

Chapter 5: Fostering Vibrant Engagement in Life

As the population ages and retires, there will be more demand for leisure activities that engage and stimulate. This will be true for the entire region, from the urban to the rural areas. The challenge will be to create and promote widely those opportunities that appeal to seniors. It will also be important for events and programs to be accessible, in terms of affordability, timing, and location so that older people can take full advantage of them. Many programs are in existence now, but they will probably need to be modified and expanded to adjust to changing needs and interests. There will also be opportunities to develop new programs.

The types of activities that are developed, while enjoyable, can also address larger issues, such as the problem of senior isolation, barriers between generations, and maintaining maximum well-being and mental stimulation well into old age. The recommendations outlined below address these challenges by starting first with assessing what recreation and leisure activities are available as well as what is of interest to seniors. From this starting point, opportunities for active, enjoyable and enriching participation can be expanded and promoted.

- 1. INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY AND AWARENESS OF OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF SENIORS' SOCIAL ISOLATION. ("AVAILABILITY" MEANS ACCESS TO AND QUANTITY OF OPPORTUNITIES, WHICH MAY BE SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL, OR RECREATIONAL.)**
- 2. SUPPORT AND PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SENIORS TO CONTRIBUTE TO CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING INTERGENERATIONAL ACTIVITIES.**
- 3. ADVANCE AWARENESS OF THE BENEFITS OF REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND PROMOTE THE AVAILABILITY OF RECREATIONAL AND EXERCISE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SENIORS.**

The following considerations apply in addressing all goals above:

- A. Promote opportunities for lifelong learning.
- B. Select convenient locations that are ADA-compliant (places that people can get to and get in, with activities in which they can fully participate).
- C. Consider and encourage affordability and the availability of transportation when planning programs or activities.
- D. Time programs and events to maximize participation.