



“POP-UP” GROUP DINING PILOT PROJECT
August 12 – November 18, 2021



2817 Millwood Avenue, Columbia, SC 29205
seniorresourcesinc.org

Pilot Project Summary:

Senior Resources will offer a “pop-up” group dining pilot program at a local restaurant, Lizard’s Thicket, to provide nutrition and socialization for currently underserved seniors in Richland County. Seniors in need of socialization or nutritional supports will gather for lunch once a week for a shared meal in the private dining area of a local Lizard’s Thicket under the supervision of a Senior Resources employee. Each attendee will be given the opportunity to order a fully balanced meal of his/her choice from a special menu approved to meet group dining nutritional standards. The meal will be available at no cost to the senior for those attending the program in need of socialization and/or nutrition using the SCDOA uniform assessment tool. Diners will also have the opportunity to order meal supplements from the restaurants full menu at their own costs. The program is funded primarily through Senior Resource’s Group Dining service contract with the Central Midlands Area Agency on Aging under the guidelines of the group dining standards set by the South Carolina Department on Aging.

Project Planning Team:

Andrew Boozer, Executive Director, Senior Resources
Rowan Goodrich, MS RDN LD, Program Coordinator, South Carolina Department on Aging
Candice Holloway, Aging Director, Central Midlands Council of Governments
Lindsay Shazly, MS, RDN, LD, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, Carolina Nutrition
Sara Krisnow, Community Relations Manager, Lizard’s Thicket



Project Goal

To develop a replicable, alternative group dining model in a restaurant setting to meet unmet needs of seniors seeking socialization and nutritional assistance.

Project Details

Pilot Location: Lizard's Thicket, 402 Beltline Blvd, Columbia, SC 29205

Time and Day of Service: 11:00am on Thursday

Duration of Pilot Program: August 12 – November 18, 2021

Target Participation: 20 Seniors each day of service (max 60)

Target Service Population

Target service population will be seniors age 60+ in need of socialization or nutritional assistance, living in Richland County and with the ability to drive/secure transportation to the dining site. Specifically, we will target seniors living in a 5-10 mile radius of the location.

Initial offerings will be advertised to seniors who were screened for nutritional support during the COVID-19 pandemic, but chose not to continue in home-delivered meals or the current offerings of group dining. These 300+ seniors initially received services through our open (no documented needs) services through Senior Emergency Nutrition Program drive-thru locations (March-June 2020). These seniors then completed a voluntary referral/screening for on-going support. From June –September 2020, these seniors received meal vouchers to Lizard's Thicket where they could receive a drive-thru or takeout meal at no cost. When the voucher program ended in September 2020, all participants were offered the opportunity to begin home-delivered or group dining services. Most chose not to do so, and thus, many of the seniors we served through the voucher program have not received assistance since September 2020.

In addition, seniors in the target demographic will be sought through outreach activities through local senior organizations, apartment complexes, churches, social media, and referrals through the Information and Referral desk at the Central Midlands Council of Governments. Seniors enrolled in other nutrition programs at Senior Resources will not be a target demographic to participate in the pilot program, though if a senior decides to participate they will be to do so as long as they do not also receive a meal on the same day at another center.

Service Continuum Example: A New Door to Aging Services Network

The pilot program is designed to meet an unmet need among the older adult population in Richland County. The COVID-19 pandemic connected seniors with us who were in need of some supports, but were not interested in attending a senior center program and were not homebound to qualify for home delivered meals. The pilot program offers a new door for seniors to enter the aging services network so that as they age they are connected available resources and services to keep them healthy and independent.

For example, a 66 year old, recently widowed woman, may have a need for more socialization because her children have all moved out of state. She has full capability of driving herself but needs to find something to keep her active outside of the home. She still is quite mobile and independent and has little interest in attending a full four-hour daily senior center program. She is an ideal candidate for the pilot program and attends for many years as part of her connection to the community. While dining at Lizard's Thicket, she meet a new friend who invites her to attend an evidence-based exercise class twice a week to help her maintain her mobility.

However, when she turns 75, her balance and dexterity deteriorates and when her car needs repairs which she cannot afford, she stops driving. Standing and getting around has become more difficult and she would like more help with meals. At this point she decides to transition to our senior wellness center group dining programs, where our bus picks her up from her home to attend five days a week.

Unfortunately when she turns 82, she has a stroke and when she is discharged from the rehabilitation center, she realizes she is homebound and unable to leave her home. She enrolls in the home delivered meals program and also begins to receive home care to help keep her house tidy. She is able to get by but feels lonely and melancholy. The aide refers her to be matched with volunteer Senior Companion so she has a regular visitor to keep up with her. At age 86, her health declines that she moves into a residential facility. In the meantime, the continuum of services provided her with 20 years of supports that kept her healthy and independent in her own home.



Outreach

Outreach for the pilot program will include direct mail postcards and phone calls to the prior participants of the voucher programs, social media posts and advertising, posting and distributing flyers to community partners and at senior-focused events and service centers in neighborhoods near the restaurant. We will also encourage word of mouth outreach among early-adopting participants to encourage other neighbors, friends, and/or family to attend.



The front of the postcard features a light green background on the left with the text "YOU'RE Invited!" in a large, stylized font. Below this, a white box contains the event details: "SENIOR LUNCH BUNCH", "Every Thursday, 11:00-Noon Starting August 12", and "Come enjoy a hot meal and friendship at Lizard's Thicket!". It also lists the provider "Senior Resources" and the location "Lizard's Thicket, 402 Beltline Blvd., Columbia, SC 29205". The right side of the postcard has a white background with the "Senior Lunch BUNCH" logo, which includes icons of three people and a fork. Logos for "Lizard's Thicket" and "Senior Resources" are at the bottom.

YOU'RE Invited!

SENIOR LUNCH BUNCH
Every Thursday, 11:00-Noon
Starting August 12

*Come enjoy a hot meal and friendship
at Lizard's Thicket!*

Provided by Senior Resources
to seniors (age 60+) living in Richland County.

LOCATION:
Lizard's Thicket
402 Beltline Blvd., Columbia, SC 29205

For more information, please call
(803) 252-7734, x236.
(see menu on the other side)

Senior Lunch BUNCH

Lizard's Thicket
Real Country Cooking

Senior Resources



The back of the postcard features a white background. On the left, the "Senior Resources" logo and address "2817 Millwood Avenue, Columbia, SC 29205" are at the top. Below is a "Menu" section with a green lizard logo, listing three "Pick One" options: "Grilled or Fried Chicken Strips Broiled or Fried Flounder", "Green Beans, Baby Lima Beans, Fried Okra, or Okra & Tomatoes", and "Mashed Potatoes or Candied Yams". A note states "All lunches come with a dinner roll, butter, fruit, and water. If desired, milk is also available. Additional items available at standard menu price." The event details "Every Thursday, 11:00-Noon, starting August 12, 402 Beltline Blvd., Columbia, SC 29205" are at the bottom. The right side features the "PROVIDED BY SENIOR RESOURCES" text, the "Senior Lunch BUNCH" logo, the "Lizard's Thicket" logo, and a postage-paid stamp.

Senior Resources 2817 Millwood Avenue, Columbia, SC 29205

Menu

Pick One:
Grilled or Fried Chicken Strips
Broiled or Fried Flounder

Pick One:
Green Beans, Baby Lima Beans,
Fried Okra, or Okra & Tomatoes

Pick One:
Mashed Potatoes or Candied Yams

*All lunches come with a dinner roll, butter, fruit,
and water. If desired, milk is also available.
Additional items available at standard menu price.*

Every Thursday, 11:00-Noon, starting August 12
402 Beltline Blvd., Columbia, SC 29205

PROVIDED BY SENIOR RESOURCES

Senior Lunch BUNCH

Lizard's Thicket
Real Country Cooking

*Come enjoy a hot meal and friendship
at Lizard's Thicket!*

PSRRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COLUMBIA SC
PERMIT NO. 535

Group Dining Experience

The program will provide a restaurant dining experience while meeting all necessary group dining requirements of Older American Act. Diners will meet in a reserved private dining room, sign-in with a Senior Resources' team member, and will be served by the Lizard's Thicket wait staff. While waiting for food to arrive, nutrition education and other activities will be offered by the Senior Resources staff. Participants will have the opportunity to contribute voluntary contributions in a locked box in the possession of the Senior Resources' staff.

Nutrition

Diners will make meal choices from a pre-approved menu. The menu is based on the standard "small plate" menu at Lizard's Thicket with certain modifications to meet dietary guidelines. The offered menu will include:

- One Protein
- One Starch
- One Vegetable
- One Fresh Fruit
- One Roll
- Water
- Glass of Milk

This fully-balanced meal, along with gratuity, will be offered at no cost to the diner. Diners may choose to take leftovers home from the dining site. In addition, seniors who wish to pay for meal supplements or additional take-out meals will have the opportunity to order from the full restaurant menu at their own expense.

Socialization

Diners will eat at shared tables with other seniors from the community. Senior Resources staff will act as the social host of the meal, helping to make introductions when necessary and to lead table activities. Table activities may be ice breaker games to encourage conversations, crossword/word search activities, and nutritional education materials to help seniors make positive lifestyle choices. On occasion, guest speakers on topics relevant to seniors may be invited to address the diners.

LUNCH SMALL PLATES

All lunch small plates are served with a dinner roll, butter, fruit, and water. If desired, milk is also available.

Additional items are available for an extra fee.

Pick one from each category:

MEAT: Grilled Chicken Strips Fried Chicken Strips Broiled Flounder Fried Flounder	VEGETABLE: Green Beans Baby Lima Beans Fried Okra Okra & Tomatoes
--	--

STARCH:
Mashed Potatoes
Candied Yams

Logos: Lizard's Thicket Real Country Cooking, Senior Resources, Carolina Nutrition

Program Oversight

The Lunch Bunch group dining project will be the responsibility of the Senior Resource's Director of Community Based Services, reporting directly to the Executive Director. The director will ensure all program activities meet guidelines and that all necessary planning and documentation is completed. The director will lead recruitment of participants for the program and ensure that all necessary documentation is entered into the client database for reimbursement.

Directly reporting to the director will be the on-site host. The host will be a Senior Resources staff who is responsible for welcoming the diners, collecting sign-in information, leading activities, confirming the meal tab with the server, and ensuring all diners safely leave the restaurant.

Lizard's Thicket wait staff will be designated to the group under the supervision of the store manager. The restaurant staff will ensure correct billing information with the host before the conclusion of the dining time, and submit for payment on a house account for Senior Resources. Lizard's Thicket will bill Senior Resources monthly for meals served.

The invoice will be submitted to Senior Resources, and once verified by the program director and in the client database, submitted for payment to the Director of Finance and Operations. The Director of Finance will monthly submit reimbursement based on data entry from the client database to Central Midlands Council of Governments within 5 working days of the start of each month.

Central Midlands Council of Governments will review the monthly reimbursement request and report to the South Carolina Department on Aging to release funds for reimbursement. Central Midlands Council of Governments will reimburse Senior Resources within 30 days.

As a contracted provider, Central Midlands Council of Governments may request a site visit or review of documentation at any time and without prior notice to ensure South Carolina Department on Aging guidelines are being fulfilled. The program's menu will be reviewed quarterly during the standing menu review meeting.

Program Evaluation

The program will be evaluated at least 30 days prior to the scheduled end of the pilot program. At that time, the project planning team and program staff will provide feedback on the program. Feedback will include direct feedback from the clients by a survey. The program will be evaluated on the following primary factors:

1. Is the program improving the nutrition and socialization needs of participants?
2. Does the program meet the expectations of each contributing organization?
3. Is the program sustainable?

Pending the evaluation, immediate plans will be implemented based one of three scenarios:

Option 1: Closure

If based on the evaluation, the pilot program is not meeting expectations and no reasonable modifications can be promptly made to amend the program, then the program will close at the end of the pilot period. Seniors will be notified at the next meal in person and written notifications will be mailed to the senior's home. Notifications will include alternative programs through Senior Resources or other providers to help meet the unmet needs after the pilot program closure.

Option 2: Adjust/Continuation

In the event that the pilot program is meeting most expectations but requires further review or modifications, the project planning team may extend the pilot program for a defined period of time. The continuation of the pilot phase will allow for further review of the various aspects of the program to ensure all contributing organizations are comfortable with the arrangement.

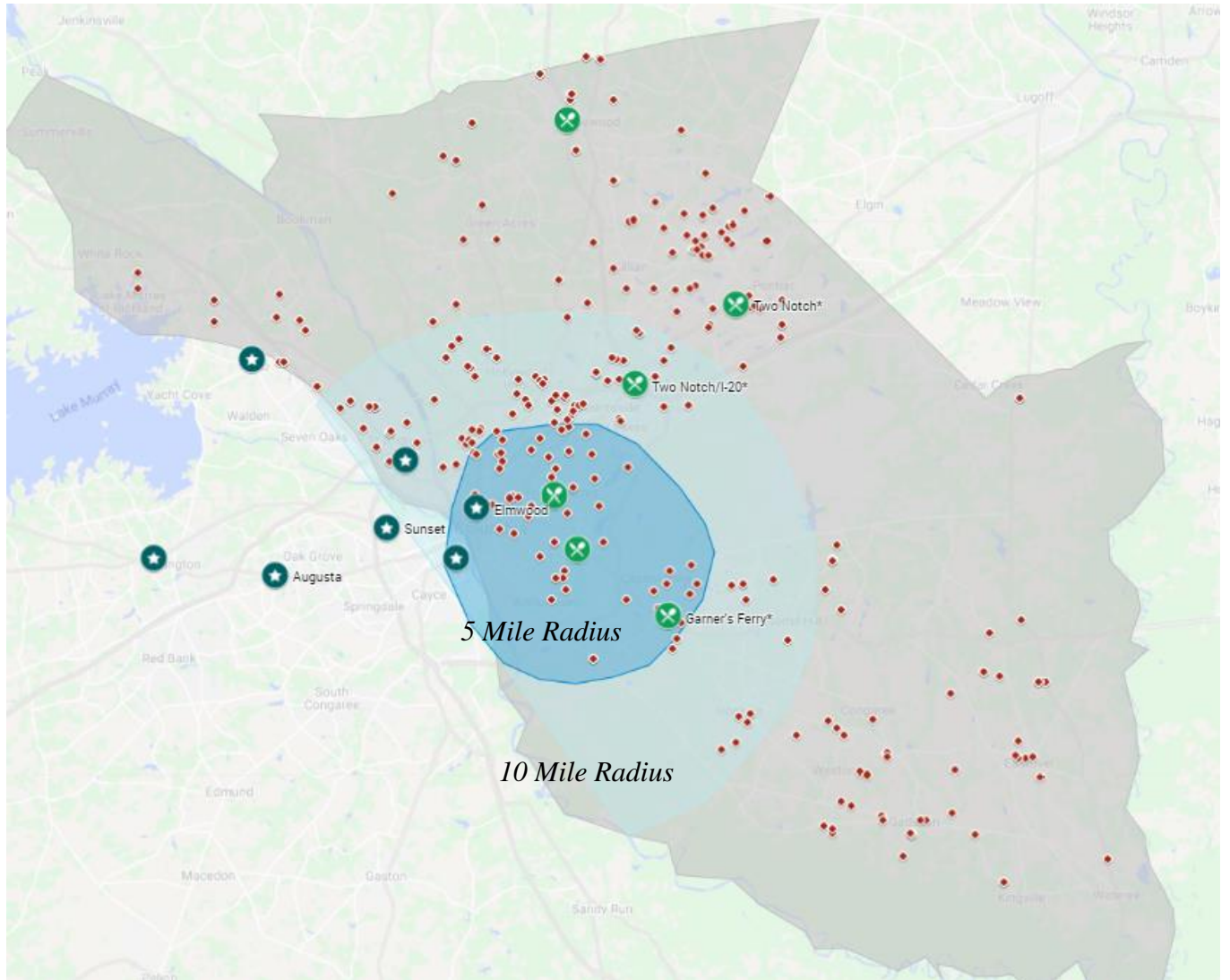
Option 3: Expansion

Once the program is meeting all expectations of contributing organizations, the project planning team will develop expansion opportunities. Expansion may include increased attendance at the current location, additional days at the current location, adding new locations, offering alternate meal times, offering breakfast menus, or other possibilities.

Project Flowchart



Pilot Location and Surrounding Area



Red Dots – Seniors served by 2020 COVID Voucher program

Green Dots – Lizard's Thicket Locations (dark green = no private dining room)

Startup Checklist: (last updated 6/23/21)

- ✓ Identify target demographics
- ✓ Identify location
- ✓ Draft menu
- ✓ Submit menu for dietitian review
- ✓ Draft pilot plan
- ✓ Preliminary site visit
- ✓ Final sign-off on menu from dietitian
- ✓ Submit "Waiver Request Form" to AAA for less than 5 days of service
 - AAA reviews, signs waiver request and submits to SCDOA
 - SCDOA reviews and approves waiver request
- ✓ Submit "Change in Meal Site Operations" form to AAA
 - AAA review, signs site change form and submits to SCDOA
 - SCDOA reviews and approves site change form
- ✓ Request new AIM code for participants
- ✓ Develop marketing tools for new site
 - Recruit new participants
 - Finalize staffing plans
 - Enroll new participants in program in AIM/client database
 - AAA assesses new participants
 - Prepare on-site documentation (sign-in sheets, required postings, banner, etc.)
 - Create on-site activities calendar
 - Confirm start date with participants
 - Perform pre-opening site visit
 - Start program