



City of Dallas

OFFICE OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

SENIOR SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN

2025



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Dallas, in collaboration with the Office of Housing & Community Empowerment (OHCE) and Guidehouse, has developed the 2025 Senior Services Strategic Plan (Plan). This Plan serves as a roadmap for enhancing City programs and services to better meet the evolving needs of older adults in Dallas. It outlines a clear vision, along with strategic goals and actionable steps to guide implementation. The Plan originated as a budget recommendation driven by the Senior Affairs Commission's advocacy and proactive efforts to gain deeper insight into the priorities and challenges facing residents aged 60 and older.

This Plan provides the City with an opportunity to rethink its approach to policymaking, service delivery, and decisions for future planning. The City of Dallas and Guidehouse strategically and intentionally engaged all involved parties, including those in underserved communities, while developing this Plan. Guidehouse supported the City of Dallas in conducting a thorough needs assessment, prioritized existing service needs, and identified potential new services to inform the Plan's development. Throughout all outreach activities, research, and deliverable development, the City of Dallas and Guidehouse took a human-centered approach and kept the older adult population and their families and caregivers at the focus of strategic planning efforts.

Methodology

From October 2024 to June 2025, the City of Dallas and Guidehouse engaged in research and outreach activities to inform and support the development of the Plan. These outreach activities and reports are described below.

Activity Title	Description
City Services Gap Analysis	The City Services Gap Analysis provides an overview of the demographic landscape of the City of Dallas and identifies gaps in services as described by stakeholder engagement and data analysis. Gaps were identified among stakeholder engagement and data analysis using publicly available data from the U.S. Census and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
City-wide Survey	The City-wide Survey is a paper and virtual survey soliciting feedback from a wide audience about the needs of older adults in Dallas. A public survey was made available and distributed to the general public, including, but not limited to, older adults, city program participants, family members, caregivers, and interested community members. The survey responses provide evaluation of programs, resources, and services currently available in the City of Dallas.
Demographic Report	The Demographic Report provides insights into the residents of the City of Dallas from a demographic perspective. The report defines strategic plans, the state of aging in the city, who are the older adults that live in Dallas, and the health and human services landscape of the city. Readers should feel informed about who the Plan targets and why.
District Listening Sessions	The District Listening Sessions were in-person sessions that the Senior Affairs Commission (SAC) and the City of Dallas held in each of the 14 Districts focused on creating greater awareness of older adult issues, gathering data regarding older adult concerns in each district, and offering community information about available resources. These sessions provide district-specific

	insight into the services requested by older adults, what services are available, and ideas for better serving the communities.
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Activity Title	Description
Landscape Analysis Scan	The City of Dallas Landscape Analysis Scan Summary is a high-level summary of the data collected from the City of Dallas Organizational Survey, which is a survey of providers of social services to city residents in Dallas, Denton, and Collin County. This analysis shows key information about the overall landscape of services available to older adults not offered by the City of Dallas.
Public Listening Sessions	The Public Listening Sessions were in-person and virtual meeting opportunities for in-depth discussion, follow-up, and connection with the older adult community who access the system and the public. The sessions provide on-the-ground realities and insights directly from participants, families, caregivers, and providers.
Senior Affairs Commission (SAC) Listening Session	The SAC Listening Session was a hybrid meeting opportunity (both in-person and virtual) in which members of the 15-member SAC advisory board assisting the City in improving the lives of older adults attended. Attendees provided their insight and feedback on long-term goals, improvements, and needs for the lives of older adults within their districts.
Senior Services Index	The Senior Services Index is a comprehensive list of departments and services provided to older adults by the City of Dallas. The index information was partially collected during five sets of interviews with City program leadership and staff to assess strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and priorities for City programs serving older adults. The index provides input from City leadership and program staff on the current state, future, and sustainability of the programs and services for older adults.
Senior Services Needs Assessment Results Summary	The Senior Services Needs Assessment Results Summary consolidated stakeholder feedback and data collected through all research and outreach activities to identify the current needs of older adults and gaps in services and support offered by the City of Dallas and service providers. The City used the results summary to evaluate recommendations including strategic initiatives, municipality-driven programming, and policy recommendations for the City's Senior Services Strategic Plan.
Service Provider Listening Session	The Service Provider Listening Session was a virtual meeting opportunity in which providers of social services attended and provided their input to five questions related to the availability and delivery of services for older adults. The session communicated the gaps identified by providers that partner with the City of Dallas.
Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Dashboard	The SDOH Dashboard is an information management tool developed to visually present key social determinants of health related to one of the eight Domain need areas, as set forth in the Needs Assessment section later in this document. The dashboard uses data from the 2022 and 2023 Census and CDC to provide a comprehensive overview of data available to draw connections between gaps in services and characteristics of the population of interest.

2019 Age Friendly Dallas Plan Crosswalk	The crosswalk is a tool that maps areas of overlap between the 2019 Age-Friendly Dallas Plan and other existing city strategic plans. It builds on an inventory of progress—compiled through evaluations, listening sessions, surveys, staff interviews, and research—to identify shared strategies, assign ownership, and highlight opportunities for collaboration. This helps the City streamline efforts and enhance its age-friendliness while maintaining its national standing designated from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).
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Overview of Senior Services Strategic Plan

Following the completion of all research and outreach activities, including input from the community, service providers, key stakeholders, City staff, and the Senior Affairs Commission (SAC), the findings were thoroughly evaluated. The following represent the most critical gaps to be addressed:

- The lack of knowledge and awareness of services available to older adults, and
- The need for assistance in accessing services for older adults.

With these key findings in mind, the City of Dallas and Guidehouse developed a comprehensive list of goal and strategy recommendations to address the identified gaps in services and support for older adults. The City selected goals and strategies from this list to prioritize in this Plan. From this list, the City prioritized specific goals and strategies to include in the Plan. All selected goals, strategies, and action items align with six main directives:

1. **Create a City-wide Departmental Outreach and Education Plan:** Aims to increase internal city outreach and awareness and to inform and educate city officials not only about city services available to older adults in the City of Dallas but also to ensure that age-friendly principles and older adult needs are considered when policies are drafted and implemented.
2. **Create a Partnership-Focused Outreach and Education Plan:** Aims to increase outreach to and engage current and future partners, providers, and other organizations providing services and supports to older adults in the City of Dallas.
3. **Create a Volunteer Engagement Plan:** Aims to coordinate and recruit volunteers to execute support activities and programs designed to support older adults, their caregivers, and others involved in supporting older adults.
4. **Create a Stakeholder Engagement Plan:** Aims to directly engage communities, departments, and businesses in supporting older adults in the City of Dallas.
5. **Establish and Support Advocacy and Civic Engagement Efforts:** Aims to increase / develop more effective advocacy for older adults in the City of Dallas.
6. **Execute Communications Recommendations:** Implement recommendations made through the Communications Findings and Recommendations report commissioned by OHCE in 2025. These findings and recommendations stem from stakeholder engagement activities and research conducted on the most effective ways to transmit information to older adults in the City of Dallas.

Thus, all strategies and action items are organized under 6 goals, each corresponding to and addressing one of those key directives. The City collaborated with CoSpero Consulting to create the sixth goal specifically aimed at improving its communication of senior services. Each goal is split into given timeframes to further break down the level of effort required to accomplish each strategy. All goals are intended to be additive to one another. Many strategies and action items in each goal will benefit from the successful implementation of the strategies and action items related to other goals. Altogether, the goals, strategies, and associated action items encompass the Plan, aiming to guide

the City of Dallas in improving and updating its senior services. Goals and their associated strategies and action items generally follow the shortened structure shown below.

Goal 1

Implementation Timeframe

- Strategy 1 ([Domain Area of Need]): [Strategy]
 - *Action Item: [Action item]*
- Strategy 2 ([Domain Area of Need]): [Strategy]
 - *Action Item: [Action item]*

Implementation Timeframe

- Strategy 1 ([Domain Area of Need]): [Strategy]
 - *Action Item: [Action item]*
- Strategy 2 ([Domain Area of Need]): [Strategy]
 - *Action Item: [Action item]*

Implementation Timeframe

- Strategy 1 ([Domain Area of Need]): [Strategy]
 - *Action Item: [Action item]*
- Strategy 2 ([Domain Area of Need]): [Strategy]
 - *Action Item: [Action item]*

For example, see the Goal 1 below, which is a shortened version of Goal 1 in this Plan.

Goal 1: Create a City-wide Departmental Outreach and Education Plan **Short-Term Strategies and Action Items**

- Strategy 1 (Information and Communication): Continually monitor the SSSP's progress toward goals, strategies, and action items.
 - *Action Item: Create an SSSP Implementation Guide to track progress against Goals, Strategies, and Action Items.*
 - *Action Item: Develop a SSSP Dashboard for transparency purposes and track and measure SSSP implementation progress.*

Medium-Term Strategies and Action Items

- Strategy 1 (Information and Communication): Share a scheduling resource / make it available to share all older adult events / activities offered at all city recreational centers, libraries, etc.
 - *Action Item: Develop and maintain a centralized online dashboard that consolidates all older adult events and activities offered by City of Dallas departments. Incorporate asset mapping to identify and visualize available resources, enhance accessibility, and facilitate coordinated scheduling and planning across departments.*

Long-Term Strategies and Action Items

- Strategy 1 (Multi-Domain): Continually monitor the demand and utilization of city services to make data-driven decisions about imminent and future service needs for older adults.
 - *Action Item: Implement a regular survey process for older adults to assess satisfaction levels, emerging needs, and barriers to accessing city services, using both digital and paper formats to ensure broad participation.*

For a complete list of the Plan's goals, strategies, and action items, see the Senior Services Strategic Plan Goals section starting on page 24.

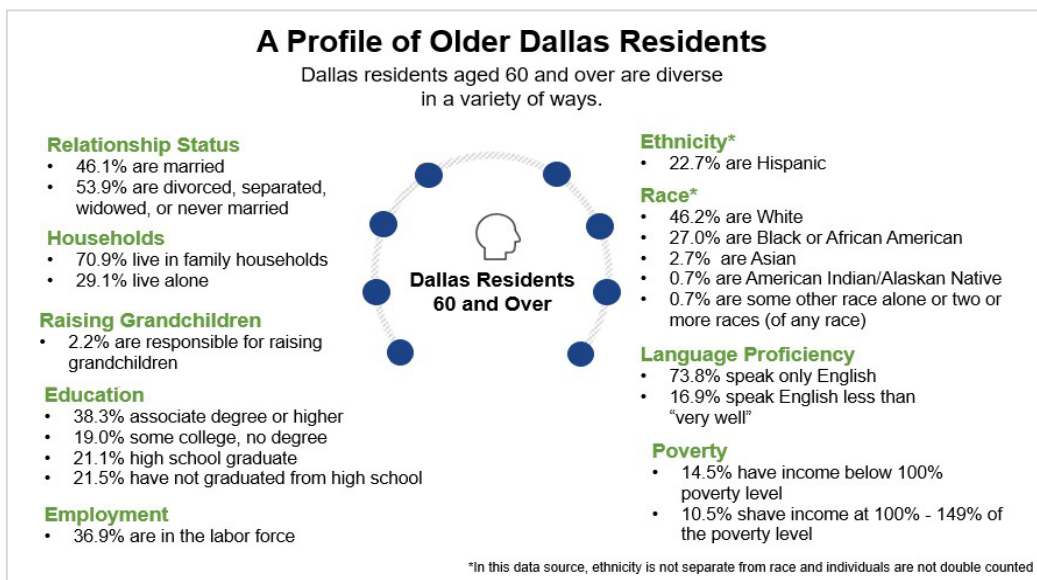
DALLAS' OLDER ADULT POPULATION

To create a Senior Services Strategic Plan that accurately addresses the current needs of older adults in Dallas, it is important to understand the older adult population and the current services and supports available to them. The City of Dallas collaborated with Guidehouse to conduct outreach activity and engage key stakeholders to inform the foundation of information that led to this Plan. This section will present background information on the City of Dallas's aging population and services offered to support them. The information included below was produced by the Demographic Report.

Older Adult Population in the City of Dallas

Dallas has a younger population compared to national and state averages. As of the 2020 U.S. Census, adults aged 65 and older made up 11.16% of Dallas's population, which is lower than the national average of 16.8% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Similarly, 16.22% of Dallas residents were aged 60 and above, compared to 23.26% nationally, according to the 2020 U.S. Census. In comparison to Texas cities of similar sizes, San Antonio and Austin, the proportion of residents over age 60 and above varies. San Antonio, with a population of 1,434,625 has 273,990 residents over the age of 60, representing 19.10% of the overall population, is three points higher than Dallas. Austin, with a population of 961,855, has 132,536 residents over the age of 60 representing 13.78% of the overall population, falls three points below Dallas. The state of Texas as a whole has 19.04% of the population aged 60 and over (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Despite these lower percentages, Dallas has experienced a significant 57% increase in residents aged 60 and above between 2000 and 2020, growing from 135,155 to 211,705 individuals.

Figure 1. A Profile of Older Dallas Residents



This demographic shift has implications for planning and service delivery, especially in Districts and ZIP codes with higher concentrations of older adults as compared to those with lower concentrations. The Texas Demographic Center expects the older adult population in Texas to grow from 13% to 20% of the total population by 2035 (Texas Demographic Center, n.d.). Extrapolated to the population of the City of Dallas, there will be more than 300,000 older adults living in the City by 2035. As Texas anticipates a 20–50% growth in its 65+ population every decade, Dallas must proactively develop creative strategies that represents populations with unique needs across varying cultural, socioeconomic, and backgrounds.

A map of the City's 14 districts is shown in **Figure 2**.

Dallas City Districts to the right (Johnson, 2024). Characteristics and social measures that can be used to understand the older Dallas population are provided in **Figure 1. A Profile of Older Dallas Residents** above, from the Demographic Report and the Administration for Community Living (Administration for Community Living, 2024).

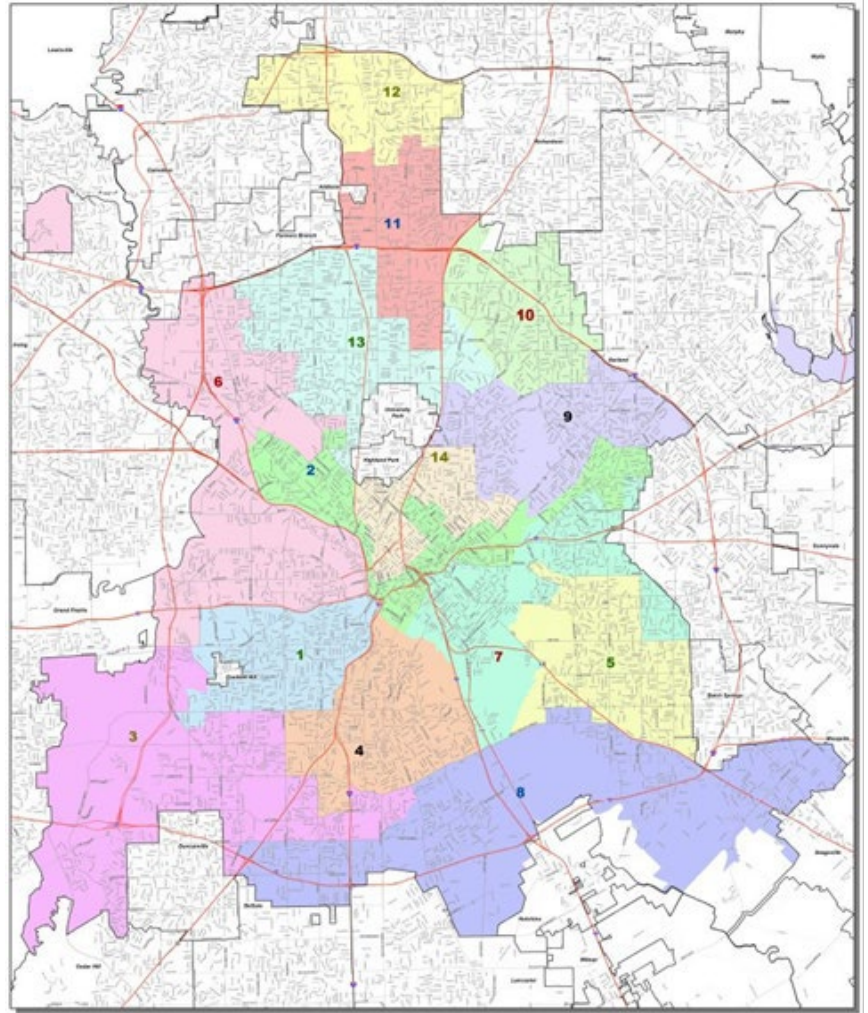
Figure 2. Dallas City Districts

Older Adults with Disabilities

Additionally, Dallas has a percentage of adults 60 and over with disabilities that is 2% higher than the national average. Many older adults will develop the need or desire for services and / or support in one or more areas of their daily life. Some of those needs may be the following:

- Changes in cognitive function may affect a person's mental processes, such as memory, attention, problem-solving, and learning abilities. These changes can range from mild impacts, such as the need for memory aids and reminders, to more intensive supports like those with advanced Alzheimer's disease and other diagnoses of dementia.
- Changes to a person's ambulation, or how they stand, walk, or move independently also occur as one ages. The causes of these changes typically occur due to changes in muscle and bone mass, injury (e.g., falls), or a specific medical diagnosis. A person may adopt a mobility aid such as a wheelchair, assistive technology, or other supports to allow them to go about their daily activities independently.
- Individuals who are blind or have low vision may require different training or support to read, write, navigate their surroundings, and perform certain tasks of daily living
- Deaf and hard of hearing refer to a spectrum of hearing ability levels, varying from mild hearing loss to no ability to hear sound at all. People who are deaf or hard of hearing use different methods for communication, such as sign language, lip reading, or talking while deaf. They may also participate differently in verbal conversations, and use assistive technologies like hearing aids, closed captions, and other devices.

Older adults with disabilities have unique needs that require targeted support that assist them to enjoy the quality of life they desire. Approximately 8% of Dallas residents report difficulty with self-care activities such as bathing, dressing, and managing medications (Administration for Community Living, 2024). This is 2% above the national average. Additionally, the need for support to live independently exceeds the national average with 13% reporting support needs for mobility or other



activities to live independently and engage fully in social and community activities (Administration for Community Living, 2024).

Older LGBTQIA+ Adults

After California, Texas has the second largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and other gender and sexual identity (LGBTQIA+) overall state population (Johnson, 2024). The City of Dallas is ranked 6th in the United States based on number of LGBTQIA+ residents over the age of 18.

211,000 Dallas, Fort Worth, and Arlington residents, or 4.0% of the total population for these metropolitan areas, identify as LGBTQIA+ (Conron, Luther, & Goldberg, 2021)¹. Applying the national percentage to Dallas, it can be estimated that 4,181 residents in Dallas over the age of 60 identify as LGBTQIA+ (1.97%).

While the majority of those who identify as LGBTQIA+ are younger, nationally, 2.3% of Baby Boomers (born 1946-1946) and 1.1% of the Silent Generation (born 1945 or earlier) identify as LGBTQIA+ (Jones, 2024). Throughout their lives, LGBTQIA+ older adults have faced discrimination that can lead to difficulties in health and wellbeing, economic security, and social connections, all of which are especially important in aging (Movement Advancement Project and SAGE, 2017).

Many older adults who identify as LGBTQIA+ grew up during a time when openly practicing their sexual preference was criminalized. Even though legal protection has improved, it has come late in life for many, leaving gaps in financial security and healthcare access. For example, same-sex couples were denied Social Security spousal benefits until 2015, which has had lasting economic impacts on older LGBTQIA+ individuals (Next City, 2025). Those lasting impacts include reduced retirement incomes and financial stability as a result of being ineligible for benefits that heterosexual couples received automatically in having a legally recognized spouse.

Safety and housing are also pressing concerns. Many LGBTQIA+ older adults fear discrimination in traditional senior living facilities, leading some to hide their identities or avoid seeking care altogether. There are several organizations, like the Resource Center in Dallas, aiming to provide inclusive housing options specifically for LGBTQIA+ older adults, but affordable housing remains a need reported by older adults via outreach activities conducted as part of this Plan (Resource Center, n.d.).

In addition to having an affordable place to live, LGBTQIA+ older adults also need a safe, affirming environment where they can age with dignity *and* community. Community support remains essential for this population, who already face social isolation, lack of family support, and limited access to culturally competent care as a result of their sexual and gender identity. Many live alone and face loneliness, especially those without children or estranged from family. Programs that foster connection, provide inclusive services, and promote visibility are critical to improving quality of life for this population. In all, older adults who identify as LGBTQIA+ face additional challenges unique to them and require additional supports from their communities.

Other Populations of Consideration

In Dallas, older men of color, older immigrants, and grandparents raising grandchildren face intersecting challenges that reflect broader systemic inequities. Older men of color often contend with the cumulative effects of lifelong racial discrimination, which can manifest in poorer health outcomes, limited access to quality healthcare, and economic insecurity (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2024).

These disparities are compounded by ageism and underrepresentation in aging services. Many have worked in physically demanding or low-wage jobs without pensions or adequate retirement savings, leaving them vulnerable in later life. Additionally, they may face mistrust or bias in healthcare settings, which can deter them from seeking necessary care.

Older immigrants in Dallas face a distinct set of barriers, including language access, cultural isolation, and limited eligibility for public benefits. Many are not eligible for Social Security or Medicare due to their immigration status or work history, and they may rely heavily on family or community networks for support. Navigating healthcare, housing, and legal systems can be daunting without culturally and linguistically appropriate services. Fear of deportation or legal repercussions can also prevent some from accessing the help they need, even when eligible.

Grandparents raising grandchildren—often referred to as “grandfamilies”—are another group facing significant strain. In Dallas, as in much of the U.S., many older adults unexpectedly become primary caregivers due to parental incarceration, substance abuse, or other crises. These grandparents often step into caregiving roles with little warning, limited financial resources, and minimal legal support. They may struggle with caring for children, while also managing their own health and retirement needs. Social isolation is also common among this population, as they may not relate to younger parents in school communities and often lack peer support.

Overall, older men of color, older immigrants, and grandparents raising grandchildren require services and supports tailored to their unique needs. In addressing complexities among these populations, a more complete, well-rounded approach can be taken to provide older adults in the City of Dallas with better, more intentional support.

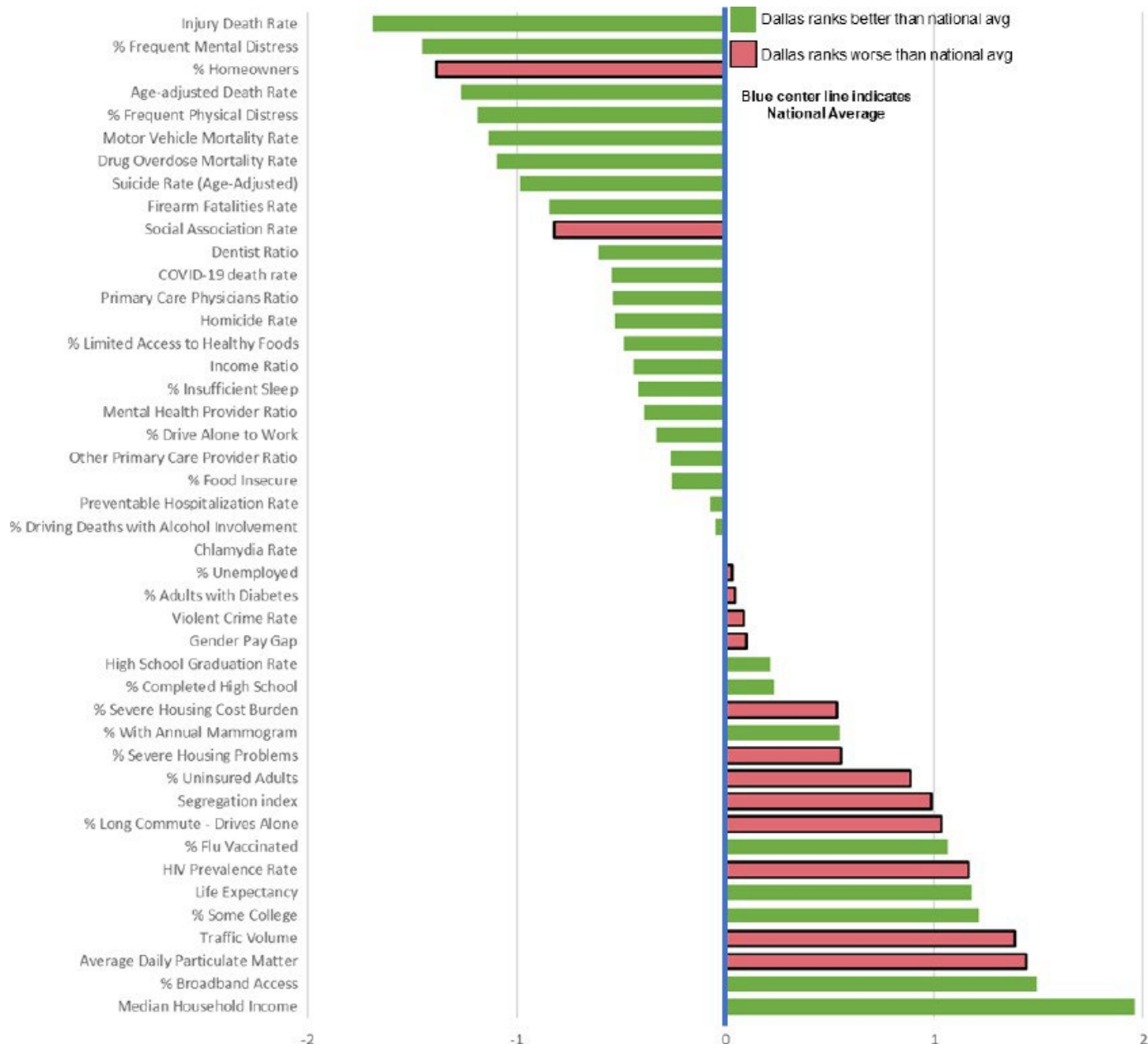
Understanding the Health and Wellbeing of Dallas Residents

Health and wellbeing are pivotal in a comprehensive Senior Services Strategic Plan due to the impact these factors have on the quality of life and overall outcomes for older adults. Health and wellbeing are central to a successful Plan because they directly influence the quality of life and outcomes for older adults. As people age, their healthcare and social support needs become more complex, making access to preventive care, chronic disease management, and specialized services essential. By prioritizing these areas, the plan can promote healthy aging, extend longevity, and support independence, allowing older adults to remain active in their communities and maintain meaningful social connections. Tailored wellness initiatives also benefit caregivers and reduce strain on healthcare systems, contributing to a more sustainable and dignified aging experience.

Health-related social drivers — also known as social determinants of health (SDOH) — are critical factors that shape the health and wellbeing of older adults. These include social and economic conditions such as living environments, income, and access to services, all of which influence physical, mental and emotional health. By identifying and analyzing these drivers, policymakers can pinpoint disparities and design targeted interventions to promote access to healthcare and resources.

In the Dallas region (including Dallas, Denton, and Collin Counties), two key drivers negatively impact health: elevated levels of average daily particulate matter and high traffic volume—both environmental factors that can exacerbate chronic conditions and reduce quality of life. Conversely, Dallas fares better than many other areas in the country in terms of median household income and injury death rates, which are less detrimental to residents’ health outcomes. **Figure 3. Health-Related Social Drivers Impacting Dallas, Denton, and Collin Counties**, below, shows that there are certain social drivers which Dallas ranks better at than the national average and certain drivers for which Dallas ranks worse than national average (Guidehouse (in)Sight Health™). These insights help guide strategic planning to improve health access and aging experiences across generations. Understanding how Dallas compares to the national average in addressing health-related social drivers allows the City to leverage the strengths to meet the challenges and prioritize its efforts effectively.

Figure 3. Health-Related Social Drivers Impacting Dallas, Denton, and Collin Counties



The Societal Impacts of Older Adults in Dallas

Older adults in Dallas are poised to reshape not only the lives of their age group but also the broader social and economic landscape.

Family and Unpaid Caregivers: One of the most immediate societal effects of older adults is on family and unpaid caregivers—individuals, often women and older adults themselves, who provide essential support without compensation. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in Texas, one in four adults are already caregivers, and many provide care for extended periods or for individuals with complex needs such as dementia. As the aging population grows, more working-age adults may reduce their work hours or leave the workforce entirely to care for loved ones, creating ripple effects across the labor market.

Workforce: This demographic shift also presents significant challenges for the workforce. As older adults retire and younger individuals exit the labor force to assume caregiving roles, industries may face labor shortages and productivity concerns. While workforce participation of adults aged 55 and

older is expected to rise—especially for those over 75—this trend may not fully offset the decline in younger workers. Additionally, the demand for healthcare and social services will increase, placing pressure on state and federal budgets. The Congressional Budget Office projects that federal spending on Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid will grow by 87% from 2023 to 2034, with Medicaid alone increasing by over 50%. These rising costs will also affect state budgets, particularly where matching funds are required.

Government Expenditures and Revenues: The state government may also face increased internal costs as it supports employees over the age of 60 and those caring for older adult family members. This includes greater use of family medical leave and potential adjustments to pension contributions as higher-income retirees exit the workforce. At the same time, the shift in demographics will influence tax revenue patterns. Older adults typically earn and spend less compared to other age groups, which could slow growth in income and sales tax revenues. The old-age dependency ratio—a measure comparing the population over 65 to working-age individuals—has risen significantly in both Texas and Dallas County, signaling a growing economic burden on the working population. For Dallas, where property and sales taxes make up the majority of city revenue, these demographic changes could have substantial fiscal implications.

As older adults' spending patterns shift and their numbers grow, the City may need to reassess its revenue strategies and prepare for increased expenditure on older adult services. Navigating these changes will require proactive planning in workforce development, healthcare infrastructure, and social support systems, along with flexible fiscal strategies to adapt to evolving needs of older adults.

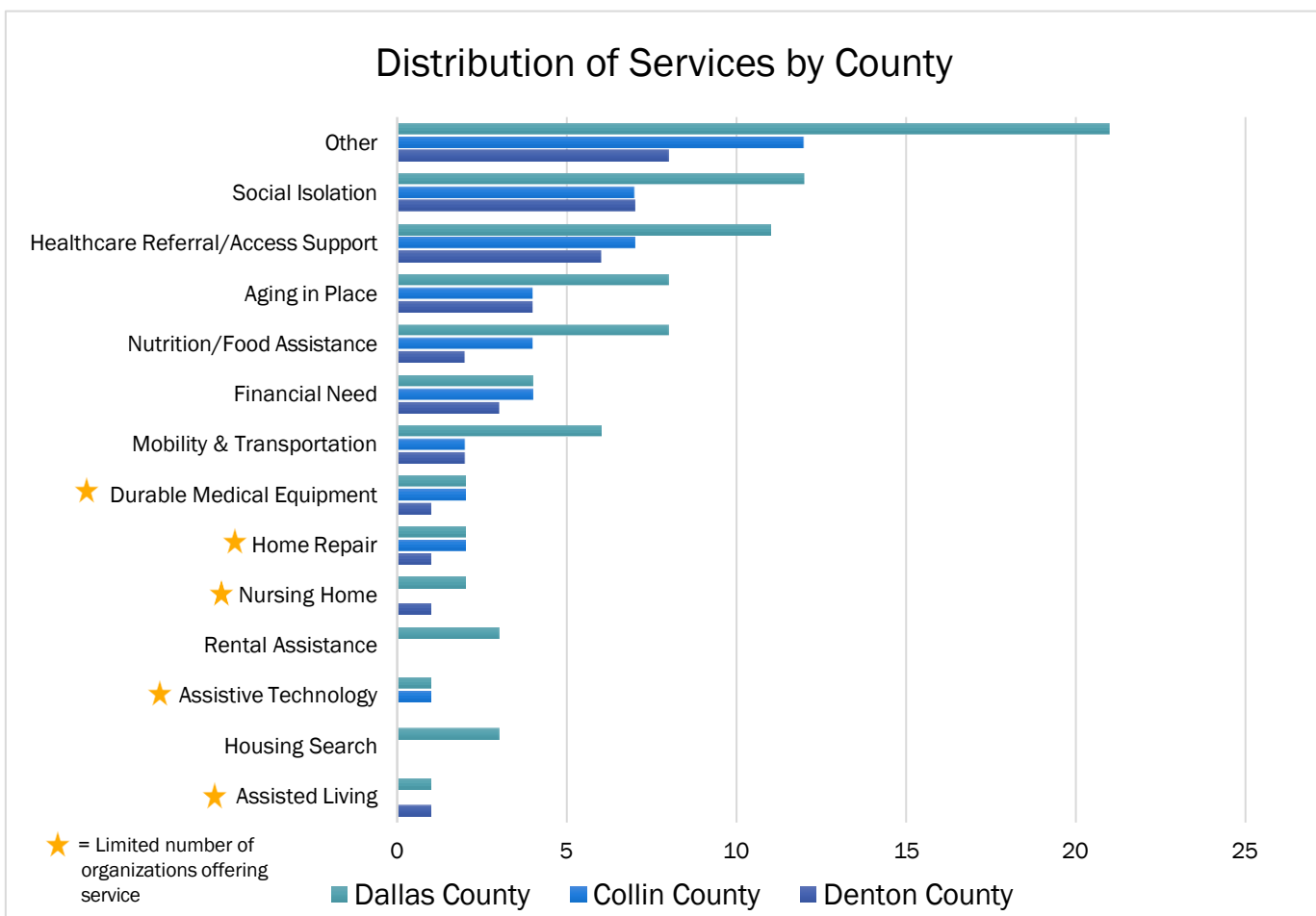
SERVICES AND SUPPORTS FOR OLDER ADULTS IN DALLAS

To identify the needs of older adults in Dallas, as well as their family and caretakers, the current service offerings and available supports in the City’s landscape were evaluated. This section summarizes the current service landscape in Dallas, informed by the Landscape Analysis, and the areas of need related to those services, as identified by the Senior Services Needs Assessment Results Summary and City Services Gap Analysis. The information included below was produced through outreach activities and research, each of which is summarized throughout this section.

Senior Services in Dallas

To develop a deeper understanding of the current services available to older adults in Dallas, Denton, and Collin Counties, the City of Dallas and Guidehouse conducted outreach to providers of social services to city residents through an organizational survey. The results gathered through the survey show key information about the overall landscape of services available to older adults not offered by the City of Dallas itself. **Figure 5. Senior Services Offered in Dallas**, on the next page, shows the current social services offered to older city residents. Thirty-six organizations offering a combined 92 services in the Dallas area completed the survey. **Figure 4. Distribution of Older Adult Services by County**, below, shows the distribution of services by county.

Figure 4. Distribution of Older Adult Services by County



Many organizations currently provide services required to address the varying needs of older adults in the City of Dallas. Dallas County offers all services listed in **Figure 5. Senior Services Offered in Dallas County**. When evaluating services offered in the City, we included services from Dallas, Denton, and Collin Counties, as certain regions of the Dallas Metropolitan area belong to Denton or Collin Counties.

Although the City of Dallas offers many services, not every service is provided by more than 1-2 organizations per county (as indicated by stars in **Figure 5. Distribution of Older Adult Services by County**). Additional organizations will need to provide these services as the population of those over the age of 60 increases. Furthermore, while most services are offered in the City of Dallas, only a few organizations provide assisted living, housing search, and assistive technology services. This gap presents an opportunity for additional organizations to match demand.

The landscape analysis also provided more details about services. Many service providers gave the target number of individuals their organization serves by service type. They also provided details about their funding sources, showing state grants and programs as the primary source for most services. Organizations expect to maintain 93% of services for more than 10 years. Although the organizations and service offerings span a wide range, older adults in the City of Dallas may find it challenging to navigate them. Geographic disparities in service availability have emerged in recent years due to misalignment between organizational service areas and City or county boundaries. Compounding this issue, the number of individuals currently served does not reflect the actual distribution of older adults across the city, raising concerns about the system's ability to meet future demand. Additionally, the services most commonly offered by organizations do not align with those most needed, as identified through key informant interviews and data analysis conducted for the development of this Plan.

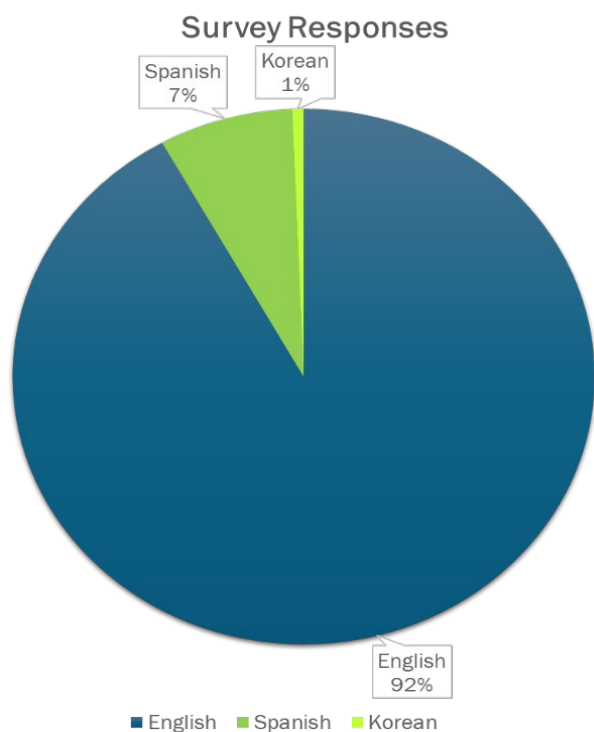
Figure 5. Senior Services Offered in Dallas County



Stakeholder Input City-wide Survey

The City of Dallas gathered critical feedback from stakeholders through a city-wide survey. To ensure accessibility to as many respondents as possible, the survey was distributed both digitally and through physical paper copies at City of Dallas Recreation Centers and various other locations throughout the city. The survey was made available in five languages, including English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese, receiving a total of 470 responses (432 in English, 35 in Spanish, 3 in Korean), as seen in **Figure 6. City-wide Survey Responses**, below. District 9 yielded the most responses for the digital survey, whereas District 4 yielded the most responses for the paper survey. Most digital and Spanish survey respondents self-identified as white females, while paper survey respondents were primarily black or African American females. Most digital respondents preferred not to report their annual household income, but most paper survey respondents reported less than \$24,999 annually. Twenty-one percent of digital survey respondents live in ZIP code 75214, twelve percent of the paper survey respondents live in ZIP code 75232, and twenty-four percent of the Spanish survey respondents live in ZIP code 75211. Most responses were consistent across all versions and languages.

Figure 6. City-wide Survey Responses



Respondents were older adults, who were mostly retired or not currently employed. Seventy-one percent of respondents reported that they had never tried to get help from aging programs offered directly by the City of Dallas. When asked what prevented them from requesting and/or receiving help, twenty-three percent of paper survey respondents reported not needing help, twenty percent of digital survey respondents reported needing help seeking services, and thirty percent of Spanish survey respondents reported that they did not know where to seek services. When asked what the biggest challenge the City of Dallas faced in helping older adults, most digital survey respondents reported that older adults do not know about services and resources, paper survey respondents reported that it was too hard to get information about services and how to apply for them, and Spanish survey respondents reported that older adults did not have enough money to care for themselves. The feedback obtained by the City-wide Survey provided valuable perspectives on the services available to support older adults in the City of Dallas and stakeholders' experiences with them.

Needs Assessment

Respondents were older adults, who were mostly retired or not currently employed. Seventy-one percent of respondents reported that they had never tried to get help from aging programs offered directly by the City of Dallas. When asked what prevented them from requesting and / or receiving help, twenty-three percent of paper survey respondents reported not needing help, twenty percent of digital survey respondents reported needing help seeking services, and thirty percent of Spanish survey respondents reported that they did not know where to seek services. When asked what the biggest challenge the City of Dallas faced in helping older adults, most digital survey respondents reported that older adults do not know about services and resources, paper survey respondents

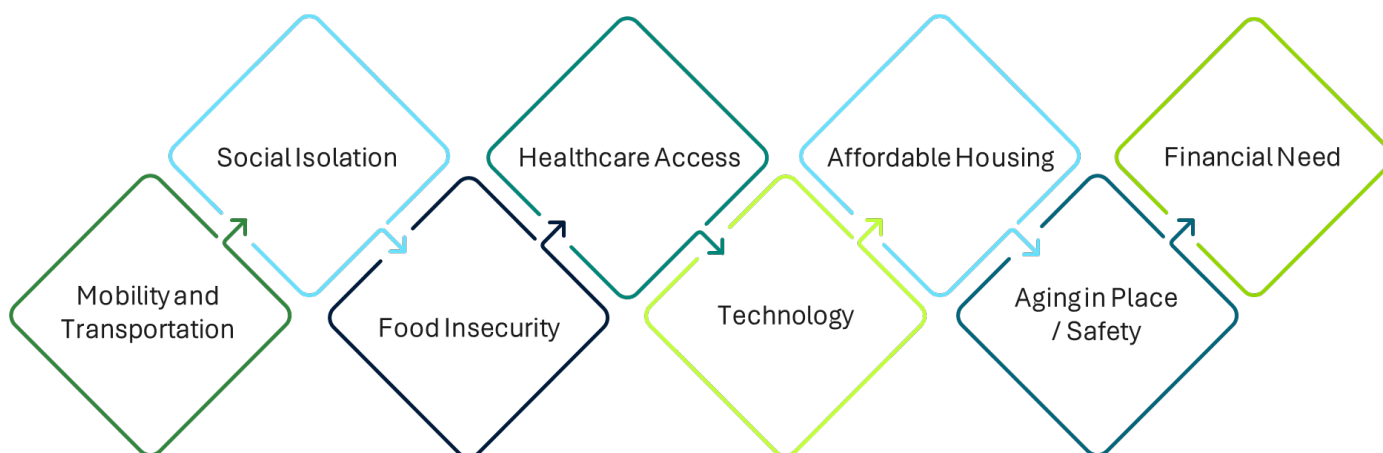
reported that it was too hard to get information about services and how to apply for them, and Spanish survey respondents reported that older adults did not have enough money to care for themselves. The feedback obtained by the City-wide Survey provided valuable perspectives on the services available to support older adults in the City of Dallas and stakeholders' experiences with them.

In an effort to consolidate stakeholder feedback and data collected through all research and outreach activities, the City of Dallas developed the Senior Services Needs Assessment Results Summary (referred to as the “Needs Assessment”) and City Services Gap Analysis. Both documents identify gaps found through all engagement and research activities, with the Needs Assessment providing the foundation for the City Services Gap Analysis.

Domains

All feedback and data collected from research and outreach activities fell under one of eight total categories, formally referred to as Domains in this Plan. Those Domains are shown in **Figure 7. Needs Assessment Domains, below.**

Figure 7. Needs Assessment Domains



Mobility and Transportation: Although many older adults in Dallas report that they drive themselves to get around, as reflected in the City of Dallas’ Department of Transportation’s Strategic Mobility Plan Final Report, additional modes of transportation are necessary to accommodate those who cannot drive themselves for various reasons. To live independently and engage fully in social and community activities, older adults need mobility and transport support. This support includes public transit options that range from larger-scale (trains, buses) to smaller-scale (shuttles, ride share services, and more).

Social Isolation: The most mentioned need among the qualitative outreach activities conducted by the City of Dallas was social isolation. Loneliness was reported by many older adults, who often lacked the means or opportunities to engage socially with their communities—often due to limited awareness of local activities or challenges with transportation. As a result, feelings of social isolation were also reported by older adults. Opportunities to socialize and ensure the availability of accessible, affordable, and entertaining social activities are needed to begin addressing this issue.

Food Insecurity: Older adults in the City of Dallas reported a lack of consistent access to enough affordable and nutritious food necessary to lead a healthy life in the City-wide Survey. This issue is not just about hunger—it’s about the uncertainty and limitations in obtaining adequate food due to economic, physical, or social barriers. Twenty-seven percent of older adults who responded to the

City-wide Survey reported having to choose between buying food and paying for utilities, transportation, housing, medical care, or medicine at some time in the past year.

Healthcare Access: As a Domain, healthcare access includes many components of healthcare services, including the availability of specialists from gerontologists to dentists, the availability of health insurance coverage, the availability of beds at skilled nursing facilities, caregiver support services, and more. All elements described previously were reported by individuals via the City-wide Survey, District listening sessions, SAC listening session, or found in publicly available data through the Demographic Report.

Technology: This Domain encompasses technological needs and the utilization of technology among older adults. While this Domain includes considerations for older adults who may or may not have access to computers in households or an internet subscription, it also includes digital literacy challenges reported by individuals through multiple of the qualitative outreach activities completed.

Affordable Housing: Although housing support services exist in the City of Dallas, providers reported during the Service Provider Listening Session that older adults who are just above the income limit and do not qualify for low-income housing still need help accessing affordable housing. To address this issue, the City needs to increase the availability and accessibility of housing options and assistance that are affordable for older adults of all income levels, not just lower-level incomes. Services and needs related to assisted living and property maintenance are also included in this Domain, as these factors play a role in the ability of older adults to afford where they reside. Older adults in Dallas need housing that is safe, secure, and affordable.

Aging in Place / Safety: The Demographic Report found in publicly available data that many older adults require assistance in activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing, and managing medications, among other activities. Support in daily activities such as these help adults age in place, especially in their community and / or home of choice. Services and needs related to home repair and sustainability are also included in this Domain. Safety concerns in neighborhoods, such as robberies, loitering, and drivers who speed in neighborhoods, are also examples of issues included in this Domain per concerns voiced by older adults via the City-wide Survey.

Financial Need: Although needs vary based on income level, financial support remains a concern indicated by older adults in Dallas. Those at or above the federal poverty level (FPL) need different supports than those who are below the FPL. This Domain also includes financial planning services, such as planning for estates, wills, trusts, and other legal processes that affect an older adult and / or their family.

Findings

The Needs Assessment reviewed the results and feedback from various sources and activities, as shown in **Figure 8. Needs Assessment Sources**. These sources and activities were categorized based on the type of data collected within them against each Domain. Each Domain received a score based on the frequency of related needs mentioned in the feedback or observed in the data. Domains with the highest need belonged to Level 1, as indicated in **Figure 9. Domains Based on Level of Need**.

Figure 8. Needs Assessment Sources



Figure 9. Domains Based on Level of Need



Throughout all Domains described, one common challenge emerged. Among all outreach activity and feedback the most prominent response received centered around a general lack of awareness of services available and how to access them. Many services required to address the needs of older adults in the City of Dallas are available in some capacity, as shown in the Landscape Analysis and other documentation discussed previously. However, stakeholders indicated that older adults are unable to find and / or access services when and where they need them. Overall, the need for information and communication about older adult services became its own stand-alone Domain based on input from stakeholders across input methods.

Senior Services Gap Analysis

Based on the Domain areas and level of need defined in the Needs Assessment, the City of Dallas also developed the Senior Services Gap Analysis to provide an overview of the demographic landscape of the City and identify gaps in services as described by stakeholder engagement and data analysis. Along with service needs analysis, the Gap Analysis offered demographic information on the older adult population in Dallas as it related to each Domain area.

Mobility and Transportation

As shown in the Demographic Report and other documents produced for the City, Dallas ranks worse than the national average in traffic volume. The City of Dallas's Connect Dallas Strategic Mobility Plan Final Report includes the Pedestrian Danger Index (PDI), which takes into account the number of pedestrian fatalities and injuries controlled for population size and geography. As seen in **Figure 10. Pedestrian Danger Index**, Dallas' PDI (124.2) was over 2x higher than the national average for 2019 (55.3). Additionally, Dallas's PDI increased from 110.4 in 2016 to 124.2 in 2019. With traffic issues and transportation safety concerns for a city that relies primarily on transit compared to other modes for commuting, mobility and transportation as a Domain ranked the highest in terms of

Figure 10. Pedestrian Danger Index

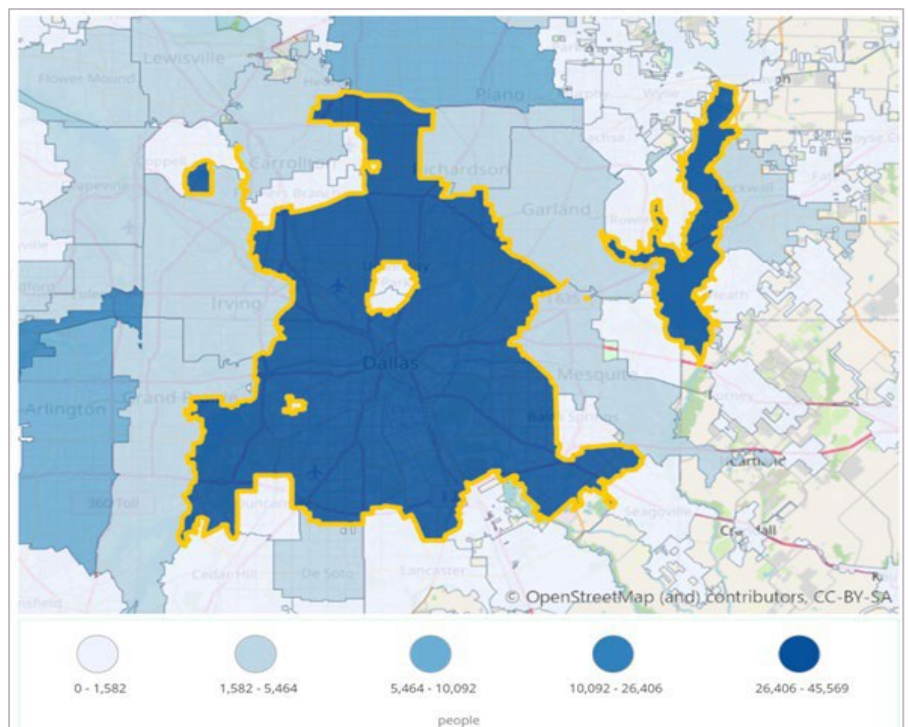


need among the Needs Assessment and Senior Services Gap Analysis.

Social Isolation

Social isolation was the most mentioned concern heard across all outreach activities and qualitative sources of information collected. As shown by **Figure 11. People Over 65 Living Alone** (Healthy North Texas n.d.), 28% of Dallas adults report a lack of social / emotional support compared to the national average of 25%. The coordination of these supports and services is vital to fostering a safe, healthy, and self-sufficient environment for older adults to thrive in their chosen communities.

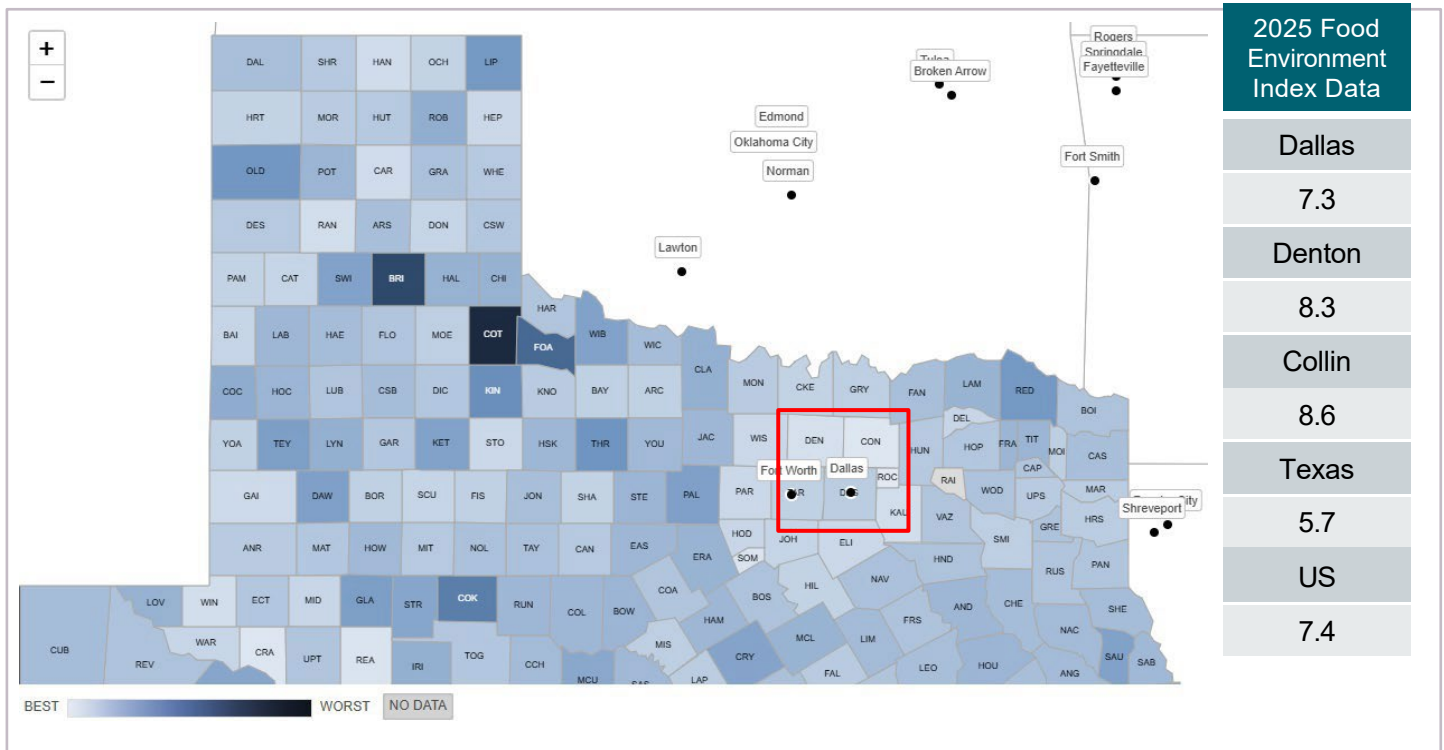
Figure 11. People Over 65 Living Alone



Food Insecurity

On the food environment index, which includes access to healthy foods and food insecurity, Texas scored 5.7 out of a possible 10 (University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, 2025). The index ranged from 0.0 to 8.8 across counties in the state, with a higher score indicating higher insecurity. The average value across the country was 7.4. As shown by **Figure 12. 2025 Food Environment Index**, below, Dallas, Denton, and Collin Counties scored worse than Texas, with Denton and Collin also scoring worse than the U.S. average.

Figure 12. 2025 Food Environment Index



As mentioned previously, about 27% of older adults in Dallas reported having had to choose between buying food and paying for utilities, transportation, housing, medical care, or medicine in the past year in the City-wide survey. As shown by the SDOH Dashboard in **Figure 13. SDOH Scores for Food Insecurity by ZIP Code**, food insecurity needs greatly vary by ZIP code in the counties of Dallas, Denton, and Collin.

Figure 13. SDOH Scores for Food Insecurity by ZIP Code

Benchmark SDOH Score		SDOH Score			
-0.03		0.14			
County	City	Zip Code	SDOH Score	Most Positive SDOH	Most Negative SDOH
DALLAS	DALLAS	75211	-0.21	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75223	-0.23	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	MESQUITE	75149	-0.28	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75232	-0.30	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75233	-0.30	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75224	-0.32	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75253	-0.33	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75236	-0.35	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	BALCH SPRINGS	75180	-0.41	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75217	-0.41	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75212	-0.58	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75241	-0.66	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75216	-0.71	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75237	-0.85	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75261	-0.86	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75270	-0.86	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75390	-0.86	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DENTON	DENTON	76203	-0.86	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75247	-0.93	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	HUTCHINS	75141	-0.97	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	WILMER	75172	-0.97	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
COLLIN	JOSEPHINE	75164	-1.01	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75215	-1.01	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
DALLAS	DALLAS	75210	-1.66	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity
Total		0.14	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity	Food Insecurity

Figure 14. SDOH Prevalence by ZIP
SDOH Prevalence by Zip Code

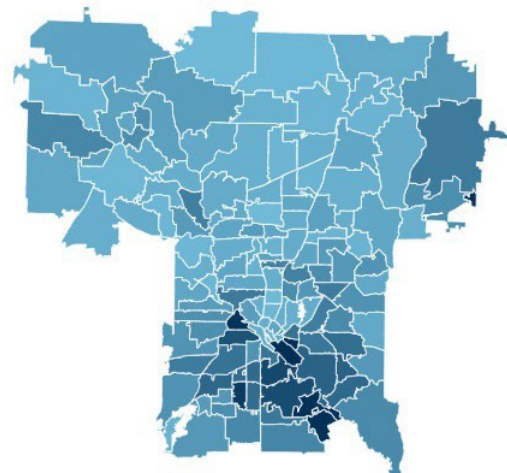


Figure 14. SDOH Prevalence by ZIP Code, above, shows a map of the ZIP codes of Dallas, Denton, and Collin Counties and their food insecurity SDOH prevalence based on SDOH score. The darker the blue shown, the worse the SDOH score for that ZIP code. SDOH scores illustrate the difference in standard deviations for the ZIP code as compared to the national average. The farther away from zero an SDOH score is, the bigger the difference in standard deviations. **Figures 13 and 14** above show the stark difference in the prevalence of food insecurity among the three counties, further indicating a need that varies depending on area.

Healthcare Access

Through outreach activities and research, needs around healthcare access spotlighted the shortage of skilled nursing facilities, the limited availability of geriatricians and dentists, and the lack of adequate caregiver support in Dallas. The Demographic Report found that many ZIP codes in Dallas only had 1 skilled nursing facility (SNF) and nursing facilities in Dallas utilized beds at 65.7% in 2024, which is lower than the historical rate. **Figure 15. Primary Care Physicians Per Person** shows the ratio of primary care physicians per person and illustrates how the number of primary care physicians in Dallas aligns with both state and national ratios. However, a nationwide shortage of primary care physicians persists. **Figure 16. Preventable Hospital Stays** demonstrates how Dallas County has more preventable hospital stays than Denton and Collin counties, as well as Texas and the U.S. average.

Figure 15. Primary Care Physicians Per Person

County	Physicians / People	Texas Ratio	U.S. Ratio
Dallas	1:1390	1:1660	1:1330
Denton	1:1860		
Collin	1:1030		

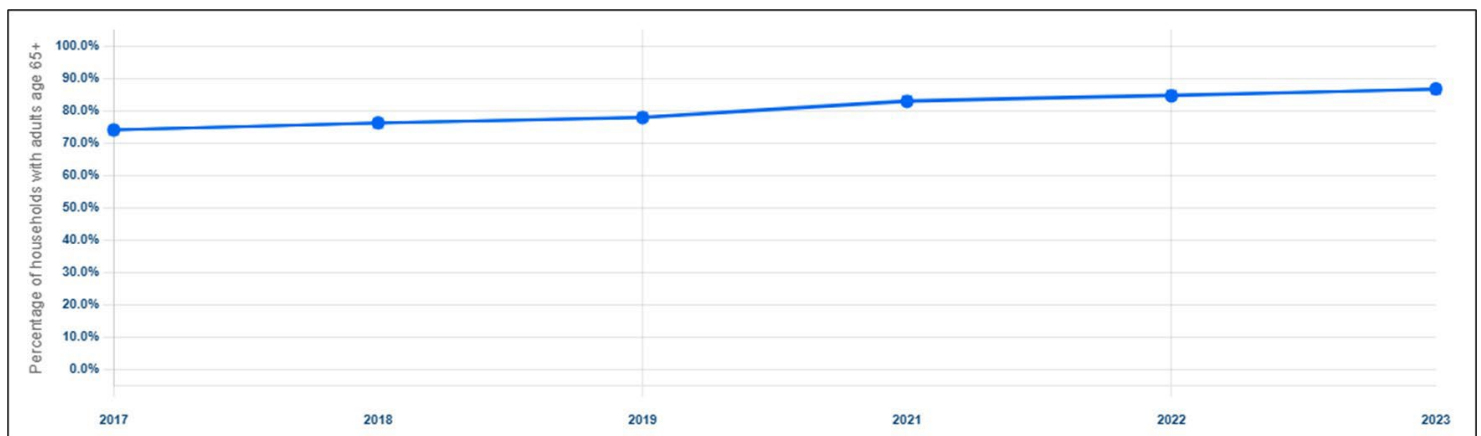
Figure 16. Preventable Hospital Stays

County	Per 100,000 Medicare Enrollees	Texas	U.S.
Dallas	3042	2968	2666
Denton	2890		
Collin	2504		

Technology

Between 2017 and 2023, Internet subscriptions among older adults in the state of Texas remained relatively flat at 70-80% of households, according to the United Health Foundation, as shown in **Figure 17. High Speed Internet Subscription Trends for Texans Aged 65+**. The counties that make up the City of Dallas are at or above the country's percentage of households with broadband access. However, access to broadband refers to availability of broadband services. It does not include the use of broadband by older adults. Per the City-wide Survey and both the Public and SAC Listening Sessions, using technology is a challenge for older adults in accessing needed services and supports. Older adults in Dallas reported that they were not technology savvy and wanted to learn how to use technology better or desire alternative ways to stay connected with others besides virtually.

Figure 17. High Speed Internet Subscription Trends for Texans Aged 65+

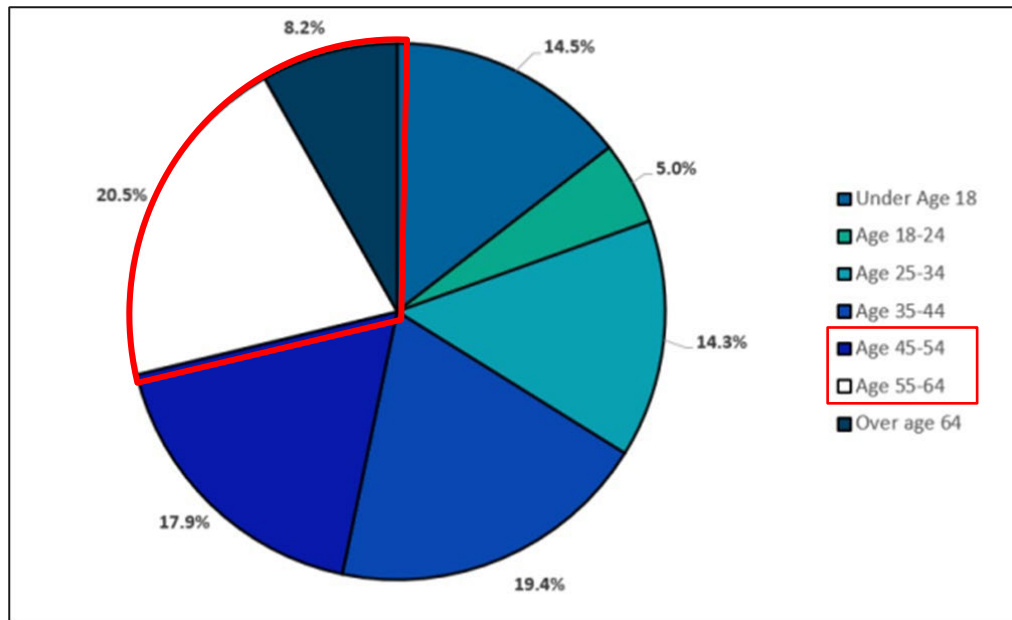


Affordable Housing

As shown by **Figure 18. Unhoused Status by Age** from the Annual Point-in-Time Report for 2024 for Housing Forward by the Institute for Community Alliances, those aged 55+ make up almost 28% of the unhoused population. By county, Dallas has a homeless population of 3,718, Denton has 3,718, and Collin has 1,297.

1,086 individuals identified as experiencing unsheltered homelessness on January 25, 2024, while 2,632 individuals identified as experiencing sheltered homelessness. Twenty-one percent of households in Dallas experience severe housing problems, which is higher than those in Denton (14%) and Collin (14%) Counties (University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, 2025). Dallas also experiences more housing challenges, including severe housing cost burdens, than Texas or the U.S. on average (University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, 2025).

Figure 18. Unhoused Status by Age in 202



Financial Need

Finally, 17.2% of Dallas residents lived below the poverty level between 2019 and 2023 and 5 external organizations offer services related to financial need as reported in the Landscape Analysis. According to the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, Dallas County's income inequality score is higher than Denton or Collin Counties but is lower than Texas or the U.S, as shown below in **Figure 19. Income Disparity**. Through public listening sessions, the City-wide Survey, and the District Listening Sessions, older Dallas adults pointed out that although many earn above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), older adults still struggle to financially support themselves. Many still require support regarding their finances despite being overqualified for programs currently offered in the City of Dallas.

Figure 19. Income Disparity

County	Multiples of Income	Texas Ratio	U.S. Ratio
Dallas	4.4	4.8	4.9
Denton	4.1		
Collin	4.0		

This finding aligned with results from the SDOH Dashboard that older adults in Dallas, Denton, and Collin, at or above the FPL, require more financial need supports as compared to those below the FPL, especially in comparison to the average level of need for the country as a whole.

All documents, outreach, and research completed by the City of Dallas informed the Senior Services Gap Analysis, helping to identify critical areas where older adults in Dallas face significant challenges and need support. Highlighting these areas of need help guide the City in creating goals, strategies, and solutions tailored to those identified gaps. By prioritizing these areas, the City will further its reach in providing comprehensive support for its older adult population, enabling them to live with dignity and independence.

SENIOR SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN

GOALS

Overview

The City's Senior Services Strategic Plan guides updates to Senior Services and reflects input from the community, providers, key stakeholders, City staff, and the Senior Affairs Council (SAC). The plan outlines the goals, strategies, and action items identified through this collaborative process.

After identifying key priorities, the City of Dallas created goals to address the current needs of older adults. These goals, along with their strategies and action items, form the Plan. This Plan serves as a roadmap for the next 5 years, helping the City support older adults in aging with dignity and independence in the community of their choice. The Plan groups breaks down strategies into short-term, medium-term, and long-term categories, based on the estimated effort and time required for completion. These timeframes represent informed estimates rather than finalized deadlines. The City estimates that short-term strategies may be completed within 6–12 months, medium-term strategies within 1–3 years, and long-term strategies within 3–5 years. The plan numbers each strategy and italicizes the action items. Each strategy also indicates which Domain area of need it related to in parentheses. Goals are designed to build upon the strategies and action items outlined in other goals, as well.

Goal 1: Create a City-wide Departmental Outreach and Education Plan

Goal 1 aims to increase internal city outreach and awareness and to inform and educate city officials not only about city services available to older adults in the City of Dallas but also to ensure that age-friendly principles and older adult needs are considered when policies are drafted and implemented. This goal also aims to ensure that city services are responsive to the ever-changing needs of older adults within the city.

Short-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Information and Communication): Enhance and centralize city efforts to increase awareness of and access to information about city programs that support older adults.**
 - *Action Item: Coordinate with the City Manager and other city departments / offices, to ensure all city departments / offices are aware of the Senior Services Strategic Plan.*
 - *Action Item: Using the Senior Services Index as a starting point, coordinate with the City Manager and other city departments / offices, to create an inventory of all services the departments / offices provide to older adults (e.g., Dallas Area Regional Transit's Rider Assistance Program, Park and Recreation's Active Senior Adult Program, Department of Sanitation Services "Helping Hands" program, Dallas Central Appraisal District Age 65 or Older Homestead Exemption,) that includes (but not limited to) eligibility criteria, funding caps, implementing department / office, etc. This document should be updated periodically and once completed, posted publicly.*
- **Strategy 2 (Information and Communication and Healthcare Access): Enhance the City of Dallas' information and referral program targeted at older adult residents.**
 - *Action Item: Improve and streamline the City of Dallas 311 internal service request system to support interdepartmental tracking, real-time status updates, and timely closure of service requests.*
 - *Action Item: Create a public-facing dashboard that tracks monthly:*
 - *Number of calls*
 - *Types of assistance requested (broken down by service type)*
 - *Number of referrals made.*

- **Strategy 3 (Information and Communication): Increase city departmental staff knowledge of available city resources for older adults.**
 - *Action Item: Develop a training program for city staff that provides an overview of services, programs, and benefits available for older adults that are provided by the city.*
 - *Action Item: Ensure reference and training materials are always available to City staff.*
- **Strategy 4 (Information and Communication): Continually monitor the SSSP's progress toward goals, strategies, and action items.**
 - *Action Item: Create an SSSP Implementation Guide to track progress against Goals, Strategies, and Action Items.*
 - *Action Item: Develop a SSSP Dashboard for transparency purposes and track and measure SSSP implementation progress.*
 - *Action Item: Using the Implementation Guide and SSSP Dashboard as a reference (among other available data), evaluate the SSSP's effectiveness periodically and identify areas for improvement or modification.*
- **Strategy 5 (Information and Communication): Create an interactive dashboard as a resource to provide information on how to access services provided by the City and to continuously share demographic data regarding older adults in the City of Dallas (in collaboration with the Dallas Office of Data Analytics and Business Intelligence), and other applicable information publicly.**
 - *Action Item: Continually compile and update a list of all older adult services provided by the City and information on how to access these services.*
 - *Action item: Continually update the key demographic data regarding older adults for the City of Dallas and by District in collaboration with the Dallas Office of Data Analytics and Business Intelligence.*

Medium-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Information and Communication): Share a scheduling resource / make it available to share all older adult events / activities offered at all city recreational centers, libraries, etc.**
 - *Action Item: Develop and maintain a centralized online dashboard that consolidates all older adult events and activities offered by City of Dallas departments. Incorporate asset mapping to identify and visualize available resources, enhance accessibility, and facilitate coordinated scheduling and planning across departments.*
 - *Action Item: Promote the online dashboard among partners and through media and physical channels.*
- **Strategy 2 (Information and Communication): Enhance education and outreach to public, private, and non-profit partners about services directly provided by the city that are available to older adults.**
 - *Action Item: Co-host events / seminars with trusted community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based groups, and local leaders to inform the community about older adult services, distribute relevant materials, advertise the Senior Help Line, and direct individuals to the interactive dashboard (once available).*
 - *Action Item: Train and deploy older adult volunteers as peer navigators per district to serve as outreach ambassadors throughout the city.*
 - *Action Item: Conduct outreach calls to older adults and their families to inform them of services available.*
- **Strategy 3 (Social Isolation): Provide technical assistance to other city departments/offices to support age-friendly strategies and service design for any service, programs, or benefits that target older adults.**
 - *Action Item: Identify key departments / offices that could benefit from the implementation of age-friendly strategies and service design.*
 - *Action Item: Establish a process for partners to request technical assistance (e.g., standing office hours).*
 - *Action Item: Invite key departments / offices to receive technical assistance on age-friendly strategies for service design.*

- *Action Item: Evaluate the compatibility of any city departmental policies with any relevant or related strategic plan goals, strategies, and action items and collaborate to implement shared strategic plan goals, strategies, and action items.*
- *Action Item: Review city policies related to housing and transportation in order to determine if older adults are considered or should be considered (e.g., set asides or discounted rates for older adults) included or addressed. Advocate for policy modifications and additions as needed.*
- **Strategy 4 (Social Isolation): Connect with Dallas older adult living communities to provide information on programs and services.**
 - *Action Item: Create informational materials (digital / print) that include the Senior Help Line number to inform residential coordinators about city programs and services.*
 - *Action Item: Develop partnerships with residential coordinators and maintain a distribution list.*
 - *Action Item: Communicate about the availability of programs and services on a regular basis.*

Long-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Multi-Domain): Continually monitor the demand and utilization of city services to make data-driven decisions about imminent and future service needs for older adults.**
 - *Action Item: Implement a regular survey process for older adults to assess satisfaction levels, emerging needs, and barriers to accessing city services, using both digital and paper formats to ensure broad participation.*
 - *Action Item: Establish a centralized data component of the Senior Services dashboard that aggregates usage statistics from city departments providing services to older adults, allowing city staff to identify trends, gaps, and opportunities for targeted improvements.*

Goal 2: Create a Partnership-Focused Outreach and Education Plan

Goal 2 aims to increase outreach to and engage current and future partners, providers, and other organizations providing services and supports to older adults in the City of Dallas.

Short-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Mobility and Transportation): Develop partnerships with organizations that have accessible modes of transportation and on-demand transportation that are available for older adults.**
 - *Action Item: Identify and create partnerships with organizations that have accessible vehicles (e.g., church vans).*
 - *Action Item: Develop a usable list of all on-demand transportation services with contact information, eligibility information, and cost within the county or in individual municipalities*
- **Strategy 2 (Social Isolation): Explore additional models for launching cultural programs and practices that address needs of all older adults and address the needs of underserved populations.**
 - *Action Item: Conduct research to identify best practices for cultural /underserved program models.*
 - *Action Item: Identify best practices for the city to adopt.*
 - *Action Item: Implement best practices to expand cultural / underserved programs to reduce social isolation.*
 - *Action Item: Create a repository of information on resources and support groups to reach all seniors. Add to the resource database / document and provide referrals when appropriate.*
- **Strategy 3 (Food Insecurity): Establish partnerships to create and execute a food insecurity implementation plan.**
 - *Action Item: Create different options for home delivered meals and food options by exploring and expanding partnership opportunities with mobile food pantries and home delivery providers.*

- *Action Item: Create a program for home-bound older adults that offers gardening lessons, implement gardening ambassadors / buddies, to show how to grow food and use that food to make a meal.*
 - *Action Item: Restart Live Well with SNAP, with Baylor Hospital or similar programs.*
 - *Action Item: Engage food insecurity services providers to coordinate and collaborate to address food insecurity in the ZIP codes with the most needs as identified through asset mapping, the SDOH Dashboard, and qualitative data gleaned from outreach activities.*
 - *Action Item: Explore and expand partnership opportunities to offer a food pantry at an older adult facilities / recreation centers.*
 - *Action Item: Maintain a comprehensive list of all food pantries in the city and a list of all food assistance programs and update / verify periodically. Provide referrals as appropriate.*
 - *Action Item: Expand older adult awareness of food pantry locations and food assistance programs such as Meals on Wheels, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP), the "Commodity Supplemental Food Program (Senior Box Program), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Texas Simplified Application Project (TSAP) which targets persons over age 60 using a simplified application process and longer eligibility periods.*
 - *Action Item: Using available data, target outreach where requests for assistance are disproportionate.*
- **Strategy 4 (Healthcare Access): Collaborate with health systems to expand existing programs serving older adults, create educational materials, and enhance outreach for older adults to increase healthcare referral services for older adults.**
- *Action Item: Develop a curated list of health care referral services that can best meet the needs of older adults in the city.*
 - *Action Item: Coordinate with medical and dental schools to conduct community outreach programs, including health fairs and senior programs, where students provide screenings, education, and information on how to access any programs that may benefit older adults.*
- **Strategy 5 (Technology): Work through existing partnerships or develop new partnerships to support technology enablement for older adults who want to become more aware of and agile with technology.**
- *Action Item: Identify partners who currently deliver adult education related to technology (including virtual reality and remote participation) e.g., high school clubs that provide technology assistance for older adults thereby creating an intergenerational connection.*
 - *Action Item: Evaluate the identified partners' ability to deliver technological education to older adults.*
- **Strategy 6 (Affordable Housing, Aging in Place / Safety): Develop additional relationships with public, private, and non-profit groups to address the challenges associated with housing affordability and sustainability.**
- *Action Item: In partnership with the OHCE's Housing Division, maintain a comprehensive list of all housing assistance programs available for older adults including, but not limited to, affordable housing, maintenance assistance, tax assistance, etc.*
 - *Action Item: Explore establishing and maintaining an internal shared-housing list for older adults renting rooms to other older adults.*
 - *Action Item: Expand partnerships / connectivity to services with service providers, faith-based organizations, etc. to address situations that may result in code violation citations such as overgrown trees, lawn maintenance, property blight, etc.*
 - *Action Item: Continue to support Home Improvement and Preservation Program (HIPP) that provides assistance for older adults for minor home repairs by continuing referrals, enhanced outreach of the program, and tracking referrals / demand in order to support any requested increases in funding.*
 - *Action Item: Prioritize efforts to address affordable housing challenges in Dallas County as it experiences more challenges than Denton or Collin.*
 - *Action Item: Work with the Dallas Water Utilities department to ensure that older adults who meet the age requirement are not improperly charged a late fee. Consider advocating for other similar services and / or waiving utility deposits for older adults.*
 - *Action Item: Increase awareness of Dallas' program that allows older adults who are homeowners in Dallas to get sidewalk repair at a reduced cost or for no cost.*

- *Action Item: Increase awareness of Department of Sanitation's Helping Hand program that offers garbage collection for physically impaired persons residing without an able-bodied person in the household.*
- **Strategy 7 (Aging in Place / Safety): Enhance and increase participation in older adult programming at Senior Centers / Recreation Centers / etc. and increase participation.**
 - *Action Item: Increase older adult awareness of senior centers / recreational centers / public library events through enhanced outreach by connecting older adults with their closest facilities, advertising Signature Events / library-hosted workshops on the OHCE website / scheduling resource, and through targeted mailing and outreach campaigns.*
 - *Action Item: Expand partnerships with transportation providers that allow older adults to visit senior centers / recreation centers / public libraries / performances hosted by the Office of Arts and Culture at a reduced rate.*
 - *Action Item: Coordinate with the Office of Arts and Culture to enhance advertising of events that target older adults and / or intergenerational populations, including dance, musical and theater performances.*
- **Strategy 8 (Financial Need): Increase resources for older adults who need financial planning, services, and education, specifically prioritizing economically vulnerable populations.**
 - *Action Item: Create a listing of providers / organizations that provide education on financial matters, long- term planning, and scam avoidance to promote financial stability, independence, and informed decision- making.*
 - *Action Item: Connect older adults in Dallas with resources that provide education on financial matters, long- term planning, and scam avoidance.*

Medium-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Technology): Implement a device loan program for older adults to check out laptops and other devices.**
 - *Action Item: Identify partners that may already have loan programs (e.g., libraries).*
 - *Action Item: Create a referral process to connect older adults with the loan program partner.*
- **Strategy 2 (Technology): Continue to expand / review engagement with broadband / internet providers to understand areas of the city wherever older adults are without access to internet services.**
 - *Action Item: Develop a service map that outlines broadband connectivity by ZIP code, county, and / or council district.*
 - *Action Item: Using the SDOH Dashboard and other available data, identify areas with high concentrations of older adults that do not currently use internet service.*
 - *Action Item: Identify methods to increase internet connectivity (e.g., free or discounted rates, hotspots, cellular broadband, satellite broadband).*

Long-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Mobility and Transportation): Conduct outreach to identify additional mobility / transportation partners, including private sector partners such as rideshare companies in order enhance mobility and transportation options for underserved older adults.**
 - *Action Item: Using the SDOH Dashboard and other available qualitative data, identify areas where older adults experience disproportionate mobility and transportation barriers.*
 - *Action Item: Establish partnerships with microtransit providers (e.g., Uber, Lyft) and explore methods to address older adults' transportation needs in underserved areas.*
 - *Action Item: Create a pilot microtransit program with identified partners to address older adult's transportation needs in underserved areas.*
- **Strategy 2 (Healthcare Access): Create a plan to improve navigation of the service network for caregivers.**
 - *Action Item: Identify services that support caregivers (e.g. Caregiver Respite Grant Program).*
 - *Action Item: Develop partnerships with service providers and programs.*

- *Action Item: Develop methods to connect older adults to caregiver service providers and programs through referrals.*
 - *Action Item: Develop a policy allowing employees who are caregivers of older adults with disabilities to take 10 hours of respite per year.*
- **Strategy 3 (Food Insecurity): Pilot healthy / culturally informed cooking classes and recipe cards.**
- *Action Item: Partner with local cultural organizations and chefs to co-design recipe cards that reflect the culinary traditions of the city's older adult population.*
 - *Action Item: Distribute healthy recipe cards through food pantries, senior centers, healthcare providers, and mobile meal delivery programs.*
 - *Action Item: Partner with local cultural organizations and chefs to co-design and lead healthy and culturally informed cooking classes at recreation centers, senior centers, or other community locations.*
- **Strategy 4 (Financial Need): Explore efforts to provide services to older adults who need services, but do not meet income or eligibility requirements.**
- *Action Item: Where possible, track service denials where older adults have applied for services but do not meet income or eligibility requirements.*
 - *Action Item: During outreach sessions, poll older adults on whether they have applied for but have been denied services and record the service provided and reasons why.*
 - *Action Item: Based on available data, determine whether income or eligibility requirements should be changed and if so, advocate for responsive changes to be made.*
 - *Action Item: Create a list of services available to older adults that are based solely on need / age and not subject to income or other eligibility requirements.*

Goal 3: Create and Execute a Volunteer Engagement Plan

Goal 3 aims to coordinate and recruit volunteers to execute support activities and programs designed to support older adults, their caregivers, and others involved in supporting older adults.

Short-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Technology): Recruit volunteers to assist older adults with appointments in the home using tablets with internet connectivity.**
- *Action Item: Procure connected tablets for use by the City of Dallas staff / volunteers.*
 - *Action Item: Recruit volunteers to support older adults who may need virtual appointment / technological assistance.*
 - *Action Item: Develop a request line and email / web portal to receive requests for virtual appointment assistance.*
 - *Action Item: Dispatch staff / volunteers to respond to requests.*
- **Strategy 2 (Aging in Place / Safety): Recruit volunteers to assist older adults during times of emergency events.**
- *Action Item: Create a neighborhood-based "older adult emergency buddy" program managed by City Districts to establish a volunteer network that pairs older adults with trained neighbors or community volunteers, ensures regular check-ins during emergencies, and helps with evacuation planning, medication tracking, and communication.*
- **Strategy 3 (Aging in Place / Safety / Social Isolation): Increase opportunities for volunteerism for older adults.**
- *Action Item: Identify areas within city departments / offices / programs that need volunteers (e.g., public libraries that recently increased senior volunteer opportunities, ombudsman) as well as public partners (museums, hospitals, etc.).*
 - *Action Item: Connect interested older adults with volunteer opportunities.*

- *Action Item: Create a volunteer posting site to advertise all volunteer and engagement opportunities for older adults in the City of Dallas.*

Medium-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Mobility and Transportation): Recruit volunteers to conduct educational trips for groups of older adults to learn how to access and use public transit (e.g., conducting an educational trip to a trip to local cultural centers or library) to encourage and increase public transit usage.**
 - *Action Item: Identify existing programs that coordinate and provide outings / trips.*
 - *Action Item: Recruit staff / volunteers to support the expansion of the program for older adults.*
 - *Action Item: Market the educational program among older adults.*
 - *Action Item: Implement the program expansion.*

Goal 4: Create a Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Goal 4 aims to directly engage communities, departments, and businesses in supporting older adults in the City of Dallas more equitably.

Short-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Social Isolation): Develop a toolkit, resources, and / or training to help communities, schools, and businesses make social participation opportunities more age-friendly and / or intergenerational.**
 - *Action Item: Create or adopt an age-friendly toolkit for communities and businesses.*
 - *Action Item: Create partnerships with organizations willing to participate in the initiative to make social participation opportunities more age friendly and / or intergenerational.*
 - *Action Item: Distribute age-friendly toolkits.*
 - *Action Item: Follow up with toolkit implementation.*
- **Strategy 2 (Social Isolation): Increase employment opportunities for older adults through developing resources for employers / universities and through enhanced partnerships.**
 - *Action Item: Collaborate with the Age Friendly Institute to complete certification as a Certified Age Friendly Employer Program.*
 - *Action Item: Work with businesses to help them obtain age-friendly business certifications.*
 - *Action Item: Develop a guide for employers and universities to use for inclusive hiring and volunteer engagement practices.*
 - *Action Item: Seek ways to maintain employment programs focused on older adult employment.*
 - *Action Item: Pilot an age-friendly program to support lifelong learning access to increase employment opportunities.*
 - *Action Item: Partner with the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) with the Texas Workforce Commission to increase employment opportunities for older adults.*

Medium-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Aging in Place / Safety): Enhance emergency preparedness awareness for older adults and their caregivers.**
 - *Action Item: Conduct an annual emergency response drill in collaboration with Dallas County.*
 - *Action Item: Working with the Office of Emergency Management, launch a citywide emergency preparedness education campaign to develop and distribute accessible materials tailored to older adults. These materials may include step-by-step guides on what to do before, during, and after different types of emergencies and information on local emergency alert systems, toolkits, checklists, evacuations routes, and shelter locations.*
 - *Action Item: Coordinate with the Dallas Public Library System when hosting emergency preparedness workshops and advertise on the OHCE website / scheduling resource.*

Goal 5: Establish and Support Advocacy and Civic Engagement Efforts

Goal 5 aims to increase / develop more effective advocacy for older adults in the City of

Dallas. **Short-Term Strategies and Action Items**

- **Strategy 1 (Healthcare Access): Advocate for additional caregiver support programs to address the growing needs among unpaid caregivers.**
 - *Action Item: Assign a caregiver advocate to City of Dallas government.*
 - *Action Item: The advocate assists the City of Dallas in identifying areas where caregivers for older adults are underserved.*
 - *Action Item: The advocate supports the development of an advocacy platform to address caregiver needs.*
- **Strategy 2 (Aging in Place / Safety): Increase older adults' awareness of public safety programs.**
 - *Action Item: Assign an aging advocate within the City of Dallas police department.*
 - *Action Item: Encourage increased police department patrols in areas with higher older adult populations.*
 - *Action Item: Encourage increased safety awareness seminars and presentations / public outreach by law enforcement / fire department / other public safety officials at recreational centers, senior centers, outreach events, etc. and provide a forum for older adult concerns to be heard.*
- **Strategy 3 (Mobility and Transportation): Continue to engage older adults in the planning and implementation process of strategies related to Transportation.**
 - *Action Item: Continue to engage older adults using public transit, especially those who use buses, to gain information about the gaps and needed amenities.*
- **Strategy 4 (Aging in Place / Safety): Engage older adults in the planning and implementation process of strategies related to Outdoor Spaces and Buildings.**
 - *Action Item: Establish a community advisory panel of older adults from neighborhoods to review and provide feedback on City-planning items such as outdoor spaces and building plans, participate in walk audits and site visits to assess accessibility and usability, and serve as ambassadors to gather input from peers and report back to city planners.*
 - *Action Item: Collaborate with the Dallas Parks and Recreation Department to develop to identify neighborhoods where parks are needed (i.e., not serving older adults within a half-mile radius). Prioritize development of parks in areas where there is a higher concentration of older adults.*
- **Strategy 5 (Information and Communication): Explore marketing and re-branding of any reference to senior programs / services to "older adult programs / services."**
 - *Action Item: Conduct a community-informed messaging audit engaging older adults, caregivers, and community partners in reviewing current program names, materials, and outreach channels to identify outdated, stigmatizing, and / or exclusionary language in City resources and materials and test alternative terms like "older adult," "60+," or "active aging" through focus groups or surveys.*
 - *Action Item: Use insights gained from the community-informed messaging audit to guide rebranding decisions in City resources, materials, and communications.*

Medium-Term Strategies and Action Items

- **Strategy 1 (Mobility and Transportation): Advocate for additional public transit stops in underserved areas to better serve older adults' needs.**
 - *Action Item: Assign a transportation advocate with the Dallas Transportation and Public Works Department.*
 - *Action Item: Using the SDOH Dashboard and other qualitative data, identify areas where older adults' transportation needs are underserved.*
- **Strategy 2 (Affordable Housing): Advocate for inclusionary zoning ordinances and incentives that encourage a given share of new construction to be affordable for older adults with low to moderate**

incomes. Include language to address the needs of older adults or how much housing should be dedicated to older adults.

- *Action Item: Assign an older adult housing advocate within Dallas city government.*
- *Action Item: Identify areas where older adults' housing needs are underserved or policies that may need modification using the SDOH Dashboard and other available data.*
- *Action Item: Employ an advocate to address underserved areas (i.e., advocate for multigenerational considerations in eligibility criteria for income-based public assistance).*
- *Action Item: Encourage developers to use universal design and / or visitability features in new construction projects.*
- *Action Item: For any new housing development, advocate for set asides for low to moderate income older adults.*

Goal 6: Execute Communications Recommendations

Goal 6 will implement recommendations made through the Communications Findings and Recommendations report commissioned by OHCE in 2025. These findings and recommendations stem from stakeholder engagement activities and research conducted on the most effective ways to transmit information to older adults in the City of Dallas. Please find these recommendations in Appendix C.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this first iteration of the Plan aims to enhance the quality of life for the City of Dallas' older adult community by providing a blueprint to ensure comprehensive, accessible, and innovative services. By focusing on key domains such as social isolation, food insecurity, and affordable housing, the City is committed to addressing the needs of its older adult population. The Plan outlines strategies and action items among six goals. These strategic initiatives are designed to foster independence, promote active lifestyles, make certain that underserved older adults are not left behind, and that older adults have the resources they need to thrive and age in the place of their choosing.

Moving forward, collaboration with sister departments, community partners, stakeholders, and older adult residents and their caregivers will be crucial in achieving the City's goals. By leveraging collective expertise and resources, the City of Dallas can create a supportive environment that empowers older adults and enriches their lives. Recognizing that the City's needs ever-changing, the Plan's strategies and action items are specifically designed to be measurable, actionable, relevant, and time-bound. Continuous evaluation and adaptation of its strategies will ensure the City remains responsive to the evolving needs of its older adult community. This will empower the city to revise goals, adjust timelines, and rethink strategies as needed, fostering a culture that values creative problem-solving and continuous evaluation, adaptability, and improvement.

Ultimately, the City's vision is to build a community where older adults are valued, respected, and have the opportunity to lead fulfilling lives. Through its dedicated efforts and commitment to excellence, the City of Dallas strives to make a positive and lasting impact on the lives of its older adults. Together, the City can create a brighter future for all.

Appendix A: Key Terms

Health-related social drivers: The term ‘health-related social driver’ is used interchangeably with social determinants of health and is emerging as the term of preference within the medical community.

Multisector Plan on Aging: Often called “Master Plans on Aging,” or Senior Service Strategic Plans, address challenges in the changing landscape of aging and provide cities, counties, and states a foundation and structure to think about aging in a new way. According to the SCAN Foundation, “A Multisector Plan on Aging establishes a 10-year blueprint that guides the restructuring of state and local policy and programs while connecting the public, private, and independent sectors in modernizing, and where necessary, creating systems-based solutions that touch all major areas of the aging life experience (e.g., health, human services, housing, transportation, consumer affairs, employment, income security)” (SCAN Foundation, 2021).

Older adult: Individuals aged 60 years and older.

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH): According to the World Health Organization, social determinants of health refer to the circumstances in which individuals are born, grow, live, work, and age, as well as their access to resources, power, and wealth. These factors play a significant role in shaping health outcomes and contribute to health disparities.

Underserved Populations: In the context of the Older Americans Act (OAA), underserved populations generally refers to older adults who face significant barriers to accessing services and resources that promote healthy aging and well-being. These barriers can stem from various factors, including economic hardship, social isolation, geographic location, disability, and cultural or linguistic differences. In the City of Dallas, this includes, but is not limited to, individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+, men of color, individuals with disabilities, and ethnic minorities, among others.

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Appendix C: Communications Findings & Recommendations



Prepared for

**City of Dallas
Office of Housing &
Community
Empowerment**

Prepared by

**CoSpero
Consulting**

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Executive Summary

This report identifies communication strengths, gaps, and strategic opportunities to improve how the City of Dallas connects with its aging residents. Developed in partnership with the Office of Housing and Community Empowerment (OHCE), the findings and recommendations are designed to guide senior-focused communications across all City departments and partner networks.

Insights are drawn from interviews, public listening sessions, artifact audits, surveys, and comparative research, conducted in partnership with CoSpero Consulting. Feedback from City staff, communications teams, and senior advocates further shaped the recommendations, with special attention to access, messaging, and the City's role as a connector to both internal and external aging services.

The resulting strategy provides a phased, actionable roadmap to help the City simplify access to services, build community trust, and amplify the voices of older adults, particularly those living in poverty or at risk of isolation.



Community Engagement Activities



Our engagement process was designed to ensure representation of Dallas' senior population. These engagements collectively surfaced authentic insights on how seniors navigate, trust, and respond to City communications. Activities include:

2 Public Listening Sessions

These sessions included barrier identification and group discussions focused on communication methods and access to services.

8 One-on-One Interviews

These interviews were conducted with seniors of diverse racial, linguistic, and mobility backgrounds across multiple Dallas neighborhoods.

Communications Flyer AB Testing

Participants were given alternate versions of sample flyers to evaluate design, language clarity, and preferences for print marketing.

Key Insights



Older adults in Dallas face real barriers to accessing information and services—from limited internet access and confusing city systems to messaging that doesn't feel relevant or relatable. Through interviews, listening sessions, flyer testing, and communications audits, we identified key themes around what's working, what's not, and how communication can serve as a stronger bridge to trust and support.

What's Working

Phone Calls and Mail

Phone calls and mail are still go-to formats. They're easy to access, feel official, and are trusted by many seniors.

Community Spaces Matter

Flyers at churches, recreation centers, and grocery stores are widely seen and remembered.

Face-to-Face Outreach

Face to face, like door visits or chats at local events, help build relationships and encourage real conversations.

Some Are Getting Comfortable Online

Some seniors are getting more comfortable online, using smartphones and email more often—though hesitancy and spam concerns remain.

Key Insights



Despite ongoing efforts, many seniors still face persistent barriers that prevent them from getting the information and services they need. From technological limitations to social isolation, these obstacles often lead to confusion, frustration, and missed opportunities. Communication strategies that rely too heavily on digital tools, use inaccessible language, or lack a clear point of entry can inadvertently leave behind the very residents they aim to support.

What's Not Working

Many older adults lack reliable internet, digital devices, or confidence navigating online platforms—so digital-first outreach strategies often miss them entirely.

Barriers to Access: Many older adults lack reliable internet, digital devices, or confidence navigating online platforms—so digital-first outreach strategies often miss them entirely.

Frustration with City Systems

Seniors frequently experience long call transfers, inconsistent answers across departments, and no follow-up—causing confusion and eroding trust.

Gaps in Awareness

Without messengers or materials that feel inclusive, information is often overlooked—especially by seniors who avoid “senior-labeled” events or live in social isolation.

Shortfalls in Design and Messaging

Flyers often use small fonts, complex language, or terms like “assistance,” which feel impersonal and don’t reflect real senior voices or lived experience.

Shortfalls in Design and Messaging: Flyers often use small fonts, complex language, or terms like “assistance,” which feel impersonal and don’t reflect real senior voices or lived experience.



City of Dallas

COMMUNICATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Communications Goal

Close information gaps for older adults by increasing access, awareness, and usage of all services available.

Year 1 Goal and Actions

Building trust with older adults begins by meeting them where they already are. Seniors are more likely to engage when information is shared in familiar, accessible spaces—like churches, recreation centers, food pantries, libraries, and neighborhood events. In-person outreach creates opportunities for real conversation, especially for residents who are socially isolated or hesitant to engage with formal systems. These connections lay the groundwork for long-term trust, visibility, and participation.

By June 2026, make it easier for older adults to find, understand, and use services available across digital, print, and in-person platforms.		
Timeline	Key Actions	Implementation Notes
Q1	Clarify and improve the senior specific City webpage	Collaborate with city-departments to ensure the page is mobile-responsive, ADA-accessible, and features simplified language, large fonts, and clear service categories. Add internal services (City programs) and link to vetted external directories
Q2	Distribute a printed “one-stop” services directory	Include updated contact info and eligibility guidance for city-supported programs. Consider adding a “community resource spotlight” section that references trusted external offerings. Ensure multilingual versions are available
	Better equip 311 and frontline staff with referral tools	Provide scripts and talking points, tailored to seniors. Include scenarios for internal vs. external referrals. Consider a quick-reference flyer or dashboard for common questions. Training should center empathy and consistency
Q3	Standardize messaging across departments	Establish messaging guidelines and shared templates that help teams clearly answer: Who is this for? What is it? Where and how can someone use it? Include age-friendly design guidance
	Revise 10+ priority communications pieces	Identify the most-used or most-confusing materials (e.g., SNAP flyers, recreation center schedules). Update content and design in partnership with older adults— especially from underserved communities

Year 1 Notes and Recommendations

These recommendations reflect operational insights and workshop feedback that should guide how Year 1 goals are carried out:

- **Prioritize the highest-need population:** Focus implementation efforts on the ~30,000 older adults in Dallas living at or below the poverty line. These residents face the greatest communication and access barriers.
- **Coordinate across departments on web improvements:** The senior-specific City webpage is owned by ITS—not Communications or 311. Improving its accessibility and usability will require early alignment and cross-department collaboration.
- **Leverage the existing 311 referral pipeline:** 311 is already a core information access point. Build on this by providing clear referral scripts, empathetic messaging, and follow-up pathways that can support older adults across service types.

- **Build on what's already working:**
 - Integrate with the Senior Services Index and current home visit efforts.
 - Avoid duplication—align messaging and outreach with systems and partnerships already in place.
- **Clarify and formalize the City's role in sharing information:** There is a need to define how the City should present service directories. Two recommended tracks:
 - Track A: City-owned directory: Highlight only City- delivered or City-funded services
 - Track B: Partner-spotlighted directory: Link to or spotlight trusted nonprofit-managed directories already in circulation.
 - Coordinate with principal community partners to feature vetted external offerings. Establish a lightweight quarterly review process to ensure accuracy and relevance.
- Align all materials with upcoming City rebrand: All Year 1 communications— web, print, and in-person collateral—should reflect this updated brand for consistency, recognition, and trust.

Year 2 Goals and Actions

Consistency builds credibility. Many older adults rely on familiar, non-digital formats—like printed flyers, radio, TV, and mail—not just for information, but for a sense of connection and reliability. By investing in multi-channel communications that feel trustworthy and accessible, the City can build deeper relationships and ensure that more seniors are informed—regardless of their access to the internet.

By June 2027, reach at least 50% of older adults in targeted Dallas ZIP codes through trusted, consistent, and recognizable communication channels—including print, broadcast, and in-person formats.

Timeline	Key Actions	Implementation Notes
Q1	Create a branded “Senior Update” template	Develop a recognizable print and digital layout for flyers, updates, and mailers. Ensure it is readable, uses plain language, and reflects the City’s new visual identity.
Q2-Q4	Mail printed updates to seniors monthly	Use utility and library databases to reach residents age 60+. Tailor content by ZIP code where possible. Include multilingual and accessible versions.
	Run public service announcements (PSAs) on TV and radio	Feature real Dallas seniors and deliver messages in at least three languages. Use trusted local stations to maximize familiarity and cultural resonance.
	Expand flyer distribution in community locations	Prioritize high-traffic, trusted locations like churches, barbershops, grocery stores, clinics, and libraries. Partner with community groups to support posting and replenishment.

Year 2 Notes and Recommendations

These implementation insights reflect workshop discussion and lessons from Year 1:

- **Use data to define “targeted ZIP codes”:** Prioritize ZIP codes with high concentrations of low-income seniors, seniors of color, or areas with historically low service uptake. Use Year 1 feedback and partner data to identify these zones.
- **Leverage trusted community spaces and messengers:** Visibility and trust go hand in hand. Expand beyond City-led placements by engaging churches, barbershops, neighborhood leaders, and nonprofits to serve as distribution allies.
- **Coordinate messaging across channels:** Ensure that print, TV/radio, and flyers align in tone, visuals, and core messaging. The new “Senior Update” template should anchor this consistency.
- **Build in translation and accessibility from the start:** Materials should be available in the top spoken languages among Dallas seniors (e.g., English, Spanish, Vietnamese), and follow readability and ADA accessibility best practices.
- **Establish feedback and tracking systems:** Begin tracking reach and effectiveness: How many seniors receive mailers? Which channels prompt the most engagement? Consider adding response mechanisms (e.g., QR codes, call-back slips) to measure performance.
- **Coordinate with Year 1 partners:** Maintain relationships built in Year 1—particularly with 311, ITS, and aging services partners—to reinforce messaging and distribute updates efficiently.
- **Align with City rebranding rollout:** By mid-to-late 2026, all new communications should reflect the City’s updated brand (design, colors, font, tone). This will help reinforce consistency and credibility across departments and channels.
- **Additional questions to address**

- How will we define and prioritize “targeted ZIP codes”?
- What are the biggest logistical or funding barriers to print distribution and PSA airtime?
- Which teams will lead content creation, translations, and template management?
- What’s one low-cost way we can track whether this information is actually reaching older adults?

Year 3 Goals and Actions

Year 3 is about going beyond information delivery. It's about showing up, listening well, and inviting seniors to be part of the solution. This work recognizes older adults not just as recipients of services, but as trusted community leaders, caregivers, storytellers, and co-designers of communication.

Goal 1: By June 2028, host at least 24 in-person engagements that build trust, connection, and visibility among older adults.

Goal 2: By June 2028, ensure that older adults actively shape how the City communicates—through inclusive language, authentic stories, and ongoing feedback.

Timeline	Key Actions	Implementation Notes
Q1	Build local partnerships + deploy OHCE Ambassadors	Formalize ties with churches, senior centers, and nonprofits. Recruit ambassadors (especially bilingual seniors) to support outreach & serve as trusted messengers.
Q2	Host door-to-door outreach and pop-up events	Focus on underrepresented neighborhoods. Use printed materials, informal conversations, and giveaways to build visibility and gather stories.
	Feature 20+ Dallas seniors in campaigns	Share real voices through videos, flyers, and social media. Highlight diverse identities and lived experiences.
Q3	Ask “What would’ve helped you sooner?” + collect 250 feedback forms	Use comment cards, surveys, and conversations at events to surface communication gaps and preferences. Embed feedback into engagement touch points.
Q4	Test and revise communications using senior feedback	Conduct multilingual message testing, then revise 10+ key materials with older adults’ voices centered. Ensure materials reflect what people asked for throughout the year.

Year 3 Notes and Recommendations

Year 3 requires both coordination and care: showing up in the right places, with the right people, and making sure older adults see themselves reflected in the process and outcomes. These strategies will help guide meaningful, equitable, and sustainable implementation.

- **Focus on high-need areas:** Use ZIP code and demographic data to identify neighborhoods with large populations of low-income or historically underserved seniors.
- **Recruit ambassadors who reflect the community:** Engage residents across language, race, culture, gender, and geography. Representation builds trust.
- **Capture and elevate real stories:** Create a shared library of quotes, photos, and lived experiences from Dallas seniors to use across campaigns and events.
- **Embed listening into every engagement:** Collect feedback through comment cards, check-ins, quick surveys, or storytelling prompts—make it easy and human.
- **Track both participation and impact:** Go beyond attendance counts. Document how senior feedback influences materials, messaging, and service design.
- **Let feedback inform more than flyers:** Use what you hear to shape program hours, outreach locations, signage, and frontline staff interactions.

- **Close the loop publicly:** Show residents how their voices led to change (updates, signage, etc.)
- **Additional questions to address**
 - What makes an engagement genuinely “trust-building,” not just visible?
 - Which seniors and communities are missing from our materials or events?
 - How will we act on feedback? How will seniors know we did?
 - What will it take to sustain pop-ups or a mobile outreach effort over time?



City of Dallas

APPENDIX

Communications Scorecard Findings

CoSpero reviewed communications samples that were pulled from a variety of locations around Dallas. This included flyers, social media posts, guides, and more.

Using this scorecard, we rated the clarity and readability, visual design, tone, and accessibility of each sample, and created an average score for each section. We used what we learned from this to create the goals and recommendations,

Category	Avg Score (out of 5)	Strengths	Gaps
Clarity & Readability	3.25	Clear core messages	Many lacked clear calls to action, had small text, or missing event details
Visual Design	3.25	Use of imagery and branding alignment	Layouts lacked spacing, large print, and accessibility features
Tone	3.7	Friendly and inclusive language common	Some materials outdated or culturally disconnected
Accessibility	1.8	Rare multilingual availability	No braille, large-print options, or sign language inclusion

Below are three examples of the types of collateral we reviewed:



SENIOR SERVICES PROGRAM
OCC Senior Services • (214) 670-5227 • 2828 Fish Trap Rd., Dallas, TX 75212

Provides information and referrals on senior services, educational programming and other resources that support and promote financial and social well-being. The Office of Community Care/Senior Services also provides staff support to the City of Dallas Senior Affairs Commission (SAC).

Senior Affairs Commission
A 15-member advisory board appointed by the Mayor and City Council to address the concerns of seniors within the City of Dallas. The Commission meets once a month, except for July. Meetings are open to the public. Inquiries: (214) 670-7863

Senior Ombudsman Program
Addresses concerns and seeks resolutions to issues for residents in long-term care facilities. Offers information to seniors and their families about nursing home issues. This program is implemented by The Senior Source: (214) 623-5700


Employment Program
The Program provides assistance, training and advocacy to enable low to moderate income senior individuals with disabilities, age 60 and older, to successfully obtain and maintain employment. U&I (214) 637-2911

DART Rider Assistance Program (RAP)
Transportation program that allows eligible seniors and persons with disabilities to schedule and pay for transportation services from the user's transportation subsidy account.
DART Certification: (214) 828-6717
Qualifying criteria:
• 65 y/o or older OR have a certified disability, but not eligible for DART Paratransit Services
• Proof of residency
• Have NO other means of transportation

Operation Watershare
Assistance with Dallas Water Utilities to persons 60+ facing financial hardships. Senior Services Main Line: (214) 670-5227

Senior Dental Health Program
Dental services for persons 60+ provided by appointment only at the following clinics:
• North Dallas Shared Ministries (214) 358-8729
2875 Merrell Rd., Dallas, TX 75229
• Dr. M.C. Cooper Clinic
Texas A&M College of Dentistry (214) 370-7260
4570 Scyene Rd., Dallas, TX 75210

Office of
Community Care
City of Dallas



WALK AND TALK
WALKING CLUB
SATURDAY, MARCH 1
8 - 9 a.m.

Home • Programs & Activities • Senior Programs

Active Senior Adult Programs (ASAP)

The Dallas Park and Recreation Department is committed to enhancing the quality of lives of Active Seniors and Adults over the age of 60 by providing recreation and leisure activities to complement your rich and rewarding lifestyle.

The Active Senior Adult Program (ASAP) offers various activities at all Dallas [recreation centers](#) Monday - Friday, 9am - 2pm. Activities focus on 5 core areas: competition, health / fitness, socialization, special events, and special interests.

Examples of ASAP activities include but are not limited to: Aerobics, Arts & Crafts, Book Clubs, Bridge, Day Trips, Dominoes, Fitness and Nutrition Classes, Walking Clubs, Weight Training, Volunteer Opportunities, and much more!

Visit one of our dedicated Senior Centers:

- [Marcus Annex Senior Center](#)
- [Singing Hills Senior Center](#)
- [Umbroess Senior Center](#)
- [WellMed Charitable Foundation Senior Center](#)
- [Willie B. Johnson Senior Center](#)

WellMed Charitable Foundation

The Dallas Park and Recreation Department is pleased to inform Dallas residents, ages 60 and older, that Active Senior Adult Program (ASAP) fees are currently waived thanks to our partnership with the [WellMed Charitable Foundation \(WCF\)](#).

In addition to waiving the \$10 annual recreation card fee, and the \$5 monthly access fee to its 43 recreation centers, WellMed Charitable Foundation has partnered with the Park and Recreation Department to operate a state of the art [Senior Activity Center](#).

[Thank you WellMed Charitable Foundation.](#)

Contact Us

Senior Program Division
3012 S. Hampton
Dallas, TX 75204
Ph: 214-671-1602

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

[Email Us](#)

Para información en español
llamada 214-670-8847

Calendar

Sat, Apr. 12
[Breast Cancer Awareness Walk & Community Health Fair](#)

Sat, Apr. 12
[Branching Out Volunteer Tree Planting @ Eladio Martinez Park](#)

Fri, May 2
[23rd Annual Mother's Day Luncheon](#)

[VIEW ALL](#)

Interviewee Demographics

CoSpero conducted one-on-one interviews with eight seniors from across Dallas to better understand how they access information, what challenges they face, and what they need to feel informed and supported. Through these conversations, we gathered personal stories and practical insights about communication barriers, trusted sources, and preferred outreach methods. What we heard directly shaped the goals and recommendations.

Age	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	District/ Neighborhood	Living Situation	Mobility	Primary Language
76	Male	White	Cedars District (D2)	Alone	Active	English
76	Male	White (LGBT)	Cedar Springs (D14)	Alone	Active	English
67	Male	African American	South Dallas	With Family	Active	English
71	Male	African American	Northeast Dallas (D10)	Alone	Very Active	English
70	Male	White (LGBT)	Cedars District (D2)	Alone	Active (cane)	English
71	Female	African American	Joppa (D7)	Alone	Moderate (cane)	English
81	Female	Hispanic	Esperanza (D11)	Alone/ Homebound	Limited	English/ Spanish
72	Female	African American	North Dallas (D12)	Alone/ Homebound	Wheelchair	English

AB Testing

CoSpero tested 3 versions of printed flyers with seniors to better understand what design and messaging approaches were most effective. Participants were shown the versions and asked to circle which parts of each they preferred and why.

A/B testing helped us learn what catches attention, what feels trustworthy and what drives action. The feedback we received directly informed the communications strategies and design recommendations.

How do you like to get information?

1. Where do you learn about services? Pick 2

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare Professional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Worker or Aging Service Professional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver | <input type="checkbox"/> Member of a Federally Recognized Tribe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employer or HR Professional | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faith Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> TV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government Official or Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Printed Flyer |

2. What makes it difficult to get important information? Check all that apply

- No internet or computer access
- Hard to read small text on flyers or emails
- I don't always answer phone calls
- Information is too complicated or unclear
- I don't know where to look for updates

3. Look at the flyer examples provided and check which one you prefer:



Why did you select the flyer above?



For #1, the top 2 places where seniors learn about services are: Social Worker and Printed Flyers
Other top contenders included: neighbors, internet, healthcare professional social media, and government officials

For #2, the top reason seniors find it difficult to get important information is: "I don't always answer phone calls." The second reason is: "Hard to read small text on flyers or emails"

For #3, the first option was preferred by most. Some individuals selected the block color in option three to separate information clearly.



Thank You

Prepared for
City of Dallas
Office of Housing &
Community
Empowerment

Prepared by
CoSpero Consulting