



Roadmap for Livable Cuyahoga



March 2024

Acknowledgments

Cuyahoga County Division of Senior and Adults Services (DSAS) served as the lead agency for the strategic planning process, but were supported by many others:

Core DSAS Team

Natasha Pietrocola
Patricia Newell
Sonya Walker-Betts
Maridell Couture

DSAS Staff

Kaylee Barnett
LaToya Blake
Lester Holmes
Deonna Kirkpatrick
Najah Miller
Denise Rucker-Burton
Darlene Wade
Tanesha Washington

Advisory Council

Susan Althans
Jerome Baker
Joy Banish*
Lisa Barno*
Dr. Doug Beach
Orion Bell*
Douglass Bennett
Myron Bennet*
Michael Billnitzer
Dr. Radiah Blanton
Yvette Bozman-Wright
Cheryl Bradas*
De'Neitra Brown
Caryn Candinsky*
Dr. Floun'say Caver*
Koula Celebrezze
Laura Chalker
Mark Cierebiej
Freddy Collier Sr.*
Leonore Comisso
Ann Conn*
Yvonne Conwell
John Corlett
Dr. Andrew Cox
Ayonna Blue Daniel
Kendra Daniel*
Jeanna Davis*
Wanda Davis*

Goren Dillard
Joshua Edmonds
Bob Eckardt*
Nicole Evans
Gabrielle Fowlkes
Jill Frankel
Dr. Prakash Ganesh
Grace Gallucci
Beth Glas*
Donisha Greene*
Katie Grootegoed
Kristies Groves
Christopher Hall*
Yvonka Hall*
Kathy Hallissey
Patricia Hardy
Phyllis Harris
Dr. Roderick Harris
Dr. Ardeshir Hashmi
Richard Haynesworth*
Bill Hebble*
Paul Herdeg*
Atunyese V. Herron*
Melanie Hogan*
John Jackson
Sara Parks Jackson
Angeline James
Valerie James
Katie Jenkins
Julie Johnson*
Dr. Janet Keeler*
Deonna Kirkpatrick*
Laura Kleinman*
Jennifer Kons
Keisha Krumm*
Mara Layne
Ricardo Leon*
Lenora Lockett
Carolyn Lookabill
Heidi Lum
Dr. David Margolius
Dr. Janice Marshall
Patsy McClain
Tangi McCoy
Mary McNamara
Simone McNitt*

Mark Meder*
David Merriman
Shannon Monyak*
Ashley Morrissey
Eric Morse
Jazz Nichols*
Kevin Nowak
Lee Ann O'Brian*
O'Diri Omobien
Martina Pace
Jeffery Patterson
Michael Parks
Annie Pease
LaJean Ray
John Roberts
Sabrina Roberts*
Jennifer Rosich*
Chris Ronayne
Catherine Rush*
Lisa Sandor
Angie Schmitt
Pam Schuellerman*
Michelle Simko
Beth Sipple
Rosalind Strickland
William Tarter
Doug Tayek
Jenna Thomas
Dr. Aloen Townsend
Meredith M. Turner
Jacob VanSickle
Darlene Wade
Allison Wallace
Annetta Joy Watts
Jennifer R. Wilson
Adam Winston*

* also participated as stakeholders

Engagement Support

Community Partnership
on Aging
Donna Smallwood
Activity Center
Fairhill Partners Senior
Guest House
Fatima Family Center
Hunger Network
Murtis Taylor Human
Services System
Westlake Senior Center

Special Thanks

Lenora Lockett, Director
of Diversity, Equity,
and Inclusion with
Cuyahoga County
Benjamin Rose Institute
on Aging
Jerry Sue Thorton Center
McGregor Gardens
Western Reserve Area
Agency on Aging
The Community of
Cuyahoga County

Consultant

Planning NEXT

A Letter to the Community

Dear Residents,

Thank you for your continued support for the Cuyahoga County Division of Senior and Adult Services. Now more than ever, it is critical that we support and uplift our aging community. Cuyahoga County is actively evolving into a community where our senior population thrives, and this continuous effort is integral to the County's mission. Fostering an environment where our seniors flourish is a priority, reflecting our unwavering commitment to their well-being.

Today, we are pleased to present the Livable Cuyahoga Roadmap, which will guide our efforts to improve the quality of life for Cuyahoga County's senior population and all residents. We are proud to have the Division of Senior and Adult Services leading this initiative and consistently striving to find better ways to serve our aging community.

In 2022, Cuyahoga County joined the AARP Age-Friendly Network to enhance programming and policies for older adults. The County completed the assessment phase in 2023 and worked collaboratively with the Livable Cuyahoga Advisory Council throughout to develop the Livable Cuyahoga Roadmap.

Cuyahoga County is committed to making informed decisions for residents based on diverse perspectives and expertise. The Livable Cuyahoga Advisory Council took a comprehensive approach to developing the plan, gathering input from older adult community members through focus groups and strategizing with advocates and stakeholders in addition to seeking the advice of consultants.

Now that the planning phase is complete, we look forward to implementing strategies to ensure Cuyahoga County is and continues to be a premier community for families to live and age. We will continue to be transparent and open to collaboration to foster innovation and strengthen the implementation of the Livable Cuyahoga Roadmap.

The Division of Senior and Adult Services is excited to continue this work over the next three years, and we are eager to bring you along for the journey. We must collaborate with our stakeholders and community partners to establish a Livable Cuyahoga. The success of this initiative depends on teamwork and cooperation among all parties involved.

Once again, thank you for your support, and we look forward to creating a sustainable and livable environment for everyone in Cuyahoga County.

Sincerely,

Chris Ronayne
Cuyahoga County Executive

Contents

Background	5
Action Agenda	15
Vision.....	16
Strategic Goals.....	17
Recommendations	18
1. Safe and Secure	19
2. Connected.....	23
3. Purposeful.....	29
4. Healthy and Supported	33
5. Engaged.....	37
Implementation	43



Background

The Roadmap for Livable Cuyahoga focuses on the age-friendliness and accessibility of Cuyahoga County and outlines a set of recommendations that will guide the County's age-friendly efforts for the next five years. It is intended to be a living, breathing document that can be used and changed as the needs of the County evolve.

This initiative supports Cuyahoga County's cities and towns in becoming great places for people of all ages and abilities; one with a healthy community, access to jobs and purposeful engagement, and government. Successful aging is a life-long process, and Division of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS) believes that Cuyahoga County's older adults and adults with disabilities should have opportunities and environments in which to stay active, engaged, and healthy. A livable community provides connection, health, and personal prosperity and contributes to well-being in all stages of life (Livable Cuyahoga Needs Assessment, 2023.)

This plan aligns with the 2023-2026 State Plan on Aging, which was released by the Ohio Department of Aging in October 2022. The state plan focused on equity and inclusion, with a goal of all Ohioans living longer, healthier lives with dignity and autonomy, with special focus on disparities and addressing inequities. The Livable Cuyahoga plan supports this, with a more specific focus on the wants and needs of the communities of Cuyahoga County.

What is Livable Cuyahoga?

Forty-five million Americans are 65 or older, and by 2030 that number will reach 75 million. In Cuyahoga County, that means 30% - over 400,000 residents – will be over 60. In April of 2022, Cuyahoga County, led by the Division of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS), became the 665th community in the United States to enroll in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. This kicked off a five-year process towards becoming a more livable community. The process began with completing a Needs Assessment, in partnership with Community Solutions, in February 2023. The assessment surveyed community members across all 59 jurisdictions of Cuyahoga County to identify how to best support older adults and healthy aging. Following the survey, this Roadmap was developed to focus on bringing the County closer to being a more livable community.



Needs Assessment Key Findings

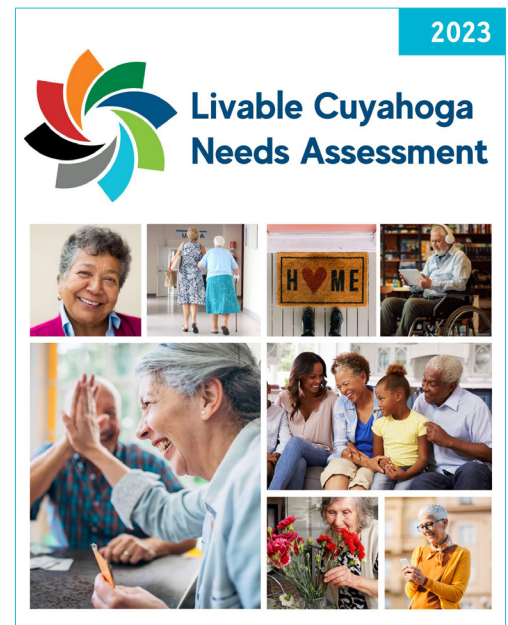
The 2023 Needs Assessment was the first phase of becoming a livable community. This assessment audited the conditions, available services, shortcomings, and aspirations related to the age-friendliness and accessibility of Cuyahoga County.

The assessment was completed by the Center for Community Solutions through a combination of surveys and focus groups that engaged the County residents, age 50 and over. Over 4,000 residents were mailed surveys and 11 in-person focus groups were convened across the County.

What was learned

Older residents of Cuyahoga County...

- » Reported high access to community and health-related services, though some areas of the County have higher health needs than others.
- » Valued parks located within the community and often mentioned Cleveland Metroparks as an asset. Good lighting and clear walking pathways are highly valued by community members.
- » Shared that bus routes and the distance to bus stops have also changed in some places, making it more difficult to access transit, especially in the winter.
- » Desired options in housing. Many were eager to stay in their communities but may be living in a home that no longer meets their needs. Smaller homes built to accommodate mobility devices were of high interest to many older adults. Homes with less maintenance, including outdoor seasonal chores, were attractive to many older adults.
- » Overwhelmingly expressed a desire to return to regularly scheduled activities to socialize, particularly to activities that had been put on hold due to Covid-19.
- » Felt respected when younger residents included them in activities and considered their needs when planning community events.
- » Felt that politicians often engage their community, but did not make changes in policies.
- » Shared that they would prefer to speak to a real person to get information rather than use the internet.



Introduction to the Livability Domains

The World Health Organization and AARP Livable Communities have established Eight Domains of Livability that provide a holistic view of what makes a community age-friendly. The eight domains, as defined by AARP¹ are:



1. **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings.** People need both indoor and outdoor public places to gather. Green spaces, seating, and accessible buildings (elevators, zero-step entrances, staircases with railings) should be used and enjoyed by people of all ages.
2. **Transportation.** Driving shouldn't be the only way to get around. Pedestrians need sidewalks and safe, crossable streets. Dedicated bicycle lanes benefit nondrivers and drivers alike. Public transit options can range from the large-scale (trains, buses, light rail) to smaller options (taxis, shuttles or ride share services).
3. **Communication and Information.** We now communicate in ways few could have imagined a decade ago. Age-friendly communities recognize that information must come from a variety of methods since not everyone is tech-savvy, has a cell phone or has home-based internet access.

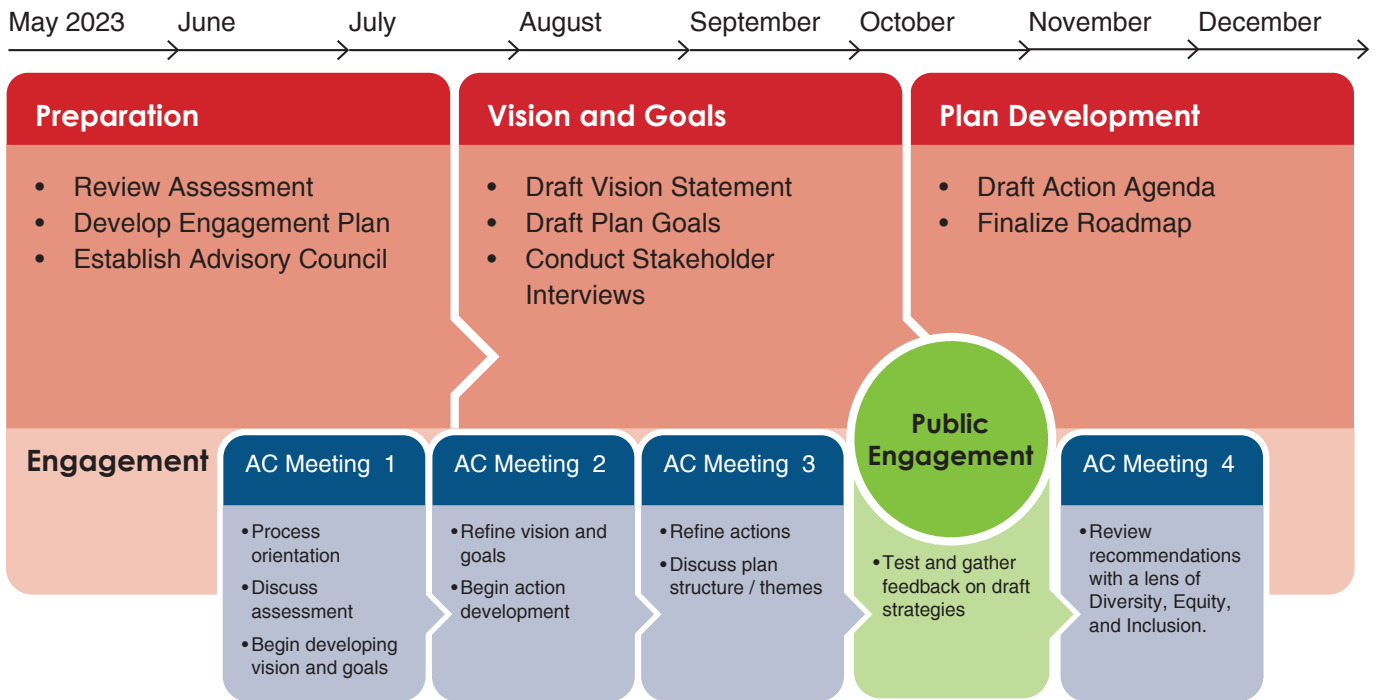
1. AARP Livable Communities. (n.d.). The 8 Domains of Livability: An Introduction. <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html>

4. **Work and Civic Engagement.** Why does work need to be an all or nothing experience? An age-friendly community encourages older people to be actively engaged in community life and has opportunities for residents to work for pay or volunteer their skills.
5. **Respect and Social Inclusion.** Everyone wants to feel valued. Intergenerational gatherings and activities are a great way for young and older people to learn from one another and honor what each has to offer while feeling good about themselves.
6. **Community and Health Services.** At some point, every person of every age gets hurt, becomes ill or simply needs some help. While it's important that assistance and care be available nearby, it's essential that residents can access and afford the services required.
7. **Social Participation.** Regardless of a person's age, loneliness is often as debilitating a health condition as having a chronic illness or disease. Sadness and isolation can be combated by having opportunities to socialize and making available fun social activities that are accessible and affordable.
8. **Housing.** AARP surveys consistently find that the vast majority of older adults want to reside in their current home or community for as long as possible. Doing so is possible if a home is designed or modified for aging in place or if neighborhoods have housing options that are suitable for differing incomes, ages and life stages.

In order to ensure this plan addressed all concerns and aspects of a livable community, its development began with all eight domains. This evolved as the Advisory Council began their work and some additional groups were added (e.g., education). The overarching Strategic Goals were developed to achieve a comprehensive baseline and to support the overall Vision Statement. As work progressed, it became clear that many of the domains were deeply interconnected, and broader themes were developed to organize the recommendations clearly and concisely.

Process Overview

The eight-month process for the Roadmap for Livable Cuyahoga began in May, 2023 and consisted of three distinct phases. The plan’s development was guided by an Advisory Council with over 130 members, which met over the course of four meetings. The Advisory Council was made up of community professionals and subject matter experts who worked with older adults and adults with disabilities across all eight of the AARP Domains of Livability. The Advisory Council was a working group focused on the Livability Domains (see pg. 9-10.) The public’s input was also vital to this process, and 11 meetings were held at senior centers across the County to meet older adults where they were and gather their feedback on key recommendations. These meetings, along with input from the Core Team and seven Stakeholder meetings resulted in a comprehensive list of recommendations that will lead Cuyahoga County toward a more livable future.

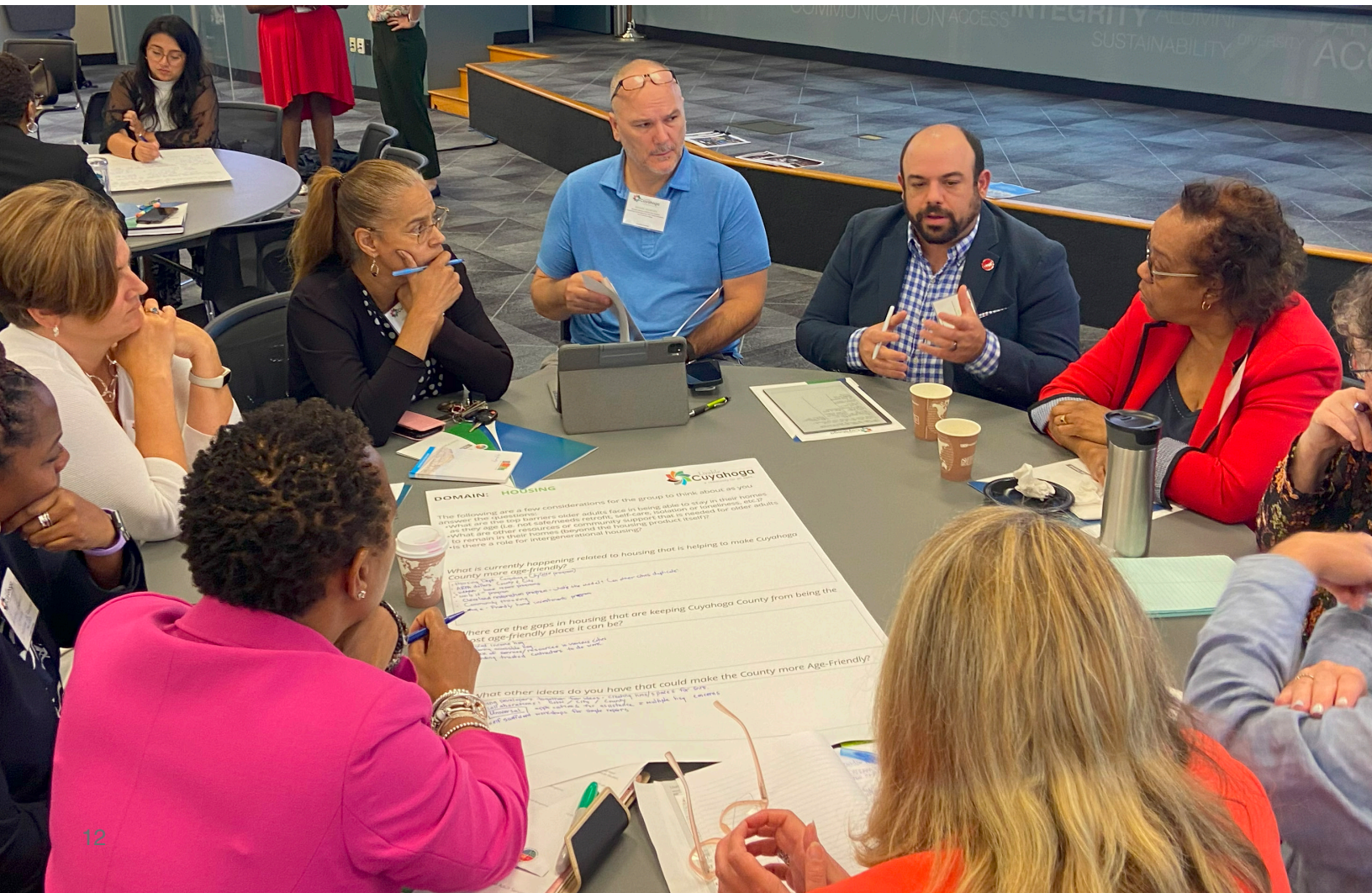


Advisory Council Meeting 1

The first meeting with the Advisory Council was convened in June, 2023. Over 130 professionals around the county who work with older adults and adults with disabilities were invited to participate in the Livable Cuyahoga initiative and officially accepted a role as a member of the Advisory Council. At the meeting, Council members learned more about the Livable Cuyahoga process, including results from the Needs Assessment. Additionally, participants were asked to brainstorm vision and goal sentiments focusing on their domains. They were also encouraged to suggest additional agencies and organizations in their domain topic area they thought should be a part of the process.

Advisory Council Meeting 2

The second Advisory Council meeting was held in July, 2023. Members reviewed the vision and goal statements that were developed based on their input from the first meeting. Then each domain working group answered three open-ended questions: (1) What is currently happening related to your domain area that is helping to make Cuyahoga County more age-friendly?; (2) Where are the gaps in your domain area that are keeping Cuyahoga County from being the most age-friendly place it can be?; (3) What other ideas do you have that could make the County more Age-Friendly? This feedback was instrumental to creating objectives of the plan.



Advisory Council Meeting 3

The Advisory Council met for the third time in August, 2023. This meeting focused on reviewing the draft objectives that were developed in the second meeting. Participants were asked to start brainstorming specific programs, policies, and projects that could be implemented to achieve these objectives.

Advisory Council Meeting 4

The final Advisory Council meeting was held in November, 2023. The Director of Equity and Inclusion at Cuyahoga County shared Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) strategies the County was actively implementing. Participants were then asked to review the draft recommendations with a DEI lens. They were given a full list of recommendations and encouraged to share comments on DEI, as well as any final thoughts to be considered as the plan was finalized.

Stakeholder Meetings

Throughout the month of September 2023, seven group stakeholder meetings were held with experts in the community. These stakeholders were invited to participate in a more focused discussion around a Livability Domain topic that allowed them the opportunity to offer expert perspective on the needs of older adults and adults with disabilities in that domain. Nearly 40 stakeholders were engaged in these discussions and offered valuable feedback that helped further inform the recommendations for the plan.

Public Engagement

After a full list of recommendations was developed and sorted into five themes to reduce redundancies across the domains, one priority recommendation from each chapter was selected and tested with older adults. Eleven “Meeting-In-A-Box” kits were distributed to senior centers around the County during the month of October to engage older adults in small, thoughtful discussions about the recommendations in response to their individual needs. These discussions provided valuable input on the practicality of the recommendations and how older adults and adults with disabilities could benefit from these specific recommendations.

According to older adults,

to increase Livability, the County should focus on...

- » *Decent, Affordable Housing*
- » *Keeping People Informed*
- » *Mass Transit Routes*
- » *Lighting in Neighborhoods*
- » *Police Resources*
- » *Pest Control*

Hierarchy and Organization

The action agenda is organized with the following hierarchy:

Vision and Strategic Goals

A high-level expression of the community's future, reflecting their values and setting the tone for the more specific recommendations.

This plan has 7 strategic goals.

Themes

Organization for the objectives that connect them succinctly to the vision and strategic goals.

This plan has 5 themes.

Objectives

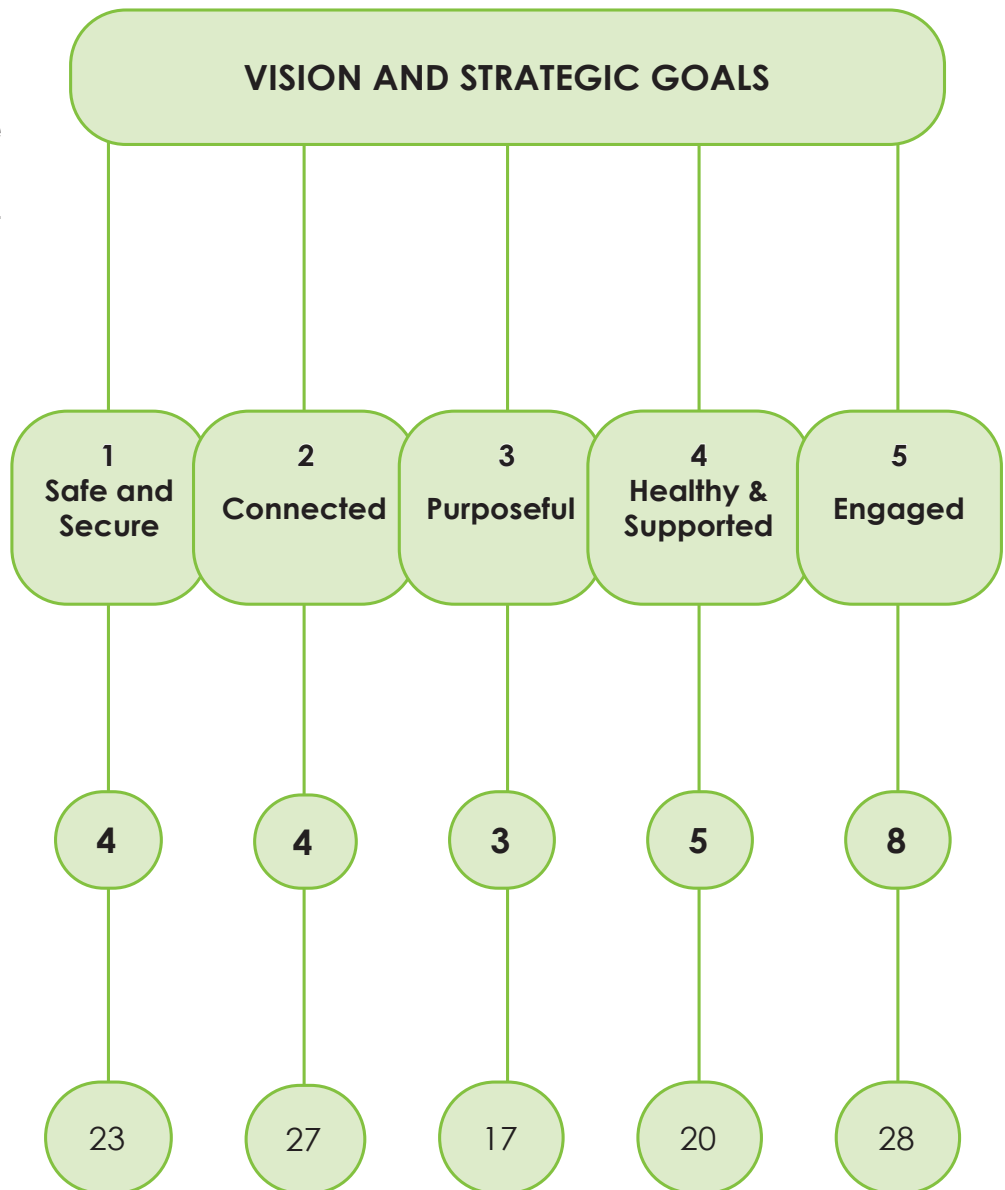
Organization for the recommendations that group them and connect them to the themes.

This plan has 24 objectives.

Recommendations

Specific programs, policies and projects to achieve the vision.

This plan has 116 recommendations.





Action Agenda

Vision

The vision statement captures the broadest aspirations of the Livable Cuyahoga planning effort. It serves as the guide for the process and roadmap for the recommendations. The vision was generated with input from the Advisory Council and refined by the Core DSAS Team.

Cuyahoga County is a recognized model for safe and livable communities. The County works collaboratively to support and empower all people, especially older adults and adults with disabilities, to live equitable, healthy, and purposeful lives.

The county works collaboratively with culturally and ethnically diverse organizations, as it strives to eliminate disparities and inequities in all County systems.

Older adults and adults with disabilities which includes adults over the age of 60 of every race, gender, culture, religion, and sexual orientation and those with a disability between 18 and 59.



Strategic Goals

Seven goals that describe the future for a Livable Cuyahoga were developed as part of the planning process. These goals were drafted to be overarching desired outcomes for the process, ensuring the plan considers all eight AARP Domains of Livability. They were conceptualized and refined with help from the Advisory Council.

Cuyahoga County...

1. Is a place where all residents have access to quality services that support their health and wellbeing. A wide variety of affordable social services are offered to meet the unique needs of older adults and adults with disabilities in their communities.
2. Is a place with safe, clean, and accessible outdoor spaces and buildings that are well-maintained and focus on quality experience for older adults and adults with disabilities.
3. Is a connected community that offers a variety of safe, affordable, and dependable transportation options for all mobility levels. This robust network of walking, biking, vehicular, and mass transit options gives older residents and residents with disabilities equitable access to important social, recreational, and health services.
4. Has an abundance of affordable, safe, and accessible housing options for its residents. Everyone has the opportunity to remain in their home and/or in communities of their choosing, as they age. For many seniors this will include living with adult children and in other familial settings.
5. Is a welcoming community where everyone feels respected, included, and connected. There is a sense of belonging and opportunities for engagement for all County residents, as they age.
6. Is a community where older adults and adults with disabilities have a variety of opportunities to work, volunteer, and develop new skills through education, uptraining, and mentorship. The opportunities are well-communicated and accessible, as well as aimed at priority communities.
7. Communicates information effectively through accessible and culturally relevant channels. Older adults and adults with disabilities know where to find this information, and it is shared in a centralized and inclusive manner.

Recommendations

The following five themes serve as aspirational focuses that organize the plan’s recommendations. The themes recognize the inherent synergies and overlaps across each of the eight Domains of Livability to achieve the age-friendly vision for Cuyahoga County. They are as follows:

In Cuyahoga County, we want our older adults and adults with disabilities to be...

1. **Safe and Secure**
2. **Connected**
3. **Purposeful**
4. **Healthy and Supported**
5. **Engaged**

Inputs

The following recommendations were developed based on data and analysis from the following sources.

- » The **2022 Needs Assessment** provided valuable background information for the process.
- » Four **Advisory Council Meetings** gathered experts in the community to begin development and refine the vision, goals, objectives, and recommendations.
- » Seven **Stakeholder Meetings** allowed targeted groups to discuss focused and detailed recommendations.
- » **Public engagement** generated specific examples to start guiding implementation.
- » The **DSAS Core Team** provided continual support, information, and feedback to guide the process.

While the objectives and recommendations were sorted into themes to reduce redundancies, it was important that the eight Livability Domains are clearly addressed. Using the key below, each domain a recommendation addresses is cross-referenced on the following pages.

Domain Topics

- Communication and Information
- Community and Health Services
- Outdoor Spaces
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Work and Civic Engagement
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In Cuyahoga County, we want our older adults and adults with disabilities to be...

1. Safe and Secure

Feeling safe and secure comes from being in an environment where one can flourish. It is important that people feel safe in their homes, their neighborhoods, and their communities. Many older adults want to stay in their homes and communities for as long as possible, which requires that the home be designed or modified for aging in place. Similarly, the larger community requires a variety of housing options suitable for a range of incomes and mobilities. When spaces around the community are well-designed with accessible buildings and green spaces, people of all ages are able to enjoy and utilize them.



1. Safe and Secure

1.A. Improve accessibility and safety throughout the County, including parks, businesses, and other public spaces.

- 1.A.1 Introduce Park shuttle SUVs with routes that include accessible parking.
- 1.A.2 Create park on-site ambassadors to help on-site with questions, access, and safety.
- 1.A.3 Introduce a business spotlight for age-friendly businesses via the AARP and community newsletters and website.
- 1.A.4 Create a “Livable Cuyahoga seal of approval” for age-friendly businesses.

According to older adults,

Livable Cuyahoga Seal of Approval means...

- » *Frequent Seating*
- » *Wheelchair Accessibility*
- » *Accessible Bathrooms*
- » *Good Lighting*
- » *Legible Signage/Menus*
- » *Senior Discounts*
- » *Adequate Staffing/Assistance*

- 1.A.5 Ensure age-friendly standards in the creation of new and expansion of existing parks and open spaces (e.g., along the lakefront).
- 1.A.6 Create a park focused on the needs and wants of older adults and adults with disabilities.
- 1.A.7 Train transportation staff on signs of distress in older adults and adults with disabilities, such as mental health, medical, homelessness, and evidence of abuse or neglect.

Domain Topics



1. Safe and Secure

1.B. Enhance access to trustworthy home repair and maintenance services.

Domain Topics

- 1.B.1 Identify an Age Friendly Contractor Certification Program(s), which educates architects, contractors, trades, and vendors on considerations for how to assist older adults and adults with disabilities in home repair, modification, and maintenance. If one does not exist, Livable Cuyahoga will work to develop a plan, utilizing the County’s equity zones to prioritize areas of greatest need.
- 1.B.2 Provide credible resource listing of government and non-profit organizations that assist older adults and adults with disabilities in screening potential contractors and vendors. Utilize County’s Scam Squad to review approved list annually. Include tips and tools for older adults to help them choose the appropriate providers.
- 1.B.3 Collaborate with a wide variety of housing professionals to plan/identify educational workshops for older adults and adults with disabilities, to help them understand and access the resources available, and to select the most appropriate contractors and vendors.
- 1.B.4 Research funding resources and provide advocacy for renters, that focus on home repair projects, as well as those living in apartments (high-rises, etc.), to allow older adults and adults with disabilities the option to safely remain in their preferred home.
- 1.B.5 Establish a working model for utilizing local landbanks and community land trusts, to increase County coordination, information sharing, and funding for affordable housing solutions.
- 1.B.6 Increase awareness of and advocate to expand access to rental assistance programs offered by Community Partner organizations.
- 1.B.7 Expand access to senior housing voucher programs, such as Section 8.

● ●

● ●

● ● ●

● ● ●











● ● ●

● ● ●











● ●

1. Safe and Secure

1.C. Educate developers and others on the needs of older adults and adults with disabilities.

	Domain Topics
1.C.1 Utilize the most recent, targeted housing study data, to assess the housing needs of older adults and adults with disabilities.	 
1.C.2 Organize a developers roundtable to discuss and plan for homes for older adults and adults with disabilities.	 
1.C.3 Create developer guidelines for housing standards (e.g. universal design) for older adults and adults with disabilities.	 
1.C.4 Connect community developers with senior centers/high-rises to leverage community/family models with the needs of older adults and adults with disabilities in mind.	 
1.C.5 Incentivize developers to develop more accessible and affordable housing for older adults and adults with disabilities.	 

1.D. Educate older adults and adults with disabilities on housing and affordability options.

1.D.1 Collaborate with local banks and lenders utilizing County Equity Zones to increase the number of educational programs, targeting priority communities on housing options, including information on loans and financing.	 
1.D.2 Compile and distribute a list of government and other organizations that provide grants and loans to local institutions such as libraries, senior centers/high-rises, doctor’s offices, schools, and first responders.	  
1.D.3 Create a program to educate the children/caregivers of older adults and adults with disabilities to make them aware of available resources (e.g., insurance agencies, LTC agencies, etc.)	  
1.D.4 Replicate and expand existing “Aging in Place” programs by community housing organizations to increase community knowledge and awareness of the programs.	 

In Cuyahoga County, we want our older adults and adults with disabilities to be...






2. Connected

Being connected means getting around your community easily and without requiring a car. This can be done by ensuring pedestrians have sidewalks and safe, crossable streets, active transportation options, such as biking, and through investing in viable public transit options that range from large (RTA buses) to small scale (taxis, rideshare).



2. Connected

2.A. Launch inclusive, informative campaigns on transportation options for older adults and adults with disabilities.

		Domain Topics
2.A.1	Partner with primary transportation services and senior transportation groups to assist with production of educational materials.	
2.A.2	Identify central, well-traveled, and older adult and adult with disabilities-frequented spaces for information distribution.	
2.A.3	Launch social, earned, and paid media campaigns to educate older adults and adults with disabilities on transit options.	
2.A.4	Release information detailing transit stops, shelters, and services, especially near parks and recreation areas.	
2.A.5	Create a transit ambassador program that helps older adults and adults with disabilities understand routes and schedules, and how to use bus and rideshare systems.	

2.B. Support active transportation at all levels, including infrastructure.

Domain Topics

2.B.1 Implement complete streets tactics throughout the County through partnerships and collaboration.



Complete Streets aim to create safer interactions for all users, despite age or abilities. Examples may include ...

- » *Curb Bulbs*
- » *Landscape Medians*
- » *On-Street Parking*
- » *Narrowed Travel Lanes*

Potential tactics could include...

- » *Creating a policy for county-funded projects to include complete streets elements to be eligible for funding*
- » *Updating the complete streets toolkit created in 2014*
- » *Writing draft complete streets legislation for municipalities to adopt*

2.B.2 Strengthen partnerships with the County Planning Commission to advocate for a change in zoning, where appropriate, to allow more mixed-use walkable environments.



2.B.3 Partner with local health and transportation service providers to create a transportation program that provides on-demand transportation for older adults and adults with disabilities.



2.B.4 Support municipalities in building an all-ages-and-abilities bike network.



2. Connected

2.C. Expand and explore partnerships and funding options to address inequitable access, for age-friendly transit.

		Domain Topics
2.C.1	Increase all transportation services (e.g., a neighborhood bus model) to include medical and social engagement/educational opportunities, utilizing the County’s Equity Zones to prioritize areas of greatest need.	● ●
2.C.2	Develop public-private and neighborhood partnerships for snow removal and landscaping.	● ● ●
2.C.3	Identify grants and related resources that reduce transit costs.	● ●
2.C.4	Advocate for increased insurance coverage for volunteers/ drivers providing quality transportation services.	●
2.C.5	Collaborate and coordinate services with agencies and organizations with dedicated funding to address issues with access for older adults and adults with disabilities.	● ●
2.C.6	Advocate for increased operating funds for senior center transportation programs.	●

2.D. Implement accessibility protocols to encourage and facilitate older adults and adults with disabilities use of public transit.

- 2.D.1 Implement a ride-along service to help older adults and adults with disabilities navigate public transit in collaboration with a transit ambassador program (action 2.A.5).
- 2.D.2 Implement weekend and evening transportation services by funding agencies at a higher unit rate, who provide such services.
- 2.D.3 Improve lighting and wayfinding at shelters and bus stops.
- 2.D.5 Enforce ADA compliance at transit stops and activity hubs, including an increase in available seating.
- 2.D.6 Provide transportation services at pick-up and drop-off locations to help with first-mile, last-mile transit.
- 2.D.7 Set aside resources and incentivize communities to repair and install sidewalks.
- 2.D.8 Implement better wayfinding tools around the County.
- 2.D.9 Include technology on buses to allow for “talking” buses for sight impaired older adults and adults with disabilities.

Domain Topics



2. Connected

Domain Topics

2.D.10 Explore piloting a volunteer driver program that encourages and incentivizes volunteer organizations to work / assist in short-distance transportation trips.

2.D.11 Create a “Lyfting for Seniors” program that utilizes senior centers/high-rises to connect older adults and adults with disabilities to ridesharing for social engagements, running errands etc.

According to older adults,
a Lyfting for Seniors program will work if it...

- » *Is Affordable*
- » *Uses Trained, Trusted Drivers*
- » *Utilizes Visible Exterior Identifiers*
- » *Is Punctual and Reliable*
- » *Has Comfortable, Accessible Seating*

2.D.12 Advocate for increased transit stops at commonly recognized community hubs such as local grocery stores, drug stores, hair salons, libraries, and senior centers/high-rises.



In Cuyahoga County, we want our older adults and adults with disabilities to be...

3. Purposeful

Feeling respected and having purpose are fundamental aspects of life that are important to one's overall wellbeing. Older adults can and should be active members of society. They should be able to participate in volunteer, work, and educational opportunities in their community. They have skills that can be used to contribute to the greater community, and knowledge that should be shared across generations.



3. Purposeful

3.A. Strengthen collaboration between higher education institutions and older adults.

Domain Topics

3.A.1 Participate in the NEO Education Compact on a quarterly basis to provide updates on Livable Cuyahoga.



3.A.2 Survey current field placement programs for older adult organizations to assess and replicate opportunities for students to work with older adults and adults with disabilities.



3.A.3 Develop a coalition of higher education partners to share information, ideas, and resources for supporting older adults and adults with disabilities.



3.A.4 Partner with an employment program to connect older adults and adults with disabilities (degreed or certified) to potential employers.



3.A.5 Create non-credit online courses for older adults and adults with disabilities who want to continue to learn.



3.A.6 Promote and expand current computer literacy programs at senior centers/high-rises and libraries.



3.B. Support and promote current work and employment services.

-
- 3.B.1 Initiate a marketing campaign to raise awareness of available older adult and adult with disability employment opportunities and other relevant services.
 - 3.B.2 Create a Workforce Advisory Board with workforce solutions for distribution at senior centers/high-rises.
 - 3.B.3 Assess existing resources for identifying transferrable work skills.
 - 3.B.4 Utilize existing social hubs (libraries, AARP website, faith-based institutions, etc.) to distribute employment information.
 - 3.B.5 Develop more employer/training sites for older adults and adults with disabilities.

Domain Topics



3. Purposeful

3.C. Encourage and incentivize inclusion of older adults and adults with disabilities in the workforce.

Domain Topics

3.C.1 Hold a business roundtable with employers to promote hiring of older adults and adults with disabilities. Make sure older adults and adults with disabilities are included in the development of this training so that their needs are met.



A Business Roundtable should advocate for three levels of discussion...

- » *awareness event*
- » *job/career fair*
- » *on-site hiring event*

3.C.2 Assess and connect community volunteer organizations to businesses to provide more volunteers to assist older adults and adults with disabilities.



3.C.3 Develop resources for volunteer organizations (e.g., financial, training, human) that work with older adults and adults with disabilities.



3.C.4 Create an inclusive marketing campaign for older adults and adults with disabilities across all cultures and abilities to encourage and promote them volunteering.



3.C.5 Create incentives for volunteer hours (e.g., gas cards, sports tickets, meals, etc.) when working with older adults and adults with disabilities.



3.C.6 Advocate for and pursue tax credits for employers who hire older adults and adults with disabilities.



In Cuyahoga County, we want our older adults and adults with disabilities to be...

4. Healthy and Supported

Residents of any age can be hurt or sick, and it is important that their community supports them. High quality healthcare assistance and necessary supportive resources should be readily available and affordable to older adults throughout the community to keep them healthy and thriving.



4. Healthy and Supported

4.A. Support and partner with municipalities to develop safe and welcoming facilities, including rehabilitation, nursing, and group facilities.

- 4.A.1 Develop a standard for end-of-life care for both in-home and facility care.
- 4.A.2 Increase on-going training for long-term care facility staff.
- 4.A.3 Develop a program to improve rehabilitation services for older adults and adults with disabilities.
- 4.A.4 Create more oversight of group homes so that the needs of older adults and adults with disabilities are understood and met where they live.

Domain Topics



4.B. Enhance emotional health resources to serve older adults and adults with disabilities where they live and gather.

- 4.B.1 Promote and expand access to behavioral health services.
- 4.B.2 Research and promote older adult- and adult with disability-specific behavioral health services and providers.
- 4.B.3 Create a “park prescription program” through the healthcare system or senior center system to encourage older adults and adults with disabilities to access nature, greenspaces, and paths and trails.
- 4.B.4 Encourage development of Employee Resource Groups (ERG) for older adults and adults with disabilities in the workforce.



Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are groups of employees who join in their workplace based on shared characteristics or life experiences. They are generally based on providing support, enhancing career development, and contributing to personal development in the work environment.

4. Healthy and Supported

4.C. Continue to partner with both large and small healthcare systems to identify underserved communities and gaps in services.

Domain Topics

-
- 4.C.1 Utilize available data from recent community health needs assessments to understand the needs of older adults and adults with disabilities.
 - 4.C.2 Create a “needs benefits” administrator program to assist older adults with health insurance enrollment and benefits.
 - 4.C.3 Create an advocacy position to promote the needs of older adults and adults with disabilities community, including health literacy, who to reach out to, and assistance with case management and paperwork.
 - 4.C.4 Continue to support local food banks and food health clinics.



4.D. Raise awareness of elder abuse and exploitation.

-
- 4.D.1 Promote education and training for mandated reporters.
 - 4.D.2 Compile a list of educational resources on elder abuse prevention.
 - 4.D.3 Create and share a regularly updated list of common and circulating scams, especially ones targeting older adults and adults with disabilities.



4. Healthy and Supported

4.E. Expand in-home health services to facilitate more older adults' and adults with disabilities' desire to remain in their residence.

Domain Topics

4.E.1 Develop and expand programs for home doctor visits to address the needs of older adults and adults with disabilities where they are to include quicker access to and more frequent medical appointments.



4.E.2 Develop a volunteer program to offer safety checks of older adults' and adults with disabilities' homes and provide resources to address resident concerns (e.g., internet, safety, maintenance, etc.).



According to older adults,

a Safety Check program should include...

- » *Smoke and CO2 Detector Inspection*
- » *Electrical Outlets Inspection*
- » *Snow Shoveling*
- » *Wellness Checks*
- » *Fall Prevention Methods*
- » *Mold/Mildew Checks*
- » *Furnace/AC Inspection*
- » *Decluttering Services*

4.E.3 Subsidize fees for in-home healthcare services for eligible older adults and adults with disabilities.



4.E.4 Promote the home health industry as a more attractive career choice for people entering the workforce and create more pipeline opportunities within high schools and higher education institutions.



4.E.5 Create delivery programs and partner with delivery services to get necessities (healthy food options, medicines, etc.) to older adults and adults with disabilities in their homes.



In Cuyahoga County, we want our older adults and adults with disabilities to be...

5. Engaged

Engagement and social interactions help combat sadness and loneliness, which can be debilitating for older adults. Older adults should have opportunities to socialize and participate in their community in accessible, affordable, and fun ways.



5. Engaged

5.A. Provide opportunities for older adults and adults with disabilities to increase their internet and media literacy and connectivity.

- 5.A.1 Identify existing media literacy resources and promote through senior centers/high-rises or other channels.
- 5.A.2 Create a program for youth (e.g., high schoolers, college students) to assist older adults and adults with disabilities in internet literacy.
- 5.A.3 Create a position or educate current staff at senior centers/high-rises and other meeting places that specialize in helping older adults and adults with disabilities with technology questions and issues.

Domain Topics



5.B. Encourage age-friendly graphic standards for print and digital information.

- 5.B.1 Partner with communication professionals to create a universal design style guide including font size, colors that are legible, appropriate images, and accessible language.



5. Engaged

5.C. Create an accessible central hub of information for older adults specific to their community.

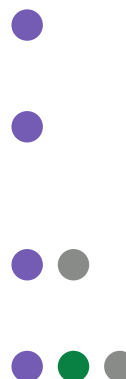
-
- 5.C.1 Create a singular method for local organizations and resources to share information across the County.
 - 5.C.2 Distribute information about social offerings to older adult and adult with disabilities occupied spaces, (e.g., pharmacies, grocery stores, educational organizations, entertainment facilities, medical institutions, and churches.)
 - 5.C.3 Include the Livable Cuyahoga website on senior center computer homepages.
 - 5.C.4 Create a system to help people understand available services in the County that is geographically based.

Domain Topics



5.D. Ensure cultural and physical diversity in programs and materials, including non-English materials and programs accessible to all cognitive/educational abilities.

-
- 5.D.1 Promote and expand support for cultural organizations providing services to Asian, Hispanic, and refugee populations.
 - 5.D.2 Partner with Northeast Ohio Coalition of Disability organizations to develop accessible programming and materials for older adults and adults with disabilities.
 - 5.D.3 Support and promote translation services for materials to increase access to services.
 - 5.D.4 Increase ADA accessible public spaces (e.g., businesses, bathrooms, adult changing facilities, parking lots.)



5. Engaged

5.E. Support and promote community organizations and senior centers/high-rises to increase their capacity to serve older adults and adults with disabilities.

Domain Topics

5.E.1 Assess and replicate local Villages models of mutual aid association.



The Villages model is a consumer-driven model that aims to promote aging in place for community-dwelling older adults. Typically determined by geographic areas, (a zip code, for example), Villages are membership organizations comprised of older adults living in their own homes. (aarp.org)

5.E.2 Conduct an older adults and adults with disabilities social offering survey to understand social needs and desires.



5.E.3 Expand awareness of 211 service to help with access to programs.



5.E.4 Engage community partners to expand recreation programming for older adults and adults with disabilities.



5.E.5 Widen the range of activities offered to older adults and adults with disabilities at senior centers and community centers.



According to older adults,
Senior Center Activities should include...

» <i>Financial and Computer Classes</i>	» <i>Game Nights</i>
» <i>Exercise Activities (cardio, walking clubs, biking, swimming/water aerobics)</i>	» <i>Dances</i>
» <i>Paint 'n Sip</i>	» <i>Day Trips (movies, plays, museums)</i>
» <i>Book Clubs</i>	» <i>Skill Classes (gardening, culinary, sewing)</i>

5.E.6 Coordinate with senior centers/high-rises and recreation departments to create outdoor activities designed specifically for older adults and adults with disabilities.



5.F. Encourage and incentivize intergenerational programs that allow older adults to socialize with young people.

Domain Topics

- 5.F.1 Create and encourage programs that direct younger students (high school, vocational school) towards in-demand fields that assist older adults and adults with disabilities (healthcare, gerontology home health, etc.)
- 5.F.2 Engage senior centers/high rises and recreation departments to create service projects involving older adults and adults with disabilities.
- 5.F.3 Form partnerships with school districts to connect older adults and adults with disabilities with students (e.g., tutoring and mentorships, socialization, adopt a grandparent type programs.)
- 5.F.4 Connect scout troops with older adult living sites.
- 5.F.5 Co-locate childcare on older adult campuses.
- 5.F.6 Establish a “friend connect program” where older adults and adults with disabilities can be paired together for social engagements.
- 5.F.7 Create an intergenerational program focused on technology, music, and art that connects adults to youth.



According to older adults,

Intergenerational Programming should include...

- » *Accessible locations*
- » *Levels for all educations*
- » *Help with technology*
- » *Hobby programs, like learning a language or gardening*

5. Engaged

5.G. Promote positive public perception of aging and ability.

5.G.1 Launch a positive aging campaign, with a focus on decreasing stigma around age, disability, and accessibility needs.

Domain Topics



5.H. Increase older adult and adult with disabilities interaction with County Government.

5.H.1 Collaborate with the County executive on appointments to boards and commissions to ensure that the perspectives of older adults and adults with disabilities are being heard.

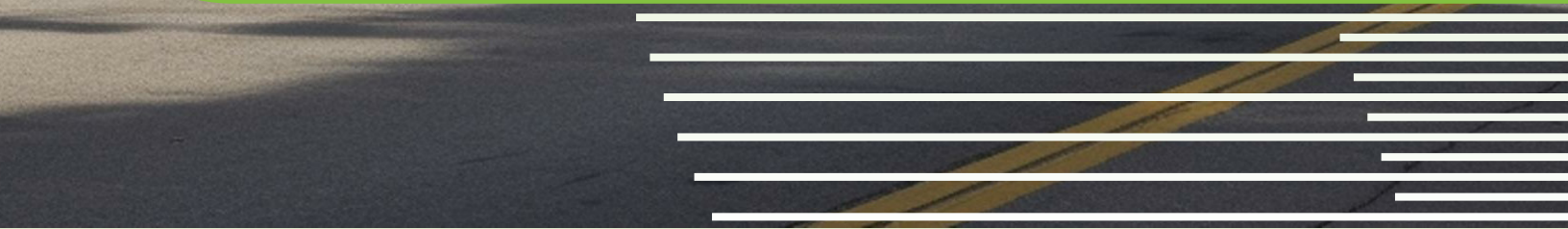


5.H.2 Coordinate a donation roundup program for local nonprofits and older adults and adults with disabilities service providers.





Implementation



The Roadmap for Livable Cuyahoga supports the community's vision for a more age-friendly and accessible future. Plan success will be determined by the collaborative, committed, and ongoing implementation of these recommendations.

Collaborating

The Roadmap is not intended to be solely implemented by Cuyahoga County. While the County is serving as the leader of the work and convener, commitment to the plan and its implementation will require the coordinated efforts of individuals and organizations representing the public, private, and civic sectors. Active buy-in and participation from all 59 jurisdictions to make the County more age-friendly.

DSAS will serve as the primary organization for spearheading the implementation of the Roadmap for Livable Cuyahoga and coordinator of the next steps of the process.

Monitoring

The Roadmap for Livable Cuyahoga should be monitored for implementation effectiveness and relevancy. This review should happen on a formal basis no less than once per year. A status report should accompany this review and be promoted throughout the community, such as through the continued Livable Cuyahoga website. An annual public meeting could take place to share progress and attract additional participants to move the community forward. At the end of each year, indicators for the following year should also be established per the AARP process cycle.

Implementation Matrix

An implementation matrix will be provided to support this plan. The matrix is a tool that connects each recommendation with a timeframe for completion, effort leader and supporting entities (e.g., departments and organizations), and potential funding sources. It is anticipated that the implementation steps may change over time based on annual review, new developments, or successes in other areas.

Updating

The Roadmap is a working, living document representing a snapshot in time of the Livable Cuyahoga process. It should be continually updated as recommendations are implemented and reevaluated.

While most recommendations are intended to be achieved during the 2024-2029 implementation period, some will continue to be implemented beyond 2029.

At the end of the five-year implementation phase, the entire plan will be evaluated, and a new five-year strategic plan prepared.

To learn more about the status of the Livable Cuyahoga Initiative and learn how to get involved, please visit: <https://hhs.cuyahogacounty.us/departments/dsas/community-office-on-aging/livable-cuyahoga>.



How to Use This Plan

The plan should be used on a daily basis as public and private decisions are made concerning the community's future. The following is a summary of how decisions and processes should be institutionalized to align with the vision and recommendations.

Annual Work Programs and Budgets.

DSAS should be cognizant of the recommendations of the plan when preparing annual work programs and budgets. This also includes considering the plan when making important policy and financial decisions that impact the community.

Municipality Planning.

The many municipalities of Cuyahoga County should work collaboratively with one another to create a consistently age-friendly County. The primary driver of these recommendations will be DSAS, but it is up to each municipality individually to implement many specific programs, policies, and projects.

Community Planning.

Community planning efforts, including those of the County, community organizations, and the school districts should be aligned with the vision, values, goals, and recommendations of the plan.

Capital Improvement Plan.

The County's, and municipalities' as appropriate, Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) should be consistent with the plan's recommendations.

Civic and Social Engagement.

All civic and community groups should create opportunities to explore solutions to issues and problems of concern to the community. They should seek alignment with the recommendations of the Roadmap and collaborate across interests, missions, and constituencies.

Consistent Interpretation.

Livable Cuyahoga's implementation leadership should collaborate with the many municipalities of Cuyahoga County to ensure clear and consistent interpretation of the Roadmap.



