

Regional Council of Mayors

October 14, 2013

PRESENTATIONS

Minnesota Trade Office

According to a recent ranking by Forbes Magazine, Minnesota is the 8th best state in which to do business—jumping 12 spots from the previous ranking and making the biggest improvement of any state.

The goals of the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Export Plan are to double metro exports from 2012 to 2017, expand the number of companies exporting and the number of markets for each exporting company, and increase global orientation and fluency. In 2010, 117,200 jobs in the state were directly related to exports.

The core strategies of the Export Plan are:

- Connect companies to global opportunities through a unified export team.
- Target the intersection of local products and global demand.
- Promote global advantages, starting with health and wellness.
- Sell MSP to the world.

Kathleen Motzenbecker, executive director of the Minnesota Trade Office http://www.positivelyminnesota.com/Business/Exporting_Trade/index.aspx, said the state has been working for a while to help increase exports, but mayors have an important role: “You can bring it home for cities.”

Mayors can:

- Be ambassadors for exporting. “I hope every mayor feels empowered to be an advocate for exports,” she said.
- Help small and mid-sized businesses see the opportunity.
- Understand that exporting isn’t just for manufacturers; a third of Minnesota’s exports are in the services sector.

Cathy Polasky, director of economic policy and development for the City of Minneapolis, said “If you just pick up the phone and call the Trade Office, they will help—and will be a link to other resources.”

The Trade Office has been conducting a pilot project in Edina, to find and help companies that could begin exporting their products or services. Edina Mayor Jim Hovland said, “One of the ancillary benefits of the project was all of the professional people who became involved.”

For more information [click here](#).

Language Immersion Education

Language Immersion Education—education in which students learn academic subjects in two languages—is growing and, according to Tara Fortune, Immersion Project Coordinator of the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) at the University of Minnesota <http://www.carla.umn.edu>, that’s a very good thing for many reasons.

“The growth of language immersion in Minnesota is phenomenal,” said Fortune. “The programs are super successful in raising academic achievement.” The number of programs has grown from 11 in 1996 to about 85 in 2012, and Minnesota is the only state with seven Mandarin total immersion programs.

Research on dual language education has shown:

- Students in dual language immersion programs have significantly better academic achievement—particularly for students from low-income families.
- Students in dual language immersion programs are more likely to go on to post-secondary education.
- The bilingual brain is sharper and more focused.
- Bilingualism prepares young people for a global future.

For PowerPoint [click here](#).

Liz Hathaway Castelan, dual language program manager for the St. Paul Public Schools, quoted the Asia Society: “In today’s interconnected world, knowledge of other peoples, economies and languages is no longer a luxury reserved for a business or policymaking elite, but an absolute necessity as part of every child’s preparation for successful citizenship.”

Several mayors pointed out that they are not in charge of their school boards, and so at least a step away from education policy. Fortune said, “We are seeing states taking this on, rather than at the level of school boards.” She encouraged mayors to urge state legislators to support dual language immersion programs in Minnesota.

For more information, contact Fortune at fortu001@umn.edu or 612.626.8826.

Regional Indicators Initiative

The Regional Indicators Initiative now has energy, water, travel, greenhouse gas and water data on 21 cities from 2008 through 2012, according to Rick Carter of LHB. With new additional funding from the McKnight Foundation and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, it has a target of 40 cities. Carter said that currently, the cities that have had their energy and water use tracked represent 28 percent of the state’s population and 46 percent of the region’s population.

Jon Commers of the Metropolitan Council said the Council will leverage the information from the Regional Indicators Initiative to track climate change. “The Council could be an effective clearing house for that kind of data,” he said.

Carter encouraged mayors to look at the data on the website <http://regionalindicatorsmn.uli.org>, where they can compare their city to others in the study and then look at the “So What?” section for ideas about next steps.

Guaranteed Energy Savings Program

Minnesota’s Guaranteed Energy Savings Program (GESP) provides a financial tool that allows local units of government to finance energy-saving projects using the savings to pay back the financing.

Lindsay Wimmer, outreach coordinator for GESP, said it’s a good way to bundle projects “so you can get your retrofits in now, rather than piecemeal.” By bundling, cities or other local units of government may be able to fund projects that on their own would not qualify for financing.

Using GESP to secure bonding, cities in effect self-fund the enhancements they want to make. Savings from reductions in maintenance costs and energy costs are used to repay the funding. Following an energy audit of the proposed project, there’s a guarantee on the energy savings by the lender. “If the savings specified doesn’t come in, they have to write you a check every year,” Wimmer said.

A workshop on how to use the program will be held November 6 at Minnesota State University Mankato [click here](#) for event flyer.

<http://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/event/workshop-minnesotas-new-guaranteed-energy-saving-program>.

Wimmer is available at wimm0020@umn.edu or 612.625.9634.

UPDATES

Move MN Campaign

The Move MN Campaign is bringing together a number organizations to focus on how to “move the needle” on transportation for the 2014 session of the Minnesota Legislature, said Darin Broton of Tunheim Partners. The group started with 10 organizations that focus on transportation needs, now includes about 35 organizations and hopes to have 180 by the time the campaign fully launches in January.

Broton said there’s no specific legislative “ask” at this point, but the goal is a balanced transportation package for roads, transit, bikes and pedestrians. He reminded mayors that the transportation budget passed in 2013 leaves the state with a \$50 billion deficit for its future needs.

Broton encouraged mayors to sign on to the campaign ([MoveMN Letter](#)) and to contact him for any further information at dbroton@tunheim.com. The website for the campaign should be up by the end of October.

U.S. Conference of Mayors

Mayor Elizabeth Kautz of Burnsville gave an update on some of the issues the U.S. Conference of Mayors <http://www.usmayors.org> is working on, which include:

- Trade. USCM is working hard to make connections that support international trade.
- Municipal bonds. A 28 percent cap would result in the loss of 300,000 jobs, Kautz said.
- Unfunded federal mandates. New rules for drinking water and waste water without funding to help cities meet them will be a major cost, Kautz said.
- Cybersecurity. "People are hacking into cities," Kautz said. This is

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Since 2004, the Urban Land Institute has provided a benefit to the Regional Council of Mayors: a one-year membership for each mayor to the national organization. For financial reasons, that benefit is now ending. Attendance and participation in the Regional Council of Mayors does not require membership to ULI, but Executive Director Caren Dewar encouraged mayors to continue their membership in the organization. Mayors receive significant membership discounts and their cities qualify for a public agency membership, which provides one full membership and two associate membership. [RCM Membership Letter](#). Dewar said 20 percent of all membership fees come back to ULI Minnesota <http://minnesota.uli.org> to support its programs.

COMING UP

The next RCM meeting will be Monday, November 11. Topic will be an update of the GREATER MSP strategic plan, by Kathy Schmidlkofer and an update from the Federal Reserve by Dorothy Bridges. RCM meetings are held on the second Monday of every month at Dorsey & Whitney.

Mayors are encouraged to email caren.dewar@uli.org with their suggestions for topics to add to the agenda.

ATTENDEES

The following individuals were in attendance on October 14, 2013:

Mayors

Jim Adams	City of Crystal
Ardell Brede	City of Rochester

Mary Giuliani Stephens	City of Woodbury
Debbie Goettel	City of Richfield
Shep Harris	City of Golden Valley
Kathi Hemken	City of New Hope
Jim Hovland	City of Edina
Tim Hultmann	City of Long Lake
Marvin Johnson	City of Independence
Elizabeth Kautz	City of Burnsville
Sandra Krebsbach	City of Mendota Heights
Sandy Martin	City of Shoreview
Gene Maxwell	City of Hopkins
Duane Poppe	City of Osseo
Terry Schneider	City of Minnetonka
Mark Steffenson	City of Maple Grove
Brad Tabke	City of Shakopee
Nancy Tyra-Lukens	City of Eden Prairie
Ken Willcox	City of Wayzata
Gene Winstead	City of Bloomington

Guests

John S. Adams, University of Minnesota; Cecile Bedor, City of St. Paul; Peter Berger, Minnesota Department of Commerce; Darin Broton, Tunheim; Rick Carter, LHB; Liz Hathaway Castelán, St. Paul Public Schools; Jon Commers, Metropolitan Council; Tara Fortune, University of Minnesota CARLA; Larry Lee, City of Bloomington; Jay Lindgren, Dorsey & Whitney; Patricia Naumann, Metro Cities; Carolyn Olson, Greater Minnesota Housing Corporation; Cathy Polasky, City of Minneapolis; Sam Rockwell, Blue Cross Blue Shield; Elizabeth Ryan, Family Housing Fund; Will Schroerer, Minneapolis and St. Paul Chambers of Commerce; Bill Sierks, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency; Lindsay Wimmer, University of Minnesota Sustainable Regional Development Partnerships.

ULI Staff/Consultants

Caren Dewar, Cathy Bennett, Aubrey Austin, Linda Picone