

2024 COMMUNITY PROGRESS REPORT

2021-2026 HAMILTON'S PLAN FOR AN AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY



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FORWARD

We are excited to share the 2024 Age-Friendly Hamilton Community Progress Report—a celebration of the care, collaboration, and shared commitment that continue to shape our Age-Friendly Hamilton.

Since 2013, our community has come together to build a city where everyone can age with dignity, connection, and purpose. Guided by the City of Hamilton’s vision to be “the best place to raise a child and age successfully,” we have seen real momentum—driven by the everyday efforts of people like you.

To be Age-Friendly means creating communities where people of all ages and abilities feel valued, included, and supported. It is about ensuring that older adults can stay active, connected, and engaged—no matter who they are or where they live.

This year’s Age-Friendly Hamilton community survey showed the incredible impact we can have when we work together. With a record 114 responses — including three times as many businesses as last year — we heard inspiring stories of action and innovation from across Hamilton. From older adults and students co-creating a housing guide, to new walking groups and dementia-friendly nature programs, to peer-led education sessions, these stories reflect the power of community spirit and collaboration. We also saw businesses offering transportation and at-home support for people returning from the hospital, new affordable housing for older Black and Indigenous adults, and efforts to prevent elder abuse and promote dignity and safety. These stories remind us that by coming together, we can build a stronger, more connected community for everyone.

A key focus this year has been advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). We know that the experience of aging is not the same for everyone. Our shared goal is to ensure that Age-Friendly Hamilton reflects and serves the full diversity of our community—across race, culture, income, language, ability, gender identity, and lived experience. This includes engaging more voices, breaking down barriers to participation, and working together to create spaces where all older adults feel welcome, safe, and heard.

Whether you have shared a story, supported a neighbour, championed a program, or made your space more welcoming—thank you for being part of this journey. This report is a reflection of your efforts. Together, we are creating our Age-Friendly Hamilton.

Warm regards,

Angie Armstrong
Chair, Age-Friendly Hamilton



Penelope Petrie, Chair, Seniors Advisory Committee and Angie Armstrong, Chair, Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee

VISION STATEMENT

Hamilton's Plan for an Age-Friendly Community (2021-2026) builds on Hamilton's first Age-Friendly plan, where we have maintained a consistent vision for moving forward. Creating a more Age-Friendly Hamilton is a shared responsibility that requires coordinated advocacy and planning commitments from all three levels of government, the private sector, the non-profit sectors, and the community. In implementing this plan, Hamilton will become a better place for people to live, play, work, learn, raise a child, and grow old when:



All residents of Hamilton are respected in community life regardless of age, ethnicity, race, gender, ability, and background. Policy and planning engages residents, reflects diversity, fosters social connectivity, and provides the opportunity for active living and aging in place. Social connectivity links people to each other, places and services thus advancing health and well-being, which increasing the city's social capital.

PRINCIPLES

1. Creating supportive and enabling environments where hospitality is practiced, and accessibility is the norm.
2. Optimizing opportunities for health, participation, security, and life-long learning across the life cycle. Health refers to physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being.
3. Equity, inclusion, and respect; recognizing the diversity of older adults including their wide range of interests, cultural practices, capacities, and resources while reducing barriers to social connectivity that result from differences.
4. Building a dementia-friendly community in which dementia-friendly environments, opportunities and supports for individuals living with dementia and their care partners are understood and fully integrated into the overall Age-Friendly Plan.
5. An informed community that practices accountability and transparency while facilitating personal, social and system connectivity.
6. Community and neighbourhood capacity building.
7. Effective public service, delivered with integrity, that is adaptive, dynamic and uses an equity and inclusion lens and that is responsive to individual and collective needs as well as emerging opportunities while delivering value for money spent.
8. Community engagement, where people have meaningful opportunities to have a say 20 in designing services and influencing decisions that affect them.

STRATEGIC GOALS





Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Engagement at the 2024 Seniors Kick off Event

BUILDING OUR INCLUSIVE AGE-FRIENDLY HAMILTON

In 2024, Age-Friendly Hamilton took important steps to strengthen our commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility . We partnered with an external consultant to develop an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy that identified 14 priority areas and 11 indicators of success. The recommendations were shaped by the voices of older adults and community partners and will guide how we connect, communicate, and collaborate in the future.

Together, we hosted two inspiring engagement events:

- A focused session with 74 older adults and community leaders, where participants shared valuable insights to help shape more inclusive approaches.
- A vibrant outreach at the Seniors Month Kickoff, where 800 older adults came together to celebrate community and learn more about the Age-Friendly initiative and its goals.

The ideas and lived experiences shared at these events formed the foundation of a recommendation report that will feed into the development of a new Communications and Engagement Strategy in 2025. One that reflects the diversity of our community and creates more opportunities for everyone to feel heard, included, and empowered.

At the heart of Age-Friendly Hamilton is a shared vision: to build a city where all older adults are listened to, feel valued, and truly belong.

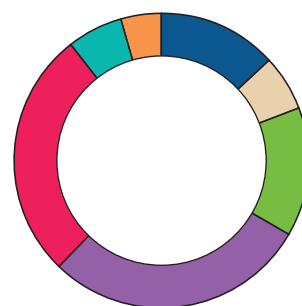
AGE-FRIENDLY HAMILTON SUCCESS SURVEY RESULTS

BY YEAR	2024	2023	2022	2021
Total Submissions	114	81	50	23

SUCCESS STORIES BY GOAL:

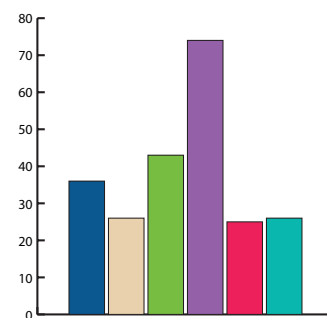
AF GOAL

GOAL 1 (Housing):	15
GOAL 2 (Transportation):	7
GOAL 3 (Information & Communication):	16
GOAL 4 (Health & Community Services):	33
GOAL 5 (Social Participation):	31
GOAL 6 (Civic Engagement, Volunteerism & Employment):	7
GOAL 7 (Outdoor Spaces):	5



OLDER ADULT INVOLVEMENT IN SUCCESS STORY

	Percentage
Advisors:	36%
Leaders:	26%
Volunteers:	43%
Clients:	74%
Employees:	25%
Customers:	26%

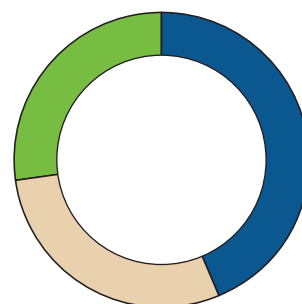


(Note: Older adults could have participated in multiple roles. For example, as an advisor and volunteer)

RESOURCES CONTRIBUTING TO THE SUCCESS STORY

Survey respondents could indicate if older adults were involved in multiple roles.

	Percentage
Financial contributions:	73%
Volunteer Contributions:	49%
In-kind Contributions:	45%



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AGE-FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

Building on the World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Communities framework, an Age-Friendly business creates an inclusive and accessible environment that meets the needs of older adults. This year, we were thrilled to receive 18 submissions from businesses across Hamilton, a substantial increase from last year. By sharing programs, services, and success stories that support older adults, we are learning from one another and discovering creative ways to make our community more welcoming, accessible and inclusive. We are also encouraged by the many businesses using their expertise to give back to the community. Let's keep the momentum going! Together, we are making Hamilton an even better place to age successfully!

2024 AGE-FRIENDLY HAMILTON SUCCESS STORIES

Thank you to the following organizations for your contributions to this report and for your important work in helping to make Hamilton an Age-Friendly community.

GOAL 1 - HOUSING 	
ORGANIZATION	SUCCESS STORY
Flamborough Connects Snow Angels	Offers a free volunteer snow removal program for low-income seniors in Waterdown. It helps prevent accidents, ensures safety, and fosters a sense of community by assisting those who struggle with snow removal during the winter months.
Homeshare Alliance	Provides support for seniors and homeowners considering home sharing as a viable housing option, helping to guide both parties through the process and better understand each other's needs.
Amica Dundas	Offers short-term respite stays with fully furnished suites, chef-prepared meals, wellness support, and daily activities. This service supports recovery, caregiver breaks, or a trial of the lifestyle in a comfortable and independent setting.
City of Hamilton	The City launched several initiatives to support senior housing: 1. Renovates Secondary Suites Program- A forgivable loan for creating accessible suites. 2. Ontario Renovates Program- Loans for home repairs and accessibility modifications for seniors. 3. Tenant Support Program- Legal support to defend against eviction and rent increases. 4. Housing Emergency Fund- Financial aid for overdue rent, last month's rent, and utilities.
Glowinski Occupational Therapy Services	Provides one-on-one support for seniors and families in housing transitions, including exploring community housing options and home adaptations, with a focus on health and well-being.
Hamilton Community Legal Clinic	Offers free legal advice for low-income senior tenants facing housing-related issues, ensuring seniors understand their rights and resolve conflicts with landlords.
Ladies of Royal LePage	The Ladies of Royal LePage are Certified Senior Real Estate Specialists with over 95 years of combined experience, dedicated to helping mature adults navigate housing transitions with confidence. For more than a decade, they have taken a concierge-style approach—supporting clients from start to finish—with a strong focus on education, emotional readiness, and informed decision-making. They also offer free public sessions to help seniors and their families better understand their options and feel empowered throughout the process.
Parkland Ancaster	A new retirement community in the heart of Ancaster that offers a full continuum of care, ensuring seniors can stay with their partners, while receiving the care they need in a supportive environment that adapts to their evolving wellness needs.

GOAL 1 - HOUSING



ORGANIZATION	SUCCESS STORY
Seasons Retirement Communities	Provides a range of retirement living options including independent living, supportive living, assisted living, and memory care. It includes modern amenities such as an indoor walking track, fitness room, home theatre, and café.
Seniors Advisory Committee	In collaboration with McMaster University and City Lab, the committee developed a comprehensive housing guide for seniors, including various housing options, financial benefits, home safety, and additional resources.
Shalom Village	Offers assisted living apartments, providing a supportive environment that promotes independence while offering access to care and services. The community includes essential amenities, 24/7 staff support, Kosher meals, housekeeping, and optional home care services. These apartments are part of the broader Shalom Village nonprofit campus of care, which also provides adult day programs, long-term care, and various community programs and services. Operating within the context of Jewish values, Shalom Village welcomes and celebrates individuals of all cultures, faiths and backgrounds.
St. Matthew's House	Secured funding to build a 15-unit development for Black and Indigenous seniors, offering culturally respectful affordable housing with support services. Scheduled to open in August 2025.

GOAL 2 - TRANSPORTATION



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
- Ancaster Community Services - Dundas Community Services - Flamborough Connects, - Glanbrook Community Services	These local agencies enable hundreds of older adults to remain independent through safe, affordable, volunteer-driven transportation. Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) Bus 
Cycling Without Age – Hamilton and Burlington	In 2024, Cycling without Age provided over 1,500 joy-filled rides, a 50% increase from last year. By expanding to include riders with disabilities and increasing routes to 11 locations, more people experienced nature, community, and connection.
Hamilton Street Railway (HSR)	HSR is developing a new tool to better understand who uses transit and where. This will support improved planning and accessibility, ensuring older adults are better served by public transportation.
Home Instead Hamilton	The “Hospital to Home” program offers free rides with caregiver support for seniors returning home from hospital. This reduces stress for families and lowers the risk of readmission.

GOAL 3 - INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
Computer Help for Adults	Tech Tuesdays offers free one-on-one tech support to seniors for phones, tablets, and laptops which helps to boost digital confidence and reduce tech-related isolation.
Flamborough Connects (FC)	Their Income Tax Program provides free, year-round tax prep for seniors. Trained volunteers handle current and past returns. Education sessions offered to seniors are free, expert-led talks on wellness, tech, and planning. They promote learning, reduce isolation, and empower informed decisions.
Hamilton Aging in Community	Through their monthly e-newsletter, Hamilton Aging in Community shares vital information and highlight up-coming community events and programs, ensuring that older adults stay connected and informed about opportunities to learn, engage with, and contribute to the broader community.
Hamilton Council on Aging (HCoA)	The Seniors4Change Program, funded by the United Way, delivered peer-led workshops benefitting 1223 seniors. Topics included Positive Aging, Healthcare Navigation, Let's Get Moving, and Advance Care Planning. Workshops are led by older adult volunteers with lived and professional experience.
Hamilton Public Library	Offers information and communication hubs for older adults with the Red Book directory, home library delivery, digital literacy support, and in-branch programming. Staff help seniors access trusted information and stay connected.
Hamilton Public Library and the Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee	The Red Book, managed by the Hamilton Public Library is an online directory that connects residents to community services in Hamilton. Since 2023, the Age-Friendly Community Progress Survey asked respondents if they would like their organization added to the Redbook, therefore increasing the number of community organizations included in this valuable resource. In 2023, there were 17 new or updated listings, and 23 in 2024.
Heather Watson, Agro Zaffiro LLP	Heather Watson is a lawyer practising in elder law. Currently with Agro Zaffiro LLP, she will be opening her own practice to better serve her clients and the community. It is important to Heather for her office space to be accessible to her clients which is why she'll offer private parking and ramp access. She will continue to provide advice and advocacy relating to issues that older adults often face. Watson Estates will open to the public October 1, 2025.
Masha Brar Law Professional Corporation	Masha Brar shared information about its Age-Friendly Legal Access initiative, designed to support older adults with their legal needs. The firm says it offers clear, caring guidance and makes services more accessible by providing home and hospital visits. They also highlight a focus on helping protect clients and making legal planning easier and more comfortable.

GOAL 3 - INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA)	VOICE, an online platform connects the community to aging research, events, and participation opportunities. The McMaster Optimal Aging Portal provides free, evidence-based content to help seniors and caregivers make informed decisions.
Meridian Credit Union	Meridian Credit Union offers expert financial planning and retirement readiness advice on budgeting, saving, understanding taxes, and maximizing public pension benefits. Meridian also provides personalized support in building private savings through RRSPs and TFSAs, helping individuals design strategies that align with their unique financial goals.
Mishka Social Services	The Seniors Program offers free rotating 6-week education sessions on computer literacy and elder abuse awareness. Participants receive laptops during sessions, refreshments, and a certificate.
New Motto	A local media company who specializes in designing user-friendly websites. They ensure digital platforms meet the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), making them accessible to all, including seniors by focusing on clear fonts, strong color contrast, and easy navigation.
Regional Geriatric Program Central	In 2024, the Regional Geriatric Program Central launched a refreshed, more accessible website to better serve older adults, caregivers, and healthcare providers. Featuring an interactive map of services, an events calendar, and easy-to-read resources. The site was designed with community input to support Age-Friendly care across Hamilton and beyond.



Hamilton Council on Aging's Seniors4Change Program



Hamilton Public Library

GOAL 4 - HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
Able Living, Thrive Group	The Transition Bed Program offers transitional beds within the city to those who are typically the most marginalized in the community and often unhoused, have chronic diseases, and have been in the hospital system for quite some time.
Afro Canadian Caribbean Association	The Age Well at Home program supports seniors to maintain their independence and age in place with dignity. Through various services including house cleaning, wellness calls, friendly home visits, help with gardening/snow removal, and transportation to medical appointments, the program helps reduce isolation and ensures that older adults can remain safe, connected, and cared for in their own homes.
Aging Swallow Research Lab and The Alzheimer Society	In partnership, McMaster University's Aging Swallow Research Lab and the Alzheimer's Society hosted the "Preparing for Mealtime Changes" event in June 2024. It addressed mealtime challenges in dementia, including swallowing issues and caregiver stress with expert insights and recipe demonstrations. Over 90% of attendees found it valuable, and the event will return this summer. McMaster University's Aging Swallow Research Lab investigates swallowing difficulties in older adults. By offering comprehensive assessments and clinical reports, the lab provides timely information to participants while reducing healthcare wait times. Their research supports the work of speech-language pathologists and physicians, improving care for individuals with swallowing challenges globally.
Bladder Cancer Canada	Bladder cancer, traditionally affecting older males, is now increasingly seen in younger individuals and females. In response, Bladder Cancer Canada revived its monthly support groups, offering both in-person sessions at the Wellwood Centre and virtual meetings via Zoom. The online forum was also updated to improve accessibility with new categories to help patients feel more comfortable asking questions and sharing experiences.
Cancer Assistance Program (CAP)	The Cancer Assistance Program (CAP) supports cancer patients and caregivers with emotional, financial, and practical assistance. Based in Hamilton, CAP connects individuals to local resources to ease the challenges of a cancer diagnosis. The Cultivating Connection Project is aimed to reduce social isolation among senior volunteers, enhance their social connections, and support their emotional and mental well-being through a robust program of engagement opportunities. By offering inclusive, educational, and wellness-focused workshops, CAP will create meaningful ways for seniors to stay connected, valued, and involved. The program also provides opportunities for continued learning and community building, ensuring volunteers feel supported and empowered.

GOAL 4 - HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
City of Hamilton Community Paramedicine Program	Community Paramedicine is a proactive healthcare model delivered by paramedics that focuses on preventative care, chronic disease management, and supporting aging in place. It includes home visits, wellness checks, medication management, post-discharge follow-ups, and health service navigation. In 2024, the program served 1,106 patients, reducing 911 calls from high-use seniors by 38% and achieving a 94% satisfaction score. Through partnerships with hospitals, primary care, and social agencies, the program ensures accessible, comprehensive care and supports seniors in their own homes.
City of Hamilton, Public Health Services and McMaster University	The Embolden Mandarin Program is a 12-week initiative that improved mobility, nutrition, social connection, and system navigation for older adults. Delivered in Mandarin across eight Hamilton neighbourhoods, the program concluded in 2024 after reaching priority communities.
Dementia Empowerment Network	The Dementia Empowerment Groups Project (2023-2025), funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, created four engagement groups in Hamilton with 26 active members. This year, the Hamilton Coffee Club and New Friends Café displayed artwork at Caledonia Public Library and organized a social event at Sackville Hill to collaborate on a toolkit for new dementia empowerment groups, set to release in early summer.
Distress Centre Halton	Distress Centre Halton's Tele Check program provides free, confidential daily calls to support older adults in Hamilton, offering emotional support, safety checks, and referrals to reduce isolation and promote well-being.
Dundas Community Services	The Dundas Caregiver Support Group provides caregivers with a confidential and supportive environment to connect and share their experiences. In a facilitated, informal setting, members openly discuss their challenges, successes, and emotions, finding strength and encouragement through shared understanding and mutual support.
Ears To You	In 2024, Ears To You launched its mobile hearing clinic, providing convenient hearing solutions directly in the comfort of your home. As a local service, Ears To You brings expert care and support to Hamilton residents.
Gilbrea Centre for Studies in Aging	This project examined the impact of monthly nature-based sessions for people living with dementia and their care partners, building on a co-designed pilot with Gilbrea Centre's Dementia SHARE group. From April to December 2024, participants engaged in guided walks, nature art, tours, and farm visits, fostering connection, well-being, and outdoor engagement.

GOAL 4 - HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
GERAS Centre for Aging Research	The Cognitive Assessment Tools (CAT) workshop, reviewed and endorsed by McMaster University, is a half day event for healthcare providers to learn how to effectively use common cognitive assessment tools in clinical practice. Led by geriatric experts, the workshop covers tools, helping participants understand when and why to use these assessments.
Good Shepherd Centres, SAM Aphasia Program	Aphasia, a language disorder often caused by brain injury such as a stroke or the degenerative condition Primary Progressive Aphasia, affects communication and can lead to social isolation and depression. The SAM Aphasia Pro-gram's Supported Conversation Groups, led by a speech-language pathologist, help individuals with aphasia en-gage socially and connect with their community.
Greater Hamilton Health Network	The Greater Hamilton Health Network (GHHN) is a collaboration of hospitals, community health organizations, and healthcare providers aimed at improving healthcare coordination in the region. As part of its 2024 Strategic Plan, GHHN is prioritizing initiatives that support older adults, including Integrated Care Pathways, modernizing home care to promote aging in place, and enhancing digital health tools and patient navigation services. These efforts make it easier for older adults to access the care and resources they need, ensuring that older adults in Hamilton receive high-quality, coordinated healthcare.
Hamilton Health Sciences	The Hamilton Health Sciences Seniors Council strength-ens leading practices in older adult care. Initiatives in-clude enhanced staff education, a Senior Friendly Care Dashboard, and showcasing best practices across de-partments. Programs include the Geriatric Rehabilitation Unit, Hospital Elder Life Program, Centre for Healthy Ag-ing, and specialized inpatient/outpatient teams.
Hamilton Police Services, St. Joseph's Healthcare, City of Hamilton Paramedic Services	Hamilton Police Services, St. Joseph's Healthcare, and Hamilton Paramedic Services launched Zachary's Legacy; a new downtown centre focused on mental health out-reach. Named in memory of Zachary Antidormi, whose tragic death in 1997 led to the creation of a groundbreak-ing partnership between St. Joseph's mental health teams and police officers, the centre offers essential support for individuals in mental health crises. It unites mental health professionals, police, paramedics, and community part-ners to provide immediate care, wellness checks, and out-reach services throughout the community.
McMaster University	iGeriCare is a free online dementia education program offered by McMaster University, created by Dr. Richard Sztramko and Dr. Anthony Levinson. It offers 10 multimedia lessons, live events, and short e-learning snippets, providing caregivers and families with expert-led support on dementia.
Mishka Social Services	Mishka Social Services provides counselling services for older adults, including pro bono sessions and affordable therapy on an honor system, available in Somali, Arabic, Portuguese, Urdu, and Punjabi. They offer grief counsel-ing and drop-in consultations.

GOAL 4 - HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
Positive Health Network	Thanks to advances in treatment, people with HIV can now live long, healthy lives. As HIV becomes part of aging and geriatric care, training is available to help assisted living and other service providers better support older adults living with HIV.
Seniors at Risk in Hamilton (Good Shepherd Centres, St. Matthew's House, the Alzheimer Society)	The Seniors at Risk in Hamilton plays a vital role in improving the lives of older adults facing significant challenges such as elder abuse, mental and physical health concerns, food insecurity, precarious housing, social isolation, caregiver stress, or dementia. By providing coordinated interventions and a centralized referral system, the program ensures seniors receive the timely support and services they need. In the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the program exceeded expectations, assisting approximately 600 seniors, directly impacting the well-being of the community. This success highlights the power of collaboration in fostering a safer, healthier environment for older adults.
Smith's Funeral Home	Smith's Funeral Home is dedicated to supporting the community by offering preplanning services that empower individuals to make informed decisions about end-of-life care. In addition to this essential service, they provide a compassionate Aftercare Program, a free resource designed to help families navigate the complexities of post-loss tasks. This includes assistance with the application process for Canada Pension Benefits and other important steps, ensuring families have the support they need.
St. Joseph's Healthcare, Hamilton	St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton is improving care for older adults by identifying signs of frailty as soon as someone enters the hospital. By using a short two minute screening tool, healthcare staff can better understand a patient's needs early on. If the screening shows a person is at higher risk, they are referred to a nurse who specializes in senior care and a team that helps older adults avoid unnecessary hospital stays. Shared Care in Management of Responsive Behaviours in Post-Acute Care to address long wait times in Seniors Behavioural Health Units, St. Joseph's introduced weekly behavioural rounds with Geriatric Psychiatry, care planning updates, restraint reduction, environmental modifications, enhanced staffing, behavioural huddles, and transitions supported by Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) and recreational therapy. This approach improves care for older adults with complex behavioural needs post-acute care.
Stay at home Nursing	Stay at Home Nursing helps people deal with chronic conditions, ageing, and medical recovery in the comfort of their home. They ensure a unified, complete experience all the way from matching the optimal care and caregiver with the client, to being a trusted navigator, and helping the client and their family deal with the complex healthcare system.

GOAL 4 - HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
The Vine Care	The Vine Care's Age-Friendly Project focuses on enhancing the well-being and independence of older adults. The program offers skilled nurses, PSWs, and companions to assist seniors in their homes. By providing home care, wellness programs, and fostering community partnerships, the project ensures seniors receive the support they need to remain independent, engaged, and well-cared for.
Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) Hamilton	The VON Hamilton's Overnight Respite Program offers caregivers a break while their loved ones receive safe, engaging care, including personal support at the VON Adult Day Centre. Through the VON's eHomecare program, a registered nurse oversees and guides the work of a specially trained personal support worker, called a healthcare technician (HCT). HCT's deliver care in the client's home, acting as the eyes, ears, and hands of the registered nurse. The VON Hamilton's "From Stress to Strength" education series helps family caregivers manage stress, emotions, and access local resources while caring for seniors or adults with long-term conditions. Offered in various locations, the series empowers caregivers with tools and knowledge.
YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford	As part of the YMCA's strategic plan, the goal was to increase the number of seniors served in a commitment to lifelong health. This includes supporting seniors in priority neighbourhoods with enabled access to YMCA programs including specialized health programs, seniors fairs and recreational programs.
YWCA Hamilton, Hamilton Health Sciences, and McMaster University	The YMCA's LiveWell program, in partnership with Hamilton Health Sciences and McMaster University, offers health rehabilitation and education programs to help older adults manage chronic health conditions. Led by health professionals, programs like "Back to Living Well" focus on managing lower back pain, while "Balance+" works to improve strength and reduce the risk of falls. Additional programs, such as "Fit for Function" for stroke recovery and "In Motion" for joint or bone issues, provide professional guidance to help participants regain mobility and improve overall health.



Hamilton Paramedics

GOAL 5 - SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
Afro Canadian Caribbean Association	The Seniors Social program offers older adults a welcoming space to connect with others, enjoy excursions and cultural activities, and participate in an inclusive and supportive environment. Held twice a month, the program encourages fun, friendship, and the sharing of helpful information to support a fuller, more engaged life.
Art Gallery of Hamilton	Since 2011, Artful Moments has been delivering meaningful art experiences for individuals living with all stages of dementia, in both hospital and community settings. Artful Moments: Shared Learning became Canada's first e-learning platform specifically for arts programming for people living with dementia (PLWD). The platform offers modules and resources to help other organizations create similar programs.
Canadian Red Cross and Greater Hamilton Health Network	In partnership, have co-designed a system-wide service delivery model to increase health equity informed care and services. Financially Assisted Social Prescribing (FASP) is an innovative approach to bringing social prescribing to community organizations in Hamilton Wards 2, 3, and 4. Social prescribing is a person-centred approach where patients are connected to community organizations for non-clinical supports, including transportation, volunteering, and participation in arts, cultural or physical activities with the goal of reducing social isolation.
City of Hamilton, Recreation Division	Provided approximately \$5000 in free space at recreation centres for community groups to reserve for programming, workshops, and services for the 55+ population. <i>*Note: this number is much higher but unable to report due to the 2024 cyber security incident.</i> Supports the Ontario Senior Games Association (OSGA) 55+ Summer Games for District 22 Hamilton Wentworth. The Recreation Division provides space and support for a variety of the games to take place at seniors and recreation centres in Hamilton. Provides operating grants to two community organizations serving residents age 55+. These grants support greater reach and access for the 55+ population.

GOAL 5 - SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
City of Hamilton, Recreation Division	The Seniors Wellness Fair hosted over 35 organizations, community groups, services, and resources for adults 55 years and older. A total of 275 older adults attended, free of charge to get information about local services. The Recreation Division collaboratively operates six clubs and three recreation centres. The contributions made by the various senior centres and clubs ("Senior Boards") to the senior community helps to support and maintain a broad range of activities to improve the quality of life for older adults. During Senior's Month (June) the Recreation Division, in collaboration with a number of community partners offered free activities throughout the month specifically designed for older adults. These activities will be held across our recreation centers, providing opportunities for seniors to engage, connect, and enjoy themselves.
City of Hamilton, Macassa Lodge	Macassa Lodge hosted a joyful and inclusive Wedding Show, thoughtfully designed to meet residents' needs and ensure full participation. The event fostered social connection and personal meaning with one couple renewing their vows, reflecting the home's commitment to resident well-being through meaningful experiences. Macassa Lodge hosted a vibrant Spring Fling Prom for its residents by offering a joyful celebration with a special staff dance, elegant decorations, and music from various eras.
Dundas 55+ Group	Offer affordable recreation programs for residents aged 55+ living in Dundas. Some activities include ukulele classes and fitness sessions that are led by qualified instructors and supported by dedicated volunteers. They provide accessible, enriching experiences that enhance the well-being of older adults and foster strong community connections.
Dundas Community Services	The Friendly Calling program supports the independence and well-being of seniors and individuals living with disabilities in Hamilton by providing regular companionship through weekly phone calls.
Fitness Firm	Launched in March 2024, the Fitness Firm and yoga instructor Rhoda Reardon offer a free weekly chair yoga class for seniors, and in turn the senior participants bring a donation for a local food bank. This program focuses on improving flexibility, balance, and strength to reduce fall risks, and has grown in popularity.

GOAL 5 - SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
Flamborough Connects	Wheel of Fitness is a free, gentle fitness program led by trained senior volunteers to help older adults stay active and independent. Classes focus on strength, balance, flexibility, and everyday movements, and are offered at multiple locations across Flamborough. The annual Holiday Gift Program helps ensure low-income seniors feel remembered and included during the holiday season. Community members, businesses, and organizations donate gifts based on each senior's personal wish list. Donors and recipients remain anonymous, and a team of volunteer "elves" wrap and deliver the gifts in mid-December.
Glamour Gals, McMaster University	Student volunteers run monthly makeovers at a local retirement residence to offer residents companionship and a little bit of glamour in an effort to combat senior isolation.
Glanbrook Community Services	The Gentle Fit programs play a vital role in supporting seniors by improving physical health and creating a welcoming space where friendships can flourish. Participants benefit not only from expert guidance but also from the sense of community, which fosters resilience and emotional well-being.
Good Shepherd Centres	The Asian Seniors Group promotes community engagement, social networking, and addresses isolation through workshops on elder abuse prevention, senior benefits, safe housing, healthy eating, and mental health support. In 2025, the program will also support the development of technology skills among South Asian senior participants.
Hamilton Council on Aging (HCoA)	Launched in 2024 with funding from New Horizons Canada, "Let's Start a Walking Group" supports community-led walking groups for seniors across Hamilton. In partnership with the Hamilton Conservation Authority and City of Hamilton, HCoA is updating an Age-Friendly guide to 18 outdoor trails. The guide will be re-released at a 2025 social event, connecting senior walkers, and featuring a list of fun, free walking groups to join.
Hamilton Jewish Family Services	The Seniors Living Well Centre has become a vibrant community hub where older adults can engage in a wide range of activities that support their mind, body, soul, and sense of community. Offering programs such as functional fitness, meditation, hiking, tech support, cooking, and gardening, all activities are led by seniors for seniors, fostering empowerment and connection.
Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra (HPO)	The Seniors Connect program offers a safe, supportive environment for older adults to enjoy select HPO mainstage concerts at First Ontario Concert Hall. Complimentary tickets and transportation are provided, and participants and volunteers meet before the concert for light refreshments and conversation, fostering connections before enjoying the performance together.

GOAL 5 - SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
Hamilton Public Library	Hamilton Public Library's Mobile Library Services help seniors who are unable to visit a branch by bringing books, movies, and more directly to them. Bookmobiles visit residences weekly, while the Home Library Service delivers hand picked items by mail or courier. In 2024, staff ex-panded these services and ensured continued access during the mail strike.
Home Instead Hamilton	The "Be a Santa to a Senior" program is a seasonal initiative that collects donations and gifts from the community, aimed at spreading holiday cheer to seniors in need. Local long-term care and nursing homes, and senior communities where individuals may have limited family support or financial resources, are the program's primary focus. Through the generosity of the community, gifts are donated to these seniors, ensuring they experience the warmth and joy of the holiday season.
McKinnon HD	McKinnon HD Hair Salon offers more than just haircuts! The salon provides a socially enriching environment where clients feel valued and connected. With a warm, welcoming atmosphere, seniors not only receive expert styling but also build friendships and engage in meaningful conversations. The salon prioritizes inclusivity, offering a private, sensory friendly room for those seeking a quieter experience.
Mindfulness Hamilton and YWCA Hamilton	Mindfulness Hamilton offers free community meditations and affordable learning opportunities. In 2024, they partnered with the Putman Family YWCA Seniors Active Living Centre to provide a free weekly meditation class on Saturday mornings. This intergenerational class has brought together older adults and other community members, promoting relaxation, connection, and well-being for all participants.
Mishka Social Services	Offers a Seniors Wellness Program that provides friendly visiting and phone calls, conducted by staff and volunteers. The program offers culturally sensitive support and recreational activities aimed at reducing social isolation among seniors.



Dundas Community Services

GOAL 5 - SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
Senior bring-ing joy to oth-ers (shared by Ann Selemba)	When I'm out and about, if I spot a person who might speak Spanish, I ask, "Do you speak Spanish" and then I tell them I have a little joke that I know from Venezuela from 70 years ago. "Empanadas calientes, Para las viejas que no tienen dientes". It always gets a laugh, and some say: "You've made my day". By making small efforts to bring joy to those around us, we help build a more Age-Friendly and connected community.
Seniors So-cializing While Playing Cards (shared by Barry Spin-ner)	"You enter the common room. There they are, about sixty seniors focused on a hand of cards. This generation grew up with card games, finding joy in simple decks and board games. Across Hamilton, in recreation centres, church halls, apartment party rooms, and homes, seniors gather to play their favorite games. Some games are quiet; others are lively. It all depends on the organizers. What I love about these scenes is the sense of fun and connection. These seniors aren't just staying home, they're out, socializing, and enjoying life. And most often, the game is local, just a short walk away. I play a complex version of contract bridge, but euchre and cribbage are equally popular. At our bridge game, about fifty people gather at formal card tables, four per table. If you don't know bridge, think of it as "Euchre on Steroids!" Card games are widely available throughout the city. Check out the City of Hamilton's Social Participation Resource Guide or Hamilton Vibe to find a game near you!
The Hindu Samaj, Sen-iors Wellness Club	The weekly Hindu Samaj Seniors Wellness Club promotes physical, mental, and social well-being through yoga, meditation, Tai Chi, and light exercises. Participants also enjoy card games, dancing, art, guest speakers, and educational sessions like computer classes. Laughing yoga adds fun, while the club provides a welcoming space for seniors to connect, stay active, and enjoy refreshments and meals together.
Welcome Inn	The Seniors Diners Club gathers approximately 50 seniors weekly for a home cooked meal and activities, fostering strong relationships that create a supportive atmosphere.

GOAL 6 - CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
Seniors Kick off Event	A collaboration of the City of Hamilton, Hamilton Council on Aging, and Seniors Advisory Committee, is hosted in June during Senior's Month. In 2024, this event hosted approximately 800 older adults and featured 71 exhibitors.
City of Hamilton, Senior of the Year Awards	In 2024, the 29th annual Senior of the Year Awards was hosted. Over 300 attendees gathered to celebrate and honour 19 nominees. The program celebrates seniors age 65+ who have made outstanding voluntary contributions to the social, cultural, or civic life of the Hamilton community.
City of Hamilton, Trillium Awards	This awards program promotes community pride by recognizing beautiful property landscaping. Older adults serve as volunteer judges, fostering intergenerational connection and community pride.
Gilbrea Centre and McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA)	The Intergenerational Club gives older adult community members and McMaster students the opportunity to learn from each other and share their interests and life experiences.
McMaster Continuing Education (shared by Bayla Fishman)	"I'm 75 and moved to Dundas 4 1/2 years ago with my husband. If you're over 65 in Ontario, you can take courses at universities for free. You can take them for credit but I'm just auditing them. I've been taking one French course per year at McMaster since I moved here, and I love it."
McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA)	In 2024, MIRA launched a year long initiative to make universities more welcoming to older adults, starting with community sessions at local libraries and culminating in the first Older Adult Open Campus Day. Participants explored unique spaces like the planetarium, LIVELab, and greenhouse, sparking strong engagement and meaningful connections with the university.
Putman Family YWCA 55+ Active Living Centre	The Give Back program offers older adults the chance to give and receive knowledge and skills. Retired professionals share their expertise during lunch and learn sessions with topics like nutrition and art, while the program's boutique, stocked with gently loved clothing donated by members, provides a meaningful volunteer opportunity, and supports the community.



Seniors Advisory Committee at the 2024 Seniors Kick off Event

GOAL 7 - OUTDOOR SPACES



ORGANIZATION	AGE-FRIENDLY SUCCESS STORY
Capability Support Services - Thrive Group	The Backyard Rubberized Surface Project, located at 107 Apple blossom Drive congregate living site was transformed with rubber surfacing, raised planters, outdoor seating, and a new ramp, therefore making it safe, welcoming, and accessible for older residents and their visiting friends.
Crown Point Garden Club- Our Lady of Vietnam Church, and Green Venture	Community members came together to revitalize the Kenilworth DePave Garden, located between Cannon and Britannia. Volunteers from Green Venture, Our Lady of Vietnam Church, and local residents joined forces to weed, clean, and prepare the space for the growing season. The effort fostered intergenerational connection, active outdoor engagement, and a shared commitment to creating a welcoming, accessible green space for all.
Hamilton Conservation Authority	Launched new trail signage at Eramosa Karst with maps, trail info, safety tips, and QR codes, therefore enhancing accessibility and navigation for all visitors. Opened West Wetlands Trail at Saltfleet Conservation Area, expanding access to outdoor recreation. Improved accessibility and safety across multiple trail sites by rebuilding entrances, upgrading signage, resurfacing roads, and parking, replacing boardwalks and lookout platforms, and adding accessible beach trails and picnic areas.

MOVING FORWARD

In 2025, Age-Friendly Hamilton is developing a Communications and Engagement Strategy to better connect with and listen to the community. Our goal is to raise awareness and ensure inclusive, meaningful messaging that reflects the needs of older adults and diverse stakeholders across Hamilton. Rooted in equity, diversity, accessibility and inclusion, this strategy will guide how we engage older adults and collaborate with community partners and businesses. It will also lay the foundation for broader consultation as we begin reaching out to shape Hamilton's third Age-Friendly Plan in 2026.

We invite all Hamiltonians and community partners to join us on this exciting journey, and we warmly thank those already walking alongside us as we work together to build our Age-Friendly Hamilton.

THANK YOU

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**SENIORS ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**