

Lifelong Communities That Work for Every Age and Ability

THE CHALLENGE

Most of us want to stay in our communities as we age, but the majority of places in metro Atlanta were not designed for us to live in our whole lives. A lack of easy access to transportation, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods,* and housing that is affordable and accessible for every stage of life make it very difficult for many to remain in their community, regardless of age, ability, or income.

BACKGROUND

Metro Atlanta has a growing older population.

We're all living longer and healthier lives, and by 2030, one in four residents will be over the age of 60. That's more than 1.2 million people.

79%

79% of residents age 65 or older reported in a 2018 Metro Atlanta Speaks survey that they want to remain in metro Atlanta.

When people live in mixed-use areas, near transit, or near greenspace, home values benefit.

Services and amenities that make a community easier to get around also make it more desirable, while improving traffic and health outcomes for residents.

2-4

Property values for well-designed, dense neighborhoods tend to be 2-4 times higher than those in traditional single-family neighborhoods.

Housing that's convenient to sidewalks, shopping amenities, essential services, and a variety of transportation options are desirable at every age

and can be lifesavers for us as we age in place.

1 in 3

1 in 3 Georgians over the age of 70 have stopped driving.

There's a shortage of housing that's affordable and accessible.

Housing is considered affordable if a person pays no more than 30 percent of their income on rent or mortgage. But more than a quarter of older metro Atlanta homeowners and more than half of older renters pay more than the affordable amount.

1 million+

More housing is needed to accommodate the more than 1 million people the 10-county region expects to add by 2040.

* Pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods are safe and accessible for people of all abilities.

SOLUTIONS

Making our communities great places to live at every stage of life can be accomplished in a variety of ways that create pedestrian-friendly, affordable, successful neighborhoods that work for all. Not every solution fits every community. Some strategies that work well for urban spaces don't work for rural communities, and vice-versa. However, every community can make changes that improve the ability for older persons to age in place.

Citizens' understanding and vocal support of needed solutions is vital for meaningful action and change. Making the changes our communities need requires all sectors, including elected officials and residents, to take targeted action informed by public engagement, thoughtful planning, and focused public resources.

Is your community ready? Here's how you can help.

- » Support regulations that allow for a variety of home and lot sizes, including rentals. This includes alternatives to single-family homes such as tiny houses in one's yard, apartments, duplexes, and cottages, as well as mid-rises (20-40 units per building) and high rises (50-200 units per building).
- » Stand up for alternatives to single-family homes for households of a variety of incomes and sizes. These include households made up of multiple unrelated individuals who've opted to become roommates in order to stay in their communities and multigenerational households.
- » In conversations about these matters, remember that density is not a bad word. It refers to uses of space that allow more people to live and work in our neighborhoods — which is nothing short of necessary in our rapidly-growing region.
- » Support mixed-use neighborhoods. Zoning that allows businesses and houses to be close together relieves demands on our region's roadways while greatly improving quality of life for residents.
- » Support Complete Streets that include sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit stops, and reduce car lanes when appropriate, recognizing that more transportation options results in less traffic congestion and more ways to get around.
- » Support parks and trails in your neighborhood to promote health through exercise and socialization, and to provide safe walking and bicycling routes to vital destinations as an alternative to driving.
- » Support public transit options in your community to ease traffic congestion and allow affordable access to persons who don't drive or cannot afford to drive.
- » Finally, speak up about your support of these measures — to elected officials and staff, civic and neighborhood groups, and friends and families. Be the voice that ignites change.

Contact information

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