

# **AARP Livable Communities: *How Missing Middle Housing Supports Age-Friendly Communities***



U.S.

## Elderly in U.S. Are Projected to Outnumber Children for First Time



Census Bureau predicts milestone will be hit within 17 years



By *Paul Overberg and Janet Adamy*

Updated March 13, 2018 9:13 p.m. ET



People over 65 years old would outnumber children by 2035, a first in U.S. history, according to updated projections released by the Census Bureau on Tuesday.



The milestone would be the latest marker of the nation's aging, which has accelerated with baby boomers' move into their senior years and recessionary effects on births and immigration over the past decade.



The...



TO READ THE FULL STORY

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October 2019: US Census updated to 2034

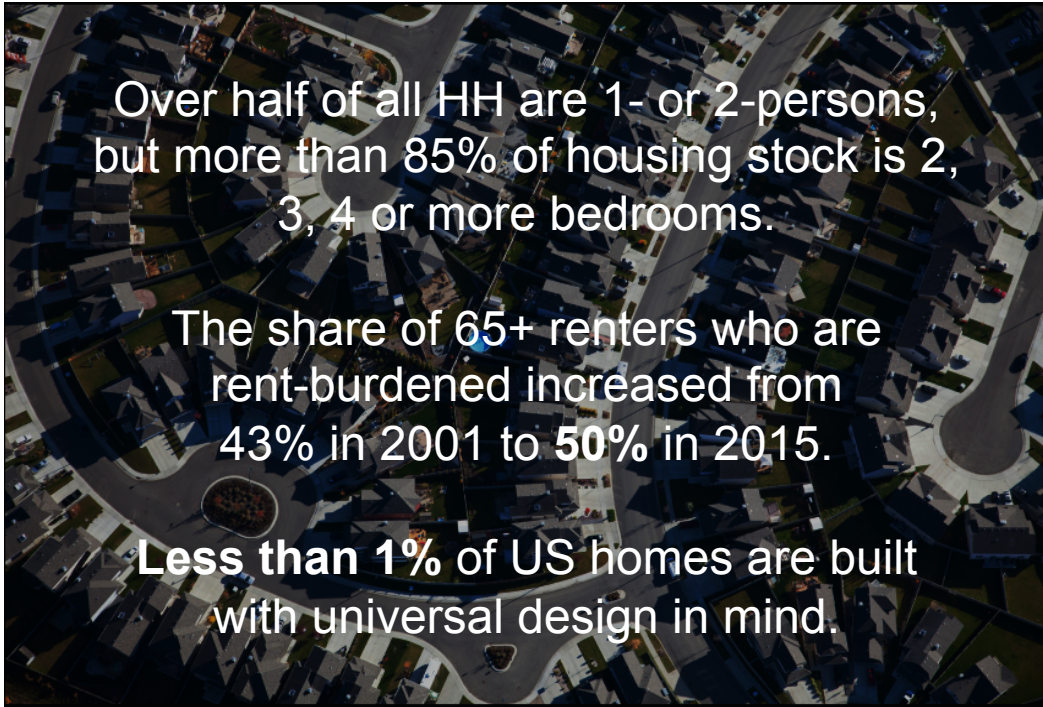
**Arlington:** saw 25% growth in >65 population 2012-2018

Biggest projected growth in householder age in Arlington next two decades?

**>85 (65% growth 2020-2045)** compared to 12% in 65-84 and 28% in under 65 group

Source:

<https://housing.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2021/01/2020-Needs-Analysis-Presentation.pdf>



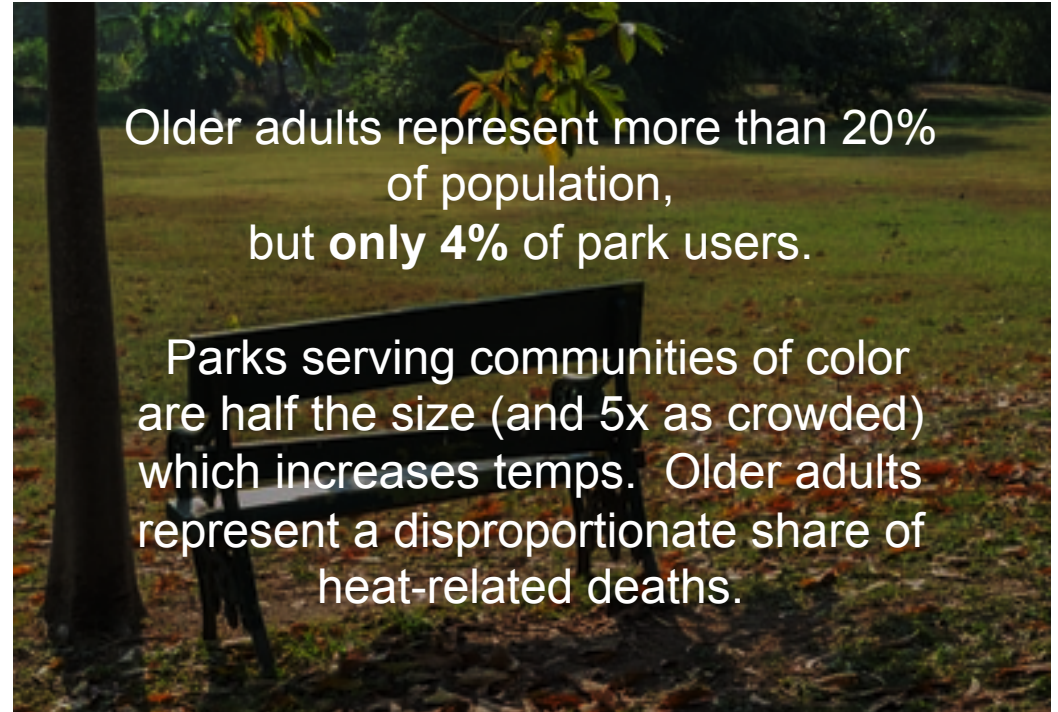
Over half of all HH are 1- or 2-persons, but more than 85% of housing stock is 2, 3, 4 or more bedrooms.

The share of 65+ renters who are rent-burdened increased from 43% in 2001 to 50% in 2015.

Less than 1% of US homes are built with universal design in mind.

## Housing

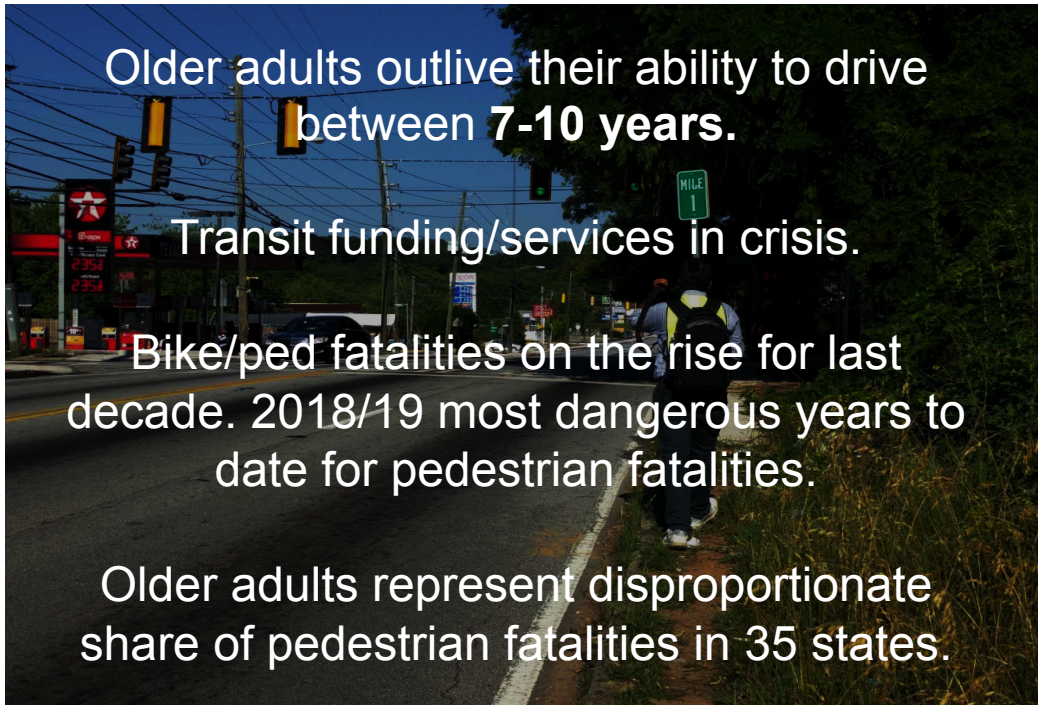
**Arlington:** 75% of 65+ renters living alone and 58% of people with disability are rent-burdened (compared to 38% overall) in 2018



Older adults represent more than 20% of population, but **only 4%** of park users.

Parks serving communities of color are half the size (and 5x as crowded) which increases temps. Older adults represent a disproportionate share of heat-related deaths.

## Parks and Public Spaces



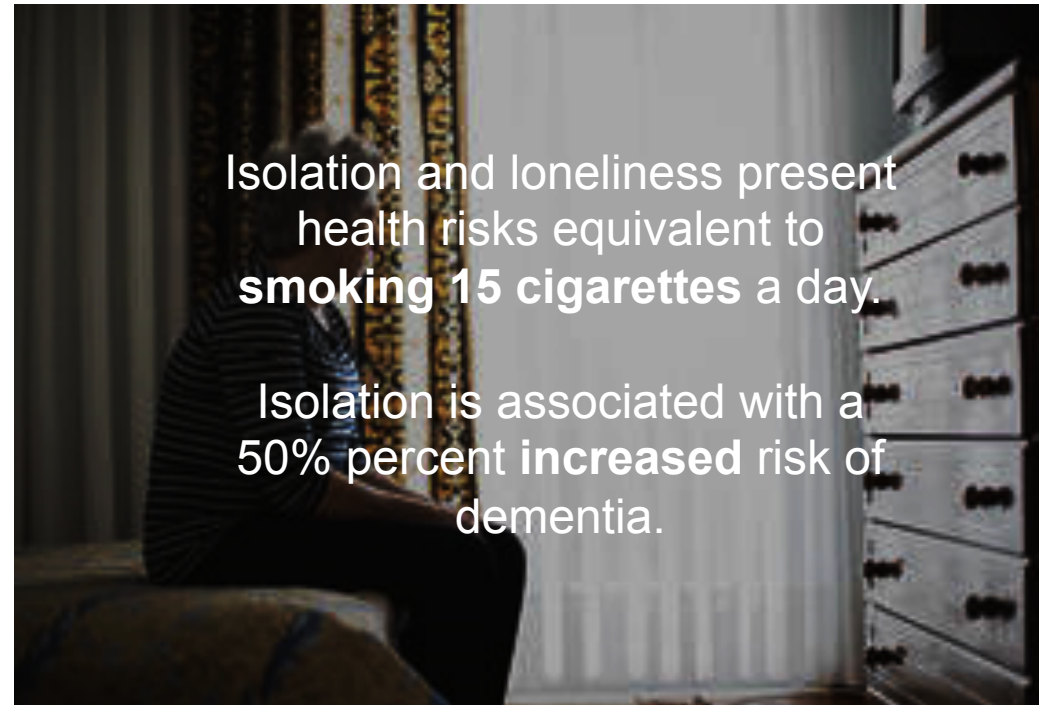
Older adults outlive their ability to drive  
between **7-10 years**.

Transit funding/services in crisis.

Bike/ped fatalities on the rise for last  
decade. 2018/19 most dangerous years to  
date for pedestrian fatalities.

Older adults represent disproportionate  
share of pedestrian fatalities in 35 states.

## Transportation



Isolation and loneliness present  
health risks equivalent to  
**smoking 15 cigarettes** a day.

Isolation is associated with a  
**50% percent increased risk** of  
dementia.

## Health

# What people want in housing as they age

- More than 3/4 of people age 50+ want to **remain in their home or community**; desire to age in place **increases with age**
- Fewer than half believe they will **stay in their homes**
- Over 60 percent of all adults own their own homes, and approximately one-third report that **major modifications are needed (bathroom, entry, lighting, etc)** to accommodate aging needs.
- Half of adults already share or would be willing to **share a home as they age**, with a major consideration being if they needed help with daily activities.
- Only about 7% of survey respondents have an ADU, but about **one-third would be interested in building one**. Biggest motivations: **income, help or companionship**



In 2018, AARP conducted a national survey on **Home and Community Preferences**

[www.aarp.org/Research](http://www.aarp.org/Research)

# AARP Livable Communities Approach

aka our “Age-Friendly” Approach

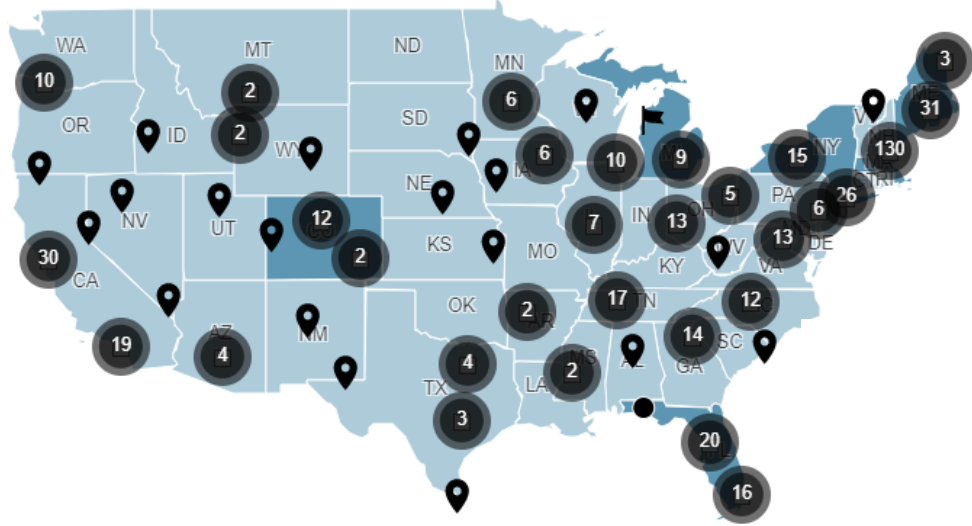
We support communities and local leaders to think differently about their **housing, transportation and public spaces** to create great places for all people of **all ages**.



- **Framework** for age-friendly policy and investment
- **Grants** to catalyze change
- **Tools and resources** for local leaders
- **AARP staff and volunteers** in every state

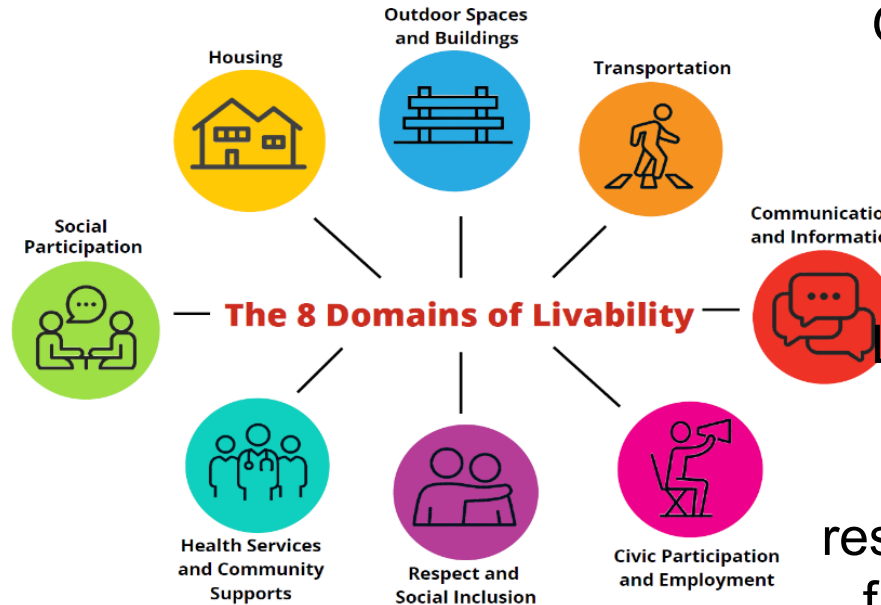
# AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

We support communities and local leaders to think differently about their **housing, transportation and public spaces** to create great places for all people of **all ages**.



*Six in VA including Arlington County (2018)*

Search for communities at <https://livablemap.aarp.org/>



Over 500 communities + six states + USVI

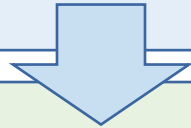
Five-year cycle

Led by diverse coalitions

Over 100 million US residents live in an age-friendly community

# Five-year process, led by champions

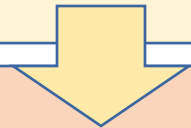
**Assess the Community's Needs**



**Develop an Action Plan**



**Implement the Plan**



**Assess Progress + Repeat**

**Who are the champions for this work?**

- City or state officials/staff
- City/county/state departments
- Regional planning/ transportation agencies
- Foundations/funders
- Higher education
- Nonprofit sector
- Private sector groups incl Chambers of Commerce
- Community residents
- Volunteers

**Often serve as Age-Friendly "core team"**

**Building an Age Friendly Community**

ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA



ACTION PLAN 2020-2023



# Community Challenge grants to catalyze change



**AARP  
COMMUNITY  
CHALLENGE**

Grants to make communities livable for people of all ages  
[aarp.org/CommunityChallenge](http://aarp.org/CommunityChallenge)



2021 application window  
February 17-April 14

Search for your  
community at  
<https://livablemap.aarp.org/>



<p>58% </p> <p><b>PUBLIC SPACES</b></p> <p>Making enhancements to parks and gathering places.</p>	<p>28% </p> <p><b>TRANSPORTATION</b></p> <p>Increasing connectivity, walkability, bikeability and safety.</p>	<p>7% </p> <p><b>HOUSING</b></p> <p>Encouraging the availability of housing that's affordable and age-friendly.</p>	<p>5% </p> <p><b>OTHER</b></p> <p>Addressing important needs identified by the community.</p>	<p>3% </p> <p><b>SMART CITIES</b></p> <p>Engaging residents and using data to improve quality of life.</p>
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**>\$6 million in 4 years (in 2020 alone, \$2.4 million in grants awarded to 184 communities)**



*Richmond, VA (2019) (top)  
(2018) (left)*

# Community Challenge grants at work

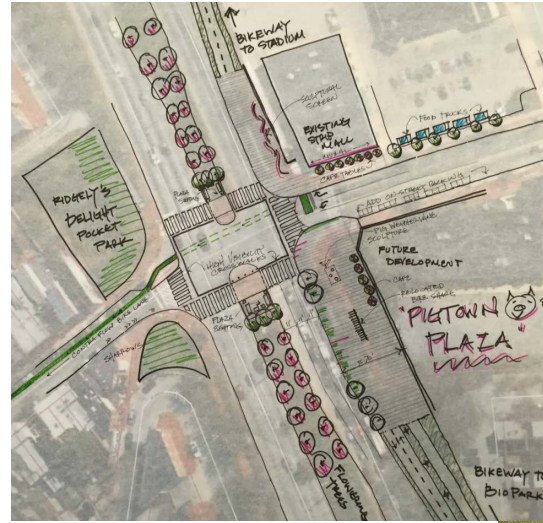


*(clockwise from top left) Los Angeles, CA; Montgomery, AL; Columbus, OH; Bethel, VT; and Brownsville, TX;*



# (More) Community Challenge grants at work

- Accessible seating + paths
- Community gardens
- Bike racks, signage and public art
- Opportunities to engage public in decision-making
- Pedestrian safety improvements
- Pop-up placemaking to enhance safety
- Transit/bike training



*(clockwise from top left)*  
Baltimore, MD; Cuyahoga, OH;  
Opelousos, LA; Memphis, TN

# Tools to help local leaders

Current Location: Rochester, Olmsted County, MN  
RECENT LOCATIONS: Bismarck, ND | Arlington, VA 22204 | 22204, Arlington, VA

**TOTAL INDEX SCORE**  
64  
Livability Score

**CATEGORY SCORE**

- 56 HOUSING: Affordability and access
- 55 NEIGHBORHOOD: Access to life, work, and play
- 64 TRANSPORTATION: Safe and convenient options

DO MORE WITH THIS SCORE

## Livability Index

<https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/>

Free weekly e-newsletter  
Text LIVABLE to 50757

View the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

Member States and Territories x Member Counties x Member Cities and Towns x

Viewing 476 AARP Age-Friendly Members | 0 AARP Community Challenge Grantees

Filter to narrow results

Year Joined/Awarded

- 2020
- 2019
- 2018
- 2017
- 2016
- 2015
- 2014
- 2013
- 2012

Age-Friendly Network Domains

- States and Territories
- Counties
- Cities and Towns
- Grantees

Searchable map  
<https://livablemap.aarp.org>

October 24, 2018 View Online

**AARP** Real Possibilities  
**Livable Communities Newsletter**

Home Page | About Us | Tool Kits & Resources | A-Z Archives

**Why Walkable Communities Are the Best Communities for Older Adults**  
Urban planner, author and walkability advocate Jeff Speck offers advice for what to look for — and not fall for — when searching for an aging-friendly place to live.  
**TIP: HAVING A PLACE TO WALK TO IS KEY**

**Last Conference Call!**  
The 2018 AARP Livable Communities National Conference is just a few weeks away. We'll be in Charlotte, North Carolina, November 12-14. Check out our updated conference program, breakout session descriptions and field trip offerings.  
**REGISTRATION CLOSES SOON**

**Livability News & Notes**

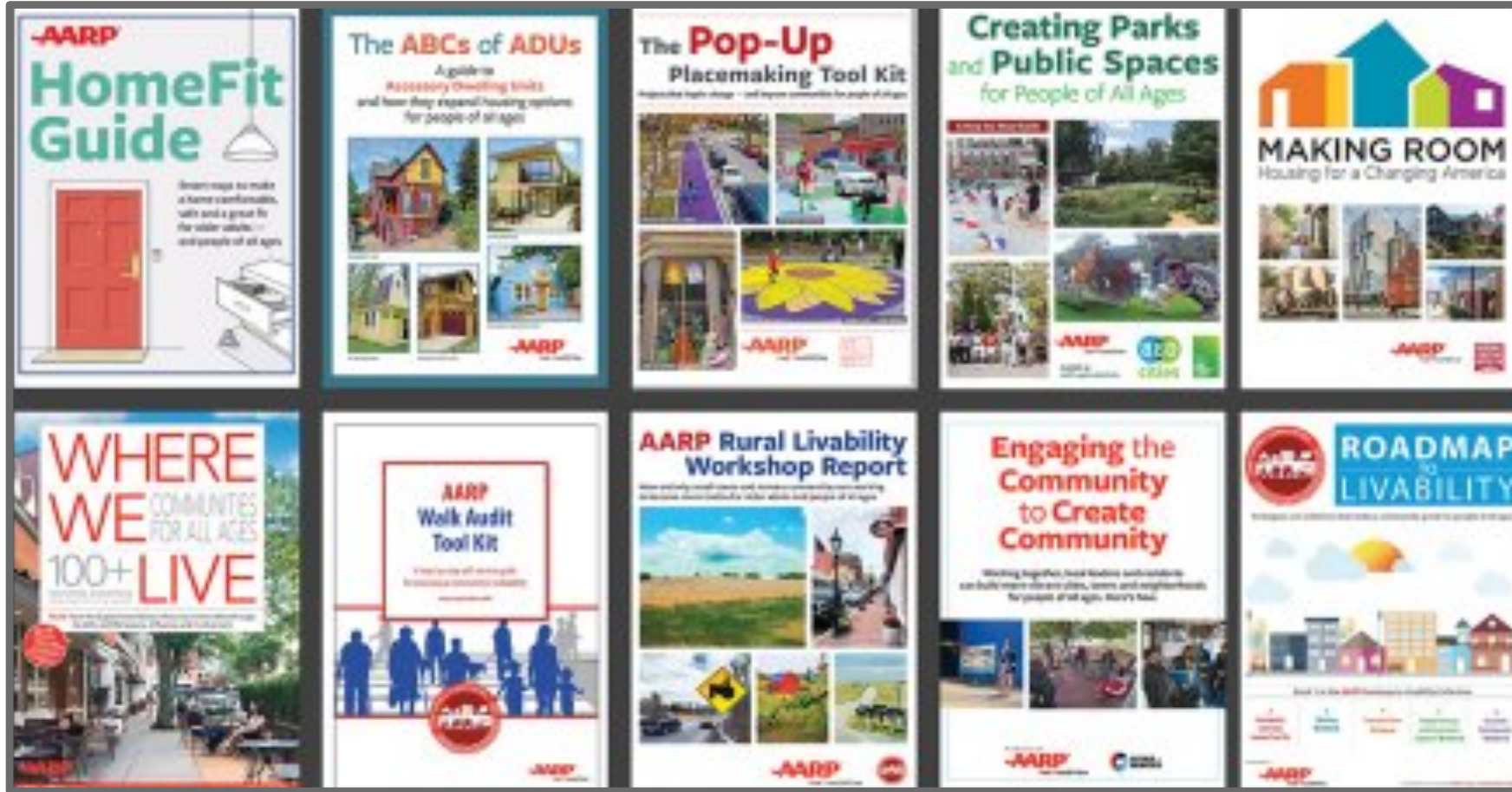
**The Mayor Who Banned Cars** — By doing so, an historic city center on the decline rebounded to become a safer, healthier, more vibrant and walkable place to live, work and play. Source: [The Guardian >](#)

**The Best Type of Car for Older Adults** — "Getting into a sports car is a controlled fall into the seat and a climb out," notes an engineer. "A pickup is the reverse." The seat height found in small SUVs provides a perfect fit. Source: [Detroit Free Press >](#)

**Livability in the Rural Mountain West** — Thanks in part to the LOR Foundation, which supports livability efforts in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico, this year's AARP Livable Communities conference will include several sessions about livability needs and successes in rural areas. Source: [LORfoundation.org >](#)

Since the AARP Livable Communities team is busy preparing for our aforementioned conference, this newsletter won't be published on Halloween or the day after Election Day. Look for the next issue on November 14.  
You can read past issues by visiting the [AARP Livable Communities e-Newsletter archive](#).

# Free publications



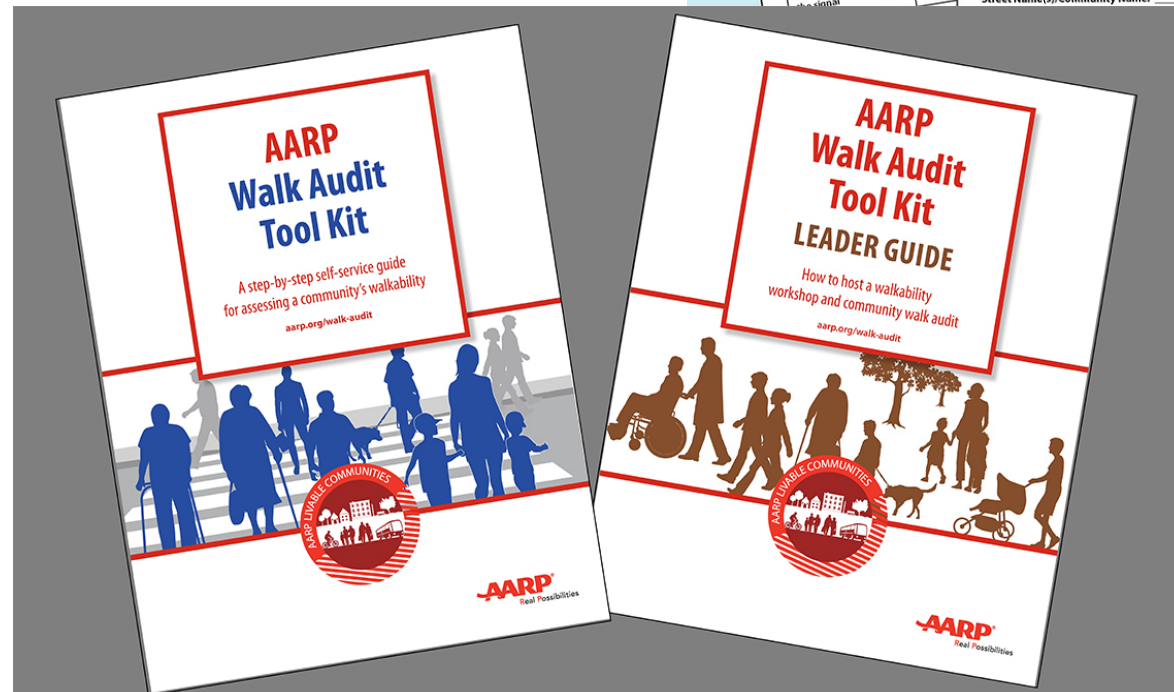
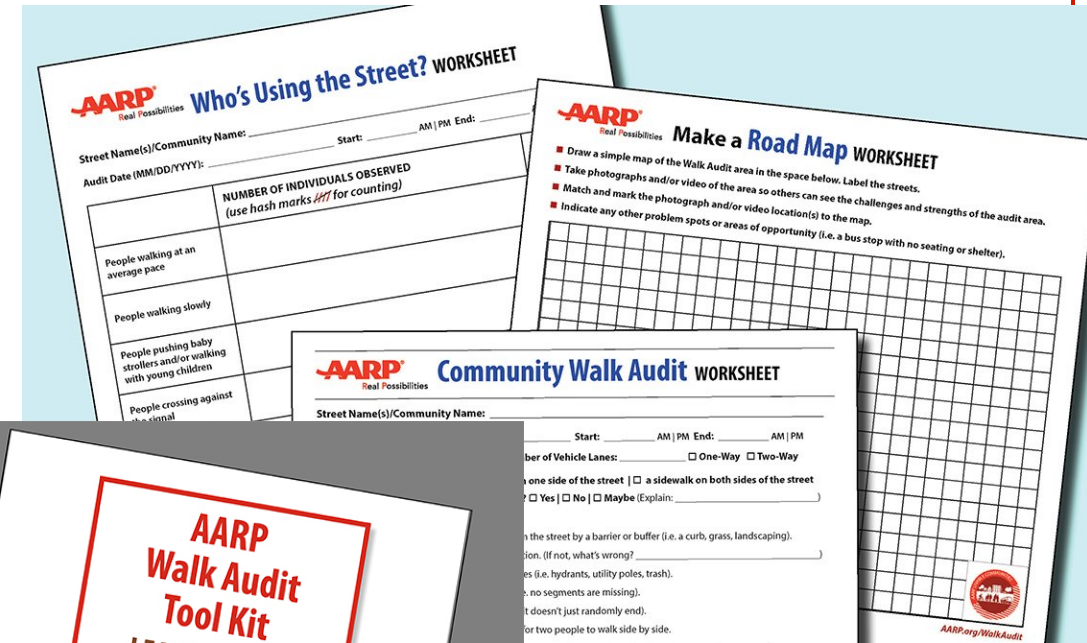
Free in print and via download. Access all at:  
[aarp.org/livable](http://aarp.org/livable)

# Focus on: Walk Audit

**The Problem:** Too many communities in the United States are designed exclusively or almost exclusively for automobile travel, with very little consideration given to the needs of pedestrians.

**The Solution:** Community members can get informed about changes needed on their streets, paths, and sidewalks to make them more pedestrian-friendly.

The **AARP Walk Audit** is a free resource to help communities improve their walkability.



Download both at [aarp.org/walk-audit](https://aarp.org/walk-audit)

# Walk Audit helps to assess:

- What might be especially problematic for a child, older adult or person with disabilities?
- Are the crosswalks legible?
- Are the roads too wide?
- Do cars block pedestrians' view of traffic?
- Are there sidewalks?
- Are existing sidewalks in poor condition?
- Are sidewalks too narrow?
- Do cars, vendors, or trucks block sidewalks?
- And more

**Assignment #1** AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit  
**CROSSING STREETS and INTERSECTIONS**  
Complete one set of the Assignment #1 sheets for each intersection you observe.  
10 to 30 minutes per intersection.

Street Name 1 \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ Street Name 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ AM | PM Time observations ended: \_\_\_\_\_ AM | PM

Items that are a problem for pedestrians and note:  
What is especially problematic for a child, older adult or person with disabilities?  
Record a landmark or side of street on the line to the right of each item you check.

PROBLEMS FOR PEDESTRIANS	LOCATION
<input type="checkbox"/> There are no sidewalks, paths or shoulders.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The sidewalks are not continuous (i.e., segments are missing).	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The sidewalk isn't wide enough for two people to walk together side-by-side (minimum width needed: 5 feet).	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The sidewalk is broken or cracked.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> There's no buffer between traffic and the sidewalk.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The sidewalks are interrupted by driveways.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> There are no ramps (i.e., curb cuts) or they're misplaced. (Note: There should be two curb cuts per corner.)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The curb cuts aren't textured or marked for people with visual impairments.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The sidewalk is blocked or interrupted by poles, signs, shrubs, dumpsters, low-hanging trees, etc.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Cars, trucks, vendors are blocking the sidewalk.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other issues and observations:	_____

Overall Rating of the Street Crossing(s) in the Survey Area:  Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor

Additional observations:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Assignment #2** AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit  
**SIDEWALKS**  
Complete one sheet for each sidewalk-equipped street within your walk area.

Street observed: \_\_\_\_\_ between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Name Cross Street 1 Cross Street 2

Day and Date of week: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time observations began: \_\_\_\_\_ AM | PM Time observations ended: \_\_\_\_\_ AM | PM

DIRECTIONS: Place a ✓ next to any items that are a problem for pedestrians and note:  
• What might be especially problematic for a child, older adult or person with disabilities?  
• What is the exact location of each problem? Record a landmark or side of street (North, South, East or West) on the line to the right of each item you check.

PROBLEMS FOR PEDESTRIANS	LOCATION
<input type="checkbox"/> There are no sidewalks, paths or shoulders.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The sidewalks are not continuous (i.e., segments are missing).	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The sidewalk isn't wide enough for two people to walk together side-by-side (minimum width needed: 5 feet).	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The sidewalk is broken or cracked.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> There's no buffer between traffic and the sidewalk.	_____
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<input type="checkbox"/> There are no ramps (i.e., curb cuts) or they're misplaced. (Note: There should be two curb cuts per corner.)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The curb cuts aren't textured or marked for people with visual impairments.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> The sidewalk is blocked or interrupted by poles, signs, shrubs, dumpsters, low-hanging trees, etc.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Cars, trucks, vendors are blocking the sidewalk.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other issues and observations:	_____

Time allowed for crossing: \_\_\_\_\_ (Minutes) \_\_\_\_\_ (Seconds)

Items that are a problem for pedestrians and note:  
What is especially problematic for a child, older adult or person with disabilities?  
Record a landmark or side of street on the line to the right of each item you check.

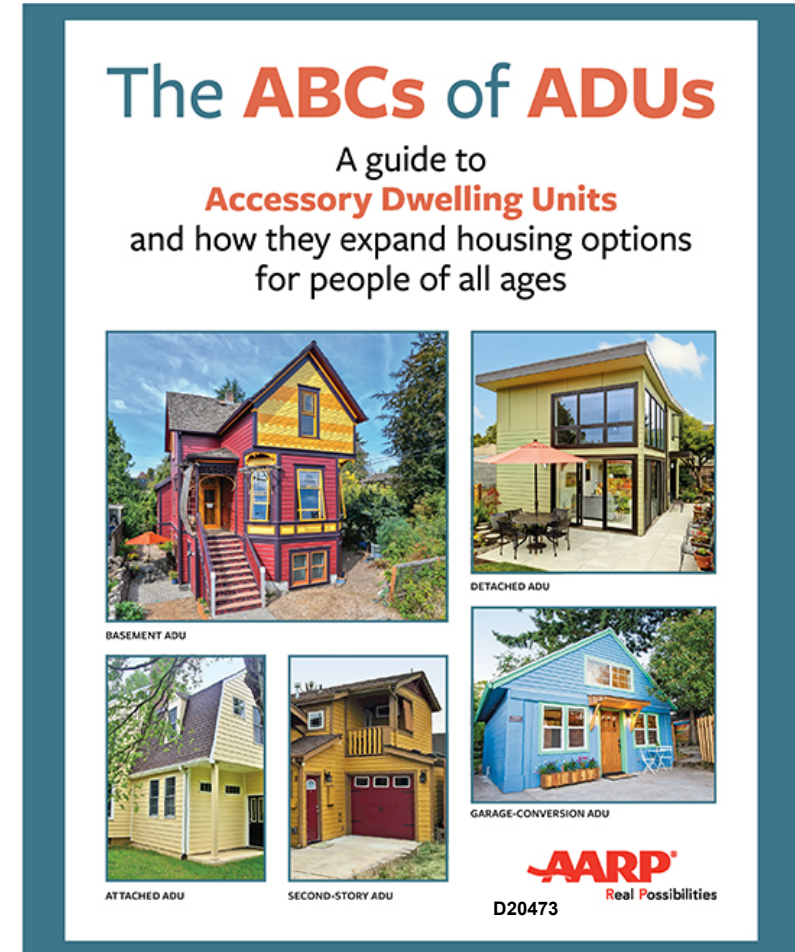
PROBLEMS FOR PEDESTRIANS	LOCATION
<input type="checkbox"/> No pedestrian signal or audible signal	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> People walking to cross	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Not enough time to cross	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Wait too long before crossing	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Poor crosswalk	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Inoperable/operating/accessibility	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Poorly marked	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Not a safe place to cross the street	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Four or more lanes	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Impaired pedestrian view of traffic	_____

Download both at [aarp.org/walk-audit](https://aarp.org/walk-audit)

# Focus on: ABCs of ADUs

**ADUs can help address the need as a part of an all-ages approach**

- Clear benefits for older adults, but also help provide below-market housing options for others
- Good way to gently add housing stock without changing the look of existing neighborhoods
- AARP has advocated for passage of ADU and missing-middle housing code in many communities
- AARP just released model state/local code on ADUs

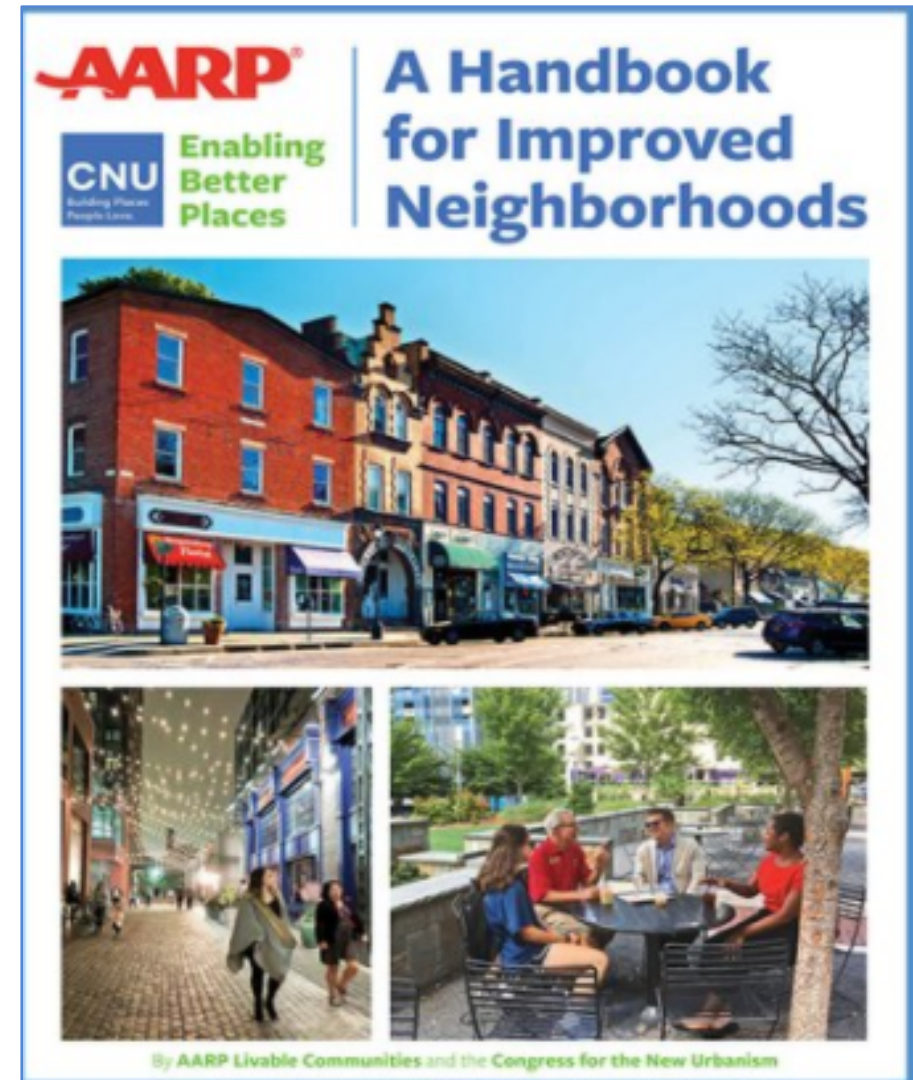


*Videos, free publications and more [AARP.org/ADU](https://www.aarp.org/ADU)*



# Focus on: Zoning Fixes

- Addresses how conventional zoning has contributed to inequitable access, amenities, services and more
- Focuses on commercial corridors and adjacent neighborhoods
- Includes **40+ suggestions** for *incremental* code changes that can enhance communities through better design of:
  - Streetscapes
  - Buildings forms and uses
  - Facades, frontages and parking



Free in print and download at [aarp.org/zoning](http://aarp.org/zoning)

# Focus on: HomeFit Guide

**AARP's HomeFit Guide helps people live safely and comfortably, regardless of age or ability**

- Over **100 room-by-room tips** that are applicable to all housing types
- Detailed illustrations, explanations and checklists for how a smartly designed or modified home can meet the **current and future needs** of its residents
- Solutions for **all skill levels**, from simple do-it-yourself fixes to improvements that require skilled expertise
- **More inclusive**, with strategies that work for renters and owners; apartment or house; and variety of cultural traditions and languages (*Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Spanish*)
- More info on **smart home tech**



Download or get a copy at [aarp.org/homefit](https://aarp.org/homefit)

# Look inside...



**AARP**  
**HomeFit**  
**Guide**

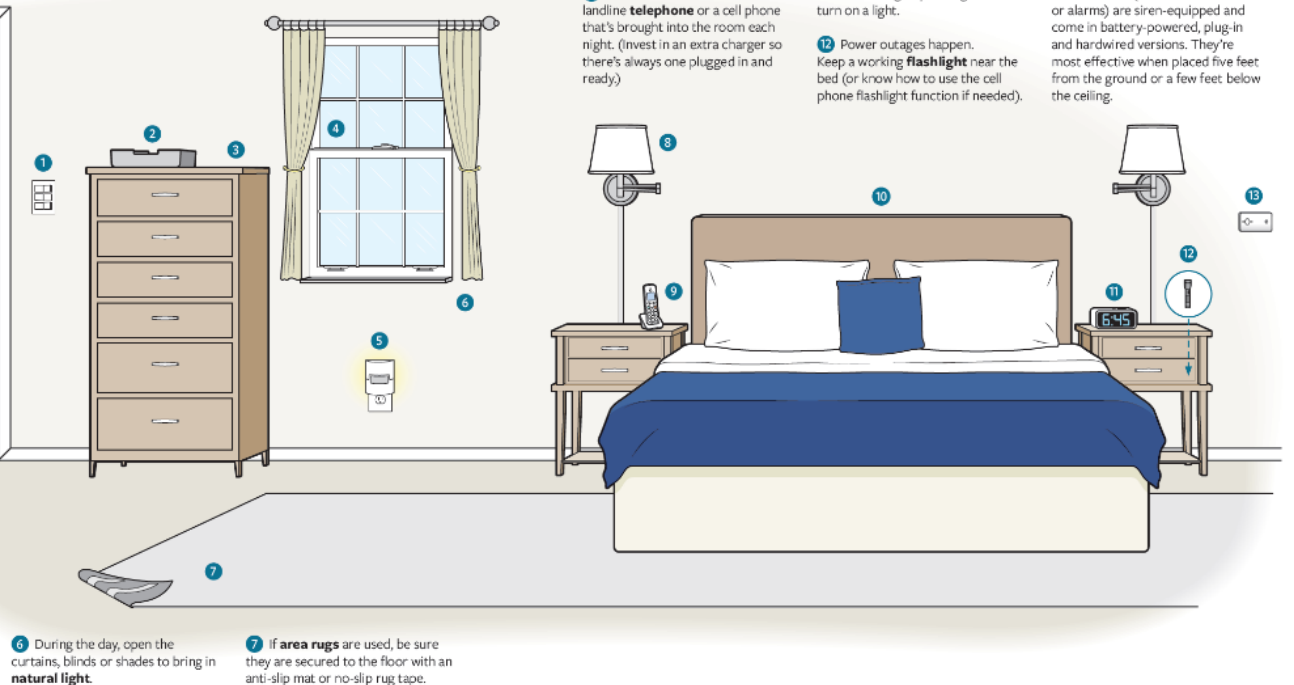
Smart ways to make a home comfortable, safe and a great fit for older adults — and people of all ages

## The Bedroom

With so many portable and high-tech devices at our disposal, the bedroom has become more than just a bedroom. Smartphones, laptop computers, exercise gear and game consoles often make their way into the room. While the devices and their accessories are typically visible during daylight hours, they can pose serious tripping hazards in the dark — especially if the charging cords and items are placed on the floor.

### FOLLOW THE NUMBERS

- 1 A **light switch** near the doorway can power a ceiling fixture so a light can be turned on before entering the room. (Although such a wall switch can be wired to a plug that powers a bedside lamp, that kind of setup often results in the light not working because one switch or the other is in the off position.)
- 2 Create a **designated spot** — such as a basket, drawer, dresser top or nightstand — for storing any electronics, cords and accessories brought into the bedroom.
- 3 Ensure that **tall furniture** is either secured to the wall or is heavy enough not to tip over. (If the home is in an earthquake zone, furniture and wall hangings should not be installed near the bed.)
- 4 **Windows** should have screens and be able to open for fresh air and to use as an exit in case of emergencies.
- 5 A **motion sensor night-light** will provide needed light when walking to or from the bathroom in the middle of the night. Another option is to place a motion- or voice-activated light fixture in the room.



Download or get a copy at [aarp.org/homefit](http://aarp.org/homefit)

# Focus on: Arlington County + Alexandria

## Arlington County: member of NAFSC (2018)

- Action plan focuses on working with the Virginia regional transit agency to enhance public transportation by making transit more affordable. Also will work to improve its commitment to enhance pedestrian safety, seeking to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries to pedestrians, bikers, and drivers by enhancing Vision Zero policies. Increase public transit use

## Alexandria: member of NAFSC (2016)

- Action plan focuses on being more inclusive for aging communities of color, different gender identities, sexual orientation, nationalities, cultures, and disabilities. Also building on its Vision Zero policy, hosting new walkability audits with community groups, and ensuring that school zones are safe.



# Focus on: Des Moines, IA

- **Member of NAFSC (2012-2017 + ongoing)**
- Identified need for more compact, walkable communities with housing that's more affordable than typical single-family home (to serve both older adults + millennials).
  - *Result: 2020 Community Challenge grant to fund construction of ADU demonstration as a housing alternative for the area and way to increase housing options.*
- Identified areas of historic underinvestment with a focus on 50+; emerged into Viva East Bank project which paired age-friendly team with local faith-based communities.
  - *Result: Invest DSM allocated a program budget of \$50 million over 10 years to strengthen middle market neighborhoods in targeted areas*
- Evaluated businesses with an eye to how they serve needs of older adults.
  - *Result: Voluntary age-friendly business certification program*
- Learn more:

<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2020/community-profile-age-friendly-des-moines-iowa.html>



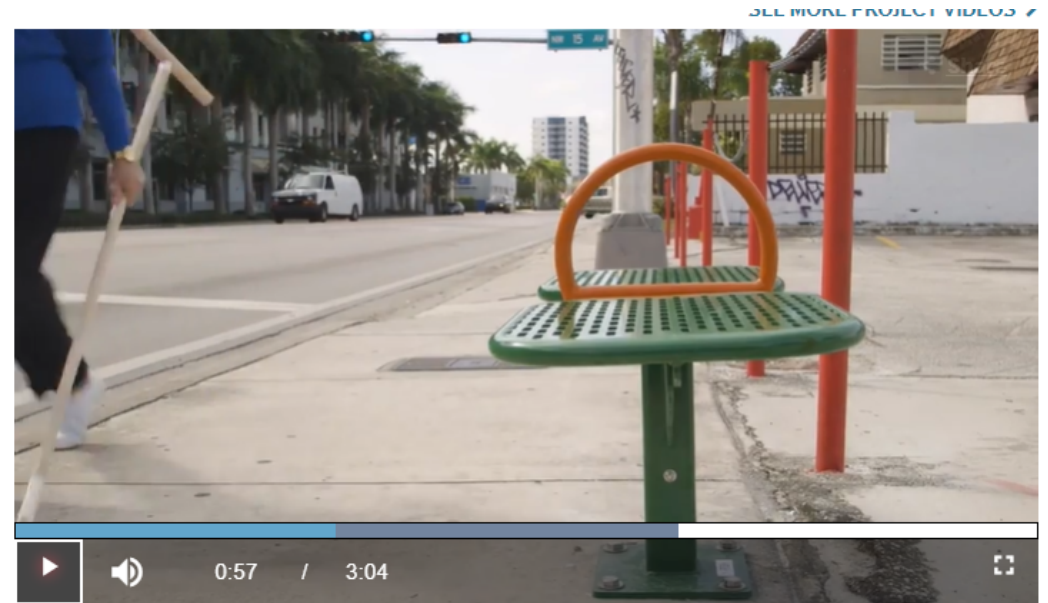
*Rendering for proposed DSM project*



*Age-friendly business certification in DSM*

# Focus on: Miami-Dade County, FL

- **Member of NAFSC (2018)**
- Action plan focuses on improving pedestrian safety and improving walkability by auditing existing roadways, providing driver education for older adults and promoting public transit use. Also advocating for additional transit stops in areas of high need and at key destinations for older adults.
- **Ex:** 2018 Community Challenge grant to install 12 bus benches to support increased use of transit in Little Havana, where residents use transit 3x as much as general population
- Feature article:  
<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2020/age-friendly-miami-florida-and-equity.html>



Excerpt of video on age-friendly bench program

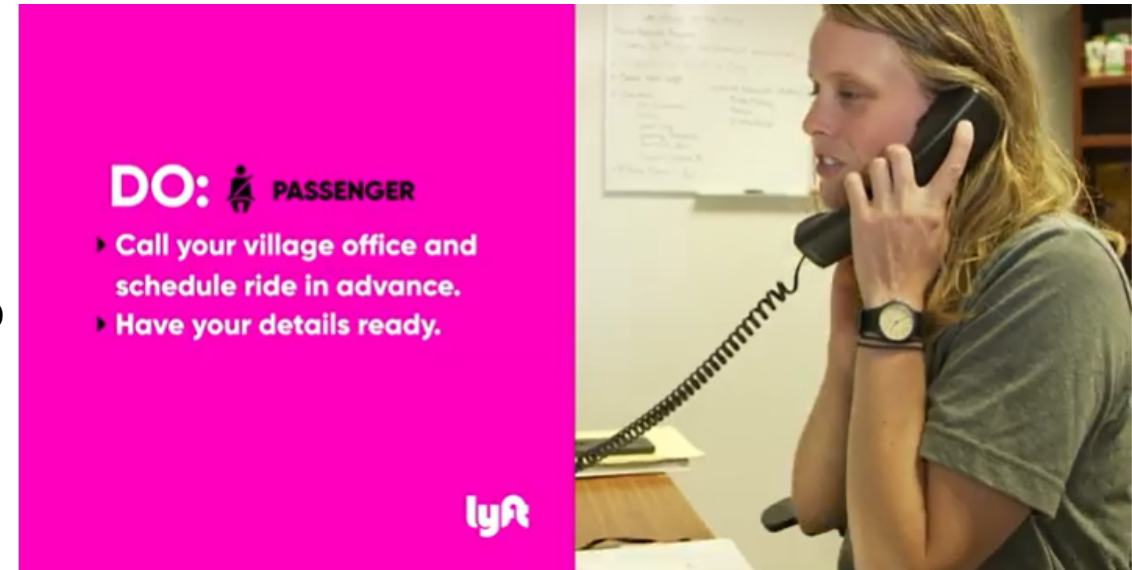
Watch video at

<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/about/info-2018/2018-community-challenge-miami-florida.html>

*Images courtesy of AARP and UHP*

# Focus on: Columbus, OH

- **Member of NAFSC (2015)**
- **Ex:** Expansive action plan over several years plus early 2019 deep dive into **transportation** led to:
  - Two neighborhood circulator buses
  - *Safe Routes to Age in Place* study, funded by the Ohio DOT, to ID transportation challenges and solutions
  - "*Mainstream on Demand*" mobility service to offer an on-demand paratransit service, created in response to *non-ADA* paratransit needs.
  - *Lyfting Villages*, a pilot program in which rides are provided by Lyft to Village members when volunteer drivers aren't available
- Feature article:  
<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2020/age-friendly-columbus-ohio-and-equity.html>



powered by embedly

Excerpt from Lyfting Villages how-to video with guidance for riders and Lyft drivers

Watch entire video here:  
<https://youtu.be/dlyR3pGXF0M>

# AARP's Livable Communities Approach

aka our "Age-Friendly" approach

**For more information:**

**aarp.org/livable | [livable@aarp.org](mailto:livable@aarp.org)  
@AARPlivable**

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