

Senior Advisory Committee
Annual Report – FY 22
(to be submitted to Board by June 15)

The members of the FY22 Senior Advisory Committee were Sharonlee Vogel (*Committee Chair*), and Genie Wessel (Vice Chair), Pearl Atkinson-Stewart, Roger Chang, John Eberhard, Elizabeth Johnson, George Laniado, Mary McGraw, Jean Salkheld, Celindah Grier, and David Zeitzer.

Darleen Vaseleros (HC Office on Aging)

CA Board liaison was Ginny Thomas

Staff liaison was Leslie Barnett, Assistant Director, Community Programs & Services.

The Committee met five times during FY22 all virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
[Link to review the minutes.](#)

A. Committee accomplishments for FY 22:

- Had presentations about topics of interest to seniors:
 - Howard County's Age Friendly Community Action Plan,
 - Brightview Senior Living
 - CAADA plan
 - CA Aquatics
 - Clinics for vaccines and boosters
 - Community Connector
 - Howard County Local Health Coalition
- Received monthly updates from Office On Aging liaison regarding programs and services that are happening that are of interest to seniors.
- Received monthly updates from CA liaison regarding programs and services that are happening that are of interest to seniors.
- Had a table at Senior Day at the Fair on August 10th, Spoke to various people about Age-Friendly Initiative
- We continue to work toward representation from every village. We currently do not have representation from, River Hill, Harpers Choice or Oakland Mills
- Continued to monitor and support progress of Village in Howard
- At each meeting, each member shared with the committee on what they are hearing/what seniors want in their Village.
- Submitted budget testimony for FY23 to CA board.
- Supported Office on Aging monthly restaurant initiative.
- Many members participated in Howard County Office on Aging Virtual 50+ Expo

B. Proposed Charge submitted for approval by the CA Board identifying items to be addressed by Committee in FY 23 that align with the Committee's goals, CA's strategic plan and the President/CEO's goals and objectives:

- Work with CA Staff to plan and implement Walk Columbia or Walktober event
- Visit CA facilities as we return to in person meetings

C. Committee recommendations, if any, with justification, for consideration by CA Board:

- The SAC recommend implementation of the attached [Older Adult Plan](#)

Committee Charge approved by CA Board _____, 2022

Older Adult Plan - Implementation Update: April 2022

The Older Adult Plan was approved by the CA Board and implementation began in May 2014. The CA website has information for this under Comprehensive Plan for Serving the Older Community. The plan outlines CA's commitment to older adult services over the next 20 years. The following report highlights the progress on the implementation of the Older Adult Plan during the fiscal year 2021-2022. Please be aware that the COVID pandemic greatly impacted much of the work of the SAC and CA on implementation of the Older Adult Plan. The SAC encourages CA to resume and direct energy and funds to the Older Adult programs again and to resume working with partners such as the Horizon Foundation, the County's Office on Aging & Independence to revitalize senior programs.

1. Mobility:

C. Senior Events Shuttle: This was discontinued by the CA Board/Council. We would like CA to resume funding this vital connection for seniors in Columbia to events. Transportation is vital to seniors, especially in the evening when fewer and fewer seniors drive.

D. Neighbor Ride Support: The SAC recommends a \$5,000 grant in FY22-23. The Volunteer Center is continuing the ongoing partnership with Neighbor Ride in which qualified seniors can use the service at half price for transportation to and from volunteer opportunities. Transportation is vital to seniors to remain active in their communities and CA is needed to make this happen.

2. Helping Older Adults Age in Place

A. Home Repair and Modification Program has been discontinued due to funding, staffing. The SAC encourages CA to resume working with the County on this program.

B. Informational programs about services for older adults are part of the Columbia Community Exchange and the The Village in Howard are vital elements of the Plan. CA has stopped the Exchange – we recommend it be resumed, working hand-in-hand with Howard County..

C. CA awarded the Village in Howard a grant of \$25,000 in FY 19, that was recommended and supported by the Senior Advisory Committee. That was the last time any funds from CA went to TVIH – this is a growing organization that CA has supported from the date it started in the SAC. The SAC recommends that CA grant TVIH \$50,000 to this successful aging-in-community organization.

3. Social/Cultural & Educational Activities

A. Village Association Cultural Events: Outreach to Latin, French, Korean, Ghanaian and Chinese cultures through the CA Multicultural programs, held at various villages community centers and public libraries. Most of these events were put on hold due to COVID pandemic.

B. Village Association Workshops/Classes: Village associations had few events due to the pandemic. The SAC is hopeful the Villages and CA will resume these: art paint nights, Master Garden classes, senior luncheons and senior coffee, among other programs.

C. Informal Village Association Program Opportunities: CA has held Solar Cooperatives, Watershed and mosquito control workshops at the Village buildings.

D. Lifelong Learning: Columbia Community Exchange was discontinued with staff cuts in the pandemic – the SAC recommends these be resumed with at least part-time staff. The program hosted mini workshops, known as skillshare fairs, which are member led and teach do-it-yourself skills.

G. Outings: During the COVID pandemic all the SAC continued its meeting – all via Zoom with presentations. We hope to resume “live” meetings in June 2022.

4. Programming - A Community for all Ages

A. Intergenerational Programming: Intergenerational programming was put on hold during the pandemic.

B. Programming Change within Existing Facilities: Most programs were on hold during the pandemic.

C. Program Monitoring: Pickleball continues to be in full flow year around at CA. The SAC urges CA to continue to expand programs for Columbia seniors such as Body Flow, Body Pump Start, and others.

D. Group Hikes and Walks: CA should resume the Exploring Columbia on Foot provided scheduled walks in 2022-23.

E. Off-Peak Programming: SAC encourages CA to expand Group Fitness class schedules to include classes during the non-peak hours, designing programs appealing to seniors.

5. Facilities - Design and Location

A. Universal Design: Incorporated into the Long Reach Tennis Club, Owen Brown pickleball facility and major renovations to the Swim Center and the Athletic Club. SAC encourages CA to continue UD elements as it updates facilities.

B. Walkable/Livable Communities: Staff advocated for funding of the Howard County Bikeway - a Horizon Foundation organized initiative to create a spinal network of bicycle pathways that would connect more than half of the county's residents to this network. The County and Horizon continue to work on these with good results.

C. Park Furnishings to Serve Older Adults: The major pathways around the three lakes have benches installed since the plan went into effect. Some seating has been updated around the ponds. Additional water fountains have been installed. SAC encourages CA to continue doing these updates and enhancements.

6. Rates and Fees:

A. Financial Assistance: Ten percent senior discount continues to be offered as well as a 50% income qualified discount. Many seniors have for decades supported CA with their lien payments and need to see increased ROI for their contributions.

7. Partnering and Cooperation:

A. Enhance Partnering: CA's Office of Planning and Community Affairs continues to foster partnerships with Howard County Government (Columbia Market Study,

Downtown Columbia to Patuxent Branch Trail Pathway Feasibility Study and Bike Share Feasibility Study, Complete Streets Implementation Team) and the Horizon Foundation (Community Building Speakers Series and planning for the Open Streets event on Little Patuxent Parkway loop), among others.

B. The Older Adult Program Manager partnered with the Horizon Foundation on Speakeasy, Howard County. Created bicultural conversations on Aging between Korean and English speaking seniors. Held a Sweetheart Dance for older adults in cooperation with the Camps department. But these events have slowed considerably during COVID. The SAC encourages CA to revitalize these.

Older adult focused grants were non-existent in 2020, 2021, and 2022. The SAC asks that CA start again to support vital programs such as The Village In Howard, the Senior Events Shuttle, and NeighborRide with financial assistance.

C. Educational Classes: Due to the pandemic these were put on hold; we hope they resume soon, even electronically.

8. Information, Training, Community Engagement and Coordination:

A. Older Adult Guide: The last work was the updated brochure in 2018 as part of the 50 + Expo.

B. Community Engagement: The information sheets and helpful links for Older Adults that is posted on CA's website needs to be updated and updated regularly. Programs and classes that are of interest to the older adult community should be expanded and promoted in the 3x yearly Activities Guide, which is posted online, delivered free to residents, available in CA facilities, and placed at community locations.

C. Website: CA works on its website to make it more user friendly and great strides have been made.

D. Video and Live Streaming: Live streaming of CA Board Meetings is going well. Residents are very happy with the ability to see what is happening from the comfort and safety of their homes. Recorded videos are posted on the website within 3 working days.

E. Older Adult Subject Expert: Due to COVID, the Older Adult Program coordinator cut back their time in participating on Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC) Healthy Aging committee to promote CA's offerings and liaise with community partners to support healthy aging in our community. CA partners with the Horizon Foundation on Speakeasy, Howard County.

9. Health Promotion and Services:

A. Health and Wellness Partnerships: Ongoing medical wellness programs (Optimal Health and Fit Beginnings) with doctors' offices and Howard County General Hospital and various medical practitioners should be resumed and publicized.

B. Healthy Lifestyle: Ongoing and expanded program offerings, facility modifications and ADA accessibility at existing facilities and pools need to be publicized.

C. Medical Advisory Panel: Working with CA's medical director, Dr. Harry Oken, Dr. Jyothi Rao (Shakthi Health and Wellness Center), and Dr. Kevin Carlson (geriatric medicine) established a healthy eating series. The kickoff event reached more than 400 community residents. Planning for future events was put in hold during the pandemic.

D. Encourage Exercise: Marketing materials and campaigns have targeted those with an interest in warm water therapy and options that increase mobility and stability. Information on the Senior Swim Pass continues to be included in communications but is seen by few in Columbia.