



Visioneering Wichita Older Adults Strategic Alliance Summary of Accomplishments to Date September 2007

As the Older Adults Strategic Alliance and its Leadership Team approach their first anniversary, their work has become increasingly specific and task-oriented.

This Alliance incorporates members of the area agency on aging's Community Service Advisory Board as well as other professionals and volunteers with an interest in the well being of older adults. Alliance members continue to make strategic invitations and plan to vary meeting sites to broaden the alliance membership with particular emphasis on increasing participation from Harvey, Butler and Sumner Counties.

The Strategic Alliance has focused on one umbrella goal statement: "Make the Wichita MSA a Mecca for retirees." Four strategies to help achieve this goal have been identified:

- Marketing
 - Existing data, some going back 50 years, about older adults in our region has been compiled. A matrix of the data will be produced by November 2007, setting the Alliance up to identify knowledge gaps and plans to address them in the coming months.
- Advocacy
 - The Alliance is exploring activities that provide advocacy for older adults. This takes the form of traditional legislative advocacy, including building ties to the Silver-Haired Legislature. It also includes building and bolstering relationships with other key partners so that they understand the older adult's perspective when making planning, policy and business decisions.
- Integration Across Age Cohorts
 - The Alliance is identifying communities that have successfully crossed age boundaries so that they may be researched and, where appropriate, replicated.
- Influencing Community Planning
 - The Alliance has proposed a housing summit in the first half of 2008 to build awareness and relationships with the many stakeholders who build, sell, regulate and buy residences for senior adults.

One successful activity has advanced all four strategies. Earlier in the year, Alliance members assisted in hosting a stop on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services promotional bus tour as part of the "A Healthier US Starts Here" initiative of the US Department of Health and Human Services. The Hon. Josefina G. Carbonell, Assistant Secretary for Aging at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, attended. The event drew a sizeable audience and underscored the power of the partnerships within the Older Adults Alliance.

The Alliance meets the second Tuesday of each month, usually at 3 p.m., with the Leadership Team meeting immediately after.

Strategic Alliance Strategy

1. Embrace our older adult citizens as a community resource for history, education, employment, and other aspects of community life.
2. Provide and maintain safe and affordable housing for older adults.
3. Provide better healthcare resources or optional healthcare resources for senior citizens.
4. Increase services for the older adults and market them effectively.
5. Continue support for senior employment programs.
6. Provide ways to get our mature adults more involved in the community.

Strategic Alliance Benchmark

Under development. The Benchmark Team suggested that a “scorecard” benchmark may be appropriate for this Alliance.

Quality of Life Foundation Vision Supported

By 2024 the Wichita MSA will be a healthy, safe community that has a vibrant recreation, entertainment & arts focus that embraces diversity and builds pride.

Key Benchmarks Targeted

Job Growth: By 2008, exceed the highest of the annual percentage job growth rate of the U.S., Omaha, Tulsa, Kansas City and Oklahoma City.

Per Capita Income: Stop the 21-year decline of Wichita per capita income as a percentage of U.S. per capita income before 2011. By 2024 exceed the annual average of Omaha, Tulsa, Kansas City and Oklahoma City.

“The Older Adult Alliance has just recently formed. We are energized to take action quickly to develop goals and action steps to move forward at a fast pace.”

**Annette Graham,
Older Adult Alliance Leadership and Sedgwick County Department on Aging**

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