

# Elevating Aging-in-Community *in* South Elgin

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*A Strategic Guide*

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*Content developed by Planning/Aging  
in partnership with the Aging in a Changing Region  
program of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus*

**December 2023**



# Executive Summary

In 2023, South Elgin participated in “Aging in a Changing Region”, funded by the RRF Foundation for Aging, and led by the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and Planning/Aging, which developed strategies to elevate South Elgin's Aging-in-Community support. Recommendations are divided into categories: Social Environment; Communication; and Built Environment.

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## Social Environment Recommendations

- An Aging-in-Community Commission to play a coordination & policy review role
- Take a ‘whole of government’ approach to supporting Aging-in-Community
- Review municipal operations and programs for their Aging-in-Community consistency
- Incorporate Aging-in-Community into key municipal programs and initiatives
- Integrate Aging-in-Community into future Community Surveys
- Expand Library’s Role in Aging-in-Community
- Expand the Parks & Recreation Department’s Role in Aging-in-Community
- Deepen partnerships with AgeGuide and other aging network partners
- Develop mutually beneficial partnerships with local educational partners
- Involve the faith & business communities with the Aging-in-Community effort
- Continue to think broadly & expand the network of Aging-in-Community partners
- Collaborate with existing service-providers to reduce the knowledge gap
- Establish a centralized Volunteer Center
- Attend the Age-Friendly Communities Collaborative & other related activities

## Communication Recommendations

- Clarify South Elgin's commitment to & engagement with Aging-in-Community
- Better coordinate South Elgin's existing older adult information sources
- Designate Village staff as Aging-in-Community point-persons
- Establish an Aging-in-Community Resource Center
- Consider developing an “Aging-in-Community Handbook”
- Practice inclusiveness in all municipal communications, activities, and behavior

## Built Environment Recommendations

- Update the Comprehensive Plan with a strong Aging-in-Community focus
- Reenergize the Village Center Master Plan as part of the new Comprehensive Plan
- Maximize the potential of the new intergenerational Community Center
- Feature Aging-in-Community transportation & accessibility improvements
- Perform a community-wide walkability/ accessibility assessment
- View housing issues in part through an Aging-in-Community lens
- Explore adding “Missing Middle Housing” options to the housing stock
- Add informal gathering places for older residents throughout South Elgin

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These recommendations are noted in more detail in this document. It is up to the Village and community to review, select and prioritize recommendations, and develop implementation plans – which should all integrate with South Elgin's recent “Age-Friendly Community” designation. As South Elgin's Aging-in-Community conversation is still at an early stage, additional ideas, and strategies can and should be added to this list.

## WHAT IS AGING IN COMMUNITY?

**Aging-in-Community** refers to a coordinated municipality-wide effort to support the evolving needs and interests of its diverse aging population.

**Aging-in-Community** uses a broad, community-level lens to identify a set of plans, programs, and services that in combination help support its older residents and is inclusive of the narrower term “aging-in-place” which focuses on one’s specific dwelling.

**Aging-in-Community** is an important component of ‘livable community’ efforts that address the needs and interests of residents throughout their lifespans.

Communities that support **Aging-in-Community** are by definition ‘age-friendly’ and ‘dementia-friendly’ communities.

Study of **Aging-in-Community** programs throughout the United States identifies key indicators of likely success of a municipality’s **Aging-in-Community** program:

- Issue champions among (but not overreliance upon) elected officials, staff leadership, and the overall community
- Dedicated human and financial resources
- Collaborations with key aging network and other community stakeholders
- Coordination between **Aging-in-Community** and other municipal priorities

# The “Aging in a Changing Region” Program

Municipalities throughout the metropolitan Chicago region – like regions throughout the country – are experiencing substantial growth in the number and percentage share of their older adult populations and are looking for strategies to help address these shifts.

Two partner organizations – the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (*MMC, serving the region’s 275 cities, towns, and villages*), and Planning/Aging (*a consultancy focused on the intersection of city planning and the growing aging population*) – received funding from the RRF Foundation for Aging to assist municipalities’ support of Aging-

in-Community. This program – “Aging in a Changing Region” (*AiaCR*) – builds upon the idea that wherever a municipality is in its support of Aging-in-Community, strategic guidance can help elevate its support going forward.

In 2021, 2022, and 2023 MMC invited municipal participation in the AiaCR program. Interested municipalities submitted applications that combined an assessment of their Aging-in-Community goals and work to date, and assistance they envisioned to help advance these goals. The AiaCR municipalities – including the 2023 Cohort of Aurora, Carol Stream, Schiller

Park, South Elgin, and South Holland – reflect the region's diversity in terms of geography, socio-economic factors, community type, and Aging-in-Community experience.

In each selected AiaCR municipality, Planning/ Aging works with a self-designated Core Team of key municipal staff and partner stakeholders, which makes the key decisions on how the AiaCR program will be tailored to their community's specific circumstances, goals, and challenges.



**Welcome to South Elgin!**



## WHAT THIS DOCUMENT ISN'T

- ✘ **ISN'T** a detailed physical plan document with specific infrastructure or other capital projects identified and costed out, and their implementation details outlined
- ✘ **ISN'T** a compendium of 'best practices' from other local or non-local municipalities – while identifying approaches from elsewhere can be valuable as references, anything planned for South Elgin should be tailored to the specifics of South Elgin
- ✘ **ISN'T** a write-up of a rigorous assessment and planning process with a precise schedule for future evaluations and updates, as South Elgin's AiaCR involvement was more a qualitative assessment of current conditions and potential future efforts and strategies



## WHAT THIS DOCUMENT IS

- ✔ **IS** a practical **strategic guide** focused on how South Elgin can elevate its current support of Aging-in-Community – designed to be used as an ongoing resource, not to gather dust on shelves due to its unreadability or impenetrability
- ✔ **IS** specific recommendations of further actions South Elgin may choose to take, either through utilization of its existing resources, joining with other entities in collaborative activities, or by engaging external partners
- ✔ **IS** a working framework of specific action steps that South Elgin can take to elevate its support of Aging-in-Community, and which can be modified, adapted, or augmented at any point to even better meet evolving community needs



*South Elgin neighborhoods sit on both sides of the Fox River*

# South Elgin's Aging-in-Community Context

## South Elgin's Aging-in-Community Commitment

South Elgin's commitment to supporting Aging-in-Community extends beyond its involvement in the AiaCR program. Simultaneous with its 2023 AiaCR application, South Elgin applied for recognition as an age-friendly community under the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities, an affiliate of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. Participation in the AARP Network requires completing a rigorous multi-year cycle during which municipalities conduct a community needs assessment, develop an action plan, implement the action plan and track progress, evaluate the plan's impact, and repeat the cycle.

Following the community engagement process described below, Planning/Aging has developed a set of strategic recommendations outlined in this document. In recognition of South Elgin's simultaneous involvement in both the AiaCR program and the AARP Network, the Core Team requested that Planning/Aging conduct its AiaCR work and develop recommendations that would seamlessly fit into its upcoming AARP Network planning work. Planning/Aging agreed to this request, and therefore everything in this document is designed to support South Elgin as it transitions from the AiaCR engagement into the AARP Network program.

# South Elgin's Demographics

The makeup of South Elgin's population helps explain the importance of taking a strategic approach towards Aging-in-Community. As shown below, South Elgin's population is currently younger than Kane County's overall population. South Elgin's population is currently younger than Kane County's overall population. South Elgin's current 65+ (*its 'older adult' population*) makes up just 10.1% of the total population, compared to 13.7% in overall Kane County. But South Elgin's current 35 through 64 (*its 'middle aged' population*) cohorts constitute 45.5% of the total population, significantly more than Kane County's 39.8% 'middle aged' population. This suggests that as its current 'middle aged' population transitions into older adulthood, joining many of those remaining in this cohort, South Elgin's 65+ population share may reach ~40-50% by the early 2040s. Assuming that the absolute numbers of older adults will be in this range, the only thing that may lower the overall percentage of South Elgin's population would be a significant influx of younger families.



*Multi-generational South Elgin*

## Age Cohorts, 2016-2020

	South Elgin		Kane County		CMAP Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Under 5	1,094	4.6%	33,569	6.3%	508,895	6.0%
5 to 19	5,835	24.7	116,068	21.8%	1,624,354	19.2%
20 to 34	3,555	15.0%	97,478	18.3%	1,781,246	21.1%
35 to 49	6,387	27.0%	108,358	20.4%	1,688,609	20.0%
50 to 64	4,386	18.5%	103,397	19.4%	1,625,883	19.2%
65 to 74	1,287	5.4%	44,048	8.3%	713,897	8.4%
75 to 84	713	3.0%	20,805	3.9%	348,205	4.1%
85 and Over	391	1.7%	8,033	1.5%	160,449	1.9%
Median Age	38.0		37.7		37.7	

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey five-year estimates

[CMAP Community Data Snapshot | South Elgin \(illinois.gov\)](https://illinois.gov/cmap)

# South Elgin's Housing Stock

Like many suburban communities whose housing stock was largely built over the past fifty years, most of South Elgin's housing stock consists of single-family detached or attached homes, 2/3 of which have three or four bedrooms. While typical

of the young family-dominated population which characterized South Elgin in earlier years, as its population ages, this begs the question of how well the existing housing stock meets the needs and preferences of this older population.

## Housing Type 2016-2020

	South Elgin		Kane County		CMAP Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Single Family, Detached	5,624	70.2%	132,117	69.8%	1,719,774	50.3%
Single Family, Attached	1,186	14.7%	21,567	11.4%	253,603	7.4%
2 Units	85	1.1%	6,803	3.6%	237,178	6.9%
3 or 4 Units	434	5.4%	6,733	3.6%	268,464	7.8%
5 to 9 Units	279	3.5%	6,150	3.2%	266,933	7.8%
10 to 19 Units	37	0.5%	4,909	2.6%	150,679	4.4%
20 or More Units	346	4.3%	9,564	5.1%	494,837	14.5%
Mobile Home/Other*	32	0.4%	1,458	0.8%	28,748	0.8%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey five-year estimates

\*"Other" includes boats, recreational vehicles (RVs), vans, etc.

[CMAP Community Data Snapshot | South Elgin \(illinois.gov\)](#)

## Housing Size 2016-2020

	South Elgin		Kane County		CMAP Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
0 or 1 Bedroom	524	6.5%	15,304	8.1%	550,686	16.1%
2 Bedrooms	1,648	20.5%	46,470	24.5%	958,392	28.0%
3 Bedrooms	2,909	36.2%	65,842	34.8%	1,138,223	33.3%
4 Bedrooms	2,457	30.6%	49,723	26.3%	600,758	17.6%
5 or More Bedrooms	503	6.3%	11,962	6.3%	172,157	5.0%
Median Number of Rooms*	6.8		6.3		6.0	

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey five-year estimates

\*Includes living rooms, dining room, kitchens, bedrooms, etc., that are separated by built-in, floor-to-ceiling walls. Excludes bathrooms, porches, balconies, foyers, halls, and unfinished basements.

[CMAP Community Data Snapshot | South Elgin \(illinois.gov\)](#)

# South Elgin's Comprehensive Plan

As the goal of a community's Comprehensive Plan is to articulate a vision for its future, it may be instructive to compare South Elgin's recent commitment to supporting Aging-in-Community with its current Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 2012.

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan focused on a young South Elgin community, although it noted (*on page 9*) that "...consideration will be given to the aging of people within the community and the changes in services,

uses and housing that will coincide with this aging." The Plan, however, made very few specific references to "this aging". Since Comprehensive Plans typically are updated every 10-20 years, South Elgin's next Comprehensive Plan might include more focus on its aging population and be intentionally consistent with the community's recent commitment to supporting Aging-in-Community.

*Panton Mill Park hosts many community concerts & events*





# Community Engagement

A key component of AiaCR is community engagement, for two reasons. First, no one knows more from a lived or professional perspective what it is like to live and age in South Elgin than its residents and its engaged stakeholders, and listening and learning from their input is invaluable. In addition, the AiaCR team firmly believes in the concept of “nothing about us without us,” in other words, the need to craft strategies informed by the people these strategies will impact.

A major element of the AiaCR community engagement is a pair of educational and strategic workshops staged in each Cohort municipality, planned in coordination with the Core Team. At each workshop, Planning/Aging provides a brief educational background to explain Aging-in-Community, framed in an intergenerational “livable communities for all ages” manner, as values held by older adults – appropriate and affordable housing options, transportation options, convenient goods and services, safe places to gather, and access to information and engagement opportunities – are generally consistent with values held by younger adults.

Planning engagements often include an assessment of a community’s assets and challenges. The limited AiaCR scope required an informal streamlined assessment process, in which Planning/Aging spoke with community stakeholders, reviewed guidance documents such as the community’s Comprehensive and other plans, and other available, relevant municipal information. In addition, residents and key internal and external stakeholders



*Resident interactions were the highlights of Workshop #1*

were asked to complete brief input/assessment forms on which residents shared their experiences living and aging in the community, and stakeholders assessed how well they felt the community currently supported Aging-in-Community.

Highlights from the resident and stakeholder input were presented, following facilitated discussions that were the core of the workshops: engaging residents to share their lived experiences and ideas as to how the community would be able to best support them in the future; and internal and other stakeholders to consider ways they might augment or modify their services and strategies to better support Aging-in-Community going forward.

# Public Workshops

- South Elgin's Workshop #1 was held on the evening of Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and Workshop #2 was held on the morning of Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The Core Team determined the scheduling and target audience for each Workshop.
- Workshop #1 consisted of approximately two dozen invited residents representing a range of the community. Workshop #1's highlight was the spirited facilitated discussion during which the resident attendees shared their experiences living and aging in South Elgin, their observations of opportunities and challenges, and their suggestions for various possible improvements.
- Workshop #2 consisted of approximately two dozen invited stakeholders who represented municipal departments, and many of the partner organizations committed to helping support Aging-in-Community in South Elgin. The highlight of Workshop #2 was also a facilitated discussion, during which the attending stakeholders shared their perspectives on South Elgin current support of Aging-in-Community, as well as additional opportunities for elevating this level of commitment.

## Resident Input Forms

- In addition to the resident-focused public workshop, residents of all ages were invited to complete and submit a short informal survey document that gave them an opportunity to share their lived experience. The Resident Input Forms were made available at Village Hall, on the Village's website, at older adult group residences, at the Library, and elsewhere around town, including at many of South Elgin's events and activities throughout the summer of 2023.
- 277 Resident Input Forms were completed and submitted, with respondents ranging from a 17-year-old to two 94-year-olds, with the majority rather evenly spread between their 50s, 60s & 70s. Respondents' tenure living in South Elgin ranged widely, from 1 year to 78 years.
- Overall respondents' tenure was rather evenly spread. In general, the written input received from submitted Resident Input Forms matched up very well with the input received at the residents' workshop, as did their suggestions and recommendations for additional Aging-in-Community support.
- Detailed results from the Resident Input Forms may be found in the Appendix.



*It didn't take many prompts to get the residents talking!*

## Key Resident Input

- Most older adult residents really love living in South Elgin. When asked to cite some of the things they particularly liked, they offered: proximity to destinations; the Police and Fire Departments' good response times; the fact that South Elgin never feels crowded or over-built; and the ease of commutes to/from South Elgin.
- Cited Challenges to Aging-in-Community in South Elgin included: limited appropriate, single-level and affordable housing options; home and property maintenance difficulties; accessibility barriers throughout the Village; limited transportation options; and the absence of a comfortable resting place in the Village's park spaces and public walking areas.
- Aging-in-Community input included: older adults are not a monolithic group, with big differences in interests and needs; broad desire for more formal and informal gathering spaces, and improved information sharing on available programs, activities and services.
- Information/Services – While many older adults access general South Elgin and older adult-targeted information from online or electronic means, a significant number still rely on reading hard copies of the newsletter, and other old-school means of communication.
- Many older adults indicated they are unclear as to the types of services or programs currently offered to support older residents. Most older adults currently use or attend no programs or services intended to support South Elgin's older residents, in part as many of them didn't perceive as such activities being relevant to them until they reached retirement.
- Over 72% of survey respondents live in single-family homes, with the rest spread between townhomes, duplexes, apartments and in older adult buildings. ~95% of respondents said their current housing meets their current needs, but only ~64% of survey respondents think they will be able to age in their current housing, while ~36% think they will need to move at some point. Those

anticipating a future move will look for single-story, smaller, easily maintained and affordable housing, perhaps providing live-in services, and less automobile-dependency.

- **Transportation and Accessibility** – A large majority of older adults rely on private cars (*self-driven or driven by others*) to get around, with smaller numbers saying they also walk, ride bikes, or use on-demand transportation services. Overall getting around South Elgin neighborhoods and public spaces/buildings is judged to be easy.
- Many older adults offered suggestions for new or additional programs or services they feel would better support Aging-in-Community, including:

- **Services:** Affordable or expanded transportation; home maintenance services; various personal support services & more information about existing services

- **Programs:** Various older-adult focused events; trips & outings; programs targeted to specific populations such as veterans, non-native English speakers, or disabled individuals; and more promotion of existing events

- **Spaces/Places:** Informal older adult gathering/activity places; more affordable housing; and adding/replacing trees & basic accessibility infrastructure throughout town, including in parks, at public buildings, along roads, and in neighborhoods.



*Multi-level homes are dominant in South Elgin*

## Stakeholder Assessments

Key municipal staff and stakeholder partners were asked to complete Stakeholder Assessments giving their views on how well South Elgin supports Aging-in-Community. The Assessments we received were consistent with the resident input we received, although the stakeholders offered additional insights based on their experience providing services in South Elgin.

## Key Stakeholder Input

- The Stakeholder Assessments suggest that much of the challenge to Aging-in-Community comes from South Elgin's original design of separated residential & commercial land uses, and from being largely auto-dependent to get to local destinations.
- The Stakeholder Assessments pointed out specific deficiencies – such as lack of technical know-how, or limited pedestrian connectivity – to South Elgin's physical and social environments that impede Aging-in-Community.
- The Stakeholder Assessments identified several potential regional partners needed to coordinate certain potential Aging-in-Community housing options for all income levels and transportation improvements.
- Key cited physical improvements included: specific sidewalk/trail gaps and deficiencies; non-private auto transportation options; sidewalk maintenance and snow removal; improved & informal gathering spaces; and a wider range of housing options.
- Key cited social improvements included: better information dissemination; identifying Older Adult liaisons or ombudspersons; and providing Age/Dementia-Friendly training, including for local businesses.
- The Stakeholder Assessments indicated that certain easily-obtainable Aging-in-Community improvements could take up to 1 or 2 years, while other more complex ones could take up to 10 years.

*Stakeholders evaluated the built & social environment at Workshop #2*



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## FOR ELEVATING AGING-IN-COMMUNITY IN SOUTH ELGIN

### ✔ SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

*An Aging-in-Community Commission to play a coordination & policy review role*

*Take a 'whole of government' approach to supporting Aging-in-Community*

*Review municipal operations and programs for their Aging-in-Community consistency*

*Incorporate Aging-in-Community into key municipal programs and initiatives*

*Integrate Aging-in-Community into future Community Surveys*

*Expand Library's Role in Aging-in-Community*

*Expand the Parks & Recreation Department's Role in Aging-in-Community*

*Deepen partnerships with AgeGuide and other aging network partners*

*Develop mutually beneficial partnerships with local educational partners*

*Involve the faith & business communities with the Aging-in-Community effort*

*Continue to think broadly & expand the network of Aging-in-Community partners*

*Collaborate with existing service-providers to reduce the knowledge gap*

*Establish a centralized Volunteer Center*

*Attend the Age-Friendly Communities Collaborative & other related activities*

### ✔ COMMUNICATION

*Clarify South Elgin's commitment to & engagement with Aging-in-Community*

*Better coordinate South Elgin's existing older adult information sources*

*Designate Village staff as Aging-in-Community point-persons*

*Establish an Aging-in-Community Resource Center*

*Consider developing an "Aging-in-Community Handbook"*

*Practice inclusiveness in all municipal communications, activities, and behavior*

### ✔ BUILT ENVIRONMENT

*Update the Comprehensive Plan with a strong Aging-in-Community focus*

*Reenergize the Village Center Master Plan as part of the new Comprehensive Plan*

*Maximize the potential of the new intergenerational Community Center*

*Feature Aging-in-Community transportation & accessibility improvements*

*Leverage human assets as part of broad local transportation planning*

*Perform a community-wide walkability/accessibility assessment*

*View housing issues in part through an Aging-in-Community lens*

*Explore adding "Missing Middle Housing" options to the housing stock*

*Add informal gathering places for older residents throughout South Elgin*

# Recommendations for Elevating Aging-in-Community in South Elgin

The following recommendations are divided into three broad categories: the **Social Environment** (which focuses on coordinating and collaborating effectively and efficiently between all of South Elgin's various human resources, programs and goals); **Communication**; and the **Built Environment** (which focuses on South Elgin's physical infrastructure and resources). There are obvious and potential overlaps and connections both between specific recommendations and the three recommendation categories.

## SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT – COORDINATION & COLLABORATION

### An Aging-in-Community Commission to play a coordination & policy review role

As stated on the Village website: “*Citizen involvement is a vital part of the Village's success story.*” Fittingly, a wide swath of South Elgin should collectively embrace Aging-in-Community, and establishing a new, ongoing Aging-in-Community Commission would be invaluable to helping embed the Village's commitment to supporting Aging-in-Community into ongoing Village practice. Ideally, the Commission would consist of a range of residents, including – but not limited to – older adults, and key public and private sector stakeholder members, many of whom participated in the AiaCR Workshops

and expressed interest in ongoing participation. With staff support, the Commission could be charged with setting its own operational rules, and performing functions such as: meeting regularly to provide a forum for coordinating Aging-in-Community activities; reviewing significant development/redevelopment proposals as to their impacts on Aging-in-Community; helping establish and maintain an Aging-in-Community resource center (discussed below) and preparing and presenting to the Village Board a ‘State of Aging-in-Community in South Elgin’ annual update.



*Village Hall will soon be joined by a new Public Safety Center*



### Take a 'whole of government' approach to supporting Aging-in-Community

A key success factor for building a robust Aging-in-Community program is positioning it within a whole of government framework, wherein diverse governmental departments, sister agencies and external stakeholder partners coordinate in addressing shared issues or challenges, rather than delegating Aging-in-Community to a single staff person, department, or agency. At a minimum, key department heads should participate with the new Aging-in-Community Commission described above and attend the recommended annual presentation of an annual 'State of Aging-in-Community in South Elgin' to the Village Board.

### Review municipal operations and programs for their Aging-in-Community consistency

Village department and sister agency staffs should conduct a review of their operations, plans and programs to identify any wording or requirements that explicitly or unintentionally undercut support for Aging-in-Community, and work with the Aging-in-Community Commission to remedy any findings. Even if this review does not unearth barriers, it may reveal

opportunities for enhancements to foster broader community (*not limited to just older adult*) participation.

### Incorporate Aging-in-Community into key municipal programs and initiatives

Aging-in-Community should become an important lens through which proposed or existing South Elgin projects, programs or strategies are viewed and evaluated -- whether the initiatives are seen as primarily benefitting economic development, municipal infrastructure, sustainability, public safety, or other key municipal agendas. This evaluation should ask: how do these projects, programs or strategies impact the older adult population, and how could they advance South Elgin towards being a livable community that supports residents of all ages? Municipal infrastructure projects should be reviewed in their design stage as to their Aging-in-Community impacts, and enhancements should be made as needed to leverage the projects' benefits to supporting Aging-in-Community. In doing this, the Village may find that impacts on older adults will often be consistent with impacts on the overall population – this underscores the notion that support for Aging-in-Community is an important component of being a livable community for all ages.



## **Integrate Aging-in-Community into future Community Surveys**

The Village commissions an outside contractor to perform periodic Community Surveys to gauge residents' assessment of Village services and quality-of-life, and these surveys include specific South Elgin questions. The 2023 Community Survey was open for input between October 23 and November 6, 2023, but future Community Surveys provide an ongoing opportunity to engage residents on Aging-in-Community matters, and should coordinate with the Village's ongoing commitment to supporting Aging-in-Community and seek relevant input.

## **Expand Library's Role in Aging-in-Community**

Consistent with taking a 'whole-of-government' approach to Aging-in-Community, and consistent with the important civic role which libraries play in the lives of many residents, the two Library Districts – the Gail Borden Public Library District and the St. Charles Public Library District – which played very limited roles in this engagement – should be more active in the ongoing Aging-in-Community effort going forward.

## **Expand the Parks & Recreation Department's Role in Aging-in-Community**

Similarly, the Parks & Recreation Department, which already maintains facilities and offers 'Aged to Perfection' and other older adult-serving programs and activities, should be engaged to play an even more integrated and significant role in supporting Aging-in-Community. The Parks & Recreation Department will play an ongoing key role with its leadership in the development of the new Community Center (*discussed below*).



*The I'm Able Playground at SEBA Park*



*One of South Elgin's many neighborhood parks*

## **Deepen partnerships with AgeGuide and other aging network partners**

AgeGuide is the state-designated and federally-funded agency designated to coordinate and sponsor services provided by partner agencies in Kane County to assist older adults to remain in their homes and communities. Aggressively continue to engage in partnership discussions, as AgeGuide's and their partner agencies' resources are spread thin throughout the region, and their funding decisions factor in municipal support and partnerships. AgeGuide and their aging network partners can also provide specific services such as Dementia-Friendly training.

## Develop mutually beneficial partnerships with local educational partners

South Elgin has already begun developing a partnership with Elgin Community College, which see itself as an important partner in the overall Aging-in-Community effort, and offers to bring a range of human, facility and transportation assets. This partnership is exciting and should continue to grow. Similarly, South Elgin should explore engaging other local educational resources, notably the two local school districts – U-46, which includes South Elgin High School, and Community Unit School District 303 – who may also be interested in a range of potential mutually beneficial intergenerational partnership opportunities, including service-learning placements, internships, technical support, and mentoring that could not only provide benefit to younger adults, but would allow older adults to function as resource-providers rather than be seen solely as resource-users.

## Involve the faith & business communities with the Aging-in-Community effort

Churches and other places of worship play a substantial role supporting the community's older adults and their caregivers. Faith community representatives might be invited to participate in the new Aging-in-Community Commission. Similarly, the business community should be pursued as a partner, as residents speak of their desire to be better engaged with local retail and commercial businesses.



*The residents shared a wealth of lived South Elgin experience*



*Community Development Director Nancy Hill welcomed everyone to Workshop #1*

## Continue to think broadly & expand the network of Aging-in-Community partners

The attendees at Workshop #2 included a range of organizations whose work with veterans and/or people with physical, developmental, intellectual, and mental health challenges includes – if not focuses upon – working with local older adults. In addition, Elgin and St. Charles Townships provide various older adult focused programs and services.

## Collaborate with existing service-providers to reduce the knowledge gap

This engagement made clear that a knowledge gap exists between South Elgin's staff and the local/regional aging network and other external stakeholder partners that support older adults and their caregivers with a range of support services. Efforts (such as the new Aging-in-Community Commission & the Resource Center discussed above) and ongoing collaboration and cross-training would help elevate staff awareness of existing service-providers and their ability to refer older adult South Elgin residents and caregivers to such

resources. This collaboration would also yield additional partnership opportunities such as staging comprehensive older adult information or health resource fairs.

## Establish a centralized Volunteer Center

Resident and stakeholder input at the Workshops evidenced strong potential for better leveraging the South Elgin's human asset of volunteerism. While it is likely that various organizations currently maintain narrow volunteer efforts, a centralized, and well-publicized Volunteer Center might harvest the currently unrealized capacity of many retired older residents who may wish to continue to contribute without "working". The Volunteer Center should be coordinated with the Aging-in-Community Commission and might be linked to an existing stakeholder partner.

## Attend the Age-Friendly Communities Collaborative & other related activities

The quarterly Age-Friendly Communities Collaborative meetings typically include representatives of several dozen regional municipalities involved with Aging-in-Community activities and provide topical knowledge and peer-to-peer learning opportunities. South Elgin's experiences with and lessons learned from the AiaCR program during 2023 will likely be of interest to other municipalities. Involvement with the Collaborative also serves as a good portal to other regional Aging-in-Community activities sponsored by a range of stakeholder entities, such as the bi-monthly American Society on Aging topical roundtables (see the Resources section for further information). South Elgin may wish to also participate in MMC's Housing & Community Development Committee which addresses Missing Middle Housing, Universal Design and other relevant Aging-in-Community considerations.

*The Fox River runs through South Elgin*





*Mature trees characterize South Elgin's older neighborhoods*

## COMMUNICATION

### Clarify South Elgin's commitment to & engagement with Aging-in-Community

South Elgin's commitment to supporting Aging-in-Community is a bit garbled on the Village's website, as various programs and services such as "Age-Friendly South Elgin", the Parks & Recreation Department's "Aged to Perfection" program, and existing older adult resources offered by Elgin and/or St. Charles Townships, and Senior Services Associates, are all promoted as standalones, and there are no links from one to the others. A new, all-inclusive Aging-in-Community landing page, promoted on the Village's homepage with a clear statement such as "*South Elgin actively support Aging-in-Community!*" could set the tone that the Village takes a "whole-of-enterprise" approach towards Aging-in-Community, whereby support of older adult residents is integrated into the work of all municipal departments and partner agencies, and not isolated to any one entity.

### Better coordinate South Elgin's existing older adult information sources

There are many current information sources and platforms in South Elgin – some run by the Village (*the Village Light newsletter, the Parks & Recreation Department Program and Events Guide, etc.*) and others by partner organizations such as Elgin Community College, Senior Services Associates, Kane Senior Council, etc. There may be other potential communication platforms such as Utility Bills that are to-date under-utilized for their outreach potential. An effort to inventory, coordinate and study these existing information sources to determine how effective and well-coordinated an information stream they provide for South Elgin's older residents would be a good first step, followed by potential action steps on how to augment/modify them as needed.

### **Designate Village staff as Aging-in-Community point-persons**

South Elgin is likely similar to many municipalities, where residents or other stakeholders need to navigate multiple departmental webpages, depending upon their issue or concern. It is likely that some residents – including but not limited to older adults – find this confusing or overwhelming. Designating and publicizing a specific staff liaison in each key public-facing department as their 'Aging-in-Community point-person' would make South Elgin's government more efficient and more accessible to older adults. The departmental Aging-in-Community liaisons should meet periodically – perhaps in conjunction with the proposed Aging-in-Community Commission -- to learn from one another and identify ways to address common issues proactively and in a coordinated manner.

### **Establish an Aging-in-Community Resource Center**

The AiaCR workshops showed that residents and key stakeholders often lack knowledge as to existing services and programs available to South Elgin older adult residents. This lack of knowledge restricts the ability of older adult residents and their caregivers to avail themselves of valuable resources and hampers the ability of municipal stakeholders to make referrals to these resources. One response to this issue might be the establishment and maintenance of a one-stop Resource Center – likely located at Village Hall -- at which residents and stakeholders can learn about and access hard copy information on existing resources provided by the range of municipal and partner stakeholder organizations. In parallel, electronic information could be made available at a digital Resource Center well-located on the Village website. The Resource Center

might be initially established by the new Aging-in-Community Commission with staff assistance, with provisions for its ongoing maintenance and updating established and agreed upon upfront.

### **Consider developing an "Aging-in-Community Handbook"**

Residents and stakeholders in most AiaCR municipalities decried the scattered nature and difficulty of accessing necessary information for older adults or their caregivers. To help address this, then-AiaCR partner organization Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) worked with 2021 AiaCR Municipality Park Forest to develop an "Aging-in-Community Handbook" and a 'how-to' document (*found in the Resource section*) intended to help interested municipalities develop and maintain their own handbooks. South Elgin may wish to contact CMAP to discuss developing such a handbook. Ongoing challenges to developing a handbook are its maintenance and updating needs and determining appropriate distribution platforms to maximize its value to its intended users.

### **Practice inclusiveness in all municipal communications, activities, and behavior**

Ageism is discrimination against older people, often due to negative and inaccurate stereotypes. Anti-ageism identifies, calls out, and looks to change anything that perpetuates ageist ideas or behavior. Consciously ensure that all references to South Elgin's older adults characterize them as civic assets and resources to be leveraged, rather than viewing them solely through a needs-based or a medical lens.

## **BUILT ENVIRONMENT – PLANNING/HOUSING/ TRANSPORTATION/ ACCESSIBILITY/PUBLIC SPACES**

### **Update the Comprehensive Plan with a strong Aging-in-Community focus**

South Elgin's current 2030 Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2012, and it focused on a young South Elgin community, although it noted that "...consideration will be given to the aging of people within the community and the changes in services, uses and housing that will coincide with this aging." That said, the Plan made very few specific references to "this aging". Since Comprehensive Plans typically are updated every 10-20 years, South Elgin's next Comprehensive Plan should include a more specific focus on its evolving population and Aging-in-Community.

Ways a new Comprehensive Plan could support Aging-in-Community throughout South Elgin include developing Aging-in-Community standards for future projects, and by identifying specific features that could be added to existing neighborhoods or shopping districts, and in future projects. Examples of Comprehensive Plans that focus on Aging-in-Community may be found in the Resources section.

### **Reenergize the Village Center Master Plan as part of the new Comprehensive Plan**

A high-profile opportunity to create spaces that support Aging-in-Community is the planned mixed-use Village Center, which was first developed in 2001's Village Center Master Plan and was most recently updated in 2009. While the Village Center Master Plan may well be outdated, the new Comprehensive Plan should again feature a true Village Center, the boundaries of



which might be expanded to include the new intergenerational Community Center discussed above, and to integrate with an East Side Development Plan. The Village Center should include a variety of affordable and accessible housing types, good connectivity, and access to civic and other amenities.

### **Maximize the potential of the new intergenerational Community Center**

Continue to apply an Aging-in-Community lens to the plans to redevelop former Lions Club building into an intergenerational Community Center, both as a potential venue for older adult-serving programs such as an informal drop-in center, a congregate meal site, program space, etc., and an ideal location to explore and promote mutually beneficial intergenerational partnerships and activities.



*Examples of sidewalk gaps*

### **Feature Aging-in-Community transportation & accessibility improvements**

South Elgin's most recent transportation plan appears to be the 2011 Transit Improvement Plan which could be reviewed in conjunction with the new Comprehensive Plan initiative. While the 2011 Plan focused largely on public transit, this new effort should take a broader view of how a range of transportation and accessibility enhancements would help support South Elgin's whole-of-government Aging-in-Community approach.

### **Leverage human assets as part of broad local transportation planning**

As transportation is a key issue (*and will likely only increase in its importance over time*), leveraging both existing rolling stock and human transportation resources is a wise approach for South Elgin to take. Continuing to build relationships with community partners – such the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association, Elgin Community College and others with buses or vans -- may help with the rolling stock side of the equation. On the human capital side, one notable opportunity to explore for its expansion potential is the Volunteer Transportation Program which Senior Services Associates already provides.

### **Perform a community-wide walkability/accessibility assessment**

As residents and stakeholders cited examples of walkability and accessibility challenges in parks and in public right-of-way throughout the Village due to missing or under-maintained sidewalks, curb cuts, the lack of trees and shade, benches and other physical infrastructure, South Elgin may wish to conduct a walkability/accessibility audit, which could be performed by the Aging-in-Community Commission or a specially convened body of residents and municipal staff. Since South Elgin has received designation as an Age-Friendly Community, you can access the AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit and other resources in the AARP Livable Communities Resource depository (*see the Resources section*). Identified gaps should be prioritized into South Elgin's Capital Improvements program.

### **View housing issues in part through an Aging-in-Community lens**

Many of South Elgin's older residents speak to their current or potential future housing-related concerns, such as their ability to navigate multiple-story single family houses, affordability, and upkeep challenges. With most South Elgin's older adults living independently throughout the community, viewing issues about the condition and affordability of the housing stock in part through an Aging-in-Community lens will better identify older-adult related housing needs, help quantify gaps, guide housing-related policy decisions, and inform potential development and/or redevelopment planning.

### **Explore adding "Missing Middle Housing" options to the housing stock**

The phrase "Missing Middle Housing" refers to a spectrum of creative house-scale buildings with multiple units in walkable neighborhoods, some of which might fit South Elgin's housing needs and support Aging-in-Community. It would be a valuable exercise to utilize the Missing

Middle Housing framework and determine whether Missing Middle Housing types would be allowable under South Elgin's existing Unified Development Ordinance and Zoning District requirements. If barriers are identified, they should be addressed in coordination with the new Comprehensive Plan effort discussed above.

### **Add informal gathering places for older residents throughout South Elgin**

Many residents and stakeholders spoke to the importance of providing informal opportunities for older adults to continue to engage with the broader community, partly as a strategy to combat social isolation. This effort need not require significant capital investment, and valuable first steps might include: performing an inventory of existing and potential informal gathering places throughout the Village, noting gaps and opportunities; including the business and faith communities in this inventorying effort; and mindfully including informal gathering or drop-in centers in the design or re-design of civic facilities. This effort might be coordinated with the new Aging-in-Community Commission.



# Aging-in-Community Resources

Listed below are some of the better centralized document repositories at which to find Aging-in-Community resources. There may be some redundancies as certain documents may be included in multiple repositories. Some of these repositories will provide links to additional resources. Carefully evaluate any resources found here for their applicability to South Elgin's specific interests and needs.

## Aging in a Changing Region Partner Organization Resources

### [Aging-in-Community - Mayors Caucus](#)

Aging-in-Community is one of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus' signature initiatives, and it has developed and assembled resource materials and documents both for its Age-Friendly Communities Collaborative and as part of this Aging in a Changing Region program.

### [AFCC REPOSITORY](#)

This data repository is maintained by the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and includes both resource materials and documents developed for its Age-Friendly Communities Collaborative.

### [CMAP \(illinois.gov\)](#)

The Chicagoland Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the seven-county metropolitan Chicago region, and develops and provides plans, programs, and other initiatives.

### [CMAP Community Data Snapshot | South Elgin \(illinois.gov\)](#)

CMAP has assembled Census and other data over time into data snapshots for each municipality in the region.

### [CMAP Aging in Place white paper](#)

CMAP developed this Aging in Place white paper in 2016.

### [Planning Aging-Supportive Communities](#)

This 2015 American Planning Association (APA) Planners Advisory Service report was primarily authored by Brad Winick of Planning/Aging. APA members can download the report for free, others are required to purchase it for \$25.

## Local/Regional Aging-in-Community Aging Network Organizations Serving South Elgin

### [AgeGuide](#)

AgeGuide (*officially known as AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois*) is the Area Agency on Aging as designated by the federal Older Americans Act and the Illinois Department on Aging, and serves as the planning and service agency for DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties, and supports partner agencies to provide a range of aging-in-community services, with Kane County services provided primarily by Senior Services Associates [Elgin, Kane County - Senior Services Associates, Inc.](#)

### [Ride in Kane](#)

The Ride in Kane program is a public paratransit transportation service providing curb to curb bus or taxi service to individuals 65 and older, individuals with a disability, and those with low income who qualify for the service in Kane County. Ride in Kane is administered by the Kane County Division of Transportation in partnership with Pace Suburban Bus and local sponsors, including South Elgin.

### [Elgin Township Website](#)

Elgin Township serves much of South Elgin and helps provide older adult residents with a number of activities, personal and transportation services.

### [Ride In Kane « St. Charles Township \(stcharlestownship.org\)](#)

Portions of South Elgin are in St. Charles Township, which is a local sponsor of the Ride in Kane program.

### [Kane Senior Council](#)

Since 2018, the Kane Senior Council has been delivering meals to homebound older adults in Kane County. In addition to home delivered meals, they perform well-being checks to each older adult served to make sure they are ok and are not in need of additional care.

### [FVSRA - Fox Valley Special Recreation Association](#)

The Fox Valley Special Recreation Association provides a wide range of recreational activities, day programs, transportation, and other services for people with disabilities. FVSRA's programs are often provided in partnership with member agencies such as the South Elgin Parks and Recreation Department.

### [St. Charles Township](#)

St. Charles Township provides a number of tax and other services, as well as serves as a sponsor of the Ride in Kane program.

### [AID \\* Association for Individual Development \\* \(aidcares.org\)](#)

AID works in the greater Fox Valley area to empower people with physical, developmental, intellectual, and mental health challenges to enjoy lives of dignity and purpose. AID often partners with FVSRA and other agencies.

### [Elgin Community College \(ECC\)](#)

While local colleges are not always thought of as part of the aging network, Elgin Community College has been exemplary in its responsiveness to South Elgin's Aing-in-Community outreach, and there are burgeoning opportunities for creative partnerships leveraging a number of human, facility, and transportation resources.

## **Aging-in-Community General Resources**

### **American Society on Aging (ASA) Roundtables**

The local chapter of the American Society on Aging stages free bi-monthly topical Roundtables, often on Aging-in-Community topics. Now being staged virtually since COVID-19, they had previously been presented at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. Bonnie Ewald ([Bonnie\\_Ewald@rush.edu](mailto:Bonnie_Ewald@rush.edu)) serves as the roundtable coordinator.

### [AARP Livable Communities Publications and Resources](#)

This is the best location at which to explore AARP's many resources, including its Livable Communities and Public Policy Institute initiatives and publications, and the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. As an Age-Friendly Community, South Elgin should have full access to these resources.

## [AARP Illinois](#)

The AARP-Illinois office has a number of staff persons involved with advocacy and community engagement and can serve as a local link to national AARP programs.

## [The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation](#)

The New Jersey-based Taub Foundation includes aging-in-community as one of its primary focus topics and maintains a comprehensive and well-organized aging-in-community library.

## [Age-Friendly Resources](#)

New York City-based Grantmakers-in-Aging is the preeminent membership organization for philanthropies focused on aging issues. It maintains a resource center full of GIA-funded and other resources.

## [USAgging.org](#)

Washington DC-based USAgging (*formerly the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging – “n4a”*) maintains an extensive searchable database of primarily n4a-sponsored reports and other documents.

## [National Council on Aging](#)

The Washington DC-based National Council on Aging (*ncoa*) provides research articles and other materials for older adults, caregivers, aging professionals and advocates, primarily developed by ncoa staff and its partners.

## Planning Resources

### [Communities for All Ages | MARC](#)

The Kansas City region's "Communities for All Ages" and "First Suburbs Coalition" programs are two of the country's preeminent regional and municipal Aging-in-Community programs. The program and its participating municipalities have developed a wealth of valuable resources.

### [Grandview 2030 by grandview1 - Issuu](#)

Grandview, Missouri's 2020 Comprehensive Plan update specifically calls out throughout the document plan elements that meet Communities for All Ages specific recommendations for helping Grandview better support Aging-in-Community. This is one of the clearest examples of linking Aging-in-Community and a Comprehensive Plan.

### [Building a Community for All Ages | City of Raymore, MO](#)

In 2017, Raymore, Missouri developed and adopted this fine standalone Aging-in-Community plan in part to achieve the highest (Gold) level recognition in the Communities for All Ages program. This plan specifically links to the city's previous plans.

### [Community for All Ages Plan by City of Lees Summit - Issuu](#)

In 2018, Lee's Summit, Missouri developed and adopted this multi-sectoral plan that informs its Comprehensive Plan and other plans.

### [American Planning Association](#)

*(American Planning Association resources search results for "aging-in-community")*– The American Planning Association maintains a resource library searchable by topic, including this link to Aging-in-Community resources.

## Transportation/Accessibility Resources

### [Aging and Disability Transportation Overview | NADTC](#) (*National Aging and Disability Transportation Center*)

The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) is a program initially funded in 2015 by the Federal Transit Administration and administered by Easterseals and the former National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a). Its resource center provides information on transportation for older adults and people with disabilities.

### [National Center for Mobility Management](#)

The National Center for Mobility Management is a program of NADTC that focuses on and maintains resources on person-centered transportation services.

### [Sidewalk Accessibility Tools \(uic.edu\)](#)

The University of Illinois at Chicago's Applied Health Sciences' Disability and Human Development department has partnered with the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and other partners to provide a suite of Sidewalk Accessibility Tools and can help support communities to access and improve their existing sidewalk networks.

## Housing/Aging-in-Place Resources

### [North West Housing Partnership - Affordable Housing, IL \(nwhp.net\)](#)

This northwest metropolitan Chicago area suburban five-town collaborative runs several housing programs, including their Handyman Program which helps support aging-in-place and aging-in-community.

### [Aging in Place Resources | Aging In Place Resources for Seniors Living at Home](#)

Aginginplace.com is maintained by its Oregon-based founder Patrick Roden, a nurse by training, and it maintains a comprehensive set of resources dedicated to supporting older adults aging in place.

### [Welcome - HomesRenewed™ Resource Center](#)

HomesRenewed was founded by Maryland-based contractor and aging-in-place advocate Louis Tenenbaum and its website provides various aging-in-place materials and resources.

### [Aging in Place: Growing Older at Home | National Institute on Aging \(nih.gov\)](#)

The National Institute on Aging is a program of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and has developed a database of aging-in-place resources.

### [Home Sharing | Center of Concern](#)

Des Plaines-based Center of Concern provides a broad range of services to support its mission "...to provide housing solutions, support services, and counseling for older adults, people with disabilities, and others in need, enabling them to live with dignity and independence." It manages a longstanding home sharing program throughout Cook County.

### [IHDA - Illinois Housing Development Authority](#)

This state agency's mission is "to finance the creation and preservation of affordable housing in Illinois" and administers numerous programs to support lenders, developers, local government, nonprofits, community groups, homeowners and renters in delivering and maintaining affordable housing.

### **[Missing Middle Housing: Diverse choices for walkable neighborhood living](#)**

Opticos Design founder Daniel Parolek coined the term “Missing Middle Housing” to convey the provision of enhanced housing options for sustainable, walkable communities. This link provides many examples and resources. Opticos maintains a Chicago office and is associated with the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus.

### **[Universal Design | RL Mace Universal Design Institute \(udinstitute.org\)](#)**

The Ronald L. Mace Universal Design Institute is a non-profit organization based in North Carolina dedicated to promoting the concept and practice of accessible and universal design. Its founder Richard Duncan has worked with communities to help support Aging-in-Community, and is associated with the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus.

## **Ageism Resources**

### **[Home \(reframingaging.org\)](#)**

The Reframing Aging Initiative began in 2012 as a shared initiative of eight national aging organizations to find out how the American public perceives of aging, and once it was determined that this perception was negative, developing an infrastructure of strategies and techniques to convey more positive and supportive messaging. This website offers many tools and resources.

### **[Old School: Anti-Ageism Clearinghouse](#)**

This clearing house was established by anti-ageism activist Ashton Applewhite and her colleagues, and it provides free and vetted resources to help educate people about ageism and how to dismantle it.

## **Intergenerational Resources**

### **[Resources - Generations United \(gu.org\)](#)**

Generations United is the preeminent national advocacy and informational organization supporting intergenerational collaborations, programs, and policies. Established by a group of organizations that focused on different portions of the lifespan, it maintains a resource library.

# Appendix

## Resident Input Forms

As stated earlier in this document, throughout the summer of 2023, residents of all ages were invited to complete and submit a short survey whose 15 questions gave them an opportunity to share their lived experience. Questions 1 and 2 of these anonymous surveys asked for respondents' age and number of years lived in South Elgin, with these results summarized as follows: 277 Resident Input Forms were submitted, with respondents ranging from a 17-year-old to two 94-year-olds, with the majority rather evenly spread between their 50s, 60s & 70s. Respondents' tenure living in South Elgin ranged widely, from 1 year to 78 years.

Some questions asked respondents to choose amongst provided options, while others were open-ended and invited respondents to write out their answers. The results from these questions are summarized below, with chosen answers charted as appropriate, and open-ended answers briefly summarized.

### QUESTION #3

**How do you get information about South Elgin's programs, services, and events?**

*Check all that apply.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Village's Website	36.96%	102
Village's Facebook Page	38.42%	106
Village Light Newsletter	82.61%	228
Village's Weekly Watcher Email	4.35%	12
Village Hall Sign	31.16%	86
Newspaper	21.01%	58
Radio	3.99%	11
Word of Mouth	31.16%	86
Other (please specify)	11.23%	31
Total Respondents: 276		

"Other" responses cited a wide variety of smaller newspapers, newsletters, named individuals' word-of-mouth, meetings, signs/banners, emails, websites, and social media platforms.

#### QUESTION #4

How do you get information about community programs or services offered to support South Elgin's older adult residents? *Check all that apply.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Village's Website	26.42%	70
Village's Facebook Page	28.68%	76
Village Light Newsletter	73.96%	196
Village's Weekly Watcher Email	2.26%	6
Village Hall Sign	18.49%	49
Newspaper	12.83%	34
Radio	3.77%	10
Word of Mouth	25.66%	68
Other (please specify)	9.81%	26
Total Respondents: 265		

"Other" responses included nearly 50% citing either a lack of such services or that they had never sought it out. The main cited information sources were the Library and Senior Services Associates.

### QUESTION #5

Do you currently use or attend any community programs or services offered to support South Elgin's older adults? *Check all that apply.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percent	Count
None of the Above	81.68%	214
Dementia Friendly Elgin	1.91%	5
Elgin Men's Shed	0.00%	0
Elgin Township Activities	5.73%	15
Elgin Memory Cafe	1.15%	3
EngAge Cafe	1.15%	3
Fox Valley Special Recreation District Activities	1.91%	5
Ride in Kane	1.91%	5
South Elgin Food Pantry	1.53%	4
TRIAD	2.67%	7
Other (please specify)	8.02%	21
Total Respondents: 262		

"Other" responses included many mentions of the Concerts in the Park, Senior Services Associates, and several mentions that – although respondents may not personally use it – they support the South Elgin Food Pantry.

### QUESTION #6

Are there additional community programs or services you would like to see offered to enhance support of South Elgin's older adult residents? *What types? Describe.*

Summary – There was a wide range of thoughtful suggestions in the 124 responses. About 10% addressed their perceived overall shortage of programs or their unawareness of existing ones. The major response categories included: about three dozen specific suggestions for recreational, fitness, or cultural activities; over a dozen calls for enhanced or improved transportation; and at least a dozen assorted references to the need for more informal gathering spaces for socializing, playing games, and/or having coffee.



### QUESTION #7

In what type of housing do you currently reside? *Check all that apply.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Single-Family House	70.29%	194
Townhouse	13.77%	38
Apartment/Condominium	11.59%	32
Senior Living Facility	3.62%	10
Other (please specify)	2.90%	8
Total Respondents: 276		

The main specific "Other" was four respondents indicating that they live in a duplex.

### QUESTION #8

Does your current housing meet your current needs? *Check one.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Yes	94.16%	258
No	5.84%	16
Total Respondents: 274		

No "Other" response opportunity.

### QUESTION #9

Will you be able to age in your current housing (stay) or will you have to relocate (move) at some point? *Check one.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Stay	63.94%	172
Relocate/Move	36.06%	97
Total Respondents: 269		

No "Other" response opportunity.

### QUESTION #10

If you believe you will need to move at some point, how will your next housing have to be different from your current housing? *Describe.*

Summary – While about 15 of the 144 respondents cited a potential future need for some type of Assisted Living, more than 75% cited their perceived future need for some combination of single-level, accessible, smaller, more affordable, more easily maintained, and/or less automobile-dependent housing.

### QUESTION #11

How do you generally get to places in and around South Elgin for your shopping, appointments, and social activities? *Check all that apply.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Private Car	96.38%	266
Walk or Mobility Device	15.58%	43
Public Transportation	0.36%	1
Ride in Kane	1.81%	5
Taxi	0.36%	1
Rideshare	1.09%	3
Other (please specify)	4.71%	13
Total Respondents: 276		

The major cited “Other” response category was four mentions of the use of bicycles to get around.

### QUESTION #12

When either walking or using an assistive device (wheelchair, walker, cane, etc.), do you generally find it easy to get around South Elgin? *Check one.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Yes	80.33%	192
No	19.67%	47
Total Respondents: 239		

No “Other” response opportunity.

### QUESTION #13

Do you generally find South Elgin's public places (parks, public buildings, etc.) easily accessible and adequate for your use? *Check one.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Yes	93.31%	251
No	6.69%	18
Total Respondents: 269		

No "Other" response opportunity.

### QUESTION #14

Do you generally find South Elgin easily accessible and adequate for your use? *Check one.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Yes	90.98%	242
No	9.02%	24
Total Respondents: 266		

No "Other" response opportunity.

### QUESTION #15

Please share any additional thoughts, ideas or suggestions about how South Elgin could better support older adults Aging-in-Community? *Describe.*

Summary – Many of the 109 responses were like those offered in response to Question 6. The major response categories included: over 25% of responses were concerns about the lack of good transportation and/or accessibility infrastructure throughout the Village; about 10 calls for more affordable and/or more varied older adult housing options; several references to needing more accessible stores, restaurants, and amenities; and several calls for better communication of existing programs and services.

# Acknowledgements

## South Elgin Residents

Over 300 South Elgin residents participated in this engagement, including nearly 300 who submitted Resident Input Forms, and almost two dozen residents who attended and participated in the resident-focused public workshop. Their input was invaluable to the project.

## Resident Attendees at Workshop #1

Bob Balsamo • Pam Blair • Denise Cedergren • Ana Cervantes • Marie & Rich Frey • Jerry & Marian Gibson • Julie Innis • Bob & Esther McArthur • Ralf & Sue Ellen Merkau • Shannon Sullivan • Willie Tate • Len Thielen • Brent Todd • Deb Walton • Rich & Linda Myers-Watson • Dawna Watson

## Representatives from Stakeholder Organizations at Workshop #2

Rita McDonough & Tasha Samuels, *Kane Senior Council* • Micki Miller & Laura Gnutek, *Senior Services Associates* • Stephanie Anderson & Rania Samani, *Fox Valley Special Recreation Association* • Diana Cornelissen, *South Elgin and Countryside Fire Protection District* • Natalie Horath, *AID (Association for Individual Development)* • Diane Kerruish, Tim Whitney & Christina Nunez, *Elgin Community College*

## South Elgin Staff Participants

Nancy Hill, *Director of Community Development (Core Team member)* • Lauren Tredup, *Community Development Coordinator (Core Team member)* • Craig Pierce, *Communications Manager (Core Team member)* • Jerry Krawczyk, *Chief of Police* • Brett Czechowski, *Deputy Chief of Police* • Brian Polkinghorn, *Deputy Chief of Police* • Megan Golden, *Deputy Village Administrator/Director of Administrative Services* • Kim Wascher, *Director of Parks and Recreation* • Mike Millette, *Director of Public Works* • Sean O'Neill, *Building and Grounds Superintendent* • Susan Wright, *Utility Billing and Customer Service Manager* • JoDee Swanson, *Utility Billing Clerk*

## Aging in a Changing Region Team Members

Neil James, Crispina Ojeda-Simmons, Nancy Firfer & Ben Schnelle, *Metropolitan Mayors Caucus* • Brad Winick, *Planning/Aging*

## Report Designer

Kathrine Nichols

*Workshop and other Document Photos courtesy of the Village of South Elgin*

## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

*This document itself was produced to be supportive of Aging-in-Community. All of the graphic details – font selection, a minimum 12-point font size, page layouts, the inclusion of graphics, avoiding the use of reversed-out text on light colored backgrounds, etc. – were made to make this document easily legible for anyone with visual sensitivity issues. Just as the body of this document makes the case that municipal decisions supportive of Aging-in-Community are innately supportive of livable communities for all ages, this document itself should be seen as innately supportive of readers of all ages.*

*One final Aging-in-Community recommendation is that all municipal documents, websites, social media postings, etc. should consciously strive to be easily legible for all viewers, including – but not limited to – older adults.*