

NewCAL and Data: A Guide

Prepared by Richard Rasala
October 2019. Updated January 2020.

https://web.northeastern.edu/rasala/senior/pdf/NewCAL_and_Data.pdf

At this stage of the NewCAL process, massive data has been published on two sites, the NewCAL project web site and on the data site entitled "Senior Information for Newton MA". The purpose of this document is to provide a guide to this data and to highlight items well worth examining in detail. To avoid a bug in PDF conversion, the URLs may use a smaller font size so they require only a single line.

Here are the links to the two sites.

The NewCAL Project Website

<https://newcal.projects.nv5.com/>

Senior Information for Newton MA

<https://web.northeastern.edu/rasala/senior/>

Materials on the NewCAL Project Website

The FAQ document was composed based on questions asked by citizens in email to the city and the responses given to these questions. It is certainly a good place to begin.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

https://newcal.projects.nv5.com/download/supporting_docs_newcal/NewCAL-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf

Members of the city government made site visits to a large number of senior and community centers. Two sets of visits were summarized formally in slides.

Visit Slides #1 [08-17-2018]

- Tolles Parsons Center Wellesley & Council on Aging
- Needham Center at the Heights & Council on Aging
- Marlborough Council on Aging & Senior Center

https://newcal.projects.nv5.com/download/program_design/2018-08-17-NewCAL-Senior-Center-Visits.pdf

Visit Slides #2 [10-05-2018]

- Randolph Intergenerational Community Center
- Natick Community – Senior Center
- Lexington Community Center

https://newcal.projects.nv5.com/download/program_design/2018-10-05-NewCAL-Senior-Center-Visits.pdf

The community meeting on 03-14-2019 was important since that meeting presented the conceptual design for the programs and spaces of NewCAL as well as the first draft of space plans.

Community Update Meeting 03-14-2019 NewCAL Vision and Facility Concept Diagrams

https://newcal.projects.nv5.com/download/presentations_newcal/2019-03-14-NewCAL-Community-Meeting-Presentation.pdf

Proposed Program/Rooms/Spaces 03-14-2019

https://newcal.projects.nv5.com/download/program_design/2019-03-14-NewCAL-Community-Meeting-Proposed-Program-Rooms-Spaces.pdf

The Deep Dive document was developed to provide detailed information on the NewCAL thinking as it evolved in the NewCAL Working Group. The document provides historical background, a discussion of the NewCAL vision and goals, and a full explanation of the building plans as presented on 03-14-2019. This document is the most extensive exposition of the rationale for NewCAL to date.

NewCAL – A Deep Dive – A Working Group Member Perspective

https://newcal.projects.nv5.com/download/supporting_docs_newcal/2019-09-26-NewCAL-Deep-Dive-A-Working-Group-Members-Perspective.pdf

Materials on the site “Senior Information for Newton MA”

Let us repeat the link.

Senior Information for Newton MA

<https://web.northeastern.edu/rasala/senior/>

The site is divided into three sections. Each section may be independently expanded or collapsed.

The three sections are:

- Key Information
- Links to Senior Center Sites
- Links to the NewCAL Project: Newton Center for Active Living

I will discuss these sections in turn.

§1. Key Information

This section currently contains 3 links.

- A link to this document: “NewCAL and Data: A Guide”.
- A link to: “NewCAL – A Deep Dive” [see above]
- A link to: “Some NewCAL Talking Points”

Some NewCAL Talking Points

https://web.northeastern.edu/rasala/senior/pdf/NewCAL_Talking_Points.pdf

§2. Links to Senior Center Sites

This section contains the bulk of the data posted on the site.

The initial purpose of this section was to post links to data about the Newton Senior Center and about senior and community centers in Massachusetts. At first, the communities chosen consisted of three nearby urban cities (Brookline, Cambridge, Somerville) plus assorted communities in the Metro West region. Later, additional communities were added based on suggestions by people who had visited their centers. At present, there are 40 communities in addition to Newton on the site.

This is a massive amount of empirical information about what programs and services are taking place in a variety of senior and community centers. Given this situation, data summaries were created during Fall 2018 for Newton and 9 other communities: Belmont, Brookline, Marlborough, Natick, Needham, Plymouth, Randolph, Waltham, and Wellesley. The summaries for the 9 communities list only programs and services that are BEYOND those offered in Newton.

The data summaries for Newton and the 9 communities may be found at:

Senior Data Extracts

https://web.northeastern.edu/rasala/senior/data_extract.html

Reading these summaries provides a convenient way to learn what is happening in many senior centers and to understand what programs and services are of interest to seniors.

Here are the direct links to the two most important data summaries:

Newton MA Senior Center Programs and Services

https://web.northeastern.edu/rasala/senior/pdf/Newton_MA_Senior_Center_Programs.pdf

This file lists all programs and services offered in Newton as of Fall 2018.

Summary of Selected Senior Center Data

https://web.northeastern.edu/rasala/senior/pdf/Summary_of_Selected_Data.pdf

This file lists all programs and services offered in the 9 communities studied that are BEYOND those offered in Newton as of Fall 2018.

On the main site, the hours of operation of each center are listed together with other information about the center. To make this information understandable in aggregate, there is a spreadsheet that summarizes the hours of operation data. There are two versions.

Center Operational Data 8/26/19

<https://web.northeastern.edu/rasala/senior/pdf/SeniorCenterData.pdf>

Center Operational Data Expanded 12/14/19

<https://web.northeastern.edu/rasala/senior/pdf/CenterOperationalData.pdf>

A striking conclusion from these spreadsheets is that most pure senior centers operate on Monday through Friday for some subset of hours between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM. A limited number of pure senior centers have a few evening hours and/or a few weekend hours. The only centers that are able to offer substantial evening hours and substantial weekend hours are those that operate as a combination of senior center and community center.

The Green Space data site classifies the relationship between a senior / community center and its surrounding green space. The senior / community centers examined here are the 40 centers (aside from Newton MA) that are listed on the main senior center data site.

Center Green Space Data

https://web.northeastern.edu/rasala/senior/green_space.html

§3. Links to the NewCAL Project: Newton Center for Active Living

This section contains links to previous work by Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype, the architecture firm for NewCAL.

There are 20 links to slide shows about centers designed by BH+A. 8 of these centers are facilities for seniors or seniors and the community.

I suggest that looking at some of these slide shows will enable people to see what a modern center looks like.

NOTE: A link to the original version of this document was posted on Village 14 on October 27, 2019. The Village14 URL is:

<https://village14.com/2019/10/27/newcal-and-data-a-guide/#axzz63bLSGwn3>