



Northbridge
Communities



Just the Facts
Your Guide to Independent Living

How should you retire? As the saying goes, let us count the ways.

Luckily—or unluckily depending on your outlook—today there are almost too many ways to count. And that can make it hard to know which retirement option is truly the best for you. We can help with an option that gives you a multitude of reasons to forget all the rest.

That option is senior living. While that term may come with preconceived notions, what you may not know is that senior living also has options, one of which is called independent living. And it's ideal for retirees just like you.

In fact, it's designed specifically for active adults who want to enjoy life, free of the burdens of daily chores and responsibilities.

Sound intriguing? Read on.



The Secret Is Out

Independent living is becoming an increasingly popular retirement option for active seniors who want to get more out of life.

After Moving to Independent Living

- 89.3% of independent living residents rate their overall satisfaction as good or excellent
- 84.5% of independent living residents would recommend their community to someone else

- *Holleran Consulting LLC*

The United States has approximately 250,000 housing units in communities for independent living.

- *Seniorliving.org*

Demand for independent living units remains intense, keeping occupancy above 90% again this year.

- *2018 Seniors Housing Research Report, Marcus & Millichap*





Does the Shoe Fit?

Independent living is not for everyone. In particular, it is not designed for those with cognitive challenges or chronic health conditions that require ongoing healthcare. Many senior living communities offer a variety of living services if these needs arise. Be sure to ask questions about continuing care when visiting.

Ask yourself:

- How is your health overall?
- How easily can you get around by yourself?
- Are you able to manage your own medications?
- Do you need help making doctor's appointments or scheduling services?

Keep in mind that while the community may not provide this type of assistance and support, independent living residents can use third-party home health services for their medication management, physical, occupational and speech therapy or personal care needs.

Less than 10% of all independent living residents use mobility aids such as walkers and wheelchairs, and about 10% of residents also require personal care services.

- American Seniors Housing Association (ASHA)

Great Expectations

So, what can you expect in an independent living community? The short answer: a lot!

Independent living communities typically offer these features:

- A choice of living options including apartments, cottages, condominiums and/or even single-family homes in some cases
- Restaurant-style dining with one to three chef-prepared meals daily
- Basic housekeeping and laundry services
- Transportation to appointments and errands
- Wellness programs
- A range of educational, social and enrichment programs, activities and outings
- Amenities such as a pool, fitness center, onsite beauty and barber salon

Beyond the specific services and amenities offered, independent living opens up a larger world to you in retirement than you would ordinarily find at home. You'll have more options and less responsibility – so you can get back to the things you really enjoy – and new friends to enjoy them with.

For the Health of It

Seniors in the United States with an active social life may have a slower rate of memory decline. In fact, memory decline among the most sociable could be less than half the rate among the least sociable. – *Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH)*

Seniors who exercise appear to live longer and have a lower risk of disability with benefits seen not only in individuals who maintain an existing level of physical activity, but also in those who begin exercising between ages 70 and 85. – *Hebrew University Medical Center and Hebrew University Hadassah Medical School*

When you become part of an independent living retirement community, you're more likely to make new friends and try new things – most report a better experience than they expected. – *2009 Independent Living Report by the ProMatura Group, LLC.*





The Bottom Line

Of course, budget is a big part of the equation as you consider your retirement options. The cost of independent living housing varies greatly based on location, but it is always less expensive than assisted living, memory care or skilled nursing options.

Some independent living communities require an entrance fee, while others only require monthly, all-inclusive rent payments. The monthly rent typically also includes most utilities, dining, maintenance, housekeeping, laundry, transportation and activities.

Keep in mind that costs vary by community, as do the services included or which cost additional.

Cost Versus Value

It's also important to consider your total cost of living at home, not simply your mortgage and rent costs, as this has a large impact on affordability. At home, you also pay for food, utilities, home maintenance, property taxes, insurance and entertainment. Factor those costs into your current monthly expenses for a more apples-to-apples comparison with potential senior living costs.

And in addition to the dollar amount, make sure to keep the positive impact on your quality of life in the equation.

Staying Home Also Has Its Costs

- Furnace and central air conditioning system replacement is approximately \$10,000.
- Lawn care for 10 years is approximately \$25,000.
- Replacement windows for an average home is \$11,000.
- Average roof replacement using composite shingles is approximately \$20,000.

Sources: CostHelper.com, The-Lawn-Advisor.com, CostVsValue.com

Note: Cost may vary depending on location.

Seeing Is Believing

You don't have to take our word for it, if independent living seems like it might be a fit for you, check it out for yourself.

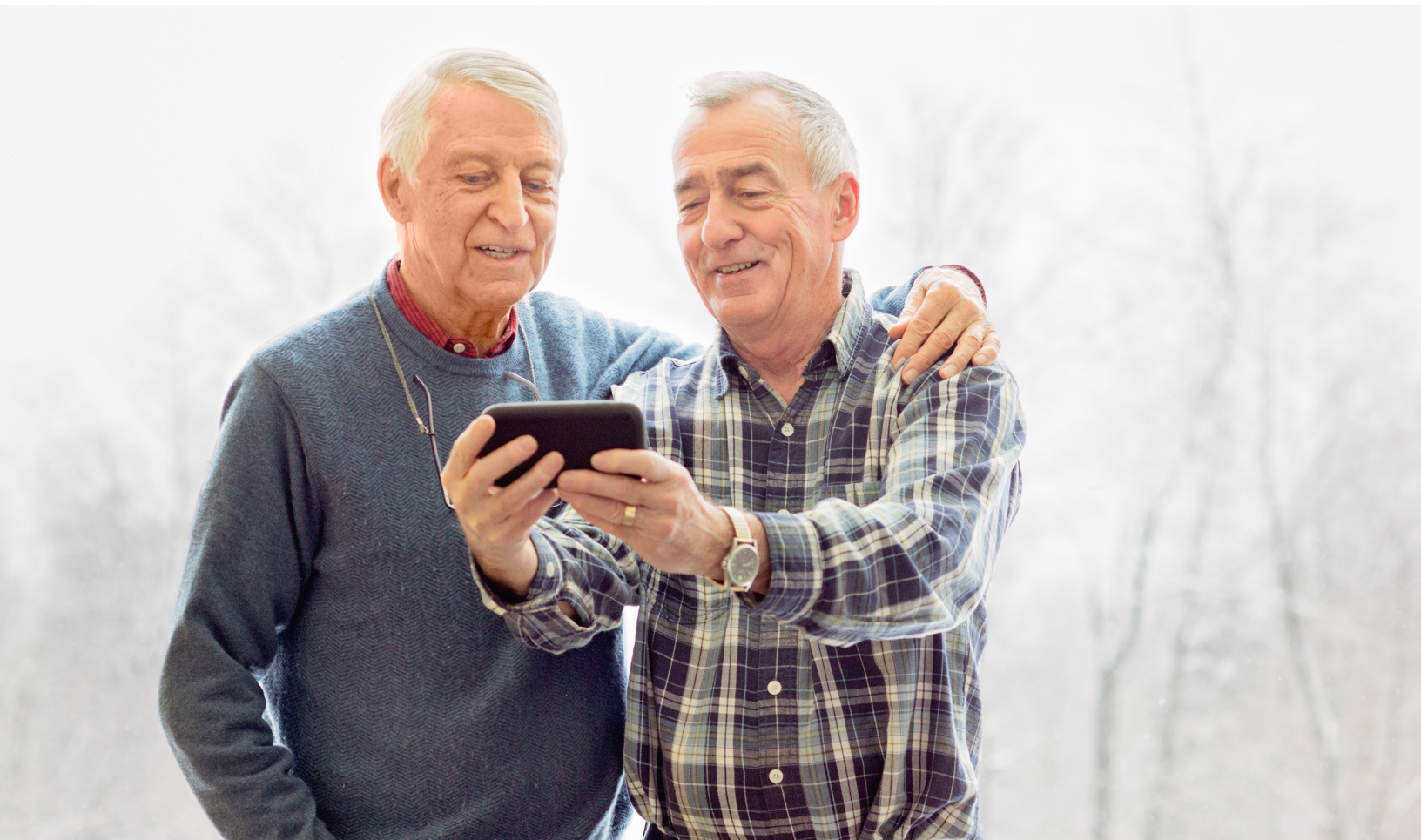
Schedule a visit with the communities you're most interested in, and be sure to look for:

- Fitness and wellness offerings
- How well-maintained the property is
- Dining options and venues
- A full social calendar
- Ample outdoor space
- Services and amenities (and which are included or not)
- A stellar reputation

And there's absolutely nothing better than firsthand experience, so talk with the residents about their daily life in the community.

After You Visit

Before making a final decision, check with family members, trusted advisors and local professionals who may work with the community to get their feedback.





Onward and Upward

You've decided you're ready to begin this exciting new chapter; however the moving process can still be stressful for some. To make things easier, visit the independent living community often to have a meal, participate in activities and get to know the staff as well as your new neighbors.

Include your family in the downsizing process to reminisce, to take keepsakes or treasured pieces and to make it more fun. Bring personal items to your new place to quickly make it feel like home. Talk to the staff about preferences and, above all, relax, because you've got a lot to look forward to.

My Ideal Life

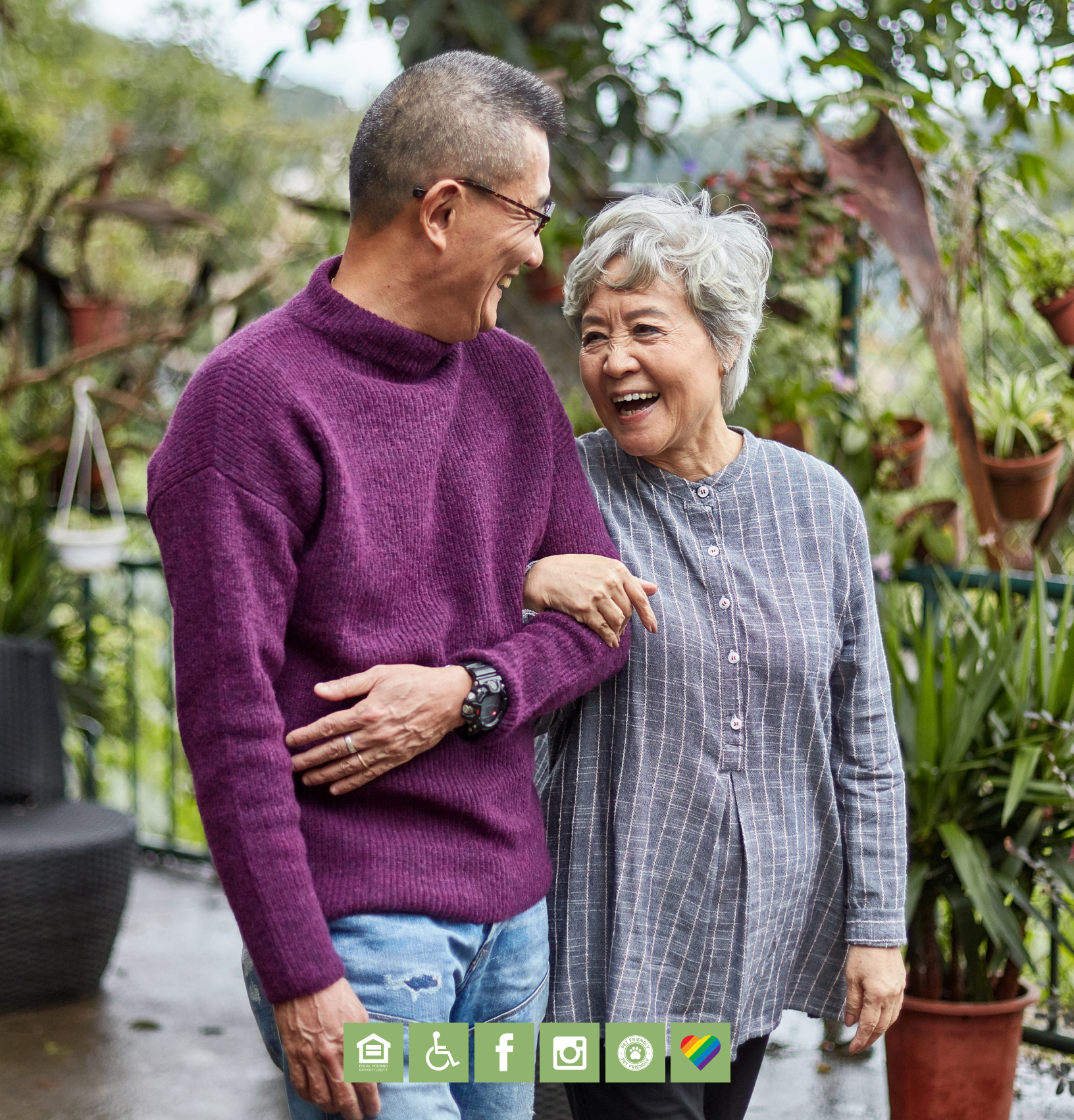
A Checklist to the Retirement of Your Dreams

MY RESPONSIBILITIES	KEEP IT - I ENJOY IT!	LET IT GO!
Grocery shopping		
House cleaning		
Cooking		
Yard work		
Household repairs		
Laundry		
Daytime driving		
Nighttime driving		
Errands		
Coordinating services		





I WANT MORE!	EASILY AVAILABLE AT HOME
Fun	
Social opportunities	
Friends	
Convenience	
Dining options	
Travel opportunities and outings	
Educational and cultural opportunities	
Pampering	
Amenities	
Fitness and wellness opportunities	
Activities on my calendar	
Volunteer opportunities	
Purpose	
Relaxation	
Time to do whatever I want	



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