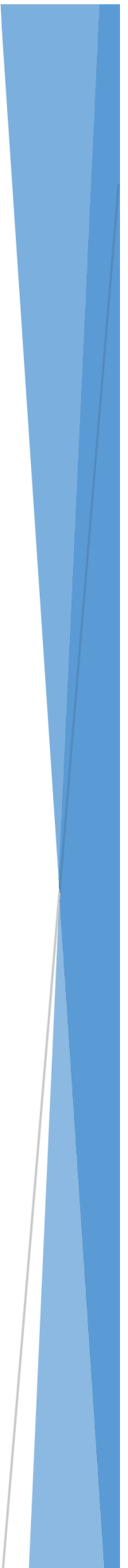


CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
Commission on Aging

Annual Report for 2018



COMMISSION ON AGING ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018

INTRODUCTORY NOTE:

This commission seeks to raise public awareness of aging-related issues, and to advocate for policies and programs that will address the problems and challenges of our community's aging population. We work in collaboration with a wide range of community organizations to build bridges, open dialogue, explore issues and concerns, encourage programming, and celebrate the accomplishments of older adults.

Our report is presented in three sections, as follows:

WHO WE ARE presents a collective resume of our members, including relevant community affiliations.

WHAT WE DID IN 2018 provides brief summaries of our activities related to:

- The Lifetime Community Concept
- Dementia Friendly Bloomington
- Additional Outreach and Collaboration
- The City of Bloomington's Community Survey

OUR PLANS FOR 2019 outlines the big-picture view as we begin the new year.

We would welcome the opportunity to address any questions that readers of this report might have about our work.

Respectfully submitted by:

Phil Stafford, Chair

Lauren Cowan

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WHO WE ARE:

We range in age from 51 to 87. None of us were born in Bloomington, but one of us has lived here for 42 of her 53 years! One of us brings the fresh eyes of a community newcomer to our work, having lived here only two of her 51 years. And one of us brings a deep sense of global history to our work, rooted in his experience as a Holocaust survivor.

We represent quite a range of disciplinary viewpoints as well. In college we specialized in fields such as art history, chemistry, cultural anthropology, education, electronic engineering, gerontology, information science, interior architectural design, nursing, photography, and public management. Some of us have masters degrees, and three of us have doctorates.

We also have considerable professional experience. One of us served as Director of the Indiana Division on Aging's Family and Social Services Administration. Another served as Director of IU's Center on Aging and Community, and yet another is currently Elder Care Home Connections' Director of Business Development. Our number also includes both a certified Senior Real Estate Specialist, and the co-owner of a local business (Agewise Design) that plans and creates safe and accessible environments for homeowners who want to "age in place." We've also had professional affiliations with Bell Trace, Meadowood, Bloomington Hospital, IBM, Pinnacle School, South Central Community Mental Health Center, and a number of different schools or administrative units at Indiana University.

Finally, we bring an assortment of community service connections to our work. These are very useful, since we are committed to helping Bloomington increase its capacity to support its aging population. Such work never is really "done," nor can it be advanced effectively by any one group on its own. Our collective network includes:

- AARP Tax Assistance
- Active Aging Coalition
- Active Living Coalition
- American Society on Aging
- Area 10 Agency on Aging
- Bloomington Meals on Wheels
- Dementia-Friendly Bloomington
- IU Emeriti House
- IU Mathers Museum of World Cultures
- IU Retirees Association
- Mathers Lifeways
- Memory Bridge Foundation
- Monroe County Historical Society
- My Sister's Closet
- Monroe County Public Library
- Monroe County Suicide Prevention Coalition
- National Center for Creative Aging
- National Association of State Units on Aging and Disability (NASUAD)
- United Way of Monroe County

WHAT WE DID IN 2018:

The Lifetime Community Concept

During the drafting of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan, we advocated for the "Lifetime Community" concept to become a key planning principle for Bloomington. In 2018 we continued that advocacy throughout the year at meetings on the UDO development process, and on the future use of the old hospital site. We also worked with MKM Architecture + Design to offer a public workshop on the concept in April. As a resource for the community, we subsequently posted that PowerPoint presentation on our website at <https://bloomington.in.gov/sites/default/files/2018-08/Lifetime%20Community.pdf>.

Dementia Friendly Bloomington (DFB)

In February, all Commissioners participated in dementia-sensitivity training led by a DFB professional. As a result, the Commission itself is DFB-certified, and is listed by the DFB at <http://www.alzresourceindiana.org/in-the-news/>. In May, we collaborated with DFB to staff its second annual conference, which was held at Sherwood Oaks Christian Church; the report on that conference is posted on our website at <https://bloomington.in.gov/sites/default/files/2018-08/Lifetime%20Community%2C%20dementia-friendly%20neighborhoods%20for%20Bloomington.pdf>. And in October, we exhibited as part of the Teepa Snow workshop at Ivy Tech on "Reframing Dementia: Inclusive Communities."

Additional Outreach and Collaboration

May is Older Americans Month, and since its inception the Commission has had a tradition of promoting that. This year we marked it by participating in the 50+ Expo at Twin Lakes, and by mounting a display in City Hall's main lobby case. Other outreach and collaboration included participating in WTIU's first-ever Conference on Aging in August; posting a direct link to the [seniorguidance.org](https://www.seniorguidance.org/assisted-living/indiana/) report on "Assisted Living in Indiana" on our website at <https://www.seniorguidance.org/assisted-living/indiana/>; and continuing to spotlight events offered by the Active Aging Coalition in each of our newsletters.

The City of Bloomington's Community Survey

In 2017 the City conducted its Community Survey (CS), and 2,030 citizens responded. Of those responses, 460 were from seniors (defined as respondents aged 55+). Since a primary focus of the Commission is to address the concerns of seniors, we undertook an analysis of the 460 responses to the open-ended survey question: *“What is the one thing you like least about the City of Bloomington?”* A table summarizing the results of our analysis is attached as an appendix to this report; the table identifies number of responses by specific age group, as well as by whether the respondent was selected randomly or opted-in once the survey had been posted online. Please take note of the included page that outlines six caveats we consider crucial to proper interpretation of these results. We intended to post this analysis on our website, providing links to the full-text of participant responses (organized by category). Ultimately, however, the results were considered too negative to be posted without a corresponding display analyzing responses to the complementary CS question, *“What is the one thing you like most about the City of Bloomington?”* The Commission did not have the resources available to undertake that additional analysis project.

OUR PLANS FOR 2019:

Some of our 2018 efforts will carry over into 2019 and beyond. For example, several of our traditional outreach and collaborative activities will continue throughout many years to come.

Additional projects for 2019 may include: providing leadership for community discussions of the need for a new center (all-ages, or senior-dedicated); exploring ways to employ digital tools for informing seniors about upcoming events and opportunities; supporting efforts to create a temporary installation that will demonstrate the nature and value of an intergenerational play street on Morton between Second and Third; supporting plans for a film festival on creative aging; and possible additional outreach to groups such as the IU Retirees Association (our Chair is doing a presentation on “The Meaning of Home and Stuff” for them this month), and the Commission on the Status of Children and Youth (he met with their Chair this month as well).

Overall, however, we plan to guide our work by reference to the four domains embedded in the Lifetime Communities concept, which are:

- Promoting creation of home and sense of place
- Enabling mobility
- Building health and wellness
- Fostering creative expression and lifelong learning

COA DATA TASK FORCE: RESPONSES TO QUESTION #19 OF 2017 COMMUNITY SURVEY

Question #19: "What is the one thing you like least about the City of Bloomington?"

RESPONSES BY CATEGORY (ROW) & RESPONDENT TYPE (COLUMN)	RANDOM 75+	RANDOM 65-74	RANDOM 55-64	OPT IN 75+	OPT IN 65-74	OPT IN 55-64		ROW TOTALS
Affordable Housing	---	2	6	---	3	10		21
Annexation	---	---	---	1	2	4		7
Catering to IU	2	1	1	1	3	2		10
Cost of Living	---	2	1	---	2	1		6
Environment	1	1	3	---	4	3		12
Funding Priorities	2	1	1	---	3	4		11
Government	1	8	8	1	17	18		53
Homelessness	3	6	12	2	8	13		44
Housing Development	10	6	7	1	11	16		51
Low Wages	1	1	2	1	---	6		11
Panhandling	2	3	3	---	3	1		12
Parking	8	8	7	2	11	9		45
Politics	2	3	1	2	5	10		23
Retail Selection	2	2	2	---	---	3		9
Road Conditions	4	2	1	2	1	3		13
Safety	1	---	3	---	1	5		10
Street Layout	3	5	1	---	6	4		19
Traffic	5	3	2	1	10	14		35
Other (< five responses)	11	15	10	5	15	12		68
COLUMN TOTALS	58	69	71	19	105	138		460

COA DATA TASK FORCE: CAVEATS TO KEEP IN MIND

1. **The wording of the Community Survey question was somewhat ambiguous.** Most respondents interpreted the question quite broadly, which is why there are so many topics listed here. But some respondents may have thought that they were being asked to comment *only* on matters relevant to the City's government. Thus, the number of responses under topics related to that may be disproportionately high.
2. **The survey question specifically asked participants to cite just one thing, but many respondents cited more.** For this index, we followed the practice used by NRC in preparing its Community Survey reports for the City. That is, due to timing constraints, we indexed only the first topic cited in each response. If the question must continue to be worded in this way for future surveys, we strongly recommend indexing all additional topics mentioned as well. Their position in each response (i.e., listed second, third, etc.) could be dealt with by identifying them as secondary responses, and presenting them in a separate section under each topic's listing.
3. **Following standard practice for reporting on survey input of this type, we did not correct any typos.** We realize that these typos make a bad impression, and can lead a reader to discount the value of what a writer is trying to express. Because of this, you may want to note we found some evidence suggesting that not all of the typos were made by the respondents themselves.
4. **The wording in many of these responses is ambiguous.** We used a careful, multi-cycle, three-person protocol to develop the set of topics/categories, and to assign responses to each of those topics. Nevertheless, many responses were so short (one word!) or so vague that we could not be confident we fully understood the respondent's intent. In the end, each assignment was a judgment call. So, keep in mind that there may be more than one category/topic relevant to whatever your interests may be.
5. **To understand what Bloomington seniors think, you need to read the full text of their responses rather than rely on the table summarizing where they were categorized.** That is, you cannot get a "snapshot" of senior priorities by just comparing the number of responses listed for each of the topics. For example, consider the topic "homelessness." Many of these response were sympathetic to what people experiencing homelessness must feel. Such responses focused on the need to support them. But other responses expressed resentment of how much the City spends in support of homeless individuals. In particular, some of those responses noted that many homeless individuals in Bloomington actually come from other parts of Indiana, because our community has a reputation for providing homeless support.