### Dakota County Communities for a Lifetime Initiative

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

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<th>Issues</th>
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<th>Action Steps, Goals, Recommendations</th>
<th>Potential Partners</th>
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<td><strong>Housing</strong></td>
<td>Affordable housing options are limited, forcing some people to leave their community. Too many people are paying &gt; 30% of their income for housing, especially renters (58% of Dakota C. renters).</td>
<td>• 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.</td>
<td>• Housing developers • Cities • Trade groups • Dakota County Community Development Agency • Nonprofits</td>
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<td>Home and building design is tailored to narrow range of physical abilities, when most people want to “age in place” and in their community.</td>
<td>• Institute home modification and repair programs and loan fund. • Encourage and incentivize universal design, “visit-ability” in new housing. • Enact Accessory Dwelling Unit policy.</td>
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<td>Suburban housing, services and transit are typically not mixed or well-coordinated.</td>
<td>• 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.</td>
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<td><strong>Planning, Zoning, and Land Use</strong></td>
<td>Land use and transportation planning affect how people and goods move from place to place.</td>
<td>Integrate mixed land use (housing, commercial and retail uses, and public services) to create more housing options, walkability, and shorten distances.</td>
<td>• Cities • Housing developers • Transportation providers</td>
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<td>Lack of public support for community design that supports aging in place/community.</td>
<td>• Engage older adults/boomers in the planning process. • Conduct focus groups that include Boomers/older adults.</td>
<td>• Cities • Residents • Community leaders • Developers</td>
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<td>Zoning regulations discourage a broad range of age-appropriate housing options.</td>
<td>Update zoning codes to encourage a range of housing options, including accessory dwelling units.</td>
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<td><strong>Outdoor Spaces, Parks</strong></td>
<td>Pedestrian crossings are often inadequate and unsafe; sidewalks in many communities are nonexistent or not connected to a larger system of sidewalks.</td>
<td>• Improve pedestrian crossings by providing adequate crossing times, non-slip markings, visual audio cues, etc. • Implement a sidewalk system in key areas (near multi-unit housing, downtown) that is well-maintained, free of obstructions, and with curb cuts. • Increase green spaces, equipment, and outdoor seating to make more welcoming to older adults, others.</td>
<td>• Cites • Counties • Businesses</td>
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| Mobility/Transportation | Many older drivers experience specific difficulties related to the driving environment. | • Improve **signage, road design, and speed reduction** to save lives.  
• Provide **safety programs and driving refresher courses** (ex. CarFit). | • Transportation providers  
• Cities  
• Counties  
• Community education  
• Libraries  
• Residents  
• Businesses |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Customer-oriented community transportation options are lacking. | • Create more **transit options** that are flexible and responsive.  
• Support **volunteer driver programs**.  
• Support a **shared shuttle or circulator bus**. |  | |
| Road design can make walking, biking difficult and dangerous. | • Use **walk audits** to identify and prioritize pedestrian improvements.  
• Implement **Complete Streets design**.  
• Conduct a **Bike Pedestrian Plan**. |  | |
| Health, Supportive Services, and Food Access | Community information on available services is dispersed across agencies and providers. People aren’t aware of what is available. | • Promote services such as Senior LinkAge Line/One Stop, www.MinnesotaHelp.info, DARTS hotline (651-455-1560)  
• Create a **directory of information** (in print and online) that provides access to local service providers. | • Health care providers  
• Home care providers  
• Nonprofits  
• Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging (MAAA)  
• Businesses |
| Home-based services are often disjointed (for ex., medical and homecare). | Encourage providers to **integrate home-based services**. |  | |
| Lack of transportation to clinics, grocery stores affects access to health care, food. | Improve access to **medical transportation**, to farmers markets, grocery stores, home-delivered food. |  | |
| Cultures and Lifelong Learning | Few arts and cultural programs are offered to older adults.  
Few opportunities for older adults to stay up-to-date on technology. | • Provide opportunities for **intergenerational learning** around arts and cultural activities.  
• Increase **technology trainings** (ex., classes pairing older adults and youth). | • Cities  
• Community education  
• Libraries  
• Nonprofits  
• Residents |
| Strengthen Neighborhoods and Public Safety | Connections and safety could be improved in some neighborhoods. More older adults are living alone and isolated. | • Encourage **Neighborhood Watch programs**; implement **home visiting, check-in calls**.  
• Create **Neighborhood Networks** to strengthen connections and support.  
• Conduct **safety audits** and make improvements as needed. | • Local law enforcement  
• Cities  
• Community education  
• Residents |
| Employment/Volunteering Opportunities | With more people retiring, the workforce is shrinking. Volunteering options are limited in many communities. | • Provide **employment options for older workers**; 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. | • Cities  
• Community education  
• Libraries  
• Nonprofits  
• Residents |

*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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