

**Niagara Age-Friendly Community Initiative**

**Year 1  
2010-2011  
Evaluation Report**

*Prepared by*

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Niagara Research and Planning Council

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**Niagara Age-Friendly Community Initiative  
Year 1  
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## REPORT SUMMARY

In late 2009, Niagara Age-Friendly Community Initiative (NAFCI) was awarded a three-year grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). In early 2010, work began to introduce and implement community partnerships for AFC initiatives throughout all twelve of Niagara's local municipalities by 2013.

NAFCI partners include:

- Niagara Region
- City of Welland
- Welland Senior Citizens Advisory Committee
- Rose City Seniors Foundation (Welland)
- Niagara Research and Planning Council

The 3-year NAFCI was piloted in 2010 in the City of Welland. A community engagement and action template was established, as a basis for rolling the project out in all twelve of Niagara's local municipalities.

### **Age-Friendly Community Principles in Niagara**

Age-Friendly Communities (AFC) create safe and secure environments that foster community participation, personal health and well-being, taking into consideration the needs of all citizens, with a particular focus on older adults. The NAFCI is based on age-friendly principles promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO), Public Health Agency of Canada, and the Murray Alzheimer Research and Education Program at Waterloo University.

### **Year 1: Building a base for Age-Friendly Action throughout Niagara**

- A NAFCI Community Coordinator position was established, to create tool kits, communications items and templates to engage citizens and assist with formation of an Age-Friendly local action committee in each of Niagara's local municipalities.
- A project Management Committee and Vision Committee constructed a Niagara-wide framework for applying age-friendly principles; a local action committee in Welland created a pilot template for local age-friendly community action.
- Niagara citizens touched by NAFCI in year one are receptive and open to learning about age-friendly principles.
- Dedicated project staff and committed volunteers have taken a forward-thinking, practical approach to discovering how age-friendly principles apply to the community of Niagara.
- Municipal leaders (both elected leaders and staff) have been receptive to learning about age-friendly principles and the bearing they will have on future community planning.
- Community partners with region-wide reach have engaged with NAFCI. A partnership with Niagara This Week newspaper for a NAFCI-branded column written by various community

volunteers was struck to be launched in the spring 2011. The Niagara Community Observatory at Brock University published a policy brief, which provides a project baseline: *Seniors in Niagara: Creating Age-Friendly Communities*. Niagara Region is hosting a NAFCI web page.

### **Future Directions for Age-Friendly Community Action in Niagara:**

1. Four main theme areas have emerged from community members' ideas for age-friendly actions to strengthen Niagara's communities:
  - better communication practices,
  - improved accessibility for all;
  - a community culture valuing older adults; and
  - applying an age-friendly lens to Niagara and Municipal official planning.
  
2. Practical ideas\* for expediting local action committee goal-setting and age-friendly community action throughout Niagara include:
  - holding up-front local focus groups; and
  - building on and strengthening the age-friendly focus of existing community resources and activities (e.g., local action committee work linking with Mayor's Youth Advisory Committees, Accessibility Committees and other Committees of Council that share the same age-friendly principles).
  
3. Project priorities, outcomes and planning for sustainability of age-friendly action beyond the end of the project will be strengthened by:
  - clarification of objectives and roles;
  - defining criteria and logistics around recognition of organizations and businesses in the community that engage in NAFCI action;
  - assessment of the human resources required to achieve project goals; and
  - refining communication and reporting processes of the project.
  
4. Engaging municipal governments in making age-friendly principles an integral part of planning is vital to healthy communities for all ages. Demonstrating practical ways age-friendly principles apply to the community of Niagara is an important project priority.

***"Even small actions make a difference" – NAFCI focus group participant, Welland, fall 2010***



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# **Niagara Age-Friendly Community Initiative (NAFCI)**

## **Year 1 Evaluation Narrative Report**

### **Introduction:**

Age-Friendly Communities (AFC) create safe and secure environments that foster community participation, personal health and well-being, and take into consideration the needs of all citizens, with a particular focus on older adults. In late 2009, the Niagara Age Friendly Community Initiative (NAFCI) was awarded a three-year grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). In early 2010, the work began to introduce and implement community partnerships for AFC initiatives throughout all twelve of Niagara's local municipalities by 2013.

While the NAFCI project is regional in scope, the pilot phase of the project focused on the City of Welland. In years two and three, the project is being rolled out to engage citizens in all twelve local municipalities. An age-friendly local action committee will be formed in each municipality, and all of these groups will benefit from lessons learned in Welland. This report summarizes what has been learned to date.

NAFCI partners include Niagara Region, the City of Welland; the Welland Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, the Rose City Seniors Foundation (Welland); and the Niagara Research and Planning Council (NRAPC).

### **Purpose of Report:**

This narrative report recounts Year 1 (April 2010 – March 2011) activity of the NAFCI. It summarizes goals and achievements of the project, and provides recommendations for future actions, based on lessons learned from the pilot year activity.

The report may be utilized by NAFCI staff and leaders to:

- inform project reports;
- help to focus planning for the final two years of the project;
- assist with NAFCI sustainability planning;
- interest municipal planners in age-friendly principles;
- further engage the community of Niagara in age-friendly activity;
- encourage volunteers serving on Niagara-wide local action committees;
- provide a basis for NAFCI communications;
- point out strengths and weaknesses of project activity to date; and
- provide other communities with information about how the community of Niagara established its age-friendly initiative.

## NAFCI Structure

### Community Coordinator

The first NAFCI Community Coordinator began worked with the project from April to December, 2010. A new Coordinator took over the role in late January, 2011. While this change in personnel caused some loss of momentum, it provided an interim opportunity to assess project direction and priorities.

Niagara Region and the City of Welland provide in-kind office space and related resources to enable the work of the project. Overall finances for the project are administered through the Rose City Seniors Foundation.

**Table 1: Committee Framework**

	<b>MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>	<b>VISION COMMITTEE</b>	<b>LOCAL ACTION COMMITTEE</b>
Purpose	Oversee Niagara-wide implementation and day to day activities of the initiative	Provide guidance, advice and support to the Management Committee and Community Coordinator	Provide hands-on local support to the Community Coordinator in implementing the Age-Friendly Community project throughout communities and organizations in their local municipality
Role	Enable engagement of members of local Niagara communities and organizations to help make Niagara an age-friendly community	Identify Niagara-wide community assets and gaps for age-friendliness, as well as potential directions and strategies to facilitate roll-out of Age-Friendly principles throughout the community of Niagara	Serve as community volunteers, to engage local organizations and mobilize citizens, businesses and institutions to learn about age-friendly community principles, apply age-friendly community tools and promote improved age-friendliness at the local municipality level
Frequency of meetings	Monthly meetings	Monthly to start, then quarterly meetings	Monthly meetings & regular volunteer engagement & activity
Term of service	3 year commitment	3 year commitment	1 year minimum commitment



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## Year 1 Project Goals

The following expected project results and outcomes align with the work plan set out in the OTF agreement for the project.

Table 2: Ontario Trillium Foundation Work Plan for Year 1

<b>Expected Results</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Hire Community Coordinator	NAFCI Community Coordinator in place
Create Niagara Age-Friendly Community Steering (Vision) Committee	A committee framework for the project was established, as shown in Table 1.
Recruit volunteer base starting with residents in the City of Welland	Volunteers were recruited for the committee framework (see above); in addition recruitment to assist with the consultations and other supportive functions was carried out
Engage in community consultations in the City of Welland	<p>Consultations were primarily held in the City of Welland, as well as with a number of intermunicipal agencies.</p> <p>26 age-friendly presentations primarily to businesses and groups in Welland were made, in addition to other intermunicipal agencies</p>
Develop research and policy instruments	The World Health Organization (WHO), Public Health Agency of Canada, and the Murray Alzheimer Research and Education Program at Waterloo University inform NAFCI best practices, in addition to the Manitoba University age-friendly project and the WHO Vancouver protocol. The process established is also informed by the work of John McKnight and Peter Block. Policy requirement work has been initiated as part of the Official Plan reviews
Create evaluation methodology to complete report back to OTF and community	Year 1 project narrative and OTF milestone reports complete
Develop Age- Friendly Community report for the City of Welland and NAFCI collaborative	Community reports to be presented to municipal bodies and citizens



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## **NAFCI Launch and Media Outreach**

The project was formally launched at the Rose City Seniors Centre in June 2010. A highlight of the launch event was the presentation of a policy brief prepared by the Niagara Community Observatory at Brock University: *Seniors in Niagara: Creating Age-Friendly Communities*. Media coverage of the launch helped to raise awareness of the initiative.

Cogeco cable television, *Niagara 50 Plus*, the *Welland Tribune*, and other local media sources have provided coverage of the project. The groundwork was laid to establish a partnership with Niagara This Week newspaper, for the spring 2011 launch of a regular NAFCI-branded column written by volunteer authors from across the region.

## **Community Engagement and Consultation– “Even small actions make a difference”**

Twenty-six community presentations/meetings engaged citizens primarily in Welland, but also from Pelham and Port Colborne, as well as, staff from a number of intermunicipal agencies. Ten consultations were held as an extension to the presentation, or as a separate event. The following summary of responses inform next steps for the local action projects, and spark ideas for community action as Age-Friendly awareness spreads throughout the community of Niagara.

The NAFCI Community Coordinator conducted three focus groups adapted from the WHO Vancouver Protocol. Consultations with a total of 76 older adults primarily living in Welland, were held.

- 40 elderly clients of Community Support Services Niagara on October 19, 2010 at the Rose City Seniors Centre (temporarily located at Holy Trinity Church 2010/11), Welland
- 18 participants on November 4, 2010 at Welland City Hall
- 18 participants on November 15, 2010 at the Rose City Seniors Centre (temporarily located at Holy Trinity Church 2010/11)

Questions covered benefits of ‘living’ in Welland as an older person, as well as gaps to be addressed.

### Participants cited Welland’s age-friendly assets as including:

- Safety, including street lighting, bike lanes, mall walking
- Comfortable mix of scale and amenities, including cultural opportunities, post-secondary institutions (Niagara College, Brock University)
- Natural features – water, walking trails



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- Community assets for wellness – seniors’ services, groups, health/wellness programs, hospital, Family Health Teams, independent living services
- Age-friendly leadership hub

And they offered ideas to enhance Welland as an age-friendly community:

- Improve communications about services for older adults, such as targeted community maps, more and better location signage
- More smaller, accessible buses and expanded routes; bus shelters with seats
- Improve safety by educating drivers to be aware and respectful of senior pedestrians; by enforcing handicapped parking rules; by enforcing residential snow removal bylaws; by educating cyclists and enforcing rules for use of sidewalks
- Increased number of rest rooms and benches in Welland canal area

Healthy Living Niagara Focus Group on physical inactivity:

On January 20, 2011, the Healthy Living Niagara Coordinator held a focus group with 7 Welland residents (the Welland Local Action Committee) Applying results based accountability methodology discussions centred on:

<p><b>Factors contributing to local older adults’ choices about being physically active</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cultural attitudes toward walking or cycling versus vehicular travel</li> <li>• encouragement to act</li> <li>• fear of falling during winter weather</li> <li>• street signage</li> <li>• bench placement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community partners with a role to play in shifting seniors toward increased physical activity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• churches;</li> <li>• local YMCA</li> <li>• government health promotion, planning and seniors’ departments</li> <li>• mall walking groups;</li> <li>• walking trail associations;</li> <li>• school/youth initiatives such as Snow Buddies;</li> <li>• the local Legion;</li> <li>• home care providers;</li> <li>• service club volunteers;</li> <li>• Niagara College and Brock University; and</li> <li>• the local media</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ideas to encourage the shift toward older adults being more physically active</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• educational seminars;</li> <li>• municipal investment in signs and benches based on age-friendly principles;</li> <li>• enhance walking experience by using and handing in pedometers;</li> <li>• serve food for seniors as an incentive to join in;</li> <li>• tailor activity to specific needs;</li> <li>• focus on neighbourhoods through phone and e-mail; and</li> <li>• use social media targeted to older adults</li> </ul>

## Smaller Age-Friendly Consultations

Forty-two local citizens with 6 community groups were engaged in the smaller age-friendly consultations applying a three question focus group methodology.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Date (2010)</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>
Niagara Region Seniors' Community Programs Staff	May 14	5
Rose City Seniors Centre Foundation Board Members	May 17	6
Information Niagara Staff	September 13	5
Welland Age-Friendly Local Action Committee members	September 16	6
Port Cares, Port Colborne	September 28	7
Regional Association of Volunteer Administrators (RAVA)	November 17	13

These groups were presented with information on the NAFCI project and Age-Friendly principles, followed by a group discussion around age-friendliness in the local community. Participants filled out a sheet that asked, "From what I've learned today, what "three things" can I do tomorrow, to make my community more age-friendly?"

*Predominant ideas emerging from participants' survey responses (in no particular order) were:*

Communication & ways of relating – when delivering services for older adults - take time, listen, speak slowly & clearly, be more understanding, considerate and respectful of their needs; larger fonts and colourful design are important in getting messages across to older adults through advertising, publications, online, for street signs and in-store signage

Advocating for age-friendly accessibility – promote age-friendly concepts - in one's own family, the community and workplace; social inclusion; valuing seniors; cultural differences; volunteering to assist seniors and advocating for seniors as volunteers; protection against fraud associated with marketers' calls; longer stoplights to allow people with walkers or scooters to get across intersections; increased bus service with level entrances & exits; even, accessible sidewalk design to accommodate walkers and scooters; sidewalk lighting; more wheelchair accessible taxis; full-serve gas stations; paved trails for scooters and wheelchairs

A community that values all ages – increase citizen awareness of responsibilities that impact older adults, such as snow removal; planning and enforcement for accessibility; boost programs that assist older adults, such as Snow Buddies; promote intergenerational programs in schools and community that value wisdom/mentoring opportunities



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Planning through an age-friendly lens – do organization/business SWOT analysis and planning using age-friendly principles; businesses could benefit from age-friendly training, for customer service, including personalized phone and retail service, marketing materials and accessibility considerations – e.g., store staff assisting seniors in parking lot, and with hard-to-reach items; time automatic doors properly; rest room design; increase disabled parking (and associated enforcement) for those in wheelchairs; parking spots and safe lanes for scooters

### **Year – End Interviews**

A series of interviews with the Management Committee, members of the Welland Local Action Committee, and the former and present age-friendly community coordinators were held to capture the thoughts of the individuals involved in managing, coordinating and carrying out the work of the NAFCI in its first year. A summary of points raised in these interviews is as follows:

- **Human Resources** - Dedicated staff and committed volunteers are the driving force behind NAFCI. Engaging the Niagara-wide community and implementing an initiative that relies on significant volunteer commitment within a 3-year time frame is ambitious, especially with one paid staff member coordinating activity. In-kind office space, along with associated resources provided by the Region of Niagara and the City of Welland was an important asset in carrying out the work of the project.

The need for clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the Community Coordinator and local action committee volunteers is an issue that emerged as the Year 1 learning curve unfolded. In order for the project to move forward at the pace necessary to achieve inoculation of the whole community of Niagara within 3 years, the Community Coordinator must be in a position to equip each local action committee with the necessary information, tools and supports so that volunteers feel confident in carrying out NAFCI activities at the local level.

- **Project Evaluation and Reporting** - Project evaluation is most effective when it is designed and implemented at the front end, before activity commences. At this point, the ability to influence information-gathering is at its highest, and the cost to project momentum is low. Thoughtful up-front setting of project evaluation measures and milestones for activity review leads to a clear vision of project goals and objectives, and facilitates project momentum building over time, with necessary adjustments being made according to predetermined checkpoints.

A high-energy, early-on NAFCI launch resulted from a priority being placed on project action. This priority stemmed from the recognition that three years is a relatively short timeframe within which to implement a Niagara-wide initiative requiring considerable volunteer commitment. However, one of the challenges for NAFCI Year 1 was finding the balance between the need for project action, effective goal-setting, and providing clarity around staff and volunteers' perception of their role in the work of the project. Lack of clarity around division of labour between project volunteers



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and staff created both real and perceived hampering of some areas of project activity. This “action angst” might have been alleviated by up-front establishment of a more detailed understanding of, and measurement framework for project objectives, especially in light of limited staff resources.

Reporting of (and planning for) project activity would be enhanced by using a dashboard showing comparative quarterly summaries of project activity, including statistics, strengths, weaknesses and emerging issues. Information could be grouped as follows:

- Presentations/Consultations;
- Development – Tools, Local Action Committees, Volunteers
- Promotion & Media
- Engagement – Citizens, Stakeholders
- Project Sustainability
- Evaluation
- Finances & OTF Reporting



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## **SUMMARY**

This NAFCI Year 1 Evaluation Narrative Report reviews activities and engaged citizens' input regarding the first phase of the project. NAFCI was piloted in the City of Welland, so that a community engagement and action template could be established, to serve as the basis for Niagara-wide citizen engagement in championing age-friendly principles throughout the community of Niagara.

### **Achievements and Strengths**

- A NAFCI Community Coordinator position was established, to create tool kits, communications items and templates to facilitate community engagement around age-friendly principles, and assist with formation of a NAFCI local action committee in each of Niagara's local municipalities.
- A project Management Committee, Vision Committee and Local Action Committee in the pilot municipality (City of Welland) were formed to establish the framework for the project, and pilot a Niagara template for local community action focused around age-friendly principles.
- Niagara citizens who have been touched by the NAFCI to date are receptive and open to learning about age-friendly principles.
- Dedicated project staff and committed volunteers have taken a forward-thinking, practical approach to the learning curve associated with discovering how age-friendly principles apply to the community of Niagara.
- Municipal leaders (both elected leaders and planning staff) have been receptive to learning about age-friendly principles and the bearing they will have on future community planning.
- Community partners with region-wide reach have engaged with NAFCI. A partnership was struck with *Niagara This Week* newspaper for a NAFCI-branded column written by various community volunteers to be launched in the spring of 2011. The Niagara Community Observatory at Brock University published a policy brief, which provides the project baseline: *Seniors in Niagara: Creating Age-Friendly Communities*. Niagara Region is hosting a NAFCI web page. The Niagara Research and Planning Council is facilitating project evaluation.
- NAFCI has a web page, is establishing its social media presence, and is strengthening its communications reach.



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## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS - NIAGARA AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY INITIATIVE**

1. Four main theme areas have emerged from community members' ideas for actions on which NAFCI activity should focus:
  - better communication practices,
  - improved accessibility for all;
  - a community culture valuing older adults; and
  - applying an age-friendly lens to Niagara and Municipal official planning.
  
2. Practical ideas for expediting local action committee goal-setting and age-friendly community action in all of Niagara's local municipalities include:
  - holding up-front local focus groups;
  - building on and strengthening the age-friendly focus of existing community resources and activities (e.g., local action committee work linking with Mayor's Youth Advisory Committees, Accessibility Committees and other Committees of Council that share similar age-friendly principles).
  
3. Project priorities, outcomes and planning for sustainability of age-friendly action beyond the end of the project will be strengthened by:
  - clarification of objectives and roles;
  - defining criteria and logistics around recognition of organizations and businesses in the community that engage in NAFCI action;
  - assessment of the human resources required to achieve project goals; and
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4. Engaging municipal governments and their planners in making age-friendly principles an integral part of planning is vital to healthy communities for all ages. Demonstrating practical ways age-friendly principles apply to the community of Niagara is an important project priority.



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## **Appendix 1 Community Action Ideas**

*“Even small actions make a difference”*

Following is a comprehensive list of ideas generated by the 125 Niagara citizens who participated in a total of ten consultations conducted as part of Year 1 activity of the Niagara Age-Friendly Community Initiative (NAFCI). These ideas are presented in no particular order. They may be used to inform next steps of the project and/or to spark ideas for community action.

### **Community Engagement and Consultation**

Twenty-six community presentations/meetings engaged citizens primarily in Welland, but also Pelham and Port Colborne, as well as staff from a number of intermunicipal agencies. Ten consultations were held as an extension to the presentation or as a separate event. The following summary of responses inform next steps for the local action projects and can spark ideas for community action as Age-Friendly awareness spreads throughout the community of Niagara.

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Questions covered benefits of ‘living<sup>ii</sup>’ in Welland as an older person, as well as gaps to be addressed.

### **Participants cited Welland’s age-friendly assets as including:**

- Safety, including street lighting, bike lanes, mall walking
- Comfortable mix of scale and amenities, including cultural opportunities, post-secondary institutions (Niagara College, Brock University)
- Natural features – water, walking trails
- Community assets for wellness - seniors’ services, groups, health/wellness programs, hospital, Family Health Teams, independent living services
- Age-friendly leadership hub

And they offered ideas to enhance Welland as an age-friendly community:

- Improve communications about services for older adults, such as targeted community maps, more and better location signage
- More smaller, accessible buses and expanded routes; bus shelters with seats
- Improve safety by educating drivers to be aware and respectful of senior pedestrians; by enforcing handicapped parking rules; by enforcing residential snow removal bylaws; by educating cyclists (about what???) and enforcing rules for use of sidewalks
- Increased number of rest rooms and benches in Welland canal area

Raw data upon which the above summary is based:

Welland's age-friendly assets:

- comfortable in terms of scale and amenities
- newly-constructed roads, with lighting and bike lanes
- safe city
- an age-friendly leader among Niagara's municipalities
- the Welland Canal ("Venice in Niagara")
- walking trails
- seniors' clubs and the Rose City Seniors' Centre
- festivals and cultural opportunities such as Illuminaqua
- cultural diversity
- opportunities to participate in health & wellness education and programs
- post-secondary education facilities close at hand (Brock University, Niagara College)
- the Welland hospital and Family Health Teams
- the Seaway Mall
- several Tim Hortons
- community leaders dedicated to age-friendly issues
- housing and community services for independent living

Gaps to be addressed in Welland:

- enhance communications about services for senior adults (community maps)
- more location signage
- more smaller buses and expanded routes, with pickup similar to disabled
- enhanced driver education – more visible enforcement
- parking in handicapped areas – more visible enforcement
- law + bylaw enforcement for snow clearing in front of properties
- enhanced enforcement for bikes using sidewalks & education for bike riders
- more bus shelters with seats



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- indoor pool (warm, senior-friendly)
- increased number of rest rooms and seating in the Welland canal area

Healthy Living Niagara Focus Group on physical activity:

On January 20, 2011, the Healthy Living Niagara Coordinator held a focus group with 7 Welland residents (the Welland Local Action Committee) Applying results based accountability methodology. Discussions centred on:

<p><b>Factors contributing to local older adults' choices about being physically active</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cultural attitudes toward walking or cycling versus vehicular travel</li> <li>• encouragement to act</li> <li>• fear of falling during winter weather</li> <li>• street signage</li> <li>• bench placement</li> </ul>
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Predominant ideas emerging from participants' survey responses (in no particular order) were:

Communication & ways of relating – when delivering services for older adults - take time, listen, speak slowly & clearly, be more understanding, considerate and respectful of their needs; larger fonts and colourful design are important in getting messages across to older adults through advertising, publications, online, for street signs and in-store signage

Advocating for age-friendly accessibility – promote age-friendly concepts - in one's own family, the community and workplace; social inclusion; valuing seniors; cultural differences; volunteering to assist seniors & advocating for seniors as volunteers; protection against fraud associated with marketers' calls; longer stoplights to allow people with walkers or scooters to get across intersections; increased bus service with level entrances & exits; even, accessible sidewalk design to accommodate walkers and scooters; sidewalk lighting; more wheelchair accessible taxis, full-serve gas stations, paved trails for scooters and wheelchairs

A community that values all ages – increase citizen awareness of responsibilities that impact older adults, such as snow removal; planning and enforcement for accessibility; boost programs that assist older adults, such as Snow Buddies; promote intergenerational programs in schools & community that value wisdom/mentoring opportunities;

Planning through an age-friendly lens – do organization/business SWOT analysis and planning using age-friendly principles; businesses could benefit from age-friendly training, for customer service, including personalized phone and retail service, marketing materials and accessibility considerations –

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eg. store staff assisting seniors in parking lot, and with hard-to-reach items; time automatic doors properly; rest room design; increase disabled parking (and associated enforcement) for those in wheelchairs; parking spots and safe lanes for scooters

Raw data upon which the above summaries are based:

Information Niagara Staff – Sept 13, 2010 (n=5)

- Take the time to listen to seniors & be patient – even when I’m not at work
- Encourage a senior citizens’ advisory committee in every municipality
- Mention to businesses/organizations when I see something lacking for seniors accessibility-wise
- Be patient – spend the time needed to provide the best service possible
- Be considerate and respectful of communication needs
- Advocate for seniors to ensure they are receiving the proper support & services
- Be patient and respectful in communicating - both listening and speaking
- Ensure I give information in a clear manner
- As a citizen – maintain my sidewalks/property in a safe manner
- Take the time to listen
- Be patient and compassionate
- Advocate and assist where possible; follow-up when needed
- Inform the community about our (Info Niagara) service and how we can help (i.e. seniors’ fair)
- Be patient – spend the time needed to provide the best service possible
- Be considerate and respectful of communicative needs
- Advocate for seniors to ensure they are receiving the proper supports & services

Port Cares – Sept 28, 2010 (n=7)

- Accessibility issues – awareness of program managers for assisted devices
- Social inclusion at ROC’s
- Transit issues
- Set up exercise classes at ROC
- Check voicemail and message (for clarity, volume)
- Encourage City to print out more user-friendly transportation/city bus
- Check web page (for font size, design)
- More consideration of communication methods that better meet a senior’s needs
- More consideration of long-term program planning to meet the growing senior demographic
- Continue the move to improve transit in Port Colborne
- Senior “volunteers” in agency
- Work & Volunteer Seniors in Action to have contact and Seniors who come to Port Colborne
- Port Cares to support the Port Colborne Sr. Citizens’ Advisory Committee – Port Cares to be involved as staff already address seniors in “Need”
- Awareness to staff – phones; how we can accommodate older adults



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- Volunteers
- Review the “checklist” from WHO – re: accessibility
- Discuss with staff to be “aware” when dealing with seniors
- Ask staff to relay any inquiries or concerns
- Voice mail – slow and clear
- Encourage staff to implement Age Friendly measures into their program (i.e. larger text size – computers); more colourful presentations to learners; speak slower & pronounce clearly when answering phone (admin)

RAVA (Regional Association of Volunteer Administrators) Members – Nov. 17, 2010 (n=13)

- 18% of seniors 65 or older
- To be more friendly – some walkways – wheelchairs more accessible
- Be treated with dignity
- More info for newcomers
- Use large, size 14 font
- Workplace assessment can be done to test
- Rose City Seniors Centre in Welland has lots of programs
- Seniors need compassion
- Need to be valued
- Stop lights really are too short to cross
- % of population that is over 65
- Verdana – font most visually friendly
- Welland – 1<sup>st</sup> in region to roll out
- Ensure flyers, etc. are printed in larger font
- Give an opportunity – volunteer
- Be inclusive & friendly
- Volunteer my time to help
- We are starting a seniors’ volunteer program, so I will use this presentation to steer the program toward Age-Friendliness. Our Senior Centre is always working toward Age-Friendliness, and we are partnered with Port Cares for this purpose.
- Assess how age-friendly we currently are (strengths and weaknesses)
- Make goals/brainstorm ideas to improve on being more age-friendly
- Implement those ideas & evaluate their effectiveness
- Change our voice mail
- Increase the font in our e-mails/website (14 pt)
- Greater awareness of their needs – be friendlier – offer more opportunities for them
- Workplace assessment
- Offer to meet seniors downstairs
- Friendliness, clear communication (slow and clear)
- Thinking age-friendly within agency (answering phone)



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- Assessments available for workplace - Age-Friendly buildings & resource materials
- Size 14 font
- Bigger font size – 14 point – increased text size
- Slower messaging
- Staff awareness of Age-Friendly program
- Change font on our forms for website to make them more age-friendly
- When leaving messages for seniors, speak slower. Repeat key points.
- When speaking with seniors, repeat key points, ensure they are able to record information

NAFCI Local Action Committee Members, Welland, September 16, 2010 (n=6)

- How “Age Friendly” has the focus been that is in line with “Aging @ Home” program – more to share with committee about programs
- Learned more about accessibility committee
- How people on this committee can help people
- Keep on doing what I am working on
- Check on my neighbours
- Observe “age friendliness” in my neighbourhood & community
- Encourage age-friendliness in my family
- Share information about the project
- Have a good look at the area where and why my Mom lives
- Become informed about community services so that I can share my knowledge to people that require such services
- Create activities that accommodate for all ages while having entertainment for all of them
- To help communicate to the French seniors
- Making sure the seniors know what services are available
- Customer service standard; Building environment standards; Transit; Information & communication; Employment standards
- Assist my older neighbours – yard maintenance (snow shovelling)
- Volunteer for Seniors’ Services
- Encourage governments to provide more Seniors’ Services

SCP (Seniors’ Community Programs Staff, Niagara Region) – May 14, 2010 (n=5)

- Larger print in phone books
- Slow down my voice mail
- Be aware, watch and speak up when you see something not right
- Be solution-oriented; not only offer suggestions to business/community members to accommodate seniors but show businesses/community how we can help support them to serve seniors – i.e. co-market age-friendly strategies & community support services
- More about what Age-Friendly means



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- Everyone should contribute
- Even small actions make a difference
- Be more conscious about Age-Friendly at all times
- Listen to those that are wiser
- Advocate for seniors i.e. parking spots, not necessarily for disabled, but equal opportunity
- Promote intergenerational programs in schools, community
- Businesses need to be aware of how they can become Age-Friendly
- Change my voice mail to clear message
- Take time to listen to what is being said
- Respect seniors

Rose City Seniors Centre Foundation Board Members – May 17, 2010 (n=6)

- Be ready to assist a handicapped person when necessary
- Participate in programs put out for Seniors' use
- Have a small bus to pick up housebound Seniors to get to the Center for recreation
- Fraud prevention/police on Board
- Snow buddies program; intergenerational programming –(Job Gym)- as partner
- Take ideas forward to new wellness complex centre
- Being more friendly – we need one another
- Take time & listen to our seniors to help them in any way
- Welland is certainly growing with more seniors
- Seniors “mentoring”
- Larger street signs
- Seniors' luncheons
- Timed cross walks
- Provide more homemakers so seniors can stay in their homes
- Delay traffic lights so seniors can walk across intersections
- Talk to Bell Canada “store employees” re: don't have to talk at “warp” speed to older customers
- Supermarkets: have staff available to reach the hard-to-reach merchandise & assist customers getting heavy/awkward loads to their cars
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The Lions Club – Congregate Dining Group – Welland – October 21, 2010 (n=20)

Q: “What 3 Things...would make my community more age-friendly for me?”

- Parking
- Building access
- Sidewalks in winter need a lot of work to make walkers & scooters useful
- I would like if they would fix our sidewalk because they are all cracked
- The street lights don't stay on red very long
- People don't shovel their sidewalk



***Niagara Age-Friendly Community Initiative Year 1 Evaluation Report–***

*Prepared by the Niagara Research and Planning Council*

[www.nrapc.com](http://www.nrapc.com)

*“Generating knowledge that drives community action”*

- Affordable rentals
- Parking up-town or anywhere for disabled
- Government should pay for our meds; I need Singular and they won't pay
- No public transit on Sunday for church & Sat. "minumile" (sp?)
- Stop signs (lights) are too short for seniors to make it across
- Uneven sidewalks make it hard for one to push a walker
- Better sidewalks
- A place that is safe for scooters & walkers
- Special places on roads for scooters
- Parking spaces designated for seniors on streets and at public/private buildings
- Better on/off ramps for scooters/walkers on city streets
- Better lighting on city streets
- Transportation – more bus service with level exits & entrances
- Parking for seniors
- Streets are too dark
- Sidewalks
- Protection against marketers' phone calls
- To have it more wheelchair accessible; I have a small go go scooter & I have to get off it many times as I can not get over the curbs. Big scooters can. Sometimes I have to go on the road.
- More wheelchair parking spots. It is dangerous when I have to park 20 cars down & drive my scooter behind cars, and they can't see me.
- Parking for handicap & enforcement thereof. A lot of persons driving are not the person the certificate was issued for
- Ability to take walkers/or scooters into stores, restaurants, without obstacles
- Access to older apartment buildings & bathtubs in apartments (entrances)
- Stop sign too short to make it across the street
- For easy access to the bus that takes us shopping
- Uneven sidewalks
- Work on store doors –press button to open, at present, very difficult to open when you have a walker
- Uneven sidewalks and you are walking with a walker and you keep stubbing your toes
- Stores that have their floor displays so close together, that there isn't sufficient room to get around them or between them
- To have independent apartments where you can have meals & housekeeping only when needed & not included only when needed
- I love playing games & cards but I will not gamble & every place I inquire, you pay \$0.50 or \$1.00. I don't mind paying but refuse if it goes to the winner. I want to play for fun only.
- I like to play games on the internet but cannot find anyone. This could be arranged by someone.
- More room in the wheelchair restrooms
- More taxis that should have wheelchair accessible vehicles



***Niagara Age-Friendly Community Initiative Year 1 Evaluation Report–***

- More ramps at restaurants & social, public places
- In grocery stores, the shelf signs (prices if there) are very small. I know space is limited, but you can't read or see a lot of them
- Why are most things on store shelves usually or always with the French side out? We have many good friends that are French so we don't have anything against them but this is Canada.
- It would help if store had some or more smaller shopping carts. The big ones can be so heavy to push.
- More lanes on the road for electric scooters & people with walkers & wheelchairs
- Paved trails for the elderly & for electric scooters, walkers, & wheelchairs
- More traffic signs indicating elderly crossing
- Library & civic are not visually friendly washrooms too dark
- Buses going to pick-up seniors @ their building MUST be accessible
- Older apartments need to be upgraded to make it accessible for a senior with walker
- Spoken communications is clear
- Telephone answering service is personal
- Seniors treated respectfully
- Employees in some stores that have no time to show seniors merchandise that they are looking for - "It's just back there", they say.
- More precautions @ crosswalks
- More carry-out in some of the stores
- We shouldn't pay for parking anywhere in town
- We need more disabled parking
- They need a place for scooters to drive on!
- Parking for seniors – slow down drivers; protection against marketers' phone calls
- Sidewalks too bumpy
- Streets are too dark.
- Better parking near the malls
- The streets are too dark
- Protection from household marketers
- More handicapped spaces to park
- Free parking spots
- Uneven sidewalks are hard for people to push walkers
- Need more full-serve gas stations
- More time to be able to cross on street lights

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<sup>i</sup> Note: Participants were primarily from Welland; however, it should be recognized that citizens from other Niagara communities, e.g., Pelham and Wainfleet consider Welland as a destination for shopping, recreation, and other activities.



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