On behalf of the City of Rowlett, we are excited about our successful collaboration with AARP Texas and the World Health Organization as we have become an Age-Friendly Community. Along with other communities in the nation, Rowlett is committed to promoting policies to make American cities friendly to the aging population.

In Rowlett, we hold our older citizens in high regard. Their life experience and broad range of knowledge has proven invaluable as our community has grown. In fact, the Rowlett City Council has an appointed Senior Advisory Board, whose mission is to generate public awareness of and support for senior citizens’ concerns, and to provide those citizens with information of interest to them. The Senior Advisory Board also proposes solutions and makes recommendations to the City Council concerning issues important to our older population.

I see great value in the AARP Network and am excited to enhance the community activities which contributed to Rowlett’s designation as an Age-Friendly City. As a participant in the national network of communities, the City of Rowlett will continue to include the active engagement of older adults in community decisions; implement this Plan of Action to respond to the needs identified by older adults in the community; commit to measuring activities, review action plan outcomes and report on them publicly.

We look forward to continuing working with AARP Texas staff and volunteers to ensure our community has the appropriate infrastructure in place to allow our older citizens to remain engaged and age with dignity.

Sincerely,

Tammy Dana-Bashian
Mayor
The City of Rowlett is situated on beautiful Lake Ray Hubbard. With a population of 67,339, Rowlett retains its small-town vibe despite being the 8th Fastest Growing City in the United States (US Census Bureau). Since 2011, numerous transportation projects have transformed Rowlett, including the President George Bush Turnpike, which bisects the city, and the Downtown Rowlett Dallas Area Rapid Transit light rail system.

In 2012, City and community leaders created a vision called Realize Rowlett 2020, which built a framework for future development in the City and established guiding principles to direct policy, land use, and implementation. Building upon the success of Realize Rowlett 2020, in 2019 the City took a journey with its citizens to update and enhance the plan. As a result, the 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update provides further direction for how the City should develop in the future.

The strategic opportunity areas in Rowlett include the mixed-use Village of Rowlett Downtown; The North Shore, an area for corporate offices anchoring a mixed-use center with a variety of residential types integrated into the development; Signature Gateway, a mixed-use neighborhood providing open neighborhood gathering spaces with limited supportive commercial along the President George Bush Turnpike; Active Living, a waterfront neighborhood with a mix of single family residential development, limited commercial, and open space on the lake; Business Beltway, a business and employment hub that offering office, commercial, entertainment, and retail development; and Lakeside Center, with the vision to be a place where civic services integrate with mixed-use development to include commercial and entertainment that capitalizes on the lake front.
Another extremely exciting development currently under construction is Sapphire Bay. Sapphire Bay is a $1 billion mixed-use development located on the shores of Lake Ray Hubbard. The 116-acre development will be Texas’ first resort destination anchored by a state-of-the-art man-made lagoon, offering guests a luxurious stay along it’s shore at the 500 room Sapphire Bay Resort – operated and managed by Destination Hotels by Hyatt. The project will feature a one-of-a-kind surf village and water park, 1,500+ residential units, 1.7 million square feet of mixed-use restaurant, retail, entertainment, office and hospitality space, 20+ acres of parks and trails, a 1,000-slip marina, and The Fountains at Sapphire Bay, which is destined to become one of the most magnetic pieces of public art in the United States. Sapphire Bay will become a national destination for conferences, vacationing families, residents looking for a unique place to call home, and businesses who want to locate where their employees can live, work, and play.

Rowlett is located in two different counties – Rockwall and Dallas. Rowlett is served by two award-winning school districts: Rockwall Independent School District, serving over 16,536 students and Garland Independent School District, (GISD), which educates approximately 56,471 students across 72 campuses and ranks as the second largest district in Dallas County. GISD boasts a diverse population that speaks more than 100 languages, as well as technology driven campuses, magnet programs, Career & Technical Educational courses.

Since 2000, Rowlett has earned the Tree City USA through the National Arbor Day Foundation. In 2019 the US News and World Report listed Rowlett in the top 10 City to Retire. In 2018 the National Council for Home & Security ranked Rowlett as the 41st Safest City and the U.S. Census Bureau recognized Rowlett as the 8th Fastest Growing City (population 50k+) in the country.

In 2017 SafeHome.org listed Rowlett as the #9th Safest City in Texas and Neighborhoods USA recognized Rowlett with the Electronic Government Newsletter of the Year.
In 2016 ValuePenguin.com ranked Rowlett as #3 Safest Place in Texas with a population over 50K.

Rowlett offers a wonderful lakeside quality of life, with access to all types of amenities such as Lake Ray Hubbard, Rowlett Community Centre, Wet Zone Waterpark, Waterview Golf Club, over 29 churches, at least 20 annual community events, over 25 clubs/organizations, The Village of Rowlett Downtown - an emerging downtown district, and numerous parks & trails that include outdoor fitness, sports playing fields, and lots of play areas. The City of Rowlett is a popular place to live because of its location, available land, workforce, award-winning public safety, and community amenities. The Village of Rowlett Downtown is growing with new businesses and restaurants and is home to the Rowlett Public Library. Rowlett has a Neighborhood-Planning Program that seeks to meet the needs of our community by promoting community involvement, and strengthening the relationships between neighborhoods and city staff.

A valued partner to the City, the Rowlett Area Chamber and Visitor Center is active in the community to support the economic well-being of the business community. The Chamber also provides visitor information, hosts several annual events and programs. Another community partner, Keep Rowlett Beautiful (an affiliate of Keep Texas Beautiful), is a service organization governed by volunteers who focus on community beautification and the health of the environment.

Rowlett residents choose to live here because they can enjoy all the amenities a close-knit community can offer. In Rowlett, you’ll find award-winning schools, unique shopping opportunities, affordable homes, top quality health care from the full-service Baylor, Scott & White Medical Center Lake Pointe, beautiful lakeside parks, a variety of community entertainment and special events and much, much more.
**DEMOGRAPHICS**

**ROWLETT AGE DEMOGRAPHICS**

- **6.8%** | PERSONS UNDER 5
- **24.9%** | PERSONS UNDER 18
- **56.8%** | PERSONS AGED 18-64
- **11.5%** | PERSONS OVER 65

**ROWLETT RACE DEMOGRAPHICS**

- **19.7%** | HISPANIC/LATINO
- **17.5%** | BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- **.5%** | ALASKAN/INDIGENOUS AMERICANS
- **54.9%** | WHITE
- **7.4%** | ASIAN
**DALLAS COUNTY AGE DEMOGRAPHICS**
*Population Estimate Circa 2020: 2,613,539*

- 7.3% | PERSONS UNDER 5
- 25.8% | PERSONS UNDER 18
- 55.8% | PERSONS AGED 18-64
- 11.1% | PERSONS OVER 65

**DALLAS COUNTY RACE DEMOGRAPHICS**
*Population Estimate Circa 2020: 2,613,539*

- 40.8% | HISPANIC/LATINO
- 23.6% | BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 1.1% | ALASKAN/INDIGENOUS AMERICANS
- 28.3% | WHITE
- 6.7% | ASIAN

**ROCKWALL COUNTY AGE DEMOGRAPHICS**
*Population Estimate Circa 2020: 2,613,539*

- 6.1% | PERSONS UNDER 5
- 26.6% | PERSONS UNDER 18
- 55.4% | PERSONS AGED 18-64
- 12.8% | PERSONS OVER 65

**ROCKWALL COUNTY RACE DEMOGRAPHICS**
*Population Estimate Circa 2020: 2,613,539*

- 18.6% | HISPANIC/LATINO
- 7.4% | BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- .8% | ALASKAN/INDIGENOUS AMERICANS
- 70% | WHITE
- 3.2% | ASIAN
The **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities** serves as a catalyst to educate local leaders (both elected officials and engaged residents) and encourage them to implement the types of changes that make communities more livable for people of all ages, especially older adults.

The network provides cities, towns, counties and states with the resources to become more age-friendly by tapping into national and global research, planning models and best practices.

Membership in the network helps local leaders identify and understand community needs, serves as an organizing structure for making community improvements, fosters partnerships among community groups and local stakeholders, provides leadership opportunities for volunteers and enables changes that benefit people of all ages.

The **8 Domains of Livability** is a framework developed by the World Health Organization and promoted by AARP. The framework is used by many of the towns, cities, counties and states enrolled in the *AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities* to organize and prioritize their work to become more livable for both older residents and people of all ages.
The Rowlett Action Plan was developed to increase livability for people of all ages, with particular attention paid to the City's evolving needs based on the percentage of adults over 55 years of age rapidly increasing. The Age-Friendly project teams gathered data from the community through a series of Listening Sessions as well as a project survey based on the Housing, Transportation and Social Participation domains. Rowlett must plan for older adults with higher rates of disabilities hindering their mobility and ability to move around comfortably. The Texas older population grew by 49.5 percent (over 1.0 million), from nearly 2.1 million in 2000 to nearly 3.1 million in 2014. With the development of Realize Rowlett 2020 as well as the construction of Sapphire Bay, the population is expected to grow quickly over the next 5 years. Due to the expected growth, accommodations will need to be reviewed on a continual basis in order to maintain the level of quality needed.
Due to the unique environment and diverse culture of Rowlett, some age friendly features exist or have been expanded. The Rowlett Community Centre offers programs for Seniors that incorporate the Social Participation domain through open events, luncheons, programs, and an indoor track. In addition to the program options, within the next few months there will be intergenerational programming to help bridge the gap between Generation Z and the Silent Generation. In addition, the Parks & Recreation Department offers FREE Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) passes for seniors to encourage them to utilize the public transportation system. The City of Rowlett currently offers roughly 10 miles of trails with more on the way. One important component to the trail system is the inclusion of outdoor exercise equipment. Outdoor exercise equipment offers a wonderful alternative to build lean muscle, improve cardiovascular function, and increase energy without the cost of a gym membership or the commitment to an exercise class.
City staff and Senior Advisory Board, along with the stakeholders, worked together on the mission and vision for developing this Age-Friendly Action Plan and fostering an Age-Friendly community.

**Mission Statement**

Rowlett is committed to creating an age-friendly culture and diverse community that promotes positive elements of the City as a place for everyone to participate, grow, and thrive.

**Our Vision**

Our vision is for all community stakeholders to support Rowlett’s strategic initiatives that comprise the QUALITY OF LIFE, TRANSPORTATION, AND NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY by fostering an inclusive community of all ages who choose to live, work and play in Rowlett.
Process Overview

In establishing its Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Program, the World Health Organization (WHO) developed a framework for defining the features that make a city age-friendly. The WHO also created a five-year process for cities to earn the age-friendly designation.

AARP, as the U.S. affiliate of the WHO’s global network, has developed a similar five-year process tailored to the United States. Essentially, the process involves joining the global network of age-friendly cities, assessing the needs of a given community’s older residents, planning and implementing actions that will address those needs, and evaluating the success of the plan. However, this process should not be considered completed at the end of the five-year process; AARP intends the process to be a continuous cycle of improvement.

As Rowlett joined the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities in January 2020, the process is entering its third year. Rowlett has completed the action plan enrollment, conducted surveys and listening sessions with our seniors and has now finalized the official Action Plan. Next steps will include implementation of the Action Plan.

DEVELOPING AN AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY: THE PROCESS

- **Year 1:** Conduct a survey and listening sessions
- **Year 2:** Create an action plan
- **Years 3-5:** Implementation
- **Year 5:** Progress/status update
- **Enrollment**
In its advocacy for policies that improve the quality of life for people of all ages, AARP provided a new tool in 2015: the Livability Index. The online tool compiled information about cities across the country to assess the livability of a given city and identify policies to improve conditions. Results are provided by a single index score, which is broken out by different categories covering various aspects of the city’s livability.

The Livability Index scores are another way to gauge what Rowlett needs. The index provides scoring of neighborhoods and communities across the United States for services and amenities that impact life the most. The score is based on the average score of seven livability categories – housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity. An average community receives a score of 50. For Rowlett, the domains of Housing and Transportation score the lowest out of the seven categories which is one reason they are the focus of this action plan. Social Participation and Inclusion score a little above average, although the thought is this domain can be enhanced to increase the score. Each of these seven categories provide metrics listing what the score is based upon and with each item listed the chart shows how Rowlett compares to other places across the country. These details can be found on the AARP Livable Communities Network website.

**TOTAL INDEX SCORE BY ZIP CODE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75088</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>52</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the Fall of 2018, one of the goals of the Senior Advisory Board was to investigate the AARP Livable City. Former Chair, Rob Rose, was appointed the lead of this initiative. In the following months he presented information about AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and encouraged board members to become familiar with components of the initiative so that all members could be actively involved in the process.

In the Senior Advisory Board’s joint meeting with City Council, they presented their investigations into the AARP Livable City. Rowlett submitted an application for enrollment to AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities.

Rowlett was accepted into the AARP Age Friendly Network in January of 2020.

On February 4, 2020, there was a press release and information presented to City Council. City Council issued a proclamation to support initiatives and opportunities to engage in the WHO Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Network. The month of February also kicked off the community needs assessment released to the community. This survey was available to residents for a month. A total of 330 surveys were completed, which is just shy of the goal of 360. 498 people started the survey but did not fully complete it.

In March of 2020, the WHO declared the novel coronavirus outbreak to be a pandemic. By mid-March Texas Governor Greg Abbott and other local officials began responding to the pandemic by issuing closures and stay at home orders. With these ever-changing orders to help prevent the spread of the virus, many City Boards and Commissions meetings were postponed pending the development of safe meeting protocols. As a result, the Senior
Advisory Board did not meet the months of March through May of 2020. When meetings resumed, they were conducted virtually. From June through August the survey results were reviewed by city staff and the Senior Advisory Board. Discussions led to the decision to focus on three domains: Housing and Transportation, the two lowest scores and Social Participation. The board felt these were the top issues in the community.

### Demographics of Survey Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97%</td>
<td>RESIDE INSIDE THE CITY LIMITS OF ROWLETT AND ARE 45+ YEARS OLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84%</td>
<td>LIVE IN DALLAS COUNTY; 13% IN ROCKWALL COUNTY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54%</td>
<td>LIVE IN ZIP CODE 75088; 44% IN 75089, WITH 2% SOMETHING ELSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69%</td>
<td>HAVE LIVED IN ROWLETT AT LEAST 15 YEARS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66%</td>
<td>WERE FEMALE; 34% MALE; 3% OTHER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79%</td>
<td>ARE ENGLISH SPEAKING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>IDENTIFY AS WHITE OR CAUCASIAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89%</td>
<td>HAVE NO CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72%</td>
<td>ARE MARRIED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95%</td>
<td>OWN THEIR OWN HOME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85%</td>
<td>WERE NOT CAREGIVERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59%</td>
<td>ARE IN VERY GOOD TO EXCELLENT HEALTH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72%</td>
<td>DID NOT HAVE ANY TYPE OF CHRONIC DISEASE OR DISABILITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31%</td>
<td>EMPLOYED FULL TIME; 45% RETIRED AND NOT WORKING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62%</td>
<td>FELT IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO REMAIN IN THEIR CURRENT COMMUNITY AS LONG AS POSSIBLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51%</td>
<td>RATED ROWLETT AS A PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE AS THE AGE AS VERY GOOD TO EXCELLENT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In January 2021, two listening sessions were held virtually. The first session had a total of 32 attendees, and in the second session 11 attendees participated. Number of participants were possibly limited due to COVID and access to online media, as well as marketing limitations due to facilities being closed and little to no programming.

In February 2021, the Mission and Vision statements were developed and accepted by the team of City staff and the Senior Advisory Board.

In March 2021, stakeholder teams were formed and developed with the assistance of the Senior Advisory Board, City staff, and community partners. In the process of creating these teams, connections were made with other Rowlett Boards and Commissions members, as these residents are already engaged in the City initiatives and familiar with the needs of the community.

During the months of April 2021 through November 2021, stakeholders staff, and Senior Advisory Board, met monthly to create goals and strategies for the action plan.

In December, the Rowlett Senior Advisory Board recommended the domain specific Action Plan outlining goals, strategies, and action items to be presented to the City Council for approval.

In February, the Action Plan will be presented to City Council for official approval and to AARP. Once the approval is received, the implementation of the plan will begin.
Community Partners

AARP
Boy Scouts of America
Christ Redeemer Anglican Church
Counseling Institute of Texas
Dallas Area Rapid Transportation (DART)
Iris Memory Care of Rowlett
Northeast Dallas County Kiwanis
Senior Citizens of Rowlett (SCOR)
Senior community members
Rowlett Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission
Rowlett Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center
Rowlett Community Development, including Neighborhood Planning
Rowlett Arts & Humanities Commission
Rowlett Fire Department, including Emergency Medical Services
Rowlett Parks & Recreation Department
Rowlett Police Department
Rowlett Public Library

Committee Members

Carter Holston   Jeff Sheldon   Michael Gallops
Dawn Dorman     Jeff Winget    Stanley Poullard
Diana Moore     Kathy Hammond  Susan Hennum
Elizabeth Crider Linicha Hunter

City Council Liaisons

Brownie Sherrill Pamela Bell Whitney Laning

Staff

Aaron Cleaver Hannah Myers Lilyana Morejon
Colin Paterson Jade Broadnax Shelly Monroe
Dana Reeves Jason Aguirre Tara Bradley
Ed Balderas Kari Pacheco
Hannah Ceaser Laura Tschoerner
Special Thanks
to the Rowlett Senior Advisory Board for their support and contribution to this project:

**Present Members**
- Alberta Reese
- Cheryl Smith
- Dianna Lieberenz
- Kenneth Williams
- Sharon Pouzar
- Susan Bell
- Virginia Denson
- Wathenia Clark

**Past Members**
- Karen Cosby
- Michael Britt
- Patricia Bird
- Rob Rose
- Veda Kull

**City Council**
- Mayor Tammy Dana-Bashian
- Matt Grubisich, Mayor Pro-Tem
- Brownie Sherrill, Deputy Mayor Pro-Tem
- Martha Brown
- Pamela Bell
- Robert Margolis
- Whitney Laning

**AARP Texas**
- Susan Williams
- Tina Tran
- William Armbruster
Introduction

Transportation is important to residents of any community. Most adults, including older adults, in Rowlett use their own vehicles to get around town. The ability of older adults to continue driving represents a continued independence to many, however, this should not be the only available method of transportation. A robust community should offer alternatives allowing residents to have access to shopping, health care, social activities, work or school, etc.

City of Rowlett wants to provide alternative modes of transportation for those who choose not to drive or who cannot drive. The Parks and Recreation Department provides free Dallas Area Rapid Transit light rail system vouchers for senior citizens over the age of 60 who may not own a vehicle or can no longer drive. The vouchers can be used for DART train, buses and Go Link. GoLink is DART’s on-demand service where a person can book a trip for work, errands or connect to other Dallas Area Rapid Transit services. A DART service not covered by the voucher is the Paratransit Service, a curb-to-curb public transportation service for people with disabilities who are unable to use DART buses or trains. Paratransit is a shared-ride service operated with modern, accessible vehicles, and taxi cabs.

Several future trails are included in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. These will be developed for more connectivity and to enhance the ability to get around within Rowlett, as funding becomes available.
We Envision...

….More access points to the Rowlett DART station and from Rowlett downtown to the Rowlett Community Centre. Infrastructure improvements, widen lanes for additional access, and ensuring connectivity within the City are considered key factors for transportation. Handicap parking availability at events, activities, and other locations are not as plentiful when needed, therefore an increase in enforcement by our Volunteers in Police Services Maybe more helpful for those who need to park closer. Adding dedicated senior transportation vehicles to the City of Rowlett Fleet would be beneficial so more seniors can be involved. As Rowlett’s population continues to grow and seniors become more active there may be a need for a helicopter pad location downtown and at Sapphire Bay to aid with emergency response operations. The hope is these action steps will increase opportunities for social participation and inclusion to help aging adults enjoy life and stay involved in their communities.

We Heard...

• Improve walkability and roadway conditions
• Improve wayfinding devices for Go Link services
• Separate pathways for bicycles and walkers
• Increase signage around the City

We Have...

• There are a few transportation resources such as Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Go Link services, Lyft, Uber, STAR transportation (limited), and taxi services
• Multiple trails, some paved and some natural, exist within Rowlett
• Rowlett has major thoroughfares to the metroplex
• The senior living communities provide some transportation for their residents
We Will...

DOMAIN 1: TRANSPORTATION

Ensure all modes of transportation are safe, affordable and accessible for all ages and abilities

1.1.A | OBTAIN SAFETY/CRIME REPORTS FOR DART RAIL LIGHT SYSTEM AND ROWLETT POLICE DEPARTMENT
1.1.B | IDENTIFY AREAS WITHIN ROWLETT THAT HAVE HIGH ACCIDENT RATINGS
1.1.C | EXPLORE IDEAS OF IMPLEMENTING A PUBLIC SAFETY APP
1.1.D | IMPROVE MAINTENANCE OF TRAILS AND SIDEWALKS WITHIN THE CITY

Improve communication and education regarding transportation opportunities

1.2.A | EDUCATE RESIDENTS ON HOW TO ACCESS INFORMATION ONLINE FOR TRANSPORTATION
1.2.B | INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF TRAILS, SIDEWALKS, AND METHODS OF TRANSPORTATION AND RESOURCES
1.2.C | IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP A MASTER LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

Eliminate barriers in order to utilize all forms of transportation

1.3.A | IDENTIFY BARRIERS THAT PREVENT USERS FROM UTILIZING TRANSPORTATION SAFELY
1.3.B | BEGIN A NEW CONNECTED ROWLETT PROGRAM TO LINK PARKS AND RECREATION DESTINATIONS AND IMPROVE MULTI-MODAL ACCOMMODATIONS WITHIN THE CITY
Housing needs change as we age. A large percentage of older adults want to live independently in their own home as long as they can and stay within the communities in which they have been residing when possible. According to AARP, the population of older adults is growing, there are approximately 45 million Americans age 65 or older. By 2034, people age 65 or over will outnumber children age 17 or younger. Senior citizens being able to remain near the area they know and near the people they have connections with contribute to their health and well-being. Accessible and affordable housing should be considered with new developments to meet the needs of aging adults, especially since there will be a high demand due to the predicted number of older adults.

City of Rowlett has and will continue to implement practical solutions and housing options suitable for our resident's differing incomes, ages and life stages. The Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation encourages developers to create affordable housing and there is a statute to encourage developers to install features in single-family homes to make it easier for older adults to age in place. The City of Rowlett has Economic and Community Development Departments, along with a Planning & Zoning Commission, who partner together for strategic housing standards, designs, and zoning.
We Envision...

...More outlets to provide information on senior resources related to housing issues, including housing modification information or realtors designated as Senior Real Estate Specialists, list of senior-friendly housing options, as well as civic or non-profit groups who help with home modifications. The goal is to create a “one stop shop” webpage with all these resources to make accessing housing information convenient for older adults who wish to live in Rowlett and enjoy life in this community.

We Heard...

- Housing affordability is a concern
- Housing is expensive due to property taxes
- A need for housing to be within walking distance of amenities such as medical, restaurants, and shopping
- Housing should be designed with these in mind: ADA compliance, accessibility needs, safety, social interaction, large first floor options
- Development of new housing should consider those on a fixed income and the need for multigenerational housing
We Have...

- The City of Rowlett adopted the Over 65 Tax Freeze in 2004. In addition, the city provides a $30,000 tax exemption to seniors over 65
  - Based on the amount of property taxes paid at the time the homeowner becomes 65, not on the property value, the Over 65 Tax Freeze is important for seniors because it sets the maximum amount of property taxes they can pay each year to the City of Rowlett over their lifetime. This is a benefit to all seniors to all seniors over 65 and a huge plus for those on a fixed income
  - Rowlett is one of only seven cities in Dallas County to provide a tax freeze for citizens over 65. While the provision of this exemption and the senior tax freeze significantly reduces our property tax revenue, we understand the need to provide our seniors with significant property tax relief in this time of escalating property valuations

- City facilities have housing resources available in hard copy or electronically for information and educational outlets

- The City of Rowlett and Rowlett Area Chamber and Visitors Center websites provide some housing information for those looking to relocate to Rowlett or who move within the city

- Rowlett has a Neighborhood Planning program that integrates neighborhood programming into long term planning

- There is a variety of age-friendly housing options in Rowlett such as assisted living, independent living facilities, secured memory care, and skilled nursing care

- The senior programming at the Rowlett Community Centre has relationships with various senior living facilities

- A Rental Housing Standards Program for single-family and multi-family rentals is in place and Rowlett adopted the International Property Maintenance Code
We Will...

**DOMAIN 2: HOUSING**

Promote and encourage the development of diverse housing options that are available and affordable for seniors

2.1. A) Research accommodations and/or universal design that is best for diverse housing for seniors

2.1. B) Communicate with potential developers about the inclusion of affordable and accommodating housing for seniors

2.1. C) Research the types of incentives available for developers to include diverse housing options

Increase awareness of supports and services that help older adults stay in their homes

2.2. A) Identify ways to bring awareness of the resources available to seniors on existing housing

2.2. B) Increase awareness of available home modifications

Improve communication and education regarding available housing and housing resources

2.3. A) Create a website or senior media page listing resources and educational opportunities

2.3. B) Hold programs and fairs specific to education on housing topics

2.3. C) Create a master list of resources available to assist seniors with housing matters
Introduction

Maintaining social connections is beneficial to both physical and mental health, which makes it critical for senior citizens. According to the Consumer Affairs 2021 survey, 1 in 4 people older than 65 experience social isolation, putting them at greater risk of loneliness. Some of the risk factors noted are the loss of a spouse or loved one, changes to societal communication and technology, no longer able to do their favorite hobby, increase in crime rates, and lack of transportation. Consumer Affairs 2021 reported that loneliness and social isolation increase the risk of dementia by 50%, stroke by 32%, and heart disease by 29% according to the Health Resource and Services Administration. Inclusion plays a significant role for older adults being able to participate in programs, events, and receive services.

City of Rowlett wants to provide opportunities for older adults to be involved in activities and have more interactions with others as a way to improve their health and quality of life, as well as to help the community embrace the aging population.
We Envision...

...More outreach, creating intergenerational activities, increasing events geared towards older adults, developing a better relationship with local schools to enhance volunteerism, and finding ways to improve accessibility of the information already available. The hope is these actions will increase opportunities for social participation and inclusion to help aging adults enjoy life and stay involved in their communities.

We Heard...

• The need for conveniently located venues
• Improve communication and visibility of programs, events, activities to seniors who do not have access to the internet
• Better parking for seniors at events and activities
• Need volunteer opportunities and intergenerational activities
• Lack of transportation leads to less mobility and more social isolation
• Increase activities geared towards older adults
• Information for resources, events, and activities should be more easily accessible to find and there is no centralized place to find the information

We Have...

• There are many resources such as Meals on Wheels, food banks, Life Message, Veterans Resource and Outreach Center, various clubs, Senior Advisory Board, Youth Advisory Council, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, City Citizen’s Academy, and Senior Citizens of Rowlett organization, as well as a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission
• The Rowlett Community Centre offers many programs, events, and activities geared towards our older population that are free or very low cost
• The Rowlett Public Library offers ongoing technology education on computers and cell phones, and also offers a WiFi hot spot program
We Have...

- The City regularly communicates in a variety of platforms: a weekly City newsletter, monthly Mayor’s Spotlight newsletter, Rowlett Television Network Cable Channel, Lakeside Leisure, Rowlett.com – the City website, Community Centre monthly newsletter, A-frame signs placed near major intersections, and on social media. There is even a Facebook page run by a local citizen specifically for seniors - Rowlett Baby Boomers Facebook.

- Senior Advisory Board offers educational seminars and annual Health Fair.

- Rowlett Fire Department offers free wellness checks, fire alarm checks, and holds a Fire Academy.

- There are senior living communities who provide activities for their residents.

- There are volunteer opportunities through Keep Rowlett Beautiful, Life Message, Hand of Hope Food Bank, Boy Scouts, faith-based organizations, schools, the Rowlett Public Library, the Rowlett Animal Shelter, and within City offices.
We Will...

DOMAIN 3: SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION

3.1 Increase visibility of events, activities, and resources

3.1.A IMPROVE THE CITY WEBSITE TO BE MORE USER FRIENDLY

3.1.B CREATE A WEB-BASED PLATFORM WITH A SINGLE ACCESS POINT TO INFORMATION

3.1.C COLLABORATE WITH ORGANIZATIONS IN THE COMMUNITY ON PROMOTING AGE-FRIENDLY EVENTS, SENIOR PROGRAMS, AND RESOURCES

3.1.D IMPROVE AWARENESS OF SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES WITH ORGANIZATIONS IN THE AREA

3.2 Expand awareness of and access to services addressing the needs of socially isolated 60+.

3.2.A EDUCATE RESIDENTS ON HOW TO ACCESS INFORMATION ONLINE

3.2.B INCREASE AWARENESS OF SENIOR SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

3.2.C EXPLORE OPTIONS TO REACH MORE SENIORS WHO ARE ISOLATED

3.3 Offer more activities geared towards older adults

3.3.A OBTAIN FEEDBACK ON SENIOR EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

3.3.B PLAN LOCAL ACTIVITIES TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN TEXAS SENIOR GAMES OR DALLAS GOLDEN GAMES

3.3.C OFFER SENIOR FOCUSED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

3.3.D INCREASE AWARENESS OF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

3.3.E INTRODUCE AND INCORPORATE INTERGENERATIONAL ACTIVITIES
## TRANSPORTATION DOMAIN

**GOAL ONE: ENSURE ALL MODES OF TRANSPORTATION ARE SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL AGES AND ABILITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Action Items</th>
<th>By Whom</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Start By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obtain safety/crime reports for DART Rail and Rowlett Police Department</td>
<td>Speak with Chiefs from respective entities, Consider a Seniors Facebook page</td>
<td>Parks and Recreation Director, DART representative, Stakeholder Committee Members</td>
<td>Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), Rowlett Police Dept, Rowlett Chamber of Commerce, Volunteers in Police Services</td>
<td>Identify unsafe locations and how to improve safety</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify areas within Rowlett that have high accident ratings</td>
<td>Research possible options to improve safety in high traffic areas</td>
<td>Stakeholder Committee Members</td>
<td>DART police, Rowlett Police Dept, Volunteers in Police Services</td>
<td>Document the findings and feasibility</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore ideas of implementing a public safety app</td>
<td>Research opportunities to implement an app for all users</td>
<td>Stakeholder Committee Members, Senior Program Coordinator</td>
<td>Rowlett IT Dept, Rowlett Public Information Office, Parks and Recreation Dept</td>
<td>Present findings to necessary city departments and document the outcome</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve maintenance of trails and sidewalks within the city</td>
<td>Maintain existing trails and associated amenities at a high level of quality and safety</td>
<td>Parks and Recreation Dept, Public Works Dept</td>
<td>Engineering Landscape Architects</td>
<td>Ratings of trails and sidewalk conditions</td>
<td>Year 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TRANSPORTATION DOMAIN

### GOAL TWO: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION REGARDING TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Educate residents on how to access information online for transportation</td>
<td>Develop a “how to” sheet, provide information at seminars, health fairs, community boards</td>
<td>Stakeholder Committee Members, Senior Advisory Board, Parks and Recreation Dept</td>
<td>SCOR, Rowlett Seniors Facebook Page, Rowlett Baby Boomers Facebook Page</td>
<td>List and identify the number of activities where the “how to” sheet was distributed</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase public awareness of trails, sidewalks, and methods of transportation and resources</td>
<td>2a. Provide information at senior Health fair, community boards, social media</td>
<td>Senior Advisory Board, City Staff, Parks and Recreation Special Events and Marketing Coordinator</td>
<td>Community Organizations, Senior Housing Communities, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Homeowner’s Associations, DART</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2b. Develop a yearly calendar to identify educational opportunities on transportation resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2a. Record date of events, number of vendors, number of participants, number of workshops</td>
<td>2a. Yr 1, 2b. Yr 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2c. Contact churches and adult living facilities to identify specific transportation services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2b. Provide copies of the calendar</td>
<td>2c. Yr 2, 2d. Yr 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2d. Create a directory or web page or Facebook page listing available transportation options</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2c. Provide the number of contacts made</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and develop a master list of organizations to build partnerships</td>
<td>3a. Contact with local organizations to identify educational opportunities</td>
<td>Stakeholder Committee Members, Senior Programmer</td>
<td>Churches, Local Businesses, Regional Area Service Providers, SCOR, Community Organizations Active in Disaster</td>
<td>3a. Provide the number of businesses engaged</td>
<td>3a. Yr 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3b. Contact the Chamber of Commerce and local support agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3b. Make an information packet</td>
<td>3b. Yr 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TRANSPORTATION DOMAIN

### GOAL THREE: ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO UTILIZE ALL FORMS OF TRANSPORTATION

<table>
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</table>
| Identify barriers that prevent users from utilizing transportation safely | Obtain safety report numbers from DART Police and the Rowlett Police Department  
Host a town hall meeting to collect information on transportation barriers  
Analyze the list of barriers | Parks and Recreation Dept  
Senior Advisory Board | DART Police  
Rowlett Police Dept | List barriers and present to appropriate entity organizations to identify solutions | Year 4 |
| Begin a new connected Rowlett program to link Parks and Recreation destinations and improve multi-model accommodations within the city | Within the program, provide a focus on sidewalks, which will provide new pedestrian and bicycle connections from residential neighborhoods to parks and recreation destinations | Parks and Recreation Dept  
Public Works Engineering | Planning and Project Consultants | List new trail designs and completion dates. Identify the ways this was marketed | Year 1 |
## Goal One: Promote and Encourage the Development of Diverse Housing Options that are Available and Affordable for Seniors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research accommodations and/or universal design that is best for diverse housing for seniors</td>
<td>Speak with builders and universal housing designers</td>
<td>Parks &amp; Recreation Assistant Director, Senior Program Coordinator, Senior Advisory Board</td>
<td>City Planners, Local builders and contractors</td>
<td>Document the research results, Create a list of best practices for building a senior friendly house</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with potential developers about the inclusion of affordable and accommodating housing for seniors</td>
<td>Create best practices check list and script of information to provide to developers</td>
<td>Stakeholder Committee Members, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director</td>
<td>Rowlett Neighborhood Planning</td>
<td>Use the list as a resource or provide when speaking with new housing developers</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research types of incentives available for developers to include diverse housing options</td>
<td>Identify types of incentives available for developers that City staff can promote</td>
<td>Senior Advisory Board, Stakeholder Committee Members</td>
<td>Rowlett’s Economic Development Dept, Rowlett Neighborhood Planning</td>
<td>Create a list of available options and incentives</td>
<td>Year 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Housing Domain

### Goal Two: Increase Awareness of Supports and Services That Help Older Adults Stay in Their Homes

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify ways to bring awareness of the resources available to seniors on existing housing</td>
<td>Develop a “how to” sheet for researching house resources online; Provide information at seminars, health fairs, community boards, City facilities</td>
<td>Senior Advisory Board</td>
<td>Senior social media outlets; City facilities; Organizations often visited by seniors; Senior housing communities</td>
<td>Distribute “how to” sheet; Record the number of activities and locations where the information was provided</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
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</table>

Increase awareness of available home modifications

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase awareness of available home modifications</td>
<td>Hold a Senior Resource Fair</td>
<td>Senior Advisory Board; City staff</td>
<td>Community Organizations</td>
<td>Record date of the fair, number of vendors, number of participants, number of workshops</td>
<td>Year 3</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### GOAL THREE: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION REGARDING AVAILABLE HOUSING AND HOUSING RESOURCES

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<tr>
<td>Create website or senior media page listing resources and educational opportunities</td>
<td>Work with other AARP Domain Teams to coordinate a web page for seniors to find information and resources</td>
<td>Senior Program Coordinator&lt;br&gt;Senior Advisory Board</td>
<td>Rowlett IT Department&lt;br&gt;Rowlett Communications Team</td>
<td>Publish the web page and track number of users</td>
<td>Year 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold programs and fairs specific to education on housing topics</td>
<td>Provide free classes and/or seminars&lt;br&gt;Hold Senior Resource Fair</td>
<td>Senior Program Coordinator&lt;br&gt;Senior Advisory Board</td>
<td>Parks and Recreation Dept&lt;br&gt;Organizations and businesses in Rowlett</td>
<td>Record date of programs, fairs and events that address housing</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a master list of resources available to assist seniors with housing matters</td>
<td>Identify and list existing locations and types of senior housing&lt;br&gt;Create a document that is a “one stop shop” listing options for housing – realtors that specialize in seniors – whether moving, buying, or selling, tax incentives or breaks, etc.</td>
<td>Parks and Recreation Assistant Director&lt;br&gt;Senior Advisory Board</td>
<td>Senior Housing communities&lt;br&gt;Local Realtors&lt;br&gt;Local Builders and contractors that can modify existing housing&lt;br&gt;Volunteer organizations and churches&lt;br&gt;Dallas Housing Authority</td>
<td>Create and provide a document to be shared in hard copy form or online for distribution to seniors and organizations.</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
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</table>
### SOCIAL PARTICIPATION & INCLUSION DOMAIN

#### GOAL ONE: INCREASE VISIBILITY OF EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, AND RESOURCES

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<tr>
<td>Improve the City website to be more user friendly</td>
<td>Speak with city Community Relations Manager</td>
<td>Parks &amp; Recreation Administrative Assistant, Senior Program Coordinator, Parks &amp; Recreation Marketing Coordinator</td>
<td>SCOR Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission</td>
<td>Implement recommendations to the city website</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborate with Rowlett Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission</td>
<td>Senior Advisory Board, Rowlett Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Document the outcome</td>
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<td>Consider creating a Seniors Facebook page</td>
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<td>Create a web-based platform with a single access point to information</td>
<td>Research possible options to include benefits for having a web portal or platform, cost, management of a portal</td>
<td>Stakeholder Committee Members</td>
<td>Other cities who use web portal SCOR</td>
<td>Document the findings and feasibility to publish the web platform</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
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<td>Rowlett IT Dept</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborate with organizations in the community on promoting age-friendly events, senior programs, and resources</td>
<td>3a. Distribute Rowlett Community Centre senior newsletter at community bulletin boards</td>
<td>SCOR Community Businesses</td>
<td>3a. Create a list of the various places that have community bulletin boards</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
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<td>3b. Develop a communication streamline to senior living communities and other organizations who serve seniors</td>
<td>Public Library and Parks &amp; Recreation Dept</td>
<td>3b. Establish rapport with the different senior living communities and determine if the living communities have space for activities/programs/events and document</td>
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<td>3c. Submit senior information through various avenues</td>
<td>Food Banks Life Message/Veterans Resource Center</td>
<td>3c. Create a list of the various outreach options</td>
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<td>Faith based organizations</td>
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<td>Rowlett Baby Boomers and Seniors Facebook pages</td>
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<td>Seniors Blue Book</td>
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<td>Senior Living Communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve awareness of social opportunities with organizations in the area</td>
<td>4a. Identify various organizations seniors can join</td>
<td>Stakeholder Committee Members</td>
<td>SCOR Garland Area Service Providers</td>
<td>Provide the social opportunities on the city website and in newsletters</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4b. Research to implement a Meet Up Group so seniors can receive notifications</td>
<td>Rowlett Chamber of Commerce</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SCOR</td>
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# SOCIAL PARTICIPATION & INCLUSION DOMAIN

## GOAL TWO: EXPAND AWARENESS OF AND ACCESS TO SERVICES ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF SOCIALLY ISOLATED 60+.

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Educate residents on how to access information online</td>
<td>Develop a “how to” sheet, Provide information at seminars, health fair, community boards</td>
<td>Rowlett Public Library, Senior Advisory Board</td>
<td>SCOR Rowlett Seniors Facebook page, Rowlett Baby Boomers Facebook page</td>
<td>List and identify the number of activities where the “how to” sheet was distributed</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase awareness of senior service organizations</td>
<td>Hold a Senior Resource Fair</td>
<td>Senior Advisory Board, City staff</td>
<td>Community Organizations</td>
<td>Record date of the fair, number of vendors, number of participants, number of workshops</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reach more seniors who are isolated</td>
<td>Contact faith organizations to identify those isolated, Research senior forums and chat rooms that are available</td>
<td>Stakeholder Committee Members, Parks &amp; Recreation Administrative Assistant, Senior Advisory Board</td>
<td>Faith based organizations Meal on Wheels, Garland Area Service Providers, SCOR Rowlett Neighborhood Planning, Visiting Nurses Association, Senior Housing Communities, Texas Recreation and Parks Society</td>
<td>3a. Create a list of the number of organizations and communities engaged to reach those isolated. 3b. Develop an informational packet to provide to the interested organizations and communities willing to reach out to those isolated</td>
<td>3a. Yr 2, 3b. Yr 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</table>
| Obtain feedback on senior events and activities | Obtain feedback on senior events and activities. 1a. Create a survey to ask users about senior events and activities. 1b. Create an online feedback system. | Senior Program Coordinator       | Senior centers and senior living communities       | Collect the survey results and implement at least one new event | 1a. Yr 2  
|                                               |                                                                              | Senior Advisory Board            |                                                    | 1b. Yr 3                                                 |           |
| Plan local activities to encourage participation in Texas Senior Games or Dallas Golden Games | Research participating with Texas Senior Games or Dallas Golden Games. | Senior Program Coordinator       | City of Dallas, City of San Antonio, Neighboring cities | Findings will be reported to Parks & Recreation management to decide whether to seek the interest in participation and document | Year 4    |
| Offer senior focused educational opportunities | Provide free classes and/or seminars. | Senior Advisory Board, Rowlett Public Library, Life Message | Senior Living Communities, Dallas College Education, Local churches | Provide number of classes and seminars offered. | Year 1    |
| Increase awareness of volunteer opportunities | 4a. Promote programs that provide opportunities for older adults. 4b. Reach out to the school district about highlighting volunteerism in both directions. 4c. Make information available on GED tutor opportunities, Boy & Girl Scouts. | 4a. City Staff, 4b. GISD/ and Senior Program Coordinator, 4c. Boy Scouts and Girl scouts | 4a. VIPS, CERT, Citizens Fire Academy, Citizens Police Academy, Citizens City Academy, Keep Rowlett Beautiful, Life Message, local churches, and food banks, 4b. Garland Independent School District, 4c. Rowlett Library, Boy & Girl Scouts. | 4a. Provide number of volunteer opportunities and number of senior participants, 4b. Create a sustainable volunteer partnership between Rowlett High school and the seniors at the RCC, 4c. Increase number of seniors volunteering at Library. | Year 2    |
| Introduce and Incorporate Intergenerational Activities | 5a. Speak with Youth Advisory Council to discuss activity or event ideas. 5b. Research new programs or activities. | Senior Program Coordinator, Senior Program Coordinator | Various organizations and clubs, Garland Independent School District. | 5a. Identify and list suggestions, incorporate one activity or event, 5b. Implement at least one program or activity. | 5a. Yr 1  
|                                               |                                                                              | Garlands Independent School District |                                                    | 5b. Yr 3                                                 |           |
The implementation phase of this plan will occur from 2022-2025. The role of City staff and identified partners will be key to tracking the metrics and helping with the implementation of this plan. City staff will continue to communicate with domain committee members, as well as key partners to obtain data to measure success of the Action Plan. The committees meet quarterly, as well as provide regular updates to the Senior Advisory Board. The City of Rowlett will submit a progress report to AARP in the fifth year. An annual progress report will be delivered to the City Manager’s Office. One main focus is to keep the Rowlett Livable Communities Network Action Plan aligned with the City of Rowlett’s Strategic Plan.
1. United States Census Bureau – Rowlett population; age reports in Americacensus.gov, June 2019-2020

2. AARP online website and the Livability Index. AARP.org/livablecommunities/network

3. World Health Organization Global Network Age-Friendly Cities and Communities website https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/network

4. City of Rowlett website

5. Consumer Affairs 2021

6. City of Rowlett Strategic Plan

7. City of Rowlett Parks and Recreation and Trails Master Plan