Building an Age-friendly Austin

Prepared by AustinUP, in partnership with the City of Austin Commission on Seniors and AARP Texas

November, 2017
An Age-friendly Austin: Background and Introduction

Our nation’s 65-and-older population is projected to reach 83.7 million in the year 2050, almost double in size from the 2012 level of 43.1 million, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. These projections, as well as Austin’s changing demographics as seen in the 2010 U.S. Census, led to the formation of the Mayor’s Task Force on Aging. In 2012, Mayor Lee Leffingwell charged the Task Force with building public awareness, analyzing the current resources and opportunities for growth, and creating a set of strategic recommendations to accommodate Central Texas’ fast-growing senior population.

In its final report, the Task Force recommended that Austin be designated an “age-friendly” community under the AARP Network of Age-friendly Communities, an affiliate of the World Health Organization’s Age-friendly Cities and Communities Program. The recommendation was in clear response to the fact that Central Texas was in 2010, and remains today, among the fastest-growing areas for people between the ages of 55 and 64, as well as people 65 and over.

“Our may have a reputation as a youthful place, but it’s also getting older rapidly. The senior population has surged 91.7% since 2000, amid a general population boom. The share of seniors in the metro area has expanded from 7.2% to 9.2%, placing it third on the Forbes’ 2014 list of U.S. Cities Going Gray The Fastest.” (Forbes, October 2014)
Since 2013, important accomplishments have been achieved as a result of the work of the Task Force, including the formation of Austin’s Commission on Seniors and AustinUP, a non-profit that is working across sectors to raise the profile of our senior population and prepare the next generation for the future of aging. But without a specific plan to build an age-friendly Austin – one that included community-designed goals and strategies and earned the support of City leaders – Austin was still coming up short.

In 2015, Austin’s Commission on Seniors created a Working Group to develop a 5-year Action Plan to improve Austin’s age-friendly infrastructure primarily in eight areas: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and...
Employment, Communication and Information, and Community and Health Services, i.e., the Eight Domains of Livability. This report describes the work of and progress made by that Working Group.

Their effort will allow Austin to participate more fully in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities, which facilitates communication and collaboration among age-friendly cities in Texas and the U.S. Equally important, the effort also will support younger generations, i.e., the “elders” of tomorrow, by establishing policies and priorities that will benefit Austinites for years to come.

Our Mayor and City Council now recognize the importance of this project. On November 3, 2016, the Austin City Council voted to adopt the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan as an amendment to the Imagine Austin comprehensive plan, the city’s 30-year vision for its future.

The following pages include a profile of the Austin community, age-friendly “cross-checks” with the City of Austin’s Imagine Austin plan, the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan itself, lists of resources and support documents, as well as the names of people and organizations involved in this historic process.

We are proud to share our progress with you.
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Letter from Mayor Steve Adler

To Whom It May Concern;

On behalf of the City of Austin, I would like to extend my support and enthusiasm for age-friendly practices by joining the AARP/WHO Network of Age-Friendly Communities. Austin is a city known for its creativity, energy and vibrancy and now also has the nation’s fastest-growing population of people 55 and 64 and the second fastest-growing population of people 65 and over.

I would like to acknowledge and offer appreciation to the broad-based work group formed by the City of Austin Commission on Seniors to develop and implement the Age-Friendly Austin Plan. They have set the stage for Austin to become not only age-friendly, but age-progressive in support of our current and future residents regardless of their age. This demographic shift poses unique challenges and opportunities, but I am confident that our city is and will continue to be a great place to live – and grow old.

I look forward to exploring areas of overlap between the Age-Friendly Austin Plan and Imagine Austin, our city’s 30-year vision for the future as our city continues to age and simultaneously grow more vibrant. I also support further development of the Age-Friendly Austin Plan as the work-group examines key “domains of livability” and how they relate to older adults, i.e., outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, and health services.

Thank you for your attention and your consideration in this important matter in the City of Austin.

Sincerely,

Steve Adler
Mayor

The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request.
Community Profile

The Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Area (MSA) has experienced a phenomenal 48% growth over the past 13 years\(^1\), making it the third-fastest growing MSA in the nation from 2000-2010 and the fastest growing MSA from 2010-2011.\(^2\) That trend continues, as shown in the following charts.

Demographic data and charts featured in this report, courtesy of Ryan Robinson, City of Austin demographer.

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The city has received national attention from the growth of the aging population in particular: the Austin MSA has the fastest growing population of older adults, age 55 – 64, in the nation and the second-fastest growing population of adults, age 65 and older.³

³ Ibid.
In 2010, individuals age 65 and older made up 8% of the MSA population. It is projected that by 2040, nearly 20% of the Austin MSA population will be seniors.\(^4\) Currently, approximately 75% of all seniors in the MSA are Caucasian. By 2040, however, the Hispanic senior population is expected to nearly match that of the Caucasian senior population.\(^5\) Also, females make up more than half of the senior population in the MSA and about 1 in 3 senior females lives alone.\(^6\)

\(^4\) Ibid.
\(^5\) Ibid.
More than 37% of Travis County seniors have a disability\(^7\) and more than 5,600 seniors have an unmet housing need,\(^8\) which could lead to substandard living conditions and unaffordable housing. To compound the issue, an estimated 9,827 individuals age 50 and older in Travis County who have not yet exited the labor force are unemployed.\(^9\) Nearly 21% of the population age 50 and older lives at or below 200% of poverty.\(^10\)

A lack of healthcare providers for seniors in Central Texas is also an issue. The number of physicians accepting new patients with Medicare in Texas has dropped from 78% in 2000 to only 58% in 2012.\(^11\) An estimated 20% of Travis County residents care for an older relative,\(^12\) and that number is likely to grow as the costs of health care rise and access to health care diminishes.

As the population of Austin grows and ages, the City must adapt to serve the changing needs of its residents. City leaders will have to sharpen their focus on key components of urban planning, especially those directly affecting older adults. The Age-friendly Austin team looks forward to working with the Imagine Austin team to improve our community in these vital areas, which include health and healthcare, affordable housing and basic services, transportation and more.

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\(^10\) Ibid.


Good health enables seniors to thrive and to continue contributing to their families and communities, yet only 50% of Central Texans surveyed by the Mayor’s Task Force on Aging are confident their community will have the resources to help them lead a healthy lifestyle.

The main areas of concern in planning for senior health care are affordability, navigation of Medicare and Medicaid, and integration of mental health to care delivery. The region has taken steps to strengthen its medical infrastructure with the opening of Dell Medical School and the new Dell Seton teaching hospital in downtown Austin.

The growing senior population will test the region’s ability to meet complex health needs. This growth, coupled with fewer doctors accepting Medicare and Medicaid, could become a serious problem in the future. However, the recent investment in affordable, accessible and holistic care in Central Texas will build the foundation for a vibrant and productive senior community.

DEMENTIA AND ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

According to the Alzheimer’s Association, Texas is among the states that will be most impacted by the growing population of seniors living with Alzheimer’s or dementia. In Central Texas, where the growth rate in the senior population is sharper than the rest of the country, there will likely be a corresponding increase in the population living with dementia and Alzheimer’s.

Caring for the high need of seniors who are mentally ill often falls to long-term care and assisted living facilities and to communities where early-stage seniors choose to stay. Addressing the
The magnitude of the growth in this population will be of special concern to Central Texas. In the region, the population of seniors living with dementia and Alzheimer’s disease is expected to increase quickly. Based on the population projections for the individuals over 65, the region can expect to see significant numbers of seniors living with dementia and Alzheimer’s:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>65 and Over</th>
<th>Alzheimer’s</th>
<th>Dementia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>140,000</td>
<td>18,200</td>
<td>4,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2040</td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>91,000</td>
<td>22,750</td>
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*Sources: Austin City Demographer and Alzheimer's Association, 2012*

As the senior population in Central Texas grows, service providers will increasingly confront the challenges of meeting the healthcare needs of seniors living with dementia and Alzheimer’s. In the future, the issue will become magnified as those in the Baby Boomer generation live longer into the “oldest-old” category, where they are at a higher incidence for developing dementia and Alzheimer’s.

Service providers indicated that the stigma surrounding dementia and Alzheimer’s is also a barrier to consider when planning to meet the educational needs of caregivers and healthcare providers who will care for this growing population. There may also be a disincentive for primary care physicians, many of whom do not accept Medicare, to learn about issues related to caring for seniors with dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.

**SENIOR MENTAL HEALTH**

Late-life depression, substance abuse, and suicide constitute the primary threats to seniors’ mental well-being. Despite the increased exposure to mental health issues, seniors have few options in selecting mental health providers who specialize in geriatric issues within Central Texas. In addition, the region is faced with a limited funding landscape to provide for the increase expected in demand for mental health services. The integration of existing networks in mental health and aging services could leverage resources to help meet the challenges in serving the emerging population of seniors.

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14 Ibid.
There is a significant need for mental health services in populations over 55. For example, of all seniors who receive in-home care, about 13.5%, suffer from major depression. Depression rates for older adults in Central Texas are similar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Rate of Major Depression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55-60</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-65</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-70</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 and over</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Austin Travis Country Integral Care, 2012*

Seniors are also more likely to die by suicide than the general population. Approximately 65% of seniors who choose suicide do so after receiving a diagnosis of a chronic cognitive impairment such as Alzheimer’s, underscoring the importance of dementia education for seniors, caregivers and medical professionals.

Although there are a number of mental health provider organizations in Austin, there are very limited number of psychiatrists and counselors in the area who accept Medicare. Because there are so few, waiting times to see these providers is an average of six months. Seniors must rely on other community providers who may not necessarily specialize in mental health issues in the aging population. Furthermore, several mental health service providers in Austin report that physical health problems are a barrier to admission to non-geriatric psychiatric programs.

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The limited funding for mental health in Texas will continue to constrain the region’s ability to address mental health needs for seniors. However, an increase in mental health capacity would benefit Central Texas as a whole.

There are generational trends among younger seniors that may increase the demand for mental health services beyond that expected from the natural growth of the population. For baby boomers, there is less stigma around mental health issues and a preference for alternative approaches for treating mental illness in tandem with chronic physical conditions. This could increase not only the demand for mental health services, but also for innovative and senior-specific approaches to treatment.

Central Texas mental health providers have had success thus far operating in an environment with scarce funding for mental health. Providers have increased the number of psychiatric beds in the region, successfully co-located mental health services in community clinics, and trained medical staff in basic mental health first aid. A collaborative effort to bring senior issues to a more prominent role in mental health services would leverage existing provider networks and capacity in both areas.

**Imagine Austin Cross-check: Health**

The Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, which the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan is a part of, also tracks progress made regarding the health of the community as a whole.

*A person’s health and ability to make healthy choices is directly affected by where they work, live, learn and play. The Healthy Austin Program seeks to improve community health and addresses how health risk factors are directly affected by our surroundings. This priority program works to address key elements of community health including physical activity, recreation, access to healthy foods, strengthening the local food system, tobacco-free living, access to healthcare, and improving the built environment to support healthy living.*

*Austin is a relatively healthy city. Over the last five years Austin/Travis County has trended better than Texas and the nation on key health outcomes including obesity, smoking, physical activity, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. While this is reassuring, we continue to see disparities along racial, ethnic, and socio-economic lines within these same health outcomes.*

Imagine Austin Five-year Progress Report, October 2017
### Healthy Austin Indicators Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We're Improving</th>
<th>We Haven't Changed</th>
<th>Wrong Direction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent of residents with health care coverage</td>
<td>Prevalence of tobacco use</td>
<td>Prevalence of obesity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property crime rate per 1,000 population</td>
<td>Prevalence of smoking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prevalence of cardiovascular disease</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prevalence of diabetes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent of population that performs the recommended amount of physical activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Violent crime rate per 1,000 population</td>
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*Imagine Austin Five-year Progress Report, October 2017*

In 2018 and 2019, the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan team will work with the Imagine Austin staff and community organizations to track health and healthcare data, specifically focusing on our senior population. This data will guide Age-friendly Austin Action Plan implementation efforts.
Access to safe and affordable housing and nutritious food for a healthy diet are essential to a senior’s ability to age well. As the senior population in Austin and Central Texas grows, so will the demand for infrastructure and services to meet their basic needs. The most pressing issues seniors face are access to and affordability of services to meet their housing and dietary needs.

Nearly 9 out of 10 Travis County seniors live independently, but still require some assistance with daily activities or home modifications. Finding assistance at home can be more challenging for low-income seniors as they age. Of Central Texas seniors, nearly 16% are low-income, earning $20,000 or less per year. Home modifications, in-home care and other services necessary to stay in their own home can be prohibitively expensive for many low-income seniors.

18 Aging Services Council of Austin/Travis County and St. David’s Foundation Community Health Foundation, "Living Independently: Travis County’s Older Adults Speak on their Needs and the Challenges of Maintaining their Independence" (survey report, Travis County, 2006), 2, http://www.agingservicescouncil.org/documents/LivingIndependently.pdf

Nutrition and physical activity also play key roles in seniors’ quality of life. Poor nutrition and lack of physical activity can make seniors more susceptible to chronic illness, which can compromise health and become expensive to treat. Furthermore, problems associated with poor nutrition take a variety of forms, including obesity, malnutrition and hunger. Finally, the nutritional needs of seniors change as they age. However, many seniors are not aware of the importance of diet on their overall health.²⁰

**HOUSING AND BASIC NEEDS**

*A Survey by the Mayor’s Task Force on Aging*

- 67% own their own home
- 76% intend to live in their current home for the next 10 to 15 years
- 67% have not made modifications or repair to their home (and 65% do not plan to)
- 14% sometimes or often use a service that takes care of household chores; 42% are somewhat to very interested in using one

SENIOURS LIVING AT HOME

“Aging in place” refers to the choice seniors make to continue living in their own homes as they get older. Aging in place can be the most economical and fulfilling option for individuals trying to balance an independent lifestyle and still maintain the outside support they may need. A local survey conducted by the Mayor’s Task Force on Aging found that 76% of respondents intend to stay in their home for the next 10 to 15 years.

²⁰ Mary Teeters (Meals on Wheels Central Texas Vice President of Client Services) and Seanna Marceaux (Meals on Wheels Central Texas Director of Nutrition Services) in discussion with authors, February 1, 2013.
Of these respondents,

- 32% intend to stay in their home because it is “comfortable and secure” and;
- 22% want to stay because they “want to be near friends and family”

In order to preserve this independence, seniors must be able to receive the support services they need, as well as continue to maintain and modify their homes as they age. Furthermore, services must be offered in a manageable and affordable way.

**AFFORDABILITY OF RENTING VS. OWNING**

Housing affordability is another major challenge seniors face when trying to stay in their own homes. When asked about affordability of homes in Central Texas over the next 10 to 15 years, 62% of respondents to the Mayor's Task Force on Aging survey said they felt home options in Austin and Central Texas were unaffordable. In coming years, a large portion of the senior population is expected to move from central Austin to surrounding areas to escape the increasing costs of living. That shift is already occurring.

According to the *Austin-American Statesman*, the poverty rate among aging adults “has increased 42% in Central Texas over the last 10 years.”^21^ Available housing for low-income Austin seniors will severely diminish due to the rapid growth of the senior population and current housing waiting lists of at least one year.

The map below shows that more seniors are living farther from the city center, with higher concentrations of Travis County seniors now living in the far east, far northeast, far south and far west near Lago Vista and Jonestown. As seniors are forced to move farther out to find housing, they are farther from critical support services and more likely to suffer from a multitude of challenges as a result of isolation.

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BASIC NEEDS: FOOD SECURITY

With rapidly increasing rates of poverty among seniors in Central Texas, malnutrition and food insecurity pose serious threats to healthy aging. A quarter of respondents of a survey conducted by the Mayor’s Task Force on Aging reported that they worry their income will not cover their food expense. A quarter of respondents also reported that they lacked access to food they need for a balanced diet. Lack of access to quality and affordable foods, decreased mobility, and reliance on insufficient public benefits all contribute to food insecurity among seniors. Food insecurity is usually categorized into two levels, low and high. Low food insecurity is defined as reduced access to quality or variety in diet, while high food insecurity is considered a reduction in food intake due to lack of access. Results of research conducted by the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB) in 2010 further highlight the growing trend in Central Texas. Survey results indicated that 35.2% of respondents over the age of 65 were experiencing some level of food insecurity.  

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22 Teeters, Mary and Seanna Marceaux, conversation with Authors, 1 February 2013.

The main cause of food insecurity is poverty. The economic impacts of the recent recession and rising costs of living in Central Texas have negatively impacted seniors. According to U.S. Census data, the number of seniors living in poverty has increased by 42% in Central Texas over the last 10 years. From 2010 to 2012, the Central Texas Food Bank saw a 20% increase in the number of seniors accessing their services. In addition to local initiatives, national public programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) exist to combat the negative nutritional effects of poverty.

In Central Texas there are multiple organizations working to provide affordable, quality food options to seniors. Free services include congregate lunches, meals delivered in-home, grocery deliveries, and food banks and pantries. However, many of these programs are at capacity and some have strict eligibility requirements.

**Imagine Austin Cross-check: Housing**

*The Household Affordability Priority Program focuses on developing and maintaining household affordability throughout Austin. This Priority Program is responsible for considering not only household costs such as mortgage, rent, and utilities but also transportation and access to daily and weekly needs as essential and interrelated components of household affordability.*

*The Imagine Austin indicators associated with this priority program show complex and dynamic results from the past five years. In general, the affordability issue in Austin is dire, and certain groups in our community feel its consequences more acutely than others. Many indicators hint at the suburbanization of poverty or the displacement of low-income households from Austin. And while the City of Austin continues to leverage the tools we have to influence these distressing trends, tackling affordability in Austin in a comprehensive way is beyond the ability of the city government alone. Such a large-scale and difficult challenge requires considerable effort from a wide and diverse array of organizations, and the City of Austin will continue to rely on strong partnerships within our community to help us reach our vision of an Austin that is affordable and accessible to all.*

Imagine Austin Five-year Progress Report, October 2017


### Household Affordability Indicators Summary

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>We're Improving</th>
<th>We Haven't Changed</th>
<th>Wrong Direction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median family income</td>
<td>Residential vacancy rate</td>
<td>Median housing values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost-burdened residential units</td>
<td>Median gross rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homeless count</td>
<td>Number of affordable residential units funded</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Imagine Austin Five-year Progress Report, October 2017*

![Bar chart showing affordable residential units funded from 2010 to 2017.](chart.png)

*Imagine Austin Five-year Progress Report, October 2017*

Variation in affordable rental housing production is largely based on the development cycle. Leveraging local resources, such as 2006 and 2013 Affordable Housing Bonds with Low Income Housing Tax Credits from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), produces the maximum number of affordable rental housing units for the City of Austin and its residents. These bond programs have been instrumental in increasing the City’s affordable housing inventory.
Austin Area median home prices compared with median family income 1990 - 2016

Median Price | Median Family Income

$305,000 2016
$189,400 2010
$161,300 2005
$144,500 2000
$73,000 1990
$58,900 1990
$67,300 1990
$73,800 1990
$78,300 1990

Inset: central metropolitan Austin

Median Household Income, for Seniors

- No Data
- Less than $20,000
- $20,000 to $30,000
- $30,000 to $40,000
- $40,000 to $50,000
- $50,000 to $60,000
- $60,000 to $75,000
- $75,000 to $100,000
- $100,000 to $125,000
- $125,000 to $150,000
- $150,000 Plus

Building an Age-friendly Austin
In 2018 and 2019, the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan team will work with the Imagine Austin staff and community organizations to track housing and affordability data, specifically focusing on our senior population. This data will guide Age-friendly Austin Action Plan implementation efforts.
Transportation that is flexible, convenient, and affordable can have a powerful effect on seniors’ quality of life. With reliable transportation, seniors are able to access healthcare, shop for groceries, and socialize with friends and family. Austin’s current infrastructure is built around one’s ability to use a car as the primary means of transportation. However, driving might not be a safe or affordable option for aging seniors. Austin’s senior population is not only growing in number, but also getting older. The number of seniors that currently use cars will soon give way to a population that needs to seek alternative means for getting around.

Older Americans of all income levels will likely be transportation-dependent at some point in their lives, especially those 85 years of age and older. When seniors are unable to drive and family members aren’t available,
community-based transportation services may be their only option. A comprehensive, effective transportation infrastructure and a more senior-friendly city can be created by tailoring options within each area to collectively serve the needs of different seniors.

As the city’s senior population grows larger and older, the City of Austin’s transportation services will need to evolve to serve this group’s unique needs. The National Center on Senior Transportation offers advice to seniors and caregivers regarding the difficult transition from independent transportation to the loss of driving capacity and necessity to rely on other forms of transportation. Effective senior public transportation should allow seniors access to transportation close to their residences, with routes that allow them to run their daily errands and live as independently as possible. This also relieves caregivers from the difficult duties of caring for a senior who is unable to drive.

According to the survey by the Mayor’s Task Force on Aging, about a third of seniors feel comfortable with the current public options. However, current programs have accessibility and capacity issues that will become even more pronounced as the senior population grows.

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**TRANSPORTATION**

**A SURVEY BY THE MAYOR’S TASK FORCE ON AGING**

- 82% use their car as their primary transportation
- 67% feel they don’t have good options if they cannot use their own car
- 54% never walk to local destinations like church and the grocery store (18% less than once a month)

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**COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

Citizens in any community rely on a stable transportation infrastructure to travel easily, safely, and efficiently. The City of Austin has an extensive and well-developed system, however, that system is oriented toward car travel. This current infrastructure does not allow easy pedestrian access for many seniors who no longer drive. By encouraging safe and more enjoyable city streets, walking can become a viable and healthy option for seniors and others in the community.

In a survey by the Mayor’s Task Force on Aging, it was found that 54% of seniors never walk to destinations in their neighborhood, and an additional 18% only do so once a month or less.

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According to The National Complete Streets Coalition (2010), seniors often face the following problems while walking in their community:

- Vehicular traffic is fast-moving and intimidating
- Narrow, uneven sidewalks, or no sidewalks at all
- Crosswalks do not allow enough time to cross before the signal changes
- Bus stops often have no place to sit

A fast-growing city results in higher population density and greater stress on the community infrastructure. Because of this, Austin can expect more traffic on city streets and a greater need for alternative transportation, especially for seniors, who may become more uncomfortable with driving as traffic increases and accidents become more likely.

The major logistical challenges for community infrastructure involve a lack of connecting sidewalks, inadequate crosswalks, improperly timed crossing signals at intersections, and a lack of shade trees and benches along pedestrian corridors. Some portions of the city include small stretches of bicycle lanes and partially renovated sidewalks, but there is high demand for further improvement.

Perhaps the most important challenge facing an increased investment in pedestrian-friendly streets, however, is a cultural one. The infrastructure of the state, and, consequently, the city, is...
built around motor vehicles. A survey by the Mayor’s Task Force on Aging found that 75% of respondents felt safe walking in their community, but 72% never or rarely did so. Walking and bicycling must be promoted more actively in order to see a significant change in the community.
Imagine Austin Cross-check: Transportation

The Invest in a Compact and Connected Austin Priority Program calls for coordination of capital investments, incentives and regulations in order to support the vision of Imagine Austin. This priority program focuses primarily on:

- Investing in a transportation system that supports the Imagine Austin Growth Concept Map and decreases dependence on driving
- Using the city’s economic development toolkit and partnering with the private sector to leverage more beneficial development in support of Imagine Austin
- Aligning the overall Capital Improvement Program with Imagine Austin

Some of the Imagine Austin indicators associated with the Compact and Connected Priority Program demonstrate progress toward our goals, while others show that the unprecedented growth of our region is difficult to manage.

Imagine Austin Five-year Progress Report, October 2017

Compact and Connected Indicators Summary

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<th>We're Improving</th>
<th>We Haven't Changed</th>
<th>Wrong Direction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of street frontage with sidewalks</td>
<td>Intersection density</td>
<td>Developed land area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle lane miles and percentage of streets</td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual unlinked transit passenger trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vehicle miles traveled per capita</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of trips by biking and walking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transportation system total annual delay</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Percent of new residential units within growth centers and corridors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Percent of new non-residential development within growth centers and corridors</td>
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Imagine Austin Five-year Progress Report, October 2017
Sidewalks increase access and connectivity to jobs and services, and provide a number of benefits by improving walkability, which contributes to health, reduces emissions and can add to the quality of life in a community.

This metric has improved significantly from 2013 to 2017 (up from 43.6% to 53.1%). This improvement is likely due to a combination of factors including implementation of new sidewalks through the Public Works Sidewalk Program, implementation of the Complete Streets Policy, and construction of new required sidewalks concurrent with development projects.

The Age-friendly Austin Action Plan team will work with the Imagine Austin staff and community organizations to track transportation data, specifically focusing on the needs of our senior population. This data will guide Age-friendly Austin Action Plan implementation efforts.
Age-friendly Austin Action Plan Executive Summary

The Task Force on Aging submitted its final report in 2013, but Austin lacked a plan for accomplishing several recommendations outlined in the final Task Force report. Consequently, Austin was at risk of losing its age-friendly designation and was lagging behind other U.S. cities.

In September 2015, Austin’s Commission on Seniors formed a Working Group comprised of members of the Commission, AARP, AustinUP and regional aging-related service organizations, to bring to fruition recommendations from the Mayor’s Task Force on Aging, including the development of an Action Plan to transform Austin into an Age-friendly City. This group met weekly to outline a five-year plan, and identify goals and strategies.

What is an age-friendly community?
Partners in the network of age-friendly communities are challenging Austin to do more to prepare for the rapid aging of the U.S. population:

• Recognize the wide range of capacities and resources among older people
• Anticipate and respond flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences
• Respect older persons’ decisions and lifestyle choices
• Protect those who are most vulnerable; and
• Promote older persons’ inclusion in and contribution to all areas of community life

Building an Age-friendly Austin
The following individuals participated on the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan Working Group:

- Angela Atwood
  Member, Mayor’s Task Force on Aging and Board Chair, AustinUp

- Janee Briesemeister
  Commission on Seniors, District 5

- Teresa Sansone Ferguson
  Executive Director, AustinUp

- Erica García-Pittman, MD, FAPA
  Commission on Seniors, District 7;
  UT Austin Dell Medical School at Seton
  Healthcare Family

- David Gray
  Commission on Seniors, District 6

- Jessica Lemann
  AARP Texas

- Carla Penny
  AARP Texas

- Shubhada Saxena
  SAIVA (South Asians’ International Volunteer Association)

- Jennifer Scott
  Commission on Seniors; Area Agency on Aging; Aging & Disability Resource Center

- Mary Teeters
  Meals on Wheels Central Texas

- Sally VanSickle
  Commission on Seniors, District 9;
  Board Chair, Capital City Village

- Peter Varteressian
  Commission on Seniors, District 8

**Plan Structure**

In developing the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan, the Working Group reviewed existing systems to support Austin’s senior population and identified where there are gaps, both in relation to the Task Force recommendations and the AARP/World Health Organization’s Eight Domains of Livability, which include:

1. Outdoor spaces and buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social participation
5. Respect and social inclusion
6. Civic participation and employment
7. Communication and information
8. Community support and health services

The objective was to perform the assessment, outline goals and strategies, gather additional input from the community, and present the plan to Mayor Steve Adler and the entire City Council for adoption.
Analysis and Input
The Working Group outlined plan goals and strategies after considerable analysis, discussion and input from the community during three events held at Anderson Mill Limited District in far Northwest Austin, Gus Garcia Recreation Center on East Rundberg and the Austin American Statesman building on South Congress. Mindful of Austin’s diverse population, the South Asians’ International Volunteer Association (SAIVA) and other groups provided feedback to ensure inclusiveness and cultural competency. AustinUP also added insight from interviews with LGBT seniors.
Focus Groups

Additional public feedback came from several community focus groups, hosted throughout 2016 by AustinUP. Topics included, “What makes a neighborhood age-friendly?” and “What makes a business age-friendly?”

A sample of attendee comments:

• “I’d like to see more ‘naturally occurring’ retirement communities located within the neighborhood...people who live in close proximity who carpool together, shop together and look out for one another. Rental units could be reserved for seniors. Let’s create pockets of these senior communities all around Austin.”

• “Retirement communities aren’t desirable for all. But whatever housing option you choose, it has to be affordable. That’s the main problem right now. We don’t have enough affordable options for taking care of our seniors. If the community also includes younger residents, that might help.”

• “The City should create ‘centers’ in neighborhoods where there isn’t a high concentration of seniors, to provide options for seniors to come together and do things for themselves.”

• “Sometimes the communication gap is not generational – it’s just a skill-set.”

• “A lot of seniors are moving to Austin. This is a huge transition for them. Their families may not know how to help them assimilate. There should be services specifically for these transplants.”
Imagine Austin
The Working Group also met with City staff who suggested studying the City’s Imagine Austin comprehensive plan to identify age-friendly overlap. The group found many shared goals with the Imagine Austin plan. Relevant phrases from the Imagine Austin plan include:

- “develop accessible community gathering places such as parks, farmers’ markets, sidewalks, and streets in all parts of Austin, especially within activity centers and along activity corridors…that encourage interaction and provide places for people of all ages to visit and relax”

- “apply high standards of urban design to ensure that ‘complete streets’ are safe and accessible for all users”

- “encourage people to use alternative forms of transportation that are sensitive to the demands of the Central Texas climate”

- “provide services to a city with a changing demographic profile”

- “increase the availability of continuing education”

- “develop new economic sectors through partnerships between the business community, city government, and institutions to help employ a diverse workforce and expand opportunities for young and old”

- “maintain quality standards in recruiting and training new public safety officers and strive for a public safety workforce that reflects Austin’s changing demographics”

- “collaborate with area school districts, local businesses, and arts organizations in developing programs that encourage lifelong active engagement and participation in the cultural arts”

- “create complete neighborhoods across Austin that have a mix of housing types and land uses, affordable housing and transportation options, and access to healthy food, schools, retail, employment, community services, and parks and recreation options”

- “ensure outreach efforts for the ongoing comprehensive planning program…that are directed toward attracting a diversity of stakeholders including under-represented demographic and socioeconomic groups”
Resolution and Adoption
The Austin City Council, at its November 3, 2016, meeting, voted to adopt the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan and incorporate it into Imagine Austin, the city’s 30-year vision for its future. Imagine Austin is intended to be more than a municipal comprehensive plan – it also covers quality of life issues beyond land use. The Age-friendly Austin Action Plan shares many goals with Imagine Austin, such as investing in the creative economy and advancing healthy, affordable living. With this action, the City of Austin amended Imagine Austin to show its commitment to becoming an age-friendly city that enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities and treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. In support of this amendment, the plan also calls for development of an age-friendly action plan for Austin to include the elements of outdoor spaces and buildings, housing, transportation, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, and health services. This plan has now been incorporated as an Appendix to Imagine Austin in support of our city’s current and future older adults.

Mayor Steve Adler speaks at Age-friendly Austin press conference, November 2016
RESOLUTION NO. 20161103-049

WHEREAS, Central Texas is among the fastest-growing areas for people between 55 and 64, and has the second fastest-growing population of people 65 and over, and

WHEREAS, Mayor Lee Leffingwell created the 2012 Mayor’s Task Force on Aging (Task Force), and tasked it with creating a set of strategic recommendations to accommodate Central Texas’ fast-growing senior population, and

WHEREAS, the Task Force recommended that Austin be designated an “age-friendly” community under the American Association of Retired Persons Network of Age-Friendly Communities, an affiliate of the World Health Organization’s Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Program, and

WHEREAS, important accomplishments have been achieved as a result of the work of the Task Force, including the formation of Austin’s Commission on Seniors and AustinUP, a non-profit that is working across sectors to raise the profile of our senior population and prepare the next generation for the future of aging, and

WHEREAS, Austin lacks an action plan for accomplishing several recommendations outlined in the final Task Force report and consequently, is at risk of losing its age-friendly designation, and

WHEREAS, a broad-based work group formed by the Commission on Seniors to bring to fruition recommendations has developed this plan, and

WHEREAS, the Age-Friendly Austin plan overlaps in key areas with the Imagine Austin plan, and
WHEREAS, the Imagine Austin plan contains amendments to include recommendations from the Commission on Seniors referencing the Age-Friendly Austin plan, and

WHEREAS, the following City of Austin commissions endorsed those amendments: Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission, Joint Inclusion Committee, Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities, and Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Committee; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

Council adopts the Age-Friendly Austin Action Plan and will actively support, promote, and work toward becoming, not only age-friendly, but also age-progressive to support Austin’s current and future residents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The city manager is directed to initiate the process to amend Appendix G of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan to include the Age-Friendly Action Plan.

ADOPTED: November 3, 2016  ATTEST: Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk

What follows is a collaborative community plan, crafted by the City of Austin Commission on Seniors with support from community partners working in the aging space, to not only serve today’s older population, but establish policies and priorities that will benefit Austinites for years to come.
Plan Implementation

The Age-friendly Austin Action Plan represents the next step in Austin’s journey toward becoming a healthy, safe and welcome community for older adults. It builds upon numerous initiatives already underway and acknowledges that everyone in our community has a role to play in improving age friendliness.

Priority 1: Implementation Team

The first step is for the Austin Commission on Seniors Age-friendly Austin Working Group to be reconstituted and expanded to serve as the implementation team going forward. The Age-friendly Austin Working Group will include members of the Commission on Seniors and representatives of partner organizations, including AARP and AustinUP. This group will guide progress on the plan with both public and private sector partners.

Priority 2: Communication Plan

The Age-friendly Austin Working Group will develop a communication plan for engaging the broader community and other partners. This will include creating an annual progress report to be distributed to our partner organizations, as well as the Mayor and City Council. This report, “The State of Aging in Austin,” will incorporate all aging-related initiatives from across the community and will be communicated to the public via traditional media, social media and on the Age-friendly Austin website, http://www.agefriendlyaustin.com.

Priority 3: Prioritization

The implementation team will lead the effort to review Age-friendly Austin goals and strategies under each of the eight domains to determine the necessary actions toward implementation. We will work with partner organizations to combine strategies where objectives overlap or share a similar intent. We will develop criteria to evaluate, and eventually prioritize, each of the strategies as they relate to:

1. COST: Capital, administration and operating costs related to successfully implementing and/or maintaining a strategy.
2. TIME: The amount of time required to initiate the strategy.
3. COMMUNITY IMPACT: The benefits a strategy will have for the community.
4. OPPORTUNITY: The potential to capitalize on internal and/or external opportunities.
5. COMPLEXITY: How complex will it be to implement the strategy?
6. Other criteria, as determined by the Age-friendly Austin Working Group.

Priority 4: Project Plan

Our project plan will answer the following four questions:

1. What will this team do?
2. How will we do it?
3. When will it be done and by whom?
4. How will we evaluate whether or not it was successful?
Steps involved in project planning:

1. Establish the purpose and objectives of the project.

2. Identify what steps/activities are required. Do some have to be finished before others can begin? What is our overall timeframe?

3. Identify what resources are required (e.g., people, space, equipment) and what are the sources (e.g., volunteers, in-kind donations, grants).

4. Identify and overcome barriers.

5. Decide how projects will be managed, including establishing ground rules and team member roles (e.g., who will be doing what, when and how?).

6. Set a start date and a target date for completion. Identify any key milestones along the way.

7. Determine how we will measure success.


This commitment will serve as an example to other communities across the United States. As Austin has demonstrated time and again, when a purpose-filled plan comes together with the energy and creativity of community stakeholders, our city rises to the challenge to do great things. In this case, Austin has what it takes to become not just age-friendly, but a community that is age-progressive in policy and age-positive in spirit for both current and future senior populations. The time is right and the time is now.
Domain 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
Green spaces, safe streets, sidewalks, outdoor seating and accessible buildings that can be used and enjoyed by people of all ages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Partner Organizations</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 1.1: Increase access to and utilization of parks, open spaces and public buildings</td>
<td>CoA Parks and Recreation Department (PARD); CoA Planning and Zoning Department; CoA Public Works Department; City Council Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Committee; City Council Planning and Neighborhoods Committee; CoA Parks and Recreation Board</td>
<td>1.1.1 Ensure all residents have access to parks and open spaces within a half-mile of every home</td>
<td>1.1.1 Measure and track number of homes within a half-mile of a parkland or greenbelt</td>
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<td>1.1.2 Ensure all residents have access to recreation facilities within a mile of every home</td>
<td>1.1.2 Measure and track percentage of residents who have a recreation facility within a mile of where they live</td>
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<td>1.1.3 Increase number of parks and public spaces that are equipped with functional seating at frequent intervals, drinking fountains, shaded resting areas, walkways suitable for wheelchairs / walkers and accessible public restrooms</td>
<td>1.1.3 Measure and track percentage of parks in compliance with ADA standards for seating, walkways, shaded rest areas and restrooms</td>
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<td>1.1.4 Convert pre-existing parking spaces into parking spaces reserved for persons with handicapped parking permits in compliance with ADA</td>
<td>1.1.4 Measure and track percentage of parks in compliance with ADA standards for accessible parking</td>
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<td>Goal</td>
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<td>1.1.5 Integrate age-inclusive policies as criteria for City decision-making</td>
<td>1.1.5 Incorporate AFA plan into Imagine Austin comprehensive plan. COMPLETE!</td>
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<td>1.1.6 Provide multigenerational programs such as yoga, Tai Chi, art in the park, etc. in neighborhood parks</td>
<td>1.1.6 Measure and track percentage of seniors attending multigenerational programs in neighborhood parks relative to total attendance</td>
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## Domain 2: Transportation

Driving shouldn’t be the only way to get around. In general terms, this domain tracks how easy it is for older adults to stay connected to their community.

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<tr>
<td>Goal 2.1: Ensure all modes of transportation are safe, affordable and accessible for residents of all ages and abilities, particularly older adults</td>
<td>CoA Commission on Seniors; City Council Mobility Committee; CoA Transportation Department; Capital Metro; Drive A Senior; Area Agency on Aging; Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)</td>
<td>2.1.1 Expedite repair, maintenance and construction of sidewalks, curb cuts and street lighting</td>
<td>2.1.1 Track total number of feet of sidewalk infrastructure improvements resulting from the Sidewalk Master Plan adjacent pedestrian attractors for seniors, relative to total feet of sidewalk improvements during same period.</td>
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<td>2.1.2 Removal of vegetation adjacent to sidewalks to increase pedestrian infrastructure and safety</td>
<td>2.1.2 Track amount of vegetation adjacent to sidewalks (in feet) cleared annually by either the city or private owners</td>
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<td>2.1.3 Increase seating options, including covered seating and close-by parking at public transit stops</td>
<td>2.1.3 A) Review Capital Metro amenities plans to ensure transit stop infrastructure updates and expansions are included. B) Track implementation of plans.</td>
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<td>2.1.4 Evaluate and install pedestrian-friendly crossing signals</td>
<td>2.1.4 A) Review and update the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan draft and subsequent adoption to include pedestrian-friendly</td>
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<td>Goal</td>
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<td>2.1.5 Provide sidewalk infrastructure in places frequented by older adults</td>
<td>2.1.5 A) Review and develop, if necessary, a seniors pedestrian attractor score. B) Develop a method to capture needs of older adults in the Sidewalk Master Plan.</td>
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<td>2.1.6 Improve street lighting</td>
<td>2.1.6 A) Track the number of requests for adding or fixing street lighting. B) Evaluate the number of requests and completed projects to add street lights.</td>
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<td>2.1.7 Improve visibility of crosswalks for older adults whether walking or driving</td>
<td>2.1.7 A) Review and update the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan draft and subsequent adoption to include crosswalks and other pedestrian street crossing fixtures. B) Measure and track implementation and subsequent adoption.</td>
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<td>2.1.8 Replace missing street signs/traffic signs with easily readable, well-lit signage that addresses access and functional needs</td>
<td>2.1.8 Track the number of requests and types of requests made by older adults to the city, the Office of Mobility Management, 2-1-1 and 3-1-1</td>
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<td>Goal 2.2: Provide residents with the information and tools they need to make informed travel choices</td>
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<td>2.2.1 Create an integrated system for scheduling transportation options</td>
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<td>2.2.1 Pilot an integrated central dispatch system that is senior-friendly</td>
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<td>2.2.2 Create a centralized clearing house for seamless information for the public</td>
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<td>2.2.2 A) Track the number of requests and types of requests made by older adults to the Office of Mobility Management, 2-1-1 and 3-1-1. B) Update the city and Cap Metro web site with transit options for seniors.</td>
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<td>Goal 2.3: Create an ongoing dialogue and innovative transportation options and expand models for the future</td>
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<td>2.3.1 Identify gaps in existing transportation services</td>
<td>2.3.1 Create list of trip purposes and needs of program participants of services via non-profits who receive Capital Metro vehicles through the Vehicle Grant Program</td>
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<td>2.3.2 Obtain additional funding to support innovative opportunities and models for transportation and expand existing options</td>
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<td>2.3.2 Assess &amp; document impact on seniors of projects receiving 5310 formula grant funding.</td>
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<td>2.3.3 Provide public transportation discounts to older adults</td>
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<td>2.3.3 Measure and track number of IDs issued using the Reduced Fare ID Program to 65+ adults year over year</td>
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<td>2.3.4</td>
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<td>2.3.4 Ensure ride-sharing options for older adults using different types of transportation like city vans, neighborhood vehicles, and nonprofit transportation providers</td>
<td>2.3.4 Track the number of public and private ride-share programs that serve older adults</td>
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<td>2.3.5</td>
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<td>2.3.5 Evaluate transportation needs and options in new home developments and neighborhood planning</td>
<td>2.3.5 Review and provide input on requirements for new home developments and neighborhood planning of transportation needs and options</td>
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Domain 3: Housing
Age-friendly communities have affordable homes and a variety of housing options that are suitable for people of all ages.

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<tr>
<td>Goal 3.1: Expand and promote the development of diverse housing options that are affordable for seniors of different income levels</td>
<td>CoA Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department; City Council Housing and Community Development Committee; CoA Community Development Commission; Travis County Appraisal Board; CODE Next Advisory Group; City Council Regional Affordability Committee; Area Agency on Aging/ADRC; Austin Housing Coalition; Austin Housing Repair Coalition; Capital City Village; Family Eldercare; Wildflower Terrace AustinUP</td>
<td>3.1.1 Encourage the development of new and innovative models of affordable housing (multigenerational, co-housing/cooperative housing)</td>
<td>3.1.1 A) Track housing costs at 30% of seniors' area median income and 50% of seniors' area median income. B) Using the Strategic Housing Blueprint and Code Next regulations, track impact on the percentage of affordable new and innovative housing developments.</td>
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<td>3.1.2 Increase and prioritize funding for affordable housing for seniors (e.g., housing bonds, housing trust fund)</td>
<td>3.1.2 Measure the amount of dollars annually allocated by the City for affordable senior housing</td>
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<td>3.1.3 Expedite the City’s permitting process and promote flexible zoning</td>
<td>3.1.3 Review and update, as necessary, Code Next to include guidelines for flexible and affordable housing for seniors</td>
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<td>3.1.4 Increase outreach and community awareness about diverse housing options</td>
<td>3.1.4 Measure and report senior-housing related 3-1-1 calls and feedback from Conversation Corps meetings</td>
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<td>3.1.5 Increase access to rent and utility assistance programs to keep seniors in their homes</td>
<td>3.1.5 Measure utilization and percentage of senior applicants served from rent and utilities assistance programs, as well as performance measures from NHCD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 3.2: Support and expand affordable housing options for seniors</td>
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<td>3.2.1 Fund improvements and renovations of public housing for low-income seniors.</td>
<td>3.2.1 Measure percentage of identified public housing units and projects for low-income seniors currently funded.</td>
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<td>3.2.2 Replicate successful models of mixed-income senior housing communities and encourage redevelopment</td>
<td>3.2.2 Measure and track the percentage of mixed income housing units for seniors</td>
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<td>3.2.3 Address the impact of property taxes</td>
<td>3.2.3 Measure the annual total property tax burden as a percentage of MFI for senior residents</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 3.3: Expand assistance for affordable home repair, maintenance and modification for seniors of all income levels</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.3.1 Expand support for the Austin Housing Repair Coalition</td>
<td>3.3.1 A) Measure annual funding level provided to the Housing Repair Coalition members. B) Measure the percentage of senior housing units in need of repair that are actually funded.</td>
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<td>3.3.2 Increase home access for seniors through design modification that improves safety and visitability</td>
<td>3.3.2 Measure and track percentage of seniors' home modification requests funded each year</td>
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<td>3.3.3 Improve access to energy efficiency and weatherization programs</td>
<td>3.3.3 Measure and track the annual number of energy efficiency and weatherization project requests by seniors that are actually funded or provided by Austin Energy.</td>
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<td>3.3.4 Expand the Village concept to engage volunteers and neighbors to help with simple, preventative maintenance</td>
<td>3.3.4 Track membership numbers of Capital City Village and similar entities</td>
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</table>
## Domain 4: Social Participation

Sadness and isolation can be combatted by the availability of accessible, affordable and fun social activities.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 4.1: Strengthen and develop recreation, leisure and educational activities involving and targeting older adults</strong></td>
<td>CoA Parks and Recreation Department (PARD); Coming of Age; AustinUP; AARP Texas; LGBT Coalition on Aging; Capital City Village; Leadership Austin; SAIVA; Prime Timers Austin</td>
<td>4.1.1 Fund neighborhood programs for senior assistance</td>
<td>4.1.1 Develop inventory of programs available and track, including funding level from CoA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 4.2: Create a City inter-agency committee to optimize facilities for senior engagement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.2.1 Develop an asset map to identify existing and new opportunities for senior social engagement at public libraries, PARD facilities, HHS facilities and schools</td>
<td>4.2.1 Complete, release, and publish an asset map</td>
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<td>4.2.2 Identify opportunities for co-located services</td>
<td>4.2.2 Develop prioritization table of services needed that may benefit from co-location</td>
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<td>4.2.3 Develop multi-generational programming at public facilities</td>
<td>4.2.3 Survey partners to identify existing programs</td>
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</table>
## Domain 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

Everyone wants to feel valued. Age-friendly communities provide ways for the young and old to learn from one another, honor what each has to offer and, at the same time, feel good about themselves.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 5.1: Expand programs and services that engage and empower older adults</td>
<td>CoA Commission on Seniors; CoA Commission for Persons with Disabilities; CoA Commission on Women; CoA Commission on Veterans; CoA Commission on Immigrant Affairs; Coming of Age; Aging Services Council of Central Texas – Neighborhood Ambassadors Program; LGBT Coalition on Aging</td>
<td>5.1.1 Expand activities, services and programs likely to attract residents age 50+ (develop survey to determine priorities)</td>
<td>5.1.1 Create survey</td>
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<td>5.1.2 Promote age-friendly customer service practices in City departments</td>
<td>5.1.2 Develop list of age-friendly customer service best practices</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5.1.3 Support AustinUP in development of age-friendly business best practices</td>
<td>5.1.3 Create list of age-friendly business best practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 5.2: Create intergenerational opportunities for seniors</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.2.1 Invest in intergenerational education partnerships with colleges, schools, universities, libraries and senior programs</td>
<td>5.2.1 Complete inventory of existing programs</td>
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<td>Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 5.2: Ensure all City recreation centers provide programs and activities for seniors that are intergenerational and provide dynamic volunteer and co-learning opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.2.2 Complete inventory of PARD's existing programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 5.3: Expand access to services and participation by older adults in diverse communities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5.3.1 Recommend that Commission on Seniors works with other commissions and boards representing diverse communities</td>
<td>5.3.1 Place commission members on other boards and committees representing diverse communities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.3.2 Ensure the Commission on Seniors selects a commissioner to serve on the Joint Inclusion Committee, which advises City Council on diversity and inclusion issues</td>
<td>5.3.2 Place a commission member on the Joint Inclusion Committee</td>
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<td>5.3.3 Ensure services and programs targeted to seniors respect racial, ethnic and cultural diversity and are welcoming and inclusive</td>
<td>5.3.3 Expand Equity Office mission to include seniors of all cultures</td>
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<td>5.3.4 Advocate that all City programs, services and strategic plans address the needs of seniors</td>
<td>5.3.4 Expand Equity Office mission to include seniors</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Domain 6: Civic Participation and Employment

An age-friendly community provides ways older people can (if they choose) continue to work for pay, volunteer their skills and be actively engaged in community life.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 6.1: Increase employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for older persons</strong></td>
<td>CoA Task Force on Community Engagement; CoA Economic Prosperity Commission; City Council Economic Opportunity Committee; CoA Economic Development Department; Coming of Age; Goodwill; Leadership Austin; AustinUP; Speak Up Austin; Encore; SCORE; Senior Community Service Employment Program; AARP Foundation WorkSearch; Workforce Solutions Capital Area; UT Osher Lifelong Learning Institute</td>
<td>6.1.1 Improve awareness and coordination of employment services</td>
<td>6.1.1 Develop inventory of programs (and sponsor organizations) related to job skills training and assistance for older adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.1.2 Promote home-based, part-time and job-sharing employment opportunities</td>
<td>6.1.2 Hold biannual AustinUp job fairs that include home-based, part-time and job-sharing employment opportunities</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>6.1.3 Distribute brochures on key topics such as age discrimination in the workplace and working while receiving Social Security benefits</td>
<td>6.1.3 Develop brochures on older adult work-related issues</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>6.1.4 Encourage local businesses to hire older persons</td>
<td>6.1.4 Measure and track AustinUp and AARP programs that communicate to employers the value of a multi-generational workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 6.2: Increase volunteerism and civic participation among persons age 55+</td>
<td>Partner Organizations</td>
<td>Strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.2.1 Develop a City of Austin internship or fellowship program for people 55+</td>
<td>6.2.1 A) Design internship program for people 55+, modeled after city’s Municipal Veteran’s Internship Program B) Fill CoA intern/fellow role with 55+ Austin resident</td>
<td>6.2.2 Publicize volunteer opportunities, as well as opportunities for civic engagement</td>
<td>6.2.2 Develop program to share information with older adult volunteers / clearinghouse to publicize volunteer and civic engagement opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Domain 7: Communication and Information**

Not everyone has a smartphone or internet access; information pertaining to the needs of older adults should be disseminated through a variety of means.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 7.1: Create a clearinghouse for information about matters related to older adults</td>
<td>CoA 3-1-1; CoA Communications and Technology Department; Area Agency on Aging/ADRC; Aging Services Council of Central Texas; AARP Texas; AustinUP</td>
<td>7.1.1 Include information about City and state services, community organizations and other resources on all appropriate City communication channels</td>
<td>7.1.1 Build resource list (asset map) that covers all domains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 7.2: Increase awareness about senior issues and perspectives</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.2.1 Broadcast Austin's Commission on Seniors meetings at convenient times for older viewers.</td>
<td>7.2.1 Determine broadcast options for Commission on Seniors meetings</td>
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<td>7.2.2 Urge City communications staff to include a &quot;age-friendly&quot; perspective in all communications materials and age-inclusive language, messaging and visuals in materials intended for older adult audiences</td>
<td>7.2.2 Hold biannual meeting with key CoA departments to discuss &quot;age-friendly&quot; issues and actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 7.2:</td>
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<td>7.2.3 Provide multicultural information and resources, recognizing the diversity of Austin’s senior population</td>
<td>7.2.3 Measure, track and expand the existing CoA Language Access Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 7.3:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote technologies that help older adults connect to their community, friends and family</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.3.1 Expand technology training at City of Austin facilities</td>
<td>7.3.1 Inventory and track changes to technology training and CoA facilities</td>
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<td>7.3.2 Encourage education through public-private partnerships</td>
<td>7.3.2 Develop list of potential partners</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>7.3.3 Offer learning opportunities for those seniors without access to technology</td>
<td>7.3.3 Develop and track Inventory of learning opportunities at senior centers, recreation centers and PARD</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.3.4 Use all appropriate City communication channels to promote training opportunities</td>
<td>7.3.4 Develop inventory of training for older adults included in existing CoA training programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Domain 8: Community Support and Health Services**

In an age-friendly community, residents of all ages should be able to access and afford the healthcare services they need.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 8.1: Sustain and enhance investment in affordable, accessible, and holistic care that will build a vibrant and productive senior community</strong></td>
<td>Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC); Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area; AGE of Central Texas (Caregiver U); Alzheimer’s Texas/Alzheimer’s Association; Family Eldercare; Meals on Wheels Central Texas; CoA Health and Human Services; Central Health; St. David’s; Seton; Dell Medical School; Aging Services Council; Chronic Disease Prevention and Control; Texas Health and Human Services Commission; CoA Health and Human Services Committee; Austin Police Department; Austin Fire Department/EMS; CoA Public Safety Commission; Sustainable Food Center; Central Texas Food Bank</td>
<td>8.1.1 Build awareness of public, private and nonprofit low or no-cost senior health services availability in citywide promotional materials</td>
<td>8.1.1 Track number of departments who adopt updated materials</td>
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<td>8.1.2 Create focus groups of city and community representatives with the charge of developing a strategic plan to integrate aging, mental health and wellness programs</td>
<td>8.1.2 A) Track number of focus groups held. B) Create strategic plan.</td>
</tr>
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<td>8.1.3 Develop health outreach programs and community care clinics, including mobile clinics and mobile food vans, in neighborhoods with dense and growing populations of older adults</td>
<td>8.1.3 Track the number of programs developed within the city to help older adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 8.1: Expand opportunities for affordable and accessible health care services not covered by Medicare, e.g., dental, hearing, vision</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.1.4</td>
<td>8.1.4 Track the number of programs serving older adults and track year over year change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 8.2: Ensure access to proper support services, community resources and information for successful aging environment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.2.1</td>
<td>8.2.1 Review updated Caregiver Resource Guide by Aging Services Council with plans to measure the dissemination, i.e., the number of agencies and individuals who receive the guide (record which agencies received the guide) and the number of CoA departments who receive the guide. Additional information to be added to the CoA website.</td>
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<td>8.2.2</td>
<td>8.2.2 Measure and track the percentage of eligible older adults participating in SNAP</td>
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<td>8.2.3</td>
<td>8.2.3 Measure and track the number of farm stands, mobile markets, healthy corner stores, full-service stores with food in designated food deserts – plus number of customers; track annual visits to food pantries and mobile food distributions</td>
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Building an Age-friendly Austin
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<td>8.2.4 Expand culturally responsive family caregiving programs and resources including dementia care, community respite care and home-based supportive services</td>
<td>8.2.4 Measure and track the number of family caregiving programs and resources that provide culturally appropriate materials and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 8.3: Provide information, education and training to ensure the safety, wellness, and readiness of seniors in emergency situations</td>
<td>8.3.1 Provide formalized emergency preparedness training that includes promotion of existing registries to seniors and caregivers at senior community centers, congregate sites, and any other venue deemed appropriate</td>
<td>8.3.1 Measure and track the number of training sessions per year, the number of participants and the number of participants helped by training (post-training survey)</td>
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<td>8.3.2 Ensure emergency responders are trained in age-friendly best practices to be prepared to respond to the needs of this population during emergency events</td>
<td>8.3.2 Measure and track the number of training sessions per year, the number of participants, the percentage of total emergency responders trained per year, the percentage of participants who are older adults, and the number of participants helped by training (post-training survey)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8.3.3 Provide emergency response, preparedness strategies on the CoA website specific to the needs of the senior population</td>
<td>8.3.3 Track changes to the CoA website specific to 8.3.3 – a YES/NO measure</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>8.3.4 Add emergency preparedness script with guidance for 3-1-1 operators</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.3.4 Create script with input from HSEM – YES/NO; Script operational for 311 operators – YES/NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 8.4: Prevent financial exploitation, neglect and the physical, sexual, and emotional abuse of seniors</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.4.1 Strengthen elder abuse detection by providing education to law enforcement and other first responders</td>
<td>8.4.1 Measure and track the number of education sessions/training for responders per year, the number of participants per year, and the percentage of first responders helped by training (post-training survey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.4.2 Provide detection, prevention and reporting strategies on the CoA website specific to the needs of the senior population.</td>
<td>8.4.2 Track changes to CoA website specific to 8.4.2 – a YES/NO measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8.4.3 Create partnerships to provide educational materials related to identifying and reporting senior financial exploitation, targeting banking and financial institutions</td>
<td>8.4.3 Track the number of partnerships and educational materials created</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>8.4.4 Add elder abuse, neglect, and fraud script with guidance for 3-1-1 operators.</td>
<td>8.4.4 Confirm 3-1-1 operators have script in place. COMPLETE!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices and Supporting Documentation

Documents

Mayor’s Task Force on Aging: In response to Austin’s increasing age diversity, former Mayor Lee Leffingwell convened a Task Force on Aging in 2012-13. He charged the group with developing strategic recommendations to ensure our aging neighbors have the resources to be healthy, independent and integrated into community life. The result of the Task Force efforts included a Report, Embracing an Age Diverse Austin, and a set of Recommendations that focus resources on ensuring adequate supports are in place to help older adults continue to contribute to their community while aging with dignity.

Events

1. Public Outreach Events

The ad below, promoting events to gather public feedback about the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan, was featured in the Austin American-Statesman on multiple days in April and May, 2016. Link to public comments from these community events.
2. **Age-friendly Austin Update**

The City of Austin Commission on Seniors, AustinUP and AARP Texas hosted an Age-friendly Austin update specifically for the members of the 2012-13 Mayor’s Task Force on Aging and its Advisory Committee. This meeting took place on Tuesday, September 13, 2016.

**Meeting Agenda:**

1. Welcome
2. Introductions: City of Austin Commission on Seniors, AustinUP
3. Overview, Age-friendly Austin (AFA) Plan
   a. CoA Commission on Seniors Working Group members, history, etc.
   b. WHO/AARP Eight Domains of Livability
   c. AFA plan summary
4. Next steps in the process, plus key dates and events
5. How you can stay involved
6. Q&A

3. **Imagine Austin Speaker Series**

   **An Age-Friendly Austin: Supporting Vibrant Intergenerational Communities**
   (November 17, 2016)

Speaker Jana Lynott of AARP Policy Institute presented synthesized data using AARP’s Livability Index to illustrate challenges and opportunities for Austin's aging population. Council person Anne Kitchen, Dr. Philip Huang, and Dr. Erica Garcia-Pittman responded to the index scores and discussed how the Age-Friendly Action Plan and the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan are offering solutions to index data and what else is needed to advance Austin as an age-friendly community. The Imagine Austin Speaker Series is an opportunity to promote and implement the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan through shared dialogue and mutual learning. The City invites targeted thought leaders from around the nation to give talks on various subjects to promote and implement the vision and policies set forth in Imagine Austin.

**Articles, News Stories and Reports**

1. Austin Working to Make City More Age- friendly (Fox 7 News, November 17, 2016)
2. Austin Adopts Plan To Be More Age-Friendly (KUT News, November 4, 2016)
4. The Milken Institute Center for the Future of Aging released its "Best Cities for Successful Aging" report in March 2017. Austin was listed #6 in the "Top 20 Large Metros" list.

**Website**

Age-friendly Austin website: [www.agefriendlyaustin.com](http://www.agefriendlyaustin.com)
Notes and Acknowledgements

Notes

1. The Austin Commission on Seniors has approved the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan goals, strategies and actions outlined in this report, but not the report itself. A commission vote to review/approve the overall report is pending.

2. The Community Profile section of this document includes select content, survey results and resources from the final report issued by the Mayor’s Task Force on Aging in 2013. We are grateful to the Mayor’s Task Force for their work.

Our thanks and appreciation to...

THE MAYOR’S TASK FORCE ON AGING

Task Force Chairs

Bobbie Barker, Vice President, St. David’s Foundation
Ken Gladish, President and CEO, Seton Foundation

Members

Jacqueline Angel, Professor, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
Angela Atwood, CEO, Family Eldercare
Tom Coopwood, M.D., Board Member, Central Health
Freddie Dixon, Diversity and Community Engagement Officer, University of Texas
David Evans, CEO, Austin Travis County Integral Care
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Sue Hoffman, Board President, Capital City Village
Char Hu, Director, Georgetown Living
Diane Kenyon, Senior Vice President, Harden Healthcare
Ann Kitchen, President, Health and Community Strategies
Meeta Kothare, CEO, Neeva Solutions / Professor, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
Joyce Lauck, Executive Director, AGE of Central Texas
Sly Majid, Chief Service Officer, Mayor Lee Leffingwell
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Anne Rafał, Aging Texas Well Coordinator, State of Texas
MariBen Ramsey, Vice President/COO, Austin Community Foundation
Jennifer Scott, Director, Area Agency on Aging Capital Area
Tom Spencer, CEO, Interfaith Texas
Tyler Sutliff, President, The Home Option
Michael Wilson, Director of Aging Programs, St. David’s Foundation

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Antoinette Griffin            April Young
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Alison Alter, Council Member – District 10

DEMOGRAPHER

Ryan Robinson, City of Austin

IMAGINE AUSTIN

Matt Dugan, Division Manager, City of Austin

PHOTOGRAPHERS

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Neil Ferguson
Staff members, AARP Texas
Public Domain

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

AARP Texas
AustinUP
LGBT Coalition on Aging
Meals on Wheels Central Texas
SAIVA (South Asians’ International Volunteer Association)