

Technical Assistance to Brownfields EPA Region 1

Community Engagement in Aging Communities

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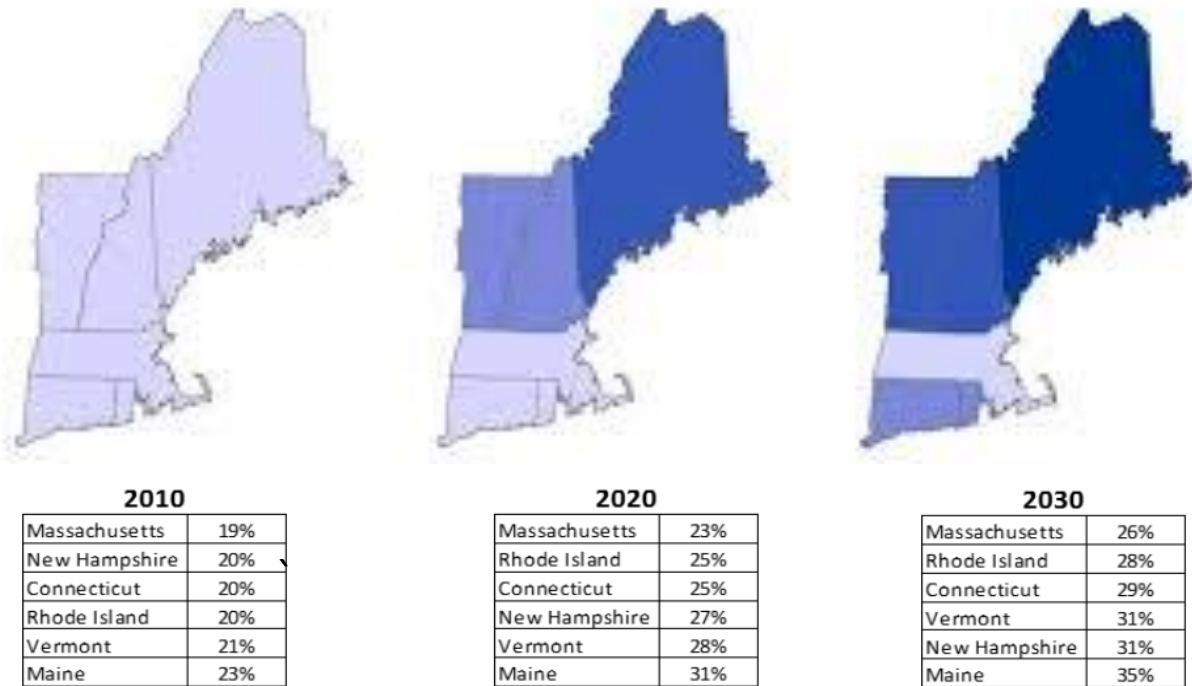
Agenda

1. Overview of Aging Population in New England
2. What is an Age-Friendly Community and Why do they matter?
3. How Can Brownfield Redevelopment Help?
4. Engaging Communities in Aging-Related Projects
5. Key Community Engagement Strategies
6. Region 1 Success Stories



New England older adult population on the rise

Figure 2. Projected Population Proportion at Age 60 or over
New England 2010-2030



- By 2030, approximately **28%** of New England residents will be aged **60 or older**, surpassing the national average
- The smallest towns in northern New England have the oldest populations and the slowest population growth.
- More than 28% of people over 65 in Connecticut live alone.

Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, Demographics Research Group, University of Virginia



World health Organization Age-Friendly Communities

- ❖ 8 domains of age friendly community are areas that can help older adults age well and participate in their community.
- ❖ Goal: Create age-friendly communities that help older adults age in place

This can be done through:

- Universal design principles
- Affordable housing
- Accessible buildings
- Safe streets
- Intergenerational Activities
- Municipal policies, programs and services



We are all Aging: Benefits of Age-Friendly Communities

- **Better Quality of Life** – Promotes independence, active aging, and social connections.
- **Improved Accessibility & Mobility** – Walkable neighborhoods, public transport, and universal design.
- **Economic & Social Impact** – Supports workforce participation, local businesses, and volunteerism.
- **Stronger Intergenerational Connections** – Encourages engagement between youth and older adults.
- **Better Healthcare & Support** – Accessible medical services, home care, and mental health support.
- **Enhanced Housing & Environment** – Affordable, adaptable housing and sustainable urban planning.
- **Increased Community Resilience** – Emergency preparedness, support networks, and elder protections.

“Incorporating age-friendly principles benefits **everyone**, not just older adults, by making communities more inclusive, safe, and adaptable for all generations.”



A scenic view of a golf course featuring a large, calm pond in the foreground. The pond is bordered by a low stone wall. In the middle ground, there is a lush green island with several tall, dark green coniferous trees and a few smaller deciduous trees. The background shows more of the golf course with scattered trees and a few people visible in the distance. The sky is a clear blue with some light, wispy clouds. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and well-maintained.

How might age-friendly development benefit your community?

Community Engagement and Age-Friendly Redevelopment

- Age-friendly communities impact everyone's lives and discussing accessibility allows for broader community involvement
- Many older adults have been aware of community issues for a long time and may have mixed feelings due to past unfulfilled promises
- Excitement about intergenerational spaces as they provide rare opportunities for young and older adults to engage
- Health concerns about abandoned land and its impact on aging populations, with redevelopment offering potential health benefits



The SEEDS FRAMEWORK:

Community Engagement Strategies in Age-Friendly Development

- **S – Stakeholder:** Who are your stakeholders in Age-Friendly Development?
 - Stakeholder Analysis
- **E – Educate:** Educational resources can address and alleviate long-standing fears and concerns among longtime community members.
 - Brownfield 101, Housing Development education
- **E – Empower:** Opportunities for intergenerational engagement (clean your park with your grandparent day), involve all generations in planning process.
- **D – Disseminate:** Senior games night, neighborhood events, partner with senior centers and schools
- **S – Sustainable Outreach:** provide age-friendly community spaces, digital inclusion efforts, transportation and mobility resources vouchers and ride-sharing programs, phone call check in and mix of media outreach, creative arts workshops for all ages



General Approach for Transforming Brownfields into Age-Friendly Development

1. Community-Centered Design:

1. Engage older adults in the planning process to ensure accessibility.
2. Incorporate walkability, green spaces, and transit accessibility.

2. Sustainability & Affordability:

1. Use energy-efficient designs (solar panels, green roofs, smart lighting).
2. Ensure affordable housing options for fixed-income seniors.
3. Partner with healthcare providers for on-site wellness services.

3. Intergenerational & Mixed-Use Concepts:

1. Combine senior housing with community centers for intergenerational activities.
2. Include grocery stores, fitness areas, and medical services within walking distance.
3. Design with universal accessibility (wide hallways, ramps, elevators).



REGION 1 SUCCESS STORIES: Railroad Square (Keene, New Hampshire) Transforming Brownfields into Senior Housing, Park, Medical Facility

- **Background:** Once a bustling industrial area, Railroad Square had several underutilized properties with potential contamination issues
- **Redevelopment:** The area was transformed into a mixed-use development, including a 24-unit service-enriched senior housing facility, medical offices, and community spaces, revitalizing the downtown area
- HOME funds and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) are federal funding programs managed by New Hampshire Housing. LIHTCs attract private investment to develop affordable rental housing, while HOME funds supplement these credits to make projects more financially viable.

“Affordable housing in a walkable downtown area will give seniors the opportunity to stay close to and involved in their community as they age.”



REGION 1 SUCCESS STORIES: Bartlett Station (Boston, Massachusetts)

- **Background:** Bartlett Yard, a former mass transit facility in Boston's Roxbury neighborhood, was a brownfield site contributing to environmental and health concerns in the community
- **Redevelopment:** The 8-acre site is being transformed into Bartlett Station, a development featuring 166 for-sale homes, 214 apartments, and 30,000 square feet of commercial space. The next phase includes Building D, a senior housing facility, and an outdoor park area.

“The housing will be two-thirds affordable. The new homeowners will gain \$500 million in equity over 20 years. The project will generate 100 permanent jobs and approximately 900 construction jobs, with over 60% going to workers of color. Over 60% of the contracting dollars will go to Minority Business Employers.”



REGION 1 SUCCESS STORIES: Ludlow Mills Complex (Ludlow, Massachusetts)

- **Background:** The 200-year-old Ludlow Mills complex, spanning approximately 170 acres along the Chicopee River, was a significant industrial site that had fallen into disuse, presenting environmental challenges.
- **Redevelopment:** The site has been revitalized into one of New England's largest brownfield mill redevelopment projects, now featuring housing, a hospital, and greenspace along the river. Future plans include further development of the historic mill buildings.

“EPA involvement, funding, and support has been instrumental to the success of this project. If it wasn't for EPA's commitment to our project, we wouldn't be able to attract the type of private and public investment into the Mills that we are now experiencing.”



Thank you! Here's Our Contact Info: uconntab@uconn.edu



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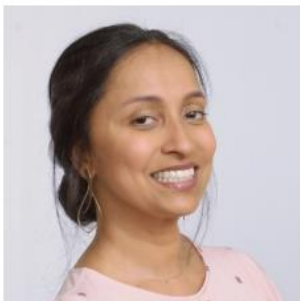
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