



JOURNAL

Expanding the Civic Imagination



Can we generate economic value by creating social good?

Human capital performance bonds would reward nonprofits that improve lives while reducing the cost of state programs

By Steve Rothschild

This much is clear: Minnesota's budget problems won't disappear at the end of the biennium or at the end of the recession. The latest 25-year forecast by the state economist predicts that state revenues will grow at a reduced rate of 3.9 percent a year while health care costs escalate at 8.5 percent and education barely stays even with inflation at 2 percent growth. This means that everything else, including early childhood education, job training, anti poverty and drug rehabilitation programs and infrastructure spending will decline at about 3.9 percent per year. Ten years from now we will have 35 percent less to invest if these trends persist. The factors driving this scenario are in large measure fixed: Our aging population will reduce state revenue growth while also dramatically increasing spending on pensions and health care. The consequences of this scenario are daunting: more school drop outs, higher poverty, and greater criminality.

This "new normal" challenges our society's well-being. Either we accept these consequences or we find a way out.

The solutions often proposed during the election season were to cut spending drastically, increase taxes, or a combination of both. Most informed observers agree that these "solutions" by themselves are no more than a short-term band aid on a hemorrhaging patient.

There are a number of efforts underway to redesign the way government provides services in an attempt to make state spending more efficient and effective. We need to encourage these efforts and implement the best of them soon.

To solve our budget problem, we need to successfully accomplish two broad objectives: improve outcomes from current state spending and increase

Can social value translate into economic value? Yes, in most areas of social spending. A successful pay-for-performance model has existed for more than 13 years in the state of Minnesota.

investment in high performing social service programs. But doing so requires that we solve our budget problems with a new approach.

Let's start with a financing system that attracts new investment capital while also holding providers (most of

whom are nonprofit agencies) and government accountable for generating quantifiable economic value from social programming. We can then reward the accomplishment of positive long-term outcomes rather than the bogus accomplishment of simply increasing our outputs (e.g., the number of people served by a program), which is what we typically do now.

Once nonprofits start demonstrating economic value, and government captures that value in the form of higher tax revenues and lower costs, government can interest private investors in providing long-term capital to finance even more economic (and social) gains.

INSIDE

Connections **2**

Engagement **3**

Take Note **4**

Viewpoint: Going small to make a big impact **5**

Evaluating the common ground process **6**

A vision for Minnesota's energy future..... **11**

Medical choices that honor our life stories..... **13**

CONNECTIONS

Building a League of Citizens

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

ANN HUTTON

Executive Director of Southeastern Libraries Cooperating (SELCO) and member of the Citizens League Rochester steering committee



My introduction to the Citizens League came in the early 1990s with a study of metro-area libraries. While every organization can claim some degree of complexity, libraries are nestled within public services or corporate structures, with varying forms of governance and funding streams complicating their operations. In its 1991 report, "*New Approaches to Regional Library Service: Long Overdue*," the Citizens League tried to sort out the future of our libraries.

After the library study, the Citizens League receded some from my memory. I held the misconception that it was limited to seven-county metro area

issues. As the Rochester affiliate unfolded, I realized Citizens League's diverse study topics affect the state. And its activities dovetailed with established community efforts, Coffee and Conversations and the Rochester Citizens Coalition.

My involvement in the Citizens League Rochester is not only based on a desire to be engaged in my community. Its approach to fair and unbiased study also complements my professional goals as a librarian. Libraries provide public gathering spaces and offer resources on a wide variety of subjects. My work with Citizens League Rochester has re-focused my attentions and will impact how SELCO (Southeastern Libraries Cooperating) undertakes future planning endeavors.

The beauty of the Citizens League approach is the belief that by drawing on the expertise of residents who know about and care for their community, local problems can be solved with local solutions.

New and rejoining members and contributing organizations

Individual members

Mohammed Agouli
Lorie Alveshere
Abou Amara Jr.
Diane Anastos
Deena Anders
Benjamin Brian Anderson
Denise Anderson
Lori Anderson
Mei-Ling Anderson
Laura Ayers
Joe Bagnoli
Carrie Bakken
Lisa Barnidge
Ann Barthel
Brandon Baumbach
Britta Bergland
Jesse Bergland
Rebecca Bergner
Sarah Berke
Jim Bernard
Micheal Bischoff
Jill Boesel
Steve Boland
Beth Loraine Bowman
William Breon
Kit Briem
Astrid Brouillard
Amelia Brunelle
Mary Canino
Mark Capalini
Lindsay Carniak
Roger Casper
Marcy Cheeseman
Lis Christenson
Michael D. Christenson
Julie Cohen
Terra Cole
Roberta Cordano

Barbara Cox
Jay Creagh
Angi Daus
Nathan Davis
Reena Dhake
Micheal Dominowski
Valerie Dosland
Jeff Douglas
Sarah Draxler
Colleen Ebinger
Fritz Ebinger
Carol Edmund
Brittany D. Edwards
Meggan Ellingboe
Justin Erickson
Natalie Fedie
Rachel Filippi
Matthew Flannery
Richard Fong
Randy Fordice
Courtney Foster
Darcy Frischolz
Angela Garrett
Michelle Geo Olmstead
Dave Gibbons
Jim Gilsenan
Edie Goldberg
Kianna Goodwin
Cheryl Gras Moen
Claire Graupmann
Ellen Z. Green
Jeremy Greene
Jennifer Griebner
Lindsay Grome
Julia Gutz-Moller
Jay Haapala
Chris Hamsher
Lance Hegland
Andrew Hestness
Gayla K. Hiar
Georgianne Hilker

Marcus Hilker
Katharine Hill
Paul Hillmer
Kate Madonna Hindes
John Hock
Tasha Hock
Rudolph Hokanson
Shauna Holt
James Horsman
John Hovanetz
Anne Huat
Jennifer Huber
Julie Huck
Scott Hvizdos
Mark Ireland
Brian C. Jacobsen
Shelley Jacobson
Todd Jasin
Kayla Johnson
Megan Johnson
Carolyn Jones
Martha Jones
Sarah Jones
Brent Kastner
Pamela Kearney
Kristin Kelly
Tadd Kelly
Ben Kent
Rebekah Kent
Michael Kolasink
Yoel Korenfeld Kaplan
Kristine Kosek
Jennifer Kramm
Willow Kreibich
Esra Kucukciftci
James Kuhn
Kim Kusnier
Kim Lafflin
Wendy Lane
Jenna Langley

Claire Langton-Yanowitz
Mike LaValle
Katie Levine
Ken Levinson
Stephanie Lewis
Todd Liljenquist
Kathleen Linblad
Rachel Link
Maggie Lockner
Givonn Logan
Leah Lundquist
Andrea MacArthur
Abigail Mackenzie Kerl
Beth Mammenga
Caitlin Marlotte
Rob Marlotte
Douglas McGregor
Dan McNeil
Lauren Melcher
Jennifer Melin Miller
Micheal Mergen
Joseph Meyer
Timothy Meyer
Franklin Michaels
Jean Michaels
Jessica Miller
Heather Miller-Shiell
Lori Miller-Shiell
Zachary D. Mohs
Sarah Mollet
Liam M. Monahan
Lauren Moore
Bob Muse
Spectra Myers
Katie Nadeau
Rohan Nadgir
Michael Nelson
Chad Ness
Scott Newstock
Steve O'Hara

Adaobi Okolue
Mike Osberg
Gina Owen
Melissa Palank
Franklin Parisi
Melissa Parker
Brian C. Peterson
Christopher Pollard
Rachel Pollock
Stephen Powell
Megan Powers
Curt Prins
Christine Pulkrabek
Ryan Pulkrabek
Janelle Raaen
Sean Rahn
Steve Rambeck
Kristine Ramos
Luther Ranheim
Gene Rebek
Peter Reese
Christine Rehm-Zola
Josh Reimnitz
Trisha Reinwald
Ashley Reisenauer
Alycia Riedl
Edward N. Ritchie
Niel Ritchie
Sarah Ritter
Christopher Romano
Jeff Ronneberg
Roman Rosenkranz
Stephen Rueff
Michael Russell
Maura Ryan
Kelly Scanlan
Nick Scheibel
Chris Schmitter
Stephanie Schweiger
Denise Shaffer
Rajiv Shah

Gabriel Skelly
Jim Slusarek
Marv Smith
Mary Smith
Sam Smith
Kim Smith-Moore
Robin Smothers
Tim Sommer
Severin St. Martin
Denise Stahura
Susan Stenson O'Brien
Patrick Stevens
Susan Stevens
Rob Stewart
Jesse Stremcha
Arlene Strom-Silvan
Vicki Stute
Chris Styring
Carol Stassen Taylor
Forest Taylor
Scott Tempel
Zoe Thiel
Tarcy Thompson
Theodore Thompson
Mary Till
Tony Tolliver
Tim Tormoen
Bob Troemel
Lois Troemel
Al Tuntland
Sharon Tuntland
Courtney Tussing
Mary Vang
Keiko Veasey
Jane Vega
Amy Wagner
Maureen Wagner
Sally Wakefield
Jennifer Wall
Amy Walsti
Kevin Ward

Teresa Ward
Christine Weeks
Megan Weisenberger
Nora Whalen
Jamie White
Joey White
David Woodard
Bob Worthington
Susan Zoff

Firms and organizations

CenterPoint Energy
Cincinnati, Inc.
City of Mahtomedi
Courage Center
Delta Dental
Faegre & Benson
Grassroots Solutions
Kowalski's Markets
MACC Alliance of Connected Communities
Medtronic
Metropolitan Library Service Agency
Minnesota Council of Churches
Public Financial Management
St. Paul Area Council of Churches
Spring Lake Park District 16
Southeastern Libraries Cooperating
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
Urban Adventure Twin Cities

ENGAGEMENT

What We're Doing and How You Can Get Involved

CURRENT WORK

Common Cents: Minnesotans weigh in on taxes and spending

In interactive forums around the state, we will hear from the public about what choices should be made to permanently balance the state's budget and promote the common good.

Common ground process for community decision making

The Citizens League is testing its common ground process by conducting a case study of the Central Corridor light rail development process. (See story on [page 6](#).)

Electrical energy

A member-organized group is convening stakeholders to develop the key characteristics of a secure, reliable and sustainable electrical energy system for Minnesota in 2040.

Health and medical care

Member-organized groups are exploring how to advance prior Citizens League work. The Health and Medical Care Advancement Group is looking at how federal health reform is being implemented in Minnesota relative to the 2008 state reforms. The Advancement Group on Rural Health Care Access is evaluating options to expand access in rural Minnesota.

Immigrant student access to higher education

Based on our 2009 report, we are advancing recommendations to reduce the barriers immigrant students face in four key areas: information, culture, cost, and language preparation.

Long-term care

We are developing and advancing recommendations to create an environment of personal responsibility for financing long-term care by giving individuals strong reasons to do so, providing opportunities for varying family situations, and offering the knowledge and information to make sound choices.

Pathways to prosperity

A steering team is overseeing the advancement of recommendations from prior work in three areas, family prosperity and decision making, building community networks, and changes to government's role in supporting prosperity.

Water

Based on the recommendations of our 2009 report, "To the Source," we are working with partners across sectors to advance models that make it in everybody's self-interest to work for clean water.



Brenda Natala, Holly Folkers, and Sarah Aughenbaugh at the September 21 Inter-Generational Roundtable event, Women and Leadership.

GET INVOLVED

Log on to the **COMMON CENTS** project on [CitiZing](#) ([www.citizing.org](#)) and tell us what values and priorities you think should inform state budget decisions over the long term. You will also find interactive polls and community meeting summaries and be able to view the presentation we've been using to frame these important conversations.

Join the **COMMON GROUND ADVANCEMENT GROUP** to evaluate the results of the Central Corridor case study and look for opportunities to apply the common ground process in local decision making.

With a few phone calls a month, **REACH OUT TO WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**. Staff can suggest talking points and the tools you'll need to answer any questions.

The Citizens League is a **nonpartisan, member-based** organization working to build civic imagination and capacity in Minnesota.

The Citizens League's model for policymaking—the **civic policy agenda**—is based on the belief that all people and organizations have essential roles in developing the ideas, skills and resources to govern for the common good. Visit [www.citizensleague.org/who/identity](#) to find out more.



To get involved or find out more about any of these projects, contact Annie Levenson-Falk at

alevensonfalk@citizensleague.org or 651-293-0575 ext. 16.

Get more information about all of our work at [www.citizensleague.org](#).

TAKE NOTE

Innovation Spotlight

A GLOWING REMINDER

According to the New England Healthcare Institute, patients in the U.S. fail to follow prescription directions about half the time, resulting in an estimated \$290 million in spending for emergency room and other avoidable medical expenses. In an effort to cut costs and improve outcomes, Massachusetts manufacturer Vitality is marketing a wireless-enabled bottle cap that sends reminders, MIT's [Technology Review](#) reports. The GlowCap fits a standard pill bottle. When opened, the cap transmits a message to a small nightlight with a cellular modem that communicates the data to a patient's pharmacy. The nightlight and cap emit an escalating series of lights and sounds when a patient neglects to take a prescribed dose. If that fails to alert the patient, it sends a text message to a patient's cell phone. The cap can also email a report to a family member or friend and submit a refill order.



PARTNERS ACROSS OCEANS

Car traffic is exploding in Beijing and the city is on the verge of gridlock. Residents of Los Angeles, America's car capital, feel their pain. That's why transportation officials in both cities are teaming up to [share strategies](#) for taming traffic. The Ministry of Transport in Beijing and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority will begin pooling research on traffic management, mass transit and parking practices in the hope of learning from the other. Beijing is seeking ways to better manage automobile traffic, while officials in Los Angeles are looking for lessons from the Chinese city's high-speed rail system.

In another example of cross-ocean cooperation, the mayors of New York City and London recently [announced](#) a two-year partnership to promote tourism to the other city. The agreement calls for sharing best practices for increasing tourism, collaborating on event planning, and swapping ad space.



LEGAL REPRESENTATION FOR FORECLOSURE VICTIMS

According to a 2009 report by the [Brennan Center for Justice](#), the majority of homeowners facing foreclosure have no legal representation and Legal Services centers around the country are besieged with requests for help. In Queen's County, New York, 84 percent of homeowners with subprime, high cost or non-traditional mortgages got no legal help during their foreclosure proceedings. At the same time, allegations of illegal foreclosure actions are rising.

Many homeowners have legitimate defenses that could have prevented foreclosures, but few are aware of their rights, the report notes. Brennan recommends expanding funding for foreclosure representation and removing the restrictions on legal-aid attorneys that Congress put in place in the aftermath of the "Contract with America."

SMARTER PARKING

The San Francisco Metropolitan Transportation Agency is undertaking a two-year pilot project to test economist and UCLA Professor [Donald Shoup's](#) market theories on parking. Shoup's book, *The High Cost of Free Parking*, which suggests underpriced parking adds to congestion, air pollution and distracted driving, is leading cities across the county to rethink their parking practices.

Funded by a \$20 million federal grant, San Francisco's [SF Park](#) project will adjust prices on parking meters and at parking garages, block-by-block and hour-by-hour, depending on use. Spots that are always full will be priced higher, and less-used spots will be priced lower. Sensors at the meters will also allow the city to help drivers find empty spots to cut down on traffic congestion and air pollution from circling cars. The new system will also report unpaid meters and direct parking enforcement to them.



LOSING THE POPULARITY CONTEST

Americans' [view of government](#) is much more negative than a decade ago, even as they express support for major government programs, such as Social Security and Medicare. A study by Harvard University, the [Kaiser Family Foundation](#) and [The Washington Post](#) finds contradictory attitudes across the country. Americans who say they want limited government rate Medicare and Social Security as "very important." Fifty-five percent say government is not paying attention to the biggest issues, and similar percentages say government isn't using tax money wisely and doesn't adhere to their values or help families.

BETTER SCHOOLS, BETTER TEACHERS

Countries with the best-performing schools seek to hire the best-performing teaching graduates, a [new report](#) finds, but in the United States, only 23 percent of teachers ranked in the top third of their college classes. In U.S. schools with high poverty rates, the percentage is just 14 percent.

According to the report, Singapore, Finland, and South Korea draw 100 percent of their teachers from the top third of the academic pool. Teachers in those countries receive higher salaries than their U.S. counterparts, along with retention bonuses and merit pay.

In the United States, salaries are comparatively lower and teaching programs are less academically competitive. The report's authors suggest the United States could increase the percentage of top-tier teaching grads by subsidizing teacher-preparation tuition, providing more effective administration and training opportunities in high-need schools, improving working conditions and offering performance bonuses of up to 20 percent, or raising salaries.



Take Note compiled by Jennifer Kehr.



Succeeding big by going small

How the Citizens League—and you—increase our impact

by Sean Kershaw

The Citizens League's membership and engagement are both up significantly, and our members and partners are involved in more policy work than at any time in a generation. So it's appropriate to ask the question many of you raised in our recent member survey.

So what?

How does all this civic engagement and activity lead to the next breakthrough policy idea, or to real impact?

We're facing the largest budget gap in a generation, and the ideological gap between the legislature and the presumed new governor is wider than it's been in a generation. We need new ideas and new ways of problem solving to break through this polarized, politicized environment. We think our civic engagement process—which brings people with diverse viewpoints together to uncover their shared interests around a common set of civic values—offers the answer.

HOW EQUALS HOW

The Citizens League's mission is to “build civic imagination and capacity in Minnesota.” It's a big, hopeful ideal, with big practical implications for politics.

Notice, I didn't say the Citizens League mission is to make public policy, or issue reports, or have meetings or lobby the legislature—although we do all of that, too. It turns out, though, that *how* we develop the next big idea is essential to *how* we implement that idea. How we have an impact as a policy organization depends on how our members and our other partners become involved as policymakers.

Whether it's improving health, balancing the state budget or improving education outcomes, our public policy problems are more complex than ever. More actors. More variables. More levers to pull to make a difference. It's more important than ever that we accurately define our problems *and* develop solutions that address them. And that we do so in keeping with our operating

In the face of major long-term problems, no group or organization is having an impact.

principles, which say that those impacted by a problem must help to define the problem and help to advance the solution where they can. That last part is critically important because we need to build the civic infrastructure that turns good ideas into good public policy—and good public politics.

Right now that is what's lacking. In the face of major long-term problems, no group or organization is having an impact. Political parties have retreated into narrow ideologies, and interest groups into narrow self-interests. It's all defense and isolation: policy entropy and political paralysis at a time when we desperately need progress.

For many of the problems we are concerned about, there is an over-supply of good ideas but no ability to implement those ideas. That was the case when we began work on mental health reform seven years ago, and it's still the case in many policy areas now. Good ideas. Sitting on shelves. Year after year.

Other problems are in desperate need of a breakthrough: the next chartered schools or Minnesota Miracle. Higher education reform, long-term care financing, water pollution, and moving families from poverty to prosperity are all examples of where Citizens League members have developed, or hope to develop, big transformative ideas.

Too often, we've given in to the false ideology that says complaining about a problem and blaming someone for it are the same as solving it. Too often, we abdicate our roles as policymakers to elected officials when it's more important than ever that our work builds the civic infrastructure that can bridge their political divide.

How we overcome these barriers gets back to your role in our work.

WE ARE ALL POLICYMAKERS

The simple act of bringing together a diverse group of Minnesotans, including those directly impacted by a problem and asking them to define the problem in light of civic principles and with Minnesota's common long-term interests (not just their own short-term interests) at heart invests people in creating the political base needed to turn a good idea into good public policy.

We have seen this in our recent work helping the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) develop a long-term vision for the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund resources. In dozens of meetings across Minnesota, and by using [CitiZing](#) online, more than a thousand people who enjoy Minnesota's natural beauty in very different ways are working through their differences to help the DNR develop a common vision for the Legacy funds. Participants left meetings surprised by how much they had in common with their “opponents,” the DNR got practical advice that it might not have otherwise, and built the relationships necessary to advance the final recommendations. Everyone in the room was a “policymaker” and a source of political support to advance their work.

BIG = SMALL

As we approach the Citizens League's 60th anniversary in 2012, it's clear to us that having a big impact on public policy and on Minnesota's future involves creating more (smaller) opportunities for our members and our communities to participate in defining, solving and advancing solutions to our common public policy problems.

Succeeding big means going small. ●

Sean Kershaw is the Citizens League's executive director. He can be reached at skershaw@citizensleague.org, [@seankershaw](#) (Twitter), Facebook, or his blog at citizensleague.org/blogs/sean/.



Testing the common ground process

The Central Corridor Light Rail Line offers a real-world opportunity to evaluate the public decision-making process

By Lindsey Alexander

One of the largest transportation projects in the history of the state is underway in the Twin Cities. No, not the I-35W/Hwy 62 Crosstown reconstruction. (Although, that is a welcome redesign.) Here's a hint: the price tag is an estimated \$950 million. It's the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit project. The 11-mile line will run between St. Paul and Minneapolis along University and Washington avenues. Construction recently began in downtown St. Paul, but development of the line has been in the works for decades, and the process has at times been controversial and contentious.

One of the underpinnings of the common ground process is that the initial purpose is to recognize and understand everyone's legitimate perspectives as the starting point of the discussion.

With the planning phase of the rail line all but complete, it is an opportune time to take a look at the process in light of some of the lessons the Citizens League has learned recently about public decision making.

Citizens League operating principles guide all of our work. Our first guideline states that those impacted by a problem must help define (and ultimately solve) any public problem. With these guidelines in place, we talked with residents around the state during the [Minnesota Anniversary Project](#) (MAP 150) and at our Regional Policy Workshop in 2008. It became clear that Minnesota needs a new model for public decision making, a model that is more authentic, more inclusive and more participatory than our current framework of public hearings and public meetings.

Last fall, the Citizens League hosted three conversations around the metro area to explore residents' views of the state's process for making development decisions. Those conversations yielded an important finding: the impacts, both positive and negative, of potential development projects are rarely identified or discussed openly. In fact, they are often not discussed and citizens are left to focus—understandably—on their self interests. Citizens often feel that development projects threaten their values (the value they place on their community, for example) and appear unwilling to see the bigger picture. Taking these lessons into account, the Citizens League has drafted a new model for public decision making: the common ground process. This process emphasizes the recognition of these threats—and benefits—and encourages dialogue in which citizens are able to see different perspectives and the “bigger picture.”

The Central Corridor light rail line development offers an opportunity to evaluate the common ground process against a real-world setting, and to explore how the process of public decision making is perceived when common ground principles are or are not applied. The Central Corridor project has broad community impact and import, and it involves numerous

governmental agencies including the Metropolitan Council, Ramsey and Hennepin counties, the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, state and federal agencies, and major stakeholders, including the University of Minnesota and Minnesota Public Radio. What has the development process looked like to these stakeholders? What were the successes and failures? Are there lessons that can be applied to future development?



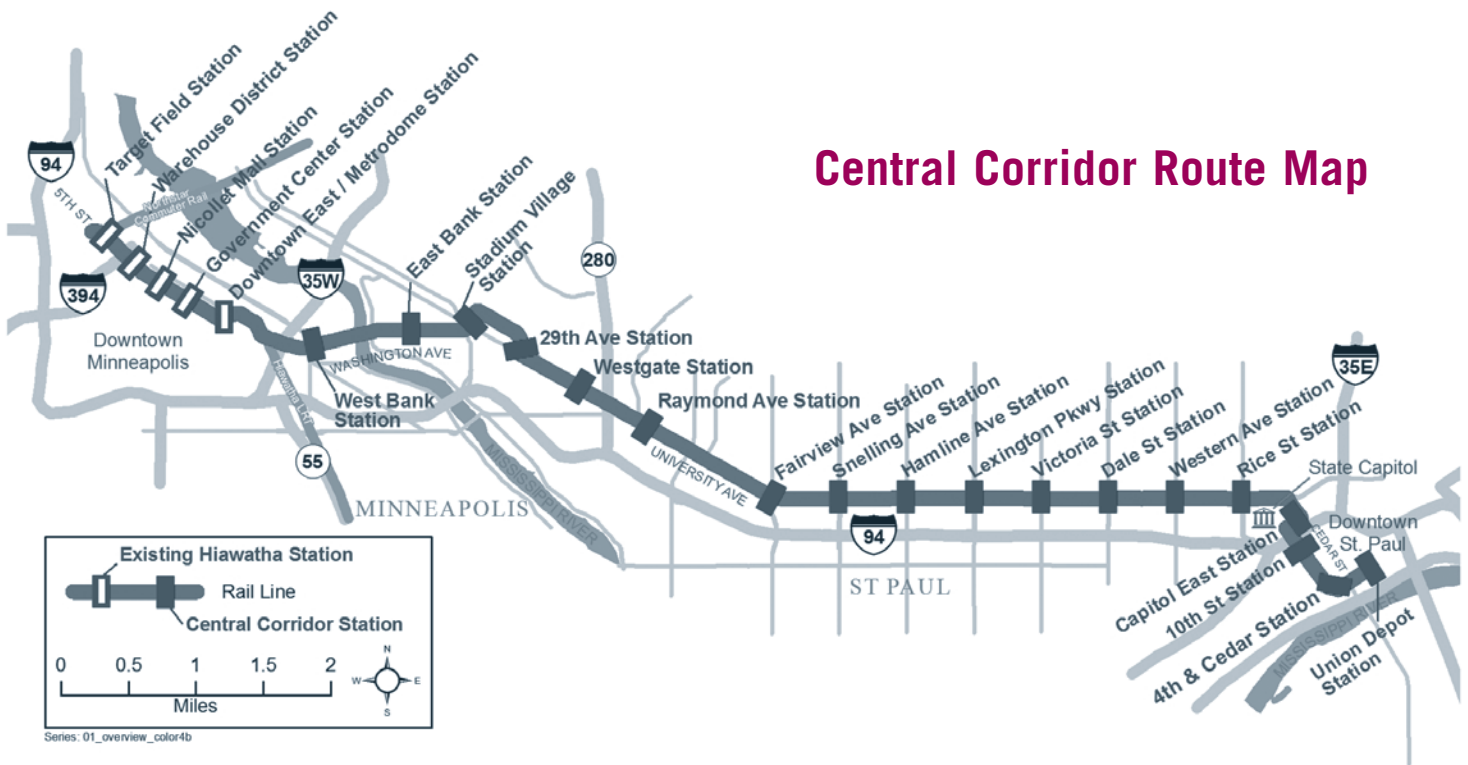
THE PROCESS

The common ground process is built around opportunities for citizens and organizations to discuss their perceptions of a proposed development's costs and benefits—and how those costs and benefits are distributed. One way to do this is to have all of the stakeholders in a development process—residents, businesses, public officials, developers, etc.—generate a list of positive and negative impacts. Participants then allocate these costs and benefits to stakeholders—parties that might “win” or “lose” something. This type of exercise forces participants to sort out their values, to weigh who “wins” and “loses,” and to see the development from different perspectives. The goal is to create a shared understanding—a common ground—that allows participants to see a worthy project for its benefit to the common good. An important result of this type of two-way dialogue is trust. Participants must believe public officials not only recognize their perspectives as legitimate, but also factor them in to the decision making.

The common ground process is built upon the principles of transparency and accountability. A few guidelines frame the process. They include:

- If the public can no longer influence a decision, don't ask them what they think. Match the timing, content and structure of a process with its purpose.
- If the development is important to the future of the community, use an inclusive, interactive process that gives residents the tools to understand the bigger picture and the trade-offs.
- Expect citizens to be problem solvers, not complainers, and set up processes that put forth that expectation. Never assume that more information alone will settle a controversy.
- Explicitly calculate the costs and benefits of a given project, taking into account the risk perceptions and perspectives of all parties.

Central Corridor Route Map



TESTING THE COMMON GROUND PROCESS

Approximately 30 individuals involved in the Central Corridor discussions, including corridor residents, business leaders, public officials and advocacy group members, have been interviewed to date. (These individuals are referred to as “participants” for the purposes of this article). Participants were asked about their perceptions of the development process, whether or not the process created a shared understanding of costs and benefits—as emphasized in the common ground process, and to what effect. While research on this case study is still underway, a few initial themes have emerged to date.

There was no opportunity for participants to state their interests and objectives, or identify costs, benefits or common ground.

Did participants have opportunity to state their respective interests and evaluate the potential costs and benefits of the project in light of those interests? That question goes to the root of the common ground process. The vast majority of participants said there was no such opportunity. While some stated that this happened to some degree during some of the “feeder” processes (e.g., the St. Paul’s development strategy committee, the Stops4Us campaign, the development of the Business Resources Collaborative strategic plan), these were all separate processes led by subgroups. Central Corridor officials never initiated a process that would identify the values and objectives of participants and their respective costs and benefits. Many in the community were left wondering exactly how they would benefit, while others believed the

costs would outweigh the benefits. Participants who spoke positively of the process were able to more clearly articulate benefits, or felt the benefits clearly outweighed the costs.

Authentic community engagement is difficult when the development process spans 25-plus years.

The common ground process recommends that public officials try to match the timing, content and structure of a public meeting with its purpose. But how do project managers meaningfully engage stakeholders in a project that may or may not happen for 25 years? Central Corridor discussions date back to 1981, but many participants became involved in the process in 2004 or even later. Many participants admitted they didn’t focus on the issue until they realized the project was going forward. By this time, decisions about the Central Corridor route had been made—much to the dissatisfaction of many. Public officials who had been working on the project for years and had already hosted hundreds of community meetings, expressed exasperation that the community wanted to revisit the route decision. One elected official reported thinking, “I’ve been at meetings for the past five years. Where were you?”

Community members who expressed dissatisfaction with the route were frequently told it was too late to revise it without jeopardizing federal funding. As one participant put it, “They wanted to talk about how to decorate the Christmas tree. We wanted to talk about where the Christmas tree was going to go.”

The process was not seen as authentic. Trust was lacking.

One of the underpinnings of the common ground process is that the initial purpose is to recognize and understand everyone's legitimate perspectives as the starting point of the discussion. Participants in the Central Corridor project reported feeling that their concerns and questions were viewed as unreasonable. They understood the need for the project to be on budget and on time, but said they felt that the fulfillment of that goal came at their expense. Public officials felt at times that responding to community concerns after years of planning would slow the project

The Central Corridor light rail line development offers an opportunity to evaluate the common ground process against a real-world setting, and to explore how the process of public decision making is perceived when common ground principles are or are not applied.

down, increase the budget and jeopardize federal funding. This cut off important areas of communication and created numerous barriers between stakeholders and public officials.

The history of the Rondo neighborhood was not fully appreciated at the outset of the project.

In the 1960s, construction of Interstate 94 between Minneapolis and St. Paul bisected the Rondo neighborhood, a vibrant African-American community. Homes were taken through eminent domain and hundreds of residents were displaced. Many of those residents now reside in the Aurora-St. Anthony neighborhood, directly south of the approved light rail alignment. The development of I-94 has left many residents with a distrust of public projects—particularly transportation projects. Intentionally or not, public officials did not fully acknowledge how Rondo's history impacted citizens' views of the light rail project.

Some Central Corridor public officials rejected the comparisons to Rondo, noting that no homes would be acquired as part of the line construction (and argued that, in fact, nearby properties would increase in value). Participants point to this mentality as indicative of the problem. They said that when I-94 was developed, government officials promised benefits to the community

that they didn't deliver. Residents along the Central Corridor felt they had no assurance this wouldn't happen again. Their distrust was heightened when they entered into a process where they felt their claims were not seen as legitimate.

THE DISCONNECT BETWEEN AUTHORITY AND ACCESS

Many participants said their elected city and county representatives were more responsive than appointed officials when it came to their concerns about project developments and decisions. The Central Corridor Management Committee, under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Council, is charged with oversight of the project. The Metropolitan Council is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor. Participants expressed dissatisfaction with the Met Council's leadership, but were at a loss as to how to change that dynamic. There was no elected official they could contact with their concerns. When one participant expressed displeasure with the Met Council, someone suggested they get their supporters to "make the phones ring" at the Met Council offices. To which they replied, "Who should they call? What good would that do?"

Yet there is a more complex issue at the root of this dynamic than whether officials are elected or appointed. The project was initiated under the jurisdiction of Ramsey County, which recommended the route. St. Paul provided local approval. The Met Council was confronted with community concerns that involved prior decisions made by other jurisdictions. Since the local governments with elected officials were no longer in charge of the project, they did not have to make the tough decisions between community concerns about accessibility and eligibility for federal funding. Ironically, the Met Council was moving forward with the "locally preferred option" which was the result of previous local processes.

Despite the enormous complexity of the Central Corridor planning process, the lengthy time frame and the number of players involved, the project is moving forward. Understanding if, how, and to what effect the common ground principles have been applied in the development process can help ensure they are relevant and provide valuable lessons for future processes.

As mentioned at the outset, the themes outlined here are preliminary. The final case study is expected to be released in December. ●

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Human Capital

continued from page 1

Here's how it works: Nonprofits whose programming leads to meaningful economic gains would qualify for a "pay-for-performance" payment. The size of the payment would be directly related to the size of the incremental economic value the state receives from increased tax collections, lower public subsidies and lower prison costs. Government has millions of examples of value being created as incomes increase and subsidies go away. For example, successful job training programs create incremental increases in sales and income taxes and lower welfare payments and corrections costs when clients' incomes rise. The same eco-

Unlike other bonds the state now issues, human capital performance bonds carry considerably lower risk for the state. Only high-performing nonprofits would qualify to participate; providers are only paid once they successfully perform.

nomic value occurs when individuals successfully leave subsidized housing, medical rehabilitation or drug treatment. This economic value is equivalent to cash and has the same financial value as cash flow in a business. Businesses use the promise of future cash flow to borrow long term or to sell securities to finance even greater growth. Governments could do the same from these new incremental funds.

The mechanism would likely be a government "moral obligation" bond that is either taxable or tax exempt. Investors would purchase these human capital performance bonds (HCPB's) based on their assessment of risk and return, much like any other investment. Government would establish the economic value equation for service providers (i.e. a share of the incremental value created) and set up a mechanism to measure, capture and pay a performance pool for interest and principal reimbursement. A reputable third-party administrator, such as an accounting firm, would pre-qualify providers based on the likelihood of their programming to create value, oversee the operations of the performance pool, and report on results. Underwriters and rating agencies also would weigh in to assure the fidelity of the investment.

Is this financing system possible? Yes. Government already borrows large sums from private investors and bonds for a wide variety of purposes, including infrastructure projects. In the case of a bridge, a tunnel or a stadium, lenders are paid back from future tolls or special taxes. A human capital performance bond would work similarly. Interest and principle payments would come from the incremental cash flows that high-performing providers create for government.

There is precedent for moral obligation bonds. The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, for example, issued low-income housing bonds in 2009. Bond underwriters are very receptive to moral obligation bonds as legitimate investment vehicles.

But can social value translate into economic value? Yes, in most areas of social spending. A successful pay-for-performance model has existed for more than 13 years in the state of Minnesota.

Twin Cities RISE! (TC RISE!) is a Minnesota nonprofit dedicated to alleviating chronic poverty. TC RISE! works primarily with people whose families have been poor for generations, most with a history of homelessness, poor job histories, low academic achievement and criminal convictions. After an intensive year-long focus on remedial education, skills training, coaching, internships and empowerment (in other words, transformation into accountable and hopeful human beings), graduates are placed in jobs that pay an average of \$25,000 annually plus benefits, an annual increase of almost \$20,000 from the time they enter the program. One- and two-year job retention averages are 82 percent and 73 percent, respectively.

These long-term outcomes create the economic value that enabled TC RISE!, with the help of economists Arthur Rolnick and Gary Stern of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank, to approach the state to develop the pay-for-performance model that it employs today. In 1995, the state determined that each time a person is placed in a job that pays more than \$20,000 annually with health benefits, a job that is at least a \$10,000 improvement in their income, the state gains \$3,800 per year from increased tax revenue and lower subsidy payments. The discounted present value of these future benefits over 15 years was calculated at \$31,000. TC RISE! is paid a performance payment of \$9,000 for each individual placement, and another a year later if the person is still employed in a job that's at least as good. TC RISE! shares the economic value that its programming creates for the state and takes all the risks; there is no payment for failure. Since 1997, when it was first enacted, the state of Minnesota has enjoyed a return of \$5.42 for each dollar paid to TC RISE! That's a 452 percent return on its investment.

TC RISE! is not unique in its ability to generate economic value from the social good it performs. Any social enterprise whose quality programming creates incremental tax revenues and/or reduces public subsidies in the short to medium term could create high returns for the state and payments for itself. Examples include workforce and drug treatment programs, health care, subsidized housing and higher education, among others. Some nonprofits are doing it already; they (and the government) just don't know it because returns aren't being measured or captured by the state.

While an overwhelming number of areas could apply human capital performance bonding, the financing system won't work everywhere. It won't work in areas where there is no direct link between social value and economic value, such as museums, zoos or public media, or where social investment takes many years to pay off, as in early childhood education.

Here's how such bonds could work:

- External investors buy human capital performance bonds that are linked to clear economic criteria established by the state.

- The state deposits these invested funds in a “performance pool,” where the money is invested and held until the payout terms are met by the nonprofit. The pool is overseen and administered by an independent trustee to insure the pool’s fidelity. (Working capital could be provided to nonprofits from this pool, too.)
- The pool pays out to the nonprofit over the bond term, based on the nonprofit’s ability to meet performance goals set by the state. The amount of the payment is related to the amount of value created (return on investment).
- The state pays the performance pool for bond interest and principal repayment from the cash benefit it receives from incremental tax receipts and cost avoidance.
- A third party administrator annually validates the performance value (ROI) to the state and adjusts the payout formula.
- If performance targets are met, the state receives a high return on investment which generates cash flow to fund interest and principal repayment. The state retains residual cash returns to lower the cost of government.
- If performance targets are not met, the state has use of the funds for principal repayment, interest, or other purposes until the bond period terminates since nonprofits are paid only when they perform.
- The structure ends at the end of the bond term. Alternatively, the performance pool continues operating, funded by the incremental cash returns reinvested by the state.

Unlike other bonds the state now issues, human capital performance bonds carry considerably lower risk for the state. Only high-performing nonprofits would qualify to participate; providers are only paid once they successfully perform. The higher tax receipts and lower state costs created by the nonprofit pool provide a dedicated flow of cash to pay interest and principal to investors. While nonprofits assume more risk in this scenario, they have the potential to earn considerably more financial support than under current (and future) state spending plans. That’s a prospect that high performers should relish.

Obviously, we’ll need a transitional structure while government and nonprofits tool up to work in this way. The benefits will be well worth the effort as each stakeholder has a lot to gain.

State government will have a new source of dollars to invest from private investors. Social spending could increase as outcomes improve, instead of the likely prospect of continuing cuts in social spending funded exclusively from state spending. Cash returns from the highest-performing nonprofits will not only pay for the financing costs but also could provide incremental returns.

The highest-performing nonprofits will have access to significant new capital for growth. The amount depends on their outcomes. They will make more strategic, higher-return investments as a bond pool life is longer term than the two-year government budget cycle. Nonprofits will seek to improve their outcomes to participate.

As the best-performing nonprofits grow, clients will be served by higher-quality programming, leading to better outcomes. More

individuals will leave poverty, obtain quality employment and achieve higher levels of education.

Investors will have a new quality investment opportunity that adds real value to the economy. Banks will be especially interested because human capital performance bonds qualify for community reinvestment act credit. Socially conscious investors will be large supporters since HCPB’s meet their mission and financial requirements.

To solve our budget problem, we need to successfully accomplish two broad objectives: improve outcomes from current state spending, and increase investment in high-performing social service programs. But doing so requires that we solve our budget problems with a new approach.

Taxpayers will gain greater transparency and accountability for their tax dollars. As investments pay off, the cost of government will come down.

More than 70 organizations, including economists, underwriters, business leaders, nonprofit and foundation executives, civic officials and thought-leaders representing every major political viewpoint have endorsed a pilot project to test human capital performance bonds during the upcoming biennium. The Citizens League is considering endorsement in December. We are now in the process of drafting legislation, creating a bond term sheet, establishing the economic value to both nonprofits and the state, and establishing a governance structure for the approval of the legislature and governor-elect.

We face a crisis in our country and state. Our investment in social programming isn’t paying off adequately and we have too little capital to finance those nonprofits that demonstrate the best results. The old financial model isn’t working and doing more of the same won’t lead to a different outcome. We need a new model that can make a difference. Human capital performance bonds have that promise. ●

Steve Rothschild is founder and chair of TC RISE! He serves on the boards of the Greater Twin Cities United Way, Minnesota Public Radio and the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs and is a former executive vice president for General Mills, Inc.



Energizing Minnesota: 2040 and beyond

Energy forum fosters dialogue among industry and citizen stakeholders

By Bill Bushnell and Sheri Hansen

What will the energy system in Minnesota look like in 2040? How will we generate electrical power? How will we transmit, distribute and regulate it? How will changes in consumer behavior impact our state's energy future? How can we ensure that our energy future is not just economically sustainable, but also socially and environmentally sustainable?

The Citizens League brought together more than 100 people from local government, regional and local utilities, technology companies, industry organizations, community groups and unaffiliated citizens at the Bakken Museum in September to discuss these questions and others, and to begin formulating a common vision to move Minnesota forward.

The half-day forum, *Envisioning Minnesota's Electrical Energy Future*, included speakers with a variety of perspectives on energy

generation, consumption and sustainability. There was a significant focus on the customer perspective, a viewpoint that has often been undervalued or underrepresented in many industry and political forums.

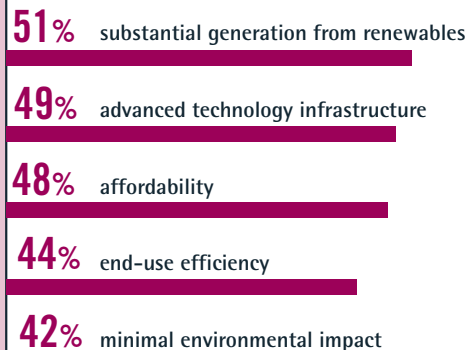
The primary objective of the forum was to work toward building a consensus vision for Minnesota's energy future that could leap over near-term hurdles, challenges and obvious points of disagreement among key stakeholders. By getting agreement on



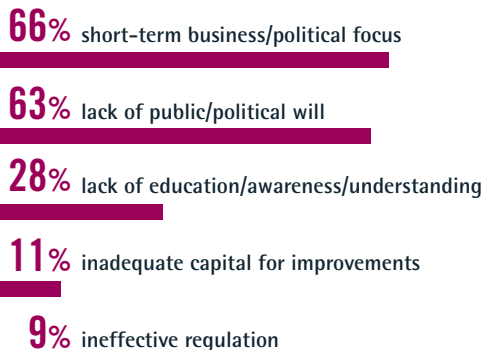
Participant views on our energy future — results of the interactive polling

As part of the energy forum, audience members participated in an electronic, interactive question-and-answer session that probed attitudes about the choices and challenges we face to meet our future energy needs. The results of the polling lead to some interesting insights and discussion.

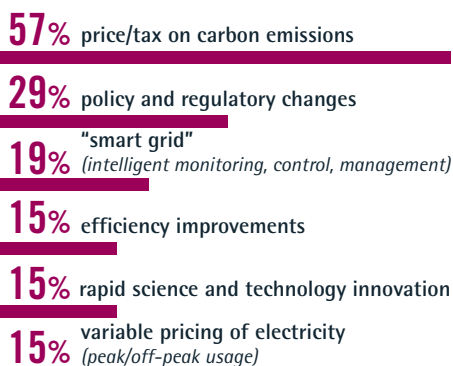
In the ideal scenario for Minnesota in 2040, what are the most important characteristics of the electric energy system? (Choose 3)



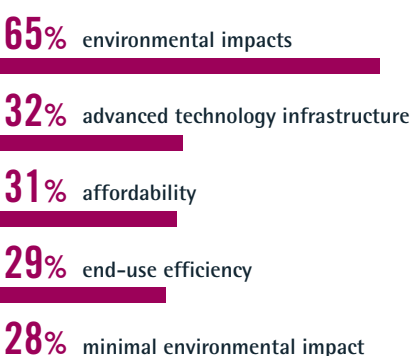
What are the primary challenges in reaching this vision? (Choose 2)



What strategies will have the biggest impact on developing the ideal future conditions? (Choose 2)



When thinking about our energy future, what issues are you most concerned about? (Choose 2)



the ideal characteristics, conditions and goals of a future system, Minnesotans stand a better chance of defining the most appropriate strategies, processes and policies to meet those goals.

Results from recent consumer research indicate that when it comes to energy efficiency, cost savings alone are not enough to significantly alter consumer behavior.

The session began with an informative presentation by Massoud Amin, director of the Technological Leadership Institute at the University of Minnesota. Amin began by stating that on our present course, the worldwide electricity supply will need to triple by 2050 to keep up with growing demand. He discussed how energy security is at the nexus of national, economic and environmental security, stating that it is really a complex and interdependent “system of systems.” Amin also pointed out that up to 98.4 percent of total energy may be lost due to the combination of inefficient generation, transmission, and end-use technologies—an area of tremendous opportunity.

Looking forward, Amin outlined the need for a stronger and smarter grid with massive storage that integrates energy from greener sources and the necessity of modernizing our outdated transmission infrastructure.

Kristen Bowring, senior director and platform lead for new business at Best Buy, challenged the audience to consider the issues of cost, capability and control from the customer perspective.

He outlined the importance of ease of use, and the challenge of seamlessly integrating increasingly complex technical devices.

Bowring highlighted results from recent consumer research indicating that when it comes to energy efficiency, cost savings alone are not enough to significantly alter consumer behavior. Cost savings, in combination with greater control and management of home resources, presented a much more compelling decision point, he said. Consumers need to be better educated on the costs, environmental impacts and capabilities of advanced products and technologies.

Steve Morse, executive director of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership, outlined key legislative elements of the Next Generation Energy Act, including an 80 percent reduction in statewide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and the state’s 25 by 25 initiative—to generate 25 percent of Minnesota’s electric energy from renewable sources by 2025.

Several recent public polls, Morse noted, including a Minnesota poll, indicate strong public support for increasing wind and solar power generation as a way to meet future energy needs. A national poll conducted by Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll showed strong public support for carbon reduction, even if it leads to increased energy costs. Putting a price on carbon, Morse said, will prompt the industry to respond with innovation and alternatives.

WHAT'S AHEAD?

The energy forum was the start of an ongoing dialogue that will continue into 2011 and beyond. Future work, organized by the Citizens League’s Energy Policy Advancement Group, will focus on more specialized topics to help refine and clarify the key characteristics and goals of the overall vision and prepare an action plan that will enable Minnesota to successfully implement sustainable energy systems for the next generation. ●

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Signed, Sean Kershaw, Publisher November 17, 2010

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B. Paid and/or requested circulation		
1. Paid/requested outside-county mail subscriptions stated on form 3541	790	800
2. Paid in-county subscriptions	767	764
3. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales	0	0
4. Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
C. Total paid and/or requested circulation	1557	1564
D. Free distribution by mail		
1. Outside-county as stated on form 3541	0	0
2. In-county as stated on form 3541	0	0
3. Other classes mailed though the USPS	0	0
E. Free distribution outside the mail	0	0
F. Total free distribution	0	0
G. Total distribution	1557	1564
H. Copies not distributed	500	536
I. Total	2057	2100
Percent paid and/or requested circulation	100	100

PERSPECTIVES

Expanding Minnesota's Conversation



Honoring our end of life choices

When we make making medical choices that honor our life's story, we profoundly impact those around us

by Stacy Becker

In August of 2010, the Citizens League partnered with Twin Cities Public Television in **Honoring Choices**, a project of the Twin Cities Medical Society. Honoring Choices is modeled after its acclaimed sister, **Respecting Choices**, an internationally recognized, evidence-based advance care planning program created by Gunderson Lutheran Medical Foundation, of LaCrosse, Wisc. The "choices" in Honoring Choices are about your decisions and about your quality of life in the last days of your life.

My job was to talk to people who have viewed the dying process from different vantage points—patients, the elderly, family members, chaplains,

doctors, social workers and nurses. In groups and one-on-one interviews, I talked with about 50 people. Here is what I learned from these remarkable conversations.

Families who understand and accept their loved one's wishes find greater peace and acceptance themselves, and this translates to a more peaceful death for the loved one.

so than patients) to pursue aggressive treatments. Death and saying goodbye to a loved one is hard in any culture. Participants often commented that families shun end-of-life discussions because they perceive those conversations as enabling dying.

Advances in modern medicine are simultaneously giving rise to the urge to fight death and to understand and accept it. Not so long ago, there were few situations that called for end-of-life medical choices. Medicine now offers hope for recovery, but also the acknowledgement that the same treatment that offers hope might simply prolong

There is a cultural bias against "giving up" that stymies family discussion and predisposes family decision-makers (more

suffering. It can be impossible to know which—prolonged life or prolonged dying—will result.



Honoring choices at the end of life:

Helen

Helen was only 70 years old when she experienced a massive heart attack. She fell in her apartment and was found unconscious by a friend and neighbor.

When Helen was brought to the emergency room her breathing was very shallow and labored. Subsequently she was intubated and placed on a respirator, or breathing machine (also called a ventilator). As an ICU nurse assigned to her, I quickly called in her family.

Her physician examined her and reviewed her history. He felt that her prognosis was very poor. He advised her family to discontinue the ventilator and keep her comfortable.

Due to fear of a lawsuit he did not order this. He needed the family's approval because Helen did not have an advance directive.

Two of her children wanted to keep her alive. They felt that she should also be resuscitated if needed. They were not ready to let her go. Helen was resuscitated, twice; in the process her ribs were fractured. This really caused her family to feel anxious about their decision. They decided to follow the physician's advice. The ventilator was discontinued. Helen died two hours later.

A few days later I received a call from Marion, one of Helen's friends. She had looked through Helen's papers and found her advance directive. Her directive was clear about one issue. She did not want to be resuscitated or intubated. She had not discussed her wishes with her family. She told Marion before she died that she feared that her kids would get "freaked out" if she talked about dying.

—Mary Jane McConnell RN

The significance of end-of-life decisions and the lack of experience in making them can create such overwhelming circumstances that people sometimes shy away from conversations for fear of saying the wrong thing. Few people have the personal experience to guide them through the dying process. As one person said, "It's not something you can practice." Another described, "I don't want to do it wrong.... what do I do?" The anguish over getting it "right" is heightened by the enormity of the consequences. Not knowing how to talk to your loved one or what to say causes some people to remain silent.

The instinct to protect one's family is very strong and may be one of the greatest influences on end-of-life preferences. Some terminally ill patients choose not to talk about their illness, desiring to spare their family the heartbreak. One woman agreed to a feeding tube even though she did not want it because she knew her son was not ready to let her go yet. Others protect their family with a health care directive, stating, "I don't want to put my family through the stress of making life-or-death decisions, so I will make them."

Clearly expressed wishes can ease family stress and enable a more peaceful



death. Family dynamics have a powerful influence over medical choices. Families who understand and accept their loved one's wishes find greater peace and acceptance themselves, and this translates to a more peaceful death for the loved one. As one person put it, "No one wants to leave this world with their family in stress and turmoil."

Discussing death or experiencing it in positive ways can reduce the fear of death

and lead to more advanced decision making. People with health care directives describe feeling a sense of relief as a result of expressing their wishes. They made statements such as "It's giving yourself control," and "It's a gift." They also used the words "confident" "empowered" and "safe."

Faith plays a vital role in guiding the dying process, but less so in terms of medical choices. Faith is instrumental in guid-



Honoring choices at the end of life:

Mark

At the tender age of 49, Mark was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's. His wife, a pharmacist, and his two children were devastated, but they entered the fight with determination and grit. For years they provided great care for Mark at home, but as the disease robbed him of more and more of his abilities, the decision was made to bring Mark to a care facility. He was 55. Mark was also diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. The double whammy of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's left him in a complicated situation. Movement was limited, and when he was able to walk, it was jerky and painful. Soon Mark was wheelchair-bound and, after five years in long-term care, he now requires total care. He no longer speaks. His limbs move only with Parkinson's spasms. He has to be fed. He is repositioned every two hours around

the clock. His responses are limited to eye contact and an occasional smile. His two children have married and are having families of their own. Mark has a 3-month-old grandchild that can do more than he can.

Mark's wife and his children have talked about Mark's future and discussed scenarios. If Mark develops pneumonia, they have decided to keep him comfortable. There will be no aggressive treatment. The family wishes for nature to take its course. In any situation that arises, they want Mark to be kept clean and provided with whatever comfort is available: oxygen, cool compresses, pain medications, a hand to hold and calming voice to bring reassurance.

—Vicki Marthaler

Chaplaincy Department,
Emmanuel Community, Detroit Lakes



Honoring choices at the end of life:

Sally

Sally was 80 years old, widowed and without children. Her diabetes had advanced to the point where she needed dialysis three times a week. Sally was also "sassy" in that good way. Her sense of humor kept those around her smiling. Her strength was failing so she relied on a wheelchair. Dialysis was her lifeline. After dialysis she would return to the nursing home where she lived and sleep for 12 hours straight. The next day would be the best day. The second day following dialysis would be OK, and by the third day, Sally knew that her body needed to be cleansed of toxins.

After two years, it was clear Sally was tired. The yo-yo swing of dialysis sapped her strength and her emotions. Sally had come to consider the nursing staff her family and her nurse as her best friend. Sally confided in her nurse that she was considering ending dialysis. Diabetes was affecting the circulation in her toes and

feet and her doctor was talking about possible amputation. Her "great" days were leveling into "good" days, and the effort to bounce back and forth to dialysis was becoming quite a chore.

As the heat of summer gave way to the cool autumn breezes, Sally decided to terminate dialysis. She had discussed this choice with her knowledgeable doctor, her loving nurse and her one long-distance cousin. Sally was at peace with her decision and understood the outcome of "letting nature take its course."

The nursing home staff struggled with Sally's decision, but for the next five days they stood with her and cared for her with great love and devotion. Sally died peacefully in her own bed, in her favorite jammies surrounded by the love of those who cared for her.

—Vicki Marthaler

Chaplaincy Department,
Emmanuel Community, Detroit Lakes

ing people and their families through the strange and unknown process of dying. Yet far fewer people described faith as a

is, making medical choices that honor our life's story—we profoundly impact those around us. In Wisconsin, evaluations have

agement, medical specialists and a high use of medical services.

And here's the amazing thing from a policy angle: when the care changes, costs drop by about \$3,000 to \$6,000 per year in the last two years of life, 25 to 50 percent less than normal. With advanced care planning, people's wishes are respected and costs go down naturally as a result.

In case you're wondering, the topic of "death panels" never came up. In fact, the most amazing thing of all was this: Not one conversation went by without some tears. But the tears were always tears of loving remembrance, gratitude and joy that a loved one could die in such a state of grace. That is, the family was able to honor their loved one by understanding and honoring their last wishes. ●

Stacy Becker is a public policy consultant and a member of the Citizens League. She directed the Citizen League's Minnesota Anniversary Project (MAP 150) and staffed the Long-Term Care Financing Project. She can be reached at stacybecker@comcast.net.

By making "policy" for our own lives—that is, making medical choices that honor our life's story—we profoundly impact those around us.

key influence in their medical decisions. One person said, "You can almost always find a loved one to trump religion." Another said, "I have strong faith but my medical choices are my business."

These were the most gratifying conversations I've ever taken part in, because they were the most sincere conversations I've ever taken part in. But they also made me realize the power of the Citizens League mantra that "everyone is a policymaker." By making "policy" for our own lives—that

shown that with advanced care planning,

- End of life wishes are far more likely to be known and carried out.
- Family members suffer far less stress, anxiety and depression.
- Patient and family satisfaction is improved.
- Care is more continuous.
- End-of-life care is qualitatively different, focused on the patient's wishes for their quality of life rather than disease man-

12/9

Imagination Works: Creating a Smarter Grid

Reception: 5:30 p.m. | Program 6-7:30 p.m.
Aloft, 900 Washington Ave. S., Minneapolis

12/15

Policy and a Pint®: The Line Between News and Opinion

Doors: 5:30 p.m. | Program 6-7 p.m.
Varsity Theater, 1308 4th Street SE, Minneapolis

12/16

Morning Coffee

7:30-9:30 a.m.
Overflow Espresso Cafe, 2929 University Ave, Minneapolis

12/17

Imagination Works: Designing Resilient Communities

Breakfast: 7:30 a.m. | Program 8-9 a.m.
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