

PART I - FACE SHEET

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE		1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction														
Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to conform to the Corporation's eGrants System)																
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS): 10/18/12	3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE:	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:														
2b. APPLICATION ID: 13SR144440	4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY: 10/18/12	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER:														
5. APPLICATION INFORMATION																
LEGAL NAME: Volunteer Services of Carlton County, Inc. DUNS NUMBER: 612531905	NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Bernadine Atchison TELEPHONE NUMBER: (218) 879-9238 FAX NUMBER: INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: batchison@vscci.com															
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 1219 - 14th Street Suite D Cloquet MN 55720 - 3700 County: Carlton																
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 411598604	7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Non-Profit 7b. Community-Based Organization Local Affiliate of National Organization Volunteer Management Organization															
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE <input type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> AMENDMENT If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es): <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> A. AUGMENTATION B. BUDGET REVISION C. NO COST EXTENSION D. OTHER (specify below):	9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: Corporation for National and Community Service															
10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: 94.002 10b. TITLE: Retired and Senior Volunteer Program	11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: Aitkin-Carlton County RSVP 11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): MINNESOTA OPPORTUNITY #1: Aitkin and Carlton Counties of MN (all cities and townships).																
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 04/01/13 END DATE: 03/31/16	14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant <input type="text" value="MN 008"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="MN 008"/>															
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: 1	16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372															
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%; border: 1px solid black;">a. FEDERAL</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: right;">\$ 21,228.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black;">b. APPLICANT</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: right;">\$ 52,019.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black;">c. STATE</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: right;">\$ 29,540.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black;">d. LOCAL</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: right;">\$ 9,600.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black;">e. OTHER</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: right;">\$ 12,879.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black;">f. PROGRAM INCOME</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black;">g. TOTAL</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: right;">\$ 73,247.00</td> </tr> </table>	a. FEDERAL	\$ 21,228.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 52,019.00	c. STATE	\$ 29,540.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 9,600.00	e. OTHER	\$ 12,879.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 73,247.00	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
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g. TOTAL	\$ 73,247.00															
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.																
a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Jill T. Hatfield	b. TITLE:	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (218) 879-9238														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 10/18/12														

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Executive Summary

An estimated 441 unduplicated RSVP volunteers serving in the Aitkin-Carlton Co. RSVP, a program of Volunteer Services of Carlton County, Inc., will serve through a network of 73 volunteer stations.

Using the guidance provided by the Healthy Futures Focus Area, they will support seniors and disabled individuals in maintaining their independence and quality of life by providing transportation, food delivery, companionship, and respite for their caregivers. Significant outreach to veterans and their families will be incorporated throughout focus area activities. RSVP volunteers will also assist in meeting other community priorities by serving as mentors for at-risk youth, focusing particularly on service learning projects and supporting communities in disaster preparedness efforts. Sites such as area nonprofits who serve elderly and disabled, schools, food banks, adult day care centers, veteran's organizations, hospitals, will host RSVP volunteers. The primary focus area is Healthy Futures.

Program outcomes at the end of the three year grant include: 520 older adults, homebound and/or individuals with disabilities receiving transportation, food delivery and companionship services will report that they have increased social ties and perceived support, allowing them to remain at home, thus avoiding the expense of moving to an assisted living or long term care facility. 21 unduplicated caregivers receiving respite services will report that they are more engaged in social or recreational activities, due to respite services received. Emergency food delivery services provided by RSVP volunteers will result in 450 recipients reporting that they have a greater sense of food security.

School attendance will improve for 30 at-risk youth who participate in a mentor program. The CNCS federal investment of \$21,228 annually will be supplemented by \$52,019 in non-federal sources.

Strengthening Communities

Performance Measures Requirements for RSVP

Requirement 1: Minimum of 10 percent of the unduplicated RSVP volunteers must be in work plans

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that result in outcomes:

The Primary Focus Area for this project is Healthy Futures. RSVP volunteers will provide assistance with daily activities helping individuals and families who find life difficult because of age, disability or life circumstance. 18% or 81 RSVP volunteers serving at 7 sites are in a work plan that results in outcomes. They will be providing rides to medical appointments, personal business, shopping, etc.

Requirement 2: At least 25% of the unduplicated RSVP volunteers must be placed in assignments in the Primary Focus Area:

57% (254) of the unduplicated RSVP volunteers will be engaging in activities which will be covered under work plans in the projects primary focus area: Healthy Futures.

Requirement 3: No more than 30% of the unduplicated volunteers can be placed in the community priorities work plan:

30% (131) of the unduplicated RSVP volunteers will be working with area community leaders in meeting local needs. They will be serving at county fairs, historical societies, service clubs, congregate meal sites and thrift stores.

Requirement 4: Remainder of the unduplicated RSVP volunteers are placed in activities aligned with CNCS Agency-Wide or Complementary Program outputs:

Using guidance provided by the remainder focus areas, 13% (56) RSVP volunteers will be serving at

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sites providing Education and Disaster Services. They will primarily serve as mentors to at-risk youth and will be trained and assist in disaster service mitigation efforts.

Describe the community you serve. Provide persuasive evidence that community needs identified in the Primary Focus Area exist in the geographic service area and is currently unmet:

Aitkin and Carlton County RSVP (A-C RSVP) is located in northeastern rural Minnesota (MN). Aitkin County is less than a two hour drive north of Minneapolis on Hwy. 169; Aitkin County covers 1,822 square miles. Primarily rural, it averages 8.9 persons per square mile, which compares to the 66.6 average for Minnesota. It is organized into six towns and forty townships. According to the MN Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Census Bureau and the Northwest Area Foundation, 95.6% of its population of 16,202 is white. American Indian and Alaskan Native represent the largest minority group at 2.4% of the population. The Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging reports the median age for persons living in Aitkin County is 46.5 years, which makes it the "oldest" county in Minnesota. Older adults 65+ are 27.7% of the county's total population. With an unemployment rate of 6.7% (state average is 5.6%) and a poverty rate of 13.1% (state average is 11.5%), the county continues to struggle economically. Its primary industries are tourism, forest products and agriculture.

Also less than a two hour drive north of Minneapolis on I-35, Carlton County covers 861 square miles, representing 1% of the land in Minnesota. Organized into nine cities and twenty-one townships, it has a population of 35,455. Primarily rural, the county has 41.1 persons per square mile. 89.9% of the population is white with the remaining 10.1% being primarily American Indian (5.8%). Its largest city, Cloquet, has the fifth largest American Indian/Alaskan Native population in the State of

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Minnesota, estimated at 1,312 in 2011. Older adults 65+ are 15% of the county's total population. This percentage is slightly higher compared to the nation (13.3%). With an unemployment rate of 6.9% (state average is 5.6%) and a poverty rate of 10.8% (state average is 8.9%), the county continues to struggle economically. Manufacturing, education and healthcare are the county's primary industries.

It is projected that by 2030 one in four Minnesotans will be 65+. Additionally, Minnesota ranks high in life expectancy, exceeding the national average of 77 years. 89% of the Minnesotans aged 50 and older stated that they preferred to remain in their homes. A large number of those to be served through the Healthy Futures focus area are located in outlying rural areas, making traditional approaches to service delivery ineffective or sometimes next to impossible. A growing number of older adults cannot afford to pay for needed services and are not eligible for public assistance programs. Because of their inability to pay for and/or lack of availability of services, they go without needed assistance, which can spiral into complications that may result in more restrictive placement, such as a nursing home, which places undue pressure on public assistance programs, such as Medicaid, and the state budget overall. Minnesota spends 44% of its Medicaid long-term care dollars for older people and adults with physical disabilities (MN Department of Health; MN Demographic Center).

The 2009 County Gaps Analysis (surveys prepared by counties indicating capacity and gaps in services and housing needs to support older persons in MN) states that both Aitkin and/or Carlton Counties have limited transportation, respite (caregiver) and companionship services.

On average, in MN, home and community based services can be provided to three people for the cost of serving one person in a nursing home. MN state trends indicate that nursing homes are gradually evolving into places of transition from hospital to home. In 2011, MN was one of 13 states chosen to be part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services "Money Follows the Person

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Rebalancing Demonstration Program" which will improve community services and support people in their homes rather than institutions. Minnesota's Live Well at Home Program (LWAH), a risk screening and risk mitigation planning tool for those older adults who wish to remain at home, is playing a major role in helping to manage key risk factors while sustaining much more preferable and cost effective supports for older people in order to enable them to live safely at home (MN Department of Health, MN Demographic Center). When combined, these factors indicate a need for services which will allow seniors and/or disabled to remain safely at home, preserving their personal independence, ensuring life quality, while minimizing impact on personal and public financial resources.

During the grant period, A-C RSVP will primarily focus on meeting the assisted transportation, caregiver respite and counseling, companionship, and food delivery services needs identified in Aitkin and Carlton County.

Describe plans and infrastructure to manage RSVP volunteers and their stations as a highly effective means to addressing the identified community needs in the Primary Focus Area:

Host agency, VSCCI, has over 25 years of experience managing volunteers; the A-C RSVP has been a signature program of VSCCI for most of this time. A-C RSVP will continue to be provided the support and guidance that such experience affords. Through regular contact with stations, the program will guarantee volunteers serving at their respective sites will engage in activities supporting the Healthy Futures of older adults and individuals with disabilities. More importantly, they will be able to see firsthand the impact that their direct services have on those to whom they provide transportation, companionship, respite and emergency food delivery. RSVP Director, together with station

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supervisors, will guarantee that volunteer's contributions are recognized by hosting annual recognition events.

Describe service activities in the Primary Focus Area that lead to National Performance Measure outputs or outcomes:

Transportation program will be identified as an output/outcome-based work plan. Its planned 81 unduplicated volunteers will serve at 8 sites, providing much needed transportation to older adults and individuals with disabilities. By year 3 of the grant, 254 individuals (139 older adults and 115 individuals with disabilities) will be provided 6,576 one-way rides.

Three other activities are planned under the Healthy Futures primary focus area. Caregivers will be provided a much needed break through respite programs at three sites. RSVP volunteers will sit with their loved ones while they engage in such activities as running errands and participating in support groups. In addition, one RSVP station operates a weekly RSVP volunteer-based group respite program called DayBreak, which allows caregivers to drop off their loved ones at a site where they can socialize and participate in activities. By year three, 9 RSVP volunteers will provide 4,500 hours of respite to 25 unduplicated caregivers. Companionship services will be provided to 75 older adults and/or individuals with disabilities by mobilizing 49 RSVP volunteers serving at 17 sites. These RSVP volunteers will regularly visit homebound, older adult and individuals with disabilities. Volunteers may share musical talents, play games, read papers and engage in meaningful conversations.

Providing emergency food support to an estimated 150 older adults and individuals with disabilities is also planned. RSVP volunteers will be responsible for overall operations at four of the 7 sites hosting volunteers. Their primary responsibilities include collecting, sorting, stocking and distributing food to

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households who are at or below the 150% of the Federal Poverty guidelines.

Connect the three major elements in the Primary Focus Area so that the service activities address the need and result in the anticipated outputs and/or outcomes. Include current and planned significant activities in service to veterans and military families:

Services which will accommodate the aging population and those with disabilities with desires to maintain personal independence and remain at home are woven throughout the work plans in the Healthy Futures primary focus area. Transportation, respite, companionship and emergency food support are critical to meeting these needs. A cadre of 254 (57%) RSVP volunteers will meet these needs. Their work sites are long-standing nonprofit sustainable organizations which have outstanding reputations for providing the services planned.

A-C RSVP and its host agency VSCCI, has a sincere appreciation for the sacrifices and contributions made by our military, veterans and their families. Providing support to them through service activities will be central to the successful operations of the RSVP program. Both A-C RSVP and VSCCI have nurtured partnerships with local veterans' organizations, such as service clubs (ex.; VFW, American Legion) and Disabled American Veterans. In addition, they work closely with the county Veteran's Service Officers. RSVP sites are encouraged to maintain these relationships. They serve as a basis to receive referrals of veterans and their families' needs but also a source of potential volunteers. Sponsoring organization, VSCCI, is also a member of the MN Military Family Care Initiative Team.

Recruitment and Development

Describe plan and infrastructure to create high quality volunteer assignments with opportunities such as sharing volunteers' experiences, abilities, and skills to improve their communities and themselves

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through service in their communities:

Volunteers are identified who are likely to have the skills, interests and motivations that would entice them to provide service to one of our partnering stations. Each RSVP volunteer is carefully matched with an opportunity which will best fit their knowledge, skills, abilities and interests, thus ensuring a positive experience for the volunteer and successful contributions to community needs at volunteer stations. Prospective RSVP volunteers complete an application which lists over 60 different interest areas. A comprehensive interview process allows our RSVP Director to determine if the volunteer would prefer to provide the same services he/she developed over a lifetime of employment or if they would like to embark on a new adventure. An intake interview is held between the prospective RSVP volunteer and RSVP Director during which time volunteers are provided an overview of the RSVP program, its history, purpose and operation. Volunteer interests are assessed and matched with possible volunteer needs as identified by RSVP stations. Once their background check is cleared, arrangements are made with the volunteer station to place the RSVP volunteer. Stations interview prospective volunteers and, if placed, they are provided with clear job descriptions and are familiarized with station policies and procedures, particularly safety policies. Volunteers are encouraged to contact the RSVP Director if they would like to pursue additional opportunities. Volunteers are surveyed after the first few days of service to determine if they are happy with their position and/or if adjustments need to be made to the volunteer site, hours or activities.

The A-C RSVP program strives to assure a high quality experience for volunteers that offers opportunities such as building new skills, developing leadership, reflecting on the meaning of service to the community, and enhancing the quality of their own lives. We continue to focus on training station supervisors to utilize RSVP volunteers to mobilize more volunteers.

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Describe plan and infrastructure to ensure RSVP volunteers receive the training needed to be effective in their assignments:

Volunteers are critical to service delivery and every effort is made to ensure that they are trained, equipped and able to successfully accomplish their respective volunteer opportunity. All volunteers are insured and regularly screened and background checked. RSVP Director is responsible for providing RSVP Policy and Procedures Orientation to all RSVP volunteers. In addition, the Director provides regular updates on program changes and other continuing education opportunities. Attendance at RSVP training is tracked electronically via RSVP Reporter. Volunteers are offered free trainings on a regular basis in order to sharpen current skills or learn new ones. We find most Baby Boomer volunteers would like to try something new, would like to have flexibility in their assignment that would not require a set schedule and would fulfill a critical need in our communities. Stations are responsible to provide clear job descriptions and training in their respective procedures. Through the use of orientation, regular training, and clear job descriptions volunteers understand their roles in providing needed services. Volunteers are encouraged to provide feedback regarding their job. All volunteers are surveyed annually to determine if they are satisfied with their volunteer experience. Responsibilities are recorded in both RSVP Station and Volunteer Handbooks.

Describe plan and infrastructure to recruit volunteer pool reflective of the demographics of the geographic communities served. As applicable include, individuals of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientation and degrees of English language proficiency; veterans and military family members as RSVP volunteers; and RSVP volunteers with disabilities included age-related:

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VSCCI embraces the belief that ethnic, cultural and social differences should be respected and celebrated. The program's primary recruitment strategy is to identify the right volunteer for the right position who is available at the right time and place. This strategy has proven successful in the 25 years of VSCCI's operation. Currently there are 2,647 active registered volunteers of all ages of whom 37% are RSVP eligible. Volunteer pool is reflective of the community served. Carefully crafted recruitment messages are delivered to prospective volunteers. The RSVP Director utilizes school district newsletters and publications, newspapers, radio, and local television to announce volunteer opportunities and recruit volunteers. The program is designed to provide volunteers with a meaningful experience, while meeting the needs of the participating RSVP station. The Executive Director and RSVP Director speak to many groups and attend networking meetings within the counties to educate people about the program, invite organizations to become a station, and recruit volunteers. RSVP also recruits at health fairs, county fairs, and senior expos. Outreach efforts will continue with Veterans service groups and Fond du Lac Reservation to identify possible volunteer opportunities and/or volunteer experiences. The Elder Advocate for the Reservation is a member of the Carlton County Council on Aging. VSCCI, including the RSVP Program, provides an informational booth at the Fond du Lac Reservation Elder Health Fair annually. The relationship of the local Disabled American Veterans Chapter and VSCCI has been an excellent forum for volunteer recruitment and meeting the needs of veterans in our service area. Current RSVP program has the highest number of Native American RSVP volunteers in the state. RSVP Program Director, Bernadine Atchison, has over twenty-six years of experience working with indigenous peoples, including serving as Cultural Heritage Director for the Kenaitze Indian Tribe in Alaska.

Volunteers complete applications and are screened in an effort to achieve a proper fit between the

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prospective volunteer's skills, strengths and interests and the needs of the RSVP station. This process has proven an excellent tool to accommodate all volunteers regardless of their physical and/or mental challenges. Volunteers have the opportunity to assess their placement and move on to new roles and challenges when additional interests are expressed. By using clear and concise volunteer position descriptions and other written and verbal tools, volunteers understand the tasks they are expected to perform and the positive impact or benefits that their job will have on their communities.

Describe plan and infrastructure to retain and recognize the RSVP volunteers:

By using clear and concise volunteer position descriptions and other written and verbal tools, volunteers understand the tasks they are expected to perform and the positive impact or benefits that their job will have on their communities. Volunteers benefit from the social contacts at their work site and strong connections to their community. They also benefit from new relationships that develop as part of their volunteer experience. The RSVP program routinely places volunteers in "volunteer management" roles. These volunteer managers provide the direct and real time supervision, coaching, support and feedback to other volunteers at their respective RSVP stations. They are advocates for the RSVP program and are instrumental in recruiting additional RSVP volunteers. Emphasizing this approach significantly reduces the amount of time expended by RSVP staff and volunteer station staff on recruiting and training other volunteers. All RSVP volunteers receive a quarterly newsletter with program information, updates and volunteer opportunities. Active volunteers also receive a personal invitation to an annual volunteer recognition event, which includes a presentation of Presidential Volunteer Service Awards. Mileage reimbursement is provided for all assignments, upon request of the volunteer. \$10,480 per year is divided into four quarters. Volunteers submit their miles on a quarterly basis; these miles are divided into the quarterly

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disbursement to determine a per mile rate, with a maximum of \$150 per quarter in reimbursement.

All active volunteers receive a birthday card signed with a personal message by all VSCCI staff members.

Program Management

Describe plan and infrastructure to ensure management of volunteer stations in compliance with RSVP program regulations and applicable laws:

RSVP Director will provide stations, through meetings and written materials, a clear understanding of the RSVP program, Senior Corps, policies and procedures, and the projects to be accomplished. Support will be provided to stations in order that they may meet accessibility and safety criteria. Each site will know their roles and responsibilities in the management of RSVP volunteers. With the support of RSVP staff, they will intrinsically understand the value of nurturing a richly diverse volunteer pool to meet the community needs identified. Support will also be provided to stations in order that they regularly train volunteers to ensure that they have the knowledge, skills and disposition needed to be successful. Training is delivered through the use of printed media, regular volunteer meetings at stations and at sessions sponsored by outside organizations. The RSVP Director and coordinators are in regular contact with and accessible to both station managers and individual volunteers to document successful experiences, problem-solve, provide technical assistance and update station contracts. A revised Station Handbook was published in 2006 and is used extensively by stations to assist in supervising and developing volunteers. The Handbook is scheduled for revision in the spring 2013. Program staff are members of the Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration (MAVA), which enables them to better support stations. Program Director and staff will ensure that all Senior Corps policy and procedures are followed and implemented in a timely, effective manner.

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Describe plan and infrastructure to develop capacity to recruit and manage volunteer stations that address specified unmet community needs outside the Primary Focus Area:

The project will allocate resources to meeting the mentoring needs of at-risk youth and the training, preparation and mitigation of local disasters which are outside our Healthy Futures primary focus area. The RSVP project has demonstrated success in prior years in operating work plans within these two areas and it was a sound viable move to maintain these workplans.

A-C RSVP has been successful in providing opportunities for youth and students to get involved with intergenerational service learning projects in our communities. In project year 2011, 80% of students polled indicated that they feel like they have a purpose in life as a result of the service learning projects. They stated that they think of themselves more positively. They also indicated that they would like to continue serving their community by doing other projects. 40 % of youth demonstrated improved social skills, improved academic performance and were interested in taking part in future tutoring/mentoring opportunities.

On June 20, 2012, RSVP volunteers were able to apply the knowledge and skills they garnered from their disaster preparedness training when a devastating 500 year flood hit the project service area impacting many residents in Aitkin and Carlton Counties. Immediately, Volunteer Services of Carlton County, Inc. (VSCCI) initiated emergency procedures. Many of the flood victims were elderly and/or disabled. Volunteers, including RSVP volunteers, were instrumental in assisting with flood recovery efforts, including assisting at emergency shelters, flood relief centers and private residences. They continue to serve on the Carlton County Flood Relief Fund Community Advisory Committee and are

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part of the county and state long term recovery efforts.

The RSVP program will continue to meet these community needs outside our primary focus area with the same level of professionalism and accuracy as it has in the past.

Describe plan and infrastructure to responsibly graduate volunteer stations to meet changing community needs and minimize disruptions to current volunteers where possible:

In light of changing community needs and the new Senior Corps program guidance, the A-C RSVP program recognizes that some current stations may not meet the criteria to remain an active part of the RSVP program. A written procedure will be developed which will systematically, with the least disruption, transition these stations to inactive status. Host organization, VSCCI, is also a volunteer center which supports volunteers of all ages. Stations scheduled for graduation will be given the opportunity to remain part of the VSCCI organization, even though they will no longer be participating in the RSVP program. The procedure will also address the transferring of RSVP volunteers who might be affected by graduating stations. Volunteers currently serving at these sites will have the opportunity to be placed at an alternative site with a new volunteer opportunity. Both stations and volunteers will be sent letters from the RSVP Program Director outlining the policy changes and the revised focus for RSVP. The realignment process will be explained and the value of the volunteer's past contributions will be emphasized, with the hope that they will want to continue with the RSVP program in a capacity in line with the revised focus areas.

Describe plan and infrastructure to assure National Performance Measure outcomes and outputs are measured and collected:

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Each work plan is systematically reviewed with participating stations. Benchmarks for measuring progress are determined. Every effort is made to identify data collection instruments which are currently in place or can be implemented with minimal effort. Consistency and accuracy of both output and outcome data is stressed. All stations will understand that data collection and analysis are as important as providing services. Stations will then be able to analyze data and provide a reputable report to the RSVP Director. Results from the data analysis will be used to determine the strengths and weaknesses of meeting the community needs and desired respective outcomes. Adjustments can be made to station operations in order to emphasize those actions which meet program expectations or to correct those actions that have not worked as well. Surveys will be the primary instrument utilized.

Host organization, Volunteer Services of Carlton County, Inc. (VSCCI), provides an annual survey to all volunteers and station supervisors. Clients are surveyed on a monthly basis at a minimum. The Board of Directors receives feedback from surveys. Program evaluations and surveys are administered by email whenever possible. A survey of RSVP volunteers was completed in 2011. 7% of RSVP volunteers serving responded. Key results included the following: 95% of volunteers said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their current volunteer assignments; 97% of volunteers stated that they were satisfied with the safety and accessibility of their volunteer site. Volunteers were surveyed in September of 2012; results of the survey are not yet available.

Describe plan and infrastructure to manage project resources, both financial and in-kind, to ensure accountability and efficient and effective use of available resources:

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Project resources, both financial and in-kind, are managed in the Quickbooks financial software program. Volunteer timesheets are signed by the volunteer, station manager and the RSVP Program Director. Executive Director approves all timesheets and accounts payable for proper coding and payment. Accounting services are provided by Eagle Accounting. Checks under the amount of \$500 require one signature and are signed by the Executive Director or other authorized official; checks over \$500 require two signatures. The accounting firm of Licari, Larsen and Company, Ltd. has been retained for annual agency audits.

Organizational Capability

Describe organization's capability to operate the RSVP project with respect to plans and infrastructure that provide sound programmatic and fiscal oversight, day-to-day operational support, data collection and clearly defined internal policies:

Daily program operations are overseen by a full-time RSVP Director. Program has been in compliance with all RSVP fiscal, programmatic, budgetary and administrative functions as stated in the federal regulations. The RSVP Director routinely utilizes the tools available on the Senior Corps website to ensure that resources are allocated to accomplish tasks as outlined on work plans.

Responsibilities of RSVP Director, stations and volunteers are clearly defined in the Station and Volunteer Handbooks. All volunteer and client data are tracked utilizing the Elderberry Database, Volunteer Reporter and Microsoft Office software systems. These systems are used to track volunteer intake information, volunteer placement, experience, mileage reimbursement, number of volunteer hours. Volunteer stations, supervisors, and accomplishment data are also managed through this software. All data is kept confidential. VSCCI's Executive Director provides personnel management for the entire staff, with input from the Board of Directors, as needed. VSCCI provides all staff with a

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Personnel Policy and the Executive Director ensures adherence to the policy. The Personnel Policy clearly defines roles for staff and administrators. VSCCI staff must submit receipts for all reimbursable expenses, including meals and travel. Travel must be authorized by the Executive Director.

Describe organization's capability to operate the RSVP project with respect to clearly defined staff positions, including how these positions will be sustained and identification of current staff assigned to the project:

Volunteer Services of Carlton County, Inc. (VSCCI) Executive Director, Jill Hatfield, has over ten years of experience with the RSVP Program, first as its Program Director, then as the Executive Director for the past nine years. Ms. Hatfield is an occupational therapist, with a strong background in the gerontology field and impact-based programming. She has over twenty-two years of managerial experience, which includes personnel, accounts receivable and accounts payable management. Recently promoted to the position of RSVP Program Director, Bernadine Atchison has five years of experience serving as the Aitkin-Carlton County RSVP Program Coordinator. Prior to this position, she had over ten years of experience coordinating and managing volunteers.

Accomplishments include coordinating the Peace and Dignity Journeys event, a 15,000 mile relay between Alaska and Mexico. Ms. Atchison has over twenty-six years of experience working with indigenous peoples, including serving as Cultural Heritage Director for the Kenaitze Indian Tribe in Alaska. VSCCI employs three Program Coordinators agency-wide. The coordinators work with all data entry for Aitkin and Carlton Counties and provide support to the RSVP Program Director for program management. Positions are funded through RSVP grant, Minnesota Board on Aging, foundations and private donations.

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Describe organization's capability to operate the RSVP project with respect to organization's track record in the Primary Focus Area, senior service, managing volunteers and in measuring performance:

A-C RSVP program has chosen to recognize the value and need to provide services to older adults, homebound and individuals with disabilities as outlined in the Healthy Futures focus areas. Its host organization, Volunteer Services of Carlton County, Inc. (VSCCI), has 25 years experience providing services to these populations. Its mission is to "coordinate volunteers to help individuals and families who find life difficult because of age, disability or life circumstance". There are five programs currently under the umbrella of this small northern Minnesota nonprofit; DayBreak-In-Home and Group Respite; Aitkin - Carlton County RSVP Program; Faith in Action-Communities Called to Care (provides chore, transportation, companionship, forms assistance and information and referral services); My Own Home (a "one-stop" program of service delivery designed to help members remain safely in their homes) and The Family Memory Care Program (a spousal support program for those caring for spouses with memory issues). Its willingness to respond to the changing needs of those they serve has made it a leader in older adults, disabled and homebound service delivery. RSVP is able to capitalize on this wealth of experience by receiving ongoing support from fellow VSCCI colleagues.

Describe organization's capability to operate the RSVP project with respect to demonstrating strong organizational infrastructure including: (1) Tangible assets such as facilities, equipment, and supplies; (2) Governance structure and operations, such as internal policies, purchasing procedures, and personnel management; (3) Role of a community participation group, such as an RSVP Advisory Council, to ensure input from the community; and (4) The existence of robust management systems

Narratives

and past experience managing federal grant funds:

Tangible Assets:

Administrative and programmatic functions for all programs, including the RSVP project, are performed at a fully equipped, handicapped accessible office. VSCCI also provides staff with state-of-the-art computer systems and programs.

Governance structure and operations:

VSCCI's Executive Director provides personnel management for the entire staff, with input from the Board of Directors, as needed. VSCCI provides all staff with a Personnel Policy and the Executive Director ensures adherence to the policy. The Personnel Policy clearly defines roles for staff and administrators. VSCCI staff must submit receipts for all reimbursable expenses, including meals and travel. Travel must be authorized by the Executive Director.

VSCCI updated and revised their agency "Financial Procedure Manual" and "Employee Travel and Other Expense Reimbursement Policy" in 2010. Regular background checks are completed on staff and volunteers. Insurance coverage includes: a General Liability and Accident Insurance Policy (\$1,500,000/\$3,000,000); CIMA Volunteer Insurance Policy; Worker's Compensation Insurance; Professional Liability Insurance (\$1,500,000/\$3,000,000) for employees and volunteers; Director's and Officer's Policy (\$1,000,000); and Employee Fidelity Bonds. Operations are overseen by a 7-person Board of Directors.

Narratives

Role of Community:

Cornerstone to VSCCI's longevity and effective operations has been its ability to nurture and sustain partnerships with area organizations. A nine member RSVP Advisory Council, comprised of community members from both Aitkin and Carlton Counties, provides overall guidance and support to the program. Council members also serve as program ambassadors, sharing program information to the community at large. The A-C RSVP project will capitalize on these strengths to identify stations which will satisfy the needs identified in the Healthy Futures primary focus area.

RSVP and its host organization, VSCCI, are often sought as partners in community problem solving and strategic planning for the future. Current partnerships and collaborations exist with over 200 organizations, including: Carlton and Aitkin County Public Health and Human Services, Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging (MinnesotaHelp), Minnesota Senior Health Options (MSHO), Carlton County Council on Aging, Triad (a national group which forms a partnership between law enforcement and older adults), County Veteran's Service Officers, Veterans organizations and the United Way. A partnership with the Fond du Lac Elder Advocate has increased outreach to the Native American community.

Existence of robust management systems and past federal grant management experience:

RSVP host organization, VSCCI, headquartered in Cloquet, is a private non-profit, 501c3 organization managing programs in Carlton, Aitkin and South St. Louis counties. Primarily grant funded, the organization routinely manages federal, state, and foundation grants. Funding sources include:

Narratives

ARDC - Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging, Corporation for National & Community Service, Minnesota Board on Aging, Minnesota Department of Human Services, State of Minnesota, Carlton County, Aitkin County, United Way, and private donations. VSCCI staff is caring and professional, creating a dynamic work environment where collaboration is routine and response to community needs are timely.

Describe organization's capability to operate the RSVP project with respect to demonstrating how organization will adequately sustain the proposed non-federal share:

The successful longevity of VSCCI (over 25 years) and A-C RSVP (nearly 25 years) operations is evidence that the programs are managed in a fiscally responsible manner. Operations will continue, utilizing the lessons learned over the years and the partnerships and good will built through the efforts of those that have served the programs. Relationships with current non-federal funders, such as the Aitkin and Carlton Counties, the Minnesota Board on Aging and the Minnesota Department of Human Services will continue to be nurtured. Additional non-federal funders will be sought in order that the program will maintain consistent service levels and accomplish workplan objectives. VSCCI prepared a comprehensive Sustainability Plan for the CCC program in 2009. VSCCI, in early 2011, completed a series of Strategic Planning Meetings with its Board of Directors and staff. These meetings helped to lay the groundwork for the future of the organization. RSVP Director participated in these meetings.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)