



# Duluth Prosperity Agenda

**Community Update  
November 18, 2010**

## **Income and Poverty**

### *Purpose:*

The Prosperity Agenda Income and Poverty working group is an inclusive and representative collaborative of organizations working to connect poverty reduction and income building initiatives underway throughout the Duluth community.

### *By:*

- Building on the momentum of existing initiatives by aligning community resources,
- Serving as a communication and connection point for income and poverty initiatives within the community,
- Addressing barriers faced by those in poverty,
- Identifying and implementing best practices, and
- Prioritizing opportunities to create policy change.

### *What we know:*

82% of Single mothers with kids are living in poverty, coupled with the fact that 55% of Duluthians are female

47% of people are living at 200% of poverty, many of whom are in college or a technical program

The median age of Duluthians is 28 compared to 35 in the previous year

### *Community Dividends:*

- Increased educational outcomes for all students in the classroom,
- Stronger workforce supports will decrease employee turnover and yield increased profit for local area businesses, and
- Increased neighborhood stabilization with fewer blighted and deteriorating houses.

### *Membership:*

Paula Reed, President, United Way of Greater Duluth  
Pam Kramer, Executive Director, Duluth LISC  
Angie Miller, Executive Director, Community Action Duluth  
Xavier Bell, Community Action Duluth  
Emily Larson, Duluth At Work  
Rick Ball, Duluth HRA  
Tony Cuneo, Green Jobs Task Force  
Steve Wagner, Lake Superior College  
Donna Ennis, American Indian Commission  
Jim Soderberg, CHUM  
Dan O'Neill, AFL-CIO Central Labor Body  
Alyssa Hoppe, Community Action Duluth

Kim Crawford, Life House  
Gary Frasier, Minnesota Chippewa Tribe  
Paul Harkness, Minnesota Teen Challenge  
Kelly Looby, Neighborhood Youth Services  
Mary Mathews, Northeast Entrepreneur Fund  
Rebecca Ellenson, SOAR Career Solutions  
Kathy Heltzer, UMD School of Social Work  
Carl Crawford, Intercultural Center Coordinator  
Ron Hagland, Office of Education Equity, ISD 709  
Wende Nelson, Lake Superior Community Health Center  
Pat Burns, Miller Dwan Foundation

## Housing

### *Purpose:*

The Prosperity Agenda Housing working group, the “At Home Housing Committee”, is an inclusive and representative collaborative of organizations working to reduce housing cost burden and provide investment in Duluth’s housing stock.

### *By:*

- Reducing household energy costs through improved weatherization and energy efficiency,
- Providing housing and rental rehabilitation programs,
- Acquiring, rehabilitating and reselling foreclosed properties,
- Acquiring and demolishing blighted properties,
- Providing homebuyer assistance in purchasing affordable housing,
- Educating new homebuyers to support informed housing purchases and household budgeting, and
- Providing tenant-based rental assistance.

### *What we know:*

#### Cost-burdened renters:

2009: 61%  
2008: 56.2%

#### Cost-burdened homeowners with a mortgage:

2009: 31.5%  
2008: 33%

### *Community Dividends:*

- Increases an individual’s ability to contribute and support the local economy,
- Allows for households to better provide for the basic needs of the household and invest in household resources,
- Increases the ability for a household to become self-supporting,
- Reduces the burden on natural resources and fosters a sustainable community,
- Encourages improvements to be made on properties, positively impacting neighborhood property values, and
- Reduces blighted properties, decreasing crime and improving neighborhood safety.

### *Membership:*

Keith Hamre, Manager, City of Duluth Community Development  
Karen Olesen, Senior Planner, City of Duluth Community Development  
Kathie Severson, City of Duluth Community Development  
Cliff Knettel, Executive Director, Neighborhood Housing Services of Duluth  
Kris Ridgewell, SVCNDA  
Lynne Snyder, HRA of Duluth  
David Peterson, Development Coordinator, HRA of Duluth  
Dean Talbott, Program Director, Duluth Energy Efficiency Program  
Jim Mischler-Philbin, Land Trust Duluth

## Education

### *Purpose:*

The purpose of the Prosperity Agenda Education working group is to coordinate comprehensive educational systems in the Duluth community to support and enhance educational opportunities for Duluth residents.

### *By:*

- Identifying and addressing individual educational needs,
- Assessing the educational needs of the community,
- Developing individual educational work plans,
- Closing the achievement gap in Duluth schools,
- Matching educational opportunities in the Duluth community with regional workforce trends, and
- Engaging individuals in educational assessment mapping.

### *What we know:*

Residents over 25 with at least some college: 65.3% compared to 64.4% in 2008

High school on time graduation rates: disparities exist between students of color and White students; in 2009 80.52% of white students graduated on time compared to 49.15% for Black students and 34.33% for American Indian students

### *Community Dividends:*

- Increased taxpayer savings in public health, crime and welfare spending,
- Stable neighborhoods,
- Ability to meet the demands of the local economy, and
- Increased individual independence.

### *Membership:*

Keith Dixon, Superintendent of Schools, Duluth Public Schools

Lynn Black, Chancellor, University of Minnesota Duluth

Bill Crandall, Principal, Area Learning Center and Unity High School

Drew Digby, Regional Labor Analyst, MN Dept. of Employment and Economic Development

Larry Goodwin, President, The College of Saint Scholastica

Pat Johns, President, Lake Superior College

Paula Reed, President, United Way of Greater Duluth

Jay Roesler, Director, Duluth Community Education

Beth Tamminen, Director, Adult Basic Education Program

## Workforce

### *Purpose:*

The Prosperity Agenda Workforce working group is collaborative committee working to identify and match current and future local employment needs with a skilled and capable workforce through employment, job training and career assistance programs.

### *By:*

- Addressing barriers to employment,
- Aligning and enhancing current workforce development activities,
- Initiating individual short term training plans and career laddering opportunities,
- Developing innovative outreach methods for community employment tools, and
- Providing connections between employment needs and the local workforce.

### *What we know:*

Average weekly wage: \$758 in 2008 compared to \$752 in 2009

Percentage of adults in labor force: 63.4% in 2008 compared to 62.6% in 2009

### *Community Dividends:*

- Higher wages for employees,
- Greater profitability for local area businesses, and a
- Vibrant and healthy local economy.

### *Membership:*

Don Hoag, Manager of Workforce Development, City of Duluth

Lisa Bodine, Director of Business Development, APEX

Nicole Johnson, Supervisor, Human Resources, ALLETE

Steve Wagner, VP of Workforce Development, Lake Superior College

Drew Digby, Regional Labor Analyst, MN Dept. of Employment and Economic Development

Thor Underdahl, Human Resource Analyst, ALLETE

## **Business Climate**

### *Purpose:*

The purpose of the Prosperity Agenda Business Climate working group is to facilitate and encourage a strong community conducive to business growth and development, resulting in greater numbers of jobs in Duluth.

### *By:*

- Developing a comprehensive business strategy for the City of Duluth,
- Stimulating economic investment in the community, and
- Supporting Duluth area businesses.

### *What we know:*

The number of jobs in Duluth declined by 3.62% in the past year but Duluth's diversified economy helped minimize the impact. The number of private jobs has grown steadily overshadowing the decline in government jobs.

### *Community Dividends:*

- Larger, broader tax base and revenue stream, and
- Positive economic growth for the Duluth area.

### *Membership:*

Don Ness, Mayor, City of Duluth

Rob West, Executive Director, APEX

Ken Browall, Publisher, Duluth News Tribune