

Northshore Senior Center
Strategic Framework
January, 2010 - July, 2011



NORTHSHORE SENIOR CENTER

ABOUT NORTSHORE SENIOR CENTER

Northshore Senior Center (NSC) is a cornerstone in the Northshore community – focused on positive aging since 1972. We are committed to serving the *full spectrum* of seniors, from the healthy, active senior who wants to use a lifetime of skills and experience to make a difference in our community through volunteering to the frail elder who requires assistance meeting the needs of daily life.

We have the capacity, the skills, the passion and the environment to provide affordable, accessible, and cost-effective services to older adults and their families, and adults with disabilities, keeping them as healthy as possible. We are innovative and adaptive in our programming – *creating programs that do not exist to meet needs that do*. In 2008, 7,470 people visited NSC and its five satellite sites 172,166 times.

AN AGING COMMUNITY

Seniors are the fastest growing segment of our population; in the coming decade, the number of persons 65 to 74 years old is expected to increase 88% in Snohomish County and 69% in King County. Of this increase, the fastest growing segment of the population is 85+.

More people are likely to “age in place” than ever before; some can expect to live in their homes after retiring for 30 years or longer. Adults ages 45–65 are increasingly finding themselves in the position of not only meeting their own needs, but also caring for their aging parents, in addition to caring for their children or grandchildren.

Increased longevity has created a dramatic rise in the number of elders living decades longer than the general life expectancy and is creating new expectations and demands for how seniors expect to age. Communities will need to provide more people with a greater range of programs and services than ever before, including multi-level caregiver support and opportunities for socialization to mitigate against the mental, emotional, and physical strain of these challenges.

NSC represents a strong effort to maintain high functioning of older persons, despite increasing prevalence of disabling conditions. Our services prevent and/or delay the need for more expensive medical and custodial care, which often is financed with public funds.

THINKING STRATEGICALLY

The current economic crisis combined with the changing demographics is causing NSC to rethink how and to whom we provide programs and services. Needs are growing just as our resources are shrinking, and we know we are not alone – other communities and agencies are facing some of these same challenges. The age tsunami is coming and will easily overwhelm the aging network as we know it today; to avoid this scenario, we need to unleash the resources and energy of the community. We have the responsibility to reach out beyond our current senior center membership, connect with the broader community to explore the role of a senior center in the community, and, in the process, uncover existing or emerging community needs and opportunities.

The goal of this Strategic Framework is to capture the knowledge from the community and develop strategies that are focused on tapping underutilized community resources, providing NSC with the tools to improve our responsiveness to community opportunities and needs and better utilize our resources through collaborations and partnerships.

All of us together have the opportunity to supply the energy needed to deal with what many are just defining as “a big looming problem”: *not enough resources for our elders*. We understand that ***now is the time*** to think strategically and collaboratively, constructively guiding our organization and our community through the emerging economy.

OUR METHODS: DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

In designing a Strategic Framework for the organization, NSC’s Strategy Team (community volunteers, board members, and staff)¹ used an “asset based community development” model as a foundation. Asset based community development draws on community strengths to build stronger, more sustainable communities for the future. In the summer of 2009, we gathered input from nearly 600 community stakeholders. The data gathering process involved

- A “community audit” of interviews with over 60 people key members of the community,
- Responses from 472 individuals through an electronic and print survey,
- A community gathering with attendance of 30, and
- Discussions with NSC’s Board and Staff of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that face NSC (known as a SWOT analysis).

The Board and Staff have prioritized emerging themes so that the 2010 budget can balance the realities of the economy and our funding with the opportunities we have identified.

The Board and Staff also took the opportunity to revisit the Vision and Mission of NSC in light of this community input. The new Vision and Mission reflect the strong voices we heard for inclusion, “giving back,” healthy aging, and general well-being.

The Goals and Objectives have emerged out of the stakeholder input we received and meetings with the Board and Staff. The Strategy Team has crafted these Goals and Objectives from a series of key themes, enriching the document with their own deep knowledge of and commitment to NSC.

Each of these Goals supports our realization of the Mission. While not all Goals or Objectives may receive full emphasis during the course of the next 18 months, they will all remain on our radar and will rise and fall in attention, depending on timing, available financial and human resources, and other internal and external factors. Many are intertwined – their realization will be accomplished as other Goals are achieved.

VISION

We envision a community where everyone leads full, healthy, and inspired lives.

MISSION

Northshore Senior Center promotes healthy aging and well-being in our community through programs, services, resources, and civic engagement.

¹ The Strategy Team for creating this Framework were:

Board members: Ron Cuddy, Geoff Ethelston, Gloria Campbell, Sharon McCain, Joan Appleby, Jacque Wallace

Community volunteer: Bob Mitchell

Staff members: Lee Harper, Jim Seeks, Judi Pirone

Consultant: Janna Rolland

Northshore Senior Center Strategic Framework
Vision, Mission, and Goals
January 2010 - June 2011



STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES JANUARY, 2010 - JUNE, 2011

GOAL: Keep the core of our programs, services and resources, while expanding or shifting programming to remain relevant to members now and down the road.

Objective 1

Continue very strong emphasis on seniors

Objective 2

Continue to serve as a place that the community gathers, centers its resources, engages socially, and catalyzes for action

Objective 3

Build NSC's ability to attract, serve, be responsive to and be enriched by the full diversity of the community

- Constituencies include low-income, immigrant and people of color

Objective 4

Continue to be nimble and responsive to the community

- Add evenings
- Consider programming for intergenerational audiences

Objective 5

Continue to combine forces and build strategic partnerships

GOAL: Secure financial resources to ensure the stability and sustainability of NSC.

Objective 1

Develop sustainable revenue streams

- Develop new revenue streams, ideally mission related. i.e. fee for service
- Pursue strategic partnerships

Objective 2

Leverage very strong support from members and participants for an operations levy

GOAL: Strengthen communication to educate the community and our own membership, volunteers and staff about all that NSC offers and how we do it.

Objective 1

Strengthen internal communication and education about what we do (for members, volunteers and staff)

- Build the organization's awareness and ownership of all of NSC (Board, staff, members)
 - Familiarity with full range of programming, services and resources
 - Equal ownership of all sites (not Bothell-centric)

Objective 2

Strengthen external communications

- Repackage what we do and sell it differently to different audiences
- Educate the community on who we are and what we do
- Continue to learn, in the process, what the community wants and needs (continuous feedback loop)
- Consider name change as a marketing and outreach tool and to better reflect what we do

GOAL: Shore up internal capacity to ensure that we are maximizing our assets, including staff, membership, volunteers and board members.

Objective 1

Enhance education with training and support for board, volunteers and staff

- Ensure a steady supply of leaders through leadership development and succession planning
- Spread ownership

Objective 2

Support staff and make jobs more sustainable

- Provide access to professional development and skills development opportunities
- Re-examine workload

GOAL: Contribute to and engage with the community, using the skills and strengths of seniors.

Objective 1

Maximize volunteer capacity to serve NSC

- Use a tool, like a skills database, that helps participants share their expertise and helps staff figure out the most appropriate skills for the task
- Tap into strengths and experiences

Objective 2

Build the civic engagement of our constituency so that they may enrich the community

- Build volunteer capacity and offer matching opportunities
- Use a tool, like a skills database, that provides a way to document and organize the skills, expertise and experience of potential volunteers

Objective 3

Advocate for seniors and building the strength of the community

- Use strategic partnerships and collaborations to further our objectives
- Elevate the voice of seniors locally and regionally with decision-makers around funding needs and resources required to support and strengthen our community