



CHAPTER 12

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS & ACCESSIBLE LEADERSHIP

VISION STATEMENT:

All of us feel welcomed, connected, represented, and encouraged to shape our community's future.

February 25, 2019

Introduction

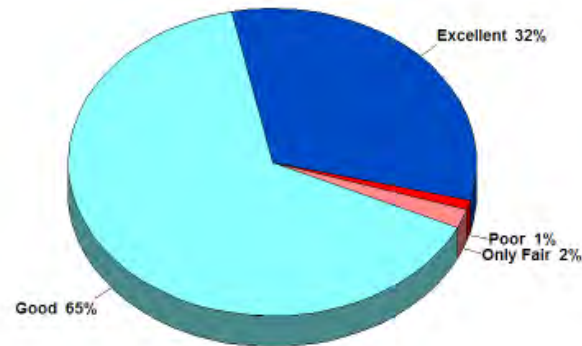
Successful towns are built on relationships, partnerships, and trust. They're also built on guidance and leadership from every part of the community. This section encompasses two seemingly different aspects of life: community connections and accessible leadership. However, without one, we don't have the other, and without both, a city doesn't thrive.

Social connections are at the core of how people and cities work. Research shows that whether people are extroverts or introverts, our connections with each other are often what make the difference between happiness and despair. Those who feel connected to their neighborhoods and community are happier and live longer. Those in isolation are at high risk of physical and mental decline. In towns where people feel valued, crime decreases, graduation rates are higher, and economic vitality is stronger.

In Red Wing's [2017 Community Survey](#), 97 percent of respondents said the "sense of community" in Red Wing is either excellent or good, and 97 percent said they felt "accepted, valued, and welcomed" (see Figure 12.1 and Figure 12.2). Those numbers are amazingly high and many non-profit, faith, school, and volunteer organizations have made this possible through years of work. However, we can't ignore anecdotal stories, some of which say that while Red Wing can be welcoming with many ways to get involved, it can sometimes be difficult to make social inroads. Through the *Red Wing 2040 Community Plan*, Red Wing dedicates itself again to increasing the opportunities for connection so all of us are able to live our best lives.

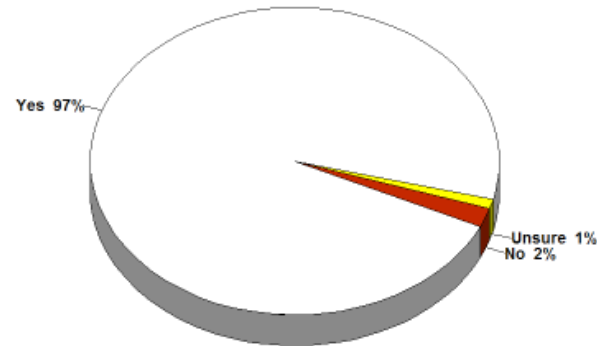
Successful cities share power and commit to a broad base of leadership. They draw ideas and knowledge

FIGURE 12.1 SENSE OF COMMUNITY



Source: 2017 Red Wing Community Survey, The Morris Leatherman Company

FIGURE 12.2 SENSE OF BEING ACCEPTED, VALUED AND WELCOMED



Source: 2017 Red Wing Community Survey, The Morris Leatherman Company

from a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and experiences. Red Wing is committing to doing just that. We will find ways to encourage, educate, and mentor new leaders in every facet of community life. We will open up the decision-making tables and encourage people to help shape Red Wing's





COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS & ACCESSIBLE LEADERSHIP

What would make
Red Wing a better
place to live?

655

responses across all 2017 engagement events and surveys suggested fostering positive community interactions, offering more services/resources to residents, and improving the way government engages with the community would make Red Wing a better place to live. Here are the top responses related to Community Connections and Accessible Leadership.



Better Communication and Engagement

Outreach to the many groups that comprise Red Wing's population was identified, both in the 2017 Community Survey and many community engagement events, as essential to improving relations between city government and residents.



A Youth, Community, and Welcome Center

In 2017, both the Community Survey and Hispanic Survey had many people identify their desire for a center to support youth, teens, families, and other Red Wing residents, both new and current. 77% of respondents to the Hispanic Survey indicated that they would use a Welcome Center if one was available.



More Programs, Activities, and Events

Additional event offerings were mentioned both in the 2017 Community Survey and many community engagement events, including more family-friendly activities, evening entertainment, and free/low-cost things for kids and teens to do. Respondents to the 2015 Latino Survey indicated they would appreciate more opportunities for social and cultural celebrations.

What do folks like most about living in Red Wing?

1,114 / 4,160
Responses
mentioned aspects
of the community,
including:

314
The Small
Town
Atmosphere

294
Welcoming
and Friendly
People

145
Friends and
Family

95
The Sense of
Community

77
The Positive
Community
Attitude

9
Community
History



Efforts toward Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Building

The importance of cultivating a supportive community was identified throughout the 2017 community engagement efforts. Respondents mentioned their desire to better recognize and celebrate the value that newcomers, older residents, and those with diverse backgrounds and perspectives bring to the community. Residents believe that having more city, neighborhood, and new-resident events would facilitate community building.



Services and Amenities

Many people referenced their desire for additional services or amenities, including resources for underrepresented groups and those in need, infrastructure upkeep, property maintenance and revitalization, and improvements to city services like snowplowing, waste removal, and recycling.



Documentation, Resources, and Representation for Immigrants

2017 and 2015 surveys of Red Wing's Latino residents indicated they need to be better connected to immigration resources, legal and medical interpreters, and representation regarding workers' rights. The desire for driver's licenses regardless of immigration status was indicated as a major way to improve the quality of life for immigrant residents.



Better Community Planning

Many respondents to the [2017 Community Survey](#) indicated that more focus on community planning and zoning would make Red Wing a better place to live. Decisions about land use and zoning have major impacts on the way the city grows and functions.

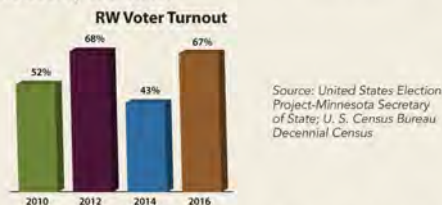
2017 Report Card

We do best when we live in a place where we feel valued and have input into the decisions that affect us.

How can we create more meaningful dialogue with local government and more frequent opportunities for social interaction with each other?

Voting in Elections

Our voting rates are higher than the U.S. and slightly lower than the county and state.



In 2016, RW's rate was 67% while Goodhue County's was 72%, Minnesota's was 70%, and the nation's was 55%.

Government Bodies

We don't currently measure other categories to see how our elected and appointed officials reflect our population.

Local Elected/Appointed Officials by Gender



Community and Our Kids

When students believe their community cares about them, they're more likely to continue their training and education.



Did You Know?

A community-wide student mentoring program is starting and needs more mentors. Call 651-468-5677.

future, in big ways and small. Sometimes that will mean purposefully fostering trust, communication, and accessibility. Other times it will mean removing barriers and simply getting out of the way.

Encouraging a wide spectrum of leaders and making knowledge and influence accessible to all are crucial avenues toward ensuring a prosperous future.

2017 Report Card

Our [2017 Report Card](#) information was limited based on the metrics collected in the past. Some of the measurements we did have were voting rates and a listing of elected/appointed officials by gender. In the short time since the [Report Card](#), a few measurements have been collected recently that show progress in representative government. When the [2017 Community Survey](#) was conducted, one out of seven City Council members were women; today, in early 2019, that number is three out of seven. Voting rates has also risen from 47 percent in 2014 to 67 percent in 2016. While some of this may be due to national factors, it can't be denied that Red Wing residents have stepped up to participate. City government played a more active role in encouraging residents to run for office in 2018, and an impressive 14 people took up the charge to run for one of four open Council seats. In addition, almost every city government board and commission position is filled.

Key Issues

Need more leadership opportunities that are open and available to everyone.

Red Wing is taking steps toward encouraging and mentoring leaders across the community, and

more work can be done. Recently, some programs have been templates for success, including a few programs that incentivize participation and assist with transportation and childcare so attendees can represent the population at large. For instance, in the summer of 2017, the Citizens Assembly brought together almost forty community members for an eight-day course over two months to learn about local government and accessible decision-making. The program, offered through Hamline University and the Jefferson Center, brought this fledgling program to Red Wing and paid participants for their time. By design, many of the attendees had no experience at all in government or community leadership.

The program elicited positive results. City government added software to survey more residents on short- and long-range plans, and some cohort members decided afterwards to work in the community in the areas of mental health, City Council and boards/commissions, the 2040 Action Teams, and other sectors.

Other leadership-building programs in Red Wing have also proven successful, some which target groups of residents who may not have otherwise participated. Fifteen Hispanic residents, for instance, earned leadership certificates in 2016 and 2017 from the Hispanic Leadership Program through Live Healthy Red Wing and Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County. These emerging leaders continued to build programs in healthy eating, police-resident relations, and year-round soccer opportunities. Youth also met locally and at the state and federal level to lobby for changes in areas such as immigration and state identification cards and drivers' licenses.



Did You Know?

The City of Red Wing's 13 boards and commissions offer leadership opportunities for 123 residents to help guide the city's work in areas such as planning, sustainability, housing, human rights, and overseeing the City Charter, which acts as a roadmap for city government. The Mayor appoints all members, and no formal experience is required.

Need to involve more people in decision-making.

Everyone knows what it's like to feel powerless, and it can happen anywhere, including schools, work places, families, faith communities, and volunteer organizations. People may feel particularly powerless in terms of their ability to influence government or regarding decisions that impact their neighborhoods or their own homes and properties. At various times in the past, some residents have felt detached from these decisions, and over time this can breed distrust.

Organizations across towns and cities know it's impossible to please everyone all the time, but that is not the goal. The purpose is to create avenues for people to voice their opinions, listen actively and openly to opinions, and weigh all factors before forming a decision. It means making government accessible to all because everyone has the right to participate in, and be part of, their local government. People also want their views to be heard by other organizations that make a difference in their lives, like their healthcare providers, schools, or places of work.

Progress is being made locally. The *Community Plan* is a good example, with more than 2,000 people helping shape the plan and more than 200 residents involved from beginning to end of the two-year process. Additionally, in the government sector, online surveys went out to the public on two other major community plans with good results: 652 residents gave input into the "Old West Main Redevelopment" online survey and 512 people responded to the public library's long-term planning survey. The City of Red Wing Engineering Department now meets with neighbors before street projects are even drafted in order to learn about people's concerns and needs early on in

the process, and then again before the plan is adopted, and residents have said they appreciate this effort. Other organizations are also reaching out more. The Red Wing School District, for instance, conducted multiple surveys and public meetings before drafting its new [Education Plan](#), and the outreach appears successful (residents voted for a five-year referendum to implement the plan).

Need to make data accessible to everyone so people can identify gaps and opportunities and share their own ideas for progress.

People need information to make informed decisions. In Red Wing, we want to be transparent and offer accessible places for people to get the details they need. City government is currently working on ways to be more transparent with budgeting documents and finding tools that make the budget more understandable and accessible.

The city of Red Wing also commits to creating a *Report Card* (also called an online dashboard) that will report on metrics the community has said are important. In addition, the city will create an online repository of information with strategies and actions people are working on in their own organizations – and how those fit with the *Community Plan*. Many organizations are working, either alone or in partnerships, to make progress on goals. Having key documents, reports, and surveys in one place will make it easier for the public to access this information.

Need to ensure equitable policies and practices.

Throughout 2017 and 2018, Red Wing 2040 Action Team members consistently said they want Red

Wing to be a more welcoming community and they want plans, policies, and practices at every level of community life to be transparent and fair for everyone. This *Community Plan* includes equity as one of its five guiding principles, and all organizations, including business, nonprofits, schools, and governments, play a crucial role in holding up equity as a goal across the community.

What exactly is equity? Equity exists when systems are fair and just, without barriers. This *Community Plan* holds up the “*Health, Equity, and Excellence in All Places*” tool kit as a key example of how we all can reexamine our current policies and create new ones to ensure they are equitable. The core of this policy-development tool asks what the impacts of a decision are, who the decision helps, who it burdens, and how people can lessen any unintended or negative consequences. City government commits to using this tool whenever possible. It’s especially helpful when working through the tool with multiple departments or other people to get a variety of viewpoints. City government will also modify, monitor, and implement its [Racial Equity Plan](#), which was approved in 2017.

Other community organizations have similar plans and policy tools in place, and this *Community Plan* supports collaborations, discussions, and events that help us listen to others and improve our policies on the journey toward equity. Equity is a long-term community-wide goal that will require ongoing, open communication with all populations to ensure we make progress.

Need to create more opportunities that build a sense of belonging.

Red Wing has many ways to get connected with the community through theater and the arts, trails and the outdoors, school and sports activities, and civic and volunteer opportunities. Dozens of hard-working organizations across Red Wing help make this possible. However, discussions with the public also show that people would like a better way to learn about Red Wing when they first move here. Additionally, there are multiple residents who feel they don’t belong for a variety of reasons. The goals and strategic actions outlined in the *Community Plan* highlight how Red Wing will reach out to strengthen bonds, build trust, and work together so people feel that wherever they come from, this can be the place they call home.

Strengthen student relationships.

Red Wing also has other concerns that have been raised to a high priority by the community. The most clear and documented topic is how our students feel they are socially connected—or at times isolated—in their daily lives. (See the Lifelong Learning section.) School- and community-wide efforts are tackling this matter to make certain every student is connected to at least five caring adults. The mandate is clear to all parties: Red Wing wants and needs to turn the tide so students don’t feel alone, unsafe, unimportant, or unwanted in school and in the community.

A citywide mentoring program, led by Youth Outreach, has shown strong results so far. Mentors from different areas of town, including businesses and government, are donating time to mentor students, and the program is growing quickly.

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

More than 90 local people have graduated from the Blandin Foundation Leadership Program since 2002. Graduates have gone on to be leaders in areas such as school board, nonprofit boards, start-up programs, philanthropic foundations, and city and state government. In 2019, Blandin comes to Red Wing to help run a year-long program called Leaders Partnering to End Poverty, enrolling people living in poverty as part of the leadership cohort.

Key Directions

- » Create programs to build local leaders who are representative of the community
- » Create more ways for people to have input into the decisions that affect them
- » Use data effectively to identify gaps and measure results, and make data easily available to increase transparency
- » Improve access to information and influence
- » Ensure plans, policies, and practices are equitable
- » Create more opportunities for building a sense of belonging, especially in residents who are new or don't feel connected to Red Wing
- » Strengthen relationships between students and the community

Goals, Strategies, and Actions

Goal 12.A: Improve communication and trust between local entities and the public.

Strategy 12.A.1: Improve communication between places of leadership and the public, and internally within the entities themselves.

- » Establish creative ways for leaders in city government, schools, and other entities throughout the community to meet with the public, both through face-to-face meetings and online options. This includes occasionally rotating regular meetings to other locations around the community.
- » Provide a variety of methods for the public to give input into the decisions that affect them—decisions made by government, schools, businesses, and community organizations.

- » Continue improving communication to the public, remembering those who are hard to reach and those who may not feel connected to the community. Ensure that organizations, schools, and government can listen to and communicate effectively with residents not fluent in English. Provide language translations as much as possible via signs, kiosks, written, and online information.
- » Create systems so communication improves internally among organizations. Within government, for instance, create a system so Council, board, and commission members better know what each other is doing and where they might collaborate.
- » Make information that's important to decision-making transparent, clear, and easy to find. This includes minutes, reports, plans, assessments, survey results, budget information, and more.

Strategy 12.A.2: Develop consistent and transparent ways to identify gaps and measure the results of community progress.

- » Update and share community assessments, reports, and other data in a readily accessible place so anyone in Red Wing can see where we stand at the present time, view progress and gaps, and identify areas for concern. Publicize so the community knows this location.
- » Continually monitor and report on organizational short- and long-term plans throughout the community to see where progress is being made, where gaps remain, and where opportunities can be acted upon. This includes using a software solution that allows the [Red Wing Report Card](#) to be regularly updated.

Terminology

Goals:

Goals are broad statements that describe a desired outcome. They are often long-term and aspirational in scope.

Strategies:

Strategies are policies, projects, programs, and practices that support one or more of the plan's goals. They address the "who, what, when, where, and how" of reaching a goal and may involve multiple sub-strategies and actions. Strategies may be ongoing and may or may not have definitive start and completion dates.



Did You Know?

New connections are starting to form between the City of Red Wing and Prairie Island Indian Community. In fall of 2018, more than 120 residents from both communities participated in a hike and meal at He Mni Can [Heh-Meh-NEE-Cha]-Barn Bluff to celebrate the bluff's sacredness to the Dakota people and the upcoming improvements that will help share its history and cultural significance.

- » Implement a system for measuring, monitoring, evaluating, and revising the *Red Wing 2040 Community Plan* that involves the full community over the long-term.

Strategy 12.A.3: Devise a way for people to feel more connected to Red Wing, especially residents who are new to town or who don't feel they belong.

- » Find a way to get information about the community to newcomers, cultural groups, and anyone who lives in Red Wing who wishes to build stronger connections in town.
- » Solution would bring together people and families who feel connected with those who don't (potentially by forming a families-mentoring-families or a people-mentoring-people program that builds community).
- » Solution could include regular events that welcome newcomers.

Strategy 12.A.4: Build stronger relationships with communities where trust has been broken or still needs strengthening, in order to form long-lasting, respectful, shared commitment. This includes Prairie Island Indian Community (PIIC), our Hispanic community, and residents of all backgrounds who feel isolated or disconnected.

- » Work together on projects that bring understanding and healing and team up to help share cultural history with the greater Red Wing community, including in the school system. (Example: The He Mni Can [Heh-Meh-NEE-Cha]-Barn Bluff improvement project

is helping Red Wing learn the history and sacredness of the bluff to the Dakota people.)

- » Consider how city and county government can create a communication system with the Prairie Island Indian Community before and, if needed, during major construction projects to ensure sacred land is considered in the planning process.
- » Work together on multi-language communication, including signs and directions.
- » Communicate more clearly about cultural events happening so people from all communities are aware and encouraged to attend.

Goal 12.B: Get more people of varying ages and backgrounds involved in leadership positions.

Strategy 12.B.1: Encourage more people of different ages and backgrounds to get involved with and participate in leadership positions.

- » Remove barriers for, and provide information and encouragement to, people interested in leadership roles, especially for people who don't normally see themselves in these roles. This includes supporting training for those often left out of the system and connecting them to people already "at the table." Goals are to open access to the roles of influence such as boards of nonprofit organizations, businesses, philanthropic foundations, and faith communities; elected offices such as City Council, County Commission, and School Board; and appointed positions such as city boards and commissions.
- » Add more opportunities for youth to engage with local government.

- » Implement regularly-scheduled, city-wide facilitation training so more entities can effectively involve a broader spectrum of different voices in their decision-making while managing conflict and finding solutions.
- » Invest in leadership programs that build and strengthen neighborhoods and neighborhood champions.

Goal 12.C: Build stronger bonds among students, their schools, and the full Red Wing community.

Strategy 12.C.1: Promote programs that enrich connections between students and the community, beginning in preschool and extending throughout their academic careers.

- » Support programs that collaboratively provide internships, apprenticeships, mentoring, volunteering, and leadership positions throughout the community. (See Lifelong Learning Chapter)

Strategy 12.C.2: Help residents see the connections between strong children and families and a strong city—with results that include increased economic development, less crime, and better mental health and well-being.

- » Encourage residents from all sectors to become mentors for children, adults, or teens.
- » Monitor results of how students score in physical, mental, and social-emotional health surveys as a necessary way of tracking success in our community as a whole.

Goal 12.D: Make city and community programs, policies, and systems more inclusive.

Strategy 12.D.1: Monitor city government and community policies and systems so they are fair and equitable for all.

- » Provide an avenue for residents to approach organizations, businesses, schools, or government and shed light on unfair policies and discuss possible remedies.
- » Create a system within city government, and when possible within schools, county, businesses, and community organizations, in which staff and elected/appointed leaders utilize a health and equity policy tool (such as the *Health, Equity, and Excellence in All Policies* tool) when creating or revisiting policies.
- » Create a system where local entities (government, schools, nonprofits, businesses, and philanthropic foundations) share resources, ideas, and training ideas for improving equity, and include residents in the conversations.
- » Continue to update and implement the *Red Wing Racial Equity Plan*.

Strategy 12.D.2: Encourage more multi-cultural events that bring people together of different backgrounds.

- » Encourage and support a wider variety of cultural events through foods, music, arts, and performances, and make events more accessible to all.

Online Library

You can see all of the foundational work of Red Wing 2040 on the City's website, www.red-wing.org/red-wing-2040.html



TABLE 12.10 STRATEGY MATRIX

Strategy	SHARE Principle(s)	Who can help achieve this?	Timing
Goal 12.A: Improve communication and trust between local entities and the public.			
» Strategy 12.A.1: Improve communication between places of leadership and the public, and internally within the entities themselves.	Equity, Sustainability, Accessibility	City Government, School District	Ongoing
» Strategy 12.A.2: Develop consistent and transparent ways to identify gaps and measure the results of community progress.	Sustainability, Accessibility	City Government, RW School District, County HHS, Every Hand Joined, Mayo Clinic H5-RW, United Way	Short-term
» Strategy 12.A.3: Devise a way for people to feel more connected to Red Wing, especially residents who are new to town or who don't feel they belong.	Accessibility, Equity	Non-profits, City Government, County Government	Long-term
» Strategy 12.A.4: Build stronger relationships with communities where trust has been broken or still needs strengthening, in order to form long-lasting, respectful, shared commitment. This includes Prairie Island Indian Community (PIIC), our Hispanic community, and residents of all backgrounds who feel isolated or disconnected.	Sustainability, Resiliency, Equity	City Government, PIIC, School District	Ongoing
Goal 12.B: Get more people of varying ages and backgrounds involved in leadership positions.			
» Strategy 12.B.1: Encourage more people of different ages and backgrounds to get involved with and participate in leadership positions.	Sustainability, Resiliency, Equity	United Way, City Government, School District, County Government	Ongoing
Goal 12.C: Build stronger bonds among students, their schools, and the full Red Wing community.			
» Strategy 12.C.1: Promote programs that enrich connections between students and the community, beginning in preschool and extending throughout their academic careers.	Sustainability, Equity, Resiliency, Accessibility, Health	RW School District, Every Hand Joined	Short-term
» Strategy 12.C.2: Help residents see the connections between strong children and families and a strong city—with results that include increased economic development, less crime, and better mental health and well-being.	Sustainability, Resiliency	Every Hand Joined, City of Red Wing	Long-term
Goal 12.D: Make city and community programs, policies, and systems more inclusive.			
» Strategy 12.D.1: Monitor city government and community policies and systems so they are fair and equitable for all.	Sustainability, Equity, Resiliency, Accessibility, Health	City of Red Wing, Goodhue County, School District, Business HR Departments	Ongoing
» Strategy 12.D.2: Encourage more multi-cultural events that bring people together of different backgrounds.	Accessibility, Equity	Sheldon Theatre, RW Arts, ArtReach, Local Grassroots Artists	Short-term

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