PREPARING FOR AGING POPULATIONS IN AMERICA'S CITIES

A Report on Priorities for America's Mayors

January 2017

THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,393 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million that helps people turn their goals and dreams into 'Real Possibilities' by changing the way America defines aging.

With staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and promote the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare security, financial security and personal fulfillment.

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Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director
The United States
Conference of Mayors

The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) has partnered with AARP to survey the nation's mayors, to identify what resources, policy changes, and infrastructure developments are needed to make our cities more "livable," so that our older residents can choose to live out their lives in their own homes and communities, surrounded by family and friends and a vibrant social and cultural network, for as long as possible.

On the day we publish this report, the number of persons in the United States aged 65 and over will be more than 46 million; in the next four decades that number is expected nearly to double.

As America's chief economic engines, service providers – of good jobs at a livable wage, quality health care, safe and walkable neighborhoods, affordable housing and mass transit, among other amenities – and hubs of social interaction, our nation's cities and their leaders, our mayors, need to prepare ourselves for this seismic shift in community demographics.

More than 100 of the nation's mayors responded to our survey – from cities as small as York, Pennsylvania and Tupelo, Mississippi to cities as large as Houston, Los Angeles and New York City; from as far north as Seattle and as far south as Honolulu; and everywhere in between. And what we've found, what you'll learn as you read this report, is this: whether you call yourself a member of 'The Greatest Generation,' a Baby Boomer, Generation X, Millennial or whatever comes next – we all want the same things for our cities.

In the end, it turns out, what's best for the quality of life is much the same for our oldest citizens as it is for our youngest and everyone in between. Making cities more livable for our older citizens, ultimately, makes cities more livable for all of us.

The nation's mayors remain committed to working with AARP to ensure that all Americans, regardless of age, have access to the resources they need to lead rich, full lives.

AARP Statement

Nancy Leamond
Executive Vice President
and Chief Advocacy and
Engagement Officer
AARP

AARP has joined with the U.S. Conference of Mayors to engage in a robust dialogue about how we can address the challenges posed by an aging population. Our nation's seismic demographic shift is underway, and we need action from our leaders to rethink and reshape our communities.

People of all ages want to live in a place where they can feel safe, find a good job, raise a healthy family, get around easily and feel like a part of the community. And we at AARP know from talking to our 38 million members that these elements of "livable communities" are especially important for older Americans who want and deserve to stay in their homes and communities as they age.

So how do we get there?

At a time when much of our public discourse and policymaking has become partisan and sometimes gridlocked, the real action is happening at the local level. Mayors and other community leaders are leading the charge to create places that work for all citizens. AARP sees this first hand as *hundreds* of our staff and *thousands* of our volunteers are hard at work in partnership with mayors and local leaders in more than 230 different neighborhoods, towns, and cities to help create great places for everyone to live.

We applaud and congratulate the nation's mayors for helping people of all ages live, work, and play in comfort in the communities of their choice. This report reveals some of the ways that elected leaders of diverse cities are thinking about the issues that matter most to their constituents.

I'm struck by the clear message delivered by leaders of different political stripes and backgrounds from all parts of the country: improving their cities for an aging population is a high priority, and many are taking action by focusing on issues that, in the end, will benefit citizens of all ages.

This report is an important tool to understand the priorities of our nation's mayors. AARP staff and volunteers across the country remain committed to partnering with mayors and other leaders in communities across America to take action and create great communities for all of us.

Introduction

The population of the United States is aging, with the number of persons 65 years or older is growing rapidly. With more than nine in 10 persons 65 years or older living in metropolitan areas, it is in the nation's cities and towns that this fact is most apparent. Responding to the needs of the increasing aging population and building communities that are livable for residents young, old, and in between is an important issue for the nation's mayors and their cities and towns. Mayors and other community leaders know this and are taking action.

There are more than 46 million people ages 65 and older in the U.S. today and that number is projected to more than double by 2050. According to U.S. Census projections, all 50 states will see an increase in the percentage of their 65-plus population by that same date.

The increasing age of city residents isn't just driven by one large group of people (Baby Boomers) growing older; it's also driven by a deep desire by people as they grow older to stay in the places in which they've lived their lives. As evidence, AARP research consistently shows that roughly eight in ten people over the age of 45 and nine in ten age 65 and older want to remain in their homes and communities as they age.

The quality of life of everyone who lives in a community, including people age 50 and older, is greatly enhanced when the places in which they live have appropriate infrastructure and services so they can:

- Feel safe & secure where they live;
- Have affordable and accessible housing and transportation options;
- Access to services and features that work for all;
- Take advantage of educational and economic opportunities; and
- Have the ability to connect with each other.

For every citizen, these core necessities cover a range of issues, including jobs, economic opportunities, transportation, housing, entertainment, and access to health care. And, they help turn cities, towns and neighborhoods into places that allow all residents to live in a community as long as they want.

These places are also known as "livable communities", which are defined as places that are safe and secure, have affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and offer supportive community features and services for older adults and people of all ages. As city populations age, policy solutions and innovations are needed to ensure that local infrastructure can continue to support everyone in a community, including people age 50 and older.

"As our city ages, New Orleans is focused on ensuring that all residents have equitable access to important services like healthcare, transportation, and affordable housing. Supporting our local Council on Aging and our unique programming through our recreation department, where over 10,000 seniors participated in programming in 2016, the City of New Orleans is working every day to ensure that our communities are safe, accessible, and enjoyable for older New Orleanians."

Mayor Mitch Mitchell J. Landrieu, New Orleans, LA

Survey Methodology

The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM), the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more, conducted a national survey of mayors to gauge their opinions on the initiatives, innovations, and policy solutions that can make communities more livable not only for older Americans, but for all city residents. With the generous support of AARP, USCM contacted nearly 1,400 cities across the United States. Survey responses were received from 108 cities – or roughly eight percent of all possible respondents. **A list of responding cities is included in this report as Appendix A.**

Specifically, responding mayors were asked to rate a variety of program and policy solutions in nine key areas, including housing, transportation, health and wellness, social and cultural amenities, and public safety, as top, high, medium, low, or no priority. They were then asked to pick one over-riding priority in each of these areas; and finally, to rank their top three priorities across these nine issue areas, in order of importance to them. **A copy of the survey instrument is attached as Appendix B.**

"Our community has focused on attracting retiring boomers and is in the process of expanding development of a multi-level approach with single family, condos, ambulatory, memory care, and other integrated community developments."

Mayor Andrew D. Gillum, Tallahassee, FL

"West Sacramento has made it a priority to include age-friendliness as a primary lens through which all of the City's policy initiatives are reviewed prior to adoption."

Mayor Christopher L. Cabaldon, West Sacramento, CA

Key Findings

Aging issues are of high importance to mayors, and many are taking action with age focused task forces and initiatives.

- **92 percent of the mayors who responded answered that aging issues are of high importance.**
- **Six in 10 mayors currently have an established, aging-related task force or initiative in their city.**
- **More than three out of four mayors (78 percent) say that having or establishing a task force on aging-related issues is a top or high priority for their administration.**
- **Showing that many other mayors are planning to take action, of the four in ten mayors who have not established an aging-related task force or initiative in their city almost half (49 percent) of them say that it is a top or high priority for them to do so.**

The survey also measured mayors on a range of policies that would improve their community in the following key categories:

- **Health and wellness**
- **Social Activity Initiatives**
- **Workforce and Job Initiatives**
- **Housing Initiatives**
- **Technology/Smart Technology**
- **Transportation and Infrastructure**
- **Neighborhood Safety Initiatives**
- **Utility Initiatives**
- **Support Programs for Low-Income Older Americans**

Mayors were also asked to identify the issues which they feel would have the most impact on making their city more livable for older residents. Their top ten responses are listed below in rank order:

1. **Easy access to health care and supportive services;**
2. **More affordable and accessible housing options including accessory dwelling units and active/assisted living communities;**
3. **Accessible and affordable public transportation;**
4. **Increased police presence and communication between police and community residents;**
5. **Housing located close to stores and transportation as well as health care facilities and other community services;**
6. **Incentives that encourage the building of low income housing;**
7. **A variety of cultural entertainment and activities for diverse populations;**
8. **A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults;**
9. **Policies to protect against cuts to Medicare and Social Security; and**
10. **Streets that are planned and built as well operated and maintained to provide access and convenience for all users in addition to safety.**

Given their priority ranking, and overlap among the top ten issues, this report will explore in depth the following priority categories:

- **Health and Wellness**
- **Housing**
- **Transportation and Infrastructure**
- **Neighborhood and Public Safety**
- **Social Activities**
- **Workforce Activities**

Each of these six priority issue areas is elaborated in the pages that follow.

Priority Analysis

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Arguably, health care is the single most extensive, if not most significant, national public policy conversation that's been had in this country in the past decade. And, while there have been large national discussions on the issue, there are many impactful health initiatives that are delivered and implemented at the local level.

So it was not surprising that mayors selected health care access as one of their top three cross-issue priorities more often than any other (51 of 108 responding mayors, or 47 percent of those responding). Overall, nearly nine in 10 responding mayors (88 percent) rated "easy access to health and supportive services" as a top or high-priority health and wellness initiative in the city, with 32.4 percent rating it as their top priority and 55.6 percent rating it as a high priority.

The other health priority options presented to the mayors also scored relatively high: 74 percent of responding mayors thought providing fitness activities specifically geared toward older adults should be a top or high priority, and health and wellness programs or classes on issues such as nutrition and weight control was ranked as a top or high priority by 72 percent of responding mayors. This finding needs little elaboration; the benefit of physical activity and healthy eating in improving quality of life and reducing incidence of a host of diseases is by now well documented.

	Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
Easy access to health and supportive services	32.4%	55.6%	10.2%	1.9%	0%
Fitness activities specifically geared toward older adults	18.5%	55.6%	23.1%	2.8%	0%
Health and wellness programs and classes in areas like nutrition and weight control	15.7%	56.5%	20.4%	5.6%	1.9%

Of the three health and wellness initiatives the respondents rated, the graph below illustrates which one initiative they believe will have the most impact on making their city a livable community.

Easy access to health and supportive services	76.9%
Fitness activities specifically geared towards older adults	13.9%
Health and wellness programs and classes in areas like nutrition and weight control	9.3%
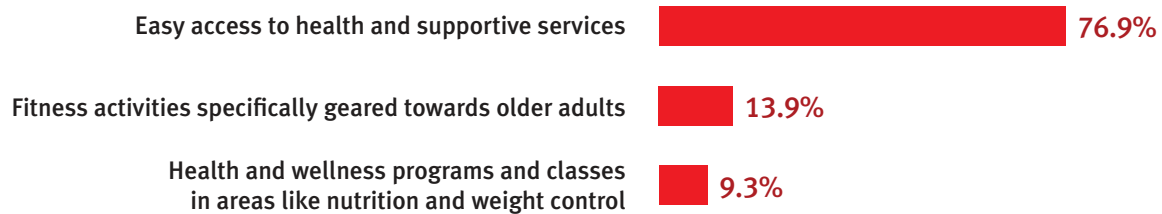
"Our region's population of 65 or older is expected to double over the next 35 years. A local study revealed that older adults are seeking more walkable communities in smaller, mixed use neighborhoods. Last year the City of Columbus and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission announced the creation of Age-Friendly Columbus to address the changing needs of this growing population in the region. The project will assess the age-friendliness of the City of Columbus through research, field work, and outreach. The city-wide assessment will provide a clear picture of where the City needs to improve."

Mayor Andrew J. Ginther, Columbus, OH

HOUSING

The vast majority of people want to remain in their homes and communities as they grow older. This is borne out in research by AARP (whose generous support has made this report possible) which has found that 87 percent of adults (nearly nine out of ten) aged 65 and older want to stay in their current home and community as they age. And among people aged 50 to 64, 71 percent of people say the same.[1]

While some people in retirement dream of retiring "down south" or of living the life of the worldly expatriate, for many these goals are beyond financial reach; and many more still would prefer to continue to live in the same place. In another AARP survey, 69 percent of respondents noted that they want to stay in their homes because they "like what their community has to offer." As cities invest significantly in the arts and parks, in building better transportation infrastructure and more walkable neighborhoods, older Americans want as much as any other generation to continue to enjoy the benefits of city life. They want to continue to live where they've already made their home – where, often, they've raised their children; where neighbors are not just close friends but more like family; and where they can continue to enjoy the many social, cultural and other amenities so important to all of us who live in cities.
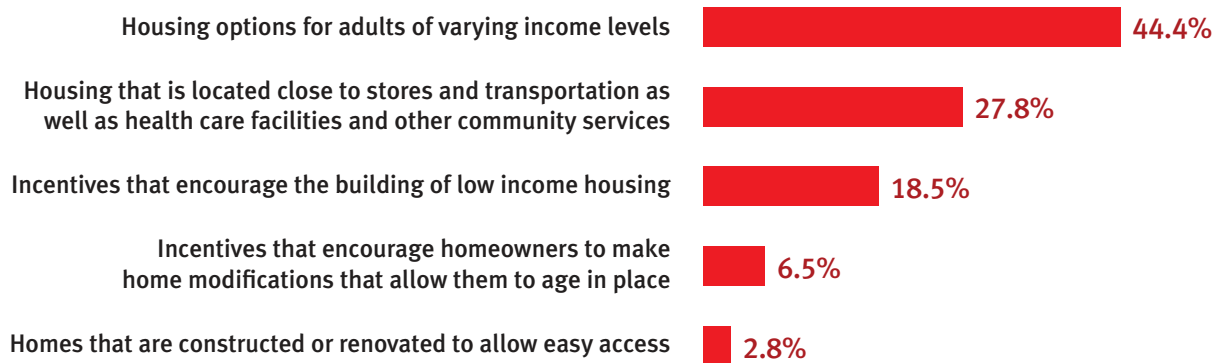
The nation's mayors, predictably, echo the concerns of their older citizens. Of the menu of potential housing-focused strategies to help older Americans age in place, 92 of 108 responding mayors – or 85 percent – felt that supporting the development of housing close to shopping, transportation, health care and other community services was a top or high priority. Also, 80 of the 108 responding mayors (74 percent) felt that it should be a high or top priority to provide housing options that address the needs of adults of varying income levels, such as active or assisted living communities, affordable housing, and accessory dwelling units. When asked to pick their single highest housing development priority, 72 percent of mayors chose one of these two options. And, just over half placed one of these two options among their top three cross-issue priorities.

Improving accessibility in individual homes, and providing homeowners with incentives or assistance to make improvements that would allow them to age in place, did not rank as high. Still, 64.8 and 54.6 percent of mayors, respectively say that these are top or high priorities. Despite their relatively low ranking, an increasing number of states and localities are taking action to create policies such as these.

	Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
Housing options for adults of varying income levels that could include older active adult communities and accessory dwelling units in addition to affordable housing and assisted living	34.3%	39.8%	23.1%	1.9%	0.9%
Incentives that encourage the building of low income housing	31.5%	31.5%	27.8%	5.6%	3.7%
Housing that is located close to stores and transportation as well as health care facilities and other community services	28.7%	56.5%	12%	1.9%	0.9%
Incentives that encourage homeowners to make home modifications that allow them to age in place	19.4%	35.2%	32.4%	8.3%	4.6%
Homes that are constructed or renovated to allow easy access into and within the home	16.7%	48.1%	30.6%	1.9%	2.8%

1   AARP Public Policy Institute, "What is Livable? Community Preferences of Older Adults," April 2014.
Accessed online at http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/info-2014/aarp-ppi-survey-whatmakes-a-community-livable.html.

Of the five housing initiatives, respondents were asked to rate which one they believed would have the most impact on making their city a more livable community. Mayors answered that "provid(ing) housing options that address the needs of adults of varying income levels" would have the most impact for residents.

Housing options for adults of varying income levels	44.4%
Housing that is located close to stores and transportation as well as health care facilities and other community services	27.8%
Incentives that encourage the building of low income housing	18.5%
Incentives that encourage homeowners to make home modifications that allow them to age in place	6.5%
Homes that are constructed or renovated to allow easy access	2.8%

"...anything that's good for an 80 year old is also good for an 8 year old."

Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl, Evanston, IL

"Many cities, including Seattle, are experiencing a demographic shift with an aging population. The whole community benefits when our older adults are supported. I look forward to working to pursue policies that enable people of all ages and abilities to engage and participate in their community."
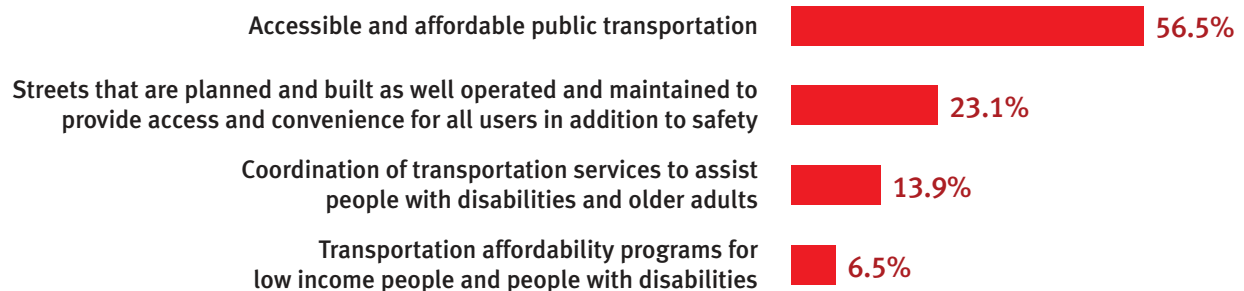
Mayor Ed Murray, Seattle, WA

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

According to Transportation for America, an advocacy coalition, as of 2015 more than 15.5 million Americans over the age of 65 had poor or nonexistent access to public transportation.[2] In addition, the issues of safety for walkers and cyclists and designing transportation networks that are safe and accessible for all users of roadways are seen with the rise of initiatives like "Vision Zero" and continued action on Complete Streets policies. Transportation access is clearly a top policy priority for mayors when it comes to thinking about their older population. Unsurprisingly, each of the four transportation issue options presented in the survey scored as a top or high priority by a significant majority of responding mayors. Nearly all the mayors (100 out of 108 respondents) rated both providing affordable/accessible public transportation and well built, planned and maintained streets as top or high priorities for their respective cities. The other two options − coordinating transportation services for people with disabilities and older adults, and creating transportation affordability programs for those same populations − rated only slightly lower, with 86 percent and 82 percent, respectively, rating these as top or high priority issues.

When asked to choose a single over-riding priority among these four options, more than half (54 percent) of the responding mayors chose proving accessible and affordable public transportation as their top transportation priority. This is consistent with the national policy conversation among mayors as articulated in the "The 2016 Mayors Compact for a Better America: 16 Points for the 2016 Mayors Compact."[3]

	Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
Accessible and affordable public transportation that is also reliable and convenient	54.0%	38%	4.6%	3.7%	0%
Streets that are planned and built as well operated and maintained to provide access and convenience for all users in addition to safety	43.5%	49.1%	5.6%	1.9%	0%
Coordination of transportation services to assist people with disabilities and older adults	39.8%	46.3%	12%	1.9%	0%
Transportation affordability programs for low income people and people with disabilities	30.6%	50.9%	14.8%	1.9%	1.9%

Accessible and affordable public transportation — **56.5%**

Streets that are planned and built as well operated and maintained to provide access and convenience for all users in addition to safety — **23.1%**

Coordination of transportation services to assist people with disabilities and older adults — **13.9%**

Transportation affordability programs for low income people and people with disabilities — **6.5%**

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2 Transportation for America, "Aging in Place, Stuck without Options: Fixing the Mobility Crisis Threatening the Baby Boom Generation." Accessible online at http://t4america.org/maps-tools/seniorsmobilitycrisis2011.

3 Accessible online at http://www.usmayors.org/investprotect2016/; "Invest in and modernize our D+ rated transportation system" is point #2.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Everyone wants to feel safe in the community in which they live – and, of course, public safety is one of those fundamental services provided at the local level. It's no wonder that neighborhood/public safety rated among the top four cross-issue priorities identified by responding mayors.

Almost all mayors (94 percent) rated "increased police presence and communication between police and neighborhood residents" as a top or high priority, with 60 percent of mayors rating it as their top priority and 34 percent rating it as a high priority. This was one of the top scoring priorities of the entire survey.

However, responses to this survey reveal that neighborhoods safety goes beyond policing policies. Again, almost all mayors (90 percent) answered that well-lit streets and public places were a top or high priority for their administration.

	Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
Increased police presence and communication between police and neighborhood residents	60.2%	34.3%	4.6%	0.9%	0%
Well-lit streets and public spaces	34.3%	55.6%	7.4%	2.8%	0%
The rehabilitation of vacant lots and buildings	27.8%	43.5%	19.4%	4.6%	4.6%
Neighborhood watch programs	20.4%	45.4%	31.5%	2.8%	0%

Similarly, among all neighborhood/public safety priorities, nearly 70 percent of mayors rated "increased police presence and communication between police and neighborhood residents" as the neighborhood/public safety initiative that would have the greatest impact in their city.

- Neighborhood watch programs
- Well lit streets and public spaces
- The rehabilitation of vacant lots and buildings
- Increased police presence and communication
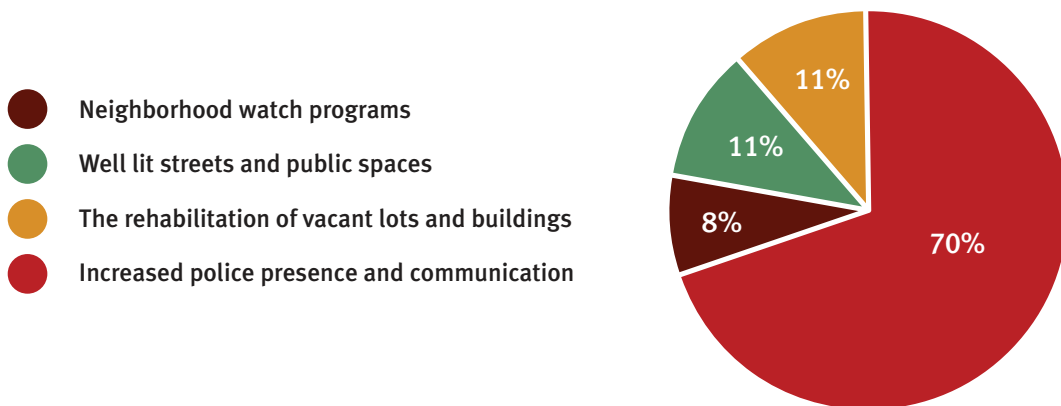
SOCIAL ACTIVITY INITIATIVES

A fundamental aspect of a community that is a great place for everyone is having an abundance of entertainment venues, activities and options that help people to remain engaged. Communities that provide a diversity of options for entertainment foster interactions between citizens and help create a more vibrant, interesting community.

This is especially significant, as studies have shown that the fastest-growing type of household are individuals living alone. And, research shows that individual and community-level isolation leads to poor social supports and higher rates of depression among older adults and can lead to overall health complications. As cities continue to invest in transportation and infrastructure, they also recognize the importance of investing in their social and entertainment amenities that support all of its citizens.

Overall, more than four in five mayors (83.3 percent) rated "a variety of cultural entertainment and activities for diverse populations" as a top or high priority among social activity initiatives in the city, with 30 percent of mayors rating it as their top priority and 54 percent rating it as a high priority.

	Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
A variety of cultural entertainment and activities for diverse populations	29.6%	53.7%	13.9%	1.9%	0.9%
Entertainment venues that are convenient and accessible for people of different physical abilities	19.4%	55.6%	22.2%	0.9%	1.9%
Entertainment and activities that are affordable to everyone	17.6%	56.5%	24.1%	0%	1.9%
Activities that involve both younger and older people	16.7%	47.2%	32.4%	2.8%	0.9%
Cultural entertainment and activities that offer senior discounts	11.1%	40.7%	34.3%	9.3%	4.6%

"Longmont is weaving in our age well assessment priorities into our City's Comprehensive and Multi modal plans."

Mayor Dennis L. Coombs, Longmont, CO

For the older population, who are more affected by the problem of isolation, arts and culture provide ways to stay engaged socially, civically, and psychologically in their communities. In addition, for people with cognitive disabilities, the arts provide a symbolic and emotionally expressive communication system that enables them to connect with caregivers and their community. When asked which initiative would have "the most" impact on their city, not surprisingly, 46 percent rated a variety of cultural entertainment and activities for diverse populations as the initiative that would have the most impact.

● Cultural entertainment and activities that offer senior discounts

● Entertainment venues that are convenient and accessible for people of different physical abilities

● Entertainment and activities that are affordable to everyone

● Activities that involve both younger and older people

● A variety of cultural entertainment and activities for diverse populations

1.9%
13.9%
22.2%
46.3%
15.7%
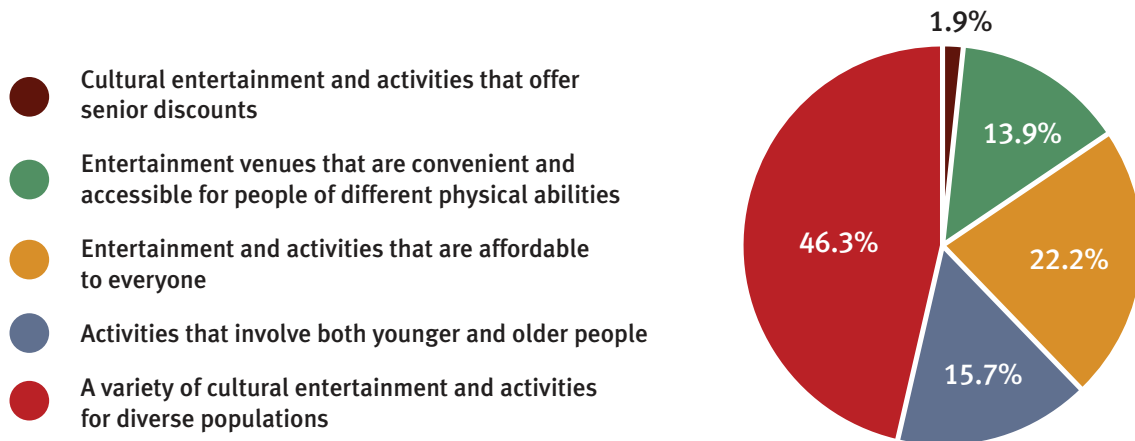
"As Georgia's second Age Friendly city, Augusta's leaders, residents, and business partners are committed to actively working toward making our community the best place to live and work for everyone. The collaboration and collegial relationships developed between government agencies, our residents and community groups in our first three years as an Age-Friendly Community have contributed to our early successes."

Mayor Hardie Davis, Jr., Augusta, GA

WORKFORCE AND JOB INITIATIVES

As the U.S. is aging; the workforce has aged along with it. According to the AARP study, "The Business Case for Workers Age 50+" the number of Americans age 50+ who are in the workforce has increased and is expected to continue to increase; in fact, it will increase to 35 percent of the labor force by 2022. This compares to just 25 percent in 2002. That same report detailed the value that older workers add to organizations. This is also detailed by the Kaufmann Foundation in their findings that people age 55 and older had the fastest growing rate of entrepreneurship from 1996 to 2014.

Mayors recognize that older adults have a unique contribution to make to the positive economic growth of their cities; more than two-thirds of mayors (68 percent) rated "policies that ensure older adults continue to have equal opportunity to work for as long as they want or need to regardless of their age" as a top or high priority, with 21 percent rating it as their top priority and 46 percent rating it as a high priority.

	Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
Policies that ensure older adults continue to have equal opportunity to work for as long as they want or need to regardless of their age	21.3%	46.3%	25%	5.6%	1.9%
Flexible leave options for family caregivers who are working	19.4%	44.4%	29.6%	2.8%	3.7%
Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities	19.0%	51.0%	25%	2.8%	1.9%
A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults	17.6%	37%	36.1%	6.5%	2.8%
Job training opportunities for older adults	14.8%	41.7%	36.1%	5.6%	1.9%

As the chart above illustrates, mayors rated "jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities" even higher, with 19 percent of mayors rating it as their top priority and 51 percent rating it as a high priority (or just over 70 percent combined).

This initiative, however, did not score at the top when mayors were asked which one initiative would have the most impact. While mayors viewed both as almost equal priorities, there is a much stronger feeling that "policies that ensure older adults continue to have equal opportunity to work for as long as they want or need to regardless of their age" would create more impact, with 33 percent of mayors saying these policies would create the most impact. In contrast, just 7 percent of mayors said that "jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities" would create the most impact.

- **Policies that ensure older adults continue to have equal opportunity to work for as long as they want or need to regardless of their age**
- **A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults**
- **Flexible leave options for family caregivers who are working**
- **Job training opportunities for older adults**
- **Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities**

6.5%
12.0%
19.4%
33.3%
28.7%

"The City of Denton takes a lifespan approach, assuming that aging begins at birth. Aging issues are universal and include several domains such as health, spirituality, social engagement, workforce engagement/voluntarism, and financial security."

Mayor Chris Watts, Denton, TX

"Seniors make up the fastest-growing sector of our city's population. It is important that as a city we continue making progress towards our goal of making Boston the most age-friendly city in America by involving them in our planning processes and taking a close look at how we can help improve their quality of life."

Mayor Marty Walsh, Boston, MA

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

While the bulk of the report examines the top six issue areas identified by mayors – health and wellness, housing, transportation and infrastructure; neighborhood and public safety; social activities; and workforce—a few other initiatives and policy areas deserve reflection.

For example, an overwhelming number of cities believe that protecting important programs that benefit and support older adults are important. Over half of the responding mayors (59 percent) rate policies that "protect against Medicare and Social Security cuts" as a top or high priority.

When surveyed about the importance of food support programs and services for older adults, 77 percent of mayors said that "increased support for local area food banks and other food supportive services" is a top or high priority, with 22 percent rating it as their top priority and 55 percent rating it as a high priority.

In the energy sector, seven in 10 mayors rated "low income assistance programs such as Low Income Home Energy Assistance and Weatherization Assistance" as a top or high priority utility initiative in their city to help make utility services more affordable to low income residents, with 27 percent rating it as their top priority and 43 percent rating it as a high priority.

In addition, roughly the same amount, 71 percent, rated "regulations that ensure that utility companies set fair and reasonable rates for residential customers" as a top or high priority, with 21 percent rating it as their top priority and 50 percent rating it as a high priority.

Finally, while technology and smart technology was addressed in a separate category, it is worth noting the importance that it carries for social and civic engagement. When surveyed about 'technology and smart technology' and older adults, overall, 76 percent of mayors rated "free access to computers and the Internet in public places like libraries" as a top or high priority technology initiative, with 32 percent of mayors rating it as their top priority and 44 percent rating it as a high priority. When asked which of the initiatives listed would have 'the most' impact on their city, 42 percent rated "free access to computers and the Internet in public places like libraries" as the initiative that would have the most impact in their city. In addition, 30 percent of mayors noted that "incentives that encourage home builders to include built in smart technology to help older adults age in their own home" would have the most impact.

CONCLUSION

This report highlights the important work that mayors and municipal leaders are doing nationwide to improve their cities and communities so they are great places for all their residents – particularly older adults. The nation's cities will continue to be the engines driving the country's economic and social growth. And, a key piece of that is harnessing the value of their older population.

It's critical for cities to make it easier for people to remain in their neighborhoods and communities as long as they want. As this report demonstrates, mayors and city leadership are actively and strategically developing their cities to support all of their citizens, including the nation's rapidly growing population of older adults.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: List of Participating Cities

CITY	STATE	MAYOR
Akron	Ohio	Daniel Horrigan
Albuquerque	New Mexico	Richard J. Berry
Alexandria	Virginia	Allison Silberberg
Allentown	Pennsylvania	Ed Pawlowski
Arlington Heights	Illinois	Thomas W. Hayes
Asheville	North Carolina	Ester E. Manheimer
Auburn	Washington	Nancy Backus
Augusta	Georgia	Hardie Davis, Jr.
Austin	Texas	Steve Adler
Bell	California	Alicia Romero
Bell Gardens	California	Pedro Aceituno
Bismarck	North Dakota	Mike Seminary
Boston	Massachusetts	Martin J. Walsh
Boulder	Colorado	Suzanne Jones
Burlington	North Carolina	Ian Baltutis
Burnsville	Minnesota	Elizabeth Kautz
Cape Coral	Florida	Mami Sawicki
Carmel	Indiana	James Brainard
Cathedral City	California	Stanley E. Henry
Charleston	South Carolina	John Tecklenburg
Cleveland	Ohio	Frank G Jackson
College Park	Maryland	Patrick Wojahn
Columbus	Ohio	Andrew J. Ginther
Coral Gables	Florida	Jim Cason
Corvallis	Oregon	Biff Traber
Dallas	Texas	Michael S. Rawlings
Denton	Texas	Chris Watts
Denver	Colorado	Michael B. Hancock
Des Moines	Iowa	T.M. Franklin Cownie
East Orange	New Jersey	Lester E. Taylor III
Eastpointe	Michigan	Suzanne Pixley
El Paso	Texas	Oscar Leeser
Elizabeth	New Jersey	J. Christian Bollwage
Evanston	Illinois	Elizabeth Tisdahl
Ewing Township	New Jersey	Bert H Steinmann
Fairborn	Ohio	Daniel R. Kirkpatrick
Fall River	Massachusetts	Jasiel F. Correia II
Farmers Branch	Texas	Bob Phelps
Flint	Michigan	Karen W. Weaver

CITY	STATE	MAYOR
Florence	Alabama	Mickey Haddock
Fontana	California	Aquanetta Warren
Green Bay	Wisconsin	James J. Schmidt
Hallendale Beach	Florida	Joy Cooper
Hamilton	Ohio	Pat Miller
Hattiesburg	Mississippi	Johnny L. DuPree, Ph.D.
Honolulu	Hawaii	Kirk Caldwell
Houston	Texas	Sylvester Turner
Jacksonville	Florida	Lenny Curry
Kansas City	Missouri	Sly Jones
Ketchum	Idaho	Nina Jonas
Knoxville	Tennessee	Madeline Rogero
Lakewood	Ohio	Michael P. Summers
Laredo	Texas	Pete Sanez
Laurel	Maryland	Craig A. Moe
Lima	Ohio	David Berger
Longmont	Colorado	Dennis Combs
Los Angeles	California	Eric Garcetti
Louisville	Kentucky	Greg Fischer
Madison	Wisconsin	Paul R. Soglin
Maui	Hawaii	Alan M. Arakawa
Medford	Massachusetts	Stephanie M. Burke
Mesa	Arizona	John Giles
Mooresville	North Carolina	Miles Atkins
Napa	California	Jill Techel
Nashville	Tennessee	Megan Barry
New Bedford	Massachusetts	Jonathan F. Mitchell
New Haven	Connecticut	Tony N. Harp
New Orleans	Louisiana	Mitch Landrieu
New York	New York	Bill de Blasio
Newton	Massachusetts	Setti D. Warren
North Little Rock	Arkansas	Joe A. Smith
North Olmsted	Ohio	Kevin M. Kennedy
North Ridgeville	Ohio	David Gillock
North Wilkesboro	North Carolina	Robert Johnson
Norwalk	Connecticut	Harry Rilling
Orlando	Florida	Buddy Dyer
Owasso	Oklahoma	Lyndell Dunn
Pembroke Pines	Florida	Frank Ortis

CITY	STATE	MAYOR
Piscataway	New Jersey	Brian C. Wahler
Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	William Peduto
Plano	Texas	Harry LaRosiliere
Prescott Valley	Arizona	Harvey Skoog
Providence	Rhode Island	Jorge O. Elorza
Quincy	Massachusetts	Thomas P. Koch
Racine	Wisconsin	John T Dickert
Reno	Nevada	Hillary Scheive
Rochester	New York	Lovely Warren
Rochester Hills	Michigan	Bryan K. Barnett
Sacramento	California	Kevin Johnson
San Antonio	Texas	Ivy Taylor
San Francisco	California	Edwin Lee
San Leandro	California	Pauline Russo Cutter
Seattle	Washington	Edward B. Murray
Somerset	Maryland	Jeffrey Z. Slavin
South Brunswick	New Jersey	Frank Gambatese
Stillwater	Oklahoma	Gina Noble
Tallahassee	Florida	Andrew D. Gillum
Town of Oro Valley	Arizona	Satish Hiremath
Tupelo	Mississippi	Jason Shelton
Washington	District of Columbia	Muriel Bowser
West Sacramento	California	Christopher Cabaldon
Wichita	Kansas	Jeff Longwell
York	Pennsylvania	C. Kim Bracey
Youngstown	Ohio	John McNally

APPENDIX B: 2016 U.S. Conference of Mayors

2016 U.S. Conference of Mayors Survey
(Survey Sample: Members of the U.S. Conference of Mayors)

PLEASE NOTE: THIS PDF IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. PLEASE COMPLETE THE ONLINE VERSION OF THE SURVEY AT WWW.USMAYORS.ORG/AGING.

The quality of life of older adults that is people age 50 and older, is greatly enhanced when communities in which they live provide appropriate infrastructure and services in the way of jobs, transportation, housing, entertainment, and access to health care. These features within communities, provided not just to older individuals, but to all community residents, help make cities and towns throughout the country more "livable." A livable community allows older residents to live out their lives in their own homes and communities surrounded by family and friends for as long as possible.

Overall, a "livable community" is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and offers supportive community features and services for older adults and people of all ages. As city populations age, policy solutions and innovations are needed to ensure that local infrastructure can continue to support older adults, which ultimately benefits all residents.

This survey is intended to capture your thoughts on the initiatives, innovations, and policy solutions you perceive are most important to help make the communities in your cities more livable for all. This information will assist the USCM and AARP in developing the Aging Task Force initiatives.

Q1. How important are aging issues to your city? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER.]**

❐	Extremely important
❐	Very important
❐	Somewhat important
❐	Not very important
❐	Not at all important

Q2. The next question is for internal use only and will not be publicly released. Please describe how you and your community define "aging issues?"

_____

Q3. Have you implemented an aging-related task force or initiatives to assist your city in becoming a livable community (a community where all residents can age in place)? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER.]**

❐	Yes
❐	No

Q4. How much of a priority is it to you to have an aging-related task force or initiatives to work on livable community issues in your city? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER.]**

❐	Top priority
❐	High priority
❐	Medium priority
❐	Low priority
❐	Not a priority

Q5. The next few questions focus on **health and wellness**. Please rate the priority of the following health and wellness initiatives in your city. **[CHECK ONLY ONE BOX PER ITEM (A, B, C).]**

		Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
a.	Fitness activities specifically geared towards older adults	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
b.	Health and wellness programs and classes in areas like nutrition and weight control	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
c.	Easy access to health and supportive services	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐

Q6. Of the 3 **health and wellness** initiatives you just rated, which one will have the MOST impact on making your city a livable community? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM.]**

❐	Fitness activities specifically geared towards older adults
❐	Health and wellness programs and classes in areas like nutrition and weight control
❐	Easy access to health and supportive services

Q7. The next few questions focus on **social activities**. Please rate the priority of the following social activity initiatives in your city. **[CHECK ONLY ONE PER ITEM (A, B, C, D, E).]**

		Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
a.	Entertainment venues that are convenient and accessible for people of different physical abilities	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
b.	Entertainment and activities that are affordable to everyone	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
c.	Activities that involve both younger and older people	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
d.	A variety of cultural entertainment and activities for diverse populations	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
e.	Cultural entertainment and activities that offer senior discounts	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐

Q8. Of the 5 **social activity** initiatives you just rated, which one will have the MOST impact on making your city a livable community? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM.]**

❐	Entertainment venues that are convenient and accessible for people of different physical abilities
❐	Entertainment and activities that are affordable to everyone
❐	Activities that involve both younger and older people
❐	A variety of cultural entertainment and activities for diverse populations
❐	Cultural entertainment and activities that offer senior discounts

Q9. The next few questions focus on **workforce development**. Please rate the priority of the following workforce development initiatives in your city. **[CHECK ONLY ONE BOX PER ITEM (A, B, C, D, E).]**

		Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
a.	A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
b.	Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
c.	Job training opportunities for older adults	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
d.	Policies that ensure older adults continue to have equal opportunity to work for as long as they want or need to regardless of their age	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
e.	Flexible leave options for family caregivers who are working	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒

Q10. Of the 5 **workforce development** initiatives you just rated, which one will have the MOST impact on making your city a livable community? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM.]**

❒	A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults
❒	Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities
❒	Job training opportunities for older adults
❒	Policies that ensure older adults continue to have equal opportunity to work for as long as they want or need to regardless of their age
❒	Flexible leave options for family caregivers who are working

Q11. The next few questions focus on **housing**. Please rate the priority of the following housing initiatives in your city. **[CHECK ONLY ONE BOX PER ITEM (A, B, C, D, E).]**

		Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
a.	Homes that are constructed or renovated to allow easy access into and within the home	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
b.	Housing options for adults of varying income levels such as affordable housing, older active adult communities, accessory dwelling units, and assisted living	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
c.	Housing that is located close to stores, transportation, health care facilities and other community services	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
d.	Incentives that encourage homeowners to make home modifications that allow them to age in place	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
e.	Incentives that encourage the building of low-income housing	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐

Q12. Of the 5 **housing** initiatives you just rated, which one will have the MOST impact on making your city a livable community? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM.]**

❐	Homes that are constructed or renovated to allow easy access into and within the home
❐	Housing options for adults of varying income levels such as affordable housing, older active adult communities, accessory dwelling units, and assisted living
❐	Housing that is located close to stores, transportation, health care facilities and other community services
❐	Incentives that encourage homeowners to make home modifications that allow them to age in place
❐	Incentives that encourage the building of low-income housing

Q13. The next few questions focus on **technology**. Please rate the priority of the following technology initiatives in your city. **[CHECK ONLY ONE BOX PER ITEM (A, B, C).]**

		Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
a.	Incentives that encourage home builders to include built in smart technology, like home security systems, keyless entry locks, monitoring devices, and automated lighting to help older adults age in their own home	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
b.	Affordable high speed home Internet access	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
c.	Free access to computers and the Internet in public places like libraries	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐

Q14. Of the 3 **technology** initiatives you just rated, which one will have the MOST impact on making your city a livable community? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM.]**

❐	Incentives that encourage home builders to include built in smart technology, like home security systems, keyless entry locks, monitoring devices, and automated lighting to help older adults age in their own home
❐	Affordable high speed home Internet access
❐	Free access to computers and the Internet in public places like libraries

Q15. The next few questions focus on **transportation and infrastructure**. Please rate the priority of the following transportation and infrastructure initiatives in your city. **[CHECK ONLY ONE BOX PER ITEM (A, B, C, D).]**

		Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
a.	Accessible, convenient, reliable, and affordable public transportation	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
b.	Coordination of transportation services to assist people with disabilities and older adults	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
c.	Transportation affordability programs for low-income people and people with disabilities	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
d.	Streets that are planned, built, operated, and maintained to provide access, convenience and safety for all users	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒

Q16. Of the 4 **transportation and infrastructure** initiatives you just rated, which one will have the MOST impact on making your city a livable community? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM.]**

❒	Accessible, convenient, reliable, and affordable public transportation
❒	Coordination of transportation services to assist people with disabilities and older adults
❒	Transportation affordability programs for low-income people and people with disabilities
❒	Streets that are planned, built, operated, and maintained to provide access, convenience and safety for all users

Q17. The next few questions focus on **neighborhood safety**. Please rate the priority of the following neighborhood safety initiatives in your city. **[CHECK ONLY ONE BOX PER ITEM (A, B, C, D).]**

		Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
a.	Increased police presence and communication between police and neighborhood residents	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
b.	Neighborhood watch programs	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
c.	Well-lit streets and public spaces	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
d.	The rehabilitation of vacant lots and buildings	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒

Q18. Of the 4 **neighborhood safety** initiatives you just rated, which one will have the MOST impact on making your city a livable community? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM.]**

❒	Increased police presence and communication between police and neighborhood residents
❒	Neighborhood watch programs
❒	Well-lit streets and public spaces
❒	The rehabilitation of vacant lots and buildings

Q19. The next few questions focus on **utility** initiatives. Please rate the priority of the following utility initiatives in your city. **[CHECK ONLY ONE BOX PER ITEM (A, B, C, D).]**

		Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
a.	Regulations that ensure that utility companies, including electric, gas, water, and telecommunications set fair and reasonable rates for residential customers	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
b.	Low-income assistance programs, such as LIHEAP or WAP, to help make utility services more affordable to low-income residents	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
c.	A municipal consumer advocate that effectively represents and protects the interests of residential utility customers	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
d.	Energy rebate or incentive programs that encourage residents to use energy more efficiently	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒

Q20. Of the 4 **utility** initiatives you just rated, which one will have the MOST impact on making your city a livable community? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM.]**

❒	Regulations that ensure that utility companies, including electric, gas, water, and telecommunications set fair and reasonable rates for residential customers
❒	Low-income assistance programs, such as, LIHEAP or WAP, to help make utility services more affordable to low-income residents—like energy rebates
❒	A municipal consumer advocate that effectively represents and protects the interests of residential utility customers
❒	Energy rebate or incentive programs that encourage residents to use energy more efficiently

Q21. The next few questions focus on **programs and services that help low-income and older adults**. Please rate the priority of the following programs and services initiatives in your city. **[CHECK ONLY ONE BOX PER ITEM (A, B, C, D, E, F, G).]**

		Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
a.	Policies to protect against cuts to food assistance programs like SNAP and WIC	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
b.	Increased support for local area food banks and other food supportive services	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
c.	Establish or increase the number of farmer's markets that accept SNAP, WIC, and other food assistance program benefits	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
d.	Policies to protect against cuts to Medicaid or other state programs that support the health of low-income people	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
e.	Policies to protect against cuts to Medicare and Social Security	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
f.	Increased support for respite care and policies that give family caregivers relief	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
g.	Affordable legal aid for low-income and older adult victims of consumer fraud and other types of financial exploitation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Q22. Of the 7 **programs and services** initiatives you just rated, which one will have the MOST impact on making your city a livable community? **[CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM.]**

❐	Policies to protect against cuts to food assistance programs like SNAP and WIC
❐	Increased support for local area food banks and other food supportive services
❐	Establish or increase the number of farmer's markets that accept SNAP, WIC, and other food assistance program benefits
❐	Policies to protect against cuts to Medicaid or other state programs that support the health of low-income people
❐	Policies to protect against cuts to Medicare and Social Security
❐	Increased support for respite care and policies that give family caregivers relief
❐	Affordable legal aid for low-income and older adult victims of consumer fraud and other types of financial exploitation

Q23. Of the 9 initiatives you chose as having the MOST impact on making your city a livable community, please rank your **TOP 3 priorities** across all 9 areas, with 1 being your top priority, 2 being your second highest priority, and 3 being your third highest priority. **[PUT THE NUMBER 1 BY YOUR TOP PRIORITY, THE NUMBER 2 BY YOUR SECOND HIGHEST PRIORITY, AND THE NUMBER 3 BY YOUR THIRD HIGHEST PRIORITY.]**

_____	Issue1 **[RESPONDENT'S CHOICE]**
_____	Issue2 **[RESPONDENT'S CHOICE]**
_____	Issue3 **[RESPONDENT'S CHOICE]**
_____	Issue4 **[RESPONDENT'S CHOICE]**
_____	Issue5 **[RESPONDENT'S CHOICE]**
_____	Issue6 **[RESPONDENT'S CHOICE]**
_____	Issue7 **[RESPONDENT'S CHOICE]**
_____	Issue8 **[RESPONDENT'S CHOICE]**
_____	Issue9 **[RESPONDENT'S CHOICE]**

Q24. Are there any other initiatives that you will focus on that relate to making your city a livable community that we have not already asked about in the survey?

Please list any other initiatives.

_____

Q25. How useful would the following age-related resources be to your city? **[CHECK ONLY ONE BOX PER ITEM (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I).]**

		Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Very Useful	Not At All Useful
a.	**Training Programs**: Virtual or in-person trainings on principles and case studies that support livable communities for all ages.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
b.	**Best Practice Sharing Programs and Resources**: Formal and informal best practice sharing; problem-solving assistance from other cities.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
c.	**Funding Opportunities**: Opportunities to apply for small grants to assist with work.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
d.	**Livable Community Resources**: "How to" guides to assist in making your city more livable for people of all ages	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
e.	**Media and Visibility for Livable Community Iniatives**: Recognition and media outreach programs to promote your city's work.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
f.	**Constituent Outreach**: On the ground work with partners to engage older Americans in community efforts.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
g.	**Other Resource**: Please specify: _____	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
h.	**Other Resource**: Please specify: _____	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
i.	**Other Resource**: Please specify: _____	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏

Demographic Information

D1. Please provide the name of your city.

	_____

D2. Please provide the name of your state.

	_____

D3. Please provide the name of your Mayor.

	_____

D4. What is your city's population?

	30,000 to less than 50,000 residents
	50,000 to less than 100,000 residents
	100,000 to less than 150,000 residents
	150,000 to less than 200,000 residents
	200,000 to less than 250,000 residents
	250,000 to less than 300,000 residents
	300,000 to less than 350,000 residents
	350,000 to less than 400,000 residents
	400,00 to less than 450,000 residents
	450,000 to less than 500,000 residents
	More than 500,000 residents

D5. What is the average age of your city's population?

	Average age in years _____

D6. Please provide your name.

	_____

D7. Please provide your job title and email address.

	_____