

Executive Summary

The global population is aging rapidly. Considering the magnitude of this ongoing demographic shift, it is critical to create and maintain community spaces that support the growing older adult population. Age-friendly planning aims to minimize the risks associated with aging while optimizing opportunities to improve wellbeing. The existing framework of age-friendly planning possesses several positive features such as emphasizing active aging and aging in place. However, there is a currently overlooked opportunity to utilize play to improve health, social cohesion, and longevity for older adults and even older adults themselves have been dismissive of the idea by assuming play is exclusive to children. Therefore, this report seeks to gain insights on older adult play from saturated older adult environments, such as age-restricted and age-friendly communities. These communities, with roots in the State of Florida as early as 1954, have emerged as an important planned response to an aging population. In order to best understand the relationship between older adult play spaces in an age-restricted community a mixed method single case study analysis was conducted. This analysis was guided by the following three research objectives:

- (1) Assess older adult play spaces in a privately owned environment through naturalistic observations.
- (2) Compare older adults' perceptions of and experiences with publicly and privately owned play spaces through semi-structured interviews.
- (3) Develop recommendations to better incorporate play into age-friendly planning and design for public spaces.

A single case study analysis of Century Village East (CVE), an age-restricted community in Deerfield Beach, Florida, was completed to gain insight on the relationship between older adults and

5. Incorporate the SOAPS tool to enhance the play potential of community spaces.
6. Consider demographic, socioeconomic, and geographic disparities to encourage the equitable distribution of older adult public play opportunities

