

AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES/Age and Disability Inclusive Neighborhoods Action Plan

Executive Summary

October 2023

As the City of Portland's long-range planning bureau, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability coordinates and leads complex multi-agency projects that shape Portland's built environment and enhance the lives of its residents. Guided by the City's 2035 Comprehensive Plan, BPS works to ensure a healthy, prosperous and equitable city for all Portlanders – regardless of one's age and disability.

This Age- and Disability-Inclusive Neighborhoods (ADIN) Action Plan includes strategies and actions focused on land use, the built environment, citywide policies, and projects and programs within City bureaus.

Guided by the principle to avoid or minimize negative health impacts and improve opportunities for Portlanders to lead healthy, active lives, the ADIN Action Plan centers older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers to improve their access to complete neighborhoods. These are places where people can age in their homes and communities, meeting their daily needs with dignity and respect.

Purpose

According to AARP, 77% of adults over the age of 50 want to remain in their homes as they age. And roughly 60% would consider living in an accessory dwelling unit (ADU). But as our population ages, America and Portland's housing stock are not prepared to meet the needs for accessibility features like zero-step entries, accessible kitchens and bathrooms, and features that allow first floor living and adaptable features as people age in place.

Social connections are also a vital component to healthy aging because, as the Surgeon General has stated, "Social connection is a fundamental human need, as essential to survival as food, water, and shelter."

In "complete neighborhoods," people of all ages and those with disabilities can access housing and employment options; grocery stores and other commercial services; schools, parks, and trails; affordable transportation options and civic amenities. Good land use policies and planning can create more housing choices in better-connected neighborhoods that are accessible to people with a range of functional abilities.

Methodology and findings

The purpose of the ADIN Action Plan is to realize the vision of an age-friendly Portland for all. It includes trends related to aging, race, and disability; housing; age-friendly environments; and social connectedness and loneliness. The findings in the report echo well-established research by the World Health Organization and AARP.

A working group comprised of stakeholders representing various organizations identified priorities, problems, and solutions, some of which are aligned with [2035 Comprehensive Plan](#) policies. This action plan focuses on land use, improvements to the built environment, citywide policies, and projects and programs in City bureaus, partner agencies, and with community stakeholders.

Portland's Central City and inner eastside neighborhoods provide the most supportive age-friendly *physical* environments. Supportive age-friendly *social* environments, on the other hand, extend into areas in Southwest, Southeast, Northeast, and North Portland. Perhaps most surprisingly, Portland's supportive age-friendly *service* environment extends beyond where the physical and social environments do not – into East Portland, east of both 82nd Avenue and Interstate 205.

Recommendations

The ADIN working group convened for most of 2022. The resulting ADIN Action Plan includes strategies to:

- Facilitate aging in place and social connectedness.
- Create age-friendly centers.
- Increase accessible and inclusive mobility and parking.
- Increase accessibility and inclusivity of public spaces.
- Support aging-in-place and aging-in-community.
- Increase involvement of vulnerable populations in environmental and climate planning.
- Initiate opportunities for local civic education and engagement.
- Leverage demographic trends to address workforce needs and support economic development.
- Increase equitable outcomes for people as they grow up and grow old.

Appendix F offers a comprehensive list of problems and solutions, including 1) sample housing solutions for keeping generations together or in close proximity, and 2) the stock of accessible housing options to meet aging and disability needs.