

Age Friendly



Hamilton

HCoA
Hamilton Council
on Aging

2016 Community Progress Report



BACKGROUND

Our population is aging. The number of older adults and seniors in Hamilton is expected to double over the next two decades. This represents the fastest growing segment of the population. For this reason, the City of Hamilton identified the need for the development of an age-friendly plan as a strategic priority.

In 2013, the City of Hamilton partnered with the Hamilton Council on Aging and the Seniors Advisory Committee to develop the Age Friendly Hamilton Plan. Public consultation for the Plan included over 700 older adults, community stakeholders and key partners from various sectors across the city. The Plan was approved by City Council in September 2014. The Age Friendly Hamilton Plan will guide municipal decision-makers, staff and community stakeholders in addressing the needs and priorities of older adults in Hamilton.

THE VISION

All residents of Hamilton are respected and included in community life regardless of age, ethnicity, race, gender, ability and background; policy and planning engages residents, reflects diversity, and fosters social connectivity and the opportunity for active living and to age in place. Social connectivity links people to each other, place and services thus advancing health and well-being, while increasing the city's social capital.

AGE FRIENDLY HAMILTON STRATEGIC GOALS

The Age Friendly Hamilton Plan has 7 strategic goals, 25 objectives and 101 actions.

1 Housing: Everyone should have a place to live. People are supported in ways that makes sense for their unique circumstances with a full range of housing options in their neighbourhoods.

2 Getting Around Greater Hamilton: The City's transportation systems, urban design and physical infrastructure enable people to participate in community life as they choose, as well as age in their community.

3 Communication & Information: Older adults have access to information and systems that are better connected, and are able to influence and design the type of information systems they need; customer service and

way-finding are intentional and responsive to individual needs and capacities.

4 Health & Community Services: Older adults have access to a wide range of supports and services that allow them to remain in their homes and attend to their health and personal needs. Aging in community is eased by good urban design, appropriate housing, and the support of family and community.

5 Social Participation: Social engagement opportunities are welcoming and reflect the diverse interests and preferences of older adults in the community, and are available in a variety of formats.

6 Civic Engagement, Volunteerism and Employment: Hamilton's vibrant civic life includes meaningful roles for older people as leaders, influencers, employees and volunteers.

7 Age-Friendly Public Service: Leaders in all City of Hamilton departments will champion age-friendly strategies in their scope of authority and practice, and in partnership with the community.



PROGRESS TO DATE

We are already moving towards becoming an “age friendly” community. One example is the new City of Hamilton Vision: “To be the Best Place to Raise a Child and Age Successfully”, which was adopted by City Council this year.

The three core partners, the City of Hamilton, Hamilton Council on Aging and Seniors Advisory Committee have been monitoring progress and implementing some of the recommendations within the Plan.

The following are some of the achievements:

Goal 1: Housing

- **300 Housing Guides:** “Housing Options for Older Adults in Hamilton” was developed and distributed widely by the Seniors Advisory Committee.
- Hamilton has implemented four **Housing First** programs, which are designed to provide immediate access to permanent affordable housing for individuals facing chronic homelessness.
- The Hamilton Council on Aging received a grant to increase social participation for seniors living in private market rental buildings.

Goal 2: Getting Around Greater Hamilton

- The City’s Recreation Division, DARTS, Ancaster, Glanbrook and Flamborough Information Services received a grant to provide free transportation for seniors residing in rural areas for recreational activities and grocery shopping.
- HSR and the Hamilton Council on Aging hosted “**Let’s Take the Bus**” workshops to assist older adults who take the bus, and created an informational brochure in seven languages.
- The City’s Recreation Division piloted a cycling workshop around safety for older adults. The City will be offering future cycling workshops for older adults.
- **18 Age Friendly Trails:** “Let’s Take a Walk: A guide to age-friendly trails in Hamilton” is a guide of many of Hamilton’s outdoor recreational trails.
- Under the Pedestrian Mobility Plan, the City continues to install Pedestrian Crossovers and Signalized Intersections with Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS).



Goal 3: Communication and Information

- **Over 3,000 Webpage Views in 2016:** A seniors landing page (www.hamilton.ca/seniors) was launched in January 2016. This landing page provides a central source of information and links.

- Opportunities for older adults to learn how to use information technology devices are continuously evolving. A few examples include:
 - The City, through **Sackville Hill Seniors Centre** partnered with Staples to offer iPad classes to its membership.
 - **The Hamilton Public Library** has a wide variety of free workshops and courses which are offered in many of its branches.
 - **The YWCA** has expanded their course offerings to include laptop and tablet lessons.
- There are new and innovative ways for older adults to access information and increase digital literacy. A few examples include:
 - **The Dundas InfoSpot55+** pilot program developed a web-based application for seniors to access information about programs and services in the Dundas community.
 - **Older Adult Peer Connector volunteers** use a web-based application on iPads to retrieve information about services for other seniors.
 - **McMaster University's Tapestry Program** volunteers work with seniors in their homes using an application on iPads to access information about community services to increase wellness and reduce social isolation.

Goal 4: Health and Community Services

- A new **Food Access Guide** which includes many community services for seniors, i.e., shopping/transportation services, Meals on Wheels programs and free meals.
- **\$2 million** was granted from New Horizons for Seniors Programs for three years to tackle social isolation amongst seniors. Seven local organizations, including the Hamilton Council on Aging are partnering to pilot this large project.

Goal 5: Social Participation

- **600 Attendees and 33 Exhibits:** The Older Adult Network (OAN) hosted their annual Seniors Kick-off event, which included various exhibits and workshops for older adults, entertainment and a luncheon.
- Approximately 2,900 Seniors will have access to recreational opportunities. The City's Recreational Division received a grant over the next two years to increase access to seniors who experience barriers in getting to existing seniors centres.
- A **New 55+ Program Guide** was launched in Fall/Winter 2015/2016 by the City's Recreation Division, and will be produced twice per year.
- A new seniors centre in Flamborough opened to the public in November 2015.



Flamborough Seniors Recreation Centre

Goal 6: Civic Engagement, Volunteerism and Employment

- **430 Guests and 30 Nominees:** This year marked the 21st for the Hamilton Municipal Seniors Awards. This event honours and celebrates those citizens over the age of 65 who have voluntarily contributed to their community in various areas. There are nine award categories, including Senior of the Year.
- **50+ New Volunteers:** The Older Adult Peer Connector Program trains older adult volunteers to provide information and referrals about community resources, support programs and services to seniors. Volunteers are placed in locations throughout greater Hamilton, including Sackville Seniors Centre, Ancaster Senior Achievement Centre, and several public libraries.



Peer Connector Volunteer

Goal 7: Age-Friendly Public Service

- **World Health Organization (WHO):** Hamilton has been certified as a member of WHO's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.
- **200 Attendees and 29 Exhibits:** The City of Hamilton and Hamilton Council on Aging hosted an Age Friendly Forum with presentations, exhibitors and refreshments.
- The City of Hamilton, Hamilton Council on Aging, McMaster University, and Hamilton Planning and Social Research Council (SPRC) have taken a leadership role in Ontario by creating an evaluation framework, which will be shared with other communities.
- A communication strategy to raise awareness and engage internal and external stakeholders has been developed.

For more information on Age Friendly Hamilton, contact:

Lisa Maychak
Project Manager, Age-Friendly Hamilton
Neighbourhood & Community Initiatives
Community & Emergency Services Department
City of Hamilton
905-546-2424 ext. 1721
Lisa.Maychak@hamilton.ca

Shelagh Kiely
Projects Coordinator
Hamilton Council on Aging
905-777-3837 ext. 12238
admin@coahamilton.ca
www.agefriendlyhamilton.ca

For more information and updates on Hamilton's Age Friendly Plan, visit www.hamilton.ca/agefriendly

For information on resources for older adults and seniors, visit www.hamilton.ca/seniors