



**City of Rockville  
Department of Recreation and Parks  
Senior Services Long Range Plan**

**TASK FORCE REPORT**



*Rockville Senior Services  
Add Years to Your Life and Life to Your Years!*

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

**October 5, 2006**

The City of Rockville would like to thank the following residents who served on the Senior Services Long Range Plan Task Force. These individuals gave their time, expertise and creativity to thoughtfully and critically examine the services to senior citizens provided by the Department of Recreation and Parks through the Senior Services Division and suggest directions for the future.

Chair: Jim Coyle

Angie Braun

Doug Bly

George J Galasso

William Goodwin

Carol Hannaford

Ruth Hanessian

Dunya Hecht

Ned Li

Adam Long

Jim Marrinan

Kathy Neale

Sandra Schwartz

Anita Summerour

Charles Treat

Dolores Wallace

Donald Wallesz

Carole Weinraub

In addition, the following staff from the Department of Recreation and Parks assisted by providing information and support to the Task Force:

Phil Bryan, Superintendent of Recreation

Jill Hall, Senior Center Supervisor

Christine Klopfer, Sports and Exercise Specialist

Karen Lumpkin, Senior Citizen Recreation Coordinator

Lorraine Schack, Senior Citizen Social Services Coordinator

---

---

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

**Table of Contents**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
	Executive Summary	
I	Introduction .....	1
II	Task Force Vision for Rockville Senior Services .....	3
III	Factors Affecting Senior Services Planning .....	5
IV	Rockville’s Current Senior Program .....	11
V	Program Benefits .....	13
VI	Key Planning Assumptions for the Future .....	14
VII	Recommended Goals and Strategy .....	15
	1. Fiscal Challenges and Resource Needs .....	16
	2. City Policies Regarding Senior Services .....	19
	3. Facilities for Senior Programs and Activities .....	19
	4. Transportation Challenges .....	20
	5. Management & Technical Personnel to Support Senior Programs .....	21
	6. Research and Program Design Capabilities for Senior-Related Programs and Services .....	22
	7. Intra- and Inter-Governmental Program Coordination.....	23
	8. Technology Beneficial to Seniors .....	24
	9. Community Education and Awareness of Senior Services .....	24
	10. Volunteer Support for Senior Services .....	25
	11. Information and Opportunities Clearinghouse for Seniors .....	27
	12. Cultural Diversity in Senior Programs .....	28
IX	Conclusions .....	29
 Appendices		
1.	Identification of Challenges Facing Rockville Seniors.....	A1
2.	Senior Services Division Budget History FY2001-FY2007 .....	A8
3.	Meeting #3 & 4 Notes from Break-Out Groups.....	A10
4.	Critical Recommendations .....	A15
5.	Areas to Be Protected/Maintained .....	A19
6.	Summary of Citizen Input.....	A23

---

---

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Rockville's senior population is expected to increase by almost 100% from 8,202 in year 2003 to more than 15,000 in year 2020 including a 45% growth of the population 85 years of age and older. But the sheer numbers of seniors alone is not the only variable that will impact Rockville's seniors. A variety of reputable sources argue that many of today's economic, social, health, and quality of life issues for current seniors will only increase over the next ten to fifteen years. In addition, the complexity and variety of needed supports will necessarily change as the seniors pass through the stages of aging. The important issue for the City of Rockville is that its programs and services recognize these challenges and change to accommodate its evolving senior population.

In response to this concern, the City of Rockville created a Senior Services Long Range Plan Task Force in January 2006 to:

**“Look at issues, trends and future demands for senior services, while establishing priorities to meet new and possibly different service requirements.”**

The Task Force was composed of eighteen citizens who met to consider information, deliberate issues and develop the recommendations presented in this report.

The Task force believes that the City's overall goals for senior services should be:

- *To enable senior residents to “age in place” in their Rockville homes insofar as is possible.*
- *To coordinate senior-related City programs internally and interface them externally to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of services for seniors at reasonable cost.*
- *To offer an expanded menu of affordable programs, activities and services for seniors to meet the new and changing needs of a growing senior population.*
- *To provide or arrange services for seniors when needed to help meet basic life needs— food, clothing, shelter, health care, in-home care, transportation and social interaction.*

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

The preferred strategy for achieving these goals is to:

- Continue providing programs and services directly through the Department of Recreation and Parks using the Senior Center as the primary location.
- Rely on City staff as a core of knowledgeable, experienced providers, supplemented by volunteers and contract assistance as appropriate.
- Extend senior program and activity offerings to Rockville neighborhoods using other City facilities to improve access, ease space constraints and meet increased demand.
- Use new, improved or expanded marketing efforts to inform senior residents of City programs and services and determine their interests and needs.
- Fund recreation and fitness programs, as well as educational activities and trips, to an increasing extent through user charges and fees.
- Research, develop and test, with general fund monies, new programs and events.
- Coordinate senior-related programs in all City Departments and interface with County and State programs.

The following is a summary of the recommendations included in this report. Detailed information on the issues and rationale for the recommendation can be found in the report text.

**1. Fiscal Challenges and Resource Needs**

- 1.1 Membership dues should be adjusted every three years to account for inflation and reflect cost of enhanced programs and services. In addition, variable membership fees should be set for different age groups.
- 1.2 Non-resident/non-members should be allowed to participate in programs and activities to help offset their cost, provided that individuals are at least 60 years of age; that they pay a premium fee; and that current members and residents have preference.
- 1.3 The Division should continue to pursue its cost recovery targets. The Division should also identify which programs and services could benefit from new or revised user charges.
- 1.4 The Division of Senior Services should continue to develop and analyze options for budgeting for meeting future senior service needs and requirements.
- 1.5 Recognizing the need for new future revenues, Division staff should work with Rockville Seniors, Incorporated (RSI) to identify and pursue new sources of funds, grant opportunities, marketing strategies and ways to increase membership.

**2. City Policies Regarding Senior Services**

- 2.1 The Task Force recommends that the Mayor and Council adopt an official policy designating the City of Rockville a “senior friendly community.”

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- 2.2 The Task Force recommends the City continue to budget for a 20% participation rate at the Center and in the community.
- 2.3 The Task Force recommends that the Mayor and Council, after reviewing this report, formulate specific policy guidance and direction that can be used by all City Departments to plan, budget for, and manage programs and services that affect senior residents.

**3. Facilities for Senior Programs and Activities**

- 3.1 The Task Force recommends the continued support for the Department's Senior Center Master Plan that is part of the City's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).
- 3.2 Demand for evening/weekend programs should be accommodated by expanding Center operating hours as required as younger seniors may require programs and services other than during regular daytime/weekday operating hours.

**4. Transportation Challenges**

- 4.1 Implement a minimal fee system for the Senior Bus service.
- 4.2 Consider expanding the transportation options for seniors (e.g., escorted transportation and shopping from private residences).
- 4.3 Work with County and WMATA to search for other senior supportive transportation options.
- 4.4 Advertise on the senior buses.
- 4.5 Seek donations from community and/or bus riders.

**5. Management & Technical Personnel to Support Senior Programs**

- 5.1 The Task Force recommends: (1) that the City give serious consideration to expanding the resources of the Senior Services Division; and (2) that the Division allocate resources to identifying new managerial and technical skills that will be needed to meet future demands for programs and services and develop a plan for acquiring those skills — whether by staff expansion, contract, training or volunteerism.
- 5.2 The Task Force recommends that the Department give high priority to acquiring additional staff for “off budget” fund raising and developing cooperative arrangements with County, State and Federal organizations, private foundations and business organizations and ensuring resources are available for professional development and training.

**6. Research and Program Design Capabilities for Senior-Related Programs and Services**

- 6.1 The Task Force recommends that the Department of Recreation and Parks establish a research and development program to design new and expanded programs and activities as well as evaluate existing services for Rockville senior residents.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

**7. Intra- and Inter-Governmental Program Coordination**

- 7.1 The Task Force recommends that the Mayor and Council adopt a policy stating explicitly that it expects City programs to be internally coordinated and adequately interfaced with related county, state and federal programs.
- 7.2 The Task Force recommends that the City take actions to increase and improve internal coordination and external interfacing of senior-related programs and activities.

**8. Technology Beneficial to Seniors**

- 8.1 Continue to provide technology classes and workshops to ensure seniors are aware of, and able to use, equipment that will improve their quality of life.
- 8.2 The Division should explore ways in which local high schools or Montgomery College students could be encouraged to participate in work/volunteer programs relating to technology beneficial to seniors.

**9. Community Education and Awareness of Senior Services**

- 9.1 The Task Force recommends that the Department of Recreation and Parks develop a “communications and marketing plan” for senior programs, activities and services which can be monitored, evaluated and revised periodically (perhaps every three years).

**10. Volunteer Support for Senior Services**

- 10.1 The Task Force recommends the Center continue to recruit and reward volunteers, as well as, ensure their volunteer experience is satisfying.
- 10.2 The staff should solicit or develop a list of volunteer opportunities from all City Departments and update it regularly.

**11. Information and Opportunities Clearinghouse for Seniors**

- 11.1 The Task Force recommends that the Division promote its library of information housed at the Senior Center. This would facilitate the Senior Center to become more known as the place to call for assistance.
- 11.2 The Task Force recommends that the City investigate the possibility of closer ties with the Maryland Senior Job Bank.
- 11.3 The Task Force recommends that the City investigate the need for and benefits of providing a structured program of information, services and advice for transitioning seniors.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

11.4 The Task Force supports the Senior Commission's developing concept for providing in-home support to seniors who need basic household assistance such as, cutting grass, snow removal, minor repairs, etc.

**12. Cultural Diversity in Senior Programs**

12.1 The Task Force recommends that the Department of Recreation and Parks develop a phased plan and program for encouraging expanded participation in senior activities by groups now under-represented.

**Conclusion**

The City has an excellent senior services program, which operates out of a multi-functional facility with a competent and dedicated staff. Its many programs, activities and services are far ranging and varied. Many are self-supporting or nearly so. Few localities in Maryland and Montgomery County, in the Task Force's opinion, are similarly positioned.

The City of Rockville, however, will experience major increases in senior citizens, 60 years and older, between now and the year 2020. Estimates for the City are for a 100% increase in its senior population. The impact of this growth on the City, its residents' quality of life and its programs and budget will be quickly apparent. The Task Force commends the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Senior Commission, and Rockville Seniors, Inc. for recognizing the need to begin preparations.

The tsunami is coming. The change provides both challenges and opportunities for the City of Rockville. The Task Force has identified a set of challenges that it believes will require high priority attention by the Mayor and Council, the Department of Recreation and Parks and the Division of Senior Services in the next few years. The Task Force is appreciative of the City's long-standing support for its senior citizens and is pleased to present its findings and recommendations for further consideration.

## I. Introduction

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Senior Services Long Range Plan Task Force. The Department of Recreation and Parks created the Task Force in January 2006 to:

**“Look at issues, trends and future demands for senior services, while establishing priorities to meet new and possibly different service requirements.”**

The Task Force was made up of eighteen Rockville citizens, all volunteers, who met bimonthly, starting in January 2006, to consider information, deliberate issues and develop the recommendations presented in this report. It was ably supported and assisted by the staff of the Division of Senior Services.

At its initial meeting, the Task Force received a comprehensive presentation from Jay Kenney, Director of the County’s Aging and Disabilities Office and Charles Smith, Senior Statistician on the senior challengers facing Montgomery County for coming years. The County Council has approved a comprehensive two-year strategic planning process to address the coming senior challenges.

The Task Force also reviewed an *Issues Paper on Senior Citizen Services, 2005-2020* prepared by Senior Services Division staff. The paper, which identified the key factors that will affect the City’s ability to deliver senior services through 2020, had previously been reviewed with representatives of the Senior Citizens Commission and the Board of Rockville Seniors, Inc., who recommended that a Task Force be established to study the issues in more depth and provide recommendations to the Mayor and Council and the Recreation and Parks Department. The paper makes it clear that the City will be challenged to provide expanded senior services during the planning period but that, with many competing services also requiring funding, it may not be possible to continue offering excellent programs and services the way the Recreation and Parks Department has for the past 25 years. The Task Force considered each of the issues identified in this report and developed recommendations.

The Task Force also looked at new priorities and requirements for future senior services and conducted a review of senior services budgets and facilities (see appendices for budget information). Additionally, the Task Force used an informal opinion poll to inform itself about community views and collect citizen input about selected issues. The poll consisted of group discussions, personal interviews and written responses to standard questions. The anecdotal results are summarized in an appendix.

In the course of conducting its work, the Task Force was convinced that:

- The Division of Senior Citizen Services is providing an outstanding array of important programs and services at the Rockville Senior Center and in the community.
- Rockville’s seniors will continue to be a great source of support and vitality to Rockville’s government, Boards and Commissions, and the community.
- Demand for City services, including senior services, will likely be higher and more costly over the next fifteen years.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Cost projections to sustain current levels of services for seniors will increase over time due to cost inflation, aging facility and, more importantly, a larger senior population.
- Three things are critical for the delivery of senior services and support given the increasing senior population:
  - Establishing a City policy of a “fair share of general revenues for senior services;”
  - Developing partnerships with all public and private entities in Rockville, Montgomery County, and the State, including non-profit and neighborhood organizations;
  - Encouraging long-term strategic thinking for supporting seniors.

As noted in subsequent sections, the Task Force recognized that the full panoply of issues and trends affecting senior citizens is nationwide in scope and extended well beyond its charter. An important part of the Task Force’s job was to select those issues that can and should be dealt with by the City via the Department of Recreation and Parks Senior Services Division. This report focuses on those issues and highlights the Task Force’s recommendations in regard to them, while noting early on the more national issues that are of concern to seniors.

## II. The Task Force’s Vision for Rockville Senior Services

The Task Force’s “2020 vision” for Rockville senior services is that:

*Rockville’s growing and increasingly diverse population of older citizens will be able to continue enjoying affordable services and opportunities that meet their needs and expectations, both in quantity and quality, and which have traditionally defined the “hometown” quality of life in Rockville.*

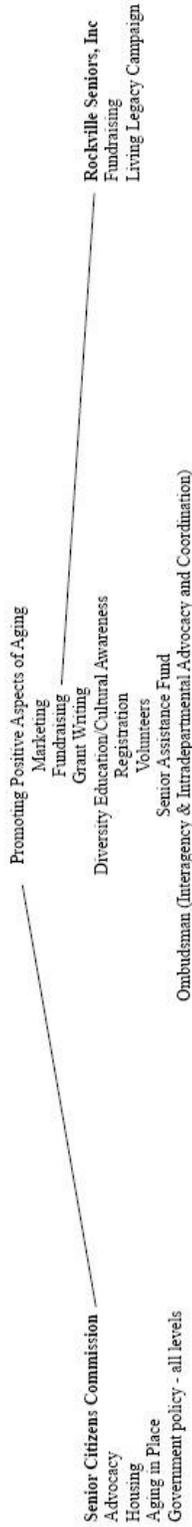
Services should include critical information and assistance, social services, recreation, education, fitness, wellness and community outreach. The Rockville Department of Recreation and Parks, Senior Services Division, should continue to be the “focal point” for ensuring the efficient and effective delivery of these services to the City’s growing and diversifying senior population. The Rockville Senior Center should be the “hub” of the effort, with other community facilities — such as community recreation centers — complementing, supplementing and providing for program expansion into the community, as required in the future.

The Task Force developed the following graph to depict the “what and how” of senior service and program provisions over the next decade. This approach attempts to recognize the evolving and complex aspects of supporting seniors across the spectrum of requirements and delivery modes.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

**PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO BE CONTINUED**

*Administrative Support*



**FREE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO COMMUNITY**  
*Provided in English - Spanish - Chinese*  
*(No age restriction)*

Options for funding include: partnerships, sponsorships, grants, donations, endowments, fundraising, paid ads on buses

**INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE**

- Emergency Assistance/Preparation
- Employment Information
- Financial, Legal, Health Seminars
- Retirement Planning Seminars
- Housing Options
- Regulatory Update
- Citizenship Information
- Social Security
- Medicare/Medicaid/Prescription Drugs
- Caregiver Services
- Physical Support (shovelling, chores)
- Fairs for Health, Housing, etc.
- Aging in Place Information
- Wellness & Health Seminars
- Translation & Outreach to Non-English Speaking Seniors

**TRANSPORTATION**

- Bus service to/from center
- Shopping
- Trips

**SOCIALIZATION**

- Lunch/Dinner
- Clubs
- Intergenerational Programs
- Drop-In Use of Facility

**LIFETIME LEARNING**

- Recreation programs
- Hobby/Craft Classes
- Computer Classes
- Educational Programs
- Citizenship Classes
- Language Classes
- Driving Classes
- Trips

**WELLNESS**

- Fitness Club
- Exercise Classes
- Sports
- Health Services/Screenings
- Prevention
- Mental Health Programs
- HeartWell

**FREE TO FEE SERVICES**  
*(Available only to seniors (members and city residents) - Governed by the Department's Cost Recovery Policy (0-100% recovery))*

- Support Groups

**TRANSPORTATION**

- Rentals to community groups
- Call 'N Ride Program

**OUTREACH**

- Home Visits
- Visits to senior apartment complexes
- Wellness counselling
- Blood Pressure Screenings

**LIFETIME LEARNING**

- Recreation programs
- Hobby/Craft Classes
- Computer Classes
- Educational Programs
- Citizenship Classes
- Language Classes
- Driving Classes
- Trips

**WELLNESS**

- Exercise Classes
- Sports
- Health Services/Screenings
- Prevention
- Mental Health Lectures
- Support Groups
- Mobile Med

*Possible expansion into other community recreation centers*

HELD AT CENTER

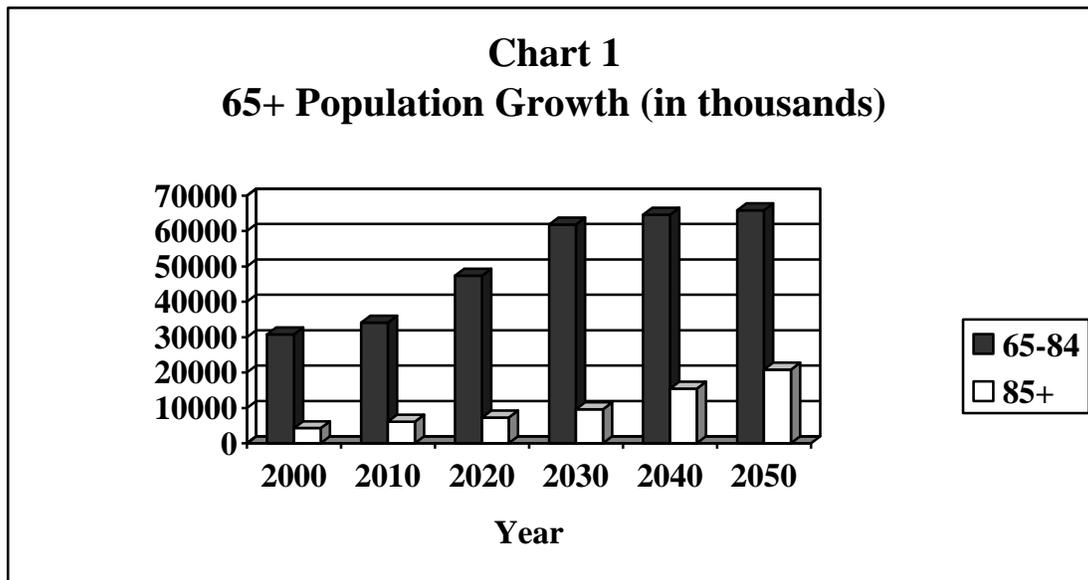
HELD IN COMMUNITY

### III. Factors Affecting Senior Services Planning

The Task Force identified and discussed many situations, trends and evolving issues that will affect the demand for programs and services for Rockville’s older population over the next ten to twenty years. These issues include aging in place, care giving, financial concerns, affordable housing, health care, transportation and more. Many of these factors are beyond the scope of the Task Force’s charter and some extend well beyond the City’s primary areas of responsibility. All of them will affect government services and programs across-the-board. Taken together, however, they provide a context for City planning and future program development. They require explicit consideration as program development and operational planning progress. As the level of government that is closest to the people, Rockville will be looked to as the major resource of services for its seniors, which, at a minimum, may mean making information available about where to turn next.

#### **Factor 1. Growth of the Over-60 Population**

As the nation’s mass media has amply documented, the “baby boom” generation - people born between 1946 and 1964 - began turning 60 this year. Beginning slowly at first, national population growth in the 65-84 age cohort will skyrocket between 2000 and 2020 and continue through 2030 before leveling off (see Chart 1). Overall, the over-65 U.S. population is expected to more than double (from 35.1 million to 71.5 million) between 2000 and 2030 (U.S. Census Bureau figures). Women will significantly outnumber men in both age groups throughout the period (56.5 percent to 43.5 percent in 2020). The fastest growing segment of this population is the over 85 year olds who are often referred to as the “old old”.



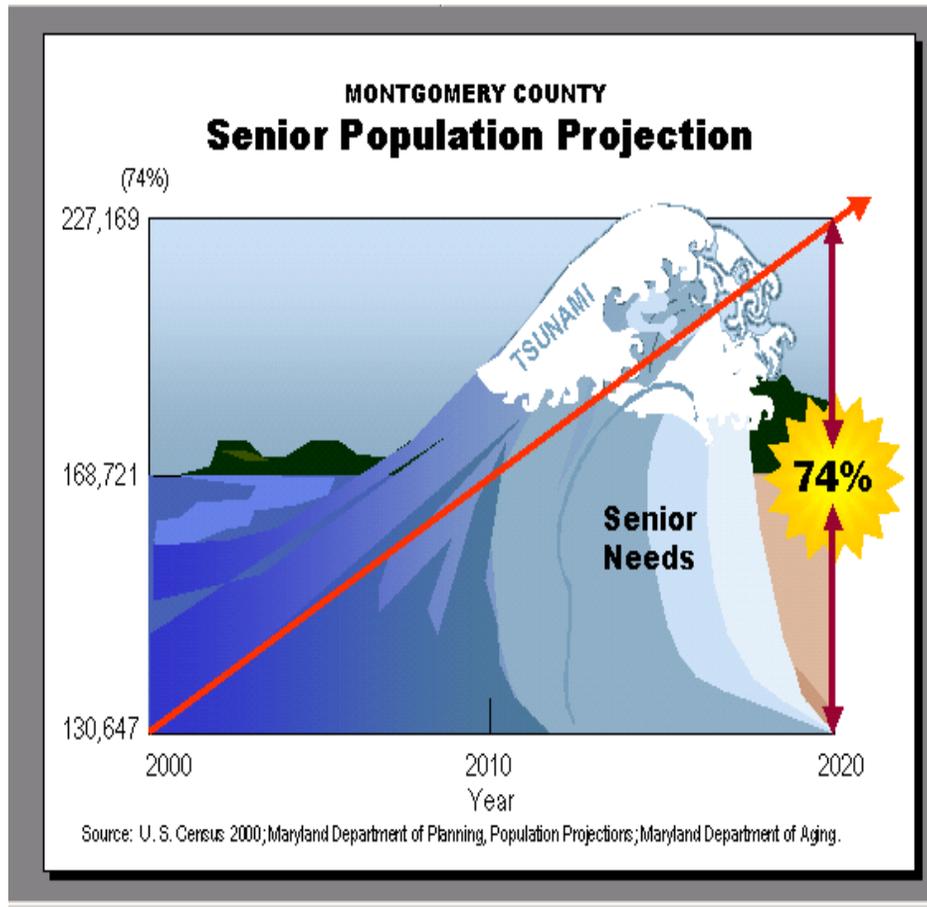
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004; U.S. Interim Projections by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin)

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

Montgomery County and the City of Rockville will experience similar growth. Between 2000 and 2020, the senior population of Montgomery County, 60 years and above, is expected to grow from 130,647 to 227,169 — a 74 percent increase. As Chart 2 indicates, community planners have referred to this as “the coming tsunami.”

**Chart 2**



Rockville’s senior population — 8,202 in 2003 — is projected to increase to more than 10,000 by 2010 and 15,000 by 2020, close to 100% including a 45% growth in the segment of the population 85 years of age and older.

Popular opinion suggests that during this period older people are expected to be living longer and healthier lives, and be better-educated and more productive than earlier generations. Nevertheless, the growth surge will severely test the ability of individuals, families, institutions and governments to provide the financial, medical, social and employment support that older people will need. In addition, a healthier older population that wishes to work later in life raises other issues, such as employment options, that must be addressed.

The services that the seniors of tomorrow will want and need are not uniform. The 2005 White House Conference on Aging emphasized “civic engagement,” such as employment opportunities for older workers, community involvement through volunteering and lifelong learning programs.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

The National Academy on an Aging Society puts ongoing social concerns and the new Baby Boom issues in the political context reflected by the White House Conference. They felt that the responsibility to provide senior services rested with local communities and the private sector rather than the Federal Government.

**Factor 2. The State of the Economy**

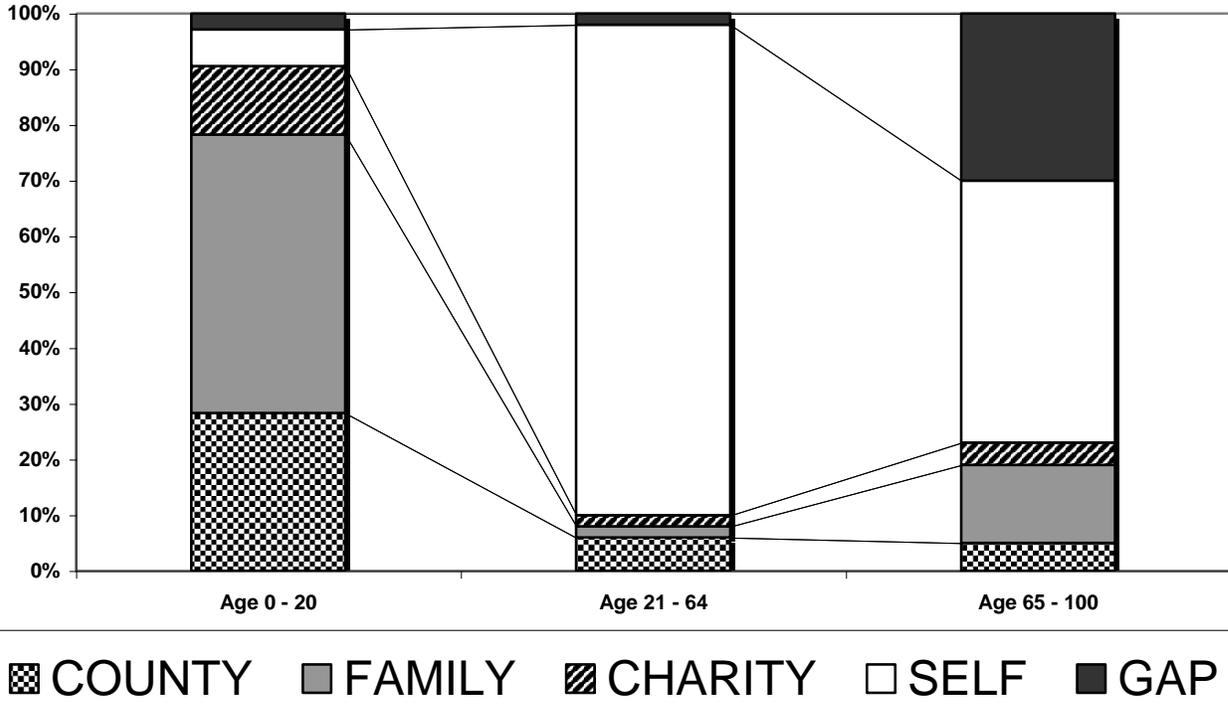
Economic conditions and trends are a second major factor affecting the planning for senior services. Economic well-being and personal financial stability are often cited as the primary concern for seniors across the Nation. Issues related to this concern abound, including:

- *Inflation and the cost-of-living.* For seniors living on low to moderate fixed incomes, inflation and the ever increasing cost-of-living are important indicators of quality of life. This is especially true in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, which is one of the five most expensive places to live in the U.S (Source: Runzheimer International 6/6/06).
- *Energy costs.* The increasingly high cost of all forms of energy has a disproportionate impact on seniors with fixed incomes and is likely to raise the cost of other services important to seniors as well (such as food, health care and transportation costs).
- *Social security.* Seniors nationwide are concerned about the future of the Social Security program and are intensely interested in the changes now being considered. For many, Social Security income is the foundation of retirement security.
- *Pension plans and savings.* Many private companies are eliminating lifetime pensions for workers, calling into question the future of traditional pension plans. For those who have made such investments, instability in the stock market can wreak havoc with 401(k) plans, and retirement saving rates for most baby boomers are far below what would be necessary to meet their retirement needs (Source: David Moore, Gallup News Service 4/22/03).

As Chart 3 shows, most seniors will not have sufficient personal resources to meet their basic living needs. The chart, developed in 2004 by the Grass Roots Organization for the Well-being of Seniors (GROWS), depicts the various sources of support to meet basic living needs for the typical person as he/she ages. The key finding is that from age 65 to 100 years of age, the gap in needed resources for maintaining Lifetime Basic Living Needs is 30% or more for seniors in Montgomery County. GROWS estimated that this gap represents close to \$1 billion currently and will continue to increase. City, County and State governments will feel increasing pressure to help seniors cope with this gap between basic living needs and income.

Chart 3

**SOURCES TO MEET LIFETIME BASIC LIVING NEEDS**



- *Employment.* Many newly emerging seniors who want or need to keep working beyond the traditional retirement age of 65 should not face age discrimination in seeking or maintaining employment. Health issues and other factors, however, may generate a need for alternatives to the standard 40-hour work week (flextime and flexplace, for example). For some seniors, transition-planning assistance will be important.
- *Affordable housing.* The vast majority of older people want to stay in the homes they have paid for and the communities where they have made their lives. Property tax increases, rising home insurance costs, increasing energy costs and the costs of home repair and modification may make this difficult to achieve financially. Moreover, some seniors may require support services (such as transportation, meals on wheels or in-home care) to continue living at home.

**Factor 3. Health Care**

Although health care is certainly an economic issue, it deserves recognition as a separate factor affecting the planning for senior services. Health care issues include:

- *Health care costs.* The nation’s overall health care costs are staggering. Expenditures in the United States on health care were nearly \$1.9 trillion in 2004, more than two and a half

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

times the \$717 billion spent in 1990, and more than seven times the \$255 billion spent in 1980. Over one-quarter of these costs are attributable to health care for the elderly. As a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), health care began to rise fairly rapidly after 2000 but leveled off in 2004 at about 16 percent. Per capita expenditures were \$6,280 in 2004. Health care employment has increased steadily since the early 1990s with 9.2 percent of all workers, or 12.3 million people, holding health care jobs in 2005 (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics).

- *The cost and availability of health care insurance.* Everyone needs and should have health care coverage. For seniors, this can be expensive, especially if long-term care is involved. Health insurance premiums increased an average of 9.2 percent in 2005. Moreover, health issues may also make coverage difficult to obtain at any cost. Companies with greater than 200 employees providing health care benefits to their retirees has dropped from 66% in 1988 to 33% in 2005 according to the Kaiser Family Foundation (July 11, 2006).
- *The cost of prescription drugs.* The average senior takes four prescription medications a day and many seniors struggle with the high cost. According to a recent AARP report, prescription drug costs rose almost 4 percent during the first quarter of 2006, the most since 2000 and equivalent to \$240 a year for the average user.
- *Medicare.* The Medicare program guarantees access to affordable health care for those over age 65. But it is expensive for taxpayers and often considered inefficient, subjecting it to constant executive and legislative branch review, criticism and increased annual costs for participants.
- *Access to health care.* In many areas of the country, access to any form of health care is an issue. Such is not the case in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, including Rockville, which has plentiful, excellent and easily accessible health care for those who can afford it.

#### **Factor 4. Quality of Life Issues**

Seniors want to maintain independence and remain active, with places to go and the means to get there. Non-financial issues that might potentially interfere with these goals include:

- *Transportation.* The daily commute in the Washington area can be a trying experience for anyone. As traffic congestion increases and parking becomes more of a challenge, seniors are presented with situations that can be difficult. Whether driving to work, seeing the doctor, shopping or just visiting with family and friends, seniors may need help and new options. The limited free County Ride-On service, Call 'N Ride taxi program and the Senior Center buses, are a tremendous service to seniors which should be continued.
- *Technology change.* Twenty-five years ago computers were unknown in most homes, videocassette recorders were just becoming popular, CDs and DVDs didn't exist, digital cameras hadn't been invented, cell phones were a rarity and nobody had ever heard of an iPod. The rapid pace of technological change is expected to continue. This can be a mixed blessing for seniors. Some changes can be difficult for seniors to master and result in

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

frustration. At the same time, technology can open up new worlds for seniors and make it easier for them to connect with family and friends, access community resources, and shop (via the internet, for example), perform everyday chores (as with robotic vacuum cleaners) and get around (by using “kneeling buses,” for example).

- *Government service trends.* Increased user fees to those who can afford them is often the only way to maintain or increase/improve services. However, some trends in government service provision could have a disproportionate effect on the over-60 population. Among these are budget reductions in response to fiscal stress, increased emphasis on performance measurement and budgeting-for-results, outsourcing and increased user charges. Efficiency and effectiveness in government operations are important for all citizens. However, it is important that they be accomplished without undue adverse effects on those who most depend on government programs and services.
- *Vital Living.* Seniors want to be recognized as a population who have and continue to contribute to the community. Seniors have paid the taxes and fees necessary for a vibrant community. They have also donated volunteer time and money for important services and causes. Seniors want to matter today and tomorrow.
- *Safety.* In addition to protecting oneself against crime, safety means living in a safe physical environment, including safe roadways and safe products.

#### **IV. Rockville's Current Senior Services Program**

The Department of Recreation and Parks is the lead organization for senior citizen services in the City of Rockville. The Department spent \$1,187,778 for senior services in FY2005 and \$1,152,347 in FY2006 a decrease of \$35,431, or about 3 percent. Revenues in FY2005 were \$227,793 and \$242,167 in FY2006 which accounted for 19% and 21% of the operating costs respectively. The net service delivery cost equates to about \$87 for each Rockville citizen over the age of 60 years (assumes 10,500 individuals over 60 years in Rockville – Source: City of Rockville Community Planning and Development Services Department estimate). In FY2007 the Division has a proposed net budget of \$1,088,953 or \$104 per person over the age of 60. Senior Services accounts for approximately 9 percent of the Department's budget. Senior programs are partially self-supporting through user charges and benefit from over 30,000 volunteer hours each year.

The budget provides for the operation of five cost centers:

1. Senior Center Operations;
2. Senior Citizen Social Services;
3. Senior Citizen Recreation;
4. Senior Citizen Sports And Fitness; and
5. Senior Assistance Fund.

The Senior Services Division's focal point is the 36,000 square foot Senior Center on Carnation Drive. The Center provides Rockville seniors with information, services and support. Programs and services include an ever-evolving mix of socialization, recreation, leisure, education, fitness, health and wellness opportunities. Free door-to-door transportation is provided to the Center for City residents. The Senior Assistance Fund provides financial assistance to residents who would otherwise not be able to afford to participate. The quarterly Rockville Recreation Guide regularly lists almost 100 programs and activities, including aquatic programs at the Rockville Municipal Swim Center, that are "just for seniors." This translates into over 400 separate programs, activities and classes a year. Approximately one quarter of all recreation program participants in FY2005 were over 60. By contrast, only 10 percent of participants were adults between the ages of 21 and 59.

Senior Center membership is available to Rockville residents over the age of 60 for a fee of \$25 per year (\$50 with fitness center membership). A limited number (225) of non-resident memberships are also available at a fee of \$125 (\$150 with fitness center membership). In FY 2004, the Center had 1,600 members – about twenty percent of all Rockville eligible seniors. Of these, 85 percent were City residents.

In addition to members, there are approximately 500 non-member seniors who participate in programs and services. Cost recovery policies established in 2004 have resulted in new or increased fees for services and facility rentals and reduced expenditures. Cost recovery targets of between 25 percent and 100 percent have been established for services for which individual beneficiaries can be identified. By current City policy, no fees are charged for transportation services or for social, wellness or outreach services to the community.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

Membership data provided by staff show that:

- The average age is 74, with almost half of the members being between the ages of 70 and 79.
- Two-thirds are female.
- The eligible age group using the Center the least, proportionately, is the 60-69-age cohort. About 53 percent of the eligible population is in this group, but only 28 percent of the membership.

## V. Program Benefits

Seniors of all descriptions benefit from the services the City provides through the Senior Services Division. Without this effort many Rockville seniors would face difficult barriers to maintaining their health and well-being and would be isolated in their homes and apartments. There would be no comparable facility in Rockville in which they could engage in social, fitness, and educational programs, and there would be no easy way for many of them to access the City facilities that serve their needs.

Seniors with other challenges in their lives receive benefits through referrals to supportive services. This support enables many to overcome limitations and maintain their independence.

For many Rockville seniors “aging in place” is not just a phrase or a dream, it is a reality. The resources of Rockville and the Senior Services Division make their later years a time of peace and community involvement. The City owes every senior the opportunity to lead a long and productive life.

Specific benefits resulting from City senior services programs include:

- Health services support
- Social and human interaction
- Transportation
- Intellectual stimulation
- Education programs
- Physical fitness and development
- Recreation
- Technology education and support
- Multi-cultural interactions
- Information and assistance.

By way of illustration, without a robust senior services delivery system in Rockville, the following activities would not occur:

- 23,000 hot meals shared by seniors;
- 5,600 health screenings and medical visits;
- 5,000 information and assistance requests;
- 4,000 senior participants in trips, classes, and senior clubs enriching their lives through recreational and lifetime learning activities;
- 40,000 supported senior transportation trips.

## **VI. Key Planning Assumptions for the Future**

The Task Force agreed that the following “key assumptions” should be used in planning for senior services between now and 2020.

- Sixty should be the earliest age used to define “senior” for planning purposes. Although lowering the eligible age to 55 would make it consistent with county senior centers, the Task Force decided to recommend leaving the age at 60 due to concerns about overcrowding and losing the “older adult” focus.
- The senior population of Rockville will reach 15,000 by 2020.
- Rockville will recognize and appreciate the contribution that its senior citizens have made to the City over the years and will continue to be a leader in offering programs and services for its senior population.
- Rockville is not alone in facing dynamic growth from its over-60 population and should not attempt to deal with it alone.
- The demand for senior-related programs and services will increase at least in proportion to the growth in population.
- The current level of services provided by the City will not be sufficient to meet the increased demand.
- The cost of senior transportation, which is critical to the Department’s support of seniors, will continue to grow and have a significant impact on the Senior Services Division.
- In addition to expanded services, new and different types of services will be required to meet the needs of the changing aging population.
- Increased resources, including staff, space, equipment and specialized contract assistance as well as funding and volunteer support, will be needed to meet the future demand.
- A larger percentage of the future budget for senior programs and services will come from increased cost recovery and new fees.
- Innovative financing approaches (such as naming rights and sponsorships) and better marketing can help to offset the increased cost of future programs and services.
- Increased funding from general City revenues will also be needed to identify, develop and test new programs and services, to provide information and assistance to a diverse population of seniors and to meet an increasing demand for social services.
- The Department of Recreation and Parks, Senior Services Division, will continue to be the lead agency for developing and delivering City services to seniors.

## VII. Recommended Goals and Strategy

The Task force believes that the City's overall goals for Senior Services should be:

- *To enable senior residents to “age in place” in their Rockville homes insofar as is possible.*
- *To coordinate senior-related City programs internally and interface them externally to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of services for seniors at reasonable cost.*
- *To offer an expanded menu of affordable programs, activities and services for seniors to meet the new and changing needs of a growing senior population.*
- *To provide or arrange services for seniors when needed to help meet basic life needs— food, clothing, shelter, health care, in-home care, transportation and social interaction.*

The preferred strategy for achieving these goals is to:

- Continue providing programs and services directly through the Department of Recreation and Parks using the Senior Center as the primary location.
- Rely on City staff as a core of knowledgeable, experienced providers, supplemented by volunteers and contract assistance as appropriate.
- Extend senior program and activity offerings to Rockville neighborhoods using other City facilities to improve access, ease space constraints and meet increased demand.
- Use new, improved or expanded marketing efforts to inform senior residents of City programs and services and determine their interests and needs.
- Fund recreation and fitness programs, as well as educational activities and trips, to an increasing extent through user charges and fees.
- Research, develop and test, with general fund monies, new programs and events.
- Coordinate senior-related programs in all City Departments and interface with County and State programs.

The issues and challenges embedded in this strategy and Task Force recommendations for implementing it are set forth on the following pages.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

The Task Force identified issues and challenges and developed recommendations that fell into the following broad categories:

- Fiscal challenges and resource needs,
- City policies,
- Facilities for senior programs and activities,
- Transportation,
- Management and technical support,
- Research and program design,
- Intra- and Inter-Governmental program coordination,
- Technology,
- Community education and awareness,
- Expanding volunteer support,
- Information dissemination,
- Program delivery,
- Cultural diversity.

Specific Task Force findings and recommendations in each of these areas are discussed in the remainder of this report.

### **1. Fiscal Challenges and Resource Needs**

#### The Issue:

Over the next fifteen years, the Rockville City Government will face the need for substantial increases in senior services funding. Growth in the over-60 population has already begun with a 124% increase over the past decade. Growth will occur regardless of how much funding is available from the City and will have to be accommodated somehow. It is assumed that most of Rockville's senior population growth will come from "aging in place" — people who are residents now — not from migration into the City from elsewhere. In addition, projected demographic changes include a major increase in the number of seniors to be served caused by the coming baby boomers as well as an increase of older citizens due to improved health, greater longevity, and commitment to Rockville. Out migration will also occur as seniors leave due to health and financial reasons.

Assuming that the scope of City services remains approximately the same and that the percentage of eligible seniors using those services remains steady (about twenty percent), the policy issue facing the City is what is the "fair share" of City revenues that should be allocated to senior services. If the senior population doubles by 2020 and the above assumptions are true, then the funding will also need to double over the same period of time just to maintain the current services level.

The Task Force believes that the City of Rockville should be in an excellent position to fund Senior Services at today's budget level for the foreseeable future. There has been a large increase in tax revenue over the past five years (12.7 percent in FY2006) due to increasing

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

property development and property values, and it is hoped the City's share of State income taxes is estimated to continue for at least for the next three years.

In FY2007, the City of Rockville plans to spend approximately \$104 per capita for each person over-60 or approximately \$540 per year for those who use the programs and services offered by the Senior Services Division. This number was provided to the Task Force for budgeting purposes – it is difficult to determine the actual number of people who use the services. The Task Force believes that this is a reasonable amount for current services and that this level be maintained as a baseline for future planning and budgeting. Community input suggests that raising taxes to meet the needs of an expanded senior population would be controversial. In the final analysis, some combination of tax-supported services, fee-based programs and outside financial support will be needed to meet the demand. The proportions of each need not be fixed and can change based on needs of the over-60 population.

The Task Force recommendations in this area (see below) propose a variety of approaches to enhancing revenues for senior citizen programs and services. The Task Force acknowledges that the City cannot and should not fund all of these efforts alone. But it also strongly believes that Rockville's seniors deserve a policy and budget commitment to meet their expanding and evolving needs. Most City seniors have lived and worked in Rockville for years, paying property taxes, contributing to the local economy and providing countless hours of community service. They expect the City government to continue to be there for them as they grow older and develop new needs. The Task Force recognizes that City officials continually face difficult funding priorities.

Rockville Seniors, Inc. (RSI) was created in 1982. One of its major functions is to be the "financial enabler" of the Rockville Senior Center. Over the years RSI has raised more than a million dollars to enhance the programs, services and facility for Rockville's seniors through efforts such as semi-annual bazaars, operations of gift and thrift shops, and holding a weekly Bingo. In addition, RSI has been the recipient of thousands of dollars in donations through their Living Legacy Campaign and Memorial Fund. As a non-profit organization, they are able to apply for grants which is a tremendous benefit to the Division's operations.

Recommendations:

The Task Force recommends that immediate steps be taken to address the issue of future fiscal resources for senior programs. Specifically:

- 1.1 Membership dues should be adjusted every three years to account for inflation and also to reflect the cost of enhanced programs and services. In addition, variable membership fees should be set for different age groups. The Task Force recommends:

	<b>Resident</b> (\$25 now)	<b><u>Non-Resident</u></b> (\$125 now)
• Age 60-69 (28.2% of members)	\$35	\$125
• Age 70-79 (47.5% of members)	\$30	\$100
• Age 80+ (24.2% of members)	\$25	\$75

---

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

These recommendations recognize that income usually declines with age (according to the GROWS study referenced earlier); that members have a higher level of commitment to the Center and its programs than non-members; that non-residents do not pay Rockville taxes; and that senior services are for seniors, not for everyone.

- 1.2 Non-resident/non-members should be allowed to participate in programs and activities to help offset costs, provided that individuals are at least 60 years of age; that they pay a premium fee; and that current members and residents have preference. The recommended fee scale is:
  - 100 % for Senior Center Members
  - 125 % for Non-member residents
  - 150 % for Non-resident non-members
  
- 1.3 The Division should continue to pursue its cost recovery targets. The Task Force believes that seniors understand that fees make activities possible. Programs and services could be subjected to reasonable market tests. The Division should also identify which programs and services could benefit from new or revised user charges.
  
- 1.4 The Division of Senior Services should continue to develop and analyze options for budgeting for meeting future senior service needs and requirements. The study should consider per capita budgeting, indexing a percentage of the City budget to the senior population, budgeting for inflation and other important cost factors. The study should also:
  - a. Identify potential sources of non-City funding or assistance, including County, State and Federal Government programs; private foundations; business organizations or groups; and community, civic, and faith-based sources.
  - b. Explicitly include non-traditional and innovative approaches in the mix of options considered. These might include:
    - i. Facility naming rights;
    - ii. Commercial program/activity sponsorship;
    - iii. Paid advertising in the Recreation Guide, on the Senior Center buses and in the monthly senior newsletter.
  - c. Identify other government programs and policies— comparable U.S. cities, Montgomery County, other counties and the State — to meet the coming growth in demand for senior services. The study should investigate whether there are any national guidelines for budgeting for various types of senior-related services programs and should highlight “best practices” in senior service delivery.
  
- 1.5 Recognizing the need for new future revenues, Division staff should work with Rockville Seniors, Incorporated (RSI) to identify and pursue new sources of funds, grant opportunities, marketing strategies and ways to increase membership.

## **2. City Policies Regarding Senior Services**

### The Issue:

This Task Force report sets forth numerous recommendations regarding the direction of senior services in the City of Rockville. The Mayor and Council's response will guide the planning, implementation, and funding of these recommendations. Explicit policy guidance is important in facilitating their acceptance, will provide a framework for program development and implementation, and would communicate to all segments of the community that the City is aware of the challenges at the highest levels and intends to meet them.

### Recommendations:

- 2.1 The Task Force recommends that the Mayor and Council adopt an official policy designating the City of Rockville a "senior friendly community." For the past twenty years, Rockville has been a leader among cities in supporting its senior community. Many local governments are formally adopting policies that recognize the value of seniors to their community and promote opportunities for seniors to contribute and thrive throughout their lifetimes. These policies include community-based strategic planning, housing, healthcare, transportation, economic development, and social and recreation services. With the coming growth of the Rockville senior population, the Task Force believes it would be most appropriate to codify Rockville's support for its seniors with an official declaration.
- 2.2 The Division's budget funds services to all seniors, however, approximately 20% are active participants in programs or take advantage of services at the Senior Center. The Task Force recommends the City continue to budget for a 20% participation rate at the Center and in the community. The Task Force recognizes that maintaining this level of service will represent a significant increase in the number of people served as the senior population increases.
- 2.3 The Task Force recommends that the Mayor and Council, after reviewing this report, formulate specific policy guidance and direction that can be used by all City Departments to plan, budget for, and manage programs and services that affect senior residents.

## **3. Facilities for Senior Programs and Activities**

### The Issue:

Rockville residents are fortunate to have a dedicated facility available for senior programs and activities, including a popular Fitness Center and computer lab. The Task Force understands that the capacity of the facility is generally adequate for the types of programs and services being conducted there. The Task Force is concerned that future growth of the over-60 population could quickly cause the facility to become stressed.

Ensuring adequate facilities for an expanding and increasingly diverse senior population is another challenge the City will face in the coming decades. The Task Force urges the Mayor and

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

Council to apply the same foresight demonstrated in establishing the Center to planning for its future upkeep and expansion as demand for programs and services increases with the senior population.

Recommendations:

- 3.1 The Task Force recommends the continued support for the Department’s Senior Center Master Plan that is part of the City’s Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). The plan should continue to:
- Identify projected use levels by program type in five-year increments
  - Review and analyze facility options at various usage levels, including:
    - Shifting programs from one location to another to meet special needs, such as culture-specific programs and community offerings.
    - Assessing availability of outside facilities that could be used for City programs (such as county schools and private facilities).
    - Consideration of “lease versus buy” options for facility expansion.
- 3.2 Address demand for evening/weekend programs by expanding Center operating hours as required as younger seniors may require programs and services other than during regular operating hours.

**4. Transportation Challenges**

The Issue:

Transportation, according to all the various senior sources, is a critical concern for seniors, especially those seniors who no longer drive or those with special needs. Seniors age differently with some able to drive into their nineties while others need accessible and affordable transportation sooner.

The Beverly Foundation of Pasadena, California, which specializes in senior transportation, expressed the challenge in this way:

“Those working in transportation and aging need to know if the options that are available actually meet the special needs of older adults, especially the “old old”. These older adults often need special care and support in getting to the essentials in life such as medical care, social services and food shopping. At the same time, there is a growing recognition that there is more to life than going to the doctor or the pharmacy. Getting to the non-essentials such as the education program, the volunteer activity or the hairdresser can be just as important and also can require special care and support. However, it is not a quantity versus quality of life argument, for both are important”.

The Beverly Foundation, in 2000, developed “The Five A’s of Senior Friendly Transportation”:

- Availability
- Accessibility

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Acceptability
- Affordability
- Adaptability

The City of Rockville provides an excellent door-to-door senior bus service for those seniors who require supportive transportation to the Senior Center. Seniors living in high-rise apartment buildings are offered twice weekly local shopping trips. All seniors are eligible to purchase taxi coupons at a reduced cost, based on income and family size. On the other hand, the City does not provide shopping bus services to those in private homes nor does it provide escorted transportation services. Escorted transportation service is for older adults who require transportation and an escort to and from medical or dental appointments. The person needing service is picked up at his/her home, accompanied to the medical office, and driven home at the end of the appointment.

The costs to the City to provide these critical transportation services continue to escalate and will provide a future budget challenge for the City.

Montgomery County has a good senior transportation support system that augments the WMATA metro-wide system. However, the County is considering reducing the Ride-On bus service to the Rockville Senior Center, which could limit access to the Center for some Rockville seniors or Center members living outside City limits.

Recommendations:

- 4.1 Implement a minimal fee system for the Senior Bus service. Input should be gathered from bus riders before a fee is determined.
- 4.2 Consider expanding the transportation options for seniors (e.g., escorted transportation and shopping from private residences).
- 4.3 Work with County and WMATA to search for other senior supportive transportation options.
- 4.4 Advertise on the senior buses.
- 4.5 Seek donations from community and/or bus riders.

**5. Management & Technical Personnel to Support Senior Programs**

The Issue:

The Task Force is impressed with the dedication, skills and abilities of the staff of the Senior Services Division. But planning, administering and delivering programs and services to Rockville's current senior population occupies the majority of their time and attention. The Task Force believes it is highly unlikely that the needs of an increased senior population can be adequately served without increasing resources. Moreover, the current staff has limited capacity (in terms of work hours) to devote to new program development, research, pursuing creative funding opportunities and other managerial and administrative activities for future planning.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

Similarly, staff will continue to require new knowledge, skills and abilities beyond those currently available.

Recommendations:

- 5.1 The Task Force recommends: (1) that the City give serious consideration to expanding the resources of the Senior Services Division; and (2) that the Division allocate resources to identifying new managerial and technical skills that will be needed to meet future demands for programs and services and develop a plan for acquiring those skills — whether by staff expansion, contract, training or volunteerism.

The size, nature and direction of future staffing requirements will depend, at least in part, on the actions taken as a result of the Task Force’s recommendations and subsequent City decisions. The Task Force believes that future staff expansion need not necessarily come from general revenues. In fact, user charges and fees might be more than sufficient to sustain staff expansion after an initial “seed money” period. Another source of funding for new staff could be grants and contributions to senior programs from outside sources. Volunteerism (see section 10, below) also offers significant potential for increasing staff support, including assistance of a specialized nature. Contracting for specific projects and services also should not be overlooked as an option.

- 5.2 The Task Force recommends that the Department give high priority to:
- Acquiring additional staff for “off budget” fund raising, including preparing grant proposals and developing cooperative arrangements with County, State and Federal organizations, private foundations and business organizations.
  - Ensuring resources are available for professional development and training to make certain that the staff members are afforded the opportunity to become or remain current in a rapidly evolving professional occupation.

**6. Research and Program Design Capabilities for Senior-Related Programs and Services**

The Issue:

As stated in the forgoing recommendations, the Task Force identified a priority need to acquire staff capability to conduct research studies, design and plan program changes, and develop new and expanded programs and services. With the current staff occupied with operational responsibilities, redirecting staff time to these activities would take away from meeting current day-to-day needs of the Center. In lieu of additional staff, consulting support could provide the needed effort.

Many of the challenges facing the Division of Senior Services are related to the scope and direction of future work — designing and developing new programs and activities to meet new needs — not to operating current programs effectively and efficiently. Ensuring that the work evolves in directions that are both useful and appropriate will require an ongoing program of research and studies leading first to strategic directions and then to specific implementation plans. Opportunities abound. The challenge is to select the best from among what is available,

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

eliminate what is not needed, explore creative funding and implement directions effectively and efficiently. It is unlikely that this will “just happen” without deliberate and dedicated effort.

Recommendations:

6.1 The Task Force recommends that the Department of Recreation and Parks establish a research and development program to design new and expanded programs and activities as well as evaluate existing services for Rockville senior residents. At a minimum, contract funds should be devoted to carrying out high priority research studies and identifying new and expanded programs with a high potential for success. When available, new staff should be allocated to research and design studies. The Department should explore whether this effort can be fully or partially funded by acquiring staff that can also attract grant funds for the work.

**7. Intra- and Inter-Governmental Program Coordination**

The Issue:

It is also clear that “senior concerns” are a major cross-cutting issue for many other City functions, including transportation, licenses and permits, police and public safety, information and technology and public works. Even within the Department of Recreation and Parks, many activities for seniors are delivered outside the Senior Center (at the Municipal Swim Center and Rockville community centers, for example). Moreover, the County and State also operate substantive programs of significant interest to Rockville senior citizens. Without asserting that there is a problem now, the Task Force believes that future growth of the senior population will require a substantially greater coordination effort. It is imperative that senior needs and concerns receive active and systematic consideration in the planning and delivery of all City services and that City efforts be adequately interfaced with those of other levels of Government. As an incorporated City, Rockville is the place that seniors will naturally turn to first for services, opportunities, assistance or problem solving.

Recommendations:

- 7.1 The Task Force recommends that the Mayor and Council adopt a policy stating explicitly that it expects City programs to be internally coordinated and adequately interfaced with related county, state and federal programs.
- 7.2 The Task Force recommends that the City take the following actions to increase and improve internal coordination and external interfacing of senior-related programs and activities:
- Naming a “senior coordinator” in relevant City Departments to be responsible for liaison on senior issues and creating a “senior council” of these coordinators to conduct joint planning and budgeting for appropriate projects and resolve issues.
  - Designate a City liaison to interface actively with County, State and Federal agencies on senior issues and ensure policy consistency and regular review of issues and programs (also see section 8, below).

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Producing an annual City “senior report” focusing on demographic trends, senior programs and City activities. The report would highlight what’s going on, what’s new, what’s being done and who’s using what facilities and programs.

**8. Technology Beneficial to Seniors**

The Issue:

A very important challenge facing the City’s senior programs and activities is identifying and using technology beneficial to seniors. Rapid technological change is a fact of life. Seniors are at least as affected by technological change as the rest of the population, and maybe even more so. They may have more difficulty adjusting and coping. Electronic voting is just one example. New and potentially beneficial technology is emerging every day: robotic vacuum cleaners, digital cameras, DVD’s, traffic control systems, kneeling buses, online shopping and numerous other examples.

Recommendations:

- 8.1 Continue to provide technology classes and workshops to ensure seniors are aware of, and able to use, equipment that will improve their quality of life.
- 8.2 The Division should explore ways in which local high schools or Montgomery College students could be encouraged to participate in work/volunteer programs relating to technology beneficial to seniors. Emphasizing technological approaches to the challenges facing seniors may also be a productive way to attract more volunteer time from young people. Many young people have significant technical knowledge. Using this knowledge and the abilities and desire of younger people to volunteer might be an inexpensive (or even free) way to keep up-to-date on important and beneficial technological developments.

**9. Community Education and Awareness of Senior Services**

The Issue:

An important challenge facing the Rockville Senior Center is residents’ awareness of the programs, activities and services it offers. Many residents appear to know about the Center and even its general location, but are unaware of the scope of the Center’s programs and services. Some citizens surveyed also were confused about the Center’s mission, thinking that the Center is a social services organization catering only to the very elderly and infirm. A prevalent attitude among many eligible residents is “I’m not ready for that place yet.”

The issue of “marketing the Center” came up in one form or another at every meeting of the Task Force. The predominant view of Task Force members was that the Center has developed a varied and valuable program and that the Center staff does an excellent job in operating the program. But the Task Force also believes that information about the Center is not being packaged and communicated to the full range of its potential and to all intended users. This is

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

not a criticism of the Center's staff. They undertake many marketing activities including flyers, brochures, surveys, and newspaper articles.

One specific issue appears to be the need to focus better on the information that a growing senior population might want or need and how that information can be provided most effectively. The Task Force believes it is critical to discuss information needs with Rockville seniors on an ongoing basis and develop plans to meet those needs. City communications should also stress that its services for seniors go beyond the programs and activities of the Senior Center.

Recommendations:

- 9.1 The Task force believes that its report to the Mayor and Council and the attendant publicity surrounding it will provide an opportunity for the City to deal with these challenges. The Task Force recommends that the Department of Recreation and Parks develop a "communications and marketing plan" for senior programs, activities and services which can be monitored, evaluated and revised periodically (perhaps every three years). The plan should identify and focus on the kind of information seniors might want and need and how they will be most likely to access such information. The Task Force also encourages the Senior Commission to bring seniors in to discuss senior needs on an on-going basis.

Technology offers the potential for relatively inexpensive distribution of very large quantities of information, such as using the City website, a ListServ for seniors and the City Cable Channel. Expanded use of *Rockville Reports* is another method that should be considered – perhaps a column dedicated to information for seniors in every issue. The Rockville Gazette and community newsletters and bulletins should be used to reach the target populations. Additionally, the Department should work to increase communications with the senior population through local clubs, community organizations and faith-based establishments.

**10. Volunteer Support for Senior Services**

The Issue:

A *City staff Issue Paper* dated March 2005 cites a decline in volunteerism as being one of the challenges the Division faces. Research indicates that the decline is part of a national trend, attributable in part to the delay in retirement and the return of women in the workforce. According to the *Chronicles of Philanthropy*, June 9, 2005 in an article entitled, *Tapping Older Volunteers*, men are more likely to volunteer than women, although women between the ages of thirty-to-fifty are the largest single group of volunteers in the population. On average 41 percent of those 60 years and over volunteer at least once a year; older volunteers average more than one day a week, 3½ hours per day; and older volunteers would give more time if asked.

Studies also suggest that meaningful activity through volunteering can contribute substantially to an older person's ability to age successfully. There is wide diversity within and across cultural groups, but people interested in senior activities are among the most likely to volunteer (as are people with higher educations, those with higher incomes

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

and those with recreational interests). Civic organizations are among the organizations most likely to attract volunteers. In short, the Rockville Senior Center is well positioned to attract more volunteer activity.

The advantages of making an effort to attract more volunteers, especially from among the older adult population, include: (1) bringing experience, knowledge and skills gained from decades of employment and experience to the organization; (2) reducing the cost of providing programs, activities and services; (3) providing a meaningful and satisfying experience for the volunteer – making a beneficial contribution. Nationally, barriers to increased use often involve: (1) the lack of staff to attract and manage volunteers (especially a “volunteer coordinator”); (2) failure to make locating and using volunteers on a systematic basis a priority for the organization; (3) a lack of processes to retain and recognize volunteers, who want to be used productively and have their contributions recognized. Luckily these barriers are not as much a factor in Rockville as the Center has a Volunteer Coordinator as well as staff and Rockville Seniors, Inc. who recruit, monitor, recognize and reward volunteers. In May 2006 three hundred volunteers were recognized for over thirty thousand hours of volunteer time in the past year. Annually a “Volunteer of the Year” is selected and given a \$100.00 cash prize and a local business is selected to receive the Corporate Appreciation Award.

A growing number of nonprofit groups are recruiting people to perform volunteer services online. People who volunteer online often perform tasks normally done by staff, including grant proposal writing, marketing and event planning. Online volunteering requires no equipment or office space and allows people to volunteer who have trouble getting out of their homes or who wish to work at odd hours. The challenge is to ensure adequate communications so that both the organization and the volunteer have similar expectations.

Although the Center has more than 300 volunteers, the Task Force believes that there may be a significant reservoir of untapped volunteer potential in Rockville. Newly retired individuals may be looking for volunteer opportunities. High school and college students may be looking for community service hours. Faith-based and community groups may also welcome expanded volunteer opportunities.

Recommendations:

- 10.1 The Task Force recommends the Center continue to recruit and reward volunteers, as well as, ensure their volunteer experience is satisfying. The Volunteer Coordinator should broaden the search for volunteers to encompass all ages and area of residence.
- 10.2 The staff should solicit or develop a list of volunteer opportunities from all City Departments and update it regularly. The volunteer coordinator should provide “match making” and keep records.

## **11. Information and Opportunities Clearinghouse for Seniors**

### The Issue:

With the growing number of seniors and with the senior population having increasingly diverse needs and interests, it will become an increasingly difficult challenge to assist seniors in locating appropriate programs, services and opportunities in which they are interested. Providing personalized service for the large number of seniors looking for information can entail prohibitive cost and staffing levels, but the demand will still exist. The Task Force believes technological solutions might be available to help with this challenge and meet the demands.

Research also suggests that a growing number of people over the age of 60 will want to continue working in some capacity, although not necessarily by commuting daily to a nine-to-five job that they have had for decades. Instead, they will be looking for new and different ways to stay useful and productive. As already noted, one way to do this is by volunteering. Other ways involve transitioning to new and different types of employment. The Task Force believes it will be in the City's best interest to seriously consider expanding its role in helping seniors to make this transition.

Currently, the Division participates in some resource databases including AARP's Benefits Checkup, and telephone outreach including Spanish and Chinese. In addition, the Division refers seniors to the County's Over 60 Counseling and Employment Service.

### Recommendations:

- 11.1 The Task Force recommends that the Division promote its library of information housed at the Senior Center. This would facilitate the Senior Center to become more known as the place to call for assistance.
- 11.2 The Task Force recommends that the City investigate the possibility of closer ties with the Maryland Senior Job Bank that catalogs and refers interested seniors to volunteer opportunities, paid employment opportunities for seniors and provides seniors with information about how to locate other employment opportunities. For those seniors without computers, access points and assistance could be provided at the Senior Center, Recreation community Centers, City Hall, libraries and private facilities (churches, assisted living facilities, etc.). The Task Force suggests the City explore the possibility of obtaining grant funding for such a project.
- 11.3 The Task Force recommends that the City investigate the need for and benefits of providing a structured program of information, services and advice for transitioning seniors. The City currently offers retirement planning seminars. However, more extensive fee-based services might be added to the program to cover needs such as financial planning, résumé preparation, education planning, legal services, and business establishment.
- 11.4 The Task Force supports the Senior Commission's developing concept for providing in-home support to seniors who need basic household assistance such as cutting grass, snow removal, minor repairs and other needs.

## **12. Cultural Diversity in Senior Programs**

### The Issue:

In a few years time, the Washington region is expected to become a "majority minority" community. Rockville has a growing population of ethnic groups, many having individuals with limited or no English language skills. Ideally, these populations would be participating in programs and activities for seniors and utilizing senior services roughly in proportion to their share of the overall population. Informal statistics indicate this is not yet the case.

### Recommendation:

12.1 The Task Force recommends that the Department of Recreation and Parks develop a phased plan and program for encouraging expanded participation in senior activities by groups now under-represented. This will involve conducting research to identify reasons for the under-usage and what might change the usage pattern. The Department should promote awareness in ethnic communities of its desire for community input, emphasizing its interest in providing meaningful and socially conscious services to the entire population. It should also attempt to connect with ethnic communities by holding informational events and by actively pursuing ethnic representation.

## **IX. Conclusions**

The City has an excellent senior services program, which operates out of a multi-functional facility with a competent and dedicated staff. Its many programs, activities and services are far ranging and varied. Many are self-supporting or nearly so. Few localities in Maryland and Montgomery County, in the Task Force's opinion, are similarly positioned.

The City of Rockville, however, will experience major increases in senior citizens, 60 years and older, between now and the year 2020. Estimates for the City are for a 100% increase in its senior population. The impact of this growth on the City, its residents' quality of life and its programs and budget will be quickly apparent. The Task Force commends the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Senior Commission, and Rockville Seniors, Inc. for recognizing the need to begin preparations.

The tsunami is coming. The change provides both challenges and opportunities for the City of Rockville. The Task Force has identified a set of challenges that it believes will require high priority attention by the Mayor and Council, the Department of Recreation and Parks and the Division of Senior Services in the next few years. The Task Force is appreciative of the City's long-standing support for its senior citizens and is pleased to present its findings and recommendations for further consideration.

## **Appendix #1**

### **Identification of Challenges Facing Rockville Seniors**

#### **ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY TASK FORCE**

- Advocacy
- Aging in Place
- Caregivers
- Day Care
- Diversity
- Emergency Assistance
- Employment
- Facilities
- Financial
- Health Care
- Housing
- Information and Referral
- Intergenerational
- Legal
- Parking
- Physical Support
- Regulations
- Relocation
- Societal Attitudes
- Technology
- Transportation
- Volunteerism
- Wellness

#### **ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY STAFF MARCH 2005**

- Affordability of Programs & Services
- Alternative Sources of Revenue
- Capital Improvement Costs
- Cost of Membership
- Cost Recovery Policy Established by Mayor and Council
- Cost to Provide Senior Services
- Diversity
- Frail Elderly Living Longer
- Fundraising
- Housing
- Increasing Senior Population
- Marketing
- Transportation
- Utility Costs at Center Increasing
- Volunteerism
- Wellness

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

Topic Area	Challenge Facing Seniors	Comments
Advocacy	Having a political voice – get adequate representation	Senior Commission role
Aging in Place	Congregate meals / groups eating together	Provided at Senior Center, senior clubs, senior buildings
	Aging in place – how to deal with all aspects of aging	Senior Center plays a referral role
	Maintaining community involvement – (Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities) NORC's	Senior Center plays an education role  If know about isolated seniors they will provide assistance
	Don't forget institutionalized / homebound	Senior Center plays an education role  If know about isolated seniors they will provide assistance
	Encourage group housing – granny flats, roommates, shared housing	Senior Commission role
Caregivers	Support groups for caregivers – education on coping	County, state and federal responsibility
	Case management	
	Out migration impact on family caregivers	Senior center refers people to support groups, but not directly involved in training or advocacy
	Community service workers – getting more utilization from them	
	Must provide training / certification for caregivers	
	Lobby for more \$ for caregivers / professional level caregivers	
	Lobby Mont College to include training for caregivers in curriculum	
Day Care	Day care facilities / Alzheimer's facilities (support group caregivers)	Senior Center provides referral information

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

Topic Area	Challenge Facing Seniors	Comments
Diversity	Language barriers / multi-cultural integration / ESOL classes	Task Force to examine this issue
	Diversity – reaching a diverse community	<p>Senior Center provides English classes, citizenship classes, Outreach Workers</p> <p>Senior Center translates all rules and important signage into Chinese and Spanish</p> <p>Senior Center celebrates cultural programs such as Chinese New Year, Hispanic Heritage Month, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah</p>
Emergency Assistance	Emergency assistance / emergency preparedness, snowstorms, etc., checking to see if ok	<p>Senior Center plays an education role</p> <p>If know about isolated seniors they will provide assistance</p>
Employment	Stipend opportunities	Senior Aide Program does this
	Find and keep senior employment / employment services	JCA, Over 60 Employment Program does this
	Age discrimination in employment	Senior Center does not deal with this
Facilities	Overgrowth of Senior Center – sufficient facilities & support	Issue for Task Force to Consider
	How to use other facilities more	

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

Topic Area	Challenge Facing Seniors	Comments
Financial	Property tax / utility costs – fixed rates for seniors	Senior Commission role
	How are we going to finance senior services?	Issue for Task Force to Consider
	Income stability / pensions, 401's, etc.	Programs on financial planning offered at Senior Center
	Maintaining current services with some kind of reasonable charge	Issue for Task Force to Consider
	Support for utilities / all energy costs	Mo. Co. has programs
	Affordability – as Rockville becomes upscale, will we be able to afford living here	Senior Commission role  Mayor and Council should keep in mind seniors
	Rising property assessments & taxes	Mayor and Council should keep in mind seniors
	Medical insurance costs & complexity	Federal Government  We provide seminars on how to navigate medical system, refer to American Medical Society, Staff are trained to assist with forms
Service fees	Mayor and Council should keep in mind seniors	
Health Care	Affordable health care – long-term care, primary physician, medication	Senior Commission role, refer to American Medical Society
Housing	Affordable housing	Senior Commission role
	Intergenerational contacts – building networks & support systems	Senior Center can expand programming, educational role  Need to expand marketing related to services offered

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

Topic Area	Challenge Facing Seniors	Comments
Legal	Method of tracking legal issues as they arise	Programs on legal issues offered at Senior Center  Lawyer comes monthly to prepare wills for free
Parking	Parking – paying for parking - issue at Senior Center	Forty new parking spaces in FY2007 budget  Paying for parking - Mayor and Council should keep in mind seniors
Physical Support	Physical support / service support (snow shoveling, chore services, routine services)	County does this  Senior Center assists with snow shovellers
Regulations	Getting thru the permit process Regulatory issues affecting seniors	Mayor and Council should keep in mind seniors
Relocation	Adjustment to relocating	Programs on downsizing, moving, etc. offered at Senior Center
Societal attitudes	Societal attitudes re: seniors 'Ageism'	Senior Center can play role in promoting positive aspects of aging
	Improve communication between age groups / generations	Senior Center can play role in promoting positive aspects of aging
Technology	Pace of technology changes (impact)	Programs on technology (digital cameras, computers, etc.) offered at Senior Center

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

Topic Area	Challenge Facing Seniors	Comments
Transportation	Transportation / pedestrian safety	Senior Center provides bus service to/from center, shopping
	Expand transportation - intra-network of movement	
	Seniors who no longer drive - adjustment, loss of independence, inability to get places, doctors appts.	Senior Center proves taxi coupons (County does too)  Senior Center provides driving education programs such as AARP and Seniors on the MOVE
	Better access to Ride-On buses / better transportation routes	Metro Access does this
Volunteerism	Volunteer matching services / volunteer placement / volunteer recognition / appreciation	Mo. Co has Volunteer Bureau
	Seniors as a resource	Senior Center uses 300+ volunteers per year
Wellness	Nutrition support – resources – ‘Meals on Wheels’ – use & access	Senior Center refers to private MOW provider
	Wellness programs with emphasis on prevention	Senior Center offers many health and wellness programs, screenings, etc.
	Wellness programs (i.e.) blood pressure screenings, flu shots, pneumonia shots	
	Socialization / isolation (spouses, friends, no longer drive)	Outreach Workers visit homebound seniors
	Emotional and mental health issues – depression, dementia, loss of self esteem	Refer to Mo. Co. Sante Group
	Change – how to deal with major change issues (death of spouse, respite care, grief counseling, bereavement leave if employed)	Senior Center plays an education role
	Grief counseling – support for surviving spouse – when other is institutionalized	
	Challenge of life-long learning – staying mentally engaged thru education/recreation	If know about isolated seniors they will provide assistance
	Physical challenges, loss of senses, more hospitalization diseases, etc.	

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

Topic Area	Challenge Facing Seniors	Comments
Who provides what services	Awareness of City vs. County services – clarification of who provides what	Senior Center should be the one place people automatically call when have a question regarding senior issues – need more marketing and promotion to make people aware of our programs and services and the knowledge base we have on site
	Central location for information & assistance – include cultural, faith-based, ethnic	
	Resource base of services	
	Awareness / education of senior programs	
	Getting info & processing it – how seniors get and understand info	
	Resources out to ‘pre’ seniors – let them know what is available	
	Assistance with having people who need problems solved / questions	
	Combination of social services for all ages	
		Need to promote focal point idea for Senior Center
		Center staff can refer people to appropriate agency

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

**APPENDIX 2: SENIOR SERVICES DIVISION BUDGET HISTORY FY2001-FY2007**

		<b>ACTUAL FY2001</b>			
		<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>% Recovery</b>
4041/40IN	Senior Center Management	\$ 293,535.00	\$ 239,295.00		22%
4043/41IN	Senior Social Services	\$ 427,129.00	included above		
4045/42IN	Senior Recreation	\$ 180,917.00	included above		
4047/43IN	Senior Sports and Exercise	\$ 168,659.00	included above		
<b>TOTAL SENIOR SERVICES DIVISION</b>		<b>\$ 1,070,240.00</b>	<b>\$ 239,295.00</b>	<b>\$ 830,945.00</b>	<b>22%</b>
		<b>ACTUAL FY2002</b>			
		<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>Total Revenues</b>		<b>% Recovery</b>
4041/40IN	Senior Center Management	\$ 325,445.00	\$ 77,943.00		24%
4043/41IN	Senior Social Services	\$ 435,799.00	\$ 35,378.00		8%
4045/42IN	Senior Recreation	\$ 185,671.00	\$ 47,700.00		26%
4047/43IN	Senior Sports and Exercise	\$ 173,122.00	\$ 66,405.00		38%
<b>TOTAL SENIOR SERVICES DIVISION</b>		<b>\$ 1,120,037.00</b>	<b>\$ 227,426.00</b>	<b>\$ 892,611.00</b>	<b>20%</b>
		<b>ACTUAL FY2003</b>			
		<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>Total Revenues</b>		<b>% Recovery</b>
4041/40IN	Senior Center Management	\$ 317,756.37	\$ 78,095.73		25%
4043/41IN	Senior Social Services	\$ 448,235.73	\$ 33,914.23		8%
4045/42IN	Senior Recreation	\$ 193,677.01	\$ 44,536.82		23%
4047/43IN	Senior Sports and Exercise	\$ 166,586.64	\$ 63,796.68		38%
<b>TOTAL SENIOR SERVICES DIVISION</b>		<b>\$ 1,126,255.75</b>	<b>\$ 220,343.46</b>	<b>\$ 905,912.29</b>	<b>20%</b>
		<b>ACTUAL FY2004</b>			
		<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>Total Revenues</b>		<b>% Recovery</b>
4041/40IN	Senior Center Management	\$ 321,975.81	\$ 92,900.00		29%
4043/41IN	Senior Social Services	\$ 504,770.51	\$ 39,907.71		8%
4045/42IN	Senior Recreation	\$ 185,642.73	\$ 51,098.37		28%
4047/43IN	Senior Sports and Exercise	\$ 149,127.72	\$ 58,076.76		39%
<b>TOTAL SENIOR SERVICES DIVISION</b>		<b>\$ 1,161,516.77</b>	<b>\$ 241,982.84</b>	<b>\$ 919,533.93</b>	<b>21%</b>

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

		ACTUAL FY2005		
		Total Expenditures	Total Revenues	% Recovery
4041/40IN	Senior Center Management	\$ 339,801.10	\$ 70,904.44	21%
4043/41IN	Senior Social Services	\$ 526,803.04	\$ 44,815.82	9%
4045/42IN	Senior Recreation	\$ 177,670.00	\$ 57,941.14	33%
4047/43IN	Senior Sports and Exercise	\$ 143,504.01	\$ 54,131.84	38%
<b>TOTAL SENIOR SERVICES DIVISION</b>		<b>\$ 1,187,778.15</b>	<b>\$ 227,793.24</b>	<b>\$ 959,984.91 19%</b>
		ACTUAL FY2006		
		Total Expenditures	Total Revenues	% Recovery
4041/40IN	Senior Center Management	\$ 363,393.00	\$ 91,252.17	25%
4043/41IN	Senior Social Services	\$ 504,327.84	\$ 44,146.44	9%
4045/42IN	Senior Recreation	\$ 181,847.95	\$ 56,150.33	31%
4047/43IN	Senior Sports and Exercise	\$ 102,778.57	\$ 50,618.80	49%
<b>TOTAL SENIOR SERVICES DIVISION</b>		<b>\$ 1,152,347.36</b>	<b>\$ 242,167.74</b>	<b>\$ 910,179.62 21%</b>
		PROPOSED FY2007		
		Total Expenditures	Total Revenues	% Recovery
4041/40IN	Senior Center Management	\$ 426,696.00	\$ 97,100.00	23%
4043/41IN	Senior Social Services	\$ 569,900.00	\$ 45,000.00	8%
4045/42IN	Senior Recreation	\$ 237,064.00	\$ 73,000.00	31%
4047/43IN	Senior Sports and Exercise	\$ 109,093.00	\$ 38,700.00	35%
<b>TOTAL SENIOR SERVICES DIVISION</b>		<b>\$ 1,342,753.00</b>	<b>\$ 253,800.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,088,953.00 19%</b>

**Appendix # 3**  
**Meeting #3 & 4**  
**Notes from Break-Out Groups**

**1. Senior Center Operations:**

Issue	Comments
What makes the center unique?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Daytime activities</li> <li>▪ Food services</li> <li>▪ Free seminars aimed at aging issues</li> </ul>
Age Requirement to Join Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Suggest eliminating age requirement to participate in programs – if we want to be a focal point for all aging services and programs for older adults, then members of the community who are interested in the topics offered here should be able to participate</li> <li>▪ Priority should be given, however, to those 55+</li> <li>▪ Allowing anyone to participate in programs may increase revenues, especially if they are charged higher fees</li> <li>▪ Could keep membership fee for those 55+ - they would pay reduced program fees and be eligible to use Fitness Room, Game Room, Library, etc.</li> </ul>
Age of Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Change to be at least the same as the County – if people can't join here until 60, but can join Holiday Park, Schweinhaut, etc. at 55, then they will go there and become loyal to that center and we won't get them when they are 60 – this results in lost revenue</li> <li>▪ Graduated fees based on age</li> <li>▪ Members must be 55 →get priority in registration, reduced fees</li> </ul>
Non-Resident Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eliminate restriction on number of non-resident members (currently set at 225) to increase revenue</li> </ul>
Membership Dues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider raising dues since they have stayed the same since 7/1/03</li> <li>• Non-member residents can be any age over 60, but can't get membership benefits (i.e., fitness club)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fees are higher for programs</li> <li>○ Non-residents pay even higher</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to increase marketing budget – it appears that what is offered at the center is not widely known</li> <li>▪ Change to be more of a one-stop place for aging issues               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Caretakers and seniors would participate</li> <li>➤ Fee issue – do caretakers pay too?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Age of membership – caretakers of any age are admitted</li> <li>▪ Explain more about the targets to be served in programs</li> <li>• Aging Contact Point = 240-314-8810 – open to all. Then direct to programs by calling 240-314-8800, if interested</li> </ul>

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

Name Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May not matter what you call the center, it may just be a marketing issue</li> <li>▪ Could call it the Rockville Senior Activities Center</li> <li>▪ Market as Carnation Center; home of RSC</li> <li>▪ Rockville Center on Aging</li> </ul>
Rentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can we improve the “ambience” in the Carnation Room to make it more inviting for rentals?</li> <li>• More marketing of Carnation Room for rental revenue</li> <li>▪ Outreach to party planner, DJs for rentals</li> <li>▪ Again this is a marketing issue – must get the word out that it is available, good price and attractive</li> </ul>
Organizational Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Since Senior Services is so vitally important with the anticipated growth and the broad range of services, why isn’t it given its own Department? There should be a Department of Senior Services</li> </ul>
Funding of Senior Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to get Mayor and Council to agree to fund senior services at a level that will support all the programs and services which are identified as being needed</li> </ul>

## #2 Senior Social Services

Programs and Services to Continue:

Transportation comments: - Keep it and praise it!

- A. No charge for the bus to the Senior Center but encourage contributions and fundraisers
- B. Unique service – keep it free
- C. Look at alternative fuels to keep cost down
- D. Important to keep cars and seniors off the road
- E. Frail and older seniors use the service the most – others are unwilling to give up their cars. Another reason not to charge
- F. Essential for Aging in Place – keep free
  - Mostly low income
- G. Someone to identify outside funding
  - Endowments
  - Grants
  - Public/private partnerships
- H. Do any major employers hire Rockville seniors?
  - May be sensitive to needs of seniors requiring transportation
- I. Volunteers Committee to look at raising money – retired development professional
- J. Advertise rental of buses

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

Lunch comments:

- A. If there is no cost to the City, this does not need to be discussed as it fills an important need.
- B. Encourage more to participate

Wellness comments:

- A. Who are we serving? Is it the person who had a stroke who depends on the center OR those who can use other facilities?
- B. Should there be a fee?
- C. Survey satisfaction and are needs being met? Effectiveness
- D. Expand services to include other hospitals
  - Contact walk-in clinics & Kaiser (Piccard) for Holy Cross programs

Senior Assistance Fund comments:

- A. Increased need in the future
- B. Should the income guidelines be changed?

Diversity comments:

- A. Why are we currently serving only Chinese and Spanish?
- B. What languages do we foresee needing to serve?

Other comments:

- A. Should the age of membership be raised to 65?
- B. Should younger persons with disabilities be allowed to join?

**Major Needs**

- Frail elders – numbers growing, increased need
- Boomers can take care of themselves
- People living longer and working longer
- Should we “fiddle” with age of membership
- Younger members are volunteers and can pay more
  - If up age of membership, should maybe ask for volunteers?

**#3 Senior Recreation**

Programs and Services to Continue:

- Trips
  - Expand, popular, important
  - Average age – trips for younger seniors
  - Successful/self-supporting

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Night and weekend offerings

Programs to Add:

- Academic classes
  - College classes
  - Programs to help facilitate new professions
  - Adult education
- Develop liaison with local agencies
- GreatCourses.com
  - DVD Subjects – watch DVD, discuss tape
- Intergenerational clearing house
  - Information and Referral
  - Seniors coach/umpire with RBBA, be team managers, etc.
- Family Weekend
  - Regular scheduled activities
- With children’s daycare
- Expand Red Hat Groups
- Clearing house to help high school community service for students
- Intercultural activities
- Involve African American seniors more
- Encourage Senior Center Membership by giving pool discount
- Friendly/Companion Phone System and outings facilitated by staff
- “One of a kind” Events
  - Photo exhibits of sign. Events (seniors bring)
  - Awards/publicity
  - Multiple locations

Programs to Eliminate:

None

Other Issues:

- Defining “Senior”
  - Important for images of programs
  - Important for marketing to various ages
  - Not age-restricted but “adult” oriented
  - “Time of Day” would self-limit
  - Day
  - Evening
  - Weekends
    - Financing
  - Nominal fees
- Is this TF right folks?
  - Suggest meeting with Seniors
- Research on Demographics
  - Ethnic group participation

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Outreach/encouragement
- Marketing Strategy

#### **#4. Senior Sports & Fitness**

Programs and Services to Continue:

- Most important thing this facility offers
- Exercise Room is important
- Gear different classes for different abilities
- Educate members about fitness programs and facilities
- Walk – Walk - Walk

Areas to Add:

- Expand Fitness Room and add showers
- Keep equipment current and state of the art
- Resurface outdoor courts and add shuffleboard court
- Programs offered at private facilities
  - Racquetball
  - Handball
- Evening hours
- Class billiards
- Expand game room/activity room
  - Utilize open space outside area

Areas to Delete:

None

#### **POLICY ISSUES / CROSS DEPT. ISSUES**

- Age Requirements
- Fees
  - Membership
  - Programs
- Fundraising
- Transportation - Offsite
- Marketing – greater use of Neighborhood Associations
- Space Requirements
- Hours of Programs/Weekend programs
- Definition of Senior/Adult

## Appendix #4 Critical Recommendations

**The Task Force Members were asked to respond to the following question: "Based on everything you have now learned about the programs and services delivered to Rockville's older adults, what are the 4 critical recommendations that you feel should be included in the final report that the Task Force will prepare?"**

Most frequently suggested recommendations:

Improve marketing efforts	7
Ensure adequate funding for senior services	6
"Increase fundraising opportunities including sponsorships, donations, etc."	5
Market Rockville as a Senior Friendly Community/focal point	4
Increase efforts to address diversity and attract more ethnic groups	4
Lower age to 55	4
Continue to provide transportation	3
Continue community service role in information and assistance	3

### Responses:

- Exercise and Physical Wellness is perhaps the most important program offered. It needs to be expanded both program-wise and physical plant. Need more space between exercise machines, room needs to be expanded and perhaps showers added.
- Transportation for Elderly needs to be continued and perhaps expanded. Perhaps get volunteers to offer transportation to home-bound individuals to take them to doctor visits etc, perhaps just to check up on them.
- Meal Program is essential, it may be the main meal of the day for some
- Health Services Program, screenings etc. periodic checks as are offered are important.
- Continue the availability of a central senior resource center in the City. Provide bus access to that center.
- Have activities there that encourage seniors to be familiar with it.
- Enable seniors to have resources available to promote aging in place.
- The Senior Task Force strongly recommends to the Mayor and Council that they continue to fund the Rockville Senior Center. The Senior Center plays a vital role in the community providing a centralized place for information on senior services. The Center also provides social services, education and wellness programs, outreach to non-English speaking seniors, and emergency assistance through its Senior Assistance Fund. By providing these services, seniors are able to enjoy a better quality of life and live independently longer.
- Rockville should be recognized as a Senior Friendly Community.
- The City of Rockville has the opportunity to meet the challenges of seniors by supporting the programs provided by The Rockville Senior Center. An active Senior Center provides a place for lifelong learning as well as a place for seniors to socialize and exercise in a safe environment.
- Allow and identify ways for recouping operational costs of senior social services like transportation and outreach. This can be done through sponsorships and donations, for example.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Increase the numbers and percentages of minorities who receive senior services through the Div. of Senior Citizen Services.
- Expand senior services programming in all City recreation and park facilities, particularly on evenings and weekends.
- Enhance educational offerings for seniors in the City by partnering with Montgomery College, MCPS, etc., particularly in areas that might be needed for entering or continuing in the workforce.
- The Rockville home page, left hand side, should have a link called Senior Services. This link should lead to a page describing senior services and should be identified with the Senior Center, although apparently some are offered elsewhere. The Senior Services page should have highlighted items that link to other information. The home page link to Recreation can continue to have a link to the Senior Center, which is there covered only by the Activities brochure. That brochure inadequately conveys the information about services I know now that are available through the senior center. (If necessary, change the name of the Senior Center to Senior Services Center.)
- Better marketing is critical to the future welfare of Rockville's seniors and to the Senior Center. But, please, no naming rights. First, in ten years another company may fund something big. Then what? Second, names change as companies merge or go out of business. Third, I do not wish to attend name places, such as the Pepsi or Coca Cola Center. Finally, plaques acknowledging donors are sufficient.
- Expand volunteer programs to entice younger seniors to offer time. Maintain your current focus, that is, do not try to expand beyond services already offered.
- A real effort needs to be made to ensure ethnic diversity of members. If 87 percent of participants are white, it does not reflect the population in the area. I know this will not be easy. I have firsthand knowledge of attempts to diversify the Human Rights Commission and the police force. But I think the effort must be made and documented. Perhaps a diversity specialist is needed on staff.
- The age range of participants should be brought into line with that of the County. A traveling exhibit should be developed to go into neighborhoods where senior participation is low (e.g., Lincoln Park, Twinbrook). It could be displayed at the recreation centers and, perhaps, borrowed by civic associations to display at meetings. An ombudsman should be added to staff (or this activity can be taken on by a current staff member) to advocate for seniors and senior issues across the City.
- Noting the large increase in potential membership mostly because of the coming wave of baby boomers, seniors are living longer and the impact of lowering the eligibility age to 55, the most important recommendation is to put senior City management and the M&C on notice that increased funding of senior services is essential in future years and to plan accordingly.
- That Rockville's Community Centers will need to be made increasingly available in programming senior services in order to increase geographical diversity and in supplementing Senior Center capacity.
- That services should be prioritized in order to focus available City resources on the most basic needs of senior citizens. That fundraising efforts need to be expanded to better supplement direct City funding resources.
- Provide enough funding to offer programs and services that help allow people to age in place. This includes not only the Senior Center, but a well funded Outreach program. We

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

need to help people stay independent, which is a benefit to the individuals and the community.

- Pursue methods of funding for senior services from sources besides the Rockville City budget. Possibilities include grants, private organizations, the county, and the state. I believe that Montgomery County does not provide sufficient funding for senior services in the Rockville area because Rockville has taken that responsibility. We all pay County taxes!
- Move the responsibility of social services (citizenship, English, financial aid, caregiver services, etc.) out of the purview of Dept of Recreation. These services are required by many Rockville residents, not just seniors.
- Advertise Rockville as a Senior Friendly community to help keep current and attract new residents. In general, I believe that the primary focus of Rockville Senior Services should be to provide a social outlet where none other exists for seniors and to offer a means of allowing seniors to feel valued and to be contributors to society.
- Lower the age of eligibility to 55 to be consistent with county senior centers and get financial support from the City.
- Serve a diverse community with a goal to match the City's demographics (by marketing enhancements and taping the resources of ethnic groups)
- Make RSC the first coming to mind for information and assistance, especially for aging issues (by service and marketing enhancements).
- Reach and maintain the target of servicing 20% of eligible seniors (by better funding/fundraising and marketing enhancements).
- Maintain building primarily as a facility for older adults--even if name is changed to sound more vigorous increase public awareness of the facility encourage intergenerational programming-not just with children but including young adults and middle-agers.
- Safeguard transportation services
- Lower the age of eligibility to 55 to be consistent with county senior centers.
- Have Mayor and Council formally designate the Senior Services Division as the focal point for aging issues.
- Investigate hiring a grants writer and try to find sponsorships for programs.
- Maintain level of support (\$105 per senior in FY07) (adjusted for inflation) by the City in the future – but add amount for 55-59 years olds not previously included
- Investigate hiring a grant writer for the Recreation and Parks Department (or a part time person for the Senior Services Division alone). Have grants recover a specified % of the Division's budget (amount to be determined based on programs/services which have no revenue potential). Investigate more opportunities for Sponsorships/Endowments/Donations/Partnerships.
- Marketing – allocate funds to pursue a comprehensive marketing strategy. Consider developing a senior services brochure to be distributed annually
- Have Mayor and Council formally designate the Senior Services Division as the focal point for aging issues – have interdepartmental and interagency cooperation and communication to ensure Senior Services involved in anything related to seniors in the City (i.e., police, planning). Investigate creating an Ombudsman position to advocate on behalf of seniors and aging issues
- Funding levels for the Sr. Center must increase proportionately with the burgeoning senior population. This task force agrees that the path of continued success for Rockville's senior services lies with increased and improved service, not a reduction.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Costs continue to rise - and maintaining a high level of service will cost more and more money.
- Expansion of services is the correct path to take. As the population grows and ages in place, we need to make a concerted effort to reach out to members of the community and provide new and/or expanded service.
- Rockville needs a comprehensive, aggressive marketing plan to spread the word about what the Senior Center and Senior Services have to offer. Knowledge is power, and unless we share that knowledge, a great potential resource isn't being maximized.
- The Senior Center's age/annual fee requirements should be revised per our agreed upon formula from Meeting 5.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

**Appendix #5**  
**Areas to Be Protected/Maintained**

**The Task Force Members were asked to respond to the following question:** The program and service directions endorsed by the Task Force involve maintaining or expanding services. If we were faced with a dire financial situation, and the Senior Service Division had budget reductions in the order of 20-25%, what six specific program, service, infrastructure, or staffing areas do you feel should be protected/maintained?

**Most frequently suggested recommendations for areas which should be protected/maintained:**

Transportation	10
Health screenings, wellness programming	8
Staff levels	4
Recreation classes, lifelong learning	4
Information and Assistance Services	4
Physical plant (facility infrastructure)	4
English/Citizenship Classes	3
Volunteer recruitment, programming	3
Lunch	3

*NOTE: The following table presents the individual answers to the question above. If the respondent listed six areas to protect/maintain, they are listed in column format. If a general response was given then only one column is used.*

My answer is an unequivocal all. We should not allow the budget for seniors to be cut. If there was an attempt to do so, the seniors should object in every way available. As far as I am concerned the Senior Center is operating well but at the basic level. Cutting anything would be a major mistake. The only possible thing to cut would be the Birthday Parties, Gala Dinner Dance and the Big Band Brunches - a mere drop in the bucket. No substantive program can be cut						
Continue free transportation on busses.	Continue to provide blood pressure screening and other health monitoring services at the senior center including seminars provided by local hospitals, doctors and providers.	Have Senior Services report directly to the City Manager thru a Director of Senior Services.	Encourage senior clubs in various areas of the City that will use City facilities for meetings but have their own independent programs.	Have a sliding scale membership fee inversely proportional to age.	Communicate the availability and desirability of senior facilities and services. Have high-end opportunities [trips and events] that help to subsidize our senior friendly City.	
Should the Senior Service Division be faced with budget reductions, I feel the Capital Improvements should be delayed.						

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

Volunteer recruitment and placement	Senior Center facility rental	social services salaried staff	transportation assistance	senior assistance fund	wellness and prevention activities
Transportation	Lunch Program and other food services	English and Citizenship	Health	Computer Training	Recreation Activities
The bus transportation system should be maintained.	The current staff levels and tasks should stay the same (except possibly adding a diversity specialist)	The City is correct in pushing for physical fitness of residents (e.g., "walk in the park" activities). The Senior Center is correct in doing the same through its fitness program and should continue this activity.	The community garden should be maintained.	The cultural language programs should be maintained.	Emergency financial assistance, such as REAP, should be available to seniors.
Emergency assistance and info& referral services are the most basic safety net items.	That home visit services (social and physical support, food delivery, home maintenance etc.) are essential to keep seniors in the community. Expanded use of volunteers and staff support are vital.	That expanded use of transportation services are essential to seniors (especially as they age and are not able to drive themselves) in order to avail themselves of vital Senior Center and Community Center services i.e. food, health, exercise, fitness etc.	That health care services especially screening and preventive including wellness counseling are increasingly needed as they age.	That more out-reach services in the form of English and citizenship classes are necessary as ethnic and racial diversity increases in the City.	That because of the increasing cost of home maintenance, more efforts are needed to address this problem for seniors on fixed low incomes i.e. expanded MPDUs, lower property taxes, other housing options, educational programs and home services.
The Senior Center facility. Continue to provide a central facility, making capitol improvements.	Transportation to/from the Senior Center	Recreation and hobby/craft lifetime learning programs & classes	Exercise classes (not fitness center)	Volunteer programs	Staff to coordinate free services, such as free lunches and senior information
With 20-25% of budget reduction, cuts will likely be "everywhere". Detailed study of cost effectiveness will help to determine the level of cuts in different areas.					
maintain physical plant	Bus service - charge modest fare to defray expenses	Nutrition program (lunch)	Health screenings and wellness programs	Facilities for drop in free activities, in and out of doors	Garden plots

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

Transportation	Information and assistance services	Wellness classes, fitness, exercise that are self-sustaining thru fees	Lifelong learning classes that are self-sustaining thru fees.	Maintenance and upkeep of senior center	Appropriate staffing of center and Sr.Services Division
Information and Assistance	Transportation -- both to and from the Center and any other that can be provided	Lunch	Wellness, especially exercise classes, prevention and screening.	Lifetime Learning	Senior Citizen Commission
Transportation - in some fashion	Sr. Center Facility generally, including building and hours of operation	Exercise facilities	Staffing levels	Sr. Center being the point of contact for Sr. Issues	Continue offering nursing/planning/life issue outreach programs (i.e. health screening, attorney, nurse services.)

**Other comments:**

Interestingly, it was consistent among those I spoke with that they were unaware of most of the offerings of the Senior Center. Generally they thought the offerings of the center were superb, and were encouraged to know Rockville provided so much. It was encouraging to hear from individuals who added their insight into the issues. It made me feel confident that we are on the right track.

Agree: invite those who are 55 years old

Don't include outreach for non-seniors- City and county do plenty

Do not do outreach for more foreign born seniors- enough already

Do not agree that City should assume more costs to run the Senior Center- dues are too low now- seniors could afford more for what they get

Seniors could pay more for the transportation to the Center- just the service of door to door is worth at least a few dollars per ride- City should not have to raise taxes for this

A senior friendly City is fine as long as it doesn't cost tax payers anymore

The senior center should be just for Rockville residents- there will be more and more in the next 20 years. Too many members will ruin it for the Rockville ones.

Fees could be much higher I think - many Rockville seniors can afford it. The services are far better than many cities offer, but shouldn't be paid for by non-seniors. Other cities, yes, Rockville, no. There could still be some reduced fees for those who truly cannot pay the going rates.

## Appendix #6 Summary of Citizen Input

The Task Force members agreed that they should test their draft recommendations by gathering community input to a series of questions as this would be a critical step in completing the Task Force Report. Task Force members conducted individual meetings and focus groups with seniors, neighbors, RSI, the Senior Commission, and community associations. Over 100 respondents represented a range of ages from 18 years and up including:

- Bethany House Senior Club (24 seniors)
- College Gardens Civic Association and College Gardens Garden Club (22 participants)
- College Gardens residents (4 people ages 25, 49, 49, 82)
- Customers at Animal Exchange
- East Rockville Citizens Association
- Fallsgrove residents (2 residents)
- Human Services Advisory Commission
- Lincoln Park Civic Association (10 people)
- Lincoln Park Community Center lunch time participants, all Chinese (43 people)
- Lunch Bunch Breast Cancer Survivors Group (20 participants)
- Potomac Woods and Potomac Springs residents (22 people ages 46-77)
- Rockshire residents (7 people)
- Rockville Senior Center Health Fair (7 participants)
- Rockville Senior Center lunch time participants, all Chinese (41 people)
- Rockville Seniors Inc. Board of Directors
- Senior Citizens Commission
- Twinbrook Citizens Association, participants at "Twinbrook in the Park" and TCA Spring Cleanup
- Woodley Gardens residents (9 people)

The anecdotal results are summarized below with detailed individual and group comments on the following pages under each question.

#	Question Topic	Agree	Disagree	Maybe	No Response
1	Age of Eligibility	86	45	5	0
2	Program Direction	68	7	1	2
3a	Senior Friendly	88	7	0	8
3b	Budget	72	17	9	1
4	Transportation	73	25	1	1
5	Financial Support	85	16	4	2
6	Marketing Campaign	54	50	7	1
7	Building infrastructure	83	5	0	4
8a	Diversity – pursue efforts	36	21	11	2
8b	Diversity – additional resources	22	23	0	3

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

Note: The 84 Chinese seniors interviewed at Lincoln Park and Rockville Senior Center generally agreed with questions 2 through 8. They are not included in above table.

**Individual and Group Comments:**

**Question 1: Age of Eligibility**

**The current age to be eligible to join the Rockville Senior Center is currently 60. County senior centers welcome individuals at age 55. The Task Force is recommending that the age of eligibility to join the Rockville Senior Center be lowered to 55. Do you agree or disagree with this recommendation?**

- Not sure. If the senior population is growing so fast will lowering the age overload the senior center?
- In general I would think that an age more consistent with neighboring centers would be preferable. I would hope the Task force has looked at projections on increased cost based on a lower age, which presumably would mean an increase in use of services
- Mixed reaction. Everyone except for the 25 y/o disagreed that the age should be lowered. Reasons for keeping the age at 60 or even raising it were that people from 55-60 wouldn't utilize the center. I was surprised by this reaction, but there is clearly a voice there. Opposing view was that why exclude that small group, they will select whether to utilize the services and pay an increased fee, so what harm could it do. The goal was to avoid losing folks in the 55-60 age category to Montgomery county facilities. But overall there were more opponents to the lowering of the age than for it.
- Considering that the basic problem is the expected increase in the number of seniors, it makes more sense to increase the age of eligibility rather than decrease it.
- Unless there is an increase of infrastructure/facilities do not decrease the age.
- As a 55 year old I would love to enjoy the facility, but if population is to increase then retaining the 60 year old eligibility makes more sense
- Without information on the financial impact of such a change I cannot support it.
- There are many Rockville Senior Center programs of interest to individuals 55-60. Another consideration is many retired government workers are between the ages of 55-60 but cannot participate (and could help support Rockville Senior Center!), due to the current age requirement. Additionally, many people 55-60 are disabled and physically unable to participate in recreational and exercise programs, but could benefit from the programming available through Rockville Senior Center – again this is not an option due to the restrictive age requirement.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Exceptions should be allowed for seniors under 60 at discretion of manager. If there will be more seniors, there should be discussion about the eligible age. Seems like you can't get social security until 62, Medicare at 65, and with people living longer, a higher age might be more appropriate, especially if taxes are involved.
- Age limits are not appropriate for this. People should be able to participate in whatever City activities interest them, especially if fees are charged. Should be no "eligibility" criteria that are age based.
- Although it is used by many senior housing developments, I believe this is to bring in more people with more wealth who can afford and pay for the "expensive amenities" – golf, indoor/outdoor pools, tennis, luxury-type meeting and party centers, etc. This is not truly for retired or semi-retired folks.
- The senior population is working longer and staying more active well past the age of 55. It is unlikely that increases in senior center staffing resources or other accommodations would be justified by similar increases in active membership.
- With the population aging why tax our physical facilities. Let's wait a while on this.
- From the questions listed below, it looks like the center is trying to maintain and expand on some important programs and the membership base does not support itself. To lower the age of eligibility is asking the center to serve more people for less money.
- Lowering the age is diluting the program, which should be for those over 65
- But - if funding is a problem, then this is the one that should not change - or make the age 58 as a compromise. I think the other things that follow are more important.
- Given that Rockville's population is likely to be filled with an increasing number of seniors, I don't know why it's necessary to create even further growth by lowering the age of eligibility.
- It should be uniform throughout the county.
- Believe 55 is more in line with county and others
- I have only one issue at this time. Until it is resolved, all other issues are deprived of any practical significance. I am 56 years old. I find the City of Rockville's approach to senior services disheartening by excluding me until I reach the age of 60. Perhaps, I should move out of the City of Rockville into Montgomery County to be welcome at a senior center?
- Federal govt. retirement age is 55 and the Rockville population has a high percentage of Federal employees/retirees."
- To maintain consistency with Montgomery County

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Lower the age to 50; AARP is open to 50 year olds.
- Lower the age to ensure the viability of programs-most Rockville recreation programs for seniors are undersubscribed
- Keep the Center from being an old age home
- Make it available to any age, especially if one spouse is 55/60 and other spouse is younger
- Most 55 year olds do not think of themselves as 'seniors' and in many cases are still involved in careers, thus having neither the time nor the interest in 'senior pursuits.'
- Is the task force looking at not only the age, but whether there are trends to reflect that amore spouses are going to be working and, thus, may result in fewer seniors being available to take advantage of such programs that might be offered?
- One commented (about age) that eligible age should be the same as the county.
- One commented (about age) that it should serve older seniors (namely, supporting 60+ instead of 55+)
- About the “friendliness”, a few commented some of the RSC staff were not friendly and were discouraged. (They mentioned “Maria” and the lady Chinese staff.)
- A few commented the high fees for membership (especially for non-resident) and classes, comparing to some offered at other locations. One resident commented the senior center general facility and drop-in activities should be free to the residents.
- Many would like to have more activities after lunch. They feel the Chinese staff could be more active in helping the participants

**Question 2: Program and Service Directions**

**The Task Force prepared a chart which illustrates the program and services directions which they are recommending be pursued. The chart shows two types of service: (a) Information and Assistance which would be available to everyone in the community, regardless of age and (b) Programs and Events which would be available only to individuals who meet the age eligibility requirements. Information and Assistance includes seminars on health, legal, financial and retirement planning, screenings, emergency assistance, housing and employment information, etc. Programs and Events include lifetime learning classes, wellness classes, fitness, sports, nutrition, etc. Do you agree or disagree with the proposed direction for senior services as shown in this chart?**

- Makes sense. Providing services to a wider audience will help more be aware of information (always a good thing) and should help for greater awareness for "new" customers as people age and need/want senior programs and events.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- All agreed the direction we are taking is positive. One asked whether a needs assessment has been performed. Most were surprised to learn of all of the services and programs offered, as they had no idea of most of the services.
- Agree except for housing and employment information which seems a duplication of other City social services
- The Task Force needs to look at the financial impact of the proposed direction.
- Proved the age requirement is lowered to 55 I agree with the proposed plan. I think the City of Rockville and RSC needs more programming for adults with disabilities, offering supportive care (i.e., medical transportation, counseling, assistance adjusting to newly acquired disability or ramifications of illness), accessibility options and resources, offering fitness and recreational activities. This is especially true of the population age 55-62. If one is not on SSI, SSDI and is under full retirement age there are few services via the City, county or state services, available to these people. It is a disgrace and most are struggling to remain employed, just for the health benefits.
- Age limits are not appropriate for this. People should be able to participate in whatever City activities interest them, especially if fees are charged. Should be no “eligibility” criteria that are age based. (As in Q. 1, above)
- Unless the Information and Assistance seminars are provided at a fee, they should be available only to members of the Senior Center who have paid fees to help defray costs. An alternative could be to provide both Information and Assistance seminars and Programs and Events at a higher fee for those who are not members of the Senior Center.
- I would rather stick to what seniors need and want to stay in Rockville.
- There are so many services the Center is trying to provide to seniors, an underserved population. I believe the focus should be on providing information and support to them in order to maintain the strength of the program. Otherwise, the program may be trying too hard to be too much to too many people.
- Based on the above I do agree - but I have not seen the chart.
- I also think you should make available to people of any age information that may help them assist relatives who are seniors. Specifically, there are many people in their 30s, 40s, and 50s who are providing care for elderly parents or other relatives. We should be able to have access to information about adult day care, services for the blind or those with low vision, transportation, nutrition, nursing services, and the like so that our relatives can take advantage of those programs.
- You haven't provided the chart, so I can't comment on it. Your description above confuses me a little bit, in that the Information and Assistance seems to be for anyone at any age, but your question asks about the direction for senior services. I don't agree that the City should be providing assistance on health, legal, emergency, housing and employment to anyone who

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

needs it. There are county and other agencies which provide those functions. If you what you really mean is Information, rather than Information and Assistance, I could endorse that to a limited extent.

- If program and events are considered lifetime learning, they should be open to any age participant
- Will programs be offered during the day and evening so those who work can take advantage of the opportunity to participate? (We are not familiar with the programs so if this is already done, it may not be an issue.) Other programs you may want to consider, if the demand is there, might include computer training (Word & Excel), Internet training, editing of digital pictures, some history of the Maryland area, painting/basic drawing, etc.)

**Question 3a: Senior Friendly Community**

**The Task Force would like Mayor and Council to adopt a philosophy that Rockville is a “senior friendly community”. By making this distinction, the Task Force is asking the Mayor and Council to continue to support the Senior Services Division budget to the same extent as they presently do. The current amount is approximately \$100 per eligible senior. This may result in additional tax support for senior services as the number of older adults increase in the community.**

**Do you agree or disagree with the recommendation that Mayor and Council should adopt a “senior friendly community” philosophy?**

- It is important for this philosophy to be adopted in light of the ever increasing costs associated with living in Rockville and the declining income of seniors.
- In concept, I want Rockville to be "everyone" friendly, including seniors but the issues are money--see below.
- All agreed. But interestingly, the 25 y/o mentioned that while it is hard to digest the amount of seniors in the pipeline, she wouldn't want to live in a community that just let its members, young or old, suffer without having the provisions necessary for leading a decent life. No one in this community wants to leave anyone behind. All agreed that we need to make a point of encouraging the mayor/council to at least maintain the same level of service as is offered today, even if it requires more taxes. One offered that if there is a tax increase to support the expanding population, it would be more digestible knowing specifics about how much of the increase is for seniors, and how much of the increase would end up directly helping the seniors. Again, the issue was raised whether a needs assessment has been performed. Also the dollar amounts provided should be annually adjusted for cost of living increases.
- The senior center is struggling to maintain all its activities and must seek additional support. The City should increase its support
- \$100 seems a reasonable amount that should be sustainable over time

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

- I think the City could afford to at minimum double its contribution; actually \$500 per senior is more reasonable. It is a small investment in light of this ever growing segment of Rockvillians in this age group.
- Agree, but strongly disagree with increasing taxes. Alternately, first raise age, second charge fees.
- Don't know what this means. City certainly shouldn't be hostile to seniors. But a formulaic response seems too simplistic. City should identify needs and decide if/how to meet them. For all groups.
- The amount of \$100 seems low. Note the property and income tax base in Rockville has increased by 50 to 100% in the past 3-5 years. Why can't this budget increase also?
- I don't think increasing tax support for senior services can be avoided. It would be good to secure agreements/promises of a minimum level of support from the Mayor and Council. However, designating Rockville as a "Senior Friendly Community" makes the entire community sound like the housing communities for seniors ... young people not welcome.
- I am curious where the \$100 proposal comes from. All seniors or those only members? How do we know how many there are?
- Wellness programs can reduce overall cost to the community and should be supported.
- I do not know what that \$100 per eligible senior pays for. I'd need to know that before I could answer.
- I wouldn't want the City to be unfriendly to seniors.
- Realize that \$100 seems insignificant in itself and that soon it will increase. Nevertheless, support the monetary tax to M&C along with other requests.
- A good thing. However, would not want to see it supported to the point where our young people are disadvantaged in any way. Nor, would we want to have Rockville known PRIMARILY as a senior community.

**Question 3b: Do you agree or disagree with the recommendation that the City budget should support senior services in the future to the same extent that they are supported today, even if it means a higher level of tax support?**

- I think the public would want some projection that incorporates the monetary impact of lowering the eligibility age. Also is information available on the amount per senior that utilize the service? (i.e., if it's \$100/ eligible senior but only 50% of the seniors use the service, the real cost is \$200/ senior using the service). I'm assuming that the Task force has looked at cost/senior of other communities and nearby municipalities for some direction on the range of costs to different tax bases.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Taxes are too high as it is for seniors because of the County Property Tax. City needs to increase support for senior programs. Depends on how much the increase would be.
- Agree, but not at the expense of our low income non-senior adults and children
- If the City does not recognize the needs of this large population sector, it will lose the Zoomers and Boomers and our tax dollars.
- No, with exception that seniors who truly need help be helped.
- No, no, no. No more taxes. Less taxes!
- Same comment as 3.a (The amount of \$100 seems low. Note the property and income tax base in Rockville has increased by 50 to 100% in the past 3-5 years. Why can't this budget increase also?)
- Can the City demonstrate that senior services are used as intended?
- I do not know what that \$100 per eligible senior pays for. I'd need to know that before I could answer.
- I don't like the idea of locking the City into a fixed dollar amount per senior. The City's budget has many other needs, and I'm already in disagreement about the idea of cutting back on basic trash
- Don't want higher taxes
- Agree only if the budgeted dollars stay within reasonable bounds. Most seniors in Rockville are fairly well off and need subsidy not operational support funding.
- We strongly agree.
- Agree with the caveat that sufficient numbers of seniors participate. We also feel that some of the programs should have reasonable course fees to offset the cost of the programs and not rely exclusively on government support. Low-income seniors should, of course, helpfully be able to participate at not cost. We presume that there would be seniors or others who, by virtue of their long work experience and communication skills, may be willing to teach programs on a volunteer basis.

**Question 4: Transportation**

**Currently City seniors are eligible for free door-to-door transportation service to and from the senior center and their home on the Senior Center buses. There are significant costs to this service (staffing, maintenance, gas) which are not recovered by revenues, however, the Task Force feels transportation is an essential service. Do you agree or disagree with the recommendation that transportation services should remain free to seniors?**

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- The bus is large. Perhaps consideration of use of smaller buses would reduce costs for short trips.
- I would be curious to know how utilized this service is and how many of the riders would not use the services if transportation was not provided.
- I think that a nominal fee could be charged, for those who can afford it, to help offset some of the rising cost. Using your own auto or cab would cost you something.
- All agreed that we must maintain free transportation. It is imperative to keep people active and involved, especially when they lose mobility.
- One has to pay the piper, develop a new system for some payment.
- If seniors can't get to the center for reasons of diminished mobility, poverty, or inability to drive, then transportation must be provided to keep them part of society and not hermits.
- As drivers age they need an alternative safe means of transportation
- As long as the City provides similar services to low income children seeking to take advantage of summer and after-school programs. Another thought is to have the seniors (and perhaps the children) pay a nominal fee of \$0.25 per ride to help defray the costs.
- ABSOLUTELY!!!! If seniors lack transportation, they are apartment/house bound and totally dependent on others – it is a major source of depression for many seniors.
- What is definition of “senior” – State? Feds? City? County?
- Seniors should be asked to donate whatever they could afford.
- Should be a fee charged. If need can be demonstrated, give passes. See if taxi companies can do this cheaper. Or Ride-On.
- Are “buses” the most appropriate vehicles. Should there be a balance of smaller, more gas-efficient vehicles?
- Even a minimal charge would help. Not necessarily enough to recover all costs though.
- Wow – I wonder if some kind of fee even if it's small could be instituted
- When my husbands grandfather was living with us, the bus services gave him an important degree of independence and me peace of mind. I think the transportation service is a key factor in making it possible for seniors to use the Center.
- Service should be on a sliding scale.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

- Yes, this is very important because otherwise seniors may not be able to get to the center. Also, seniors are usually on a fixed income so the savings to them would be good.
- There are two senior citizen centers for the deaf. One is in Frederick and the other one is at Silver Spring recreation center on Glenmont Road. I need an SSP, (Support Service Provider), to assist me with transportation, guiding and interpreting. I wonder if Rockville Senior Center programs can provide assistant for me. Communication is essential too!
- I agree that the services should remain at low cost to seniors, but I wouldn't object to a minimal charge for the service. With free goods and services, there's always a chance of over utilization. I think the City should have the flexibility to address such a problem if it arises.
- Maybe pro-rate to financial need; Only if that is the only way they can get there; Depending on cost.
- Two sides on this – many can afford to pay and should. Consequently I believe that a financial chart may bring up the reason for helping some (many) or none.
- Free for disabled seniors; varying charges dependent on income.
- Agree. It should remain free to those who cannot afford to pay. We think there should be a fee asked of those who are able to pay. Perhaps ‘passes’ could be *given* to those in need and *sold* to others. This would eliminate any stigma attached to the *free* rides, as everyone riding would have a pass.
- Agree, as long as the usage warrants it.

**Question 5: Financial Support**

**Currently the senior services division is funded primarily by taxes (75%) and fees for programs and memberships (25%). The Task Force is recommending greater staff resources be allocated to the senior services department so they can pursue additional funding sources such as grants, sponsorships and partnerships. Do you agree or disagree with the recommendation that Mayor and Council should allocate more money so additional staff can be hired to pursue alternative funding sources?**

- Let's try the foundations.
- My questions would be how many staff do they have now? Also how many and what cost of new staff. You would want to be sure to get that much back in grant money and partnerships to cover the cost of new staff.
- All strongly agreed, especially noting that having grant writing support is essential to increasing income. Diverse funding is essential to success.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Agree, but it should be on a limited trial basis not to exceed three years. If it is determined that the income is not in excess of 150% of the cost of staff it should be terminated.
- Hire staff on demonstration basis and evaluate result.
- Fundraising is very difficult and time consuming – maybe one dedicated staff person on a trial basis.
- It is the cart and horse dilemma. Do you hire the staff first to find the money or do you find the money and then hire the staff. Another thought is to contract out the fundraising function.
- Yes, the City’s designated senior services staff are outstanding but woefully lacking in numbers. The City should expand its staffing level, not only to pursue alternative funding sources, but also to enhance community outreach efforts, provide programming at senior residential properties (such as Town Center Apts., Heritage House, etc.) and exploring new programs at the Senior Center.
- Seems like the Mayor and Council should be asking County, State and Feds for Support. There is staff at the State level.
- Should be based on community-based funding.
- No staff expansion with tax money. Staff expansion with fees okay, or if new staff can bring in enough grants, sponsors, etc. to pay for themselves and still reduce City funds needs.
- Effectiveness should be evaluated after a trial period.
- It is difficult to answer this question without knowing the amount of funding available to be tapped and the expected costs of additional staff, or how other Senior Centers in other cities are funded. Why can’t this endeavor be given to consultants rather than to permanent staff? Outsource this work.
- I agree with the initial support of additional funding with the hope that the alternative funding sources can provide the support for the additional staff. I also believe that the City should explore volunteers with expertise in grant writing -- seniors or juniors.
- Yes, but should be done promptly and efficiently so monies get to the seniors and not endless research by additional staffers. This should be monitored carefully.
- Having Rockville taxpayers pay for the City to hire grant-application-writers does not seem to me like a great idea.
- Somewhat supportive and still reluctant to say that “more money” or should seniors pay more. Don’t believe that number of new seniors who will remain in Rockville will make that much difference. I could be wrong and “agree” because of Task Force seemingly saying otherwise.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

- The City has been unwilling to partner with private interests through advertising, naming options, etc. To pay someone to explore these is absurd. The City in the past has generated applications for All American City, etc. in house and should have the capability already to apply for grants.
- Comment that alternative funding sources should pay for additional staff
- Agree – only if such staff identifies resources that more than offset their own compensation, benefits and administrative costs.
- Unsure – would these pursuits result in an amount sufficient to offset the cost involved and still end up with additional funds for the senior projects? Are there no qualified professionals willing to donate time and effort to such a cause?

**Question 6: Marketing Campaign**

**The Task Force is recommending that a comprehensive marketing strategy be undertaken to raise awareness of the programs and services offered by the Senior Services Division. Do you support the recommendation that the City undertake a comprehensive marketing campaign to raise awareness of what the senior services division offers?**

- I have always been impressed by the quality and quantity of services offered. Greater awareness would greatly improve the view that Rockville is a “senior-friendly community and a “family friendly” community.
- I would want this to be a building of a long-term solid program to build the future membership rather than a fancy blitz for the present to increase short-term awareness.
- All strongly agreed, and emphasized that it is critical. Most of those agreed many of the programs and offerings from the center were previously not known to them. They were in some cases visibly surprised to learn of several of the offerings.
- Do not see need for big marketing effort. Use existing mechanisms, such as Rockville Reports, more wisely (i.e., have a regular section and list programs and services).
- Participate more actively in “Hometown Holidays” and various other activities sponsored by City.
- Utilize current means of communication more wisely.
- I don’t think the marketing campaign should be confined to senior services. It should include all activities offered by the City for seniors, adults and children, with special emphasis on outreach to our neediest residents. The marketing campaign needs to be done in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean and perhaps other languages.
- The senior services division is a huge community resource but I am always amazed how many in Rockville are unfamiliar with i.e., the great Gift Shop and other benefits the RSC

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

provides to our community. Again, more dedicated senior center staff could provide community awareness programs for RSC and that would generate revenue!

- Not a “comprehensive” marketing campaign. This presumes there are many citizens in Rockville who would come if they knew about it. What are the demographics? How many seniors (define) are living in Rockville; how many interested/not interested? Seems like the City should know who we are. As a senior, I am not interested now.
- What is need for a comprehensive marketing campaign. These are expensive. Citizens should make it their business to find out what’s available. City shouldn’t have to push this.
- Comprehensive, but not extravagant. A personal invitation to each person who is or reaches the age and who is not a member. This communication can be done mostly by volunteers with some staff help. Letters, brochures, phone follow-up.
- The Senior Services Division patrons are primarily Rockville City residents who receive four times a year the Rockville Recreation Guide. The Rockville Recreation Guide includes several pages of offerings for Rockville seniors. If necessary, actually it would be a good idea to have the Recreation Dept. add a page that lists the particulars and offerings of the Senior Services Division.
- I have always said we need more advertising.
- These services do a lot to extend the length and quality of life for a growing population. The more people it reaches, the more our community benefits. It may mean the difference between independent and assisted living for some.
- Information is already readily available.
- Again, this is a good idea, if needed, but this proposal is one that could wait if money is tight. There should be a simple and inexpensive way to get awareness of senior programs and services to seniors.
- I do believe that there should be more advertising about the programs and services offered, but I’d like to know what “comprehensive” means and how much that costs.
- As with my answer to a previous question, I believe that Rockville's future is going to include many more senior citizens, due to the demographics of the population. I think that more and more seniors will demand programs and services from the Senior Center just using the knowledge they gain from Rockville Reports, the Gazette, and already existing information mechanisms without the need for any elaborate marketing strategy.
- Use the money elsewhere. Those that want to see what services will look into it themselves.
- Not sure- Rockville Newsletter should be enough. The funding should come from the budget allocations – not new allocation.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Only if the case is made for actual seniors coming forward which is indicated. All programs in Rockville should have marketing campaigns and seniors should be no different.
- If we are actually subsidizing seniors so much should we be encouraging more through marketing? What are we marketing – income or expense? Do not use outside contractors.
- Agree. The majority of seniors (including ourselves) really are not well informed or aware of the programs and service offered. (Actually, it is our responsibility to become aware if we are interested.)
- Need more information about current marketing and public awareness programs and their results. ...should also address the percentage of seniors who have computer access and participate in programs such as AARP that regularly publishes information for members. Are current programs underutilized? If so, has the reason been determined?

**Question 7: Building Infrastructure**

**The Task Force is recommending that the City continue to provide repairs and enhancements to the Rockville Senior Center building so that it can continue to be the focal point for senior programs and services. Do you agree with the recommendation that the Rockville Senior Center building should maintained and enhanced as needed?**

- Absolutely.
- Folks agreed, but only if expansion is truly needed, not because it appears to be needed. One person indicated it would be OK to expand only if it didn't take any money away from other ongoing programs.
- YES this is a great community resource for classes, performances, fitness, art and meetings. As a taxpayer, this is exactly the type of property the City should fiscally support with my hard-earned dollars as a working disabled individual.
- However, expecting RSI to make senior center self-supporting is impossible.
- There should be a clear and enforceable agreement on what “as needed” means.
- Agree, but depends on meaning of “enhanced facilities” and the cost. This marketing effort seems like a solution in search of a problem.
- Maintain, yes. Expand? Maybe. Maybe not. Probably better options – e.g. use space in schools at night, use other City facilities.
- Also the tie-in to the Rockville swim and exercise centers should be very clear and promoted. Back and forth transportation, programs, etc.
- This seems to be adequate for current needs. Enhancements should allow for future growth.
- Yes and soundproof the dining room.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- I have seen the improvements in that building over the years and they have been great. It is important that Seniors feel they have a nice, well cared for place to meet, etc.
- How will what's offered at the new Fallsgrove Community Center duplicate what's offered at the Senior Center?
- Of course, the definition of "as needed" isn't included in your question, and that involves making some judgments. But as a general rule, I would agree it should be maintained and enhanced.
- Senior center should be watched and enhanced on a two to five year plan with buildings and grounds given a thorough scrutiny by City staff and senior center personnel.
- Bearing in mind that a lot of the enhancements have actually been paid for by the seniors who raise the funds themselves.
- Absolutely agree, assuming the current location is being efficiently and effectively utilized. Otherwise, alternative locations should be considered.
- We feel strongly that this is absolutely necessary.

**Question 8a: Diversity**

**Rockville is becoming an increasingly diverse community with many immigrants. The Task Force is recommending that the senior services division pursue methods to attract more non-English speaking seniors to the programs and activities at the Rockville Senior Center, as well as increase community awareness of information and assistance services using translated materials. This will require additional funds be allocated to outreach and marketing efforts, and may also necessitate additional staff. Do you agree with the recommendation to pursue efforts to attract more non-English speaking seniors to the Rockville Senior Center?**

- This cost should be borne by the county or the state.
- Agreed it is important to get to minorities. (I phrased it for minorities, not for foreign born.) It was indicated that this should be a part of the marketing campaign.
- The senior center must be available to all but they must show greater interest in assimilation and citizenship.
- This needs to be a broad based effort, not just to attract different groups.
- In my mom's New Jersey senior center the immigrant groups enjoy the uses of the facility but do not understand the need to volunteer or to interact with the other groups. There needs to be more attempts at integration.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- Diversity is what makes Rockville the great City it is!
- Why? Not opposed to diversity. Just opposed to singling out one group over another. People should choose what they wish to use and pay for that.
- Shouldn't have to advertise to get diversity. Just run the right programs.
- I believe all residents of the U.S. should learn our national language – English. The Senior Center can assist in this with volunteers and courses on site.
- I think you should include all seniors no matter where they come from but they should have green cards and live within the City of Rockville for a period of time.
- This campaign should be part of the marketing campaign in question 6.
- Again, this should be done if money is available and not taken from other important items.
- AGREE, make sure to include deaf, blind, deaf and hard of hearing as well as the blind which means providing accommodation.
- Once again, the task force seems to think that it's all-important to greatly increase the size of the group which uses the Senior Center. I just don't buy that premise.
- This seems to be same as suggestion as #6. If they are interested, they will look into it; Based on how long identified seniors in this county; depends on cost
- Unfortunately many seniors do not now attend Senior Center because they feel that foreigners, particularly Orientals have taken over much of the facilities. This may prove to be reality and have to be faced up to. I do not think that marketing to attract foreigners is necessary because they are very adept at taking advantage of the center now.
- Sr. Services should represent the Rockville population.
- A study needed to be done to determine needs/cost/usage.
- The Sr. Center should attempt to reach ALL seniors, not just foreign-born or minority.
- No simple answer. Too complex and requires more information for a simple response. “Initially, perhaps an ESL program is a more appropriate first-step to this issue.”
- We do not think foreign-born seniors should be *targeted* although feel strongly that all information and assistance should be available in a translated format as needed.

**Question 8b: Do you agree with the recommendation that additional resources should be spent on outreach and marketing efforts to reach non-English speaking seniors?**

- Not sure. Could English classes be taught at the center?

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

- Agree in principle but casual observation of the senior center suggests that “foreign born” users are already well aware of the facility and what it has to offer and are already in the majority, which is ok as long as it mirrors the demography of the area to a reasonable extent. But it may be a concern if such a program was seen to be unduly encouraging failure to adapt.
- We cannot provide translation to all the foreign languages in Rockville (e.g., there are several Chinese languages, let alone other Asian languages, as well as Farsi, etc.) therefore not fair to do it for 1 or 2 languages
- Bringing in new foreign born is only part of the problem, need more attention to integration and understanding from all sides
- Isolation is the primary negative aspect of seniors’ lives; it can result in serious health and psychological problems. Except for American Indians, we are all/or are descendents of foreign-born people – this is a country of immigrants.
- Not for “foreign born” and not for “native born” either.
- Equal to non foreign-born residents.
- They should be treated the same as all others except that offering of English language classes should be communicated and that some translation assistance can be provided to assist them initially. If this is not accomplished, the City will not have an integrated community in the Senior Center or elsewhere. Our schools teach English at all levels — why not to seniors.
- (1) Everyone, including the President of the U.S., is trying to encourage foreign-born residents to learn English. (2) If additional funds become available, other things should take priority: upgrading/improving physical facilities; increasing staff and services; transportation; etc.
- Is there any choice?
- Same comment as above. If there is money to do this after these above items are taken care of - well then - sure. (This was an agree, with reservations)
- Does that mean that there also will be new programs added specifically for one population, say, exercise classes in Chinese? Or just that more programs will accommodate more people?
- Once again, the task force seems to think that it's all-important to greatly increase the size of the group which uses the Senior Center. I just don't buy that premise.
- Reallocate present funding for outreach; depends on cost.

City of Rockville Senior Services Long Range Plan  
TASK FORCE REPORT

---

---

- At this point we are providing essentially adult day care for many non-English speaking seniors new to this country. Providing appropriate services may be difficult in group situations.