

creating an
**Age Friendly
Northfield**

June 5, 2018

Rhonda Pownell, Mayor
Greg Colby, Brad Ness, Suzie Nakasian, David Delong, Erica Zweifel, Jessica Peterson White,
Councilor
801 Washington Street
Council Chambers
Northfield, MN 55057

Dear Mayor Pownell and City Councilors Colby, Ness, Nakasian, Delong, Zweifel, White,

Thank you for being a valued stakeholder in the *Age-Friendly Northfield Initiative*. Recent studies show the world's older population continues to grow at an unprecedented rate. The United States 65+ population is projected to nearly double in the next three decades, from 48 million to 88 million by 2050.

Demographics show us that this is just the beginning of the baby boomers turning 65. The number of people 65+ will continue to increase every year until the year 2030. The number of older adults will be more numerous than the entire child population under the age 18 by 2035. The demographic shift among age groups **is unprecedented in Minnesota**. As recently as 1970, as the Boomers were coming of age the child population was 3.4 times as large as the 65+ population. From 1980 through 2010, the 65+ group in Minnesota consistently accounted for 12-13% of the total population. This share is expected to rise to 17% in 2020 and 21% by 2030. In other words, one in five Minnesotans will be an older adult by 2030. (There is going to be a lot of us!) Both the child population and 18-64 population will decline as a proportion of Minnesota's population over this time period.

In Northfield the trend is the same. The population projections is that the **age group 65-74 is the fastest growing group** – in 2020 projected to be 1,682 ; 2025 – 1,984; 2030-2,117. All other age groups except the 35-44 show a decline. When the age groups ranging from 55 to 85+ years are added together the projected total number of people age 55 – 85+ in Northfield in 2020 will be **5736**. This is **27% of the 20,531** total projected population.

While many older adults are healthier, and more active and independent than ever before, for others, living longer does not necessarily mean living well. Both of these changing demographics will have a dramatic impact on the community structures and services required to meet the needs of an aging population. Cities must prepare today so that current and future seniors of Northfield will have the support they need to age well in community.

The Age Friendly Northfield Steering Committee is asking for your support in furthering our work for the Northfield community.

A re-cap of the work of Age Friendly Northfield Steering Committee

- ❖ **City of Northfield** became part of the World Health Organization (WHO) / AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities in 2016. AARP and WHO have developed a five-year assessment, planning, and implementation process to assist communities in becoming more age-friendly.
- ❖ **Northfield as an Age Friendly community** means that Northfield's physical, social, and economic frameworks are intentionally designed to promote independence and a high quality of life for its residents as they age. It means that its residents are better able to remain in their own home or community even though there may be significant changes in their physical and economic health. Program initiatives help communities to assess their strengths and needs in eight designated "Domains of Livability:" Once identified, communities are better able to secure, coordinate and direct resources to address the most pressing needs of their citizens.
- ❖ **Age-Friendly Northfield Steering Committee:** Shelley Holden, Pat Allen, Evelyn Burry, Patty Ciernia, Chris Ellison, Lynne Pederson, Dave Delong, Scott Temple, Chris Heineman, Clare Mathers, Nan Just, Ben Martig, represent interested community citizens, non-profit organizations, and the City of Northfield
- ❖ **A community survey** conducted during the summer of 2017. Results were presented to City Council in January and to the community in February, 2018. The survey results identified a sampling of the needs to be addressed in the five-year Action Plan.
- ❖ **Next steps** are to host focus groups with stakeholders like you, and other dedicated community leaders to celebrate the great things Northfield currently offers its seniors, and to further identify additional needs in the eight Domains of Livability. This information helps us to formulate our five-year action plan.
- ❖ **Focus/Listening Groups** are planned for June 13, 20, 27. Participants will choose which of the eight Domains of Livability - Housing, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation and Streets, Health and Wellness, Social Participation, Inclusion and Educational Opportunities, Volunteering and Civic Engagement, Job Opportunities, and Community Information - that they would like to participate in for a discussion.
- ❖ **Action Plan** - The information from the survey results and the focus/listening sessions will be used to create the five year Action Plan that will address the gaps and needs in Northfield identified by community members. The Action Plan will be completed by December 31, 2018 and forwarded to Bill Armbruster, AARP Liveable Communities.
- ❖ **Financials** - A financial statement is attached for review. At present there is no funding for the work of the Age Friendly Northfield Steering Committee.

The Age-Friendly Northfield Steering Committee is currently inviting all partners to join the effort in funding the next steps towards making our community more age-friendly. Funding is needed to support the focus groups and to write the five-year Action Plan. Other communities that have completed Action Plans, have produced plans that are between 30 to 50 pages of information.

As partners in Age Friendly Northfield, FiftyNorth, Three Links, and Northfield Retirement Community are being asked to give \$1000. Commitments have been received from FiftyNorth, and Northfield Retirement Community. Northfield Hospital and Clinics is being requested to give \$2,000. The City of Northfield is asked to match these funds in the amount of \$5,000.

Funds will go towards hiring a consultant to write the Action Plan estimated at \$8,000 and for supplies for the focus groups, \$1,000. Any remaining funds will be used for the future domain planning groups.

We are hoping that Age-Friendly Northfield can count on \$5,000 from City of Northfield to help fund this worthy initiative.

Thank you for your continued support as a stakeholder of the Age-Friendly Northfield Initiative!

Sincerely,



Lynne Pederson and Shelley J. Holden
Co-Chair Age Friendly Northfield
507-664-3701/507-650-7335

As fiscal agent of Age Friendly Northfield, please remit payment to:

FiftyNorth

Attn: Lynne Pederson

[1651 Jefferson Pkwy](#)

[Northfield, Mn. 55057](#)

For more information on Age-Friendly Northfield visit us at: www.agefriendlynorthfield.com

Watch our Video at: [AARP Age-Friendly Community Video](#)