AARP Age-Friendly
Community Houston, Texas
AARP - Houston
Age-Friendly/Livable Community Report and Action Plan
Houston, Texas
December 2018
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[Placeholder]
Executive Summary

Dedication
The City of Houston AARP Age-Friendly Action Plan is dedicated to the many individuals who had a hand in building the amazing city that Houston is today. Your work and dedication have assisted in building a community that is inclusive of all people and all ages, including the young at heart.

General Recommendations (Not in any order or mutually exclusive)

- City of Houston to appoint a Special Assistant on Age Friendly/Livable Community in the Mayor’s Office
- City of Houston to create standing advisory committee on Age Friendly/Livable Community
- City of Houston to work with Area Planning Aging Council (APAC) to implement the activities presented in this plan.
- Houston City Council to pass a resolution supporting the activities presented in this plan.
City of Houston
The City of Houston, founded in 1837 by brothers John and Augustus Allen and named after Sam Houston was labeled “the city to be”. With early developers platting wider than average roads and thoroughfares, there were high expectations from the start. It is no surprise that the city now overlooks a global port, host the world’s largest medical center, and provides a residence for many of the world’s most innovative thinkers. The City of Houston is no longer the “city to be” but now is the city to model.

Houstonians are known for thinking big. Home to Johnson Space Center, Houstonians continue to look ahead for the next great adventure. Houston is the fourth largest city in the United States in terms of population and the ninth largest in terms of area. Sitting between open grasslands and the Gulf Coast, Houston has always been able to enjoy economic successes ranging from agricultural commerce, oversea trade, and energy innovation. Houston continues to provide opportunities for entrepreneurs, those looking to start or restart their careers, and individuals who are looking for a new place to call home.
Now known as the Bayou City, the City of Houston has brilliantly developed the many bayous into hike and bike trails, parks, and open greenways, creating assets where there were once underutilized resources. From those that call Houston home to frequent visitors, the Bayou City provides a unique experience that showcases the capabilities of a global city without losing the charm and meaning of southern hospitality.

Houstonians are helpful. Always there with a welcoming smile and willingness to lend a hand, the city is committed to serving others. The city welcomed evacuees in the wake of Hurricane Katrina with open arms and continued to showcase this hospitality for those devastated by Hurricane Harvey, creating the nationally recognized brand #HoustonStrong.

Houstonians by nature are problem solvers. The city is home to 25 Fortune 500 companies. The city is home to over 40 colleges including world-class universities like the University of Houston, Texas Southern University, the University of St. Thomas, and Rice University. Houston is also one of the most diverse cities in the United States. One can observe many different ethnic communities and taste cuisines from all over the world without ever leaving the city limits. The city is also a cultural center. It is home to over twenty museums specializing in areas from natural history to health.

Houstonians have come together to create this Age-Friendly Action Plan to foster policies that are bold yet achievable. The city is mindful of the role aging plays in all aspects of life. Age cuts across all nine domains that frame an age-friendly community and we know from the State of Aging and Health in America 2013 report that the key to improving health and overall quality of life must be through collaboration of multiple diverse groups at the national, state, and local levels. It is in this dynamic city where anything is possible, and that Houstonians will apply a big picture, big hearted approach in the action plan that is presented here.

**Houstonians who call Houston Home**
Age
While Houston is known for having a relatively young, diverse population, Houstonians are aging. The aging of Houstonians is reflected in the median age, increasing from 31.8 in 2009 to 32.6 in 2015. As of 2015, there were 2,217,706 people who call Houston home. Of these, 212,701 are 65 and over, making up 9.6 percent of the population. To put this in perspective, one out of every ten Houstonians is now 65 and over. There are currently 564,000 residents in Harris County over the age of 60. By 2025, that population will double to more than one million.

The number of older individuals in Houston is increasing not only as a percentage of the population but in raw numbers as well. Therefore, there will be more demand for services and amenities tailored to this age group. From 2000 to 2010, the number of Houstonians 62 or over increased from 197,956 to 240,715. The trend in the percentage of Houstonians 50 or over is generally increasing as well but has shown a slight decrease in 2014 and 2015. The overall number is expected to increase regardless of any change in percentage.
Gender
While half of the total population in Houston identifies as either male or female, the population 65 years and over is skewed to a female majority.
Diversity
The societal makeup of Houston is a diverse mix of ethnicities and cultures. The Houston metropolitan area consists of 39.7 percent non-Hispanic whites, 35.3 percent Hispanics, 16.9 percent non-Hispanic blacks, and 8.2 percent Asians and others. According to Rice University’s Kinder Institute, Houston is the most ethnically diverse major metropolitan area in the United States in terms of how near it is to an equal distribution of the nation’s four major ethnic communities: Asians, Hispanics, non-Hispanic blacks, and non-Hispanic whites.

Accommodations
Houston’s aging community must deal with higher rates of disability that hinders their mobility and ability to move around comfortably. The population 65 and over is almost four times more likely to have at least one disability at 38.1 percent compared to 9.8 percent among the general population.

Military Service
Houston’s residents 65 and over have a history of military service. Of those 65 and over, 16.5 percent are a civilian veteran. This is in comparison to 4.7 percent of Houston’s entire civilian population over 18 years of age.

Housing
Houstonians 65 and over live in the same house they did one year ago at a rate of 92.4 percent in comparison to 79.6 percent of the general population. The benefits of a livable community, then, would be enjoyed by someone 65 or older for a longer period than someone in the general population. This also means that the housing stock is older and more likely to need repair and/or ill-equipped to accommodate the higher rates of disability among Houstonians 65 and over.
A greater percentage of AARP Houston respondents own their own residence at 77 percent while a smaller percentage rent when compared to the general population of Houston’s 65 years and over. In both instances, a higher percentage own their own residence than rent. In the general population, the story is different. More rent than own with 43.7 percent owning and 56.3 percent renting.

Most Houston AARP respondents want to live independently in their own home for as long as they can. A surveyed 87 percent believe it is important to stay in their own home as they age, and 44 percent say it is important to age in their own community. Two of biggest reasons respondents would want to move out of their community are to find right-sized housing and/or to find a home that can help them live independently as they age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Home</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Family Home</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townhouse/Duplex</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coop/Condo</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Language
In Houston, roughly half of the general population in 2015 speaks a language other than English at home: 47.1 percent versus 52.9 percent speaking English only. Of those for whom English is a second language, 23.3 percent speak English less than very well.

Among Houston’s residents 65 and over, 70.8 percent speak English only at home. Yet 29.2 percent still speak a language other than English at home and 18.8 percent speak English less than very well. While a greater percentage of those 65 and older speak English only at home than the general population, almost 30 percent still speak a language other than English at home.

**Most Important Domains to Houston AARP Members**

Health care and transportation domains are the two most important livable community domains to Houston AARP members according to the 2016 AARP Livability for All in Houston Survey. Respondents are particularly concerned that hospital staff are respectful, facilities are accessible, and home health care is affordable. In Houston, 73.4 percent of Houstonians have health insurance coverage (48.4 percent private and 30.7 public) while 26.6 percent have no insurance coverage at all.

Transportation is a close second in importance to Houston AARP respondents. Respondents desire well-maintained streets, enforced speed limits, readable signage, and well-lit intersections. Almost nine out of ten, or 87.9 percent of Houstonians 16 years and older rely on a car, truck, or van as their means of transportation to work. This has major implications for the independence of Houston’s aging residents, particularly because they are four times as likely to have a disability as the general population.

Only 4.2 percent use public transportation. The rest walk (2.1 percent), bike (0.5 percent), use a taxicab, motorcycle, or other means (1.9 percent), and 3.4 percent work from home. The mean travel time to work for Houstonians is 26.5 minutes versus 25.2 in the United States.

**Largest Gaps Identified in 2016 AARP Livability for All in Houston Survey**
The largest community need gaps identified by the AARP survey is community information that is delivered in person to those with difficulties leaving their home as well as clearly displayed information with large lettering. It is likely that a significant number of the population 65 and over will require messaging that is not only clearly displayed but available in other languages due to the 30 percent that speak a language other than English at home.

Another significant gap identified in the survey relates to jobs. There exists a lack of opportunities identified by respondents for older adults who would like to learn new skills in addition to a dearth of jobs that are adapted to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (blue and yellow bars add up to equal light green bar)
Summary

Houston is diverse. Houston is aging. One in four Houstonians is 50 and over. One in ten is 65 and over. This is a significant segment of Houston’s population and the numbers cannot be ignored. The demand for services tailored to an age-friendly community will only increase in the coming years as more and more baby boomers become older persons. The belief is that what is good in an age-friendly community is good for the entire community.
Methodology

In 2014, AARP Houston committed to become part of the World Health Organization (WHO) Network of Age Friendly Communities. To begin that process, the head of the municipality would commit in writing to begin the process. Under the leadership of Mayor Annise Parker with support from the Houston Health Department, the process began in Houston in late 2014. During the next year, a host of activities related to Age-Friendly was conducted by AARP and some community partners. Additionally, many one-on-one meetings were scheduled with City elected officials, departmental directors and community agencies to introduce the concept and gain commitment to participating. In April of 2016, newly elected Mayor Sylvester Turner, pledged his support in a keynote address with other key community partners, such as the Area Agency on Aging and Care for Elders who reported on their recent reports on Houston’s older adult population. At the same time, AARP Houston reported on the recent results from their survey of Houston’s AARP membership. Finally, in the fall, the inaugural convening of community partners to join in the Age Friendly/Livable Community Planning Process began.

AARP National became the U.S. representative of the WHO Network of Age Friendly Communities and branded the initiative Livable Communities to broaden the impact of creating an Age Friendly community. Our mantra is “if it’s good enough for an 80-year old, it will be good enough for an 8-year old. This also broadened the participation of community partners and enabled a larger coalition of advocates to work towards an Age Friendly/Livable Community.

Committee Structure

The AARP Houston Steering Committee utilized existing partnerships and relied on community partners, many of them who serve older adults but also who were advocates and providers in one or more of the domains to create an equitable plan that benefited all Houstonians. Co-leaders were identified for each domain to help expand, convene and create the domain action plan.

Age Friendly/Livable Community Planning Process Convenings

The Houston process involved a few general convenings with all community partners to gain consensus on some fundamental principles and direction. It was agreed that, wherever possible, we would utilize and connect with other existing and related plans. Another point of agreement was to focus on and limit the scope of the plan to the City of Houston but acknowledge that some activities were county-wide or regional, in some cases, like transportation.

Most of 2017 was convening of the individual domains in “roundtable” format. Co-leaders were identified to help identify other potential partners and help draft the initial plan.
In addition to the Roundtables, the group used other public access opportunities to gain data particularly from older adults.

2016 AARP Livability for All in Houston Survey

To better understand the dynamics of aging among Houstonians, AARP Houston conducted an age-friendly community survey, the AARP 2016 Livability for All in Houston Survey, to get a better sense of how age-friendly the City of Houston is according to Houston AARP members. Almost 500 members gave us insight into how the residents feel, what they want, what they have, and to what services they have access. This, in turn, allows (perceived) gaps in services to be identified. Almost all Houston AARP respondents feel their community is a good place to live. However, the services and amenities the respondents identified wanting to have access to and the corresponding lack of these services and amenities identified by respondents indicates there is still room for improvement. While the results are enlightening, they reflect the opinions and perceptions of the respondents. Accordingly, it may be the case that services are indeed available but are yet unknown to respondents.

Convio

This is another sample of AARP Houston members who were contacted by email to respond to a short on-line survey to ascertain some specific information. About 160 senior Houstonians completed the survey, that asked them on what their top areas of concerns related to the listed AARP domains, descriptions of the City of Houston, and recommendations to improve the overall quality of life for seniors. Of this group, it was found that 13% were under the age of 55, 41% were between the ages of 55-65 years of age, 36% were between 66-75 years of age, and 9% were between 76-85 years of age. Also, 20% of residents have lived in their homes for less than 5 years, another 20% have lived in their homes for 5 to 10 years, 17% have lived in their homes for 11-20 years, 28% have lived in their homes 21-35 years, 13% have lived in their homes 36-50 years, and 3% have lived in their homes for more than 50 years.

Council member Amanda Edwards Empowerment Series (October 25, 2018)

This event is in its second year and had over a thousand seniors attend. We were invited to hold a session on Age Friendly/Livable Community Planning to inform the seniors who attended this session about the draft plan and the activities recommended. About fifty seniors chose the domain that he/she was most interested in. One of our community partners led the domain discussion and the results further provided input on the specific activities giving us more direction and specificity.
In our efforts to create an equitable plan, other existing city plans and studies were reviewed and included to provide critical insight. Plans included 2008 – 2016 Aging Agenda, Health of Houston Survey 2010, 2016 Livability of All in Houston, and the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

**AARP Houston – Vision Statement**

*We envision a community for our families that is safe, affordable, friendly, and accessible to all. We will work to ensure a city that is inclusive, embraces diversity and promotes respect and dignity for all.*
AARP Houston – Values

Equity Friendly
Embracing Diversity
Respect for Dignity
Awareness & Sensitivity
Cooperation

Community Partners

3-1-1
City of Houston Area Planning Advisory Council
Houston-Galveston Area Council Area Agency on Aging

AARP Houston

AARP State Executive Committee
AARP Volunteers
Adult Protective Services
Aged and Disabled Resource Ctr.
Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries
City of Houston Multiservice Centers

Asakura Robinson
Avenue CDC
Houston B-Cycle

Baker Ripley (formerly Neighborhood Centers)
Baylor College of Medicine
Big Brothers/Big Sisters
Bike Houston
Boat People SOS – Houston (BPSOS)
Bridge Solutions Health
Buffalo Bayou Partnership
Care for Elders – Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center
Catholic Charities
Senior Community Service Employment Program
Houston Council Member Amanda K. Edwards
Chinese Community Center
Citizens Transportation Coalition
City of Houston
City of Houston Administration and Regulatory Affairs
City of Houston Health Department
City of Houston Parks & Recreation Department
City of Houston Planning Department
City of Houston Urban Garden
City of Houston Planning and Development Department
City of Houston Community Centers
City of Houston Department of Neighborhoods
City of Houston Housing & Community Development
City of Houston Public Library
City of Houston – Harris County Area Agency on Aging
City of Houston Planning Commission
City of Houston Volunteer Program
Executive Service Corps of Houston
Family Houston
Family Tree Home Care
Filipino Lions Club
Foster Grandparents
Glasshouse Policy/Traffic Safety Specialist TXDOT
Greater Northside Management District
Greatland Leasing & Management, Investment
Harris County Housing Authority
Harris County Public Health
Harris County Sheriff’s Office
Harris County Transit Rides
Hawes Hill Calderon
Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Houston Fire Department
Houston-Galveston Area Council Livable Communities
Houston Apartment Association
Houston Association for Volunteer Administrators
Houston ISD-Community Partnerships
Houston Fire Department
Houston Parks Board
Houston Police Department
Houston Southeast Management District
Interfaith Ministries
International Management District
League of Women Voters
Legacy Community Health
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
MD Anderson

METRO
Mi Familia Vota
Montrose Clinic
Munford Consulting
National Homebuilders Association
City of Houston Super Neighborhood Alliance
New Hope Housing
Houston Office of Emergency Management
Outreach Strategists LLC
Rebuilding Houston
Rebuilding Together Houston
Recipe for Success Foundation
Retired Senior Volunteer Program
Student Conservation Association
Scenic Houston
Senior Justice Assessment Center
SER Jobs for Progress
Sharpstown Civic Association
Southwest Management District
Texas Housers
YMCA of Greater Houston
Houston Tool Bank
Traffic Engineers, Inc
Texas Department of Engineers
Uber
University of Houston – Downtown, School of Social Work
The United Way
University of Houston
Urban Harvest
University of Texas Health Policy, & Community Health Practice
University of Texas Health Consortium on Aging
VN Teamwork-Golden Bamboo Village
Volunteer Houston
Westchase District
Workforce Commission
In 2017-18, the Houston AARP Age Friendly/Livable Communities team launched a series of meetings in preparation of the plan. Thought leaders for each of the domain teams included non-profit leaders, municipal officials, and members of the community with long-term vested interests in the community planning process. During the initial meeting, attendees were encouraged to be mindful and anticipate the needs and preferences of older persons and to respect lifestyle choices of older persons who are the most vulnerable. Participants weighed their suggestions in accordance with the outlines provided by the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Community Action Plan.

The Houston AARP Age Friendly/Livable Communities team also decided early on to add a ninth domain of Public Safety. Given our city’s history and experience, this domain included various aspects of public safety including but not limited to: police, fire and emergency disaster preparation, both natural and manmade; personal safety such as abuse, neglect and exploitation, scamming and fraud. This turned out to be more fortuitous than expected as Hurricane Harvey hit the Houston area in late August of 2017. This event also set our timetable back since it took the rest of 2017 for many of our community partners to recover and/or to refocus their efforts from disaster recovery to more routine service provision.

Multiple metrics were measured, including ownership of projects, timeline, resources & support, and avenues of measuring overall progress and success. Members of the committees, with both personal and professional experiences brought their insight to create viable projects that are equitable to all. These projects ranged from age-friendly employment programs, establishing policies advocating for older persons, and implementing practices that will directly serve a community ready to age in place.

The initial meetings allowed the domain teams to design a comprehensive plan that included goals ranging from the inclusion of leisure & cultural activities, proving safe and affordable modes of public transportation, and promote programming that ethnic & cultural diversity. With the leadership provided by the Houston AARP office, participants were engaged at a grassroots level with a special focus on creating short, mid- and long-term program and policy goals.

Overall, the domains were well attended with participants with diverse experiences and varying fields of work. The Houston AARP team is confident that the presented goals resemble the values and overall mission defined by the AARP Age Friendly/Livable Communities program.
AARP Houston Age Friendly/Livable Community Plan Development Process

Phase 1: Planning (Years 1-2)

Phase 2: Implementation (Years 3-5)

Phase 3: Continual Improvement (Year 5 and Beyond)
AARP Houston Domain Action Plans

1. **Transportation (47)**

2. **Housing (67)**

3. **Public Safety (Not measured)**

4. **Health and Community Support (56)**

5. **Communication and Information (Not measured)**

6. **Open Spaces and Buildings (41)/Social Participation (35)**

7. **Respect and Social Inclusion (Not measured)**

8. **Civic Participation, Volunteerism, and Employment (46)**
Domain Name: Transportation

Goal: Make Houston a Place that Encourages Safe, Walkable, Accessible and Affordable Mobility Options (tentative)

Vision: Safe and affordable modes of private and public transportation

Collaborating Organizations: Collaborative Organization: COH – P&D/PWE, Houston Coalition for Complete Streets, Super Neighborhood Alliance, Rebuild Houston (Funding), AARP, Bike Houston, TIRZ, Metro, Uber, LYFT, Houston B-Cycle, Volunteer Houston, and Family Tree’s Concierge Services. HPD, COH - P&D/PWE, METRO, And non-profits, AARP, Bike Houston, SNA, Complete Streets Coalition, Harris County Rides

Transportation is one of the two most important livable community domains to Houston AARP members. Nine out of ten Houstonians relies on a vehicle as their primary source of transportation. The inability to drive a vehicle has major implications for a Houstonian’s independence. A disability hinders independence even more. Houston’s older residents are four times as likely to have at least one disability as the general population. Respondents are particularly concerned that hospital staff are respectful, facilities are accessible, and home health is affordable.

The AARP 2016 survey found that survey respondents consider it highly important to ensure streets are well-maintained, traffic signs are easy to read, speed limits are enforced, and intersection are well-lit and safe for all users.

AARP Livability Index –
The AARP Livability Index scores transportation in the City of Houston as a 47, within the middle third and not scoring within the average. Houston is cited as having 28 busses and trains per hour, providing Houston a passing score, however, an accessible system design, convenient, transportation options and safe streets (based speed limits) all fall below the bottom third of the scoring metric.

On measure transportation policies, the City of Houston operates under a state and local complete street policy as well as a comprehensive livability committee, however, lacks a set policy on transportation coordination that supports convenient transportation options.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Resources and Support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 1:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 2:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 3:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 4:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 5:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 6:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 7:</strong></td>
<td>TBD, Best Practices; Bike Plan</td>
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**Recommendation 8:**

Identify & Assign Responsible Departments for Sidewalks, Bike Lanes, and Bus Stop Maintenance

TBD, Best Practices; Bike Plan
Domain Name: Housing

Goal: Availability of home modification programs for aging in place as well as a range of age-friendly housing options.

Vision:

Collaborative Organizations: City of Houston, AARP Houston, HPD, Dept of Neighborhoods, Super Neighborhoods, Corporate sponsors, A.O Phillips (person with Minority Contract Association), City of Houston Office of Business Opportunity (Carlecia Wright), Houston MSDC, and the Greater Houston Builders Association, Houston Contractors Association

Housing
Houstonians 65 and over live in the same house they did one year ago at a rate of 92.4 percent in comparison to 79.6 percent of the general population one year of age and over. This means 12.8 percent more Houstonians over 65 and over remain in the same house they did a year ago than the general population. Therefore, most are part of their community longer than the general population. 87 percent believe it is important to stay in their own home as they age, and 44 percent say it is important to age in their own community. The benefits of a livable community, then, would be enjoyed by someone 65 or older for a longer period on average than someone in the general population. This also means that the housing stock is older and more likely to need repair and/or ill-equipped to accommodate the higher rates of disability among Houstonians 65 and over.
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<th>Activities</th>
<th>Metrics/Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Affordable Housing options</td>
<td>Number of individuals assisted via informational and public assistance programming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote and Distribute programs to help Seniors Age in Place,</td>
<td>Number of homes and individual assisted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including: Homefit and Program of Installing bars, ramps, elevators,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>lifts, alarms etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocate Housing Policies to Encourage More Housing Options including</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Universal Design, Tax Credits (eliminating state representative letter),</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Trusts, changing building codes to allow for more variety of</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>housing, smaller housing, middle housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Public facing, city tenants council.</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Tenants Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>List of resources/programs that assist/develop affordable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive list of affordable housing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Transparency and accountability for potential residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public list of citations against apartments</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Organized community clean ups</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support National Night Out</td>
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Domain Name: Public Safety

Goal: Older adults want to be safe, both inside and outside of the home. Through collaborative initiatives and multi-disciplinary teams, the City of Houston will address fire and crime prevention, home safety, elder abuse and mistreatment, as well as financial security and fraud protection.

Vision: Assurance of public safety and security in all aspects of life, such as crime, homeland security, cyber-security, emergency preparedness and personal exploitation and neglect.

Collaborative Organizations: APS, Harris County, Guardianship, District Attorney’s Office, Law Enforcement, Texas Elder Abuse Mistreatment Institute, APS, UT Health, Harris County Elder Abuse Fatality Review Team, H-Fast (Houston Abuse Specialist Team), Sheltering Arms, Better Business Bureau, Houston Police Department, Houston Fire Department, 211, and AAA-Harris County.

Houstonians want to be safe and feel safe. Houston is becoming a safer place to live. The benefits of a safer community will be enjoyed by all. Houston AARP will continue to focus on traditional methods to maintain that feeling of safety for all Houstonians while working with partnering groups to place a new focus on cybersecurity and education on how to stay safe in today’s digital world.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Metrics/Outcomes</th>
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</table>
| **Recommendation 1:**  
Senior Citizens Crime Prevention Initiative-provides seniors with home safety prevention equipment, e.g., locks, alarms, lighting, batteries, smoke detectors |                                                       |
| **Recommendation 2:**  
Public Awareness Campaign for Elder Abuse and Neglect – door to door scams |                                                       |
| **Recommendation 3:**  
STEAR Registry-needs to be updated                                         |                                                       |
| **Recommendation 4:**  
Support of the Senior Justice Assessment Center (SJAC)                     | Reduced number of clients coming back into the system |
| **Recommendation 5:**  
Educate community on financial crimes, Fraud and Scams                    |                                                       |
| **Recommendation 6:**  
Houston Fire Department free installation of smoke detectors              | Safer homes and lowered risk of fire related damaged  |
| **Recommendation 6:**  
Recontinue of the Gatekeeper Program                                         |                                                       |
| **Recommendation 7:**                                                   |                                                       |
Houston Fire Department - Heat Prevention “Beat the Heat” &
“Healthy Homes-Fall Prevention”
Domain Name: Health and Community Support

Goal:

Vision: Access to home-based care services, health clinics and programs that promote wellness and active aging

Collaborative Organizations: HCAAA/COH, CFE, BR, 211, IM/ERJCC Meals on Wheels, Churches, Community Centers, UTH, Legacy, Methodist, Settegast Clinic, Baytown, Harris, Interfaith Care Partners, Baker Ripley, Alzheimer’s Association, Care for Elders

Healthcare, along with transportation, is one of the most important livable community domains to Houston AARP members. Respondents are particularly concerned that hospital staff are respectful, facilities are accessible, and home health care is affordable. In Houston, 73.4 percent of Houstonians have health insurance coverage (48.4 percent private and 30.7 public) while 26.6 percent have no insurance coverage at all.

The AARP Houston 2016 Age-Friendly Community Survey found that survey respondents list respectful and helpful staff and access to a variety of professionals and specialists as a top priority. Also, respondents expressed a want for well-maintained facilities and conveniently located emergency centers.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Metrics/Outcomes</th>
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</table>
| **Recommendation 1:**  
Create a user-friendly map for all senior centers in Houston (Ex. Coalition for Homeless maps and Parks for All Ages map based on walkability and features) | Hard copy and digital maps disseminated to at least one organization in every super-neighborhood? |
| **Recommendation 2:**  
“Primer” or training on how and where to find information and create a “FAQ” (frequency asked questions) or Tool-kit (one-page front and back) | Phone-based and community pre/post survey increase of awareness and knowledge for general public older adults; distribute 25,000 hard copies of the Senior Guidance Directory as well as digital; need significant evaluation protocols |
| **Recommendation 3:**  
To create awareness around the “front door” intake and assessment lines and also systems coordination between the providers for older adult and caregiver service, including HCAAADRC, United Way’s 211 and Baker Ripley intake line.  
a. Standards to look for and best practices in caregiving. | Increased awareness and utilization of front door lines via survey |
### Recommendation 4:
To allow people living in Houston of all ages’ answers to the questions, “Where do I go and who do I call to be healthy and exercise my sense of purpose?”

Available listing of resources and increased availability and accessibility of programs offered

### Recommendation 5:
To identify the underserved pockets of community where calls to the key intake lines are not being received and to create target outreach initiatives to increase reach?

Identify, plan and execute one neighborhood per year for targeted outreach; track change in call volume

- a. Support those who helped seniors during disasters - activate STEAR registry for seniors and disabled to be listed for help during disasters

### Recommendation 6:
To offer aging training from the HGEC/UTH Consortium model to direct service staff in FQHCs and clinics and providers in Houston.

Within three years, have provided aging trainings to 50% of community clinics in Houston

### Recommendation 7:
To make programs like AAA’s *Care Transition Program* and *Home Plate* (Meals on Wheels) available to those who need it the most.

For vulnerable patients, create and implement best practice standards of care around “community handoff” and implement or scale to three major hospital systems

### Recommendation 8:
To link discharging hospital patients that do not have immediate, significant medical needs to community centers and other social opportunities in their community.

For non-vulnerable patients, create and implement best practice standards of care around self-directed “next steps in community” and pilot at clinics of a major hospital
Domain Name: Communication and Information

Goal: Facilitate the provision of information and means of communication to all.

Vision: Access to communications technology and other resources so older residents can connect with their community, friends and family

Collaborative Organizations: AARP, Harris County Area Agency on Aging/Care Connection Aging and Disability Resource Center (HCAA/ADRC), Care for Elders, United Way 2-1-1, Houston Public Library (HPL), Parks and Recreation, 3-1-1, Houston Parks and Recreation, Volunteer Houston, Care for Elders,

The largest community need gaps identified by the AARP survey is community information that is delivered in person to those with difficulties leaving their home as well as clearly displayed information with large lettering. It is likely that a significant number of the population 65 and over will require messaging that is not only clearly displayed but available in other languages due to 30 percent speak a language other than English at home.

The 2016 AARP Houston Age-Friendly Community Survey found that respondents identify salient gaps in having community information that is delivered in person, clearly displayed information, from a centralized source and automated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 1:</strong> Provide ongoing education and information</td>
<td>Share/disseminate information daily, weekly, monthly, etc. depending on the information; share/disseminate information at events per established schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 2:</strong> Provide classes such as computer and social media-Seniors use texting more</td>
<td>Establish class schedule and teach/educate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 3:</strong> Produce and disseminate Senior Guidance Directory</td>
<td>Produce and disseminate directory biennially</td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 4:</strong> Maintain an Age Friendly Community Facebook Page</td>
<td>Develop Facebook page</td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 5:</strong> Develop an app for Seniors similar to the listserve, “Nextdoor”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 6:</strong> Create a Senior Communication Volunteer Network using trained “Ambassadors” from Civic Clubs/Superneighborhood Councils, Service orgs., faith-based institutions, residences, etc.</td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 7:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify pipelines of information to disseminate</td>
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<th><strong>Recommendation 8:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Use Community Newspapers and Free publications such as Senior News</td>
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<th><strong>Recommendation 9:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Identify senior advocates or spokespersons</td>
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Domain Name: Open Spaces & Buildings/Social Participation

Goal: To provide availability of safe and accessible recreational facilities.

Vision: Availability of safe and accessible recreation facilities

Collaborating Organizations: Houston Complete Streets Coalition, Houston Parks Board, Sports and Fitness related organizations, AARP Houston and the City of Houston

Open Spaces and Buildings/Social Participation
Houstonians of all ages desire beautiful spaces to live in. Beautiful places filled with trees and flowers, parks that are accessible regardless of disabilities, and areas to talk and to rest. These areas reduce stress, encourage exercise, and foster community cohesion. Houston AARP will continue to promote availability of safe and accessible recreational facilities. Houstonians of all ages desire beautiful spaces to live in. Beautiful places filled with trees and flowers, parks that are accessible regardless of disabilities, and areas to talk and to rest. These areas reduce stress, encourage exercise, and foster community cohesion.
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| **Recommendation**  
Identify multi-service centers in the City of Houston | Number of MCSs, parks and recreation spaces patronage by CoH residents.            |
| **Recommendation**  
Create places & spaces for urban farming and gardening to promote food access and food security |                                                                                  |
| **Recommendation**  
Make streets and sidewalks more walkable                                  |                                                                                  |
| **Recommendation**  
Develop and Promote local resources and programs both in outdoor spaces and in buildings that encourage active aging |                                                                                  |
| **Recommendation**  
On-line Video Life Course-have seniors talk about their life experiences relatable to kids-Storytelling. Have AARP put on Podcast |                                                                                  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Number of individuals assisted via informational and public assistance programming</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identify and improve the accessibility of the parks and recreation spaces; provide better lighting</td>
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<td>Recommend multi-generational interactions, multicultural and multiethnic interactions and inspire dialogue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify and improve access to facilities that allow seniors to engage in sports and fitness activities</td>
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Domain: Respect and Social Inclusion

Goal: Foster an Atmosphere Promoting Respect, Inclusion and Diversity

Vision: Programs that promote ethnic and cultural diversity, as well as multigenerational interaction & dialogue.

Collaborative Organizations: Volunteer Houston, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, Chinese Community Center, Harris County Sheriff’s Dept, HFD, APS, 211, and AAA – Harris County, and AARP

Houstonians respect for each other was on full display in the wake of the floods following Hurricane Harvey. They came together to help one another regardless of their differences. The goal was simply to help as many people as possible. Houston AARP will continue working to open opportunities to provide respect and social inclusion programming.

There are many opportunities to participate in various activities in the Houston area. However, one must know about them, want to go, and have the means to get there. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Adequate communication, activities tailored to Houston’s older adults, and transportation will all help facilitate greater social participation.

The AARP Livability Index scores engagement as a 35.
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 1:</strong> Build and strengthen networks and collaborations that promote inclusion and diversity in cultural and intergenerational activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 2:</strong> Identify causes of social isolation and identify assets in neighborhoods where seniors have access to social participation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 3:</strong> Develop education, training and communications efforts that promote respect and a better understanding of older adults’ presence and contributions in the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 4:</strong> Develop education and training for providers that will help integrate cultural and intergenerational inclusion and provide cultural competency. Develop a tool-kit for providers that include cultural and geographical sensitivities.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Domain Name: Civic Participation, Volunteerism, and Employment

Goal: To add value to the wise worker. Promote evidence-based programming to support civic participation and employment programs. “Community engagement is a lifetime commitment.”

Vision: Paid work and volunteer activities for older residents and opportunities to engage in the formulation of policies relevant to their lives.

Collaborative Organizations: Mi Familia Vota, League of Women Voters, Executive Service Group, Super Neighborhood Council, AAA – Harris County, and AARP.

Another significant gap identified in the AARP survey relates to jobs. There is a lack of job opportunities identified by respondents for older adults who would like to learn new skills in addition to a dearth of jobs that are adapted to the needs of individuals with disabilities.
<table>
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</table>
| **Recommendation 1:**  
Develop and Promote programs that encourage Civic Participation, including Encouraging voter communication and voter turnout, Increasing the number of attendees at candidate forums and Encouraging easier avenues for voter participation; hold politicians accountable for senior issues. | |
| **Recommendation 2:**  
Mobilization and connectivity through information and communication | |
| **Recommendation 3:**  
Allow flexible work arrangements to help employees maintain work-life balance, especially those who provide care for their spouses or parents. | |
| **Recommendation 4:**  
Education and Marketing Program that promotes the message that Older Workers are Good Investments Supported by Research | |
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<tr>
<th><strong>Recommendation 5:</strong></th>
<th>Mobilize and Connect Seniors through Information and Communication</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 6:</strong></td>
<td>Develop and Promote programs that encourage senior employment that don’t conflict with other senior benefit programs; possibly receive stipend; including Working to prolong SCSEP (Senior Corps Service Employment Program that allow older job seekers to increase their skills and build self-confidence while earning a modest income. Create Foster grandparent programs in communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation 7:</strong></td>
<td>Develop and promote programs that encourage volunteerism, including engaging volunteer interest organizations and engaging human resource organizations for volunteer collaborations; include transportation for older adults</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Special Thank You

We would like to thank the individuals who volunteered their time and efforts to create an Age-Friendly plan for the City of Houston that is inclusive of all needs, lifestyles, and points of view. Their efforts were documented, discussed, and weighed to map a comprehensive plan that accurately represents the needs of each individual. Their continued commitment drives us to improve livability and opportunity for the residents of the City of Houston.