

Orange County, North Carolina Master Aging Plan 2017-2022

Community Needs Assessment

Orange County began the Master Aging Plan (MAP) process by conducting a community needs assessment between May and September 2016. The needs assessment consisted of key informant interviews with community stakeholders, focus groups with community members, and a questionnaire that was distributed online and in paper format across the county. The goal of this community needs assessment was to understand the needs and concerns of seniors (defined as individuals age 60 and above), learn which resources seniors use in the community, and understand what their vision is for Orange County over the next 5 years.

Design of the Community Needs Assessment

Key Informant Interviews

The purpose of the key informant interviews was to 1) provide an overview of the work and programming of the Orange County Department on Aging (OCDOA), 2) identify ideas and areas of concern for the aging populations among the different agencies in the country, and 3) generate buy-in, foster collaboration, understand how the work of the OCDOA intersects with that of other stakeholders. Key informant interviews were primarily conducted by the director of OCDOA. The format of these interviews was varied based on 1) how much the key informant knew about the services provided by OCDOA and the MAP process, and 2) prior working relationships between the key informant and the OCDOA director.

Focus Groups

The purpose of the focus groups was to 1) understand what people are most concerned about regarding their own aging and 2) understand what it will take for Orange County to become a truly age-friendly community. Focus groups lasted approximately one hour and the focus group leaders had a guide to follow to lead the discussion. A copy of the focus group guide can be found in Appendix I.

Questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information from a wide variety of residents all across Orange County. The Odum Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was consulted for the design of the questionnaire. The questions guiding the development of the survey were 1) What are

you worried about when you think about aging? 2) What is Orange County already doing well? 3) What would you like to see happen? and 4) What are some “magic wand” ideas you have? The survey included quantitative questions, demographics, and an open-ended question for additional comments. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix II.

Results of the Community Needs Assessment

The results of this community needs assessment were organized using the World Health Organization and AARP’s Age-Friendly Communities Framework. This framework includes eight domains of livability that impact quality of life for seniors and are areas communities should focus on improving to become age friendly. These 8 domains are: outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, and community and health services. Qualitative results from the survey were pooled with results from the key informant interviews and focus groups and are summarized below.

Key Informant Interviews

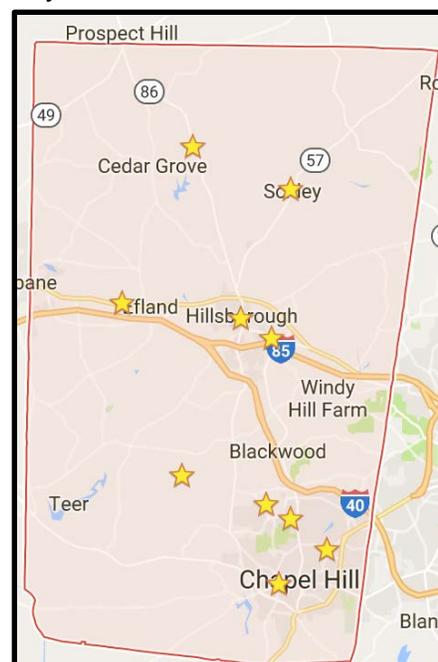
Thirty-four key informant interviews, representing 26 different agencies, were conducted. These key informant interviews were conducted with stakeholders in county and town governments, healthcare, faith-based organizations, housing, and community services. Topics of focus for the KI interviews were primarily focused on the domains of housing, community support and health services, transportation, and communication and information.

Focus Groups

A series of 13 focus groups were held at various locations throughout the seven townships of Orange County (locations starred on the map). These focus groups were held in English (11), Mandarin (1), and Spanish (1). A total of 63 community members participated in the focus groups.

Questionnaire

The electronic survey was emailed to all Orange County government employees and a 2,000-



person listserv maintained by the Orange County Senior Centers. Paper copies of the surveys were also available for individuals to complete at each of the Orange County Senior and Community Centers, as well as handed out at each of the focus groups. There was a total of 860 respondents who answered at least one question on the survey (full results in Appendix III). The majority of respondents were 60 years old or older (68%), represented a wide range of incomes (14% <\$25,000, 22.7% \$25,000-49,999, 19.5% \$50,000-74,999, 44.0% >75k) and were from both rural (27%) and urban (73%) residents.

Over half of the respondents reporting worrying, at some point, about most issues. These include worries about poor health and dementia, financial issues, maintaining independence, and experiencing social isolation. The most common worry was over getting dementia, with 43.4% of respondents worrying about this at least monthly. The other issues that respondents worried about were running out of money (39.7% worry at least monthly), losing the ability to take care of their home or yard (37.2% worry at least monthly), and being a burden on my family and/or friends (36.0% worry at least monthly). Overall, there are a large number of issues related to aging that are of concern to Orange County residents.

As for services offered across Orange County, over half of respondents reported being familiar with most services (23 out of 26). However, these results show that there is still room in increase the knowledge of services offered across Orange County. Of respondents who were familiar with Orange County services, over 50% of respondents felt Orange County did a good or fantastic job with 7 of the 23 services, and an ok to fantastic job with 23 of the 26 services. The services respondents were most positive about were providing opportunities to stay physically active, providing opportunities for older people to socialize, creating opportunities for meaningful volunteer work, and creating opportunities to explore spirituality.

Qualitative Results

The qualitative results from the questionnaire was pooled with the results from the key informant interviews and focus groups and were organized using the eight domains of Age Friendly Communities. The major concerns of the community were in the domains of transportation, housing, and community support and health services.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings. Outdoor spaces and building concerns included recommended upgrades to the existing infrastructure and expansion of indoor and outdoor community spaces. However, access to outdoor spaces and buildings was limited by the existing transportation infrastructure and was frequently cited as a barrier

to using these community spaces. Ideas to improve outdoor spaces and buildings include:

- Improve and increase sidewalks to make communities safe and walkable
- Increase the amount of time at cross walk signals to give pedestrians more time to cross
- Make central areas of cities pedestrian priority zones by limiting or eliminating automobile traffic
- Add a pool with a walking track to Carrboro
- Increasing outdoor gathering spaces and community gardens
- Increased use of resources already in the community (e.g., more programs at community/senior centers and using churches for senior programs)
- Increase green burial options in the community

Transportation. Transportation is a major concern of the community. Lack of transportation disproportionately affected residents in rural areas of the county, however, cost of housing in the urban areas of Orange County is prohibitive to some seniors. Lack of transportation affects access to health care, access to food, and ability to engage in social activities. Transportation concerns focused on three key areas:

1. The current transportation infrastructure needs improvements like increased frequency, more direct routes to resources needed by seniors, and better coordination between the transit operators
2. There are limited transportation options in rural areas of the county which limits access to food, health care, and community resources as well as the extended length of time rural residents have to spend on public transportation when it is used.
3. Transportation options should better address the unique concerns of residents with limited mobility, like improved door-to-door service options.

Housing. Housing is a major concern across the county. Residents and stakeholders brought up several key issues related to housing:

- There are diverse desires for housing models across the county
- There is conflict between what is desired and an individual's ability to afford this
 - Price of houses and rent makes living in the city prohibitive once retired
 - Gentrification and increased tax rates force people to move
- The availability of the specific housing model does not match the demand

- Accessibility of housing is an important concern and new buildings should incorporate Universal Design
- Location of housing and access to transportation was an important concern, with many desiring centrally located and walkable communities
- Housing concerns increase as individuals think about continuing to age
 - Will they be able to continue maintaining their home safely and affordably?
 - How will the housing function as individuals require more care?

Additionally, community members were interested in learning about different housing models to help them decide what will meet their needs as they age. Community members and stakeholders had several recommendations for new housing communities including focus on adequate transportation, easy access to healthcare, resources, and other services, communities that are walkable, and efficient use of space in new housing (e.g., patio homes, multifamily homes, zero lot line homes).

Social Participation. Social isolation, loneliness, and depressing were concerns for many. Social participation was directly related to transportation issues, as an individual's ability to participate was directly related to having access to adequate, frequent, and efficient transportation. Recommendations included:

- Improve connection between community resources/supports and individuals who are home bound (such as churches)
- Improved community cohesion and support for seniors in their neighborhoods
- More free community activities and exercise programs at senior centers, community centers, and other locations such as churches, gyms, dance halls
- Improved transportation and pricing for cultural offerings at UNC for seniors
- Educational opportunities for seniors such as an OLLIE program
- Offer language classes
- More senior day trips
- Social opportunities for younger and more active seniors who need to develop a social network (some mentioned feeling out of place at the senior centers) and for those who are still employed and can't attend programs during the day

Respect and Social Inclusion. There was a desire for more intergenerational programs and social opportunities. Specific ideas included intergenerational gatherings where knowledge and advice can be passed between the generations, adopt a grandchild/grandparent programs, and multigenerational housing. Seniors expressed a desire to volunteer in school programs and providing information about aging, health,

and life skills. There was also interested in supporting advanced planning for aging for young adults in the community.

Civic Participation and Employment. The needs of older adults in the workforce was a major concern for those who were still working, or needed to continue working. For some in the community, employment is not optional as they do not have enough money for retirement. Employment concerns include:

- Assistance is needed in finding jobs and ideas included senior job fairs, senior temp agencies, paid senior internships, and a focus on helping immigrant senior find employment.
- Seniors were concerned about wages for work and believed Orange County should adopt a living wage.
- Age discrimination was seen as a barrier to entering the workforce.
- Supports are needed as an employed caregiver and included:
 - Dementia friendly employer
 - Inadequate supports of FMLA
 - Need for quality caregiving relief to attend work and increased availability of supports outside of traditional 9-5 working hours

Communication and Information. Overall, survey respondents felt services offered across the community were poorly advertised. Specifically, survey respondents did not know anything about many of the services offered across the community. To improve communication, stakeholders and community members recommended:

- Increase internet access so there is county wide coverage
- Provide in-home training and technical support to use computers and the internet
- Provide an easy way to find out about community resources and increase advertisement of these services to rural communities
- Better information about how to access community services during weather emergencies (where to go and when to go)
- Improve access to community resources to non-English speakers (particularly in healthcare or long-term care settings)

Community Support and Health Services. Community support and health services is a major concern across the county and spans several key areas:

1. Health care and care coordination between different agencies
 - Access to high quality and affordable health care is important

- Mental health services in the community need to be improved, particularly for individuals with dementia.
 - There is a need for healthcare advocates, particularly for single people
 - There is a need for patient navigator services to coordinate care between agencies and healthcare providers.
2. Respite care
- Family care-givers desired better options for respite care and/or adult daycares, including expanded hours and more affordable options
3. Home upkeep
- Individuals are concerned about finding help to care for their home when they are no longer able
 - Individuals are also concerned about the cost associated with the upkeep of their home
 - Recommendations included compiling a list of volunteers, having a paid community organizer, and providing a vetted list of community resources
4. Community supports
- Individuals were concerned about knowing when and where to access community resources in emergencies
 - There was additional desire for a community helpline to talk about general concerns

Appendix I: MAP FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Ensure people have signed in and have nametags

Time: 1 hour

First: Provide an overview:

- **State Purpose of the Focus Group:**
 1. To understand what people are most concerned about re: their own aging and
 2. To understand what it will take for Orange County to become a truly age-friendly community.
- **Provide Ground rules:**
 1. Everything said here stays in the room
 2. Do not talk over one another
 3. Everyone's experience and comments are valuable
 4. Turn off cell phones
- **Introduce the Master Aging Planning Process:** The MAP is our roadmap to becoming an even more age friendly community. We will:
 1. Engage the community at-large (survey, focus groups and key informant interviews, large community meetings) to gather information and help identify priority areas for improvement.
 2. Establish 6-8 workgroups to develop action plans that address each prioritized area. Work groups will meet 5 times between January and March 2017 and,
 3. Compile a 5-year plan, which will be presented to Board of County Commissioners for acceptance in May 2017.
- **Describe the MAP Structure and Support for the MAP process:** This 4th cycle of the 5-year MAP is designed around AARP's Age Friendly Community Initiative. Orange County is the first NC County to sign on. During the planning process, we will be supported in part by 5 UNC undergraduates from The Department of Health Policy and Management. Throughout the process, we will be supported by over 20 local community organizations and leaders who have committed their resources and talents to the implementation of the MAP.

Discussion:

- **Introductions**
 - Go around the circle and share names

- **Questions**

- **Question 1:** (With the introduction) Please tell us what, in your experience, is the best part about growing older?
- **Question 2:** Thus far, what activities, services, or relationships have contributed most positively to your experience of aging in Orange County? WHY?
 - **Probe:** Activities? Why was this activity important to you?
 - **Probe:** Services? Why was this service important to you?
 - **Probe:** Relationships? Why was this person important to you?
- **Question 3:** What are you worried about with regard to your aging, or someone you know who is aging?
 - **Probe:** Please tell us a story that exemplifies your concern:
 - **For example:** Your neighbor who had to quit her job to take care of her mother.
 - **For example:** When your father was no longer able to drive, he became depressed.
- **Question 4:** Based on what you've identified that you are worried about, if you could wave a magic wand, what would you add or improve upon to make Orange County the ideal place to grow old? Money is no object.
 - **Probe:** Formal services, Programmatic initiatives, Characteristics
 - **Probe (if time):** What are your ideas about how improvements could be put into play? Prompt ideas

Appendix II: Orange County Dept. on Aging Survey for 2017-2022 MAP

Dear Orange County Resident, Thank you for taking time to complete this survey. Your input, combined with the responses from other Orange County residents, will guide the development of our 2017-2022 Master Aging Plan. Overall, we want to learn from you about what it takes to age well in Orange County. This survey asks two main questions: 1) What are the aging issues that are foremost in your mind? and, 2) How well is Orange County doing now to address important issues related to aging?

Are you a resident of Orange County, North Carolina?

- Yes
- No

How often do you worry about the following life situations?

	Never	Rarely	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Losing mobility (such as not being able to walk)	<input type="radio"/>				
Losing the ability to take care of my home and/or my yard	<input type="radio"/>				
Living alone	<input type="radio"/>				
Being a burden on my family and/or my friends	<input type="radio"/>				
Experiencing spiritual emptiness	<input type="radio"/>				
Leaving behind dependent children	<input type="radio"/>				
Not having my end-of-life choices granted	<input type="radio"/>				
My ability to leave a legacy	<input type="radio"/>				
My ability to leave an inheritance	<input type="radio"/>				
Getting dementia	<input type="radio"/>				
Getting sick and not having a doctor	<input type="radio"/>				

How often do you worry about the following life situations?

	Never	Rarely	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Running out of money	<input type="radio"/>				
Losing my driver's license	<input type="radio"/>				
Becoming socially isolated	<input type="radio"/>				
Losing my job	<input type="radio"/>				
Not having meaningful work to do	<input type="radio"/>				
Losing my source of income	<input type="radio"/>				
Not being able to get to a grocery store	<input type="radio"/>				
Getting sick and not having a caregiver	<input type="radio"/>				
Needing nursing home care	<input type="radio"/>				
Managing chronic illness	<input type="radio"/>				

What is your 5-digit zip code? _____

What is your age group?

- Under 18
- 18-44
- 45-54
- 55-59
- 60-64
- 65-69
- 70-74
- 75-84
- 85 - 95
- 96+

I live in a home that I:

- Own
- Rent
- Other type of arrangement

My home is a:

- Single Family home
- Condominium
- Mobile Home
- Apartment
- Co-housing community
- Supported group housing
- Other

My living environment is:

- Urban, suburban, small city or town
- Rural

Are you providing unpaid assistance on a regular basis for an older person who is having trouble taking care of themselves? Examples include helping with dressing, bathing, driving or managing money.

- Yes
- No

What is your yearly household income (before taxes)?

- less than \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more

What is your employment status? *Check any and all that apply.*

- Part-time
- Full-time
- Retired
- Not working
- Looking for work
- Volunteer

In the space below, please enter any comments you want to share with us about aging in Orange County.

**Appendix III. MAP 2017-22 Survey Report
Orange County Dept. on Aging Survey for 2017-2022 MAP (Master Aging Plan)**

How often do you worry about the following life situations?	Never	Rarely	Monthly	Weekly	Daily	Total # respondents
Losing mobility (such as not being able to walk)	16.91%	53.32%	17.43%	6.50%	5.85%	769
Losing the ability to take care of my home and/or my yard	15.10%	47.53%	22.27%	9.11%	5.99%	768
Living alone	23.75%	45.14%	16.67%	6.96%	7.48%	762
Being a burden on my family and/or my friends	15.97%	47.91%	20.03%	8.51%	7.59%	764
Experiencing spiritual emptiness	50.65%	36.29%	6.79%	4.18%	2.09%	766
Leaving behind dependent children	73.25%	17.09%	5.30%	1.72%	2.65%	755
Not having my end-of-life choices granted	47.25%	40.58%	7.72%	2.49%	1.96%	764
My ability to leave a legacy	43.08%	42.16%	8.43%	3.29%	3.03%	759
My ability to leave an inheritance	42.20%	40.63%	10.62%	3.67%	2.88%	763
Getting dementia	8.90%	47.51%	25.00%	12.30%	6.28%	764
Getting sick and not having a doctor	47.44%	40.10%	6.95%	2.88%	2.62%	763

How often do you worry about the following life situations?	Never	Rarely	Monthly	Weekly	Daily	Total # respondents
Running out of money	14.69%	45.55%	22.51%	8.49%	8.76%	742
Losing my drivers license	35.37%	50.61%	8.98%	2.59%	2.45%	735
Becoming socially isolated	28.65%	47.16%	15.14%	5.68%	3.38%	740
Losing my job	58.86%	29.92%	7.34%	1.80%	2.08%	722
Not having meaningful work to do	40.03%	40.30%	10.66%	4.51%	4.51%	732
Losing my source of income	25.91%	47.64%	15.65%	5.13%	5.67%	741
Not being able to get to a grocery store	35.35%	50.67%	7.93%	3.90%	2.15%	744
Getting sick and not having a caregiver	26.27%	49.73%	15.55%	5.63%	2.82%	746
Needing nursing home care	23.58%	52.70%	17.25%	3.77%	2.70%	742
Managing chronic illness	18.49%	50.34%	17.27%	7.15%	6.75%	741

We want Orange County to be a great place to age! Based on your experiences, the experiences of people you know, or things you've heard about how would you say the community is doing on the following aging issues?

... how would you say the community is doing on the following aging issues?	Terrible	Poor	Okay	Good	Fantastic	Not familiar with this	Total
Providing affordable housing for older residents	9.33%	35.79%	23.82%	4.87%	0.56%	25.63%	718
Providing quality long term care (nursing homes, assisted living)	5.59%	27.83%	31.75%	11.89%	0.84%	22.10%	715
Providing door to door transportation services	4.32%	14.78%	31.38%	20.22%	5.58%	23.71%	717
Providing access to healthy food	1.54%	12.61%	34.17%	25.21%	6.30%	20.17%	714
Providing personal care in the home (meal preparation, bathing, dressing)	2.94%	15.97%	25.21%	11.62%	0.98%	43.28%	714
Providing access to doctors	1.12%	6.45%	28.05%	30.43%	10.38%	23.56%	713
Providing information about available resources and services for older people	1.67%	7.93%	26.98%	34.77%	11.68%	16.97%	719
Providing emergency services tailored to older people	1.81%	12.53%	20.61%	16.57%	4.32%	44.15%	718
Providing mental health support services	5.16%	21.62%	20.08%	12.55%	2.09%	38.49%	717
Providing job training for older workers	4.91%	15.57%	13.74%	4.91%	1.12%	59.75%	713
Providing opportunities to stay physically active	0.70%	3.76%	27.58%	40.95%	16.71%	10.31%	718
Promoting home safety	1.12%	6.70%	26.12%	27.65%	4.75%	33.66%	716
Promoting safe neighborhoods	1.12%	7.96%	27.23%	30.87%	5.87%	26.96%	716

Based on your experiences, the experiences of people you know, or things you've heard about how would you say the community is doing on the following aging issues?

How would you say the community is doing?	Terrible	Poor	Okay	Good	Fantastic	Not familiar	Total
Hosting community discussions to solve common problems	1.15%	10.06%	28.59%	28.88%	8.91%	22.41%	696
Providing support and training for caregivers	1.30%	11.30%	18.41%	19.13%	3.77%	46.09%	690
Providing assistance for life transitions (health changes, retirement, loss of a loved one)	1.30%	12.57%	22.83%	17.49%	2.75%	43.06%	692
Providing opportunities for older people to socialize	0.72%	5.48%	25.07%	37.18%	18.73%	12.82%	694
Providing opportunities to be with people of different ages	1.60%	10.89%	25.54%	27.87%	7.26%	26.85%	689
Providing need-based home maintenance and repair services	3.46%	19.77%	16.31%	6.78%	0.87%	52.81%	693
Providing support for using computers, cellphones, internet, etc.	1.73%	12.41%	24.10%	18.90%	3.90%	38.96%	693
Providing safe streets for older people to walk on	5.48%	23.05%	27.95%	15.56%	2.88%	25.07%	694
Creating public outdoor spaces for quiet and contemplation	2.88%	14.70%	29.11%	24.93%	7.78%	20.61%	694
Providing county-wide internet service	11.45%	20.58%	15.65%	13.48%	1.45%	37.39%	690
Creating opportunities for meaningful volunteer work	0.86%	4.76%	24.50%	38.62%	13.98%	17.29%	694
Creating opportunities to explore spirituality	1.01%	4.35%	20.29%	26.23%	7.68%	40.43%	690
Providing workshops about using online resources such as Air BnB, VRBO, Uber, Lyft, Amazon, or Meetup.	4.61%	14.27%	11.24%	8.50%	1.87%	59.51%	694