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# An Assessment of the Built Environment and Inclusivity of Older Adults in Community Planning in Portland, Maine

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# AN ASSESSMENT OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND INCLUSIVITY OF OLDER ADULTS IN COMMUNITY PLANNING IN PORTLAND, MAINE

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Capstone Paper for Community Planning and Development Program  
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

Americans are living longer than ever. The increase in the number of older adults in the United States stems from the large number of children born between 1946 and 1964 – commonly known as the Baby Boomers. One in three Americans is currently aged 50 or older. By 2030 one out of every five people will be 65-plus. Portland, ME has seen its share in this increase with a larger elderly population calling the city home. In Maine, over 41 percent of the population is over 50 years old and over 17 percent is more than 65 years old. As a result of these changing demographics, our nation is grappling with many age-related issues and causing many to look for ways to support this population in their own homes and communities.

The changes in Maine will be even more dramatic. By 2030, it is estimated that one of out every four Mainers will be over 65. At the same time, the Census Bureau projects Mainers working age population will increase only one percent compared to a national growth of 18.3 percent. To better understand the needs of this segment of the population in Portland and to identify ways to create a more livable community for citizens of all ages, the City of Portland has committed to joining the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

Population aging and urbanization are the result of successful human development during the last several decades and will be the major challenges for the next century. Public health gains and standards of living improvements present opportunities for older adults to be community resources. Making cities more age-friendly is necessary to promote wellbeing and provide urban stability. (World Health Organization, 2007)

## 1.2 AARP LIVABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

The development of a well-designed, accessible community that sustains economic growth will benefit residents of all ages. The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities is an affiliate of the World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Program which is an international effort launched in 2006 to help cities prepare for rapid population aging and the parallel trend of urbanization. This program encourages adoption of features like safe, walkable streets, viable housing and transportation options, access to key services, and opportunities for residents to participate in community activities. (Livability Resources - Great Places for All Ages, 2015)

The program has participating communities in more than 20 nations representing more than 1,000 communities. In the U.S., more than three dozen communities representing more than a dozen states are enrolled in the network. Portland was the first in Maine to sign-on in August of 2014 and was later followed by Ellsworth.

Years one and two of program participation focus on assessing community needs and developing an action plan for improvements. To begin this work in Portland an assessment is required of the built environment including accessibility and current practices regarding involvement of this targeted population in civic policy making and community planning. The AARP has defined eight focus areas called domains for evaluation of the age-friendliness of a community. This paper focuses on this assessment specific to four: civic participation, housing, transportation, and outdoor spaces and buildings. Four others targeted for study by others include respect and social inclusion, communication and information, community and health services, and social participation. Each domain is reviewed from the perspective of older adults

aged 55 and older although this assessment also benefits people of all ages and abilities. Some data and references were only available with population breakouts of those aged 65 years and older and are noted appropriately.

The work contained in this paper will be used by the City of Portland for reporting on the assessment required by the AARP Age-friendly Community program. City staff will use the information to developing plans for physical, policy, and environmental improvements targeted at older adults in Portland.

### 1.3 ACADEMIC LITERATURE AND BEST PRACTICES REVIEW

#### 1.3.1 CIVIC PARTICIPATION

The importance of community in aging should not be minimized. The ability to maintain pre-existing social life and circumstances for ongoing psychological well-being is important.

Connections, interactions, and ways to stay in touch are increasingly meaningful and the ability to contribute to the next generation and play a part in contributing to society provides fulfillment. (Maine Area Agencies on Aging, Maine AARP, and Ideactive Solutions, 2013)

Older individuals representing diverse demographic backgrounds should be at the table for decision making early and often. Participatory and collaborative governance that involves these individuals in a meaningful way – beyond informing and consultation – is a best practice.

(Maine Area Agencies on Aging, Maine AARP, and Ideactive Solutions, 2013) Recognizing the wide range of capacities and resources among older people enables this involvement. (World Health Organization, 2007) Venues for participation should be conveniently located and easily reached by public transport. (World Health Organization, 2007)



### 1.3.2 HOUSING

Housing is essential for safety and well-being. (World Health Organization, 2007) Older adults benefit from affordable and accessible housing options near transportation and other services. Without affordable housing, quality of life and health can seriously suffer because of access difficulties and increased costs. Many states are implementing practices related to the use of the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program to leverage funds for the development of housing near transit and in livable community settings. (Farber, 2011)

Active aging is a process of optimizing opportunities for health and security. Policies and settings must protect those who are most vulnerable and respect a person's decision and lifestyle choices. (World Health Organization, 2007)

Aging in place is the long-term care option of choice for most older people. According to a 2010 national survey by AARP, nearly 75 percent of Americans ages 45 and older strongly agree that "what I'd really like to do is stay in my current residence for as long as possible". Accessible building standards allow older adults to remain in their homes longer instead of paying for retrofits or moving. (Farber, 2011) Communities need a thoughtful planning process aimed at the way people are supported as they age in order to maximize and grow the services, programs, and resources people need to thrive. (Maine Area Agencies on Aging, Maine AARP, and Ideactive Solutions, 2013)

To support older adults, the National Association for Homebuilders developed the Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) designation to certify specially trained professionals who understand the unique housing needs of the older adult population. CAPS will be

knowledgeable about aging-in-place home modifications, common remodeling projects and solutions to common barriers.<sup>1</sup> (Home Fit Guide, 2015)

### 1.3.3 TRANSPORTATION

Integrating land use and transportation planning allows communities to comprehensively plan for housing, commercial uses, and public services in the context of multiple forms of transportation. This coordination can reduce congestion, increase environmental quality, and improve public health. Statutes can encourage or require this integration. (Farber, 2011)

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is the development of housing, offices, and retail space near transit stops. States and municipalities can specify how design issues must be addressed or provide grants, incentives or technical assistance to encourage TOD. This style of development usually contain housing, walkable street environments and easy access to a number of transportation options. (Farber, 2011)

Coordination of transportation services is a process of organizations interacting to jointly accomplish transportation goals. This work can increase efficiency of resource use and improve service (Farber, 2011) and also ensure that all city areas and services are accessible by public transport with good connections. (World Health Organization, 2007)

Transport stops and stations should be conveniently located and accessible, safe, and clean with adequate seating and shelter. Designated stops with reliable pickups and drivers who stop beside the curb to facilitate boarding and wait for passengers to be seated before driving off

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<sup>1</sup> Four CAPS professionals are located in Greater Portland. (Find a Certified Aging in Place Specialist, 2015)

create an age-friendly environment. (World Health Organization, 2007) Bus lanes and transit prioritization at busy intersections improve the reliability of routes with high passenger volumes. Shelters with next-bus information improve comfort and convenience for passengers. (Zehngebot & Peiser, 2014)

Encouraging more people to be out on the street biking and walking will result in more people meeting daily recommendations for physical activity. There is a distinct relationship between a state population's physical activity levels and its levels of bicycling and walking and the State of Maine has published goals to increase walking and biking. (Alliance for Biking & Walking, 2014)

Accessible surfaces and wide sidewalks with unobstructed pathways create comfortable walking environments that make streets welcoming for people of all ages and abilities. When combined with proper lighting and street trees, they are inviting, safer, and contribute to placemaking. (Zehngebot & Peiser, 2014)

Bicycling can boost business. Each ride in the Twin Cities' (Minnesota) Nice Ride system was found to bring \$7 to \$14 to the local economy. Forty-four percent of (Washington, D.C.) Capital Bikeshare riders surveyed used bike share to make a trip they otherwise would have skipped, largely for entertainment, socializing, and dining out. A bicycle places people within a city landscape, allowing them to easily make stops, as opposed to merely shuttling through inside a private car. Shops and restaurants often report a surge in business after the creation of a bike lane on their street. (Lawson, 2013)

Developing an education and awareness campaign can encourage bicycling and bicycle-friendly streets and communities. A “complete streets” approach includes planning, designing, and operating transportation projects while keeping in mind the needs of all users – motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit passengers – regardless of age and ability. (Farber, 2011)

Government officials may need to have public support before acting and advocates can build this support and then meet with decision makers to discuss the benefits of bicycling. (Stanton, Burden, Morphy, & Ping, 2014) Many states legislate complete streets policies and the interest continues to grow. (Farber, 2011) These complete streets initiatives specifically assist older adults in reaching services they need in the community and remaining engaged socially.

As bicycling and walking become more viable modes of transportation, more education is needed to ensure all roadway users are aware of their rights and responsibilities. (Alliance for Biking & Walking, 2014) Adults over age 65 have been involved in a disproportionate number of vehicle and pedestrian fatalities. An older pedestrian is 61 percent more likely to die when hit by a motor vehicle than a younger one. This vulnerability has inspired some state legislatures to pass laws designating pedestrians and bicyclists as “vulnerable users.”<sup>2</sup> (Farber, 2011)

Creating sidewalks that accommodate people with visual and mobility impairments is an appropriate physical accommodation to increase safety. (Maine Area Agencies on Aging, Maine AARP, and Ideactive Solutions, 2013)

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<sup>2</sup> Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas and Vermont have considered “vulnerable users” laws.

Safe bicycle storage encourages bicycling. Racks can be located inside buildings or bolted into sidewalks or the street. A single parking space can hold up to 12 bicycles on staple racks.

(Stanton, Burden, Morphy, & Ping, 2014)

At the start of 2013, the United States was home to 22 modern public bike-sharing programs. By spring 2014, that number will likely double as a flurry of cities joins the more than 500 bike-sharing communities worldwide. (Lawson, 2013) People can join a share program for a short term rental or a full year by paying a membership fee.

Creating a system of routes cyclists can follow to get around town safely guides both residents and visitors to the city. Signs should be highly visible and indicate distances, destinations and street names and installed at all important crossings. (Stanton, Burden, Morphy, & Ping, 2014)

Digital tags and information panels integrated with street furniture enable wayfinding and trip planning with smart devices by residents and visitors. (Zehngebot & Peiser, 2014)

#### 1.3.4 OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

The quality of the outside environment and public buildings has a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people. (World Health Organization, 2007)

The U. S. Forest Service estimates that street trees increase adjacent home values and can increase retail sales in business areas. Trees also promote health by mitigating vehicle exhaust fumes, lower energy bills by providing shade, and reduce storm water runoff and flooding by absorbing precipitation through their leaves and roots. Tree shade also improves the lifespan of street surfaces by mitigating daily temperature fluctuations. It is important to involve the public early to minimize anxiety about the unknowns and give citizens ownership of the goals. The

proper tree selection, planting procedures and location selections along with suitable maintenance increases the likelihood of success. (Stanton, Burden, Morphy, & Ping, 2014) (Zehngebot & Peiser, 2014)

Public areas that are clean and pleasant with sufficient green spaces and outdoor seating are essential aspects of Age-friendly cities. Pedestrian crossings that are safe for people with different types and levels of disability should have visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times. Buildings which are well-signed with accessible elevators, ramps, railings, stairs, and non-slip floors are also critical features. (World Health Organization, 2007)

Recreation activities and events that are well noticed with details about accessibility and transportation options will be most well-attended. Offering a wide variety of events at various local community spots will ensure diverse participation. (World Health Organization, 2007)

## 2 CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

### 2.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

Portland, Maine is a vibrant city known for its tourist attractions, restaurant scene and as a hub for craft breweries. While the population swells during the summer months with visitors by land and sea, the year round population is over 65,000 of which approximately 12 percent is 65 years of age or older.

The population pyramid based on 2010 Census Data for the City of Portland is presented below. (US Census Data, 2015) Two features are apparent. First, the cohorts of the 20 to 24 years, 25 to 29 years, and 30 to 34 years are the largest for both males and females. This population of young adults can be typical of an urban area which attracts young people including new college graduates looking for employment. Second, the pyramid has a narrow base of school age children and is rather columnar in shape for the middle-age cohorts. This indicates that an increasing percentage of the overall City population is approaching or in retirement and that the school systems are likely seeing shrinking enrollments.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Population pyramids for the State of Maine and the United States are included in Appendix A. The Maine pyramid is similar in shape to Portland whereas the US pyramid is more reflective of a stable and growing population.

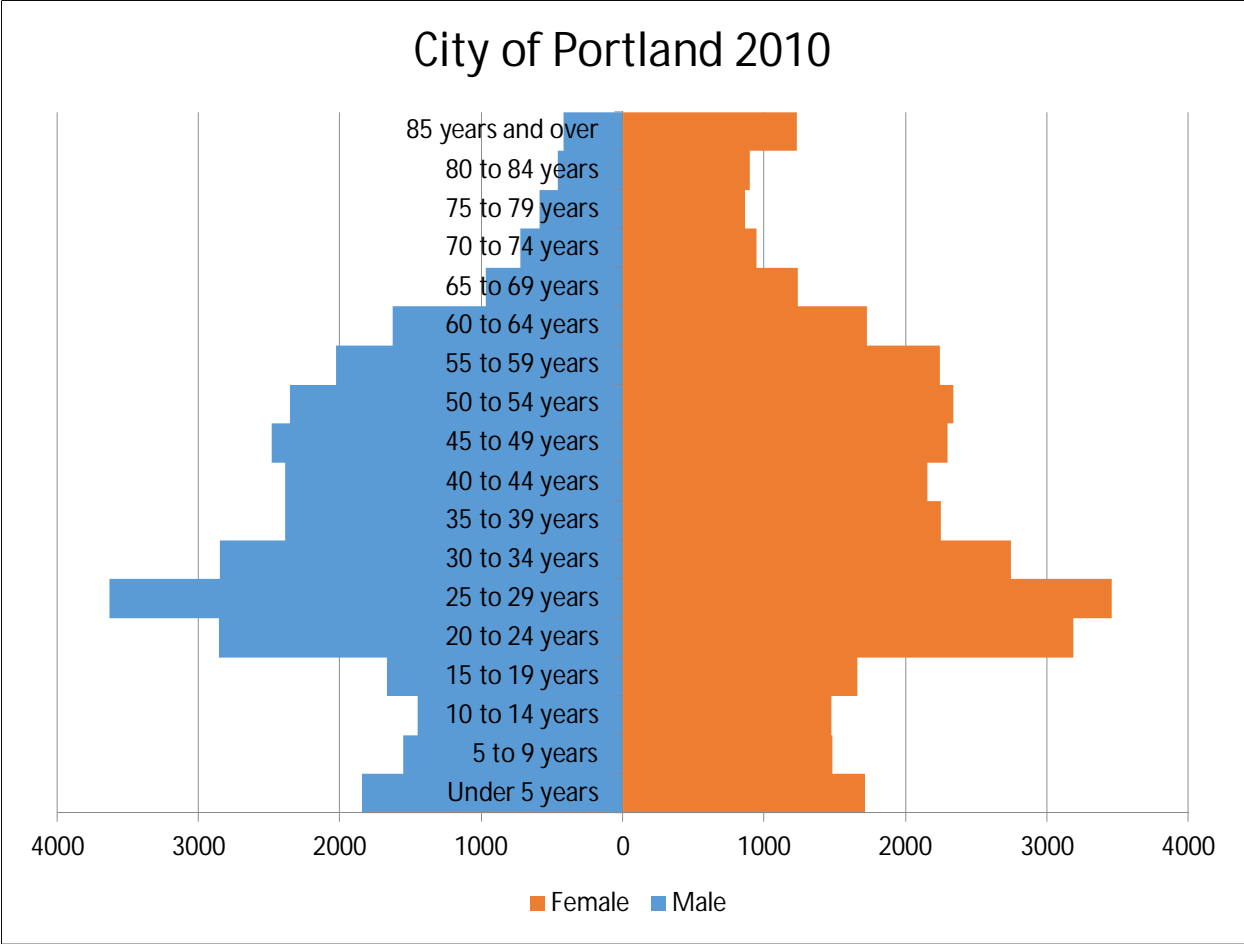


FIGURE 1 CITY OF PORTLAND 2010 POPULATION PYRAMID

The older adult population (defined by the US Census data to be aged 65 years or older) primarily identifies as white (94.9 percent). Almost 9 percent of this group is foreign born with most having migrated to the United States more than ten years ago. The marital status is shown in Figure 2, below. This data shows that almost 60 percent are not in traditional relationships and there may be additional care and housing needs to be considered. Figure 3 shows the large percentage of this segment of the population in rental housing. Figure 4 shows educational attainment levels.



The housing tenure of the over 65 population in Portland is primarily owner occupied housing units (58.7 percent) with an average household size of 1.75. The median value of these homes is \$230,800 (slightly lower than the median for the total population). City wide, the median rent is \$903, but the over 65 group has a median of only \$613. More than half of these renters are paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing which is the established limit of affordability by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

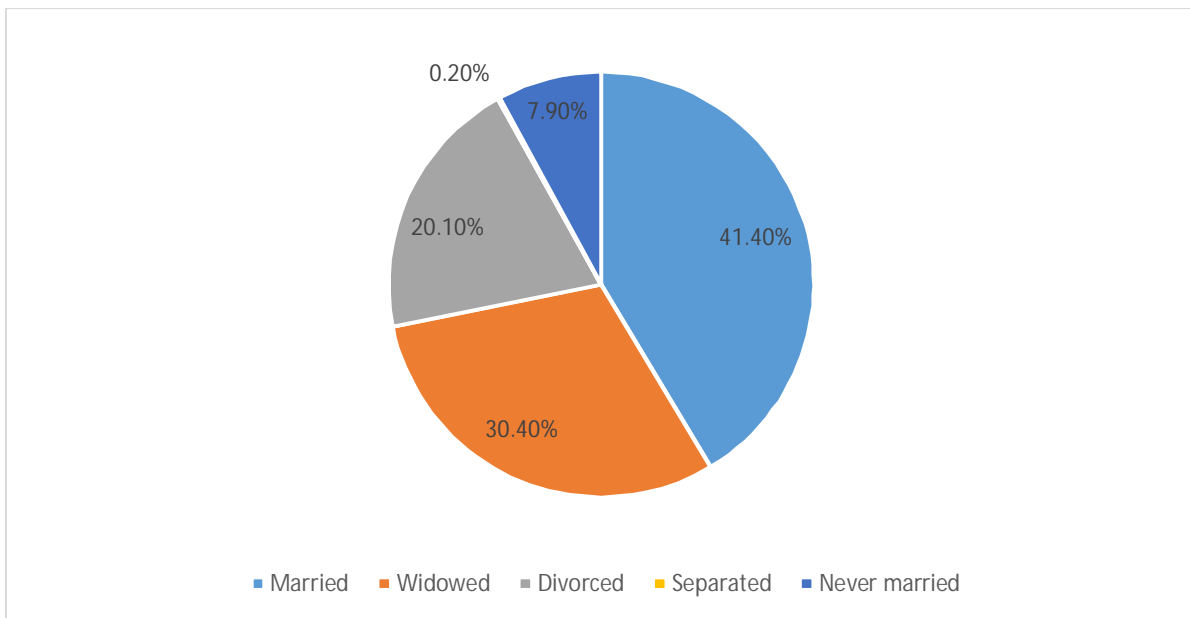


FIGURE 2 MARITAL STATUS OF OLDER ADULTS IN PORTLAND

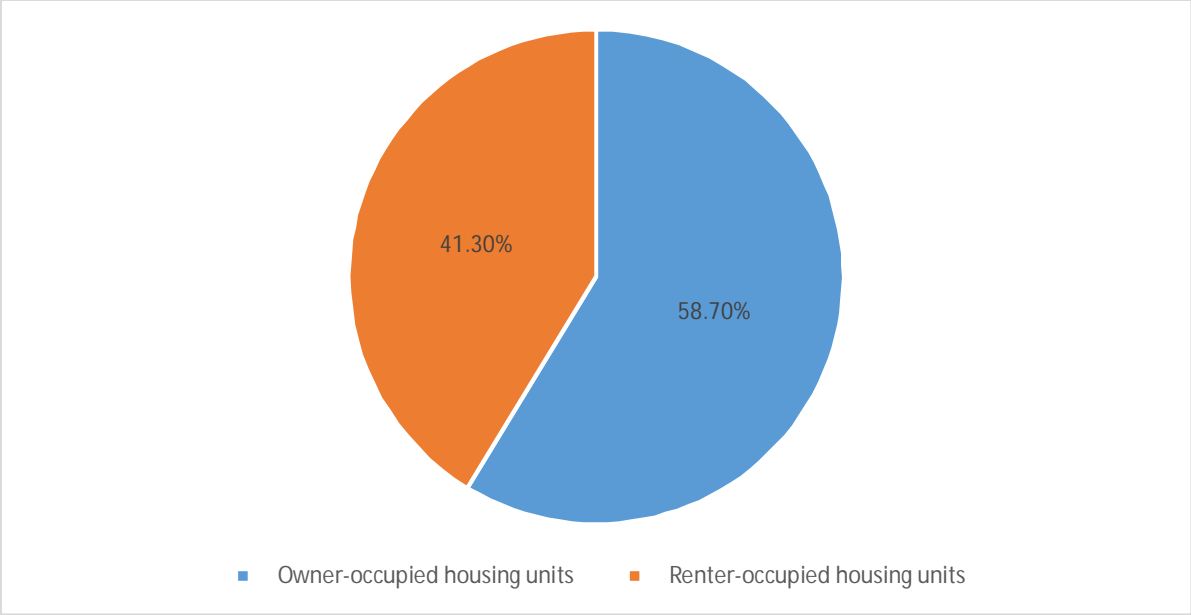


FIGURE 3 HOUSING TENURE

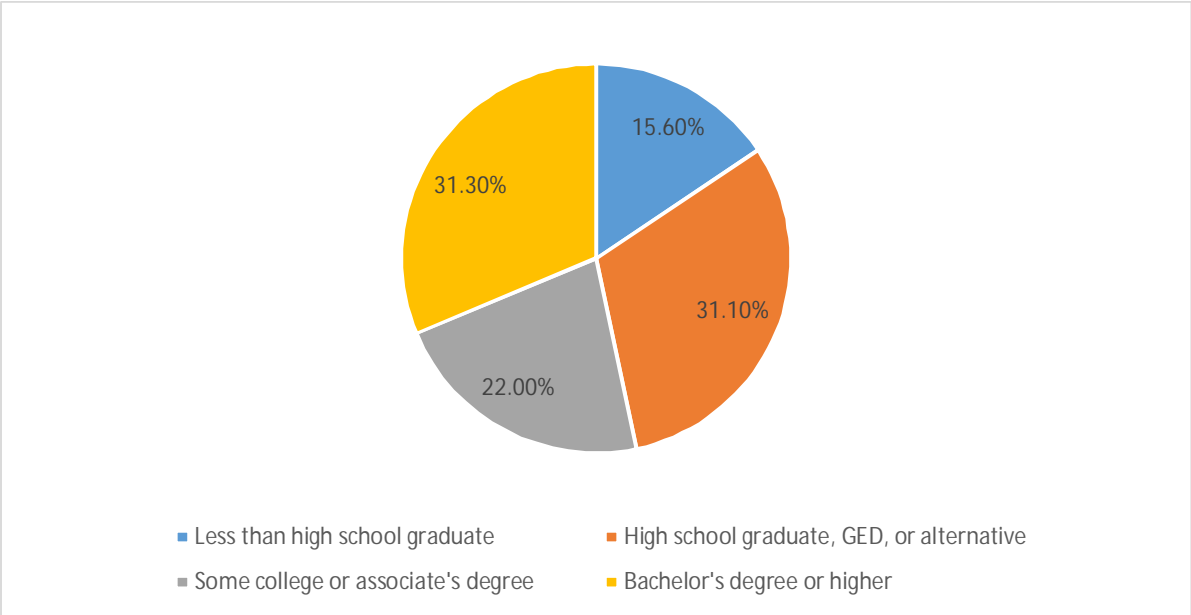


FIGURE 4 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF OLDER ADULTS IN PORTLAND

## 2.2 ECONOMIC DATA

Lifestyle in retirement has changed in recent decades and many people continue to work beyond age 65, either by choice or need. In Portland, about 32 percent of this group is in the labor force. Household earnings from this employment and other sources are described below. One quarter of the group is below 150 percent of the poverty level compared to 30 percent of the total population.

Households with Income in the Past 12 Months		
	Over Age 65	Mean Amount (Over 65)
With earnings	31.3%	\$41,206
With Social Security income	89%	\$16,314
With Supplemental Security income	6.3%	\$8,503
With cash public assistance income	4.9%	\$2,994
With retirement income	43.8%	\$18,952
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits	14.8%	N/A

FIGURE 5 ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD EARNINGS

## 3 CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION

### 3.1 CURRENT EFFORTS

#### 3.1.1 GOALS AND ACCESS

The City of Portland City Council Common Goals 2014 include elements specifically targeted at the older adult population and/or will benefit this group. In part, these include promoting housing availability, transportation initiatives, and the improvement of city services. (Common Council Goals, 2015)

*Promote Housing Availability:* Provide increased availability in all segments of the housing market while insuring that there is a suitable balance of housing opportunities among those sectors.

*Provide Transportation Initiatives:* Develop a transportation system that advances healthy living, minimizes environmental impacts and promotes the local economy by advancing opportunities for mass transit, bicycle use and walking.

*Improve City Services:* Operate the city government in an efficient and effective manner that is responsive to all segments of the community in a manner that is transparent and accountable.

Goal: Promote Housing Availability	Goal: Transportation Initiatives	Goal: Improve City Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete assessment of and, as appropriate, begin to offer city owned property to construct affordable housing</li><li>• Complete draft rewrites of portions of the zoning ordinance to allow for greater housing opportunities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write an MOU with METRO that addresses street closures impacting transit routes.</li><li>• Review and revise Parking Policies/Practices to support sustainable transportation and increased housing.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a City budget that advances the common goals and guiding principles including a 311 center, customer service training and a new website.</li><li>• Write a report that documents options available for property tax and rent rebates.</li></ul>

The City of Portland has an Elder Advocate who is available to assist older adults and their families sort out problems, answer questions, and advocate for rights. This role provides easy access to information about a variety of services available in the Portland area and gives support to health and social service providers so that their services are easily accessible.

In addition, the City website has an alert function called “Notify Me” that allows citizens to receive email alerts or mobile phone text notifications regarding parking bans, recreation cancellations, public health alerts and information from a number of City Departments. A city-wide calendar lists all meetings and events. Current and historic meeting agendas are also posted allowing for engagement without meeting attendance. Audio and/or video recordings of meetings are available. The City also maintains a presence on Facebook and Twitter.<sup>4</sup>

### 3.1.2 CITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

An integral part of the work of the Planning Department is soliciting public input on public and private development projects. Notices regarding participation opportunities are distributed to abutters in a 500 foot radius of the project site by email. For larger projects, neighborhood meetings are held between the project proponents, City staff, and the community to understand and resolve local concerns and questions. All citizens are welcome to participate in formal comments periods during meetings or via writing. (Jaegerman, Barhydt, & Knowland, 2015)

### 3.1.3 EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Fire Department establishes a Unified Command in the event of an emergency comprised of policy makers and department heads. Often, the direction to citizens is to “protect in place” with notifications made through reverse 911 calls<sup>5</sup> and public service announcements. This command then establishes shelters, if required, at various City buildings which operate on

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<sup>4</sup> Facebook: City of Portland, Maine; Twitter: @CityPortland

<sup>5</sup> Reverse 911 calls work for land line phones. The Assistant Chief indicated that reaching residents on cell phones will be investigated.

generators. These facilities can be activated during flooding, ice storms, heat waves, or similar emergencies. A plan for transportation can be created for evacuations through the utilization of Metro buses. (Gautreau, 2015)

Coordination between the command and elder care facilities and hospitals occurs, as required. It is expected that these facilities have their own emergency preparedness measures and the Fire Department can be called to assist.

The Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) program focuses on enhancing preparedness in the nation's largest cities and metropolitan statistical areas, where more than 50% of the U.S. population resides. In Maine the CRI includes York, Cumberland, and Sagadahoc counties.<sup>6</sup> A Point of Dispensing (POD) is a location where the public will go during an emergency to receive free life-saving medications. In activating PODs, the goal is to provide medication to 100% of the affected population within 48 hours.

Maine Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) has a plan with the Southern Maine Area Agency on Aging's (SMAAA) Meals on Wheels program where they would help provide information and medical countermeasures, if needed, to their clients. SMAAA has also offered to send out any information about Maine CRI activities to clients on their mailing list and/or publish information in their regular newsletter. Maine CRI worked with the Barron Center to set them up as a Closed Point of Dispensing so they will be able to dispense medical countermeasures to their staff and residents. This will allow to staff to continue working on site during an emergency (so

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<sup>6</sup> Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention manages the Maine CRI.

they do not have to leave to go to an Open POD and miss work) and it provides the medical countermeasures to the residents so they do not have to leave. Generally, when planning for public Open PODs it is necessary to consider the needs of people with all abilities and functional needs. This includes accessible parking, waiting times in line, and consideration for people who may be unable to stand for long periods of time. Plans include offering assistance to those who need it by having "floaters" available at PODs that can assist anyone who may need help getting through the POD. (Hager, 2015)

A community outreach branch of the fire department was established and is presently setting goals. The intention is to provide safety tips and advice in advance of emergency situations. This might include suggested components in a disaster kit to keep at home and a website resource to which residents can turn for information. (Gautreau, 2015)

Cumberland County has contracted with Emergency Communications Network, Inc. for its "CodeRED" high speed telephone emergency notification service. In the event of a natural disaster or manmade emergency, the CodeRED system gives the City and County the ability to deliver pre-recorded emergency telephone notifications/information messages to targeted areas or the entire region at a rate of up to 60,000 calls per hour. CodeRED allows notification via hardwired phone, cell phone, text message, or email in the event of an emergency. (City of Portland, 2015)

### 3.2 EVALUATION

Active planning processes with community involvement opportunities and City staff that are eager to address concerns have created an environment that is adaptable to the changing

needs of its residents. Common goals created by the City Council provide focus and accountability. Much emphasis has been placed on the review of housing availability and affordability and zoning revisions are in process to this end. This increased density allowances, inclusive zoning efforts, and reduced parking requirements may facilitate the development of options attractive to older adults.

Actively seeking and recruiting older adults to serve in leadership positions within City government and on volunteer committees will increase the likelihood that representative concerns are considered during decision making at all levels. This form of involvement gives more power to the impacted group and facilitates greater buy-in to implemented policies.

The emergency preparedness and planning activities are comprehensive, but education efforts related to personal planning in these events are limited. These efforts should be expanded upon and all forms of communication should be utilized including electronic, postal mail, media – both traditional and social, and in person sessions.

## 4 HOUSING

### 4.1 CURRENT EFFORTS

#### 4.1.1 PLANNING AND POLICY

The City Comprehensive Plan, updated in 2002, specifically identified the vision for housing in Portland. A goal was established to meet the needs of the socially and economically diverse population with varied and affordable housing. Policy recommendations centered on:

- Identifying the need for an adequate and diverse housing supply to meet the needs, preferences, and financial capabilities of all Portland households, now and in the future.



- Maintaining, rehabilitating, and restoring the existing housing stock as a safe and important physical, economic and architectural resource for the community.
- Maintaining and enhancing the livability of Portland's neighborhoods...through careful land use regulation, design, and public participation that respects neighborhood integrity.
- Seeking opportunities for economic and social integration throughout the Greater Portland region to encourage the development of a range of housing options that are available and affordable to all income levels in the region.
- Encouraging sustainable development patterns and opportunities within the city by promoting efficient land use, conservations of natural resources, and easy access to public transportation, services, and public amenities.
- Striving to ensure freedom of choice in housing type, tenure, and neighborhood for all, regardless of race, color, age, gender, familial status, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, source of income or disability. (Housing Comprehensive Plan Committee, 2002)

Since the writing of the Housing Plan over 2,000 housing units have been constructed. A new study, Portland: 2030 Workforce Housing Needs, was completed to determine if there are any gaps in what the market is currently providing and the city needs. The report cited that of the housing units constructed from 2010 to 2014, only 29 percent were offered at a rent or sales price affordable to a household earning the median income. Tools were outlined to inform the development of policies to balance access to the newest housing boom. Work on these items continues by City officials. (Greater Portland Council of Governments, 2015)

The City is currently working on revising housing policies to encourage a balance of affordable housing options. The following are items either under consideration or are already becoming part of formal policies.

Density bonuses grant an increase in the number of units allowed by right in order to provide an incentive for the construction of affordable housing. It is typically incorporated into a contract zone, overlay district, or cluster subdivision. Inclusionary zoning requires that a certain percentage of units in a new development be set aside as affordable, with or without an increase in density.

A reduction in the amount of required parking reduces that number of spaces that must be constructed to support each housing unit. Eliminating the typical suburban requirement of two spaces per unit can cut housing construction costs significantly and free up land to increase density. This policy can also encourage an increase in walking, biking, and taking public transit by the residents.

Rent control establishes a ceiling on rent increases permitted in the public and private rental market. While it can provide some relief from rising rent prices, it has the potential to create housing shortages by discouraging new construction. (Greater Portland Council of Governments, 2015)

#### 4.1.2 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Subsidized housing for older adults is available in locations throughout the City. Eligibility requirements and services vary.

Subsidized Housing for Older Adults in Portland		
100 State Street	100 State Street	168 units
Bayview Heights	158 N. Street	59 units
Butler/Payson Apartments	77 Pine/218 State Street	56 units
Deering Pavilion	880 Forest Avenue	200 units
Franklin Towers	211 Cumberland Avenue	200 units
Harbor Terrace	284 Danforth Street	119 units
Loring House	1125 Brighton Avenue	100 units
North School	248 Congress Street	60 units
Northfield Green	147 Allen Avenue	200 units
Park Danforth	777 Danforth Street	70 units
Peaks Island Elderly Housing	89 Central Avenue	11 units
Washington Gardens	577 Washington Avenue	100 units

FIGURE 6 SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

#### 4.1.3 ASSISTED LIVING AND NURSING HOMES

Several older adult focused facilities are located within Portland with a variety of care styles available. The following tables summarize each.

Assisted Living Facilities in Portland		
Park Danforth	777 Danforth Street	36 beds
Seaside Nursing and Rehabilitation Center	850 Baxter Boulevard	124 beds (includes long-term)
Portland Center for Assisted Living	68 Devonshire Street	125 beds
Saint Joseph's Rehabilitation and Residence	1133 Washington Avenue	44 beds
Seventy-Five State Street	75 State Street	
The Cedars	620-640 Ocean Avenue	

FIGURE 7 ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

Long-term and Skilled Nursing Care		
Barron Center	1145 Brighton Ave	219 beds
Saint Joseph's Rehabilitation and Residence	1133 Washington Avenue	37 beds (skilled) 84 beds (long-term)
Seaside Nursing and Rehabilitation Center	850 Baxter Boulevard	124 beds (includes assisted living)
The Cedars	620-640 Ocean Avenue	

FIGURE 8 LONG-TERM AND SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES

The following facilities offer independent living apartments within a community setting. Often, increased levels of care are available on an “a la carte” basis.

Independent Living apartments	
Seventy-Five State Street	75 State Street
The Cedars	620-640 Ocean Avenue
The Woods at Canco	257 Canco Road

FIGURE 9 INDEPENDENT LIVING APARTMENTS

#### 4.1.4 AGING-IN-PLACE

Several organizations in Portland offer housekeeping and minor repair programs. Some are private pay, some have sliding fee schedules based on income, while others are volunteer based and the services are gratis.

Aging Excellence provides at-home support services and recreational opportunities for older adults. Services include homemaking, heavy chore service, transportation, telephone reassurance/reminder service, social trips, and outings.

Catholic Charities of Maine provides homemaking services to allow elderly clients, disabled individuals, and families in crisis to remain in their homes. It also helps families needing support with parenting skills and child rearing. Services include grocery shopping and errands, light housework, household management, emotional support, parenting skills, and occasional respite care. A more recently developed program provides support services to elder immigrants and refugees, including help finding translators, housing, legal services, and other resources. This includes outreach to isolated adults and the creation of services based on observed needs.

East End Time Dollar Exchange and the Portland West Time Dollar Exchange are volunteer service exchange programs in which older adults can participate. Members provide over 500 services to other members and include transportation, minor home repairs, massage therapy, and volunteer opportunities.

Southern Maine Agency of Aging Volunteers performs minor home repairs and maintenance. Volunteer labor is donated. The congregate housing program provides a daily meal, homemaker service, and service coordination to qualified older adults living in six different Portland Housing Authority properties.

#### 4.1.5 ADULT DAY PROGRAMS

Area adult day programs are offered by the Community Counseling Center, the Southern Maine Agency on Aging, Saint Joseph's Rehabilitation and Residence and the City of Portland. The offerings vary, but in general, provide a respite for care givers and include activities such as group therapy, social skill training, health educations, and therapeutic arts. Some specialized

programs for clients with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias or developmental disabilities are also available.

## 4.2 EVALUATION

The "complete streets" design and planning efforts will directly benefit the older adult population once implemented in the physical environment. Continued efforts encouraging and requiring developers to incorporate affordable housing into projects will further meet the needs of this group. Expanding the focus of affordability need beyond workforce level will be challenging, but is critical to meet needs of vulnerable residents. This access to affordable housing will be enhanced by adding requirements that all units built as such remain so in perpetuity.

# 5 TRANSPORTATION

## 5.1 CURRENT EFFORTS

### 5.1.1 PUBLIC MODES

METRO operates the public bus system in Portland. There are eight routes and hundreds of stops that reach all areas of the City and some extend into neighboring communities including Westbrook, South Portland, and Falmouth. Routes operate seven days a week with a reduced weekend and holiday schedule. Recent service enhancements are increasing operating hours and destinations. The public is encouraged to comment on service needs and accommodations are made, as possible.

Discounted metro tickets are available to adults aged 65 or older. Each ride is 75 cents with a Medicare card or photo ID. This is a fifty percent discount. "TenRide" tickets are also available

for a discounted price. Tickets can also be used with the South Portland Bus service. Other mode transfer options include Casco Bay Ferry Service, Zoom Shuttles, and the Amtrak Downeaster Train.

Ridership enhancements are in the planning stages and include real time bus locator notifications which will be available via smart phones applications and text messaging. Alerts will also be sent about delays or service interruptions. (Beck, 2015)

Regional Transportation Program, Inc. (RTP) is another public transportation service that provides low-cost transportation to the elderly, social service agency clients, the economically disadvantaged and persons with disabilities throughout Cumberland County with the exception of Brunswick and Harpswell. RTP offers door to door and scheduled pick-up service to medical appointments and shopping. For those riders who are 60 or over, RTP offers rides at affordable prices. For those with a low income, RTP contracts with DHHS to provide rides to medical and other appointments. A yearly application with income verification is required. For riders who are 60 or older and over income guidelines provided by DHHS, riders can still qualify for services. The fare is 2.50 one-way, for trips within one town, or between neighboring towns and \$5.00 one-way, for trips between non-adjointing towns. (rtp Regional Transportation Program, 2015)

The Amtrak Downeaster train service connects Portland with North Station in Boston and Brunswick through which many regionals and national transportation options exist. There are five daily round trips between Boston and Portland with two extended to Brunswick. Tickets

vary from \$6 to \$29 each way with up to half off for those over age 62. (Amtrak Downeaster, 2015)

A Greater Portland Transit Guide is published at least twice a year as a collaborative effort among the Amtrak Downeaster, Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach Zoom ShuttleBus, Casco Bay Lines, METRO Bus, Regional Transportation Program, the South Portland Bus service, and the York County Community Action Corporation. This guide helps facilitate regional transportation for riders. (Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG), 2015) METRO also publishes a "Before You Ride Guide" which provides basic details on what to expect at stops, on the bus, how to pay your fare, and how to signal to the driver that you want to exit. This information provides new users with an increased level of comfort before embarking on the service. Multi-lingual translations are available in 15 languages. (METRO Before You Ride Guide, 2014)

### 5.1.2 PRIVATE MODES

Approximately eleven taxi companies serve the Portland community and surrounding areas.

Rates are consistent throughout the town at \$1.90 for the first 1/10 of a mile and then 30 cents for each additional 1/10 of a mile.

More recently, a private company Uber began offering private transport service in Portland.

Rates include a base fare of \$1.50 plus \$.18 per minutes and \$1.85 per mile. Fares vary due to traffic, weather, and usage. Tips are not accepted and payment is through smart phone applications. (Uber Features, 2015)



Independent Transportation Network operates within a 15 mile radius of Portland and provides transportation services for older adults and persons with visual impairments. Paid and volunteer drivers use private cars to transport to appointments, shopping, outings, etc. A membership is required and allows for no money exchanged in the vehicle. Customers pay by the mile (\$1.50 per mile and a \$4 pickup fee). Tips are not accepted. (Senior Transportation in Portland, 2015)

Casco Bay Lines is a ferry system that provides year-round passenger, freight, postal and vehicle service to the islands of Casco Bay from Portland. The ferries transport nearly one million passengers, 30,000 vehicles and 5,300 tons of freight annually. Casco Bay Island Transit District (CBITD) was created under State Enabling Legislation in 1981 to serve residents and visitors of six Casco Bay islands: Peaks Island, Little Diamond Island, Great Diamond Island and Cliff Island (which are within the City of Portland), and the Towns of Long Island and Chebeague Island. Passenger rates vary from about \$2 to about \$6 depending on destination and time of year. These rates reflect a discounted ticket. (Casco Bay Lines, 2015)

### 5.1.3 CAR AND BIKE SHARING SERVICES

U-Car Share has partnered with the city in its car share service. Three passenger cars and a pickup truck are available for hourly rentals within the City limits with rates of \$4.95 per hour plus a per mile charge (Uhaul Car Share, 2015). The city has provided dedicated on-street parking spaces on Elm Street and Congress Street for these vehicles.

In 2013, the City of Portland Department of Public Services completed a Bike Share 'readiness assessment' and found conditions conducive to supporting a bike share system. The assessment

was done as part of the EPA's "Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities" Smart Growth Technical Assistance Program. They then followed up by a Request for Information process with bike share vendors/operators for their proposals for technology, scale and costs for acquiring and operating a bike share program in Portland. Based on those responses, they are determining next steps to pursue funding and partner opportunities. If the program moves forward, it would likely be two to four years until a system could be up and running in Portland.

#### 5.1.4 INFRASTRUCTURE

The City of Portland Parking Division manages on and off street parking to support the safety and parking needs of residents, visitors, businesses. The consistent and fair enforcement of parking regulations, parking meter management, and the operation and oversight of parking garages and lots are the most visible ways in which the office supports the city's mission. The City owns four parking garages as part of the 48 Downtown parking facilities. A Park & Shop program good for one hour of free parking in several facilities is available. This program can also provide a free METRO ride home.

Snow removal from pedestrian walkways includes approximately 85 miles of sidewalks and about 10 miles of trails. Adjustments are made annually based upon feedback received and when new shared use pathways are built and new sidewalks that are primary school walking routes.

A 2014 survey by the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) collected data on transportation user satisfaction, mode selection, values, and priorities for future spending and projects. While the participants were from the Greater Portland region and not

only the City of Portland and of a variety of ages<sup>7</sup>, the results remain applicable as Portland is the destination for many user trips. Asked to rate on a scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), the mean ratings for the services and infrastructure conditions are summarized:

Satisfaction with Transportation Options	
Availability of Sidewalks	3.39
Major Road Conditions	3.08
Public Ferries	4.11
Public Trains	3.88
Availability of bike lanes and/or paths	3.08
Bus services, including public buses	3.16

FIGURE 10 SATISFACTION WITH TRANSPORTATION

The survey also identified that for those who changed transportation behavior in the last five years, over a quarter of those changes were due to increased age and therefore a reduction in driving. The type of community where respondents would live in five to ten years is one where the houses are smaller and closer to each other, but schools, stores, and restaurants are within walking distance and served by public transit (51.2%). (Pan Atlantic SMS Group, 2014)

## 5.2 EVALUATION

The public transportation system has multiple modes available to visitors and residents.

Modified parking requirements for new development will provide increased focus and desire

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<sup>7</sup> 25 percent of respondents were 55-64 and 26.5 percent of respondents were 65 or older.

for investment in these systems. The passenger satisfaction with these services is positive with many suggestions for continued improvement.

Enhanced coordination between the many varied services and routes will help identify service gaps and where there is need for enhanced services. This work may also reveal duplicative efforts and opportunities for increased efficiencies. Adding enhancements such as more passenger shelters and wayfinding methods will make using the system more user friendly and easy for the older adults residing in Portland and visiting.

## 6 OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

### 6.1 CURRENT EFFORTS

#### 6.1.1 PUBLIC GATHERING SPACES AND BUILDINGS

Portland Recreation has five community centers in the following neighborhoods:

- Riverton Community Center (Pool Access)
- East End Community Center
- Cummings Community Center
- Peaks Island Community Center
- Reiche Community Center Peaks Island Community Center (Pool Access)

The Recreation Department of the City coordinates and plans adult programming at each center, with Cummings and Peaks Island offering the most offerings specifically targeted to older adults. The other centers offer adult drop in gyms, yoga classes, water aerobics and lap swim. All of the centers have parking in lots with the exception of Peaks Island and Cummings Community Center and the buildings are accessible. (Bradley, 2015)

With an authorized strength of 163 sworn officers and 59 civilian employees, the Portland Police Department is the largest municipal law enforcement agency in the state of Maine. The Community Policing Section consists of personnel who work closely with community members, service agencies, business owners, and other government agencies to develop and implement programs, initiatives and services throughout Portland's neighborhoods. (City of Portland, 2015)

Safety tips for pedestrians, drivers, homeowners, and renters are published by the Police Department and available online. (City of Portland, 2015)

### 6.1.2 PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

The Public Services Department are responsible for planning and programming projects related to the public right of way including roads and sidewalks. They make sure that pavements are well-maintained, free of obstructions and sidewalks are reserved for pedestrians. Pedestrian crossings locations are at intersections, are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disability, with non-slip markings, visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times.

### 6.1.3 RECREATION

Athletic facilities have over 50 playing fields, including 2 artificial surfaces at Fitzpatrick and Memorial Stadiums. Lighted softball and baseball fields are used by local leagues. Tennis, volleyball, and basketball courts are also available for public use.

Portland Recreation has an extensive adult program for ages 62 and older. Up to three vans provide door to door service to local programs and activities. Recreation staff mail calendars and registration forms each month to nearly 500 people. Some of the people who receive it are

the program coordinators for housing agencies and social workers who work with the targeted population and share the information with their building residents.

Each month, approximately two activities are held at the Cummings Community Center and 12 to 14 trip based activities are scheduled to various destinations. In the summer and fall, day and overnight motor coach trips are also organized. Door to door pick up for all activities for Portland residents is provided using two 15-passenger mini-busses and one 15 passenger van. The department does not have a wheelchair accessible bus, but has worked with the Barron Center to occasionally use theirs. There has been an increase in participants over the last few years, with the highest numbers being in May through October. Participation varies from about 175 to 450 per month. (Bradley, 2015)

During the summer months, many older adults attend the free outdoor concerts at the Western Prom and Fort Sumner Park on Munjoy Hill. In 2014, 14 such concerts were held. Portland Recreation also hosted Shakespeare in Deering Oaks Park with three performances a week during late July and August. (City of Portland, Maine, 2015)

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) was created for those 50 or older with an interest in continued learning and is part of the University of Southern Maine. More than 1700 people are members and can choose among an array of courses in the liberal arts and sciences. The courses are peer taught with no grades or tests. Courses are offered year round and are two hours in length, one each week, for either six or eight weeks. The annual OLLI membership fee is \$25 and includes access to special interest groups and course registration. Most courses cost

\$50. Scholarships are available for those who cannot afford tuition. (University of Southern Maine, 2015)

Founded in 1853, the Portland YMCA is the twelfth oldest of the over 2,000 YMCA's in the United States and the largest in Maine. The historic facility is home to two pools, the Studio A classroom, a fitness facility, a gym, four recently renovated courts, 3 for squash and 1 flex court, and many other amenities. Many programs and activities on a variety of topics are available for members. Adult memberships are \$52 per month, but financial assistance is available.<sup>8</sup> (YMCA of Southern Maine, 2015)

The Salvation Army operates a senior center with a variety of programs, trips, and entertainment targeted at adults over age 55. Lunch is served daily. (The Salvation Army, 2015)

#### 6.1.4 PARKS

The City of Portland manages many park facilities for use by residents and visitors. Park rangers patrol year round. The Forestry Section of the Public Services Department manages Portland's shade and ornamental trees. The municipal community forest consists of thousands of street trees, along over 300 miles of public roadways on the mainland and the island communities on Peaks, Little Diamond, Great Diamond and Cliff Islands. The group also maintains park and public grounds trees in city parks and public grounds. (City of Portland, Maine, 2015)

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<sup>8</sup> Over \$710,000 is provided for membership assistance. One out of three members receive some form of membership assistance.

Community Parks	
Back Cove Trail	33.36 acres
Deering Oaks Park	55 acres
Eastern Promenade	68.2 acres
Payson Park	47.75 acres
Western Promenade	18.5 acres

FIGURE 11 COMMUNITY PARKS

Natural Parks	
Baxter Woods	30 acres
Baxter (Deering) Pines	5.9 acres
Capisic Pond Park	18 acres
Evergreen Cemetery Woodlands	
Fore River Park	
Oatnuts Park	15 acres
PATHS	
Pine Grove Park	6.5 acres
Presumpscot River Preserve	40 acres
Riverton Trolley Park	19 acres
University Park	8.6 acres

FIGURE 12 NATURAL PARKS

In-Town Neighborhood Parks	
Fort Allen Park	9.33 acres
Fort Sumner Park	1.25 acres
Harbor View Memorial Park	2.5 acres
Heseltine Park	0.82 acres
Lincoln Park	2.5 acres
Post Office Park	0.15 acres
Tommy's Park	0.15 acres

FIGURE 13 IN-TOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS



Greater Portland Neighborhood Parks	
Bedford Park	0.52 acres
Belmeade Park	0.25 acres
Barrows Park – Baxter Sundial	0.25 acres
Fessenden Park	0.46 acres
Longfellow Park	0.34 acres
Nason’s Corner/Breakwater School	
Quaker Park	0.8 acres
Stroudwater Park	0.75 acres
Stroudwater Park 2	
Trinity Park	0.1 acres
Winslow Park	1.26 acres
Fort Gorges	2 acres
Peaks Island	

FIGURE 14 GREATER PORTLAND NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Off Leash Dog Parks	
Quarry Run Dog Park	10 acres
Valley Street Dog Park	2.8 acres

FIGURE 15 OFF LEASH DOG PARKS

A boat launch is located at East End Beach. Daily launch fees for residents are \$5.

The City of Portland's Department of Public Services oversees four community garden sites containing 132 garden plots. Individual plots are available for seasonal gardening. Each garden site contains a garden shed and basic tools. Compost is supplied yearly. Five additional community gardens are located in Portland, but are not city administered.

Riverside Golf Course is owned and operated by the City of Portland. This popular and traditional public golf facility first opened in 1932 and features an 18-hole course, a 9-hole course and a 3-hole practice course. The classic layout, rolling hills and tree-line fairways are bordered by the Presumpscot River. Green fees range from \$15 to \$30. (City of Portland, Maine, 2015)

#### 6.1.5 BURIAL SITES

Evergreen Cemetery is the only active burial site within City limits. Discounts are available to residents for services and plots which help meet the need and desire for a complete life within one's community. The City maintains the cemeteries with assistance from volunteer groups and individuals. (Dumais, 2015)

### 6.2 EVALUATION

Numerous recreation and social opportunities are available for older adults in Portland. Offerings from the City and private agencies provides diverse engagement and geographic reach. Green spaces and athletic facilities are plentiful and available throughout the City. Continued efforts to maintain a strong program will make this a service highlight among older adult residents. Enhancement through further outreach about the vast activities available may increase the diversity of participants and increase the overall health of this group through social interactions.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

Portland, Maine has received many national awards for livability and is increasingly identified as a livable city. (Portland, Maine - Various Awards, 2015) These attributions will continue to attract older adults, singles persons, families, and visitors to the area for homes and vacation settings.



The City of Portland considers older adults in many of its departments, planning activities, and service offerings. As this segment of the population continues to increase there are plentiful opportunities to build on this foundation and become known as an age-friendly community in the region. Portland's deliberate consideration of older adults when making these improvements will benefit this segment of the population, but perhaps more importantly, improve the quality of life for all residents.

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## 9 APPENDIX A

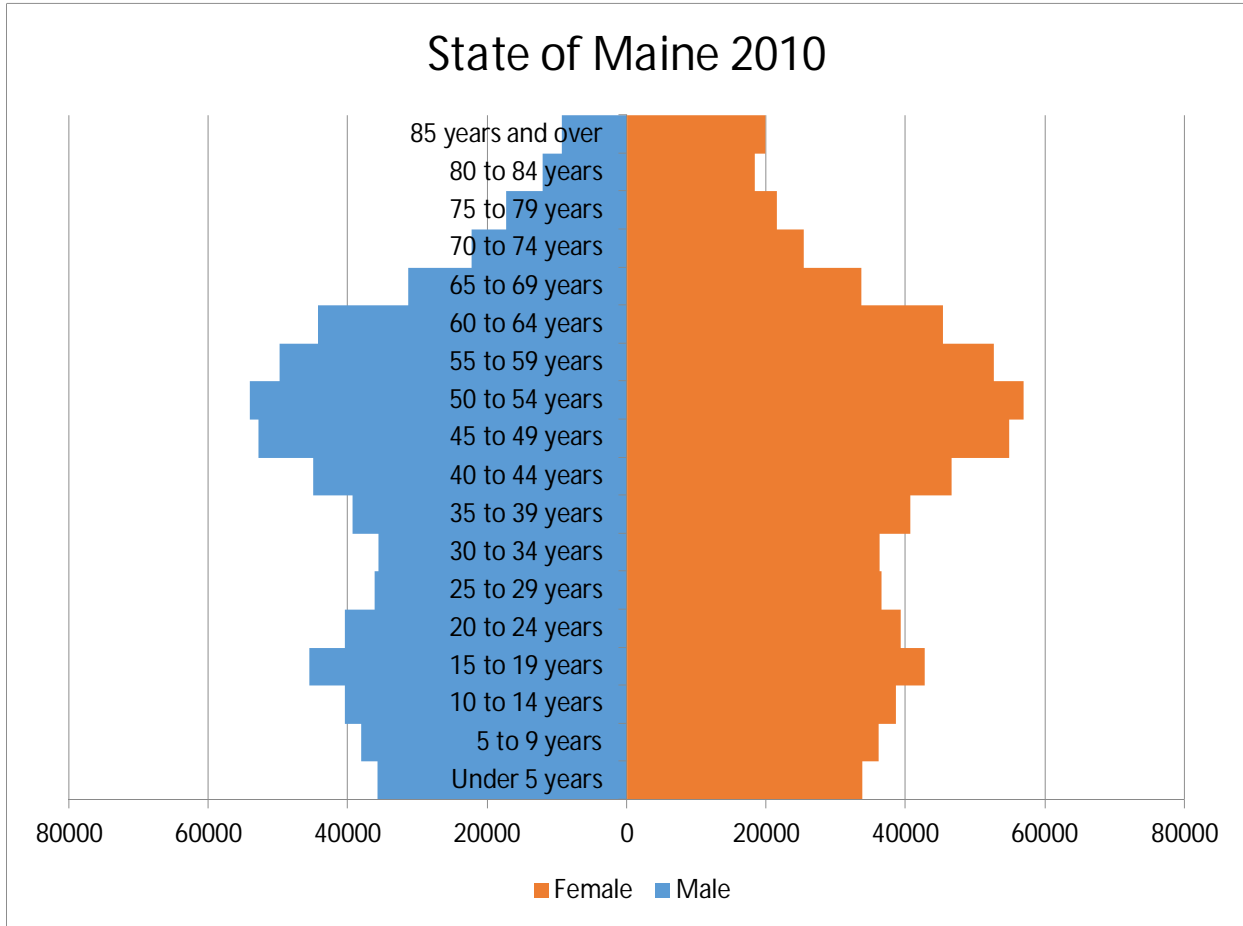


FIGURE 16 STATE OF MAINE POPULATION PYRAMID

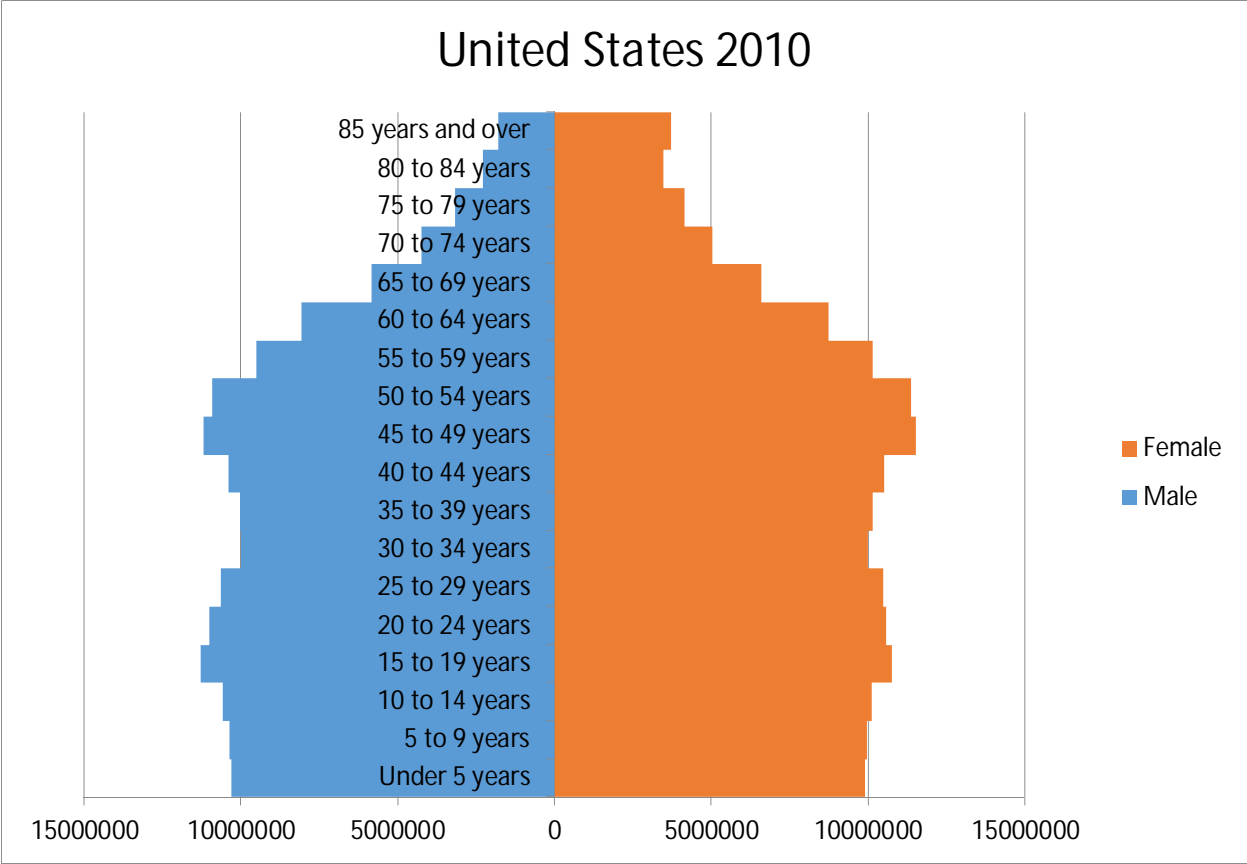


FIGURE 17 UNITED STATES POPULATION PYRAMID