

County Forum on Creating a More Aging-Friendly Community Ideas from July 10, 2013 Forum at Herndon Senior Center

Number of participants: 102

50+ Community Forums were held across the county. The public was invited to participate in the process of developing the 2013/2014 50+ Action Plan. At most of the meetings, after a brief introductory session, the participants were invited to participate in two of five small group discussions focused on the following topics: Housing, Transportation, Community Engagement, Safe & Healthy Community, and Services. At the end of each small group session, the participants were asked to vote on the three ideas or initiatives that they thought were most important. The votes for particular ideas were totaled in the "Number of Votes" column of the forum data. Some smaller forum participants did not have the opportunity to vote.

SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY

COMMENTS	NUMBER OF VOTES
Provide a list of vetted contractors.	6
Start a pilot program that would provide in-home medical care.	4
Use technology to support safety.	4
Transportation is a barrier to seniors getting out.	4
Screen calls and use answering machines to avoid telemarketers; Create senior "Just Say No Program".	4
Establish buddy walking programs.	4
Create phone buddy systems.	2
Provide halls for seniors to meet, network and socialize (other than at a senior center).	2
Look into how the county can provide information to the deaf community.	2
Assign student volunteers to help with grocery shopping.	2
Promote in home safety resources.	2
Put together neighborhood supper clubs.	2
Promote in home safety resources.	2
Access neighborhood list services to reach community members.	1
Create community volunteer coordinators.	1
Organize crafts, games and community building activities.	1
Organize a neighborhood speaker series.	1
Start a book club or gardening club for seniors.	1
Have local theaters host movie nights for seniors.	1
Obtain more involvement from houses of worship.	1
Provide training around using the "Do Not Call List".	1
Have patrols along bike paths.	1
Provide better access to grocery stores (twice a month visit is not enough).	1
Use volunteers to help carry groceries.	1
Offer mobile social workers that can help seniors navigate the system.	1
Support parishioners that do not have family.	0
Provide intergenerational activities like gardening and cooking.	0
Hold community block parties.	0
Arrange for swimming pools to be heated.	0
Install rails along walking paths.	0
Bring Farmers Markets to senior communities.	0

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMENTS	NUMBER OF VOTES
Let the community use schools for engagement opportunities.	4
Have young people on serve on boards; recognize the strength of the community.	3
Fairfax County needs to become more visible and communicate what it has to offer.	2
Have junior high school children teach seniors computers and social marketing at their school.	2
Create more senior speaker groups and bureaus.	2
Create intergenerational opportunities with Adult Day Health Care collaboration; utilize schools to provide mentoring interaction reciprocity.	1
Communicate to seniors who are not in senior centers to let them know about programs, services, classes that are eliminated/reduced and any issues.	1
Invite well-educated seniors to share their skills and experiences.	0
Get churches involved in community engagement with seniors.	0
Focus on reaching the unreachable.	0
Use senior talent in a job bank.	3
Use a senior volunteer in a senior community and have the senior run the program.	3
Form a RSVP Volunteer Fairfax program for seniors.	3
Build a shepherd Center in Herndon and Reston.	3
Create a volunteer bank.	2

TRANSPORTATION

COMMENTS	NUMBER OF VOTES
Provide transportation to medical appointments and shopping trips.	13
Make seniors aware of transportation options.	10
Put sidewalks on both sides of the street.	10
Liability for volunteer drivers prevents some people from volunteering.	9
Use shuttles for direct destinations sponsored by businesses. There can be a charge for this if needed.	9
Put benches and shelters at bus stops.	7
More direct bus routes are needed.	6
Transportation should service senior centers.	6
Provide training on traveling/transportation.	5
Ensure the schedule for rides is reliable.	5
Bus signs don't have enough information regarding schedule/destination on them.	5
Handicapped parking spaces need more enforcement.	4
More neighborhood shuttles are needed.	4
Benches and shelters are needed at bus stops.	4
Provide transportation options for the blind and people with low vision.	4
Grocery/pharmacy delivery is an issue for those who don't use computers or have low vision.	3
Provide access to different senior centers.	3
Put bus stops in malls for safety.	2
Provide training on travel.	2
Install audible pedestrian signals.	1
Plan for technical transportation changes such as self-driving cars.	1
There are long wait times for transportation during off-peak hours.	1
There is no transportation for older adults and caregivers in Great Falls.	1
Fastran vans are canceled due to low registration.	0

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TRANSPORTATION

COMMENTS	NUMBER OF VOTES
There is a change of bus drivers too frequently.	0
Change shuttle schedules to different days/times.	0
Provide Information in a centralized location.	0

SERVICES (Group 1)

COMMENTS	NUMBER OF VOTES
What services are needed to live at home?	
Improved transportation services.	7
More handyman services are needed for seniors.	5
Nurses and Aides to help with ADLs and Life Alert to call for help if needed.	2
What comments do you have to help people stay at home?	
Lower taxes for organizations and businesses that help seniors stay at home.	5
Lower tax rates have low income.	4
Build parks and more open spaces.	1

SERVICES (Group 2)

COMMENTS	NUMBER OF VOTES
What services are needed to live at home?	
Fastran's wait list is too long.	7
Transportation to grocery stores, trips, doctors' appointments, etc. is needed.	6
Create a job search program for seniors.	5
Expand transportation services.	3
Expand Meals on Wheels drivers' program (i.e. Senior Express).	3
Make available specialists that can counsel seniors on how to stay in their homes.	2
Provide aides and caregivers to help seniors stay in their homes.	0
Where can you go for help?	
Seniors need to know where to go for help and what resources are available.	11
Have help available that doesn't require the use of a computer to access it. Some seniors don't use computers.	2
Some housing lists have closed wait lists.	2
How you can help seniors with housing needs?	
Volunteer.	3
Have senior centers and volunteer groups do monthly lunches for seniors and guest speakers. Provide information and help with transitioning. Some senior centers do this and have 70-90 seniors attend.	3
Be part of a neighborhood watch for seniors living at home.	2
Have partnerships with businesses to sponsor senior centers.	1
Assist with membership fees.	1
Services – Comments	
Promote ElderLink services through social media to share information on what services are available.	12
Make available someone knowledgeable to call if you need help (e.g. the Health Advocate at the Shepherd Center).	7
Offer education classes, especially on how to scan photos. Offer craft classes, etc. for men.	5
Give incentives to geriatric physicians and nurses to retain them. Partner with GMU.	5
Have Geriatric Care Coordinators that you can talk to and who know the community.	4
Offer more personal care services in homes (i.e. hair, nail, foot, etc.).	3

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SERVICES (Group 2)

COMMENTS	NUMBER OF VOTES
Services – Comments	
Put concierges at libraries to guide people.	3
More handyman services are needed for seniors.	3
Provide temporary or long term caregivers through ElderLink.	1
Recommend service providers for yard work, snow removal, etc.	1
Provide more information on "Managing your own health".	1
Create business partnerships like the Microsoft one at the Sheppard Center.	1
Provide Alzheimer's support for those diagnosed and their families.	1
Have home care agencies convey county information.	1
Give incentives to personal care providers who go to seniors homes.	1
When people turn 50 have the county mail information about available services and related information.	1
Have services like the Adult and Aging Intake line 703-324-7948.	0
Have community and senior centers give out information on services available.	0
Partner with faith communities and churches to get information out and have a coordinator to contact.	0
Create FAAA screened services like Angie's List does.	0
Have neighborhood group vetting and provide references.	0
Have an article in the Golden Gazette on how to start a memory café.	0

HOUSING (Group 1)

COMMENTS	NUMBER OF VOTES
What do you see as needs?	
Provide affordable homes with a universal design.	5
Builders need to build accessible, one level homes.	5
Create a more universal design in homes now.	4
Improve visibility around step barriers.	3
Lawns and snow removal need to be maintained.	2
There needs to be increased exterior lighting.	2
We need doctors who make house calls.	1
Don't build split level homes.	1
Provide senior housing with medical services.	0
Prevent falls by creating wider doorways, installing railings and providing accessible full baths in homes.	0
Improve handicapped parking.	0

HOUSING (Group 2)

COMMENTS	NUMBER OF VOTES
Housing Options	
More available and affordable housing is needed including section 8 housing.	16
Create co-housing and cooperative housing.	5
Real estate taxes are a concern.	4
	4
Use the "Green House" and "Clustered" models for home design.	4
Create apartments and townhomes with universal design.	4
Make available homes that people can grow old in.	2
Build more senior housing.	1

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HOUSING (Group 2)

COMMENTS	NUMBER OF VOTES
Provide more assisted living housing.	1
Great Falls has large homes on big lots that may have problems (e.g. sewer issues).	1
The waiting lists are too long for section 8 rental housing.	1
It's too late for current retirees to plan for retirement so they may not have the funds needed.	0
Features to change in a home after a fall or stroke: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remodel the home • Add ramps • Add elevators • Widen hallways • Change door levers • Add good external lighting • Provide emergency help for people in wheelchairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible bathrooms • Lower peepholes in doors • Lower switches and outlets • Raise switches and outlets for wheelchairs • Install showers that you can roll into instead of stepping into • Add alarms/call for help buttons • Provide more lighting in stairwells 	4