



**TOWN OF WASAGA BEACH
AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLAN**

**Final Report
May 10, 2016**

SHERCON ASSOCIATES INC.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Town of Wasaga Beach has developed an AFC Plan with assistance from a grant received from the Government of Ontario. An Age-Friendly Community (AFC) is one where policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments are designed to support and enable older people to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in their communities.

Implementation will be closely linked to existing plans such as the Town's Official Plan, Housing Strategy, Active Transportation and Wayfinding Plans, Downtown Master Plan, Parks, Facilities and Recreation Master Plan, and Infrastructure Capital Works Plans. Wasaga Beach's AFC plan will be a living document to serve as a blueprint for ongoing community relationship building and collaborative planning by the Town, other levels of government, service agencies, businesses and the community at large.

Approach

Work commenced in September 2015 and was complete in April 2016. Steps in carrying out the project were the following:

- Recruitment of an external consultant and establishment of a community-based Steering Committee to oversee the project
- A review of relevant background information
- A needs assessment questionnaire completed by 28 service providers from a cross-section local organizations
- A community survey completed by over 500 respondents
- Five focus group sessions directly engaging 66 seniors
- Phone interviews with 10 key informants including political officials, senior service providers and other community leaders.
- A half-day facilitated community stakeholder forum that was attended by a dynamic mix of seniors and service providers
- A discussion paper distributed on-line to inform citizens about the project and gather further input to the emerging goals and objectives
- An implementation planning workshop to identify specific actions, time frames and potential partners for moving the plan forward.

High levels of stakeholder engagement were achieved. The needs assessment and consultation process generated well over 800 interfaces with seniors, family members, service providers and community members accomplished through the interviews, surveys, community forum, discussion paper and implementation planning workshop. There was great consistency in the views expressed across the various groups.

Senior's Needs

Needs identified through the consultation/data gathering initiatives were the following:

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible sidewalks, trails and buildings Improved street lighting Downtown core and beachfront redevelopment Cycling and scooter lanes and paths Improved snow removal Expanded and interconnected walking trails Bus shelters, benches and sitting areas
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded bus service Special transit for people with disabilities Improved and subsidized parking for seniors Reduced taxi fares Volunteer, shuttle or pooled driving options
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local long-term care facility Affordable housing appropriate to seniors needs Subsidized (rent geared to income) accommodation Home maintenance and modification supports More retirement homes Facilities with a continuum of supports
Social and Recreational Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community hub Educational and employment opportunities Year-round recreational facilities Intergenerational programs
Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More local medical and specialized services Mental health and dementia supports Expanded in-home care Walk-in clinic Health education and promotion Supports for caregivers
Other Community Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enclosed mall/improved shopping options Financial support and cost relief Age-friendly businesses Improved access to information One-stop shopping for seniors services

Needs and services were analysed based on people's functional abilities rather than arbitrary age groups. The categories were well and fit seniors, seniors requiring some assistance with activities of daily living and seniors requiring 24-hour support.

Goals and Objectives

Eighteen goals emerged from the planning process addressing priorities related to infrastructure, housing, services and supports, health care and leadership and engagement.

Town Infrastructure

- 1.1 Improve accessibility of sidewalks, trails and buildings
- 1.2 Continue progress on the downtown core and beachfront redevelopment
- 1.3 Increase the range of transportation options for seniors

Housing

- 2.1 Provide supports to allow seniors to remain in their homes
- 2.2 Increase affordable and rent geared to income housing stock
- 2.3 Establish a local long-term care home

Services and Supports

- 3.1 Increase coordination and raise levels of awareness of existing services
- 3.2 Reach out to isolated and vulnerable seniors
- 3.3 Provide financial relief and support to seniors in need

Health Care

- 4.1 Establish a local walk-in clinic
- 4.2 Increase home health care services
- 4.3 Increase mental health supports to seniors
- 4.4 Establish hospice/palliative care lodging and supports

Leadership and Engagement

- 5.1 Expand use of social and conventional media related to senior's activities
- 5.2 Increase volunteer and employment opportunities for seniors
- 5.3 Involve youth in intergenerational programming
- 5.4 Engage businesses in service delivery to seniors
- 5.5 Enhance seniors' representation/involvement with Council on local issues

Suggested strategies to achieve the goals are described in the body of the report.

Next Steps

Experience from other jurisdictions has shown that community aging plans require some form of a permanent entity in order to ensure successful ongoing implementation, monitoring, revision and evaluation of goals and strategies.

On reviewing the various options for a sustainability model it is recommended that a formal committee (potentially called the “Wasaga Beach Age-Friendly Community Advisory Committee”) be established to encompass some of the members of the current Age-Friendly Steering Committee but expanded to include additional seniors and representation from local business. It would report through the Wasaga Beach Public Library which is already at the centre of many AFC plan initiatives and has strong existing connections with the senior community.

Submitted by:

Dr. David Sheridan
Senior Consultant and Principal

Deb Ballak
Associate Consultant

SHERCON ASSOCIATES INC.
100 Bronte Road, Unit 2
Oakville, ON L6L 6L5
www.shercon.ca

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

An Age-Friendly Community (AFC) is one where policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments are designed to support and enable older people to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in their communities.

Following receipt of an AFC planning grant from the Province of Ontario, the Town of Wasaga Beach issued a request for proposals and selected a consulting firm to facilitate the planning process. A community-based Steering Committee was formed which held a start-up meeting with the consultant on October 22, 2015. Steering Committee members are listed in Appendix A. A comprehensive needs assessment and consultation process was carried out in the fall and winter with a draft report being submitted to the Steering Committee for review on March 29, 2016. The final report will be presented to Council in May 2016.

This report outlines the project methodology, reports on the findings from the needs assessment and consultation process, outlines goals, objectives and strategies and discusses options for implementation and ongoing sustainability.

Implementation will be closely linked to existing plans such as the Town's Official Plan, Housing Strategy, Active Transportation and Wayfinding Plans, Downtown Master Plan, Parks, Facilities and Recreation Master Plan, and Infrastructure Capital Works Plans. Wasaga Beach's AFC plan will be a living document to serve as a blueprint for ongoing community relationship building and collaborative planning by the Town, other levels of government, service agencies, businesses and the community at large.

2.0 THE PLANNING PROCESS

2.1 Methodology

The project made extensive use of the Age-friendly Community (AFC) checklists and assessment tools developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and closely referenced the guidelines for Age-friendly Community Planning outlined in the 2013 Ontario Seniors Secretariat publication “Finding the Right Fit: Age-friendly Community Planning”. It also drew on approaches employed in several master aging plans developed in the United States and adapted by the consultants in their earlier AFC work in Brantford, Brant County, Oxford County and Niagara.

Best practices in planning for the needs of older adults suggest that services should be targeted to seniors on the basis of their functional abilities rather than on arbitrary age groupings. Recommended clusters based on the consultants’ experiences with similar projects are the following:

Well and fit seniors

Seniors requiring some assistance with activities of daily living

Seniors requiring 24-hour support

The focus of any age-friendly strategy should be on maintaining seniors in their present ability grouping and slowing down their transition to higher needs groups. The project methodology therefore involved identifying community needs and mapping them on a matrix crossing World Health Organization (WHO) dimensions against groupings of seniors with different needs and capabilities.

WHO Category	Well and Fit	Require some ADL assistance	Require 24 hour support
Transportation			
Housing			
Social participation			
Respect and social inclusion			
Civic participation and employment			
Communication and information			
Community support /health services			
Outdoor spaces and buildings			

The matrix also served as a useful guiding template during the goal setting and action planning stage of the project.

2.2 Information Review

At the outset of the project relevant background information was reviewed including World Health Organization literature about age-friendly communities, leading practices from other jurisdictions, provincial government planning and policy documents, Town plans, the 211 service listing and websites and literature of community groups and service provider organizations. Other reports and documents were identified and reviewed over the course of the project.

2.3 Community Survey

A questionnaire was designed to solicit information from members of the Wasaga Beach community on their perceptions of the system of services and supports for seniors. The questionnaire was made available in hard copy form at various community locations, sent to seniors groups and organizations, handed out at focus groups and distributed on-line through the Town website and e-mail distribution lists. The survey followed the WHO categories and utilized questionnaire items suggested in the Ontario Senior's Secretariat guidelines. More than 500 responses were received reflecting a representative cross-section of the Wasaga Beach population, particularly seniors and family members. The large sample size permitted some statistical generalizations and enabled some cross-group comparisons. The community questionnaire along with the detailed findings obtained appears as Appendix B.

2.4 Service Provider Survey

In order to gather detailed input from direct and indirect providers of services to seniors in the Wasaga Beach area a comprehensive provider questionnaire was constructed and distributed on-line to the agencies and individuals identified through the information review. The survey questions addressed awareness of current services for seniors, perceptions of service effectiveness, gaps between demand and supply, priorities for service enhancement, potential service duplication, perceived barriers to service, and suggestions for service improvement. The survey also focused on the eight WHO AFC dimensions. Twenty-eight local service providers completed and returned the questionnaire. The provider questionnaire along with the detailed findings obtained appears as Appendix C.

2.5 Seniors Focus Groups

Direct in-person contribution from seniors and their families was the centre piece of the needs assessment and consultation process. Five separate focus group sessions were scheduled to ensure involvement of the different population segments and were hosted by community groups and organizations. Dates and locations of the community focus group sessions appear below:

Date/Time	Sponsor/Location	Participants
November 17, 2015 afternoon	SGB Community Health Centre	10
November 18, 2015 morning	Waterside Retirement Lodge	14
November 18, 2015 afternoon	Wasaga Beach Public Library	10
November 18, 2015 evening	Wasaga Beach Seniors Residence	5
November 19, 2015 afternoon	Park Place Retirement Community	27
	Total Participants→	66

The facilitation approach in the sessions varied depending upon the group size and included a briefing on the project, likes/dislikes of existing services and supports, improvement suggestions and future priorities. The groups were lively, positive and generated good discussions that revealed high levels of consensus regarding seniors' needs. Notes were produced and a cumulative record of input was maintained.

2.6 Key Informant Interviews

Semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted by the consultants with a range of key informants including political officials, business owners, senior service providers and other community leaders. The respondents are listed in Appendix A. Questions covered high level perceptions of the current system of services and supports for seniors in Wasaga Beach, key trends, events and emerging issues, and comments and advice regarding the planning process underway. Ten interviews were carried out by the consultants over the course of the project. Their comments helped to corroborate and understand the findings from the surveys and focus groups.

2.7 Community Stakeholder Forum

A half-day facilitated community stakeholder forum was held at the Wasaga Beach RecPlex on Wednesday, December 9, 2015 and attended by members of the Steering Committee, Mayor Brian Smith, Councillor Bonnie Smith, Town staff, service providers and a solid contingent of Wasaga Beach seniors. Activities and deliberations included the following:

- Presentation of the information from the surveys, interviews and focus groups
- An exercise to assemble a "SWOT" analysis identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to service and supports for Wasaga Beach seniors
- Visioning and brainstorming exercises to identify potential initiatives
- Breakout work, followed by plenary discussion to develop broad strategic goals related to identified needs areas in the WHO Age-Friendly categories.

The community forum was attended by over 50 participants and the dynamic mix of seniors and service providers resulted in high quality input and advice stemming from the day.

2.8 Discussion Paper

In January 2016 a final consultation loop to the community was achieved through the on-line circulation of a community discussion paper that reflected the information gathered from the research and consultation process and solicited responses to the emerging goals and objectives. Again, a very high response was achieved with 137 well considered replies received from 94 seniors, 16 family members and 27 community groups and organizations.

The discussion paper was a helpful part of the stakeholder engagement process as it confirmed points of consensus around the goals and generated many excellent suggestions for implementation.

2.9 Implementation Planning Workshop

On Wednesday, March 9, 2016 a half-day implementation planning workshop was held at the Wasaga Beach Arena and attended by over 40 seniors, service providers and Town staff. Participants reviewed the feedback from the discussion paper, affirmed the emerging goals and identified specific actions, time frames and potential partners for moving the plan forward. Information from the session was used to finalize the plan that was submitted to the Steering Committee for review.

2.10 Stakeholder Engagement

The table below identifies the stakeholder interfaces achieved through the needs assessment and planning process. Identified needs were highly consistent across the groups.

	<i>Seniors</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Providers</i>	<i>Community</i>
Steering Committee			8	2
Key Informant Interviews	-	-	10	2
Community Survey	380	40	-	86
Provider Survey	-	-	22	-
Focus Groups	66	-	-	-
Community Forum (est.)	20	-	20	10
Discussion Paper	94	16	27	-
Implementation Planning Workshop (est.)	34	-	10	-
Total Stakeholder Interfaces: 847	594	56	97	100

3.0 NEEDS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

3.1 System Overview

Members of the Steering Committee, attendees at the December community forum, and other participants in the AFC planning process identified the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats pertaining to the overall system of services and supports for seniors in Wasaga Beach:

<u>Strengths:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location and natural beauty of area Range of clubs and social outlets Recreation facilities and opportunities Active and engaged base of seniors Safety and security Availability of public transit Welcoming community accommodating to seniors Existing services for seniors
<u>Weaknesses:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate, affordable housing for seniors Lack of local long-term care beds Limited transportation options No local hospital or walk-in clinic Wait lists/wait times for health services Knowledge and awareness of existing services Sidewalk and building accessibility issues
<u>Opportunities:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service coordination and partnerships Downtown core redevelopment Improving trail accessibility Communication and awareness raising Engagement of businesses and developers Intergenerational programming
<u>Threats:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing lack of sufficient funding Isolation of seniors Overwhelming demand with baby boomers Financial pressures on seniors Lack of specialized services Demands on caregivers

Any initiatives undertaken as part of the Wasaga Beach AFC Plan should build on strengths, rectify weaknesses, capitalize on opportunities and address threats.

3.2 Target Service Groups

The study focused on target groups of seniors based on their abilities rather than ages. This approach was employed as it offered a meaningful way of focusing on needs based upon personal circumstances rather than arbitrary age distinctions. The broad characteristics of the three different groups are described below:

Well/Fit Seniors

These individuals generally are in good health and able to live independently without assistance. The goal of services for this population is to help them maintain their health and independence for as long as possible. Previous work carried out by the consultants in other Ontario communities and confirmed by observations in Wasaga Beach has produced the following profile:

- Wide age range from 50 to 85+
- Many are retired, some working beyond typical retirement age
- Living independently in own homes – although affordable and appropriate future housing is often an issue
- Physically mobile
- Most drive
- Varying family situations
- Increasing in number and more demanding of services
- Becoming more “tech-savvy” and beginning to use social media

Minimal specialized supports are required for this group although it will be important to watch for risk factors such as isolation and depression which could jeopardize their wellness.

Seniors Requiring Some Assistance with Activities of Daily Living

This population requires some assistance with activities of daily living in order to allow them to stay in their own homes. In many cases the support comes from family members. This group can be profiled as follows:

- Mid and lower income, with increasing numbers of low income
- Some have financial concerns and challenges
- Predominantly female
- Acute and chronic disease and illness including diabetes, stroke, MS, arthritis, Parkinson’s, heart and renal disease
- Increasing dementia and mental illness issues
- Some are driving, others have caregivers who drive

- Some are invisible and inaccessible especially in rural areas
- Most have local family doctors – who are gradually retiring
- Increasing expectations for services and supports

The need for services that support caregivers and individuals to stay in their own homes is very evident with this group.

Seniors Requiring 24 hour Support:

The majority of these individuals reside in long-term care homes. The consultants profiled this group as follows:

- Age range 50 to 85+, with the majority in older age groups
- About two-thirds are female
- Entering long-term care older and more frail
- Increasing acuity and complexity of needs with higher care requirements
- Increasing behavioural challenges related to dementia

Quality of care is a priority issue for this segment of the older population, which is under-represented in Wasaga Beach due to the lack of long-term care homes.

The next six sections outline seniors’ needs identified through the surveys, focus groups, interviews, meetings and discussion paper. Selected representative quotes from seniors and other stakeholders are included to add richness and flavour to the data.

3.3 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

“We need snow free sidewalks in winter. Ice accumulation in intersections is also a problem for walkers. I fell in one breaking my wrist in 2015.”

“Parking at the beach is too expensive. It would be nice to have places handicapped can park at the beach so we can afford to go to the beach.”

“There is good accessibility – we have complied with the AODA act ahead of deadline.”

“I love living in Wasaga Beach and want to be able to continue to live here as I age.”

The 2007 World Health Organization (WHO) guide on age-friendly cities states that the outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the independence and quality of life of older people and their ability to “age in place”.

The community survey posed a number of questions related to outdoor space and buildings. Findings appear below and suggest reasonable levels of accessibility in the Town with some improvement areas identified, particularly with “walkability” issues and bike and scooter lanes.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings (Category Average 2.6)	Rating out of 4*
Public areas in Wasaga Beach are clean and pleasant	2.9
Pavements and sidewalks are in good condition and free of obstructions	2.8
Buildings and outdoor spaces are accessible for handicapped individuals	2.7
Services are situated in convenient location	2.7
Green spaces and outdoor seating are sufficient in number, well-maintained and safe	2.6
It is easy for seniors to get around walking	2.5
There are adequate lanes for bicycles and scooters	2.3

*Average scores on a 4-point scale where 4=Agree Strongly; 3=Agree Somewhat; 2=Disagree Somewhat; and 1=Disagree Strongly

Green = High rating 3.0+ **Yellow** = Midrange **Red** = Low rating < 2.5

Focus group participants corroborated the findings from the community survey and emphasized the importance of seniors being able to walk around town freely and safely. Support was expressed for continued downtown and beachfront development and ongoing improvements to the trail system.

Seniors’ needs related to outdoor spaces and buildings identified through the needs assessment were categorized by service groups and are summarized below.

Service Group →	Well/Fit	Some Assistance	24 Hour Supports
<u>Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:</u>			
Accessible sidewalks, trails and buildings	-	x	x
Improved street lighting	x	x	x
Downtown core and beachfront redevelopment	x	x	x
Cycling and scooter lanes and paths	x	x	-
Improved snow removal	x	x	-
Expanded and interconnected walking trails	x	x	-
Bus shelters, benches and sitting areas	x	x	x

3.4 Transportation

“If you lose the ability to have a car you have to sell and move.”

“Bus service to Barrie for mall-walking/shopping in winter especially would be nice.”

“Develop a multi-use facility that is tied to the transportation network.”

“There is a desperate need to address the special needs for those who are unable to walk to the bus stop. More and more people require transportation that is available to take them door to door, to appointments, social events and shopping.”

The 2007 WHO guide on Age-friendly Cities identifies transportation as a key factor influencing active aging. Being able to move about the community determines social and civic participation as well as access to services.

Community survey findings related to transportation appear below and point to a lack of affordable transportation options and the need for more special transit.

Transportation (Category Average 2.8)	Rating out of 4*
Traffic signs are easy to read and understand	3.2
Parking and drop-off areas are conveniently located	3.0
Public transit is reliable and frequent	2.9
Affordable and accessible special transit is available for people who are disabled	2.6
Taxis are accessible and affordable	2.4
There are good options for volunteer, shuttle or pooled driving	2.4

*Average scores on a 4-point scale where 4=Agree Strongly; 3=Agree Somewhat; 2=Disagree Somewhat; and 1=Disagree Strongly

Green = High rating 3.0+ **Yellow** = Midrange **Red** = Low rating < 2.5

A quarter of respondents responding to the community survey felt that transportation was “a large concern” for seniors accessing services and supports for seniors.

Focus group participants expressed a need for more bus shelters and increased options for affordable and convenient transportation such as shuttle and volunteer drivers. They also expressed concerns about the cost of taxis (a taxi to Collingwood costs \$80), similar to the findings from the community survey reported above. Transportation appeared near the top of the wish lists developed at the focus groups.

Respondents who completed the service provider survey identified special transit and public transit as a service gaps to be addressed, particularly for the group of seniors requiring some assistance with activities of daily living.

Seniors' needs related to transportation identified through the needs assessment were categorized by service groups and are summarized below.

Service Group →	<i>Well/Fit</i>	<i>Some Assistance</i>	<i>24 Hour Supports</i>
<u>Transportation:</u>			
Expanded bus service	X	X	-
Special transit for people with disabilities	-	X	X
Improved and subsidized parking for seniors	X	X	-
Reduced taxi fares	X	X	X
Volunteer, shuttle or pooled driving options	-	X	X

3.5 Housing

“We need to have reasonably priced rental units when we can no longer look after a house and property. We would have to move to Barrie or Collingwood to get that now.”

“Assisted living is expensive. That makes home care services very important.”

“While the town is planning on developing a down town, perhaps condos for seniors with indoor parking and elevators might find a way into the discussion.”

“Given the number of seniors that make Wasaga Beach their home, a long term care facility coupled with affordable housing would be a wonderful asset.”

The 2007 WHO AFC guide cites appropriate housing as an important determinant of the independence and quality of life of older people. Community survey respondents provided very low ratings across all of the questionnaire items pertaining to housing for seniors in Wasaga Beach. Findings appear below:

Housing (<i>Category Average 2.1</i>)	<i>Rating out of 4*</i>
Affordable home maintenance and renovation services are available	2.4
Sufficient housing appropriate to the needs of seniors is available in Wasaga Beach	2.2
<i>... Cont'd</i>	

Housing Cont'd	<i>Rating out of 4*</i>
There are sufficient supports to keep seniors in their homes (meals, housekeeping, personal care)	2.2
There is an adequate number of retirement homes in the community	2.1
There is an adequate amount of subsidized (rent geared to income) accommodation	1.8
There is an adequate number of long-term care beds in the community	1.7

*Average scores on a 4-point scale where 4=Agree Strongly; 3=Agree Somewhat; 2=Disagree Somewhat; and 1=Disagree Strongly

Green = High rating 3.0+ **Yellow** = Midrange **Red** = Low rating < 2.5

Findings from the service provider survey paralleled the community survey data, with providers identifying major gaps in long-term care beds and affordable housing options including rent geared to income accommodation. When asked to allocate hypothetical funding across different needs areas (housing, health care, transportation and recreation) they assigned the largest portion (47%) to housing.

Focus group participants corroborated the findings from the community and provider surveys and expressed needs for increased in-home supports and intermediary housing options to bridge the gap between independent living and long-term care. Housing related items topped the wish lists of all the focus groups.

Seniors' needs related to housing identified through the needs assessment were categorized by service groups and are summarized below:

Service Group →	<i>Well/Fit</i>	<i>Some Assistance</i>	<i>24 Hour Supports</i>
<u>Housing:</u>			
Local long-term care facility	-	-	X
Affordable housing appropriate to seniors needs	X	X	X
Subsidized (rent geared to income) accommodation	X	X	-
Home maintenance and modification supports	-	X	X
More retirement homes	-	X	X
Facilities with a continuum of supports			

3.6 Social, Cultural and Recreational Opportunities

“I consider the RecPlex to be an excellent community hub. It could be augmented with things like a walk-in clinic, information centre, etc. by constructing additional housing for the specific entity.”

“Establish an industrial area to encourage job creation. Seniors need to work. Pensions do not cut it. Jobs are an important aspect moving forward.”

“Seniors will be left in the dark if they don’t learn how to use a computer from the basics on up. Computer instruction is needed here and now.”

“Programs need an overhaul as this is a new generation. Seniors clubs are missing the new older adult because they are not interested in bingo/square dancing, etc.”

In describing the AFC “Social Participation” dimension the 2007 WHO guide points out the importance of seniors participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community. Another WHO dimension, “Civic Participation and Engagement” describes the benefits of older adults doing both paid and volunteer work in their communities. These two dimensions were addressed in the community survey and findings appear below.

Social, Cultural and Recreational (Category Average 2.9)	Rating out of 4*
Clubs and social groups offer a wide variety of activities of interest to older people	3.3
There are lots of ways to meet other seniors	3.2
There are enough volunteer opportunities for seniors	3.1
Recreation facilities are meeting the needs of seniors	3.0
Activities and attractions in town are affordable	2.7
There are enough educational opportunities for seniors	2.6
There are enough employment opportunities for seniors	2.2

*Average scores on a 4-point scale where 4=Agree Strongly; 3=Agree Somewhat; 2=Disagree Somewhat; and 1=Disagree Strongly

Green = High rating 3.0+ **Yellow** = Midrange **Red** = Low rating < 2.5

Seniors in Wasaga Beach have a wide range of existing recreation opportunities. Concerns flagged by the community survey respondents related to affordability and the need for more educational and employment opportunities.

Service provider survey respondents identified some minor gaps in social and recreational opportunities but would allocate a relatively small amount (14%) of hypothetical new funding to this area, reflective of the existing strengths of recreation assets in Wasaga Beach.

Focus group participants generally spoke positively about recreation in Wasaga Beach and expressed needs similar to the findings from the community survey. In addition, the need for a location or facilities to serve as a seniors' community "hub" for information, services and activities was a theme that emerged at the focus groups, community forum and implementation planning workshop.

Seniors' needs related to social, cultural and recreational opportunities were categorized by service group and are summarized below:

Service Group →	<i>Well/Fit</i>	<i>Some Assistance</i>	<i>24 Hour Supports</i>
<u>Social and Recreational:</u>			
Community hub	x	x	-
Educational opportunities	x	x	x
Employment opportunities	x	x	-
Year-round recreational facilities	x	x	-
Intergenerational programs	x	x	x

3.7 Health Care

"Seniors are required to drive or be driven to the hospital in Collingwood or Barrie. The walk in clinic in either location is quite often busy with very long waiting times."

"The proposed medical centre on 45th Street has yet to be built. Wasaga Beach is in desperate need of a clinic for all residents, not just seniors."

"I am concerned with the wait time for a specialist's referral, never mind the actual diagnosis and possible surgery. It is frustrating, sad and overwhelming to family members trying to cope with their elderly parents and relatives."

"The town needs more access to doctors and a hospital, walk-in clinic, or both. We as a community need to find ways to attract visitors to Wasaga Beach in ALL seasons."

"Talk more about preventive health care instead of fund raising for a cure. Real food education (involve the grocery stores to stop the use of unhealthy foods) Educate people on prevention, prevention, prevention."

The 2007 WHO AFC guide cites health and support services as an important dimension vital to maintaining independence in the community. Good mental and physical health is deemed essential to quality of life and a key determinant of a senior's ability to socialize and engage in social activities.

Community survey findings related to health appear below and reveal some issues with access, coordination, availability of services and wait times.

Health (Category Average 2.5)	Rating out of 4*
Most health care providers are aware and sensitive to the unique needs of seniors	2.9
There is a sufficient amount of information about health promotion	2.6
Services are easy to access and well coordinated	2.4
There is an adequate range of medical services available in the community	2.4
Health services are available when you need them	2.4

*Average scores on a 4-point scale where 4=Agree Strongly; 3=Agree Somewhat; 2=Disagree Somewhat; and 1=Disagree Strongly

Green = High rating 3.0+ **Yellow** = Midrange **Red** = Low rating < 2.5

Focus group participants echoed the survey findings and emphasized the need for a local walk-in clinic (a prominent item on their wish list), in-home health care services and mental health and dementia services and supports.

Service provider survey respondents flagged health promotion, dementia care and palliative care as major service gaps for seniors. They allocated 22% of their hypothetical funding increase to health services.

Seniors' needs related to health care identified through the needs assessment were broken out by service groups and are summarized below:

Service Group →	Well/Fit	Some Assistance	24 Hour Supports
<u>Health Care:</u>			
More local medical and specialized services	X	X	X
Mental health and dementia supports	-	X	X
Expanded in-home care	-	X	-
Walk-in clinic	X	X	-
Health education and promotion	X	X	-
Supports for caregivers	-	X	X

3.8 Other Community Needs

“In my experience, the Town of Wasaga Beach has good range of senior’s services and supports and is already an age friendly community, but if there were a way to make our age friendly community more obvious to the rest of Canada, we could be a very large magnet for seniors.”

“There is a need to simplify a process by which a senior in need (or anyone) can access the services that are available in a obvious, straight forward way, without having to do in-depth research and make a large number of contacts to get help. An individual should not have to know “How to play the game” to get the appropriate assistance.”

“We need a common source to locate contacts when desperately needed. It is a difficult road to navigate when you are ill and need help ASAP.”

“Everyone says ‘it only cost a few dollars’, here and there it adds up for us seniors on limited income.”

The 2007 WHO guide on age-friendly cities states that the “Respect and Social Inclusion”, the general feeling of respect and recognizing the role that older adults play in society is a critical factor for establishing an age-friendly community. Items on the community questionnaire related to this dimension as well as other community attributes appear below.

Other	<i>Rating out of 4*</i>
This is a safe and secure community for seniors to live in	3.3
Seniors are welcomed at community events, activities and settings	3.3
Retail and service staff are courteous and helpful to seniors	3.1
Older people are recognized by the community for their past as well as their present contributions	3.0
There is adequate information about services and resources available to seniors	2.7
There is a good variety of shopping options for seniors	2.6
Decision making bodies welcome and use input from seniors	2.6
Cost-relief and financial support is available to seniors who need it	2.3

**Average scores on a 4-point scale where 4=Agree Strongly; 3=Agree Somewhat; 2=Disagree Somewhat; and 1=Disagree Strongly*

Green = High rating 3.0+ **Yellow** = Midrange **Red** = Low rating < 2.5

Community survey respondents assigned high ratings to all items related to social inclusion, an important WHO AFC dimension and one that is often difficult to obtain. They gave low ratings to cost relief/financial support and the lack of local shopping options for seniors. More than a third (37%) of the community respondents felt that the financial cost of accessing services was “a large concern.” Service provider respondents expressed similar concerns.

The availability of information about services and supports was a persistent theme throughout the planning process. Only 9% of the community survey respondents felt they were “very informed” about services provided to seniors in Wasaga Beach and more than a third (37%) reported they were “not too informed” or “not at all informed”. Interestingly, further analysis reported below shows that ratings of services increase as people become more aware of what is available.

Service Ratings by Service Awareness

	Very Informed <i>n=40</i>	Somewhat Informed <i>n=234</i>	Not too Informed <i>n=135</i>	Not at all Informed <i>n=12</i>
'Excellent' Rating	25%	2%	1%	0%
'Good' Rating	63%	61%	33%	8%
'Fair' Rating	10%	33%	60%	50%
'Poor' Rating	2%	4%	7%	42%

Based on community survey (506 total responses). Columns do not always total 100% due to rounding. Table is statistically significant.

The range of other community needs identified through the needs assessment was categorized by service groups and are summarized below.

Service Group →	<i>Well/Fit</i>	<i>Some Assistance</i>	<i>24 Hour Supports</i>
<u>Other Community Needs:</u>			
Enclosed mall/improved shopping options	x	x	x
Financial support and cost relief	x	x	x
Age-friendly businesses	x	x	-
Improved access to information	x	x	x
One-stop shopping for seniors services	x	x	-

3.9 Conclusion

More than half (55%) of the community survey respondents rated services and supports for Wasaga Beach seniors as “excellent” or “good”, evidence that the Town of Wasaga Beach has already made considerable progress in achieving the eight WHO dimensions for Age-Friendly Communities.

Key points from the needs assessment appear below.

WHO Dimension	Existing Strengths	Improvement Areas
1. <u>Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:</u>	Location and natural beauty of area Downtown and beachfront redevelopment plans	Accessibility/walkability, Bike/scooter lanes Expanded trail system
2. <u>Transportation:</u>	Existing public transit	More transportation options Expanded special transit Out of town transit
3. <u>Housing:</u>	Existing retirement homes and communities	Local LTC beds Expanded affordable housing options
4. <u>Social Participation:</u>	Existing recreation options RecPlex Seniors groups Service clubs	Educational opportunities Intergenerational programs
5. <u>Respect and Social Inclusion:</u>	Welcoming, friendly and accommodating	Expand seniors profile and awareness
6. <u>Civic Participation and Employment:</u>	Volunteer opportunities	Employment for seniors Engagement opportunities
7. <u>Communication and Information:</u>	Public Library Existing publications 211	Coordination and one-stop shopping Senior’s Hub
8. <u>Community and Health Services:</u>	Local community health centre Local health care providers Hospital in Collingwood	Local drop-in clinic Mental health and dementia supports Expanded in-home care

The next section describes the plan developed to address the findings from the needs analysis and move Wasaga Beach closer the WHO notion of an age-friendly community.

4.0 MOVING FORWARD

4.1 Guiding Principles

The Steering Committee participated in an exercise at its inaugural meeting to identify broad principles to govern the development and implementation of the AFC plan. These were compared and found to be consistent with the guiding principles suggested on the University of Waterloo AFC website, a source recommended in the Ontario Seniors Secretariat AFC guidelines.

The five guiding principles for the Wasaga Beach AFC plan are therefore the following:

1. Respect and support of all individuals
2. Access and inclusion
3. Openness and transparency
4. Community engagement in plan development and decision making
5. Accountability for actions and follow-up

These principles governed the development of the Wasaga Beach AFC plan and will guide its ongoing implementation.

4.2 Vision

A vision statement describes the "preferred future state" of a community and its stakeholders. Steering Committee members and community forum participants engaged in several visioning exercises to develop elements of a future vision for seniors in Wasaga Beach:

- Inclusiveness and accessibility across all areas of the community
- Enhanced services and facilities that ensure high quality of life for present and future seniors living in Wasaga Beach
- A high degree of seniors leadership and engagement in community life

Achievement of the vision will position Wasaga Beach as a leading Age-Friendly Community in the province.

4.3 Goals

Eighteen goals emerged from the planning process addressing priorities related to infrastructure, housing, service and supports, health care and leadership and engagement.

The goals appear on Page 26.

AFC GOALS

Town Infrastructure

- 1.1 Improve accessibility of sidewalks, trails and buildings
- 1.2 Continue progress on the downtown core and beachfront redevelopment
- 1.3 Increase the range of transportation options for seniors

Housing

- 2.1 Provide supports to allow seniors to remain in their homes
- 2.2 Increase affordable and rent geared to income housing stock
- 2.3 Establish a local long-term care home

Services and Supports

- 3.1 Increase coordination and raise levels of awareness of existing services
- 3.2 Reach out to isolated and vulnerable seniors
- 3.3 Provide financial relief and support to seniors in need

Health Care

- 4.1 Establish a local walk-in clinic
- 4.2 Increase home health care services
- 4.3 Increase mental health supports to seniors
- 4.4 Establish hospice/palliative care lodging and supports

Leadership and Engagement

- 5.1 Expand use of social and conventional media related to senior's activities
- 5.2 Increase volunteer and employment opportunities for seniors
- 5.3 Involve youth in intergenerational programming
- 5.4 Engage businesses in service delivery to seniors
- 5.5 Enhance seniors representation/involvement with Council on local issues

4.4 Linkages to Other Town Plans

Implementation should be closely linked to existing plans such as the Town's Official Plan, Housing Strategy, Active Transportation and Wayfinding Plans, Downtown Master Plan, Parks, Facilities and Recreation Master Plan, and Infrastructure Capital Works Plans. Strategic plans from other community organizations should also be linked where possible.

The AFC plan can serve as a blueprint for ongoing community relationship building and collaborative planning by the Town, other levels of government, service agencies, businesses and the community at large.

IMPLEMENTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

5.1 Implementation Template

This section describes the strategies, accountabilities and time frames necessary for achieving the AFC goals. The template is based on work completed by participants at the implementation planning workshop held in March 2016. It is presented here as a preliminary draft and will need to be expanded and refined as AFC implementation proceeds.

Town Infrastructure

1.1 Improve accessibility of sidewalks, trails and buildings

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
1.1.1	Install and upgrade sidewalks to accommodate walkers and motorized scooters	Town of WB	2016 Ongoing
1.1.2	Review sidewalk and bus stop snow removal practices and implement improvements where feasible	Town of WB	Ongoing
1.1.3	Continue development of Town trail network to encompass even and consistent surfaces, clear signage, wheelchair accessibility and improved parking	Town of WB Healthy Community Network Ministry of Natural Resources	2016-18 Ongoing
1.1.4	Ensure accessibility standards and AODA requirements are being met in all town businesses, buildings and facilities	Accessibility Advisory Committee Chamber of Commerce Local organizations	Ongoing

1.2 Continue progress on the downtown core and beachfront redevelopment

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
1.2.1	Commence property upgrades in core area in accordance with the Downtown Master Plan	Town of WB Developers	Ongoing
1.2.2	Attract businesses such as a major hotel, entertainment venues, and retail shopping	Town of WB Developers Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
1.2.3	Explore feasibility of civic catalysts such as the Library, arenas and cultural centres to serve as part of community hubs for seniors and all residents	Town of WB YMCA Sports associations Library	2016-20
1.2.4	Continue developing “shovel ready” plans to capitalize on new funding opportunities	Town of WB Private Partners	Ongoing

1.3 Increase the range of transportation options for seniors

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
1.3.1	Explore feasibility of extended bus service into senior's residential areas and increased drop-off points	Town of WB	2016-17
1.3.2	Increase bus shelters and ensure they are accessible	Town of WB	2016-17
1.3.3	Promote increased public transit ridership in targeted areas of the Town	Town of WB	Ongoing
1.3.4	Expand volunteer, shuttle and pooled driving arrangements	Taxi Companies Red Cross volunteer drivers Seniors Trans. Services Service clubs School Boards (buses)	2017-18
1.3.5	Explore expanded options for inter-municipal transportation	Town of WB County of Simcoe Surrounding municipalities	2016-19

Housing

2.1 Provide supports to allow seniors to remain in their homes

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
2.1.1	Expand home maintenance services including lawn care and snow removal	Local businesses High school volunteer credits	2016-17
2.1.2	Seek funding for increased home support services for seniors (meals, housekeeping, personal care)	Town of WB County of Simcoe North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN CCAC	2017-18
2.1.3	Educate seniors on available grants and subsidies	Town of WB County of Simcoe Housing Resource Centre	Ongoing

2.2 Increase affordable and rent geared to income housing stock

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
2.2.1	Increase number of affordable housing units	County of Simcoe Town of WB	2016-18
2.2.2	Create mixed housing buildings with market and RGI rents	Town of WB County of Simcoe Private developers	2016-18
2.2.3	Increase non-traditional options such as secondary suites (granny flats) and shared pod housing	Town of WB County of Simcoe Private developers	Ongoing
2.2.4	Explore feasibility of establishing a municipal non-profit housing corporation	Town of WB County of Simcoe	2017-18 Ongoing

2.3 Establish a local long-term care home

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
2.3.1	Develop a business case based on present and future demographics	Town of WB Simcoe County North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN	2017-18 Ongoing
2.3.2	Apply for funding	Town of WB County of Simcoe North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN	2018 Ongoing
2.3.3	Develop and promote facilities with a continuum of supports to facilitate “aging in place”	Town of WB County of Simcoe	2019 Ongoing

Services and Supports

3.1 Increase coordination and raise levels of awareness of existing services

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
3.1.1	Increase community knowledge and use of 211	211	2016
3.1.2	Create a “Seniors Services” section on Town website	Town of WB Service providers	2016
3.1.3	Establish seniors services information hubs at key locations	Library Town of WB Chamber of Commerce South Georgian Bay CHC	2017
3.1.4	Increase collaboration and information sharing among service providers	Town of WB Simcoe County Service providers	2017 Ongoing

3.2 Reach out to isolated and vulnerable seniors

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
3.2.1	Expand adult day programs	VON YMCA Town of Wasaga Beach Red Cross	2017-18
3.2.2	Expand friendly visitors program and establish supports for widows and widowers	Red Cross Other service providers	2017-18
3.2.3	Expand books on wheels program	Library	2017
3.2.4	Expand “Home for Life” programs	Waterside Retirement Lodge Other service providers	2017
3.3.5	Establish and maintain a registry for people living alone	Community Health Centre	2017

3.3 Provide financial relief and support to seniors in need

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
3.3.1	Expand seniors discounts offered at local businesses	Chamber of Commerce	2016-17
3.3.2	Advocate for increased housing and social services subsidies	Town of WB County of Simcoe	Ongoing
3.3.3	Offer financial literacy training and credit counselling	Georgian College Financial planners	2017 Ongoing
3.3.4	Continue /expand food bank, community garden and food security initiatives	Town of WB (Healthy Community Network) Community Health Centre	Ongoing

Health Care

4.1 Establish a local walk-in clinic

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
4.1.1	Meet with local physicians and nurse practitioners to determine interest	Town of WB	2016
4.1.2	Apply for provincial funding	MPP North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN	2016-17
4.1.3	Establish interim temporary site	Town of WB	2017
4.1.4	Attract new physicians and health care specialists to the town	Town of WB Collingwood General and Marine Hospital	2017-18
4.1.5	Develop and implement a local fundraising strategy	Town of WB Residents Service Clubs Businesses	2019 Ongoing

4.2 Increase home health care services

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
4.2.1	Advocate for increased funding for home care	County of Simcoe North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN CCAC	Ongoing
4.2.2	Identify and communicate existing available respite services	211	2016
4.2.3	Create a volunteer community group for care/visits	Service Clubs Churches	2017
4.2.4	Increase education of hospital to home patients	CCAC Community Health Centre	2017

4.3 Increase mental health supports to seniors

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
4.3.1	Create an education plan regarding dementia	Alzheimer's Society Dementia Network County of Simcoe	2017 Ongoing
4.3.2	Offer information sessions to families and providers on dementia care	Alzheimer's Society	2017 Ongoing
4.3.3	Establish mental health support groups for seniors and their families	CMHA Simcoe County Alzheimer's Society	2017 Ongoing
4.3.4	Establish support groups for families and caregivers	Service providers	2017 Ongoing

4.4 Establish hospice/palliative care lodging and supports

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
4.4.1	Provide education to the community regarding hospice process	CCAC Canadian Cancer Society	Ongoing
4.4.2	Build a case by gathering data on past and projected future use of hospice beds	TBD	2016
4.4.4	Identify and pursue provincial and other funding sources	TBD	2017
4.4.4	Explore the potential for a satellite hospice through an existing local facility	Waterside and other potential locations	2018-19

Leadership and Engagement

5.1 Expand use of social and conventional media related to senior's activities

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
5.1.1	Enhance and simplify Town website for seniors	Town of WB	2016
5.1.2	Provide education to seniors on computers and social media	Library Youth groups	2017 Ongoing
5.1.3	Initiate a media campaign to profile seniors and their accomplishments	Town of WB Local media	2017 Ongoing

5.2 Increase volunteer and employment opportunities for seniors

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
5.2.1	Establish a seniors volunteer data base	Library Service Clubs	2017
5.2.2	Seek grant opportunities for seniors employment	Town of WB (Healthy Community Network)	2017-18
5.2.3	Promote employment of seniors in local hospitality industry, retail and other business areas	Chamber of Commerce	2017 Ongoing

5.3 Involve youth in intergenerational programming

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
5.3.1	Explore synergies with existing youth programs	Town of WB Healthy Community Network Youth Centre	2016
5.3.2	Engage youth in Community Gardens and other appropriate programs	Town of WB Healthy Community Network Youth Groups	2016 Ongoing
5.3.3	Utilize high school volunteer credits for providing services to seniors	School boards	2017 Ongoing

5.4 Engage businesses in service delivery to seniors

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
5.4.1	Provide businesses with training and tool kits re: engaging with seniors and accessibility	Service providers	2016
5.4.1	Develop partnerships and sponsorship opportunities	Town of WB Chamber of Commerce	2017 Ongoing

5.5 Enhance seniors' representation/involvement with Council on local issues

<i>Strategies</i>		<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
5.5.1	Extend and expand the mandate of the Age-Friendly Project Steering Committee to form an Age-Friendly Community Advisory Committee	Town of WB (Town Council)	ASAP
5.5.2	Explore funding options to recruit a coordinator to support the initial roll-out of the plan	Town of WB Library	2016-17

Note that the Wasaga Beach AFC plan currently consists of five priority areas, 18 goals and 66 individual strategies to achieve the goals. Detailed action steps will need to be developed to execute the strategies as the plan is built out further.

The implementation template should remain a perpetual draft, changing frequently as strategies and actions are executed and new ones are identified.

5.2 Sustainability Model

Experience from other jurisdictions has shown that community aging plans require some form of a permanent entity in order to ensure successful ongoing implementation, monitoring, revision and evaluation of goals and objectives.

The consultants have direct experience with several sustainability models used in other jurisdictions:

1. A separately incorporated not-for-profit unit (Brantford and Brant County Master Aging Plan, 2012; Niagara Aging Strategy and Action Plan, 2014).
2. Identified local organizations, groups and individuals to act as plan champions (Oxford County Master Aging Plan, 2012)
3. Independent and autonomous local committees not formally affiliated with municipal Council (Arnprior AFC Plan, 2016; Petawawa AFC Plan, 2016)
4. A local community advisory group as a formal standing committee of Municipal Council (Municipality of South Huron AFC Plan, 2016).

In the case of Wasaga Beach a variation of Options 2 and 4 is recommended. A formal committee (potentially called the “Wasaga Beach Age Friendly Community Advisory Committee”) could be established to encompass some of the members of the current Age-Friendly Steering Committee established to oversee the development of the AFC plan but expanded to include additional senior members and representation from local business.

Functions of the Age-Friendly Community Advisory Committee would include:

- Ongoing communication of the AFC plan and its various initiatives to the Wasaga Beach community
- Continually identifying service gaps and shortfalls
- Recruitment of partners to participate in executing AFC strategies
- Regular alterations to the plan based on changes in the environment and maintenance of the Implementation Template as a “living document”
- Monitoring progress on goals against pre-determined outcome measures
- Identifying and pursuing resources such as grants, new funders, corporate sponsorships or in-kind donations

It is recommended that the AFC Advisory Committee report through the Wasaga Beach Public Library which is already at the centre of many AFC plan initiatives. This promotes the notion of a “community owned” plan rather than a Town Council driven plan. The library currently acts at “arms length” from Town Council but has strong links which would be useful in implementing those strategies which fall directly to the Town.

In addition the library already has strong connections with the senior community and could potentially fulfill a role as a community hub for seniors. It also has experience with developing and submitting grant applications which would be useful for obtaining funding for a coordinator to manage the project. Having charitable status will also help if any fund raising initiatives become necessary.

5.3 Immediate Next Steps

Suggested steps for moving forward are the following:

1. Present the final plan to Council in the spring of 2016 for formal endorsement.
2. Develop terms of reference for the Age-Friendly Community Advisory Committee and confirm Library involvement.
3. The AFC Advisory Committee would then initiate an ongoing communication program with the following key messages:
 - The fact that the needs and solutions in the plan are based on extensive bottom-up input from members of the community and as such have considerable legitimacy
 - The fact that it is not a conventional plan but rather a template that draws linkages to existing and planned actions by community groups, individuals and organizations
 - The fact that the plan will strive to be cost-neutral wherever possible and even cost reducing due to the resource coordination efficiencies it will achieve
4. Assign Advisory Committee members as champions of the various goals who can approach potential partners for involvement and support. The Advisory Committee would then establish action plans for priority strategies identifying specific tasks, deliverables, time frames and accountabilities and resource requirements.
5. Expand the list of strategies and identify quick wins that can be implemented immediately. Include these in early communications.

The ultimate success of the initiatives in the Wasaga Beach AFC plan will be dependent on broad and sustained engagement of the Town, service providers and agencies, community members and most of all, seniors themselves. Successful implementation will require some new initiatives, but many of the strategies are already underway through the Town, existing organizations and providers. The plan should guide collaboration and resource sharing, advocacy and long-term planning by all sectors.

The lead consultant from Shercon Associates Inc. will remain on call for a six-month period to support and assist the AFC Advisory Committee with the roll-out of the plan.

APPENDIX A - Steering Committee and Key Informants

Steering Committee Members

Brian Smith	Mayor of Wasaga Beach
Bonnie Smith	Town Council representative
Dr. Toni Basinski	South Georgian Bay Family Health Team
Jackie Beaudin	Wasaga Beach Public Library
Irene Bell	Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association, Prime Time Club, HCN
Bruce Galbraith	Accessibility Advisory Committee
Marci Janecek	South Georgian Bay Community Health Centre
Susan Luciani	Healthy Community Network
Sharon Matthews	Prime Time Club
Dr. Peter Willmott	Healthy Community Network
Nathan Wukasch	Town Planner, Chair of Steering Committee

Key Informants Interviewed

Jackie Dusome	Waterside Retirement Lodge
Gerry Hillier	412 Seniors Club
Marci Janecek	South Georgian Bay Community Health Centre
Cathy Kytayko	Simcoe County Social Housing
Marie La Rose	Georgian Bay Family Health Team
Robin McFadyen	Home for Life
Peter Preager	Senior Resident, LHIN Board Member
Brian Smith	Mayor of Wasaga Beach
Karen Storing	Wasaga Beach YMCA
Karen Taillefer	North Simcoe Muskoka CCAC



WASAGA BEACH AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLAN Survey of Community Members (APPENDIX B)

The Town of Wasaga Beach is developing an Age-Friendly Community Plan with assistance from a grant received from the Ontario Government. An Age-Friendly community is one where policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments are designed to support and enable older people to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in their communities. Work on the plan is underway and will be complete in the new year.

This survey is one of several community consultation initiatives to be launched and is seeking the views of older adults about the current environment for seniors in Wasaga Beach. It will take about 10 minutes to complete. Findings will be presented at a community stakeholder forum to be held in early December and then used to develop goals and objectives.

Your answers will help us better understand the needs of older adults in Wasaga Beach. Please complete this questionnaire no later than Monday, November 30, 2015. Your responses are anonymous and will go directly to the consultants helping us with the project.

It is not necessary to answer all the questions. If you are unsure, or do not want to answer a question, leave it blank. You can also complete this questionnaire on line by going to the Town website www.wasagabeach.com

1. A list of statements about services and supports for seniors in Wasaga Beach appears below. Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. If you are unsure leave the item blank. **Final N=506 responses**

Green = High rating 3.0+ Red = Low rating < 2.5 Yellow = Midrange	Av.	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly
	#	%	%	%	%
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings					
Public areas in Wasaga Beach are clean and pleasant	2.9	15	62	18	5
Green spaces and outdoor seating are sufficient in number, well-maintained and safe	2.6	12	46	33	9
Pavements and sidewalks are in good condition and free of obstructions	2.8	17	54	22	7
It is easy for seniors to get around walking	2.5	15	39	28	19
There are adequate lanes for bicycles and scooters	2.3	11	31	36	22
Buildings and outdoor spaces are accessible for handicapped individuals	2.7	12	56	26	6
Services are situated in convenient location	2.7	12	53	26	9

		<i>Agree Strongly</i>	<i>Agree Somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree Somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>
Transportation	#	%	%	%	%
Public transit is reliable and frequent	2.9	22	53	16	9
Affordable and accessible special transit is available for people who are disabled	2.6	13	50	23	15
Traffic signs are easy to read and understand	3.2	36	52	9	3
Parking and drop-off areas are conveniently located	3.0	25	52	20	3
Taxis are accessible and affordable	2.4	11	36	35	18
There are good options for volunteer, shuttle or pooled driving	2.4	10	33	39	18
Housing	#	%	%	%	%
Sufficient housing appropriate to the needs of seniors is available in Wasaga Beach	2.2	9	29	31	31
Affordable home maintenance and renovation services are available	2.4	8	44	29	19
There is an adequate number of retirement homes in the community	2.1	7	29	35	29
There is an adequate number of long-term care beds in the community	1.7	4	9	35	52
There is an adequate amount of subsidized (rent geared to income) accommodation	1.8	4	15	34	47
There are sufficient supports to keep seniors in their homes (meals, housekeeping, personal care)	2.2	7	31	38	24
Social and Recreational	#	%	%	%	%
Clubs and social groups offer a wide variety of activities of interest to older people	3.3	44	47	8	1
Recreation facilities are meeting the needs of seniors	3.0	26	54	15	4
There are lots of ways to meet other seniors	3.2	35	50	13	2
There are enough educational opportunities for seniors	2.6	14	44	32	9
There are enough volunteer opportunities for seniors	3.1	28	56	14	3
There are enough employment opportunities for seniors	2.2	6	27	46	21
Activities and attractions in town are affordable	2.7	14	47	31	9

		<i>Agree Strongly</i>	<i>Agree Somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree Somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>
Health	#	%	%	%	%
There is an adequate range of medical services available in the community	2.4	11	41	26	22
There is a sufficient amount of information about health promotion	2.6	11	50	29	10
Most health care providers are aware and sensitive to the unique needs of seniors	2.9	19	54	21	6
Services are easy to access and well coordinated	2.4	9	40	37	14
Health services are available when you need them	2.4	10	39	30	21
Other	#	%	%	%	%
This is a safe and secure community for seniors to live in	3.3	36	54	8	1
Cost-relief and financial support is available to seniors who need it	2.3	6	33	47	14
There is a good variety of shopping options for seniors	2.6	13	47	26	15
Retail and service staff are courteous and helpful to seniors	3.1	27	58	12	3
Seniors are welcomed at community events, activities and settings	3.3	40	54	4	1
Older people are recognized by the community for their past as well as their present contributions	3.0	28	50	20	2
There is adequate information about services and resources available to seniors	2.7	15	46	32	7
Decision making bodies welcome and use input from seniors	2.6	12	47	31	9

3. In general how would you rate the overall services provided to older adults in your community?

4 Excellent **39** Fair
51 Good **6** Poor

4. How informed or uninformed do you feel about services provided to seniors in your community?

9 Very informed
54 Somewhat informed
33 Not too informed
4 Not at all informed

5. A number of potential obstacles or barriers to individual seniors accessing services are listed on the next page. Indicate the extent to which you feel each of these has been a concern to you:

	<i>Not a concern at all</i>	<i>Somewhat of a concern</i>	<i>A large concern</i>
The hours that supports or services are available	36	49	15
The geographic location of where the services are provided	26	44	30
Transportation	35	39	26
Being physically able to get to services	39	37	24
Stigma related to accessing some services	51	37	12
The financial cost or out-of-pocket expenses to individuals	22	41	37
Long wait lists/wait times	16	41	43
Not meeting eligibility criteria for services	28	46	25
Lack of awareness of services	21	52	27
Language or cultural differences	74	21	5

Did you answer this questionnaire as an: *(Check all that apply)*

- 90** Older adult/senior
9 Family member/caregiver
21 Community citizen

Your age: **7** Under 55 years
22 56 to 65
57 66 to 80
14 Over 80 years

Circumstances: **86** In good health and able to live independently
13 Require some assistance with activities of daily living
1 Require 24 hour support

Live in: **95** Wasaga Beach

Duration: **24** Less than 5 years **48** Between 10 and 30 years
21 Between 5 and 10 years **7** More than 30 years



WASAGA BEACH AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLAN Survey of Providers (APPENDIX C)

The Town of Wasaga Beach is undertaking the creation of an Age-Friendly Community (AFC) Plan with assistance from a grant received from the Ontario Government. An Age-Friendly community is one where policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments are designed to support and enable older people to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in their communities.

Work on the plan is underway and will be complete in the new year. The project is being led by a Steering Committee with representatives from the Town, service providers and seniors. It will produce a comprehensive and sustainable AFC plan that will serve as a template for collaborative planning to address the needs of our growing seniors population in Wasaga Beach.

This survey is one of several stakeholder consultation initiatives to be launched and is designed to gather service provider perceptions of the current system of services and supports for older adults in Wasaga Beach. It will take about 15 - 20 minutes to complete. Findings will be presented at a community forum to be held in early December and used to develop goals and objectives

Please complete and return this on-line questionnaire no later than 5:00 p.m. Friday, November 27, 2015. Your responses will be confidential and will go directly to the external consultants assisting us with the project.

If you are unsure, or don't know the answer to a particular question, simply leave that item blank. It is not necessary to answer all the questions.

1. Please provide the following background information: **28 responses**

Type of Organization: *Check all that apply*

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 9 Home support | 2 Faith based organization |
| 3 Hospice | 2 Ethnic/cultural organization |
| 16 Health care | 1 Government |
| 0 Social services | 2 Retirement home |
| 6 Primary care | 2 Supportive housing |
| 3 Recreation | 4 Long-term care home |
| 7 Outpatient/outreach (day program, assisted living) | |

Estimated percentage of your services that are provided to seniors/older adults (55 years and older): **Average = 74%**

Which groups of seniors receive services from you or your organization?

- 18** Well-fit seniors living independently
- 22** Seniors requiring some support with activities of daily living (ADL)
- 14** Seniors requiring 24-hour support

2. A list of services and supports for seniors in Wasaga Beach appears below. Please review the list for each service group and indicate the five services that you feel are currently experiencing the greatest system pressure in terms of present gaps between supply and demand.

Check up to five in each column

		<i>Seniors Group Served:</i>		
<i>Category</i>	<i>Service/Support</i>	<i>Well/Fit Seniors</i>	<i>Some ADL Assistance</i>	<i>24 hour support</i>
Transportation	Special transit	5	12	10
	Public transit	3	13	5
	Taxi services	2	10	4
	Volunteer, shuttle and pooled driving	3	10	6
	Driver supports – signage, parking, etc.	2	8	3
	Active transportation: Pedestrian and cycling friendly environment	10	7	2
Housing	Home maintenance and renovation supports	6	9	5
	Affordable and accessible housing options	10	13	8
	Rent geared to income accommodation	10	14	9
	In-home supports – meals, housekeeping, etc.	7	9	8
	Personal support workers	5	9	12
	Retirement homes	5	9	8
Social and Recreational	Long-term care beds	3	6	14
	Recreation centres	5	9	5
	Clubs and social groups	5	5	6
	Faith based organizations	3	5	6
	Arts and culture organizations	5	7	3
	Library resources	3	7	5
	Educational opportunities for seniors	10	8	4
	Volunteer opportunities for seniors	8	5	4
	Employment opportunities for seniors	8	5	3
Parks and outdoor space	4	8	3	
Health Care	Health education and promotion	10	9	4
	Primary care – family physicians, clinics	6	11	9
	Medical specialists	7	9	9
	Therapies – Physio, OT, etc.	5	7	7

Health Care (Cont'd)	<i>Service/Support</i>	<i>Well/Fit Seniors</i>	<i>Some ADL Assistance</i>	<i>24 hour support</i>
	Pharmacy	2	4	2
	Dental, vision and hearing	2	3	3
	Foot care	3	4	4
	Dementia care	3	8	15
	Palliative care/hospice	4	7	13
	Mental health supports	6	9	11
	Addictions services	4	5	7
Other	Access to community information	4	5	3
	Counselling	8	11	8
	Supports for caregivers – respite, training, etc.	9	13	14
	System navigation	6	8	8
	Retail services	2	5	3
	Safety and security programs (falls, fraud preventions, fire safety, etc.)	8	9	6
	Financial supports	8	7	10

3. Are there any necessary services or supports for seniors that presently do not exist in Wasaga Beach?

Walk in clinic; nutritional education; repeats of above categories

4. Thinking now in general terms, rate the overall effectiveness of the system of services and supports for seniors in accomplishing the following:

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>
Responding to the unique needs of seniors	0%	42%	42%	16%
Coordination across programs and service providers	0%	21%	47%	32%
Providing flexibility and choice to seniors	0%	25%	65%	10%
Ensuring individuals receive the right services	0%	26%	58%	16%
Ensuring individuals receive services in a timely fashion	0%	21%	47%	32%
Communicating information about services available	0%	37%	26%	37%
Identifying and responding to community needs	0%	21%	58%	21%
Having a positive impact on the lifestyle and well-being of seniors	6%	28%	50%	16%

5. If you gave a rating of “fair” or “poor” to any of the items in Question 4, please explain below:

Transportation issues; underfunded; service gaps; wait lists; lack of coordination; knowledge/awareness of services; limited choice of providers; no LTC home

6. Do you feel there is any unnecessary duplication of services for seniors in Wasaga Beach?

None identified

7. Assume that you have some new funding to distribute to the various services and supports for seniors in Wasaga Beach. Thinking in terms of your answers to the previous questions, allocate these funds by assigning percentages across the services below:

You can allocate the funds any way you like but the total should add up to 100%

		Amount
Transportation 12%	Public transit	8
	Special transit	1
	Taxi services	-
	Volunteer, shuttle and pooled driving	1
	Driver supports– signage, instruction, parking	-
	Active transportation: Pedestrian and cycling friendly environment	2
Housing 47%	Home maintenance and renovation supports	1
	Affordable and accessible housing options	11
	Rent geared to income accommodation	15
	In-home supports – meals, housekeeping, etc.	3
	Personal support workers	1
	Retirement homes	2
Social, Recreational, Educational, Wellness 14%	Long-term care beds	14
	Recreation centres	3
	Clubs and social groups	-
	Faith based organizations	-
	Arts and culture organizations	1
	Library resources	6
	Educational opportunities for seniors	1
	Volunteer opportunities for seniors	-
Employment opportunities for seniors	2	
Parks and outdoor space	1	

Health Care 22%	Health education and promotion	1
	Primary care – family physicians, clinics	8
	Medical specialists	1
	Therapies – Physio, OT, etc.	1
	Pharmacy	-
	Dental, vision and hearing	-
	Foot care	-
	Dementia care	2
	Palliative care/hospice	3
	Mental health supports	6
	Addictions services	-
Other 5%	Access to community information	2
	Counselling	-
	Supports for caregivers – respite, training, etc.	2
	System navigation	1
	Retail services	-
	Safety and security programs (falls, fraud preventions, fire safety, etc.)	-
	Financial supports	-
Total:		100%

8. A number of potential obstacles or barriers to individual seniors accessing services are listed below. Indicate the extent to which you feel each of these is a concern in Wasaga Beach:

	<i>Not a concern at all</i>	<i>Somewhat of a concern</i>	<i>A large concern</i>
The hours that supports or services are available	11%	45%	44%
The geographic location of where the services are provided	0%	44%	55%
Transportation	0%	60%	40%
Physical mobility in accessing services	11%	78%	11%
Stigma related to accessing some services	30%	70%	0%
The financial cost or out-of-pocket expenses to individuals	0%	60%	40%
Long wait lists/wait times	0%	60%	40%
Restrictive eligibility criteria	0%	90%	10%
Lack of awareness of services	10%	70%	20%
Language or cultural differences	33%	67%	0%