



Report: Summit on Aging



December 3, 2015

Silver Spring Civic Building • Silver Spring, MD



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Glossary of Terms

- **Community for a Lifetime: A Senior Agenda**

Developed by the Montgomery County Commission on Aging and adopted and encouraged by the County Executive and County Council, this document provides a framework for the long-range goals of transforming Montgomery County into a “Community for a Lifetime,” where older adults can live safe, healthy, and vital lives.

- **Age-Friendly Community**

As the U.S. population ages and people stay healthy and active longer, communities must adapt. The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities helps participating communities become great places for all ages by adopting such features as: safe, walkable streets; better housing and transportation options; access to key services; and opportunities for residents to participate in community activities.

Well-designed, livable communities promote health and sustain economic growth, and they make for happier, healthier residents – of all ages.

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities is an affiliate of the [World Health Organization’s Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Program](#), an international effort launched in 2006 to help cities prepare for rapid population aging and the parallel trend of urbanization. The program has participating communities in more than 20 nations, as well as 10 affiliates representing more than 1,000 communities. (<http://www.who.int/ageing/age-friendly-world/en/>) In the U.S., more than three dozen communities representing more than a dozen states are enrolled in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

<http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2014/an-introduction.html>

- **Dementia Friendly America**

<http://www.brightfocus.org/alzheimers/news/brightfocus-foundation-joins-montgomery-county-md-alzheimers-campaign>

Dementia Friendly America is a national initiative to create communities that better recognize and help those affected with dementia, their families and care partners. It is a multi-sector collaborative on a mission to foster “dementia friendly” communities. Through the work of over 35 national, leading organizations, the Dementia Friendly America initiative is catalyzing a movement to more effectively support and serve those across America who are living with dementia and their family and friend care partners. The lead organizations represent all sectors of the community and are collectively leveraging their national reach to activate their local affiliates, members and branches to convene, participate in and support dementia friendly community efforts at a local level.

Led by the Dementia Friendly America initiative, communities across the nation are taking action and becoming dementia friendly by leveraging tailored resources and tools for community sectors, including business, community-based services and supports, faith communities, health care community, legal and financial services, government services and planning, and residential settings. The communities are building on a model developed by Minnesota’s ACT on Alzheimer’s and the 34 dementia friendly communities in Minnesota it created. By 2016, the Dementia Friendly America initiative will pilot 15 dementia friendly communities across the nation.

<http://www.brightfocus.org/alzheimers/news/brightfocus-foundation-joins-montgomery-county-md-alzheimers-campaign>

- **Villages**

Villages are volunteer-led, grassroots organizations that support people’s choices to age in place. They offer volunteer services (such as rides or yard work) and social engagement opportunities. The Village offers an option for meeting the needs of the growing older population by making it possible for people to stay in their communities and “age in place.” Neighborhood residents create villages to help coordinate and deliver services and supports within their communities. (<http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/ppi/liv-com/fs177-village.pdf>)



On Thursday, December 3, 2015, Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett convened a Summit on Aging. The Summit was the second such event to take place in the County. The first was the Senior Summit held in November 2008 to identify and plan for meeting needs of the growing population of seniors in the County and ensure that Montgomery County becomes a “Community for a Lifetime,” where older adults can live safe, healthy, and vital lives. The 2015 Summit provided an opportunity to review the many policies, programs, and accomplishments resulting from the 2008 event and to focus on efforts going forward that allow seniors of all socioeconomic, ethnic, and diverse backgrounds to live and thrive in the County.

The 2015 Summit on Aging brought together more than 400 stakeholders from government, business, non-profit, advocacy, faith-based, and healthcare organizations as well as County seniors. During the morning session, attendees heard from the County Executive and co-chairs of the Subcabinet on Senior Vital Living, Uma Ahluwalia, Director of Health and Human Services, and Gabriel Albornoz, Director of the Department of Recreation.

The Goals of the 2015 Summit on Aging were to:

- **Celebrate the many accomplishments** related to County seniors achieved over the past six years (See Appendix: Montgomery County: A Community for a Lifetime: Summary of Accomplishments, p.42);
- **Review the recommendations** from stakeholders and other research on remaining areas of need for seniors;
- **Develop a three-year County Executive Strategic Plan** related to fulfilling [The Senior Agenda](#) (See Appendix: Senior Agenda, p.43), created by the County’s Commission on Aging and endorsed by the County Executive and County Council; and
- **Prioritize actions for FY 2017.** The critical areas identified as essential to promoting vital aging for all residents were established for the 2008 Summit: Health and Wellness, Housing and Zoning, Home and Community Supports, Civic and Social Engagement, Transportation, Safety, Employment, and Communication and Outreach. The 2015 Summit on Aging again addressed these critical elements—with an additional focus on diversity, elder abuse and technology.

Process

Prior to the Summit and under the Direction of the County Executive’s Senior Subcabinet on Vital Aging, the County undertook a number of initiatives to gather information that would inform discussion at the Summit. They included:

- Convening an Advisory Planning Group of County staff, Commission on Aging members, and community volunteers (See Appendix: [Advisory Committee Members](#), p.42);
- Conducting listening and focus groups around the County in English as well as in Chinese and Spanish (See Appendix: [Summit on Aging Focus Group Report](#), p.43);
- Fielding an online and paper survey of the County’s adult population age 55 years and older that generated more than 2000 responses about community characteristics, amenities, and quality of life. (See Appendix: [Survey Results](#), p.43); and
- Developing an online Summit resource site, with background papers and work-group specific information for participant reading prior to the start of the event. (See Read-Ahead Papers and other Summit resources on the [Summit on Aging 2015 website at: \(https://www.montgomery-countymd.gov/senior/senior_summit/summit-2015.html\)](https://www.montgomery-countymd.gov/senior/senior_summit/summit-2015.html)

In addition, statistics about Montgomery County’s rapidly changing and increasingly diverse population informed discussions during the Summit.

Summit Proceedings

The County Executive opened the day-long event and shared his vision for ensuring that Montgomery County is a place where its residents can age, remain, and thrive—a Community for a Lifetime. Morning speakers included County Council Vice President Roger Berliner and Rona E. Kramer, Director of the Maryland Department on Aging. The Keynote address was presented by Dr. Fernando Torres-Gil, Board of Trustees at AARP, Professor of Social Welfare and Public Policy at UCLA, and Director of the UCLA Center for Policy Research on Aging.



Later that morning, Dr. Torres-Gil presented the County Executive with a certificate congratulating Montgomery County on joining the AARP/World Health Organization as an Age-Friendly Community based on its past record of service and programming for seniors and its current planning process for expanding and improving those services. (See Appendix: Age-Friendly Community [Certificate, p.44.](#)) He was joined by Hank Greenberg, Director of AARP Maryland and Jeanne Anthony, Senior Project Manager at AARP. Stacy Pagos Haller, President of BrightFocus® Foundation then announced another initiative, enrolling Montgomery County in the Dementia Friendly America initiative. (See Appendix: Dementia Friendly Community [Certificate, p.44.](#))

During the lunch session, Jeff Kramer, Verizon's Executive Director of Strategic Alliances, addressed the present and future role of technology in helping to improve lives across an aging population. In the afternoon, Sandy Markwood, CEO of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, presented an overview of issues and opportunities affecting all generations as they age, i.e., transportation, housing, employment, technology, long-term care, caregiver support and education, community-based services, prevention services, elder abuse policies, social engagement and purpose, and ageism.

Attendees broke into preselected morning and afternoon work sessions on specific topic areas to look at achievements to date, identify needs, and make recommendations for moving forward in key areas of most importance to seniors. All session participants were asked to include diversity, technology, and partnerships as part of the discussion. A group facilitator, scribe, and subject matter experts were assigned to each group. The work groups focused on the following topics:

- Civic and Social Engagement
- Communications and Outreach
- Employment
- Health and Wellness/Home and Community-Based Support Services
- Housing and Zoning
- Safety
- Transportation and Mobility

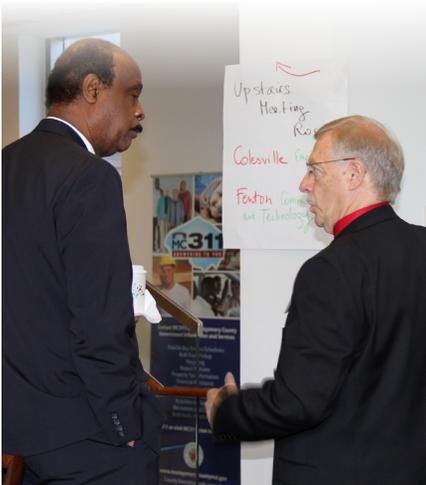


Overall findings from the work groups confirmed that although much has been accomplished since the 2008 Summit, there remains much work to be done. Each work session elicited a number of recommendations. There were notable cross-cutting areas for action and/or improvement.

Mr. Leggett closed the event by focusing on the progress that has been made and committing his administration to making the County an even better place to age. He thanked sponsors of the Summit, Verizon and *The Beacon*, and again acknowledged Uma Ahluwalia, Gabriel Albornoz, the Senior Subcabinet and staff, and the Summit Advisory Planning Committee. He noted that Montgomery County is a caring community. By engaging seniors and all citizens with dignity and respect, and with the continuing energy, engagement, and community partnership of all attendees moving forward, Montgomery County will be a better place not only for seniors, but for all residents, and for our children and grandchildren in years to come.

Evaluation

Following the event, attendees provided feedback to Summit planners via an online evaluation form. Responses were highly positive about the event, with more than 90 percent rating the Summit as good, very good, or excellent and as meeting or exceeding their expectations. Nearly all rated the information presented as helpful. Many attendees reported being impressed by the breadth and depth of services that the County provides for seniors and that the Summit helped them better understand the range of services available. Participants reported a willingness to help in many areas of services and programs for seniors, including partnerships, volunteer activities, housing, communications, interfaith activities, and more. Attendees also offered a wide range of ideas about priorities and challenges facing County seniors, areas in which they would have liked more discussion during the event, and ideas for improving a future Summit. (See Appendix: Summit Evaluation, p.43.)





INTRODUCTION

Background and History. *On Thursday, December 3, 2015, Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett convened a Summit on Aging. The Summit was the second such event to take place in the County. The first was the Senior Summit held in November 2008 to identify and plan for meeting needs of the growing population of seniors in the County and ensure that Montgomery County becomes a “Community for a Lifetime” where older adults can live safe, healthy and vital lives.*

The 2015 Summit provided an opportunity to review the many policies, programs, and accomplishments resulting from the 2008 event and to focus on and prioritize efforts going forward that allow seniors of all socioeconomic, ethnic, and diverse backgrounds to live and thrive in the County.

Summit Goals. The Goals of the 2015 Summit on Aging were to:

- Celebrate the many accomplishments related to County seniors achieved over the past many years;
- Review the recommendations from stakeholders and other research on remaining areas of need for seniors;
- Develop a three-year County Executive Strategic Plan related to fulfilling a Senior Agenda created by the County’s Commission on Aging and endorsed by the County Council; and
- Prioritize actions for Fiscal Year 2017.

Summit Proceedings. The 2015 Summit on Aging brought together more than 400 stakeholders from government, business, nonprofit, advocacy, faith-based, and healthcare organizations, as well as County seniors. During the morning session, attendees heard from the County Executive and Subcabinet on Vital Aging Co-chairs Uma Ahluwalia, (Director of Health and Human Services), and Gabriel Albornoz, (Director of the Department of Recreation).

Attendees broke into preselected morning and afternoon work sessions on specific topic areas to look at achievements to date, identify needs, and make recommendations for moving forward in key areas of most importance to seniors. All sessions included technology, diversity, and partnerships as part of the discussion. A group moderator and scribe were assigned to each group and subject matter experts were available as a resource to each group. The work groups focused on the following topics:

- Civic and Social Engagement
- Communications and Outreach
- Employment
- Health and Wellness/Home and Community-Based Services
- Housing and Zoning
- Safety
- Transportation and Mobility

History. At the County Executive’s 2008 Senior Summit, work groups were convened in eight different topic areas: Health and Wellness, Home and Community Supports, Housing and Zoning, Civic and Social Engagement, Transportation, Safety, Employment, and Communication and Outreach. The work groups examined needs and made recommendations for action in each of those areas and have continued to work with and advise County government since. Following the 2008 Senior Summit, the County Executive undertook a number of steps to ensure that County government would understand and address the needs of its seniors. He established a “Senior Subcabinet on Vital Living” comprised of department heads or their representatives and the Chair of the Commission on Aging. Subcabinet members established departmental plans for meeting senior needs in their respective areas and regularly reported on programs, plans, and measurable outcomes via the Office of CountyStat. He also started an annual senior initiative as part of his proposed budget process, enhancing County-funded senior services.

In 2012, with help and support of the County’s Commission on Aging, the County Executive and County Council adopted *A Community for a Lifetime, A Senior Agenda* (See Appendix: [The Senior Agenda, p.43](#)). In addition, the County established three new staff positions to further support critical senior needs: A Transportation and Mobility Manager, a Villages Coordinator, and a Caregiver Support Coordinator.

The Senior Agenda serves as a framework for the long-range goal of transforming Montgomery County into a “Community for a Lifetime.” It lays out a commitment to seniors and sets a vision in the areas of transportation, housing, socialization and leisure, health and wellness, communication, employment, security and safety.

Pre-Summit Process. The County undertook a number of activities in preparation for the 2015 Summit.

1. Aging and Disability Chief, Dr. John (Jay) Kenney, and the Director of the Area Agency on Aging, Dr. Odile Brunetto, led a Summit Planning Advisory Committee comprised of County staff, consultants, and volunteers from the Commission on Aging, the Vital Living Network, and the aging services community. This Advisory Committee developed the program, agenda, and plans for conducting the work sessions for the Summit on Aging. (See Appendix: Summit Agenda; Advisory Committee Members, p. 42.)
2. The County engaged a consultant to conduct listening sessions with 405 Montgomery County residents in 13 focus groups from August through November 2015. There were three language-based focus groups—two Chinese and one Spanish, where interpreters were used. Focus groups were held in various parts of the County for feedback from as many diverse groups as possible. Focus groups were primarily held in conjunction with existing senior programs to capture audiences already in place. Four concerns emerged across all groups, regardless of income or ethnicity:
 - Affordable housing;
 - Improvements in transportation schedules and fees;
 - The cost of living in Montgomery County outpacing their retirement income; and
 - Better communication from the County about available services.

The majority of participants stated that they enjoy living in Montgomery County and plan to continue living in the County if they can afford it. There was also consensus that the County provides good services for seniors. Most expressed satisfaction with the County police and fire departments. Additional concerns emerged as overarching themes within groups based on language and income. See the Focus Group Report for additional details. (See Appendix: [Focus Group Summary](#), p. 43.)



3. The County developed and fielded an online and paper Montgomery County Age-Friendly Community Survey ([English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Chinese](#) | [Farsi/Persian](#)), which was available online and at senior centers throughout the County. (See Appendices: Survey Result; Survey Links, p.43.) More than 2,000 seniors responded, offering input about community characteristics, quality of amenities, and how they find the County as a place to live. Surveys were collected between September and November 2015. Results were made available online for Summit attendees and for consideration during work session discussions and recommendations.

Seniors' top concerns involved cost and affordability of housing and ability to afford a good quality of life in retirement. Other key results were:

- Eighty-nine percent of respondents ages 55 and older rated the overall quality of life in Montgomery County as good or excellent.
 - Ninety percent rated the availability of health services as excellent or good.
 - Eighty-nine percent rated public safety as excellent or good.
 - Sixty-nine percent rated the overall quality of services as excellent or good.
 - Sixty-eight percent rated their ability to get where they want to go as excellent or good.
4. Prior to the start of the Summit, the County developed a Summit website (http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/senior_summit/summit-2015.html) and urged participants to read information posted there prior to the Summit. Online resources included background information about the Summit, County accomplishments since the last Summit, and other materials to inform discussion in their pre-selected work group topic areas.

In addition, statistics about Montgomery County's rapidly changing and increasingly diverse population were essential to informing discussions during the Summit:

- **Rapid aging.** The number of residents age 65 or older in the County is projected to more than double between 2010 and 2040, from 120,000 to 244,000. This will raise senior residents' share of the population from 9% in 1990 to 12% in 2010 to 20% by 2040. The number of residents aged 85 and older is expected to grow the fastest, to 42,900 by 2040.



- **Seniors to school-aged children ratio.** Already, approximately 50 of the County's 215 neighborhoods (i.e. "census tracts") have more seniors than school-aged children.
- **Aging in place.** Many of the County's seniors are "aging in place." In fact, over half of households headed by senior residents have lived in their home since before 1990.
- **Rising diversity.** The share of minority residents among the age 65 or older population is expected to increase from 34% in 2010 to 57% by 2040. Today, Asian residents make up the largest minority group among County residents age 65 or older, accounting for 14%, with Black residents accounting for 12% and Hispanic residents (of any race) accounting for 8%. Today, 43,600 residents who are age 65 and older (or 31% of the total) speak a language other than English at home, with 25,400 residents age 65 or older speaking English less than very well (or 18% of all seniors).
- **Poverty.** 6.5% of the County's seniors live in poverty, with an additional 5.4% of seniors living between 100 and 150% of the poverty line. While these rates are low relative to the Maryland and national averages, the County is nevertheless home to almost 9,000 residents age 65+ who live in poverty. Rates also differ significantly by race and ethnicity, with 4.9% of White Non-Hispanic residents living in poverty versus 17.4% of Hispanic seniors, 13.1% of Asian seniors, and 9.9% of Black seniors.
- **Disabilities.** 28% of residents age 65 or older have a disability—a rate that rises to 37% among senior residents living in poverty. Moreover, the number of seniors with dementia is expected to nearly double between 2000 and 2030, rising from 14,000 in 2010 to 22,600 in 2030.
- **"Housing burdened."** 27% of Montgomery County senior homeowners and 61% of senior renters are "housing burdened" (defined as spending more than 30% of income on housing).

(Source: US Census American Community Survey 2013 and 2014 for current estimates; State of Maryland for population projections)

GENERAL SESSION PRESENTATIONS



Welcome: Uma Ahluwalia and Gabriel Albornoz

Summit on Aging Co-Chairs, Director of Health and Human Services, Uma Ahluwalia, and Director of the Department of Recreation, Gabriel Albornoz, opened the program, welcomed guests, and introduced County Executive Isiah Leggett.



Opening Remarks: Isiah Leggett, County Executive

Mr. Leggett thanked the Summit co-chairs, acknowledged the hard work of so many in putting the day's program together, and thanked the many County Councilmembers and Maryland State legislators who work tirelessly on issues affecting the County's large and growing senior population. He stressed that much of what we have built today rests on the shoulders of our senior population through their hard work, taxes paid, and their volunteerism and involvement in civic activities. We owe them much gratitude. We must make sure that they want and are able to remain in Montgomery County. Dignity and respect are the foundation for meeting our seniors' needs and drive everything we do. This requires listening, respecting, and engaging with our older residents.

The 2008 Summit helped identify areas for meeting needs and making improvements. The 2015 Summit is a continuation of that process. Following the 2008 Summit, a "Subcabinet on Senior Vital Living" was formed, comprised of County department heads and/or their delegates and the Chair of the Commission on Aging. Departments took on the responsibility of addressing senior needs and incorporating them into their planning and programming. The Subcabinet has worked hard to improve programming and help County seniors thrive as they age. Its efforts have been enhanced and broadened through the hard work of the Commission on Aging and the Vital Living Network. Much has been accomplished since that time. (See Appendix: [Accomplishments Summary](#), p.42)

Mr. Leggett then showed a [video](#) (See Appendix: Montgomery County: Celebrating Everyone's Community for a Lifetime, p. 42) in which department directors highlighted many of those accomplishments, including:

- **Transportation:** expanding bus services, personal transportation services, improving sidewalks, ramps, and pedestrian safety.
- **Health and Wellness:** supporting and expanding "villages, wellness classes, and nutrition programs, as well as home- and community-based services; providing and expanding senior and recreation center exercise and lecture activities.

- **Civic Engagement:** increasing ways to engage seniors in volunteer and work activities via the [Senior website \(www.montgomerycountymd.gov/seniors\)](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/seniors), lifelong learning opportunities, and employment resources. In libraries: expanding library hours; offering classes on the use of computers, technology, finance, health, consumer issues, English language and more; sponsoring the annual 50+ Employment Expo in partnership with the Jewish Council for the Aging, and making the Senior Smart Card for public transportation available at all County libraries.
- **Housing:** preserving and acquiring affordable housing, partnering to create new affordable housing, and offering property tax credits for people with modest assets. Accessible housing efforts included expansion of the Design for Life program to make homes visitable or livable, and recycling collection at the door for frail seniors and people with disabilities.
- **Safety:** opening five new firehouses, providing faster emergency response, conducting fire safety in-home visits, continuing the Keeping Seniors Safe program, and establishing an investigative Elder Abuse section in the office of the State's Attorney.
- **Informing the Community:** establishing a centralized 311 call number for all County services; establishing the Senior website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/seniors; distributing fact sheets on topics such as transportation, vital living, older driver safety, caregiver supports; continuing publication of a bimonthly e-newsletter, *Paperless Airplane*; and continuing the *Seniors Today* cable TV show.

This is an evolving process. Challenges are many. It is essential to meet the needs of all ages of our population. We need resources to expand and open schools in response to the growing population of the young, while at the same time improve services for their parents and our older population. This involves improving transportation services for seniors, the climate for job opportunities, availability of accessible and affordable housing, programs for seniors with special needs, and reaching out to better inform our residents about our programs and services. The County is especially proud of the new senior housing complex built in the heart of our busy, vibrant, downtown Silver Spring.

Montgomery County now is one of the most diverse communities in the country and cultural needs vary widely. In addition, the needs of older adults in general are changing. For example, there may be many seniors who could not join us today because they may have needed to be at work or had difficulties with disabilities, transportation, or caregiving responsibilities that prevented their participation. Our job is to become more inclusive of all in our community so that residents at every age can live here and thrive. We have a great deal of work ahead and we are committed to making a difference.



Roger Berliner, Vice President, Montgomery County Council

Mr. Berliner expressed gratitude to Mr. Leggett and Councilmember George Leventhal for their longtime commitment to the County's senior residents and the many accomplishments made in the past few years. He also expressed regrets of the new Council President, Nancy Floreen and U.S. Representative Chris Van Hollen, both of whom were unable to attend this Summit. Montgomery County is one of the greatest places to live for all residents, including our older adults. Mr. Leggett has overseen huge improvements, despite fiscal challenges, to meet the needs of our rapidly growing senior and ethnic populations.

Our senior population will double in the next 25 years, with many naturally- occurring senior communities. Ensuring that Montgomery County is and remains a "Community for a Lifetime" must be a priority. Later in the program, Montgomery County will officially be enrolling in the AARP/World Health Organization (WHO) Age-Friendly Community initiative, highlighting the County's many accomplishments over the past few years, as well as its ongoing efforts to meet senior needs. The County also faces many challenges. For example, our State's Attorney John McCarthy reports that although elder abuse has become a huge problem, seniors report fewer than five percent of abuse cases due to shame and embarrassment. We must educate widely on this topic and see that the report rate improves.

The County also must work to counter the ill effects of social isolation at both the personal and community levels. Promoting programs to foster involvement with others in the community will help prevent this isolation. Improved transportation options will ensure access for more seniors, reduce isolation, and allow them to participate in activities, get to medical appointments, and connect with family and friends.

We applaud all that has been done to date and look forward to continuing our efforts to maintain and improve the quality of life for all our residents, and especially for the older adults who add such value to our community.

Rona E. Kramer, Maryland Secretary of Aging

Ms. Kramer congratulated Mr. Leggett and the County for convening this conference and for the important work they have done to help seniors live and thrive in Montgomery County. She noted that the County serves as a model across the state, and indeed, across the nation, for the respect, programming, and services it provides for its seniors.

There are ongoing challenges and needs that are prevalent for older adults, not only in Montgomery County, but also throughout the state and the nation. Two major challenges involve keeping older adults active and healthy.

- 1) Many improvements can be gained through increasing our corps of volunteers, both those who work with seniors and seniors who wish to stay civically involved in their communities. Intergenerational activities with students can be especially rewarding.
- 2) It is equally essential that all possible is done to keep our older population healthy. At this time, a majority of our population age 65 and older has at least two chronic diseases. Two ways to prevent this from occurring are to decrease the intake of sugary drinks throughout life, and to stay active, regardless of age. Ms. Kramer urged that everyone exercise whenever possible, and led the assembled audience in a “stretch break.”

Secretary Kramer looks forward to continuing to work with the leadership of Montgomery County in its future efforts to serve its seniors.

Morning Keynote Address: Fernando Torres-Gil

Board of Trustees, AARP; Professor of Social Welfare and Public Policy at UCLA; Director, Center for Policy Research on Aging, Luskin School of Public Affairs, UCLA and First Assistant Secretary for Aging at the Administration on Aging within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Dr. Torres-Gil commenced by noting his lifelong friendship with Mr. Leggett, including a shared experience of serving together as White House Fellows. He commended Mr. Leggett on the leadership he and the County Council have shown on issues affecting seniors, making Montgomery County a model for the rest of the country in its efforts to serve its senior population. He was honored to serve as a representative of a constituency of older citizens and to speak at this Summit. He reminded attendees about the importance of always showing appreciation to our veterans for their service and the challenge of ongoing gun violence in our country in the face of the prior day’s tragedy in San Bernardino, California. The purpose today was to set the stage and provide context for the leadership Montgomery County has shown in serving needs of seniors. It is laudable that Montgomery County recognizes that, despite its many successes, there remains much work to be done.



The country has done so much to enhance quality of life; there is much to celebrate and many challenges ahead. Today we celebrate many significant anniversaries:

- The 50th anniversary of Medicare/Medicaid programs
- The 79th anniversary of Social Security
- The 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act
- The 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The good news about aging and gerontology is that we are living longer, healthier lives than ever before. Not only do we have longer lifespans today, but also we can do so much more with these added years of life. Because we live longer, we can enjoy multiple generations and inter-generational interaction with children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. Centenarians can still have an active lifestyle. The concept of retirement is becoming obsolete. AARP has a membership of 38 million people, the majority of whom are still in the workforce.

The less-good news is that there are many challenges facing us as we age:

- The burden of caregiving on the caregiver.
- The lack of a national system for ensuring that all of us will have choices about how we age and where we want to live with the support we will need. (Long term care coverage was removed from the Affordable Care Act.)
- Significant challenges in affordable housing. It is difficult to get developers to support accessible and affordable housing where it is needed, which makes the new Silver Spring senior housing even more impressive.
- Longevity accompanied by health problems and discomfort. Healthy aging is a process that starts at birth and should be followed through old age. But it is difficult to get younger and middle-age people to practice healthy aging at all ages. Changing behaviors, such as was successfully accomplished with fire prevention (Smokey the Bear campaign) and smoking cessation can take years to become effective.
- Other challenges include the environment, financial inequality, social and economic disparities, and the ballooning diversity of our population.



By 2015, every member of the “Baby Boomer” population had turned 50 years of age. By 2029, all Boomers in that cohort will be 65 years old, doubling our senior citizen population. Right now is the time to plan for that. Ninety percent of people growing older want to remain in their own homes or communities with neighbors and friends. But that is not possible in many places.

Today we applaud Montgomery County’s enrollment in the AARP/WHO Network of Age Friendly Communities. This shows that this County is thinking and planning for the future. Other cities and jurisdictions should be looking at Montgomery County and other Age-Friendly Communities that have reached that threshold; here seniors know they have an excellent quality of life.

It is possible to stay involved and active at any age. On the anniversary of the 50th anniversary of the landing at Normandy, France, a group of older World War II veterans successfully recreated their war-time parachute jump. These men did this to honor those men who jumped with them who did not come back, to honor all men and women who joined our military, and to show that we can be involved and active at any age. Dr. Torres-Gil commended all assembled for leadership and support for older adults and Montgomery County’s example of a livable, age-friendly community.

Fernando Torres-Gil: Welcome to Montgomery County to the AARP/World Health Organization Age-Friendly Community Initiative

Dr. Torres-Gil, along with Hank Greenberg, the state director for AARP-Maryland, and Jeanne Anthony, Project Advisor, AARP, presented a certificate officially welcoming Montgomery County’s enrollment into the AARP/World Health Organization (WHO) Age-Friendly Community initiative.

The AARP and WHO have embarked on a social movement across the country and the world to create a network of age-friendly villages, cities, and municipalities that allow us to age in place with a good quality of life. This is an arduous process and one in which the County has been successfully working for many years.

Mr. Greenberg noted that ten percent of the State’s 875,000 AARP members reside in Montgomery County. He recognized the County for all that has been done for its seniors and for the thinking and planning currently under way to keep improving services and programs for seniors. AARP will continue to work with the County as it continues on this journey. (See Appendix: Montgomery County-Age Friendly Community Certificate, p.44.)



Dementia-Friendly Community:



Stacy Pagos Haller, President and CEO, BrightFocus® Foundation

Ms. Haller commended Montgomery County as a Dementia Friendly Community, thanks to the leadership efforts of Mr. Leggett and County government.

BrightFocus® is a Montgomery County-based nonprofit with an international footprint. It funds research worldwide in age-related health conditions, in particular glaucoma, macular degeneration, and Alzheimer's disease. The Foundation also provides resources for those living with diseases and their caregivers. It has established a Dementia Friendly Community Program in localities across the country, including nearby Prince George's County.

The three diseases affect one in 16 people over the age of 40, as well as families and caregivers. Dementia Friendly communities are being established throughout the country. A Dementia Friendly Community empowers people with dementia to have high aspirations and feel confident, knowing they can contribute and participate in activities that are meaningful to them. It provides support, training, and tools for community and individual use. The tools help communities in supporting people with dementia and their caregivers in their own homes.

To help communities, the program involves and informs all sectors of the community so that they can foster improved quality of life for those affected. Involved sectors may include legal, financial, faith-based, housing, business, police and fire, healthcare, memory loss services, and local government. The program is based on a successful model undertaken in Minnesota.

Ms. Haller announced the establishment of a ground-breaking Dementia Friendly Community campaign in Montgomery County. She commended Montgomery County, with its extraordinarily long history of bringing high quality services to seniors and all constituents. She thanked Uma Ahluwalia and Jay Kenney in particular for their efforts to bring this endeavor to the County. (See Appendix, Dementia Friendly Community Certificate, p.44.)

LUNCH PRESENTATION**Can Technology Keep Pace with an Aging Montgomery County?**

Mr. Kramer presented an overview of technology use among older adults today and what can be expected in the future.

Older adults are wireless consumers. Seventy-seven percent of all seniors age 65 and older use wireless phone technology based on 2013 Pew research numbers. However, those rates are lower among seniors for internet and broadband compared to the national average.

What are the challenges? Seniors are concerned with privacy, relevance, and comfort level. The Verizon Foundation developed a program with the National Council on Aging (NCOA) to find out how best to assist seniors in adopting new technology. The program targeted 225 adults in underserved communities where adoption levels are low. It conducted one-on-one, small group trainings and gave seniors tablets to use. Those one-on-one trainings removed their levels of fear and introduced a comfort level in use of the technology. Seniors became aware of how useful the technology is in terms of civic engagement, social interactions, and lifelong learning, resulting in increased engagement with technology. This project is now going into its second year in different communities. Verizon and NCOA are working with communities to provide information to people and bring broadband to communities at a low cost.

The term “Internet of Things” means many things to many people. It conveys a sense of vitality in a variety of ways that help the public sector, for example, smart parking where the car parks itself, direction to available parking spaces, dashboard navigation, and alerts to road accidents, weather emergencies, and shelter in place emergencies.

Many companies now are adapting services to become more age friendly. They are developing and providing devices that help older adults stay independent in their homes and in the community. Wearable devices are becoming more and more popular for exercise monitoring, home monitoring, healthcare information, and more. Some studies have shown their benefits in helping patients achieve weight loss goals. Car manufacturers are working to make cars safer and more interactive. These systems are becoming popular with older drivers and will continue to grow.



Jeffrey Kramer,
Executive Director,
Strategic Alliances, Verizon

Verizon provides products and services such as:

- Verizon’s National Accessibility Customer Services Center and the Verizon Center for Customers with Disabilities;
- Wireless 101 workshops to teach older adults how to use wireless devices;
- 65 and older calling plans for people who just want easy-to-use phones without the need for data or internet;
- Big-button remotes, which are useful for older people with vision or mobility problems;
- Universal design for all Verizon products to ease use for as many people as possible; and
- Velasense: A Verizon program to reach out to innovators to identify useful ideas that Verizon can help move into the marketplace. For example, Velasense offers a suite of voice activated applications that can help seniors and people with low vision and other challenges navigate through their day using money, bar codes, etc. New ideas always are welcomed.

Can technology keep pace with an aging Montgomery County?

Verizon will continue to provide needed products and services and looks forward to continuing to serve this community.

In thanking Mr. Kramer for this informative presentation, Mr. Albornoz noted that the Recreation Department is highlighting a multi-generational program this Spring in which high school students will be working with older adults to teach them how to use technology.



AFTERNOON PRESENTATION:**AGING WELL in Montgomery County**

Ms. Markwood opened her presentation by noting that she had taken part in the 2008 Summit, and came today to celebrate the County's many accomplishments since, including its new enrollment into the AARP/WHO Network of Age Friendly Communities and the Dementia Friendly America Community initiative. She thanked the County's leadership and Dr. Odile Brunetto, who serves on the board of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging.

While much has been accomplished, there is still much to be done. The essential vision is to build a society that values people as they age. Aging is an intergenerational and community issue. The goal is that people age successfully with dignity and independence. We know that, like people here in Montgomery County, most people want to age in place, in their homes or communities. The question is how?

In this process, we must remember:

- Caregivers. Each of us is or expects to be a caregiver at some point in our lives. (When asked nearly everyone in the audience raised a hand to indicate they were a caregiver, expected to be a caregiver, or had received caregiving from another person.)
- Baby Boomers. Multiple generations of people are aging. Right now, boomers are getting the press. Some startling statistics:
 - Forty-two percent of people who are age 65 will live to age 90 (and beyond); the goal is to add quality to those years
 - As we turn 50, we can expect at least 30 more years of active living
 - Unlike the stereotype usually presented, we know that most people over age 60 are happy!

There is a need to redefine aging. Older adults are an asset to the community; they are purposeful, engaging, and conscientious. However, the reality is that as people age they will at some point need services and assistance from friends, family members, and/or the community.

Unfortunately, Baby Boomers are in complete denial of this fact. We need to turn this around to a media, public policy, and personal planning perspective. The magic formula is that:



Sandy Markwood,
Chief Executive Officer,
National Association of Area
Agencies on Aging (n4a)

- We each need to plan for our own aging process
- Our families need to plan to support us and other loved ones
- Our community needs to plan for citizens across the lifespan

As individuals and family plan for aging, they must consider their options for aging in place. Will it be possible to stay at home? Will it involve moving to a different, more easily managed environment like a condo in the community? Or might it require assisted living or a similar type of setting designed for older residents—and are these options available in the community?

The n4a Eldercare Locator (1-800-677-1116) receives 300,000 calls each year. The key concerns are:

- Transportation: getting where you want to go when you want to go there;
- Housing: affordability and accessibility;
- Health: fear of Alzheimer's disease and dementia; and
- Economic concerns: fear of outliving your retirement money.

What is the community's role in addressing these concerns? So many factors are affected directly by local government. What are Montgomery County's aspirations in this regard? It is important to involve the community in these decisions because the environment in which you live significantly affects longevity. As the County is thinking about local development planning, it is important to consider how development affects residents across the lifespan. Developers are just beginning to consider this more often, especially in this County under the County Executive's leadership.

Important elements of aging successfully involve the following factors:

- Employment. Some older adults may want to retire, but the economic reality is that many have to continue working later in life so as not to outlive their retirement savings. Does the community and business perspective support older adults staying in the workforce?
- Community-based services. Are there aging services that ensure that people who need home and community-based services can get them? These services cost a lot less than institutional care; they also make a huge difference between someone staying at home or going into an institutional setting.

- **Prevention services.** Are prevention services available? The health-care community is to be commended for beginning to recognize the importance of prevention, which is important at every age. It is important to build bridges between community home care and medical settings. Many programs have been proven to work, such as fall prevention programs. The cost of one fall treated at a hospital can run \$9,000, so a fall prevented is a definite cost savings.
- **Elder abuse policies and laws.** Everyone needs to be safe and secure. Elder abuse is a growing problem in this country.
- **Social engagement and purpose.** Studies show that people who volunteer and participate in civic activities add value to themselves and their communities and years to their life and good health. Active aging involves keeping older adults involved in the community through volunteering, workforce, mentoring young people, helping older adults, volunteer driving, and so much more.

Communities need to be responsive to all generations. The alignment between what older adults and millennials want actually is very close. How you design a community affects the quality of life across the lifespan and vitality of that community. For example, can you walk, or must you drive to the grocery store or pharmacy? Some solutions in community planning and redevelopment include:

- Taking an “aging in everything” perspective;
- Engaging older adults and other generations in design charrettes and discussions; and
- Educating key stakeholder groups on the demographics and economic potential of an aging population. Older people are economic drivers in the community, a force to be reckoned with.

Potential solutions to many of the areas of concern among aging populations include the following:

- **Transportation:**
 - Improvements in road and signage redesign;
 - Driver safety classes;
 - Volunteer driver programs;
 - Bus route adjustments;
 - Travel ambassadors to accompany or show older adults how to navigate the public transit systems; and
 - Age sensitivity training for taxi, bus, and transit staff.



- Housing
 - Promoting mixed-use housing/universal design housing in existing / new neighborhoods;
 - Promoting new types of housing alternative “accessory apartments,” in-home, co-housing options, etc.;
 - Conducting home safety audits;
 - Promoting home modification/repairs; and
 - Supporting affordable assisted living options.
- Technology: consider emerging technology in all aspects of aging services and care.
- Long-Term Care—Community Solutions:
 - Access to aging assessments;
 - Help navigating services through care management; and
 - Support for home and community-based programs, home-delivered meals, medical transportation, etc.
- Caregiver education and support
 - Respite care
 - Access to information on available services
 - Age-friendly, dementia friendly sensitivity training for county staff, businesses, and others who interact with older adults and caregivers;
 - Forging informal and formal neighborhood-based community connections. Neighborhood associations can help older adults as they age—neighbors helping neighbors.
- Ageism. Aging affects the entire community. To combat ageism, engage all generations and capitalize on the assets of a growing aging populations

Montgomery County, always a leader in addressing each of these issues, has made the commendable choice to continue to lead, demonstrated today by its inclusion as an Age and Dementia Friendly community. We must all continue to include the needs and wishes of the aging population in everything we do. This involves: continuing to engage everyone of all ages in the community; building diversity into programming and services; collaborating across all areas of government, nonprofit, and business, and recognizing that aging is an asset, longevity is an opportunity, and that there are human and economic benefits to aging. With the incredible County leadership in place and the support of each caring person here today, we will ensure that Montgomery County remains, as it is today, a home for a lifetime.

As Margaret Mead once wrote, a few people can indeed change the world. Aging well in Montgomery County is up to all of us.

**CLOSING REMARKS:
COUNTY EXECUTIVE ISIAH LEGGETT**

Mr. Leggett thanked everyone for participation in this Summit and asked that they be sure to return a Summit evaluation that they will receive. Mr. Leggett thanked Summit sponsors, Verizon and *The Beacon*, and again acknowledged the hard work of Uma Ahluwalia, Gabriel Albornoz, the Senior Subcabinet and staff, and the Summit Advisory Planning Committee.

In afternoon [remarks](#), Mr. Leggett urged all attendees to use this day as an opportunity to move forward in improving our community, now and for future generations. By treating seniors and all citizens with dignity and respect, and with the continuing engagement of all attendees moving forward, Montgomery County will be a better place not only for seniors, but also for all residents, and for our children and grandchildren in years to come. (See Appendix: Agenda, Closing remarks p.43 to see video.)





Work sessions in each of the seven topic areas were held once in the morning and again in the afternoon. Participants preselected work groups in which they wished to take part at the time of registration. Each work session was led by a facilitator; scribes took notes and marked comments on large wall charts. Subject matter experts were available in each work group to serve as a resource. At the close of the Summit, scribes and facilitators developed work session reports.

Work groups were divided into the following topic areas:

- Civic and Social Engagement
- Communication and Outreach
- Employment
- Health and Wellness/Home and Community Based Services
- Housing and Zoning
- Safety
- Transportation and Mobility

Participants had access to background information and topic-specific materials for reading prior to the Summit. The numbers of participants in each group varied widely. The Health and Wellness morning group had the largest number of participants, with more than 140 Summit attendees taking part.

Facilitators had an annotated agenda recommending issues to be covered and direction of conversation, but because of the variations in group size, facilitators had discretion on how to organize each group discussion. Each group was asked to consider diversity, technology, and partnerships in discussions.

Some of the groups identified specific priorities, which are indicated in the following reports. Details from both morning and afternoon sessions were combined into one report per topic area and may be seen in the individual reports that follow.

Cross-cutting Issues. The issues below emerged as important across several different topic areas:

- **Communication/Outreach/Education** for both informing residents about programs and services and educating them about ways to improve their health, safety, and quality of life. Of special interest in many groups was the ability to reach out to diverse audiences.
- **Adoption of technology** to improve exchange of information, monitor health, improve safety, and enhance overall quality of life.
- **Transportation options** that allow seniors to get where they need or want to go as a way ensure that older residents can live and thrive in the County.
- **Housing.** Most seniors prefer to remain in their own homes or in the community if possible. The ability to live and remain in Montgomery County with safe, affordable, and accessible housing is a key concern across all segments of our population.
- **Volunteerism** as a way to promote intergenerational activities, prevent social isolation, enhance job skills, provide transportation, and disseminate information.
- **Intergenerational Activities** that flow in both directions provide value to the community as a whole.
- **Training** of health care providers and aides, police and fire personnel, individual volunteers and organizations serving older adults.
- **Partnerships.** Because government alone cannot accomplish all of its many goals for meeting seniors' needs and interests, it is essential to enlist participation of partners in many efforts.
- **Diversity.** Montgomery County has the largest share of Hispanic and Asian elderly in the state and has other diverse groups of older adult residents. This demographic shift drives efforts to reach out to, work with, and respond to needs and interests of all cultural, ethnic, and faith-based sectors of our County.

WORK SESSION: CIVIC AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Challenges

- **Communicating civic engagement opportunities**
 - Lack of awareness of available County resources;
 - Lack of computer and internet access;
 - Strong preference for paper-based communications, which are growing fewer with the recent closing of the Gazette.
 - Diversity in languages and cultures—and insufficient translated materials; and
 - Insufficient awareness of the importance of accessing information via the internet.



- **Access to civic engagement opportunities**

- Most opportunities are in central locations and in the absence of adequate transportation become inaccessible;
- People prefer to stay close to home;
- There is a lack of culturally sensitivity opportunities. Even the use of the term “civic engagement” is not effective. People respond better to “community involvement” for example.

- **Need to expand partnership network with government to address challenges and promote opportunities for collaboration**

- Benefit from the sheer number of older adults who retire and have many assets to share with their community;
- Villages are an emerging opportunity for grassroots civic engagement;
- Senior buildings, civic associations, and homeowner association are good places for information dissemination;
- Intergenerational programming is mutually beneficial (i.e., a group of older adults in Clarksburg teaching school children about local history);
- Partnerships with Montgomery County Public Schools and faith communities especially around diverse communities; and
- Staffing shortages in County facilities create opportunities for volunteer staff.

Solutions and Opportunities

- Give homeowners and civic associations information on translation services;
- Encourage businesses and the County government to include civic engagement resources in employee exit interviews;
- Create an incentive program for older adults to volunteer, as even small incentives can be a significant motivator. For example, cover cost for Montgomery College courses, offer gift cards, lunches, stipends, internships, etc.;
- Energize the senior population to become more engaged and offer their talents. Change language to talk about the idea of community engagement rather than civic engagement or community involvement.
- Talk to younger generations about services available to their aging family members, and provide them information on aging well in the County;
- Develop mentorship programs with the schools;
- Partner with Chambers of Commerce, corporate volunteer council;
- In diverse communities, people connect on an individual basis. Use the family units to develop connections within the community;



- Go to where older adults “hang out” (be creative);
- Offer more social opportunities (as opposed to tasks or education) to connect with cultural organizations, such as the Chinese American Senior Services Association and faith-based mosques, churches, etc.;
- Convene an intergenerational summit; and
- Promote intergenerational experience by exploring ways to break the silo among the age groups.

Partnerships

- Montgomery County Public Schools
- Civic Associations
- County “Villages,” senior residences, homeowner associations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Corporate Volunteer Council of Montgomery County
- Media: The Beacon, radio stations such as WAMU, WETA
- Technology businesses such as Comcast

Priorities

- Information dissemination
- Transportation
- Accessibility from technical, language, and geographical perspectives
- Intergenerational programming
- Volunteerism

WORK SESSION: COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

Challenges

- There is still much people don’t know;
- People do not know where to find needed information; there is need to improve ability to get the information to the intended audience of seniors and their caregivers;
- There is a need to get information to the 28 percent of people who do not use the internet; and
- Technology is both an opportunity and a challenge.

Solutions/Opportunities/Priorities

- Improve outreach to seniors and their caregivers and families:
 - o Reach seniors where they congregate, such as doctors’ offices, beauty salons and barbershops, faith-based settings, and other businesses;
 - o Empower the 28 percent who do not regularly use the internet with printed information, use of radio and television, and greater availability of County materials;
 - o For Paperless Airplane, include information by region, i.e., “Activities in Gaithersburg,” Activities in Olney,” etc.;
 - o Use volunteers to provide outreach and community presence in the place of County staff when needed;

- o Encourage the Beacon to:
 - Publish information about County programs, perhaps via a pull-out section;
 - Publish existing fliers;
 - Transform the Seniors Today cable TV show into a Beacon column; and
 - Translate and publish in ethnic media;
- o In translations, use language sensitive to culture; and
- o Utilize culturally specific radio, often the preferred communication tool of diverse audiences.
- There needs to be a single, well-publicized point for obtaining information:
 - o Clarify/publicize the difference between using 311 and 240-777-3000;
 - o Consider use of a 211 number for social services, such as some other jurisdictions use; and
 - o Implement a way for the public to let staff at the 311 number know if information they provide is incorrect.
- Invest in and improve marketing:
 - o Undertake a major multimedia campaign, including public service announcements with private marketing partners to brand the County as a leading place to age; use fun, inspiring messages;
 - o Determine which resources and issues are most frequently accessed by seniors and use for planning purposes;
 - o Advertise where to get information
 - Montgomery County Senior Website
 - 240-777-3000
 - The Beacon
 - o Tailor messages to different age groups, as 50-year olds may need different information than older adults; and
 - o Embrace use of the word “senior” (rather than “older adult,” as it simplifies searches on websites).
- Improve Senior website:
 - o Create a webmaster position specifically for the senior website;
 - o Ensure that all information is correct and timely;
 - o Eliminate use of acronyms;
 - o Make website look more as if it were designed for seniors and less for in-house (government) staff;
 - o Centralize information, simplify navigation of websites, including Aging and Disability’s and ensure that information is available in different languages; and
 - o Ensure that it is easy for seniors to sign up for list serves, alerts, and other information.
- Increase seniors’ use of technology:
 - o Involve young people in training seniors to use technology;
 - o Develop ongoing, perhaps weekly training classes;
 - o Expand provision of information via smart phones and tablets;

- o Anticipate that the seniors being trained and the technology they use both are changing with age and time, so that there is a continuum for training and education;
- o Institute seminars and workshops on technology at the 50+ Employment Expo; and
- o Identify alternatives for providing computer support in-home and at other settings.

Partnerships

- Ethnic media;
- Schools where young people could work with older residents on use of technology;
- Colleges and other life-long learning organizations with free or low-cost classes for seniors;
- The Beacon;
- Jewish Council for the Aging;
- Fire and police departments; and
- Libraries.

WORK SESSION: EMPLOYMENT

Challenges

- Age and disability discrimination, including physical appearance and misperceptions that older people lack skills, seniors are willing to work for free, increased liability, etc.;
- Lack of recognition of skills of older population;
- Digital divide: Importance of keeping older population educated and up to date on technology; so many things today are online or computer-based. Job seekers and employees must be trained and have access to online resources;
- Need for enhanced communication about jobs and training opportunities to enhance skills and/or start own business; and
- Need for recent and continuing learning and skills, which are important to employers.

Solutions/Opportunities

- Find models in other jurisdictions such as Baltimore's Black Charities, which helps low-income workers move up the ladder;
- Expand information and access to successful programs already being offered in the County;
- Encourage volunteerism as a step toward (re)employment; build volunteer experiences with the goal of being hired and encourage hiring employers to credit volunteer work experience as equivalent to paid work experience;
- Develop a comprehensive outreach program that includes both traditional and nontraditional sites such as pharmacies and grocery stores; at regional centers, designate specific hours for career information;



- Develop programs to help County employees and other workers plan for “what’s next” as they plan for retirement;
- Encourage the government to be a model in hiring, training and maintaining older workers;
- Educate employers and County management about the value of hiring seniors. Consider deconstructing jobs and making segments part-time;
- Seek input from employers about the most valued qualities they seek in employees; and
- Consider developing intergenerational opportunities for training and mentoring.

Partnerships

- Other jurisdictions, perhaps with a joint summit;
- Housing Opportunity Commission—consider its Self-Sufficiency Program, which encourages development of skills;
- Jewish Council for the Aging and its career center and trainings;
- RSVP for linkages with job seekers;
- Businesses and nonprofits to determine most important qualities of hiring older worker;
- Schools to develop intergenerational training and education programs; and
- Colleges for access to their career development resources and classes.

Priorities

- Make County government a model for older worker employment and pre-retirement planning;
- Create a community wide outreach effort to inform older adults about existing resources for finding job opportunities;
- Create one center for older adult employment with wrap-around services;
- Provide age-specific job training;
- Initiate work force development for home care workers, match ESL caregivers with people who speak the same language;
- Expand intergenerational programming on technology skills; and
- Provide information on volunteer opportunities to help seniors keep and build needed job skills.



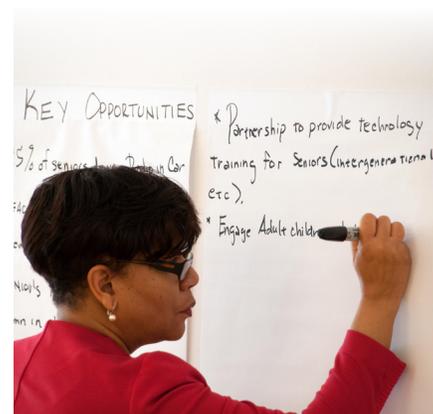
WORK SESSION: HEALTH AND WELLNESS/HOME AND COMMUNITY - BASED SUPPORT

Challenges

- Needed improvements in Maryland nursing homes;
- Transportation and accessibility;
- Funding for home care;
- Need for friendly visitors for homebound;
- Differences in needs of seniors based on range of age (from age 60 to 100);
- Difficulty of navigating through County system and services;
- Follow-up after help has been given;
- Denial of need and reluctance to ask for help;
- Identification and education of family caregiver;
- Financial issues: access to health care, donut hole; and
- prescription costs.

Solutions/Opportunities

- Conduct more outreach and education:
 - Use vans to get information to the public;
 - Widely promote *Seniors Today*;
 - Use Social media and begin education process with Boomers;
 - Empower Villages by offering information for their residents;
 - Educate home care providers and home health aides;
 - Educate individuals on self-care, caregiving, and linkages to needed health care services;
 - Reach out to newcomers, immigrants, including undocumented; and
 - Address misperceptions about aging.
- Involve different sectors of the public in supporting seniors:
 - Promote neighbor-to-neighbor activities (particularly in multi-cultural settings);
 - Engage young professionals, possibly through an arrangement of academic credit for further education and/or stipends; and
 - Promote and increase Intergenerational programs and opportunities — as a way for individuals to give back.
- Enhance/improve services:
 - Incorporate technology into overall strategy;
 - Simplify access to services so that it is not all web-based;
 - Initiate and educate about a 211 number to access senior services, or put all services under 311;
 - Create a one-stop shop for health care supporting the Area Agency on Aging and the Crisis Center;
 - Increase and enhance caregiver services, possibly through HHS coordination, coalition, and regulation;



- Tailor services to individual rather than “one size fits all”;
- Develop corps of navigators to help individuals and organizations find the best solutions for the client via “case management” type of model or use of organizations such as Villages;
- Address the need for mental health services in both facilities and community;
- Standardize and streamline discharge planning;
- Train direct care workers and develop workforce for future health care needs; and
- Assist with individual needs through transition from independent to assisted living and vice-versa;
- Focus on diversity issues with cultural programs and funding;
- Promote faith-based nursing to provide home care in various diverse communities;
- Adjust the scale for assisted living so that more people would be eligible for assisted living rather than forced to go to a nursing home;
- Recycle assistive devices;
- Initiate a time/dollar (barter) program through the Volunteer Center;
- Nutrition:
 - Assist with SNAP and food stamp program; simplify application for food stamps
 - Expand diversity of nutrition program to reflect County population.

Partnerships

- Faith-based nurses
- Community organizations, including faith-based
- Hospitals
- Recreation Department and Parks
- The media
- Villages

Priorities

- Communication and education about services, resources, providers, Medicare
- Housing
- Health (including in-Home assistance and help, dental care and hearing aids) aimed at healthy aging, promoting exercise and social interaction
- Transportation and mobility
- Social isolation



WORK SESSIONS: HOUSING AND ZONING

Challenges

- Lack of affordable, accessible, and visitable housing for seniors;
- Limited resources (money from federal, state and local governments); limited financial resources is by far the greatest challenge the County faces. Substantial cuts and reductions in federal housing programs. (The federal push for renovating public housing further limits new development);
- Rent stabilization as a way to help seniors age in place;
- Extensive need for housing for individuals with mental health needs, dementia;
- Housing for abused seniors;
- Home maintenance;
- Lack of knowledge and understanding about housing programs that are available to residents of Montgomery County;
- Cost of housing in Montgomery County;
- Warehousing of seniors in communities away from their homes by the industry of assisted living instead of encouraging seniors to stay in the community;
- Lack of developer interest in building accessible housing despite Design for Life Program;
- Timeframe for developing needed housing; and
- Need for many code/policy changes including tax credits/mandatory living standards, visitability, Design for Life.

Solutions and Opportunities

- Examine, understand, apply lessons about barriers, challenges, cost, and timeframe issue from emerging plans for senior housing in County and elsewhere, including:
 - Silver Spring
 - Glenmont
 - White Flint
 - Shelter Housing
 - Nexus Montgomery
 - Housing Opportunity Commission
 - Green House Model Nursing Home (Baltimore, MD)
 - Generations of Hope, Washington DC (intergenerational living)
- Promote Intergenerational housing as beneficial to all:
 - Encourage intergenerational communities, development;
 - Build senior housing near schools for intergenerational activities; and



- Ensure that private entities be accountable when purchasing senior housing.
- Maximize existing possibilities for additional housing:
 - Add “granny” pods to existing structures;
 - Match people with extra room in their homes with people who need a living space;
 - Consider generational approach (i.e., single mother needing coaching from older person); and
 - Retrofit homes for those who want to stay in place.
- Capitalize on use of technology by and for seniors:
 - Computers and computer training;
 - Smart home sensors;
 - Safety technology in kitchen;
 - Medication management;
 - Medical appointment reminders;
 - Self-climbing wheelchairs;
 - Robots to reduce isolation and perform tasks; and
 - Fall prevention.
- Explore and implement policy changes related to development:
 - Conduct market research on future demand in Montgomery County for senior housing;
 - Standardize in code tax credits for senior housing/mandatory livable standards, visibility, design for life (i.e., Arizona);
 - Rewrite tax credit language in simple language, and in many languages;
 - Mandate Universal Design;
 - Increase the number of group home/assisted living units;
 - Promote intergenerational housing;
 - Review all assets owned for potential housing development sites, including air rights over County-owned public buildings such as garages, public libraries, schools, etc.;
 - Use County renovation of senior and community centers to add senior living apartments on top of those buildings;
 - Increase high density high rises near Metro;
 - Modify zoning to allow elder cottages and PODS;
 - Address problems related to cost of fees for development and length of approval process. Fast track Montgomery County process (streamline registration hurdles, lower fees);
 - Design a demonstration model program to support revisions;



- Require developers to commit a certain percentage of senior affordable housing in any development plan;
- Hold information sessions at service centers to answer questions;
- Change the County or home owners' association rules to allow existing home owners to add a disability friendly room on their premises; and
- Encourage more affordable housing for middle income in Bethesda, Chevy Chase corridor.
- Explore/implement policy changes related to affordability and accessibility:
 - Perform comprehensive review of eligibility criteria for social services; consider raising criteria levels. (Consider the Department of Health and Human Services' Working Parents Assistance Program as a model reference for income restrictions);
 - Modify Medicaid Waiver Program; end waitlist for Medicaid Waiver Program so seniors do not have to wait years or go into a Skilled Nursing Facility to receive care with Activities of Daily Living;
 - Revise State Medicaid Waiver Program to allow for funding affordable assisted living;
 - Create a sliding scale for assisted living;
 - Establish rent stabilization;
 - Use the self-sufficiency standard as the eligibility standard for services;
 - Increase/add tax credits for accessible housing and developers wanting to create senior housing in the County;
 - Support clustered care need for home care services in small increments that allows seniors to share the cost of one health care provider and pay a percentage of that health care providers' daily rate instead of each paying for an entire day. The Nexus Montgomery pilot program with affordable senior communities currently is exploring this concept;
 - Establish transitional and long-term housing for abused seniors who cannot afford to go home because of money or unsafe conditions;
 - Create affordable worker/family housing adjacent to industrial facility where land costs may be less expensive for families and/or employees may have easy access to work; and
 - Continue participating in Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS) program.

Partnerships

- A new taskforce to develop the idea of public/private partnerships to address the varied and layered housing issues for the aging population among:
 - Developers;
 - Providers of entire continuum of housing;
 - Villages;



- Faith communities; and
- Technology companies (seniors are a growth segment of their market).
- Between and among hospitals, home care providers, pharmacies, health care providers and independent housing communities to enhance services (cluster-care);
- State Cost Containment Commission;
- Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission;
- Homecare companies to bring services to people who want to remain at home (such as “care share” program) so that seniors can purchase a menu of care and plan appointments in 15-minute increments;
- Public-private partnership with a bank such as Sandy Spring to create a low-interest loan program, which would allow entrepreneurs to purchase homes (some of which may be in foreclosure), rehab them and create small group homes for residents with challenges of aging, disability or mental illness; and
- A public-private partnership to address the need for housing for individuals with early onset dementia (people in their 40’s, 50’s, and 60’s) whose needs are not currently being met by existing assisted living or skilled nursing facilities.

Priorities: Short-Term Goals (1 year)

- Conduct outreach and education about available resources:
 - Place a Senior Service Coordinator on staff at senior housing buildings to provide seminars/discussions in nearby communities and at libraries;
 - Widely inform residents about property tax credits for those aging in place, especially for those who are above poverty line/low middle class;
 - Hold a series of seminars for seniors and families on serious issues and benefits of living in the County;
 - Promote the one phone number for senior issues: 240-777-3000; have a person respond to telephone inquiries rather than an automated system;
 - Educate the community about Aging in Place with multigenerational housing/models in other areas;
 - Educate the public, developers, appraisers, and investors about universal design;
 - Communicate to residents who are owners of single family homes about resources available to renovate so they can age in place; and
 - Hire one expert for County senior housing issues.



Priorities - Long Term Goals (3 years)

- Change State Medicaid cap;
- Build more affordable housing;
- Find ways to provide more wrap-around services;
- Subsidize assisted living;
- Create tax credits or otherwise encourage builders to build houses that will be accessible for multi-generations;
- Provide tax credits/incentives to support senior housing development;
- Dedicate more money to affordable housing;
- Partner with the faith-based organizations for senior housing;
- Raise eligibility criteria for social services, Medicaid Waiver program;
- Encourage land development for senior housing;
- Ensure accessible housing policy for all new construction and that there be correct design from project inception (affordable, accessible, visitable);
- Simplify development procedures/costs;
- Support development of green buildings (Green House Model in New Hampshire);
- Change zoning code to allow for PODS and granny cottages; and
- Improve services for seniors with mental health needs in independent housing.

WORK SESSION: SAFETY

Challenges

- Lack of education and awareness of safety devices for seniors;
- Large and growing operations of telephone and other scams directed at seniors;
- Lack of training about elder abuse, mental health issues in managing interactions with disabled and elderly among:
 - Police and emergency medical response technicians (elder abuse and mental health issues)
 - Volunteers who assist seniors
 - Hospitals and healthcare providers about when to report suspected abuse
 - The general public
- Lack of follow-up by safety personnel after report of crime/threats;
- Pedestrian safety;
- Welfare of seniors in multiple-dwelling residences;
- Hoarding;
- Insufficient background checking for hiring private caregivers;
- Fear of police due to immigration status.



Solutions

- Driver Safety:
 - Use of emerging companies like Uber and Lyft;
 - Putting car keys away;
 - Educating seniors about how to use buses and other available transportation; and
 - Decreasing rate of able-bodied people parking in handicapped spaces.
- Pedestrian Safety:
 - Educate about how to be a safe pedestrian;
 - Paint parking blocks to prevent falls;
 - Lengthen crosswalk time; and
 - Place additional police on streets.
- Home safety:
 - Continued home inspections by Fire and Rescue and other security providers;
 - Use of available technology;
 - Free caller ID;
 - Calls to police when fraud is suspected; and
 - Changes in condominium and homeowner association laws to enhance welfare of older residents.

Key Partners

- AARP driver safety program;
- Policy, transportation, and other safety officials;
- Emergency medical personnel;
- Volunteer organizations;
- Homeowners associations, Villages, and HOC residences; and
- Media for public education, public service announcements about the issues of concern.

Priorities

- Education and training for the public as well as for police, EMTs, volunteers about working with the senior population and issues of elder abuse;
- Pedestrian safety:
 - Uniformity in (state and County) street signs and crosswalks;
 - Longer crossing times; and
 - Additional police presence on street targeted to high-risk areas.
- Public education about contacts:
 - Who to contact;
 - “See Something, Say Something;” and
 - Phone numbers (311, 240-777-3000).
- Safety in shopping education programs
 - Smoking and related safety issues.



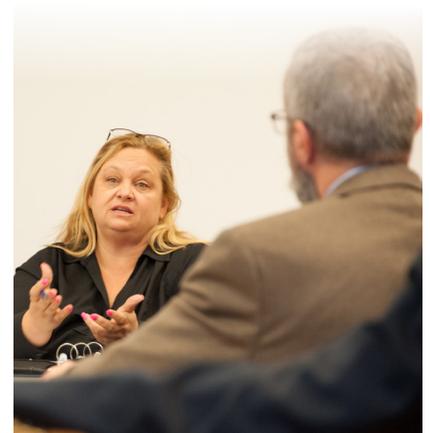
WORK SESSION: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Key Challenges

- Transportation is vital for keeping older adults in their homes.
- Routes do not take seniors everywhere they want to go, especially Upcounty and in rural areas.
- Some seniors fear public transportation:
 - Inability to walk distance to bus stop;
 - Inability to stand;
 - Fear of falling on bus;
 - Difficulty of managing transfers; and
 - Undependable bus schedule.
- Affordability of transportation for those on fixed incomes can be difficult.
- There is a need to address older driver safety and needs of those transitioning from driving.
- Seniors could benefit from technology (like trip planning tools and RideOn apps) but may not be comfortable with it.
- People using wheelchairs often need to reserve transportation well ahead of time.
- Solutions may require a combination of approaches.

Solutions

- **Educate the public (the top priority identified by both break-out groups)**
 - Use both traditional methods of communicating and new electronic methods.
 - Give attention to needs of those not comfortable with English.
 - Be sensitive to cultural diversity regarding where/how people get their information.
 - Send transportation resource information to points of contact at senior housing facilities.
 - Place advertising about special programs on buses (including Metro Access vans) and bus shelters.
 - Reach out to doctors' offices, drugstores, and the faith community.
 - Mobilize consumers as transportation ambassadors who can share resource information with peers.
 - Standardize age of eligibility for programs to clear any confusion in messaging about options.



- **Ensure a safe travel environment for seniors (high priority for both groups).**
 - Improve safety for pedestrians by improving and expanding sidewalks, lighting, crosswalks, signal timing, and signage. Address issues like snow removal and overgrown vegetation.
 - Add benches to allow seniors to rest along their routes.
 - Add or improve signage to help those who may be disoriented or need reassurance.
 - Educate the public to “wear white at night.”
 - Consider prohibiting right-turn-on-red at more intersections where there are many pedestrians.
- **Make transportation more affordable**
 - Extend free hours for RideOn and Metrobus, ideally to 24/7.
 - Lower required age for free buses.
 - Expand Call-N-Ride program eligibility.
- **Consider safety of older drivers and those transitioning from driving.**
 - Increase the font size of road signs and include symbols/icons where possible.
 - Add more signs to provide directional support for drivers.
 - Educate families of older drivers about the availability of alternatives.
 - Support families as they help loved ones transition.
 - Encourage seniors to explore alternatives while still driving to decrease difficulty of giving up the keys
- **Promote and support ride sharing and volunteer transportation** and help volunteer programs with necessities such as criminal background checks of volunteer drivers, ride scheduling software, secondary insurance protection, and recruiting bilingual volunteer drivers.
- **Bring services to seniors’ homes.**
 - Some seniors may prefer to receive some services at home, such as health care and groceries.
 - Promote use of technology such as Skype for virtual visits, and help with paperwork.



Partnerships

- Public, private and non-profit providers working together, such as:
 - Existing transportation providers, taxicab companies, transportation network companies (such as Uber and Lyft);
 - Volunteer organizations (Aging in Place Villages; The Senior Connection: HELP organizations, etc.); and
 - Companies that develop scheduling software and medical information sharing technology (IT Curves, etc.)

Priorities

- Educate the public;
- Ensure a safe travel environment for seniors;
- Expand affordable options;
- Increase availability of accessible transportation;
- Consider safety of older drivers and those transitioning from driving; and
- Increase ride-sharing and other volunteer programs.

Summit Evaluation

Following the event, attendees provided feedback to Summit planners via an online evaluation form. Ninety-five of the more than 400 attendees completed the evaluation survey. Responses were highly positive about the event, with more than 90 percent rating the Summit as good, very good, or excellent and as meeting or exceeding their expectations. Nearly all rated the information presented as helpful.

Many attendees reported being impressed by the breadth and depth of services that the County provides for seniors and that the Summit helped them better understand the range of services available. Participants also reported appreciation for the opportunity the Summit offered for new contacts and partnerships. Many expressed willingness to help in many areas of services and programs for seniors, including partnerships, volunteer activities, housing, aging at home, transportation, caregiving, homelessness, dementia care, interfaith activities, communications, and more.

Attendees also offered a wide range of ideas about priorities and challenges facing County seniors, areas in which they would have liked more discussion during the event, and ideas for improving a future Summit. These insights will help the County and its partners define a “Common Operation Picture” and translate these findings into priorities and initiatives to make Montgomery County “A Community for a Lifetime.” For more details, see link to complete report in Appendix, Evaluation Report p.43.



Appendices

Summit on Aging 2015 Resources

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/senior_summit/summit-2015.html

Advisory Committee Members

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/senior_summit/Members.html

Montgomery County: A Community for a Lifetime – Summary of Accomplishments

Web: http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/accomp_summit_on_aging_2008-2015-1.pdf

Video: [Montgomery County: Celebrating Everyone's Community for a Lifetime \(video\)](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npwL0Ib3TEg&feature=youtu.be>

Read Ahead papers:

- [Civic and Social Engagement](#)
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/Civic_and_Social_Engagement_2015.pdf

- [Communications and Outreach](#)
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/Communications_2015.pdf

- [Diversity](#)
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/graying_and_browning_of_America.pdf

- [Employment](#)
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/Employment_2015.pdf

- [Health and Wellness](#)
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/Health_and_Wellness_2015-1.pdf

- [Home and Community Based Support Services](#)
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/Home_and_Community-Based_Support_Services_2015.pdf

- [Housing](#)
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/Housing_2015.pdf

- [Safety](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/Safety_2015-1.pdf)
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/Safety_2015-1.pdf
- [The State of Technology Use Among Older Adults in the U.S.](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/techpaper_pew_study.pdf) http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/techpaper_pew_study.pdf
- [Transportation and Mobility](http://socialenterprise.georgetown.edu/2015/07/can-technology-keep-pace-with-an-aging-America/)
<http://socialenterprise.georgetown.edu/2015/07/can-technology-keep-pace-with-an-aging-America/>
- **Age Friendly Community Survey** (English | Spanish | Chinese | Farsi/Persian)
- **Age Friendly Community Survey Results (November 2015)**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/AgeFriendly-Com_SurveyAnalysis_151130-1.pdf
- **Summit on Aging Focus Group Report**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agsservices/Resources/Files/SENIOR-SUMMIT-FOCUS-GROUP-SUMMARY.pdf>
- **[The Senior Agenda](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/SeniorAgenda.pdf)**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/summit_2015/SeniorAgenda.pdf
- **Commission on Aging Summer Studies:**
 - o [Commonalities and Differences in Localities](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/Rev112015COA2015A-FLCSummerStudyReport.pdf)
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/Rev112015COA2015A-FLCSummerStudyReport.pdf>
 - o [Long Term Care Services and Supports: Nursing Home Quality](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/2015LTCServicesand-SupportsNursingHomeQualitySummerStudy.pdf)
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/2015LTCServicesand-SupportsNursingHomeQualitySummerStudy.pdf>
- **[County Executive's Closing Remarks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0IAf85FxKk&feature=player_embedded)**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0IAf85FxKk&feature=player_embedded
- **Certificate: Montgomery County as Age Friendly Community**
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/Certificate%20-%20Montgomery%20County%20-%20Age%20Friendly%20Community%20\(AARP\).pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/Certificate%20-%20Montgomery%20County%20-%20Age%20Friendly%20Community%20(AARP).pdf)
- **Certificate: Montgomery County as Dementia Friendly Community**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/CERTIFICATE-%20Montgomery%20County%20-%20Dementia%20Friendly%20America.pdf>
- **Summit Evaluation Report**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/SummitSurvey_Results.pdf
- **Memo to AARP re: Age-Friendly Community (pdf)**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/Letter%20from%20CE%20Leggett%20to%20AARP%20re%20Age%20Friendly.pdf>







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