

How Age Friendly is Medina, Ohio?

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ABSTRACT

As the lifespan increases, so does the need for services designed to support the health and well-being of older adults. Having age-friendly communities available to provide these services is paramount. According to the World Health Organization, an age-friendly community has policy, resources, and programming in place to support older adults in the areas of housing, access to suitable outdoor environments, transportation, access to appropriate social environments and community support, and availability of health services. The purpose of this study is to examine my hometown of Medina, OH to examine whether it addresses the above factors in such a way that it could be considered an age-friendly community. Additionally, I will use my analysis to create suggestions on how Medina could become more age-friendly.

HOUSING

The city of Medina, and Medina County has numerous housing options for older adults. Represented facilities include low-income and subsidized housing for older adults, independent living, assisted living, continuing care retirement communities, nursing homes, skilled nursing facilities, and memory care.

Many of the facilities include more than one type of housing option, often assisted living and independent living. Additionally, most facilities offer both house and apartment style options.

With the exception of the low-income housing, most of the older adult housing options in Medina are expensive, ranging from \$2395 to \$4500 per month. Medina County residents have a median income that is higher than the state average, which is likely a contributor to these higher prices.

Most facilities offer amenities such as being pet friendly, gym and salon services, laundry services, and clubs or other activities for residents.

TRANSPORTATION

Medina offers transportation services through Medina County Transit with older adult benefits acquired through the Medina County Office for Older Adults (MCOOA)

The MCOOA offers subsidized tickets for in-advance curb to curb service (requiring a two-week notice) and regular loop fares around Medina and surrounding cities for ages 60 and older. The bus is wheelchair accessible and pet-friendly.

There are no bus services specific to older adults and the Medina general public utilizes the same bus system

Uber and Lyft are both available in Medina as are several private taxi services, which can offer transportation out of the county and into Cleveland, the closest metropolitan area and the home of the Cleveland Clinic, as well as to the airport.

HEALTH & WELLNESS SERVICES

Medina has a variety of different health services available to older adults.

There is one board certified geriatrician who practices in the city of Medina and an additional three who practice within Medina County.

There are seven different home-health services, 6 hospice services, one of which is a facility located within the city.

Medina city one general hospital, two emergency rooms, two urgent cares, and several different health centers where various doctors, physical and occupational therapists, laboratories, imaging and radiology services, and outpatient procedure services can be found.

The Medina County Recreation Center (MCRC), located in the city, offers reduced cost memberships for age 60+ and a variety of different senior activities and programs. The MCRC also has a Silver Sneakers program for Medicare users that offers free memberships.

OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Medina has a robust parks system which consists of 19 nature preserve/trail style parks, many of which are wheelchair accessible and have indoor and available restrooms. These facilities offer educational and club style programs for seniors.

The city of Medina has 14 built parks that feature paved walking and biking trails, playgrounds, picnic areas, and sports courts. There are two splash pads and a community pool. Most of these parks are wheelchair accessible.

Historic downtown Medina which features many restaurants, activities, shops, and municipal buildings is paved, with wide sidewalks and numerous crosswalks. Route 42 Medina, which is closest to most of the older adult living options, is paved and has wide sidewalks that are wheelchair accessible. Route 18 Medina is not accessible by foot and due to busy traffic, can only be accessed with a vehicle.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Medina County Senior Services Network (MCSSN), The Medina County Office for Older Adults (MCOOA), and The Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging (WRAAA) all offer resources and services for older adults

The MCOOA has a senior center that offers exercise classes, clubs, trips, support groups, and various activities. They offer grant-funded meals on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The Soprema Senior Center outside of the city has a variety of different programs and features a full-service café that is targeted towards seniors.

The MCSSN has a Senior Solutions publication that is available for free online and in print that highlights county wide services, activities, and resources. There are also guides on how to obtain benefits such as subsidized transportation and parking permits. The catalog has numerous articles featuring different housing options, health and dental care services, and free or reduced cost meal options

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Medina, with its many senior centered services both public and private, is a community with an environment that is open to older adults. Besides the numerous clubs and activities that these services provide, Medina has other services for older adults to take advantage of.

The Medina County District Library, located in historic downtown Medina, is a newly renovated, accessible building that offers special activities for older adults

The Senior Solutions catalog also has listings for senior friendly banks, legal services, home repair and maintenance services, real-estate agencies, caregiver resources, adult day care and & respite services, and stores.

Medina does not offer specific intergenerational programs. However, many services accessible to older adults at reduced rates are also utilized by the general public.

CONCLUSION

For a city with a population of 26,000, Medina has a great deal to offer the older adults who live within the city and surrounding county. Primary concerns for Medina are the lack of availability of low-cost, non-subsidized housing, senior specific transportation services, and intergenerational programming. Adding these things to Medina's substantial list of older adult services and resources would go a long way to making Medina a truly age-friendly community.

REFERENCES

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Other sources available on request
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