

Clark County Commission on Aging

.....
2016 Annual Report
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CLARK COUNTY
COMMISSION
on
AGING



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Commission on Aging Mission

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As community ambassadors, the Commission on Aging provides leadership, advocacy, community awareness and partnerships to initiate change toward an all-age-friendly, livable community.

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From the Chair



Marjorie Ledell
Chair

Dear Community Members,

Thank you for helping make this year's focus on housing a success. Your attendance, questions and comments at our public meetings were invaluable. We heard the passion in your voices and are grateful you are our strongest partners.

We took what we learned from our speakers and you and developed the recommendations in this report to the county council. These recommendations will help reshape the housing market to better serve people of all incomes, ages and abilities, whether their home is a house or apartment or in an urban, suburban or rural location.

Our report details our year-long housing program. We thank our speakers and look forward to continuing our partnership with them, especially at the Clark County Housing Summit on Feb. 9, 2017.

Looking ahead, we remain steadfast to our charge to educate, raise awareness and advocate through focus areas outlined in the Aging Readiness Plan. They are housing, supportive services, transportation, healthy communities and community engagement. Nearly 90 percent of people age 50 and older want to live in their own home as they age, and these focus areas are crucial to ensuring that desire is within reach, for all of us. We have learned that what older people need, younger people prefer.

Next year's focus will be on Supportive Services. We will seek help identifying speakers with the expertise to inform us as well as listen and respond to you. We are grateful to Clark County for creating the Commission on Aging in 2012 as a forum to address important issues.

Our goal then and now is to achieve an "all-age friendly, livable community." We are counting on your help.

Thank you and take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marjorie A. Ledell".

Marjorie A. Ledell
Chair, Commission on Aging

Aging Readiness Plan and Commission on Aging

Aging Readiness Plan

Knowing that more than 10,000 people turn 65 each day nationwide, the then-Board of County Commissioners appointed a 24-member panel in 2010 to assess the county's capacity to serve its residents. The Aging Readiness Task Force developed a plan that identified 91 strategies focusing on healthy communities, housing, transportation, supportive services and community engagement. The plan includes perspectives about how to effectively cultivate and protect the things residents say they want most — the ability to age in community.

Commission on Aging

The commission was established May 20, 2012, as recommended in the Aging Readiness Plan. The commission was, and is, tasked with leading and managing the implementation of the plan — fostering countywide awareness, dialogue and insight into challenges and opportunities for all residents. The commission is supported by volunteers and Community Planning. It works on a variety of fronts, and as community ambassadors, members provide leadership, education, advocacy and community awareness.



Ali Caley
Vice Chair



Chuck Frayer
Treasurer



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COA Past Chairs

Gary Beagle
Bill Ritchie
Kiersten Ware



2016 Focus on Housing

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10 experts talk
about successful
aging in place,
universal design and
the housing market
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The Commission on Aging dedicated its fourth year to the issue of housing, especially for people 60 and older. At each meeting, an invited expert provided insights on a specific aspect of housing. The presentations were to:

- Educate commission members and the public
- Direct questions to the expert to gain further information
- Seek comments and questions from the public
- Identify and recommend ways to shape the direction of policy and a stronger housing market

An outgrowth of this year's program is a housing summit early next year to discuss this report's findings with major players in the housing industry, policy makers from across the county and nonprofit organizations. In addition, a summit goal is to further develop collaborative relationships and partnerships to reshape the housing market for all ages and incomes.



Highlights

from Housing Series

Christina Marnieris

Community Services Program Supervisor,
Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of Southwest Washington:

How to be prepared to talk with parents about long-term housing needs.

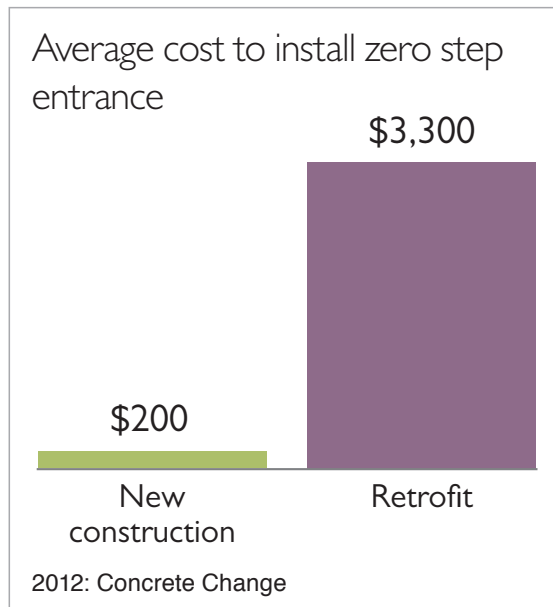
1. Talking with your parents about long-term needs does not have to be difficult.
2. Not having the conversation could make matters worse.
3. Think about what to gain, not ultimatums.
4. Choose the right moment and place.

Alan De La Torres

Environmental Gerontologist and Research Associate,
Portland State's Institute on Aging:

How housing in Clark County is changing and what that means to seniors. You have more choices than ever.

1. Communities that fare best in the future tackle challenges and embrace possibilities for aging residents.
2. Housing should be:
 - Well designed
 - Affordable
 - Close to essential services and infrastructure
 - Integrate a diversifying population
 - Foster social and physical well being
3. Millennials and baby boomers prefer small yards in walkable neighborhoods.
4. Universal design means:
 - Zero-step entrance to home
 - Wide doorways and hallways
 - Bathrooms on first level.
5. If features are incorporated when a home is built, cost to the builder is less than the cost to retrofit.
6. Lifelong housing should be fully accessible and adaptable for grab bars and conversion to an accessory dwelling unit; include adjustable countertops and cupboards and outlets at waist-level.





Patrick Roden

Founder of Aging-in-Place.com and a registered nurse:

Know what aging in place means and how it can be achieved physically, emotionally and socially.

1. Mental competence rises with brain stimulation and decreases with lack of stimulation.
2. Novelty and challenges of a complex environment are examples of brain stimulation while standardization and routines are examples of lack of brain stimulation.
3. Custodial care typically does not provide stimulation. People who age in their own surroundings with regular contact with family, friends and neighbors typically do better than those who do not.

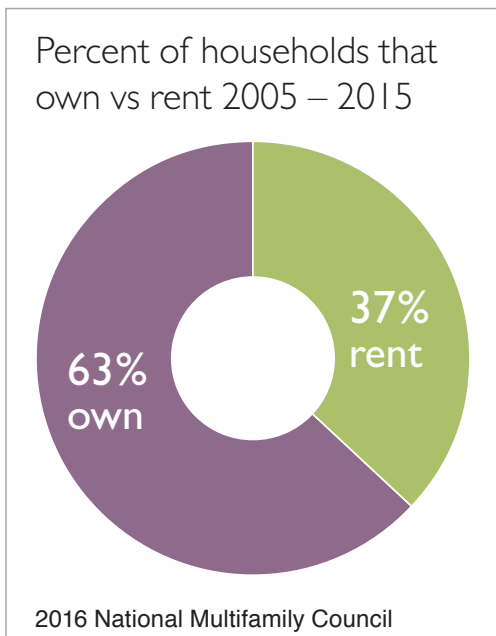
Andy Silver

Executive director for Council for the Homeless:

Our community's affordable housing crisis; why is it happening and what we can do about it?

He outlined unique aspects of our community and local policy choices that contributed to our affordable housing crisis.

When a household is spending more than half its income on housing, members are at increased risk of becoming homeless, he said.



1. Every \$100 increase in rent is associated with: 6 percent rise in homelessness in metro areas and 32 percent increase in homelessness in non-metro areas. Housing costs drive demand for and success of homeless services.
2. Nationally, increased demand means 37 percent of households live in rental housing, the highest since mid-1960s and an increase of nine million households from 2005 to 2015.
3. Without change, we will not produce the right mix of housing to meet the need.
4. Factors driving supply are: zoning, cost structure incentives and financing incentives. New rentals are for people with the highest incomes.
5. The policy and regulatory environment includes system development costs, multi-family zoning v. single-family zoning and incentives such as pre-approved plans for middle range housing.
6. Financing involves a mix of locally controlled funding, philanthropy and public/private partnerships with banks.
7. Individuals can make money and do the right thing.

Amanda Davis

Interior Design department chair, Portland Community College:

How simple design choices can help people age-in-place affordably and efficiently and how the boomer market is reshaping houses for the future.

1. The boomer generation is adding accessibility to the residential landscape and will be making more changes as they age.
2. More affluent seniors are moving to the east or west coast.
3. People 65 and older have the most disposable income, but the markets are not serving them.
4. 70 percent of the disposable income in the U.S. belongs to those 65 and older, while only 5 percent of advertisers target this group.
5. Promoting access and safety through home remodeling and smart technologies
 - Home remodeling includes first-floor bathroom, wheelchair accessibility, raised toilets and wide walkways.
 - Assistive technologies include motion sensors in hallways, alerts of exterior doors, diet monitors on the refrigerator and sleep monitors under mattresses.
6. “Future proofing” a home means designs that leave enough room for future things such as drawers and cabinet storage spaces rather than doors.

Mark Eshelman

Loan officer for Pinnacle Capital Mortgage, which specializes in reverse mortgages:

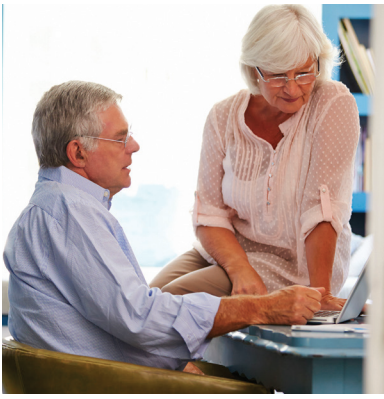
What financing options are available for remodeling, renovating, retrofitting and new construction for seniors and boomers and potential tax benefits.

Aging in place: How do we pay for it? Examples of financing options for low to moderate incomes include:

- Clark County Housing Rehabilitation Program
- Vancouver’s Housing Rehabilitation Program
- USDA Single-Family Housing Repair Loan and Grant and Evergreen Habitat for Humanity’s A Brush with Kindness Program. Potential tax benefits of renovating, remodeling and retrofitting a home

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Every \$100 increase
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non-metro areas.
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The 55+ age buyer and seller market has nearly doubled in the last 20 years.
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Sherri Adams

Realtor and Seniors Real Estate Specialist:

What to consider when moving. Selling a senior's home is different because many factors need to be considered.

1. Is moving the best alternative and have other options been explored?
2. Do close family members support the decision to sell?
3. What is the best way to downsize a lifetime's worth of possessions and family heirlooms?
4. What are the tax-related implications of a sale?
5. What effects might a sale have on future income?

Here are some quick facts to keep in mind:

- Many seniors rely on fixed incomes, receiving an average \$1,234 monthly Social Security check. If they are fortunate, they have supplemental retirement income.
- The 55+ buyer and seller market has nearly doubled in the past 20 years.
- By 2050, people 65 and older will be 20 percent of the U.S. population.

A Clark County Realtors Association survey showed that 62.3 percent of members saw an increase in home buyers over age 55 and 55 percent indicated most buyers wanted a suburban home. That could be because the desired homes are not in urban areas and 88 percent of buyers over 55 want a single-family dwelling.

Aaron Marvin

Owner of A.C.T. Builders, vice president of the Clark County Building Industry Association and a Certified Aging in Place Specialist:

Simple steps to ensure a successful home renovation or new-build project and the apparent need for more regulations in the housing market. Aaron outlined steps for selecting a contractor that included:

1. Set a budget and have an idea of what you want
2. Ask around, conduct formal research online
3. Talk with people who have had similar contracting work done and look at the completed projects
4. Interview contractors and think about whether you actually like the person
5. Get bids, and then hire a contractor.

Aaron suggested the following resources:

- What You Should Know About Hiring a Contractor, Remodeler or Handyman, by ProtectMyHome.net;
- Independent Contractor Guide by the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries.

Reshaping the housing market to better meet the evolving needs of seniors requires a change of thinking and consumer demand, he said.

Roy Johnson

Executive director of the Vancouver Housing Authority:

Our community's public housing crisis and why it is happening.

Quick facts:

1. Vancouver had the highest percentage of rent increases in the nation.
2. Rapidly increasing rents and low vacancy rates result in an increase in homelessness.
3. Hard to use rental assistance when rents are above Fair Market Rent.
4. High demand for housing is resulting in renovations, rent increases and displacement.
5. Sources of funding for public housing are declining as the need increases. New sources need to be found.
6. Older units are adapted to residents' needs. All new housing is accessible.

Aaron Murphy

Architect, entrepreneur and author of ADM Architecture:

How housing is the hub of happiness, health and longevity. Here are some of his major points:

1. The built environment is designed for a person who is of average height and weight, has perfect eyesight and hearing, and is right-handed and able-bodied.
2. 87 percent of elder fractures are due to falls.
3. 70 percent of retirees are forecast to run out of money within 10 years.
4. Housing stock hasn't change since the 1950s.
5. Good design encourages mobility and activity, family support and involvement with others.
6. Today assisted living is approximately \$4,500 per month; the median cost of a nursing home is \$8,973 per month.
7. Remodeling a home into a forever home would allow you to stay 10-15 years longer with part time care and potentially save you up to \$500,000.
8. Universal design doesn't mean a home looks or feels institutional.
9. Adding universal design features in a new home costs virtually nothing.



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Remodeling a home into a forever home would allow you to stay 10-15 years longer with part-time care and potentially save you up to \$500,000.

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2016 Focus on housing

Major Findings

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87 percent of older adults prefer to retire in place and will need accessible, affordable housing.
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The demand for housing that can adapt to the changing needs of residents continues to outpace the supply.

- An AARP survey found that 87 percent of people prefers to retire in place and will need accessible, affordable housing.¹
- What the public wants does not converge with what the industry provides.
- Incorporating accessible elements in new construction is easier than a remodel.

¹ AARP PPI, "What is Livable? Community Preferences of Older Adults," April 2014



Recommendations for policy direction and stronger marketplace

Based on information from our housing speaker series and public comments, the Commission on Aging recommends the community discusses, refines and implements the following policy and marketplace solutions.

Policy direction

Encourage the construction of new single-family homes that can accommodate all residents and visitors regardless of age or ability by the inclusion of these design features:

1. A no-step entry way connected to an accessible route to the driveway or sidewalk;
2. All doorways and hallways have a minimum clear width of 36 inches and lever handles instead of door knobs;
3. Bathroom on the main floor with reinforced wall backing for secure attachment of grab bars and adequate space for a walker or wheelchair; and
4. Light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats and other environmental controls mounted no higher than 48 inches and no lower than 18 inches above finished floor.

Recognize that the most practical and cost-effective means of providing “visitable” housing to meet the projected need is with new construction.

Retrofit and remodel existing housing for aging in place by:

1. Developing standard drawings detailing construction specifications for expedited permit application and approval.
2. Identifying tax credits, incentives and grants available for homeowners or builders.
3. Identify and publicize programs such as VA assistance for disabled veterans.

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“Visitable” is an emerging term meaning barrier-free housing, accessible to all residents and visitors.
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Work to ensure new affordable housing projects are built to allow access for all potential residents.
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Increase neighborhood functionality, connectivity and accessibility with a combination of pedestrians, cars, bikes and public transportation.

1. Ensure all new neighborhoods are built with sidewalks and curb cuts.
2. Ensure safety and access for fire and emergency medical responders to reach and transport residents.
3. Develop funding strategies for priority sidewalk construction, improvement and repair to connect existing neighborhoods.

Marketplace ideas

Clark County and the Commission on Aging will:

1. Collaborate with the Building Industry Association to promote “visitability” choices for new and existing homes. Encourage the BIA to showcase a Universal Design home in the Clark County 2018 Parade of Homes.
2. Work with housing nonprofits such as Habitat for Humanity and Vancouver Housing Authority to ensure new affordable housing projects paid for with private and public funds are built to allow access for all potential residents.
3. Encourage all Clark County cities to adopt “visitability” programs with voluntary initiatives and/or code requirements.
4. Continue work with Clark County Association of Realtors to revise and increase designations for accessible features in the use of the multiple listing service.



Implementing the Aging Readiness Plan

The Commission on Aging has developed several programs to implement a robust aging readiness plan, including:

- hOur Impact Time Bank
- Public presentations that reach out to all sectors of the community
- Encouraging Universal Green Design
- Providing education, resources and advocacy

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A six-prong strategy has been identified in the Aging Readiness Plan.
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All ages and skills
are welcome to
participate in hOur
IMPACT Time Bank
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hOur IMPACT Time Bank

The Commission on Aging developed the county's first time bank. The hOur IMPACT Time Bank allows neighbors to exchange skills or services without money changing hands. The time bank concept promotes a variety of strategies identified in the Aging Readiness Plan. The hOur IMPACT Time Bank was launched in May 2015. It now has 134 members, including nine nonprofits, three neighborhood associations, one farmers market and three public programs.



Public presentations:

Neighborhood associations: Maplewood, Vancouver Heights, NE Hazel Dell, Vancouver Neighborhood Alliance, Fruit Valley, Esther Short, Lincoln, Northwest, North Salmon Creek and Rose Village. Two presentations to the Neighborhood Associations Council of Clark County and Vancouver Office of Neighborhoods.

At public libraries: Battle Ground, Ridgefield, La Center, Camas, Washougal, Salmon Creek and Cascade Park. A presentation at the holiday luncheon of the Fort Vancouver Regional Library two years in a row to reach their volunteer program coordinators.

Clark County Youth Commission: We partnered with the Clark County Youth Commission to get members' input on how this program could be rolled out to teens. Sixteen members joined hOur IMPACT and participated in two park clean ups.

Senior retirement communities: Courtyard Village Retirement Living, Columbia Ridge and Smith Tower Senior Living community.

Noon concert series at Esther Short Park: An information booth at the Wednesday, six-week concerts series.

Salmon Creek Farmers Market: An information booth at the Legacy Hospital Farmers Market.

Community organizations: Share volunteer coordinators, Lewis River Rotary and YMCA CASA Connection coordinators. Attended the Faith Based Coffees to introduce the program and met with Clark County Food Bank, Go Connect, Flash Love, Columbia Springs and Americans Building Community.

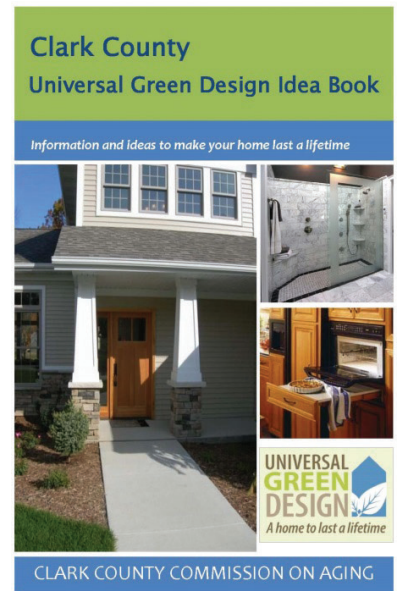
County and city coordination: We coordinate with the following county and city departments: Community Services, Public Health, Youth Commission, Parks and Vancouver Housing Authority, and neighborhood associations and Fort Vancouver Regional Library coordinators.

Universal Design

This long-term approach combines environmentally sustainable elements of green building with universal design, which uses simple, proven ideas to make a home comfortable for a wide range of abilities.

The commission prepared an idea book to provide information and inspiration and showcased the benefits of universal green design at the well-attended Home and Garden Fair. The commission works with builders to include universal green design elements in their homes. To date, the commission has distributed 1,200 idea books.

Universal design is an integral component of aging in place and its importance was highlighted by many of the experts who spoke to the commission during the 2016 focus on housing.

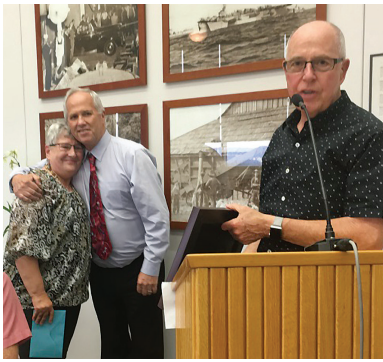


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Universal design is an integral component for aging
in place.

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Education, awareness and advocacy

In prior years, the Commission on Aging operated on a June–July calendar. Beginning in July 2015, the commission moved to a fiscal calendar. From July 2015 through December 2016, the commission worked to provide education, community awareness and advocacy to move toward an all-age-friendly, livable community. Below is a list of events the commission attended to provide information on topics related to aging in Clark County.

City councils: Then-Chair Bill Ritchie presented the 2015 CoA Annual Report to all city councils to keep them updated on the commission’s progress implementing elements of the Aging Readiness Plan.

Senior Resource Fair: Hosted by U.S. Representative Jaime Herrera Beutler, the fair provides resources on a variety of opportunities for seniors. Commission members and staff provided information about the group’s work.

Prime of Your Life Day at 2015 Clark County Fair: Then-Chair Bill Ritchie received an award during this event.

Clark County Youth Commission: Collaborated with Youth Commission to develop youth participation in the hOur IMPACT Time Bank program.

Fall into Health Wellness Resource Fair: Commission member Karin Woll staffed a table at the fair to provide information about the work of the commission.

Fred Meyer holiday: Member Karin Woll collaborated with Fred Meyer on East Mill Plain during the holiday gift wrapping promotion, talking with people about the Commission on Aging and hOur IMPACT program while they waited for their gifts to be wrapped.

Lions meeting: Member Bill Ritchie presented information about the work of the commission to the Lions Club.

NACCC meeting: Member Karin Woll and staff provided information about the commission’s work and hOur IMPACT time bank to the Neighborhood Association Council of Clark County.

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conducted by the
commission itself.
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Team Hymas

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Clark County Mission Statement

Clark County's mission is to enhance the quality of life of our diverse community by providing services with integrity, openness and accountability.

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Clark County Community Planning

Planning for Clark County's promising future

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For other formats, contact the Clark County ADA Office **Voice** (360) 397-2000; **Relay** 711 or (800) 833-6388; **Fax** (360) 397-6165 **Email** ADA@clark.wa.gov