

Creating Livable Communities for An Aging Society



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engAGE in community
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Two Basic Premises

- Aging is universal – we are all doing it
 - We all want to age as well as we can – physically and mentally – and we want to help our elders to age as well as possible
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Two Global Trends

1. ***The world is aging***, especially in developing regions
 - 2006: 11% of global population aged 60+
 - 2050: 22% (more older people than children aged 0-14 for the first time in human history)
 - Our metropolitan region (Portland/Vancouver):
 - 2000: 10.5% aged 65+
 - 2030: 17% aged 65+ (a **137%** increase, compared to 47% for the total population)
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2. *More of the world's population is living in urban areas*

- 2007: 49%
- 2030: 60% (growth occurring in cities of less than 5 million and in developing regions)

Sources:

WHO (2007). *Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide*.

Neal et al. (2006). *Age-Related Changes in Housing and Transportation* (Report prepared for Metro).

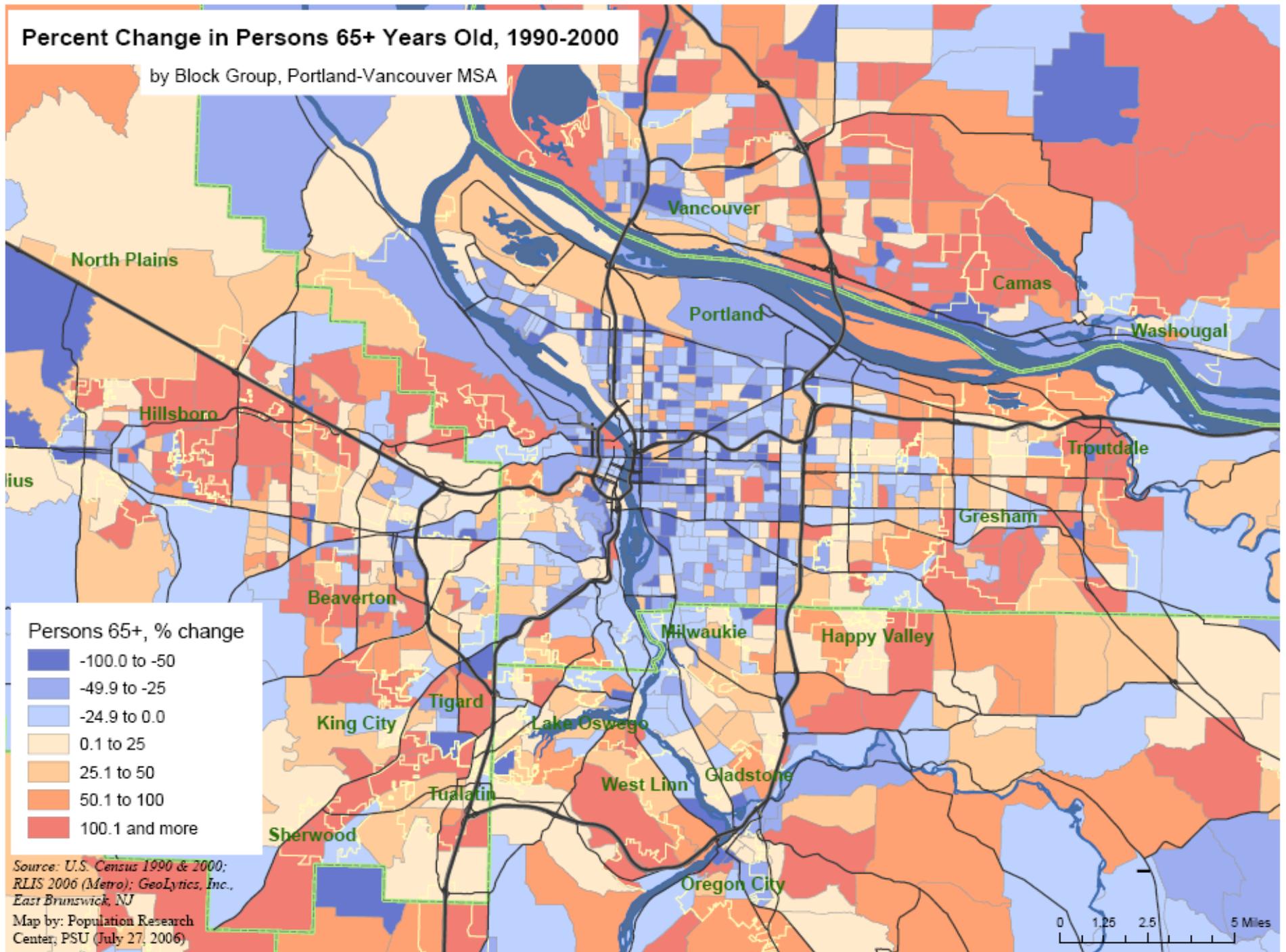
(See <http://www.pdx.edu/ioa/publications> for links)

Key Finding: Housing location choices changed between 1990 and 2000

- The 2000 Census, compared to the 1990 Census, showed fewer persons aged 65+ in central cities and more in suburban and rural areas and in new subdivisions near the Urban Growth Boundary
 - What will the 2010 Census show?
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Percent Change in Persons 65+ Years Old, 1990-2000

by Block Group, Portland-Vancouver MSA



Social-Economic Change: Financial Well-Being

Previous research indicated:

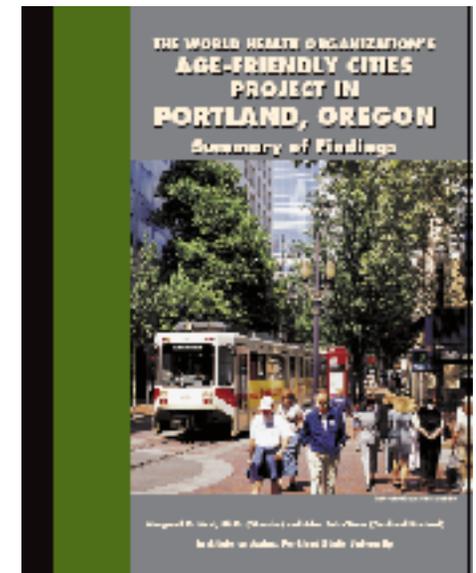
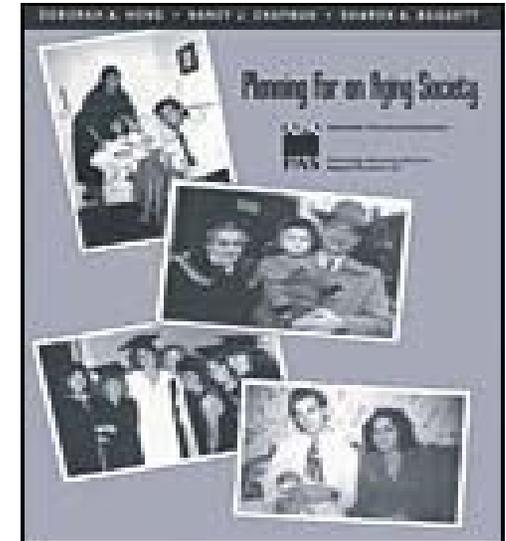
- Nationally, about 80% of those aged 50+ owned their own home in 2003 (*AARP, Beyond 50.05, 2005*)
- In 1999, home equity was the largest single component of household wealth for older Americans, accounting for 43.6% of their net worth (*Housing Our Elders, 1999*)

Recent research has revealed:

- The loss of wealth due to the collapse of the housing market and the plunge in the stock market will make Boomers as a group far more dependent on Social Security and Medicare than prior generations (*Rosnick & Baker, 2009*)
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Relevant PSU Research

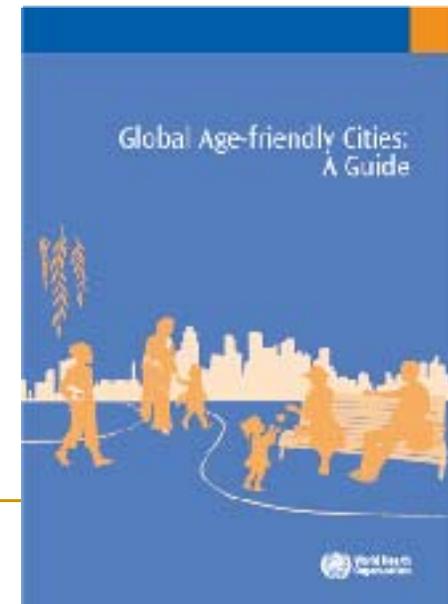
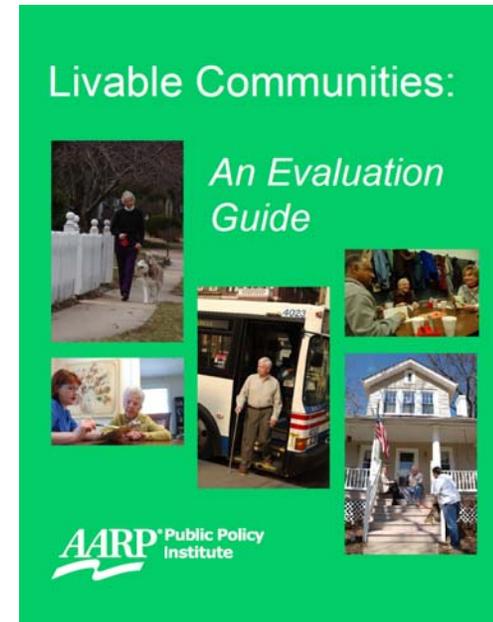
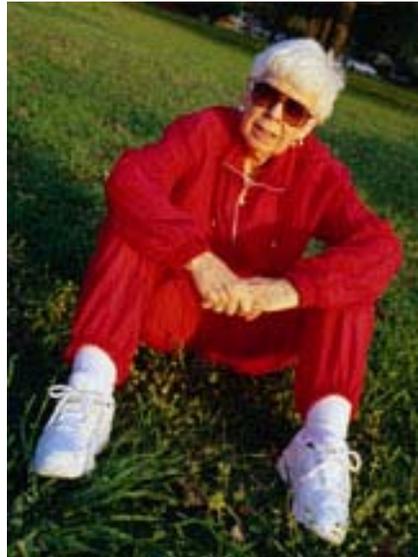
- ***Planning for an Aging Society*** (APA PAS Report # 451, 1994)
- ***Age-Related Shifts in Housing and Transportation Demand*** (Study for Metro, 2006)*
- **World Health Organization (WHO) *Age-Friendly Cities* Project in Portland** (2007)*
- Capstone course: ***Creating Livable Communities for an Aging Society*** (2009)*



* See <http://www.pdx.edu/ioa/publications>

Some Key Concepts

- Livable Community
- Active Aging
- Age-Friendly City



Livable Community Defined: AARP

- Facilitates personal **independence**
- Enables **engagement** of residents in civic and social life
- Provides **supportive** community features and services



Active Aging

- “Active ageing is the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.”
 - WHO – Active Ageing: A Policy Framework (2002)



An Age-Friendly City:

“Adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities”

“Emphasizes enablement rather than disablement; it is friendly for all ages, not just age-friendly”

Livable Communities: Why Do They Matter?

- Locally and globally, we are witnessing the unprecedented aging of our populations
 - Our window of opportunity for preparing for an aging society is shrinking rapidly
 - Communities have characteristics that contribute to or impede livability for those of all ages and abilities – characteristics that facilitate or create barriers to active aging
 - Older adults are an asset to society; however, we have yet to take full advantage of them
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Benefits of Active Aging

- For the individual
 - Health
 - Independence
 - Engagement in civic life

- For the community
 - Livable communities for all result: e.g., compact, walkable, mixed-use with a range of transportation and housing options
 - Reduced public costs (e.g., for health care)
 - Economic development benefits (e.g., tourism)
 - Older residents are community resources

Source: International City/County Association – *Active Living for Older Adults: Management Strategies for Healthy and Livable Communities*.
<http://bookstore.icma.org/> (item e-43140)

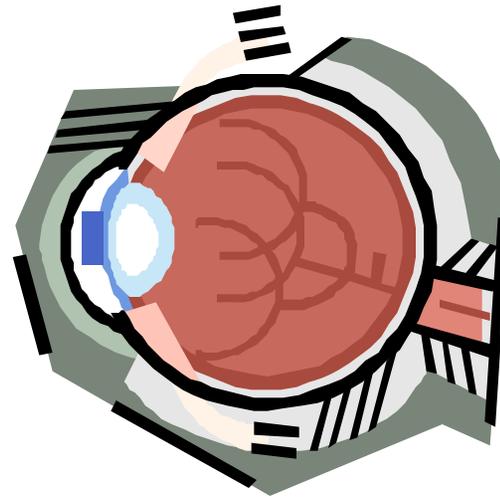
**Normal physical changes occur as we age
and
have implications for communities**

Aging Begins at Birth

- Through our 20s, we are gaining in vitality, strength and capacity
 - Beginning in our fourth decade, some signs of physiological decline typically begin
 - However, chronological age alone is a poor predictor of function
-

Normal Changes to the Eyes

- Tear film decreases resulting in dry eye
- Photoreceptor cells decrease in number, resulting in diminished response to light
- Pupil decreases, letting in less light
- Lens thickens and is less able to focus



Vision Changes - Implications

- More light is needed, and glare should be minimized
 - Variations in elevation (e.g., floors, sidewalks) should be gradual and well marked
 - Larger print should be used (including on road signs, public documents)
-

Changes in Hearing

- Auditory decline generally starts earlier than vision problems and affects more people, particularly men
 - Higher frequency sounds are more difficult to hear
 - **Implications:**
 - Can affect driving (traffic noise, sirens not heard)
 - Can affect community participation, engagement
 - Use microphone in public meetings
 - Face the person directly and speak in a clear voice (no shouting – this can distort sound)
 - Speak in a lower tone
 - Repeat key points
-

Changes in Muscles, Bones

- In old age, there is a decrease in strength, agility, and fine motor control
- This decrease results from a loss of muscle mass and from degeneration of the joints
- Lack of muscle tone and impaired muscle coordination contribute to the loss of ability to balance rapidly or to compensate for a sudden loss of balance
- Bones are more porous and brittle



Changes in Muscles, Bones - Implications

- Problems with balance and muscle strength can lead to increased risk of falls, and bones more likely to fracture
 - Physical activity and exercise are important!
 - Well-maintained sidewalks, places to sit, places that are safe encourage walking
 - Handrails can help (round, easy to grasp, and present on both sides of stairways and steps)
 - Rocker-type on/off devices for lights preferable to toggle switches, which require muscle control and finger strength
 - Handles that are levers or push-bars rather than knobs help people with diminished strength
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The World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Cities Project in Portland, Oregon



Research Team - Portland State University

- **Margaret Neal, Ph.D.** - Principal Investigator, Director, Institute on Aging
- **Alan DeLaTorre** – Project Manager, Doctoral student, Urban Studies

Local Project Advisory Team

- **Sharon Baggett** – PSU Institute on Aging
 - **Jay Bloom** - Multnomah County
 - **Ken Calvin** - Senior Representative and Advocate
 - **Nancy Chapman** – PSU, School of Urban Studies and Planning
 - **Jerry Cohen/Joyce DeMonnin** – AARP Oregon
 - **Carlos Crespo** – PSU, School of Community Health
 - **Vicki Hersen** - Elders in Action
 - **Lydia Lundberg** - Oatfield Estates
 - **Neal Naigus** - Portland Community College
 - **Grady Tarbutton/David Hanson** - Multnomah County Aging and Disability Services
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Study Objectives

- **For WHO:** to identify concrete indicators of an age-friendly city and produce a practical guide to stimulate and guide advocacy, community development and policy change to make urban communities age-friendly
 - **For participating cities:** to increase awareness of local needs, gaps and good ideas for improvement in order to stimulate development of more age-friendly urban settings
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Study Methods

- 33 cities in 22 countries followed the “Vancouver Protocol,” which focused on qualitatively evaluating age-friendly features and barriers to age-friendliness within cities
 - In each of the 33 cities, 8 focus groups were conducted with:
 - **Older adults** (60+, lower & middle income)
 - **Informal caregivers** (as a proxy for frail/disabled)
 - **Providers of service** (public, private, and voluntary sectors)
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Age-Friendly Collaborating Cities



AMERICAS

Argentina, La Plata
Brazil, Rio de Janeiro
Canada, Halifax
Canada, Portage La Prairie
Canada, Saanich
Canada, Sherbrooke
Costa Rica, San Jose
Jamaica, Kingston
Jamaica, Montego Bay
Mexico, Cancun
Mexico, Mexico City
Puerto Rico, Mayaguez
Puerto Rico, Ponce
USA, Portland

EUROPE

Germany, Ruhr
Ireland, Dundalk
Italy, Udine
Russia, Moscow
Russia, Tuymazy
Switzerland, Geneva
Turkey, Istanbul
UK, Edinburgh
UK, London



AFRICA

Kenya, Nairobi

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

India, New Delhi
India, Udaipur

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Jordan, Amman
Lebanon, Tripoli
Pakistan, Islamabad

WESTERN PACIFIC

Australia, Melbourne
Australia, Melville
China, Shanghai
Japan, Himeji
Japan, Tokyo

Credit: BC Ministry of Health

Portland – “The Capital of Good Planning¹”

- Some urban planners have viewed the Portland region as “the poster child for regional planning, growth management and other innovative urban planning policies²”
- Planning for older adults has received insufficient attention given the aging of the population



**Photo credit: Portland Oregon Visitors Association*

¹Carl Abbott (2000). *Greater Portland: Urban Life and Landscapes in the Pacific Northwest*

²Mayer & Provo (2004). In Ozawa (ed.) *The Portland Edge: Challenges and Successes in Growing Communities*

The Sample in Portland

- Convenience sample for the 8 focus groups
 - 96 individuals were contacted
 - 55 participated

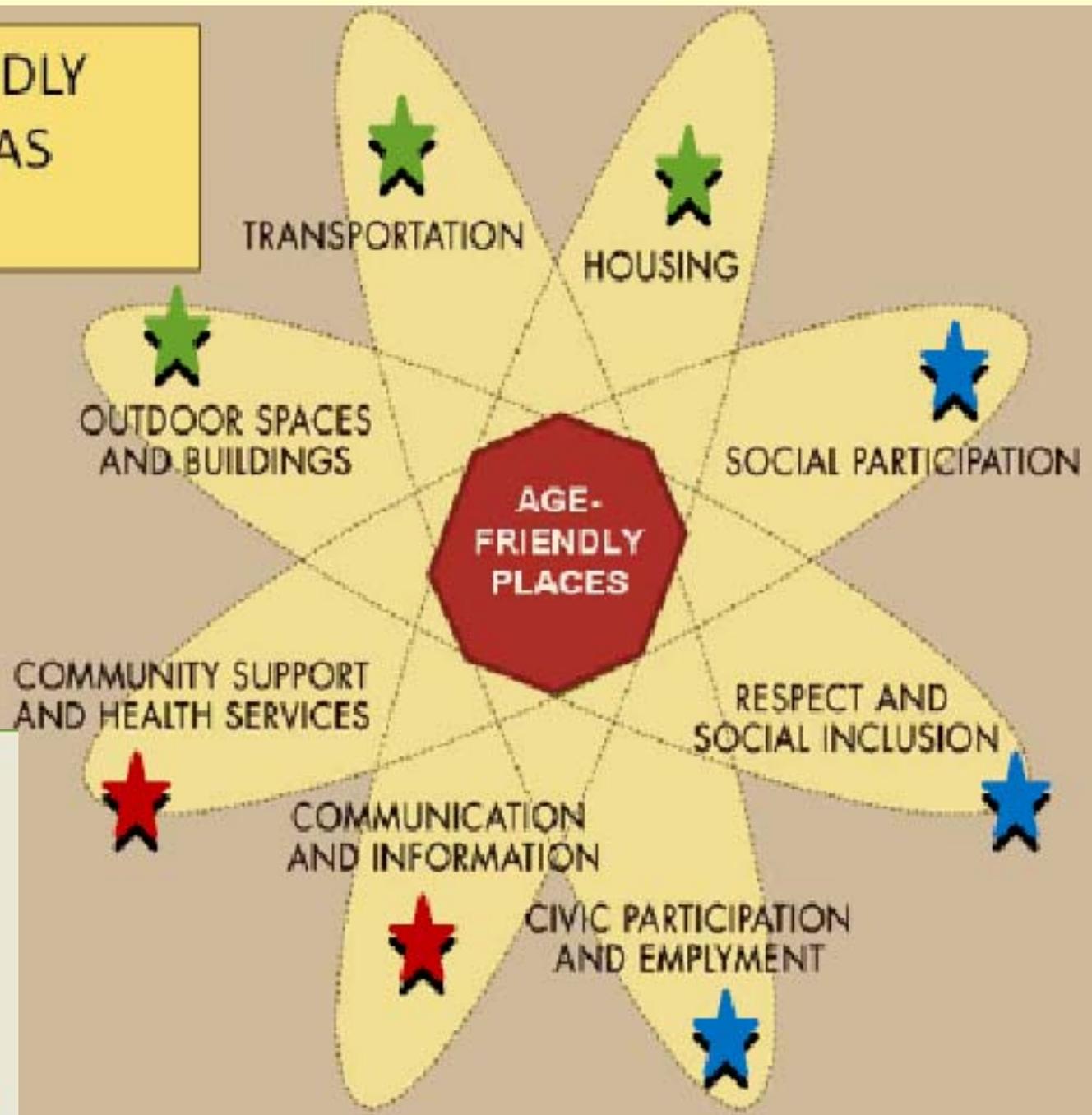
 - Many participants were active and civically engaged older persons (and family caregivers)
 - Elders in Action
 - Senior Adult Learning Center at PSU
 - Volunteers of America

 - Individuals from both lower and middle-income neighborhoods throughout Portland were selected
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Figure 6. Age-friendly city topic areas



AGE-FRIENDLY TOPIC AREAS



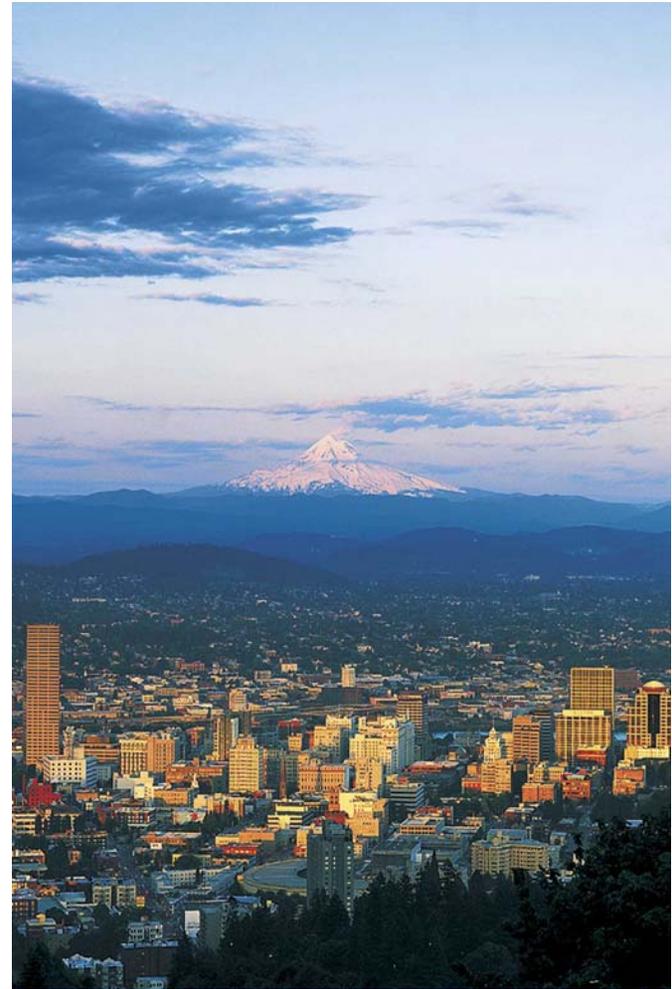
- ★ Physical or Built Environment
- ★ Social and Cultural Environment
- ★ Service Environment

Selected Findings from the Portland WHO Age-Friendly Cities Study

A general comment:

“I can walk downtown [in] 20 minutes, but I have 187 stairs to go back home on, but that’s okay with me right now; it may not be later. I think that the community offers a lot of services and a lot of opportunities for social, medical, exercise, enjoying, volunteering, and also entertainment...”

-Older adult living in SW Portland

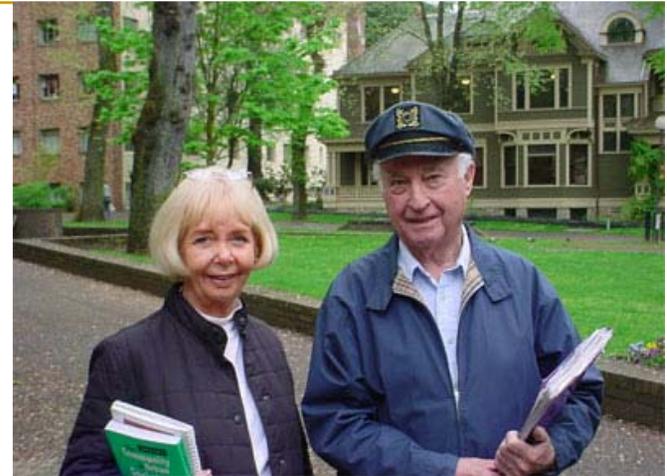


**Photo credit: Portland Oregon Visitors Association/
Brent Bradley*

Social Participation

Age-friendly features:

- Colleges offer free/discounted classes to those 65+
- Other educational opportunities (OASIS)
- Programs and opportunities for physical activity for older adults (e.g., Parks & Rec programs, parks, trails, public spaces, malls, etc.)
- Programs are relatively affordable



<http://www.pdx.edu/profiles/15279/>

Suggestions:

- Inform older adults about the many educational opportunities that exist in the region
- Encourage social and physical activity among older adults through the funding of new programs, continuing existing ones, and creating walkable and bikeable communities

Respect and Social Inclusion

Age-friendly features:

- Intergenerational activities (e.g., Portland Parks and Recreation)
- Transportation providers (e.g., TriMet & Ride Connection) train vehicle operators
- Many citizens, including public transit patrons, are respectful and courteous

Suggestions:

- Use language like “honored citizens”
 - Use the term “long-term living” rather than “long-term care”
 - Encourage consulting by older adults
 - Educate those of all ages about the process of aging and the contributions and needs of older adults
-

Civic Participation and Employment

Age-friendly features:

- There are numerous ways/organizations with which older adults can be engaged (e.g., Elders in Action; AARP)
- Some companies employ and value the contributions of older adults (e.g., New Seasons Market)

Suggestions:

- Involve older adults not typically engaged
 - e.g., low income, less educated, diverse backgrounds
- Age discrimination exists – educate employers



Communication and Information

Age-friendly features:

- Multnomah County Aging and Disability Services' **Helpline**
 - “a real, live person” for information about services for seniors 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- A vast amount of information is available on the internet (e.g., Network of Care, Elders in Action)
- Multnomah County Library computer access and programs

Suggestions:

- Have seniors teach seniors how to use computers
 - Ensure that information is distributed in ways other than just the internet
 - Create a central clearinghouse for printed information (e.g., in local newspapers, at grocery stores)
-

Community Support and Health Services

Age-friendly features:

- A wide range of community support and health services is available
- Many providers offer quality health services and a range of alternative health care and preventive services
- Neighbors and people in the community offer assistance

Suggestions:

- Increase funding for programs
 - Form partnerships between organizations and co-locate services
 - Train more doctors, dentists, health, and social service providers re: the needs of older adults
 - Balance preventive and acute care services
-

Outdoor Spaces – Natural Features & Green Spaces

Age-friendly features:

- Parks, trails, community gardens, and other natural features and green spaces



http://www.pdx.edu/media/p/l/planpdx_TomMcCallWaterfrontPark.jpg

Suggestions:

- Provide new natural and green features/maintain those currently available
- Make accessible to those with physical limitations
- Create animal, bird, and people watching opportunities
- Add recreational features such as chess/checker boards, other outdoor activities

Outdoor Spaces – Pedestrian Infrastructure



Age-friendly features:

- Sidewalks, curb cuts, street lighting, benches, and traffic calming devices are well developed in certain areas

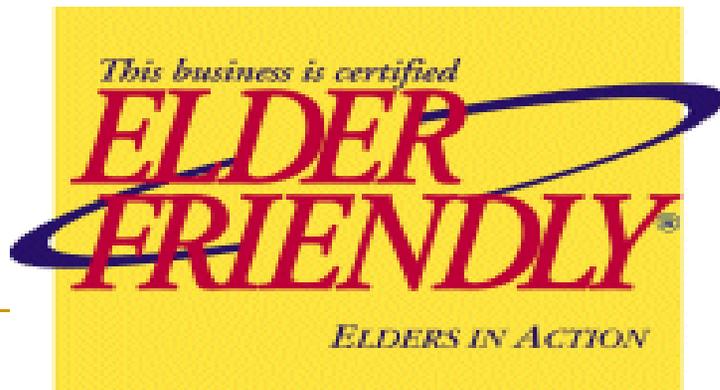
Suggestions:

- Improve pedestrian infrastructure where needed
- Improve awareness of the city's maintenance office and hotline number
- Create additional safe routes to important destinations (e.g., community centers, libraries)

Buildings

Age-friendly features:

- New developments & redevelopments are required to develop according to ADA standards
- Elders in Action provides Elder Friendly[®] business certification



Suggestions:

- Go beyond ADA regulations toward universal design standards
- Certify businesses as Elder-Friendly
- Require numbers easily visible from the street on businesses and houses

Public Transportation

Age-friendly features:

- TriMet offers good general service for older adults and those with disabilities
- Services are affordable
 - “fareless” zone



Suggestions:

- Put the accessible light-rail car in the same location on each train
- Provide more night and weekend transit service
- Place security officers on light rail trains
- Design transit stops so illegal activities cannot be shielded from view
- Educate older adults about how to use public transit (e.g., current Ride Connection program)

Additional Aspects of Transportation

Age-friendly features:

- Ride Connection – program that coordinates and provides transportation services
- Bicycling options exist for many Portlanders, including older adults
- Senior Cyclist Program for new and experienced bicyclists

Suggestions:

- Older adults should attend AARP Driver Safety classes or similar programs
- Older adults should prepare for driving cessation
- Older adults should consider alternatives to driving



Housing - Affordability

Age-friendly features:

- Programs are available to help older individuals find and obtain quality affordable housing
- Affordable housing production is a goal for some leaders and agencies



Suggestions:

- Create more affordable housing
- Limit property tax increases for those with fixed incomes
- Protect vulnerable older adults from “condo conversions”
- Provide affordable housing near services

Housing - Options

Age-friendly Features:

- Co-housing opportunities exist
- The City of Portland allows the construction and use of an accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
- Some realtors are certified as “Senior Real Estate Specialists”



Suggestions:

- Enhance the ability of individuals to age in place through universal design
- Explore multigenerational and co-housing/cooperative housing environments
- Promote the use of accessory dwelling units (ADUs)

Housing – Additional Suggestions

Proximity to Services

- Educate older home buyers on places that facilitate aging in place
- Educate realtors and developers re: older adults' housing needs and preferences

Design

- Develop housing with green spaces, gardening areas, and balconies
- Allow pets in housing for older adults
- Allow accessibility improvements made by renters in housing to remain



Two Useful Guides and Assessments

- Citizens

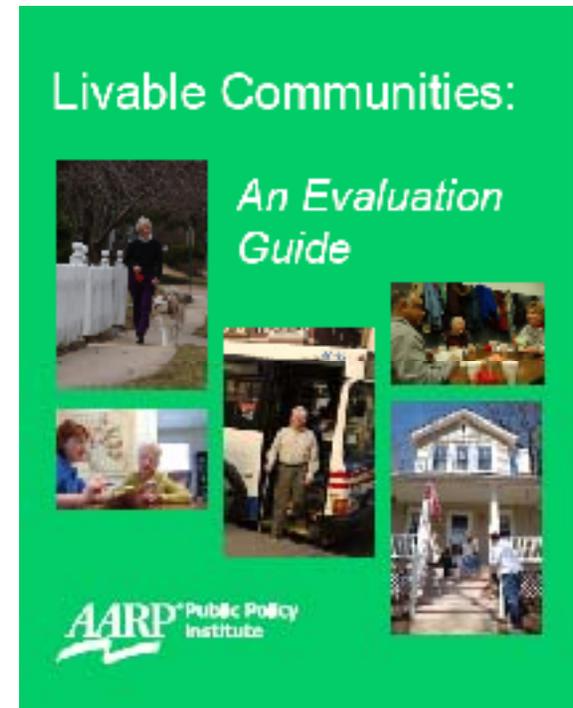
- Livable Communities: An Evaluation Guide (AARP)

- Government

- Active Living for Older Adults: Management Strategies for Health and Livable Communities (International City/County Management Association)
-

Livable Communities: An Evaluation Guide (AARP)

- Purpose is to help residents identify areas where they can direct their energies toward making their community more livable
- Small groups can concentrate on specific issues or perform entire community evaluations
- Guide is intended to empower groups of older volunteers



Active Living for Older Adults: Management Strategies for Healthy and Livable Communities

- Intended for local government managers and other local government leaders
- Offers strategies for designing communities that support “active aging”
- Guide can serve as a resource to help local governments plan for a growing aging population



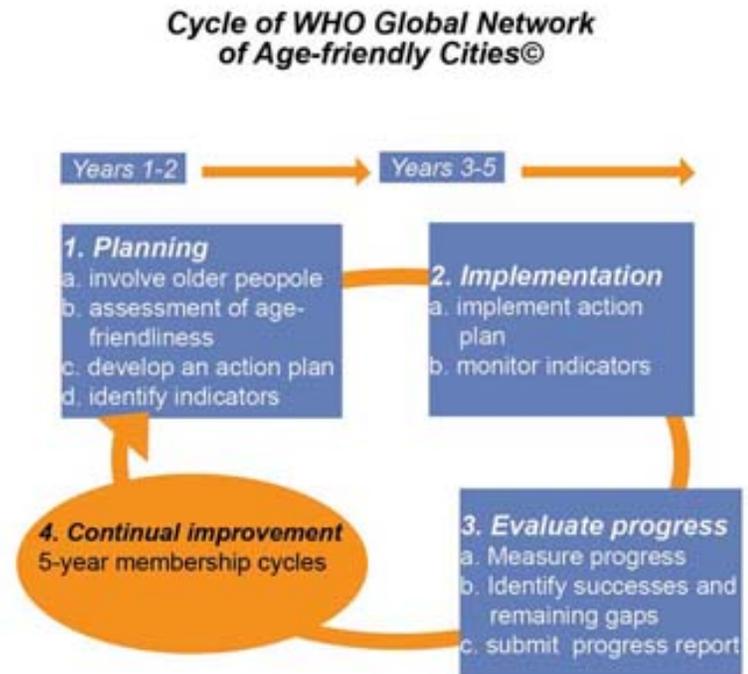
Today - Next Steps

- An exciting process is ahead: Sharing your thoughts re: how age-friendly Clackamas County is! Polling, with Dr. Deborah Johns
 - In the future, perhaps join the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities Networks?
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Join the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities Network?

To join, cities must commit to 4 steps:

- Establish mechanisms to **involve older people** in all stages of the Age-friendly Cities process. Cities are also encouraged to build partnerships (e.g., non-governmental organizations, academic institutions).
- Conduct a comprehensive and inclusive **baseline assessment** of the age-friendliness of the city, considering each of the eight domains identified in the WHO AFC Guide.
- Develop a 3-year city-wide **action plan** based on assessment findings. It is anticipated that the action plan will link to other municipal instruments to ensure that age-friendliness becomes a core responsibility for all municipal departments.
- Identify **indicators** to monitor progress against this plan.



http://www.who.int/ageing/age_friendly_cities_process/en/index.html

Thank you!

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<http://www.pdx.edu/ioa>

