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Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan



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ENGINEERS · ARCHITECTS · PLANNERS

The logo for J.L. Richards is located in the bottom right corner. It features a stylized blue "JR" monogram where the "R" has a red cross-like shape in its center. Below the monogram, the name "J.L. Richards" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Underneath the name, the words "ENGINEERS · ARCHITECTS · PLANNERS" are written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.

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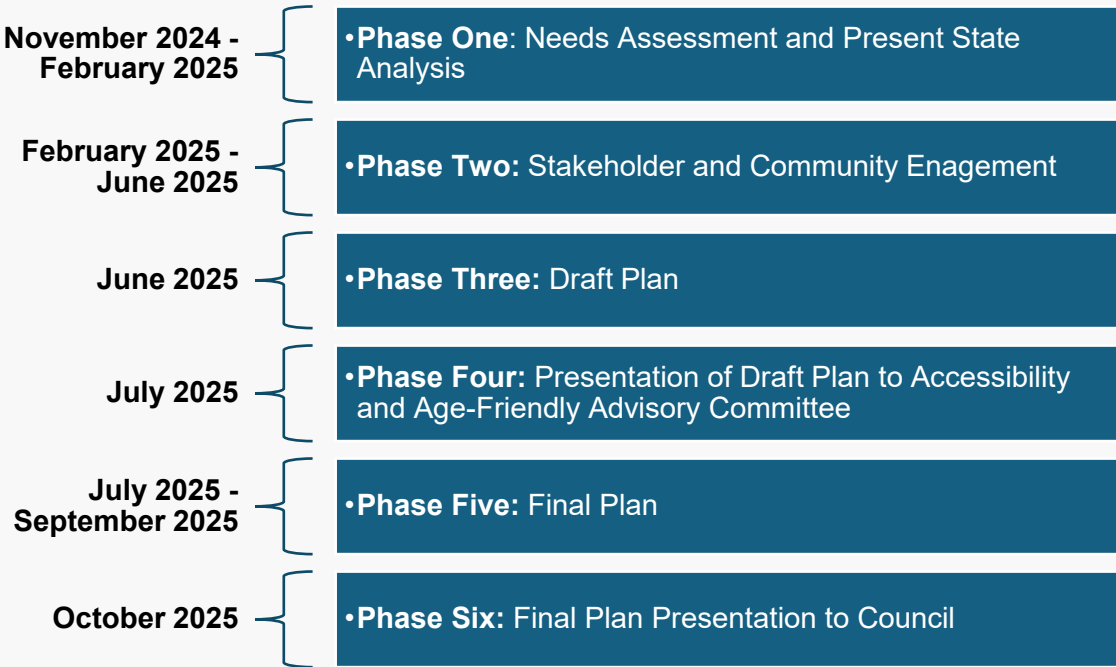
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1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Overview

An Age-Friendly Community (AFC) is a health promoting community designed for diversity, inclusion, and cohesion, across all ages and capacities. Its policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments are designed to support and enable older adults (those ages over 65 years or more) to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in their communities.

Work on the renewed Age-Friendly Community (AFC) Plan consisted of the following phases:



This plan outlines the planning process, including public engagement, that was conducted to inform the plan, as well as the plan’s vision, guiding principles, goals, and priority actions under which potential partners and recommended timelines are outlined. Implementation will be closely linked to existing plans such as the Town of Arnprior (the Town) Recreation Master Plan, Official Plan, Strategic Plan as well as other plans from various agencies and organizations within the Town and County of Renfrew (the County).

1.2 The Planning Process

The planning process consisted of the following components:

- Needs Assessment & Present State Analysis
- Plan Evaluation
- Service Provider Survey

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- Key-Informant Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Community Open House
- Community Survey

Through the planning process many existing strengths in the Town were identified, including:

- small town feel;
- supportive community;
- proximity to larger urban centres;
- large variety of existing services available to older adults in the municipality; and
- supportive institutions such as the Library, Seniors Active Living Centre (SALC), and Arnprior McNab/Braeside Men's Shed.

Challenges identified through the planning process highlighted issues related to:

- communication of services;
- programing limitations resulting from lack of physical spaces;
- events oriented to older adults;
- coordination amongst organizations and agencies providing these services;
- limited transportation options;
- work being done to Nick Smith Centre do not include anything for older adults, i.e. indoor walking track; and
- lack of programs to engage in intergenerational learning and actively contribute to the community.

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Based on the feedback received through the Public Engagement Phase as well as information reviewed as part of the Needs Assessment and Present State Analysis the following Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) has been prepared:

| Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) | |
|--|--|
| Strength | Weaknesses |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close-knit small-town atmosphere • Local health services • A strong variety of existing programs and services for older adults • Ample green space and opportunities for outdoor recreation • Strong sense of safety • Proximity to larger urban centres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited transportation options • Lack of bike lanes or evenly paved surfaces for scooters • Accessibility of downtown buildings and condition of sidewalks • Limited capacity of SALC • Few public washroom facilities • No community newspaper • Long waitlists for family doctors • Lack of third places to gather |
| Opportunities | Challenges |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate volunteer network • Sharing information on older adult services via local radio • Knowledge sharing and intergenerational programming • Re-establishing the Greater Arnprior Seniors Council (GASC) • Grants and public-private partnerships • Collaborate with existing providers and the County to coordinate regional transportation • Work with other levels of government to increase funding • Opportunity to re-engage and rebuild age-friendly community networks post-COVID | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer coordination and burnout • Funding not keeping pace with costs • Resource constraints • Inflation and growing financial pressures • Lack of historical funding • Ageism and age-related stigma • Auto-centric community design • Limited housing types outside of single detached dwellings • High cost of housing • Growing community with greater demands on services |

1.3 Vision and Guiding Principles

The vision and guiding principles of this Plan follow those established through the Town of Arnprior’s 2016 Age-Friendly Community Plan. Wording has been updated, and additions have been made to account for feedback received during the Public Engagement Phase of the project, however, the intent and “preferred future” identified by today’s residents remains the same.

Vision:

An open, respectful and inclusive community that respect and engages older adults through:

- Enhanced facilities and infrastructure that meet the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.

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- Maintaining a broad range of older adults focused services and supports.
- Supporting a community culture that fosters positive engagement, lifelong learning, and comprehensive wellbeing.

Guiding Principles:

The five guiding principles for the Town of Arnprior’s Age-Friendly Community Plan are as follows:

1. Respect for All Ages and Abilities
2. Access and Inclusion
3. Openness and Transparency
4. Community Focused
5. Accountability and Continuous Improvement.

1.4 Goals, Priority Actions & Pathways to Implementation

In this Plan, seven goals are established - each with corresponding priority actions. The World Health Organization (WHO) developed the Age-friendly Cities Framework to help communities become more inclusive and supportive of older adults. At the heart of this framework are eight interconnected domains, each addressing key aspects of urban life that influence the well-being, independence, and participation of older adults. Each of the seven goals will touch on at least one of the WHO’s eight interconnected domains of age-friendly urban life. The eight interconnected age-friendly domains are listed below:

- Community and Health Care
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information

Through the process we have identified the seven goals to foster an age-friendly community within the Town of Arnprior. These goals were developed from information gathered from the Needs Assessment and Present State Analysis, and policy review; as well as feedback recorded throughout the Stakeholder and Community Engagement Phase including key-informant interviews, focus groups, the community open house, and surveys (services provider and community). The priority action, developed under these goals are based around the local context – as location specific solutions are essential for effective community planning and policy implementation as they are designed to be flexible, responsive, and encourage community ownership.

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| Goal #1 |
| <i>Mitigating Ageism & Age-Related Stigma</i> |
| Interconnected Domains |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Respect and Social Inclusion ✓ Social Participation ✓ Community and Health Care |
| Priority Actions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language review of materials and content for older adults to ensure use of age-inclusive language. • Provide guidelines for age-inclusive language to local businesses and services. • Establish an Age-Friendly Resource Section within the Arnprior Public Library. |

| |
|--|
| Goal #2 |
| <i>Fostering Accessible & Age-Friendly Built Environments</i> |
| Interconnected Domains |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Outdoor Spaces and Buildings ✓ Respect and Social Inclusion |
| Priority Actions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue a sidewalk inventory, documenting conditions, and categorizing the need for repair and frequency of use accordingly. Invite residents to provide feedback on sidewalks in need of repair. • Encourage improved accessibility of stores and businesses Downtown, supported by Community Improvement Plan (CIP) incentive programs. • Improve access to existing public washroom facilities in the core area of the Town. • Identify roads suitable to bike/scooter lanes and pursue opportunities for their implementation. |

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| Goal #3 |
| <i>Strengthening Channels of Communication & Support</i> |
| Interconnected Domains |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Communication and Information ✓ Social Participation ✓ Civic Participation and Employment |
| Priority Actions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-establishment of and support for a Greater Arnprior Seniors Council to work with the AAFAC. • Encourage the establishment of an Age-Friendly Working Group as an informal group made up of service providers who will meet with the intent to communicate and coordinate the delivery of services and supports, this group will advise the AAFAC and GASC on an as needed basis. • Establish an Arnprior volunteer registry on which various organizations can draw upon when needed. • Develop a printed biennial or quadrennial Age-Friendly Community Guide containing information and resources for older adults in the community and distribute accordingly. • Implementation of a program to share/distribute information on services and supports available to older adult residents that are newcomers to the community. |

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| Goal #4 |
| <i>Rethinking Housing</i> |
| Interconnected Domains |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Housing ✓ Outdoor Spaces and Buildings ✓ Social Participation |
| Priority Actions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with other levels of government, non-profit housing providers, and local developers to expand housing options in the Town. • Advocate for increased affordable housing and social service subsidies. • Explore opportunities for co-living as well as intergenerational living amongst older adults in the form of additional residential units. • Research and pursue innovative housing opportunities (i.e., older adult dementia villages, older adult housing co-ops, etc.). • |

| |
|--|
| Goal #5 |
| <i>Expanding Transportation Networks</i> |
| Interconnected Domain |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Transportation ✓ Respect and Social Inclusion |
| Priority Actions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate and coordinate existing transportation services. • Research and work with agencies and governments to advocate for funding and subsidies for local transportation. • Collaborate with neighbouring municipalities on on-demand transit programs. • Provide additional transportation support to older adults on waitlists for long term care or older adults who have self-identified as requiring transportation supports. • Explore the viability of ridesharing programs in the Town. |

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|---|
| Goal #6 |
| <i>Supporting Intergenerational Learning</i> |
| Interconnected Domains |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Respect and Social Inclusion ✓ Social Participation |
| Priority Actions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek opportunities for intergenerational day-programs for older adults and youth and/or shared facilities for childcare within retirement homes. • Establish an intergenerational matching program that pairs older adults and other age groups to skill share in pairs or groups. • Seek out and identify opportunities where older adults can participate in educational and course programming. • Establish volunteer buddy program to target older adults who are at heightened risk of isolation. |

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- Identify built environments that could be enhanced to be intergenerational environments through the inclusion of age-friendly features.

| |
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| Goal #7 |
| <i>Enabling Comprehensive Health and Wellbeing</i> |
| Interconnected Domains |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Respect and Social Inclusion ✓ Social Participation |
| Priority Actions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and pursue funding opportunities for expanded older adult health programs. • Undertake initiatives, including working with existing health providers, to attract more family physicians to the Town. • Research and educate the public on how social factors can impact individual health. Pursue opportunities to develop a social determinant of health assessment tool for older adults. • Work with the County to continue to expand health promotion and healthy living initiatives specific to older adults. • Work with older adults aged 80 years and older to develop recreation programs tailored to this group’s needs and abilities. • Consult with experts in recreation programming through groups such as Recreation Professionals of Ontario, and Parks and Recreation Ontario. • Expanded and continued services for older adults with dementia. • Expanded mental health support for older adults and caregivers. |

For the list of potential partners and anticipated time periods for implementation please review Section 6.0 of this plan.

1.5 Conclusion

The success of the goals and priority actions within the Town of Arnprior AFC Plan will be dependent on broad and sustained effort and engagement of service providers and agencies, local organizations, volunteers, community members, older adults themselves, and most of all the Town itself as a leader and advocate for the importance of age-friendly communities. The Town was an early adopter of an AFC Plan and offers a variety of services that focus on keeping older adults active in their community. However, as mentioned throughout this plan, an age-friendly community is not a destination that is arrived at, rather it is a sustained and coordinated effort between the Town, its partners, and residents, to say throughout everything it does “*This is a community in which I want to grow old in.*”. By accounting for the most vulnerable members of the community in its design, policies, and plans, the Town makes itself open and inclusive to residents of all ages and abilities.

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2.0 Glossary of Terms

- **Age-Friendly World:** In accordance with the World Health Organization (WHO) definition, an Age-Friendly World is “*A world in which you would want to grow older*”¹. An Age-Friendly world is one in which older people are enabled to:
 - age safely in a place that is right for them;
 - be free from poverty;
 - continue to develop personally; and
 - to contribute to their communities while retaining autonomy, health, and dignity.
- **Age-Friendly Community:** In accordance with the WHO’s definition, “*An age-friendly city or community is health promoting and designed for diversity, inclusion, and cohesion, across all ages and capacities*”². Overall, an age-friendly community is set up to help older adults live safely, enjoy good health and stay involved.
- **Age-Friendly Community Plan:** An Age-Friendly Community (AFC) Plan (also called an Age-Friendly Action Plan, Age-Friendly Strategy, etc.) is a document designed to address key gaps and barriers that prevent an older adults’ full participation in their communities. It includes short – and long-term strategies to enhance the quality of life for older adults in the community³. These plans typically contain:
 - a community profile;
 - a description of the consultation process;
 - an overview of the current state;
 - a definition/description of the desired future state.
- **Ageism:** “*Ageism is a bias against people based on their age and manifests in stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination in many aspects of life.*”⁴
- **Ageing-in-place:** Ageing-in-place means older adults having the health, social supports and services they need to live safely and independently in their homes / communities for as long as they wish and are able⁵.
- **Built Environment:** The built environment refers to “human-made surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, ranging in scale from buildings and parks or green spaces to neighbourhoods and cities that can often include their supporting

¹ WHO, (n.d.). What is an age-friendly world? WEB: [About Us - Age-Friendly World](#)

² WHO, (n.d.). Creating age-friendly cities and communities. WEB: [Creating age-friendly cities and communities](#)

³ Ontario, (2021). Creating a More Inclusive Ontario: Age-Friendly Community Planning Guide for Municipalities and Community Organizations. WEB: [Creating a More Inclusive Ontario](#)

⁴ Centre for Ageing Better, (2021). Challenging Ageism. WEB: <https://ageing-better.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/Challenging-ageism-guide-talking-ageing-older-age.pdf>

⁵ Government of Canada, (n.d.). Thinking about aging in place. WEB: [Thinking about aging in place - Canada.ca](#)

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infrastructure.”⁶. In simple terms, the built environment is “the human-made space in which people live, work, and recreate on a day-to-day basis.”⁷

- **Intergenerational:** Involving different generations or age groups.
- **Older Adult(s):** In this plan, the term older adults refers to people aged over the age of 65 years. It is used in place of terms like aged, elderly, or senior citizen, as the word adult “*affirms agency and personhood, as does person-first language*”⁸. It is important to note an exception to this rule for Indigenous Peoples in which the term elders may be preferred as well as culturally appropriate⁹.

⁶ A.Kaklauskas, & R., Gudauskas. (2016). Intelligent decision-support systems and the Internet of Things for the smart built environment, in *Start-Up Creation*. WEB: [Built Environment - an overview | ScienceDirect Topics](#)

⁷ K, Roof. & N, Oleru. (2008). Public health: Seattle and King County’s push for the built environment, ; 71(1) 24-7, *Journal of Environmental Health*. WEB: [Public health: Seattle and King County's push for the built environment - PubMed](#)

⁸ National Institutes of Health, (n.d.). NIH Style Guide: Older adults vs. the elderly. WEB: [Age | National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#)

⁹ Ibid.

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3.0 Introduction

Municipalities across Ontario are facing a demographic shift as large portions of their population age into older adulthood. From a high-level review of the Town of Arnprior (the Town) (Census Subdivision) age characteristics, as of 2021 27.2% of the Town’s population was over the age of 65 years. While this dramatic demographic shift can present challenges for municipalities, it also provides numerous opportunities to strengthen the community by making it more inclusive of all ages and abilities.

An Age-Friendly Community (AFC) promotes health and wellbeing, and is designed for diversity, inclusion, and cohesion, across all ages and abilities. Its 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 fully in their communities.

Following the receipt of the AFC planning grant from the Province of Ontario, the Town issued a request for proposals and selected J.L.Richards & Associates Limited (JLR) along with Dr. Maxwell Hartt, Associate Professor at the School of Urban and Regional Planning at Queen’s University, as the successful consulting firm to complete the Town’s AFC Plan Renewal. Work on the renewed AFC Plan began in November 2024, kicking off the planning process. The project has advanced in accordance with the following phases:



Figure 1: Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan renewal planning process phases.

This plan outlines the planning process, including public engagement, that was conducted to inform the plan, as well as the plan’s vision, guiding principles, goals, and priority actions under which potential partners and recommended timelines are outlined. Implementation will be closely linked to existing plans such as the Town’s Recreation Master Plan, Official Plan, Strategic Plan as well as other plans from various agencies and organizations within the Town and County of Renfrew.

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4.0 The Planning Process

4.1 Needs Assessment, Present State Analysis, and Plan Evaluation

4.1.1 Needs Assessment and Present State Analysis

The Needs Assessment and Present State Analysis portion of the planning process was largely focused on the analysis of age-characteristic data for the Town of Arnprior. Relevant data was retrieved from the Statistics Canada's 2021 Census of Population for the Census Subdivision of Arnprior (Town).

| LOCAL: Arnprior, Town (T) [Census subdivision], Ontario | | |
|---|--------|------------|
| Age Characteristics (2021) | | |
| Age Characteristics | Counts | Proportion |
| 0 to 14 years | 1,515 | 15.7% |
| 15 to 64 years | 5,500 | 57.1% |
| 65 years and over | 2,615 | 27.2% |

Table 1: Age Characteristics – Town of Arnprior, Census Subdivision, Census of the population (2021)

| 65 years + Age Characteristics (2006 – 2021) | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|------|-------|--------|-------|
| LOCAL: Arnprior, Town (T) [Census subdivision], Ontario | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Age Characteristics | 2006 | | % | 2011 | | % | 2016 | | % | 2021 | |
| | Counts | Rates | | Δ | Counts | | Rates | Δ | | Counts | Rates |
| 0 to 14 years | 1,150 | 16 | -2.19% | 1,125 | 13.9 | 18.5% | 1,355 | 15.4 | 11.1% | 1,515 | 15.7 |
| 15 to 64 years | 4,565 | 63.7 | 11.9% | 5,145 | 63.4 | 2.1% | 5,255 | 59.7 | 4.5% | 5,500 | 57.1 |
| 65 years and over | 1,455 | 20.3 | 26.8% | 1,845 | 22.7 | 17.1% | 2,190 | 24.9 | 17.6% | 2,615 | 27.2 |
| Total Population (approx.) | 7,170 | | 13.4% | 8,115 | | 8.4% | 8,800 | | 9.5% | 9,629 | |

Table 2: Age Characteristics (2006-2021) – Town of Arnprior, Census Subdivision, Census of the population (2021)

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| Arnprior, Town (T) [Census subdivision], Ontario / Ontario [Province] / Canada [Country] | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Age Characteristics (2021) | | | |
| Age Characteristics | Arnprior, Town | Ontario, Province | Canada, Country |
| 0 to 14 years | 15.7% | 15.8% | 16.3% |
| 15 to 64 years | 57.1% | 65.6% | 64.8% |
| 65 years and over | 27.2% | 18.5% | 19.0% |

Table 3: Age Characteristics – Town of Arnprior, Ontario, Canada, Census Subdivision, Census of the population (2021)

Through the review of Statistics Canada data, it is clear that the Town is a growing community with a steadily increasing population. Over the past several years, the Town has seen a noticeable rise in the number of residents, including older adult residents. The average age of people living in Arnprior is higher than the provincial and national average, demonstrating that the Town is experiencing an ageing population as many of its residents age into older adulthood and/or older adults move into the Town from other communities. More than a quarter of the Town's residents are over the age of 65, this is a significant proportion of the Town's population and is higher than in other municipalities. Most of the older adults in the Town are between the ages of 65 and 84, however, there is also a notable group of people living well into their 80s and 90s, suggesting that many residents are living longer lives.

| Structural Type of Dwelling (2021) | | |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| LOCAL: Arnprior, Town (T) [Census subdivision], Ontario | | |
| Age Characteristics | Counts | Rates |
| Single-detached house | 2,230 | 51.7% |
| Semi-detached house | 450 | 10.4% |
| Row house | 550 | 12.8% |
| Apartment or flat in duplex | 90 | 2.1% |
| Apartment in a building that has fewer than five storeys | 915 | 21.2% |
| Apartment in a building that has five or more storeys | 55 | 1.3% |
| Other single-attached house | 5 | 0.1% |
| Moveable dwelling | 15 | 9.3% |

Table 4: Structural Type of Dwelling – Town of Arnprior, Census Subdivision, Census of the population (2021)

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| Private Households by Household Size (2021) | | |
|---|-------------|-------|
| LOCAL: Arnprior, Town (T) [Census subdivision], Ontario | | |
| | Counts | Rates |
| 1 person | 1,445 | 33.6% |
| 2 persons | 1,645 | 38.2% |
| 3 persons | 555 | 12.9% |
| 4 persons | 430 | 10% |
| 5 persons | 235 | 5.5% |
| Average household size: | 2.2 persons | |

Table 5: Private Households by Household Size – Town of Arnprior, Census Subdivision, Census of the population (2021)

Older adults who live alone may be more vulnerable to social isolation and may be less likely to engage in community support. In terms of housing types, 51.7% of residents in the Town live in single-detached homes, however, there is also a considerable number of residents living in apartment buildings or other housing types such as townhouses and duplexes.

A variety of housing types help to support people as they age, especially those who may want to remain in their homes and communities as they grow older but may not be able to maintain a single-detached home on their own. Housing options such as co-ops, apartment dwellings, and additional residential units, can help older adults remain in their communities while maintaining a high-level of independence.

Similar to how young people often transition from a parent’s home, to apartment, to town home, to single detached home, it is important that this housing continuum is continued and activated to allow older adults to transition from a single detached home to apartment or co-op living facility, to retirement home, to long term care, all based on individual need and lifestyle choice.

Review of census dissemination areas (smallest geographic area for which census data is disseminated) demonstrated a fairly even distribution of older adults over the age of 65 in the Town of Arnprior, however there were higher concentrations of older adults located centrally within the Town. This centralization could be beneficial for service delivery, but it also highlights the importance of ensuring the downtown environments are accessible, safe, and supportive for older adult residents. In addition, not all municipal facilities are centrally located, and as a result travel supports may be required. Further supports and varied transportation options for older adults that reside outside of the downtown area is essential to mitigate the risk of older adult isolation.

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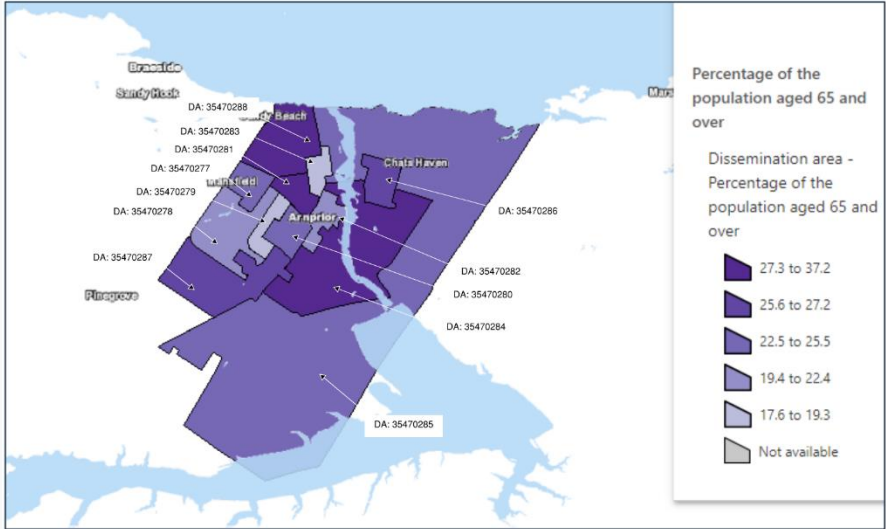


Figure 2: Dissemination Areas – Percentage of the population aged 65 and over – Town of Arnprior, Census Subdivision, Census of the population (2021)

The data paints a clear picture: the Town of Arnprior is a community with a significant and growing older adult population. This makes it especially important for the Town to prioritize age-friendly policies, programs, and infrastructure in order to support healthy, connected, and dignified living for older adults.

4.1.2 Policy Review

4.1.2.1 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), 2024

The 2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) provides policy directions on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development in Ontario. Under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13, where a municipality is exercising its authority affecting a planning matter, such decisions “shall be consistent with” all policy statement issued under the Act.

While the PPS does not directly speak to age-friendly communities, its policies touch on a variety of features that contribute to an age-friendly community, such as housing, transportation, infrastructure, and health and safety. The PPS also highlights the need to consider all ages, abilities, and incomes in the planning of complete communities – Section 2.1.6 of the PPS outlines the following:

“Planning authorities should support the achievement of complete communities by:

- a) *accommodating an appropriate range and mix of land uses, housing options, transportation options with multi-modal access, employment, public service*

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facilities and other institutional uses, recreation, parks and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;

- b) improving accessibility for people of all ages and abilities by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society; and*
- c) improving social equity and overall quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes, including equity-deserving groups.”*

The intent of these policies is to encourage the creation of complete communities that meet the current and long-term needs of people of all abilities, ages and incomes, in a manner that is enabling and as such does not limit one group’s ability to participate in society.

It is through this policy understanding that the goals and priority actions of this Plan are to be brought forward: on the understanding that everyone should be able to participate fully in their communities – regardless of age and ability.

4.1.2.2 County of Renfrew Official Plan, 2020

The purpose of the County of Renfrew Official Plan (County OP) is to provide a policy framework for growth and development throughout the County. The OP’s intent is to “*promote orderly and efficient development in a manner which is consistent with the desired lifestyle and needs for growth and prosperity...*” with the first objective of the OP to “*maintain and enhance the quality of the natural, built, and human environments in the County*”. Within the County OP there are a variety of policies that play an essential role in an age-friendly community – a select few of these are highlighted below:

Section 2.2.1.c. of the County OP outlines that need for affordable housing and the tools through which the municipality can foster affordable housing:

“Encouraging housing forms and densities designed to be affordable to moderate and lower income households. Local municipalities may develop policies, zoning standards, site plan requirements, licensing by-laws (or a combination thereof), to permit and regulate alternative forms of affordable housing (i.e., tiny homes).”

In accordance with census data the predominate form of housing in the Town are single detached dwellings¹⁰. However, as one ages, other forms of housing may be more appropriate to meeting their individual needs and reduce the risk of social isolation. This policy in the County OP acknowledges that there should be a mix of affordable housing types and densities, as well as new and innovative alternative housing options to provide residents with a broader range of choices.

¹⁰ Statistics Canada. 2023. (table). Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 15, 2023. WEB: [Profile table, Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population - Arnprior, Town \(T\) \[Census subdivision\], Ontario](#)

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Section 2.2.1.f. of the County OP specifically addresses their willingness to work with municipalities to provide social assisted housing for older adults:

“Monitoring the need for social assisted housing for households and seniors through periodic surveys in co-operation with area municipalities. Where specific needs are identified, Council will work with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Social services Department of the County of Renfrew to meet identified needs”.

As outlined in the policy above, the Town should continue to collaborate with the County in order to survey and assess need for social assisted housing amongst older adults, and work with MMAH to find solutions to identified needs.

Section 2.2.26 of the County OP highlights how active transportation and accessible infrastructure contribute to a wide range of community benefits:

“ Active transportation increases physical activity, community engagement and social connections; contributes to economic development; provides accessible infrastructure to all segments of the population; and connects people to parks, open spaces and the natural environment....the goal is to achieve a land use pattern composed of housing, employment, recreation, parks and open spaces that promote the use of active transportation.”

Active transportation is an important consideration in age-friendly communities as some older adults do not have access to a vehicle and thus rely on infrastructure such as sidewalks to a greater degree. In line with PPS policies, the facilitation of active transportation is consistent with addressing land use barriers that prevent full participation in society.

The above noted policies highlight the County’s intent for efficient development, compact communities, and active transportation infrastructure – all features that contribute to an age-friendly community. The policies of the County OP have been considered throughout the development of this plan and its recommendations.

4.1.2.3 Town of Arnprior Official Plan, 2017

The purpose of the Town of Arnprior Official Plan (Town OP) is to provide direction and a policy framework for managing growth and plan use decisions in the Town over the planning period to 2036. Under the Town OP’s vision it notes that the plans purpose is also to *“...assist in achieving common goals and objectives, such as: the need to enhance an already high quality of life; to support an existing community structure; and to create a highly desirable, healthy, and attractive place to live, work, and visit, for a range of people and lifestyles.”* In the vision is the acknowledgement that a high quality of life should be accommodated for a range of people and lifestyles. Under this section of the Town OP it goes on to note that, *“...Arnprior believes that there should be a range of housing options available to all incomes and ages, educational and employment choices to encourage residents to learn and work in the community, and recreational facilities and opportunities to support a healthy community.”* This statement considers the wellbeing of residents in a wholistic manner, acknowledging that housing, education, employment, recreation and health care as areas which are essential to resident wellbeing – and when

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combined help to make up an age-friendly community. The following policies highlight a selection of the policies in the plan which contribute to an age-friendly community:

In line with what is outlined in the County OP, Section A3.2.g of the Town OP similarly prioritizes active transportation with the goal to, “*Encourage reductions in the use of private automobiles by promoting active transportation and the use of Transportation Demand Management measures, such as cycling and walking*”. As previously mentioned, the provision of adequate pedestrian safety and active transportation infrastructure positively contributes to an age-friendly community and enables a more active population. Section E2.2.6 of the Town OP goes on to note that, “*It is the intent of the Plan that interconnected systems of active transportation routes providing access to major activity and employment areas and to future public transit be established overtime*”. The intent of this policy is to connect key destinations in the Town through active transit routes and to eventually connect these routes to public transit as the Town grows. From review of these sections in the Town OP in addition to its vision it is clear that the Town seeks to foster and increase the use of active transportation.

Under Section A2 ‘Guiding Principles’ of the Town OP it notes in A2.n. that planning decisions shall, “*...improve accessibility for persons with mobility challenges and older persons by identifying, preventing and removing land use barriers that restrict their full participation in society*”. This policy within the Town OP represents a commitment on the part of the Town to “*...identifying, preventing, and removing...*” barriers to accessibility in the built environment.

Section B9.1.f. of the Town OP outlines that future housing needs be met in part by, “*Supporting the development of innovative seniors housing options that allow for progressive care and aging in place*”. The intent of this policy is to enable older adults to age within their existing social and built environment by supporting innovative housing solutions that are enabling in that they meet the needs of the individual as they age. As outlined in the County OP policy, this can include tiny homes, but it can also include a range of housing options and adaptations that foster a high quality and level of wellbeing amongst older adults.

The above noted policies demonstrate the Town’s forward-looking vision for the growth of the community while removing barriers in the environment, creating connections, aiding residents to age in their community, and helping to maintain a high quality of place and life. The policies of the Town OP have been considered throughout the development of this plan and its recommendations.

4.1.2.4 Town of Arnprior Recreation & Parks Master Plan, 2024

The Town of Arnprior Recreation & Parks Master Plan (Town RPMP) provides “*...a cohesive vision and strategy for the provision of parks and recreational services for the community that includes facilities and programming, trails and parks, and assess management and staffing strategies*”.

Section 8 of the RPMP addresses strategic directions for the future through recommendations under a series of strategic directions. Section 8.2.2.2. addresses the need for age-specific programming for older adults,

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“As the population and demographic shifts occur, there will be a need for the Town’s recreational spaces to also shift and accommodate these changes. There is a need to plan for the introduction of new, trending activities, age-friendly sports and age-specific programming, such as for seniors and teens.”

As discussed earlier in this plan the demographic trends demonstrate that there is significant growth in the older adult age category in the Town, and as such adaptation of recreational programming, pathways and trails to accommodate to the needs of this group is essential in maintaining an age-friendly community.

Section 8.2.2.3 of the RPMP ties together the need to ensure adequate access to recreational facilities in the Town, outlining that the Town shall *“Look for opportunities to improve accessibility within indoor facilities, as well as improving travelling options to indoor facilities, ensuring that the Town’s indoor facilities are easily accessible for pedestrians and cyclists”*. This is an essential consideration, as despite there being age-friendly recreational programming if the facilities themselves are not easily accessible to older adults – it will diminish any age-friendly value that could be gauged from the programming. Another policy which connects to this in the RPMP is the acknowledgement in Section 8.3.2.3. that there needs to be improved outreach across a number of platforms to bring awareness of the recreational programming to residents, noting that *“Increased promotion and advertisement of Town-run programs on various platforms is crucial to getting community members interested and aware of events happening on the Town...”*. While some older adults are comfortable in accessing information virtually through the Town website or social media, other older adults may prefer to receive information in more traditional forms such as flyers, printed newsletters, posters, advertisements, etc. It is essential that the preferred forms of communication amongst the targeted demographic be considered when sharing information of recreational programming.

Section 9 of the RPMP provides specific recommendations to address service needs and gaps with regards to recreation in the Town. Section 9.3.b. echoes the County and Town OP policies on active transportation, with the policy direction to *“Provide incentive for active living and encourage walkable communities by connecting recreation destinations throughout the Town to link recreation destinations”*. It is especially important for older adults that recreational destinations be well connected with even walking surfaces, seating areas, adequate lighting, shade, and washroom facilities. The majority of these features are noted in 9.6.b. of the RPMP which recommends the development of outdoor recreation standards. It is essential that these standards reflect the unique needs of older adults, in order to enable their access to recreational facilities and pathways in the Town.

4.1.3 Plan Evaluation

A plan evaluation is a structured approach to assessing the effectiveness and performance of a plan. The aim of the plan evaluation was to evaluate the Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community (AFC) Plan which was adopted by Council in 2016. AFC Plans are non-statutory municipal plans that contain policies that respond to the needs older adults in the community in order to foster an age-friendly community.

The plan evaluation framework for the evaluation of the Town’s 2016 AFC Plan is based on three separate yet similar plan evaluation frameworks:

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- Guyadeen, D., Thistlethwaite, J., & Henstra, D. (2019). Evaluating the quality of municipal climate change plans in Canada. *Climatic Change*, 152(1), 121–143.
- Pelopidas, C. (2021). *Age-friendly Policy: Evaluating Walkable Environments for Older Adults in Mid-sized Ontario Municipalities* (Major Research Paper). University of Toronto, Toronto, ON.
- Public Health Agency of Canada, (2016). *Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Guide: using Indicators to Measure Progress*.

This plan evaluation framework was composed of the following three components used to evaluate the plan's contents:

1. **Plan Characteristics** – Key elements like goals, policies, and implementation. (See plan characteristics in Appendix A).
2. **Indicators** – 74 specific measures used to assess the presence and quality of content (See list of indicators in Appendix B).
3. **Scoring System** – Each indicator was scored in accordance with how it was integrated into the AFC Plan:
 - **0** = Not present
 - **1** = Mentioned briefly
 - **2** = Fully integrated with details

The results of the plan evaluation are as follows:

| Plan Characteristics | Score Frequency | | | Total |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|----|----|-------|
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | |
| Fact Base | 5 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Goals | 2 | 2 | - | 4 |
| Policies | 27 | 16 | 6 | 49 |
| Implementation | - | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Monitoring & Evaluation | 1 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Public Participation | - | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Inter-Organizational Coordination | - | 3 | - | 3 |
| Organization & Presentation | 2 | - | - | 2 |
| Total: | 37 | 25 | 12 | |

Table 6: Scoring from the Plan Evaluation of 2016 Age-Friendly Community Plan

The strengths of the 2016 AFC Plan were determined to be its strong implementation strategies, thorough public and stakeholder engagement, and strong policy connection to other municipal plans. Areas for improvement that were identified included adding demographic data, more context specific strategies, the use of age-inclusive language, and concise policy descriptions.

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4.2 Service Provider Survey

The service provider survey ran from mid-February through to the end of the Public Engagement Phase (June 2025). The survey was sent to a group of service providers identified by the Town of Arnprior as providing services to the older adult population in the Town. The survey provided an opportunity for service providers to answer questions and provide written feedback on their experience and perceptions of services for older adults in the Town. The questions contained in the survey aimed to address awareness of current services for older adults, perceptions of service effectiveness, gaps between demand and supply, priorities for service enhancement, potential service duplication, perceived barriers to service, and suggestions for service improvement. The survey was distributed to 20 service providers by the Town. A total of two complete responses were received.

The respondents highlighted both the opportunities and challenges they face in providing services to older adults. Challenges included inadequate facilities, and staff and volunteer shortages that have resulted in reduced service capacity and inability to reach a broader group of older adults in the Town. Respondents also identified funding and infrastructure limitations as key challenges. They suggested that increased funding, municipal support, and incentives could be tools to enhance service delivery and strengthen their ability to support the growing needs of older adult residents.

Questions in the service provider survey can be found in Appendix C.

4.3 Key-Informant Interviews

Interview invitations were sent out by JLR to various key-informants identified by the Town. The intent of these interviews was to gauge insight from these key-informants on a variety of age-friendly topics in relation to the local context. A total of sixteen invitations were sent out to key-informants, a total of ten key informants expressed interest in being interviewed. The dates of these interviews are outlined in the table below:

| Key-Informant | Interview Date |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Town of Arnprior Recreation | February 28 th , 2025 |
| Seniors at Home | March 4 th , 2025 |
| Town of Arnprior Public Library | March 6 th , 2025 |
| Arnprior Regional Health/Senior’s Active Living Centre | March 7 th , 2025 |
| Arnprior District Museum | March 21 st , 2025 |
| Arnprior McNab/Braeside Men’s Shed | April 7 th , 2025 |
| Renfrew County | April 17 th , 2025 |
| Arnprior Legion | April 17 th , 2025 |
| Mayor Lisa McGee | April 28 th , 2025 |
| Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County | May 12 th , 2025 |

Table 7: Key-Informant Interview Schedule

The key-informant interviews provided a comprehensive overview of the current state, strengths, challenges, and opportunities related to age-friendly services and supports within the Town. Many

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of the key-informants noted the Town's small-town charm and proximity to larger urban centres such as Ottawa, as key features that make the Town an attractive location for older adults. In addition, many key-informants noted the wide variety of existing service and supports for older adults, as one of the Town's existing strengths in terms of its age-friendliness.

A large majority of key-informant noted that transportation remains a major barrier for older adults in the Town, with limited affordable transit options, increased demand for existing transit services without increased funding to support this increased demand, as well as a lack of after-hours transportation options.

Almost all key-informants noted the loss of the community newspaper as having a significant (mostly negative) impact on older adults due to the removal of this critical information channel. Communication with the older adult population in the Town was noted as a significant issue, particularly for older adults who are not on social media or do not have access to a computer. Many key-informants expressed that it was hard to get word out about the supports and services they offer older adults, and that as a result they noted that some older adults may not be aware of the full range of services that are available to them.

While key-informants expressed that the Town excels in offering diverse recreational programs and services and supports for older adults, they noted insufficient coordination amongst service providers post-COVID. The key-informants expressed a strong desire to work closer with other service providers and the Town to coordinate the delivery of programming, supports, and services, for older adults. Many key-informants emphasized the need for a centralized communication across agencies in order to avoid duplication of efforts, enable pooling of resources, and well as more allow for the more efficient coordination of volunteers. Some key-informants noted that there is a growing need for more inclusive and dementia-friendly services, as well as targeted outreach to isolated older adults, particularly those with mobility and/or cognitive challenges.

Funding of programs was another major talking point amongst key-informants with many noting that funding is often fragmented and insufficient as demand for services continues to increase. Many key-informants expressed concern over the long-term viability of programs and supports for older adults due to rising operational costs and a greater reliance on an already over-extended volunteer base.

Key recommendations included re-establishing the Greater Arnprior Seniors Council (GASC), increased funding for new and expanded transportation services, improved communication and coordination amongst service providers, a desire for an expanded and coordinated volunteer base, as well as increased social programming for older adults.

The list of questions used to guide the conversation in the key-informant interviews can be found in Appendix D of this plan.

4.4 Focus Groups

A total of three focus groups were held as part of the Public Engagement Phase. All focus groups were held in-person in the Town of Arnprior. All but one focus group was held with older adults (aged 65 years or older). The other focus group discussion was held after the Arnprior Accessibility and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee (AAFAC) meeting on Wednesday, March 5th,

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2025. The remaining two focus groups were with two groups of older adults on Thursday, March 13th, 2025. The first focus group was held at 9:00 am at Island View Retirement Suites. The second focus group was held at 1:00 pm at the Senior's Active Living Centre (SALC). Both focus group discussions were approximately one and a half to two hours in length. Each focus group followed a similar format, with a series of exploratory questions designed to gauge feedback on the topics at hand (e.g., age-friendly communities, the built environment, services and supports, the social environment, and recreation). These were followed by exit questions which provided participants with the opportunity to share any additional comments or suggestions they had on the topic.

Participants expressed a strong appreciation for Arnprior's welcoming atmosphere, natural beauty, and small-town charm. According to participants, the Town's slower pace, friendly residents, and largely accessible amenities contribute to a high quality of life for older adults. However, many participants in the focus groups expressed a desire for more consistent and inclusive communication from the Town. Many were unaware of previous age-friendly planning efforts and suggested that information should be regularly and widely shared through multiple channels, including local radio, community newsletters, and outreach through places of worship and service organizations. Participants also noted the value of informal gathering spaces—such as libraries and cafés—for fostering connection, information sharing, and reducing the risk of isolation.

Participants noted that transportation remains a significant barrier, both within Town as well as to other regional destinations and nearby urban centres. They noted that limited transit options, the high cost of private services, and restricted weekend availability all hinder mobility and access to essential services. Accessibility was another concern, as many participants noted that many public and commercial buildings lack proper ramps, automatic doors, and/or accessible washrooms especially in the downtown area of the Town.

Many participants raised concerns for vulnerable older adults, particularly those facing housing insecurity or limited access to nutritious food. Participants advocated for preventive health care approaches and community support systems that reduce reliance on institutional care. Participant suggestions included co-operative housing models, older adult villages, and potential partnerships with local service providers to ensure basic needs are met.

Lastly, participants expressed enthusiasm for intergenerational initiatives and expressed that these kinds of programs are mutually beneficial and provide a way to preserve community knowledge from generation to generation and help to foster empathy across different age groups. Participants also called for better coordination of volunteer opportunities and recognition of the valuable contributions older adults can make to their community.

The list of questions used to guide the conversation in the key-informant interviews can be found in Appendix E of this plan.

4.5 Community Open House

The community open house was held at the Town of Arnprior Public Library on Thursday, April 3rd, 2025, from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm. The format consisted of information and participatory boards set up around the room and provided residents with the opportunity to provide feedback and ask

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questions directly on the boards. A total of four residents attended the open house and contributed feedback. A number of the participatory information boards from the open house were then taken and posted on various public information boards at municipal locations throughout the Town. A total of five additional feedback forms were received from residents following the open house.

Feedback received from participants in this engagement activity focused largely on the comprehensive wellbeing of older adults as well as the importance of improving accessibility within the downtown area of the Town.

Participants again expressed appreciation for the existing services in the Town but noted that it was hard to receive information on the supports and services that were available to them. The loss of the community newspaper was again noted as it had been a significant source of information for this demographic. Participant suggestions to reach older adults with information on services and programming included advertising via local radio, as well as including information in water bills.

There was also specific feedback gathered regarding the built environment of the Town such as safety concerns related to visibility at crosswalks, railing along stairways and bleachers, as well as the condition of some sidewalks in the Town. Further comments on the built environment centred around large shopping areas being beyond walking distance of many residential areas which increased older adults' dependence on the use of vehicles to meet daily needs. The feedback received as part of the open house was consistent with feedback gathered throughout other engagement activities.

In addition, the open house brought about important discussions on the importance of mental health supports for older adults, as well as services and supports for adults who are not quite in the 65 years and over age range but who still may require and could make use of these services as they transition from adulthood into older adulthood.

The boards for the Community Open House are attached in Appendix F of this plan.

4.6 Community Survey

The online community survey was distributed by the Town and was available from May 16th, 2025, to June 6th, 2025. The community survey was designed to solicit information from residents of the Town of Arnprior in order to inform the creation of the renewed AFC Plan. It allowed residents to share their individual experiences in the Town as well as their perspectives on age0friendly communities - regardless of their age. The intent behind this approach was to reinforce that age-friendly communities are about more than just creating age-friendly environments and services for older adults but rather about creating vibrant built and social spaces for all ages. By asking individual respondents about their own experiences, perceptions, and thoughts, we were able to identify any discrepancies between age groups.

The community survey gathered responses from a total of 91 respondents and provided valuable insight into the experiences and needs of residents.

The majority of respondents were aged 65 and older, with a significant number having lived in Arnprior for over 15 years. However, there were also a number of respondents from other age groups as well. The findings from the community survey were consistent with feedback that had

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been received through the earlier forms of engagement, with respondents highlighting accessibility concerns relating to the lack of public washrooms, seating, sidewalk maintenance, and buildings with a lack of accessibility features such as ramps and automatic doors.

While many respondents noted feeling a sense of belonging and safety in their community, some respondents expressed feelings of isolation or not being heard by decision-makers. Respondents generally agreed that public spaces are kept in good condition in the Town and felt that it was relatively easy to get around Town, however, many expressed frustrations with the availability and convenience of existing transit options.

A theme that arose through the community survey that had not been touched upon as much in previous engagement activities was issues with access to health services. Many participants reported difficulty in accessing family doctors or having to travel long distances to see a family doctor. Respondents with many expressed a desire for more walk-in clinics and better communication about available health services.

In terms of statistical analysis of the survey responses, a series of Mann-Whitney U tests were run to determine if there were significant differences in responses to isolation related questions between people who identified as males versus females.

The results point to only one isolation-related variable that had responses that were statistically significant between people who identified as males versus females, in which women reported a higher positive response for *“I feel like I have sufficient opportunities to socialize with people that are outside of my age group”*. These results could be interpreted to point to two points: that people who identify as men have fewer opportunities to socialize with those outside of their age group, and as such, potentially are at greater risk of social isolation. A weak statistically significant relationship found that older adults who lived in retirement residents were more likely to have more opportunities to socialize with people outside their age group, followed by those in condos and apartments, with those in single detached dwellings having fewer opportunities to interact with different age groups. This further points to individuals habituating in single detached dwellings as being potentially at an increased risk of social isolation by default of dwelling type.

A series of Kruskal Wallis tests (as well as follow-up Mann Whitney U tests) were run to determine if there were significant differences in responses to isolation related questions between people with different lengths of tenure living in the Town. Three isolation variables had responses that were statistically significant between people with different tenure lengths in the Town:

- *“I feel like I have sufficient opportunities to socialize within my age group”*: Weak statistical difference indicated that the strongest positive response was from those living in Town 15+ years, followed by 10-15 years, 1-2 years, 5-10 years, and a larger gap down to less than a year and 2-5 years.
- *“There are a wide variety of activities offered to my age group within the Town”*: Moderate statistical difference indicated that the strongest positive response from those living in Town 15+ years, followed by 10-15 years, less than a year, 5-10 years, and 1-2 years. Long-term and new residents had the most positive responses.

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- *“There are a variety of sports/recreation groups in the Town I could join”*: Weak statistical difference indicated that the strongest positive response from those living in Town 15+ years, followed by 5-10 years, 10-15 years, 2-5 years, 1-2 years, and then a very large gap down to less than a year.

The results demonstrate that long-term residents of the Town perceive more opportunities for social interaction within their age group as well as access to sports and recreation programs in the Town, whereas newer residents perceive there being significantly less opportunities for social interaction. The outlier in terms of this connection is that long-term residents and new resident feel as though there is a variety of activities available to their age group, with residents who have been in the Town for a moderate amount of time (2-10 years) are less aware of the activities available to them. What this data could point to is long-term residents feeling more welcome and more socially connected, medium term residents being less aware of the recreational offerings, and newer residents being aware of recreational offerings but perhaps not feeling as welcome or able to participate in the recreational offerings.

Lastly, in terms of how different age groups receive information the following findings point to older adult receiving information digitally less than other age groups, however, it should be noted that the survey was largely distributed digitally, therefore, those who completed it were more likely to be more proficient in digital forms of communication – which should be considered in interpretation of the results.

- 50% of respondents aged 15-44 get information via social media as main source;
- 57% of respondents aged 45-64 get information via social media as main source;
- 43% of respondents aged 65-74 get information via social media as main source, followed by:
 - email (27%) and
 - website (20%);
- 37% of respondents aged 75-84 get information via email as main source, followed by:
 - social media (33%) and
 - word-of-mouth (17%);
- Main source of information for respondents aged 85-94 was split evenly between:
 - email (33%),
 - mail and paper newsletters (33%) and
 - word-of-mouth (33%).

Overall, the results of the community survey were consistent with feedback received in other engagement activities and point to long-term residents and women as being more socially connected, while medium to new term residents as well as males as being less socially connected and potentially at greater risk of isolation.

The community survey Questions are attached in Appendix G to this plan.

*(*Please note the interpretation of survey results and inferential statistical analysis options are limited due to the size and distribution of the sample. However, some preliminary conclusions can be drawn.)*

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4.7 Summary of Engagement & SWOC

Throughout the Public Engagement Phase, it was clear that while there are challenges and areas for improvements to make the Town more age-friendly, there are also a number of areas in which the Town is excelling. The Town undertaking an AFC Plan Renewal is an indication that an age-friendly community is important to both the Town and residents. The existing strength of the Town in terms of age-friendliness that the participants spoke to the most was location. Many participants expressed that the benefits of being in close proximity to the larger urban centre of Ottawa while having the benefits of a smaller Town like Arnprior is an attractive feature for older adults. Another strength discussed was the number of existing services (at home supports, healthcare services, recreation programs, etc.) available to older adults in the municipality.

Themes related to challenges that arose throughout public engagement, were largely centered around the communication of services, programs, and events to older adults, and the coordination amongst organizations and agencies providing these services, programs and events. Additionally, there were many comments around the need for transportation solutions and improved accessibility of the built environment to improve older adults access to various destination in the Town. Further, many older adult participants indicated that they would like to actively contribute to the community through the sharing of their skills and experience, as well as learning from other’s skills and experiences.

Based on the feedback received through the Public Engagement Phase as well as information reviewed as part of the Needs Assessment and the Present State Analysis the following Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) has been prepared:

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close-knit small-town atmosphere • Local health services • A strong variety of existing programs and services for older adults • Ample green space and opportunities for outdoor recreation • Strong sense of safety • Proximity to larger urban centres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited transportation options • Lack of bike lanes or evenly paved surfaces for scooters • Accessibility of downtown buildings and condition of sidewalks • Limited capacity of SALC • Few public washroom facilities • No community newspaper • Long waitlists for family doctors • Lack of third places to gather |
| Opportunities | Challenges |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate volunteer network • Sharing information on older adult services via local radio • Knowledge sharing and intergenerational programming • Re-establish the Greater Arnprior Seniors Council (GASC) • Grants and public-private partnerships • Collaborate with existing providers and the County to coordinate regional transportation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer coordination and burnout • Funding not keeping pace with costs • Resource constraints • Inflation and growing financial pressures • Lack of historical funding • Ageism and age-related stigma • Auto-centric community design • Limited housing types outside of single detached dwellings • High cost of housing |

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| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with other levels of government to increase funding• Opportunity to re-engage and rebuild age-friendly community networks post-COVID | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Growing community with greater demands on services |
|--|--|

Table 8: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges

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5.0 Vision and Guiding Principles

5.1 Vision

The visions and guiding principles of this Plan continue to be those established through the Town of Arnprior’s 2016 Age-Friendly Community Plan. Wording has been updated, and additions have remained to account for feedback received during the public engagement phase of the planning process, however, the intent and “preferred future” identified by today’s residents remains the same.

A vision statement describes the “preferred future” of a community and its stakeholders. Participants at the 2016 October community forum engaged in a visioning exercise that identified the following elements of an age-friendly community vision for the Town of Arnprior. This vision has been built upon through the Public Engagement Phase of the AFC Plan Renewal, by asking participants “What does an age-friendly community mean to you?”.

An open, respectful and inclusive community that respects and engages older adults through:

- Enhanced facilities and infrastructure that meets the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.
- Maintaining a broad range of older adult focused services and supports.
- Supporting a community culture that fosters positive engagement, lifelong learning, and comprehensive wellbeing.

Through this vision it is necessary to acknowledge that an age-friendly community is not a destination that a community arrives at, but rather an age-friendly community is one which is in a continuous state of becoming, adjusting, and remaking plans and policies to ensure that it meets the needs of residents of all ages.

5.2 Guiding Principles

The original Steering Committee created to oversee the creation of the Town’s 2016 Age-Friendly Community Plan had participated in an exercise at its inaugural meeting to identify broad principles to govern the development and implementation of the AFC plan. These were compared and found to be consistent with the guiding principles suggested on the University of Waterloo AFC website, which had been used as a resource in the creation of the original AFC Plan. Wording has been modified to be more concise; however, the intent remains the same as the original guiding principles. The five guiding principles for the Town of Arnprior’s Age-Friendly Community Plan are as follows:



Figure 3: Guiding Principles

These principles governed the development of the Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan renewal and will continue to guide its ongoing implementation.

6.0 Goals, Priority Actions & Pathways to Implementation

The goals and priority actions listed in this section are derived directly from the themes identified through the Public Engagement Phase, needs identified through Needs Assessment, Present State Analysis, and Plan Evaluation, as well as consideration for the eight interconnected domains outlined within the WHO Age-Friendly Cities Guide. Each of the seven goals will touch on at least one of the interconnected domains as indicated under each respective goal. The eight interconnected domains which are outlined below:



Figure 4: World Health Organization Eight Interconnected Domains of Urban Life.

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Under each goal will be a set of priority actions as well as recommended pathways to implementation which include listed potential partners, outlined deliverables, and the following estimated time frames:

| Time Frame | Range |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Short Term | 1 – 3 years |
| Medium Term | 4 – 7 years |
| Long Term | 8 – 10 years |

Each priority action is rooted in the local context of the Town of Arnprior, and as the community continues to grow and evolve, goals and priority actions have been designed to be flexible in such a way that they can be interpreted and adapted to meet evolving conditions in the Town.

The Age-Friendly Community Goals are as follows:



Figure 5: Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Goals.

Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan

6.1 Mitigating Ageism & Age-Related Stigma

“There becomes a pride issue in aging...not wanting to admit that you need help.”

Interconnected domains:

**Respect
and Social
Inclusion**

**Social
Participation**

**Community
and Health
Care**

Ageism is an often-overlooked challenge. However, how people think and talk about aging fundamentally shapes how society sets up systems and supports older adults. Older adults are often viewed, thought of, and spoken about as one homogenous group¹¹. This issue worsened with the COVID-19 pandemic in which older adults were consistently framed as being weak, passive and at risk¹². An alternative framing of aging in society is required, where older adults like any other age group are seen as possessing a multitude of identities, experiences, abilities, individual attributes and characteristics – and all are respected. One older adult may be actively involved in recreation activities in their community, another may be an avid reader and a computer whiz, while another may not know how to use a computer but loves gardening, another a grandmother living with dementia. It is important to recognize that older adults represent a diverse group that are worthy of respect and inclusion.

The priority actions below are aimed at positively improving the way aging is talked about and viewed in the Town. Rather than aging being something that is associated with decline the priority actions work to help inform, educate and reframe older adulthood as a natural progression of life that presents unique opportunities and ways of being.

| Priority Actions | Potential Engagement Partners | Deliverables | Time Period for Implementation |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------|
| Language review of materials and content for older adults to ensure use of age-inclusive language. | Town of Arnprior Accessibility and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee | Internal standards for the use of age-inclusive language. | Short Term |
| Provide guidelines for age-inclusive language to local business and services. | Town of Arnprior Accessibility and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee | Age-inclusive language guideline. | Short Term |

¹¹ Stephenson, J. (2013), "Age Discrimination – Ageism in Employment and Service Provision", *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, 32(6), 629-631. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-05-2013-0023>

¹² Morgan, T., Wiles, J., Williams, L., & Gott, M. (2021). COVID-19 and the portrayal of older people in New Zealand news media. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 51(S1), S127–S142. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03036758.2021.1884098>

Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan

| | | | |
|--|--|---|-------------|
| | Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce | | |
| Establish an Age-Friendly Resource Section within the Arnprior Public Library. | Town of Arnprior Arnprior Public Library Older adult residents | Age-friendly resources and information. | Medium Term |

Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan

6.2 Fostering Accessible & Age-Friendly Built Environments

“Going out gives you the confidence to go out again.”

“Stop accommodating cars over people.”

“Sidewalks start and stop in weird places, sidewalks are very broken in many places in the residential areas.”

“People will help if they are there but if not, you cannot get in the door.”

“There should be a designated public washroom facility in our downtown core.”

Interconnected domains:

Outdoor
Spaces and
Buildings

Respect and
Social
Inclusion

Age-friendly communities can only result from integrated approaches that are centered on how older adults actually live their day-to-day lives. If an older adult cannot access a certain destination as a result of a barrier – this is a significant as it represents an exclusion from a space. This can reduce wellbeing as it can negatively impact one’s dignity and self-perception and potentially result in an older adult avoiding going out into the built environment and contributing to isolation. Alternatively, an age-friendly built environment reflects the Town’s commitment to inclusivity. As it ensures that older adults, regardless of ability, are able to fully participate in society without facing discrimination and exclusion due to barriers.

It is also important to acknowledge that there is more to inclusive age-friendly planning and design than just ensuring access¹³. Accessibility is the baseline for age-friendly environments, however past this the opportunities are endless – the built environment can also be designed to account for play and other features than can help facilitate older adult wellbeing.

The priority actions outlined below are designed to not only address specific features that can be improved in the built environment but also include ways to directly involve residents in these tasks, in unique and novel ways. Thus, inviting residents to participate and take ownership of the condition of their community.

¹³ Vincent, E. (2023). *Playing in Place: An Analysis of Enabling and Limiting Play Environments Through the Lens of Older Adults in Victoria, B.C.* WEB: [Playing in Place: An Analysis of Enabling and Limiting Play Environments Through the Lens of Older Adults in Victoria, B.C.](#)

Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan

| Priority Actions | Potential Engagement Partners | Deliverables | Time Period for Implementation |
|--|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Continue a sidewalk inventory, documenting conditions, and categorizing the need for repair and frequency of use accordingly. Invite residents to provide feedback on sidewalks in need of repair. | Town of Arnprior Accessibility and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee Residents | Sidewalk inventory Rebuilt sidewalks Drawing attention to the location of hazards with high visibility markers. | Continuous |
| Encourage improved accessibility of stores and businesses Downtown, supported by Community Improvement Plan (CIP) incentive programs. | Town of Arnprior Accessibility and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce Arnprior McNab/Braeside Men's Shed | Retrofits and renovations such as: - Removable ramps - Hand railings - Automatic door openers | Continuous |
| Improve access to existing public washroom facilities in the core area of the Town. | Town of Arnprior | Public washroom signage Maps to public washrooms | Short Term |
| Identify roads suitable to bike/scooter lanes and pursue opportunities for their implementation. | Town of Arnprior | Bike/scooter lanes | Medium to Long Term |
| | County of Renfrew | Transportation Master Plan | Short Term |
| | Accessibility and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee | Quiet Street Identification | Short to Medium Term |

Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan

6.3 Strengthening Channels of Communication & Support

“You have to see a poster, take a picture of it, and remember you took a picture of it – easy to forget.”

“Really important that partners step up and be committed.”

“Communication with other agencies is where it would help.”

“Small groups coming together to address issues – looking for commonalities.”

Interconnected domains:

Communication
and Information

Social
Participation

Civic Participation
and Employment

Throughout the Public Engagement Phase, frustration around communication and coordination of services and supports for older adults continuously came up as an issue. The need for more consistent, accessible, and inclusive communication channels to inform older adult residents about available services, programs, and community events was clear. Coordination amongst service providers was also described as fragmented, with calls to revitalize the Greater Arnprior Seniors Council as well as the need to create a tool or appoint a dedicated coordinator to streamline resources and organize volunteers to support age-friendly initiatives and programs. Participants stressed the importance of integrating diverse community groups and ensuring that communication strategies are proactive, multi-channeled, and tailored to the needs of both older adults that are long-term residents as well as older adults who are newcomers to the community. The priority actions listed below are designed to help meet the goal of Strengthening Channels of Communication and Support aim to get different groups talking about how they can assist one another in the delivery of services, programs, and events to help contribute to a more age-friendly Arnprior. Many of these priority actions are not new, the establishment of a Greater Arnprior Seniors Council was a result of recommendations included in the 2016 Arnprior Age Friendly Community Plan. The re-establishment of the Greater Arnprior Seniors Council calls for renewed support in order to move forward with the proposed age-friendly initiatives as well as proceeding priority actions.

Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan

| Priority Actions | Potential Engagement Partners | Deliverables | Time Period for Implementation |
|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <p>Re-establishment of and support for a Greater Arnprior Seniors Council (GASC) to work with the AAFAC.</p> | <p>Town of Arnprior</p> <p>Accessibility and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee</p> <p>Arnprior Public Library</p> <p>Town of Arnprior Recreation</p> <p>County of Renfrew</p> <p>Arnprior McNab/Braeside Men’s Shed</p> <p>Arnprior Legion</p> <p>Seniors at Home</p> <p>Arnprior Regional Health</p> <p>Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew</p> <p>Service Clubs</p> | <p>Greater Arnprior Seniors Council</p> | <p>Short Term</p> |
| <p>Encourage the establishment of an Age-Friendly Working Group as an informal group made up of service providers who will meet with the intent to communicate and coordinate the delivery of services and supports, this group will advise the AAFAC and GASC on an as needed basis.</p> | <p>Arnprior Public Library</p> <p>Town of Arnprior Recreation</p> <p>County of Renfrew</p> <p>Arnprior McNab/Braeside Men’s Shed</p> <p>Arnprior Legion</p> <p>Seniors at Home</p> <p>Arnprior Regional Health</p> <p>Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew</p> <p>Service Clubs</p> | <p>Community based Age-Friendly Working Group.</p> | <p>To be determined by community.</p> |

Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan

| | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <p>Establish an Arnprior volunteer registry on which various organizations can draw upon when needed.</p> | <p>Town of Arnprior Seniors at Home Greater Arnprior Seniors Council Service Clubs Volunteers</p> | <p>Volunteer registry</p> | <p>Medium Term</p> |
| <p>Develop a printed annual, biennial, or quadrennial Age-Friendly Community Guide containing information and resources for older adults in the community that can be picked up at public facilities in the Town.</p> | <p>Town of Arnprior Accessibility and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee Greater Arnprior Seniors Council</p> | <p>Age-Friendly Community Guide</p> | <p>Short to Medium Term</p> |
| <p>Implementation of a program to share/distribute information on services and supports available to older adult residents that are newcomers to the community.</p> | <p>Greater Arnprior Seniors Council Seniors at Home Service Clubs Volunteers</p> | <p>Resident Program</p> | <p>Short to Medium Term</p> |

Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan

6.4 Rethinking Housing

“Parks and housing need to be integrated.”

“Affordable housing is a challenge.”

“Keeping people in the community as long as possible.”

“Apartments in Town are unaffordable.”

“We need much more co-op rentals and rent geared to income housing in Arnprior.”

Interconnected domains:



Based on feedback gathered throughout public engagement, the housing situation for older adults in the Town of Arnprior, like many municipalities across Canada, reflects a complex mix of challenges and opportunities. Rising rental costs, influenced by urban expansion from larger urban centres, are exacerbating housing pressures in the Town. Additionally, waitlists for long-term care facilities are resulting in some older adults remaining in community housing longer than intended, contributing to longer waitlists for community housing as well. Despite these challenges, there are opportunities for innovative housing solutions for older adults. For instance, research in this area has pointed to small-scale, non-profit homes that allow for independent living with communal meal spaces that foster social interaction¹⁴. This aligns with feedback received during engagement in which participants highlighted the important role common rooms in apartment buildings play in socialization and reduction of isolation. As such there are opportunities to better utilize existing communal spaces to foster social interaction, as well as promote developments designed around these communal uses.

Other opportunities for housing can also tie in intergenerational living, which can be encouraged and facilitated through as-of-right additional residential units – fostering intergenerational support and reducing risk of social isolation. Existing housing stock in the Town can also be leveraged by encouraging intensified use of underutilized housing through home sharing and co-living arrangements. Programs that focus on renovating and retrofitting existing homes to make them more accessible and suitable for older adults, as well as home maintenance support, can all help enable older adults to age-in-place. Lastly, collaboration between different levels of government, non-profits, and private developers should be fostered to implement innovative housing solutions and explore funding models to support affordable and market rate older adult housing.

¹⁴ Henry, A., Heinen, A., & Witoszkin, A. (2019). *Innovative Seniors Housing*. WEB: [Innovative-Seniors-Housing-2019PLAN530-CMHC.pdf](#)

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| Priority Actions | Potential Engagement Partners | Deliverables | Time Period for Implementation |
|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Partner with other levels of government, non-profit housing providers, and local developers to expand housing options in the Town. | Town of Arnprior County of Renfrew Government of Ontario Government of Canada Non-profit housing providers Developers | Expanded stock of different housing types available Greater availability of affordable housing options | Medium to Long Term |
| Advocate for increased affordable housing and social service subsidies. | Town of Arnprior County of Renfrew | Additional funding | Medium to Long Term |
| Explore opportunities for co-living as well as intergenerational living amongst older adults in the form of additional residential units. | Town of Arnprior County of Renfrew Greater Arnprior Seniors Council Developers Non-profit housing providers | Older adult focused additional residential unit program. | Medium to Long Term |
| Research and pursue innovative housing opportunities (i.e., older adult dementia villages, older adult housing co-ops, etc.) | Town of Arnprior Accessibility and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee County of Renfrew Non-profit housing providers Developers Retirement Community Organizations | Additional funding and innovative older adult housing options | Medium to Long Term |

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6.5 Expanding Transportation Networks

“New homes are beyond walking distance of core area shopping. This increases car dependence.”

“There is a difference between isolation by choice and isolation not by choice.”

“It’s hard to prevent their world from becoming smaller.”

“Winter is more of an isolating time especially for those living independently in the community.”

Interconnected domains:

Transportation

**Respect and
Social
Inclusion**

Transportation was one of the most prominent areas of feedback received from participants throughout the public engagement. For many older adults in the Town, transportation is a central concern, especially as it relates to an older adults’ ability to age in place and maintain independence. The loss of a driver’s license can be a critical turning point for an older adult, without the proper transportation supports it can result in a significant reduction in independence, dignity, social interaction, and overall level of wellbeing. Based on feedback received through engagement, there are a variety of challenges that transportation programs are facing. Funding constraints arose as a recurring theme, with the expiration of grants threatening the sustainability of transportation programs. In the Town, there has been consistent year-over-year growth in demand for transportation services, yet funding has not kept pace with the increased demand for services. The number of volunteers—many of whom are aging into older adulthood themselves—has diminished post-COVID, further challenging service delivery. Lastly, for those who are lucky enough to have an informal network of family and friend to provide transportation support, it still may not be a sustainable transportation option. Research suggests that transportation should be treated as a ‘merit good’ as it is a service that provides a broad societal benefit and thereby warrants public investment¹⁵. This is something that is being recognized at different levels of government for example the province has boosted investment in transit in rural communities through the Ontario Transit investment Fund (OTIF)¹⁶. Research into the viability of transit and funding opportunities to support it is amongst on of the priority actions outlined below. Despite being a relatively compact community, transportation remains a significant barrier to achieving a truly age-friendly community within the Town as transportation to medical appointments and after hour service remains an ongoing challenge. Priority actions aimed at addressing this issue will require renewed funding, innovative service models, and collaboration with local organizations, neighbouring municipalities, and levels of government to ensure older adults can remain mobile, connected, and independent. Despite the current challenges there are opportunities for creative, community-based transit solutions such as hop-on-hop-off shuttles, ridesharing and/or ride

¹⁵ Fraade-Blanar, L., Best, R., & Shih, R.A. (2022). *Transportation Equity for Older Adults*. WEB: [Transportation Equity for Older Adults](#)

¹⁶ Ontario. (2024). *Ontario Investing in Transportation for Rural Communities*. WEB: [Ontario Investing in Transportation for Rural Communities | Ontario Newsroom](#)

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matching programs, and on-demand transit programs. Other supports can include a registry where older adults can self-identify as being in need of transportation support, they can further specify what kind of support they are in need of (i.e., transportation to appointments, grocery store, out-of-town travel, etc.) with this information transit providers and local organizations can work together to match them to the most appropriate transit service and provide these older adults with the necessary information. In addition to the volunteer registry identified as a priority action under the goal of Strengthening Channels of Communication & Support, volunteers can self-identify as being able to provide rides to key destination and programming. This would further enable the pairing of need to support.

| Priority Actions | Potential Engagement Partners | Deliverables | Time Period for Implementation |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Integrate and coordinate existing transportation services. | Seniors at Home Retirement Community Organizations Local businesses Local school boards | Expanded operation hours and pooling of resources (volunteer, equipment, etc.) | Short to Medium Term |
| Research and work with agencies and governments to advocate for funding and subsidies for local transportation. | Town of Arnprior Accessibility and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee Government of Canada Government of Ontario County of Renfrew Seniors at Home and other transportation providers | Identified funding sources / programs | Short to Medium Term |
| Collaborate with neighbouring municipalities on on-demand transit programs. | Town of Arnprior Neighbouring municipalities (e.g. McNab Braeside, Renfrew, etc.) County of Renfrew Transit providers | On demand transit pilot program | Long Term |
| Provide additional transportation support to older adults on waitlists for Long Term | Arnprior Regional Health Seniors at Home | Continued additional transportation supports | Medium to Long Term |

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|---|--|---|-------------|
| Care or older adults who have self-identified as requiring transportation supports. | Township of McNab/Braeside | | |
| Explore the viability of ridesharing programs in the Town. | Town of Arnprior County of Renfrew Rideshare providers | Identified opportunities for ridesharing programs | Medium Term |

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6.6 Supporting Intergenerational Learning

“Seniors have skills and experiences that they could be contributing – but may not know how to engage – or where to find out about opportunities to participate.”

“It takes a community to build a community.”

“Tap the talent of older people.”

“When people your age are gone, who are you going to hang out with?”

Interconnected domains:

Respect and
Social
Inclusion

Social
Participation

During public engagement, many participants expressed a desire for more intergenerational programming available for youth, families, and older adults. Participants suggested several thoughtful and community-driven initiatives related to intergenerational engagement that could be pursued such as community gardens, intergenerational cooking programs, as well as carpentry and other activities that people of different age groups could participate in together. These suggestions reflect a strong desire to foster connection, knowledge exchange, and mutual support across age groups. Many older adults expressed that they would appreciate learning about topics that different age groups are knowledgeable in, as well as teaching other age groups the skills that they are experienced in. The giving and taking of knowledge was a very important feature of these programs, in order for older adults to not only contribute to the community but to also learn from community members of different ages. In other words, there is value in creating opportunities for older adults and youth to interact meaningfully. Intergenerational programs have been shown to be beneficial to every age group¹⁷. From pre-school, elementary school, middle school, high school, and college students’ participation in intergenerational programs has shown to improve confidence, feel empowered in their communities, and improve cognitive, social, and physical benefits¹⁸. Benefits for adults include better communication and civic participation, while older adults experience decreased social isolation, stronger sense of purpose, increased self-esteem and greater life satisfaction¹⁹.

The priority actions listed under this goal are intended to be scalable and to target each age group. For example, intergenerational day programs can start out on a weekly or monthly basis and be scaled to be integrated facilities (such as a childcare facility within a retirement facility). By allowing for opportunities for intergenerational programming at every age, it enables participants to engage at their ability level. For instance an older adult who has a skill that they are looking to teach, or a skill that they are looking to learn they can participate in a shared learning program,

¹⁷ Generations United. (2021). *Making the Case for Intergenerational Programs*. WEB: [2021-MakingTheCase-WEB.pdf](#)

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

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whereas an older adult who is looking to maybe read books to children, or partake in more informal activities may prefer participating in a day program, another older adult who may be interested in sharing knowledge or local history could partake in an education or course related programming. Intergenerational programming can be set up in such a way that it is a 'pick your own adventure'. It is also important to acknowledge that not all intergenerational activities have to be directly implemented, by simply creating shared spaces that are both welcoming and accessible to individuals of different generations intergenerational interaction can occur naturally. These priority actions are based on the recognition that intergenerational efforts not only benefit older adults but also enrich the broader community by building social capital, preserving local knowledge, and promoting mutual respect across generations.

| Priority Actions | Potential Engagement Partners | Deliverables | Time Period for Implementation |
|--|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Seek opportunities for intergenerational day-programs for older adults and youth and/or shared facilities for childcare within retirement homes. | Town of Arnprior County of Renfrew Arnprior Regional Health / SALC Seniors at Home Local childcare providers Arnprior Museum Local retirement homes | An intergenerational day program | Short to Medium Term |
| Establish an intergenerational matching program that pairs older adults and other age groups to skill share in pairs or groups. | Arnprior McNab/Braeside Men's Shed Arnprior Public Library Arnprior Museum Arnprior Legion Town of Arnprior Recreation Greater Arnprior Seniors Council SALC | Intergenerational Shared Learning Program | Medium Term |

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| | | | |
|---|--|--|----------------------|
| | Other local organizations | | |
| Seek out and identify opportunities where older adults can participate in educational and course programming. | Local school boards Town of Arnprior Arnprior Museum Arnprior Public Library | Opportunities for students and older adults to collaborate on school and course projects | Short to Medium Term |
| Establish volunteer buddy program to target older adults who are at heightened risk of isolation. | Seniors at Home Arnprior Regional Health / SALC Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County Arnprior Legion | A buddy program for older adults at risk of isolation | Medium Term |
| Identify built environments that could be made to be intergenerational environments through the inclusion of age-friendly features. | Town of Arnprior Town of Arnprior Recreation Arnprior Museum Arnprior Public Library Arnprior Regional Health / SALC Greater Arnprior Seniors Council | Intergenerational environments in the town | Medium to Long Term |

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6.7 Enabling Comprehensive Health & Wellbeing

“Isolation becomes a way of life. Socialization builds momentum.”

“Providing support to people who are providing support.”

“Simple things are very important – social intervention keeps minds active.”

“I drive an hour to see a doctor. This is not viable as I age.”

Interconnected domains:

Community
and Health
Care

Respect and
Social
Inclusion

Social
Participation

Feedback from participants expressed appreciation for existing health services and programs in the Town while acknowledging that there are opportunities for collaboration in the coordination and delivery of services, as well as opportunities to pursue additional funding, and targeted outreach directed at older adults most at risk of isolation. In addition, feedback was received regarding a desire for increased mental health supports for older adults in the Town.

The priority actions below, while many are carried forward from the 2016 Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan, other priority actions have been added to make their implementation more comprehensive in scope. Singularly focused active aging policies do not necessarily account for the complex realities of aging in which older adults can live with multiple chronic conditions, and face significant social, psychological, and environmental challenges²⁰. Research continues to demonstrate that the social determinants of health, which can include financial security, mobility, cognitive changes, living arrangements²¹, etc. all play a major role in the overall health and wellbeing of an individual. In other words, there is a clear interrelationship between social factors and the health of older adults²². The priority action listed below aim to increase and expand the physical and mental health services available to older adults in the Town, while also addressing the needs of caregivers, the public's awareness of aging and health, and promoting social interaction and intervention to reduce isolation amongst the most vulnerable older adults.

²⁰ MacLeod, S., Schwebke, K., Hawkins, K., Ruiz, J., Hoo, E., & Yeh, C. S. (2018). Need for comprehensive health care quality measures for older adults. *Population health management*, 21(4), 296-302. WEB: [Need for Comprehensive Health Care Quality Measures for Older Adults | Population Health Management](#)

²¹ Ibid

²² Perez, Felipe P., Carmen A. Perez, and Magali N. Chumbiauca. "Insights into the social determinants of health in older adults." *Journal of biomedical science and engineering* 15.11 (2022): 261. WEB: [Insights into the Social Determinants of Health in Older Adults](#)

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| Priority Actions | Potential Engagement Partners | Deliverables | Time Period for Implementation |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Research and pursue funding opportunities for expanded older adult health programs. | Town of Arnprior Arnprior Regional Health Arnprior and District Family Health Team Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County | Increased funding | Short to Medium Term |
| Undertake initiatives, including working with existing health providers, to attract more family physicians to the Town. | Town of Arnprior Arnprior Regional Health Arnprior and District Family Health Team | Recruitment initiatives | Short, Medium, to Long Term |
| Research and educate the public on how social factors can impact individual health. Pursue opportunities to develop a social determinant of health assessment tool for older adults. | Town of Arnprior Arnprior Regional Health Arnprior and District Family Health Team Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County | Increased public awareness on the social determinants of health and potential assessment tools | Medium to Long Term |
| Work with the County to continue to expand health promotion and healthy living initiatives specific to older adults. | Arnprior Regional Health Arnprior and District Family Health Team County of Renfrew | Courses, programs, and information | Short, Medium, to Long Term |
| Work with older adults aged 80 years and older to develop recreation programs tailored to this | Town of Arnprior Recreation Arnprior Regional Health / SALC | Recreation programs developed specifically for older adults aged 80 + | Short Term |

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|---|--|---|----------------------|
| group's needs and abilities | Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County | | |
| Consult with experts in recreation programming through groups such as Recreation Professionals of Ontario, and Parks and Recreation Ontario | Town of Arnprior Recreation Professionals of Ontario Arnprior Regional Health / SALC Parks and Recreation Ontario | Dialogue with Provincial organization on recreation and improved practices. | Short to Medium Term |
| Expanded and continued services for older adults living with dementia. | Arnprior Regional Health Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County | Expanded programs to support the specific needs of older adults living with dementia. | Medium Term |
| Expanded mental health support for older adults and caregivers. | Arnprior Regional Health Arnprior and District Family Health Team Dementia Society of Arnprior and Renfrew County | Supports designed to support the mental health of older adults and caregivers. | Medium Term |

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7.0 Recommendations for Monitoring & Conclusion

7.1 Recommendations for Monitoring

Experience from other jurisdictions as well as previous experience in the Town has shown that AFC Plans require some kind of permanent group that has been mandated to implement the strategy, a group of champions, in order to ensure successful ongoing implementation, monitoring, revision and evaluation of goals and priority actions.

The re-establishment of the Greater Arnprior Seniors Council and task-oriented groups to work on specific implementation objectives. With renewed support from the Town, this approach could fulfill this function and it is recommended that it again be made a permanent community entity charged with working directly with the Town in overseeing the ongoing development, implementation and monitoring of the Town's renewed AFC plan.

Given the current structure of Council and its Committee's, creation of the GASC within the mandate of the AAFAC would provide both a place for the champions to report to and to provide support as needed. The previous mandate for the Greater Arnprior's Senior Council had the group as the sole over-seers and implementors of the AFC Plan, hence the tendency to burn-out and overtax a small group. The creation of a separate group would require resources that may not be available to support a full Committee.

Included in the priority actions are the establishment of other task-oriented support groups to provide input to the AAFAC The various realms involved in supporting an age-friendly community.

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Figure 6: Proposed coordination of Age-Friendly Community Plan.

Accessibility & Age-Friendly Advisory Committee (AAFAC): The AAFAC will continue to provide sound advice and recommendations to Council related to the accessibility of Town programs, services and facilities for all users. They will also serve to promote and facilitate a barrier-free and age-friendly community by assisting in the removal and prevention of barriers faced by persons of varying abilities and the creation of programs and services that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors of all ages.

The AAFAC will remain focused on the removal of barriers in the community that prevent accessibility and age-friendliness in the Town. They will continue to work directly with Council.

The AAFAC is currently primarily barrier-free focused, and the Town will have to confirm the change in role and focus. This may lead to an alteration to the membership of the Committee as the Town examines the implementation of these recommendations to include representatives of the various older adult interests.

Greater Arnprior Seniors Council (GASC): A re-established GASC as well as community run task-oriented support groups informing and working with AAFAC to provide recommendations based on the previous goals of GASC including:

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1. *enhance facilities and infrastructure to enable older adults to fully participate in the community;*
2. *improve older adult-focused services and supports while promoting and coordinating existing services and assets; and*
3. *foster positive engagement and active lifestyles for older adults.*

While all these goals would still be relevant to a renewed GASC, rather than taking on sole responsibility for all these efforts, we propose a division of responsibilities amongst community run (volunteer) task-oriented support groups to provide ideas/recommendations to assist with the AAFAC implementing their role. For example, AAFAC should be the main spearhead of efforts to “*enhance facilities and infrastructure to enable older adults to fully participate in the community*”. This global focus on the implementation of this plan is appropriately situated within this Council Committee.

As an example, if the Committee finds it needs assistance with the improvement of “*older adult-focused services and supports while promoting and coordinating existing services and assets*”, they can turn to a community-based support group such as the proposed “Age-Friendly Community Working Group”.

For the final goal, it is recommended that “*active lifestyles*” is changed to “*comprehensive wellbeing*”, and that all groups including GASC, AAFAC, and the Age-Friendly Community Working Group be tasked with fostering “*positive engagement and comprehensive wellbeing for older adults*”.

The role of GASC will be to support and coordinate these goals amongst the respective support group and to be the main advocacy point for older adults in the Town – a “home base” of sorts.

The GASC is older adult focused.

Age-Friendly Community Working Group: As outlined above the main role of this group would be to “*improve older adult-focused services and supports while promoting and coordinating existing services and assets*”. This group would be an informal community-based group made up of service providers in the Town. The group could provide an opportunity for these service providers to come together, coordinate efforts, pool resources, share experiences, and foster the efficient and effective delivery of services and supports to older adults in the Town. This role is of benefit to these groups, and the AAFAC can utilize this group as a source of information (and vice versa) on an as-needed basis.

The Age-Friendly Community Working Group is service focused and can meet independently as needed to provide input on a specific topic.

Volunteer Registry: The Arnprior volunteer registry can contain a list of volunteers that have self-added themselves to the registry and that can be drawn upon to support volunteer initiatives in the Town. Various groups and organizations could use this registry, as needed, to recruit volunteers to provide support for various initiatives and events.

Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan

7.2 Conclusion

The success of the goals and priority actions within the Town of Arnprior AFC Plan will be dependent on broad and sustained effort and engagement of service providers and agencies, local organizations, volunteers, community members, older adults themselves, and most of all the Town itself as a leader and advocate for the importance of age-friendly communities. The Town was an early adopter of the AFC Plan and offers a variety of services the focus on keeping older adults active in their community. However, as mentioned throughout this plan an age-friendly community is not a destination that is arrived at, rather it is a sustained and coordinated effort between the Town, its partners, and residents, to say throughout everything it does “*This is a community in which I want to grow old in.*”. By accounting for the most vulnerable members of the community in its design, policies, and plans, the Town makes itself open and inclusive to residents of all ages and abilities. And by approaching it in such a way as to address the comprehensive wellbeing of the individual by accounting for their participation in the social and built environment of the Town, from where they live, to who they interact with, to what programs are there to support them as they age, a sense of belonging in place is fostered. In the simplest of terms AFC Plans remind us of why we care about and build communities in the first place – *to support one another.*

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Renewed Town of Arnprior Age-Friendly Community Plan

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