

PROGRESS REPORT



From Vision to Fruition

Approximately \$1,000,000 worth of volunteer time has been contributed to our communities through endorsed and funded Vision 2040 initiatives.



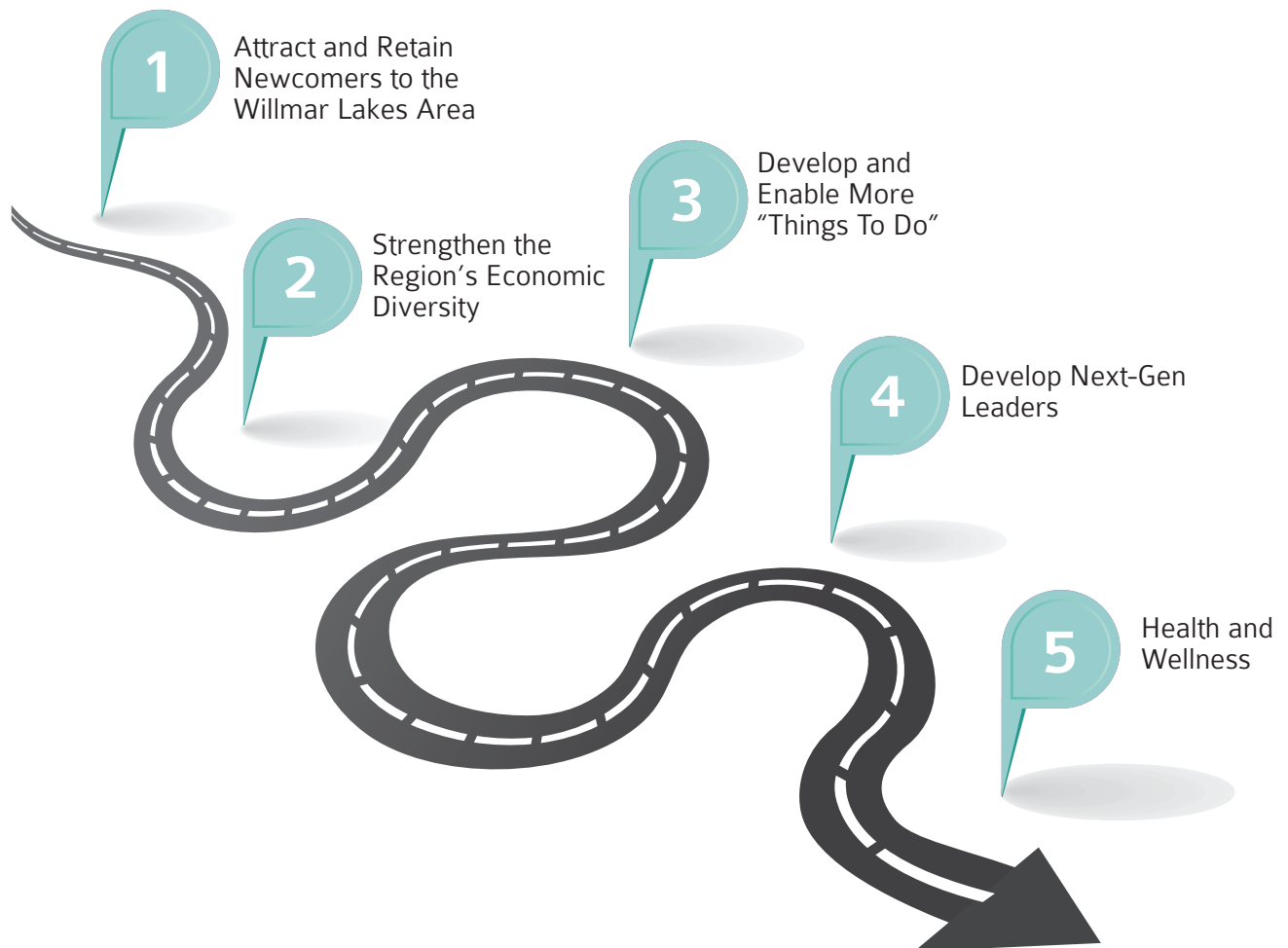
PROGRESS REPORT

This report shows the progress of the Willmar Lakes Area Vision 2040 Project through 2017.



Willmar Lakes Area Vision 2040 is a movement based off an evolving plan created by the citizens of the Willmar Lakes Area after a lengthy consultation process with people throughout the region via interviews, round table discussions, community chalkboards and surveys. The goal of this effort is to create a long range plan for building healthy communities where people want to live, work, do business and raise a family.

The result is a “roadmap” that identifies 4 primary goals for our community through the year 2040. Work on those first four goals spawned a fifth goal--Health and Wellness.



Roadmap of Our Goals

VISION 2040 GOALS

1

Attract and Retain

Goal One is focused on welcoming new and retaining current residents to make the Willmar Lakes Area a place where people want to move and stay. In order to achieve this, we have established specific focus areas.

- Welcoming Newcomers
- Bridging Diverse Communities
- Broadband Internet
- Affordable Housing

2

Economic Diversity

Goal Two focuses on strengthening economic opportunities throughout the region. Economic diversity currently has several areas of focus and they are as follows:

- Manufacturing
- Forming a “Learning and Earning” Task Force
- Creating new databases to track economic progress and job growth
- Expanding middle-skill and high-skill jobs
- Increasing opportunities for entrepreneurs

3

Things to Do

Goal Three works on creating more activities for the Willmar Lakes Area. A number of projects including the Willmar Destination Playground have been completed in an effort to achieve this goal. This committee is committed to creating more things to do in the Willmar Lakes Area and continually looks for more projects!

4

Next-Gen Leaders

Goal Four focuses on developing leaders in a variety of ways. In order to achieve this goal, Next-Gen leaders focused their energy on the following projects:

- Launching a boot camp for aspiring leaders
- Utilizing the region’s retirees and elder population
- Encouraging Latinos, East Africans, and members of neXt to serve
- Creating a formal, community wide mentoring program

5

Health and Wellness

The vision of Goal Five is to create and promote community health, health equity, and healthy behavior. Goal 5 is striving to make the healthy choice the easy choice. Members of Goal 5 consist of volunteers from local organizations.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the past five years, hundreds of volunteers, and countless volunteer hours have contributed to numerous accomplishments. Here are a few things that have happened to move us towards that achievement.

Destination Playground

The new Willmar Playground at Robbins Island was built in the summer of 2017. This was a community effort from planning to construction that was completed by an amazing group of 3,792 volunteers. These volunteers worked to not only plan the playground and raise the money to build it, but they also organized the build. The community came together for a nine day build to create an accessible playground that's fun for all!



"I'm a grandpa. I knew the Willmar Playground at Robbins Island would be a fantastic asset for them that they could enjoy for years to come. My grandkids love it! We go there all the time! I also knew it would be an improvement to Robbins Island and that means a lot to me as well."
Kevin Halliday

Vision 2040 Leadership

Vision 2040 Leadership is a small cohort leadership program designed to help people prepare to answer the call of community service within the Willmar Lakes Area and Kandiyohi County. Vision 2040 Leadership is a partnership with the University of Minnesota Extension in which participants engage in hands on learning and doing within communities throughout Kandiyohi County. The inaugural cohort began in 2014 and continues to bring a new group of leaders to fruition each year. Learn more at <http://www.willmarlakesarea2040.com/leadership>



1 Million Cups



1 Million Cups is a national organization. It was brought to Willmar because of the Inner City Leadership Tour to Fargo, West Fargo and Moorhead in October of 2015.

Each week a unique startup or entrepreneur will give a 6 minute presentation to share their business model and story. Following the presentation, the audience asks questions and the facilitator always ends by asking, “What can we do to help you be successful?” 1 Million Cups is open to everyone in all walks of life, bringing together a sense of support, community. Learn more at <https://www.1millioncups.comwillmar>

“What can we do to help you be successful?”



Idea Fund

The Healthy Together Willmar Community Table invited residents to one of three community meals for the first ever Idea Fund in September of 2017. These meals provided residents with an opportunity for collective, collaborative problem-solving and idea generation. It was a facilitated experience in which residents broke bread together, learned about health and the work of the Community Table, reflected, and developed a collection of new project ideas – an idea fund.

Learn more about the Idea Fund at <http://healthytogetherwillmar.org/idea-fund>



MNyou Youth Garden

MNyou is a diverse group whose focus is on community health and local food. The group thought about what families might have on their menu and if variety could be added. With that, they developed the MNyou Youth Garden, located on a plot of land provided by MinnWest Technology Campus in Willmar.

Here they grow vegetables native to Minnesota such as tomatoes, carrots and pumpkins. They are also growing bitterballs and kittley, which are native to Africa. MNyou sells their produce at the local Farmers Markets and has had great success and support from the community. When not in the garden, you can find them meeting with local farmers in the community, learning about different varieties of crops they grow and harvest.



Green Card Voices: Local Immigrant Exhibit



Green Card Voices is an exhibit that was created from 57 immigrant stories that were recorded in 2013 and 2014 throughout Minnesota (35), New York (12) and San Francisco (10). These immigrants come from over 40 different countries as well as diverse walks of life. Each immigrant story was featured with a large color portrait, a biography, a quote and a QR code with a 5-minute first person video narrative that viewers could scan with an iPhone/iPad and watch. The exhibit was on display for the month of August 2015 at The Goodness Coffee House in downtown Willmar. An Evening of Stories was the kickoff event that welcomed the Green Card Voices exhibit.



"I support Vision 2040 with my time because Willmar is my home. I want to do everything I can to make it a better place to live." Ben Nelson

Other Accomplishments

- Brain Gain for Rural MN (August 2014)
- Housing Implementation Plan (2015)
- Race Unity Day (2015)
- Vision 2040 Leadership (est 2015, ongoing program)
- WeLEAD (est 2015, ongoing program)
- Cross-Cultural Conversation, Willmar Middle School (January, 2015)
- An Evening of Stories (July, 2015)
- Willmar KC Dog Park (August, 2015)
- Boomtown (September, 2015)
- Hack20, WorkUP, MinnWest Technology Campus (August, 2015)
- Inner City Leadership Tour to Fargo, West Fargo and Moorhead (October, 2015)
- Kandiyohi County Housing Study, Health and Human Services Building (October, 2015)
- Willmar Faith in Action (October 2015)
- 1 Million Cups (est. 2016, ongoing programming)
- Diversity Immigrant Experience (2016)
- The Great Plains in Focus - Ben Winchester (2016)
- Kandiyohi County Business Retention Study (2016)
- Movies in the Park (est 2016, ongoing programming)
- Celebration & Conversation, Willmar Conference Center (February, 2016)
- Cinco de Mayo, Roosevelt Elementary (May, 2016)
- An Evening of Stories II, Willmar Education & Arts Center (June, 2016)
- Green Card Voices (July, 2016)
- Rockin Robbins (July, 2016)
- Kandiyohi County Broadband (August, 2016)
- Facilitate to Lead: World Cafe Training, MinnWest Technology Campus (November, 2016)
- BCBS Community Table (December, 2016)
- Leadership for Ethnically Diverse Communities (2017)
- New Resident Packets (2017)
- Patty Wetterling at Life Connections, Willmar Civic Center (March, 2017)
- 2017 Leadership Fair, Ridgewater College's Student Center (April, 2017)
- Community Conversation About Difference, Willmar Campus (April, 2017)
- MNyou Youth Garden, MinnWest Technology Campus (April, 2017)
- Cinco de Mayo Festival, Kennedy Elementary Gym (May, 2017)
- Destination Playground, Robbins Island (May, 2017)
- Wellness in the Workplace, Lakeland Auditorium (May, 2017)
- Community Water Safety Events, Kandiyohi YMCA, WCER, and other organizations (August, 2016/June, 2017)
- Warehoused Showing, WEAC (June, 2017)
- Willmar Mobile Pack, Willmar Middle School (June, 2017)
- Somali Independence Day, Downtown Willmar (July, 2017)
- Idea Fund (September, 2017)
- 15th Street Flats Development through Housing Task Force (October, 2017)
- Blue Zones Trip to Mason City, IA (October, 2017)
- ReYOU Trek to the Tropics (November, 2017)

STRUCTURE

The Willmar Lakes Area Vision 2040 is a movement based off an evolving plan created by the citizens of the Willmar Lakes Area. This plan is overseen by a Steering Committee consisting of the following people:

Doug Allen, Retired President of Ridgewater College/DWA Consulting

Aaron Backman, Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar EDC

Candice Clemens, headstands everywhere

Wendy Foley, Blue Cross Blue Shield

Brad Hanson, Willmar Ambulance/Willmar Lakes Area Chamber Liaison

Ahmed Fowzi Ismail, Community Integration Centre

Theresa Hillis, Kandiyohi County Area Family YMCA

Larry Kleindl, Kandiyohi County Administrator

James Miller, United Way of West Central Minnesota

Mike Negen, Hansen Advertising

Karen Samuelson, Rice Memorial Hospital

Kathy Schwantes, Willmar City Council

Melissa Sorenson, Jennie-O Turkey Store, Inc.

Leslie Valiant, City of Spicer

Steve Ammermann, West Central Tribune

Sara Carlson, Willmar Area Community Foundation

Bruce DeBlieck, Former City Council Member/MNDOT

Jay Halliday, neXt

John Harren, Willmar Municipal Utilities

Ross Magnuson, Heritage Bank/Willmar Lakes Area Chamber Liaison

Jeff Holm, Willmar Public Schools

Harlan Madsen, Kandiyohi County Commissioner

Sheila Moenkedick, ACMC Health

Pablo Obregon, PACE 4 Family Collaborative

Joanna Schrupp, MinnWest Technology Campus

Pat Solheid, Jennie-O Turkey Store, Inc.

Lynn Stier, Rice Memorial Hospital

Ken Warner, Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce

Hope Thompson, Northern Radiator / Willmar Lakes Area Chamber Liaison



"I Initially got involved in V2040 to support a movement to bring more activities to the Willmar area. I continue to support V2040 because I see positive results. Teams develop a vision, raise money, and execute. There is value and power in the V2040 platform that unites the community to make the lakes area a great place to raise a family, work, and play." Jeron Smith

FUNDING

There are a number of partners that have invested in Willmar Lakes Area Vision 2040. Over our five year history, below is the list of partners that have supported these efforts.

The funding from 2013 was the seed money for Willmar Lakes Area Vision 2040. A total of \$35,000.00 was contributed in 2013.

- Kandiyohi County
- City of Willmar
- Willmar Public Schools
- Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce
- Jennie-O Turkey Store Inc.
- Willmar Area Community Foundation
- Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission
- Willmar Municipal Utilities

In 2014, these entities continued to support the movement. A total of \$50,000.00 was contributed.

- Willmar Area Community Foundation
- Kandiyohi County
- City of Willmar
- Willmar Public Schools
- Jennie-O Turkey Store Inc.
- Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission
- Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce
- Willmar Municipal Utilities
- Spicer EDA
- New London Spicer Schools
- Community Christian School

In 2015, these entities are the financial stakeholders supporting the Vision 2040 initiative. A total of \$35,500.00 was contributed.

- Jennie-O Turkey Store Inc.
- Willmar Public Schools
- Kandiyohi County
- Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission
- Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce
- Willmar Municipal Utilities
- Spicer EDA
- New London Spicer Schools
- Community Christian School
- City of Pennock
- Willmar Area Community Foundation
- City of Willmar

In 2016, these entities are the financial stakeholders supporting the Vision 2040 initiative. A total of \$27,350.00 was contributed.

- City of Willmar
- Jennie-O Turkey Store
- Christianson & Associates
- Northern Radiator
- Northern States Supply
- Willmar Municipal Utilities
- MinnWest Technology Campus
- United FCS
- ALSK
- NLS Schools
- West Central Communications
- Walt's
- Perkins Lumber
- PrintMasters-Quick Signs
- Dooley's Petroleum
- Rice Memorial Hospital
- Century 21/Kandi Realty
- APMC
- Willmar Area Community Foundation

In 2017, these entities are the financial stakeholders supporting the Vision 2040 initiative. A total of \$39,500.00 was contributed.

- Willmar Area Community Foundation
- Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Minnesota
- Willmar Municipal Utilities
- Community Christian Schools
- Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce
- Willmar Public Schools
- Jennie-O Turkey Store
- Spicer Economic Development Authority
- City of Willmar
- Kandiyohi County
- NLS Public Schools
- MinnWest Technology Campus
- Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar Economic Development



"I am participating because I would love to see community progress in all areas of life to make this community healthy a community." Anis Iman

In addition to these funding partners, there have been many in-kind donations to assist in covering expenses for events that are too numerous to list. Vision 2040 has also received grants from the Blandin Foundation.

Willmar Lakes Area Vision 2040 has also worked with a number of generous local media partners. The following media partners continue to support Vision 2040 with in-kind donations.

- West Central Tribune
- Lakeland Broadcasting
- WRAC
- KDJS-AM/K95.3/KRVY-FM

United Way of West Central Minnesota is the Willmar Lakes Area Vision 2040 fiscal host.

The WLA has benefited from over 4,200 volunteer hours that just the steering committee alone has dedicated to the area through Vision 2040. This is a value of over \$100,000.



The Willmar Lakes Area Vision 2040 plan is a community effort. We encourage all citizens and businesses to become involved to move our community forward. To get involved, go to the Vision 2040 website. Select "Get Involved" at the top of any page. Fill out the form and select which goal you're interested in getting involved with. The goal captain will get back to you!

www.willmarlakesarea2040.com