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COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP OF HENNEPIN COUNTY

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ANALYSIS

April 2017
Saint Louis Park, Minnesota



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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT

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This report outlines the stakeholder engagement findings that were conducted as part of the Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County Strategic Plan. This report provides a compilation of findings, analyses, and conclusions that will be used to support the development of the comprehensive strategic plan for the Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

future→iQ

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|-----|--|----|
| 1.0 | Introduction | 4 |
| 2.0 | Approach and Methodology | 6 |
| 2.1 | Pre Think-Tank Survey | 6 |
| 2.2 | CAP-HC Think-Tank..... | 8 |
| 2.3 | Focus Groups..... | 9 |
| 3.0 | Key Findings | 11 |
| 3.1 | Diversified Funding Source | 11 |
| 3.2 | Partnerships / Collaboration in the delivery of services..... | 13 |
| 3.3 | Staff and Volunteer Training on Programs offered by CAP-HC | 15 |
| 3.4 | The Need to Understand Minneapolis | 16 |
| 3.5 | Staff Development, Capacity Building and Empowerment | 17 |
| 3.6 | Leveraging Technology | 18 |
| 4.0 | Conclusion | 19 |
| 5.0 | About Future iQ | 20 |
| 6.0 | Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County, Minnesota | 20 |



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report represents an overview of the opinions of the Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County (CAP-HC) stakeholders regarding CAP-HC's future and their thoughts regarding what should be carried out to further CAP-HC's impact in the community in the years to come.

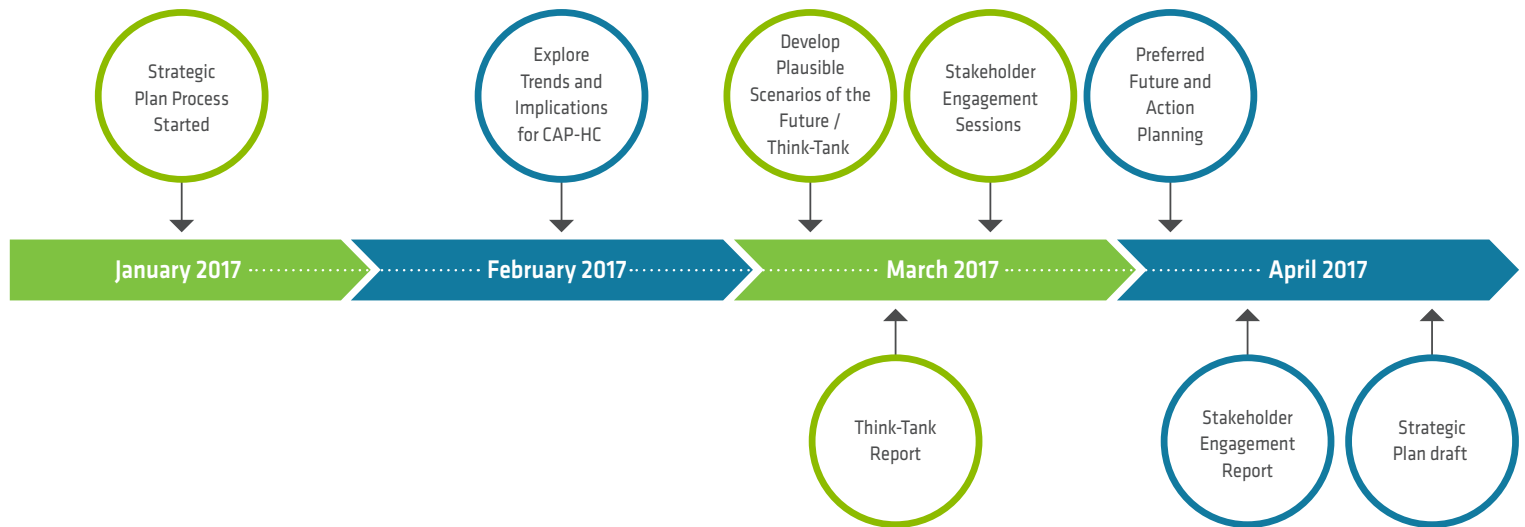
Future iQ was contracted by CAP-HC to develop a strategic plan for the organization, which will be the foundational document guiding the next 1, 3, and 5 year organizational efforts and its expansion into Minneapolis.

In order to build a strategy that is supported by the staff, board of directors, volunteers, and partner organizations, CAP-HC embarked upon an intensive participatory stakeholder engagement process involving meetings, focus groups, and an all-day Think-Tank Workshop. This engagement was intended to create the foundation of support upon which a more targeted strategic plan could be developed to guide the CAP-HC's efforts over the next several years.

Specific dates of engagement were as follows:

- Initial Interviews and Meetings Senior Staff Members (February 9, 2017)
- Board of Directors and Senior Leadership Staff All Day Think Tank (March 4, 2017)
- Board of Directors Meeting and CAP-HC Annual Meeting (March 23, 2017)
- Focus Group - CAP-HC Staff (March 28, 2017)
- Focus Group – Key Partner Organizations (March 29, 2017)
- Focus Group - CAP-HC Volunteers (March 29, 2017)

The report outlines the project's stakeholder engagement process and provides a compilation of findings, analyses, and conclusions that may be used to support the development of a comprehensive strategic plan for CAP-HC. From the beginning of this process, it was evident that there is great momentum and that this is an optimal time to develop a strategic plan for CAP-HC. Of particular interest is the alignment of the input from board members, staff members, volunteers and key partner organizations. This alignment provides a clear direction and the building blocks for a strategic plan that is supported by all stakeholders, which leads to broad stakeholder buy-in and planned momentum.





2.0 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Future IQ uses an approach that emphasizes broad and deep participatory engagement methods to create collaborative environments that produce aligned visions of the future. For this project, various engagement methods were used including meetings and interviews, focus groups, and an all-day Think-Tank.

The CAP-HC Board of Directors has had, via the all-day Think-Tank, a key role in the strategic planning process, guided by section 676B of the Community Services Block Grant Reauthorization Act of 1998, which requires that the tripartite boards of organizations such as CAP-HC “fully participate in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program to serve low-income communities.”

2.1 PRE THINK-TANK SURVEY

The Pre Think-Tank survey was sent to all participants who were invited to attend the scenario planning Think-Tank workshop. The goal of the survey was to understand the participants' vision for CAP-HC and serve as a baseline for creating the axes of the scenario matrix. The survey collected responses from 19 people. Survey questions included:

1. How important do you think it is to have a shared vision for the future of the Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County?
2. How important will a shared vision for CAP-HC be in making decisions for YOUR organization/department?
3. How would you rate the future prospects for CAP-HC in the next 5 years?

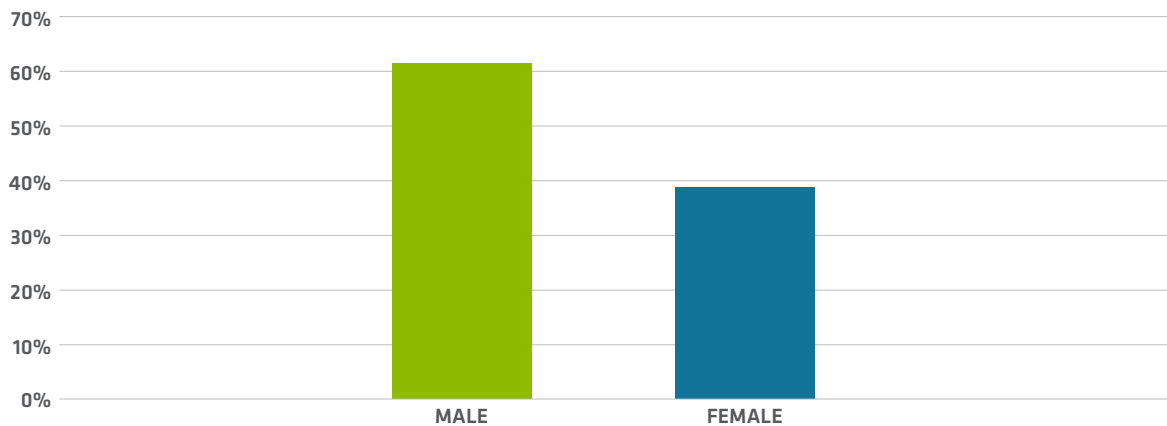
4. Please indicate how important you think the following assets are to the future of CAP-HC (from Not Important to Critically Important):

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversified funding source • Diversified direct service programs • Access to technology • Leveraging technology for service delivery and intake • Capacity for innovation • Strong knowledge base of other organizations' services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to influence policy and systems change • Multiple locations for service delivery / intake • Strong and intentional partnerships with related organizations • Solid organizational branding and marketing |
|---|---|
5. In the last 5 years, what has been the most important unrealized opportunity for CAP-HC?
6. What do you think are the biggest threats CAP-HC will be facing in the next 10 years?
7. What do you think are the biggest opportunities CAP-HC will be facing in the next 10 years?
8. Over the next 10 years how important will changes in the following topics be to CAP-HC? (from much less important to much more important)

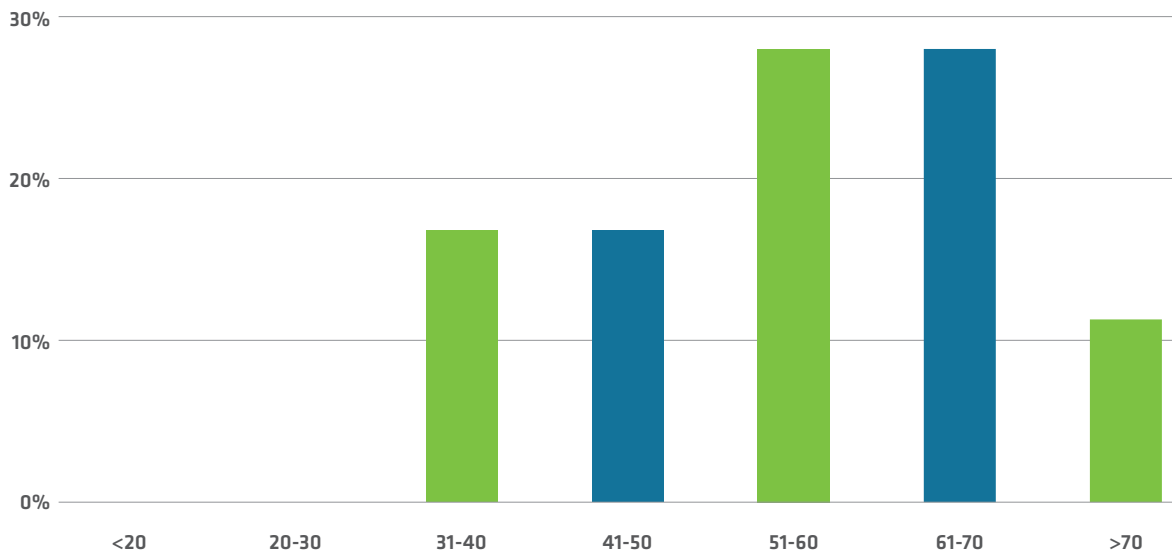
| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available jobs for low income people • Cost of living • Quality of life in Hennepin County • Gentrification trends • Expanded direct service programs by other Hennepin County organizations • Reduced direct service programs by other Hennepin County organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity for innovation • Educational and research capacity • Strength of local economy • Increase in language and cultural diversity of population served • Access to affordable housing • Baby boomers' retirement |
|--|---|
9. In 2014, 13% of Hennepin County residents were living in poverty (at or below 100% of the federal poverty level). The percentage was higher in Minneapolis (23%) than in suburban Hennepin County (8%). What percentage of Hennepin County residents, do you believe, will be living in poverty in 10 years?
10. In 2014, the percentage of residents living in poverty was higher in Minneapolis (23%) than in suburban Hennepin County (8%). What percentage of Minneapolis residents, do you believe, will be living in poverty in 10 years?
11. In 2014, the percentage of residents living in poverty was higher in Minneapolis (23%) than in suburban Hennepin County (8%). What percentage of Suburban Hennepin County residents, do you believe, will be living in poverty in 10 years?

12. As we draft the CAP-HC strategic plan, what do you think are the 3 most important items to be discussed when considering the future of CAP-HC?

What is your gender?



What is your age group?



2.2 CAP-HC THINK-TANK

The CAP-HC Think-Tank was held on March 4, 2017 and was the key participatory engagement event for this project. Future iQ uses the Think-Tank methodology to bring key stakeholders together to build an aligned vision for the future. The CAP-HC Think-Tank was a full day workshop where approximately 20 individuals - members of CAP-HC Board of Directors and members of CAP-HC senior leadership team – took a deep dive into CAP-HC's future.

The workshop program included:

- Review of important trends and background research
- Development of detailed narratives and descriptions of potential future scenarios for CAP-HC
- Examining the impact and consequences of potential decision making paths for CAP-HC
- Identifying preferred futures
- Pinpointing critical action steps

2.3 FOCUS GROUPS

Future iQ conducted three focus group sessions on March 28th and 29th, 2017. Focus group sessions are used by Future iQ to introduce and explore ideas and strategies that have been identified as priorities pertaining to a given project. Future iQ used the scenarios of the future developed during the Think-Tank, the answers to the Pre Think-Tank Survey, the initial Senior leadership meeting information, and the Community Needs Assessment to formulate the questions addressed in focus group sessions. The results were analyzed and compiled in this report's Key Findings.

Approximately 40 people attended the focus group sessions. The focus group session that was held on March 28th was held specifically for CAP-HC staff members. Two sessions were held on March 29th – one for members of key organizations that partner with CAP-HC and one for CAP-HC volunteers.



The focus group questions were:

CAP-HC Staff Member Focus Group Questions

1. What are the biggest obstacles that you, as staff, face as we expand into Minneapolis?
2. What are the biggest opportunities for CAP-HC over the next 5 years?
3. In terms of programs, what are CAP-HC's most important current and future roles in the community?
4. Which programs are we stronger as the main provider, and which ones are we better served by having strong partners in the community?

Key Partners Focus Group Questions

1. What are the biggest obstacles to serving clients that organizations face today?
2. What are the main currencies of the Hennepin County underserved community?
3. What is CAP-HC's role in the community?
4. Which programs do you believe are stronger with CAP-HC as the main provider, and which programs are better served by having stronger partners in the community?

CAP-HC Volunteers Focus Group Questions

1. What is CAP-HC's role in the community?
2. Through your volunteering are there any needs you have become aware of?



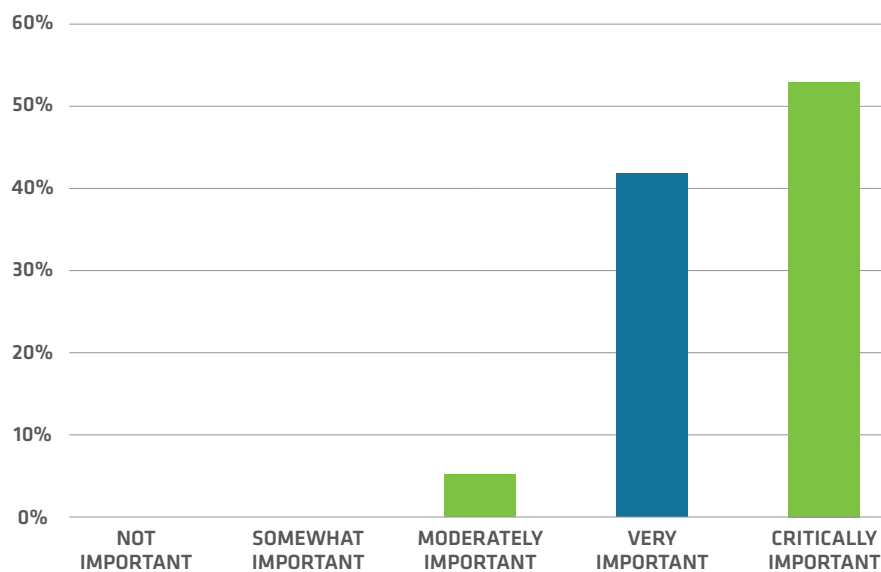
3.0 KEY FINDINGS

3.1 DIVERSIFIED FUNDING SOURCE

It became clear after the initial interviews, and again was validated through the Pre Think-Tank survey and the scenario planning exercises that a diversified funding source is an important issue for CAP-HC.

In the Pre Think-Tank survey, participants were asked to indicate how important Diversified Funding Sources are to the future of CAP-HC. Fifty-three percent believed that a diversified funding source was critically important, 42% believed it to be very important, and 5% believed it to be moderately important.

Importance of Diversified Funding Source



Question 5. In the last 5 years, what has been the most important unrealized opportunity for CAP-HC?

- Developing alternative funding sources
- The development of multiple sources of funding
- Non-grant based funding development

Question 6. What do you think are the biggest threats CAP-HC will be facing in the next 10 years?

- Maintaining adequate cash reserve
- Funding alignment with service needs in community.
- Federal and state budget cuts.
- Federal funding cuts political pressure/tension
- Decreased funding
- Possibility that federal funding will dry up
- Funding
- Changes in government funding levels.
- Federal and state funding has plateaued. The same number of dollars have less value each year
- Funding priorities change, which could threaten existing services. If we enter another recession, will we have enough funds to meet the needs of the community and provide services?

Question 7. What do you think are the biggest opportunities the CAP-HC will be facing in the next 10 years?

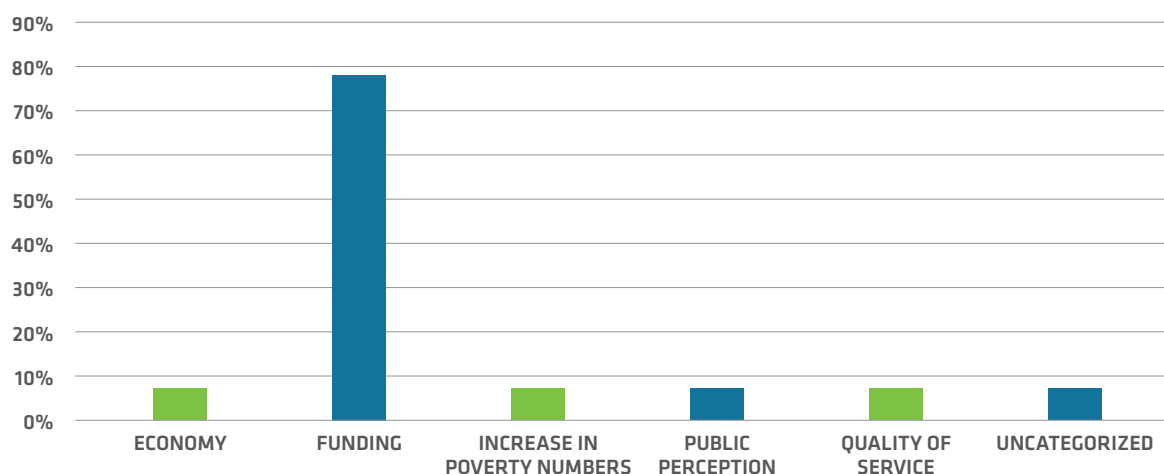
- Effective fund development

Question 12. As we draft the CAP-HC strategic plan, what do you think are the 3 most important items to be discussed when considering the future of CAP-HC?

- Diversification of funding to ensure ongoing success and flexibility
- Funding diversity

Survey participants also reacted strongly when asked what are the biggest threats CAP-HC will be facing over the next 10 years. Almost 80% viewed funding as one of the biggest threats.

What do you think are the biggest threats CAP-HC will be facing in the next 10 years?



The importance of a diversified funding source was also very clear in the scenario planning exercises conducted in the Think-Tank and each of the focus groups. One-hundred percent of the participants in the Think-Tank and the focus groups placed their preferred version of the future on the “diversified funding” side of the vertical funding axis.

Additionally, focus group participants also stated that funding was a critical issue for CAP-HC. Example quotes from Focus Group participants:

- Funding – uncertainty for certain programs that worked in Suburban Hennepin but absent Minneapolis
- Funding for specific programs / low or limited funding”
- Possibility of additional funding sources in Minneapolis
- Establish relationships with funders
- New funding sources / secure
- Lack of resources - funding / staff

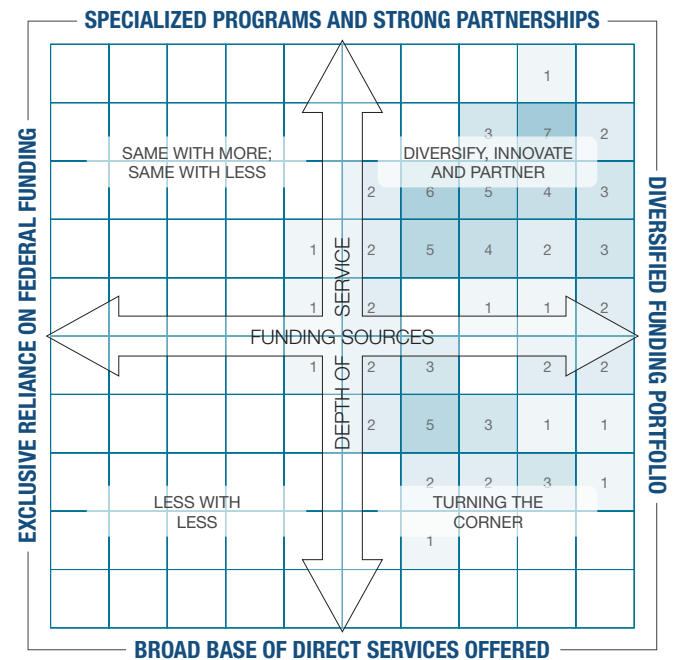
Implications:

A diversified funding portfolio is seen by stakeholders as critically important to maintaining CAP-HC's community impact going forward. There are several implications to moving from an organization that is exclusively government funded to one with a more diverse funding portfolio, but this shift seems to be critical to CAP-HC.

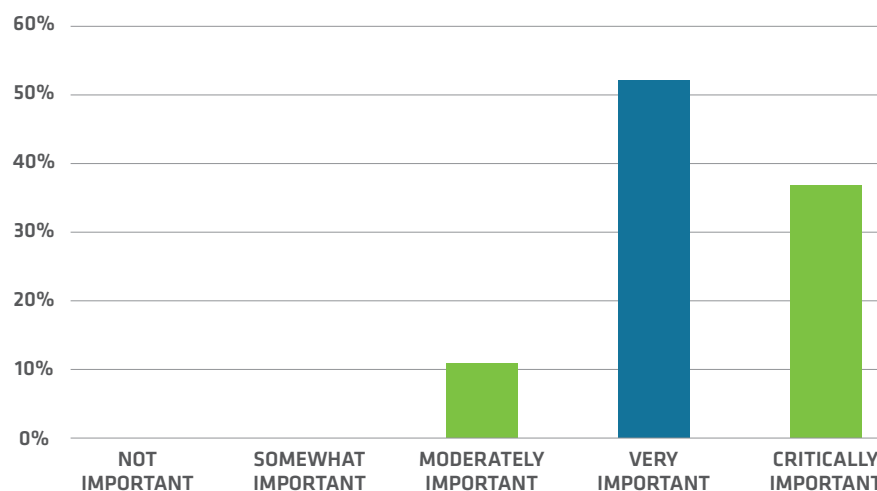
3.2 PARTNERSHIPS / COLLABORATION IN THE DELIVERY OF SERVICES

During the Think-Tank and the various focus groups, the need for collaboration and partnerships amongst organizations was emphasized. On a similar note, avoiding the duplication of services and avoiding “turf” wars with other organizations were mentioned on several occasions,

In the Pre Think-Tank survey, participants were asked to indicate how important Diversified Funding Sources are to the future of CAP-HC. Thirty-seven percent believed that strong and intentional partnerships with related organizations was critically important, 53% believed it to be very important, and 11% believed it to be moderately important.



Importance of Strong and Intentional Partnerships with Related Organization



Focus group participants also believed that partnerships are key for CAP-HC. Example quotes from Focus Group participants:

- Avoiding turf wars / duplicate services
- Finding partners with other programs and figuring out how to work with them
- New Partners
- Collaborate with organizations to develop programs focusing on providing tools to educate and train our clients for future challenges (technology)
- Collaboration with other organizations to require completion of educational activities to access services in order to achieve self-sufficiency
- Working with community organizations that work with specific groups to improve services
- Learn about new providers in in networks in Minneapolis and how to integrate without duplicating

In the Pre Think-Tank survey, the need for strong partnerships was also highlighted.

When asked “As we draft the CAP-HC strategic plan, what do you think are the 3 most important items to be discussed when considering the future of CAP-HC?”, respondents stated:

- Avoiding duplication of services with other organizations
- Focusing on services we know we can provide well and avoiding those where we don't
- How best to partner with other organizations to ensure access to services for low-income communities, without duplicating services

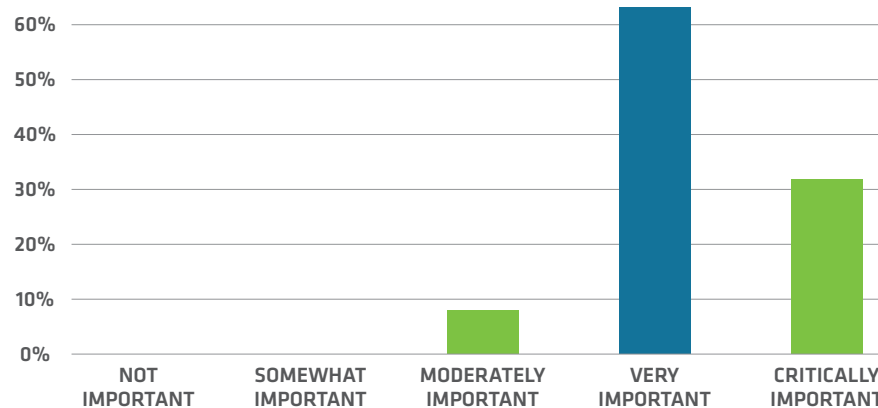
Implications:

The various means of stakeholder input suggests a leaning towards fostering strong partnerships in the community and avoid duplicating services that are already being executed successfully by other organizations. Strong partnerships and stronger core direct services by CAP-HC would represent a shift in CAP-HC's business model and one that has strong support from stakeholders.

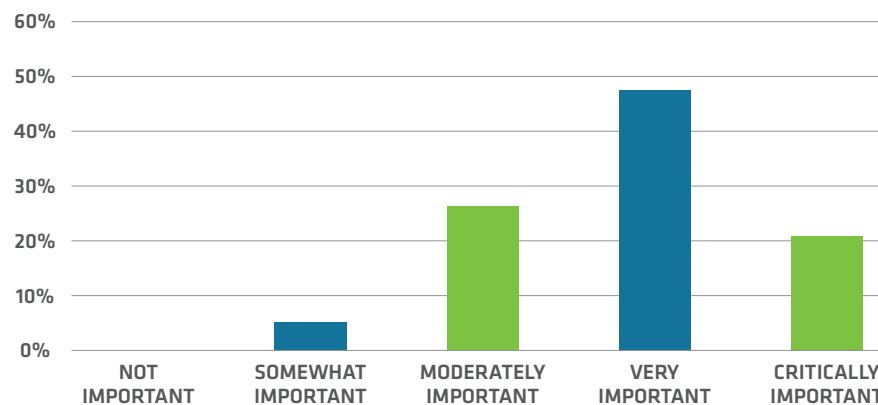
3.3 STAFF AND VOLUNTEER TRAINING ON PROGRAMS OFFERED BY CAP-HC

During the Focus Groups the lack of cross training amongst staff and the lack of volunteer training were highly emphasized. Staff members talked about their own lack of understanding of programs outside of their current responsibility and volunteers highlighted the lack of training / communication from CAP-HC to volunteers, which significantly hinders their ability to engage with clients outside of their expertise.

Importance of Strong Knowledge Base of other Organization's Services



Importance of Multiple Locations for Service Delivery / Intake



Example quotes from Focus Group participants:

- Cross department training
- Agency wide communication, knowing about different locations
- Infrastructure not knowing what locations and what programs are moving

Implications:

Training programs for the organization regarding CAP-HC's various programs and partnerships are relatively simple to create and could be leveraged and used for both staff and volunteers. The return on this small investment is significant as both staff and volunteers will feel more connected to the organization and more willing to participate fully to assist their clients.

3.4 THE NEED TO UNDERSTAND MINNEAPOLIS

There is a perception amongst staff and partner organizations that CAP-HC doesn't "know" Minneapolis. Partner organizations are concerned that CAP-HC will duplicate services that are already provided in Minneapolis, and staff members are cautious about the unfamiliar territory.

Example quotes from Focus Group participants:

- Learning of new providers networks in Minneapolis and how to integrate without duplicating
- Funding – uncertainty for certain programs that have worked in Suburban Hennepin but not in Minneapolis
- No relationship with Minneapolis funders
- Political environment in Minneapolis
- Understanding the identity of Minneapolis
- Knowledge of different cultural groups in Minneapolis
- Poverty more concentrated in Minneapolis
- Providing services that are relevant
- Getting clients comfortable and knowledgeable about us now being in Minneapolis
- Possibility of additional funding sources in Minneapolis

Implications:

Understanding Minneapolis would benefit both the CAP-HC programs and partner organizations. It would avoid duplication of services, foster stronger relationships with Minneapolis organizations and enable CAP-HC to focus its programs where it is needed.

3.5 STAFF DEVELOPMENT, CAPACITY BUILDING AND EMPOWERMENT

The need for staff development, empowerment and capacity building was highlighted during the Think-Tank and the various focus groups. The current limitations placed on staff regarding staff recognition were emphasized as well as the lack of intentionality behind staff development.

In the Pre Think-Tank survey, when asked “In the last 5 years, what has been the most important unrealized opportunity for CAP-HC?” a respondent stated that “Development of senior staff within the organization to prepare for expanding services and change within the organization.”

In the Staff focus group, when asked “What are the biggest opportunities for CAP-HC over the next 5 years?” participants answered the following as it relates to staff development:

- More job opportunities for qualified staff
- More staff development
- Adding Staff
- Opportunities for advancement of staff

Implications:

Commitment to staff is a two-way street. When CAP-HC dedicates its efforts to the advancement of staff, staff work harder, smarter and show stronger commitment to CAP-HC’s goals. Staff development seems to be a critical issue within the organization, and addressing it would help move the entire organization forward.

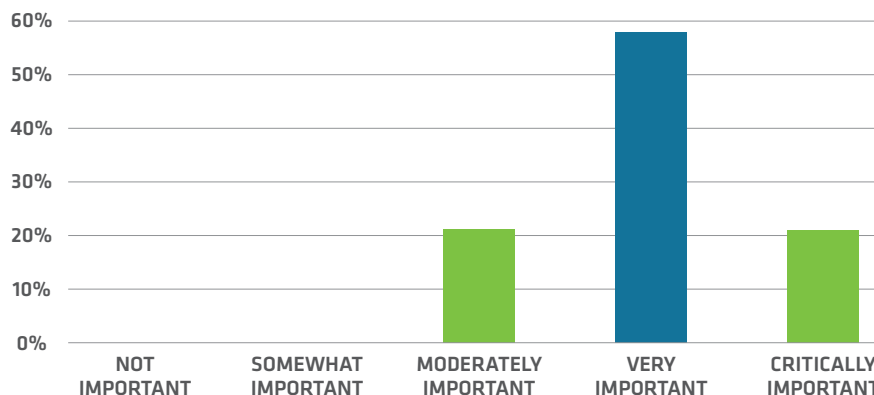
3.6 LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY

Through Future iQ's research and from feedback in the initial meeting, the Think-Tank and the focus groups, the need to leverage technology has been identified as a critical need of CAP-HC. Intake process can – at times – take an entire afternoon, data entry must be done in several different systems. Clients often wait hours for this process and staff waste countless hours on data entry.

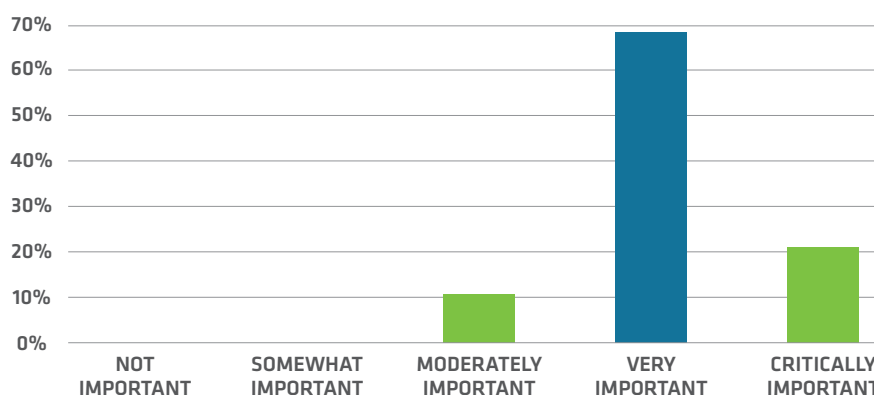
In the Pre Think-Tank Survey, participants were asked to indicate how important Access to Technology is to the future of CAP-HC. Twenty-one percent believed it to be critically important, 58% believed it to be very important, and 21% believed it to be moderately important.

When asked to indicate how important Leveraging Technology for service delivery and intake is to the future of CAP-HC, 21% believed it to be critically important, 68% believed it to be very important, and 11% believed it to be moderately important.

Importance of Access to Technology



Importance of Leveraging Technology for Service Delivery and Intake



Implications:

Using technology for everyday processes like intake and service delivery would streamline CAP-HC's operations, free up staff time for more important tasks and would build client relationships by being more mindful of clients' times.



4.0 CONCLUSION

The results of the stakeholder engagement process provided the following conclusions:

- Stakeholders unanimously agree that a diversified funding source is the preferred revenue model for CAP-HC
- Stakeholders reiterated throughout the engagement process that exclusive reliance on government funding exposes CAP-HC to significant risk
- Stakeholders throughout the engagement process stated that strong partnerships and avoiding duplication of services should be one of the main goals of CAP-HC
- Stakeholders expressed a desire for a stronger training program for CAP-HC Staff and CAP-HC volunteers on programs offered to clients
- Stakeholders reiterated throughout the engagement process the need to better understand Minneapolis in order to provide appropriate and relevant services
- Stakeholders identified the need for stronger staff development programs, where staff empowerment and capacity building occurs
- Stakeholders produced a clear indication that leveraging technology should be one of CAP-HC's priorities



5.0 ABOUT FUTURE IQ

Future iQ is a market leader in the development and application of scenario planning; network analysis, industry and regional analysis, and community engagement and capacity building. Future iQ specializes in applying innovative tools and approaches to assist organizations, regions and industries shape their economic and community futures. With over a decade of business experience, the company has grown to have a global clientele spanning three continents.

To learn more about Future iQ, and our recent projects visit www.future-iq.com or by email at info@future-iq.com

6.0 COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP OF HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA

The Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County (CAP-HC) is a community action agency working in all of suburban Hennepin County to improve the lives of low-income people. CAP-HC offers services to individuals through outreach, energy assistance programs, homeownership services, food support, free tax assistance, legal services, employment counseling, and financial counseling. Additionally, CAP-HC's Planning & Development Center assists nonprofit and other service entities in becoming more effective.

For more information on the Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County, please contact:

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