PROCTOR, MINNESOTA

The City of Proctor, population 2,853 is located in northeastern Minnesota, approximately 10 miles from downtown Duluth. The Proctor school district is comprised of several small towns and rural townships bringing the total population to nearly 12,608. The focus of their intergenerational work started in 2009 through the Age to age program, known locally as G3 (Gathering Generations for Greatness). After a series of public meetings and a visioning process, the leadership team, comprised of elders, adults, and teens decided that community cohesion was the area the group wanted their work to bolster.

They have taken a two-pronged approach to community cohesion: community gatherings and the renovation of a community park as an intergenerational gathering place. G3 provides community gatherings at which people of all ages come to meet and reconnect with each other and to have fun together. Events are designed to meet the need shared interest of each generation and to make each generation the “expert” in some activity.

G3 has also undertaken the redesign of an unused city park to provide a public space in which community can gather causally or in formal settings. The new design will have spaces for causal meeting, conversation, children’ play and will be welcoming and accessible for all ages. This space located next to the community center, will provide on-going, sustainable opportunities for building community cohesion.

Proctor, Minnesota is a community to watch. They are off to a phenomenal start in building a strong, healthy intentional intergenerational community and their thoughtful planning process engaging community members of all ages is sure to continue to result in positive outcomes for all.