

Light Rail and Inclusive Housing - Keeps Older Adults with Disabilities (and Younger too) Close to Family & Friends

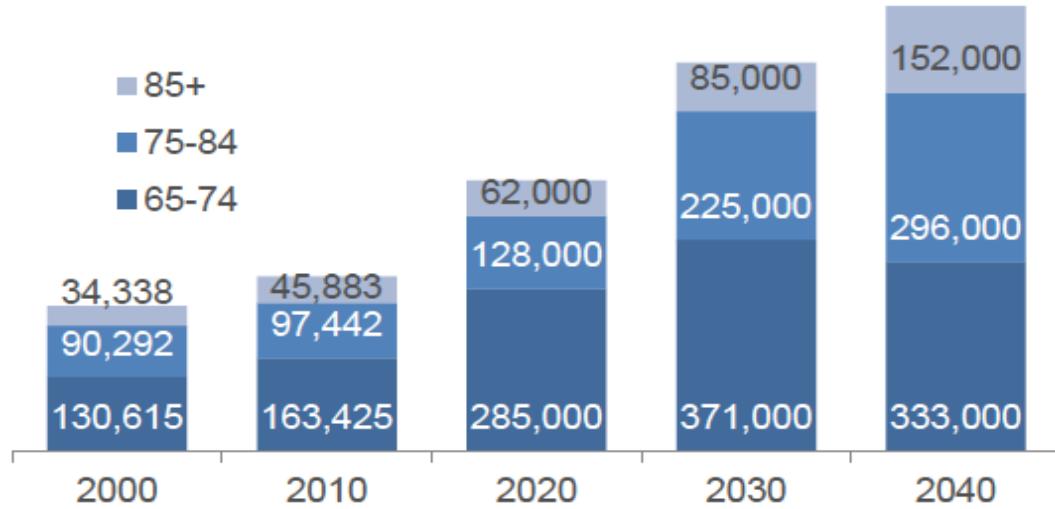
Tuesday, August 17, 2021 - 6 p.m. - Light Supper, 6:30 - 8 p.m., Forum

Brooklyn Park City Council Chambers, 5200 85th Avenue N.

Olufunso Oresanya is the Blue Line Extension Community Outreach Coordinator for Metro Transit. He will review maps for sections of the Blue Line Extension and let us know which will remain the same, important places for stops, and which areas need to choose a new route. (10 minutes).

Carol Woehrer is the Vice President of Think Again MN, and Coordinator for Think Again Brooklyns. She has a background in Gerontology through the U of M and the Andrus School of Gerontology at the University of Southern California. She will review the rapid growth in MN's number of disabled people as MN's population grows older. (10 minutes)

Metropolitan Area Growth in Older Age Cohorts



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Metropolitan Council Regional Forecasts

Failing to provide inclusive housing would result in a Medicaid cost of over \$10 billion. Note that the increase in residents 75 years and older who have the highest increase in wheelchair use and disabilities between 2020 and 2040 is **236%**.



Gene Nicolelli, our main speaker for the evening, is an architect who is the Principal of Nicolelli Architects and is a Certified Aging - in - Place Specialist (CAPS) certified by the National Association of Home Builders 50+ Housing Council. Over his years as an architect, Nicolelli has received many awards, including the National Association of Home Builders 50+ Council - Best of 50+ Housing Awards, and the 2012 Gold Achievement Award, a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Award of Excellence. He has taught many builders how to construct inclusive design homes.

He describes inclusive design as a holistic approach that can be used by as many people as possible, of any age, ability, or circumstance, without discrimination and has lifetime value. He will explain how inclusive design can be included in new construction at a minor cost.

He will conclude with a chart that shows the large number of women who currently have to quit their jobs to care for disabled parents. That will greatly increase along with the increase in the 75+ population if housing is not inclusive, resulting in many families with reduced income and women who have reduced retirement and Social Security income. (30 minutes)

Ken Rodgers is the Disability Coordinator at the Minnesota Department of Transportation. He will give an example of how inclusive design of homes and features of livable communities can help people with one kind of disability, that of blindness. He had originally been a registered nurse when he began to lose his site as a result of retinal disease.

In later forums, we will discuss the great help that inclusive design homes provide for people with other disabilities. The huge contribution of inclusive design is emphasized by the recent U.S. News and World Reports rating of cities. Sarasota, Florida, the first city to incorporate widespread inclusive housing design with the encouragement of the American Association of Retired Persons, received the top rating for retirement cities.