

**CITY OF  
GAINESVILLE**

030540  
**INTER-OFFICE  
COMMUNICATION**

Date: June 25, 2004

To: Personnel & Organizational Structure Committee Members  
From: Jim Hencin  
Block Grant Manager  
Subject: Update – Communities for a Lifetime Initiative

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Last November, the P & O Committee discussed the "Communities for a Lifetime Initiative" report, which contained a number of recommendations on ways to improve the community to accommodate the needs of seniors. As a follow-up in determining where the City of Gainesville stands as an organization in addressing the various Communities for a Lifetime recommendations, we asked City departments to report whether they are doing or not doing something along the lines of the report's recommendations.

The attached report is a compilation of responses to the 86 recommendations contained in the Communities for a Lifetime report. While there are a number of recommendations that do not apply to the City of Gainesville, many of the recommendations are in fact being addressed by various departments.

I will be at the July 6 P & O Committee meeting to answer any questions that you might have.

JAH/km

Attachment

Cc: Wayne Bowers, City Manager  
Tom Saunders, Community Development Director

**City of Gainesville**  
**Responses to**  
**Alachua County Partners For Elder Readiness**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**NOTE:** Included below are responses to the 80+ recommendations, which are loosely organized into categories according to the original "Communities for a Lifetime" report. The categories are:

- A. TRANSPORTATION/TRAVEL**
- B. ENVIRONMENTAL**
- C. SAFETY**
- D. EMPLOYMENT/VOLUNTEER WORK**
- E. ELDER FRIENDLY BUSINESSES**
- F. EDUCATION**
- G. FINANCIAL/LEGAL**
- H. HEALTH**
- I. HOUSING**
- J. SERVICES**
- K. SOCIAL/RECREATION**

**A. Transportation/Travel**

1. Assess and repair sidewalks at regular scheduled intervals.

*PWD - Repairing.*

2. Work to establish a variety of transportation systems and options in all neighborhoods for seniors who may no longer be capable of driving or who may have limited driving capabilities. (Buses, taxi's, volunteer drivers, mini buses, car pool systems, bicycle, scooter, golf cart, pedestrian, etc.)

*PWD - Fixed route sidewalks/ramps and paratransit.*

*R&P - Partnered with ElderCare of Alachua County to transport seniors to the Thelma Boltin Center Monday-Friday for senior recreation, social and nutrition programs run by the Recreation & Parks Department.*

3. Increase maintenance of street signs, replacing damaged or faded signs, cleaning mildew, graffiti and dirt from signs.

*PWD - Doing.*

4. Use latest recommendations relative to height, letter size, and symbols.

***PWD - Doing.***

***R&P - Doing at parks and recreation facilities.***

5. Use reflective materials for headlights at night.

***PWD - Doing.***

***R&P - Doing at parks and recreation facilities.***

6. Evaluate pedestrian and vehicle traffic at all intersections. Adjust timing of lights and cross-walks. Increase visibility of walk ways, use auditory as well as visible walk signals. Use universal symbols. Assess distances between pedestrian crosswalks and the width of all cross walks.

***PWD - Doing.***

7. Maintain roads and intersections from debris and deterioration.

***PWD - Doing.***

8. Create speed "humps" rather than "bumps" and make certain all are clearly visible day and night.

***PWD - Doing.***

9. Ensure adequate slope and width of ramps at all intersections. Have "cross hatching" on concrete for traction.

***PWD - Doing. Tactile warnings for warnings not traction.***

10. Establish a driving skill assessment and counseling program for seniors and their families.

***PWD - Not doing.***

11. Provide educational programs to the community on bicycle/pedestrian safety and promote UF doing the same for all new students.

***PWD - Doing.***

12. Determine frequency of Handicapped parking spaces being full in public building lots. Add additional spaces where needed.

*PWD - Doing.*

13. Have Handicapped Parking spaces close to entrances which are covered where possible.

*PWD - Not doing.*

14. Evaluate criteria and frequency of applying for Handicapped Parking Permits.

*PWD - N/A.*

15. Encourage businesses to exceed the mandatory minimum number of handicapped parking spaces.

*PWD - N/A.*

16. Work with GPD, ASO and UFPD to enforce parking and bicycle laws.

*PWD - Doing.*

17. For new construction, promote the location of sidewalks as center lanes between rows of parked vehicles.

*PWD - Not doing.*

18. Provide sidewalks and walkways which are separated from vehicle traffic.

*PWD - Doing.*

19. Provide benches and weather protection at all bus stops and other public transportation centers.

*PWD - Doing.*

## **B. Environmental**

20. Work to improve and maintain an acceptable level of air quality. Publicize in the newspaper, on government web sites etc. when air quality falls below an acceptable, safe level.

*N/A.*

21. Have sufficient numbers and locations of benches, lights, emergency call boxes, water fountains in public parks.

*R&P – Have installed water fountains in two parks that are accessible with push bars. As equipment is replaced in parks, accessibility will be addressed.*

22. Ensure all pathways in parks are accessible.

*R&P – Doing.*

23. Use large print on park signs with information related to distance of walks and distance between benches.

*R&P – Not doing.*

### **C. Safety**

24. Encourage special training for postal workers, and gas or electric company personnel to follow-up when something appears amiss at an elder's residence.

*Being done by U.S. Postal Service; City departments report unusual incidents when in the field.*

25. Increase location and frequency of advertising for Special Needs Registration with Emergency Management.

*GPD - N/A.*

26. Ensure list for evacuations, and other emergencies is regularly updated.

*GPD - Doing.*

27. Work with ASO, GPD, other law enforcement agencies and SALT to educate seniors on crime prevention techniques.

*GPD - Doing.*

28. Support programs which would provide free or discounted security equipment to low-income seniors.

*GPD - N/A. Have done in the past.*

29. Improve lighting where needed in locations frequented by seniors.

***PWD – Doing. (Public areas)***

30. Place emergency call boxes in parking areas, at bus stops and other locations, where seniors may be at risk.

***GPD – N/A.***

31. Encourage programs resulting in a reduction of crime such as Neighborhood Watch, Citizen Patrol, Home Security Inspections, VIN etching etc.

***GPD – Doing.***

***R&P – Are made available free of charge for most neighborhood crime watch meetings.***

32. Encourage the establishment of more neighborhood watches with special considerations for senior's needs.

***GPD – Doing.***

33. Increase training to professionals (EMTs, fire dept., physicians, social workers, law enforcement, 911 operators, shelter staff, crisis center staff, victim advocates, postal and utility workers etc.) and the public, about working with seniors, domestic violence, abuse and neglect as related to seniors.

***GPD – Doing.***

***RTS – Sensitivity training provided to employees regarding working with seniors.***

34. Promote programs offering free cell phones to seniors for 911 calls and work towards having local cell phone locator service.

***GPD – N/A.***

35. Encourage law enforcement to educate the public and publicize the latest scams and frauds against seniors.

***GPD – Doing.***

36. Ensure security in and around all government agencies and offices.

***GPD – Doing.***

37. Encourage law enforcement and emergency management to have elder outreach and information programs.

*GPD – Doing.*

38. Ensure all rural seniors have a means of communicating with others by telephone, email, or monitoring system and ensure rural seniors have a working radio or other device for receiving emergency broadcasts.

*GPD – N/A.*

39. Ensure there are sufficient free and/or discounted emergency alert response systems available. Build these systems or the capability for them into new construction, especially in senior housing.

*GPD – N/A.*

#### **D. Employment/Volunteer Work**

40. Work with Alachua-Bradford One Stop Career Centers and local businesses to increase employment opportunities for seniors.

*Not doing.*

41. Increase advertising efforts of volunteer opportunities for seniors and work to increase types of volunteer programs available.

*Not doing.*

#### **E. Elder Friendly Businesses**

42. Encourage increased accessibility and accommodations for all businesses by providing guidelines, assessments and designations as “Elder Friendly Businesses” (EFB).

*Not doing.*

43. Periodically list businesses with this designation in newspapers and other publications.

*Not doing.*

44. Consider providing incentives to businesses for becoming “Elder Friendly”.

*Not doing.*

45. Provide easily recognizable signs for businesses to display in windows or other public views indicating that the business is "Elder Friendly".

*Not doing.*

46. Ensure that public transportation systems are encouraged to receive EFB designations.

*Not doing.*

47. Encourage SFCC teaching zoo to be more accessible and Elder Friendly.

*N/A.*

48. Encourage all recreational facilities and faith based organizations to be designated as Elder Friendly.

*Not doing.*

49. Establish additional criteria for public and private buildings which provide services to seniors such as special waiting areas for seniors or disabled individuals with padded chairs, chairs with and without arms, shorter waiting periods, individualized service, materials with larger print, take a number systems, etc.

*Not doing.*

50. Encourage companies to consider offering elder daycare programs/services to their employees.

*Not doing.*

51. Encourage all grocery stores, supermarkets, and pharmacies to seek "Elder Friendly Business" designations meeting specific criteria such as taking phone orders, making home deliveries, etc.

*Not doing.*

52. Encourage all service providers to offer application submittals by mail, phone, or home visits.

*Not doing.*



## **F. Education**

53. Adapt public computers and those used for teaching seniors with devices for the visually and hearing impaired.

*R&P – Partnered with SantaFe Community College to start free computer classes and labs for senior citizens at the Thelma Boltin Center and will expand to Cone Park in the fall of 2004.*

54. Increase public awareness of existing programs to assist low income seniors with medication, utility payments, medical care, vision, hearing, dental care, prosthetics, etc. Work to increase and expand these programs.

*N/A.*

## **G. Financial/Legal**

55. Evaluate utility assistance and deposit programs for low income seniors.

*GRU – Doing.*

56. Encourage senior discounts programs with all businesses including telephone, cable, utilities and internet access companies. Provide education to these businesses.

*Not doing.*

57. Encourage attorneys to advertise to and offer pro-bono work for seniors in need.

*Not doing.*

58. Evaluate and revise if necessary, tax exemption/deferred-tax programs.

*OMB – senior homestead.*

## **H. Health**

59. Establish programs which provide for sufficient air conditioning and heating of senior's homes.

*Not doing.*

60. Establish donation and recycle programs for durable medical equipment and assistive devices.

*Not doing.*

61. Establish a program for all seniors utilizing the file or vial of life including annual update assistance.

*Not doing.*

62. Encourage more geriatricians to practice here.

*Not doing.*

63. Support all programs providing free medical evaluations, and screenings for vision, hearing, mental health, dental, general physicals, medication reviews, etc. Encourage the provision of transportation or the use of mobile units.

*Not doing.*

64. Encourage businesses and professionals to assess for the benefits of assistive devices, and provide training for their use.

*Not doing.*

65. Promote free or discounted services for seniors who need mental health assistance and counseling to deal with depression, grief/bereavement, substance abuse or other mental health concerns.

*Not doing.*

66. Encourage medical practices which have specialization programs for the elderly.

*Not doing.*

67. Encourage the establishment of sufficient licensed Home Health agencies which also have sliding scales etc. and which can provide health aides, nursing services, medication management, therapies, and medical supplies.

*Not doing.*

68. Encourage the establishment and advertising of a variety of support groups for people dealing with wide varieties of specific challenges such as dementia, caregivers, Parkinson's, vision, stroke, hearing, loss of spouse, cancer, loss of driving privileges, etc.

*Not doing.*

## **I. Housing**

69. Research alternative housing programs such as shared housing, mother-in-law quarters, etc.

*Group homes are allowed per state statute.*

70. Assist in the development of housing alternatives for moderate income seniors.

*Doing.*

71. Encourage the development of businesses and volunteer programs which provide financial and construction assistance to seniors needing environmental modifications to their homes.

*Not doing.*

72. Encourage public housing for seniors to offer case management, personal care assistance, homemaking assistance, etc.

*N/A. (GHA doing.)*

73. Research any zoning restrictions which may prevent the opening or operation of Adult Family Care Homes and Adult Day Care Facilities.

*Already allowed.*

## **J. Services**

74. Encourage the development of sufficient specialized services such as caregiver training and respite programs, companions/sitters, home delivered meals, pest control, shopping assistance, telephone reassurance, adult day care, home care, pet assistance services, home repair services, etc.

*Not doing.*

75. Encourage lawn care companies to donate their services to seniors in need.

*Not doing.*

76. Encourage neighborhoods to provide assistance to their seniors and support businesses which provide free or discounted services.

*Not doing.*

77. Provide for free pick-up and disposal of deceased pets for seniors in need of this.

*Not doing.*

78. Make directories of services for seniors more publicized and readily available to them and their families.

*Not doing.*

79. Ensure there are sufficient Adult Day Care and Adult Day Health Care Centers with sliding scales or other financial assistance offered.

*Not doing.*

80. Encourage Waste Management to provide trash and recycle bins on wheels for those who may need this.

*Doing.*

81. Ensure that all basic services are provided to senior residents in each municipality within the county.

*N/A.*

82. Identify and target rural seniors for service and information.

*N/A.*

#### ***K. Social/Recreation***

83. Design and build a Senior Center in every community so that seniors do not need to travel far from their homes and can feel comfortable with the friends and neighbors they know.

*R&P – Thelma Boltin has been designated as a center for senior citizens, which is operated 5-days per week. Other recreation centers (Westside, TB McPherson, Rosa B. Williams, and Porters) also have activities for seniors. Senior programs will also be offered in the fall at Eastside Recreation Center at Cone Park. This center along with the Thelma Boltin has a computer lab, game room and an equipped kitchen. The Eastside Center also has an exercise/dance room and arts and crafts room.*

84. Have a larger main Senior Center for larger events similar to the downtown library, with several smaller branches in other communities.

*R&P – See response to above question.*

85. Use the latest architectural designs and materials to accommodate the needs of seniors.

*Doing – as new facilities are built.*

86. Spaces should include computer lab, exercise rooms, library/reading room, game room for board games, pool tables, dart boards etc., multipurpose large function rooms, equipped kitchen, congregate meal room, heated pool for aquatic arthritis therapy, small private rooms for counseling and larger rooms for classes or group therapy. Also, allow office space for service providers to meet with seniors.

*Doing – as new facilities are built.*

