

AGE-FRIENDLY DC

2018-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN
PROGRESS EVALUATION REPORT

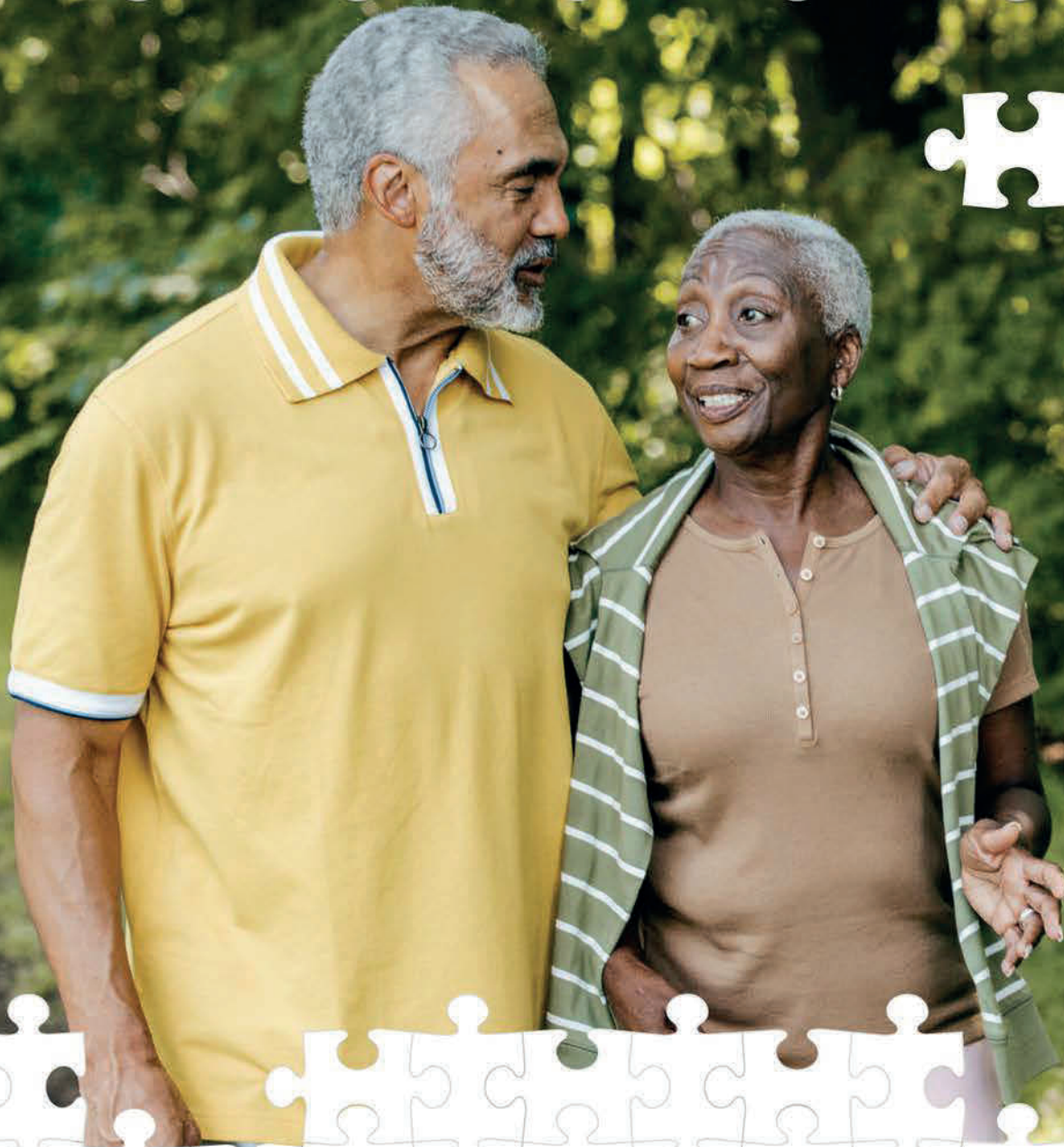


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LETTER FROM MAYOR MURIEL BOWSER

Dear Washingtonians,

I am proud to present to you the Age-Friendly DC 2018-2023 Strategic Plan Progress Evaluation Report. Since Age-Friendly DC's launch in 2013, the District has been committed to our goal of ensuring all DC residents have a fair shot at being active, connected, and able to lead healthy and happy lives. I am grateful for our cross-sector work to support all residents, particularly the older adults in our lives who are foundational to the spirit of our city.

We have come a long way, not just in the fight against COVID-19, but also in our work towards DC's comeback. The next five years are so important. We will transform parts of our city with a special focus on our values, particularly inclusiveness and equity for all. Initiatives like Age-Friendly DC demonstrate those values in action. Across 58 District government agencies and offices and 33 community organizations, we've seen progress across each of Age-Friendly DC's focus areas.

Of course, there's still progress to be made, and there are challenges to overcome. However, we know together we can achieve our goals. As we look ahead to the 2024-2028 plan, we will expand our work with proven strategies and develop new ones to meet the bold goals we've set for ourselves over the next five years. We will increase food access and internet access. We will continue to invest in economic prosperity and affordable housing citywide. These goals can only be achieved if we are focused on equitable collaboration.

This report highlights the ways Age-Friendly DC has continued to show evidence of their work across the District. Congratulations and thank you to all who have contributed to our efforts to build a healthier, more connected, and more resilient DC.

Muriel Bowser
Mayor

LETTER FROM THE AGE-FRIENDLY COORDINATOR

Dear Fellow DC Residents,

As the District's Age-Friendly Coordinator, I have had the pleasure of working closely with DC residents since 2013. In that time, our work has been unanimously supported across our local government and internationally recognized for our comprehensive and transformative approach to make DC an easier place to grow up and grow older.

As we conclude and evaluate the impact of our second 5-year effort, I want to name how our lives have been forever changed. The COVID-19 pandemic was sudden, unpredictable, and devastating. We learned the importance of public health, as regular testing, mask-wearing, and vaccinations became our best defenses against the virus. The pandemic also challenged us to adapt and expand our efforts to address each of our fourteen Age-Friendly domains, some of which include:

- Understanding and utilizing technology: We found new tools to connect with family, friends, and colleagues virtually. Since 2020, more residents than ever have learned about Age-Friendly DC's progress, thanks to virtual gatherings.
- Being active outdoors: Walking outside became easier as our sidewalks, street crossings, and parks became more accessible.
- Helping our neighbors: Neighbors helped neighbors more frequently and directly through organizations like DC Villages, which allows residents to age in their own homes among communities they know and love.
- Supporting DC workers: Residents needing time off were able to utilize DC's Paid Family Leave program without having to choose between addressing health concerns and earning income.

The Age-Friendly DC 2018-2023 Strategic Plan was created before we knew what we know now; yet we've made desirable progress thanks to the partnership of the DC government agencies and community organizations (noted in each domain report and the appendix attached to this report). I encourage you to become familiar with our accomplishments and to help us shape our next 5-year strategic plan. Please stay connected by reaching out to our office directly, visiting the Age-Friendly DC website, or via Facebook or X (formerly known as Twitter). We look forward to your partnership as we continue to improve our quality of life here in the District. Remember, you start aging as soon as you're born.



Gail Kohn

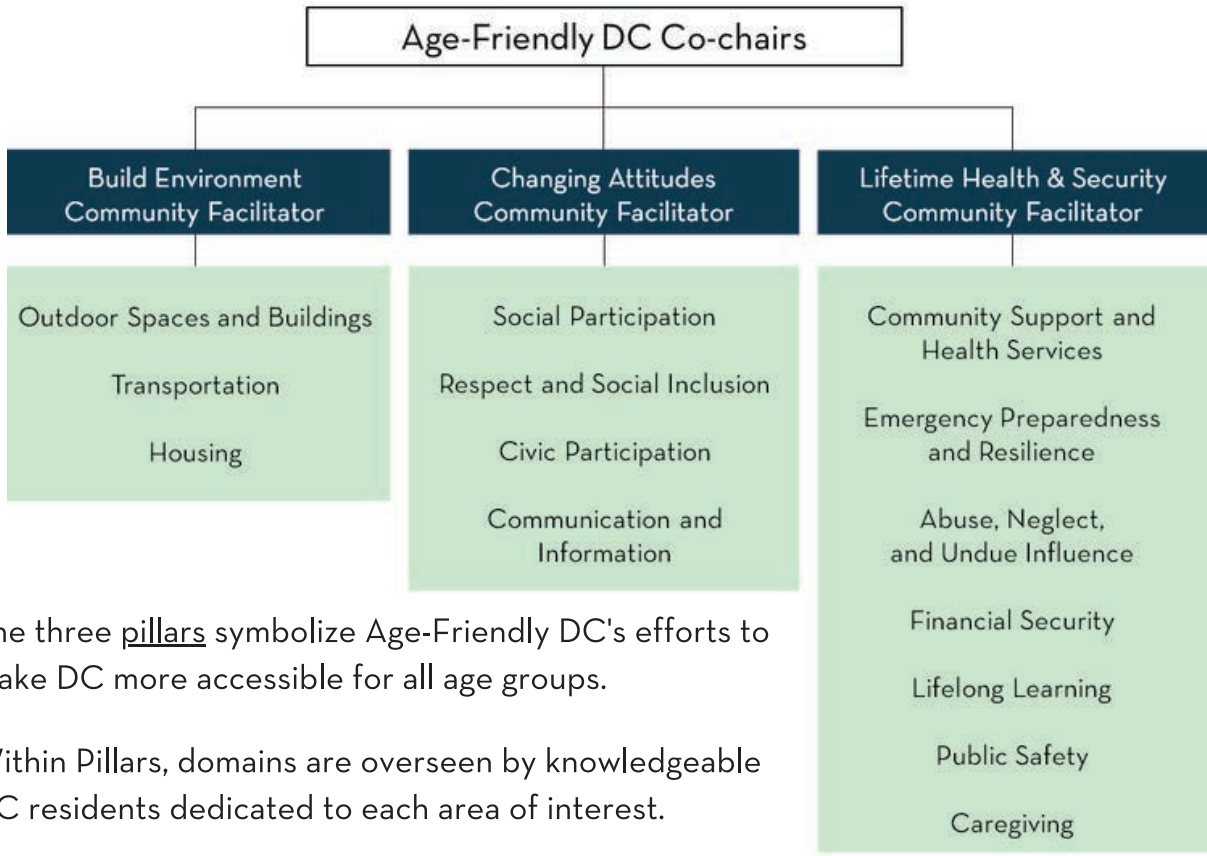
Age-Friendly DC Coordinator

ABOUT AGE-FRIENDLY DC

Age-Friendly DC is an initiative of the DC Government to coordinate observations of residents with equitable actions by DC agencies and community organizations **to make the District an easier place in which to live, work and play, as we all grow older.** After the completion of the 2013-2017 Age-Friendly DC Strategic Plan, **the District of Columbia was recognized as a top city in the world for Age-Friendly policy directions** by the World Health Organization (WHO) and AARP.

As an interagency initiative housed in the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, **Age-Friendly DC collaborates with 26 agencies across the government.** This ensures that lifelong aging is a consideration in all citywide plans, and actions. This report on our progress implementing the plan, released by Mayor Muriel Bowser prior to the January 30, 2024, Task Force meeting, relies on the work accomplished by the actions of DC government agencies and community organizations. Throughout this report, watch for hyperlinks to plans and programs that have resulted in the Age-Friendly DC 2018-2023 strategic plan progress.

Age-Friendly DC relies on the advice and expertise of its task force, charged with contributing to the District’s second 5-year strategic plan. **The Task Force is comprised of DC agency leaders and community representatives, appointed by Mayor Muriel Bowser.**



- The three pillars symbolize Age-Friendly DC's efforts to make DC more accessible for all age groups.
- Within Pillars, domains are overseen by knowledgeable DC residents dedicated to each area of interest.

UNDERSTANDING AGE-FRIENDLY DC DOMAINS

The following overview of Age-Friendly DC domains details the use of terms throughout this report:

OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS	Everyone, regardless of abilities, should be able to easily access buildings and be active in public spaces anywhere in the city.
TRANSPORTATION	Traveling on foot or using wheels should be safe and easily available.
HOUSING	Affordable and accessible places to live.
SOCIAL PARTICIPATION	Connecting with others at events, programs and activities.
RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION	Being welcomed by others, regardless of our differences.
CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT	Engaging in the city's functions and economy via voting, social groups and working.
COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION	Sharing knowledge about news and programs.
COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES	Programs and services that prevent and treat health issues.
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESILIENCE	Plans and services in place of unexpected events that allow for communities to bounce back quickly.
ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND UNDUE INFLUENCE	Programs and services that prevent unjust treatment and taking advantage of residents.
FINANCIAL SECURITY*	Having enough money to sustain a happy and healthy lifestyle.
LIFELONG LEARNING*	Continuing to learn throughout one's life.
PUBLIC SAFETY	Feeling secure and comfortable with one's surroundings.
CAREGIVING	Providing care for someone with long-term health needs.

2018-2023 Age-Friendly DC Strategic Plan

The 2018-2023 Age-Friendly DC Strategic Plan is organized into three pillars. Within the three pillars, areas of focus or domains, recommended by the World Health Organization, were adopted to organize work. In 2017, DC residents shared their observations on life in the District, resulting in six additional domains that Age-Friendly DC uses to address their concerns about the city they love. Those DC-specific domains are marked with an asterisk (*) in the list below.

Built Environment



OUTDOOR SPACES
AND BUILDINGS



TRANSPORTATION



HOUSING

Changing Attitudes About Growing Older



SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



RESPECT AND
SOCIAL INCLUSION



CIVIC PARTICIPATION
AND EMPLOYMENT



COMMUNICATION
AND INFORMATION

Lifelong Health & Security



COMMUNITY SUPPORT
AND HEALTH SERVICES



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
AND RESILIENCE*



ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND
UNDUE INFLUENCE*



FINANCIAL SECURITY*



LIFELONG LEARNING*



PUBLIC SAFETY*



CAREGIVING*

2018-2023 Age-Friendly DC Strategic Plan

In January 2023, Age-Friendly DC began to assess the effectiveness and reach of the 2018 - 2023 strategic plan with an evaluation.



EVALUATION AIMS

- To evaluate progress implementing the 2018 to 2023 Age-Friendly DC strategic plan
- To explore current barriers to healthy aging in DC that will inform the 2024 to 2028 strategic plan



QUESTIONS

1. Domain-by-domain, how have measures of interventions progressed?
2. What are current attitudes to growing older within the District of Columbia?
3. Do residents perceive progress across the strategic plan over the past 5 years?
4. What are current barriers to healthy aging in DC?



EVALUATION DESIGN

This evaluation utilized a mixed methods design consisting of three components:

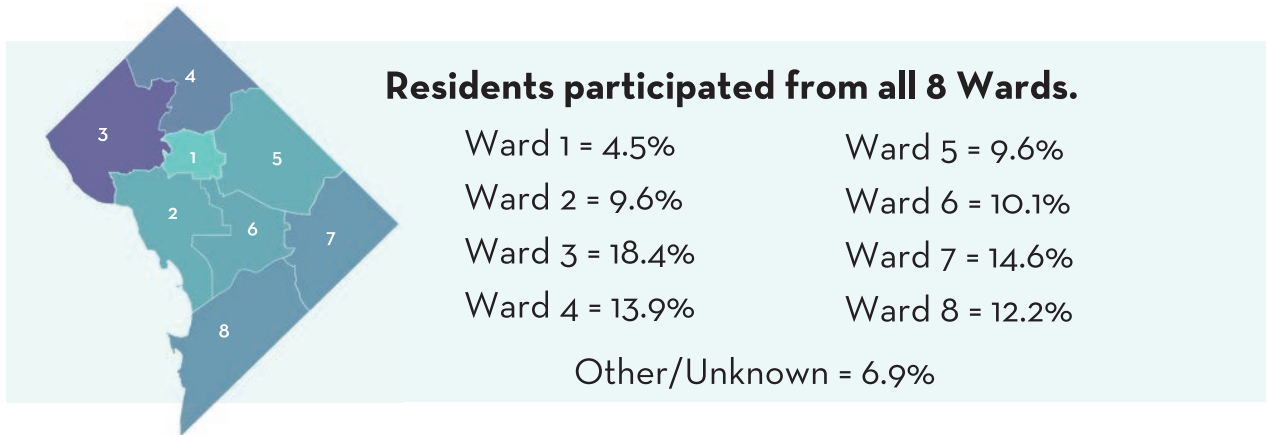
- Age-Friendly DC Task Force members for each domain were asked to report data on the completion of the plan aims, goals, and strategies.
- The DC Livability Survey was distributed by the Mayor's Offices of Community Relations and Community Affairs at events across the city, in all 26 DC libraries, and published in The Beacon Newspapers.
- Focus groups were conducted with approximately 6-12 members per group to understand how residents perceived change in each of the 14 domains over the past five years. Focus groups were recruited from each wards and through special populations groups.

Results from each of these components are summarized within each pillar by domain.

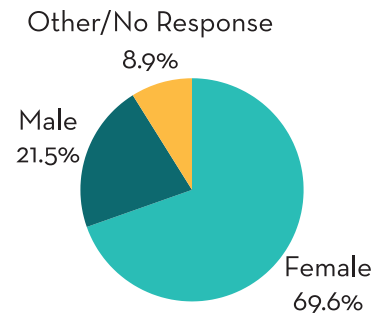
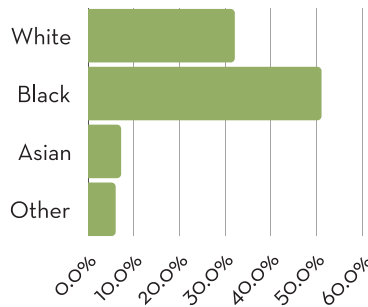
Survey Participant Characteristics

The Age Friendly-DC Livability survey was open to all District residents age 18 and older. Residents were recruited to take the survey either on paper or online through multiple channels.

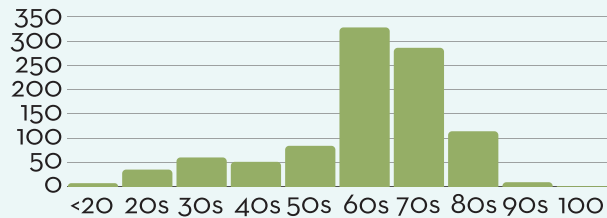
In total, 1,090 people completed the survey.



The sample was racially diverse and mostly female.



Participants ranged from 18 to 95, with a median age of 65 years old.



While only 6% of participants identified as having a disability, 60% reported a significant limitation (e.g. difficulty walking).

Focus Group Participant Characteristics

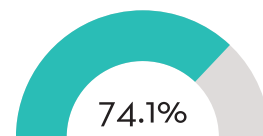
There were considerable efforts to hold focus groups with residents from each ward and representatives for special interest groups. Age-Friendly DC worked closely on a recruitment strategy with the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs (MOCA), the Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS), and numerous community partners, leading to a total of 20 focus groups:

- Ward 2 residents
- Ward 3 residents
- Ward 4 residents
- Ward 6 residents
- Ward 7 residents
- DC veterans
- LGBTQ veterans
- LGBTQ Individuals & Allies
- Deaf, Blind, and Hard of Hearing
- Unhoused community members (2 focus groups)
- Asian Pacific Islanders-Mandarin
- Asian Pacific Islanders-Cantonese
- African Affairs
- DC Neighborhood Village members
- NW Village members
- Serve DC members
- Community Emergency Response Team members
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management staff members

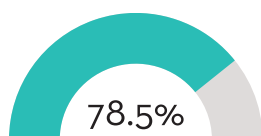
Each facilitator and participant completed the Age-Friendly DC Livability Survey prior to joining the focus group.

Group participants were from all 8 Wards.

Ward 1 = 3.3%	Ward 5 = 3.2%
Ward 2 = 11.1%	Ward 6 = 8.2%
Ward 3 = 44.1%	Ward 7 = 4.7%
Ward 4 = 16.8%	Ward 8 = 1.8%
Other/Unknown = 6.8%	



Most group participants have lived in DC for over 20 years.



Most group participants identified as female.

The average age of focus group participants

66
years old

Age-Friendly DC Task Force Members

When the Age-Friendly DC 2018-2023 Strategic Plan was developed by the Task Force, members were able to establish directions to strive for but were reluctant to set 5-year numeric targets that could demonstrate progress, due to concerns about unforeseen priorities and budget constraints. However, looking retrospectively, data was retrieved that illuminate the results Pillar-by-Pillar, and domain-by-domain. Most data was reported by Task Force members appointed by the Mayor from DC agencies, less so from the Mayor’s Task Force appointments for the community. Listed below are the DC agencies and community organizations that have been appointed by the Mayor as members of the Task Force and others who joined Age-Friendly DC domain committees to devise and implement the approved plan.



PILLAR 1: BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment consists of human-made structures and the outdoor spaces that connect them, together shaping the places where we live, work, and play. Decisions about land use, including proximity of services and amenities, accessibility for all, diversity and affordability of transportation, and housing options have an enormous impact on quality-of-life for everyone, especially as we grow older. The three domains below address these areas of focus.



OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS



TRANSPORTATION



HOUSING



PILLAR 1: BUILT ENVIRONMENT OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

VISION: A city where everyone has access to recreational facilities, activities and services; moves easily indoors and out; and routinely experiences nature.



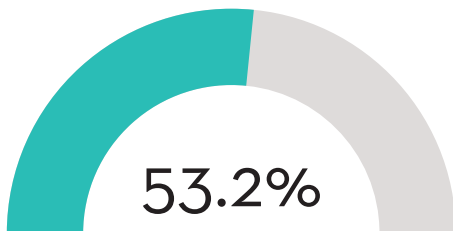
2018 - 2023 PROGRESS

- Since 2018, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has invested over \$205M in the American Disability Act (ADA) compliance of recreational facilities.
- Over the past five years, DPR has added 5 new parks and 7 recreational facilities.
- A variety of outdoor amenities, including additional restrooms, picnic tables, water fountains, and benches were incorporated into the DC park system to enhance visitor experience and convenience
- In 2023, DPR adopted the 20-year [Ready2Play Plan](#) which promotes climate-resilient, environmentally friendly, and inclusive parks and recreational facilities.
- In 2022, AARP DC donated a [FitLot Outdoor Fitness Park](#), located in Ward 4 at the Lamond Recreation Center, which currently offers programming through DPR.
- The Comprehensive Plan update approved in 2021, increases equity, convenience, and resilience by strategically planning locations of housing, recreation, education, and business center locations across the District.

Survey Results

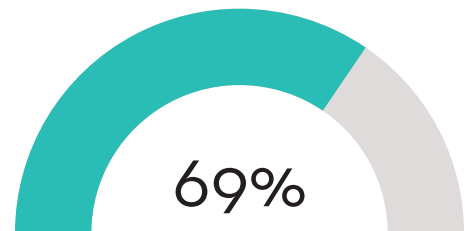
Residents who report utilizing local recreation centers

n=957



Residents who report utilizing local parks

n=971

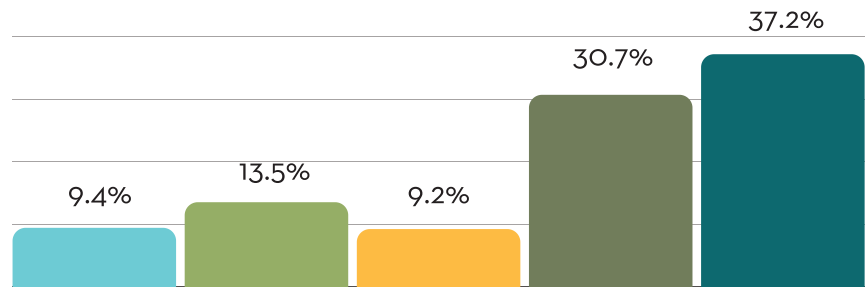


Nearly 7 out of 10 (68.6%) find it easy to access nature

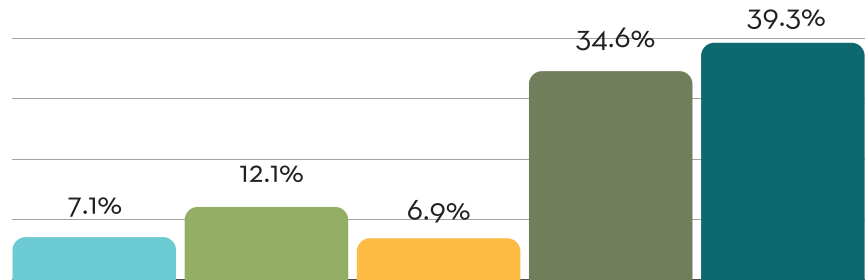
n=385

How accessible are...

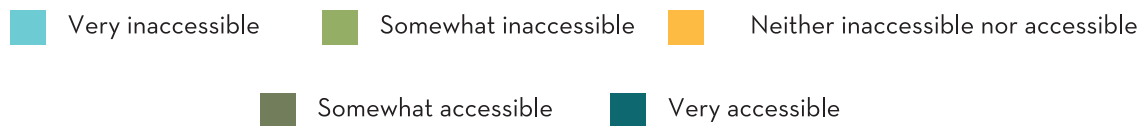
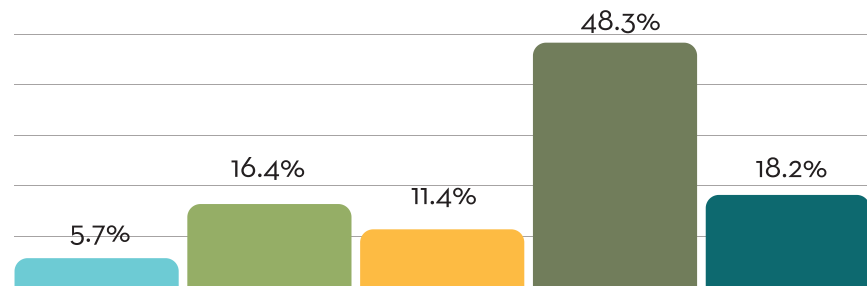
• Recreation centers in your neighborhood? n=688



• Parks in your neighborhood? n=810



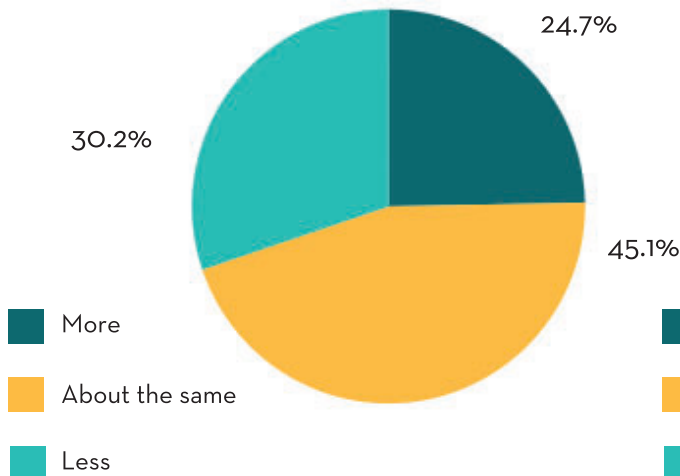
• Buildings in your neighborhood? n=385



Compared to 2018...

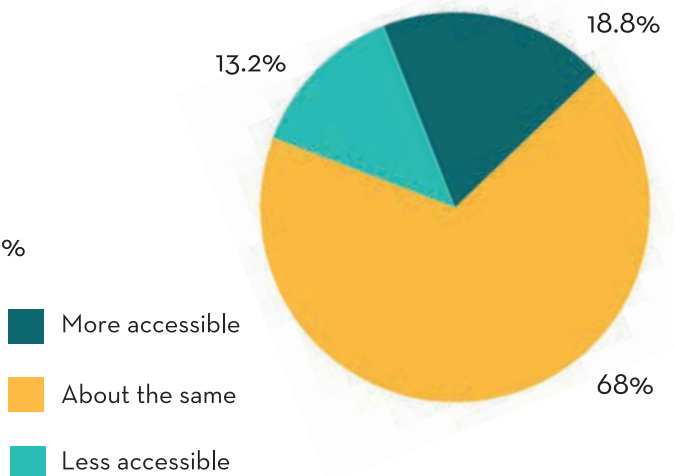
Residents use parks and recreation facilities

n=328



Residents feel parks and recreation facilities are

n=325



Focus Group Results

Among focus group participants, there was high praise for the parks, trails, and recreation centers in the District. Focus group members felt parks and trails were great places for physical activity for people of all ages and were becoming more accessible. Similarly, recreation centers have improved over the past few years with building updates, new equipment, more accessibility, and a wider array of programs. Focus group members hoped to see continued improvements in parks and recreation, such as more benches and restrooms in parks, and an increased number of multi-generational programs that welcome older adults to recreation centers.

Focus group members also discussed the role of private businesses and homes in regard to this domain. A wide range of restaurants and shops increases motivation to get out and walk in the neighborhood. The inaccessibility of both businesses and homes was seen as a major barrier to being active.

Summary

The District of Columbia has invested in creating accessible park and recreation opportunities within close proximity to all residents and has developed strategic plans that continue to expand inclusive and environmentally-friendly parks and recreation centers. Survey respondents report high use of parks and recreation facilities and most feel these spaces are accessible. Focus group members also provided praise for parks and recreation and acknowledged improvements in their neighborhood. Overall, the Age-Friendly DC Outdoor Spaces and Buildings domain was successful in increasing access to parks and recreational opportunities. Future efforts should focus on continued expansion of accessible park structures and increasing programs for all that welcome older adults, in recreation centers.

“

I think they've done a great job. That park over here - McPherson Square - before it was just a rat village. Now it's beautiful. I went by there one day and they had a whole bunch of children and families in the park. I mean, it is just so beautiful now. So I think they're doing a great job. I really do. I think the mayor, their staff are doing great and they devoted more money to doing these things.

”

DOMAIN 1 STRATEGIES

OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS



GOAL 1.1: Increase accessibility and knowledge of outdoor areas by creating engagement opportunities; and work to beautify recreational facilities.

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	KEY AGENCIES AND PARTNERS	PROGRESS
1.1.1	Increase the number of art projects, landmarks and natural features for people of all ages as a way to create distinct and memorable places within neighborhoods by 2023.	DCCA, OP, DPW, DDOT	✓
1.1.2	Strengthen the linkages to physical activity for residents 50+ by expanding the Park Prescription to residents of all ages.	DPR, DC Health, DAACL	→
1.1.3	Increase the number of parks and public spaces by 10 new locations a year that are equipped with drinking fountains, restrooms and seating with arms and backs.	DPR, ODR	✓
1.1.4	Increase awareness of District buildings and parks that are accessible.	OP, DCRA, DCPS, DGS, DPR	✓
1.1.5	Increase awareness of accessibility concerns by working with private entities to publish accessibility reports for private buildings.	Age-Friendly DC Taskforce	✓

✓ Achieved → Making Progress ▽ Delayed

TURKEY THICKET: SENIOR PICKBALL CLINIC MARCH 2023



PILLAR 1: BUILT ENVIRONMENT TRANSPORTATION

VISION: A city with a variety of transportation modes, including walking, biking, and scooters, that are safe and affordable for travelers of all ages and abilities, easy to find and use, and able to connect residents and visitors to jobs, goods, and services.



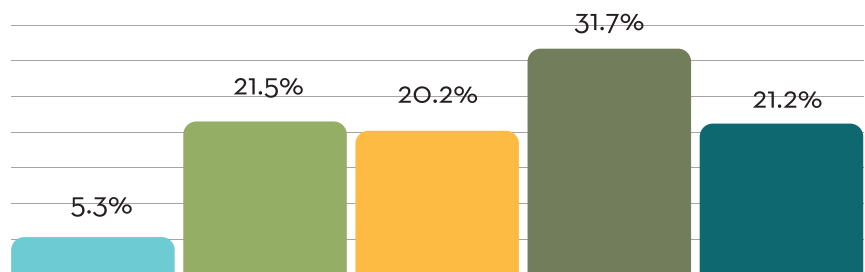
2018 - 2023 PROGRESS

- In 2023, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority ([WMATA](#)) held 1,424 in-person travel trainings for older adults and people with disabilities to travel safely and independently on Metrorail/Metrobus.
- Since 2021, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has repaired 148 miles of sidewalk, installed/maintained 500+ high visibility crosswalks, installed 21 miles of bike lanes and trails, and improved compliance with ADA guidelines at 131 transit stops.
- At least 60 [Leading Pedestrians Intervals](#) were installed at crosswalks in 2023 and more than 300 have been installed since 2021.
- Over 3,460 residents have a [DC Connector Card](#), which provides qualified adults age 60+ with reduced fare on ground transportation services.
- The shared electric vehicle company, [Lime](#), introduced [Lime Assist](#) to increase accessible bikes for those with mobility impairments.

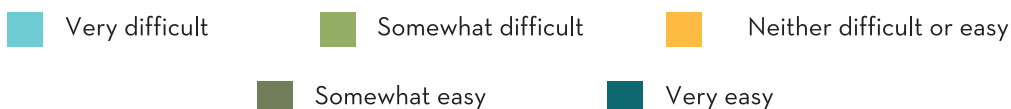
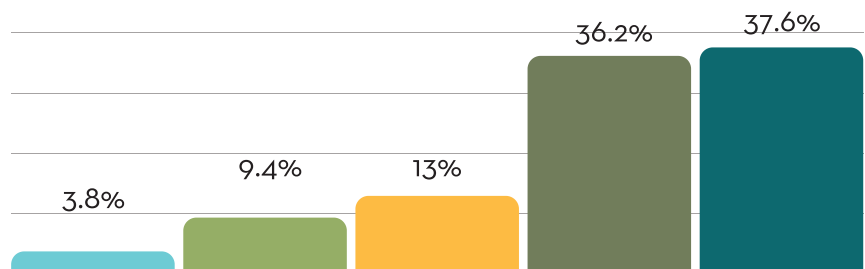
Survey Results

How easy is it for you to...

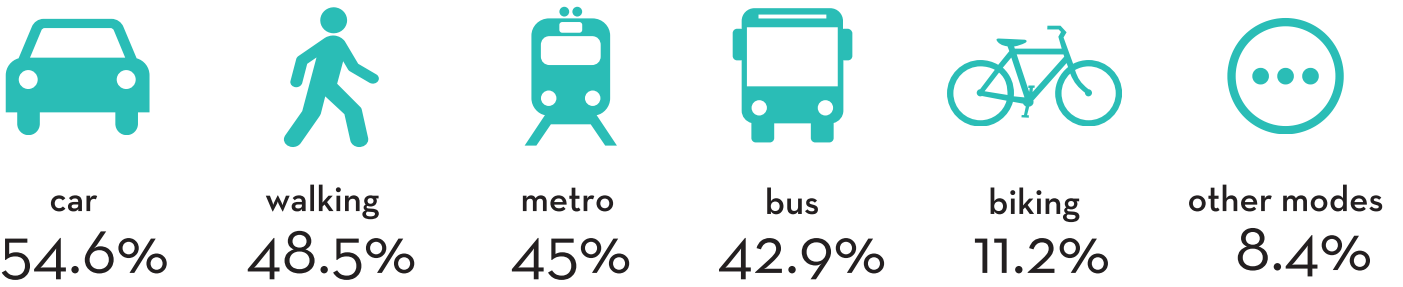
• Walk to places in your neighborhood? n=961



• Access public transportation? n=956



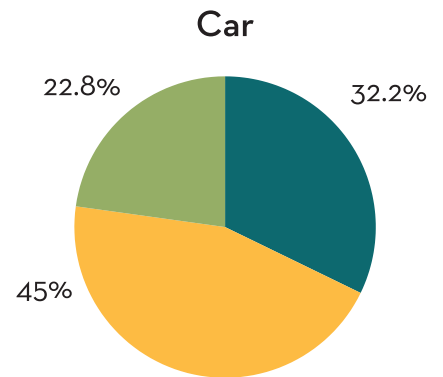
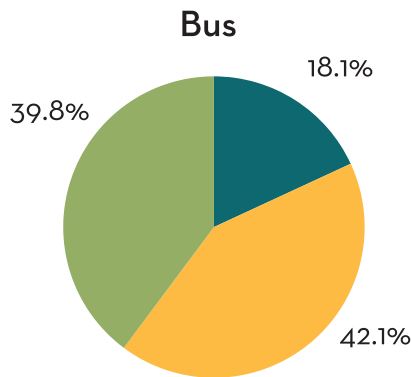
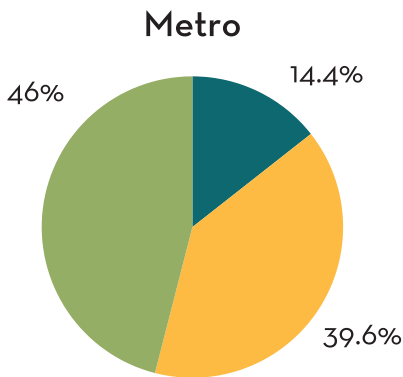
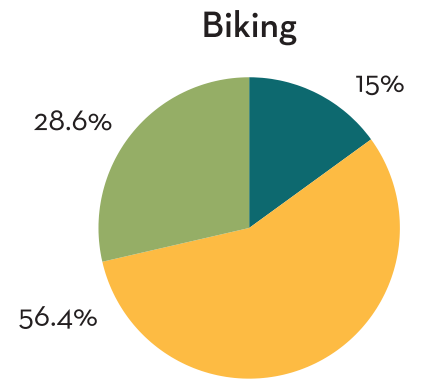
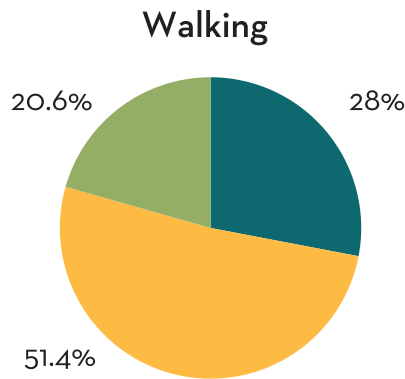
Residents' typical modes of transportation n=1090



Compared to 2018...

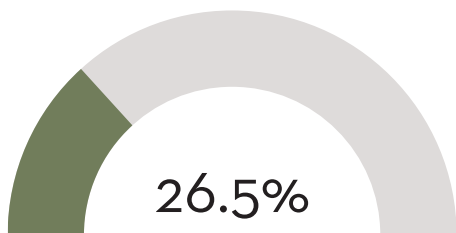
How has your typical mode of transportation changed?

n=313



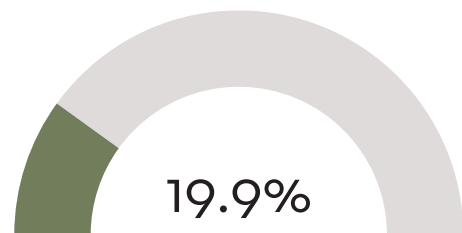
% of residents who report that their mode(s) of transportation changed due to safety

n=347



% of residents who report that their mode(s) of transportation changed due to affordability

n=347



Focus Group Results

Transportation was a hot topic among focus groups with members raising both positive and negative aspects regarding public transportation, car travel, bikes/scooters, and walking. Focus groups acknowledged that DC has a strong public transportation system, many bike lanes, and walkable neighborhoods. They were aware of efforts to improve transportation including [Vision Zero](#), longer pedestrian crossing times, connections to trails, and reduced fares for those 65+ through WMATA, [MetroAccess](#), [VetsRide](#), and the [Connector Card](#) program. Group members also noted that they had seen an increase in sidewalk repairs.

However, there were several major concerns related to transportation. Some viewed public transportation as unsafe due to worries about theft and assault. Others expressed frustration with bike lanes that are making car travel and parking more difficult. Furthermore, members shared that bikers and scooter riders often ride on the sidewalk and leave their bikes and scooters in the middle of walkways, reducing pedestrian safety. Lastly, group members felt that while bricks were aesthetically pleasing, these walkways were a safety hazard for those with mobility issues.

“ In terms of transportation in general, we're well off because we've got a Metro stop smack in the middle of our area and lots of buses and bus access all around. ”

Summary

The city has made substantial efforts to increase the safety and accessibility of all modes of transportation. Survey results show that there is a high use of cars, buses, metro, and walking, but only 11% of respondents bike. Respondents report that it is easy to walk and access public transportation in their neighborhood. Over the past five years, survey respondents began walking or driving more, but took public transportation less. Focus groups acknowledged improvements in city walkability and programs to increase safety and access for residents 60+ and those with disabilities. However, they expressed concerns about personal safety on the metro, changes in traffic patterns due to bike lanes, and the safety of brick sidewalks for those with mobility limitations. Overall, the transportation domain has made great strides and should continue to implement the [MoveDC](#) plan.

DOMAIN 2 STRATEGIES

TRANSPORTATION



GOAL 2.1: Continue implementing safe and affordable private and public modes of transportation.

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	KEY AGENCIES AND PARTNERS	PROGRESS
2.1.1	Develop sustainable funding and implementation for sidewalk repairs, safety, and maintenance.	DDOT	✓
2.1.2	Reduce the amount of bicycles and pedestrian crashes.	DDOT, WABA, MPD, PAC, BAC	▽
2.1.3	Increase outreach to a.) increase older adult bicycle usage and b.) strengthen the interaction of pedestrian/bicycle/mobility devices.	DDOT, WABA, DCPL, DPR, BAC, DACL, LIME	✓
2.1.4	Replace street/traffic signage so it is easily readable, well-lit at night, and addresses access and functional needs.	DDOT	✓
2.1.5	Improve transit stops making them more compliant with accessibility guidelines through sidewalk/intersection connectivity (e.g. curb ramps).	DDOT, WMATA	✓
2.1.6	Improve accessible curbside use opportunities.	DDOT, ODR, WMATA, DFHV, DACL	✓

✓ Achieved → Making Progress ▽ Delayed

DOMAIN 2 STRATEGIES

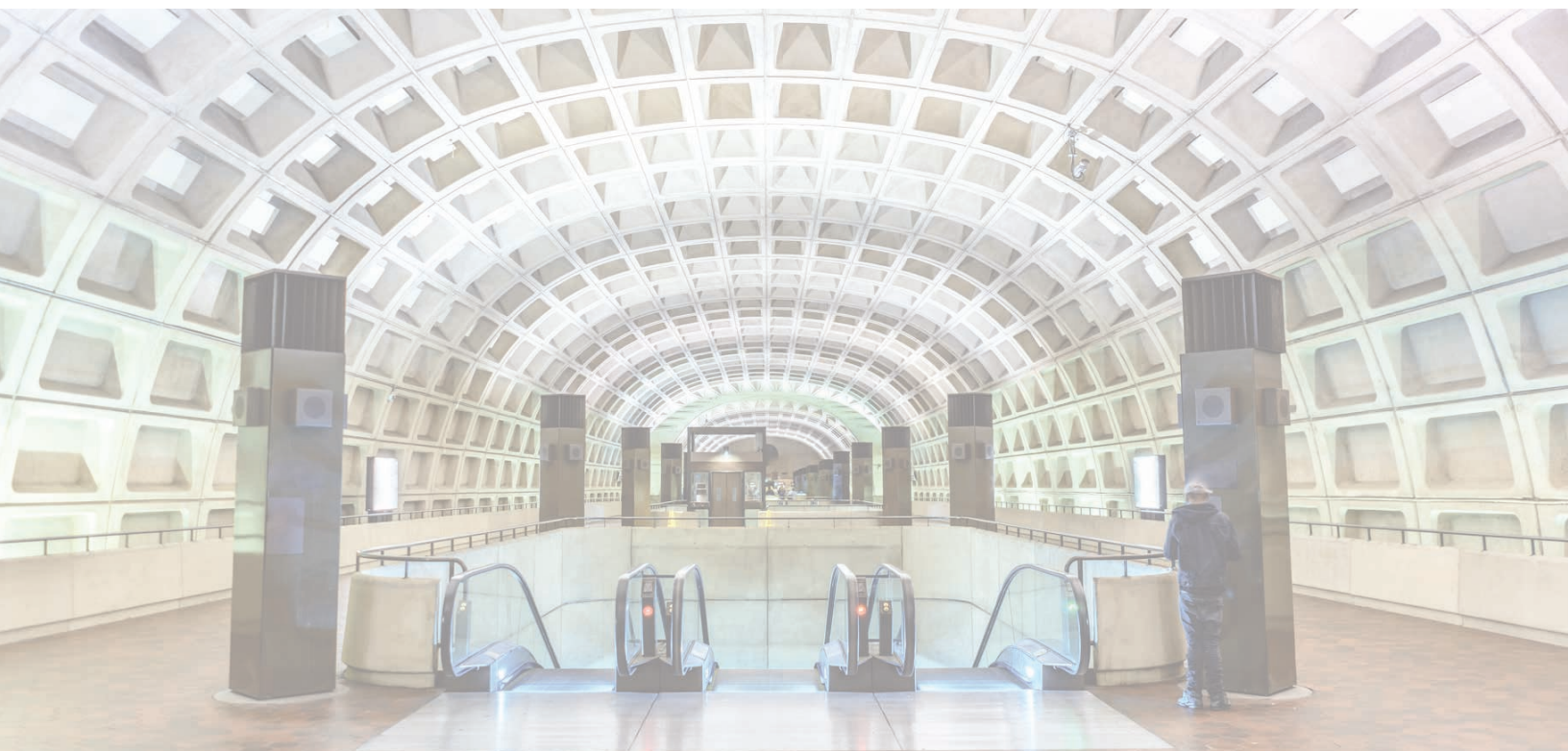
TRANSPORTATION



GOAL 2.2: Provide residents and visitors with the information and tools they need to make informed travel choices.

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	KEY AGENCIES AND PARTNERS	PROGRESS
2.2.1	Enhance WMATA transportation training (such as Travel Training/System Orientation), individual counseling and group instruction which inform older adults of app travel options. Pertinent written information can ensure they can make informed, appropriate, cost-effective, efficient choices.	WMATA, DCPL, DDOT, DACL, DPR, AARP, DFHV	✓
2.2.2	Expand travel options to connect older adults to survival essentials (i.e. meal delivery, medication) and to key locations (medical centers, senior centers, grocery) within the District.	DFHV, DACL, DDOT, DC Villages	✓
2.2.3	Improve access to real time data, such as reports of service repair requests for sidewalks, streetlights, alleys, and traffic signals.	DDOT, WABA, DCPL, DPR, BAC, DACL	✓

✓ Achieved → Making Progress ▽ Delayed



PILLAR 1: BUILT ENVIRONMENT HOUSING

VISION: A city that provides access to a continuum of safe and affordable housing options that allow residents to age in place.



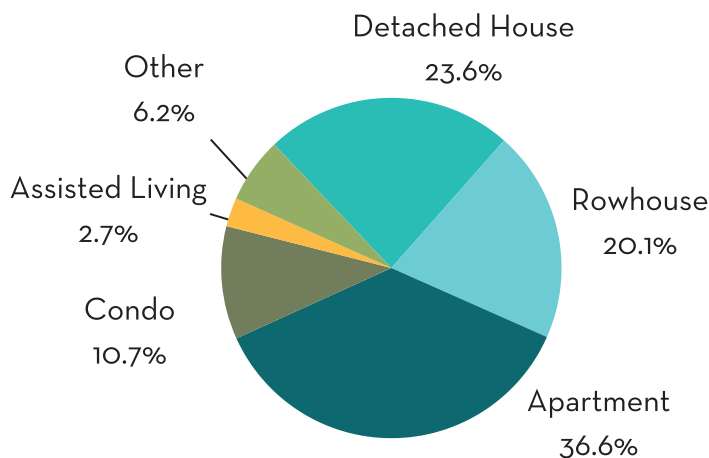
2018 - 2023 PROGRESS

- Since 2019, over 8,000 affordable housing units have been developed with the greatest concentration of units in wards 3, 5, 7, and 8.
- Between 2018 and 2023, 266 homes were rehabilitated through the [Single Family Residential Rehabilitation Program](#).
- The [Heirs Property Assistance Program](#) was launched in 2023 to preserve housing for families after a homeowner passes away.
- Since 2018, three affordable assisted living residences have been built due to increases in reimbursement by Medicaid.
- Since 2018, over 640 housing contractors and inspectors have been trained to meet ADA guidelines in order to increase accessibility for those with disabilities.
- To prevent falls in the home, the Department of Aging and Community Living (DAACL) reported 4,891 installations through the [Safe at Home](#) safety modification program between 2018 and 2023.
- In 2019, the Department of Insurance, Securities, and Banking (DISB) presented 18+ housing resource forums and consumer protection presentations in partnership with local and national organizations.
- In 2023, 17 projects produced 447 affordable units, of which over half the units are accessible.

Survey Results

Survey participants' current housing

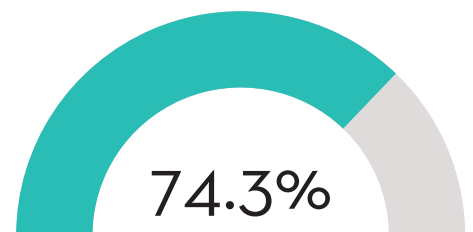
n=949



Compared to 2018...

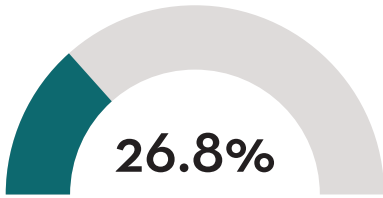
Residents still living in the same place

n=350



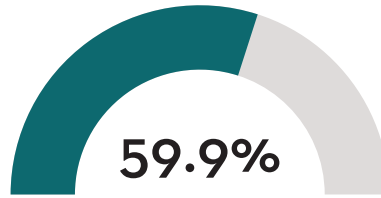
Residents who feel their neighborhood is affordable

n=936



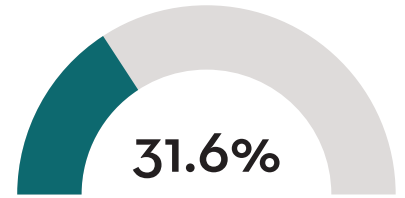
Residents who own their home

n=419



Residents who have wheelchair accessible housing

n=950



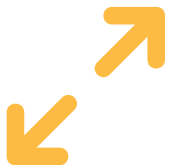
Those who moved over the past 5 years did so because... n=104



They wanted a more walkable or accessible community
20%



They could no longer afford their home
13.3%



They needed more space
21.1%



They were worried about safety
17.8%



They wanted to be closer to friends/family
16.7%



They wanted to be closer to work
11.1%



They wanted to downsize
11.1%



other reason(s)
21.1%

Focus Group Results

Focus group conversations elicited a great deal of concern about the lack of affordable housing in Washington, DC. Groups stated that apartments, houses, and even assisted living centers have become very expensive. Group members noted that older adults living on a fixed income may have a hard time living in their home due to increasing property taxes and the high cost of maintenance. The groups recognized that more apartment buildings were being built, but felt that rent was still too steep for many people. Furthermore, many homes and apartments were seen as inaccessible to those with mobility limitations. More affordable options were often seen as the least accessible.

Multiple programs to assist with housing were discussed. Group members welcomed programs that reduced property taxes or paid for home repairs, but noted that the income qualifications are too low. Members applauded voucher programs but shared stories in which the process of attaining a voucher was cumbersome and were concerned that members receiving vouchers needed more complementary services. Finally, groups expressed gratitude for programs through DC Neighborhood Villages such as the vetted vendor program and snow shoveling services.

“ I think the cost of living, particularly around housing, is the number one issue that I'm hearing across the board. ”

Summary

The city has put great effort into ensuring residents have affordable and accessible housing options. DC invested in building more affordable units and promoted the construction of affordable assisted living facilities, training housing contractors and inspectors to improve accessibility, and providing support for residents to maintain their property. About half of all survey respondents live in a house, just over a third live in an apartment, and most have not moved in the past five years. However, most survey respondents felt their housing was inaccessible and their neighborhood lacked affordability. Focus group members acknowledged helpful programming such as the [Single Family Residential Rehabilitation Program](#) and [Safe at Home](#), but felt that the expense of housing in DC was currently one of the biggest issues affecting residents. The District has made considerable progress on the housing domain goals but might need to accelerate efforts in the next strategic planning cycle.

DOMAIN 3 STRATEGIES

HOUSING



GOAL 3.1: Streamline, expand, and promote programs that support affordable housing and aging in place.

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	KEY AGENCIES AND PARTNERS	PROGRESS
3.1.1	Develop incentives financed by the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF) and other government financing to encourage developers to increase the production of new affordable units available, including intergenerational as well as age-segregated housing to residents 50+.	DHCD, OP	✓
3.1.2	Increase awareness and access to the Safe At Home program to residents 60+ by expanding eligibility requirements.	DACL	✓
3.1.3	Increase awareness and access to home modification programs using allocated funds from the Single Family Residential Rehabilitation Program, Handicapped Accessibility Program, Rebuild Together, and other programs, so residents can prepare for the years when they may experience mobility limitations and/or accommodate others with mobility disabilities.	DHCD, DACL	✓
3.1.4.1	Review Medicaid assisted living reimbursement rates annually to support older low-income residents accessing and maintaining assisted living housing.	DHCF, DACL	✓
3.1.4.2	Review Optional State Supplemental Payment (OSSP) funding levels to ensure that payment levels established effective January 1, 2021 and are updated to reflect inflation.	DHCF	✓
3.1.5	Encourage the development, preservation, and improvement of new and existing independent living residences and affordable and accessible housing in the city.	DHCD, DMPED, WMATA	✓
3.1.6	Research and promote home-sharing options for both intergenerational living arrangements for residents 50+, as a strategy to enable capable older adults to remain in their neighborhoods.	Age-Friendly DC Taskforce, AARP, Generation Hope, Home Sharing Compatibility Apps (i.e. Silvernest)	✓
3.1.7	Encourage implementation of accessory dwelling units (also known as ADUs or “granny flats”) in more residential zones.	DMPED, DHCD, DCRA, OP	✓

DOMAIN 3 STRATEGIES

HOUSING



GOAL 3.2: Increase awareness of accessible, affordable, and healthy housing options that supports residents with diverse backgrounds and interests.

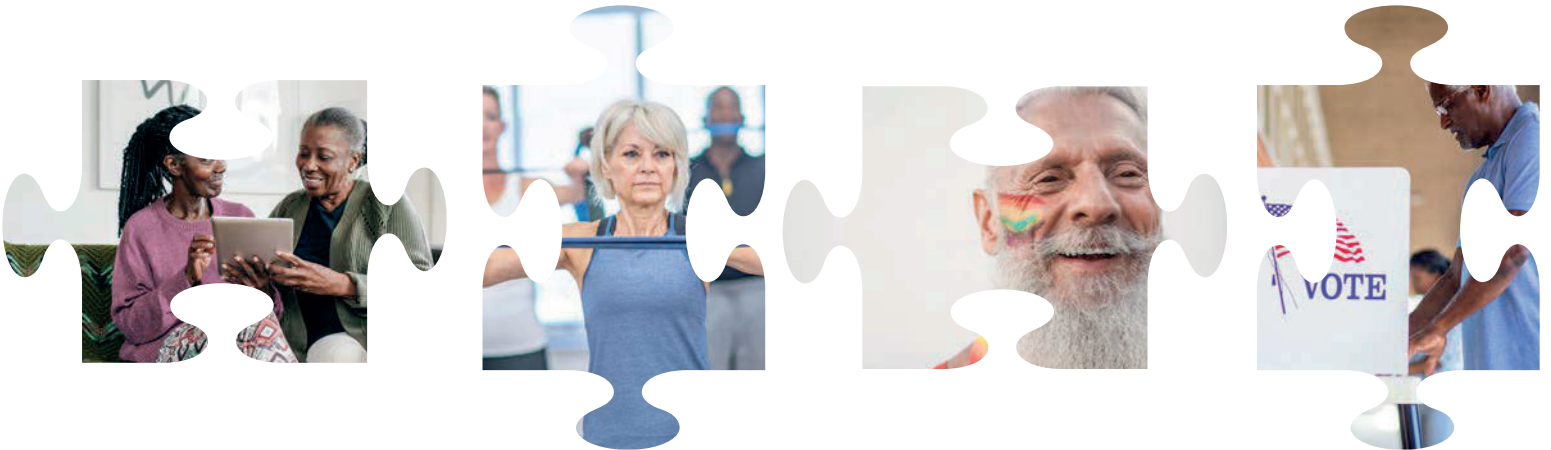
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	KEY AGENCIES AND PARTNERS	PROGRESS
3.2.1	Provide and update a series of easy-to-comprehend factsheets, webinars, and/or infomercials on topics such as qualifying for tax credits, Fair Housing Act compliance, saving money on utilities, and the Healthy Homes program, annually.	OTA, OTR, DISB, OHR, DOEE, DHCD	✓
3.2.2	Develop and distribute a user-friendly list of housing inventory that supports residents 50+ with diverse backgrounds (i.e. LGBTQ+, persons with disabilities, English as a second language speakers).	DHCD, ODR, MOLGBT, MOLA, MOAA, MOAPIA, National Association of Realtors	✓
3.2.3	Provide training for managers of existing public and private housing including tenant-owned buildings to address the needs of aging residents, Fair Housing, ADA compliance and cultural competency for populations such as residents who are LGBTQ+, have a disability, and/or English language learners.	OHR, ODR, DAOL, OTA, MOLGBT, MOLA, MOAA, MOAPIA, DHCD	✓
3.2.4	Expand Fair Housing Act training to third-party inspectors and offer technical assistance to architects and developers to promote compliance with the act.	DCRA, ODR, DHCD, OHR, DGS	✓

✓ Achieved → Making Progress ▽ Delayed



PILLAR 2:**CHANGING ATTITUDES ABOUT GROWING OLDER**

From early childhood, we form views about others. Stereotypes about groups are formed and reinforced as we become adults. Ageism, negative views about the abilities of others who are older or younger, limits full participation in social and professional situations. By reducing ageism in all its forms, we are increasing the quality of life of all residents.

**SOCIAL PARTICIPATION****RESPECT AND
SOCIAL INCLUSION****CIVIC PARTICIPATION
AND EMPLOYMENT****COMMUNICATION
AND INFORMATION**

PILLAR 2: CHANGING ATTITUDES ABOUT GROWING OLDER SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

VISION: A city where leisure, cultural and creative, multigenerational activities are widely available and accessible for residents of all ages, including those age 50 and over.



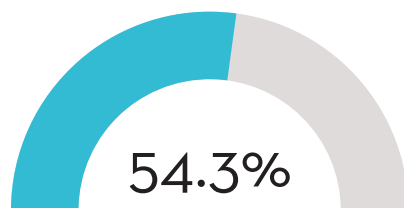
2018 - 2023 PROGRESS

- [AARP DC](#) increased visibility for the Black LGBTQ+ community by reaching 1,880 people in person and 14,120 virtually in collaboration with [DC Black Pride](#), [Capital Pride](#), and the [Center for Black Equity](#).
- [Around Town DC](#) was launched in 2019 to promote social opportunities for those 60+ in ward 2 and 3.
- [HelpAge](#) launched a pilot program, [Friendship Bench](#), in which residents are being trained to support other adults coping with depression and/or anxiety.
- The neighbor-to-neighbor support organizations, [DC Villages](#), of which we have more per square mile than any state, have created a growing source of social participation.

Survey Results

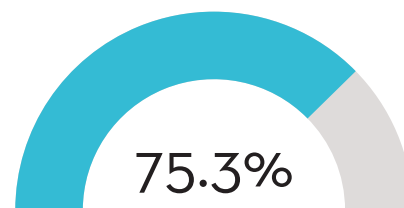
Residents who have engaged
in a volunteer opportunity in
the past month

n=960



Residents who have participated
in a social or cultural activity in
the past week

n=955

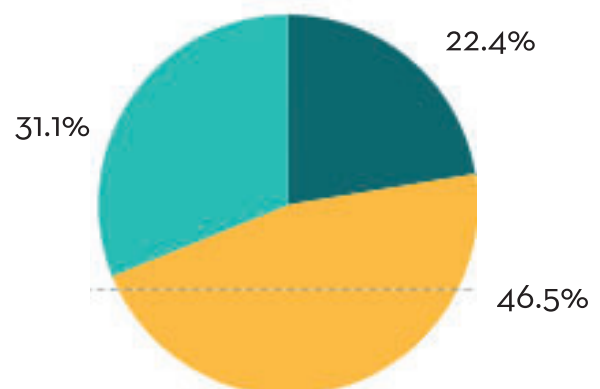


Compared to 2018...

Frequency of resident volunteering

n=340

More About the same Less



Focus Group Results

Focus group members generally had high recognition and praise for the social opportunities in the city. Events and programs through Around Town DC, Department of Aging and Community Living, Iona, Department of Parks and Recreation, DC Villages, DC Public Library, Senior Wellness Centers, and AARP DC were highlighted in group discussions. Some group members noted that technology that allowed for virtual participation further expanded their options, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Focus group members stated that they hoped these events and programs would continue to increase and become more accessible.

Some participants from special interest groups stated that they would like to see more multigenerational opportunities for their specific population. Barriers to social opportunities identified by the focus groups include transportation, concerns about health and safety, and accessibility of events.

Summary

Both government agencies and non-profit organizations in DC have expanded opportunities for social participation for adults 60+ and those in special populations. Most survey respondents have engaged in social events and volunteered recently. Focus group participants recognized several events and programs that provide an opportunity to connect with others, and praised the accessibility of virtual options. Overall, progress has been made on the goals for social participation. Continued focus on expanding opportunities for special populations including the LGBTQ community and those with disabilities should be emphasized in the next strategic plan.

“

You know, I retired a little more than five years ago and it's been a wonderful experience for me because it's just luxurious to have a day ahead of you. You can do all sorts of stuff that's allowed me to become more involved in community affairs. There's so many opportunities to learn now and communicate.

”

DOMAIN 4 STRATEGIES

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



GOAL 4.1: Develop, strengthen, and promote arts, recreation, leisure, and other social activities involving older adults.

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	KEY AGENCIES AND PARTNERS	PROGRESS
4.1.1	Promote, determine, and measure future intergenerational social activities and programs for underserved populations, such as intergenerational gardening and help with technology.	DACL, DCPL, OCTO, DPR, MOCA, Seabury, IONA Senior Services, DC Villages	✓
4.1.2	Build Around Town into a citywide online location with information about adult-oriented education, services, and events.	Iona Senior Services, DACL	▽
4.1.3	Promote arts-oriented programs for adults of all abilities.	Smithsonian Institutions, GW Center for Aging, Health and Humanities	✓
4.1.4	Promote outdoor safe-distanced mutual interest gatherings.	DPR, Capital Nature	✓



GOAL 4.2: Promote and provide quality volunteer opportunities for older adults.

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	KEY AGENCIES AND PARTNERS	PROGRESS
4.2.1	Produce a “State of Volunteerism in the District” report assessing volunteerism by age group, activity, and organization, providing, recruiting, and retaining techniques and recommendations.	MOCA, ServeDC	▽
4.2.2	Enhance and promote the ServeDC volunteer database to expand volunteer opportunities, improve ease of use, increase choices, and better match residents 50+ with volunteer opportunities.	DC Villages	✓

✓ Achieved → Making Progress ▽ Delayed

PILLAR 2: CHANGING ATTITUDES ABOUT GROWING OLDER RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

VISION: A city that actively empowers older adults by improving public and private services, as well as public perceptions of aging.



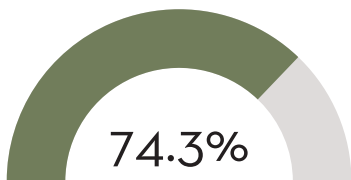
2018 - 2023 PROGRESS

- Over 50,000 Language Access Compliance trainings have been completed by District employees and grantees since 2018.
- The 2021 - 2024 Olmstead Plan was adopted with strategic goals focused on housing, healthcare, and employment for people with disabilities.
- Between 2018-2023, 100% of new and current government employees received LGBTQ+ training.
- Long-term care employee LGBTQ+ Sensitivity Training is now mandated and is being systematically implemented.

Survey Results

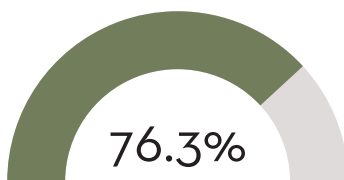
Residents feel socially included

n=946



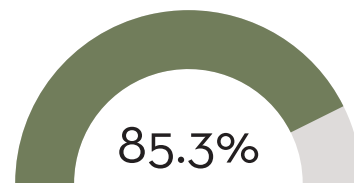
Residents have a neighbor they can rely on

n=955



Residents feel respected

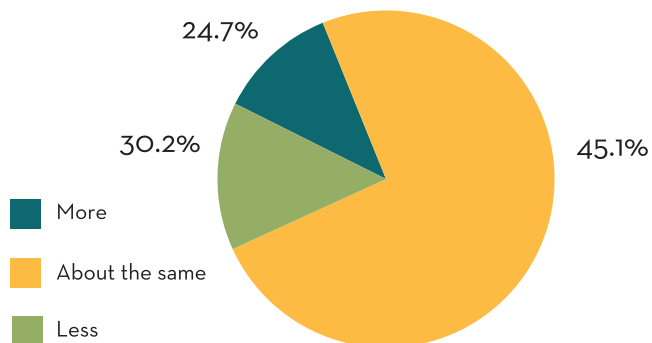
n=945



Compared to 2018...

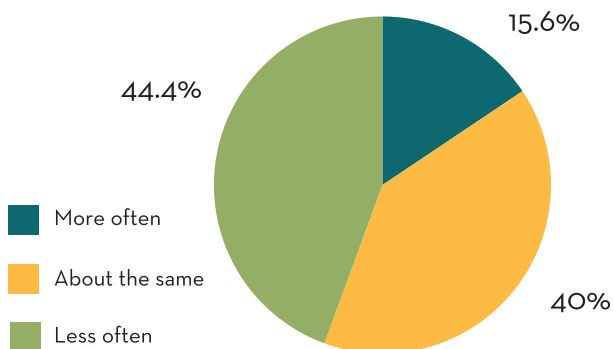
How welcome do you feel in programs in which others are different than you, regarding abilities, race, gender identity, age, political preferences?

n=346



Do you feel connected with others...

n=347



Focus Group Results

Themes related to respect and social inclusion include attitudes on aging, recognition of city efforts to improve respect and inclusion of all people, continued discrimination of some groups, and a call for more neighborhood cohesion. Focus group members recognized that older adults are breaking the stigma of aging and are living vibrant and full lives in the community. This is especially true for those that have strong social connections. However, ageism still exists in the community within some employment opportunities, programs, and attitudes from younger generations. Older adults sometimes feel that they are viewed as “outdated” instead of “experienced.”

Some groups recognized city efforts to increase inclusion such as cultural sensitivity training for city employees and community events with the police department. Focus group members from some special interest groups feel that they are still discriminated against. Not only did they express instances of overt discrimination such as people treating them poorly, but also more systemic discrimination such as a lack of accessibility and translations. Finally, the groups posed neighborhood cohesion as a possible solution to improve respect and social inclusion, acknowledging that neighborhoods can bring together people of all ages and backgrounds.

Summary

Multiple city-wide initiatives have focused on increasing respect and inclusion for people of all ages, abilities, languages, and gender identities. Survey respondents feel respected and included, and most have a neighbor they can rely on. Focus group members recognize the importance of diversity, but acknowledge there is still work that needs to be done to ensure everyone feels welcome.

There have been great strides forward in the Age-Friendly DC respect and inclusion domain. Recommendations for the next plan include developing a dedicated campaign to reduce ageism and continually improving the accessibility of healthcare for those with disabilities.

“It makes our community richer when we have all different age groups living and interacting together.”

DOMAIN 5 STRATEGIES RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION



GOAL 5.1: Empower older adults by improving public and private services to better serve older adults and enhance the public perception on aging.

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	KEY AGENCIES AND PARTNERS	PROGRESS
5.1.1	Develop person-centered, culturally sensitive training that is available to frontline, public facing government agencies, and staff.	DACL, ODR, DDS, MOLGBT	✓
5.1.2	Partner with private entities to support education campaigns aimed at mitigating negative attitudes and biases against aging individuals.	AFDC, AARP-DC, Corporation on National and Community Service, Mayor's Interfaith Council, NCOA, Leading Age, Frameworks Institute, MOCA	✓
5.1.3	Support implementation of the Olmstead Plan.	ODR, DACL, DHCF, DDS, DBH, DOES, DHS, DCHA	✓

✓ Achieved → Making Progress ▾ Delayed

PILLAR 2: CHANGING ATTITUDES ABOUT GROWING OLDER CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYEMENT

VISION: A city where full and part-time work opportunities are available for the most experienced workers.



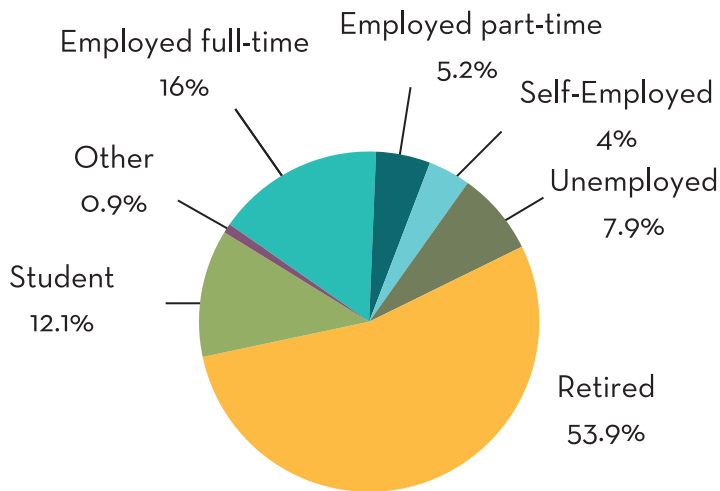
2018 - 2023 PROGRESS

- At its highest proportion in the last 5 years, an estimated 24% of adults 65+ are employed in DC.
- The 2023 DC unemployment rate is down to 4.6 per 100 residents, representing a substantial decrease across all wards since 2018.
- In the last 5 years, over 300 agencies and organization across a variety of industries have offered over 5,900 apprenticeship positions within DC.
- In collaboration with DC Board of Elections, AARP DC held voter education workshops; trained 70+ senior service providers on voter access; and conducted voter awareness campaigns, candidate forums, and tele-town halls to increase voter participation.
- Led by AARP DC, multiple community organizations and government agencies increased participation in the 2020 census in order to secure funding for the District.

Survey Results

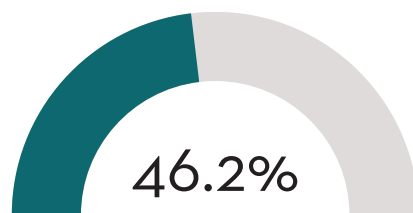
Survey participants' employment status

n=958



Residents are involved in decision-making about important political, economic, and social issues in their community

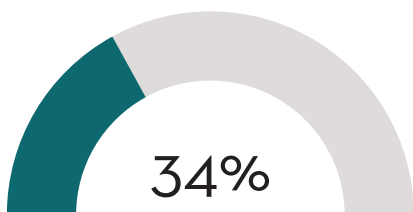
n=927



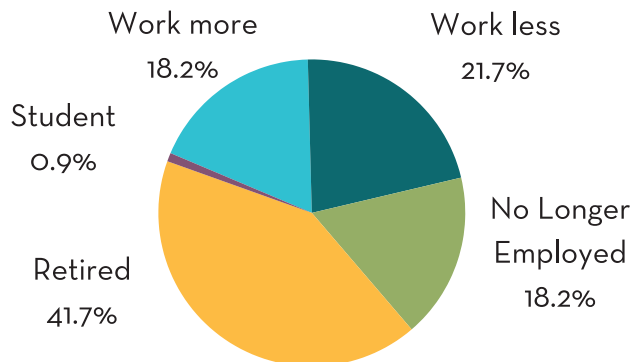
Compared to 2018...

Residents reported that their
employment status has changed

n=347



Of those that had employment changes,
residents report reported that they... n=115



Focus Group Results

Regarding civic participation, focus group members recognized the importance of raising their voices through voting, attending meetings, or even taking office at all levels of government from Advisory Neighborhood Commissions to the national level. Group members felt that it was important to have a balance of age groups participate in civic duties to represent their community. Additionally, members noted that early voting and online meetings greatly facilitated their participation.

Regarding employment, residents felt that older adults play an important role in the work force. Older group members recognized their work as a way to stay busy and engage in a meaningful way. Younger focus group members valued the experience and wisdom of older adults. However, the groups recognized that there were still barriers to employment for older adults who want to work including ageism in the work force and a lack of programs or services that connect older adults to potential opportunities.

“

I think the key thing about adults--seniors--is just to recognize and try to promote that, among seniors, you've got a lot of years ahead of you and being engaged in work or purposeful activities is something the city facilitates and supports.

”

Summary

The city has successfully promoted employment and civic opportunities to all residents across wards, especially adults aged 60 and over. Unemployment rates are down among all adults, and nearly a quarter of adults 60 years or over are employed, although about half of survey respondents were retired. Additionally, nearly half of all survey respondents were involved in decision-making in their community.



DOMAIN 6 STRATEGIES

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT



GOAL 6.1: Increase full- and part-time employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for older residents.

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	KEY AGENCIES AND PARTNERS	PROGRESS
6.1.1	Increase the number of residents 50+ working in long-term care by partnering with employers. Emphasize long-term care employment close to home.	DOES, OSSE Adult Charter Schools, DC Housing Authority, Leading Age	✓
6.1.2	Partner with the Rotary Club of Washington and Council of Churches of Grater Washington to identify entrepreneurial opportunities and employers that focus on hiring residents age 50+.	AFDC, CCGW, ICMW, AARP-DC	▽
6.1.3	Work with the Age-Friendly Business initiative to provide technical assistance and explore financial incentives to help small and local businesses become age-friendly, hire residents age 50+, and provide entrepreneurship opportunities for older residents.	AFDC, AARP-DC, DSLBD, DOES	✓



GOAL 6.2 Increase civic participation among residents age 50+.

6.2.1	Create and publish a listing of civic engagement opportunities for residents age 50+.	DOES, MOTA	✓
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✓ Achieved → Making Progress ▽ Delayed

PILLAR 2: CHANGING ATTITUDES ABOUT GROWING OLDER COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

VISION: A city that uses all forms of communication to keep older residents connected to their community, friends, and family.



2018 - 2023 PROGRESS

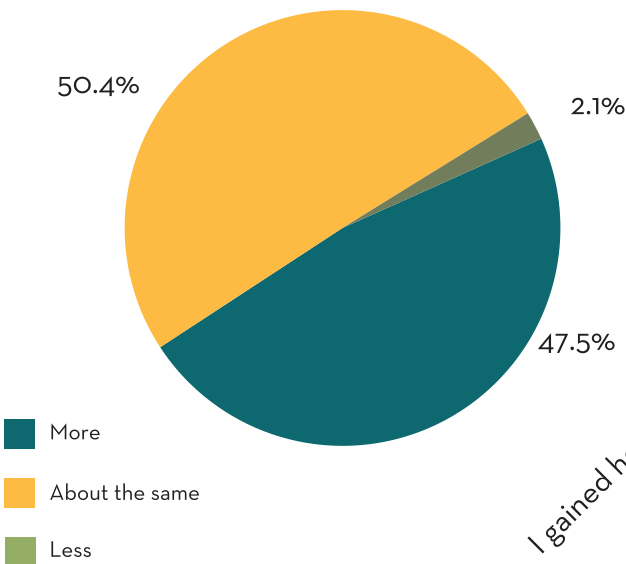
- In 2021, [TechTogether DC](#) was established to provide tech educational programs and free community internet hubs for eligible DC residents.
- Over 1,200 free iPads were distributed between 2022 to 2023 to qualified residents 60+ which included free training conducted by [WildTech](#).
- Between 2019 and 2020, at least 41,040 District government employees completed Language Access Compliance training to increase support for individuals whose first language is not English.
- The Center for Aging, Health and Humanities has hosted Age-Friendly DC Task Force meetings 2018-2023. The Center promotes the recordings of these meetings which have been received over 15,000 views.

Survey Results

Compared to 2018...

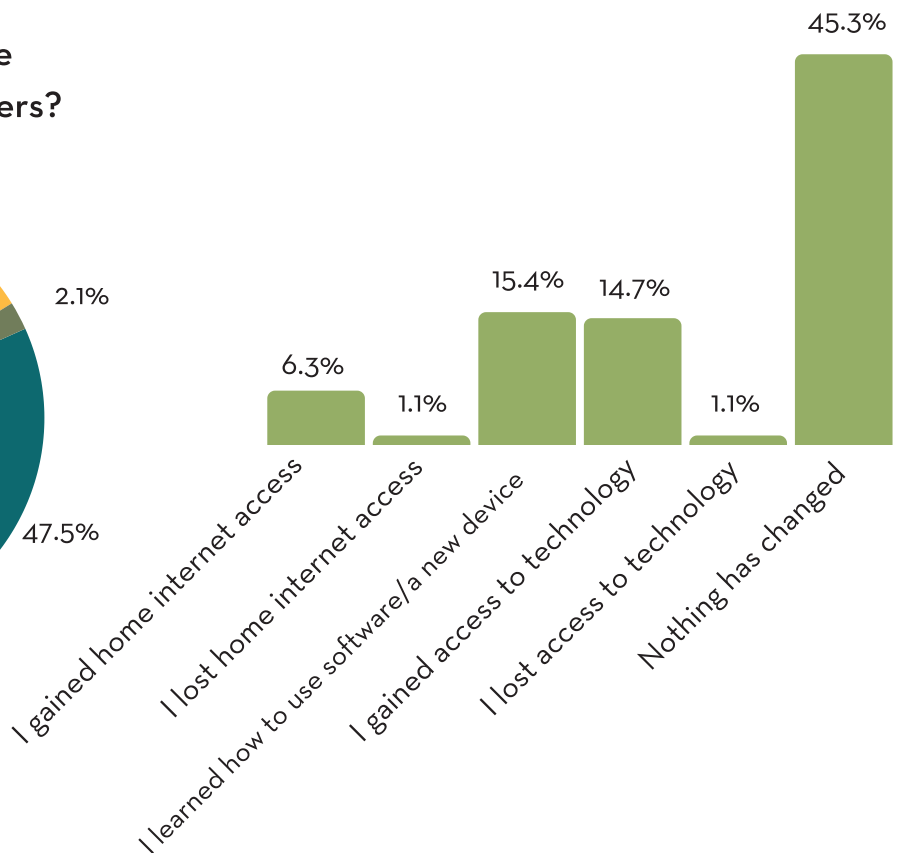
How frequently do you use technology to connect to others?

n=341

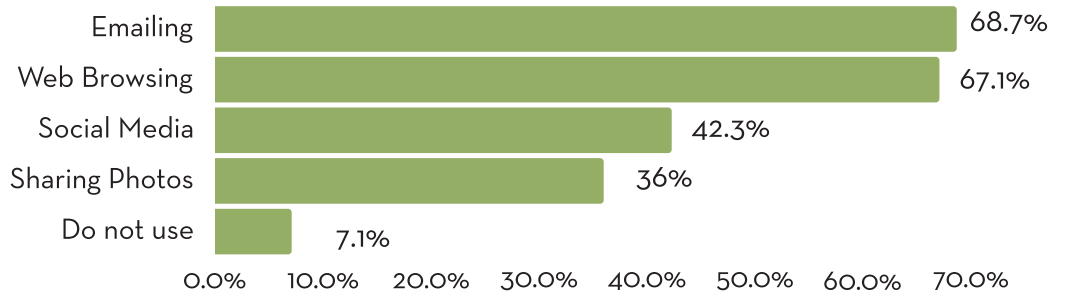


What has changed about your technology?

n=341



How do you use the internet?
n=1090



How do you typically find out about important health and safety information?
n=1090



50.2%

Word of Mouth



37.3%

Print



47%

Web



30.2%

Social Media



24.8%

Radio



42.6%

TV



3.6%

Information from medical provider



2.7%

Centers (rec, library, wellness, etc.)



2%

Other

Focus Group Results

Communication was discussed regularly throughout the focus group conversations as a way to build awareness of the available services and resources in the community. Focus group members recognized a few main themes regarding communication and information: a wide range of modes of communication are necessary to reach all, including adults past their 50th birthday. Technology plays an important role in reaching people, and multiple barriers to receiving information exist in the population.

Group members reported receiving information from a wide range of sources including app notifications, email blasts, social media, WeChat, newsletters, The Beacon Newspaper, word of mouth, and events run by places of worship, and the DC government.

Notably, a higher percentage of older adults of all ages getting information through technology, but groups were concerned that older adults who lack access to technology or who are not technology literate are not being reached. Additional barriers to communication noted include language barriers and being socially isolated.

Summary

Communication and the dissemination of information is a critical element of every Age-Friendly-DC plan. This domain focuses on reaching residents with information through many forms of communication.

As technology plays an increasingly large role in the way we share information and connect with others, this domain has demonstrated success by increasing access and education about technology. Survey respondents utilize the internet in a variety of ways and only a small fraction (7.1%) said they did not use the internet. Nearly half of all survey respondents felt they used technology to connect with others more frequently than they did five years ago. While technology-based communication ranked high among ways people learn about important health and safety information, it should be noted that half of all respondents still learn from word of mouth. Focus groups also noted that while increasing technology literacy and access have increased information sharing, other communication strategies are still key to reaching all, including adults 50 years or over. Moving forward, this domain should continue to focus on increasing access to technology while also expanding communication efforts through word of mouth.

“ In terms of communication, I would say that it has gotten better [over the last five years] because mostly everyone has a cell phone and they're on a lot of apps and you receive information pretty quickly.”