



## Staff Report

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**File #:** 19-225

**Version:** 1

**Date:** 5/28/2019

**Item #:** 6. d.

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**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:** Steve Powers, City Manager

**FROM:** Peter Fernandez, PE, Public Works Director

**SUBJECT:**

Center 50+ Advisory Commission Age-Friendly Initiative Assessment

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

Result Area(s): Welcoming and Livable Community

**ISSUE:**

The Center 50+ Advisory Commission Age-Friendly Initiative Assessment report summarizing the process, findings, and potential next steps.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Information only.

**SUMMARY:**

Over one year, Salem's *Age-Friendly* Assessment Team conducted open forums, on-line surveys and personal interviews, to assess the Salem community as a place for older adults to live and thrive.

Although Salem meets many of the *Age-Friendly* standards, seniors and their families often are unaware of these resources and the intentional planning taking place to support Salem's older adults. The need for improved communication and information dissemination was identified as a reoccurring issue throughout this assessment.

The Salem *Age-Friendly* Assessment Team was diverse and included local seniors, executives from non-profit providers, policy makers, funding agencies, educational institutions, and County, City and State representatives.

## FACTS AND FINDINGS:

1. In October 2018 the Salem *Age-Friendly* Assessment Team held a final community forum. During this event attendees were asked to prioritize the assets required to make Salem a livable community. The Forum identified top priorities for Salem seniors:
  - a. Remaining **Connected to the Community**: staying in the neighborhood they choose.
  - b. **Social Participation**: lifelong learning was a high priority, as was participating in community events.
  - c. **Civic Engagement and Volunteerism**: seniors want to be active and engaged.
  - d. **Housing**: remaining in one's home and neighborhood was a clear priority, as was living near transportation and services.
  - e. **Transportation**: the ability to move freely around the community without the use of a personal vehicle.
2. Throughout the assessment process, and noted throughout the final report, one's ability to remain **connected to their neighborhood and community** was identified as a top priority to older adults. However, accessibility and affordability of basic needs such as transportation and housing were also consistently identified as factors that either promote or restrict the ability of seniors to actively engage.
3. One positive bi-product of the assessment process has been an increase in networking among agencies which has led to new partnerships, some with minimal or no budget impact, such as:
  - a. Center 50+ is working with the Salem/Keizer Transit District (Cherriots) to train seniors to ride the bus and use the Cherriots Transportation App.
  - b. Placing seniors with youth to work on community projects.
  - c. Bringing video technology training to seniors through CCTV.
  - d. Revamping the volunteer group the "Fix-It Brigade" to provide minor household repairs.
  - e. Activating ACT Now Awesome Community Team-pairing seniors with community need projects and supporting local non-profits.
  - f. Pilot program WEAVE (Village Movement) promoting people remaining in their homes with the support and resources they need.
  - g. Friendship Brigade-Volunteers helping to combat isolation and loneliness of seniors

h. Work After 50 workshops

i. Technology conference.

4. The Center 50+ Advisory Commission will begin the development of an action plan in January 2020. The action team will include seniors and other agencies and community partners. The Commission is eager to take the lead in creating an *Age Friendly* Action Plan; bringing seniors and partners together to accomplish a series of many small steps toward becoming a community for all ages.

## BACKGROUND:

The World Health Organization (WHO) conceived the idea of *Age-Friendly* Communities in June 2005. WHO realized that communities need to prepare for the rapid aging of our population by paying increased attention to the environmental, economic, and social factors that influence the health and well-being of older adults. By doing so, these communities are better equipped to become great places, and even lifelong homes, for people for all ages.

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has partnered with WHO to encourage and support communities in the United States working toward being an Age Friendly Community. AARP provided \$2,500 to Center 50+ to support the activities involved in the assessment process.

WHO and AARP have identified eight domains of livability that influence the quality of life for all residents. The focus of this group was to pay special attention to quality of life for older adults. The eight domains include:

- Outdoor spaces and buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic participation and employment
- Communication and Information
- Community Support and Health Services

Salem is one of Oregon's largest cities and has an ever increasing older adult population. The population of those age 65 and older saw an increase of nearly 3 percent from 2010 to 2015, and now represent 16.4 percent of the total population. With 7,100 people turning 65 each day in the United States, Salem will continue to have an annual increase of those aged 65 and older.

Alicia Blalock  
Administration Division Manager

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**Attachments:**

1. Age-Friendly Salem Assessment 2018