



State: Florida
Community Name: Collier County
Population Size: 384902

Percentage of Residents Above Age 60: 36

Community Structure: County

Other:
Community Type: Mixed

Elected Official Signing the Letter of Commitment

Name: Burt L. Saunders
Title: Chairman, County Commissioners

Office Mailing Address: 3299 Tamiami Trail East, Suite 303 Naples, FL 34112

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Role: Ms. Wilkinson is the current President and Chair for the Leadership Coalition on Aging in Collier County, FL. Ms. Wilkinson has been a nurse serving the elderly for more than 30 years. She currently owns and operates Shifting Sands Adult Day Center and Home Care. Actively involved with the Leadership Coalition on Aging she believes strongly in advocating for the elderly and a community that supports aging in a friendly and supportive environment. With the support of LCA and the Leadership's Steering Committee Ms. Wilkinson will work closely with elected officials, government offices, and community resources to create and support initiatives, policies, and programs that will come together to form an age friendly community that Collier County can be proud of.

Older Adult Involvement: Collier County and LCA will move forward with the age-friendly initiative by encouraging community input and participation in a variety of forums that will include surveys, small group sessions, and active involvement in committees that will be formed to initiate planning, development of our action plan, implementation of all new changes, programs and resources, and review for ongoing development and growth in the future. Our older adults will be key in this process. Who better to help us understand the services and programs they need or would love to have access to? Who better to help us identify the areas we need to improve upon? Who better to

look around our community and tell us the areas they do not have access to or have difficulty accessing? Who better to add insight, experience, and passion to our initiative than the very individuals that we want the age-friendly community to support? Each step we take in our process will require input and involvement from our older adults. We need to allow them to be a voice for their concerns, keep our vision focused and realistic, and become a part of the working group that will make our age-friendly community possible. The older adult will bring value, integrity, and dialogue that would never be possible without them. Collier County will need to listen to our older adults, encourage them to get involved in the process, be a voice in their community, and allow them to be a big part in making their community better.

**Increasing
Collaboration and
Coordination:**

Collier County has always valued older adults, we are a community that continues to grow and thrive because of these individuals. Look around and you will see a variety of agencies and community offices that are constantly developing or growing programs and services that support our older adults. Collier County does not lack the passion or initiative however, we do need to improve upon collaboration. The Leadership Coalition on Aging was formed with exactly this concept in mind. Our goal was to bring together a group of professional individuals and organizations that were each working in their own way to improve the lives of older adults and then collaborate and join efforts to make a bigger difference with more impact. While we have made great strides, we believe there is always more to accomplish, and there will always be areas to improve upon. As a community we need to build on what we have started, and we need to encourage and increase community involvement. Becoming an age-friendly community is the next step. It will give us a template to follow and identify areas that we had previously not thought of or addressed. We also believe this initiative will create a new excitement within our community that encourages our elected officials, other community agencies, and organizations to join our efforts in a united and focused forum. We look forward to new points of view, new insight, and the offering of new and exciting suggestions and solutions for creating the best age-friendly community possible.

**AARP Team
Member Contact
Info:
Most Instructive
Area of Work:**

Laura Cantwell- Associate State Director of Advocacy & Outreach
AARP Florida lcantwell@aarp.org

Collier County has always been committed to being a community that was age friendly. 36% of our population are individuals that are 60 and older. These individuals are residents of Collier County, however, each year we are greeted with an influx of snowbirds that pushes that number well over 50% for several months out of the year. We have become a desirable community for the older adult to vacation to, live part time, or retire to on a permanent basis. Our commitment to the older adult, the resources they need, and the activities that bring them back to us each year is exceptional. We have learned to create and build a coalition that supports these individuals and works tirelessly to improve upon their quality of life.

We would love to share our experiences and collaborate with others within the network.

Optional

Resolution:

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Logo or Image:

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Website:

lcacollier.org

Twitter 2:

NA

Facebook 1:

Leadership Coalition on Aging--Collier County

Facebook 2:

Shifting Sands Adult Day Center

**Additional Social
Media:**