

**Minutes**  
**Senior Services | Aging in Place Task Force**  
**Housing Working Group**  
**May 18, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.**

**1. Call to Order**

Housing Working Group meeting called to order at 7:10 PM.

**2. Roll Call**

Present: Richard Schmitt, Chair; Cynthia DeMan; Jerry Amber; Jim Schneider; Carol Windorf; James Downing; Melinda Loftin; Nancy Robinson; Susan Clark

Absent: None

In attendance: Peter Young, Ex-officio

**3. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting**

**Regular Meeting May 4th, 2022**

Motion by Jim Schneider

Second by Cynthia DeMan

Carol Windorf abstains

Aye: all

No: none

Approved unanimously

**4. Approval of Agenda for tonight's meeting**

May 18, 2022 agenda approval

Motion by Jim Schneider

Second by Cynthia DeMan

Aye: all

Nay: none

Approved unanimously

**5. Next Meeting Dates (In Person/Hybrid(?)):**

- a. June 15, 16, 22, or 23rd (location TBD)

Meeting will be held in person. Email will be sent out once the date is set.

**6. Review and discuss summary document updated by Richard Schmitt on our results to date.**

The workgroup discussed changes to a draft summary document. This section summarizes the significant points group members have when editing. The group went into fine details about what words best emphasize the document's message and intended tone. This section records some of the broader concepts but some of the debates about the fine details are not recorded.

The group's goal was to make a document that balances bold, firm, and concrete language with diplomacy.

Jerry suggests changing goal number one from "creating a fulltime position" to "assigning responsibly".

The group decided to change it to “providing a fulltime position”. The team prefers to be bold and concrete.

Jim asks if goal number three could be changed add details to and clarify aging in place in people's existing house.

Aging in place may need clarification. What place are we aging in? Aging in homes? Age in the community?

The goal should start with aging in place broadly and then work in specifics like ‘aging in home’ and then go into other specifics.

Paragraph 2 adds historical data about ROSES. Remove paragraph number 2.

Two goal 2 recommendations:

- A goal to provide a list of age friendly housing.
  - Would age friendly property owners ask to be on the list?
  - Leave it up to the city. We don't want to solve the problem for the city.
- List of aging in place assessment service.
  - Identify resources for residents aging in place. Assessment tools could be part of this; including self-assessment.

Some sort of ADU ordinance is feasible and should be considered.

## **7. Finalize Goals and Recommendations**

The group discussed their goals and recommendations document. They discuss the details and finalize edits. The final document ([Attachment 1.](#)) is attached below.

## **8. Public Comments**

None

## **9. Adjournment**

Attachment 1.

## **Vision Statement:**

We envision a city that identifies opportunities, ideas, and direction for a diversity of housing solutions for seniors to remain and age in the Royal Oak community.

## **We Heard Statement:**

We heard from 697 respondents to our community surveys and 135 participants in our seven focus groups conducted from April 2019 through January 2020 with 67% of them were in the over 60 age group.

92% of the respondents say they currently live in single family detached housing. In order to safely “Age in Place,” 64% believe they need to make modifications to their homes. Such modifications include adding grab bars, handrails, and non-slip tiles. The next most popular modification was to add/relocate a bedroom, bathroom and/or laundry on the first floor of their current home.

83% of our respondents said that trustworthy and affordable home repair contractors were very important. 75% of respondents stated a need for home maintenance support is very or somewhat important to them and 64% stated that seasonal services like leaf removal and snow removal for low- and moderate-income older adults as well as for older adults of any income.

Overall, the responses from the focus groups expressed aspirations for more single floor housing options, without stairs, that are affordable or exclusive senior or senior assisted living options.

## **Our Goals and Recommendations:**

### **Goal #1: Meet the needs of Royal Oak’s growing Senior population by providing a Full-Time Position to connect Seniors with Programs and Services.**

Based upon the latest data from SEMCOG, the City of Royal Oak will experience an increase in population of Seniors aged 65 to 84 of 34.8% (+1184) from 2019 to 2045 and a larger increase over 85 aged population of 179.4% (+1189) in the same period.

To support this forecast in our Senior populations, we need the City of Royal Oak to significantly improve both the existing programs administered out of the Administration at the Senior Center or the Planning Department. The existing programs and services such as R.O.S.E.S and Housing Rehab that are funded by CDBGs would need to grow to support the growing population.

We concluded that the best way to improve and expand these programs is to provide a full-time budgeted position to:

- 1) Increase outreach to local churches, businesses, schools, service groups to support volunteerism to our senior community for seasonal tasks like leaf raking, snow shoveling/plowing, spring yard clean ups (i.e., Earth Day, Arbor Day, etc.)
- 2) Better maintenance of both print and online senior friendly resources and contractors previously used for minor home tasks (i.e., grab bars, handrails, etc.)
- 3) Maintain current lists of contractors previously used and vetted for home modifications that might be more expensive or don't meet the criteria of CDBGs that support moderate to low-income seniors (i.e., relocating bedrooms and laundry facilities to main floors, bathroom modifications and opening doors to be ADA compliant, etc.)
- 4) Support current staff for the R.O.S.E.S and Home ReHab program with outreach to Royal Oak Seniors.

**Goal #2: The City shall provide easily accessible Resources on available “Age-Friendly” Housing in the City:**

- 1) Identify and maintain connections to “affordable” Senior Residences such as the 450 existing units in Barton Towers and Royal Oak Manor as well as the “Age Restricted” market-rate 147 units at the Villages of Royal Oak.
- 2) Develop and maintain connections to other “market-rate” rentals, condominiums, and single-family ownership opportunities in the city that meet “Age Friendly” design elements such as “zero-entry”, single floor living with elevators if in multi-story buildings.

**Goal #3: Meet Royal Oak Seniors desire to “Age in Place” by facilitating the development of “Affordable” Senior and “Market-Rate” Senior housing.**

We believe that the existing inventory of “affordable” and “market-rate” Royal Oak Senior Housing units will not be adequate as that population grows:

The City of Royal Oak should aggressively market to developers as development sites become available for additional “affordable” or “market rate” senior housing.

To support these activities; we feel the City needs to include in the current Master Plan Update areas of the City that fit an “Age Friendly” Senior Housing location, close to central city and commercial services, and include in the Master Plan Update areas of the city where zoning could be created specifically to allow creation of ADUs , Carriage houses, or “Mother-in-law” apartments for use by aging family members.

Furthermore, the City of Royal Oak should facilitate the construction of additional dedicated senior and/or senior friendly housing by:

- 1) Identifying underutilized city owned land or land available for strategic acquisition.
- 2) Making that land available to private and non-profit developers through an RFP process for redevelopment as senior or senior friendly housing
- 3) Work with successful developers to rezone property to facilitate redevelopment to meet future senior or senior-friendly housing.