

# CMRPC Age Friendly Action Plan

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# Age Friendly Central Mass

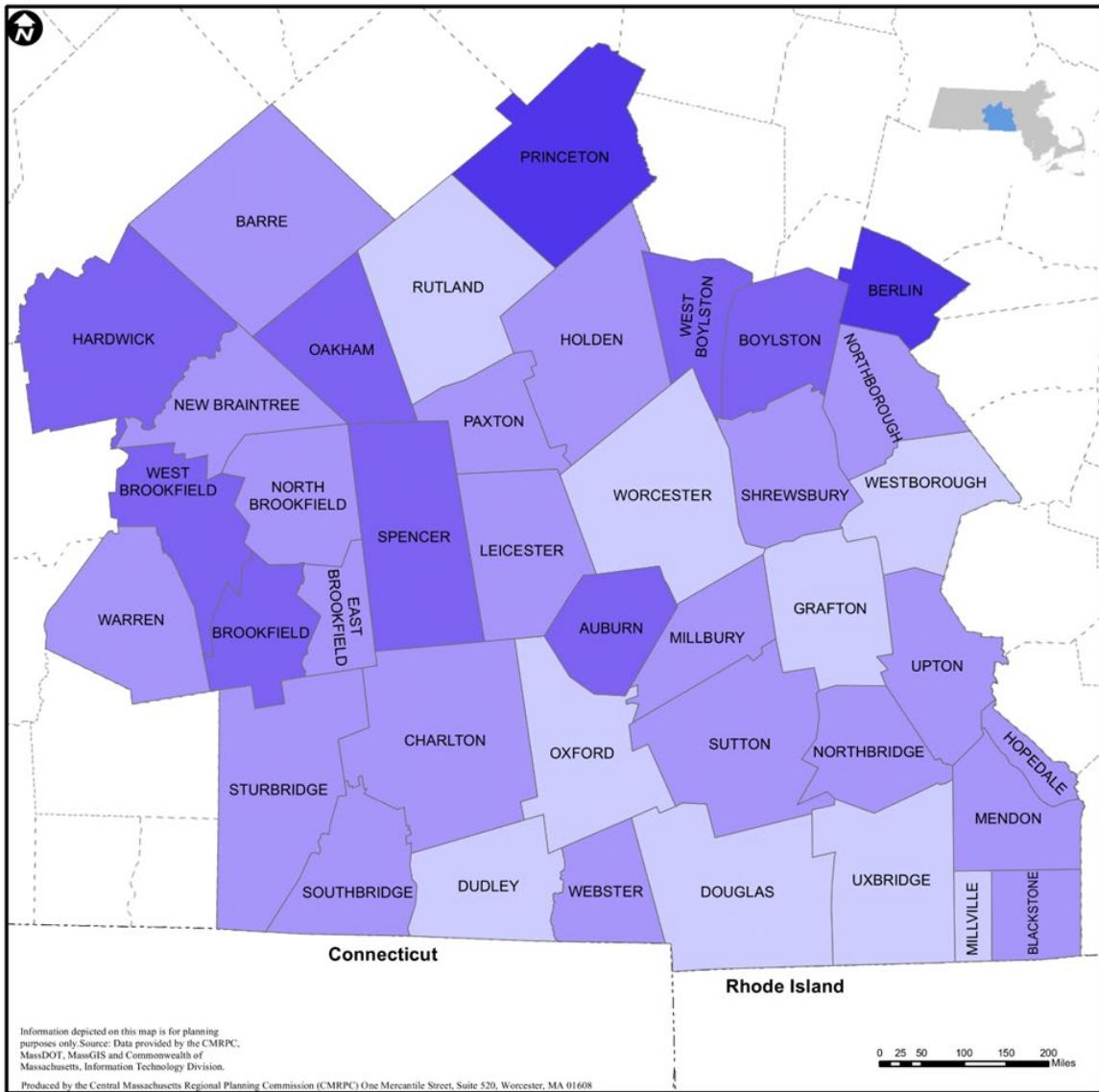
## Age-Friendly Designation (2021)

- Recognized for being an Age Friendly community for 5 years

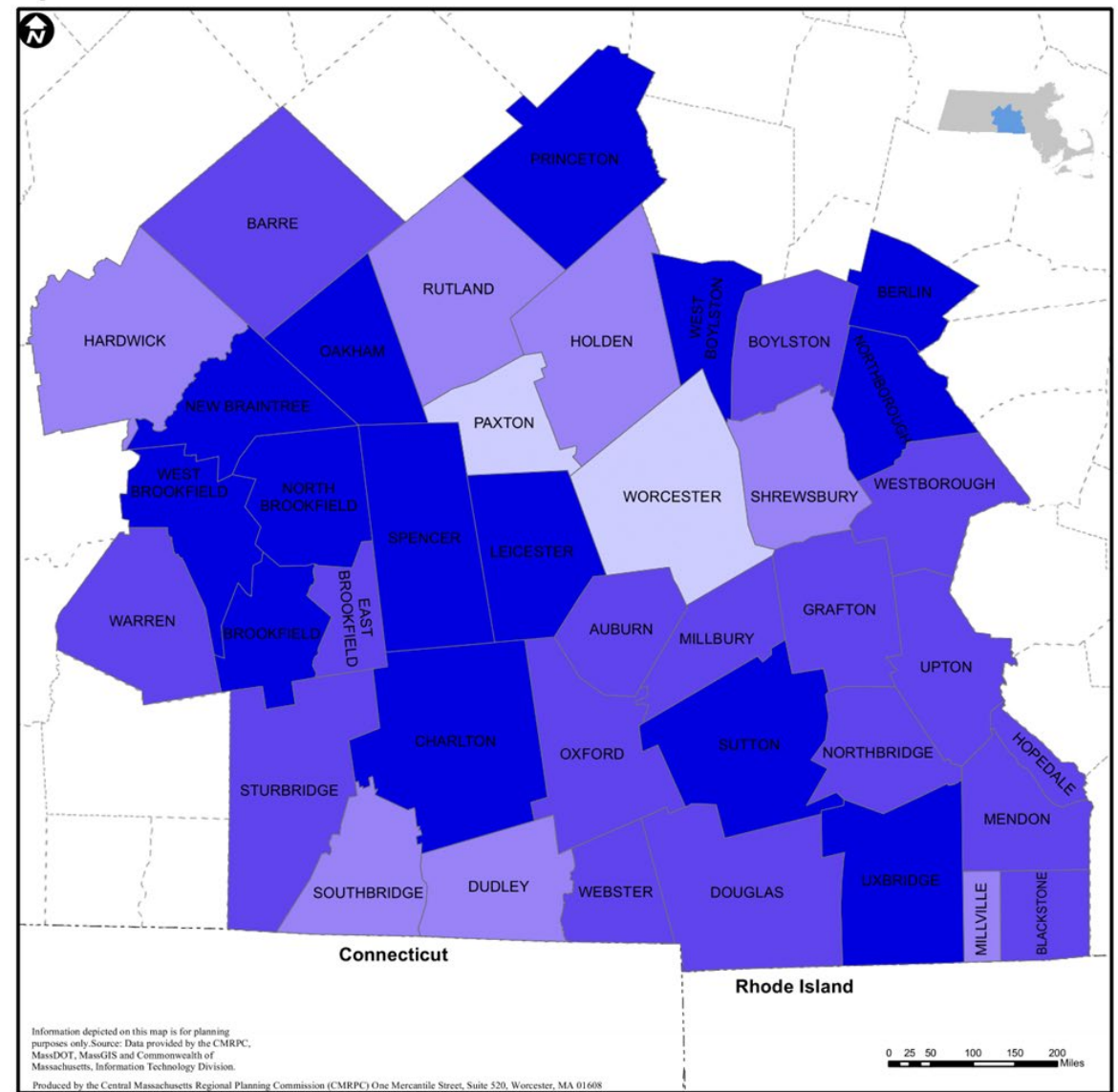
## Age Friendly Action Plan (2023)

- Provide status update every year

Population Percent Over 60



Population Percent Over 60



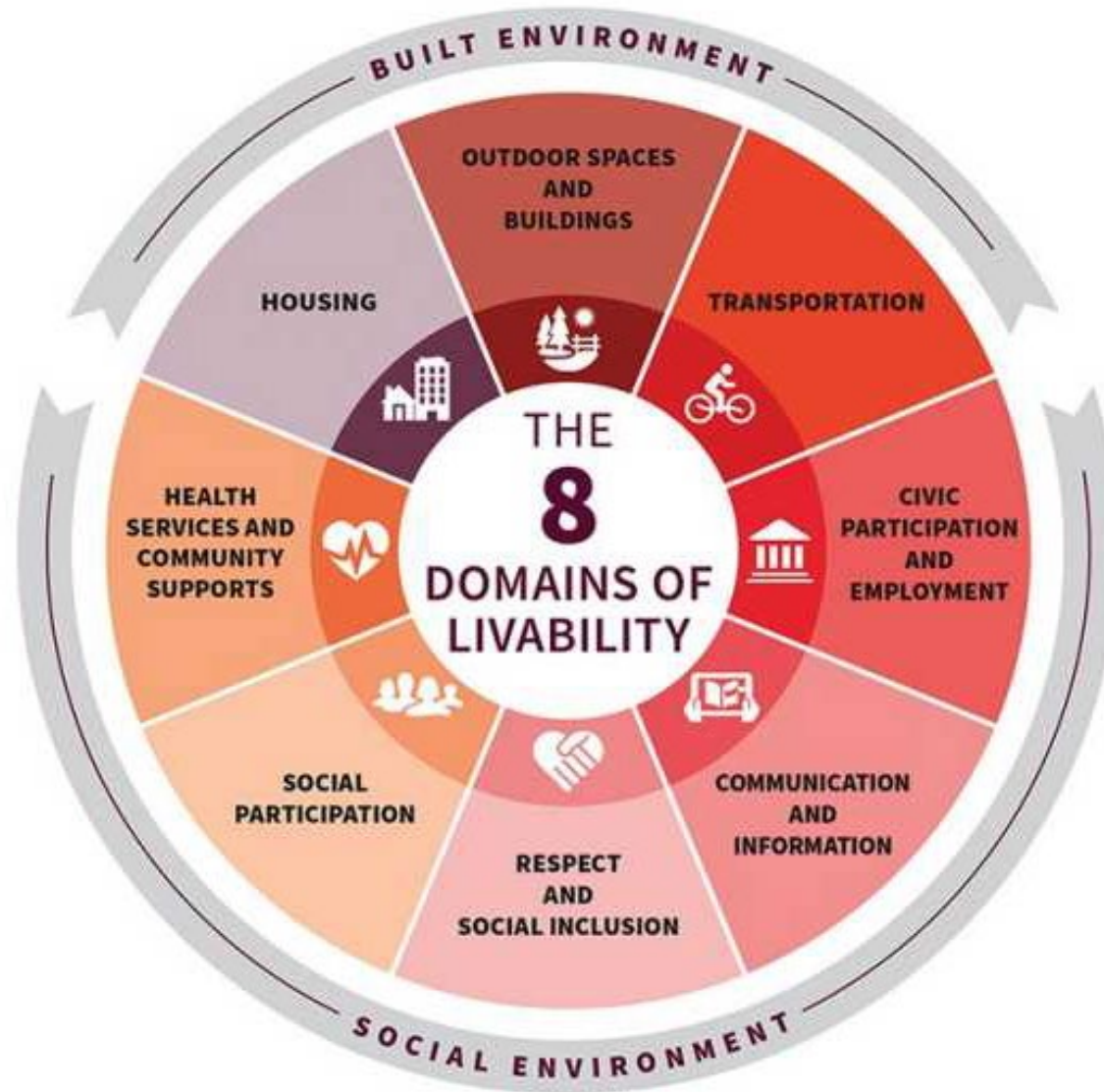
Population Percent Over 60 (2019 ACS)



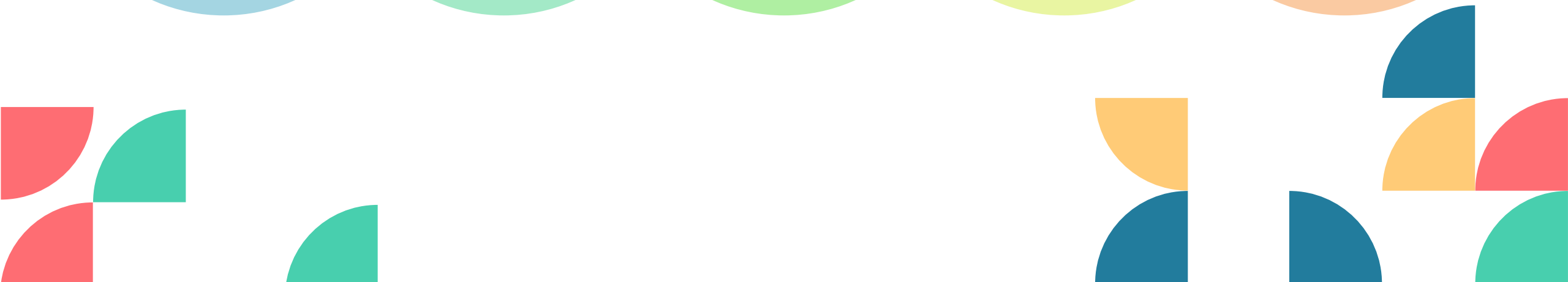
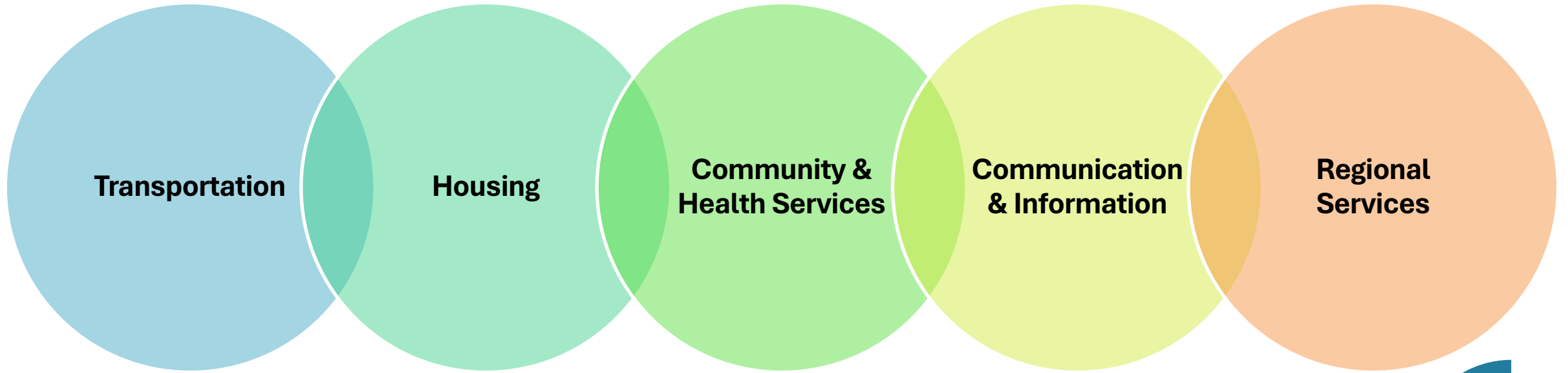
Population Percent Over 60 (2040)



# 8 Domains of Livability



# 5 Domains of Focus



# Transportation

- Health Equity Partnership of North Central MA (CHNA9) Transportation Study underway and formed a Transportation Management Agency (TMA).
- CMRPC funded TriValley to provide long-haul transportation for medical appointments in Charlton, Douglas, Upton, and other communities.
- WRTA Travel Training at Senior centers for older adults.



# Housing

- CMRPC Housing and Transportation study.
- The City of Worcester has a property tax abatement for low-income adults.
- CMRPC pursuing funding with partners for HomeShare program matching older adult homeowners with graduate student renters.

## Homeshare



### HomeShare Reaching More Corners of Vermont

We are excited to announce the largest geographic expansion in HomeShare Vermont's 43-year history. HomeShare will soon begin serving all of the Northeast Kingdom (Orleans, Caledonia and Essex Counties), Windham County and the remainder of Windsor County that wasn't covered with our expansion two years ago.

"This is a major step forward in our long-term goal of serving every Vermonter who can benefit from the program," HomeShare Vermont Executive Director Connor Timmons said. "Through the additional support of the State Legislature and our new strategic partners, we are much closer to realizing that goal."

Of course, being HomeShare Vermont, we will be leveraging connections and job sharing to cover these new areas. Much like the successful partnership that was



formed in 2023 with the Thompson Senior Center in Woodstock, we will embed HomeShare case managers within organizations that have long histories of serving their respective communities.

In the NEK, we will partner with the Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging. In Windham County and in southern Windsor County, our partner will be the Windham & Windsor Housing Trust. "We are so fortunate to work with two organizations that know these regions well and are already working with many of the people who can benefit from homesharing – either as a host or a guest," Timmons noted.

After case managers from these two organizations are trained over the next few months, we hope to begin serving these new areas by the end of the summer.

If you live in a town in our new service area, we'd love to hear from you about any local outreach opportunities, so we can spread the word about homesharing!

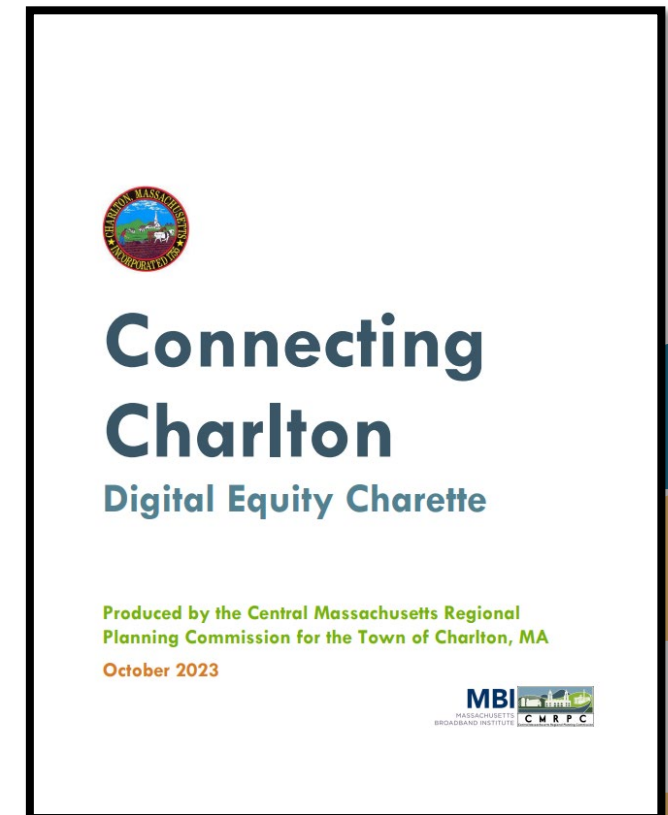
# Community & Health Services

- Community health workers employed by the Charlton Coalition for Public Health, South Central Mass Partnership for Public Health, and the Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health.
- Elder Services of Worcester, City of Worcester, Open Sky, Southern Middlesex Opportunity Council, and Community Healthlink organized Older Adult Outreach events to connect older adults to services.
- Worcester Senior Center hosting behavioral health group for men 65+ and cultural affinity groups.



# Communication & Information

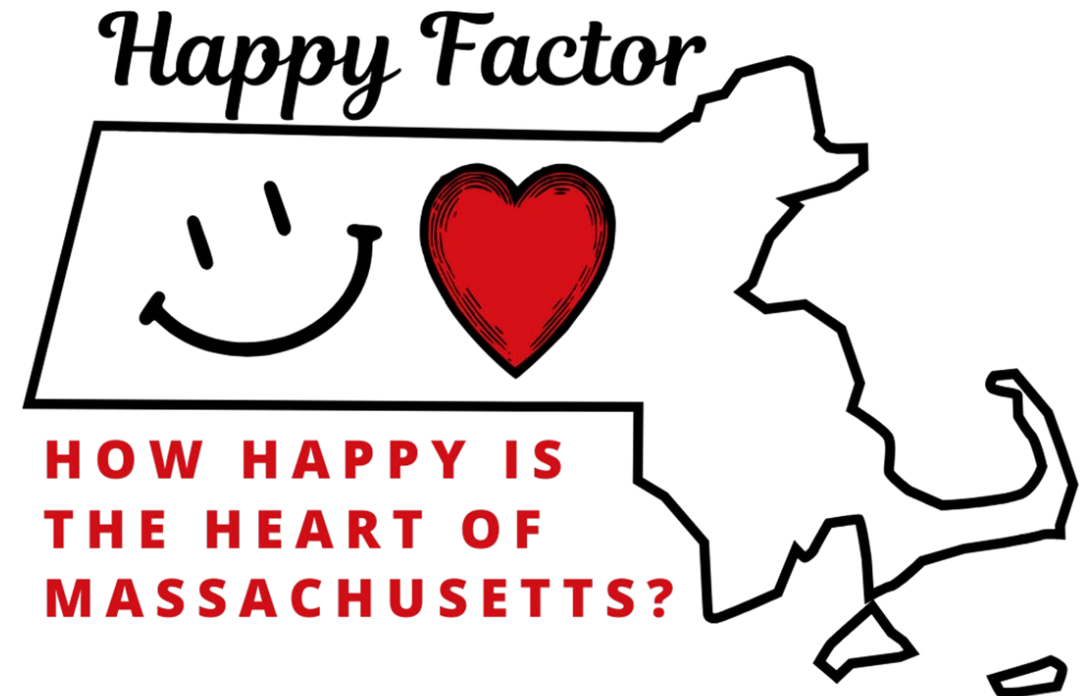
- Digital Equity Plans have been produced for the following communities: Worcester, Millbury, Brookfield region, and Charlton.
- Digital Equity Trainings held in Worcester at Green Island Neighborhood Community Center and Worcester Elder Services.
- CMRPC developed best practices guide for local cultural council. Provided guidelines for working with older-adults.



# DISCOVERING THE HAPPY FACTOR

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Building Connection,  
Purpose, and Civic  
Engagement in Central MA



# WHAT IS THE HAPPY FACTOR?

- Community-based
- Focussed on social connection, volunteerism, civic engagement, and creating a sense of well-being for older adults
- Funded through the Massachusetts Community Health and Healthy Aging Fund

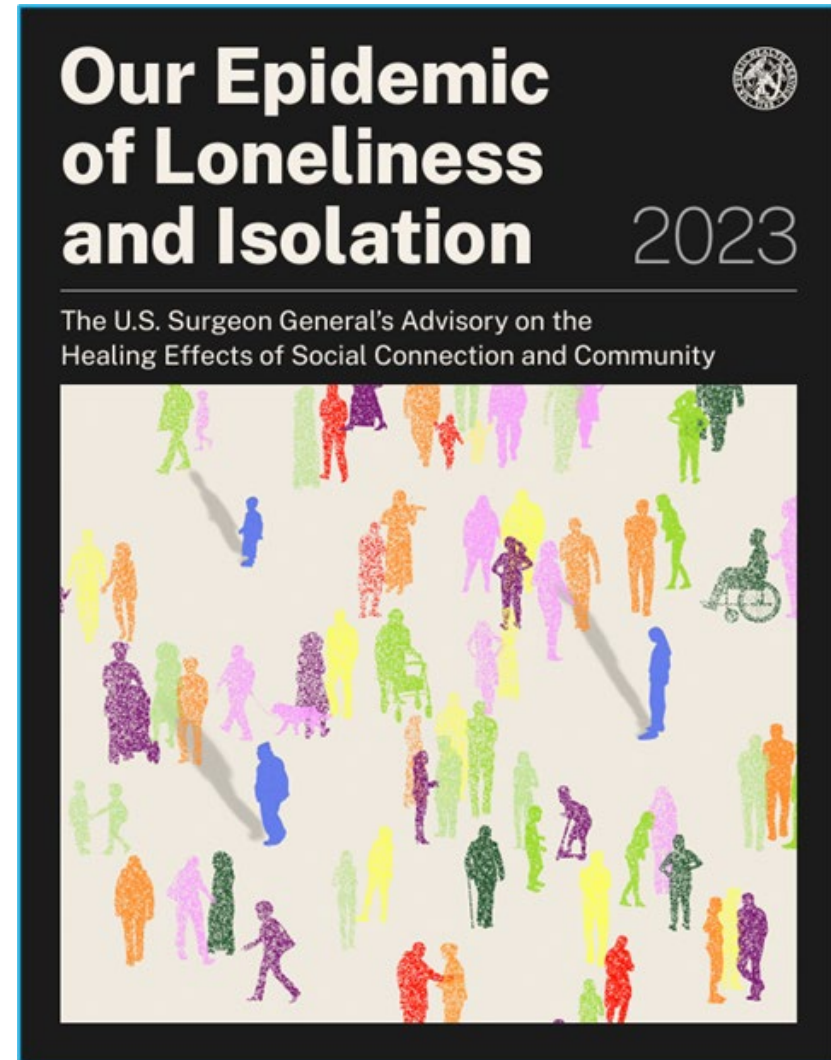
# BACKGROUND

Informed by the U.S. Surgeon General's advisory on loneliness

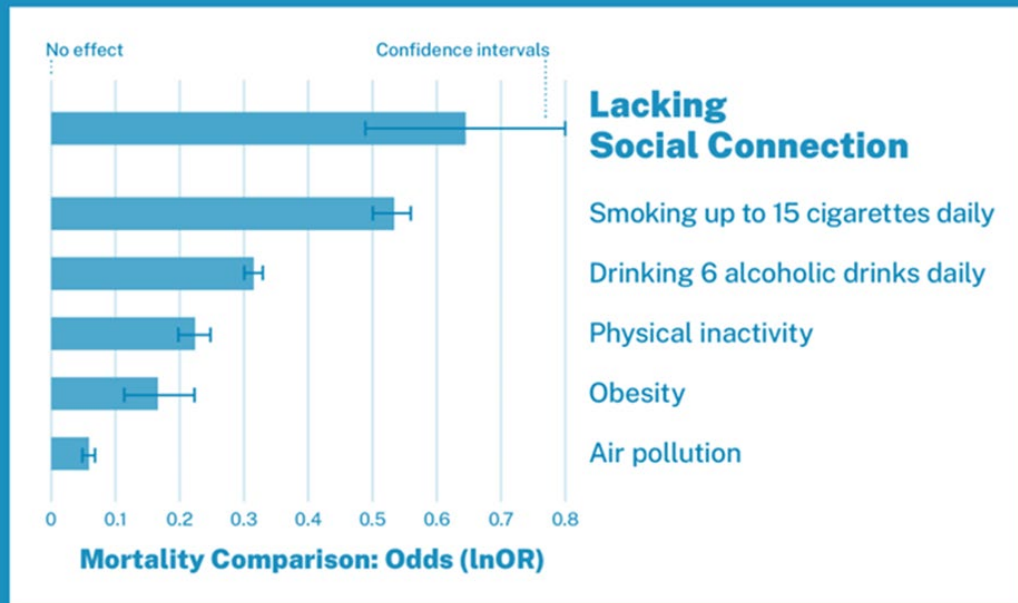
**END LONELINESS  
COALITION**

**LONELINESS  
DISCOVERED AS A TOP  
CONCERN OF AGE  
FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN**

**CMRPC IDENTIFIED  
REGIONAL TREND OF  
LACK OF MUNICIPAL  
VOLUNTEERISM**

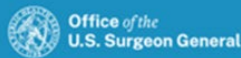


# Lacking social connection is as dangerous as smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day.



**Comparison groups:** Complex measures of social integration: high v. low; not smoking v. smoking < 15 cigarettes daily; alcohol abstinence v. drinking > 6 alcoholic drinks daily; physical activity v. inactivity; low BMI v. high BMI; low air pollution v. high air pollution.

**Source:** Holt-Lunstad J, Robles TF, Sbarra DA. Advancing Social Connection as a Public Health Priority in the United States. *American Psychology*. 2017;72(6):517-530. doi:10.1037/amp0000103. This graph is a visual approximation.

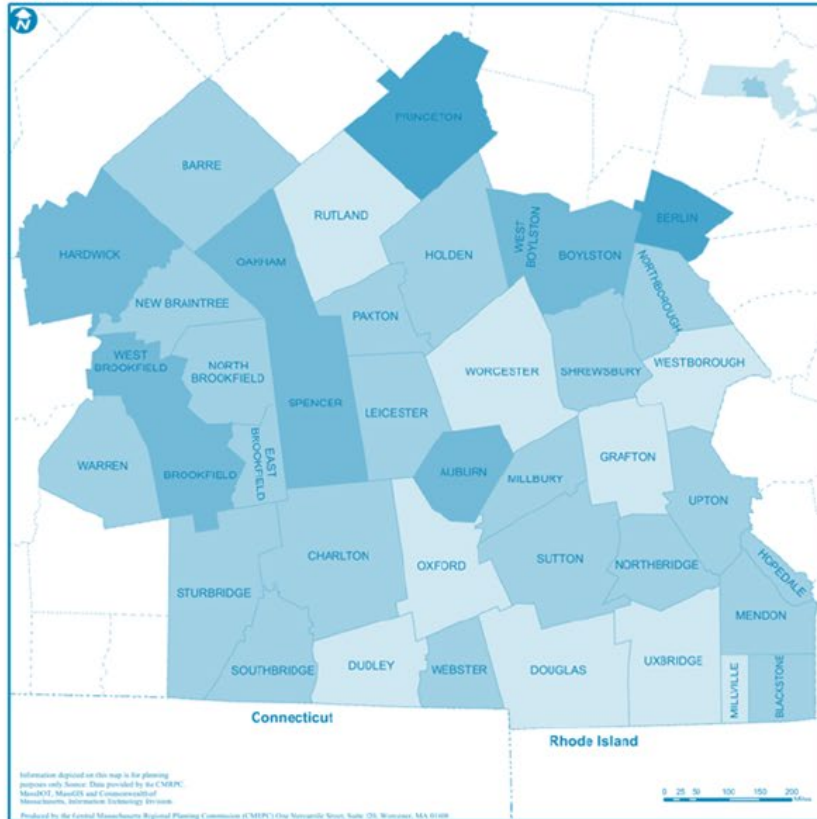


“Over four decades of research has produced robust evidence that lacking social connection- and in particular, scoring high on measures of social isolation- is associated with a significantly increased risk for early death from all causes.”

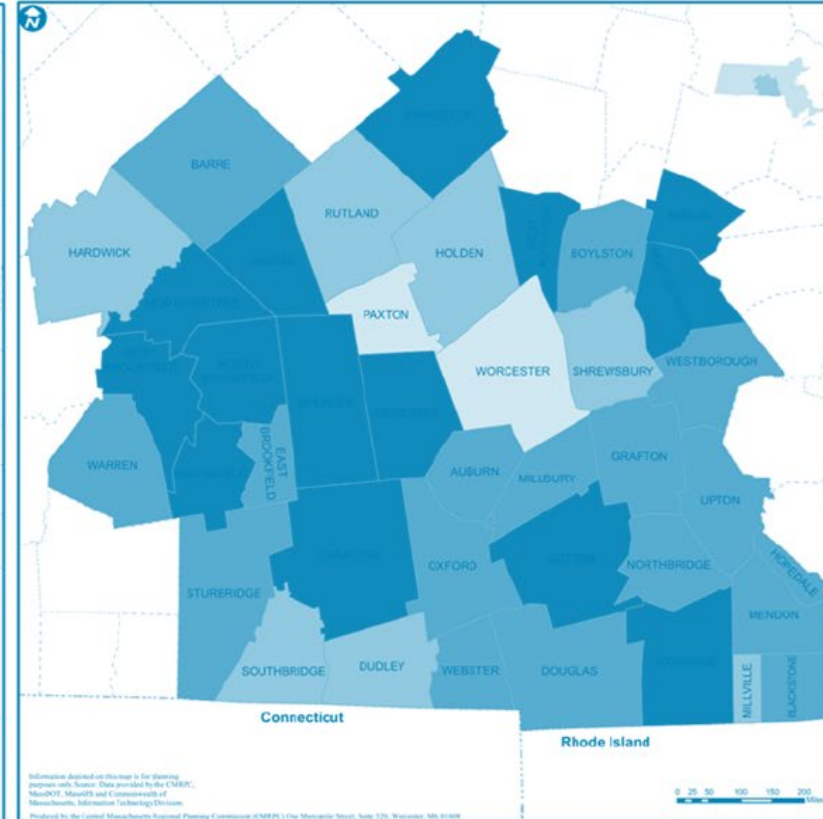
2020 Consensus Study Report, National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine.

# CENTRAL MA AGING POPULATION

Population Percent Over 60



Population Percent Over 60



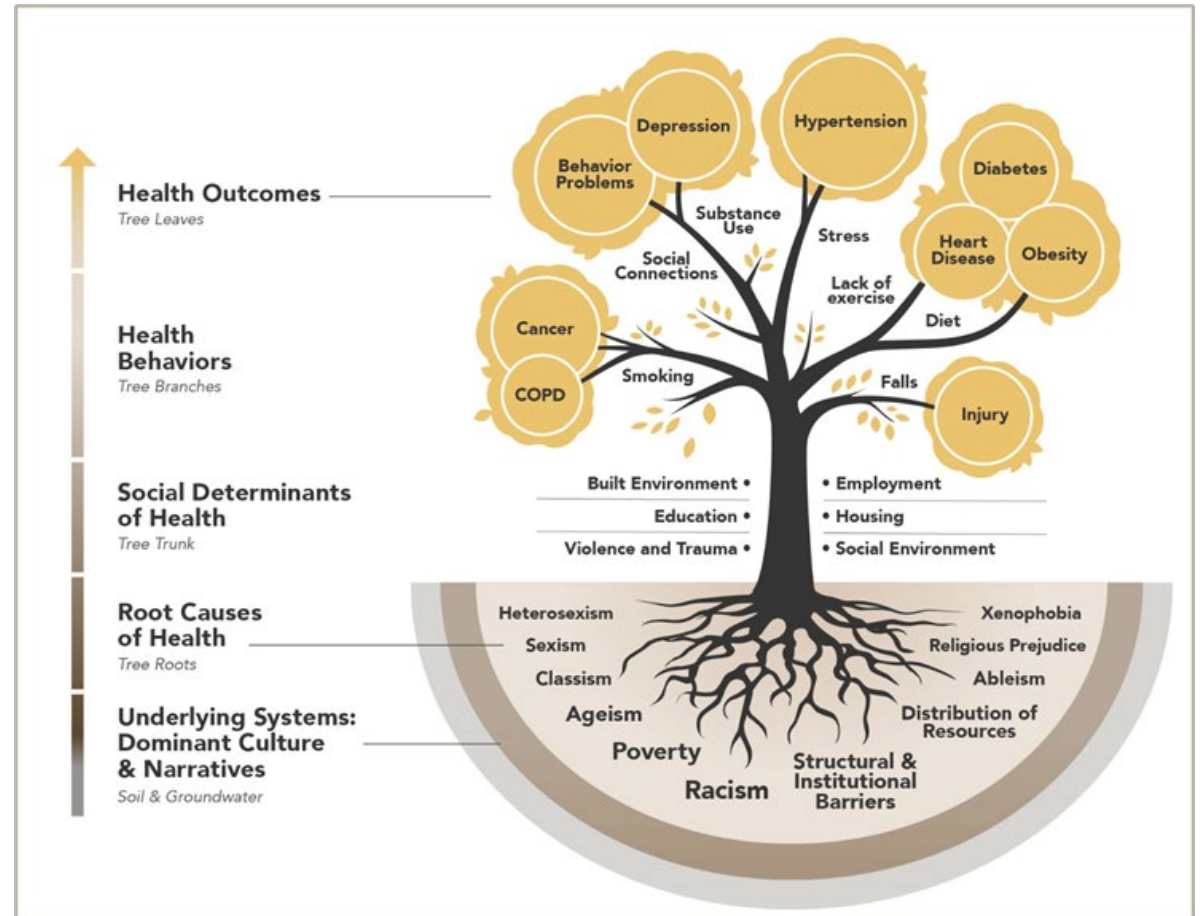
# OUR PARTNER: MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY HEALTH & HEALTHY AGING FUNDS (MACHHAF)



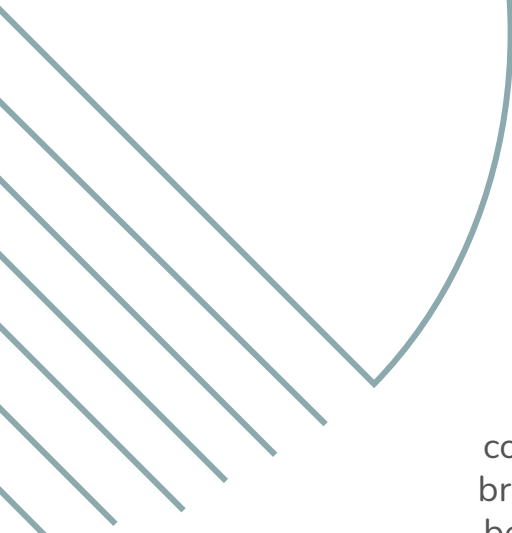
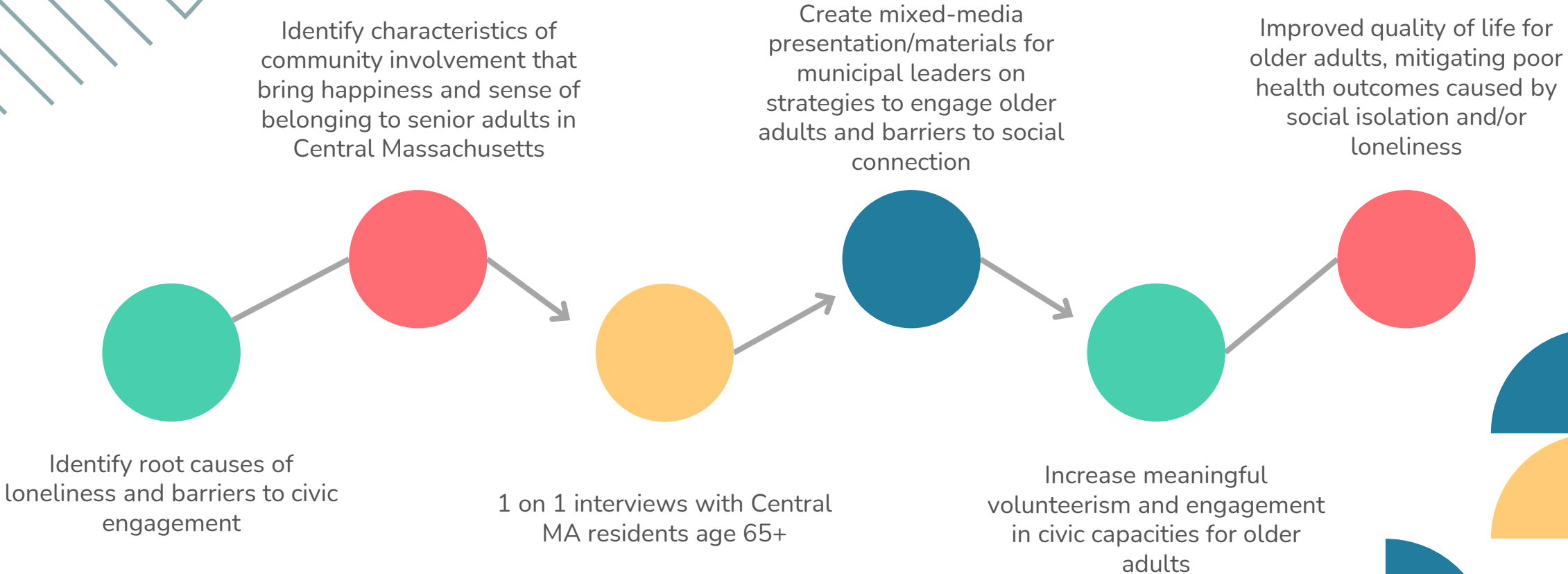
## — Massachusetts — COMMUNITY HEALTH AND HEALTHY AGING FUNDS

The Funds' strategy is based on a model that connects health outcomes to the **root causes** of those health outcomes.

Awardees focus their initiatives on the root causes of health and social determinants of health to create a sustainable impact on health outcomes.



# PROJECT PROCESS & GOALS



# KEY INSIGHTS FROM INTERVIEWS

PEOPLE WANT TO FEEL USEFUL AND CONNECTED

VOLUNTEERING OFTEN IMPROVES SENSE OF PURPOSE

COMMITTEE SERVICE CAN FEEL CONFUSING OR UNWELCOMING WITHOUT GUIDANCE

MEETINGS NEED TO BE ACCESSIBLE

PEOPLE RESPOND POSITIVELY TO BEING ASKED DIRECTLY TO SERVE

LOCAL COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICITY IS KEY

# REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS



## Recruitment

- Advertising & marketing
- Leveraging Career & Personal Strengths
- Optimize Board Make-ups



## Retention

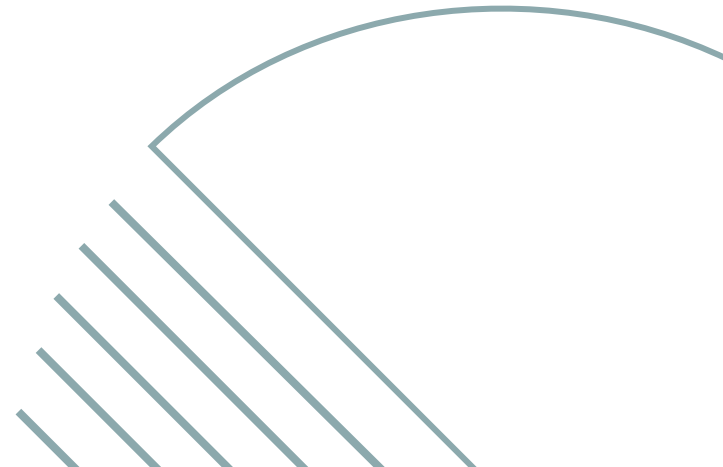
- Trainings
- Meet Basic Needs for Participation
- Member Recognition & Succession Planning



Happy Factor  
video  
premiere  
4.2.2026 – 19  
Carter, Berlin,  
MA

# NEXT STEPS

- Engagement with regional COAs, town administrations, public resources to distribute & present the video.
- Award mini-grants to support local efforts that address barriers to civic participation and are aligned with the strategies and findings of the report.





# THANK YOU

[www.cmrpc.org/](http://www.cmrpc.org/)

<https://cmrpc.org/regional-collaboration-community-planning/regional-services/healthy-aging/happy-factor/>