



Durgin Center

Live Well, Age Well

Eastern Area Agency on Aging is opening a new center to provide an accessible and welcoming space for older adults, caregivers, and adults with disabilities to gather, socialize, learn, and stay active and healthy.

The Durgin Center will offer programs and services for hundreds of residents in the Greater Bangor Area and surrounding communities. The center, conveniently located in Brewer, will also be the hub for Eastern Area Agency on Aging's (EAAA's) Meals on Wheels Program serving thousands of people in Penobscot, Piscataquis, Hancock, and Washington Counties.

Challenges:

Aging Population - Maine is the oldest state in the country, demographically. In the four counties served by EAAA – Penobscot, Piscataquis, Hancock, and Washington – 27% of adults are seniors. (Worldpopulationview.com) Maine's State Economist projects growth of 37% in the 65 and older age cohort from 2016 to 2026.

Isolation and Loneliness - Older adults want to stay active and socially connected in order to stay healthy. Many of us are experiencing the frustration of being socially disconnected during the ongoing global pandemic caused by COVID-19. A lack of social connection carries a risk to overall health that is comparable, and in many cases exceeds, that of other well-accepted risk factors, including smoking to 15 cigarettes per day, obesity, physical inactivity, and air pollution (Holt-Lunsrad et al., 2010).

Food Insecurity - Food insecurity among older adults in our region is a significant issue. Costs for basic necessities such as housing and prescription medicines have risen, while incomes have not kept pace. Older adults are often faced with difficult decisions, such as whether to pay for prescriptions or groceries. Research shows that people who are food insecure are disproportionately affected by diet-sensitive chronic diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Rapid Growth - Approximately 300 consumers attended wellness and enrichment exercise classes annually through EAAA's before the pandemic. Since closing the doors to in-person classes in March 2020, wellness classes have been and continue to be offered through a virtual platform, but EAAA is preparing for in-person classes to start again when it is safe to do so. Attendance for the wellness classes was growing, and we need space to meet the community's needs.



Tai Chi and Yoga

- Promote balance
- Increase Flexibility
- Reduce falls

Line Dancing

- Cardiovascular workout
- Mood enhancer

Enhance Fitness

- Strength training

Increase in Demand - EAAA's Meals on Wheels program has seen tremendous growth in demand in recent years. To meet the rising need for Meals on Wheels, the agency needs a larger kitchen to accommodate a walk-in freezer to increase food storage capacity. On the days that meals are packaged for delivery, several staff and volunteers are needed to help with the packing.

Meals on Wheels delivered:	
2017:	68,230
2018:	80,230
2019:	88,871
2020:	188,859

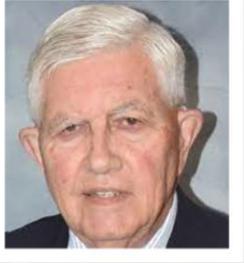
Our Solution and the Future:

The Durgin Center will provide space for various wellness classes, enrichment activities, and social opportunities in a convenient, visible, and accessible location for older adults, caregivers, and adults with disabilities. The center is conveniently located at the Brewer Shopping Plaza on State Street, next to EAAA's administrative office. The center is on the main thoroughfare that offers ample parking, public bus line service at the front door, with all amenities on one level for ease of access and use.

The new center will allow EAAA to meet the demand for classes, activities, and social opportunities. It is projected the new center will serve 600-700 people in the first year. Special events such as guest speakers or training will likely draw attendees from a wide geographic area in the Agency's four-county service area. The community café at the Durgin Center is projected to serve 4,500 meals in the first year.

Besides providing a space for socializing, various classes, and stimulating programs, the center will also become the hub for Meals on Wheels. EAAA expects to prepare 25,000 meals monthly to be delivered to consumers in its four-county service area. Having the Meals on Wheels program located closer to the Agency's administrative office will also improve the efficiency of implementing this program.

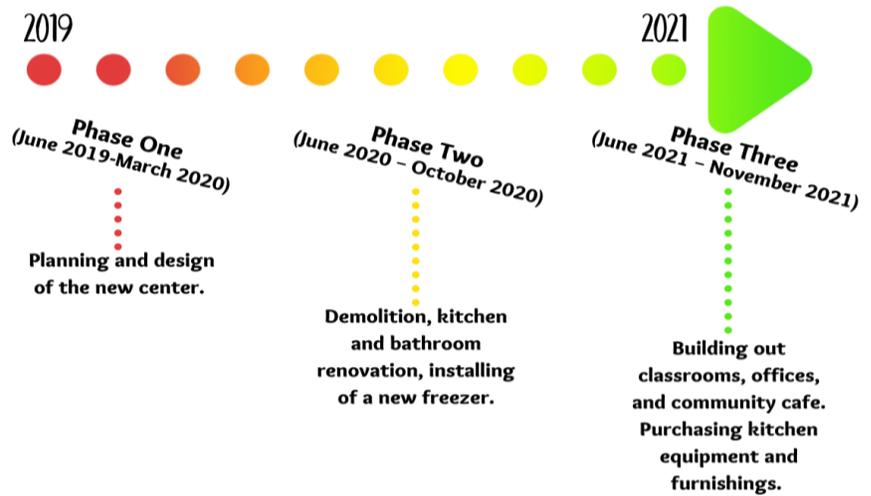
The renovation project's total cost, including architecture services, contingencies, fees, and permits, is \$533,079. EAAA is seeking charitable contributions for individuals, businesses, and foundations to provide a convenient, accessible, and welcoming space for older adults, caregivers, and adults with disabilities in our community.



The new center is named in honor of Nelson Durgin, longtime EAAA Board member and community leader. Nelson's dedication to serving seniors in Eastern Maine and advocating for their social and physical well-being makes him the perfect person to honor in the naming of the new senior center.

Durgin Center Budget:

Phase 1 and 2 Renovation	\$170,200
Phase 3 Renovation	\$268,498
Equipment and Furnishing	\$72,381
Architectural Services	\$22,000
Total	\$533,079



A Collaborative Planning Process:

In 2015, EAAA's Executive Director and the City of Bangor's Director of Public Health came together, with the support of the EAAA Board of Directors and the Bangor City Council, to develop the Bangor Livable Age-Friendly Communities Committee (BLCC). (Livable Communities is a World Health Organization designation that identifies eight domains of livability that influence old adults' quality of life.) The BLCC worked with community members, organizations, and city staff to discuss how to improve "livability" and enhance opportunities for older adults, caregivers, and adults with disabilities without duplicating efforts already underway.

In January of 2019, the Committee voted to address the void in services and programming for older adults in the region. EAAA chose to create a new center because they are a leader in meeting the needs of older adults and their families in the area and partnering with other non-profit organizations and community advocates to address identified needs. The Agency committed to raising funds for and building a centrally-located community center to improve livability in the region.

How You Can Help:

Renovations are already underway at the new Durgin Center. Soon, older adults in eastern Maine will have a welcoming space to meet, take classes, and enjoy a meal together. Meals on Wheels moved into EAAA's new location in Brewer and is preparing 5,000 meals weekly for Meals on Wheels recipients across Penobscot, Piscataquis, Hancock, and Washington Counties. The larger storage space will also be available for use this year. EAAA anticipates fully opening the new facility, provided it can do so safely and following Maine CDC guidance, in November 2021. When it is safe to meet in groups again, the Durgin Center will be ready to welcome consumers for classes and programs and to enjoy the café.

When you support the Durgin Center Campaign, you will provide a welcoming space for older adults, caregivers, and adults with disabilities to continue to learn, create, socialize and stay active and healthy. Your donation will support EAAA's vital programs for seniors in the region by providing more space for Meals on Wheels, a café for seniors, and classroom space. Your thoughtful contribution will enhance the livability of seniors in our region for years to come.

You can support this crucial endeavor by making a charitable donation now to EAAA, Durgin Center Campaign. Gifts in honor or memory of a loved one or colleague are a meaningful tribute to someone special in your life. Family members or employees of a business may join together to maximize the impact of a gift to the Campaign.

Please consider making a generous gift today by completing a Durgin Center Campaign gift/pledge form and return it to EAAA at 240 State Street Brewer, ME 04412. You may make a pledge to be paid over a two-year period to make your donation go even further. Checks should be made out to "EAAA - Durgin Center Campaign." You may also make a gift securely online at EAAA.org. Thank you for your heartfelt consideration!



Socialization activities

- Morning coffee klatch
- Lunch five days a week through Meals on Wheels

Educational sessions

- Health and Safety
- Avoiding scams and fraud • Financial planning in retirement

