

Age-Friendly Minnesota Council Meeting

August 12, 2026

9:00 am to 10:30 am

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Agenda

- 9:00 Call to Order and Welcome Chair Pugh
- 9:05 Blueprint Steering Committee Committee and staff
- 9:25 Strategic Partnership Committee Chair Pugh and Committee
- 9:50 Advocacy and Policy Committee Chair Pugh/Farah Baig
- 10:10 Retiring Council Member: Dian Lopez
- 10:15 Director/Staff Report Staff
 - Regional Exchanges
 - Progress Report

Next Council Meeting:
Wednesday, September 2, 2026 | 9 to 12 noon | In-Person

Blueprint Steering Committee



Action Teams Recommendations Report: Dissemination Plan Timeline

- **Aug. 12:** Recommendations Report draft presented to Council
- **Aug. 13-28:** Recommendations Report circulated for review and feedback
 - Council members review and share with colleagues
 - AFMN shares with partners
- **Fri., Aug. 28:** Feedback due to AFMN
- **Sept. 2026:** Comments reviewed and incorporated
- **Wed., Oct. 7:** Updated report sent to Council for review
- **Wed. Oct. 12:** Report submitted to Council for approval



Recommendations Report

Guided review questions:

1. Is your organization working on similar or related efforts that the AFMN Council should be aware of as we move forward?
2. Which recommendations stand out as highest priority or highest potential from your perspective?
3. Are you and/or your organization interested in engaging in this work as we move forward?
4. Are there important considerations *not* reflected in the current recommendations?
5. Which people or organizations would be important to be engaged in this work?

Online form with these questions will be provided.



Review Process for AFMN Council Members

Council Members – Agency Representatives

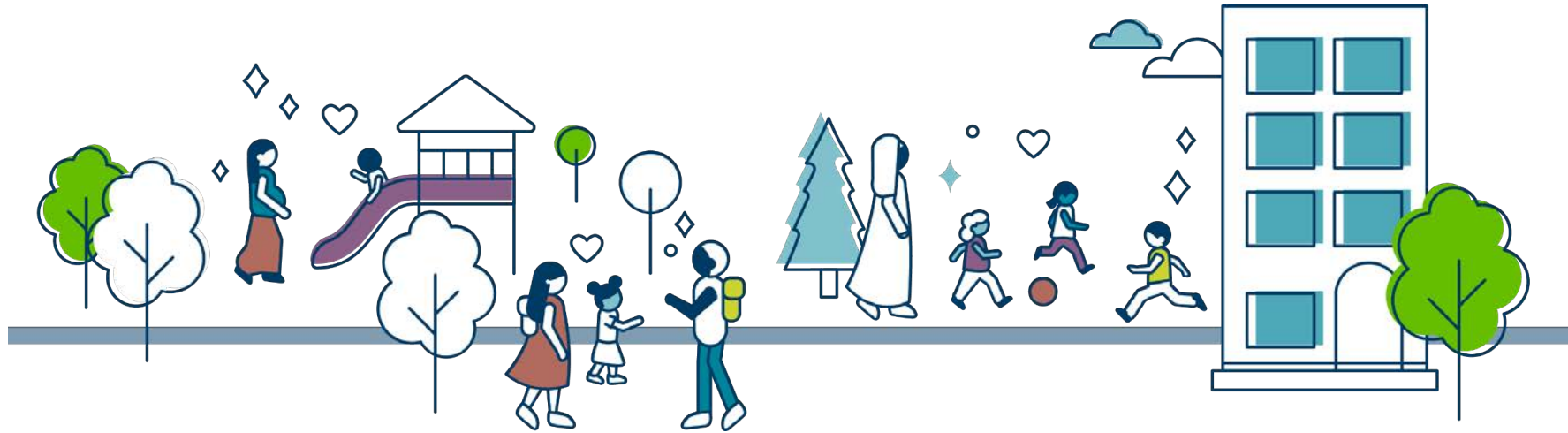
- Review and provide input based on your experience and knowledge.
- Please also share with your agency colleagues, knowing that MMB will be facilitating Deputy Commissioner review of the report across numerous agencies (those on AFMN Council as well as others).

Council Members – Community Representatives

- Review and provide input based on your experience and knowledge.
- Please share with one organization in your network whose input you feel would be valuable.

All feedback due Friday, August 28, 2026.





Strategic Partnership Committee Report

AFMN / MBA Alignment Discussion

Concept:

- Update MBA statute to codify AFMN core functions into permanent law.
- **Considerations:**
- Requires statutory modernization
- Careful transition planning
- Heavy lift of co-design of statute language and governance definitions
- Determine which functions belong in statute and other needed changes
- Ensure flexibility is maintained

Concept:

- Codify AFMN council in statute as operating in close collaboration and alignment with MBA.
- **Considerations:**
- Define governance roles
- Clarify decision-making authority
- Ensure sustainable support
- Clear and formal mechanisms for collaboration and alignment
- Determine who participates
- Clarify advisory roles
- Identify recommendations to inform decisions



Policy & Advocacy Committee Report

Timeline for 2027 Legislative Session (budget year)

MONTH	ACTION ITEM(S)
August	DHS Policy proposal; partner engagement (AARP); legislator meetings (Klevorn); convening of MBA MMB AFMN MNLCOA (tomorrow); primary results
September	MMB guidance committee begins (membership); share Action Team recommendations and stakeholder feedback; legislator meetings, proposal development
October	AFMN Regional Exchanges; legislator meetings, continue proposal development
November	Continue proposal development; legislator meetings; MMB releases November budget forecast; 2027 election results
December	Finalize materials for 2027 session; legislator meetings; MMB-LRP draft proposal expected



Regional Exchange Update

Age-Friendly Minnesota and
our regional partners present

Age-Friendly Regional Exchanges 2026



Join us to connect with communities, learn
about the growing impact of Minnesota's age-
friendly ecosystem, and collaborate to create a
more age-inclusive future!



Stay tuned for more details and registration!

Scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/AFRE2026>

Regional Exchanges are free to attend and
include food and refreshments.



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Tuesday, Oct. 27

Virtual statewide conference

Wednesday, Oct. 28

Five, in-person locations
across the state!

- **Arrowhead:** Chisholm
- **Central:** Sartell
- **Metro:** Plymouth
- **Northwest:** Bemidji
- **Southern:** Mankato



**Save the
Dates!**

Regional Exchange Partners

- AARP MN
- Age-Friendly Freeborn County
- Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging
- Central Minnesota Council on Aging
- Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging
- Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging
- Minnesota Board on Aging
- Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging
- University of St. Thomas
- VINE Faith in Action

2026 Regional Exchanges

Regional Hosts and Planning Partners

NW MN:

- Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging

Southern MN:

- Age-Friendly Freeborn County
- MN River Area Agency on Aging
- VINE Faith in Action

Statewide partners:

- AARP MN
- MN Board on Aging



Arrowhead:

- Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging

Central:

- Central MN Council on Aging

Metro:

- AARP MN
- Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging
- University of St. Thomas

2026 Regional Exchanges: Two-day format

DAY 1: Tues. Oct. 27, 2026

Virtual, statewide

- **Keynote:** Trust for America's Health – on age-friendly ecosystem
- **Featured speaker:** Prof. Mildred Warner, Cornell University – on recent research re. benefits of age-friendly communities
- **AFMN/Blueprint Update**

DAY 2: Wed., Oct. 28, 2026

In-person at 5 regional sites

- **Common content:**
 - Regional discussion on Blueprint Recommendations Report
 - Blueprint Pulse Check (community engagement)
- **Region-specific content:**
 - Each region creating its own focus



Celebrating Progress



Minnesota's Multisector Blueprint for Aging 2026 Progress Report

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Our Progress

Minnesotans Forging a New Path Together

The release of the Multisector Blueprint for Aging in late 2024 was a major accomplishment. However, the next phase of work awaited on the other side: implementation. How do we bring this expensive, ambitious plan to life?

We had a strong foundation – building on longstanding partnerships as well as many newer relationships established through the Blueprint development process. People were inspired and ready to roll up their sleeves, but also uncertain about how exactly it would move forward.

Any pioneering initiative takes time to get established. Throughout 2025 and the first half of 2026, Age-Friendly Minnesota (AFMN) undertook implementation through three major tactic areas: Blueprint Action Teams, Age-Friendly Minnesota grants, and Regional Exchanges. This Progress Report describes how each of these implementation activities contributed to advancing Blueprint goals.

Header photo
Regional Exchange attendees share
input during the Blueprint Pulse Check.
Source: University of Saint Thomas



Message from the Chair

As Chair of the Age-Friendly Minnesota Council, I am pleased to present the 2026 Progress Report on Minnesota's [Multisector Blueprint for Aging \(PDF\)](#). This reflects the collective work of hundreds of Minnesotans committed to creating a more age-inclusive future for our state.

We invite you to celebrate this progress, and to join us in advancing a more inclusive, equitable, and age-friendly Minnesota.

In community,

Sherrie Pugh

Sherrie Pugh
Chair, Age-Friendly
Minnesota Council



1

Stories of Impact

Nature As We Age

Nature enriches lives at every age, offering important benefits to our health and well-being.

The **Nature As We Age** initiative connects people of all ages to the abundant nature throughout our state. By offering tools and research-backed strategies, the initiative supports many programs that help older adults connect with nature.

Building a network of resources



A Field Scan of Older Adults and Nature in Minnesota

A statewide report that highlights the benefits of nature for older adults and provides a framework for connecting people with nature.

► Explore the [Field Scan Summary Brief \(PDF\)](#)
or read the full report at [agefriendlymn.org/nature](#).



Webinar and Storytelling Series

A series of videos that inform and inspire viewers by explaining strategies to engage with nature and highlighting success stories of these practices.



Multisector Shared Learning

Convenings that brought together parks and trails, aging services, health/wellness partners, and more to exchange knowledge and learn together.



Digital Toolkit

Growing collection of resources to help organizations learn from and replicate the success of nature-based programs.



Learn more about the
**Age-Friendly Minnesota
Nature Resource Center**
[agefriendlymn.org/nature](#)



Supporting nature-based programs

Age-Friendly Minnesota community grants boost efforts throughout Minnesota, such as:

Arrowhead Regional Development Commission

Analyzed recreation facilities on Minnesota's North Shore to promote and expand availability of Age-Friendly trails.

Big Ole Bike Club, Inc. on behalf of Cycling Without Age Alexandria

Funded Cycling Without Age, a program that pairs volunteer Trishaw bike pilots with older adults and others with restricted mobility.

City of Roseau

Purchased equipment for all-age outdoor winter activities such as snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

Loppet Foundation

Created an action plan to expand [nature programs for older adults](#) in Hennepin County, especially those who are in North Minneapolis or from BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other underrepresented communities.

River Bend Nature Center

Community-wide initiative to learn from diverse older adults and [report the findings \(PDF\)](#), develop an interpretive plan, and make tangible improvements.



Source: Minnesota Master Naturalist Program



Follow Our Blueprint

The Multisector Blueprint for Aging is a collective effort and roadmap to build an age-friendly state for all Minnesotans.

Learn more at [mn.gov/dhs/age-friendly-mn/blueprint](#).



Source: Northwoods Partners

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[mn.gov/dhs/age-friendly-mn](#)
Published 2026

Upcoming Meetings

- **August**
 - Partners Convening: August 13
- **September**
 - 2nd: AFMN Council Working Session – In-Person
 - 24th: MBA Annual Strategic Planning Meeting
- **October**
 - AFMN Council Meeting: October 14
 - Regional Exchanges: Oct. 27 virtual / Oct. 28 in-person
- **November**
 - AFMN Working Session needs to be rescheduled due to public holiday on 11/11