

How Age Friendly is Perrysburg, Ohio?

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ABSTRACT

Today the population of 65 and older is continuing to grow and individuals surpass the life expectancy of 80 years old. As we are now starting to live longer, it is important that accommodations are made for the older population. Becoming an age-friendly community not only benefits the 65+ population, but also the rest of the population as well. The purpose is to maximize the opportunities for older adults to age actively in their own communities. The World Health Organization has created a set of guidelines on how to determine if a community meets the requirements of being age friendly. These guidelines include housing, outdoor spaces and built environment, transportation, social environment, community support, and health and wellness services. The purpose of my study is to examine how well the city of Perrysburg, Ohio has accommodated in becoming an Age Friendly Community.

HOUSING

Perrysburg has many different housing options for older adults, whether that be independent or assisted-living,

Abundant Life is independent senior housing for low-income senior citizens. To qualify, you must be 62+ years or 55 with a qualifying disability. Also, single general income must not exceed \$24,150 or two individual general incomes not exceeding \$27,600.

- Diversified activities for active and not so active residents, various activities weekly.
- Bus transports residents to local grocery stores.
- Located in a secluded, quiet neighborhood which makes it a great place to walk, ride bikes, or sit outside and enjoy the scenery.
- The Waterford is located at the Levis Commons shopping center. It has independent living, assisted living, and temporary care. The goal is for those living independently to have the freedom from chores and an active social life.
- They have an abundance of amenities such as scheduled transportation services, meal service, entertainment and social events, wellness support, etc.

OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Perrysburg has 11 city parks that offer over 209 acres of green space within the city limits.

- Woodlands Park is a large park housing a disc golf course. Three Meadows Park has ponds, fishing and boating, as well as a picnic shelter.
- The W.W. Knight Nature Preserve features a mix of environments and three different trails, with benches for resting and modern restrooms.

Right in downtown there is the Way Public Library and close by is the Fort Meigs Historic Site.

The Town Center at Levis Commons and Downtown Perrysburg offer many different stores and places to eat.

There are many efficient sidewalks everywhere that you go, and you can easily walk throughout the city.

TRANSPORTATION

Available transportation services in Perrysburg are the Perrysburg Transit and Comfort Keepers:

Perrysburg Transit provides door-to-door transportation services for citizens who need a ride to their medical appointments, work, shopping trips, and much more within the city.

- All vehicles are equipped with wheelchair ramps and other accommodations for those with disabilities.
- Driving hours are Monday-Saturday from 8am-6pm, with a \$1 fixed fee.

Comfort Keepers is an in-home care franchise that focuses on independence, so that is why they partnered with the transportation service, Lyft.

- All drivers must pass a vigorous background check, vehicle inspection, and possess good driving record.
- Rides are charged to your invoice; cost depends on how where they are traveling to.

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Perrysburg Area Senior Center offers so many different things, that there is a newsletter each month.

- Due to the current circumstances, they are offering LivelyU which is a virtual learning academy and digital fitness classes on Zoom.
- Throughout the month of March there were activities such as Wii bowling, book club, apples to apples, combating isolation, etc. For the activities that are in person, there is a 7-person maximum. So, about half of the activities are only offered online via Zoom.

Branches of the YMCA of Greater Toledo offer Silver Sneakers, Silver&Fit, and Renew Active by United Health Care Memberships with participating insurance plans. The Fort Meigs location doesn't currently offer these.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Adult Basic & Literacy Education (ABLE) is a program that is put on through Owens Community College.

- ABLE classes are available at no cost to adults who want to improve basic math and English skills in order to obtain a GED, prepare for additional training or college, or improve employment opportunities.
- The Area Office on Aging of Northwest Ohio, has a volunteer group - Retired and Senior Volunteer Group (RSVP). This group is in neighboring city, Toledo.
- Provides a program through which those age 55 and better contribute their time, talent and expertise to volunteer in their own communities.
- Serving through schools, day care centers, police departments, hospitals, and other non-profit and public organizations.

HEALTH & WELLNESS SERVICES

In Perrysburg there are many health services throughout the city. There are only a few that are specialized in geriatrics.

There are two doctors that specialize in Geriatric Medicine; one is at ProMedica Physicians Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation and the other is at Hospice of Northwest Ohio. There is one Geriatric Psychiatrist at Behavioral Connection.

Mercy Health Hospital is located right off the highway with an Emergency Department, as well as ProMedica Urgent Care and Great Lakes: Urgent Care close by.

CONCLUSION

After conducting research on Perrysburg, Ohio's age-friendliness based on the World Health Organization's six recommended guidelines, I have deemed Perrysburg to be an age-friendly community. This is solely based on the abundance of housing options, outdoor spaces, and health and wellness services.

Throughout the community of Perrysburg, Ohio there is still a need for improvement in the areas of transportation, social environment, and community support. Although there are still many options for these areas, many of them are in a neighboring city. It would be a great idea for Perrysburg's YMCA (Fort Meig's) to start offering Silver Sneakers, Silver&Fit, and Renew Active. As well as the volunteer group, RSVP. These two improvements would encourage its aging residents to become more active both in the community and physically.

REFERENCES

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Other references available upon request.