



Age Friendly Community Action Plan Project Charter

Project: Age Friendly Community Action Plan
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1.0 Project Mission & Charter

1.1 Project Mission

The Municipality of Middlesex Centre is looking to develop a 3-5 year 'Age Friendly Community Action Plan' (AFCAP), to help guide the municipality in becoming a community that supports active, healthy, and engaged living for people through all life stages and abilities, and fosters civic, economic, and social participation. This project will focus on residents over the age of 55 and those with disabilities. Completing this project meets the Strategic Themes identified in the Municipality's Strategic Plan 2021-2026 such as being 'an engaged community and sense of place' and a 'responsible & responsive municipal government'.

1.2 Purpose of the Project Charter

In an effort to move this project forward in a timely manner, it is recommended that a project charter be used. The project charter outlines the scope, schedule, budget, milestones, delivery strategy and risks associated with the project. The adoption of a project charter will allow the project steering committee to finalize a detailed project schedule. A project charter establishes a full understanding of the expected objectives, outcomes and deliverables for this project and will guide the project task force in its management and completion.

Once approved by Council, the charter and any amendments will guide the management of the project.

2.0 Background

2.1 Project Background

In December 2020, the Province of Ontario opened the Inclusive Community Grants program that looked to offer up to \$2 million to assist communities to become age - friendly by ensuring that the needs of Ontarians of all ages and abilities are considered at every stage of community planning and development.

As noted in the Application Guidelines for this project, inclusive communities create more accessible environments for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Inclusive communities respond to both the opportunities and challenges of an aging population by creating physical and social environments that support independent and active living and enable older adults and people with disabilities to continue contributing to all aspects of community life.

Community leaders and residents in inclusive communities work together to ensure that local policies, programs and services support the social and physical environments that enable all Ontarians to live safe, active and meaningful lives.

Inclusive communities align with the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility's [Advancing Accessibility in Ontario framework](#) which aims to make the province more inclusive and accessible for everyone by focusing on four key areas:

1. Breaking down barriers in the built environment
2. Government leading by example
3. Increasing participation in the economy for people with disabilities
4. Improving understanding and awareness about accessibility

Inclusive communities are also Age-Friendly Communities (AFC)-a World Health Organization endorsed planning and evaluation framework that has been adopted internationally and in Canada. The AFC approach fosters local partnerships, allows for local needs assessment and action planning, and engages older adults as well as people with disabilities in its processes.

The World Health Organization identified **eight domains of community life** that overlap and intersect to affect an individual's personal well-being and their independent and active living in physical and social environments:

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

Staff put forward an application that looked to develop a 3-5 year 'Age Friendly Community Action Plan' to help guide the municipality in becoming a community that supports active, healthy, and engaged living for people through all life stages and abilities, and fosters civic, economic, and social participation. The project will focus on residents over the age of 55 and those with disabilities.

The Municipality has received grant funding and been approved for \$43,000 to complete this project. Staff have selected Monteith Brown Planning Consultants to undertake this work.

3.0 Project Governance and Steering Committee

The following outlines project governance and the project steering committee along with their roles and responsibilities.

Project Role	Responsibilities
Project Approval: Michael Di Lullo, CAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approves project charter and project plan and approves any significant changes made to the scope of the project • Provides final approval of AFCAP and endorsement of identified recommendations/priorities/initiatives
Project Sponsor: Scott Mairs, Director, Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides oversight and strategic direction • Provides approval of project charter prior to going to Council • Approves and confirms project goals, objectives and deliverables prior to going to Council • Assists in the resolution of any conflicts
Project Manager: Steve Langlois, Monteith Brown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controls the day-to-day aspects of the project • Develops and maintains the project charter, project plans and all documentation • Identifies project objectives and deliverables • Identifies and manages risks • Reports and forecasts project status • Resolves conflicts within the project • Oversees quality assurance of the project management process • Executes formal reviews and management reviews • Helps resolve issues and change requests • Tracks action items and any related budgets

Project Role	Responsibilities
<p>Project Task Force:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heather Kepran (Communications) • Rob Cascaden (Public Works) • Arnie Marsman (Building) • Debbie Heffernan (Council) • Sam McFarlane (Accessibility Coordinator) • Marion Cabral (Planner) • Gail Prior (55+) • Todd Copeland (CFDC) • Lindsay Brock (Library) • 4-5 Citizen Reps (TBD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides ongoing review of the development of the study, process and reports to ensure project scope is being adhered to • Provides guidance, feedback and recommendations for the plan including goals, objectives and the public consultation process • Organizes, supports and participates in the review, public consultation and other activities as they relate to the development of the plan • Attends meetings as required to assist in achieving project objectives and deliverables and advancing the project • Assists in completing research, data gathering, analysis and documentation as outlined in the project plan
<p>Public Review and Oversight Community Services Advisory Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews project scope and parameters • Participates in public consultations and other activities as they relate to the development of the plan • Encourages public participation and input – ambassadors for the AFCAP project

4.0 Management & Accountability Approach

4.1 Accountability Structure

The project task force will meet as required to provide strategic direction to the project manager and sponsor and when key decisions of Council are required.

4.2 Progress Reporting to Council and the Public

It is recognized that this project will have a high level of interest in the community. To ensure that Council and the public are kept informed on its progress, the Middlesex Centre website and other media channels (social media, newsletters, media releases, etc.) will be used to share updates and the status of this project.

4.3 Change Management

Significant scope changes related to project scope or budget will be approved by the CAO (e.g., changes to the items listed under Objectives). Changes that fundamentally alter the mandate of this charter will be presented to Council for final approval (e.g., changes to the deliverables listed).

5.0 Defining Success

5.1 Strategic Alignment

This project contributes and supports the municipality's strategic plan (2021-2026) by meeting the needs of both current and future residents of Middlesex Centre. The strategic plan along with other relevant plans and strategies will be consulted over the course of this project. These documents include:

- 2014 Trails Master Plan
- 2017 Ilderton Indoor Recreation Facility Needs Study
- 2020 Official Plan Review
- 2021 Community Services Master Plan Update
- 2021 Community Well-Being Safety Plan
- 2021-2026 Middlesex Centre Strategic Plan

The municipality's commitment to excellence and quality in the provision of services is demonstrated through alignment with provincial and national strategic planning related to recreation and sport. Wherever possible, the CSMP will look to incorporate practices and principles from the following policy and framework documents:

- Provincial – Age Friendly Community Planning Guide for Municipalities and Community Organizations: <https://files.ontario.ca/msaa-age-friendly-community-planning-guide-municipalities-community-organizations-en-2021-01-01.pdf>

- National – Age-Friendly Communities in Canada: Community Implementation Guide: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/age-friendly-communities-canada-community-implementation-guide.html>

5.2 Objectives

The Middlesex Centre Age Friendly Community Action Plan Project will assess the social and physical environment using the eight World Health Organization (WHO) dimensions of community life affecting older adults who are 55 or older and those with disabilities and will identify priority areas to support the development of an age-friendly Middlesex Centre. The goal of the project is to engage with the community to develop a plan that lays out age-friendly priorities for the municipality to create a healthy and sustainable environment for older adults and those with disabilities today and into the future.

The project objectives are as followed:

1. To assess the ‘age-friendliness’ of the Municipality of Middlesex Centre and its smaller communities based on the World Health Organization’s eight age-friendly community domains.
2. To create a community profile of current Municipal and community initiatives and opportunities and gaps for active, positive aging.
3. Evaluate the needs of the older adult population in Middlesex Centre
4. To engage and consult with a wide range of seniors and community stakeholder to gain understanding about and to garner support for an Age-Friendly Community Action Plan.
5. To increase awareness about the importance of seniors remaining active, healthy and engaged in the community.

The project will see two key outputs:

1. A local needs assessment that identifies opportunities and gaps in services and supports for seniors.
2. An Age Friendly Community Action Plan for Middlesex Centre with prioritized supports and services for seniors which can begin to be implemented in the 2022 budget year.

Ancillary, the project will:

1. Raise awareness about the importance of seniors remaining active, healthy and engaged in the community; and

2. Garner the support of local organizations to ensure the tangible actions in the plan implemented.

The specific outputs will be identified through the need's assessment and action plan development processes. It is expected that the output indicators identified in the plan would be the policies, services and programs to be implemented to create an Age Friendly Community, all of which can be measured by monitoring participation levels.

1. **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings** - Design and provide safe pathways, way finding, benches, recreational programming through a barrier free and universal design scope.
2. **Transportation** - Improve or make available accessible transportation, seek alternative transportation options. Measure the increased percentage of those using alternative transportation.
3. **Housing** - Promote tools that encourage planners and developers for age friendly housing. Measured by increased number of accessible housing/units.
4. **Social Participation** - Create a directory of age friendly activities such as cultural, health related programs and increased social engagement and activities.
5. **Respect and Social Inclusion** - Develop best practices for improving social inclusion for seniors and those with disabilities and other marginalized population.
6. **Civic Participation and Employment** - Promote Middlesex Centre as a destination for those with disabilities and older adults.
7. **Community Information** – Provide information about community events or important services that is both readily accessible and in formats that re appropriate for older adults and people with disabilities.
8. **Community Support and Health Service** - Create age friendly hubs, work with other community services providers to bridge gaps in services.

5.3 Deliverables

The project looks to complete the following:

- Deliver an Age Friendly Community Action Plan that guides and supports municipality's efforts in becoming a community that supports active, healthy, and engaged living for people through all life stages and abilities, and fosters civic, economic, and social participation.
- Identify action plans to be implemented over the next 3-5 years
- Provide an implementation plan

6.0 Budget, Project Timeline & Planning Process

6.1 Budget

The project budget to complete this work is \$43,000.

6.2 Project Timeline & Workplan

Key steps in the planning process will include:

- establishing an Age-Friendly Task Force to guide the process, support community engagement activities, review deliverables, and serve as champions in increasing awareness
- creating a community profile of current municipal and community initiatives and opportunities and gaps for active, positive aging
- engaging residents and stakeholders to identify gaps, opportunities and priorities
- conducting a needs assessment of the older adult population in Middlesex Centre
- establishing a tangible action plan that prioritizes policies, programs, services, and supports that can begin to be implemented in 2022

Phase 1: Research and Consultation

1. **Initial Meeting with Steering Committee Meeting:** An initial meeting (virtual) will be held to kick-off this study. The project work plan will be reviewed, study objectives confirmed, data needs identified, and deadlines established at this meeting.
2. **Confirm Project Charter & Local Principles:** We will work with the Municipality and Steering Committee to jointly develop a project charter (outlining roles and responsibilities, general timelines, etc.) and local principles to establish a foundation for decision-making and priority-setting. Together, these items will define a collective vision for what we want the project to achieve.
3. **Environmental & Policy Scan:** We will review existing municipal policies, reports and studies to identify opportunities to support the goals of the age-friendly planning process. Examples include the Municipality's recent Community Strategic Plan, County Accessibility reports, planning strategies, design guidelines, etc.

4. **Demographic Research & Community Profile:** Leveraging existing data, we will compile a profile of the Municipality's population, with a particular focus on older adults. This task will also provide a snapshot of available services and initiatives that speak to the current age-friendliness of the municipality.
5. **Preliminary SWOT Analysis:** Through a review of secondary research undertaken by the consultant (and supplemented by information provided by the Steering Committee), a preliminary list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relative to age-friendly planning and service delivery will be identified.
6. **Prepare Community Engagement Strategy:** The specific tactics proposed to engage the community and stakeholders will be identified and elaborated upon through an Engagement Strategy that identifies the "who, what, why, where, when and how" of the upcoming focus groups, interviews, public sessions, and surveys.
7. **Steering Committee Meeting #2:** A virtual meeting will be held with the Steering Committee to discuss study progress to date and to review materials and logistics for the upcoming consultation tasks.
8. **Stakeholder Focus Groups (4) & Key Informant Interviews (6):** A series of focus groups and interviews (all virtual) are proposed to solicit information and ideas from a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. The exact number and format of interviews/sessions will be determined in consultation with the Steering Committee. Potential stakeholders include municipal/county staff and officials, service providers, community leaders, etc.
9. **Public Information Session #1:** A virtual public open house or similar online event will be held to directly engage area residents in the study and collect their opinions. The format of this consultation will be determined in consultation with the Steering Committee. One possible option includes a real-time virtual information session, combined with online content and feedback opportunities. The Municipality will be responsible for promotion and registration. The Consultants will prepare all meeting content, facilitate the session, and summarize input.
10. **Community Survey:** An online survey will be launched to establish a profile of user needs and identify priorities for consideration within the action plan. The Municipality will be responsible for survey approval and promotion. The Consultants will design, administer, and analyze the survey.
11. **Phase 1 Report:** A report consisting of elements addressed in Phase 1 – including the findings from the consultation program and local research – will be developed to guide the development of the action plan.
12. **Steering Committee Meeting #3:** A virtual meeting will be held with the Steering Committee to review the Phase 1 Report.

Phase 2: Action Plan Development

13. **Needs & Gap Analysis:** An assessment of existing and future gaps and needs will be prepared, addressing all eight domains of community life. This evaluation will utilize the planning principles, framework, and needs assessment methodology established in the provincial guidelines to assist in defining locally-driven and responsive actions.
14. **Action Plan Development:** A prioritized action plan will be developed that responds to the Phase 1 findings and needs assessment, with tangible actions identified for each of the eight WHO dimensions.
15. **Identify Strategies & Priorities:** For each of the actions identified in the previous task, priorities, timelines, responsibilities, and other implementation requirements will be assigned.
16. **Evaluation & Implementation Strategy:** Approaches and considerations for implementing the plan will be identified to assist the municipality and community in moving the plan forward, including an evaluation process.
17. **Draft Report:** A draft report containing summaries of the above-noted tasks and culminating in an action plan to enhance Middlesex Centre as an age-friendly community will be provided to the Steering Committee for review and comment.
18. **Steering Committee Meeting #4:** A meeting will be held to review the draft report and revise it for public release.
19. **Public Information Session #2:** An in-person (or virtual, depending on gathering restrictions) information session will be held to present the draft report to residents and stakeholders. Feedback on the recommended actions will be sought. The Municipality will be responsible for promotion. The Consultants will prepare all meeting content, facilitate the session, and summarize input.
20. **Finalize Report:** The report will be finalized based on input from the public.
21. **Presentation to Council:** The report will be revised accordingly and presented to Municipal Council by the consultants.

7.0 Risks

7.1 Risk Management

Risks will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to reflect the current understanding as actual events occur. The following lists the potential risks and mitigation strategies for this project:

Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Lack of community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong communications and engagement strategy. Ensure 2-way communication among the project steering committee, stakeholders and residents. • Use current information retained from the development of the Strategic Plan and the Official Plan Review
Lack of community understanding of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong communications and engagement strategy. Ensure 2-way communication among the project steering committee, stakeholders and residents.
Engagement fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a number of recent public engagements for projects such as the Strategic Plan, Official Plan and Budget Survey, residents may be feeling engagement fatigue. As noted above, a strong communication strategy is important to ensure the public understands the importance of this project.
Stakeholder issues, managing controlling voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project manager will ensure all feedback is considered, but stays within the scope of the project.
Time Overruns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project manager will monitor schedule, will update project steering committee and project sponsor, and adjust timelines as needed.
COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek creative ways to engage the public to promote physical distancing e.g., online meetings or engagement through social media.
Organizational Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With other pressing departmental and corporate projects on the go in 2021, there will be an increased workload to the project team. Having a detailed project plan and schedule will assist in keeping the project on its critical path. Sharing of tasks amongst the project team will ease the workload across the team.
Project Management Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously re-visit the project purpose, objectives and deliverables to ensure they are clearly defined and understood. Ensure ongoing communications among project team members.

8.0 Project Approvals

Michael Di Lullo, CAO

Date

Scott Mairs, Director, Community Services

Date

Steve Langlois, Monteith Brown

Date