



A Community for All Ages

Age-Friendly Niagara Strategy: From Plan to Action

Presentation to Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Council:

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Outline of Presentation

1. World Health Organization: Age-Friendly City
2. Niagara Community Profile
3. Age-Friendly Niagara Progress
4. *The Niagara Aging Strategy and Action Plan*
5. Converting the *Plan* into Action
6. Early Results



World Health Organization's 8 Age-Friendly Community Domains



Niagara Community Profile

- Population: 447,888*
- Over 65 population: 95,845 or 21.4%*
- Niagara-on-the-Lake 31%*
- Ontario 16.7%
- Canada 16.9%

*Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2016



Niagara Community Profile (cont'd)

Niagara Region population aged **55 years and older** is forecast to increase from 27% in 2006 to 36% in 2031**

Largest population increase is expected to come from:

1. the Region's 55-64 age group, driven by Niagara's **"baby boom" population base (born between 1946 and 1964)** and
2. **positive net migration** to Niagara Region in this age group**

**Source: NIAGARA REGION AGE-SPECIFIC POPULATION FORECASTS BY AREA MUNICIPALITY
December 2012, by Watson and Associates Economists Ltd.

Overview of Age-Friendly Niagara

AFN leadership from volunteer community members since 2009 (i.e. government, not-for profits, and business)

Three Ontario Trillium Foundation grants:

1. Raising awareness and local action
2. *Aging Strategy and Action Plan*
3. Implementation, Evaluation and Sustainability



Age-Friendly Niagara Vision

**A caring community
that optimizes opportunities for overall well being
to enhance quality of life as people age**



A Community for All Ages



Overview of Age-Friendly Niagara

(cont'd)

Age-Friendly Niagara Network Leadership Council:

- Welland, Pelham and Thorold Advisory Committees
- Niagara Connects
- Regional Municipality of Niagara Seniors Services
- City of St Catharines Parks, Recreation and Culture
- Brock University and Niagara College
- Community Support Services Niagara
- Quest Community Health Centre
- Lifelong Learning Niagara
- Foyer Richelieu

Overview of Age-Friendly Niagara

(cont'd)

Raising Awareness/Assessing Needs/Strategy and Plan

- Representative Steering Committee for Aging Strategy and Action Plan project
- Community presentations
- Focus groups with older adults in each community
- Planning Teams
- Key Informant interviews and Provider Survey
- Community Forums and Implementation Workshop
- Over 500 individuals were engaged

Aging Strategy and Action Plan

- Based on the community's input on needs of older adults who are:
 1. *'well & fit'*
 2. *'needing some help'*
 3. *'needing 24/7 care'*
- Identifies 5 overarching goals, and a hundred strategies and actions

Aging Strategy: Community's Goals

1. Elevate the profile, level of **leadership and engagement** of seniors in the community
2. Facilitate an **active and positive lifestyle** for all seniors
3. Optimize the **health and wellness** of seniors
4. Improve **access and utilization of services** and supports
5. Improve and maintain a **supportive infrastructure**



Aging Strategy: Key Messages

1. It's the Dawn of a "New Age"

Today's "older adults" are different than yesteryear's "seniors", as most of today's older adults are increasingly:

- well and active, living longer and healthier
- contributing to the community with expertise, life experience, and volunteer time
- providing valued support to their families
- significant consumers in the local economy
- donors to worthy causes

Aging Strategy: Key Messages (cont'd)

2. Older Adult Population is an Economic Driver

- Younger generations no longer represent the biggest growth market
- Rather, baby boomers are numerically superior and control the bulk of wealth and spending
- Boomer households (i.e. ages 50 to 69) spend 66% more on goods and services than millennial households (i.e. ages 15 to 34)*

*Environics Analytics

Aging Strategy: Key Messages (cont'd)

3. Municipalities should seize this opportunity

- Assign a staff member as AFC champion
- Explore AFC grants for the municipality
- Develop a strategy for capitalizing on the social and economic capital of older adults
- Establish an Advisory Committee to provide an “age-friendly” lens on municipal business
- Join the WHO’s Age-Friendly Cities Network

Converting the Plan into Action

Community Collaborative:

- Received OTF funding (May 2017) for 28 months
- Established a Project Steering Committee with representative community membership
- Overseeing implementation of 5 goals with community champions & partners
- Conducting evaluation and assessing appetite for a Niagara Council on Aging *or equivalent* to ensure long-term sustainability

AFC early results

- Presentations to 10 municipal councils
- Age-Friendly Advisory Committees are now established in at least 8 local municipalities
- Age-Friendly grants received
- Large font road signs being installed
- Park benches along walking paths
- Housing Forums to review affordability

AFC early results (Cont'd)

- Focus groups on needs for active and positive lifestyles
- Use of *Aging Strategy and Action Plan* by organizations for their future planning
- Collaboration on palliative care services in South Niagara
- Needs study on LGBT seniors in long-term care homes in Niagara and training education for service providers



Questions/Comments?

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