Low Cost/No Cost Solutions to Create Age-Friendly Communities

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An Aging America

In 2011, the first of the Baby Boomers reached age 65.

By 2030, 1 in 5 Americans (over 70 million) will be over 65.
Aging in Place

The ability to remain in a community as they age, without having to move to get care and/or housing.

86% of adults over 45 strongly prefer to age in place; 90% of those over 60 plan to stay where they are for the next 5 to 10 years.

“Place” is the community and neighborhood – not just the dwelling.

Planning for all—across the lifespan—creates a sustainable community.
An Aging America

Top challenges for older Americans:

- Finance
- Transportation
- Housing
- Health

( ICMA, Maturing of America Survey, 2011 )

Challenges for governments and service agencies:

- Service delivery difficult in areas with large, dispersed client populations
- Changing housing preferences
- More people need services while public resources have often decreased
Livability For All Ages...What You Can Do

- Affordable Accessible Housing
- Transportation Options and Access
- Social Engagement
- Community Based Alternatives
- Integrated Planning
- Zoning and Building Codes
Proactive, Integrated Planning

• Creating an age friendly community:
  – Begins with a good look at the needs and assets of all ages and interests.
  – Includes integrated financial and physical planning done through the lens of the entire community

• Rancho Cucamonga, CA --Healthy RC
  – A financially and organizationally viable program; responsibility is in the City Manager’s Office; activities are integrated into existing strategic & organizational work plans and budget cycles.
Proactive, Integrated Planning

Takeaway Action: Conduct an environmental scan using existing data to understand the current landscape of aging in your community.
Land Use—Zoning & Building Codes

- Effective tools for removing barriers to, and supporting, aging in place
- Affect where people live, the condition and cost of housing, and neighborhood and pedestrian safety

**Philadelphia, PA—Age Friendly Philadelphia**

- Modernized zoning code in 2012 for the first time in four decades. The Zoning Code Commission (ZCC) added (among others) accessory dwelling units, visit-ability, adult day care, long-term care facilities, and parking requirements for senior housing.
Land Use—Zoning & Building Codes

Takeaway Action: *Review your current land use policies—are they age friendly? Chose one to change.*
Transportation—Access & Mobility

• Walkability
  – Access to goods and services
  – Well maintained sidewalks
  – Safe and secure

• Transit access & availability

• Complete Streets
  – Streets for everyone
  – Designed enable safe access for all users at all ages

http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/ppi/liv-com/2009-12-streets.pdf
Pedestrian Safety—Speed Kills

• A pedestrian hit at 40 mph has an 85% chance of being killed.

• At 20 mph the fatality rate is only 5%

• **Sonoma County Vulnerable User Ordinance**

Transportation—Access & Mobility

• Takeaway Action: *Investigate creative ways to reduce expensive Para-transit use.*
  – Non-profit transportation programs
    • ITN America
    • Surprise AZ Northwest Valley Connect
  – Incentives to ride buses & subways
    • Washington, DC
Housing: Affordable, Accessible, Maintained & Modified

• Older adults need safe, accessible and affordable homes to grow old in their current homes and communities.

• Local governments make this desire a reality through zoning, land use policies, initiatives and partnerships.
Housing: Affordable, Accessible, Maintained & Modified

- **San Mateo, CA**—HIP Housing
- **Santa Cruz, CA**—Accessory Apartments
- **Loudoun County, VA**— Home Repair Program for the Elderly and Disabled
Housing: Affordable, Accessible, Maintained & Modified

Takeaway Action: *Review and analyze housing policies that promote aging in place.*

– Do you have subdivision and zoning plans and building codes that encourage development of a range of housing types and universal design features that promote housing for a lifetime?
Social Engagement

• Lack of social interaction and civic engagement is a barrier to aging in place.

• Local governments are pressed to develop service delivery mechanisms to connect older adults with their peers and the community, to provide relevant activities and services, and to leverage their talents.

  – Johnson County, KS—CHAMPSS Choosing Healthy Appetizing Meal Plan Solutions for Seniors
Social Engagement

Takeaway Action: *Investigate how to engage older adults and prototype senior service delivery mechanisms for the future:*

– Use of existing non-traditional space, such as commercial and retail space and school facilities, for programs and events.

– Virtual senior center models such as “Senior Center Without Walls” Oakland, California Chicago.
Grassroots Alternatives—Resources for Local Governments

- **Villages** (geographic or neighborhood membership organizations), **NORCs** (Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities), and **Community Volunteer Service Organizations**
  - Help their members to “age in place”
  - Can be a significant resource for local governments meeting the needs of the growing number of older adults, providing services and saving public dollars.
Grassroots Alternatives—Resources for Local Governments

Takeaway Action: *Is there a Village organization in your community?*

*If Yes*—open a dialogue to see how you can provide support.

*If No*—investigate with staff how to encourage a grassroots membership organization.
Discussion

• What Are You Doing to Create an Age Friendly Community?

• Solutions? Ideas?
Questions/Comments?

Additional Information...
Resources

• **ICMA**—Center for Sustainable Communities
• **AARP**—Education and Outreach and Livable Communities divisions and the Public Policy Institute (PPI)
• **JustPartners, Inc.**— Sustainable Communities for All Ages – Viable Futures Toolkit #1. and Community Planning for Boomers – Viable Futures Toolkit #2.
• **Center for Civic Partnerships** — *Aging Well in Communities* and an *Aging Well Toolkit, Healthy Aging Series, and Healthy California Cities and Communities*