

“He who keeps his eye fixed on the horizon will find the right road.”



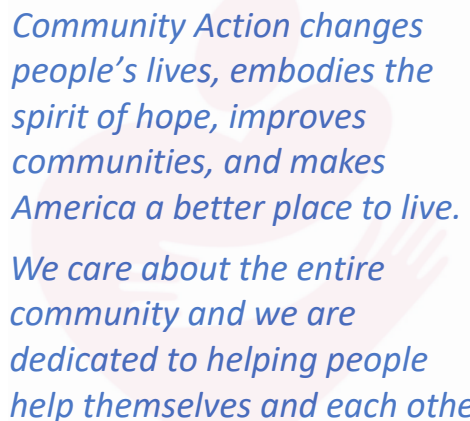
Picture of Lake Superior view from Lutsen
provided by Mark Henderson

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2022

The mission of AEOA is to strengthen communities by providing opportunities for people experiencing social and economic challenges.

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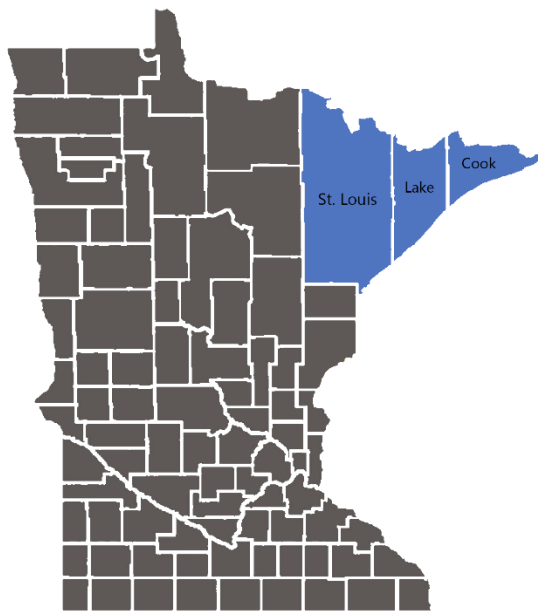
*Community Action changes
people's lives, embodies the
spirit of hope, improves
communities, and makes
America a better place to live.*

*We care about the entire
community and we are
dedicated to helping people
help themselves and each other.*

Introduction

The Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) is one of the largest private, non-profit Community Action Agencies in Minnesota. AEOA's mission is to *strengthen communities by providing opportunities for people experiencing social and economic challenges*. For over five decades, the Agency has grown in response to community needs and currently provides services to community members through five major service departments including Employment and Training; Head Start; Housing; Senior Services; and Arrowhead Transit.

The Agency is governed by a 27-member Board of Directors, representing an equal cross-section of low-income individuals, public officials, and private sector parties. Employing over 365 full- and part-time employees across ten counties, AEOA is widely recognized as a primary support resource for the region's low-income population. AEOA is also a state-designated employment and training service provider, as well as a Community Housing Development Organization. Although AEOA's central office is in St. Louis County, the Agency's service area covers roughly 23,000 square miles, a geographic area larger than ten states. AEOA has staff at 120 locations dispersed throughout the region including in area CareerForce Centers, school districts, and community colleges.

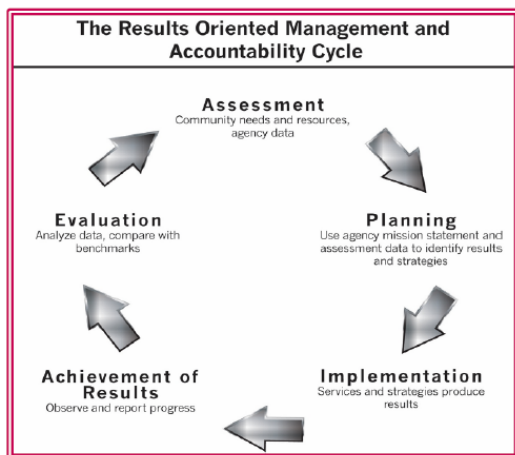


AEOA's Community Action Service Area

Requirements

Per the National Community Action Partnership Category Six Toolkit, "The strategic planning processes, typically conducted every three to five years, sets the broad goals that guides the agency's programs and operations to meet the needs of low-income individuals, families, and communities. The Community Action Plan (CAP), submitted annually to the State CSBG Lead Agency, details the specific program activities that the agency will engage in over the year as guided by the results of the needs assessment and goals of the strategic plan.... Additionally, there are a number of reasons that an agency should consider conducting a deeper evaluation related to the Organizational Standards for strategic planning:

- Improve the agency's implementation of the ROMA ([Results Oriented Management and Accountability](#)) framework;
- Better connect existing and future strategic plans with the CNA and CAP;
- Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation process for the current strategic plan; and
- Identify ways to better integrate the current strategic plan into the routine management and operational processes of the agency."



National Organizational Standards Related to Strategic Planning

- Standard 6.1** The organization has an agency-wide strategic plan in place that has been approved by the governing board within the past 5 years.
- Standard 6.2** The approved strategic plan addresses reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient.
- Standard 6.3** The approved strategic plan contains family, agency, and/or community goals.
- Standard 6.4** Customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected as part of the community assessment is included in the strategic planning process.
- Standard 6.5** The governing board has received an update(s) on progress meeting the goals of the strategic plan within the past 12 months.

There are several other Standards that relate to strategic planning that should be considered. Including:

- Standard 1.1** The organization demonstrates low-income individuals' participation in its activities.
- Standard 1.2** The organization analyzes information collected directly from low-income individuals as part of the community assessment.
- Standard 1.3** The organization has a systematic approach for collecting, analyzing, and reporting customer satisfaction data to the governing board.
- Standard 4.1** The governing board has reviewed the organization's mission statement within the past 5 years and assured that: 1) the mission addresses poverty; and 2) The organization's programs and services are in alignment with the mission.
- Standard 4.3** The organization's Community Action plan and strategic plan document the continuous use of the full Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle or comparable system (assessment, planning, implementation, achievement of results, and evaluation). In addition, the organization documents having used the services of a ROMA-certified trainer (or equivalent) to assist in implementation.
- Standard 9.3** The organization has presented to the governing board for review or action, at least within the past 12 months, an analysis of the agency's outcomes and any operational or strategic program adjustments and improvements identified as necessary.



Methodology

AEOA performed work around our strategic plan from July to December 2019. The process began with the Executive Director and Director of Planning meeting individually with each AEOA Board member to gain an understanding of community needs, themes, and projected goals for the agency. Board members were provided the 2018 Community Needs Assessment prior to the conversations to reinforce the guidance provided by that document.

Questions posed to the Board members included:

1. Do you believe AEOA's mission, "To strengthen communities by providing opportunities for people experiencing social and economic challenges." accurately reflects the work our agency should be doing?
2. What makes our mission meaningful to you?
3. What are the areas of community need that relates to AEOA's mission?
4. How well do you think AEOA is doing in meeting these needs in your community?
5. What community assets are you aware of that you want to make sure AEOA is engaging with or utilizing to improve services to those in need?
6. What do you think AEOA should do more of?
7. What do you think AEOA should do less of?
8. Are there other comments, questions, concerns, or feedback you want to share?

Input gathered from the Board members is provided as an appendix. Information is aggregated in no particular order. Once gathered, the feedback was grouped into areas of themes and analyzed by sector represented and tenure on the Board (also provided as an appendix).

Board of Director members were also asked to reaffirm the agency mission. The mission was approved during this process and remains: ***AEOA strengthens communities by providing opportunities for people experiencing social and economic challenges.***

Themes from the Board member feedback, along with an overview of the CNA were provided to the agency department directors and assistant directors prior to a focused conversation to further evaluate the priorities of the agency. At the end of this discussion three strategic and two operational directions were determined. Those directions were reviewed and edited by the AEOA Board Planning Committee. The priorities were further outlined for action steps by agency employees during two focused conversations and feedback at the AEOA All-staff Training on December 6, 2019.

This work determined the following strategic directions:

- *Increase the visibility and awareness of the Agency's mission and programming*
- *Enhance service delivery at the community level.*
- *Increase community support and capacity for affordable housing*

Two operational directions were also determined:

- *Evaluate wages and benefits in 2020 to remain competitive*
- *Improve IT leadership*

Future Work

To further tell the story of AEOA and the vision the Agency has from 2020 to 2023 and beyond, the Board Planning Committee will engage over the course of 2020 to create an AEOA Vision and Core Values Statement as well as an Identifying Statement. The Planning Committee will also develop a strategic action plan road map for each year of the plan beginning in January of 2020.

Furthermore, additional focused conversations and feasibility studies are needed to determine next steps for increasing support and capacity for a broad spectrum of affordable housing including developments with access to broadband internet.

The two operational directions determined in this process are being addressed at the Agency leadership level through a wage/benefit study in 2020 and through the AEOA Information Technology committee.

Documenting Progress and Evaluation

The AEOA Board Planning Committee will meet quarterly to review and evaluate progress toward meeting the strategic goals. The plan's implementation process will be guided by Department Directors who will assign staff to perform the work. The staff and Directors will report back to the Planning committee on progress quarterly. Reports from the Planning Committee will be provided at regularly schedule AEOA Board of Directors meetings.



Strategic Plan 2020-2022

Goal One

Increase the visibility and awareness of the Agency's mission and available programming within the organization and throughout AEOA's service area.

2020 Activities

Goal	Strategy
Increased community awareness of all services and programs provided by AEOA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate opportunity for an agency-wide marketing team/policy • Enhance agency brochure and service grid • Create targeted media campaign to share service information and results achieved • Review/create program brochures to establish a more cohesive Agency brand
Improve internal communication and employee awareness of all services provided by AEOA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance current internal news sharing options, including internal newsletter, agency-wide email notifications of program changes, and training opportunities (webinar, lunch-n-learn, etc.)
Improve communication with community partners and people served by AEOA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a more professional website with up-to-date program information, program outcomes, success stories and agency story • Utilize social media platforms for increased outreach and agency information distribution • Further develop internal and external communications plan
Advocate on behalf of AEOA mission, programs, and people served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop outreach plan for elected officials and boards (Township, School, County, City, State, Federal) • Develop process for sharing community needs assessment, annual report, outcome reports, and other agency materials across sectors and with the broader community



Strategic Plan 2020-2022
Goal Two

Enhance service delivery through the development of mission-driven community specific teams.

2020 Activities

Goal	Strategy
Improve internal communication and employee awareness of all services provided by AEOA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance current internal news sharing options, including internal newsletter, agency-wide email notifications of program changes, and training opportunities (webinar, lunch-n-learn, etc.)• Enhance program service guide components and distribution process (perhaps an internal wiki page)• Develop internal program sharing process utilizing latest technology• Enhance new employee orientation to better outline agency mission and programming
Increase cross-department collaboration and reduce silo effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop quarterly employee gatherings based on geographic area served• Develop agency policy supporting a culture of cross department referral and information sharing• Develop community event calendar to ensure AEOA is represented at community partner events and gatherings



Strategic Plan 2020-2022
Goal Three

Increase community support and capacity for affordable housing including homes for young families, senior community living, and workforce housing with access to broadband.

Goal	Strategy
Improve knowledge of housing capacity in local communities	To be determined
Develop partnerships with economic and workforce development, senior service, and family service agencies, municipalities, broadband advocates, and other housing developers	To be determined

Appendices

Appendix A: Strategic Plan Approach Overview



Strategic Planning Approach 2019

The AEOA Board Planning Committee, Executive Leadership, and the Planning Department have designed the following approach for strategic planning in 2019. The approach will be implemented with the theory, “Nothing about us, without us.”, in mind. The strategic plan will be designed at the intersection of Board priorities, community needs, agency leadership and funder priorities, and emerging issues of the community.



1. Board members will be advised to review the 2018 Community Needs Assessment Report as well as any community data to which they may have knowledge.
2. The Executive Director and Director of Planning will meet one-to-one with each AEOA Board member to gather feedback on community needs, themes, and projected goals for the agency.
3. The Planning Department will analyze the data collected from the interviews to develop a report on overall themes, analyzed by sector, community, and other relevant demographic categories.
4. The Agency Directors will meet to discuss the report utilizing their knowledge of identified theme areas and develop three major goals for the agency over the next three years.
5. The developed goals will be reported to the Planning Committee of the Board for further discussion and approval. The Planning Committee will then move a recommendation forward to the Board for acceptance or further review.
6. Once the Board has approved the goals, the Planning Department will implement a series of focus conversations with AEOA clients, community members, and possibly partner organizations. The agenda of these focus conversations will include a deeper dive into local data around the theme area as well as an opportunity to gather feedback on needs, opportunities, and resources to address the identified goal.
7. Feedback from the focus groups will be analyzed by the Planning Committee of the Board and the Planning Department to create action steps for the next three years and will include evaluation of those actions as well as identify methods of reporting progress toward the goals to the Board.
8. The proposed plan will be provided to the Board for final review and approval no later than December 2019.

Planning BP 6-10-2019

Appendix B: Board Member Feedback Overview



Strategic Planning Board Member Feedback

As part of AEOA's 2019 strategic planning process, the Executive Director and Director of Planning will be meeting individually with each AEOA Board member to garner feedback on community needs, themes, and projected goals for the agency.

Prior to the conversation, please take a few minutes to review AEOA's 2018 Community Needs Assessment located at <https://www.aeo.org/images/FinalCNARReport2018.pdf>. Also review any additional data or reports you may be aware of affecting your community. This will help you better prepare for our conversation.

While the dialog will be very informal, below are several questions we will be speaking about when we meet. The conversation should take one hour or less.

1. Please share why you have chosen to sit on the Board of AEOA.
2. What are the top three greatest areas of need in your community?
3. What are the top three areas of opportunity and/or success in your community?
4. How well do you think AEOA is doing in meeting the needs of the community?
5. What community assets are you aware of that you want to make sure AEOA is engaging with or utilizing to improve services to those in need?
6. What do you think AEOA may be missing in providing services to the communities?
7. Do you believe AEOA's mission, "To strengthen communities by providing opportunities for people experiencing social and economic challenges." accurately reflects the work our agency should be doing?
8. If AEOA had all the needed resources and could not fail, what do you believe we should attempt to do to serve those in need in Northeast Minnesota?
9. Are there other things you want to share that we have not asked you about?

All answers will remain anonymous and be reported in aggregate by sector. Refusal to participate will not jeopardize any services you may receive from AEOA or any partnership you may have with AEOA. Thank you for providing us this valuable community information.



Planning BP 6-10-2019

Appendix C: Community Needs Assessment Condensed

2019 Community Needs Assessment Highlights

Top Five Needs of People We Serve

1. Enough money to pay bills
2. Enough money to buy clothing
3. The ability to get credit, pay debt, or take care of bad credit
4. Enough money to buy a car
5. A job that pays enough to support basic needs

Top Five Needs of the General Community

1. Enough money to participate in fitness activities
2. Enough money to participate in recreational activities
3. Enough money to afford repairs on their home if they need it
4. Enough money to repair their vehicle
5. Not able to afford healthy food options

Concerns of Partners

Emerging trends

1. Transportation
2. Mental health
3. Chemical dependency
4. Housing costs
5. Child care shortage

AEOA's Strengths	AEOA's Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Great, compassionate staff2. Variety of programs3. Size, longevity, and funding4. AEOA's willingness to partner with other organizations5. Great programs	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Funding2. Lack of a central access point3. Bureaucratic4. Staff spread too thin, compromising quality of service for clients5. Staff availability, lack of training, turnover, and lack of empathy

Wishes for AEOA

1. Improve our website
2. Communicate with partners more
3. Improve/expand transportation to increase service area and hours
4. Increase marketing for programs



Top Concerns of Employees

Nearly 40% only work here because it is a job, they do not feel a connection to our mission.

Top five things staff believe their clients need:

5. 71% of staff stated that their clients are most in need of *supportive relationships*
6. 63% of staff stated that their clients are most in need of *safe, affordable housing*
7. 60% of staff stated that their clients are most in need of *access to healthy, nutritious food*
8. 54% of staff stated that their clients are most in need of *transportation*
9. 40% of staff stated that their clients are most in need of *money*

Programs needed that AEOA does not currently provide

1. Increased transportation options including personal vehicle
2. Increased childcare options
3. Basic housing repair or chore services
4. Mental Health Support
5. Increased educational opportunities

Emerging trends staff see

1. Lack of reliable transportation
2. Increase costs limiting ability for people to meet basic needs
3. Increase mental health issues
4. Limited health and dental options
5. Internal staff concerns

Top staff wishes for AEOA:

1. 46% of staff wish for *more funding for the Agency*
2. 25% of staff wish for *new and/or expanded programs*
3. 15% of staff wish for *more communication among staff*
4. 15% of staff wish for *a new building for AEOA*
5. 10% of staff wish to *help all clients in-need*
6. 10% of staff wish to *have more staff at AEOA*



Appendix D: Compilation of Board Member Feedback

Strategic Planning Board Member Feedback

Overall Themes from Board Member Interviews

Individual

- Individuals raising non-biological children (i.e. grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends)
- Education and training programs
- Programming for young children and youth (preventative)
- Workforce program (specifically for singles and connecting with living wage jobs)

Community

- Childcare gap
- Food and nutrition
- Transportation – increase service times and locations (rural)
- Affordable Housing
- Support efforts around CD/MH in community

Agency

- Equitable services throughout region
- Outreach to elected officials and additional community groups
- Awareness of programming in the community and for the Board
- Create advisory boards for other programs like Head Start

Themes by Tenure

Ten years and over (9)

Program

- Education and employment (4)
- Mental Health/Chemical Dependency (3)
- Transportation (3)
- Housing (3)

Agency

- Need for prevention services – teen, early childhood, CD/MH

Fewer than ten years (14)

Program

- Transportation (6)
- Education and training (5)
- Support efforts around CD/MH in community (3)
- Childcare gap (2)
- Housing (2)

Agency

- Outreach and visibility in communities
- Diversify approaches to doing business/services
- Equity in service delivery
- Need for prevention services – teen, early childhood, CD/MH



Themes by Sector

Consumer (9)

Program

- Education and employment (5)
- Mental Health/Chemical Dependency (4)
- Transportation (3)
- Food Access (3)
- Housing (3)

Agency

- Need for prevention services – teen, early childhood, CD/MH

Private (7)

Program

- Individuals raising non-biological children (3)
- Housing (2)
- Transportation (2)

Agency

- Outreach and visibility in communities and with policy/funding decision makers
- Equity of services throughout region
- Concerns of working with/for other agencies

Public (7)

Program

- Education and job training (4)
- Transportation (3)
- Childcare (2)

Agency

- Outreach and visibility in communities
- Diversifying policy makers with which we speak
- Equity of services throughout region



Appendix E: Focused Conversation Agenda – Directors and Assistant Directors

Strategic Planning September 30, 2019 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

2019 is a Strategic Planning Year for AEOA. Our strategic plan needs to be based on Community Needs Assessment and guides the development of our Community Action Plan.



- I. Introduction of the process
- II. Focused Conversation
 - A. What are the top three greatest needs you see in the communities we serve?
 - B. What are the top three greatest internal needs for the Agency?
 - C. What does AEOA currently do to address these needs?
 - D. Where could we improve to address these needs?
 - E. If our success was completely guaranteed, what bold steps might we take to address these needs?
- III. Review Gathered Data
 - A. Community and Clients
 - B. Partners
 - C. Employees
 - D. Board Member Prioritization
 1. Where are there connections between what we have determined and the community data? What is missing?
 2. Inspired by these connections, what are three shifts in the world you can see AEOA spearheading?
- IV. Determine 3 goals for the next three years

Appendix F: Director and Assistant Director Feedback Condensed

Strategic Planning Proposed Goals from Directors

The Department Directors and Assistant Directors met and discussed the following questions:

1. What are the top three greatest needs you see in the communities we serve?
2. What are the top three greatest internal needs for the Agency?
3. What does AEOA currently do to address these needs?
4. Where could we improve to address these needs?
5. If our success was completely guaranteed, what bold steps might we take to address these needs?

After reviewing the data, we discussed:

1. Where are there connections between what we have determined and the community data?
What is missing?
2. Inspired by these connections, what are three shifts in the world you can see AEOA
spearheading? _ _ _ _ _

Goals Identified and Voted on in Directors' Discussion

- Increase and evaluate wages and benefits (19)
- Marketing – overall and website improvements (8)
- IT leadership (7)
- Inter and intra-agency community teams (4)
- Full spectrum of affordable housing (3)
- Living wage job opportunities, including training to get them (1)
- Internal cross training (0)
- Board training – provide a better understanding of programs and inner workings of AEOA (0)
_ _ _ _ _

Proposed Strategic Goals for the Next Three Years

- Awareness and marketing of AEOA programs
- Inter and intra-agency community teams
- Full-spectrum affordable housing

Proposed Operational Goals

- Increase and evaluate wages and benefits
 - This will be addressed in 2020 when the agency undergoes another wage/benefit study
- IT leadership
 - This is currently being reviewed and addressed by agency leadership.



Appendix G: Employee Focused Conversation Agenda

Strategic Planning Proposed Goals from Directors

Proposed Strategic Goals for the Next Three Years

- Increase the visibility and awareness of the Agency's mission and available programming within the organization and throughout AEOA's service area.
 - Enhance service delivery through the development of mission-driven community specific teams.
 - Increase community support and capacity for affordable housing including homes for young families, senior community living, and workforce housing with access to broadband.
-

1. Introductions

Go-Around: Name and what was the most meaningful moment you had at AEOA

Purpose of meeting: Develop methods to obtain the identified strategic goals

2. Suspend Disbelief...

Imagine that you part of the senior executive group at AEOA – you are meeting to consider the future viability of AEOA which has been affected negatively by recent policy changes. In walks CAPatra, the renowned and proven clairvoyant. She says, “You can ask me three questions about your future.” What would those three questions be?

3. Discussion on the process so far and development of the goals.

What comes to you as new or fresh in any of this? What looks pretty “same-old, same old”? What do you see here that makes you say, “Well they finally got that right!..”

4. Strategy Setting

(One person stays in each group; others go to another group. Person who stayed at the table explains the goals to the new group) New group answers the question...

a. Awareness and marketing of AEOA programs

What does this goal suggest we have to do?
What are the challenges to attaining this goal?
What are the resources that will help? Which of these do we have, and which do we need to obtain?

b. Inter and intra-agency community teams

What does this goal suggest we have to do?
What are the challenges to attaining this goal?
What are the resources that will help? Which of these do we have, and which do we need to obtain?

c. Full-spectrum affordable housing

What does this goal suggest we have to do?
What are the challenges to attaining this goal?
What are the resources that will help? Which of these do we have, and which do we need to obtain?



Appendix H: Employee Focused Conversation Notes

Strategic Employee Focused Conversation October 31, 2019 Grand Rapids, MN

Parking lot

Engaging with local resources

Staff Comment:

“Too broad of questions don’t know where to begin” (#3)

Suspend Disbelief

3 Questions:

- What changes does AEOA need to make to not be crumbling but thriving?
- 71% of staff say clients need supportive relationships, how can AEOA play a roll in meeting that felt need?
- How can we use funds for “prizes” if our grants do not allow it?
- What has changed about AEOA over the years for the negative?
- Can we have more online training to save travel costs?
- Is there any thoughts on being more mobile? i.e. network tablets to have at events, etc.
- Have we ever given department prizes for most success/ads submitted?
- What is/will be AEOA’s long term strategy for employee retention?
- What strategy does AEOA have to ensure that seeking new revenue does not jeopardize the quality of service of current programs? If chasing month that drastically changes the scope of frontline staff’s duties at the expense of direct services in order to maintain admin costs.
- How will AEOA ensure equity between all counties if/when funding becomes an issue? i.e. outer offices disproportionately cut in favor of St. Louis/Itasca.
- Is AEOA going to go paperless and use technology to their advantage?
- Is AEOA going to downsize? i.e. instead of having locations (offices) in 7 counties narrow it down to 3
- Is AEOA going to expand on other programs to help with their local community?
- Where can we search for funding to ramp our programs up to where they should be?
- How do we create an “us” culture instead of an “us vs. them”? Become better at collaborating with other agencies and services?

Process so far and Development of goals

What comes to you as new of fresh in any of this?

- #3 is a bigger goal

What looks pretty “same-old, same-old”?

- “Never heard of AEOA and lived here my entire life” – only heard of it because of a job (same with another staff – was referred to NEMOJT & learned about AEOA)
- Clients say they wish about us sooner
- Hear of ABE through friends

- “Would be great if I knew the people and was 100% sure I’m contacting the right person for a referral and know my client is getting what they need”
- Community sometimes only knows of one small piece of AEOA (1 dept – E&T or transit), and that other services are also attached to AEOA (different buildings appear different such as transit in Gilbert versus the Grand Rapids facility that houses many programs, including transportation)

Awareness and Marketing of AEOA programs

What does this goal suggest we have to do?

- It’s a lot of word of mouth now – we need to use social media and free advertising
- Post on buses
- Radio stations, 3 banks, 2 colleges at chamber event – they followed up and “bug” the staff person – they want us to run ads on the radio (E&T)
- Engagement of employees – This gives representation for the whole agency. Front line staff motivation. – Upper management help staff focus - philosophies to empower front line staff, as they are primary contacts with the public – they will be more willing to advocate for the agency in the community if they are happy employees – Intentional management culture (Green yellow black belt training) – Listen to and ask for opinions of front line staff.
- Staff must know what programs are available to promote this information – program shadowing
- Nontraditional ways of advertising
- Inviting other departments to table at events that certain depts attend – shared event calendar
- Shared or interdepartmental messaging – (Legacy & SCSEP)
- T-shirt that is easily identifiable for whole agency by department

What are the challenges to attaining this goal?

- Time. Not able to get out of office, clients email phone calls, etc. Where is the time?
- Would be nice if AEOA staff could get together to communicate with each other about programs
- Cross Function group become too social and it’s on a lunch hour
- So many programs and difficult to explain and hard to others to grasp. What is a concise way to market our messaging for programs when there are so many?
- No Agency wide message to market
- Front line employees (bus drivers) come in contact with people in crisis and do not know where to refer them. Ex. Homeless individual took bus from Walmart and driver did not know what to do. Define front line staff.
- Educate volunteers (MoW)

What are the resources that will help? Which do we have and which do we need to obtain?

- Staff
- Passion for helping people (60% of staff)
- One-to-one engagements that creates opportunities
- Established reputation

- Increase visibility
- Staff & volunteer education
- Building Trust & Educate all of the community (middle and upper class)
- Fear of Failure – Trust of fellow staff when making referrals

Inter and intra- Agency community teams

What does this goal suggest we have to do?

- Meet in person, over phone, skype, Microsoft Teamviewer
- Make it more accessible for staff who do not have flexibility in their job
- Would like to see specifically targeted training – ex: dept would benefit from motivational interviewing – targeted quality trainings to smaller groups
- Incentive for engagement
- Management must focus on what motivates their employees
- Consistency across the department - How well trained is anyone else to take over if a staff person is on medical leave?
- How to be productive?
- Restructuring so those with motivation are not getting burned out, make sure they have the time. Overwork the overachievers, and underwork the underachievers (Punish the passionate) – could overcome with incentive

What are the challenges to attaining this goal?

- AST challenges – intent is to network and collaborate
- Make it worthwhile – topics that they could use in day to day – (referrals, connecting with other staff, visibility of agency, etc.)
- Making the trainings engaging and not too often, but often enough
- Most engaged will have the biggest workloads
- Taking time off makes the workload worse
- Needs to be community specific

What are the resources that will help?

- Tech tools
- External Relationships - incentives to build the relationships? (X number of spots available for meetings)

Which resources do we have and which do we need to obtain?

- Cross training
- Equipment
- Scanners at every desk for efficiency

Full-spectrum affordable housing

What does this goal suggest we have to do?

- Service provider networking event to learn about what is in the community with hopes of more referrals (St Louis County does this)
- Ability to pay rental deposits
- Build housing near places of employment

What are the challenges to attaining this goal?

- No jobs
- Transportation cannot bridge the gap - You cannot build housing where jobs are and many jobs are where transportation does not go
- Sometimes \$ are hidden in different departments -E&T, Housing, Transit
- Flex grants to provide more \$ for departments to assist clients with needs
- Have confidence in other organizations on what they offer the community
- Not much outreach to for profit community

What are the resources that will help? Which resources do we have and which do we need to obtain?

- Market our ideas to others - Persuade building developers on where to build rather than AEOA building the housing
- Housing projects prioritized by chamber by presenting the information to them

Strategic Employee Focused Conversation
November 15, 2019
Virginia, MN

Parking lot

Funding & Policy

Process so far and Development of Goals

What comes to you as new of fresh in any of this?

What looks pretty “same-old, same-old”?

What do you see here that makes you say “well they finally got that right”?

Staff comment:

A lot of cycle of homeownership – goal is to get people into starter homes but seeing a lot of pause because they’re not entering secondary home. Consider the cycle. Where do they go next? Depletes the stock of affordable homes for first time homebuyers.

Awareness and Marketing of AEOA programs

What does this goal suggest we have to do?

- Educate staff to AEOA’s other services we provide & service areas
 - All staff event
 - Small all-inclusive brochure of services
 - Town hall meetings to present services
- Advertising brochures
- Internal trainings

What are the challenges to attaining this goal?

- Geography
- No Time to learn more
- Indifference of volunteering outside of your area
- Lack of consistent marketing plan & no marketing department
- Website poorly executed not user friendly
- Communication/understanding between staff & clients is lacking (human services jargon)
- Cross training among staff
- Lack of knowledge among employees & having to ask other employees for guidance
- Public awareness
- Services differences in counties
- Generational gap (internet vs no internet)
- Younger crowd wants better technology than what AEOA can provide
- Siloed departments
- Lack of broadband access
- Partner cross training
- Big events churches college

- Social media presence
- Social media Policy – different for each department – consistency! (also knowing who has access so people can connect with those representatives)
- Commercials

What are the resources that will help? Which do we have and which do we need to obtain?

- Program managers for specific areas host a meet and greet for their staff to connect with other staff in the area from different departments
- Dedicated PR staff
- Focus on website
- Transit
- Other cap agencies
- Colleges for educating people
- Training especially technology
- Send out where free wifi is offered in each community
- unrestricted funding so staff have time to help with projects
- Day care opportunities available per county for staff to do outreach
- WebEx meetings to do meet & greets among staff
- utilize in house resources (ABE)
- consistency among departments when it comes to social media
- more staff for marketing – volunteers?
- Seniors learning technology

Inter and intra- Agency Community Teams

What does this goal suggest we have to do?

- Working more with community leaders
- Events, booths, fairs, college to get info out
- Interviews on local radio , tv, newspaper, door to door
- Area coordinator to get our message out for different communities
- Working with the police department
- Create committee to gather resources
- List of each department & staff liason for each service provided including a contact person
- Reach out to outside partners
- Tshirts – ask about AEOA, ask about volunteering to encourage people to talk about it
- Town meeting
- Community involvement in future planning of our programming
- All Staff training is specific to AEOA rather than other trainings
- Department Directors educate staff
- AEOA's own resource page for employees – like a google page
- Externally – monthly summit meeting to get in different counties and come together as one
- Network at events

What are the challenges to attaining this goal?

- Time, time, time
- Not having an in person orientation anymore
- 211 for AEOA – resource book or pamphlet or something
- More shared info from director and board
- Lack of mentorship
- No actual plan or priority for fill in services. No commitment in areas to focus on including other programs – get your numbers up and make sure they're taken care of
- Better external education – best ways to educate public on what we offer
- Community communication of successful approaches for departments – educate staff
- No say in all staff training
- Communicate to all people involved rather than tell one and have them tell 6 others
- Lack of positive attitudes
- Marketing rep at department level – we go to events separately as departments, not as an Agency. AEOA first.
- Not all services are provided throughout all 10 counties
- Staff need to know what services are available in their local community to refer clients to if we cannot assist them

What are the resources that will help? Which resources do we have and which do we need to obtain?

- Resource Guides by county & by department
- All Staff training
- Networking internally and externally