

Age-Friendly Montgomery County, Maryland 2020 and Beyond





On behalf of Montgomery County, Maryland and its residents, I am pleased to present our new Age-Friendly Action Plan, 2020 and Beyond. It reflects our shared and continuing commitment to the World Health Organization (WHO)/AARP Age-Friendly States and Communities Program.

Montgomery County strives to be *A Community for a Lifetime*—a community of racial equity and social justice—where residents of all ages and backgrounds can feel welcomed and thrive throughout their lives. Among our residents is a large, diverse, and rapidly growing older population that contributes mightily to the vitality, cultural richness, and economy of our County. By supporting and providing them with easy access to information, programs, and services they want and need, we help ensure that they can remain in this area as they age, continue involvement with friends and generations of family members, and participate actively in the life of the community.

We take pride in many achievements that have occurred since our 2015 enrollment in the Age-Friendly program and our certification in 2017. At no time, however, has the benefit of the Age-Friendly process been more evident than during the 2020 COVID-19 public health emergency. Our partnerships of government, business, and nonprofit organizations have resulted in innovative and coordinated response across all domains, providing rapid and unprecedented support in public safety, emergency response, and access to health care, food, transportation, and other essential services. We expect to continue building on those efforts as we expand, improve, and initiate programming to benefit residents of all ages.

This plan reflects our long-standing efforts to support all County's residents, including our families, our older population, and members of our many diverse and ethnic populations. It reflects our Age-Friendly successes and our expectation for even greater accomplishments in coming years. Just as our demographics are dramatically changing, opportunities for improving and enhancing an Age-Friendly environment continue to evolve to meet those changing needs. We continue to promote Age-Friendly through presentations to other organizations and the community, support other Maryland jurisdictions working toward Age-Friendly certification, and look forward to Maryland become an Age-Friendly state.

Our Age-Friendly work is only possible with the dedication of County staff and our numerous community partners who work tirelessly as advisors and work group members to improve life in Montgomery County for people of all ages. We thank AARP and all of our stakeholders for this commitment, and we look forward to years of our continued collaboration and success.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marc Elrich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Marc Elrich
Montgomery County Executive

AGE-FRIENDLY MONTGOMERY COUNTY: 2020 AND BEYOND

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THANK YOU TO THE ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTNERS PARTICIPATING IN THE AGE-FRIENDLY MONTGOMERY INITIATIVE

We gratefully acknowledge all those who participated in the many Age-Friendly Montgomery successes achieved since Montgomery County's 2015 enrollment and 2017 certification as an Age-Friendly Community. We especially want to recognize:

- **Dr. Raymond Crowel**, Director of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and **Robin Riley**, Director of the Department of Recreation, for their leadership of the Montgomery Age-Friendly Advisory Group.
- **Dr. Odile Brunetto**, Director, Area Agency on Aging, and Chief, Aging and Disability Services, DHHS, for her leadership and guidance for the domain work groups.
- **Marcia Pruzan**, DHHS Senior Fellow and Age-Friendly Montgomery Program Manager.
- **Dennis Linders**, Manager for Planning, Accountability and Customer Service, DHHS, who has provided the statistical data and interpretation necessary for conducting this effort.
- **Partner organizations and members of the Montgomery County Age-Friendly Advisory Group** and the ten domain work groups for their significant contributions.
- **The Montgomery County Commission on Aging**, whose members continue to help shape the County's approach to supporting its older residents and the Age-Friendly program.

Table of Contents

	Page
INTRODUCTION	5
OUR VISION	5
TEN AGE-FRIENDLY MONTGOMERY DOMAINS AND MISSIONS	6
OUR PARTNERS	7
RECENT INNOVATIVE AGE-FRIENDLY PROGRAMS	10
SUCCESS IN ADVOCACY	13
AT-A-GLANCE ACCOMPLISHMENTS ACROSS DOMAINS OVER PAST FIVE YEARS	14
HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OVERVIEW OF FUTURE PLANS BY DOMAINS	15
Civic and Social Involvement	15
Communications and Outreach	16
Elder Abuse Prevention	17
Employment	18
Health and Wellness	20
Home and Community Based Services	21
Housing	22
Planning, Open Spaces, Parks and Community Buildings	23
Senior Public Safety	24
Transportation	26

Introduction

Montgomery County proudly wears the banner of an AARP Age-Friendly Community. Since its 2015 enrollment and 2017 certification, the County's ten Age-Friendly domains have engaged in wide-ranging activities for the benefit of all residents across our large and diverse community.

Our Vision

Together with our community partners, the Age Friendly Advisory Group envisions a 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.

Ten Age-Friendly Montgomery Domains and Missions

The 10 Age-Friendly Montgomery domains have adopted the following missions:

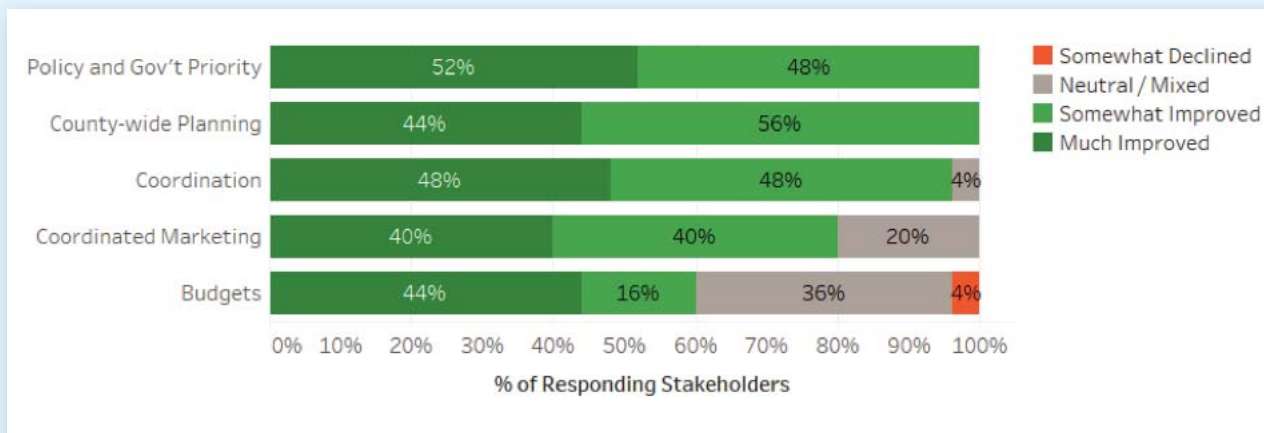
- 1. CIVIC AND SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT:** to encourage and support vital living for all older adults in Montgomery County by providing opportunities for physical, mental, and social interaction.
- 2. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH:** to distribute and publicize recognizable, understandable, timely, and accessible information on County and public 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 awareness, resources, and activities for adults 55+ that help maintain or improve physical, cognitive, and emotional health.
- 6. HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES:** to provide residents with 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 some ownership. Further, the County will support housing with supportive services so that older adults can remain in their communities.
- 8. PLANNING, OPEN SPACES, PARKS, AND COMMUNITY BUILDINGS:** to “change the way we fully age” by enabling older adults to stay as active as possible, within all areas of life: physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, vocational, social, and environmental. Aging within these dimensions of wellness keeps us alert and enabling a productive life.” (Adopted from the International Committee on Active Ageing.)
- 9. SENIOR PUBLIC SAFETY:** to provide physical, financial, technological protections, 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.

Our Partners

Partnerships are critical to our ability to create and bring information, programs, and services to all areas of our community. Partnerships take place across and among both government departments and outside organizations in the community.

More than 40 organizations outside of government currently support Age-Friendly Montgomery. They represent the arts, education, federal government, health care, life-long learning, transportation, technology, transportation, and religious and ethnic communities. In addition, we coordinate closely with Dementia Friendly Montgomery, led by the County's caregiver coordinator, who also co-chairs an Age-Friendly domain—Home and Community Based Services.

The Age-Friendly process has proven to be a highly successful model for cross-government/outside organization work. Feedback from a recent survey of our advisors and stakeholders showed high satisfaction with the Age-Friendly process, improving on their ability to work outside of their silos, to learn, interact and coordinate among domains and outside organizations, and to better conduct outreach and education in the community. Across the ten domains, top priority areas of concern were communication and outreach, transportation and mobility, and affordable housing. In addition, the burden of social isolation and its detrimental effects on the emotional and physical health of individuals of all ages is an increasing source of concern among and across our government agencies and partner organizations.



Age-Friendly Statistics

Since joining Age-Friendly Communities, US Census Bureau statistics (2015-2018) show that the county added over 20,000 additional residents aged 55 and older through both aging and migration—this is the equivalent of growing by nearly 20 residents aged 55+ every single day. The number of residents in this age group grew six times faster than the number of residents overall (7.2% vs. 1.1%), with those under 55 years of age actually experiencing a decline in population.

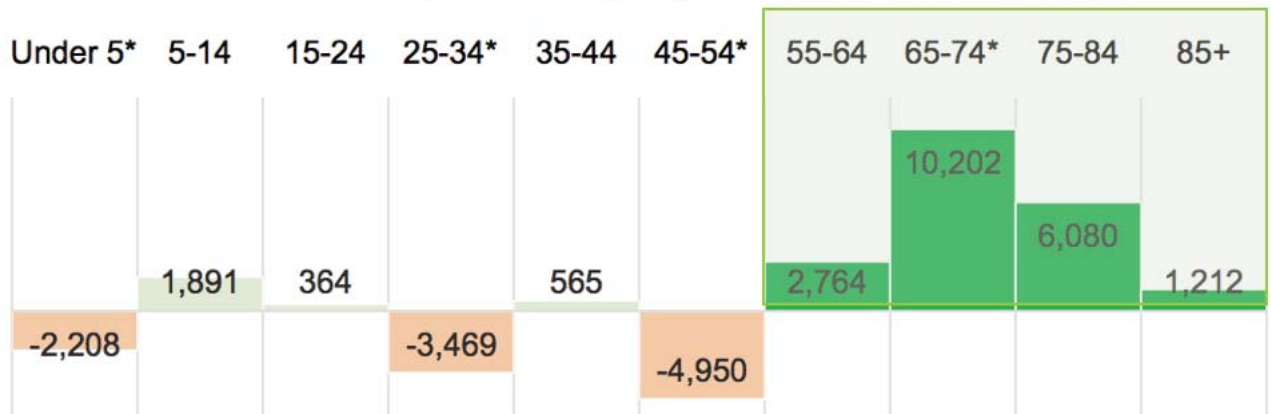
CountyStat analysis of the county's demographic and socio-economic trends shows that the residents driving this growth are more diverse, more geographically spread out across the county, and more likely to live in a low-income household, with important implications for delivering public services, social opportunities, and a high quality of life.

The Maryland Department of Planning expects these trends to continue, with the share of residents aged 60+ projected to grow from 21% of the county's population in 2017 to 27% by 2045. Over this time, residents aged 60 and over are projected to grow at more than seven times the rate of the rest of the population, with those aged 85 and over growing fastest of all. Minority residents will account for a growing share of this age group, with a projected rise from 36% in 2015 (the start of Age-Friendly Montgomery) to 66% by 2045—with minority residents making up more than half of the county's 60+ population before 2030. The charts below show these trends in more detail.

To meet its commitment to both WHO/AARP and the growing and changing needs of our residents, County staff, community advisors, and work group members have been working in ten areas of focus, or domains, to implement the Action Plan. As a result, new Age-Friendly initiatives have been developed and implemented; already-existing programs and services have been continued and enhanced to the degree feasible, and planning is underway for future initiatives.

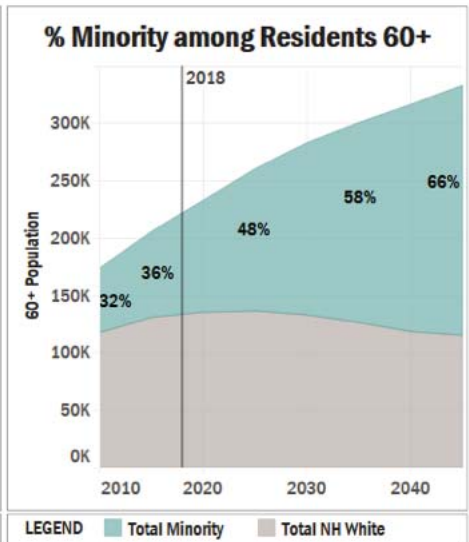
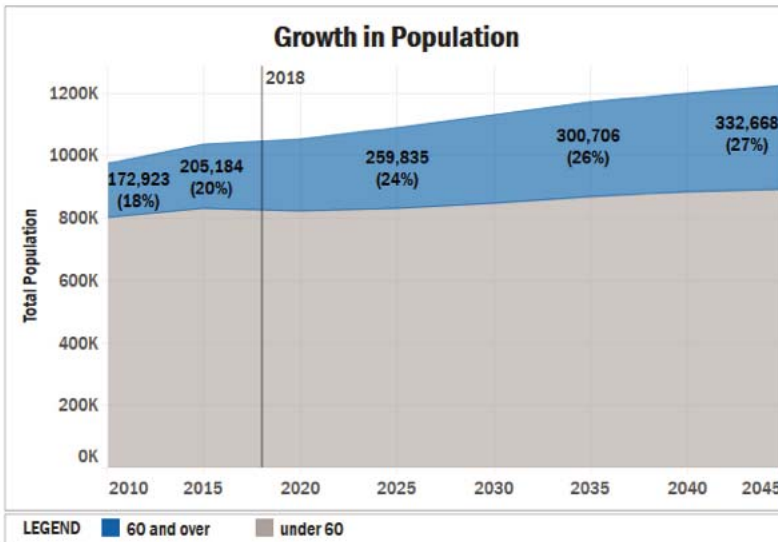
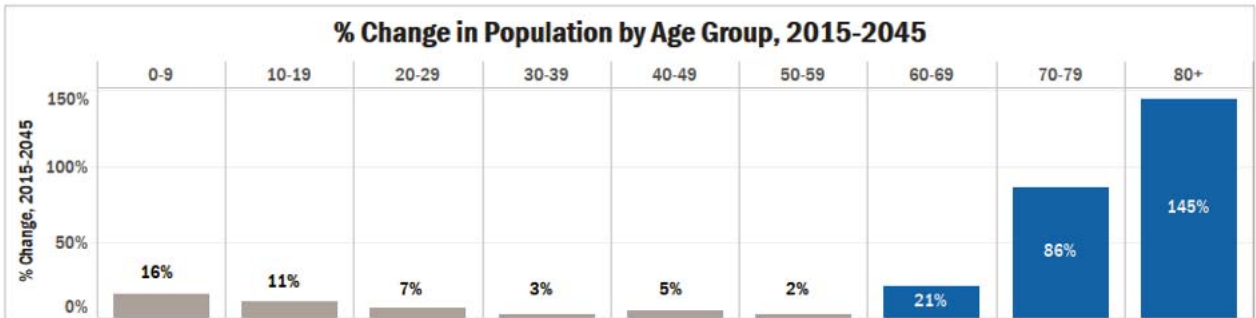


Increase in Population by Age Range, 2015 to 2018



Source: 2015 and 2018 population estimates by age, US Census American Community Survey (DP05). Age ranges with a * are statistically significant population increases.

Our Partners



Mrs. K. appreciates the County's Caregiver program, which educated her about services and help for Mr. K. As Mrs. K. is the sole family earner, having support for Mr. K. ensures that as the caregiver, she stays healthy and doesn't compromise her own health. He now regularly attends a County Recreation Center, with County-provided transportation, and enjoys many activities and friendships at the Center. This has allowed her to continue working. The Caregiver program has provided her with ongoing coaching to ensure that she is considering "next steps" and is better prepared for any changes in her husband's health status.

Recent Innovative Age-Friendly Programs

For decades, Montgomery County has had programs and services in place to support residents of all ages, with a special focus on its growing population of older adults—both those who are vital and active and those who are more vulnerable. These programs have evolved over time and changed to meet the needs of the changing demographics of our diverse community.

County government works closely with its Commission on Aging, its community partners, Age-Friendly Advisors and members of the ten domain work groups, and its own departments to create innovative and effective initiatives designed to improve the lives of our older residents and their families.

Response to a National Public Health Crisis

The successful cooperation and coordination between and among County government and its Age-Friendly community partners has been especially critical in the County's ability to respond and support our residents during the COVID-19 public health crisis. Some of the many activities include:

- Maintaining County website and 311 telephone referral line with the latest information on COVID-19 and the entire range of County services and resources.
- Via Senior Planet Montgomery, conducting a virtual senior town hall meeting featuring the County Executive and County Council president answering more than 70 questions from more than 200 older residents who participated.
- Providing Crisis Center telephone line for urgent mental health needs (240-777-4000).
- To help those in need of food during the pandemic.
 - Establishing and participating in a Food Security Task Force to coordinate the many efforts by numerous government and community partners to make food available and accessible throughout the county.
 - Creating a Food Access Call Center via the County's 311 telephone line—a one-stop contact for information about access to food.
 - Creating bi-lingual promotional documents and graphics with information about access to food in English, Spanish, Amharic, French, Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese for distribution, and placement in appropriate print, electronic and social media platforms.
 - Via the Recreation Department, providing weekly curbside pick-up at Recreation Center sites of a 7-day supply of boxed frozen meals for older residents enrolled in lunch programs, and delivering meals, in partnership with the Jewish Council for the Aging, to those unable to travel to pick them up.
- Enhancing the County's Disability Services and Resources web page.



Recent Innovative Age-Friendly Programs

- Offering information about resources and medical services available to veterans during the COVID-19 crisis through the County's Commission on Veterans' Affairs.
- Promoting Maryland's innovative Senior Call Check Program, a free telephonic service to check on older residents throughout the state.
- Launching the County's Caregiver Support Program's - Engage@HOME, devoted to assisting County caregivers and their loved ones maintain good health, wellness and engagement.
- Working with the county's 28 villages to support their efforts to check in with and help out neighbors in need.
- Instituting a Recreation Department initiative to call regular program members to make the social connection, allay social isolation, and ensure their wellbeing.
- Making operational changes to assure adequate response and to keep Fire, Police and other emergency personnel safe, including more telephone safety activities for nonmedical, nonemergency calls.
- Offering Department of Transportation resources for adults over 50 and people with disabilities during the COVID-19 health crisis, allowing for free transportation for those who must travel, and establishing a website with information, continually updated:
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-Transit/seniors.html>; special daily sanitizing of Ride On buses.
- Disseminating information through the Office of Consumer Protection about COVID-19-related scams.
- Piloting a Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services (MCFRS) plan for older people with smart phones that would allow staff to walk them through steps for in-home safety checks, done in person prior to this time.
- Offering ways through the County's Volunteer Center and villages for people who wish to volunteer to help others during the crisis.
- Creating a Summer Corps employment program for civic minded youth to support the County's community response to the pandemic.
- Dementia Friendly Montgomery County.

Nancy, a Startup! class participant since April 2019 said "Although I do not have a traditional "startup" business, I signed up for Startup! to learn more about marketing with social media. I was interested in learning because I am a realtor, but also because I had set up a team to participate in the Purple Stride Walk in DC for raising funds for Pancreatic Cancer research. In a panic, because I hadn't done anything to raise funds, I started on Mother's Day with a month to go before the walk and had to raise \$2,020. This class gave me the confidence to use Facebook & Instagram to market for my cause. I learned so much that I raised over \$3,000. Thank you for these wonderful classes for seniors!"

Recent Innovative Age-Friendly Programs

Additional innovative initiatives in past five years include:

- Senior Center Plus, a program for people with mild cognitive impairment who want to remain active but are unable to navigate regular senior center programs.
- Home health and other services for frequent callers to 911, designed to help them stay safe and healthy and avoid unnecessary trips to the emergency room. This program is coordinated through Health and Human Services, Police, and Fire and Rescue Departments.
- A monthly insert in the local newspaper, The Beacon, highlighting services for older adults and translated into Chinese and Spanish.
- The 50+ Volunteer network, which pairs skilled, retired older volunteers with local nonprofits in need of those skills.
- Certification course for managers of senior residences in conjunction with Montgomery College; the course covers management skills for addressing issues that commonly arise with older residents.
- A database of local nonprofits with Age-Friendly workplace and hiring practices for older workers and jobseekers.
- Initiation of an age-discrimination workshop for area employers.
- A pilot home-sharing project to screen and pair people who need a place to live with residents who have rooms to rent in their homes.
- Medicaid Adult Dental Waiver Program, a pilot program with Maryland Dental Action Coalition, which enlists volunteer dentists who provide dental services to Medicaid patients.
- Through the State's Attorney's Office, creation of a new unit for prosecution of crimes against seniors and vulnerable adults.
- A partnership with a senior residence on a pilot project to reduce social isolation.
- Creation of virtual events for caregivers, such as a virtual education event on dementia, a caregiving e-newsletter, a blog and a podcast series with programs on social isolation to enhance physical, mental and spiritual health and wellness.

To support these and other County efforts, we also have created several new positions:

- A Mobility Manager to ensure that residents have and know about a huge variety of transportation options for getting around our large county, especially those that are no- or low-cost, for older residents.
- A Village Coordinator, who supports and informs the large and expanding village movement in the county and who collaborates with the larger village movement in the greater Washington, DC metropolitan area.
- A Caregiver Support Coordinator to serve the enormous and diverse population of individuals, both family and friend, who care for our rapidly aging population.
- Continuation of the County's unique Senior Fellow Program, which employs retired residents with expertise and skills needed for specific projects and tasks throughout County government—including a senior fellow manager for Age-Friendly Montgomery.

Success In Advocacy

Our Age-Friendly stakeholders, together with Montgomery County's Commission on Aging, have been essential and highly effective advocates in achieving many legislative and policy successes at the local, state, and federal levels, including:

- Funding for two pilot projects
 - A dental care pilot program for Medicaid patients
 - A new home-sharing project
- A reduction in County property tax burden for older homeowners.
- Zoning changes allowing for creation of thousands of accessory dwelling units in three county zones to help meet affordable housing needs.
- State legislation requiring banks to report suspicious activity in accounts of older customers.
- Overall increased funding for essential County services and support, such as the ombudsman program and elder abuse prevention.
- Creation of the Maryland Order for Life Sustaining Treatment, enabling treatment wishes to be known to health professionals.
- Enactment of the Maryland Care Act, allowing hospital patients or their guardian to designate a lay person who can provide aftercare in the patient's home, and who is consulted by the hospital about the patient's discharge plan and at-home care needs.
- Significant funding allocated to add senior programming at newly renovated Wheaton Recreation Center and Library.



Mary, a long-time Montgomery County resident in her 70's, fell victim to a "woodchuck scam." She was targeted by two men while working in her garden. They insisted that a large tree needed to be cut down in her back yard and charged her \$25,000 for the work, which was not needed. During her speech at a World Elder Abuse Awareness Day event, she said "The State's Attorney's Office was marvelous. It is amazing that I got the money back. I had paid \$25,000 for the tree to be taken down and I got all the money back in restitution."

Accomplishments Across Domains Over Past Five Years

At -A-Glance...

- Expanding and improving in-person, print, radio and television, and electronic/online communications in multiple languages across Age-Friendly domains to keep residents informed about County services, programs, news, and events.
- Development by the CountyStat office of an Aging and Vulnerability Dashboard that mapped and analyzed economic challenges facing our senior communities to help locate priority areas for aid.
- Initiating and expanding new and refurbished low-income housing projects and introducing a new home-sharing program to help residents meet the ongoing challenge of available, affordable housing units.
- Supporting the large and growing villages movement, a vital grassroots, volunteer-led neighbor-helping-neighbor concept that helps older residents age in place and keeps generations of families together in the community.
- Expanding hours and low- and no-cost transportation options, including vehicles that are wheelchair-accessible, to help older people and people with disabilities get to medical appointments and participate more fully in family, social, and community life.
- Expanding and integrating safety education through outreach and in-home visits by police, fire and rescue, and EMS staff.
- Increasing volunteer participation in county life through 50+ Volunteer Network that pairs area organizations in need of specific expertise with older volunteers who can provide that expertise,
- Combatting social isolation through expanding programming at our Senior Centers, including those for culturally diverse older residents.
- Creating a Caregiver Coalition and new in-depth resources that help family caregivers find the resources and support they need to care for family members.
- Launching Senior Planet, a technology training for older adults that opens the door for finding needed information, better communication with family and friends, improving job skills, and identifying appropriate job and volunteer opportunities.
- Promoting employment for older workers in partnership with Work Source Montgomery and the annual Jewish Council for the Aging's 50+ jobs Expo and educating area organizations about the benefits that older workers bring to them and to the community.
- Updating area parks to include safety and accessibility features for people of all ages.
- Conducting an annual Falls Prevention campaign each September with free classes in 30 locations.
- From the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, collaborating across government, community partners and domains to ensure the availability of critical services and protect the health and safety of county residents and employees.



Henry also spoke about his elderly parents who are in their 90's. A trusted caregiver stole their valuable jewelry and cash. Their caregiver had watched them use their safe and noted where they kept the key. One day, while the couple was resting, the caregiver stole more than \$40,000 of jewelry and cash from the safe. Montgomery County Police located some of the stolen jewelry at a local pawn shop. After the caregiver's arrest and confession, they located more of the stolen jewelry in her home, and the defendant pled guilty to the theft.

Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Civic and Social Involvement



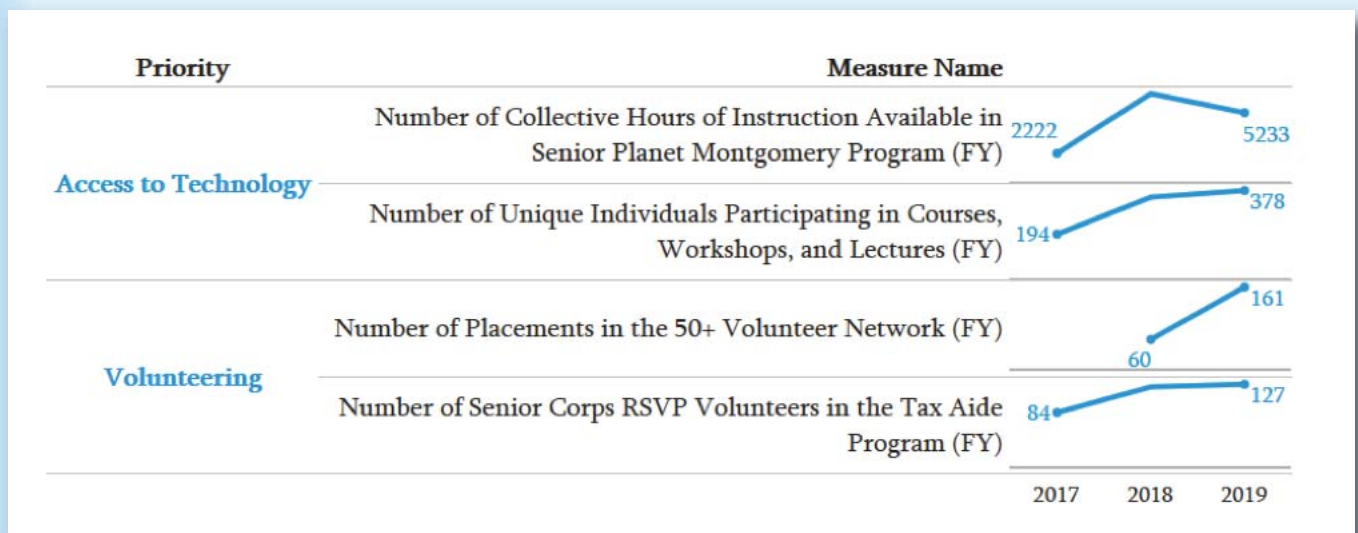
Achievements:

- Created and launched 50+ network to increase volunteer opportunities for residents 50+.
- Launched Senior Planet, digital technology training for older residents, and continued expanding course offerings over time and vastly expanded virtual class offerings during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Expanded growth and capacity of villages across the community.
- Continued program of intergenerational mentoring in partnership with Montgomery County Public Schools and the Jewish Council for the Aging.
- Used “Let’s Share” volunteer-led program at North Potomac Community Center as a model for engaging seniors from diverse communities.
- Increased leadership among diverse communities through work with villages.

Planned and Proposed Activities

- Continue to focus on increasing engagement and preventing social isolation.
- Continue to champion support for Montgomery County’s unique Senior Fellows Program.
- Expand the “Let’s Share” program to identify leaders and engage more participants from diverse communities throughout the county.
- Explore greater corporate partnerships for funding for technology devices.
- With partners, support growth in and increase access to technology programs.
- Collect statistics on digital literacy and lifelong learning.

Measures



Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Communications and Outreach

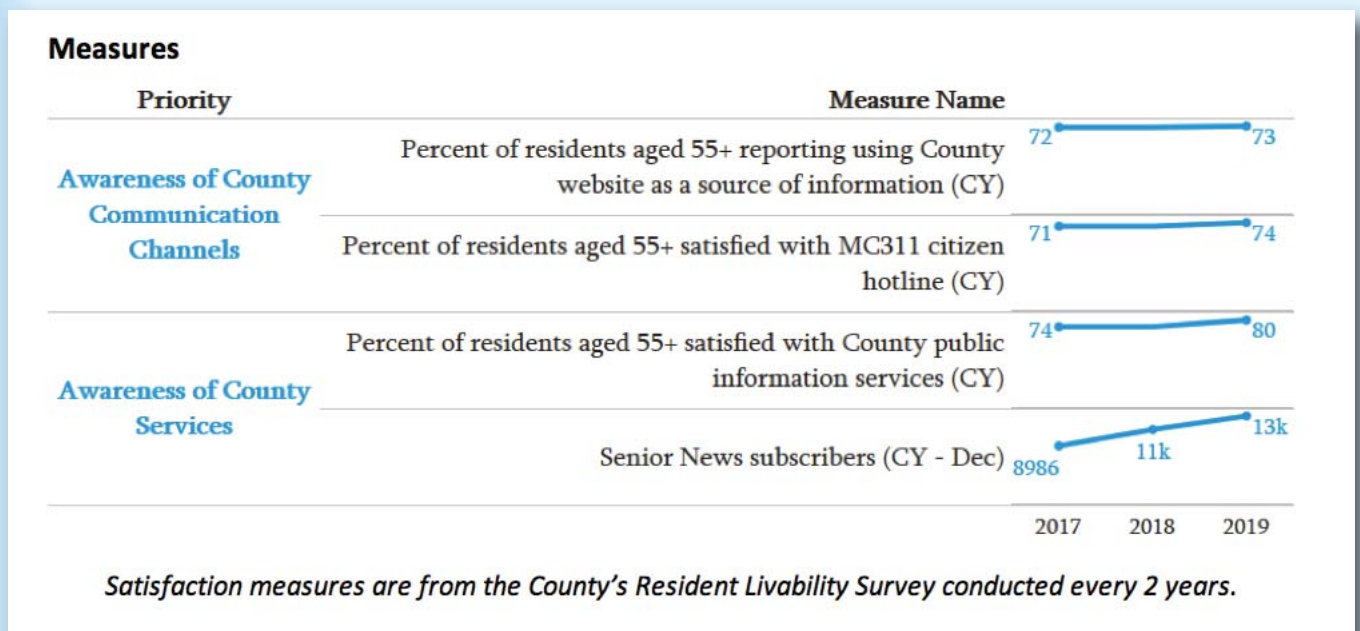
Accomplishments

- Launched new monthly article in The Beacon, a widely read free newspaper for those 50+, as well as newsletters in other languages, highlighting key resources and programs for older adults. The information is also available online.
- Raised awareness of County communication channels via accessible print and electronic promotions.
- Raised awareness of County programs, services and resources by strengthening content on County website.
- Leveraged the website, the 311 system, the Senior Resource Line (240-777-3000), Montgomery al Dia, My MC Media, Paperless Airplane, social media, Seniors Today cable television show, and other communication channels.
- Made content available in Spanish, Chinese, and other languages as capacity allowed.

Planned and proposed activities

- The Public Information Office (PIO), in collaboration with the Commission on Aging, will design a new communications strategy to offer more targeted messages to more targeted audiences, via appropriate communication channels.
- PIO will collaborate with County departments, Age-Friendly work groups and the Montgomery County Commission on Aging to implement this improved method of promoting County programs, services and resources for age 55+.
- PIO will identify metrics for this strategy and begin collecting data once it is implemented.

Measures



Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Elder Abuse Prevention

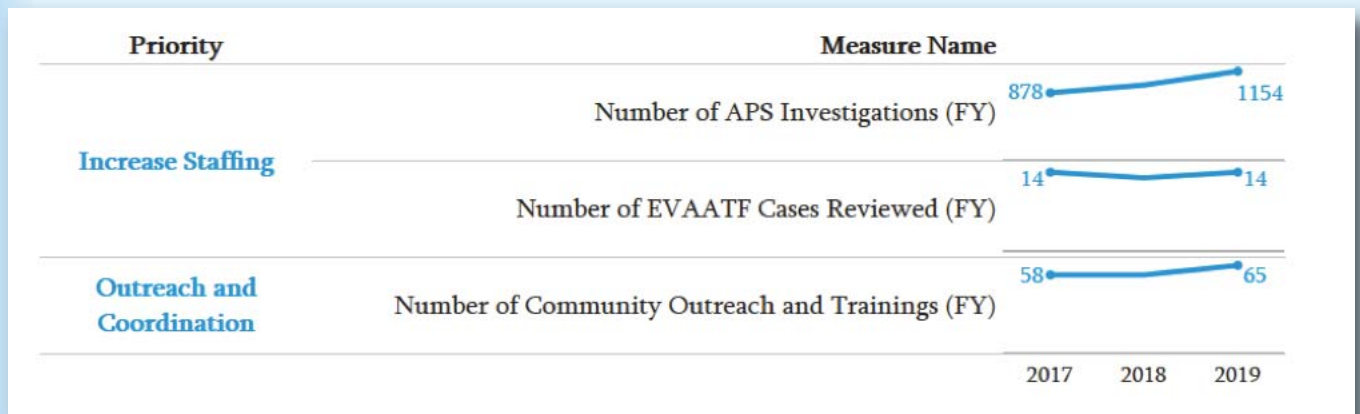
Accomplishments

- Improved communication across agencies and the Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse Task Force.
- Updated memorandum of understanding to add Fire and Rescue to its effort to improve information sharing among County agencies.
- Added new staffing to meet needs of increased number of Adult Protective Services intakes.
- Coordinated with County agencies (State's Attorney's Office, Adult Protective Services, Office of Consumer Protection, Fire and Rescue) in making joint presentations to various older adult groups across the county.
- Increased outreach capacity in multiple languages (Spanish, Mandarin, Chinese, and Korean).
- Increased staffing capacity of the Crimes Against Seniors and Vulnerable Adults unit of the State's Attorney's Office to investigate and successfully prosecute perpetrators of elder/vulnerable adult abuse.

Planned and Proposed Activities

- Continue to focus on public and professional outreach efforts in conjunction with the State's Attorney's Office, Adult Protective Services, Office of Consumer Protection, and Fire and Rescue Services.
- Increase outreach and education about elder abuse in multiple languages to new communities and diverse populations.
- Establish an elder fatality review process to monitor and learn from elder deaths in our community.
- Increase access to forensic accountant as financial exploitation cases grow.
- Engage medical community in efforts to help identify and combat elder abuse.
- Continue collaboration with Washington, DC and other state and local jurisdictions interested in building on Montgomery County's multi-disciplinary approach.

Measures



Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Employment

Accomplishments

- Created directory of community organizations with resources and workshops for older workers and launched 50+ section of WorkSource Montgomery website.
- Worked with Alliance for Workplace Excellence in initiating first-ever certification honoring employers with age-positive programs. Among the eight winners were seven in Montgomery County, including the County's Office of Human Resources.
- Worked with international retirees' group, the 1818 Society, to introduce the concept of Age-Friendly and ways that retirees could help themselves and colleagues find paid and volunteer work.
- Work with the County Office of Human Resources resulted in County's first workshop on age-discrimination in employment, in development and placement of an article about age discrimination for various news outlets, and development of ad on age discrimination in the workplace that was shown in area theaters.
- Partner Jewish Council for the Aging expanded its Career Gateway courses, continued its annual 50+ employment expo, continue its on-the-job-training Senior Community Service Employment Program, and continued to promote programs and services available to older job seekers.

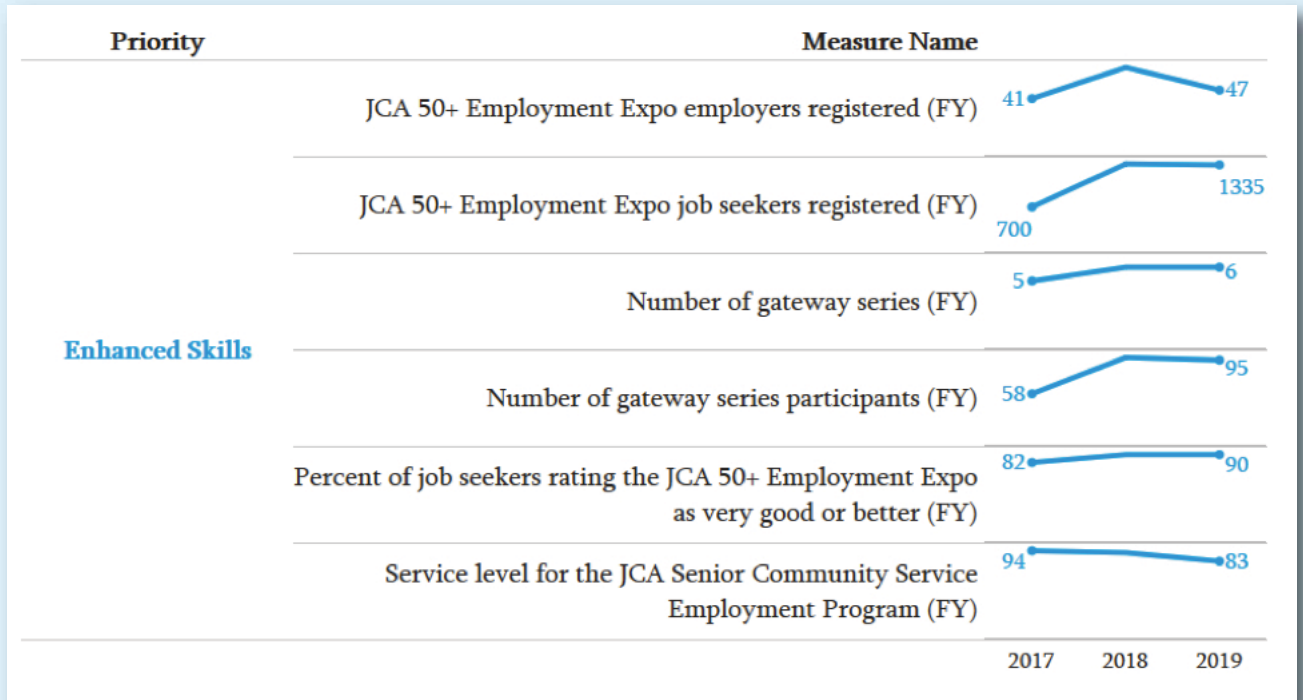
Planned and Proposed Activities

- Continue to expand and otherwise improve communication about available resources for job seekers; encourage community organizations and media outlets to communicate information about available programs and resources.
- Collect best practice information from winners of the Alliance for Excellence Best Practices for Supporting Workers 50+ Award.
- Identify programmatic and other needed resources and advocate for developing them.
- To increase the number of age-friendly employers, develop a communications strategy and talking points aimed at employers to promote the benefits of recruiting, engaging and retaining workers 50+.
- Continue collaboration with AARP Maryland in letting AARP members know about the resource list.
- Encourage the Montgomery County Commission for Women to explore ways to use the resource list to help their clients.
- Explore working with public and private lifelong learning institutions to foster employment opportunities.
- Develop a speakers' bureau and arrange presentations at meetings of employer organizations and work to connect with employers to encourage their age-friendly strategies.
- Continue collaboration with the County's Office of Human Rights and outreach to area law firms, and the Montgomery College Work Force Development Unit to include information about legal protections against age discrimination in the workplace.
- Encourage Montgomery County government to be a model of an age-friendly employer.
- To combat age discrimination, continue work with the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights to include information about the legal protections from age discrimination as a regular part of its briefings and outreach to employers, employees, and job seekers.

Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Employment

Measures



Margaret, 91, is a long-time tax-aide client and her daughter wrote a thank you note: "I am so grateful for your free tax preparation assistance. For the past 10 years, my mother has been your client and you have always been kind, patient and professional. Thank you for this program!"

Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Health and Wellness



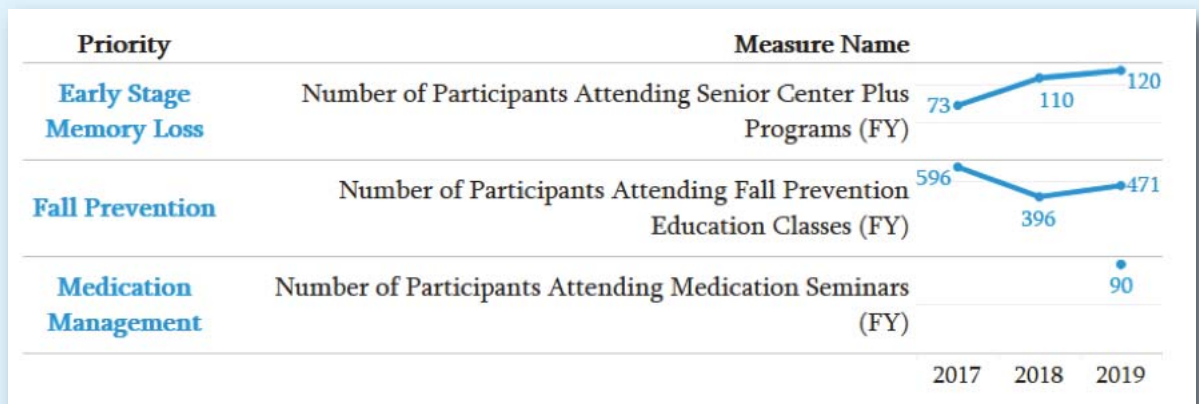
Accomplishments

- Established one new priority area: to help prevent social isolation; with partner WISH (Wellness and Independence for Seniors at Home/Nexus Montgomery) initiated program “One Building at a Time” at one senior residence in 2019.
- Conducted and expanded Medication Management Day events at local senior centers as well as education events with older adults on the wait list for department senior care services within the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Developed and widely distributed new Medication Management fact sheet.
- Held numerous expired medication collection events at area senior centers.
- Partnered with Fire and Rescue to train emergency medical personnel about medication management issues with repeat emergency customers.
- With Jewish Council for the Aging and County Recreation Department, in 2016 opened a social day club for persons with early-stage memory loss; opened a second site in 2019.
- Conducted fall prevention “Stepping On” classes in County-run senior residences and community recreation centers. In addition, partner Washington Area Oasis promoted 34 fall prevention exercise and classes and held its first fall prevention event during September’s Fall Prevention Month.
- With partner Washington Metropolitan Oasis, promote health aging and active lifestyle programs with goal of improving balance and mobility and preventing falls.
- Continued “Bone Builder” classes to help community members with osteopenia or osteoporosis to exercise safely to improve strength, balance, and bone density. In addition, partner Holy Cross Hospital implemented a “Better Bones” class.

Planned and Proposed Activities

- Increase efforts to reduce isolation for at-risk seniors, including those with limited English proficiency; after assessment of initial effort, expand the “One Building at a Time” initiative to additional senior residences.
- Integrate health and wellness programs throughout the county; help residents become aware of programs; provide access to interpreters of health and wellness information in other languages.
- Partner with the Dementia Friendly initiative to expand Medication Management program.
- Translate the Medication Fact sheet into multiple languages.
- Continue participation in Dental Care Program for Seniors, Active Aging Week activities, and Walk Maryland Day.

Measures



Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Home and Community Based Services

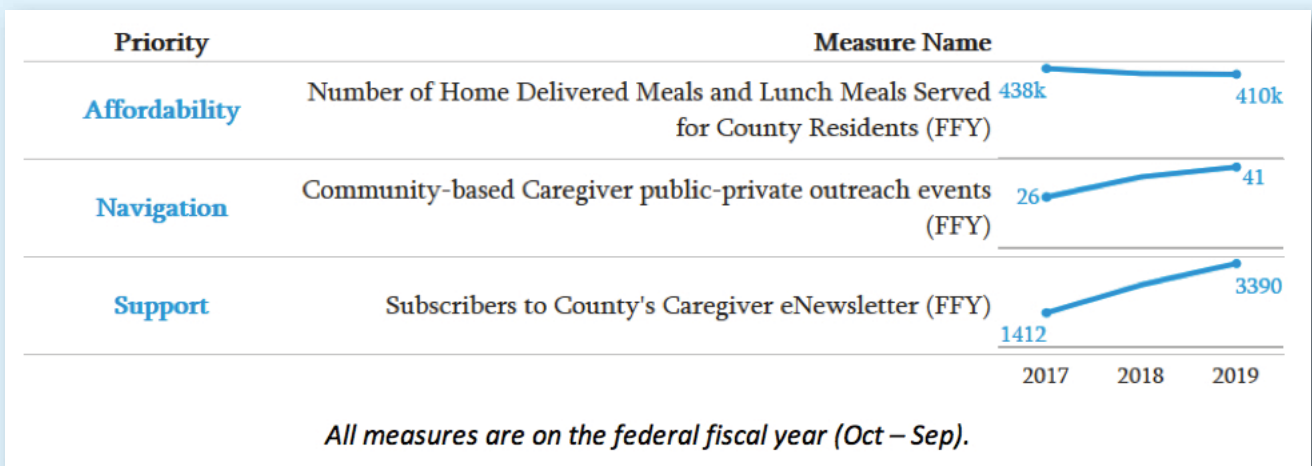
Accomplishments

- Developed Caregiver Resources—print, and published online—including County caregiver resources in five languages, eNewsletter/blog and podcasts.
- Conducted public-private outreach events, workshops, meetings with advisory groups and listening sessions—provided caregiver education and resources.
- Provided home-delivered and lunch meals in senior centers at no cost or with voluntary donations.
- Created Engage@Home to assist caregivers in maintaining good health, wellness and engagement.

Planned and Proposed Activities

- Continue follow-up efforts resulting from the 2019 conference with care managers.
- Explore how to reach younger audiences facing caregiving questions—adult children of aging parents.
- Refocus on collaboration between for-profit and nonprofit entities.
- Repeat or create new Beacon follow-up advertisement.
- Continue efforts to provide print public service ads in English, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese and/or other languages.
- Continue developing diverse platform caregiver communication strategies.
- Continue delivery of home-delivered meals.
- Explore providing delivered weekend meals for eligible older adults.
- Explore opportunities for working with organizations that support LGBTQ communities.

Measures



Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Housing



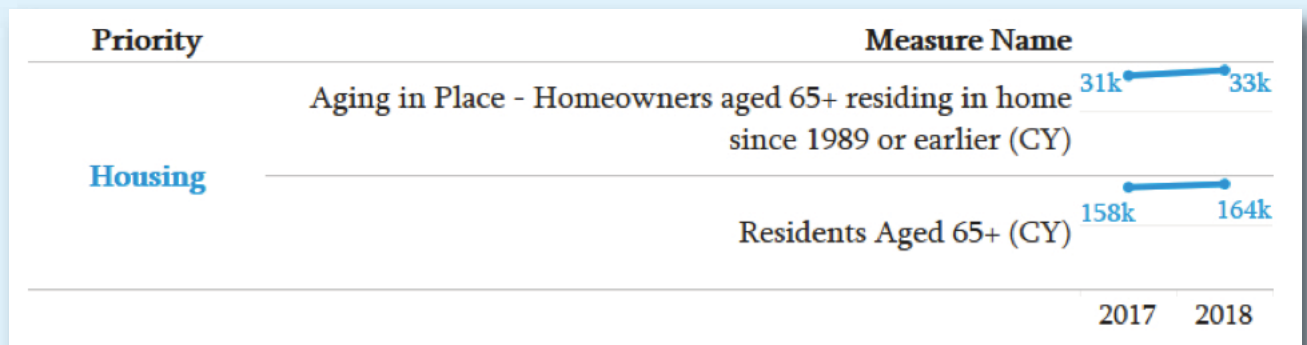
Accomplishments

- Initiated round table programs providing education to managers and service coordinators of affordable senior living communities in which the County has invested.
- Launched an energy efficiency program in partnership with Habitat for Humanity open to all income qualified homeowners with a priority to seniors.
- Collaborated on expansion of the Independence for Seniors at Home (W.I.S.H.) Program --a free, county-wide program that connects seniors to community-based health care and other support services to promote wellness independence at home—to enroll low-income residents of affordable senior communities in the program providing wrap-around services.
- Provided financing to prevent loss of 9 of 13 affordable living units.
- In collaboration with Montgomery College, launched a 12-session certificate class, Understanding Aging. The class is being offered to managers and service coordinators of affordable senior living communities in Montgomery County.
- Developed and obtained approval for a home-sharing pilot program to begin in 2020 to help place home seekers with homeowners.
- Convened a meeting to explore affordable options for assisted living and continuing care residences and to identify recommendations for related legislation.

Planned and Proposed Activities

- Continue working with Police Department to promote security inspections at all tax credit affordable senior living buildings.
- In collaboration with Montgomery College, expand training and certification program for all service coordinators and managers of low-income, independent senior housing.
- Continue to explore opportunities for public/private partnerships to increase the number of affordable senior living units and communities.
- Explore potential for expanding home-sharing model upon outcome assessment of new pilot program.
- Build opportunities to influence the appropriate design of senior living facilities to mitigate falls, particularly in bathrooms.

Measures



Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Planning, Open Spaces, Parks and Community Buildings



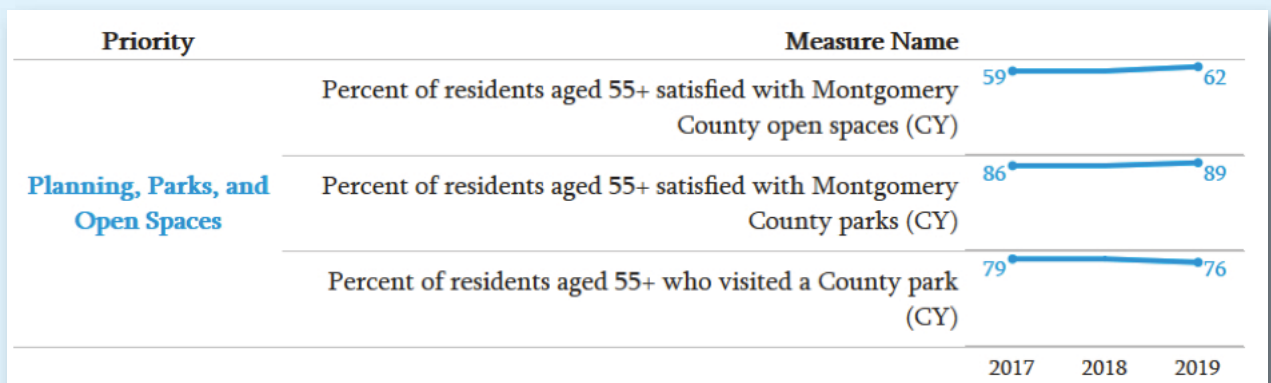
Accomplishments

- Completed co-location study for sharing of real estate and services by two or more organizations.
- Selected site for new senior friendly therapeutic play area.
- Adding multi-generational fitness equipment to all playgrounds in the playground renovation program.
- Adding specialist to coordinate inclusive programs and events throughout the park system that are welcoming to all residents.
- Completed planning for construction of co-located aquatic, community, and senior center.
- Planning for partnership with ParkRx program in which physicians issue prescriptions for patients to go to nearby parks for health and enjoyment benefits.
- Montgomery County Department of Parks' removed more than 1400 barriers as part of the ADA Transition Plan.
- Completed plan identifying walkable open space needs in highly populated areas with recommended solutions to allow access and recreation for all ages.

Planned and Proposed Activities

- Through the "Thrive Montgomery 2050" initiative, updating the County's General Plan to create a long-term, shared vision with broad policies that will guide future, more detailed land use planning, public investments in infrastructure and communities, amenities, and private development, and ensuring that the county thrives over the next 30+ years with a vibrant economy, equity for all residents, and a healthy environment.
- Explore expanding partnerships with other County agencies and/or private companies, essential for delivering new facilities and programs.
- Expand efforts for inclusiveness for all ages and abilities.
- Explore co-location opportunities with schools, parks, recreation facilities.
- Develop talking points for educating staff about senior issues.
- Develop Master Plan to improve pedestrian conditions countywide, which complements the 2018 Bicycle Master Plan and plans for other modes of transportation through strategies for making streets safer and more accessible for residents of all ages and abilities.
- Identify initiatives and programs that enhance quality of life of residents age 60+ as part of every community master plan, sector plan, and General Plan update.
- Increase communications about available programs and amenities.
- Stay informed about latest trends in senior friendly design and programming.

Measures



Satisfaction measures are from the County's Resident Livability Survey conducted every two years.

Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Senior Public Safety

Accomplishments

- Initiated a Public Safety Senior forum for networking and identifying outreach opportunities across departments and office lines for outreach to the older adults in the community.
- In conjunction with the Montgomery County Police Department and numerous partner organizations, conducted numerous volunteer-led outreach and education efforts within senior communities under the “Keeping Seniors Safe” program to increase awareness about safety issues and provide guidance and resources.
- Fire and Rescue initiated program to provide a full day of education training in Community Risk Reduction, with an emphasis on fire and injury prevention for older residents to every recruit class.
- Fire and Rescue initiated an effort to reduce number of frequent users of 911 emergency system with a multidisciplinary team working to reduce the impact of frequent users for nonemergency services.
- Fire and Rescue instituted an “Every Call/Every Alarm” initiative resulting in first responders checking a home’s smoke alarms to ensure they are working and up to date following the medical call.
- Fire and Rescue expanded the robust Senior Outreach and Education program to provide fire safety education to more than 5000 seniors per year on average, and to complete more than 1000 home safety checks per year, ensuring that all homes visited are up-to-date with smoke alarm protection.
- Using “Language Friendly Hours,” the Office of Consumer Protection was able to address older audiences in Mandarin and Korean at the Chinese and Korean Senior centers.
- Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security performed outreach on personal preparedness at various events and has participated in other events such as the 50+ Expo and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.
- Briefed the County Council’s Public Safety Committee on senior public safety initiatives of the various County departments, including the State’s Attorney’s Office, Police, Park Police, Fire and Rescue Services, Office of Consumer Protection, and Health and Human Services.



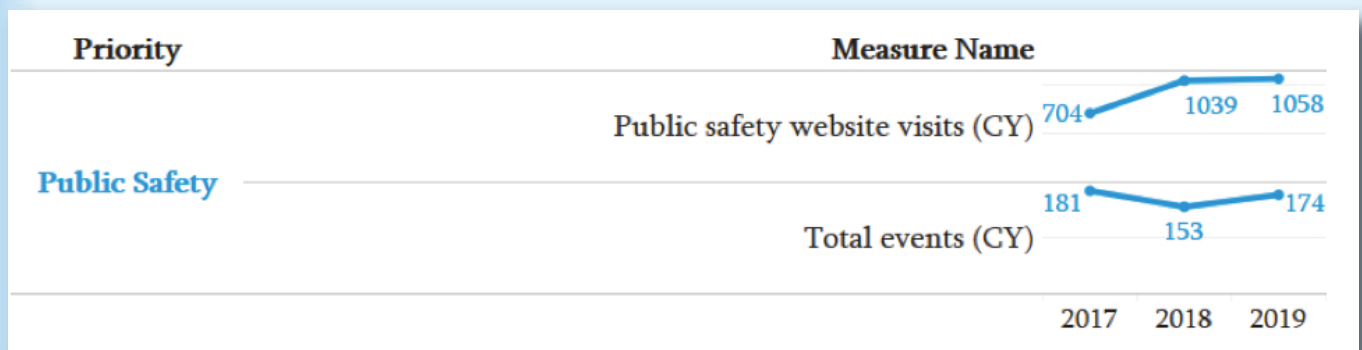
Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Senior Public Safety

Planned and Proposed Activities

- Gain a better understanding of how people hear our messages and information, perhaps through a County survey.
- Sustain and expand ability for all departments involved with senior public safety to provide a “crossover” of information and resources for those in need of services or information, including by developing (a) a public safety master checklist of all educational materials that can be used in outreach events; and (b) a master calendar for coordinating all outreach events.
- Sustain and expand outreach and education in senior communities through the “Keeping Seniors Safe” Program.
- Expand the home safety check program to reach more homes and identify other services that might be performed while in the home.
- To maximize public safety for the entire community, reach out to community with communication-based needs, such as for those who are not proficient in English, those who received information through non-traditional methods, and others.

Measures



Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Transportation

Accomplishments

- Increased public awareness of transportation options for older adults via wide range of advertisements, community outreach, events, presentations, workshops, and trainings to educate older residents on use of public transportation.
- Publicized wide use of Connect-A-Ride program which provides transportation information and referral for residents over age 50.
- Increased and expanded affordable transportation options by extending hours of free Ride On and Metro bus service for older adults, and encouraging development of aging-in-place villages.
- Achieved passage of legislation requiring a 100% accessible taxi fleet by 2025.
- Designed regulations to incentivize the purchase and driving of wheelchair accessible taxis.
- Extended passenger vehicle licenses to Montgomery County Taxi Union to provide accessible taxicab service.
- Enhanced pedestrian safety through changes and improvements in built environment of bus stops, sidewalks, and traffic signals.
- Supported and helped fund aging-in-place villages, many of which provide free transportation to members.
- Received Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Enhanced Mobility Grant to reduce Call-n-Ride (discounted taxi program) participants' co-payments.
- Introduced Ride On Flex, the County's new no fixed stops, no fixed schedules on-demand transit service.



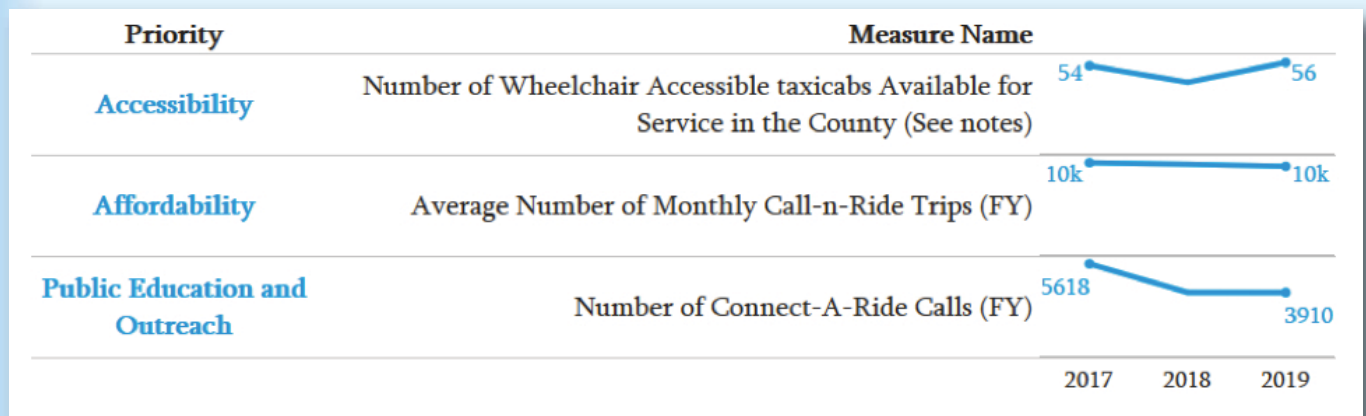
Accomplishments & Future Plans By Individual Domain

Transportation

Planned and Proposed Activities

- Support organizations providing much-needed volunteer transportation.
- Ensure that taxicab and other driver services are held accountable for safety and quality customer service.
- As most older drivers are reluctant to give up their driving licenses, enhance older driver safety, especially by educating older drivers and making roads as safe as possible for older drivers.
- Ensure app-based transportation options are also available by phone call.
- Continue promoting public awareness through advertising, education, and outreach
- Increase outreach to groups serving limited and non-English speaking residents; continue translation of brochures and outreach materials to various languages
- Additional efforts will be given to recruiting volunteers willing to drive for volunteer driving organizations.
- Assess outcome of initial Ride-On FLEX program for potential expansion.
- Apply for another COG Enhanced Mobility Grant to expand travel training.
- Encourage organizations outside of County government to apply for Enhanced Mobility funds.
- Expand partnerships with non-profits, private and governmental agencies who serve older adults.
- Hire a Vision Zero manager and implement Vision Zero plan to reduce/eliminate pedestrian fatalities.

Measures





July 2020