AGING in MASSACHUSETTS

Shaping the Future

MCOA Small and Rural Conference
Robin Lipson, Executive Office of Elder Affairs
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Governor's Council to Address Aging in MA

On April 12, 2017, Governor Charles D. Baker signed Executive Order 576 establishing the Governor's Council to Address Aging

Governor's Council to Address Aging in MA
Plan and Process

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Year One

- Held 5 in-person meetings including 4 expert panels
- Reviewed documents and data from thought leaders
- Held 4 listening sessions across the state
- Invited input and recommendations via web portal
- Heard from over 500 individuals across the Commonwealth
- Drafted initial blueprint

Year Two

- Establish working groups to research, develop and explore potential initiatives
- Provide recommendations to Governor Baker
- Establish a plan for communications of the Council's work and reports
- Develop metrics to evaluate outcomes and measure success

Overview
What the Council Heard

Over nine months the Council held five working meetings and convened four listening sessions throughout the state in addition to collecting public comment online. The result was input from more than 500 Massachusetts residents.

Governor's Council to Address Aging in MA
Create an Age-Friendly Commonwealth
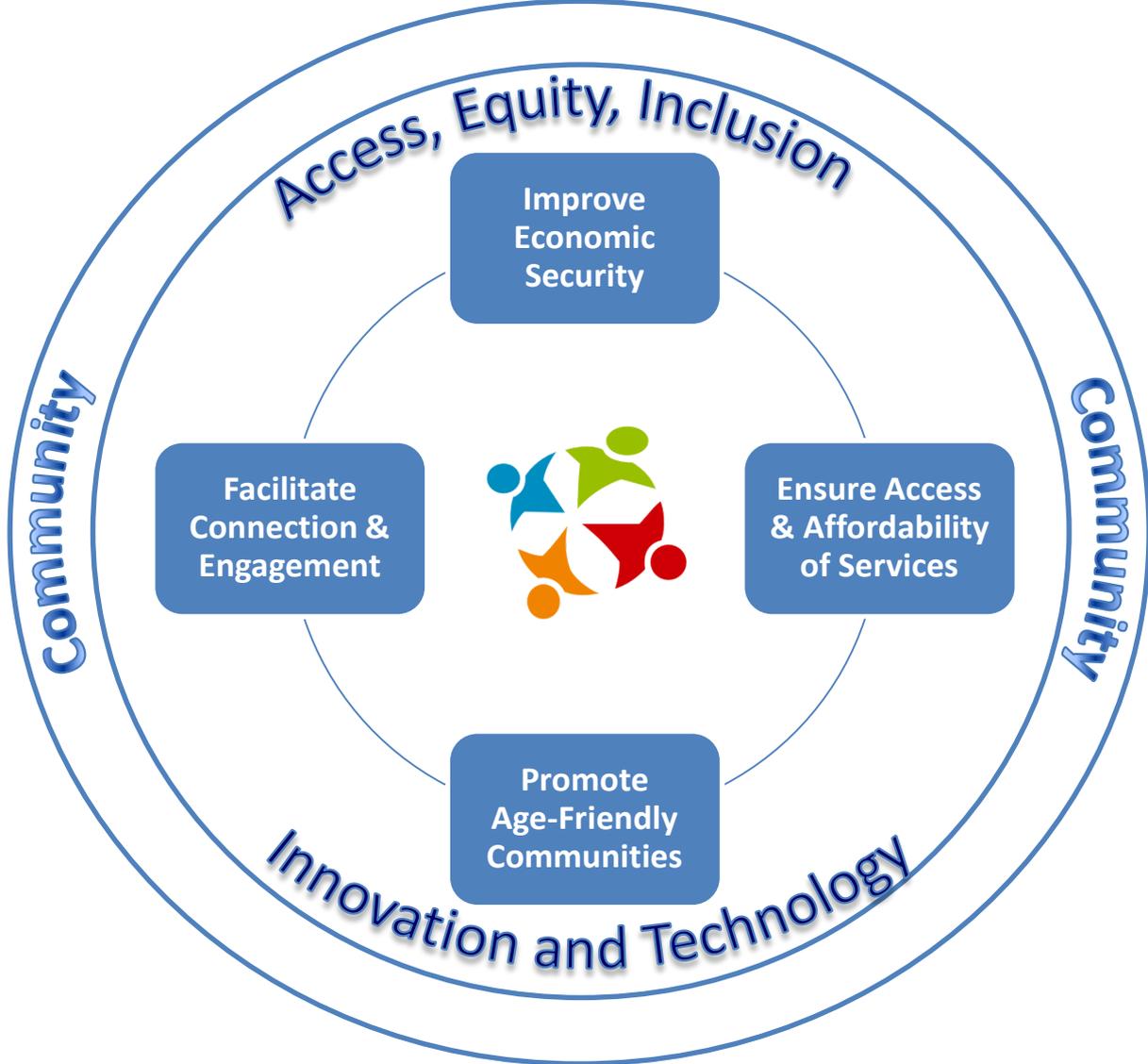
Governor's Council to Address Aging in MA
Initial Priorities

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1. **Declare Massachusetts as an age-friendly state**

2. **Include age-friendly best practices in community compact program (new business, economic development, innovation and technology)**

3. **Promote the designation of age-friendly employers and practices that support mature workers and workers who are caregivers**

4. **Increase participation in employer sponsored retirement plans and explore options for those without access to employer sponsored plans**

5. **Consider supporting caregivers with an information and awareness campaign**

6. **Promote and modernize property tax deferral programs**

7. **Consider options, including new sources of capital, for increasing production of accessible, affordable, service enriched housing**

8. **Quickly scale and replicate successful age-friendly pilots, such as ride-sharing**

9. **Become the Silicon Valley for innovative technology, products and services related to aging**

10. **Begin changing perceptions and address ageism with specific trainings and communication tools**

What Does Age Friendly Mean?

Age-Friendly describes a movement to make communities more welcoming and livable for older residents and people of all ages. It describes efforts we can take together to create places where people can grow up and grow old together. AARP has identified eight areas for communities throughout the country to focus on improving:

1. **Outdoor Spaces & Buildings**
2. **Transportation**
3. **Housing**
4. **Social Participation**
5. **Respect & Social Inclusion**
6. **Civic Participation & Employment**
7. **Communication & Information**
8. **Community & Health Services**
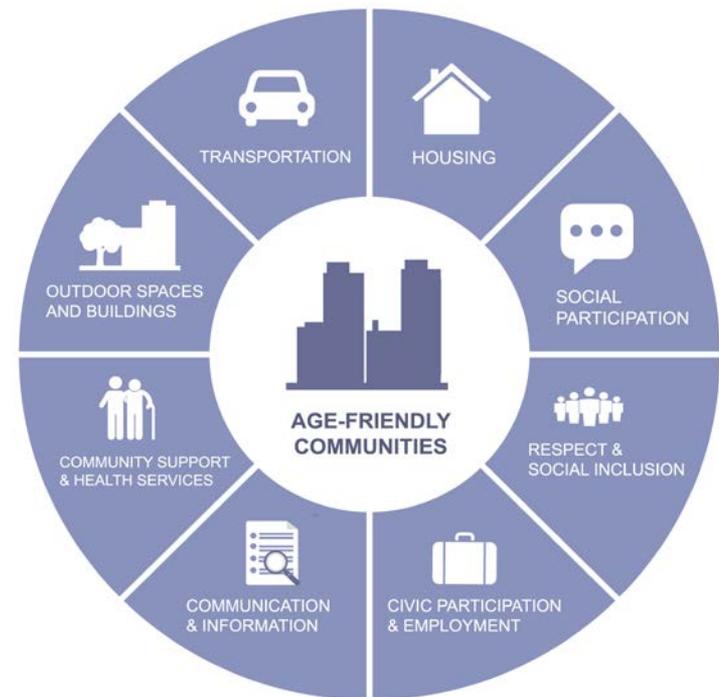
Age-Friendly State

The Governor announced that Massachusetts has been designated by the AARP as only the second state in the country to join that organization's Age-Friendly Network.

This designation commits us to making Massachusetts more livable and welcoming for older adults and people of <u>all</u> ages through a diverse network of partners and communities.

"We need to think differently about aging in Massachusetts...to ensure that those who grew up, raised families and built our communities, can continue to contribute their energy, experience and talents where they live.

GOV. CHARLIE BAKER

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House 2 Budget

The H.2 budget funds the Executive Office of Elder Affairs at $544.6M, which is a $17.4M (+2.4%) increase over FY18 estimated spending and $18.2M (+2.6%) above the FY18 GAA.

House 2 Budget Highlights

- $2.9M in Councils on Aging account to increase the local Councils on Aging formula grant from $9.70 per elder (as funded in FY18 GAA) to $12 per elder. Note: $635K in non-programmatic earmarks not funded in H.2
- $4.7M increase to Choices program due to steady caseload but higher acuity and longevity
- $7.4M increase for caseload growth in the state Home Care program. This funding level will ensure there is no waitlist and will serve more than 600 new members in FY19
  - Supports a caseload increase of 2%
  - $2.9M in rate increases associated with Chapter 257
- $2.7M increase for growth in elder protective services caseload
  - This supports intervention in 5,800 new cases of elders experiencing emotional, physical, sexual, or financial abuse
  - 9% projected caseload growth is in line with recent years

Partnerships and Innovation

<u>Age-Friendly</u>

- Age-Friendly Berkshire created a Task Force with community partners across the 32 cities and towns in Berkshire County to establish a plan to create a more livable county for people of all ages, with a focus on the needs of an aging population.

- Adams, Agawam, Aquinnah, Cheshire, Chilmark, Edgartown, Hinsdale, North Adams, Oak Bluffs, Sheffield, Tisbury are all active age-friendly communities

<u>Transportation</u>

- Hilltown Development Corporation started a new program with the Franklin Regional Transit Authority called Hilltown Easy Ride.

- Med Ride, a program that the Shutesbury Council on Aging offers, funded by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, now has six drivers who work on an as-needed basis and use their own cars.

Villages - Villages are membership-driven, grass-roots, community organizations. They often start informally with community members coming together to conceptualize a way of helping each other. The beauty of this model is its uniqueness – allowing each community to envision and create the structure that works for the needs of the members.

- There are villages in the following small and rural communities: Nauset Neighbors and Vineyard Village at Home

Memory Cafés - A memory café is a welcoming place for people with forgetfulness or other changes in their thinking and for their family and friends. Memory cafés meet at a variety of places including coffeehouses, museums, or community organizations.

- There are memory cafes in the following small and rural communities: Belchertown, Dudley, Gardner, Greenfield, Groton, Hampden, Littleton, Ludlow, Shelburne Falls, South Hadley

Elder Mental Health Outreach Teams (EMHOT) to increase access to mental health services for older adults who are isolated at home or living in difficult situations. The teams include collaboration between behavioral health clinicians and community outreach staff who are trained and supported in conducting mental health screenings.

- These teams were piloted in Lower Merrimack Valley (led by Amesbury), New Bedford and Blackstone Valley (led by Bellingham)

Questions?

Thank You