

Commission on Aging FY 14 Budget Priorities - Summary

Just as we plan for and build roads, highways and the basic infrastructure of community life, we need to plan for and build the infrastructure that supports aging in Montgomery County.

Aging in Place/Community: Housing and Services

- a. The County should restore funding to the Housing Initiative Fund to the 2009 level in order to increase funding for new construction and rehabilitation of older buildings for safe and affordable housing for seniors.
- b. To sustain the Village Movement and aging in place in Montgomery County, the County needs a central coordinator to provide technical assistance and resources for Village activity and to help develop new Villages.

Transportation:

- a. The County should develop a transportation plan for seniors that coordinates all public and private transportation options. A plan with multiple options should include funding for escorted transportation and development of a new ride share service to fill a gap in door to door transportation and transportation to community centers.
- b. To build the infrastructure for aging, we need to connect transportation to mental and physical health need for socialization and fitness by including transportation to community centers in a senior transportation plan. Currently the County provides limited transportation only to senior centers.

Health/Social Isolation:

- a. With the senior population increasing and need for services growing, increase funding for mental health services, including Senior Outreach Services. More than 25 percent of County seniors age 65 and older live alone, and isolation fuels depression.
- b. Services that promote social connectedness and fitness activities are key to overall health, and especially mental health. Restore funding for senior center maintenance, staffing and transportation services that was reduced in recent years.
- c. An estimated 18 percent of seniors have a limitation in performing activities of daily living. The County needs to advocate for increased State and Federal funds to address the Older Adult Waiver program waiting list, that now includes 1,800 older adults in our County, and adequately provide case management to program participants. With increased cases, we need to increase funding for case management.
- d. Respite care is often needed in situations where the senior lives with a caregiver. Funding for respite care, which was reduced, should be restored for family caregivers.
- e. Restore funding for senior information and communication, including printed resource publications, in multiple languages on transportation and other services as little or no printed information now exists. Key senior programs also need an outreach component to at risk populations.