

## **Aging in Place: Reimagining the Last Quarter of Life in an Elder-friendly Community**

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On a national level, AARP and other credible sources have found that, when surveyed, older people overwhelmingly prefer to “age in place.” Encouraging communities to be elder friendly is an important aspect of National Association of Area Agencies on Aging policy. When the Health, Housing and Human Services Council of a small island near Seattle used a survey and focus groups to scrutinize unmet community needs in its older population, this same theme emerged. Their efforts then focused on defining aging in place, examined how other organizations and communities have implemented this concept, created support materials, and are now in the process of bringing community agencies and policy makers together to educate providers and consumers. Characteristics of an elder-friendly community include a single point of entry for resources, a wide range of affordable housing options that meet needs of diverse older people, universal design options in buildings and homes, transportation options, opportunities for intergenerational activities, and involvement of older people in policies and community decisions. For this poster session, photos of and information about the essential elements of aging in place will highlight intergenerational activities, transportation, universal design, affordable and accessible housing, walkable neighborhoods and easy access to shopping, community resources, and elder-friendly businesses. Copies of the informational literature created by this project will be provided. Collaborators include:

Elder-Friendly Community Steering Committee:

Bainbridge Island Senior Center

Helpline House

Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers

Washington Adult Day services Association Bainbridge Island Housing Resources Board

Health Housing and Human Services Council

Kitsap County Agency on Aging

Lutheran Community Services Northwest

Bainbridge Housing Coalition

**Objective:** to help professionals in the field of aging imagine a more positive future for ourselves, the current cohort of older people, and the soon to be old boomers by learning how one community researched unmet needs, discovered the concept of aging in place, and the actions under way for implementing a more elder-friendly community to actualize this concept.