

Age-Friendly Communities in Ontario 2013-2018

Why an age-friendly Ontario?

- Ontario has a rapidly aging population.
- Majority of older adults have the potential to age well.

Population of **Ontario**:
13.4 million
Adults over the **age of 65 in**
2018: 16.8%
Adults over the **age of 65 in**
2036: 30.6%

(Statistics Canada, 2017)

Age-friendly communities (AFCs) improve the ability of older adults to live in security, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in society.



Eight Domains of an AFC



Demonstrated Benefits



Improved accessibility, walkability, and safety



Reduced isolation, improved inclusion and intergenerational connections



Stimulated economy



Improved quality of life

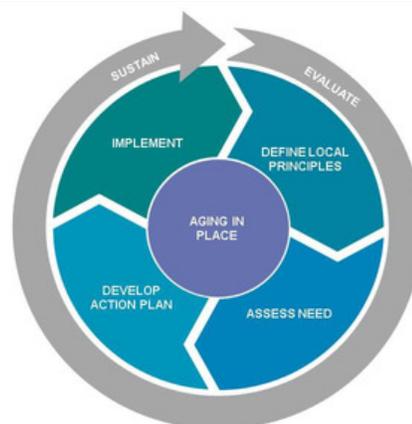


Improved access and awareness of health and community services

Four Components of the Ontario AFC Initiative

1. Finding the Right Fit: Provincial AFC Planning and Implementation Guide

A provincial framework to guide community-level AFC planning, implementation, and evaluation.



2. Provincial Investment in AFC Planning Grants

Ontario invested 1.5 million to support innovative local planning initiatives across the province.



56 communities across Ontario benefited from funding grants to support planning and implementation of AFC work in 2015-2017.

There are currently **81 AFCs** in Ontario undertaking initiatives across 8 domains

1. Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings	62 initiatives
2. Transportation	47 initiatives
3. Housing	48 initiatives
4. Social Participation	65 initiatives
5. Respect and Social Inclusion	82 initiatives
6. Civic Participation and Employment	22 initiatives
7. Communication and Information	74 initiatives
8. Community Support and Health Services	51 initiatives

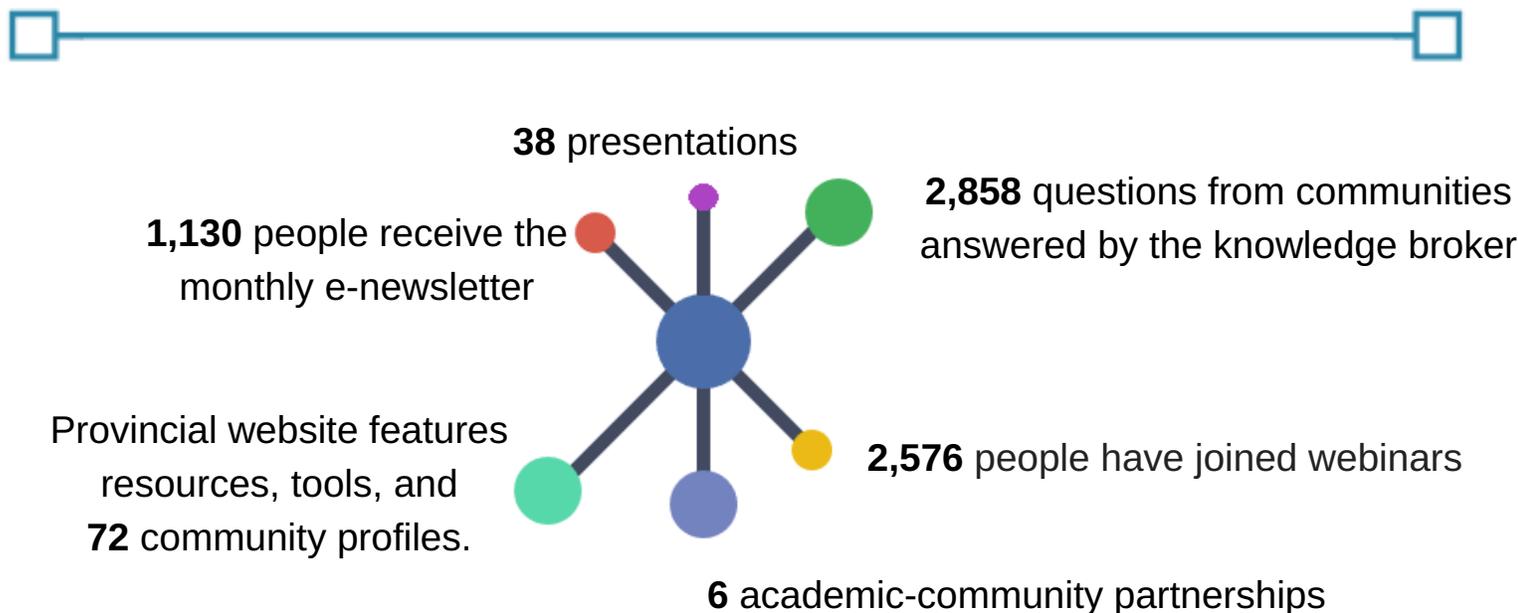
Learn more about these initiatives and see where they're happening by exploring the [AFC interactive maps](#).

3. Ontario AFC Outreach Program

Ontario launched the AFC Outreach Program, which is administered by the University of Waterloo, Queen's University, and Huntington/Laurentian University (2015 onwards).

The goals of the AFC Outreach Program are to:

- increase awareness and understanding about AFCs
- increase connectivity and sharing amongst communities across the province
- increase community capacity to implement and strengthen their AFC initiatives
- evaluate AFC implementation and outcomes, and make recommendations



The Ontario AFC Outreach Program conducts ongoing research focusing on sustainability, immigrant populations, small urban and rural communities, and Indigenous populations.

4. Ontario AFC Recognition Awards

Launched in 2018, the recognition program celebrates Ontario communities' leadership in becoming age-friendly.

40 communities applied and were recognized.



These numbers were last updated November 2018.
For more information visit www.agefriendlyontario.ca

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Examples of Value-Added Innovations in Ontario



Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings

The **Haliburton** Aging Well committee made a presentation at a Theatre Board Meeting regarding safety and accessibility issues of a local theatre, and offered detailed plans for handrail installation. Handrails were installed immediately to 6 rows with a further promise of complete installation in the future. Stair-edge reflective tape is now being used to improve stair visibility and safety until full renovations occur.



Transportation

In **Hamilton**, 500 older adults have participated in “Let’s Get Moving” Workshops with both in-class and experiential learning specific to “Let’s Take the Bus” and “Let’s Take a Walk”. Let’s Get Moving: An Age-Friendly Guide to 18 of Hamilton’s Outdoor Recreational Trails was developed and in 2019, 100 older adults will participate in a new workshop: “Let’s Ride a Bike.” Participants have increased physical activity, confidence using active transportation and knowledge about transportation options.



Housing

Burlington and other communities are piloting HomeSharing programs. HomeShare is a living arrangement between two or more people, usually unrelated, who reside together in the same residence. Sometimes services (e.g. gardening, household cleaning) can be exchanged for reduced accommodation expenses.



Social Participation

Temiskaming Shores offers Sip & Learn, a 1-hour program in both French and English once per week in each of its northern and southern communities. The program includes a coffee social with an educational component. 17-20 people attend each session.

Examples of Value-Added Innovations in Ontario



Respect and Social Inclusion

In **Orangeville**, seniors from the local community and most of the town's retirement facilities meet with elementary-aged students during the school year. Meeting times are structured to promote rich storytelling between generations. At the end of the school year, the Grandpals come together for an end-of-project celebration, to share stories, snacks and have fun. Seniors are also presented with a finished book of stories!



Civic Participation and Employment

Cornwall hosted two older adult volunteer fairs to connect seniors with senior-friendly volunteer opportunities that offer training and support. The fair also provided information about Cornwall's senior-friendly initiatives, services, programs, activities, community clubs, educational organizations, and groups for seniors.



Communication and Information

Kenora and many other communities have developed a Seniors Services Guide that has been distributed through both print and electronic means. In Kenora, reference copies are available at a few City facilities and the e-version is available on their website. Kenora has also forwarded the information to 211 to make the information more widely available and ensure updating of the information. Promotion of 211 as an information source is currently underway.



Community Support and Health Services

The Council on Aging of **Ottawa** developed the Take Charge of your Health Project. Seniors were trained as peer-learning facilitators (or "Health Ambassadors") to go out and facilitate a series of health literacy sessions with small groups of seniors. The goal of the program was to help seniors obtain the information they need to connect to community support and health services and make more informed healthcare decisions. Topics include *Talking to Your Doctor*, *Dealing with the Unexpected* and *Choosing to Age at Home*.