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Cover Photo: Wilkinsburg Community Drum Circle, a project that emerged from Aging Your Way.

Watch it on our YouTube channel

Photo: In-Formed by Nature art workshop, Frick Environmental Center, August 2019
Welcome

We’re so glad you’re here.

At the heart of it, that’s what our work is about. Design—of neighborhoods and opportunities—should welcome us. We should be able to participate in life our entire life.

Our work says to people of all ages and abilities: We care about you. We respect you. We want you in our community. It’s a simple message, but so often it gets lost. And that’s why we’re here.

Five years ago, Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh set out to make our region more inclusive and respectful of every generation. Our population is growing older, we said, and that’s an opportunity to rethink what works and what doesn’t—for older people and for all of us. We envisioned better options for transportation, housing and connecting with one another. We envisioned innovation by and for everyone, allowing us to age where and how we choose.

As you’ll see in the pages ahead, we’ve made tremendous progress, and we’re proud of that. We’re consistently recognized as a model among the nearly 500 age-friendly communities nationwide.

And yet, we have a long way to go. Pittsburgh is heralded as one of the most livable cities, but we must ask—livable for whom? White women in our region can expect to live to 78, while Black men can expect to live to 64. That’s a difference of more than a decade. Disparities across health, income, employment and education are pervasive—and have been laid bare by COVID-19.

Everyone should have the opportunity to grow old in an environment that is safe and healthy, and in communities that are thriving. That’s what guides us as we celebrate this five-year milestone and look ahead to what’s needed and what’s possible.

Thanks for being here, and for being on this journey with us.

Laura Poskin, Executive Director
Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh
Introduction

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh is part of the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. In the United States, AARP leads designation and coordination efforts among members which, at present, includes six states, one territory and 472 communities.

Thanks to leadership by Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging, Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh joined the national and international networks in September 2015, kicking off a five-year planning, implementation and evaluation cycle.

Our Action Plan—created in partnership with more than 100 organizations and 800 voices—outlines 30 Action Items, grouped into three focus areas:

1. **Access** to transportation and housing options, as well as new opportunities,

2. **Connection** across generations to combat social isolation and loneliness, and

3. **Innovation** that empowers people of all ages and abilities.

Read our Action Plan at [swppa.org/agefriendly](swppa.org/agefriendly)
Did You Know?

19.3% of Allegheny County’s population is 65+, compared to 16.8% nationally.

Between 2015–2030, Southwestern Pennsylvania will experience a 40% increase in residents ages 65+. Between 2030–2045, we will experience a 75% increase in people ages 85+.

Nearly half of Allegheny County residents ages 75+ live alone.
Progress Highlights

ACCESS

Safer streets
Pop-up street performances called The Crossings engaged 396 advocates across seven neighborhoods and sparked change including new pedestrian countdowns, widened curb cuts, the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy and $455,000 in upgrades from the City budget. Data on 905 miles of Pittsburgh sidewalks collected by pathVu.

Coordinated COVID response
Building on relationships developed through Age-Friendly, partners including ACCESS Transportation and United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania teamed up to use paratransit vehicles to move food and supplies—rather than people. More than 50,000 meals and 5,000 boxes of PPE delivered to date.

Smarter navigation
In partnership with 20 public and private transit providers, Age-Friendly’s Transportation Work Group developed an online concierge tool called A to B for riders to better navigate their options across 98 zip codes.

Numbers indicate Action Items from the Action Plan 2017–2020. See the full list on pages 18–19.
Now THAT'S a good looking signal! (40th@Penn) New pedestrian countdowns, audible cues (push button for audible indicator — no need to push for walk phase!), new protected turn. Thanks to @AgeFriendlyPGH for championing our older adults here and helping us make it safer for all!
“We need to feel connected to one another because in that connectivity, we have strength.”

– Ted Cmarada, Lively Pittsburgh’s Director of Community Engagement

#CoffeeConnectPGH event in Homewood, July 2019, and on Virtual Senior Academy, July 2020
Age-inclusive advocacy

A series of four Legislative Briefings in partnership with AARP Pennsylvania convened 300+ attendees, including more than 80 elected officials or their staffers.

Intentional conversation

Events called #CoffeeConnectPGH fostered dialogue in five neighborhoods and transitioned to bi-weekly online gatherings in March 2020. Prompts—like “Who is someone you’ve met during the pandemic?”—initiate meaningful dialogue across generations.

Increased empathy

Age-friendly module embedded in Port Authority’s training for all new bus operators, so far completed by 145 operators in seven cohorts. Dementia-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh educated hundreds of professionals about creating safe, respectful and engaging spaces for those living with dementia and their care partners.

Elevated arts scene

Intergenerational arts events held in unexpected spaces—Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh, the Frick Environmental Center—engaged 275 participants. Color Beechview public art project engaged 60 neighbors, made possible via an AARP Community Challenge grant, one of two awarded in Pennsylvania.

Numbers indicate Action Items from the Action Plan 2017–2020. See the full list on pages 18–19.
Progress Highlights

**INNOVATION**

**Inspired neighbors**
Aging Your Way workshops, organized by Lively Pittsburgh in 11 neighborhoods, motivated 130 people to dream up ways to leverage their own skills and strengths to make their community a better place to grow old. $20,000 awarded to promising projects via the Age-Friendly Challenge.

**New housing options**
Age-Friendly championed the development of a cohousing project called Rachel Carson Ecovillage, to be the first of its kind in the region. A summit and webinar series on LGBTQ+ housing options convened 325 participants to date.

**More online opportunities**
Virtual Senior Academy, created by Jewish Healthcare Foundation, offered 147 classes to more than 1,000 participants. Tech Buddies program launched to create one-on-one learning opportunities.

Numbers indicate Action Items from the Action Plan 2017–2020. See the full list on pages 18–19.
As conversations around the country continue on race, equity, and justice, we’d like to point toward @AgeFriendlyPGH, one of our champion #agefriendly communities, as they take a stand on both intergenerational and racial inclusion.
Timeline

SEPTEMBER 2015
Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh join WHO and AARP’s Network of Age-Friendly Communities

NOVEMBER 2015
Age-Friendly Champions meetings convene leaders in and outside the field of aging

JANUARY 2016
Aging Your Way workshops spark resident-led action

JUNE 2016
500 residents ages 50+ participate in AARP’s Livability for All Community Survey

APRIL 2017
Performances of The Crossings create a stir

OCTOBER 2017
Action Plan launched at press event in City-County Building

MARCH 2018
First of four Legislative Briefings hosted with AARP Pennsylvania
DECEMBER 2018
#CoffeeConnectPGH events celebrate social connection

OCTOBER 2018
Color Beechview public art project

OCTOBER 2019
Lively Pittsburgh releases Aging Your Way Toolkit

SEPTEMBER 2019
In-Formed by Nature art workshop and exhibit at Frick Environmental Center

JULY 2019
A to B online concierge tool for ride options launched

JULY 2020
Rachel Carson Ecovillage in advance planning stage

APRIL 2020 TO DATE
Transportation Network delivers 50,000 meals and 5,000 boxes of PPE
Engagement

Media Wins

“Community Profile: Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh,” by AARP Livable Communities | aarp.org

“Want to Live to 100? Living in One of These 8 U.S. Cities Will Help,” by Paula Spencer Scott | Parade

“Age-Forward Cities for 2030,” by Caroline Servat and Nora Super | Milken Institute Center for the Future of Aging

“To build an inclusive smart city, look through an age-friendly lens,” by Katie Pyzyk | Smart Cities Dive

“How This Big City Is Becoming Age-Friendly,” by Laura Poskin | Next Avenue, Forbes.com

“Age-Friendly Pittsburgh: Action plan aims to make this a better place to grow old,” by Gary Rotstein | Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Presentations

AARP Livable Communities Transportation Workshop | Virtual Event | September 2020

Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging | St. Paul, Minnesota | December 2019

TEDx Point Park University | Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania | October 2019

American Society on Aging Conference | New Orleans, Louisiana | April 2019

AARP Livable Communities Conference | Charlotte, North Carolina | November 2018

American Planning Association Pennsylvania Annual Conference | Erie, Pennsylvania | October 2018

United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley’s Age-Friendly Forum | Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania | June 2018

We are all aging.
Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh is a collaboration between local leaders, businesses, organizations and residents of all ages. The initiative is made possible through generous funding from the Henry L. Hillman Foundation, with support from AARP Pennsylvania, Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Jewish Healthcare Foundation and Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging (SWPPA).

In 2017, we launched our Action Plan in partnership with more than 100 organizations and 800 voices. We’d like to thank everyone who has been along for the ride: the longtime partners and the new partners we continually welcome into the fold. We especially appreciate leaders from the organizations on the following page, who were the primary forces bringing our Action Plan to life.

“The Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh collaboration has developed into a powerful movement, adapting to changing circumstances while manifesting their vision of communities in which people can thrive at every age.”

– Evaluation Institute for Public Health, University of Pittsburgh
### Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh Leadership Circle 2019–2020

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### Action Items from the Action Plan 2017–2020

#### ACCESS

**Mobility**
1. The Crossings
2. Walkability Studies
3. Complete Streets Advocacy

**Affordability**
4. Creative, Far-Reaching Transit
5. Housing Assessment and Mapping
6. Health Promotion Expansion

**Navigation**
7. Online Concierge for Ride Options
8. Connecting Referral Services
9. Murals to Help Caregivers

#### CONNECTION

**Perception**
10. Speakers Bureau
11. Sensitivity on the Bus
12. Campaign to Combat Isolation and Loneliness

**Social Spaces**
13. Arts for All
14. Parks Reimagined
15. Centers for More Than Seniors
16. Gardening for Good

**Intergenerational Relationships**
17. Solidarity Discussions
18. Welcoming Communities
19. GenPGH
INNOVATION

Businesses and Neighborhoods
20 An Age-Friendly Seal
21 Dementia-Friendly Conversations
22 Dementia-Friendly Training
23 New Housing Solutions

Workforce
24 The Job Search, Redefined
25 Intergenerational Tech Training
26 Direct Care Workforce Development

Interaction
27 Virtual Senior Academy
28 Tech Support
29 Disaster Preparedness
30 Bye Week Back Home

Want to find out more about the progress of specific Action Items? Contact us.

Laura Poskin
Executive Director
412-456-6716

Randi Vega
Project Manager
412-439-2025

Read our Action Plan at swppa.org/agefriendly
Join us as we build a region that’s more inclusive and respectful of every generation.

Visit swppa.org/agefriendly to learn more and find ways to get involved!