

An Evaluation of Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences
Graduate School of Public Health in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Public Health

University of Pittsburgh

2021

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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University of Pittsburgh, 2021

ABSTRACT

The socioecological environment in which people older people live dramatically affects their well-being and ability to age healthfully in their communities. Barriers experienced by many older people include transportation access problems, lack of safe pedestrian routes and recreational facilities, insufficient affordable housing, difficulties with retaining or retiring from employment, social isolation and exclusion, and inadequate health services, social support, and home-based care. These barriers lead to poor health outcomes such as decreased physical activity, ineffectively treated chronic illnesses, malnutrition, falls, and increased hospitalization and use of emergency health services. Intersectionally marginalized older people are particularly vulnerable to such health risks and harms.

Communities can make coordinated efforts to assess and improve the age-inclusiveness of the conditions in which older people live, which can improve their health outcomes. Evaluating the processes and outcomes of such efforts is critical to ensuring that projects are successful, sustainable, and equitable in their pursuit of their public health goals. In Allegheny County, Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh (AFGP) is a coalition of organizations working to improve the “livability” of the region for older people, guided by the World Health Organization (WHO) and AARP Age-Friendly Communities Initiatives. AFGP’s objectives and activities focus on addressing the systemic health barriers experienced by older people.

A student and faculty member evaluated AFGP’s third implementation year and first five years overall. The evaluation found that AFGP facilitated relationships between organizations with

complementary missions. The organization grew, obtained increased funding, and reported activities and progress corresponding to most of their Action Item objectives. The evaluators supported many of AFGP's plans, including their plans to proceed with repetition of the AARP Livable Communities survey, related regional outreach, and focusing on disaster preparedness. The evaluation also made recommendations related to organizational process and improvement of diversity, equity, and inclusion related to race and disability.

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Preface

I would like to thank the many people whose work and care have supported my study of Public Health at the graduate level.

I am grateful to all the faculty members, instructors, and classmates with whom I have studied and to the staff who have created the spaces in which to study. I am especially grateful to Dr. Elizabeth Felter for her support, professional guidance, and disability-competent academic mentorship. I have been fortunate to experience many academic homes, and I have been honored to be part of the Behavioral and Community Health Sciences community at Pitt Public Health: the people in our department during this very difficult year have been unfailingly creative, generous, professional, and committed.

Unpaid disabled advocates have made essential contributions to my education: both the writers and teachers outside the academic world who self-publish their experiences and theoretical understandings, and the activists who have made it possible for a disabled person to reach this level of study. Likewise, without the struggles of student and professor parents before me, completing a graduate degree would not have been possible as a disabled parent.

It is impossible to adequately acknowledge and thank the patients, clients, and families with whom I have been privileged to work throughout my healthcare education.

My parents—already caring for the generation before themselves without many of the supports addressed in this Essay—made it possible for me to return to school through their confidence in me and intensive grandparenting, even after the pandemic separated us physically.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my own family, whose patient, optimistic adaptation to life in a global public health crisis allowed me to complete this work.

1.0 Introduction

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh (AFGP) is a nonprofit coalition of Allegheny County organizations, businesses, governments, and communities working to create more age-inclusive conditions in the Pittsburgh region. Leaders of partner organizations, government office representatives, and involved stakeholders form AFGP's Leadership Circle.

AFGP's goals are regionally specific and aligned with the WHO and AARP general definitions of communities' livability for older people. Their approach is based on the philosophy that ideal conditions for aging in one's community are not achieved by working toward an aging-focused environment, or age-specific facilities or neighborhoods. Rather, AFGP works to promote universal design, envisioning an Allegheny County and Southwestern Pennsylvania region that is supported by robust infrastructure investment, benefitting people of all ages, household compositions, and community styles.

This broad, ambitious goal for the Greater Pittsburgh area's age- and disability-inclusivity progress is what makes AFGP's network of partners and stakeholders across sectors and foci so essential. Beyond aging-focused organizations, AFGP engages with organizations whose missions range from disability advocacy to bicycle and pedestrian development.

1.1 Terminology

1.1.1 Disability

Identity-first language (IFL) is used throughout this document when referring to disability, and the same convention was used in the evaluation described. Many professional style guides used in public health and related fields continue to recommend universal use of person-first language (PFL), with some noting a possible exception for d/Deaf and autistic people. The American Psychological Association has recently updated their approach to discuss both IFL and PFL. (Dunn, D. S., & Andrews, E. E., n.d., 2015) The systematic exclusion of disabled people from professional roles in academia, the nonprofit sector, policy work, and direct practice in public health and related fields has resulted in slow progress toward these fields' language use coming into alignment with disabled people and communities' self-description. Disabled people have a variety of preferences about language, and no individual can speak on behalf of all. (Dunn, D. S., & Andrews, E. E., n.d., 2015) Like many disabled people, the author uses identity-first language to self-describe.

1.1.2 Age

The self-descriptive language preferences of older people are not universal, and like the preferences of many groups of people, change over time (Palmore, 2005, pp. 317-318). In an effort to use the most neutral, descriptive, and non-euphemistic language (Palmore, 2005, pp. 133-135), the adjective "older" is used to describe people when relevant. Other words only appear when the term was chosen by others, as in direct quotes or program names. Common terms such as "senior,"

or other euphemistic descriptors (Palmore, 2005, p. 134) are no longer considered to be the most neutral, accurate, and unlikely to perpetuate ageism (Avers, Brown, Chui, Wong, & Lusardi, 2011; United Nations Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, 1995). Similarly, adjectives such as “elderly” that can perpetuate stereotypes and do not have neutral counterparts for younger people (Avers et al., 2011; United Nations Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, 1995) are avoided.

1.1.3 Race

As mentioned above, professional style guides are imperfect references when choosing the most neutral, least biased and least harmful use of language, because the institutions that produce them remain exclusionary. As explained by Rachele Kanigel in *The Diversity Style Guide*, the conversations around the most respectful language are ongoing and complex, including the choice between using “Black” instead of “African American” to describe race, and further, the capitalization of the word “Black” (Kanigel, 2019, pp. 4-5). Sarah Glover, former president of the National Association of Black Journalists, wrote in her June 2020 open letter, published in the *New York Amsterdam News*, “Black is an encompassing term that is readily used to refer to African Americans, people of Caribbean descent and people of African origin worldwide. Capitalizing the ‘B’ in Black should become standard use to describe people, culture, art and communities.” (Glover, 2020).

In this Essay, “Black,” (capitalized) is used when describing people. Other terminology (e.g. “African American” or “black,” uncapitalized) are included only when they occur in a quote or program name.

1.1.4 Other Terminology

The following definitions are used in this Essay:

Table 1, Definitions

Definitions of Terms Used	
<p>Infrastructure: the built environment, human-made systems, and coordinated human activities that support collective functioning, with emphasis on those aspects that are (or could be) publicly created, owned, or funded, including the resources and processes required to perform systematic activities that can be characterized as infrastructure, such as the facilities, equipment, supplies, workers, organization</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all transit vehicles, workers, systems, fixed components and maintenance • all car and truck transit fleets • roads, traffic control, weather management, tunnels, bridges, fueling equipment systems • airports and aircraft, waterways, ferries, and other vessels 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all components of buildings • sidewalks, partitions, and multiuse paths • bridges, underpasses, curb ramps, and lifts • parks, greenways, and plantings • shelters, and housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools, dependent care, healthcare • home and community-based disability and supportive services • institutions that train such workers • communications systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste management and resource recovery • environmental rehabilitation systems, equipment, activities, and processes • energy production and delivery systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water management and delivery • food, medication, and other production and delivery systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disability equipment and adaptive services, home/vehicle modifications • durable medical equipment, physical and occupational therapy, service animals • health law services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergency response systems • disaster preparation • climate change mitigation efforts
<p>Age-focused environment/organization: a program, service, entity, or institution that is designed specifically for older people or restricted to use by older people, including those that may also allow for use by younger disabled people.</p>	
<p>Age-specific facilities: a piece of physical infrastructure or set of physical and service-based infrastructure that is designated for use by older people, including those that may also allow for use by younger disabled people.</p>	

2.0 Background

2.1 Socioecology and Older Adult Health

2.1.1 The United States

Approximately 53.8 million people in the United States were over age 65 in 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019c), and by 2060, the national over-65 population is expected to increase to roughly 98 million (Mather, Jacobsen, and Pollard, 2015). Two main factors have driven this growth in the older adult population. First, public health measures, social changes, and biomedical advances have lengthened life expectancies, particularly for wealthy, white Americans (Chetty et al., 2016). Second, a disproportionately large cohort of people was born in the two decades following World War II (“baby boomers”). As they age, the US population continues to skew older (Mather, Jacobsen, and Pollard, 2015), meaning increased need for the resources that support healthy aging. Conversely, the population of working-age adults who are available to provide financial support and direct care to older adults is a proportionally smaller cohort (Mather, Jacobsen, and Pollard, 2015), making it especially critical for communities to meet the material and social support needs of older adults.

Older adults are more likely to be disabled and have related health and access needs than people under age 65. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019c) This increase in disability is due to interconnected physiological, pathological, and socioecological factors. Age-related changes result in some of the most common disabilities experienced by older people who are otherwise well, such as changes in mobility, vision, hearing, cognition, and immunocompetence. The

progression of and sequelae from chronic illnesses such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, malnutrition, and tobacco use cause or contribute to most of the leading causes of death and cause significant disability and healthcare expenditure (Mokdad, Marks, Stroup, & Gerberding, 2004). Acute health changes related to infections and injuries—particularly falls—are also major factors. Social and environmental conditions, such as systemic racism, poverty, isolation, barriers to healthcare access, and lack of supportive services are also major contributors to morbidity and mortality for older people in the US, particularly intersectionally marginalized older people.

Until 2019, eight of the ten leading causes of death in the US primarily affected older people, with most of those resulting from underlying chronic illness processes, malnutrition, and tobacco use (Mokdad et al., 2004). In descending order of mortality, these causes of death are heart disease, cancer, chronic lower respiratory diseases, stroke, Alzheimer disease, diabetes, kidney disease, influenza and pneumonia (Kochanek, Xu & Arias, 2020). All of these causes are still in the top ten contributors to morbidity and mortality, but COVID-19—which disproportionately sickens and kills older people—is now the leading cause of death for people in the United States (National Center for Health Statistics, 2021).

2.1.2 Pennsylvania

Of Pennsylvania's 12.8 million people, 18.7% are over age 65 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019c), which is a higher proportion than for the US overall, at 16.5% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019c). In addition to the factors driving the increase in the older adult population that apply globally and to the United States in general, Southwestern Pennsylvania experienced economic upheaval and a massive loss of jobs due to the fall of the steel industry in the 1980s, which drove

people—particularly those younger than middle age—away from the region (Schulz & Heuck, 2014).

The COVID-19 pandemic rapidly and dramatically changed the safety conditions and health statuses of older adults in Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania Department on Aging Council on Aging, 2020). Even before the effects of COVID-19, the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) reports that Pennsylvania’s older adults faced certain health difficulties at rates higher than the rest of the United States’ older adult population, particularly asthma (ACHD, 2021e), depression (ACHD 2021i), lung and bronchial cancers (ACHD, 2021k), strokes (ACHD, 2021e,p), Alzheimer’s Disease and dementia (ACHD 2021d), atrial fibrillation (ACHD, 2021f), cancer (ACHD, 2021g), osteoporosis (ACHD, 2021l), and arthritis (ACHD, 2021o). The life expectancy of a person in Pennsylvania, 78.5 years, is lower than the US value, 79.2 (ACHD, 2021j).

2.1.3 Allegheny County

Like Pennsylvania’s older adult population, Allegheny County’s proportion of residents are over age 65 is slightly higher than the U.S. average, at 19.3% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019a). Over 235,000 people in the County are over 65 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019a). As mentioned above, Southwestern Pennsylvania’s loss of steel industry jobs and resultant younger adult population loss had a devastating impact on the region’s stability and shifted the demographic balance toward an older population ahead of the US and Pennsylvania increases. (Schulz & Heuck, 2014). Allegheny County’s population overall experiences much higher death rates categorized as “due to drug use” and related causes of death, such as overdose and opioid-involved poisoning compared to Pennsylvania, which as a state has rates almost twice the US average (ACHD, 2021c). This affects some older adults who use drugs themselves and has also led to many older adults

unexpectedly caring for young children who need alternate guardians because of their parents' drug use or death.

Compared to Pennsylvania's life expectancy of 78.5, Allegheny County's life expectancy is shorter, at 78.1 years (ACHD, 2021j). Several diseases and chronic illnesses are more common among older adults in Allegheny County compared to Pennsylvania and the United States generally. Compared to Pennsylvania rates that are already over the US average, older adults in the County experience higher rates of depression (ACHD 2021i), lung and bronchial cancers (ACHD, 2021k), and strokes (ACHD, 2021p). Some health factors impact Allegheny County older adults more than US older adults overall, but slightly less than older Pennsylvanians in general: these include higher rates of asthma (ACHD, 2021e), atrial fibrillation (ACHD, 2021f), cancer, (ACHD, 2021g), osteoporosis (ACHD, 2021l), and arthritis (ACHD, 2021o). While the incidence and prevalence of certain age-related disabilities do not dramatically exceed national or state averages in Allegheny County, these disabilities are still significant health factors for the older adult population in the region, affecting 22.7% of the population aged 65-74 and 46% of people over age 75 (ACHD, 2021m). These overlapping disabilities include mobility disabilities, cognitive disabilities, being d/Deaf or Hard of Hearing, being blind or having a vision impairment, having difficulty with self-care, and having independent living difficulties, the last of which affects 14.5% of Allegheny County residents over age 65 (ACHD, 2021a,m).

About 33% of Allegheny County's older adults are disabled, which is similar to the national and Pennsylvania averages (ACHD, 2021m). For white older adults, the proportion is almost the same, with 32.4% of people being disabled. Older adults who describe their race as Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Latiné/x, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, "other," or "two or more races," however, are disproportionately more likely to be disabled. For Latiné/x older adults,

the likelihood compared to white people the same age is 1.12. For Black older adults, the prevalence of disability is 40.2%, or 1.25 times as common compared to white older adults. Older people who describe their race as “other,” or “two or more races,” are 1.5 and 1.6 times as likely to be disabled, respectively. American Indian/Alaska Native older adults, of whom 56.6% are disabled, experience 1.75 times as much disability as white older adults. For Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander older people, the prevalence is even higher, at 1.8 times as high as the rate for white older people in their age group.

Because older adults of all races in Allegheny County except for white older adults experience disproportionately more disability (ACHD, 2021m) and accessibility issues (Musa et al., 2014) compared to white people of the same age, it is critical to ensure the equity of all efforts to improve accessibility and disability-related services and supports. Inequitable service provision—such as offering programs and supports that are more readily available to white older adults—compounds these existing health disparities.

2.1.4 World Health Organization Domains of Livability

While all individuals, families, and communities have unique priorities and needs, a set of globally relevant community conditions necessary for older adult health has been provided by the World Health Organization (WHO). The WHO Age-Friendly Communities initiative defines eight “Domains of Livability” that characterize age-inclusive community environments (Figure 1). The domains are: (1) Outdoor Spaces & Buildings, (2) Transportation, (3) Housing, (4) Social Participation, (5) Respect & Inclusion, (6) Civic Participation & Employment, (7) Communication & Information, and (8) Community Support & Health Services. These dimensions of living conditions and their relevance to older adult health are described below.

The first domain, “Outdoor Spaces & Buildings,” refers to “accessibility to and availability of safe recreational facilities.” The built environment and general conditions in which older adults live correlate significantly with their health. Older adults’ perceptions of their own health worsen with declining neighborhood conditions (Spring, 2018). There is also copious evidence that the safety of older adults’ neighborhoods—including the safety of sidewalks, traffic-pedestrian interaction sites, and parks—relates to their mental and physical health, partly because safe outdoor spaces increase the likelihood of older adults engaging in health behaviors such as regular physical activity for enjoyment and transportation (Barnett et al., 2017; Cerin et al., 2017; Won et al., 2016).

While these safety concerns and attendant health risks can affect all older residents of a neighborhood, Black older adults in Allegheny County experience disproportionately worse living conditions. The most recent decennial Survey of Older Adults in Allegheny County (SOAAC) by the University of Pittsburgh’s University Center for Social and Urban Research (UCSUR) found that Black older people were less likely than white people the same age to describe feeling safe in their neighborhoods, having appropriate conditions for getting exercise in their community, being able to access to grocery stores, and being able to be in green spaces. (Musa et al., 2014). Significantly, they were less likely to characterize their neighborhoods as “good places for older people to live.” (Musa et al., 2014).

The perception of safety and the presence and accessibility of sidewalks, pedestrian bridges and underpasses, multiuse paths, parks, and greenways—which fall under the first domain—are not the only conditions that are required to allow older people autonomous mobility through the community. The second domain, “Transportation,” encompasses, “safe and affordable models of private and public transportation.” In Allegheny County, most older people drive or are driven by close community members as their primary mode of transportation, and Black older people are

more than four times as likely to use public transit (Musa et al., 2014). Health outcomes related to transportation safety show that race also correlates to having a more dangerous experience with vehicle transportation in Allegheny County: Black residents are more than twice as likely to die in a collision (ACHD, 2021h).

In addition to inadequate universally accessible and health-promoting infrastructure outside of older people's homes, a lack of affordable, accessible housing presents serious barriers to health for many people in the US (Boch, Taylor, Danielson, Chisolm, & Kelleher, 2020). The third domain, "Housing," recognizes that multidimensional solutions are required for the complex problems presented by current housing stock and the varying levels of care needs older adults can have, calling for a "wide range of housing options for older residents, aging in place and other home modification programs." Only 35.2% of Black older people in Allegheny County describe their housing conditions as "good," compared to 63.8% of white older people (Musa et al., 2014).

The fourth domain of livability, "Social Participation," has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic for people of all ages, worldwide. In addition to having a detrimental impact on mental health, social isolation is associated with decreased ability to engage in positive health behaviors, and increased risk of disability (Schulz & Heuck, 2014). Conversely, increased social contact and sense of connectedness to others improves health for older people (Cain, Wallace, & Ponce, 2018; Stokes & Moorman, 2018). Social isolation disproportionately impacts Black older adults: according to the UCSUR SOAAC, Black respondents over 65 were 2.5 times as likely to have survey answers that the researchers categorized as, "Usually or always feels isolated, left out or can't find companionship" compared to white respondents the same age (Musa et al., 2014, p.

98). The same survey found that social interactions with neighbors were much less common for Black older people than for white older people (Musa et al., 2014).

Isolation often relates to living arrangements: in Allegheny County, only half of people over 75 live with anybody else (Musa et al., 2014). Older adults in the County who live alone are also at greater risk of having fewer social contacts outside their home (Musa et al., 2014) In Pennsylvania, family, religious communities, and community organizations focused on older adults' needs had been the three main sources of social connection for people over age 85 before the pandemic began, but safety concerns and restrictions cut off some or all access to these three areas of life for many people (Pennsylvania Department on Aging Council on Aging, 2020).

Prior to the emergence of COVID-19, the UCSUR SOAAC revealed “moderate-to-severe” depression symptoms in ten percent of all participants over age 55, using the Patient Health Questionnaire Depression Scale (PHQ-8) (Musa et al., 2014; Schulz & Heuck, 2014). Considering only Black participants, 12.3% percent of their scores qualified as “moderate-to-severe,” compared to only 7.3% of white participants' scores (Musa et al., 2014).

The fifth domain, “Respect and Inclusion,” relates to social participation and isolation, but specifically addresses both ageism and intersectional marginalization by focusing on “programs to support and promote ethnic and cultural diversity, along with programs to encourage multi-generational interaction and dialogue.” In Allegheny County, racism and other factors cause particularly bad conditions for Black residents, especially Black women and girls (Howell, 2019). Cultural and social opportunities have been greatly impacted by COVID-19. For example, the closure of the “senior centers” that are run by Area Agency on Aging due to COVID-19 had disproportionate effects on Black older women, who use these centers proportionally more than any other group in Allegheny County (Musa et al., 2014.)

In addition to addressing discrimination specifically in the “Respect and Inclusion” domain, the sixth domain, “Civic Participation and Employment,” has major implications for equity and inclusion. Many older people in Allegheny County ages 55-64, over 65, and even over 75 continue to work, and the fraction who do so is increasing (Musa et al., 2014). Older people who cannot work must rely on savings, retirement accounts, different forms of Social Security income, pension plans, the support of community members, intergenerational living, or for those who are eligible or not given the choice, living in institutional setting. In Allegheny County, more so than in the Pennsylvania or the US in general, many older retired people still have pensions with terms that were negotiated by strong unions when manufacturing industries were successful in the region (Musa et al., 2014). The younger an Allegheny County resident is, the less likely that situation is to apply to their working years and consequent retirement income (Musa et al., 2014).

Wealth and income are inequitably distributed in the US in terms of race and gender, and the circumstances of Allegheny County’s older adult populations show evidence of that pattern (Musa et al., 2014). Older Black women are notably marginalized in employment (Howell, 2019). Out of all older people in Allegheny County, the oldest cohort of Black women has the highest rate of living in poverty (Musa et al., 2014).

The quantity of financial resources available to older people over time impacts their psychological wellbeing in addition to their ability to meet material needs. Apprehensions about being able to fund one’s needs during retirement are disproportionately burdensome to Black older people in Allegheny County as well: their concerns about having enough money as they age are roughly twice as common, compared to white older adults (Musa et al., 2014).

The seventh domain, “Communication and Information,” involves “promotion of and access to the use of technology to keep older residents connected to their community and friends

and family, both near and far.” More than 30% of older adults in Allegheny County do not have any internet access, including a smartphone, and Black older adults are more likely to live in neighborhoods where the vast majority of families have no home internet (ACHD 2021; Meta Mesh, 2018). The “digital divide” in Allegheny County is discussed further in sections 4.4.2, Virtual Adaptations Due to COVID-19, and 5.3.3.1, Racial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Connection to information, particularly that comes from another person, is important to older people in Allegheny County: Musa and colleagues at the UCSUR found in their 2014 survey that when Allegheny County residents expressed that they had “unmet needs,” 44% of what was desired was “information or advice.” (Musa et al., 2014)

Finally, the eight domain, “Community Support and Health Services,” refers to “access to home care services, clinics, and programs to promote wellness and active aging.” As discussed above, the continuing age shift in Allegheny County has a critical impact on the lives and health statuses of older people because of the need for formal and informal care. This care includes professional healthcare in all settings, institutional living support work, paid and unpaid work that encompasses assistance with activities of daily living, labor to replace access gaps in all aspects of home, community, and society-level infrastructure, and nurturance of relationships through hands-on assistance when that is desired regardless of autonomous access to alternative ways of meeting needs.

As the UCSUR SOAAC survey report describes, over 20% of people—mostly women—who provide care for older adults for an average of more than 35 hours per week are over 55 themselves, and most are still also working. Roughly half of people ages 55-64 who are not already providing care in a similar capacity presume that they will eventually take on those responsibilities; 35% of people 64-74 and 22.7% of people over 75 had the same expectation (Musa et a., 2014).

Providing this level of care with the current lack of surrounding support has detrimental effects on the health of older caregivers (Musa et al., 2014). Further, the authors warn, “In 2010, the [dependency] ratio was 6:1 in Allegheny County. By 2050, it is projected to collapse to 3.6 caregivers for every person in need of care.” (Schulz, & Heuck, 2014, p. 9) Encouragingly, providing assistance to older caregivers and other supportive services improves the health of the caregivers, the people receiving care, and the financial stability of the healthcare system (Gusmano, Rodwin, & Weisz, 2018; Shier, Ginsburg, Howell, Volland, & Golden, 2013).

2.2 Age-Friendly Initiative in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh (AFGP) grew out of an April 2015 project proposal by Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging (SWPPA), “Create an Age-Inclusive Ecosystem in Pittsburgh.” The Age-Friendly initiative engaged early support from established Pittsburgh and regional organizations whose work focuses on making the Pittsburgh area more accessible and inclusive for older adults and disabled people. Importantly, the project proposal also secured the backing of Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto. The work of Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh is funded by the Hillman Family Foundations, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, SWPPA, and UPMC Health Plan.

Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh were accepted into the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Global Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Network and the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities in September 2015. Communities earn WHO “Age-Friendly” status and AARP Network membership through an application process that

establishes a commitment to improving livability for older people. The World Health Organization defines eight Domains of Livability, which include crucial aspects of life for older people such as transportation, healthcare, social inclusion, and housing (Figure 1).

World Health Organization 8 Domains of Livability

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	accessibility to and availability of safe recreational facilities
Transportation	safe and affordable models of private and public transportation
Housing	wide range of housing options for older residents, aging in place and other home modification programs
Social Participation	access to leisure and cultural activities and opportunities for older residents to participate in social and civic engagement with their peers and younger people
Respect & Inclusion	programs to support and promote ethnic and cultural diversity, along with programs to encourage multi-generational interaction and dialogue
Civic Participation & Employment	promotion of paid work and volunteer activities for older residents and opportunities to engage in formulation of policies relevant to their lives
Communication & Information	promotion of and access to the use of technology to keep older residents connected to their community and friends and family, both near and far
Community Support & Health Services	access to home care services, clinics, and programs to promote wellness and active aging

Figure 1 World Health Organization 8 Domains of Livability

2.3 Baseline Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement

The AFGP strategy for baseline assessment relied on a variety of forms of community engagement. In addition to exploring other age-friendly communities' experiences, AFGP

distributed the “AARP Livability for All in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County Community Survey” to over 500 older adults in the Greater Pittsburgh region, hosted seven Aging Your Way workshops with 90 participants, convened four public input sessions, and collaborated with organizations and stakeholders representing the needs of older and disabled people in the region to generate the first AFGP Action Plan. Approximately 136 people from 77 organizations participated in the creation of AFGP’s 2017-2020 Action Plan. Including the survey participants, Aging Your Way workshop attendees, and approximately 100 people at public input sessions, over 800 contributors were represented in AFGP’s needs assessment and planning process.

The AARP survey analysis was performed by the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and was returned to AFGP in September 2016. The results were presented at the SWPPA conference in December 2016. Also in 2016, leaders from SWPPA hosted a series of four Age-Friendly Champions meetings, each focusing on two of the eight WHO Domains of Livability. Based on the outcomes of those Champions meetings, the initial AFGP work groups were organized to establish goals. AFGP continues to use Working Groups to coordinate objectives and plans; the exact foci have been adapted and some names have since changed to accommodate activities and shifts in the region. Currently, AFGP uses five Age-Friendly Work Groups: Transportation, Housing, Dementia-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh, Digital Literacy, and Workforce. The same year, Lively Pittsburgh hosted seven Aging Your Way workshops aimed at eliciting residential input and inspiring community-led activities.

2.3.1 First Five-Year Cycle Action Plan

The AFGP collaboration’s first two years focused on planning, in 2015 and 2016. Three implementation years followed, from September 2017 to August 2020. The three implementation

years' activities were outlined in the AFGP 2017-2020 Action Plan, a schematic of which is included here (Figure 2).

Access				Innovation							
	Action Item	Domain(s)	Years				Action Item	Domain(s)	Years		
Mobility	1. The Crossings	• OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS • TRANSPORTATION	1	2	3	Businesses and Neighborhoods	20. An Age-Friendly Seal	• OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS • COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
	2. Walkability Studies	• OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS	1	2	3		21. Dementia-Friendly Conversations	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
	3. Complete Streets Advocacy	• TRANSPORTATION	1	2	3		22. Dementia-Friendly Training	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
Affordability	4. Creative, Far-Reaching Transit	• TRANSPORTATION	1	2	3	23. New Housing Solutions	• HOUSING	1	2	3	
	5. Housing Assessment and Mapping	• HOUSING	1	2	3	Workforce	24. The Job Search, Redefined	• CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT • COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION	1	2	3
	6. Health Promotion Expansion	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3		25. Intergenerational Tech Training	• CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT • COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION	1	2	3
7. Online Concierge for Ride Options	• TRANSPORTATION	1	2	3	26. Direct Care Workforce Development		• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3	
Navigation	8. Connecting Referral Services	• COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION • HOUSING	1	2	3	Interaction	27. Virtual Senior Academy	• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3
	9. Murals to Help Caregivers	• COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION	1	2	3		28. Tech Support	• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3
	10. Speakers Bureau	• COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION	1	2	3		29. Disaster Preparedness	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
Connection	11. Sensitivity on the Bus	• TRANSPORTATION	1	2	3	30. Bye Week Back Home	• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3	
	12. Campaign to Combat Isolation and Loneliness	• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3						
	13. Arts for All	• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3						
Social Spaces	14. Parks Reimagined	• OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS	1	2	3						
	15. Centers for More Than Seniors	• OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS • SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3						
	16. Gardening for Good	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3						
Intergenerational Relationships	17. Solidarity Discussions	• CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT	1	2	3						
	18. Welcoming Committees	• COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION • SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3						
	19. GenPGH	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3						

Figure 2 Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh 2017-2020 Action Plan Schedule

3.0 Methods

While the WHO Age-Friendly Communities guidelines recommend a five-year cycle with evaluation occurring in the fifth year, Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh (AFGP) chose to embed evaluation throughout the cycle. Evaluation is performed annually by The Evaluation Institute for Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. A five-year evaluation was incorporated into the annual evaluation for 2019-2020.

The global 5-year evaluation and annual evaluation of Year 3 (August 2019-2020) of AFGP was performed in July-August 2020. As in previous years, the final evaluation report was structured according to the AARP Livable Communities Evaluation Guide. Data was collected by interviewing AFGP Leadership Circle members, reviewing AFGP's documents, communications, Tracking Tool spreadsheet, and Work Group updates, exploring AFGP's publications, social media and outside media coverage, examining survey results and training materials, and by integrating the lead evaluator's direct experience with several of the relevant services, locations, and issues as a disabled Pittsburgh resident.

3.1 AFGP Documents and Media Review

The review of AFGP's documents included:

- The AFGP Tracking Tool spreadsheet
- AFGP 2017-2020 Action Plan
- 2017 Aging Your Way Initiative Report

- Aging Your Way Toolkit
- Meeting agendas and minutes
 - AFGP Leadership Circle Meetings
 - AFGP Working Groups Meetings
 - Transportation
 - Housing
 - Dementia Friendly Greater Pittsburgh
 - Older Workforce
 - Digital Literacy
- SWPPA Board Updates
- Newsletter and other emails from AFGP and partner organizations
- Lively Pittsburgh AFGP Project Report Addendum
- GenPGH Kick-off Workshop materials
- AFGP and partners' press releases
- Outside media coverage
- promotional materials related to events
- social media related to AFGP and partner organizations
- survey results
 - bus operator training surveys (raw data)
 - selected feedback from stakeholders and participants in AFGP's trainings
 - Aging Your Way Workshop selected sample feedback
- training materials
- photographs and architectural illustrations

- websites and online tools (AFGP, partners, and programs)
- statements and communications
 - PCRG Recovery Streets Task Force
 - Statement on racial justice after
- Headcounts, zip code records, reported unique website visits, and other quantitative measures of community engagement and impact

3.2 Interviews

Interviews were conducted with several key members of the AFGP Leadership circle, including:

- Dr. Al Condeluci
CEO of Community Living and Support Services (CLASS), 1991-2018
- Ted Cmarada
Director of Community Engagement & Program Development at Lively Pittsburgh
- Jason Jablon
Director of Programming at Lively Pittsburgh
- Ed Sinagra
CEO and Founder of pathVu
- Stefani Danes
Architect and Project Manager of the Rachel Carson EcoVillage
- Mara Leff
Director of Innovation at the Jewish Healthcare Foundation

Program Director of Virtual Senior Academy

- Cassandra Masters

Outreach and Communications Manager at ACCESS

- Karen Hoesch

Executive Director of ACCESS

- Laura Poskin

Executive Director of AFGP

Interview questions included both a set of standard questions that were asked in every interview (Table 1) and additional questions tailored to the organizations, projects, services, events, and individuals' roles (Table 2).

Table 2, Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Questions asked in every interview
Which neighborhoods are best served by [program/ service]? (If tracking, same Q. about zip codes)
How have you had to adapt your work this year due to COVID-19?
How has COVID-19 changed your goals?
What has been the biggest challenge for your work related to COVID-19?
What do you wish you had known when starting [organization/program/service]?
What strategies have worked best?
How do most [participants] learn about [program, service]?
What are the most important actions you're taking now to ensure equity in your [programming/service/etc.] related to race and neighborhood home?
Do you track the neighborhood, ZIP Code, or race of your participants?
Did you tell me about any specific plans for improving racial equity and inclusion in 2020 to 2021?
Are there subgroups of the Pittsburgh area older adult population that you wish you could reach more effectively?
What aspect of your AFGP related work from 2019 to 2020 are you the proudest of? (Same question for 2017-2020 / entire collaboration)
Do you see opportunities for age-inclusive design and policy improvements that have opened up because of COVID-19?
I want to make sure I'm up to date through August 2020, could you tell me what's going on now and what's coming up in the next few weeks?

Table 3, Tailored Interview Questions

Questions tailored to interviewee/project or asked as follow-up during interview (in italics)
What are the advantages and disadvantages of the site for accessibility?
How diverse are the people who are interested in [housing project]?
Could you tell me about the [sessions]? I read that some people met their neighbors for the first time; could you tell me more about that?
Could you tell me more about [activity in Tracking Tool]?
What have you heard from older adults about their technology needs for replacing in person errands [related to safety due to COVID-19]?
What have you heard from older adults about their technology needs for social connection?
How would you change your approach today?
How did you identify stakeholders?
Do you think you were successful in identifying all relevant stakeholders?
I know the process of developing the action items was very methodical and deliberate. Does AFGP have any action items with a particular focus on older people living in institutional or quasi-institutional settings like group homes?
Are there more opportunities for inclusion of older adults living in congregate settings now that so many things are adapted virtually?
Where would be the best place for me to learn more about [project/program without published information and no internal documents so far]?
I saw the “SMARTIE” objective format in notes from a working group meeting; are you planning to incorporate that across the whole collaboration?
Did [event, date] happen? How did it go?
What aspects of the project related to universal design are you the happiest with?
How does the virtual format expand access to [program, service, participation in leadership]?
Are you able to reach to more neighborhoods using the virtual format?
Are the [data, survey results, illustrations, photographs, training guides, etc.] available?
Could you tell me more about your partnership with United Way for deliveries and transportation during the early weeks of COVID-19? How has it evolved from there? What is ridership and usage like now? Do you think you’ll keep some of those changes?

3.3 Direct Testing of Selected Services, Processes, and Locations

Lived experience as a disabled person in Allegheny County provided the essential basis for understanding the social and built environments in which AFGP works. The lead evaluator drew on five years’ experience as a wheelchair user in a variety of urban and suburban systems, including Pittsburgh.

3.3.1 Physical Infrastructure

Direct physical experience with infrastructure throughout four seasons while using a manual rigid-frame wheelchair with power-assist for forward motion included:

- Buildings
 - Academic institutions and public elementary schools
 - Residential buildings including apartment complexes of varying ages
 - Governmental buildings
 - Outpatient medical buildings and hospital complexes
 - Museums, libraries, science centers, and nonprofit offices
 - Restaurants, coffee shops, grocery and retail stores
- Parks, playgrounds, trails, and exercise facilities (public and private)
- Sidewalks, bus stops, multi-use paths, and bridges
- Street crossings, curb ramps, and traffic signals
- Bike lanes, rental bike fleets, and bicycle repair facilities
- Fueling stations, car repair facilities, car rental facilities
- Motor vehicle inspection, licensing and registration centers
- Parking structures, lots, and street parking facilities
- Downtown areas and hotels
- Transit facilities and vehicles
 - Port Authority buses of varying age
 - Airport and airport-serving transit

3.3.2 Other Testing

Other testing performed from the perspective of a wheelchair user included web-based tools and sites:

- A to B transit planning tool
- pathVu beta wheelchair-accessible navigation app
- AFGP and partner websites and social media

4.0 Results

4.1 Areas of Impact

In their first three implementation years, Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh's successful projects across dimensions of public life in the Greater Pittsburgh region include:

- positively impacting policy decisions
- contributing to systems-level changes
- supporting new technological solutions
- leveraging existing resources and tools
- raising awareness about the needs of older residents
- engaging neighborhood participation in age-friendly improvements

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh has been effective in connecting organizations to enable successful collaboration. The usefulness of the AFGP network was evident during the early stage of the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic. Most businesses and non-essential in-person services were forced to shut down during the second week of March 2020 by a statewide emergency order issued by Governor Wolf. Two AFGP partners leveraged a relationship strengthened through AFGP: ACCESS and the United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania kept vehicles running for essential personal transportation and coordinated the use of United Way resources to obtain food and personal protective equipment (PPE) to deliver using the ACCESS fleet.

The participation of two AFGP Leadership Circle members on the recovery streets task force—by invitation—indicates the growing and important role in policy development that AFGP

plays in the Pittsburgh region. In June 2020, the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG) Recovery Streets Task Force invited AFGP Leadership Circle Karen Hoesch and Ted Cmarada to serve on the Task Force along with DOMI, the Department of City Planning, PAAC, BikePGH, and the Natural Resources Defense Council. The Task Force was formed in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Pittsburgh economy and the well-being of residents, to “explore ways in which we can redesign our city streets and reconceive transportation and mobility in order to best support businesses and residents to stabilize and strengthen the local economy and serve the mental and physical health of our people.” Their core goal was to provide more usable spaces that are large and open enough for people to use while physically distancing. Activities of the Task Force include creating Neighborhood Slow Streets with temporary closures to increase the spaces in which neighbors can exercise outdoors, providing guidance about “micromobility” devices (electric rental scooters), and modifying street spaces to accommodate sidewalk widening or curbside pickup areas.

Mr. Cmarada and Ms. Hoesch were able to provide important age-inclusion feedback to other Recovery Streets leaders about their “Request for Collaborators” document. They noted that their suggestions “highlight the importance of Diverse community engagement prior to implementing these projects, that people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds are included in the decision-making process.” That statement and their specific suggested changes emphasized the importance of ensuring that disabled access was considered in street closures, considering transit users’ needs, and above all, engaging residents to ask what they want on their streets.

4.2 Program Implementation

In AFGP's five years of existence and three years of implementation, they have made substantial progress toward realizing the objectives of their 2017-2020 Action Plan for improving the livability of the Pittsburgh region for people of all ages. The 2017-2020 Action Plan set an implementation schedule that AFGP has been able to follow, with some adaptations in plans as needed.

4.2.1 Goals and Strategy

The 2017-2020 AFGP Action Plan was developed with clear relationships between their 2015-2017 baseline findings and their planned activities. Their findings correlated to concepts laid out in the WHO eight domains of livability, and their specific plans consider the unique strengths and challenges of Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh, as experienced by the people who contributed their perspectives to the planning process.

The Action Plan is structured around 30 Action Items, which are organized within three broad "focus areas": Access, Connection, and Innovation (Appendix B, Tables of Action Items by Focus Area). The Access focus area is designed to understand and improve multidimensional accessibility to public goods and human services. A lack of comprehensive access can render any program, intervention, or service less effective and inequitable. The Connection focus area Action Items are designed to support relationships—at the individual and community levels—and decrease isolation. The need for new forms of connection is more apparent than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Innovation focus area explores new initiatives and technologies that

support people in aging in their communities. Equally important, this focus area brings attention to the relationships between Pittsburgh region residents and the tech industry.

4.2.2 Virtual Adaptations Due to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic that began in Winter 2019-2020 generated a variety of challenges for the organization and required some activities in 2020 to be altered or postponed. Based on the scale of the events and the evolving situation in Southwestern Pennsylvania as of June 2021, there are many indicators that health effects, social difficulties, economic damage, and practical challenges related to COVID-19 will extend throughout 2021 and beyond. Many of AFGP's plans involved preparation work in Winter 2019-2020 and the associated events and collaborations were slated for Spring and Summer 2020. Because they laid so much groundwork, AFGP may be able to implement some versions in alternative ways, or as conditions allow, hold rescheduled in-person events with safety modifications.

All interviewed AFGP Leadership Circle members described obstacles to programming and services brought by the pandemic and its secondary effects. Adaptations to the challenges associated with COVID-19 included shifting to remote work, holding virtual meetings, providing new or altered services to meet the rapidly changing needs of Spring 2020, rescheduling existing programming and events, moving events online, and hosting limited versions of physically distanced events.

AFGP and its partners have modified some of their programming and relied on existing virtual events and services. AFGP Leadership Circle members interviewed for the evaluation all identified inequitable access to technology as a serious barrier to equitable program and service delivery since March 2020, when the spread of SARS-CoV-2 dramatically increased the danger of

in-person interaction, particularly for older people. Mara Leff, who directs the Virtual Senior Academy, explained that for many older people, smartphone screens are too small to allow for easy independent operation of video calling software. A tablet or computer was determined to be the minimum equipment necessary for participants to access Virtual Senior Academy courses or #CoffeeConnectPGH. The program organizers also reported that there is a need for one-on-one technical support in person, which was not possible to accomplish while maintaining physical distance sufficient to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Often, obtaining a device and sufficient internet access are barriers. According to the Pew Research Center, 44% of households with income under \$30,000 per year—including many older people on fixed incomes—do not have broadband internet at home, restricting their ability to participate in online programming or service delivery. (Pew Research Center, 2019) Without online tools, going out to meet routine needs or to work is often the only option for one or more household members. In many communities, the disparity in access to devices and broadband internet are an even greater crisis: in the predominantly Black Homewood neighborhood in Pittsburgh, over 70% of households lack internet service. (Meta Mesh, 2018) There is no way to deliver truly equitable programming and services when the means of access is online.

4.2.3 Pre-2019 Notable Projects

- Online concierge ride planner “A to B” created and launched
- pathVu app launched, mapping accessible routes on sidewalks and paths
- Bus operator sensitivity training created for Port Authority’s new drivers; 145 new operators have participated in seven trainings to date

- Four Legislative Briefings hosted in partnership with AARP Pennsylvania, convening 80 elected officials or their staffers and over 300 attendees
- Bringing “The Crossings” events to five diverse neighborhoods, including over 230 participants of all ages, public officials, and several community and school groups, ultimately helping to change policy
- Pittsburgh adopted “Complete Streets” policy; AFGP supported Millvale in the same
- 35 Dementia-Friendly events & trainings including over 180 participants
- 147 “Virtual Senior Academy” classes: 1000 participants from 97 zip codes
- Color Beechview: intergenerational art-making workshop for neighborhood residents

4.2.4 2019-2020 Notable Projects

Despite the unprecedented challenges of the 2020 pandemic, AFGP continued to make progress on their existing initiatives. Year 3 of implementation included continued action on existing work and several new projects:

- Transportation Network established by AFGP partners: delivered 20,000 prepared meals, 3,000 boxes from local food banks, and truckloads of PPE during COVID-19
- Rachel Carson Ecovillage, an intergenerational cohousing community, in advanced planning with future residents
- Nine popular #CoffeeConnectPGH events and successful transition to virtual space
- The Power of Our Older Workforce Study completed and presented at SWPPA
- Support from the Henry L. Hillman grant, with aging as a priority for the Hillman Family Foundations

- TEDx Talk: “Reimagining Communities for All Ages” to audience of >100 with 3,000+ YouTube views
- Lively Pittsburgh’s Aging Your Way Toolkit released
- Wilkinsburg Drum Circle formed, met 27 times, a resident-led result of Aging Your Way
- AFGP participation in Pittsburgh’s Shared and Autonomous Vehicle Working Group
- Safety improvements to 40th & Penn intersection completed in 2020, thanks in part to AFGP advocacy and engagement through The Crossings
- Participation of Leadership Circle members in the Recovery Streets Task Force
- Incorporation of AFGP’s sensitivity training for bus operators into the Port Authority’s standard bus operator training for new workers, improvements to the trainings
- Aurora Tour: AARP, ACCESS, and AFGP met with leadership about age-friendliness and accessibility
- Social Isolation webinar by disability expert Dr. Al Condeluci May 2020, attended by 220 people
- Dr. Bill Thomas event for MINKA, “Transform Rural Aging” held in November 2020 with 51 attendees
- Advising age-friendly communities in Pennsylvania and other states, including a December 2019 keynote presentation to kick off work towards Age-Friendly Minnesota
- 220 University of Pittsburgh Health Professions students received age-friendly training during Pitt Geriatrics Week, October 2019
- In-Formed by Nature Art Workshop and Opening, 150 participants, Aug-Sept 2019

4.2.5 Overall Progress on Action Items

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh made progress on 26 out of their 30 total Action Items between August 2019 and August 2020.

4.2.5.1 Access Focus Area

Many of AFGP's most significant activities in 2019-2020 were related to their Access focus area, specifically addressing four Action Items: #3: Complete Streets Advocacy, #4: Creative, Far-Reaching Transit, #6: Health Promotion Expansion, and #7: Online Concierge for Ride Options.

AFGP addressed Action Items 3, 4, and 7 with six noteworthy activities in 2019-2020: (1) 20,000 prepared meals, 3,000 boxes from local food banks, and truckloads of PPE delivered by a Transportation Network—established by AFGP partners— during COVID-19, (2) participation in the Shared and Autonomous Vehicle Working Group and providing key accessibility and age-inclusivity insight to Aurora's leadership during a November 2019 tour of their operations, (3) participation in the Recovery Streets task force at the invitation of the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG) and the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI), (4) improvements to and outreach about the A to B service, (5) multiple Transportation Working Group presentations, and (6) supporting PCRG's AARP Grant application for pop-up demonstrations to improve pedestrian and transit user experience.

Table 4, Notable Access-Themed Action Items

Notable Access-Themed Action Items

#4: Creative, Far-Reaching Transit, #7: Online Concierge for Ride Options & #3 Complete Streets Advocacy

**2019-20
Goals**

Goals for Creative, Far-Reaching Transit: decrease number of unmet transit requests
 Goals for Complete Streets Advocacy: Align with the Complete Streets movement to increase safety, equity, and comfort among people of all generations. Policy focused.
 Goals for Online Concierge Ride Options (A to B):

- Pitch story to news outlets, at least two of which have predominantly Black audiences or readership
- Promote A to B by distributing information on A to B to AARP’s legislator list
- Distribute A to B information to service coordinators in at least 50 senior residences
- Continue site usability improvement based on feedback from site visitors
 - # questions on provider and user profiles
 - # providers included and partners involved
 - # of tool users, # of zip codes, and gaps in transportation options identified

Progress

1. Mobilization of collaborative network during the COVID-19 emergency:
 - Mass deliveries of meals, food, and PPE by AFGP partner network
 - Continued personal transportation of older and disabled people
2. a. AFGP Director on DOMI Shared & Autonomous Vehicle Working Group 2018-20
 b. Aurora Autonomous Vehicle Facility Tour Nov 2019 with AARP & ACCESS
3. Recovery Streets Task Force
4. a. Improvements to the A to B concierge rider service tool and marketing
 b. Use of A to B tool
 - 665 hits, 544 unique for 9 months in 2019-2020
5. Age- Friendly Transportation Work Group presentations
 - A to B Community impact presentation at UWSWPA to 30 leaders, 8/6/19
 - follow-up tour with 2-1-1, 8/8/19
 - Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging, 65 Community service providers
 - Transportation Work Group presented at SWPPA Annual Conference in Oct 2019, "Age-Friendly Transportation: Ingenuity in Action"
6. AFGP letter of support for PCRG’s AARP Grant application for pop-up demonstrations to improve pedestrian and transit user experience

Table 5, Notable Access-Themed Action Item #6

**Notable Access-Themed Action Item
#6: Health Promotion Expansion**

**2019-20
Goals**

General goal: Extend evidence-based models for health promotion, particularly no-cost or low-cost for participants and with relationship components

Objectives

- Increase number of participants of all ages, with additional zip codes served, particularly in underserved areas with large populations of older residents

Measures:

1. number of participants
2. # zip codes served

Progress

Pitt Geriatrics Week: participants included 220 health professions students

4.2.5.2 Connection Focus Area

In the Connection focus area, AFGP made substantial progress on seven Action Items in 2019-2020: Action Items #10: Speaker’s Bureau, #11: Sensitivity on the Bus, #12: Campaign to combat social isolation, #13: Arts for All, #15: Centers for more than seniors, #17: Solidarity Discussions, and #19: GenPGH.

Outreach events and presentations were emphasized before COVID-19 limited in-person gatherings and travel. Their activities addressing Action Item #10 included a wide range of forms of engagement and inter-organization connections in many locations. The Transportation Work Group made several conference presentations, which are described under Access-related Action Items, above. Other presentations included: (1) Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh’s Director presented a TEDx talk in October 2019 (2) presentations at the SWPPA Annual Conference, the Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging Summit, and moderation of a panel of Age-Friendly community leaders at the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (OAAAA) conference, (3) two presentations at University of Pittsburgh Graduate Schools of Public Health and Social Work

and two presentations at Carnegie Mellon University, and (4) advising on age-friendly community changes at a Lively session at SWPPA Annual Conference, the Lawrenceville United Monthly Meeting, and six AARP Livable phone sessions in five counties—one in Ohio, and four in Pennsylvania.

Table 6, Notable Connection-Themed Action Item #10

Notable Connection-Themed Action Item #10: Speakers Bureau

Goals

Train six Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh Leadership Circle members and older advocates to give general presentations about AFGP. This group of people will be diverse, representing different ages, races, areas of Allegheny County and more.

Progress

- (1) TEDx talk by AFGP Director, “Reimagining Communities for All Ages” October 2019
 - 2,835 views on YouTube
 - Experts including professors at three institutions have reached out for insight and incorporated it into their courses
- (2) Conferences
 - SWPPA Annual Conference, October 2019, 187 people
 - AFGP presented in afternoon session and three breakouts
 - Moderated OAAAA panel of Age-Friendly leaders, October 2019, 36 people
 - Keynote for MN Leadership Council on Aging Summit, Dec. 2020, 15 people
 - recommended by AARP national to speak about community engagement
- (3) Educational Sessions
 - U. Pitt Grad. School of Public Health, February 2020, 6 students
 - U. Pitt Grad. School of Social Work, “Adult Development & Aging,” March 2020, 6 students
 - CMU Intro to Physical Computing
 - virtual presentation for 11 people in November2019 and 25 people in April 2020
 - presentation on universal design; student teams design a tool for older adults
- (4) Outreach Events
 - Pennsylvania
 - SWPPA Lively Session, October 2019
 - Lawrenceville United Monthly Meeting
 - 25 people via Zoom and over 1,000 on FB Live May 2020
 - AARP Livable Phone sessions with other counties
 - Total of 6 sessions: Westmoreland, Delaware, York, Lehigh Valley
 - Delaware County, Ohio:
 - advised Age-Friendly Delaware County on planning process
 - recommended by AARP Livable Communities Senior Advisor Bill Armbruster

Table 7, Notable Connection-Themed Action Item #11

Notable Connection-Themed Action Item #11: Sensitivity on the Bus

SMART Goals	<p>From the Transportation Work Group Meeting February 2020</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand PAAC training to 1 hr, incorporate best practices from other transit providers 2. Establish best practices for older adult travel training 3. Develop rider-focused resources on rider rights and responsibilities
Progress	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continued bus operator training with new operators at Port Authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o seven trainings reached 145 new bus operators o strong working relationship with PAAC Training Manager 2. Riders involved in training 3. Positive bus operator feedback to trainings 4. Legislative session testimony about value of training by bus operator

Table 8, Notable Connection-Themed Action Items #13 & #15

Notable Connection-Themed Action Items: #13: Arts for All & #15: Centers for More Than Seniors

2019-20 Goals	<p>Goal of Arts for All: Offer intergenerational events for older and younger Hill District and Northside residents first, and expand to other neighborhoods with promising arts and cultural opportunities that foster increased intergenerational dialogue and promote solidarity; measure # of events and # of participants</p>
Progress	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Wilksburg Drum Circle has gathered 27 times, a community-led gathering that arose as a result of Aging Your Way and the Age-Friendly Challenge (2) In-Formed by Nature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Art Workshop 70 participants August 2020 o In-Formed by Nature Art Opening & Exhibit, 150 participants, Aug-Oct 2019 o Attack Theatre continued partners in "Aging Your Way" workshops (3) Aging Your Way <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o outreach in diverse neighborhoods o Aging Your Way Toolkit created, presented at the SWPPA conference o Age-Friendly Challenge

Table 9, Notable Connection-Themed Action Item #17

Notable Connection-Themed Action Item #17: Solidarity Discussions

2019-20 Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hillman grant, with aging as a priority for the Foundation (Action Item #17) • Four Aging Your Way workshops held in four neighborhoods with more than 37 participants, ages 34-99 • Lively Pittsburgh presented at SWPPA Conference (10/15/19), "Aging Your Way: Creating Age-Friendly, People Centered, Healthy Neighborhoods."
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Table 10, Notable Connection and Innovation Action Items #12 and #27

**Notable Connection- and Innovation-themed Action Items:
#12: Campaign to Combat Social Isolation
& #27, Virtual Senior Academy**

Progress

- (1) Virtual Senior Academy programming increased dramatically during and after March 2020 COVID-19 shutdowns, with more programming for all ages
- (2) Civic Champs “Helping Hands” app
- (3) #CoffeeConnectPGH
 - Bloomfield, November 2019 with 34 participants
 - on Virtual Senior Academy eight times, March-August 2020, > 60 participants
- (4) Addressing Loneliness & Social Isolation, Dr. Condeluci, May 2020, 220 attended

4.2.5.3 Innovation Focus Area

In addition to the progress on Virtual Senior Academy (Action Item #27), described above with the Connection-Focused Action Items, four other Action Items from the Innovation focus area should be noted for their applicable activities in 2019-2020: #23, New Housing Solutions, #21: Dementia-Friendly Conversations, #22: Dementia-Friendly Training, and #24: The Job Search Redefined—with the Connection-focused Action Item #19: GenPGH.

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh made significant progress in 2019-2020 on Innovation Action Item #23, New Housing Solutions. The Rachel Carson Ecovillage at Chatham University’s Eden Hall Campus is in advanced planning stages with progress on all objectives. Also related to innovative housing solutions, the Housing Work Group presented, “Building Momentum in Health and Housing” at SWPPA’s Annual Conference. AFGP also assisted with hosting MINKA’s “Transform Rural Aging” event, featuring Dr. Bill Thomas. Dr. Thomas’ November 2020 event was held at MuseumLab and welcomed 51 participants.

Table 11, Notable Innovation-Themed Action Item #23

**Notable Innovation-Themed Action Items:
#23 New Housing Solutions**

**2019-20
SMART
Goals**

- (1) Move forward with Rachel Carson Ecovillage by:
 - convening monthly meetups through June 2020, welcoming > 50 prospective homeowners from diverse backgrounds (age, race, zip code)
 - recruiting 30 homeowners by June 2020
 - finalizing design for 1-3 bedroom homes & common house by December 2020
- (2) In conjunction with partners such as AARP PA:
 - support the development of at least two new housing models in our region
 - include LGBTQ-friendly and senior cohousing, in new housing models
 - increase awareness of innovative programs
- (3) Convene at least one meeting to identify and explore options and issues with home modification and the current resources that are available.

Progress

- (1) Rachel Carson Ecovillage progress:
 - Held introductory sessions attended by 66 people
 - Successful transition to virtual sessions since March 2020
 - 136 people of diverse ages in 17 zip codes have made inquiries
 - “core group” of 36 people meeting and participating in workgroups
 - LLC status and formal membership structure established
 - Design discussions under budget with contractor began in May
- (2) Dr. Bill Thomas event for MINKA: Transform Rural Aging with 51 attendees
 - Presentation of new dementia-friendly intentional community housing model
- (3) Age-Friendly Housing Work Group chair Jim Pieffer presented at SWPPA Annual Conference (10/15/19), "Building Momentum in Health and Housing"

Table 12, Notable Connection Action Items #21 & # 22

**Notable Connection-Themed Action Items
#21 &22: Dementia-Friendly Conversations & Training**

Goals

- Conversations:
1. ID 3 new community leaders to join leadership team and create awareness of dementia-friendly initiatives in the community. Intentional outreach to get more diverse voices around the table, with a goal of at least 3 new people of color on the leadership team by end of year.
 2. Steward newly identified community leaders/champions to utilize the dementia-friendly toolkit and engage the community in at least (6) new dementia-friendly activities throughout the year (i.e. host site for or participant in dementia-friendly conversations in their community, host Dementia Friends session, etc.).
 3. Identify and reach out to local policymakers/elected officials with welcome letter and schedule a minimum of 1 meeting with official and/or staff per quarter to introduce dementia-friendly toolkit. Secure 4 or more elected officials to lend their name in support of Dementia-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh.
 4. Have an elected official attend or host a dementia-friendly event 1-2 times per

year.

Goals for Dementia-Friendly Trainings:

1. Engage at least 2 dementia-friendly social engagement events and/or trainings per quarter designed for members in the community diagnosed with dementia and/or their care partners and families to actively participate in shaping their dementia-friendly community (i.e. Dementia Friends sessions, memory cafés, etc.).
2. Seek participation of 1-2 participants living with dementia during each dementia-friendly social engagement activity or training.
3. Host or participate in 2 educational conferences/events per year that target providers, families, care partners, and people living with dementia.
4. Connect to 300+ participants annually through educational and engagement endeavors.

Progress

Dementia-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh Cutting Edge Trends in Alzheimer’s Research event, 8/2019, 35 people

- Nov 2020 “Transform Rural Aging” event featured musician & Alzheimer’s advocate Jay Allen, attended by 51 people
- Email outreach with tips and strategies from Dementia360 / DFGP to help caregivers of PLWD provide engagement and reassurance during COVID-19

The needs and specialties of older adults in the workforce were also set to be explored in an Around the Table South event with 25 attendees that was planned with AARP PA, JFCS Career Development Center, and Mon Valley Initiative. Relatedly, The Power of Our Older Workforce: Study and infographic were both completed.

Table 13, Notable Action Items #24 and #19

**Notable Innovation-Themed Action Items:
#24: The Job Search, Redefined
& Action Item #19: GenPGH**

**2019-2020
Goals**

Goal for #24: The Job Search, Redefined
Increased workforce participation among people of all ages; Increased skill-building opportunities and entrepreneurial competencies across generations

Progress

- The Power of Our Older Workforce study completed
 - commissioned by SWPPA and AFGP
 - completed October 2019 by Chris Briem at the University Center for Social and Urban Research (UCSUR) at the University of Pittsburgh in
 - Infographic by longtime partner Dezudio to communicate key findings
- Around the Table South event postponed due to COVID-19
 - AARP Pennsylvania, JFCS Career Development Center, and Mon Valley Initiative
 - 25 RSVPs, strong interest
- GenPGH partnerships
 - Perkins Eastman, Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging, and AFGP
 - Surveyed 17 emerging professionals to learn more about their needs
 - Postponed Big Table event with PE and ACAAAA
 - 12 RSVPs by emerging leaders

4.2.5.4 Other Action Item Progress in 2019-2020

The following Action Items were less applicable to the 2019-2020 work. A few are highlighted in Table 13.

Table 14, Progress on Additional Action Items in 2019-2020

Progress on Additional Action Items

Access	Action Item #2: Walkability Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All Allegheny Co. sidewalk centerline data incorporated in app •Gathered curb ramp data for two Pittsburgh neighborhoods •Piloted pathVu Navigation app with beta testers •Planning further pilot opportunities with new ADA coordinator for Pittsburgh
	Action Item #8: Connecting Referral Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Directly connected key partners AFGP, AAA, South Hills Interfaith Movement (SHIM), and PA 2-1-1 •Housing Working Group was planning collaboration with PA Housing Finance Agency to improve PA Housing Search site •AFGP Housing Work Group presented at SWPPA Conference (10/15/19), "Building Momentum in Health and Housing" •Check-in Call Network offered for all 2-1-1 callers over age 60
Connection	Action Item #14: Parks Reimagined	•Fit with a Legislator with PA State House of Representatives Edward Gainey on 8/14/19
	Action Item #16: Gardening for Good	•Plantings completed in 2019-2020 before COVID
	Action Item #18: Welcoming Committees	•Three Aging Your Way Workshops held, with AYW projects ongoing in those communities
Innovation	Action Item #20: An Age-Friendly Seal	See #24
	Action Item #25: Intergenerational Tech Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Age-Friendly Tech North •Expands the 1:1 Tech Buddies intergenerational training •started before the pandemic, in active planning now
	Action Item #26: Direct Care Workforce Development	<p>Goal: explore equity dimensions of care workforce, increase standardized training, and opportunities for capacity-building</p> <p>(1) SWPPA Policy Session, LTC Council presentation Oct 2019</p> <p>(2) AFGP Leadership Circle member Jen Blatz (AARP) presented at SWPPA Conference (10/15/19), "Be Inventive: Policy Advocacy & the Blueprint for Strengthening PA's Direct Care Workforce"</p>
	Action Item #28: Tech Support	<p>Promotion of VSA & other tech for families to decrease loneliness.</p> <p>(1) North Hills Community Outreach awarded \$10,000 for "Age-Friendly Tech North 2020" via connection from Age-Friendly Tech Work Group</p> <p>(2) Age-Friendly Tech North postponed during COVID-19</p>

Four Action Items were largely deferred or not scheduled for focus in 2019-2020: #5: Housing Assessment and Mapping, #9: Murals to Help Caregivers, #29: Disaster Preparedness, and #30: Bye Week Back Home.

Table 15, Action Items Deferred in 2019-2020

Action Items Deferred in 2019-2020

Access	Action Item #5: Housing Assessment and Mapping Action Item #9: Murals to Help Caregivers
Innovation	Action Item #29: Disaster Preparedness Action Item #30: Bye Week Back Home

5.0 Discussion

In Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh’s first five-year cycle, they have made sustained progress related to the objectives of their Action Plan for improving the Pittsburgh region’s livability for people of all ages. The AFGP collaboration has adapted to changing circumstances while working toward their vision of Allegheny County communities in which people can thrive at every age.

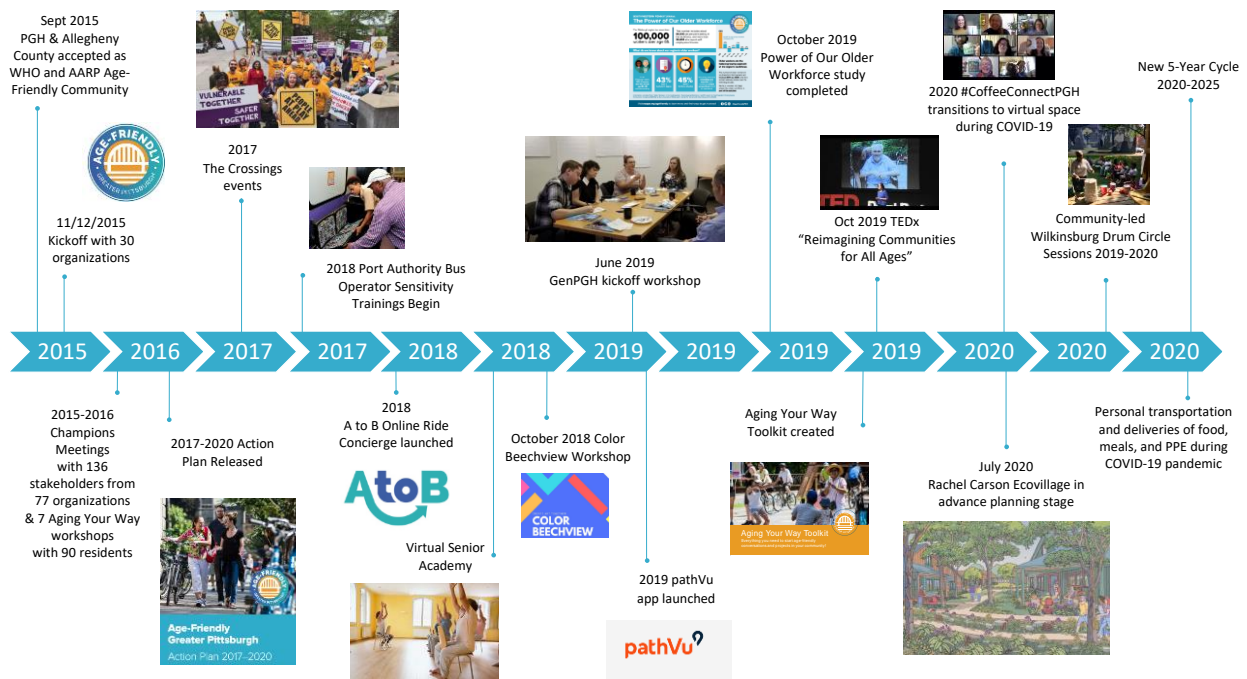


Figure 3 AGFP 2015-2020 Timeline

5.1 Limitations and Variables

Evaluation activities were necessarily performed almost entirely remotely due to the SARS-CoV-2/ COVID-19 pandemic. The safety concerns with visiting indoor spaces and the cancellation of many events limited the extent to which the evaluator could assess indoor infrastructure and multidimensional accessibility.

The nature of video-format meetings also influenced interpersonal dynamics related to disability. Interviewees presumably only knew that the evaluator was disabled when explicitly informed by the evaluator when relevant to the interview conversation. During an in-person interview with a wheelchair-using evaluator, the interviewee would inevitably be aware that they were speaking to a disabled person. The ability to choose whether and when to disclose physical disability could have positive and negative effects on the interview dynamic. For some interviewees, coping with a sense of curiosity or desire to behave appropriately around the topic of physical disability could be distracting. In that case, having the majority of the interview occur without that dynamic might be beneficial. The ultimate impact on the interview findings and evaluation efficacy of the decision to disclose and choice of timing is unknown.

A lack of racial diversity limited comprehensive evaluation: the evaluators and Leadership Circle interviewees are all white. This homogeneity restricted the perspective of the evaluation, particularly with respect to racial equity dimensions. The main evaluator's perspective was also limited by a relatively short residence in Pittsburgh prior to conducting the evaluation.

While people of all ages and disability statuses are impacted by AFGP's work and the conditions with which their mission is concerned, to the evaluator's knowledge, no interviewees were recipients of AFGP member organization services or older adult participants in AFGP member organization programming.

5.2 Strengths

5.2.1 Relationships and Culture

A major source of Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh’s strength was found to be in their relationships with a wide variety of community stakeholders.

A clear indicator of the commitment AFGP has made to relationship-building is the constructive feedback their members were able to provide to other Recovery Streets leaders about their “Request for Collaborators” document, which they were invited to participate in developing. The two Leadership Circle members who made the edits noted that their suggestions “highlight the importance of diverse community engagement prior to implementing these projects, so that people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds are included in the decision-making process.” That statement and their specific suggested changes—such as ensuring that disabled access was considered in street closures, considering transit users’ needs, and above all, engaging neighbors first to ask what they want on their streets—show an intention to improve equity by working with marginalized communities, rather than working on their behalf as outsiders.

Relatedly, in the course of conducting the evaluation, a question came up about AFGP’s convention for the use of the person-first terminology (i.e. “person with a disability”) instead of identity-first terminology (i.e. “disabled person”). As discussed in the introduction to this document, these terms relate to deeper meaning about how cultures frame disability. Many disabled people prefer identity-first language, particularly those involved in disability advocacy work. Person-first language is widely used by non-disabled people who work in disability-related fields. Many disability advocates notice the use of identity-first language by a person or organization as one of many signs of solidarity with disabled people, individual awareness or lived

experience with disability, and being closely connected to disability culture. The director's reaction to the question provided an example of AFGP's commitment to growth toward diversity and inclusion. Though she had not heard of this dichotomy within disability- and disability-adjacent communities, her immediate conclusion was that being unaware of it was a symptom of a lack of disabled representation in the leadership of many organizations.

The evaluator agreed that AFGP has many opportunities for building and strengthening connections with disabled advocates and with disability-related organizations that do not specifically relate to age. AFGP's leadership communicated a desire to improve disabled representation and disability awareness in their work and hierarchies. This approach to cultural concepts—an attitude of humility and a desire to learn and build connection—was also exhibited by other Leadership Circle members interviewed.

5.2.2 Assessment and Evaluation

The evaluators found that AFGP documented many program and service activities and made recommendations for further data collection and organization to facilitate future evaluation of process and outcomes (see Appendix A). Their community needs assessment at the outset of the initiative—which included holding community meetings, distributing surveys, and convening workgroups—illuminated many aspects of the Greater Pittsburgh area that could be more age-inclusive, accessible, and equitable. The evaluators supported AFGP's plan to conduct another AARP Livable Communities Survey in 2020-2021 for comparison and updated objective-setting.

The evaluation found that virtual programming, primarily Virtual Senior Academy and #CoffeeConnectPGH, showed promise for social connection during a time of extreme isolation for many older people. Those positive signs also highlighted the need to prioritize equitable

technology and internet access for all older Pittsburgh residents. The extreme disparity in access to these tools translates to disparate access to online services and programming alternatives. (Anderson & Kumar, 2020, Meta Mesh, 2018; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019b) The evaluators therefore recommended that AFGP develop and adapt programming and service alternatives that do not require home internet or a smartphone.

Examples of programming and service alternatives accessible without internet were provided in the evaluation. The examples offered included continuing existing outdoor programming, such as the 2018-19 Gardening for Good events, as well as opportunities for expansion by further partnership with Pittsburgh Public Schools for outdoor intergenerational community enrichment experiences.

5.2.3 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The evaluation noted the public commitments AFGP has made to improving the racial equity and inclusion of their work and examined several specific examples. These demonstrations included public statements, attention to community-led planning in their work on the PCRG Recovery Streets project, and activities designed to bring attention to neighborhood conditions such as “The Crossings” events. The Aging Your Way (AYW) project was noted as another example of AFGP’s intention to empower communities rather than impose external interventions. Several historically exploited neighborhoods were included in recent AYW outreach efforts: East Liberty, Larimer, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, Beechview, and East Hills.

In response to evaluator interview questions about racial equity, AFGP’s director audited outreach emails to colleagues sent in an effort to recruit candidates for the Project Manager and consulting roles this year. Sixteen percent of the 102 total emails were sent to Black colleagues;

two percent were sent to non-Black people of color. As noted in the evaluation, these proportions correspond fairly closely to racial composition of Allegheny County reported in the 2019 US Census data: 78.1% white residents, 13.1% Black residents, 4.2% of residents identifying as Asian, 2.3% Latinx residents, and 2.3% of residents described by the census as having more than one race (US Census, 2019a). AFGP has made a deliberate effort to seek out more diverse candidates for their positions, and notes there is room for growth in professional connections with Black people and people of color.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Assessment and Evaluation

The evaluators made several specific recommendations related to assessment and evaluation. They supported AFGP’s plan to repeat the AARP Livable Communities, and to use regional promotion of the survey as an opportunity for age-friendly initiative outreach. In continued planning, the evaluators recommended expanding their use of the “SMARTIE” framework to all Action Items. “SMARTIE” may describe objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable. Defining each element of the SMARTIE acronym, including equity dimensions, facilitates practical planning and establishes clear markers for evaluation at the outset of projects.

The AFGP leadership indicated a desire to increase their data-gathering about the home zip codes and ages of participants in their activities, events, and services. The evaluators agreed that documenting the areas in which participants live is critical to equitable planning and evaluation,

since neighborhood home and race are critical determinants of livability disparities. The evaluators acknowledged that zip codes are straightforward in terms of data collection and analysis but noted that “zip codes may not tell the whole story, especially in a city like Pittsburgh that has so many distinct neighborhood centers and that is experiencing rapid new development in many historically marginalized areas.”

Further, the evaluation recommended tracking the race of AFGP’s service recipients and program participants by (1) offering participants the opportunity to share the name of their neighborhood home, and recording that information in the exact language the person uses and (2) paying residents of the neighborhoods from which AFGP most urgently needs racial equity information to consult on data collection that would be culturally appropriate and likely to obtain the most pertinent information with the least burden to the participant. The evaluation listed examples of accessible and low-contact alternatives to sign-in sheets to facilitate this data collection.

AFGP’s Tracking Tool is the central organizational spreadsheet where goals, objectives, project progress, key contacts, and outcomes are stored. The evaluation made several specific recommendations for the Tracking Tool, including potential changes that could improve accessibility for all intended users and expand documentation of relationship-building activities, to facilitate future evaluation of the success of these efforts, particularly with regard to racial- and disability-related equity.

5.3.2 Organizational Plans

The evaluators supported AFGP’s plan to use their repetition of the AARP Livable Communities Survey as a form of outreach to motivate age-inclusive initiatives in the ten other

counties in SWPPA's area of service. The addition of a full-time Project Manager will help absorb the additional workload of taking on more regional inter-organization coordination and projects.

Several staffing transitions were occurring at the time of the 2019-2020 evaluation. AFGP's Director transitioned to full-time Executive Director, beginning in July 2020. AFGP was also planning to add a full-time Project Manager to their team, who would take on some of the substantial work of organizing, tracking and coordinating the activities of the various partner organizations and work groups, as well managing the organization's social media presence. The position would also include survey distribution and data management, and related outreach and other tasks to facilitate growth of age-friendly initiatives in other communities within Southwestern Pennsylvania. Importantly, the Project Manager's role expectations explicitly included, "Strategize on how to best reach, listen to and meaningfully engage residents of all ages and abilities, particularly in Black communities given the disparities that exist across health, income, employment and more." The input of a strategic options consultant and a development consultant were also expected by AFGP to provide valuable insight as they planned their next 5-year cycle.

5.3.3 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

5.3.3.1 Racial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The AFGP Leadership Circle members indicated a strong desire to address racial inequity and exclusion, both in their public advocacy and through organizational self-assessment. Relatedly, AFGP planned to emphasize formation and sustenance of relationships within the communities AFGP serves during 2020-2021. The evaluators supported this commitment to self-

examination and encouraged AFGP to continue taking proactive steps toward awareness, inclusion, and equity. Continued education on and collective honesty about the history of anti-Black racism in the region and the lack of much diversity in their leadership are the first essential steps toward counteracting the intersecting barriers that exclude Black professionals from the top levels of Greater Pittsburgh organizations. Black members of Allegheny County communities deserve to be represented at all levels in the public and nonprofit entities that impact their communities.

Members of AFGP's Leadership Circle affirmed their support for organizational self-examination and actionable plans to improve the diversity of their ranks and the equitability of their activities. To that end, the evaluators recommended that AFGP's 2020-2025 planning should explicitly prioritize the recruitment, retention, and promotion of Black professionals within their coalition. Specific recommended steps included hiring a third-party racial equity and inclusion consultant to assess barriers and opportunities for people of color in their organizations, recommending that members of the Leadership Circle engage the same expert guidance in their organizations, arranging for professional trainings around implicit bias and cultural humility, and continuing to highlight opportunities for the Leadership Circle to participate in local and virtual educational and community-building events and resources around racial justice.

The evaluators recommended expansion of partnership and collaboration with Black-led organizations and those primarily serving Black residents in Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh. Examples included Black Tech Nation, the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh, The African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania, the YMCA/ywca sites of Pittsburgh and surrounding municipalities, The August Wilson African American Cultural Center, the Black Political Empowerment Project, NAACP Pittsburgh, Advancing Black Arts in

Pittsburgh, Executive Action and Response Network, and Vibrant Pittsburgh. Supporting older adults who experience multiple forms of marginalization is essential to equitability, and to that end, AFGP could also partner with SAGE’s branch in Western Pennsylvania, headquartered in Pittsburgh.

Truly age-inclusive conditions cannot be achieved in the Pittsburgh region unless all older people benefit equitably from AFGP’s work. Uncovering and counteracting systemic racism is essential for the success of their initiatives. In order to understand the current equity of AFGP partners’ services and programming, tracking the racial diversity of participants and recipients of services is needed. AFGP can model, support, and expect this tracking from partner organizations.

The evaluation drew attention to equity issues related to technology and internet access. Virtual programming and events (e.g. Virtual Senior Academy, #CoffeeConnectPGH, webinars) require a tablet or computer. Many services (e.g. A to B, pathVu) require a smartphone. More than 96% of Hazelwood residents—33% of whom are retired—used a library or community center for most of their internet use before COVID-19 caused these sites to close (Meta Mesh, 2018). Over 70% of Homewood residents have no internet access at home (Meta Mesh, 2018). Given these conditions, understanding the current access realities and needs is an integral part of offering virtual services and programs.

Inequitable access to virtual programming and services is a systems-level problem requiring policy solutions. AFGP can play an important role in promoting local and regional policies that support internet access for older people, disabled people, and people living in poverty. The main program available for low-cost internet access, Comcast Internet Essentials, excludes older people and disabled people. They can only benefit from the program if they live with a child who receives free or reduced-price lunch (Meta Mesh, 2018). As the authors of the 2018 Meta

Mesh report on neighborhoods' relative online access in Pittsburgh noted, home broadband internet is "increasingly a requirement of socio-economic inclusion, not a consequence of it." The significant problem of lack of internet and device access in exploited Allegheny County neighborhoods should be prioritized as an age-inclusion equity issue.

While policy changes are needed in order to address both the root causes of disabled people and older adults living in poverty and the particular manifestation of lack of home internet access, solutions at a smaller scale can be explored in order to mitigate the equity issue. AFGP could partner with existing area organizations such as Meta Mesh, Black Tech Nation, and Computer Reach. With a significant portion of AFGP's programming and services requiring online access, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the ability to physically distance reliant on access to online alternatives to in-person errands, home Internet service is as essential to the equitability of AFGP's work as transportation and physical accessibility.

5.3.3.2 Disability Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The evaluation brought up the Leadership Circle's intentional choice of different meeting venues for variation and inspiration, such as Carnegie Museum of Art's "Access + Ability" exhibit, Community Living and Support Services (CLASS), CoLab18, and the Persad Center, before COVID-19 restricted in-person meeting possibilities. This practice presents a great opportunity for the Leadership Circle to investigate and advocate for improvements in the multidimensional accessibility of many venues. As AFGP hopes to develop close working ties with disabled advocates, it is important to recognize that simply changing spaces can be an access burden, given the current reality that disabled people must thoroughly research any new location to identify barriers, transportation options, and costs. This process can take hours to days for a simple museum

visit, and sometimes the ultimate information obtained is incorrect or insufficient for planning. As with standardizing the practice of asking about access needs for virtual meetings, practicing accessibility competencies together in physical spaces builds skills and helps identify places where research is needed (e.g. having a current list of ASL interpreters to call, knowing whether an entire venue is multidimensionally accessible and how to contact for detailed information or maintaining a list of those that are, etc.). Carnegie Museum of Art, for example, requires two weeks' notice to provide accommodations, without specifying what might be available. CoLab18 doesn't list any accessibility information or same-day contact options on their website. Additionally, since disabilities disproportionately affect Black people, accessibility is also an intersectional racial equity issue. Continuing to make proactive, visible accessibility efforts would demonstrate to disabled collaborators that at AFGP, the work of inquiring about and planning for accessibility is shared, ensuring that the tasks do not repeatedly fall to the person with an access need that is frequently unmet. Disabled representation on AFGP's and its partner organizations' teams could bring these insights to many activities. The use of paid disability and accessibility consultation is a critical interim step and ongoing supplement to the specific competencies of disabled staff in the future.

The evaluators recommended that AFGP attend to the equity issues that come with using internet-based communication, both within the organization and in their outreach, programs, and services. AFGP's use of remote video meeting services comes with a responsibility to remain accessible to a disability-diverse population. Automated tools are insufficient and can even be counterproductive, and disabled consultants using disabled-created sources can help. (Rooted in Rights, 2020) It is also critical to address equitable access to internet-based communication for all community members, given the intersecting racial disparities in access in Pittsburgh. (Meta Mesh,

2018) Because of the current inequitable situation, it remains important to use voice phone calls and SMS, distribute leaflets, and spend time in the neighborhoods in which AFGP wants to offer programming, resources, or services. Lively Pittsburgh’s leadership discussed maintaining phone trees, which could help to include people who have a landline phone and are often home.

5.3.4 Expansion on Recommendations Made in AFGP Evaluation

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh’s leadership expressed a desire to recommit to the “Disaster Preparedness” Action Item of their 2017-2020 Action Plan, which the evaluators strongly supported. Preparation for a pandemic that would impact older people living in congregate settings was not a specific objective when the Action Plan was developed, but equitable and just disability- and age-inclusive emergency planning is relevant to all disaster scenarios. Unfortunately, disasters of all types are likely to impact marginalized people disproportionately in at least some ways, and disaster planning across sectors chronically omits accessibility and age inclusion. Examples provided in the evaluation included climate change and weather emergencies, supply chain disruptions, health system overload, and ongoing infectious disease concerns in the context of mass institutionalization of older disabled adults. Planning for mitigation of the effects of natural and preventable disasters was recommended as a high priority equity and justice issue.

An important consideration noted in the evaluation related to disaster planning is that AFGP has positioned themselves to influence local and regional policy. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused increased popular attention to the public health funding and planning choices that have been made over the course of the last several decades. The precarity of many of the United States’ institutions and forms of infrastructure—and the health implications of that fragility—are now more apparent to non-experts. The evaluators therefore further recommend that AFGP member

organizations harness the collective motivation arising from this new public health awareness in service of improving safety for the most vulnerable residents in the region. Durable political solutions are needed to stabilize exploited neighborhoods and support intersectionally marginalized residents of those communities, like Black disabled older adults.

An additional recommendation should be made related to “implicit bias” trainings referenced in the evaluation. As mentioned above, the evaluators supported many of AFGP’s intended courses of action, one of which was holding such trainings. The evaluator and interviewee did not discuss a specific planned training, but it should be noted that there are concerns with the evidence basis for implicit bias as a way to predict racist behavior (Oswald, et al., 2013). When researching racial equity education and evaluation for AFGP and partner organizations, it is critical to engage Black experts to determine how systemic racism operates in their organizational structures and processes, and what steps should be taken to most effectively correct those manifestations.

5.4 Conclusion

From the completion of their first Action Plan through July 2020, AFGP made significant progress on many of their stated goals. New priorities emerged as the Greater Pittsburgh area experienced the widespread health, economic and social sequelae of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the end of their first 5-year cycle, AFGP’s leadership expressed a commitment to ongoing engagement with Allegheny County communities to focus their work effectively and equitably in their next five years. The rapid spread of COVID-19 in congregate settings caused massive preventable suffering and death among older adults and disabled people in 2020. This tragic reality

made the importance of efforts to support accessible community living clear to people within and outside of organizations focused on the wellbeing of older adults and disabled people. Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh's work is an important part of creating and improving accessible community living options for people of all ages in the region.

Appendix A AFGP Year 5 Evaluation Report and Global Check-In



Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh

Year 5 Evaluation Report and Global Check-In

August 2020

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Executive Summary

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh (AFGP) leverages the collective strength of Allegheny County organizations, businesses, governments, and communities to build an age-inclusive Pittsburgh region. Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh joined the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Network and the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities in 2015. In AFGP's first five-year cycle, they have made substantial progress toward realizing the objectives of their Action Plan for improving the Pittsburgh region's livability for people of all ages. The AFGP collaboration has developed into a powerful movement, adapting to changing circumstances while manifesting their vision of communities in which people can thrive at every age.

One key factor in AFGP's success is their extensive connection to regional organizations and government offices in Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh. Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh grew out of a 2015 Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging (SWPPA) project proposal. The Age-Friendly initiative developed a collaborative network of established Pittsburgh region stakeholders in accessibility and age-inclusion work. At least 136 stakeholders from 77 organizations and 90 residents worked to assess local needs and create the initial Action Plan, and AFGP's first implementation phase launched in November 2017.

Five years into their collaboration, the leaders of AFGP's partner organizations agree: Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh works because it connects resources, organizations, and communities effectively. The dynamic strength of the AFGP network was evident during the early stage of the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic. With businesses and services shut down in mid-March, AFGP mobilized organizational leaders across sectors. Together, leveraging relationships strengthened through AFGP, they kept essential services running and coordinated the use of existing resources to obtain and deliver food and personal protective equipment (PPE).

Nearing the end of three years of implementation, AFGP has brought their 2017-2020 Action Plan to life. Their first five-year cycle has seen remarkable results, including:

2019-2020 Progress

- Transportation Network—established by AFGP partners—delivered 20,000 prepared meals, 3,000 boxes from local food banks, and truckloads of PPE during COVID-19
- Accessible transportation provided without interruption during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Rachel Carson Ecovillage, an intergenerational cohousing community, proceeded to advanced planning with future residents
- Popular #CoffeeConnectPGH events successfully transitioned to virtual space
- The Power of Our Older Workforce Study completed
- Support from the Henry L. Hillman grant, with aging as a priority for the Hillman Family Foundations
- TEDx Talk: “Reimagining Communities for All Ages” to audience of >100; 3,000+ YouTube views
- Lively Pittsburgh’s Aging Your Way Toolkit released
- Wilkinsburg Drum Circle formed, met 27 times, a resident-led result of Aging Your Way

Pre-2019 Progress

- Online concierge ride planner “A to B” created
- pathVu app launched by disability-diverse team, mapping accessible routes on sidewalks and paths
- Bus operator sensitivity training created for Port Authority’s new drivers; 145 new operators have participated in seven trainings to date
- Four Legislative Briefings hosted in partnership with AARP Pennsylvania, convening 80 elected officials or their staffers and over 300 attendees
- Brought “The Crossings” events to seven diverse neighborhoods
- 35 Dementia-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh events & trainings included over 180 participants
- 147 “Virtual Senior Academy” classes attended by over 1,000 participants from 97 zip codes, with attendance climbing during ongoing COVID-19 pandemic
- Color Beechview—funded by a 2018 AARP Community Challenge grant—piloted an intergenerational art-making workshop, connecting residents in a rapidly changing neighborhood

The first 5-year cycle of Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh’s work has yielded impressive results. The organization has been especially successful in collaborating with allies and guiding progress in the public and private sectors. Their relationship-building work includes recognizing disparities, committing to

improving equity and welcoming more diverse leadership, and acting in solidarity with marginalized communities. Age-friendly innovation, education, outreach, and service are critical to the Pittsburgh region's ability to adapt to the extraordinary challenges of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Everyone benefits when age-friendly principles are used in planning and improving our communities, ensuring that everyone has what they need in order to remain at home in their neighborhoods and able to fully participate in life. With Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh's work, the Pittsburgh region is working to become a place in which people of all ages can thrive.

I. Program Description

1. Background

The Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh (AFGP) initiative leverages the collective strength of Allegheny County organizations, businesses, governments, and communities to build an age-inclusive Pittsburgh region. The AFGP collaboration has developed into a powerful movement, adapting to changing circumstances while manifesting their vision of communities in which people can thrive at every age.

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh grew out of an April 2015 coalition proposal by Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging (SWPPA), "Create an Age-Inclusive Ecosystem in Pittsburgh." The Age-Friendly initiative engaged early support from established Pittsburgh and regional organizations whose work focuses on making the Pittsburgh area more accessible and inclusive for older adults and disabled people. Importantly, the project proposal also secured the backing of Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto. The work of Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh is made possible by the support of the Hillman Family Foundations, with support from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, SWPPA, and UPMC Health Plan.

Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh were accepted into the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Network and the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States

and Communities in September 2015. Communities earn WHO “Age-Friendly” status and AARP Network membership through an application process that establishes a commitment to improving livability for older people. The WHO defines eight Domains of Livability, which include crucial aspects of life for older people such as transportation, healthcare, social inclusion, and housing.

2. Baseline Assessment

The AFGP strategy for baseline assessment relied on community engagement. In addition to exploring other age-friendly communities’ experiences, AFGP learned what older people in the Greater Pittsburgh region need by asking residents directly and connecting with organizations and stakeholders representing their concerns. At least 136 people from 77 organizations participated in the creation of the 2017-2020 Action Plan. Including over 500 survey participants, 90 residents at seven Aging Your Way workshops, and almost 100 people at four public input sessions, over 800 voices were represented in AFGP’s needs assessment and planning process.

The Action Plan was informed by several forms of input. The AARP Livability for All in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County Community Survey, was returned to AFGP in September 2016. The results were presented at the SWPPA conference in December 2016. Also in 2016, leaders from SWPPA planned a series of four Age-Friendly Champions meetings, each focusing on two of the eight WHO domains. From there, work groups were organized to establish goals. The same year, Lively Pittsburgh hosted seven Aging Your Way workshops to learn what residents wanted and inspire community-led activities. Ultimately, AFGP settled on five Age-Friendly Work Groups, focusing on Transportation, Housing, Dementia-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh, Digital Literacy, and Workforce.

The AFGP collaboration’s first two years focused on planning, in 2015 and 2016. Three implementation years followed, from September 2017 to present. While the WHO framework recommends evaluation in the fifth year, AFGP chose to embed evaluation throughout the cycle.

Evaluation is performed annually by The Evaluation Institute for Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health.

AFGP's Steps for Developing the 2017-2020 Action Plan

Convene Local Leaders

136 stakeholders from 77 organizations participated in Age-Friendly Champions & work group Sessions

Mobilize Neighbors

>90 residents participated in 7 Aging Your Way workshops & summit

Collect Data

500 people over age 50 responded to AARP's Livability for All in Pittsburgh & Allegheny County Community Survey

Evaluate

University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health evaluated AFGP's progress annually

Gather Feedback

39 participants completed a web-based survey and nearly 100 people attended four public input sessions

The AFGP initial needs assessment and strategy development was guided by The World Health Organization's defined "8 Domains of Livability" for Age-Friendly Communities: (1) Outdoor Spaces and Buildings: accessibility to and availability of safe recreational facilities, (2) Transportation: safe and affordable models of private and public transportation, (3) Housing: wide range of housing options for older residents, aging in place and other home modification programs, (4) Social Participation: access to

leisure and cultural activities and opportunities for older residents to participate in social and civic engagement with their peers and younger people, (5) Respect and Inclusion: programs to support and promote ethnic and cultural diversity, along with programs to encourage multi-generational interaction and dialogue, (6) Civic Participation and Employment: promotion of paid work and volunteer activities for older residents and opportunities to engage in formulation of policies relevant to their lives, (7) Communication and Information: promotion of and access to the use of technology to keep older residents connected to their community and friends and family, both near and far, and (8) Community Support and Health Services: access to home care services, clinics, and programs to promote wellness and active aging.

World Health Organization 8 Domains of Livability

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	accessibility to and availability of safe recreational facilities
Transportation	safe and affordable models of private and public transportation
Housing	wide range of housing options for older residents, aging in place and other home modification programs
Social Participation	access to leisure and cultural activities and opportunities for older residents to participate in social and civic engagement with their peers and younger people

Respect & Inclusion programs to support and promote ethnic and cultural diversity, along with programs to encourage multi-generational interaction and dialogue

Civic Participation & Employment promotion of paid work and volunteer activities for older residents and opportunities to engage in formulation of policies relevant to their lives

Communication & Information promotion of and access to the use of technology to keep older residents connected to their community and friends and family, both near and far

Community Support & Health Services access to home care services, clinics, and programs to promote wellness and active aging

3. Goals and Strategies

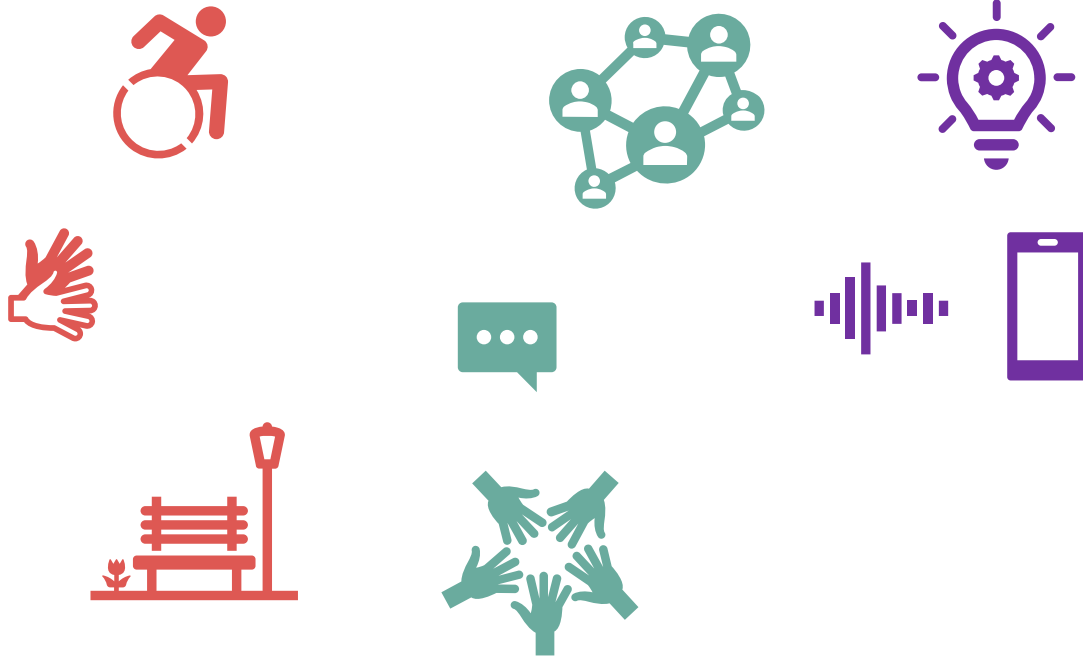
The 2017-2020 AFGP Action Plan was developed with clear relationships between their 2015-2017 baseline findings and their planned activities. Their findings correlated to concepts laid out in the WHO eight domains of livability, and their specific plans consider the unique strengths and challenges of Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh, as experienced by the people who contributed their perspectives to the planning process. The Action Plan is structured around 30 Action Items, which are organized within three broad “focus areas”: Access, Connection, and Innovation.

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh Focus Areas

Access

Connection

Innovation



The Access focus area is designed to understand and improve multidimensional accessibility to public goods and human services. A lack of comprehensive access can render any program, intervention, or service less effective and inequitable.

Access

“We will improve entry points, participation, and navigation to new options and opportunities—within neighborhoods and health systems—for people of all ages and abilities.”

The Access focus area includes three sub-categories of Action Items: Mobility, Affordability, and Navigation. These sub-categories each contain three Action Items. “Mobility” encompasses Action Item #1: The Crossings, Action Item #2: Walkability Studies, and #3: Complete Streets Advocacy. “Affordability” encompasses Action Item #4: Creative, Far-Reaching Transit, #5: Housing Assessment and Mapping, and #6: Health Promotion Expansion. “Navigation” includes Action Item #7: Online Concierge for Ride Options, #8: Connecting Referral Services, and #9: Murals to Help Caregivers.

The structure of the Access Action Items, their three categories, the objectives of each category, and the general goal of each action item are shown in the table below:

Access Action Items & Objectives

Mobility	<p>Objective #1: Improve access to safe, welcoming walkways and streets</p> <p>1.1. The Crossings: Build visibility and change policies in favor of crosswalk safety.</p> <p>2.2. Walkability Studies: Collect data about sidewalk and park path accessibility.</p> <p>3.3. Complete Streets Advocacy: Align with the Complete Streets movement to increase safety, equity, and comfort among people of all generations.</p>
Affordability	<p>Objective #2: Expand options for transportation, housing & health services</p> <p>4.4. Creative, Far-Reaching Transit: Advocate for creative solutions to increase transportation options for older adults and improve and enhance existing services.</p> <p>5.5. Housing Assessment and Mapping: Investigate current and forecast future demand for healthy, affordable, accessible, and inclusive housing options.</p> <p>6.6. Health Promotion Expansion: Extend evidence-based models for health promotion, particularly no-cost or low-cost for participants and with relationship components.</p>
Navigation	<p>Objective #3: Connect people with resources & services that meet their needs & honor their preferences</p> <p>7. Online Concierge for Ride Options: Develop an online concierge tool for riders to find transportation options that match their specific profile and fit their preferences, including increasing understanding of no- or low-cost options. Identify gaps in transportation options and advocate to fill these gaps.</p> <p>8. Connecting Referral Services: Maximize awareness of existing services by convening local providers of information and referral services. Establish best practices for warm, respectful referrals.</p>

9. Murals to Help Caregivers: Start a creative, grassroots campaign about caregiver self-identification

The second focus area for AFGP’s 2017-2020 Action plan is Connection. Their purpose for the Action Items in this category is to support relationships—at the individual and community levels—and decrease isolation. The need for new forms of connection is more apparent than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Connection

“We will strengthen intergenerational relationships to combat social isolation and loneliness, creating spaces that encourage coming together and celebrating initiatives that put relationships first.”

Three sub-categories of Action Items are identified within the Connection focus area: Perception, Social Spaces, and Intergenerational Relationships. “Perception” encompasses Action Item #10: Speakers Bureau, Action Item 11: Sensitivity on the Bus, and #12: Campaign to Combat Isolation and Loneliness. “Social Spaces” encompasses Action Item #13: Arts for All, #14: Parks Reimagined, #15: Center for More than Seniors, and #16: Gardening for Good. “Intergenerational Relationships” includes Action Item #17: Solidarity Discussions, #18: Welcoming Committees, and #19: GenPGH.

The structure of the Connection Action Items, their three categories, the objectives of each category, and the general goal of each action item are shown in the table below:

Connection Action Items and Objectives

Perception	<p>Objective #4: Educate the public to dispel myths about aging and promote solidarity</p> <p>10. Speakers Bureau: Assemble a multigenerational, multicultural Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh Speakers Bureau to educate various stakeholders and the press</p> <p>11. Sensitivity on the Bus: Launch an awareness campaign to improve sensitivity and build empathy among drivers and passengers,</p> <p>12. Campaign to Combat Isolation and Loneliness: Develop a series of Op-Eds and public service announcements about the dangers of social isolation and loneliness and the power of relationships, using AARP’s #Connect2Affect campaign as a model</p>
Social Spaces	<p>Objective #5: Champion the power of “third places” in promoting health and wellness</p> <p>13. Arts for All: Collaborate with arts and cultural organizations to provide meaningful ways for generations to connect</p> <p>14. Parks Reimagined: Offer senior-friendly programming in highly visible, public spaces, like the Region’s parks. Empower older adults to serve as Park Ambassadors to help motivate fellow seniors to get active</p> <p>15. Center for More than Seniors: Expand the reach of senior center activity to find and include people of all ages</p> <p>16. Gardening for Good: Encourage people of all ages to understand the connection between body, environment, and health, align with community gardening and environmental initiatives</p>
Intergenerational Relationships	<p>Objective #6: Build friendship and support across generations</p> <p>17. Solidarity Discussions: Facilitate discussions among traditional and nontraditional allies, to elevate the ideas of intergenerational solidarity and age diversity as essential to the health and wellbeing of residents and organizations</p> <p>18. Welcoming Committees: Develop neighborhood ambassador programs to connect newcomers and legacy residents</p>

19. GenPGH: Engage with young professionals, as well as high school and college students, to promote careers in the field of aging

The third focus area for AFGP’s 2017-2020 Action plan is Innovation. The Innovation focus area explores new initiatives and technologies that support people in aging in their communities. Equally important, this focus area brings attention to the relationships between Pittsburgh region residents and the tech industry.

Innovation

“We will champion meaningful technology and ideas that enable people to age in community, and help neighbors of all ages collaborate with our region’s growing tech industry.”

Three sub-categories of Action Items are identified within the Innovation focus area: Businesses and Neighborhoods, Workforce, and Interaction. “Businesses and Neighborhoods” encompasses Action Item #20: An Age-Friendly Seal, Action Item #: 21: Dementia-Friendly Conversations, #22: Dementia-Friendly Training, and #23: New Housing Solutions. “Workforce” encompasses Action Item #24: The Job Search, Redefined, #25: Intergenerational Tech Training, and #26: Direct Care Workforce Development. “Interaction” includes Action Item #27: Virtual Senior Academy, #28: Tech Support, #29: Disaster Preparedness, and #30: Bye Week Back Home. The structure of the Innovation Action Items, their three categories, the objectives of each category, and the general goal of each action item are shown in the table below:

Innovation Action Items and Objectives

Business & Neighborhoods

Objective #7: Promote equitable development that helps people remain in their communities as they age

20. An Age-Friendly Seal: Establish a seal and incentives program for local businesses and employers with a focus on replicating best practices (see #24 for progress as well)

21. Dementia-Friendly Conversations: To build a dementia-friendly community, ignite conversation and creative engagement among family members, friends, and people living with Alzheimer’s disease

22. Dementia-Friendly Training: Train health professionals, community organizations, and families about ways to interact and communicate with people living with dementia, expand the reach of these dementia-friendly messages to new people and policymakers

23. New Housing Solutions: Explore options for progressive housing solutions, such as home-sharing and intergenerational housing. Also identify mechanisms to encourage and incentivize developers to use universal design elements in newly proposed housing units

Workforce

Objective#8: Find new, more effective ways to do business that include people of all ages

24. The Job Search, Redefined: Advocate for increased job training and placement programs that are inclusive of job seekers of all ages. Also support entrepreneurs of all ages by equipping them with the skills they need to successfully launch startups or small businesses

25. Intergenerational Tech Training: Increase access to technology through tech training, particularly in-person, one-on-one opportunities. Tap into Pittsburgh’s growing tech community for volunteers, many of whom may be younger and/or new to the region

26. Direct Care Workforce Development: Advocate for a robust, multicultural direct care workforce to support the needs of frail elders and people living with disabilities and their care partners. Educate managed care organizations and providers about need for capacity-building

Interaction

Objective #9: Come together for support and vital company to combat social isolation

27. Virtual Senior Academy: Offer online, interactive classes through the use of video conferencing technology

28. Tech Support: Champion technology, that helps older adults remain in their communities and connected to people of all ages

29. Disaster Preparedness: Engage first responder organizations and other services and systems to develop disaster preparedness plan for isolated elders and people living with disabilities

30. Bye Week Back Home: Support intergenerational community gatherings that bring together new and native residents, via social media

II. Program Implementation

In AFGP's five years of existence and three years of implementation, they have made substantial progress toward realizing the objectives of their 2017-2020 Action Plan for improving the livability of the Pittsburgh region for people of all ages. The 2017-2020 Action Plan set an implementation schedule that AFGP has been able to follow, with some adaptations in plans. The COVID-19 pandemic has generated a variety of challenges and required some activities in 2020 to be altered or postponed. Based on the scope of the events and the situation in Southwestern Pennsylvania in August 2020, there are many indicators that health effects, social difficulties, economic damage, and practical challenges related to COVID-19 will extend into 2021 and beyond. Many of AFGP's plans involved preparation work in Winter 2019-2020 and the associated events and collaborations were slated for Spring and Summer 2020. Because they laid so much groundwork, AFGP can realistically implement some versions in alternative ways, or as conditions allow, hold the rescheduled in-person events.

AFGP and its partners have been resourceful and creative, maintaining virtual versions of programming that can be modified to work online. AFGP Leadership Circle members interviewed for this evaluation all identified inequitable access to technology as a serious barrier to equitable program and service delivery during this time of physical distancing. For many older people, smartphone screens are too small for video calls to work well. Text-to-speech is not always a functional solution for people who need large print and audio formats. Virtual Senior Academy leaders have not had success with

smartphones in lieu of a tablet or computer for accessing their Virtual Senior Academy courses or #CoffeeConnectPGH. The organizers report that there is a need for one-on-one technical support with a person, which is difficult to accomplish with physical distancing due to COVID-19.

Often, obtaining a device and sufficient internet access are barriers. According to the Pew Research Center, 44% of households with income under \$30,000 per year—including many older people on fixed incomes—do not have broadband internet at home, restricting their ability to participate in online programming or service delivery. (Pew Research Center, 2019) Without online tools, going out to meet routine needs or work is sometimes the only option. In many communities, the disparity in access to devices and the internet are an even greater crisis: in the predominantly Black Homewood neighborhood in Pittsburgh, over 70% of households lack internet service. (Meta Mesh, 2018) There is no way to deliver truly equitable programming and services when the means of access is online. Alternative mechanisms must be explored, and the problem of lack of internet and device access should be prioritized as an age-friendly issue.

Implementation Phase Schedule from 2017-2020 Action Plan

Access	Action Item	Domain(s)	Years		
Mobility	1. The Crossings	• OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS • TRANSPORTATION	1	2	3
	2. Walkability Studies	• OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS	1	2	3
	3. Complete Streets Advocacy	• TRANSPORTATION	1	2	3
Affordability	4. Creative, Far-Reaching Transit	• TRANSPORTATION	1	2	3
	5. Housing Assessment and Mapping	• HOUSING	1	2	3
	6. Health Promotion Expansion	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
Navigation	7. Online Concierge for Ride Options	• TRANSPORTATION	1	2	3
	8. Connecting Referral Services	• COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION • HOUSING	1	2	3
	9. Murals to Help Caregivers	• COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION	1	2	3
Connection					
Perception	10. Speakers Bureau	• COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION	1	2	3
	11. Sensitivity on the Bus	• TRANSPORTATION	1	2	3
	12. Campaign to Combat Isolation and Loneliness	• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3
Social Spaces	13. Arts for All	• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3
	14. Parks Reimagined	• OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS	1	2	3
	15. Centers for More Than Seniors	• OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS • SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3
	16. Gardening for Good	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
Intergenerational Relationships	17. Solidarity Discussions	• CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT	1	2	3
	18. Welcoming Committees	• COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION • SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3
	19. GenPGH	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3

Innovation	Action Item	Domain(s)	Years		
Businesses and Neighborhoods	20. An Age-Friendly Seal	• OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS • COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
	21. Dementia-Friendly Conversations	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
	22. Dementia-Friendly Training	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
	23. New Housing Solutions	• HOUSING	1	2	3
Workforce	24. The job Search, Redefined	• CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT • COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION	1	2	3
	25. Intergenerational Tech Training	• CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT • COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION	1	2	3
	26. Direct Care Workforce Development	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
Interaction	27. Virtual Senior Academy	• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3
	28. Tech Support	• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3
	29. Disaster Preparedness	• COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES	1	2	3
	30. Bye Week Back Home	• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPECT & INCLUSION	1	2	3

III. Methods for Evaluating the Program

This process evaluation focuses on Implementation Year 3 (August 2019-August 2020) and also considers the organization’s first five-year cycle. Evaluation findings came from interviews with members of the AFGP Leadership Circle, progress updates from AFGP’s Work Groups (documented in the AFGP Tracking Tool), media coverage of AFGP’s activities, AFGP’s own written materials, social media related to AFGP and their partners, survey feedback from stakeholders and participants in AFGP’s trainings, headcounts and other quantitative measures of community engagement and impact, and the lead evaluator’s experience with several of the relevant services and issues as a disabled Pittsburgh resident. This evaluation—like the three annual evaluations before it—was performed by a graduate student and a faculty member from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. As in previous years, this report is structured according to the AARP Livable Communities Evaluation Guide.

IV. Findings

1. Timeline and Highlights

In their first two implementation years, AFGP completed and began many successful projects across many dimensions of public life in the Greater Pittsburgh region, including:

- positively impacting policy decisions
- contributing to systems-level changes
- supporting new technological solutions
- leveraging existing resources and tools
- raising awareness about the needs of older residents
- engaging neighborhood participation in age-friendly improvements

Pre-2019 Notable Projects

- Online concierge ride planner “A to B” created and launched
- pathVu app launched by disability-diverse team, mapping accessible routes on sidewalks and paths

- Bus operator sensitivity training created for Port Authority’s new drivers; 145 new operators have participated in seven trainings to date
- Four Legislative Briefings hosted in partnership with AARP Pennsylvania, convening 80 elected officials or their staffers and over 300 attendees
- Bringing “The Crossings” events to five diverse neighborhoods, including over 230 participants of all ages, public officials, and several community and school groups, ultimately helping to change policy
- Pittsburgh adopted the “Complete Streets” policy and AFGP supported Millvale in doing the same
- 35 Dementia-Friendly events & trainings including over 180 participants
- 147 “Virtual Senior Academy” classes attended by over 1000 participants from 97 zip codes
- Color Beechview—funded by a 2018 AARP Community Challenge grant—piloted an intergenerational art-making workshop, connecting residents in a rapidly changing neighborhood

Despite the unprecedented challenges of the 2020 pandemic, AFGP continued to make progress on their existing initiatives. Year 3 of implementation included continued action on existing work and several new projects:

- Transportation Network—established by AFGP partners—delivered 20,000 prepared meals, 3,000 boxes from local food banks, and truckloads of PPE during COVID-19
- Rachel Carson Ecovillage, an intergenerational cohousing community, in advanced planning with future residents
- Nine popular #CoffeeConnectPGH events and successful transition to virtual space
- The Power of Our Older Workforce Study completed and presented at SWPPA
- Support from the Henry L. Hillman grant, with aging as a priority for the Hillman Family Foundations
- TEDx Talk: “Reimagining Communities for All Ages” to audience of >100 with 3,000+ YouTube views
- Lively Pittsburgh’s Aging Your Way Toolkit released
- Wilkinsburg Drum Circle formed, met 27 times, a resident-led result of Aging Your Way
- AFGP participation in Pittsburgh’s Shared and Autonomous Vehicle Working Group
- Safety improvements to 40th & Penn intersection completed in 2020, thanks in part to AFGP advocacy and engagement through The Crossings
- Participation of Leadership Circle members in the Recovery Streets Task Force
- Incorporation of AFGP’s sensitivity training for bus operators into the Port Authority’s standard bus operator training for new workers, improvements to the trainings

- Aurora Tour: AARP, ACCESS, and AFGP met with leadership about age-friendliness and accessibility
- Social Isolation webinar by disability expert Dr. Al Condeluci May 2020, attended by 220 people
- Dr. Bill Thomas event for MINKA, “Transform Rural Aging” held in November 2020 with 51 attendees
- Advising age-friendly communities in Pennsylvania and other states, including a December 2019 keynote presentation to kick off work towards Age-Friendly Minnesota
- 220 University of Pittsburgh Health Professions students received age-friendly training during Pitt Geriatrics Week, October 2019
- In-Formed by Nature Art Workshop and Opening, 150 participants, August-September 2019



2. Challenges and Adaptations

As this evaluation was completed in Summer 2020, AFGP celebrated their fifth year as an initiative. 2019-2020 was also the organization's third year of Implementation Phase. AFGP has made remarkable progress in the past year, despite the challenges brought by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that began in Winter 2020. Everyone in the AFGP Leadership Circle who was interviewed brought up the obstacles to programming and services brought by the pandemic and its secondary effects.

Adaptations to the challenges associated with COVID-19 have included remote work, virtual meetings, continuing essential operations for in-person transportation, delivering food, meals, and PPE, reaching out to people who contact 2-1-1 for follow-up, rescheduling existing programming and events, moving events online, and an emphasis on expanding new physically distanced methods for combating isolation. AFGP's activities and services are helping older people in the Greater Pittsburgh region get through the pandemic together, while simultaneously gearing up for the next five-year cycle.

3. Action Item Progress 2019-2020

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh made progress on 26 out of their 30 total Action Items between August 2019 and August 2020.

Access

Many of AFGP's most significant activities in 2019-2020 were related to their Access focus area, specifically addressing four Action Items: #3: Complete Streets Advocacy, #4: Creative, Far-Reaching Transit, #6: Health Promotion Expansion, and #7: Online Concierge for Ride Options.

AFGP addressed Action Items 3, 4, and 7 with six noteworthy activities in 2019-2020: (1) 20,000 prepared meals, 3,000 boxes from local food banks, and truckloads of PPE delivered by a Transportation Network—established by AFGP partners— during COVID-19, (2) participation in the Shared and

Autonomous Vehicle Working Group and providing key accessibility and age-inclusivity insight to Aurora's leadership during a November 2019 tour of their operations, (3) participation in the Recovery Streets task force at the invitation of the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG) and the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI), (4) improvements to and outreach about the A to B service, (5) multiple Transportation Working Group presentations, and (6) supporting PCRG's AARP Grant application for pop-up demonstrations to improve pedestrian and transit user experience.

(1) When Allegheny County was forced to shut down nonessential public activities in mid-March due to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, the AFGP Transportation Work Group sprang into action. The Executive Director of ACCESS is also the co-facilitator of the Age-Friendly Transportation Work Group. Ridership of the ACCESS paratransit service went down, but the need for transportation didn't change for people who needed to work or get to dialysis and other essential medical appointments. ACCESS kept personal transportation running, including arranging for transportation for people who tested positive for COVID-19. Rides were provided to people who needed them, without judgement about their reason, and ACCESS altered their policies in order to allow unlimited grocery bags for people making infrequent shopping trips. Some people used the service to visit loved ones in skilled nursing facilities, through closed windows.

The excess capacity in March and April at ACCESS freed up vehicles, operators, and coordinators. Through the AFGP collaboration, United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania (UWSWPA) and the Pittsburgh Foundation were able to partner with ACCESS to enable massive deliveries of food and personal protective equipment (PPE). Over 20,000 boxes from local food banks and over 3,000 meals were delivered, along with truckloads of personal protective equipment (PPE). Delivery of food and meals is critical. Because of the need to close physical senior center operations due to COVID-19 beginning in March 2020, many people lost access to the meals provided on site. The alternative "Grab n Go" meals were not as accessible due to changes in transit availability and the safety of using it. In addition to

addressing food insecurity, meal and grocery delivery protects older people in another very important way: shopping for groceries for themselves was found to be the primary reason adults 60 years or older in Pennsylvania went out in public when surveyed in late March and early April 2020 (Pennsylvania Department of Aging Council on Aging, 2020).

(2) AFGP has also been involved in key conversations about self-driving vehicles and shared forms of transportation in Pittsburgh. AFGP's Director has served on DOMI's Shared and Autonomous Mobility Advisory Group since 2018. During a tour of the Aurora autonomous vehicle facility in November 2019, representatives from AARP, ACCESS, and AFGP provided key insight about the needs of older adults and disabled people. The group met with the government relations team and VP of software engineering Jinnah Hosein, Sr. Manager of Government Relations Melissa Froelich, and Head of Government Relations Gerardo Interiano. This meeting was an important step in developing relationships between the tech community and age-friendly and accessibility advocacy groups in Pittsburgh.

(3) Also in 2019-2020, PCRG invited AFGP Leadership Circle members Karen Hoesch and Ted Cmarada to serve on the Recovery Streets Task Force along with DOMI, the Department of City Planning, PAAC, BikePGH, and the Natural Resources Defense Council. The Task Force was formed in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Pittsburgh economy and the well-being of residents, to "explore ways in which we can redesign our city streets and reconceive transportation and mobility in order to best support businesses and residents to stabilize and strengthen the local economy and serve the mental and physical health of our people." The core goal is to provide more usable spaces that are large and open enough for people to use while physically distancing. Activities of the Task Force include creating Neighborhood Slow Streets with temporary closures to increase the spaces in which neighbors can exercise outdoors, providing guidance about "micromobility" devices (electric rental scooters), and modifying street spaces to accommodate sidewalk widening or curbside pickup areas. AFGP made excellent suggestions to help the Recovery Streets team consider accessibility and resident needs.

(4) The A to B online transportation-finding tool was developed as both a user-friendly service to find ride options tailored to specific needs and to identify service gaps. A to B launched in July 2019, and in its year of existence, AFGP has met many of their specific objectives. According to their own measures for their SMART goals, they made great progress. A to B exceeded their target of 20 providers and at least 25 different ride options, with 20 providers and 28 ride options serving 98 zip codes by the end of 2019.

A to B continued to improve by incorporating user feedback, which came from some of the 665 uses of the tool by 544 unique riders and the 40 beta testers representing clients of five agencies (ACCESS, the Allegheny County Health Department, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, North Hills Community Outreach, and Wesley Family Services). Of the 36 post-launch users who gave feedback, 60% were “happy,” 25% felt the service was “okay,” and 15% reported feeling “sad.” AFGP actively sought service gaps and has modified the tool to allow users to report when they receive no results, meaning the Age-Friendly Transportation Work Group can determine if the problem is that no options cover the trip, or if the site didn’t find an existing route. Analysis of satisfaction survey questions, which have also been improved over time, is pending. Early findings indicate that there is a demand for employment-related transportation and more options for people under 60.

Like all aspects of life in the Pittsburgh region, the A to B tool and its use have been affected by COVID-19. All existing options involve interacting with another person, sometimes with very close contact, and sometimes with many people at once. Volunteer-based ride providers have become much less available since the spread of COVID-19 to Allegheny County in March 2020.

(5) Ensuring that riders, service providers, and other stakeholders know about the A to B tool remains important, and in-person outreach opportunities were curtailed by the pandemic. Nevertheless, AFGP partners exceeded their goal of five public promotions of A to B. They distributed flyers at the All for All “From Other to Us” community dinner, the Alzheimer’s Association Conference, and the LGBTQ+ Housing Summit. The Transportation Work Group also gave several presentations about A to B. The A to

B presentation at United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania (UWSWPA) reached 30 leaders from their Community Impact team in August 2019; A to B was presented to seven senior staff members at the Port Authority, and to 38 participants at the TIRES forum. The A to B presentation at UWSWPA strengthened important connections through a follow-up tour with staffers at United Way’s 24-7 call center, 2-1-1.

Additional Transportation Work Group events included a presentation to the Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging (ACAAA), for 65 community service providers, and the presentation at the annual SWPPA conference in October 2019, “Age-Friendly Transportation: Ingenuity in Action.”

(6) Also related to Action Items #3 and #4, AFGP wrote a letter in support of Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG)’s AARP Community Challenge Grant application. The grant would fund the production of pop-up “Better Block” style adaptations. The demonstrations would highlight the need for improved safety for users of transit systems and pedestrian infrastructure.

Notable Access-Themed Action Items

#4: Creative, Far-Reaching Transit, #7: Online Concierge for Ride Options & #3 Complete Streets Advocacy

**2019-
2020
Goals**

- Goals for Creative, Far-Reaching Transit: decrease number of unmet transit requests
Goals for Complete Streets Advocacy: Align with the Complete Streets movement to increase safety, equity, and comfort among people of all generations. Policy focused.
Goals for Online Concierge Ride Options (A to B):
- Pitch story to news outlets, at least two of which have predominantly Black audiences or readership
 - Promote A to B by distributing information on A to B to AARP’s legislator list
 - Distribute A to B information to service coordinators in at least 50 senior residences
 - Continue site usability improvement based on feedback from site visitors
 - # questions on provider and user profiles
 - # providers included and partners involved

Progress

<ul style="list-style-type: none">○# of tool users, # of zip codes, and gaps in transportation options identified
<ul style="list-style-type: none">(2) Mobilization of collaborative network during the COVID-19 emergency:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mass deliveries of meals, food, and PPE by AFGP partner network○ Continued personal transportation of older and disabled people(3) a. AFGP Director on DOMI Shared & Autonomous Vehicle Working Group 2018-20b. Aurora Autonomous Vehicle Facility Tour Nov 2019 with AARP & ACCESS(4) Recovery Streets Task Force(5) a. Improvements to the A to B concierge rider service tool and marketingb. Use of A to B tool<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 665 hits, 544 unique for 9 months in 2019-2020(6) Age-Friendly Transportation Work Group presentations<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A to B Community impact presentation at UWSWPA to 30 leaders, 8/6/19<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ follow-up tour with 2-1-1, 8/8/19○ Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging, 65 Community service providers○ Transportation Work Group presented at SWPPA Annual Conference in Oct 2019, "Age-Friendly Transportation: Ingenuity in Action"(7) AFGP letter of support for PCRG's AARP Grant application for pop-up demonstrations to improve pedestrian and transit user experience

One additional Action Item in the Access focus area—#6: Health Promotion Expansion—deserves special mention because of the expansion in scope and relationships represented in the activities relating to it this year. Beth Mulvaney, a member of the SWPPA Board and a professor of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work, led Pitt Geriatrics Week from October 21-25, 2019. Participants included 220 health professions students: 145 medical students, 18 pharmacy students, 15 nutrition students and 10 nurse practitioner students. Students were introduced to age-inclusive perspectives and issues, along with Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh itself. Then the students applied their learning by visiting community healthcare sites to explore and evaluate the age-friendliness of the space

and practices. The students completed their educational experience by offering information and context to the healthcare site they visited, to support the site’s expansion of access and age-friendliness.

Notable Access-Themed Action Item #6: Health Promotion Expansion

2019-2020 Goals and Objectives

General goal: Extend evidence-based models for health promotion, particularly no-cost or low-cost for participants and with relationship components

Objectives

- Increase number of participants of all ages, with additional zip codes served, particularly in underserved areas with large populations of older residents

Measures:

1. number of participants
2. # zip codes served

Progress

Pitt Geriatrics Week: participants included 220 health professions students

Also related to bike and pedestrian access and safety in 2020, the Transportation Work Group contacted AFGP’s Cleveland counterpart to learn more about their adaptive bike program, Silver Spokes. BikePGH and AFGP met and discussed possibly partnering with Venture Outdoors and BOLD. There was a lot of interest on the part of local bike shops, but the project has currently been postponed to ensure that it is done with the appropriate capacity for handling the bicycles themselves, in terms of sourcing, storage, and maintenance. The COVID-19 pandemic also presents substantial challenges for such a program, due to the hands-on nature of the process.

In addition to the Access-related activities described above, important policy and infrastructure changes related to AFGP’s work on The Crossings (Action Item #1) reached full implementation in 2020. Thanks in part to the advocacy efforts of Lively Pittsburgh and AFGP through “The Crossings” performances, gathering community input, and consulting with the Pittsburgh Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI), the problematic intersection at 40th Street and Penn Avenue has finally

undergone a pedestrian safety overhaul in January 2020. The intersection, which is located between Bloomfield and Lawrenceville, now has 3-second leading pedestrian intervals for all crosswalks, an automatic visual walk signal with countdown and audible countdown with push-button access, and updated curb ramps new traffic signals, safer lagging left turn for drivers in both directions approaching Penn Avenue from 40th Street. Tweets from Mayor Peduto's Chief of Staff and DOMI highlight this accomplishment:

"Now THAT'S a good looking signal! (40th@Penn) New pedestrian countdowns, audible cues (push button for audible indicator - no need to push for walk phase!), new protected turn. Thanks to @AgeFriendlyPGH for championing our older adults here and helping us make it safer for all!"

-Tweet from Department of Mobility & Infrastructure, June 10, 2020

"City partnered with neighbors and @AgeFriendlyPGH at 40th/Penn to install new crosswalks, new handicap [sic] ramps, new traffic signals, pedestrian countdown signals, protected turn, and auto walk phase"

-Tweet from Daniel Gilman, Mayor Peduto's Chief of Staff, June 10, 2020

Connection

In the Connection focus area, seven Action Items saw substantial progress in 2019-2020: Action Items #10: Speaker's Bureau, #11: Sensitivity on the Bus, #12: Campaign to combat social isolation, #13: Arts for All, #15: Centers for more than seniors, #17: Solidarity Discussions, and #19: GenPGH.

Before COVID-19 limited in-person gatherings and travel, AFGP had a very active year for outreach events and presentations. Their activities addressing Action Item #10 included a wide range of forms of engagement and inter-organization connections in many locations. The Transportation Work Group made several conference presentations, which are described under Access-related Action Items, above. Other presentations included: (1) Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh's Director presented a TEDx talk in October

2019 (2) presentations at the SWPPA Annual Conference, the Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging Summit, and moderation of a panel of Age-Friendly community leaders at the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (OAAAA) conference, (3) two presentations at University of Pittsburgh Graduate Schools of Public Health and Social Work and two presentations at Carnegie Mellon University, and (4) advising on age-friendly community changes at a Lively session at SWPPA Annual Conference, the Lawrenceville United Monthly Meeting, and six AARP Livable phone sessions in five counties—one in Ohio, and four in Pennsylvania.

(1)Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh’s Director presented a TEDx talk entitled, “Reimagining Communities for All Ages” in October 2019. The recording of the talk has 3,204 views on YouTube, and AFGP continues to receive inquiries from experts who learn about AFGP or age-friendliness through the video. Professors at three institutions have been in touch with AFGP and incorporated the video and the concepts it covers into their courses.

(2)2019-2020 was an active year for conference participation prior to COVID-19 travel and gathering shutdowns in March 2020. AFGP presented at the annual SWPPA Conference in October 2019 to 187 people, in an afternoon session and three breakout sessions. AFGP moderated a panel of Age-Friendly community leaders at the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (OAAAA) conference in October 2019, with 36 attendees. AFGP’s director also presented a keynote on community engagement at the Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging Summit in December 2020, for an audience of 150, on the recommendation of AARP national.

(3)AFGP brought an introduction to age-friendliness to two area Universities in 2019-2020. At University of Pittsburgh, AFGP presented at the Graduate School of Public Health in February 2020, with six students in attendance. Then, in March 2020, AFGP was a guest at the Graduate School of Social Work, presenting “Adult Development and Aging” to six students. At Carnegie Mellon University, AFGP gave presentations to the Fall and Spring semester section of Introduction to Physical Computing, attended by

11 people in November 2019 and 25 people (virtually) in April 2020. The presentation covered universal design and age-friendly communities. The students applied that understanding to create prototypes of tools that an older adult might use to make routine daily activities safer, more comfortable, or more convenient. In Summer 2020, AFGP met twice virtually to advise a group of four undergraduate Carnegie Mellon students participating in the university's COVID-19 Innovation Challenge, a connection made through the Introduction to Physical Computing course.

(4) 2019-2020 also saw many outreach events around advising on age-friendly community changes within and beyond Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania before the pandemic made travel and large gatherings unsafe. In the Pittsburgh area, AFGP's events included a Lively session at SWPPA's Annual Conference in October 2019 and the Lawrenceville United Monthly Meeting, which 25 people attended via Zoom and over 1,000 viewed on FB Live in May 2020. From 2019-2020, AFGP held six AARP Livable phone sessions in Pennsylvania, with Westmoreland County, York, and Lehigh Valley. Beyond Pennsylvania, AFGP advised Age-Friendly Delaware County, Ohio on their planning process at the recommendation of AARP Livable Communities Senior Advisor Bill Armbruster.

Notable Connection-Themed Action Item #10: Speakers Bureau

Goals

Train six Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh Leadership Circle members and older advocates to give general presentations about AFGP. This group of people will be diverse, representing different ages, races, areas of Allegheny County and more.

Progress

(1) TEDx talk by AFGP Director, "Reimagining Communities for All Ages" October 2019

- 2,835 views on YouTube
- Experts including professors at three institutions have reached out for insight and incorporated it into their courses

(2) Conferences

SWPPA Annual Conference, October 2019, 187 people

AFGP presented in afternoon session and three breakouts

Moderated OAAAA panel of Age-Friendly leaders, October 2019, 36 people

Keynote for MN Leadership Council on Aging Summit, Dec. 2020, 15 people

- recommended by AARP national to speak about community engagement

(3) Educational Sessions

U. Pitt Grad. School of Public Health, February 2020, 6 students

U. Pitt Grad. School of Social Work, "Adult Development & Aging," March 2020, 6 students

CMU Intro to Physical Computing

- virtual presentation for 11 people in November 2019 and 25 people in April 2020

- presentation on universal design; student teams design a tool for older adults

(4) Outreach Events

Pennsylvania

- SWPPA Lively Session, October 2019

- Lawrenceville United Monthly Meeting

 - 25 people via Zoom and over 1,000 on FB Live May 2020

- AARP Livable Phone sessions with other counties

 - Total of 6 sessions: Westmoreland, Delaware, York, Lehigh Valley

Delaware County, Ohio:

- advised Age-Friendly Delaware County on planning process

- recommended by AARP Livable Communities Senior Advisor Bill Armbruster

In partnership with Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAAC), AFGP continued their bus operator sensitivity training sessions, which have now been incorporated as a standard feature of new operator training. Seven trainings have reached 145 new bus operators to date. This project is the focus of Action Item #11: Sensitivity on the bus. In 2019 the September and December trainings included 62 new bus operators, and the trainings after that have been suspended due to COVID-19. The training contains interactive educational elements and is designed to promote understanding and compassionate treatment of older and disabled bus riders. Riders participated in developing the training, which takes place in a space including a partial PAAC bus. Images of the training materials also play on video screens

in the bus operators’ “cruise room,” with key tips from riders, such as, “It really helps me when you wait for me to sit down [before moving the bus].”

“One day we will be that age or in [their] position.”

-PAAC bus operator post-training survey comment

Bus operators shared positive feedback about the training sessions, and reported (1) an increased awareness of the experiences and needs of older and disabled riders (average of 4.6/5 in response to, “I better understand the experiences of older adults and people with disabilities”) and (2) a commitment to changed practice as a result of this learning (average of 4.8/5 in response to, “I will consider these tips and perspectives when operating the bus.”). One driver wrote, “Great awareness for low visibility and shortness of breath. Try more often to always kneel, so far not always possible at every stop.” Another operator’s survey response read, “This information is really helpful to better understand the needs of the aging.” One driver simply said, “One day we will be that age or in [their] position.” A PAAC bus operator participated in a 2018 AFGP Legislative Briefing in Pittsburgh’s City Council Chambers and shared how meaningful it is to her that bus operators are part of this effort. She views herself as part of a coordinated system of people working to make Pittsburgh more age-friendly.

**Notable Connection-Themed Action Item #11:
Sensitivity on the Bus**

SMART Goals

- From the Transportation Work Group Meeting February 2020
1. Expand PAAC training to one hour and incorporate best practices from other transit providers
 2. Establish best practices for older adult travel training
 3. Develop rider-focused resources on rider rights and responsibilities

Progress

- Continued bus operator training with new operators at Port Authority
 - seven trainings reached 145 new bus operators
 - strong working relationship with PAAC Training Manager
- Riders involved in training

- Positive bus operator feedback to trainings
- Legislative session testimony about value of training by bus operator

Many AFGP projects in 2019-2020 related most closely to Action Items #13: Arts for All, and #15: Centers for More than Seniors: (1) Wilksburg Drum Circle, (2) In-Formed by Nature Art Workshop, August 2020, and Art Opening and Exhibit, August-October 2019, (4) Aging Your Way neighborhood workshops, outreach, presentation of the Aging Your Way Toolkit at SWPPA, and the Age-Friendly Challenge.

(1)The Wilksburg Drum Circle is a resident-led gathering that began as an idea and connection between neighbors at an Aging Your Way workshop. Lively supports by providing supplies, but it is a new community-run tradition. The Drum Circle has met 27 times, including twice using an online meeting format due to COVID-19.

(2) Age-friendly creative events organized by AFGP provided opportunities for intergenerational arts engagement in 2019-2020. In August 2019, 70 people, aged 50-81 and from 15 zip codes, participated in the In-Formed by Nature art workshop. The mixed-media photography and natural materials workshop at The Frick Environmental Center was led by Lively Pittsburgh—in collaboration with The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, The Frick Environmental Center, The Jewish Healthcare Foundation—and taught by artists Lisa Seligman and Isaac Bower. Participants created art related to their sensory experiences, emotions, and memories of objects and processes in nature. The next month, 150 community members of all ages attended the opening of the exhibit of their work, which ran until October 2019. Participants and facilitators were very positive about the experience:

“This is what this space was designed for! It’s so good to see and feel the excitement and energy, and to see the space brought to life!”

- Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Staff

“This is so professionally done! It’s amazing to see our work displayed this way.”

- In-Formed by Nature Workshop Participant

“It was so exciting and inspiring to know we’d have an art exhibit as a culmination of our workshop. I love it! Please do this again!”

- In-Formed by Nature Workshop Participants

(3) Aging Your Way (AYW) neighborhood workshops are creative, participatory workshops facilitated by Lively Pittsburgh. Many successful Aging Your Way workshops have brought together the people, skills, and resources to start intergenerational resident-led community projects that have endured in the neighborhood after the workshop is over. Events in 2019-2020 were held in historically marginalized neighborhoods Larimer, Beechview, East Liberty, and Wilksburg, and have been key to relationship-building between AFGP and communities whose concerns are often unheard. Attack Theatre continues to partner with "Aging Your Way" during their neighborhood workshops.

Aging Your Way workshops in 2019-2020 included:

- Beechview neighborhood, July 2019, 11 residents ages 34-80 from 15216 zip code
 - Immigration stories in this diverse group emerged as a theme
- Wilksburg neighborhood, July, 9 residents ages 60-85 from 15235 zip code. Age breakdown: 60-85
- Larimer neighborhood, August 2019, 17 residents from 15206 zip code. Age breakdown: 34-99
 - a ninety-nine-year-old Larimer resident shared photos and stories of the neighborhood from the past century
 - Lincoln-Lemington residents offered to assist in Larimer neighborhood clean-ups

A major project came to fruition this year when the Aging Your Way Toolkit was published. The Toolkit is a tangible way of supporting community-led age-friendly projects. It is structured as a guide to creating a five-hour “community lab” session, where neighbors can meet one another and share their visions of what their neighborhood could be. The guide is friendly and thorough, but approachable. Important foundational principles such as ensuring diverse participation are discussed throughout. Lively Pittsburgh presented the Age-Friendly Toolkit at the SWPPA Annual Conference (10/15/19), in a session called "Aging Your Way: Creating Age-Friendly, People Centered, Healthy Neighborhoods."

“We grew our connections in meeting one another face to face. Together, we evoked stories of personal and communal challenges and triumphs, and we began to inspire and incubate visions of how the community could be more accessible and livable for all.”

-Aging Your Way organizing team member describing their Ground Game

The Age-Friendly Challenge awards mini-grants to projects that come out of AYW workshops. An Age-Friendly Showcase was planned for March 2020, but it had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Notable Connection-Themed Action Items:

#13: Arts for All &

#15: Centers for More Than Seniors

2019-2020 Goals

Goal of Arts for All: Offer intergenerational events for older and younger Hill District and Northside residents first, and expand to other neighborhoods with promising arts and cultural opportunities that foster increased intergenerational dialogue and promote solidarity; measure # of events and # of participants

Progress

(1) Wilksburg Drum Circle has gathered 27 times, a community-led gathering that arose as a result of Aging Your Way and the Age-Friendly Challenge

(2) In-Formed by Nature

- Art Workshop 70 participants August 2020
- In-Formed by Nature Art Opening & Exhibit, 150 participants, Aug-Oct 2019
- Attack Theatre as continued partners in "Aging Your Way" workshops

(3) Aging Your Way

- outreach in diverse neighborhoods
- Aging Your Way Toolkit created and presented at the SWPPA conference
- Age-Friendly Challenge

Notable Connection-Themed Action Item

#17: Solidarity Discussions

2019-2020

Progress

- Hillman grant, with aging as a priority for the Foundation (Action Item #17)
- Four Aging Your Way workshops held in four neighborhoods with more than 37 participants, ages 34-99
- Lively Pittsburgh presented at SWPPA Annual Conference (10/15/19), "Aging Your Way: Creating Age-Friendly, People Centered, Healthy Neighborhoods."

Five Action Items best represent AFGP's 2019-2020 work on isolation. Counteracting isolation is a critical task for supporting aging in any setting, and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of isolated people. An April 2020 survey of 3,776 people over age 60 taken the first week of April 2020 determined that older people needed more connection than they had gotten since being forced to stay at home or not see family. (Pennsylvania Department of Aging Council on Aging, 2020) The

need to maintain physical distance has presented many additional challenges to in-person connection. When the pandemic emergency began in Allegheny County, AFGP's previous work with Action Item #27: Virtual Senior Academy, served as a model upon which to build a virtual adaptation of AFGP's popular #CoffeeConnectPGH activity. The report concluded that connecting older adults to technology and programming to counteract social isolation should be prioritized (Pennsylvania Department of Aging Council on Aging, 2020). The authors of the study provided Virtual Senior Academy as a promising option for older adults to connect with others around common interests and activities.

The #CoffeeConnectPGH events have been extremely popular since their introduction. One November 2019 gathering of 34 participants took place at Crazy Mocha in Bloomfield, hosted in partnership with the Bloomfield Development Corporation and State Representative Sara Innamorato's office. In addition to intergenerational conversations, the participants at the first event were able to connect to resources facilitated by Representative Innamorato's office, such as registering in the free Port Authority Transit card program. A total of nine virtual #CoffeeConnectPGH sessions with 52 attendees have been held as of August 2020, and the organizers plan to continue the alternate-Thursday event via Zoom throughout the pandemic. Participants since the transition to virtual events have included neighbors who had never met one another in person, who were able to meet because of #CoffeeConnectPGH.

The Virtual Senior Academy (VSA) platform has been an invaluable portal for connection for people of all ages in the Pittsburgh region during the COVID-19 pandemic. The April 2020 PA Council on Aging State of Older Adults During COVID-19 report offered the VSA model as a promising example of successful online programming. At least 1,060 accounts had been created by April 2020, 92 of which were set up after Allegheny County's March 23 "stay-at-home" order—a rate of increase of about 300%—leading to class sizes roughly twice the size of pre-February 2020 averages. The new programs include offerings designed to include children, which has expanded the age-range of users dramatically, including children as young as five.

Notable Connection- and Innovation-themed Action Items:

#12: Campaign to Combat Social Isolation & #27, Virtual Senior Academy

Progress

- (1) Virtual Senior Academy programming increased dramatically during and after March 2020 COVID-19 shutdowns, with more programming for all ages
- (2) Civic Champs “Helping Hands” app
- (3) #CoffeeConnectPGH
 - Bloomfield, November 2019 with 34 participants
 - on Virtual Senior Academy eight times, March-August 2020, > 60 participants
- (4) Addressing Loneliness and Social Isolation Webinar with Dr. Al Condeluci in May 2020 attended by 220 people

Work on Action Item #12 (Campaign to Combat Social Isolation) in 2019-2020 also included a presentation by past SWPPA Board President Dr. Al Condeluci. Dr. Condeluci brought his considerable expertise and perspective to the ongoing conversation about social isolation in the form of a successful May 2020 webinar, “Addressing Loneliness and Social Isolation: The Key to a Better Life.”

**“Social isolation and loneliness are measurable,
but difficult for people to admit and talk about.”**

- Dr. Al Condeluci

The interactive event, sponsored by SWPPA, welcomed 220 participants. Dr. Condeluci’s life’s work has been in disability advocacy and community support. His experience in the field spans more than 50 years and includes work in human services, academia, and policy advocacy in Pittsburgh and at the state and national levels. In his words, in addition to understanding that social isolation presents a health risk for anyone, “We also know that marginalized groups, folks with disabilities, seniors, those in poverty, and

other minorities, are at greater risk of being lonely, isolated, or disconnected.” The webinar introduced participants to the concept of “social capital,” the state of research on isolation and the related measurement of loneliness as a quantifiable health status, the effective approaches to addressing loneliness currently taken in other countries, and what lessons are applicable in age-inclusivity work in the southwestern PA region. One core idea from the UK’s approach that Dr. Condeluci believes should be integrated into accessibility and age inclusion work in the US is the “social prescription”—the idea that the health benefits of social interaction are so significant that manifesting the space in which those connections can form is a medical need and is in the public’s interest to provide. Dr. Condeluci pointed to the Rachel Carson Ecovillage cohousing community as an example of how a housing model can counteract the complex, interrelated factors that lead to loneliness and isolation for so many older and disabled people.

Innovation

In addition to the progress on Virtual Senior Academy (Action Item #27), described above with the Connection-Focused Action Items, three other Action Items from the Innovation focus area should be noted for their applicable activities in 2019-2020: #23, New Housing Solutions, #21: Dementia-Friendly Conversations, #22: Dementia-Friendly Training, and #24: The Job Search Redefined—with the Connection-focused Action Item #19: GenPGH.

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh made significant progress in 2019-2020 on Innovation Action Item #23, New Housing Solutions. Age-diverse cohousing options are an important aspect of age-inclusive communities. The Rachel Carson Ecovillage at Chatham University’s Eden Hall Campus is in advanced planning stages. The Age-Friendly Housing Work Group has made enormous progress on all of their objectives for the project, including practical planning, contractor relationships, and financial milestones

ahead of schedule. The team, including interested people and future residents, has met monthly—six times in 2020 as of this evaluation’s writing. The last in-person meeting in January 2020 drew 66 attendees; the subsequent meetings have all taken place on Zoom. Interestingly, the organizers have decided that even after restrictions on gatherings are lifted, they intend to continue to conduct their regular meetings via Zoom, because they find the structured format efficient, fair, accessible, and flexible. As of July 2020, 70 people are inquiring participants and 30 people are regularly involved in planning meetings. The potential residents come from 24 zip codes, and range in age from 30s to 70s.

Importantly, the Ecovillage team continue to reach out to Black communities in the Pittsburgh region through social, professional, religious, and non-profit organizational connections. Inclusion of diverse neighbors—in terms of race, ability, age, family makeup, economic privilege, and other demographics—is a topic of current conversation in intentional communities, and the Rachel Carson Ecovillage planners have been active participants in that work.

The project is working with an ecologist toward long-term transformation and ongoing stewardship over decades to more than a century. The buildings’ overall placement is established; there will be three clusters of 11 units around courtyard—a blend of rental and owned properties. There is an orchard commons to extend Chatham’s existing heirloom orchards. The space is pedestrian focused with cars kept off to the side and accessibility considered.

Also related to innovative housing solutions, the Housing Work Group presented, “Building Momentum in Health and Housing” at SWPPA’s Annual Conference. AFGP also assisted with hosting MINKA’s “Transform Rural Aging” event, featuring Dr. Bill Thomas. Dr. Thomas’ November 2020 event was held at MuseumLab and welcomed 51 participants. The event highlighted Dr. Thomas’ new intentional housing model designed for people with dementia. Dr. Bill Thomas is a geriatrician who has founded multiple innovative housing models for older people, including the Green House, Eden Alternative, and Minka Homes + Communities. Other speakers at the event included Kathy Gillespie, CEO of the Clearfield

County Area Agency on Aging and co-founder of the Minka Village of Hope, Harry Johnson II, the Regional Director for Sen. Bob Casey, and Laura Poskin, Director of AFGP. Musician & Alzheimer’s advocate Jay Allen also performed at the event.

“We have a lack of affordable housing in rural PA. We have an opioid epidemic that has left grandparents raising young children, without access to supportive services and transportation. Everybody here is part of the solution.”

-Kathy Gillespie #TransformAging

-Tweet from MINKA about the Rural Aging event 11/20/2019

Notable Innovation-Themed Action Items: #23 New Housing Solutions

**2019-2020
SMART
Goals**

- (1) Move forward with Rachel Carson Ecovillage by:
 - convening monthly meetups through June 2020, welcoming > 50 prospective homeowners from diverse backgrounds (age, race, zip code)
 - recruiting 30 homeowners by June 2020
 - finalizing design for 1-3 bedroom homes & common house by December 2020
- (2) In conjunction with partners such as AARP PA:
 - support the development of at least two new housing models in our region
 - include LGBTQ-friendly and senior cohousing, in new housing models
 - increase awareness of innovative programs
- (3) Convene at least one meeting to identify and explore options and issues with home modification and the current resources that are available.

Progress

- (1) Rachel Carson Ecovillage progress:
 - Held introductory sessions attended by 66 people
 - Successful transition to virtual sessions since March 2020
 - 136 people of diverse ages in 17 zip codes have made inquiries
 - “core group” of 36 people meeting and participating in workgroups
 - LLC status and formal membership structure established
 - Design discussions under budget with contractor began in May
- (2) Dr. Bill Thomas event for MINKA: Transform Rural Aging with 51 attendees
 - Presentation of new dementia-friendly intentional community housing model
- (3) Age-Friendly Housing Work Group chair Jim Pieffer presented at SWPPA Annual Conference (10/15/19), "Building Momentum in Health and Housing"

Related to Action Items #21 and 22, Dementia-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh (considered a work group in AFGP's structure; part of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging's Dementia Friendly Network) hosted "Cutting Edge Trends in Research" with Dr. Rebecca Edelmayer, the Director of Scientific Engagements and Medical & Scientific Relations at the National Alzheimer's Association. The August 2018 event was attended by 35 people at Presbyterian SeniorCare Network's Longwood at Oakmont in Verona, PA.

Dementia-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh (DFGP) reached out to their contacts with tips and strategies from Dementia360 and DFGP to help caregivers of people living with dementia to keep their loved ones engaged at home, how to communicate with them about the pandemic and what is happening, information about virtual Dementia Friends sessions, and information about virtual caregiver support groups from the Alzheimer's Association. They also included the Emergency Preparedness Guide from the Alzheimer's Association and resources from UPMC's Senior Services.

Notable Connection-Themed Action Items

#21: Dementia-Friendly Conversations and

#22: Dementia-Friendly Training

SMART

Goals

Goals for Dementia-Friendly Conversations:

1. Identify 3 new community leaders/champions per month in various sectors (i.e. faith-based organizations, arts/culture entities, local libraries, financial institutions, businesses, healthcare, etc.) to join the leadership team and create awareness of dementia-friendly initiatives in the community. Intentional outreach to get more diverse voices around the table, with a goal of at least 3 new people of color on the leadership team by end of year.
2. Steward newly identified community leaders/champions to utilize the dementia-friendly toolkit and engage the community in at least (6) new dementia-friendly activities throughout the year (i.e. host site for or participant in dementia-friendly conversations in their community, host Dementia Friends session, etc.).
3. Identify and reach out to local policymakers/elected officials with welcome letter and schedule a minimum of 1 meeting with official and/or staff per quarter to introduce dementia-friendly toolkit. Secure 4 or more elected officials to lend their name in support of Dementia-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh.
4. Have an elected official attend or host a dementia-friendly event 1-2 times per year.

Goals for Dementia-Friendly Trainings:

1. Engage at least 2 dementia-friendly social engagement events and/or trainings per quarter designed for members in the community diagnosed with dementia and/or their care partners and families to actively participate in shaping their dementia-friendly community (i.e. Dementia Friends sessions, memory cafés, etc.).
2. Seek participation of 1-2 participants living with dementia during each dementia-friendly social engagement activity or training.
3. Host or participate in 2 educational conferences/events per year that target providers, families, care partners, and people living with dementia.
4. Connect to 300+ participants annually through educational and engagement endeavors.

Progress

- Dementia-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh Cutting Edge Trends in Alzheimer's Research event, 8/2019, 35 people
- Nov 2020 "Transform Rural Aging" event featured musician & Alzheimer's advocate Jay Allen, attended by 51 people
- Email outreach with tips and strategies from Dementia360 / DFGP to help caregivers of PLWD provide engagement and reassurance during COVID-19

Momentum on GenPGH, a professional development network for emerging leaders in aging, built this year prior to the postponement of in-person events due to COVID-19. AFGP partnered with Perkins Eastman, and their survey of emerging professionals yielded information about their needs and goals for GenPGH. As of 11/1/19, 17 participants had completed a survey about what they hope to contribute to and learn from professional development group sessions. Perkins Eastman is working on next steps, to be moved into a virtual space or postponed until in-person meetings are safe.

The needs and specialties of older adults in the workforce were also set to be explored in an Around the Table South event with 25 attendees that was planned with AARP PA, JFCS Career Development Center, and Mon Valley Initiative. Relatedly, The Power of Our Older Workforce: Study and infographic were both completed.

Notable Innovation-Themed Action Items:
#24: The Job Search, Redefined
& Action Item #19: GenPGH

2019-2020

Goals

Goal for #24: The Job Search, Redefined
 Increased workforce participation among people of all ages; Increased skill-building opportunities and entrepreneurial competencies across generations

Progress

- The Power of Our Older Workforce study completed
 - commissioned by SWPPA and AFGP
 - completed October 2019 by Chris Briem at the University Center for Social and Urban Research (UCSUR) at the University of Pittsburgh in
 - Infographic by longtime partner Dezudio to communicate key findings
- Around the Table South event postponed due to COVID-19
 - AARP Pennsylvania, JFCS Career Development Center, and Mon Valley Initiative
 - 25 RSVPs, strong interest
- GenPGH partnerships
 - Perkins Eastman, Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging, and AFGP
 - Surveyed 17 emerging professionals to learn more about their needs
 - Postponed Big Table event with PE and ACAA
 - 12 RSVPs by emerging leaders

The following Action Items were less applicable to the 2019-2020 work. A few are highlighted:

Progress on Additional Action Items

Access	#2: Walkability Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Allegheny County sidewalk centerline data incorporated into app Gathered curb cut/ramp data for two Pittsburgh neighborhoods Piloted pathVu Navigation app with beta testers Planning further pilot opportunities with new ADA coordinator for Pittsburgh
	#8: Connecting Referral Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly connected key partners AFGP, AAA, South Hills Interfaith Movement (SHIM), and PA 2-1-1 Housing Working Group was planning collaboration with PA Housing Finance Agency to improve PA Housing Search site AFGP Housing Work Group presented at SWPPA Annual Conference (10/15/19), "Building Momentum in Health and Housing" Check-in Call Network offered for all 2-1-1 callers over age 60
Connection	#14: Parks Reimagined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fit with a Legislator with PA State House of Representatives Edward Gainey on 8/14/19
	#16: Gardening for Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plantings completed in 2019-2020 before COVID
	#18: Welcoming Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three Aging Your Way Workshops held, with AYW projects ongoing in those communities
Innovation	#20: An Age-Friendly Seal	See #24
	#25: Intergenerational Tech Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age-Friendly Tech North Expands the 1:1 Tech Buddies intergenerational training started before the pandemic, in active planning now
	#26: Direct Care Workforce Development	<p>Goal: explore equity dimensions of care workforce, increased use of standardized training, and increased opportunities for capacity-building.</p> <p>(1) SWPPA Policy Session, LTC Council presentation Oct 2019</p> <p>(2) Age-Friendly Leadership Circle member Jen Blatz from AARP presented at SWPPA Annual Conference (10/15/19), "Be Inventive: Policy Advocacy and the Blueprint for Strengthening Pennsylvania's Direct Care Workforce"</p>
	Action Item #28: Tech Support	<p>Promotion of VSA & other assisted tech for families decrease loneliness.</p> <p>(1) North Hills Community Outreach awarded \$10,000 for "Age-Friendly Tech North 2020" via connection from Age-Friendly Tech Work Group</p> <p>(2) Age-Friendly Tech North postponed during COVID-19</p>

The pathVu project had already demonstrated sustained action in the first two years of AFGP's Action

Plan implementation. In 2017, pathVu was awarded a Federal Highway Administration grant of \$425,000

to develop their accessible wayfinding sidewalk/path app. The pathVu Navigation app launched on time in 2018 and has over 100 active beta testers across both major smartphone operating systems. PathVu has mapped 800 miles of Pittsburgh sidewalk centerlines and has gathered data about sidewalk quality on 905 miles of sidewalk in five diverse Pittsburgh neighborhoods. The team has made important connections to accessibility work in other U.S. cities as well, including Portland, Boston, Washington D.C., and Louisville. Here in Pittsburgh, pathVu presented at a booth and poster session for the International Seating Symposium to 3,000-4,000 attendees, and they reported an enthusiastic reception for their work and considerable interest in the service.

Progress on the pathVu app and the Walkability Studies continued this year, as the team moved forward on all 2019-2020 SMART goals. All Allegheny County sidewalk centerline data have now been incorporated into pathVu Navigation app, and the team has gathered curb cut/ramp data for two Pittsburgh neighborhoods. The pathVu Navigation app is in use by over 100 beta testers. The pathVu leadership has also been in conversation with Pittsburgh's new ADA coordinator about further pilot opportunities with the city.

The Connecting Referral Services Action Item goal is to increase older adults' access to services by strengthening connections information and referral providers, and there has been progress toward that goal prior to 2019-2020. AFGP helped coordinate a well-attended 2018 meeting, with 58 attendees whose work centers around information and referral, including ACAA and PA 2-1-1. As a direct result of discussion with AFGP, AAA, South Hills Interfaith Movement (SHIM), and PA 2-1-1 now meet with partners quarterly, to facilitate ongoing interorganizational collaboration. As of February 2020, the Housing Working Group was planning to collaborate with the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency to improve the PA Housing Search site as a definitive resource for older adults to search for affordable housing.

The Gardening for Good Action Item focuses on locating spaces for intergenerational community gardens and tree planting sites. In 2018 and 2019, six schools participated in the initiative, with over 850

students planting more than 250 trees. Additionally, in Summer 2018, three workshops with 33 attendees of all ages planted six universal-design-informed raised-bed gardens. Many organizational connections have been strengthened through activities related to this Action Item, including One Tree Per Child Pittsburgh, the Vincentian Academy and Vincentian Collaborative System, the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation, The Children's Museum, the Jewish Agency on Aging, the Alzheimer's Association, Gwen's Girls, New Sun Rising, Lawrenceville United, and Lively Pittsburgh. The intergenerational participation in these events is particularly meaningful. The Vincentian project included an age range of 16-97, and the universal design raised bed project included middle school students and adults up to age 78. Plantings continued in 2019-2020, before the COVID-19 shutdown.

The Age-Friendly Tech North Event (related to Action Item #28) was postponed in April 2020 due to COVID-19. Through a connection formed via Age-Friendly Tech Work Group, North Hills Community Outreach was awarded \$10,000 for "Age-Friendly Tech North 2020:"

Action Items Deferred in 2019-2020

Access	<p>Action Item #5: Housing Assessment and Mapping Action Item #9: Murals to Help Caregivers</p>
Innovation	<p>Action Item #29: Disaster Preparedness Action Item #30: Bye Week Back Home</p>

Four Action Items were largely deferred or not scheduled for focus in 2019-2020: #5: Housing Assessment and Mapping, #9: Murals to Help Caregivers, #29: Disaster Preparedness, and #30: Bye Week Back Home. During the first two years of Action Plan implementation (2017-2019), AFGP made substantial progress on some of these four Action Items, particularly Housing Assessment and Mapping and Murals to Help Caregivers, and there may be opportunities for revisiting some of these in 2020-2021 and beyond.

The Housing Assessment and Mapping Action Item was created with the goal of producing “a community asset map and plan for future redesign of senior housing in our region” and “a public-facing

guide to Age-Friendly Housing in Greater Pittsburgh to build visibility that helps consumers and makes a case for increased options.” In 2018, the initial version of geomapped Subsidized Housing options was produced based on the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) annual “Housing Information Guide for Senior Adults.” With a strong working group size of 10-12 organizations, the Housing Work Group is well-positioned to include further housing mapping and assessment in their new five-year cycle.

The Murals to Help Caregivers Action Item is designed to support the addition of “culturally relevant art and messaging in urban and suburban neighborhoods, increasing intergenerational dialogue about caregiving and self-identification to find help.” With a \$1000 Age-Friendly Challenge Grant, thirteen Senior Portraits were completed in 2018, and further grant opportunities to support similar public art are being researched. In 2018-2019, the Color Beechview project drew neighbors together to make temporary public art.

V. Conclusions & Recommendations

Strengths will be discussed first, followed by recommendations in the following section.

1. Strengths and Accomplishments

i. Relationships and Culture

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh’s continued strength comes from the solid foundation of community and organizational support they established with their initial planning and the relationships they have nurtured throughout their five years. The Leadership Circle is made up of dedicated, highly organized people who consistently participate in AFGP meetings. There are many individual and group strengths to build on, and recommendations are discussed in the appropriate section, below.

A clear indicator of the deep commitment AFGP has made to relationship-building is the constructive feedback their members were able to provide to other Recovery Streets leaders about their “Request for Collaborators” document. The two Leadership Circle members who made the edits noted

that their suggestions “highlight the importance of diverse community engagement prior to implementing these projects, so that people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds are included in the decision-making process.” That statement and their specific suggested changes—such as ensuring that disabled access was considered in street closures, considering transit users’ needs, and above all, engaging neighbors to ask what they want on their streets—reveal a core value of improving equity by working with marginalized communities, rather than working on their behalf as outsiders.

Relatedly, in the course of writing this report, a question came up about AFGP’s convention for the use of the person-first term “person with a disability,” instead of the identity-first “disabled person.” More than a writing style question, these terms relate to deeper meaning about how cultures frame disability. Many disabled people prefer identity-first language, particularly those involved in disability advocacy work. Person-first language is widely used by non-disabled people who work in disability-related fields. Many disability advocates notice the use of identity-first language by a person or organization as one of many signs of genuine solidarity with disabled people, individual awareness or lived experience with disability, and being closely connected to disability culture. The director’s reaction to the question speaks volumes about AFGP’s commitment to organizational growth toward diversity and inclusion. Though she had not heard of this dichotomy within disability- and disability-adjacent communities, her immediate conclusion was that being unaware of it was a symptom of a lack of disabled representation in the leadership of many organizations. There are countless opportunities for AFGP to strengthen connections with disability advocates and disability-diverse efforts that do not specifically relate to age, and AFGP is clearly committed to improving disabled representation and disability awareness in their work and leadership. This approach to cultural concepts—an attitude of humility and a desire to learn and build connection—is shared among Leadership Circle members. When AFGP provides input on initiatives like Recovery Streets, their perspective can shift projects from outsider interventions to sustainable, welcome, community-led solutions.

ii. Assessment and Evaluation

AFGP has collected detailed information about project outcomes by using SMART/SMARTIE goals and a comprehensive Tracking Tool spreadsheet. Importantly, the spreadsheet directly connects documented activities to leaders' contact information, contributions, and organizational affiliation history, facilitating ongoing collaboration. The needs assessment at the outset of the initiative—including community meetings, surveys, and workgroups—produced a comprehensive picture of what could be more age-friendly about the Greater Pittsburgh area. That baseline for later comparison facilitates later evaluation, which AFGP plans to do using the AARP Livable Communities Survey.

iii. Range of Engagement

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh has structured their work to target all eight WHO livability domains. This thorough strategy has yielded a diverse array of projects and organizational connections for building innovative programming that takes advantage of virtual connection possibilities. Similarly, the successes of Virtual Senior Academy and #CoffeeConnectPGH since the start of the pandemic are extremely encouraging in terms of the potential for continued connection during a time of physical and social isolation for many older people. Those positive experiences also highlight the need to prioritize equitable technology and internet access for all older Pittsburgh residents. The extreme disparity in access to these tools translates to disparate access to these online services and programming alternatives. (Anderson & Kumar, 2020, Meta Mesh, 2018, U.S. Census Bureau, 2019) Even during this time of physical distancing, programming and service alternatives that do not require home internet or a smartphone must be developed.

iv. Outdoor Programming

Another benefit of AFGP's varied program involvement and focus on outdoor dimensions of livability is that many of their existing projects present great opportunities for physically distanced intergenerational activities to continue outside. The emerging understanding of COVID-19 as

transmissible by airborne routes has prompted everyone to consider ventilation and indoor occupancy density when planning physical gatherings. The popular 2018 to 2019 Gardening for Good events are just one example of the many AFGP projects that could occur with physical distancing in a strictly outdoor setting, with appropriate safety measures taken. Pittsburgh Public Schools' (PPS) operating status for September-October 2020 is remote-only. When students do return to school buildings, in-person activities will be a complex challenge. Outdoor intergenerational gardening activities welcoming older people and PPS students might provide an opportunity for positive social interaction, community nurturing experiences for children and teens, and the thoughtful neighborhood relationship building that AFGP wants to center in their planning.

v. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The AFGP Leadership demonstrate anti-racist values and a shared sense of responsibility for naming, understanding, and ameliorating the harms of racial injustice in our region. In response to the murder of George Floyd, AFGP Director Laura Poskin and SWPPA Board President Linda Doman released a statement, which included, "We recognize the deep injustices and inequities fueling the outrage across our country and right outside our door. Pittsburgh is often heralded as one of the most livable cities—but for whom? Disparities across health, income, employment and education are pervasive, and have been laid bare by COVID-19. We stand for intergenerational inclusion and respect, and we want to make it absolutely clear that we stand for racial inclusion and respect, too." AARP Livable Communities amplified their message and called other Age-Friendly Communities to action in their tweet:

"As conversations around the country continue on race, equity, and justice, we'd like to point toward @AgeFriendlyPGH, one of our champion #agefriendly communities, as they take a stand on both intergenerational and racial inclusion."

AARP Livable Communities tweet, 6/11/20

During the Leadership Circle meeting in June 2020, AFGP’s Director spoke about the impact of the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work’s 2019 report *Pittsburgh's Inequality across Gender and Race*. She shared the sobering contrast in life expectancy in Pittsburgh in 2018: 78.2 years for a white woman, and 63.3 years for a Black man. The racially disparate impacts of COVID-19 and the associated socioeconomic devastation compound these existing inequities. In addition to espousing inclusive values, the AFGP Leadership Circle has considered equity in their strategic design and implementation. As the report says, “Pittsburgh has been called one of the most ‘livable,’ cities,” but many pointed out after the release of this study that it is not so livable for Black women. In fact, Pittsburgh is one of the least livable cities in the United States for Black women.

“[T]he reality is that if we don't reckon with the inequality in Pittsburgh and that it's much greater than the vast majority of cities in the U.S., we are not only not making the city livable for our Black residents but all of us.”

University of Pittsburgh Department of Sociology professor Dr. Junia Howell

There are many demonstrations of these values in AFGP’s activities. Their attention to community participation in their work on the PCRG Recovery Streets project builds fairness and inclusion into the proposed actions. Activities designed to bring attention to neighborhood conditions such as “The Crossings” events have been intentionally held in diverse neighborhoods and drawn participants who come from the local area. When making policy recommendations about the intersections highlighted by the events, AFGP and their partners have sought input from the neighbors who attend the events. The Aging Your Way project is another example of AFGP’s intentional strategy to empower communities rather than impose external interventions. The communities included in their most recent outreach efforts include East Liberty, Larimer, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, Beechview, and East Hills.

When considering AFGP's efforts to recruit Black candidates and candidates of color for the Project Manager and consulting roles this year, AFGP audited their outreach emails to colleagues. In addition to posting the opportunities on general and nonprofit-specific internet job boards, AFGP sent 102 emails to professional contacts. Out of 102 emails, 16 were sent to Black colleagues (16%), two were sent to non-Black people of color (2%), and 42 were sent to someone working outside the aging field (41%). These proportions correspond fairly closely to Allegheny County's 2019 population proportions, with 78.1% white residents, 13.1% Black residents, 4.2% of residents identifying as Asian, 2.3% Latinx residents, and 2.3% of residents described by the census as having more than one race. AFGP has made a deliberate effort to seek out more diverse candidates for their positions, and notes there is room for growth in professional connections with Black people and people of color.

2. Recommendations

i. Assessment and Evaluation

We agree that AFGP should distribute the AARP Livable Communities survey and submit it to the AARP for analysis, in order to compare the current status to the baselines established in their thorough planning process in 2015. Combining a repeat Allegheny County survey with AFGP's plan to generate regional age-friendly momentum by promoting the AARP survey to the other SWPPA counties will clarify the needs and desires of people throughout the Southwestern Pennsylvania region.

As AFGP determines its priorities and strategies for 2020-2025, we recommend that they continue to create goals and objectives using the "SMARTIE" framework and develop them for all Action Items. Different professional fields have developed their own iterations of the original "SMART" goal method. For example, "SMARTIE" may describe objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant,

Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable. Many Action Items already have listed SMART/SMARTIE objectives. Most Action Items are already approached with consideration for most of these elements; recording that thought process can be valuable. Ensuring that diversity, inclusion, and equity are explicitly assessed, considered, and prioritized in all activities is essential. Defining each element of the SMARTIE acronym facilitates practical planning and establishes clear markers for evaluation at the outset of projects.

The AFGP leadership also wants to increase data-gathering about participants in their activities, events, and services, particularly their home zip codes and ages. Many partner organizations are already recording zip codes or tallying the number of zip codes served. We agree that learning more about participants is important for many reasons, and zip codes are straightforward in terms of data collection and analysis. Neighborhood home and race are critical determinants of livability disparities. Zip codes may not tell the whole story, especially in a city like Pittsburgh that has so many distinct neighborhood centers and that is experiencing rapid new development in many historically marginalized areas.

In addition to zip codes, we recommend that AFGP track the racial diversity of AFGP programming participants and recipients of services from AFGP partners. Two practical steps toward these goals include (1) asking participants if they would like to share what neighborhood they're from, and recording it in the exact language the person uses and (2) inquiring with the residents of the neighborhoods from which AFGP most urgently needs information to improve the equity of their activities, and paying them for consulting to assist in developing a data collection and analysis strategy that is culturally appropriate and likely to obtain the most pertinent information with the least burden to the participant. Accessible and low-contact alternatives to sign-in sheets, typing, or entering characters by voice could include offering an array of neighborhood names and racial identity choices on a disinfected tablet screen or using an accessibility-tested popup box to ask during the entry process for virtual events, and asking participants to tap a check box or radio button to indicate which matches most closely. The experts on block-to-block

neighborhood dynamics and definitions are the residents themselves; seeking their input is essential in crafting a relevant, comprehensive data collection and analysis strategy.

AFGP's leadership has brought up the Tracking Tool spreadsheet as an area for potential improvement, in order to facilitate the most timely and thorough documentation of goals, objectives, measures, activities, and follow-up. Given that the Tracking Tool encompasses all AFGP activities across all Action Items, it may make sense to break it into a series of sheets, which would still be searchable as a single document file. For example, one sheet could display current-year SMARTIE objectives for the 30 Action Items, along with very brief notes on outputs and progress for that current year, clearly connected to each defined objective. Another sheet could contain the Action Items within their focus areas, showing sub-categories and their associated objectives, targets for each Action Item, goals, and suggested measures, for easy reference. A third sheet could organize current community partners and Working Group leadership for the Action Items, with a separate sheet for their contact information, roles within their organizations, and past lead partners for Action Items. Media could be tracked in its own sheet as well. Because AFGP has so many interconnected, active foci and projects, the Tracking Tool may be challenging to navigate for those who see it less frequently, perhaps leading to fewer updates and less detail than might be possible if it were more accessible.

When considering the 2020-2021 intention to focus on relationships, it will be important to document relationship-building activities for evaluation. For example, it is a meaningful and necessary activity when a Leadership Circle member meets a community member for coffee to hear their concerns, develop trust, and create common goals. Virtually adapted gatherings and conversations are just as noteworthy. Each Work Group member should try to maintain a record of these types of interactions so that AFGP can best understand where these connections are being nurtured and where there are opportunities to direct more attention. Specifically, recording the neighborhood home, race, general age, and known or disclosed

disability status of the community member or other AFGP-related contact will help AFGP and partner organizations understand more about the equity of their outreach, programs, and services.

ii. Lessons to Share

We support AFGP's plan to consider strategies for disseminating information about their program to the ten other counties in SWPPA's area of service. As mentioned above, outreach may involve promoting the use of the AARP Livable Communities Survey surveys as a form of outreach to motivate and inspire southwestern Pennsylvania communities to initiate age-inclusive actions. The addition of a full-time Project Manager will help absorb the additional workload of taking on more regional inter-organization coordination and projects.

iii. Plans for Improvement

Thanks to increased funding this year, AFGP's Director is now a full-time Executive Director, beginning in July 2020. AFGP will also add a full-time Project Manager to their team, who will take on some of the substantial work of organizing, tracking and coordinating the activities of the various partner organizations and work groups. The Project Manager will also help AFGP further their mission by managing the organization's social media presence. The position will include some data management, survey distribution, and assisting with growth to other communities within Allegheny County. Importantly, the Project Manager's job expectations explicitly include, "Strategize on how to best reach, listen to and meaningfully engage residents of all ages and abilities, particularly in Black communities given the disparities that exist across health, income, employment and more." The input of a strategic options consultant and a development consultant are also expected to provide valuable insight as AFGP plans the next 5-year cycle.

We agree with AFGP's assessment that turning more attention to Action Item #29: Disaster Planning is critical in 2020-2021, given the COVID-19 pandemic and related socioeconomic upheaval. Older people in the Greater Pittsburgh region are now even more vulnerable to destabilizing events such as weather

emergencies, supply chain interruptions, healthcare system overload, and other potential disasters. Environmental injustice can mean that disasters affect marginalized neighborhoods and residents disparately. Disaster planning at all levels across sectors chronically omits any preparation for disabled people and older adults. The successful collaboration within AFGP’s organizational network at the beginning of the pandemic shows how crucial their connections can be in a crisis. Further disaster planning would maximize the positive impact they could have as Pittsburgh and Allegheny County face the evolving challenges associated with COVID-19 and climate change.

iv. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

a. Racial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The AFGP Leadership Circle has been actively working to address racial inequity and exclusion, both in their outside advocacy and through organizational self-assessment. AFGP plans to make 2020-2021 a year of emphasis on forming and sustaining relationships within the communities AFGP serves. We support their commitment to self-examination and encourage them to continue taking proactive steps toward awareness, inclusion, and equity. Their collective honesty about the history of anti-Black racism in our region and the lack of much diversity in their leadership is the first essential step toward addressing the intersecting barriers that exclude Black professionals from the top levels of our organizations. Black members of Greater Pittsburgh communities deserve to be represented at all levels in the public and non-profit entities that impact their communities.

“Pittsburgh is often heralded as one of the most livable cities—but for whom?”

-AFGP and SWPPA joint statement, 6/4/20

Members of AFGP’s Leadership Circle affirm their support for organizational self-examination and actionable plans to improve the diversity of their ranks and the equitability of their activities. To that end, AFGP’s 2020-2025 planning should explicitly prioritize the recruitment, retention, and promotion of Black

professionals within their coalition. We recommend that they hire a third-party racial equity and inclusion consultant to assess barriers and opportunities for people of color in their organizations. AFGP could recommend that the members of its Leadership Circle engage the same expert guidance in their organizations. We also agree with the Leadership Circle members who suggest that AFGP arrange for professional trainings around implicit bias and cultural humility. AFGP should also continue to encourage the Leadership Circle to participate in local and virtual educational and community-building opportunities around racial justice.

On the subject of relationship emphasis, partnership and collaboration with organizations led by and primarily serving Black residents of Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh are crucial. If cooperative efforts do not already exist, some organizations AFGP could consider reaching out to include Black Tech Nation, the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh, The African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania, the YMCAs/ywcas of Pittsburgh and surrounding municipalities, The August Wilson African American Cultural Center, the Black Political Empowerment Project, NAACP Pittsburgh, Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh, Executive Action and Response Network, Vibrant Pittsburgh, and many other organizations within and beyond the nonprofit world whose work is dedicated to specific areas of focus that overlap with some of AFGP partners' projects. Supporting older adults who experience multiple forms of marginalization is essential to equitability, and to that end, AFGP could partner with SAGE's branch in Western Pennsylvania, headquartered in Pittsburgh.

Truly age-inclusive conditions cannot be achieved in the Pittsburgh region unless all older people benefit equitably from the excellent work AFGP does. Uncovering and counteracting systemic racism is essential for the success of their initiatives. In order to understand the current equitability of AFGP partners' services and programming, tracking the racial diversity of participants and recipients of services is needed. AFGP can model, support, and expect this tracking from partner organizations.

Due to the dangers of in-person programming and services for the near future, especially for older people, AFGP should evaluate the fundamental fairness of virtual versions of their work. Virtual programming and events (e.g. Virtual Senior Academy, #CoffeeConnectPGH, webinars) require a tablet or computer. Many services (e.g. A to B, pathVu) require a smartphone. More than 96% of Hazelwood residents—33% of whom are retired—used a library or community center for most of their internet use before COVID-19 closed these sites (Meta Mesh, 2018). Over 70% of Homewood residents have no internet access at home (Meta Mesh, 2018). Given these conditions, understanding the current access realities and needs is an integral part of offering virtual services and programs.

Working toward equitable access may involve promoting policies that would support internet access for older people, disabled people, and people living in poverty. Programs such as the Comcast Internet Essentials program exclude older people and disabled people, unless they also have a child at home who receives free or reduced-price lunch (Meta Mesh, 2018). Internet access is “increasingly a requirement of socio-economic inclusion, not a consequence of it,” as the authors of the Meta Mesh report describe. School-aged children’s need of the internet for homework are not the only reason a household in 2020 needs access to the internet; the COVID-19 pandemic has made that fact obvious to everyone.

If AFGP is not already connected with Meta Mesh, Black Tech Nation, and Computer Reach, consulting with or partnering with those and similar organizations might be useful in improving the Internet and device access of Black residents of Allegheny County and The City of Pittsburgh. Regardless of organizational cooperation, residents should continue to be considered the experts on their own needs and experiences. With so much of their programming and services requiring online access, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the ability to physically distance reliant on access to online alternatives to in-person errands, home Internet service is as essential to the equitability of AFGP’s work as transportation and physical accessibility.

b. Disability Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Leadership Circle has intentionally chosen different meeting venues for variation and inspiration, such as Carnegie Museum of Art's "Access + Ability" exhibit, Community Living and Support Services (CLASS), CoLab18, and the Persad Center, before COVID-19 restricted in-person meeting possibilities. This practice presents a great opportunity for the Leadership Circle to investigate the accessibility of many venues. As AFGP hopes to develop close working ties with disabled advocates, it is important to recognize that changing spaces can be an access burden, given the current reality that disabled people must thoroughly research any new location to identify barriers, transportation options, and costs. This process can take hours to days for a simple museum visit, and sometimes the ultimate information obtained is incorrect or insufficient for planning. As with standardizing the practice of asking about access needs for virtual meetings, practicing accessibility competencies together in physical spaces builds skills and helps identify places where research is needed (e.g. having a current list of ASL interpreters to call, knowing whether an entire venue is multidimensionally accessible and how to contact for detailed information or maintaining a list of those that are, etc.). Carnegie Museum of Art, for example, requires two weeks' notice to provide accommodations, without specifying what might be available. CoLab18 doesn't list any accessibility information or same-day contact options on their website. Additionally, since disabilities disproportionately affect Black residents, accessibility is also a racial equity issue. Continuing to make proactive, visible accessibility efforts demonstrates to disabled collaborators that at AFGP, everyone shares the work of inquiring about and planning for accessibility, ensuring that the job doesn't fall to the person with a particular access need. Disabled representation on AFGP's and its partner organizations' teams could bring these insights to many activities. If disabled representation isn't a reality yet, paid disability and accessibility consulting is a good interim step.

In planning for 2020-2025, AFGP will need to stay flexible due to the shifting realities of the novel coronavirus pandemic. AFGP has been successful in continuing internal and inter-organizational

communication via remote services such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Reliance on virtual meetings comes with a responsibility to remain accessible to a disability-diverse population. It will also be critical to work toward equitable access to technology-reliant communication for all community stakeholders, given the intersecting racial disparities in access to the internet and computers or tablets in Pittsburgh. (Meta Mesh, 2018) Because of the current inequitable situation, it will remain important to use voice phone calls and SMS, distribute leaflets, and spend time in the neighborhoods in which AFGP wants to offer programming, resources, or services. Lively discussed maintaining phone trees, which could include people who have a landline phone and are often home.

“Our biggest challenge is communicating the urgency of this work. There are a lot of competing priorities, but we’re living in a new demographic reality. If we address this now, it’s only going to help us in the future.”

—AFGP Director Laura Poskin

As of July 2020, AFGP has made impressive progress toward implementing their Action Plan in three years of implementation. New priorities may emerge as the Greater Pittsburgh area goes through Fall and Winter 2020-2021, depending upon incidence of COVID-19 infection, the annual influenza season, and the widespread economic and social sequelae of the pandemic. As they have been throughout their history, AFGP is engaged in active dialogue with the communities of the Greater Pittsburgh region in order to target their work most effectively and equitably in their new 5-year cycle. Efforts to support community living for older adults—as opposed to congregate settings, where COVID-19 has spread rapidly and caused tens of thousands of preventable deaths—are now more urgent than ever. AFGP is manifesting positive changes in the Greater Pittsburgh area that enable older people to age safely at home in our communities, to everyone’s benefit.

Appendices

I. 2020 Leadership Circle

II. 2020 Media Appearances

Howell, J., Goodkind, S., Jacobs, L., Branson, D., & Miller, E. (2019). *Pittsburgh's Inequality across Gender and Race* (Gender Analysis White Papers, pp. 1-95, Rep.). Pittsburgh, PA: City of Pittsburgh's Gender Equity Commission.

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Appendix B Action Items and Objectives by Focus Area

Access Action Items & Objectives

Mobility	<p>Objective #1: Improve access to safe, welcoming walkways and streets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1. The Crossings: Build visibility and change policies in favor of crosswalk safety.2. Walkability Studies: Collect data about sidewalk and park path accessibility.3. Complete Streets Advocacy: Align with the Complete Streets movement to increase safety, equity, and comfort among people of all generations.
Affordability	<p>Objective #2: Expand options for transportation, housing & health services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">4. Creative, Far-Reaching Transit: Advocate for creative solutions to increase transportation options for older adults and improve and enhance existing services.5. Housing Assessment and Mapping: Investigate current and forecast future demand for healthy, affordable, accessible, and inclusive housing options.6. Health Promotion Expansion: Extend evidence-based models for health promotion, particularly no-cost or low-cost for participants and with relationship components.
Navigation	<p>Objective #3: Connect people with resources & services that meet their needs & honor their preferences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">7. Online Concierge for Ride Options: Develop an online concierge tool for riders to find transportation options that match their specific profile and fit their preferences, including increasing understanding of no- or low-cost options. Identify gaps in transportation options and advocate to fill these gaps.8. Connecting Referral Services: Maximize awareness of existing services by convening local providers of information and referral services. Establish best practices for warm, respectful referrals.9. Murals to Help Caregivers: Start a creative, grassroots campaign about caregiver self-identification

Connection Action Items and Objectives

Perception

Objective #4: Educate the public to dispel myths about aging and promote solidarity

10. Speakers Bureau: Assemble a multigenerational, multicultural Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh Speakers Bureau to educate various stakeholders and the press

11. Sensitivity on the Bus: Launch an awareness campaign to improve sensitivity and build empathy among drivers and passengers

12. Campaign to Combat Isolation and Loneliness: Develop a series of Op-Eds and public service announcements about the dangers of social isolation and loneliness and the power of relationships, using AARP’s #Connect2Affect campaign as a model

Social Spaces

Objective #5: Champion the power of “third places” in promoting health and wellness

13. Arts for All: Collaborate with arts and cultural organizations to provide meaningful ways for generations to connect

14. Parks Reimagined: Offer senior-friendly programming in highly visible, public spaces, like the Region’s parks. Empower older adults to serve as Park Ambassadors to help motivate fellow seniors to get active

15. Center for More than Seniors: Expand the reach of senior center activity to find and include people of all ages

16. Gardening for Good: Encourage people of all ages to understand the connection between body, environment, and health, align with community gardening and environmental initiatives

Intergenerational Relationships

Objective #6: Build friendship and support across generations

17. Solidarity Discussions: Facilitate discussions among traditional and nontraditional allies, to elevate the ideas of intergenerational solidarity and age diversity as essential to the health and wellbeing of residents and organizations

18. Welcoming Committees: Develop neighborhood ambassador programs to connect newcomers and legacy residents

19. GenPGH: Engage with young professionals, as well as high school and college students, to promote careers in the field of aging,

Innovation Action Items and Objectives

Business & Neighborhoods

Objective #7: Promote equitable development that helps people remain in their communities as they age

20. An Age-Friendly Seal: Establish a seal and incentives program for local businesses and employers with a focus on replicating best practices (see #24 for progress as well)

21. Dementia-Friendly Conversations: To build a dementia-friendly community, ignite conversation and creative engagement among family members, friends, and people living with Alzheimer’s disease

22. Dementia-Friendly Training: Train health professionals, community organizations, and families about ways to interact and communicate with people living with dementia, expand the reach of these dementia-friendly messages to new people and policymakers

23. New Housing Solutions: Explore options for progressive housing solutions, such as home-sharing and intergenerational housing. Also identify mechanisms to encourage and incentivize developers to use universal design elements in newly proposed housing units

Workforce

Objective #8: Find new, more effective ways to do business that include people of all ages

24. The Job Search, Redefined: Advocate for increased job training and placement programs that are inclusive of job seekers of all ages. Also support entrepreneurs of all ages by equipping them with the skills they need to successfully launch startups or small businesses

25. Intergenerational Tech Training: Increase access to technology through tech training, particularly in-person, one-on-one opportunities. Tap into Pittsburgh’s growing tech community for volunteers, many of whom may be younger and/or new to the region

26. Direct Care Workforce Development: Advocate for a robust, multicultural direct care workforce to support the needs of frail elders and people living with disabilities and their care partners. Educate managed care organizations and providers about need for capacity-building

Interaction

Objective #9: Come together for support and vital company to combat social isolation

27. Virtual Senior Academy: Offer online, interactive classes through the use of video conferencing technology

28. Tech Support: Champion technology, that helps older adults remain in their communities and connected to people of all ages

29. Disaster Preparedness: Engage first responder organizations and other services and systems to develop disaster preparedness plan for isolated elders and people living with disabilities

30. Bye Week Back Home: Support intergenerational community gatherings that bring together new and native residents, via social media

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