

# Elevating Aging-in-Community *in* Bensenville

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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*

**February 2022**

# Executive Summary

Bensenville was one of five municipalities selected to participate during 2021 in the “Aging in a Changing Region” program, run by the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and Planning/Aging, funded by a grant from the RRF Foundation for Aging. Planning/Aging led two public meetings and reviewed internal stakeholder and community input to identify strategies by which Bensenville could elevate its support of aging-in-community, defined as a ‘whole-of-government approach’ to supporting older adults. The following recommendations are divided into two categories: Policy and Programmatic. The Policy Recommendations primarily deal with Bensenville’s approach to and handling of its support for aging-in-community. The Programmatic Recommendations are topical and address Bensenville’s key specific aging-in-community challenges or opportunities.

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## Policy Recommendations

- Elevate and promote the Village’s commitment to aging-in-community
- Specifically mention aging-in-community in Bensenville’s next Strategic Plan
- Combat ageism both in what is communicated and what is implied
- Incorporate aging-in-community into key municipal conversations and initiatives
- Utilize aging-in-community to strategically link with ongoing efforts to serve the diverse Bensenville community
- Establish an Aging-in-Community Commission to play a policy advising and review role
- Designate Village staff in multiple departments as aging-in-community point-persons
- Continue to regularly attend the MMC’s Age-Friendly Communities Collaborative and other regional aging-in-community activities

## Programmatic Recommendations

- Maximize the aging-in-community and intergenerational benefits of the new Senior Citizens Center
- Review existing ordinances, plans & programs for their aging-in-community consistency
- Critically evaluate Bensenville’s public realm as to its support for aging-in-community
- Strategize on how to increase the use and benefits of Ride DuPage
- Study Bensenville’s older adult housing market
- Consider revisiting Accessory Dwelling Units as an aging-in-community benefit
- Look for creative intergenerational opportunities

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It is up to the Village Board and the community at large to review, select and prioritize from this list of strategic recommendations and develop specific implementation plans going forward. As Bensenville’s conversation about Aging-in-community is still at any early stage, additional ideas and strategies for supporting Aging-in-community 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 aging population.

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

**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.

Evidence from successful **aging-in-community** programs throughout the United States suggests that important indicators of the likely success of a municipality’s **aging-in-community** program includes: issue champions amongst its elected officials, staff leadership, and within the overall community; dedicated human and financial resources; and mindful coordination between **aging-in-community** and other key municipal priorities and stakeholders.

# The “Aging in a Changing Region” Program

The metropolitan Chicago region – like most regions throughout the United States – is experiencing substantial growth in the number and percentage share of its older adult population. Municipalities throughout this region are likewise seeing such population shifts, and many municipalities are looking to develop strategies to address these shifts, and to support their growing older adult populations.

To assist these municipalities, three partner organizations – the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (a membership organization of the Chicago region’s 275 cities, towns and villages), the Chicago Metropolitan

Agency for Planning (the regional planning organization for the counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will), and Planning/Aging (a consultancy focused on the intersection between city planning and the burgeoning aging population) in 2021 received grant funding from the RRF Foundation for Aging to support selected municipalities with these efforts. This program is called “Aging in a Changing Region” (AiaCR). The AiaCR partners are committed to the idea that regardless of where a municipality currently is in terms of discussing, planning, and implementing strategies and projects that support its older adults as they age



*Beautifully landscaped gateway signage along Irving Park Road*

in community, providing key community stakeholders with the AiaCR program's strategic guidance and assistance can help advance their aging-in-community efforts.

In March of 2021, MMC put out a call for interested municipalities to apply to participate in the AiaCR program. Each interested municipality submitted an application that combined a self-assessment of where they stood in their aging-in-community work to date, what their aging-in-community goals were, and

what type of assistance they envisioned to help them advance towards their goals. The AiaCR partners designed the application and selection process to attract a wide range of communities and were pleased in June 2021 to introduce a 2021 Cohort of municipalities – Bensenville, Calumet City, Hawthorn Woods, Mount Prospect and Park Forest – that reflect the region's broad diversity in terms of community geography, socio-economic factors, community type, and aging-in-community experience.

# Municipal Workshops

A key element of AiaCR was to be a pair of educational and strategic workshops that Planning/Aging would plan and conduct in each selected municipality. Once the 2021 Cohort was selected, Planning/Aging engaged in a series of planning conversations with a core team of municipal point persons to identify the community's aging-in-community goals, and to develop unique strategies for their two public workshops. While certain aspects of the workshops bore similarities

between municipalities, many aspects such as timing, target audiences and structure were completely unique to each municipality, due to each community's specific preferences, as conveyed by their core team.

At each workshop, Planning/Aging provided educational background on aging-in-community to help attendees get onto the same page on what the term means, and to help build support for aging-in-community,



which was framed as being consistent with the often-cited term “livable communities for all ages” as community values typically held by older adults – appropriate and affordable housing options, well-managed and reliable transportation services, convenient goods and services, accessible safe places to gather, access to and engagement opportunities with community matters, and responsive municipal staff and governance – have been found to be virtually identical to values also identified by younger adults. Planning/ Aging also pointed out the compatibility between prominent national and international frameworks that some communities choose to utilize – notably the “Age-Friendly Community” designation offered by the World Health Organization (and its domestic affiliate AARP) and the “Dementia-Friendly” designation offered by Dementia-Friendly America – and the unique community-specific aging-in-community programs that many other communities choose to develop. Bensenville can choose whichever path – enrolling in an existing program or developing its own program – to support aging-in-community as best fits its unique community needs, assets, and interests.

Community planning engagements typically include



## WHAT THIS DOCUMENT ISN'T

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



## WHAT THIS DOCUMENT IS

- ✓ **IS** a practical strategic guide tailored to Bensenville on how to 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 topical recommendations of further actions Bensenville 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 Bensenville 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



*Village Manager Evan Summers addressing Workshop #1*



*Village President Frank DeSimone engaging with Workshop #2 attendees*

an assessment of and collecting input about a community's historic and current assets and challenges. The limited scope of the AiaCR engagement required a more streamlined assessment and input process. Prior to the first workshop in each 2021 Cohort community, Planning/Aging spoke with key community stakeholders, reviewed available guidance documents such as the community's Comprehensive, Housing, Transportation and other relevant plans, and reviewed – if available -- recent surveys on residents' perceptions about their communities. In addition, each community was asked to have key internal stakeholders complete an assessment of the degree to which their agency or department currently supports their growing older adult population and offer insights as to their challenges or opportunities.

The highlights from these input sources were presented at the workshops,

augmented by a facilitated discussion that engaged participants to drill down on key questions about their own aging-in-community experiences – with residents sharing how they perceive the community will be able to support them going forward, and with internal stakeholders considering ways they might be able to augment or modify their current services to even better support aging-in-community in the future.

The workshops were documented with notes and photographs taken by the AiaCR team and municipal stakeholders. In some instances, the workshops were recorded and made available on municipal websites. In all instances, the workshop presentations and other related materials were given to the municipalities, so that these materials could be made widely available.

# Bensenville's Aging-in-Community Context

Bensenville is aging. Its population has significantly aged over the past 10-15 years, is aging comparably with that of DuPage County and the CMAP region overall, and is likely to continue to do so. And the aging of Bensenville's population is likely not a temporary phenomenon, as one in every three Bensenville residents is currently over 50 years old, up about 10 percent from 2000.

In their AiaCR applications, the Bensenville core team – consisting of Executive Assistant to the Village Manager Mary Ribando and then Associate Planner Kelsey Fawell – self-assessed that Bensenville could be seen as at an 'Advanced Involvement' stage in its commitment to its older adults and at an 'Early Involvement' stage of dealing with aging-in-community

in a systematic manner. They identified involvement with the AiaCR program as an opportunity to enhance communications with and build Bensenville's older adults' knowledge of available aging-in-community assets and resources and looked forward to the establishment of an aging-in-community framework that would link to the Comprehensive Plan.

On the 2018 (*the most recent*) Community Survey, "As a place to retire" was scored lowest of the 49 areas that were assessed, 14 percent below other communities nationally and 19 percent below other communities regionally. It is not clear how residents' opinions about how Bensenville fared "as a place to retire" might link to their thoughts about aging-in-community.

## Bensenville is Steadily Aging

	Bensenville			DuPage County	CMAP Region
	2000	2006-2010	2015-2019	2013-2017	
19 and under	27.9%	29.4%	23.3%	25.8%	26.0%
20 to 34	26.8%	23.4%	25.7%	19.0%	21.3%
35 to 49	21.6%	22.1%	17.4%	19.9%	20.2%
50 to 64	12.4%	15.2%	19.4%	21.3%	19.3%
65 to 74	11.3%	9.9%	14.2%	8.2%	7.6%
75 to 84	11.3%	9.9%	14.2%	3.9%	3.9%
85 and Over	11.3%	9.9%	14.2%	1.9%	1.7%
Median Age	32.2 years	33.4 years	36.1 years	39.1 years	37.0 years

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Community Snapshots

<https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/102881/Park+Forest.pdf>



Bensenville's guidance documents – its Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Plan, and other topical or area-specific plans – have generally supported aging-in-community but have not made many specific recommendations or linked aging-in-community with other Village priorities. Notably, the 2015 Comprehensive Plan revision called for a broader range of housing options that would support older adults and was bolstered by subsequent Zoning Ordinance revisions that allowed for such housing options (*although the permitting of accessory dwelling units – often discussed as a potential aging-in-community option – was not included in the revisions*).



On the Bridgeway of Bensenville campus

## Bensenville's Public Workshops

- The goals of the public workshops were to provide general educational background on, build community support for, and promote an ongoing conversation about aging-in-community in Bensenville
- Bensenville took a unique approach to their two workshops by holding them only one week apart, with the first focusing on key community stakeholders, and the second focusing on residents (primarily older adults). There was some overlap in attendance between the two workshops
- For each of the two public workshops, the Village's core team led the publicity and outreach efforts, and Planning/Aging led the workshops themselves and made short presentations on aging-in-community
- One unique element of the workshop outreach efforts was a recorded Spotlight on Bensenville conversation about aging-in-community between Bensenville's Kelsey Fawell and Planning/Aging's Brad Winick. It remains available on the Village's website
- In preparation for the public workshops, Planning/Aging:
  - Spoke regularly with the core team to develop workshop focus and structure
  - Reviewed Bensenville's key guidance documents and other relevant materials
  - Developed and reviewed responses to the internal stakeholders' assessment questionnaires
  - Developed questions for the workshops' facilitated discussions





### Stakeholder engagement at Workshop #1

- Bensenville's Workshop #1 was held on October 27, 2021, and was attended by approximately 24 key stakeholders from within Village government, sister and community agencies, and older adult serving organizations
- Bensenville's Workshop #2 was held on November 3, 2021, and was attended by approximately 45 attendees, largely older residents, with a handful of Village elected officials, staff, and community stakeholders
- The highlight of each workshop was a facilitated discussion in which attendees assessed how well Bensenville is currently addressing aging-in-community, their experiences living and aging in Bensenville and identifying key issues and challenges they have experienced

### Key Observations from the Bensenville Public Workshops

Bensenville is certainly a caring community. Over the brief tenure of the AiaCR project, this was made clear in two ways: in the input from both the internal stakeholders and members of the community, many

of whom proudly stated the number of decades they have lived in Bensenville; as well as in the community's united response to the near fatal injuries suffered in the line of duty by Police Officer Steven Kotlewski in November.

Bensenville clearly respects its older adults, and offers various activities and programs, albeit in a somewhat unsystematic manner, specifically intended to support them as they age in community. Notably, Bensenville has recently secured a lease and grant funding to transform the vacant lower level of St. Alexis School into a Senior Citizens Center, which will be a tremendous asset and will provide an opportunity to help address aging-in-community in a more coordinated manner. The specific challenge for Bensenville is how to leverage this opportunity – and link it to other existing community resources – in a way to best support aging-in-community overall.

### Observations from Workshop #1: Stakeholders

- The Village is very engaged with a small subgroup of older adults – a group of about 100 reliably attends all functions – but this is only a small fraction of its

over 2,000 older adults. Finding ways to better connect with more older adults is an ongoing challenge

- Many of Bensenville's older adult population maintain a fierce long-time allegiance to the community
- Bensenville is a very diverse community, and continues to seek proactive strategies to engage with its non-white and non-English-speaking older adults, including leveraging existing church and other cultural connections
- As a diverse community, it is important to recognize that Bensenville's older adult population is made up of several different generations, who each represent a range of interests and needs
- Some of the Village's sister agencies – notably the Community Public Library and the Park District – have good older adult-focused programming and are strong aging-in-community partners
- The above observation notwithstanding, there clearly is some unintentional siloization between some of the Village's different institutions and agencies
- Developing good mutually beneficial partnerships is an important aspect of establishing Village-wide older adult programs and services, and there is more opportunity here
- Many older adults experience technical computer/smartphone literacy and scam/spam protection issues, which is an ongoing challenge for them as they age in community
- The existing Senior Hotline was referenced as a good community engagement resource and information source for many older adults
- Despite the benefits provided by the Senior Hotline and other communication platforms, many stakeholders pointed



*Resident engagement at Workshop #2*

out a need for a trusted source with collected information important to older adults – this could be a role of the new Senior Citizens Center

- Social isolation continues to be a significant challenge for many older adults who prefer and want face-to-face engagement opportunities
- Bensenville's older adults are largely reliant upon private cars to get around, as public transportation options are seen as having service hours, reliability, and cost challenges
- Non-vehicular transportation and accessibility are said to be good in downtown Bensenville, while many other areas suffer from the lack of connected walks and paths





*On the Castle Towers of Bensenville campus*

- While Bensenville has several fine older adult housing buildings, such as Castle Towers and Bridgeway of Bensenville, most of the Village's older adults live in various housing throughout the Village, and there is said to be a shortage of affordable, accessible, and appropriate older adult-focused housing options
- Stakeholders also pointed out that addressing the shortage of medical services, and adult day services would help support aging-in-community in the Village

**Observations from Workshop #2:  
Residents**

- Participants indicated that they were originally drawn to Bensenville because it was a relatively safe, relaxed, affordable, convenient, supportive community with good services
- The residents at Workshop #2 confirmed the same housing concerns as identified by the stakeholders at Workshop #1
- Also, residents at Workshop #2 confirmed the same transportation concerns as identified by the

- stakeholders at Workshop #1
- Residents expressed a good deal of concern about perceived challenges to roadway and sidewalk snow plowing throughout town, in addition to a lesser level of similar concern about vegetation maintenance
- While there was a small amount of discussion about perceived public safety concerns, most of it was related to speeding cars and difficulties crossing certain traffic arteries
- Residents indicated that they received information about the community in general and anything specifically related to older adults from a variety of sources and platforms
- Additional issues mentioned by participants included a desire for more intergenerational assistance (*with moving or carrying things*), a way to access more comprehensive older adult information and services, and a desire for more and better available home handyman services



# Recommendations for Elevating Aging-in-Community in Bensenville

The following recommendations are divided into two categories: Policy and Programmatic. The Policy Recommendations primarily deal with Bensenville's approach to, handling of, and expression of its support for aging-in-community. The Programmatic Recommendation are topical and address Bensenville's key specific aging-in-community challenges or opportunities.

## Policy Recommendations

**Elevate and promote the Village's commitment to aging-in-community**  
Bensenville needs to express its support for aging-in-community more visibly. This starts with the Village's website, which currently conveys little indication of support for aging-in-community. A comprehensive evaluation of the website – beginning with the home page, on which a clear statement such as “We actively support aging-in-community!” can set a tone, followed by a continuity of commitment and purpose on appropriate pages such as the ‘Government’, ‘Departments’, ‘Community’ and ‘How Do I...?’ pages. Additionally, the Village Board can develop and adopt a proclamation expressing its support for aging-in-community, which in addition to being a standalone indication of commitment, can be referenced on the Village website. A standalone “Aging-in-Community” page might also be a good place to gather all relevant information, as it is currently scattered throughout the Village website.

## **Specifically mention aging-in-community in Bensenville's next Strategic Plan**

Although Bensenville has paused its development of periodic Strategic Plan updates, during which guiding principles towards which the community should navigate are identified, should strategic planning resume, support for aging-in-community might constitute an appropriate multiple year strategic priority. Identification of aging-in-community as a strategic priority would underscore the Village's commitment as discussed above.

**Combat ageism both in what is communicated and what is implied**  
Consciously frame all references to Bensenville's community as one in which older adult residents are seen and characterized as civic assets and resources to be leveraged, rather than viewed solely through a needs-based or a medical lens.

## **Incorporate aging-in-community into key municipal conversations and initiatives**

A key factor to building a robust aging-in-community program is positioning it within a whole-of-government framework. To do this, aging-in-community should become an important lens through which proposed or existing village-wide plans, programs or strategies are viewed and evaluated -- regardless of whether the initiatives are seen as primarily benefitting Bensenville's community and economic development, fiscal sustainability, recreation and community, public works, housing, or resident resources agendas.



***Bensenville residents are very willing to share their opinions!***

This evaluation should ask: how do or how would these plans, programs or strategies impact our older adult population? In doing this type of evaluation, the Village will likely find that the impacts on older adults will often be consistent with the impacts on the overall population – this underscores the notion that support for aging-in-community is an important component of truly being a livable community for all ages.

**Utilize aging-in-community to strategically link with ongoing efforts to serve the diverse Bensenville community**  
Everyone ages, although their aging experiences are impacted by their cultural traditions. Therefore aging-in-community can be creatively used as a means by which Bensenville can simultaneously support its older adults and reach out and engage with all components of its diverse population, using multi-cultural events like food, craft, and music festivals as ways to draw people together, and as a portal to an ongoing and robust aging-in-community conversation.

**Establish an Aging-in-Community Commission to play a policy advising and review role**

A wide swath of Bensenville should collectively “own” aging-in-community, and an ongoing entity would be invaluable to playing a key aging-in-community policy role. This entity might include a broad range of members representing the public and private sectors, including key stakeholders (*faith communities, sister agencies such as the Community Public Library, the Park District, and local schools, and community organizations such as the Community Foundation and the Chamber of Commerce*), and residents including – but not limited to – older adults, who (*with Village staff support*) might be charged with: playing a key role in programming the new Senior Citizens Center; reviewing development/redevelopment proposals as to their impacts on aging-in-community; preparing and presenting to the Village Board an annual 'State of Aging-in-



Community' type report; and sponsoring aging-in-community events.

### **Designate Village staff in multiple departments as aging-in-community point-persons**

While certain individuals may informally play such a role for the overall Bensenville municipal government, it is likely that not all residents know this and may search for who to contact on a department-by-department basis. Designating and publicizing a specific staff liaison in each key public-facing department as their aging-in-community designee would make the government more accessible to older adults as well as more efficient, as for instance a resident wanting to report a sidewalk or trail upkeep concern would ideally be able to make such a report to the designated aging-in-community staff person within the Public Works Department rather than search various departments for

the appropriate way to do so. The aging-in-community liaisons should meet regularly and share contacts to learn from one another and address issues proactively and in a coordinated manner.

### **Continue to regularly attend the MMC's Age-Friendly Communities Collaborative and other regional aging-in-community 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. Bensenville's experiences with and lessons learned from the AiaCR program during 2021 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 Appendix for further information*).



*Brad Winick of Planning/Aging presenting at Workshop #2*

## **Programmatic Recommendations**

### **Maximize the aging-in-community and intergenerational benefits of the new Senior Citizens Center**

Preparing for and staging the workshops made clear that many parties – residents, internal stakeholders, and community partners – possessed incomplete or inadequate knowledge about the range of older adult-benefitting services provided by municipal, aging network, faith-based, sister agency, for profit and other providers, and aggregating information about these services at the new Senior Citizens Center near downtown Bensenville would be a major benefit. During the AiaCR program, the core team was put in touch with



valuable local resources who offered their willingness to serve as resources on the programming and development of the new Center, which might be a first assignment for the Aging-in-Community Commission. All activities and information at the new Center should be carefully coordinated with the Village website and the other information platforms.

### **Review existing ordinances, plans & programs for their aging-in-community consistency**

Building upon the brief internal assessments done in preparation for Workshop #1, Village and sister agency staff should conduct a system-wide review of its ordinances, plans, programs, and practices to identify any language or requirements that explicitly or unintentionally undercut support for aging-in-community, and work with the Aging-in-Community Commission to remedy any findings. While this review may not unearth barriers, it may reveal opportunities for enhancements to foster broader community *(not limited just to older adults)* participation

### **Critically evaluate Bensenville's public realm as to its support for aging-in-community**

Bensenville's public realm and its walkability, accessibility and perceived safety are important elements of a livable community for all ages, not to mention its support of aging-in-community. Workshop attendees pointed out connectivity gaps and maintenance concerns within streets, sidewalks, and parks. Also, there continues to be an absence of sidewalks, connective paths, or area lighting in parts of town. It may be time to critically assess whether the public realm is appropriate for an aging Bensenville, and whether the nostalgic allure of a small town-like feeling public realm with limits on such infrastructure elements is outdated.



*Bensenville's Village Hall is located alongside its Metra station*

### **Strategize on how to increase the use and benefits of Ride DuPage**

Reliance on private automobiles is known to be a contributing factor behind social isolation affecting older adults. Yet few residents appear to utilize Ride DuPage, which potentially serves as a key transportation asset that could help mitigate social isolation. The Aging-in-Community Commission or a separate entity should convene a broad public/private community conversation on how to better structure and market Ride DuPage as an important Bensenville aging-in-community and livable community for all ages.

### **Study Bensenville's older adult housing market**

Many residents and stakeholders indicated or anticipated future concerns that their current housing situation would not appropriately support their desire



*Community input was the most valuable component of each Workshop*

to age well and safely, due in good part to the need to navigate stairs to access fundamental living or support spaces such as bathrooms or laundries. While Bensenville's housing inventory includes some ranch-style single-level homes, it is not clear whether there are enough such housing units to serve older adults looking to possibly relocate in the future. Performing or commissioning an older adult housing market study would help quantify possible market gaps and inform future housing-related policy decisions, including preferred use mixes for potential future Bensenville development/redevelopment sites.

#### **Consider revisiting Accessory Dwelling Units as an aging-in-community benefit**

As described above, the potential legalization of accessory dwelling units was left out of the recent Zoning Ordinance revision, possibly due to concerns having nothing to do with aging-in-community. As part of the Village's support for aging-in-community, it may be appropriate to revisit this matter, with a specific focus on accessory dwelling units as a possible and affordable solution for caregivers or older adults looking for options to age within their current neighborhoods.

#### **Look for Creative Intergenerational Opportunities**

Older adult residents and stakeholders indicated a lack of positive interactions with younger people, some older adults lacking certain technical knowledge, and some outdoor maintenance and upkeep issues. This may be the kernel of possible intergenerational opportunities, in need of developing enhanced connections with existing potential community organizational partners such as Fenton High School and its support for aging-in-community and its student community service requirements, along with other sister agencies, and the identification of potential mutually benefitting projects. As indicated above, the new Senior Citizens Center will provide a wonderful venue and platform to support thinking intergenerationally in the strategizing for a livable Bensenville for all ages that supports aging-in-community.

# 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 Bensenville's specific needs.

## Aging in a Changing Region Partner Organization Resources

### [AFCC REPOSITORY - Google Drive](#)

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

### [Home - 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.

### [94b4305c-4586-4bd3-acf1-e177194f8820 \(illinois.gov\)](#)

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 Network Organizations Serving Bensenville

### [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, primarily via DuPage Community Services ([www.dupageco.org/seniorsvcs](http://www.dupageco.org/seniorsvcs)) and Metropolitan Family Services DuPage ([www.metrofamily.org](http://www.metrofamily.org)).

### Addison Township – [Senior Information | Addison Township](#)

Most of Bensenville is within Addison Township, which provides several real estate-related programs that benefit older adults.

### Leyden Township – [www.leydentownship.com/services/senior-services](http://www.leydentownship.com/services/senior-services)

A small portion of Bensenville is served by Leyden Township which provides a number of services geared towards older adults.



## [Ride DuPage Transportation Program | Bensenville, IL - Official Website](#)

Ride DuPage is a result of coordination between the (former) DuPage County Inter-Agency Paratransit Coordinating Council, the County of DuPage and Pace Suburban Bus to improve transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities in Bensenville and throughout DuPage County. Ride DuPage is available to Bensenville residents.

## Aging-in-Community General Resources

### ASA Roundtables

The local chapter of the American Society on Aging stages free bi-monthly topical Roundtables, often on aging-in-community topics. Currently being staged virtually due to 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 repository is the best location at which to explore AARP's many resources, including its Livable Communities initiatives and publications, and the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities.

### [Resources for Age-Friendly Communities | 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 | Grantmakers in Aging \(giaging.org\)](#)

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.

### [Publications \(usaging.org\)](#)

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

### [Research \(ncoa.org\)](#)

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.

## Senior Center Resources

### [National Institute of Senior Centers \(NISC\) for Professionals \(ncoa.org\)](#)

This membership institute links the over 11,000 senior centers throughout the United States and provides networking, best practices, research and other professional materials.

### Tracy Colagrossi | [tcolagrossi@vah.com](mailto:tcolagrossi@vah.com)

In addition to serving as Arlington Heights' Senior Center Manager, Tracy is the current chair of the NISC. During the planning of Bensenville's AiaCR workshops, Tracy agreed to be an informal consultant and mentor as Bensenville develops its new Senior Citizens and Community Center.

### Julie Kane | [JKane@mountprospect.org](mailto:JKane@mountprospect.org)

Julie is Mount Prospect's Director of Human Services and developed a survey asking older adults for programming and activities input for the new Farley Community Room. During the planning of Bensenville's AiaCR

workshops, Julie agreed to be an informal consultant as Bensenville develops its new Senior Citizens and Community Center.

## Planning Resources

[Search \(planning.org\)](#) (*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 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 National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (*n4a*). Its resource center provides information on transportation for older adults and people with disabilities.

[Home - 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.

## 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 Lewis 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.

## 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.

# Acknowledgements

## Residents

Ann Warych • Marilyn Ryner • Lorraine Halladay • Mary Bonfide • Maria Julia Fernandez • Beverly Bohauron • Jackie Middleton • Laura Wilowianz • Willis McCarthy • Donna Leonard • Joanne Pelivan • Jim & Cindy Novello • Anita Bell • Carlos Medina • Mary O'Brien • Chuck Rizzo • Judy Garcia • Ron Kambach • John Perry • Mary Kambach • Ed DalBoris • Karen Balog • Jim & Susan Ricker • Gene Bagnuolo • Shirley Gallagher • Karen Marcotte • Mary Radek • Judy Wozniczka • Jo & Mark Folisi • Shirley Dixon • Pam Zelek • Rich Johnson • The Hoffenkamps • Nancy Leninger

## Representatives from Community Stakeholder Organizations

Representative Kathleen Willis, *State Representative - 77<sup>th</sup> District* • Alexander Sargent, *Office of Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi - 8<sup>th</sup> District* • Trent Grossman, *Bensenville Park District* • Joe Valez, *Bensenville Park District* • Dave Sieffert, *Bensenville Library* • Lara Schwarz, *Bensenville Elementary School District #2* • Rick Kambic, *Fenton High School* • Fr. Matthew Nathan, *St. Alexis Parish* • Rev. James Nylander, *Grace Lutheran Church*

## Representatives from Aging Network Organizations

Marla Fronczak, *AgeGuide (Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging)* • Megan Wileman, *AgeGuide (Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging)* • Amy Gayobs, *DuPage County Community Services* • Sophia Fernandez, *Castle Towers Senior Living Apartments* • Dee Morris, *Castle Towers Senior Living Apartments*

## Village of Bensenville Leadership

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## 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.*