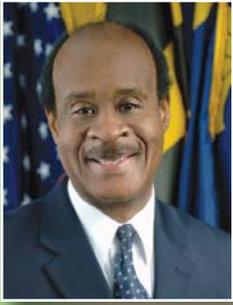


Age-Friendly Montgomery: A Community for a Lifetime

A Three-Year Action Plan





On behalf of Montgomery County, Maryland, and its residents, I am proud to present this three-year, Age-Friendly Action Plan. This plan reflects our dedication to making Montgomery County a safe, livable place where people can age, remain and thrive with dignity and respect—A Community for a Lifetime.

Montgomery County has a rapidly changing and increasingly diverse population, with the number of residents ages 65 and older expected to more than double between 2010 and 2040, from nine percent to 20 percent. Older residents are at the heart of our vibrant community. Montgomery County has a long history of commitment to Age-Friendly principles and has worked over many years to design and implement processes and programs to ensure an age-friendly environment.

In 2008, I convened a Senior Summit, an early demonstration of our commitment to ensuring that Montgomery County seniors and their caregivers are treated with dignity and respect and have access to a range of services to age in the community with safety, independence and choice. This event was attended by nearly 400 participants including business leaders, faith community representatives, nonprofit organizations, advocates and consumers, as well as elected representatives and appointed officials from local, State and federal government. Attendees identified key areas in which to promote senior vital living. At that time, I established a “Subcabinet on Senior Vital Living” to monitor the progress in achieving goals set in each area. In May of 2012, I proposed “A Community for a Lifetime: The Senior Agenda” developed by the Commission on Aging, which was ratified in December 2012.

To further highlight the value of seniors to our community, remain accountable to the goals identified at the 2008 Senior Summit, and identify additional opportunities for improvement, I convened the December 2015 “County Executive’s Summit on Aging in Montgomery County.” At the event the County enrolled in the AARP/World Health Organization (WHO) Age-Friendly Communities Network and designated an “Age-Friendly Community.” The County Council and I endorsed this effort, which had been championed by the Commission on Aging. The network provides a framework for developing a comprehensive approach toward ensuring that the needs of older adults and all residents are recognized and addressed. The County is working with community leaders and partners from nonprofit, business, faith-based and ethnic communities in ten specific domains to examine, address and strategically plan programs and services for our richly diverse community. Those domains include Civic and Social Involvement, Communications and Outreach, Elder Abuse Prevention, Employment, Health and Wellness, Home and Community-Based Services, Housing, Open Spaces and Buildings, Senior Public Safety, and Transportation and Mobility.

In partnership with BrightFocus® Foundation, the County also enrolled in the Dementia Friendly America initiative (<http://www.brightfocus.org/alzheimers/news/brightfocus-foundation-joins-montgomery-county-md-alzheimers-campaign>). This national initiative creates communities that better recognize and help those affected with dementia, their families and care partners. In implementing Dementia-Friendly Montgomery, the County is working closely with local partners, businesses and other community organizations. In December 2016, the County announced public safety efforts that strengthen the respect, support and empowerment we offer to individuals and families living with dementia. The two programs, Age-Friendly Montgomery County and Dementia Friendly Montgomery County, are collaborating closely to benefit all County residents.

Much of what we have accomplished already rests on the shoulders of our senior residents, through their hard work and taxes paid, their volunteerism, and their involvement in civic activities. We owe them much gratitude. We also must acknowledge the hard work of the many County officials and staff, along with nonprofit, business and community partners who have helped make possible our successes to date and with whose help we will continue to improve and expand on those successes.

This action plan is part of an evolving process. There are many challenges, but as we strive to meet the needs of residents of all ages, we look forward to ensuring that Montgomery County is a vibrant, livable Age-Friendly community for generations to come.

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Isiah Leggett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Isiah Leggett
Montgomery County Executive

Age-Friendly Montgomery County: A Community for a Lifetime

A THREE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

Table of Contents	Executive Summary	4
	Introduction	6
	Montgomery County: A Snapshot	7
	A Profile of Montgomery County Seniors	12
	Background, History and Accomplishments	17
	2008 Senior Summit	
	Accomplishments 2008-2015	
	2015 Summit on Aging	
	Essential Input from Montgomery County Seniors	21
	Age-Friendly Community Survey	
	Focus Groups	
	Three Year Strategic Plan: Process, Missions and Priorities	23
	Process	
	Crosscutting Issues	
	Mission Statements and Priorities by Domain	
Plan Assessment		
Age-Friendly Action Plans by Domain	27	

Additional Information	AARP Livability Index
	2015 Summit on Aging Accomplishments
	County Executive Decision Memorandum
	Age-Friendly Community Survey
	Focus Group Report
	AARP/WHO Checklist
	Age-Friendly Advisory Group Membership
	Age-Friendly Work Group Membership

Additional Reading	Better Together: A Comparative Analysis of Age-Friendly and Dementia Friendly Communities (AARP)
	Cities and Communities Take A Stand Against Ageism (WHO)
	Economic Case for Seniors (Huffington Post)
	The Ideal Place to Grow Old (New York Times)

Alternative formats of this report are available upon request. Call 240-777-3000 or Maryland Relay 711. If you do not have access to the Internet you may request printed copies of any of the additional information listed. Call 240-777-3000 or Maryland Relay 711.

Acknowledgements	We gratefully acknowledge all those who participated in creating this plan. We especially want to recognize Uma Ahluwalia, Director of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and Gabriel Albornoz, Director of the Department of Recreation, for their leadership of the Senior Subcabinet on Vital Living (subsequently renamed the Montgomery County Age-Friendly Advisory Group) and Drs. Jay Kenney and Odile Brunetto of DHHS' Aging and Disability Services for their leadership and guidance for the domain work groups. We value the work of Marcia Pruzan, who as senior fellow for the Age-Friendly Advisory Group, has written this report and spent countless hours compiling the recommendations and reports from the domain work groups. Thank you to Dennis Linders and CountyStat staff for providing the statistical data necessary for building this plan. We commend all members of the Montgomery County Age-Friendly Work Group and all members of the ten work groups for their significant contributions in developing this plan. Finally, we wish to thank members of the Montgomery County Commission on Aging, who have been instrumental in helping to shape the County's approach to supporting its older residents and for encouraging the County's leadership to enroll in the AARP Age-Friendly Program.
-------------------------	---

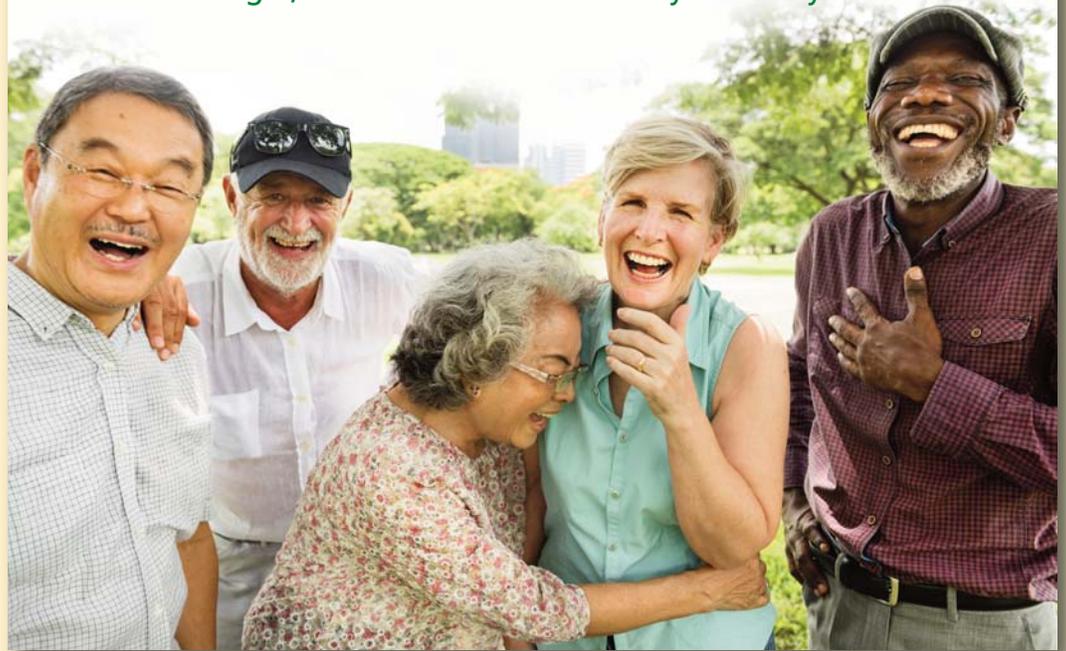
Executive Summary

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.

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

THE VISION

Together with our community partners, the Montgomery County Age-Friendly Advisory Group envisions Montgomery County as a wonderfully diverse Community for a Lifetime, where all residents can remain and thrive as they age and be a powerful resource in making our County a better, stronger, more inclusive community for everyone.



Montgomery County, Maryland, is home to a large, diverse, and rapidly growing older population that makes enormous contributions to the community. Older people lend ongoing expertise and enthusiasm for hard work, provide positive economic impact through their consumerism and contributions to our economy, and actively engage in the volunteer, civic and political life of our area.

Yet many face obstacles and challenges in their daily lives. It is essential to recognize and improve programs and services that address these challenges and create opportunities for people as they age. At the same time, it is important to create opportunities for more active, older people to remain involved in our community.

At the December 2015 Summit on Aging, Montgomery County enrolled in the AARP/World Health Organization (WHO) Age-Friendly Communities Program. The County also enrolled in the Dementia Friendly America Initiative of the Alzheimer's Association and the Bright Focus™ Foundation to ensure that needs of persons with cognitive impairments and their caregivers are addressed. These two programs complement, strengthen and enhance each other and together will provide benefits to the whole community.

The County has a long record of working to meet needs of both active, vital older people and those who are more vulnerable. At the 2015 Summit, the County Executive highlighted an extensive list of accomplishments since the first Senior Summit in 2008, identified many challenges, and invited County staff, partners and stakeholders working in ten specific domains to begin Age-Friendly planning for the next three years. The ten workgroup domains and their missions are:

- 1. Civic and Social Involvement:** To encourage and support vital living for all older adults in Montgomery County by providing opportunities for physical, mental and social interaction.
- 2. Communication and Outreach:** To distribute and publicize recognizable, understandable, timely and accessible information on resources and services for older adults.
- 3. Elder Abuse Prevention:** To protect elderly adults from maltreatment, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of every type through education, intervention and prosecution.
- 4. Employment:** To promote the equitable recruitment and training of workers age 50 and older to enhance their employability and to benefit employers.
- 5. Health and Wellness:** To bring together government and community partners to expand and promote health and wellness, resources and activities for adults age 55+ that help maintain or improve physical, cognitive and emotional health.
- 6. Home and Community Based Services:** To provide Montgomery County residents coordinated, personalized, community-based support allowing them to age safely and with dignity in their communities.
- 7. Housing:** To ensure that Montgomery County older adults will have choices of dwelling types to meet the changing needs and preferences of this population. The County will support initiatives to assist older adults to age in place, downsize, choose rental housing or home ownership. Further, the County will support housing with supportive services so that older adults can remain in their communities.
- 8. Planning, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:** To “change the way we age” by enabling older adults to “stay active, to the fullest extent possible, within all areas of life; physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, vocational, social and environmental. Aging within these dimensions of wellness keeps us alert and enjoying a productive life.” (Adopted from the International Committee on Active Ageing.)
- 9. Senior Public Safety:** To provide physical, financial, and technological protection and safety for older adults.
- 10. Transportation and Mobility:** To provide public and private transportation and mobility systems that enable older adults to go safely where they want to go, when they want to go.

The following plan provides priorities, strategies and action steps in the ten domain areas. Ultimately, the goal is to balance the need to promote vital aging and protect the vulnerable aged.

Age-Friendly Montgomery County: A Three-Year Strategic Plan

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. 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.

Introduction

Montgomery County, Maryland, is home to a large, diverse and rapidly growing older population that makes enormous contributions to the community. Older people lend ongoing expertise and enthusiasm for hard work, provide positive economic impact through their consumerism and taxes paid, and actively engage in the volunteer, civic and political life of our area. At the same time, many face obstacles and challenges in their daily lives. It is essential to recognize and improve programs and services that address challenges and create opportunities for people as they age. This plan provides priorities, strategies and action steps for meeting the needs of our older population. Ultimately, the goal is to balance the need to both promote vital aging and protect the vulnerable aged.

Montgomery County, along with its stakeholders and partners in the community, enrolled in in the AARP/World Health Organization (WHO) Age-Friendly Communities initiative at the December 2015 Montgomery County Summit on Aging. The County also enrolled in the Dementia Friendly America initiative, sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association and the Bright Focus™ Foundation, to engage government and all sectors of the community--business, faith, health care, legal, financial, safety and others to ensure that needs of those with cognitive impairments that emerge with age, and those of their caregivers are addressed and met. These two programs complement, strengthen and enhance each other. Collaboration among the two initiatives and with sectors of the government and community will greatly benefit Montgomery County.

The value of age-friendly planning is enormous. As part of the Age-Friendly Initiative, the County will focus its efforts on ten areas of activity that support and nurture our older residents from diverse communities and backgrounds. Montgomery County planners have decided to work in 10 domains that directly affect the lives of the older population.

1. Civic and Social Involvement
2. Communication and Outreach
3. Elder Abuse Prevention
4. Employment
5. Health and Wellness
6. Home and Community Based Services
7. Housing
8. Planning, Outdoor Spaces, and Buildings
9. Senior Public Safety
10. Transportation and Mobility

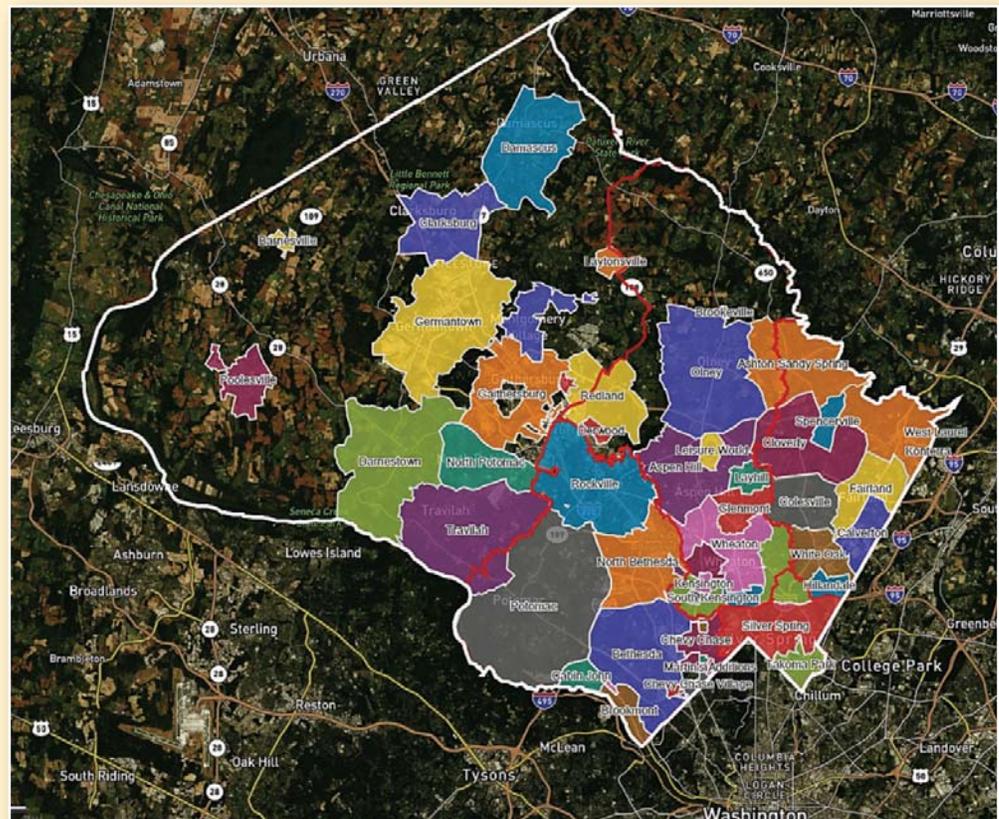
Montgomery County: A Snapshot

Montgomery County, Maryland is located just outside Washington, D.C., and encompasses nearly 500 square miles of suburban and urban areas. It is part of the greater Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, which includes Washington D.C. and the adjoining Maryland and Northern Virginia suburbs. The federal government is the County's largest employer, with the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and several other federal agencies situated in whole or in part in the county.

Montgomery County, named after General Richard Montgomery, was established by the State Convention in 1776 and functioned under the County Commission system until 1948, when voters adopted a charter giving the County home rule and a council-manager form of government. In 1968, voters approved a new charter providing for separate legislative and executive branches of government, with the legislative power vested in an elected council and executive power in an elected county executive. The new charter was fully implemented in 1970 with the November election of an executive and a council. The County Council is currently composed of nine members, four of whom are nominated and elected by voters from the entire county, and five who are elected by voters in each of the county's five councilmanic districts. Terms for the County Executive and County Council are four years. Along with executive departments, the County shares a bi-county planning and parks agency, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, with nearby Prince George's County.

The census divides the county into 215 neighborhoods within the areas of East County, Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Mid-County, Silver Spring and Up-County. Neighborhoods include incorporated cities, towns, villages and municipalities, which enact many of their own laws. The incorporated cities are Rockville, Gaithersburg and Takoma Park. Other incorporated municipalities include Barnesville, Brookeville, Chevy Chase, Friendship Heights, Garrett Park, Glen Echo, Kensington, Laytonsville, Poolesville, Somerset and Washington Grove.

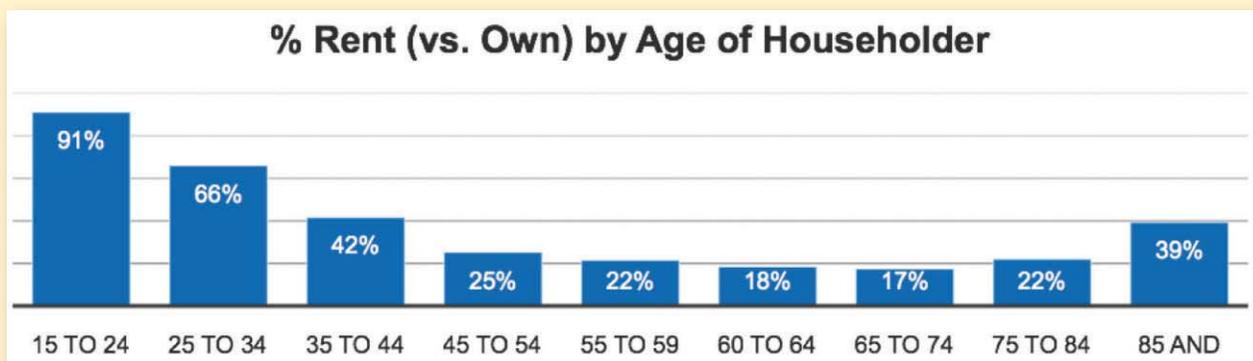
Map: Places in Montgomery County (incorporated and unincorporated as designed by US Census)



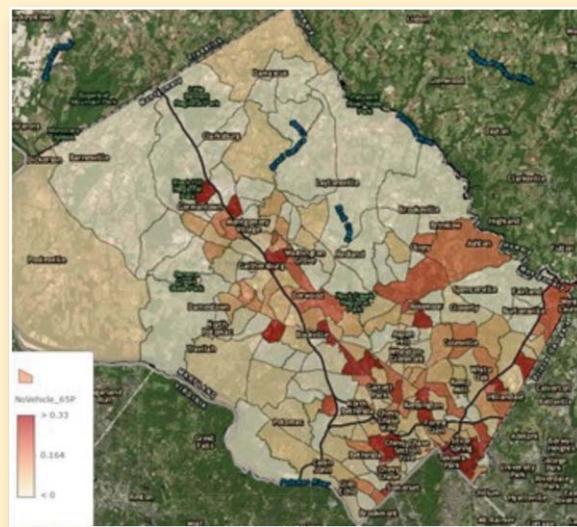
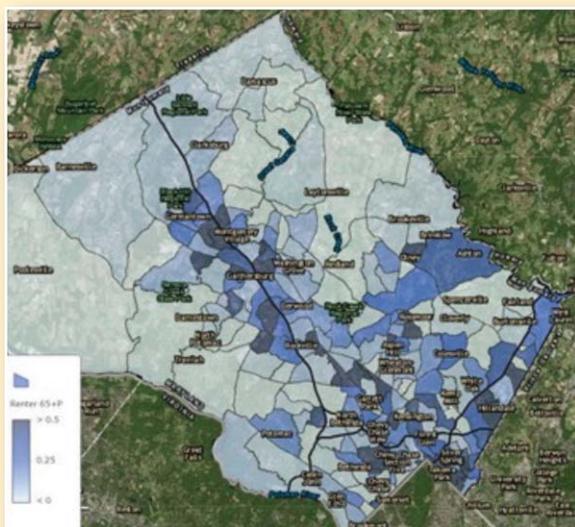
Population

According to the July 2015 U.S. Census, Montgomery County has 1,040,116 residents. It is the most densely populated county in the state. Its resident population ranks among the top half percent in the country on several metrics, including diversity, educational attainment and income. Approximately one-third are foreign born, compared with five percent for counties nationally.

- Montgomery County has an income level that is among the highest in the nation, while its poverty rate is relatively low. The median household income is \$99,435 (U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015) compared with \$58,889 nationally.
- Montgomery County is number one among U.S. counties with populations more than 200,000 for percentage of residents with a PhD.
- In terms of employment, the county is ranked number eight in U.S. for public administration jobs and number ten for jobs in management, business and science.
- More than 50 percent of renters and more than 30 percent of mortgage-holders are considered housing-burdened in Montgomery County (i.e. spend more than 30 percent of household income on housing) (U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2011-2015).
- More than 70,000 residents live under the poverty line, and 19,750 children in the county live in poverty. The highest percentage of residents living in poverty are in the Silver Spring, Wheaton, Montgomery Village and East County areas.
- A growing number of students qualify for free and reduced meals.
- A growing number of students are assessed as eligible for the Limited English Proficiency Program.
- Approximately two-thirds of county households live in owner-occupied housing, including 78 percent of households headed by a senior, age 65+. (U.S. Census, ACS 2011-2015).



- Eight percent of households do not have access to a vehicle, including 17 percent of renters and three percent of homeowners. This rate doubles among households headed by seniors (65+), with 16 percent not having access to a vehicle, including 72 percent of renters and six percent of homeowners (U.S. Census ACS, 2011-2015).



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2013

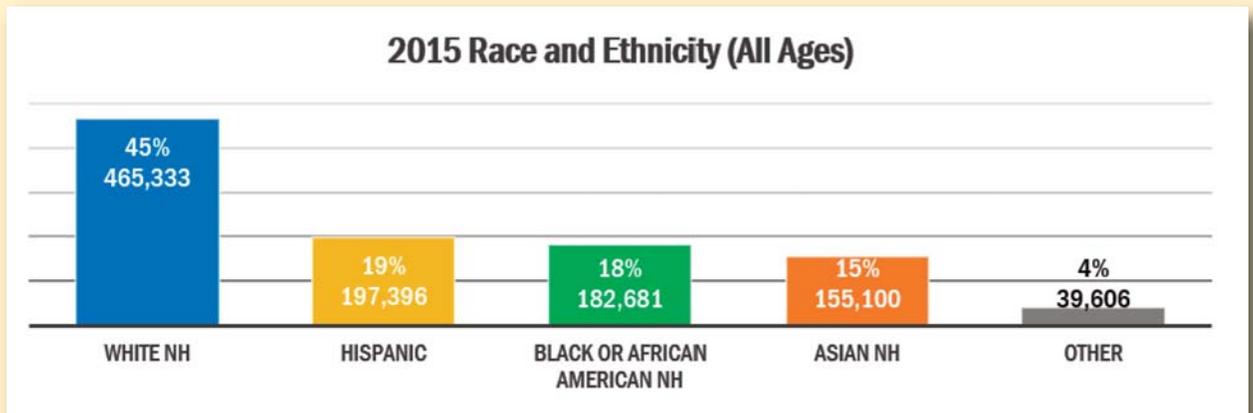
Health

Montgomery County ranks as Maryland's healthiest county in the annual County Health Rankings (CHR) for Maryland. The CHR, a collaboration of the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, compares counties within each state on more than 30 factors that impact health, including social determinants such as education, jobs, housing, exercise, commuting times and more.

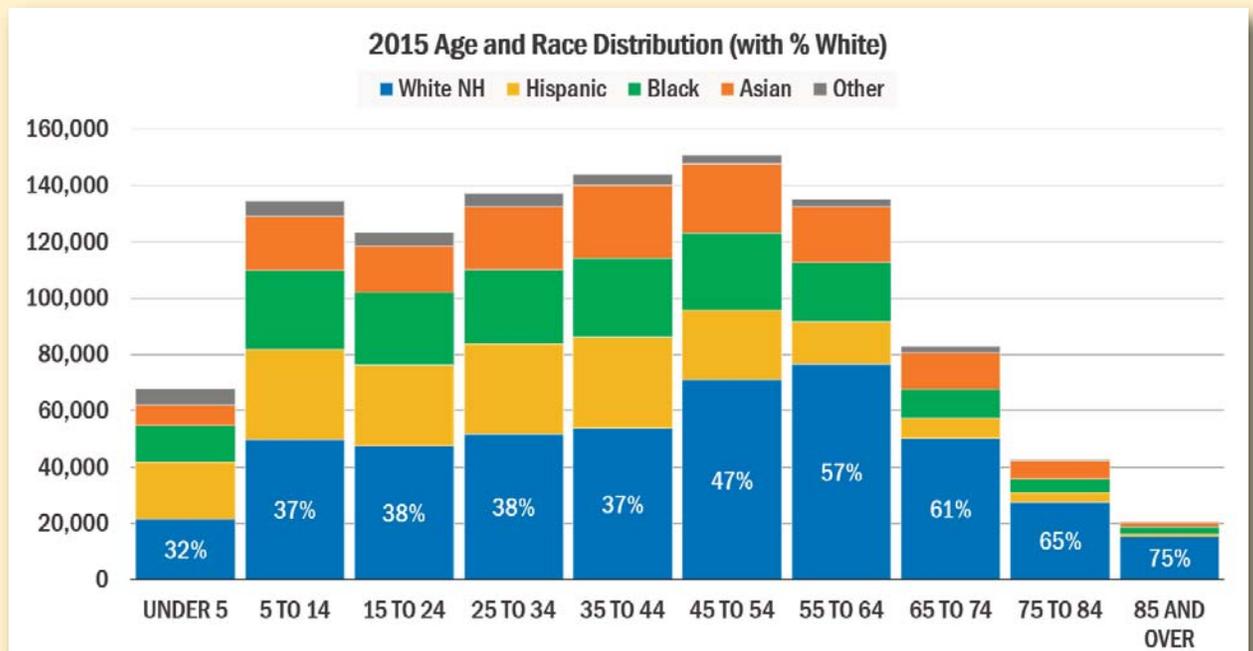
Diversity

Religiously and culturally diverse populations live throughout Montgomery County. The county's rapid growth in diversity reached an important milestone with the 2010 Census, when Montgomery County, for the first time, reached "majority-minority" status. As of 2015 the county's population was majority-minority, made up of 55% minority residents. (U.S. Census American Community Survey 2015)

The growth in diversity has been witnessed in every Council district over the past 35 years. Currently the population makeup is as shown in the slide below:

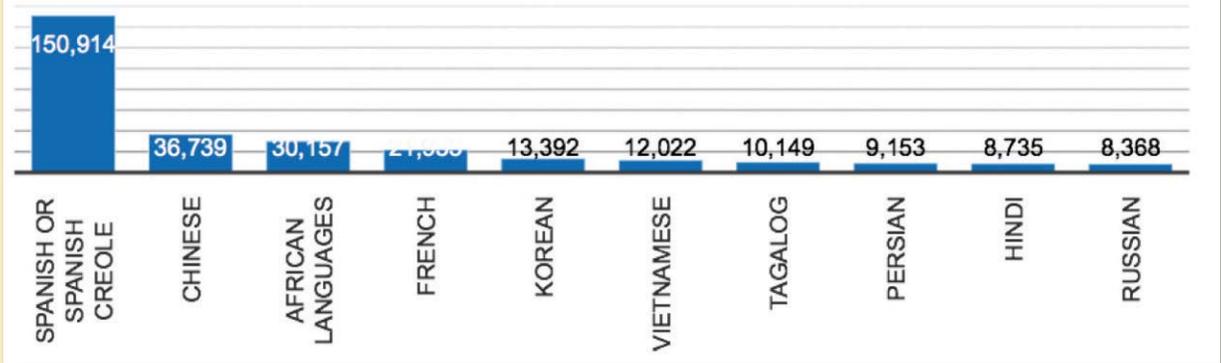


Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2015



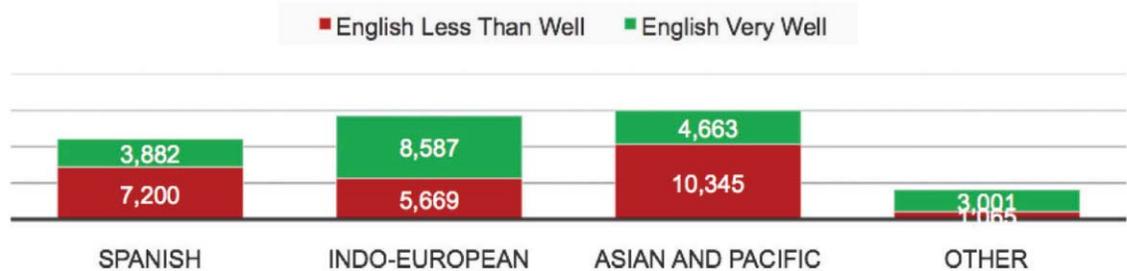
Approximately one-third of residents were born outside of the U.S. and approximately 40 percent of speak languages other than English at home. Another 138,000 have limited English proficiency, and approximately 26,000 households are "language isolated," unable to communicate without assistance in English at all or to a very limited degree, for example, in emergency situations. Spanish is the predominant language other than English, although there are many speakers of other languages, including, but not limited to Chinese, Korean, Persian, Vietnamese and French.

Top 10 Non-English Languages Spoken at Home (All Ages)



Source: <http://statisticalatlas.com/county/Maryland/Montgomery-County/Languages>

Language Groups Spoken at Home by Residents, 65+



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015

Immigration

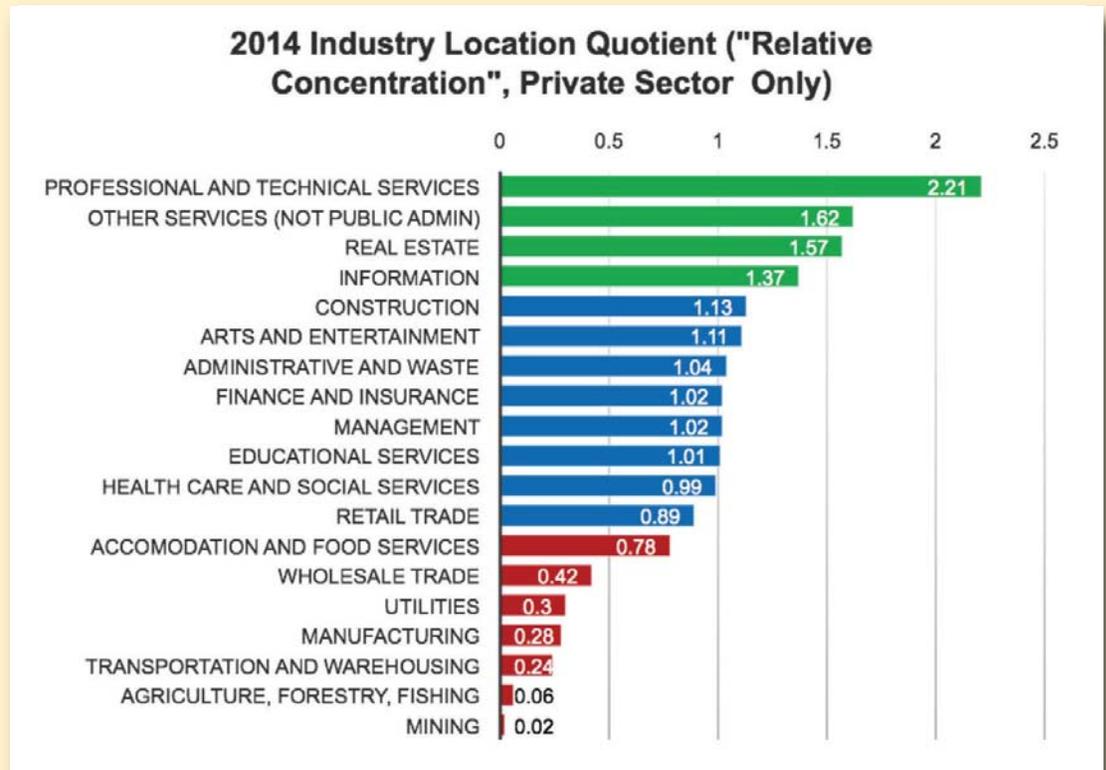
According to the U.S. Census, nearly one-third of Montgomery County's population in 2012 was foreign born. Of those, 38 percent were from Latin America, 36 percent from Africa, 10 percent from Europe, one percent from North Africa and less than one percent from islands in the Pacific Ocean.

(Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2015).



Employers and Employment

More than 70 percent of adults age 16 and older are in the county's civilian labor force working in more than 27,000 employer establishments of all sizes. In addition to County and local governments, Montgomery County also is home to several federal agencies, biotechnology companies, bioresearch, healthcare organizations, learning centers and major corporations. The Montgomery County government and the Montgomery County Public School system employ 22,181 part-time and 10,031 full-time employees, respectively. Among the largest federal employers in the county are the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Large corporate employers include Marriott International, Lockheed Martin, Giant Food, GEICO, IBM, Safeway, Whole Foods and Verizon.

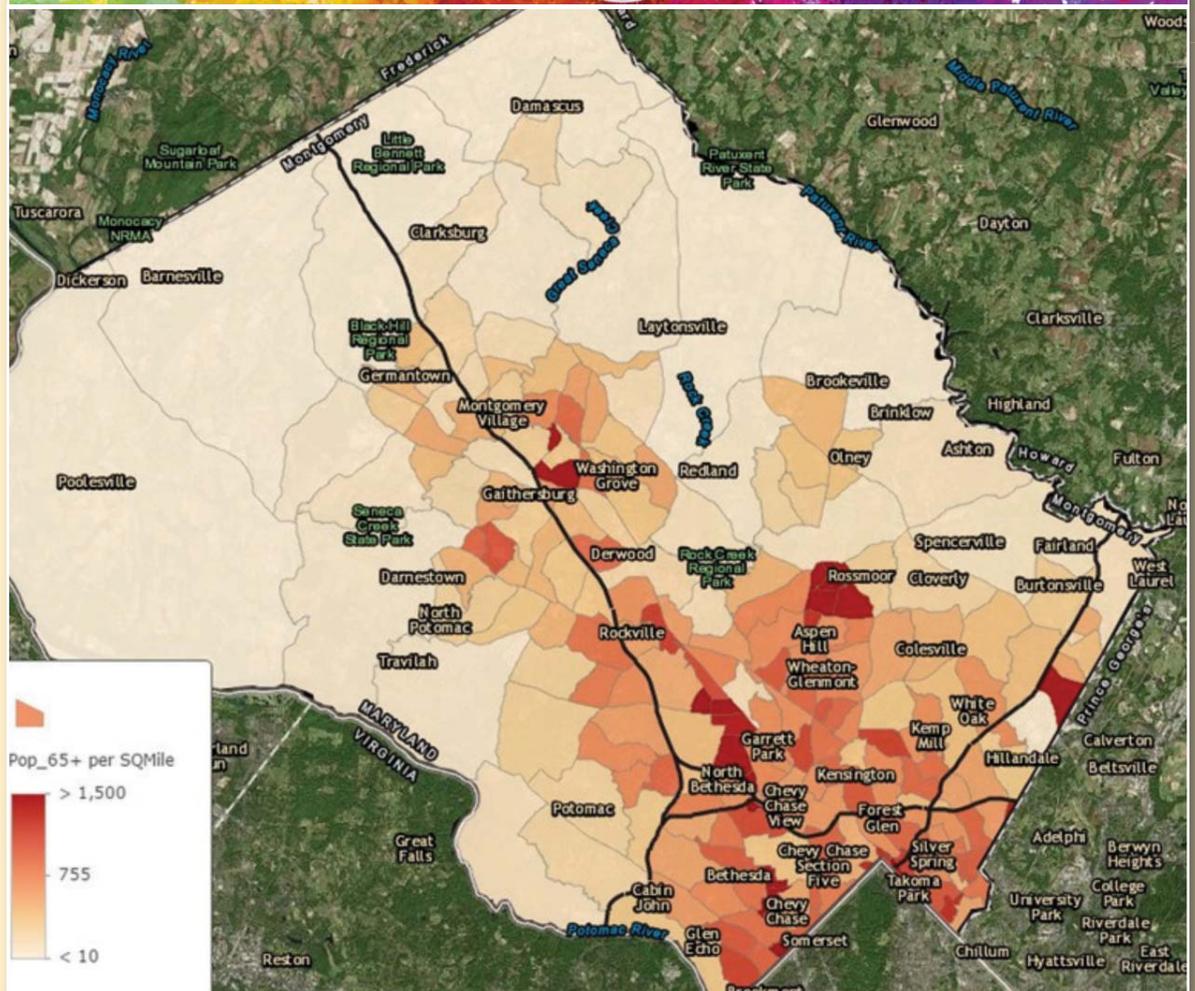


Source:

<https://reports.data.montgomerycountymd.gov/stat/goals/d68s-yave/5dwx-z6yc/637u-9s3f/view>

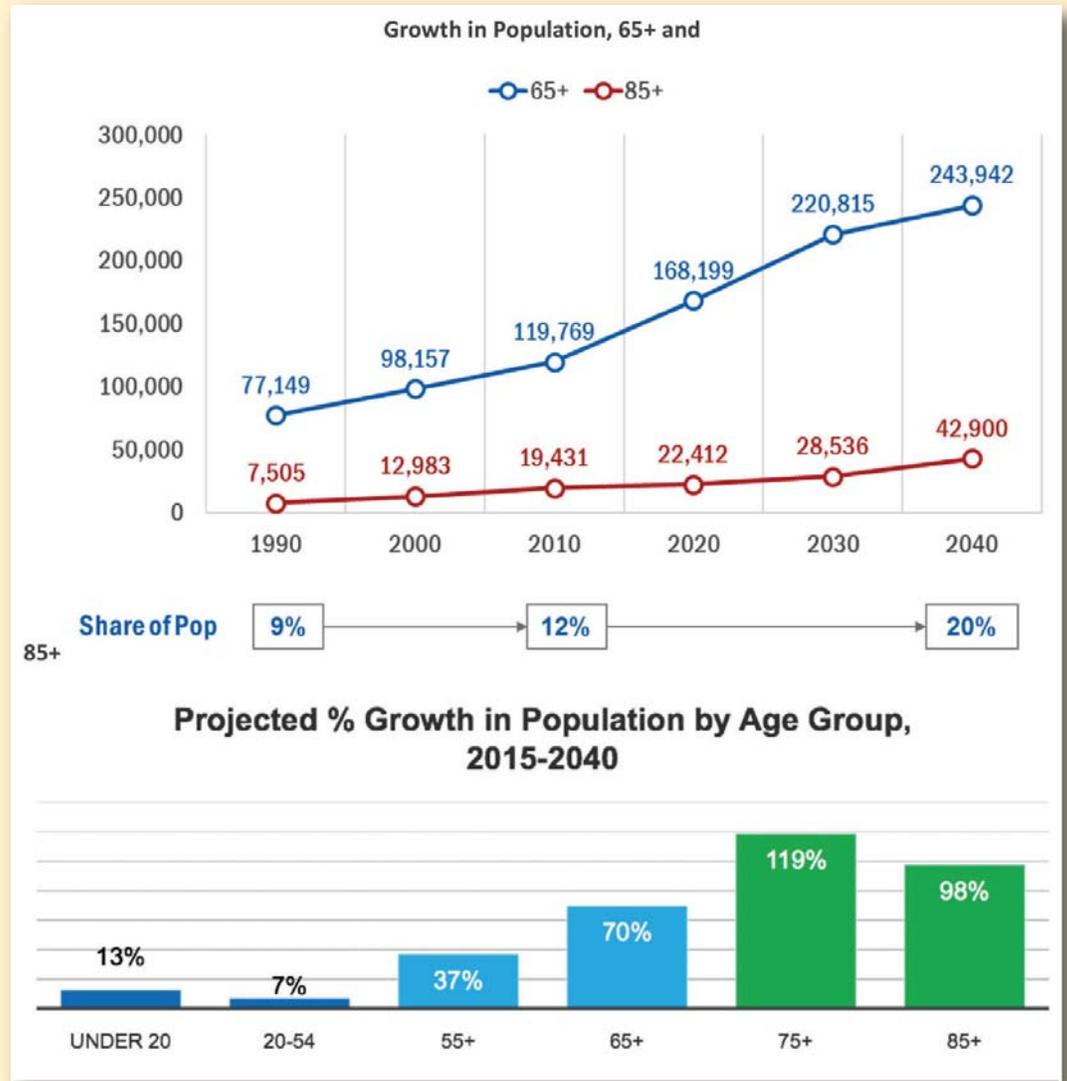
Note: A location quotient shows how concentrated an industry sector is in the county compared to the nation. This can reveal what makes the county's economy unique in comparison to the national average by showing in which industries the county has specialized. For instance, per the chart above, professional services are 2.2 times more concentrated in Montgomery County than they are nationwide.

A Profile of Montgomery County Seniors



Map: Density of Seniors: Residents—65+ per square mile

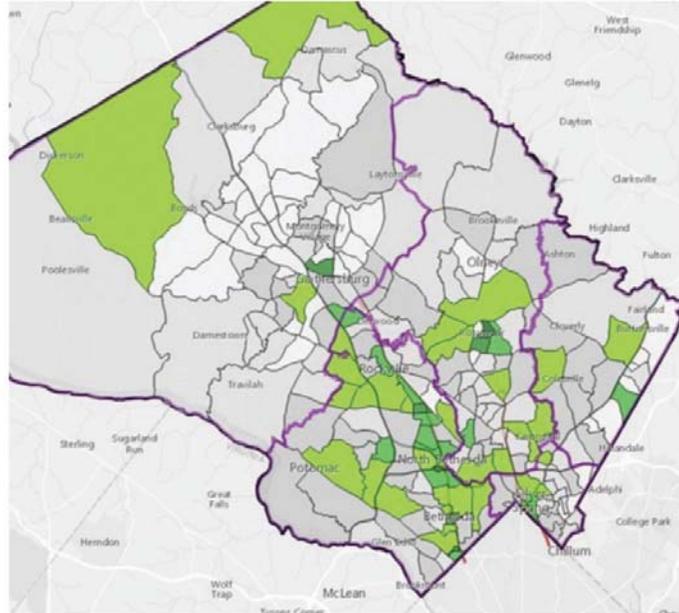
- Rapid aging.** In Montgomery County, the growth of the older population is outpacing the growth of the general population. The two main reasons for the growth in the county's older person population are that the baby boomers are aging and the population is living longer. The number of residents age 65+ in the county is projected to more than double between 2010 and 2040, from nearly 120,000 to almost 244,000. This will raise senior residents' share of the population from 12 percent in 2010 to 20 percent by 2040. The growth of residents age 85 and older is expected to grow faster than the older population from 19,431 in 2010 to 42,900 by 2040.



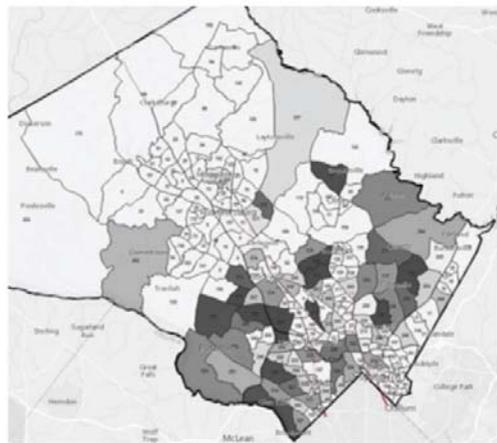
Source: Maryland State Data Center, Maryland Department of Planning – Population Projections

- **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.
- **Geographic dispersion.** Older people reside in all areas of the County, and the number is growing in non-traditional areas.
- **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 for 25+ years.

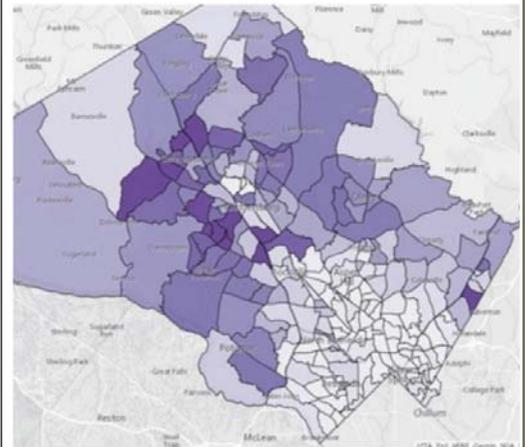
Seniors (65+) to School-Aged Children Ratio (Green = More Seniors)



Aging in Place: % 65+ in home since before 1990

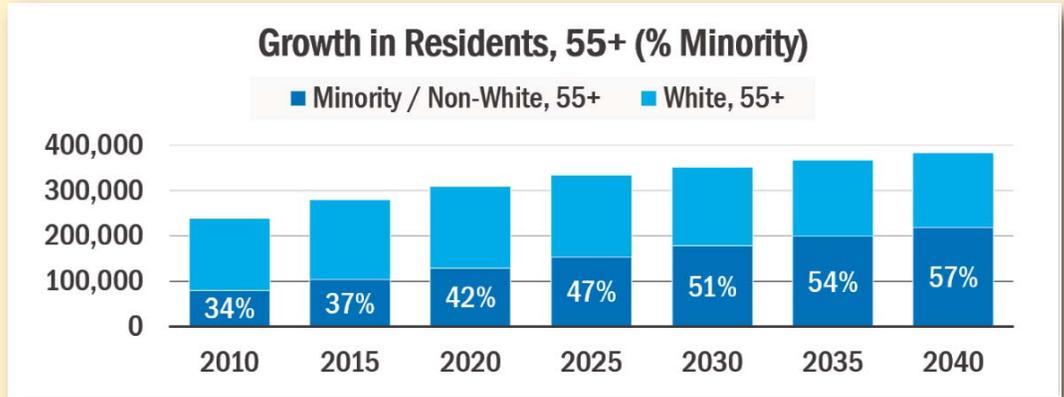


% Growth in 65+ Population, 1990-2010



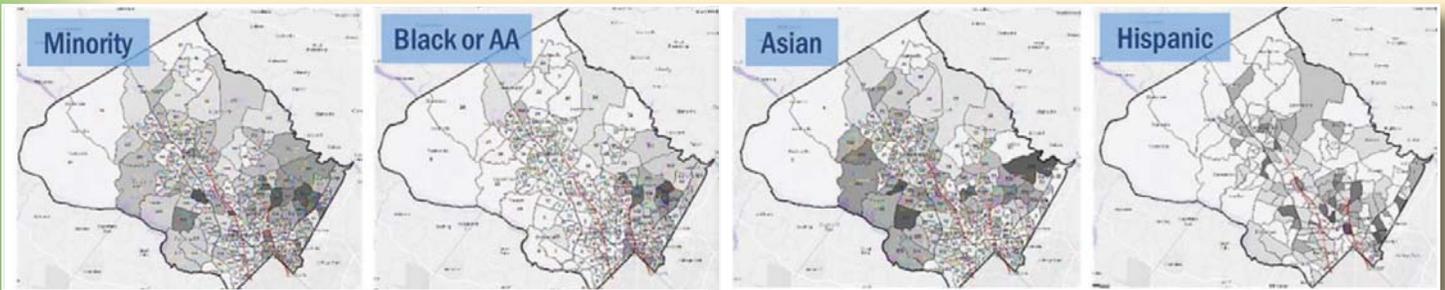
Source: US Census American Community Survey, 2009-2013; US Census 1990 and 2010

- **Rising diversity.** The share of minority residents among the 55+ population is expected to increase from 34 percent in 2010 to 57 percent by 2040, when most of the county's older population will be part of a minority group.



Source: Maryland State Data Center, Maryland Department of Planning – Population Projections

Today, Asian residents make up the largest minority group among county residents age 65+, accounting for 14 percent, with black residents accounting for 12 percent and Hispanic residents (of any race) accounting for eight percent. Today, 43,600 residents who are age 65+ (or 31 percent of the total) speak a language other than English at home, with 25,400 residents age 65+ speaking English less than very well (or 18 percent of all seniors).



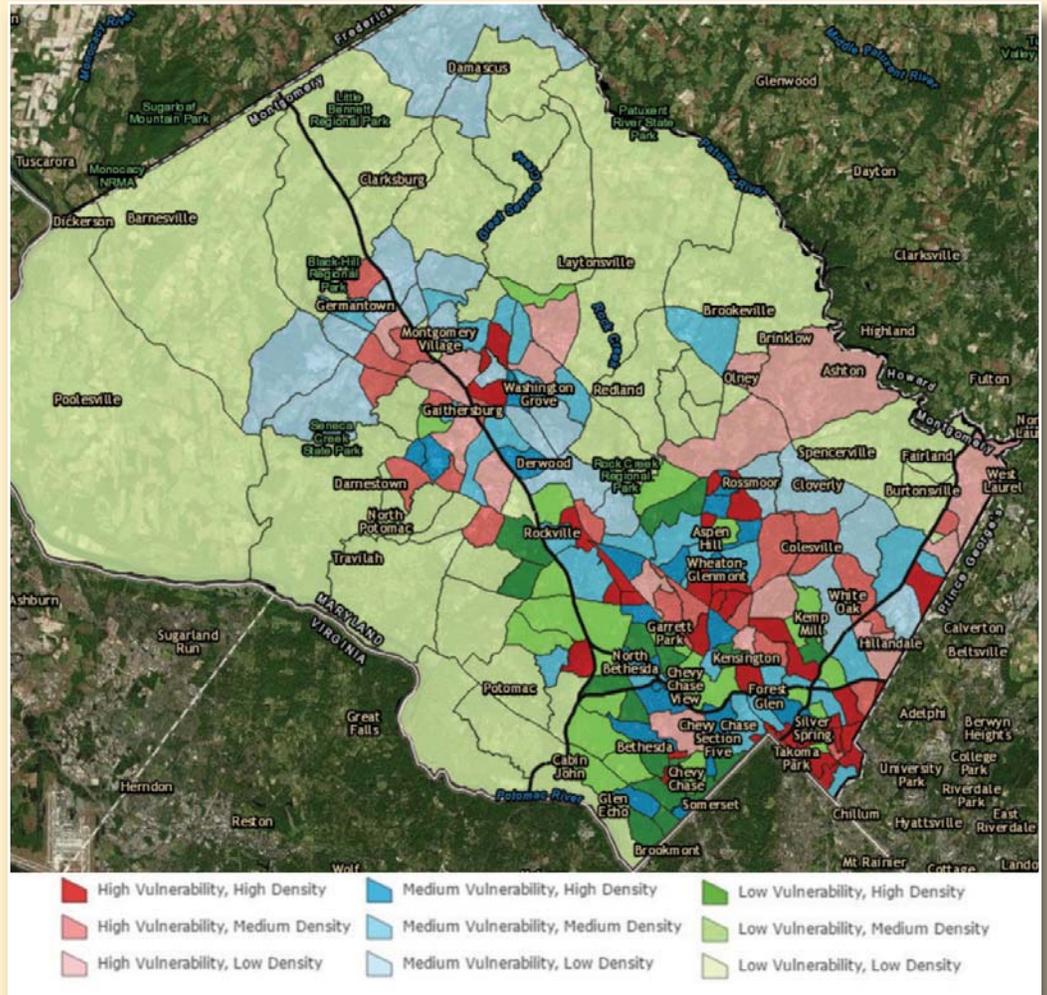
Maps: Location of 65+ Population by Ethnicity (Source: US Census American Community Survey, 2009-13)

- **Poverty.** Six and a half percent of the county's seniors live in poverty, with an additional 5.4 of seniors living between 100 and 150 percent of the poverty line. While these rates are low relative to 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 percent of White Non-Hispanic seniors living in poverty versus 17.4 percent of Hispanic seniors, 13.1 percent of Asian seniors and 9.9 percent of African American seniors.
- **Disabilities.** Although life expectancy is increasing, old age can be fraught with health problems such as dementia, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Diverse populations are at greater risk for disabilities than the general population. Almost thirty percent of all residents 65+ have a disability—a rate that rises to 37 percent among senior residents living in poverty. Moreover, the number of seniors with dementia is expected to nearly double between 2000 and 2030, from 14,000 in 2010 to 22,600 in 2030.
- **Housing burdened.** Twenty seven percent of Montgomery County senior homeowners and 61 percent of senior renters are housing burdened (defined as spending more than 30 percent of income on housing).

(Source: US Census ACS 2013, 2014, 2015 for current estimates; State of MD for population projections)

CountyStat Map: Senior Vulnerability Index

The map below rates each of the County's 215 neighborhoods ("census tracts") using a composite "senior vulnerability index" that looks across ten characteristics of the senior population (65+/60+), including the percent of seniors receiving food stamps (SNAP), living under 200 percent of the poverty line, lacking a high school diploma, being housing burdened, living alone, not having access to a vehicle, having multiple disabilities, 85 years of age or older (the "old old"), minority status and foreign born. High vulnerability neighborhoods are marked in red. The darker the red, the higher the concentration (i.e. density) of seniors—i.e. the darkest red neighborhoods have both high vulnerability and a high density of seniors and may be most in need of support.



Source: American Community Survey, 2010-2014; inspired by methodology developed by Kirwan Institute

Background, History, and Accomplishments

The 2008 Senior Summit

County Executive Isiah Leggett convened department directors for a day-long retreat in May 2008, to focus on how Montgomery County government, in partnership with private providers and the faith community, could promote vital aging for all its seniors. At that time, he established a Senior Subcabinet comprised of department heads and the Commission on Aging chair to focus on initiating, expanding and sustaining County programs and services for the older population. Further, he directed that a Senior Summit be convened in November 2008. The purpose of the 2008 Summit was to identify priority issues affecting the senior population, develop strategies and action plans to meet current and future needs, and take the first steps towards developing collaborative relationships between County departments and community stakeholders to ensure that Montgomery County is a good place for older adults to live and retire.

Groups at the 2008 Summit worked in eight specific topic areas to make numerous recommendations to improve the quality of life for Montgomery County seniors and identify action steps needed to achieve those goals. Those areas included: Civic and Social Engagement; Communications; Employment; Health and Wellness; Home and Community-Based Services; Housing; Recreation; Safety; and Transportation. Consistent principles or themes emerged as inherent in any steps taken by the County: Diversity, Partnerships, Civic Engagement, Planning and Accountability.

Accomplishments: 2008-2015

Since that time, the county has seen exciting changes. Not only has the older population grown and become more diverse, but there has been enormous expansion of programs and services for older people, including huge growth in the senior Villages movement, as more and more communities organize to help older residents age in place in the homes and communities they love; improvements in accessibility to transportation; expanded library hours and services; improvements in affordable rental housing and design for senior living; expanded access and programming in five senior centers and recreation centers; expanded and engaging opportunities for volunteerism and lifelong learning; and a myriad of new programs and services to keep seniors healthy, safe and protected against financial and other forms of elder abuse.

Specific steps that the County Executive, together with County staff, the Montgomery County Commission on Aging and the County Council took following the 2008 Summit include:

- Instituting topic-specific workgroups comprised of representatives from government, private, nonprofit and faith-based organizations to advise County staff on areas of concern and interest for seniors.
- Adopting a 2012 "Senior Agenda," developed by the Commission on Aging and endorsed and implemented by the County Executive and County Council.
- Establishing and/or strengthening information tools for seniors, including a senior services information and referral unit (240-777-3000), a Senior Website, and e-newsletter, along with the continuation of a cable television show for seniors, Seniors Today.
- Continuing to support the work of the Commission on Aging (COA), which advises the County Executive, the County Council, the Department of Health and Human Services (including Aging and Disability Services and the Area Agency on Aging) and other County departments on the interests, needs and challenges of county seniors. Recommendations from the COA's annual summer studies also have led to several significant age-friendly undertakings, such as the establishment of a senior mobility coordinator, a Village coordinator, and the County's enrollment in the AARP's Age-Friendly Program.
- Working with the County's Vital Living Network, a group of residents with an interest in initiating, advocating and supporting opportunities that engage and energize Montgomery County residents age 50+.

Since the 2008 Summit, departments have also undertaken efforts to implement senior friendly programs and services, some of which are noted below.

Civic and Social Engagement (Recently renamed Civic and Social Involvement)

- Growth in Villages movement, where neighborhoods organize to ensure the safety and social interactions of their older residents. There currently are 20 villages in the County, with ten more in development.
- Improved volunteer resources.
- Expanded vital living resources.

Communications

- Created new information products for older county residents.
- Created new channels of communication; strengthened existing channels.

Employment

- Continued to support training and employment resources
- Continued to fund and publicize the annual 50+ Employment Expo, sponsored by Jewish Council for the Aging (JCA), which benefits thousands of county residents by offering resume and job-hunting advice and connection to employers.
- In 2015, County Executive Isiah Leggett presented the second annual Experience Counts Best Practices Awards at the 50+ Employment Expo to Social and Scientific Systems, Inc., Dynaxis LLC, and the Beacon Newspaper, Inc.
- Montgomery College continued to provide senior tuition waivers for Maryland residents, age 60+, to enroll in classes.
- Montgomery College Workforce Development and Continuing Education continued to offer courses and certificates.
- Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) continued to offer residents aggregated online access to a wide range of career, enrichment and study support resources.
- The Senior Community Service Employment Program provided on-the-job training to lower-income older adults while enabling job trainees to support local charities and government agencies.
- The JCA SeniorTech Computer Training Centers and Career Gateway program provided senior-specific employment assistance. In addition, JCA supported WorkSource Montgomery's Wheaton One Stop Employment Center.
- County government expanded its senior fellowship program from one to six positions. This program provides temporary part-time job opportunities for experienced and seasoned professionals as well as opportunities to remain professionally active in the community and local government.

Health and Wellness

- Increased senior center hours and accessibility.
- Developed a Recreation Department Strategic Plan in 2013.
- Expanded 55+ recreation, health promotion and exercise options; maintained other fitness services.

Home and Community Based Services

- Expanded Senior Nutrition (SNP) program.
- Doubled County funding for SNP home-delivered meals for frail and vulnerable homebound residents age 60+.
- Promoted expansion and growth of Villages—grassroots local organizations that help older adults age in place.
- Continued community-based health and social support services.
- Continued support for family caregivers.
- Continued to assist residents with serious and ongoing medical challenges.
- Continued convenient collection of refuse and recycling for frail residents.

Housing

- Protected availability of affordable rental housing.
- Expanded property tax credits for homeowners with modest assets.
- Shortened timeframe for homeowners seeking approval for accessory housing features.
- Introduced incentives for home owners and builders to install accessible housing features.

Recreation

- Increased accessibility and access at five senior centers and recreation centers; with more engaging programs and expanded hours.
- Provided rich offerings of health and fitness classes and activities at recreation and aquatics facilities.
- Provided access to more recreation and Maryland Senior Olympics.
- Expanded library hours and services.

Safety

- Invested in Fire and Rescue facilities, operations and personnel; reduced response times.
- Promoted fire safety among seniors.
- Expanded crime prevention services and locating at-risk seniors.
- Added unit on crimes against seniors and vulnerable adults abuse.
- Promoted emergency planning.

Transportation

- Maintained free and reduced RideOn and Metrobus fares for seniors.
- Tripled number of people using Connect-A-Ride; added support to help transition from driving.
- Introduced escorted transportation service.
- Continued Call-N-Ride subsidized taxi service for low-income seniors.
- Improved pedestrian safety and accessibility.
- Hired a mobility manager to promote, improve and expand transportation options available to seniors and persons with disabilities.
- Enacted legislation to increase the number of wheelchair-accessible taxicabs and set a goal that the County's fleet will become 100 percent accessible by 2025.

2015 Summit on Aging

A second Summit on Aging was held in December 2015 to celebrate the accomplishments of County departments and community partners in improving programs and services for seniors, and to review areas of challenge, need and opportunity for coming years. The 2015 Summit on Aging brought together more than 400 stakeholders from government, business, nonprofit, advocacy, faith-based and health care organizations as well as county seniors and family caregivers.

The goals of the summit were to:

- Celebrate county seniors' accomplishments over the past years;
- Review recommendations from stakeholders and research on remaining areas of need for the senior community;
- Initiate development of a three-year County Executive Age-Friendly Strategic Plan related to fulfilling the Senior Agenda, created by the County's Commission on Aging and endorsed by the County Council; and
- Prioritize actions for Fiscal Year 2017.

The County's enrollment in the AARP/WHO Age-Friendly Program at the 2015 Summit grew from a recommendation by the Montgomery County Commission on Aging (COA). During the summer of 2014, the COA undertook a summer study, *"The Need to Improve Advocacy for Older Adults."* The study arose from concerns that despite the increasing number of older adults in the county, they lack adequate visibility and representation in the County's planning process. Two of the study recommendations were to expand the Senior Agenda, using resources cited in the full summer study report and to investigate the possibility of the county becoming an AARP/Age-Friendly Community based on its comprehensive approach to ensure that the needs of older adults are met.

A subsequent 2015 COA summer study recommended that the County undertake a series of steps to enroll in the WHO/AARP Age-Friendly Communities Program and identify specific actions to help plan and implement the initiative, including creation of a staff position, or on an interim basis, a senior fellow devoted to coordinating this initiative with all relevant County departments; and creation of an Age-Friendly Advisory Group—an expansion of the Senior Subcabinet with outside community leaders. Acting on those recommendations, the County Executive and County Council agreed and began the application process for the WHO/AARP designation.

At the December 2015 Summit on Aging, AARP officially enrolled Montgomery County into the AARP/World Health Organization Age-Friendly Communities Program. To reinforce the age-friendly concept, the County Executive renamed the Senior Subcabinet, introducing the group as the Montgomery County Age-Friendly Advisory Group and expanding it to include area leaders from nonprofit, business, faith-based and ethnic communities.

In addition, workgroup domains were reconfigured and increased to more closely align with the AARP/WHO domains and the community's priorities. The ten Age-Friendly county domains are now:

1. Civic and Social Involvement
2. Communication and Outreach
3. Elder Abuse Prevention
4. Employment
5. Health and Wellness
6. Home and Community Based Services
7. Housing
8. Planning, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
9. Senior Public Safety
10. Transportation and Mobility

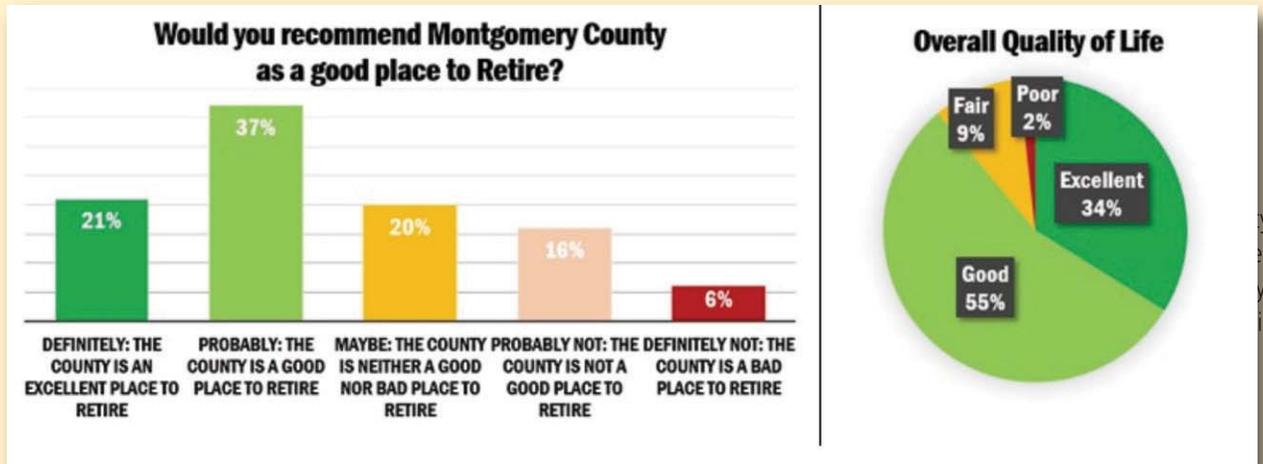
In December 2015, Montgomery County also enrolled in Dementia Friendly America. Sponsored by the BrightFocus™ Foundation, Dementia Friendly America is a national initiative to create communities that better recognize and help those affected with dementia, their families and care partners. It is a multi-sector collaborative with a mission to foster “dementia friendly” communities. The Dementia Friendly America initiative is catalyzing a movement to more effectively support and serve those across America who are living with dementia, their families and 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. Age-Friendly Montgomery County and Dementia Friendly America complement and enhance each other, offering benefits for all county residents. Because dementia can affect every segment of the county's senior population, regardless of income level or ethnicity, the County is incorporating planning to support people with dementia and their caregivers across its age-friendly efforts.

The World Health Organization has recognized Montgomery County for increasing opportunities for intergenerational activities to counter ageism through its work with the Jewish Council on Aging's Heyman Interages Center®. Montgomery County is one of five age-friendly communities to be so recognized, and the only one in the United States.

Essential Input from Montgomery County Seniors

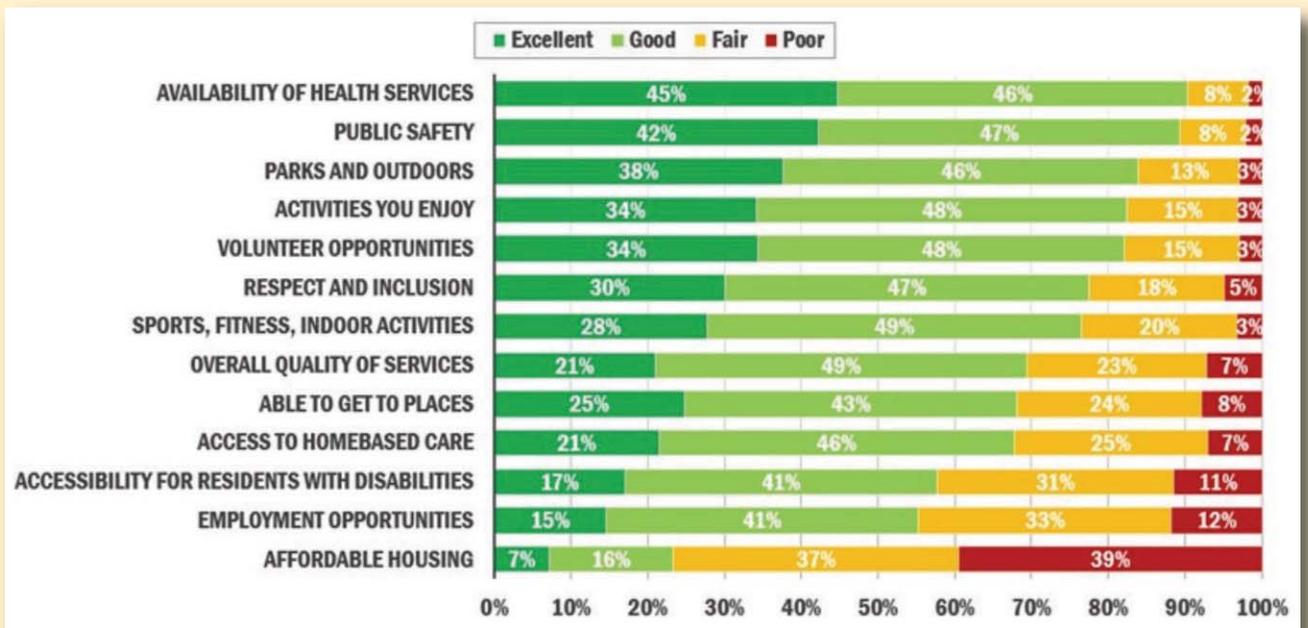
Age-Friendly Community Survey

In preparation for the 2015 Summit and for Age-Friendly Montgomery planning purposes, the County launched an online and paper survey and conducted focus groups to gather valuable information from older residents about their experiences and perceptions of life in the county. More than 2,000 residents responded, offering input about community characteristics, quality of amenities, and how they find the county as a place to live and retire.



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

- Eighty-nine percent of respondents, age 55+, rated the overall quality of life in Montgomery County as good or excellent.
- Ninety percent rated availability of health services as excellent or good.
- Eighty-nine percent rated public safety as excellent or good.
- Seventy percent rated overall quality of community services as excellent or good.
- Sixty-eight percent rated ability to get where they want to go as excellent or good.



Focus Groups

From August through November 2015, more than 400 Montgomery County residents also participated in a series of 13 focus groups. There were three language-based focus groups where interpreters were used—two in Chinese and one in Spanish. The focus groups were held in various parts of the county to obtain feedback from as many diverse groups as possible. Focus groups were primarily held in conjunction with existing senior programs to capture an audience already be in place. Four concerns emerged across all groups, regardless of income or ethnicity:

- Need for affordable housing;
- Need for improvements in transportation schedules and fees;
- The cost of living in Montgomery County outpacing retirement income; and
- Better communication from the County about available services.

Most participants stated that they enjoy living in Montgomery County and plan to continue living in the county if they can afford it. There also was consensus that the County provides good services for seniors. Most people expressed satisfaction with the County police and fire departments. Other concerns emerged as overarching themes within groups based on language, culture and income. See additional details in the Focus Group Report.

Three Year Strategic Plan: Process, Missions, and Priorities

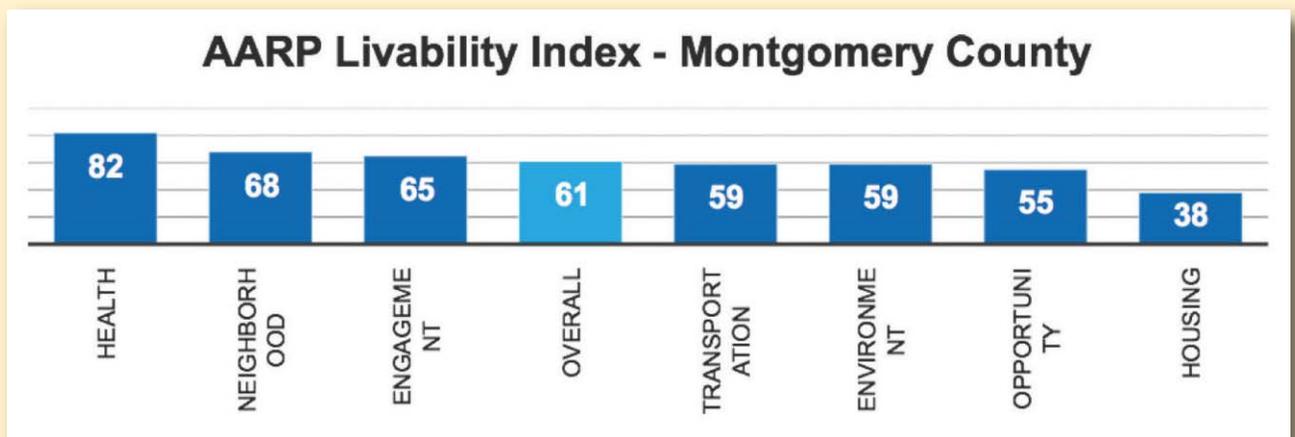
Process for Developing an Age-Friendly Plan

This plan has been developed under the leadership of the co-chairs of the Age-Friendly Montgomery County Advisory Group: Uma Ahluwalia, Director of the Department of Health and Human Services; and Gabriel Albornoz, Director of the Department of Recreation. County staff, along with participants from health care, legal, business and technology, communications, academic, federal, nonprofit, faith and members from our diverse cultural and ethnic communities contributed to the development of this plan. Many participated in domain workgroups to develop priorities. In addition, several leaders from these communities serve on the Age-Friendly Montgomery County Advisory Group, which reviewed and made final recommendations to the County Executive on priority action steps. These community partners are essential to the viability of the public-private partnership in steering the County's age-friendly program.

Advisory group members and workgroup leaders represent both County departments and a number of community organizations, including AARP Maryland; the Beacon Newspapers; BrightFocus® Foundation; Commission on Aging; Commission on Aging Alumni Group; Family and Nursing Care; Susan I Wranik Associates, LLC; Jewish Council on Aging; Jewish Social Service Agency; the Maryland National Park and Planning Commission; the Montgomery County Muslim Foundation; the National Hispanic Council on Aging; Vital Living Network and WorkSource Montgomery. In addition, the County is continually working with neighboring jurisdictions and with Age-Friendly Washington DC to share information and strategies related to planning, programming and outcomes.

A number of resources were used to help planners determine priorities and action steps, including the AARP Livability Index (livabilityindex.aarp.org), information provided by County statisticians on population and statistical trends, results from the 2015 Summit workgroups, and input from seniors collected through focus groups and surveys.

Montgomery County received relatively high scores on the AARP Livability Index. This index uses a scale of above average (67-100), average (34-66) and below average (0-33). The County's highest score was in health (81). Scores in the high end of average range were neighborhood access to life, work and play (66); civic and social engagement (64); transportation (58); environment (56); and opportunity (54). The lowest score, still within the range of average, was for affordable, accessible housing (37), a concern to which the County is keenly attuned and is devoting significant efforts, along with its community partners and businesses. The County received no below-average scores in any of the index categories.



The workgroups also considered relevant population statistics and trends provided by County statisticians, results of recent County-wide surveys and focus groups conducted with seniors, and the information gleaned from corresponding workgroups that took part in the 2015 Summit on Aging. In prioritizing strategies and action steps, they discussed opportunities and challenges and considered needs of the county's diverse population as well as advances in technology that might facilitate improvements in programs, services and communications for older residents. Deliberations captured challenges and opportunities and included recommendations about existing and potential partnerships to harness resources, prevent overlap and generate activities of mutual benefit to both residents and the participating organization. Measurements of success were attached to each priority. Finally, groups had to consider not only feasibility, but also budget implications—whether any priority or action step within that priority would rely on existing monies, a repurposing of existing monies or would require new monies.

After workgroups assembled their recommended priorities, County staff reviewed them for feasibility and budget implications before presenting them to the Advisory Group. The Advisory Group's final recommendations, reflected in the following pages, were approved and presented to the County Executive.

In the coming years, County staff leaders and their partners from the community will undertake the steps outlined. Throughout the process, they will continually look at progress and assessment measures to help them determine the success of the action as it moves forward. As this is an evolving process, adjustments and outcomes related to original expectations will be made as needed.

Individual Domains: Mission Statements and Priorities

Following the 2015 Summit, the domains were slightly to more closely align with the AARP Age-Friendly Program. These domains also incorporate the mission of Dementia Friendly America to address needs of seniors with dementia and their caregivers. An overview of mission statements and primary priorities are included in the list below. Detailed information, including background, challenges and opportunities, goals, objectives, action steps and assessment measures for each priority follows.

DOMAIN: Civic and Social Involvement

To encourage and support vital living for all older adults in Montgomery County by providing opportunities for physical, mental and social interaction.

- Increase participation in volunteer activities.
- Improve participation in county life by older adults in culturally diverse communities.
- Improve opportunities for older adults to use and access newer technologies that will support and enhance their lives.

DOMAIN: Communication and Outreach

To distribute and publicize recognizable, understandable, timely and accessible information on County and public resources and services for older adults.

- Raise awareness among seniors of County communication channels, including general telephone help numbers (311) and the senior help line (240-777-3000).
- Raise awareness among older adults of County programs, services, and resources—including among those for whom English is not their first language.

DOMAIN: Elder Abuse Prevention

To protect elderly adults from maltreatment, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of every type through education, intervention and prosecution.

- Improve information sharing among County agencies.

- Continue coordination of community outreach and education among County agencies on topics of elder neglect, physical and financial abuse.

DOMAIN: Employment

To promote the equitable recruitment and training of workers age 50+ to enhance their employability and to benefit employers.

- Facilitate job placements by enhancing skills of jobseekers age 50+.
- Increase or improve employer engagement.
- Combat age discrimination in employment.

DOMAIN: Health and Wellness

To bring together government and community partners to expand and promote health and wellness awareness, resources and activities for 55+ that help maintain or improve physical, cognitive and emotional health.

- Develop and implement a medication management education and outreach initiative.
- Institute an Early Stage/Cognitive Dementia Program in Montgomery County senior centers (Senior Center Plus).
- Continue and expand the County's falls prevention program.

DOMAIN: Home and Community Based Services

To provide Montgomery County residents coordinated, personalized, community-based support allowing them to age safely and with dignity in their communities.

- Improve support for county residents and caregivers of older adults.
- Simplify access to resources for older adults.
- Optimize navigation of home and community-based resources.

DOMAIN: Housing

To ensure that older adults will have choices of dwelling types to meet the changing needs and preferences of this population. The County will support initiatives to assist older adults to age in place, downsize, choose rental housing or home ownership. Further, the County will support housing with supportive services so that older adults can remain in the community.

- Expand affordable housing options.
- Introduce aging in place and wrap around services to affordable senior living communities.
- Explore the opportunity to develop affordable assisted living in the county.

DOMAIN: Planning, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

To “change the way we age” by enabling older adults to “stay active, to the fullest extent possible, within all areas of life; physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, vocational, social and environmental. Aging within these dimensions of wellness keeps us alert and enjoying a productive life.” (Adopted from the International Committee on Active Ageing.)

- Implement Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for 2017 (PROS 2013 adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board.).
- Implement the ADA Transition Plan submitted to the U.S Department of Justice (formal approval pending).
- Implement other plans developed by Departments of Recreation and General Services.

DOMAIN: Senior Public Safety

To provide physical, financial and technological protection and safety for older adults.

- Continue outreach on programs and services that the County offers.
- Refine message to reach various and diverse communities.
- Grow the awareness base of resources offered.

DOMAIN: Transportation and Mobility

To provide public and private transportation and mobility systems that enable older adults to go safely where they want to go, when they want to go.

- Increase seniors' awareness of transportation and mobility options and resources through public education and awareness.
- Increase and expand affordable transportation options.
- Increase accessibility of vehicles and the built environment (all the physical parts of where we live and work such as homes, buildings, streets, open spaces and infrastructure.)

Assessment

Workgroups have identified ongoing assessments and measures for each priority and action step. Action steps will be continuously monitored, and annual assessments conducted to identify adjustments that may be needed. Assessment will examine what was (or is being) done, how successfully it is being done, whether it is meeting the desired objective, and whether it is or should be sustainable. Changes may be indicated due to changing trends, unexpected events, budgetary needs and other factors as determined by the current environment.



Age-Friendly Action Plans by Domain

- Civic and Social Involvement
- Communication and Outreach
- Elder Abuse Prevention
- Employment
- Health and Wellness
- Home and Community Based Services
- Housing
- Planning, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Senior Public Safety
- Transportation and Mobility

TABLE OF CONTENTS

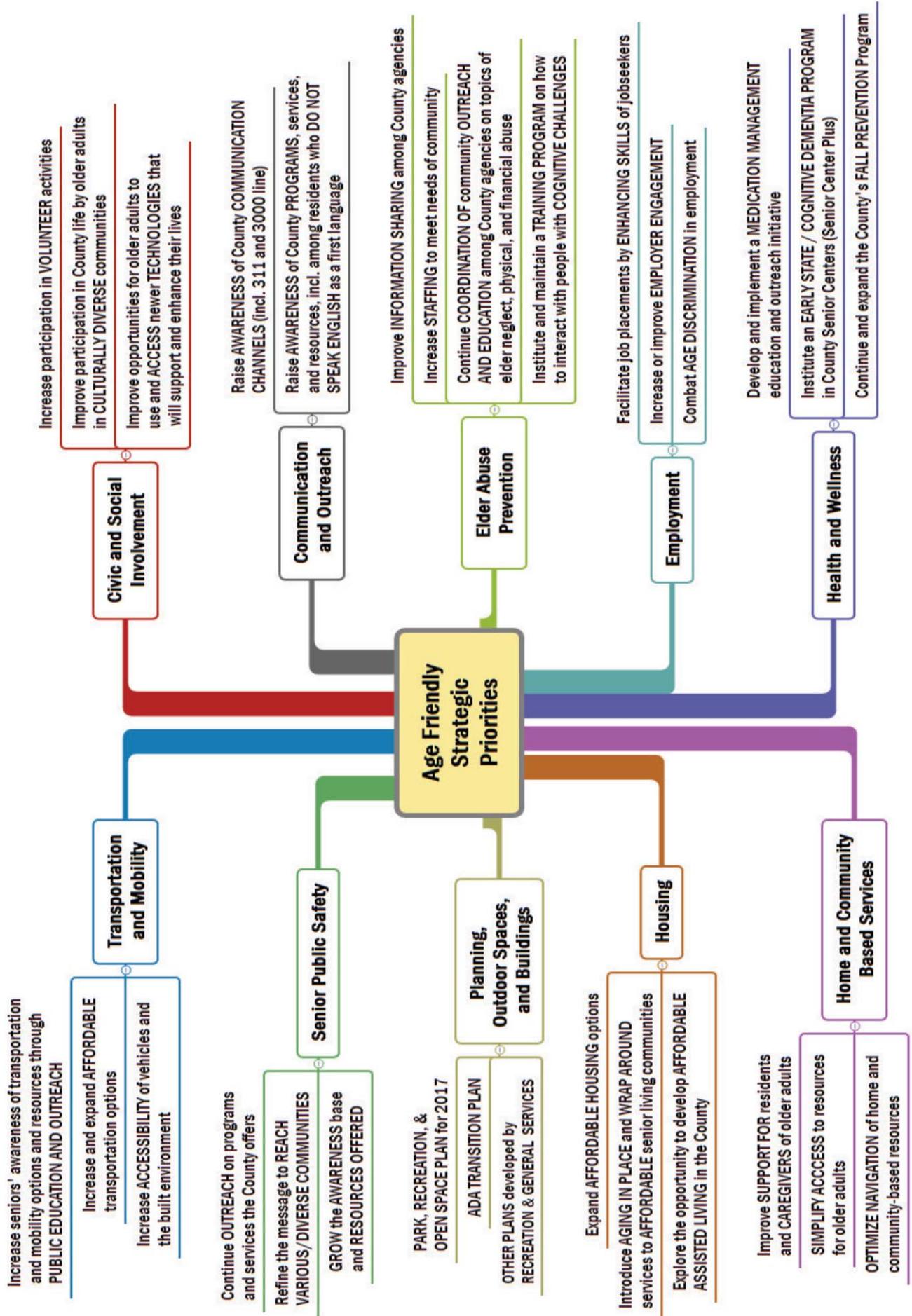
PAGE

PRIORITIES FOR WORKING GROUPS.....29
MISSION STATEMENTS FOR WORKING GROUPS.....30
WORKGROUP COLLABORATION MATRIX.....31
ACRONYMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT.....32

WORKGROUP PLANS

CIVIC AND SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT.....33
COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH.....38
ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION.....45
EMPLOYMENT.....50
HEALTH AND WELLNESS.....55
HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES.....61
HOUSING.....67
PLANNING, OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS.....74
SENIOR PUBLIC SAFETY.....76
TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY.....78

AGE FRIENDLY MONTGOMERY: PRIORITIES FOR THE TEN WORKING GROUPS



WORKING GROUP MISSION STATEMENTS

CIVIC & SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT

To encourage and support vital living for all older adults in Montgomery County by providing opportunities for physical, mental and social interaction.

COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH

To distribute and publicize recognizable, understandable, timely and accessible information on County and public resources and services for older adults.

ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION

To protect elderly adults from maltreatment, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of every type through education, intervention and prosecution.

EMPLOYMENT

To promote the equitable recruitment and training of workers age 50 and older to enhance their employability and to benefit employers.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

To bring together government and community partners to expand and promote health and wellness awareness, resources and activities for residents aged 55+ that help maintain or improve physical, cognitive and emotional health.

HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

To provide Montgomery County residents coordinated, personalized, community-based support allowing them to age safely and with dignity in their communities.

HOUSING

To ensure older adults will have choices of dwelling types to meet the changing needs and preferences of this population. The County will support initiatives to assist older adults to age in place, downsize, choose rental housing or home ownership. Further, the County will support housing with supportive services without having to leave the community.

PLANNING, OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS

To “change the way we age by staying active, to the fullest extent possible, within all areas of life; physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, vocational, social and environmental; aging within these dimensions of wellness keeps us alert and enjoying a productive life.” (Adopted from Int’l Com on Active Ageing).

SENIOR PUBLIC SAFETY

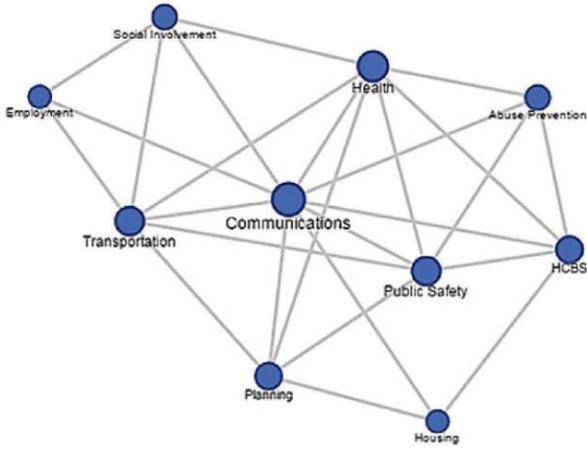
To provide physical, financial and technological protection and safety for older adults.

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

To provide public and private transportation and mobility systems that enable older adults to go safely where they want to go, when they want to go.

WORKGROUP COLLABORATION MATRIX

Suggested Areas for Cross-Collaboration



	Civic / Social	Communications /	Elder Abuse Prevention	Employment	Health & Wellness	Home & Community	Housing	Planning, Outdoor	Senior Public Safety	Transportation / Mobilit
Civic/Social Involvement		⊙		⊙	⊙					⊙
Communications/Outreach	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Elder Abuse Prevention		⊙			⊙	⊙			⊙	
Employment	⊙	⊙								⊙
Health & Wellness	⊙	⊙	⊙			⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Home and Community Based Services		⊙	⊙		⊙		⊙			⊙
Housing		⊙				⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙
Planning/Outdoor Spaces/Buildings		⊙			⊙				⊙	⊙
Senior Public Safety		⊙	⊙		⊙			⊙		⊙
Transportation/Mobility	⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	

Key Crosscutting Issues for Collaboration

1. Better communication from the County about available services
2. Growth in diversity of senior residents
3. Improvements in transportation schedules and fees
4. Cost of living outpacing retirement income and housing affordability
5. Technology

ACRONYMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT

APS	Adult Protective Services
CEC	Community Engagement Cluster
CEX	Office of the County Executive
COA	Commission on Aging
DHCA	Department of Housing and Community Affairs
DFAi	Dementia Friendly America Initiative
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DOT	Department of Transportation
DPS	Department of Permitting Services
DTS	Department of Technology Services
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EVAATF	Elder Vulnerable/Adult Abuse Task Force
FRS	Fire and Rescue Service
H&W	Health and Wellness Advisory Group
HOC	Housing Opportunities Commission
MCPL	Montgomery County Public Libraries
MCPD	Montgomery County Police Department
OCP	Office of Community Partnerships
OHR	Office of Human Resources
PIO	Public Information Office
REC	Department of Recreation
SAO	State’s Attorney Office

ADDITIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAA	Area Agency on Aging
BB	Bone Builders
CASSA	Chinese American Social Services Association
EHR	Electronic Health Record
GROWS	Grassroots Organization for Wellbeing of Seniors
JCA	Jewish Council for the Aging
JSSA	Jewish Social Services Agency
MCDEDC	Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation
MCAEL	Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy
NIA	National Institute on Aging at the National Institutes of Health
OATS	Older Adults Technology Services
RSVP	Retired Senior Volunteer Program
SHRM	Society for Human Resource Managers
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
WSM	WorkSource Montgomery

Age-Friendly Montgomery: Civic and Social Involvement

Austin Heyman (Office of Community Partnerships) and Vivien Hsueh (Commission on Aging Alumni)
Co-Chairs

MISSION

Encourage and support vital living for all older adults in Montgomery County by providing opportunities for physical, mental and social interaction.

PRIORITIES

VOLUNTEERING

Improve vital living for older adults through increased participation in volunteer activities.

DIVERSE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Improve participation in County life by older adults in culturally diverse communities.

ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

Improve opportunities for older adults to use and access newer technologies that will support and enhance their lives, to access information and communicate with family members and others.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009

IMPROVED VOLUNTEER RESOURCES

- The Montgomery County Volunteer Center launched a user-friendly website in 2011 that made it easier for individuals to find ways to engage and help others. Over the past three years, 33,000 volunteers of all ages have accessed this system to find volunteer opportunities.
- In a recent year (spring 2014-spring 2015), nearly 500 Retired Senior Volunteer Program volunteers helped 33 nonprofits/agencies, serving 68,554 hours. This included helping 3,000 county residents fill out tax forms and access \$4.3 million in refunds. It also includes more than 250 seniors who tutor and mentor children through Interages and three dozen Grandreaders who read to children weekly at six libraries during the summer.

LIFELONG LEARNING AND LIBRARIES

- Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) operating hours increased by 11% and began a cycle of major refresh projects to enhance library collections, space and services to meet the needs of a wide range of communities, including baby boomers and older persons.
- Increased the number of courses offered through Montgomery College Lifelong Learning Institute while expanding class locations, including MCPL (which hosted 23 such events, engaging 328 seniors).
- Montgomery College continued to provide senior tuition waivers for Maryland residents, age 60-plus, to enroll in classes after the regular registration period has passed by paying only fees.
- MCPL continued to offer residents aggregated online access to a wide range of career, enrichment and study support resources.
- MCPL expanded technology training with more classes in using computers and devices, downloading e-books and music, sharing via Facebook and using email; MCPL also continued to offer classes such as finance, health, consumer issues and English language learning.

PROMOTED EXPANSION AND GROWTH OF VILLAGES

- From 2009 to 2015, the number of senior Villages in Montgomery County grew from four active Villages to 14 villages (with nine more villages in development.) Montgomery County has been promoting Villages through its Regional Service Centers. Since January 2014, a Village Coordinator has been helping to expand the number and capacity of Villages across the county.

VOLUNTEERING

GOAL & OBJECTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To increase the number of volunteer opportunities for older adults to help them maintain social, physical and mental engagement.
OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The county increasingly has large numbers of older adults with experience and skills needed by both County government and nonprofits.
CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getting information on opportunities to those searching.• Successfully matching skills with the needs of County government and nonprofits.• Nonprofits often need assistance to target critical needs and make efficient use of skilled volunteers.
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Program participation statistics (administrative data)• Examples include the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), JCA/Interages, OASIS, Chinese American Social Services Association (CASSA), and North Potomac Multicultural Community Program• General 50+ volunteering statistics (possibly via County survey)

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

GOAL & OBJECTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To include more members of culturally diverse populations and communities in area activities and programs and to increase the number of older residents from culturally diverse communities who can take part and volunteer in county programming and volunteer opportunities.
OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build upon existing models for diverse communities' participation by providing support and space for other communities to develop their own programs.
CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying leadership and the need for some support during initial stages of organization.
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Numbers of newly engaged, culturally diverse older adults /program participation statistics.

ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

GOAL & OBJECTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve understanding of and access to newer technologies that older adults can use for recreation, communication and health. Expand existing and create new programs to help them access information and stay in touch with their families.
OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Available computer labs in libraries and some recreation centers.• Available students who can assist.
CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For some, transportation• Adequate time to match available instructors• For some, lack of connectivity
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of participants trained• Internet access and usage statistics for 50+ residents (Census, etc.)

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
<p>Volunteering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine alternative model programs and determine best approach for harnessing the experience and skills of older adults by matching them with the County and nonprofit volunteer opportunities. <i>(Volunteer Center / RSVP, Pro Bono, Non-Profit Montgomery)</i> • Develop proposal for selected model that details how it will achieve workgroup's stated goals, and its program structure, resources required and implementation schedule. <i>(Same as above)</i> • Include in proposal methods for increasing the Senior Fellow program and orienting Montgomery County departments to engage fellows. <i>(Same as above)</i> • Realign Pro Bono Consultant Program exclusively to 50+ market through inclusion in proposed new model. <i>(Same as above)</i> • Obtain proposal approval and ensure that funding is included in FY 18 budget process. <i>(CEC)</i> • Develop and implement outreach strategy, including by hosting "50+ Vital Living through Meaningful Volunteering" events and by engaging County and local organizations through retirement orientations. <i>(Volunteer Center, CEC, Community Partners, MCPL, COA Alumni)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement selected model for matching older adults with County and nonprofit volunteer opportunities. <i>(Volunteer Center / RSVP, Pro Bono Consultant Program, Non-Profit Montgomery)</i> • Continue to increase the Senior Fellow program and orient Montgomery County departments to engage fellows. <i>(OHR, CEX, CEC)</i> • Continue outreach efforts. <i>(Volunteer Center, CEC, Community Partners, MCPL, COA Alumni)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine and grow selected model for matching older adults with county and nonprofit volunteer opportunities. <i>(Volunteer Center / RSVP, Pro Bono Consultant Program, Non-Profit Montgomery)</i> • Continue to increase the senior fellow program and orient Montgomery County departments to engage fellows. <i>(OHR, CEX, CEC)</i> • Continue outreach effort. <i>(Volunteer Center, CEC, Community Partners, MCPL, COA Alumni)</i>

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Cultural Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a pilot multicultural community program to identify group leadership and provide guidance as appropriate to one ethnic group—and to identify facilities that can host the group (ex: North Potomac). <i>(REC, CEC, IMPACT, Faith Community)</i> • Identify communication leadership to assist in disseminating information to limited English proficiency community. <i>(PIO, CEC)</i> • Develop senior handbook (initially in English, for future translation in other languages). <i>(PIO, CEC)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a multicultural community program to identify group leadership and provide guidance as appropriate to a second ethnic group—and to identify facilities that can host the group. <i>(REC, CEC, IMPACT, Faith Community)</i> • Identify communication leadership to assist in disseminating information to a second limited English proficiency community. <i>(PIO, CEC)</i> • Translate Senior Handbook in two non-English languages. <i>(PIO, CEC)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a multicultural community program to identify group leadership and provide guidance as appropriate to a third ethnic group—and to identify facilities that can host the group. Also capture lessons learned from past three years. <i>(REC, CEC, IMPACT, Faith Community)</i> • Identify communication leadership to assist in disseminating information to third limited English proficiency community. <i>(PIO, CEC)</i> • Translate Senior Handbook into three additional non-English languages. <i>(PIO, CEC)</i>
Access to Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the UltraMontgomery contract for Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) computer training (to start in October; classes at Marilyn Praisner Library, Forest Tower HOC property, Long Branch Senior Center). <i>(DTS / UltraMontgomery, REC, MCPL)</i> • Pilot Tech Connect intergenerational program. <i>(JCA/ Interages, REC, MCPS)</i> • Grow MCPL-facilitated student volunteer program to assist 50+ residents with technology needs in libraries. • Host Tech Expo for 50+ residents. <i>(REC, CEC, Community partners)</i> • Catalog computer training programs for residents ages 50+(MCPL, Montgomery College, CEC/Gilchrist, JCA, Live and Learn, OASIS). <i>(DTS, CEC)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second round of UltraMontgomery contract for OATS computer training (add classes at Long Branch and Germantown libraries, White Oak Senior Center). <i>(DTS/ UltraMontgomery, REC, MCPL)</i> • Refine Tech Connect program and other intergenerational programs. <i>(JCA/Interages, REC, MCPS)</i> • Implement wi-fi connectivity at more Recreation and Senior Centers. <i>(REC, DTS)</i> • Host second Tech Expo for residents ages 50+. <i>(REC, CEC, Community partners)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain Tech Connect program and other intergenerational programs. <i>(JCA/Interages, REC, MCPS)</i> • Implement wi-fi connectivity at Recreation/Senior Centers lacking such connectivity. <i>(REC, DTS)</i>

VOLUNTEERING

- 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.
- Encourage businesses and the County government to include community 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 and internships.
- 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

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- 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.
- Give homeowner and civic associations information on translation services.

TECHNOLOGY

- Involve young people in training seniors to use technology.
- Develop ongoing, perhaps weekly training classes.
- Expand provision of information via smart phones and tablets.
- 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.
- Institute seminars and workshops on technology at the 50+ Employment Expo.
- Identify alternatives for providing computer support in-home and at other settings.

INTER-GENERATIONAL

- Convene an intergenerational summit.
 - Promote intergenerational experience by exploring ways to break the silo among age groups.
-

Age-Friendly Montgomery: Communication and Outreach

Patrick Lacefield/Lorraine Driscoll (Office of Public Information) and Stuart Rosenthal (The Beacon)
Co-Chairs

MISSION

To distribute and publicize recognizable, understandable, timely and accessible information about county and public resources and services for older adults.

PRIORITIES

RAISE AWARENESS OF COUNTY COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Provide information and marketing that increases awareness and engagement among County residents age 55+ regarding County communication channels, especially 311 and 240-777-3000.

RAISE AWARENESS OF COUNTY PROGRAMS, SERVICES AND RESOURCES

Provide information and marketing that increases awareness and engagement among County residents age 55+ regarding County programs, services and resources—including among those for whom English is not their first language, and among family caregivers.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009

New Information Products for Baby Boomers and Older Residents

- Developed, distributed and publicized recognizable, understandable, timely and accessible series of informational flyers. (Transportation Options, Senior Vital Living, Caregiving, Older Driver Safety, Living and Thriving in Montgomery County, The Senior Agenda, Transportation Network Directory for People with Disabilities and Seniors, and Senior Resource Information Guide).
- These branded products on key issues are disseminated online and via senior centers, libraries, senior housing, community centers/groups, tax bill and targeted mailings, County fair, Beacon newspaper, etc.

New and Strengthened Communication Channels

- The senior website, introduced in 2009, is a central portal offering timely information to seniors and caregivers about county services and programs. Information is organized in nine sections: consumer issues, employment and volunteering, health, recreation and libraries, safety, senior housing, social support, transportation and tax and finance. In each section, eligibility requirements are specified along with contact information.
- The County's 311 telephone and online information and referral system was initiated in 2010 and is staffed from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Callers can learn information and track service requests on a wide range of topics, including senior issues. Additionally, the Aging & Disability Senior Resource Line (240-777-3000) is a phone resource for more detailed questions regarding program services and eligibility.
- Continued Paperless Airplane, an electronic newsletter sent twice-monthly to 140,000 subscribers which provides County news and information, including items of interest to baby boomers and older persons; and Health and Human Services – Aging and Disability Services sends monthly e-newsletter to increase awareness of senior services and events in the county.

- Continued providing communications addressing senior issues via County Cable TV (“Seniors Today,” “Make a Difference” and “Montgomery al Dia”), mailings, bus ads, public forums, county fair, and posters at libraries, recreation facilities, health clinics and senior centers. Also worked with Montgomery County Media (MCM) to provide information to seniors via the internet, social media and print material. The Office of Landlord Tenant Affairs continued to conduct seminars for owners, landlords and residents of multi-housing units to build awareness of services and programs available to older County residents.

RAISE AWARENESS OF COUNTY COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: Educate the community of adults age 55+ on how to access County information, resources and services. Focus mainly on accessing 3-1-1 and 240-777-3000; also promote the County website, e-newsletters, Seniors Today, social media, etc.

Objective: Promote 311, 240-777-3000 (along with other County communication channels) across a wide variety of venues, to build awareness about the kind of questions that are appropriate for each service and to increase 55+ usage of both.

BACKGROUND

- The 311 phone line for information about County programs and services and the 240-777-3000 line for information about aging and disability services are both well-appreciated. However, a 2015 County survey of residents age 55+ revealed that 79% of respondents never use 311 or 240-777-3000. High proportions reported using the County website, at least every couple months, which implies an interest in County news and information.
- Given the low response rate regarding use of 311 and 7-3000 and the high expectations for easy access to information about County resources, it may be beneficial to improve awareness of both.
- Of those using the internet, 68% also use a tablet or smart phone, while 26% also report having access to the internet at the library or other common space. Ninety-five percent of this group report using the Internet daily. Interest in learning more about technology and the Internet for use in daily lives continued to be strong, with 59% expressing this.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Engage the community about these phone services and encourage usage of them.

CHALLENGES

- Both phone services offer broad content and it will be challenging to inform people about the breadth of info available.
- There is some overlap in the info offered by the two services.
- It is difficult to reach people age 55+ who may be isolated, less technologically savvy and/or for whom English is not their first language.
- Program success depends upon recruiting, engaging and appreciating volunteer ambassadors.
- Need to find new ways to communicate with older residents for greater receptivity.

METRICS

- Increase in number of residents age 55+ who access 311
- Increase in number of callers requesting information about resources and programs intended for residents age 55+ via 311.
- Increase in number of people accessing 240-777-3000

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: To increase awareness among the 55+ community regarding County programs, services and resources, including among caregivers and those for whom English is not their first language. Promote ways to build technology competency that enables improved access to the County website and social media.

Objective: Provide up-to-date information and engaging marketing regarding County programs, services and resources for people who are age 55+, in ways that are branded and relevant. Emphasize, opportunities that are free, fun and/or intergenerational.

BACKGROUND

- The County provides substantial resources, programs and benefits for older persons and their families. However, there may be limited awareness of some of these assets, making it difficult for many people to access them. The County aims to ensure that older residents and their families have adequate access to information about County services, resources and opportunities.
- Based on 2,000 internet survey responses, County residents age 55+ most often receive information via word of mouth (91% report often or sometimes), the Internet (86% report often or sometimes) and newspapers (85% report often or sometimes). In continued descending order, residents age 55+ also receive information via mailings, community list servs, radio, the County website (66% report often or sometimes), local TV and social media networks.
- In addition to broadcast, print and online channels, there is opportunity to leverage local sources of information among people who are 55+, such as word-of-mouth and community organizations – because survey respondents identified both as frequent sources of information.
- Reaching this population effectively with limited resources requires developing content that is accessible and can be repurposed for sharing across many communication channels.
- Public libraries, county parks and volunteering offer additional opportunities to reach residents age 55+, not only with relevant content, but also through partnerships and cross-promotions, as each was identified in the survey as a frequent activity.
- There is significant interest among people age 55+ in learning to use technology more effectively, (e.g., understanding better how to search the internet at the library or how to use Facebook to communicate with family, etc.) Improving people’s ability to access such information would improve the County’s reach among broader populations.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Inform and market to residents age 55+ regarding the wealth of enjoyable, supportive and engaging programs, services and resources available in Montgomery County – in general and via the County calendar; engage older residents in sharing the good news about County programs, services and resources.

CHALLENGES

- Keeping all the information up to date and providing an effective marketing flavor to the communications.
- Translating information into other languages.
- Addressing technology awareness and facility.
- It is difficult to reach people age 55+ who may be isolated, less technologically savvy, suffering memory loss and/or for whom English is not their first language.
- Program success depends upon recruiting, engaging and appreciating volunteer ambassadors.
- Need to find new ways to communicate with older residents for greater receptivity.

METRICS

- Residents who are age 55+ and family caregivers report increased awareness of County programs, services and resources
 - The number of people age 55+ who access County programs, services and resources increases
 - Increase in number of community ambassadors
 - Number of useful materials translated into other languages and distributed effectively increases, over time
-

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
----------	----------	----------	------------

Raise Awareness of County Communication Channels

- Promote both phone lines to people age 55 and older and their families via County website, social media, broadcast media, PA, paid ads, civic associations, relevant County newsletters, relevant County facilities, relevant County activities (e.g., health/fitness expos), etc. *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Recruit and engage volunteer ambassadors to help promote both phone lines to people age 55 and older, and their families, via social media, list serves, faith-based organizations, community organizations, villages, etc. *(PIO, DHHS, OCP, volunteers)*
- Explore pilot intended to reach family caregivers (e.g., via PTAs, faith community). *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Share calendar-appropriate stories on social media regarding things people can learn via 311 or 240-777-3000. *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Conduct outreach to community organizations and businesses to identify any that may benefit from referring people to 311 and/or 240-777-3000 (e.g., NORC buildings, IL facilities, banks. *(PIO, DHHS; in coordination with DHCA, OCP, others)*
- Consider value/opportunity of promotional swag; if valuable, seek funding. *(PIO, DHHS)*

- Continue promoting both phone lines to people age 55 and older, and their families, via County website, social media, broadcast media, PA, paid ads, civic associations, all relevant County newsletters, all relevant County facilities, all relevant County activities (e.g., health/fitness expos), etc. *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Continue engaging volunteer ambassadors to help promote both phone lines to people age 55 and older, and their families, via social media, list serves, faith-based organizations, community organizations, villages, etc. *(PIO, DHHS, OCP, volunteers)*
- Continually assess the reach of ongoing staff and volunteer efforts and focus any additional County outreach efforts to fill major gaps, esp. among those most isolated. *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Share calendar-appropriate stories on social media regarding things people can learn via 311 or 240-777-3000. *(PIO, DHHS; in coordination with DHCA, Community Partnership, others)*
- Partner with any community organizations or businesses that were identified as believing they would benefit from referring people to 311 and/or 240-777-3000. *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Test pilot intended to reach family caregivers.
- Connect with Nexus to identify whether the hospital community might partner on relevant outreach efforts *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Conduct informal focus groups (e.g., at senior centers, faith-based and ethnic organization sites) to determine whether people understand whether the two numbers are confusing, easy to remember, accessible at hours needed, etc. and seek remedies, if necessary. *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Assess the success of the outreach plan and make adjustments, as appropriate. *(PIO)*

- Continue promoting both phone lines to people age 55 and older and their families via County website, social media, broadcast media, PA, paid ads, civic associations, all relevant County newsletters, all relevant County facilities, all relevant County activities (e.g., health/fitness expos), etc. *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Continue engaging volunteer ambassadors to help promote both phone lines to people age 55+ and their families, via social media, list serves, faith-based organizations, villages, community organizations, etc. *(PIO, DHHS, OCP, volunteers)*
- Continually assess the reach of staff and volunteer efforts and focus any additional County outreach efforts to fill major gaps, especially among those most isolated. *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Share calendar-appropriate stories on social media regarding things people can learn via 311 or 240-777-3000, especially things that are free, fun and/or intergenerational. *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Assess effectiveness of partnerships with any community organizations or businesses that were identified as believing they would benefit from referring people to 311 and/or 240-777-3000. Continue, as valuable. *(PIO, DHHS)*
- Expand pilot program focused on reaching family caregivers, as appropriate. *(PIO, DHHS)*

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
<p>Raise Awareness of County Programs, Services and Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make information/marketing content available via the County website, 311, 240-777-3000, Seniors Today, Montgomery al Dia, Mosaic, Radio America, My MC Media, Paperless Airplane, mailings, paid ads, public forums, posters, social media and other County communication channels. Make content available in non-English languages, as possible. Emphasize things that are free, fun and inter-generational. <i>(PIO, DHHS, volunteers)</i> • Continue engaging volunteer ambassadors to help promote relevant information and marketing to County residents 55+ through word-of-mouth, newspapers, list servs and community presentations. Share fun stories of success, to inspire additional engagement among other ambassadors. <i>(PIO, DHHS, volunteers)</i> • Develop a pilot partnership with MCPL and/or MC Parks on an identified, relevant opportunity to share content through effective cross-promotions. These could include online promotions as well as F2F communications and tangible products. <i>(PIO, HHS, MCPL and/or Parks)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue providing accurate and current information and marketing – in formats most conducive to sharing and repurposing – regarding programs, services and resources available in Montgomery County to residents age 55+ and their families. Continue making information and marketing content available via the County website, 311, 240-777-3000, Seniors Today, Montgomery al Dia, Mosaic, Radio America, My MC Media, Paperless Airplane, mailings, paid ads, public forums, posters, social media and other County communication channels. Make content available in non-English languages, as possible. <i>(PIO, DHHS staff, volunteers)</i> • Continue engaging volunteer ambassadors to help promote relevant information to residents 55+ through word-of-mouth, newspapers, list servs, community presentations. Share stories of success, to inspire additional engagement among other ambassadors. <i>(PIO, DHHS staff, volunteers)</i> • Evaluate the pilot partnership with MCPL and/or Montgomery Parks; continue cross-promotions, as appropriate. <i>(PIO, HHS, MCPL and/or Parks)</i> • Pursue earned media, if capacity exists, to promote priority programs, resources and services. <i>(PIO, DHHS, volunteers)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accurate and current information and marketing – in formats most conducive to sharing and repurposing – regarding programs, services and resources available in Montgomery County to residents age 55+ and their families. Make information and marketing content available via the County website, 311, 240-777-3000, Seniors Today, Montgomery al Dia, Mosaic, Radio America, My MC Media, Paperless Airplane, mailings, paid ads, public forums, posters, social media and other communication channels. Make content available in non-English languages, as possible. <i>(PIO, DHHS, volunteers)</i> • Recruit and engage volunteer ambassadors to help promote relevant information to residents age 55+ through word-of-mouth, newspapers, list servs, and community presentations, etc. <i>(PIO, DHHS, volunteers)</i> • Evaluate the pilot partnership with MCPL and/or Montgomery Parks. As appropriate, revise and/or continue. <i>(PIO, DHHS, MCPL and/or Parks)</i> • Pursue earned media, if capacity exists, to promote priority programs, resources and services. <i>(PIO, DHHS, volunteers)</i>

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2015 SUMMIT ON AGING

Improve Outreach to Seniors and Caregivers

- Reach seniors where they congregate, such as doctor offices, beauty salons, etc.
- Empower the 28% who do not regularly use the internet with printed info, radio/ TV and print materials.
- For Paperless Airplane, include information by region, i.e., “Activities in Gaithersburg,” etc.
- Use volunteers to provide outreach and community presence in the place of County staff as needed.
- Encourage the Beacon to publish information about County programs, perhaps via a pullout section; publish existing fliers; and transform the Seniors Today TV show into a Beacon column.
- In translations, use language sensitive to culture; and utilize culturally specific radio, often the preferred communication tool of diverse audiences.

Single Point for Information

- Clarify/publicize the difference between using 311 and 240-777-3000;
- Consider use of a 211 number for social services, such as some other jurisdictions use;
- 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

- 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.
- Determine which resources/issues are most frequently accessed by seniors and use for planning.
- Advertise where to get information: (County senior website; 240-777-3000; The Beacon).
- Tailor messages to different age groups.
- Embrace use of the word “senior” (rather than “older adult,” as it simplifies searches on websites).

Improve Senior Website

- Create a webmaster position specifically for the senior website.
- Ensure that all information is correct and timely; Eliminate use of acronyms.
- Make website look more as if it were designed for seniors and less for in-house (government) staff.
- Centralize information, simplify navigation of websites, including Aging and Disability’s and ensure that information is available in different languages.
- Ensure that it is easy for seniors to sign up for list serves, alerts and other information.

Increase Seniors’ Use of Technology

- Involve young people in training seniors to use technology.
- Develop ongoing, perhaps weekly training classes.
- Institute seminars and workshops on technology at the 50+ Employment Expo.
- Identify alternatives for providing computer support in-home and at other settings.

Age-Friendly Montgomery: Elder Abuse Prevention

Bryan Roslund / Debbie Feinstein (State's Attorney's Office) and Mario Wawrzusin (Health and Human Services)
Co-Chairs

MISSION

To protect elderly adults from maltreatment, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of every type through education, intervention and prosecution.

PRIORITIES

INFORMATION SHARING

Improve information sharing among County agency agreements, by updating cross-agency agreements—including by adding additional agencies and improved practices of communication.

INCREASE STAFFING

Increase staffing to meet needs of community, as calls for assistance to Adult Protective Services (APS), States Attorney's Office (SAO), Police and Emergency Medical Services and Fire and Rescue Services (EMS/FRS) continue to increase.

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Continue coordination of community outreach and education among County agencies on topics of neglect, physical and financial abuse of seniors.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009

Unit on Crimes Against Seniors

- Enhanced and grew the Montgomery County Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse Task Force, which was created in 1999.
- In June 2014, added the Crimes Against Seniors and Vulnerable Adults Abuse Unit to the Montgomery County Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse Task Force. Representatives from Montgomery County Police Department, the State's Attorney's Office, Adult Protective Services (APS), Emergency Medical Services and Fire and Rescue Services, County Attorney's Office, Ombudsman and Licensure and Regulatory Services partner with the Department of Health and Human Services to prevent elder abuse, raise public awareness, support legislative efforts to establish stronger and better laws and, aggressively investigate and prosecute those who commit elder abuse.
- In 2014, the State's Attorney's Office created the Crimes Against Seniors and Vulnerable Adults Unit to aggressively prosecute crimes against seniors, including physical abuse, financial exploitation and neglect. This unit includes three specialized Assistant State's Attorneys and a Program Manager to track all incidents of elder abuse in Montgomery County.
- Established an investigative Elder Abuse Section in the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), as part of the County's Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse Task Force, to educate the community and aggressively investigate reports of fraud.
- Added funds (FY15) for a social worker in Adult Protective Services (APS), part of DHHS, to address growing investigations of financial exploitation resulting from new mandatory bank reporting requirements. In FY14, there were 776 APS investigations.

INFORMATION SHARING

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: Remove barriers to information sharing among County agencies.
Objective: Update memorandums and other governing documents.

BACKGROUND

- There are existing memorandums about the sharing of confidential information between certain agencies. These agreements need to be updated to include additional agencies and improved practices of communication.

OPPORTUNITIES

- County has many agencies that gather information in their regular duties of helping seniors.
- Information from one agency can be useful to the mission of other agencies.

CHALLENGES

- Each agency has its own set of confidentiality rules and controlling statutes.
- Identifying the person with authority to change internal practices of each agency.

METRICS

- Finalized and signed agreements.

INCREASE STAFFING

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: Provide constituents with elder abuse information, victims with timely investigations, services and prosecutions when appropriate.
Objective: Build infrastructure to meet growing needs of seniors with increased staffing, collaboration and efficiencies with the continuum of APS services, SAO, Police and EMS/FRS.

BACKGROUND

- Current agency staff are not able to handle the volume, which means many in the community who are suffering do not receive services. APS intake and APS investigation units often receive first call, and perform initial investigation, and have seen nearly a 50% increase in referrals/investigations over last five fiscal years, and a 60% increase in guardianship cases.

OPPORTUNITIES

- County has many agencies that can educate residents on elder abuse and work collaboratively to serve. APS is in unique position of receiving many of the initial referrals and is equipped with licensed social workers for investigation.

CHALLENGES

- Each agency has its own set of intake parameters and protocols.
- Nearly 50% increase in APS investigations over last five fiscal years has outstripped increase in infrastructure to receive additional cases.

METRICS

- Track number of APS investigations and referrals to Elder Vulnerable/Adult Abuse Task Force (EVAATF) partners.
- Track number of successful elder abuse prosecutions.

OUTREACH AND COORDINATION

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: Provide residents with information and resources on elder abuse and available resources.

Objective: Increase county residents awareness of elder abuse, and the various resources available to mitigate risk, as well as investigate abuse occurrences.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The County provides many opportunities for outreach and community education regarding elder abuse and services.

CHALLENGES

- The Elder Vulnerable/Adult Abuse Task Force (EVAATF) can serve as a central point and catalyst for educational efforts on elder abuse.

METRICS

- Contacts, attendees, and events (agency statistics); master calendar of events.

TRAINING ON INTERACTING WITH PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE CHALLENGES

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: Train public safety personnel on how to interact with people with cognitive challenges.

Objective: Institute and maintain a training program for safety personnel (from APS to SAO investigators, Police, Fire and Rescue/EMS personnel).

OPPORTUNITIES

- Montgomery County recently launched its Dementia Friendly Initiative which aims to support people with dementia and their caregivers.

CHALLENGES

- The number of older adults with dementia is expected to double between 2000 and 2030.

METRICS

- Number of trainings offered and number of personnel trained.

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Information Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain existing memorandums of understanding. <i>(County Attorney)</i> Update language of existing memorandums to reflect current laws and regulations. <i>(County Attorney and SAO)</i> Identify additional County agencies that should be on the Elder and Vulnerable Adult Task Force. <i>(SAO)</i> Finalize documents and obtain signatures from agency directors. <i>(All agencies)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate whether additional County agencies should be invited to join EVAATF. <i>(all agencies)</i> Evaluate whether participation by state agencies would be beneficial and whether state agencies can be brought under task force confidentiality memorandums. <i>(all agencies)</i> 	
Increase Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit for an additional APS screener in intake unit. <i>(DHHS)</i> Submit for a new social worker to screen high volume EMS users with Fire & Rescue Services. <i>(FRS)</i> Identify additional infrastructure resources needed by EVAATF partners. <i>(SAO)</i> Submit for new APS supervisor to build second APS investigative team to handle increased referrals. <i>(DHHS)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate additional agency resources/staff required by EVAATF partners as elder abuse referrals continue to grow. <i>(all agencies)</i> Submit for two additional APS investigators and a guardianship caseworker. <i>(SAO; all agencies)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor elder abuse referrals, and staffing/infrastructure to meet growing demand. <i>(all agencies)</i> Continue refining EVAATF educational, training, collaborative efforts so all agencies receive cutting edge information and resources in the field of elder abuse. <i>(SAO; all agencies)</i>
Outreach and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EVAATF will continue outreach efforts, focusing on high-volume senior venues such as senior centers, senior living environments, senior expos, etc. <i>(SAO and DHHS; all agencies)</i> EVAATF will take lead for annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) event. <i>(All agencies)</i> Work with Senior Public Safety Committee on master calendar for events. <i>(SAO; All agencies)</i> Work with PIO on continued bus campaigns (ads) explaining elder abuse and available services. <i>(DHHS, SAO, and PIO; all agencies)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore professional symposium for EVAATF staff and partners on elder abuse and financial exploitation. <i>(SAO, DHHS, and MCPD; all agencies)</i> 	

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Training on Interacting with People with Cognitive Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training on dementia, Alzheimer’s and related disorders, with an emphasis on how to work with this population and their caregivers. • Complete one training, working with seniors with cognitive challenges that affect financial planning and decision making utilizing a capacity/financial assessment scale. <i>(completed in March 2017).</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide further training on working with persons with cognitive challenges, including training for APS investigators, Police, and SAO investigators on utilization of the Lichtenberg Financial Screening tool that sifts out cognitive deficits that increase risk for fraud and exploitation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey safety personnel on their field experiences working with people with cognitive challenges and any successes or perceived gaps in services and/or training. • Submit, collect and analyze data on financial scamming and fraud, and the outcomes generated by the Lichtenberg capacity/financial screening tool. <i>(LFDSS).</i>

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2015 SUMMIT ON AGING

Vulnerable Adults and Exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training for the public as well as for police, EMTs, volunteers about working with the senior population and issues of elder abuse. • Public education about who to contact, “See Something, Say Something” campaign and phone numbers (311 / 240-777-3000). • Improved background checks for hiring private caregivers. • Safety in shopping education programs.
---	--

Age-Friendly Montgomery: Employment

David Gamse (Jewish Council for the Aging), Mara Mayor (Vital Living Network), and Ellie Giles (WorkSource Montgomery)
Co-Chairs

MISSION

To promote the equitable recruitment and training of workers age 50 and older to enhance their employability and to benefit employers.

PRIORITIES

ENHANCE SKILLS	Facilitate job placements by enhancing skills of jobseekers ages 50+.
IMPROVE EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT	Increase the number of age-friendly employers who adopt sound practices for recruiting, training and retaining an older workforce.
COMBAT AGE DISCRIMINATION	Improve the knowledge of employees, jobseekers and employers of age protections under the law to combat age discrimination in employment.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009

Employment Expo	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continued to fund and publicize the annual JCA-sponsored 50+ Employment Expo, which benefits thousands of county residents by offering resume and job hunting advice and connecting them to employers. In 2015, the County Executive presented the second annual Experience Counts Best Practices Awards at the 50+ Employment Expo to Social and Scientific Systems, Inc., Dynaxis LLC and the Beacon Newspaper, Inc.
Tuition Waivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Montgomery College continued to provide senior tuition waivers for Maryland residents, age 60+, to enroll in classes after the regular registration period has passed.
Online Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) continued to offer residents aggregated online access to a wide range of career, enrichment and study support resources.

ENHANCE SKILLS

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: To enhance jobseeker skills to enable Montgomery County jobseekers age 50+ to land the jobs they need and want.

Objective: To improve life planning and job-seeking skills through at least three annual trainings (to targeted publics) on job-search skills, entrepreneurship, computer literacy, industry-based technology and life/retirement planning.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The County has many potential collaborators—public and private—to advance this priority, including WorkSource Montgomery (WSM), Jewish Council for the Aging (JCA), and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

CHALLENGES

- Ageism in the larger culture.
- Lack of awareness among employers of the benefits of older workers.
- Many jobseekers' limited English-language proficiency, transportation needs, and lack of essential job-search and life/retirement planning skills.

METRICS

- Number of workshops for people ages 50+ as benchmarked by the Maryland Workforce Exchange.
- Number of nonprofits reporting information (goal is five for Year One).

IMPROVE EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: To increase the number of age-friendly employers that adopt sound practices for recruiting, training and retaining an older workforce.

Objective: To identify County employers that are willing to champion the advantages of hiring and retaining older workers and manage a multi-generational workforce and then to share commendable employer practices.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The County has many potential collaborators—public and private—to advance this priority.

CHALLENGES

- Despite the need for changing workplace and workforce practices and culture, many employers are unprepared for the impact that the aging demographic will have on their workforces.
- Business case for hiring/retaining the 50+ workforce needs to be shared with county employers.
- Jobseekers may need additional technical/transferrable skills.
- There is no readily accessible library of resources for county employers.
- Employers need to be partners in developing realistic employment strategies and opportunities that promote multigenerational workforces.
- The Age-Friendly Employment Group will not directly be targeting Dementia Friendly issues in its current action plan, but will be attentive to opportunities to do so in the coming years. Two issues that will be on our radar are employer recognition of their employees' need to provide eldercare and the compensation provided to professional caregivers.

METRICS

- Number of employers within the county that have signed the AARP age-friendly (Work Reimagined) pledge.
- Number of unique employers reached through such organizations as local chambers of commerce, chapters of the Society for Human Resource Managers (SHRM), Nonprofit Montgomery, ReServe Mid-Atlantic and the Workforce Development Board.

COMBAT AGE DISCRIMINATION

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: Improve the knowledge of employees, jobseekers and employers of age protections under the law to combat age discrimination in employment.

Objective: Educate employers as well as employees and jobseekers age 50+ about the basic provisions of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) and other laws designed to protect the rights of older workers.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The County has several natural allies, including the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights, the local bar association, elder law attorneys and the media.

CHALLENGES

- Lack of knowledge.
- Difficulty in identifying good legal counsel.
- Expense.
- Prevalence of ageism.

METRICS

- Number of unique employers reached through such organizations as local chambers of commerce, chapters of SHRM, Nonprofit Montgomery, ReServe Mid-Atlantic Region, and the Workforce Development Board.
- Number of employees reached through cable and broadcast news stories, local newspapers and social media and the workshops we conduct.
- Number of employers sharing relevant materials they use to explain age discrimination protections or that demonstrating age equity (goal: 25).
- Number of employers implementing age-friendly practices.
- Number of employees trained.

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Enhance Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to catalogue existing and relevant workshops and collect evaluative statistics. <i>(JCA, Worksource Montgomery)</i> • Provide workshops on job-seeking skills while collecting and analyzing data on jobseekers' needs/wants and program effectiveness. <i>(JCA, Worksource Montgomery)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide workshops on job-seeking skills, life/retirement planning and entrepreneurship. <i>(JCA, Worksource Montgomery, MCPL)</i> • Collect and analyze data on jobseekers' needs/wants and pro-gram effectiveness. <i>(JCA, Worksource Montgomery, MCPL)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide workshops on job-seeking skills, life/retirement planning, entrepreneurship, computer literacy and industry-based technology. <i>(JCA, Worksource Montgomery, MCPL, MCAEL)</i> • Collect and analyze data on jobseekers' needs/wants and program effectiveness. <i>(JCA, Worksource Montgomery, MCPL, MCAEL)</i>
Employer Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current employer strategies / models / toolkits (e.g., agesmartemployer.org). <i>(Worksource Montgomery, MCEDC)</i> • Convene a focus group of key stakeholders to raise awareness of age-friendly employability <i>(Worksource Montgomery, MCEDC)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on outcomes of the focus group (in year one), identify champions and identify next step activities. <i>(Worksource Montgomery, MCEDC)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct outreach to inform employers within the county of strategies / tools / models for them to customize <i>(Worksource Montgomery, MCEDC)</i>
Combat Age Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and review educational materials that employers use to explain age discrimination protections or that demonstrate age equity. <i>(Worksource Montgomery, OHR, JCA, MCEDC)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate educational materials about age discrimination in the activities undertaken for the "Enhanced Skills" and "Employer Engagement" priorities above. <i>(Worksource Montgomery, OHR, JCA, MCEDC)</i> • Conduct at least two trainings for employers or employees that focus on age discrimination protections. <i>(Worksource Montgomery, OHR, JCA, MCEDC)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate educational materials about age discrimination in the activities undertaken for the "Enhanced Skills" and "Employer Engagement" priorities above. <i>(Worksource Montgomery, OHR, JCA, MCEDC)</i> • Conduct at least four trainings for employers or employees that focus on age discrimination protections. <i>(Worksource Montgomery, OHR, JCA, MCEDC)</i>

Training

- Provide age-specific job training, including examination of models in other jurisdictions such as Baltimore's Black Charities, which helps low-income workers move up the ladder.
- Address the digital divide, including expansion of intergenerational programs on technology skills
- Seek input from employers about most valued qualities they seek.

Age Discrimination Protection

- Address age and disability discrimination, including physical appearance and misperceptions that older people lack skills, seniors are willing to work for free, increased liability, etc.

Job Search Resources

- Create a community-wide outreach effort to inform older adults about existing resources for finding job opportunities: include both traditional and nontraditional sites such as pharmacies and grocery stores.
- Create one center for older adult employment with wrap-around services. At regional centers, designate specific hours for career information.
- 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 as equal to paid work.

Government Lead by Example

- 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.

Homecare Workforce

- Initiate workforce development for home care workers and match English as Second Language caregivers with people who speak the same language.

Age-Friendly Montgomery: Health and Wellness

Phil Smakula (Recreation) and Odile Brunetto (Health and Human Services)
Co-Chairs

MISSION

To bring together government and community partners to expand and promote health and wellness awareness, resources and activities for residents age 55+ that help maintain or improve physical, cognitive and emotional health.

PRIORITIES

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT	Develop and implement a medication management education and outreach initiative.
SENIOR CENTER PLUS	Institute an Early State/Cognitive Dementia Program in County senior centers.
FALL PREVENTION	Continue and expand the County's falls prevention program.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009

Increased Senior Center Hours and Accessibility

- Increased operating hours, programs and services at three senior centers (i.e., Schweinhaut, Damascus and Holiday Park) that offer social opportunities, health and wellness programs, lifelong learning and educational programs, exercise classes, dance classes, lectures, cultural programs, vegetable gardens and a variety of County services.
- Curb-to-curb transportation services were expanded via a contract with Jewish Council for the Aging to provide Monday-Friday services at all five County senior centers.

Expanded 55+ Recreation, Health Promotion and Exercise Options

- 55+ Active Adults Recreation Programs were expanded to pre-2009 hours at thirteen of the County recreation centers where baby boomers and older persons gather for educational programs, friendship, entertainment, and many sports. (The County also continued exercise classes for people age 18 and older at a dozen additional locations.) Today, Montgomery County offers 60% more health, exercise and wellness classes, compared with 2009, including additional Bone Builders and Zumba classes.
- For a \$50 annual fee, thousands of County residents age 55+ work out using the weights and exercise facilities – including Fitness Clinics – at the 17 County recreation centers. Thousands of older adults swim at County aquatic facilities each year. Hundreds more enjoy mini-trips offered quarterly to destinations and events in the metro Baltimore/DC areas. Over 2,000 active adults take Senior Outdoor Adventures in Recreation (SOAR) day trips. More than 800 seniors competed in 2,500 events at the 2015 Maryland Senior Olympics, hosted by Montgomery County.
- Through partnerships with local hospitals, the number and variety of programs and services offered to seniors in Recreation Department facilities have increased substantially. Examples include the “Senior Fit” exercise program offered by Holy Cross Hospital and the “Senior Shape” exercise program and Heartwell nurse programs offered by Suburban Hospital. The Bone Builders exercise program, a joint DHHS and Recreation Department evidence-based program, expanded from ten classes in 2012 to 18 classes in 2015.

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: To create educational opportunities for Montgomery County seniors to learn about their medications and interactions with other drugs.

Objective: To collect and publish a list of current medication management programs and seminars throughout the county. Develop new programs and compile materials to present to Montgomery County seniors.

BACKGROUND

- According to “Medicine Use and Older Adults” (the National Council on Patient Information and Education), older adults comprise 13% of the population but account for 34% of all prescription medicine use and 30% of all over-the-counter (OTC) drug use. Most older adults, (four out of five) have one or more chronic conditions. Many take multiple medicines at the same time.
- Older adults are at increased risk of serious adverse drug events, including falls, depression, confusion, hallucinations and malnutrition. Almost 40% of older adults are unable to read or understand prescription labels, and 67% are unable to understand information given to them by the doctor or pharmacist regarding their medications.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Partnering with new organizations and providers.
- Creating a network to tap into for medication management issues related to seniors.

CHALLENGES

- Locating providers and speakers to meet the demands.
- Translating medical information into other languages.

METRICS

- Number of participants attending educational seminars.
- Program evaluation of HomeMeds program and utilizing evidence-based programs.

SENIOR CENTER PLUS

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: To create an innovative inclusion program for persons in Montgomery County diagnosed with early stage dementia or Alzheimer’s disease.

Objective: To provide a safe and productive environment at senior centers with programs that enhance and prevent loneliness for seniors with cognitive impairments.

BACKGROUND

- The Alzheimer’s Association projects that the Maryland growth rate of Alzheimer’s between 2015 and 2025 will be 31.3%. Montgomery County’s projected senior population growth matches the projected state wide senior growth.
- In 2015, 99,000 (12%) of the states’ senior population 65+ had an Alzheimer’s disease diagnosis. In 2025, the Alzheimer’s Association projects 130,000 (11%) of the state’s senior population 65+ will have an Alzheimer’s diagnosis.
- Based on current estimates, Montgomery County could have 22,636 adults 65+ who have an Alzheimer’s diagnosis. This represents an increase of 5, 396 (31.3%) by 2025.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Bridge the gaps between programs for fully independent seniors and those who require assistance. Partner with Dementia Friendly America Initiative (DFAI).

CHALLENGES

- Adequate physical space, staffing and funding for the program.

METRICS

- Number of participants attending Senior Center Plus programs
- Pilot program evaluation.
- Number of programs throughout the county, including geographic distribution and access.

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: To increase and expand fall prevention education and activities for Montgomery County seniors, encouraging seniors to engage in three events/activities per year.

Objective: To maintain existing fall prevention education and outreach programs and extend it to greater numbers of seniors in diverse and ethnic communities with a focus on September as Falls Prevention Month and the evidence based program Stepping On.

BACKGROUND

- Each year, millions of people 65 and older fall. One of three older people fall each year, but less than half tell their doctor. Falling once doubles the chances of falling again.
- According the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one of every five falls causes a serious injury such as broken bones or head injury. Each year, 2.5 million older people are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries. More than 700,000 patients a year are hospitalized because of a fall injury, most often because of a head injury or hip fracture.
- Each year across the country, at least 250,000 older people are hospitalized for hip fractures. More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling sideways. These injuries can make it hard to get around and do activities of daily living.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase the existing network of stakeholder's that service diverse audiences. Recruiting instructors and speakers for education programs.

CHALLENGES

- General translations suitable for all dialects of the different languages, cost, volunteer manpower limitations.

METRICS

- Number of education classes and participants.
- Pre- and post-session evaluations.

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Medication Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a list of medication management seminars that are scheduled at senior and community centers. <i>(REC and AAA staff)</i> • Recruit local pharmacists to participate in medication management seminars at senior centers for an annual campaign to continue in Year 2 and Year 3. <i>(REC and AAA staff; H&W Advisory Group)</i> • Develop a HomeMeds Pilot (medication management for seniors) program with AAA and Social Services to Adults (DHHS program). <i>(AAA, DHHS, and Partners in Care staff)</i> • Seek partnership with Jewish Council for the Aging (JCA) on HomeMeds or research another medication management programs for consideration and include volunteers. <i>(REC and AAA staff; H&W Advisory Group)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information on medication issues related to seniors and publish a fact sheet; promote information via Seniors Today. <i>(NIA; H&W Advisory Group; AAA staff)</i> • Enlist 10 partners to help identify and recommend sites to disseminate fact sheet on medication issues affecting seniors. <i>(AAA staff; Health and Wellness - Advisory Group)</i> • Prioritize which senior group will receive program and services, with emphasis on low income and vulnerable seniors. <i>(REC staff; H&W Advisory Group)</i> • Explore formal partnership with Nexus Montgomery, including the six hospitals, for medication management programs for seniors. <i>(AAA staff; H&W Advisory small work group)</i> • Reach out to providers of health care to improve communication with patients about medicine, utilize Medication Reconciliation Implementation Toolkit for education and instructions and the re-engineered discharge documents. Reach out to pharmacies about offering Medication Management therapy to all Medicare clients. <i>(AAA staff; H&W Advisory small work group)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a HomeMeds pilot program. <i>(AAA staff)</i> • Publish a report on HomeMeds pilot program and lessons learned. Evaluate program outcomes. <i>(AAA staff; H&W Advisory Group)</i> • Expand HomeMeds pilot program to serve the greatest needs in the county. <i>(AAA staff; JCA)</i> • Partner with family caregivers and Dementia Friendly Initiative Advisory Group. <i>(AAA staff; H&W Advisory Group)</i>

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Senior Center Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update a list of senior centers in Montgomery County that need a Senior Center Plus Program. <i>(REC; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Establish a pilot program with Jewish Council for the Aging at the Germantown Community Center. <i>(REC, JCA, and AAA; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between JCA and Germantown Recreation Center for program guidelines, components, budgets and transportation. <i>(REC and JCA)</i> Evaluate JCA/Germantown program for replication. <i>(REC and JCA)</i> Inform County leadership, CoA, DFAi and public on first year results of pilot program. <i>(REC, JCA, and AAA; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Recruit additional partners for FY 2017. <i>(REC, JCA, and AAA; H&W Advisory Group)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek funding for a second program in the down-County area and a third program to be prioritized by the Recreation Department. <i>(REC, JCA, and AAA; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Encourage partners (such as Dementia Friendly, Alzheimer members) to seek funding (private or county) to propose second site. <i>(REC, JCA, and AAA; H&W Advisory Group; DFAi)</i> Work with CountyStat to identify priority needs for this program. <i>(REC, JCA, and CountyStat)</i> Develop a survey to distribute to DFAi, H&W, CoA H& W and other partners regarding program replication potential needs. <i>(REC, JCA, and AAA; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Publish results of survey. <i>(REC, JCA, and AAA; H&W Advisory Group)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand program and add additional days to current program or a new location down-County. <i>(REC, JCA, and AAA; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Create a video (YouTube) to show families and county residents the benefits of the Senior Center Plus program. <i>(REC, JCA, and AAA; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Work with Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA), CountyStat and AAA evaluation staff on the benefits of this program and publish results. <i>(REC, JCA, and AAA; H&W Advisory Group)</i>

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Fall Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify four sites and four volunteer instructors to implement up to four “Stepping On” classes throughout Montgomery County serving 80 seniors for two years. <i>(Existing stakeholders and newly trained instructors)</i> Work with Living Well Center of Excellence regional coordinators to assist in risk assessment and data collection efforts; this a two-year program. <i>(Living Well and AAA staff)</i> Continue to coordinate with Grassroots Organization for Wellbeing of Seniors (GROWS) and advertise 25-30 free September Falls Prevention Programs in The Beacon. <i>(GROWS, AAA staff; volunteers)</i> Maintain Bone Builder 58 classes and 54 sites throughout the County. <i>(AAA staff; BB coordinator)</i> Recruit more volunteer Bone Builder trainers/instructors. <i>(AAA staff; BB coordinator)</i> Reach out to 20 low-income senior housing facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and reprint fall prevention brochures and distribute at sites throughout the County. <i>(PIO; existing stakeholders; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Translate, test and print falls prevention brochures in Chinese. <i>(CASSA and AAA staff)</i> Develop and place information items in at least three Chinese media outlets or senior centers throughout the county. <i>(Chinese media outlets; REC; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Partner with Nexus Montgomery on falls prevention programs for patients discharged from hospitals or nursing homes. <i>(Nexus Montgomery staff; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Partner with the National Institute on Aging’s (NIA) Go4Life® evidence-based physical activity program in September during Falls Prevention Month. <i>(H&W Advisory Group; NIA)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate growth need of Older American Act-funded Falls Prevention programs including Stepping on and Matter of Balance. <i>(UMD; Montgomery College; AAA and CountyStat staff)</i> Work with County Stat on listing the falls prevention programs in the County on an interactive map. <i>(CountyStat; H&W Advisory Group)</i> Conduct a formal evaluation of the Bone Builder program <i>(AAA staff and Montgomery College)</i>

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2015 SUMMIT ON AGING

Health and Wellness

- Conduct more outreach and education.
- Focus on diversity issues with cultural programs and funding.
- Involve different sectors of the public in supporting seniors.
- Increase and enhance caregiver services, possibly through DHHS coordination, coalition, 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 senior villages.
- Address the need for mental health services in facilities and community.
- Standardize and streamline discharge planning.
- Train direct care workers and develop workforce for future health care needs.

Age-Friendly Montgomery: Home and Community Based Services

Jay Kenney (Health and Human Services) and Hileia Seeger (Jewish Social Services Agency)
Co-Chairs

MISSION

To provide Montgomery County residents coordinated, personalized, community-based support allowing them to age safely and with dignity in their communities.

PRIORITIES

CAREGIVER SUPPORT	To better support residents and caregivers of older adults.
SIMPLIFIED ACCESS	To simplify access to Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) resources for older adults.
NAVIGATION	To optimize navigation of HCBS resources.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009

COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH AND SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

- Continued in-home nurse monitoring for more than 2,000 senior and disabled clients (FY15) through Community First Choice Program, a Medicaid waiver. Increased State Senior Care Gateway Grant to expand senior care service capacity and avoid institutionalization.
- Continued in-home personal care and chore services (sliding fee scale), assisting more than 300 vulnerable seniors in remaining safe and cared for in the community, while preventing unnecessary institutionalization (76 are on the waitlist). Medical Assistance Personal Care received 410 new applicants over recent six-month period.
- Continued public guardianship program – recently expanded span of program as the caseload increased by almost 25% in one year, from 77 individuals to 101 individuals.
- Increased Adult Foster Care reimbursement rate for 122 clients in senior assisted living homes (increased from \$1,350/month in 2012 to \$1,550/month.) Continued Group Homes Subsidy.
- Continued medication management program that distributes File of Life medical cards throughout the community and pill boxes to DHHS clients.

SUPPORT FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

- Continued to offer respite service, on a short-term basis, to family caregivers who support frail elders. Currently, 453 caregivers are being served; 20% are seniors.
- Increased subsidies for adult day programs to help 30 individuals access the program two days per week since 2014. Programs provide clients socialization and medical supervision while providing respite for family caregivers.
- To provide better support to caregivers, recently approved a Senior Fellow position, along with operating funds, to coordinate outreach regarding available services.

SENIOR NUTRITION

- Expanded Senior Nutrition Program (SNP) congregate meals to four adult day centers, two congregate housing service programs, and six ethnic contractors serving residents with limited English skills. Improved choice by offering either hot or cold meals option. Served 225,555 meals to 4,407 seniors at 42 sites in FY15.
- Served 1,977 homebound seniors with meals delivered to their homes in FY15, twice as many as in FY13 after expanding the number of buildings served to include 900 seniors residing in 18 low-income housing sites.
- Launched Five-Year Food Security Strategy that includes a specific focus on addressing senior hunger.

ASSIST RESIDENTS WITH SERIOUS AND ON-GOING MEDICAL CHALLENGES

- Continued to support and promote chronic disease self-management course offered by Holy Cross Health. This evidence-based, six-week program is for adults with chronic medical conditions, family, friends and caregivers.
- DHHS serves as lead agency of the Montgomery County Coalition for Care at the End of Life to encourage advance care planning, especially discussion and preparation of advance directives.
- Continued convenient collection of refuse and recycling for frail residents who are unable to bring containers to the curb, due to physical limitations. Currently 1,149 residents use this exemption.

EXPANSION OF VILLAGES

- From 2009 to 2015, the number of senior villages grew from four to 14 active villages (with nine more villages in development). Since 2014, a Village coordinator helped expand the number and capacity of Villages.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: Increase awareness of HCBS resources.

Objective: Increase the variety of communication channels in multiple languages.

Objective: Identify cultural ambassadors to promote HCBS services.

Objective: Identify and target channels of communication and agencies that have access to caregivers of people with dementia.

OPPORTUNITIES

Montgomery County has a lot of HCBS resources. Our actions will help more people, including immigrant populations; learn about the resources that are available to them. Montgomery County is dedicated to the senior population and becoming age-friendly.

CHALLENGES

It can be challenging to get community engagement. The “right” cultural ambassador must be selected. Language translation cannot just be the translation of words but also how the message is shared. Cost and lack of staff time to update channels can be prohibitive.

METRICS

- Number of media channels used and number of languages messages are translated into.
- Increased number of calls to 311 and other resources (when possible).

SIMPLIFIED ACCESS

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: Improve the integration of HCBS resources.

Objective: Strengthen partnerships within, between, and among public- and private-sector agencies.

OPPORTUNITIES

Integration of services is supported by new funding regulations as well as a desire for quality care. Agencies are interested in supporting each other and having appropriate and useful referral sources. Electronic health records (EHRs) are being used more frequently allowing for increased sharing of information.

CHALLENGES

It can be hard to reach small community partners. Agencies often fear loss of business. Different EHRs or no EHRs are currently being used. Staff has limited time to attend meetings/conferences.

METRICS

- At least once, annual meeting of providers in Years 2 and 3.
- Number of businesses that attend meetings and/or sign agreements to work together.
- Survey from participants re: satisfaction with system of services.
- Number of new partnerships.
- Number of County website hits.

NAVIGATION

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal: Expand quality care coordination services.

Objective: Maximize existing services.

Objective: Advocate for additional funding for services.

OPPORTUNITIES

Montgomery County has many different HCBS programs including a variety of case management programs already. The County has showed support for increased case management as there is a wait list for current programs. Agencies are looking at partnering for quality of care and funding reasons.

CHALLENGES

Different programs are hard to navigate. There are different notes systems as well as requirements. Cost expansion and ongoing trainings will require additional funding from the County/State.

METRICS

- Number of clients served.
- Creation of standardized quality measures.
- Number of partners that attend annual meetings.

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
CAREGIVER SUPPORT: Multiple languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey communication channels currently being used. Identify under-used channels (social media, public service announcement, Facebook, etc.). Identify those that have been successful. Determine a baseline number of people accessing services (at least through 311). Work with other age-friendly groups on a message that should be communicated to all seniors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create materials to be shared with the community in multiple languages. Assess internal DHHS processes for dissemination of material and well as relationships with service providers. Identify gaps to be addressed. Disseminate information into the community and to DHHS and other community partners as well as on all identified communication channels. Use awareness of gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect data on number of channels used, number of languages and number of resources accessed since the campaign was rolled out. Follow up with cultural ambassadors and community partners to get feedback from the campaign. Tweak as needed and continue providing information to the community.
CAREGIVER SUPPORT: Cultural ambassadors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify community partners who represent different segments of the population - including Office of Community Partnerships. Ensure that tech trainings for seniors are available to all groups in Montgomery County, not just English-speakers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify cultural ambassadors and community partners. Develop trainings and train ambassadors on resources and support their efforts in the community. Identify ambassadors in the community who work with people with dementia and caregivers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tweak as needed and continue providing information to the community.
SIMPLIFIED ACCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify nonprofit and for-profit stakeholders. Identify existing means of communication between providers and assess which are the most effective. Focus on ensuring the County website is up-to-date (may require funding for staff time). Determine baseline number of daily hits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene an annual meeting for all HCBS providers. Consider making it remotely accessible for those who cannot attend. Continue to monitor accuracy of the website and support initiative to increase awareness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold second meeting for all HCBS providers. Assess the effectiveness of the website and annual HCBS meetings.

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
<p>NAVIGATION: Maximize existing services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify care management providers and encourage them to be a part of the awareness campaign. This includes smaller agencies representing diverse communities. Convene a group to set criteria for quality care management/metrics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include care management as one of the priorities for the HCBS annual meeting. Have a workgroup that focuses on collaboration of care. Provide webinars to service providers to maintain quality care. This includes webinar/s on addressing the needs of people with dementia and caregivers. Ensure stakeholder group includes agencies and individuals who work with people with dementia and support caregivers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in senior feedback re: quality of care over the past year.
<p>NAVIGATION: Funding for services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look at the waiting list numbers for HCBS senior programs in the county. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and create a business case (white paper for additional funding). Educate elected officials about existing services, the financial benefits of care management and the current workload. Research grant opportunities for care management funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for increased care management services for low-income seniors. If funding has been approved, begin implementing services using approved quality metrics.

HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

- Increase communication and education about services, resources, providers, Medicare.
- Incorporate technology into overall strategy.
- Increase and enhance caregiver services, possibly through DHHS coordination, coalition, 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.
- Train direct care workers and develop workforce for future health care needs.
- Assist with individual needs through transition from independent to assisted living and vice-versa.
- 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.
- Expand diversity of nutrition program to reflect county population.
- Focus on diversity issues with cultural programs and funding.
- Promote neighbor-to-neighbor activities (particularly in multicultural settings).
- Promote and increase Intergenerational programs and opportunities.
- Address social isolation.

(Note: Many of these recommendations are shared with Health and Wellness)

Age-Friendly Montgomery: Housing

Jay Greene and Leslie Marks (Department of Housing and Community Affairs)
Co-Chairs

MISSION

To ensure that Montgomery County older adults will have choices of dwelling types to meet changing needs and preferences of this population. The County will support initiatives to assist older adults to age in place, downsize, choose rental housing or home ownership. Further, the County will support housing with supportive services so residents do not have to leave the community.

PRIORITIES

AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS

Expand affordable housing options for seniors.

WRAP AROUND SERVICES

Introduce aging in place and wrap around services to affordable senior living communities.

AFFORDABLE ASSISTED LIVING

Explore the opportunity to develop affordable assisted living in the county.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009

Affordable Rental Housing

- The County formed partnerships to acquire/preserve thousands of existing units of affordable housing.
- The County partnered with private and non-profit developers to build new affordable housing for seniors. The following are either in the planning stage or under construction — Aspen Hill (110 units); Churchill II (133) Germantown; The Bonifant (149) Silver Spring; White Oak (105); Silver Spring (75); Glenmont (110); East County (151); White Flint (150).
- Partnering has continued with the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) and the Department of Health and Human Services(DHHS) to provide rental assistance to low-income seniors.

Expanded Property Tax Credit

- Maintained property tax credit for homeowners with limited assets, with an additional such credit for seniors. The credit applies to those who apply and qualify based on modest financial resources.
- In FY2015, more than 2,900 seniors with limited assets received an average of \$720 in homeowners' and seniors' property tax credits. Beginning in July 2015, Montgomery County doubled the rate of the senior tax credit and expanded eligibility to include homeowners who are 65 to 70 years old (until this year, the credit was limited to homeowners 70 years and over). Next year, homeowners age 65 and older with limited savings can apply to receive an estimated average of \$870 per year in property tax credits.
- Property tax credit support for older homeowners who have modest savings are estimated to grow from about \$2 million to approximately \$3 million per year. For residents age 70 and older, retroactive applications for this credit may be made for the prior three years.

Incentives to Install Accessible Features

- Design for Life, managed by the Department of Permitting Services (DPS), provides partial tax credits to property owners or homebuilders who install measures that improve accessibility, visit-ability and/or livability of residential homes.
- This model program was initiated in July 2014 to improve the ability of all residents to manage more successfully in homes and age in place and to make homes more accessible to visitors of all ages.

Accessory Housing Approval

- In 2013, the County began offering homeowners a swifter approval process for accessory apartments, one way to expand affordable housing for seniors. Currently, 60 accessory apartments have been licensed and nearly four dozen are in the pipeline.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

- Goal:** Expand the availability of affordable housing for seniors who are between 30% of area median income (AMI) and 40% of AMI; 10% of all new affordable housing developments for seniors will be for seniors who are between 30% and 40% of AMI.
- Objective:** Develop a “home share” model for Montgomery County seniors.

BACKGROUND

- Data shows that 16.5% of all County residents living under the poverty level are 60 years or older. Montgomery County is an expensive place to live. There has been a commitment on the part of elected officials to increase the supply of affordable housing. In recent budget cycles, Montgomery County has invested in affordable senior housing, examples being the recent opening of the Bonifant in Silver Spring and the pursuit of development of senior housing on County-owned land next to the East County Regional Center.
- As committed as the County is and has been to development of new affordable senior housing, the County cannot solve the need for affordable senior housing by simple building its way to a solution. In addition to new construction, the County must look for ways to partner with the private and non-profit sectors to find innovative opportunities to increase the affordable senior housing choices.
- The Age-Friendly Montgomery Housing Work Group has decided to pursue the re-activation of a home sharing program for seniors as an opportunity to expand the choices for affordable housing for seniors. This program would identify seniors who are interested in sharing a home with seniors who are interested in finding a home to share.

OPPORTUNITIES

- As the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) partners with developers in the private sector, DHCA can influence the financing of a project to allow the project to afford offering units to seniors whose income falls between 30% and 40% AMI. DHCA can accomplish this by additional investment in communities to insure financial feasibility that will offer 10% of their units that are between 30% and 40% AMI.
- Montgomery County previously had a successful home sharing program managed by HOC. It no longer exists. At present, the Jewish Council for the Aging (JCA) has stated their interest in reviving and managing a “home sharing” program and has created an interest paper. Saint Ambrose of Baltimore, a robust “home sharing” program has indicated an interest in collaborating with entities in Montgomery County to re-activate a “home sharing” program.

CHALLENGES

- The biggest challenge to providing 10% of all units in new senior housing communities to renters between 30% to 40% of AMI is ensuring the financial feasibility of the project. Achieving this rental goal will require budget commitment through the Housing Initiative Fund.
- Funding is a challenge in initiating and managing a new program such as the home sharing program. Grants need to be identified and obtained as well as County funds to support a new, home sharing program.

METRICS

- Percent of rents (for seniors) in new buildings who fall between 30% – 40% of AMI (goal is 10%).
- Creation of a home sharing program.

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

- Introduce wrap around services to tax credit affordable senior living communities and to low income seniors living in their own homes that will allow them to age in place.

BACKGROUND

- Keeping seniors safe and thriving and enjoying a reasonable quality of life takes more than the physical structure of a building or a home. Seniors who have lived in their homes for many years and have “aged in place” may find that home difficult to navigate and maintain. To support seniors in their current homes, the County will institute a weatherization program for seniors. Older homes may be heavy energy users, taxing seniors on fixed incomes. Bringing older homes up to current energy codes will also make the home more livable.
- Wrap-around services delivered directly to seniors in their homes will support aging in place that is safe and adds to a positive quality of life. DHCA will partner with DHHS and identified healthcare providers to pilot a medication management program in tax credit senior communities.
- Security is a major concern for seniors aging in their homes. DHCA will develop a pilot program with owners/managers of tax credit communities to promote security by instituting security assessments of all buildings, in collaboration with Police (MCPD), to identify needed adjustments.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The weatherization program is an opportunity to partner with the Montgomery County senior village movement to identify senior homes that meet income and need requirements to participate in the program, as well as an opportunity to collaborate with a nonprofit partner(s) to provide the delivery of weatherization upgrades to seniors who would not otherwise be able to afford them.
- The medication management wrap-around services program will provide an opportunity to collaborate with DHHS and other health care providers to offer all seniors living in affordable tax credit communities a medication management program that could mitigate 911 calls for emergency service needed because of over medication.
- The security survey of all tax credit senior communities will provide owners and managers with information and guidance about making their communities safer for their senior residents. This program will initiate a dialogue between community owners/managers and DHCA and the Police Department as a resource of information and support.

CHALLENGES

- The weatherization program is budgeted for \$800,000+ funds in the next three years. Additional funding sources will be necessary through the budget process or from grants to continue the program.
- DHCA has typically worked closely with developers and property managers in the development/building phase, but has not, to this point, tried to coordinate services to the tax credit senior housing properties in which it has invested.
- Coordinating efforts with DHHS on medication management pilot programs is an important step toward delivering an effective program to the tax credit affordable senior housing communities. Funding to sustain this program is important and yet not in place.
- A successful community security survey and implementation program will require close coordination and communication among MCPD, DHCA and the owners and managers of tax credit senior housing communities. This approach will take effort to make it effective.
- Obtaining cooperation and consent from seniors living in affordable tax credit housing for wrap around services will require building trust. Seniors participating in the wrap around programs must be willing to allow the sharing of medical information among health care providers.
- Identification of funding sources to implement aging in place programs is essential.

METRICS

- Number of senior homeowners receiving weatherization services (goal is 10 per year).
- Number of affordable senior communities active in wrap-around services program (goal is five).
- Number of tax credit senior properties active in the medication management program (goal is five).
- Number of tax credit senior properties that have participated in a security survey.
- Number of tax credit senior properties that benefited from MCPD security “walks.”

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

- Explore the creation of an affordable assisted living program for seniors living in Montgomery County.

BACKGROUND

- The confluence of a rapidly expanding senior population and the increasing life expectancy of that population has created new and different societal issues related to seniors. More seniors have chronic health issues related to their longer life spans. Long life spans impact the financial wellbeing of seniors who may have been middle class or wealthier for most of their lives, but have depleted their personal wealth due to longevity and health issues.
- What happens to seniors who can no longer live safely in their own homes or in affordable independent living communities? What happens to seniors who do not have support of family or friends as they age?
- It is not uncommon when talking to managers of affordable independent living communities, that they bemoan the fact that one or two of their residents can no longer live alone, the community cannot support the needs of the residents, and there is no family to provide support. The seniors in question are often sent to nursing homes because there are no affordable living options that they can afford.
- The question becomes what are the options and opportunities to create an affordable assisted living program for seniors who can no longer live alone but are not ready for a nursing home. Illinois has a program that provides Medicaid waivers to developers who wish to develop affordable assisted living products. Tax credits provide for the “bricks & sticks” and the Medicaid waivers provide the operating subsidies to keep the community operational.
- Determine the necessary infrastructure elements (policy, legislation, industry interest, financial investment) necessary to create affordable assisted living in Montgomery County.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Partner with the Commission on Aging (COA) to study affordable assisted living programs that have successfully operated around the United States.
- Determine who the players are at the local, state and federal levels that could facilitate the development of affordable assisted living.
- Identify successful affordable assisted living communities in the United States, determine how they are funded and the level of support that is obtained by states and local communities.
- Identify financial institutions that have partnered with developers to fund affordable assisted living communities.
- Learn how the greenhouse program for senior communities operates and how or if it can be adapted to developing affordable assisted living communities.
- Identify potential partners such as hospitals, developers, banks, the State of Maryland, nursing home developers and operators, and nonprofits with potential interest in the development and operation of an affordable assisted living community.

CHALLENGES

- Involving the many agencies at both the state and local level that need to participate in the conversation of addressing affordable assisted living.
- Obtaining support from Commission on Aging to conduct a summer study to look at the feasibility and the pros and cons of funding and supporting an affordable assisted living community in Montgomery County.
- Changing the Maryland’s policy of funding Medicaid recipients to include those living in assisted living communities.
- Allocating funds to make affordable assisted living possible.
- Creating a pilot program to approve, build and manage an affordable assisted living community

METRICS

- Completion of study and identification of elements of successful plans that can be used in Maryland and Montgomery County.

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Affordable Housing Options – New Housing Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly set expectations of building partners of senior tax credit communities that 10% of units must serve senior populations between 30% and 40% of AMI. Dedicate sufficient County financial resources to assure the financial feasibility of at least 10% of new senior tax credit units to service the senior population who are between 30% and 40% of AMI. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Year One actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Year One and Two actions.
Affordable Housing Options – (b) Home Sharing Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select Montgomery County’s home sharing operational partner (JCA). Obtain information from jurisdictions that are successfully implementing a home sharing program (St. Ambrose, Baltimore and Fairfax County). Develop a pilot home sharing plan. Identify funding needs, funding sources and additional partners to operate and support an ongoing home sharing program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present home sharing plan to both DHHS and DHCA for approval. Prepare a budget request to County Executive for some ongoing funding to support home sharing program. Prepare and obtain additional financial support from foundations, faith based organizations and other philanthropic organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out pilot program.
Aging-in-Place Wrap Around Services – (a) Weatherization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create RFP to identify nonprofit or contractor to partner with DHCA to create a process that will identify senior homeowners who are income qualified and will benefit from weatherization upgrades to existing home . Partner with nongovernment organizations to identify income-eligible seniors. Identify and complete weatherization improvements on 10 homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based upon the success of the program in Year One, identify additional funding from the State of Maryland and County government to continue the program. Continue to work with DHHS and the faith community to identify eligible senior homeowners for weatherization projects. Provide weatherization for 10 senior homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the success and opportunities of Year One and Two to build and expand program to include additional housing weatherization investments.

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Aging-in-Place Wrap Around Services – Medication Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate a process for ongoing communication and feedback from all affordable senior housing communities in which the County has invested funds (approximately 15, with five in process) and introduce the owners / managers to opportunities to provide services and support to their residents through existing County programs. Make the owners and management companies aware of medication management pilot programs available for their residents. Solicit three-to-five communities interested and willing to participate in a medication management pilot program. Create a collaboration process among DHCA, DHHS communities to provide wrap-around services to five identified affordable senior communities. Partner with JSSA and JCA on the grant they received for a medication management program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue regular meetings with affordable senior housing communities that the County has invested in. Continue to provide information and opportunities for interested communities to bring services to their communities, such as a fall prevention program. Expand the medication management program to include five to seven additional communities. Collaborate with JCA & JSSA to measure the effectiveness of the medication management program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the work done in Year One and Two.
Aging-in-Place Wrap Around Services – Security Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with MCPD to perform security surveys of affordable senior housing communities in which the County has invested. Encourage community owners and managers to take advantage of the security surveys provided by MCPD and institute a collaboration vehicle for sharing information and best practices among communities. Encourage security “walks” of all Montgomery County tax properties in partnership with MCPD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the work done in Year One. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the work done in Year One and Two.
Affordable Assisted Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a Commission on Aging (COA) decision to do a summer study on the feasibility of developing affordable assisted living in Montgomery County. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a COA summer study about the feasibility of developing affordable assisted living in the county. Identify communities and states that have successful affordable assisted living programs and the challenges that other jurisdictions have faced in developing affordable assisted living communities. Through study, bring all necessary agencies both at the local and State level into a discussion about implementing a pilot affordable assisted living program—and identify potential partners around the State that support affordable assisted living. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the outcome of the COA study, decide on next steps for implementing a pilot program to develop an affordable assisted living community.

Senior Housing Development and Options

- Examine, understand and apply lessons about barriers, challenges, cost and timeframe issues from emerging plans for senior housing in county and elsewhere.
- Conduct market research on future demand in senior housing.
- Review all assets owned for potential housing development sites, including air rights over County-owned public buildings such as garages, public libraries and schools.
- Increase high-density high rises near transit.
- Increase the number of group home/assisted living units.
- Require developers to commit a certain percentage of senior affordable housing.
- Fast track and streamline development process to reduce cost and increase speed.
- Encourage more affordable housing for middle income in the Bethesda/Chevy Chase corridor.
- Support development of green buildings (ex: Green House Model in New Hampshire).
- Partner with faith-based organizations for senior housing.

Affordability and Supporting Services

- Create a sliding scale for assisted living.
- Dedicate more money to affordable housing.
- Establish rent stabilization.
- Increase/add tax credits for accessible housing and developers wanting to create senior housing.
- Support clustered care need for home care services in small increments that allows seniors to share the cost of one healthcare provider and pay a percentage of that health care providers' daily rate instead of each paying for an entire day.
- Find ways to provide more wrap-around services.
- Improve services for seniors with mental health needs in independent housing.

Universal Design

- Mandate universal design.
- Standardize in-code tax credits for senior housing/mandatory livable standards, visitability and design for life.

Home Sharing

- Maximize existing possibilities for additional housing, including matching seniors who have an extra room with seniors looking for a living space.
- Modify the zoning to allow elder cottages and PODS.

Outreach and Education

- Inform residents about property tax credits for those aging in place, including for those above the poverty line (lower middle class).
- Educate the public, developers, appraisers and investors about universal design.
- Hold a series of seminars for seniors and families on issues and benefits of living in the county and educate the community about aging in place.
- Communicate to residents who are owners of single family homes about resources available to renovate so they can age in place.
- Hire one expert for senior housing issues.

Intergenerational Housing

- Promote intergenerational housing as beneficial to all, by encouraging the development of intergenerational communities and senior housing near schools for intergenerational activities.

Technology

- Capitalize on the use of technology by and for seniors, including smart home sensors, safety technologies, medication management, household task automation and fall prevention.

Age-Friendly Montgomery: Planning Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Rachel Newhouse (Parks and Planning) and Nancy Greene (General Services)
Co-Chairs

MISSION

To “change the way we age by staying active, to the fullest extent possible, within all areas of life; physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, vocational, social and environmental; aging within these dimensions of wellness keeps us alert and enjoying a productive life.” (inspired by the mission statement of the International Commission on Active Aging).

PRIORITIES

PLANNING AND ACCESSIBILITY

Launch and implement the “Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan” (2017); the “Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan” (submitted to U.S. Department of Justice); and other plans by the Departments of Recreation and General Services.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009

Parks and Outdoor Space

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan submitted to the Department of Justice.
- Update to the 2012 PROS plan, a document that guides the planning and implementation for future parks and recreational amenities for Montgomery County residents.

Planning

- Introduced incentives for builders to install accessible park amenities. Density is awarded through zoning process for private development projects and is approved by the Planning Board. In addition, Recreational Guidelines Update – 2016 gives developers points for providing publicly accessible outdoor spaces and amenities.

1. PLANNING AND ACCESSIBILITY

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

- Launch and implement the “Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan” (2017); the “Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan” (submitted to U.S. Department of Justice); and other plans by Departments of Recreation and General Services.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Identify new programs and re-purposing amenities for the active aging population.

CHALLENGES

- Cost of improvements to parks and open spaces in Montgomery County.
- Creating Awareness of the programs and amenities offered for active adults.

METRICS

- County Council approval of walkability plan.
- Establish a walkable/biking and transit center.
- Increase in number of residents engaging in activities on the trails.
- Increase in number of residents shopping in downtown areas.
- Increase in the number of volunteers in parks.

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Planning and Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch and implement Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. • Launch and implement ADA Transition Plan. 		

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2015 SUMMIT ON AGING

- Parks and Open Spaces**
 - Cost of improvements to parks and open spaces in Montgomery County.
- Active Aging**
 - Create awareness of the programs and amenities offered for active adults
 - Identify new programs and re-purposing amenities for the active aging population.

Age-Friendly Montgomery: Senior Public Safety

Betsy Davis (Police), Tracy Rezvani (Consumer Protection), and James Resnick (Fire and Rescue Services)
Co-Chairs

MISSION

*To provide physical, financial and technological protection
and safety for older adults.*

PRIORITIES

COORDINATED AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Continue outreach on County programs and services to increase the awareness base of resources offered, including by refining the message to reach various/diverse communities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009

Fire Safety

- In 2008, the County Executive convened the Senior Citizen Fire Safety Task Force, which was charged with developing an aggressive approach to address and reverse the trend of fire risk among seniors. Since then, fire fatalities among seniors have fallen from an average of five per year from 2005-2007 to an average of two per year from 2008-2014.
- One of the tasks force's most successful and high-profile recommendations has been the implementation of MCFRS' home safety program--fire department representatives visit the homes of seniors and persons with disabilities to check smoke alarms, identify and correct any potential safety risks and ensure that the resident has a home fire escape plan. Using an appointment-based scheduling system, the department has visited more than 1,000 senior homes in the first ten months of the program.
- Additionally, the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services (MCFRS) personnel partner with communities, neighborhood organizations and residential building managers to develop fire evacuation and escape plans. MCFRS provides "fire safety awareness" training to any group that may interact with "at-risk" seniors in their home – alerting them to check smoke alarms, space heaters and learning cooking practices to help prevent fires.

Expanded Crime Prevention

- In 2009, the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) launched "Keeping Seniors Safe" crime prevention outreach program, which addresses financial and other frauds and scams, identity theft, shopping safety and emergency preparedness. With presentations from community outreach officers and command staff, and brochures distributed widely, the program reaches thousands of seniors yearly.
- Through work of the Alzheimer's/Dementia Outreach Unit, providing a continuous, layered approach to wandering prevention and general community safety through education of officers and the community, outreach, immediate follow-up and incident response.
- MCPD officers continued to conduct home security surveys in seniors' homes.
- MCPD officers also manage Project Lifesaver to help locate seniors with Alzheimer's disease.
- The Montgomery County Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse Task Force was formed.

Emergency Planning

- The Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) continues to deliver preparedness messages throughout the community, educating seniors about becoming better prepared for an emergency.

COORDINATED AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

GOAL & OBJECTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide constituents with resources and information on the agencies that provide a full spectrum of public safety support.
OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good outreach and network connection that can be used by various members of the task force for cross-pollination.
CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of centralized information. • Lack of inter-agency awareness. • Different definitions of “senior.”
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of contacts/attendees /events (agency statistics—possibly use Wufoo for data gathering). • Master calendar of events.

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
----------	----------	----------	------------

Coordinated Awareness Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a master calendar for events and outreach. <i>(OCP)</i> • Develop a public safety master checklist / brochure <i>(MCPD)</i> • Initiate a Public Safety Senior Forum for agencies. <i>(FRS)</i> 		
---------------------------------------	--	--	--

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2015 SUMMIT ON AGING

Home Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued home inspections by MCFRS and other security providers. • Use of available technology (example: free caller ID). • Calls to police when fraud is suspected. • Changes in condominium and homeowner association laws to enhance welfare of older residents.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training for the public as well as for police, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and volunteers about working with the senior population and issues of elder abuse. • Public education on who to contact, “See Something, Say Something” campaign and phone numbers (311, 240-777-3000).
Pedestrian Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniformity in (State and County) street signs and crosswalks. • Longer crossing times. • Additional police presence on street targeted to high-risk areas.
Driver Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of emerging companies like Uber/Lyft. • Putting car keys away. • Educating seniors about how to use buses and other available transportation.

Age-Friendly Montgomery: Transportation and Mobility

Dan Hibbert / Sam Oji (Transportation) and Shawn Brennan (Health and Human Services)
Co-Chairs

MISSION

To provide public and private transportation and mobility systems that enable older adults to go safely where they want to go, when they want to go.

PRIORITIES

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Increase seniors' awareness of transportation and mobility options and resources.

AFFORDABILITY

Increase and expand affordable transportation options.

ACCESSIBILITY

Increase accessibility of vehicles and the built environment.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009

Free and Reduced Bus Service

- Maintained free fares (M-F 9:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.) and reduced fares (all other times) for seniors and people with disabilities who obtain a Senior SmarTrip card.

Accessible Transport

- Continued County's bus stop improvement program, which is regarded as a national model. Currently, 90% of bus stops are ADA compliant and 100% of Ride On buses are ADA compliant.
- In July 2015, the County enacted legislation to increase the number of wheelchair-accessible taxicabs and set a goal that the County's fleet will become 100% accessible by 2025. A new fund, collected as surcharges from transport network companies, will help the County achieve this goal.

Tripled Connect-A-Ride Users

- The number of people who use this service has tripled from 1,012 in FY07 to 3,124 in FY15. Connect-A-Ride helps callers who are age 50+ and/or disabled learn about a wide range of public, private and volunteer transportation options. In FY15, transitioning from driving became an added service.

Call-N-Ride Subsidized Taxi Service

- Call-n-Ride currently serves over 5,000 people; 70% are seniors. The program also serves persons with disabilities. In April 2013, Call-n-Ride was transitioned to an automated debit card system; by reinvesting savings, the program expanded income eligibility in FY15 for greater participation.

Escorted Transport Service

- Escorted transportation is available on a sliding scale basis to low- and moderate-income older adults and people with disabilities who require an escort. Although clients can access the program for any purpose, in FY15, 87% of the trips were for medical or dental appointments.

Expanded Transport to Senior Centers

- Service improvements began January 2014. Shuttles take participants to Damascus, Holiday Park, Long Branch, Margaret Schweinhaut and White Oak senior centers. Buses traveled 25,596 miles and provided 8,615 rides in the first six months of operation.

Improved Pedestrian Safety

- The County is two-thirds finished retiming all the traffic signals to extend pedestrian crossing times to the latest national standards, which accommodate slower walking speeds. For improved visibility, street name signs have been increased to five inches for better legibility.
- Since 2010, the most severe pedestrian collisions have been reduced by 28%.
- In the past five years, 175 miles of sidewalk and 6,000 new ramps have been constructed to improve walkability. Since 2007, 35 miles of sidewalks have been reconstructed to meet ADA standards.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**GOAL & OBJECTIVE**

- Increase seniors' awareness of transportation and mobility options and resources.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Many message venues and partnerships/potential partnerships exist.
- Federal grant funding is available in FY17 and FY18.
- Connect-A-Ride information and referral service.
- Collaborations with communications workgroup.

CHALLENGES

- Communicating messages effectively to all segments of the target population is difficult because of differences in language, culture, literacy, cognitive abilities, etc.
- Capturing seniors' attention can be difficult.

METRICS

- Number of outreach sessions/attendees.
- Number of calls to Connect-A-Ride, DOT, 311.
- Increased awareness and better utilization of existing senior transportation options / resources.
- Number of senior center, escorted, Call-n-Ride, and volunteer-provided trips.

AFFORDABILITY**GOAL & OBJECTIVE**

- Increase and expand affordable transportation options.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Can leverage existing programs and partnerships, including programs offering volunteer-provided transportation.

CHALLENGES

- Least expensive transportation options are not necessarily preferred or safest for many seniors
- Recruiting volunteers.

METRICS

- Number of free and low-cost programs.
- Number of trips / participants.

ACCESSIBILITY

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

- Increase accessibility of vehicles and the built environment

OPPORTUNITIES

- Council established the goal of having a 100% accessible taxicab fleet by 2025.
- Transportation network companies (TNCs) surcharges have created a Transportation Services Improvement Fund used to improve transportation access and services for individuals with disabilities and seniors.
- Union Taxi received 50 passenger vehicle licenses (PVLs) for accessible vehicles.
- The Department of Transportation (DOT) has ongoing sidewalk, bus stop, ADA, pedestrian safety and traffic engineering improvement programs.

CHALLENGES

- We are in the midst of a changing and uncertain transportation environment.
- There are real costs and other real/perceived barriers to owning/operating accessible vehicles.
- Snow storms present accessibility problems.
- It is difficult to stay on top of ongoing maintenance needs of sidewalks and bus stops in county.

METRICS

- Percentage of accessible vehicles in fleet available for use at any given time.
- Percentage of fully accessible bus stops and benches added.
- Number of improved sidewalks and ramps.
- Number of pedestrian signals re-timed to increase crossing times.
- Number of street name signs changed to include larger letters.
- Amount of time between ride request and ride.
- Number of trips unable to take place because of lack of accessibility of vehicles or environment.

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Public Education and Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of outreach events, with federal funds and other opportunities. <i>(DHHS, CAR, DOT)</i> • Outdoor campaigns (bus / shelter ads). <i>(DOT, DHHS)</i> • Create and distribute plain language materials and translations that are easier for people with cognitive changes to understand. <i>(DHHS, PIO)</i> • Ongoing collaboration with PIO to develop and disseminate transportation-related information, including content in The Beacon or other newspapers. <i>(DOT, DHHS, PIO, The Beacon)</i> • Mail postcards to residents receiving help with trash and recycling pick-ups. <i>(DHHS)</i> • Continuously disseminate transport information at venues where seniors live and gather. <i>(DOT, CAR, DHHS, PIO)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain increased level of outreach, especially with federal funds. <i>(DHHS, CAR, DOT)</i> • Continue outdoor campaigns (bus and shelter ads). <i>(DOT, DHHS)</i> • Ongoing collaboration to develop and disseminate transportation related information. <i>(DOT, DHHS, PIO)</i> • Incorporate social media tools to disseminate information to seniors, their caregivers and relatives. <i>(PIO, DOT, DHHS)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a strategic communication and marketing plan and special purpose initiative that includes promotional and educational strategies, through a combination of ongoing marketing and outreach, presentations, events, website, social media. <i>(DOT, DHHS, PIO, CAR)</i> • Increase the budget of Connect-A-Ride to expand outreach and travel training sessions. <i>(DOT, CAR)</i>
Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand free bus service to include Saturdays. <i>(DOT, WMATA)</i> • Use federal funding to recruit and screen volunteer drivers. <i>(DHHS, non-profits)</i> • Expand Call-n-Ride eligibility to 65 years and older. <i>(DOT)</i> • Continue to support expansion of Village rides. <i>(JCA, DHHS)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand free buses to include Sundays or all day, every day. <i>(DOT, WMATA)</i> • Use federal funding to recruit and screen volunteer drivers. <i>(DHHS, nonprofits)</i> • Expand Call-n-Ride financial eligibility by using self-sufficiency standards. <i>(DOT)</i> • Expand the ongoing escorted transportation program. <i>(HHS)</i> • Utilize federal grant and other opportunities to develop free or subsidized medical transportation programs. <i>(DOT, DHHS)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand free buses to every day, all day. <i>(DOT, WMATA)</i> • Provide funding to volunteer and non-profit transportation services to support their operations and to cover criminal and driver background checks on drivers. <i>(DHHS)</i> • Expand Call-n-Ride sliding scale so that more residents are eligible, even if subsidy is lower than 50%. <i>(DOT)</i>

PRIORITY	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOT develops regulations for utilization of Transportation Services Improvement Fund. <i>(DOT)</i> • Percentage of accessible vehicles for on-demand transportation increases to 28% of available fleet. <i>(DOT, industry, nonprofits)</i> • Union Taxi (awarded 50 licenses) begins providing accessible transportation. <i>(DOT, Union Taxi)</i> • Pedestrian safety campaigns include messaging for older adults. <i>(DOT, PIO, JCA)</i> • Continue sidewalk and bus stop improvements; and prioritize maintenance of those areas frequently used by seniors. <i>(DOT)</i> • Continue re-timing pedestrian signals; and replace street name signs with larger letters. <i>(DOT)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOT provides funds from the Transportation Services Improvement Fund to increase availability of accessible on-demand transportation. <i>(DOT, industry, nonprofits)</i> • Percentage of accessible vehicles for on-demand transportation increases to 37% of available fleet. <i>(DOT, industry, nonprofits)</i> • Union Taxi and other taxi fleets increase number of accessible transportation provided. <i>(DOT, Union Taxi)</i> • Continue to refresh all cross-walks with highly visible ladder bar style. <i>(DOT)</i> • Convert most street lights to LED. <i>(DOT)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and evaluate use and effectiveness of the Transportation Services Improvement Fund used to increase availability of accessible on-demand transportation. <i>(DOT)</i> • Percentage of accessible vehicles for on-demand transportation increases to 46% of available fleet. <i>(DOT, industry, nonprofits)</i> • Expand sidewalk, bus stop, ADA, pedestrian safety and traffic engineering improvement programs to all areas of the County. <i>(DOT)</i> • Convert all street lights to LED. <i>(DOT)</i> • Ensure that training for bus operators includes guidelines for interacting with people with aging-related cognitive changes.

Education

- 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 share resource information with peers.
- Standardize age of eligibility for programs to minimize confusion in messaging about options.

Safe Travel Environment

- 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.

Affordability

- Extend free hours for RideOn and Metrobus, ideally to 24/7.
- Lower required age for free buses; expand Call-N-Ride program eligibility.

Safety of Older Drivers

- 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 one's transition.
- Encourage seniors to explore alternatives while still driving to decrease difficulty of giving up keys.

Ride Sharing and Volunteer Transport

- 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 recruitment of bilingual volunteer drivers.

Services to 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.