



# THE CENTER AT BELVEDERE



## Report to the City of Charlottesville

April 3, 2023



THE  
CENTER  
AT BELVEDERE

# ANNUAL REPORT



# 20 22



# ADVANCING HEALTHY AGING FOR ALL

After a year in which the opening of The Center at Belvedere was postponed, operating hours were cut, and programs moved online, the start of fiscal year 2022 felt like a new beginning. Thanks to the rapid development and deployment of highly effective COVID-19 vaccines, restrictions on gatherings eased, and more and more people found their way to The Center at Belvedere to discover—or rediscover—a resource for healthy aging and a hub for community interaction.

Working with stakeholders from across the community, we launched two initiatives aimed at maximizing our impact on community health: a new strategic plan and a racial equity action plan. Everything you read below and in the accompanying member and volunteer vignettes speaks to the different ways we are working to ensure that every senior in our community has access to the most effective and achievable means for improving their health and well-being.

## 2022–2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

At its core, the Strategic Plan focuses on a progression of programming and practices to bring healthy aging opportunities to every older adult in our area. Guided by this plan, we will work to increase understanding of aging issues and promote changes in attitudes, policies, and actions; to provide increased value through collaboration, exploration, advocacy, access, outreach, and partnerships; and to strengthen the organizational, financial, and technological resources needed to achieve these outcomes. [Click here to read the plan.](#)

## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN

The vision we hold for our community—to understand and embrace the power of healthy aging to positively transform all lives—can never be fully realized without the forever work of ensuring people from all walks of life have a place to connect, challenge, and contribute. With goals embedded in the Strategic Plan, our Racial Equity Action Plan will integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion into The Center’s core mission of healthy aging; effect a greater sense of belonging and inclusion among all members of The Center community; increase ownership of and commitment to DEI efforts by members, staff, Board, and volunteers; increase the diversity of participants; and enhance accountability, effectiveness, and collaboration. [Click here to read the plan.](#)

# BY THE NUMBERS

**969**  
MADE A GIFT  
TO SUPPORT  
HEALTHY  
AGING

THIS YEAR THE CENTER OFFERED

**6,715**

CLASSES, EVENTS,  
PROGRAMS, AND TRIPS

**283**  
VOLUNTEERS

MORE THAN  
**\$75,000**

WORTH OF COMMUNITY SPACE  
DONATED OR DISCOUNTED

CENTER VOLUNTEERS  
CONTRIBUTED  
**24,707**  
HOURS TO AREA  
NONPROFITS

**77**  
VOLUNTEER  
PROGRAM LEADERS

**\$38,842**  
MEMBER  
SCHOLARSHIPS

**23**  
NONPROFITS  
SUPPORTED BY CENTER  
VOLUNTEERS

## IMPACT

The Center's mission is to positively impact our community by creating opportunities for healthy aging through social engagement, physical well-being, civic involvement, creativity, and lifelong learning.

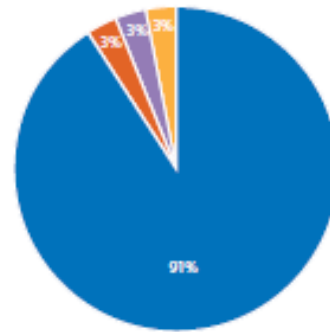
Research proves that people who participate in programs like those at The Center incur lower health care costs, have a more positive outlook on life, and give back to the community as volunteers.

*FY22 Survey respondents who Agree or Strongly Agree that  
Center programs accomplish core objectives*



## FY22 FINANCIAL DATA

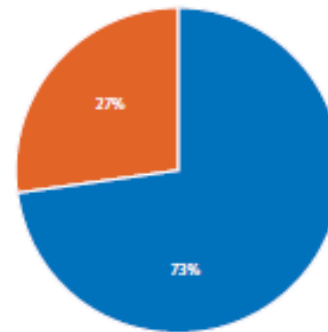
The Center receives no regular funding from local, state, or federal governments and is sustained financially through diverse revenue streams from both philanthropy and earned income.



### ASSETS

|                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| • Land & Facility            | \$20,566,049 |
| • Cash & Cash Equivalents    | 647,400      |
| • Other                      | 706,980      |
| • Seabrook & Fell Endowments | 689,244      |

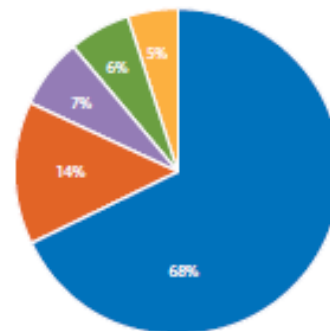
**Total Assets** **\$22,609,673**



### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| • Equity      | \$20,566,049 |
| • Liabilities | 647,400      |

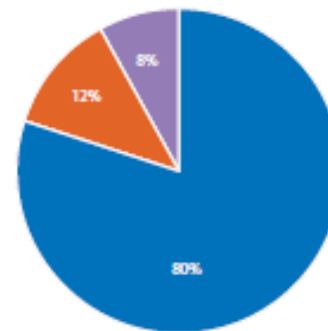
**Total Liabilities & Equity** **\$22,609,673**



### REVENUE

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| • Contributions     | \$1,375,466 |
| • Membership Dues   | 293,354     |
| • Rentals & Leases  | 142,654     |
| • Programs & Travel | 114,969     |
| • Other*            | 110,678     |

**Total Revenue** **\$2,037,121**



### EXPENSES

|                                  |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| • Healthy Aging Program Services | \$2,043,660 |
| • Supporting Services            | 311,579     |
| • Fundraising                    | 209,451     |
| • Management & General           |             |

**Total Expenses\*\*** **\$2,564,689**



# PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS IN FY22

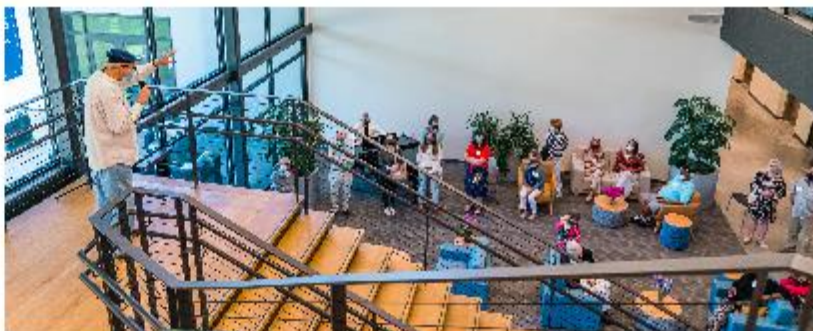
- Dozens of new programs offered community members fresh ways to pursue wellness in all its dimensions.
- Evening hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays expanded capacity for and access to healthy aging resources and amenities.
- Topics ranged from local (History and Stories of the Original Communities of Free State, Belvedere, and Dunlora) to international (Global Flashpoints: The Korean Peninsula). From timeless (Archaeology, Myths, and Customs of Rome) to timely (Global Viral Pandemics: We Should be Better Prepared for the Next One"). And from community planning (Rio Corridor Plan Community Pop-up) to retirement planning (Plan for a Financially Secure Retirement).
- Special programs and exhibits for Native American Heritage Month, Black History Month, Women's History Month, and Pride Month.





## PERMANENT ART EXHIBIT

The Center is pleased to have acquired *The African Violin*, a painting by Charlottesville native Frank Walker. This work is part of a collection that will focus on local artists and represent the diversity of the visual arts and of the Albemarle-Charlottesville area relating to our demographics, cultures, geography, and history. We are grateful to Center friend and local artist Linda Verhagen for underwriting the purchase of *The African Violin*, the first piece in our permanent art collection.





# THE RALPH FEIL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FUND

- Ensuring that every older adult has the opportunity to live more years in good health is fundamental to The Center's mission and values.
- We provide scholarships to anyone who requests assistance to pay for Center membership.
- In FY22, scholarship requests exceeded \$38,000.



- Support for scholarships comes from individuals, foundations, churches, and corporations. When requests exceed donated funds, The Center redirects money from operations to ensure all needs are met.
- In FY22, The Center was able to provide 25 scholarships using funds drawn from a new source of support—an endowed scholarship fund named to honor the legacy of community leader and Center friend Ralph Feil.

## CHARMAINE CROWELL-WHITE

Charmaine Crowell-White is a storyteller first.

Her work and life's passion as a Living History Interpreter brought her to The Center in 2021 and she calls it "an absolute positive savior in my life."

After 25 years teaching Theater Arts in public schools and a slate of theater, film, and television credits, Charmaine retired and found living history to be "such a fine companion" to her lifelong interest in acting.

She traveled to schools, colleges, museums, libraries, and churches to present the lives of women such as Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Suky (personal servant to Dolly Madison), and Maggie Walker, among others. "I'm just a vessel... [to] run all these amazing women through me," she says.

A friend encouraged her to bring a living history program to The Center and the result was an unexpected turning point.

Although Charmaine was born and raised in Charlottesville, she had spent 40 years away, only returning to care for her aging mother. "I came back to this new Charlottesville [and] I was a bit lost," she says, noting connections left behind in Richmond and a new home in Keswick that was beautiful but quiet and removed.

When she first arrived at The Center, she was astounded by "the newness, the freshness, [and] the invigorating energy of the people I met."

Charmaine spoke so effusively of the programming and the people she found at The Center, her daughter gifted her a membership – one Charmaine has made the most of at every opportunity.

Over the months, she has taken Tai Chi, had a hearing test, gone on day trips to Smith Mountain Lake and a Potomac River cruise, and become a regular at the Move to Rhythm Dance Party, which she calls "a lifesaver [that will] move you from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet."

"I'm a walker and my goal is 10,000 steps a day... On Tuesdays, I know I'm going to get it!" she laughs. "I look forward to it every single week. We just have a ball!"

Charmaine has even brought her own programming to The Center, teaching a storytelling class in March and April 2022. She got an amazing response with 12 participants, one of whom was so inspired, they are now collaborating on a storytelling festival to take place sometime in 2023.

Even as she strengthens her roots in storytelling, for Charmaine, the possibilities at The Center are endless. She says, "I could learn a different language or study yoga... [have] the possibility to travel abroad and meet amazing people."

What Charmaine most loves about The Center are its many different outlets and its "wonderful, well-rounded group of people" where you'll meet "everyone from artists to academics."

"It's diverse in so many ways [and] it's like a second home!"



## JIM HASSMER

Scrabble is fundamentally a game of making connections, putting pieces together so that they have meaning, so perhaps it is fitting that the game is what first drew Jim Hassmer to The Center. "A connector" is how many describe him, and the retired Methodist minister is driven by his genuine interest in other people and a desire to help his community.

Pastoring across Virginia for 30 years shaped Jim's perspective, instilling a passion for reducing hunger and poverty – he is now the gleaning coordinator for the Charlottesville area – as well as for furthering racial equity and social justice.

Among his many commitments to community organizations, Jim serves on the education committee of the NAACP. He says, "I feel the earth is here for all people to enjoy equally, and any disparity is unfair and unjust."

A conversation with The Center's executive director about six years ago regarding the need he saw for more diversity at the organization eventually led to Jim co-chairing the Racial Equity Special Committee and serving as a member of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

"The Center has made progress in programming," Jim says, adding that "Approval of the Racial Equity Action Plan is a great step forward in some specific ways."

His motto is "Find a need and fill it."

Meeting needs and making connections permeates so much of Jim's activity both at The Center and in the greater community, and those needs can be serious or lighthearted. All foster wellness and well-being.

As President of the Charlottesville Square Dance Club, he has brought his love of square dancing to The Center, where he teaches twice a week. "It's a way of moving to music that engages with other people, exercising body and mind," he explains. "And it's fun. A lot of fun!" He appreciates the pleasure people get from participating and says that "teaching the class has opened me up."

Jim continues to play Scrabble at The Center, too, where he sees that connections go beyond letters and words. Players "talk about what's going on in each other's lives, they show concern for one another."

"The Center is a gathering place for people 50 and over, but with an amazing variety of programs; it's a place where people can connect on an ongoing basis and develop relationships that deepen."







## MARIA CHEE

Every Monday, Center members don their ballet slippers for Silver Swans, improving their flexibility, strength, and coordination through the art of ballet. Unlike other Center programs, however, this one comes from a valuable community partnership with Charlottesville Ballet.

Program leader Maria Chee comes to The Center as a faculty volunteer from Charlottesville Ballet to teach two levels of Silver Swans as one of the Ballet's five free outreach programs.

"Each reinforces the mission of the other," she says of the two nonprofits, noting the importance of physical well-being and wellness, civic involvement, lifelong learning, and creativity to both organizations.

Maria is well poised to lead lessons with multiple degrees in dance, a Ph.D and more than ten years of teaching experience in adult education, and a stint at the Martha Graham School in New York. That's not all she brings to Center members, though. She adds, "Being a mature adult [myself] helps a lot in sharing dance with them. It gives me a certain understanding of their bodies!"

Maria has enjoyed her own time at The Center since 2014, joining an international folk dance group, watching documentaries about Native Americans, learning bridge and computer skills, and even getting her CPR certification.

"I count my blessings, because I truly enjoy it, especially [now that] The Center [has] moved to its current location with beautiful ballet studios!" she says. "The architecture and facilities are truly uplifting... It's a vibrant hub of diverse activities to its constituents!"

Silver Swans alone has much to offer its students, and it's not just about the physical benefits that lead to healthy aging.

Maria says, "This class offers social connection, cognitive exercises, physical activities, and aesthetic experiences, as well as a return to their youth... Doing ballet makes them feel good and young at heart."

"[When] one hears beautiful music and moves to it, it elicits positive inner emotional responses to the beauty in both movement and sound," she continues. "That's ambrosia for one's body and soul!"

Ballet is often a less accessible, and even elitist, art form, requiring money for lessons, costumes, and performance tickets. Young children need a parent with enough free time to drive them to and from class, leaving ballet the typical purview of wealthy families. Through programs like Silver Swans, Charlottesville Ballet and The Center are "democratizing ballet."

Maria says, "For those who had taken ballet lessons [at] a young age, they have a chance to be in touch with their youthful days and become that younger self again. For those who had never taken ballet classes but always wanted to, they have this chance to make their dreams come true."

The goal is not to become a professional, but simply to enjoy the beauty, meditation, and other benefits of ballet, or as Maria puts it, "to be in touch with the artistic elements within everyone's psyche."

"For one hour of class," she concludes, "you become the ballerina that you are within yourself and experience your own artistic temperament. That is truly a finer moment of life."

## The Center at Belvedere Garners Prestigious National AIA Award

- The American Institute of Architects (AIA) awarded Bushman Dreyfus Architects the Design for Aging Review 2021 Award of Merit (its top award) for The Center at Belvedere.
- AIA representatives hailed The Center as a new prototype and model for similar centers. The jury calling the robust offering of activities and layout, and detailed design “exceptional.”

## C3’s Better Business Challenge Award Recognizes Commitment to Sustainability

- The Center’s win was powered by building design, which prioritized features for energy efficiency, including solar panels, LED lighting and sensors, and water bottle filling stations.
- We are reducing and greening energy use, water use, and waste; cutting our carbon footprint with an enhanced recycling program; and spreading community awareness with environmental program offerings.

## Interior Design Excellence Award Celebrates Innovate, Smart Design

The ASID and IIDA recognized CIRCLE Design Studio with a statewide Interior Design Excellence Award (IDEA) for The Center at Belvedere, which earned First Place in its category.





# Aging Impacts on Charlottesville

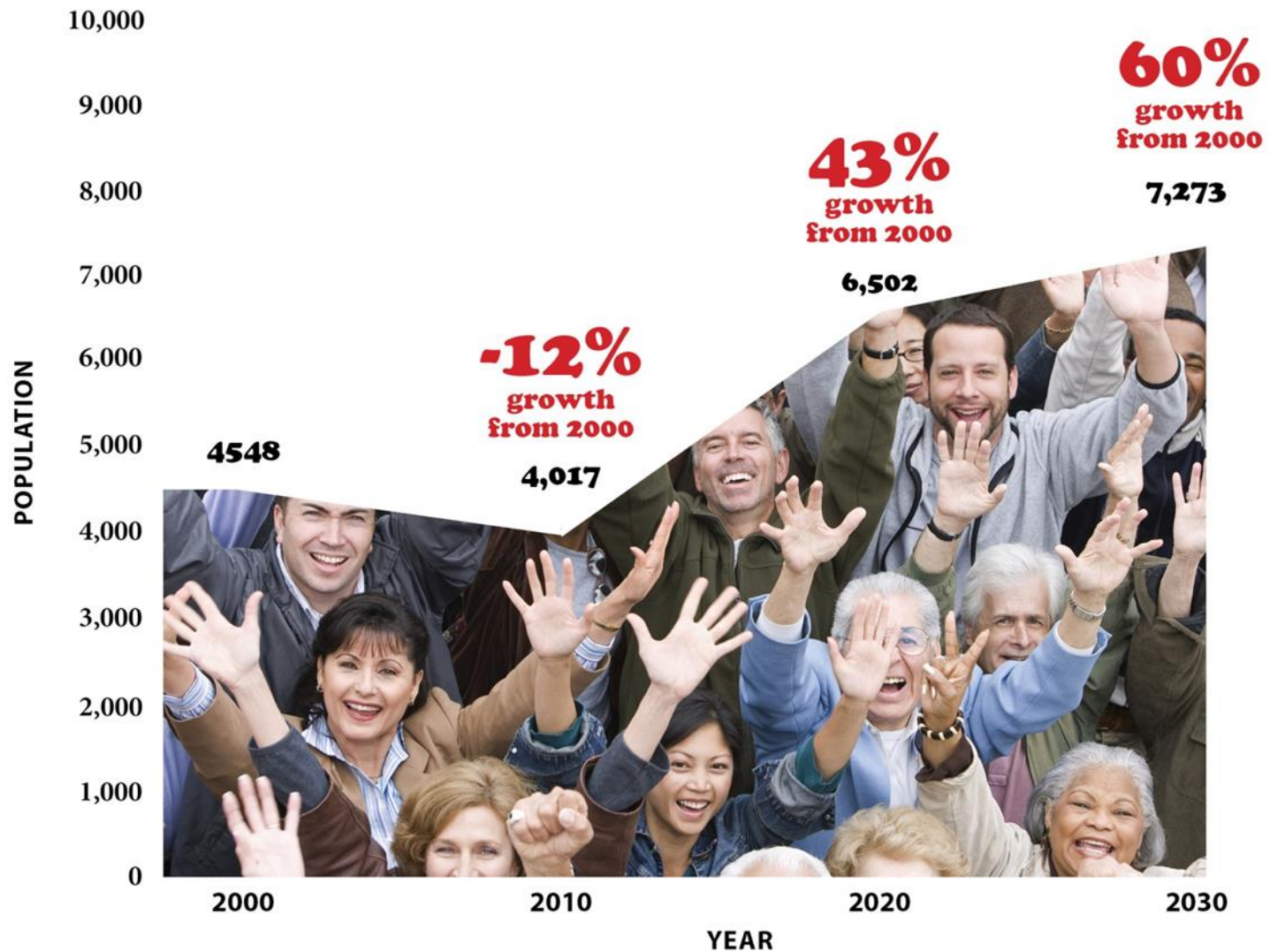
- community planning
- economic development
- work force
- social services
- health care
- families





# CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

## Projected Growth in Senior Population 65 and Older, 2000–2030



# Vision Areas & Strategic Goals Alignment



## A Connected Community

## Commitment to Connection & Accessibility



- CAT Route 11 & JAUNT
- proximity to City center, seniors, and affordable housing
- Mary P. Reese Scholarship Fund (approx. 10% of members)
- capacity for satellite delivery



# Pending: CAT Service to The Center



- Section 8E: ‘...make and designate a bus stop to assist with access for City residents...’
- Public transit is critical to ensure accessibility for people who do not drive or do not have a car
- Two-way service necessary
- Parking lot designed and constructed to accommodate CAT service
- Impacts environment
- Impacts parking



# Vision Areas & Strategic Goals Alignment



## A Community of Mutual Respect

## Contributions to Partnerships & Engagement



- mission & programs
- collaborations to serve more people
- multigenerational reach
- volunteer resources
- civic engagement
- support for community nonprofits



# Community Partners



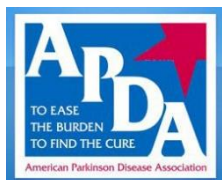
COMMUNITY CLIMATE  
COLLABORATIVE



African  
American  
Authors Book  
Club



*Piedmont Pastelists*



# Serving Charlottesville

- **Current Membership**

25.7% City residents  
62.5% Albemarle County  
11.8% Other

- **Scholarships**

- **Guests**

- **Community Partners**

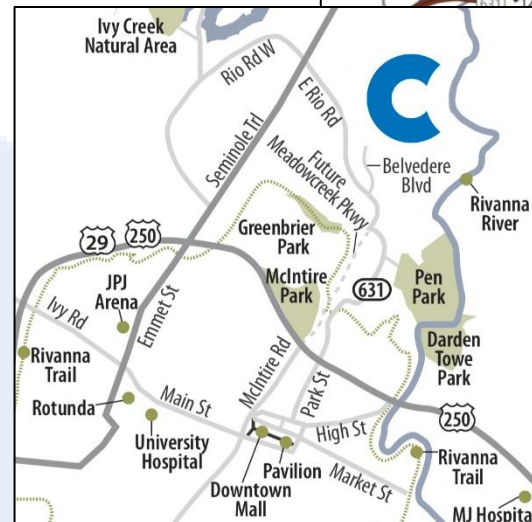
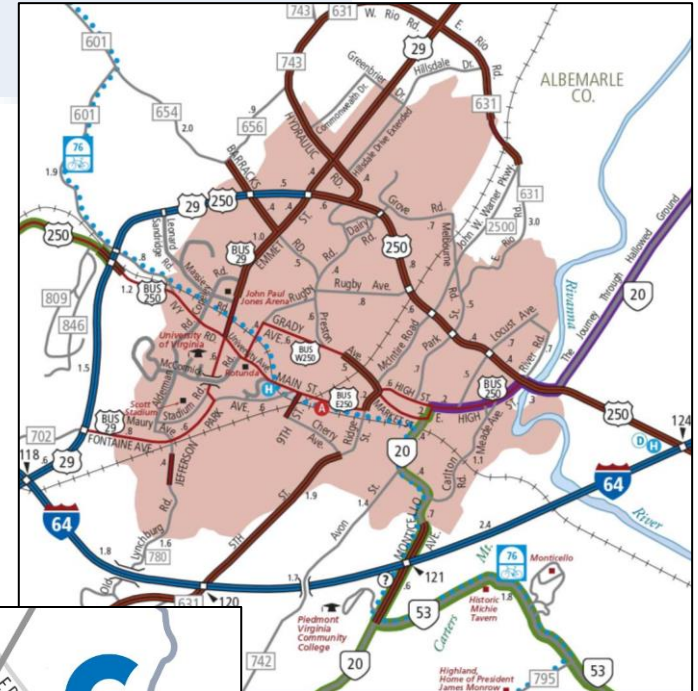
- **Outreach** e.g.

Friendship Court, Piedmont Housing Alliance, City of Promise, City Social Services, Ebenezer Baptist Church

- **Easy Access**

Conveniently located just off Rio Road close to US29 and the 250 Bypass—handy to downtown, UVA, and other neighborhoods

For walkers and bikers, Belvedere links to Rivanna Trail and John Warner Parkway's 2.5-mile trail from downtown





# City Return on Investment

- **Proven benefits for community health**

Cost-effective health promotion strategy

Reduced demand for social services

Lower health and long-term care costs

- **Improved quality of life for all ages**

Support for an age-friendly community

More volunteers for area nonprofits

Community access to multidimensional programs

- **More contributors to the local economy**

Promotes independence / aging in place



# Thank you!



[thecentercville.org](http://thecentercville.org)