

# Age-Focused Planning

## Implementing Age-Friendly Strategies in Southwest New Hampshire

### Overview

A Project of **Cheshire Medical Center** and **Southwest Region Planning Commission** to Address Changing Demographics in Southwest New Hampshire.

- Project activities focus on coordination to improve access to transportation, housing options, economic opportunities, and vital community services for older and younger adults in Southwest New Hampshire.
- The effort will also involve coordination activities for broadband connectivity and other emerging health issues as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.
- Funding and technical assistance provided by the Tufts Health Plan Foundation through June 30, 2021.

### The Need

A previous phase of the project entitled *Age-Focused Planning in Southwest New Hampshire* investigated the implications of changes in four theme areas that impact community vitality and residents' health and quality of life (i.e. transportation alternatives, housing options, economic opportunities and social engagement):

- Demographic trends indicate a decline in youth and residents of working age while the proportion of the population that is 65+ is growing faster than any other age group.
- In contrast to the older adult population, the number of children under the age of 15 decreased by 14% between 2000 and 2010.
- These demographic shifts will have significant regional and local level implications on housing, transportation, economy, and community vitality.

### Objectives

- Increase regional and local capacity to provide a variety of transportation options to places people want and need to go, such as medical appointments, shopping, employment, cultural events, and recreation.
- Increase opportunities for people to be socially connected.
- Increase community participation and understanding of community transportation and ways to address social isolation.
- Increase education of municipal and state officials on the need for public transportation services and funding options.
- Increase use of land-use and zoning tools to create healthier more vibrant communities.
- Increase community and citizen emergency preparedness including response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Get Engaged

There are many ways you can be involved in the project and creating a more welcoming community and region for all ages:

- Review the *Age-Focused Planning in Southwest New Hampshire* study findings, recommendations and guidance specific to your own community.
- Start a dialogue with local and regional partners about implementation priorities and resources
- Connect with other communities developing and implementing Age-Focused action plans.
- Reach out to SWRPC for resources to assist you with the development and implementation of your local action plan.

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