

DEVELOPMENT OF AGE-FRIENDLY DESIGN VERIFICATION PROGRAM

PROPOSAL TO COLORADO STRATEGIC ACTION PLANNING GROUP ON
AGING (SAPGA): PHYSICAL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Colorado is aging. The state demographer tells us that from 2010 – 2040 the population of people over 65 will grow more than twice as fast as the population at large.ⁱ Most of these are people who already live in Colorado and are choosing to remain as they age. At the same time, the population is growing at a much faster rate than the available housing. In 2015, Colorado’s population grew by 102,000 people, but only added 25,143 new homes, 15,000 homes fewer than needed for that many new residents.ⁱⁱ

When people move to assisted or skilled nursing facilities the associated costs are progressively greater causing them to spend their retirement savings more quickly and creating a greater risk that they will become dependent on Medicaid and other government services. There are many reasons that people move from living independently to more intense levels of care but accessibility need not be one of them. When seniors can remain independent, they are more likely to live active and healthy lives.

The demographic shift to an older population in the state of Colorado to will require shifts to our state’s programs. More support will necessarily be directed to people over 65. However, if that support goes into housing and thus reduces other costs, it will be a more permanent investment than medical bills or nursing care.

When you look at the demographics of an aging population and the increasing housing shortage it becomes clear that with a little encouragement, we can create an environment that addresses both issues. By encouraging universal design, a greater proportion of the housing in Colorado can be appropriate for a greater proportion of the population. Currently, most homes are not built using universal design principles and these design principles are not widely known or appreciated.

There is a critical need to develop a consistent, industry and consumer informed, standard for Age-Friendly design.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Our team's primary goal is to advance the development healthy, thriving built environments where people of all life stages can flourish. We believe that a design verification program will reward Age-Friendly Design by giving it a seal of approval that can be used by builders to market homes and by consumers to find appropriate homes.

Through this project, we will develop and deploy an Age-Friendly Design verification in order to advance the housing industry, support seniors living at home longer, and enhance the health and vitality of our communities. Specifically, this verification program will:

- increase public awareness,
- provide education to the building, development and real estate industries,
- provide a tool for seniors to plan for their future at home,
- increase the profile and promote age-friendly design in new building throughout the state, and
- create clear and useful standards for retrofitting existing homes.

ESTABLISHED NETWORK & PARTNERS

The Partnership for Age-Friendly Communities (PAFC) for Larimer County has been working on housing issues for 3 years. The Housing Priority Group within the Partnership is a team of housing experts representing builders, developers, Housing Authorities, DOLA, Homeless advocates, senior housing experts, the Office on Aging and sustainability professionals. Together we have deep ties to the community and institutional knowledge of aging and housing issues in Larimer County and Colorado.

In May of 2016, PAFC partnered with the Institute for the Built Environment to hold a charrette on Age-Friendly design. The Age-Friendly verification emerged as a powerful tool to gain traction in this area. We began discussing how to design a verification process that would fit the variety of communities in Colorado.

The Institute for the Built Environment is uniquely positioned to design such a verification because of their twenty years of experience in the green building industry and their position in a land grant university. IBE has extensive experience in administering and even supporting the development of other successful systems like the green building design certification, LEED. Colorado State University has a strategic initiative to support healthy aging through teaching, research, and service. These factors position IBE as the best partner to develop this tool for the state of Colorado.

The Physical Community Committee of the Colorado Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging (SAPGA) as a key partner will provide alignment of SAPGA's overall goals and the legislative context.

Together, these three groups are uniquely qualified to envision, design and develop an Age-Friendly verification program for the State of Colorado.

Finally, Larimer County is an ideal pilot territory for an eventual statewide verification program. With an established network connected through the PAFC, a combination of urban and rural communities, and bridging the mountains and the plains, it serves as a microcosm of the populations of Colorado.

IMPACT

Our team's goals and the Colorado Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging goals are the same. We seek to enhance the lives of our aging population through the development a program which improves the effectiveness of public and private services and ensures efficient use of public funding.

The Age-Friendly Design verification will have transformative impacts to Colorado. It will:

- Advance the Colorado housing industry and educate design, construction, and real estate professionals,
- Encourage housing which allows seniors to live at home longer, reducing their personal expenses and the risk they will become dependent on government services, and
- Empower and educate seniors on how they can have a healthy, thriving future at home.

PLAN OF WORK

Project Objective: Develop and deploy an aging in place verification to advance the housing industry, support seniors living at home longer, and enhance the health and vitality of our communities.

Activity 1: Engage industry and community stakeholders to inform verification program design and implementation plan

- Draft program language using successful models and research best practices
- Draft business plan for ongoing verification management
- Facilitate a series of workshops to receive input from community and industry stakeholders

Activity 2: Design Age Friendly Design Verification Program

- Define requirements and thresholds for achieving verification
- Determine alignment with industry standards (i.e. ADA, LEED, municipal codes)
- Re-engage stakeholders to check and confirm verification design

Activity 3: Pilot Age Friendly Design Verification with partners in Larimer County

- Engage 1-2 projects in Larimer county to implement Age-Friendly design practices and go through the verification process
- Receive feedback and refine the verification

Activity 4: Implement sustainable business plan for age friendly design verification long-term management

- Plan for after seed funding - Ongoing funding from verification fees and/or county partners
- Determine where verification will be housed and the ongoing governance of the system

Activity 5: Deploy verification broadly and provide education and training to businesses and consumers

- Facilitate training for community and industry stakeholders
- Develop public-facing materials to educate and market the program

TIMELINE

ACTIVITIES	FA '17	SP '18	FA '18	SP '19	FA '19	SP '20	FA '20	SP '21
1: Engage Stakeholders								
2: Design Verification								
3: Pilot Verification								
4: Launch Business Plan								
5: Deploy Certificate								

BUDGET

Our team's 4-year project budget is summarized below. Costs shown include personnel fringe and overhead. The full project budget will be managed by Colorado State University and funds to partners outside of CSU will be distributed per agreed terms.

POSITION	RESPONSIBILITIES	COST	
Staff			
Executive Director (IBE)	Oversight, guidance, community stakeholder engagement	\$25,000	
Program Development Manager (IBE)	Deadline and budget management, funder communication and impact reporting, partner management, oversight of all project tasks	\$115,000	
Verification Development Team (IBE)	Development of all verification material, coordinating external reviews, piloting verification, finalizing public-facing materials	\$85,000	
Marketing Manager (IBE)	Design of public marketing materials, website, and overall program brand	\$20,000	
Trainings Director (IBE)	Development educational materials, facilitation of public and industry trainings	\$44,000	
Community Engagement Manager	Development and engagement of community and industry stakeholders to inform verification	\$60,000	
Business Planning Partner	Management of business plan development, in partnership with all invested entities	\$30,000	
		Subtotal	\$379,000
Supplies			

Community Workshop Supplies	Workshop supplies, room rentals and catering, printing, etc.	\$8,500	
Public Education Materials	Final verification materials, booklets, guide sheets, website hosting, etc. for public education and marketing	\$9,000	
Training Supplies	Materials for public and industry trainings	\$2,000	
Travel	Mileage for workshops and educational events around the Front Range	\$1,500	
		Subtotal	\$25,000
		Total	\$400,000

ⁱ Colorado State Demographer. <https://demography.dola.colorado.gov/>

ⁱⁱ Denver Post August 22, 2016

<http://www.denverpost.com/2016/05/19/colorado-population-growth-far-outstripped-new-housing-census-says/>