

Mayor's Task Force on Aging

2013

Community Goals And Strategies

Goal 1. Focus on *Healthy Living*

Strategies

1. Create a Care Transitions Coalition

to prevent unnecessary hospitalization and to reduce the risk of re-admissions. The coalition should combine public and private resources to determine best practices for increased quality of transitional care:

- Discharge planning
- Family member involvement
- Available community-resources
- Patient education
- Staffing care transitions initiatives

Strategies

2. Create Alliance to Integrate Aging and Mental Health Services

Senior mental health includes a focus on late-life depression, suicide prevention, substance abuse and identifying mental health symptoms, such as dementia. A collaboration could:

- Convene aging services and mental health providers
- Coordinate dementia education efforts for citizens and providers
- Promote career pathways in geriatric mental health, including geriatric psychiatry fellowships and student internships

Strategies

3. Develop a Health Outreach Program in Low-Income Neighborhoods

Outreach would include preventative screenings, medication management, mental health, and nutrition. Providers would coordinate services to include:

- Mobile health units
- Telehealth
- Preventative care nurses staffed at senior centers during peak hours

Strategies

4. Expand Food Availability to Older Adults

Congregate meal sites present opportunities for social engagement and improved daily nutrition. The Fresh Food for Families Program could work in tandem with sites to expand fresh foods for seniors.

Goal 2. Focus on *Independence*

Strategies

1. Expand Caregiver U

Caregiver U, a program of AGE of Central Texas, is a collaboration that provides critical supports to caregivers. An expansion should include:

- Intensify community outreach and public awareness around elder abuse and caregiver support
- Develop Dementia Care Program for families

Strategies

2. Expand Home-based Supportive Services

Home care services to assist with the activities of daily living help people to age in place.

In-home respite services allow caregivers to work and run errands. However, rising costs deter caregivers from seeking in-home care.

Strategies

3. Expand Home Modification and Repair Services

The Austin Housing Repair Coalition repairs and modifies seniors' homes so they may stay while it is healthy for them to do so.

Strategies

4. Create a Central Dispatch for Transportation Services

Creating a one-stop dispatch for all transportation services within the region would promote efficient use of limited vehicles and increase accessibility for seniors.

Capital Metro is hiring a Mobility Manager who will oversee a centralized dispatch center. Capital Metro should engage nonprofit stakeholders to integrate services.

Goal 3. Focus on an *Informed Community*

Strategies

- 1. Create a Website and/or Phone Number to Serve As a Central Clearinghouse for Information about Senior Services and Activities**

Strategies

2. Develop a Public Awareness Campaign for a Variety of Issues:

- Caregiver assistance
- Locating senior service providers
- Elder abuse

Vehicles for Implementation

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Create an Advocacy
and Planning
Organization for
Seniors

Create a Robust Aging
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Resource Center

Recommendations for *The City of Austin*

Goal 1. Focus on *Age-Inclusive Policies*

Strategies

1. Integrate Age-Inclusive Policies as Criteria for City Decision-Making

Policies should focus on reducing negative impacts and promoting positive impacts on seniors. These include:

- ordinances, regulations, and policies related to transportation, affordable housing, land development, and affordable utilities and taxes.
- Integrate Senior's interests into implementation of the City's Imagine Austin Plan.

2. Join AARP/World Health Organization Age-Friendly Communities Initiative

Goal 2. Focus on *Affordable Housing*

Strategies

- 1. Research and Analyze the Impact of Property Tax Deferrals/Caps and Utility Cost Subsidies on Seniors and Recommend Appropriate Action**
- 2. Prioritize Affordable Housing Funding for Seniors**
- 3. Expedite Permitting Process For Secondary Apartments**

Goal 3. Focus on *Integrating Seniors into Civic Life*

Strategies

1. Fund Neighborhood Programs for Senior Assistance

City's Neighborhood Match Program could foster neighborhood senior assistance. Neighborhood associations could offer meals, transportation and social engagement.

2. Create an Interagency Committee to Optimize Facilities for Senior Engagement

- Develop an asset map to identify existing and new opportunities for senior engagement at public libraries, PARD facilities, HHS facilities, and schools.
- Identify opportunities for co-located services.
- Develop intergenerational programming at Recreation Centers and schools.

3. Create Intergenerational Opportunities for Seniors

- Invest in intergenerational art education partnerships between schools, organizations, libraries and senior programs to provide exposure to the arts.
- Designate a City Recreation Center as an intergenerational site and provide dynamic volunteer and co-learning opportunities for all ages.

Vehicles for
Implementation



Create a City
Commission
for Seniors

QUESTIONS