

2019 FOCUS: HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

“A livable community is one that has affordable and appropriate housing, supportive community features and services, and adequate mobility options, which together facilitate personal independence and the engagement of residents in civic and social life.” -AARP

Group goal: for the eight speaker events next year, an overarching goal is to recruit resources and speakers from all the cities and the county as much as possible.

1. Healthy Communities Overview

Most suburbs are not designed with aging residents in mind. Homes are segregated from other buildings, goods and services, creating an over-dependence on the automobile. Land use decisions can determine our ability to be physically active through a feature called “connectivity,” which means you can walk or bike from your home to other destinations on a street, path or road. A healthy community has neighborhoods with a well-rounded offering of daily goods and services that can be reached within a comfortable walking distance.

- Healthy community indicators (walkability, proximity to healthy food, transit, parks and open space, tree canopy, etc.)
- Complete neighborhoods
- Resources to look at indicators: GIS, AARP Livability Index, Walk Score, etc.
- Potential resources and/or speakers: Alan DeLaTorre

2. Access to Recreation and Open Space

Access to parks, recreation and open space has a direct effect on our health. Public health practitioners have documented a 40 percent increase in physical activity when people have access to parks and open space.

- Outdoor recreation: existing parks, trails and open space, park land acquisition, subdivisions, park amenities, park activities
- Indoor recreation: community centers and other facilities, senior programs, adaptive recreation
- Potential resources and/or speakers: consider panel with parks and rec representative for cities and county - Bill Bjerke (County Parks), Julie Hannon (Vancouver Parks & Rec), Jerry Acheson (Camas Parks & Rec), Suzanne Grover (Washougal Parks), Debbi Hanson (Battle Ground Parks & Rec), Dennis DiPinto (Ridgefield Parks & Rec), La Center Parks & Trails (need contact), Yacolt Activities & Recreation (need contact), Friends of the Gorge, Kelly Punteney, Bill Dygert



3. **Access to Healthy Foods:** A healthy community provides a readily available, affordable and abundant selection of healthy eating options through conveniently located fresh produce markets, grocery stores, farmers' markets and community gardens.
 - Food networks: easy access to good and affordable food
 - Improve nutrition, reduce hunger, reduce prevalence of obesity
 - Potential resources and/or speakers: Suzanne Washington (Meals on Wheels), Warren Neth (Slow foods), Ann Foster (Farmers Markets), Food System Council
4. **Access to Medical Services and Pet Care Support:** A healthy community provides easy access to medical services as well as pet care support services.
 - Access to medical services: connection to services such as all-in-one-building, Telehealth/Telemedicine
 - Access to pet care and pet support services for seniors
 - Potential resources and/or speakers: All-in one facilities (SeaMar, Vancouver Clinic, Kaiser, Legacy)
5. **Access to Economic Opportunity:** A healthy community promotes adequate jobs that pay living wages and opportunities for building equity.
 - Seniors affect the local economy as customers, volunteers and mentors
 - Senior service providers need workers which creates an opportunity for jobs
 - Potential resources and/or speakers: Melissa Boles (Workforce Southwest Washington Long Term Care Program), OHSU Hartford Center of Gerontological Excellence (ask Cory Bolkan for recommendations), Clark College
6. **Urban Forestry and Environmental Quality:** A healthy community promotes environmental protection and conservation.
 - Urban forestry: mental and physical health benefits, tree canopy coverage data
 - Air, water, soil quality: respiratory diseases, toxics exposure, mental health impacts
 - Green and sustainable development practices: low impact development, green infrastructure, stormwater management, brownfield remediation, urban heat island effect
 - Potential resources and/or speakers: Charles Ray (Vancouver Urban Forestry), county forester
7. **Safe Neighborhoods and Public Spaces:** A healthy community promotes safety, social interaction, cohesion and sense of place.
 - Neighborhood safety and security: low crime, streetlighting, visibility, eyes on street, traffic safety, sense of safety
 - Social cohesion: access to safe public spaces (indoor and outdoor), third places, neighborhood associations, community groups, nonprofits
 - Potential resources and/or speakers:
8. **Connectivity and Complete Neighborhoods:** In order to age in place independently, older adults who cannot, or choose not to, drive – about 20 percent of those age 65+ – must be able to run errands, visit family and friends, get to work and keep doctors' appointments. (AARP)
 - Complete neighborhoods – close proximity to all key services
 - Easy access to public transit and active transportation
 - Complete streets

- Role of technology – services delivered to your home
- Nonprofits, i.e. Villages Clark County
- Potential resources and/or speakers: Patrick Sweeny (Consultant in PDX - no longer with City of Vancouver), City of Vancouver 20-minute neighborhood policy

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