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Virginia's Blueprint for Livable Communities

The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) are promoting Livable Communities Planning across the Commonwealth. The basic concept behind [Virginia's Blueprint for Livable Communities](#) can be stated simply: "Livable communities promote opportunities for people of all ages to carry out their lives when, where, and how they choose."

As the "Commonwealth of Opportunity," Virginia strives to be a place where all people are able to experience the dignity of decision-making in their own lives; to have a chance to engage meaningfully in social and civic activities; to participate in the economic mainstream; and to live well while challenging themselves to learn and grow through new experiences. A "livable community" is a community that is designed and functions in a way that facilitates well-being for all of the people who live there, regardless of age, income, or ability. It is a holistic goal that is achieved through a long-term, open-ended, community planning process. Livable community planning is the process through which a community focuses on supporting the lifelong wellness of its population through both the design of the spaces people use and the services that support them to do so.

The goal of this initiative is to spark conversations at the local and regional level that will bring together area leaders to focus on accessible and affordable transportation, housing, and wrap-around support services that will improve the ability of Virginians of all ages and abilities to live integrated lives in their communities.

Creating a livable community involves a two-fold focus:

1. Alter community design features to make living environments more accessible so individuals are better positioned to integrate into the community.
2. Expand and improve the ability of in-home and community-based services to meet growing needs in the population.

For more information on Virginia's Blueprint for Livable Communities (VBLC), visit www.vadars.org/vbhc.

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