adults born between 1946 and 1964, will live longer, healthier and more active lives, remaining employed past traditional retirement age and demonstrating a robust commitment to volunteer. For these reasons, and others, counties are starting to pay closer attention to the interests and preferences of the generation. The following are examples of CFL activities at the county level.

- **Carver County.** In 2000, county government and a local medical center partnered to consider the impact of the aging population. The preferences of current older adults informed their early work, but the initiative soon focused on the preferences and eventual needs of the baby boom generation. The county is perhaps most unique in its establishment of a new [Office of Aging](#) to coordinate efforts. Recent initiative activities include: a study of housing options, “baby boomer profiles” of area cities based on focus group and survey research, and an evaluation of the fit between local zoning ordinances and universal design principles.
- **Dakota County.** In 2005, with the support of the Board of Commissioners, Dakota County began the Aging Initiative. The first result was a [report](#) which provided a thorough assessment of demographic trends in the county. This report, in turn, was the basis for the [Living Longer and Stronger in Dakota County](#) initiative, which has leveraged the time and talent of numerous, highly-skilled volunteers and a public-private partnership with [DARTS](#). The initiative has been pursuing concrete community improvements in six issue areas.
- **Steele County.** CFL efforts began in 2006 in Steele County with a thorough review of [demographic and economic data](#) and an emphasis on mapping local assets. A [report](#) was written to summarize the findings, articulate a vision, and define action steps. An early effort of the initiative has been to implement a “no wrong door” policy at Steele County Human Services, an approach that benefits not only older adults, but residents of all ages. The county has begun work on other initiatives including: elder-friendly businesses, an “assisted living without walls” model, and cultural sensitivity.

Regional Level Initiatives

Features of the health care and education systems such as hospitals, universities and colleges serve regional areas, not just the residents of the community where they are located. Regions, and the communities that comprise them, are also defined by major industries such as mining in the northeast or tourism in north-central Minnesota. School districts also cross municipal and county lines, as do Legislative districts. For this reason, certain “community” level initiatives, depending on their aim, may be best employed on a regional, rather than a county or municipal basis. In some cases, this is a practical reality. For instance, not all communities can afford to supply a full range of amenities and services to residents such as hospitals or clinics. The following are three examples of regional level initiatives.

- **Area Agencies on Aging.** Since 2007, Minnesota’s seven AAAs have included CFL principles in their annual Area Plans.⁷ Area Plans for calendar year 2010 set out three priorities for Program Development and Coordination (PD&C) activities, one of which is “Transform 2010: Preparing

⁷ Minnesota has six AAAs based on geographical areas and one Indian tribe AAA.

for an Aging Population.” Under this priority, promoting CFL is a specific, named goal. In 2009, AAAs reported providing education on CFL to more than 125 local groups across the state.

- **ElderCare Development Partnerships.** Much like AAAs, [ElderCare Development Partnerships](#) (EDPs) deliver education and technical assistance on CFL related matters at the regional level. EDPs are grantees overseen by DHS whose work is tied to recommendations of the [2001 Minnesota Long-Term Care Task Force](#). EDPs work collaboratively with counties, AAAs, providers and others to maximize resources to support families’ efforts to age healthfully in community.
- **Headwaters Regional Development Commission.** The [Headwaters Regional Development Commission](#) (HRDC) has supported the establishment of Stewardship Councils to build successful communities throughout the Mississippi headwaters region, i.e., north-central Minnesota. HRDC believes that there are identifiable, characteristic assets that make up healthy communities and that residents and local governments can work together to pursue these assets to build more successful communities. To date, Stewardship Councils have been established in Alexandria, [Bemidji](#), [Blackduck](#), [Fergus Falls](#), and [Park Rapids](#).

State Level Initiatives and Programs

CAN DO

Since 2007, the [Disabilities Services Division](#) (DSD) of DHS, in partnership with the [State Council on Disability](#) (MSCOD), has pursued an initiative called CAN DO, or Collaborative Action Network for Developing Opportunities. The central aim of the initiative is to improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities living in the community.

As a part of the initiative’s launch, more than 300 people participated in a series of public forums held across the state. Later activities included monthly conference calls among initiative participants, videoconference sessions, and implementation of a social networking website. All of these efforts were viewed as strategies for increasing peer-to-peer interaction and disseminating promising community improvement practices.

Governor’s Fit City Program

Administered by MDH since 2005, the [Governor’s Fit City Program](#) recognizes Minnesota cities that demonstrate a commitment to active living through the opportunities and environment they provide their residents. The Fit City Program views physical activity as essential to overall health; improving the health of all Minnesotans is the central aim of the program.

To be designated a Governor’s Fit City, a city must meet two required application criteria and five of eight optional criteria. Since 2005, 47 cities have been designated, which entails receiving a plaque, being posted to the MDH website and the accompanying media coverage. With clear criteria, a simple [online application process](#), and a meaningful aim, the Fit City Program represents a current, local model for administering a basic community recognition program.⁸

⁸ It is important to note that participation in this program has been modest and measurable outcomes have not been reported. The scale of impact is uncertain, but appears small.

GreenStep Cities Program

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) submitted a [report](#) to the Legislature in February 2009 recommending the implementation of a recognition program called [GreenStep Cities](#) (GreenStep). MPCA and partners have spent 2009 refining the program. The main goal of GreenStep is to promote community level sustainable development aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the state. This program is modeled, in part, after DEED's former Star City Program.

While many of the community level issues addressed by GreenStep differ from those targeted by CFL, the community level process encouraged by both initiatives are very similar, e.g., broad-based collaboration, use of best practices, and creation and implementation of an action plan. The official launch of the GreenStep recognition program is being planned for June 2010.

Star City Program

The Star City Program, formerly administered by the Department of Trade and Economic Development, what is now the [Department of Employment and Economic Development](#) (DEED), is a recognizable, local example of a community recognition program. While the program was decommissioned in the 1990s, it was viewed by many as an important economic development tool since its inception in 1981.

The central goal of the program was to improve the capacity of local government to perform economic development and community planning functions. The program targeted communities with populations between 1,500 and 20,000; at the time, these communities commonly operated without a formal economic development plan. Apart from building local, technical capacity, the intended program outcomes included job creation and retention, and attracting and retaining capital investments from businesses.

Successful applicants needed to document completion of an 11-step process. The process included four major components: organizing, collecting information, planning and marketing. The final step was a site visit from an evaluator who played the role of a business owner inquiring about locating a business in the community. Applicants were provided various types of technical assistance including, quarterly meetings, monthly memos, and the option of on-site consultation.

Statewide Health Improvement Program

The [Statewide Health Improvement Program](#) (SHIP) is a part of [2008 Minnesota health care reform](#). While most aspects of the reform focus on improving the affordability, quality and accessibility of health care services for Minnesotans, SHIP focuses on the reduction of common causes of preventable illnesses, i.e., tobacco use, physical inactivity and poor nutrition, across the population. The goal is to improve overall health and reduce need for and cost of health care.

As of November 2009, MDH had awarded 40 grants totaling \$47 million to grantees covering all 87 counties and eight of eleven tribal governments. Grantees are required to develop action plans determined and implemented by local leaders in broad-based collaboration with area partners. Grantees are asked to focus their efforts on policy, systems and environmental changes in four settings: schools, work sites, health care and the community at large. They are also required to target an at-risk population, e.g., low-income populations, people with disabilities, or older adults.

Transform 2010

The CFL concept has been promoted by [Transform 2010](#), a project of DHS and MBA in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). CFL was identified as a promising framework to help prepare Minnesota communities for an aging population based on national research and the results of public meetings held across the state in 2006. As a result, MBA began incorporating CFL principles into their [State Plan](#), which is the basis for the AAA Area Plans referenced earlier in this report. The most recent State Plan relied heavily on Transform 2010's [strategic framework](#) and made specific reference to CFL.

Beginning in 2007, Transform 2010 has educated the public on CFL principles and disseminated promising practices occurring at the community level. Various methods have been used to share these examples including: public speaking, a series of statewide videoconferences, in-person public forums, and a [publication](#) featuring successful initiatives. Transform 2010 has also sought to collaborate with state-level partners. The project formed a group comprised of representatives from more than a dozen state agencies who have a clear stake in the aging of the population and in the CFL concept, e.g., the Departments of Health, Housing and Finance, and Transportation.

III. FINDINGS

1. Findings from Direct Consultation with Mandated and Other Stakeholders

a. Intrinsic rewards of CFL should be stressed over external rewards

Many stakeholders were concerned that a recognition program would place undue emphasis on external rewards. Instead, stakeholders wanted to promote *community improvement* as the *real* reward of CFL.

b. CFL should be understood as an ongoing process that has no end-point

Some stakeholders believed officially designating “Communities for a Lifetime,” would convey the wrong message, i.e., that a community can *finally* achieve this status. Most stakeholders did not support this view; they understood community improvement as an ongoing process. The former Star City Program faced this same concern. DEED representatives noted that many communities lost all momentum after they acquired their award, i.e., a Star City highway sign. An unpopular and reportedly ineffective recertification process was put in place to address the issue.

c. A recognition program would inspire relatively little new CFL activity

AAA representatives providing front-line technical assistance to current CFL initiatives were openly skeptical that a recognition program would advance or expand current efforts. Most believed that a recognition program would largely appeal to communities seeking recognition for past accomplishments.

d. Coordination of state-level initiatives was identified as an opportunity and challenge

Stakeholder discussions revealed considerable philosophical alignment between CFL and other state-level initiatives, but these initiatives have been largely uncoordinated. The lack of coordination poses potential barriers to communities deciphering the rules and objectives of various programs. It also means that state agencies are missing opportunities to cross-promote their initiatives and grants, share expertise and leverage scarce resources.⁹ While there was support for increased coordination, state agency representatives noted that this would require investments of additional human and financial resources, a challenge in the current fiscal environment.¹⁰

e. New partnerships will be needed if CFL is to encompass all segments, aspects of community

Stakeholders advised MBA to seek new partnerships as CFL is embraced as a concept for all people as they age, e.g., younger adults or people with disabilities. AAA representatives expressed a specific need for partners to provide technical assistance related to physical infrastructure. Stakeholders expressed that the current gulf between planning, zoning, housing and transportation, and aging professionals must be bridged. The League of Minnesota Cities and the Departments of Housing and Transportation would be likely partners for MBA at the state level.¹¹

f. Community characteristics named in the Statute were too specific

The Statute delineated a list of community characteristics believed to be features of a CFL (see [Appendix A](#) for the complete Statute). While stakeholders affirmed the characteristics outlined in the Statute, they

⁹ One example of leveraging scarce resources would be to consolidate the efforts of CFL and CAN DO. These are initiatives with considerable alignment, both housed at DHS.

¹⁰ A representative from DEED suggested that coordinating CFL efforts on a regional basis may be most effective.

¹¹ MBA has collaborated with these agencies on projects, though ties could be strengthened moving forward.

found the features too specific to recommend them to all communities. Instead, stakeholders preferred that communities be allowed to pursue community features according to broad parameters rather than a “check-list” of specific features.

g. Communities should be able to define themselves

Stakeholders agreed that, for the purpose of a recognition program, “community” should be defined as a group of people sharing a specific geography, rather than a group of people that share a common interest, culture or identity. According to this definition, a neighborhood could be considered a CFL community, as could a collection of contiguous towns. Counties, school districts, health care or business markets were also suggested as sensible parameters of a community. In any case, stakeholders felt communities should define themselves.¹²

h. Stakeholders did not support mandating CFL principles as a part of formal community planning

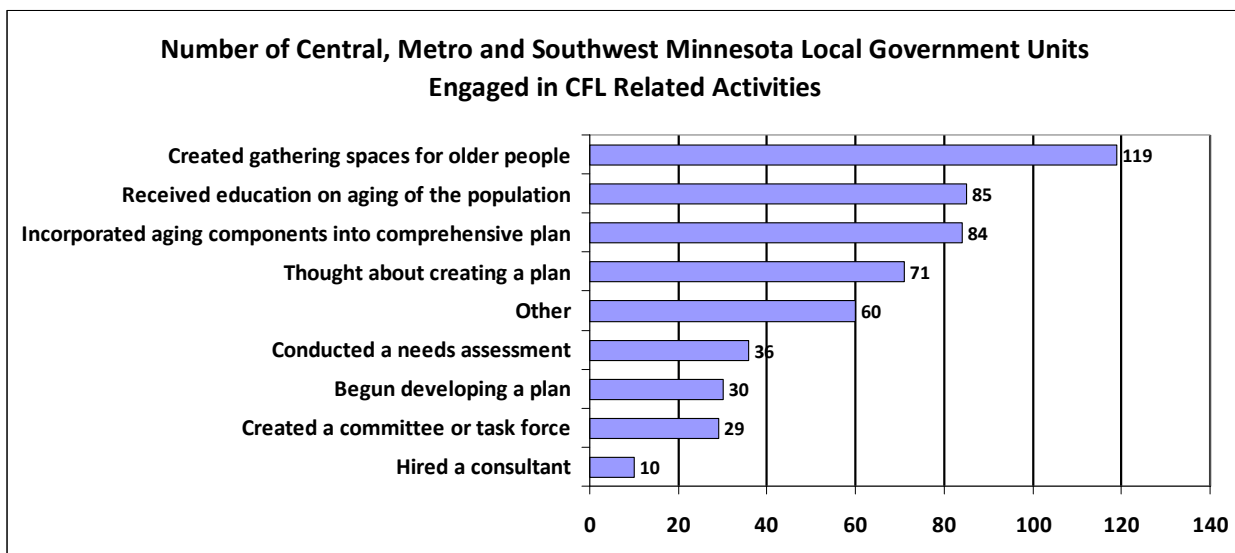
In addition to specifying a list of CFL community characteristics, the Statute suggested changes to the local community planning process under subdivision 10.d.3 (see [Appendix A](#) for the complete Statute). While stakeholders widely embraced CFL principles, they were reluctant to mandate their application. Instead, they supported the use CFL principles on a voluntary basis.

2. Findings from State and National Research

a. CFL activities are occurring in Minnesota

Minnesota communities across the state are engaged in CFL initiatives. Recent surveys conducted by AAAs indicated that 64 to 89 percent of local government respondents had taken concrete steps to prepare for the aging population. Figure 1 below shows the number of municipalities that have engaged in specific activities. Three local level factors underlie CFL work: (a) awareness of demographic trends; (b) motivation to improve the community; and, (c) commitment of local leaders.

Figure 2. Municipalities across three Minnesota regions engaged in CFL efforts (n=272)



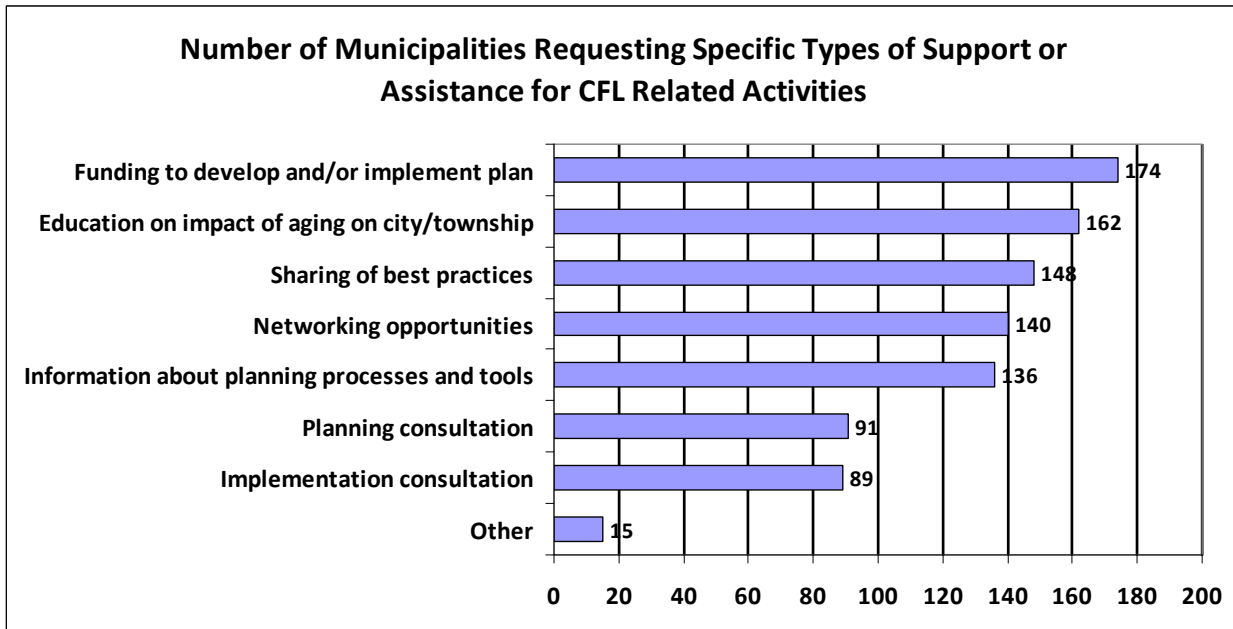
Note: Note: The three AAA regions surveyed comprise 48 counties. A total of 272 municipalities completed the surveys.
 Source: Area Agency on Aging Communities for a Lifetime Surveys, 2008 and 2009

¹² DEED and MDH also noted that economic markets and health care markets – “communities” – sometimes straddle or blur state lines, e.g., La Crosse and Superior, WI, Sioux Falls, SD, and Fargo, ND.

b. Local governments value funding and other forms of support for CFL activities

Communities surveyed by AAAs reported that funding was the most valuable form of support, followed by education on demographic trends and best practices (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 3. Municipalities across three Minnesota regions indicated need for assistance (n=272)



Note: The three AAA regions surveyed comprise 48 counties. A total of 272 municipalities completed the surveys.
Source: Area Agency on Aging Communities for a Lifetime Surveys, 2008 and 2009

c. Regional technical assistance provided by AAAs is valuable, but could be better promoted

Respondents to the 2008 and 2009 CFL surveys requested guidance on interpreting the impact of demographic trends, recommendations on planning tools, and information on grants and other resources. This type of assistance is available through the AAAs. However, many survey respondents indicated that they were unaware of the AAA in their region, i.e., 56 percent of metro region respondents, and 36 and 67 percent of central and southwest region respondents. Promoting AAAs may be a good investment.¹³

d. State initiatives promote CFL principles

Beginning in 2006, Transform 2010, a project of DHS, MBA and MDH, identified CFL as one of five themes for action—critical areas to help Minnesota prepare for population aging. As a result, MBA embedded CFL principles in its State Plan on Aging, and the AAAs included CFL education and technical assistance among their core activities.¹⁴ Other DHS initiatives such as EDPs and the [Community Service/Services Development grant program](#) have also been directed to focus on strengthening community capacity to support persons at-risk of needing more expensive long-term supports. At the same time, Transform 2010 has promoted CFL through a series of state-wide videoconference sessions, public forums, and a 30-page report on promising practices. Other state agencies are pursuing initiatives compatible with CFL, e.g., MDH’s Statewide Health Improvement Program and Governor’s Fit City Program,¹⁵ and Minnesota

¹³ Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging (2008). *Communities for a lifetime*; Central Minnesota Council on Aging (2008). *Communities for a lifetime*; Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (2009). *Communities for a lifetime survey results*.

¹⁴ Key community organizations also promote CFL, e.g., the Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging and the Vital Aging Network.

¹⁵ SHIP aligns well with CFL because it targets policy, system and environmental changes to improve quality of life.

Pollution Control Agency’s GreenStep Cities Program (see [Appendix C](#) for a list of related state grant programs).

e. National models do not demonstrate measurable impact of formal recognition

MBA learned through its research that neither Florida nor Michigan, i.e., the two most relevant national models, had measured the progress of their state-wide CFL recognition programs toward specific outcomes. At the same time, both programs have demonstrated anecdotal success: (a) both programs promote awareness of CFL principles; (b) both spur participation by local units of government, however brief or sustained; (c) both disseminate promising CFL practices; and, (d) Florida achieves notable state and local media coverage related to CFL. However, other national models and Minnesota’s own experiences demonstrate that some of these same results can be achieved by means other than a formal recognition program.

f. National models present many alternatives to formal recognition

Most of the national models researched by the MBA promoted CFL principles by means other than a recognition program. The central research question becomes: do alternative strategies build awareness, disseminate promising practices, embed CFL principles into state and community level planning functions, and garner media attention? The answer appears to be “yes” among national models and in Minnesota, where CFL activity has been increasing without employing a recognition program.

3. Findings from the CFL Online Survey

a. Communities would be motivated more by financial rewards than other forms of recognition

The majority of survey respondents indicated that funding would be the most meaningful type of reward. As shown in Figure 4 below, “Being given higher priority for state grant funding,” was ranked first by 58 percent of respondents. An additional 23 percent of respondents ranked this form of recognition second or third. The importance of funding was reinforced by a large number of written comments submitted by survey respondents.

Figure 4. Most and least meaningful incentives, rewards according to survey respondents (n=639)

Type of Recognition:	Most Meaningful →			Least Meaningful		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Being given higher priority for state grant funding	58%	14%	9%	7%	3%	8%
Being featured in local and state media outlets	15%	31%	20%	16%	10%	7%
Being featured as a best practice example at public forums	5%	20%	30%	26%	14%	5%
Being featured as a best practice example on state websites or in state publications	8%	20%	22%	29%	16%	6%
Being presented a physical award at a public ceremony by a high-ranking official	10%	12%	13%	15%	41%	9%
Being issued a letter or certificate by a high-ranking state official	4%	3%	5%	7%	17%	64%
Percent of Respondents						

Note: Some rank totals do not equal 100 percent due to number rounding.
 Source: Minnesota Board on Aging Communities for a Lifetime SNAP Survey, 2009

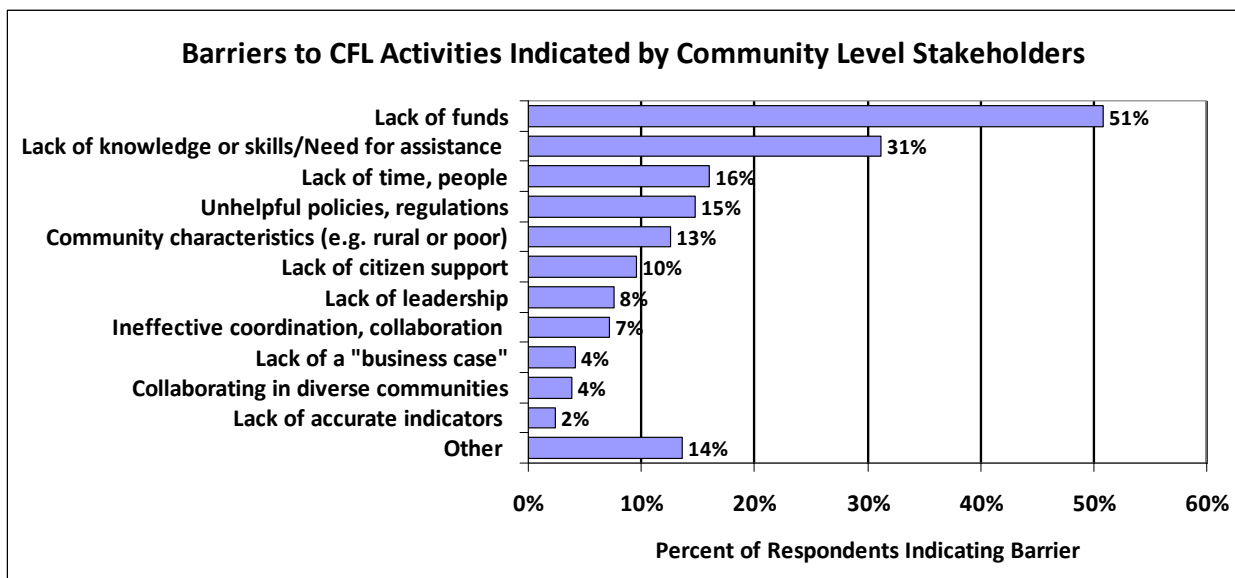
b. Categories and levels of recognition were favored by survey respondents

Survey respondents agreed that a program featuring more than one level of recognition for a number of categories of community improvement would encourage participation by communities and likely longer-lived initiatives. Forty-six percent indicated that the strategy would be very successful, and an additional 49 percent thought it would be at least somewhat successful. Respondents suggested in written comments that for communities that had not yet begun this kind of work, an “entry level” award might invite them to start. On the other hand, communities already engaged in CFL may be motivated to continue their efforts because of higher-level awards or awards for different community improvements.

c. Survey respondents value education, technical assistance and “best practice” examples

Many survey respondents noted the importance of education, technical assistance and sharing useful ideas among peers. Community leaders were particularly complimentary of the work of AAA and EDP representatives who had provided hands-on assistance to local efforts. However, many survey respondents expressed a need or desire for additional assistance. Of the 462 survey respondents that indicated communities face barriers to pursuing CFL, 31 percent indicated that a lack of knowledge or skills or a need for technical assistance posed a barrier (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 5. Community level survey respondents identified barriers to pursuing CFL (n=462)



Note: This is a summary of responses to an open-ended survey question. Respondents often indicated more than one barrier.
Source: Minnesota Board on Aging Communities for a Lifetime SNAP Survey, 2009

d. Survey respondents prefer a vision of CFL as a concept for all ages

The Statute defined CFL as a “[community] whose citizens seek to affirmatively extend to *persons ages 65 and older* the opportunities, supports, and services that will enable them to continue to be contributing, civically engaged residents.” While survey respondents in no way objected to efforts to improve the lives of people age 65 and older through CFL, 84 percent of respondents viewed CFL as a strategy to improve communities *for people of all ages*.¹⁶

¹⁶ The [Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging](#) maintained support for a specific focus on “seniors” or “elders.”

e. MBA should define a broad vision of CFL

In written comments, survey respondents cautioned MBA against establishing a narrow or overly prescriptive definition of CFL. The general sentiment was that a CFL program requiring communities to pursue specific features would ignore important differences between communities. Respondents were also concerned that a narrow definition would constrain local innovation and creativity. However, there was support for the state to offer a broad vision for CFL. Some indicated that a state-level vision would help community leaders gauge whether they were moving in the right direction in their local initiatives. On the other hand, some respondents expressed concern that a vision for CFL be clear and compelling, to prevent communities from engaging in initiatives counter to the essential aims of CFL. Clearly, any state-level vision would have to strike a careful balance between being too narrow and too broad, and in any case, be offered as a guide rather than enforced as a rule.

f. MBA should focus on identifying policy issues that create barriers to CFL

Survey respondents also pointed to specific policies that pose barriers to CFL at the community level. For example, several respondents noted the negative affect rising property taxes have on lower-income households, e.g., fixed-income older adults. CFL principles support community features such as affordable housing options to help residents live and age successfully in the community. However, rising property taxes make community living less affordable or impossible for some. Respondents suggested that the state could play a role in addressing policy-level barriers to CFL, such as rising property tax rates.

IV. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Findings from direct consultation with mandated and other stakeholders

Stakeholders named in the Statute indicated that more than recognition of community improvement is the real aim and reward of CFL work. These stakeholders saw CFL work as an ongoing process rather than an end in itself and therefore questioned the value of should be officially designating a community a CFL. The stakeholders also found the community characteristics named in the Statute too specific, and they did not support mandating prescriptive CFL principles as a part of any formal community planning functions. Finally, mandated stakeholders were skeptical that a recognition program alone would inspire new and meaningful local activity and viewed additional coordination of state-level programs that support CFL work as a more productive. A few stakeholders remained interested in official designation, even while acknowledging that the administrative cost might be prohibitive in the current fiscal environment, additional resources if available would be more effectively targeted to FCL projects, and alternative strategies to promote CFL might be as effective.

Findings from state and national research

Research confirmed that extensive CFL activity is occurring in Minnesota at the local level—in neighborhoods, cities, towns and counties—and that a number of state and regional programs promote CFL principles. One important way that state programs support CFL work at the local level is through grant programs aligned with CFL principles (see [Appendix D](#)). According to results of surveys conducted by three Minnesota AAAs, 64 percent of local government respondents value funding for CFL projects more than any other form of support. The majority of respondents also value education on demographic trends and technical assistance, such as what is provided by AAAs and DHS ElderCare Development Partnerships (EDPs). However, results from the same survey suggested that existing sources of assistance could be better promoted, with roughly half of respondents indicating that they were unaware of the AAA in their region. National level research uncovered various approaches to promoting CFL principles. Perhaps the most relevant national finding is that existing state-wide CFL recognition programs in Florida and Michigan were unable to demonstrate a measurable positive impact other than recognition.

Findings from the CFL online survey

In order to reach local level stakeholders MBA conducted an online survey in October 2009. 684 individuals from across the state completed the survey providing valuable feedback on CFL and approaches to formal recognition. As with the earlier AAA surveys, funding was ranked first by 58 percent of survey respondents among six possible forms of recognition. Media attention was the next most favored form of recognition, with 15 percent of respondents ranking it first. Respondents also reported valuing education and technical assistance. If a recognition program were implemented, respondents also indicated that they favored a program with various levels and categories of recognition. 84 percent of survey respondents indicated that CFL was a concept that applied to persons of all ages, not just older adults.

MBA designed a program to recognize CFL communities

The Legislature directed the MBA to design a program to designate communities as CFL. The “Building Communities for a Lifetime Recognition Program” described in [Appendix E](#) represents the general consensus of persons and groups consulted to produce this report, as well as the findings from the

national review of state-wide recognition programs. The estimated cost of the program is \$350,000 annually.

MBA does not recommend the creation of a CFL recognition program

Based on consultation with mandated and other stakeholders, surveys of local government representatives and other interested individuals, and the findings from state and national research, MBA does not recommend the creation of a program for communities to request and receive CFL designation at this time. MBA does not find this a cost effective approach, especially given that CFL activity is occurring without formal recognition and communities and the state face historic budget challenges.

MBA identified alternatives to a CFL recognition program

Research demonstrated that alternative approaches to official designation or recognition address the core needs and interests of Minnesota stakeholders: (a) access to promising or best practices; (b) access to expert technical assistance, including contact with experienced peers; and, (c) access to relevant community planning resources and tools. Minnesota currently provides these forms of support through publications, videoconferences and occasional public forums at the state level, and education and technical assistance at the regional level.

Recommendations

MBA recommends an alternative to a CFL recognition program

Based on report findings, MBA recommends an alternative approach to a formal recognition program. This approach would maintain the efforts of MBA and its state and regional partners to promote CFL principles without additional state funds by:

1. Maintaining existing state grant funds that support CFL principles;
 - Including grant programs listed in [Appendix D](#)
2. Providing education and technical assistance on CFL principles;
 - Including an initiative website, a biennial best practice publication, quarterly videoconference sessions, an annual public forum, and continued access to regional technical assistance through AAAs and EDPs
3. Pursuing coordination of state-level activities that promote CFL principles;
 - Including consolidation with the CAN DO initiative, increasing awareness of state programs outside MBA and DHS, and improving communication across state agencies

If available, MBA recommends additional funds for the following activities:

1. Increasing existing or establishing new innovative state grant funds that support CFL principles;
2. Enhancing education and technical assistance on CFL principles;
 - Including website enhancements, webinars, and regularly scheduled public forums
3. Improving coordination of state-level activities that promote CFL principles;
 - Including development of new, strategic partnerships, better alignment of grant programs, and identification of state-level policy and regulatory barriers to local level CFL projects

V. ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

Volunteerism in Minnesota

Community level initiatives are fueled by many things, but citizen volunteers are perhaps foremost among them. As the state continues to work with partners to promote CFL principles, it is important to recognize, promote and leverage the contribution of community level volunteers. Fortunately, Minnesota has long been a national leader in volunteerism. This leadership has included investment in important infrastructure to support volunteers and the development of unique, nationally recognized models.

According to the Corporation for National and Community Service's 2009 *Volunteering in America* report, Minnesota ranks third among all 50 states with a volunteer rate of 38.4 percent. This volunteer rate compares favorably to both the United States (26.4 percent) and the Midwest region (30.2 percent).¹⁷ Notably, the Twin Cities (Minneapolis-St. Paul) metropolitan area currently ranks highest among the country's 51 largest metropolitan areas (38.4 percent).

While leaders in Minnesota's volunteer network never cease to be innovative in employing the time and talent of the state's residents, landmark federal legislation passed in 2009—[The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act](#)—provides new opportunities to expand public service across the state. MBA should seek to partner with volunteer network leaders as they maximize the Act, with an eye of promoting CFL.

Community level leadership capacity and development

MBA has observed a pattern among successful CFL initiatives in Minnesota communities: the presence of a local champion or leader is a critical, if not necessary, ingredient. Because of this, MBA was surprised that national research on CFL and related concepts uncovered little information on local level leadership. MBA questions what role, if any, it might play in the identification, development or encouragement of community leaders. Perhaps the best strategy would be strengthening partnerships with organizations focused on leadership development and civic engagement. A natural public partner might be [Minnesota State Colleges and Universities](#), especially institutions around the state that have targeted leadership development or civic engagement in their missions. A private partner might be the [Vital Aging Network](#), a nonprofit organization that has pioneered a leadership development curriculum, i.e., ALVA, and created an online tool related to CFL called the [Vital Communities Toolkit](#).

Measuring progress on CFL

Stakeholders supported the use of CFL outcome measurements, but this may be cost prohibitive. Aging Indiana presents the best example of attempting to implement CFL related indicators on a state-wide basis. Other states have pursued state-wide measurement tools, including: Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, and Oregon. There is some precedence for this type of effort in Minnesota as well. Between 1991 and 2002 the Minnesota Department of Administration oversaw the [Minnesota Milestones project](#). Efforts along these lines are being revived outside of state government by [Minnesota Compass](#), which has developed a series of indicators to track quality of life across the state. Finally, since 1988, MBA has conducted a [Survey of Older Minnesotans](#) approximately every five years. Whatever the vehicle, Minnesota would face challenges financing ongoing indicators.

¹⁷ Corporation for National and Community Service (2009, July). *Volunteering in America: Research highlights*.

CFL as an “upstream” or early intervention model

CFL is often associated with other community improvement strategies such as elder-friendly or senior-friendly initiatives. While there are more similarities than differences between these strategies, stakeholders cautioned MBA against focusing CFL too narrowly on the quality of life of current frail elderly. MBA and its partner, [MDH](#), understand that health and vitality later in life depends on the habits and environments of individuals in early and middle stages of life. Along these lines, stakeholders expressed support for “upstream” strategies such as fitness, wellness, and financial and long-term care planning, as ways to achieve later-life health and security for individuals and communities as a whole.

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

A Blueprint for 2010: Preparing Minnesota for the Age Wave (2007)

<http://edocs.dhs.state.Minnesota.us/lfserver/Legacy/DHS-5059-ENG>

A Blueprint for Action: Developing a Livable Community for All Ages (2007)

http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/Blueprint_for_Action_web.pdf

A Minnesota Blue Zone? It's closer than before (2009)

http://www.minnpost.com/stories/2009/08/26/11118/a_MINNESOTA_blue_zone_its_closer_than_before

A Tale of Two Older Americas: Community Opportunities and Challenges (2004)

http://www.vnsny.org/advantage/AI_NationalSurveyReport.pdf

Aging Implications: A Wake-up Call. What can employers, workers, educators, philanthropists, state and local policymakers do? (2009)

<http://www.workforcewise.com/media/pdf/WW-AgingImplicationsStudy-12-09.pdf>

Aging in Place: A Toolkit for Local Governments (2004)

http://www.atlantaregional.com/documents/ag_aging_in_place_toolkit_2_23_04.pdf

Aging in Place: Technical Assistance Guide (2007)

http://www.livable.com/publications/Aging_in_place_technical_assistance_final.pdf

Aging with a Comprehensive Approach: Developing a Livable Tampa Bay Region for All Ages (2007)

http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/Articles%20and%20Reports/tampa_bay_report_electronic.pdf

Beyond 50.05 – A Report to the Nation on Livable Communities: Creating Environments for Successful Aging (2005)

http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/beyond_50_communities.pdf

Blueprint for Affordable Elder Housing in Communities for a Lifetime: A resource for affordable homes, communities and mobility solutions that are Senior-Friendly, Boomer-Ready (2009)

<http://www.communitiesforalifetime.org/docs/THEBLUEPRINT.pdf>

Creating Communities for a Lifetime: Minnesota Success Stories (2009)

http://www.Minnesotaaging.org/advocate/cflDocs/CFL_SuccessStories_DHS-5059e-ENG.pdf

Creating Healthy Communities for an Aging Population: A Report of a Joint Rural Health Advisory Committee and State Community Health Services Advisory Committee Work Group (2006)

<http://www.health.state.Minnesota.us/divs/orhpc/pubs/healthyaging/hareportnofs.pdf>

Creating Senior-Healthy Communities: Removing Regulatory Barriers (2007)

<http://www.drcog.org/documents/Creating%20Senior-healthy%20Communities-16Apr07.pdf>

Design Guidelines for a Lifespan Community (2009)

<http://agingindiana.org/files/other%20reports/DesignGuidelines09.pdf>

Designing Places and Spaces for Now and in the Future: Developing a Livable St. Louis Region for All (2009)

<http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/WorkshopReports/stlouisaginginplaceworkshopreport.pdf>

Eden Prairie nets award for active community planning work (2009)

<http://www.edenprairienews.com/news/announcements/city-nets-award-active-community-planning-work-109>

Elder Friendly® Business Certification (n.d.)

<http://www.eldersinaction.org/whatwedo/elderfriendly/>

Engaging Older Adults through Arts and Culture: Developing a Livable Chicago for All Ages (2008)

http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/developing_a_livable_chicago_for_all_ages.pdf

Enhancing Lifelong Learning: Developing a Livable San Diego County for All Ages (2008)

http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/developing_a_livable_san_diego_county_for_all_ages.pdf

Evidence Based Interventions to Improve Physical Activity in Older Adults (2009)

http://agingindiana.org/files/other%20reports/Evidence_Based_Intervent.pdf

Florida Communities for a Lifetime Blueprint (2007)

<http://www.communitiesforalifetime.org/docs/blueprint2007web.pdf>

Forming a Community Based Network: A Handbook (1999)

<http://www.elderberry.org/content/Documents/FormingACommunityBasedNetwork.pdf>

Growing Smarter, Living Healthier: A Guide to Smart Growth and Active Living (2009)

http://www.epa.gov/aging/bhc/guide/2009_Aging.pdf

Home Modification: Your Key to Comfort, Safety, and Independent Living (2006)

<http://www.communitiesforalifetime.org/docs/Home%20Modification%20AARP%20brochure.pdf>

Increasing Home Access: Designing for Visitability (2008)

http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/2008_14_access.pdf

Increasing Transportation & Mobility Options: Creating Livable Miami-Dade & Monroe Counties (2008)

<http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/Articles%20and%20Reports/aip%20miami%20report%20final.pdf>

Innovations for Seniors: Public and Community Transit Services Respond to Special Needs (2004)

<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/innovations.pdf>

Land Use Planning and Design: Developing a Livable Centralina Region for All Ages (2008)

http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/charlotte_report_final.pdf

Lifelong Communities: A Regional Guide to Growth and Longevity (2009)

http://www.atlantaregional.com/documents/LLC_Final_Report_06_23.pdf

Michigan Community for a Lifetime Elder Friendly Community Recognition Program History and Project Development Report (2007)

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/miseniors/7- Michigan_CFL_History_Project_Dev_199548_7.pdf

Minnesota GreenStep Cities: A report to the MINNESOTA Legislature regarding Green Star award expansion and a program proposal to assist local governments in taking the next step to implement carbon reductions and other environmental actions (2009)

http://www.cleanenergyresource teams.org/files/GreenStepCities_FinalReport_0.pdf

Older Adults in the Atlanta Region: Preferences, Practices and Potential of the 55+ Population (2007)

http://www.atlantaregional.com/documents/ag_aging_survey_5_1_08.pdf

Opportunities for Creating Livable Communities (2008)

http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/2008_02_communities.pdf

Redesigning Communities for Aging in Place: Developing a Livable San Antonio for All Ages (2009)

http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/WorkshopReports/san_antonio_aging_in_place_report_final.pdf

Safe Mobility for a Maturing Society: Challenges and Opportunities (2003)

http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/safe_mobility.pdf

The Maturing of America: Getting Communities on Track for an Aging Population (2006)

http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/maturing_of_america_reformatted_for_printing.pdf

The Role of Housing: Developing a Livable Kansas City Metro Area for All Ages (2008)

<http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/developing%20a%20livable%20kc%20metro%20area.pdf>

Transportation Innovations for Seniors: A Synopsis of Findings in Rural America (2006)

http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/Senior_Rural_Innovations.pdf

Walkability (2009)

http://www.cityofalbertlea.org/pdfs/walkability_audit.pdf

Workforce Development and Nonprofit Capacity Building: Developing a Livable Arizona for All Ages (2007)

<http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/arizona%20report.pdf>

VII. APPENDICES

A.	2009 Minnesota Statutes – Communities for a Lifetime.....	30
B.	2009 Communities for a Lifetime SNAP Survey.....	32
C.	Comparison of National Models.....	36
D.	State Grant Programs Related to Communities for a Lifetime.....	38
E.	“Building Communities for a Lifetime Recognition Program” Design.....	41

256.975 MINNESOTA BOARD ON AGING

Subdivision 10. Communities for a lifetime

- (a) For purposes of this subdivision, "communities for a lifetime" means partnerships of small cities, counties, municipalities, statutory or home rule charter cities, or towns, whose citizens seek to affirmatively extend to persons ages 65 and older the opportunities, supports, and services that will enable them to continue to be contributing, civically engaged residents.
- (b) The opportunities extended within a reasonable distance to senior residents by communities for a lifetime must include, but not be limited to:
- (1) the opportunity to contribute time and talents through volunteer community service;
 - (2) the opportunity to participate in the paid workforce, with flexibility of hours and scheduling;
 - (3) the opportunity for socializing, recreation, and wellness activities, including both physical exercise and mental stimulation;
 - (4) the opportunity to "age in place" and choose among a variety of affordable, accessible housing options, including single-family housing, independent congregate senior housing, and senior housing with services;
 - (5) the opportunity to access quality long-term care in the setting of the senior's own choice; and
 - (6) the opportunity for community-wide mobility and to access public transportation, including door-to-door assistance and weekend and evening access.
- (c) Communities for a lifetime must demonstrate the availability of supports and services for senior residents that include, but are not limited to:
- (1) an array of home and community-based services to support seniors' options to remain in an independent living setting as they age and become more frail;
 - (2) access to contemporary remote medical technology for cost-effective home-based monitoring of medical conditions;
 - (3) access to nutrition programs, including congregate meal and home-delivered meal opportunities;
 - (4) access to a comprehensive caregiver support system for family members and volunteer caregivers, including:
 - (i) technological support for caregivers remaining in the paid workforce to manage caregiver responsibilities effectively; and
 - (ii) respite care that offers temporary substitute care and supervision for frail seniors;
 - (5) personal assistance in accessing services and supports, and in seeking financing for these services and supports;
 - (6) high-quality assisted living facilities within a senior's geographic setting of choice;
 - (7) high-quality nursing care facilities within a senior's geographic setting of choice; and
 - (8) the protection offered to vulnerable seniors by a publicly operated adult protective service.

(d) Communities for a lifetime must also:

- (1) establish an ongoing local commission to advise the community for a lifetime on its provision of the opportunities, services, and supports identified in paragraphs (b) and (c);
- (2) offer training and learning opportunities for businesses, civic groups, fire and police personnel, and others frequently interacting with seniors on appropriate methods of interacting with seniors; and
- (3) incorporate into its local plan, developed in accordance with sections 366.10, 394.232 and 394.232, elements that address the impact of the forecast change in population age structure on land use, housing, public facilities, transportation, capital improvement, and other areas addressed by local plans; provisions addressing the availability of the opportunities, supports, and services identified in paragraphs (b) and (c); and strategies to develop physical infrastructure responsive to the needs of the projected population.

(e) In implementing this subdivision, the Minnesota Board on Aging shall:

- (1) consult with, and when appropriate work through, the area agencies on aging;
- (2) consult with the commissioners of human services, health, and employment and economic development, and the League of Minnesota Cities and other organizations representing local units of government; and
- (3) review models of senior-friendly community initiatives from other states and organizations.

(f) The Board on Aging shall report to the legislature by February 28, 2010, with recommendations on

- (1) a process for communities to request and receive the designation of community for a lifetime, and
- (2) funding sources to implement these communities.

APPENDIX B: 2009 Communities for a Lifetime SNAP Survey

Introduction

The 2009 Minnesota Legislature passed a law requiring the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA) to submit a Report to the Legislature on options for Minnesota to adopt a **Communities for a Lifetime** (CFL) recognition program. Communities for a Lifetime was defined in the law to mean “partnerships of small cities, counties, municipalities...or towns, whose citizens seek to affirmatively extend to persons 65 and older the opportunities, supports and services that will enable them to continue to be contributing, civically engaged residents.” While many communities across the state are currently moving in this direction, the objective of a state recognition program would be to promote even greater adoption of CFL ideas. This survey is intended to get your feedback about how this kind of program might work best in Minnesota.

1. What role(s) do you play in your community? (Check all the apply)

Citizen or community resident
Community health and human services professional
County health and human services professional
Local government professional, outside of health and human services
Elected official in local government
Business owner
State, regional or local planner, in any discipline
Other:

2. From the perspective of which role will you be responding to this Communities for a Lifetime stakeholder survey? (Check only one)

Citizen or community resident
Community health and human services professional
County health and human services professional
Local government professional, outside of health and human services
Elected official in local government
Business owner
State, regional or local planner, in any discipline
Other:

3. Using your own definition of community, do you consider your community to be rural, suburban, or urban?

Rural
Suburban
Urban

A review of community recognition programs in other states uncovered examples of programs with very high standards and relatively lower standards for recognition. Please indicate your opinion on the issue of setting standards by answering the question below.

4. Would you prefer a recognition program that sets higher standards, encouraging communities to meet several established guidelines, or a recognition program that sets relatively lower standards, encouraging communities to meet a select few established guidelines?

Very high standards
High standards
Both high and low standards (for example: a two-tier recognition program)
Low standards
Very low standards

Several ideas have been suggested for how a recognition program could work. Please rate the two approaches below according to how successful you think they would be in promoting Communities for a Lifetime in Minnesota.

5. Award communities for accomplishments according to established categories (for example: housing, transportation, health and wellness, civic engagement), in addition to overall accomplishments.

Very successful
Somewhat successful
Not very successful
Unsuccessful

6. Award communities for accomplishments according to levels of excellence (for example: gold, silver, bronze).

Very successful
Somewhat successful
Not very successful
Unsuccessful

7. What type of recognition do you believe communities would find meaningful? (RANK the following types of recognition on a scale of 1 to 6, a ranking of 1 being “most meaningful” and 6 being “least meaningful”)

Being issued a letter or certificate by a high-ranking state official
Being presented a physical award at a public ceremony by a high-ranking state official
Being featured as a best practice example on state websites or in state publications
Being featured as a best practice example at public forums
Being featured in local and state media outlets
Being given higher priority for state grant funding

8. Which statement best reflects your view of the Communities for a Lifetime concept?

Communities for a Lifetime is about providing a good quality of life for older residents
Communities for a Lifetime is about providing a good quality of life for residents of all ages

The following two questions address issues related to communities applying and being selected for recognition.

9. What type of entry process would you prefer for communities seeking recognition through a state program?

An application process where communities apply on their own behalf

A nomination process where communities are nominated by an outside party

10. What type of selection process would you prefer for communities seeking recognition through a state program?

A panel of state administrators using established criteria

A panel of citizens using established criteria

A joint panel of state administrators and citizens using established criteria

Other (please describe):

The following two questions address ways in which the administrators of the recognition program could provide technical assistance to communities.

11. How valuable would it be to provide standardized planning and assessment tools for use by communities?

Very valuable

Moderately valuable

Of little value

Not at all valuable

12. How valuable would it be to promote a set of Communities for a Lifetimes benchmarks or measures that could be tracked over time to mark the state and communities' progress?

Very valuable

Moderately valuable

Of little value

Not at all valuable

13. Are there barriers that communities face in pursuing Communities for a Lifetime initiatives that state agencies may be able to address?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide a description of the barriers you have identified or experienced:

14. Are there alternative approaches to a formal recognition program that you believe would promote and advance Communities for a Lifetime initiatives?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide a description of any alternative approaches:

15. How likely is it that your community would pursue recognition through a Communities for a Lifetime recognition program?

Very likely

Somewhat likely

Somewhat unlikely

Not at all likely

16. Please share any additional feedback you feel was not captured by this survey:

APPENDIX C: Comparisons of National Models

Model Name	Program/Initiative Goal	Components of “CFL”	Core Program Activities
Florida Communities for a Lifetime (1999-)	The goal of the initiative is to help Florida communities become better places for elders to live, providing all residents the opportunity to contribute to the betterment of their communities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing 2. Health, wellness and injury prevention 3. Volunteerism, intergenerational programs and community services 4. Employment 5. Transportation and mobility 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Publishing reports and guidebooks 2. Administering award program 3. Coordinating with other state initiatives 4. Educating communities 5. Maintaining website 6. Hosting regional workshops 7. Public relations
Michigan Communities for a Lifetime (2007-)	Michigan established this program to formally recognize these successful efforts, both as a small reward for their achievement and as a model to other communities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Walkability/bikeability 2. Supportive community systems 3. Access to health care 4. Safety and security 5. Housing 6. Transportation 7. Health promotion 8. Commerce 9. Enrichment 10. Inclusion 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disseminating best practices 2. Administering award program 3. Offering a toolkit 4. Maintaining website 5. Developing and testing community assessment tools 6. Managing a listserv 7. Managing pilot grants
EPA Building Healthy Communities for Active Aging (2006-)	The principal goal is to raise awareness across the nation about healthy synergies that can be achieved by communities combining Smart Growth and Active Aging concepts.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staying Active, Connected, and Engaged 2. Development and housing 3. Transportation and mobility 4. Staying healthy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining a website 2. Publishing a guidebook 3. Managing an online learning network 4. Offering practical tip sheets 5. Publishing program brochures
Go Texan Certified Retirement Communities (2006-)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote Texas as a retirement destination 2. Assist Texas communities with marketing 3. Assist in the development of life-care communities for economic development purposes 4. Encourage tourism 	Not applicable	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining a website 2. Offering a frequently asked questions sheet 3. Hosting regional workshops 4. Administering the certification program
American Assoc. of Retirement Communities Seal of Approval (no date)	The AARC Seal of Approval program was established to recognize communities and master-planned developments that possess the resources and amenities to attract today’s relocating retiree.	Not applicable	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining a website 2. Administering the seal program

Model Name	Program/Initiative Goal	Components of “CFL”	Core Program Activities
AdvantAge Initiative (2001-)	The initiative helps counties, cities, and towns prepare for the growing number of older adults who are "aging in place" while creating livable communities for people of all ages.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic needs for housing and security 2. Maintenance of physical and mental health 3. Independence for the frail, disabled, and homebound 4. Opportunities for social and civic engagement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing and testing an assessment tool 2. Administering surveys 3. Conducting analysis and writing reports 4. Offering a toolkit 5. Maintaining website 6. Managing a newsletter 7. Publishing fact sheets
Aging in Place Initiative (2004-)	The initiative was developed to help America’s communities prepare for the aging of their population and to become places that are good to grow up, live in and grow old.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing 2. Planning and zoning 3. Transportation 4. Health and supportive services 5. Cultures and lifelong learning 6. Public safety 7. Civic engagement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining a website 2. Hosting regional workshops 3. Administering micro-grants 4. Disseminating best practices 5. Publishing reports
Aging Indiana (2006-)	Planning elderly-friendly Hoosier communities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Addressing basic needs 2. Promoting independence 3. Promoting physical and mental health and well being 4. Promoting social and civic engagement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing and testing an assessment tool 2. Administering surveys 3. Conducting analysis and writing reports 4. Online education 5. Maintaining website and blog 6. Hosting workshops
Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (c. 1980-)	The NORC paradigm is a community-based intervention designed to reduce service fragmentation and create healthy, integrated communities in which seniors living in NORCs are able to age-in-place with greater comfort and security in their own homes.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Volunteer opportunities 2. Education, socialization and recreation 3. Social services assistance 4. Health care assistance 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining a website 2. Hosting annual meetings 3. Disseminating best practices 4. Program evaluation and survey implementation 5. Public policy advocacy
North Carolina Livable and Senior-Friendly Communities (2003-)	The initiative provides a practical, tested framework to enable places in North Carolina, regardless of their size, to respond to the changing and unique needs and wants of their older population as well as accommodate residents of all ages.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accessibility spaces 2. Healthy aging 3. Economic security 4. Technology 5. Safety and security 6. Public accountability and responsiveness 7. Social and cultural opportunity 8. Access and choice in services and supports 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of the State Plan on Aging and the accompanying Area Agency on Aging Area Plans

APPENDIX D: State Grant Programs Related to Communities for a Lifetime

State Grant Program	Description
Explore Minnesota	
Explore Minnesota Tourism Grants	Explore Minnesota Tourism offers a variety of grants to help communities promote their areas of the state.
Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA)	
Transform 2010: Preparing for an Aging Population	MBA partners with Minnesota’s seven Area Agencies on Aging that in turn work with local partners to address community-level issues related to the aging of the population. Grants and technical assistance are available to strengthen the local capacity to support older people in their own homes and communities.
Minnesota Dept. of Administration	
Minnesota STAR Program (or System of Technology to Achieve Results)	STAR's mission is to help all Minnesotans with disabilities gain access to and acquire the assistive technology they need to live, learn, work and play. The Minnesota STAR Program is federally funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration in accordance with the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended (P.L. 108-364).
Minnesota Dept. of Employment & Economic Development (DEED)	
Pathways Grant Program	The Pathways Program, which is a Minnesota Job Skills Partnership (MJSP) Program activity, acts as a catalyst between business and education in developing cooperative training projects for individuals who are at or below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines or who are making the transition from public assistance to the workforce. Grants are awarded to accredited Minnesota public and/or private educational institutions with businesses as partners; all projects must have at least one educational institution and one business working together.
Small Cities Development Program	The program helps develop viable communities by providing financial assistance for decent, safe, affordable housing, economic development, and public facility needs; and a suitable living environment by expanding economic opportunities, principally benefiting low- to moderate-income households. The program provides federal grants from HUD to local units of government on a competitive basis for a variety of community development projects.
Special Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program	The Special Incumbent Worker Training Program, which is a Minnesota Job Skills Partnership (MJSP) Program, is intended to expand opportunities for businesses and workers to gain new skills that are in demand in the Minnesota economy. Special Incumbent Worker Training Program grants-in-aid may be awarded to state or local government units (including state universities and MinnesotaSCU institutions), non-profit organizations, community action agencies, business organizations or associations, or labor organizations.

State Grant Program	Description
Greater Minnesota Business Development Public Infrastructure Grant Program	<p>This grant program provides funding in Greater Minnesota to build infrastructure improvements that use Minnesota biomass energy products to conserve energy and reduce reliance on electricity, oil, and natural gas. The program also provides funding to stimulate economic development by assisting local units of government to provide infrastructure required in the creation or retention of high quality jobs with a focus on industrial, manufacturing, and technology-related industries and to keep or enhance jobs in a specific location while increasing a city's tax base.</p>
Minnesota Investment Fund	<p>The Minnesota Investment Fund provides grants to help add new workers and retain high-quality jobs on a statewide basis. The focus is on industrial, manufacturing, and technology-related industries. Grants are awarded to local units of government who provide loans to assist expanding businesses.</p>
Redevelopment Grant Program	<p>The Redevelopment Grant Program offers grants to assist development authorities with costs for redeveloping blighted industrial, residential, or commercial sites where a past use and the need to recycle the land for a more-productive use exist.</p>
Minnesota Dept. of Health (MDH)	
SHIP (or Statewide Health Improvement Program)	<p>A component of 2008 Minnesota Health Reform, SHIP aims to help Minnesotans live longer, healthier lives by reducing the burden of chronic disease.</p>
Community Clinic Grant Program	<p>The Community Clinic Grant Program provides funding to plan, establish or operate services to improve the ongoing viability of Minnesota's clinic-based safety net providers. Grants support clinical capacity to serve people with low incomes, reduce current or future uncompensated care burdens, or improve care delivery infrastructure.</p>
Eliminating Health Disparities Grants	<p>These grants provide grantees an opportunity to: work toward eliminating the health disparities of racial and ethnic populations; promote the health and quality of life of individuals and communities; build on community strengths and assets to address health issues; develop effective working relationships among community members and the organizations and leaders who serve them; and focus on prevention and early detection.</p>
Minnesota Rural Flex Grant Program	<p>This grant program is intended to preserve access to needed health services and encourage collaboration and integration of rural community health systems. Grants may be used to develop community, network or strategic plans for preserving or enhancing access to health services. Grants may also be used for implementation activities in the following categories: network development, health system improvements, strengthening and integrating the EMS system; and quality improvement.</p>
Rural Hospital Capital Improvement Grant Program	<p>Small rural hospitals may apply for grants of up to \$125,000 to make needed facility and equipment improvements.</p>
Rural Hospital Planning and Transition Grant	<p>The Office of Rural Health & Primary Care administers grants to help small rural hospitals preserve access or respond to changing conditions. Hospitals have used transition grants to prepare strategic plans, implement new uses for hospital space and develop community services. Approximately \$300,000 is available each year and the maximum grant amount is \$50,000.</p>
Minnesota Dept. of Human Services (DHS)	
Community Service/Community Services Development (CS/SD)	<p>CS/SD grants are intended to help communities rebalance their long-term care service delivery system and increase their capacity to help people age 65 and older to stay in their own homes and communities.</p>

State Grant Program	Description
Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR)	
Metro Greenways Protection & Restoration	Protect, connect, restore, and manage a regional network of natural areas, parks, and other open spaces interconnected by ecological corridors in the seven county metropolitan region through collaborative public/private partnership.
Federal Recreational Trail Program	To encourage the maintenance and development of motorized, non-motorized, and diversified trails by providing funding assistance.
Minnesota Dept. of Transportation (MNDOT)	
Greater Minnesota Transit Grants	This capital transit facility program provides financial assistance for major public transit facility projects in Greater Minnesota. These funds may be used for the purchase of, renovation of, or construction of bus garages, bus stops, administrative offices, and other transit-related building activities.
Public Transit Participation Program	The Public Transit Participation Program (State/Federal Program 5311) provides financial assistance for public transit services. This grant program supports capital, planning, and operations of transit systems in small and large urban areas and in rural areas outside of the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area.
Safe Routes to School Program	The funds are available for a variety of projects including infrastructure improvements, education, and enforcement that improve the safety of bicycling and walking to and from school.
Metropolitan Council	
Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA)	Grants available for cities and municipalities to redevelop communities, with an emphasis on creating jobs and taxable revenue as well as mixed use/livable communities.
Minnesota Historical Society	
Historical Society Grants	The Minnesota Historical Society has grant programs available to provide support for individuals, organizations and agencies for historical research, historic preservation, and projects to preserve and interpret Minnesota's history.
Minnesota Housing Finance Agency	
Fix-up Fund	The Fix-up Fund is a statewide program that offers affordable, low-interest, fixed-rate loans that can be used for energy efficiency improvements.
Community Fix-up Fund	The Community Fix-up Fund (CFUF) is available to help communities address their home improvement needs and objectives (including energy efficiency) under geographically targeted initiatives.
Rehabilitation Loan Program	The Rehabilitation Loan program assists low-income homeowners in financing basic home improvements that directly affect the safety, habitability, energy efficiency, or accessibility of their homes.
Source: Minnesota Office of Grants Management	

APPENDIX E: “Building Communities for a Lifetime Recognition Program” Design

Program Name

“Building Communities for a Lifetime Recognition Program” (Recognition Program) was chosen as the name of the Recognition Program to indicate that there is no actual end-point to the Communities for a Lifetime process. That is, award winners will be recognized for *building* a Community for a Lifetime, rather than *being* a Community for a Lifetime (CFL).¹⁸

Eligibility to Apply

Applicants can apply from any sector of a community, i.e., public, nonprofit or private, as long as “lead” applicants have documented their engagement with relevant representatives of all three sectors. Applicants can define the spatial parameters of their own community, e.g., neighborhood, town, township, city, cluster of proximate cities, county, or school district.

Application Process

The Recognition Program will provide an online application process where applicants document the completion of seven required CFL steps.¹⁹ The following is a list of the required steps and how applicants will be asked to document each element:

1. Demonstrating awareness of community demographic and economic trends by completing at least one community assessment
DOCUMENTATION: Applicants will be asked to indicate if they used a standard assessment tool recommended by the Recognition Program. Communities that used an alternative assessment tool will be asked to describe their methods in 250 words or less and electronically attach a blank copy of the tool.
2. Engaging a wide array of community residents and stakeholders
DOCUMENTATION: Applicants will be asked to indicate if they engaged specific stakeholders in their process, e.g., local government officials, citizens, and providers. Communities will also be asked to electronically attach a complete list of official initiative partners.
3. Designating or assembling a leadership body
DOCUMENTATION: Applicants will describe the location, structure and composition of their leadership body in 250 words or less.
4. Articulating a long-term vision and plan
DOCUMENTATION: Communities will be asked to electronically attach an official vision statement and long-term planning document for their initiative.
5. Articulating concrete steps toward community improvements, i.e., an “action plan”
DOCUMENTATION: Communities will be asked to electronically attach an outline of concrete steps for their initiative. A template will be provided to applicants.

¹⁸ The [Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging](#) maintained support for an official CFL community “certification” process.

¹⁹ The [Governor’s Fit City Program](#) offers an example of [an online application process](#).

6. Articulating a plan for sustaining community efforts
DOCUMENTATION: Applicants will describe their strategy for sustaining their efforts in 250 words of less.
7. Achieving and documenting concrete community improvements (Note: Step 7 is required only for those communities seeking Level 2 recognition)
DOCUMENTATION: Applicants seeking recognition for community improvements in one or more of the seven CFL categories will be asked to complete a logic model template describing their efforts, e.g., Problem > Inputs > Outputs > Outcomes. A logic model template will be provided to applicants.

Selection Process

The Recognition Program will establish a point system corresponding to the required CFL steps above.²⁰ All applicants meeting a specified threshold of points will receive the corresponding form of recognition. The Recognition Program will administer a diverse panel of judges to review completed applications, including citizens, providers and local government professionals from around the state. The MBA Board is a likely source for judges, as its members are citizen appointees from all regions of the state. AAAs may also be a good source of representatives. Staff to the MBA will also serve on the selection panel.

Levels and Categories of Recognition

The Recognition Program will have two levels and seven categories of recognition:²¹

LEVEL 1 Recognition – “Getting Started”

1. Assessment and Planning
2. Leadership and Organization

LEVEL 2 Recognition – “Making a Long-Term Impact”

3. Housing, Transportation and Accessible Spaces
4. Health, Wellness and Safety
5. Commerce, Employment and Civic Engagement
6. Services in Support of Independence
7. Land-Use and Long-Term Community Planning

Forms of Recognition

Communities that apply and meet criteria for Level 1 Recognition – “Getting Started” – will receive:

- A letter of recognition signed by the Governor

Communities that apply and meet criteria for Level 2 Recognition – “Making a Long-Term Impact” – will receive the following forms of recognition:

- An official press release and subsequent media coverage

²⁰ The [Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging](#) proposed an alternative selection process based on applicants’ documentation and completion of specific community improvements in one or more of five categories.

²¹ The [Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging](#) advocated for the use of different categories of recognition than are presented here. The categories included here align with national models.

- An electronic logo award
In a time when public relations efforts occur increasing online, MBA recommends creating and distributing an electronic Recognition Program logo award. Logo awards could be displayed on print publications or on community websites by award recipients and their official partners. The Recognition Program will design five seals to reflect the five, Level 2 award categories.
- Inclusion in state level print and online best practice publications

Administration and Technical Assistance

Recognition Program administration and technical assistance will include the following:

- Defining high-level CFL principles, goals and outcomes
- Educating the public about CFL and promoting the Recognition Program
- Administering the Recognition Program application and selection process
- Providing technical assistance to communities and Recognition Program applicants
- Administering the various forms of recognition
- Publishing best practice reports and maintaining website access

Human and Financial Resources

Based on budget information for comparable state-level programs, the Recognition Program is estimated to cost approximately \$350,000 annually.

State Level (1 FTE to Minnesota Board on Aging/Department of Human Services):

Salary and fringes	\$81,250
Overheads/support	\$25,780
Travel expense	\$ 2,000
Additional printing/web	\$ 7,500

Regional Level (3 FTEs to ElderCare Development Partnership)

Salary and fringes	\$210,984
Overheads/support	\$10,780
Travel expense	\$10,400

Total	\$348,694
-------	-----------