Age-friendly
STLCommunity
ACTION PLAN
2015

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Health &
Wellbeing

Health & Wellbeing

WHO DOMAINS
Community Support
Health Services

Address the countywide health issues of mental health and diabetes through accessible, age-sensitive services, prevention and education

Increase access to primary care and improve respiratory and cardiovascular health outcomes among older adults with health disparities, particularly African American and underserved residents

Increase the level of community-based services offered by municipal and local public service providers to improve the health and wellbeing of older adults

> *"Community partnerships will be essential in closing the gap of health disparities for STLCO's older adults."*

Our Current Challenges

Within St. Louis County, health related issues are visible on both a countywide basis as well as concentrated within certain geographic areas. Across the county, one-in-three seniors age 65 and older have a disability and half of those indicated that they have some sort of physical, mental or emotional condition that prevents them from living independently. Additionally, hospitalizations for diabetes and major depressive disorders are up for seniors across St. Louis County. Increasing the level of community-based services to allow people to live independently and heightening awareness and access to services, prevention and education of pervasive health issues will be key in addressing these countywide issues.

A more targeted approach of service delivery is needed to address the concentrations of health disparities that exist in St. Louis County. Older adults living in North St. Louis County fare worse on indicators for primary care, heart and lung health. There is even a stark disparity in the expected lifespan across the county, which correlates with education, income and race, and, ultimately, affects health. Greater evaluation and monitoring is needed to better understand the causes of these disparities and community partnerships will be essential in closing the gap of health disparities for St. Louis County's older adults.

Our Goals

- Address the countywide health issues of mental health and diabetes through accessible, age-sensitive services, prevention and education.

- Increase access to primary care and improve respiratory and cardiovascular health outcomes among older adults with health disparities, particularly African American and underserved residents.

- Increase the level of community-based services offered by municipal and local public service providers to improve the health and wellbeing of older adults.

Health & Wellbeing

WHO Domain: Community Support & Health Services
Access to homecare services, clinics, and programs to promote wellness and active aging.

GOAL 1: Address the countywide health issues of mental health and diabetes through accessible, age-sensitive services, prevention and education.

Actions	Departments
1. Establish benchmarks through the Community Health Assessment in 2016.	DOH
2. Stratify implementation opportunities of the Community Health Improvement Plan to facilitate services to older adults.	DOH
3. Provide a dedicated health promotions staff point of contact for literature and programming recommendations, services and awareness campaigns.	DOH
4. Partner with community agencies, such as OASIS, to provide education, awareness and screenings at community locations (libraries, community centers and mobile unit) accessible to older adults.	DOH
5. Disseminate appropriate resources, referrals, programs and opportunities to the public and partnering agencies.	DOH

GOAL 2: Increase access to primary care and improve respiratory and cardiovascular health outcomes among older adults with health disparities, particularly African American and underserved residents.

Actions	Departments
1. Establish benchmarks using epidemiology surveillance to provide stratified data, by age, and maps based on chronic disease and health indicators.	DOH
2. Provide material and partnership support to the Integrated Health Network's Community Referral Coordinator program in order to decrease hospital emergency department visits and facilitate access to primary care for people with chronic conditions, including older adults.	DOH
3. Support the work of the Regional Health Commission in increasing access to care for all County residents through participation in the Gateway to Better Health Program and as an active Provider Services Advisory Board member.	DOH

GOAL 3: Increase the level of community-based services offered by municipal and local public service providers to improve the health and wellbeing of older adults.	
Actions	*Departments*
1. Explore the creation of a web-based and app-based resource guide for municipal and public health practitioners and services.	DOH, IT
2. Assess and create a comprehensive plan to determine where qualified graduate and medical students can complete clinical and community work within existing age-friendly programs for workforce development.	DOH
3. Establish a multi-sector coalition of agencies to apply for federal funding and work on initiatives focused on older adults.	DOH, IT
4. Present to St. Louis Area City Managers Association and the Municipal League on the importance of expanding local government's ability to provide consultation, programming and case management services to older adults through gerontologists and social workers.	CORP, DOH
5. Increase health screenings and workshops, targeted for older adults, at recreation and community centers.	Parks

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Social & Civic
Engagement

Social & Civic Engagement

WHO DOMAINS
Social Participation
Respect & Social Inclusion
Civic Participation & Employment
Communication & Information

Create opportunities for multigenerational interaction and dialogue

Connect residents to existing facilities, programs and resources

Encourage the delivery and promotion of existing programs to reflect the diversity of older adult population

Encourage businesses to adopt age-friendly practices in order to attract and retain older adults as customers and potential employees

Provide volunteer opportunities for older adults to remain engaged in their communities

Engage older adults in the creation of policies and programs relevant to their lives and that support and address diversity in the older adult population

Improve access to information about services and programs for older adults and caregivers

Expand the use of technology to allow older adults to remain socially connected to their family and community

Our Current Challenges

As people establish roots and live within a community, it becomes important to find meaningful ways to connect with other people, and build relationships and respect with one another. This is perhaps especially true of seniors who may have retired and may be looking for social activities and volunteer opportunities to keep them active, connected, and help them serve their community.

St. Louis County's older adults are fortunate to have a wealth of resources available that provide a wide variety of social and civic engagement opportunities. Local governments, libraries, non-profit and private agencies offer robust programming for fitness, lifelong learning, social interaction and volunteer opportunities targeted to older adults. The key to the success of existing programming is ensuring awareness, accessibility and affordability to maximize the overall impact of services and programs offered.

The tools to enhance communication and disseminate information are available like never before due to the prevalence of the Internet and the rise of mobile technology. Two-thirds of St. Louis County seniors use the Internet and four-out-of-five say they use the Internet and social media for community information. This means local governments and partner agencies need to find the best ways to use technology to communicate with their older adult customers, families and caregivers.

Our Goals

- Create opportunities for multi-generational interaction and dialogue.
- Connect residents to existing facilities, programs and resources.
- Encourage the delivery and promotion of existing programs to reflect the diversity of older adult population.
- Encourage businesses to adopt age-friendly practices in order to attract and retain older adults as customers and potential employees.
- Provide volunteer opportunities for older adults to remain engaged in their communities.
- Engage older adults in the creation of policies and programs relevant to their lives and that support and address diversity in the older adult population.
- Improve access to information about services and programs for older adults and caregivers.
- Expand the use of technology to allow older adults to remain socially connected to their family and community.

Social & Civic Engagement

WHO Domain: Social Participation, Respect & Inclusion

Access to leisure and cultural activities; opportunities for older residents to participate in social and civic engagement with their peers and younger people; programs to promote ethnic and cultural diversity

GOAL 1: Create opportunities for multi-generational interaction and dialogue.

Actions	Departments
1. Create established links among programs for older adults and children to facilitate inter-generational opportunities (gardening, fishing, naturalists).	Parks
2. Establish a formal dialogue with school districts to develop programs that allow older adults to participate in intergenerational activities with youth.	CORP, Parks,

GOAL 2: Connect residents to existing facilities, programs and resources.

Actions	Departments
1. Create outreach materials that increase awareness of existing programs and resources.	CORP, Parks
2. Conduct environmental audits of facilities where programs for older adults are held.	CORP, Parks

GOAL 3: Encourage the delivery and promotion of existing programs to reflect the diversity of older adult population.

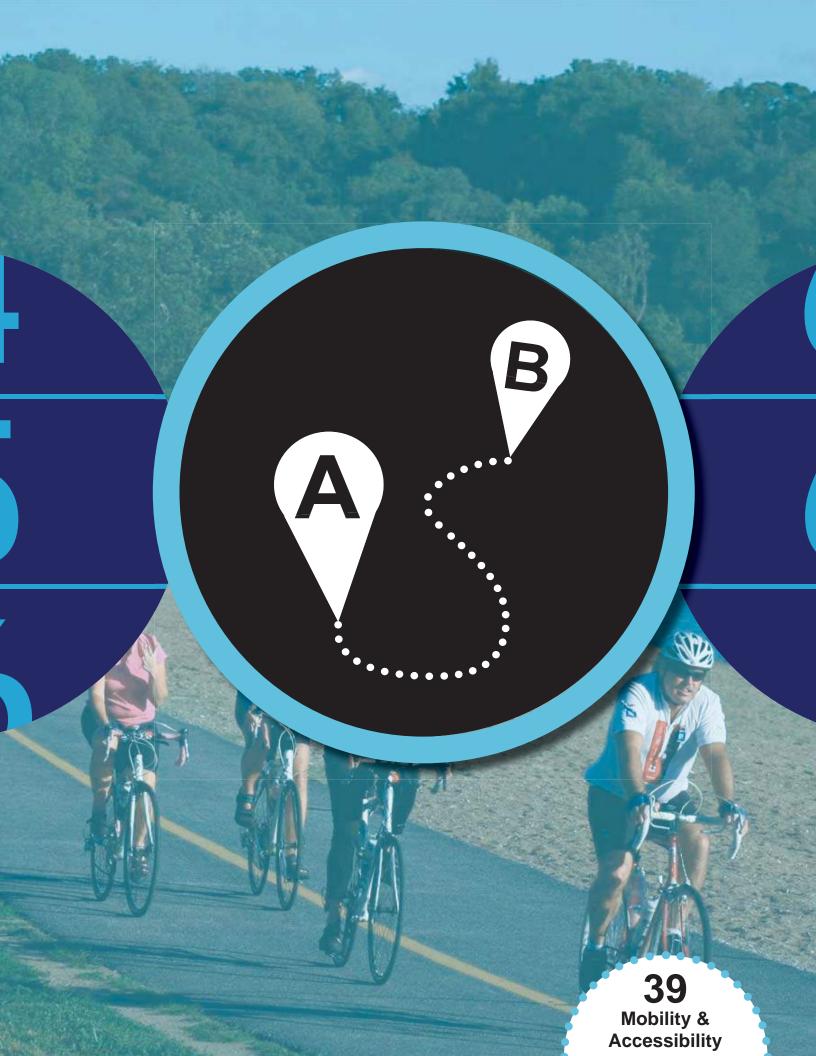| Actions	Departments
1. Review communication of programs for cultural diversity and sensitivity.	CORP, Planning
2. Evaluate all programs to serve a diverse older adult population.	CORP, Planning

WHO Domain: Civic Participation & Employment

The promotion of paid work and volunteer activities for older residents and opportunities to engage in the formulation of policies relevant to their lives.
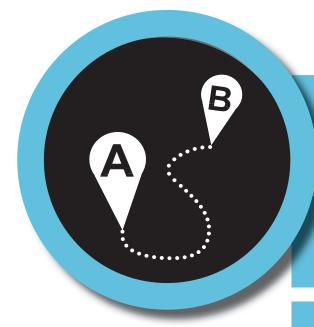
GOAL 4: Encourage businesses to adopt age-friendly practices in order to attract and retain older adults as customers and potential employees.

Actions	Departments
1. Explore the development of an Age-Friendly Business certification program.	Planning
2. Provide a template for local municipalities to host job "re-entry" fairs for older adults.	Planning
3. Create a template of best practices/guidelines for Municipal League and local chambers of commerce to educate about the importance of older adults as economic participants.	Planning

GOAL 5: Provide volunteer opportunities for older adults to remain engaged in their communities.	
Action	*Departments*
1. Create a dynamic volunteer resource system that provides multiple ways to find and sign up for regular volunteer opportunities available throughout STLCO departments.	CORP, Parks, Customer Service, IT

GOAL 6: Engage older adults in the creation of policies and programs relevant to their lives and that support and address diversity in the older adult population.	
Actions	*Departments*
1. Create a St. Louis County Older Adults Commission to evaluate and provide guidance on policies, operations, programs, events and services impacting older adults.	County Executive/ County Council
2. Create a question bank of standard survey questions that municipalities can ask when conducting community surveys, that allow for consistent reporting and tracking of issues that are important to older adults over time.	Planning
3. Create a template on how to create older adult commissions or focus groups.	Planning

WHO Domain: Communication & Information
The promotion of and access to technology to keep older residents connected to their community and friends and family.

GOAL 7: Improve access to information about services and programs for older adults and caregivers.	
Actions	*Departments*
1. Create an accessible web-based and app-based resource for older adult services offered by local governments, and other public and non-profit agencies.	CORP, IT, Customer Service
2. Expand Parks and Recreation Activity Guides to include an older adult section.	Parks
3. Create and provide a printed list of common referrals for older adult services to local governments.	CORP, Planning
4. Create a mobile information kiosk that provides hardcopy material as well as electronic access to resources, and establish regular venues for display.	CORP
5. Develop and promote the use of a standardized template for providing information for older adults and caregivers on local government websites.	Planning

GOAL 8: Expand the use of technology to allow older adults to remain socially connected to their family and community.	
Actions	*Departments*
1. Develop partnerships to promote and expand technology training programs such as BYOD (Bring Your Own Device), Grab-A-Geek and Book-A-Trainer programs.	CORP, Parks
2. Promote "tech training" curriculum for Parks staff to teach through recreation and community centers.	Parks

*M*obility & Accessibility

WHO DOMAIN
Transportation

Increase the mobility of older adults of all abilities by coordinating, expanding and enhancing the network of transportation options available to them

Improve access to a broad range of educational, social, fitness and civic programs for non-driving older adults

Improve pedestrian mobility and active transportation options for older adults of all abilities

Enhance the mobility of older adults by creating a system of signs, graphics and other design elements that helps them navigate the transportation network

Improve the safety of older adult drivers

" It is clear that alternate mobility options will be in high demand. "

Our Current Challenges

Mobility, the ability to get around one's community, is vital to the independence of older adults. Due to its largely suburban character, mobility in St. Louis County is often identified with driving, reflected in the increase of driver's license ownership among seniors in the past decade. Seniors who live to be older than 70 will outlive their driving years by 7-10 years and with 9 out of 10 St. Louis County seniors owning a driver's license, it is clear that alternate mobility options will be in high demand. Additionally, over 50,000 seniors have some disability that prevents them from driving and another 11,000 have no access to a car. For these 61,000 seniors, alternative transportation options are vital.

The challenge is that St. Louis County lacks a comprehensive, connected transportation system. Municipal door-to-door van service is not available countywide and the cities that offer service do so on different days, at different times and with different service areas. Volunteer door-through-door services are limited by the availability of volunteers, among other challenges, and public transit is not always affordable or timely to meet the needs of older adults. Tying the system together into a cohesive whole will be necessary for St. Louis County's older adults to remain mobile and independent.

Our Goals

- Increase the mobility of older adults of all abilities by coordinating, expanding and enhancing the network of transportation options available to them.

- Improve access to a broad range of educational, social, fitness and civic programs for non-driving older adults.

- Improve pedestrian mobility and active transportation options for older adults of all abilities.

- Enhance the mobility of older adults by creating a system of signs, graphics and other design elements that helps them navigate the transportation network.

- Improve the safety of older adult drivers.

Mobility & Accessibility

WHO Domain: Transportation
Safe and affordable modes of private and public transportation

GOAL 1: Increase the mobility of older adults of all abilities by coordinating, expanding and enhancing the network of transportation options available to them.

Actions	*Departments*
1. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of transportation services available to older adults, including an analysis of service gaps, availability of accessible service, funding options, and service delivery options including transportation programs (e.g. Integrated Transportation Network).	Planning, CORP
2. As part of the comprehensive assessment, convene a forum on senior transportation that brings together local officials, service providers, legislators and users of the system to build consensus and action around coordination and funding of a senior transportation network.	Planning, CORP
3. Create a web portal that links people with available transportation services and resources for older adults in St. Louis County.	Planning, CORP, IT
4. Provide technical assistance and planning support to Metro to analyze the feasibility of establishing hyper-local bus routes that serve older adults during specific times in specific locations.	Planning, CoDOT, CORP
5. Work with Metro to explore options to improve access to reduced fair cards for older adults.	Planning, CoDOT, CORP

GOAL 2: Improve access to a broad range of educational, social, fitness and civic programs for non-driving older adults.

Actions	*Departments*
1. Pilot "ride matching" opportunities at a recreation or community center frequented by older adults to promote carpooling for older adult programs, and evaluate the potential for replicating such events at other locations.	Parks
2. Promote the transportation resources web portal through activity guides to facilitate access to community centers, parks and other recreation programs and events.	Parks, CORP

GOAL 3: Improve pedestrian mobility and active transportation options for older adults of all abilities.	
Actions	*Departments*
1. Prioritize sidewalk and intersection improvements in areas with concentrations of older adults.	CoDOT, Planning
2. Provide opportunities for more walkable mixed-use and transit-oriented development through the adoption and implementation of St. Louis County's Sustainable Zoning and Subdivision Code update.	Planning
3. Promote the adoption of land use regulations modeled on St. Louis County's Sustainable Zoning and Subdivision Code in municipalities throughout St. Louis County.	Planning
4. Engage older adults in walkability audits and create "senior-friendly" walk routes to reach specific destinations.	CORP, CoDOT, Planning
5. Work with Metro and other partners to install benches, lighting and other streetscape amenities along identified "senior-friendly" walk routes.	Planning, CoDOT
6. Work with East-West Gateway and other regional transportation partners to develop criteria to increase the competitiveness for funding of projects that promote active transportation for older adults.	CoDOT

GOAL 4: Enhance the mobility of older adults by creating a system of signs, graphics and other design elements that helps them navigate the transportation network.	
Action	*Departments*
1. Work with Metro, Great Rivers Greenway and other partners to ensure that signage for transit and trails is tailored to the needs of older adults.	Planning, CoDOT, CORP

GOAL 5: Improve the safety of older adult drivers.	
Actions	*Departments*
1. Promote and expand the availability of driver safety education and competency programs for older adults, e.g. Car Fit and AARP's driver transition course.	CORP
2. Pursue grants, such as Missouri Department of Transportation's Highway Safety grants, to support partnerships to advance older adult driver safety.	CORP, CoDOT

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Attractive & Safe
Neighborhoods

Attractive & Safe Neighborhoods

WHO DOMAINS
Housing
Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

Expand and promote programs that support affordable property maintenance and home repair

Improve availability and awareness of home modification programs to increase safety and accessibility for older adults

Enable older adults to remain in their homes for as long as possible by creating and expanding high quality home and community-based services

Expand and promote programs that provide assistance for housing costs and utilities for older adults who are unable to meet their basic needs

Create a diversity of housing options for older adults that are accessible, affordable and low maintenance

Improve safety in neighborhoods with high concentrations of older adults

Ensure all existing and planned facilities are accessible and safe for people of all ages

> *"STLCO's older adults are showing a growing desire to remain in their homes & communities as they age."*

Our Current Challenges

Overwhelmingly, in St. Louis County and across the nation, older adults are showing a growing desire to remain in their homes and communities as they age. To do so, communities must have quality, affordable housing with features and amenities older adults need and want as they age. It also means older adults need services, programs and assistance to help them meet the needs of living independently at home.

St. Louis County's relatively high homeownership rate is both an asset and a challenge. High homeownership means people are invested in their communities and neighborhoods. Yet, two-thirds of the housing stock owned by seniors was built before 1970, making home repairs and modification a growing concern. As older adults become "empty nesters," some may desire smaller homes or homes with more amenities and less maintenance. There is also a growing interest in non-traditional living arrangements, including co-housing options, which do not always lend themselves to traditional single-family homeownership. The challenge becomes having the right diversity in housing stock to accommodate the variety of needs of older adults who wish to remain in their communities.

In addition to maintenance, modification and housing options, affordability is also an important consideration for older adults. Homeowners may be challenged to afford necessary repairs or desired modifications, while renters are challenged with simply finding affordable housing options. In St. Louis County, where more than half of renters are facing a housing burden and over 95 percent of the unmet needs of older adults are housing and utility related, housing affordability will be a growing issue.

Our Goals

- Expand and promote programs that support affordable property maintenance and home repair.
- Improve availability and awareness of home modification programs to increase safety and accessibility for older adults.
- Enable older adults to remain in their homes for as long as possible by creating and expanding high quality home and community-based services.
- Expand and promote programs that provide assistance for housing costs and utilities for older adults who are unable to meet their basic needs.
- Create a diversity of housing options for older adults that are accessible, affordable and low maintenance.
- Improve safety in neighborhoods with high concentrations of older adults.
- Ensure all existing and planned facilities are accessible and safe for people of all ages.

Safe & Attractive Neighborhoods

WHO Domain: Housing

A wide range of housing options for older residents; the ability to age in place; and other home modification programs.

GOAL 1: Expand and promote programs that support affordable property maintenance and home repair.

	Actions	Departments
1.	Create and promote a monthly/seasonal checklist to encourage preventative home maintenance.	CORP, PW
2.	Evaluate the feasibility of creating a volunteer "handyman" program for preventative maintenance and minor home repair services.	CORP, PW
3.	Create a new, robust Home Care & Repair program that comprehensively addresses the issues of home repair for older adults: • A vetted list of contractor referrals, with information on fraud prevention • Workers and volunteers from trade schools, organizations such as YouthBuild and community service participants • Financial assistance for home repair for older adults who cannot meet basic needs • Create an accessible online resource guide	CORP
4.	Present to the American Public Works Association and other forums for municipal code enforcement and building inspection professionals to learn best practices for working with older adults.	CORP, PW
5.	Explore the feasibility of designating a share of Office of Community Development funding for eligible elderly and disabled homeowners.	OCD

GOAL 2: Improve availability and awareness of home modification programs to increase safety and accessibility for older adults.

	Actions	Departments
1.	Partner with Occupational Therapy programs from area universities to provide home safety assessments to older adults with needs.	CORP
2.	Partner with the National Association of Remodeling Industry-St. Louis Chapter to explore opportunities to expand home modification programs.	CORP
3.	Provide referrals for geriatric assessments to older adult applicants for any St. Louis County home modifications and retrofitting assistance programs.	OCD

Actions	Departments
4. Promote the Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) program provided by the National Association of Homebuilders to ensure professional credentialing in the home modification field.	CORP
5. Promote AARP's Homefit guide.	CORP
6. Expand the inclusion of Universal Design elements in St. Louis County's housing stock by: • Exploring integration of Universal Design elements into the St. Louis County building code • Promoting Universal Design to area homebuilders and developers • Promoting the ability to search Multiple Listing Service real estate listings for Universal Design elements	PW, CORP, Commission on Disabilities, Planning
7. Create a template for county and municipal officials to provide information about the needs of older adults in retrofitting their homes and available resources to do so.	Planning

GOAL 3: Enable older adults to remain in their homes for as long as possible by creating and expanding high quality home and community-based services.

Actions	Departments
1. Partner with Village to Village and provide technical assistance to areas seeking to establish villages.	Planning, CORP
2. Use the "village" concept model as a means for delivering select CORP services in targeted areas.	Planning, CORP
3. Provide a template for municipalities to conduct asset mapping to identify existing services, agencies and businesses that support successful aging in their communities.	Planning

GOAL 4: Expand and promote programs that provide assistance for housing costs and utilities for older adults who are unable to meet their basic needs.

Actions	Departments
1. Create an accessible online resource guide for all utility assistance and weatherization programs, including eligibility requirements.	CORP, IT
2. Explore the creation of a sustained funding source for utility assistance, through grants, foundations and corporate giving programs.	CORP, OCD
3. Consider partnering with financial institutions to provide assistance to older adult households with budgeting, assets, tax advocacy and financial assessments.	CORP

GOAL 5: Create a diversity of housing options for older adults that are accessible, affordable and low maintenance.

Actions	Departments
1. Conduct a housing suitability study of the availability and diversity of quality, affordable housing stock for older adults.	Planning
2. Explore successful co-housing programs that provide opportunities for adults, especially women, to live together in a single residence.	Planning

GOAL 6: Improve safety in neighborhoods with high concentrations of older adults.

Actions	Departments
1. Explore partnerships with Housing Options Provided for the Elderly (HOPE) and AmeriCorps to expand and promote friendly "care calls" to ensure the wellbeing of older adults.	CORP, Police
2. Develop a community-based crime prevention and safety program to support older adults in targeted communities.	Police, CORP, Planning

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
Availability of safe and accessible recreational facilities.

GOAL 7: Ensure all existing and planned facilities are accessible and safe for people of all ages.

Action	Departments
1. Promote age-friendly facility audits to ensure public buildings and parks are accessible to all ages.	PW

Departments Key

CORP = County Older Resident Programs

DOH = Department of Health

IT = Information Technology

OCD = Office of Community Development

PW = Public Works

CoDOT = Department of Transportation