

Age-Friendly DC July 2024 Newsletter



AGE-FRIENDLY=DC



Quote of the Month: *“We want to make sure we are passing on a city that is stronger and more inclusive for each generation. We want everyone in our city, from our youngest residents to our oldest residents, to live proudly, to be loved supported, and safe.”* – Mayor Muriel Bowser

Bi-Annual Task Force Meeting 2024-2028 Strategic Plan



The bi-annual Age-Friendly DC Task Force meeting took place on June 11, 2024, at 3:00pm. The event was attended by individuals from partner agencies, community-based organizations and was open to the public. The GW Center for Aging, Health, and Humanities hosted the event.

The Task Force presented an introduction to the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan. This plan focuses on making improvements across the lifespan to provide everyone an equitable chance to a long

and healthy life. Goals were shared for each of the initiative's three main pillars: built environment, changing attitudes about age and other characteristics, and lifelong health and security. Promising practices that will be included as action plans such as [Safe at Home](#), [Friendship Benches](#), [Bank on DC](#) and [the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program](#) were spotlighted throughout the meeting.

James Appleby, President of the Gerontological Society of USA and co-chair of the Task Force, said, "What I took away is that the work being done for the 2024-2028 cycle is well underway. There is a lot of passion behind this work, and I was really taken by the number of practical solutions that are being put forward. I think it's something we should celebrate."

You can listen to the full meeting recording [online here](#).

Mark your calendar for the next Task Force meeting which will take place on Tuesday, December 3, 2024!

Livability Survey: A Chance for DC Community Members to Share their Perspective



The 2024 Livability Survey is underway! This annual survey is a chance for community members of all ages to answer questions related to key areas of the Age-Friendly DC plan such as accessibility of local parks and recreation centers, neighborhood walkability, inclusion in their community, and neighborhood safety. Your responses to this survey help influence policy and programs that improve the aging experience.

This year's survey also includes a short battery of questions about neighborhood cohesion and feeling of connection with your neighbors. There is a growing body of evidence that neighborhood cohesion is an important determinant of your health. A recent [study](#) showed that older adults who have higher perceptions of neighborhood cohesion had a lower risk of loneliness and depression, and higher life satisfaction. Knowing how community members feel about their relationships with their neighbors can help us create events and programs that bring neighbors together in neighborhoods that need it most.

You can complete the [survey online](#) or stop by any DC public library to fill out a paper version. Responses are anonymous, but you can provide contact information for a chance to win \$250!

The survey will be open until Friday, July 19th at 11:59 pm. If you have any questions, please call (202) 727-7973 and ask to speak to an Age-Friendly DC staff member.

Meet the Age-Friendly DC Task Force Co-Chairs



Social Isolation in middle age can cause serious health issues later in life, but through collective efforts, we can strengthen social connections and improve health for everyone. *“The AFDC 2018-2023 progress evaluation revealed that about a quarter of DC residents feel socially excluded, matching national data indicating 24% of Americans over 65 are socially isolated,”* said **Wayne Turnage** the Director of the Department of Health Care Finance at DMHHS and the co-chair of the AFDC task force.

To address this, AFDC is developing a strategic plan incorporating social participation, including measuring social isolation across the District to identify at-risk residents. We are teaming up with many organizations and agencies to reduce social isolation, like [DC Villages](#), [Mayor's Office of Community Affairs](#), [AARP DC](#), [Washington Interfaith Network](#), [the GW Center for Aging, Health, and Humanities](#), and [Help Age's Friendship Bench program](#). The [Friendship Bench program](#) trains older people to provide basic talk therapy to people of all ages on wooden “Friendship Benches” situated in safe spaces within the community. The other AFDC task force co-chair, **James Appleby**, CEO of the Gerontological Society of America, stated, *“I'm so impressed by the Friendship Bench idea and its application. It shows how open-minded we are in looking for solutions, because aging is a global phenomenon, as is the mental health crisis, and finding solutions wherever they might be and bringing them to the citizens of DC.”*

Key Dates

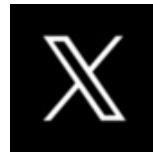
2024 Age-Friendly Ecosystem Summit: The GW Center for Aging, Health and Humanities is hosting the fourth annual Age-Friendly Ecosystem Summit virtually this fall.

- October 8- Shaping Tomorrow: Longevity, Age-Friendly, and Multisector Planning
 - [Register here](#)
- October 9- Inclusive by Design: Strategies for Age-Friendly and Dementia-Friendly Businesses
 - [Register here](#)
- October 15- Unlocking Potential: Lifelong Learning for a Thriving Society
 - [Register here](#)
- October 16- Healthy Communities and Healthier Aging: Collaborative Solutions
 - [Register here](#)

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