

Aging Well Center

A Local Design For Sustainable Living

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Office on Aging
City of Clearwater Parks and Recreation Department



City of Clearwater The Aging Well Center

Purpose

The Clearwater Aging Well Center will promote health and wellness, education, recreation, socialization, creative expression and access to resources for residents age 55 and older.

Grant Awarded

The City of Clearwater received \$727,500 in funding from the Florida Department of Elder Affairs to renovate, equip and furnish the Aging Well Center located at the Long Center. The Clearwater Aging Well Center was one of only six senior center appropriations exceeding \$700,000 in the 2008/2009 State budget.

Clearwater's Age Wave is Here

The growth of Clearwater's older adult population has accelerated well beyond national or state trends.

The 2000 U.S. Census shows Clearwater had the highest proportion of residents aged 65 years and older (21.5 percent) for those cities with a population of 100,000 or more.

We know that 28 percent of Clearwater residents are among the "baby boomer" population (i.e. born in 1946 to 1964).

Existing Amenities at the Long Center

Older adults visiting the Aging Well Center will have convenient access to the existing amenities at the Long Center.

These amenities include:

- Fitness center designed for users of all abilities
- Gymnasium
- Aquatic center with heated therapy pools
- Accessible walking and biking trails
- Covered PSTA bus stop
- Central location in Clearwater

Of all U.S. cities with 100,000 residents or more, Clearwater has the nations:

- ✓ Highest percentage of individuals age 65 and older (22 percent).
- ✓ Highest percentage of individuals age 85 and older (4.1 percent).
- ✓ Highest median age (45.7 years old).

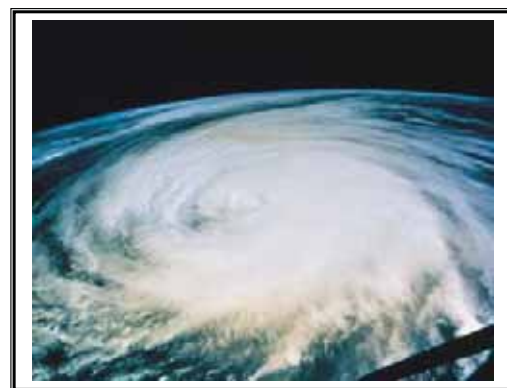
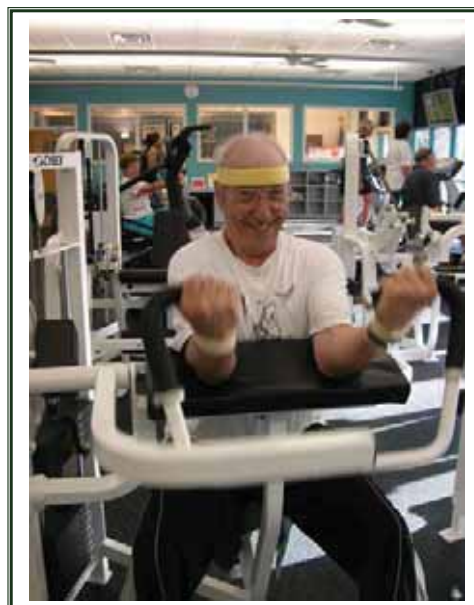
Source: American Community Survey.

Community Needs Defined

To measure the needs of older adults, the Office on Aging and the Florida Survey Research Center conducted the Aging Well Survey.

The comprehensive survey interviewed 500 Clearwater residents age 60 or older about their needs. Survey findings are summarized below:

- Need for Multi-Service Senior Center
67% expressed positive interest in a Clearwater senior center offering educational, social, recreational, cultural and health and wellness activities.
- Need for Physical Health Programs
60.8% report they want to improve their level of physical fitness.
- Need for Health Education and Preventative Health Screenings
51.6% said they have chronic health problems.
47% were interested in attending health and wellness classes.
- Need for Financial Counseling and/or Career Counseling
25.2% indicate that they have significant financial concerns.
- Need for Social Opportunities
17.4% report that they “Always” eat alone, while 37.4 percent say they “Sometimes” eat alone.
- Need for Resident Disaster Planning
 - Over 30 percent of the respondents report they don’t have a family disaster plan in place in case of an emergency (i.e. hurricane or fire).
 - Over 33 percent of respondents report they don’t have disaster supply kits.
- Need for Fall Prevention Education
A recent report from the Pinellas County Health Department reflects that Clearwater has some of the highest rates and numbers of falls leading to hospitalization in Pinellas County.



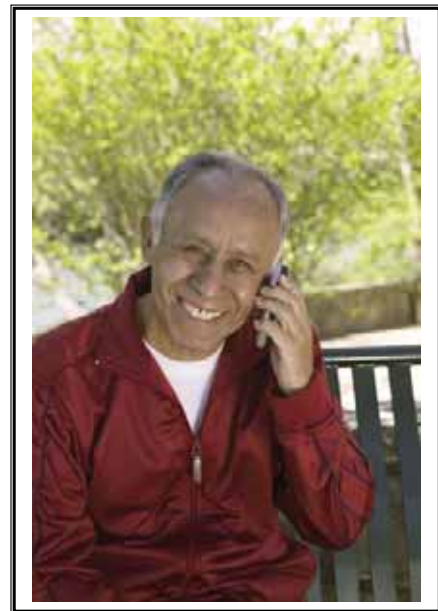
Emerging Partnerships

The Aging Well Center will offer a variety of programs and services for older adults through partnerships with area organizations.

The Aging Well Center will host educational forums and provide office space on a rotating basis to organizations that provide assistance to seniors and their families.

These partnerships include:

- Alzheimer's Association Gulf Coast Chapter - education and support services.
- Area Agency on Aging of Pasco Pinellas – information and referral assistance.
- CARES, Inc. - preventative health screenings and education.
- Clearwater Fire & Rescue - special needs registration, life safety education programs and free smoke alarms.
- Clearwater Police - crime prevention education.
- Florida Department of Elder Affairs' SHINE counselors - health insurance counseling.
- Florida Department of Financial Services - unbiased financial education.
- Experience Works, Inc. - job and computer training.
- Gulfcoast Legal Services - legal assistance and education.
- Lighthouse of Pinellas at Watson Center - counseling, support groups, rehabilitation training and services for residents with low vision.
- Morton Plant Mease Healthcare - preventative health screenings and education.
- Neighborly Care Network - information on services for seniors and caregivers.
- Pinellas County Emergency Management - emergency preparation forums.
- Pinellas County Falls Prevention Coalition - fall prevention education.
- Suncoast Center - gerontological counseling.



Aging Well Center Programs

The Aging Well Center will continue to evolve and change, adjusting to new challenges by listening to the expectations and needs of the community.

The Center will conduct customer satisfaction surveys and establish a Member Advisory Board to design programs and services that meet the needs of our dynamic and diverse community.

The Center will strive to serve three generations:

- “Greatest Generation” (1901-1924)
- “Silent Generation” (1925 -1945)
- “Baby Boomer Generation” (1946 – 1964)

To attract and serve three different generations, the Center will offer diverse, generationally sensitive programs and services at flexible times.



Preliminary Program Listing

- After 5 at the Center
- Art and Craft Classes
- Computer Classes
- Dance
- Educational
- Exercise
- Games
- Health Fairs
- Lunch & Learn Series
- Movies
- Health & Wellness
- Social Events

Other Activities

- Special events – dances, banquets, luncheons
- Travel groups
- Annual Art and Craft Show

Access to Resources

- Information and Referral
- Financial information
- Insurance Counseling
- Employment Information
- Legal
- Mental Health Counseling
- Caregiver Support
- Emergency Preparedness

Technology at the Center

The Aging Well Center will fully utilize available technology including:

- Wireless Internet access and computers for patrons.
- Fully accessible website.
- Select education programs and special events offered online through “Podcasts” or “YouTube.com”.
- Specialized sound system assisting members with hearing impairments.
- Wii systems for self directed exercise programs.
- Flat screen televisions, DVD players and a computer projector.
- Software to track participant utilization of programs.



Operational Issues

Center Hours

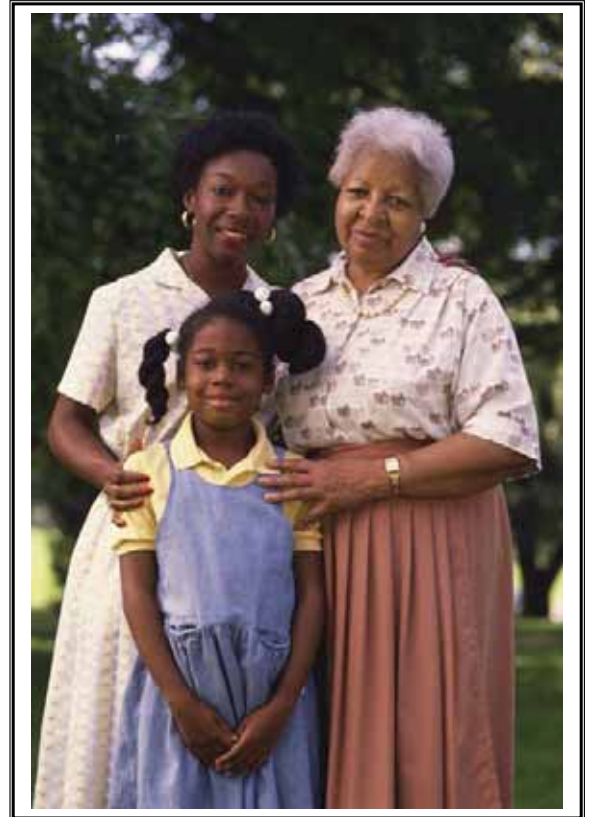
The Center will offer a variety of programs weekly. Special events will be offered throughout year.

The projected hours are:

- Monday through Thursday 8 am – 7 pm
- Friday 8 am – 4 pm
- Saturday 9 am to 1 pm

Membership Fees

- Recreation Card (Individual)
 - Resident \$7/annually
 - Non Resident \$180/annually
- Annual Play Pass (age 55+)
 - Resident \$82.50/annually
 - Non Resident \$262.50/annually



Professional Staff

The City's Parks and Recreation Department will operate the Aging Well Center with oversight by the City's Office on Aging Manager. Center staff will include one full time Center Manager and one part time recreation specialist.

Volunteer Support

The City of Clearwater Parks and Recreation department has an extensive, dynamic volunteer program. The well-coordinated program has more than 5,000 volunteers serving the community in a variety of ways.

In 2007, the Parks and Recreation volunteers provided approximately 50,000 hours of service to the community. The Aging Well Center will partner with the Parks and Recreation Volunteer Department to develop a volunteer base at the Center.

Transportation

The Long Center is located on Belcher Road and is easily accessible by a variety of transportation modes including the personal automobile, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Service (PSTA), a non-motorized trail (Ream Wilson Trail) and senior transportation programs.



Innovation

The Aging Well Center will act as the catalyst and launching pad for three pioneering aging programs in Pinellas County.

- Pinellas Aging Think Tank
- Economic Resource Center
- Radical Aging Program

Pinellas Aging Think Tank

The Think Tank will facilitate collaboration among municipalities, senior centers, Communities for a Lifetime and community members by sharing aging related information and resources. The Think Tank will establish a long term vision and strategic plan to address aging issues in Pinellas County for the next quarter century.

The Clearwater Office on Aging will work with the Area Agency on Aging of Pasco Pinellas to establish the Pinellas Aging Think Tank.

Aging Well Economic Resource Center

The Aging Well Economic Resource Center will provide unbiased, reputable financial, insurance, legal and employment information through seminars, community forums and individual sessions. Partners include:

- Florida Department of Financial Services
- Florida Department of Elder Affairs' SHINE Program
- Pinellas County Consumer Protection Agency
- Area Agency on Aging of Pasco Pinellas
- Gulfcoast Legal Services
- University of South Florida's School of Aging Studies
- Consumer Credit Counseling Services
- AARP
- Experience Works
- Others as identified



Radical Aging Education Program

Many Clearwater older adults have expressed feelings of being "invisible" or disrespected in our community due to their age. To ensure Clearwater is a "senior friendly" community, a new approach to combating ageism will be offered at the Aging Well Center.

The "Radical Aging" sensitivity program will provide hands-on interactive training for children, businesses and city staff to improve participants understanding of aging issues.

Conclusion

The Aging Well Center is the culmination of the City's Community for a Lifetime efforts and will be an integral part of our diverse community.

The Aging Well Center will serve as a resource for the community for information on aging, support for family caregivers, training professionals, community leaders and students; and for developing innovative approaches to address aging issues.

The project's work plan has begun with the anticipated Aging Well Center's grand opening in February 2010.



If you have questions or comments about the Aging Well Center please contact the Clearwater Office on Aging.

Kerry Marsalek, MA
Office on Aging Manager
E-mail: agingwell@myclearwater.com
Phone: (727) 562-4830
Fax: (727) 562-4825
www.myclearwater.com/agingwell

Mailing Address:
PO Box 4748
Parks and Recreation Dept.
Office on Aging
Clearwater, FL 33758-4748