

II. Housing Options for Our Aging Population

“The needs and expectation of housing change with age.

Housing options in our communities should reflect these evolving needs and expectations.”

A Blueprint for Action: Developing a Livable Community for All ages – National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

As populations and societies change, so do living situations and housing needs. During the past half-century, suburbanization and lifestyles have profoundly affected housing choices. In coming years, the aging population will set new trends in housing and living arrangements.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Across the nation, people are working to create good places to live, work, grow up and grow old. A livable community has been defined by AARP as one with a variety of affordable and appropriate housing, supportive community features and services and adequate transportation choices. These elements create an environment in which everyone has the opportunity to live independently and participate in civic and social life as they age.

The Clark County Aging Readiness Task Force housing subcommittee evaluated whether Clark County has or can provide a variety of housing to meet the needs of our aging population. The following chapter discusses current housing options, innovative best practices from around the nation, and recommendations about how to broaden and strengthen housing choices.

Aging-in-Place

What is aging-in-place? It simply means successfully remaining in your home for as long as possible. To be successful, an individual might need to modify the home for changing needs, secure support services, or find different ways to stay engaged with the community.

Surveys across the country show that more than 85 percent of older adults prefer to remain in their home as they age. What's more, enabling people to successfully stay in their homes and communities contributes to a community's stability. For example:

- Nationally, homeownership rate for adults age 65 and older is more than 80 percent, higher than the national average (Anon. 2006). When residents stay in their homes,

the community retains its tax base and preserves neighborhood stability.

- Remaining in the home is less expensive than moving to a facility, in part because much of the needed assistance is provided by family caregivers. According to a MetLife study, family members provide approximately 80 percent of all long-term care services in the U.S.
- The Medicaid and Medicare systems cannot support institutional care for all adults who will reach later stages of life in the next 25 to 30 years.
- Because so many older people continue to contribute to their community, helping seniors age-in-place can benefit the community as a whole. Some forward-thinking communities strive to attract retirees and market their aging-friendly services to help attract new businesses.



When driving is no longer possible, another ingredient to aging-in-place is access to goods and services, gathering spots and recreational venues. Unfortunately, most communities built in the past several decades were not designed for aging-in-place. In Clark County, most people are aging in suburbs where little or no public

transportation exists and they have to rely on the automobile to reach locations outside a reasonable walking distance. In short, the same neighborhoods that were wonderful places to grow up may prove to be terrible places to grow old.

Aging-in-Community

When older adults cannot or choose not to remain in their homes, they should have the opportunity to remain in the same community with friends, neighbors, relatives, doctors, restaurants, parks and services they know.

According to AARP, 85 percent of older adults say if they could no longer live in their home, they would like to remain in their local community. Nationwide, communities need a variety of single-family, multi-family and less traditional housing options for all income levels.



National housing trends for the aging population

- Majority of people 50 and older want to remain in their present home. (AARP)
- Most 55+ households continue to be happy with their homes and communities. (Housing Trends, 2011)
- In 2007, 46% of older households (65+) lived in suburbs. (Hayutin, 2010)
- In 2008, 29% of all people 65+ lived alone. (Hayutin, 2010)
- In 2007, more than two-thirds of 55+ households owned single-family, detached homes. (Housing for 55+, 2009)
- If nursing home residency rates for those 85+ remain at the 2004 level, or 14%, 1.2 million people 85+ will live in nursing homes by 2030 and 2.6 million by 2050. (Hayutin 2010)
- In 2003, housing was the largest expense category for persons 45+. (AARP)
- The majority of 55+ households do not live in age-restricted communities. (AARP).

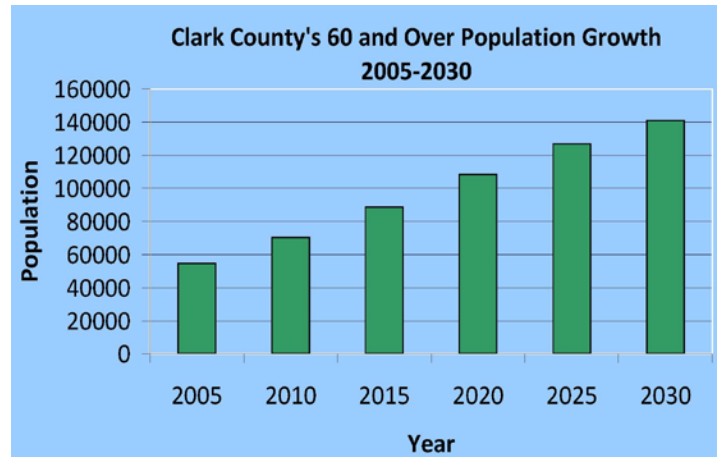
CLARK COUNTY

Clark County has seen rapid growth over the past decade, and now is seeing a new trend emerge. By 2030, one in four residents will be 60 or older. The forecasted population growth from 2005 to 2030 shows a 158 percent increase in residents 60 and older. This growing segment of our community is going to redefine what a livable community means in Clark County. Clark County must ensure housing options and opportunities to meet the needs of older residents and encourage aging-in-place and aging-in-community.

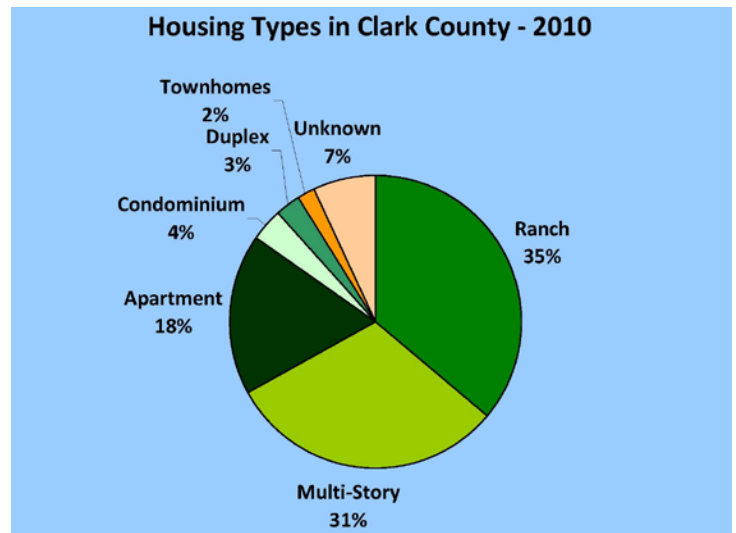
Clark County housing statistics:

A livable and age-friendly community provides a range of housing types at various prices. How “age-friendly” are local housing choices?

- In 2005, ~54,000 people 60 and older lived in Clark County
- In 2030, forecasters predict 141,000 people 60 and older will live in Clark County
- That 158 percent projected population growth rate compares with a 48 percent rate for all ages
- 35 percent of Clark County’s current housing stock is single-story (ranch style)
- 18 percent of Clark County’s housing stock is apartments
- 13.3 percent of Clark County’s housing stock was built before 1960



Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management



Source: Clark County Assessor's Database - November 2010

Housing choices for the aging population

Seniors need housing options with multiple levels of care. The housing subcommittee identified these possible options:

Adult Family Homes: Adult family homes are state-licensed neighborhood homes where staff assumes responsibility for the safety and well-being of adults. They provide a room, meals, laundry, supervision and varying levels of assistance. Some provide occasional nursing care. Some offer specialized care for people with mental health issues, developmental disabilities or dementia. The home may have two to six residents.

Assisted Living: Assisted living facilities, also referred to as boarding homes, are facilities where staff assumes responsibility for the safety and well-being of the adult. They provide housing, meals, laundry, supervision and varying levels of assistance. All are licensed by the state, and some provide nursing care while others offer specialized care for people with mental health issues, developmental disabilities or dementia. They can have seven or more residents.

Continuing Care Retirement Communities: These communities provide a continuum of care – from independent living to assisted living, residential care and skilled nursing services – on one campus. They allow individuals to live in the same retirement community as their needs progress, and they typically offer the full selection of amenities associated with retirement living.



Independent Living: These private homes or apartments are rented to seniors. Some offer meal plans, housekeeping and additional services for an extra fee.

Memory Care or Dementia Care: Memory care and dementia care facilities are specialized for all types of memory and dementia issues. Most are secure, and some are connected to larger assisted living units.

Nursing Home or Skilled Nursing Facility: Nursing homes provide 24-hour, supervised nursing care, personal care, therapy, nutrition management, organized activities, social services, room, board and laundry.

Residential Care Facilities: These provide housing and supportive services for six or more people who do not require 24-hour nursing care. Pricing can vary greatly depending on the level of care provided and the size and amenities of

each apartment. Accommodations typically are in a home-like setting and range from a shared bedroom with common bathroom to private apartments with a kitchenette and bathroom. Monthly fees vary based on amenities and care services. Many residential care facilities specialize in individuals with Alzheimer's or dementia.

Supportive housing: Supportive housing provides an array of services that can range from housekeeping to assistance with dressing, bathing or monitoring chronic health conditions. Tenants' rent payments are set at an affordable level, and some developments employ coordinators to identify and connect residents with available services. The model differs from assisted living facilities, which require residents to pay for all services offered rather than services they use.

Housing Choices in Clark County

- 300+ Adult family homes (licensed)
- 20+ Assisted living facilities
- 30+ Independent living facilities (*14 are known as affordable, either subsidized or income-restricted*)
- 6 Skilled nursing facilities
- 2 Dementia care
- 7 Memory care
- 1 Parkinson
- 2 Enhanced care facilities

Please note that some facilities provide several levels of service options.

Source: SW WA Agency on Aging and Disabilities and the Retirement Connection Guide, Jan-Jun 2011.

Other housing choices to build in Clark County

Needs and expectations for housing change with age, and options should reflect the changes. Availability, affordability and a variety of housing can affect older peoples' ability to remain independent and actively engaged in the community. Options can include:

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's)

Accessory dwelling units, also called "granny flats," "mother-in-law apartment" or "backyard cottages," are separate, compact spaces – complete with bed, bath, kitchen and entry – that provide a second dwelling on a single residential parcel or lot.



This backyard Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) in the San Francisco Bay area has a living room, bedroom, kitchenette and bath, all in about 400 sq. ft.

Congregate Housing

Congregate communities offer independent living in private apartments and the opportunity to share activities of daily living with other residents as one chooses. The communities might offer rental or ownership units, but do not generally provide personal or health care. Typically, it is an apartment building for people living independently who want common

“hospitality” services, such as one or more meals a day or light housekeeping. Social activities might be arranged.

Housing and financial assistance programs

About 27 percent of Clark County householders 65 and older pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing. According to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), households that pay more than 30 percent are considered cost-burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care. When older adults retire, their incomes can decrease. As the aging population grows in the next 25 to 30 years, more older households will become cost-burdened. Below are housing/financial programs now available.

Public Assisted Housing: Public housing is defined as any housing assisted (constructed or subsidized) with public dollars. The Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA) administers subsidized public housing, the Housing Choice voucher program and the majority of low-income housing developments in Clark County. The VHA administers the following public assistance housing programs:

- **Low-Rent Housing:** According to the VHA’s 2009 annual report, the authority has 575 units of low-rent public housing, including 60 units converted for assisted living. Low-rent housing residents pay approximately 30 percent of their income for rent. The average annual income for households in VHA public housing is \$13,664.
- **Rental Assistance:** The HUD Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program allows low-income families to choose housing in

the private market. Renters pay a portion of their adjusted household income for rent and utilities. In 2008, VHA administered 1,927 housing vouchers. VHA owns 202 units of Section 8 New Construction properties.

- **VHA Waiting list:** The Vancouver Housing Authority has a shortfall of 1,000 units to meet the demand for elderly housing. The waiting list of people who want housing or government vouchers for rent is about 3,000 people, even though the list has been closed for five years.



Low Income Housing Rehabilitation Program: Clark County and the city of Vancouver administer Housing Rehabilitation Loan programs through community development block grants. The program provides financial assistance to owners who meet the income eligibility guidelines and assists residents in making repairs to their single-family homes.

The Accessibility and Minor Repair Program: The accessibility program is for Clark County owners and tenants who have physical challenges and need their homes modified for accessibility. Projects can include ramps, bathtubs, roll-in showers, doorways, door handles, grab bars and raised toilets. The minor

home repair program is for owners who need emergency health and safety repairs. Projects can include obvious signs of structural, plumbing, mechanical and electrical deterioration.

Weatherization program: Weatherization is provided through a grant program funded by the Bonneville Power Administration, Clark Public Utilities, federal Department of Energy, federal Department of Health and Human Services and Washington State Energy Match Maker. Primary focus is to install cost-effective measures for energy conservation and address health and safety concerns.

Clark Public Utilities, Clark County and the city of Vancouver, in partnership, received grant funding from the state to implement a two-year pilot weatherization program in two neighborhoods – one in the county and one in the city – to assist moderate-income households who do not qualify for the low-income weatherization program. Project Energy Savings, provides grants to eligible electrically heated homes for energy conservation improvements such as installation of insulation, duct sealing and weather-stripping.



Lawn sign for Clark Public Utilities/Clark County/City of Vancouver pilot weatherization project for moderate income households

Low Income Home Energy Assistance: The Housing Preservation Program contracts with Clark Public Utilities to provide the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The program provides eligible customers with grants for energy assistance.



Senior Citizen Property Tax Exemption: Eligible criteria are you: are at least 61 when the claim is filed; are the owner/buyer or have a Life Estate or Lease for Life interest in the property; are living in the home as your principal residence; have an annual combined disposable income no more than \$35,000. On approval, the residence's assessed value will be "frozen" at the value certified on January 1 of the application year. The taxable value of the qualified residence and home site will not increase, but could decrease, as long as you qualify for the exemption.

WHAT DOES OUR COMMUNITY WANT & NEED?

A home is key to personal independence and engagement in community life. It is where people prepare to conduct their lives in the surrounding community and the setting for socializing with family, friends and neighbors. To find out what our local community's housing wants and needs are, the Aging Readiness Task Force hosted a community workshop to ask the question.

Aging Readiness Housing Workshop

The Aging Readiness Task Force held a workshop on Thursday, Sept. 16, 2010, to discuss building a livable community in Clark County. More than 90 community members attended. Discussions focused on providing housing choices for people of all ages, sharing information, collecting ideas and providing recommendations.

Alan DeLaTorre of Portland State University's Institute on Aging, an expert on sustainable and affordable housing for older adults, presented the global background to the upcoming cultural shift in worldwide demographics. Following his talk, attendees gathered in small groups for a facilitated conversation.

Summary of workshop discussions

Housing is essential to safety and well-being. The link between housing and access to community and social services influences people's independence and quality of life. Needs for and expectations about housing change with age. Although most residents want to age in place, they confront many barriers to remaining in their homes and engaging with their communities. In addition, most residents wait too

long to plan for their retirement and should start planning at age 50. The following points were identified as gaps to successful aging in place:

1. Affordable housing is limited.
2. Home and building design is tailored to a narrow range of physical abilities.
3. Mobility options are inadequate to provide the link between housing and access to community.
4. Services/amenities in close proximity to housing are lacking.
5. People have concerns about safety and isolation.
6. The range of housing types is inadequate to meet future needs of the community.
7. Individuals are not planning for future housing needs.
8. Information is limited and not readily available, especially in alternative formats.



Sept. 16, 2010 Housing Workshop

Subcommittee Overview

The housing subcommittee's charge was to develop specific recommendations that will serve as blueprints for short-term (0-3 years), medium-term (4-6 years) and long-term (7+ years) actions. The goal was to identify specific strategies, and where possible implementation actions, that will enable all Clark County residents to be lifelong, integral members of the community, despite varying life conditions.



Workshop Questions

1. Do you think people plan for their housing needs to change as they age? At what age should people start planning for their retirement housing? What factors, if any, are considered, such as unique needs, age-related physical changes, lifestyle, location and type of housing? What is our obligation as a society to provide public awareness and education? If so, what should we do that we are currently not doing?
2. Although it is assumed that older people move to retirement communities or specialized senior housing as they age, the vast majority “age in place” in single-family homes. Aging in place is the ability to live in one's own home – wherever that might be – for as long as confidently and comfortably possible. What alternatives for staying in your home are feasible, but have not been developed? What types of services and amenities should be nearby? How close should these services be to homes? Adjacent to the residential area? Mixed within the residential area?
3. Universal design refers to a broad-spectrum solution that produces buildings, products and environments that are usable and effective for everyone, not just people with disabilities. It emerged from “barrier-free” or “accessible design” and “assistive technology,” and recognizes the importance of aesthetics. Universal design is a part of everyday living, and is all around us in such things as curb cuts or sidewalk ramps, extra-wide doorways, lever door handles, rocker light switches, cabinets with pull-out shelves, kitchen counters at several heights and stair railings. Since aging in place can be extended through the incorporation of universal design principles, telecare and other assistive technologies, what do you think developers should consider as they build housing and communities to accommodate residents of all ages? What can be done to assist with retrofitting existing homes?
4. The generally accepted definition of affordability is for owners and renters to pay no more than 30 percent of their annual gross income on housing. Housing costs usually include taxes, insurance and utility costs. As older adults exit or spend less time in the workplace, their earnings historically fall after age 60. This income decrease can lead to difficulties affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care. What is our obligation as a society to address the needs of affordable housing? What should we do that we are currently not doing to meet this need? Are there barriers? If yes, what do we need to break down those barriers? What is our obligation to address the needs of individuals who might not meet the definition of affordable housing yet are unable to pay for services to remain in their home?

CHALLENGES & STRATEGIES

As they age and their abilities change, many adults find that shortcomings in their homes and communities limit where they are able to live. Some limitations are related to features of the housing stock, while others are rooted in community characteristics that do not accommodate an aging population.

For many older adults in Clark County, the housing stock can be expensive, lack accessible features, and inconveniently located for essential services, all of which makes aging-in-place difficult. These issues can precipitate an unwelcome move to a distant community or a premature move to a nursing home.

With information and community responses from the housing workshop, an online survey and subsequent research, the housing subcommittee identified four major housing challenges facing our aging population: housing affordability, home design, housing choice and communication.

Housing Affordability	Home Design
Housing Choice	Information and Communication



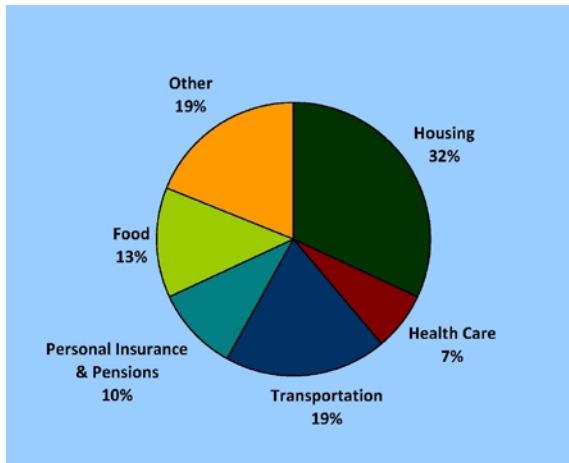
CHALLENGE 1: HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Affordable housing is a term used to describe dwelling units whose total housing costs are deemed "affordable" to those who have a median income. Although the term often is applied to rental housing within the financial means of those in the lower income ranges of a geographical area, the concept is applicable to both renters and purchasers in all income ranges.

In the United States, a commonly accepted guideline for housing affordability is that housing costs do not exceed 30 percent of a household's gross income. Costs considered in this guideline generally include taxes and insurance for owners and, usually, utilities. When the monthly costs of a home exceed 30-35 percent of household income, the housing is considered unaffordable for that household.

Older adults' earnings can fall as they exit or spend less time in the workplace. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Expenditure Survey shows that housing costs represent approximately one-third of out-of-pocket expenditures for people 45 and older, making it the single largest expenditure category.

Household Out-of-Pocket Expenditures



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Expenditure Survey

Strategy 1a (short term) – Preserve and expand rental housing for seniors with incomes below 60 percent (established federal guidelines) of the area's median income. As stated earlier, Vancouver Housing Authority is now 1,000 units short of meeting the demand for elderly housing. The waiting list of people who want housing or government vouchers for rent is about 3,000 people, even though that list has been closed for five years.

Clark County, its incorporated cities and all housing agencies serving Clark County residents need to combine efforts in advocating for a secure financing source for the state Housing Trust Fund. The fund helps communities meet the housing needs of low-income and special needs populations by providing support for the construction, acquisition or rehabilitation of housing units. Money for the fund is allocated by the Legislature from the state's general revenue and has been in jeopardy in recent years. However, the money is a critical tool for local funds to leverage for construction of low income housing units.

Strategy 1b (medium term) – Weatherizing homes to reduce energy costs. On average, weatherization reduces home energy costs by 21 percent, saving eligible households an estimated \$413 on energy bills each year, according to 2008 data from the federal Department of Energy. Because it reduces costs and increases comfort, weatherizing a home can make the prospect of aging-in-place more likely for older adults with limited incomes. Clark County and its incorporated cities, in partnership with all housing agencies, Clark Public Utilities and NW Natural, should build on existing weatherization programs. Efforts could include providing information, education and assistance to moderate income households who do not qualify for the federal Weatherization Assistance Program but cannot afford the initial weatherization investment.

Strategy 1c (long term) – Non profit/Land Trust Affordable Housing Model. Encourage a not-for-profit organization or community land trust to purchase homes, remodel using universal design principles, then resell the home at an affordable cost. To ensure the home will remain affordable, the organization or trust could employ resale-restricted principles of shared equity homeownership. (Davis, 2006)



CHALLENGE 2: HOME DESIGN

Most homes are not designed to accommodate the needs of older adults. Evidence shows the vast majority of older adults wish to age-in-place, so having homes that are well-designed for people of varying ages and abilities is crucial to their quality of life. Appropriate design helps people enjoy the full use of their home, host guests with varying abilities, and maintain their independence.

Well-designed homes are one component of a strategy to enable residents to stay out of more expensive and sometimes less appealing settings, such as long-term, assisted care facilities.

Universal design is a framework for results that work well for the widest possible range of users (young and old) without separate or special design. A group of American advocates

developed the seven principles of universal design in 1977. They are:

1. **Equitable Use:** The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
2. **Flexibility in Use:** The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
3. **Simple and Intuitive Use:** Use of the design is easy to understand regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills or current concentration level.
4. **Perceptible Information:** The design communicates necessary information effectively, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.
5. **Tolerance for Error:** The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
6. **Low Physical Effort:** The design can be used efficiently, comfortably and with minimum fatigue.
7. **Size and Space for Approach and Use:** Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation and use regardless of user's body size, posture or mobility. (Connell et al, 1997)

Strategy 2a (short term) – Universal Design Information Guide. Develop a Clark County Universal Design Information Guide to assist homeowners in increasing the ease and flexibility of their home

Strategy 2b (medium term) – Incorporate universal design principles in Clark County's Building Code review process.

1. Develop a tiered level of universal design which would include adaptable through fully accessible.

2. Provide the option of using a universal design code instead of the Clark County Building Code.
3. Establish a universal design identification program for homes that meet universal design criteria levels, as verified by Clark County or city building officials, which would be displayed on the county's property information database and online maps.
4. Coordinate with the Building Industry of America and their certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) program to provide training on universal design for builders, remodelers and property owners.
5. Coordinate with the Clark County Association of Realtors and their Senior Real Estate Specialist (SRES) program to provide universal design information to buyers and sellers of residential property.
6. Provide construction incentive by waiving up to 25 percent of permit fees for universal design multi-family buildings.
7. Mandate that 10 percent of all new residential units (per single-family development or per multi-family building) are use universal design level "adaptable" and 5 percent use level "fully accessible" by 2016.

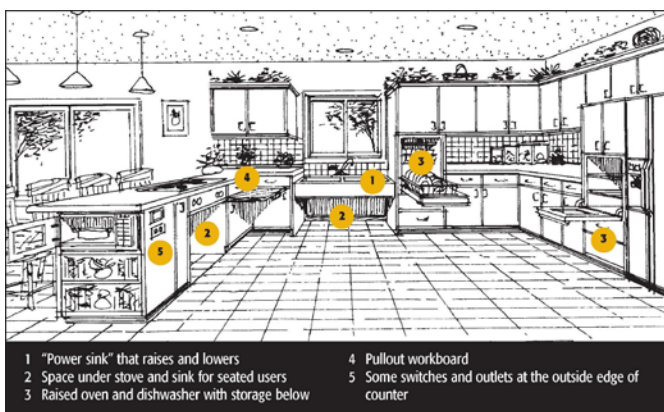


Cottage Housing - Kirkland, WA

CHALLENGE 3: HOUSING CHOICE

Older adults who want to age in their communities lack housing choices. Even if older adults cannot or choose not to remain in their homes as their abilities change, they should be able to remain in the same community with the neighbors, friends, relatives, medical care and amenities with which they are familiar. Available and affordable housing options are crucial for older people to remain independent and actively engaged in the community.

Strategy 3a (short term) – Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). Currently ADUs trigger a Type I site plan review, which can make a project subject to school, traffic and park Impact fees. Depending on location, these fees can add \$8,000 to \$12,000 to the cost of an ADU. Single-family detached homes, duplexes and triplexes are exempt from site plan review. The county should consider exemptions for ADUs, as well. Currently, ADUs are eligible for a waiver from school impact fees if, by design or restrictive covenant, the unit is exclusively for persons 62 or older. The county should consider a similar age-restricted waiver for traffic and park impact fees.



Elements of a Universal Designed Kitchen by the IA Program for Assisted Technologies.
www.uiowa.edu/infotech/universalthomedesign.htm

Strategy 3b (short term) – Allow more flexibility for the development of duplexes. Currently, 85 percent of land in the unincorporated Vancouver Urban Growth Area is zoned for single-family residential development. Outside the Highway 99 Sub-Area, duplexes are restricted to corner lots in the R1-5 and R1-6 residential zones, and the lots for duplexes need to be nearly twice the size of a neighboring single-family home. This restriction limits the ability to downsize or convert a large home into a duplex. The county should consider allowing duplexes in all single-family residential zones.



Duplex - Portland, OR

Strategy 3c (medium term) – Encourage new developments of senior housing to be within a half-mile of transit, services and retail amenities.

Strategy 3d (medium term) – Allow cohousing to be developed in single-family residential zones.

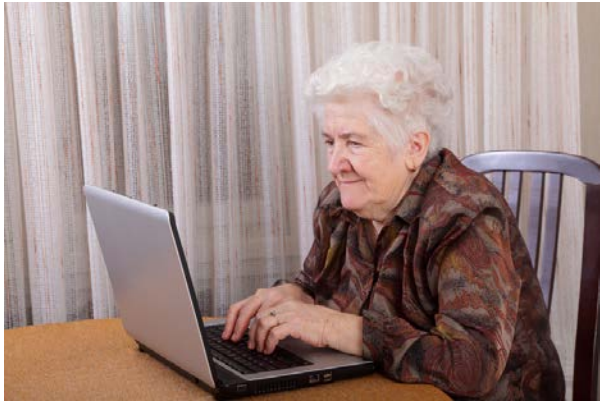
Cohousing is a residential model that offers adults an opportunity to age-in-place. Cohousing communities often include 15 to 35 housing units, a common house and other shared facilities. They frequently are occupied by households intimately involved in the development's planning.

Strategy 3e (medium term) – Allow assisted living facilities in single-family residential zones as a conditional use. Relatively few persons age 50 and older wish to move, but when they do, they wish to continue community ties. Allowing assisted living facilities in residential areas promotes successful aging-in-community strategies.

Strategy 3f (long term) - Develop a shared housing program. The program would assist homeowners with finding someone to share their home. The roommate need not be an older person. Organizations such as Council for the Homeless or Human Services Council could assist in these arrangements and match two people based on the needs of one person and the abilities of the other. The group would screen before matching and follow up to help the match thrive. Most organizations that do this are non-profit and supported by sources other than those seeking help.



Peninsula Park Cohousing - Portland, OR



CHALLENGE 4: INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Access to information and services is critical for the aging population, their families and caregivers as they seek help to age-in-place and in community. A centralized location for information related to services provided by government, non-profits and private agencies would be of value.

Strategy 4a (short term) – Provide aging adult education and information about design and modifications that can support and enhance their ability to stay at home as well as be active in the community. See strategy 2a.

Strategy 4b (short term) – Prepare a comprehensive checklist as a guide about issues that may be important when you are thinking about moving across town or across the country.

Strategy 4c (short term) Provide website links to resources in Clark County that can help you modify, remodel or find a new home.

Strategy 4d (short term) – Coordinate with Clark County Association of Realtors about increasing the number of Senior Real Estate Specialists (SRES). Training for SRES is a two-day,

accredited course provided by Washington realtors. Renewal and continuing educational requirements must be met for this accreditation to be maintained annually.

Strategy 4e (short term) – Coordinate with the Building Industry Association to increase the number of Certified Aging-in-Place Specialists (CAPS) who build or remodel in Clark County. Training for CAPS is a three-day, accredited course provided by NAHB. Renewal and continuing educational requirements must be met for this accreditation to be maintained annually.

Strategy 4f (short term) – Partner with the Building Industry Association to provide a universal-designed home and information at the Clark County Parade of Homes.

Strategy 4g (medium term) – Create an interactive website, as well as a showroom, to explore how people can stay at home and "remodel for life."

Strategy 4h (medium term) – Develop and implement a marketing outreach initiative for the financial housing programs offered by Clark County and the City of Vancouver to increase awareness and availability of the programs. They include the Home Repairs/Modification, Weatherization, Home Energy and Property Tax Exemption programs for income-eligible seniors.

Strategy 4i (medium term) – Provide information on the different types of accessible housing (age-friendly neighborhoods). Develop a user-friendly application for the GIS maps online that would provide livable community, age-in community and universal design information.

Strategy 4j (long term) – Provide a centralized information and referral program. Encourage a not-for-profit or community service organization to provide a central location for information and referrals. This could be an enhanced 211 or an expansion of SWAAD’s Information and Referral program.



Strategy 4k (long term) - All agencies that provide financial services to income-eligible seniors should coordinate their application processes. This could result in a one-time application that could qualify the household for multiple programs, if needed. This one-stop application initiative would assist in providing information on other programs available based on income, and decrease the amount of time, frustration and confusion that can occur when applying to multiple programs in multiple agencies.

Housing Internet Resources

Vancouver Housing Authority:

www.vhausa.com

Clark County Housing Preservation Program:

www.clark.wa.gov/housing-preservation/

Universal Design:

www.universaldesign.com

Center for Universal Design:

www.ncsu.edu/project/design-projects/udi/

National Shared Housing Resource Center:

www.nationalsharedhousing.org

Cohousing Association of the United States:

www.cohousing.org

Clark County Senior Citizen Tax Relief Program:

www.clark.wa.gov/assessor/taxrelief/senior