



Age-Friendly Communities
Are Livable for
People of All Ages



CITY OF
COLLEGE PARK

Age Friendly College Park Progress Report to Mayor and Council

May 20, 2025

Age Friendly College Park

Progress Report

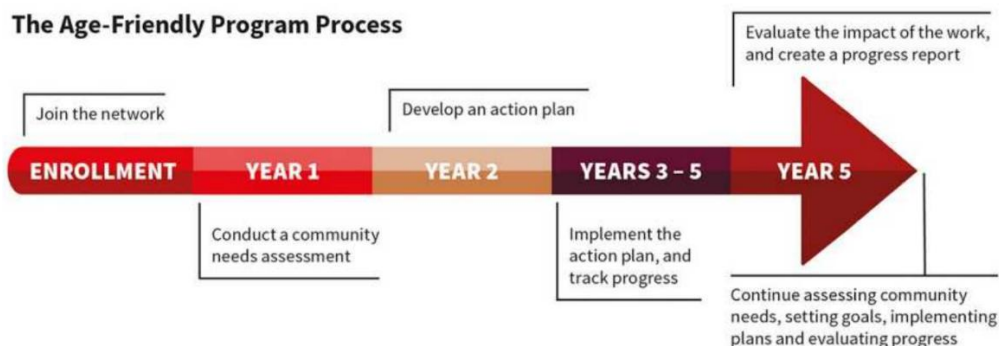
Introduction

We are proud to submit this report to the Mayor, City Council and residents of the City of College Park to provide an update about our progress toward achieving the goals of the Age Friendly College Park Action Plan.

Background

In early 2020, the City's Senior Advisory Committee (SAC) recommended that the City participate in the AARP Livability Communities Program. In September of that year, the City Council adopted Resolution 20-R-21 in support of the City's participation in the Program. In December of 2020, the Mayor sent a letter to AARP expressing the City's commitment to the Age Friendly Livable Communities Program. We officially joined the AARP Age Friendly Network in June of 2021.¹

An Age Friendly College Park Workgroup was created under the umbrella of the Senior Advisory Committee to plan how to meet the AARP requirements. Through a grant from the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, an Age Friendly Action Plan was developed, and shortly thereafter, the Workgroup created an Addendum to the Action Plan. The Action Plan and Addendum are posted on the City's website, [here](#). Once approved by the Mayor and Council in 2023, the plans were submitted to AARP. In July 2023, AARP accepted our plan to move forward.



¹ College Park joins seven other Maryland communities who are part of this initiative: Hyattsville, Salisbury, Baltimore County, Calvert County, Carroll County, Howard County, and Montgomery County.

We are currently in Year 4 of the “Years 3-5” implementation phase. Our first Progress Report is due to AARP in July 2026, and then every five years after that.

AARP Livability Index

AARP uses a “livability index” to score communities for the services and amenities that affect people’s lives the most. The index tracks more than 50 national data sources and 61 key indicators to score how well a community meets the needs of people of all ages, regardless of income, physical ability, or ethnicity.

Currently, College Park’s “Overall Livability Score” is 56. This is in the top half of communities in the US. For context, in 2024, the highest City score for a mid-size community was 68, in Cliffside Park, NJ, a community of 25,000 people.² At the time of the original action plan in September 2022 our score was 51.

Greenbelt and Hyattsville, which are also mid-size communities, score 57 and 58, respectively. College Park’s page on the AARP Livable Communities website is here: [College Park | AARP Livable Communities Map](#).

One measure of success of our work will be to improve our overall livability score, in the eyes of the AARP index.

Focus Areas

The work of the Age Friendly College Park Workgroup is focused on the following five domains:

Domain	Goal
<i>Housing</i>	College Park offers a variety of safe, affordable, well-maintained housing types to meet the needs of all ages, income and ability groups.
<i>Transportation</i>	A variety of convenient, low-cost, multimodal, and accessible transportation options are available to residents, employees and visitors of College Park.

² Source: [AARP Livability Index™ Top 100 – AARP Livability Index](#).

<i>Communication</i>	People of all ages receive useful and timely communications from the City in a format they can readily access. Communication among residents is facilitated.
<i>Social Participation</i>	College Park residents are provided with a variety of multi-cultural, multi-generational and inclusive opportunities to be engaged including social, education, and volunteer activities.
<i>Health Services and Community Support</i>	Physical and mental health services, and recreational and wellness activities are effective, affordable and accessible to residents of all ages, abilities and incomes.

Major Accomplishments July 2024-May 2025

These are our major accomplishments since our last report to the Mayor and City Council in July of 2024:

1. The part-time Age Friendly College Park lead contractor was hired in October 2024. She attends monthly AARP webinars and Age Friendly and Senior Committee meetings. She meets with counterparts in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, Hyattsville and Greenbelt to share ideas and explore areas of collaboration. She provides administrative support for our many initiatives. We thank the Mayor and Council for the continued funding of this position in the FY 2026 budget.
2. Thanks to an invitation from the Age Friendly College Park workgroup, the University of Maryland is working on their application to join the Age Friendly University Global Network (www.afugn.org). This came about because of our request to meet with the University's Associate Provost for Community Engagement, Dr. Tania Mitchell, to discuss the Age Friendly University program. That meeting occurred in January. When they discussed the idea with their peers, they learned that the University Senate had passed a resolution in 2020 to pursue designation as an Age Friendly University. However, because of COVID and a change in staffing, that initiative was never acted upon. The University is now working on their application to join this international network of Age Friendly Universities. This will lead to more structured collaborations between the University and the community moving forward. General information on the Age Friendly University Global Network is included in Appendix #1. Details on how the University plans to engage with the community will be provided by the University at a later date. We are extremely excited by this development and consider it a major win-win that will have a lasting impact on the community at large.
3. In April 2025, we began hosting semi-monthly events at the College Park Woods Clubhouse. The first Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m. is Coffee & Conversation with guest speakers from community partners. The third Wednesday of the month at

1:00 is for games and activities. Our current schedule can be found in Appendix #2. In addition to the planned activities, we invite participants to sign up for the City's "College Park Connected" email list, the new Emergency Text Alert system, and we survey guests on their interests for future events. We are delighted that we can use this wonderful new City amenity for these types of activities and welcome suggestions from the Mayor and Council.

4. Partnering with the City's Seniors Program, we sponsored a presentation on scams and fraud at the Branchville Fire House and arranged for a tour of the Hyattsville Library, both of which were well received. We look forward to finding additional ways that we can collaborate with and support the City's Seniors Program.
5. We continue to provide useful information through articles in the Municipal Scene and College Park Here and Now. If approved in the FY 2026 budget, we will begin publishing a quarterly installment in the Here and Now targeted toward seniors. We continue to look for new ways to reach our residents to communicate about resources that are available from the City, the County, AARP, and local volunteer and non-profit organizations that they might not know about. Communication with our residents who are not connected to email or the City website remains a significant challenge.
6. Our program lead has pursued a concept for a home sharing/housing match pilot program. Under the concept plan, the pilot program would match University of Maryland Graduate Students who are seeking housing near campus with area homeowners who would benefit both financially and socially from renting out a room in their homes. We have received a proposal from a private company called Nesterly who administers similar programs in communities across the country and are seeking feedback from stakeholders (i.e., surrounding jurisdictions, the University of Maryland, and others) about their level of interest in pursuing the idea, and plan to explore the idea further with the City's Affordable Housing Task Force.
7. We will be participating in the City's Affordable Housing Task Force.
8. We are monitoring the County's work on Accessory Dwelling Units and Missing Middle Housing. The state's passage of HB 1466/SB891 (Land Use and Real Property Accessory Dwelling Units Requirements and Prohibitions, which establishes a state policy to promote and encourage the creation of accessory dwelling units on land zoned for single-family residential use to meet housing needs) requires the County to adopt legislation by October 1, 2026 authorizing the development of accessory dwelling units on land with certain single-family detached dwelling units subject to certain requirements. Accessory Dwelling Units can provide a much-needed affordable housing option to our residents.

We are also monitoring the County's north College Park US 1 Neighborhood

Compatibility Study, which is looking at ways to activate the Hollywood commercial district and strengthen east-west connections in north College Park.

9. We are working on a standalone brochure to provide a compilation of senior resources from the City, the County, AARP, and local volunteer and non-profit organizations for our residents. This brochure will be available at City buildings and distributed at City events.
10. We have provided updates and feedback to City staff on the City website.
11. We have established an ongoing partnership with the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee on matters of mutual interest. We are planning to collaborate on a "Bike Audit" and "Walk Audit" and are seeking suggestions of possible locations.
12. We participated in the UMD School of Architecture "15-minute Neighborhood" Capstone project. Their recommendations were reported to the Mayor and Council on May 6.
13. We advocated for continued funding of the Habitat For Humanity Metro Maryland Aging-In-Place home repair and retrofit program and are pleased to see that funding was included in the FY 2026 budget. This is a worthwhile program that will help our seniors age in place. From the HFH MM February 2025 report, 7 home repair projects had been completed, and three more are in process.
14. We participated in a variety of City and community events, such as Corridor Conversations, Explorations on Aging Senior Art Show/Reception, Hollywood Farmers Market, Trolley Trail Day, College Park Day, and co-sponsor weekly Tai Chi classes with College Park Arts Exchange.

What's Next

- Our Progress Report to AARP is due in June 2026. Our report will include City and stakeholder initiatives as they pertain to our domains.
- We will continue conversations with UMD on their Age Friendly University Global Network status and plan for future collaborations.
- We will engage with the new Seniors Program Manager.
- We will use the feedback we receive from the City Council and participants at our events to inform future initiatives.
- At our monthly meetings we will continue to review and discuss our five domain areas – Communication, Housing, Social Participation, Transportation, and Wellness and Community Support – for ideas, initiatives, and programs that will benefit our residents.

- We will continue our discussions and collaborations with area stakeholders and welcome more participants to our group.

Conclusion

The work toward age friendly livability is a continuous process of assessment and improvement. The City's efforts to advance the goals and initiatives in the Age Friendly Action Plan will help residents of all ages, not just the seniors in our community. To be as successful as possible, we must involve a variety of stakeholders. The continued support of the Mayor and City Council is crucial to our success, and we thank you.

We look forward to your feedback and questions.

The Age Friendly College Park Workgroup

Working under the direction of Kiaisha Barber, Director, Youth Family and Senior Services, the Workgroup consists of Mary Anne Hakes, Bonnie McClellan, Gail Lovelace, Robert Thurston, Heidi Weber, Carol Gray, Darlene Nowlin, Kathy Baer, and Betty Colonomos. The Program Lead is Janeen S. Miller.

Appendices:

1. Age Friendly University Global Network information
2. College Park Woods Clubhouse schedule