



Age-Friendly Durham Strategy and Action Plan

April 2017



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Message from the Regional Chair and CEO



The Region of Durham is pleased to present its strategy and action plan for an age-friendly community. An aging demographic creates opportunities for innovative planning, service delivery and public engagement. This is the basis of the Age-Friendly Durham Strategy.

A Regional staff working group, external steering committee, municipal partners, and community input ensured a collaborative approach. The coordination of this work was made possible, in part, thanks to an Age-Friendly Community Planning Grant from the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat. We are grateful for their support.

An age-friendly community enables seniors to participate in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities. It provides opportunities to work and volunteer. Health care and other services may be tailored to the needs of older residents. Communication and information is available in a variety of formats. Together, our goal is to make Durham a community where all residents feel included, respected, and enjoy a high quality of life.

Yours truly,

Roger Anderson
Regional Chair and CEO





Message from the Chief Administrative Officer



Durham's population is aging, and this will have an important impact on the types of services that are required in the future and the way in which they are delivered. This demographic shift gives us an opportunity to re-think our approach, so that we continue to adapt to the changing needs and diversity of our residents. The Age-Friendly Durham Strategy is the product of extensive conversations with older adults and their families, caregivers, and many community partners. It establishes a common vision for Durham as a community that values, respects, and supports the well-being of all residents, regardless of age or ability.

With this strategy, Durham joins a global movement of communities that are committed to ensuring older adults are actively engaged in all aspects of social and civic life. A strong and vibrant community benefits us all, and older adults have an abundance of knowledge and experience to share. As an age-friendly community, our focus will be on creating opportunities that support active, healthy aging. We will achieve this through continued advocacy, policy development, and by delivering programs and services that meet the needs of residents at all ages and stages of life.

To be most successful, implementation of this plan will require the participation of many. Durham residents, community agencies, different levels of government, and other partners all have a role to play in creating and sustaining an age-friendly community. This strategy will help guide the direction of Regional services over the next five years, and I look forward to working together to achieve our age-friendly vision.

Yours truly,

Garry Cubitt
Chief Administrative Officer



Executive Summary

In June 2015, the Region of Durham received a grant from the Province of Ontario to initiate an age-friendly community planning process. This strategy is the result of comprehensive research and community engagement, generating conversations that have moved the community towards a more collaborative and sustainable approach to meeting the needs of Durham residents across their lifespan. It builds upon the many initiatives already underway, and acknowledges that older adults, caregivers, local businesses, academia, service providers, community organizations, senior levels of government and municipalities each have a role to play in building the kind of community where citizens of all ages and abilities feel valued and included.

There is no single definition of older adult or senior. The age of 65 is typically associated with retirement and pension eligibility; however different levels of government may use other age thresholds when determining eligibility for programs and benefits aimed at an older population. Within the context of this Plan, the term “older adult” refers to those individuals aged 55 and older. Evidence suggests that early emphasis on active and healthy aging can significantly improve health outcomes and quality of life as people age. An effective age-friendly strategy provides the foundation for a strong and vibrant community where older adults remain active, enjoy better health, and are more engaged and informed.

The recommendations that follow provide a roadmap to guide the Region, and also inform the work of other community stakeholders, to help ensure that decision-making reflects and responds to the needs and lived experience of older adults. The Region has been bold in our approach to developing this strategy. Rather than narrowing its scope, this Action Plan moves beyond a strict focus on areas of Regional responsibility, incorporating all the input that was received regarding what is important to older adults and their families. There is a need to be pragmatic, but also to set ambitious goals that might lead to innovative responses. Ultimately, what is achievable will be influenced by available resources and overall capacity to deliver services. It is recognized that the timeframes outlined in this Plan are only a guide.

Timing of actions will ultimately be determined by Regional departments, or by those stakeholders who may be involved with the implementation of specific recommendations. Certain actions may also change or evolve based on further discussion with Regional staff, area municipalities, and other community partners.

The objectives identified in this Plan represent a consolidated version of the full set of community recommendations contained in the companion document: “Summary of Community Feedback and Recommendations – Age-Friendly Durham Consultation”. This Action Plan includes only those areas where the Region of Durham may have a direct or indirect role¹.

Age-friendly recommendations are consistent with, and should be viewed within, the context of many other local, regional, and provincial policy frameworks and activities including:

- » Growing Together, Reaching Further, Aspiring Higher – A New Strategic Plan for Durham Region: 2015-2019
- » At Home In Durham – The Durham Housing Plan 2014-2024
- » The Regional Official Plan (ROP)
- » Transportation Master Plan (TMP)
- » Regional Cycling Plan
- » Approved Regional Trail Network
- » Regional and Area Municipal Accessibility Plans
- » Durham Region Transit 5-year Plan and Rural North Plan
- » Durham Region Health Neighbourhoods and Priority Neighbourhoods
- » Property Tax Policy
- » Walkshed Analysis and Transit Access Analysis studies
- » Zoning By-laws and Urban Design Guidelines
- » Advancing Access to Affordable Recreation in Durham (AARD)
- » Durham Public Libraries Strategic Plans
- » Dementia-Friendly Communities and the Blue Umbrella Program
- » Age-Friendly Whitby recommendations and the Town of Whitby Seniors’ Recreation and Leisure Services Strategy
- » Municipality of Clarington Older Adult Strategy 2015
- » Township of Scugog Strategic Plan 2016 (Strategic Direction #6)
- » Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and related regulations
- » Ontario's Seniors Strategy
- » Ontario’s Long-term Affordable Housing Strategy
- » Ontario’s Basic Income Pilot

¹The companion document “Summary of Community Feedback and Recommendations – Age-Friendly Durham Consultation” is available on the Age-Friendly Durham webpage at durham.ca/agefriendly. It provides a detailed list of all recommendations and their policy alignment, and includes action items where other organizations (either area municipalities or another community partner) might take the lead on implementation.



A Profile of Durham's Older Adult Population

The population of older Canadians is growing faster than at any other time in the country's history. By the year 2030, more than a quarter of Canada's population is expected to be over the age of 65.² Consistent with this national trend, the number of older adults in Durham is also increasing. People are living longer, and over the next few decades the wave of aging Baby Boomers³ will shift the demographic make-up of our community substantially. According to 2015 population estimates, there are 177,678 residents aged 55 and older in Durham, making up nearly 27% of the total population.⁴ This is expected to increase to 34% by the year 2031. The largest gains are seen among Durham seniors aged 90 and older. Between the years 2005-2015, this age group increased by 154%, with the greatest growth in the City of Pickering, where the number of people aged 90+ tripled from 200 to 601 – a 200% increase.

Men and women aged 50-54 represent the largest proportion of the Durham population (8.7% of males and 8.6% of females in 2015).⁵ In the decade between 2005 and 2015, the number of adults between the ages of 50-54 increased by over 44%. This is in contrast with a decreasing population of 30-49 year olds across the Region. In addition to a rapidly aging population, older adults are frequently outliving their partners or becoming the sole occupants of their own homes. It is estimated that 21% of Durham residents over the age of 65 (14,695 older adults) are living alone.⁶

As the population ages, their physical and cognitive needs and abilities also change. It is estimated that 1 in 10 Canadian adults over the age of 65 will develop some form of dementia. Currently, 1 in 5 Canadians over the age of 45 are providing care to seniors with long-term health problems. At a local level, it is estimated that close to 10,000 Durham residents are living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia.⁷ All of these factors have significant implications for the way in which municipalities, and other organizations, prioritize resources and approach the delivery of programs and services in the future. From a community perspective, an aging population requires a shift in our approach to urban planning and community design, housing, health and social service programs, buildings and transportation infrastructure, transit services, and how businesses will respond to the changing consumer needs of older adults. This is at the heart of age-friendly planning – to build communities that are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all residents, across the lifespan.

²Statistics Canada (2015). The Daily – Canada's Population Estimates.

³Baby Boomers are those born during the post-World War II baby boom, typically between the years 1946 and 1964.

⁴Durham Region Health Department "Population at a Glance" report
http://www.durham.ca/departments/health/health_statistics/popAtAGlance.pdf

⁵Durham Region Health Department "Population at a Glance" report
http://www.durham.ca/departments/health/health_statistics/popAtAGlance.pdf

⁶Census 2011, Statistics Canada.

⁷Alzheimer Society of Durham Region

What is an Age-Friendly Community?

In 2006, the World Health Organization (WHO) developed a framework for assessing the age-friendliness of cities and communities. The Global Age-Friendly Cities Project was an international effort that brought together 33 cities around the world with an interest in supporting healthy aging. Canada has been at the forefront of this work due to early leadership from the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the participation of four Canadian cities in the initial research and development of the framework.⁸ “Age-friendly cities” encourage active, healthy aging⁹ through their structures and services, and promote inclusion of older adults in all areas of community life. The World Health Organization identified 8 interrelated features of an age-friendly community:

1. Outdoor spaces and buildings
2. Transportation*
3. Housing*
4. Social participation
5. Respect and social inclusion
6. Civic participation and employment
7. Communication and information
8. Community and health services*

Durham’s Age-Friendly Strategy and Action Plan aligns with the World Health Organization age-friendly cities framework, and places Durham among a growing number of communities – both in Canada and abroad – who are working to enhance quality of life for older adults. An * indicates the three age-friendly dimensions that most closely align with Region of Durham responsibilities.

Becoming age-friendly is an ongoing process, achieved through coordinated planning and strategic efforts over time. It recognizes that each community has unique needs and available resources, impacted both by population and by rural/urban dynamics. Local governments have a key role to play in promoting age-friendliness through policy and planning, programs and services, education, and infrastructure investments. Equally important is the participation of businesses, community organizations, citizens and other stakeholders, as municipalities alone cannot fully influence every aspect of an age-friendly community.

⁸ Saanich (BC), Portage La Prairie (MB), Sherbrooke (QC) and Halifax (NS).

⁹ Active aging refers to “the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.” From Active Aging: a Policy Framework retrieved March 3, 2017 from http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/active_ageing/en

An Age-Friendly Vision for Durham

Durham Region is a community where all residents – regardless of age, ethnicity, race, gender or ability – feel included, respected, and enjoy a high quality of life.

Guiding Principles

- » Effective age-friendly planning meets the needs of Durham residents across the lifespan.
- » The term “older adults” will encompass those individuals aged 55+.
- » An emphasis will be placed on the promotion of active, healthy aging within the scope of age and ability.
- » The principle of “Nothing About Them, Without Them” will be applied, to ensure seniors are actively engaged in the age-friendly planning process.



Goals and Objectives

The Age-Friendly Durham Strategy and Action Plan provides a framework to assist the Region of Durham – and other community stakeholders – in planning for an aging population. The recommendations that have been identified are intended to guide future decision-making over the next five years, while also serving to benchmark initiatives already underway. They provide a foundation that aims to move Durham beyond the status quo, focusing efforts and resources on those areas that were identified as most meaningful to older adults. The overall objective is to accomplish the following:

- » Engage residents and stakeholders in an ongoing dialogue about our aging population and the evolving needs of older adults
- » Inform the planning and delivery of current and future services for older adults across Durham’s eight municipalities
- » Incorporate best practices from other jurisdictions into Durham’s local age-friendly planning process
- » Encourage multi-level collaboration and collective action, to improve quality of life and the livability of our communities

Age-Friendly Durham Community Planning Process



Age-Friendly Steering Committee

- Oversees the development of an Age-Friendly Strategy and Action Plan
- Leverages community networks

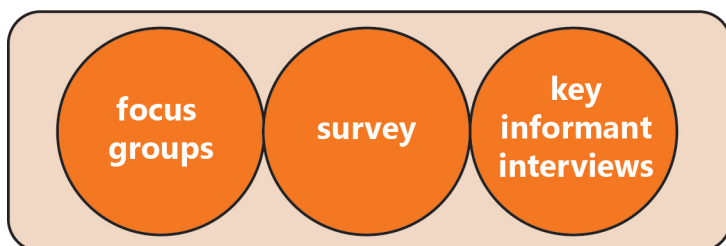
Age-Friendly Staff Working Group

- Develops inventory & aligns existing Regional activities
- Conducts data analysis and mapping
- Hosts Roundtable

Municipal Age-Friendly Committees & Working Groups

- Develop complementary strategies, plans and actions

Community Input, Consultation and Communications





Process

This strategy was initiated in July 2015 and completed in April 2017. The planning process occurred in three phases:

1. Background research and data analysis;
2. Community engagement and consultation;
3. Synthesis and strategy development.

Initial research included a review of existing municipal seniors' strategies and best practices in age-friendly planning; a benchmarking exercise to document Regional programs and services pertaining to older adults; and data analysis to support the development of infographics and an online service locator that maps community programs and services relevant to older adults. The service locator and a series of summary documents from the community consultations can be found on the Region's age-friendly web page at durham.ca/AgeFriendly.

A Project Steering Committee and Regional Staff Working Group were also established to focus on different elements of the planning process. These two groups worked in tandem to facilitate the community engagement activities, and analyse the information gathered to identify the recommendations contained in this Plan.

The Region undertook a 6-month consultation process to gather input from older adults, caregivers, community organizations, businesses, and Durham's eight municipalities. Over 1900 participants contributed to the Age-Friendly Durham conversation, sharing their ideas and experiences through the following activities:

- » On June 24, 2016 a Municipal Roundtable discussion was attended by 63 representatives from the Region and each of Durham's eight municipalities¹⁰, with the intent of creating alignment between local and regional efforts in a forum specific to age-friendly planning.
- » On September 30, 2016 the Age-Friendly Community Forum was held in Ajax, Ontario. An information exchange and robust discussion took place about the needs of older adults, with 289 participants and 20 community organizations attending the event.

¹⁰ Durham Region includes: Ajax, Brock, Clarington, Oshawa, Pickering, Scugog, Uxbridge, and Whitby.

- » A series of eight focus groups were held across Durham, engaging a varied audience of 229 participants from both rural and urban areas, with concerted effort made to reach older adults of diverse backgrounds and experiences, such as multicultural communities, low-income individuals, and persons with disabilities.
- » One-on-one interviews were conducted with eight “key informants” with subject-matter expertise relevant to age-friendly planning and the needs of older adults, including: community health service providers; a rural policy specialist; local business owners; an advocate for persons with disabilities; Indigenous representative; an academic with research interests in gerontology and population health; and a caregiver.
- » A community needs assessment survey was circulated in both online and print formats, and was completed by 1,182 respondents between June and September 2016.
- » Additional input was sought through the distribution of “Idea Cards” that captured 141 further comments and ideas about what is working well for older adults in Durham, and what needs to be improved.

Throughout these conversations there was striking consistency in the messaging. Regardless of age, income, ability, or where they live, older adults and their families identified similar priorities and concerns.

"Maintaining a senior in their own home is a huge challenge. Supports to help a senior are few and far between, inconsistent, and the system is difficult to navigate with long waiting periods."

– Survey Respondent





Methodology

The feedback received through the community and stakeholder consultation sessions shaped the recommendations and next steps outlined in this Plan. The project team reviewed all of the input received, summarized and ranked it according to its importance to seniors, and then identified core recommendations and potential implementation partners. The Region looks forward to working with these partners through the “next steps” identified in this Plan. The Plan highlights the major opportunities for improvement by identifying action items, implementation status/timelines and potential partners for activities where the Region would play either a lead or supporting role.

Strategic Goals and Actions

The following goals and actions are organized by the eight WHO Age-Friendly dimensions, and include highlights of what we heard during the consultation process, existing community strengths, opportunities for improvement, and potential implementation partners for each action. For Regionally-led or supported actions, the following timeframes have been suggested for implementation:

Implementation Timeframes for Regional Responsibilities

In Progress = Action on these items is already underway

Immediate = Target of 1-2 years

Future = Target of 3-5 years

Future Contingent on Funding = Action on these items is contingent on the identification of additional resources from appropriate source(s).



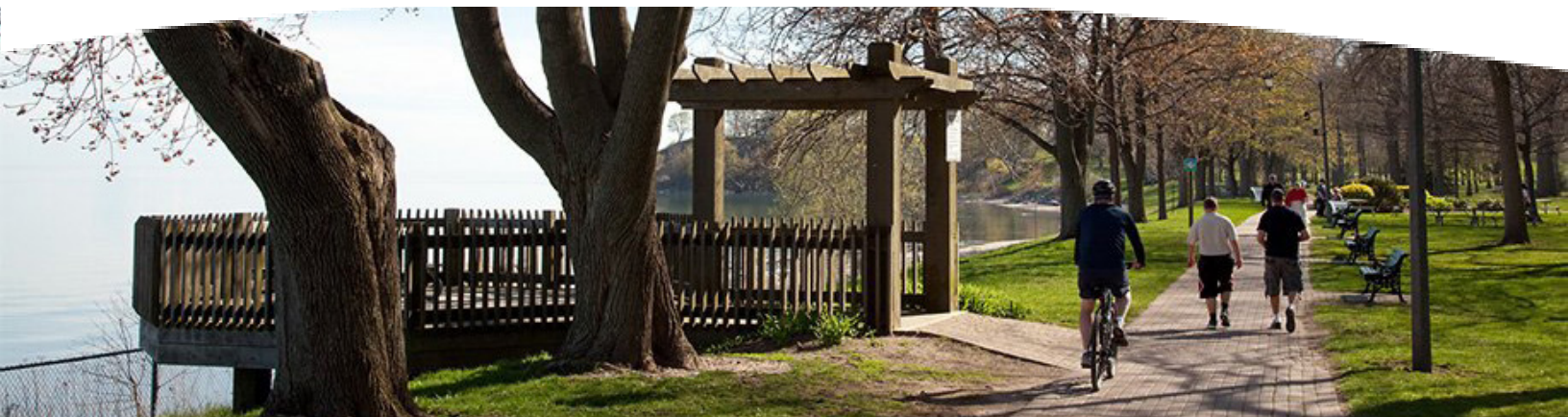
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

The World Health Organization identifies outdoor spaces as having a major impact on mobility, independence, and the quality of life of older people, affecting their ability to age in place. Connectivity of communities through safe and accessible physical infrastructure (sidewalks, curb cuts, parking, pedestrian crossings, paths and trails, paved road shoulders, signage and lighting) can have a dramatic impact on quality of life for older adults.

Highlights of What We Heard:

- » Lack of “complete communities”¹¹ means older adults have to move frequently during life stages and changes.
- » Subdivisions are not conducive to aging in place, and walkability can be enhanced beyond the creation of off-road paths and trails.
- » Older adults find it difficult to navigate pedestrian crossings safely, due to the quick light changes and lack of countdown timers.
- » Wayfinding signage and the availability of public washrooms and places to rest (e.g. benches) are inadequate in some communities.
- » Effective and timely snow clearing on sidewalks, at bus stops and intersections is essential for older adults to get around.
- » The safe use of open spaces and access to shops and services relies on accessible design (e.g. ramps), including pedestrian and cycling surfaces that encourage active transportation.

¹¹ “Complete communities” are an urban planning concept that emphasizes walkable, vibrant neighbourhoods where access to services, jobs, housing, recreation and open spaces is readily available.



Overview of Community Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement:

Strengths

- » Provincial AODA requirements ensure the integration of accessibility into the design of public spaces and buildings.
- » Accessible pedestrian signals (both new and retrofit) have been installed at various Regional intersections.
- » Local businesses are being encouraged to provide accessible entry into stores through zoning by-laws and urban design guidelines, such as the new City Centre Zoning By-Law in the City of Pickering.
- » An extensive network of trails and cycling paths exist that encourage active living and the use of outdoor spaces for all ages.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- » Enhance the use of outdoor spaces by improving signage, washroom facilities, and installing more benches.
- » Ensure that curb cuts and medians exist at Regional intersections, and the timing of lights is adjusted for older pedestrians.
- » Improved lighting and maintenance of trails, and clearer road markings for cyclists will improve safety for all users.
- » Access to local shops is impacted by a tension between cost and liability, and the difficulty for local businesses to measure the economic benefits of accessibility improvements.

"More benches would be nice, and not only in parks. Sometimes you just need to stop and rest in your travels."

–Survey Respondent

"Pedestrian crossing lights do not provide enough time to cross the street safely. At some crossings, I find it impossible to get across with the number of seconds indicated on the light, even though I am a very mobile senior."

–Survey Respondent



Recommendations:

Objective 1 ~ Enhance accessibility of public spaces, buildings, and local businesses.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
1.1 Encourage local businesses to provide accessible entry into stores and offices, and educate business owners regarding AODA compliance.	Immediate	Area Municipalities Business Owners Boards of Trade/Chambers of Commerce
1.2 Increase the number of accessible parking spaces outside Regional facilities, moving beyond legislated requirements to accommodate growing demand from an aging population.	Future Contingent on Funding	Area Municipalities have responsibility for local spaces including buildings, parks, and community recreation facilities.
1.3 Increase the availability of benches and resting places on trails, in public spaces and downtown areas, incorporating protection from the elements (e.g. windbreaks and sunshades).	Future Contingent on Funding	Area Municipalities Business Owners
1.4 Develop a consistent evaluation tool to measure the age-friendliness of outdoor spaces and buildings.	Future Contingent on Funding	Area Municipalities
1.5 Encourage the use of larger font sizes and numbers on street signs and buildings to facilitate easier navigation of public spaces.	Future Contingent on Funding	Area Municipalities Business Owners
1.6 Utilize available greenspace to encourage community activity.	Future	Area Municipalities

Objective 2 ~ Improve the safety and connectivity of outdoor spaces to support active transportation and ongoing access by older adults.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
2.1 Encourage active transportation through further development of the regional cycling network, increased signage, and the installation of additional bike racks.	Future	Area Municipalities
2.2 Educate users about road markings to increase understanding and support the safety and visibility of cyclists, transit users, and pedestrians.	In Progress	Area Municipalities
2.3 Enhance the timely removal of snow from intersections and bus stops, to prevent slips and falls and facilitate the movement of all residents.	Immediate	Area Municipalities
2.4 Develop a consistent approach across municipalities to improve the safety and accessibility of sidewalks and pedestrian walkways (e.g. curb cuts, tactile walking surface indicators, salting and lighting).	In Progress	Area Municipalities
2.5 Develop a municipal policy for paved road shoulders to benefit transit riders, cyclists, mobility device users, agricultural vehicles.	Future Contingent on Funding	Area Municipalities
2.6 Promote increased connectivity of neighbourhoods, trails, and pathways to support active transportation.	In Progress	Area Municipalities



Transportation

The World Health Organization identifies transportation, including accessible and affordable public transportation, as a key factor that influences active aging.

Being able to move around a community influences the degree to which older adults can participate meaningfully in social and civic activities, and their ability to access community and health services.

Highlights of What We Heard:

- » When older adults can no longer drive, they must rely on transportation options that are unaffordable or unable to meet their needs.
- » Public transit routes and schedules result in long trips to go short distances, often require many transfers, and are not fully integrated with other regions in close proximity to Durham.
- » Resources for specialized transit services that provide assisted, door-to-door transportation for frail seniors and those with disabilities are insufficient to meet growing demand.
- » Rural residents have to travel large distances to access community and health services that are predominantly located in Durham municipalities along the lakeshore.
- » Bus shelters and seating at transit stops is inadequate in rural areas, where more protection is needed from the elements and reduced bus frequency results in longer waits.
- » Lack of core funding to support community transportation alternatives provided by non-profit organizations and not enough volunteer drivers to support existing programs.

Overview of Community Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement:

Strengths:

- » Durham Region Transit operates a fleet of conventional buses that are 100 percent accessible with ramps and drop-floor features.
- » Active transportation is encouraged through a bus fleet that is equipped with racks to accommodate bicycles.

- » Durham Transit service has recently been expanded in rural areas through the Durham Transit Rural North Plan and inter-regional connections.
- » The walkability of communities and access to transportation is evaluated through walkshed analysis, transit access analysis, and the use of walkability scores.
- » The Five-Year Service Strategy for Durham Transit identifies improvements to address frequency and service coverage.

Opportunities for Improvement

- » Improved communication and education about different transportation options, including conventional and specialized transit.
- » Inter-regional transit options that connect riders to the places they want to go.

“We need to stop putting in sidewalks and change them to multi-use trails like Whitby has been doing. I would rather have cyclists with pedestrians than with cars and trucks, and it will be safer as all the Baby Boomers start driving scooters.”

–Survey Respondent

“I would like to stay active. My wife and I would like to bicycle more. We have the trail by the lake, but you have to drive your car with the bikes on a rack in order to get there.”

–Survey Respondent





Recommendations:

Objective 1 ~ Continue advocacy efforts to encourage investments in Durham transportation networks and services.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
1.1 Continue to advocate with Metrolinx for improved accessibility at stations and expanded GO bus and train services, including evenings and better coverage of rural areas.	In Progress	Metrolinx Area Municipalities
1.2 Enhance traffic enforcement efforts to promote greater road safety, and advocate with OPP for more enforcement on provincially-patrolled highways.	Future Contingent on Funding	Area Municipalities Durham Regional Police Service Ontario Provincial Police

Objective 2 ~ Improve awareness of transportation options through ongoing communication and public education.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
2.1 Install next-stop digital signs on Durham Transit buses, to help all riders use the service effectively – including the hearing impaired and passengers whose first language is not English.	In Progress	-
2.2 Provide user-friendly route schedules and maps that are available at a variety of locations, including bus stops and onboard Durham Transit vehicles.	In Progress	-
2.3 Develop an orientation program that familiarizes transit users with existing and new or expanded routes, schedules, Presto cards, specialized transit and other options.	Future	-

Objective 3 – Enhance transportation infrastructure and services to address identified gaps and improve the passenger experience.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
3.1 Further improve the frequency and routing of Durham Transit buses to address gaps in coverage, and align routes with key service points (e.g. health clinics, senior centres, adult day programs, Welcome Centres, shopping centres, etc.)	Future Contingent on Funding	-
3.2 Develop improved inter-regional transit routes to Orillia, Newmarket, Lindsay and Keswick to provide greater connectivity outside Durham’s borders.	In Progress	-
3.3 Provide an improved passenger experience by adding more bus shelters that include seating.	In Progress	-
3.4 Improve access for all by installing more accessible bus pads on Durham Transit routes.	In Progress	-
3.5 Expand bike-friendly transportation options and consider multi-use lanes for bikes, scooters, and walking.	Future Contingent on Funding	-
3.6 Consider the use of smaller buses or a dial-a-bus service for off-peak hours, neighbourhoods with high senior populations, and rural areas.	In Progress	-
3.7 Promote age-friendly walkability and design access to public transit with the pedestrian in mind.	In Progress	-
3.8 Refine the assessment process for Specialized Transit to reduce wait times and gaps in eligibility.	In Progress	-



Objective 4 ~ Address affordability and other barriers to transportation that will improve the overall use and passenger experience for older adults.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
<p>4.1 Consider free or low cost access to public transit for older adults, individuals receiving Guaranteed Income Supplement, and newcomers with limited independent income.</p>	<p>Future Contingent on Funding</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>4.2 Provide education/training to transit/taxi drivers on customer service needs of older adults.</p>	<p>Future</p>	<p>Area Municipalities Licensed Taxi Operators Volunteer Drivers</p>

We have accessed specialized transit for an elderly parent in a nursing home, and are very happy with the service and the staff are friendly and helpful. Good job!"

- Survey Respondent





Housing

The World Health Organization identifies a link between appropriate housing and the independence and quality of life of people as they age.

Housing that is both suitable and affordable is critical to maintaining the dignity and wellbeing of older adults, helping them to successfully age in place with appropriate access to community and social services.

Highlights of What We Heard:

- » Housing affordability is a problem: many older adults are unable to absorb the costs of home ownership, rental units, retirement communities or long-term care.
- » Low-income individuals face long wait times for rent-geared-to-income (RGI) housing due to inadequate supply, including units designed to meet the needs of older adults.¹²
- » Most individuals wish to stay in their own homes as long as possible, but the necessary supports are not always available.
- » Emergency housing that is available is not appropriate for older adults with complex needs who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.
- » Home maintenance services are expensive and not enough information is available on home adaptations that facilitate aging in place.
- » Insufficient availability of various sizes and types of housing limits options for those wishing to downsize.

¹²RGI units mandated for seniors aged 60 years and older represent about 53.3% of total RGI units in Durham, and seniors represent about 30.6% of the RGI wait list.



Overview of Community Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement:

Strengths

- » At Home in Durham is the Region's 10-year Housing Plan to address homelessness, housing affordability, choice and supply to support strong and vibrant neighbourhoods.
- » The Region has implemented a new vacancy driven rent-geared-to-income (RGI) waiting list called Durham Access to Social Housing (DASH) that gives people greater choice in deciding where they want to live.
- » Intensification targets and other planning tools (e.g. inclusionary zoning)¹³ could be used to increase the range of available housing options.
- » Regional Council has created the Affordable and Seniors' Housing Task Force to identify strategies that support the creation and maintenance of affordable and seniors' housing in Durham.
- » The Durham Regional Local Housing Corporation and the non-profit housing sector provide dedicated seniors housing in 26 social housing properties across the region (about 1,540 units).
- » There are over 300 new affordable housing units for seniors constructed (or approved for construction) with the assistance of senior levels of government since 2009. All new affordable housing developments give consideration to universal barrier-free design.
- » The Region provides financial housing assistance to make rental housing more affordable for over 5,000 low-income households in Durham, including seniors.
- » The Central East LHIN-Municipal Service Manager Housing and Homelessness Framework promotes collaborative strategic planning, improved co-ordination of service planning and alignment of funding between health and housing sectors.

"Affordability is our major stumbling block. Seniors on government pensions definitely cannot afford the luxury of yard work or taxis to get to appointments and retirement homes are out of the question."

- Survey Respondent

¹³Inclusionary zoning is a planning tool that, if adopted by the Ontario government as an amendment to the Planning Act, would give municipalities the option of requiring affordable housing units as part of residential developments.

Opportunities for Improvement

- » Opportunity exists to explore innovative responses to Durham’s housing challenges, such as co-housing, intergenerational housing, lease-for-life and other models.
- » A more co-ordinated approach to assist with accessing housing options and related supports for older adults.
- » Increased distribution of resources regarding accessible housing by design, and how to retro-fit existing housing stock with home adaptations.

Recommendations:

Objective 1 ~ Improve access to information regarding housing options and supports to help individuals plan for their aging and successfully age in place.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
1.1 Increase awareness of existing resources that support aging in place through housing design and adaptations.	Immediate	Provincial Government Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Community Stakeholders
1.2 Investigate developing a directory of organizations and local businesses that assist people with home maintenance and in-home supports.	Future	Community Stakeholders
1.3 Examine the impact of home ownership costs on fixed-income older adults, and increase education about assistance programs.	Future Contingent on Funding	Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders
1.4 Review the new online DASH system for social housing vacancies, including the needs of those who don’t have Internet access.	In Progress	Community Stakeholders Community Agencies



Objective 2 ~ Age-friendly housing options are available that are affordable, accessible, and provide greater choice over time.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
<p>2.1 Increase the number of affordable housing units for older adults in Durham.</p>	<p>Future Contingent on Funding</p>	<p>Area Municipalities Federal and Provincial Governments Non-Profit Housing Providers Development Community</p>
<p>2.2 Continue to advocate for increased housing allowances for Ontario Works/ODSP recipients.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>	<p>Provincial Government</p>
<p>2.3 Encourage increased housing supply and the development of a broader mix of housing, including bungalow townhomes, multiple-occupancy bungalows, and low-rise apartments close to services.</p>	<p>Future</p>	<p>Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders Development Community Non-Profit Housing Providers</p>
<p>2.4 Explore opportunities for innovative housing solutions based on existing models and best practices (e.g. lease-for-life models, repurposing empty schools and motels, intergenerational housing, community hubs).</p>	<p>Future Contingent on Funding</p>	<p>Area Municipalities School Boards Development Community Community Stakeholders Non-Profit Housing Providers</p>
<p>2.5 Encourage landlords to install adaptations (grab bars, comfort height toilets, etc.) and the development of larger accessible units for older adults.</p>	<p>Future</p>	<p>Area Municipalities Landlords Community Stakeholders</p>
<p>2.6 Increase awareness of secondary suites as an option to support aging in place.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>	<p>Area Municipalities</p>

Social Participation

The WHO identifies a connection between social participation and social support with good health and well-being throughout life.

Participation in meaningful and affordable activities helps older adults stay connected with their community, and supports mental and physical well-being across their lifespan.

Highlights of What We Heard:

- » Social connectedness is an important factor in maintaining physical and mental health as we grow older.
- » Older adults are a diverse population and require opportunities that respond to a variety of interests and functional abilities.
- » Recreational activities are often seen as non-essential, and will be sacrificed if the financial resources are not available to pay.
- » Many older adults are isolated and unaware of the opportunities that exist to participate in social activities.
- » Transportation can be a barrier to participation, making it difficult for those in rural communities and those who can no longer drive.





Overview of Community Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement:

Strengths

- » In addition to community day programs, the Region of Durham operates three adult day programs at Hillsdale Estates in Oshawa, Port Perry and at Lakeview Manor in Beaverton, as well as social programming at Regionally-operated long-term care facilities.
- » Local Seniors Centres provide a wide range of programs across Durham, and create opportunities for leadership and volunteerism.
- » Public libraries across Durham offer low-cost and free programs and workshops on topics of relevance to older adults.

Opportunities for Improvement

- » Develop more activities that meet the needs of diverse groups and ranges of functional ability, including ethno-cultural communities, LGBTQ seniors, and older adults living with frailty.
- » Offer programs in a variety of formats with daytime, afternoon and evening schedules and drop-in opportunities.
- » Encourage the business community to support older adults by creating gathering places and offering spaces to run informal activities.

Recommendations:

Objective 1 ~ Enhance social opportunities for older adults across the age and ability spectrum that are close to where people live.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
1.1 Increase the range of programs offered including activities at different times of day that are available in a variety of rural and urban venues.	Future Contingent on Funding	Area Municipalities
1.2 Develop volunteer opportunities for older adults to encourage social connections and mutual support.	Future	Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders



Objective 2 ~ Improve access for all ages through greater awareness and increased referral to recreation and leisure activities.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
2.1 Consider funding and/or free access to space in municipal facilities for community events, social and educational opportunities.	Immediate	Area Municipalities
2.2 Facilitate informal social and educational opportunities, and review policies that may restrict use of space to registered non-profit organizations.	Immediate	Area Municipalities Local School Boards
2.3 Encourage the creation of gathering places that can be used for both formal and informal activities.	Immediate	Area Municipalities Local Businesses
2.4 Examine ways to create common definitions and eligibility requirements for older adult programs.	Future	Area Municipalities
2.5 Facilitate more referrals to social activities and programs through better education and information.	Future	Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders



Respect and Social Inclusion

The WHO identifies a connection between participation in social, civic and economic life of their community and a person's experience of feeling respected, valued and included.

An age-friendly community includes older adults as full partners, creating opportunities for their inclusion in social and economic life, and showing respect for their needs, experience, and knowledge.

Highlights of What We Heard:

- » Older adults experience conflicting attitudes and behaviour towards them, feeling respected and included at times and treated inconsiderately at other times.
- » Stores, restaurants and other businesses cater to younger customers, overlooking the purchasing power of the older demographic.
- » The needs and complaints of older people are sometimes ignored and decisions are made without their input.
- » A lack of public awareness about aging exists and there are few opportunities to learn from one another through intergenerational activities.

Overview of Community Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement:

Strengths

- » The Alzheimer Society of Durham offers the Blue Umbrella Program, an initiative that works with local businesses to improve customer service and awareness of the needs of individuals with dementia.
- » The Durham Elder Abuse Network works collaboratively to prevent elder abuse through networking, information sharing, raising awareness and advocacy.
- » Durham Regional Police Service has a dedicated Seniors Support Coordinator position to provide education and a coordinated response to issues of older adult safety.



Opportunities for Improvement

- » More resources are needed to educate the public and increase the recognition and reporting of elder abuse.
- » Greater awareness of the consumer habits and purchasing power of the 55+ demographic, to develop a local retail landscape that better meets their needs.
- » Continue to apply an age-friendly lens to policy and planning activities, so that decisions incorporate the needs and perspectives of older adults.

Recommendations:

Objective 1 ~ Encourage respect and recognition of older adults through improved education, awareness and communication.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
1.1 Enhance education and training for those working with older populations.	Future Contingent on Funding	Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders
1.2 Create intergenerational learning opportunities that foster respect and acceptance between younger and older generations.	Future Contingent on Funding	Area Municipalities Libraries School Boards, UOIT, Durham College
1.3 Develop an education and awareness campaign that addresses stereotypes about age, disability, dementia, and encourages neighbours to support older adults.	Future Contingent on Funding	Alzheimer Society of Durham Region VON Durham

Objective 2 ~ Reduce the social isolation of older adults and help them feel safe and supported in the community.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
2.1 Identify ways to engage isolated older adults in community programs, services, activities and events.	Future	Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders
2.2 Create greater awareness of elder abuse through education initiatives, and provide training in elder abuse recognition and reporting.	Future Contingent on Funding	Durham Elder Abuse Network Durham Region Police Service





Civic Participation and Employment

The WHO identifies opportunities for paid or volunteer work and to participate in civic life as an important aspect of age-friendly communities.

Many older adults would like to continue working if there were opportunities to do so, and express an ongoing desire to contribute to their community through volunteerism and participation in civic life.

Highlights of What We Heard:

- » Older adults are frequently deferring retirement and wish to remain in the workforce, but do not necessarily want to work full-time.
- » Options and opportunities for paid employment are limited, and are not structured in ways that accommodate older workers.
- » There is no central coordination or advertising of local volunteer opportunities, making it hard to know where help is needed.
- » There should be less costs and administrative requests associated with volunteering (i.e. extensive medical tests, criminal reference checks, etc.)

Overview of Community Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement:

Strengths

- » Boards, committees and advisory councils provide many ways for older adults to join in civic participation.
- » Community-based employment programs exist to support eligible older workers to retrain and transition into new employment.
- » Strong relationships exist with the local business community, Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce to share information about older workers and consumers.

Opportunities for Improvement

- » Improved information about volunteering opportunities would encourage more participation and better matching of skills and experience to positions.
- » Better coordination of volunteer recruitment efforts would avoid duplication and wasted resources.
- » The cost of required medical and background checks (e.g. criminal reference checks, tuberculosis testing, etc.) is a barrier to many older adults who might like to volunteer their time.
- » Businesses receive more information to better understand the needs of older adults as workers and consumers.

Recommendations:

Objective 1 ~ Local employment and volunteer opportunities exist that leverage the knowledge, skills and experience of older adults.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
1.1 Work with the business community to create more local employment opportunities for older workers.	Future Contingent on Funding	Local Businesses Community Stakeholders
1.2 Develop mentorship and volunteer opportunities that appeal to diverse groups of older adults, including newcomers.	Future Contingent on Funding	Community Stakeholders Welcome Centres Employment Agencies Seniors Organizations

Objective 2 ~ Opportunities are created for business growth and entrepreneurship to meet the needs of an aging population.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
<p>1.1 Provide education and incentive programs for local businesses to improve accessibility of their shops.</p>	<p>Future Contingent on Funding</p>	<p>Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders</p>
<p>1.2 Identify and promote emerging business opportunities as a result of the aging population (e.g. home maintenance and delivery services, home healthcare services, full-service gas stations, etc.)</p>	<p>Future Contingent on Funding</p>	<p>Area Municipalities Local Businesses Business Advisory Centre Durham Startup Durham SPARK Centre</p>



Communication and Information

The WHO identifies staying connected with events and people, and getting timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs as vital for active aging.

Having access to correct and timely information in a format designed for them, helps older adults successfully navigate systems and gain access to community programs and services that enhance quality of life.

Highlights of What We Heard:

- » Increasing amounts of information can only be found online, making it hard for older adults without computer skills to access.
- » People often don't pay attention to information until they need it, and it can be difficult to locate when someone is in crisis.
- » Printed information is often not provided in a way that considers accessibility requirements, such as larger font size.
- » Information about programs and services is not distributed widely enough or frequently enough to reach the people who need it.
- » Transit schedules and maps are difficult for older adults to understand and use, which impacts their mobility.

Overview of Community Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement:

Strengths

- » Information is being distributed through a variety of channels including print, online, television and radio.
- » Adaptive technologies and provincial regulations have improved access to information for those with disabilities.
- » Public libraries in Durham are key points of contact for information on community programs and services, providing computer and internet access for those who need it.
- » The Region of Durham has introduced an Open Data Initiative which is making more information available to researchers and other organizations who use it for service planning.

Opportunities for Improvement

- » Information is not consistently produced in plain language and accessible formats so that it is easy to understand and read.
- » Telephone numbers are not always included on publications, and older adults often prefer to speak directly to a person.
- » The Region of Durham can provide leadership as a clearinghouse for information on age-friendly initiatives, through the age-friendly webpage durham.ca/AgeFriendly.
- » Further leverage local print, web content and social media to communicate the age-friendly message and keep residents informed of progress.



Recommendations:

Objective 1 ~ Information is available and easy to access when it is required, and produced in a variety of formats that meet the needs of older adults and those who support them.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
1.1 Provide information about programs and services in locations where older adults congregate, including strategies to improve communications in rural areas.	Immediate	Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders
1.2 Create communications materials that are accessible to a broad audience, integrating clear print accessibility guidelines, plain language and telephone contact information.	In Progress	Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders
1.3 Produce a variety of tools to enhance age-friendly planning and communication, including an age-friendly toolkit, service locator, and development of the Region's age-friendly webpage as an information clearinghouse.	Immediate	Community Stakeholders
1.4 Enhance the publication of data and other information to better inform residents of municipal programs, services and related costs.	Immediate	Area Municipalities



Objective 2 ~ Evidence-based policy, programming and planning is facilitated through research, collaboration, and partnership.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
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1.1 Improve understanding of Durham’s aging population through data collection and collaborative research that leverages local academic expertise.	Future	UOIT Durham College Community Stakeholders
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“Unfortunately, many older adults are not using the Internet, so if they do not have the transportation to get these brochures and forms, they will not know what is going on in their community.”

– Survey Respondent

“We have a significant number of older adults for whom English is not their first language. What are the strategies to reach out to them?”

– Survey Respondent

Community and Health Services

The WHO identifies the availability of sufficient, good quality, appropriate and accessible care as vital to maintaining health and independence in the community.

Having access to quality community and health services is critical to an older adult's ability to maintain their independence as long as possible and successfully age in place.

Highlights of What We Heard:

- » Long wait times to see specialists and a shortage of general practitioners make timely access to medical care difficult.
- » Programs that address mental health are insufficient to meet demand, and dental care programs for older adults are sparse.
- » Basic services such as lab facilities are not available in all areas, requiring patients to travel outside their community for routine monitoring and testing.
- » Growth in demand from an aging population is outpacing the ability of healthcare and service organizations to respond to the need.
- » Waitlists for long-term care facilities are as long as 3.5 years and often require older adults to leave their community, family and friends when a bed does become available.
- » The cost of retirement homes leaves many older adults without an appropriate level of care and support, which places pressure on caregivers to fill the gap.
- » Hospital discharge lacks coordination and patients are sent home too soon, before the necessary homecare supports are in place.
- » Limited options are available for transportation to medical appointments at a reasonable cost, and volunteer driver programs are stretched to capacity.

Overview of Community Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement:

Strengths

- » Community buses, volunteer driver programs and specialized transit are valued by service users.
- » Durham has many community support services available providing a broad range of programs and services for older adults.
- » Falls prevention and chronic disease prevention programs provide valuable education that helps older adults avoid injury and manage their health effectively.

Opportunities for Improvement

- » Difficulty navigating a complex system leaves many older adults and their caregivers frustrated and unaware of where help is available.
- » Limited options are available for transportation to medical appointments at a reasonable cost, and volunteer driver programs are stretched to capacity.
- » The absence of a residential hospice in Durham has a negative impact on palliative care clients and their family members.
- » More respite care beds are needed for palliative care clients – there are currently only 6 beds in Durham.
- » More resources are required to ensure homecare supports are available when they are required, and offer a sufficient number of hours to meet older adults' needs.





Recommendations:

Objective 1 ~ Provide effective advocacy on behalf of older adults for continued healthcare service and system improvements.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
<p>1.1 Continue to advocate with the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, and other healthcare providers for improved services, including more long-term care beds, homecare services, increased respite and palliative care, mental health services and a residential hospice for Durham.</p>	In Progress	Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders
<p>1.2 Advocate for affordable and accessible physiotherapy, audiology, dental and vision care services for older adults.</p>	Future	Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders



Objective 2 ~ Programs and services are available, accessible, and adequate to meet the needs of an aging population.

Action	Timeframe	Potential Partners
<p>2.1 Increase dementia awareness and services to support those affected and their families.</p>	<p>Future Contingent on Funding</p>	<p>Alzheimer Society of Durham</p>
<p>2.2 Explore the development of a community paramedicine program.</p>	<p>Future Contingent on Funding</p>	<p>Provincial Government</p>
<p>2.3 Develop bereavement support programs for older adults (including those who live in long-term care facilities) and their families.</p>	<p>Future Contingent on Funding</p>	<p>Community Stakeholders</p>
<p>2.4 Promote resources that support older adults in crisis (e.g. the Seniors Safety Line).</p>	<p>Future</p>	<p>Area Municipalities Community Stakeholders</p>
<p>2.5 Increase awareness and resources on healthy, active aging, disease prevention, falls prevention and related programs and services.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>	<p>Community Stakeholders</p>
<p>2.6 Improve systems navigation for older adults and caregivers through effective information and assistance.</p>	<p>Future</p>	<p>Community Stakeholders</p>
<p>2.7 Increase day programs and explore alternative models of delivery (e.g. virtual delivery) to address rural/urban and transportation barriers.</p>	<p>Future Contingent on Funding</p>	<p>Community Stakeholders</p>



“The Brock Community Health Centre is doing a fantastic job of organizing and offering various health promotion activities and workshops!”

- Community Forum Participant



Next Steps

The development of this Strategy and Action Plan has generated significant interest and enthusiasm from residents and stakeholders across Durham's eight municipalities. Endorsement of this Plan represents the first phase of moving towards a more age-friendly community. In order to sustain the momentum and bring this strategy to life, the Project Steering Committee recommends the following:

- » A community-wide **Council on Aging** be established in Durham, with administrative support from the Region, to guide the implementation of this Plan over the next 5 years. Similar to the Local Diversity and Immigration Partnership Council (LDIPC), a **Council on Aging** would establish cross-sectoral partnerships that engage numerous stakeholders in the work of advancing age-friendliness. The **Council on Aging** would act as a springboard to connect with other community initiatives and consolidate efforts, in a way that breaks down silos, reduces duplication, and increases collaboration and knowledge transfer.
- » Consistent with the Region's work around accessibility, the eight dimensions of age-friendly communities cut across multiple departments and program or service areas. Co-ordination of the Plan from a corporate-wide perspective helps facilitate alignment with broader strategic priorities, as identified in the Strategic Plan and the Accessibility Plan. As such, the Project Steering Committee suggests the continued allocation of staff resources from within the CAO's office to co-ordinate the Region's age-friendly efforts.
- » Convene a cross-departmental Age-Friendly Staff Working Group, with representation from all departments, to support implementation and review progress on Regional action items identified in the Plan. Based on this review, an annual progress report be developed and forwarded to Regional Council.
- » Co-implementation of this Plan in partnership with area municipalities, many of which are also producing local age-friendly strategies.

» The World Health Organization (WHO) has established a Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities for municipalities who demonstrate commitment to the values, principles and process of age-friendliness. The Town of Whitby has recently become a member. Currently, only area and single-tier municipalities are eligible; however this is under review. Upper-tier municipalities are important for the network, given their responsibility for a number of programs and services critical to age-friendliness – namely regional roads and infrastructure, public transit, paramedic and police services, social housing, long-term care facilities, and public health programs that promote active, healthy aging. When membership criteria are revised, it is recommended that the Region of Durham join the Global Network as a demonstration of commitment to the age-friendly concept and process.





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The Regional Staff Working Group is acknowledged for contributing their operational expertise to the development of the Action Plan, and for supporting the engagement of Durham residents and area municipalities through the Community Forum and Municipal Roundtable consultations.

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Town of Whitby



Glossary of Terms

Age-friendly

In an age-friendly community, policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable “active, healthy aging”.

Age in place

The ability of people to live in the home and community of their choice as they age, in a manner that promotes safety and independence.

AODA

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Best practices

Effective methods, techniques and activities that have been shown by research and experience to produce optimal results.

Blue-umbrella program

An Alzheimer Society program that provides local businesses with education about dementia and suggests strategies to provide good customer service to people living with dementia.

Civic

Relating to overall city life, including municipal government, businesses, organizations, events, and activities.

Communication

Methods of relaying information including print, electronic, face-to-face, etc.

Community

An area or place including where you live, work, play, worship, etc. that is broader than a geographic neighbourhood.

Community paramedicine

A program that allows paramedics to operate in expanded roles and provide routine healthcare services to reduce the use of 911 services for non-urgent healthcare.



Complete community

An urban planning concept that emphasizes walkable, vibrant neighbourhoods where access to services, jobs, housing, recreation and open spaces is readily available.

DASH system

Durham Access to Social Housing is a new vacancy driven rent-g geared-to-income (RGI) waiting list that gives people greater choice over where they want to live.

Guaranteed income supplement

The Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) provides a monthly non-taxable benefit to Old Age Security (OAS). Pension recipients who have a low income and are living in Canada.

Key informant

Individuals whose position or experience gives them specialist knowledge in a subject.

LGBTQ

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer.

LHIN

Local Health Integration Network (Durham is covered by the Central East LHIN).

Long-term care home

Long-term care homes are places where adults can live and receive help with most or all daily activities and access to 24-hour nursing and personal care.

ODSP

Ontario Disability Support Program.

Older adult

Defined as an individual aged 55 or older for the purposes of this strategy.

Palliative care

Specialized medical care for people living with serious illness, focused on providing relief from symptoms and improving quality of life for the patient and the family.

Residential hospice

Residential hospice is a home like environment where adults and children with life-threatening illnesses receive end-of-life services. A hospice provides individuals who cannot be cared for at home with compassionate care and comfort in the last stages of their life.

Respite care

Provides temporary care for an older adult to give relief to their usual caregiver.

Retirement home

A privately-owned residence that provides rental accommodation and care services (such as meals and medication administration), where residents are able to live independently with minimal to moderate support. Residents pay for accommodation, care and services without any subsidy or contribution from other sources.

Seniors safety line

The Seniors Safety Line provides contact and referral information for local agencies across Ontario that can assist in cases of elder abuse.

Social engagement

Refers to the degree of a person's involvement or participation in community life.

Specialized transit

Provides accessible door to door transit service for persons with disabilities who meet eligibility criteria.

Stakeholder

Someone who is involved with or affected by an issue, situation or course of action.

UOIT

University of Ontario Institute of Technology.

Welcome centres

Welcome Centres provide a one-stop service for new immigrants seeking settlement and integration assistance.



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