



Report Number: 2016-158

Date: September 26, 2016

SUBJECT: City of Port Colborne Age-Friendly Needs Assessment

1) PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to bring forward the recommendation to City Council to accept the final report of the Age-Friendly Needs Assessment (AFNA) for the City of Port Colborne, prepared by Pearl Paul, and presented to City Council at the September 12, 2016 Council meeting.

2) HISTORY, BACKGROUND, COUNCIL POLICY, PRACTICES

One of City Council's visions noted in the 2015 Strategic Plan is to foster and enhance the level of community health and quality of life to align with the standards described by the World Health Organization (WHO). The Senior Citizens' Advisory Council's (SCAC) initiative to embark on a community-wide needs assessment is aligned with this vision from the 2015 Strategic Plan. A \$20,000 grant was awarded by the Seniors' Secretariat of the Ontario Government in June of 2015. Along with the support and guidance of the SCAC, the funding was used to procure the services of a Project Coordinator to complete the grant criteria. Port Colborne is one of 60 Ontario cities that have been awarded grant money to complete age-friendly initiatives and is the only municipality in the Niagara Region to receive grant funds to complete an age-friendly needs assessment.

The objective of this project was to identify gaps and opportunities by assessing the needs of senior citizens in Port Colborne. Additionally, the project was put in place to compare and contrast findings from our local needs assessment with those of Age-Friendly Niagara's needs assessment completed in 2014. Based on the results of the comparison, a strategy and action plan will be articulated for the City of Port Colborne by SCAC. The AFNA process was to follow the project milestones and timelines outlined in the grant application. With the project coordinator secured, the project plan was created, the timelines were established, and all guidelines and requirements provided by the Seniors' Secretariat were implemented and completed within the grant timelines and budget. The following outlines the project plan in accordance with grant criteria:

1. Create and implement a survey;
2. Host four (4) Focus Groups;
3. Conduct Key Informant Interviews;
4. Collate the data into a report;
5. Submit the AFNA (Appendix A) and the accompanying financial statements to the Seniors' Secretariat;
6. Populate and maintain current data in the provincial age-friendly on-line data base with Port Colborne's status;

7. Seek approval from local Council for the acceptance of the AFNA; and
8. Assess and use the report data to create an action plan with viable tactics to present to Council to affect planning and policy making initiatives. See presentation attached as Appendix B.

The AFNA project is an Ontario Government sponsored initiative that has been modelled after the methodology outlines created by the WHO. The eight domains of an age-friendly community map over to the core components of a 'Healthy Community' that have been defined by the WHO. Port Colborne's AFNA dovetails with the 2015 Strategic Plan, and truly fills the gap identified in the plan that states the "City resources are limited so City Council will need to prioritize what it considers most relevant and of greatest impact and benefit to Port Colborne." (Pg.2 Report 2015-47: Strategic Plan). The AFNA specifically identifies what citizens of all ages name as the priority issues for City Council to address in order to be a healthier and age-inclusive community, which offers a high quality of life to its community members. The AFNA has raised awareness, provides solutions and is a definitive piece of work that is entirely aligned with Port Colborne's strategies and tactics to continue developing a healthy community with quality of life.

3) STAFF COMMENTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The project has successfully achieved the completion of the project goals, objectives, milestones and timelines. The survey was implemented and culminated in a 40% response rate from community members. 1000 surveys were distributed; 404 were completed with 99 completed on-line and 305 submitted in hard copy. Four focus groups were hosted with community members over the age of 55, some with caregivers of seniors. Three focus groups were completed with urban residents and one with rural residents. Ten key informant interviews were completed that resulted in a tremendous amount of feedback regarding various issues and solutions were procured throughout the data collection process.

The overall survey results showed the age-friendly dimensions of concern by Port Colborne citizens in descending order of priority as follows:

1. Health Services and Community Supports;
2. Housing;
3. Transportation;
4. Communication and Information;
5. Civic Participation and Employment;
6. Public Spaces and Buildings;
7. Social Participation; and
8. Respect and Social Inclusion.

The Port Colborne Age-Friendly survey results compared with the Age-Friendly Niagara results were not congruent. Housing was the only category that ranked in the same priority level (second). Wherein Health Services and Community Supports ranked first in priority for Port Colborne it ranked fourth for the Age-Friendly Niagara needs assessment.

Focus group results showed the top 4 dimensions of concerns in descending order:

1. Public Spaces and Buildings;
2. Health Services and Community Supports;
3. Transportation; and
4. Housing.

The focus group determined 118 issues and solution ideas were generated in the focus groups. Affordability was identified as the overarching concern that links all eight age-friendly domains.

The key informant interviews comprised of businesses, service providers, and community agencies outlined five (5) challenges and provided five (5) strategic concepts that could be implemented to enhance Port Colborne's age-friendly status.

The AFNA concludes with a series of suggestions for the SCAC to continue the momentum of the project. The most important recommendation is to create an action plan that would generate tactics and timelines based on the data collected from the AFNA collection tools.

The entire project concluded with an update to the Seniors' Secretariat naming the acceptance of the AFNA by Council.

4) OPTIONS AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

a) Do Nothing

To do nothing with this report is not recommend.

b) Other Options

That Council adopt the Age Friendly Needs Assessment in principal; and directs staff to execute a public statement promoting the Age Friendly Needs Assessment.

5) COMPLIANCE WITH STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

The Age-Friendly Needs Assessment is one of the strategic initiatives that the Senior Citizens' Advisory Council has endorsed and is in alignment with the 2015 Strategic Plan. Item 3 Section A of the Strategic Plan outlines the concept of a 'Healthy Community.'

6) ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Age-Friendly Needs Assessment Final Report

Appendix B: Age-Friendly Needs Assessment Final Presentation

7) RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the City of Port Colborne Age-Friendly Needs Assessment be adopted in principle; and
- 2) That the Age-Friendly Needs Assessment study be incorporated as a standard component guiding Council's decision making framework for strategic planning, policy making and community improvement initiatives.

8) SIGNATURES

Prepared on September 14, 2016 by:



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The Senior Citizens' Advisory Council Presents

The Corporation of the City of Port Colborne Age-Friendly Needs Assessment



Acknowledgements

The contents of this report is the result of a collaboration between Port Colborne's Senior Citizens' Advisory Council and the City of Port Colborne.

Deep gratitude is herein expressed to the enthusiastic and dedicated members of Port Colborne's Senior Citizens' Advisory Council members who gave so generously of their time and knowledge.

SCAC members: Sue Brown – Chair, Maggie Wahl-Horne – Vice Chair, Valerie King, Dick Moore, Judy Wade, Jack McDowell, Phyllis Brown, Donna Abbott, Audrey Garrett, Councillor Angie Desmarais.

To the City of Port Colborne, staff and council members who went above their roles in support of this initiative; your contributions are valued and appreciated.

Thank you to the Ontario Senior Secretariat of the Government of Ontario for funding this Age-Friendly Needs Assessment initiative.

To all participants from the community of Port Colborne – residents, community leaders, agencies, club members, business and service providers: thank you for sharing your feelings, your knowledge, your insight and your support. Respectfully all are to remain anonymous.

To Jack Grace and Cathy Melville for allowing us to photograph them for the cover.

To the Age-Friendly Niagara Committee, appreciation for your time, support and guidance.

This Age-Friendly Needs Assessment Report could not have happened without the input and support from all who contributed - Thank You!

Report written by Pearl Paul, Age Friendly Needs Assessment Coordinator,
August 17, 2016

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Executive Summary

The Senior Citizens' Advisory Council (SCAC) of Port Colborne, supported by the City of Port Colborne, has implemented an eight-month project funded by the Ontario Senior Secretariat to conduct a community-wide, age-friendly needs assessment. The goal of the assessment is to provide City Council with substantiated feedback from the community regarding the local infrastructure and services available to older adults. The assessment results will help identify gaps, and determine opportunities for enhancing age-friendliness in Port Colborne.

Port Colborne's Age-Friendly Needs Assessment (AFNA) builds upon the existing needs assessment and action plan developed by Age-Friendly Niagara. The project will extend the Age-Friendly Niagara Initiative by comparing results with the Age-Friendly Niagara findings in order to develop a locally sensitive action plan. The project models frameworks used by Age-Friendly Niagara and the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat. Ontario's Age-Friendly Community Planning Guide follows the World Health Organization eight-dimension model for assessing age-friendly community needs:

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

Community members and service providers contributed by participating in a survey, focus groups and key informant interviews. The feedback generated indicates that seniors and other residents are actively engaged in community improvement initiatives and readily identify the elements that need to be addressed within Port Colborne. These are in order of priority:

- Health Services and Community Supports
- Housing

- Transportation
- Communication and Information
- Civic Participation and Employment Opportunities

The final results from Port Colborne's needs assessment provides a starting point for setting and establishing community goals, as well as for creating an action plan to assist the municipality in implementing age-friendly initiatives. A collaborative approach among advocacy committees, agencies, businesses, service providers and residents is required in order to fully manifest the vision of a healthy, active and cooperative community for all ages and abilities.

Introduction

Port Colborne's aging demographic parallels the trends of global aging demographics. As the proportion of older people increases, so does the need for communities to increase their capacity to provide services, infrastructure, policies and plans to support community members throughout the changes in their lifespan. Global, national and provincial recognition of aging demographics has created a highly visible need for municipalities to augment planning to accommodate age-friendly practices and initiatives. It is projected that in 2017 there will be, for the first time, more people 65 and older than there will be people under 15 years of age. This informs municipal governments of the urgency for proactive action to accommodate the needs of its aging populations.

The World Health Organization describes an age-friendly world as one that "enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities and treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. It is a place that makes it easy for older people to stay connected to people that are important to them. And it helps people stay healthy and active even at the oldest ages and provides appropriate support to those who can no longer look after themselves."

Port Colborne has been proactive in aligning with age-friendly community strategies and, as of March 2013, was the first municipality of the Niagara Region granted official age-friendly membership with the World Health Organization. With municipal awareness concerning Port Colborne's increasing

seniors' population, the City has sponsored an advocacy group, Port Colborne's Senior Citizens' Advisory Council (SCAC) to advance age-friendly initiatives within the community.

Background

Statistically, Port Colborne's senior population (65 and over) represents 21.9% of its total population and has the second highest concentration of senior residents in the Niagara Peninsula. The overall proportion of seniors within the Niagara Region itself is 18.8 %. With such high numbers of a growing senior population, it is vital for Port Colborne to adapt and configure its municipal plans and policies to mitigate the consequences of such a large demographic transition. SCAC took the opportunity to source provincial grant funding as a way to increase its capacity to effectively advocacy for age-friendly progress at the municipal level. A grant to conduct an age-friendly needs assessment was awarded in June 2015 by the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat. A project coordinator was hired in November 2015 to conduct the needs assessment which culminated in this finalized report that can be used to create and implement an age-friendly action plan within the municipality of Port Colborne.

Purpose

The goal of this initiative is to identify through an age-friendly matrix, the gaps and opportunities in the community's infrastructure, services and programs through an information gathering process involving community members interested in fostering a more age-friendly environment for seniors and all citizens. The project incorporates and expands upon the existing age-friendly initiatives that were identified in the Niagara Regional Age-Friendly Initiative that began in 2014.

This project culminates in a final report that is to be shared and made available to the City of Port Colborne’s Council members, administrative body, citizens, community partners, businesses, service providers and community agencies.

The Port Colborne needs assessment protocol follows the Ontario Seniors’ Age-Friendly Planning Guide and gathered community feedback through a community-wide survey, four focus groups, and ten key informant interviews. The results of these consultations show that seniors and community members at large are very active and politically engaged. Community assets were identified and age-friendly barriers were determined and discussed in terms of priority in order to establish a course of action based on the input received from community members.

The top three categories of concerns from Port Colborne residents replicate two out of four of the top four concerns identified through the Niagara Regional Age-Friendly Needs Assessment initiative completed in 2014:

Table 1: Age-Friendly Needs Assessment Priorities - Port Colborne vs Niagara Region

Port Colborne (2016)	Numerical Priority	Niagara Region (2014)
Health Care	1	Transportation
Housing	2	Housing
Transportation	3	Social Participation
Communication	4	Health Care

The condensed feedback from the needs assessment project demonstrates the unique profile of Port Colborne’s seniors’ demographics that can be compared to the regional viewpoint. The cumulative data can be useful for community members and agencies in their advocacy efforts to augment a congruent age-friendly mindset that can enable the implementation of more age-friendly initiatives.

Method

Three collection methods – survey, focus groups, and key informant interviews, were used to acquire input from community members regarding their

perspectives about Port Colborne's capacity in delivering age-friendly services, supports and infrastructure. All participants were presented with preemptive information describing the project, sponsorship, objectives, and definitions for the eight age-friendly categories. The project fulfilled municipal protocols for privacy standards relating to data collection and dissemination of information. The data collection campaigns were promoted through a variety of media channels: Council Meetings, local community events and meetings, posters as well as through *word of mouth* sharing. All promotion efforts contributed in maximizing participation, enhancing results, creating higher public awareness and increased energy for participation in future community age-friendly action initiatives.

1. Survey Method

The survey drew upon a *non-probability convenience* and *self-select* sample. Although the sampling method did not generate a representative sample of the senior population in Port Colborne, the results collected are useful to identify commonalities, themes and concerns. A four-point Likert Scale ranking was used with the selection choices being, *agree, partially agree, disagree and I don't know*. The survey was made available on-line through the city website, and paper versions were placed in prominent and monitored locations at four city facilities, a variety of public and private service providers and through selected manned survey stations that corresponded to locations with high traffic potential for seniors and those of limited capacities and means. Extra effort was made by SCAC and the project coordinator to bring the surveys to those who were known to have limited mobility options. The survey design included 60 closed-ended questions and seven open-comment categories. One thousand paper surveys were made available to the community. The decision to make the survey portion of the needs assessment open to all adult community members was intended to align with the WHO organization's philosophy of 'age-friendliness' being a society that is age and ability inclusive. This is beneficial for municipal government to access comprehensive demographic data from which it can use an age-inclusive filter for all policy planning and decision-making processes. The survey was open from February to May 2016 in order to accommodate the traditional exodus of seniors during the winter months. All survey responses were amalgamated and analyzed through the Survey Monkey tool and transferred into Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentation documents.

2. Focus Group Method

Participants for the focus groups were chosen using a *random convenience sample* selection method. Caregivers and seniors over the age of 55 were invited to participate. The purpose of the focus groups was to identify the most salient age-friendly solutions by using an open format designed to encourage validation and expansion upon results accumulated from the survey. The groups were held between April and June 2016. Based on the size of the focus groups, either one or two facilitators (the project coordinator and a member of SCAC) conducted the sessions using a small group, round-table discussion format. All focus groups began with introductions, outlines of project goals, presentations of guidelines, and overviews of the top 6-7 age-friendly categories which were made available in print form for quick referencing. A three-step process was used to further distill the suggestions into the top 3-5 ideas participants felt were in highest need of attention. Step one was to brainstorm and discuss concerns. Step two involved reducing the discussion points down to 3-5 key issues, generate potential solutions and transfer these to a wall chart. Step three was to complete a carousel-style review where each participant read all suggestions and placed one vote beside their top 3-5 choices. Prior to voting participants were invited to add in their own personal first choice if it was not included in their group's distillation of ideas.

The session data was collated and charted. Microsoft Word was used to sort and arrange data into themes and key findings. The data was further reduced to the top most repeated suggestions and categories derived from the amalgamation of the 4 focus groups' finalized selections.

3. Key Informant Interview Method

The AFNA coordinator conducted interviews with 20 participants from ten service, business and political providers, many of whom were selected from the stakeholder's list outlined in the grant proposal. The participants, identified as *Key Informants*, were made aware of the eight domains of an age-friendly community and were provided context concerning the Age-Friendly Needs

Assessment initiative. The interview was discussion-based and centered around one key question created to provide key informants the freedom to brainstorm for relative issues and create poignant suggestions that could enhance the goals of Port Colborne's age-friendly initiative. The key informants were asked to use their '*service and business perspective*' to determine what the City of Port Colborne could do to enable service providers to better accommodate the needs of their clients of older ages and limited capacities. Microsoft Word was used to record the responses, tally them according to the 8 dimensions of age-friendliness, and calculate the frequency of response in order to determine the common themes and findings.

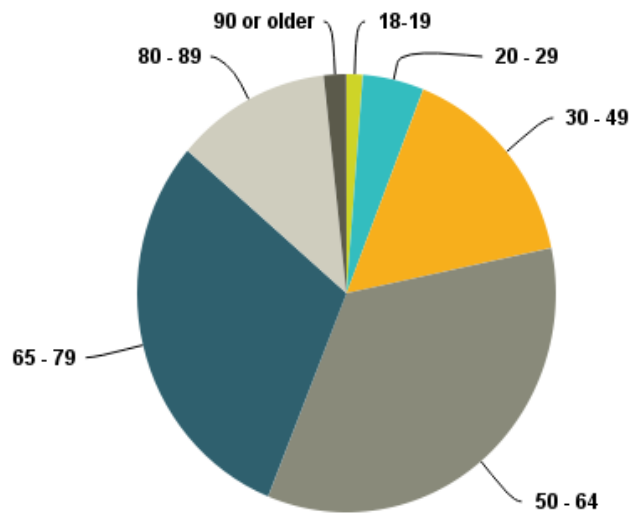
Findings

This section provides a summary and review of details for each of the three data collection methods and is completed with a short summary of all findings.

1. Survey Results

One thousand surveys solicited 404 responses translating into a 40% response rate, with 99 completed online and 305 being submitted in paper form. The majority of survey respondents were between 50 and 79 years of age with 34.4 % in the 50-64 category and 30.2 % in the 65-79 age grouping. The data calculations indicate a 6.7% greater response rate in the 20-49 age bracket compared to the 80-90+ age grouping. Also noteworthy is the similarity in response rate between the 18-19 year-olds (five participants) and the 90+ age group (seven participants).

Table 2: Ratio of Respondents Age Categories



Of the 404 surveys filled out, 362 responded to the question asking the location of their residence; 79% are urban residents and 21% are rural from the rural areas.

Table 3: Percentage Profile of Respondents’ Residency

Answer Choices	Responses	
Urban	79.28%	287
Rural	20.72%	75
Total		362

Although the survey did not request specific personal details such as income, two general questions indicate that 15% of survey participants whose ages ranged from 20-89 years show financial inflexibility. Sixty out of 404 of the participants responded to the questions identified in the chart below.

Table 4: Financial Flexibility of Respondents by age group

Questions: My house is affordable; I can pay my living expenses.		
Age	Answer	% of respondents
20-29	No	3 %
30-49	No	27%
50-64	No	35%
65-79	No	28%
80-89	No	7 %

Overall Survey Results

What is Port Colborne doing well?

Over 60% of the respondents agreed with the following survey statements:

- My place of residence is affordable.
- My residence is safe and suitable for my level of health and wellness.
- Municipal parking lots are well maintained and free of obstruction.
- In general, I feel I am treated with respect in my community.
- Overall, I do not personally feel diversity discrimination.
- In general, I feel safe from abuse, vandalism and crime.

What needs improvement?

Over 60% of respondents disagreed with the following survey statements:

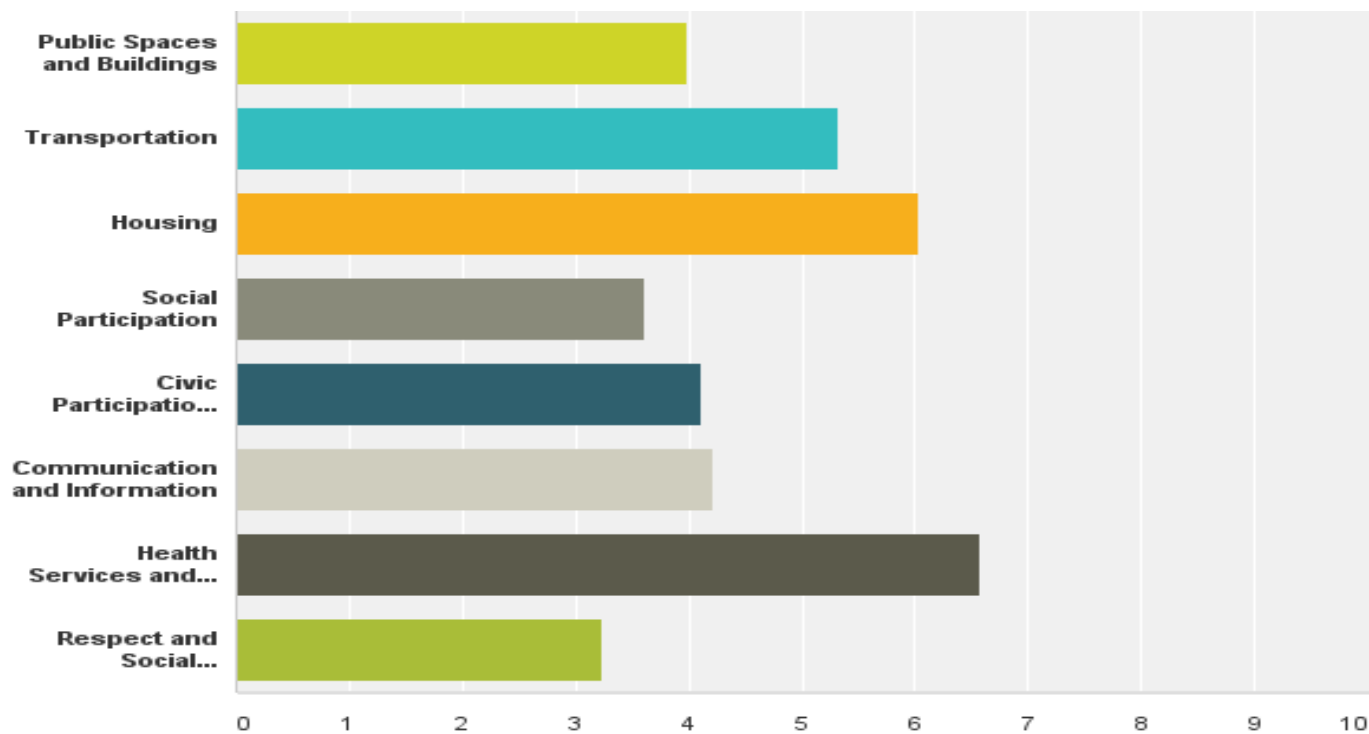
- There are enough public washrooms in key areas of the city.
- There are enough opportunities to meet and socialize with people my age.
- Port Colborne has adequate health care that meets the needs of my age group.
- I get timely information about community updates, events and important notifications.

It is important to consider the statements that scored highest (over 45%) as 'I don't know' were found under Transportation and Health Services & Community Supports. Reasons for respondents to make these selections are speculative. One

possibility indicates a lack of awareness regarding what services are offered unless they are actually needed by residents. Qualitative data from the focus groups and key informant interviews corroborates this interpretation.

The priority of needs ranking for all eight age-friendly domains are listed in descending order of urgency: Health Services and Community Supports, Housing, Transportation, Communication and Information, Civic Participation and Employment Opportunities, Respect and Social Inclusion, Public Spaces and Buildings, Social Participation and Respect and Social Inclusion. The categories of Communication, Public Spaces and Buildings, Social Participation and Respect and Social Inclusion scored at relatively equal levels of importance. The three dimensions of highest concern are, Health Services and Community Supports, Housing and Transportation. Table 5, shown below, visually represents the breakdown of these priorities.

Table 5: AF Categories of Priority Concern (Highest score = Highest Concern)



Survey respondents took the time to further identify concerns and solutions by using the open comment questions that were available in most categories. Table 6 shows the number of responses generated per category in descending order.

Table 6: Number of Open Comment Responses According to AF Categories

AF Category	Number of Open Comments	Priority Ranking	AF Category	Number of Open Comments	Priority Ranking
Transportation	150	3	Social Participation	88	7
Public Spaces and Buildings	132	6	Civic Participation and Employment Opportunities	66	5
Housing and Living	119	2	Respect and Social Inclusion	50	8
Health Services and Community Supports	103	1	Communication and Information	28	4

There are some noteworthy anomalies. The category Public Spaces and Buildings generated the second highest number of open comments, however it ranked 6th in terms of priority importance. It is also important to point out that the 4th ranking dimension - Communication and Information, had the fewest number of open comment responses. This is attributed to the design of the question which did not have an 'open comment' answer field, however, it did have a response field that invited respondents to list an alternative choice of communication preferences. Four respondents chose to use this field to express their open comments.

Age Comparison for Priority Ranking of Age-Friendly Categories.

The next two charts show some comparative data regarding age-friendly priorities based on age rankings. The age-friendly priorities according to age grouping differentiate from the aggregate data.

Table 7: Ages 18-49 – Priority Ranking of Needs to be Addressed

Q14 Rank in order of priority the categories you feel are most important for City Council and Administration to address: #1 being the highest priority to #8 being the lowest.

Answered: 76 Skipped: 11

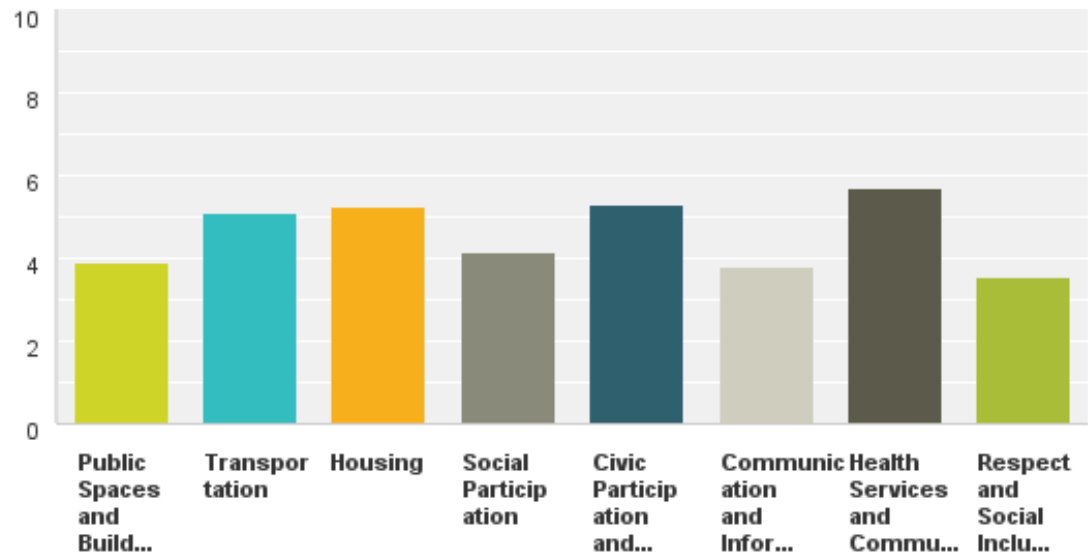
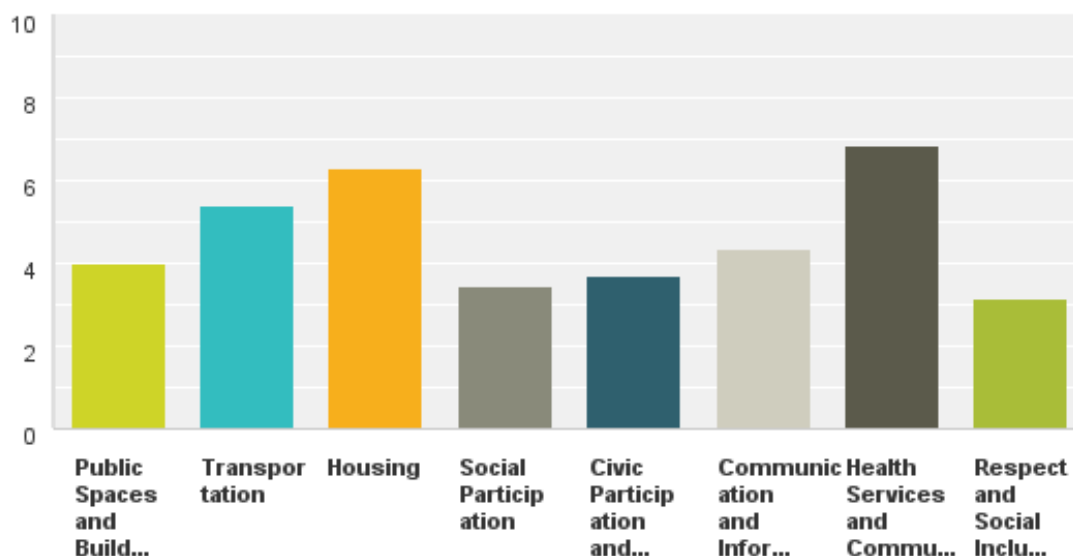


Table 8: Ages 50-90+ – Priority Ranking of Needs to Addressed

Q14 Rank in order of priority the categories you feel are most important for City Council and Administration to address: #1 being the highest priority to #8 being the lowest.

Answered: 254 Skipped: 60



In comparing the high priority needs of community members under the age of 50 with those over 50, Table 9 shows only two common rankings, Health being first and Public Spaces and Buildings being fifth.

Table 9: AF Categories Priority Ranking according to age grouping

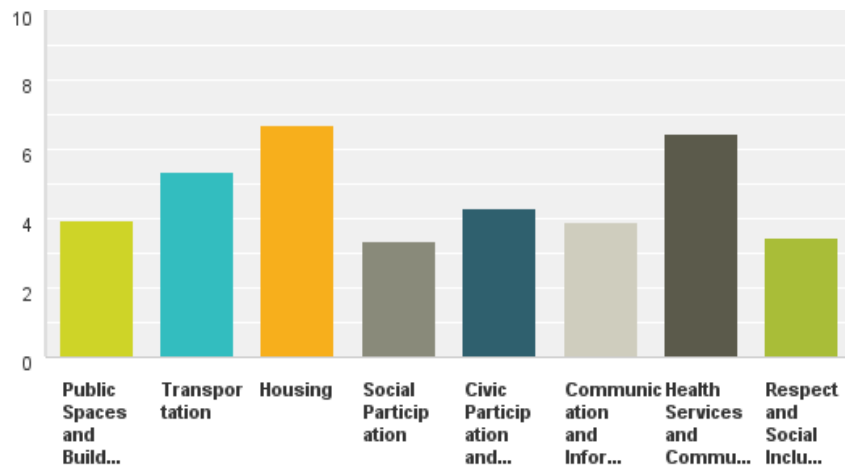
Ages 18 - 49	Ranking	Ages 50 -90(Plus)
Health	1	Health
Civic Participation and Employment	2	Housing
Housing	3	Transportation
Transportation	4	Communication
Public Spaces and Buildings	5	Public Spaces and Buildings
Communication	6	Civic Participation and Employment

What is notable is that Health Services holds the highest priority ranking among all age categories other than in the stand-alone age group of 18-19; their priority needs are as follows: 1. Civic Participation and Employment, 2. Social Participation, 3. Health Services, 4. Transportation.

Financial Comparison for Priority Ranking of Age-Friendly Categories

For the survey population that reported limited financial capacity, the top 4 priorities do not replicate the priorities found in Table 5 (p. 15). The chart below, Table 10, shows the most important age-friendly priorities for those indicating financial limitation. Their priorities are as follows: 1. Housing, 2. Health, 3. Transportation, and 4. Civic Participation and Employment. This may represent the perceived need for more employment opportunities to be available to residents of Port Colborne.

Table 10: High Priority AF Categories – Segmentation: Financial Limitation



Summary of Survey Results

Results from the survey indicate that residents are highly engaged in the pursuit of improving the age-friendly status of Port Colborne. The survey results show respondents place the most value on the affordability factor of services and products that enable them to remain healthy, independent, mobile and informed with access to local supports, services and amenities. Despite the differences between the varying data segmentations, Health, Housing, Transportation and Communication are consistently cited as the most important age-friendly dimensions for which community members wish to see improvements. This report provides rich data that, through the process of further analysis can add imminent value for the municipality to better understand how to implement improvements that would benefit residents throughout the varying ages within their lifespan.

2. Focus Group Results

Four focus groups were held with community members over the age of fifty-five and for caregivers of seniors. Participants were selected from those who signed up for focus groups on the survey forms and from callers who responded to

poster advertisements. There were three groups representing urban residents and one group representing rural residents. Participation rates ranged from a high of fifteen to a low of five people.

Five to seven categories were discussed by participants in all of the four focus groups. Over 150 variations of concerns and solutions were identified. Most of the ideas generated fall under the following categories listed in order of priority: Public Spaces and Buildings, Health Services and Community Supports, Housing, and Transportation. The table below indicates the number ideas repeated in each of the top four age-friendly categories identified in the focus group discussions.

Table 11: Number of Ideas in Top 4 Age-Friendly Categories

Category:	Public Spaces	Health Services	Transportation	Housing
Number of ideas generated:	50	24	24	20

The work done by the participants reflects and reiterates the aggregate data found in the survey. The discussion process from the focus group generated innovative solutions that could be considered possible future action steps for Port Colborne to pursue. Consistently repeated in all categories is the concern of affordability. Some of the strongest concerns and solutions are outlined below.

Public Spaces and Buildings:

- Support accessibility upgrades for public and private sectors through planning, policy-making and financing (standards includes ramps, door openers, handrails, no-slip floors, wheelchair accessible washrooms with high toilet seating)
- Make all walkways safe (including railway crossings), i.e. no cracks, bumps or protrusions, GRADUAL slopes to the road and improve snow removal systems. Many suggest the city should own and operate sidewalk snow removal machinery.
- Strategically increase the amount of outdoor seating/eating and washroom facilities. *Benches need to be higher.

- Lack of safety at crossing areas is a big concern. Increase the number of stoplight systems, include beeper notifications and have longer crossing times at all city stop lights.
- Crossing areas close to the Market Square, Portal Village and along busy zones on Highway 58 require improvement. *Courtesy Crosswalks* are dangerous to seniors and people with limitations - many drivers ignore the protocol. An alternative is to implement a seniors' crossing guard system at peak times in busy locations without stop lights.
- Prevent scooters from using pedestrian walkways.

Health Services and Community Supports:

- The highest concern is the need and desire to have local urgent care/ walk-in/Bridges types of facilities located in Port Colborne that are accessible to all citizens. Although many people name this as 'Keep our hospital', the concept is that community members of all ages and of fragile health should not have to risk their health because of lack of speedy and quality medical services that can only be obtained out of town. Participants feel that the city should find ways and means to make this happen through lobbying or creating our own city-run health facility.
- Increase the number of doctors so all citizens can have a doctor; review and shift incentive programs to enable this.
- Volunteer outreach and check-in programs should be run by the city to ensure the mental and physical health of isolated seniors and those of vulnerable health, as well as to provide supports for access to basic amenities.

Transportation:

- Improve the convenience and affordability of public transportation by increasing routes, destinations, frequency of scheduling and introducing geared-to-income or subsidization of fees
- More seating and shelters at bus stop locations.
- Create Port Colborne's own bus or shuttling system.

Housing:

- Increase housing options for seniors and affordability through geared-to-income, subsidized programs and lower taxes so seniors can stay in their homes
- Repurpose older buildings and municipally owned properties to build and create accessibility designed seniors dwellings
- Model successful seniors housing projects found in other communities

Summary of Focus Group Findings

The findings from both the urban and the rural focus groups substantiated and elaborated upon the results expressed in the survey data. The rural focus group data differentiated further by elaborating the need for improved public transportation and improved walkability as there is absolutely no rural public transit available nor are there safe walking pathways or sidewalks along most rural roads. The focus groups served to promote awareness of the age-friendly initiative and opportunities, interest in participating in programs of change and an increase of focus towards innovative, solution-minded thinking that were not cited in the qualitative survey data.

3. Key Informant Interview Results

Key informant interviews corroborated the data from the survey and the focus groups, in addition to providing broader economic, political and social perspectives. Participants were asked to discuss what they felt was needed from the municipality in order for them as service providers to better accommodate the needs of their clients with limited capacity due to age or health concerns. Twenty-two people participated in the key interview process in the months of March to June 2016.

The comments and solutions offered by key informants sorted into the 8 age-friendly elements of a community rank in priority as follows:

1. Health Services & Community Supports; 2. Respect and Social Inclusion; 3. Public Spaces and Buildings; 4. Transportation; 5. Communication; 6. Housing &

Living; 7. Civic Participation and Employment Opportunities; and 8. Social Participation.

All key informants reiterated the need for improvements in walkability, transportation services, housing and health care as being essential age-friendly enablers so that residents can remain active and able to contribute, participate and use services, businesses and activities within the community.

Five common challenges were identified through the key informant interviews that impede change and progress. Agencies and businesses are:

- Fulfilling gaps in services and supports that do not fall within their mandates
- Assisting community members with support in areas such as providing information and direction to available social, medical, legal and health-related services,
- Disseminating information updates and community news and information
- Assisting and providing tangible and hands-on resources through their agencies because people have no other place to get support or information
- Dealing with duplication, detachment, and fragmentation of beneficial community-based projects resulting in the lack of implementation that would benefit the community and its members

The key informant discussions culminated with the suggestion to focus on strategic and tactical approaches concerning what age-friendly means at social, political and business levels. Five strategic suggestions are:

1. Act upon the opportunity to take a strong visionary and broadband approach to incorporating 'age-friendly' as part of the political and social decision-making framework in planning and policy-making efforts. Many key informants strongly advocated for the city to find ways to integrate age-friendly strategies and principles into all aspects of our community as enablers of economic, social and political prosperity.
2. The second most repeated suggestion called for city council to shift and redefine its economic base through the lens of being a service/tourism/retirement based community.
3. Rethink local health care status and partner with the Local Health Integration Network, Niagara Regional Public Health and Niagara Regional

Housing for new and innovative ways to provide health services to the community as future demographics and political shifts continue to change.

4. Plan and create policies that place *social issues* on par with *brick and mortar* concerns. Find ways to hold owners and providers of services and housing to seniors and disadvantaged residents accountable to legislated standards of basic human rights and caregiving.

5. Create an *Age-Inclusive Navigator* role - a multidimensional and liaison position that can function as ombudsperson; safety and wellness advocate; communications coordinator; volunteer coordinator; and social accountability monitor. This position could eliminate redundancies, overlap, and fragmentation of efforts for community improvement among varying agencies, municipally sponsored committees and community-based service providers and businesses.

Summary of Key Informant Interview Findings

The strategically focused age-friendly based solutions and suggestions provided by participants of the key informant interview process give balance and context for integrating tactical age-friendly solutions. The energy to support the progress of an even more age-friendly focused community is evidenced by the number of participants in the process and by the quality of suggestions that were shared. The majority of interviewees showed a keen interest in forging strong working relationships and partnerships to achieve age-friendly initiatives.

Challenges

There were three challenges that surfaced in the course of this initiative.

1. The one-year-long grant allotted timeline was, in effect, reduced to an eight-month project delivery period because of four-month delay. Work began on November 16, 2015 and ended with this written report in July, and finalized in

August of 2016. The bulk of the project working time occurred during the winter months when high numbers of seniors, including a significant number of SCAC members, left for southern climates for anywhere from 2 to 4 months. This essentially contributed to a loss of approximately two more months of community face-time, thus the actual working time was condensed and project timelines were changed several times during the course of this needs assessment initiative.

2. Survey Question number 14, an overall ranking question, did not solicit comprehensive response. The question asked participants to “rank in order of priority the age-friendly categories you feel are most important for the city to address, 1 being the highest and 8 being the lowest.” Out of 404, 71 respondents did not answer the question and out of the remaining respondents who chose to answer approximately 15% percent did respond correctly. Regardless, the data results remained consistent across the views.

3. One circumstance of data incongruity was found in the category of Public Spaces and Buildings which ranked 6th in priority however held the 2nd highest number of discussion points from all data gathering tools: the survey, the focus groups and key informant interviews. This incongruity warrants the opportunity for SCAC members to further investigate in more detail the rationale of the public’s perception regarding the priority needs of this category.

Conclusion

The data analysis demonstrated a convergence of views from all collection methods. From both the quantity and quality of information accrued through the needs assessment project it was clear that there is a strong level of engagement and hope by community members, clubs and agencies, businesses, service providers and community leaders to see Port Colborne show tangible advancement towards being an age-friendly community. Overall the community named the needs of Port Colborne to support all residents of varying ages and capacities as grounded in:

1. Health Care Services and Community Support Systems that are easily accessed and are affordable so people can age actively, remain in their homes and participate in society.
2. Housing that is affordable, safe and suitable to all according to individual needs so they can age actively and remain in their homes.
3. Transportation that allows people to maintain the same quality of life as those who can still drive.
4. Communication and information that is readily accessible, up-to-date available in a variety of ways and presented instead of being sought out.
5. Civic participation and employment opportunities that enable people, regardless of their age, to be engaged, validated and contribute in their community with continued access to paying jobs and the ability to live with quality of life.

The premise of age-friendly communities as beneficial to people of all ages was reinforced in these findings and through the proposed solutions put forward by the participants of this initiative, as well as the strong and comparable response rates from all age groupings.

The cumulative qualitative data demonstrates an overall *call to action* for City Council and its administration to assume more accountability for Port Colborne's 'own residents' by finding ways to mitigate the compartmentalized approaches driven by Regional, Provincial and Federal strategies and policies that prevent Port Colborne from actualizing a holistic approach to being age-friendly.

Comparative data analysis of the age-friendly priorities identified from the Age-Friendly Niagara Initiative do not directly map over to the Port Colborne age-friendly results. Port Colborne holds a locally unique profile. Social Participation (recreation, activity, education and culture) was identified as a deficit in the Age-Friendly Niagara results, whereas in Port Colborne, the results show Social Participation is perceived as an age-friendly asset. Port Colborne's age-friendly focus can be summed up in a desire and need for advancement in basic essentials of health services, mobility and adequate housing and increased levels of communication.

Next Steps

Included in this section are the intentions for follow-up based on the results found in this report. Recommendations are suggested to assist in the process of implementing the next steps required by the guidelines outlined in the Ontario's Age-Friendly Community Planning Guide. There is a four-step approach for becoming an age-friendly community.

1. Define Local Principles, 2. Conduct a Community Needs Assessment, 3. Develop an Action Plan, 4. Action Implementation and Evaluation.

With this report, the Senior Citizens' Advisory Council has now completed Step 2 and is ready to move forward with Step 3 – Develop an Action Plan. The suggested next steps are:

1. Presentation of this report to Council and community members through a public forum.
2. Implementation of one cost-effective solution listed in the needs assessment data would demonstrate Port Colborne's commitment and capacity to enhance the community's age-friendly status and to begin momentum among citizens, City Council and its administration.
3. Continued in-depth analysis of the report findings including the raw data to prepare for creating an innovative and highly focused action plan.
4. Creation of liaisons and partnerships within the community to assist in the process of formulating SCAC's age-friendly action plan.
5. Creation of a project timeline with goals and objectives to manifest the action planning document.

The information collected and presented in this report provides a solid bank of data showing the insights and suggestions from all strata of Port Colborne's community. With this rich resource, SCAC will be well equipped to create an action plan that can be used to make Port Colborne a progressive, active, age-friendly community.

Resources

Aging and Life Course Global Age-Friendly Cities Project, World Health Organization, http://www.who.int/ageing/projects/age_friendly_cities/en/

Aging and Life Course Towards an Age Friendly World, World Health Organization, retrieved from: <http://www.who.int/ageing/age-friendly-world/en/>

Census Profile, Port Colborne Ontario, retrieved from: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=3526011&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=Port%20Colborne&SearchType=Begin&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=3526011&TABID=1>

Finding the Right Fit, retrieved from: <http://www.seniors.gov.on.ca/en/afc/guide.php>

Independence, Activity and Good Health Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors, retrieved from: <http://www.oacao.org/images/ontarioseniorsactionplan-en.pdf>

Livable Communities An Evaluation Guide, Arizona State University Herberger Center for Design Excellence AARP2005 Public Policy Institute Washington DC, retrieved from: http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/d18311_communities.pdf

News Release Main Content Ontario Building Age-Friendly Communities Province Helping Seniors Stay Active, Healthy and Engaged, retrieved from: <https://news.ontario.ca/oss/en/2015/06/ontario-building-age-friendly-communities.html>

Niagara Aging Strategy and Action Plan, retrieved from: <http://www.niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/06/Aging-Strategy-Project-Report-final-April-8-2015.pdf>

Appendix

Appendix One – Survey



How Age-Friendly is Port Colborne?

Your Opinion Matters! Fill out the survey; at the end, enter the draw to win a \$50.00 gift certificate for local shopping!

Q: What does an “Age-Friendly City” mean?

A: Age-Friendly Cities are communities that consider and incorporate the needs of aging citizens in their decision making strategies. An Age-Friendly community focuses on the entire lifespan needs of its residents.

RETURN YOUR COMPLETED SURVEY BY

1. Drop-off at one of the following City locations:

- a. City Hall, 66 Charlotte Street
- b. Roselawn Centre, 296 Fielden Avenue
- c. Vale Health & Wellness Centre, 550 Elizabeth Street
- d. Port Colborne Library, 310 King Street

2. Mail, to:

Community Services

296 Fielden Avenue,

Port Colborne, ON L3K 4T6

ATTENTION: Age-Friendly Needs Assessment Coordinator

TO FILL OUT THE SURVEY ONLINE:

Visit: http://portcolborne.ca/page/committee_seniors_advisory

Alternative survey formats can be made available:

Call, 905-835-2901 ext. 539, or Email, agefriendly@portcolborne.ca

Notice of Collection: The City of Port Colborne adheres to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* regarding the collection, use, disclosure, and retention of personal information. Personal information on this form is collected under the authority of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, and will be used for the completion of the Age-Friendly Needs Assessment for the City. Questions about this collection should be directed to the Community Services Division, City of Port Colborne, 66 Charlotte Street, Port Colborne L3K 3C8, 905-835-2900 ext. 539, Age-Friendly Needs Assessment Coordinator.

Thank you for PORTicipating!

General Information (required)								
1. Please circle your age group.	14-19	20-29	30-49	50-64	65-79	80-89	90 plus	
2. Circle where your residence is located.								
					Urban	Rural		
AGE-FRIENDLY CATEGORIES								
3. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings					Agree	Partially	Disagree	Don't Know

			Agree			
Public areas are clean and pleasant.						
Walking areas are kept in good condition and are free of obstruction.						
Public walking areas are adequately lit.						
Most buildings and services are accessible to people with limited vision, hearing and/or mobility.						
3. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings (continued)			Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree Don't Know	
Most sidewalks slope to the road to accommodate mobility devices such as, wheelchairs, scooters, strollers.						
There are enough public washrooms available in key areas of the City.						
There is adequate public seating in key areas of Port Colborne.						
It is generally safe to walk in Port Colborne at any time.						
Please suggest one thing to improve 'Public Spaces and Buildings' in Port Colborne.						
4. Transportation: Circle below the 2 methods of transportation you most often use.						
I drive myself	Others drive me	I walk	I walk with a support device (cane or walker)	I use a motorized mobility device (scooter, wheel chair)	I use public transportation	I cycle, skateboard or roller-blade
5. Transportation (roads, parking, public transportation)			Agree	Partially	Disagree	Don't Know

		Agree		
Roads are well maintained for driving safely.				
In general, there is an adequate amount of parking available.				
Overall, there are enough designated handicapped parking spaces available.				
Municipal parking lots are well maintained, (cleared of snow, ice and obstructions).				
Parking lots for businesses and service providers are kept well maintained, (cleared of snow and ice and obstructions).				
Public transportation is reliable and affordable.				
Public transportation is available during the day and in the evenings.				
Public transportation covers the destinations I need to reach.				
Transportation stops have adequate seating and shelter.				
Transportation is available to individuals with special needs and disabilities.				
Please suggest one thing to improve 'Transportation' in Port Colborne.				
6. Housing and Living	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
My place of residence is affordable.				
There is enough subsidized housing for low-income residents of Port Colborne.				

My residence is safe and suitable for my level of health and wellness.				
There are enough support services available in Port Colborne so I can remain in my home, (meals, housekeeping, personal care, house and yard maintenance).				
I can afford the support services that are available so I can remain in my home, (meals, housekeeping, personal care, house and yard maintenance).				
The wait times to get into senior housing are reasonable.				
There is adequate rental housing available in Port Colborne.				
Assisted living options are available to me if needed.				
Please suggest one thing to improve 'Housing and Living' in Port Colborne.				
7. Housing and Living: Place and 'X' beside the statement from below that best describes your ability to handle expenses.				Use 'X' to mark your choice
I am able to pay my expenses on a consistent and regular basis.				
I am able to pay my expenses most of the time, but not always.				
I am not able to pay my expenses on a consistent and regular basis.				
Others are responsible for paying my expenses.				
8. Social Participation	Agree	Partially	Disagree	Don't know

		Agree		
There is a range of social activities available for my age group.				
Activities that are available include physical, recreational, indoor, outdoor, educational, cultural and membership based.				
Activities and events are held in locations that are accessible for all.				
Activities and events are generally affordable for me.				
8. Social Participation (continued)	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Don't know
There are enough opportunities to meet and socialize with people my age.				
Please suggest one thing to improve 'Social Participation' in Port Colborne.				
9. Civic Participation and Employment Opportunities	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Don't know
City council and administration considers the needs of my age group in their planning processes.				
There are enough volunteer opportunities for my age group.				
There is adequate recognition for volunteering and contributing to community projects for my age group.				
There are enough paid employment positions for my age group.				

Job opportunities in the City accommodate the needs of my age group.				
There are community based support programs to assist me in finding and preparing for paid employment and/or volunteer opportunities.				
Please suggest one thing to improve 'Civic Participation and Employment Opportunities' in Port Colborne.				
10. Communication and Information	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Official, written information such as forms, brochures and signs, are adapted to the needs of seniors and those with limited communication abilities, (verbal, auditory, visual).				
I get timely information about community updates, events and important notifications.				
I can find someone to assist me with filling out official forms and documents when I need to.				
I can find access to and receive training for current communication tools such as computers, cell phones, internet etc.				
11. Communication and Information: Select your three preferred ways to receive information.				Use 'X' to mark your choice
Local newspapers				
Mail to my residence (includes flyers and brochures)				
E-mail				

Poster Advertisements				
Word of mouth				
Internet searches				
Local radio				
Local television				
Other (please specify)				
12. Health Services and Community Supports	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Port Colborne has adequate health care services that meet the needs of my age group, (medical, dental, hearing, vision, mental health, and alternative healing practitioners such as physiotherapy, chiropractic, massage).				
I can afford to get necessities delivered to me, (e.g. groceries, medicines).				
There is local access to medical equipment rentals and/or loans.				
Public health nurses are available at health centers.				
Public health nurses are available for home visits.				
I have people that can help me when I need assistance.				
Caregiver supports such as respite and adult day programs are available in Port Colborne.				

Local businesses and service providers make extra efforts to accommodate my particular health needs.				
Please suggest one thing to improve 'Community Health and Support Services' in Port Colborne.				
13. Respect and Social Inclusion	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
Port Colborne has community activities that bring together people of all ages.				
There are services in my community in which I can contribute and participate.				
In general, I feel I am treated with respect in my community.				
Overall, I do not personally feel diversity discrimination.				
In general, I feel safe from abuse, vandalism and crime.				
Please suggest one thing to improve 'Respect and Social Inclusion' in Port Colborne.				
14. Rank in order of priority, the Age-Friendly categories you feel are most important for the City to address, 1 being the highest priority to 8 being the lowest.				Use 1-8 to rank priority (#1 being highest)
Public Spaces and Buildings				
Transportation				
Housing and Living				
Social Participation				

Civic Participation and Employment	
Communication and Information	
Health Services and Community Supports	
Respect and Social Inclusion	
FILL OUT THE FORMS BELOW TO: Enter the draw for a \$50.00 gift certificate &/or to join a Focus Group Your information will be kept confidential.	
DRAW for \$50.00 Gift Certificate	
Name:	
Address:	
City:	
Province:	Postal Code:
Phone:	Email:
Join a FOCUS GROUPS (eligibility: 55 and older, caregiver to a senior	
Name:	
Email:	
Phone:	

The City of Port Colborne

Age-Friendly Needs Assessment Report September 12, 2016



How we'll Roll

1. Preliminary Slides (2)
2. Result Slides (11)(Survey, Focus Groups, Key Informant Interviews)
3. Summary Slides (2)
4. Q & A



Success!

1. PC's AFNA Report: completed and submitted to the Ontario Government
2. SCAC: pleased to present report to Council & excited to use the results to begin the action planning phase
3. Success is attributed to all those who contributed, supported and participated



It wasn't possible without help...

1. Thank you to:

- a. Residents who participated
- b. Council members who supported, contributed and consulted
- c. ALL City staff and administration who assisted so generously
- d. SCAC members who worked diligently & enthusiastically
- e. Community agencies, businesses, services and media partners who consulted, advised, sponsored and participated, Age-Friendly Niagara
- f. Ontario Senior Secretariat – funding and support

High Level View

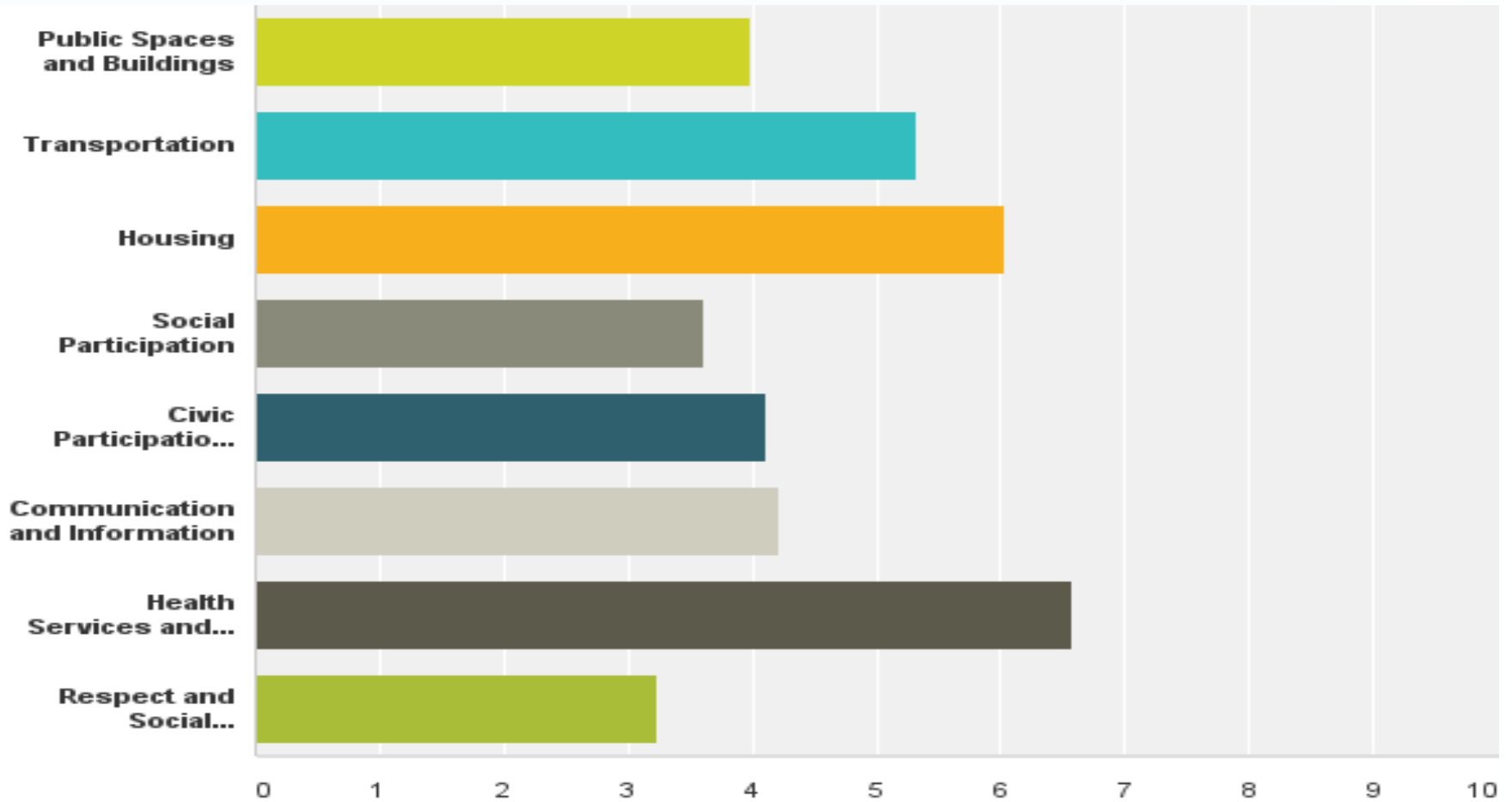
1. Survey: 40% response rate
 - a. 1000 distributed, 404 completed
 - i. 99 online, 305 paper
 - ii. 79% Urban, 21% Rural
 - iii. 34% ages 50-64, 30% 65-79%
 - b. 4 focus groups - 3 urban, 1 rural
 - c. 10 Key Informant Interviews



The Survey

1. The top 5 Age-friendly dimensions in order of importance in PC:
 - a. Health Services and Community Supports
 - b. Housing
 - c. Transportation
 - d. Communication and Information
 - e. Civic Participation and Employment

Table 5: AF Categories of Priority Concern (Highest score = Highest Concern)



Scores for Priority Concerns from Survey Respondents

S

1. Health & Com. Supports - 6.57
2. Housing – 6.04
3. Transportation – 5.33
4. Communication – 4.22
5. Participation & Employment – 4.12
6. Public Spaces – 3.98 * *FYI*
7. Social Participation – 3.62
8. Respect & Social Inclusion – 3.21

Age Comparison Rankings

- Ages 18 – 49
 - 1. Health,
 - 2. Participation and Employment
 - 3. Housing
 - 4. Transportation
 - 5. Public Spaces
 - 6. Communication
- Ages 50 – 90
 - 1. Health
 - 2. Housing
 - 3. Transportation
 - 4. Communication
 - 5. Public Spaces
 - 6. Civic Participation and Employment



Table 1: Age-Friendly Needs Assessment Priorities - Port Colborne vs Niagara Region

Port Colborne (2016)	Numerical Priority	Niagara Region (2014)
Health Care	1	Transportation
Housing	2	Housing
Transportation	3	Social Participation
Communication	4	Health Care



4 Focus Groups

1. Substantiated and elaborated upon the results from the survey
2. Generated innovative solutions not found in the survey
3. Rural interests highlighted the detriments of there being no public transportation, nor safe walking on rural roads
4. Increased awareness and high energy to participate in change initiatives

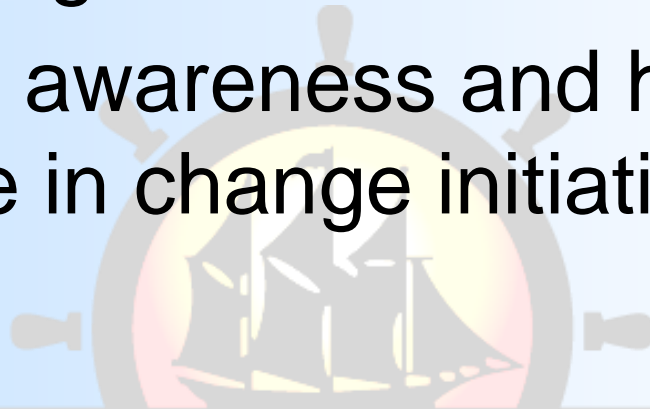
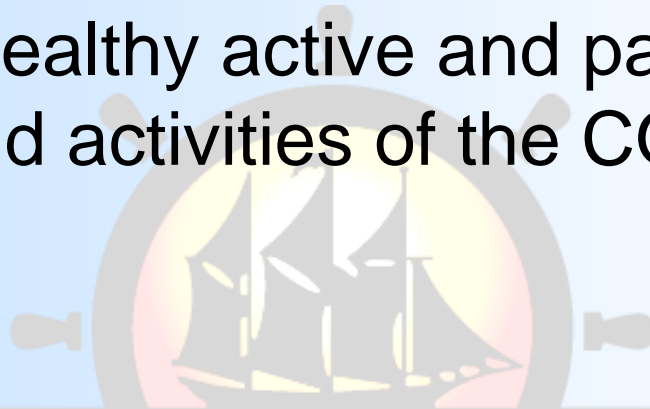


Table 11: Number of Ideas in Top 4 Age-Friendly Categories

Category:	Public Spaces	Health Services	Transportation	Housing
Number of ideas generated:	50	24	24	20

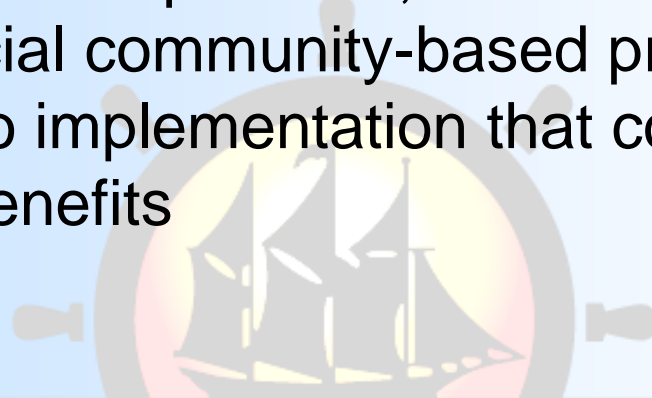
Key Informant Interviews

1. 22 Participants, Stakeholders listed on grant application
2. Ranking of Priority: 1. Health, 2. Respect & Inclusion, 3. Public Spaces, 4. Transportation, 5. Communication, 6. Housing, 7. Participation and Employment, 8. Social Participation
3. All named, walkability, transportation, housing and health care as essential for enabling citizens to remain healthy active and participating in the services and activities of the COPC



KII – 5 Challenges to AF Progress

1. Services, Agencies and Business are:
 - a. Fulfilling service gaps outside of their mandates
 - b. Assisting people with information and direction to services: social, medical, legal, health and related
 - c. Disseminating community info updates and news
 - d. Providing hands on and tangible resources through their agencies that people can't access through systems
 - e. Dealing with duplication, detachment, fragmentation of beneficial community-based projects, thus seeing slow or no implementation that could provide age-friendly benefits



KII - Compelling Solutions for a Holistic Age-Friendly Port Colborne

1. Incorporate 'Age-friendly' as part of the political and social decision-making frameworks for Council and City Administration
2. Redefine PC's economic base as a service/tourism/retirement-based community
3. Rethink local Health Care and partnerships with LIHN, NRPH, and NRH
4. Create policies that place *social issues* on par with *brick and mortar* concerns
5. Create an Age-Inclusive Navigator Role – multidimensional role to provide a single lane into support, info and coordination services to community members and community improvement initiatives

Conclusion

1. The premise of 'age-friendly' was clearly perceived to be inclusive and of benefit to all ages
2. Community members are solution oriented, enthusiastic and supportive of future changes
3. Strong call to action to strategically include 'Age-Friendly' concepts into decision and policy making frameworks
4. High need for a paid navigator/advocacy role
5. Data analysis show a convergence of views from survey, focus groups and key informant interviews

Next Steps (p.27 of report)

1. Public forum to present report
2. Implement one cost effective suggestion from report results within one year while SCAC creates a formal action plan
3. SCAC begin creating an action plan
4. Create liaisons and partnerships to assist with action plan and its implementation



We Are Pleased to Answer
Your Questions

