



Age-Friendly Planning

A Focus on Greater Community Accessibility and Social Interaction

Canadian Institute of Planners Conference 2019

July 4, 2019

11:00 am – 12:15 pm

Presenters:

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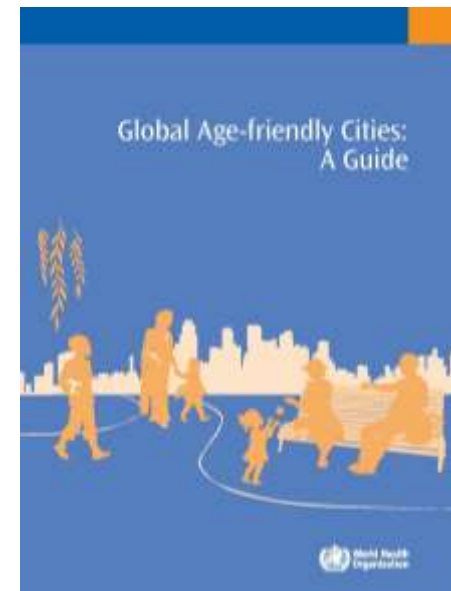
Michael Hanifi, MPI
Planner
WSP

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CAO/Clerk
Town of St. Marys



Presentation Outline

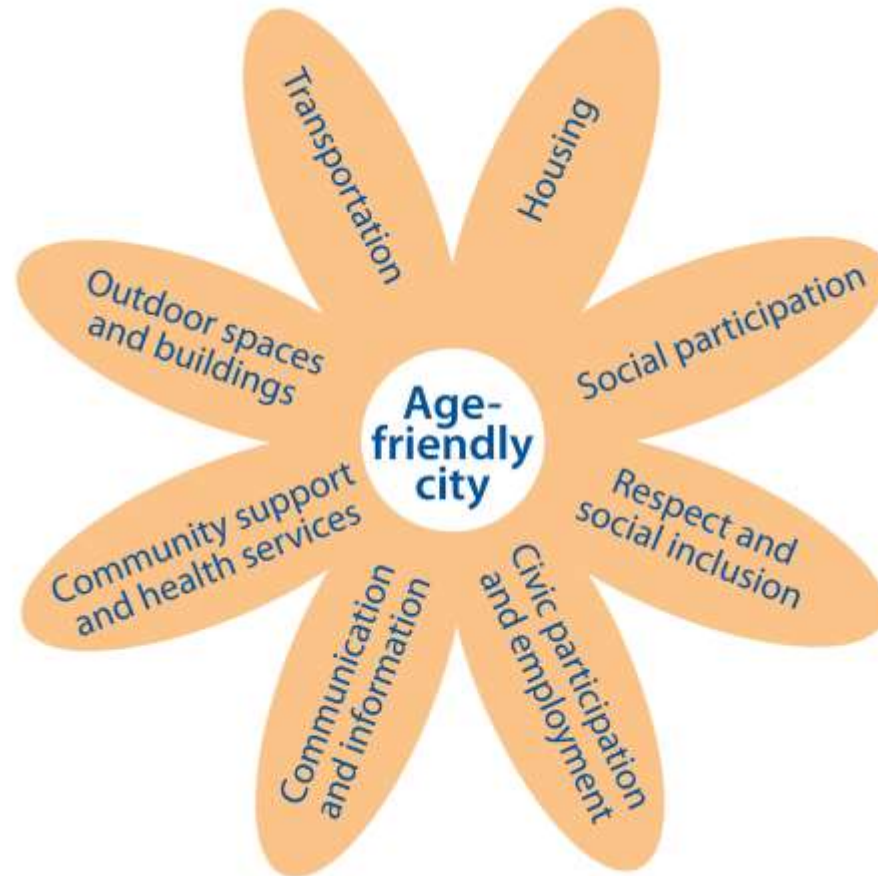
- WHO's Eight Dimensions of Age-Friendly Community Planning
- Why Plan for an Age-Friendly Community?
- Framework for Developing Age-Friendly Community Planning
- Age-Friendly Planning for All Ages
- Town of St. Marys Queen Street Reconstruction
- Discussion and Q&A



WHO, Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide (2007)

World Health Organization

8 Dimensions of Age-Friendly Communities



WHO, 2007

Why Plan for an Age-Friendly Community?

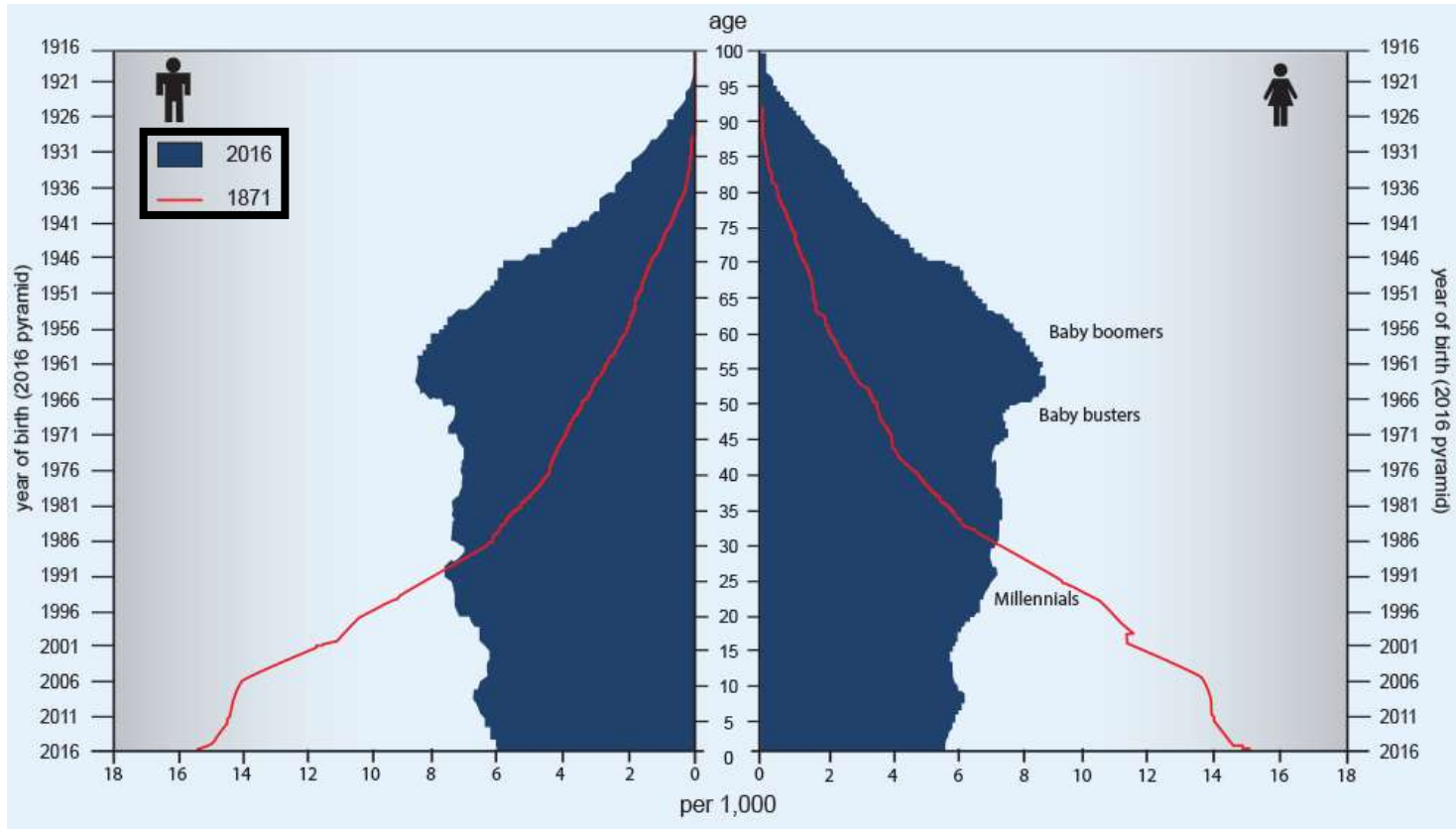


Image source: Statistics Canada (2016)

Why Plan for an Age-Friendly Community?

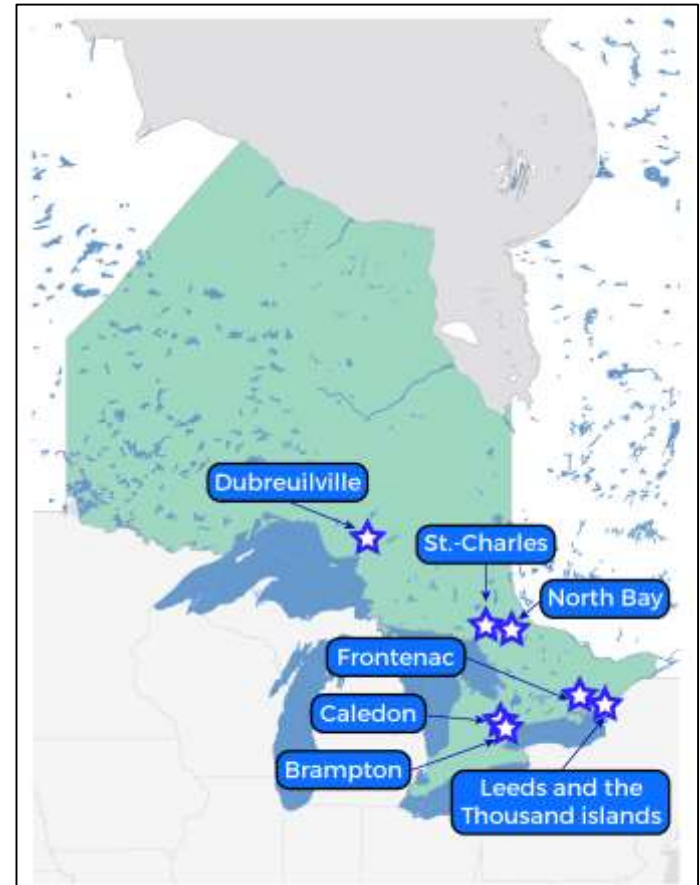
- **Equity:** Ensures that people of all abilities are included in all aspects of community life
- **Health:** Promotes environments that support physical and mental health



Hard and Soft Infrastructure



WSP Experience



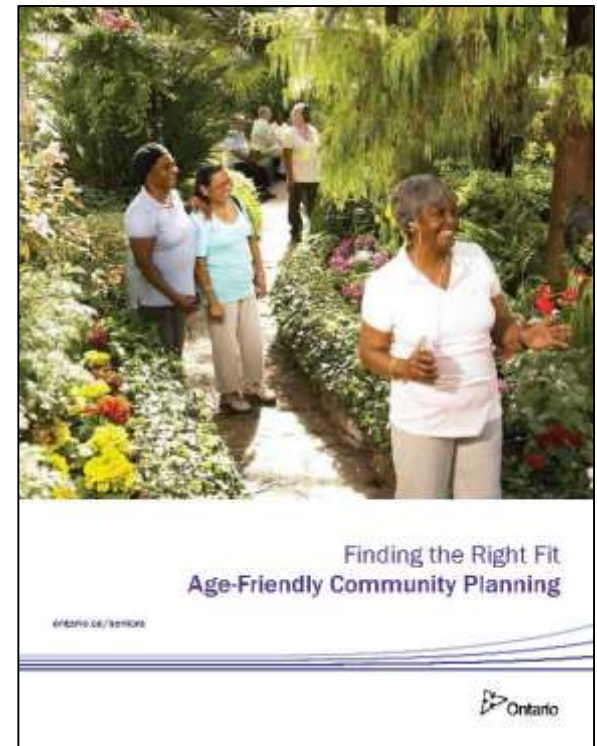
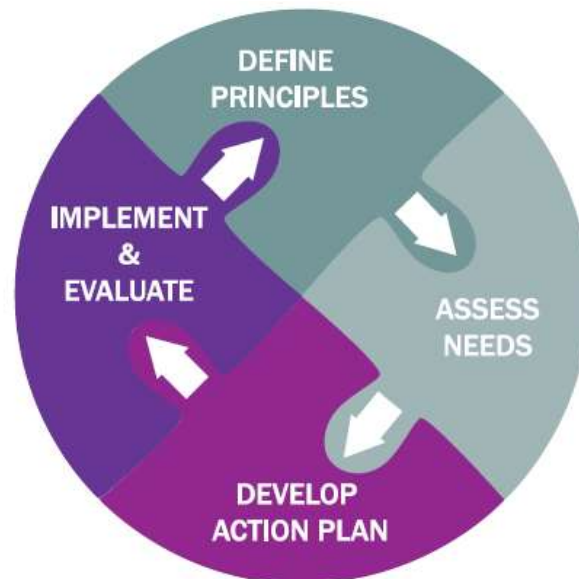
WSP Age-Friendly Projects

Community	Context	Population (2016)	Language
City of Merritt, BC	Rural	7,139	English
Village of Keremeos, BC	Rural	1,502	English
City of North Bay, ON	Urban	51,553	English
Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, ON	Rural	9,465	English
Township of Dubreuilville, ON	Rural	613	French
County of Frontenac, ON	Rural	150,475	English
Municipality of St.-Charles, ON	Rural	1,269	English/ French
Town of Caledon, ON	Suburban/ Rural	66,502	English
City of Brampton, ON	Urban	593,635	English, South Asian, Other

Age-Friendly Planning Frameworks – Ontario Ministry of Seniors' Affairs

Four Stages to Develop an Action Plan:

1. Define Vision and Principles
2. Assess Needs
3. Develop Action Plan
4. Implement and Evaluate



Friendly for All Ages

Places can be as unfriendly to youth as they are to seniors

Common wants:

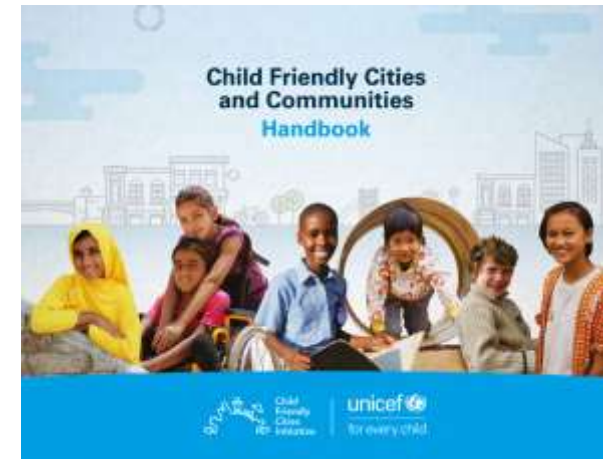
- Accessible and convenient places
- Amenities within walking distance
- Efficient public transportation and transit-oriented public spaces
- Safety – adequate sidewalks and street lighting, eyes on the street, etc.
- Places where you want to “hang out”



The Alley Project, Detroit, Michigan (via <https://bbandm.wordpress.com/2012/05/16/art-in-a-detroit-alley/>)

Bridging the Gap – Planning for All Ages

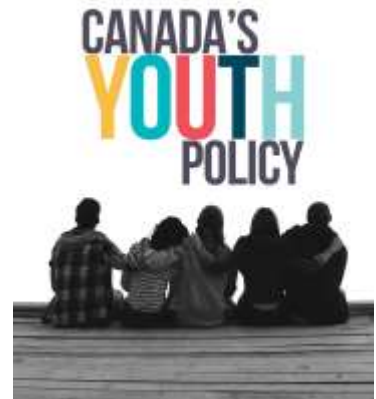
- Don't forget about the youth
 - The built environment and developing youth
 - The benefits of youth engagement
 - Child-Friendly Communities/UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiatives



Planning for a Lifetime

- Sustaining young professionals
 - A place they can grow into
 - Affordability, employment and safety
 - Live, work, play balance
- What makes a city youthful?
 - Youth engagement strategies
 - Resource: Youthful Cities Index

Overall Message: When thinking about age-friendly communities, the lens should zoom in and widen out to make age-friendly community planning truly an all-age planning initiative.





Town of St. Marys Queen Street Reconstruction

Marrying Accessibility, Public Engagement and Heritage



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Agenda

- Introduction
- Scope of work
- Constraints
- Pre-planning & design process
 - Engineering design
 - Public relations efforts
- Executing construction
- Lessons learned



Some History

- Queen Street – last full reconstruction in 1972
 - Storm sewers
 - Sanitary sewers
 - Water mains
 - Services
 - Roads & sidewalk
- Signalization installed in the 1960s (Water and Wellington Streets) and 1980s (Church Street)
- Illumination added in the mid-1990s



Today's Need

Copper water services are failing before the end of their life and need to be replaced.

The fix?

Largely a road reconstruction and infrastructure rehabilitation project:

- Water service replacement
- Asphalt rehabilitation
- Sidewalk reconstruction
- Victoria Bridge rehabilitation



Today's Need

But with service level improvements, especially accessibility:

- Fully accessible pedestrian signals at all intersections
- Accessible storefronts
- Accessible sidewalks
- Event power added for downtown festivals
- Boulevard improvements to delineate the HDC
- Services installed for future streetscaping features

All at a cost of \$2.2 million without upper level funding



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Key Project Constraints

Physical Space

- Storefronts positioned prior to modern road standards

Effect

- Narrower than preferred road allowance for an arterial road
- Leaves little space to “add” to meet public expectations



Queen Street, St. Marys Museum, *Picture St. Marys*

Key Project Constraints

Local topography

- How do we make storefronts accessible when these exist on our hilly terrain?



Multiple steps



Wide entrance



Temporary ramps



Varied step heights

Key Project Constraints

Legislation

- Accessibility for Ontario with Disabilities Act came into force January 1, 2016 for this project

Effect

- The public space must be designed in compliance with the AODA
- Embrace it!



Key Project Constraints

Stakeholder Expectations

- Do not impact our summer events schedule
- Use this opportunity as “the silver bullet” to revitalize the downtown core

Effect

- Expedited project (September 2015 – August 2016)
- An understanding that this could not be the “typical” construction approach
- A collaborative process would be required



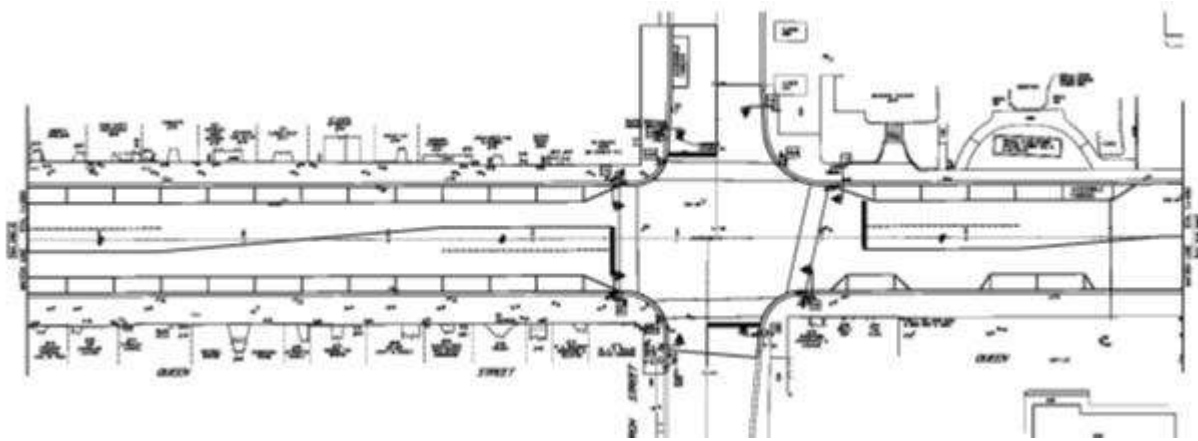
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Pre-planning – Pre-design

For starters:

- Retain a firm with a good track record in similar projects
 - BM Ross & Associates preferred because of previous project experiences with successful track record



Pre-planning – Engagement

Next:

- Get out in the field and understand the local environment, its people and its constraints
- Several key steps taken:
 - Introductions with all property owners affected
 - Full picture inventory of the exterior of all buildings affected
 - Basement inspections of all buildings
 - Detailed survey work to document existing grades



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Pre-planning – Engagement

Next:

- Collect as much information as you can about your stakeholders
 - **Pre-design public meeting** - September 2015
 - **Pre-construction survey** sent to all property owners in the construction zone to understand:
 - How do they operate? When do they need water? What are their hours? What are their parking needs? Do they have a rear entrance for access? When do they receive deliveries?



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Pre-planning – Engagement

From the Town and the BIA perspective, greatest project constraint is stakeholder expectations:

Town

- How do we manage expectations?
- What can we do to lessen the effect on businesses?
- How do we ensure people are informed?

BIA:

- Are we going to be open this summer?
- How do we have our voice heard?
- Who is paying for the work on our building?



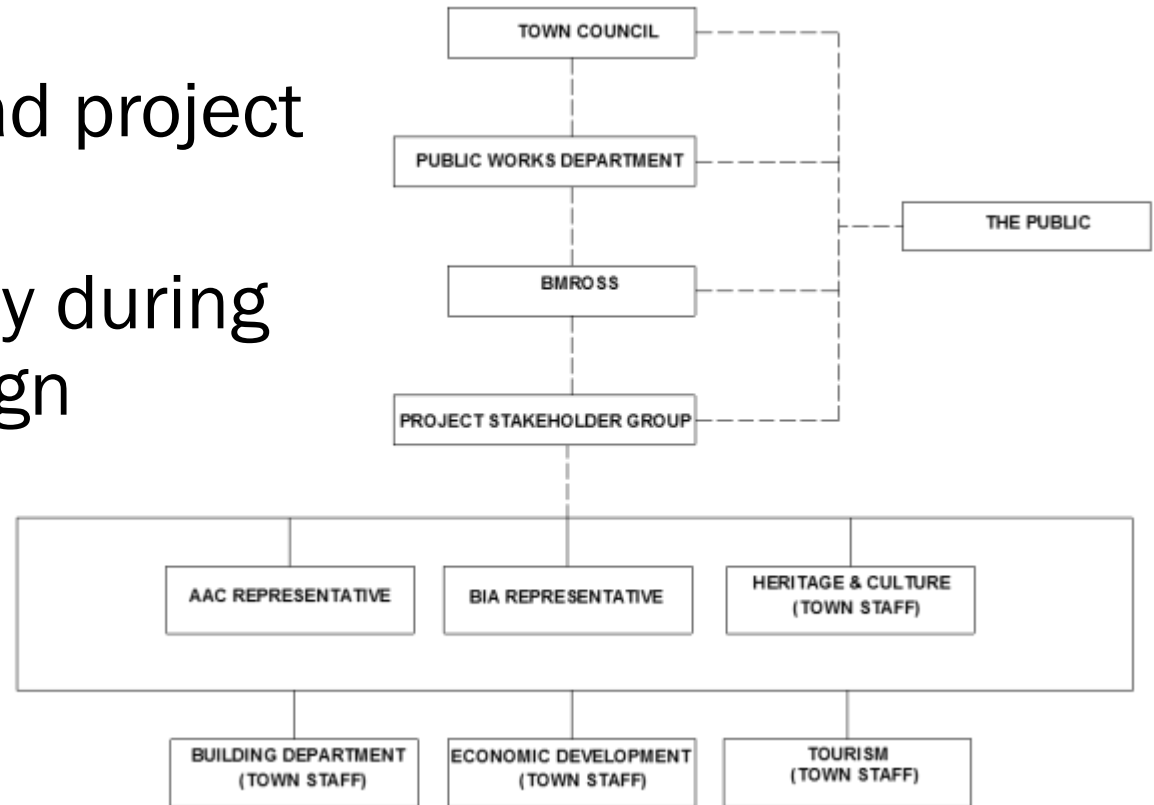
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Pre-planning – Design

First step:

- Develop a broad project steering group
- Meet frequently during the entire design process



Pre-planning – Design

After that:

- Actually use the information!
 - All pre-design issues identified were presented to the project steering group for review and advice
 - All design suggestions received during the public open house reviewed by the project steering group
- Take all the information back and start developing a design plan



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Pre-planning – Design

- In terms of design, local topography is the largest constraint because AODA requires:
 - 1.5 m (min), 1.8 m (preferred) clear path of travel
 - 5% (max), 4% (preferred) cross slope in clear path of travel
 - 5% (max) running slope of clear path of travel OR match the existing grade of the road
 - Town preference - make as many storefronts accessible as possible
- Accessibility Committee played an active role

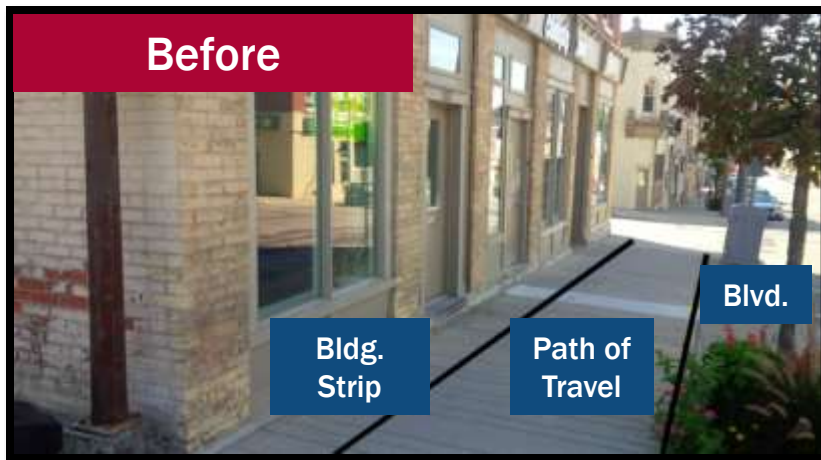


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Pre-planning – Design

The solution - create tiers in the sidewalk design to meet compliance



Pre-planning – Design



Pre-planning – Key Decisions

But:

- Remember those wide entrances and those with large steps?
 - Raising the sidewalk to make them accessible will require façade modifications
- Heritage Conservation District rules and by-laws will apply to any work that is required
- Who applies? Who pays for the work?
 - That leads us to....



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Pre-planning – Key Decisions

Continue to keep your doors open:

- Once design was substantially complete and reviewed by the steering group, key design questions brought forward for Council to consider
- All BIA stakeholders were invited to attend to learn about the design and understand Council's rationale
- Key decisions:
 - One heritage permit covering the entire project
 - Town to fund all work, carpenter and mason on retainer
 - No permanent trees



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Construction Planning

Continue to keep your doors open:

- Business survey responses were consolidated, reviewed by the BIA, corrected where necessary and then used to inform the construction planning
- A second public open house held in February for the general public to learn about the final design and to provide construction planning feedback
- THEN - move on to construction



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Construction

First:

- Make sure you are getting a **good contractor**
 - All general contractors plus asphalt and sidewalk sub-trades were pre-qualified prior to bidding
 - Ensured that only experienced contractors with a strong record of success would be able to bid



Construction

Next:

- Actually use the information you have collected!
- Project steering group focused on the key themes and ideas from the pre-planning work to develop a construction plan
- Focus was to address the regular, day-to-day questions and leave the actual constructability plan to the contractors
 - Some examples...



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Construction

How will traffic be able to move through the construction zone?

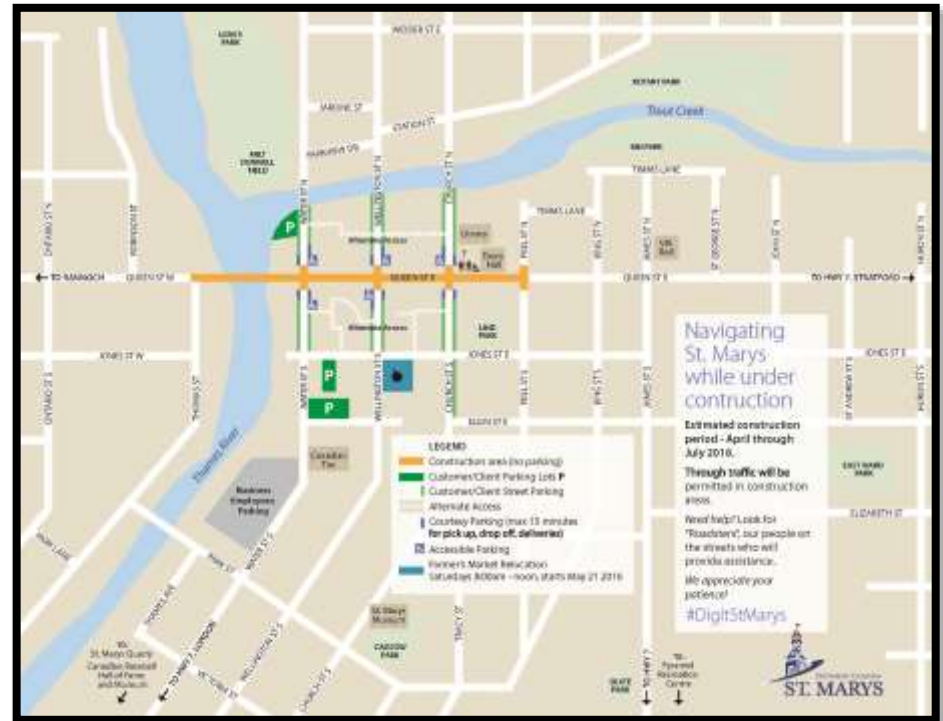
- No parking allowed on construction street
- Two lanes of traffic kept open, trucks allowed through the construction zone
- BUT turns restricted



Construction Planning

Where are employees and patrons going to park?

- Comprehensive parking plan developed
- Town secured right of use agreements from owners of nearby large vacant lots



Construction

How will people know where to park?

- Comprehensive directional signage plan and detailed parking map developed



Construction

How can we encourage people to use “out of the way parking?”

- Incentive program developed to reward people who park in out of the way locations



Construction

If turns are restricted,
how will I receive
deliveries?

- Contractor will be flexible
- “Drop-off” zones created on side streets



Construction

How will I know when and what is happening with the construction schedule?

- Project steering group attends all weekly construction meetings, including BIA reps
- Weekly construction newsletter



Construction

How will patrons be able to access each business?

- Removed sidewalks replaced with packed gravel walkway
- Ramps into buildings
- Construction fence placed to allow for front access
- Rear entrance accesses suggested
- Good neighbours



Construction

How will patrons be able use these back alleys (they are private property)?

- Town secured a right of access easement from each property owner to allow the public to use the alleys as a walkway



Construction

How will patrons know to go to rear entrances?



M.A.S.H. style signs for wayfinding



Town "Ambassadors"

Construction

How will patrons know to go to the rear of the building?

- BIA promoted back alley walking tours with their members
- Relaxed sign by-law rules for businesses advertising on their own properties



Construction

How will we address those buildings that need façade modifications because of the raised sidewalk?

What if we find an old window well or coal chute?

- Carpenter and mason on retainer
- Town to take out the heritage permit and pay for the modifications



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Completed Product



Completed Product



Completed Product



Completed Product



Completed Product



Lessons Learned

No matter how much pre-planning is completed, there will always be a surprise!



Abandoned fuel tank

Lessons Learned



Rooms under the sidewalk

Lessons Learned



Confused drivers

Final Message

With:

- A proactive approach to pre-planning
- A collaborative and community-minded project team
- A flexible and understanding construction team

You will be pleasantly surprised in the positive way what you can truly impact a person's day to day life...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPcQ8FFOfKA>



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What Municipalities Can Do

- Take an age friendly perspective “apply the age-friendly lens” in infrastructure planning, recreation, and economic development
- Develop partnerships within the community and between municipalities
- Build and maintain momentum



Strengthening Age-Friendly Communities and Seniors' Services for 21st Century Ontario

A New Conversation about the Municipal Role

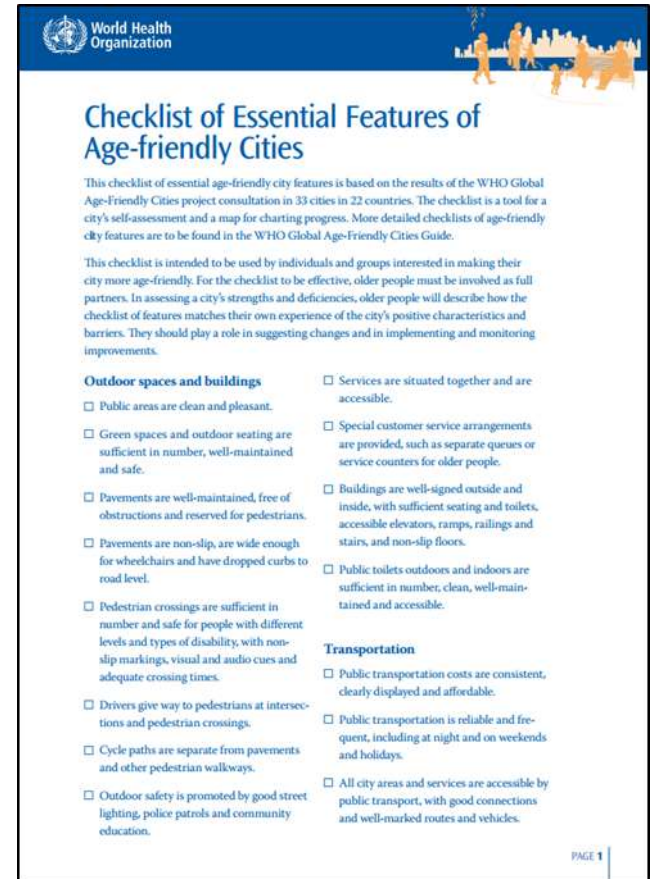
September 2016

What Municipalities Can Do



Tips and Ideas

- Have a summer student, volunteer, or staff person conduct a Community Audit using the WHO's checklist
- Conduct an Age-Friendly Business Assessment survey
- Establish an Age-Friendly Committee to assist in municipal initiatives
- Engage community organizations, business improvement organizations, elected officials



The image shows a page from the World Health Organization's 'Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities'. The page has a blue header with the WHO logo and the title. Below the title, there is an introductory paragraph explaining the checklist's purpose and a paragraph describing its intended use. The main content is organized into two columns of checklist items, each starting with a section header and a sub-header. The first column is titled 'Outdoor spaces and buildings' and contains seven items. The second column contains three items, including 'Services are situated together and are accessible', 'Special customer service arrangements are provided...', and 'Buildings are well-signed...'. A third section titled 'Transportation' follows, containing four items. The page number 'PAGE 1' is visible in the bottom right corner.

World Health Organization

Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities

This checklist of essential age-friendly city features is based on the results of the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities project consultation in 33 cities in 22 countries. The checklist is a tool for a city's self-assessment and a map for charting progress. More detailed checklists of age-friendly city features are to be found in the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide.

This checklist is intended to be used by individuals and groups interested in making their city more age-friendly. For the checklist to be effective, older people must be involved as full partners. In assessing a city's strengths and deficiencies, older people will describe how the checklist of features matches their own experience of the city's positive characteristics and barriers. They should play a role in suggesting changes and in implementing and monitoring improvements.

Outdoor spaces and buildings

- Public areas are clean and pleasant.
- Green spaces and outdoor seating are sufficient in number, well-maintained and safe.
- Pavements are well-maintained, free of obstructions and reserved for pedestrians.
- Pavements are non-slip, are wide enough for wheelchairs and have dropped curbs to road level.
- Pedestrian crossings are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disability, with non-slip markings, visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times.
- Drivers give way to pedestrians at intersections and pedestrian crossings.
- Cycle paths are separate from pavements and other pedestrian walkways.
- Outdoor safety is promoted by good street lighting, police patrols and community education.

- Services are situated together and are accessible.
- Special customer service arrangements are provided, such as separate queues or service counters for older people.
- Buildings are well-signed outside and inside, with sufficient seating and toilets, accessible elevators, ramps, railings and stairs, and non-slip floors.
- Public toilets outdoors and indoors are sufficient in number, clean, well-maintained and accessible.

Transportation

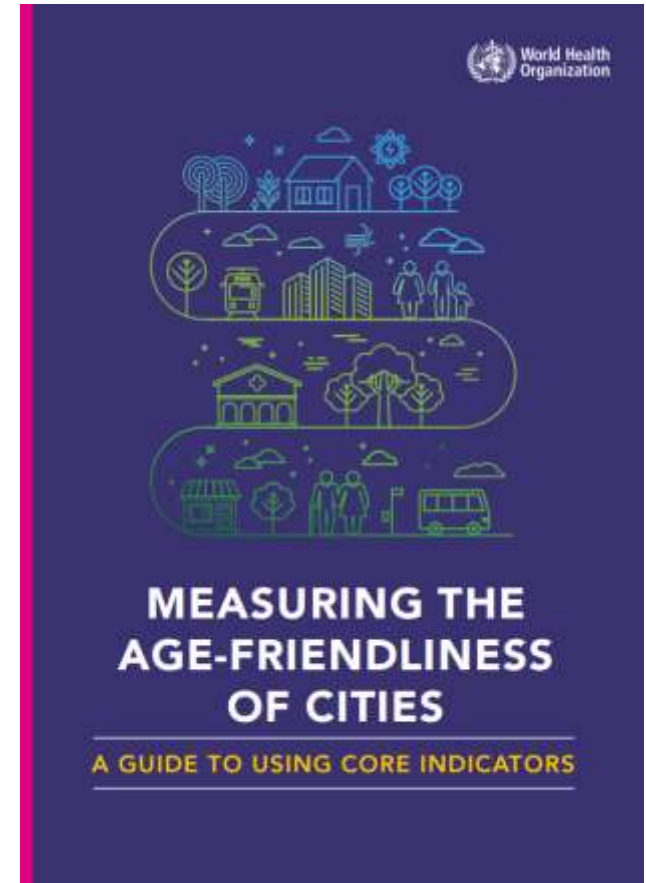
- Public transportation costs are consistent, clearly displayed and affordable.
- Public transportation is reliable and frequent, including at night and on weekends and holidays.
- All city areas and services are accessible by public transport, with good connections and well-marked routes and vehicles.

PAGE 1



Ideas, Tools and Resources – World Health Organization

- Checklist of Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities
- Global Database of Age-Friendly Practices
- Publications, Data, Research
- agefriendlyworld.org
- [WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities](#)



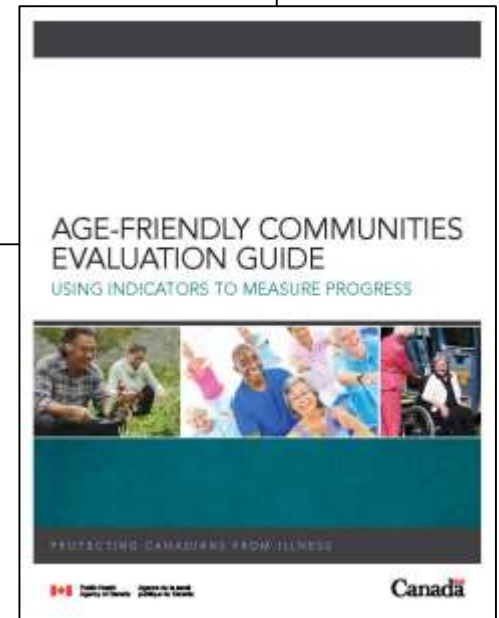
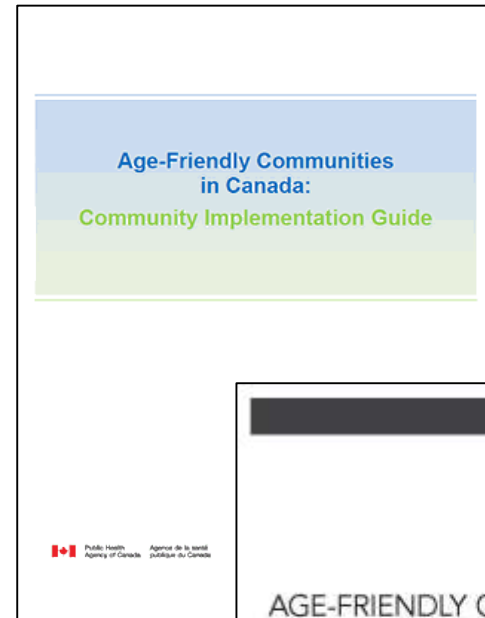
Ideas, Tools and Resources – Public Health Agency of Canada

Community Implementation Guide and Toolbox

- Guidance and sample materials for preparing an action plan

Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Guide

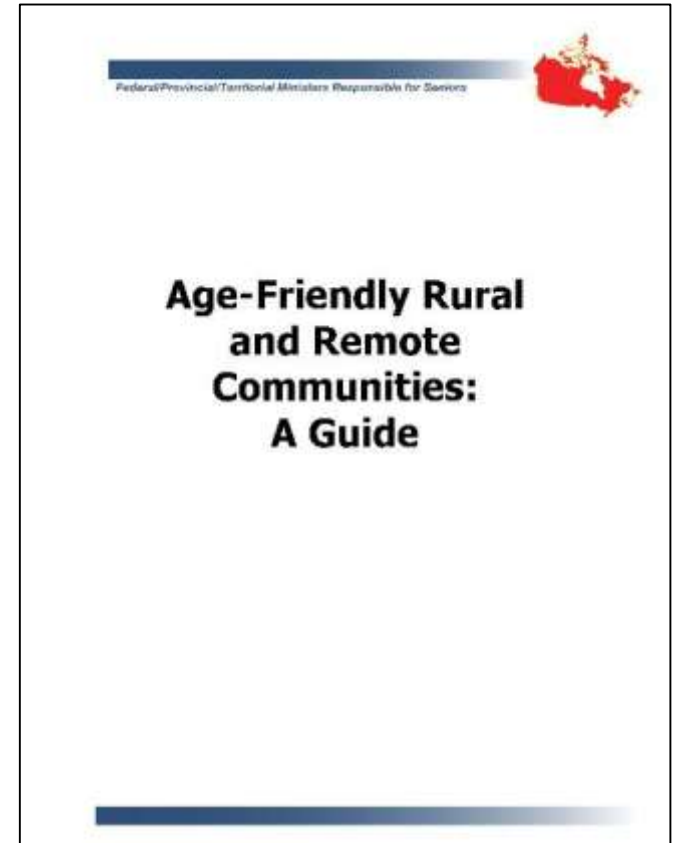
- Provides guidelines and sample indicators for evaluating age-friendly initiatives

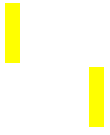


Ideas, Tools and Resources – Public Health Agency of Canada

Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities Guide

- Identified issues through focus groups in rural/remote communities across Canada
- Provides high level recommendations regarding each dimension of age friendly communities in a rural Canadian context





Discussion and Q&A

Thank You

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