

Dakota County Communities for a Lifetime Initiative

What Cities and Communities Can Do to Create Age-Friendly Cities

Issues	Key Challenges	Action Steps	Potential Partners
Housing	Affordable housing options are limited, forcing some people to leave their community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage development of a full range of housing options (rental apts., condos, single level units, independent and assisted living). Offer tax incentives for new affordable housing for older adults or mixed-age. Support projects funded through HUD Section 202 housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Housing developers</i> <i>Cities</i> <i>Trade groups</i> <i>Dakota County Community Development Agency</i> <i>Nonprofits</i>
	Home and building design is tailored to narrow range of physical abilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute home modification and repair programs. Encourage universal design, “visitability” in new housing. 	
	Suburban housing, services and transit are typically not mixed or well-coordinated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): housing with walkable streets, transit options, and easy access to goods and services. Create partnerships with housing and service providers. 	
Planning, Zoning, and Land Use	Land use and transportation planning affect how people and goods move from place to place.	Integrate land use (housing, commercial and retail uses, and public services) and transportation planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Cities</i> <i>Housing developers</i> <i>Transportation providers</i> <i>Cities</i> <i>Residents</i> <i>Community leaders</i> <i>Developers</i>
	Lack of public support for community design that supports aging in place/community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Boomers/older adults in a planning process Conduct focus groups that include Boomers/older adults. 	
	Zoning regulations discourage a broad range of age-appropriate housing options.	Update zoning codes to encourage a range of housing options, including accessory dwelling units.	
Outdoor Spaces	Pedestrian crossings are often inadequate and unsafe; sidewalks in many communities are nonexistent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve pedestrian crossings by providing adequate crossing times, non-slip markings, visual audio cues, etc. Implement a sidewalk system in key areas (near dense housing, downtown) that is well-maintained, free of obstructions, and with curb cuts. Increase green spaces and outdoor seating to make more welcoming to older adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Cities</i> <i>Counties</i> <i>Businesses</i>

Transportation	Many older drivers experience specific difficulties related to the driving environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve signage and road design. • Provide safety programs and driving refresher courses (ex. Car Fit). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Transportation providers</i> • <i>Cities</i> • <i>Counties</i> • <i>Community education</i> • <i>Libraries</i> • <i>Residents</i> • <i>Businesses</i>
	Customer-oriented community transportation options are lacking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create more transit options that are flexible and responsive. • Support volunteer driver programs. • Support a shared shuttle or circulator bus. 	
	Road design makes walking, biking difficult.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use walkability audits to identify and prioritize pedestrian improvements. • Implement Complete Streets design. 	
Health and Supportive Services	Community information on available services is dispersed across agencies and providers. People aren't aware of what is available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote services such as Senior LinkAge Line/One Stop, www.MinnesotaHelp.info, DARTS hotline • Create a directory of information (in print and online) that provides access to local service providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Health care providers</i> • <i>Home care providers</i> • <i>Nonprofits</i> • <i>Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging (MAAA)</i> • <i>Businesses</i>
	Home-based services are often disjointed (for ex., medical and homecare).	Encourage providers to integrate home-based services.	
	Lack of transportation to hospitals, doctors' offices affects access to health care.	Improve access to medical transportation.	
Cultures and Lifelong Learning	Few arts and cultural programs are offered to older adults.	Provide opportunities for intergenerational learning around arts and cultural activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cities</i> • <i>Community education</i> • <i>Libraries</i> • <i>Nonprofits</i> • <i>Residents</i>
	Few opportunities for older adults to stay up-to-date on technology.	Increase technology trainings (ex., classes pairing older adults and youth).	
Strengthen Neighborhoods and Public Safety	Connections and safety could be improved in some neighborhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Neighborhood Watch programs. • Create Neighborhood Networks to strengthen connections and support. • Conduct safety audits and make improvements as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local law enforcement</i> • <i>Cities</i> • <i>Community education</i> • <i>Residents</i>
Civic Engagement Opportunities	Civic engagement options are limited in many communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more options to engage older adults as assets. • Enhance volunteer recruitment and coordination activities. • Work through community education and other programs to link older adults and youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cities</i> • <i>Community education</i> • <i>Libraries</i> • <i>Nonprofits</i> • <i>Residents</i>

*Adapted from: - A Blueprint for Action: Developing a Livable Community for All Ages
- World Health Organization, Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities
- AARP, Aging in Place: A State Survey of Livability Policies and Practices

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