



REGIONAL COUNCIL OF MAYORS

May 10, 2010

ULI MN/RCM PRESENT TARGET CORPORATION WITH LEADERSHIP AWARD

ULI MN and the Regional Council of Mayors recognized the Target Corporation for its longstanding commitment to and support of the RCM. Karen Anderson, former Mayor of Minnetonka and RCM co-founder, commended Target for realizing the value and power of a partnership between the region's mayors and the private sector. In 2004 Target Corporation provided a matching grant so that ULI MN could accept a national ULI Challenge Grant to get the RCM off of the ground. Target has continued their support each year since. Recognizing that policy and relationships play a critical role in getting things done, Target's Nate Garvis said, "It is especially gratifying to see an idea turn into great value and civic resiliency in my home state. "

Mayor Elizabeth Kautz read the Resolution of Appreciation (see website) and the Mayors unanimously voted to adopt the resolution.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION—REPORT OUT ON REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS PROJECT

Mayor Harpstead was quick to point out that although the graduate students at the University of Minnesota have finished their report, the work is ongoing. Mayor Harpstead reported on the key findings:

- A need for a consistent regional voice and vision
- The region must be forward about its competitive strengths
- Mayors need to build bridges with CEOs and meet with them on an on-going basis
- Businesses make expansion decisions based on multiple "little factors"—not just big ones like the tax rate.
- Idea of "Cluster Boards" where mayors are the focal point to bring leaders in industry together. Focus could be on increasing talent, innovation, pushing collaborations between research institutions and businesses.

Mayor Harpstead also discussed the findings within each studied cluster area:

Financial services

- Twin Cities is a national hub in health and life insurance
- Strong banking firms located here
- Access to talent pool is critical for this sector
- The region is good at managing risk—as a result the sector didn't suffer from the recession as

badly as coastal peers.

Medical Devices

- High rate of innovation and entrepreneurship
- Bold action is required
- Looking to have Mayo and University of Minnesota to promote themselves jointly

Distribution Services

- Graduate student teams ended up focusing on distribution/logistics/warehousing rather than the intended “branded distributed products” sector.
- Need to analyze a corporate HQ cluster

Mayor Winstead described his experiences talking with CEOs, noting that in their minds talking to mayors is much more important than talking to city economic development partners. According to Winstead, the CEOs he spoke with wondered if people even cared that their companies were located there.

Mayors discussed the need to be advocates for businesses in their communities at the state capitol. It is important for mayors to know what regulatory and other issues affect the way companies can do business.

Noting that there is one more year left with the DEED grant, mayors discussed what work should move forward. Ideas included partnering with Itasca to bring competitor businesses in a sector together (e.g. Boston Scientific, St. Jude, and Medtronic) to identify how the region could more effectively support their cluster. Mayor Goettel and Mayor Maguire discussed the need for bringing cluster companies together so that mayors could really understand the industry to figure out the “little things” that impact their business decisions. The group also talked about moving discussion into action through an implementation pilot.

Mayor Hovland discussed the need to engage small businesses in this discussion as they are the biggest drivers of growth in the region. He also noted the importance of growing jobs in our Fortune 500 headquarter companies as their presence supports the presence of other major employers.

An online repository of the Regional Competiveness Project work will be made available.

U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS UPDATE

Mayor Kautz reported that the U.S. House of Representatives is moving a local jobs bill through the House that will include block grants for cities. There is also a bi-partisan effort to fund the Department of Energy’s “Energy Efficiency Block Grant” program. The annual USCOM meeting will be held in Oklahoma City, June 11 – 15.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Caren Dewar described the new Brookings Institution report "[The State of Metropolitan America](#)," released on May 9th. The report details "demographic and social trends shaping the nation's essential economic and societal units—its large metropolitan areas—and discusses what they imply for public policies to secure prosperity for these places and their populations." Ms. Dewar mentioned that the Brookings team plans to make a stop in the Minneapolis-St. Paul region to discuss the report's findings.

At the last RCM meeting, Ms. Dewar shared a draft vision statement for the region as part of the Metropolitan Business Plan work. Based on the feedback, and with assistance from Lynn Casey, the vision statement now reads: "The Minneapolis-Saint Paul region will be a world class international center of commerce with unsurpassed vibrant communities and natural beauty." Ms. Dewar also shared that the local Steering Committee for the Brookings work has engaged [JumpStart, Inc](#) to provide expertise and tools that can help build regional, sustainable entrepreneurial systems.

COMING UP

The June RCM meeting has been cancelled so that Mayors can attend the second annual ULI Minnesota Housing Initiative conference on June 17, 7:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at Dorsey & Whitney, 50 South Sixth Street, room 1500. The conference features national speakers: Douglas Duncan, Vice President and Chief Economist, Fannie Mae and John McIlwain, ULI Senior Resident Fellow and J. Ronald Terwilliger Chair for Housing.

ATTENDEES

Mayors

Ardell Brede, Rochester; Sandy Martin, Shoreview; Bill Droste, Rosemount; Elizabeth Kautz, Burnsville; Stan Harpstead, Arden Hills; Jim Hovland, Edina; Mark Steffenson, Maple Grove; Steve Lampi, Brooklyn Park; Debbie Goettel, Richfield; Marvin Johnson, Independence; Mike Maguire, Eagan; Mary Hershberger Thun, Victoria; Gene Winstead, Bloomington; John Sweeney, Maple Plain; Bill Hargis, Woodbury; Ken Willcox, Wayzata; Will Rossbach, Maplewood; Nick Ruehl, Excelsior; Eugene Maxwell, Hopkins; Dean Johnson, Lake Elmo; Janet Williams, Savage.

Staff and Contractors

Caren Dewar, executive director, ULI Minnesota; Cathy Bennett, Housing Initiative; Snezhana Bessonov, Initiatives; Mary Kay Bailey, Communications and Policy.

Advisors and guests

Karen Anderson, former Mayor, Minnetonka; Nate Garvis, Target; Mike Logan, Target; John Shardlow, Bonestroo; John Adams, University of Minnesota; John Breitingner, United Properties; Colleen Cary, Cornerstone Group; Michael Huber, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota; Sarah Harris, Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District; Nick Koch, HGA Architects and Engineers; Carol Nielsen, Target; Luke Weisberg, Greater Metro Workforce Council; Kevin Frazell, League of Minnesota Cities; Jeremy Hanson-Willis, Office of Mayor R.T. Rybak; Gretchen Nicholls, LISC; Jim Erkel, MN Center on Environmental Advocacy; Mia Adams, University of Minnesota; Alisha Cowell, University of Minnesota; Burke Murphy,

DEED; Lee Munich, University of Minnesota; Elizabeth Ryan, Family Housing Fund; Brian Paulson, Greater Twin Cities United Way; Eric Muschler, McKnight Foundation; Jay Lindgren; Dorsey & Whitney.