

LIVABLE ORLANDO

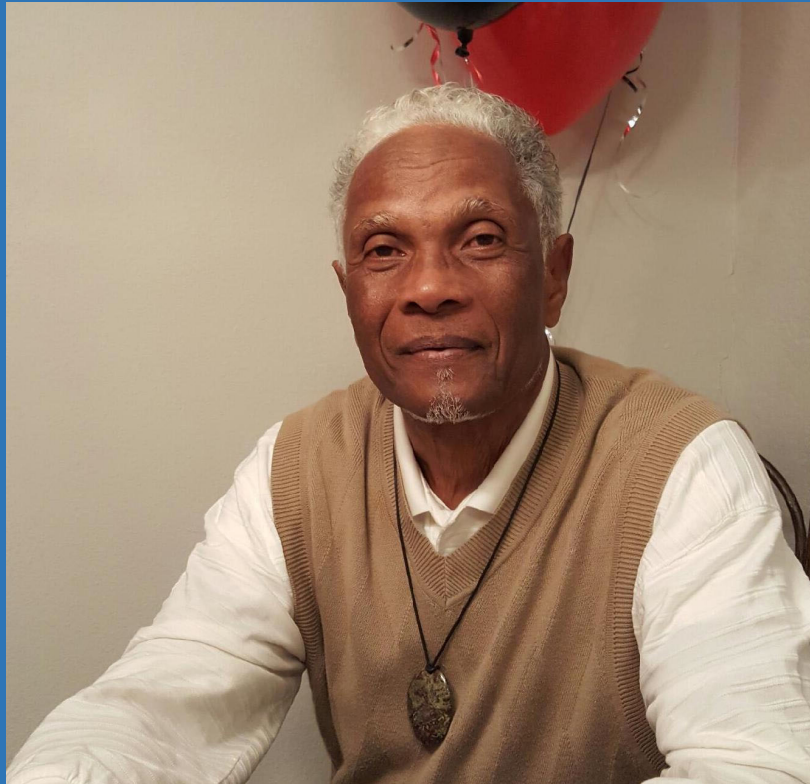
An Age-Friendly Initiative Action Plan

2022 - 2025



Dedication

This action plan is dedicated to the memory of Lynn Nicholson, a dear friend and tireless neighborhood champion, who provided invaluable wisdom as a member of the Mayor's Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging.



July 2, 1943 – February 16, 2022

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Message from Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer

	<u>Page</u>
Executive Summary	7
Introduction	13
Demographic Trends	
The Economics of Longevity	
Equity, Inclusion, and the Age-Friendly Lens	
Our Process	23
Understanding the Age-Friendly Framework	
Mayor’s Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging	
Understanding the 8 Domains of Livability	
Developing Our Action Plan	
Action Plan Structure	
Creating an Age-Friendly Built Environment	33
Creating an Age-Friendly Social Environment	63
Creativity & Innovation – Linking the Built and Social Environments	97
Looking Ahead	107
Appendices	

Acknowledgements

We are tremendously grateful for the many people who contributed their ideas, time, and energies to envision and shape this *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan*. We gratefully acknowledge the support received from AARP National and AARP Florida, as well as the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, throughout the process of creating this Action Plan. We also wish to express our sincere thanks for AARP's generous financial support for our 2021 Community Challenge Grant "Tables of Connection" project.

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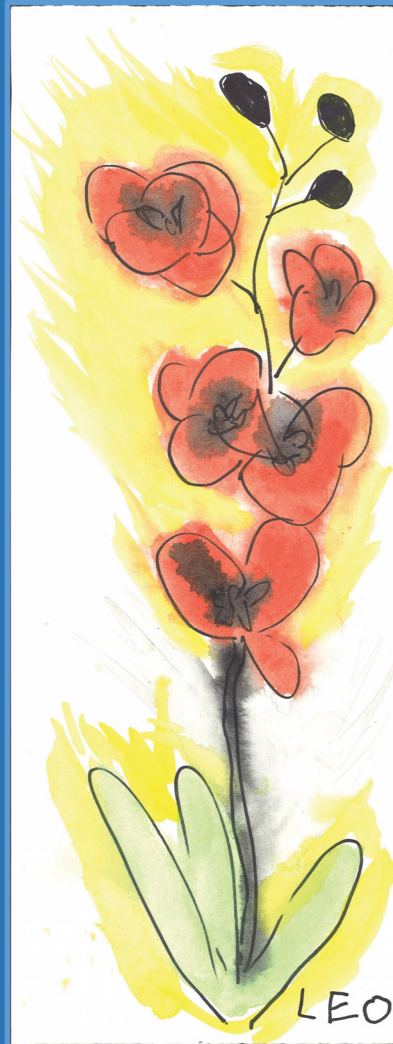
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Artwork created by an **Art's the Spark** participant, a program offered by the Orlando Museum of Art for those living with memory or neurological impairments, such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

Message from the Mayor



As a city, we value diversity and inclusiveness in all its many forms - including our older residents. That is one of the reasons why in late 2019, the City of Orlando applied for and received an Age-Friendly City designation through AARP and the World Health Organization. By joining the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, we agreed to embark on a process to create Orlando's first *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan*.

Our planning process was led by the Mayor's Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging, a committed group of volunteers representing key senior services organizations, community partners, and local advocates. They were charged with developing a strategy to create a more age-friendly community based on eight domains of livability: outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, community health and support, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and engagement, and communication and information.

The *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan* outlines 25 goals and 89 action items needing to be addressed. Their implementation will be guided by the Mayor's Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging. Also, we hope that existing business and community partnerships will be enhanced, and new partnerships will be created to successfully implement the action plan.

I would like to thank the Mayor's Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging for their dedication and diligent work throughout the action plan creation process. Because of their efforts, I believe that Orlando is well on its way to implementing the needed best practices to ensure that we remain a vibrant, livable, and safe community for residents of all ages.

We welcome this opportunity to implement a plan that responds to the needs of our seniors and builds upon our work for Orlando to remain a "Community for a Lifetime."

Buddy Dyer
Mayor

Executive Summary

What is the Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan?

What does it mean to be an age-friendly city? An age-friendly city means a city that adapts its structures, programs, and services to be accessible and inclusive to residents of all ages and abilities. The *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan* is our community's blueprint to make Orlando the best city in which to live and age well. This action plan details 25 specific goals and 89 specific action items the City will take in partnership with other organizations to become even more age-friendly.

Intersecting Initiatives

This *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan* is a component of Orlando's comprehensive planning efforts and will be fully integrated into other plans and processes and vice versa including the Growth Management Plan, Future-Ready City Master Plan, Green Works Community Action Plan, and the Vision Zero Action Plan among others. These plans serve to re-enforce and reflect each other where there is synergy.

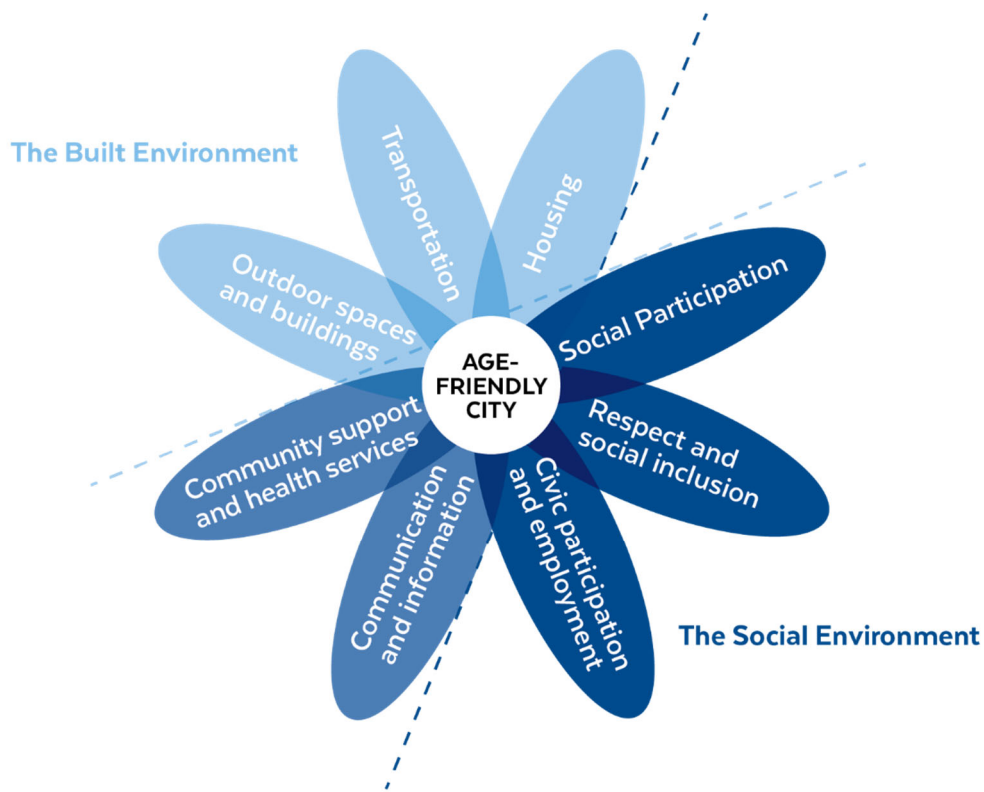
Action Plan Structure

The *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan* is divided into **five main sections** that provide a roadmap for creating both an age-friendly built environment and social environment. The **Introduction** provides a summary of demographic trends, the economics of increased longevity, as well as a discussion regarding equity and inclusion through an age-friendly lens. The **Our Process** chapter describes the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities framework within which the action plan was created including the 8 Domains of Livability that all members of the network utilize in their planning and implementation work. This chapter also provides information on our community engagement process as well as the structure of the action plan. The **Creating an Age-Friendly Built Environment** chapter focuses on three of the 8 Domains of Livability, specifically Outdoor Spaces & Buildings, Housing, and Transportation/Mobility and includes a series of goal statements, goals, and action items for each domain. The **Creating an Age-Friendly Social Environment** chapter focuses on the remaining five Domains of Livability including Civic Participation & Employment, Respect & Social Inclusion, Social Participation, Community Support & Health Systems, and Communications & Information. This section also includes a series of goal statements, as well as specific goals and action items. The final chapter, **Creativity & Innovation – Linking the Built and Social Environments**, highlights some incredible community placemaking efforts and projects that cross various domains of livability. The action plan also contains a series of

appendices that include an Action Items Matrix, a summary of Orlando’s Age-Friendly Livability Survey, Community Engagement Timeline, and summary of the Words & Wisdom Poetry Contest.

Readers may also notice that the action plan’s main narrative text uses a fairly large 12-point font size and paragraph spacing designed to make the plan more comfortable for older eyes and for those living with disabilities.

8 Domains of Livability – Our Vision



Source: The 8 Domains of Livability from the World Health Organization’s report, Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide (2007).

The World Health Organization (WHO) developed a framework with 8 Domains of Livability. Acknowledging variability in the preferences and experiences of people as they age across cultures, this framework encourages communities to identify their own priorities within each domain. AARP and the Florida Department of Elder Affairs through their Livable Florida program also utilize these 8 Domains of Livability in their age-friendly work, which can be further defined as the “built environment” and the “social environment”.

Our *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan* envisions the following overarching goal statements relative to each Domain of Livability:

Built Environment

Domain	Overarching Goals
OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS	<p>WE ENVISION...</p> <p>...an Age-Friendly Orlando where older adults can safely, easily, and comfortably access the natural and built environment, including parks, greenspaces, trails, and sidewalks, as well as public buildings.</p> <p>...an Age-Friendly Orlando where older adults can improve their health and longevity by encouraging active lifestyles including participation in meaningful recreational and cultural activities.</p>
HOUSING	<p>WE ENVISION...</p> <p>...an Age-Friendly Orlando in which safe, appropriately designed housing options are available and affordable to older adults, including housing with services that help them age in place and to enjoy their home.</p>
TRANSPORTATION (MOBILITY)	<p>WE ENVISION...</p> <p>...an Age-Friendly Orlando in which older adults can safely, conveniently, and comfortably travel where they want and need to go so that they can participate fully in their community.</p>



Social Environment

Domain	Overarching Goals
CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT	WE ENVISION... ...an Age-Friendly Orlando in which older adults have access to work opportunities as well as to meaningful volunteer opportunities.
RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION	WE ENVISION... ...an Age-Friendly Orlando that actively listens to, engages with, and celebrates the valuable contributions of older adults in the community.
SOCIAL PARTICIPATION	WE ENVISION... ...an Age-Friendly Orlando with a wide array of affordable, equitable, and accessible social, recreational, and cultural opportunities for older adults.
COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SYSTEMS	WE ENVISION... ...an Age-Friendly Orlando that offers affordable, person-centered health care and supportive social services which promote active and independent living. ...an Age-Friendly Orlando that recognizes the special needs of our community living with dementia, their family and caregivers, and that creates supportive communities which promote an enhanced quality of life.
COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION	WE ENVISION... ...an Age-Friendly Orlando in which an effective communication system reaches and engages community members of all ages, including older adults.

Call to Action

This *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan* has identified significant challenges for all of us – residents, public agencies, the private sector, nonprofit service providers, and cultural institutions. But it also gives us opportunities to transform the way we think about aging. Quite simply, our goal is to make the Orlando community a place to live better for longer, and for our city to be more accessible for everyone. In the next four years, our initiative will focus on improving the built and social environment to equitably enhance the lives of Orlando residents of all ages.

INTRODUCTION



Artwork created by an **Art's the Spark** participant, a program offered by the Orlando Museum of Art for those living with memory or neurological impairments, such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

THE WISDOM OF INNOCENCE

By Lynda Hope Swenk

(College Park – Orlando, Florida)

He giggled, the two-year-old toying with water,
Engaging me with eyes full of innocent wonder.

I am here and now, immersed in his laughter;
Gazing into his soul his presence I ponder.

They say wisdom comes with age.

Time and experience are the tutors.

Yet here a two-year-old has me engaged.

Water and laughter are the lures
That magnetically draw me into the infinite,
Calming me and exciting me all at one time.

I hear, I see, I perceive as I sit
With a wise toddler wordlessly teaching me in my prime.

Poem written as part of the 2021 Words & Wisdom Poetry Contest.

Introduction

Our community should work well for people of all ages, from the small child playing on the swing set at the newly renovated Grand Avenue Park to the grandparents who are joyfully watching over her. We need to ensure that our public realm supports the needs of older teens participating in Orlando's Kidz Zone activities in Parramore, Holden Heights, Mercy Drive, and Engelwood by providing facilities such as the Westmoreland Bike Trail, as well as older adults swimming laps or participating in water aerobics at the Colonialtown Neighborhood Center and College Park Community Center & Pool. We need to make sure that our community is safe, connected, and beautiful, one that respects young parents pushing their children in strollers as well as older adults using those very same sidewalks in neighborhoods throughout the city to maintain their heart health and to increase their longevity and ability to age in place. We need to ensure that walking paths and recreational amenities at our community and neighborhood parks serve people of all ages, and that programming at our senior centers and community centers throughout Orlando remains robust.

The Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Initiative brings people of all ages together to rethink how our diverse neighborhoods are designed and built and to take action to make them more livable, inclusive, equitable, and respectful of every generation. We must carefully consider how land development, urban design, and engineering regulations impact the built environment and focus on the needs of people of all ages as we go about our daily lives. We must understand what kind of training we need to secure the jobs and volunteer opportunities we want as we age. All in all, there is a tremendous amount of work to do as our community's age demographics shift. We recognize that meeting the needs of our older population comes with challenges and opportunities. As more of our residents live longer lives, we know that our city has a new, growing resource – people with lived experience, career expertise, diverse skills and interests, and even buying power. We must take advantage of the collective wisdom of our older adults, to come together and to ensure continued opportunities for all.

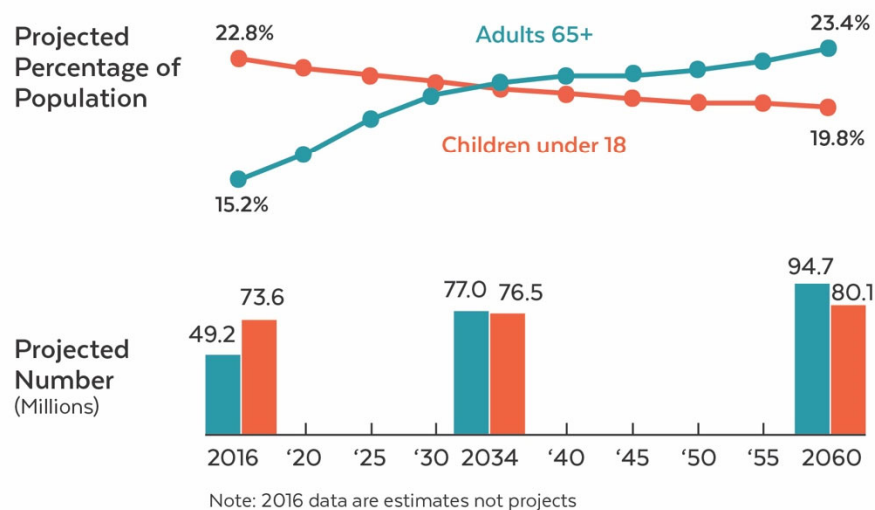
With increased longevity comes a human desire for a healthy lifestyle including social engagement, cultural and educational enrichment, and physical activity all within a functional, safe, and beautiful public realm. We know that there will be an increased demand for all manner of resources to help meet those desires over the next decade as Baby Boomers fully or partially retire and redirect their time and varied interests to age well. With a rapidly growing older population, we believe there is no better time than now to embark on creating a more livable and age-friendly Orlando.

Demographic Trends

We understand that the population in the United States, Florida, and Orlando are all growing older. According to the U.S. Census, by 2030, one of every five people in the nation will be 65 years of age or older. And by 2035 – for the first time in U.S. history – older adults are projected to outnumber children under 18.



For the first time in U.S. history, older adults are projected to outnumber children by 2034



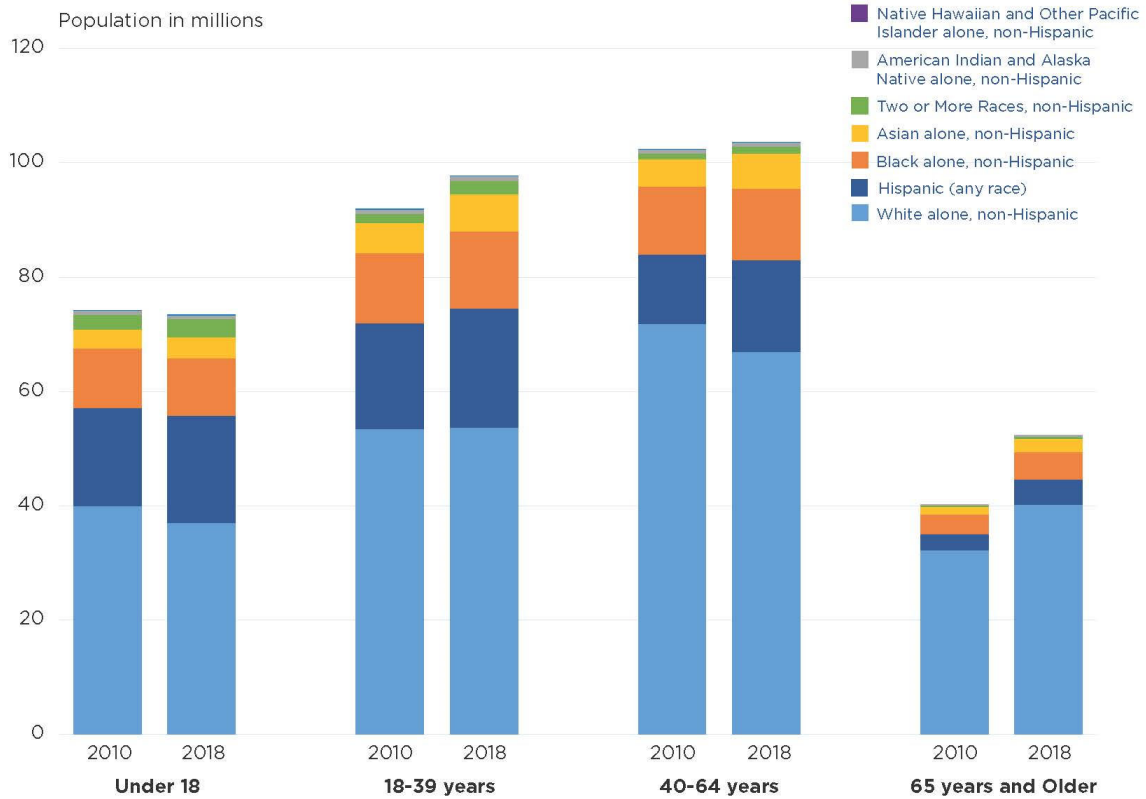
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

Source: National Population Projects, 2017
[census.gov/programs-surveys/popproj.html](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popproj.html)

We are also becoming a more diverse nation in every age group – in percentage terms, the highest growth has been in the Hispanic population. Much of this trend is related to the Baby Boomer generation which consists of people born following World War II and continuing into the mid-1960's. In addition to being the largest generation in the history of the U.S., Baby Boomers are living longer lives and experiencing longer retirements than previous generations.

A More Diverse Nation

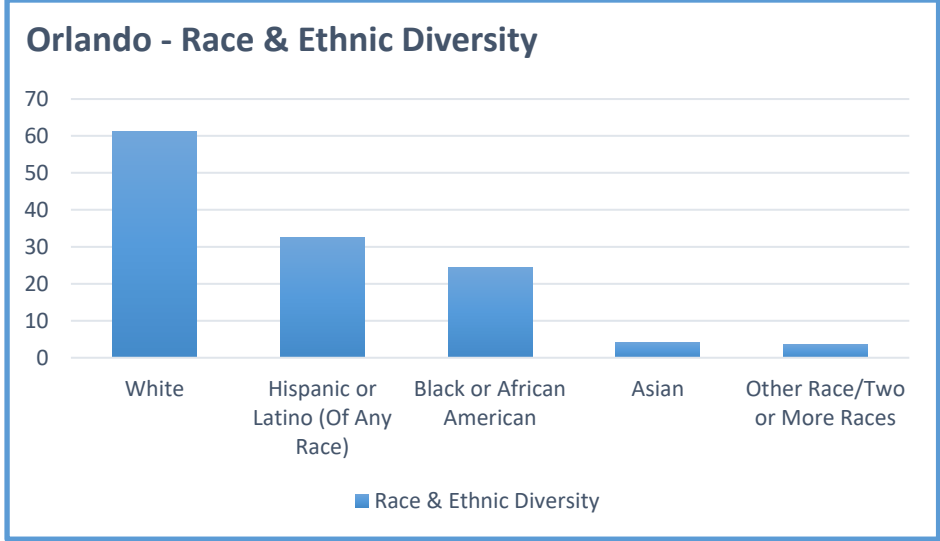
Distribution of Race and Hispanic Origin by Age Groups



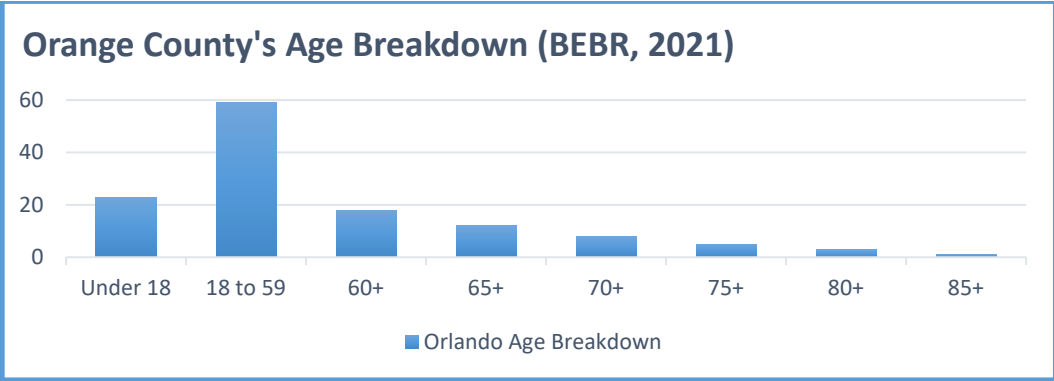
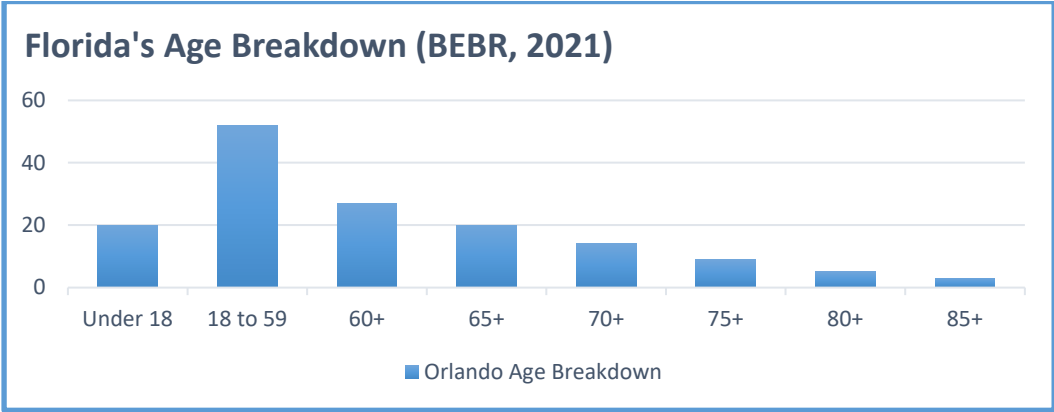

 U.S. Department of Commerce
 Economics and Statistics Administration
 U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

Source: Vintage 2018 Population Estimates
www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest.html

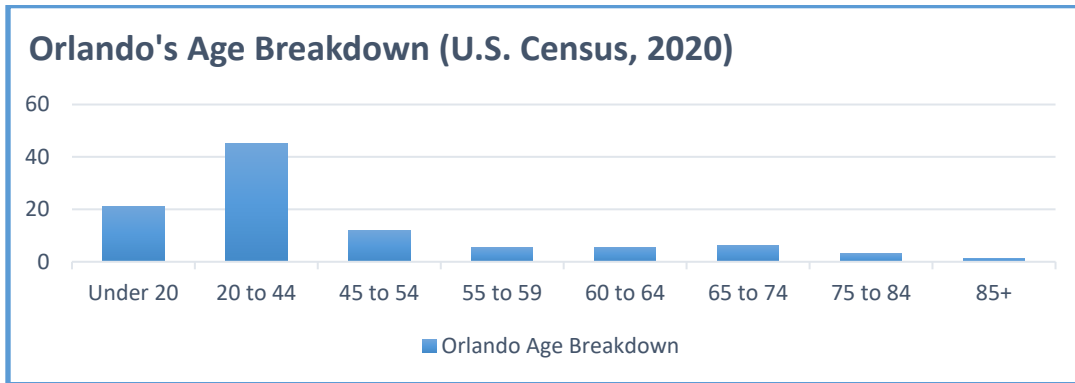
According to the 2020 US Census, Orlando’s resident population was estimated to be 307,573. In terms of race and ethnic diversity, Orlando is approximately 61.3% white, 24.5% black or African American, and 4.2% Asian, with 33% being of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity (of any race).



According to the Florida Department of Elder Affairs' 2021 Profile of Older Floridians, 20% of Florida's population is aged 65+, while 12% of Orange County's population is over the age of 65. Orlando's 65+ population is slightly lower at 10.2% (source of data from the Bureau of Economic & Business Research, University of Florida).

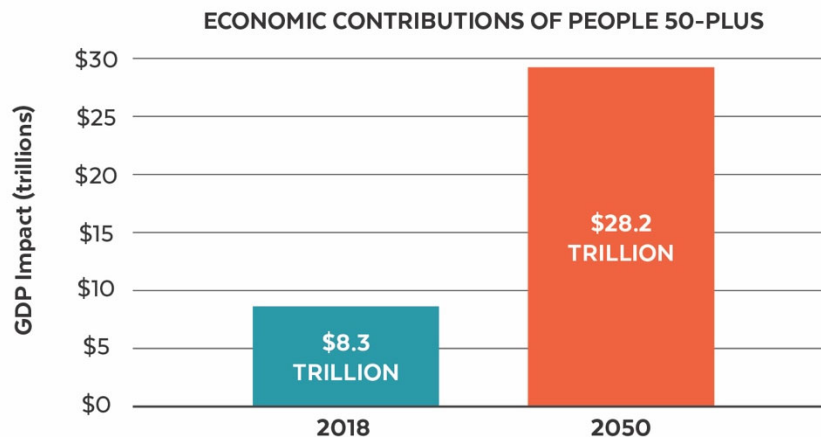


The US Census estimates that there are approximately 31,372 people aged 65+ in the City of Orlando. Like the rest of the nation, Orlando’s population is growing older with the percentage of those 65+ having increased 1.4% since 2010 (from 8.8% in 2010 to 10.2% in 2020). It should be noted that Orlando does have a relatively low median age of 33.9.



The Economics of Longevity

According to AARP’s Longevity Economy Outlook report (2019), as people live longer and healthier lives, they are contributing to communities and fueling economic wealth well past the traditional retirement age. Americans 50+ contributed over \$8 trillion to the national economy in 2018 and that number is only expected to grow. The 50+ population now represents five generations (from the Silent Generation to the Greatest Generation to Baby Boomers to Generation X) and by 2031 will include millions of Millennials. Generation Z will join the 50+ cohort in 2047.



The economic contributions of the 50-plus age group will grow from \$8.3 trillion in 2018 to \$28.2 trillion by 2050.

Source: AARP Longevity Economic Outlook (2019)

According to the Florida Department of Elder Affairs' Florida Action Plan on Aging (2021), Florida's older adults are significant contributors to the state's economy and are very active in local communities including Orlando. Older adults are staying employed longer and producing economic value for an extended period. They donate to charitable causes and contribute greatly to their communities by volunteering in local programs and services such as libraries, schools, community-service organizations, museums, theater groups, and art galleries. The total economic contribution of older adults accounts for up to 54% of the State's Gross Domestic Product or \$478 billion. We will be exploring the profound impacts of increased longevity – not only economic but social as well – throughout this action plan.

Equity, Inclusion, and the Age-Friendly Lens

The age-friendly lens recognizes that many of us want the same things – to live in safe, affordable places where it's easy to get around. We want to live in proximity to shops and businesses that we support and appreciate, as well as to the family and friends we love. We want to participate in life to the fullest by doing the things that interest us. Unfortunately, our communities aren't necessarily built for us to all have the same things across our lifetimes. Crossing the street or finding a part-time job may be exponentially more difficult for an 80-year-old than a 28-year-old for many reasons including ageism. The age-friendly lens inspires us to view this as an equity issue, and to rethink how to welcome every generation to be part of the community, regardless of ability, and share their inherent strengths however they choose.

According to the book **Restorative Cities: Urban Design for Mental Health and Wellbeing**, by Jenny Roe & Layla McCay, historical urban planning and design focused on developing environments targeted towards the needs and characteristics of ethnic-majority, able-bodied, working-age men. The authors emphasize that key demographics should be considered in all aspects of urban planning and design, including all ages, genders, races and ethnicities, sexual orientations, socioeconomic strata, and the full diversity of physical, sensory and cognitive abilities and needs. Roe & McCay note that urban design can affect people's self-esteem, dignity, independence and mental health, as well as their ability to access the full range of a city's educational, economic, social, cultural and health opportunities. The authors state that there are two main ways in which cities can achieve more inclusivity; by attracting people to mixed-income, mixed-age neighborhoods offering good-quality housing, facilities, amenities and opportunities, and by making planning and design decisions that recognize the needs and characteristics of all residents, not just those with the socioeconomic resources to ensure their needs are met. Roe & McCay emphasize that the involvement of diverse demographic groups in every stage of planning and development can help deliver inclusive urban design that enables

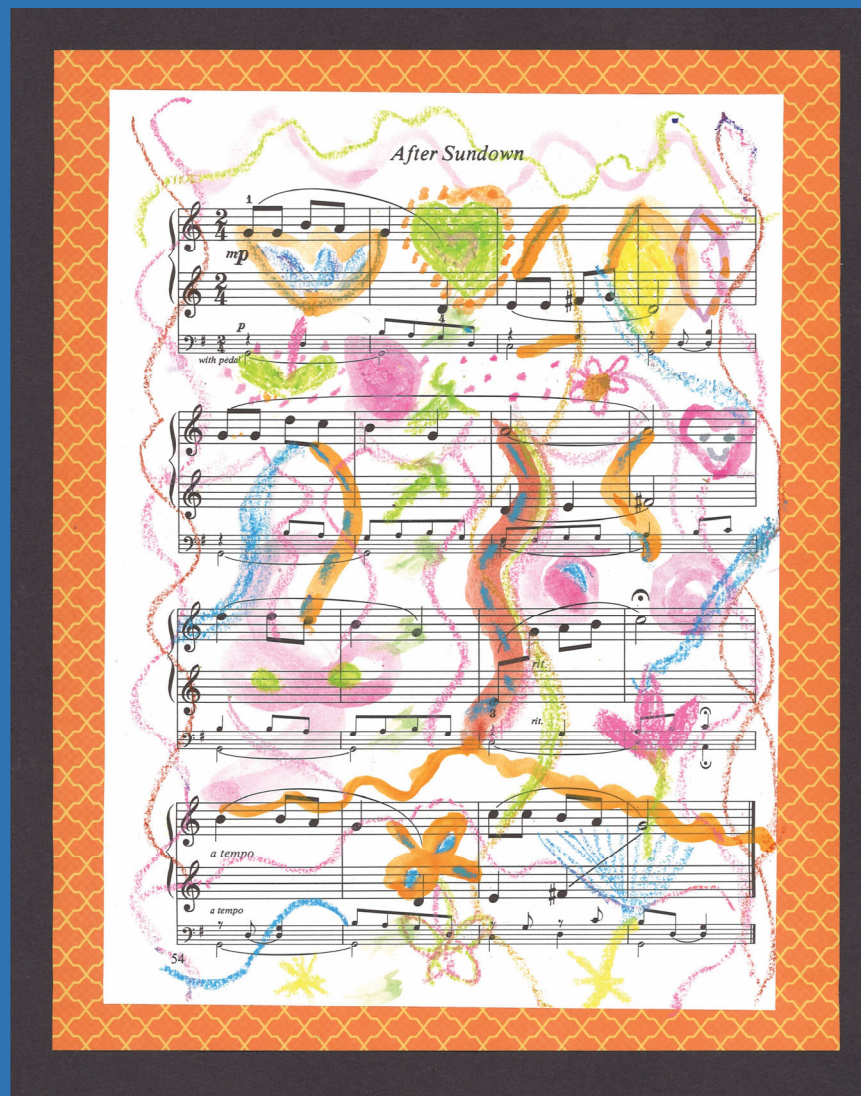
the whole community to thrive, and that applying the principles of the child- and age-friendly city can deliver inclusive urban planning and design for the whole population.

We believe that older adults of all races and ethnicities should be active participants in planning processes and in implementation. It is important to understand what they think and to engage them in developing solutions. Engaging older adults is extremely important because they know best about the needs and challenges they face on a daily basis. Older adults' participation not only helps in the decision-making process, but it also empowers them to contribute to society, stay socially connected, and work towards the betterment of their own communities and lives. The information obtained by engaging older adults provides a fundamental understanding of what policy attributes are needed to create an age-friendly community that fosters active and healthy aging. Policy recommendations and changes are paramount to implementing and maintaining the changes older adults need to age in place. Current and proposed new policies should be reviewed and crafted to ensure that older adults' needs are considered and modified to include any that are not.

According to an AARP Public Policy Institute report on What Is Livable (2014), nearly 90% of Americans want to age in place. We understand "place" means more than the confines of a home. It means all that a community has to offer – structural elements like streets, transit, buildings, and parks (the built environment) as well as rich, fulfilling experiences and relationships (the social environment). The purpose of this Action Plan is to consider new ways to improve our "place" for everyone. After all, a crosswalk that works better for a person using a wheelchair works better for someone pushing a stroller or lugging home grocery bags. In the next three years, our initiative will focus on improving the built and social environment to enhance the lives of Orlando residents of all ages.

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OUR PROCESS



Artwork created by an **Art's the Spark** participant, a program offered by the Orlando Museum of Art for those living with memory or neurological impairments, such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

HUNGER

By Lissa Pompos Mansfield

(Audubon Park – Orlando, Florida)

On the drive to school, mom turns down the volume of the radio.
She tells me a story. Grief sits at the base of her throat.
Her words are measured, heavy, and full: of meaning, memory, and regret.
I shrink in my seat and whisper “Why are you telling me this?”
She sighs and shimmies, straightens up to her full height.
“Learn from my mistakes so you don’t make the same ones.”
I digest this. She has portioned out her pain into bite-sized bits.
She lays the lessons before me, each an offering.
My mind is sated, but my belly growls.
I have not yet tasted risk. My throat thirsts for experience.
My eyes crave freedom.
Years later, I will tell my daughter of my own failures, mistakes, regrets.
I will repeat my mother’s words and add my own offering:
I am not wise, but I am listening. I am not wise, but I am learning.

Poem written as part of the 2021 Words & Wisdom Poetry Contest.

Our Process

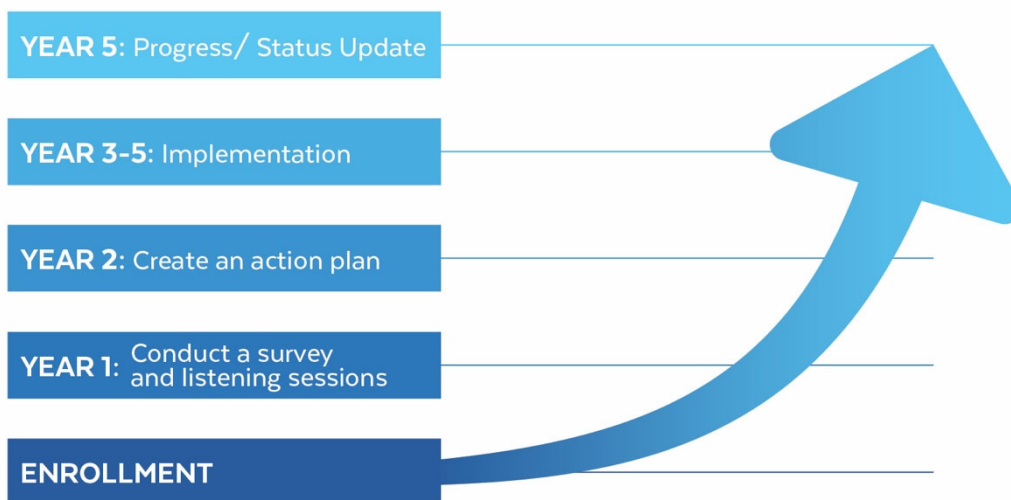
Understanding the Age-Friendly Framework

On October 28, 2019, the City of Orlando officially enrolled in AARP's Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities which is the United States affiliate of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Program, an international effort launched in 2006 to help cities prepare for rapid population aging and the parallel trend of urbanization. The WHO program has more than 20 nations, as well as 10 affiliates representing more than 1,000 communities around the globe.



Mayor Buddy Dyer, Commissioner Robert Stuart (District 3), State House Representative Anna Eskamani (District 47), Jeanne Curtin (Florida Department of Elder Affairs-Director of Livable Communities), Jeff Johnson (AARP Florida State Director), and members of the Mayor's Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging (Mayor Beardall Senior Center).

As of May 2022, there are nine states (including Florida), one territory (U.S. Virgin Islands), and over 657 communities (including Orlando and Orange County) participating in the network. To put things into perspective, approximately 100 million people live in a town, city, county, territory, or state that has enrolled in the network. **But joining the network is only the beginning of the process, not the end!**



As a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, Orlando has committed to a five-year process including conducting a community livability assessment to determine our city’s age-friendliness, to develop an action plan based on its findings, and to implement age-friendly initiatives.

Mayor’s Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer charged his previously constituted Committee on Aging to help lead our community through this important process. Committee members include representatives from various community non-profit organizations, businesses, and institutions who are subject area experts in various fields related to aging, including the Senior Resource Alliance (Area Agency on Aging), Seniors First, Inc., AARP Florida, the Orlando Senior Health Network, Orlando Health, and the University of Central Florida, as well as community activists and residents. One of the group’s first actions was to collectively rename the committee to better align with their enhanced mission – the Mayor’s Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging.

The committee has provided invaluable input throughout the two-year community engagement and planning process as we assessed our community and delved into a series of livability issues associated with both the built environment and the social environment. The result of all that work is a *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan* that provides policy and program recommendations for the Mayor and City Council to consider, including recommendations for building and strengthening partnerships as we recognize that city government cannot necessarily do everything by itself – we need our entire community engaged – after all, we are all getting older and we need to take care of each other.

Understanding the 8 Domains of Livability

The World Health Organization (WHO) developed a framework with 8 Domains of Livability. Acknowledging variability in the preferences and experiences of people as they age across cultures, this framework encourages communities to identify their own priorities within each domain. AARP and the Florida Department of Elder Affairs through their Livable Florida program also utilize these 8 Domains of Livability in their age-friendly work, which can be further defined as the “built environment” and the “social environment”.

The built environment refers to human-made space that encompasses the physical aspects of where we live and work including elements such as neighborhoods, buildings, parks, pedestrian infrastructure, land use patterns, the way houses are built, and the transportation systems that connect all of them together. The social environment is generally defined as the social setting people live in and involves many aspects of our daily lives. The built environment and the social environment are inextricably linked.

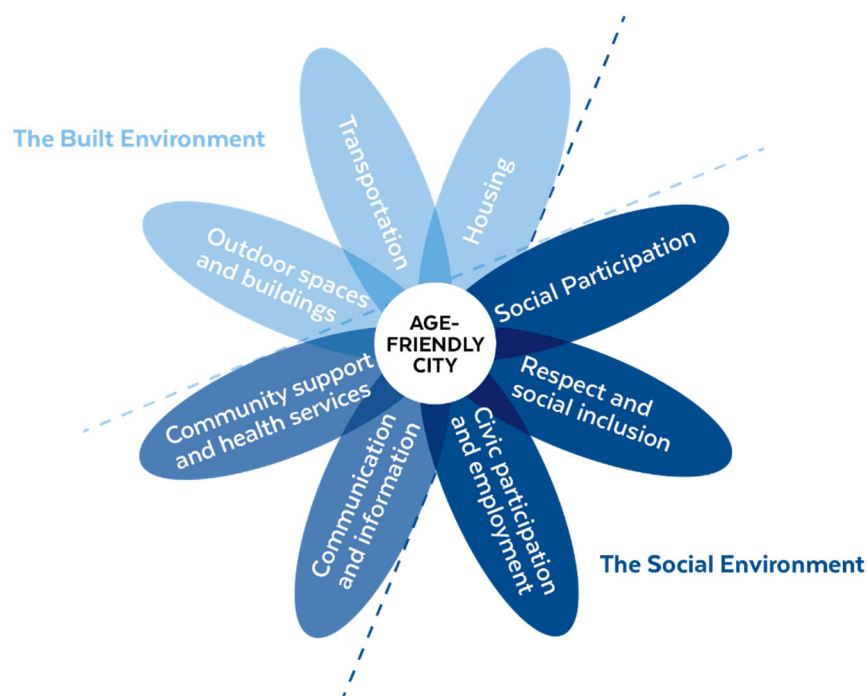
The 8 Domains of Livability are as follows:

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- 1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings.** Age-friendly outdoor spaces and parks are those that are clean and pleasant with green spaces and outdoor seating with shade, pedestrian infrastructure that includes well maintained and unobstructed sidewalks, appropriate curbs to accommodate wheelchairs, and pedestrian crossings that allow enough time for older adults to safely cross among other features. Additionally, the buildings and businesses within them should be similarly secure, welcoming, and accessible for people of all ages and abilities.
- 2. Housing.** An age-friendly city must have housing that is affordable, accessible, located in safe neighborhoods, and in close proximity to businesses and services in the community. In addition, housing that is near public transit or has links to public transit make it easier for people of all ages to live in and get around. Further, accessible housing that meets the needs of older adults and people with disabilities should be provided.
- 3. Transportation (Mobility).** Because mobility declines with aging, there is an obligation and need for us to ensure safe mobility for life so that people are able to stay connected. We recognize that an age-friendly city must have reliable transportation options (complete streets, efficient transit, well-designed sidewalks, etc.), and all areas and services in a community need to be accessible by public transit and be designed and/or adapted to accommodate people living with disabilities. The availability of different mobility options within our transportation network is critically important to meet the needs of older adults.

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

4. **Civic Participation and Employment.** The availability of meaningful and varied employment, volunteering, and training program opportunities tailored to older adults is also key to an age-friendly city. The input of older adults should be included in the decision-making process for all aspects and areas of the community.
5. **Respect and Social Inclusion.** An age-friendly city promotes awareness and understands the value of older adults. Similar to domain #4, older adults should be included in the decision-making in both private and public sectors to effectively meet their needs.
6. **Social Participation.** An age-friendly city should have affordable and conveniently located events, activities, and opportunity for social engagement tailored to all ages, including older adults.
7. **Community Support and Health Services.** In order to meet the needs of older adults, an age-friendly city needs to provide adequate access to all levels of health care and offer services that promote, maintain, and restore health. Community support including delivery of services, social services, and widespread information and resources for emergency planning is vital to older adults.
8. **Communication and Information.** In an age-friendly city, it is important to have continued and widespread distribution of information, therefore an efficient communication system needs to be in place to reach all individuals and effectively inform residents of the services, programs, and resources available in the community.



Source: *The 8 Domains of Livability from the World Health Organization's report, Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide (2007).*

Developing Our Action Plan

The *Livable Orlando: An Age-Friendly Initiative Action Plan* is the culmination of over two years of community engagement and planning, which was certainly made more challenging during the Covid-19 pandemic. We completed the following actions to create this Action Plan:

- **Data & Analysis** – We conducted a deep dive into data and research from many sources to better understand the needs of our community, including:
 - AARP Livability Index scores for Orlando;
 - 500 Cities Project data, which is a collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation;
 - Florida Department of Health in Orange County data including the Community Health Improvement Plan 2021-2025, or CHIP;
 - Florida Department of Elder Affairs (FDEA) documents including County Demographic Profiles & Statistics, the Florida State Plan on Aging 2022-2025, and the Florida Action Plan on Aging (2021);
 - International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Planning For All Ages survey data (2013 & 2019);
 - Central Florida Foundation Table Talks data (2019);
 - Orlando’s Future-Ready City online survey data (2020); and
 - MetroPlan Orlando Health Strategic Plan public opinion research (2021).

- **Intersecting Initiatives** – We identified the various plans and documents that inform our age-friendly work and which we hope to influence in turn, specifically in terms of public policy, including:
 - Florida State Plan on Aging 2022-2025 – Florida Department of Elder Affairs
 - Florida Action Plan on Aging (2021) – Florida Department of Elder Affairs, Livable Florida, and AARP Florida
 - City of Orlando Growth Management Plan & Land Development Code
 - Green Works Orlando Community Action Plan (Sustainability/Resiliency)
 - Orlando Future-Ready City Master Plan
 - Orlando Parks Master Plan
 - Downtown Master Plan (Project DTO 2.0)
 - Complete Streets Strategy
 - Orlando Transportation Guidelines
 - Vision Zero Orlando Action Plan
 - Regional Affordable Housing Initiative
 - Orange County Housing For All – 10-Year Action Plan
 - MetroPlan Orlando’s 2022 Health Strategic Plan

- Community Engagement** – We participated in 30+ neighborhood and community events to listen and seek input into the action plan, to obtain survey responses, and to educate the public on our age-friendly initiative. These sessions included the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) Orlando’s Rethinking the City series, the Motown Goes Gospel senior event, the Mayor’s Neighborhood & Community Summit, American Institute of Architects (AIA) Orlando’s Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, seven (7) Future Ready City Master Plan community meetings, the Orange County Commission on Aging’s Community Partnership Committee, LIFE Information for Elders series (virtual webinar), the Municipal Planning Board, neighborhood meetings, AARP Community Challenge Grant – Tables of Connection related events, and an age-friendly focused poetry contest that we’ll highlight later in this document.



Coffee & Conversations with US Administrator & Assistant Secretary of Aging Lance Robertson and Florida Secretary of Elder Affairs Richard Prudom – November 14, 2019 (Senior Resource Alliance event with President and CEO Karla Radka, sponsored by AARP)



Motown Goes Gospel Senior Event – Dr. James R. Smith Neighborhood Center – February 20, 2020.

- **Listen and Gather Feedback** – We conducted an age-friendly community livability survey and received 1,226 responses, with 1,003 of those being people 45+ in age. Based on the City’s resident population when we conducted the survey of 298,362, we were hoping to receive at least 1,000 responses overall and at least 800 from people 45+, so we were able to exceed those goals. We made a concerted effort to obtain both online and in-person responses with our Families, Parks & Recreation staff distributing flyers and paper surveys to senior towers in Downtown Orlando, recreation centers and senior centers particularly those with senior programs; 200+ paper survey responses were received. We will be highlighting the results of the survey throughout this Action Plan and a summary of the survey responses can be found in Appendix B.



The City of Orlando invites you to take our
Age-Friendly Community Survey

All residents age 45+ are encouraged to take this comprehensive survey to tell us how we can make Orlando a more livable and age-friendly city.

To take the survey and get more information, visit orlando.gov/agefriendly.



Action Plan Structure

The City of Orlando, in collaboration with a variety of community partners, will take specific actions to achieve our goals and guiding principles related to each of the 8 Domains of Livability (and further defined by the built environment and social environment). The collective “we” statements used in this *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan* represent both City departments and the potential partners vital to the implementation of these action items. Each domain is further organized into the following sections:

WE ENVISION...includes overarching goal statements relative to each domain. These statements represent how Orlando can be shaped to be more inclusive and supportive of older adults.

WE HEARD...describes the results of our community needs assessment (including the age-friendly community livability survey) that informed the action plan process, and subsequently, the action items that are presented in this document. All quotations in this section come from Orlando residents who provided write-in responses to one of the open-ended survey questions.

WE ARE...outlines initiatives, programs, or partnerships that the City of Orlando is already participating in that encourage age-friendliness.

TOGETHER, WE WILL...lays out a set of additional recommended action items for each domain. This section includes both the broad theme of action as well as the individual steps necessary to address each theme.

CREATING AN AGE-FRIENDLY BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Artwork created by an **Art's the Spark** participant, a program offered by the Orlando Museum of Art for those living with memory or neurological impairments, such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF WISDOM

By Diane Neff

(Longwood, Florida)

This is what I know about wisdom:
That a tomato is a fruit, but it doesn't
Belong in a salad with bananas and grapes.
It's about how we apply knowledge,
And which data we choose. Maybe
That tomato is just a trigger for a laugh,
A random thought, a question,
Or maybe it makes us redefine what we mean.
What is wisdom, besides the history of events
Interpreted through our eyes?
What is life, beyond how we live it?
What is wisdom, and how do we know it?

Poem written as part of the 2021 Words & Wisdom Poetry Contest.

Creating An Age-Friendly Built Environment

Understanding the Built Environment

The built environment refers to human-made space that allows for daily living within a community, encompassing all the physical aspects of where we live and work including elements like neighborhoods, buildings, parks, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, land use patterns, the way houses are built, and the transportation/mobility systems that connect those elements together. How the built environment is planned and designed has a direct impact on peoples' quality of life and associated health outcomes for those very same people. Rapid growth and urban sprawl can lead to a poorly designed built environment, which can directly impact the health of the population. Conversely, cities and neighborhoods that are planned and designed to encourage all modes of transportation/mobility will lead to enhanced opportunities for physical activity and social interaction. For purposes of this age-friendly action plan, the built environment focuses on the following three Domains of Livability: outdoor spaces & buildings, housing, and transportation (or more appropriately, mobility).

Outdoors Spaces & Buildings

WE ENVISION...

...an Age-Friendly Orlando where older adults can safely, easily, and comfortably access the natural and built environment, including parks, greenspaces, trails, and sidewalks, as well as public buildings.

...an Age-Friendly Orlando where older adults can improve their health and longevity by encouraging active lifestyles including participation in meaningful recreational and cultural activities.

WE HEARD...

- Orlando's older adults value parks and open space.
- According to our Age-Friendly Community Livability Survey, 92% of respondents feel that it's important for our public parks to be located within walking distance of their homes.

"I LOVE ALL THE PARKS IN ORLANDO. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOME CREATIVE ADDITIONS LIKE TALKING BENCHES OR ART INSTALLATIONS, OR WATER FEATURES." – ORLANDO RESIDENT

- 96% of survey respondents think it's important to have accessible public buildings.
- 74% of survey respondents say they feel safe in their neighborhoods.
- Many older Orlando residents want better accessibility features in public areas – some, including those with disabilities, feel unsafe and/or uncomfortable going to parks.

WE ARE...

Improving City Parks. There are well over 100 community and neighborhood parks totaling over 2,058 acres located throughout the City of Orlando. Our Families, Parks, and Recreation Department (FPR) currently has over \$50 million of recreation projects under construction with funding from a bond issued for this purpose in 2019. Among these projects are the former Grand Avenue School site (highlighted below), Packing District Park, Rosemont Neighborhood Center gymnasium, and Lake Lorna Doone Park renovation.

SPOTLIGHT: GRAND AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER & PARK

Through a land swap with Orange County Public Schools, the City obtained the recently retired Grand Avenue Elementary School building and grounds. The beautiful historic school building was slated for demolition much to the dismay of the surrounding community but the City acquired the site and decided to renovate and expand the original footprint, with input from historic preservationists. The programming from the Downtown Recreation Center, which is scheduled to be vacated due to redevelopment, is being relocated into the newly renovated and expanded Grand Avenue Neighborhood Center building. This \$17 million project includes the renovation and adaptive reuse of the existing historic building but also includes a new gymnasium and locker rooms, offices for staff, a teen room, game room, classrooms for educational programs, a computer room, a recording studio, and expanded arts wing where Orlando's Pottery Studio will move and plenty of storage space.



Grand Avenue Neighborhood Center



Grand Avenue Park

Grand Avenue Park, which surrounds the neighborhood center, has also been improved to include age-friendly amenities including playgrounds for children of different age groups, a musical instrument garden, and an ADA-accessible all-ages exercise equipment area with shade structure – so important in the hot climate of Central Florida.

The playground, musical instrument garden, and adult exercise areas are all in close proximity with shaded seating areas designed specifically to allow parents and grandparents to watch their children and grandchildren as they play and as they enjoy the park amenities themselves.



Grand Avenue Park – Adult Exercise Equipment



Grand Avenue Park – Musical Instrument Garden



Grand Avenue Park – Tot Lot and Playground

Funding Park Improvements and Planning for the Future. In 2016, Orlando adopted a Parks Impact Fee which provides a dedicated funding source for the acquisition and development of new parks and the renovation of existing parks and amenities throughout the city. The Park Impact Fee has collected approximately \$10.5 million through 2021, and funds will be used on projects that increase the capacity of the city park system as identified in the City of Orlando Families, Parks and Recreation (FPR) Vision Plan (2010) and subsequent update anticipated to be complete by year-end 2022.

FPR enlisted GAI Consultants, Inc. to create an updated Parks Master Plan. Funds from the Park Impact Fee were allocated to conduct an existing conditions analysis including new demographic and population information as well as the creation of a statistically valid survey (both paper and web-based, in English and Spanish) to provide feedback on the existing park system, how residents use our parks, and what improvements they would like to see in the future, taking equity in location and amenities into account. The existing conditions analysis also catalogs the nature and location of all recreation programs operated and/or facilitated by FPR, and evaluates and documents existing conditions of all the City's parks and recreation centers. The Phase 1 analysis of the Parks Master Plan process was completed in 2021, and Phase 2 should be complete by the end of 2022.

The Parks Master Plan Update examines how best to create an optimal network of high-performing green spaces, defining a network of Complete Streets, Green Streets, and Trails. The Parks Master Plan will also include a level of service analysis using a new set of metrics and thresholds, including walk-time service area analyses for each park and facility (e.g. 10-minute walk), using existing transportation network infrastructure to determine real-world accessibility and shown graphically to illustrate City-wide coverage and gaps. Each park and facility will be given an LOS (level of service) score which can be graphically integrated with the service areas through a color scale (e.g. red, yellow, green), and then studied to see if its access can be improved. Finally, the report will graphically show links and gaps in connectivity between parks, community centers, and surrounding neighborhoods.

We anticipate that the analysis and recommendations of the Parks Master Plan Update will ultimately lead to amendments to the adopted LOS standards and guidelines specified in the Growth Management Plan (GMP) – Recreation Element. We estimate that the Parks Master Plan Update will be completed by the end of calendar year 2022. Potential GMP amendments could follow in 2023.

SPOTLIGHT: 8 80 LENS WEBINAR SERIES

On October 5 and October 28, 2020, the City of Orlando and AARP Florida teamed up with 8 80 Cities, a nonprofit organization out of Toronto, Canada that focuses on mobility & public spaces to explore ways to enhance Orlando’s parks as age-friendly destinations. The webinars had several learning and doing objectives, including: 1) learning the key ingredients that make up age-friendly cities, streets, parks, plazas, and public spaces; 2) exploring the benefits of equitable and inclusive park design and management that considers the needs of all residents; and 3) identifying existing community assets and opportunities in Orlando for age-friendly park and place-making initiatives. Participants included staff from the Families, Parks, and Recreation, Economic Development, and Transportation Departments, members of the GAI Consultants team working on the Parks Master Plan update, and members of the Mayor’s Committee on Livability and Healthy Aging. The discussions were lively and informed both this action plan and the Parks Master Plan Update.



Creating Community Gardens and Urban Farming Programs. The City of Orlando is home to more than 700 Community Garden plots according to the 2018 Green Works Community Action Plan, and the number of garden plots continues to grow in innovative ways. Under the motto “grow food, not lawns”, a local non-profit, IDEAS For Us, started the nationally recognized Fleet Farming urban farming program. In strategic neighborhoods throughout Orlando, local volunteers plant and maintain garden beds in participating residents’ front lawns. Produce grown in these lawns is harvested and sold at local farmers markets and restaurants, as well as

donated to the hosting home. In what has been termed a “swarm ride”, volunteers meet at the different farm plots via bicycle, creating a sustainable model for the transport of food. This model of urban agriculture spurred the City to review and amend the Land Development Code to allow more local food production in resident’s front lawns, creating a showcase for the local food movement. We believe that encouraging gardening among older adults is important as it contributes to one’s well-being socially (e.g., interacting with other gardeners, with opportunities for intergenerational mentoring), physically (e.g., helping people meet their recommended activity levels), and culturally (ability to grow produce not commonly found in local stores).



Orlando Festival Park – Community Garden

TOGETHER, WE WILL...

Goal A.1 – Ensure that the needs and opinions of older adults are considered in park and open space planning and design.

- **Action Item A.1.1:** Create a system to engage surrounding neighborhood residents, including older adults, via surveys, community meetings, and other engagement methods throughout the park planning and design process.
- **Action Item A.1.2:** Develop a set of recommendations for age-friendly and dementia-friendly park features to use as a guideline when designing City-owned parks and greenspaces.
- **Action Item A.1.3:** Mitigate the effects of extreme heat on vulnerable populations such as older adults by providing shade trees in parks, open spaces and along roadways/paths, shade structures, and water/cooling amenities (e.g., splash pads, water fountains) in public parks, where practicable.

- **Action Item A.1.4:** Work with the Orlando Police Department (OPD) to educate older adults about how they can improve the safety of Orlando’s outdoor spaces including encouraging older adults to report problems or concerns and to participate in OPD Community Programs such as Neighborhood Watch Groups, the Citizen Observer Program, LGBTQ Safe Place, and National Night Out.

Goal A.2 – Improve the sense of place, comfort, and interconnectedness of communities by promoting culturally appropriate age-friendly amenities and events/activities.

- **Action Item A.2.1:** Promote more public art to create landmarks, to make areas more aesthetically pleasing, and to assist with wayfinding.
- **Action Item A.2.2:** Work with the Families, Parks & Recreation Department, Downtown Development Board/Community Redevelopment Agency, and Main Street Districts to promote age-friendly events that increase a sense of place and of safety.
- **Action Item A.2.3:** Explore the creation of an Age-Friendly/Dementia-Friendly Certification Program and/or Age-Friendly Business Tool Kit that would educate and assist businesses in better serving their customers, no matter their age or ability.
- **Action Item A.2.4:** Recognize and encourage grassroots efforts such as Dementia-Friendly Dining in Central Florida.

Goal A.3 – Encourage application of Universal Design principles to create an accessible and equitable built environment.

- **Action Item A.3.1:** Develop Universal Design principles/best practices that can be provided to developers, builders, homeowners, and business owners as part of the planning and permitting process.

Goal A.4 – Foster the creation and maintenance of community gardens and local food production to contribute to the physical, social, and cultural well-being of older adults.

- **Action Item A.4.1:** Through Green Works Orlando, continue to expand opportunities for people to learn how to garden and to develop opportunities that allow people to garden in their homes, apartments (e.g., balcony gardens), and neighborhoods (e.g., community gardening plots). As part of this effort, promote and educate people about composting including dissemination of Orlando’s Backyard Composting Guide.
- **Action Item A.4.2:** Create and disseminate guidelines on how to build raised beds gardens that appropriate for people living with mobility impairments (e.g., wheelchair users) and those who cannot bend or squat.
- **Action Item A.4.3:** Explore partnership opportunities with the Senior Resource Alliance, Seniors First, and/or other senior-serving nonprofits to create and maintain community gardens with and for older adults.

Housing

WE ENVISION...

...an Age-Friendly Orlando in which safe, appropriately designed housing options are available and affordable to older adults, including housing with services that help them age in place and to enjoy their home.

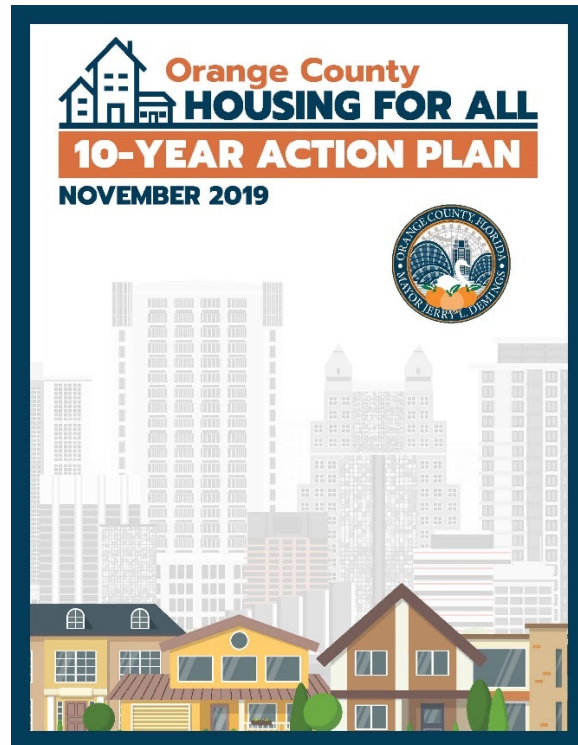
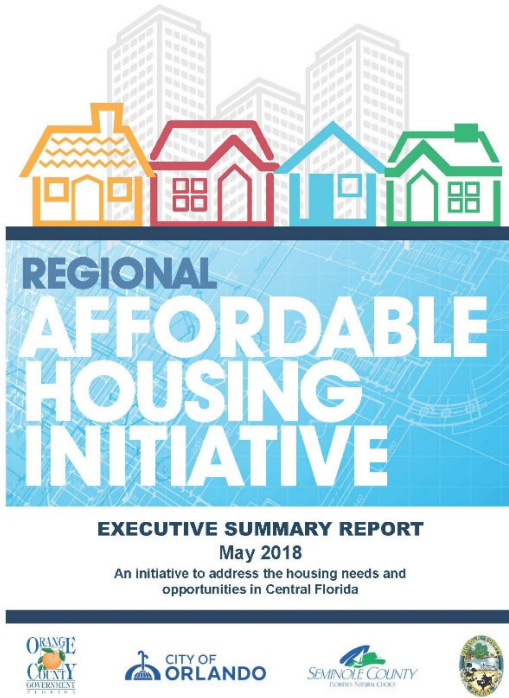
WE HEARD...

- Orlando's older adults want affordable housing options, including the ability to downsize, as well as housing with services.
- According to our Age-Friendly Community Livability Survey, 97% of respondents think it's important to live independently as they age, and the two factors they worry about most are lack of public transportation and housing affordability.
- More than half of survey respondents (53%) think it's likely they'll move to another home, but less than half (47%) think it's likely they'll be able to find an affordable home in the future.
- Orlando's older adults need help accessing affordable home maintenance services, so they can live safely in their homes.

"MY GREATEST CONCERN IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING AS I AGE. BEING ABLE TO MAINTAIN MY CURRENT HOME FOR AS LONG AS I AM PHYSICALLY ABLE TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY. THEN, BEING ABLE TO AFFORD TO LIVE IN A RETIREMENT COMMUNITY THAT PROVIDES ASSISTED LIVING AND PROGRESSES TO FULL TIME CARE WHEN NEEDED." – ORLANDO RESIDENT

WE ARE...

Building Partnerships to Create Affordable Housing. Between 2016 and 2018, Orange, Seminole, and Osceola County, as well as the City of Orlando participated in the Regional Affordable Housing Initiative. Three community workshops were held on May 19, 2017 (Identifying Areas for Affordable Housing in Central Florida), October 18, 2017 (Affordable Housing Design and Product Types), and April 11, 2018 (Regulatory and Financial Strategies for Increasing Affordable Housing Supply). The Initiative's partner organizations produced a final report in May 2018, and each local government has taken steps to implement the recommendations found in that report.



As an outgrowth of the Regional Affordable Housing Initiative, Orange County Government published the Orange County Housing For All 10-Year Action Plan which was approved by the Orange County Board of County Commissioners in December 2019. The 10-Year Action Plan addresses housing affordability and supply, and is focused on removing regulatory barriers, creating new financial resources, targeting areas of access and opportunity, as well as engaging the community and industry.



Orange County has instituted land development code amendments intended to make it easier to develop affordable housing. They have also created a Housing Trust Fund to create a substantial, local funding source for affordable funding (not dependent on Sadowski funds), and a revolving loan fund to provide nonprofit developers with access to low-interest loans for affordable housing construction. Orange County’s Housing Trust Fund has a 3-year budget of approximately \$33 million (FY 2020-2022).

Orlando has also actively sought to increase the supply of affordable housing through its CDBG/HOME programs, the Housing Department and Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency’s single family infill residential projects, and by participating in mixed-income projects such as Parramore Oaks. Parramore Oaks is a 211 unit mixed-income project (80% affordable; 20% market rate; 5% permanent supportive housing for the homeless, with wrap-around services. Phase 1 with 120 dwelling units opened in 2019, and Phase 2 with 91 dwelling units is fully financed and construction was underway in 2022 with completion anticipated in the 1st quarter of 2023.



Parramore Oaks (Downtown in Background)



Parramore Oaks – Townhome-style Apartments

In late 2018, the Central Florida Foundation, Inc. teamed up with local governments, the Florida Housing Coalition, and Bright Community Trust to establish the Central Florida Regional Housing Trust – now known as HOUSD. The land trust offers more affordable prices on housing for renters and buyers as areas around Orlando redevelop and property values increase.

Finally, the Regional Affordable Housing Initiative partners will participate in a nexus study to evaluate the feasibility of a “linkage fee” as an additional local funding source for affordable housing. A linkage fee is charged at the time of permitting for new non-residential construction. The cost is typically calculated per square foot. The funds raised are deposited into an affordable housing trust fund and used to facilitate construction of affordable housing. The “linkage”, or rational nexus for the fee, is based on the concept that new commercial

development creates jobs which in turn drive up demand for housing. In Central Florida, many new jobs are in low-wage sectors, disproportionately impacting demand for affordable housing. The nexus study review process is anticipated to begin in 2022.

Preserving Affordable Housing Through Rehabilitation. Orlando’s Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) administers local, state, and federal funds for housing and community development. HCD plans, develops, and implements programs and activities such as home ownership/down payment assistance, rental and owner-occupied housing rehabilitation, public facilities and improvements, and public services to the homeless, persons living with HIV/AIDS, and low-income City of Orlando residents. HCD receives and manages state and federal grants, including State Housing Initiatives Partnerships Program (SHIP), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). These programs fund the repair and rehabilitation of our housing stock and includes the Housing Rehabilitation Program, which assists existing homeowners including older adults with repairs to help reduce safety and health-related code violations.

The City and Orange County have also partnered with the Solar and Energy Loan Fund (SELF), whose mission is to provide access to affordable and inclusive financing for sustainable home improvements. SELF features special programs for people with disabilities to retrofit homes to include ramps, lift systems, widened doors, ceiling lift systems, bathroom modifications and home automation systems. SELF offers affordable, unsecured loans, with no tax or title lien that are based on the homeowner’s ability to pay. There is no minimum credit score to equity requirement. Interest rates are generally in the 5% to 11% range, for 3-10 years, with amounts up to \$25,000, and there are no dealer fees to contractors. 52% of participants are seniors.

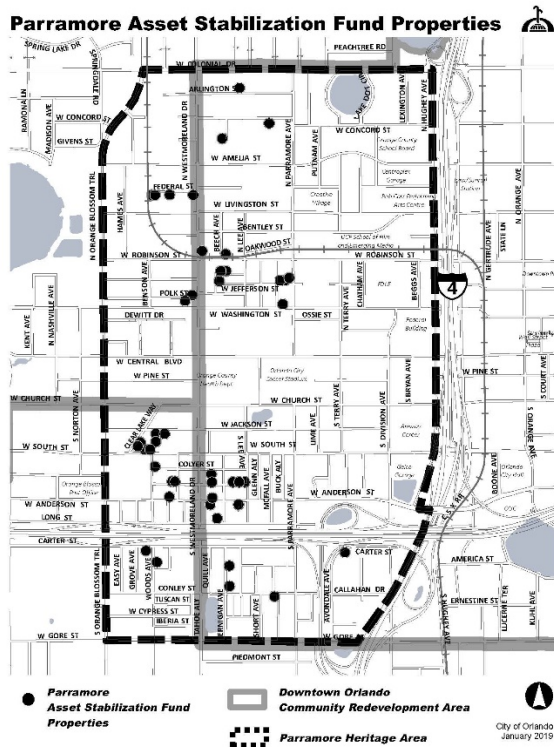


Orlando has also participated in a unique partnership designed to preserve affordable housing in the Parramore neighborhood. On February 18, 2019, the Orlando City Council approved a development agreement between the City, the CRA, Parramore Asset Stabilization Fund, LLC, and Central Florida Foundation, Inc.

The Parramore Asset Stabilization Fund, PASF, was formed to purchase scattered-site rental properties in Parramore in order to improve housing conditions and preserve long term affordability in the area. PASF is a collaboration between three strong nonprofit organizations with a focus on housing: Central Florida Foundation, Florida Community Loan Fund, and New Jersey Community Capital.

The agreement called for PASF to renovate 44 properties containing a total of 83 units in the Parramore area over a twelve-month period (properties transferred from the City to PASF), updating all units and bringing them into compliance with City Code.

The agreement provided \$250,000 in Downtown CRA funding to be used towards renovation costs for the properties in the CRA area, \$500,000 in City funding, as well as \$500,000 in Federal HOME funds to be used for the remaining properties. The improvements include the installation of new roofs, upgrades to heating & cooling systems, new flooring, kitchen and bath renovations, remediation of any toxic materials, and other energy-efficiency enhancements.



The agreement contains an affordability requirement, and restriction on sale, that the developer must adhere to for at least 10 years. At the end of the initial 10-year period, the developer may either maintain ownership of the properties (with an additional 10-year affordability period), or offer the properties for sale to the Central Florida Regional Housing Trust. If developer does not sell to the Trust, they will be offered to the City and/or Downtown CRA at appraised fair market value.

All renovations were completed in 2021.

We recognize that preserving affordable housing for our older adult residents is critical to our community’s livability. Baptist Terrace opened in 1969 as a 197-unit senior living community which was financed in a way that established affordability and age restrictions through 2021. After that, the building would no longer have limitations on rental rates or tenant outcomes and could have been purchased by a developer and turned into luxury condos.

Thanks to the power of partnership, our community has ensured this building remains true to its original vision and mission as affordable housing for older adults. Through our Downtown Orlando Community Redevelopment Agency, the City of Orlando provided \$1 million dollars to help the Orlando Neighborhood Improvement Corporation purchase and completely renovate the building, which has been renamed The Roberts. On March 31, 2022, our community celebrated this wonderful affordable housing preservation story with a ribbon cutting and re-dedication event that included Mayor Buddy Dyer, Commissioners Patty Sheehan and Robert Stuart, and Florida State Representative Anna V. Eskamani.



Reducing Obstacles to Develop Affordable Housing. In response to the affordable housing crisis being experienced in Central Florida, and in order to implement the recommendations of the afore-mentioned Regional Affordable Housing Initiative, the City of Orlando amended its Land Development Code (LDC) to make it easier to develop “missing middle” housing.



MissingMiddle-housing.com is powered by Opticos Design.
Illustration © 2015 Opticos Design, Inc. 

Specifically, in 2017 and 2018, Orlando amended the LDC to revise development standards to allow more efficient site planning to better fit in urban areas and to remove barriers to increasing housing variety:

- **Townhomes.** Amendments allowed administrative master plan review (rather than a board hearing) for projects of 3 to 100 units in size; reduced minimum lot size allowing joint use driveways and alleys to be placed on separate tracts rather than on individual lots, prohibited front-loaded units (for better appearance from the public realm), modified setbacks; and allowed townhomes to face a courtyard or street which provides for greater design flexibility.



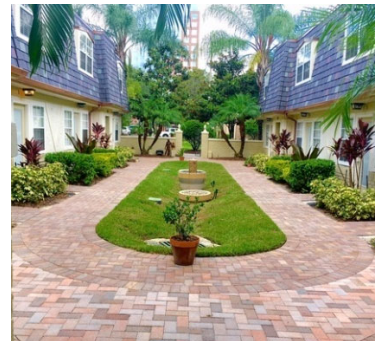
- **Multifamily.** Amendments established a qualitative delineation between types of one-bedroom units, studio units, and efficiency uses; updated parking standards to allow for and encourage development of small efficiency units with fully functioning and accessibility-compliant kitchens and bathrooms; better defined multiplex developments to address buildings of 3-8 dwelling units and expanded the number of zoning districts where such units are allowed while maintaining neighborhood compatibility.



Triplex



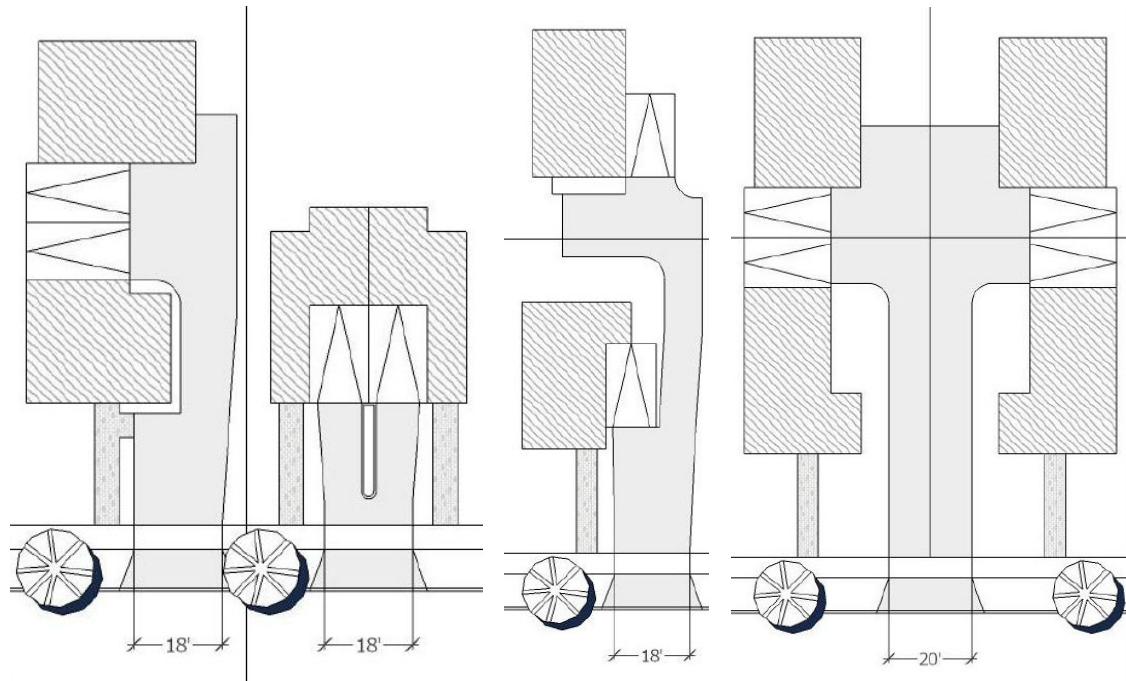
Quadplex



Walk-Up

- **Duplexes, Courthomes, and Tandem Single Family.** Amendments encouraged diversity in housing stock, rather than cookie-cutter development patterns, by requiring variety between adjacent lots and not allowing “mirror image” front-loaded duplexes; promoted

home ownership opportunities by allowing tandems in more locations, and allowing existing and new duplexes to be split into fee simple lots.



*Front-to-Back
Duplex*

Side-by-Side Duplex

Tandem

Courthome

- **Accessory Dwelling Units – ADU’s.** Amendments specifically recognized that ADUs encourage aging in place, allowing older adults to either live in their ADU or the main house and rent out the other unit; clarified requirements for ADUs and ultimately expanded the number of zoning districts where ADUs are allowed.



SPOTLIGHT: LIFT ORLANDO – PENDANA AT WEST LAKES + SENIOR RESIDENCES

Lift Orlando, which is part of the Purpose Built Communities network, has been working for the past 10 years to strengthen neighborhoods in the Communities of West Lakes (including the Lake Sunset, Lake Lorna Doone, Rock Lake, Clear Lake, and Clear Lake Cove neighborhoods). Lift Orlando, along with their partners (AdventHealth, Boys & Girls Club of Central Florida, and the City of Orlando) and resident leaders, focuses on four shared goals: Mixed-Income Housing, Cradle-to-Career Education, Community Health & Wellness, and Long-Term Economic Viability.

In 2019, Pendana at West Lakes opened, providing 200 affordable, mixed-income apartments in a very walkable setting just west of Downtown Orlando. And in 2020, Pendana at West Lakes Senior Residences began welcoming new residents aged 62 and older with dedicated professional management. The Senior Residences consist of 120 one and two-bedroom units, all of which are considered affordable housing with several reserved for very low-income residents for use in partnership with the City of Orlando. Pendana Senior Residences have amenities such as a movie theater, rooftop balconies, and even apartments that can be reserved for the use of visiting family and friends, all designed to provide high-quality housing for the community's active seniors.



Pendana at West Lakes – Concept Illustrative



Pendana at West Lakes Apartments

TOGETHER, WE WILL...

Goal B.1 – Encourage age-friendly development and explore innovative housing approaches such as dementia-friendly housing, cooperative and/or intergenerational housing, home sharing, and partnerships among senior living communities, colleges, and universities.

- **Action Item B.1.1:** Encourage demonstration projects, design competitions, and innovative approaches to shared housing such as accessible accessory units, shared single family homes, as well as intergenerational housing and all-age communities.

- **Action Item B.1.2:** Explore creation of a “Homeshare” network, matching older homeowners with rooms to rent with others who need to rent a room, such as graduate students or other older adults.
- **Action Item B.1.3:** For senior housing projects receiving financial incentives or assistance from the City of Orlando, require embedded services or a plan for connecting older adults to services.

Goal B.2 – Implement strategies to improve accessibility so that older adults can age in place.

- **Action Item B.2.1:** Provide guidance to developers, builders, planners, and residents regarding best practices for age-friendly housing and technical assistance for completing age- and ability-appropriate housing including Universal Design and the accessibility concepts described in AARP’s Livable Communities HomeFit Guide.
- **Action Item B.2.2:** Identify mechanisms to encourage and incentivize developers and builders to use Universal Design principles in newly proposed housing projects.
- **Action Item B.2.3:** Encourage both mixed-use development and residential mixed-income development throughout Orlando.

Goal B.3 – Improve education about housing and housing services available in Orlando.

- **Action Item B.3.1:** Create and implement a communication plan to educate residents who are looking for housing and those who desire to stay in their existing homes about options and costs so that they can consider their current and future needs, whether they are looking for affordable or market-rate housing or seeking long-term care and supportive services.
- **Action Item B.3.2:** Increase outreach to older adult homeowners about how to access existing housing support services such as home repair, weatherization, and modification resources.
- **Action Item B.3.3:** Increase outreach to older adults who are renters about resources available to assist in remaining in their homes or finding appropriate housing, as well as their rights as tenants.
- **Action Item B.3.4:** Increase outreach on affordability programs and foreclosure prevention for older adults, particularly within communities of color, including non- or limited-English speaking elders.
- **Action Item B.3.5:** Conduct an inventory of existing programs and services that help older adults stay in their homes and compile them into an easy-to-access, centralized location.

Transportation (Mobility)

WE ENVISION...

...an Age-Friendly Orlando in which older adults can safely, conveniently, and comfortably travel where they want and need to go so that they can participate fully in their community.

WE HEARD...

- Mobility was considered very important to our Age-Friendly Community Livability Survey respondents.
- 46% of survey respondents felt that our streets and sidewalks are in excellent to good condition in their neighborhood.
- Most (56%) survey respondents drive themselves while less than 10% regularly use transit. 5% of the respondents use Lymmo (free downtown shuttle bus service) or Lynx buses, while 13% indicated that they use SunRail at least occasionally.
- Approximately 8% of respondents reported using rideshare services like Uber and Lyft, and 9% stated that they relied on family or friends to help them get around.
- Only 26% of survey respondents think that public transit is accessible.

*"I THINK IT (ORLANDO) WOULD BE A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AS I AGE IF THERE WAS BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION...AND I COULD WALK TO RESTAURANTS AND SHOPPING. I REALLY WANT TO LIVE IN A WALKABLE CITY, AND I'M NOT SURE ORLANDO IS THAT PLACE."
– ORLANDO RESIDENT*

WE ARE...

Building Healthy Transportation Infrastructure and Safe Mobility for Life. The mobility choices we make have a profound impact on the health, safety, and viability of a community. When private vehicles are the only option, lower income residents or those who cannot drive such as children, older adults, and people with disabilities are put at a disadvantage, making traveling to work, buying groceries, or going to the doctor difficult. To address this important issue, the City of Orlando is working to make it easier for residents to walk, bike, carpool, ride transit, and use alternative fuel vehicles.

Mobility services in Orlando are blooming. The SunRail commuter train service, which operates Monday through Friday over 61 miles in Volusia, Orange, and Osceola Counties, provides an easy and affordable alternative to driving, allowing people to get to Downtown Orlando easily. Older adults 65+ qualify for a 50% discount for SunRail tickets.



Lynx buses have 68 fixed routes throughout Orange, Seminole, and Osceola County with 4,289 total bus stops; 2,051 of those stops are ADA accessible and 1,021 of them have shelters. Orlando features a free bus service (Lymmo) that shuttles people around Downtown Orlando, stopping at senior high-rise residential buildings, public library, grocery stores, banks, the Orange County Courthouse, Post Office, the Dr. Phillips Performing Arts Center, University of Central Florida/Valencia College in Creative Village, the Amway Arena and Exploria Soccer Stadium, and many other destinations. As with SunRail, older adults 65+ qualify for a 50% discount for bus tickets.



The City's Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has also partnered with Seniors First, Inc. (Orange County's Meals on Wheels provider) to provide the Senior Tran shuttle service which provides service to residents of 12 downtown buildings that house older adults. Seniors First operates this service three days a week using two ADA-accessible buses which provide round trip transportation – safely delivering mobile seniors to their destinations such as the pharmacy, grocery store, Orlando Public Library, and other places where they can purchase needed household and personal items. Seniors First also provides transportation to their Neighborhood Lunch program sites so that older adults may obtain a healthy meal and have opportunities to socialize and stay active.

Other mobility services include transportation network companies such as Uber, Lyft, Brightline, and Beep (Beep is highlighted later in this document). BrightLine is a new intercity

rail service (top speed 125 mph) that will connect Orlando International Airport with Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, and plans for a future connection to Tampa. The new station at the Orlando International Airport South Terminal is complete, new rail tracks are being built on the southside of the Beachline (State Road 528), and the Orlando-Miami service is expected to open by early 2023.



Orlando International Airport-Intermodal Station Brightline Train

Over the past few years, Orlando has focused on amending its Growth Management Plan, Land Development Code, Engineering Standards Manual, ADA Transition Plan, and Bicycle Plan, and creating new policy documents to enhance mobility and safety, including:

- **Complete Streets.** In 2015, consistent with principles specified in Smart Growth America’s National Complete Streets Coalition, Orlando adopted Complete Streets policies into its Growth Management Plan and later into its Land Development Code. These policies promote a multi-modal environment that helps the City promote healthy communities and equitable access to destinations for all people including older adults (users are defined as pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and passengers of all ages and abilities).



These complete streets concepts have further been incorporated into the City's transportation guidelines and in a number of the City's neighborhood vision plans (including Edgewater Drive, Corrine/Virginia Drive, Curry Ford, and South Downtown/SODO) and in large planned developments including Lake Nona, RoseArts, and the Packing District.

- **Vision Zero Action Plan.** On December 11, 2017, Mayor Buddy Dyer signed a resolution to adopt a Vision Zero Orlando Action Plan, and the Orlando City Council adopted the plan on September 24, 2019. Orlando's Vision Zero mission is to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries within the City by 2040.

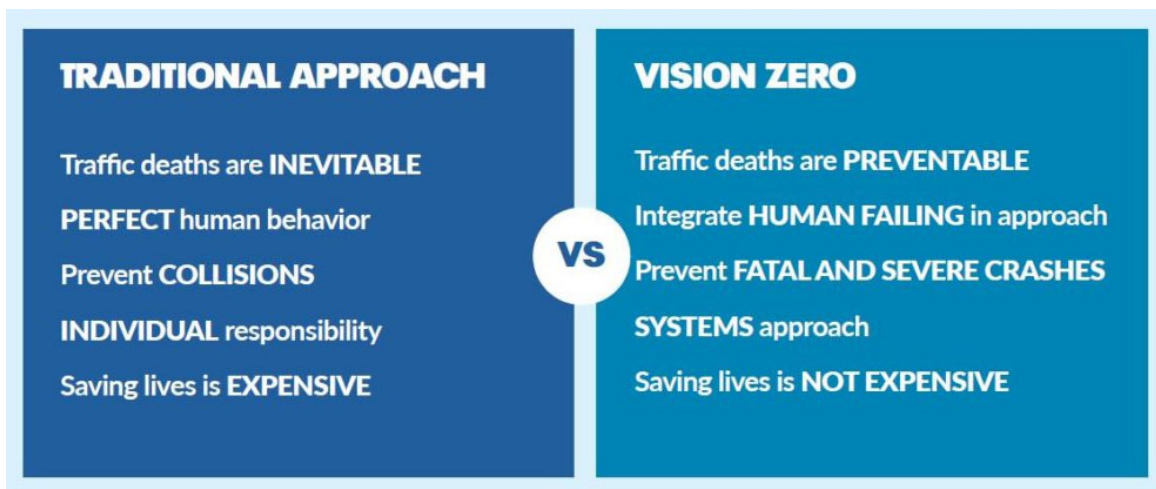


Vision Zero starts with the ethical belief that everyone has the right to move safely in their communities, and that system designers and policy makers share the responsibility to ensure safe systems for travel. Through a series of meetings with the Vision Zero Task Force, the City shaped and adopted six goals which set the foundation for the Vision Zero program. These goals embrace the Vision Zero Network model to provide equitable transportation safety solutions through a collaborative, data-driven process.

Orlando's Vision Zero Goals are:

1. Adopt a safe systems approach in roadway design, operations, and maintenance;
2. Increase everyone's understanding of the leading causes of crashes resulting in fatalities or serious injuries;
3. Support law enforcement efforts to eliminate behaviors leading to serious injury and fatal crashes;
4. Demonstrate continuous progress toward Vision Zero;
5. Improve access and travel time to Level 1 Trauma Center and other hospitals; and
6. Prioritize investments and programs in communities of concern including underserved populations and higher numbers of vulnerable road users.

These goals were established to enable multidisciplinary collaboration, including the use of consistent data, fair and targeted enforcement and the equitable dissemination of information, policies and future improvements. The goals are flexible and inclusive so that stakeholders can commit to Vision Zero. The roadmap to zero fatalities and serious injuries is further refined in the framework where objectives, action strategies, performance metrics, and responsible partners are identified to establish shared responsibility and investment in Vision Zero through 2040.



The City is currently pursuing a series of improvements to enable residents to reduce reliance on private vehicles and invest in healthy, safe infrastructure to encourage more sustainable choices like bike trails, sidewalks, and electric vehicle charging stations. One initiative of note is the Orlando CROSS project.

The Orlando CROSS: Connecting Residents to Safe Streets is a project made possible through a \$606,000 RAISE grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT); the

estimated total project costs including City portion is \$757,500. RAISE stands for “Rebuilding America Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity”.

This federal planning grant will fund the development of a Vision Zero implementation plan which will carefully examine six corridors within the City of Orlando and to fast-track transformational safety improvements and capital improvements necessary to make progress on the City’s Vision Zero goals. Possible recommendations include targeted operational changes, restoring sidewalk connectivity, constructing new bikeways, creating safer crossings, and enhancing access to transit services. The roads include sections of Orange and Rosalind Avenues downtown, Colonial Drive, Semoran Boulevard (including the Curry Ford Road intersection), Orange Blossom Trail, and Kirkman Road. The City’s Transportation Department is currently going through the RFP (Request for Proposal) process to select a consultant and it is anticipated that the project will be completed in 2023 or early 2024. To complement this implementation grant, the Transportation Department will pursue similar funding opportunities to construct these important Vision Zero countermeasures.



Implementing the Vision Zero initiative, Future-Ready City Master Plan, and this age-friendly action plan, Orlando recently installed a new midblock pedestrian crosswalk that features the latest in technology, automated flashing beacons, on Primrose Drive (2021). These beacons utilize state-of-the-art passive detection technology through infrared heat profiles to identify pedestrians or bicyclists within the detection zone to automatically activate the beacon without needing to push the button.

Orlando's efforts are very much consistent with and help to implement the Safe Mobility For Life Coalition's mission to increase the safety, access, and mobility of Florida's aging road users while eliminating fatalities and reducing serious injuries, and essentially to promote design features that support safety and aging in place. The Coalition's members include the Florida Departments of Transportation, Health, Economic Opportunity, and Elder Affairs, AARP Florida, and many other allied organizations.



The Safe Mobility for Life Coalition has developed a wealth of materials developed to support their mission which can be found at their Resource Center at SafeMobilityFL.com. They also host presentations and interactive workshops to help educate older adults on how to maintain safe driving skills and stay connected to their community beyond driving. Of special note is the CarFit educational safety program created by the American Society on Aging and developed jointly with AAA, AARP, and the American Occupational Therapy Association, designed to help older adult drivers improve the “fit” of their vehicles for safety and comfort.

Finally, the recent work of MetroPlan Orlando with their Health Strategic Plan should be recognized. MetroPlan Orlando's Health Strategic Plan was approved in January 2022 and provides a framework for understanding the community's connections between transportation and health. The plan also provides a guide for how MetroPlan Orlando can support the regional partners in planning our region's transportation system to improve community health.



Health Strategic Plan



Supporting a diversity of trips and modes of travel that aid in the achievement of diverse community health goals.

January 2022



The MetroPlan Orlando Health Strategic Plan can plan has five principal goals:


- **Supporting Healthy Lifestyles** – Taking steps to support a culture of active and healthy lifestyles will help the people of Central Florida maintain healthy weight, reduce chronic disease, and improve mental health.
- **Implementing Healthy Transportation Infrastructure** – Investing in a transportation system that reduces pollution and provides protection from extreme weather will lead to better health outcomes for the people of Central Florida. Exposure to extreme heat, particularly for the elderly, is a concern for the region.
- **Providing a Safe Transportation System** – Providing a safe transportation system is essential for the people of Central Florida. The region’s goal of zero transportation deaths and injuries means we all have to reduce crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists – our most vulnerable travelers.
- **Improving Health Care Access through Transportation** – Some populations in the region do not have adequate health care services, including medical, mental, and dental health. MetroPlan Orlando’s 2021 Regional Transportation Survey found that nearly one in five (18%) respondents had skipped or missed a doctor’s appointment in the past year because they did not have reliable transportation. Transit riders have missed doctor’s appointments three times more often than non-transit riders – these figures were for individual of all ages, not just seniors (22% of respondents were aged 50-64, and 15% were aged 65+).

- **Integrating Health Equity into Transportation Planning** – Health equity, the idea that health outcomes and the opportunity to receive care are fair and just, is an important concern for the region’s public health community. Health inequities are reflected in multiple outcomes including morbidity and mortality rates and quality of life.

Each goal statement then has specific objectives, strategies and actions. The Health Strategic Plan then provides a series of “next steps” for taking the plan further including better defining roles and responsibilities, considering needed updates to complementary transportation and health plans, identifying opportunities for collaboration, determining methods of coordination, and defining progress monitoring and measurement. The City of Orlando welcomes the support and opportunity to collaborate with MetroPlan Orlando on these important initiatives.

SPOTLIGHT: MOVE NONA AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE PROGRAM (BEEP)

Move Nona shuttles are operated by Beep, an autonomous mobility solutions provider in Orlando’s Lake Nona – Laureate Park neighborhood. The service connects the Lake Nona town center, UCF Medical School, VA Medical Center, Nemours Children’s Hospital, the Gatherings 55+ condo community, and the Laureate Park residential neighborhood. It is the largest and longest-running single-site fleet in the country. The shuttles are all electric and ADA accessible; they arrive at a stop every 10 – 15 minutes which is very convenient for users. In addition, the schedule and tracking in real-time are available by downloading the Ride Beep app which is available for iOS and Android.



The composite image consists of three photographs and a map. The top-left photo shows the interior of a white autonomous shuttle with its doors open. The top-right photo shows a white autonomous shuttle parked at a stop with a 'MOVE NONA' sign. The bottom-left photo shows a white autonomous shuttle driving on a road. The map on the right, titled 'MOVE NONA', shows the shuttle routes in the Lake Nona area, connecting landmarks such as Nemours Children's Hospital, VA Hospital, and the Laureate Park Village Center Shuttle Stop.

TOGETHER, WE WILL...

Goal C.1 – Promote healthy mobility options for all ages and abilities.

- **Action Item C.1.1:** Develop and implement goals, objectives, policies, and strategies in the Growth Management Plan, Green Works Community Action Plan, Future-Ready City Master Plan, and other City documents that create clean, healthy environments that are non-auto-centric, safe, and which facilitate physical activity.
- **Action Item C.1.2:** Implement the City’s adopted future land use philosophy which is based on a hierarchy of mixed-use activity centers connected by mixed use corridors to encourage more active pedestrian friendly environments for people to live, work, learn, and play, and so they don’t have to travel as far as they might in more isolated locations.
- **Action Item C.1.3:** Apply “Complete Streets” principles to all mobility projects, encouraging best design criteria while recognizing flexibility in balancing user needs. Consistent with the Green Works Community Action Plan, increase the number of miles of “Complete Streets” from 23 miles (2018) to at least 38 miles (2040 goal).
- **Action Item C.1.4:** Prioritize funding for healthy mobility options (sidewalks, urban trails, bicycle lanes, bike infrastructure, and public transit service) over improvements for vehicles.
- **Action Item C.1.5:** Ensure that mobility infrastructure (such as bus shelters, benches, traffic signals, bike paths, sidewalks, crosswalks, and wayfinding signage) is made available in all areas of Orlando in an equitable manner, and that it is designed to human scale using Universal Design principles with special consideration for the needs of older adults such as shade/protection from the effects of the sun’s heat (above and beyond required minimum accessibility standards where financially feasible).
- **Action Item C.1.6:** Encourage micro-mobility operators (Bike and Scooter Sharing) to explore and include age-friendly options such as three-wheeled scooters in City-sponsored/authorized programs.
- **Action Item C.1.7:** Collaborate and partner with MetroPlan Orlando on initiatives that further the goals and strategies outlined in their 2022 Health Strategic Plan.
- **Action Item C.1.8:** Support the Orange County Transportation Sales Tax Referendum to provide a dedicated funding source for healthy mobility options in Orlando and throughout Orange County.
- **Action Item C.1.9:** Through the City’s Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency, continue to partner with Seniors First, Inc. to provide the Senior Tran shuttle service for older adults in Downtown Orlando.

Goal C.2 – Implement the Vision Zero Orlando Action Plan.

- **Action Item C.2.1:** Consistent with the Vision Zero Orlando Action Plan and the Green Works Community Action Plan, implement policies, strategies, educate, and build infrastructure to eliminate pedestrian and bike fatalities by 100% by 2040.
- **Action Item C.2.2:** Collaborate with the Florida Department of Transportation, MetroPlan Orlando, and Orange County to implement Vision Zero.
- **Action Item C.2.3:** Support the efforts of the Safe Mobility for Life Coalition to increase the safety, access, and mobility of Florida’s aging road users and promote design features that support safety and aging in place.
- **Action Item C.2.4:** Support and promote the efforts of Bike/Walk Central Florida as a member of the Best Foot Forward Pedestrian Safety Coalition.

Goal C.3 – Promote educational programming to increase older adults’ knowledge of and access to healthy mobility options.

- **Action Item C.3.1:** Promote educational opportunities for older adults – whether they drive or not – that teach them about alternative mobility options, including ways to take advantage of discounted rates and passes for transportation services.
- **Action Item C.3.2:** Promote the Safe Mobility for Life Coalition’s CarFit program to help aging drivers improve the “fit” of their vehicles for safety and comfort.
- **Action Item C.3.3:** Promote AARP’s Smart Driver™ defensive driving online course which features research-based driving strategies and appropriate adult-learning principles.

CREATING AN AGE-FRIENDLY SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT



Artwork created by an **Art's the Spark** participant, a program offered by the Orlando Museum of Art for those living with memory or neurological impairments, such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

WHEN THE SPINNING STOPPED

By Mark Andrew James Terry

(Lake Copeland – Orlando, Florida)

You said, I gives ya my affa-davy. You were true to that in everything, and I said, it's not that your story isn't true, it's that what is true isn't your story. It's about adventuring every moment your breath will allow; challenging prevalence, and the rote way to go; enhancing the lives our paths touch, one by one; fighting for the ground that's worth defending; and, braving harshness and adversity with resolve.

Then I said, you and I are heads 'n tails of the same coin, spinning through time. And you said, my spinning's done brother. It's just you now. Whatchagonnado 'bout that?

Poem written as part of the 2021 Words & Wisdom Poetry Contest.

Creating an Age-Friendly Social Environment

Understanding the Social Environment

The social environment can be generally understood as the social setting people live and work in and involves many aspects of our daily lives. Because we understand the direct impact the built environment has on a person's ability to engage with the social aspects of a community, the social environment is inextricably linked to the built environment. The design of the community along with the availability of resources influences the level of interaction an individual has with the social aspects of the community. We believe that if the aspects of the built environment domains are present, then that will help bridge the gaps found in the domains of the social environment. For purposes of this age-friendly action plan, the social environment focuses on the following five Domains of Livability: civic participation & employment, respect & social inclusion, social participation, community support & health systems, and communication & information.

Civic Participation & Employment

WE ENVISION...

...an Age-Friendly Orlando in which older adults have access to work opportunities as well as to meaningful volunteer opportunities.

WE HEARD...

- According to our Age-Friendly Community Livability Survey respondents, employment and volunteerism are very important. Older adults in Orlando want more work opportunities not only for the extra income, but for community and social engagement.
- The Covid-19 pandemic, and the resulting shortage of workers, has increased the need for the training and hiring of older adults willing and able to work.
- 88% of respondents said that they are likely to continue to work for pay, but only 17% agree that there are flexible job opportunities.
- Only 56% of respondents felt that there are appropriate volunteering activities out in the community.
- Older adults in Orlando need information about available volunteer opportunities that are close to where they live and fully utilize their skills and talents.

*"I'M CONCERNED
WITH AGE
DISCRIMINATION
WHEN IT COMES TO
LOOKING FOR WORK."
– ORLANDO RESIDENT*

WE ARE...

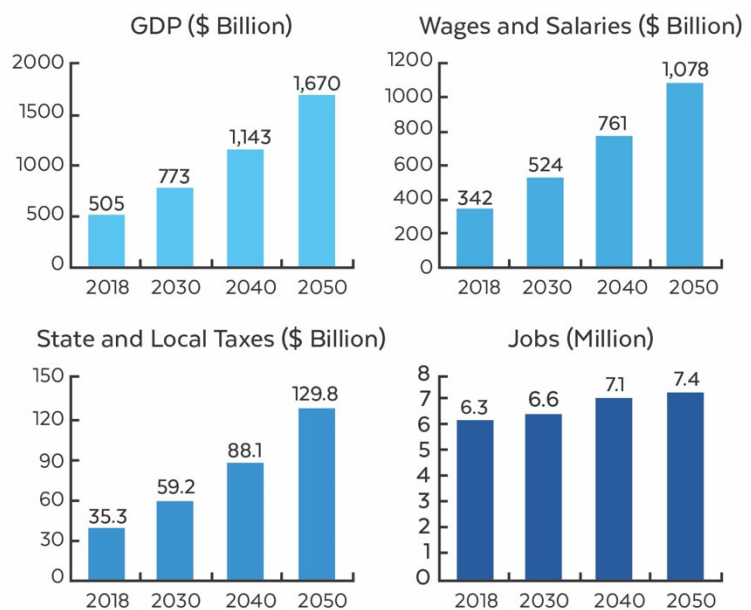
Recognizing the positive economic and social impacts of older adults in the workplace and in the community. As stated in the Florida Department of Elder Affairs' Florida Action Plan on Aging (2021), older adults are an asset and incredible resource whose strengths, experience, and insights are extremely valuable in the workforce and greater community. The plan states that people seeking to remain in the workforce may require education, training, and other forms of support to transition careers, add new skills, and discover new employment avenues. It goes on to say that assessing and promotion of equal opportunities for older adults in the workforce is vital because age biases and discrimination remain a problem in our society. The plan states that the workplace provides an excellent opportunity for intergenerational engagement, and that we should support programs that emphasize such activity. Additionally, older adults may choose to engage in volunteerism through participation in mission-driven activities, civic organization, or faith-based institutions. Volunteering has social, mental, and physical benefits for people of all ages.

According to AARP's Longevity Economic Outlook report (2019), older adults will play a critical role in Florida's economic recovery and growth even after accounting for the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Florida's aging population will continue to make economic and social contributions that benefit people of all ages, and the growth of this age group will no doubt fuel innovation and new market solutions.

The report found that Florida's 50+ population creates outsized economic impact and will drive economic growth for the next 30 years. In 2018, the 50+ population accounted for 40% of Florida's population, yet contributed 48% – or \$505 billion – of the state's total GDP. Their activities also supported 6.3 million jobs and generated \$342 billion in wages and salaries. Their contribution to GDP is forecast to reach \$1.7 trillion in 2050 – over 52% of the states' projected GDP – when people 50+ will account for 43% of the population.

THE 50-PLUS POPULATION FUELS ECONOMIC GROWTH, STIMULATES JOBS, AND CREATES OPPORTUNITIES

Economic impact of the 50-plus population through 2050



The AARP Longevity Economy Outlook report also found that, beyond their economic contributions, the 50+ cohort also spends a significant amount of time engaging in vital activities like volunteering and caregiving for children and adults. The 50+ population in Florida contributed \$15 billion in volunteering activities and \$37 billion in unpaid caregiving in 2018, with the average person spending 90 hours on volunteering and almost 370 hours on caregiving over the entire year.

Because of these factors, policymakers, business leaders, and elected officials must ensure that programs and policies are in place to support and grow this economic engine.

Building partnerships that enhance the work environment for older adults in Orlando. The AARP Foundation’s Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is the nation’s oldest program to help low-income (not more than 125% of established federal poverty guidelines), unemployed individuals aged 55+ find work. Nationwide, it is funded with \$77,808,096 in grants from the US Department of Labor; this funding provides 90% of the support for SCSEP, with AARP Foundation matching 10% (\$8,774,913). AARP Foundation first matches eligible older job seekers with local nonprofits and public agencies so they can increase skills and build self-confidence, while earning a modest income. Based on their employment interests and goals, participants may also receive supportive services and skills training through an educational institution. Their SCSEP experience most often leads to permanent employment. The City of Orlando and Orange County Government support and help fund this program in Orange County.

Building partnerships to enhance volunteering opportunities amongst older adults. Volunteers for Community Impact (VCI), a non-profit organization serving Central Florida, has several programs designed to engage older adults, fight social isolation, and promote intergenerational relationships.

Across Central Florida (Orange, Seminole, and Osceola Counties), over 400 volunteers have served over 29,000 hours. VCI provides



multiple programs under their GRAN PLAN including the AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP Program whose volunteers serve in areas such as education, food security, and health, as well as the AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent Program. These programs allow older adults to volunteer with OTTER (Older Teachers Teaching Early Readers), My Brother’s Keeper (MBK), and/or GOAL (Girls Overcome Achieve and Learn), all designed to provide positive mentorship and educational assistance to children.

In 2022, VCI launched a new program in Central Florida, the AmeriCorps Seniors – Senior Companion Program, which provides grants to organizations with a dual purpose: to engage persons 55 years and older, particularly those with limited incomes, in volunteer service to meet critical community needs; and to provide a higher quality experience that will enrich the lives of the volunteers.



The AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in this program provide supportive, individualized services to help older adults with special needs maintain their dignity and independence. Volunteers for this program serve as friends and companions to older neighbors, making sure they can live in their homes for as long as possible, and providing supportive services such as transportation to appointments, assistance with grocery shopping, and cooking meals. Volunteers are eligible to receive a stipend for their volunteering if they meet income eligibility requirements.

TOGETHER, WE WILL...

Goal D.1 – Improve access to employment opportunities and reduce ageism.

- **Action Item D.1.1:** Develop and implement a public awareness campaign promoting the value of older workers and combating myths and stereotypes about aging.
- **Action Item D.1.2:** Promote the value of older workers to Orlando area businesses and in our Main Street districts.
- **Action Item D.1.3:** Engage and/or partner with community nonprofits, faith-based institutions, and other groups to inform older adults of employment opportunities.

Goal D.2 – Provide support and connect older adults to employment opportunities and resources.

- **Action Item D.2.1:** Champion community efforts that ensure that Orlando residents gain a life-long love for learning, and that help them gain the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the 21st century workforce.
- **Action Item D.2.2:** Work to identify barriers to employment for older adults in the city. Further, develop materials to assist businesses to become more age-, disability, and dementia-friendly.
- **Action Item D.2.3:** Advocate for increased job training and placement programs that are inclusive of job seekers of all ages including older adults.

- **Action Item D.2.4:** Support entrepreneurs of all ages including older adults by equipping them with the skills they need to successfully launch startups and small businesses including businesses at home, including coordination with potential community partners such as the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and the National Entrepreneur Center in Orlando.

Goal D.3 – Enhance and promote volunteer opportunities for older adults.

- **Action Item D.3.1:** Explore ways for the city to recognize volunteers, such as developing a “Volunteer of the Year” award.
- **Action Item D.3.2:** Identify city offices and departments that could benefit from additional volunteers, including AmeriCorps volunteers, and publicize such opportunities to older adults who may be interested.
- **Action Item D.3.3:** Utilize the city’s Orlando Cares Volunteer Recruitment website to post volunteer opportunities and recruit seniors for city and community organization volunteer opportunities.

Respect & Social Inclusion

WE ENVISION...

...an Age-Friendly Orlando that actively listens to, engages with, and celebrates the valuable contributions of older adults in the community.

WE HEARD...

- Ageism and respect for older adults is a concern in Orlando.
- On the issue of social isolation, 79% of respondents to our Age-Friendly Community Livability Survey said they feel connected to other people.
- A plurality of 78% said they have contact with friends and family at least several times a week (45% everyday and 33% several times a week).

"I BELIEVE WE NEED TO DO MORE TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN SENIORS AND THE YOUNGER GENERATION. EDUCATION AND UNDERSTANDING WITH SOCIAL GATHERINGS BETWEEN THE TWO..." – ORLANDO RESIDENT

WE ARE...

Recognizing the importance of engaging, including, and celebrating older adults. The National Institute on Aging (NIA) has identified numerous studies linking social isolation and loneliness in older people to higher risks of high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease, and even death. People who find themselves unexpectedly alone due to the death of a spouse or partner, separation from friends or family, retirement, loss of mobility, and lack of transportation are at particular risk. Conversely, people who engage in meaningful, productive activities with others tend to live longer, boost their mood, and have a sense of purpose. Understanding the social determinants of health and the role of social and interpersonal processes in healthy aging and longevity is critically important in creating an age-friendly city.

According to the book **Restorative Cities: Urban Design for Mental Health and Wellbeing**, by Jenny Roe & Layla McCay, people who have strong networks of supportive social relationships are less likely to develop mental health problems and more likely to recover from them. Roe & McCay note that social isolation and loneliness increase the risk of mental health problems like depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. They discuss a wide range of urban design interventions that can help to reduce social isolation including creating and encouraging mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods with housing designed to promote positive, natural social

interaction and networks across all ages, mixed incomes and all ethnicities. Roe & McCay emphasize that parks and urban green space facilitate social interaction and foster place belonging, altruism and greater perceptions of trust in a neighborhood. Investment in public spaces associated with facilities that people use regularly and where they can bump into people on an impromptu basis – like our local shopping areas and Main Streets or in dog parks – can enhance neighborliness, reduce feelings of isolation, and reduce both physical and mental health problems.

Countering the negative perceptions of aging. The myths, stereotypes, and negative perceptions of aging carry a high cost to society: ageism in healthcare and employment, social exclusion, and elder abuse and neglect. Many older adults don't participate in senior center activities because of the perception that "senior citizens" are old and frail, which we know is simply not the case. New approaches must be used to create a new and authentic perception that the wisdom, talents, and experience of older adults are true community assets. By joining the Network of Age-Friendly Communities, re-imagining the role of the Mayor's Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging, and preparing our first-ever age-friendly action plan, Orlando has chosen to address aging exactly as it is – a net positive and a blessing.



Incorporating the needs of older adults in Orlando's Future-Ready City Master Plan. So, what is future-ready? Well, a future-ready city is one that uses innovation and technology to better deliver the services its residents and visitors rely on and expect. When considering what it will take for a city to thrive for generations to come, a future-ready city will need to be a place where residents are empowered to co-create opportunities using innovation and technology. It should work to maximize the benefits of living in an urban environment, while minimizing its challenges. Overall, a future-ready city should work to be a place of prosperity, safety, equity, sustainability, resiliency, and diversity for future generations. But most of all, it should put people first.

SPOTLIGHT: RESILIENCE HUB GRANT

On April 16, 2021, the City of Orlando was awarded a \$2,850,000 grant by the State of Florida's Department of Economic Opportunity through HUD's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Mitigation General Infrastructure Program. The Rebuild Florida CDBG Mitigation General Infrastructure Program is designed to provide funding opportunities for local governments and state agencies to develop large-scale mitigation activities that allow Florida communities to better withstand future disasters. The grant will fund the development of six (6) Resilience Hubs at existing neighborhood centers in Orlando.

So, what are Resilience Hubs? Resilience Hubs are community-serving facilities that function year-round and that also provide critical services before, during, or after a disaster. Resilience Hubs have a backup power supply that allows them to serve as cooling center during times of extreme heat when there are power outages – incredibly important for assuring the health and wellbeing of vulnerable people including older adults. In the recovery phase of a hurricane, residents can use the facility to charge phones, access wifi, apply for benefits, or contact loved ones. The facilities act as distribution centers for sandbags, water, food, or other supplies and services for residents.



Resilience Hubs are used year-round as neighborhood centers for community building activities, fostering social cohesion, building trust between local government and connecting neighbors. Resilience Hubs are also known as Community-Based Emergency Operation Centers, and are particularly valuable in low-income communities where residents may have fewer options to evacuate, turn on air-conditioning, or purchase generators.

The first six Resilience Hubs will be located at the following community and neighborhood centers and will include HVAC improvements and either installation of a fixed generator or electrical upgrades to allow connection to a mobile power generator:

- Dr. James R. Smith Center, 1723 Bruton Boulevard
- Northwest Community Center, 3955 WD Judge Drive
- Englewood Neighborhood Center, 6123 LaCosta Drive
- Dr. J.B. Callahan Neighborhood Center, 101 North Parramore Avenue
- Rosemont Community Center, 4872 Rose Bay Drive
- Dover Shores Community Center, 1400 Gaston Foster Road

So, why are HVAC improvements part of these Resilience Hubs? Well, improvements to indoor air quality are vital not only for residents with asthma, allergies, and other conditions, but also critical to preventing the spread of disease, such as Covid-19. By installing HEPA filters, UV lights, and mixed ventilation systems, these community centers will also improve function during a pandemic.

The development of Resilience Hubs is the outgrowth of a rigorous planning and community engagement process. The Future-Ready City Master Plan identified the creation of Resilience Hubs as a key strategy to improve our community’s ability to weather disasters in an equitable manner. Besides the CDBG-Mitigation Grant, the City of Orlando is applying for additional funding opportunities to create small and medium-sized Resilience Hubs in more Orlando neighborhoods. The 2021 AARP Community Challenge Grant “Tables of Connection” project, highlighted in the Creativity & Innovation – Linking the Built and Social Environments chapter of this action plan, is an excellent example of a small Resilience Hub.

TOGETHER, WE WILL...

Goal E.1 – Support inclusive, age-friendly customer service in city operations and throughout the community.

- **Action Item E.1.1:** Educate city employees, particularly those with direct and regular public contact such as emergency responders, on the unique needs of older adults, including those with dementia, taking into account cultural and language diversity.
- **Action Item E.1.2:** Periodically evaluate the programs and services offered to older adults at the city’s senior centers and recreation centers, including the use of surveys, focus groups, and other appropriate community engagement tools.
- **Action Item E.1.3:** In coordination with Orlando’s Future-Ready City Master Plan, gather data and survey technology needs of older adults, and develop programs to address equitable resilience and the digital divide including Wi-Fi accessibility projects and/or hot spot and tablet checkout pilot projects which incorporate age-friendly connectivity links.

Goal E.2 – Create opportunities for intergenerational activities and events, services, and other programs.

- **Action Item E.2.1:** Implement best practices to successfully nurture and strengthen connections across generations.
- **Action Item E.2.2:** Promote intergenerational arts, cultural, and recreational programs and events at the city’s senior centers and recreational centers, as well as in neighborhood Main Streets.

Goal E.3 – Ensure the perspectives and needs of older adults are included in city planning processes and policies.

- **Action Item E.3.1:** Explore strategies for older adults to be more deeply involved in policy making and advocacy.
- **Action Item E.3.2:** Incorporate the voice of Orlando’s older residents by ensuring that an older resident or representative of the Mayor’s Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging serves on relevant internal working groups or task forces where appropriate.

Social Participation

WE ENVISION...

...an Age-Friendly Orlando with a wide array of affordable, equitable, and accessible social, recreational, and cultural opportunities for older adults.

WE HEARD...

- According to our Age-Friendly Community Livability Survey respondents, social participation is critically important in terms of increasing their quality of life.
- 79% of survey respondents said that they are likely to have friends or family available to help them.
- 49%, or a little less than half, are happy with the physical distance from their family.
- Many older adults in Orlando want increased opportunities for arts, culture, and recreation programming and events in their neighborhoods.

“WE NEED BETTER CONNECTIONS FOR SENIORS. EVENTS TO GATHER AND SHARE, FEEL LOVED AND VALUED SO SENIORS WHO HAVE LOST FAMILY MEMBERS FEEL LESS LONELY.” – ORLANDO RESIDENT

WE ARE...

Providing social, cultural, and recreational programs through our senior centers and recreation centers. The City of Orlando is blessed to have two incredible senior centers – Mayor Beardall Senior Center in Downtown Orlando and the L. Claudia Allen Senior Center in southwest Orlando, along with 17 other neighborhood and recreation centers where services for people of all ages including older adults are provided.

The Beardall Senior Center is an historic building originally built in the 1920s as an elementary school located at the corner of Gore Street and Delaney Avenue. This was one of the first adaptive reuse projects developed by the City of Orlando, and the building recently underwent a \$1 million renovation to modernize technology and improve the various systems in the structure.



More than 100 clubs, classes, and events take place each month for older adults at the center to increase social participation and reduce social isolation including the Central Florida African Violets Society (and their Show and Sale), Artist League of Orange County, American Needlepoint Guild, Central Florida Brain Injury Support Group, Orange County Retired Educators, Creative Writing Group, Coloring and Conversation, and many others. AARP also provides income tax services from February to April each year, as well as their AARP Driver Safety Program. Dances are held on Thursday and Saturday nights, and various exercise classes including yoga, tai chi, and line dancing are held throughout the week. Rock Steady Boxing is a non-contact form of exercise that improves the quality of life for anyone at any level of Parkinson’s disease – boxers enjoy socialization and show an increased confidence in their daily life.



A Computer Lab helps older adults with technology including computers and smart phones. The Cooking Matters in Your Community program, sponsored by and taught by the University of Florida, allows older adults how to make healthier choices when shopping and eating. And there are even workshops provided by Central Florida Community Arts - CFCArts. The center also acts as the starting point for different field trips and fun events like the Florida Strawberry Festival in Plant City.

The L. Claudia Allen Senior Center in the Johnson Village neighborhood in southwest Orlando hosts a number of clubs (Bingo, Bridge, Bowling, Young and Restless Bid Whist, Hook & Stitches) and provides many similar social activities, programs, dances, and classes including aerobic fitness and body toning, tai chi and social dance class, water aerobics,



Zumba fitness class, ceramics, field trips, Movie Madness, Old School Shooters, as well as the Seniors First, Inc. Neighborhood Lunch program and the SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) program which is a free program offered by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the Senior Resource Alliance (our local Area Agency on Aging) designed to assist older adults with Medicare, Medicaid, and health insurance questions and by providing one-on-one counseling.



On April 15, 2022, L. Claudia Allen Senior Center hosted an Easter Celebration on Good Friday with breakfast, a fashion show, and door prizes.

SPOTLIGHT: CENTRAL FLORIDA COMMUNITY ARTS (CFCARTS)

We are blessed to have the Central Florida Community Arts or CFCArts organization in Orlando. CFCArts is the School for Arts and Health, offering a multitude of arts and cultural educational opportunities including art lessons, camps for children and teens, arts access for under-resourced populations, arts and health, and music therapy (in partnership with AdventHealth). Community programs include the Community Choir, CFCArts Orchestra, Big Band, and Children and Youth programs. Two programs are designed to reach our older adult population – Arts & Wellness and Arts in Action.

The Arts & Wellness program provides engaging arts experiences for people with unique abilities or diseases, offering both virtual and in-person programs. Worth special mention is the Musical Minds Choir which is geared toward adults experiencing the early stages of memory

loss, dementia, or Alzheimer’s disease. Choir members are accompanied by their care partners who are welcome to sing with the choir or sit back, relax, and enjoy the beautiful music. Being a member of the choir provides people with the opportunity to meet others who are also living with memory loss and have some fun while exercising the brain – research findings suggest that being part of making music such as singing or playing an instrument, or simply listening to music can be a great way to stimulate the brain and help promote brain health.

The Arts In Action program began with the Winter Park Health Foundation in partnership with numerous other organizations, and is designed to bring the arts to older adults in our community. This collaborative program offers a variety of classes and experiences across five (5) disciplines: Music, Drama, Dance, Art, and Creative Writing. Beginner Ukulele is just one of the musical offerings, and CFCArts Narrators! is another fun program for older adults (55+) who have a desire and a mission to give back to the community by performing. Each Narrators! class session is 90 minutes long and features vocal warm-ups, and senior-friendly theatre games design to get participants laughing and imaginations active. The group spends the bulk of the class working on scripts which can be presented without memorization and with as much or as little movement as the participants are comfortable with.



In 2020, CFCArts was awarded the “Community Builder of the Year” Award by the City of Orlando and Mayor Buddy Dyer.

TOGETHER, WE WILL...

Goal F.1 – Create and promote culturally sensitive engagement opportunities for older adults.

- **Action Item F.1.1:** Using tools such as surveys and/or focus groups of senior residents, identify gaps, in arts, cultural, and recreational programming offered by the city with an emphasis on older adults and adults living with disabilities.
- **Action Item F.1.2:** Enhance opportunities for social engagement, both through the city and by partnering with other organizations, leveraging existing resources and public spaces as well as working to fill the identified programming gaps.
- **Action Item F.1.3:** Collaborate with arts and cultural organizations to provide meaningful ways for different generations to connect and participate in Orlando’s vibrant cultural scene.
- **Action Item F.1.4:** Ensure that social engagement opportunities are equitably distributed and inclusive throughout the city, including all ethnicities as well as the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Action Item F.1.5:** Effectively market social engagement opportunities to Orlando’s older adults through various media.

Goal F.2 – Celebrate the lives and experiences of older adults in Orlando.

- **Action Item F.2.1:** Explore the creation of intergenerational exchanges and programs that include art, music, storytelling, oral histories, and written histories as ways to pass along knowledge and experience.

Goal F.3 – Reimagine senior centers and recreation centers as intergenerational focal points for the community.

- **Action Item F.3.1:** Explore different concepts for transforming Orlando’s senior centers and recreational centers to emphasize intergenerational opportunities.
- **Action Item F.3.2:** Support intergenerational technology training, particularly in-person, one-on-one opportunities.

Community Support & Health Systems

WE ENVISION...

...an Age-Friendly Orlando that offers affordable, person-centered health care and supportive social services which promote active and independent living.

...an Age-Friendly Orlando that recognizes the special needs of our community living with dementia, their family and caregivers, and that creates supportive communities which promote an enhanced quality of life.

WE HEARD...

- Orlando's older adults are concerned with obtaining affordable food and access to healthcare.
- In terms of community support and health services, 80% of respondents to our Age-Friendly Community Livability Survey said that they are satisfied with healthcare providers in Orlando in general.
- A slightly higher percentage, 84% of respondents, said they are satisfied with their own healthcare providers.
- 77% of survey respondents think their personal health is good.
- Many residents indicated that they need more information about options for long-term care, particularly for those with dementia.

"THE ONLY CONCERN I HAVE IS THAT THE CITY OF ORLANDO HAS LIMITED RESOURCES FOR ELDERLY RESIDENTS. ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM THE CITY OF ORLANDO'S BUDGET SHOULD BE ALLOCATED TO LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES TO INCREASE ASSISTANCE FOR ELDERLY ORLANDO RESIDENTS." – ORLANDO RESIDENT

WE ARE...

Collaborating with State and local community partners whose primary mission is to serve older adults. One of the most important aspects of being a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities is the opening up of opportunities for sharing best practices and learning from one another, collaborating on programs, and recognizing and supporting the great work being done by a multitude of people and organizations.

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs, through its Livable Florida initiative, is providing incredible leadership and support to local governments, service providers, and most importantly to older adults in the State of Florida. As one of the first states in the nation to join

the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, they have provided an invaluable framework focused on creating livable communities that provide both a safe and pleasant built environment as well as supportive community features and services which embrace older adults with varying needs and abilities.

LIVABLE FLORIDA

LIVE WELL. AGE WELL.



As noted in their recently adopted Florida Action Plan on Aging (2021), Livable Florida is focused on creating new opportunities for an aging population while simultaneously making a place where people of all ages will call home. We look forward to working in partnership with FDEA and the Livable Florida initiative to help implement their action plan as well as our own.

The Senior Resource Alliance is the Central Florida region's Area Agency on Aging (AAA). The Senior Resource Alliance (SRA) is the liaison between the federal government and a network of nonprofit partners in Brevard, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties that provide coordinated home and community-based services. The SRA's President and CEO, Karla Radka, is a valued member of our Mayor's Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging.

Specific programs that the SRA coordinates include: AmeriCorps (Senior Health and Wellness Program, Aging & Disability Resource Program, and the Heart 2 Heart Walkie-Talkie Program), the Emergency Home Energy Assistance for the Elderly Program (EHEAP), the elder Abuse


Neglect and Exploitation (ANE) Prevention Program, Elder Helpline, Health & Wellness Workshops focused on fall prevention and healthy living, SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders), Veteran Directed Care, and the Heart 2 Heart Telephone Reassurance Program which was particularly important during the Covid-19 pandemic in combating social isolation.

During the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021 and 2022, SRA launched several critical programs to support older adults, including a campaign to help prevent relatives from passing along Covid-19 to their elderly and vulnerable loved ones. Funded by a \$315,000 federal grant, the SRA provided free transportation to vaccination sites, coordinated appointments, ran a vaccine information hotline, and offered free senior daycare so caregivers could take time off to get their own vaccinations and booster shots. Meanwhile, the Meals of Love program, funded through the CARES Act, offered support not only for vulnerable seniors, but for restaurants that struggled with the economic impacts of the pandemic.

SRA has also provided leadership and service regarding Alzheimer’s disease. There are more than 52,000 probable Alzheimer’s patients in the Central Florida area. The State of Florida funded a total of \$51 million in the FY2021-22 budget for the Alzheimer’s Disease Initiative. SRA received \$1.1 million for FY2021-22 and the alliance’s partner groups across Central Florida are working to expand resources for people with Alzheimer’s and their caregivers as the population ages.

SPOTLIGHT: BRINGING THE LOST HOME

A unique partnership was created in 2021 between the SRA, Central Florida Foundation, Orange County Sheriff’s Office, and Scent Evidence K9, and one very dedicated bloodhound named Will-O, to create the “Bringing the Lost Home” project. Funded by a \$57,000 grant from Rex V. Stevens and Dulciza Stevens Fund and the Frances and Joseph Victor Fund, the project uses advanced scent K9 training to locate people with Alzheimers’s or other cognitive impairments. Scent Evidence K9 uses scientifically tested Scent Preservation Kits to swipe, seal, and store a person’s unique scent so that K9 responders can use an uncontaminated scent article to begin searching for missing loved ones and quickly bring them home safe and sound. As noted by SRA President and CEO Karla Radka, “With Will-O’s help, we’ll be able to provide peace of mind for caregivers across four counties.”



Another important partner organization, Seniors First, Inc., provides invaluable services to older adults in Orlando. Seniors First offers several options to help older adults (60+) who may have struggles with hunger get the nutrition they need including:

- **Meals on Wheels** – home delivered meals and case management to homebound Orange County seniors, up to 5 days per week. On April 25, 2022, the Orlando City Council approved the allocation of \$200,000 in CDBG funds to install a permanent walk-in cooler/freezer with Seniors First to support the Meals on Wheels program.
- **Emergency Meals on Wheels** – the same Meals on Wheels services provided for up to 30 days to a senior facing a crisis situation.
- **Neighborhood Lunch Program with Transportation** – a nutritious lunch, social activities and round trip, door-to-door transportation for those who lack transportation to 13 community sites in Orange County, up to 5 days per week. In Orlando, this program is hosted at Engelwood Neighborhood Center, L. Claudia Allen Senior Center, Marks Street Senior Center, and William Booth Towers. The cornerstone of this program is the fellowship and camaraderie seniors feel from spending time with others their age, to offset social isolation. Social activities include games, holiday and birthday celebrations, field and shopping trips, health and educational seminars, music, and exercise.
- **Community Food Pantry** – open to anyone in need on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. In 2022, the pantry celebrated 4 years of serving older adults in our community. At the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, the pantry was distributing 18,000 lbs. of food per month, up from the pre-pandemic average of 3,700 lbs. per month.

Seniors First also offers the following programs:

- **In-Home Care** – help with activities of daily living through a case-managed package of services (e.g., personal care, homemaking, companionship, respite for caregivers) for homebound older adults (60+) in Orange, Seminole, and Polk Counties.
- **Stepping Stone Medical Equipment Bank** – refurbished, durable medical equipment for adults living with disabilities in Orange, Seminole, and Osceola Counties.
- **Guardianship** – Public Guardian to incapacitated adults of limited financial means who lack a private guardian in Orange and Seminole Counties. Seniors First offers 8-hour court-mandated guardianship classes for individuals seeking guardianship of a friend or family member.

Of course, there are many other organizations doing incredible work to serve older adults in Orlando and Central Florida, including Share the Care, SELF Home Improvement Financing, the Alzheimer’s Association – Central & North Florida Chapter, Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida, AdventHealth, Orlando Health, and the Florida Department of Health in Orange County just to name a few. We look forward to continuing to build partnerships and collaborating with allied organizations as we implement our age-friendly action plan.

Funding community partners who provide invaluable support services to our older adult residents. In addition to the various social, cultural, and recreational programs offered at Orlando’s senior centers and recreation centers, the City provides funding to non-profit service providers each year through Community Investment Program Grants. As part of the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget process, City Council approved \$2.41 million in funding for thirty-eight (38) human service organizations. Through the Community Investment Program (CIP), the City of Orlando invests in efforts that solve community problems by granting funds to meet the needs of a growing Central Florida population and address the diverse needs and challenges Orlando residents experience. Program focus areas include Housing-Focused Services for Persons Experiencing Homelessness, Family Sustainability, Domestic Violence Prevention, Support of Seniors, and Improve Availability, and Access and Consumption of Healthy Foods.

The guidelines for the Support of Seniors program focus area state the grant recipients should provide services that promote or maintain senior independence and/or create a social environment in which all older adults who live within the City of Orlando can live independent, healthy, and productive lives. Service examples include meal delivery to homebound seniors, respite and day care services, social well-being, and health services. In Fiscal Year 2021-22, under Support for Seniors, Orlando provided \$381,000 in grants to the following organizations:

Organization Name	Program	Dollar Amount
Center for Multicultural Wellness and Prevention, Inc.	CMWP – Project Joy	\$26,000
Central Florida Community Arts, Inc. (CFCArts)	Arts in Action and Arts & Wellness Programs	\$33,000
Cornerstone Hospice Foundation	Community Outreach to Assist and Educate Alzheimer’s and Dementia Caregivers	\$25,000
Easter Seals Florida, Inc.	Easter Seals Day Break at the Miller Center	\$15,000
Lighthouse Central Florida, Inc.	Independent Living Skills – Older Blind	\$28,000
Seniors First, Inc.	Project Home	\$228,000
Share the Care, Inc.	In-Home Respite	\$26,000
	Total	\$381,000

Similar amounts were provided in previous years to (\$358,000 in FY2020-21, \$363,000 in FY2019-20, and \$337,000 in FY2018-19) to these organizations and other organizations such as the Orlando Ballet for their Gentle BeMoved in the Community program, Guardian Care Nursing & Rehabilitation Services, and Volunteers for Community Impact for their foster grandparent program. It is anticipated that the Support of Seniors program focus area will be funded at similar levels in the future though the grant recipients may change from year to year.

Learning about advances in the field of healthy aging and incorporating those concepts into our policies and programs. The Florida State Plan on Aging 2022-2025, published by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, states that the projected increase of older adults in Florida is in part due to improved health and wellbeing. The report notes that this is already apparent with the population of individuals age 100+, currently the nation’s fastest-growing age group by percentage. Many favorable trends are occurring simultaneously among individuals age 60+ that continue to decrease the likelihood of morbidity (illness) and mortality (death), including a declining disability rate, delayed retirement and increased labor force participation by older adults, and increases in education and a focus on healthy aging.

Orlando is blessed to have incredible thought leaders in our community. Tavistock Group, the company who helped establish the Lake Nona/Medical City bio-medical cluster in southeast Orlando, has created the Lake Nona Institute – a nonprofit, community-focused organization that incubates, activates, and measures the impact of innovative technologies and programs as global models for building healthy, sustainable communities. Working together with partners such as Cisco, GE, Johnson & Johnson Health and Wellness Solutions, GuideWell Innovation, Florida Hospital and Technogym, the Lake Nona Institute researches and analyzes information on human, physical, and environmental elements in real-time to better understand the interaction and effects of the built environment and lifestyle behaviors on human wellbeing.

Each year, the Lake Nona Institute convenes an invitation-only Impact Forum with leaders from Fortune 500 companies, entrepreneurs, academics, policy leaders and even musical artists to engage in thought-provoking conversations that will directly impact individuals, businesses, and communities across the world. In 2022, the forum theme was “Health Innovation in the New Reality.”

Some very exciting longevity-related innovations on the horizon were discussed including:

- **Artificial Intelligence** – drug development, diagnosis, and disease management by computers;
- **Gene Engineering/CRISPR-Cas9 Gene Editing** – eliminating all hereditary diseases and most forms of cancer;
- **Nanotechnology** – tools to manipulate submicroscopic particles to repair damaged cells or destroy cancerous cells;
- **Organ and Tissue Regeneration & Replacement** – regenerating heart and skin tissue, new hearts, lungs, kidneys, and livers;
- **New Diagnostic Devices** – devices which can scan your body for signs of disease daily or even constantly;

- **Precision Medicine** – a wide range of technology personalized to your personal biomarkers; and
- **Pharmaceutical Interventions** – treatments that may soon extend living to 100 years (and beyond) possible and practical.



The forum raised some interesting questions about longevity: if people are going to live longer, how do we help them live healthier and fuller lives and how do cities play a role in achieving this goal? For example, do we plan for more intergenerational parks, three-wheeled scooters, re-invent senior centers, etc.? Also, how do we eradicate the present inequities in the existing healthcare system? We should certainly understand that life expectancy may be going up for people with good access to healthcare but could be going down for people who don't have such access. Will primary and hospital-level care delivered directly to you in your home help? What impact will telehealth have? How will this impact the types of transportation and medical facilities we'll need and use?

As we look at planning for the future needs of our community, we certainly need to consider increased life expectancy, but we need to differentiate between life expectancy and *healthy* life expectancy. One of the initiatives that we'll be following closely into the future is the recently created AARP Innovation Labs and associated AgeTech Collaborative™, the mission of which is to bring leading startups, forward-thinking investors, enlightened industry leaders, and creative testbeds together to discover, support, and scale smart solutions that will empower people to choose how they live as they age.

SPOTLIGHT: UCF DISABILITY, AGING AND TECHNOLOGY (DAT) CLUSTER INITIATIVE

The City of Orlando is blessed to have a world-class university in the University of Central Florida (UCF) whose faculty are conducting important work in the intersecting fields of medicine and technology. UCF's Disability, Aging and Technology (DAT) Cluster designs, develops and disseminates practical and affordable interventions to help people with disabilities and older adults move better and smarter, reintegrating people using technology while promoting health and wellbeing.



The faculty associated with this effort work against a backdrop where:

- Advances in medicine and technology are helping people live longer despite advanced age and previously life-ending traumatic injuries;
- Assistive technology has provided some independence and improved quality of life, but many chronic conditions lack effective preventative medical treatment or cure and strain our healthcare system; and
- An increasing array of technological innovations are available to patients and caregivers to support self-management, maintenance of functional abilities and care delivery, but their practical application remains critical targets for research, education and service.

One of the members of the UCF DAT initiative, Dr. Ladda Thiamwong, PhD, RN, and one of the members of our Mayor's Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging, has been working on a National Institutes of Health (NIH) project focused on technology-based fall risk assessments in low-income older adults at Kinneret Apartments senior tower in Orlando. In the initial study, Orlando residents were able to significantly reduce their fall risk and improve their quality of life using an affordable intervention that did not require special training. Additional grant funds are being pursued through NIH to expand the program to benefit less privileged socioeconomic groups who cannot travel for services or have limited resources.

TOGETHER, WE WILL...

Goal G.1 – Assess and support services designed to reach older adults in need who are vulnerable and isolated, as well as their caregivers.

- **Action Item G.1.1:** Continue to provide financial support to community partners who provide nutrition, healthcare, medical, and other wrap-around services to vulnerable seniors through the City’s Community Investment Program.
- **Action Item G.1.2:** Educate older adults about options for improving their access to healthy food, including but not limited to, availability of delivery service options, farmer’s markets, Hebni’s food and nutrition program and Fresh Stop Mobile Food Market, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, as well as congregate and home-delivered meals programs.
- **Action Item G.1.3:** Increase awareness about caregiving and caregiver support. Specifically, develop or expand recreation and neighborhood programs to reduce social isolation experienced by many caregivers, with special focus on communities with health disparities.
- **Action Item G.1.4:** In partnership with appropriate subject-area experts, complete an assessment of Orlando residents over 55 years old to determine the types and amount of healthcare support services needed.

Goal G.2 – Explore new and innovative approaches to providing healthcare and related services.

- **Action Item G.2.1:** Explore telehealth in the city’s senior centers and recreation centers with an emphasis on communities of concern, and to significantly reduce health inequities.
- **Action Item G.2.2:** Take advantage of existing and emergent technologies to assist people to age in place at home, such as unobtrusive monitoring of activity to identify changes in health, digital technologies that help people stay in touch with family and friends, and other assistive technologies.
- **Action Item G.2.3:** Partner with community organizations to educate policy makers, health professionals, community organizations, businesses, and families about ways to interact and communicate with people living with dementia.
- **Action Item G.2.4:** Explore creation of an innovation fund, perhaps in partnership with the Central Florida Foundation or other donors, to support age- and dementia-friendly community projects.
- **Action Item G.2.5:** Coordinate with community partners to support the work of the Department of Elder Affairs’ Dementia Care and Cure Initiative (DCCI) Task Force for Central Florida including grassroots programs such as Dementia-Friendly Dining in Central Florida.

Goal G.3 – Enhance older adults’ health, safety, and welfare through education and emergency preparedness.

- **Action Item G.3.1:** Educate and empower people of all ages and abilities to positively affect their own health and wellbeing through engaging in healthy behaviors (e.g., being physically active, eating healthy food, staying engaged) as well as understanding and working to improve the social conditions that influence how well people age.
- **Action Item G.3.2:** Collaborate with community partners who are experts on fraud, elder abuse, and financial exploitation to raise awareness of warning signs and avenues for assistance through various social and traditional media.
- **Action Item G.3.3:** Improve emergency preparedness and systems for ensuring the safety of older adults and people with special needs in response to natural disasters such as tropical storms and hurricanes.
- **Action Item G.3.4:** Improve city personnel’s knowledge of mental health issues, procedures, and practices for dealing with people with conditions such as dementia.

Communication & Information

WE ENVISION...

...an Age-Friendly Orlando in which an effective communication system reaches and engages community members of all ages, including older adults.

WE HEARD...

- Orlando’s older adults do not feel adequately informed. Only 29% of the respondents to our Age-Friendly Community Livability Survey think that community information is accessible.
- Respondents noted in various comments that the digital divide was a significant concern particularly to people who may not have financial resources or even the desire to access information via the internet.
- A number of people stated that teaching older adults how to navigate and use smart phones should be done, identifying this idea as an opportunity for an intergenerational program.
- Respondents also noted that the types of information they desired were services and how to access those services, community events, crime and personal safety, as well as what they called “need to know” and “good to know” phone numbers.

“THE SENIOR CENTERS ARE FANTASTIC & SHOULD BE PROMOTED MORE. MY MOTHER IS 94 & I FIND THE SYSTEMS FOR GETTING HELP FOR HER ARE VERY FRAGMENTED. YOU CAN’T GO TO ONE PLACE & GET ALL THE INFO YOU NEED...”
– ORLANDO RESIDENT

WE ARE...

Improving access and engaging older adults through effective communications. Many communication methods are already utilized by the City of Orlando to engage our older adult population including the City’s www.orlando.gov website which was recently upgraded to be more intuitive, connect to social media channels, direct outreach through Office of Communications and Neighborhood Services, Office of Community Affairs, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, and departmental communications related to specific projects. Please note that the City’s senior centers and recreation centers have individual webpages including programs and events for our older adult population. Because there is always room for improvement, we will further explore ways to strengthen our engagement as we implement this age-friendly action plan. Of course, other organizations are providing invaluable information to older adults living in the City of Orlando and their efforts should be recognized.

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs' website (www.elderaffairs.org) and their Livable Florida webpage provides access to a wealth of information and resources for Florida's older adults on programs and services including:

- Mental Wellness
- Elder Helpline 1-800-963-5337 (available in Spanish as well)
- Housing Options
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Transportation
- Caregiving
- Elder Protection Program
- Guardian
- Senior Companion Program
- Food Assistance
- Medicaid Long Term Service
- Nutrition Programs
- SHINE (Senior Health Insurance Needs of Elders)



NEWSLTR

A PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS

AGE-FRIENDLY LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Click [here](#) for more information on Age-Friendly Livable Communities.

SUBSCRIBE AND STAY INFORMED
To subscribe to this newsletter, click [here](#) or email us at LivableFL@elderaffairs.org.

Sarasota's Age-Friendly Library Program

Susan Berger
Aging System Policy Coordinator
Sarasota County Health and Human Services

Age-Friendly Sarasota is a county-wide effort to promote active, engaged, and healthy living for people of all ages.

Sarasota County, with full support from the Board of County Commissioners, took the lead of this initiative in 2019. The Age-Friendly process is one of continuous quality improvement, and we look for new and creative ways to keep the lens focused on our aging population.

With that said, it's a perfect time for Age-Friendly Sarasota and Sarasota County Libraries to come together to support "A is for Aging," a collection of books that portray older adults and aging in a positive light for young readers.



ABOVE Tim Fortier, children's book author and Sarasota resident, enjoys reading about the "A is for Aging" book collection.

The "A is for Aging" brochure includes titles for children under the age of 5 to explore a variety of aging experiences. It includes stories through the eyes of grandparents, neighbors, or famous late bloomers.

During Children's Book Week (November 8-14, 2021), Sarasota's

Age-Friendly Library Program was pleased to share a list of Age-Friendly selections to inspire new understanding of our aging communities and the value they bring to our youngest residents.

agefriendly Sarasota.org/blog/a-is-for-aging.html



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Several helpful reports and publications can be found on the Livable Florida webpage including the 2021 Florida Action Plan on Aging, Caregiver Toolkit, Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementia (ADRD) Resource Guide, and Fraud Trends and Scam Information.

Livable Florida also publishes Elder Update, a quarterly publication available in print and online which includes the annual Disaster Resource Guide. It can be delivered to older adults at their address free of charge. Sign-up instructions are provided on their website.

Livable Florida also publishes the Livable Communities e-Newsletter bi-monthly, sharing resources and best practices of Florida's Age-Friendly communities.

The Senior Resource Alliance – Aging and Disability Resource Center website (www.seniorresourcealliance.org) provides additional resources for Central Florida’s older adults which we highlighted more fully under the Community Support & Health Systems domain. Information on their website is provided in English, Spanish, and French. Of special note is their Elder Helpline at 1-866-41-ELDER [3-5337].



Finally, Orange County Government’s Office on Aging and Commission on Aging provide a tremendous amount of information to older adults throughout Orange County, including Orlando residents. The Commission on Aging provides direct links to Orange County Governments’ senior centers and recreation centers offering programming for older adults, and they provide a clearinghouse of resources and services for elders (both in print through their *Community Resources for Elders* publication and on-line at www.ocfl.net/seniors).

The *Community Resources for Elders* publication is distributed by Orange County Elder Ambassador volunteers. The Elder Ambassador initiative is a free community outreach program designed to increase awareness of elder services and opportunities in Central Florida. Volunteer Elder Ambassadors provide community education by offering free presentations to neighborhood groups, faith communities, and other organizations. Volunteers can also participate as a vendor at local health fairs.

The Orange County Office and Commission on Aging also provides a monthly newsletter loaded with invaluable information and the host events and programming such as the LIFE Life Information for Elders seminar series (in partnership with the Orange County Library System).

These informative seminars typically occur at the Orlando Public Library in Downtown Orlando (they were virtual during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic) and feature such topics as Dementia Sensitivity, Elder Law, the AARP Age-Friendly Network, and How to Talk To Your Doctor among many others.



In addition, Orange County offers special programming on Orange TV called the Vital Living Forum. The Vital Living Forum is an hour-long talk show that highlights local services, resources, and opportunities for older adults living in Central Florida. Over 40 shows have been produced on topics ranging from medical, housing and transportation, to life topics and positive aging. The show airs in Orange County on Orange TV (Spectrum Bright House 488/AT&T U-Verse 99/Comcast 9). All the shows can also be watched on Orange TV anytime, anywhere in the world at www.orangetvfl.net. Direct links to the Vital Living Forum shows by topic can be found here on the Orange County Office on Aging webpage here: www.ocfl.net/seniors.

TOGETHER, WE WILL...

Goal H.1 – Develop an Age-Friendly Communications and Implementation Strategy.

- **Action Item H.1.1:** Develop a strategic Communications Plan that will serve as a roadmap for age-friendly communications across all channels including both traditional and new media.
- **Action Item H.1.2:** Conduct and analyze marketing research about the communications preferences of older adults, including national and local trends, as well as understanding best practices of other cities when informing older residents about resources, services, and activities.
- **Action Item H.1.3:** Enhance and expand communication channels using the above-mentioned marketing research and best practices, and by collaborating with community partners to expand reach.

- **Action Item H.1.4:** Promote senior centers, recreation centers, neighborhood associations, and faith-based organizations as places where information exchanges can and should be concentrated.
- **Action Item H.1.5:** Promote the Florida Department of Elder Affairs' Livable Florida Initiative and the various resources available to older adults through their network.
- **Action Item H.1.6:** Promote the Senior Resource Alliance and their efforts to inform and educate older adults about the various programs and services that are available to Orlando residents.
- **Action Item H.1.7:** Explore the creation of a staff position dedicated solely to collaborating with partner organizations, communicating with, and educating the public, and further implementing this Livable Orlando Initiative Age Friendly Action Plan.

Goal H.2 – Coordinate with Orange County's Office on Aging to share information relevant to older adults living in Orlando and Orange County.

- **Action Item H.2.1:** As members of the AARP Age-Friendly Network of States and Communities, further develop and enhance a working partnership with the Orange County Office on Aging to share information and resources of interest to older adults in both jurisdictions.
- **Action Item H.2.2:** Promote and participate fully in the Orange County Elder Ambassador initiative and/or explore the creation of a similar program in the City of Orlando.

Goal H.3 – Build individual and community resiliency.

- **Action Item H.3.1:** Develop and implement strategies to disseminate emergency preparedness information to older adults and caregivers, and involve more older adults and people with disabilities in neighborhood emergency preparation and safety programs across generations.
- **Action Item H.3.2:** Engage faith- and community-based organizations in disaster preparedness training for older adults.
- **Action Item H.3.3:** Provide training on emergency preparedness to older adults, their families and caregivers, as well as organizations serving older adults (e.g., senior centers, home meal delivery volunteers, etc.).

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CREATIVITY & INNOVATION: LINKING THE BUILT & SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS



Artwork created by an **Art's the Spark** participant, a program offered by the Orlando Museum of Art for those living with memory or neurological impairments, such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

GRANDMA'S TALES

By Cheyanne

(North Quarter – Orlando, Florida)

Taught that innocence stays only a while
Before an inevitable thief steals that faultless nature of the child.
A silver haired woman, young at heart and fierce in word,
Says she's seen too much to sugar coat. Her ears, too, have heard
Tongues tell more stories than her head can hold.
I listen, even when I've heard before.

Between abandonment, losing a child, lovers with bad intentions,
Having known love and joy that ended with anger and resentment,
She was taught how painful life can be.
She teaches it to me.
Now aware that forgetting with time is a fallacy of the mind,
I recite her wisdom like nursery rhymes.

Poem written as part of the 2021 Words & Wisdom Poetry Contest.

Creativity & Innovation: Linking the Built & Social Environments

Building Community Through Art & Poetry

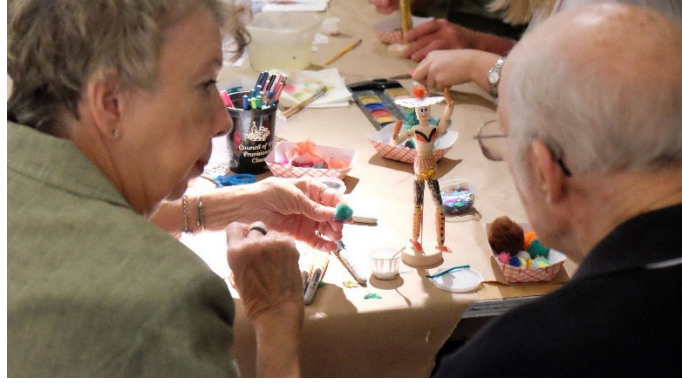
Orlando is blessed to have a vibrant and talented arts community, and we certainly wanted to highlight that creative spirit in our Livable Orlando age-friendly action plan process, particularly the Orlando Museum of Art's "Art's The Spark" program, our 2021 AARP Community Challenge Grant "Tables of Connection" project, the Bringing Kindness to the Table: Picnic Table Public Art project, and our Words & Wisdom poetry contest.

ORLANDO MUSEUM OF ART (OMA): ART'S THE SPARK PROGRAM



Through interactive tours of the Orlando Museum of Art's exhibitions, the Art's the Spark program gives those living with memory impairment, or any other neurological impairment, such as early-stage Alzheimer's disease or Parkinson's disease, and their healthy caregivers a fun experience, and expressive outlet and an opportunity for adult discussions. Art's the Spark is based on a similar program at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York and is the only one of its kind in Central Florida.

Art's the Spark provides a safe environment for members of the community who may have lost their memory but not their imagination and a forum for dialogue through looking at and making art. OMA professional educators lead small group tours in the Museum's galleries during non-public hours, offering an experience designed to use fine art as a catalyst for discussion and reminiscing. After the tour, healthy caregivers enjoy social time with other caregivers with coffee and conversation while their loved ones engage in a studio art activity. Take home images are provided to extend the experience. The program is free for both participants and caregivers.



The images above feature Art's the Spark program participants. This Livable Orlando age-friendly action plan is blessed to have images of the artwork created by Art's the Spark program participants throughout this plan document.

2021 AARP COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANT – “TABLES OF CONNECTION”

In April 2021, Orlando submitted the Tables of Connection grant application as part of AARP’s Community Challenge Grant process to:

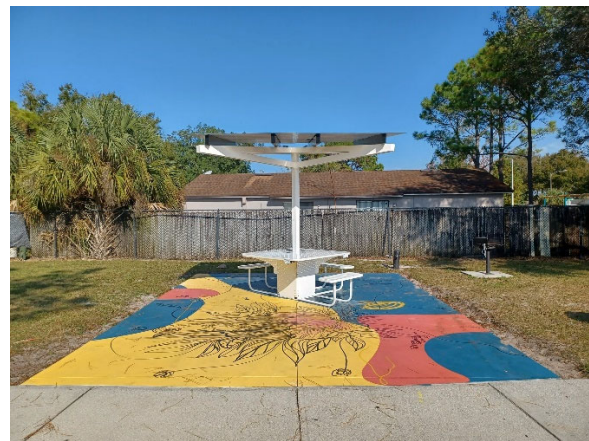
- Increase internet access in two underserved Orlando neighborhoods (providing a gateway to jobs, benefits, and education);
- Provide a pleasing, eye-catching, outdoor, socially-distanced, wheelchair accessible/ADA compliant gathering place for the enjoyment of all residents, but with an age-friendly focus on grandparents over the age of 50 who are taking care of their grandchildren; and
- Provide essential communication and back-up power for the surrounding neighborhood in a power outage (important when considering an electrical grid increasingly vulnerable to natural disasters and cyber-threats).

After reviewing over 3,560 applications across the United States (144 applications in Florida), AARP selected our Tables of Connection project with an award of \$20,000. Orlando was one of 243 total grantees from across the country, with eight (8) grantees here in Florida. The grant dollars were spent on the purchase of one of the resiliency tables and to pay artists for their beautiful and inspiring artwork.

As part of this grant, the City installed a solar-operated table and shade structure in each of two (2) neighborhood parks, Prince Hall Park and Willows Park.



*Prince Hall Park – 4416 Prince Hall Boulevard
(District 6)*



*Willows Park – 3101 Willow Bend Boulevard
(District 5)*

The tables are outfitted with Wi-Fi hotspots and charging stations which connect residents to the internet, and which can charge up to four (4) wireless devices and power four (4) laptops at once. The tables bring needed connectivity to these areas in which 57% and 33% of residents

lack broadband service, much higher than the Orlando average of 18%. Rated for 175 mph winds, each table can provide critically important services to residents after a disaster, allowing people to charge phones, call loved ones, restore services, and get access to emergency information during a power outage. The City hopes to replicate these resiliency tables in at least 14 other locations over the next few years.

What really set this project apart was the community engagement and art component. The City worked with the Downtown Arts District to identify artists of color and to help coordinate the purchasing of supplies which included donations from Home Depot. Local artists Peterson Guerrier and German Lemus met with neighborhood residents and painted the concrete pads on which the Tables of Connection sit with images that have special meaning to people in the neighborhood, all to provide a colorful, unique park amenity. We are very proud of the results and want to extend our gratitude to AARP, the Downtown Arts District, as well as Home Depot for making this quick action project possible.



Prince Hall Park – February 10, 2022 Unveiling Event (Pictured from left to right: Dean Grandin – Chair of the Mayor’s Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging, Orlando Police Chief Orlando Rolon, District 6 Commissioner Bakari Burns, Mayor Buddy Dyer, artist German Lemus with his daughter Ariana).

BRINGING KINDNESS TO THE TABLE: PICNIC TABLE ART PROJECT

In March 2022, a call for artists to participate in another creative “table” project was announced. The City of Orlando, in partnership with the Downtown Arts District and the One Orlando Alliance, launched an uplifting public art concept called “Bringing Kindness the Table”. This program allowed the City to purchase twenty-four picnic tables to be painted by local artists with messages of hope, inspiration, love, and kindness. Once completed, the picnic tables were strategically in parks located throughout the city. This initiative helps to support economic vitality and results in civic pride, essentially creating a sense of place and enjoyment for those who live and visit our community.



The theme of love and kindness ties into the Acts of Love and Kindness movement grown out of the spirit of giving and good deeds witnessed in the aftermath of the tragedy at Pulse Nightclub on June 12, 2016. The One Orlando Alliance mobilized this movement to inspire the Orlando community and beyond. LGBTQ+ artists, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) artists, and artists with disabilities were highly encouraged to participate. This initiative launched as part of the One Orlando Alliance’s Acts of Love and Kindness Kick-off event at Langford Park on April 23, 2022. Participants of the event were encouraged to engage in volunteerism, share stories, and strengthen our community through acts of love and kindness in the 49 days between April 25 and June 12, in memory of the 49 Pulse angels. The images below show several of the tables painted by our amazing local artists.



From left to right: Barbara Hartley – Executive Director of the Downtown Arts District, Mayor Buddy Dyer, Josh Bell – Executive Director of One Orlando Alliance, and Patty Sheehan, District 4 Commissioner

WORDS & WISDOM POETRY CONTEST

To create a fresh approach to our community engagement strategy for the Livable Orlando: An Age-Friendly Initiative, and to have some fun, we worked with the Mayor’s Office to transform our quarterly Words & Wonders poetry contest with the theme Words & Wisdom. The contest webpage invited people to *“share their experiences with wisdom, a rare and often hard-earned quality to be treasured. Where do you find wisdom, and what wisdom would you offer to others? A poem can spring from moments of regret, epiphany, humorous wit, or sincere advice to a younger generation; it can tell a story through which lessons are learned, or a major insight breaks through daily life to change everything. Wisdom can come from a great-grandparent or the innocent observations of a three-year-old, so new to the world.”*

The contest opened on August 23, 2021 and closed on November 19, 2021. Winners were selected by Orlando’s Poet Laureate – Shawn Welcome, and announced during the week of November 22, 2021 on the City’s website and social media channels. Dozens of submissions were received from Orlando’s amazing poetic voices (and beyond), with poets ranging in age from 16 to 73. In addition to the recognition described above, winning poems have also been included in our Action Plan document (please see Appendix D).



Shawn Welcome is a long time Orlando resident and University of Central Florida graduate. He has been highly involved in the Orlando community, including facilitating poetic expression since 2006 through "Diverse Word," a weekly poetry night he launched that features local literary artists from across Central Florida.

Placemaking, Mobility, and Open Space Innovation

According to the book **Restorative Cities: Urban Design for Mental Health and Wellbeing**, by Jenny Roe and Layla McCay, scientific research has indicated that experiencing nature in the form of parks and natural areas (green space) and urban water settings (lakes, streams, ponds or “blue space”) can help improve mental wellbeing, reduce stress and the risk of depression, manage the symptoms of anxiety disorders, ADHD, and dementia, and generally improve cognitive capacity. Access to water may be of particular importance for emotional wellbeing across the generations, in children and older people. Roe and McCay note that innovative urban design approaches should focus on maximizing green space and blue space in terms of quantity, quality, and accessibility throughout the community, with specific investment for children, youth, and older people. Finally, the authors emphasize that we should encourage “playable” cities that nurture creativity, learning, social interaction, and civic engagement.

The City of Orlando believes that partnerships in innovation with the private sector are critical to livability and placemaking. One example is the planned GreenLink project in the Lake Nona development in Southeast Orlando. The GreenLink will replace approximately 3,377 linear feet of what was originally planned as an east-west roadway with conventional infrastructure with a vibrant multi-purpose amenity that contains both mobility and stormwater functions within a beautiful linear park and open space setting.



GreenLink will act as an alternative to the traditional treatment of stormwater (a series of stormwater pipes, buried underground) by turning it into a feature. GreenLink will celebrate stormwater in the form of an open waterway that will flow over a series of weirs from the west (Lake Nona Town Center) to the east into an existing lake in the Laureate Park residential neighborhood. Recirculation of water from the existing lake to a series of source points on the west end of GreenLink will ensure water is always flowing. Stormwater from adjacent development parcels will be treated before entering the waterway including the planting of littoral plants along the length of the waterway. And the eastern end of GreenLink is envisioned as a celebratory transition of the waterway into the existing lake.

Active transportation will be a primary focus of GreenLink with the inclusion of a dedicated Cycle Track, Electric Vehicle Lane for Move Nona (Beep) autonomous vehicles, and pedestrian sidewalks. This will provide residents and visitors of Lake Nona and Laureate Park with safe, alternative modes of transportation and experiences.



Livability is a key component of GreenLink. Its 7.6 acres of amenities will allow for social engagement through impromptu encounters of neighbors and friends. The Park Square (approximately 2 acres in size) will allow for community engagement with pop-up activities, such as art exhibits and food truck events. Park Square is the heart of GreenLink and offers residents multiple opportunities for urban relaxation and different levels of engagement along the waterway. Park Square will encourage people to gather and explore the waterway and its water sources, along with features such as a playground, fountain, flex lawn, and outdoor gathering places.



Consistent throughout GreenLink is the location of a landscape buffer between the Cycle Track and the Electric Vehicle Lane to allow for planting of shade trees, providing opportunities of respite from the Florida heat. And of course, GreenLink will create the opportunity for the enjoyment of wildlife habitat in an urban setting. Cleaner air and cleaner stormwater will be a natural result of GreenLink.



The Specific Parcel Master Plan for GreenLink has already been approved by the Southeast Town Design Review Committee and Orlando City Council. As development of Lake Nona's Mixed-Use District is currently underway, it is anticipated that the GreenLink will be timed with that development and in place for residents and visitors to enjoy within the next 3 to 5 years.

Looking Ahead

Approval Process

- Once the *Livable Orlando: An Age-Friendly Initiative Action Plan 2022-2025* is accepted by the Orlando City Council, it will be forwarded on to AARP and ultimately the World Health Organization.

Implementation & Evaluation

- The implementation of the *Livable Orlando: An Age-Friendly Initiative Action Plan 2022-2025* will be directed by Mayor's Office staff in partnership with specific city departments over the next four years. Implementation will be periodically evaluated over time in accordance with the schedule outlined by the AARP Age-Friendly Network of Age-Friendly Communities program. The results of this initiative will be provided to the community to ensure appropriate transparency and accountability.
- The implementation effort will be guided by the Mayor's Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging, using the 25 specific goals and 89 action items found in the succeeding Appendix A – Action Items Matrix.
- Our goal is that existing business and community partnerships will be enhanced and new partnerships will be created, to effectively implement the action plan.

Intersecting Initiatives

- This *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan* is a component of Orlando's comprehensive planning efforts and will be fully integrated into other plans and processes and vice versa including the Growth Management Plan, Future-Ready City Master Plan, Green Works Community Action Plan, and the Vision Zero Action Plan among others.

Call to Action

This *Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan* has identified significant challenges for all of us – residents, public agencies, the private sector, nonprofit service providers, and cultural institutions. But it also gives us opportunities to transform the way we think about aging. Quite simply, our goal is to make the Orlando community a place to live better for longer, and for our city to be more accessible for everyone. In the next four years, our initiative will focus on improving the built and social environment to equitably enhance the lives of Orlando residents of all ages.



orlando.gov/agefriendly