

# A Call to Action & Engagement



*From Michelle Hoersch, Chief Planning Officer  
Multisector Plan for Aging*

The future of aging in Illinois starts now – and it starts with you.

**EngAging Illinois** is not simply a plan; it is a promise we make to ourselves, our parents, our children, and every generation that follows. This is not a distant challenge. It is an immediate opportunity to reimagine what it means to age well and then act accordingly.

Every sector, every community, every individual has a stake in this transformation. Whether you are a healthcare provider adapting to serve an aging population, a local official planning age-friendly infrastructure, a business leader recognizing the value of experienced workers, a neighbor looking out for older people nearby, a caregiver, or an older adult charting your course for the decades ahead – your engagement is essential.

The thriving, multi-generational society we are building is not only about adding years to life; it is about adding life to years. When we make Illinois an exceptional place to grow older, we make it better for everyone. This collective action is our social responsibility.

Together, we will make Illinois the gold standard for aging well in America.



## Here's How You Can Act Today

Everyone will benefit from **EngAging Illinois**. Therefore, everyone has a role to play in translating the Plan into real progress. In addition to the work of state agencies, we can all find ways to support making the Plan's priorities, strategies, and actions become reality.

- **All of us** can advocate for age-friendly policies in our workplaces, towns, and the General Assembly. Challenge ageist attitudes wherever we encounter them. Support caregivers, both paid and unpaid, who form the backbone of our care systems. Connect with your local Area Agency on Aging to get involved with community programs. Engage with the **EngAging Illinois** initiative, become an ambassador, track our progress, and contribute your ideas, talents, energy, and leadership.



- **Elected officials** can review the Plan, and its funding strategies, for legislative ideas that will help transform the lives of older constituents. We also hope they will speak up publicly on behalf of these ideas to raise awareness of both the opportunities and challenges that the aging of our population presents.
- **Local governments** can use the community assessments and other tools and resources to ensure their city, town, township or village is paying sufficient attention to older citizens and providing age-friendly services and infrastructure that enable all of us to live well as we get older.
- **Service providers and community-based organizations** will play an essential role in many of the priorities and other exciting actions in the Plan, from piloting new affordable housing models to implementing age-friendly programs.
- **Foundations and other philanthropic organizations** can identify the strategies and actions in the Plan that align with their funding priorities and offer expertise and financial support to create public-private partnerships that extend government investment in age-positive policies.
- **Businesses** can create vibrant, supportive multi-generational workplaces, employ older workers, extend support to employees who are caregivers, and ensure their businesses, services, and products are accessible and attractive to people of all ages.
- **Caregivers** can access the services and respite essential to maintaining their own health and well-being so they can live and age well while they provide daily support for friends, families, and clients.
- **Older adults** can take the lead in advocating for **EngAging Illinois'** priorities with federal, state, and local elected officials, participate in the initiative's Action Groups, and continue, where possible, to contribute ideas, talents, and leadership on a whole range of efforts (in this plan and beyond) that make Illinois an even better place to live for this generation and for generations to come.

**EngAging Illinois is for all of us—and will take all of us to succeed.**