

# Livable Orlando – 2024 Implementation Highlights Report

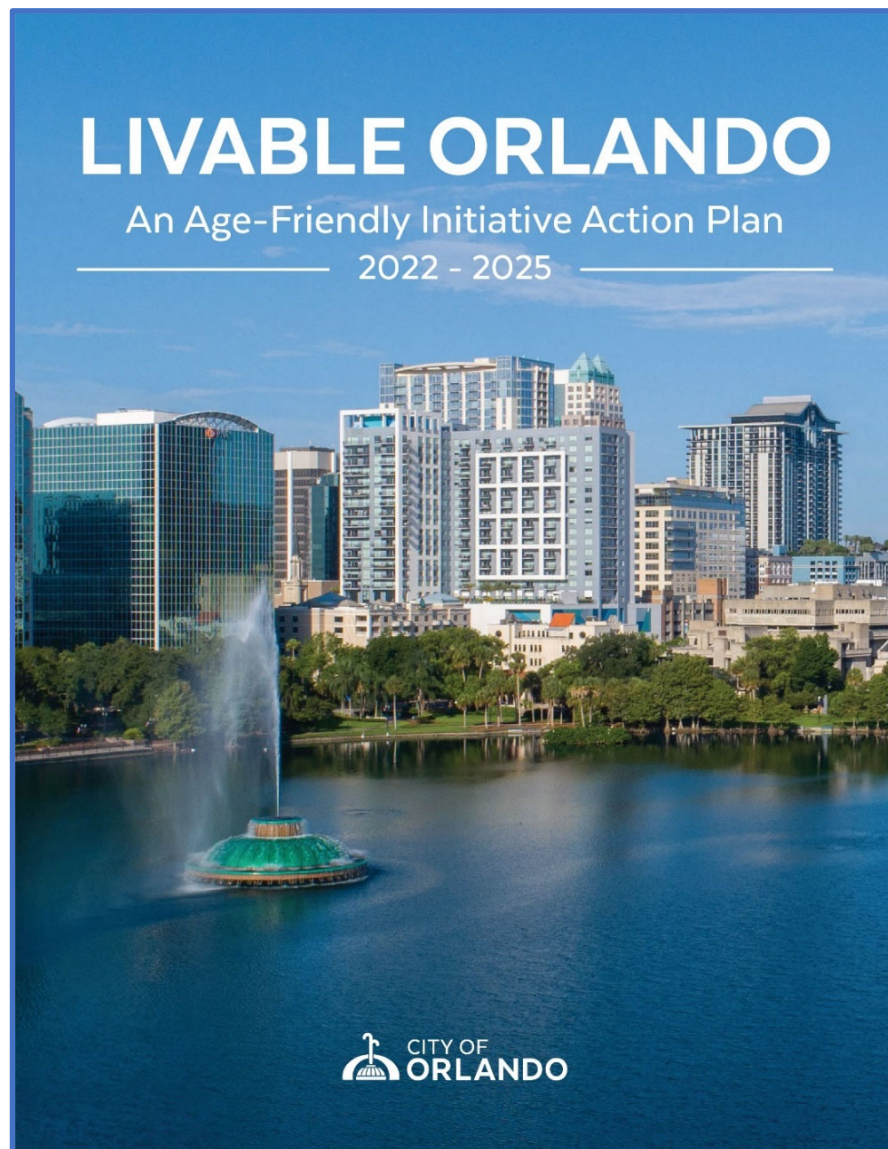
Prepared for the Mayor’s Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging

January 19, 2025

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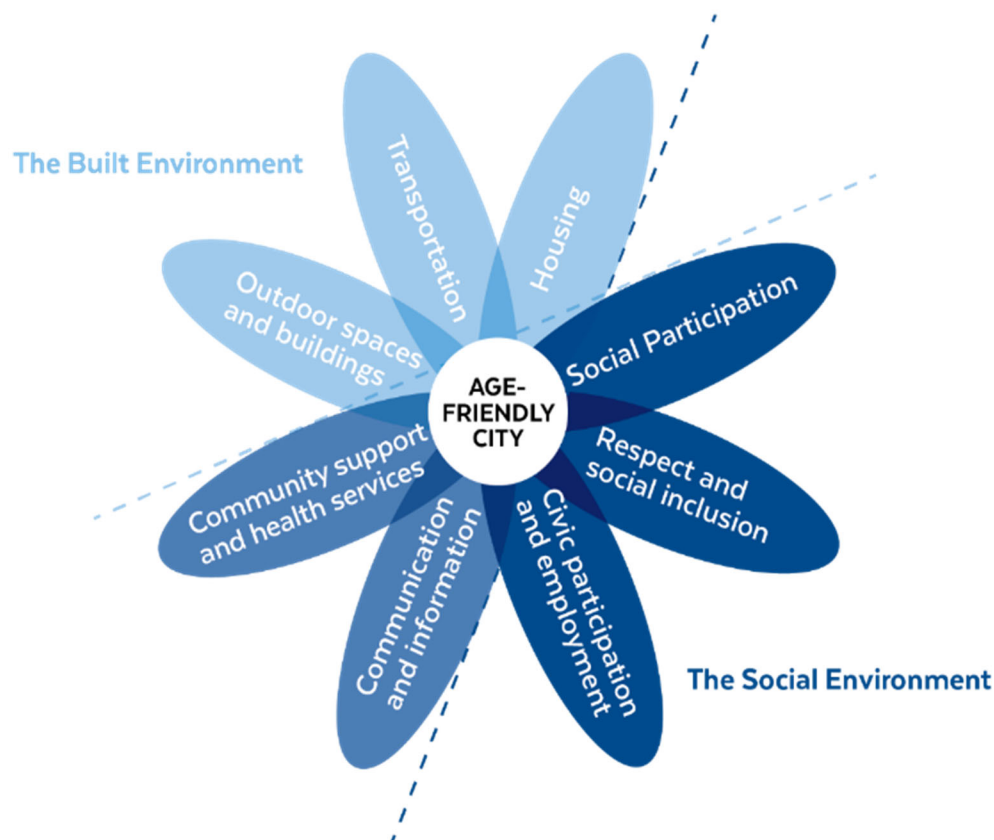
The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of progress made during 2024 to advance the goals and action items identified in the **Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Initiative Action Plan 2022-2025**. 2024 marked the second full year of plan implementation. As of January 2025, we are beginning the third year of plan implementation.

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## BACKGROUND

- The Orlando City Council approved the **Livable Orlando Age-Friendly Action Plan 2022-2025** on September 12, 2022. The Plan was created under the auspices of the World Health Organization (WHO) and their affiliate in the United States, AARP.
- Orlando's Plan focuses on improving the built and social environments to ensure "livability for people of all ages", with a special emphasis on older adults. There are 25 goals and 89 action items across 8 domains of livability.

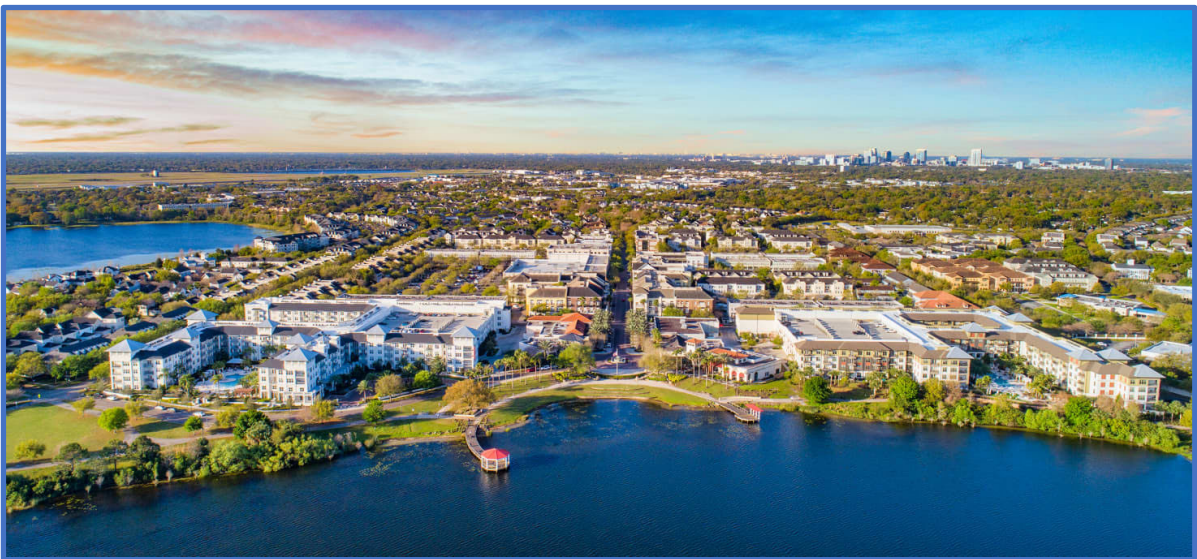


- The Mayor's Committee on Livability & Healthy Aging (MCLHA) guides the Plan's implementation. Membership of the MCLHA has been strengthened in recent years not only to foster partnerships between the City and organizations that provide services to older adults, but also to encourage partnerships between organizations themselves.
- The Mission of the MCLHA is to ensure the City of Orlando remains a "Community for a Lifetime" for all its residents by making recommendations to the Mayor and City Council.

## **BUILT ENVIRONMENT – 2024 IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS**

### **PLACEMAKING**

- **Baldwin Park Planning & Design Award.** In March 2024, the City of Orlando’s Planning Division was awarded the 2023 Addison Mizner Award from the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art Florida Chapter for excellence in planning and design. The Baldwin Park planned community was the first large-scale “new urbanism” development within the City of Orlando. Livability and age-friendly features of Baldwin Park include integrated land uses, walkable neighborhoods, traditional grid street patterns, extensive park spaces (over 200 acres), and trails along the lakes.



The Addison Mizner awards are named for Addison Mizner, an architect whose civic and domestic works defined the standards of excellence in composition and craftsmanship for classical and traditional design in the early years of urban development in Florida. Please see: <https://flclassicist.org/awards/>

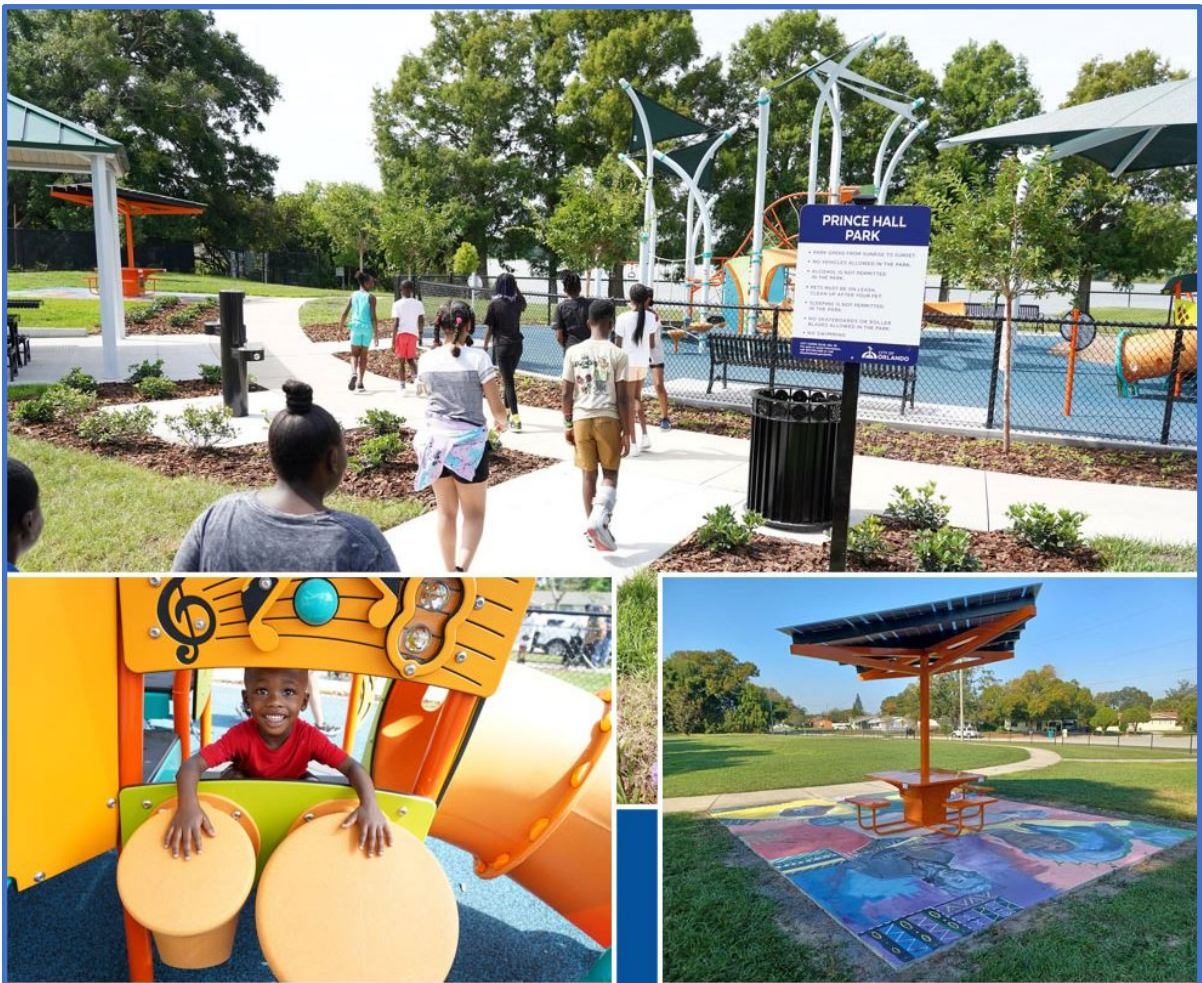
*Action Items: A.1.1., C.1.1., C.1.2.*

- **Tables of Connection Project Expansion – IN PROGRESS.** As part of a 2021 AARP Community Challenge Grant (\$20,000), Orlando purchased and installed wheelchair-accessible, solar-operated table and shade structures at two neighborhood parks – Prince Hall Park and Willows Park. Outfitted with Wi-Fi hotspots and charging stations, the tables brought needed connectivity in terms of providing broadband service to underserved communities.



Based on the success of the original project and as part of Accelerate Orlando (ARPA), on August 12, 2024, the Orlando City Council approved a design/build services contract with SELS USA, LLC which includes the design and build of up to twelve (12) additional Tables of Connection at different locations throughout Orlando with an estimated budget of \$600,000 for all 12 tables. This includes the tables, the install, the concrete work, adding some sidewalks, adding internet, etc. The City is not planning a public art component with this project expansion. The new tables, which will be installed in 2025, will broadcast internet further than the original projects at Prince Hall Park and Willows Park (originally, those tables only had internet within about 10 feet of the table). The newer approach will provide internet throughout each park and into some of the adjacent homes. Exact prices will be developed with the design/build contractor. While most of Accelerate Orlando is for homelessness and affordable housing (\$58M total), some of it was set aside for digital divide/internet access (about \$4M).

*Action Items: A.1.3., E.1.3, G.2.2.*



- **Community Gardens – ON-GOING.** Orlando’s Office of Sustainability, Resilience and Future and the City’s Families, Parks and Recreation Department have partnered to expand the City’s Community Garden program to 10 Orlando Neighborhood Centers. These gardens focus on nutrition, increasing access to local produce, and climate readiness. Each garden includes several extra tall, raised garden beds that are 32" in height for mobility challenged gardeners. The beds at the McQuigg Garden are fully ADA accessible. As part of this gardens expansion, the Office of Sustainability, Resilience and Future has worked with outside partners to increase the number of volunteers participating in gleaning events as well as rebuilding gardens and urban farms in Orlando. While the City does not gather age demographics for these gardens, staff has noted that mature adults have garden plots in these 10 gardens and have become garden volunteers – especially at McQuigg.

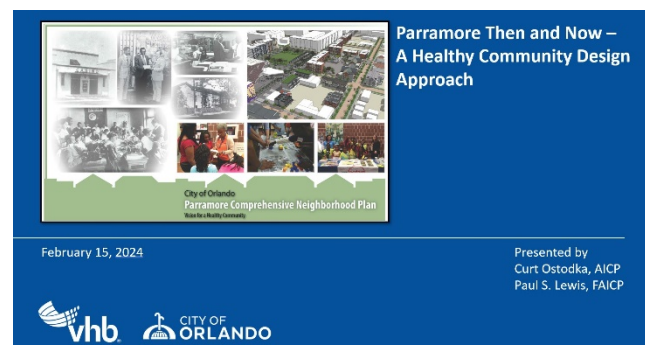


*Action Items: A.4.1., A.4.2.*

- **Center for Healthy Design – Livability Presentation – COMPLETED.** Paul Lewis led a national webinar on February 15, 2024 on the topic of “Parramore Then & Now – A Healthy Community Design Approach”. This presentation summarized the City’s efforts to create a neighborhood plan that incorporated infrastructure needs, fostered a healthy economy, created sustainable housing, and provided community services. Paul explained how the Parramore Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan promoted livability features such as walkability, mixed uses, and extensive open space – and connected to the Livable Orlando Action Plan and the City’s age-friendly efforts.

This healthy design approach included extensive community engagement sessions that allowed neighborhood residents and businesses to provide input and recommendations on the Parramore planning process. The presentation was coordinated by the Center for Healthy Design with several hundred people attendance.

*Action Items: A.1.1., C.1.1., C.1.2.*



## HOUSING

### ■ 2023 AARP Community Challenge Grant – ADU Education & Outreach Campaign – EXTENSION COMPLETED.

- ✓ **Aging in Place & Staying Safe at Home Event.** With careful planning and taking advantage of in-house resources, the City was able to create effective ADU educational materials in a cost-effective manner that significantly reduced anticipated expenditures and resulted in unspent grant funds for the 2023 AARP Challenge Grant. These unspent funds were used to host an Aging in Place and Staying Safe at Home event at Leu Gardens on June 6, 2024. More than 140 attendees learned about the latest trends in Aging in Place, including new technologies and home modifications to make their homes safer – and how to avoid the latest scams and fraud schemes. Representatives from the Orlando Police and Fire Departments plus more than a dozen vendors were at the event to provide invaluable information. AARP volunteers, including the MCLHA's very own Marie Hernandez, provided their invaluable efforts to make the event a success.



- ✓ **Orlando ADU Web Guide Update Results.** As part of the AARP grant, the City's [www.orlando.gov](http://www.orlando.gov) site was updated to include a landing page for the City's accessory dwelling unit (ADU) initiative. This new ADU webpage includes the ADU fact sheet and the aging-in-place brochures that were developed under the 2023 AARP Community Challenge Grant. We were very pleased to see that the number of "views" or "hits" received on our new ADU Web Guide in the first year was substantial – 3,883 views between launch on November 10, 2023 to December 15, 2024. We will continue to monitor and analyze the number of ADU's built in the City of Orlando over time to see if the campaign has moved the needle.

*Action Items: B.2.1., B.3.2., E.2.2, F.1.5, G.3.2., G.3.3., H.1.3, H.1.4.*



- **2024 Annual Action Plan & Fair Housing Plan Update – APPROVED.** On July 15, 2024, the Orlando City Council approved the Program Year 2024 Annual Action Plan and Fair Housing Plan which is required of all US Department of Housing and Community Development (or HUD) grant recipients, under the Community Development Block Grant (CDGB), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) formula grant programs. The Annual Action Plan and Fair Housing Plan were provided to HUD for review and comments. Upon HUD’s approval of the documents and review of the final documents by the City Attorney’s Office, the City will enter into an agreement with HUD for receipt of the Program Year 2024 funding under the above-mentioned programs, anticipated to be approximately \$9.58 million. In addition to these anticipated Program Year 2024 grant allocations from HUD, the City of Orlando plans to reallocate an estimated \$1.2 million of CDBG funds from previous years to carry out the activities identified in the 2024 Annual Action Plan.

*Action Items: B.1.3., B.2.3., B.3.1.*

- **HUD Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant Update – IN PROGRESS.** The HUD Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant is a partnership between Lift Orlando and the Orlando Housing Authority, in cooperation with the City of Orlando. Awarded in the Fall 2023, this project is currently in the community engagement and outreach phase. During this phase, staff is engaging with residents of Lorna Doone, Lake Mann, and surrounding communities who are providing feedback on future development in these neighborhoods. The entire comprehensive planning project is anticipated to take 18 months to two years and will result in a strategic action plan for the community with a focus on the redevelopment of two affordable housing projects, Lake Mann Homes Apartments and Lorna Doone Apartments which is a 104-unit affordable senior housing project. After the planning grant is completed, the goal is to leverage this plan into a significant HUD implementation grant – such grants typically have a \$50 million cap.

*Action Items: A.3.1., B.1.1., B.2.1., B.2.2., B.2.3., B.3.1.*

- **Affordable & Senior Affordable Housing Construction Updates**

- ✓ **Kinneret Apartments – COMPLETED.** The ribbon cutting to commemorate the completion of \$18 million in renovations to the 280-unit Kinneret Apartments was held on June 11, 2024. Mayor Dyer and Commissioner Patty Sheehan attended. Beardall Senior Center was a vendor at this event. Staff educated residents on the active aging opportunities that are within 0.4 mile from Kinneret and accessible by the free downtown LYMMO circulator.



- ✓ **Palm Gardens Affordable Housing – PHASE ONE COMPLETED.** The beginning of June 2024 marked the grand opening of phase one of Palm Gardens Orlando Apartments. This project consisted of converting the former blighted Ambassador Hotel into 150 new affordable apartments for low-income residents, including 15 units designated for permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals. Palm Gardens is the first affordable housing project completed with Accelerate Orlando funds. Through Accelerate Orlando, the City is using American Rescue Plan Act federal funds to support Affordable Housing and Homelessness Initiatives. The City of Orlando contributed over \$4 million towards Palm Gardens. City staff worked to craft the funding agreement, which includes a 30-year affordability period and rent and income restrictions to support low—and very low-income persons. The City of Orlando partnered with One Stop Housing, Synovus Bank and Cushman & Wakefield.
- ✓ **Fern Grove Apartments – PHASE 1 UNDER CONSTRUCTION.** Construction, which began in 2023, continues for this 138-unit senior affordable housing community located at 3750 W D Judge Drive. The City of Orlando provided \$1.3 million in Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds towards the project, which has a total budget of \$42.2 million. As of late December 2024, 32 of the 138 units have received a Certificate of Occupancy. It is anticipated that this phase of the project will be completed in the 2025 Q1.
- ✓ **Grand East Village – IN PLANNING/DESIGN.** This \$30 million, 92-unit senior affordable housing community located at 1199 Bruton Boulevard in the Washington Shores neighborhood is currently in the permitting and early construction phase. Through Orlando’s Affordable Housing Certification process, City staff worked with Housing Trust Group to secure impact fee waivers and provided expedited permitting to facilitate development of the project which is scheduled to open by the end of 2025.

*Action Items: B.1.3.*





## TRANSPORTATION / MOBILITY

- **FORWARD Orlando – USDOT Safe Streets & Roads for All Grant Activities – IN PROGRESS.**

On July 15, 2024, the Orlando City Council approved a \$3.958 million US Department of Transportation (USDOT) grant agreement and resolution for the Safe Streets and Roads for All planning and demonstration activities, otherwise known as FORWARD Orlando. Funded through the 2023 USDOT Safe Streets for All grant, FORWARD Orlando will transform high-need areas for pedestrian safety into dynamic living labs for safety countermeasures, quick-build safety projects in 28 locations throughout the City, and other demonstration activities. These demonstration activities will inform a 5-year update to Orlando's Vision Zero Action Plan as well as the development of the City's Pedestrian Facilities Plan.

*Action Items: C.1.3., C.1.4., C.1.7, C.2.1, C.2.2.*

- **Orlando CROSS Project – IN PROGRESS.** Orlando CROSS (Connecting Residents on Safe Streets) is a Vision Zero implementation plan for six transportation corridors, including portions of Kirkman Rd., Colonial Dr., Orange Blossom Trail, South Orange Ave., the Semoran Blvd./Curry Ford Rd intersection, and the Orange-Rosalind-Magnolia Aves corridor. The Vision Zero Action Plan focuses on eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries – and increasing safety and mobility – by 2040. Contracts for this planning grant are anticipated to be executed in mid-April, with project work occurring from August through October. The project is funded by USDOT and FDOT grant dollars. Recommendations outlined in this planning grant will be used to apply for federal implementation grants in late 2024.

*Action Items: C.1.1., C.1.3., C.2.1., C.2.2., C.2.3.*

- **Complete Streets in New Packing District – IN PROGRESS.** The redesign of Princeton Street (S.R. 438) from John Young Parkway (S.R. 423) to Orange Blossom Trail (U.S. 441) incorporates 'Complete Streets' improvements that have resulted in



a more walkable community street and provides safer access for all modes of travel. The improvements on Princeton Street include a four-lane divided roadway with a raised median, on-street parking, six-foot-wide sidewalks, and 10-foot-wide separated bicycle lanes that has brought roadway improvements to North Orange Blossom Trail and Princeton Street. The City leveraged the private development of the Packing District to invest in these roadway improvements and infrastructure to support recreational enhancements as well as the adjacent mixed-use development.

*Action Items: C.1.3., C.1.4., C.1.5., C.2.1., C.2.2.*

- **Wheel of Achievement Award – COMPLETED.** On June 13, 2024, the Orlando Transportation team received a Wheel of Achievement Award from Bike/Walk Central Florida for their efforts in community safety and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, and others who use alternative modes of transportation. The City received the Florida Special Achievement Award for their pioneering work on the pop-up bike path along the north side of Corrine Drive. This quick-build project, designed and implemented by the Transportation team, features safety enhancements like green conflict markings, a new pedestrian signal and dedicated bike crossings.

*Action Items: C.1.3., C.1.4., C.2.1.*
- **Motorized Scooter Share Program Contract – EXECUTED.** In November 2023, the City of Orlando executed a new vendor contract for the Bike Share/Motorized Scooter Share Program, which enables users to rent dockless bikes or scooters equipped with GPS technology. The new contract now requires vendors to offer three types of scooters: a traditional scooter, a sit-down (bike-like) scooter, and an adaptive scooter. Per the City’s new contract, adaptive scooters must have three-wheels or self-balancing technology, a seat, and a basket or container to hold a mobility device such as a cane. These adaptive scooters operate on a “library model” where users can call to request, and the scooter will be delivered within an hour.

*Action Items: C.1.6.*
- **AARP “Moving Forward Together: A Survey on Aging-Friendly Transportation Initiatives – COMPLETED.** In May 2024, Orlando’s Transportation Department completed AARP’s survey which was designed to help the AARP Livable Communities team better understand how communities are addressing transportation in their age-friendly work.

*Action Items: C.2.3.*
- **Orange County/City of Orlando Convening on Age-Friendly Transportation (With Support from AARP) – COMPLETED.** On August 13, 2024, AARP Florida in collaboration with MPACT hosted a convening of community partners including representatives from FDOT District 5, MetroPlan Orlando, Healthy West Orange, Orange County Government, City of Orlando Planning and Transportation, as well as a number of AARP volunteers/advocates to enhance community connections related to transportation (mobility, Vision Zero, Complete Streets, etc). This 4-hour event, held in Winter Garden, was designed to be a one-day think tank on the state of local/regional transit/mobility as it relates to older adults; to build/renew stakeholder connections; to define operating context of local/regional mobility for older adults; and to identify shared priorities/challenges and opportunities for future collaboration.

*Action Items: C.1.7., C.2.1., C.2.2.*

- **Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Seniors First, Inc. – Senior Transportation (Senior Tran) Funding Agreement – APPROVED.** On September 9, 2024, the Orlando Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) approved a funding agreement between Seniors First, Inc. and the CRA for up to a total amount of \$66,423.03 to provide senior transportation services to residents of 12 Downtown senior housing complexes (Magnolia Towers, Kinneret Apartments, Orlando Cloisters, Orlando Central Towers, Baptist Terrace, Hillcrest-Hampton House, William Boothe Towers, Westminster Towers, Lucerne Towers, Orlando Lutheran Towers, Jackson Court, Carver Park. The service operates three (3) days a week using two buses on two fixed routes with various stops including Fashion Square, Publix (Paramount and S. Orange), Walgreens, Orlando Public Library, Dollar Store, Beall’s and the Target at SoDo.

*Action Items: C.1.3., C.1.9.*

- **Downtown Orlando Ride Circuit System (Ride DTO) – LAUNCHED/IN PROGRESS.** In October 2024, the Downtown Orlando CRA launched **Ride DTO**, which offers an on-demand transit service featuring eco-friendly electric vehicles. Powered by Circuit Transit, Inc., **Ride DTO** allows people living, working, and visiting Downtown Orlando – including older adults – to be picked up and dropped off exactly where they need to be, for only \$1.00 per ride (and the first three (3) rides are free).



**Ride DTO** is available every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., providing 12 hours of seamless mobility. Riders are able to interface with the system and schedule rides through an app (both Apple and Android). The vendor will be offering trainings on how to use the app at the different senior apartments in the downtown service core. This service is an excellent example of integrating age-friendly, sustainability, and future-ready concepts.

*Action Items: C.1.3., C.1.4., C.1.7, C.2.1, C.2.2*



## **SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT – 2024 IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Livable Orlando Initiative Presentation to Mayor Dyer – COMPLETED.** On January 9, 2024, a meeting with Mayor Dyer and key cabinet-level staff was held. During this meeting the 2023 Year-End Report for the MCLHA was distributed. Key discussions focused on how the MCLHA has been restructured, the emerging partnerships between Committee members and other nonprofit/civic organizations, and the integration of age-friendly concepts into Orlando’s programs and services.

*Action Items: E.3.2.*

- **Virtual Reality (VR) Pilot for Seniors – IN PROGRESS.** Designed to bridge the digital divide, the City’s Families, Parks, and Recreation Department (FPR) and the City’s Office of Sustainability, Resilience, and Future-Ready City are moving forward with a virtual reality (VR) pilot program for seniors funded under the City’s Future-Ready budget. Initially, the program will include three (3) VR goggles and a tablet to manage the goggles, plus lots of content for our seniors to hopefully enjoy. The pilot would last for a 1-year period, and the idea is to move these devices around and try them at several locations include Beardall Senior Center, L. Claudia Allen Senior Center, and Rosemont. If after a few months, the pilot looks like a success, staff can work with Technology Management, Procurement, etc. to determine if and how to scale it up.

*Action Items: E.1.3., F.3.1., F.3.2., G.2.2.*

- **Orlando Fire Department Programming – IN PROGRESS.**
  - ✓ **Falls Prevention and Resource Rack Brochures.** The Orlando Fire Department has completed two resource rack cards to help seniors age-in-place. The falls prevention rack card provides information on how to stay safe when falling and how to prevent falls from occurring. The community resource rack card provides a snapshot of community resources, older adult programming, and Orlando Fire Department initiatives.
  - ✓ **Dementia Training.** The Orlando Fire Department has begun exploring how to incorporate “mini trainings” on dementia and senior sensitivity for first responder staff.
  - ✓ **CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Training.** CERT training courses continue to be scheduled. These courses educate volunteers on disaster preparedness and train them in basic skills, including fire safety, search and rescue, team organization, medical operations, and enhancing their capabilities for disaster response and recovery. Orlando Fire Department staff have increased CERT training options, including offering Spanish classes and hybrid remote/in-person classes. A course geared for older participants is under development.

- **Additional Outreach Efforts.** The Fire and Fall Safety Program for Older Adults helps seniors make their homes safer by bringing together fire/emergency services and community partners to educate older adults on falls prevention and fire prevention. This program also serves residents of the senior high-rise apartments. ElderLiNKs provides seniors and their caregivers with information on home and community-based services that can help seniors maintain their independence and living standards. The Citizens Fire Academy is a 4-week program that educates citizens on the daily operations of the Fire Department, including fire suppression, fire safety, disaster preparedness, search and rescue operations, and emergency medical operations.

*Action Items: E.1.1, G.1.2, G.3.1, G.3.3., G.3.4, H.1.6, H.3.3.*

- **Orlando Police Department – Hispanic Senior Safety Summit – COMPLETED.** The Orlando Police Department hosted the Hispanic Senior Safety Summit on June 25, 2024 at the Englewood Neighborhood Center. This senior safety summit provided local Hispanic residents with information and the tools on how to stay safe in and out of their home. This event included crime prevention and safety presentations from Spanish speaking Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Department personnel on a range of topics, including preventing residential burglaries, hands-only CPR, and personal safety for seniors. Community vendors were also present.



*Action Items: A.1.4., F.1.4., G.3.2.*

- **Families, Parks & Recreation (FPR) Senior Connections Programming – IN PROGRESS.**
  - ✓ **OATS (Older Adults Technology Services) Computer Training.** In 2023, FPR became an “OATS” community and trained 14 FPR staff to lead free computer classes to Orlando’s residents aged 55-up. FPR has recently increased the number of certified trainers from 13 to 23 trainers. OATS classes were expanded in 2024 and are now offered at seven FPR centers, including the City’s two senior centers. OATS programming includes lectures, workshops, and multi-day classes which range from educating older adults on affordable home internet to basic computer instruction and how to protect their personal information online. such as the 10-week “computer basics for older adults.”
  - ✓ **Monthly Game Night.** Staff at the L. Claudia Allen Senior Center have implemented a monthly “Senior Game Night” to promote social connections and friendships. National Institute on Aging research has shown that older adults are vulnerable to social isolation

and loneliness, which makes older adults a higher risk for a variety of physical and mental health conditions including high blood pressure, cognitive decline, obesity, and depression. These third Thursday game nights not only offer a host of different games – from dominos to Uno to billiards – but also have music, refreshments, and unstructured opportunities to engage.

- ✓ **Free Technology Classes.** Senior Connections is partnering with Senior Planet from AARP to help people over 55 learn new online skills. When people sign up for the Digital Skills Ready@55+ program, they will gain the essential skills needed to navigate an increasingly digital world from a certified Senior Planet instructor. The 10-week Senior Planet Licensing (SPL) “Computer Basics for Older Adults” course is designed to:
  - Empower older adults with essential computer skills;
  - Foster confidence in navigating digital environments;
  - Master fundamental software applications; and
  - Promote effective communication through email and online platforms.Classes have been or will be offered at various locations including Beardall, Callahan Neighborhood Center, College Park Neighborhood Center, Ivey Lane Neighborhood Center, Jackson Neighborhood Center, L. Claudia Allen Senior Center, Northwest Neighborhood Center, and Rosemont Neighborhood Center.
- ✓ **Gentle BeMoved.** Presented by Orlando Ballet, this ongoing monthly program inspires participants to embrace dance and fitness as a path to healthy living, joy, and fulfillment; genres include Wilde, Cool and Swingin’, Roaring 20s, Rhythm, Country and Blues, Back-Up Singer Moves, Latin Rhythms, Steps that Swing, and Waltz. Locations include Beardall Senior Center, L. Claudia Allen Senior Center, Callahan Neighborhood Center, and Rosemont Neighborhood Center.
- ✓ **Social Events.** FPR’s Senior Connections team continues to expand programming for seniors, including:
  - Many of FPR’s centers hosted special Mother’s Day luncheons that provided a fun social atmosphere and an opportunity for seniors to dress up and showcase their creative attire.
  - On April 12, 2024, the Callahan Neighborhood Center hosted a Denim and Pearls social for its seniors.
  - On September 11, 2024, as part of Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration at the Beardall Senior Center, a screening of the movie “Dance With Me” was presented; and on September 18, 2024, FPR hosted a “Sip & Paint” event, featuring art



activities guided by a painting instructor. Light refreshments and art supplies were provided.

- On October 3, 2024, Senior Connections led a trip to Washington, D.C. to explore American history, visit legendary museums, and have unforgettable experiences.
- On Saturday, October 19, 2024, FPR hosted the Halloween Masquerade Ball at Beardall Senior Center.

*Action Items: A.2.2, D.2.1., E.1.3., E.2.2, F.1.2, F.1.3, F.1.5, F.3.2, G.3.1., H.1.4.*

- **Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Funding Agreements and Distribution of Arts and Cultural Organization Grants – APPROVED.** On October 21, 2024, as part of the FY24-25 budget process, City Council approved funding for arts and cultural organizations, which enables the City of Orlando fulfill its mission to create a vibrant, livable community for people of all ages. This action provided for distributions of \$494,099 to United Arts of Central Florida, and \$518,364 to the Orlando Science Center, for a total allocation of \$1,012,463.

*Action Items: E.2.1, F.1.2, F.1.3, F.2.1.*

- **Fiscal Year 2024-2025 – Community Investment Program Grants – APPROVED.**
  - ✓ On November 11, 2024, as part of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget process, City Council approved funding for fifty-six (56) human service organizations.
  - ✓ Through the Community Investment Program (CIP), the City of Orlando invests in efforts that solve community problems by granting funds to meet the needs of a growing Central Florida population and address the diverse needs and challenges City of Orlando residents experience.
  - ✓ Program focus areas include Housing-Focused Services for Persons Experiencing Homelessness, Family Sustainability, Domestic Violence Prevention, Improving Availability, Access and Consumption of Healthy Foods, and **“Support of Seniors”**.
  - ✓ The Central Florida Foundation partnered with the City’s Office of Community Affairs to structure/facilitate the process and to review the grant requests earlier this year.
  - ✓ A total of \$525,000 was allocated in the **“Support of Seniors”** category, or  $\pm 17.54\%$  of the total \$2,992,200 allocated for FY 2024/25 across all categories. This represents an increase of \$17,000 (or 3.34%) from the \$508,000 provided in this category in FY 2023/24. The following amounts were provided in previous years: \$390,000 in FY 2022/23; \$381,000 in FY 2021/22; \$358,000 in FY 2020/21; \$363,000 in FY 2019/20; and \$337,000 in FY 2018/19.
  - ✓ The organizations and programs funded in FY 2024/25 include:

Organization	Program Name	Approved Funding
Central Florida Community Arts, Inc.	Arts in Action and Musical Minds Programs	\$35,000
Central Florida Young Men's Christian Association	Senior Programming at YMCA	\$20,000
Cornerstone Hospice Foundation	Hospice Care for Underserved and Indigent Patients	\$45,000
Easter Seals Florida, Inc.	Day Break	\$15,000
Legal Aid Society of the Orange County Bar Association, Inc.	SOLID (Seniors Overcoming Legal Issues Definitively)	\$20,000
Lighthouse Central Florida, Inc.	Independent Living Skills for Seniors with Vision Loss	\$30,000
Lutheran Counseling Services	Aging Well Program	\$15,000
Orlando Ballet, Inc.	2025 Gentle BeMoved® in the Community	\$10,000
Rebuilding Together Tampa Bay, Inc.	Disaster Readiness and Targeted Home Repairs for Low-Income Orlando Seniors	\$60,000
Seniors Firs, Inc.	Project Home	\$245,000
Share the Care, Inc.	In-Home Respite	\$30,000
		<b>\$525,000</b>

*Action Items: E.2.1, F.1.2, F.1.3, F.2.1, G.1.1, G.1.2, G.2.2., G.3.1, G.3.2.*

- Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Funding Agreements and Distribution of Community Service Organization Grants – APPROVED.** On October 21, 2024, as part of the FY24-25 budget process, City Council approved funding for distribution of \$82,280 to the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness, \$82,280 to the Homeless Services Network, and \$50,000 to the Pet Alliance of Greater Orlando for the mobile veterinary unit. The total allocation for the three organizations is \$214,560.

Older adults experiencing homelessness, including the number of unsheltered seniors, is an emerging and troubling trend. According to the Homeless Services Network of Central Florida's 2024 Point-In-Time Count (PIT Count; conducted in January 2024), the total number of persons experiencing homelessness in Central Florida was 2,776, with 1,094 of those being unsheltered.

Combined Household Types	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
Total # of Households	771	386	1,026	2,183
Total # of Persons	1,147	535	1,094	2,776
# of Children (under Age 18)	343	141	13	497
# of Youth (Age 18-24)	67	51	55	173
# of Adults (Age 25-34)	197	75	155	427
# of Adults (Age 35-44)	181	77	263	521
# of Adults (Age 45-54)	141	90	244	475
# of Older Adults (Age 55-64)	148	75	269	492
# of Older Adults (Age 65+)	70	26	95	191

- Although those 65+ are still a minority, it is very concerning that about half were unsheltered (on the streets, in the woods, in their cars – as opposed to being in a homeless shelter).
- Another 492 people ages 55-64 were homeless, and  $\pm 55\%$  were unsheltered too.
- One year earlier, during the 2023 PIT Count, there were 398 people ages 55-64 vs. 492 in 2024 – a 24% increase; and in 2023, there were 144 people 65+ vs. 191 in 2024 – a 32% increase; approximately 44% of them were unsheltered.
- If you combine the single 55+ groups together, there has been a 26% overall increase in older adults experiencing homelessness in a single year.

In January of 2024, there were 759 unsheltered persons in Orange County, with just over half located in downtown Orlando, a 24% increase since 2023. The City of Orlando's **Action Plan on Unsheltered Homelessness** establishes bold goals to be achieved by 2027:

- Reduce the presence of unsheltered persons by 50%;
- Ensure no child spends the night on the streets of Orlando;
- Provide pro-active, public space management – a services-first, diversion effort to coordinate housing and services for persons living outdoors.

In addition to the programs we support under our regional system of care, the City of Orlando is currently supporting a variety of short-term and long-term initiatives toward achieving the goals of the action plan. Aside from the grants mentioned above, the City of Orlando currently invests nearly \$4.5 million annually to partner agencies to support programs that provide emergency shelter, bridge and permanent supportive housing, supportive services and ongoing case management to those who are experiencing homelessness.

In addition, through its **Accelerate Orlando** initiative, the City of Orlando is leveraging \$58 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) federal funds to further our efforts in tackling two of our community's most daunting challenges: homelessness and affordable housing.



Currently we are housing nearly 400 previously homeless residents in permanent, supportive housing. And, over the past few years, we've invested more than \$43 million to create or preserve housing options for residents at all income levels. The City of Orlando plans to accelerate our efforts by investing in agencies who provide shelter and wrap-around services to homeless individuals during the day, particularly in downtown Orlando.

Our plans include:

- Investing in the Christian Service Center, Salvation Army, and Coalition for the Homeless to modernize their campuses and provide services to address the needs of unsheltered homeless during the daytime; and
- Investing in Pathlight Home to reinvigorate the vision for the Pathways Drop In Center supporting the development of additional space for essential daytime services for individuals who have been diagnosed with serious mental illnesses.

The city is also making investments that will increase the overall availability of affordable housing in our city by:

- Converting a blighted hotel on Colonial Drive into Palm Gardens Orlando Apartments, which will provide 150 apartments once completed in 2024, including 15 units for permanent supportive housing;
- Developing up to 80 apartments for mixed-income affordable housing on Jefferson Street;
- Developing approximately 15 single-family homes in Parramore and Holden Heights; and
- Expanding down payment support, housing counseling and access to housing repairs for low-income residents.

*Action Items: B.1.3, B.2.3, B.3.1, B.3.4*

### **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS/PARTNERSHIPS**

- **AARP Florida's Age-Friendly Office Hours.** Paul Lewis and Marie Hernandez (AARP Volunteer/Committee Member) participate in a weekly coordination meeting on various topics related to age-friendly planning and implementation (2021 to Present).
- **AARP Tax Aide.** Each year, Beardall Senior Center becomes an AARP Tax-Aide program site from late January to mid-April. During tax season, volunteers who are certified annually by the IRS, help prepare and electronically file federal 1040 tax returns (and state returns where applicable) that fall within the scope of their IRS training. While the program focuses

on serving taxpayers aged 50-up with low-to-moderate incomes, volunteers will assist any tax payers.

- **MCLHA Information Sharing.** During 2024, the MCLHA hosted the following presentations and presenters:
  - ✓ **DTO 2.0** – David Barilla, Executive Director of the Downtown Development Board
  - ✓ **League of Women Voters 2024** – Joan Erwin, LWV Orange County Board of Directors and Kay Hudson, LWV Co-Chair of Orange County Natural Resources Committee
  - ✓ **The Legal Aspects of Aging in Place and Staying Safe at Home** – Judge Jose Rodriquez (Retired)
  - ✓ **City of Orlando’s Senior Safety Programs** – Sergeant Michael Fiorentino-Tyburski, OPD Criminal Investigations, and Tammy D. Hughes, OFD Community Engagement & Preparedness Manager
  - ✓ **2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan** – Sarah Larsen and Leilani Vaiaoga, MetroPlan Orlando
  - ✓ **Update on Orange County Library System Implementation Plan** – Sara Gonzalez, OCLS Chief of Lifelong Learning
- **Senior Legal Presentation.** The Rock Lake Neighborhood Center hosted a luncheon on April 23, 2024 for seniors to learn more about the State Attorney’s Office in the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court. State Attorney Andrew Bain was the guest speaker.
- **UCF Research Project.** FPR and University of Central Florida (UCF) continue to expand their partnership. During April and May 2024, FPR acted as a connector between attendees of the City’s senior programs and a UCF research project entitled “Understanding of Human Behavior Across Adulthood.” This was a voluntary opportunity – and the seniors who attended provided positive feedback about the experience.
- **MetroPlan’s Integrating Health into the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Meeting.** Paul Lewis and Mimi Reggentin participated in a small group workshop hosted by MetroPlan Orlando (MPO) on May 15, 2024. The workshop was held to identify existing regional health conditions – and the targets and metrics to address these conditions. The MPO also asked for recommendations (policy, programmatic, and physical) for incorporation in the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan that is currently being updated.
- **2024 AARP Community Challenge Demonstration Cohort – Digital Connectivity for Disasters Presentation.** On August 13, 2024, Paul Lewis provided a presentation on the

Tables of Connection project to a group of 2024 AARP Community Challenge Grant recipients from across the country at the invitation of AARP National via Zoom.

***And ending on a fun note:***

- **Salsa Dance Extravaganza – COMPLETED.**  
AARP hosted a Salsa Dance Extravaganza at Beardall Senior Center on April 26, 2024. From newcomers to salsa pros, 139 adults came together to move, groove, and sharpen their brains. Joined by two instructors from Kenny Kings Music and a handful of talented AARP volunteers, participants learned basic steps on how to salsa — quickly clapping, cheering, and breaking into pairs to dance the day away.



According to recent research, the positive effect of dance extends to seven cognitive domains: global cognitive function, executive function, learning and memory, complex attention, language, social cognition, and perceptual–motor function. Check out the video - [Shake Your Way to a Sharp Mind with AARP Orlando](#).