

Vanlue, Ohio: Is it an Age-friendly Community?

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Abstract

As the United States continues to see an increase in the population of older adults over the age of 65, there will be considerations that need to be made in order to provide adequate services to those individuals. Aging affects us all, and now, more than ever, it is vital that we examine how older adults are able to continue to live in their current community, or whether they should look for a more age-friendly community. Age-friendly communities take into consideration the following items: Housing, Outdoors Spaces, and Environments, Transportation, Social Environment, Community Support, and Healthcare/Wellness Services. The purpose of this study is to show how Age-friendly communities can fix a lot of current and future an older adult may run into when they discover that maybe they are not as young as they think they are.

Housing

One of the variables to take into consideration is housing. Some things to take into consideration when looking at housing around Vanlue is Location, Maintenance, Affordability, Access to retail, Access to transportation, Social Services, Appropriate design of housing safe, Safe environment. Without looking at a specific house, I will dive into some of the other variables. Location, access to rental, and transportation, Vanlue doesn't have any retail or transportation within the town limits. Findlay (15-20 minute drive) is the closest city that has access to both. Affordability, maintenance, and a safe environment can be found in housing in Vanlue. Social services like city council, churches, and a post office can also be found in Vanlue.

Transportation

Transportation is another variable taken into consideration when discussing an age-friendly environment. Something that is often looked at when deciding whether the transportation in an area is efficient and serviceable is reliability, age-friendly/specialized/safe vehicles, affordability, parking, community transportation, priority seating, Taxi, and comfort. Vanlue only checks one box, that box is parking. At the community areas like restaurants, gas station, parks parking can be found relatively close.

Healthcare Service

The final variable when looking at what is an age-friendly community is Healthcare services. This would include access to care, promoting positive health, geriatric or physiological care, evidence-based health promotion, emergency healthcare, and illness prevention program. Findlay (15-20 minute drive) is the nearest location that provides all of these. However Carey (5-10 minute drive) does provide a diagnosis clinic, along with basic care tests (ekg, blood, and vaccines). However, Vanlue does have a Volunteer Fire Department that can provide basic Life Support.

Community Support

Another variable to ponder when discussing what can be considered an age-friendly environment is Community Support. Community Support looks at encouraging active engagement, options for volunteering and employment, entrepreneurial opportunity, opportunities to learn or acquire skills, flexibility to accommodate older volunteers or workers. Vanlue has the ability to supply encouraging engagements, options for volunteering, and employment (school, park, Cafe, Post Office), and flexibility to accommodate older volunteers and workers. However, the nearest opportunity for new skills/education and entrepreneurship can be found in Findlay (15-20 minute drive).

Summary

Looking over the criteria to determine whether a community can be considered Age-Friendly Community, Vanlue would be considered not an age-friendly Environment. Out of the six criteria, Vanlue only really meets is Community Support and Social Environment. Vanlue is missing some key services to be an age-friendly community. These would include, Housing (Assisted living and give or take on appropriate house design), Environment (retail), Transportation (cab, taxi, or any specialized transportation service) and Healthcare Services (Advance Life Support, clinic, doctor office, etc.)

Criteria used in determination an Age-Friendly Environment

Housing

Environment

Transportation

Social Environment

Community Support

Healthcare Services

Environment

Another variable of deciding whether a place is age-friendly is the Environment that surrounds the housing complex. The thing that is often looked for in an Age-friendly environment is Places to eat, Walkability, Crosswalk, Pleasant and Clean, Senior Center, Leisure Opportunity, Public toilet. Vanlue has two serviceable community environments, they are the community park (basketball, volleyball, tennis courts, picnic, shelter area, restrooms, and playground for young children) and the school (Track and playground). These community areas are pleasant/clean, walkability environment, and crosswalks can be found on most routes to these areas. Vanlue does have two places where you could get food from, but only one is a place you can go inside sit down and eat. These places are the Wildcat Cafe (sit-down restaurant) and the Marathon gas station (Junk food/pizza).

Social Environment

On the back nine of variables to consider whether a community is age-friendliness is Social Environment. Some things that are looked at are age-friendliness services, respectful behavior, meaningful connections with family, friends, and neighbors, no economic exclaims, age-friendly design and layout, widespread distribution, and the widespread of the right information at the right time. The only thing that Vanlue doesn't have is age-friendly services.

