



Community Action Plan

2023-2027



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Land Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge that the communities included in the Age-friendly Peterborough Community Action Plan are located on Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg territory and in the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, known collectively as the Williams Treaty First Nations, which include Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island First Nations.

We respectfully acknowledge that the Williams Treaty First Nations are stewards and caretakers of these lands and waters in perpetuity, and that they continue to maintain the health and integrity of these lands and waters for generations to come.

We recognize the unique histories, cultures, and traditions of the many Indigenous Peoples with whom we share this time and space. We strive to strengthen Indigenous-non-Indigenous relationships and to responsibly honour all our relations.

We acknowledge and deeply appreciate the knowledge, experiences and perspectives that were shared by representatives from Hiawatha First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation Health and Family Services, Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre, and Nijkiwendidaa Anishnaabekwewag Services Circle in the process of developing this plan.

We know that building safe, healthy, and strong communities depends on strong relationships between municipalities and Indigenous communities. We recognize that we all have a role to play in honouring the teachings of Indigenous Peoples.



Message from the AFPAC Chair

On behalf of the Age-friendly Peterborough Advisory Committee (AFPAC), we are pleased to present the **AFP Community Action Plan 2023-2027** for the City of Peterborough, Peterborough County including the Townships of Asphodel-Norwood, Cavan Monaghan, Douro-Dummer, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, North Kawartha, Otonabee-South Monaghan, Selwyn, and Trent Lakes, Curve Lake First Nation, and Hiawatha First Nation.

Our communities are aging. In 2015, for the first time in Ontario the number of seniors over the age of 65 accounted for a larger share of the population than children aged under 14. In Peterborough, individuals over the age of 65 account for more than 24% of our regional population. The shift towards an older population will have profound implications for individuals, families, and communities. With this shift also comes new opportunities for community building and social development.

Since the release of the 2017 Plan, the greater Peterborough area demographics have changed and there is an increased need to support healthy aging. The AFP Community Action Plan 2023-2027 highlights how AFP plans to meet those needs now and in the future.

The Plan provides a roadmap with goals that identify what will be done and the strategies that outline how the goals will be achieved. AFP is a collaborative of passionate individuals and organizations who have a shared vision that *Peterborough is a thriving region that is inclusive, respectful, and accessible to people of all ages and abilities*. The Plan demonstrates the shared responsibility and commitment to the vision because together, we make a collective impact.

The Plan is a tool that will be used by many community organizations upon which to develop new programs and services. It recognizes that a variety of partnerships have been formed for our vision of an age-friendly community.

Finally, The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) highlights the importance of aging in place for older adults (United Nations, 2017). AFP specifically relates to Goal 11: “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable by 2030.”

Dawn Berry Merriam
AFPAC Chair



Introduction and Acknowledgement

In 2017, Age-friendly Peterborough (AFP) developed a Community Action Plan that identified a clear path forward to enhance programs, services, and infrastructure for older adults in the greater Peterborough area: City of Peterborough, Peterborough County including the Townships of Asphodel-Norwood, Cavan Monaghan, Douro-Dummer, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, North Kawartha, Otonabee-South Monaghan, Selwyn, and Trent Lakes, Curve Lake First Nation, and Hiawatha First Nation.

In 2021, AFP received funding from the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility, Inclusive Community program to evaluate the 2017 Plan and conduct community engagement to inform AFP future goals and strategies. A summary of the results has been highlighted in the AFP Report Card 2017-2022.

Acknowledgement

Thank you to those who contributed to the development of the AFP Community Action Plan 2023-2027 (2023 Plan).

- Thank you to the intergenerational Evaluation Task Force members who conducted research and interviews, developed the community engagement survey and analyzed the results, and provided recommendations for actions to be included in the 2023 Plan.
- Thank you to Age-friendly Peterborough Advisory Committee and the AFP network for their strategic direction, guidance, and support.
- AFP acknowledges the partners who reported how they contributed to an age-friendly community and continued to support the AFP vision, strategies, and goals.
- The voice of older adults is incorporated in all we do. AFP is grateful for the volunteers who are on our committees and those who participated in our community engagement survey and focus groups. They have demonstrated the need for an age-friendly community and have provided the insight, experience, and expertise to shape the future.
- Thank you to United Way of Peterborough and District, and the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility for generously funding AFP projects.



Note check logos

Background

Age-friendly Communities

The world is experiencing a significant demographic shift, with the number of individuals over 60 years of age growing faster than any other age group. In 2007, the World Health Organization (WHO), started a movement where active aging is regarded as a lifelong process shaped by several factors that improve health, participation, and security in older adult life.

WHO defines an age-friendly community as “one where policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments are designed to support and enable older people to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health and continue to participate in their communities”.

WHO has identified eight domains to consider when planning for an age-friendly community. These eight theme areas have been found to directly impact quality of life as people age and have been incorporated into the Age-friendly Peterborough Community Action Plan.

Peterborough demonstrated its commitment to becoming age-friendly and was accepted into the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities on August 24, 2016. Age-friendly Peterborough is proud to be part of this international movement and is actively involved in the Age-friendly Ontario Communities Network.

The AFP Community Action Plan 2017 was launched in 2017 with support from City of Peterborough, Peterborough County including the Townships of Asphodel-Norwood, Cavan Monaghan, Douro-Dummer, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, North Kawartha, Otonabee-South Monaghan, Selwyn, and Trent Lakes, Curve Lake First Nation, and Hiawatha First Nation (the greater Peterborough area).



The World Health Organization Community Domains

Physical Environment



Outdoor spaces and public buildings – When people view a neighbourhood as safe and accessible, it encourages participation in outdoor activities and engagement with the community.



Transportation – The conditions and design of transportation-related infrastructure such as signage, traffic lights and sidewalks, affect personal mobility.



Housing - The availability of a range of appropriate, affordable, accessible, and supportive housing options that incorporate flexibility through adaptive features, style and location choices, are essential for age-friendly communities.



Social Environments



Social participation - Social participation involves the level of interaction that older adults have with other members of their community and the extent that the community itself makes this interaction and inclusion possible.



Respect and social inclusion - Community attitudes, such as a general feeling of respect and recognizing the role older adults play in our society, are critical factors for establishing an inclusive and age-friendly community.



Civic participation and employment - Civic engagement includes the desire to be involved in aspects of the community that extend beyond day-to-day activities, such as volunteering or working on committees. The ability to continue working or find new employment provides economic security.



Personal well-being



Communication and information - Age-friendly communities provide information about community events or important services that is both readily accessible and in formats that are appropriate for older adults.



Community support and health services - Access to and awareness of community support services and mental and physical health programs contribute to quality of life and age-friendliness.



The icons were used in the Plan 2017 and website. Use colour or greyscale where you see fit

About Age-friendly Peterborough

The Age-friendly Peterborough (AFP) Vision is that Peterborough is a thriving region that is inclusive, respectful, and accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

AFP is a collaborative of passionate individuals who contribute their time, expertise, resources and provide an age-friendly lens through a diverse perspective. The network includes representatives from:

- First Nations
- Academia and research
- Planning
- Transportation
- Accessibility
- Not-for-profit agencies
- Government
- Health care professionals
- Senior centres and clubs
- Businesses that provide senior services
- Retirement residences
- Home care providers
- And most importantly, older adult volunteers

AFP also supports initiatives from other organizations who serve seniors. Collaboratively, the aim is to improve the quality of life of seniors in the greater Peterborough area.

Age-friendly Peterborough Advisory Committee

The Age-friendly Peterborough Advisory Committee (AFPAC) provides strategic direction for implementing goals and strategies outlined in the AFP Community Action Plan (the Plan). Through the Age-friendly Coordinator, AFPAC strives for effective coordination and communication between municipal departments, public and private partner organizations, councils, community members, and associations in the implementation of the Plan activities.

AFPAC has four Working Groups who are responsible for driving actions related to their respective priority area: Basic Needs, Staying Mobile, Building Relationships, and Learning and Contributing. The AFP mandate is Action for Aging Well.

The current list of AFPAC members can be found on the AFP website www.peterborough.ca/aging.

History

Although Age-friendly Peterborough (AFP) was branded in 2017, the organization began in 2008 when the Peterborough Seniors Planning Table was formed. Below is a review of how AFP has evolved.

- In 2008, the Peterborough Seniors Planning Table was formed to create opportunities for integration and capacity building within the system of services that support seniors and their families. Members were cross-sectoral representatives from senior support service organizations. The Seniors Planning Table was an informal group with City staff involvement and two co-chairs who provided leadership to the 60 members.
- In 2014, the Seniors Planning Table expanded to have older adults incorporated into the conversation, a new governance model was developed, and the new group was branded as the Peterborough Council on Aging. Ontario Trillium Foundation funding was received, and a Coordinator was hired to conduct research, community engagement and develop a Community Action Plan.
- In 2017, the Community Action Plan (2017 Plan) was completed, and endorsed by local councils (City of Peterborough, Peterborough County, all eight Townships, and Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations). The 2017 Plan was organized into four goals and 146 actions were proposed.
- In 2017, the organization was rebranded as Age-friendly Peterborough and the City of Peterborough agreed to be the lead organization.
- On July 31, 2017, the Age-friendly Peterborough Advisory Committee (AFPAC) was established by the City of Peterborough with the mandate of implementing the Plan. AFPAC reports to the Peterborough Regional Liaison Committee (previously the Joint Services Steering Committee).
- In 2017, the United Way of Peterborough and District (United Way) earmarked approximately \$377,000 toward the implementation of the Plan. These funds came from a family bequeath to support seniors in the greater Peterborough area.
- In 2018, the City of Peterborough and the County of Peterborough agreed to create the Age-friendly Coordinator position that would oversee the Plan and focus on aging issues in the community.
- In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had significant impact across the globe and adjustments to services were made to accommodate restrictions. AFP worked with senior sector service providers to keep older adults informed and engaged in their community.
- In 2021, AFP received an Inclusive Community grant from the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility to evaluate the 2017 Plan and prepare a new Plan for 2023-2027.

Age-friendly Peterborough Values:



Alignment – Meeting the goals of the Plan requires alignment with related community plans. Action will be achieved by integrating the Plan outcomes within existing service-delivery and planning and governing structures.



Collaboration – Supporting healthy and active aging is everyone's responsibility. Enhancing quality of life for older adults requires engagement of, and cooperation between older adults, all levels of government, service providers, community-based organizations, and civil society.



Diversity – No two older adults are the same, and every person experiences the process of aging differently. Diversity of culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability, and economic circumstance should be recognized and respected in all populations, including older adults.



Equity – Older adults, particularly those who experience vulnerability or marginalization, may require specific supports to access services depending on their circumstances. All older adults should have access to the services they require regardless of income, ability, or geography.



Inclusion – To live is to age. Healthy and active aging is a process for everyone. Relationships across generations and across differences strengthen communities and support all residents to live and age well.

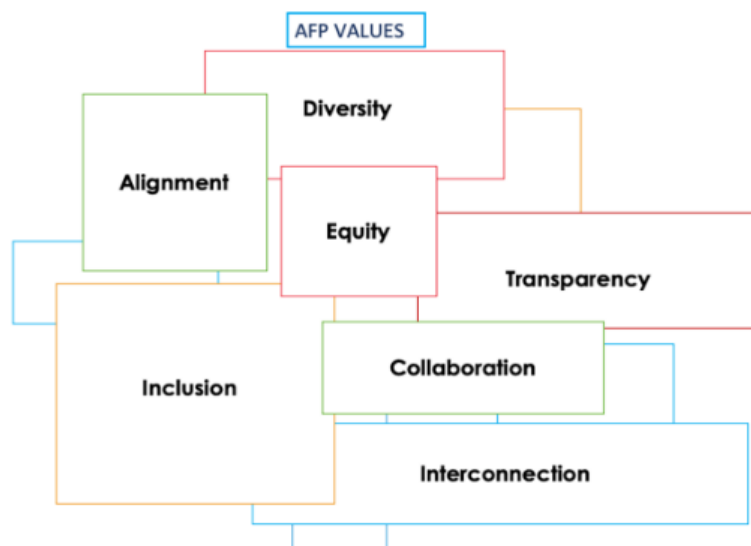


Interconnection – Creating age-friendly environments requires work across sectors which exist in relation to one another. Changes in one sector may impact access and service requirements in another.



Transparency – The Age-friendly Peterborough Advisory Committee is committed to ongoing reporting on progress measures and the outcomes of the Plan.

These icons are from the website. The visual was an idea to use the values and our branding boxes



About the greater Peterborough area

Local Context

The greater Peterborough area offers a mix of rural and urban living with proximity to both Toronto and Ottawa.

The region borders on the City of Kawartha Lakes and the Counties of Haliburton, Northumberland, and Hastings, providing access to urban centres in those counties.

Community Trends

Peterborough is growing: Both the City and County are growing in population with a projected 41% increase of residents in the City alone by 2041. From 2011 to 2021, the City experienced a growth rate of 6.2% while townships in the County experienced growth rates ranging from 7.7% to as high as 26%.

An aging community: The percentage of seniors aged 65 and over is projected to increase substantially over the next 20 years. Currently, persons older than 65 make up more than 30% of the population in the Townships of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, North Kawartha, and Trent Lakes. See the chart and graphic on page 14 for details. Challenges impacting seniors include the rising cost of housing, social isolation, and barriers accessing services due to transportation and connectivity.

High rates of dependency: Rates of dependency refers to “area-level concentrations of people who don’t have income from employment, and includes seniors, children, and adults whose work is not compensated.” Peterborough’s rates are among the highest in the province.

Housing is unaffordable: While housing affordability has been a long-standing issue in the region, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the rising disparity between those who can afford housing and those who are finding it increasingly difficult to stay housed. Housing costs have increased dramatically since the onset of the pandemic. As well, the region has very low vacancy rates and rapidly increasing rents.

Limited incomes: In 2021, Peterborough’s living wage for one adult was calculated to be \$18.59/hr or just over \$32,000 annually. Having access to affordable and adequate housing leads to better physical, mental, and social outcomes by eliminating stress, reducing hazards in the home, and freeing up resources for other basic needs.

Health: As of January 2022, an estimated 13,000 people in the region lack a family doctor.

(This section is from the 2022 Peterborough Community Safety and Well-being Plan)

Scenario

The rising cost of housing in Peterborough is one of the biggest challenges seniors face. According to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, in 2021 the average monthly rent in Peterborough was:

- bachelor apartment - \$873
- 1 bedroom - \$1,090
- 2 bedroom - \$1,339

If a senior aged 65-74 living in Peterborough was only receiving the maximum Old Age Security (OAS) and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) payments, their income would be \$20,568. That would mean if they were living in a bachelor apartment that costs \$873 a month in Peterborough, 50.9% of their income (\$10,476) would be spent on rent alone. Bachelor apartments are also the scarcest type of housing in Peterborough, so it is likely that a senior renting in Peterborough would be living in at least a one-bedroom unit and therefore spending 63.5% (\$13,080) of their income on housing. Financial institutions recommend that a person's monthly housing costs be no more than 30% of their gross (pre-tax) monthly income.

The Living Wages 2021 Report produced by United Way Peterborough and District provides a scenario for a single adult living in Peterborough. It states that the annual cost for shelter, insurance, hydro, internet and cable, phone, food, non OHIP medical, and an annual transit pass is \$29,065. Given that a person aged 65-74 receiving only OAS and GIS has an income of \$20,568, they would not be able to afford their basic needs.

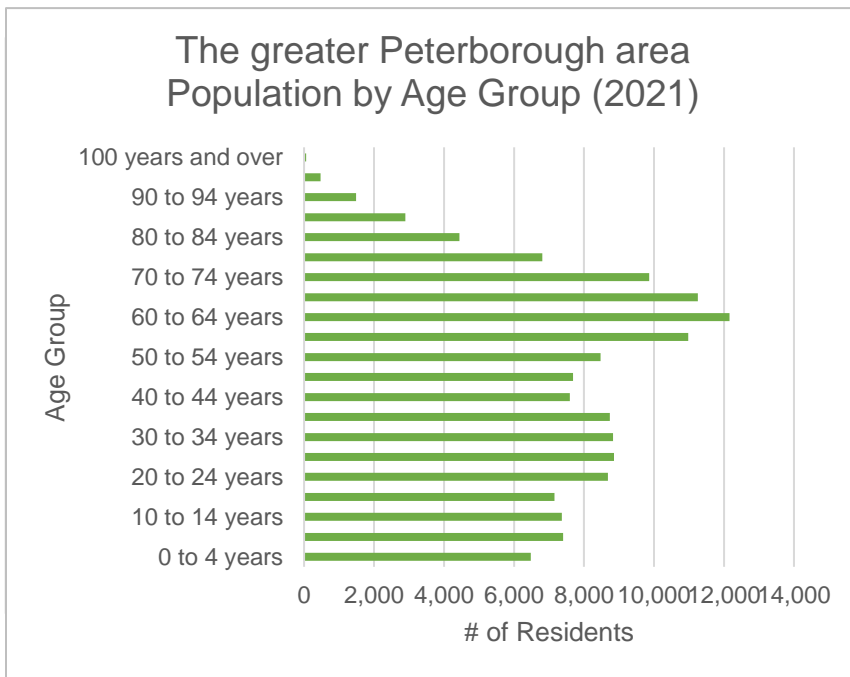


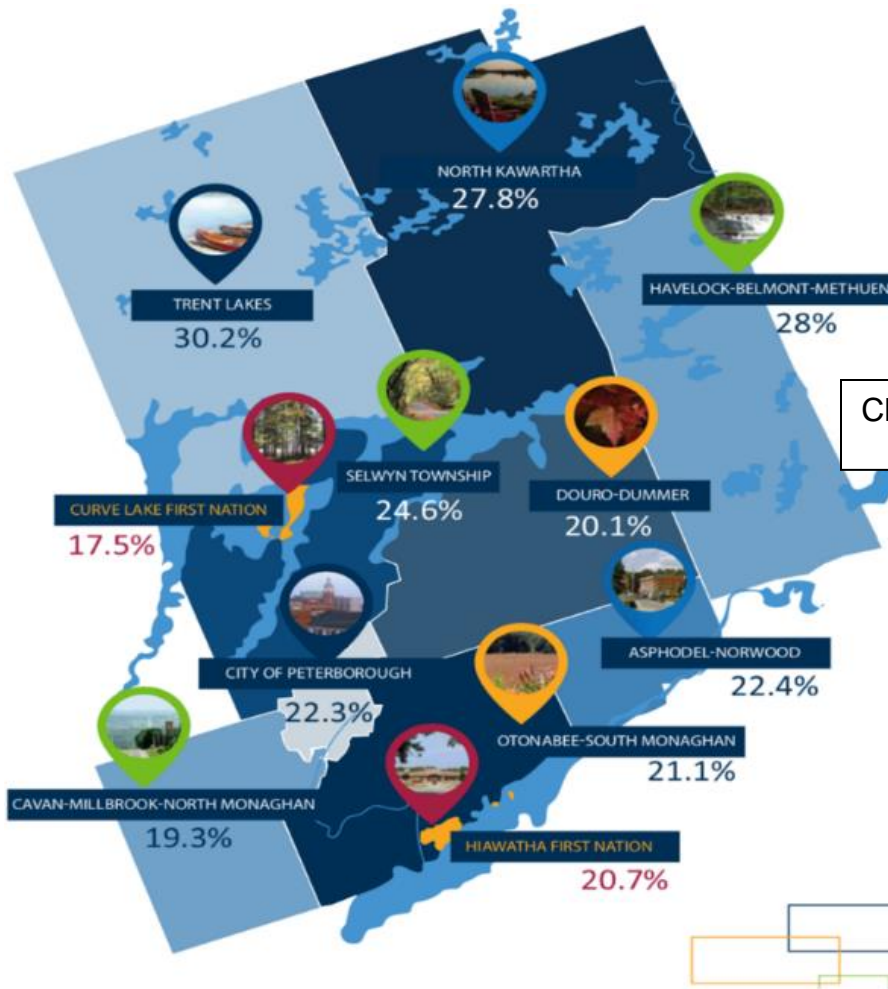
The greater Peterborough area – older adult population

In 2021, people older than 65 represented 25.2% of the greater Peterborough area population, an increase from 22.8% in 2016. There were 65 centenarian residents reported. For the age groups of 95-99 and 100 and older, older adult women outnumber men 3 to 1.

From 2016 to 2021, the proportion of older adults 65 and over has increased the greater Peterborough area. In 2016, Trent Lakes had the highest proportion of older adults at 30.2% however in 2021, North Kawartha reported 35.4% of their population being over age 65.

Hiawatha First Nation saw the highest increase in the proportion of seniors in their population over the past five years, moving from 20.7% in 2016 to 27.7% in 2021.





Percentage of the population of the greater Peterborough area who are over age 65, comparing 2016 to 2021 (Statistics Canada 2016 and 2021)

- Trent Lakes 30.2% to 32.4%
- Havelock-Belmont-Methuen 28.0% to 30.0%
- North Kawartha 27.8% to 35.1%
- Selwyn 24.6% to 28.7%
- Asphodel-Norwood 22.4% to 24.0%
- City of Peterborough 22.3% to 24.2%
- Otonabee-South Monaghan 21.1% to 24.8%
- Hiawatha FN 20.7% to 27.9%
- Douro-Dummer 20.1% to 23.1%
- Cavan Monaghan 19.3% to 21.1%
- Curve Lake FN 17.5% to 21.7%

In 2021
 Canada average is 19.0%
 Ontario average is 18.5%

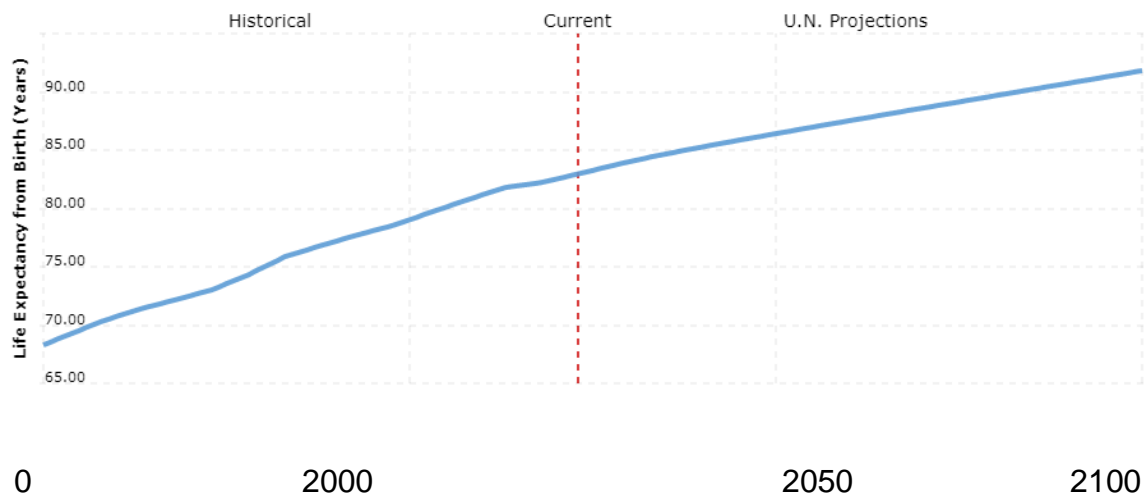
The Number of Older Adults will Continue to Increase

People who are a part of the Baby Boomer generation were born between 1946 and 1964, therefore in 2023 they are between the ages of 59 and 77. Many have not retired yet or require support services.

Many Baby Boomers purchased a cottage in the greater Peterborough area with the intention of using it as their retirement residence. As they retire and move to the cottage, they will add to the older adult population growth in the region.

According to Macrotrends, the average lifespan of a person living in Canada in 1950 was 68 years. In 2023, average lifespan has increased to age 83. It is projected that by 2100, we will live to 92. The World Health Organization states that even though we are living longer, we are living the latter years in poor health.

Macrotrends “Life Expectancy from 1950 to 2100”



Community Consultation

In 2021, AFP received an Inclusive Community Program grant from the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility to evaluate the 2017 Plan and conduct community consultation to prepare a new Plan for 2023-2027. Community organizations and stakeholders were consulted during the 2017 Community Action Plan Review (Review) and community individuals were engaged through a survey and in-person discussions.

Community Action Plan 2017 Review

The AFP Evaluation Task Force interviewed stakeholders and reported the progress on the 146 proposed actions listed in the 2017 Plan. The Review identified the actions that were completed and those to be carried over to the 2023 Plan. The results have been outlined in the AFP Report Card 2017-2022. The Report Card demonstrates how the greater Peterborough area has become more age-friendly over the last five years. The following are some highlights from the Report Card.

- In 2019, United Way Peterborough and District provided funding to contract Peterborough Public Health staff to develop a healthy aging and housing service directory. Local older adults, their caregivers, and families can access the directory by telephone and calling 211, or through the [Peterborough Senior Service Directory](#) on the AFP website www.peterborough.ca/aging.
- The Age-friendly Peterborough Housing Report outlines how local municipalities can support older adults to age in place. The research specifically addresses [innovative housing solutions](#) such as tiny homes, secondary suites, and granny flats, in combination with community services. Other housing models found in the greater Peterborough area are Abbeyfield Lakefield, Canada HomeShare, and Senior Women Living Together.
- Many organizations provide [programs and services that support healthy aging](#). They can be accessed virtually by phone or computer, or in-person at an office, community hub or at home.
- The greater Peterborough area has developed [better infrastructure](#) to support active transportation and age-friendly spaces by extending trails, pedestrian crossing safety features, traffic calming measures, and adding benches, trail lighting and shade structures.
- Community Care Peterborough provides [door-to-door transportation](#) options to enable clients who reside in the City and County to attend medical appointments, social activities, day programs, planned special events, and manage daily errands. In 2022, about 32,841 drives were provided to 2,169 clients.
- Peterborough [Transit](#) made changes to their services to improve planning a ride and offers more accessible and individualized options. The Link is a new rural transportation pilot project funded through the Province of Ontario in partnership with Selwyn Township, Curve Lake First Nation, Community Care Peterborough, and the City of Peterborough.

- Each community has a [local library](#) to visit to enjoy programs, books, and social space. Libraries have expanded their lending items to now include things like toys, games, and passes to provincial parks. In 2022, the Lakefield Library expanded to include Makerspace where people can learn to use a Glowforge, 3D printer, Cricut, sewing machine, and a sound booth with digitization tools. The Peterborough Public Library Visiting Library Service has volunteer drivers to deliver books to homebound library members.
- AFP in partnership with Activity Haven launched the [Senior Centre Without Walls](#) telephone activity program in May 2021. SCWW appeals to older adults who do not have access to a computer or use the internet.
- To promote [volunteerism](#), AFP in partnership with Community Care Peterborough developed the Volunteer Hub and Virtual Volunteer Fair. In 2022, Volunteer Peterborough was formed.
- The [Seniors Showcase](#) and the [Summit on Aging](#) continue to be popular annual events where older adults receive information and resources and attend educational workshops.
- In 2022, AFP received a Seniors Community grant from the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility to develop the [Be Prepared Workbook](#). 480 older adults attended workshops and received information about Emergency Preparedness, Personal Safety Planning, Next-step Housing, Advanced Care Planning, and Final Wishes.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

From 2017-2022, AFP and its partners accomplished many proposed actions and as a result the community became more age-friendly. It must be acknowledged that during this time, the COVID-19 pandemic required organizations to pivot to other priorities and some projects, such as the Age-friendly Business program, were delayed or will be carried over to the 2023 Plan. Organizations and businesses were flexible, creative and they adapted services and programs to meet the frequently changing needs of the community. So, although the actions outlined in the 2017 Plan may not have been completed as expected, many others were incorporated. This was a lesson learned in the development of the new AFP Community Action Plan for 2023-2027.

Community Engagement

The objective of the community consultation was to ask older residents if they felt the greater Peterborough area became more age-friendly since the 2017 Plan and to assess their current needs. The opportunity to respond was available through a survey, focus groups, individual interviews, or intentional discussion at events.

Survey questions were from the 2016 AFP Community Engagement Survey and the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility, Ontario's Seniors Strategy Survey. The survey was posted on the Connect Peterborough website and was distributed in print in the community. 244 survey responses were received.

The AFP Evaluation Task Force also reviewed the 2021 Community Safety and Well-being survey results of 283 older adult respondents.

Focus groups and interviews were scheduled to provide older adults with the opportunity to talk about how the greater Peterborough area can become more age-friendly and to validate the survey responses. Informal evaluation included discussion with participants at events such as Mapleridge Open House, Activity Haven Lunch and Learn, and Pride in the Park. 1,399 were engaged in age-friendly conversations.

Comments and quotes were useful as they provided context, in-depth understanding of an issue, and examples of real-life stories. Some impact statements are quoted below.

Summary of Results

Housing

Most older adults want to stay in their current residence as long as possible but recognize they may need support to do so. Home maintenance and renovations were reported as the most needed service. Concerns about isolation were apparent and the need for community engagement opportunities was stated.

Some older adults are considering moving to a collective dwelling like a condominium or apartment where most residents are older adults. It is more appealing if the complex had social activities and support services available.

Many were concerned if they needed to move, they would not have anywhere to go. The rent they have now may be manageable as it only increased slowly over time, but they can't afford rent in the current market. The survey and focus groups participants expressed the need for more accessible, affordable, safe, and supportive housing.

"I'm on a fixed income, and with rent costs increasing, I'm not sure where I would go".

Community Support and Health Services

When referring to their health needs, inability to access required services was commonly identified by older adults. Access due to affordability, waitlists, lack of services in rural areas, and transportation were noted. Dental care and eye care were defined as basic needs, but many older adults do not have health benefits and they

cannot afford these services. Hearing aids and incontinence underwear were also included as an unaffordable basic need.

22% of the survey respondents identified as a caregiver for a spouse, family member, or loved one and many who participated in a focus group identified as such. Unable to take time for themselves or be with other family members, contributed to the inability for caregivers to manage the emotional or mental distress of caregiving. The physical requirement of caregiving also affects their health. Finding affordable options that meet their needs is a challenge.

"I told my family, I don't need anything for Christmas, just buy me Depends as I can't afford to buy them myself."

Staying Safe and Secure

The good news is most older adults reported generally feeling safe. However, the fear of falling restricted many people's actions. They did not go out as much as they wanted, especially in the winter and this is leaving them isolated in their home. Living or being alone contributed to the feelings of being unsafe as many reported family and friends lived far away and they did not have anyone to go out with or check on them.

When asked, What services and resources older adults needed to help them feel safer in their community? the top three responses were:

- renovating their home with safety and accessible features,
- using home or personal technology devices such as fall detection sensors and smart lights activated by motion or voice command, and
- social opportunities like friendly visits or phone check-ins, Meals on Wheels delivery or attending a program where people would recognize you were missing.

"I wish there was more help for people who are less fortunate than myself. Many people struggle with homelessness, substance abuse, and mental health. Unfortunately, there is a perception that downtown Peterborough is not safe as people see and interact with marginalized individuals."

Transportation

85% of survey respondents drive, but many also walk when possible. Availability of safe sidewalks and/or trails was noted as a challenge. This related to the earlier feedback that reported a significant number of older adults have a fear of falling.

Even though someone had access to a car, many indicated they only drove in certain conditions. For example, they don't drive at night, in the rain or snow, or on the highway. The survey reported out-of-town medical appointments as the number one unmet transportation need.

Those who take transit indicated the frequency of service was a barrier.

When asked, What would make active transportation (walking, rolling, cycling) a more appealing choice? respondents suggested ice removal such as salting the sidewalks, better lighting on trails, a greater police presence in downtown parks, and dedicated cycling infrastructure.

"We need more benches in the community. Not only in parks, but along major streets where there is shopping and services. I saw an elderly woman stop and sit on a store step when she was tired".

Social Participation

Most older adults reported they use technology such as email, mobile phones, social media, and video calls to stay connected with others. About half depend on their land line telephone.

Socializing with friends and family and doing activities like walking or games on their own were equally important for older adults to stay physically and mentally active. A popular activity was visiting their local library and reading. Only 9% of survey respondents were members of a seniors' activity centre and 14% belonged to a faith-based organization.

When asked, What prevents you from socializing and/or staying physically active? respondents indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact and has affected their outlook, routine, and comfort level. They also mentioned they don't want to go alone, can't afford a membership, don't have transportation, have physical or mental health challenges, and/or their work or caregiving schedule limits what they can do.

"No one comes to see if I am okay. No regular community involvement. No one knows I am here"

Civic Participation and Engagement

A significant number of people felt they experienced age discrimination in the workplace. Some respondents who were retired, indicated they are considering employment as they are concerned, they will not be able to afford the cost of living on their current means. However, they felt employers wouldn't provide the flexible work arrangements that they need. 32 survey respondents indicated they weren't aware of opportunities or where to go to look for employment.

About half of the survey respondents volunteered. When asked why they don't, lack of time was the most common answer, followed by physical and mental health challenges that limit what they can do. Although there was a general positive outlook on volunteering in the greater Peterborough area, a significant number of people said they would volunteer if they knew what opportunities were available. Some suggested a central list of organizations who are recruiting and details about their volunteer roles. Others indicated the need for delivering better communication about the benefits of volunteerism to the individual, organization, and the community.

"A central list of volunteer opportunities could help others who are looking to serve".

Communication and Information

More than half of the survey respondents indicated the first place they would go to get information about programs, services and resources is a local website dedicated to older adults. Some commented that the Age-friendly Peterborough website was easy to navigate, and the Peterborough Seniors Service Directory was useful. Older adults equally turned to traditional media like newspaper and radio, and non-traditional media

like social media and online searches. Participants cautioned that even though some have access to the internet many do not. Printed resources, telephone access to live professionals, and in-person educational events were still very important.

When asked, What do you feel you need to know more about? most said community resources, local programs, and services: especially how to get more help at home for themselves or a loved one. Information about advanced care planning, wills, and Power of Attorney was also mentioned. A significant number of people indicated they were worried about being scammed and education about fraud was needed.

“Many older people do not have computers, either because of cost or inability to adapt. This is one of the biggest barriers to communication”.

Respect and Social Inclusion

When asked if they have been discriminated against because of age, an equal number of respondents said they have, as compared to the number who said they have not.

At the focus groups, many shared how they or someone they knew were discriminated against because of their age. It was felt that service providers and other customers were impatient and expressed frustration to older adults when they were slow or had difficulty with tasks such as paying. Not hearing or seeing very well are seen as signs of mental incapacity. This was especially noticeable during the COVID-19 pandemic when people couldn't see the directional arrows and signs and couldn't hear others through masks and plexiglass. It caused older adults to not go into stores and resulted in further isolation.

One survey respondent stated, “there is a compassion gap when it comes to seniors.” People are in such a hurry and not paying attention to their surroundings, they unknowingly bump into older adults and when balance is a concern this can be harmful.

“I have frequently felt invisible.”

It was suggested that intergenerational programs could provide awareness of ageism. One respondent was grateful when her young neighbours offered to help during the COVID-19 pandemic, and they emphasized the need for a sense of community.

“It is very important to ensure all people are included and valued for what they bring to the table.”

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The isolation caused by the pandemic has had a lasting impact on older adults' mental health. Through the community consultation there were many stories shared about how older adults had difficulty accessing medical care, their procedures were delayed, and many reported frustration and anxiety over trying to keep up with the changing protocols, especially vaccination procedures.

Although it was mostly perceived as negative, some reported positive changes to their quality of life. Many were forced to use technology for doctor visits, participating in social and physical activities, and connecting with family and friends. In some cases, they felt they had better access to information and people. They took the opportunity to

improve their health and wellness. Most will continue to use the technology they learned during the COVID-19 pandemic to participate in virtual programs and workshops, order from home delivery services, and connect with family and friends.

It was noted that increased cleaning and precautionary measures like wearing masks has become more mainstream and therefore may decrease the spread of illness. Also, the acceptance of working from home that started during the pandemic made it possible for some to provide care for their loved one.

“During COVID I felt isolation, a decrease in physical abilities and mental health. The lack of available supports intensified, and professionals were overworked and stressed which affected my care too”.

Aging in First Nations Adults

Indigenous elders reported the importance of family and community to support their healthy aging. The Curve Lake First Nation Health and Family Services Team work together to support and educate the individuals and families of Curve Lake First Nation in their self-defined pursuit of a healthy and dignified life. The programs and services offered are appreciated by the community.

The most reported challenge was for food security. Use of food banks increased since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Indigenous elders also experience issues with technology. The internet is slow and costly and there are no hot spots with Wi-Fi available in Curve Lake. The COVID-19 pandemic forced some people to learn to use tablets so they could stay connected, but it was not viewed as an effective tool.

“We take care of each other; family is so important. But we have excellent programs when we need them.”

2SLGBTQI+

According to the survey respondent demographics, very few identified as Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and Intersex (2SLGBTQI+). Therefore, we looked to broader consultation results and participated in the Pride in the Park event in Peterborough to get local validation.

The greatest challenge and fear reported was discrimination, particularly repercussions of being 2SLGBTQI+ in the medical system, retirement residences, and long-term care. Egale Canada (Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere) proposes that inclusion policies be developed in all institutions and inclusion training be mandatory for residents and workers in long-term care.

Those who identified as 2SLGBTQI+ reported facing many of the same issues as older adults, however the solutions may be more challenging. For example, if a person who was openly 2SLGBTQI+ and was looking to rent a room or home share, there is a fear that they would be discriminated against, therefore limiting their housing options in an already tight housing market.

“There are intersections of oppressions and discrimination based on having multiple minority identities”.

New to Canada

Older adults who are new to Canada, reported facing the same challenges many others have expressed, however, language was reported as a barrier to receiving services and participating in activities. Those who receive support at the New Canadians Centre Peterborough were grateful, but those with limited English proficiency stated they experienced discrimination in the community. Language was especially problematic during the COVID-19 pandemic as other factors such as masks and plexiglass screens impeded communication.

Those who have recently immigrated may experience psychological distress as they adjust and potentially face economic hardships, negative community experiences, lack of social support, and ethnic discrimination. As a result, older adults who are new to Canada reported feeling socially isolated and experienced related physical and mental health issues.

“More culturally appropriate services are needed in order to improve the aging experience, including financial aid and referral services”.

Age-friendly Peterborough Community Action Plan 2023-2027

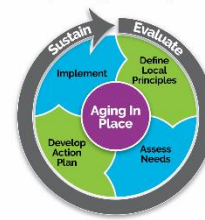
Introduction

The Age-friendly Peterborough Community Action Plan 2023-2027 (2023 Plan) builds on the extensive work done in the development of the 2017 Plan and when the Age-friendly Peterborough governance model was established.

AFP followed the process outlined in the Age-friendly Community Planning Guide for Municipalities and Community Organizations (2021) developed by the Province of Ontario. Age-friendly community planning and implementation is an ongoing cyclical process that follows four interconnected steps:

- Step 1: Define local principles
- Step 2: Assess need
- Step 3: Develop action plan
- Step 4: Implement and evaluate

The Age-Friendly Community Process



Format text around the visual

The 2023 Plan builds on the current framework and strong foundations established by the 2017 Plan while incorporating lessons learned, current trends and needs, research, and feedback from the community and stakeholders revealed through the evaluation process.

The purpose of the 2023 Plan is to outline the identified needs of older adults in an action-oriented way and to provide local government, organizations, and businesses direction on how they can contribute to an age-friendly community. Individuals and groups can align and embed their actions with the goals and strategies outlined in the 2023 Plan. This is a different approach than the 2017 Plan where the proposed actions were stated. A higher-level framework allows for additional actions to be included and more flexibility over a 5-year term.

“Collective dialogue about healthy aging can encourage and create positive change”.

The 2023 Plan provides a roadmap that outlines:

- **Priority Areas** that are the principles of the Community Action Plan,
- **Goals** are what will be done to accomplish the priority area, and
- **Strategies** are how the goals will be achieved. Each strategy will have a workplan that outlines specific actions. The workplans are living documents that support the flexibility in implementing the strategies.

The four Priority Areas are:

1. Older adults’ **Basic Needs** are met.
2. Transportation and infrastructure support older adults to **Stay Mobile** in the community.
3. **Relationships** are sustained to encourage collaboration and foster partnerships.
4. Older adults have the opportunity to **Learn and Contribute**.

4 boxes with colour
Basic Needs – yellow
Staying Mobile – blue
Building Relations – red
Learn and Contribute - green

Priority Area 1: Basic Needs

Outcome: Older adults' basic needs are met.

Goal 1.1 Advocate for the development of appropriate, affordable, and sustainable housing options for older adults.

Strategies

1.1.1 Champion and support an increase of housing options.

Goal 1.2 Enhance support for older adults to age in the place of their choice.

Strategies

1.2.1 Champion and support the delivery of coordinated, appropriate, affordable, and timely community programs and services.

Goal 1.3 Enhance access to healthcare to support older adults to live their best quality of life possible.

Strategies

1.3.1 Support and promote affordable local options and the availability of integrated healthcare and services.

Goal 1.4 Address income barriers experienced by older adults.

Strategies

1.4.1 Champion increased support for persons living in poverty to ensure their basic needs are met.

Priority Area 2: Staying Mobile

Outcome: Transportation and infrastructure ensures older adults are able to Stay Mobile in the community

Goal 2.1 Enhance transportation options.

Strategies

2.1.1 Champion and support accessible, inclusive, affordable, and reliable transportation options. (how we get around)

2.1.2 Champion and support accessible, inclusive, user-friendly infrastructure to support older adults to ensure safe, year-round active transportation routes. (infrastructure to support how we to get around)

Goal 2.2 Enhance age-friendly infrastructure and accessible indoor and outdoor spaces.

Strategies

2.2.1 Champion and support age-friendly and accessible community facilities, commerce areas, and parks to support the needs of the aging population.

Goal 2.3 Support the implementation of complete and connected community design.

Strategies

2.3.1 Promote intentional age-friendly neighbourhood development planning

Priority Area 3: Building Relationships

Outcome: Relationships are sustained to encourage collaboration and foster partnerships

Goal 3.1 Enhance community collaboration to improve system navigation so older adults are connected and have better access to programs and services that meet their needs.

Strategies

3.1.1 Develop relationships through roundtable conversations to promote networking and collaborative partnerships.

Goal 3.2 Promote intergenerational relationships.

Strategies

3.2.1 Champion and support intergenerational opportunities.

Goal 3.3 Develop relationships within the safety sector to build and maintain a safer community for local older adults.

Strategies

3.3.1 Foster collaborative partnerships and projects to ensure vulnerable local older adults feel safe in their community.

Goal 3.4 Promote a diverse representation of aging and inclusion of older adults.

Strategies

3.4.1 Promote positive language and images of aging.

3.4.2 Champion for the inclusion of older adults in decision-making and planning of an age-friendly community.

Priority Area 4: Learning and Contributing

Outcome: Older adults have the opportunity to Learn and Contribute

Goal 4.1 Support and increase connectivity and access to information.

Strategies

- 4.1.1 Provide communication to the community in a multi-modal way that meets the diverse needs of older adults.
- 4.1.2 Support and champion affordable connectivity. (Infrastructure and devices)
- 4.1.3 Implement and promote technology training.

Goal 4.2 Support and increase access to leisure, recreation, and social activities that promote a better quality of life.

Strategies

- 4.2.1 Promote the benefits of physical and social activity.
- 4.2.2 Support access to diverse cultural, social, and recreational opportunities.
- 4.2.3 Support ongoing coordination and strategic planning between activity centres, facilities and organizations that offer older adult programs.

Goal 4.3 Lead, support, and encourage participation in lifelong learning.

Strategies

- 4.3.1 Promote the benefits and opportunities for lifelong learning.
- 4.3.2 Plan and implement events that increase awareness of programs, services, and resources available to support healthy aging.

Goal 4.4 Promote and encourage volunteerism within our community.

Strategies

- 4.4.1 Promote the benefits of volunteerism and opportunities available.
- 4.4.2 Collaborate with organizations that engage volunteers and encourage participation in the volunteer hub.

Goal 4.5 Support diverse and flexible employment opportunities

Strategies

- 4.5.1 Raise awareness of older adults need for flexible employment options and the advantages of hiring older persons.

Guiding Documents and Principles

The following Guiding Principles were utilized to inform the development of the Age-friendly Peterborough Community Action Plan 2023-2027.

Alignment with other local plans

- Community Safety and Well-being Plan, 2022
- 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, 2019
- Active Transportation & Health Indicators Report, 2020
- City of Peterborough Transportation Master Plan 2022-2052
- Peterborough County Active Transportation Master Plan
- City of Peterborough Cycling Master Plan
- City of Peterborough Sidewalk Strategic Plan
- City of Peterborough Accessibility Plan, 2018

Resources consulted

- World Health Organization Age-friendly Cities Framework
- UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030)
- Creating a More Inclusive Ontario: Age-friendly Community Planning Guide for Municipalities and Community Organizations, 2021
- Statistics Canada. Census Profile, 2016 and 2021
- CMHA Rental Market Report, 2021
- United Way Housing is Fundamental Report, 2021
- United Way Peterborough Annual Living Wage Report Peterborough City and County, 2021
- Peterborough City/County Paramedics 10-year Resources & Facilities Master Plan, 2016
- Peterborough Ontario Health Team Town Hall, 2021
- Peterborough Immigrant Needs Assessment, 2021
- Social determinants of health and health inequities, 2022
- 8 Dimensions of Wellness
- Evaluating Your Age-Friendly Community Program: A Step-by-Step Guide
- Age-friendly Communities Evaluation Guide: Using Indicators to Measure Progress
- Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors, Age-friendly Rural and Remote Communities Guide
- Egale Community Engagement Consult for 2SLGBTQI+ Seniors, 2017
- Successful Aging among Immigrant and Canadian-born Older Adults, 2022
- Ontario First Nations Aging Study, 2019

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

AFP strives to prevent, identify, and remove barriers to ensure all of what is done is accessible, open, and welcoming to all people. AFP respects and celebrates the diversity of experiences, backgrounds and cultures that makes a better, stronger, more vibrant community.

AFP has and will continue to collaborate and seek clarification on matters from an inclusion, diversity, and equity perspective. AFP will broaden community awareness, knowledge, and respect for diverse community populations by sharing experiences and resources.

“Each person is unique, has value and is equally worthy of respect.”

Collaboration

AFP listened and will continue to listen to those with lived experience and knowledge, value their perspectives, and incorporate their voices. This ensures the outcomes and actions will benefit the older adults they are intended to support.

“Nothing about us, without us”.

AFP collaborates with organizations who support older adults and through those strong partnerships there is collective impact. AFP welcomes and encourages the participation of all individuals who share the AFP vision for an age-friendly community.

“Partnerships and collaborations are seen as a way to have a more comprehensive and sustainable impact in the pursuit of communities that are safe and inclusive for all.”

Next Steps

The review and evaluation of the 2017 Plan confirmed that the greater Peterborough area has become more age-friendly. The stakeholder consultation, community engagement, and research provided a current snapshot of the community need. The 2023 Plan can be a catalyst for community action and change.

Statistics Canada reported the number of persons over the age of 65 who reside in the greater Peterborough area increased from 22% in 2016 to 25% in 2021. Over the next 20 years that demographic will continue to grow. The 2023 Plan identifies a clear path forward to enhance programs, services, and infrastructure for current and future local older adults.

Individuals and groups can align and embed their actions with the goals and strategies outlined in the 2023 Plan. As projects continue to evolve and include a greater number of community organizations and volunteers, AFP will come closer to achieving the vision for Peterborough to be a thriving region that is inclusive, respectful, and accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

To monitor and evaluate future progress, AFP will release an annual Impact Report.

Past success can be attributed to leadership from AFPAC, passionate volunteers, strong partnerships with local organizations, dedicated staff, and generous support from funders. AFP envisions a bright future where older adults Basic Needs are met; transportation and infrastructure ensures older adults are able to Stay Mobile in the community; older adults have the opportunity to Learn and Contribute; and community Relationships are sustained to encourage collaboration and foster partnerships whereas older adults are supported.

