World Health Organization

Global Age-friendly Cities: Assessment
City of Philadelphia

Mayor's Office of Policy Planning and Development

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Context

There are 276,000 Philadelphia residents age 60 years and older, representing 19% of the total City population. Within the population, 36% are aged 75 years and older, and 8% are age 85 and older.

Both locally and nationwide, the aging population is growing. From 1999 to 2009 the number of Americans age 65+ increased from 35.3 million to 39.6 million. Philadelphia mirrors the nation. 12% of Philadelphians are aged 65 and older.

With the aging of the "baby boom" generation, the population 65+ will continue to increase, projected to reach 55 million by 2020. With this growth comes the need for a city that will meet the demands of its aging population.[1]

Mayor Michael Nutter understands that city government must take a leadership role in meeting the needs of the growing number of older Philadelphians. As the senior population grows in Philadelphia and the needs of those seniors become more diverse, the City must ensure that older Philadelphians can stay in their homes and communities, become more engaged in their neighborhoods, and continue to live with dignity and respect as they age. In response to this need and as a result of city-wide dedication, Philadelphia is proud of its commitment to make this city a more age-friendly place. In 2011, the Mayor's Commission on Aging published a strategic plan outlining a total of 12 priorities and five key goals in creating an age-friendly city.

The following assessment is another example of Philadelphia's dedication to create an age-friendly city. The following evaluates the current state of age-friendly programs and infrastructure in Philadelphia. With the WHO, Philadelphia hopes to not only commit locally, but globally to building a city where all older adults can participate.

Outdoor Space and Buildings

Introduction
Age-friendly outdoor space and building aspects include: a clean environment, outdoor seating, green spaces and walkways, and accessible and safe streets and buildings.

Current age-friendly features:
- Green space
    - Philadelphia has 11,186 acres in parks.
    - 10% of Philadelphia is open space.
    - Fairmount Park as the largest city-owned park system in the world.
    - In 2011, Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA), and Fairmount Parks Conservancy (FPC) partnered to conduct needs assessment research to create an Age-friendly parks checklist for use by park designers, volunteers, and administrators in evaluating how parks can increase older adult participation and use.[2]
    - There is a large movement throughout Philadelphia to create senior-friendly community gardens at senior centers and senior housing complexes. In total, there are 61 active community gardens that involve older Philadelphians.[3]
- Buildings - All new construction follows the American Disabilities Act.
- Bicycle paths - Philadelphia has 200 miles of bike lanes and in 2009 was named a "Bicycle Friendly City" by the National Bicycle Organization.[4]
- Streets and Accessibility - For accessible and safe streets, PennDOT complies with the American Disabilities Act (ADA). In 2009, Mayor Michael Nutter signed a Complete Streets executive order, establishing Philadelphia as the first city in Pennsylvania to adopt a Complete Streets policy.[5]

Key areas for improvement:
- Public toilets – Public toilets are available in libraries and recreational centers. However, there are limitations due to closing times. The availability of clean, conveniently located, well-signed, handicap-accessible toilets is generally regarded by the WHO as a sign of Age-friendly cities.
- Clean environment - Philadelphia was rated as a county with "poor air quality" in 2010.[6] "Poor air quality" is defined as air quality concentrations above the level of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The American Lung Association predicts that the poor air quality in Philadelphia will affect 185,309 older adults in Philadelphia.[7]
- Traffic and road safety - In 2011, Philadelphia was ranked the 5th most dangerous city for pedestrians in relation to automobile accidents.[8] The current Complete Streets seeks to address this issue.
- Safe streets - In a 2008 Milestones survey conducted by PCA, seniors repeatedly asked for safer streets as well as more lighting and police presence to deter drug violence.[9]
- Outdoor seating - Although the City has taken steps to create space for street furnishing through the Complete Streets plan, except through the Street Furnishing RFP in 2009, there has not been any further movement to provide more bus shelters (304 currently existing) and street benches in Philadelphia.[10]

Transportation

Introduction
Transportation, including accessible and affordable public transportion, is a key factor in building age-friendly cities. Important aspects include: availability, affordability, reliability, frequency, age-friendly vehicles, safety, service, priority seating, and accessibility to transport stops and stations.

Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) is the nation's fifth largest transportation system with the most comprehensive bus/subway/commuter-rail system in the United States.[11] (See Appendix A for map of major railways and subways). Goal 5 of SEPTA's Sustainability Plan states that SEPTA support an age-friendly Philadelphia as outlined by the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging.[12]

Current age-friendly features:
- Affordability – Philadelphia's public transportation is very affordable to senior citizens. All seniors aged 65 and above ride free on all non-regional rail. Currently, around 200,000 seniors are registered for SEPTA's free ride system.[13]
- On regional rail, seniors pay $1 for fare. [14]
- Age-friendly vehicles - All buses, trolleys and trains are accessible to wheel chairs as well as older adults requiring lower platforms to board vehicles.[15]
- Accessibility to subway and railway stations[16]
    - Out of 280 stations, SEPTA has 89 elevators at Regional Rail, Subway Stations and multi-modal transportation centers.
    - SEPTA complies with American Disability Act (ADA) regulations in all station renovation projects. Measures include installing ramps to access high-level regional rail platforms and installing elevators to access subway and elevated platforms.[17]
- Accessibility to Parking - All parking lots comply with the ADA regulations for handicapped and disabled designated parking spots.
- Specialized services
    - SEPTA's Customized Community Transportation (CCT) provides paratransit service - CCT Connect - to individuals with disabilities and senior citizens. Eligible individuals can travel whenever and wherever buses operate in SEPTA's five-county service region.[18] This shared-ride program is a door-to-door, advance-reservation, ride-sharing service, offered on a space-available basis to senior citizens 65 years of age and residents of Philadelphia. This service can be used to travel within the City of Philadelphia and to any location in the surrounding counties within three miles of the City's border.[19]
- Priority seating is available on all public transportation avenues in Philadelphia.
- SEPTA transport drivers scored an 8 out of 10 on service.[20]
- Driving competence - The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has driving lessons tailored to seniors.

Key areas for improvement:
- Reliability and frequency
  - SEPTA System-wide on-time performance slipped by 0.6% percentage points from 89.3% in fiscal year 2011.[21]
    - The CCT system-wide on-time performance averages around low to mid 80%.[22]
  - About 8.6% of older adults in Philadelphia have cancelled a doctor's appointment or not scheduled one due to transportation problems.[23]
- Cleanliness - Evening vehicle and evening station cleanliness were frequently cited as critical issues in need of attention in 2010.[24]
- Safety - 29,806 crime reports were filed in 2008 in SEPTA's elevated and subway lines, 59% of which were for loitering by the homeless.[25]
- Bus shelters - Currently, there are only 304 bus shelters. The presence (or absence) of age-friendly bus stops could be the deciding factor in a senior's decision to use public transportation.[26] Therefore, it is beneficial to provide bus shelters near senior centers. Please see Appendix B for map on distance from bus shelters to senior centers.
- Taxi accessibility[27]
  - Only seven taxis out of 1600 medallion taxis are wheelchair accessible.
  - Freedom Taxi dispatch company hosts five and All City Taxi dispatch company hosts two.
  - How to access or reserve wheelchair accessible taxi cabs is relatively unknown.
  - Currently, the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA) is working to establish a regulatory framework for launching and maintaining a safe, reliable and robust system for supply of wheelchair accessible taxicab service under Act 119, which provides for immediate issuance for sale of 15 new medallions to be placed only on wheelchair accessible taxicabs with 15 additional medallions to be sold annually for the next ten years.[28]
- Information - The SEPTA Accessible Travel Center informs seniors on where and how to ride public transportation.[29] However, 53,000 older adults in Southeastern Pennsylvania (SEPA) or 10% of the older adult population in the five counties had not heard of these transportation services and discounts.[30]

Housing

Introduction
The WHO considers housing to be essential to the safety and well-being of seniors. The categories for evaluation for age-friendly housing are as follows: affordability, essential services, design, modification, maintenance, aging-in-place, community integration, housing options, and living environment.

Current age-friendly features:
- Design - Design of all senior centers and senior homes complies with ADA standards.
- Maintenance and modification

- o The Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation's (PDHC) Adaptive Modification Program helps physically disabled persons live more independently in their houses or apartments.
    - ▪ In 2011, the Adaptive Modification Program modified 153 homes.
  - o Philadelphia Corporation on Aging provides minor repairs to the homes of older people through the Senior Housing Assistance Repair Program (SHARP) and modifications to the homes of people with disabilities to improve the safety, security and accessibility of their homes. In total, PCA's SHARP program has completed 1,266 construction jobs in 2011, the vast majority of which served individual households.[31] The program serviced 700 homes in 2011.[32]
  - o The Urban Resource Development Corporation (URDC) provides an Owner Occupied Repair Program (OORP) in Northwest Philadelphia that assists low-income and older adult homeowners in the exterior repair of their homes. OORP operates in conjunction with National Penn Bank, which supplies low interest loans (3%, un-collateralized, not to exceed $5,000) to qualified owners for exterior home repairs. URDC pre-screens candidates for the program, selects contractors, and supplies direct grants to help owners defray the costs of major repairs. Since 1995, they have serviced more than 30 homes.[33]
- • Aging-in-place
  - o Most seniors wish to live in their own homes (91%) or at least on their block or within their neighborhood (49%). In Philadelphia, 43% of residents age 60 and older are living below 200% of the poverty level; making housing options a key focus.[34]
  - o PCA and additional groups offer "home-based" services to older adults.
  - o Mercy LIFE, NewCourtland LIFE, and Saint Agnes, and University of Pennsylvania's Living Independently for Elders (LIFE) Program are major avenue through which older adults can request home services.
  - o The City's newly adopted 2012 zoning code includes aging-in-community features such as[35]
    - ▪ Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)- ADUs are subordinate, additional, residences that are constructed within a residential property or garage. They can benefit seniors by providing the opportunity to downsize and to live in the same building with caregivers without having to leave the community or go to an institution.
    - ▪ Visitability - In any subdivision containing 50 or more detached, semi-detached or attached houses, at least 10% of the houses shall be visitable dwelling units.
      - • Visitabilitiy is defined as: having a zero step entrance; accessible first floor half-bath; and doorways and pathways that can accommodate a wheelchair.[36]
      - • Philadelphia Visitability Committee seeks to raise public awareness about visitability and promote legislation requiring 100% of new, market-rate housing to be visitable.[37]
  - o Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) - a geographic area of either a high-rise, individual houses, or a combination of the two, that over time has become home to a large concentration of persons 60 years of age or older. [38]

- Under this initiative is the NORC Support Service Program (NORC SSP), a community-based model that brings together housing or neighborhood organizations, health and social service providers, residents, and other community resources to promote and support successful aging-in-place.
- Some existing NORCS include: Rhawnhurst NORC, The West Oak Lane NORC Initiative , and Services To Area Residents (STAR).[39]
  - o Penn's Village is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization operated by and for residents of Center City Philadelphia that enables them to stay in their neighborhoods as they age by providing social, cultural, and daily support services.[40]
- Housing options[41]
  - o Assisted living[42]
    - PCA's Domiciliary Care program offers a home to adults who want to remain in a community setting, but cannot live on their own. Consumers are matched with a family and benefit by receiving individualized attention far more personalized than they might receive in a personal care home or long-term care facility. In 2011, 170 certified Dom Care home providers offered room, board and daily assistance to 200 people.
    - PCA's In-Home Support Program (IHSP) serves older adults who are temporarily homebound due to injury or another situation. Services include personal care, home-delivered meals, transportation, help around the house, and other assistance, to enable them to avoid or postpone the need for long-term care. In 2011, 2,337 consumers were served by this program.
  - o Nursing homes - In Philadelphia there are 48 nursing homes licensed by the Department of Health. In total, these facilities provide 7, 604 licensed beds. All nursing homes provide 24-hour care.[43]
  - o Boarding homes - Smaller than assisted living facilities, boarding homes provide similar services such as meals, housekeeping and personal care activities such as bathing and dressing.
  - o Subsidized and public housing
    - The Philadelphia Housing Authority provides public housing to seniors. PCA also provides older adults with resources to finding subsidized housing.
    - The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and the Jewish Federation work to provide affordable homeownership and rental apartment options for senior adults.

Key areas for improvement:
- Living environment – Senior perception of their living environment, especially lower-income seniors living at home, is still rather negative. Many have called for safer neighborhoods with more police presence to fend off drug violence.[44]
- Maintenance and modification - Although PCA and PDHC provides a multitude of maintenance support and housing modification services, around 10,000 seniors aged 65 and older experience severe home improvement issues.[45]

- Design - The accessibility and safety of seniors living within their own homes is currently a concern. 183,000 seniors have to enter their home from the outside through the use of front steps.[46]
- Aging in place - Although the zoning code supports ADU housing, it still lacks specific provisions in certain areas. In addition, personal care homes have been negatively impacted.
- Section 202 programs from the federal government have been eliminated, so alternative ways to fund senior housing projects must be identified. State tax credits, Philadelphia Housing Authority Section 8 vouchers and other funding programs must be explored.
- There are no focused housing programs for grandparents who must care for grandchildren.
- Programs that do housing repairs at no or reduced cost remain relatively unknown.

Social Participation, Respect, and Social Inclusion

Introduction
Social participation, respect, and social inclusion of older adults within their local communities and in the broader community are important indicators of good health and well-being amongst older adult populations. Participation in community activities with peers and family allows older adults to stay informed about resources, as well as feel a connection to the people around them. The WHO evaluated social participation with the following criteria: accessibility of events and activities, affordability, range of events and activities, promotion and awareness of activities, addressing isolation, and fostering community integration.

Current age-friendly features:
- Accessibility of Events and Activities
  - There are 70 senior centers in Philadelphia, 8 are nationally accredited.[47]
  - PCA provides 23 senior community centers and 11 satellite centers located throughout Philadelphia. All these centers have weekly events for seniors.[48]
  - There are in total 36 non-PCA senior centers and satellites in Philadelphia.[49]
  - Philadelphia Parks and Recreation hosts six Older Adult Centers across Philadelphia.
- Affordability - Both free events and those that charge fees are available. Greater Philadelphia Cares offers free events. Philadelphia Senior Centers offer paid and free events.
- There is a large range of activities – Activities include health, social services, wellness and educational.
- Facilities and settings - Most events are held in senior centers and community centers that are wheelchair accessible.
- Intergenerational and family interactions
  - Organizations such as the Intergenerational Center at Temple University's strengthen communities by bringing generations together to address critical concerns and creating opportunities for lifelong civic engagement.

- - Project SHINE connects Temple students to older adults ESL and citizenship tutoring for approximately two hours per week to immigrants and refugees. [50] Fifty to 100 students are involved annually. [51]
    - Kinship Placement – Grandma's Kids and Family Friends is an intergenerational program that connects older adult volunteers who have experience, wisdom and time to share with children and families who may be feeling overwhelmed and isolated. [52]
    - Time-Out is a model intergenerational respite and home support program in which college students provide quality, low cost services to families caring for the frail elderly. [53] One hundred students are involved annually. [54]
  - GenPhilly – GenPhilly is a network of emerging professionals who are inspiring Philadelphians to connect with older adults through their work and personal lives. Through creative programming and professional development opportunities, GenPhilly works to change stereotypes and establish Philadelphia as an age-friendly community for all of us. They organize a minimum of six events annually to educate, support, and provide networking opportunities for members, and to introduce GenPhilly and its goals to the city at large. [55] There are 350+ members. [56]
- Public Education
  - Older people can become actively and regularly involved in local school activities with children and teachers through AARP's Philadelphia Experience Corps. Retirees and older adults can support schools in improving the reading and literacy skills of children in grades K-3. AARP Experience Corps tutors provide intensive and ongoing 1:1 instructional support in reading and literacy to over 2,000 students in over 20 schools in Philadelphia. Each year Philadelphia Experience Corps members provide nearly 100,000 hours of service to Philadelphia schools.
  - Klein JCC's Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) recruits volunteers to tutor/coach in elementary schools and work with the *Art Goes to School* program, an art appreciation program for young children. [57]
- Community Inclusion – Many older adults feel safe and included in their neighborhoods. In the 2010 Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) Household Health Survey, 93% of older adults surveyed strongly agreed or agreed that they feel they are a part of their neighborhood, and 80% believed that their neighbors can be trusted. [58]
- The cultural diversity in Philadelphia provides opportunites for many groups to engage in activities in their own culture or language group. Examples include: Nationalities Services Center, Jaisohn, Agape and Coffee Cup.
- Programs focusing on lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender (LGBT) residents include the William Way Center and the LGBT Elder Initiative.
- LGBT inclusion
  - The LGBT Elders Initiative under CARIE (Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of Eldery) is committed to assuring that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender older adults have rights and opportunities to live vibrant, creative and mutually supportive lives. [59]
  - Next year, the PHMC will be releasing a comprehensive report of the needs of LGBT older adults in Philadelphia. [60]

- - o Philadelphia's first LGBT-friendly affordable senior housing complex broke ground in November 2012. The new building will be a 56-unit senior affordable development in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia.[61]
  - Programs addressing elder inclusion - Little Brothers - Friends of the Elderly (LBFE) Philadelphia is committed to relieving isolation and loneliness among the older adults.[62]

Key areas for improvement:
- Promotion and awareness of activities - 18% of seniors in southeastern PA had not heard of any activities or senior centers. [63]
- Addressing isolation – In 2008, nearly one in four (24.9%) older Philadelphians living alone see friends or relatives less than once a week.[64]
- Accessibility of voting place - Most of Philadelphia polling places are not accessible. Only 18 of the 66 wards in our city have at least one fully accessible voting facility.[65] .
- Social inclusion
  - o Pets and social inclusion - The importance of creating initiatives with the purpose of assisting older, frailer adults with the responsibilities of pet care has been heightened in the past years due to a recent analyses by PCA which shows that 33% of all seniors age 60+ in Philadelphia have a pet, representing over 95,000 households. Pets provide a range of health benefits, but older adults often have difficulties in maintaining them.[66]
  - o Language barriers – 26% of older Spanish speakers speak no English at all. 21% Asian and Pacific Island elders speak no English at all. It is clear from these statistics that programs for limited English speakers are important in addressing social and cultural inclusion.[67]
- Public images of aging – Although there have been efforts through GenPhilly to discuss aging women and their contemporary public image, there is still more to be researched on how media include older people in public imagery.
- Voter ID
  - o Legislation which requires a voter to produce a photo ID is a barrier for many seniors because they do not have the requisite documentation or cannot get to driver license centers.
  - o Passed in the spring of 2012, Pennsylvania's voter ID law requires a valid photo ID to vote. Although halted for the November 6, 2012 election, the law disproportionately affects older adults. 44,861 active Philadelphia voters in the 80-plus age group, 12,313, or 27.4%, do not have a PennDOT ID. Among active voters aged 65 to 79, 19.5% do not have an ID. For those 55 to 64, 15.2% do not have an ID. Although photo IDs are issued by nursing homes or other licensed Pennsylvania care facilities, most older Philadelphians do not live in licensed care facilities.[68]

Civic Participation

Introduction

WHO also defines an age-friendly community as providing options for older people to continue to contribute to their communities through paid employment or voluntary work, if they so choose, and to be engaged in the political process.

Current age-friendly features:
- Volunteering Options and Civic Participation
  - Klein JCC runs a Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) that provides opportunities for people 55 and older, working or retired, to use their skills, talents, wisdom and experience to answer critical community needs through significant volunteer services. RSVP has more than 900 senior volunteers, 91 volunteer centers across Philadelphia, and produce 50,000 hours of civic engagement annually.[69]
  - Center in the Park (CIP) is a nationally accredited Senior Community Center founded in 1968 whose mission is "to promote positive aging and foster community connections for older adults whose voices are critical instruments in shaping its activities and direction." CIP has a membership of over 5,000 who are 55+ and serves 1,000 homebound elders a year through various programs and services. CIP offers over 80 different programs and services annually.[70]
    - Senior Environment Corps is a free program where a group of seniors can participate in a variety of important projects such as monthly water quality monitoring, habitat assessments, tree plantings, watershed tours, environmental events, advocacy projects, school programs, youth and community education and outreach programs and trips.[71]
  - SERVE Philadelphia – SERVE Philadelphia is an online resource for volunteers to connect to volunteer opportunities run through the Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement. Organizations can post activities on the SERVE Philadelphia website. There are currently 11 senior organizations registered.[72]
  - United Way - United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey helps senior centers improve their programming and staff training in order to achieve accreditation from the National Institute of Senior Centers. In Pennsylvania, United Way was instrumental in helping 18 centers – or 90 percent – of those currently accredited achieve or maintain that status.[73]
  - Coming of Age[74] – Coming of Age is a Philadelphia-based national initiative to promote age 50+ service, learning and leadership. Their objective are to help people 50+ explore their future, connect and contribute to their community, and build capacity for non-profits by capturing the energy and expertise of this population.
- Training - Programs such as the Senior Community Service Employment Program provide Philadelphia seniors with job counseling, as well as access to training and work placement. In 2010, more than 1,100 persons aged 55-plus were assisted with job-related services. PCA also coordinates the Mature Workers Task Force, a coalition of agencies which provide employment and training services for older workers.[75]
- Employment Options and Pay – Of approximately 258,000 community dwelling older adults in the city, 54,700 are employed (21%). Those with at least some years of college are more likely to be employed than those who did not attend college. The mean salary of those who are employed is $47,000. [76]

Key areas for improvement:
- Although there seem to be many available options and programs for older adults to become engaged within their community, the 2010 PHMC Household Health Survey cited that 48% of older adults do not participate in any community organization.[77]
- There are no programs that support entrepreneurship for older adults.

Communication and Information

Introduction
Communicating information to senior citizens is important to create opportunities for vital, active aging, especially in a society of digital revolution and instantaneous information exchange. WHO looks at the following criteria: Information offer, oral communication, printed information, plain language, automated communication and equipment, computers and the internet.

Current age-friendly features:
- Information Offer and Printed Information
  - PCA's Milestones newspaper reaches more than 168,000 senior citizens. Online versions and print are available.[78]
  - The Senior Citizens Guide to Philadelphia is a resource designed to help older adults and adults with aging parents or family members find housing, health, financial, travel, entertainment, consumer services, and other senior-related resources in the Delaware Valley area (including Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, & Philadelphia Counties). It is available in print and online.
  - AARP maintains a database of over 600,000 seniors in the Greater Philadelphia region that is used to communicate information about issues affecting seniors.[79]
- Oral Communication[80]
  - It is important to ensure that older adult voices are heard, especially in times of need. PCA's Ombudsman Program advocates for enhanced quality of care and quality of life for seniors in more than 337 personal care homes, nursing homes, domiciliary care homes and adult day centers, which served approximately 14,043 seniors in 2010.
    - In 2010, the program assisted people with more than 176 complaints, made 501 quality assurance facility visits, and provided 1,057 consultations to individuals, families and providers.
  - Global Philadelphia - Global Philadelphia, managed by the Managing Director's Office of Philadelphia, provides free telephonic interpretation for those calling into city agencies.[81]
  - CARIE serves as a major avenue for senior voices in Philadelphia.[82]
    - The most widely-used service is CARIE LINE, a free telephone based education and referral one-on-one counseling service regarding issues of concern for older adults.
    - In partnership with the SeniorLAW Center, CARIE has formed a task force to address issues of domestic abuse and sexual assault of seniors.
  - Computers and Internet
    - Philadelphia Senior Center (PSC) has an internet café

- PSC serves approximately 200 seniors daily, most of who frequent the Recovery Act-funded GreenBean Internet Cafe, an eco-friendly dining experience with Wi-Fi access which enables seniors to surf the web as they congregate for meals and social activities.[83]
  - KEYSPOT provides free computer training at over 70 locations in Philadelphia.[84]
- Automated Communication and Equipment
  - For many of Philadelphia's older adult-centered facilities and programs, customers can choose between automated messages, speaking to a person or leaving a message for someone to call back.

Key areas for improvement
- Cultural differences– Older adults from ethnic groups sometimes prefer to come in for services to feel like they have a personal relationship with those who are aiding them. This illustrates that it is important to also have an accessible physical location for in-person services.

Community and Health Services

Introduction
Health and support services are vital to maintaining health and independence in communities. WHO uses the following categories to assess age-friendly community and health services: service accessibility, voluntary support, emergency and planning care, and offer of services.

Current age-friendly features:
- Offer of services and service accessibility
  - PCA programs have assisted more than 2,700 people in understanding their health insurance options and benefits.[85]
  - PENN, New Courtland, and Mercy have LIFE programs that provide a range of health services to older adults in Philadelphia.[86]
  - Health promotion and education programs take place at senior centers and other convenient locations in the community. In 2010, 26,707 older adults were served through 53 different programs, including 28 PCA-funded exercise programs.[87]
  - The City of Philadelphia produced a Food Resource Guide for Philadelphia's Older Adults that provides information on food resources for seniors, including home-delivered meals, farmer's markets, pantry access and grocery delivery services.[88]
  - AARP provides older adults with free tax preparation services through their Tax Aide Program.[89]
  - United Way is an advocate for legislation and collaboration for bettering senior health. In 2011, 22,000 homebound adults received in-home physical health services, 3,500 adults received nutritious meals, and another 14,000 received timely referrals for a variety of healthy aging services.[90]
- Emergency planning and care

- o The Emergency Fund Coalition for Older Philadelphians helps adults 60 years and older, whose incomes are within 175% of poverty, and who have exhausted all other means of purchasing fuel or energy, food, medical equipment or supplies, clothing or essential items. In fiscal year 2010, 1,975 seniors and people with disabilities received assistance through the Emergency Fund.[91]
  - o CARIE offers older adult victim emergency security support to older adult victims of crime.[92]
  - o The American Red Cross is piloting a program to enable seniors to "shelter-in-place."
- Caregivers - The number of adult caregivers of persons 60+ in Philadelphia alone is 378,500.[93]

Key areas for improvement:
- Accessible Care – Transportation in Philadelphia remains a serious issue for seniors and a barrier to accessing health services. As reported in a previous section, about 8.6% of older adults in Philadelphia have cancelled a doctor's appointment or not scheduled one due to transportation problems.
- Health - According to the PHMC, older adults are still the most at risk for being diagnosed with diabetes. In 2010, 20.8% of adults aged 60-74 were diagnosed compared to 2.4% of adults aged 18 to 39.[94]
- Affordability
  - o In PCA's 2008 Milestones survey, 36% of older adult respondents cited that a primary source of difficulty was their ability to pay for health costs.
  - o In an additional report, PCA found that amongst all seniors, insured and not insured), 18% reported that they did not fill a prescription due to cost, whereas just 11% forewent dental care due to cost.[95]
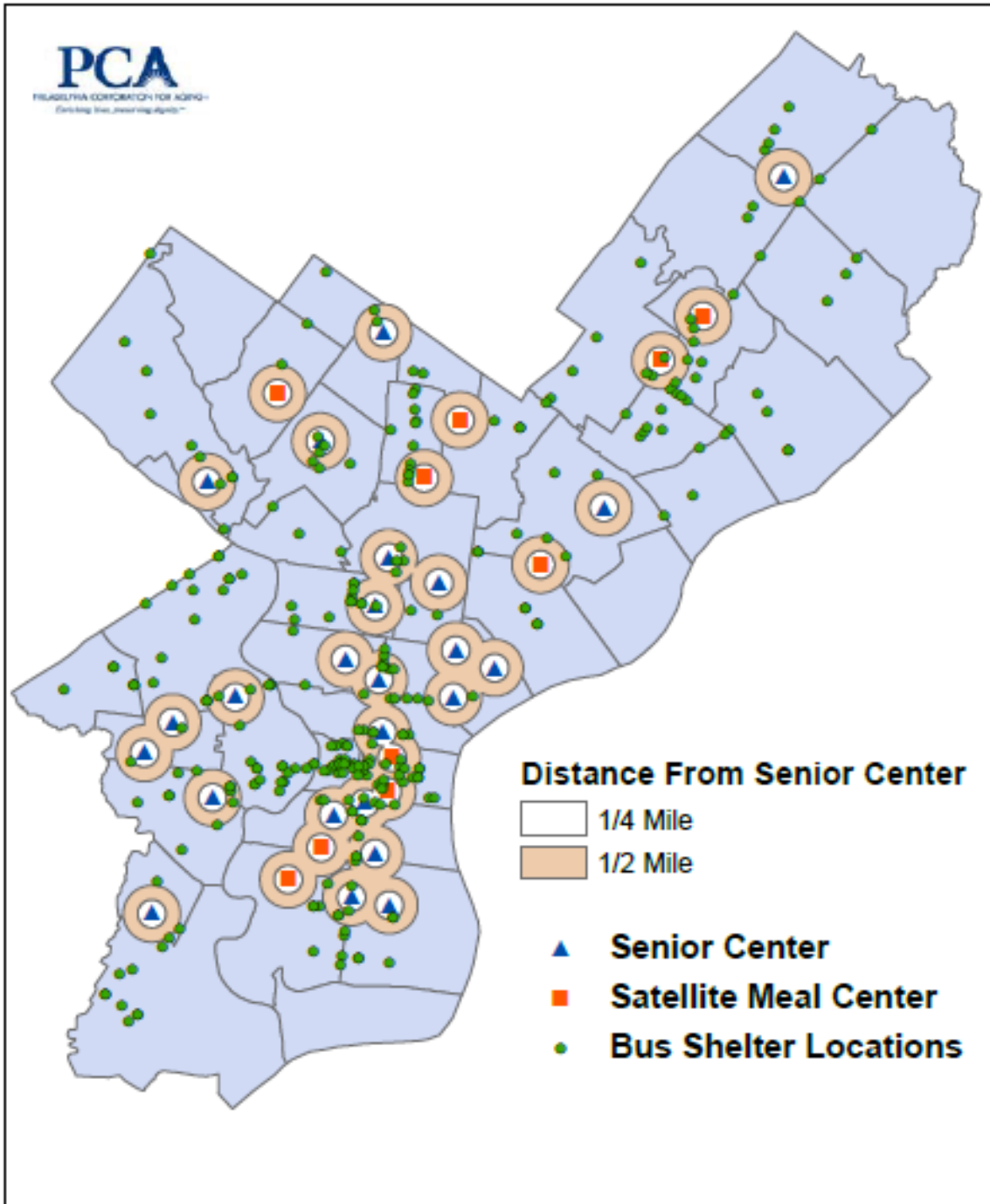
Conclusion

These findings emerged from intensive resource compilations from various sources. It is clear from the results that Philadelphia currently has many age-friendly features such as its wealth of green space, public transportation, diversity of housing options, and non-profits dedicated to serving older adults. At the same time, there is still room for improvement. Inequities exist in regards to public housing access, maintenance access, road safety, a clean environment, health services and discrepancies exist between the services accessed and offered.

To improve assessments in the future, it is necessary to conduct surveys focusing on community and health services, communication and information, and civic participation. Current available data is insufficient to assess certain categories. Collection of additional data can assist in comprehensibly evaluating the state of Philadelphia's current age-friendly features.

Appendix A

Appendix B

City of Philadelphia:
Senior Center Bus Route Access

Distance From Senior Center
- 1/4 Mile
- 1/2 Mile

▲ Senior Center
■ Satellite Meal Center
• Bus Shelter Locations

Data Source: Mayor's Office of Transportation & Utilities (2010)

Community Contributors

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[1] Philadelphia Corporation for Aging, "Philadelphia's Older Population." Last modified 2012. http://www.pcacares.org/pca_aa_Philadelphias_Older_Population.aspx.

[2] Philadelphia Corporation for Aging, "Age-friendly Parks." Last modified June 2011. http://www.pcacares.org/Files/PCA_Age-Friendly_AGE-FRIENDLY_PARKS_chapter.pdf.

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