Become a Community for All Ages
A checklist to help you become age friendly

Workbook version

Does your city or county need tools to help it become a Community for All Ages? This checklist is designed to be used together with Making Your Community Work for All Ages — A Toolkit for Cities as a way to raise awareness, plan actions and assess your city for age friendliness.

This Workbook is designed to assist committees assigned to document progress on their city’s age-friendly self-assessments using the Communities for All Ages Checklist. Enter progress information, notes, statistics, to-do lists, etc., in the green text boxes corresponding to each Policy and Action Item.

A final version of this Workbook may be used to support your application to the KC Communities for All Ages recognition program.

1 Public outdoor spaces and buildings

(See Making Your Community Work for All Ages — A Toolkit for Cities, Chapter 2)

Locate, design and construct public facilities to allow for connectivity with neighborhoods and other destinations, and enable maximum use and benefit by residents, visitors and employees of all ages.

Cities are responsible for the location, design and construction of parks, trails, community centers, city halls and other public facilities and spaces. Most communities have assessed these facilities to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and some have taken steps to make improvements beyond the minimums established by ADA.

Physical limitations and mobility needs must be considered when designing and creating both outdoor spaces and buildings. Residents with physical limitations are more comfortable, safe and active when communities consider and address their needs in the design of public buildings and spaces. The following policies and actions provide guidance on maximizing physical accessibility to public spaces for all levels of ability and age.
Policy

1-A The city develops and implements age-friendly policies that consider the needs of persons of all ages in the siting, design and development of public spaces. Examples include: parks and other outdoor spaces, walkways, outdoor seating, streetscapes and buildings.

_X_ Existing policies. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

The recommendations coming out of the Parks Master Plan will include several of these elements. The new corner park at Broadmoor and Martway Streets will have some of these. Bathrooms in parks are a priority. The Form Based Code and the East Gateway Streetscape Plan encourage these types of design choices.

1-B The city plans and constructs bike and pedestrian facilities to maximize use and safety for all users. Examples include: width, surface material and expected use. The city may use the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) Highway Safety Manual standards or other recognized standards for bicycle and pedestrian facility design.

___ Included in city plans. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

The City designs new biking and walking paths according to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The Martway Street project expanded biking and walking paths through the city, and now the Rock Creek Trail through the farmers’ market site along Johnson Drive is paved where it had been gravel previously.

1-C The city designs and builds its public buildings to meet the needs of residents of all ages. Examples include: easy-to-read signage and accessible elevators, ramps, railings and stairs, and non-slip floors.

_X_ Included in city plans. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

Facilities at the Sylvester Powell, Jr. Community Center (Community Center) and the Mission Family Aquatic Center (MFAC) strive to meet this mark. Details are not specifically called out in city plans, but are implemented in practice. As the MFAC was built, consideration was given to safety and enhanced access in areas such as the zero grade entry splash pad, the sidewalks surrounding the facility and in clear signage throughout.

1-D The city prioritizes safety in parks and neighborhoods. Examples include: providing good street lighting, trimmed trees and bushes and other appropriate safety measures.

___ Included in city plans. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

The city code includes a restriction on vegetation allowing for clear passage along sidewalks. Public Works maintains the majority of the street lights and there is a notification system on the City’s website to report outages. There are tripping hazards are present on some sidewalks throughout the City. Future work could include an inventory of these areas to target improvement efforts.
1-E The city involves residents of varying ages and abilities in planning for the siting and design of public outdoor spaces and buildings.

Included in city plans. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

This is an area of opportunity and continuous improvement. There is always a certain aspect to public input for public outdoor spaces and buildings, but outreach efforts vary from project to project. Groups such as the Johnson County Area Agency on Aging work with individuals and service providers who may prove to be good partners in helping to communicate available services to additional groups of residents.

Action

1-F The city provides seating areas in public outdoor spaces and outside public buildings in recognition that residents have different levels of mobility and stamina.

Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

The park on Beverly is a notable exception to this goal. The sidewalk does not connect, and there is no seating at this park. Amenities in all parks were examined as part of the recent update to the City's Parks Master Plan and the goal is to upgrade them in a coordinated and more strategic fashion in the future.

1-G Stairways on public property, including within park facilities, are designed and constructed to maximize safety. Examples include: railings and painted or taped stair tips to distinguish each step.

Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

This is a work in progress and may be improved in the future.

1-H The city provides ample parking and drop-off areas near the entrances to public facilities that meets mobility and accessibility needs of all citizens. (ADA requirements are an expected minimum, the composition of the community and the expected use of a facility may dictate additional spaces to improve resident experience at public facilities.)

Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

There are more ADA spaces at the Community Center than are required. This is an item that has seen a lot of discussion lately through the Johnson Drive project. There are no ADA spaces in the block that hosts the farmers market, but an additional space beyond what was required was added to the project during construction in response to a request from the public.
1-I The city considers the mobility needs and stamina of all citizens in accessing city services and provides flexible customer arrangements. Examples include: separate waiting lines and seating if the wait is long, special queues and service counters and online and mail-in access.

__ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Staff would move to accommodate this type of need whenever it should arise, but in most cases, the crowds, lines, etc. are not significant enough in Mission to warrant additional effort. The Community Center has a strong relationship with the Mission Project and Mission Project 2 participants, individuals with developmental disabilities living in Mission. The participants are welcome to use the Community Center facilities and special classes and often find other opportunities for collaboration.

1-J The city encourages walkability in downtown areas.

__X__ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

The Johnson Drive project has worked to this goal specifically and made significant improvements in walkability in the downtown area. Wider, flatter sidewalks, with pedestrian beacons and clearly marked sidewalks contribute to the area’s overall walkability improvements.
Provide age-friendly housing options.

Studies document that older citizens wish to “age in place.” Buyers and renters of all ages are becoming wary of the costs of commuting long distances. Communities that provide a range of age-friendly housing options will retain their older adult residents and provide an attractive alternative for all ages looking for housing.

Cities have a role in the siting and design of housing and commercial development through their planning and regulatory processes. Through these processes, cities can impact how well development meets the needs of all populations.

Policy

2-A The city conducts an audit of its development codes to ensure that a range of housing options are allowed, particularly in places connected to public transit, employment centers and community services.

_X_ Existing policies. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

A range of housing options are available, and that variety is supported when updated demographic information is evaluated during the updates to the Comprehensive Plan. The City also has an affordable housing policy.

2-B The city has in place policies to allow for and encourage a range of housing options, including accessory and shared dwellings that meet the needs of all ages and generations.

___ Existing policies. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

Mission does not allow accessory dwellings.

2-C The city evaluates and streamlines its building code review processes to be consistent with adopted plans and policies, including those that reduce costs and provide housing in a range of cost points.
When appropriate, the building code application process is modified to reduce barriers to development while still maintaining strong standards of life safety. Process changes like making simple reviews available "over the counter" reduce part of the burden associated with property maintenance and upgrades of Mission's building stock.

2-D The city has in place policies that encourage developers to include features in new or restored housing stock that meets the different mobility needs of as many people as possible. Cities may refer to universal design, enabling design, visitability features or other design elements.

___ Existing policies. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

Mission does not have these policies in place.

2-E The city evaluates its zoning and building code review processes to ensure that the siting and design of commercial properties consider the needs of users of all ages.

___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Certain aspects of the code encourage pedestrian connections, adequate sidewalks, etc. The Form Based Code specifically addresses these issues by encouraging pedestrian oriented buildings and design elements that enhance the streetscape and walking environment. There is a general preference toward density and mixed use present in the Form Based Code.

Action

2-F The city uses its property maintenance enforcement to support neighborhood quality and, as appropriate, assists property owners in identifying resources to maintain their homes.

___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission's Neighborhood Services Department's code enforcement program that includes the Mission Possible program offering financial assistance to residents performing maintenance on their homes. Staff also refers residents to relevant programs offered by Johnson County.

2-G The city and its partners make information available about housing options within the city that meet different mobility and dependence levels.

___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

The City rarely receives requests on housing. Front line staff offer information on a case-by-case basis.
2-H The city has a property tax relief program for homeowners with a fixed income who meet defined criteria (if allowed under state law).

_ X_ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission’s Neighborhood Services Department offers the Community Rebate Program that offers a full rebate of city telephone, electricity or gas franchise fees, a partial rebate of city property taxes, and a partial rebate of solid waste utility fees.

2-I The city and its partners offer residents information about assessing and protecting their property to strengthen crime prevention.

_ X_ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission does this through website notifications, notifications in the quarterly newsletter that is distributed in the Mission Magazine, and at periodic community events such as “Coffee with a Cop”, and self-defense classes. The Police Department has also held talks on fraud and identity theft which can include door-to-door scams and may sometimes target the senior population.
Ensure that the community transportation system meets the needs of all users. Healthy, vibrant communities provide multiple, accessible transportation options that contribute to the independence of all residents. Young adults, baby boomers and all ages increasingly seek and choose communities where they can walk, bike or access transit to get to school, work, services and entertainment.

There are many resources available to help a city meet this criterion, including guidelines and checklists provided by the National Complete Streets Coalition (www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets), U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Bikeability Checklist (www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/pebdimobike/bikeability/); Bicycle Friendly America (www.bikeleague.org/bfa); and Walk-Friendly Communities. (www.walkfriendly.org/). These guidelines help communities ensure that the transportation system meets the needs of all users. Cities can work proactively with local transit operators to plan and implement transit services to address the needs of their residents and workforce.

Policy

3-A The city addresses multiple transportation modes in its comprehensive plan.

_X_ Included in city plans. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

Mission incorporated bus lines and transit stops and better connections for the Rock Creek Trail in the Martway Street project. The Linkages Plan in the code shows a preference for transit oriented development and density in those areas of the city.

3-B The city has adopted a Complete Streets resolution or comparable policy and is taking steps to implement the policy.
Existing policy. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

Mission has not formally adopted a Complete Streets resolutions but incorporates many of the relevant elements into infrastructure projects including sidewalk and trail connections and wider sidewalks.

3-C The city – with or without a transit partner – works to ensure public transportation stops and stations have infrastructure that meets the needs of all ages and abilities. Examples include: shelter with lighting, benches and curb cuts.

Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

The Tiger grant funding included upgrades to all the major Johnson County Transit stops between Metcalf and Roe in 2013. Improvements can still be made to the stops outside of those improvements. Communications with Kansas City Area Transportation Authority indicates that some of those improvements will be based on ridership numbers. Foxridge Drive improvements scheduled in 2017-2018 will include better connections to some existing stops.

3-D The city and its partners review and consider adoption of older driver and pedestrian safety provisions in the region’s long-range safety plan. The city may use Toward Zero Deaths 2013-2017, or other recognized standards as guidance.

Included in city plans. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

Mission does not do this.

Action

3-E The city works with partners, including transportation providers, to develop and implement strategies to support independence of non-drivers and those with additional needs for assistance in using transportation options.

Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Staff is trained to refer individuals requesting these services to paratransit options.

3-F The city and its partners provide resource information on where residents can find transportation options.

Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Bus route maps and schedules are available at the Community Center and City Hall lobbies. Information about paratransit options are available through the Johnson County Area Agency on Aging, and front line staff have
been trained on how to refer individuals to that service.

3-G The city constructs pedestrian facilities to allow for safe travel to transit stops and stations from neighborhoods and other locations.

__ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Some connections exist, especially along the east/west corridor. Some connections to residential areas are still lacking.

3-H The city and its partners provide resource information for determining older driver competency and the supports available for transitioning from driver to passenger.

__ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission does not serve the function, but would refer individuals to a partner agency if required.

3-I The city has considered application for or has achieved the Walk-Friendly Community designation from the Pedestrian Bicycle Information Center. (www.walkfriendly.org)

__ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission has not formally achieved the Walk-Friendly Community designation, but incorporates many of the relevant elements into infrastructure projects including sidewalk and trail connections and wider sidewalks.

3-J The city has considered application for or has achieved the Bicycle Friendly Community designation from the League of American Bicyclists. (www.bikeleague.org/bfa)

__ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission has not formally achieved the Bicycle Friendly Community designation, but incorporates many of the relevant elements into infrastructure projects including a bike lane on Martway Street and bike racks on Johnson Drive and at public buildings. Did apply to be a Bicycle Friendly Community several years ago, but did not receive the designation.
Include all residents in developing community activities and adapt communication strategies for multiple audiences.

By leveraging the knowledge, skills and abilities of all residents and including them in decision-making, communities create a competitive advantage for themselves. Cities will benefit when residents of all ages are an integral part of a community and the cities are knowledgeable about their diverse needs.

Meaningful participation in affordable community activities helps residents to develop relationships, maintain good health and have a sense of belonging. Cities obtain input from all residents to develop community activities that will engage residents and meet their needs.

Policy

4-A The city and its partners understand the demographic makeup of residents, engages with the community and then designs programming, including recreational opportunities, that respects the needs and interests of diverse populations.

_X_ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Programs at the Community Center and the work of the Comprehensive Master Plan update process and the community survey achieves this item.

4-B The city has a comprehensive communication plan with marketing and outreach strategies and tools that include diverse public imagery, depicting all ages, cultures and abilities.

___ Included in city plans. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

Improvement is desired in clarifying goals of a strategic communications plan for consistency and impact of message.

4-C The city communications plan requires that information about accessibility of facilities and transportation options is included when publishing information about city activities and events.
Action

4-D The city communication plan includes strategies to work with partners to inform people at risk of social isolation about community activities and events.

4-E The city partners with community organizations to develop and implement opportunities for utilizing and showcasing the skills and contributions of all ages, cultures and abilities.
Provide opportunities for residents to be involved and keep all residents informed of city affairs and of employment and volunteer opportunities and other ways to be engaged.

With increased levels of involvement in community affairs and civic life, citizens are well positioned to build connections and support communities for all ages.

Cities will benefit from welcoming residents to be employed or become involved in city affairs. Input and participation from residents of all ages will strengthen the city’s programs and services.

Policy

5-A The city has a policy in place to encourage civic participation by all age groups in the community.

___ Existing policy. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

Mission does not have an official policy in place but certainly holds this goal in practice. The City has remained committed to relationships with local groups which cater to groups of all ages including schools, senior living facilities and non-profit agencies and has also maintained a variety of communication methods including both print and online formats to inform and encourage a wide range of participation.

Action

5-B The city maintains and promotes a list of volunteer and employment opportunities within city government and offers an easy means to apply, including drop in, mail, on line and telephone.

_X_ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission recruits volunteers for three primary programs including the Snow Angels and Leaf Busters programs for neighbors interested in helping to remove snow and leaves, and the Farmers Market Ambassadors program for assistance at the Mission Farm and Flower Market. The opportunities are advertised online and in the City’s newsletter and sign-up is through online forms or via email or telephone.
5-C The city provides flexible options for volunteers of all ages and abilities, including training, recognition and guidance.

___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission certainly provides required training for volunteers, but does not have a formal recognition program in place at this time.

5-D The city encourages stakeholders, community organizations and nonprofits serving its community to work with volunteers of all ages, cultures and abilities, using best practices and guidelines for volunteer engagement and management promoted by organizations such as the Shepherd Center’s Coming of Age, the United Way of Greater Kansas City, United Way of Wyandotte County and Nonprofit Connect.

___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission supports this goal and certainly seizes opportunities when they present themselves, but the City does not have a formal process by which to do this as part of a sophisticated volunteer program.

5-E The city and its partners encourage local businesses to adopt flexible employment practices to meet the needs of citizens of all ages.

___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission does not take a leading role in this effort, but has highlighted the Horizons High School program that enables students to work with local businesses. The Mission Project facilitates placements of their participants with local businesses. Internally, the Community Center in particular has flexible job opportunities for a wide range of ages.

5-F The city and its partners develop an outreach plan to ensure residents of all ages are included in community and civic conversations.

X_ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Similar answer as for item 5-A. Through the use of a variety of communication methods, Mission aims to reach a diverse group, and encourages participation from all.

5-G The city ensures that meeting locations are accessible to all residents and meet the communication needs and challenges of diverse populations.

___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)
Recent improvements at City Hall have improved public meetings for the hearing impaired and mobility is somewhat addressed, especially at Sylvester Powell, Jr. Community Center, and less so at City Hall. Staff should review how accommodations are advertised meeting notices.
Offer a range of community and health services that address the needs of all ages.

Many residents desire easy access to a range of health and social services. Communities that address the community and health services needs of residents can generate value from both a real estate and a community health perspective.

Local governments may offer a range of direct services at their public facilities or work with private for-profit or nonprofit providers to deliver services using city facilities. In some cases, communities identify health needs and encourage private providers to locate programs and services in the city.

Policy

6-A Applicable city plans recognize the need for health care services that are accessible to all residents and served by transportation options.

_X_ Included in city plans. (Please cite and attach copies for documentation.)

The Comprehensive Plan promotes locating transit services near health care services.

Action

6-B The city, in partnership with area health care organizations, makes arrangements to offer health services at community facilities. Examples include: hearing tests, hearing aid cleaning, flu shots, blood pressure checks, etc.

_X_ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

The City contracts with a provider to offer blood pressure checks at the Community Center on a monthly basis. The Center could host additional services or staff could do a more strategic job of promoting services offered at the Northeast Johnson County offices.
6-C The city, in partnership with the local public health department, publicizes plans and services to improve the rate of immunizations among city residents.

___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission does not do this now. This is an opportunity for improvement.

6-D The city has educated personnel to ensure those who work with the public are knowledgeable about specialized needs for citizens of different ages and abilities. Personnel are also trained in applicable reporting requirements of abuse or neglect, regardless of age.

___X___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

The Mission Police Department does this, and the Parks and Recreation Department staff receive training to recognize signs while staffing youth camp. Staff is interested in investigating offering similar training for recognizing signs of elder abuse at the Community Center.

6-E The city promotes and enables the location of full-service grocery stores and retail establishments to expand the availability of healthy food options.

___X___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

The Code allows this type of establishment to locate in the city. The City also established and promoted the Mission Farm and Flower Market.

6-F The city works with local ambulance providers to ensure city demographic information is incorporated into planning for services.

___X___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

EMS looks at call logs and data, and the Mid-America Regional Council provides larger data for demographic changes.

6-G The city, in partnership with area health care organizations, has developed and implemented education programs about healthy choices and preventive services, including the benefit of smoking cessation.

___X___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Mission coordinates the DARE program in local elementary schools which does cover the harms of tobacco use. There could be future opportunities for expansion of this education. KU Medical Center has information and works with cities to reduce smoking. HyVee and Natural Grocers have a dietician and education programs.
6-H The city encourages healthy eating by providing information to residents about programs such as home-delivered meals, food banks or other resources.

___ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Front line staff have been trained to refer individuals needing this type of service to the Johnson County Area Agency on Aging.

6-I The city encourages healthy eating and community participation by supporting community gardens and other initiatives that promote healthy eating.

___X_ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

The City created the community garden at Lamar Avenue and Foxridge Drive, and supported the community garden for Mission Project 2 on Outlook Street. St. Pius X Catholic Church also maintains their own community garden on their property.

6-J The city and its partners provide referrals to those residents identified as needing more intensive services.

___X_ Completed. (Please provide documentation.)

Front line staff have been trained to refer individuals needing this type of service to the Johnson County Area Agency on Aging.
RE: Adding Communities for All Ages impacts to Action/Discussion Item summaries.

DETAILS: Staff, with the assistance of the Sustainability Commission, continue to look for ways to incorporate the Communities for All Ages (CFAA) work into more aspects of our on-going service delivery. Applying the CFAA lens to our work improves Mission’s ability to anticipate and/or meet the needs of residents over the next 20 years, as an increasingly greater percentage of the population reaches age 65+.

We currently include statutory/regulatory and budgetary impacts when preparing agenda items for Council consideration. Including these in the standard format of the item cover sheet ensures they are considered as a matter of routine. Adding information on how CFAA was considered provides an additional check and opportunity to communicate how the “all ages” philosophy is being taken into account.

The CFAA work continues on several fronts. The Sustainability Commission recently completed an initial assessment of the material in the CFAA Checklist. The group will evaluate whether particular issues are priorities for future work and will share their findings with the governing body and other groups as appropriate. The Checklist considers topics organized into six issue areas including:

- Public outdoor spaces and buildings
- Housing and commercial development
- Transportation and mobility
- Social inclusion, communication and participation
- Civic participation and employment
- Community and health services

Mission’s Sustainability Commission and representatives from the Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, and Governing Body have been invited to CFAA summit on January 27. The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), will host the meeting for the cities of Mission, Roeland Park, Raytown and Gladstone to collaborate on ways to advance CFAA goals in 2016. Mission department directors will be asked to implement 1-2 new program improvements that achieve these goals in 2016 and elements of CFAA have been incorporated to the preliminary drafts of the Comprehensive Plan and Parks Master Plan.

Mission participated in MARC’s CFAA recognition program in 2015 and received bronze recognition. We expect to apply for silver recognition in April 2016. A fact sheet on the program is attached. More resources about the regional effort, including the Communities for All Ages Checklist and Toolkit, are available at the MARC website: www.marc.org/Community/KC-Communities-for-All-Ages