AGING CITIES:
THE ROLE OF THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
MAY 22, 2018
MYTH 1

“There is no need here.
In our country, our seniors are cared for by their families”
MYTH 1: THERE IS NO NEED; OUR SENIORS ARE CARED FOR BY FAMILY
MYTH 2

“Due to our country’s healthy lifestyle and good healthcare, our seniors can live independently longer than ever.”
MYTH 2: OUR SENIORS CAN NOW LIVE INDEPENDENTLY LONGER THAN EVER
**BIOLOGICAL AGING**

**Communicating Systems**
- Declining ability to react to stimuli
- Degrading reflexes
- Memory loss

**Examples of Appropriate Design Responses**
- Extend times for such devices as elevator doors
- Provide screened and shared outdoor areas
- Design mechanical systems to avoid drafts
- Provide landmarks for wayfinding
BIOLOGICAL AGING

Mechanical Systems

● Loss of bone mass, elasticity, and physical strength
● Loss of balance
● Increased vulnerability to falls

Examples of Appropriate Design Responses

● Avoid devices that require twisting or pinching
● Minimize walking distance to key activities
● Provide chairs designed to facilitate sitting and standing
● Avoid tripping hazards
● Provide opportunities for exercise and fitness
● Provide handrails
BIOLOGICAL AGING

Control Systems

● Digestive issues including bladder control and incontinence

● Declining cardiovascular system that diminishes energy and other issues

Examples of Appropriate Design Responses

● Frequent accessible bathrooms

● Fitness programs and facilities

● Healthy menus and dining areas that stimulate appetite
BIOLOGICAL AGING

Detection Systems

- All five senses decline with age
- Hearing and sight are most important

Examples of Appropriate Design Responses

- Higher lighting levels and reduced glare
- Alarm devices that assume lower sight and hearing level
- Reduce background, ambient noise levels
BIOLOGICAL AGING

Alzheimer’s and senile dementia

- Age-related diseases

Examples of Appropriate Design Responses

- Small group settings for dining and activities
- Enhanced wayfinding
- Safe wandering paths
BIOLOGICAL AGING

Other typical aging issues
● Disengagement and isolation
● Need for continuity

Examples of Appropriate Design Responses
● Space to accommodate personal furniture and possessions
● Life-long learning programs
● Programs that engage
MYTH 3

"We need to create new senior living communities outside our cities where land is affordable and they can be with other seniors"
MYTH 4

“"We need to create a model for senior living""
MYTH 4: WE NEED TO CREATE A MODEL FOR SENIOR LIVING
MYTH 5

“It is too costly. We do not have the resources to address this issue.”
MYTH 5: WE DO NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE

- Barrier-free universal design
- Safe streets
- Supportive land use regulations and policies
- Preservation and adaptation of existing housing stock
- Senior service centers
- Senior-friendly public transportation
- Accessible geriatric healthcare
- Technology
- Supportive residential environments for the physically and cognitively fragile or disabled
MYTH 5: WE DO NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE
AGING CITIES:
THE ROLE OF THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
MAY 22, 2018