



Creating a Community for a Lifetime

An Action Plan for an Age-friendly/Livable
Rochester and Monroe County

SPRING 2022



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Introduction



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Rochester and Monroe County



Creating a Community for a Lifetime

An Action Plan for an Age-friendly/Livable Rochester and Monroe County

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An Action Plan for an Age-friendly/Livable Rochester and Monroe County

“Monroe County should champion the Livable Communities (Age-Friendly) model. A Livable/Age Friendly community is one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and offers supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources help enhance personal independence, support residents to age in place, and foster engagement in the community’s civic, economic and social life.”

The Monroe County Transition Report, February, 2020.

Background

Our community, like our nation, is aging. This reality is fostering a national and even worldwide movement about how to make communities more age-friendly and more livable for all.

A Global Network on Age-Friendly Cities and Communitiesⁱ was established in 2010 by the World Health Organization (WHO) to connect cities, communities, and organizations worldwide who share a common vision of making their localities a great place to live longer. It focuses on action at local levels that fosters the full participation of older people in community life and promotes healthy and active aging. As an affiliate of the WHO effort, AARP formed a network of “Age-Friendly Communities”ⁱⁱ to help cities prepare for a growing population of older adults. More than 1,100 cities, counties, towns, and villages counties across the country have already committed to the WHO’s guiding principles for age-friendly communities.

It is time for Monroe County/Rochester to join the national age-friendly movement. This report, *Creating a Community for a Lifetime*, fulfills the pledge of County Executive Adam Bello to champion an age-friendly plan for Monroe County. Developed in partnership with the Rochester/Monroe County Aging Alliance, this plan reflects the commitment of Monroe County to create an inclusive, age-friendly community for all its citizens and includes an Action Plan submitted to AARP for inclusion in the national network

Moreover, this report is a blueprint local governments, nonprofits, funders, and residents can use to make our community a better place to live and age.

Age-Friendly Communities have Three Characteristics.

1. Age is not a significant barrier to the maintenance of life-long interests and activities.
2. Supports and accommodations exist to enable individuals with age-related disabilities to meet basic health and social needs.
3. Opportunities exist for older adults to develop new sources of fulfillment and engagement.

“In practical terms, an age-friendly community adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Why Strive to Become an Age-Friendly Community?

1. The Age Wave.

More of us are living longer. The confluence of increasing longevity and the aging of the baby boom generation is creating an unprecedented age wave. The leading edge of the boomer generation, once the largest in history, is turning 76 in 2022 at a time when advances in health care are resulting in longer lifespans. The age wave is a key trend which will continue to swell the number of people 65 and older in our community well into this century.

2. Economics

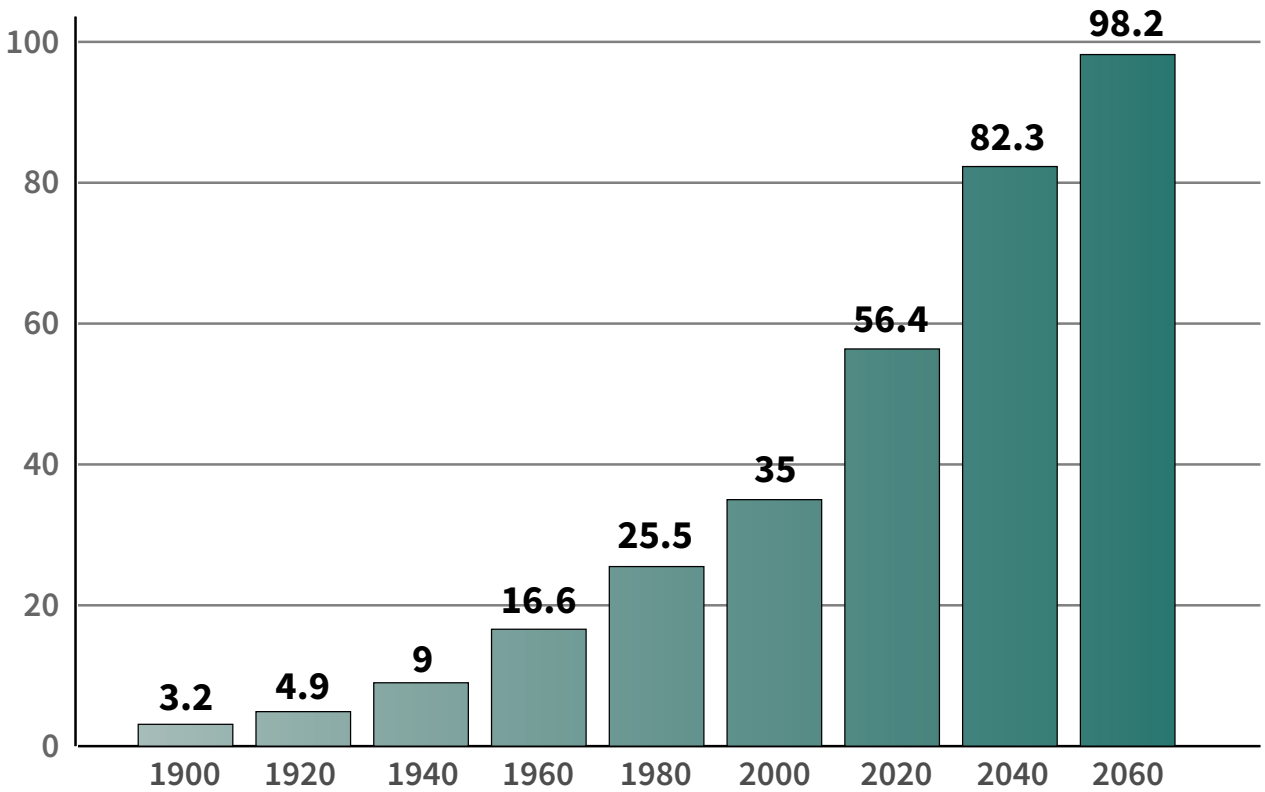
Older adults fuel the economy. The 2016 report, *The Longevity Economy*^{iv} by Oxford Economics found:

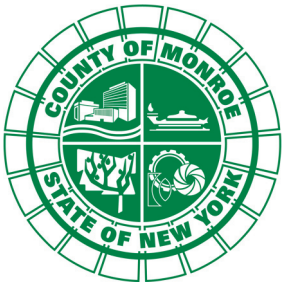
- The “longevity economy” is one of the most vital in the U.S., with 106 million people over the age of 50 collectively responsible for \$7.6 trillion in annual economic activity, spending \$4.6 trillion on consumer goods and services, and the health care industry.
- Eighty-three percent of U.S. household wealth is held by people 50 and older.

3. Assets

Older adults are a community asset with a lifetime of experience and knowledge. As most hospitals and many nonprofits can attest, older adults give back thousands of hours of volunteer service each year in fulfilling roles which also boost their health and wellness.

Historical & Projected Growth in U.S. 65+ 1900 to 2060 (in millions)





Office of the County Executive
Monroe County, New York

Adam J. Bello
County Executive

March 16, 2022

Dear Monroe County Resident,

In 2019, our county joined the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities, recognizing our community's desire to create a place where older adults, can live and thrive. Since that time, our own Monroe County Office for the Aging and the Rochester Monroe County Aging Alliance have engaged older adults, businesses, organizations, and County departments, to create a comprehensive plan for our County.

I am honored to support *Creating a Community for a Lifetime*, as a blueprint to make our community more age-friendly, and ultimately more livable for people of all ages.

Age-friendly communities makes sense. Our older adult population is growing. In 2015, the number of people 60 and older in our county surpassed 20% for the first time in history. Today, 23% of Monroe County's residents are 60 or older. We want older adults to be able to live here for a lifetime, to contribute to our community for a lifetime, and to be supported here in their 'home' of Monroe County for a lifetime.

Research for this report found that older adults seek respect and inclusion. Monroe County recognizes the invaluable contributions of older adults to our economy and community life — in volunteerism, consumerism, and in our workforce. We also recognize the significance of poverty among some older adults, and will support efforts to improve economic security for residents.

As in all other parts of the country, the COVID pandemic disproportionately affected older people in our County. Too many older adults became more isolated, which had a profound impact on their health and wellbeing. The pandemic also strikingly revealed the digital divide. I am happy to see recommendations and suggested action items within this report that will help address isolation, technological and other disparities blown wide open by the pandemic.

Our county departments have met with members of the Aging Alliance about what it means to create an age-friendly, livable community. All departments - from aviation to parks to veteran services — are committed to viewing our County's decisions and plans through an age-friendly "lens." This means older adults can participate fully in day-to-day life and enjoy our community's rich public spaces and services.

On behalf of Monroe County, I support an age-friendly Monroe County and I am committed to our own County departments' collaboration on this work. Thank you to all who participated in creating our 'Monroe County for a lifetime' action plan.

Sincerely,

Adam J. Bello
Monroe County Executive



January 11, 2022



Beth Finkel, Director
New York AARP
780 Third Avenue, 31st Floor
New York, NY 10017-2003

Dear Ms. Finkel:

Our elders are the backbone of our community and I am committed to their well-being. On behalf of the City of Rochester, I fully support the Age-Friendly Action Plan recommendations noted in the *Creating a Community for a Lifetime* report. Notably, this report concurs with recommendations in the City’s 2034 Comprehensive Plan regarding age-friendly issues like housing, transportation, street design, and use of recreation centers.

Our 2034 Plan recommendations which are relevant to this report include:

- Encouraging emerging and as-of-yet untapped housing types, including tiny houses (permanent, not mobile in nature), co-housing, attached single-family homes (townhouses), in-law apartments, four-family homes, and condominiums.
- Supporting the production of new, high-quality, mixed-income housing that is affordable and accessible to people across a wide range of incomes, abilities, household sizes, life stages, and ages.
- Developing a street design guide that prioritizes safety and incorporates current Fire Prevention Code standards into an urban setting, while prioritizing safe, accessible and complete streets.
- Using R-Center facilities to support non-recreation activities to expand and diversify community reach (e.g., health screenings or insurance enrollment/navigation, adult education, job training, senior programming, etc.)

I am aware that after a several decade decline, the population of older adults living within the city is increasing as the Baby Boom generation ages in place, and that 21% of our city’s 60-and-older residents—over 6,500 people—are living in poverty. Poverty does indeed occur across the lifespan, and I applaud this report for including economic security as a ninth, essential domain.

City Hall is committed to taking additional steps to support older residents including creating co-housing, intentional communities for older citizens, launching an independent Senior Stabilization Fund to help older adults stay in their homes, and implementing a City Senior Volunteer Corps, which will engage with seniors to keep them involved in our community, and make sure that we use all their talents, knowledge, and experience to help our city grow and thrive.

I often say, we have a past to remember, a present to live, and a future to look forward to. An age-friendly and livable community for all is the goal of these intertwined, and I believe, attainable efforts.

Sincerely,

Malik D. Evans
Mayor

About our Community



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Creating a Community for a Lifetime

An Action Plan for an Age-friendly/Livable Rochester and Monroe County



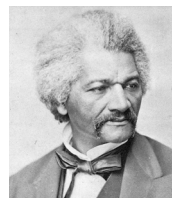
About Our Community

Our submission to the AARP Age-Friendly network includes the following overview of our local history, assets, and demographics.

Monroe County, New York encompasses the City of Rochester and multiple suburban/rural towns. The county is located on the southern shore of Lake Ontario in upstate New York. We are situated between Buffalo and Syracuse, New York.

A Rich History

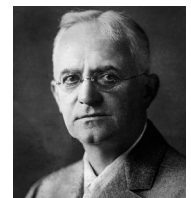
Monroe County's rich and vibrant history includes names known to most Americans. Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony both lived, worked, and are buried here. George Eastman, founder of the Eastman Kodak company, transformed the way people took pictures and preserved memories for generations across the world. While his name is not as widely known, Chester Carlson's invention of xerography (Xerox Corp.) more than 70 years ago was an extraordinary milestone in the development of the modern information age. John Jacob Bausch and Henry Lomb grew a tiny optics store into a multi-national company producing the first optical quality glass made in America, the lenses used to take the first satellite pictures of the moon and the first soft contact lenses. For much of the 20th century, Monroe County/Rochester, NY was the epicenter of innovation and technological advancement.



DOUGLASS



ANTHONY



EASTMAN



Since 2000, as these large companies downsized (Kodak once employed 65,000 people locally), our economy has shifted. While Rochester is still a player in the field of optics, the health care sector, via UR Medicine and Rochester Regional Health, has become the driving force in our economy as the largest employers. Regional businesses such as Wegmans, consistently named the number one grocery store in the U.S., and Paychex, the country’s largest HR company for small and medium-sized businesses, contribute to our economy.

It is often said that our community is a great place to raise a family. Historically, housing prices were low, and suburban towns, which grew substantially between 1970 and 2000, became havens for families with children who left the city in search of more land and better schools. As a result, the city population shrank from 296,000 in 1970 to 211,000 in 2020.

The City of Rochester, incorporated in 1834, is the urban core and cultural center of Monroe County. Split into east and west by the Genesee River, the city earned the nickname, The Flour City, in reference to its many flour mills along the Genesee’s waterfalls. Later, with a shift toward nursery and seed businesses, the nickname morphed into the Flower City, a moniker it still holds as a site of thousands of lilac bushes and an annual, springtime Lilac Festival. Today, some residents refer to Rochester as the Festival City as summer brings at least one festival a week, including a top tier Jazz Fest, along with numerous ethnic, musical, and arts/crafts gatherings.



The city, unfortunately, also has a high concentration of poverty. Several anti-poverty initiatives are underway with a focus on children and families. The Monroe County Aging Alliance and Lifespan of Greater Rochester published a report, Poverty in Later Life, in 2021 to underline the need to address the fact that one in five city residents (21%) 60+ lives below the 100% of the Official Poverty Measure of \$12,490, that the number of poor older adults living in the city is increasing, and that the poverty rate is highest for Latinx elders, nearly twice the rate of Black elders.

A Growing Population of Older Adults

Our demographic profile includes data from the county, as well as the City of Rochester, as there are several stark differences in economics and cultural identity.

It is noteworthy that 80% of the county’s older adults (60+) live in the suburban towns.

Monroe County's Older Adult Population

In 1970, just 40,000 county residents were 65 or older.

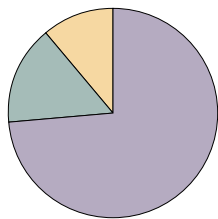
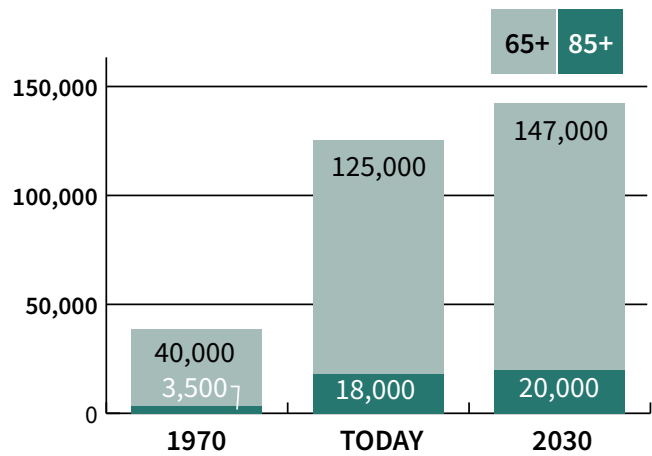
Today, 125,000 residents are 65+. The 2030 projection is 147,000.

In 1970, just 3,500 county residents were 85 or older.

Today, 18,000 residents are 85+. The 2030 projection is 20,000.

The population of Monroe County in 2020 was 759,000.

(Note: This number is from the 2020 Census Redistricting Table. All other demographics in this report were obtained from the Census 2019 5-Year American Community Survey, ACS.)



POPULATION

- 66.6% White
- 14.8% Black
- 9.5% Hispanic/Latinx

- Monroe County's population was 66.6% white, 14.8% Black and 9.5% Hispanic.
- The median household income was \$60,000.
- The median age was 38.9 years.^v

About Monroe County residents 60 and older.

- The 60+ population of 175,000 comprised 23.5% of the total population.
- Residents 60+ were 56% female.
- 85% White, 9.5% Black, 3.5% Hispanic and 2% Asian.
- 29% of people 60+ were employed.
- 8.6% lived below the poverty line, and 7.6% had incomes between 100% and 149% of the poverty line.
- 26% rented versus owned.
- 12% received SNAP benefits.
- 27% reported living with a disability.
- 6% reported knowing English "less than very well."

About Monroe County residents 65 and older.

- The 65+ population of 125,000 comprised 16.9% of the total population.
- Residents 65+ were 57% female.
- 88% White, 9% Black and 3% Hispanic.
- 17% of people 65+ were employed.
- 7.9% lived below the poverty line, and 16% had incomes below 150% of the poverty line (\$18,735 for one person.)
- 27% rented versus owned.
- 31% lived alone.
- 31% reported living with a disability.
- 6% reported speaking English "less than very well."



The City of Rochester

The city's population in 2020 was 211,000.

(Note: This number is from the 2020 Census Redistricting Table. All other demographics in this report were obtained from the 2019 5-Year American Community Survey, ACS, which has the city population at 207,000.)

About city residents 60 and older.

People 60 and older are in the fastest-growing demographic within the City of Rochester.

- The city's 60+ population of 33,000 comprised 16% of the total population.
- This cohort was 56% female.
- 52% White, 35% Black, 11% Hispanic and 2% Asian.
- 24% were employed.
- One in five, 20.8%, lived below the poverty line, and 35% had incomes below 150% of the poverty line (\$18,735 for one person.)
- 45% rented versus owned.
- 30% received SNAP benefits.
- 37% reported living with a disability.
- 2% were responsible for grandchildren.
- 11% reported speaking English "less than very well."

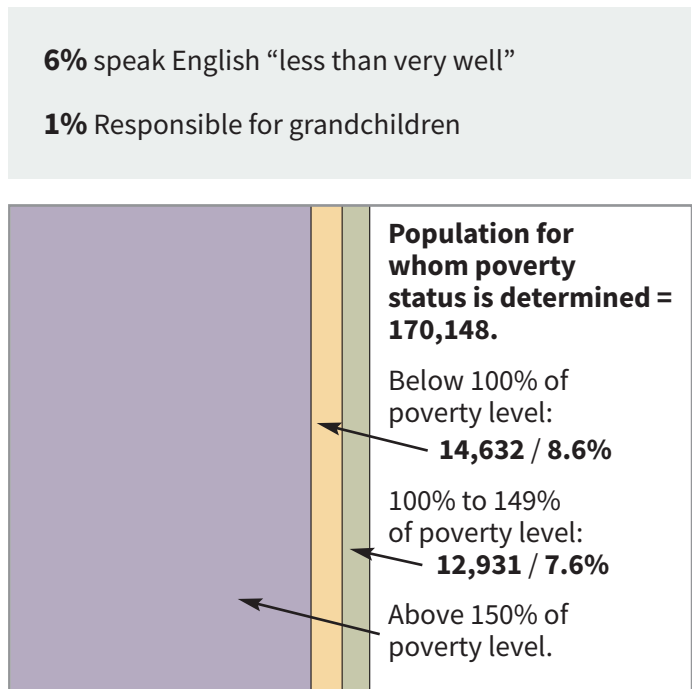
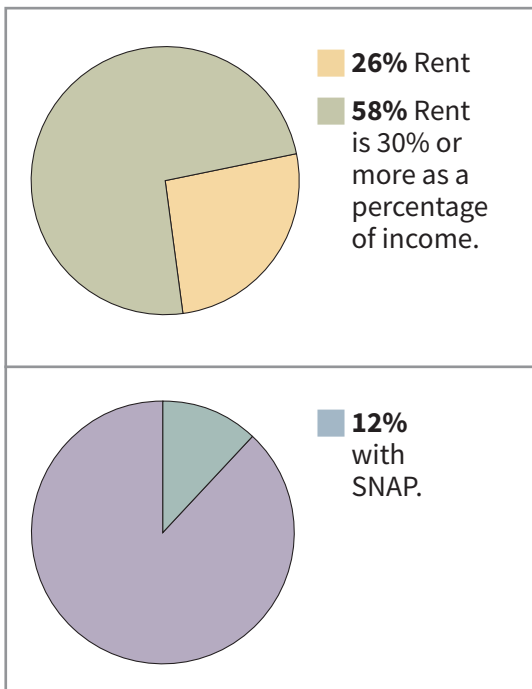
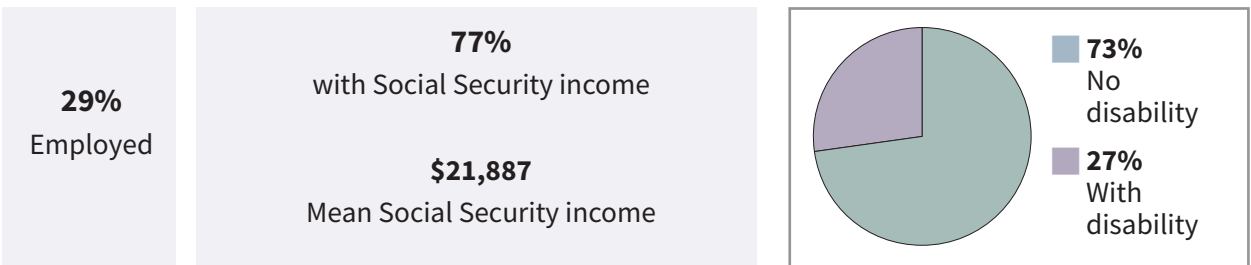
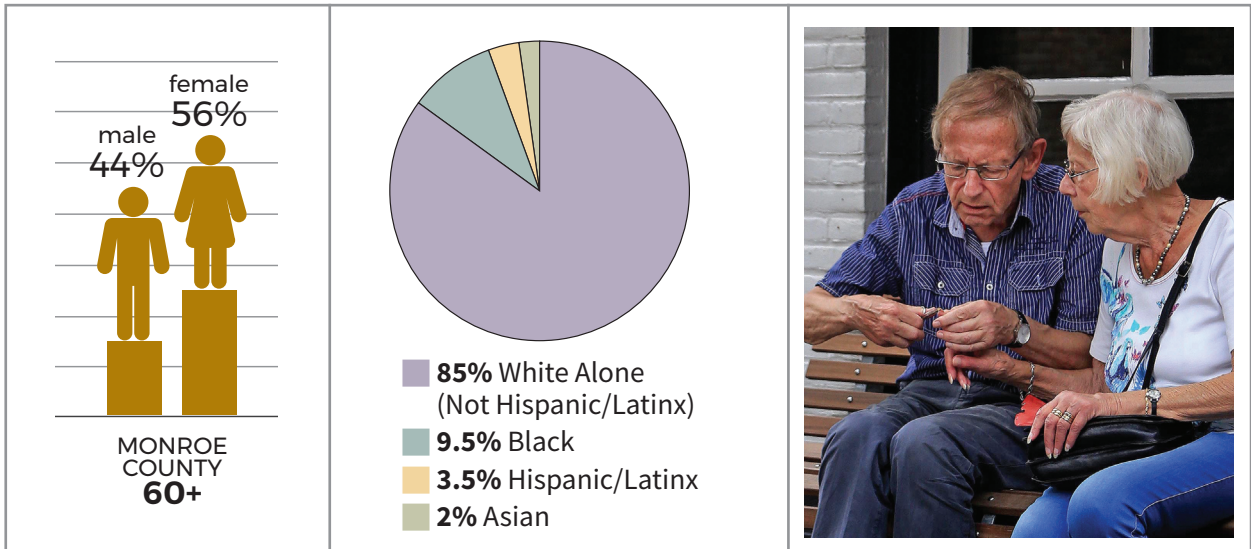
About city residents 65 and older.

- The city's 65+ population of 22,500 comprised 9.1% of the total population.
- This cohort was 58% female
- 55% White, 33.6% Black, 11.4% Hispanic.
- 15% of city residents 65+ were employed.
- 18.4% lived below the poverty line, 33% had incomes below 150% of the poverty line (\$18,735 for one person.)
- 42% rented versus owned.
- 38% reported living with a disability.
- 40% lived alone.

Monroe County 60+

POPULATION: **175,022** (23.5%)

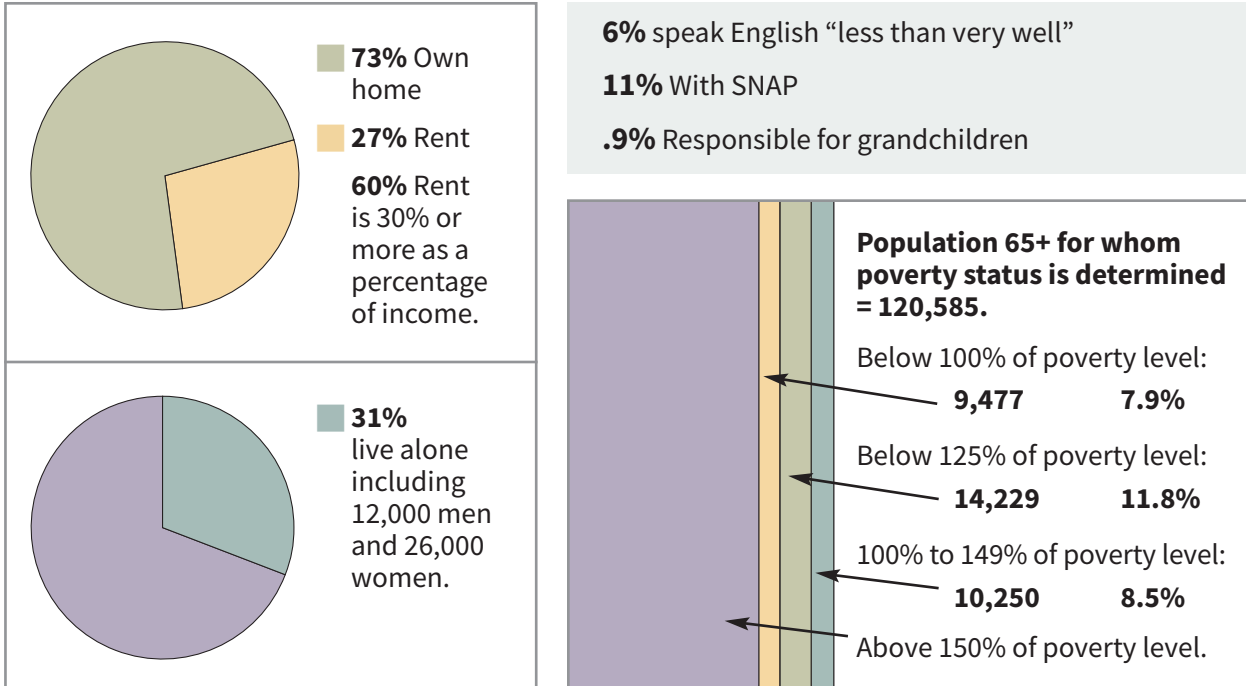
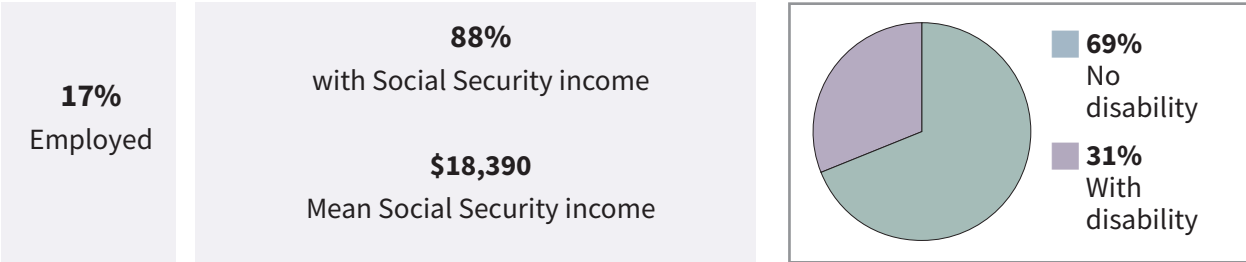
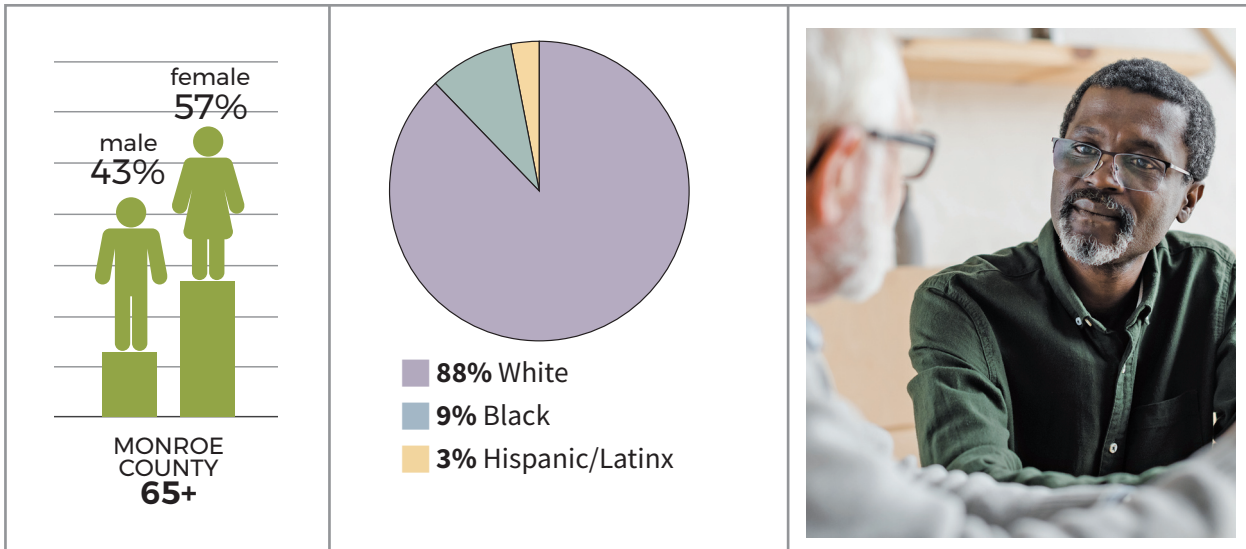
Source: 2015-2019 ACS



Monroe County 65+

POPULATION: **125,344** (16.9%)

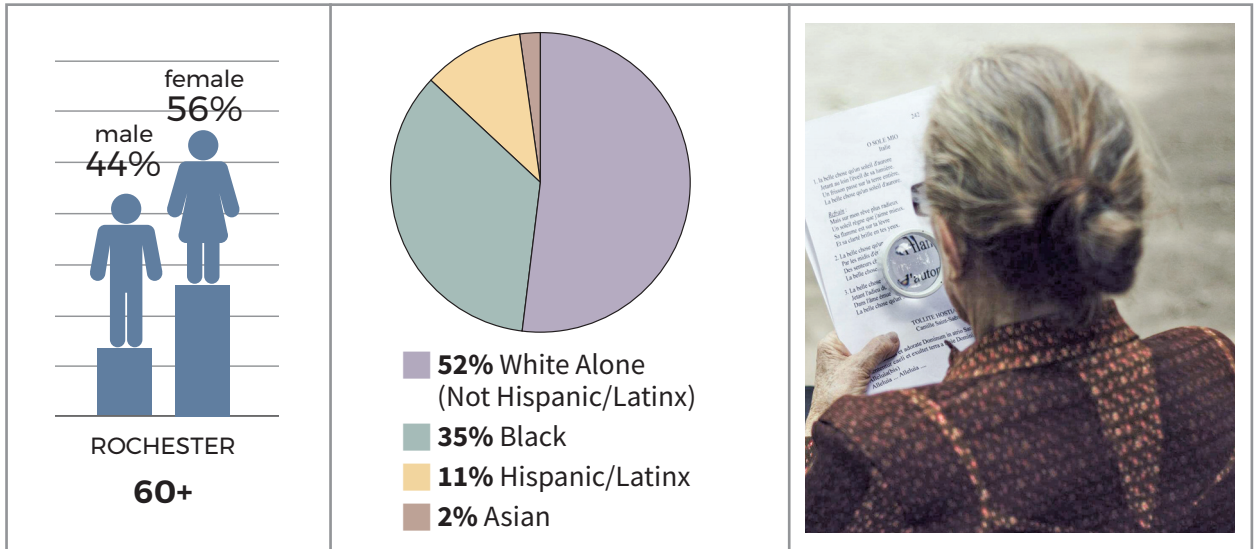
Source: 2015-2019 ACS



City of Rochester 60+

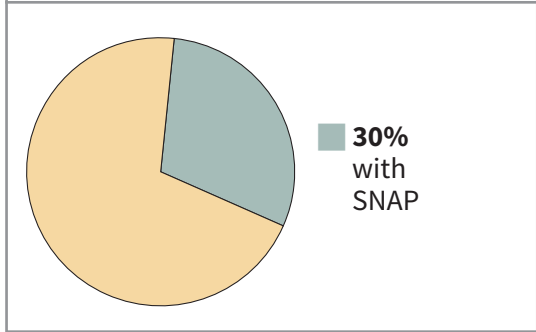
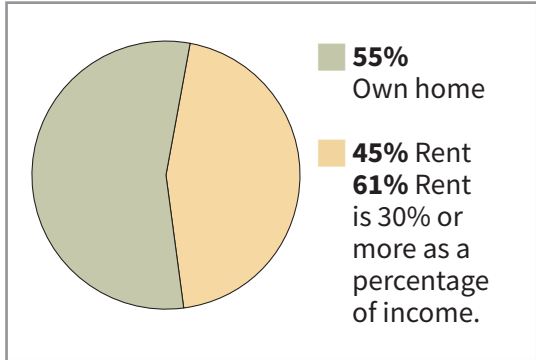
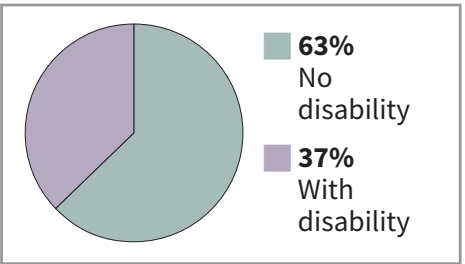
POPULATION: **33,089** (16%)

Source: 2015-2019 ACS

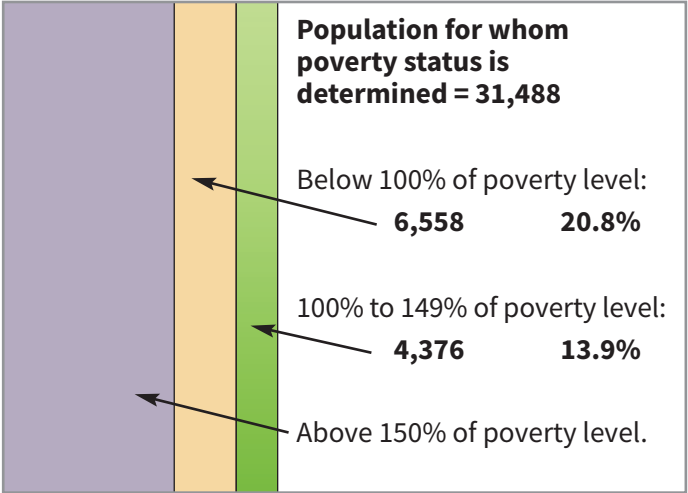


24%
Employed

11%
Speak English
"less than very well"



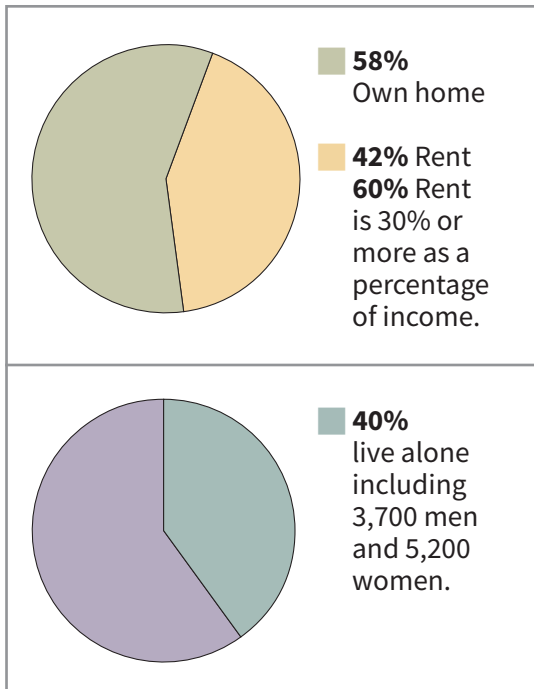
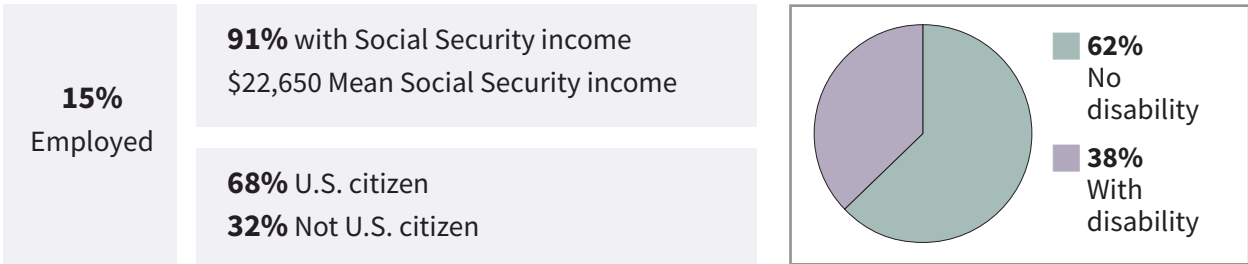
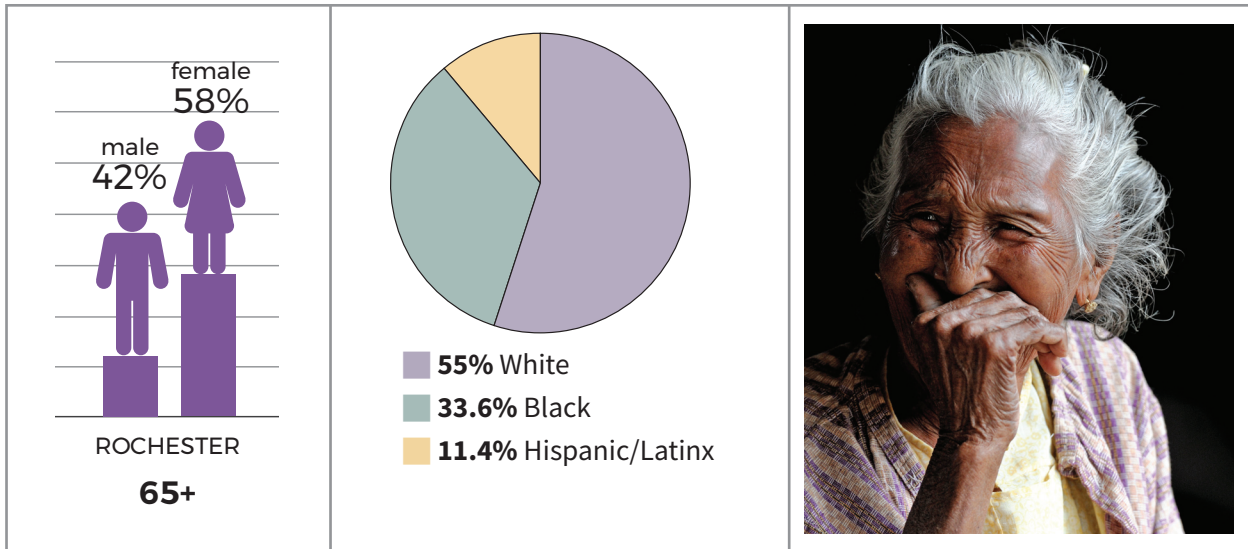
1.9% Responsible for grandchildren



City of Rochester 65+

POPULATION: **22,531** (9.1%)

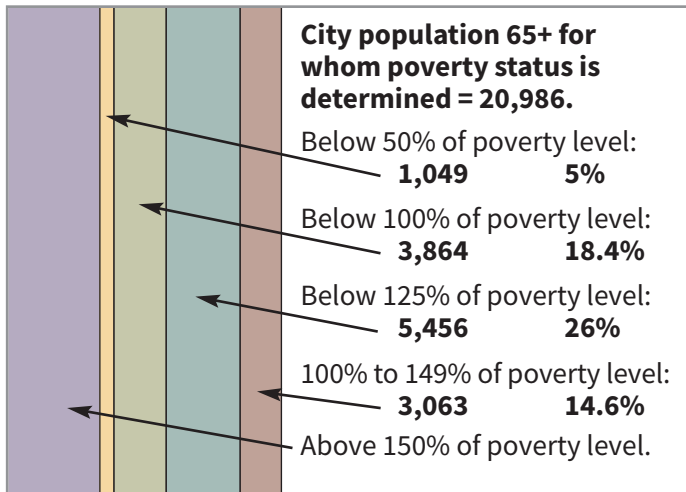
Source: 2015-2019 ACS



12% speak English “less than very well”

30% With SNAP

1.4% Responsible for grandchildren



Several towns have high concentrations of older adults.

Town	60+	Town	60+
Sweden	18.3%	Riga	26.1%
Henrietta	21.5%	Pittsford	26.4%
East Rochester	22%	Brighton	26.8%
Hamlin	22%	Greece	26.9%
Ogden	23.5%	Gates	27.5%
Clarkson	24%	Webster	27.9%
Chili	24.4%	Irondequoit	29.2%
Wheatland	24.7%	Penfield	29.5%
Parma	25.3%	Perinton	29.5%
Mendon	25.7%	Rush	32.9%



Trends Affecting Current & Future Older Adults

Nothing in society is stagnant, and this is certainly true of the trends impacting the lives of older people.

1. More Childless Older People

More people are childless than in previous generations. Of the 92.2 million adults ages 55 and older in 2018, 15.2 million (16.5% or one in six) are childless (no biological children). Childlessness is more common among the younger cohort of older adults suggesting that childless adults will make up an even greater share of the older adult population in the future.^{vi}

2. Retirement Savings Crunch

Almost half of people 55 and older have nothing saved for retirement.^{vii} Today, just 17% of private companies offer traditional defined benefit pensions once offered by 90% of companies. Some older adults need to continue working past traditional retirement age to meet their basic needs.

3. More Educated

Today's older adults are more likely to hold college degrees than previous generations, and people with higher levels of education are known to postpone retirement.

4. Greater Diversity

As the older population becomes more diverse, racial/ethnic health disparities will play a greater role in shaping overall population health.^{viii}

5. More Health Concerns

As a group, older adults today have higher rates of obesity and mobility-related impairments than previous generations.^{ix}

Our Age-friendly Attributes



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Understanding the Age-Friendly Domain Framework



To guide communities, the World Health Organization, WHO, put forth eight domains of livability. The availability and quality of these community features impact the well-being of older adults and help make communities more livable for people of all ages.

This report was developed using the domain framework with the addition of one domain we believe is vital – especially for older adults living within the City of Rochester – economic security.

Our Community’s Key Age-friendly Features

Within this framework, the following is an overview of our community’s existing age-friendly assets. We are fortunate that many age-friendly features do exist.

A Strong Nonprofit Aging Services Provider Network

The Monroe County Aging Alliance is a group of providers and funders focused on the needs and wishes of older adults. (Membership list in Appendix.) The Alliance’s mission is to create a community where all people age well. The Alliance is the convener of the planning process behind this Age-Friendly Action Plan and will promote and monitor the recommended strategies across our nine domains of an age-friendly community.

Lifespan of Greater Rochester Inc., a nonprofit providing information, guidance and more than 30 supportive services for older adults and caregivers, has a menu of services far beyond those typically found in county or regional offices for the aging. As the host of NY Connects, a no-wrong door aging and disability resource center, Lifespan serves as the hub of aging services in Monroe County. The agency’s mission includes making our community a great place to age well. Lifespan hosts an annual Celebration of Aging community luncheon, attended by thousands over 25 years, to promote a positive view of longer life.

Additional aging services provided by Catholic Family Center, Ibero-American Action League, Jewish Family Services, Episcopal Senior Life, UR Homecare, the Monroe County Office for the Aging, and Urban League of Rochester, among others, meet the needs of older adults and caregivers through neighborhood programming, affordable transportation and homebound services, shopping and errand services, older adult centers, refugee support, and Natural Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs). Many of the providers emphasize services which address the social determinants of health which are responsible for up to 80% of an individual’s overall health and wellness.^x One local program, Lifespan’s Community Care Connections, has proven through rigorous evaluation by the New York Academy of Medicine to decrease hospitalizations and ED visits among clients by offering a combination of healthcare coordination and social work.

A Service Rich Community with People First Services

Unlike nearby rural counties, ours is a service-rich community with numerous nonprofit providers of health and human services across the age spectrum. That said, in 2015, IBM’s Smarter Cities Challenge study found, “Rochester to be program rich but results poor.” To rectify this problem, the Monroe County Systems Integration project is engaging area providers in creating a “...secure data hub to share information and coordinate care with personalized digital dashboards offering individuals and their chosen care teams a complete view of a person’s needs. When fully implemented, the Systems Integration project will improve coordinated cross-sector interventions by working with multiple organizations to support the transition of individuals and families from crisis, to stable, to thriving.”^{xi} This community initiative is hosted by the United of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes. The aging services network is fully engaged in this process.

Age-friendly Health Systems Engagement

Hospitals and/or units within Monroe County’s two healthcare systems, UR Medicine and Rochester Regional Health, are certified as Age-Friendly Health Systems (AFHS)^{xii} participants using the evidence-based 4M’s model (What Matters, Medication, Mentation and Mobility) to improve patient experience and health outcomes.

Transportation Network Expands Options

A relatively strong transportation network helps older adults get to medical and other appointments. Core mobility management services, with application support, trip booking and management and education, are available for older adults and persons with disabilities. Give-a-Lift, a program to recruit, screen and train volunteer drivers for a consortium of 20 volunteer-based driver services, has more than 400 drivers. Along with STAR, and other neighborhood-based transportation services, they provide non-wheelchair transportation for thousands each year. Medical Motor Service is a nonprofit, fully accessible transportation provider, Lyft and Uber are widely available, and an Active Transportation group promotes bike/scooter share and e-bike use. Discounted fare (half price) for older adults and free fares for older adult veterans are available through Rochester's Regional Transit Service. Additionally, plans to create a regional mobility management program and information portal are underway.

Older Adult Housing Options are Numerous

Specialized housing for older adults, from independent to skilled nursing care, is particularly plentiful, though often expensive. Options include Green House homes, assisted living, independent living with services and family-type homes. However, many of these options are financially out of reach for lower and middle-income older adults. Lower-cost housing, especially housing with supportive services, has two-year long waitlists. One of our recommendations includes increasing access to lower-cost, supportive housing

Volunteerism – We're #2!

A 2018 Volunteering in America report by the Corporation for National and Community Service found that Rochester is No. 2 in the country when it comes to volunteering. Across all categories in the study, it was found that volunteers engage in their communities at higher rates than non-volunteers, whether it's talking to neighbors, participating in civic organizations, fixing things in the community, attending public meetings, discussing local issues with family and friends, doing favors for neighbors, and voting in local elections.^{xiii} AmeriCorps Senior, a program of Lifespan, engages older adults in meaningful volunteer activities by matching their interests and experiences to open roles. United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes manages the Volunteer United portal of opportunities for individuals of all ages.

Cultural Opportunities & Outdoor Spaces Abound

As noted, Rochester offers a diverse range of cultural activities for all ages. Art galleries, music, dance, museums, theater, and numerous festivals all contribute to vibrancy. We have a strong philharmonic, numerous beautiful parks with walking paths, city, and town libraries, two nationally recognized museums, a plethora of golf courses and minor league sports teams.

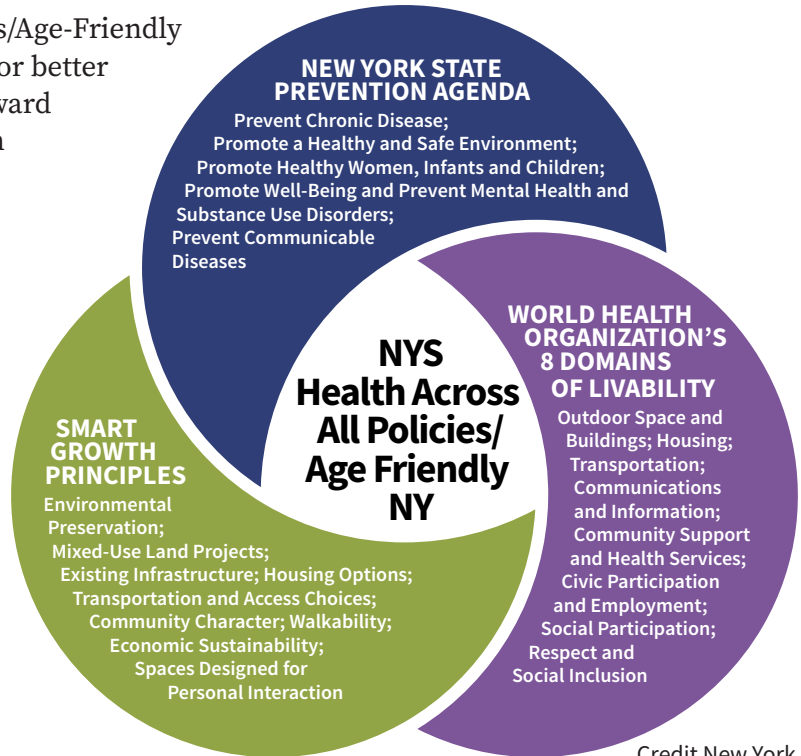
Government – Working with an Age-Friendly Lens and an Emphasis on Health Across All Policies

In New York State, the age-friendly movement is interwoven to great advantage with the state’s Health Across All Policies/Prevention Agenda and Smart Growth principles.

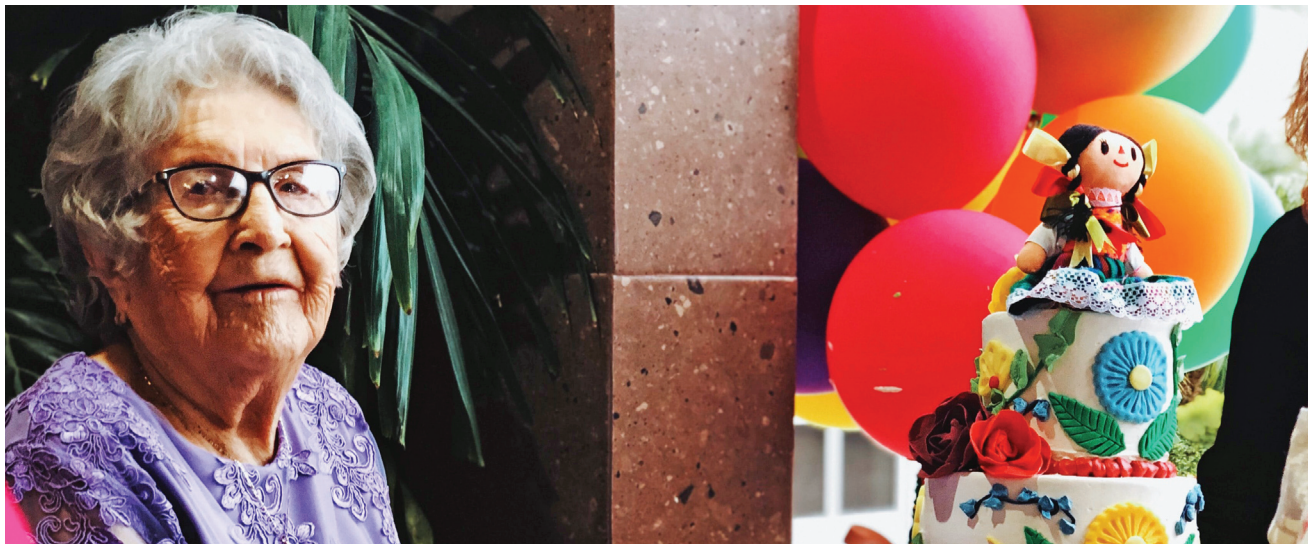
“Through Health Across All Policies/Age-Friendly NY, New York continues to strive for better population health and to work toward health equity— “the state in which everyone has the opportunity to attain full health potential, and no one is disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or any other socially defined circumstance.”^{xiv}

The goal is to incorporate both health and age-friendly considerations into policies, programs and initiatives led by government.

With the support of our county executive, members of the Aging Alliance have met with numerous Monroe County departments – from aviation to veterans – to discuss age-friendly principles and ways government should view all planning, projects, procurement, and communication with “age-friendly and Health Across All Policy lenses.” The step of meeting with county departments with top-down backing is invaluable to the success of an age-friendly Monroe County.



Credit New York Academy of Medicine



Age-Friendly Assessment



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Creating a Community for a Lifetime

An Action Plan for an Age-friendly/Livable Rochester and Monroe County

Introduction to our Age-Friendly Action Plan

Our vision is that Monroe County/Rochester is a great place to grow old because:

- Older adults are valued, respected, and engaged.
- Equity, diversity, and inclusiveness are embraced.
- Collaboration is a core value of the sectors that serve the community’s residents.

As will be discussed, over the last year the Aging Alliance reached out to a broad range of older people, agency staff and community thought leaders to inform this Age-friendly Action Plan.

Our plan is guided by these principles:

- Informed by those it seeks to serve.
- Builds on and complements existing resources and services.
- Reframes the aging narrative to increase understanding and change attitudes about aging and ageism.
- Promotes equity for the community’s diverse population.
- Has broad, multi-sector support.
- Is realistic, measurable, and sustainable.

Our Age-Friendly Assessment Process

Our process was multilayered, involved nearly 1,400 people, and took place during 2020 and 2021. It included:

1. One survey of people 60+ living within Monroe County.	1,119
2. Three workgroups with consumers, professionals, and the disability network.	30
3. Five focus groups – online and in-person.	89
4. 16 meetings with Monroe County government departments.	89
5. 25 one-on-one interviews with consumers and professionals.	25
Total meetings	49
Total individuals who provided input.	1,352

6. The process also included consideration of the *Poverty in Later Life* report completed in 2021 by Lifespan of Greater Rochester and the Aging Alliance.^{xv}

1. The Survey

The survey was distributed in fall 2020 both electronically and via hardcopy in English and Spanish. (See Appendix) The target audience was Monroe County residents 60 and older. The age distribution of our sample approximates the older adult population in Monroe County.

The following table compares our sample to Monroe County Census data for people who reported being 60+. Our sample includes 219 people who reported being 80 or older.

Gender: Women are over-represented in our sample of Monroe County residents 60+.

Age: Somewhat representative of the 60+ population.

Race: Somewhat representative of the 60+ population.

	Census	Our Sample
Male	43%	26%
Female	57%	74%
60-69	49%	42%
70-69	31%	35%
80+	20%	23%
White	87%	87%
Black	9.4%	11%
Asian	2%	2%
American Indian/Alaska	.3%	.6%

[Census data: 2019 1-Year American Community Survey]

The proportion of respondents who reported being of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino origin or descent was 6%, which exceeded the 3.3% needed to be representative of the Monroe County 60+ population.

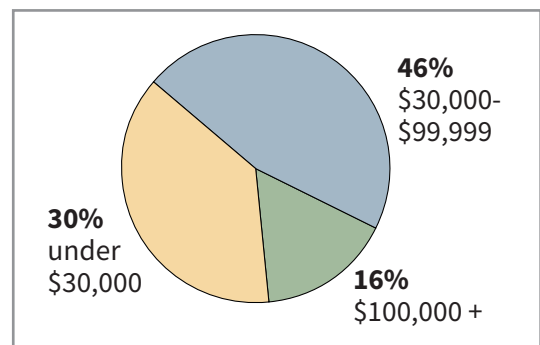
Income

66% provided their income. Of these:

38% report incomes under \$30,000.

46% report incomes between \$30,000 and \$99,999.

16% report incomes of \$100,000 or more.



Disability

38% of respondents report being limited by disability or disease.

8% report having a spouse or partner with limitations.

55% report no limitations.

Caregivers

27% of our sample report being caregivers.

14% are receiving assistance from a caregiver.

53% of our sample don't see caregiving in their future.

2. Workgroups & One-on-One Interviews

Members of the Monroe County Aging Alliance met in small workgroups to review survey feedback, and to research and gather information about existing services for older adults.

These initial workgroups drafted preliminary recommendations pertaining to the domains. In the fall of 2021, the Alliance hosted two expanded workgroups with older adults and providers via Zoom to review the draft recommendations and provide additional input. We also met one-on-one with retired professionals from human services organizations.

Participating Organizations

AARP	Former & current Monroe County Adult Protective Staff	Rochester Spinal Association
ABVI - Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired/Goodwill	Genesee Transportation Council	Rochester Area Community Foundation
Action for A Better Community	Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce	Rochester Regional Health: ElderONE
Alzheimer's Association	Greater Rochester Area Partnership for the Elderly	Rochester Transit Authority
Catholic Charities Family and Community Services	Heritage Christian Services	RochesterWorks
Center for Disability Rights	Hilton Parma Senior Center	St Joseph's Neighborhood Health Center
City of Rochester	Home Leasing	St Mary's Place/Refugee Services
Chamber of Commerce	Ibero American Action League	Strong Older Adults Clinic
Common Ground Health	Jewish Family Service of Rochester	SWAN/Montgomery Center
Community Design Center	Lifespan of Greater Rochester Inc.	United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes
Community Place of Rochester	NYS Caregiver & Respite Coalition	Urban League of Rochester
Compeer	Pathstone Corporation	UR Home Care
County of Monroe	Rainbow Seniors Roc (formerly Out Alliance)	UR Medicine
Episcopal SeniorLife Communities	Reconnect Rochester	UR Medicine Older Adult Services
Finger Lakes Performing Provider System	Regional Center for Independent Living	Outpatient Clinic
Finger Lakes Independent Provider Network		

3. Focus Groups and Phone Interviews

Focus groups were conducted in fall 2021 by Causewave, a local nonprofit dedicated to making communities stronger by bringing voice to diverse public issues and needs. The research was designed to assess what services for older adults are being utilized, identify needs and gaps not being addressed, highlight action items within each livability domain.

Methodology/Participant Profile

- Telephone, online and in-person focus groups were conducted and designed to accommodate communication preferences based on demographics.
- 68 individuals age 60+ participated from suburban and urban areas with a mix of income and ethnicity. Participants were given a \$50 incentive.
 - Two online focus groups with 44 people.
 - Phone interviews with five people.
 - Two in-person groups with 19 people.

Gender: Oversampled women.

Age: Somewhat representative of the 60+ population.

Race: Representative of the 60+ population.

	Census	Our Sample
Male	43%	26%
Female	57%	74%
60-69	49%	48%
70-69	31%	26%
80-89	20%	10%
90s		2%
White	87%	75%
Black	9.4%	25%
Asian	2%	0%
American Indian/Alaska	.3%	0%

The proportion who reported being of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino origin or descent was 12% which exceeded the 3.3% needed to be representative of the county’s 60+ population.

An additional focus group was convened by the Aging Alliance at Community Place.

4. Cross Sector Inventory of Existing Community Plans

In 2019, the Aging Alliance contracted with Richard Iannello, a consultant in the field of aging, to review existing community plans and their inclusion (or exclusion) of facets of the age-friendly/livable community domains.

The 22 documents, consisting of more than 3,400 pages, were scanned for references to the WHO eight livability domains. Some plans gathered as many as 31 inclusion age-friendly domain checkmarks, and a few included none. In the areas of transportation, housing, outdoor spaces and health services, the plans and documents included strong acknowledgements of Monroe County's older adults. The domains covering respect, civic participation and communications were considerably less represented in the plans and documents. As a result, the Aging Alliance paid special attention to the less represented domains during the workgroup process.

The number of references for each domain in the reviewed plans is indicated below.

- Transportation (31)
- Housing (28)
- Outdoor spaces and buildings (24)
- Community & health services (22)
- Social participation (21)
- Respect & social inclusion (18)
- Civic participation & employment (15)
- Communication & information (11)

5. Poverty in Later Life Report

The inability to meet basic needs among older adults is hidden and rarely acknowledged even though a significant number of older adults in the City of Rochester are living in poverty. As a result, we believe it is vital to add an Economic Security domain to our Action Plan. Per the report:

- One in five city residents (21%), 60+ lives below the Official Measure of Poverty (OMP) of \$12,490.
- Thirty-five percent of city residents 60+ live below 150% of the OMP of \$18,735.
- Poverty is greatest among Latinx elders, nearly the twice the rate of Black elders.

Assessment by Domain



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Creating a Community for a Lifetime

An Action Plan for an Age-friendly/Livable Rochester and Monroe County

Community Assessment Findings

The word which perhaps summarizes the findings of our assessment is **inclusion**.

Older adults have a deep desire to contribute to the fabric of our community but find barriers related to ageism, transportation, crime, technology, housing and notably, for upstate New York, snow. Local older adults want meaningful volunteer opportunities, the ability to work to an age of their choice and the ability to interact with diverse populations and ages.

“In March 2020, the hashtag #BoomerRemover began circulating on Twitter, with snide and merciless comments celebrating that the pandemic could help trim the ranks of older adults. A sample analysis of 18,128 tweets from mid-March 2020 showed that almost one-quarter of these tweets had ageist comments including jokes or derision, while 20 percent downplayed the relevance of COVID-19 and/or implied that the lives of older people were less valuable.”

Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, Georgetown University, July 2021.



Due to the timespan of our research and planning, it is impossible to remove the effect of the COVID pandemic. First, it affected our outreach efforts and forced more online interaction than would have been likely pre-pandemic. Secondly, COVID, as many have noted, laid bare inequities regarding older adults’ access to food during lockdowns, their access to vaccine appointments, and their access to medical care via telehealth. Ageism was alive and well when COVID ravaged nursing homes, and when older adults became the initial victims of the disease.

Our major community assessment findings by domain.

Respect & Inclusion



WE KNOW...

An inclusive society encourages older people to participate more in the community's social, civic, and economic life and promotes active aging.

WHAT WE HEARD...

Nearly one-third rated opportunities for older adults to participate in decision-making bodies (e.g., community committees/boards) as “fair” or “poor.”

City residents said they are less likely to have good opportunities to get together with other people.

Older adults say the perception is that older adults are not as physically capable or interested in activities or learning.

Older adults say ageism, discrimination, equity, and respect issues are prevalent — more so for older adults of marginalized or under-represented populations.

Language access for all, including American Sign Language (ASL), is critical.

Older adults want intergenerational opportunities (programming, technical assistance, volunteer/neighbor support).

Some specialty groups, such as LGBTQ elders, voiced a need for specialized programming and space to connect with one another.

“There’s a big divide between teens and older adults. There shouldn’t be that divide, but there is.”

“It’s amazing the wealth of information, knowledge and experience in this room. Do not underestimate people because they are older. I think we have a lot of valuable things to share.”



Social Participation



WE KNOW...

Loneliness/social isolation have been estimated to shorten a person's life by 15 years, equivalent in impact to being obese or smoking 15 cigarettes per day.

WHAT WE HEARD...

56% of respondents rated their community as good or very good for opportunities to get together with other people. More suburban residents felt included and felt they had a support network than city residents.

42% said a major consideration for moving would be the desire to live in an area with good opportunities for social interaction.

More city residents than suburban residents said there were conveniently located entertainment venues.

Both city and suburban residents cited libraries as the most common source of continuing education/self-improvement.

Older adults say intergenerational programming is desirable.

Older adults want more information about activities available to them. They also said the cost of participation can be higher especially if transportation is needed.

Older adults say senior centers in the city are not on par with suburban centers.



“The Lily Café is the perfect example of a place to socially gather.”

“If you can keep your mind active, if you can get out with people, it makes a difference.”

“I would like our town senior programs offerings and operation to not be based on the ‘old’ 1970’s model of what a senior program should offer. More topics of interest to younger older adults: travel, investing, technology...”

“The town is also very limited and outdated with its offerings for older adults. Ex: six pages of youth activities, one for older adults if that.”

Volunteerism & Employment



WE KNOW...

Older workers who lose their jobs have much more difficulty finding a new job than younger workers and that older adults may need to work part or full-time past the traditional retirement age to meet basic needs.

WE KNOW...

Volunteers report a better state of health and well-being than non-volunteers, and that older volunteers contribute the vitality of our community,

WHAT WE HEARD...

61% rated the community as good or very good with respect to available volunteer activities.

One in four were likely to continue working as long as possible. Yet, just 16% rated policies that ensure older adults can work as long as they choose as “good” or “very good.”

Half of respondents reported being unsure of job opportunities, training for older adults, and accommodations for people with disabilities. Employment issues for older adults exist, especially for grandparents caring for children & grandchildren.

In-home and long-term care workforce shortage must be addressed.

One-third indicated that it is not easy to find information about volunteer activities. Suburban residents found it easier to find volunteer opportunities than city residents. Meaningful opportunities to volunteer are preferred.

Businesses may need more data to dispel the myths about and encourage the hiring of older workers.

“I worked till I was 80. What do you get for it? Nothing.”

“Housing is way too expensive. Owned by corporations that aren’t even in this area. We are just beginning to look at facilities and I’m just amazed at the money they’re asking.”

“I need siding, I need a roof, I need windows! When I called someone out, they gave me an estimate, they said \$16,000!”

“We are often treated like we no longer have value to the workplace, community, etc. That our ideas, skills are outdated.”

Communication & Information



WE KNOW...

When interacting with older people, it is important to be sensitive to how they prefer to communicate, learn, and use information.

WHAT WE HEARD...

66% were either unsure if there was one central source of information about community activities or thought access was fair or poor.

79% turn to friends or family for information on services for older adults. 75% would ask their doctor or health care professional, and 72% would go to the internet.

83% of respondents had access to the internet.

When those without internet at home were asked the reason why, more town residents said they had no interest in using the internet, while more city residents said they would use it if they knew how or had help.

Materials and information in Spanish (and in all languages, including ASL), are needed.

Communications should be in an age-friendly format: larger fonts, contrasting colors, simple wording.

Information for older adults in one location, via website or phone hotline, is ideal (housing, transportation, activities, medical and community services). Information and navigation services are fragmented.

‘Digital divide’ inequity for older adults is real, as evidenced by the difficulty older adults had during the pandemic accessing vaccination appointments.

Computer proficiency and technology support is needed across all older adult age groups, for city and town residents, and across all household income categories.

“I would like more technical help with my phone or computer. Sometimes I get frustrated.”

“I google everything, but it would be nice to have help sometimes. New technology can be overwhelming! I don’t know where to go for that type of help.”

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings



WE KNOW...

Neighborhoods/buildings which are not safe are not livable, inhibit social participation and increase isolation.

WHAT WE HEARD...

75% rated their location as a very good/good place for people to live as they age.

73% said there are well-maintained parks and green spaces.

49% said availability of benches for resting in public areas is “very good” or “good;” 27% said “fair.”

59% said sidewalks are in good condition while 10% said sidewalks are poor (75% from suburbs which sometimes lack sidewalks).

Park safety, including lighting and patrols, are important. Benches are needed in some public spaces and transit stops.

Crime and safety concerns were consistent especially among city residents. Better snow removal is needed.

“I want to be able to sit on my porch and feel safe.”

“Old people become a target (of violence).”



Transportation



WE KNOW...

Mobility is essential to helping older adults maintain their independence and linking them to services they need or want.

WHAT WE HEARD...

Older adults, especially women, outlive their ability to drive by seven to ten years. 72% drive while 25% rely on others. 15% use special transportation services.

18% said access to convenient public transportation was poor. 74% of these respondents were suburban residents.

51% rated separate pathways for bikes and pedestrians as “fair” or “poor.” 80% rated “very good/good” for easy-to-read traffic signs.

Affordable, on-demand transportation is needed evenings and weekends along with better transportation for non-medical trips.

Lack of bilingual drivers.

Rental options should include three-wheeled tricycles.

Mobility management services are needed to make sense of complex systems.

“Help for people who can’t get out easily is so important. Affordable transportation, especially during evening and weekend hours to stay socially connected and help to run errands are what people need to stay in their homes longer.”

“Luckily, we’ve got the bus here [Henrietta Senior Center], but it only brings you to here. It’ll take you to Walmart once a month.”

“I live in the suburbs and worry about the day I’m no longer able to drive myself around. I attempted to take the bus into Rochester once but first had to drive to the bus stop, so I don’t know how I’d get there if I couldn’t drive. I found the bus schedule difficult to understand and apparently read it wrong because I ended up having to walk quite a distance to get to my destination.”

Housing



WE KNOW...

Most older adults prefer to age in their own geographic locations, neighborhoods, and homes.

WHAT WE HEARD...

55% prefer to stay in their current residence and never move.

24% percent would move to a different community.

63% want a home that will help support independence as they age.

47% rated affordable options for varying income levels as “fair” or “poor.”

24% rated said the availability of well-maintained, safe, low-income housing is poor. Long waiting lists for affordable accessible housing.

Feeling safe is a major concern among city residents.

Qualified, vetted contractors for home repair and modification would be very helpful. Support to advocate with landlords is needed.

Transition/downsizing support is needed (packing, selling, donating, moving).

Additional grant funding for home repair/maintenance is needed.

“We need to have more affordable housing.”

“We only have a bathroom upstairs. I know we’re going to need one downstairs. I wish we had one now!”

“I am definitely going to want to move to someplace that is easier to care for, so I’d need help finding a good place, downsizing, packing, moving.”



Health Services & Community Supports



Health Services &
Community Supports

WE KNOW...

80% of health is determined by the circumstances in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age.

WHAT WE HEARD...

84% ranked availability of health care as “very good” or “good.” 30% ranked affordable home care as “fair” or “poor.”

41% were unsure if there was an opportunity to speak to someone about community programs and services.

61% were unsure where to go for community information in different languages.

Caregiver health suffers because of aide shortages, lack of respite and support systems available, and complex/confusing systems.

Coordinated navigation services are needed to find, connect, and educate about community services.

Health care coordination services would be beneficial for individuals with complex health needs.

Mental health and emotional wellness are important for older adults and services should be available for homebound persons.

Equity and inclusion issues must be addressed to allow for quality access to health-care for all populations.

Health literacy support is needed, especially for disabled and limited English speaking individuals.

“I had to go in for a root canal. I had to pay over \$1,000, and they wanted \$300 up front. I just said to them, ‘Maybe I’ll just let it rot.’”

“My parents are 92 and 95 and living at home (amazing but true) yet they need help and the most important help they need is help with coordinating their healthcare needs...not easy for the young and even more difficult for the elderly.”

Economic Security *(Added by this Action Plan)*



WE KNOW...

Within the city, one in five persons (21%) 60 and older lives below 100% of the Official Poverty Measure (OPM) of \$12,490.

WHAT WE HEARD...

In the community assessment, nearly 30% rated access to affordable, healthy food as “fair” or “poor.”

41% said the cost of maintaining their current residence would be a major factor in considering a future move.

Older adults reported they could not afford better choices for housing.

Older adults want more affordable medical care and more affordable, accessible transportation.

Cost is a barrier to engaging in some preferred social opportunities.

As a HIICAP volunteer, I see people struggling with how to pay for medical care and medications. They need to know programs like Medicare Savings Program, Extra Help and EPIC exist. We help them apply.”

COVID and Food Insecurity

It was the COVID pandemic that exposed the precarious situations of some elders. In March 2020, older adults faced challenges obtaining food and other necessities because of the pandemic. Suddenly agencies began receiving hundreds of calls a day asking for help. With food pantries and older adult centers closed, older adults’ food insecurity was palpable, and perhaps for the first time, highly visible.

During the COVID lockdown, one caller said, “I only have one sleeve of Ritz crackers.” Many, many others said they had only enough food for one day.

Age-Friendly Recommendations



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Creating a Community for a Lifetime

An Action Plan for an Age-friendly/Livable Rochester and Monroe County

Our Age-friendly/Livable Community Recommendations

We present the recommendations and the resulting Action Plan with the expectation and hope that:

- Local governments will use them routinely for purposes related to planning and zoning, transportation, human services funding, public communications, special events planning and other departmental services;
- Nonprofits will use them as evidence of the need for service expansion and new, innovative programs and activities;
- Planning organizations, foundations and other funders recognize the needs of this growing population segment;
- Older adults and caregivers recognize that our community is striving to become a more livable/age-friendly community.

The following recommendations cut across our nine domains of age-friendly/livable communities. They are the result of hundreds of hours of input from people 60 and older, aging services staff and allied community organizations.

1. Combat ageism.
2. Engage and support older adults from underserved and under-represented populations.
3. Recognize and respect older adults as economic contributors to the local economy.
4. Increase intergenerational opportunities.
5. Reimagine older adult centers and programming.
6. Increase support for homebound and/or isolated older adults.
7. Improve opportunities for older adults to share their skills and talents.
8. Debunk the myths about older workers and educate employers about the value of older workers and persons with disabilities.
9. Help older workers locate and apply for jobs.
10. Raise wages for chronically low-paying jobs, particularly those in long-term care fields.
11. Centralize and simplify information for older adults.

- 12.** Develop age-friendly style guidelines for community information exchanges.
- 13.** Increase access to and proficiency of internet and technology to reduce the digital divide.
- 14.** Provide safe, comfortable access to indoor and outdoor public spaces.
- 15.** Provide and maintain clean and accessible restrooms at public parks and spaces.
- 16.** Improve snow removal.
- 17.** Improve pedestrian safety.
- 18.** Adopt a ‘Transit First’ approach to community development.
- 19.** Improve cycling infrastructure.
- 20.** Expand low-cost or no-cost transportation for medical and non-medical trips.
- 21.** Implement more robust mobility management services.
- 22.** Increase affordable, safe, accessible housing.
- 23.** Establish a reference center for home support and maintenance services.
- 24.** Establish one navigator service to assist older adults in accessing available health services, community supports.
- 25.** Expand health services and health literacy programs for older adults.
- 26.** Support formal and informal caregivers, and caregiver networks.
- 27.** Promote full participation in the Age-friendly Health System Initiative by local hospital systems and all medical providers.
- 28.** Recognize the issue of poverty among older adults, especially those of color living within the City of Rochester, and support improvements to address the elder poverty crisis.
- 29.** Increase participation in public benefit programs and services.

Action Plan



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Creating a Community for a Lifetime

An Action Plan for an Age-friendly/Livable Rochester and Monroe County

Age Friendly Monroe County Recommendations and Action Plan



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Respect & Inclusion

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
1. Combat ageism.	1A. Provide educational workshops about the value of older adults.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging	Respect & Inclusion	Funding is secured for a Reframing Aging initiative. Community workshops and trainings are completed.	Improved awareness of the value of older adults.	■		
	1B. Include older adults in community planning and decision-making efforts, on boards, and in community discussions.	Aging Alliance Monroe County City of Rochester	Respect & Inclusion Social Participation	The addition of an older adult in at least three community planning discussions, boards or committees.	Greater participation of older adults in community decision-making.	■	■	■
2. Engage and support older adults from underserved and underrepresented populations.	2A. Review racial and age equity provisions in city and county contracts.	Monroe County City of Rochester	Respect & Inclusion	The addition of race and age equity provisions in city and county contracts.	Contracted organizations are inclusive and reflect the diverse population of older adults they serve.	■	■	

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
2. Engage and support older adults from underserved and underrepresented populations.	2B. Use intentional efforts and non-traditional outreach ideas to improve access to services and supports for older adults from underserved and underrepresented populations.	Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers Community-based organizations	Respect & Inclusion	Aging service providers report increased service to older adults of underserved and underrepresented populations.	Older adults have equitable access to services and supports.	■	■	
	2C. Include older adults of various disabilities, languages and cultures in older adult program design.	Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers Community-based organizations Local businesses	Respect & Inclusion	More diverse older adult consumers participate in aging program design.	Older adult programming is best informed by individuals representing the diversity of our community.	■	■	■
	2D. Train police and first responders about the unique needs of older adults with cognitive impairments and other disabilities, in order to improve their ability to respond to emergencies, communicate with, and assist older adults in times of crisis and need.	Aging Alliance Lifespan Rochester Police Department Monroe County Sheriff Office Alzheimer's Association EMTs, 911 operators and other emergency responders	Respect & Inclusion	Presentations are completed by aging service providers at monthly community in-service trainings for first responders.	First responder teams are more knowledgeable about issues facing older adults and can best assist in responding to challenging situations.	■		

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
2. Engage and support older adults from underserved and underrepresented populations.	2E. Provide affordable gathering space for diverse older adult groups, such as LGBTQ and Deaf/hard of hearing elders.	Monroe County Office for the Aging City of Rochester Community-based Organizations	Respect & Inclusion Social Participation	Number of groups provided affordable space to meet and interact.	All groups have access to programming in ways that are culturally acceptable and person-centered.	■		
3. Recognize and respect older adults as economic contributors to the local economy.	3A. Educate local business leaders about older adults as economic contributors and customers.	Aging Alliance Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce Lifespan	Respect & Inclusion Volunteerism & Employment	Educational event is held for the business community, hosted by aging service professionals.	Older adult consumers are understood and appreciated.	■	■	■
	3B. Explore the viability of an age-friendly business designation or similar program.	Aging Alliance Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce Local businesses	Respect & Inclusion Volunteerism & Employment	Business community interest in creating an age-friendly business designation program is determined.	Older adults are respected and appreciated as economic contributors in the community.	■	■	■

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
4. Increase intergenerational opportunities.	4A. Expand opportunities to volunteer and engage in schools.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Monroe County Youth Bureau Lifespan – AmeriCorps Seniors United Way OASIS Schools	Respect & Inclusion Volunteerism & Employment Social Participation	Additional volunteer and social opportunities are available at area schools.	Older adults have more opportunities to engage with younger generations.	■	■	
	4B. Use recreation centers, older adult centers, and other venues for intergenerational contact.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Monroe County Youth Bureau City of Rochester Monroe County Towns and Villages Local youth centers and providers	Respect & Inclusion Social Participation	Additional intergenerational programs are offered at community locations.	Older adults have more opportunities to interact with younger people.	■	■	
	4C. Expand new intergenerational opportunities with the Monroe County Youth Bureau.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Youth Bureau Monroe County Office for Aging City of Rochester	Respect & Inclusion Social Participation	Additional intergenerational programs or events are provided.	Older adults have more opportunities to interact with younger people.	■	■	■

Age Friendly Monroe County Recommendations and Action Plan



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Social Participation

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
5. Reimagine older adult centers and programming.	5A. Expand older adult programming and activities at alternative sites such as libraries, YMCAs, recreation centers.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Greater Rochester YMCA Recreation centers Libraries Community-based organizations	Social Participation Respect & Inclusion	More older adult programming is included at various community locations.	Improved connectivity of older adults to their communities.	■	■	■
	5B. Upgrade or renovate the city older adult centers, in physical layout and programmatic offerings, and provide centers in neighborhoods lacking such resources.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers City of Rochester Private funders	Social Participation Respect & Inclusion	Existing older adult centers in the City of Rochester report improvements, and new centers are funded in neighborhoods lacking such resources.	Increased opportunity, equity and access for older adult center members in the City of Rochester.	■	■	■

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
5. Reimagine older adult centers and programming.	5C. Seek ongoing input from older adults and participants to create programming at older adult and recreation centers that best meets the needs of today's older adult preferences.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for the Aging Community-based organizations United Way	Social Participation	Participant satisfaction is reported.	Inclusive, meaningful, person-centered programming at area older adult centers.	■	■	
	5D. Expand social opportunities at times of the day that appeal to participants, including weekend and evening schedules, as well as spontaneous outings.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for the Aging Aging service providers Congregate housing sites	Social Participation Respect & Inclusion	Social opportunities scheduled at times that appeal to participants are reported.	Older adults have meaningful, person-centered social participation opportunities.	■		
6. Increase support for homebound and/or isolated older adults.	6A. Connect homebound older adults to online activities/workshops and/or volunteer roles to reduce isolation.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers Community-based organizations Recreational providers Education providers	Social Participation Respect & Inclusion	Increased number of homebound older adults are connected to resources.	Reduced isolation for older adults.	■	■	

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
6. Increase support for homebound and/or isolated older adults.	6B. Expand in-home programming to older adults to help address isolation.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers Community-based organizations Private funders	Social Participation Respect & Inclusion	Number of new in-home programs to support isolated older adults.	Improved social connectedness for isolated older adults.	■	■	
	6C. Expand home-based volunteer opportunities for homebound adults, such as friendly calling.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for the Aging United Way Community-based organizations	Social Participation Volunteerism & Employment	Number of new opportunities for volunteerism by homebound individuals.	Increased sense of purpose for homebound individuals.	■	■	■
	6D. Create social engagement opportunities for older adults living in congregate housing settings, where such opportunities and programs are lacking.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Housing agencies Aging service providers Community-based organizations	Social Participation	New opportunities for isolated older adults in congregate living settings are created.	Improved social engagement of older adults living in congregate settings.	■	■	■

Age Friendly Monroe County Recommendations and Action Plan



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Volunteerism & Employment

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
7. Improve opportunities for older adults to share their skills and talents.	7A. Promote the use of the current community volunteer database.	Aging Alliance Aging service providers United Way – Volunteer United	Volunteerism & Employment	Increased use of the database is reported.	Simplified access to community volunteer opportunities.	■		
	7B. Promote older adults' connection to volunteer programs, such as AmeriCorps Seniors, Volunteer United, and Veterans Outreach Center, for help to find volunteer opportunities.	Aging Alliance Aging service providers Lifespan – AmeriCorps Seniors United Way – Volunteer United Veterans Outreach Center	Volunteerism & Employment	More older adults utilize the community's volunteer connection services.	Older adults have fulfilling volunteer roles.	■	■	
	7C. Promote SCORE Greater Rochester, an opportunity which allows older adults to volunteer to share their professional expertise and can help older adults launch entrepreneurial endeavors.	Aging Alliance SCORE Greater Rochester Aging service providers Volunteer service providers Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce	Volunteerism & Employment	Increased use of SCORE Greater Rochester by older adults.	Older adults have opportunities to share lifelong skills and experience, either through volunteerism or entrepreneurship.	■	■	

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
8. Debunk the myths about older workers and educate employers about the value of older workers and persons with disabilities.	8A. Educate the Chamber of Commerce members and local businesses about the value of older adult workers.	Aging Alliance Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce Aging service providers	Volunteerism & Employment Respect & Inclusion	One educational seminar provided to Chamber of Commerce and local businesses.	Older workers are valued.	■	■	
	8B. Create materials and videos dispelling the myths about older workers.	Aging Alliance Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce Causewave Community Partners	Volunteerism & Employment Respect & Inclusion Communication & Information	An informational campaign about the value of older workers published, posted or presented to the business community.	Older workers are valued.	■		
9. Help older workers to locate and apply for jobs.	9A. Expand services providing job training and placement assistance for low-income older adults.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Local workforce development programs SUNY ATTAIN lab	Volunteerism & Employment Economic Security	Increased workforce development services for older adults are reported.	Older adults have support to achieve employment goals.	■	■	
	9B. Create an older adult job board, with linkage to other job posting sites and resources.	Aging Alliance Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce RochesterWorks	Volunteerism & Employment	The creation of a community job board.	Simplified access to job openings for older adults.	■	■	

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
9. Help older workers to locate and apply for jobs.	9C. Use libraries, older adult centers and RochesterWorks as hubs for workforce development.	Aging Alliance RochesterWorks Monroe County Systems Integration Project Libraries Older adult centers	Volunteerism & Employment	Hubs for workforce development, located inside familiar community locations, are created.	Improved access to workforce development resources.	■	■	■
	9D. Foster partnerships with disability organizations to provide support to older adults with needed workplace accommodations.	Aging Alliance Regional Center for Independent Living Aging service providers Disability service providers	Volunteerism & Employment	A workshop for aging providers, business leaders, and older adults about services available to assist disabled workers is held.	Older workers are aware of and have support for their employment rights.	■	■	
	9E. Promote the use of the SUNY ATTAIN (Advanced Technology Training and Information Networking) lab for low-income older adults seeking computer literacy and vocational support to secure job opportunities.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office of the Aging SUNY ATTAIN lab Aging service providers	Volunteerism & Employment Economic Security	Presentation by SUNY ATTAIN staff to aging professionals that encourages referrals for older adults seeking this support.	Improved computer literacy for vocational support.	■		

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
9. Help older workers to locate and apply for jobs.	9F. Develop workshops about using online job search tools for older adults seeking employment, preferably at convenient community locations such as libraries and older adult centers.	Aging Alliance OASIS SUNY ATTAIN lab RochesterWorks Area community colleges and learning centers Libraries Older adult centers	Volunteerism & Employment Economic Security	New online job search workshops are offered at convenient community locations.	Older adults with limited computer proficiency have the skills to find a job in today's digital society.	■	■	
10. Raise wages for chronically low paying jobs, particularly those in long-term care fields.	10A. Raise wages for low-paying, long-term care and home care workers to increase the community's caregiver workforce.	Aging Alliance Sage II Commission/ Common Ground Rochester and Monroe County Anti-Poverty Initiative New York State Department of Health Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Long-term care and Home care providers	Volunteerism & Employment	Increased wages for long term care and home care workers.	Reduced workforce shortages.	■	■	

Age Friendly Monroe County Recommendations and Action Plan



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Communication & Information

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
11. Centralize and simplify information for older adults.	11A. Centralize information for older adults into one location.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Systems Integration Project Monroe County Office for Aging Lifespan/Monroe County NY Connects Libraries Aging service providers 211	Communication & Information Health Services and Community Supports Volunteerism & Employment Transportation	The creation of a centralized information hub for access to information, including direct connection to relevant community resources.	Older adults have simplified access to information.	■	■	■
	11B. Provide information in digital and non-digital formats, such as by phone (a live person), via mail, in-person, in various languages and with supportive accommodations for disability.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Systems Integration Project Greater Rochester Area Partnership for the Elderly Lifespan/Monroe County NY Connects Aging service providers Disability service providers	Communication & Information	Information for older adults is accessible and available in multiple ways, to accommodate consumer preferences and support needs.	Older adults have access to information based on their unique preferences or needs.	■	■	■

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
12. Develop age-friendly style guidelines for community information exchanges.	12A. Promote age-friendly language in written and spoken communication, using easily readable format and style.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Monroe County Communications Department Lifespan Community at large	Communication & Information Respect & Inclusion	Creation of a style guide for age-friendly communication, for use by the community at large.	Greater respect for older adults.	■		
	12B. Promote full accessibility for information exchanges, especially supporting individuals with limited English proficiency, low literacy, visual and hearing impairments, and those with intellectual or developmental disabilities.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers Disability service providers	Communication & Information Respect & Inclusion	Creation of a style guide for age-friendly communication, which includes information about how to communicate with individuals across the disability spectrum.	Improved access to information for individuals of all disabilities, languages, literacy and communication support needs.	■	■	

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
13. Increase access to and proficient use of internet and technology to reduce the digital divide.	13A. Promote technology education and digital literacy for older adults.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging OASIS Local colleges and universities Local school districts Libraries	Communication & Information Respect & Inclusion	Technology educational opportunities available to older adults are compiled and are posted or otherwise shared by the aging service network.	Greater computer literacy for older adults.	■	■	
	13B. Create intergenerational connections and opportunities for technological assistance to older adults.	Monroe County Office for Aging Monroe County Youth Bureau Colleges and Universities Local school districts	Communication & Information Respect & Inclusion	New intergenerational programs for technological assistance to older adults are created.	Greater computer literacy for older adults.	■	■	■
	13C. Improve access to and education about telehealth services for older adults.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Common Ground Health Area healthcare and hospital systems Telehealth service providers	Communication & Information Respect & Inclusion Health Services & Community Supports	Increased use of telehealth by older adults.	More older adults have the skills to use telehealth services.	■	■	■

Age Friendly Monroe County Recommendations and Action Plan



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
14. Provide safe, comfortable access to indoor and outdoor public spaces.	14A. Expand seating and shelters at transit stops.	Regional Transit Service Reconnect Rochester	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings Transportation	Additional seating/shelters at transit stops.	Comfortable accommodations for riders of transit service.	■	■	■
	14B. Increase availability of seating/benches in public places and parks.	Monroe County Parks Dept Monroe County City of Rochester Parks Department	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Additional seating/benches installed in parks and public spaces.	Comfortable use of public spaces.	■	■	■
	14C. Construct inclusive and accessible playgrounds for older adults and people with disabilities.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Monroe County City of Rochester Local school districts Aging service providers Disability service providers	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings Respect & Inclusion	Increased number of accessible playgrounds within the county.	Inclusion for older adults and people with disabilities at area playgrounds.	■	■	■

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
14. Provide safe, comfortable access to indoor and outdoor public spaces.	14D. Add emergency phones in parks and public venues.	Monroe County City of Rochester	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	New phones are installed at parks and public venues.	Increased sense of safety by park users.	■	■	■
	14E. Encourage greater accessibility of the built environment with wide entryways, well-maintained sidewalks and ramps, and good lighting leading up to and inside buildings.	Aging Alliance Center for Disability Rights Monroe County Towns and Villages City of Rochester Building owners Developers	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings Respect & Inclusion	Buildings with improvement needs are identified and advocacy is provided by identified partners to support improvements.	Greater access to buildings.	■	■	■
	14F. Encourage greater accessibility of outdoor spaces such as walk paths, trails and beaches.	Monroe County Towns and Villages Center for Disability Rights City of Rochester	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings Respect & Inclusion	A walkability survey and assessment in the county's parks, walk trails and beaches is completed; needed improvements are identified and made.	Greater use of public spaces.	■	■	■
	14G. Educate older adults about safety-related issues, such as personal safety, home safety and scams.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Monroe County Sheriff's Dept Rochester Police Department Aging service providers	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Number of older adults educated about personal safety and protections.	Older adults are knowledgeable about safety precautions.	■		

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
15. Provide and maintain clean and accessible restrooms at public parks and spaces.	15A. Improve public restrooms, including the height of toilets, entrances, walkways leading to restroom areas, and maximum space for wheelchair turns.	Monroe County Parks Dept City of Rochester Private developers	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Improvements to public restrooms are made.	Increased comfort and use of public restrooms.	■	■	■
	15B. Create more family-style, unisex restrooms for ease of use by individuals with special needs, and privacy for caregiver support.	Monroe County Parks Dept City of Rochester Private developers	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	More family-style, unisex rest rooms are available.	Improved restrooms for individuals with special needs and their caregivers.	■	■	■
16. Improve snow removal.	16A. Educate homeowners, landlords and commercial building owners about snow removal policies.	Monroe County Towns and Villages City of Rochester	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Public service campaign about snow removal is completed.	Greater walkability and access.	■	■	
	16B. Create neighbor-to-neighbor and intergenerational assistance with snow removal for homeowners.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Monroe County Youth Bureau City of Rochester	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Snow removal pilot project is implemented.	Greater access of outdoor spaces in winter.	■	■	■

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
16. Improve snow removal.	16C. Maintain sequencing for streets and sidewalk plowing to avoid snow moved to just-plowed sidewalks and driveways.	Monroe County Towns and Villages City of Rochester AARP	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings Transportation	Survey is conducted to verify the reduction of snow-blocked driveways, sidewalks, streets and intersections.	Walkable, accessible outdoor winter spaces	■	■	■
17. Improve pedestrian safety.	17A. Conduct walkability surveys in both towns and the City of Rochester to track ongoing needed sidewalk repair and curb transition improvements.	City of Rochester Monroe County Towns and Villages Reconnect Rochester AARP Community volunteers	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Municipalities report walkability surveys are being conducted and are utilized for on-going walkability improvements.	Improved walkability.	■	■	■
	17B. Promote safer streets with street reconstruction improvements.	Monroe County Towns and Villages City of Rochester	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Number of new street reconstructions that incorporate safe street design for slowing traffic.	Reduced pedestrian and vehicle crashes.	■	■	

Age Friendly Monroe County Recommendations and Action Plan



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Transportation

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
18. Adopt a 'Transit First' approach to community development.	18A. Consider transit needs and services during the planning phase of community development projects.	Aging Alliance City of Rochester Monroe County Economic Development Private developers	Transportation	Number of new development plans that are located near transit connections.	Greater connectedness of people to employment, housing and community services.	■	■	
19. Improve cycling infrastructure.	19A. Create more bike space when renovating, repaving, and upgrading street infrastructure projects.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Genesee Transportation Council City of Rochester Reconnect Rochester Rochester Cycling Alliance	Transportation	Additional bike space is documented in plans for street improvements.	Improved bike safety.	■	■	
	19B. Consider expanding shared bike rental stations near older adult housing complexes.	City of Rochester Regional Transit Service Reconnect Rochester Rochester Cycling Alliance	Transportation	Number of bike rental stations near older adult housing complexes.	Greater access to active transportation options for older adults.	■	■	

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
19. Improve cycling infrastructure.	19C. Pilot the addition of three-wheeled trikes in bike-share, and rental inventory.	Aging Alliance Reconnect Rochester Rochester Cycling Alliance Rochester Transit Service Older adults	Transportation	Pilot completed of shared use three-wheeled trikes.	Improved bike safety for community members with compromised mobility.	■	■	■
	19D. Promote bike boulevards and urban bike trails, with signage and marketing.	Aging Alliance Reconnect Rochester Rochester Cycling Alliance Genesee Transportation Council	Transportation	List of marked bike boulevards and urban bike trails is produced and publicized.	Increased use of bicycles.	■	■	■
20. Expand low-cost or no-cost transportation for medical and non-medical trips.	20A. Expand volunteer driver programs through increased investment in recruitment, training, and placement of volunteers.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging United Way Lifespan-Mobility Management Programs Community-based organizations Aging service providers	Transportation Volunteerism & Employment Economic Security	Number of additional volunteer programs and volunteers.	Increased access to affordable or no cost transportation options.	■	■	

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
20. Expand low-cost or no-cost transportation for medical and non-medical trips.	20B. Additional financial support for non-emergency medical and social transportation (such as voucher programs) for those not eligible for Medicaid.	Monroe County Office for Aging Lifespan Private funders Municipalities	Transportation Economic Security	Additional financial support is available to older adults for transportation needs.	Improved access to affordable transportation for older adults.	■	■	■
	20C. Expand geographic locations of on-demand transit zones.	Rochester Transit Service	Transportation Economic Security	Expanded geographic locations for on-demand transit service.	Increased, affordable transportation opportunities.	■	■	■
21. Implement more robust mobility management services.	21A. Create a centralized portal for all updated transportation options, accessible electronically and in print.	NYS Department of Transportation Monroe County Office for Aging United Way Lifespan	Transportation Communication & Information	Creation of a centralized portal for all transportation information and services, accessible for individuals and to those assisting individuals with mobility needs, available digitally and in print.	Easier access to the transportation ecosystem.	■		
	21B. Provide travel training, including public transit ride-along, education about on-demand and transit options, and support with electronic trip planning applications.	Rochester Transit Service NYS Department of Transportation Monroe County Office for Aging United Way Lifespan	Transportation Communication & Information	Number of travel training services provided by the mobility management program.	Greater use transit service by older adults and people with disabilities.	■	■	

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LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Housing

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
22. Increase affordable, safe, accessible housing.	22A. Advocate for more affordable, accessible rental housing options for older adults.	Aging Alliance Rochester Housing Authority Sage II Commission/ Common Ground Health Housing developers	Housing Economic Security	Increased development of affordable, accessible rental housing for older adults.	Increased development of affordable, accessible rental housing for older adults.	■	■	■
	22B. Support zoning changes for Accessory Dwelling Units on residential properties.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Towns and Villages City of Rochester	Housing	Accessory Dwelling Units are approved in city and town zoning ordinances.	Increased alternative housing options that support affordable living near loved ones.	■	■	■
	22C. Expand home modification programs, which provide affordable improvements such as railings, grab bars, non-skid stairs, interior/exterior ramps.	Monroe County Office for Aging City of Rochester Lifespan Community-based organizations Aging service providers UR Medicine Private funders	Housing Economic Security	New or expanded home modification services are available to older adults.	Older adults have support to successfully age in place.	■	■	

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
22. Increase affordable, safe, accessible housing.	22D. Increase grants and low interest loan programs for home maintenance and repair.	Monroe County Office for Aging Community-based organizations Aging service providers Private funders	Housing Economic Security	Amount of increased funding supporting low-income older adults with needed home repairs.	Older adults have the financial support to remain in their own homes.	■		
23. Establish a reference center for home support and maintenance services.	23A. Create a reference center for trusted home repair and improvement contractors.	Monroe County Office for Aging Lifespan/Monroe County NY Connects Monroe County Systems Integration Project Better Contractors Bureau	Housing Communication & Information	Resource center created for contractors, vetted by a trusted source, as a reference for older adults.	Older adults have reliable information about trusted home support services.	■	■	
	23B. Provide affordable packing and moving services for older adults who wish to rightsize.	Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers Community-based organizations Private funders	Housing Economic Security	List of new or expanded packing/moving services for low-income older adults.	Older adults have financial support to relocate.	■	■	■

Age Friendly Monroe County Recommendations and Action Plan



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Health Services & Community Supports

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
24. Establish one navigator service to assist older adults in accessing available health services and community supports.	24A. Champion the community's Systems Integration project efforts to establish a navigator service.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Systems Integration Project	Health Services & Community Supports Communication & Information	Establishment of a community-wide navigator service.	Increased connection to community resources.	■	■	■
	24B. Co-locate navigators at key neighborhood, community center and housing locations.	Monroe County Systems Integration Project	Health Services & Community Supports	Navigator services are available throughout the county.	Increased access to supportive community services.	■	■	■
25. Expand health services and health literacy programs for older adults.	25A. Expand the existing, evidence-based health care coordination model, for assistance with appointment management, transportation, medication management, and care coordination, regardless of income or insurance.	Private funders Monroe County Office for Aging Lifespan Healthcare providers	Health Services & Community Supports	Increased funding is secured for health care coordination services. Improved health outcomes are reported.	Improved health outcomes.	■		

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
25. Expand health services and health literacy programs for older adults.	25B. Improve the social determinants of health for underserved and underrepresented older adults.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers Common Ground Health Healthcare providers	Health Services & Community Supports Respect & Inclusion	Inventory of community aging resources is created, organized into social determinants of health domains. County health metrics show improved health outcomes for underserved and underrepresented older adults.	Improved health outcomes.	■		
	25C. Advance health literacy through programs such as Ask Me 3™ and other patient-empowerment programs.	Monroe County Office for Aging Common Ground Health Healthcare providers Private funders	Health Services & Community Supports Communication & Information	Health literacy programs are offered to older adults, as reported by healthcare providers.	Improved health literacy of older adults.	■		
	25D. Educate healthcare practitioners about how to improve communication with older adults and persons with disabilities. E.g., take time, go slower, speak up, use large print.	Aging Alliance Common Ground Health Healthcare providers	Health Services & Community Supports Communication & Information Respect & Inclusion	Workshop or seminar is given to medical providers that promotes an understanding of the value of older adults and their needs.	Improved understanding by medical providers about how to serve and treat older adults.	■		

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
25. Expand health services and health literacy programs for older adults.	25E. Expand evidence-based, in-home emotional wellness and behavioral health programs for older adults, as well as more intense services for behavioral health needs (mental health and substance abuse).	Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers Monroe County Office of Mental Health Common Ground Health Healthcare providers Private funders	Health Services & Community Supports	Increased options for treatment and support are available for older adults with behavioral health needs	Improved emotional wellness for older adults.	■	■	■
26. Support formal and informal caregivers, and caregiver networks.	26A. Provide caregiver information and assistance to support those caring for loved ones, understanding that many do not identify as 'caregivers.'	Caregiver resource providers Aging service providers Monroe County Systems Integration Project	Health Services & Community Supports Communication & Information	Increased number of caregiver resources and services provided.	Easy access to caregiver information and support.	■	■	
	26B. Expand formal and informal neighborhood care networks that coordinate assistance and support for aging in place. E.g. Episcopal Senior Life Neighborhood program, the Villages model, and private, neighbor-to-neighbor informal support.	Episcopal Senior Life Aging service providers Villages programs Neighborhoods Community at large	Health Services & Community Supports	Number of new neighborhood care networks and services available.	Improved caregiver support.	■	■	■

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
26. Support formal and informal caregivers, and caregiver networks.	26C. Support kinship caregivers.	NYS Kinship Navigator Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers Local schools	Health Services & Community Supports	Increased number of kinship caregivers served.	Kinship caregivers are supported with resources to care for children.	■	■	
27. Promote full participation in the Age-friendly Health System Initiative* by local hospital systems and medical providers.	27A. Foster continuous improvements in locally certified Age-friendly Health Systems using the 4Ms framework: four evidence-based elements of high-quality care that focus on What Matters, Mobility, Mentation, and Medication.	Monroe County hospitals and healthcare systems Aging service providers	Health Services & Community Supports Respect & Inclusion	Adoption of one new age-friendly care innovation or operational improvement inside the local Age Friendly Health System network.	Improved health outcomes.	■	■	■

*An initiative of the John A. Hartford Foundation and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement in partnership with the American Hospital Association and the Catholic Health Association of the United States

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LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Economic Security

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
28. Recognize the issue of poverty among older adults, especially those of color living within the City of Rochester, and support improvements to address the elder poverty crisis.	28A. Support community-based organizations assisting low-income older adults with basic needs.	Monroe County Office for the Aging Private funders	Economic Security	Discontinued Monroe County matching fund requirements for programming that serves individuals in poverty.	Fewer restrictions and challenges placed on community-based organizations who serve individuals in poverty.	■		
	28B. Increase financial support to programs that assist older adults with bill paying and budgeting tasks.	Monroe County Office for Aging Private funders	Economic Security	Additional funding secured for bill paying and budgeting programs.	Older adults have support to maintain their financial independence.	■	■	■

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
28. Recognize the issue of poverty among older adults, especially those of color living within the City of Rochester, and support improvements to address the elder poverty crisis.	28C. Infuse financial services programming into City of Rochester older adult programming locations, to support older adults living in poverty in these neighborhoods.	Monroe County Office for Aging Monroe County Systems Integration Project Neighborhood Centers Aging service providers	Economic Security	Number of financial support services offered at various City of Rochester neighborhood locations.	Improved financial stability for older adults living in the City	■	■	
29. Increase participation in public benefit programs and services.	29A. Host financial clinics in targeted locations to provide eligibility and application assistance to older adults who qualify for public benefit programs.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Office for Aging Aging service providers Monroe County Department of Human Services	Economic Security	Number of financial clinics held.	Improved financial stability for older adults.	■	■	
	29B. Increase the number of older adults receiving public benefits, especially the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Department of Human Services Nutrition Outreach and Education Program Aging service providers	Economic Security	Increased number of older adults receiving SNAP and other public benefits.	Reduced food insecurity and improved financial stability for older adults.	■	■	■

Recommendation	Action	Community Partners	Domains	Indicators	Desired Impact	Timeline		
						Y1	Y2	Y3
29. Increase participation in public benefit programs and services.	29C. Connect older adults to financial support for internet access and Lifeline telephone benefits with smartphone technology options.	Aging Alliance Monroe County Department of Human Services Aging service providers	Economic Security Communication & Information Respect & Inclusion	Increased number of older adults enrolled in internet and Lifeline financial assistance programs.	Improved internet and technology access for older adults.	■	■	

From Recommendations to Action



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Creating a Community for a Lifetime

An Action Plan for an Age-friendly/Livable Rochester and Monroe County

From Recommendations to Action

We want to acknowledge that over the last decade, nonprofit providers, local governments, and funders have launched initiatives designed to combat ageism, increase intergenerational opportunities, address housing and transportation barriers, reimagine older adult centers, and support family caregivers, among others. This report is a blueprint designed to foster even more innovation.

Our recommendations, along with the aligned set of suggested actionable activities, community partners, indicators and desired impacts, are strongly suggested guides for practices that will result in a more age-friendly/livable community for all. Our recommendations and suggested activities do not stand alone, nor are they exclusive of future suggestions about building an age-friendly community. The recommendations and activities often affect more than one domain; they are cross-cutting. The activities both support the recommendations and derive from input gathered during our community assessment.

The Monroe County Aging Alliance will monitor progress over the next three years. We commit to producing annual progress updates and a final report with qualitative and quantitative changes and improvements. Our goal, once again, is to ensure full participation in the fabric of our community by an increasing population of older people who very much want to remain relevant.

End Notes

- i <http://www.who.int/ageing/age-friendly-environments/en/>
- ii <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2014/an-introduction.html>
- iii Global Age-Friendly Cities, A Guide, The World Health Organization, 2007
- iv The Longevity Economy, 2016, Oxford Economics
- v All demographic data is from the 2015-2019 Five-Year American Community Survey (ACS).
- vi <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2021/demo/p70-173.html>
- vii <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-19-442r>
- viii <https://www.prb.org/resources/eight-demographic-trends-transforming-americas-older-population/>
- ix Ibid.
- x <https://nam.edu/social-determinants-of-health-101-for-health-care-five-plus-five/>
- xi <https://unitedwayroch.org/landing-pages/systems-integration-project/>
- xii <http://www.ihl.org/Engage/Initiatives/Age-Friendly-Health-Systems/Pages/default.aspx>. Age-Friendly Health Systems is an initiative of The John A. Hartford Foundation and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), in partnership with the American Hospital Association (AHA) and the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA).
- xiii <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/rochester/good-news/2019/06/04/rochester-number-2-in-nation-volunteering-usa-community-america>
- xiv <https://www.nyam.org/haaap/>
- xv Poverty in Later Life, Rochester's Poverty Problem is a problem across the lifespan. Monroe County Aging Alliance and Lifespan of Greater Rochester, 2021. <https://www.lifespan-roch.org/publications>

Appendix



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County



Creating a Community for a Lifetime

An Action Plan for an Age-friendly/Livable Rochester and Monroe County

Monroe County Aging Alliance Members

Action for A Better Community

Alzheimer's Association

Catholic Charities Family and Community Services

City of Rochester

Common Ground Health

County of Monroe

Episcopal SeniorLife Communities

Finger Lakes Caregiver Institute

Home Leasing

Ibero American Action League

Jewish Family Service of Rochester

Lifespan of Greater Rochester Inc.

Rochester Area Community Foundation

Rochester Regional Health: ElderONE

The American Association of Retired Persons

The Greater Rochester Area Partnership for the Elderly

United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes

UR Medicine

Urban League of Rochester



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Rochester and Monroe County

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