



PROS Plan – Senior Services Focus Group

Date: March 10, 2025

Location: Senior Center, Street, Ashland OR 97520

Attendees: Lynn Roberts, Rosalie Rybka, Patty Winner, Debra Johnson, John Engelhardt, Bryn Morrison, Peter Finkle, Noriko Toyokawa, Eric Molinsky, Anne Bellegia, Jon Pfefferle, Mike Gardiner, Amey Broeker, Char Hersch, Jamie Hanna

Staff: Natalie Mettler, Nancy Mero, Shannon Holt, Rachel Dials, Rocky Houston

Summary:

Rocky facilitated a conversation focused on senior services and programs with the attendees. The results of this conversation and group exercises follow:

Senior Services Group Exercise Results

Group Exercise #1 – the good

- Newsletter, offerings, available digitally and by mail
- Strength and Balance class, all classes are good and reasonably priced
- Good class descriptions in program materials, accessible, geared to audience
- Staff maintains facility at a high level, clean, friendly, preventative maintenance
- Senior programs also at other locations, e.g. Grove, creative use of facility space, incentive to create spaces (e.g. outdoor activity area)
- Staff easy to work with; organized
- Great resource for info for senior needs – transportation, etc. (one-stop)
- Good at extending resources/funding/impact/visibility of programs through collaborations
- Staff knowledge of patrons, authenticity, and connection

The not so good

- Need more staffing and open hours
- Need more funding (increase footprint to meet need)
- Underappreciation of senior services to support working adults
- Need to look at Parks & Rec overall re: senior access (e.g. in parks)



- Shorter open hours equals less vibrant programming
- More support for transportation & mobility issues
- More navigation services
- Day program/adult day care to reach the more frail
- Community members (supporting families & seniors, stay in their homes)
- More bandwidth for advocacy
- Use community seniors better to help other seniors (“buddy system”)
- Better use of intergenerational opportunities/connections
- More volunteer opportunities – seniors' identity, meaning, and purpose
- More jobs for seniors (combat senior poverty)

Group Exercise #2 Dot voting results

Arts & Culture	20	Education & Enrichment	25
Events	24	Fitness & movement	26
Friends & Fun	28	Information Referral	37

Group Exercise #3 The Future

- Intergenerational community center (child and adult daycare, etc., recreation facility with pool, etc.) (example of a similar facility in Charlottesville, VA and Asheville, NC)
- Livable Ashland/AARP/WHO all-age friendly community
- Larger facility with spaces for interest groups, support groups, etc., to foster organic connection
- When adding facility space, remember hearing issues, parking, and other access issues
- Transportation options (shuttle service)
- Engage youth more (e.g. volunteers) because they are lonely/isolated, too
- Housing issues (SOU senior housing) Partner with organizations with large spaces



Better Together

- predictability of housing costs
- exchange of skills with students easier with proximity
- Self-driving cars (Waymo)
- Senior needs more represented in City transportation plan (shuttle)
- Work with high school students – they need community service hours to graduate – we need to better outreach with them
- SOU students also have Senior Capstone projects – collaboration
- Support home-sharing (housing stock sufficient but expectations of privacy too high)
- There will be more and older seniors; adjust programming (Boomer cohort)