March 1, 2021

Dear Residents,

In 2015, Springfield was the first community in Lane County to join AARP’s Network of Age-Friendly Communities to demonstrate our commitment towards an inclusive community for all ages and abilities.

It’s been a slow start for us in formulating the action plan, but Springfield moved forward and added many age-friendly components to strategic plans. There continues to be excitement about the opportunity to join with AARP and the World Health Organization to better serve the aging population.

Springfield is a rapidly growing community and the over-age-65 population in our community will more than double in proportion of the total population between now and the year 2040. As Springfield looks to the future, the services required to support the community will continue to change. Anticipating this shift in demographics prepares us to better serve our community and ensures Springfield continues to be a great place to live for people of all ages.

I’m proud to have been a part of the steps taken to create an age-friendly community through the process, and look forward to seeing the inclusion of age-friendly practices and a focus on creating a smart, vibrant, and entrepreneurial city. Through the work of the Age-Friendly Springfield Committee and the support of our community partners, Age-Friendly Springfield prioritizes strategies that expand upon current goals and objectives and will continue to identify best practices, community needs, and opportunities that support this vision.

The Age-Friendly Springfield Committee is made up of city staff and community stakeholders including experienced residents and organizations focused on serving older adults and residents of all ages. I hope this committee will be tagged to oversee the implementation and evaluation of the Age-Friendly Springfield initiative and will continue to be a resource for the community and city leadership.

Sincerely,

Christine Lundberg
Former Mayor, Springfield, Oregon
March 1, 2021

Dear Residents,

I like living in Springfield, and I’ll bet you do, too. We’re lucky to live in a place surrounded by so much natural beauty. With our families, we can enjoy biking and walking on well-tended paths that run for miles along the river. We have sidewalks and bike lanes that make it safe to walk and bike in most of our neighborhoods, too. Our public library offers programs and activities including story times for little ones, workshops and movie nights for teens and book groups, lectures and movies for adults. The Wildish Community Theater, Emerald Art Center, and all the murals, restaurants and other businesses make our downtown a lively place to eat and shop.

As I write this, it’s been a year since the start of the COVID-19 restrictions that have severely limited our ability to gather indoors. Our library has continued to serve us by providing curbside delivery and our park district has offered exercise classes via online video. Sadly, many of our neighbors have faced severe financial setbacks and some have lost their businesses. It appears that the worst of the crisis is nearly over, and our national leadership has said our economy will begin to rebound strongly. That will be welcome to us all.

Our community is best when it works for everyone, regardless of age, ability or ethnicity. Whether you are an infant or an elder, you deserve to thrive in the place you call home. As you review this plan, I think you’ll find that the City of Springfield and its partners are already working to accomplish many of the goals our residents and stakeholders have identified as important, and I hope you’ll agree that the suggestions we’ve made will help Springfield to be an even better place to live, work and play. Participating in this project has been an engaging process for me and I’ve learned a lot about our city and what it takes to make it the special place it is. If you aren’t doing so already, I encourage you to jump in and become part of the network of volunteers who serve on citizen boards and committees, support children’s reading, and share their skills with others through our varied recreation programs.

Our collective efforts and support will be needed to help Springfield to become an outstanding age-friendly city. I and the other members of our committee hope you’ll join us in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Sandy Coffin
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter From Mayor Christine Lundberg</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter from Sandy Coffin, Chair, Age-Friendly Springfield Committee</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Demographics of Springfield</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network of Age-Friendly Communities Process</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing The Age-Friendly Action Plan</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Domains of Livability</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority Actions &amp; Initiatives</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan Implementation</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Domain 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Domain 2: Transportation</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Domain 3: Housing</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Domain 4: Social Participation</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Domain 5: Respect &amp; Social Inclusion</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Domain 6: Civic Participation &amp; Employment</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Domain 7: Communications &amp; Information</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Domain 8: Health &amp; Community Services</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps Following acceptance by City Council of the Action Plan</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A – Listening Sessions/Roundtables</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B – Road to Livability – Highlights of Springfield Survey</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive Summary

ASSESSMENT(S) KEY FINDINGS

- Springfield has 63,320 residents according to U.S. Census Bureau data. More than 12,664 persons older than age 60 live in Springfield, about 20.1 percent of the entire city’s population.

- The older adult population is growing. Adults age 60 and older were 23 percent of Lane County’s population in 2020. The older population (age 60 and older) grew from 90,595 in 2015 to about 106,680 in 2020. This is an increase of almost 18 percent. By 2030 this group’s population share is expected to grow to more than 30 percent.

- More than 25 percent of Springfield residents older than age 65 are living alone, underscoring the need for measures to prevent social isolation.

- In Oregon, 15 percent of the Lane County adult population experience a disability and 31 percent of adults ages 21-64 with a disability live below poverty levels.

- According to the 2015 AARP Survey, 89 percent of residents age 45 and older already believe that Springfield is a good place for older people to live, so the City has a strong starting point from which to develop its age-friendly efforts.

- The AARP Oregon survey found that Housing and Transportation are rated as the most important livable community feature/domain, followed by Outdoor Spaces and Respect and Social Inclusion.

- To be impactful, programming targeting older adults should include activities that bring together a diversity of age, ability or race demographics, and should be combined with effective communications and transportation systems so that residents know about the programs and are able to access them.

- When we make the community more livable for its older residents, we make it more livable for all of its residents. AARP surveys and listening sessions with younger and older residents found that they want the same things in their community. While education ranks higher among younger members in the community and health and wellness ranks higher among older residents. They all want a community in which they can grow up, work, raise their families and retire.
Introduction

The World Health Organization’s (WHO) Global Age-Friendly Cities and Communities project was created to help cities prepare for the rapid aging of populations and the increase in urbanization. The program targets the environmental, social and economic factors that influence the health and well-being of older adults. The AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities was established in April 2012 as an independent affiliate of the WHO program.

In signing the letter of support for this initiative Mayor Christine Lundberg recognized that:

- Like the rest of the world, the population of Springfield is rapidly aging.
- It is critical to put systems in place that allow for people to engage fully in their community as they age, and
- A well-designed, age-friendly community fosters economic growth and makes for happier, healthier residents of all ages.

AARP Oregon staff and volunteers have been working in Springfield to engage and mobilize citizens and other stakeholders, share expertise, and deliver technical assistance as needed. The work began in 2018 with a collective group of stakeholders representing a broad spectrum of the community. The Age-Friendly Action Plan is a result of a hands-on and locally determined and directed effort.

The common thread among the enrolled communities and states is the belief that the places where we live are more livable, and better able to support people of all ages, when local leaders commit to improving the quality of life for the very young, the very old, and everyone in between.
AGING TRENDS

Springfield is a city located in Lane County, Oregon. With a 2020 population of 64,717. Springfield is currently growing at a rate of 1.36% annually and its population has increased by 8.95% since the most recent census, which recorded a population of 59,403 in 2010. Almost 30 percent (29.6%) of Springfield’s population is 50 years of age or older, and 20.1 percent is 60 and older.

Springfield is following the aging trend predicted by WHO and the U.S. Census Bureau. The population of Springfield is growing at a rapid rate – a trend across Oregon.

• From 2020 to 2025, the 60 and older population is forecast to grow another 13%, to an estimated 120,615 in Lane County.
• The number and percent of the population’s people of color is growing.
• The number of millennials and older adults living in Springfield is increasing.
• By 2030, one of every five people in the U.S. will be 65 or older.
• By 2034, the number of adults older than 65 worldwide will be greater than the number of children under 18.
• By 2040, almost 40 percent of adults in Lane County will be older than 50.

COVID-19 and Wildfires, Racial Inequality

Like other cities around the country, Springfield was hit hard by unexpected events in 2020. The loss of homes to wildfires in the surrounding area has added to the shortage of affordable rentals, adding stress to an already tight housing market. Smoke and ash from the fires added to the health dangers posed by COVID-19, and were concerning for older adults, particularly those living in congregate care facilities. The consequences of COVID-19 have been especially hard felt among people of color and have highlighted the inequality of services and safeguards for many of our citizens. If there is a positive side to this disaster, it is that the recognition of inequality has ignited national concern about how best to address these issues going forward.

A report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) points out that even in “normal” times - - more than one-third of adults aged 45 and older feel lonely, and nearly one-fourth of adults aged 65 and older are considered to be socially isolated. Older adults are at increased risk for loneliness and social isolation because they are more likely to face factors such as living alone, the loss of family or friends, chronic illness, and hearing loss.

Additionally, social isolation and loneliness can increase the risk of dementia by 50 percent and put people of any age at increased risk of heart attack, stroke, depression, suicide and premature death.
History and Demographics

Springfield is a city in Lane County in Western Oregon. It is located on the Willamette River at its confluence with the McKenzie River. Once the territory of Kalapuya Indians, the area was settled when Elias and Mary Briggs and their family arrived in 1848. They were among the first party to travel to the region via the “Southern Route” by Klamath Lake, over the Cascades, into the Rogue Valley, then north to the Willamette Valley.

Elias Briggs chose for his home a place convenient to a spring of water and in due time this land was fenced in. This enclosure became known as the “Springfield” — hence the name of the town. The Briggs family operated a ferry across the Willamette River at roughly the site now occupied by the Union Pacific railroad bridge.

In 1852, Mr. Briggs began building a town. He dug and built the mill race and he and Mr. Driggs of Linn County formed the Briggs and Driggs Company and began to build a flour mill and a saw mill in 1853 and 1854 respectively.

Springfield was platted in 1856, incorporated as a city in February 25, 1885, and received its charter on March 17, 1893. In 1891, Springfield had a general merchandise store, two grocery stores, two cigar stores, a drug store, two dress shops, two blacksmiths, a variety store, a meat market, a saloon, a barber shop, a shoe store, three hotels, two schools, and three churches. Also, in 1891, Springfield received its first railroad line. In 1910, Springfield welcomed the Portland, Eugene and Electric Railroad streetcar.

Springfield was an industrial and lumber center. Before World War II most of the city’s retail was Main Street. Industries were northwest of the railroad tracks and residences were to the north. In 1940, the City’s area was only 1.5 square miles and the population only 3,805. By 1998, the City had expanded to more than 13 square miles and the population had grown to 51,700.

Demographics

In 2019, Springfield, OR had a population of 63,320 people with a median household income of $47,695.

Two ethnic groups comprise more than 90% of Springfield’s population: White (Non-Hispanic) (79.8%), The remainder are: (Hispanic) (11.4%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (5.6%), Other (Hispanic) (2.81%), and Asian (Non-Hispanic) (1.47%). The city of Springfield sits across Interstate 5 to Eugene, Oregon. The two communities have streets that link and go from one community to the next. The largest universities in the Springfield, OR/ Eugene, OR area are the University of Oregon and Northwest Christian College and Lane Community College.

According to the Eugene-Springfield Consolidated Plan (2020,) the regional economy has continued to “diversify and improve.” However, a significant number of households cannot meet their basic needs for food, shelter, medical care and transportation. In addition, there is a growing number of older adults, persons with disabilities and others who are looking for work but are unable to find jobs. Those factors, combined with a very tight housing market, have resulted in many households paying more than they can afford (more than 30 percent of their income) and increasing homelessness among young and older residents alike. As noted earlier, recent events have perpetuated a housing emergency in Springfield and the surrounding area.

The median property value in Springfield is $204,700, and the homeownership rate is 51.1%. Most people in Springfield commute by personal vehicle, and the average commute time is 20 minutes. The average household in Springfield owns two cars.

The McKenzie Drift Boat: Symbol of the City of Springfield

The City of Springfield adopted the McKenzie drift boat as the community’s official symbol on March 26, 1985 to commemorate the importance of this famous boat in the history of Springfield and the McKenzie River. Early versions of the boat, created by Veltie Pruitt and Prince Helfrich, floated the McKenzie River in the early 1900s. After years of changes to the craft, boat builder Woodie ‘Knoble’ Hindman developed the present design in 1946 on Main Street in Springfield. This well-known craft is used today around the world on streams and rivers requiring a sturdy agile boat to handle their perilous rapids. A detailed one-half scale model is on display in Springfield City Hall.
Network of Age-Friendly Communities Process

ENROLLMENT

Communities interested in joining the Network can find the membership application and related information on the aarp.org/agefriendly page. Questions can be addressed to the applicant’s AARP State Office and/or by emailing oraarp@aarp.org or Livable@aarp.org

CONDUCT A SURVEY AND LISTENING SESSIONS

In order to improve the community for older adults and people of all ages an age-friendly community needs to assess the community’s needs. AARP provides a survey template (available in English and Spanish) that can be adapted to local needs. Focus groups and listening sessions also are parts of the assessment.

DEVELOP AN ACTION AND EVALUATION PLAN

This phase features the following key elements:

1. Establish a way — such as through a commission, advisory panel or focus groups — to include older residents in all stages of the age-friendly planning and implementation process.
2. Conduct a community needs assessment (AARP can provide survey examples, templates and an online tool in English and Spanish.)
3. Develop an action and evaluation plan based on the assessment results.
4. Submit the plan for review by AARP.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implement and work toward the goals of the plan and share solutions, successes and best practices with AARP. Examples of action plans and progress reports can be found within The Member List at aarp.org/livable-communities.

EVALUATE AND UPDATE

Assess the plan’s impact and submit progress reports — and then start again by setting new goals.

AGE-FRIENDLY SPRINGFIELD COMMITTEE

Chair: Sandy Coffin, AARP Oregon Volunteer
Sandy Belson, City of Springfield
Betty-Coe deBroekert, AARP Oregon Volunteer
Gwen Burkard, AARP Oregon volunteer
Aurora Jackson, Lane Transit District
Vahana Keene, City of Springfield
Niel Laudati, City of Springfield
Max Malzahn, Springfield Area Chamber
Emma Newman, City of Springfield
Kate Scott, Lane Council of Governments
Carmel Perez Snyder, Staff, AARP Oregon
Tilford Snyder, AARP Oregon Volunteer
Daryl Swan, AARP Oregon Safe Driver Volunteer
Dennis Weirich, Disability Services Advisory Council

Thank you: Eric Adams, Willamalane; Jose de Silva, Principal, Springfield High School.; Mike Eyster, Community Volunteer; Willamalane; Courtney Griesel, City of Springfield; Dan Hill, Arbor South; Kaarin Knudson, Better Housing Together; Tracy Kribbs, Willamalane; former Mayor Christine Lundberg; Vonnie Mikelson, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce; Eric Richardson, NAACP; Springfield Public Library Rob Zako BEST

Special thank you:
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce
Developing The Age-Friendly Action Plan

The City of Springfield was accepted into the Network of Age-Friendly Communities in 2014. However, work on the Action Plan did not begin in earnest until 2018-2019. Committee members included city staff and leaders in business, education and public and nonprofit organizations. They met once or twice a week for about 20 months. Much of the research and work was conducted in 2019 and the report was due to be presented to the City Council in 2020.

The combined hours resulted in an estimated $320,000 of value for Springfield (based on Volunteer America calculations of volunteer time value.)

However, COVID-19, racial unrest and natural disaster created delays as attention and resources were focused on immediately pressing matters. The events of 2020 highlighted the importance of a strong Age-Friendly Action Plan that will help the community respond and prepare for the needs of all residents regardless of age, ability, income or race. Using the latest assessment plans from the United Way of Lane County, the Oregon Department of Health and the results listening and focus group sessions, the Age-Friendly Springfield committee created a plan that will move the city toward an age-friendly community status.

Listening sessions were held with older residents in 2018 and 2019. A listening session was held with young people, ages 12-17 in 2019.

Community partners, residents and members of the Springfield Age-Friendly Committee agree that Springfield leaders have made a good start toward creating an age-friendly community, and that taking some additional steps will bring the City to an outstanding level of livability. That, in turn, is expected to attract residents and businesses.

While this plan is focused on improving livability for all ages, we must spotlight that addressing the needs of older residents now and in the future is the premier focus of creating an age-friendly community. The listening sessions and surveys identified areas where there are gaps in services and infrastructure, and shared possible steps in the plan which would:

- 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
- Structure developing policies and plans for the City of Springfield.

The gaps are identified based on the WHO’s Eight Domains of Livability:

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

OBJECTIVE

The work group’s objective was to outline the Age-Friendly Action Plan goals and strategies to be used as a blueprint for action and to advocate for all city residents, but specifically older adults. The Action Plan provides strategies intended to help the City and local private and nonprofit organizations and individuals to move our city and region toward development and activities that foster age-friendly physical, social and service environments.

The plan includes aspects of existing city strategic plans and accomplishments. Admittedly, it is not comprehensive, but is expected to evolve as new knowledge and understanding are gained and technological developments emerge. This plan is meant to lead organizations and individuals, young and old, to work toward creating a community that is truly a livable place for everyone.
ANALYSIS AND INPUT

This document contains the goals and strategies outlined by the working group after considerable analysis, discussion and input from the community during several events:

1. Age-Friendly Listening Session, Springfield Library, August 2019;
2. Listening Stations at public events, 2018, 2019

8 Domains of Livability
Priority Actions & Initiatives

From assessments and listening sessions the Committee heard a broad range of perspectives and noted recurring themes. The top three issues were:

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Rising home values have reduced the availability of quality housing affordable to low and moderate-income homeowners.

At the same time, more than 65 percent of Springfield residents 50+ surveyed said they want to remain in their community as they age. Of those who are older than 65 years, more than 80 percent say they want to remain in their homes or community.

Affordable housing was consistently mentioned as a barrier to livability by people age 50 and older. Unexpectedly, housing that is affordable was also the main issue for the young people attending the Teen Roundtable, one of whom noted that his mother had been working overtime for years to earn enough for a down payment but was unable to keep pace with rising home prices.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Access to transportation was also a common theme across the age demographics. Younger residents told us that lack of transportation was a barrier to accessing part-time jobs or entertainment opportunities. Older residents wanted better transportation from residential areas to entertainment and shopping.

Transportation and housing intersected as priorities. Some residents voiced support for transit-oriented housing developments that include a mixture of housing, office, retail or other commercial development and amenities integrated into a walkable neighborhood.

**SOCIAL INCLUSION AND RESPECT**

While respect for older adults is mostly healthy in many communities, including Springfield, negative preconceptions of aging still exist. Social inclusion and respect was one of the top concerns among older and younger participants.

Additional socially inclusive events were all listed as desired outcomes to increase the livability of the city.

“I worry that I’m not going to be able to afford to live here when I graduate from school. We need affordable housing, transportation and affordable things to do.”

- Springfield youth, participating in Teen Roundtable, Feb 2020
Plan Implementation

The Age-Friendly Springfield Action Plan represents the next step in Springfield’s journey toward becoming an even more healthy, safe and welcoming community for people of all ages and abilities, a place where people can work and play, raise their children, grow older and retire.

The Age-Friendly Springfield Action Plan 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

The Age-Friendly Springfield Committee will form the base for an ongoing implementation and monitoring team under the jurisdiction of the Mayor’s office. The expanded team will represent a cross-section of the community, including at-large representatives of high-schoolers, and representatives from organizations such as the City of Springfield, Willamalane Park and Recreation District, Lane County Human Services Commission, Lane Transit District and partner organizations, including AARP and the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce. Other group representation will be added at the discretion of the Mayor’s office.

PRIORITY 2: COMMUNICATION

The Age-friendly Springfield Team 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.

PRIORITY 3: PRIORITIZATION

The implementation and monitoring team will lead the effort to review Plan goals and suggested actions under each of the eight domains. The team will work with partners to combine strategies where objectives overlap or share a similar intent. The team will likewise work with partners to develop criteria to evaluate, and eventually prioritize, each of the suggested actions as they relate to:

1. Cost: Capital, administration and operating costs related to successfully implementing and/or maintaining a suggested action.
2. Time: The amount of time required to initiate the suggested action.
3. Community Impact: The benefits a suggested action 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 suggested action?

BUILDING AN AGE-FRIENDLY SPRINGFIELD

1. Review the purpose and of each action item.
2. Identify what steps/activities are required. Do some have to be finished before others can begin?
3. Identify what resources are required (people, space, equipment) and what are the sources (public funding, volunteers, in-kind donations, grants).
4. Identify and overcome barriers.
5. Decide how projects will be managed within the implementation and monitoring team, including establishing team member roles (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.

Springfield has consistently demonstrated time and again, that it can rise to the challenge to do great things. In this case, Springfield has what it takes to become not just age-friendly, but a community that is age-progressive in policy and age-positive and inclusive in spirit for both young people, and current and future senior populations.
DOMAIN 1: OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

Outdoor spaces and public buildings are places where people spend substantial amounts of time and both require the attention needed to ensure that they are accessible, clean, safe, and inviting. In its study of 33 urban areas, the World Health Organization (WHO) found that older adults were especially concerned with accessibility, cleanliness, green space, resting places, walkways, pedestrian crossings, security, and bike paths. WHO also found that “the outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people and affect their ability to age in place.” Additionally, parks are important for children because access helps to develop large motor skills and leads to lower body mass index (BMI) as they approach adulthood.1

Parks

Created by voters in 1944, Willamalane Park and Recreation District is designated as the park and recreation service provider for Springfield and its urban area, including Glenwood. The current district boundary includes the area within Springfield’s city limits, as well as areas outside of the city limits and within the urban growth boundary (UGB). In addition, any newly developed areas annexed by the City of Springfield are automatically annexed to the district. Funding comes from user fees, System Development Charges (SDCs) and bond measures.

Willamalane’s Comprehensive Plan updated in 2012 sets the following Core values for the district and the City of Springfield.

- Affordability
- Excellence
- Accessibility
- Community
- Environment
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Inclusiveness
- Innovation
- Partnerships
- Play
- People
- Personal Growth
- Stewardship
- Teamwork

Willamalane maintains and operates five recreation facilities and 46 parks and natural areas, totaling more than 1,500 acres. Highlights include 10 waterfront areas, 29 miles of hiking and biking trails, 27 playgrounds, 9 sports fields, 2 swimming pools, a large indoor athletic facility, an adult activity center and a miniature golf course. Willamalane offers an extensive range of programs and special events for all ages, including adaptive recreational opportunities for adults with physical or developmental disabilities. While only 55 percent of people nationwide live within a 10 minute walk of a park. The figure for Springfield is 76 percent and that number holds true across age, income, and race/ethnicity.

The Willamalane Adult Activity Center (WAAC) was built in 1979 with the primary

1 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4380517/
mission of providing programs and services to encourage the meaningful use of leisure time by promoting a setting for social interaction with peer groups. It now serves more than 100 persons over age 50 daily, providing a range of activities including art and computer lessons, exercise classes, discussion groups, a rock shop, and a wood shop. The kitchen prepares food for about 120 Meals on Wheels homebound clients weekly and more than 60 lunches every weekday for older adults who eat at WAAC. The kitchen equipment was upgraded recently through a bond measure, but the amount of space is the same as it was originally, which makes for crowded conditions and particular difficulties in packaging food for home distribution.

Morning exercise has proven very popular at WAAC and the cafeteria/auditorium is now used to accommodate classes. Since the room must be cleared and readied for lunches, classes are often rushed and the area becomes congested. Dedicated fitness space would allow additional offerings and relieve congestion.

**Public Buildings**

The City Hall and Springfield Public Library are co-located near the center of downtown in a building that was constructed as a mall in the late 1970’s. It is built of concrete making it difficult and expensive to wire the site for current technology. To access the building, one must climb 30 steps or use a small elevator located near the parking lot. The steps collect leaves and debris and the aged exterior concrete is subject to growths of mold, making for an overall unkempt, unwelcoming appearance. The building has a large, atrium-like foyer, which is often used for public gatherings; however, other meeting space is at a premium and evening meetings, in particular, are difficult to schedule. Municipal offices and the library are in tight quarters without space needed to expand in service to a growing population.

During 2018, there were more than 160,000 visits to the library. Participation in youth and teen programs topped 22,000 last year and library computers were used for 20,000 sessions. Even more programming could be provided if space were available. Further, the need for access to information and technology is growing and a computer lab at the library would provide space for teaching technical skills. A library with a ground floor entry would enable better access for everyone and would serve as a hallmark of downtown Springfield.

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2 Program Philosophies, Practices and Procedures, Senior Adult Activity Center, 1983.
Action Item 1
There is a lack of clear pedestrian links between downtown and Island Park. Both younger and older residents are less likely to drive and safe accessibility would be improved by creating clear links. This would add to the vibrancy of both areas; encourage walking and improve pedestrian & bicyclist safety.

1. Paint crosswalks at intersections leading from downtown to the park.
   - Crosswalks clearly marked across Pioneer Parkway(s) and Mill Street at “A” Street.
   - Work with City/Willamalane to identify other areas that need access improvements from downtown to park.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield, AARP Oregon, Willamalane

Action Item 2
Provide benches in downtown areas. The cost for this need not be borne only by the city. Downtown businesses and private sponsors could provide benches to create community gathering places.

1. Create gathering and resting places for residents in the downtown area.
   While several restaurants provide sidewalk dining, additional benches would create a more welcoming environment for anyone who would like to stop and visit.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield, downtown businesses, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, private sponsors

Action Item 3
Ensure that neighborhood and community parks are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) based on 2016 survey of parks completed by Lane Independence Living Alliance. This will allow all residents to use park facilities, regardless of age and ability.

1. Develop plan to bring parks into compliance.
2. Willamalane Board determines what and how projects can be funded and timetable.

Potential Partners: Willamalane, City of Springfield, Human Services Commission

Action Item 4
Expand the Willamalane Adult Activity Center to include dedicated fitness space and a larger kitchen to provide room for additional programming and food preparation.

1. Develop plan; include input from older adults who use the Willamalane Adult Activity Center.
2. Consider moving older adult fitness activities to Keefer Center is expansion is not an option at Willamalane Adult Activity Center.

Potential Partners: Willamalane, City of Springfield
Action Item 5
Springfield City Hall needs to be more welcoming and project civic pride to residents and visitors alike. While tax dollars might not be available to replace or renovate a building, maintenance and cleanliness must be a priority.

1. Clean City Hall/Library steps of leaves, debris and mold.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield

Action Item 6
All residents should be able to access City buildings where it is reasonable to expect the public to have access. Additionally, providing residents information about the accommodation at publicly held events is reasonable and furthers the goals of both social and civic participation.

1. Ensure that all City meetings open to the public are held in fully ADA compliant locations.
2. Ask applicants for event permits to publish information on how to request accommodations if their venue is not fully ADA compliant.

Action Item 7
Create and put forward a ballot measure to fund a new library that can provide needed services and enhance the livability of the City of Springfield.

1. Explore the possibility/feasibility of a bond measure.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield

Action Item 8
Establish an urban park of “plaza center” in or near downtown Springfield. The location could encourage use of the downtown area for public events, general multipurpose use by families and others and to support downtown businesses.

1. Conduct feasibility study to include development on publicly owned land that can be used for this purpose.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield, Willamalane

Action Item 9
Make available a GPS-based guide to downtown murals and other tours of interest around the city to encourage residents and tourists to walk for fun and promote local businesses through the digital application.

1. Research available applications and create a plan for Digital Springfield project.

Potential Partners: AARP Volunteers; Implementation and Monitoring Team, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

“When you look at a city, it’s like reading the hopes, aspirations and pride of everyone who built it.”

– Hugh Newell Jacobsen, American architect
Springfield residents use the Lane Transit District buses within the city. Lane Transit District (LTD) is a public agency that provides public transportation in Lane County. The transit district serves the Springfield and Eugene metropolitan areas, including the neighboring cities of Coburg, Junction City, Creswell, Cottage Grove, Veneta, and Lowell. LTD began service in 1970 with 18 buses and two vans, and today carries roughly 10.5 million customers annually with a fleet of 111 buses. Many of LTD’S riders are students and older adults who can ride simply by showing their student I.D. or senior pass, free for riders 65 and older.

Additionally, LTD’s Eugene-Florence Connector provides twice daily round trip service to Florence on the Oregon Coast, 60 miles west. There are two places to board in Eugene and the bus makes five stops in or near Florence. The fare is $5 each way.

LTD’s Emerald Express (EmX) Bus Rapid Transit system connects west Eugene to Springfield’s Gateway Mall and downtown. Each stop or station in the EmX line offers raised platforms for ease of boarding, fare machines, and at most stations real-time signs to help you anticipate the next bus. This line is a particular boon for University of Oregon and Northwest Christian College students and those attending Lane Community College’s downtown Eugene campus.

RideSource, required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, is an origin to destination transportation for people who are unable to use the bus because of a disability. However, the RideSource does not allow a day of service request, so, people with last-minute medical appointments or unplanned trips must look for other transportation sources. Fortunately, beginning in 2019, both Uber and Lyft have been able to operate with the City of Springfield.

In recent years, LTD has started to explore on-demand transportation services with pilot programs in the surrounding communities of Eugene and Cottage Grove, communities surrounding Springfield. However, the programs were paused due to the 2020 pandemic. Listening sessions noted several transportation needs that are not being met for Springfield residents currently. For example, LTD does not have bus service to the Adult Community Center at Willamalane Adult Activity Center. This is a gathering place and meal service site for older adults that could benefit from door-to-door transportation options to include those older adults who are not eligible for RideSource.

As noted earlier, the lack of transportation within residential areas was cited by both older adults and younger residents as a barrier to employment and entertainment. Good public transportation is a critical component in preventing isolation and social and economic inequities in the community.

The City of Springfield completed and adopted the Springfield Transportation System Plan (TSP) in July 2014. The plan assesses the community’s transportation needs and identifies the preferred multi-modal transportation system to serve...
residents, businesses and visitors. In order to more fully implement the goals, policies, and actions identified in the plan, the City is currently conducting a code update and implementation project to establish the Transportation System Plan’s vision in the Springfield Development Code.

Springfield’s Main Street is consistently ranked as one of the most unsafe city streets in Oregon based on the severity and frequency of traffic crashes. Main Street is also State Highway 99 and accommodates all modes of wheeled transportation from bicycles to logging trucks, and pedestrians sometimes cross in mid-block. The City and the Oregon Department of Transportation have launched the [www.mainstreetsafety.org](http://www.mainstreetsafety.org) so that citizens can review and comment on initiatives to address safety problems.

Over the next two years, project leaders will engage our Springfield community and do detailed analyses to identify thoughtful and effective safety solutions. The goal is to create a coordinated plan that identifies the types of safety improvements that work best for all Main Street users. Community engagement is vital to inform the selection of infrastructure solutions that help ensure safe, accessible transportation for everyone, whether by foot, bike, mobility device, bus, or car.

Major transportation projects in progress include:

1. **Virginia-Daisy Bikeway Project**
   The [Virginia-Daisy Bikeway Project](http://www.mainstreetsafety.org) will include design development that considers, but is not limited to, treatments such as striping of bicycle lanes, sharrows, traffic calming infrastructure, intersection treatments, automobile traffic diversion, limited lighting additions, ramp improvements, speed and designation signs, and a crossing improvement at 42nd St. The project strives to enhance the overall appeal of the corridor for all users and residents.

2. **Franklin Boulevard Redevelopment Project**
   The [Franklin Boulevard Redevelopment Project](http://www.mainstreetsafety.org) is a project planned for Glenwood that will construct modern urban standard improvements on the old Highway 99 alignment, called Franklin Boulevard, between downtown Springfield, the University of Oregon, and downtown Eugene.

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**Action Item 1**

Increase the options for affordable and accessible transportation in Springfield for people of all ages and abilities to allow for new options, including ride sharing and autonomous vehicles.

1. Review city policy/code/ordinances to allow for autonomous vehicles create an on-demand ride share program at low cost to address the needs of persons with mobility issues.

2. Review city policy/code/ordinances for electric scooters, which are growing in popularity and use.

   Success Measure: Clear picture of current policies, City of Springfield will work with Lane Transit District, in order to be prepared for the influx of this alternative transportation.

   **Potential Partners:** City of Springfield, Lane Transit District, Peace Health Rides

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**VISION**

Safe, accessible and affordable transportation options are necessary for people of all ages and abilities. Access to transportation is needed for active aging, for people with mobility challenges and for a livable community. Our vision for the City of Springfield includes coordinated intra-city travel options for people of all ages and public transportation that is accessible to people of all abilities.

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**TRANSPORTATION**

(continued)
Action Item 2
Expand options for older adults, youth and people with disabilities in residential areas. It is imperative that we improve accessibility to transportation.

1. Lane Transit District will have a Springfield location for residents to purchase monthly passes in person.
2. Identify neighborhoods where bus stops are needed, such as Community Centers; higher-density senior neighborhoods; lower-income neighborhoods; outlying neighborhoods.
3. Provide public transportation training for new riders on a regular basis, perhaps twice yearly.
5. Add smaller, accessible bikes and trikes to bike ride-share programs.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield, Lane Transit District, Peace Health Rides

Action Item 3
Increase safety of streets for all users: including pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists to eliminate injury and death on City streets.

1. City will create a Task Force, to write a Vision Zero Action Plan targeted at eliminating serious injury and death on city streets and roadways.
2. City residents will participate in a series of “Safe Street Audits” coordinated by Better Eugene Springfield Transportation, AARP Oregon and Safe Routes to School to identify unsafe streets and suggest solutions.
3. City will continue efforts to create safer access for bicycles and pedestrians to Main Street, a growing retail and restaurant area in the city’s center.
4. City will work with partners to hold an annual “Open Street” or “Better Block” type event to enable people to experience car-free streets.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield, Lane Transit District, AARP Oregon, Springfield Bicycle Pedestrian Committee, Better Eugene Springfield Transportation, Safe Routes to School
DOMAIN 3: HOUSING

The City of Springfield is a medium-sized community located just across Interstate 5 from neighboring Eugene. Despite its stable economy and sustained population growth, Springfield is experiencing a severe housing shortage. A lack of available housing at all levels has left more than half of the city’s renters and over a third of its homeowners cost-burdened; only one market rate multifamily housing project has been built there in the past 10 years while homelessness continues to rise.

In 2018, AARP provided technical assistance experts to meet with community members, local builders and developers and City staff to determine the best steps forward for addressing Springfield’s market-rate housing shortage. AARP hired LOCUS, of Smart Growth America, a program that AARP offers to cities within the Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

In response, Springfield’s City Council, property developers, home builders, architects and others have begun to explore methods of spurring market rate multifamily housing development within their city limits. Their research has led them to consider the implementation of a missing middle housing tax exemption (ORS 307.600-637). Consideration would be given to development in Springfield’s transit-oriented Main Street, Q Street, and Mohawk Boulevard areas, which are currently well-served by mass transit.

Other steps toward an age-friendly community and easing the housing shortage in the city have been addressed through a Housing Strategy Plan that includes the use of Community Development Block Grants for the City’s Emergency Home Repair Program and Springfield Home Ownership Program. Additionally, the City has waived System Development Charges to encourage the construction of Accessory Dwelling Units, waived application fees for non-profit housing and reinstated property tax exemptions for low-income housing. The City is also in the midst of a Code Update in 2020, to enhance livability and equity in the city’s Housing code. In 2021, AARP is working with City planners to connect them with consultants from Smart Growth America to help develop outreach and seek input from residents as the City updates its housing code to align for more development in an equitable manner. AARP is covering the cost of the consultants.
VISION

Springfield will have sufficient affordable and accessible housing so that residents can live here through their lifespan. This will increase the number of affordable housing units for rent and purchase so people (from low income, fixed income and median working income) can remain in Springfield.

To address homelessness, the City allows churches and industrial sites to allow parking for vehicles, campers and trailers. The City provides port-a-potties and has partnered with Sanipac, the local trash collector, which donates its services.

The City continues to work to update its housing code. In response, AARP is again providing technical assistance and working with senior planners to connect them with consultants from Smart Growth America to help develop outreach and seek input from residents on the proposed changes. AARP is paying for the consultants with the project.

Action Item 1

Encourage Age-Friendly development and alternative housing options. Increase housing that is available and affordable for people of all ages, abilities, income levels and ethnicities.

The City will encourage universal design principles to allow for aging in place, paying particular attention to layouts of kitchens and bathrooms, and encourage the development of common areas and shared spaces to help combat isolation. This will be done by creating a Life-Long Housing Certification that builders, developers, landlords can apply for and receive (see Action Item 6)

1. City will encourage developers who are seeking funding from the city for senior living to work with Senior and Disability Services or have a plan for connecting people to services.
2. The Age-Friendly Team will work with Senior and Disability Services to explore creating a “home share” network, matching older homeowners with rooms to rent with others who need to rent a room, including older adults or students. Both homeowners and renters will be screened to ensure mutual safety.

Action Item 3

Acquire and make available property for construction/renovation of affordable housing units.

1. Identify publicly-owned property for residential development.
2. Use CBDG funds for acquisition and improvement of properties for housing units.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield, developers and builders.

Action Item 4

Assist Owners with CDBG Funds

1. Provide down-payment assistance for home ownership (Springfield Home Ownership Program or SHOP)
2. Assist low-income homeowners with repairs and accessibility improvements (Emergency Home Repair Program or EHR)
3. City Council will review the development code to make it easier and potentially less expensive for developers and builders to build moderate-cost residential developments

Potential Partners: City of Springfield
Action Item 5
Promote housing of diverse types through ordinances, temporary exemptions, and long-term investment.

1. Extend tax exemptions and/or waiver of SDCs for construction of market rate multi-unit properties.
2. City of Springfield will update development code to promote development of housing.
3. Create user-friendly guides to navigate development codes and process.
4. Ensure appropriate zoning for residential land

Potential Partners: City of Springfield, AARP Oregon

Action Item 6
Create guidelines for the adaptive use and renovation of existing housing and new construction to ensure that housing units are age-friendly. This will increase awareness of age-friendly design among home-owners, contractors and architecture professionals.

1. Work with Lane County Council of Governments to develop a Life-Long Living Certification program.
2. Create an online Age-Friendly Checklist for residents and developers to access
3. Create an Age-Friendly Springfield page on the City’s website.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield, Lane Council of Governments, AARP Oregon

Action Item 7
Increase options to address homelessness in the community.

1. Explore options to house homeless families, including tiny home villages, establishing housing communities and providing professional support for families in transition.
2. Expand the Overnight Parking Program to include businesses with large parking lots, such as shopping centers.
3. Ensure municipal code allows churches and industrial sites to host up to three vehicles/campers/trailers
4. City increased support to $10,000 per year to cover trash collection, port-a-potties, and administration cost of local non-profits. Work with Chamber to increase business participation in the Overnight Parking Program.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Faith community, business
DOMA IN 4: SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Just as younger residents in the city have diverse interests, older residents differ in their interests and desires for activities outside of the home. Therefore, a range of social participation strategies and approaches are needed for this growing population.

Willamalane offers robust programming for people of all ages, including older adults, but many activities for both young and old might not be in everyone’s budget. In addition, activities in the city are not readily available to all residents or are not designed to support the specific requirements of residents with special mobility needs or restrictions.

While some cities, including Eugene have neighborhood associations that has not been a custom in Springfield. Nevertheless, there are a few neighborhoods where people get together informally to socialize or engage in mutually beneficial activities. Such groups add to a sense of community and provide networks that promote not only social participation, but communication and civic participation as well. Additionally, the Lane County Emergency Operations Plan notes the self-sufficiency of neighborhoods is important in mitigating the effects of natural disaster.

The Office of Emergency Management recently reported that age-friendly communities were able to pivot more readily to address the impact of Covid-19 and the wildfires of 2020 on residents particularly older residents who were at higher risk.
Action Item 1
Create community events to foster resident participation.

1. Include information ranging from cultural activities (e.g., museums, theater) to health-related programs (e.g., food preparation, fitness) to life-long learning opportunities (e.g., free classes, presentations) to faith based organizations and places of worship.

2. Identify existing neighborhood organizations and poll their members to find out what makes the organizations successful.

3. Survey residents at municipal gatherings, such as street fairs and farmers markets, to find out how they feel about the neighborhood where they live and what they would do to make it feel more like a community.

4. In support of both social participation and inclusion, AARP Oregon will create one or more neighborhood events on National Night Out to foster resident participation and reach under-represented communities.

5. Prepare a print directory for use by people of all ages and abilities as an amenity for those traveling to Springfield as tourists and visitors.

Potential Partners: AARP Oregon, City of Springfield, Willamalane, Travel Oregon, Springfield Utility Board, Springfield Area Chamber

Action Item 2
Support neighborhood-based efforts for older adults: Springfield needs to foster identifying neighborhoods and cultural associations to create a network for residents.

1. Create an Office of Neighborhood Involvement or identify someone within an existing organization that can foster neighborhood identities.

2. Help create/support neighborhood associations, formal and informal groups, and encourage city agencies to focus on involving older adults and other underrepresented groups of all cultures in social activities.

3. Encourage neighborhood associations to appoint representatives from various generations and cultures, including both younger and older adults.

4. City will support organization events that are open to the public by including those in community calendar.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield, AARP Oregon, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Willamalane
Respect is critical for a socially inclusive community. Negative misconceptions about people’s abilities because they are “too young,” or “too old,” stifle a community’s growth.

In particular, middle-aged and older adults are often isolated and ignored in the United States, and Springfield is no exception. At a time when our city – and the rest of the world – is aging, it is critical to identify real opportunities to integrate aging Springfield residents into activities and communities in a meaningful way, both to stem social isolation and its deleterious effects and to take advantage of older adults’ skills, talents, and resources.

Intergenerational Age-Friendly initiatives to involve seniors in activities where they have experience can keep them engaged with the community and help them both share their interests with others and to learn from them. Such participation helps everyone to feel valued and appreciated by their community.

Elders should be consulted on all decisions concerning them. Education should also begin early so earn to appreciate what others of another generation have to offer.
Action Item 1
Reduce social isolation among older adults: Social isolation and disengagement from social interaction can be harmful to people of any age, but older adults and people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to the effects of isolation.

1. Implement housing policies, services provisions, and community-generated approaches to ensure that those of all ages and abilities remain connected and thriving in their communities.
2. Foster the ability of older adults to contribute to communities through new and existing programs

Potential Partners: Lane County Aging and Disability Services, Human Rights Commission, AARP Oregon, other nonprofit and faith-based communities

Action Item 2
Improve the language used pertaining to aging and older adults: Language matters! In the field of gerontology there has been a move away from referring to “senior citizens” and “the elderly” to “older adults” and “elders. Likewise, preferred terms such as “congregate care” and “long term living” is replacing the more restrictive “nursing home.” There is a need to change how we speak (and think) about the aging process and older adults.

1. Use language that is preferable to older adults in all official documents and on websites - City of Springfield, LTD, Willamalane.

Potential Partners: Human Rights Commission, Willamalane, City of Springfield

Action Item 3
Advance civil rights, equity, and social sustainability for older adults: Numerous efforts in Springfield aim to increase opportunities across classes and groups of people in a sustainable and equitable manner, and more are needed.

1. Develop and share best practices for improving the accommodations for people with disabilities at public meetings (captioning, instant translation), including a list of vendors/service providers capable of improving access during such meetings.
2. Collaborate with the Human Rights Commission to recognize and remove systemic barriers to fair and just distribution of resources, access, and opportunity. The needs of elders are not explicitly detailed in either effort and should be addressed.
3. Aging of the population is a significant demographic trend over the next several decades. The WHO age-friendly approach regarding the involvement of older adults in policy making is often referred to as “Nothing about them without them.”

DOMAIN 6: CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT

Working with others to improve the quality of life in our community is critical to the well-being of our city. Civic engagement includes our involvement in aspects of community life that extend beyond our day-to-day activities, such as volunteering and voting. For some, these have been lifelong involvements; for others, retirement years have created the time to become more involved. Both the City of Springfield and United Way of Lane County act to connect volunteers with opportunities for service and United Way targets youths and seniors specifically. However, older adults are often frustrated in their attempts to find meaningful volunteer opportunities that use their knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond writing a check, stuffing envelopes, or working on a one-day project.

Citizen participation is required in city planning processes in Oregon, yet meaningful involvement of many of Springfield’s different communities has been challenging. New approaches are needed to foster engagement of both youths and older adults in a manner that uses their skills and experience.

Voting is one of the most straightforward ways we can show we care about our communities. People who vote in national elections are more likely to also be politically informed and active on a local level, participating in local elections that directly shape community life. The Oregon Secretary of State reports that 75% of eligible voters in Oregon’s Representative District 12 (City of Springfield) cast their ballots in the 2016 presidential election, compared to 80 percent for Oregon as a whole. A 2013 survey of eligible voters over aged 50 conducted by AARP revealed that 94 percent reported voting in the previous two elections. (Voter turnout for 2020 was not available at the time of writing.)

AARP’s Livability Index rated Springfield 52 overall and 51 in the area of Engagement, both are just above their national averages. The 62 percent overall voting rate in the county was in the top third nationally. Opportunity for civic engagement, measured at the county level by the number of civic, social, religious, political, and business organizations per 10,000 people was 7.9; the median nationally is 7.3.
**Action Item 1**
Increase the involvement of older adults and students in civic affairs and policy making.

1. Work with Springfield School District administrators and teachers to identify projects or initiatives appropriate for student input.
2. Continue to support expansion of Springfield’s City Links program that residents of other underrepresented groups to civic participation.

**Potential Partners:** City of Springfield, Willamalane, Springfield School District, AARP Oregon

**Action Item 2**
Educate youth and older adults about existing policies, systems and strategies so that they can engage effectively in shaping future policy and decision making in Springfield.

1. Offer workshops for older adults, advertising workshops through fliers and web page.
3. Use post-class surveys from participants to formulate ongoing classes.

**Potential Partners:** City of Springfield, Willamalane, Springfield School District, NAACP, Centro Latino Americano, AARP Oregon

**Action Item 3**
Citizen participation is required in urban planning processes in Oregon, yet meaningful involvement of many of Springfield’s different communities has been challenging. New approaches are needed to engage older adults in a manner that utilizes their skills, experience, and wisdom, especially those whose voices are rarely heard: older adults of color and those living in poverty.

1. Develop a best-practices guide to be used by City offices outlining ways to encourage and facilitate the involvement of students and older adults in civic affairs and policy making, especially those citizens from traditionally underrepresented groups.
2. Convene a committee of representatives from community organizations to write a guide to help bolster interest and participation in civic affairs and volunteer activities.
3. Make guide available online as a pdf for residents and businesses.

**Potential Partners:** City of Springfield, Willamalane, Springfield School District, NAACP, Centro Latino Americano

**Action Item 4**
Celebrate the contributions and spirit of volunteerism in Springfield to make residents more aware of volunteer opportunities and publicly thank volunteers.

1. Convene committee of representatives from community organizations to write a guide to help bolster interest and participation in civic affairs by a wide range of residents.
2. Make guide available online as a pdf for residents and businesses.
3. Schedule a Citizen Volunteer Appreciation event (concurrent with another citywide event)
4. Provide space for recruitment of volunteers at event
5. Promote volunteerism in Springfield.

**Potential Partners:** City of Springfield, Willamalane, United Way, other nonprofits who use volunteers
Employment/Economic Development

Being an older adult does not equate to having no need to work. AARP surveys indicate ageism still exists, including in Springfield, and that many older adults need to earn income. An age-friendly community provides ways that older people who need or wish to do so can continue to work for pay. With a 3.9 percent growth rate, people aged 65 and older were the fastest-growing segment of the civilian labor force between 2006 and 2016. Increasing life spans have resulted in a longer “middle age” and extending the period when workers are at their most productive. Portland State University research has shown that older workers contribute substantially to businesses and organizations. Further, older adults have emerged as leaders in new entrepreneurial activities in the United States.

The Livability Index measured economic strength by the number of jobs per person in the workforce measured at the metro area scale, in this case the Eugene Metropolitan Statistical Area (EMSA). Because job opportunity so directly impacts livability, the Index examines the number of jobs per worker in metropolitan areas and rural counties. The rate for the area encompassing Springfield was .73, indicating that there are about 25 percent more job seekers than available positions. Nationally, the median was .77.

According to Oregon Employment Department projections, Lane County will add 19,300 jobs between 2017 and 2027. This represents an 11 percent increase in employment over 10 years and an apparent increase in the knowledge and skills needed for those jobs.

To be ready for these jobs, seekers will need to have requisite skills. If Springfield is a reflection of the nation as a whole, job seekers have significant deficits in literacy, numeracy, and problem solving in digital environments. In a 2011-2012 survey of 23 countries, participants aged 16 to 65 in the United States scored at best 16th of 23 countries.

Education scores in the Livability Index for Springfield are 67.9 percent. The average 2020 on-time graduation rate across all four of Springfield’s high schools was 41 percent; however eliminating the lowest performer at 6 percent, the graduation rate of the top three performers was 83 percent. Graduation rates may have been more severely impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, particularly in lower performing schools.

Action Item 1

Develop and share best practices for developing and sharing with job seekers and employers the availability of stipends, training, fellowships and internships to facilitate paid employment for older adult to enable older adults to easily

“Being unemployed is even more disastrous for individuals than you would expect. Aside from the obvious harm – poverty, difficulty paying off debts – it seems to directly affect people’s health, particularly that of older workers.”

– James Surowiecki, journalist
Employment/Economic Development VISION
Springfield residents of all ages have equal opportunity in employment.

1. Convene committee of representatives from community organizations.
2. Create and share best practices guide for employers.
3. Establish speaker’s bureau of designated individuals who will promote and speak to businesses and organizations about the benefit of having older workers.
4. Encourage Lane Community College and Workforce to include older workers in underrepresented groups.

Potential Partners: Grant Makers of Oregon and Southwest Washington, AARP Oregon, Nonprofit Association of Oregon, Encore Fellows program, Senior & Disability Services, United Way, City of Springfield, Springfield School District, University of Oregon, Lane Community College, Senior Corps, Experience Works, Pioneer Pacific University, and Portland State University (Eugene)

Action Item 2
Older adults are starting businesses that provide income and add dollars to the local economy. Reports show older entrepreneurs stay in business longer than younger ones. With five years in business, 70 percent of ventures created by older entrepreneurs were still operating compared to 28 percent of their younger counterparts. Springfield should highlight and encourage this growing resource of older entrepreneurs.

1. Sponsor a conference for older entrepreneurs.

2. Encourage existing business incubators to include older adults.
3. Survey conference participants, six-months and one-year after event to judge conference efficacy.

Potential Partners: AARP Oregon, Springfield Chamber, NEDCO, business associations, Lane Small Business Development Center, Better Business Bureau, LCOG, SCORE

Action Item 3
Create an optional “Age-Friendly Business” certification for Springfield businesses to encourage businesses to employ older workers. Eligible businesses will get tips on recruiting and managing older workers and providing a welcoming environment for people of all ages, races and abilities.

1. Develop certification criteria and program, launch program by 2023.
2. Publicize criteria and program availability, with goal of at least 5 businesses enrolled in the first year.
3. Survey of businesses that are certified one year after enrollment to determine the effect of certification.

Potential Partners: City of Springfield; Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, SCORE, LCC Small Business Administration Office
COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION

Communication is an overarching concern in making communities livable for people of all ages. Having access to reliable information, including that from digital sources, can be challenging. People have varying levels of comfort with, ability to use, and access to various types of media. Although communicating exclusively through digital formats is increasingly common, print media or community information areas (e.g., pin boards, pamphlets, and displays) are preferred or required by many people, including some older adults. In order for Springfield to be an age-friendly city, it is important to provide information in ways that are easy to find, readily understood, and available to a wide range of the population. Using existing organizations to disseminate information and improving online sources to ensure that they are age friendly are key features in providing citizens with opportunities for civic, social, and educational engagement.

**Action Item 1**

Increase residents’ awareness of resources, services and opportunities available in Springfield and the greater Springfield community (including Eugene and nearby communities).

1. Identify current sources used for publicity, including pin boards and print media.
2. Distribute a list of best practices and standards for online communication. This list will be helpful to consumers and producers of information alike.
3. Work with businesses and organizations to identify 2 or 3 resources to serve as “clearinghouses for information.”
4. Create a community calendar on the City’s or a partner’s website to include information ranging from cultural activities (museums, theaters) to health-related programs (food preparation, fitness) and life-long learning opportunities (free and low-cost classes, presentations). A list of houses of worship could also be included.
5. Notify businesses and organizations about the community calendar and encourage use.

**Potential Partners:** Age-Friendly Springfield Work Group, AARP Oregon, City of Springfield, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

**Action Item 2**

Promote 211 ([info.org](http://info.org)), including its phone number and text options; (dial 211), and text option (text zip code to 898211) and which are available in every Oregon county and provides free information about nonprofit, government and faith-based health and social services programs.

1. Contact organizations to encourage their participation, with goal of five participating organizations.
2. Reference to the website and telephone/text options are included on organizations’ websites and other promotional material.

**Action Item 3**

Promote faith-based organizations, neighborhood associations, and recreational adult activity centers as places where information exchanges can and should be established.

1. Provide educational opportunities to improve residents’ and service providers’ skills for communicating through print, electronic and social media.

**Potential Partners:** City of Springfield, AARP Oregon, Lane County Senior & Disability Services, Human Services Commission, Eugene Register-Guard, television and radio stations
Community services are vital to the functioning of an age-friendly city as they support the day-to-day needs of all Springfield residents, no matter their age or ability. Vital community services include grocers and other vendors of healthy foods, government services, retail outlets, arts and culture destinations, entertainment venues, and beauty and hygiene services, among others. Community services should recognize the needs of older adults, in particular, and they should be in close proximity to housing and transportation options to better serve everyone.

Western Oregon is vulnerable to natural disasters from earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and strong storms. The City’s website includes an “Emergency Management” section that provides a list of questions to spur thinking about one’s own preparation for emergencies and links to Federal, State, and other websites on this topic. Additionally the section specifically addresses floods, wildfires, earthquakes and tsunamis. Lane County’s website enables signing up for emergency notifications and a 12-week plan for building an emergency kit to shelter in place or evacuate. The City also is served by CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets), a mobile intervention team integrated into the public safety system of the cities of Eugene and Springfield. Free response is available for a broad range of non-criminal crises, including homelessness, intoxication, disorientation, substance abuse and mental illness problems and dispute resolution. Non-emergency medical care, first aid and transportation to services is also provided.

**Community Services**

**Action Item 1**

Improve emergency preparedness and systems of ensuring the safety for older adults and people with special needs:

In addition to emergency preparedness, appropriate approaches for dealing with vulnerable populations (e.g., people with mental health disorders such as dementia) need to be integrated into training and procedures for public and other organizations serving the public.

1. **Engage a broad range of community members – including older adults and people with disabilities – in emergency preparedness training.**
2. **At street fairs, farmers markets, festivals and other appropriate venues, promote Lane County Emergency Management “Alert” system that enables subscribers to receive free emergency notifications.**

**Potential Partners:** AARP Oregon, Lane County Emergency Management, Springfield Police Department,

**Elders in Action, Lane County Aging & Disability Services, City of Springfield, CAHOOTS**

**Action Item 2**

Improve the age friendliness of community and recreation centers: People of all ages need safe, welcoming places that encourage physical activity, social inclusion and interaction, as well as safe and convenient access to goods and services required in daily life.

1. **Identify locations in Springfield that lack adequate services and infrastructure to meet the needs of older adults (sidewalks, curb cuts and safe crossings; government services; fresh and affordable food) and use the information to develop a plan to address deficiencies.**

**Potential Partners:** Springfield Transportation Planning Department, Lane Transit District, Willamalane, Springfield Library and Springfield School District, Age-Friendly Springfield Work Group
Health Services

Health services are particularly important for older adults due both to normal aging processes and to disease-related challenges that often occur later in life. In Springfield and the U.S. as a whole, major changes in health care are being undertaken. The push to include “health in all policies” is continuing globally and locally and is considered an innovative, systems change approach by the National Association of County and City Health Officials. The recent COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the inequities in health care availability and access for older adults and families in the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) communities. It is essential that Springfield along with Lane County and health providers focus on a preventive and proactive model that values home- and community-based care, as well as a range of supportive health policies and approaches.

Action Item 1

Improve older adult wellness and preventive health care: Evidence points to the importance of inter-professional health provider teams, in the prevention of and management of chronic illnesses.

1. Foster opportunities for information technology, coordination of care, and care innovations in the delivery of health care to older adults, including partnerships among individuals, private, governmental, and other community organizations.
2. Promote building multifamily housing near existing hospitals and congregate care facilities so that care is more easily accessible to both patients and visitors.
3. Collaborate with health agencies to promote behavior and infrastructure that foster health and prevent illness (walkable neighborhoods, access to fresh foods).
4. Promote existing programs such as the PeaceHealth Strides for Social Justice Initiative to city and surrounding residents.

Potential Partners: Lane County Public Health Department, Lane County Aging & Disability Services, City of Springfield, Human Services Commission, PeaceHealth Medical Group, McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center, Willamalane Park and Recreation District

Action Item 2

Active aging is a fundamental aspect of health and a vital component of age-friendly communities. Active aging emerges from a variety of physical, social, psychological, physiological, and economic factors, as well as experiences accumulated throughout one’s life. Older and younger residents alike should understand how these factors influence how we age.

1. Educate and empower individuals of all ages and abilities to positively affect their own health and well-being through engaging in healthy behaviors (being physically active, eating healthy foods, staying engaged with others) and to understand and improve the social conditions that influence how well people age.
2. As programs and infrastructure are being designed use the World Health Organization’s ACTIVE, a policy tool kit to help all governments reduce the alarming levels of physical inactivity and the related health, social and economic consequences.
3. Offer an array of chronic disease self-management programs and programs to increase physical activity for older adults throughout the city.
4. Explore strategies for reducing financial barriers to accessing Willamalane’s recreation programs.
5. Create an Age-Friendly Fitness Park (FitLot) in coordination with AARP Oregon and Willamalane.

Potential Partners: Lane County Health Department, Lane County Senior & Disability Services, Willamalane, AARP Oregon, PeaceHealth, Willamette Medical Center
Steps Following Acceptance of the Action Plan

The City of Springfield should identify the organization/committee that will serve as a collective impact “backbone” of Age-Friendly Springfield. The entity will coordinate implementation of the Age-Friendly Action Plan, and convene stakeholders to advocate for, coordinate, and monitor age-friendly developments and policymaking efforts.

- The Age-Friendly Springfield Team will convene with the organizations identified as “Potential Partners” to review the action items proposed, confirm willingness to collaborate, make needed refinements as needed to the action items, identify accountable organizations and set meaningful, measurable progress indicators and timelines.

- With partner organizations, the team will prepare an implementation plan, detailing the responsible organizations, indicators for monitoring progress and timelines for accomplishment.

- The Team will develop an educational campaign that describes age-friendliness, including active aging strategies, and how Springfield residents can work together to make our community an even better place for all ages.

- The Team will remain well-informed of technological, policy, and other developments and update implementation plans accordingly.

- An Age-Friendly Springfield page should be created on the City’s website for the purpose of information sharing about the project.

- The Team will contact Oregon municipalities enrolled in the Network of Age-Friendly Communities to determine how we can work together to coordinate our various age-friendly related efforts and enhance the age-friendliness of Oregon as a whole. Examples include Clackamas County’s engAGE project, Clark County’s Aging Readiness Plan, Washington County’s Vision Action Network.

- The Team will explore new private-public partnerships to build and strengthen the economic sustainability required to ensure Springfield’s age friendliness in the future. To achieve success, the effort to become more age friendly must both involve and be beneficial to government and private entities without overly relying on either group.

- The Team may seek funding for coordinating demonstration projects, possible partnerships with U.S. and international cities, and examine the outcomes achieved overall and to understand how best to make individual areas of the city more age friendly.
The following sources were used in creating the Age-Friendly Action Plan:

AARP Livable Communities [www.aarp.org/livable](http://www.aarp.org/livable)

https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_21660.htm


Center for Research and Education on Aging and Technology Enhancement (CREATE) Lane Workforce [http://www.laneworkforce.org/labor-trends/lane-county-employ](http://www.laneworkforce.org/labor-trends/lane-county-employ)


NCBI [www.ncbi.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1524856/](http://www.ncbi.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1524856/)


https://www.pewinternet.org/2018/03/01/social-media-use-in-2018/


Social Security Administration [https://www.ssa.gov/OACT/ProgDATA/nra.html](https://www.ssa.gov/OACT/ProgDATA/nra.html)


https://www.springfield-or.gov/city/history

https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/springfieldcityoregon

Eugene-Springfield Consolidated Plan


https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/springfield-or-population

[https://www.ssa.gov/OACT/ProgData/nra.html](https://www.ssa.gov/OACT/ProgData/nra.html)

APPENDIX A – LISTENING SESSIONS/ROUNDTABLES

City Listening Post at Upstream Mural Celebration, 2018

Art in the City

Livable communities often have art in common: public art installations, arts education in schools, exposure to music, dance, theater and the visual arts. Culture in our communities fosters creativity and enhances recreational opportunities for citizens of all ages. Expanding access to cultural offerings creates a more vibrant, interesting community for local residents — whether it’s taking a painting or dance class, watching a play, listening to a concert or enjoying a new sculpture in a public park. Public art also gives communities a sense of place, making them destinations where people of all ages want to stop for a moment rather than rush through on their way to a meeting, a job or an appointment. Taken together, investments in the arts can help increase social engagement and creativity among residents of all ages. Across the country, mayors are using the arts to enliven their communities and create new destinations for community events. In Oregon, murals in Eugene, Springfield and Cottage Grove draw visitors to the cities’ centers, which have become outdoor art museums. Springfield and Eugene have both dedicated public funding for public art. To learn more about how mayors across the country are using art to create livable communities, check out AARP’s latest edition of Where We Live: Communities for All Ages. [http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/livable-in-action/info-2016/where-we-live-culture.html](http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/livable-in-action/info-2016/where-we-live-culture.html)

The Age-Friendly Springfield Committee set up a listening station on a downtown sidewalk near the Upstream Mural Project and the History and Hops celebration at the Springfield Museum. We asked attendees: “What kind of art would you like to see (more of) in your community? Respondents were residents of Eugene and Springfield.

![Bar chart showing preferences for types of art](image_url)

**What kind of art would you like to see in your community?**

- More Murals
- Painted Art Crosswalks
- Interactive Public Games
- Intergenerational Art Project
- Art Festival
- Creative Outdoor Seating
- City Concerts
- Other
Youth Roundtable, Feb. 2020
Older Adult Listening Session, Fall 2019

We met with young people, ages: middle-school to high-school at Springfield Library downtown. We asked them to tell us what a “livable” community meant and what things were important to them. The graph below shows the major responses we received from almost every youth in attendance. The responses were almost identical to the responses we received from the Fall 2019 Listening session with adults 50 and older, that was held at City Hall. Older adults mentioned Health Services.

Sample comments:

“I want to have a voice. We’re not listened to because of our age.”

“It’s great that things are coming to downtown and other places, but it’s expensive. We’re left out if we can’t afford it.”

“Affordable Housing is important. My family struggles every month to pay rent, and we can’t buy a house because it is too expensive.”

“I want to find a job that pays me enough to live here.”

“More inclusion. Sometimes it feels like Springfield is divided. If you’re gay – you can only go where gay people are, if you are wealthy, if you’re black, brown or anything different, sometimes you don’t feel welcome.”

“We need more to do. A place to hang out that’s not expensive, but it’s safe. The parks don’t always feel safe.”
APPENDIX B – ROAD TO LIVABILITY – HIGHLIGHTS OF SPRINGFIELD SURVEY

ROAD TO LIVABILITY FOR THE 50+
Springfield, OR

85% say it’s important to remain in their own home as they age

68%

80+ own their home

70+

only 20% think there’s an adequate supply of affordable housing in Springfield

65+

only 43% think there’s a variety of housing options for persons with different physical abilities

55+

95%

believe having wellness programs for people ages 55+ is important

50+

14%

people reported they are hungry or ate less than they should

43%

believe having a home nearby is important

30%

believe having a garden nearby is important

23%

think good job opportunities exist in Springfield

9%

faced workplace discrimination

39%

Drive to get around

69%

Walk to get around

37%

Ensure roads are designed for all users

65%

people in the Springfield survey

35%

people in the Springfield survey

68%

people in the Springfield survey

35%

people in the Springfield survey

40%

people in the Springfield survey

55%

people in the Springfield survey

56%

people in the Springfield survey

39%

people in the Springfield survey

25%

people in the Springfield survey

33%

people in the Springfield survey

50-59 yrs old

60-64 yrs old

65-74 yrs old

75+ yrs old

people in the Springfield survey

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