

I4A ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

NEWSBRIEF

The Maturing of Illinois – Getting Communities on Track for an Aging Population

By 2030 one in every five Americans will be over the age of 65. Are communities prepared for a growing aging population? A national report, entitled “The Maturing of America – Getting Communities on Track for an Aging Population, concluded that 46% of American communities have begun planning to address the needs of the exploding population of Baby Boomers.

A national survey, conducted by n4a – the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging in partnership with the International City/County Management Association, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, and Partners for Livable Communities, found that although many communities have some programs to address the needs of older adults, very few have undertaken a comprehensive assessment of what it would take to make their community “elder friendly.”

The full report, available at www.n4a.org, includes findings and best practices in the areas of health care, nutrition, exercise, transportation, public safety & emergency services, housing, taxation and finance, workforce development, civic engagement & volunteer opportunities, and aging & human services.

Are Illinois communities prepared? The number of people over age 60 in the State of Illinois is projected to increase from 2 million in 2006 to 3.6 million in 2030 – an increase of 77%. The number of persons age 85 and over is projected to increase by 109% from 192,346 in 2000 to 402,311 in 2030. Minority persons age 60 and older living in Illinois will increase from 307,137 in 2000 to 983,396 in 2030 – a 220% increase.

The thirteen Area Agencies on Aging in Illinois in partnership with the Illinois Department on Aging have launched a statewide initiative entitled, “The Maturing of Illinois – Getting Communities on Track for an Aging Population.” Area Agencies in collaboration with citizens, local governments, and organizations will conduct a comprehensive assessment of selected communities over the next three years. The process is designed to help community leaders assess their assets, identify areas for improvement, and create a blueprint for the development of a livable community for all ages.

For more information about this statewide initiative, contact the Area Agency on Aging serving your community. A directory of Area Agencies on Aging by planning and service area (PSA) can be found on the website for the Illinois Department on Aging at <http://www.state.il.us/aging> and on the website for the Illinois Association of Area Agencies on Aging at www.i4ainfo.org.