



# AGING IN PLACE

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

### COMMUNITY AGING

Prepared by

**DR. KATRINA POLK**

Director of Community Aging and Services





*“Aging is not  
‘lost youth’ but  
a new stage of  
opportunity and  
strength.”*

- Betty Friedan

## #factsandstats

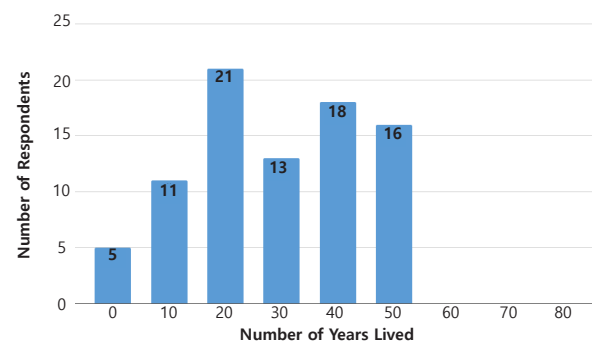
Older adults are living longer, and their preference to age in place continues to grow: an overwhelming 90% of people in the United States 50 years of age and over desire to age in place for as long as possible. At the same time, the number of people aged 60 and older as a proportion of the global population will double from 11 percent in 2006 to 22 percent by 2050—at which time there will be more people aged 60 and older than children ages 0 to 14 in the population for the first time in human history. If the City of District Heights is to secure a stable future for our aging population—especially for low-income seniors, who are the most vulnerable of all—now is the time to explore innovative solutions that lengthen the possibility of independent living, improve the quality of life and community involvement, and forestall or prevent nursing home placement. The City’s combination of a senior center, programs, and services and becoming an Age-Friendly City represents both a potential solution and a model for the future.

District Heights 50+ aging adult population is approximately 37% of the total residency, and the individuals aged 50-79 are the largest cohort at an estimated 25%. Our goal is to establish a senior center with the right-sized programs and services to improve the quality of life for residents and educate them and their families and caregivers about available resources to help grow and thrive in the City. We offer the community and the surrounding areas a safe and accessible location for educational, social, nutritional, and recreational opportunities.



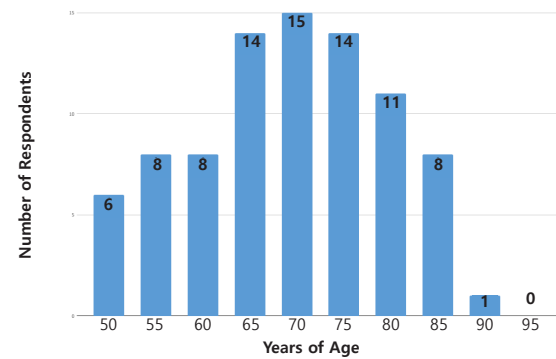
**DISTRICT HEIGHTS SENIOR CENTER**  
2000 Marbury Drive  
District Heights, MD 20747  
United States  
301-336-1402

## How long have you lived here?



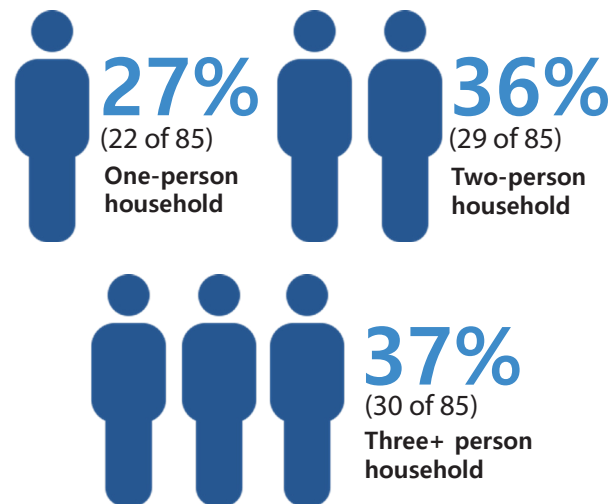
Most of the residents who responded to the survey 55% (47 of 85) have lived in District Heights for 30 years or more. \* One person has lived in the city for 80 years.

## How old are you?

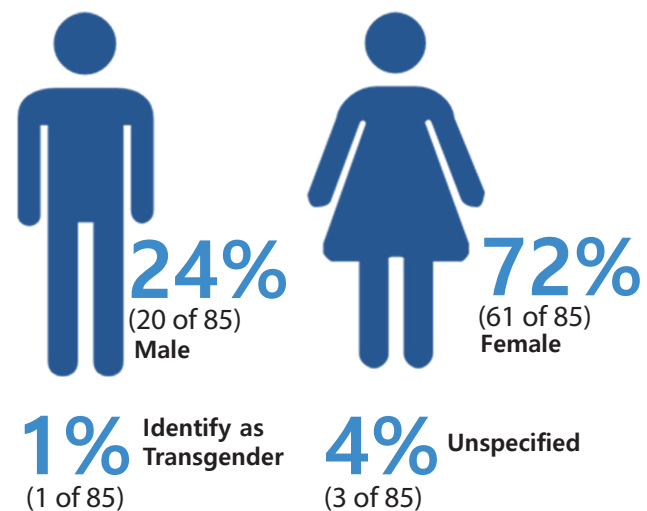


Most of the residents who responded to the survey 57% (49 of 85) are between the ages of 61 and 70 years old. Of survey respondents, the average age is 67. The youngest responder was 50 years old, and the oldest responder was 90 years old.

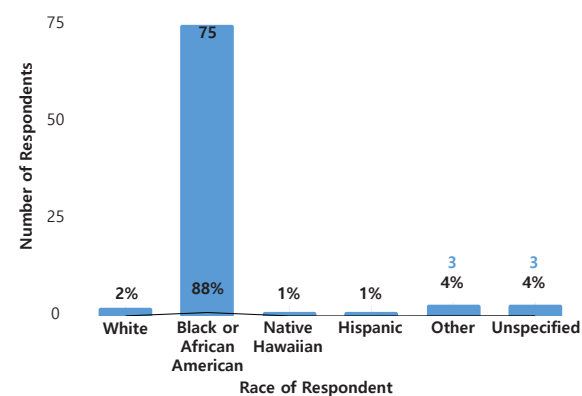
## How many people live in your household?



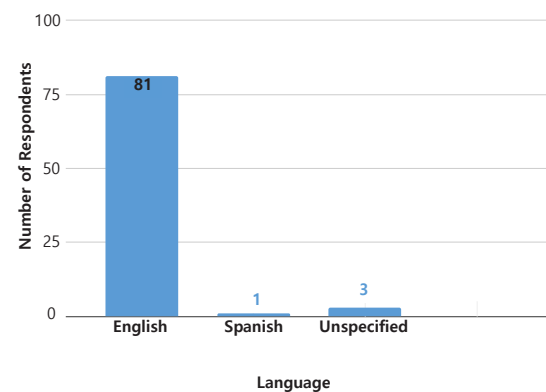
## How do you identify yourself?



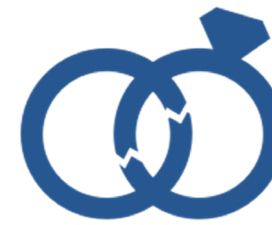
## What is your race?



## What is the language you speak at home?



## What is your current marital status?



Single	32	38%
Divorced	1	1%
Widowed	12	14%
Separated	15	18%
Married	22	26%
Total	85	

Unspecified 4% (3 of 85)

## What is your highest level of education you have completed?



8th grade or less	0	0%
9th - 12th	4	5%
High School or GED	11	19%
Some College	32	38%
College Degree	10	9%
Post Graduate Degree	14	16%
Total	85	

Unspecified 6% (5 of 85)

## Are you a veteran or active member of the U.S. Armed Forces or the National Guard and Reserve?

**YES**  
22%  
(19 of 85)  
are serving or  
have served

**NO**  
73%  
(62 of 85)  
have never  
served

## Are you currently working?

**YES**  
18%  
(15 of 85)  
are currently  
working

**NO**  
73%  
(62 of 85)  
are not currently  
working

## Do you have a personal computer or a smart phone?



**YES** 88%  
(79 of 85)

**NO** 1%  
(1 of 85)

Unspecified 8% (7 of 85)

## Do you have a car?



**YES** 78%  
(66 of 85)

**NO** 15%  
(13 of 85)

Unspecified 7% (6 of 85)

If No, what type of transportation do you use to get groceries, go to the doctor, etc.?

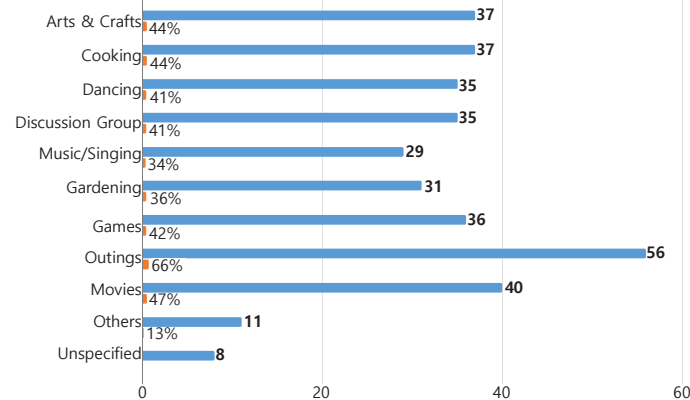
Bus	0	0%
Walk	2	2%
Bike	0	0%
Taxi/Uber	1	1%
Metro Access	1	1%
Someone else drives me	7	8%
Combo	11	13%
Total	85	

Would you be interested in participating in any of the programs and activities below?

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

**YES**  
**93%**  
(79 of 85)  
are interested

**NO**  
**1%**  
(1 of 85)  
are not inter-  
ested

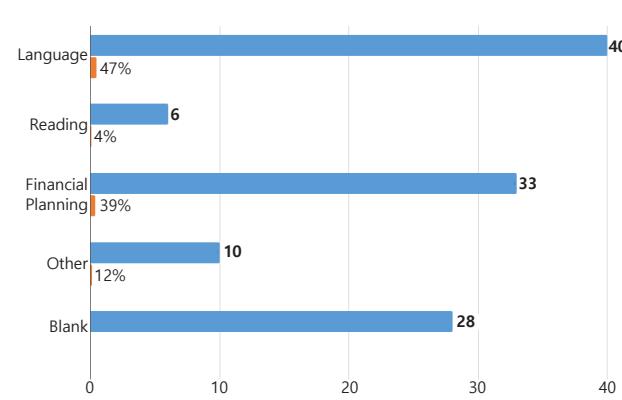


Other requests and comments included: My walking limits me • Chess (2) • Play pool • Pool Tables • Tennis/sports • Cards • Playing ball • Gambling

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

**YES**  
**73%**  
(62 of 85)  
are interested

**NO**  
**58%**  
(12 of 85)  
are not interested

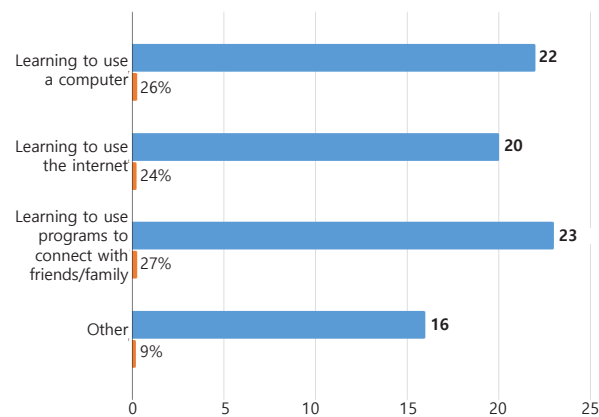


Other requests and comments included: Get my GED • Computer • Business • Computer • Culture • GED Class • Computers • College

## COMPUTER PROGRAMS

**YES**  
**54%**  
(46 of 85)  
are interested

**NO**  
**21%**  
(18 of 85)  
are not interested

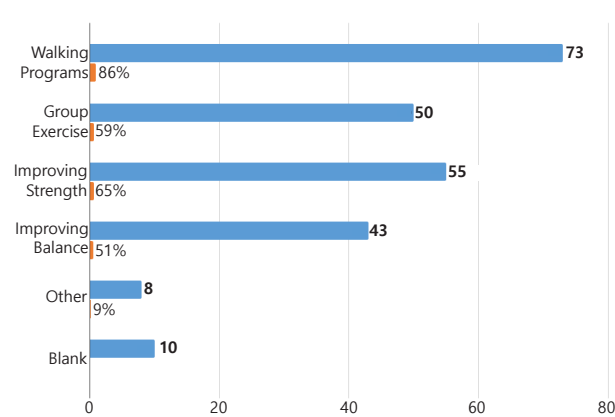


Other requests and comments included: Arthritis in hands • Business • Using hot spots, connecting to TV, etc.

## EXERCISE & FITNESS PROGRAMS

**YES**  
**89%**  
(76 of 85)  
are interested

**NO**  
**5%**  
(4 of 85)  
are not interested



Other requests and comments included: Weight Loss • Balance weigh • Physical therapy • Jogging • Yoga • Water Aerobics

## WELLNESS & PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Would you be interested in participating in any of the programs and activities below?

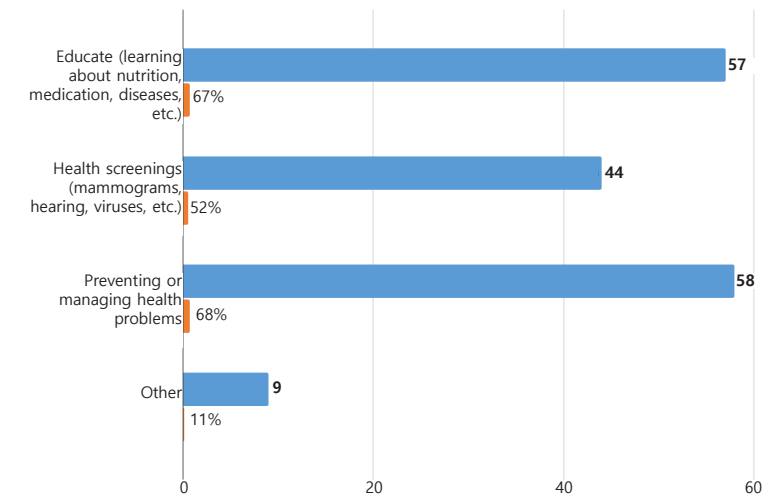
**YES**  
**53%**  
(39 of 74)  
are interested

**NO**  
**47%**  
(35 of 74)  
are not interested

Would you be interested in participating in any of the programs and activities below?

**YES**  
**63%**  
(52 of 85)  
are interested

**NO**  
**21%**  
(18 of 85)  
are not interested



In general, would you say your health is:



Excellent	6	7%
Very Good	29	34%
Good	30	35%
Fair	15	17%
Poor	1	1%
Total	85	

**Unspecified**  
**15%**  
(5 of 85)

Do you have any of the following health conditions?

	YES	%	NO	%	TOTAL
High blood pressure or hypertension	54	64%	22	26%	76
Diabetes or high blood sugar	29	34%	38	45%	67
Cancer	3	4%	52	61%	55
Chronic lung disease/breathing problems	5	6%	53	62%	58
Heart problems	10	12%	48	56%	58
Arthritis or rheumatism	38	48%	27	32%	65
Eye problems like cataracts, glaucoma, or macular degeneration	25	29%	38	45%	63
Neurological problems	9	11%	46	54%	55
Memory-related disease	5	6%	51	60%	56
Emotional, nervous, or psychiatric problems	6	7%	50	59%	56



## Do you use any of the following assistive devices?

Eyeglasses/contact lenses	69
Wheelchair	2
Walker	4
Cane	10
Assistance of others	7
Motorized scooter	2
Hearing aids	3
Oxygen	2
Other	0
None	12
Total	99

Do you or anyone in your household have a vision problem that prevents them from seeing when wearing glasses or contacts?

**YES**  
12%  
(10 of 85)

**NO**  
82%  
(70 of 85)

## Are you legally disabled?

**YES**  
18%  
(15 of 85)  
are disabled

**NO**  
75%  
(64 of 85)  
are not disabled

Do you or anyone in your household have a hearing problem that prevents them from hearing what is said in normal conversation even with a hearing aid?

**YES**  
9%  
(8 of 85)

**NO**  
84%  
(71 of 85)

Do you or anyone in your household have any condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying?

**YES**  
24%  
(20 of 85)

**NO**  
67%  
(57 of 85)

## I need help with...

	Yes	% Yes	No	% No	Total
Bathing/showering	2	2%	62	73%	64
Dressing	0	0%	62	73%	62
Get in and out of bed/chair	3	4%	61	72%	64
Using the toilet	1	1%	62	73%	63
Controlling your bladder	3	4%	60	71%	63
Eating	0	0%	62	73%	62
Using the telephone	1	1%	60	71%	61
Shopping	6	7%	57	67%	63
Preparing meals	4	5%	58	68%	62
Housekeeping	11	13%	54	64%	65
Doing laundry	8	9%	55	65%	63
Traveling to places out of walking distance	11	13%	55	65%	66
Managing medications	1	1%	61	72%	62
Managing money or finances	6	7%	57	67%	63
Managing relationships	1	1%	61	72%	62

## How many days a week are you physically active for at least 30 minutes?

Of the 78 respondents, residents reported that they were physically active for at least 30 minutes, an average of 4.7 days per week.

## Is there anything that keeps you from engaging

No	55	65%
Not motivated	7	8%
Don't know what to do	3	4%
Physical or health limitations	16	19%
Total	81	

## VOLUNTEERING

Do you participate in volunteer activities? (share your time, skills, talents to help other, give back, help a neighbor, do community service, etc.)

**YES**  
51%  
(47 of 85)

**NO**  
49%  
(45 of 85)

## How long have you been active as a volunteer?

More than 5 years	21	43%
3-4 years	5	10%
1-2 years	6	12%
Less than 1 year	17	35%
Total	49	

## How often in the past month have you participated in volunteer activity?

More than 50 HRS	4	7%
30 - 49 HRS	4	7%
10-29 HRS	6	10%
Less than 10 HRS	19	32%
I have not participated in volunteer activities during the past month	26	44%
Total	59	

## Please describe why you choose to engage in volunteer activities.

- It is my purpose to help others
- I enjoy interacting with others
- I have been playing in a group setting and at a 3rd church for many years
- I enjoy being around people have no local friend
- They concern me
- Like to serve and love helping
- Social engagement and help others in need
- To stay active
- Social environment & give back to the community
- I find it very fulfilling
- To help improve the quality of life for others
- To contribute my skills and talent to a community that deserves the best
- I'm a minister
- it was with a company I worked for
- Started little after retirement, wanted to help and also keep busy
- I enjoy helping others youth and seniors
- Keep my community clean
- To assist and helping others where and when I can while I can
- For the betterment of the city
- To stay engaged, and educated
- I wanted to be the change in my community
- To teach students the tools to solve mechanical math challenges in robotic competitions
- safe community
- To keep my mind stimulated and body active
- Our community needs help
- I like being busy and helping others
- To connect with like-minded people
- Motivation
- Give and share knowledge, programs, services to those who may not know
- Helps my mental health & physical strength
- I like to help where I can when I can
- Not able to work, to keep my mind active
- trash removal
- Because I like being active with others and helping them out I thank god
- I have health well enough to help
- Just who I am. Have always been a volunteer in some capacity such as meals on wheels, cub scout, parent groups, etc.
- Fun, outings, community
- I care

Please describe where you volunteer and the type of activities you perform.

- City of DH, AARP (State and County) Veteran Related Committees (County and City)/NCNW Church
- I Volunteer my tome as the keyboard player at 2 different churches
- Volunteer for the “grab & Go” food distribution at my main church Dog rescue. local city government
- Capital area food bank
- AARP 939, DNC, food pantry, helping the sick and disabled Volunteer at my church (share food program) packaging and distributing of free food
- First Baptist Church of DH, Andrews AFB, Spouses Club, Thrift Shop
- Senior and homeless
- Checking on older people, taking them to Dr appointments, etc. Service on ministries in the church
- Seniors and Homeless
- Activist
- At church, visiting the sick and shut in
- I volunteer with passing out grocery at a food pantry (elementary school) i do not recall
- Presently doing review of STEM related grant proposals & assisting my neighbors by keeping them informed of community information
- Forestville Pregnancy Center, First Baptist Church of District Heights Forestville Pregnancy Center, First Baptist Church of District Heights Started little after retirement, wanted to help and keep business. Started little after retirement, wanted to help and keep business
- Church food distribution and senior transportation
- Grass cutting and home improvement, area clean up, trash pick-up
- Assisting my granddaughter with care, she has cerebral palsy, also volunteer with several church activities
- Cap, charter committee, website committee, holiday committee
- Various activities and community involvement with non-profit & fraternal organizations, church, and community-based services
- Church teaching Bible study classes; volunteer as the church administrator
- DH Summer Campers gardening workshop, Clinton Demo gardening, Fiesta Place Garden, judging gardens
- Once worked with students who were competing in robotics competition
- Neighborhood watch
- Church/Trustee; charter committee/DH; BOSE committee/DH; July Birthday Ministry/Church
- Community garden
- I am not a active volunteer at present .I have been involved with this community private schools library and gardening
- Active in the horticultural community in various ways, BOD for National Garden Clubs, Garden Club President
- Neighborhood
- Woodland Springs food bank & Street village
- Help pass out food and help the children with arts and crafts
- Sorting mail
- In the neighborhood at the food bank I pass out food
- At the local elementary school my grandchildren go to and at the food bank in my neighborhood
- I have volunteer in helping my neighbor and telling others about DH office staff
- Small pkgs from store, share when i have more than I need, Share spiritual books and check on neighbors
- AARP Sunshine club , raising 3 grandchildren, civil action patrol
- Bowling, Quilting, raffle tickets
- CAP neighborhood watch

COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT NETWORK

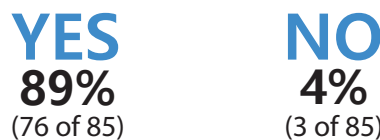
Do you have a home health aide?



Do you have family or friends in the area?



Do you have family or friends who call you regularly?



Do you have family or friends who visit you regularly?

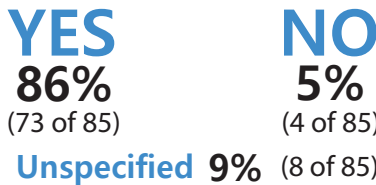


How would you describe the amount of help your family members or friends provide?

I do not need help	49%	42
Do not provide help	1%	1
Limited help	22%	19
Moderate help	14%	12
Lots of help	13%	11

DIGITAL IMPACT

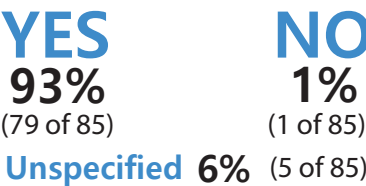
Do you have internet access?



What is your preferred connection to the

Computer	34%	29
Mobile	40%	34
Both	20%	17
Unspecified	7%	6

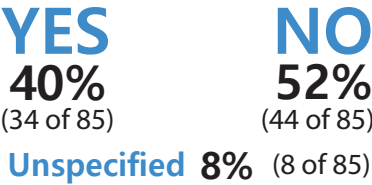
Do you have access to technology?



How do you currently receive information from the City?

Website	37%	32
Public Meeting	1%	1
Community	16%	14
Combination	32%	28
Unspecified	11%	10

Do you participate in the City Meeting?





# QUOTES

"We demand better Age-Friendly customer service from government agencies and local businesses in our community."

"We would love to have a mobile app to make us more aware of community services and programs."


"We want our center to have high participation and utilization, intergenerational activities, volunteering and advocacy opportunities, and a supportive community and residents."

"How and where residents age is critical to the city."

"We hope communication, space accessibility and transportation will be prioritized".

"We need to be intentional in bridging the gap and building relationships in all parts of District Heights neighborhoods."

"Intergenerational programs are important; we want to help younger people as they help us."



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Work with advocacy organizations to build a strong relationship with those who represent aging residents and can effectively change policies that impact this population and their ability to age in place. Advocacy work in the city is essential to creating positive change for older residents and the process of aging.

Apply the co-location concept to collaborate with organizations operating evidence-based wellness programs and services with demonstrated successful outcomes (i.e., aging and health presentations, healthy cooking demonstrations, fitness classes, social connectedness events, and arts and crafts activities). Establish a relationship with health service organizations to deliver effective community-based services to residents needing preventive services (i.e., vaccination clinics, podiatry, noninvasive procedures, and ask-the-doctor programming). Having programs and services co-located increases awareness, access, and utilization rates.

Establish an Academy for Lifelong Learning with educational partners to offer free and low-cost classes, events, and activities for adults aged 50 and older in the areas of technology, health and wellness, financial planning, community service projects, memory practicums, literary discussion groups, genealogy, arts and crafts, history, and other learning opportunities. Adopting a philosophy of lifelong learning can expand social circles, encourage critical thinking and independence, and strengthen connections to the community and city.

Leverage existing workforce development platforms to provide training, coaching, and job-seeking tools needed to compete with confidence in today's job market or redeploy skills and reinvent careers for adults aged 50 years and older so they can re-imagine the next phase of life. Engage aspiring entrepreneurs with hands-on support to successfully launch businesses, including developing a business plan and executive summary, learning how to get investment ready, practicing pitches, and accessing funding for launching and growing a business. Nearly 51% of this country's small businesses are run by entrepreneurs older than 50.

Develop a senior volunteer cohort that operates as an outlet for professional skills, talents, and interests; bring a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment; and provides growth, learning opportunities, and critical elements to successful aging experiences. Train community residents as health ambassadors to serve as contact points for distributing information about the city's programs and services available to aging adults and caregivers. Senior volunteerism demonstrates a benefit to society, themselves, and the government.

Engage external volunteer groups in creating an aging-in-place program as a critical safety net for yard work and minor services. The program will support vulnerable older adults through transformative volunteer service projects that help them stay in their own homes. A healthy, safe, and comfortable place to call home is essential for all of us. Bridge transportation gaps, as the result of the Call-A-Bus program termination that served the city, by launching new transportation program so low-income and non-driving seniors can be transported to the senior center to access programs and services for unmet needs. Develop and implement a transportation loop program will increase utilization rates for

disadvantaged residents so they can equitably participate in community focused activities.

Establish and implement a connected community concept called a "village" for the city and adjacent municipalities; it will serve as an "Aging Service Network Model" to improve access to supportive services, enhance the quality of independent living experiences, enable us to pursue high-level funding including federal multi-year and other resource development opportunities with strategic alliances, and lengthen residential longevity—lessening the burden of nursing home placement within this population. A new standard of aging supportive services within targeted municipalities will enhance community-based Long-Term Services & Supports (LTSS) Options, emphasizing services not currently accessed and, or under-utilized.

Create a sustainable, replicable, fundable, innovative, evidence-based active aging model with a national appeal that attracts sponsorship, philanthropic support, and government funding in which we can evaluate the model and process. Adopt a culturally enriched framework that is person-centered with a community-focused approach. Collaborate with organizations to advance projects that can become sustainable solutions to the challenges facing aging adults. Achieve equitable outcomes with specific objectives and prioritize equitable strategies and services that address systemic barriers, racial and ethnic disparities, and other biases perpetuating aging instability.

## QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

### Center Program and Service Priorities:

Advocacy & Awareness  
Health and Wellness  
Aging in Place/Housing  
Intergenerational Approach  
Workforce Development & Volunteering  
Transportation

### Age-Friendly City Domain Priorities:

1. Communication & Information
2. Housing Stabilization
3. Community Support and Health Services
4. Respect and Inclusion
5. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
6. Social Participation
7. Advocacy & Civic Participation
8. Transportation

### Defining Successfully Aging:

Good Health  
Social Connectivity  
Receiving Relevant Information Timely  
Awareness of Services  
Feeling Safe and Secure

### Defining Feeling Healthy:

Mobility  
Inspired/Motivated  
Supported (Family, Friends & Services)  
Having a Process to Age  
Mentally Stabled  
Live to See Another Day  
Financially Sustained

### We use technology for:

Communication  
Information and Research  
Pay Bills

Connect to Resources and Services  
Employment Search  
Purchases





## VISUALIZING A BETTER TOMORROW IN THE CITY OF DISTRICT HEIGHTS TODAY FOR RESIDENTS 50 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER



### Address

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District Heights, MD 20747  
United States



### Phone

Phone: 301-336-1402



### Website

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