

Michigan *Community for a Lifetime*

Elder Friendly Community Recognition Application

Developed for the Michigan Commission on Services to the Aging

By:
State Advisory Council on Aging
Michigan Office of Services to the Aging
Michigan Department of Community Health

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The Michigan *Community for a Lifetime* application includes ten categories of assets that play a significant role in creating elder friendly communities:

- Walkability
- Supportive community systems
- Access to Health Care
- Safety and Security
- Housing: Availability and Affordability
- Housing: Modification and Maintenance
- Transportation
- Commerce
- Enrichment
- Inclusion

Each section includes questions to help direct community discussion and information gathering. In addition, in your toolkit you'll find links to supportive information, if it is available, that will aid in your discussion.

The questions were compiled from various assessments and research on Elder Friendly and livable communities. They are based on research and on the recommendations of various local and national leaders and researchers. They are regularly reviewed and updated based on new information and on input from participating communities.

The application will not be something that can be completed in one meeting. It will require some information gathering, some community discussion, and some judgment. Tools are available in your toolkit to assist with that process. As a community completes the application it will naturally lead to the identification of action steps.

As items are placed on the action plan, the *Community for a Lifetime* Toolkit will provide information on resources, best practices, and additional information that you can use to help you implement your local projects.

It is a simple matter to apply by submitting the completed application and other supporting materials identified during the process.

Communities of all sizes can benefit from completing the assessment and becoming a *Community for a Lifetime*. In order to ensure fairness, accommodations are made in the recognition process for smaller communities that choose to participate.

Congratulations on taking this step to becoming a recognized Michigan *Community for a Lifetime*.

The *Community for a Lifetime* Goals

In a *Community for a Lifetime* walking is a practical, viable option for seniors.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* the physical environment is designed and maintained in a way that is sensitive to the needs of seniors.

A *Community for a Lifetime* has barrier-free multi-purpose trails and walking paths that can be used easily by seniors.

A *Community for a Lifetime* has people, structures and processes in place for assessing current conditions, planning for improvements, and evaluating progress in accomplishing them.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* residents have access to and assistance using current technology.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* emergency assistance with basic needs is available.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* seniors have easy access to information and can easily get connected to services if they have a specific need.

A *Community for a Lifetime* promotes good health for all its seniors.

Seniors in a *Community for a Lifetime* have access to quality medical services.

A *Community for a Lifetime* helps seniors remain independent as long as possible.

A *Community for a Lifetime* makes the safety and security of residents a priority.

A *Community for a Lifetime* has a variety of housing options for older adults with different physical, social and/or financial status.

Housing in a *Community for a Lifetime* is affordable in relation to household income.

Zoning regulations in a *Community for a Lifetime* support the flexible needs of seniors.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* seniors have access to services for making home modifications that are needed as they age. (Services are available at reduced cost for those with limited incomes.)

The *Community for a Lifetime* Goals

In a *Community for a Lifetime* seniors have access to home maintenance services necessary to keep their property functional and attractive. (Services are available at reduced cost for those with limited incomes.)

In a *Community for a Lifetime* affordable transportation is available that riders find convenient, safe and dependable for getting to common travel destinations. (Accommodations are made for people of limited income.)

Seniors in a *Community for a Lifetime* have several transportation options nearby for out-of-town travel.

The businesses in a *Community for a Lifetime* accommodate needs and product choices of older customers.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* there are a wide variety of activities that are attractive, affordable and accessible to seniors regardless of financial abilities.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* seniors are valued and respected.

Community for a Lifetime
2006 Application

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GOALS:

In a *Community for a Lifetime* walking is a practical, viable option for seniors.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* the physical environment is designed and maintained in a way that is sensitive to the needs of seniors.

A *Community for a Lifetime* has barrier-free multi-purpose trails and walking paths that can be used easily by seniors.

PURPOSE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Many communities are beginning to realize that sidewalks, bike paths and crosswalks are not just ‘extras,’ but essential investments in the health and safety of their residents. Making sure our neighborhoods provide opportunities for everyone to be safely active, not only enriches quality of life but also improves health and increases longevity. In addition, steps taken to improve the environment for older adults are beneficial to others as well. For example, making sidewalks safe and accessible helps people in wheelchairs, parents pushing strollers, and young children walk to school, as well as older adults. Increased foot traffic can boost sales at local retail businesses, and there is evidence that property values increase in communities where residents are able to walk and bike easily.

(Source: Creating Communities for Active Aging, NHTSA)

Sidewalks

1. Does your community have a walkability plan?

Yes *(required)* No

2. Does your community have an inventory of existing sidewalk locations and conditions?

Yes No

The sidewalk inventory will be needed for completing the remaining questions in this section of the walkability assessment. If your community has an inventory completed you should get a copy. If your community does not have a sidewalk inventory you can work with your public works personnel to create one.

3. Reviewing the existing sidewalk locations and conditions against known high pedestrian traffic areas:

3a. Are the sidewalks in the known high pedestrian areas complete?

None Some Half Most

3b. Identify gaps in the sidewalk system in known high pedestrian areas:

3c. Are the sidewalks in known high pedestrian areas in good condition?

None Some
Half Most

3d. Identify existing condition problems in known high pedestrian areas:

You may want to schedule a walking tour of known high pedestrian areas and make notes on what you experience.



IMPORTANCE OF SIDEWALKS:

Improved crosswalks and sidewalks for older pedestrians tend to benefit other groups like parents with strollers and persons in wheelchairs. In fact, many of the strategies listed here are likely to boost safe biking and walking among all generations.

(Source: Creating Communities for Active Aging, NHTSA)

3e. Are there multiple known high pedestrian areas that could be linked with additions to the sidewalk system?

Yes No

Identify the links:

3f. Are there places pedestrians would like to walk if there were sidewalks available?

Yes No

Identify the places:

3g. Do sidewalks have curb cuts at all intersections? ^(PAC)

None Some

Half Most

Which intersections need curb cuts?

3h. Are all new or improved sidewalks required to be ADA compliant?

Yes No

3i. Are residential facilities targeted to seniors required to have sidewalks?

Yes No



The recently passed Transportation bill includes \$612 million for Safe Routes to School, a program to improve the safety and participation of youth in walking and biking to school. Perhaps there are opportunities to improve intergenerational areas that can benefit both youth and seniors.



ADA GUIDELINES:

Current standards dictate that minimum clear width needs to be 36" and minimum passing space needs to be 60". If the sidewalk is less than 60", then 60" by 60" passing spaces need to be located at intervals not to exceed 200 feet.

(Source: ADA Accessibility Guidelines - Americans with Disabilities Act Handbook, October, 1991)

3j. Are residential facilities targeted to seniors required to be built in locations where walkability is easy?

Yes No

3k. During road and sidewalk repair, are physical accommodations and signs used to keep pedestrians safe?

Yes No

3l. Are sidewalk obstructions that would interfere with walking or wheel chair use, such as signs, vending machines and trash receptacles, placed out of the path of pedestrians?^(PAC)

None Some Half Most

4. Can all major streets in known high pedestrian areas be crossed easily and safely?

None Some Half Most

(Discussion on this issue should consider how needs differ as seniors become older.)

4a. Which streets are cause for concern?

4b. Are traffic light times long enough for seniors to cross?^(LC M)

None Some Half Most

(There may be some locations where this is especially critical: e.g. near senior living centers.)
Which lights need adjusted?

4c. Are there safety islands on extra wide street crossings?

None Some Half Most

Not applicable

Where would safety islands make sense?

4d. Are crosswalks marked?

None Some Half Most

What crosswalks in known high pedestrian areas are not marked?

4e. Is the speed limit appropriate?

Yes No

Identify streets where cars travel too fast:

4f. Is the speed limit enforced? ^(LC M)

Regularly Occasionally Seldom

What steps would be needed to increase enforcement?



**IMPORTANCE OF
TRAFFIC CALMING:**

Roundabouts, curb bulb-outs, and speed humps are all forms of traffic calming which offer promise if properly applied to curb speeding and some forms of aggressive driving. Pedestrians especially benefit from traffic calming. Traffic calming which employs physical changes to the roadway, signage or operation changes, can be thought of as a "silent policeman" enforcing speed limits where no law enforcement are present.

4g. Are there mid-block crosswalks or pedestrian traffic signals on long streets with no intersections? ^(LC)

Yes No Not applicable

Identify any needed mid-block crosswalks or pedestrian traffic signals needed:

5. Are there “pedestrian routes” identified between major residential areas and typical destinations?

Yes	No
-----	----

If No, create a map identifying known pedestrian routes.



IMPORTANCE OF PEDESTRIAN ROUTES:

Although many people are busy, they will walk to do errands if paths connect homes and offices with shopping, restaurants, and services. Active communities not only provide places for walking, they connect destinations and make it easier to fit walking into hectic schedules.

5a. Benches are provided at regular intervals along “pedestrian routes” to allow people with physical limitations to rest? ^(PAC)

None	Some
Half	Most

Where would benches be helpful for seniors? ^(PAC)

5b. There is a community plan for planting trees for shade along pedestrian routes?

Yes	No
-----	----

If No, who could take responsibility for creating a plan?



IMPORTANCE OF LIGHTING:

People tend to walk and bike where they have pleasant and safe places to do so. Trees, adequate street lighting, and trash removal do make a difference. *(Source: Creating Communities for Active Aging, NHTSA)*

6. Is there adequate lighting along sidewalks for pedestrians to be and feel safe? ^(LC M)

None	Some
Half	Most

Where is lighting limited?

7. Snow is a reality in Michigan. Is it handled safely:

7a. Are sidewalks placed far enough back from roadways to allow space for snow storage?

None Some Half Most

7b. Does the community require new and improved sidewalks be placed far enough back from roadways to allow space for snow storage? ^(PAC M)

Yes No

7c. Does the community have a snow removal ordinance? ^(PAC M)

Yes No

7d. Is it enforced? ^(PAC)

Regularly Occasionally Seldom

7e. Are locations where indoor walking can take place – schools and colleges/Universities, recreation centers, shopping malls – open for community walkers? ^(PAC)

None Some Half Most

What locations are currently open or could be open:

Trails

8. Abandoned railroad beds and/or utility corridors (where present) make excellent walking trails

8a. Have abandoned railroad beds and/or utility corridors in your community been converted to walking/bicycling trails?

None Some Not applicable
Half Most

Identify any potential trail routes that exist:

8b. How many miles of shared use paths and/or multi-use recreational trails are available in your community? (This does not include sidewalks.) ^(PAC)

Miles _____



IMPORTANCE OF TRAILS:

Trails can sometimes be used as a way to link disconnected neighborhoods and commerce centers. The Transportation Bill just passed contains \$370 million for trails.

GOALS

A *Community for a Lifetime* has people, structures and processes in place for assessing current conditions, planning for improvements, and evaluating progress in accomplishing them.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* residents have access to and assistance using current technology.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* emergency assistance with basic needs is available.

In a *Community for a Lifetime* seniors have easy access to information and can easily get connected to services if they have a specific need.

PURPOSE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

A community that is Elder Friendly is willing to work at it. There is a *Community for a Lifetime* Leadership Team that works to assess the situation, identify areas for improvement or causes for celebration, and then identify and encourage the necessary action. The Leadership Team has support from the official political bodies within the community. Residents are aware of what the Leadership Team is doing and join in sharing their ideas and input. The Leadership Team meets regularly to evaluate progress and plan next steps. They communicate regularly with the community.

The planning processes and documents of a *Community for a Lifetime* recognize and accommodate the needs of seniors.

Today's seniors demand and use the latest technology. In a *Community for a Lifetime* they have access to current technology, e.g.: cell phones, multi-channel television

A *Community for a Lifetime* has systems in place to support any senior who should need assistance with basic necessities, e.g.: food, shelter, utilities

Supportive Community Systems

Support for *Community for a Lifetime*

1. A local *Community for a Lifetime* Leadership Team has been established or an existing Team has taken responsibility for leadership of the *Community for a Lifetime* application process?

Yes *(required)* No

If Yes, who is the Team Leader?

Name:

Title:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

-
2. Are at least 25% of the Leadership Team seniors?

Yes *(required)* No

-
3. The Leadership Team has staff support to assist with meeting arrangements, Team notification, minutes, information gathering, and associated tasks?

Yes *(required)* No

-
- 3a. If Yes, approximately how many hours a week?

-
- 3b. If yes, please provide the following information about staff people:

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

If more than two people, please add a sheet for additional staff members.

Supportive Community Systems

4. Has the governing body passed a resolution supporting the *Community for a Lifetime* process and the *Community for a Lifetime* Leadership Team?

Yes No

Attach a copy of the resolution, or, if more than one political jurisdiction impacts your project, attach multiple resolutions.

5. The *Community for a Lifetime* Leadership Team has adopted an action plan for making Elder Friendly improvements?

Yes (*required*) No

If Yes, please attach a copy of the plan.

6. The community's operating budget includes funding to support improvements that support the *Community for a Lifetime* process?

Yes No

If Yes, please identify government unit and what the funding is for and the amount.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

If more than three items, please attach additional sheet

7. The community has passed a senior millage?

Yes No

Millage amount:

Expiration:

Major uses:

8. The *Community for a Lifetime* Leadership Team has established mechanisms for regular communication with the public?

Yes No

If Yes, please describe:

Supportive Community Systems

9. The *Community for a Lifetime* Leadership Team provides regular opportunities for public input into their plans and actions?

Yes

No

10. The community has a leadership development program for seniors that helps them learn skills and tools that enable them to participate more effectively as leaders within the community?

Yes

No

Technology Infrastructure

11. Is cell phone coverage available in all parts of the community?

Yes

No

If No, describe the locations where cell phone coverage is not available:

Describe plans for full coverage:

12. Multi-channel television is available in all parts of the community?

Yes

No

If No, plans for full coverage:

13. High-speed internet access is available in all parts of the community?

Yes

No

If No, plans for full coverage:

Supportive Community Systems

14. The community has a web site, where important community information is posted, including information about the *Community for a Lifetime* project?

Yes No

If Yes, what is the address of the web site:

15. Public Wireless Internet access (WiFi or WiMAX) is available in the community?

Yes No

If Yes, describe the locations:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

If more than three, please add a sheet for additional locations.

Assistance Services

16. The community has a home delivered meals program e.g. “Meals on Wheels?” ^(LC)

Yes No

17. The community has a directory of services available to seniors in need? ^(LC)

Yes No

If Yes, please include a copy with the application.

18. The community has a central phone number that people can call when they need assistance but don't know where to turn? ^(LC)

Yes *(required)* No

If Yes,

18a. Is the number answered 24 hours a day/7 days a week?

Yes No

18b. Is the number promoted throughout the community?

Yes No

Supportive Community Systems

18c. Is there a process for follow-up with people who call to make sure they got connected with the appropriate group or organization?

Yes

No

19. The utility company (or companies) serving your community has a program to notify a third party in case of impending utility shut-off? ^(LO)

Yes

No

If Yes, list the companies that offer this service:

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
-

20. The community has a process for providing residents with assistance with basic needs in emergency situations?

Yes

No

If Yes, how many people were served in the last year?

GOALS

A Community for a Lifetime promotes good health for all its seniors.

Seniors in a *Community for a Lifetime* have access to quality medical services.

A Community for a Lifetime helps seniors remain independent as long as possible.

PURPOSE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

As we age it becomes necessary that we have access to quality health care. Quality health care can be defined as adequate, available and affordable and items such as transportation, social networks, and insurance are just a few things that can impact that access and determine where seniors chose to live. By creating communities that allow residents access to hospitals, quality healthcare professionals, pharmacies and medical supply offices, we are allowing residents to age in their homes thereby reducing the need to move into an assisted living facility as well as maintaining the social networks and support that individuals have already established. Strong social networks often times will provide respite for caregivers for those individuals that have been able to age in their homes as well as decrease depression and increase quality of life.

Wellness

1. Health fairs that provide information and screenings for seniors are provided on a regular basis?

Yes No

2. Health education programs are presented on topics important to seniors?

Yes No

3. All senior centers and nutrition sites offer exercise programs on an on-going basis?

Yes No
(Programs should be relevant to the audience served)

4. Low cost physical activity programs specifically designed for seniors are easily accessible?

Yes No
(Programs should be relevant to the audience served)

5. Preventative immunizations such as, influenza, pneumonia and various screenings such as, blood pressure, hearing, vision, PSA, bone density, mammogram are available within the community?

Yes No

6. Programs are available for seniors on depression, grief and bereavement, and alcohol and substance abuse?

Yes No

Professional Medical Care

7. Does your community have a hospital or medical center within 30 minutes of most people? ^(LC M)

Yes *(required)* No

If No, what is the distance to the nearest hospital or medical center?

If Yes, does it have an emergency room?

Yes *(required)* No

8. Does the number of primary care physicians within 30 minutes of most residents equal or exceed the national average of 1,325 persons per physician (1,810 in rural areas) ?

Yes *(required)* No

9. Are mental health counselors available within 30 minutes of most residents?

Yes (*required*) No

10. Is there a minor emergency care center available within 30 minutes of most residents?

Yes No

11. Diagnostic services such as, x-ray, hearing, vision are available within 30 minutes for most residents?

Yes (*required*) No

12. Mobile medical services such as x-ray and blood drawing are available to residents in the community?

Yes No

13. Specialty treatment services such as dialysis, physical therapy, respiratory therapists and occupational therapy are available within 30 minutes of most residents?

Yes No

14. Accessible medical supply and oxygen supply vendors are located/or deliver within the community?

Yes No

15. Emergency responders have been trained to be sensitive to the needs of older adults?

None Some Half Most

16. The community has a pharmacy that is accessible 24 hours a day/seven days a week?

Yes (*required*) No

17. The pharmacy delivers?

Yes No

18. Home health care services are available with no waiting list?

Yes No

19. Hospice care is available within thirty minutes of most residents?

Yes No

20. There is one dentist per 2500 people within 30 minutes of most people in your community?

Yes (*required*) No

Caregiver Services

21. Caregiver education and support groups are available?

Yes No

22. A system is in place to inform caregivers about available support services?

Yes No

23. The religious community supports and participates in the senior care network?

Yes No

GOALS

A Community for a Lifetime makes the safety and security of residents a priority.

PURPOSE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Safety and security are important as they impact the daily lives of all residents within a community and can be broken into two categories: community and home safety. Community safety encompasses items such as pedestrian routes, crime, and vehicular routes. Home safety includes items such as home security and fall prevention. In order to create an environment in which a person can live a lifetime, programs and infrastructure need to exist that enable this. Home safety projects which include safety audits both by public safety officials and builders are important as they allow residents to remain in their homes for a much longer period of time. Community safety such as neighborhood watch and safe pedestrian routes allows individuals the independence to remain within in their community without having to rely on others for all of their needs.

Public Safety

1. Would seniors say they feel safe living in your community?

None Some Half Most
(Will the response differ based on the age of the respondent?)

2. Law enforcement employees receive training on how to be sensitive to the changing needs of seniors as they age?

None Some Half Most

3. Law enforcement is visible in the community?

Yes *(required)* No

4. Does your community have a “neighborhood watch” program?

Yes No

Are there neighborhoods where it is needed and not available?

Yes No

Identify:

5. Fire department employees receive training on how to be sensitive to the needs of senior?

None Some Half Most

6. There is a system or procedures in place to evaluate the factors behind pedestrian and bicycle injuries caused by crashes with motor vehicles and to recommend needed safety improvements? ^(PAC)

Yes No

Please identify the most recent improvement made as a result of this system:

7. Do local papers in your community stop delivery for short periods of time while people are away? ^(LC)

Yes No

8. Does law enforcement offer a service for checking on residences when owners are gone for extended periods?

Yes No

Personal Safety

9. The criminal justice system in your community, in cooperation with the Department of Human Services, is actively identifying and prosecuting cases of elder abuse?

Yes No

10. A service for checking up on seniors living alone by phone is available?

Yes No

11. There is a formal program in your community for educating seniors about, and protecting them from, fraud?

Yes No

12. All people who provide services to seniors have criminal background checks?

None Some Half Most

13. Is there a "Mail Carrier Alert" type program in your community? ^(LC)

Yes No

14. Does your police department or other appropriate agency have a program to educate the public about personal safety and security? ^(LC)

Yes No

15. Will the police department or other agency in your community do in-home safety checks? ^(LC)

Yes No



Some communities have a program where mail carriers will alert a third party when they notice that an older person living alone does not pick up his or her mail for a few days. Older people register the name of a designated person to be notified if mail is not claimed for a number of days. When the mail carrier notices that an older person's mail is remaining in the box, the carrier contacts the designated contact. That person then investigates. *(Source: AARP)*

16. Smoke detectors and batteries are offered free for seniors, including installation if needed?

Yes No

17. There is a "911" type system for reporting emergencies? ^(LC M)

Yes *(required)* No

18. Emergency cell phones are provided to seniors who need them?

Yes No

19. Driver re-training courses are available?

Yes No

20. Are there street signs at every major intersection in your community? ^(LC)

None Some
Half Most

21. Are street signs large and easy to read? ^(LC)

None Some
Half Most

22. Can street signs be read in the dark?

None Some
Half Most

23. Do the parking lots and parking structures in your community have adequate, clear and well-marked location signs? ^(LC)

None Some Half Most

24. Are parking lots and parking structures well lit? ^(LC)

None Some Half Most

AARP has developed a driver education program, the 55 ALIVE/Mature Driving program, which is completed by about 640,000 older drivers annually. Thirty-four states and the District of Columbia have laws that require insurance premium discounts or reductions in infraction points for older people who take an approved driving course like 55 ALIVE. As people age there are skills they can learn that will help them to be safer drivers. There are also improvements that can be made in the community to make it easier for older drivers to get around. Clearly visible street signs and well-designed and signed parking lots and structures. Effective road marking.

Housing: Availability and Affordability

GOALS

A *Community for a Lifetime* has a variety of housing options for older adults with different physical, social and/or financial status.

Housing in a *Community for a Lifetime* is affordable in relation to household income.

Zoning regulations in a *Community for a Lifetime* support the flexible needs of seniors.

PURPOSE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Like other consumers, seniors want choices in housing that meet their needs. Those needs may change significantly during their senior years. Early on that can mean new construction of a single family home, it can mean downsizing a house or upsizing a cottage, it can mean a condominium or an apartment. Later, it might mean shared housing with a friend or an accessory apartment with a family member. When more support is needed it might mean an assisted living center or a nursing home. In Elder Friendly Communities there is a planned effort to ensure that a variety of housing options are available and affordable. Zoning ordinances allow unrelated adults to share housing, allow adult family care homes, and allow accessory apartments for seniors. Availability and affordability of housing is a regular agenda item for the planning board. New construction is done using the standards of “universal design” to allow for ease of modification as needs change later in life.

Housing: Availability and Affordability

Housing Availability

1. Has your community completed a Community Housing Assessment in the past three years?

Yes *(required)* No

If Yes, please attach a copy to your application.

2. Does it project future housing needs for various populations based on anticipated changes in your community population?

Yes *(required)* No



A housing assessment offers policy-makers, developers, housing agency administrators, and others directly related to housing an overview of the current housing situation in the community. Second, it describes the changes that have occurred in the community's population base and corresponding shifts that resulted in housing stock.

This relationship provides context for forecasting housing needs. Finally, the analysis presents an objective assessment of future housing needs based on a combination of a) historical trends in housing utilization, b) recent trends in housing construction, and c) demand for housing based on population and income shifts. *(Source: North Dakota Statewide Housing Needs Assessment)*

Housing: Availability and Affordability

3. Based on your Community Housing Assessment (or by other means – please describe), what kinds of housing need to be developed to meet the future needs of seniors in your community?

Single-family	Senior living center
Multi-family	Mobile/Modular Homes
Assisted living	Condominiums
Nursing home	Add-on Apartments
Nursing home with dementia care	
Other	

(Discussion on this issue should address how needs differ as seniors become older.)

4. What is the extent to which the building code incorporates the concept of “universal design”?

Entirely	Somewhat
Minimally	Not at all

Zoning

5. The community’s zoning ordinance restricts the housing options available to seniors? ^(PAC)

Yes	No
-----	----

- 5a. List the types of housing restrictions caused by your zoning ordinance: (e.g.: no accessory apartments restrict building density, restrict in-fill development.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Universal Design – the design of products and environments to be usable to all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

1. **Equitable Use:** The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
2. **Flexibility in Use:** The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
3. **Simple and intuitive use:** Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.
4. **Perception Information:** The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities.
5. **Tolerance for error:** The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
6. **Low physical Effort:** The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.
7. **Size and Space for Approach and Use:** Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of the user’s body size, posture, or mobility.

(Source: The Center for Universal Design (1997). The Principles of Universal Design, Version 2.0. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina State University.)

Housing: Availability and Affordability

6. Community regulations (e.g. municipal codes, ordinances, and association bylaws) restrict or prevent housing modifications that older adults need to accommodate their changing physical, mobility and safety needs?

Yes No

7. Community regulations restrict:
-

- 7a. Unrelated persons living together in the same unit?

Yes No

- 7b. Dwelling unit size/square feet per occupant?

Yes No

- 7c. Construction of wheelchair ramps?

Yes No

- 7d. Doorway size of at least 32" wide with swing clear hinges?

Yes No

- 7e. Location of electrical outlets 18" – 48" above the floor?

Yes No

- 7f. Hallway widths at least 42"?

Yes No

8. Community regulations permit mixed land use. This means that retail establishments and community services can be placed within walking distance of residential areas?

Yes No

9. Community regulations permit cluster zoning. This means developers can design neighborhoods that group houses closer together as long as a portion of the development is preserved as open space? ^(PAC)

Yes No

10. Energy efficiency standards must be met in all building and remodeling?

Yes No

Housing: Availability and Affordability

Affordability

11. Would most seniors in your community say their housing expenses are manageable?

Yes

No

What specific concerns about cost would they express?



US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has determined that the percentage of household income spent on housing costs should not exceed 30%.

12. Does cost limit the housing options of seniors in your community?

Yes

No

(Is this true for different housing options people have at different ages?)

13. Are seniors in your community who might need services aware of assistance programs for utilities or other expenses related to housing?

Yes

No

Housing: Modification and Maintenance

GOALS

In a *Community for a Lifetime* seniors have access to services for making home modifications that are needed as they age. (Services are available at reduced cost for those with limited incomes.)

In a *Community for a Lifetime* seniors have access to home maintenance services necessary to keep their property functional and attractive. (Services are available at reduced cost for those with limited incomes.)

PURPOSE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Routine maintenance is a critical part of homeownership. In addition, changing physical capacities may necessitate modifications to existing homes. In a *Community for a Lifetime* there are reputable home repair and modification contractors. Free assessments are available to help residents identify needed repairs and modification opportunities. The community also has a program that ensures that residents of limited financial means are able to get needed repairs and modifications.

Housing: Modification and Maintenance

Home Modification

1. There are an adequate number of licensed contractors who do interior and exterior modifications to homes to accommodate the changing needs of seniors? (e.g.: grab bars, ramps, door handles and locks, thresholds, overhead cabinets)

Yes No

What is the average waiting time between contacting a contractor and having a job completed?

-
2. A list of registered and licensed contractors is maintained where seniors can access it easily?

Yes No

-
3. A program or service is available to assist community members of limited means with interior and exterior modifications to homes?

Yes No

-
4. A service is available to mediate between seniors and contractors when there are problems?

Yes No

-
5. Assessments are available to help seniors identify opportunities to modify their homes for better function and safety?

Yes No

If Yes, who provides the assessment?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Home Maintenance

6. Businesses exist in the community that provide assistance with routine or seasonal home maintenance chores (snow removal, yard work, raking, putting away lawn furniture, putting up screens or storm windows, weatherization, gutter cleaning, etc.)?
(LC)

Yes No

Housing: Modification and Maintenance

-
7. A program or service is available to assist community members of limited means with seasonal home maintenance chores?

Yes

No

-
8. Businesses in the community provide housekeeping services, including heavy cleaning services?

Yes

No

-
9. A service that provides people to run errands for seniors is available?

Yes

No

GOALS

In a *Community for a Lifetime* affordable transportation is available that riders find convenient, safe and dependable for getting to common travel destinations. (Accommodations are made for people of limited income.)

Seniors in a *Community for a Lifetime* have several transportation options nearby for out-of-town travel

PURPOSE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

There are many kinds of public transportation; bus services, light rail systems, ride-on-demand services, and taxicab service. The availability of transportation varies greatly from community to community. When options are limited it can be especially challenging for the 21% of Americans age 65 and older who do not drive. In the University of Michigan Surface Transportation Project study, Linda Bailey found that more than half of non-drivers age 65 or older stay home on any given day partially because they lack transportation options. These older non-drivers have a decreased ability to participate in the community and the economy. The study also found that when public transportation is available, older Americans make regular use of it.



The Beverly Foundation developed five criteria for senior friendly transportation in 2000. They are:

- **Availability:** Transportation exists and is available when needed, including evenings and weekends.
- **Accessibility:** Transportation can be reached and used, stops are reachable, stairs are negotiable.
- **Acceptability:** Vehicles are clean, safe and user friendly (operators are courteous and helpful).
- **Affordability:** Fees are affordable and options exist for those of limited means.
- **Adaptability:** Transportation can be modified or adjusted to meet special needs (e.g. wheelchair).

“Aging Americans: Stranded Without Options” Linda Bailey, Surface Transportation Policy Project, UofM, April 2004. Retrieved from Ageline January 25, 2005

“More than one in five (21%) Americans age 65 and older do not drive. More than 50% of non-drivers age 65 or older stay home on any given day partially because they lack transportation options. Older non-drivers have a decreased ability to participate in the community and the economy. Where public transportation is available, older Americans make regular use of it.

Public Transportation

1. The community has a public transportation plan?

Yes No

2. The community has a public transportation system or is part of a regional transportation authority? For a small town, this could consist of a "Dial-a-Ride" type program for the general public (that is, not restricted to residents with disabilities)? ^(PAC)

Yes *(required)* No

3. When is this system available? 24/7/365, M-F daytime, M-F all day, Saturday daytime, Saturday all day, Sunday daytime, Sunday all day, Holidays, daytime, Holidays all day? ^(LC)

Please provide system availability:

4. Are major shopping and service areas covered by the public transportation system? ^(LC M)

None Some
Half Most

Please identify areas not covered:



The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates that all public transportation become more accessible to people with physical and sensory disabilities.

5. Do operators publicly announce upcoming stops?

None Some Half Most

6. Are public transportation stops clearly marked? ^(LC)

None Some Half Most

7. Are there shelters at none, some, most, or all public transportation stops?

None Some Most All

Not applicable

Public Transportation

8. Are there places to sit at none, some, most, or all public transportation stops?

None Some Most All

Not applicable

9. Are public transportation stops well lit?

None Some Half Most

10. Is it easy to get information on public transportation routes and schedules? ^(LC)

Yes No

11. Are public transportation schedules in large enough print for seniors to be able to read them?

Yes No

12. In your opinion, do most people feel safe using public transportation in your community? ^(LC)

Yes No

(Would the response vary based on the age of the seniors?)

If no, what changes are needed to ensure a feeling of safety?



Some seniors have visual limitations that make it difficult for them to associate the landscape that is passing by with the stop where they need to get off. Publicly announcing the stops increases the ability and comfort of these riders.

13. In your judgment, do most seniors in your community feel the fare for public transportation is affordable? ^(LC)

Yes No

(Would the response vary based on the age of the seniors?)

If No, what action would be needed to improve it?

Public Transportation

14. Is it easy to reach a public transportation stop for most people in your community? ^(LC)

Yes No

15. Can seniors bring a helper onto public transportation without charge?

Yes No

16. Counselors are available to help people evaluate and meet mobility needs?

Yes No

Taxi Service

17. Is taxi service available in your community? ^(LC)

Yes No

If Yes,

17a. Is taxi service available 24/7/365? ^(LC)

Yes No

17b. Most residents would feel taxi fares are reasonable? ^(LC M)

Yes No

17c. Is taxi service prompt? ^(LC)

Yes No

17d. Are taxis clean and well maintained? ^(LC)

Yes No

17e. Do passengers feel safe using this taxi service? ^(LC)

Yes No

If no, what changes are needed to ensure that passengers do feel safe?

17f. If riders need assistance, is it company policy for the taxi driver to help? ^(LC)

Yes No

Out-of-Town Travel

18. There is nearby access to out-of-town travel options, such as: air, bus and train?

Yes

No

19. There are home pick-up and drop off services for people traveling out-of-town?

Yes

No

GOALS

The businesses in a *Community for a Lifetime* accommodate needs and product choices of older customers.

PURPOSE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

It only makes sense for businesses to target this expanding customer base. Seniors hold three quarters of the financial assets in the US. They have eight of every ten savings accounts, seven of ten money market accounts, half of all corporate stocks, and they purchase about half of all domestic automobiles. They own three quarters of the homes, most of which are worth more than the national average. There is no question that this is the segment of the population with the resources to make significant purchases. However, success with this population requires businesses to make changes. These changes demonstrate that the businesses recognize the changing needs of seniors as they age. In turn, seniors feel recognized and appreciated by the businesses and choose them when they make their purchases.

Access

1. Grocery stores, drugstores, banks, barbers, hairdressers, coffee shops, dry cleaners, book-stores, and sundries stores are distributed throughout the community in locations where they can be easily accessed by seniors? ^(LC)

Yes *(required)* No

- 1a. Are there any areas with high concentrations of seniors where there is not good access to these types of businesses?

Yes *(required)* No

If Yes, describe:

2. Legal services, including wills, trusts, advance care plans, power of attorney are available within 30 minutes of most seniors?

Yes No

If No, where do residents typically get these services?

3. High quality, fresh fruits and vegetables are available throughout the community with easy access to seniors?

None Some Half Most

4. How many restaurants are within the boundaries of your defined community?
-

- 4a. What are the five most popular restaurants in your community frequented by seniors?

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
-

Customer Amenities for Seniors

5. Do businesses in your community have lightweight, power assist doors, and push-plate entrances? ^(LC)

None	Some	Half	Most
------	------	------	------

6. Do all grocery stores in your community deliver? ^(LC)

None	Some	Half	Most
------	------	------	------

7. Do all grocery stores in your community provide carryout service? ^(LC)

None	Some	Half	Most
------	------	------	------

8. Do all large stores in your community provide motorized shopping carts? ^(LC)

None	Some	Half	Most
------	------	------	------

9. Do all large stores in your community have sitting areas located throughout the store where seniors can rest while shopping? ^(LC)

None	Some	Half	Most
------	------	------	------

10. Are all businesses in your community sensitive to some senior's sight limitations in their signage and print materials?

None	Some	Half	Most
------	------	------	------

11. Do businesses in your community train their employees in providing service to seniors?

None	Some	Half	Most
------	------	------	------

12. Buildings in the community have business names prominently displayed?

None	Some	Half	Most
------	------	------	------

13. Most businesses in the community have:

Accessible to restrooms

Adequate parking, within a reasonable distance to the business

Parking has good lighting and sidewalks separate from the parking area

Store directories are provided at the entrance

Employment

14. Seniors who desire employment find several elder friendly employers in the community?

Yes

No

15. There is an employment placement service with skill in placing seniors within 30 minutes of most residents?

Yes

No

16. There is a plan to ensure a reliable workforce to meet the needs of local residents?

Yes

No

The name of the agency responsible for preparing the plan:

17. Is there a SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) program in the community?

Yes

No

GOALS

In a *Community for a Lifetime* there are a wide variety of activities that are attractive, affordable and accessible to seniors regardless of financial abilities.

PURPOSE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

By providing a wide range of diverse opportunities for enrichment, communities enable residents to stay involved and civically engaged. Enrichment and community engagement are important because they offer a sense of inclusion. This sense of inclusion will result in a more active and healthy lifestyle, not only for the resident but for the community as well. The senior population has a number of assets that a community can benefit from, as such, it is important to provide enrichment activities that are meaningful and beneficial to them. Their time, knowledge and expertise are vital to the success of a community and by providing opportunities for enrichment we are ensuring that they will chose to age within their community.

Public Spaces

1. The community's master plan identifies valued natural resources including natural areas, woodlands, abandoned rail and utility corridors, river or pond access and wetlands?

Yes No There is no Master Plan

2. The community's master plan includes provisions to protect or create linkages between greenways, open spaces, and outdoor recreation areas?

Yes No There is no Master Plan

3. An inventory of parks, recreation and sports opportunities has been compiled for the community and is available to the public?

Yes (*required*) No

Is the inventory available on-line to provide 24-hour access?

Yes (*required*) No

4. Does the community have a senior center or community focal point for senior?

Yes (*required*) No

Is the Senior Center well connected and integrated with community resources?

Yes No

5. Tax dollars are allocated for parks and recreation facilities and activities in the current operating budget?

Yes No

Most seniors would agree that they are welcome in the community's parks and recreation facilities?

Yes No

6. Most residents would agree with the statement, "The parks here are safe?"

Yes No

If no, please explain:

7. Most residents would agree with the statement, "The parks here are pleasant?"

Yes No

If No, what major issues need resolved?

Arts and Entertainment

8. Does the community have a movie theater? ^(LC)

Yes No

Does it offer discounted senior prices?

Yes No

9. Are earphones for hearing assistance available at all local movie theaters? ^(LC)

Yes No

10. Are there opportunities to attend such events as: theaters, museum and sporting events?

Yes No



National Center for Creative Aging “The whole society benefits when older adults, with their wisdom and lifetime of experience, are given opportunities to transmit their skills and perspectives through creative activities. Research on the impact of participation in arts and cultural programming points to a vital relationship between creative expression and healthy aging.”

Recreation

11. Which of the following are available and open to the public in your community? ^(PAC)

- Community ice skating arena
- Roller skating/Inline skating facility
- Swimming pool
- Weight training facility
- Tennis courts
- Bowling
- Hiking
- Fishing
- Baseball/softball/soccer fields
- Basketball courts
- Golf courses
- Volleyball facilities
- Handball/squash/racquetball facilities
- Shuffleboard
- Cross country ski trails
- Downhill skiing
- Boating/canoeing
- Other, please list:

Lifelong Education

12. Does your community have a public library? ^(LC)

Yes *(required)* No

13. Does the library in your community have a program to deliver books to people who are homebound? ^(LC)

Yes No



The library is a resource for all sorts of information: fiction and non-fiction books, reference materials, audio and video materials, newspapers, periodicals, and computer data terminals. *(Source: AARP)*

14. Is there a bookmobile or remote satellite sites?

Yes No

15. Does your library offer informational programs on topics of interest to seniors?

Yes No
(Would the response vary based on the age of the seniors?)

16. Do the schools in your community offer courses that seniors can participate in at low or no cost? ^(LC)

Yes No

17. Educational day trips are available?

Yes No

Celebrations

18. The community celebrates its history and claims to fame with festivals and events?

Yes No

If Yes, please list:

19. The community celebrates its cultural heritage?

Yes No

If Yes, please list events:

20. Within the last 12 months has your community sponsored events that promote physical activity, such as, public walks, biking events, corporate challenges, etc? ^(PAC)

Yes No

If Yes, please list:

Volunteering

21. There is a program to help seniors identify volunteer opportunities?

Yes *(required)*

No

22. A range of opportunities exist for seniors who want to volunteer?

Yes

No

(Discussion on this issue should address how needs differ as seniors become older.)



“Older Americans that are more engaged, especially in volunteering and other kinds of activities, are usually more satisfied with their retirement. They get hooked on volunteering. It not only gives back to the community, but it gives back to the volunteer.”

(Source: Sheila Zedlewski, Sacramento Bee, 8/1/05)

Spiritual

23. Faith-based organizations encourage participation by senior members by making regular contact and providing transportation to services and activities?

Yes No

24. Faith-based organizations actively support their senior members with activities specifically for them?

All organizations Most Some

25. Faith-based organizations are active in assisting with meeting needs of senior members for transportation, family counseling, preventing isolation, etc?

Yes No



“Religious or spiritual life is one of the top two most important areas to boomers – second only to family and friends.”

(Source: “Boomers at Midlife: The AARP Life Stage Study” Wave 3, 2004.)

It is important that faith-based organizations provide services to their older-members.

- Programs for seniors who are homebound, hospitalized or otherwise unable to attend services.
- Greeters and ushers trained to provide assistance when needed.
- Accessible worship facilities.
- Printed materials with type size large enough to be read by seniors.

GOALS

In a *Community for a Lifetime* seniors are valued and respected.

PURPOSE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Everyone wants to feel valued and respected, to have a sense of belonging in the community where they live. The value seniors bring to communities is significant. Today's seniors are a major component of our system of caregiving. Seniors are often the caregivers for spouses, parents, and/or grandchildren. Seniors volunteer in many roles bringing their knowledge, wisdom and skills to the community and its members. In addition, seniors, through their sources of income, are often a source of financial stability for communities. They often provide the capital that make it possible for communities to make improvements and add amenities.

All seniors ask in return is respect for their contributions. Respect can be demonstrated in many ways. Encouraging and supporting senior participation in community discussions and activities demonstrates recognition of value. Identifying the goal of becoming a *Community for a Lifetime* shows seniors they are appreciated. As they move through the community seniors find that members of the community have positive attitudes about aging and seniors.

Seniors Valued and Respected

1. The community's most recent Master Plan studied the needs of older adults in their community and made recommendations to help meet these needs? ^(LC)

Yes *(required)* No No Master Plan

2. Local government units have established official policies specifying the importance of including seniors and information about seniors in all program development and decision-making processes?

Yes No

3. Seniors would say they feel welcome and are encouraged to attend community meetings?

Yes No

4. Seniors contributions are regularly recognized in publications and public meetings. Exceptional contributions by seniors are recognized with awards and public ceremonies?

Yes No



IMPORTANCE OF SENIORS

“Nearly 40 percent of older Americans provide care to family members. Older caregivers spend 580 hours a year on average helping their spouses, parents, in-laws, and grandchildren.”

(Source: Urban Institute, Perspectives on Productive Aging, July 2005)

Senior Participants

5. Seniors are represented on most public community boards and committees?

Yes *(required)* No

6. Transportation to the polls is available for seniors on election day?

Yes No

Acknowledgement

This application was compiled by Paul McConaughy, Program Leader, Michigan State University Extension and Robin Palmer, Community Health Consultant, Michigan Department of Community Health.

Countless people were instrumental in providing information and testing for the contents. We are thankful to each one.

We would specifically like to thank these groups for their support: the Michigan Vital Aging Think Tank, the State Advisory Council on Aging, Michigan Office of Services to the Aging, Michigan Department of Community Health, Cardiovascular Health, Nutrition and Physical Activity Section, the Otsego Elder Friendly Community Leadership Team, and the north Ottawa County Elder Friendly Community Leadership Team.

