

Avon Lake: Age-Friendly Community Analysis

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Abstract

With the growing population and advances in medical technology, the population of people ages sixty-five and over is rapidly increasing, triggering major concerns for sustainability of our economy as well as our overall way of life. It is imperative that preparation for being able to sustain this increase begins now before it is too late. Age-friendly communities are considered to be a solution to this pending issue. An age-friendly community is a community in which has the resources, policies, and services in order to “support and enable” older individuals to have security, maintain or improve health, and fully participate as a member of society (Global Age-Friendly Cities Project, 2015). The following is a comparative analysis to show whether the city of Avon Lake, Ohio is a qualified “age-friendly community” and if it is not, identifying further steps it can take in order to achieve “age-friendly” status.

Criteria

- Affordable housing that is safe and conveniently located for access to necessities
- A clean and pleasant environment that provides opportunities for recreational activities
- Safe, adequate transportation options
- Social environment that provides connection with others in age-friendly formats
- Community Environment that provides support and opportunities for seniors
- Access to proper medical facilities and facilities for health maintenance

Housing/Living Arrangements

- **CCRC's**
 - Towne Center
 - Independent living, respite care, skilled nursing, assisted living, memory care
 - Transportation
 - Activities
 - Expensive
- Independence Village
 - Independent living, skilled nursing, memory care, assisted living
 - Transportation
 - Activities
 - Moderate pricing
- **Other Options**
 - Wide Range of apartment, townhouse and neighborhood living options
 - Wide range of pricing options
 - Safe neighborhood

Outdoor Spaces/Built Environment

- Parks
 - Koph Family Reservation, Miller Road Park, Veterans Park, Bleser Park, Weiss Field, Aquatic Center
- Private Open Spaces
 - Many neighborhood pools, open spaces, etc.

Transportation

- Unassisted free curb-curb service for banks, local shopping, and medical appointments
- Transportation for individuals in care facilities, included in price
- Ride share services such as Uber and Lyft are available in the area
- Bus Stations located right outside of the city (Avon/Westlake)

Social & Community Environment

- Recreation
 - Facilities: Pool, community center, various parks, Koph Family Reservation
 - Activities: fishing with friends, strength and balance, chair yoga, yoga, pickleball, self-defense, bridge, indoor walking group, “Senior” prom, and more
- Nearby Shopping
 - 2 large shopping centers
 - Multiple grocery stores
- Communication
 - Newsletter, word of mouth, bulletin boards, website, newspaper, text updates
- Other
 - Funeral home, legal offices, churches, adult day care, senior center, YMCA's

Health & Wellness

- Hospital Services
 - Cleveland Clinic Richard E. Jacobs Health Campus
 - Full Hospital, emergency department, primary care, internal medicine, rehabilitation facility, orthopedics
 - University Hospitals
 - St. John West Shore hospital, emergency department
- Other Acute Care
 - Urgent care
- Health Maintenance
 - Dentists offices
 - Optometrists
 - PT/OT
 - Mental Health
- Fitness
 - Multiple Fitness facilities
 - Golf Courses
 - Recreation Dept.

Conclusion

Overall, Avon Lake is a fairly age-friendly community, but lacks in the areas of free assisted transportation and pricing for nursing care/ retirement communities. Improvements can be made to make the city more age-friendly