

Commission on Aging
Aging in Community Committee
June 11, 2024
9:30 am-11:30 am

“CoA Advocacy and Budget Priority Planning Part #2”

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82315344483?pwd=U0FxeWxDK0hSaGxwb0krQjY2RUFUZz09>

Agenda

- **Welcome and Introduction**
- **Review and Approval of May 14, 2024 minutes.**
- **Meeting Overview (Wayne and Betsy):** At this meeting we will do the following:
 - **Begin to formulate the AIC timetable and content for budget priorities for 2025. (see attached below items No. 1 thru 6 that includes a summary listing from last year and examples from 2024 AIC submission).**
 - **Action items needed: consensus on process, priorities, and timetable**
 - **Planning for the AIC work agenda for the remainder the 2024.**
Action items needed: Specific topics to be investigated, possible speakers
- **Business Meeting:**
 - Update on County Issues
 - Other Business
- **Next Scheduled Meeting:** September 10, 2024. Topic TBD

NOTE: See attached (below) budget-related items for background to frame the budget priorities discussion:

- Attachment #1: Listing of AIC Budget and Advocacy Recommendations for FY 24
- Attachment #2: Proposed Framework for CoA Advocacy Agenda
- Attachment #3: FY 25 CoA Budget Priorities Final Score Sheet.
- Attachments # 4 thru 6: Example of a Budget Priorities write-up for the Gap Filling Transportation Program

ATTACHMENT #1

SUMMARY LISTING OF BUDGET / ADVOCACY PROPOSALS
SUBMITTED BY THE AIC COMMITTEE 07-28-2022

PROJECT	BRIEF STATEMENT	ACTIONS
Establish a safety, accessibility and customer service training program for all Montgomery County taxicab drivers	Improve service provided by taxi and other transportation companies to older adults and residents with disabilities by funding the Passenger Assistance Safety and Sensitivity (PASS) training .	FY 24: Fund at \$190,000 / year
Provide gap-filling transportation services to older adults and residents with disabilities	The MC Commission on Aging urges the requested funding to the MC Department of Transportation (MCDOT) in order to provide “gap-filling” transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities.	FY 24: Fund at \$120,000 / year
Technology Services Enhancements for Staff Support and Training to Older Adults.	The CoA supports the Office of Broadband Services’ request for an additional technology outreach, training, and marketing position to focus on the needs of low-income older adults.	FY 23: Advocate for special appropriation to fund additional position FY 24: Provide funding to Senior Planet for tele-health training
Telecare/Telehealth Demonstration Project to improve access to healthcare services for older adults in Montgomery County	The MC Commission on Aging (CoA) requests funding to carry-out a special demonstration project that will showcase the application of innovative tele-health / tele-medicine services for older adults in Montgomery County.	FY 23: Advocacy and Demo Design, FY 24: \$250,000
Full-Time FTE for Marketing and Promotion (with Attention to Food Insecurity)	The MC Commission on Aging urges the hiring of a full time staff person within the Aging and Disability Services unit of the MC Dept of Health and Human Services.	FY 23: Advocate for Position FY 24: Fund the FTE
Implementation Subsidy For A Hub & Spoke Model For Village Administrative Services	The Commission on Aging (CoA) is requesting that the County FY2024 budget include an implementation subsidy for a “hub and spoke” model of providing administrative services to Villages.	FY 23: Advocacy for funds FY 24: Fund the project
Certification Program for Stronger Universal Design Implementation for Senior Housing	The MC Commission on Aging urges the development and implementation of a Universal Design training and certification program for all developers in Montgomery County as well as staff from the County’s offices of Housing and Aging and Disabilities.	FY 23: Advocacy for certification program FY 24: Fund the program

ATTACHMENT #2

Commission on Aging

JUNE 15, 2023 Executive Committee Process for setting Budget Priorities:

- Process for July 27th, 2023 Budget Priorities meeting and Budget Priority vote
 - o All Commissioners are expected to participate on at least one committee: that is their opportunity to offer budget priorities for consideration. New ideas will not be accepted during the July 27 budget meeting.
 - o AAA Staff and CoA Staff will provide input for their priorities to the 4 Committees/Committee Chairs before or at their July meetings.
 - o Co-Chairs will submit budget priorities to David/ Peter/ Wayne/Virginia by July 19th and no new budget items will be accepted after July 20th Executive Committee meeting.
 - o David will send out a document with all of the Committee priorities to the full CoA, so that people have a chance to review it before the July 27th meeting.
 - o During the July 27th budget meeting, each committee will have up to ten minutes to present their priorities.
 - o After all committee presentations, there will be open discussion.
 - o A voting form will be distributed shortly after the July 27th meeting. Commissioners will be asked to rank their top five priorities in order from one to five and send the voting form to Peter who will calculate the votes.
 - o Final ranked budget priorities will be reported back out to the CoA members.

A Budget Priority should be no more than 1 page for the purposes of presentation to the Commission and include a financial request for an item to be kept in the Budget, increased from a previous Budget, or be included as a new addition to the Budget. The Priority should take in consideration if the item has previously been funded by grants, ARPA Funds, State, or Federal Funds. The Council will want to know how many people will be needed to staff the Priority.

If the funding request involves personnel, the Priority should also contemplate the use of contract labor vs. merit pay employees and at what grade level (if possible) and authority the position should hold. The Priority should contemplate how the County will look at the request through a DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility) lens. Providing information on what problem that the Priority solves and how many older adult lives are impacted should be included in the primary narrative of the request. Specificity and brevity should be considered in the presentation. Documentation and background on the problem, if it does not fit on 1 page, can be provided as supplemental information.

The Commission on Aging will use this Priority setting opportunity to form priorities on top advocacy concerns that may be short or long term in nature, but not impact the FY25 Budget Priority Process.

ATTACHEMENT #3

FY25 Budget Priorities for the Commission on Aging as of August 2023

#1 Priority received 20 votes and a weighted score of 74

Hire a permanent Marketing and Outreach staff person in the Department of Aging Disability Services to promote the many County programs available to older adults, including coordinating the CoA's volunteer Ambassador and Library Liaison Programs.

#2 Priority received 14 votes and a weighted score of 53

HCBS Work Force Task Force: One FTE at a pay grade sufficient to carry out the duties of Implementation Manager.

#3 Priority received 9 votes and a weighted score of 33

Smarter Care Technology Project: Program Formulation and Pilot design \$250,000

#4 Priority received 9 votes and a weighted score of 27

Implementation Subsidy Hub and Spoke Model for Villages

#5 Priority received 7 votes and a weighted score of 25

The Senior Nutrition Program funding

#6 Priority received 8 votes and a weighted score of 22

Early-Stage Memory Loss Program: Budget Request: \$120,000 for expanding services

#7 Priority received 5 votes and a weighted score of 22

Plan of Service Delays – Home & Community Based Service programs (Community Personal Assistance Services, Community First Choice and Community Options Waiver). Advocate for a better plan to address

#8 Priority received 7 votes and a weighted score of 17

Provide \$10,000 to fund the Commission on Aging's annual public forum that brings together noted experts with members of the public to discuss issues important to older adults.

#9 Priority received 5 votes and a weighted score of 15

Respite Services – Increase funding to support Respite Coordination.

#10 Priority received 7 votes and a weighted score of 13

Provide funding for the translation of printed materials specific to older adults. Continue funding for important older adult publications such as ads for The Beacon and production of the public access TV program, 50+ in Montgomery County.

#11 Priority received 5 votes and a weighted score of 13

Provide gap-filling (last-minute) transportation services to older adults and residents with disabilities. FY 25: Fund at \$120,000 / year

#12 Priority received 6 votes and a weighted score of 12

OHCQ Inspections of Nursing Facilities – Continue advocacy to improve State inspection practices and potentially reinstate MOU between HHS and OHCQ.

#13 Priority received 4 votes and a weighted score of 9

Establish a safety, accessibility, and customer service training program for all Montgomery County taxicab drivers. FY 25: Fund at \$190,000 / year

#14 Priority received 4 votes and a weighted score of 8

Across the Lifespan – Coordinating efforts with MCPS, Department of Children, Youth & Family Services and Housing & Community Affairs to enhance intergenerational programming and activities.

#15 Priority received 3 votes and a weighted score of 5

Congregate Meals Site – Requesting funding for a Congregate Meals Site at the new Silver Spring Recreation & Aquatic Center.

ATTACHMENT #4

Request - Provide gap-filling transportation services to older adults and residents with disabilities FY24 Funding Request- \$120,000

BRIEF STATEMENT

The MC Commission on Aging (CoA) urges the requested funding to the MC Department of Transportation (MCDOT) in order to provide “gap-filling” transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities. The funding would provide an important service that will prevent people with an immediate need of transportation service from falling through the cracks in getting their medical and life care needs met. The service would be modeled after the very successful MC DOT’s Emergency COVID Vaccination Transportation Service.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Too many County residents miss vital medical appointments and life opportunities because they don’t have access to transportation. Montgomery County residents were vaccinated at a higher rate than many communities because Montgomery County government made a commitment to addressing barriers to vaccination, including transportation to vaccination clinics. The County’s COVID transportation program leveraged existing contracts with Connect-A-Ride and local taxi companies to ensure access to vaccination clinics: this program can be expanded to meet other needs as well.

Connect-A-Ride is a program run by Jewish Council for the Aging under contract with MCDOT. Generally, its services are limited mostly to providing information and referral to older adults and residents with disabilities about the many programs available to meet their transportation needs such as Metro Access, volunteer transportation, and discounted taxi. The COVID transportation program allowed Connect-A-Ride staff to connect residents with free taxi rides when these other programs were unavailable. The COVID transportation program can be expanded to provide transportation for other needs, including trips to medical appointments and opportunities vital for quality of life. Such a program would help ensure that older adults and residents with disabilities get where they need to go.

311 operators are familiar with the Connect-A-Ride service and can connect callers directly to it. Under the existing contract, Connect-A-Ride is required to conduct outreach to make County residents aware of its availability. Funding for this project would go toward staffing and promotion of Connect-A-Ride, as well as funds to cover taxi fares.

Recommendation - Establish a safety, accessibility and customer service training program for all Montgomery County taxicab drivers.

Cost - \$190,000 annually

BRIEF STATEMENT

Improve service provided by taxi and other transportation companies to older adults and residents with disabilities by funding the [Passenger Assistance Safety and Sensitivity \(PASS\) training](#). A nationally-recognized industry standard, PASS training ensures that passengers are transported in the most safe, sensitive and careful manner possible. These funds would enable Montgomery College staff to deliver the training to drivers, and DOT to compensate drivers for their time.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The MC Commission on Aging (CoA) recognizes the need to provide better training of taxi drivers who serve older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income residents. The CoA has heard on numerous occasions about drivers who are verbally abusive, insensitive, and lack understanding of appropriate customer service techniques, given their clientele, and the proper use of the wheel chair accessible vehicle and equipment. We strongly believe the County needs to provide periodic sensitivity-type customer service training to every driver who serves older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income residents. The drivers need to be compensated for their time to incentivize participation in order for them to attend. The CoA urges the development and implementation of a certified training program that is both required of all taxi drivers and is based on national standards, such as those developed by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA).

The Commission on Aging and the Commission on People with Disabilities have advocated for more robust training to ensure that taxicab drivers understand their responsibilities when transporting individuals with disabilities and seniors, especially using wheel-chair accessible vehicles (WAV). Respondents to a recent survey about taxicab usage, conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Transportation, indicated that patrons believed that taxicab drivers have a general lack of awareness of the proper protocols of transporting individuals with disabilities. The County's Call-n-Ride subsidized trip programs, that involve residents that are at a higher level of needs, are a growing percentage of taxicab trips. This makes such a certified training program all the more important.

TITLE Certification Program for Stronger Universal Design Implementation for Senior Housing

BRIEF STATEMENT

The MC Commission on Aging (CoA) urges the development and implementation of a Universal Design training and certification program for all developers in Montgomery County as well as staff from the County's offices of Housing and Aging and Disabilities. Such a training and certification program would be needed to insure the options for Universal Design features were adequately considered and implemented in new, existing, and rental housing for older adults. This effort would be done jointly with the MC Offices of Aging and Disabilities, Office of Permitting Services, and the Housing Opportunities Commission. The effort would also engage Developers in the County

FY 2023: Advocacy to County Council for this effort to build a constituency and support. Work with national organizations to frame a concept for a training and certification program.

FY 2024: Funding Requested of \$50,000.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

It is envisioned that this initiative will have the following outcomes:

1. All developers in Montgomery County should have one staff member certified in UD to review all housing destined/marketed for seniors/people with disabilities whether for sale or rent. The County Housing Department should similarly have staff certified (not just familiar with but certified) in UD, and all housing plans for seniors should be reviewed through that lens.
2. All developers marketing homes to seniors should ask the buyer to sign a document stating which if any UD features, he wishes or does not wish installed prior to moving in. The list of UD features on the document can include the additional price for each feature, if installed. Prices should be based on market prices and verified by the County housing department, comparing with similar costs for non-profits.
3. The County housing Department should prepare a minimum list of UD features to share with potential renters/purchasers.
4. All new senior housing as well as refurbished rental senior housing, in Montgomery County should be pre-equipped with broadband capability strong enough that it can accommodate some of the tech health, safety and entertainment features seniors may need, e.g. cell phones, personal alarms, streaming services, electronic personal assistants like Alexa, virtual medical appointments, remote work or banking needs.