

Topic: Population Aging

Convener: John Carney

Room: G

**Discussion Summary:**

- Main concern: the greatest demographic shift on the planet. Particularly in America.
- **Doubling of the number of seniors over the next several decades. Huge shift in population – impact is larger than we think.**
- This is a new problem. How can the community prepare for this shift? Need to build community awareness, long-term planning.
- How do we prepare in a sustainable way?
- **Disproportion of aging in urbanized area.**
- No one “gets” it.
- Aging population will help create solutions. Universal design, livability, etc. Ideas for transportation, housing, etc.
- No social systems addressing this.
- **We depend on government systems to address this. What about private business? Some risk here, but important. Tension between private, nonprofits and government.**
- Have to business opportunities, entrepreneurial opportunities.
- How do we make this a green issue, not just a grey issue?
- Younger folks will need to rely on experience of older adults in dealing with this. Stay connected to this resource of wisdom. Needs to be presented as opportunity.
- Retirement/aging is about vacation, freedom, doing what you do after a long career. No one thinks about bringing these people back into civic life.
- **78 million Boomers today. Twelve percent of KC’s population is 60+. Controls 77 percent of wealth!**
- Unstable economy, losing retirement . . . will this population need to work longer?
- Impact on the school system when boomers were going through school – restructuring systems.
- **Aging boomers will still be taking care of their parents, who are in their 90s.**
- People over 85 fastest growing group because they are living longer.
- Create systems of support for these groups.
- Not connected with any civic group.
- WHO says aging population and urbanization are two out three top world issues.
- We funnel money into silos. These silos don’t really address aging.
- **Stop “medicalizing” everything. More lifestyle issues than medical.**
- How do we address getting around, the basics?
- **This is a community issue. Biggest challenge is community awareness.**
- **Look at this as a great asset. People with the most education, resources, wisdom. These people want something to do with the rest of this life. Get them involved – civic participation. Already a movement to this. Get them to educate everyone else on these issues.**
- Have got to reach out to urban core and minorities. What do you do with these groups when they lose their house?
- Overwhelming need to start planning for this demographic at city level.
- There are good models to look at – even in this region. England is farther along increasing solutions – they, too, have a large problem.
- Capitalize on the current positions of the boomers in corner offices. Lots of power there.
- No interest in going to old-folks home. Lack of single-level housing that is close to core.
- Retrofitting houses, universal design, and new technologies. Need resources, make affordable. Entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Concern about taking advantage of seniors is a real concern.
- Worry about reverse mortgages on old people. Some solid, some very risky. Need consumer education.
- Opportunity in the memory of boomers – how things used to be in neighborhoods.
- Getting back to the social networks we had – these are vital but have changed over time.
- Community transportation is a large issue. Some older adults shouldn’t drive.
- 90 percent of 65+ have drivers license – what does this mean for safety. How do we work with this? Golf car lanes? Provide other options.
- Redefining communities for aging.
- Tax incentives.

Meeting time: Session 1: 9:30 a.m.

Recorder: Karen Clawson