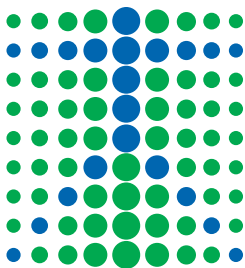# Building Partnerships: Creating a Livable Chattanooga for All Ages

Workshop Report Twelve:
A Place for Everyone, Building for the Future, Healthy Living & Lifelong Learning

Partners for Livable Communities

n4a sm

Advocacy. Action. Answers on Aging.

MetLife Foundation

For more information or resources relating to the Aging in Place Initiative, please visit:

www.aginginplaceinitiative.org

America is aging. Today roughly 37 million Americans age 65 and older represent slightly more than 12 percent of the country's total population. By the year 2030 the number of Americans in this age group will nearly double, accounting for one-fifth of the population. Due to the overwhelming desire of older Americans to age in place in their own homes, communities will face unprecedented challenges to providing the services and infrastructure that this population will demand. Yet if communities are resourceful, innovative and prudent, these challenges will be eclipsed by the enormous share of social and human capital that will be made available by the largest, healthiest, best-educated and most affluent generation of older adults in American history.

The Aging in Place Initiative was created by Partners for Livable Communities, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and other national civic groups to draw attention to the increasing aging demographic and to share information about how communities can achieve livability for all. With support from MetLife Foundation, the partners have supported the development of practical tools and resources to help communities jumpstart their conversations and take action to address the needs of older adults in their cities and neighborhoods.

Simply put, Aging in Place is growing older without having to move

Aging in Place is a comprehensive community-driven strategy to give Americans the services, opportunities and infrastructure so that they can grow old with dignity in their own homes while remaining active and engaged members of their communities.
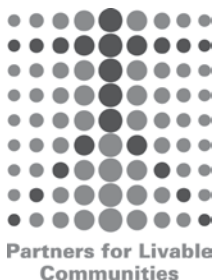
As part of this initiative, the partners supported *The Maturing of America* survey in 2006. This questionnaire found that although many communities have some programs to address the needs of older adults, very few have undertaken a comprehensive assessment of what it would take to make their community livable for all. As a result of these findings, the partners developed a comprehensive resource, *A Blueprint for Action: Developing Livable Communities for All Ages,* to provide communities with a concrete tool to help them plan for the future. The strategies and best practices outlined in the *Blueprint* can help communities make the incremental changes needed to create livable communities that are good places for the young and old alike.

Now, the initiative is on the road hosting a series of regional workshops across the country that focus on one particular aspect or theme of Aging in Place. It is the goal of each workshop to bring together a diverse group of experts and stakeholders to share ideas and generate a local dialogue about Aging in Place efforts and chal¬lenges in the community. To help stimulate innovative ideas and new partnerships, workshop attendees are learning how they can receive small "JumpStart the Conversation" grants to fund their own projects. In addition, the initiative's website, www.aginginplaceinitiatve.org, has become an information and resource hub with a listing of the JumpStart grant winners along with best practices and the report from each workshop.

This report documents the Chattanooga workshop (the twelfth in the series) which focused on A Place for Everyone, Building for the Future, Healthy Living, and Lifelong Learning. Regardless of whether you attended the workshop, this report provides an understanding of the importance of building partnerships towards making successful communities in the 21st century that embrace fairness and equity for all.

Making a community ageless requires the collaboration of numerous players from the public, private and nonprofit sectors. We hope that this report provides a better understanding of how Aging in Place can be incor¬porated into all aspects of community life.

Your national hosts,

Partners for Livable Communities

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Advocacy. Action. Answers on Aging.

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Table of Contents

With its focus on *Building Partnerships: Creating a Livable Chattanooga for All Ages*, the twelfth workshop in the Aging in Place Initiative series drew the participation of many Chattanooga leaders and served as the launch of a new collaborative effort: that of preparing the Chattanooga area to accommodate its aging population. The workshop was focused on defining the characteristics that make communities livable for older adults—and for everyone. Workshop breakout sessions then centered on identifying priorities for enhancing livability for Chattanooga's older residents.

The theme of the workshop, *Building Partnerships*, matched perfectly the city's history of recent decades—partnering with many organizations and residents to transform the area is now part of its DNA. It is a Chattanooga tradition to engage all sectors of the community and involve its very active citizens in solving problems—which at times have seemed insurmountable.

In making Chattanooga a great place to live for its current older citizens, it will also make it more attractive to retirees now living elsewhere who might choose to move to Chattanooga. The workshop's sub-theme, *Choose Chattanooga, Come Live with Us*, reflected the city's desire to simultaneously make sure its aging residents can comfortably stay in the Chattanooga area, while also attracting many older adults now living elsewhere to settle in the area.

For Chattanooga, this workshop served as confirmation that resting on past laurels is not an option. Its focus is on the future. As the workshop attested, Chattanooga's concern for its older residents, is indicative of a broader recognition of the importance of constant attention to the city's quality of life, its livability, for everyone. Chattanooga's leaders believe that what benefits older residents will be good for all who live in the area.

The city's leaders also understand that the livability of a community and its economic development are inextricably linked. Cities that fail to attend diligently to their economic futures will inevitably decline, as will those that do not work tirelessly to enhance their quality of life. An example of the clear linkage of quality of life and economic development is highlighted on page 10, where Volkswagen's decision to build its plant in Chattanooga is described.

Chattanooga's efforts to attract older adults to settle in the area are, in part, motivated by economic considerations. Newcomers to the area will contribute to the local economy, as purchasers of homes and services, patrons of retail establishments and many other venues.

However, workshop speakers and attendees repeatedly emphasized their view that older adults add immeasurably to the life of their communities, as citizens, employees, volunteers and leaders. Their expertise, wisdom and experience contribute to the welfare of the community as a whole.

Key Findings:

❑ Chattanooga's leaders recognize that accommodating the needs of their aging residents is essential to their hope of being one of the great cities in the country.

❑ Chattanooga can serve as a model for successfully coalescing around community-wide, multi-sector partnerships to transform a city, town or region.

❑ Chattanooga has figured out how to engage thousands of citizens in envisioning the area's future.

❑ Chattanooga also understands the importance of developing workable plans and seeking the financial resources to execute them.

❑ Chattanooga has learned that economic development and livability for all ages are inextricably linked.

Workshop Details

What: A discussion about the role of partnerships in creating livable communities for all.

When: June 30, 2009

Where: Brainerd United Methodist Church

Who: Over 120 community leaders and stakeholders representing a broad range of organizations and expert speakers and facilitators.

Chattanooga's leaders also understand that, in meeting the needs of an aging population, the area will advance its goal of remaining in the ranks of the best mid-sized cities in the country. Chattanooga's mayor, Ron Littlefield, made this clear at the workshop when he said that, "My hope is that this [workshop] is just the beginning of an initiative that takes us to the next level."

In planning the workshop, Linda Bennett, Executive Director of Choose Chattanooga, and Steve Witt, Director of the Southeast Tennessee Agency on Aging and Disability, invited national and local leaders to discuss the impact of the burgeoning aging population on the nation's communities and on the Chattanooga area specifically. They allocated time for four breakout sessions, and selected topics covering the breadth of livable community issues: Reflecting these topics, the breakout sessions were entitled *A Place for Everyone*; *Building for the Future of Housing, Transportation and Employment; Healthy Living; and Lifelong Learning*. Structured to promote initial brainstorming about challenges Chattanooga faces, the sessions included time to choose two to three priorities within each of the breakout topics.

Those attending the workshop were prospective partners who can participate in Chattanooga's drive to be a livable community for all ages. Their vigorous engagement in the breakout sessions and their knowledge of the needs of older adults demonstrated their intense interest in the aging residents in their community—and those who will move to Chattanooga.

Though Chattanooga is the focus of this report, the speakers and attendees discussed issues that are relevant to communities around the country. The report, which covers the workshop in detail, will be the starting point for developing a full-fledged strategic plan for making Chattanooga a livable community for all. The Southeast Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Choose Chattanooga will be very involved in collaborating with many organizational partners and residents to complete the plan.

The following pages provide a "Backgrounder" (p. 5-6), highlighting Chattanooga's recent history and its profound commitment to partnerships.

The section, "The Big Picture: Perspectives on Planning for the Age Wave" on (p. 7), briefly recaps the presentations of the two national speakers, Bob McNulty and Sandy Markwood. They described the impact on communities of the enormous increase in the numbers of aging residents, and proposed promising approaches for accommodating their needs and hopes.

The section that follows, "Thumbnail Sketches: Enhancing Livability Through Partnerships," (p. 11), includes sketches of three partnerships that contributed to the livability of their communities, in Chattanooga, Charlottesville and Las Vegas. It was one goal of the workshop to gain perspective on obstacles to livability requiring the area's immediate attention. To get a start on its quest to be one of the greatest places for older adults in the country, attendees identified Chattanooga's more serious challenges—and possible solutions. Detailed reports on the breakout sessions start on page 19.

Finally, "Aging Friendly Innovations, Best Practices" (p. 37), have been selected from outstanding collaborative programs in Chattanooga, the state of Tennessee and around the country. Many additional resources available online or in printed reports or books are also listed.

I t does not take long for first-time visitors to Chattanooga to discover the great sense of pride in the city felt by many of its residents. Former Vice President Al Gore, a Tennessean, described Chattanooga as it was when he was growing up: "The smog was so thick people couldn't even see the mountains. The air was so polluted that on some occasions, when women wore nylon stockings outside, their leg wear actually disintegrated from the pollution. The riverfront was littered with dilapidated warehouses and a vacant high school, and you couldn't even see the river. The town's oldest bridge was considered so unsafe the state wanted to tear it down."[1]

The city that is now often called the Scenic City of the South has since earned that title. Chattanooga reclaimed its beauty by involving more than 2,500 residents in envisioning a future that would transform smog and blight into a pleasurable, walkable downtown with many attractions. The results have brought national recognition to Chattanooga for its many amenities and enhanced livability.

Today Chattanooga is a pleasing mix of the old and the new, with dazzling contemporary architecture complementing traditional southern buildings and homes. Its formerly hazardous bridge spanning the Tennessee River was reinforced as a pedestrian-only bridge that offers an attractive walkway that is part of the five mile RiverWalk. The old warehouses were converted into the largest fresh-water aquarium in the world, appealing to tourists from near and far. Electric buses circulate around the downtown, providing free, non-polluting transportation for all.

For Chattanooga, a combination of open and inclusive public forums and surveys, along with effective partnerships which engaged businesses, non-profits, civic groups and foundations, created an environment that supported the remarkable changes that transformed Chattanooga. It's not surprising, then, that a notable optimism characterized the workshop in Chattanooga, the twelfth workshop of the Aging in Place Initiative. Most of the speakers and attendees have experience with the broad citizen engagement and the multi-sector collaboration that has been a model for many other cities. For Chattanooga, effective partnerships are a way of life.

While Chattanooga must reinvent itself yet again to accommodate its aging population, citizens do not doubt their capacity to overcome obstacles. Some changes are essential. Workshop attendees identified some serious impediments to livability that can deprive older Chattanoogans of their independence and quality of life.

Chattanooga's public transit system does not serve as many riders as it could, a pronounced drawback to livability for all age groups. Because residents of suburbs are dependent on automobiles for most travel, insufficient public transportation can be a severe detriment to older residents who have stopped driving. Workshop attendees also made note of the need for a one-call resource for information about all the services available to older Chattanoogans and made other recommendations for enhancing livability for all.

Snapshot of Chattanooga

15.1 percent of residents of Chattanooga are 65 years of age or older.

20.5 percent of those five years of age or older have some disability.[2]

The Chattanooga Metropolitan Statistical Area's total population is over 518,000. [3]

Chattanooga is among the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) members' favorite places to walk and bike.[4]

From 2000 to 2007, the number of those 45 to 64 years of age living in Chattanooga increased by an estimated 29.9 percent. [5]

In 1969, the federal government identified Chattanooga as the dirtiest city in the country. It is now cited by many groups and publications as one of the best cities in the country.

The Big Picture: Perspectives on Planning for the Age Wave

"We have already honored Chattanooga twice for its livability and I have a hunch that we will be honoring Chattanooga again."

—Bob McNulty, President, Partners for Livable Communities and workshop speaker

Chattanooga has a history of success. The city and its residents figured out how to change an unattractive, smoggy environment into a beautiful downtown. Chattanooga, with its commitment to collaboration and strong partnerships, is on the right path for creating a livable community for all ages.

For Bob McNulty, returning to Chattanooga as a speaker for the workshop was a chance to check on the area's significant progress. For 33 years, as a founder and the president of Partners for Livable Communities, McNulty has been urging communities in the United States and around the world to become more livable by encouraging community leaders to partner with a diverse range of stakeholders. In the 1980s, he worked closely with Chattanooga to assist its leaders and many engaged citizens to create a strategic vision for Chattanooga's future.

At the workshop, McNulty voiced his concern that very few communities have developed comprehensive plans or have even begun to think about the increasing needs of their rapidly increasing aging populations. He also urged workshop attendees to be mindful that older adults are invaluable assets to their communities.

For McNulty, a litmus test of a democratic society is how communities accommodate their aging residents and respect and make the most of their experience. He explained that, for Partners, aging is not a health issue alone, but a quality of life issue. McNulty did not minimize the work involved. He said that communities have to retrofit almost everything to make them livable for aging adults and for everyone else.

From McNulty's perspective, planning for livable communities and supporting Aging in Place should be a community-wide venture with the involvement of stakeholders from every sector, including businesses, non-profits, government agencies, elected officials and foundations. He recommends the inclusion of organizations that, at first, may not appear to have a direct stake in issues related to aging. These could include libraries, arts organizations, chambers of commerce, health and wellness organizations, faith congregations, universities, environmental groups, the media, grant makers, community developers and the military. McNulty points out that communities are faced with many competing claims for attention, but the need for planning for their older adults cannot be set aside. The more in a community who have a role in enhancing livability for all, the more likely it is that a successful plan can be devised and executed.

Welcoming Remarks

The Honorable Ron Littlefield
Mayor
City of Chattanooga

Steve Witt
Director
Southeast Tennessee Agency on Aging and Disability

Linda Bennett
Executive Director
Choose Chattanooga

Speakers

Robert McNulty
President,
Partners for Livable Communities

Sandy Markwood
Executive Director
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Greg Vital
CEO
Independent Healthcare Properties LLC/Morning Pointe Assisted Living

"We see people in their eighties and nineties who still want to volunteer and give something back to their communities."

—Greg Vital, CEO, Independent Healthcare Properties LLC/Morning Pointe Assisted Living and workshop speaker

During her presentation, Sandy Markwood, Executive Director of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, sounded the warning that "the age wave has hit the shore." She added that the baby boomers are the 800 pound gorilla in the room, and that every 7.5 seconds another boomer turns 50.

Markwood also described the changing perception of aging. As she explained, by their sheer numbers, the aging of baby boomers results in:

• A new definition of aging.

• A new interest in aging.

• A new attitude toward aging.

Noting that "All older adults are not alike," she stressed that boomers are more than a single generation and are diverse in age (born from 1946 to 1964), race, ethnicity, income, health and interests.

Markwood added that boomers share some common characteristics, especially their strong sense of engagement and desire to "give back" to their communities. They are, she emphasized, active participants in community life, as workers, volunteers/civic participants, entrepreneurs, homeowners and investors.

The Time to Start Planning Is Now!

Is your community a good place to grow up and grow old?

If not, what can you do as ambassadors for livable communities?

Is your community ready to meet the needs of its current aging population?

> —Sandy Markwood, Executive Director, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

In describing the importance of designing livable communities for all ages, Markwood stressed that, "Good planning is good governance and that combination is good for everyone." She did not shrink back, however, from detailing the many features of communities that must be evaluated for livability, some of particular importance for older adults. The features she listed include housing, health, transportation, land use planning, public safety, parks and recreation, workforce development and education, arts and cultural activities, volunteerism/civic engagement, economic development and fiscal impact.

Putting the Workshop in Context

"I am convinced that the selection of Chattanooga [as the site for the workshop] was timely and a true gift to our area. It is a matter of being in the right place at the right time for all of us."

—Linda Bennett, Executive Director, Choose Chattanooga and workshop planner and speaker

In her introductory remarks, Linda Bennett, the newly appointed executive director of Choose Chattanooga, commented on her initial surprise that the first project on her agenda would be working with Steve Witt to plan the Aging in Place Initiative workshop. With so many new and ambitious partnerships recently launched in Chattanooga, she had expected to be "connecting the dots," to help to integrate proposals related to: Chattanooga's new Climate Action Plan; the work of CreateHere, a Chattanooga organization that supports creative entrepreneurs in many fields; Chattanooga Stand's visioning and strategic planning agenda; and extensive preparations for the new Volkswagen plant that will employ 2,000 people in the Chattanooga area.

A community could collapse under the weight of so many plans or quietly shelve them. However, Bennett explained that "Our hope is that this workshop will serve as a starting place to develop another very important component in the broader, in-depth discussion about the future of Chattanooga and the surrounding region." Bennett confirmed Choose Chattanooga's commitment to older residents and its support for creating a livable Chattanooga for all ages.

Bennett described the goals of the workshop:

  • To raise awareness and engage the community in the issues affecting Aging in Place and livable communities for all;

  • To initiate collaboration among the public, private, non-profit and government sectors;

  • To define next steps.

Bennett commented on how the breakout sessions, *A Place for Everyone; Building for the Future of Housing, Transportation and Employment; Healthy Living; and Lifelong Learning*, would be structured to encourage discussion of the challenges and recommendations relevant to Chattanooga in these issue areas, and would give attendees the chance to suggest priorities that would become the basis for further consideration by the community.

"The age wave has hit the shore."

—Sandy Markwood, Executive Director, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Bennett also explained that the Chattanooga Leadership Think Tank Roundtable would use the workshop report to frame its discussions about the needs of aging residents and the requirements for meeting them. The Roundtable, comprising many Chattanooga leaders representing a variety of organizations and partnerships, will act as the "steward" for creating the plan and determining how it will be executed. Establishing this kind of stewardship body is key to successful strategic planning and execution and is a very important responsibility. This stewardship body will have to distill all of the comments from the public and the views of community leaders and experts, examine all of the relevant assets and deficiencies, and create a plan that establishes clear priorities, assigns responsibilities, assesses funding requirements and defines a timeline.

Stefan Jacoby, President and CEO of Volkswagen Group of America, Explains Its Choice of Chattanooga

On July 15, 2008, Stefan Jacoby announced Volkswagen's decision to build its new manufacturing plant in Chattanooga. It will employ 2,000 people who will be manufacturing cars specifically for buyers in the United States. He explained the choice: "This decision was about more than just a site. I have always said that ultimately it would be based on something intangible… something in our gut, or maybe better, something in our hearts." He went on to define some of the reasons, such as the "spectacular mountains and river and the warm welcome of the people of Tennessee." He added that the "intangibles are suddenly very tangible."

He continued to define the reasoning for the selection of Chattanooga: "This city knows a little about partnership and about vision. Over the past 30 years you have overcome environmental challenges to become one of the top places to live in this country. You did it by coming together and creating a vision of what Chattanooga could be, and today you are successful. Chattanooga's vision of a clean, healthy city and protecting the nature of this area is another very important reason why Volkswagen felt very at home here. Environmental sustainability is one of the Volkswagen Group's core values and we are very proud to become a part of Chattanooga's vision and her environmental stewardship."[6]

Thumbnail Sketches: Enhancing Livability Through Partnerships

"Chattanooga has been a model for developing very effective partnerships to create significant improvements in the community. I have every confidence we will develop a great plan for making Chattanooga a livable community for all ages."

—Steve Witt, Director, Southeast Tennessee Agency on Aging and Disability

Partnerships are key to creating livable communities for all ages. However, partnerships are not easy. They thrive only where there is mutual trust, shared leadership and a wholehearted willingness to give time, energy and expertise to refining and executing a plan. Community partnerships should reflect a broad range of stakeholder interests.

Successful partners also have the complementary skills and the varied resources that enable them to perfect their strategies, adjust them as necessary and provide rigorous oversight as a plan unfolds into concrete actions. They need to divvy up tasks, both huge and small, and often must keep several projects moving simultaneously.

In its continuing pursuit of livability for all, Chattanooga has embraced three critical elements—partnership, collaborative leadership and community—as prerequisites for creating major changes in the city and intends to do the same in planning on behalf of its older residents. Including "community" might seem obvious or unnecessary, but many well-intentioned efforts to inspire community change are started by outsiders who propose to work with the community or with community leaders to identify and solve problems. This is not enough. The community, whether a city block, a neighborhood, an entire city or a region, must participate in decision-making directly.

Chattanooga has exemplified this approach on several occasions when it has asked citizens to determine what they want the city to be and what their highest priorities are. Chattanooga was originally quite daring in calling on its citizens for their views, because the city was in such dramatic decline. But Chattanooga's residents have proved time and again that their recommendations and decisions lead to successful reinvention of their city.

In the current economic environment, garnering the involvement and support of residents and partners representing all sectors of the community is particularly important for planning for the age wave. Local, state and federal budgets are drained and new projects are often being set aside. Because accommodating older residents cannot be postponed, communities must draw on the skills and resources of many organizations and individuals to supplement government programs and funding. This requires a painstaking identification of every available resource and the wholehearted engagement of the community.

The extent of the engagement of community members depends, of course, on the nature of the project or plan to be developed and implemented. In the case of planning for Aging in Place, some older residents may themselves become partners and leaders—or may be the instigators of change.

The three thumbnail sketches that follow on Chattanooga, Charlottesville and Las Vegas all confirm the great importance of partnership. Planning in Chattanooga and Charlottesville engaged many hundreds of residents who relished the opportunity to influence their community's future, while the Las Vegas project, narrower in focus, from its inception largely involved partners whose expertise and resources were the essential ingredients. Visioning and long-range planning can be the province of many residents, but successful execution will often depend on tightly organized collaboration among a handful of partners.

The partnerships in the following sketches are as diverse as the communities they have served and the tasks they have undertaken. They are further evidence that a cookie cutter approach will not work and that plans must be shaped to meet the unique requirements of each community

Citizens Can Lead the Way: Chattanooga's Residents Create a Vision

Challenge: Chattanooga was overwhelmed with challenges to livability.

Solution: Involve residents in developing solutions.

In 1969, Chattanooga was named the dirtiest city in the country by the federal government, a designation that was widely publicized when Walter Cronkite announced the city's ignominious status to the nation. Within five years, the city had cleaned its air by spending millions of dollars and appointing citizen volunteers to the Air Pollution Control Board in lieu of industry representatives. They imposed some strict environmental discipline on the city.

That cleanup was the starting point for the astonishing Chattanooga story. Chattanoogans seem to relish a challenge—the city breeds leaders whose ambition is to improve some aspect of its community life. These leaders currently participate in partnerships for youth, the aging, young professionals, artists and the environment. The partnerships are so extensive that a Chattanooga Leadership Think Tank Roundtable is charged with channeling their energies to the greatest benefit for the city.

In truth, the city is "led" by its citizens, who many times over have gathered in large numbers to determine the direction the city will take to solve a myriad of problems. Chattanooga has overcome so many odds that its residents exude confidence that they can act communally to overcome any obstacle.

Among the core leaders of the city's first full-scale experiment with a visioning process and its subsequent implementation were Rick Montague, the then director of the Coca-Cola funded Lyndhurst Foundation; Gene Roberts, who became mayor in 1983; and Mai Bell Hurley, who would head Chattanooga Venture. According to a report of the Community Economic Adjustment Program of the University of Michigan, in the early 1980s the core leaders held 65 public meetings to hear from Chattanooga's citizens. To learn as much as possible, they and other civic leaders talked with many consultants about ways to improve the city, and in a practice that continues to this day, 50 business, civic and non-profit leaders from Chattanooga joined with their elected officials to visit Indianapolis, which had recently undertaken its own revitalization. The city also surveyed 50 cities around the nation in a quest for ideas.[7]

Chattanooga Venture was created in 1984 to formalize the process for enabling Chattanooga's residents and organizations to collaborate to create a vision for its future. Chattanooga still had very serious problems to overcome, including racial discord and a general state of decline. Chattanooga Venture asked citizens to think big and to express their views on what would be required to make Chattanooga a great place to live. Over a 20 week period, following considerable discussion and deliberation by 1700 people, 40 goals were selected with a completion date of 2000. Their work was captured in "Vision 2000", which defined the goals and priorities to which community participants had agreed. The results were 223 projects that cost more than $800,000,000. The University of Michigan report adds that "The evidence of Vision 2000's success is all over Chattanooga today—financed not just by Coca-Cola heir Jack Lupton's Lyndhurst Foundation, but by major investments by banks and insurance companies in renovating classic late 19th and early 20th century office buildings." Chattanooga Venture, which became a model for many cities around the country, achieved its mission and was no longer needed by the city.[8]

Initially, Chattanooga's visioning effort deliberately avoided becoming too structured. The organizers set up a small eight person coordinating council that did little during the visioning process. The council only became active once Chattanooga's citizens had made it clear that reorienting the city toward the river was important to them. At that point, the structured organization (Chattanooga Venture) with a board composed of the members of the coordinating council was established to direct the redevelopment of the river area.

Not surprisingly, the city is now engaged in a process that replicates the approach of Vision 2000. An organization called Chattanooga Stand surveyed 26,000 residents about the future of the Chattanooga area during the summer and fall of 2009. Chattanooga Stand asked the following questions:

- *What do you like about the Chattanooga region?*

- *Imagine the best possible Chattanooga region. Describe it.*

- *What challenges must be addressed?*

- *What actions, big or small, can you take to help?*

Residents from diverse socioeconomic and racial groups were surveyed. The data and analysis will be made public in 2010. Stand expects that the outcome will be that, as a community, Chattanooga will "identify shared priorities, through public dialogue, build stronger connections between residents, leaders and organizations, and collaborate to turn vision into action."

For more information, visit http://chattanoogastand.com

The Area Agency on Aging in Charlottesville, Virginia, Takes the Lead and Partners With the Planning District Commission

Challenge: Area Agencies on Aging know that their communities are not ready for the burgeoning aging populations.

Solution: The agencies partner with organizations in their communities that can create a livable community for all.

With its executive director, Gordon Walker, leading the effort, the Jefferson Area Board on Aging (JABA), the non-profit Area Agency on Aging that serves Charlottesville, Virginia and five surrounding counties, spearheaded the drafting of its 2020 Plan: Aging in Community. With the guidance of JABA and the involvement of 85 organizations and 500 individuals, Walker and JABA staff worked closely with the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), which now sits on the steering committee that guides its implementation. The core leadership for guiding the planning process was its steering committee, which included health, planning, housing, youth, academic and other disciplines.

The collaboration between JABA and the Planning District Commission is so important because the region shares with almost every community in the country two of the thorniest challenges for "aging in community"—the lack of affordable and appropriate housing and adequate mobility options. Traditional housing and community designs have been based on the assumption that all residents are fairly young and completely able-bodied. Unfortunately, as people age, their homes can become increasingly hazardous to them, with stairs, bathrooms and kitchens posing special risks. For those using crutches, walkers or wheelchairs, homes are often inaccessible. Older adults who can no longer drive may make the sad discovery that they are stuck in their homes, as they have no alternative means of transportation.

JABA's plan specifically calls for, among other provisions:

- A variety of quality, affordable and accessible senior housing options integrated within the community;

- Safer, more convenient, flexible and affordable transportation options;

- Improved quality of life through innovative community design.

These are the kinds of problems that call for the skills and knowledge of planners. Bill Wanner, a senior planner for the Commission, explains that its role has morphed into one that can very positively impact aging in community. Through three committees on design, policy and outreach, the Commission has taken many steps to facilitate aging in place in the region. It has created design plans for homes and apartments that meet the needs of older adults. To enhance their accessibility, the Commission has assessed the design of neighborhoods and recommended improvements.

The Commission has accepted significant responsibility for meeting some of the goals of the 2020 Plan. As a founding member of the Livable for a Lifetime initiative, the Commission, along with partners including JABA, has formalized its important role in enhancing the region's livability. The initiative, which evolved from the 2020 Plan, promotes change in the practice, policy, design and construction of homes and communities, and as such, advocates for the inclusion of universal design features in homes, businesses and communities.

The Commission and its member non-profit housing foundations are at the forefront of construction and remodeling techniques that use both universal design features and green building materials and construction standards.

The residents of the region also benefit in many ways from the presence of and partnership with The University of Virginia, not excluding its support of aging in place. The innovative assistant professor in the School of Architecture, John Quale, in partnership with students, is building model "EcoMod" homes that are ecologically sound, affordable and universally designed. The Planning District Commission consults with the School of Architecture for expert advice on housing and community design issues. For information on the University's EcoMod homes, go to http://www.ecomod.virginia.edu/.

The Commission has also prepared white papers that can increase understanding of universal design, accessory dwelling units and other topics by older residents, their caregivers, policymakers, builders and others about the kinds of housing options that will make their communities more livable. For white papers on universal design and accessory dwelling units, go to http://www.tjpdc.org/pdf/housing/WhitePape_Homes.pdf and http://www.tjpdc.org/pdf/housing/WhitePaper_ADU.pdf.

The Commission has also created a toolkit for assessing current housing and transportation options, projecting future needs and identifying overlapping issues and opportunities. Though created for use by communities in Virginia, the toolkit is useful for all communities engaged in creating a livable community. For more information, go to http://www.tjpdc.org/housing/THAtoolkit.asp

In the transportation field, the Planning District has collaborated with the Virginia Transportation Research Council to examine the special needs of senior drivers. Specific outcomes of this collaboration include the identification of engineering design treatments that accommodate the needs and capabilities of older drivers. For more information, visit http://www.jabacares.org/page/full/2020-plan/ and www.tjpdc.org/pdf/RTA/Vision%20Item%204.pdf

More than 40 percent of older adults say that they have at least one problem with their home that is in need of physical repair.

—Sandy Markwood, Executive Director, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Las Vegas: A Core Group of Partners Collaborate for Five Years to Create Affordable Assisted Living

The creation of the Silver Sky affordable assisted living facility in Las Vegas is an example of a small group of leaders in a multi-partner project successfully guiding a remarkable, large and diverse collaboration. A very complex venture, the development of Silver Sky could have collapsed

Challenge:	Specific projects to enhance livability can require strong, longer-term commitments and funding.
Solution:	Identify the partners who can get the job done.

at any point if strong public/private partnerships had not prevailed. It took tenacity, the willingness to collaborate, identification of appropriate partners and careful distribution of assignments to complete the facility. Silver Sky opened for residents following five years of intense teamwork, which began in 2000 with the initial decision to make affordable assisted living a priority.

In many respects, the development of Silver Sky is a textbook example of a skillful, thoughtful approach to initiating a major project and sharing core leadership and partnership responsibilities. AARP Nevada had, in 2000, identified the need for an affordable assisted living facility in Las Vegas, as an answer to the question "What are the basic challenges to aging in place in our community?" A handful of leaders then addressed the need for broad collaboration.

In 2002, the Nevada Model Assisted Living Advisory Committee (MALAC) was formed to provide a structure for the work of the sixty organizations and individuals collaborating to establish Silver Sky. The primary leadership, its executive committee, included members of the Nevada State Legislature, Harrah's Entertainment Inc., AARP Nevada, the State of Nevada Division for Aging Services, Fannie Mae, private charitable foundations and universities.

Very deliberately and carefully, the MALAC executive committee oversaw the development and execution of the plan for Silver Sky—while carefully nurturing relationships with the members of MALAC, prospective funders, the City's elected officials, other stakeholders and the public. Some of the steps in MALAC's progress included:

- In 2002, prompted in part by a report issued by a subcommittee of the Nevada Legislature, U.S. Senator Harry Reid introduced legislation to permit the Bureau of Land Management to donate federal land for use for the facility.

At the time we committed to financially supporting Silver Sky, it was nothing more than a great idea, While we knew there was no guarantee it would ever come to fruition, it was a risk worth taking to help seniors in need.[9]

—Jan Jones, Senior Vice President of Communications and Government Relations, Harrah's Entertainment

- State Assemblywoman Barbara Buckley sponsored complementary legislation appropriating funds for a model affordable assisted living facility in Clark County. With urging from Buckley, leaders of companies and the government also pledged their financial support.

- Senator Reid and Assemblywoman Buckley convened a community forum to launch the project, discuss the financial commitment of Harrah's Entertainment and Nevada's Housing Division and chose a committee to formulate a Request for Proposal.

- A free training was offered for assisted living and affordable housing advocates from around the state to inform them about the process for developing an assisted living facility.

- Public hearings and workshops were held to identify needs and to inform the public. Harrah's contributed $800,000 for the venture and the City Council awarded $1,000,000 in HOME funds. Additional funds were obtained through tax credits and an allotment of Medicaid waivers for assisted living.

- As plans progressed, the City of Las Vegas held a meeting for owners of property and residents living near the site of Silver Sky, to hear questions and concerns. Leaders of MALAC and other community members also participated.

- Assemblywoman Buckley and MALAC, over the development period of Silver Sky, successfully pursued passage of legislation to enhance regulation of assisted living facilities in Nevada. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services also approved waivers allowing payment of some costs for Medicaid-eligible clients.

- Silver Sky opened its doors in 2006.

The partners in the development of Silver Sky had to take risks and at times deal with great complexity. They also aggressively and imaginatively sought funding to make sure this daunting project would be completed. They succeeded by inspiring confidence, engaging a broad range of stakeholders, inviting the participation of the public, generously sharing leadership roles and by believing, over five years, that they would ultimately reach their goal.

Silver Sky is best described as an affordable living community that uses tax credit financing, donated public land and Medicaid service reimbursement to provide assisted living services to low-income seniors — the first-of-its-kind facility in the United States.[10]

—Jan Hogan, Staff Reporter, the View News, Las Vegas, Nevada

The Workshop Breakout Sessions

The following are reports and analysis of the workshop's four breakout sessions (A Place for Everyone; Building for the Future in Housing, Transportation and Employment; Healthy Living; and Lifelong Learning). Though the facilitators in each session used slightly different approaches, they first encouraged a discussion about a range of challenges relevant to their topic, and then asked participants to identify two to three priority challenges and possible solutions. For each session, a reporter carefully recorded the highlights. Please note: The Building for the Future session was subdivided into three sessions, on housing, transportation and employment.

Breakout Session: A Place for Everyone

Background

Chattanooga, like many communities around the country, is figuring out what it needs to accomplish to help current and future residents stay in their homes and communities as they age. Each community faces widely varying circumstances—and each must assess its unique assets and deficiencies in order to begin planning the changes that will enhance livability, not just for older adults, but for all ages. However, the need for mobility options and affordable and appropriate housing for all are common themes across the nation. In these recessionary times, all must reckon with dramatic pressures on funding.

Challenge:	It is necessary for each community to identify its livability assets and deficiencies and the resources available to make necessary changes.
Solution:	Engage community leaders in an assessment of needs, recommendations for priorities and identification of resources.

The participants, in focusing on the admittedly broad topic of a "place for everyone", concentrated on the physical as well as emotional and social needs of the aging population—and everyone else—and identified Chattanooga's livability assets and gaps. This group was clearly attracted to a concept of livability compatible with the vision of Main Street cited in the box to the side—where communities are not intersected by massive throughways and stores and services are accessible by bicycling or walking. In their discussions, participants in this session defined many of the elements of a livable community for all. They were guided by their knowledge of the many surveys that show that older adults prefer to age in a familiar home and community, near family and friends and included all types of communities—urban, suburban or rural—in their discussion.

> The physical characteristics of a livable community can be seen on any "Main Street," where some residences are close to stores and services and people can easily travel by car, on foot, or by bicycle, or where they can access convenient public transit. *A Blueprint for Action, Developing a Livable Community for All Ages*

This group also articulated the often unstated hurdle to planning—the longstanding negative perception of aging in this country. Sandy Markwood, in her presentation to the workshop, argued that the boomers are creating a "new definition of aging, a new interest in aging and a new attitude toward aging."

While this is the case, from the standpoint of those in the breakout session, much work has to be done to end the negative attitudes toward aging and the denial of the aging process that can obscure the urgent requirement to make the changes that will enable older residents to age in place. Those assembled, many of whom were boomers themselves, contended that boomers have not come to grips with planning for their aging.

This group covered a range of issues essential to livability, including the importance of a strong and diverse economy. They emphasized the need for improved transportation services, to include light rail, buses that accommodate wheelchairs, senior taxis, volunteer drivers, walking/bike trails in and between neighborhoods, and walkable streets and parks. Expressing concerns shared by many communities, participants named mixed income housing as a requirement. The group also recommended additional steps for creating "a place for everyone" to include:

- Creating a sense of place, with features of a small town;

- Supporting neighbors helping neighbors;

- Attracting a mix of generations;

- Creating incentives for retail and grocery stores (preferably local businesses) that also offer special services for seniors;

- Offering activities for the housebound;

- Establishing one-stop shopping centers with a variety of services, including information/referral services, a library, doctors' offices, the health department, salons, handymen;

- Supporting arts/cultural/recreation/entertainment activities representing an array of cultures;

- Developing cross-generational events and activities with area schools and other organizations;

- Assuring pet-friendly public places;

- Offering public events, welcoming to immigrants, and people of all ages and ethnicities.

As participants in this breakout session recognized, planning must now take place during a troubled economic period, even while the aging population grows rapidly. Visionary community leaders are seeking less costly and more aging-friendly ways to assist their older residents to age in place. Community leaders, creators of innovative programs, non-profit service organizations, faith-based organizations and others are finding ways to replicate the virtues of small town living, where neighbors traditionally help neighbors.

"We really don't want neighborhoods where people close their doors and don't find ways to associate"

—Breakout session participant, A Place for Everyone

This group, in hailing the virtues of small town thinking and neighbors caring for neighbors, was referring to a role for neighbors that government or non-profits now must often assume. Their families and friends often scattered across the country, many older adults do not have anyone to call on for a ride to the grocery store or to complete a home repair essential to safety. Neighbors, because of their busy work and family lives, may be only passing acquaintances.

The alternative may be "organized" neighborliness where specific needs can be addressed by volunteers who have the skills or training for meeting them. Many older homeowners, for example, need modifications to their homes. The 200 affiliates of an organization called Rebuilding Together recruit and train volunteers to repair and modify homes of low-income, older homeowners in their communities across the country.

Meals on Wheels, whose services date back to the 1950s, is another outstanding example of neighbors helping neighbors, and is a model program for supporting the independence of those who are homebound. But communities now face the fact that many of their aging residents will need many other kinds of assistance to stay in their homes and communities. Communities will have to tap every imaginable resource to develop a comprehensive approach to accommodating their aging residents.

Fortunately, communities can emulate the successes of programs around the country, many of which have found ways to shave costs. The many affiliates of Faith in Action , interfaith community organizations, are an example of the role volunteers can play in filling gaps where funding is not available. These provide a variety of in-home and community-based services at no cost to recipients.

The federal Corporation for National and Community Service sponsors several programs focused on seniors, such as RSVP (Retired Seniors Volunteer Program). RSVP places older adults in volunteer assignments that match their interests and talents. Some volunteers recruited by RSVP help preserve the independence of frailer seniors by assigning volunteers to assist them. Many other programs, both local and national, engage volunteers in supporting the independence of older adults. For more information, visit http://www.shepherdcenters.org/ and http://www.nationalservice.gov/

Breakout Recommendations: A Place for Everyone

Identify financial resources to replicate the benefits of small town living and provide incentives for businesses. The group cited the need for financial resources to promote one-stop access to information and services and to replicate some of the benefits of small town living, which so clearly appealed to this group. Participants recommended working first with existing community groups, agencies and programs that could co-locate in neighborhoods, where they can share resources. They also proposed providing incentives to businesses, such as grocery stores and other local businesses, to encourage them to come into areas that they don't usually serve. Engaging businesses in developing solutions to accommodate the needs of older adults was also recommended.

Combat ageism. To combat ageism, the group recommended cross-generational programming and broad-based communication. One idea that was well received was a "seniors and seniors" program, to connect older adults and high school seniors. After working together on joint programs, they could end the year with a "senior" prom.

Breakout Session: Building for the Future of Housing, Transportation and Employment

Challenge: Building for the future requires increased availability of affordable and appropriate housing, greater choice in mobility options and employment opportunities for older workers.

Solution: Assess the needs and develop plans, through community engagement and partnerships, to increase availability of housing, transportation and employment.

To enable them to examine their concerns about housing, transportation and employment more closely, participants in the Building for the Future session broke into three groups, to cover each topic more completely.

Background: *Building for the Future of Housing*

Participants in this session quickly identified many of the same obstacles to livability in suburban areas of Chattanooga that trouble communities around the country. Unfortunately, suburban living requires dependence on cars, and suburbs often isolate people who do not drive, many of whom are seniors.

As is the case in the Chattanooga area, older residents of suburbs often find especially difficult the segregation of housing, retail establishments, civic buildings and offices, as they require trips by car to accomplish most of life's tasks. If they no longer drive, older residents may be unable to engage in social life, and are sometimes dependent on the kindness of strangers when they would prefer to navigate their own way.

The participants in the Chattanooga breakout session were acutely aware of the problems associated with suburban housing patterns and were well-versed in planning concepts espoused by those who support denser housing in close

proximity to transit, retail establishments, services and amenities. They listed the need for the following:

- Greater density in housing;

- Assessment and identification of resources and needs;

- More flexible zoning and land use planning;

- Increased availability of multi-family housing;

- Funding for home modifications;

- Incentives for building more affordable housing;

- Land banking to preserve land for affordable housing;

- Mixed income/mixed use;

- More green development;

- Universal design as a standard business practice.

This list incorporates many of the ideas that now influence community planners around the country as they seek to enhance the livability of their communities. Planners, policymakers, environmentalists and others concerned about the sustainability of the suburban way of life have instigated some serious re-thinking about alternative approaches to development. Concerns about the environment, wasteful energy use and loss of parklands and open space have prompted development of a movement called Smart Growth, whose principles call for mixed-use development with a range of housing and transportation options and walkable neighborhoods.

Smart Growth has many adherents among those interested in community development and can be an important ally for proponents of livable communities and Aging in Place. The goals of Smart Growth and livable communities for seniors often intersect, although their priorities may differ. Smart Growth, which evolved in reaction to suburban sprawl and the environmental damage caused by dependence on automobiles, offers some alternatives to the constraints on Aging in Place that suburbs often impose. For example, Transit-Oriented Design, based on Smart Growth principles, calls for mixed use communities in which housing, retail establishments, offices, restaurants and other buildings are in close proximity and accessible to public transportation. Smart Growth also supports denser placement of homes and buildings, more compact living spaces, walkable communities, convenient access to public transportation, preservation of open spaces and compact building design.

Smart Growth supporters are sometimes challenged by those who object to greater density, both of people and housing, in their neighborhoods. For those expecting to age in place, however, Smart Growth and Transit-Oriented Design (often called TOD) can relieve some of the burdens of urban, suburban

or rural life. In any choice about where to live, tradeoffs are unavoidable, especially for those who may need to make changes due to aging. Smaller, more compact homes mean less upkeep; parks can substitute for big yards and their maintenance; walking can be a healthy alternative to driving; and public transportation is cheaper and more energy-efficient than a car. For more information, visit http://www.smartgrowth.org

The views of this breakout session were comparable in many respects with the tenets of Smart Growth. Participants understood, however, that each community and neighborhood must adapt them to serve their own needs and preferences.

Breakout Recommendations: *Building for the Future of Housing*

Educate the general public, their families and service providers. The recommendations of this breakout session echo concerns identified by communities around the country. The group cited insufficient understanding of the variety of housing options available and the steps Chattanooga should take to increase the options. Participants agreed that many do not know about the home modifications that can make it possible for older adults to stay in their homes as they age. They also do not know how or where to find information about housing options or other services for seniors. One participant also expressed concern that grandparents raising grandchildren are not aware of the benefits for which they are eligible.

Participants proposed the creation of a public relations campaign, conducted through the media, faith-based organizations, employers, neighborhood associations and others. The group noted that education about these issues should start at a very young age, and also stressed the urgent need for a one-stop resource center for information about housing options and long- term care.

Develop more flexible approaches to zoning and land use planning. The group recommended promotion of multi-family housing and mixed use/mixed income neighborhoods as an alternative to current suburban patterns.

Offer incentives to builders to increase the availability of affordable housing. While mixed use/mixed neighborhoods are important, the group also concluded that builders should support affordable home modifications and universal design.

Background: *Building for the Future of Transportation*

One theme is constant, in Chattanooga and around the country, for those concerned about mobility options for older adults: The love of Americans for their cars has left most other forms of transportation, a necessity for many seniors, in lowly second-class status. Older adults who settled in suburbs to raise their families, or who live in rural areas, now may find themselves unable to drive and stranded in their homes.

It is not surprising, then, that mobility options are often at the top of the list when community leaders identify the needs of their older residents. In late 2005, the delegates to the White House Conference on Aging confirmed this point by selecting selected transportation as the third priority out of 73. To put this in perspective, strengthening Medicare and Social Security ranked fifth and eleventh, respectively. For more information, visit http://www.apta.com/mediacenter/pressreleases/2005/Pages/051219_mobility_voted.aspx

Participants were outspoken about the challenges facing public transportation in Chattanooga, an essential mobility option for many older adults who do not drive. They agreed that public transportation does not work well in the area, and use of the bus system is stigmatizing and is viewed by some as unsafe.

The group also emphasized that automobiles completely dominate transportation in the Chattanooga area. Participants listed as additional deficiencies in public transportation:

- Transit stops that are too far from homes;
- Confusing route maps/brochures and a lack of consistent signage at bus stops;
- Absence of shelters, seating and lighting;
- Lack of after-hours service;
- Lack of walkable communities;
- Schedules that are limited;
- Insufficient funding at every level—local, state and national.

Though perspectives on the reputation and availability of public transportation, vary from place to place, many older residents tend to avoid it. Even if they have a favorable or neutral view of public transportation in their area, many have had little use for it—because they have used their cars for all trips. Many older adults who must stop driving are not comfortable with the public transportation available to them because they do not know how to use it.

Travel training is one way some communities have helped older adults overcome their apprehension about using public transit. To allay their fears and increase their confidence, the Fairfax County, Virginia, Department of Transportation has outfitted a bus that serves as a classroom for educating seniors about using both the bus and the Washington area Metrorail (the subway). The rear of the bus is a classroom, which includes audio and video components for tapes, DVDs and computer programs. Even with these training tools occupying space, the bus can transport 30 passengers. Trainees are taught how to read bus schedules and route maps, pay fares and how to signal the driver to stop. Training includes a visit to a Metro station to enable those who have not used the system to familiarize themselves with the fare system and the routes, which span Washington, DC, and the suburbs of Maryland and Virginia. For more information, visit http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/FCDOT/mattbus.htm

As Sandy Markwood explained in her presentation to the workshop, boomers will change how we age. Their influence (as well as that of those who precede them) will profoundly affect transportation planning. They will demand flexible, affordable mobility options in their communities. They will expect to be able to age in place—and to move about their communities with ease, with or without a car.

Complete Streets: Streets for Everyone

AARP, the American Planning Association, the American Public Transportation Association, biking and walking organizations and many others are members of Complete Streets, a coalition that represents many organizations working to transform the streetscapes of the nation. Complete Streets states that its purpose is to assure that the streets of our cities and towns "ought to be for everyone, whether young or old, motorist or bicyclist, walker or wheelchair user, bus rider or shopkeeper. But too many of [our] streets are designed only for speeding cars, or worse, creeping traffic jams. They're unsafe for people on foot or bike and unpleasant for everybody." For more information, visit http://www.completestreets.org

This Chattanooga breakout session's conclusion that the area's current mobility options are inadequate is a common concern around the country. Many American communities face a yawning gap between what is required and what is currently available in transportation. Undoubtedly, volunteer drivers will fill some of the gaps and driver training can extend the driving years of older adults. Walking and biking can substitute for driving in some cases, but it will not be a reasonable option in many areas.

For Chattanooga, and every community in the country, transportation is one of the challenges of the century, not only for seniors but for all residents. To influence their decisions about mobility options, advocates for the aging need to understand the roles of community transportation planners, land use planners, elected officials, staffs of Metropolitan Planning Organizations and state departments of transportation. They will also be most persuasive if they have a precise understanding of the needs of older adults for mobility options in their communities. But the capacity for solving mobility problems does not stop with these players. Others who help close the gaps in the network, may include transportation providers, private and corporate funders, Area Agencies on Aging, social service agencies, faith-based programs, non-profit organizations and many others.

Expanding mobility options is a tall order. Chattanooga and other communities can meet the expectations of their residents if they begin now to develop mobility plans—and execute them.

Breakout Recommendations: *Building for the Future of Transportation*

Encourage the visible support of public transportation by public officials. Participants in this session argued that public officials should have the experience of using public transit, and should be asked to use public transportation themselves and report their experiences to the public.

Conduct a needs assessment. The group agreed on the need to identify current attitudes about public transportation as well as specific needs and potential opportunities.

Increase demand—and funding—for public transportation. Reflecting the sense that public transportation is viewed as an undesirable mode, participants suggested that it should be more flexible, accessible and socially acceptable.

Promote the use of transportation alternatives. The group proposed a neighborhood-based pilot program. Two suggestions for the pilot were to use electric shuttles to promote a green approach or a ride-share program that residents could access by phone or the Internet. Concentrating efforts in one neighborhood could increase visibility and the sense that public transit is a safe and comfortable mode of travel. Success in changing transportation habits in one neighborhood would then spread to others, thereby improving perception about public transportation and encouraging the development of improved services and greater public demand.

Background: *Building for the Future Employment of Older Adults*

By including employment in its Building for the Future breakout sessions, the workshop planners accounted for the great importance, to both employers and older employees, of continued employment beyond the traditional retirement years. They also clearly recognized the contribution that housing and mobility make to the likelihood that employers in a community will thrive—and that they will be in a position to employ those who are aging. Affordable and appropriate housing and transportation are fundamental to sustaining a workforce and a local economy, and therefore to the well-being of a community's older adults, many of whom either must or choose to continue to work.

Three significant trends will greatly influence the future employment of seniors. The first is the severe economic downturn. The second is the need or desire of many boomers to stay in the workforce and delay retirement. The third is, in spite of the fragile economy and the desire of many to continue to work, the expected departure of many boomers from the workforce, and the associated loss of their skills and knowledge. Employers face a stark fact: The sharp decline in the population of the generations that follow the boomers will eventually cause shortages of workers in many fields.

The current recession has upended the working life of many older adults, more than doubling the rate of unemployment for those 55 and over, according to a report by AARP's Public Policy Institute. In December, 2007 the unemployment rate of those 55 and over was 3.1 percent, but in June, 2009 it had risen to 7 percent.[11]

The National Center for Senior Transportation

The National Center for Senior Transportation, administered by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Easter Seals, Inc., offers information and technical assistance to enhance mobility options for older adults in communities across the country. The Center focuses on the creation and coordination of mobility options for seniors in their communities and is a portal to a wealth of information about transportation for older adults.

For more information, visit http://seniortransportation. easterseals.com

Unemployed baby boomers, many of whom believed they were still in the prime of their careers, are confronting the grim reality that they face some of the steepest odds of any job seekers in this dismal market.

—*The New York Times, April 13, 2009*

The unemployment figures are grim, but a 2005 report on the future of older workers by the Conference Board explained why retaining older workers is essential for the long-term economic health of many industries. Describing the impact the reduced numbers of younger workers will have, the report states "By 2010, the number of 35-44 year olds, those normally expected to move into senior management ranks, will actually decline by 10 percent. Also by 2010, the number of U.S. workers 45-54 will grow by 21 percent, while the number of 55-64 year-olds will expand by 52 percent."

Jeri Sedlar, Senior Advisor to the Conference Board on Mature Workforce Issues, stated in the report "As more companies feel the pain of knowledge losses caused by retirements in key businesses or functions, those not planning ahead and leveraging their mature workforce will be scrambling." Job losses during the current recession alter the employment picture, but the need to retain older workers is already an issue in health care, nursing and government.

Many older adults choose to work rather than retire because they enjoy their jobs. However, the Conference Board Report cited statistics that show that 74 percent of those 55 and over do not have the financial resources, and 60 percent the medical benefits, that would allow them to retire.[12]

The employment breakout discussion focused on the valuable contributions older employees make and the requirement or hope of many for continued employment as they age. They might be encouraged by a report from The Center for Retirement Research at Boston College that concludes, by analyzing data collected from surveys of 400 private sector employers, that employers value the productivity of older workers, though they contend that older workers are more costly.

Though the Center notes that some employers encourage early retirement, its report states "Older workers are far better educated than older workers just a decade ago; they are more physically fit; and the shift from goods-producing to services-producing jobs has reduced the physical demands of work, which should enhance the employment prospects of older workers."[13]

On the other hand, boomers who have been laid off during this recession have faced longer job searches and diminished income. While loss of employment is lower for older adults than for younger employees, The New York Times reported that, "Unemployed baby boomers, many of whom believed they were still in the prime of their careers, are confronting the grim reality that they face some of the steepest odds of any job seekers in this dismal market."

Furthermore, the Times notes, "Workers ages 45 and over form a disproportionate share of the hard-luck recession category, the long-term unemployed—those who have been out of work for six months or longer, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. On average, laid-off workers in this age group were out of work 22.2 weeks in 2008, compared with 16.2 weeks for younger workers. Even when they finally land jobs, they typically experience a much steeper drop in earnings than their younger counterparts."[14]

Breakout Recommendations: Building for the Future Employment of Older Adults

Overcome negative perceptions of older employees. The group stressed the need to enhance awareness of the benefits of employing older workers.

Improve communications that will enable employers to inform employees about job. Participants recommended that employers post openings, the experience required for each position and information about businesses and organizations that are hiring. They suggested conducting a virtual job fair and an employment resource center. The group noted that several dedicated URLs are currently available that describe job openings.

Provide opportunities to older adults to enhance their technological skills. Participants noted that local universities, the Chamber of Commerce or others can offer training in computer use. This session concluded that, for learning technology, older adults learning from peers is a better environment than being taught by young people. In the field of technology, it is particularly important to dispel the myth that technology is only for youth.

Designing for Older Workers

Thomas C. Nelson, Chief Operating Officer, AARP, during a speech before the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in Paris in May of 2006, explained that some companies have modified the design of their workplaces to accommodate older employees. He said that "Florida Baptist Health South Florida, a hospital in Coral Gables, installed new patient beds throughout its hospital system to minimize the constant stresses and strains nurses endure by lifting and moving their patients. International Truck and Engine Corporation turned its manufacturing process upside down, literally, to create a safe and comfortable environment for employees. In the manufacturing process for two new lines of trucks, they've turned the chassis upside down to cut down on work-related injuries. Some employers are trying phased retirement, seasonal work, or career development in order to attract 50 plus workers." For more information, visit http://www.aarp.org/research/ppi/econ-sec/work/articles/creating_jobs_in_the_21st_century.html

There is a valuable list of websites that can be useful to older workers seeking employment, and that can help connect job seekers to employers in the Resource section on page 47.

Breakout Session: Healthy Living

Background

Challenge: A community that supports healthy living and aging must promote the community and social engagement aspects of health.

Solution: Identify ways the community can enhance opportunities for community and social engagement.

Healthy living encompasses many realms of our lives including the physical, emotional, intellectual, community and social, the spiritual and economic. In identifying the many elements that influence healthy living, participants decided to limit discussion to the community and social spheres. They were influenced by the report on the healthfulness of the people of Roseto, Pennsylvania, described by Malcolm Gladwell in his book, *The Outliers*.

Gladwell reports that Roseto had been settled by barely literate and poor immigrants from Roseto, Italy. They built homes and a church on a rocky hillside, and in 1896 an energetic young priest created societies and festivals and encouraged Rosetans to grow vegetable crops in their yards. Soon shops, schools, restaurants and bars were built to create a self-contained community.

A local physician informed Dr. Stewart Wolf, a professor in the medical school of the University of Oklahoma, and a summer visitor to Roseto, that he rarely found anyone under the age of 65 in Roseto with heart disease. In 1961, Wolf decided to investigate. He and those assisting him found that the rate of death due to heart disease in Roseto was half the national average, in spite of a Rosetan diet laden with fat, lack of exercise and smoking by many. There were also no reports of suicides, peptic ulcers, alcoholism, drug addiction and very little crime.

As Gladwell states, "Wolf began to realize that the secret of Roseto wasn't diet or exercise or genes or location. *It had to be Roseto itself*."

Gladwell explains that the Rosetans "visited one another, stopping to chat in Italian on the street, say, or cooking for one another in their backyards." He adds that the researchers found that, "Extended family clans underlay the town's social structure. They saw how many homes had three generations living under one roof, and how much respect grandparents commanded."

Rosetans, even though a community of under 2000, participated in 22 civic organizations. Gladwell argues that they "were healthy because of where they were from, because of the world they had created for themselves in their tiny little town in the hills."[15]

From this description of their lives, it is clear that social isolation in Roseto is unlikely at any age—and social isolation of those who are aging has long been viewed as a detriment to health. A review of research by the Cornell Institute for Translational Research on Aging (CITRA) states the view of gerontologists: "A long research tradition in the field of gerontology has related

social integration—participation in multiple life roles and activities and access to social support in times of need—to good health and wellbeing among older people. Conversely, social isolation, or the lack of access to social support and the lack of meaningful social relationships, roles, and activities, is related to poor health and lower wellbeing." For more information, visit http://www.citra.org/Assets/documents/Social%20Isolation.pdf

AARP and many others concur about the importance of community and social connections in promoting healthy aging. From AARP's perspective, community and social relationships are encompassed in the term community engagement. In its publication, *Beyond 50.05, A Report to the Nation on Livable Communities: Creating Environments for Successful Aging*, AARP incorporates community engagement in its discussion of livable communities. It defines community engagement as the following:

- Attachment to place and sentiments of community attachment;

- Social activities with friends and kin from the local area;

- Relationships with neighbors and informal help;

- Local organizational membership and activity;

- Volunteering;

- Charitable giving at the local level;

- Interest and participation in community affairs and issues.[16]

Another communal activity that has been proven to support health is participation in arts and cultural events. A groundbreaking study initiated in 2001 by the Center on Aging, Health and Humanities at The George Washington University assessed the impact of community-based cultural programs on the physical and mental health of adults 65 and older. It was the first study of its kind and its overwhelming conclusion was that those who participated in arts and cultural activities reported a higher overall health rating, fewer doctor's appointments, less use of medication and less instance of falls.[17]

In its discussion, this breakout session focused on the need for hands-on activity that lends purpose, sparks interest or provides worthwhile service that will appeal to boomers. Though participants did not identify all of the elements that are enumerated in *Beyond 50:05*, they clearly recognized the beneficial role of social and community involvement of all kinds including memberships in organizations, activity with others, volunteering and participation in community affairs. In many respects, this group touched on the same themes as the *A Place for Everyone* breakout—the satisfactions of helping neighbors and of living in a close-knit community.

This session also discussed the negative consequences of the unfavorable view of aging that still dominates the perspective of many people, both older and younger. Though changes in nomenclature are often recommended as a solution, a recent report from the Atlantic Philanthropies' Community Experience Partnership Initiative notes that "terms such as 'boomers,' 'seniors,' 'retirees,' 'experienced adults,' 'mature adults,' and even 'older adults' are accepted or rejected with no clear trend."[18]

Breakout Recommendations: Healthy Living

Improve and centralize communications about existing opportunities and services in Chattanooga, especially those that enhance community and social aspects of health for all ages. This breakout session agreed that limited channels of communication deter participation in social and community life by longtime residents and newcomers as well. The group proposed the creation of a compilation of a more extensive list of available community/social services, resources and opportunities for engagement in Chattanooga. Participants also expressed their concern at the lack of a centralized location (physically within the region or available electronically) that lists and describes existing services, resources and activities. They also recommended the identification of gaps and ways to close the gaps. They noted the need for communication about opportunities for service, whether for pay or volunteer, and greater communication about or establishment of interest groups, such as gardening, investment clubs, and special facilities for woodworking and auto repairs.

Encourage participation of older adults in activities that support health. Participants also stressed the need to change the image of those currently aging to encourage their involvement in worthwhile activities by erasing the existing stigma. The group stated that the current image of aging prevents involvement by boomers in "senior" activities. The use of the word "senior" is acceptable only when using the AARP discount card, according to many of this session's participants. The group urged the reinvention of activities, services and resources for boomers and those to follow. The group also stressed the importance of encouraging intergenerational relationships and educating each generation about dealing with the others, whether socially or in the workplace environment.

Breakout Session: Lifelong Learning

Background

Challenge: Access to educational opportunities is important at every age.

Solution: Assess the availability of the range of educational options in a community, and recommend steps to enhance them.

Proponents of enhancing the quality of life of older adults have made lifelong learning an increasingly prominent priority, and some of the Chattanooga breakout sessions validated its significance. In supporting employment, continued learning can prepare older workers for the constantly changing demands of the workplace. Lifelong learning supports healthy

aging by encouraging the social and community connections that shared experience supports. A broad range of educational opportunities can bring young and old together as participants in a common endeavor. The Aging in Place Initiative has characterized lifelong learning for older adults as an essential feature of a livable community for all ages.

Participants in this session expressed emphatically their view that more resources must be dedicated to lifelong learning in Chattanooga. They stressed that all generations must have more opportunities for learning across many disciplines. They also discussed the specific needs of older adults for lifelong learning, needs that are common to those in communities around the country. They maintained, however, that the focus of lifelong learning in Chattanooga should be intergenerational.

In San Diego, where the Aging in Place Initiative sponsored a workshop on lifelong learning, many participants voiced their support for expanding intergenerational learning opportunities because of the desire of older adults to engage with younger generations. The importance of this preference is confirmed by their attraction to college towns and their auditing of classes offered to younger students. They also enroll in classes specifically designed for older students, but may share a venue with younger students.

However, a report by the American Council on Education, entitled *Framing New Terrain: Older Adults and Higher Education*, articulated a problem that, unfortunately, limits participation in college classes. Produced as part of MetLife Foundation's project called "Reinventing in the Third Age: Older Adults and Higher Education," the report reveals that many older adults do not feel especially welcome or comfortable on college campuses because of their conviction that they are subject to ageism.[19]

Community colleges and universities can make themselves more welcoming by taking extra steps to provide support, outreach and accommodations to older adults who want to participate in college classes. They can publish materials aimed at making older learners more comfortable and informed about courses and other offerings.

> ## Lifelong Learning a Key to Health
>
> Nancy Merz Nordstrom, an expert on lifelong learning, notes that scientific research from the 1990s reveals that a "challenged, stimulated brain may well be the key to a vibrant later life." She adds that, "As 78 million baby boomers prepare to redefine their own retirement, news that staying active and keeping their brains constantly engaged may help stave off mental and physical ailments and diseases has many asking how best to do so. The answer is simple: lifelong or later-life learning"[20]

As noted by both this breakout group and during a similar session in the San Diego Aging in Place workshop, educational institutions can supplement their lifelong learning programs by offering them in locations where older adults can easily congregate. The Chattanoogans expressed support for access to learning at the neighborhood level that is accessible, affordable and user-friendly.

Libraries, can also be a great resource for lifelong learning. Most libraries have meeting rooms and sponsor a variety of classes. For many older patrons, libraries are a congenial place for enhancing knowledge, learning to use computers and participating in a community of readers.

The lifelong learning discussion also focused on what kind of help communities are providing to older adults who wish to learn new skills for the workplace. Reflecting views similar to those of the employment breakout session, participants agreed that older adults, in Chattanooga and everywhere, are concerned about stereotypes and stigmas and a workplace culture that is constantly changing. They suggested that partnerships can expand access to continuing education, a view also expressed during the San Diego workshop. At that workshop, participants said that local community colleges are natural allies to businesses that need to enhance the skills and knowledge of their employees.

A report by the American Council on Education endorses this viewpoint. Although many employers value the experience and knowledge of older adults, some are reluctant to work across generational lines in increasingly dynamic work environments. "This disconnect," as explained in the ACE report on older adults and higher education, "presents an opportunity for colleges and universities to partner with businesses and other organizations to train and place older adults in high-demand jobs."[21]

Very aware of other possible hindrances to lifelong learning in Chattanooga, participants suggested that every effort should be made to eradicate roadblocks resulting from cultural or other differences. To overcome obstacles to learning, they advocated for the development of appropriate learning strategies to meet the varying needs of learners.

Another barrier to lifelong learning that Chattanooga shares with many communities is a lack of mobility options. Older adults must be able to physically reach lifelong learning activities that they wish to attend. Transportation emerged as a key concern for participants in this breakout session, who noted that classes should be available beyond classrooms, in neighborhoods, and that more older adults could participate if they are trained to use the Chattanooga area transportation system.

This group also noted that older adults are not just learners, but also can be the teachers. They highlighted the role older adults can serve in their communities by sharing their interest in such things as arts and culture through mentoring, conducting intergenerational programs and sharing their knowledge in a variety of fields in many other contexts.

Breakout Recommendations: Lifelong Learning

Complete a community-wide needs assessment of lifelong learning opportunities in Chattanooga that include the requirements of all age groups. The group agreed that educational opportunities are a long-standing deficit in the Chattanooga area, and that the focus could be intergenerational. The group also proposed that current needs should be identified first, with a separate evaluation of future needs to follow. Participants also suggested that Chattanooga's lifelong learning programs should be benchmarked for comparison with other communities, and that its library system should be funded at a much higher level.

Expand transportation options to enable many more residents to participate in learning and communication across cultures. The breakout session focused on the role of transportation in fostering learning opportunities that can overcome barriers of age, cultures and distance. By connecting people from diverse neighborhoods—who might otherwise not meet each other—residents from diverse neighborhoods and ethnic groups have the chance to learn together and share their experiences.

Lifelong Learning

"Structural barriers related to outreach, programming, scheduling, and transportation continue to stymie efforts to make lifelong learning more accessible."[22]

Major Themes Emerge: The Whole is Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts

The breakout sessions covered a broad spectrum, but treated the elements of livability for all ages as distinct categories to give detailed attention to each one. In the end, however, the creation of livable communities encompasses their housing and mobility options, the access they provide to employment, lifelong learning and comprehensive information resources, their support for healthy aging and the ways in which these features and others complement each other. They are interdependent parts of a greater whole. Take one element away, and livability is seriously diminished.

For example, the fundamental role of mobility options in a livable community for all ages was noted repeatedly in the breakout sessions. When a range of accessible, convenient mobility options are available, residents face few obstacles to partaking in social and community life and lifelong learning, traveling to employment, to shops and theaters and returning to homes that support aging in place. Likewise, ample and varied employment opportunities enable a community to prosper, to have the wherewithal to offer affordable housing and mobility options and greater opportunity for lifelong learning and healthy aging.

Great local leaders constantly reassess the capacity of community features essential to livability for all and the thoroughness of their integration. They also must continually recalibrate and balance competing requirements, as communities are dynamic and the needs of their residents never static. This is particularly the case in planning for the age wave as unprecedented numbers of older residents, most of whom will enjoy long lives, expect their communities to accommodate their hopes of aging in place.

Chattanooga, as do all communities around the country, has its work cut out for it as it begins planning a livable community for all ages. Participants in the workshop breakout sessions developed an exhaustive list of desirable features of livable communities and, with a generous spirit, confronted the many issues associated with meeting the needs of aging residents. They embraced an intergenerational approach and deplored the stigma associated with aging—and showed great interest in finding ways to change negative attitudes. Workshop participants also expressed their desire for a Chattanooga where cultures, neighborhoods and ages routinely mix.

While their conversations cut across a broad swath of issues relevant to livable communities for all ages, workshop attendees ranked improvements in public transportation in Chattanooga very high in terms of priorities and highlighted the pressing need for a single, comprehensive source of information about services for those who are aging or disabled. They also emphasized their desire to replicate the virtues of neighbors helping neighbors and closely knit neighborhoods.

Participants in the workshop breakouts also articulated their interest in solutions that engage and support all ages. They want the generations to work together, to share their lives and interests, and to sustain each other.

Chattanooga is already thinking big, and wants to develop a comprehensive plan that accounts for all aspects of livability for those aging in place—and for all residents. Chattanooga's leaders recognize that achieving its ambitious agenda depends on community wide, multi-sector partnerships.

Chattanooga, so practiced in the art of partnerships, is off to a great start. In this community where civic engagement is the norm, many residents, including those who are older, will soon be working to make sure Chattanooga is a livable community for all ages.

Aging Friendly Innovations: Best Practices

Chattanooga and Tennessee Best Practices

Chattanooga Climate Action Plan

This recently adopted plan is an example of Chattanooga's ability to engage citizens and multi-sector leadership in creating a plan for the city's future. In this case, the mayor appointed a Green Committee to fulfill a pledge he had made in signing the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. The Committee developed a comprehensive plan that will engage community volunteers, local businesses and industry, schools and other civic organizations. The goals include environmental protections in energy efficiency, the built environment, food and agriculture, transportation and natural resources.

To learn more, visit http://www.chattanooga.gov/Final_CAP_adopted.pdf

Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise

Founded in 1986, civic, business and political leaders created the Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise, Inc. (CNE) to develop more affordable housing in the city. CNE, which acts as the clearinghouse for low-income housing activities in the city, initially developed a ten year plan, working with the Enterprise Foundation, the national organization that supports low-income housing initiatives. CNE describes its mission as improving the lives of "low to moderate income Chattanoogans by building strong, sustainable neighborhoods and by fostering homeownership" and its work now sometimes includes mixed-use development. An affiliate of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, CNE has also played an important role in revitalizing the city through rehabilitating dilapidated properties.

To learn more, visit http://www.cneinc.org/History.htm

Chattanooga Stand

Chattanooga Stand conducted a visioning process that replicates the approach of Vision 2000 (See next Best Practice). Stand has surveyed 26,000 residents about the future of Chattanooga during the summer and fall of 2009. Stand asked the following questions:

- What do you like about the Chattanooga region?

- Imagine the best possible Chattanooga region. Describe it.

- What challenges must be addressed?

- What actions, big or small, can you take to help?

Residents from diverse socioeconomic and racial groups were surveyed. The data and analysis will be made public in 2010. Stand expects that the outcome will be that, as a community, Chattanooga will "identify shared priorities, through public dialogue, build stronger connections between residents, leaders and organizations, and collaborate to turn vision into action."

To learn more, visit http://chattanoogastand.com/

Chattanooga Venture/Community Vision

Chattanooga Venture was created in 1984 to encourage Chattanooga's residents and organizations to collaborate on the creation of a vision for its future. Chattanooga had serious problems to overcome, including racial discord and a general state of decline. Chattanooga Venture asked citizens to think big and express their views on what would be required to make Chattanooga a great place to live. Over a 20 week period, following considerable discussion and deliberation by 1700 people, 40 goals were selected with a completion date of 2000. Their work was captured in "Vision 2000", which defined the goals and priorities to which community participants had agreed. The results were 223 projects that cost more than $800,000,000. Chattanooga Venture, which became a model for many cities around the country, achieved its mission.

To learn more, visit http://www.sustainable.org/casestudies/tennessee/TN_af_chattanooga.html

Retire Tennessee
Nashville, Tennessee

Featuring ten participating counties, including Hamilton, where Chattanooga is located, Retire Tennessee is an initiative of the Community Development Division of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. Its website boasts of Tennessee's central location— as it is bordered by eight states— and notes its varied geography, cost of living, moderate climate, musical heritage, 54 state parks and much more. Tennessee also prides itself on its green initiatives and environmental sustainability and recommends the state as a desirable location for retirees who share those concerns.

To learn more, visit http://retiretennessee.org

National Best Practices

Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC)
Nationwide

Aging and Disability Resource Centers were established through collaboration of the Administration on Aging (AoA) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to test new approaches for improving availability of and access to information for older adults, people with disabilities and their families. Many agencies and organizations provide relevant services, but finding out what is available has often been extremely difficult because intake, assessment and eligibility functions have been fragmented. The Centers are tasked to coordinate with the relevant agencies and organizations to provide and integrate information about all available services for older adults and individuals with disabilities in the communities they serve. Centers provide one-stop shopping for information and counseling and access to programs and services. AoA and CMS expect that an ARDC "improves the ability of state and local governments to monitor program quality through centralized data collection and evaluation."

To learn more, visit http://www.aoa.gov/AoAroot/AoA_Programs/HCLTC/ADRC/index.aspx#purpose

Community Advocates for Rural Elders Partnership (CARE)
Port Angeles, Washington

One of the 16 sites receiving funds from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program, Community Partnerships for Older Adults, CARE has engaged approximately 300 individuals and organizations that focus on the needs of those who are aging, including five Native American tribes in rural areas of Clallam County, Washington. Through interviews, surveys and listening sessions, CARE conducted a needs assessment. In the process, CARE learned that "people wanted to be active, productive members of society whose lives had purpose and meaning." CARE also determined that "services were needed to combat social isolation and elderly depression." Some CARE activities include: a neighborhood watch program that prepares isolated seniors to handle emergencies; counseling programs to "combat social isolation" and to 'identify mild to moderate depression" for referral to mental health providers; advocacy on behalf of seniors; analysis of service delivery systems to "improve access for older adults" and to create "protocols for collaboration across systems to ensure that elderly residents do not fall through the cracks."

To learn more, visit http://www.nwpublichealth.org/docs/nph/f2007/lowe_f2007.pdf

Community for a Lifetime
Dunedin, Florida

In response to the Community for a Lifetime Initiative sponsored by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, Dunedin was one of the first to apply for the designation. Participating communities must assess the elder readiness of services and opportunities to "encourage independence and quality of life for older adults." They must also collaborate with partners such as government agencies, businesses, educational organizations and non-profits, which support development of community amenities. As a result of its assessment, the first completed for the Initiative, Dunedin instituted a sidewalk improvement program to "complete connections within and between neighborhoods and the downtown, and to install ramps where needed."

To learn more, visit http://www.communitiesforalifetime.org

Cycling and Walking Master Plans
Seattle, Washington

Known as a haven for outdoor enthusiasts, Seattle has confirmed its reputation by engaging its citizens and staff in developing master plans for transportation, biking and walking. The bicycle master plan was approved by the mayor and city council in 2007, and the pedestrian master plan was approved in 2009. Views of citizens solicited through public hearings and citizen advisory groups contributed significantly to the plans, as did Seattle's land use planners, health department and public works staffs and other stakeholders. The perspectives of older adults and those with disabilities were an important consideration throughout the planning phases.

To Learn more, visit http://www.seattle.gov/Transportation/bikemaster.htm and
http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~ordpics/31157_ata.pdf

Elders Share the Arts
Brooklyn, New York

Launched in 1979, Elders Share the Arts (ESTA) is an organization that promotes healthy aging through participation in the arts. ESTA fosters "an understanding of the vital relationship between creative expression and healthy aging." ESTA offers a wide range of programs and partners with a number of local artists, cultural institutions and senior centers in the community. One program, "Generating Community," brings schoolchildren and older adults together on a weekly basis to create various art forms that explore one another's stories and backgrounds. In the program "Storytelling, Reminiscence, and Life Review," participants join workshops where they explore memories and experiences for sharing with others. The workshops take place at a variety of venues including senior centers libraries, naturally occurring retirement communities, adult day health centers and long term care facilities. "Legacy Works" enables seniors to "transform memories and life experiences into plays, journals, poetry, photography, and visual art, including collage, painting and mural projects.

To learn more, visit http://www.elderssharethearts.org/programs/living1.html.

Lifelong Communities
Atlanta, Georgia

The Atlanta Area Agency on Aging, as a division of the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), has direct and daily access to the ARC's leaders and land use planning staff. This relationship has been a boon to the AAA's ability to develop its Lifelong Communities program. The Commission and its Area Agency on Aging have provided leadership that explores the needs of the region's aging residents and seeks the best approaches for meeting their needs and figures out a way to plan regionally while clearly recognizing that livable communities are created locally, block by block.

The Commission's goals are to promote housing and transportation options, encourage healthy lifestyles and expand information and access across the region. The ARC describes its planning process as transforming "the region from the bottom up. Rather than create one regional plan that local communities implement, professionals with a wide range of expertise, older adults and caregivers form local county-based partnerships. These community groups then analyze the local data, challenges and opportunities, identify priorities and implement strategies."

To create representative models for the Atlanta region that can be useful for the rest of the country, the ARC and Duany, Plater-Zybeck and Company conducted a nine-day charrette. Five Atlanta region communities that are suburban in character were selected as the subjects of the charrette. Detailed model plans, including zoning considerations, were created for the communities. For each community, seven issues were examined: connectivity, pedestrian access and transit, neighborhood retail and services, social interaction, dwelling types, healthy living and consideration for existing residents.

To learn more, visit http://www.atlantaregional.com/documents/LLCReport_Cover_TOC.pdf.

Older Dominion Partnership
State of Virginia

The Older Dominion Partnership brings together many leaders in Richmond and around the state who decided to prepare the Commonwealth of Virginia for the age wave. While the board of the Partnership is largely Richmond based, it has nonetheless embarked on an ambitious agenda: to influence every community in the state to develop a plan to accommodate the increasing numbers of their aging residents, notably the boomers. As its partners include academics and others who specialize in demographic research, the Older Dominion Partnership's approach is rigorous. Currently it is focusing on publicizing future population trends in Virginia, as the facts about the huge spike in the numbers of aging make a persuasive case that communities must prepare now. The ODP is playing the role of a Patrick Henry of the age wave, announcing to communities throughout Virginia that they will be swamped by the wave if they don't begin to prepare now.

While its message conveys a sense of urgency, the ODP appears to be leaving nothing to chance. Its own preparations have been completed by committees that draw on the expertise and resources of its many partners, which include the philanthropic community and foundations, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the business, academic and non-profit communities. It intends to support community planning through making comprehensive data research available as well as disseminating national, state and local reports, and successful strategies and best practices from Virginia and around the country.

To learn more, visit http://www.olderdominion.org.

Westchester Public/Private Partnership for Aging Services
Westchester County, New York

Over the past two decades, a broad-based group of leaders, representing business, aging organizations, elected officials, planning organizations and others has collaborated to forge a cross-cutting approach to aging and community planning in Westchester County. A large and increasingly diverse suburban area just north of New York City, the County recognized early the need to accommodate an increasing aging population. Led by the Commissioner of the Department of Senior Programs and Services (DSPS), the Partnership was created in 1991. In 2000, it intensified its efforts through engaging 270 volunteers from all walks of life, including attorneys, business people and consumer advocates, to convene 18 caucuses on issues such as transportation, diversity and intergenerational learning. Each caucus included subject experts and stakeholders. The planning process was funded by private grants and donations. DSPS and its partners have developed a county-wide initiative, Livable Communities: A Vision for All Ages.

To learn more, visit http://www.westchesterpartnership.org/ or check A Blueprint for Action: Developing a Livable Community for All Ages, page 56.

Appendix: Workshop Agenda

Building Partnerships: Creating a Livable Community for All Ages
(Choose Chattanooga: Come Live with Us)

June 30, 2009
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Brainerd United Methodist Church

9:00 a.m.   **Welcoming Remarks and Introductions**
The Honorable Ron Littlefield, *Mayor, City of Chattanooga*
Steve Witt, *Director, Southeast Tennessee Agency on Aging and Disability*
Linda Bennett, *Executive Director, Choose Chattanooga*

9:10 a.m.   **Creating Livable Communities for All Ages: Aging in Place Initiative**
Robert McNulty, *President, Partners for Livable Communities*

9:20 a.m.   **Chattanooga: The Place to Live and Grow**
Sandy Markwood, *Executive Director, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging*

10:00 a.m.   **Charge to breakout participants**
Linda Bennett, *Executive Director, Choose Chattanooga*

10:05 a.m.   **Breakout Sessions**
  • A Place for Everyone
  • Lifelong Learning
  • Healthy Living
  • Building for the Future

11:15 a.m.   **Group Reports and Facilitated Discussion**
  • Facilitator: Linda Bennett

12:15 p.m.   **"JumpStart the Conversation" Grant Overview**

12:25 p.m.   **Lunch and Networking Opportunities**

Appendix: Workshop Participants

Carol Adams
BrightStar of Greater Chattanooga

Marie Alcorn
CAC Office on Aging

Kadir Ameen

Kay Andrews

Shelley Andrews
Friends of Moccasin Bend National Park

Connie Atkins
Hamilton County Department of Education

Dinah Bailes
Morning Pointe

Rich Bailey
Bailey Communications

Terry Barker
River Street Architecture

Cathrine Bays
Southeast TN Development District

Linda Bennett
Choose Chattanooga

Andy Berke

Carol Berz

Jennu Berz

Laura Bey
The Bethlehem Center

T. Danise Birchfield
Memorial Home Health

Dawn Blackwell
Erlanger Health System

Ron Blankenbaker
UT College of Medicine Chattanooga

Michael Bond
Seniors Home Mortgage

Ernestine Bowers
GNRC Area Agency on Aging & Disability

Carolyn Boyd
Signal Centers, Inc.

Aaron Bradley
East Tennessee AAA

Becky Browder
Independent Healthcare Properties, LLC

Amy Broyles
Knox County

Mary Brugger-Murphy
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)

Diana Bullock

Jim Cantanzoro

Mike Carter

Courtney Chandler
Signal Centers, Inc.

Garnet Chapin
Parks Foundation

Rebecca Chapman

Russell Cliche
HCDE

Nancy Cogar
Chattanooga-Hamilton County Bicentennial Library

Aaron Collier
Collier Construction

Ethan Collier
Collier Construction Company

John Coniglio

Eleanor Cooper

Michael Cooper
SunTrust Bank

Lulu Copeland

Denise Cothern
Fairfield Inn of Chattanooga

Missy Crutchfield
City of Chattanooga

Anne Curtis

Casey Davison
Metlife

Genevieve DeHoog

Mark Dowling
Humana MarketPOINT

Dawn Dunn
The Lanter at Morning Pointe

Helen Eltzeroth
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)

Chris Eslinger
Metlife

Iona Farrar

Mike Feely

Richard Floyd
TN General Assembly

Suzanne Foster
Independent Healthcare Properties,
LLC

Rob Fowler
River Street Architecture

Adam Green
Hire Here

Chris Gregory
SunTrust Bank

Tamika Griggs
The Rush

Teresa Groves

Elana Gulas
CreateHere

Zibin Guo
UTC

Caprill Hacker
The Ochs Center for Metropolitan
Studies

Jennifer Harper
SunTrust

Kathi Harrah
Southeast TN Area Agency on Aging
and Disability

Allen Harris
Humana

Connie Havis
Hospice of Chattanooga

Jim "Buddy" Hayes
Metlife

Courtney Head
BrightStar Healthcare of Greater
Chattanooga

Andy Hodes
Keller Williams Realty

Pat Holloway
Parkridge Medical Center

Jay Hopkins
Midfield Acres Community
Asscoiation

Karen Hundt
Planning & Design Studio

John Jackson
Creative Initiatives

Jonathan Jackson
Metlife

Janna Jahn
Community Consulting Services

Traci Jennings
Erlanger Health System

Mark Jones
Pre Paid Legal Services, Inc.

Donna Killian
SunTrust Bank

Jane King

Sandra Kurtz
Urban Century Institute

Lila Lesley
St. Barnabas Senior Living Services

Ron Littlefield
City of Chattanooga

Molly Littleton
Signal Centers

Christa Mannarino
Association for Visual Arts

Sandy Markwood
National Association of Area
Agencies on Aging (n4a)

J. Ed. Marston
Chattanooga Area Chamber of
Commerce

Tony Mavredes
PHS

Brian May

Marvis McKeldin
TMCC

Ed McMahon
UTC

Robert McNulty
Partners for Livable Communities

Patricia Miller
AAAD

Naveed Minhas
CHA

Elaine Montgomery

Barbara Monty
Knox County CAC Office on Aging

Art Moran

Jennifer Nichols
Signal Centers

Maria Noel
Renewal Community

Chris Nystrom
CreateHere

Sam Oberlin

Wayne Owens
STS, Inc.

Kay Parish
Friends of Chick & Chatt Natl
Mil Park

Becki Patterson

Veronica Peebles
CARTA

Catherine Pippin
Southeast TN Area Agency on
Aging and Disability

John Poteet
Metlife

Rick Rader
Orange Grove Center

Valerie Radu
University of TN Chattanooga

Jill Ralston
Independent Healthcare
Properties, LLC

Betsy Ranalli
US Senator Bob Corker

Vic Richardson
Caldsted Foundation

Judy Roberson
UCDD/AAAD

Sally Robinson

Brenda Rose
Critical Signal Technologies

Karen Rudolph
Lyndhurst Foundation

Ann Rybolt

Dan Saieed
Hamilton County Government

Betty Severyn

Sue Shaw

Stacie Smith
Southeast TN Area Agency on
Aging and Disability

Geri Spring
Alton Park Development
Corporation

Kristi Strode
Southeast Tennessee
Development District

Lesia Stuart
Blue Cross Blue Shield

Tim Swafford

Jean Pierre "JP" Tapia
Metlife

Deborah Taube
St. Barnabas

Bekah Tuggy
Alexian Grove

Melissa Turner
City of Chattanooga

Jamie Tyson
Southeast TN Development
District

Greg Vital
Independent Healthcare
Properties, LLC

Langhorne Waterhouse
UT-College of Medicine

Nancy Watts
Chattanooga State

Katie Welch
BrightStar Healthcare

Kathy Whitaker
First TN Area Agency on Aging
and Disability

Eddie Wilkes
Seniors Home Mortgage

Patrick Willard
AARP

Holly Williams
UCDD/AAAD

Steve Witt
Southeast TN Area Agency on
Aging and Disability

Monte Wyne

Nan Zamata
Midfield Acres Community
Association

Lawrence Zehnder
Chattanooga Parks and
Recreation

Appendix: Resources

Chattanooga Local Links

Chattanooga Stand
http://chattanoogastand.com

Create Here
http://createhere.org/

Southeast Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability
http://www.setaaad.org/www

National Links

Aging in Place Initiative: Developing Livable Communities for All Ages
http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org

Partners for Livable Communities
http://www.livable.org

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
http://www.n4a.org

AARP
http://www.aarp.org

AdvantAge Initiative
http://www.vnsny.org/advantage/

American Association on Health and Disability
http://www.aahd.us/page.php

American Planning Association
http://www.planning.org

American Public Transportation Association
http://www.apta.com

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http://www.ap.buffalo.edu/idea/Visitability/

Center for Universal Design, North Carolina State University
http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/

Clearinghouse for Home and Community-Based Services
http://www.hcbs.org/

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http://www.projectaction.org

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http://www.hud.gov/news/release.cfm?content=pr09-023.cfm

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http://www.adaptiveenvironments.org/

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http://www.icma.org

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National Center for Senior Transportation
http://www.seniortransportation.net

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http://www.ncd.gov/

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http://www.nga.org

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http://www.nia.nih.gov

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http://www.adata.org/

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http://www.homemods.org

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http://www.smartgrowth.org

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http://www.tjpdc.org/index.asp

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http://www.access-board.gov/

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About the Aging in Place Initiative Team

Partners for Livable Communities (Partners)—A national, non-profit organization working to renew communities for all ages. Partners has over twenty-five years of experience in solving community problems by providing information, leadership and guidance that help communities help themselves. www.livable.org

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)—A leading voice on aging issues for Area Agencies on Aging across the country and a champion for Title VI-Native American aging programs in our nation's capital. Through its presence in Washington, D.C., n4a advocates on behalf of the local aging agencies to ensure that needed resources and support services are available to older Americans and their caregivers. www.n4a.org
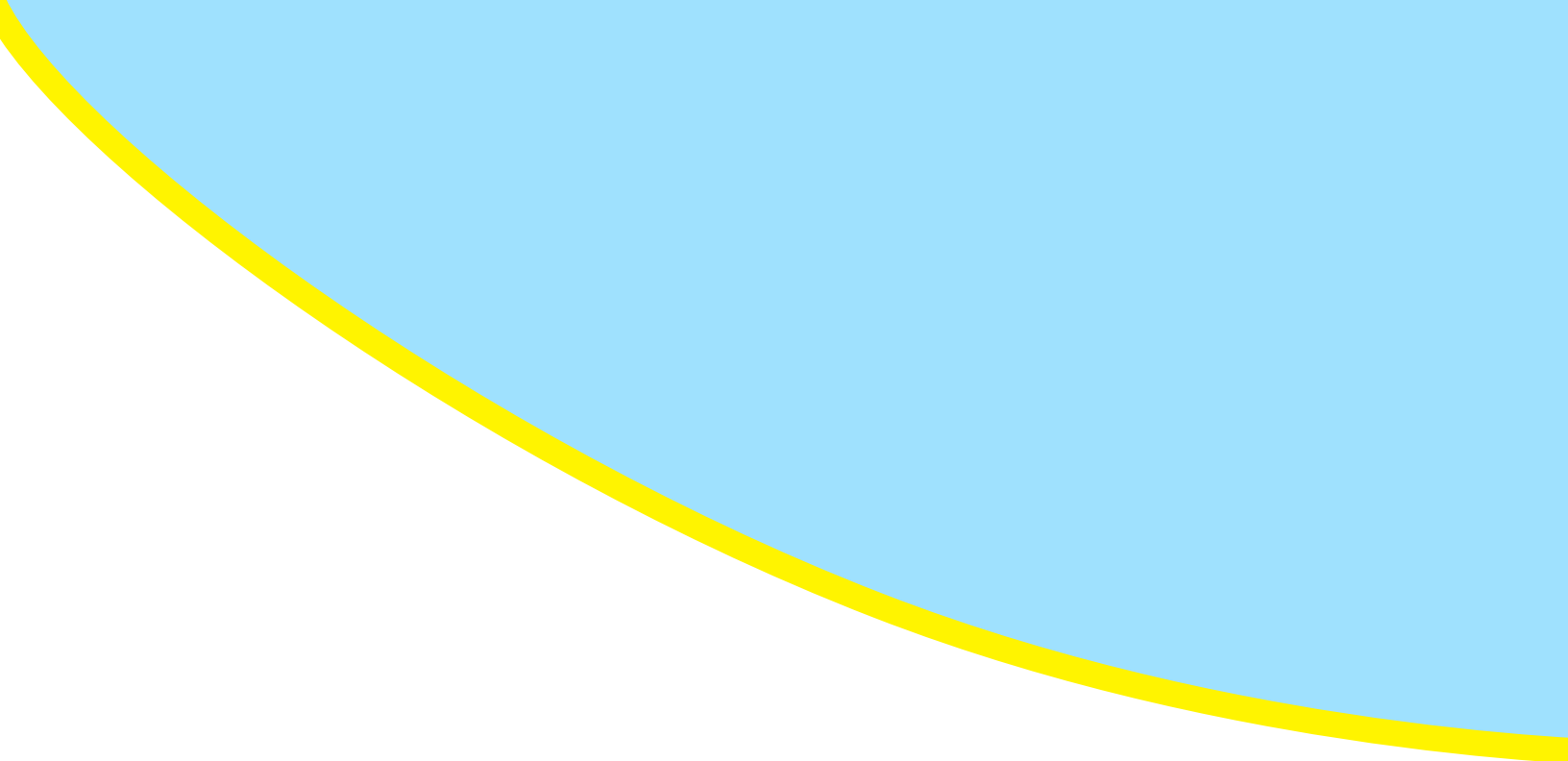
ICMA (International City/County Management Association)—The premiere local government leadership and management organization. http://icma.org

National League of Cities (NLC)—The largest national organization representing municipal governments throughout the United States. www.nlc.org

National Association of Counties (NACo)—A national organization representing county governments in the US. www.naco.org

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Partners for Livable Communities
1429 21st Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
202-887-5990
www.livable.org

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
1730 Rhode Island Ave., NW, Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20036
202-872-0888
www.n4a.org

www.aginginplaceinitiative.org