



2017-2018 SUMMARY

**COMMUNITY THEMES
& STRENGTHS
ASSESSMENT**

CHISAGO COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Acknowledgments

MAPP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kathy Bystrom, Fairview Lakes Medical Center

Todd Fisk, Lakes Region EMS

Ami Helmbrecht, Chisago County HHS

Angie Kemen, Chisago County HHS

Tom Koplitz, Community Partnership with Youth & Families

Dan Meyer, North Branch Police Department

Center

Lezlie Sauter, Lakes and Pines CAC, Inc.

Emma Shepard, Central MN Council on Aging

Amy Tvedt, Central MN Council on Aging

Justin Wood, Chisago County Sheriff's Office

CHISAGO COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Courtney Wehrenberg, CHS Administrator

Colton Anderson, Public Health Planner

Pam Bates, Public Health Supervisor

Jodi Budde, Emergency Preparedness/Special Projects Coordinator

Pauline Amundson, Disease Prevention & Control Coordinator

Alyssa Fritz, Community Health Specialist

Introduction

Public Health is defined as “the art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts of society” (Acheson, 1988; WHO). The overall vision is to promote greater health and well-being in a sustainable way, while strengthening integrated public health services and reducing inequalities. In order to achieve this vision, the public health approach involves working with other sectors to address the wider determinants of health. So much more can be accomplished by working together with a common vision to improve health (WHO).

"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." --Andrew Carnegie

The Chisago County MAPP Committee brings together the individuals, groups and organizations that make up our local public health system, and guides our community to identify and take action on priority health issues. The committee uses the Mobilizing Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) model for community health planning.

In support of the MAPP Committee, the Chisago County Public Health Department is pleased to present this summary report of the 2017 Community Themes & Strengths Assessment of the MAPP Model.

Its purpose is to provide a deeper understanding of our community assets. It answers the questions, “What is important to

our community?”, “How is quality of life perceived in our community?” and “What assets do we have that can be used to improve community health?”



The assessment corresponds to the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment of the MAPP model. Electronic surveys, focus groups, community forums, and Windshield/Walking surveys lead to a strong understanding of community concerns and issues residents feel are the most important by identifying community assets and celebrating community strengths.

Other assessment reports are available at:

<http://www.co.chisago.mn.us/340/Community-Health>

Methods

COMMUNITY FORUMS

Chisago County Public Health held three community forums to receive feedback from community members in Rush City, North Branch, and the Chisago Lakes region. Data from the 2017 Chisago County Community Health Survey was presented, and open-ended questions pertaining to quality of life were addressed and discussed.

FOCUS GROUP

Pine Technical & Community College Employment and Training Center

WINDSHIELD/WALKING SURVEYS

Students from Bethel University participated in windshield surveys in Rush City, Harris, and North Branch. The purpose of a windshield survey is to assess community character (physical, social, and economic) and compare the different communities in our county. Observations about the community were made by driving around the community and recording what was seen.

The areas of focus for the windshield survey were housing, commercial activity, public spaces, environmental quality, culture and entertainment, media, and education. Some observations include the lack of neighborhood sidewalks and healthcare facilities in Harris, new housing and community gathering spaces in Rush City, and the trails.

QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

A Quality of Life Survey containing nine questions was sent out to MAPP Committee members to assess their perceptions about their community. Concerns of resources for the aging population and mental health issues were listed as important issues affecting quality of life.

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment: Participants

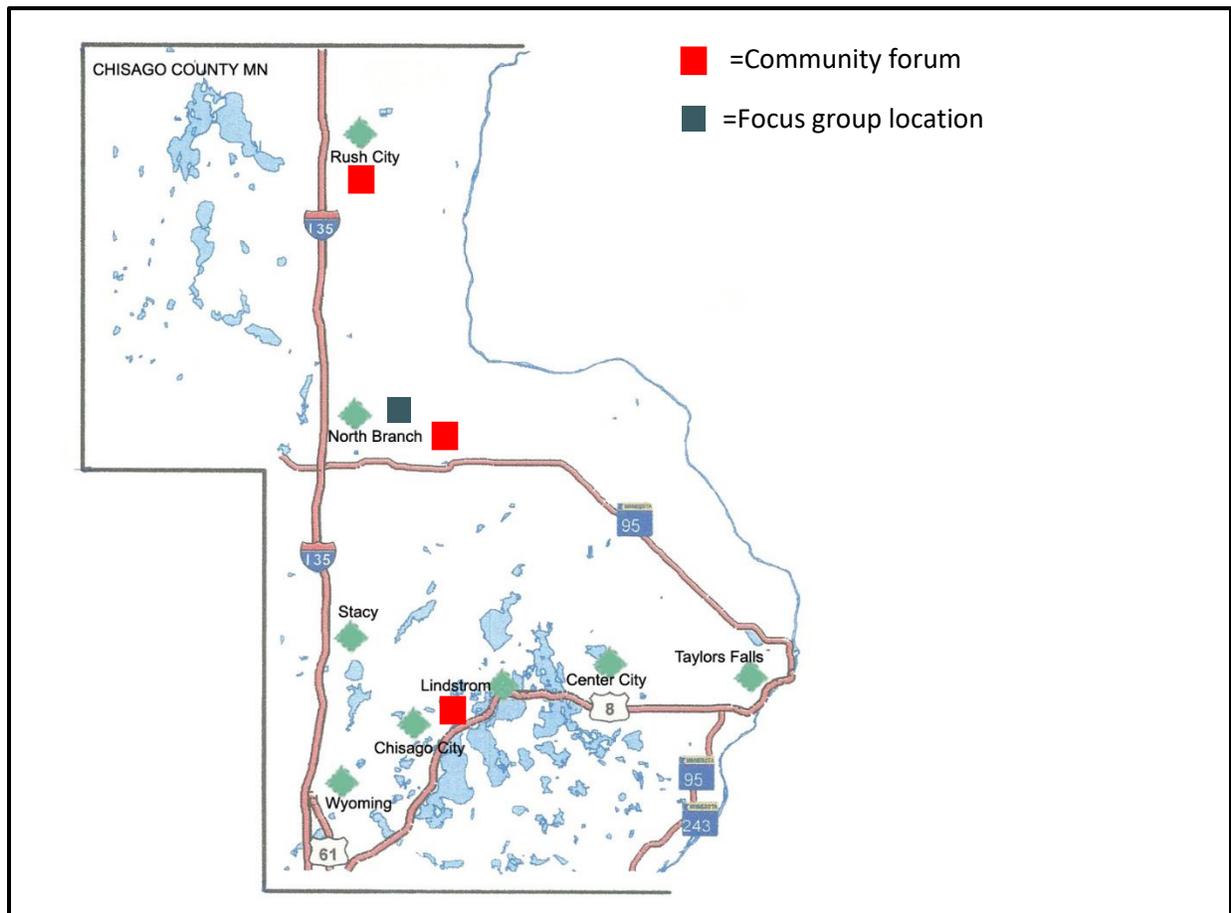
Adults ages 18 years and older who live in Chisago County.

COMMUNITY FORUMS

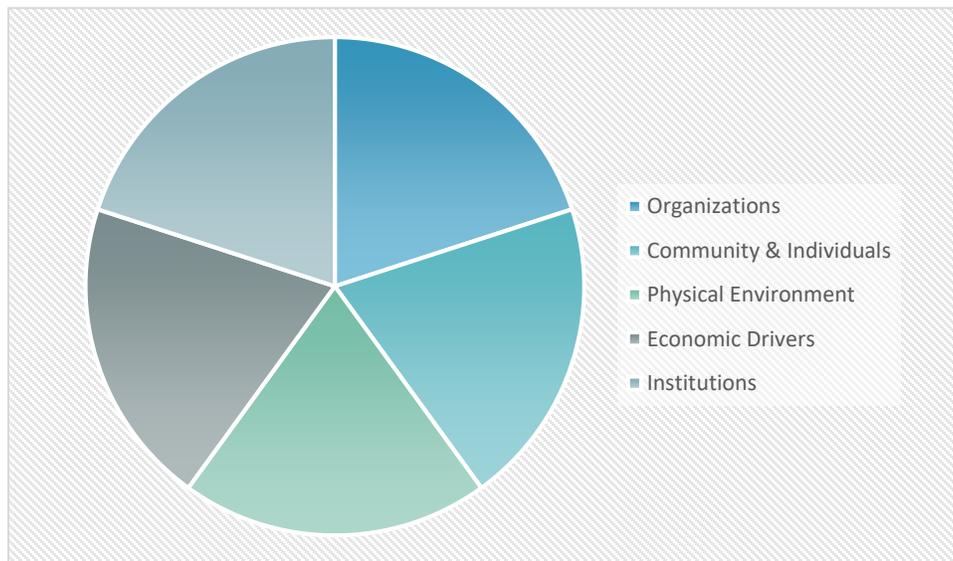
- 3 Community Forums
- 13 participants

FOCUS GROUPS

- 1 Focus Group
- 9 participants



Our Community Assets



ORGANIZATIONS:

- Senior & Youth non-profits
- St. Croix Valley Foundation
- YMCA
- Self-reliance building non-profits
- Business Chamber of Commerce
- Parenting (MOPS)
- Service Organizations (Parish nurses, Lions Club, Masons, Rotary)
- Historical Society
- Youth Groups

COMMUNITY & INDIVIDUALS:

- Population dedicated to health
- Age striation
- Festivals & Events
- Community engagement opportunities

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT:

- Lakes and natural resources
- Parks
- Trails
- Rural- access to metro

- Close proximity to medical centers
- Major throughways
- Connection to heritage

ECONOMIC DRIVERS:

- Agriculture
- Infrastructure for development
- Tourism (Outdoor Recreation)
- Skilled manufacturing
- Local business entrepreneurs
- Large and small business operations

INSTITUTIONS:

- Education system
- Local law enforcement
- Local newspapers
- Health care (two medical centers, Lakes Region EMS, transitional care, in-home care support)
- Faith community
- Libraries
- Local units of governance

Qualitative Responses

QUALITY OF LIFE QUESTIONS RESPONSE SUMMARY

Chisago County residents viewed the environment (lakes, trails), education system, elderly care, and safety as community strengths. On the other hand, air quality, mental health care, tobacco use, access to healthy foods, and healthcare access were viewed as challenges that should be addressed in the community. Chisago County residents expressed interest in community involvement opportunities to address these issues.

COMMENTS FROM QUALITY OF LIFE COMMUNITY FORUMS AND FOCUS GROUPS:

- “We need to start talking about the big pink elephant”
- “I am concerned about the air quality in my community”
- “Transportation for all ages is a problem”
- “I am proud of the educational systems in our community”
- “Local jobs and commute time are a large issue”

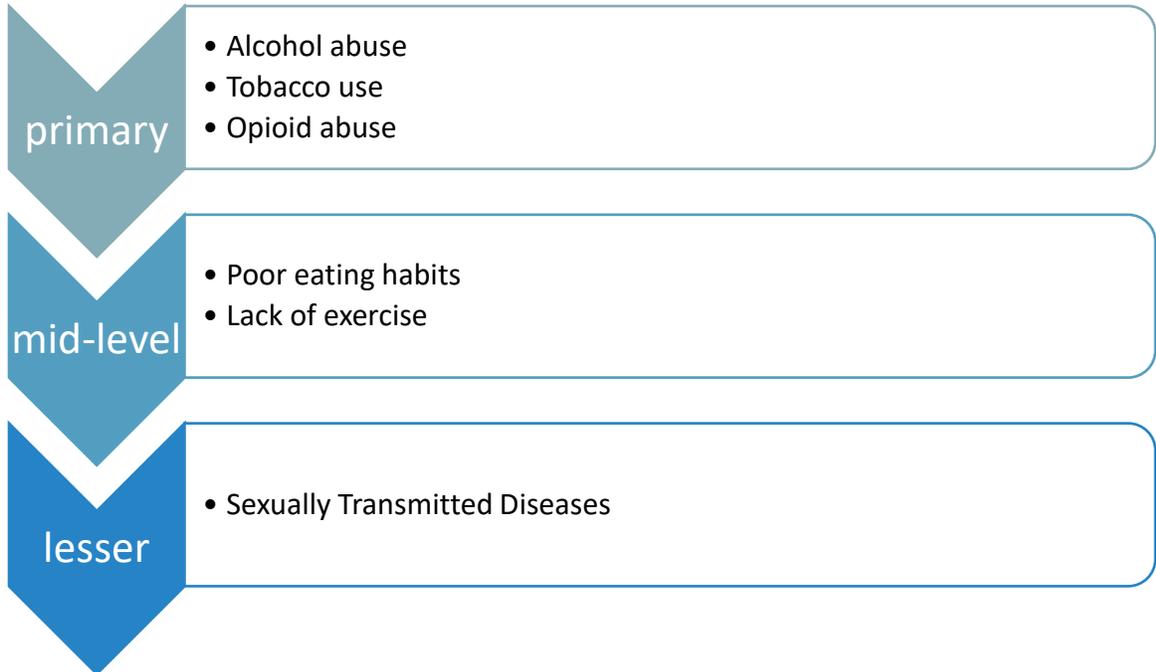
Factors of a Healthy Community



Important Health Concerns



Risky Behaviors



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Community THEMES & STRENGTHS ASSESSMENT

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Chisago County Public Health
6133 402nd Street
North Branch, MN 55056
651-213-5231
www.co.chisago.mn.us

