

Communities for All Ages Assessment Task Force

Update to Westwood City Council
June 2023



Purpose: Create a baseline assessment of how well current city policies and actions improve quality of life for residents of all ages

1. Public outdoor spaces and buildings
2. Housing and commercial development
3. Transportation and mobility
4. Social inclusion, communication, and participation
5. Civic participation and employment
6. Community and health services

Members

Five meetings from January to March 2023

Task Force Members

1. Jeff Harris
2. Ed Land
3. Ann Holliday
4. Laine Raitinger
5. Rita Zeller
6. Elizabeth Dansel
7. Chris Burns
8. Patrick Storm
9. Spencer Day
10. Jenn Wetzel
11. Karen Johnson
12. Lisa Fielden
13. Gary Coleman

Staff

- Leslie Herring
City Administrator
- John Sullivan
Director of Public Works
- Curt Mansell
Chief of Police

Results and Key Findings

- Task Force attendance and engagement was **high**.
- The Task Force was diverse across age, gender, length of time in Westwood, and city role (Staff, elected, appointed, citizen, business owner, parent, Foundation, Westwood Women's Club).
- The Task Force absorbed a **high** volume of information (next slide).
- **There are an abundance of age friendly and aging resources across Johnson County and the KC metropolitan area, but finding and engaging those resources can be daunting.**

Meeting 1 Preparation – Public Outdoor Spaces and Buildings (Wed., 1/25, 6:30 – 8 PM)

In our first meeting, MARC staff and Council President Harris will provide a very brief background summary to lead-off the task force work and each of you will be asked to very briefly introduce yourself to the rest of the task force members. Following that brief introduction, we will launch into the first of the meeting topics – public outdoor spaces and buildings. In preparation for that conversation, please review the following items:

- a. The City's webpage for this program: <https://www.westwoodks.org/communitiesforallages>;
- b. CFAA workbook – Section 1, completed by City staff (attached in a modifiable format for your convenient note-taking); and
- c. Identification of Westwood public spaces:
 - a. [Streets](#);
 - b. City Hall;
 - c. Pocket parks, including:
 - i. [W. 47th Ter. & Belinder Ave.](#);
 - ii. [W. 47th Ter. just east of Rainbow Blvd.\(behind K-Jo and FMA Animal Hospital\)](#); and
 - iii. [W. 47th St. & Belinder Ct. in front of Westwood Public Works](#);
 - d. [Joe D. Dennis Park](#);
 - e. Outdoor seating; and
 - f. Streetscapes.

Further, as you mentally prepare to evaluate the community, it may be helpful for you to begin viewing your immediate surroundings through an “age-friendly lens” if you don’t already. Each week, we will email you a series of questions to consider to prime the pump for our meeting the following week. Some questions for you to consider ahead of next week’s meeting are:

- How do Westwood’s public spaces feel to you? Imagine yourself using them with a stroller, a cane or walker, or crutches or a knee scooter. Do they feel different in those scenarios?
- Are Westwood’s public spaces inviting and do they add value to your quality of life? Do you feel like they are designed with you in mind?
- Do you feel physically safe when using Westwood’s public spaces (i.e. in and around them) and in getting to and from them? Imagine yourself walking, riding a bike, or using an electric scooter or wheelchair to get to/from them. Do you feel different in those scenarios?
- Are there any observations of Westwood’s public spaces that you have made which would improve their design for your use? Is there anything you can think of that makes you want to linger longer in a certain public space in Westwood, get in and out as soon as possible, or avoid altogether? What makes you feel that way?

Resources for Reference Throughout the Task Force Period

In addition to reviewing in-depth the resources provided above, the following additional resources will be referenced at different points throughout the task force convening and would be of great benefit to you to become familiar with. If you aren’t already familiar with these resources, please let me or Council President Jeff Harris know and we can give you historical context before you dive in.

- [2015 Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel](#)
- [2017 Master Plan](#)
- [2018 47th St. Complete Street Plan](#)
- [2021 Complete Streets Policy and Plan](#)
- [2021 Reimagine 47th Place Design Charette](#)
- [2021 Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel](#)
- [2022 City Facilities Assessment and Feasibility Analysis](#)

Gold Level: Action

Bring the Age Friendly Lens to a Major City Plan

1. **City Strategic Communication Plan** and **Resource Campaign.**

- i. City Administration will create a strategic communication plan for Westwood; this has also been a goal for the City Administrator.
- ii. Our action to meet CFAA Gold Level certification will be to utilize this new plan and our communication channels for an extended communication campaign about age friendly and aging resources.

2. **Universal Design.** We are planning two Universal Design Workshops with support from MARC and Universal Design expert Richard Duncan:

- i. Residents, real estate professionals, developers and builders
- ii. City Staff, City Council, Planning Commission