

Town of Midland Age-Friendly Community Plan

December 2020



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Town of Midland Age-Friendly Community Plan was undertaken on behalf of the Town of Midland. The Plan was created with the support and direction of Staff, Council, and the Midland Seniors Council. A special thanks and appreciation also to the community residents and organizations who shared their personal experiences and insights to inform this Plan. The experiences of all contributors have provided guidance in developing a vision and path that will lead the Town of Midland in becoming a more age-friendly community for all.

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THANK-YOU.

The Town of Midland Age-Friendly Community Plan was facilitated by Jodi Ball, J Consulting Group



With support provided by



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OUR AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLAN

INTRODUCTION

As Canada’s senior population continues to grow, it is more important than ever to support the health and wellbeing of older Canadians. That is why the Town of Midland, like other communities across Simcoe County, is taking steps to become a more age-friendly community, where all residents can be active and engaged members of the community at every stage of life.

AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

An age-friendly community is designed to help people live safely, enjoy good health, and stay involved. As part of its [Global Age-friendly Cities Project, the World Health Organization](#) (WHO) identifies eight key themes (foundations) of community life that can become more age-friendly:

1. Outdoor spaces and buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Respect and social inclusion
5. Civic participation and employment
6. Communication and information
7. Community support and health services
8. Social participation



COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS

The age-friendly community plan process involved completing a background review of existing policies and strategies, preparing an age-friendly profile, and engaging residents in age-friendly community planning.

Phase 1: Background Research (April - May 2020)	Phase 2: Community Engagement (June – September 2020)	Phase 3: Age Friendly Plan (October – December 2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project launch • Review of background documents and data • Community age-friendly profile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated webpage • Online community survey • Age friendly focus groups • Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Plan (including vision, principles & actions) • Workshop • Final Age Friendly Community Plan

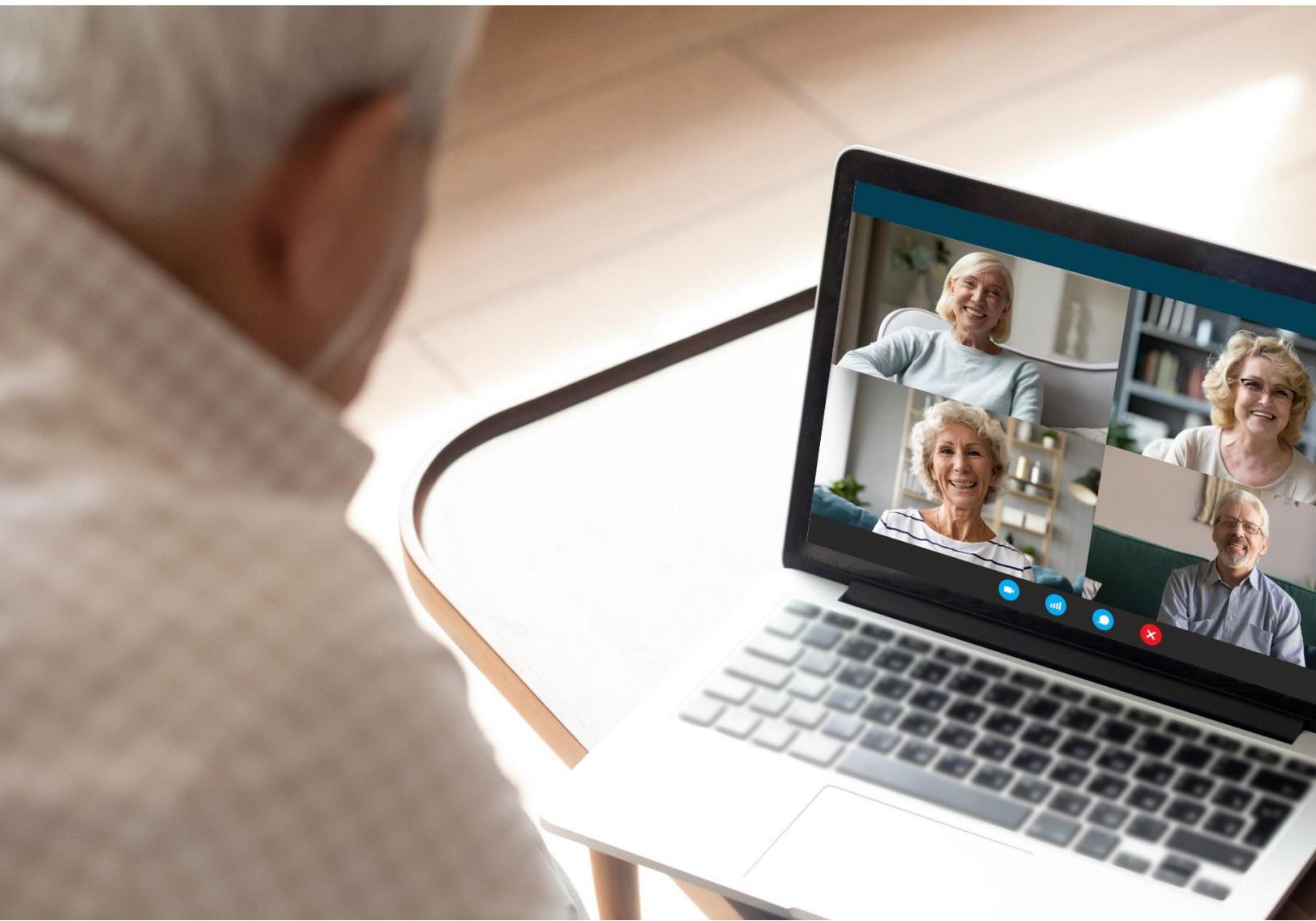
ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with the community was conducted to gather feedback on priorities, issues and opportunities related to age friendliness, and the eight key foundations of an age friendly community as defined by WHO. Community engagement occurred from June 24 through to September 11, 2020.

Opportunities to provide feedback included an online community survey and workbook for residents, focus groups with key stakeholders, interviews with community partners, and meetings with the Midland Seniors Council.

Project promotion and engagement opportunities were advertised and shared through the following methods:

- Project website
- Emails to stakeholders
- Advertising in the Midland Mirror
- Social media posts including Twitter and Facebook

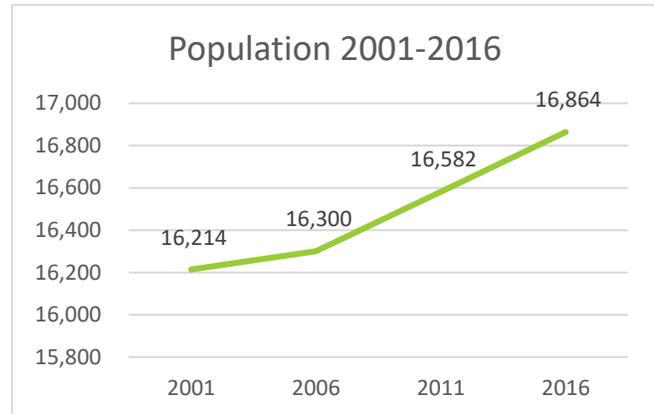


COMMUNITY PROFILE

A number of key demographic indicators, such as population by age, as well as household characteristics and income levels of older adults, can help provide further context in planning for a more age-friendly community.

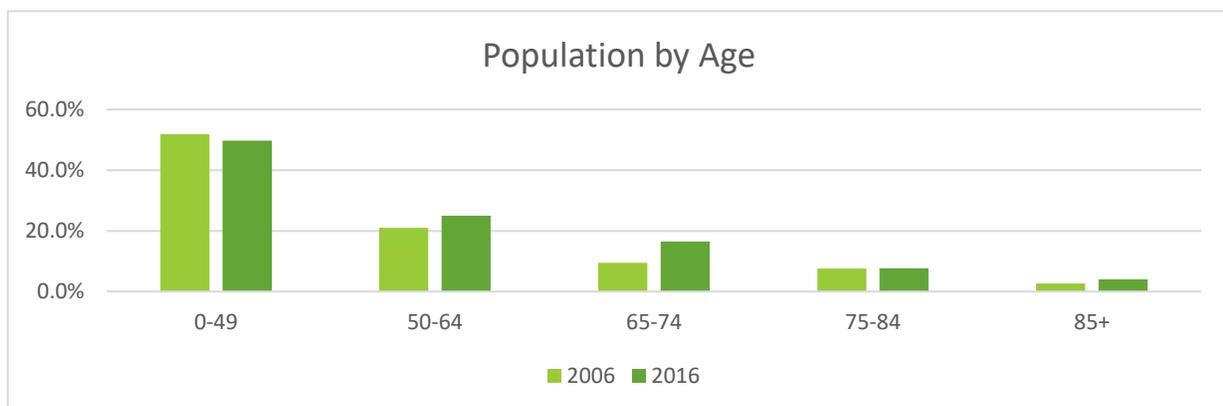
POPULATION GROWTH

Between 2001 and 2016, the Town of Midland's population grew by 650 persons, from 16,214 to 16,864 (Statistics Canada, Census, 2001-2016). Midland saw gradual, consistent growth over the 15 years prior to the last Census (2016), growing by 4.0%. Its growth has been slower than other municipalities in the County of Simcoe, which saw an overall population growth of 27.2%. Midland's growth has also been slower than the province of Ontario as a whole, which saw a 17.9% growth over the period.



Over three quarters (77.1%) of Midland's population has European origins (Statistics Canada, Census, 2016) (people may report more than one ethnic origin). Many also have North American origins (39.3%). Of note, Midland has a significantly larger proportion of its population with Indigenous origins than Ontario, at 17.1% for Midland compared to only 3.9% for Ontario. One in 10 (10.2%) Midland residents has Métis origins and one in 14 have First Nations origins.

Most of Midland's older adults were born in Canada. Just 10% of its population age 55 to 64 and 17.7% of its population age 65 and over are immigrants (Statistics Canada, Census, 2016). Most immigrants have been in Canada for some time. Only 0.3% of Midland's older ages age 55 and over had migrated to Canada in the past 10 years.

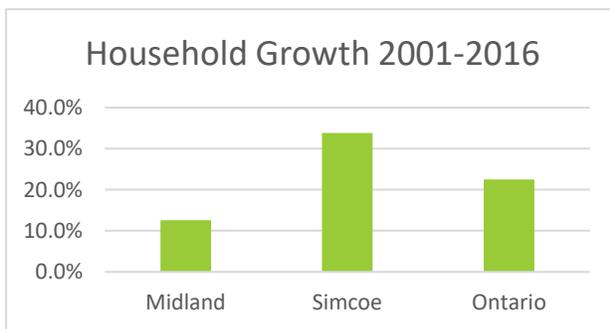


Just over half (50.2%) of Midland’s population is age 50 and over (6,660 people) (Statistics Canada, Census, 2016). One quarter (25.2%) are age 65 and over, while 11.7% are age 75 and over, and 4.0% are age 85 and over.

Midland has an older population than both Simcoe County and Ontario. Adults age 50 and over accounted for 38.2% of Ontario’s population and 40.7% of Simcoe County’s population in 2016, compared to 50.2% in Midland (Statistics Canada, Census, 2016). There was a similar pattern for Midland’s population 65 years and over. Adults age 65 and over-represented 16.7% of Ontario’s population and 18.0% of Simcoe County’s, compared to 25.2% of Midland’s population.

HOUSEHOLD GROWTH

Midland saw steady gradual growth in its number of households between 2001 and 2016, with an increase of 825 households or 12.6% (Statistics Canada, Census, 2001-2016). Ontario and Simcoe County both saw higher growth rates in the number of households, at 22.5% and 33.8%, respectively.



On average, household maintainers between the ages of 25 and 54 in Midland live with more than one other person – likely including at least one child (Statistics Canada, Census, 2016). Adults ages 55 and 64 are most likely to live with one other person, while the average household size of household maintainers over the age of 65 falls below two people.

The number of older adults living alone rises with age. Just over one quarter (26.4%) of adult household maintainers ages 45 to 54 live alone. This rises to over one third for adults ages 55 to 64 (34.5%) and 65 to 74 (34.6%), and 42.3% of adults age 75 to 84. More than half (54%) of adult household maintainers age 85 and over live alone.

PREVALENCE OF LOW INCOME

The prevalence of low income (based on Statistics Canada’s measure of Low-Income Status) among Midland residents is relatively consistent among various subgroups by age up to age 64, but drops for those age 65 and over to 13.3% (Statistics Canada, Census, 2016). This compares to 17.9%-18.8% for different age ranges between the ages of 18 and 64.

COMMUNITY NEED

Through the age-friendly community planning process, residents, stakeholders, and staff explored in detail each of the eight WHO foundations of an age-friendly community. Community members were asked to share their experiences and stories, and to help identify current strengths, challenges, and opportunities to improve the overall age-friendliness of the Town.

The results of these conversations and shared insights, as well as findings from the review of documents and community profile data, are presented in the following sections. A community response to the identified priorities is also identified for each of the age-friendly themes in the following sections.

Descriptions of the WHO Age-Friendly Dimensions, shared below, are from the [Ontario Age-Friendly Community Planning Guide](#).



OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS

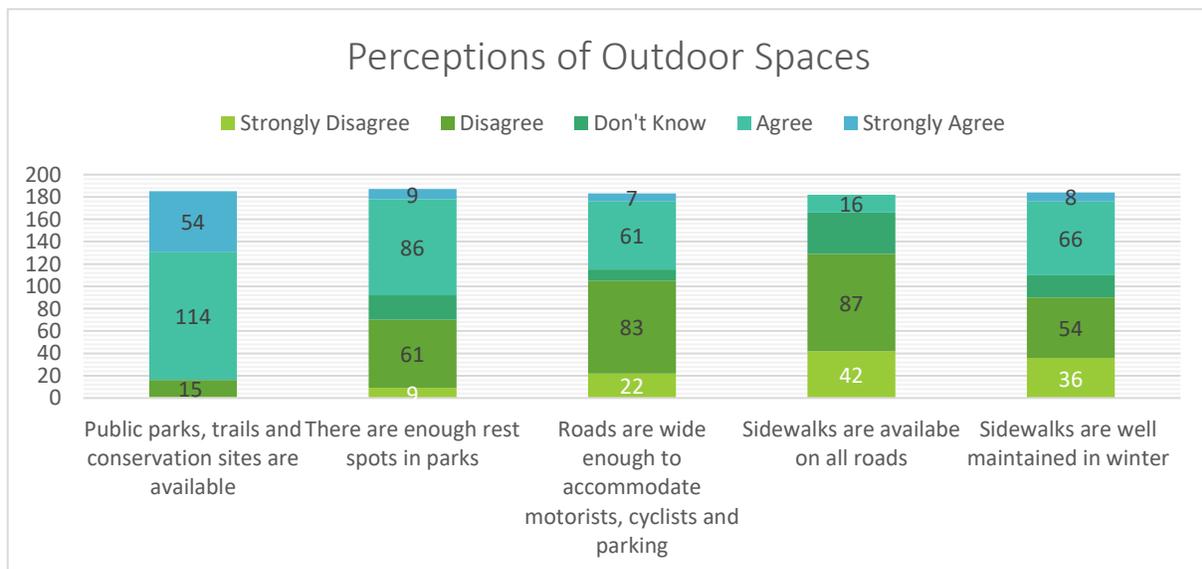
When people view a neighbourhood as safe and accessible it encourages outdoor activities or engagement with the community. Accessibility involves removing barriers that limit opportunities for people with disabilities, including older adults with age-related impairments, and allowing older adults to participate in social activities or to access important health and social services and businesses.

CURRENT CONTEXT

The Parks and Trails Master Plan outlines several directions impacting age-friendliness. Specifically, the recommendations for both parks and trails emphasized comfort and accessibility and providing for an increase in active facilities for older adults. Comfort and accessibility recommendations included: upgrading trails, pathways and outdoor facilities to increase the availability of AODA compliant sections and facilities; and to increase the frequency and location of shade, seating and comfort stations. With respect to activities there were requests and recommendations for increased older adult activity facilities (e.g. pickleball and adult fitness apparatus).

COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

- Residents express a high regard and connection to parks, trails, and outdoor spaces
- Survey results highlight the need to improve accessibility of sidewalks, buildings, trails, community events, and access to beach; to have more rest spaces along streets and some parks, improved safety of trails and downtown, and enhanced lighting at crosswalks and along rural roads; and to maintain sidewalks in winter months
- Lack of sidewalk on many streets is also a key concern
- Gap in active transportation, and desire to improve trails



COMMUNITY RESPONSE

1. Complete an assessment of all public buildings and parks for AODA compliance, and comfort and safety concerns
2. Review Parks and Trails Plan through an age-friendly lens to identify opportunities and bring forward priorities for action
3. Consider development of a streetscape plan
 - o Plan should include elements for traffic calming, crosswalks, sidewalks, seating, shade, access and accessibility, parking
4. Evaluate and enhance, where appropriate, current sidewalk winter maintenance program
5. Explore options for the development of a community-led seniors assistance program, to support aging-in-place needs
 - o This type of program includes developing a list of seniors in need, so that when there is a need (i.e. snow fall or raking in the fall) volunteers go out and ensure that walkways/driveways are clear. Volunteers could also check on resident to make sure they are ok.
6. Explore feasibility and funding options for enhancements to Little Lake Park
 - o Consider outdoor exercise equipment, cover for pavilion, and improved accessibility

TRANSPORTATION

The condition and design of transportation-related infrastructure such as signage, traffic lights and sidewalks affects personal mobility. Access to reliable, affordable public transit becomes increasingly important when driving becomes stressful or challenging.

CURRENT CONTEXT

The Town of Midland does have a community transit program through the [Midland/Penetanguishene Transit](#). For residents unable to use this system, specialized transit service is available through Community Reach. The Town's Strategic Plan does identify transportation as a priority emphasizing the promotion of walkability and developing a street environment that encourages walking. Further, The Town's Transportation Master Plan's mandate is to increase the quality and quantity of safe and accessible transportation routes. The Plan makes many recommendations to improve transportation including increasing the quality of active transportation routes and adopting a 'Complete Streets' approach to transportation planning.

Specialized transit is available in Midland through Community Reach, Red Cross, Cancer Society, Wheels for Wheels (Huronians Seniors Volunteer Care Team).



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

- Survey results highlight that most people drive to get to the places they need to get to
- Most survey respondents believe there are transportation options available in Midland
- Residents and stakeholders express concern over lack of transportation and potential isolation for people living alone who do not drive and who may not have family in the area
- Accessible transportation is also a concern

“IF YOU DON’T DRIVE IN THE RURAL AREAS, YOU ARE REALLY STUCK” – INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT



COMMUNITY RESPONSE

1. Review Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan through an age-friendly lens to identify opportunities and bring forward priorities
2. Identify opportunities, and support efforts, to increase current community transportation service capacity (i.e. Community Reach, Red Cross, Cancer Services of Midland)
3. Advocate for transit service, and increase in service availability, in areas that are currently underserved, and work with Simcoe County and LINX to identify priority areas for enhanced transportation
4. Explore alternative transportation opportunities such as volunteer driver programs, community shuttles, ride share program, and subsidized taxi fares for low-income seniors

HOUSING

For many older adults, aging in place is desirable. The availability of appropriate, affordable housing with a choice of styles and locations and that incorporates flexibility through adaptive features is essential for age-friendly communities.

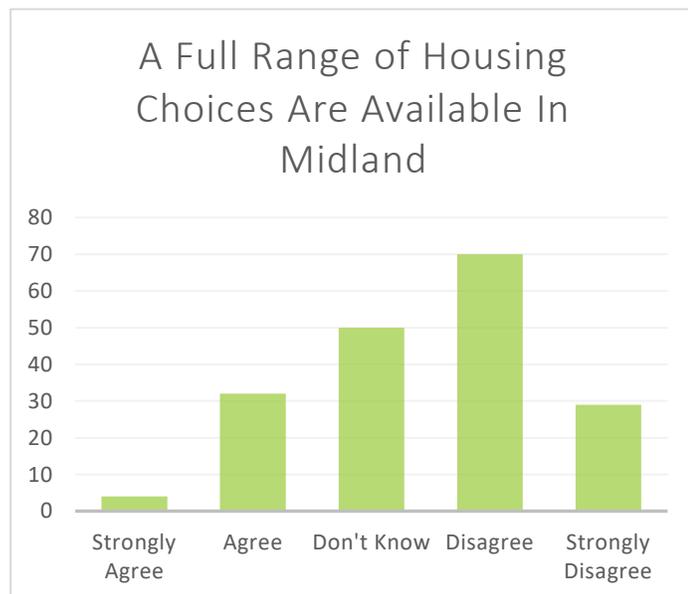
CURRENT CONTEXT

The Town’s Strategic Plan includes the goal of creating a livable, and fully accessible community and includes the need to encourage new accessible and affordable housing. Simcoe County’s *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy (2014-2024)* emphasizes the need for creative solutions for increasing affordable housing for all residents in Simcoe County.

Data from the 2016 Census highlights that many Town of Midland older adults, age 55 and over, have unmet housing needs. This is mainly a result of affordability with over one-quarter of adults age 55 and over are spending more than 30% of their income on rent. In addition, some 5.6% are living in housing in need of major repairs. There are also limited assisted and supportive housing options for seniors in Midland, and long waiting lists for long-term care homes in the area.

COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

- A lack of housing options for seniors, in particular affordable options and accessible housing is a priority for the community, stakeholders point to:
 - Gap in supported and assisted housing
 - Lack of affordable housing for Indigenous seniors
 - Seniors who are homeless and at-risk of homelessness
 - Long-waiting lists for low-income housing
 - Need for more support services in home



“THERE IS NO AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING FOR LOW INCOME PEOPLE” – SURVEY PARTICIPANT

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

1. Adopt municipal housing policies and regulations that encourage a mix of housing types, tenures including affordable housing options
 - a. Consider housing targets for affordable, accessible, and supportive housing forms
2. Promote secondary suites as an opportunity to increase affordable housing options
3. Share information and promote senior government and non-government funding programs and initiatives to increase affordable and supportive housing options
4. Support community efforts to increase in-home supports for seniors and people with disabilities
 - a. Consider supports for housekeeping, and home and yard maintenance
 - b. Consider youth volunteer program
5. Encourage County to look at older adult accommodation study to examine opportunities for increasing assisted housing, supportive housing, co-housing, and long-term care housing for seniors
6. Support County of Simcoe in advocating to senior government for increases to housing subsidies, and affordable housing in Town of Midland
7. Engage community to explore opportunity of establishing a local home share program



RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION

Community attitudes, such as a general feeling of respect and recognizing the role that older adults play in our society, are critical factors for establishing an age-friendly community. Age-friendly communities foster positive images of aging and intergenerational understanding to challenge negative attitudes.

CURRENT CONTEXT

Simcoe Muskoka Health Stats provide data on several health and well-being indicators, including sense of belonging. Sense of belonging to the local community is higher among adults age 65 and over in Simcoe Muskoka compared to Ontario. In Simcoe Muskoka, 88.3% reported a sense of belonging to the local community that was somewhat strong or very strong (Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0113-01). Some 79.3% reported a strong or very strong sense of belonging across Ontario.

COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

- Residents and stakeholders expressed concern over seniors who have no family in the area, in particular in winter months
- Some survey participants raised concern for LGBTQ people
- Some concern was also raised over lack of access to internet in some areas
- Most survey respondents believe Midland has a sense of community and is neighbourly and friendly



COMMUNITY RESPONSE

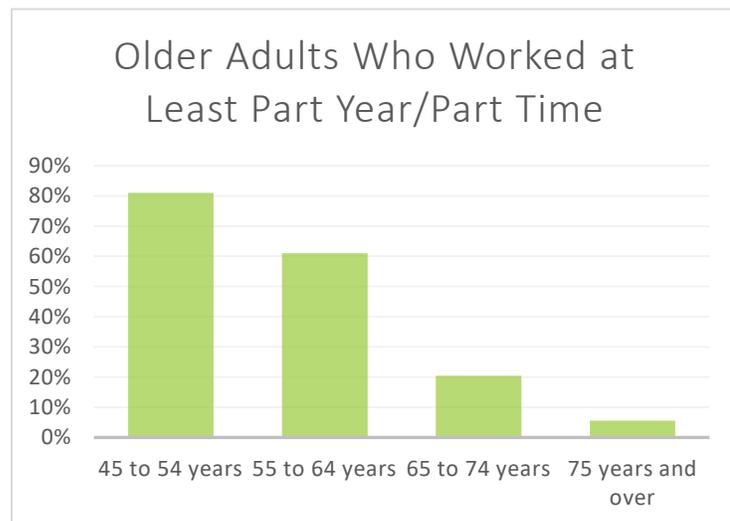
1. In partnership with community groups and agencies (i.e. Canadian Red Cross, local churches, Askenonnia Seniors Centre), seek out opportunities to expand friendly visiting/calling programs and connect isolated older adults with community supports
2. Expand education and awareness of needs of more vulnerable older adult populations (i.e. LGBTQ2S, people of colour, newcomers, Indigenous People), and work with community partners to expand programs and support services as needed
3. Acknowledge and celebrate achievements and contributions of seniors and youth in the community
4. Explore opportunities for intergenerational programs and initiatives

CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT

Civic engagement includes older adults' desire to be involved in aspects of community life that extend beyond their day-to-day activities, such as volunteering, becoming politically active, voting or working on committees. Economic security is important for many older adults, particularly those with low and fixed incomes. The ability of an older adult to remain employed or find new employment provides economic security, and it benefits employers who recognize the experience and commitment that older employees bring to the workplace.

CURRENT CONTEXT

Adults generally start to exit the labour force after age 54. Based on the last Census, some 81% of Midland's adults age 45 to 54 worked at least part of the year, either part time or full time (Statistics Canada, Census, 2016). Among adults age 55 to 64, 61% worked at least part of the year. Still 20.4% of adults age 65 to 74 and 5.6% of adults age 75 and over worked at least part of the year.



Data on rates of volunteering were only available at the county level. Based on Statistics Canada’s General Social Survey in 2010, volunteerism among older adults age 65 and over in Simcoe County is well above the provincial average. Some 44.8% of Simcoe County’s adults age 65 and over reported having volunteered in the past 12 months compared to 35% of the province’s older adults.

COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

- A key concern raised by stakeholders was that the volunteer sector is aging
- Most survey respondents feel there are opportunities to volunteer, yet a general sense of a lack of employment opportunities in Midland was expressed

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

1. Create more awareness on where and how to apply for volunteering and employment opportunities
 - Incorporate into Town’s website, promotional and outreach material
2. Celebrate contributions of local volunteers
 - Consider local event
 - Communicate recognitions in local media
3. Promote Simcoe County Age-Friendly Business/Organization Award Program among local businesses and organizations

“VOLUNTEERS NEED TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED IN A MORE POSITIVE WAY” – SURVEY PARTICIPANT

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

Age-friendly communities make sure that information about community events or important services is both readily accessible and in formats that are appropriate for older adults. Moreover, an age-friendly community recognizes the diversity within the older adult population and promotes outreach initiatives to non-traditional families, ethnocultural minorities, newcomers and aboriginal communities.

CURRENT CONTEXT

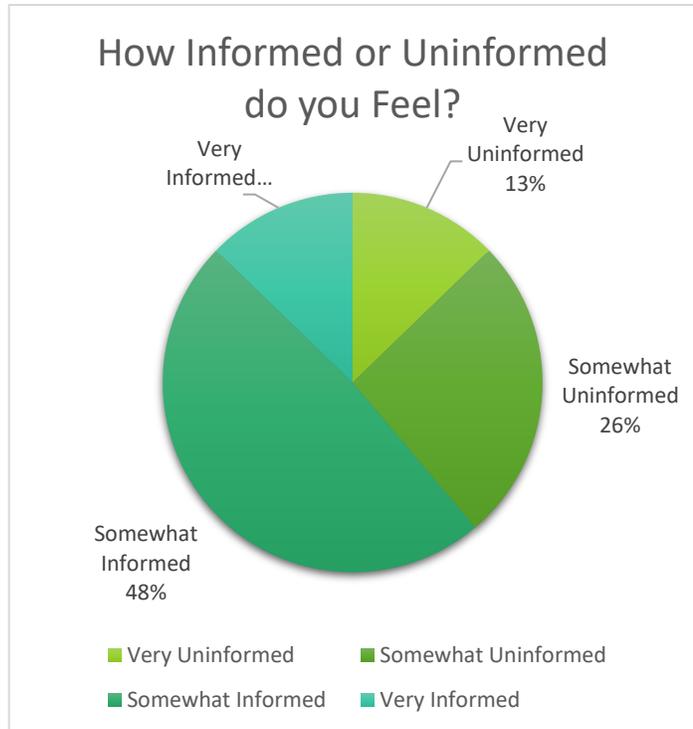
Residents get information on community services and resources from a variety of sources including social media, newspaper, municipal website and community postings, local services providers, and word of mouth. The Town’s Strategic Plan emphasizes enhancing access and capability for on-line municipal services and information by reviewing the current phone system with a view to enhancing live operators and voice options.



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

- Need for greater awareness of current activities, events, programs; improvements to website and Seniors Directory suggested by stakeholders
- Access to internet is a concern in some areas
- Residents are looking for more opportunities to be engaged

“TOWN INFORMATION IS HARD TO FIND AND ACCESS” – SURVEY PARTICIPANT



COMMUNITY RESPONSE

1. Develop dedicated age-friendly page on the Town’s website that provides a central source of information
 - a. Incorporate inventory of current services and resources
 - b. Consider feedback mechanism and option to provide notifications and updates to residents
 - c. Provide information on events and activities being held by Town as well as local organizations, clubs, and groups
 - d. Provide link to volunteer and employment information
 - e. Provide link to age-friendly funding opportunities
2. Identify opportunities to further promote 211
3. Continue to promote local activities using a range of platforms including online, newspaper, and throughout the community in public places, such as community boards, churches, Drs. office, clubs, apartment buildings and libraries
4. Collect and share information on various age-friendly funding opportunities
5. Develop annual community report card to report on the Midland Age-Friendly Community Plan



COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES

Good mental and physical health contribute to quality of life and age-friendliness. When evaluating age-friendliness, consider access to community-related services that support physical or mental well-being and the availability of health promotion or awareness services that promote and support healthy behaviours and life choices.

CURRENT CONTEXT

In the area covered by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, which includes Midland, more than half (52.4%) of adults age 65 and over perceive their health to be very good or excellent, while 22.9% reported fair or poor health (Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0113--01). This compares to the province where 46.8% reported very good or excellent health and 19.8% reported fair or poor health. Perceived mental health was somewhat better than physical health, with 73.5% who reported their perceived mental health to be very good or excellent (Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0113-01).

In Simcoe Muskoka, 12.3% of adults age 65 and over reported that most days they had quite a bit or extremely stressful life stress (Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0113-01). This is similar to the province, where 12.0% reported quite a bit or extremely stressful life stress most days.

COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

- Askennonia Seniors Centre is praised as a strong asset in the community
- Stakeholders and residents would like to see a community hub(s)
- Need for support services to help seniors maintain their home
- Residents and stakeholders point to a lack of health resources and services:
 - Lack of doctors in rural areas
 - Lack of Personal Support Workers
 - Lack of mental health services
 - Lack of oral health care for seniors
- Affordability was expressed as a key barrier for some
- Some stakeholders and residents would like to see more services for seniors in Midland

“MOST SENIORS MUST FIND IT FINANCIALLY DIFFICULT TO GET DENTAL CARE, FOOT CARE AND PHYSICAL THERAPY IN A TIMELY MATTER, TOO MANY HOOPS TO JUMP THROUGH ITS DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE TO NAVIGATE” – SURVEY PARTICIPANT



COMMUNITY RESPONSE

1. Create awareness and promote available community and health services for seniors
 - Explore options to assist adults over the age of 65 to navigate existing support and health services
2. Advocate to the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care, and Children, Community and Social Community Services for adequate funding for community services that enable people to remain in their homes
3. Establish a network of services and supports for keeping seniors in their homes longer, including snow removal, grass cutting, minor maintenance, home safety, laundry, yard work, heavy house cleaning, shopping, transportation to appointments and socialization
4. Establish relationships with the former LHIN, CCAC, Family Health Teams, hospitals and other health and community services to ensure that services residents need are in place
5. Support the creation of a community hub serving seniors by facilitating discussions with possible partners, including discussions about using library facilities and community centres to support access to multiple services in one location
6. Engage with the County of Simcoe as it develops its strategic plan for Community Paramedicine to express need and explore opportunities to expand community paramedicine in the Town



SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Interacting with family and friends is an important part of positive mental health and community awareness. Social participation involves the level of interaction that older adults have with other members of their community and the extent that the community itself makes this interaction possible.

CURRENT CONTEXT

Simcoe Muskoka adults age 65 and over reported similar rates of physical activity as their counterparts across the province (Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0113-01). In Simcoe Muskoka 38.7% reported that they were physically active for at least 150 minutes per week, compared to 38.0% for Ontario.

In terms of life satisfaction, 90.6% of Simcoe Muskoka adults age 65 and over reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied (Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0113-01). This was similar to the provincial rate (90.5%).

COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

- Concern was raised over no longer having a municipal parks and recreation department
- Stakeholders and residents seeking more intergenerational recreational options
- Affordability is a concern among seniors
- Most survey respondents indicate good opportunities available in Midland to participate in recreation, fitness and cultural activities
- Survey participants were also asked to share their level of engagement with various Town activities and facilities.
 - Almost half of survey respondents reported they had never been to a seniors centre
 - 141 (76%) respondents attend a recreation centre at least once in a typical month
 - 142 (76%) respondents attend a public library at least once in a typical month
 - 153 (82%) respondents attend a cultural event in Midland at least once in a typical month
 - 119 (64%) respondents reported that they never attend a Town of Midland public meeting
 - Almost all (180) respondents reported visiting a Town of Midland Park at least once in a typical month
 - Almost all (182) respondents reported connecting with a family or friend at least once in a typical month

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

1. Enhance promotion of current events, programs, services, and activities in Midland Today, Town of Midland website and social media accounts, and community boards and newsletters
2. Consider development of a Recreation Plan
 - a. Identify recreation needs, and evaluate opportunities for enhanced programming, where appropriate, in existing Town facilities (indoor and outdoor)
 - b. Identify opportunities to engage partners in wider range of programming
3. Continue to expand educational talks and workshops
4. Engage with older adults and youth in designing, planning, and implementing of age-friendly activities and initiatives
5. Support efforts to ensure low-income residents have access to social programs and services
6. Continue to host annual Seniors Council Lunch
 - a. Reach out to agencies and organizations to co-sponsor event



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The following Plan puts forward a community vision, principles, and set of actions aimed at meeting the identified needs and priorities for a more age-friendly Midland. Actions are summarized for each age-friendly theme.

OUR VISION

A community where people of all ages and abilities have opportunities to work, play, and live well.

OUR PRINCIPLES

The following five principles steered the development of the Age-Friendly Community Plan and will guide ongoing efforts in development and implementation.

INCLUSIVE: we are a community that is accessible, equitable, and welcoming of all

ACCOUNTABLE: we are committed to the community to report back on initiatives and updates

RESPECTFUL: we are a community that recognizes and values all individuals

COLLABORATIVE: we have a shared responsibility among community members and partners to improving the lives of older adults



OUR ACTIONS

OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS

1. Complete an assessment of all public buildings and parks for AODA compliance, and comfort and safety concerns
2. Review Parks and Trails Plan through an age-friendly lens to identify opportunities and bring forward priorities for action
3. Consider development of a streetscape plan
 - o Plan should include elements for traffic calming, crosswalks, sidewalks, seating, shade, access and accessibility, parking
4. Evaluate and enhance, where appropriate, current sidewalk winter maintenance program
5. Explore options for the development of a community-led seniors assistance program, to support aging-in-place needs
 - o This type of program includes developing a list of seniors in need, so that when there is a need (i.e. snow fall or raking in the fall) volunteers go out and ensure that walkways/driveways are clear. Volunteers could also check on resident to make sure they are ok.
6. Explore feasibility and funding options for enhancements to Little Lake Park
 - o Consider outdoor exercise equipment, cover for pavilion, and improved accessibility

TRANSPORTATION

1. Review Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan through an age-friendly lens to identify opportunities and bring forward priorities
2. Identify opportunities, and support efforts, to increase current community transportation service capacity (i.e. Community Reach, Red Cross, Cancer Services of Midland)
3. Advocate for transit service, and increase in service availability, in areas that are currently underserved, and work with Simcoe County and LINX to identify priority areas for enhanced transportation
4. Explore alternative transportation opportunities such as volunteer driver programs, community shuttles, ride share program, and subsidized taxi fares for low-income seniors



HOUSING

1. Adopt municipal housing policies and regulations that encourage a mix of housing types, tenures including affordable housing options
 - a. Consider housing targets for affordable, accessible, and supportive housing forms
2. Promote secondary suites as an opportunity to increase affordable housing options
3. Share information and promote senior government and non-government funding programs and initiatives to increase affordable and supportive housing options
4. Support community efforts to increase in-home supports for seniors and people with disabilities
 - a. Consider supports for housekeeping, and home and yard maintenance
 - b. Consider youth volunteer program
5. Encourage County to look at older adult accommodation study to examine opportunities for increasing assisted housing, supportive housing, co-housing, and long-term care housing for seniors
6. Support County of Simcoe in advocating to senior government for increases in housing subsidies, and affordable housing in Town of Midland
7. Engage community to explore opportunity of establishing a local home share program



RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION

1. In partnership with community groups and agencies (i.e. Canadian Red Cross, local churches, Askenonnia Seniors Centre), seek out opportunities to expand friendly visiting/calling programs and connect isolated older adults with community supports
2. Expand education and awareness of needs of more vulnerable older adult populations (i.e. LGBTQ2S, people of colour, newcomers, Indigenous People), and work with community partners to expand programs and support services as needed
3. Acknowledge and celebrate achievements and contributions of seniors and youth in the community
4. Explore opportunities for intergenerational programs and initiatives

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & EMPLOYMENT

1. Create more awareness on where and how to apply for volunteering and employment opportunities
 - Incorporate into Town's website, promotional and outreach material
2. Celebrate contributions of local volunteers
 - Consider local event
 - Communicate recognitions in local media
3. Promote Simcoe County Age-Friendly Business/Organization Award Program among local businesses and organizations

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

1. Develop dedicated age-friendly page on the Town's website that provides a central source of information
 - a. Incorporate inventory of current services and resources
 - b. Consider feedback mechanism and option to provide notifications and updates to residents
 - c. Provide information on events and activities being held by Town as well as local organizations, clubs, and groups
 - d. Provide link to volunteer and employment information
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3. Continue to promote local activities using a range of platforms including online, newspaper, and throughout the community in public places, such as community boards, churches, Drs. office, clubs, apartment buildings and libraries
4. Collect and share information on various age-friendly funding opportunities
5. Develop annual community report card to report on the Midland Age-Friendly Community Plan



COMMUNITY SUPPORTS & HEALTH SERVICES

1. Create awareness and promote available community and health services for seniors
 - Explore options to assist adults over the age of 65 to navigate existing support and health services
2. Advocate to the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care, and Children, Community and Social Community Services for adequate funding for community services that enable people to remain in their homes
3. Establish a network of services and supports for keeping seniors in their homes longer, including snow removal, grass cutting, minor maintenance, home safety, laundry, yard work, heavy house cleaning, shopping, transportation to appointments and socialization
4. Establish relationships with the former LHIN, CCAC, Family Health Teams, hospitals and other health and community services to ensure that services residents need are in place
5. Support the creation of a community hub serving seniors by facilitating discussions with possible partners, including discussions about using library facilities and community centres to support access to multiple services in one location
6. Engage with the County of Simcoe as it develops its strategic plan for Community Paramedicine to express need and explore opportunities to expand community paramedicine in the Town

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

1. Enhance promotion of current events, programs, services, and activities in Midland Today, Town of Midland website and social media accounts, and community boards and newsletters
2. Consider development of a Recreation Plan
 - a. Identify recreation needs, and evaluate opportunities for enhanced programming, where appropriate, in existing Town facilities (indoor and outdoor)
 - b. Identify opportunities to engage partners in wider range of programming
3. Continue to expand educational talks and workshops
4. Engage with older adults and youth in designing, planning, and implementing of age-friendly activities and initiatives
5. Support efforts to ensure low-income residents have access to social programs and services
6. Continue to host annual Seniors Council Lunch
 - a. Reach out to agencies and organizations to co-sponsor event



MOVING FORWARD

Realizing the age-friendly vision for Town of Midland requires the collective efforts of a broad range of stakeholders to come together to implement the recommended actions and ultimately become a more age-friendly community to all residents.

Further to the actions identified in the above Community Plan, the following recommendations are being put forward for consideration in moving forward, to continue the rising community age-friendly momentum, and to realize the full achievement of this Plan.

1. Identify Age-Friendly Coordinator role or position
 - a. The Age-Friendly co-ordinator may be established as a new, part-time position, or as part of an existing municipal role.
 - b. The Age-Friendly Coordinator's role may include:
 - i. Facilitate MSC meetings (send out invites, assist with logistics and technology as appropriate, take notes and distribute)
 - ii. With support of MSC, prepare an implementation plan for the Age-Friendly Community Plan
 - iii. Monitor progress on Age-Friendly Plan monthly, and prepare annual Report Card
 - iv. Assist in developing content for local age-friendly communications
 - v. Seek out and initiate funding opportunities to achieve actions within Age-Friendly Plan
 - vi. Liaise with community partners including health care partners
 - vii. Assist in promotion and outreach for local activities and events
2. Plan and facilitate community Age-Friendly Call to Action
 - a. This Call to Action is intended to bring stakeholders together to share the recommendations within the Age-Friendly Plan, identify shared priorities, and seek out champions to move forward on action items

The Age-Friendly Coordinator and Community Call to Action will be instrumental to the overall success of the Community Plan and ultimately making the Town of Midland a more age-friendly community for current and future residents and visitors.

All actions will consider the current evolving COVID-19 pandemic environment and put safety of residents at the forefront of planning.



BE INVOLVED!

For more information please contact:

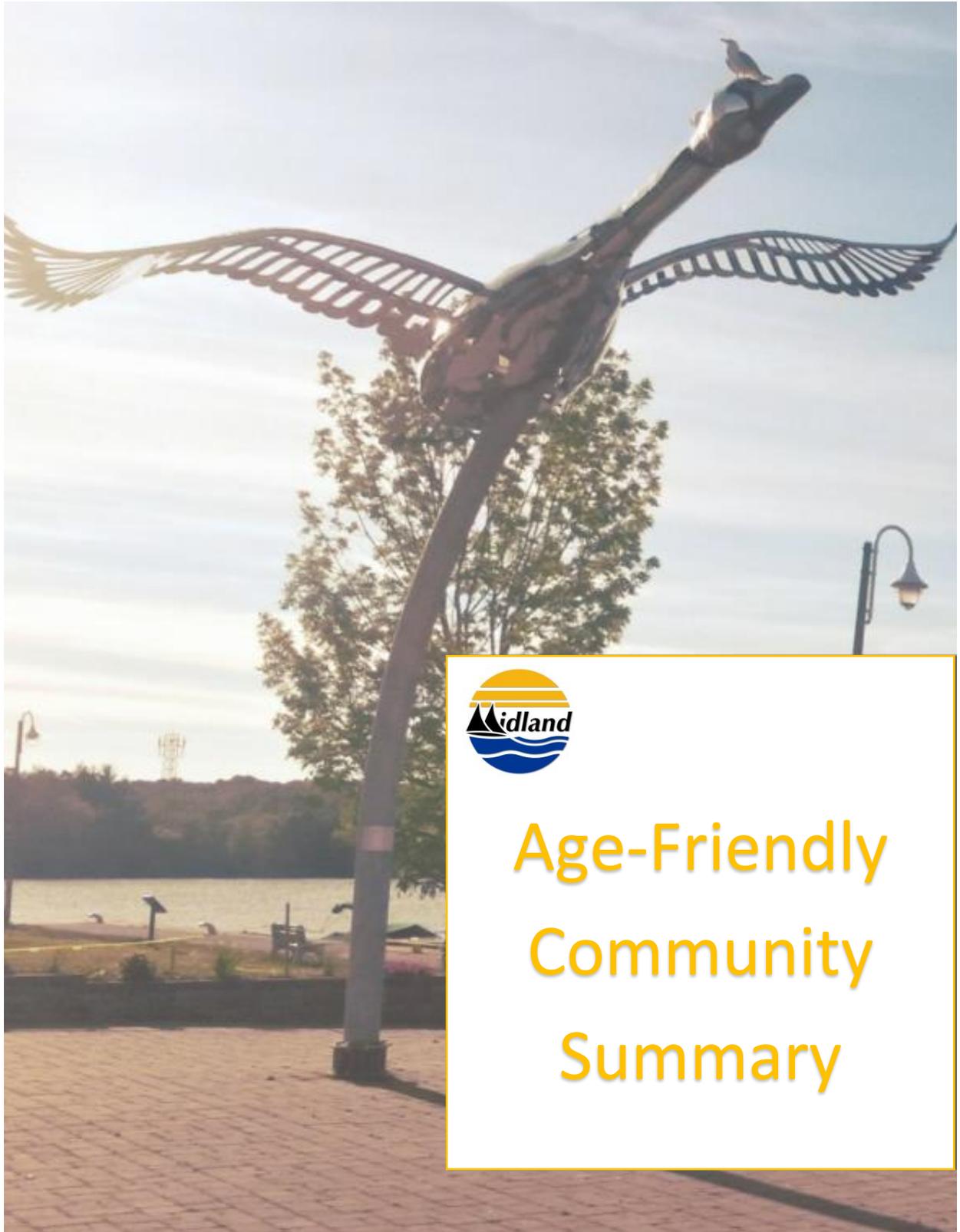
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Visit [Town of Midland Age-Friendly Community Plan](#)





Age-Friendly Community Summary

Introduction

When looking at the Town of Midland through an age-friendly lens, it is important to support the community through engagement and active transportation. As discussed in the Age-Friendly Community Plan Framework, there are eight key areas of community life that can become more age-friendly. Two of the eight key areas are highlighted below, and the actions are supported in detail.

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

Action #1 Complete an assessment of all public buildings and parks for AODA compliance, and comfort and safety concerns.

Throughout the Town of Midland, many parks and trails have been fulfilled over the years to encourage the community to be active especially for age-friendly residents. In 2005 the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was implemented and in the past few years the standards are being executed into everyday construction. In the Parks and Trails Master Plan accessibility is one of the top priority Town wide improvements. Meeting the Requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is a requirement for all municipalities. In the recommended design improvements for Midland's 26 parks highlight several accessibility improvements that should be undertaken. This includes establishing a Town standard for park benches and picnic tables, Replacing, and upgrading park benches and picnic tables, provide accessible paved routes through all parks, and install handrails and guardrails where needed. The Master Plan has estimated costs for these improvements. The Soft costs associated to meeting the required AODA Standards are \$60,000, Hard costs are \$600,000 making it a total \$660,000.

Action #2 Review Parks and Trails Plan through an age-friendly lens to identify opportunities and bring forward priorities for action.

A very large majority of residents in Midland use the parks throughout town as either part of an organized group or for unstructured activities. In the Parks and Trails Master Plan the responses from the survey show that between 27 to 36% of users at waterfront parks, community parks and trails is residents over the age of 55. Therefore, it is important to improve these parks to make them more accessible for age-friendly residents and bring the number of users up throughout the Town.

In reviewing the Parks and Trails Master Plan through an age-friendly lens, a few of the parks and trails stand out for being top priority for action and improvement.

The first priority would be improvements on Little Lake Park. Little Lake park is one of Midland's premier destination parks. It focuses on the community with a wide range of active and passive park activities including special events. However, the park is in need of updating and enhancements to help maximize its full potential. Costs associated to updating the park are estimated to be \$900,000. Some recommendations for improvements are listed below:

- a. Replace sand surfacing with accessible engineered wood fiber mulch, with curb edge
- b. Provide an accessible route/walkway between parking lots, restaurant, and seating around the lake

- c. Accessible benches
- d. Accessible picnic tables
- e. Repair emergency phones
- f. Provide accessible route to beach and water (mobi-mat)
- g. Consolidate individual play structures into one play space
- h. Bike parking
- i. Park wayfinding signage at each park access point
- j. Implement new major trailhead
- k. Boat launch improvements
- l. Fitness stations
- m. Investigate interest/feasibility of providing a mini putt course

Another priority park would be Pete Peterson Park. This park is one of Midland's destination waterfront parks providing boat access to Georgian Bay, a sandy beach, and a ball diamond. It is well connected to the Town via the Rotary Trail which traverses the park. In updating this park, it will add more age friendly elements and encourage more residents to be active in the community. Soft costs for updating the park is estimated at \$45,000 and hard costs are estimated at \$380,000 totaling costs at \$425,000.

Key recommendations for the park include:

- a. Improved pedestrian access route into the park from the Rotary Trail
- b. Update and consolidate playground equipment
- c. Replace sand surfacing with accessible engineered wood fiber mulch with curb
- d. Accessible seating
- e. Accessible picnic tables
- f. Large shade structure
- g. Repair/replace emergency pole with phone
- h. Bike parking
- i. Park wayfinding signage at each park access point
- j. Major trailhead at parking lot
- k. Bike repair station
- l. Minor trailhead at Victoria Street
- m. Formalize waterfront lookouts
- n. Boat launch improvements
- o. Fitness stations

Since the majority of 55+ of age residents use the trail systems throughout Midland it is important to add improvements to the trails as a whole system to keep the residents active through walking and cycling. The average costs for updating individual trail systems is between \$10,000 to \$40,000. Some improvements to the trails are as follow:

- a. Pave areas where gravel gets soft in the rain
- b. Grade the trails to smooth out the bumps
- c. Garbage bins and signs at the beginning of all trails
- d. Trail etiquette signage for sharing and direction/side one should cycle vs. walk
- e. Policing to end graffiti to signs and buildings along the trails
- f. Open it year-round for walkers

- g. Better access to waterfront for SUP, kayaks, etc.

One project that is currently in progress is the County Road 93 Multi-Use Trail. This project is incorporating new sidewalks, a multi-use trail and updates to traffic at the corner of Vindin and County Road 93. The new sidewalks along County Road 93 between Yonge Street and Hugel Avenue provide the community access to the Mountainview Plaza, Huronia Mall, The Superstore, and the hardware stores. This project will eventually connect Midland to Penetanguishene with the multi-use trail allowing residents to walk and cycle safely from one town to the other. The section of the county trail that runs through Midland is estimated at \$1.8M

Action #3 Consider development of a streetscape plan. Plan should include elements for traffic calming, crosswalks, sidewalks, seating, shade, access, and accessibility parking.

At the Town of Midland, we are in the process of implementing a traffic calming policy. The Parks and Trails Master Plan recommends seating, shade structures and accessible routes throughout the Towns parks and trail system as a primary recommendation. Total costs for accessibility which includes seating and accessible routes is estimated to be \$660,000 for all parks and trails outlined in the Parks and Trails Master Plan. Shade structure total costs would be estimated at \$815,000 for implementation in most parks that require improvements in the Master Plan.

Action #4 Evaluate and enhance, where appropriate, current sidewalk winter maintenance program.

The current sidewalk winter maintenance program is in full effect for the 2020/2021 winter year. One enhancement made this year are new poly blades for the sidewalk machines for King Street to help protect the new unit pavers from damages yet still provide an adequate level of service. The Town has their own snow plowing team which saves on costs for hiring a contractor to do the work. This allows for in-house upgrades to equipment and enhancements to the program. As new sidewalks and trails are added to the winter maintenance program this will mean a service level change and there will be subsequent costs associated with additional equipment and labour.

Transportation

Action #1 Review Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan through an age-friendly lens to identify opportunities and bring forward priorities for action.

One main project in the Town of Midland was the King Street Reconstruction and one of the main focus for this project was accessibility. This was achieved by providing new wider walkways, accessible benches and safety bollards, the age-friendly community can benefit from these changes. While providing new spaces for the businesses to expand their outdoor patio/street shopping section, this can allow residents to enjoy the downtown core and optimistically encourage the age-friendly community to walk through downtown.

While reviewing the Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan, some new projects that stand out as priorities for the age-friendly community are ones that can improve sight line and speed issues as well as improve accessibility and connectivity throughout the community. The following projects are ones that meet this criteria.

Intersection improvements at Harbourview Drive and Vindin Street. The current intersection has poor sightlines due to the angled approach at which the east leg of the intersection meets Harbourview Drive. The realigned intersection would result in Fifth Street being converted into a cul-de-sac with a big enough radius to allow municipal service vehicles to continue to service it efficiently and safely. This realignment would benefit active transportation by having proposed bike lanes on each side of the road and improving the pedestrian crossings which connect to both the sidewalk and trail systems in this area. This is a Medium-term road improvement which would be implemented between 5-10 years however due to developer interest in this area it has been proposed to be brought forward as a short-term project. The overall estimated cost for the project would be \$3,248,700.

Bay Street and Aberdeen Boulevard intersection improvements. Northbound vehicles on Aberdeen Boulevard are subject to a stop condition whereas eastbound vehicles on Bay Street can proceed through the intersection without stopping and turn on Aberdeen Boulevard or continue into the TRW plant. The recommendation is to realign the corner to have the road traffic have the right-of-way and add the addition of a multi-use path on the north side of Bay Street to connect with the existing trail that runs parallel to Aberdeen Boulevard. By constructing a drop curb at Aberdeen Boulevard and extend the concrete sidewalk/trail through the access, this will improve the trail crossing. The cost for this project is estimated around \$2,730,560. This is a short-term road improvement project which would be implemented between 0-5 years.

Along with auto transportation active transportation is highly significant within the Town of Midland. The Town provides bike lanes and sidewalks for residents from the age-friendly community to enjoy.

Midland's cycling network infrastructure mostly comprises of multi-use trails, with some smaller portions of bike lanes, and sharrows primarily located along the waterfront, downtown, and green spaces. These facilities provide approximately 24km of cycling infrastructure through Midland, however the network has a significant number of gaps and large areas that are disconnected. In the Transportation Master Plan, it recommends 35 new improvements to the cycling community. This includes adding dedicated paved bike lanes, sharrow pavement markings, and appropriate signage. Almost all of these improvements are short term projects and cost between \$2,000 to \$900,000 each.

Beyond the roadway cycling infrastructure Midland's existing pedestrian network consists of a mixture of sidewalks and multi-use trails that are focused on providing links between schools, local neighborhoods, and connecting multi-use trails. Pedestrian sidewalks are located throughout the Downtown and residential neighborhoods with connections to bike routes and other active transportation facilities that culminate in 118km of pathways. The sidewalk network is complimented by the Town's signalized intersections. On the arterial roadway's pedestrians are required to deviate their path 650m to cross at a signalized crosswalk. The Transportation Master Plan has recommended 45 new sidewalks and 11 pedestrian crossings, mostly short-term projects and costs ranging from \$20,000 to \$550,000 each. For a complete list recommended projects from the Transportation Master Plan, please see the attached Appendix B.

Action #2 Identify opportunities, and support efforts, to increase current community transportation service capacity (i.e. Community Reach, Red Cross, Cancer Services of Midland)

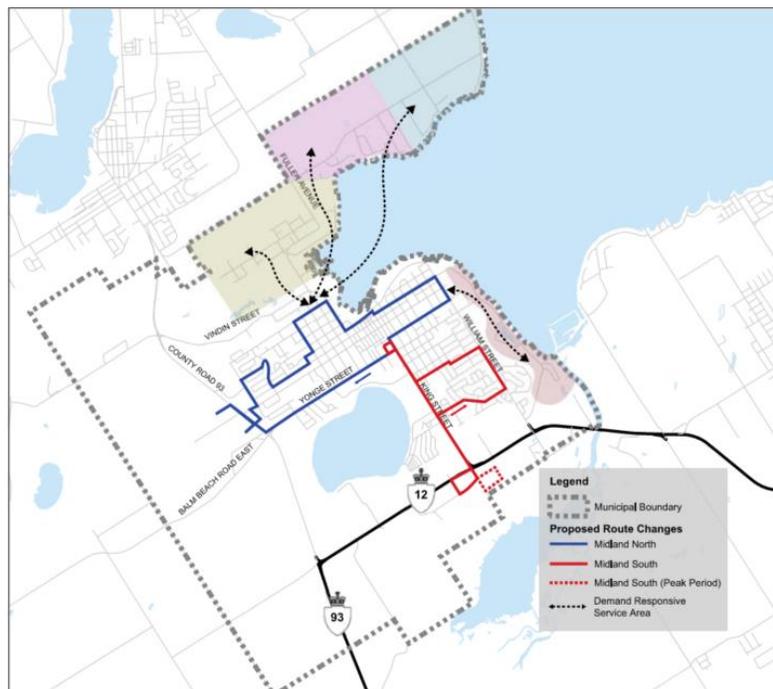
The Town of Midland operates a conventional and paratransit service throughout community. The conventional service can be characterized as a hub & spoke network that currently provides two (2) routes in Midland operating at 30-minute headways and one (1) route to/from Penetanguishene that operates at 60-minute headways. All routes operate in one-way circuitous loops out of the main transfer point (Town Hall) at King Street & Elizabeth Street in the Downtown. The service provides weekday service between 6:30 a.m. with final departures at 5:45 p.m., as well as weekend service on Saturdays with service starting at 8:30 a.m. with final departures at 4:45 p.m.

Overall, the most recent transit operational review identified five (5) priority service improvements that residents are demanding including:

- Increasing Service Frequency;
- Introduce Sunday Service;
- Later Weekday Service;
- Later Saturday Service; and
- Providing service to new areas of the Town

Respondents to the transit survey in the Transportation Master Plan identified a need to have a larger service area coverage, along with a desire to improve the existing reliability of the service. The complexities with transit operations is that the most of the highest utilized transit stops are on the periphery of Midland to access the retail areas on County Road 93 and Highway 12 with few direct connections between major nodes. Most trips currently require riders to make a circuitous indirect route to access the opposite side of town, and currently there is no transit connection to areas in north Midland around the Harborview Drive and Fuller Avenue area.

The following diagram (Figure 3.12 from the Transportation Master Plan) shows the new proposed Transit route network with the north and south lines.



The following diagram (Figure 3.16 from the Transportation Master Plan) shows where residents would like more service locations throughout Midland.



Community Reach currently provides specialized transit services (Accessible Transit) to the Town for persons with disabilities. Many communities are moving toward a co-mingling strategy, where a specialized transit vehicle that has time and vehicle capacity in a low demand area can also be used to pick-up a conventional transit passenger. This makes good use of existing resources instead of dispatching a second vehicle to the same area. Where the vehicle is already in service and charged on an hourly basis, no additional cost is incurred for the pick-up.

According to Community Reach, to coordinate and dispatch vehicles for potential customers, additional resources would be required. To accommodate upwards of twenty calls per day, an additional 34 hours a week of staff resources would be required. Approximately half of the effort could be accommodated by existing in-house resources. An additional part-time resource (approximately 17 hours a week at \$15 an hour) would be needed to accommodate these trip requests. According to Community Reach, the annual additional coordination cost would be approximately \$14,300 per year.

System-Wide Strategy Costs by Horizon Period									
	Existing Service (2017-2018)		Quick Wins (2019)	Short-Term Recommendations (2020-2021)			Long-Term Recommendations (2023+)		
			#1	#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3
	Existing Service (2017)	Existing Service (2018) with Proposed Fare Structure	Revise Route Structure to Improve Schedule Adherence	Sunday Service	Pilot Demand Responsive Service to Sunnyside and Tiffin	Introduce Demand Responsive Service to Portage Park, Midland Point	Weekday Extension (2 Hours)	Increase Frequency on Weekdays (Mid-Day Only)	Increase Frequency on Weekday (All Day)
Average Fare	\$1.54	\$2.29	\$2.29	2.29*	\$2.29	\$2.29	\$2.29	\$2.29	\$2.29
Revenue Vehicle Hours	3,330	3,330	3,330	3,770	3,330	3,330	3,840	4,840	6,230
Ridership	63,700	60,600	60,600	66,200	62,600	63,400	63,900	71,600	76,500
Passenger Revenue	\$97,900	\$138,600	\$138,600	\$151,400	\$143,100	\$145,000	\$146,100	\$163,700	\$174,900
Capital cost	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$420,000.00	-
Operating Cost	\$249,900	\$249,900	\$249,900	\$283,000	\$280,000	\$295,000	\$287,700	\$363,300	\$467,200
Net Operating Cost	\$151,900.00	\$111,200	\$111,200	\$131,600	\$136,900	\$150,000	\$141,600	\$199,600	\$292,300
Municipal Investments	\$111,900	\$111,900	\$111,900	\$111,900	\$111,900	\$111,900	\$111,900	\$111,900	\$111,900
Provincial Gas Tax**	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Net Operating Cost (+Municipal and Provincial Contributions)	-	\$40,700	\$40,700	\$20,300	\$15,000	\$2,000	\$10,300	-\$47,700	-\$140,400
Additional Municipal Investment Required (Green= Surplus; Red= Deficit)	-	\$407,000	\$40,700	\$20,300	\$3,500	-\$35,300	-\$35,600	-\$154,000	-\$335,100
Revenue Cost (R/C) Ratio	39%	55%	55%	53%	51%	49%	51%	45%	37%
Boardings Per Revenue Vehicle Hour	19.13	18.2	18.2	17.55	18.79	19.04	16.66	14.78	12.28
Passengers Per Capita	2.62	2.49	2.49	2.72	2.57	2.60	2.62	2.94	3.14
Net Cost Per Passenger	\$3.92	\$4.12	\$4.12	\$4.27	\$4.47	\$4.65	\$4.50	\$5.08	\$6.11

*Note: Average fare in 2018 shown here to illustrate the change in ridership and revenue that would result from a fare increase. The plan recommends the fare increase to be staged in starting with the introduction of Sunday service.

The following table shows costs associated with the system wide strategies for Transit.

Action #3 Advocate for transit service, and increase in service availability, in areas that are currently underserved, and work with Simcoe County and LINX to identify priority areas for enhanced transportation

In addition to local conventional service, the County of Simcoe recently launched the first phase of its proposed county-wide transit network on August 7, 2018 under the brand LINX along with a smartcard fare payment system. This route currently operates between Midland/Penetanguishene and Barrie along with an accompanying specialized transit service called LINX+ that provides a pre-arranged door-to-door and/or service to and from conventional transit for registered users. The following diagram (Figure 3.13 in the Transportation Master Plan) shows the proposed county Linx Transit Network. The county has another 4 routes planned to be added between 2019 and 2021 including Midland to Orillia.

