

# Council Study Session

August 15, 2022

<b>Agenda Item</b>	Special Presentation – Livable Ashland Alliance	
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<b>Item Type</b>	Requested by Council <input type="checkbox"/> Update <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

## **SUMMARY**

Co-chairs of the Livable Ashland Alliance Steering Committee, Sandy Theis and Anne Bellegia, will make a presentation on progress toward making Ashland an all-age friendly community. The Livable Ashland Alliance is focused on improving the livability for all members of the Ashland community.

## **POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED**

**Develop and/or enhance the following “Value Services” by leveraging the City’s resources**

B. Tier 2: Moderate Priority

f. All-Age Friendly Community

## **BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Council and Mayor of the City of Ashland and the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission endorsed an application to join the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Network. AARP accepted Ashland into the network on February 10, 2020. Membership in the Network involves a 5-year process that includes formation of a Steering Committee, a needs assessment to identify gaps, development of an action plan, implementation of the plan and a report that evaluates the results.

According to the attached progress report, the Livable Ashland Alliance Steering Committee group has been expanded and serves as a stand-alone alliance representing key organizations serving Ashland that are involved in or knowledgeable about a number of the AARP 8 Domains. There is representation from Ashland City Council, Ashland Senior Services Division, the Ashland Branch of Jackson County Library Services, Asante Ashland Community Hospital (AACH), Ashland Community Hospital Foundation (ACHF), Ashland At Home (AAH), Ashland YMCA, Mountain Meadows, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Southern Oregon University, Rogue Valley Council of Governments Senior, and Disability Services, and Southern Oregon University (SOU).

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to assist key organizations in Ashland in assessing needs and gaps in the actual and perceived livability of Ashland by its residents and to suggest actions for improvements. The preliminary needs assessment draws upon existing data, the knowledge of Steering Committee members, and inquiries to stakeholders whose constituents represent one or more groups or whose work involves one or more of the domains. This Progress Report outlines the preliminary needs assessment and steps taken by the Steering Committee, as well as planned next steps within the 5-year process.

**FISCAL IMPACTS**

Not Applicable

**REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS**

Livable Ashland Alliance: Towards An All Age-Friendly Community - Progress Report for AARP Oregon  
April 15, 2022

# Livable Ashland Alliance: Towards An All-Age Friendly Community

## Progress Report for AARP Oregon

April 15, 2022

### Background

The Livable Ashland Alliance is focused on improving livability for all members of the Ashland, Oregon community. It grew out of the WHO/AARP Livable Communities effort and the structure and resources provided by the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and States.

The WHO/AARP framework focuses on eight domains: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information, Community and Health Services. AARP provides a plethora of resources for addressing community livability. Member communities receive ongoing ideas from other communities in the network through newsletters, webinars, and conferences.

The Council and Mayor of the City of Ashland and the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission endorsed an application to join the AARP Network. AARP accepted Ashland into the network on February 10, 2020. Membership in the Network involves a 5-year process that includes formation of a Steering Committee, a needs assessment to identify gaps, development of an action plan, implementation of the plan and a report that evaluates the results.

The initial membership of the Livable Ashland Alliance Steering Committee was formed from a workgroup of the Ashland Senior Advisory Committee, which advises Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission and the Commission's Senior Services Division. The work group has been expanded and restructured as a stand-alone alliance representing key organizations serving Ashland that are involved in or knowledgeable about a number of the AARP 8 Domains. At present, there is representation from Ashland City Council, Ashland Senior Services Division, the Ashland Branch of Jackson County Library Services, Asante Ashland Community Hospital (AACH), Ashland Community Hospital Foundation (ACHF), Ashland At Home (AAH), Ashland YMCA, Mountain Meadows, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Southern Oregon University, Rogue Valley Council of Governments Senior and Disability Services, and Southern Oregon University (SOU).

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to assist key organizations in Ashland in assessing needs and gaps in the actual and perceived livability of Ashland by its residents and to suggest actions for improvements. The preliminary needs assessment draws upon existing data, the knowledge of Steering Committee members, and inquiries to stakeholders whose constituents represent one or more groups or whose work involves one or more of the domains.

The Steering Committee seeks additional connections with stakeholders that include but are not limited to the City of Ashland departments and commissions, the Ashland business community, Ashland School District (ASD), racial and social justice groups, clergy, Options for Helping Residents of Ashland (OHRA), and others to expand and deepen its understanding of issues impacting Ashland residents. AARP Oregon has provided a member of their Southern Oregon Action Team to assist.

This Progress Report outlines the preliminary needs assessment and steps taken by the Steering Committee, as well as planned next steps within the 5-year process.

## **Roles of Livable Ashland Alliance Steering Committee**

At the outset, the Livable Ashland Alliance Steering Committee agreed that its roles included the following:

- Assessing and identifying livability issues facing the community of Ashland using existing data, surveys, focus groups and discussions among stakeholder groups
- Convening meetings of representatives of stakeholder organizations to review and discuss assessment findings and encourage other organizations to participate in Livable Ashland meetings and activities
- Encouraging collaboration among stakeholder organizations by generating ideas in those meetings for activities that could best be undertaken by combinations of stakeholder organizations
- Monitoring collaborative Livable Ashland initiatives by holding periodic meetings among stakeholder organization representatives at which reports would be presented on group activities and representatives could comment on activities and share ideas on how the activities could be enhanced
- Publicizing collaborative projects that improve Ashland livability and inspire civic pride by announcing successful initiatives to the greater community and by reporting these through the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities (NAFSC)
- Advocating for support of Livable Ashland initiatives with government and community organizations that can facilitate collaborative initiatives

The Steering Committee further agreed that initiatives identified, proposed, and promoted by the Alliance should involve several organizations working together within the Ashland community, directly or indirectly benefit multiple age groups, address one or more of the key issues that have been identified in the Steering Committee's Preliminary Needs Assessment and be defined in terms of the AARP 8 Domains of Livability.

## **Preliminary Ashland Livability Needs Assessment**

The Livable Ashland Alliance Steering Committee is focused on the needs of the full spectrum of Ashland residents. The following information is primarily contained within the U.S. Census Bureau's 2016-2020 Five-Year American Community Survey for the City of Ashland and the Ashland, OR Livability Report of those aged 18+ from the 2019 National Community Survey. The Steering Committee will augment this preliminary assessment with other methods that may include stakeholder interviews, focus groups and survey(s).

There are four significant factors that are not directly addressed in this preliminary report.

- Ashland is part of a larger region, and its livability is impacted both positively and negatively by factors due to resources and policies over which it has no direct control.
- Due to the timing of the two surveys, they do not account for the impact of the COVID pandemic, racial justice reckoning, the Almeda fire and conflict around the 2020 election.
- Ashland serves many visitors, as well as short-term residents that primarily include students at Southern Oregon University and actors/staff at Oregon Shakespeare Festival.
- While quantitative information about all age groups can be found in the American Community Survey, the opinions and behaviors of those under age 18 are not included in the National Community Survey

## Demographics

Ashland's age demographics differ significantly in comparison with Oregon and the United States as a whole: there are fewer residents in the under 18 age group, more in the post-secondary years, fewer in the 25-54 prime working years, and more in the 55+ age group, especially age 65+.

### POPULATION COMPARISONS BY AGE

Label	United States		Oregon		Ashland	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Total	326,569,308	100%	4,176,346	100%	21,138	100%
Under 18	73,296,738	22%	867,076	21%	2,846	13%
18 to 24	30,435,736	8%	364,440	9%	3,062	14%
25 to 34	45,485,165	14%	594,642	14%	2,518	12%
35 to 44	41,346,677	13%	559,407	13%	2,111	10%
45 to 54	41,540,736	13%	513,263	12%	2,041	10%
55 to 64	42,101,439	13%	542,586	13%	3,392	16%
65+	52,362,817	16%	734,932	18%	5,168	24%

Source: American Community Survey, 2016-2020 Five-Year Estimates

### POPULATION COMPARISONS BY RACE AND LATINX ORIGIN

Ashland is not very racially or ethnically diverse. Residents are largely White, not Latinx (83.2%) compared to Oregon (74.9%) or the U.S. as a whole (60.1%).

Label	United States		Oregon		Ashland	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Total	326,569,308	100%	4,176,346	100%	21,138	100%
One race	309,693,766	94.8%	3,918,374	93.8%	20,191	95.5%
White	229,960,813	70.4%	3,449,081	82.6%	19,222	90.9%
Black	41,227,384	12.6%	79,117	1.9%	220	1.0%
Indigenous	2,688,614	0.8%	45,683	1.1%	97	0.5%
Asian	18,421,637	5.6%	187,801	4.5%	447	2.1%
Pacific Islander	611,404	0.2%	16,445	0.4%	57	0.3%
Two or more races	16,875,542	5.2%	257,972	6.2%	947	4.5%
Latinx (any race)	59,361,020	18.2%	552,279	13.2%	2,071	9.8%
White, not Latinx	196,251,375	60.1%	3,128,494	74.9%	17,586	83.2%

Source: American Community Survey, 2016-2020 Five-Year Estimates

Note: The report highlights information from the American Community Survey. More data can be gleaned.

## Overall Ashland Livability

Of the 1700 surveys sent to a random sample of Ashland residents as part of the Ashland, OR Livability Report from the 2019 National Community Survey, there were 549 completed responses. Answers to a select number of questions are included as part of this Needs Assessment and are indicated below by age and by White (W) versus Not White/Latinx (NW).

Caution: the number of respondents (pre-weighting) within the Non-white/Latinx category is extremely low. For example, there were zero respondents who identified themselves as Black/African Americans. The raw number of other respondents included 6 Indigenous people, 7 Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 21 Latinx individuals. Since respondents could check more than one box, it does not necessarily mean that there were 34 Non-white respondents. The “Other” box in the question on race was checked by 40 respondents. It is unclear whether this corresponds to 40 additional individuals, was checked by those belonging to multiple groups or those who preferred not to answer.

Given these numbers and the uncertainty of how to interpret them, the last two columns of the charts of NCS-sourced data that follow in this report are shaded in grey to indicate that interpretation of differences between White and Non-White/Latinx groups based on this data should be regarded with caution. Within the very small number of actual respondents, other factors, such as age, economic circumstances, or language spoken may be more significant than simply their race and ethnicity.

Nevertheless, the American Community Survey data from the Census shows that the number of BIPOC residents of Ashland is a sizeable group, almost 3,000 people. More information about their ratings of livability should be sought through other means.

### OVERALL LIVABILITY INDICES

Within the overall livability ratings, the cost of living has a low positive rating across all ages, especially age 18-34 and Non-White, and is also lower than benchmark cities. Most ratings in the Non-White group are lower than the White group, independent of benchmark cities.

Community Characteristics	Overall	By Age Group			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Rating - % Positive (excellent/good)	88	82	84	92	89	86	88	86
Overall quality of life	81	70	78	89	82	80	83	60
Ashland as a place to live	90	80	93	95	91	91	91	85
Ashland as a place to raise children	86	87	87	86	88	85	89	73
Ashland as a place to retire	83	78	81	85	86	80	85	66
Overall appearance of Ashland	90	82	91	94	92	89	93	74
Overall feeling of safety in Ashland	86	74	87	92	86	87	85	92
Overall economic health	52	51	48	56	50	56	54	49
Cost of living	14	8	14	16	10	16	14	8

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

## Ashland Livability by Domain

What follows are data, assets, challenges, comments, and further research needed for each individual WHO/AARP Domain of Livability.

### 1. OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

Indoor and outdoor gathering spaces for all ages

#### Data

Ashland outdoor spaces are highly rated and frequently utilized.

Community Characteristics		By Age Group			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
Rating – % Positive (excellent/good)	Overall	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Overall natural environment	94	94	96	94	96	93	96	83
Overall “built environment”	75	74	75	74	77	73	78	54
Public places to spend time	79	67	80	85	84	74	82	62
Vibrant downtown/commercial areas	77	75	75	79	81	74	80	61
Safe downtown/commercial areas	86	80	89	87	89	84	86	86
Library services	92	91	90	94	92	93	93	99
Recreation centers and facilities	79	69	85	81	81	78	80	72
City parks	94	90	94	96	94	95	93	99
Availability of paths and trails	91	90	87	94	92	90	92	84

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

Participation		By Age			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
Rating - % Positive (always, sometimes)	Overall	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Used Ashland recreation facilities	64	59	69	62	62	65	65	63
Visited a city park	96	96	99	95	96	97	96	100
Used Ashland public libraries	71	58	82	72	75	66	73	49
Attended a city sponsored event	65	53	83	62	62	64	67	60

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

#### Asset Inventory

There are many options of outdoor and indoor gathering spaces, including but not limited to Ashland Library and public meeting rooms, Ashland Parks & Recreation programs (19 parks, 53 miles of trails, community buildings, community gardens, Daniel Meyer Pool, ice rink, Nature Center, Oak Knoll Golf Course, Senior Center, tennis and pickleball courts), Ashland wineries, Ashland YMCA, City Council meeting room, churches and synagogues, Elks Club, fire station meeting rooms, historic Ashland Armory, hotel conference rooms, movie theaters (theaters for rent), Mt. Ashland Ski Resort, Oregon Shakespeare Festival theaters and the Bricks, restaurants and coffee shops, school and university buildings and athletic fields, ScienceWorks Museum (events and rooms for rent), and Thalden Pavilion.

## Challenges

Not all public spaces are ADA accessible or intergenerational in design. The challenge of homelessness is most evident in public spaces and this population may feel unwelcome.

## Comments

Outdoor, indoor, and combination public spaces are generally very good at reflecting Ashland's reputation as a tourist destination and cultural center.

## Further Research Needed

What are the barriers to usage of some of these spaces by those 18-34 or Non-white? To those with disabilities?

## **2. TRANSPORTATION**

Pedestrian, biking, buses, and on-call systems

## Data

In comparison to benchmark cities included in the NCS, ratings of ease of public parking are lower; street repair and sidewalk maintenance are rated low but are similar to benchmark cities. For a number of the ratings, those for the 18-34 age group are lower than the overall rating and there are also lower ratings in the Non-White groups. Ease of bicycle travel is an area rated more highly by the 18-34 age group.

Community Characteristics	Overall	By Age Group			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Rating - % Positive (excellent, good)								
Overall ease getting to usual places	81	79	75	84	83	80	83	62
Traffic flow on major streets	58	50	63	59	60	56	59	47
Ease of public parking	26	21	29	27	26	26	27	21
Ease of travel by car	57	43	60	63	60	54	59	47
Ease of travel by public transport.	34	15	45	38	30	38	34	38
Bus or transit services	61	48	60	67	62	58	59	58
Ease of bicycle travel	68	82	68	62	68	72	69	70
Ease of walking	91	88	89	92	92	89	92	80
Traffic enforcement	60	45	68	63	64	56	63	45
Street repair	38	34	35	40	40	34	39	20
Sidewalk maintenance	49	51	56	44	48	52	52	27
Street lighting	52	31	54	61	50	53	54	33

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019



Participation		By Age			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
Rating-% Positive (always, sometimes)	Overall	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Walked or biked instead of driving	83	86	94	62	62	65	82	87
Used bus or public transportation	22	12	35	19	19	24	20	36

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

### Assets

Easy access to freeway and state highway, Ashland Municipal airport (private planes) and convenient access to regional connections to major hubs, Ashland connector, bike paths, bike rental, bus, city streets with ADA corners, Lyft and Uber, shuttle, taxis, trails, local private plane airport and convenient regional airport with good connections to major hubs.

### Challenges

Accessible parking, maintenance of sidewalks and some streets. While ease of walking is rated high, even for older adults, the hills above Siskiyou Boulevard pose some limitations.

### Comments

Ashland is a small town, with all locations within easy access to one another. Public transportation, both route-scheduled and on-call, and private on-call transportation is relatively quite good.

### Further Research Needed

What are the barriers to greater usage of public transportation, especially among those aged 18-34? Is there good awareness of the Ashland Connector and Uber/Lyft? What travel destinations pose difficulties? How to get age 55+ to walk more?

## **3. HOUSING**

Affordable single- and multi-unit housing for all life stages

### Data

Ratings for the variety of housing options and affordability of quality housing are lower than benchmark cities and are lower for the 18-34 age group and Non-Whites. The quality of new development is also rated lower for these two groups.

Community Characteristics		By Age Group			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
NCS Rating - % Positive (excellent, good)	Overall	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Variety of housing options	17	9	16	22	18	16	17	12
Affordable quality housing	6	3	5	9	7	5	6	5
Quality of new development	47	33	55	48	47	47	50	30

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019



## Comments

Much of Ashland's housing stock is older; units that lack universal design and/or located in hilly terrain are not suitable for aging in place for the city's disproportionately large 65+ population.

## Further Research Needed

Quantitative evaluation of adequacy of housing in Ashland and surrounding towns by demographic and income group; quantitative and qualitative analysis of adequacy of senior housing by needs groups (private single and multi-family housing for sale and rent, 55+ independent-living communities, assisted living facilities, adult foster homes, 55+ continuing care communities, and specialized nursing facilities).

### **4. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**

Accessible, affordable, and fun activities

## Data

Ratings for community social characteristics of all types are uniformly lower for Non-Whites, as are several in the 18-34 age group and are reflected in the participation ratings.

Community Characteristics		By Age Group			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
Rating - % Positive (excellent, good)	Overall	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Recreational opportunities	90	85	88	95	91	91	92	74
Recreation programs	88	68	94	93	87	90	89	74
Education & enrichment opportunities	87	80	83	93	88	86	90	68
Cultural/arts/music opportunities	87	78	88	96	92	89	92	47
Adult educational opportunities	81	76	70	90	84	81	83	69
Social events and activities	76	55	79	86	83	68	79	54
City-sponsored special events	78	77	71	82	80	76	79	66
Religious or spiritual activities	89	76	82	96	90	84	94	57

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

Participation		By Age			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
Rating - % Positive (always, sometimes)	Overall	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Used Ashland recreation centers	64	59	69	62	62	65	65	53
Used Ashland public libraries	71	58	82	72	75	66	73	49
Attended a city sponsored event	65	52	83	62	62	64	67	60
Participated in a club	34	20	43	39	33	37	36	29

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

## Assets

Ashland has a plethora of assets that could foster social participation compared with other cities, especially of its size: concert venues, events, faith communities, festivals, movie theaters, museums, performing arts companies, and sports stadiums, including but not limited to the following:

4 <sup>th</sup> of July Celebration	Mt. Ashland Ski Resort
American Band Concert	Oak Knoll Golf Course
Ashland Branch, Jackson County Library Services	Oregon Cabaret Theater
Ashland Chamber of Commerce Greeters	Oregon Center for the Arts at SOU
Ashland Culinary Festival	Oregon Honey Festival
Ashland High School Mountain Avenue Theater	Oregon Shakespeare Festival
Ashland Independent Film Festival	OSF Green Show
Ashland New Plays Festival	Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at SOU
Ashland Recreation Division programs/classes	Rogue Valley Growers and Crafters Market
Ashland Senior Services Division classes/events	Rogue Valley Symphony
Chamber Music Concerts	Varsity Theater
Childrens Halloween Celebration	Schneider Art Museum
Chocolate Festival	ScienceWorks Hands-on Museum
Daniel Meyer Pool	Siskiyou Music Project Concerts
Earth Day Extravaganza	Siskiyou Woodcraft Guild Show
Festival of Lights	Southern Oregon Arts and Research Conference
First Friday Art Walk	Southern Oregon University lecture series
Hannon Library at SOU	Southern Oregon University Music Hall
Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary service clubs	Southern Oregon University Raider Stadium
Lithia Artisans Market	

## Challenges

The wealth of cultural attractions has made Ashland an attractive residential community and tourist destination and has served as the backbone of the local economy. Physical distancing restrictions due to the pandemic have had a disproportionately negative impact on the viability of most of the organizations in this category with ripple effects across all related commercial entities in the hospitality and retail businesses and the incomes of Ashland residents employed in them. Those in the 18-34 and NW groups show lower ratings and utilization than the overall residents, which might reflect whether the offerings are to their tastes and the affordability of some assets, but many are free and open to all.

## Comments

The speed with which there will be a return to pre-pandemic in-person gatherings is an unknown. Some of the benefits of remote participation that have been recognized may result in permanent changes in how Ashland residents access cultural, recreational and educational pursuits.

## Further Research Needed

Which of the assets listed above will have survived the pandemic? What are the barriers to utilization of Ashland social and cultural opportunities, particularly in younger and Non-White groups?

## 5. RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Feeling valued, and opportunities to learn from others and connect intergenerationally

This realm considers the differences among Ashland residents with respect to race, ethnicity, education, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, politics, and finances.

### Data

The low rating for fair treatment of residents by city government are similar to benchmark cities. Once again, there are lower ratings by younger age groups and Non-Whites.

Community Characteristics	Overall	By Age Group			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Rating - % Positive (excellent, good)								
Neighborhoodliness	66	61	58	71	64	66	68	45
Openness and acceptance of diverse people	61	53	61	66	60	65	64	48
Treating all residents fairly (City gov't)	44	22	44	52	44	45	48	24

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

In contrast to the ratings of community characteristics, actual social behaviors are more “friendly.”

Participation	Overall	By Age			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Rating - % Positive (always, sometimes)								
Talked to or visited with neighbors	95	86	94	99	97	91	94	92
Done a favor for a neighbor	82	60	85	91	82	80	81	84

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

### Assets

The City of Ashland has affirmed that social equity and racial justice part of its values and has formed a formal Social Equity and Racial Justice Commission. In addition, staff, curricula, and multiple clubs and organizations within Southern Oregon University are focused on diversity, equity and inclusion: Black Student Union, Latino Student Union, Gender and Sexuality Justice, Multi-racial Student Club, Native American Student Union, and Social Justice and Equity Center. Many other community groups embrace this domain in their work, including AIFF in its film selection, Amigo Club, Ashland Culture of Peace, Ashland Food Bank, Food & Friends congregant meals and Meals on Wheels, environmental and climate action groups, LEAP (energy assistance), Native American land acknowledgment, OHRA, OSF social justice focus, Peace House, Say Their Names memorial, schools-based meals programs, Senior Center, and World Peace Flame Monument at the Thalden Pavilion, among others.

### Challenges

“Diversity and inclusion” is often considered through the BIPOC lens more so than other historically marginalized groups. Southern Oregon University BIPOC students have communicated concerns about how they are treated in businesses and by landlords. It is difficult to increase the numbers of those who represent these groups when there is limited availability of affordable housing and jobs.

## Comments

Ashland is more homogeneous than many cities with the regard to race, language, and socioeconomic circumstances, however, if social media and Letters to the Editor are any indication, minor differences in worldviews tend to be magnified. Improvements in acceptance of those who may differ in beliefs and opinions could facilitate acceptance of those outside of the current composition of Ashland residents.

There are many avenues for intergenerational connections, but these have not been fully realized, perhaps because a number of those in older age groups have relocated to Ashland rather than having these connections established through younger family members or work colleagues.

## Further Research Needed

With such a low representation of those in the Not White/not Latinx in the NCS Ashland Livability Report, more research is needed of both a quantitative and qualitative basis to understand the barriers those in these groups may face in feeling respected and included.

## **6. CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

Work for pay, volunteering and engaging in local affairs

### Data

Ratings of the last four community characteristics are low but the same is true in other benchmark cities. Employment opportunities and overall direction that Ashland is taking are lower than benchmark cities. More males than females rated these low. Ratings for the 18-34 age group and Non-Whites are lower, in general.

Community Characteristics	Overall	By Age Group			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Rating - % Positive (excellent, good)								
Opportunities to participate in community matters	71	46	72	83	71	71	75	41
Opportunities to volunteer	84	63	84	93	85	82	85	66
Employment opportunities	12	10	12	13	15	8	13	5
Overall direction that Ashland is taking	42	21	51	48	47	39	45	31
Ashland as a place to work	47	39	45	54	51	43	49	34
Economic development	32	20	37	37	36	29	35	20
City gov't welcoming resident involvement	47	21	56	55	48	46	50	33
Overall confidence in Ashland government	40	26	50	41	45	35	41	35
Ashland gov't acting in best interest of community	44	30	52	46	47	41	47	31

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

As for civic participation, the low ratings for the last four items below are also low in other benchmark cities and do not differ appreciably for Non-Whites. A bright spot is the high degree of voting in local elections, including by Non-Whites, as well as overall involvement in campaigning. Civic participation, in general, is lower for the 18-34 age group.

A surprising finding for those who feel employment opportunities in Ashland are low is that more respondents in Ashland than in benchmark cities reported that they work in town, including working from home. However, these may be low-paying jobs.

Participation		By Age			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
Rating - % Positive (always, sometimes)	Overall	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Volunteered	58	46	70	57	56	60	56	72
Work in Ashland (inc. from home)	54	61	80	33	53	57	52	79
Read or watched local news*	74	55	69	88	80	64	74	73
Voted in local elections	91	77	94	96	92	89	89	98
Campaigned for issue, cause or candidate	44	34	39	50	38	48	42	41
Contacted Ashland elected officials	23	10	27	29	20	25	22	27
Contacted city for help or information	52	35	53	59	47	53	50	56
Attended a local public meeting	30	7	41	34	27	23	29	18
Watched a local public meeting	23	8	24	30	22	23	21	27

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019.

Data from the 2019 American Community Survey is provided to counteract a generally expressed view that Ashland residents are more affluent than those in Oregon as a whole.

Economic indicator	Oregon	Ashland
Households receiving SNAP	13.4%	13.4%
Income below poverty level	11.4%	9.8%
Median earnings (all)	\$35,643	\$25,414
Median earnings (worked full time)	\$44,634	\$41,068

Source: American Community Survey, 2019

### Assets

Many opportunities exist to participate in or volunteer with business organizations, civic organizations, citizen commissions, climate and environmental groups, faith communities, nonprofit organization, political groups, and schools. The City of Ashland maintains transparency with regard to meetings. The Ashland Chamber of Commerce is not a PAC and is significantly involved with supported local businesses, excelling in this regard during the pandemic and Almeda fire.

In the employment realm, there are several major employers: Asante Ashland Community Hospital, Oregon Shakespeare festival, and Southern Oregon University and many jobs in the hospitality and retail sectors. There are other major employers within a short commuting distance.

## Challenges

The low ratings for City government, especially among those 18-34 and Non-White, are at odds with the positive ratings for Ashland's quality of life and most City services (not all are detailed in this summary of the NCS data). However, distrust of government exists across benchmark cities. Respondents in Ashland and in other benchmark cities do not seem to avail themselves of opportunities to engage and to have influence with local government, which would seem to be easier in a town of Ashland's size.

## Comments

Measures of voter participation in the 2020 election are in line with NCS responses: there were 8,237 registered voters in Ashland and turnout was 90.32% compared to 79.51% for Jackson County overall.

## Further Research Needed

What is needed to promote civic participation in Ashland (attending city meetings, participating in surveys, contacting city officials) and to increase trust in its governance, particularly in the 18-34 age group and NW? Do residents feel that Ashland itself needs to offer broader employment opportunities?

## **7. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION**

Reliable sources of information that are disseminated through various means

### Data

Ratings of Ashland's sources of public information are rated lower by those 18-34 and males.

Community Characteristics		By Age Group			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
Rating - % Positive (excellent, good)	Overall	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Public Information	74	64	73	80	80	69	76	73

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report 2019

Those in the 18-34 are less likely to contact the city for help.

Participation		By Age			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
Rating - % Positive (always, sometimes)	Overall	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Contact city for help	52	35	53	59	47	53	50	56

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

### Assets

Newspapers (print and online); TV and Radio (RVTV, JPR, KSKQ in town; others nearby); City meetings on RVTV; cell service; broadband; informational city websites (Ashland Chamber, City of Ashland); City Source newsletter; Nixle alerts.



Unlike other communities in Oregon and the U.S., a high proportion of Ashland residents have computers and internet.

Computer and Internet Use	Percent
Households with a computer, percent, 2016-2019	96.9%
Households with a broadband Internet subscription, percent, 2016-2019	90.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 2016-2019

### Challenges

Despite the high degree of access to devices and broadband, given the age skew of the population, facility with technology might be an issue.

In addition, the Alameda fire exposed limitations regarding emergency communications in fast-developing situations.

### Comments

Not measured is the extent to which residents participate in social media and whether those sources are providing reliable information.

### Further Research Needed

How well is technology utilized by those of all ages, races and ethnicities? Does social media promote or detract from Ashland’s livability?

## **8. COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES**

Access to services, clinics and programs that promote wellness and healthy aging

### Data

Childcare/pre-school, air quality and mental health services garnered low ratings and are lower than benchmark cities. A number of community characteristics differ in the 18-34 and Non-White groups.

Community Characteristics	Overall	By Age Group			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Rating - % Positive (excellent, good)								
Overall public safety	86	74	82	92	86	87	85	92
Childcare/preschool	33	9	40	33	23	45	32	48
K-12 education	78	59	78	85	83	76	80	79
Adult education	81	70	70	90	84	81	83	69
Education and enrichment	87	80	83	93	88	86	90	68
Fitness opportunities	88	86	82	93	86	91	89	84
Drinking water	82	74	85	84	83	81	83	67
Health/wellness opportunities	82	75	80	87	85	80	85	67
Affordable quality food	64	48	58	76	62	67	65	62

Affordable quality health care	55	34	52	65	52	58	57	36
Preventive health services	63	46	59	71	60	65	63	59
Affordable quality mental health	27	4	39	34	27	26	28	21
Air quality	57	59	55	57	60	55	57	61

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

Participation		By Age			Sex		Race/Ethnic.	
Rating - % Positive (always, sometimes)	Overall	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	W	NW
Eat fruit	84	70	91	89	88	80	85	77
Physical activity	92	91	93	92	93	90	91	98
Rate health high	71	66	77	71	75	66	72	70
Use library	65	58	82	72	75	66	67	60

Source: National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019

Other information

There is a treasure trove of health data in the 2018 Community Health Assessment of Jackson and Josephine Counties (CHA) on data sources and indicators by topic.

- |                               |                              |               |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| Adverse Childhood Experiences | Diet and Physical Activity   | Hepatitis     |
| Food Insecurity               | Chronic Diseases             | HIV/AIDS      |
| Safety/Crime                  | Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs   | STDs          |
| Overall Health                | Mental Health                | Immunizations |
| Mortality                     | Oral Health                  | Access        |
|                               | Maternal/Child/Infant Health |               |

As an example of specificity of the data and indicators under just one of the topics, Access, see below. There are corresponding figures and analysis for each topic.

Access	Data indicator	Data Source
	% population without insurance	U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2012-2016
	% population under 65 years uninsured	U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates: Health Insurance Interactive Data Tool, 2016
	% population under 19 uninsured	U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates: Health Insurance Interactive Data Tool, 2016
	Medical health care providers per capita - primary care physicians	County Health Rankings, 2015
	Nurse midwives, nurse practitioners, physician assistants per capita	County Health Rankings, 2017
	Behavioral health care providers per capita	County Health Rankings, 2017
	Dentists per capita	County Health Rankings, 2016
	% adults who have a personal doctor or health care provider	BRFSS, 2012-2015
	% adults reporting not seeing health care provider due to cost in past year	BRFSS, 2012-2015
	% students reporting routine checkup in past year	Oregon Healthy Teens, 2017

One take-away from the vast number of data points is that a top cause of mortality in terms of rate per 100,000 from chronic lower respiratory disease is 47.8% in Jackson County compared to 39.7% in Oregon as a whole, raising the question of the extent to which air quality may be a significant issue. Other causes of death found in older adults, like cancer and heart disease, are somewhat lower in Jackson County.

Following the Community Health Assessment, Jefferson Regional Health Alliance led a collaborative planning effort among multiple organizational partners to develop Jackson and Josephine Counties Community Health Improvement Plan 2019-2022 (CHIP), a community-level strategic plan to address priority health issues. The priority issues examined included:

Substance Use	Environmental Health
Mental Health and Wellbeing	Oral Health
Health Care Access	Food Insecurity
Fragmentation of Services	Communicable Diseases
Aging (dementia, falling, etc.)	

From these, Behavioral Health (mental health and substance abuse), Housing, and Parenting Support and Life Skills were selected for action plans.

#### Assets

Asante Ashland Community Hospital and its pursuit of Age-Friendly Hospital designation; alternative health options; Ashland Supportive Housing; Ashland Parks and Recreation Department Services; Ashland Senior Services Division programs; Ashland YMCA and fitness centers; Food Bank; groceries and farmers' markets; healthcare providers, community health centers and pharmacies; OLLI at SOU; outdoor recreational opportunities; preschool through university education; Rogue Valley Council of Governments Food and Friends and Meals on Wheels; SOU Youth programs.

#### Challenges

Local controls for fire risk cannot address the issues of climate change and Ashland's topography that funnels smoke from even distant fires into our City.

#### Comments

The extent of the health actions being pursued in the two-county area as part of CHIP will have favorable results for Ashland. However, given the disproportionately high number of those in the 65+ age group in Southern Oregon and particularly in Ashland, modifiable health aspects of this population must be a priority since these are costly and impact resources for other age groups. This is not apparently considered as such in CHIP. Further discussions are needed.

#### Further Research Needed

Causes of emergency response requests, hospitalization and mortality by age, race and ethnicity within Ashland.

## FOR MORE DATA

The full reports cited in this Needs Assessment can be viewed at the links provided.

- National Community Survey, Ashland Livability Report, 2019:  
[https://www.ashland.or.us/Files/2019\\_National\\_Community\\_Survey.pdf](https://www.ashland.or.us/Files/2019_National_Community_Survey.pdf)
- American Community Survey, 2016-2020 (can drill down to Ashland and comparative data):  
<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs>
- One Rogue Valley: Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, SOREDI, March 2020:  
<https://soredi.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2019-11-08-SORED-CEDES-FINAL.pdf>
- 2018 Community Health Assessment of Jackson and Josephine Counties, Jefferson Regional Health Alliance: <https://jeffersonregionalhealthalliance.org/allinforhealth/2018-community-health-assessment/>
- Jackson and Josephine Counties Community Health Improvement Plan 2019-2022 (CHIP):  
<https://jeffersonregionalhealthalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Full-CHIP-FINAL.pdf>
- Census: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/ashlandcityoregon/PST045219>

### Potential Initiatives for the Livable Ashland Alliance

In general, the characteristics that the Steering Committee for the Livable Ashland Alliance has set for the initiatives it identifies, proposes or promotes are ones that involve several organizations working together within the Ashland community, directly or indirectly benefit multiple age groups, address one or more of the key issues that have been identified in the Steering Committee's Preliminary Ashland Livability Needs Assessment and be defined in terms of the AARP 8 Domains of Livability.

Possible initiatives identified through the needs assessment are listed in terms of the domain, issue addressed, initiative, and partners.

Domain 1: Outdoor spaces and buildings

Issue: Lack of accessible outdoor public space for dining and relaxation

Suggested initiative: Redesign of Plaza area with permanent dining and gathering spaces

Potential Partners: City of Ashland, Ashland Chamber of Commerce, Ashland Parks and Recreation (APRC)

Domain 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Issue: Limited number of conversational seating arrangements that are socially distanced in open spaces throughout the city

Suggested initiative: Install such seating in multiple park settings (possibly sponsored or named donation)

Potential Partners: APRC, homeowner and neighborhood groups

Domain 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Issue: Need for seating and activities for adults adjacent to playground spaces

Suggested initiative: Install adult recreational equipment and adjacent seating in multiple park settings

Potential Partners: APRC, Ashland Senior Advisory Committee (ASAC)

#### Domain 2: Transportation

Issue: limited accessible public parking; street repair and sidewalk maintenance problems

Suggested initiative: Focused awareness and identification of specific problems through Walk Audit

Potential Partners: City of Ashland, Ashland Senior Services Division (ASSD), Ashland Chamber of Commerce, homeowner and neighborhood groups

#### Domain 3: Housing and Domain 5: Respect and social inclusion

Issue: Seniors living alone in larger older homes in the SOU neighborhood having problems of affordability and companionship; shortage of affordable housing for SOU students

Suggested Initiative: Initiate a SOU student housing program to house students with older adults

Potential Partners: SOU, ASSD, OLLI

#### Domain 3: Housing and Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Limited number of beds (both private pay and Medicaid) in congregant living facilities in Ashland relative to large pool of seniors; shortage of paid and unpaid caregivers

Suggested Initiative: Explore expanding pool of licensed adult foster home operators in existing homes as a possibly faster route to increased beds than construction of new residential facilities

Potential Partners: Existing operators, RVCOG, Chamber of Commerce, ACHF

#### Domain 4: Social Participation

Issue: COVID and Alameda Fire created social isolation in older adults and learning loss in K-12 students

Suggested Initiative: Intergenerational tutoring and educational enrichment programs

Potential Partners: Ashland YMCA, Jackson County Library System (JCLS), OLLI, Ashland School District (ASD), Ashland Community Hospital Foundation (ACHF)

#### Domain 4: Social Participation

Issue: Social isolation risks for older adults

Suggested Initiative: Social calls, listening programs; publicity about available connection options

Potential Partners: OLLI, ASSD, ACHF, Faith-based organizations, Age-Wise/Age Well, Ashland At Home (AAH)

#### Domain 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

Issue: Many players in this space and there may be duplicated efforts and gaps

Suggested Initiative: Convene and encourage collaboration among organizations working on equity and inclusion

Potential Partners: SOU, ASD, Ashland Social Justice and Racial Equity Commission, OSF, OHRA, Peace House, SO Pride, BASE SO, SO Equity Coalition, UNETE, Northwest Seasonal Workers Assoc.

#### Domain 6: Civic Participation and Employment

Issue: Limited awareness of senior and youth volunteer opportunities in Ashland

Suggested Initiative: Outreach, promotion and recruitment of new residents, retirees and youth into volunteer programs in community nonprofits, agencies and citizen commissions

Potential Partners: City, ASSD, ASD, Chamber of Commerce, Ashland Newcomers, OLLI, Community Volunteer Network (CVN), AAH

#### Domain 6: Civic Participation and Employment

Issue: Engagement of businesses in area around SOU with the university community

Suggested initiative: Establish University District

Potential Partners: SOU, OLLI, Chamber of Commerce, businesses in area

Domain 6: Civic Participation and Employment

Issue: Limited communications between and among organizations that impact livability

Suggested Initiative: Regular roundtable meetings of stakeholder organizations to discuss activities and initiatives affecting residents in Ashland, organized by Livable Ashland

Potential Partners: City of Ashland, APRC, ASD, Chamber of Commerce (ACC), relevant agencies and nonprofit organizations

Domain 7: Communication and Information

Issue: Older adults who lack information technology skills; secondary school students with limited research skills

Suggested initiative: Older adult/student mentoring and training programs

Potential Partners: ASSD, JCLS, ASD

Domain 7: Communication and Information

Issue: Limited awareness of activities in the community that support livability

Suggested Initiative: Creation of Livable Ashland website

Potential Partners: Chamber of Commerce, Ashland.News, Project A

Domain 7: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Severely limited childcare and pre-school resources, with impact on working parents

Suggested Initiative: Assessment of barriers to attracting childcare workers and providers

Potential Partners: existing providers, ASD, ScienceWorks, YMCA, SOU, Chamber of Commerce

Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Mental health challenges for kids and parents post-COVID/fire

Suggested Initiative: Evaluation of needs and resources

Potential Partners: ASD, ACHF, OLLI, AACH, Grandmas 2 Go

Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Need for focused health care for older adults; opportunity for clinical experience for healthcare professionals interested in geriatrics

Suggested initiative: Specialized geriatric care program at Asante Ashland Community Hospital (AACH)

Potential Partners: AACH, SOU, Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU), ACHF

Domain 8: Community and Health Services

Issue: Health care advocacy for older adults, especially those living alone

Suggested initiative: Certificate or degree programs in healthcare advocate and geriatric care manager programs at SOU; encouragement of existing geriatric care managers to employ and mentor extenders

Potential Partners: Asante Health Care System, Providence Health System, SOU, ASSD, local geriatric care managers

Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Lack of navigation and advocacy for older adults experiencing functional decline; caregiver pool (paid and unpaid) inadequate

Suggested initiatives: Increase awareness of supports; encourage planning ahead

Potential Partners: OLLI, SOU, OHSU, Rogue Community College, Rogue Valley Council of Governments Senior and Disability Services, ACHF, ASSD

Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Older adult health and wellness, both physical and mental

Suggested Initiative: Community education programs

Potential Partners: YMCA, OLLI, ASSD, AACH, ACHF, Jackson Regional Health Alliance (JRHA)

## **Ashland Livability Actions Through March 2022**

The Steering Committee for the Livable Ashland Alliance is monitoring livability initiatives that have been or are being actualized since Ashland joined the AARP Network. The following list summarizes the status of the initiatives of which it is aware by domain and issue addressed. It is in the process of compiling additional actions that have been undertaken by other agencies and organizations.

Domain 1: Outdoor spaces and buildings

Issue: Pandemics ups and downs limited opportunities for in-person classes and connections at the Ashland Senior Center; additional space for movement classes had already been needed

Status: ASSD has applied for an AARP Community Challenge grant to build an outdoor classroom space with an appropriate floor surface and shade structure near the deck of Ashland Senior Center.

Domain 1: Outdoor spaces and buildings

Issue: Reduced City funding resources for outdoor spaces and the built-environment

Status: APRC and City departments are considering service and staffing adjustments that will best preserve livability and sustainability

Domain 4: Social Participation

Issue: Social isolation risks for older adults

Status:

- Ashland Senior Center reopened December 6 with limited hours and is gradually bringing back in-person programming to provide more social connection.
- The Ashland Senior Phone Buddy program, now with 16 volunteers, is working to provide more older adults who would like to be matched with a volunteer buddy for regular social phone calls.
- OLLI at SOU instructors were encouraged to provide opportunities for informal conversations within the 80-100 courses offered via Zoom each quarter from Fall 2020-Winter 2022 when in-person classes were not possible and introduced Conversation Connections and Guided Explorations that offer an interactive focus.

Domain 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

Issue: Ageism

Status:

- Toya Cooper, the new VP of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at SOU has committed to inclusion of ageism as a focus of her efforts. Her office co-hosted with OLLI a talk by Louise Aronson, a geriatrician, on Aging, Ageism and the Future of Elderhood that was attended by about 250 participants.
- A new SOU faculty specializing in gerontology, Noriko Toyokawa, is planning to apply for SOU to be an Age Friendly University through a gerontological education group. She has met with ASAC and OLLI members to discuss the application process.

Domain 6: Civic Participation and Employment

Issue: Engagement of businesses in area around SOU with the university community

Status: The formation of a “University District” has been included on the list of SOU’s 150th anniversary activities.

Domain 6: Civic Participation and Employment

Issue: need for informal in-home supports for older adults

Status: The local Village program, Ashland At Home, which was inactive during the pandemic, is reopening as an all-volunteer organization serving Ashland and Talent

Domain 7: Communication and Information

Issue: Adults with limited technology skills for utilizing MyChart, telemedicine, community services and connections

Status:

- AACH arranged a connection between JCLS and Asante Information Technology to start a collaborative project for educating the community about access to medical information and medical records by leveraging the Library system’s resources, including their DART mobile tech van
- In collaboration with JCLS, a series of computer labs for older adults are scheduled at Ashland Senior Center

Domain 7: Communication and Information

Issue: Reduced coverage of Ashland news due to elimination of the Ashland Tidings and reduced print editions of the Mail Tribune

Status: Formation of Ashland.News, a non-profit that will provide free, comprehensive, locally sourced online news utilizing journalistic principles in its reporting and choice of topics. This will be an important megaphone for initiatives of the Livable Ashland Alliance.

Domain 7: Communication and Information

Issue: The City did not purchase the 2021 or 2022 Ashland Livability Report of the National Community Survey, which would have identified how the pandemic and fire impacted perceptions of Ashland’s livability and participation in comparison to the 2019 data

Status: The City Council is instead surveying community residents in July 2022 to ascertain funding priorities; the Steering Committee will determine if the results have utility in fleshing out the Preliminary Needs Assessment.

Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Air quality due to smoke

Status: AACH is partnering with Ashland Forest Resiliency and several others stakeholders in preparation and dissemination of a brochure and other materials to inform Ashland residents of health risks from wildfire smoke and mitigation opportunities as part of the City’s Smokewise Ashland effort.

Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Limited supports for older adults experiencing functional decline, especially those who are Medicaid eligible, with impacts on their working family members

Status: ASAC members toured the new AllCare Program for All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) in Grants Pass, which provides daytime services, and will be advocating for expansion of their coverage area to reach Ashland residents.



Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Youth experiencing learning loss and health challenges due to the pandemic and Alameda fire

Status:

- The 2021 Patrons Campaign-Help Kids Thrive of Ashland Community Hospital Foundation provided financial support for the Ashland and Phoenix-Talents school districts summer school programs including expanded hours for the School Nurse Program.
- ACHF also provided Ashland students with a learning boost through Brainpop interactive videos and outdoor science kits that were used at school and then taken home for ongoing learning. English language learners also received more focused instruction through a research-based language program.

Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Older adult health and wellness, both physical and mental

Status:

- AACH is continuing development of the hospital as an Age Friendly Health System. Goal is to be certified as such by the parent organization. Biweekly meetings of workgroup have resumed; steering committee are occurring bimonthly. Initial efforts to recruit a Chair in Geriatrics begun.
- ACHF awarded a \$325,000 grant to AACH to fund staff education for the Age-Friendly Initiative to support geriatric care.
- The Ashland YMCA offered a Healthy Living course at OLLI.
- Asante providers have presented two health lecture series as part of OLLI's free, community lectures.
- ASSD arranged for several COVID vaccine events.

Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Issue: Limited knowledge of and planning for care supports for oneself and others

Status:

- OLLI at SOU, with sponsorship from Asante, AARP and Rogue Valley Manor, provided a three-part webinar series, Plan4Care: Values and Choices, with an intergenerational focus. There were almost 600 registrants.
- The recordings, slides and resource materials from the series are being hosted on the OLLI website; awareness of these free materials has been publicized to current and former OLLI members and the general public; registrants have been encouraged to pass them on to others.

## Next Steps

The Steering Committee of the Living Ashland Alliance plans these additional steps before implementation of an Action Plan:

- Utilize focus groups and stakeholder interviews to fill gaps in the Preliminary Needs Assessment
- Identify livability initiatives that have occurred since joining the AARP Network that were missed in this report, as well as ones in progress
- Publicize the aims of the Ashland Livability Alliance to the general public to inspire organizational and individual buy-in on enhancing Ashland's livability
- Prioritize initiatives with most potential for impacting Ashland livability
- Formulate an Action Plan
- Identify interest and capacity of prospective partners in working on each Action
- Consider a more formal structure or nonprofit status for the Livable Ashland Alliance