



City of Hamilton Report for Information

To: Chair and Members
Emergency and Community Services Committee

Date: June 12, 2025

Report No: HSC25030

Subject/Title: Hamilton's Plan for an Age-Friendly Community:
2024 Community Progress Report

Ward(s) Affected: (City Wide)

Recommendations

That Report HSC25030 **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to provide an update around Age-Friendly progress in Hamilton in 2024.
- Strong growth in stakeholder engagement is evident as the number of Age-Friendly success stories submitted through the 2024 Age-Friendly Hamilton Community Progress survey have increased substantially since 2021.
- A total of 114 Age-Friendly success stories were submitted by the community, a significant increase from the 81 submitted through the 2023 survey.
- Age-Friendly work is already underway in 2025, including the development of an Age-Friendly Hamilton Communications and Engagement Strategy.
- The plan outlines a strategic and measurable framework and is being implemented and supported by a collaborative committee, governance committee, key partners, and goal champions.

Financial Considerations

Not applicable

Background

Hamilton's Plan for an Age-Friendly Community (2021-2026) is Hamilton's second Age-Friendly Plan and was informed by many stakeholders including older adults, community organizations, and City of Hamilton leaders and front-line staff. As a community plan, it is a guide for all stakeholders to ensure that they are addressing the needs and priorities of all older adults living in Hamilton.

Since 2013, the City of Hamilton, Hamilton Council on aging and the City's Seniors Advisory Committee have been working in partnership to implement the recommendations in Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan in collaboration with many community partners and City staff. In addition, the three partners have also focused on raising awareness of the plan, so that we are proactive in planning now and in the future as the number of older adults age 55+ is a rapidly growing age demographic. According to 2021 Census data, there are 183,265 residents age 55+ which represents 32% of Hamilton's population, and this number is expected to double by 2041. This is not just a local trend as the World Health Organization estimates that by 2030 there will be 1.4 billion over the age of 60 and 2.5 billion by 2050.

Hamilton's Plan for an Age-Friendly Community (2021-2026) includes includes seven strategic goals, 21 objectives and 61 recommendations.

Strategic Goals:



Implementation and Governance

The Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee (AFCC) is comprised of the three key partners, the City of Hamilton, Hamilton Council on Aging, and Seniors Advisory Committee as well as goal champions for all goals who help to advance the recommendations in Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan. Goal champions include staff from various City departments and representatives from community organizations. The Age-Friendly Governance Committee (AFGC), which includes the three key partners, provides overall guidance and support to the Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee and includes two representatives from each of the three key partners.

Analysis

2024 Age-Friendly Hamilton Community Progress Survey

Recognizing that Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan is a community plan, the Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee determined that it was vital to identify Age-Friendly success stories that were being implemented by other stakeholders, including older adults, community organizations, private business, healthcare, education, and City staff. Therefore, in 2021 the first Age-Friendly Hamilton Community Progress Survey was launched, and results identified 23 Age-Friendly success stories that aligned with the goals and objectives of Hamilton's Age-Friendly plan. In 2022, results from the second survey included a total of 50 success stories, and in 2023 a total of 81 Age-Friendly success stories were submitted.

In February 2025, the fourth Age-Friendly Hamilton Community Progress survey was launched with a surprising total of 114 Age-Friendly success stories that were implemented in 2024, and from 72 distinct stakeholders. Eighteen surveys were submitted by private business, a substantial increase from the eight that were submitted the year before. In addition, older adults were primary contributors as advisors, leaders, volunteers, clients, employees, and customers to the Age-Friendly success stories. Results from the survey informed the 2024 Age-Friendly Hamilton Community Progress Report, attached as Appendix "A" to Report HSC25030.

Examples of 2024 Age-Friendly Success Stories identified through the survey:

Goal 1: Housing

Seniors Advisory Committee – In collaboration with City Lab, McMaster University, and City Staff, the Seniors Advisory Committee developed a comprehensive housing guide for older adults living in Hamilton. The guide includes descriptions on various types of housing including rental and ownership, housing with supports, financial benefits, home safety, and additional housing resources.

St. Matthew's House - Funding was secured to build a 15-unit development offering culturally respectful, affordable housing with support services for Black and Indigenous seniors, supported by the City of Hamilton.

Goal 2: Transportation

Ancaster, Dundas, and Glanbrook Community Services and Flamborough Connects - These four community organizations are valuable to each of their communities as they offer safe, efficient, and affordable volunteer-based transportation services for seniors who lack access to other means of

transportation. This type of support service enables older adults to attend medical appointments, get their groceries, and remain socially engaged. In 2023, Glanbrook Community Services received funding for 2023 and 2024 to enhance their transportation program.

Home Instead Hamilton – The Hospital to Home Program offers a one-time free transportation service of up to 20 kilometres for seniors being discharged from the hospital. A Home Instead caregiver will accompany the senior to ensure they are settled back in their home and provides reassurance for the family.

Goal 3: Information and Communication

Hamilton Council on Aging – Funded by the United Way, the Seniors4Change program delivered a wide range of peer-led, evidence-informed workshops designed to equip older adults with vital aging-related knowledge, foster social connections, and promote equity and inclusion. The workshops were offered throughout Hamilton both in person and virtually, and included topics such as Positive Aging, Navigating the Healthcare System, Let's Get Moving, and Advanced Care Planning. The workshops were facilitated by peer volunteers, many of which are retired doctors, teachers, and social workers. In 2024, a total of 1,223 older adults participated in the workshops.

Hamilton Public Library and Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee - The Redbook, managed by the Hamilton Public Library is a comprehensive online directory offering residents access to information about community services and resources in Hamilton. Since 2023, the Age-Friendly Community Progress Survey asked respondents if they would like their organization added to the Redbook, therefore increasing the number of community organizations included in this valuable resource. In 2023, there were 17 new or updated listings, and 23 in 2024.

Goal 4: Health and Community Services

Positive Health Network - Offers training to reduce the stigma and increase provider awareness around the needs of older adults who are living and aging with HIV.

Seniors at Risk in Hamilton – Plays a critical role in supporting older adults in Hamilton, and is a partnership of the Good Shepherd Centres, St. Matthew's House, and the Alzheimer's Society. The collaborative provides coordinated interventions for seniors facing serious challenges such as elder abuse, mental and physical health concerns, food insecurity, precarious housing, social isolation, caregiver stress, or dementia. There is a centralized point of referral and intake to ensure appropriate connection to supports and services. During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the program exceeded its service goals by assisting approximately 600 older adults in Hamilton.

Goal 5: Social Participation: Recreation, Learning, Arts, and Culture

Gilbrea Centre for Studies in Aging, McMaster University - Developed a nature-based dementia program that engages older adults living with dementia and their care partners to participate in outdoor activities.

Canadian Red Cross and Greater Hamilton Health Network - In partnership, have co-designed a system-wide service delivery model to increase health equity informed care and services. Financially Assisted Social Prescribing (FASP) is an innovative approach to bringing social prescribing to community organizations in Hamilton Wards 2, 3, and 4. Social prescribing is a person-centred approach where patients are connected to community organizations for non-clinical supports, including transportation, volunteering, and participation in arts, cultural or physical activities with the goal of reducing social isolation.

The Fitness Firm – Partnered with a local yoga instructor who is a senior to provide free chair yoga classes for seniors in exchange for a donation to a local food bank. Initiated in March 2024, the classes have grown in popularity and numbers.

Goal 6: Civic Engagement, Volunteerism, and Employment

Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee (AFCC) - Through various engagement methods with older adults and other stakeholders, an Age-Friendly Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy was developed that identified 14 priority areas for the Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee (AFCC) and 11 indicators of success for creating an equitable, diverse, and inclusive community for older adults in Hamilton. This strategy is being integrated into the ongoing work of the AFCC including using it as a framework for the development of a Communications and Engagement Strategy.

Hamilton Trillium Awards – A program offered by the City of Hamilton that promotes and encourages community pride through the recognition of excellence in landscape design, maintenance, and effort to beautify properties. Older adults contribute as volunteer judges, fostering intergenerational pride and community-building.

YWCA Hamilton- Through the Give Back Program, older adults donate clothing and share professional expertise through boutique sales and lunch-and-learn events, empowering peers and fostering meaningful volunteerism.

Goal 7: Outdoor Spaces

Capability Support Services – The Backyard Rubberized Surface Project, located at 107 Apple blossom Drive congregate living site was transformed with rubber surfacing, raised planters, outdoor seating, and a new ramp, therefore making it safe, welcoming, and accessible for older residents and their visiting friends.

2025 Age-Friendly Achievements:

Since January 2025, members of the Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee (AFCC) as well as community partners have also achieved some Age-Friendly success stories that align with the strategic goals of Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan.

- 1. Hamilton Elder Abuse Prevention Network** - Identified as a need by members of the Seniors at Risk Community Collaborative (SaRCC), this vital network has been re-established since pre-pandemic times. The backbone of this network is the Good Shepherd Centres of Hamilton who is hosting their first Hamilton Elder Abuse Prevention Network meeting on June 11, 2025. With the support from Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario, education and support will be provided to member organizations.
- 2. Housing Workshops** – The Hamilton Council on Aging and Seniors Advisory Committee have partnered to develop a four-part series of workshops based on information contained in the 2024 guide, *Housing Options for Older Adults in Hamilton*. The person-centred series will provide space for older adults to share stories and prepare for housing transitions. The workshops will be facilitated by Seniors Advisory Committee volunteers and supported by cross-sector experts.
- 3. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Workshops** - Building on the 2024 Age-Friendly Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Recommendation Report, The Hamilton Council on Aging will offer two annual Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion workshops. The first, for the Hamilton Council on Aging staff, Board, and volunteers, and the second will be offered to professionals working with older adults.
- 4. Age-Friendly Hamilton Communications and Engagement Strategy** - The Age-Friendly Governance Committee is currently developing a strategy with a consultant to establish a unified approach to communication and engagement. Goals include strengthening brand identity, expanding reach to new audiences, and incorporating recommendations from the 2024 Age-Friendly Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Recommendation Report to improve engagement with diverse communities, which is crucial for the development of Hamilton's third Age-Friendly Plan in 2026.
- 5. Information Postcard** - The Seniors Advisory Committee and Hamilton Council on Aging have developed a postcard containing key websites addresses and phone numbers to access information about programs and services for older adults, such as the City of Hamilton website and 211, a free and confidential helpline. The postcard will be launched at the Seniors Kick-off event this year.

6. **Seniors4Change Workshops** - The Hamilton Council on Aging has secured a Grow Grant from the United Way to continue offering the Seniors4Change workshops in 2025 and 2026. Like 2024, the workshops will continue to offer age-related knowledge on various topics relevant to seniors but will also focus on increasing accessibility and inclusion, including the development of multilingual offerings and outreach to diverse communities.

7. **Senior of the Year Awards** - Organized and hosted by the City of Hamilton, this year marks the 30th anniversary. Nominees age 65+ are recognized for their voluntary contributions to the social, cultural, or civic life of the Hamilton community in nine award categories including Senior of the Year. Nominations opened April 28, 2025, which was the launch of National Volunteer Week and close on June 30, 2025. In 2024, 19 nominees were celebrated at the awards event that hosted over 300 attendees. This year, the Senior of the Year Awards is scheduled for October 14, 2025.

Alternatives

Not applicable

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

1. Responsiveness & Transparency
 - 1.1. Prioritize customer service and proactive communication
 - 1.2. Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving
 - 1.3. Build a high performing public service
 - 1.4. Modernize City systems

Previous Reports Submitted

- Hamilton's Plan for an Age-Friendly Community: 2023 Community Progress Report (HSC24007)
- Hamilton's Plan for an Age-Friendly Community, 2022 Community Progress Report (HSC23034)
- Hamilton's Plan for an Age-Friendly Community, 2021 Community Progress Report and Hamilton Council on Aging Contract Renewal (HSC22031)
- Age Friendly Plan 2021-2026 (CES14053(d))

Consultation

Not applicable

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: Hamilton's Plan for an Age-Friendly Community: 2024
Community Progress Report

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