

# Town of Orangeville Age-Friendly Community Action Plan

Preparing for an older  
population 2016-2019







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## Executive Summary

The Town of Orangeville’s Age-Friendly Community Action Plan is the strategic planning document prepared for the Town by the Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee. It represents the efforts of many individuals and partners who strive to fulfill the Committee’s vision for aging well in Orangeville:

***A vibrant, safe community where we can all age with dignity, respect and purpose.***

### Background

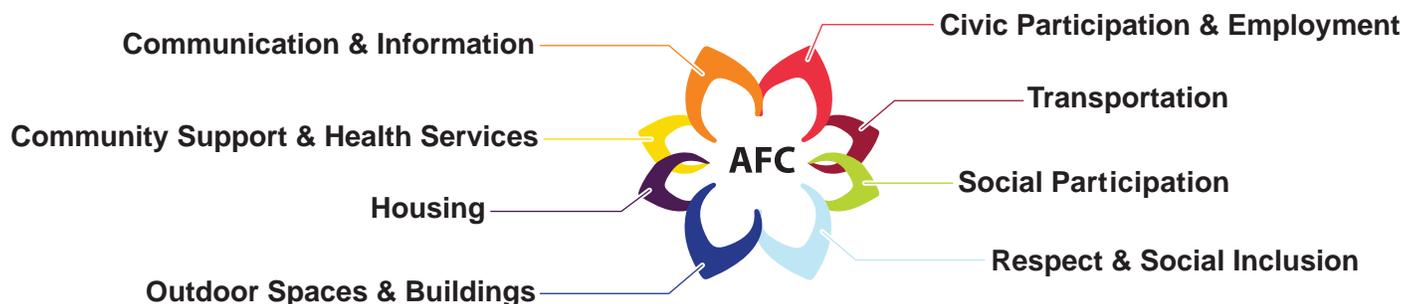
In November 2013, Orangeville Council authorized then Councillor Mary Rose and the Mayor’s Seniors Advisory Committee<sup>1</sup> to review the feasibility and requirements to join the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. This resolution demonstrated a willingness and early interest by Council in becoming an age-friendly community. It also positioned the Town to successfully pursue and receive funding from the Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat through the Age-Friendly Community Planning Grant Opportunity.<sup>2</sup>



Councillor Scott Wilson and Mary Rose

Orangeville’s membership in the Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities represents a commitment to being an “inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes active aging”<sup>3</sup>. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), “active aging” refers to an individual’s “continuing participation in social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs, not just the ability to be physically active or to participate in the labour force.”<sup>4</sup> The ability to maintain one’s autonomy and independence as one ages is a central theme in the WHO’s active aging framework.

The requirements for age-friendly accreditation by the WHO began with an assessment of our community’s age-friendliness across the following eight categories<sup>5</sup>:





These categories were assessed first using a “bottom-up” participatory approach that involved seniors as full participants in the project and allowed their views and experiences to inform decision-making policies<sup>6</sup>. This included inviting seniors to fill out the Seniors’ Survey (2014) and participate in focus groups.

Questions were asked about their ability to access needed services; participate fully in community and civic life; express concerns about their personal safety and financial security; and other areas related to the eight WHO categories.

The assessment continued with an inventory of existing age-friendly “assets” in Town, stakeholder interviews (community partners), and age-friendly input into municipal plans and policies that were under review in 2015. Opportunities for public input were made during the process: several presentations were made to seniors’ groups during the period 2014-2016, and a special outreach event was made to the business community in spring 2016.

A sub-committee of the Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee was formed in September 2015, and, together with the age-friendly consultant, they created an action plan to help guide the Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee, and community partners. The plan is the result of data received from the community in 2014-2016. As such, while it provides a roadmap for the next three years, it is not a “static” document but one that will be periodically reviewed as more input is sought from seniors during later stages of the project.

“Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don’t mind, it doesn’t matter.”  
- Mark Twain

## A Changing Population Requires A Plan for Change

Seniors are the fastest-growing demographic in Canada, creating both opportunities and challenges for municipalities. The number of seniors in Canada is expected to double from 5 million in 2011 to over 10 million by 2036<sup>7</sup>. Orangeville’s population shows an aging demographic between the 2006 and 2011 censuses. **The Town’s population of adults aged 65 and older<sup>8</sup> increased by about 19%, while the population of children aged 0 to 14 decreased by 7% during the same census period<sup>9</sup>.** The median age for Orangeville – while younger than the Province of Ontario’s median age – nevertheless increased more quickly from 2006 to 2011. Orangeville’s median age increased by 5.4% compared to 4.1% for the province overall.

## Development of Orangeville’s Age-Friendly Community Action Plan

The Town of Orangeville is in a unique position among municipalities that are pursuing age-friendly accreditation. Orangeville Town Council voted to pursue this accreditation and authorized the Mayor’s Seniors Advisory Committee (now renamed Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee) to begin the process of accreditation. The support from Council is instrumental on a number of levels: it indicates a level of political commitment to age-friendly quality of life for all residents; it allows for greater cross-departmental conversations and planning to reduce silos and create innovation; and, it solidifies leadership while acknowledging the grassroots approach to involving seniors in decisions that affect their quality of life.



A second unique feature of Orangeville’s approach to age-friendly planning is having the Orangeville Public Library provide the necessary support and administration for the project. As an inclusive community hub, the library is positioned to be an exemplary model of age-friendly service. Its Homebound Delivery Service sends qualified staff and seniors to deliver resources to patrons with illness or mobility issues, the majority of whom are senior-age. In the library, residents can use large-print, high-contrast keyboards, closed-captioned DVDs, and large-print books. The library hosts informative sessions on topics of interest to seniors such as preventing elder abuse or changes to the Ministry of Transportation’s licensing for older adults. The library’s Tech Help program is an outreach program for seniors to come into the library for hands-on help with their digital devices.

### **The Orangeville Seniors Committee**

With support from Council and project management from the Orangeville Public Library, the Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee became the steering committee for the age-friendly project. The committee created the logo and increased public awareness of the project with a presentation at the Lord Dufferin Centre by Dr. Margaret Denton, Professor of Health, Aging, and Society at McMaster University. A sub-committee was formed in September 2015 – the Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee – to work specifically on creating the action and implementation plans for Age-Friendly Orangeville. A vision statement was created and the priorities for the age-friendly project were developed.

### **Strategic Themes**

The age-friendly action plan is based on a careful collection of data from multiple sources over a period of two years, including: an online and paper-based seniors’ survey; focus groups, stakeholder interviews, a review of existing municipal plans, and, an inventory of age-friendly assets.

Every community will have a unique perspective on the needs and direction of their age-friendly planning. The Town of Orangeville has identified five strategic themes:



1. Reducing Social Isolation
2. Integrated Cross-Departmental Planning
3. Strengthening Accessibility with an Age-Friendly Lens
4. Building Age-Friendly Awareness & Supports in the Private Sector
5. Addressing Ageism Across All Sectors



### **Moving Forward with Age-Friendly Orangeville**

This plan would not be possible without the dedicated senior volunteers, community partners, businesses, and municipal staff that are part of the vision for Age-Friendly Orangeville. It is our hope that the strategies and action items expressed in this plan will become an integral part of the fabric of our community and show what is possible when we work together.



## Letter from the Mayor

Greetings,

Orangeville prides itself on being a leader among other municipal governments. We have led the way in many different sectors. Two of those have been sustainability and being at the forefront of accessibility. The experience we have gained in these provides a solid foundation for our next goal: being a national leader in adopting age-friendly principles and policies.

Our council formed the Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee to create a path forward to make our town age friendly in all that we do. The Action Plan outlines the course we intend to follow to achieve that.

Our town is built on the backbone of our seniors. They form the bedrock of our community and provide a vital part of what makes Orangeville what it is today. Through involvement by volunteering, working and being active members of our business community, the very fabric of what makes us 'us', is woven by their strength. Our town has long sought to be inclusive of all within our community, and we are succeeding in that endeavour. Being an Age-Friendly municipality only makes sense as the next step in that direction.

Seniors are not just valued within our town as residents, but also as visitors to Orangeville from other areas. A fundamental component of our economic development plan is based on tourism. By becoming a leader in age-friendliness, we will further bolster the desirability of our town to not just live in, but also to visit. This will bring increased strength to our local businesses.

I'm extremely proud to be the mayor of Orangeville, and of the commitment we have to make us an example for others to follow. Our council and I fully embrace the concept of becoming Age-Friendly and we look forward to continuing in this endeavour.

Jeremy D Williams

Mayor of Orangeville

## Letter from the Chair of the Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee

There's a saying in age-friendly community circles: Build it for 80 and you build it for everyone.

This is the heart of what it means to be an age-friendly community: it's not just for "seniors" but for all ages and all abilities.

When our streets are designed to be wheelchair accessible, they're also accessible to strollers, training wheels, and service animals.

When our trails and parks have adequate benches and rest stops, they encourage everyone to get out of their homes and into their community. Less isolation for seniors means more community for everyone: seniors, stay-at-home parents, caregivers, and children.

When our seniors feel valued and are celebrated as volunteers, caregivers, and workers, we're building connections between young and old, reducing ageism, and increasing respect. For everyone.

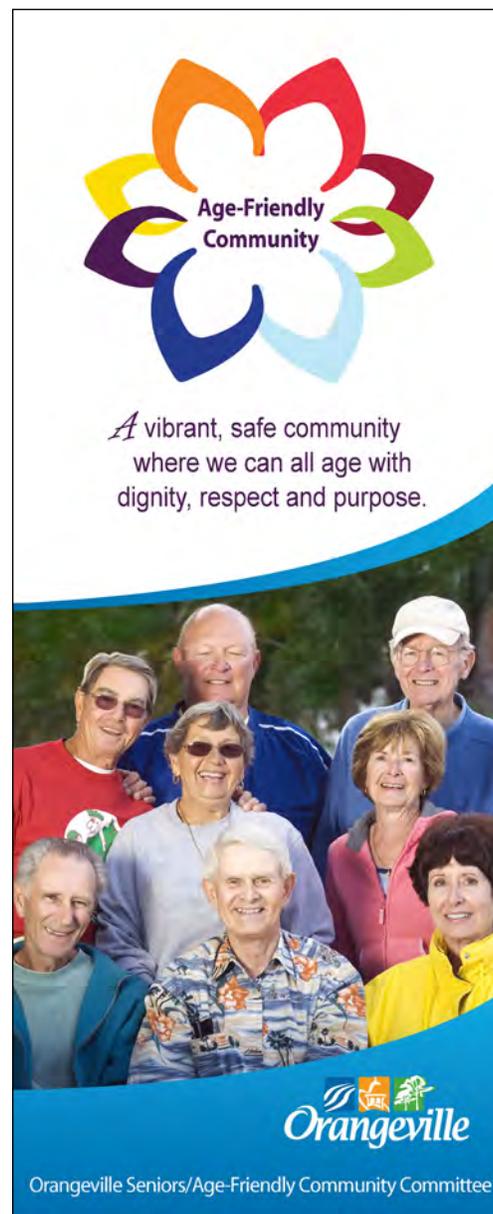
When our businesses hire seniors and promote their services and goods to attract senior customers, everyone benefits from the exceptional customer service. It makes good business "dollars and sense" for our community.

Orangeville is on the path towards age-friendly accreditation from the World Health Organization. As the Chair of the Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee, I am excited to present the Town's Action and Implementation Plan. This is the result of several years of hard work, building on the vision of my predecessor, former Councillor and Age-Friendly Champion Mary Rose. I applaud the hard work of our committee members: volunteers, community service leaders, and Town staff who have done the grassroots work of reaching out to our community with surveys, interviews, and roundtable discussions.

This is our guide for the next several years. Much of its success depends on the creative, grassroots and administrative strengths of our residents and staff to make it happen.

Together, we can fulfill our vision for an age-friendly Orangeville.

Councillor Scott Wilson  
Chair, Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee





## 1.0 Introduction

The world is changing demographically at an unprecedented rate. By 2050, 1 in 5 people – 2 billion – will be over the age of 60<sup>10</sup>. In 2015, Statistics Canada reported that, for the first time in Canadian history, the number of people over the age of 65 surpassed the number of people under the age of 15<sup>11</sup>.

Orangeville is part of this change as well. According to the 2011 National Household Survey Profile, Orangeville experienced a significant increase (18.8%) in its 65+ population from 2006 to 2011, while the percentage of residents aged 14 and under decreased by over 7% during the same period<sup>12</sup>.

Orangeville, and in fact the entire world, is in the middle of a huge demographic shift towards an older population. This shift has been dubbed in many circles as the “Silver Tsunami” or the “Grey Wave.” This trend is affecting both developed and developing countries as fertility continues to decline and people are living longer.

The terms “Silver Tsunami” or “Grey Wave” may sound rather ominous at first glance. While the shift towards an older population presents real challenges in health, transportation, and housing, there are also great opportunities in seniorpreneurship, intergenerational events and activities, and recreation. Communities can, and should, engage seniors in ways that will enhance their ability to develop and use their skills, talents, and interests. Doing so will enrich their lives and their communities.

**Aging is the success of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup>.**

Dr. John Puxty

## 1.1 What is an Age-Friendly Community?

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines an age-friendly community as one that is an “inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes **active aging**.”<sup>13</sup>

“

**What is Active Aging?**

**“Active [aging] allows people to realize their potential for physical, social, and mental well-being throughout the life course and to participate in society, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they need.”**

World Health Organization

”



**For the first time in Canadian history, the number of people over the age of 65 surpassed the number of people under the age of 15.**

Source: Statistics Canada, The Daily, September 29, 2015



### **What is Active Aging?**

**“Active [aging] allows people to realize their potential for physical, social, and mental well-being throughout the life course and to participate in society, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they need.”**

World Health Organization





Within that definition, the WHO identified eight domains that influence the health and quality of life of older people, including:

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

In addition, the WHO has developed a list of 84 indicators that fall into each of the eight domains listed above. Together, the eight domains and 84 indicators make up a checklist that communities can use to assess their “age-friendliness”.<sup>14</sup>

The World Health Organization has taken a leadership role by providing communities with self-assessment guidelines to become age-friendly across the domains. Communities such as Orangeville have an opportunity to complete an action and implementation plan that address strengths and opportunities for improvement in these key areas, and then submit their plans to the World Health Organization for membership in the Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities.<sup>15</sup> Many Canadian cities have already been accepted in this membership, with London being the first to join in 2010. Others include Windsor, Kingston, Ottawa, Moncton, Edmonton, and Guelph.<sup>16</sup>

## 1.2 What is Age-Friendly Planning and What Does it Accomplish?

Age-friendly planning is about a community’s preparedness for residents of all ages to enjoy and participate in community life. As a population ages, new supports and services are required to reflect people’s changes in mobility, vision, taste, smell, and memory. Communities can help mitigate some of this loss in capacity from aging by providing safe and accessible buildings, appropriate transportation, walkable environments, and opportunities for learning, working and volunteering. How can the Town of Orangeville plan for an age-friendly community? A growing number of cities are addressing their policy challenges and options by addressing the following areas:<sup>17</sup>

- Cross-departmental integration and planning of services
- Location and accessibility of services
- Accessibility of the built environment
- Public spaces which promote a sense of place and social cohesion
- Appropriateness of housing available
- Complete communities to facilitate active and healthy aging
- Meaningful community engagement of older adults
- User-friendly information technology

“Age-friendly communities are supportive physical and social environments that enable older people to live active, safe and meaningful lives that continue to contribute in all areas of community life.

*Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat*

Taken together, these areas promote a holistic approach to municipal planning for an age-friendly community. It encourages responsive rather than reactive planning to financial pressures that municipalities will be facing as the population ages.



### 1.3 Ontario Government

The Government of Ontario has provided a number of supports and resources for communities that are planning for an older population. Through the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat (OSS), municipalities can participate in webinars, knowledge exchange with other communities, and access the Age-Friendly Planning Guide that details how communities can move through a process for planning, implementing and evaluating their age-friendly community.

In 2015, the Town of Orangeville received a grant through the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat Age-Friendly Community Planning Grant Program<sup>18</sup>. This grant, awarded in the amount of \$35,000, has covered the costs related to the Town's age-friendly project to date: community launch, consultations (survey and focus groups), needs assessment, and action plan development.



#### An Aging Population Requires Community Planning

People may be living **longer**, but they're not necessarily living **better**.

Every aging adult is **different**. Some older adults are in great health; others need full-time assistance for basic tasks.

Are we ready to provide the services that will be needed?



### 1.4 Town of Orangeville's Age-Friendly Community Action Plan

Our priorities for this action plan are shaped by the following principles<sup>19</sup>:

- We recognize that any meaningful change that addresses deficits and gaps in senior well-being must be crafted with a **holistic response**. Biological aging is tied to physical, mental, and social changes that do not occur in isolation but work together, over time, to affect one's quality of life.
- We recognize that an age-friendly society requires the **co-operation of all sectors**: government, private, non-profits and residents/citizens. Each sector brings unique strengths and problem-solving abilities to the table. In each sector, the full participation of older people is required to help shape the changes and improvements that they need to age well.
- We recognize the importance of **aligning the age-friendly strategies of this action plan with the Town's local goals and targets in other municipal plans** (e.g., Official Plan, Cultural Plan, Parks and Recreation), particularly as they relate to supporting accessible civic participation and healthy, active lifestyles for all residents. This provides a cohesive community strategy for addressing the physical, social, and health needs of our aging population.
- We are building on the **existing strengths of our community**. Orangeville has a number of tremendous assets (organizations and local champions) that are already doing age-friendly work, or have the potential to mobilize and deliver new initiatives to help our seniors. We are tapping into the 'can-do' spirit that our community is known for.

### 2.0 Demographic Snapshot of Orangeville

Orangeville has experienced a tremendous amount of growth and development over the past several decades. The most rapid period of growth occurred from 1986 to 2001, when the population increased from 14,455 to 25,248: a staggering 75% increase! The growth from 2001 to 2013 continued at a slower pace (25,248 to 28,962). The population forecast is expected to grow to 32,130 residents over the next 10 years (to 2024), with a longer term forecast of 36,490 residents by 2031.

As part of their Master Plan process, the Parks Department conducted a population analysis<sup>20</sup> of the dissemination areas for the Town<sup>21</sup>. Younger adult residents tend to live in the more easterly and westerly limits of Orangeville, which represent the more newly-developed areas. Older residents (50+) live in higher proportions in the more established areas of town, including the downtown core. In particular, seniors are heavily represented (over 40% of the total population) in the area east of First Street up to the north of the downtown core, and along the north side of Broadway, to the west of the core area. Please see Appendix A for Town population maps showing concentrations of seniors by dissemination area.

## 2.1 Population Age Profile

Like most communities across Canada, Orangeville’s population is aging. While the Town’s age profile is relatively younger to the provincial average (37.3 years in 2011 compared to 40.4 years for Ontario), the change in median age from 2006 (35.4 years) to 2011 (37.3 years) for Orangeville shows a more rapid rate of aging than both Ontario and Canada.

### Changes in Median Population Age for Canada, Ontario and Orangeville, 2006 to 2011

	Median Age	
	2006	2011
Canada	39.5	40.6
Ontario	39	40.4
Orangeville	35.4	37.3

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 7 Canada, Ontario and Orangeville, T – Median age, 2006 and 2011 Censuses.

Furthermore, the 14 and under age group experienced a decline of over 7% from 2006 to 2011, while the 65 and over age group grew by almost 19%:

### Change in Population for Orangeville by Age group, 2006 to 2011

Broad age groups (both sexes)	Population			
	2006	2011	Change	% Change
Total	26,925	27,975	1,050	3.9
0 to 14	6,025	5,600	-425	-7.1
15 to 64	18,195	19,150	955	5.2
65 and over	2,710	3,220	510	18.8

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 4 Orangeville, T-Age Distributions by broad age groups and sex, 2011 Census.

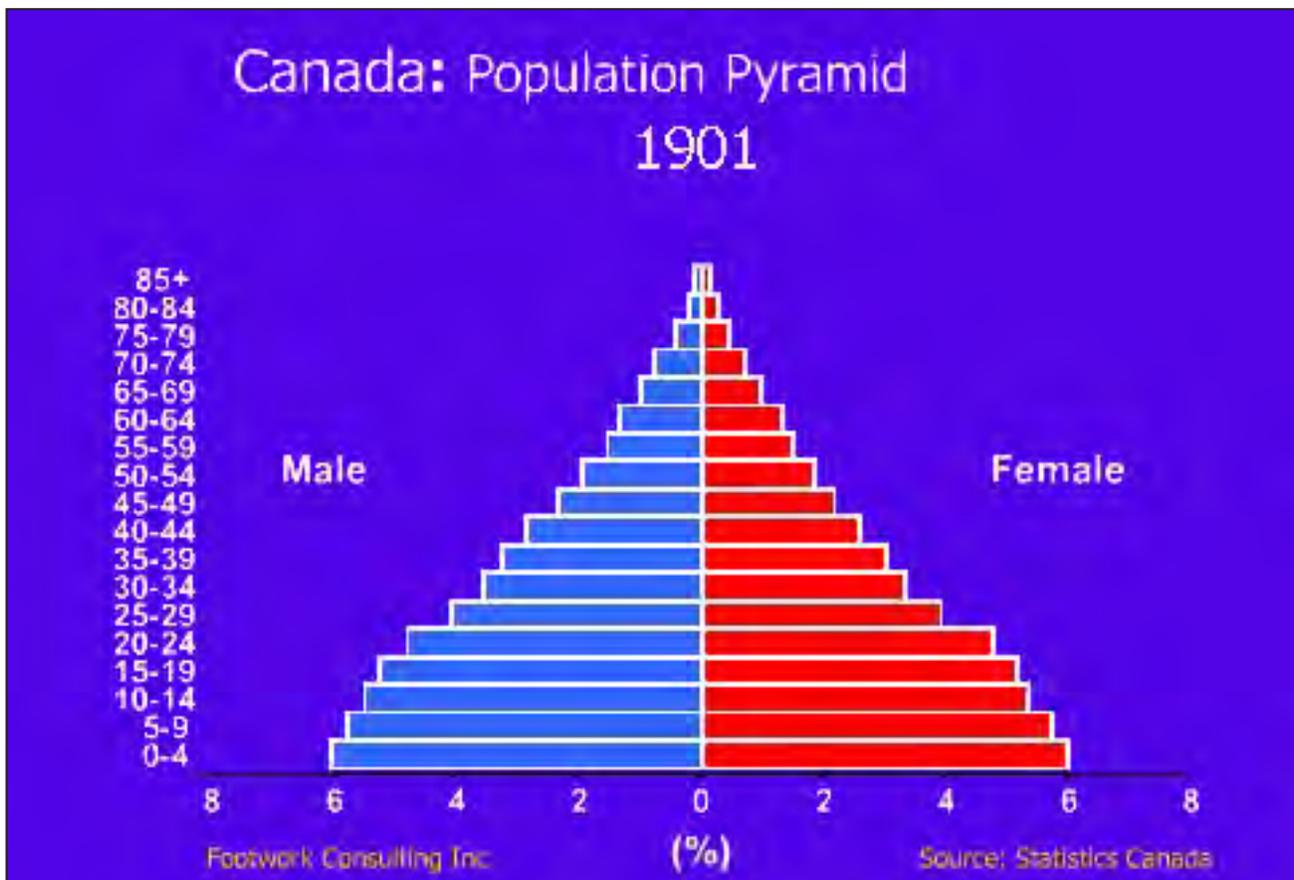
The large bump in the 65 and over age group can likely be attributed to the aging of the baby boomer cohort (55+) as many of them began turning 65 during the 2011 Census.

## 2.2 Population Projections

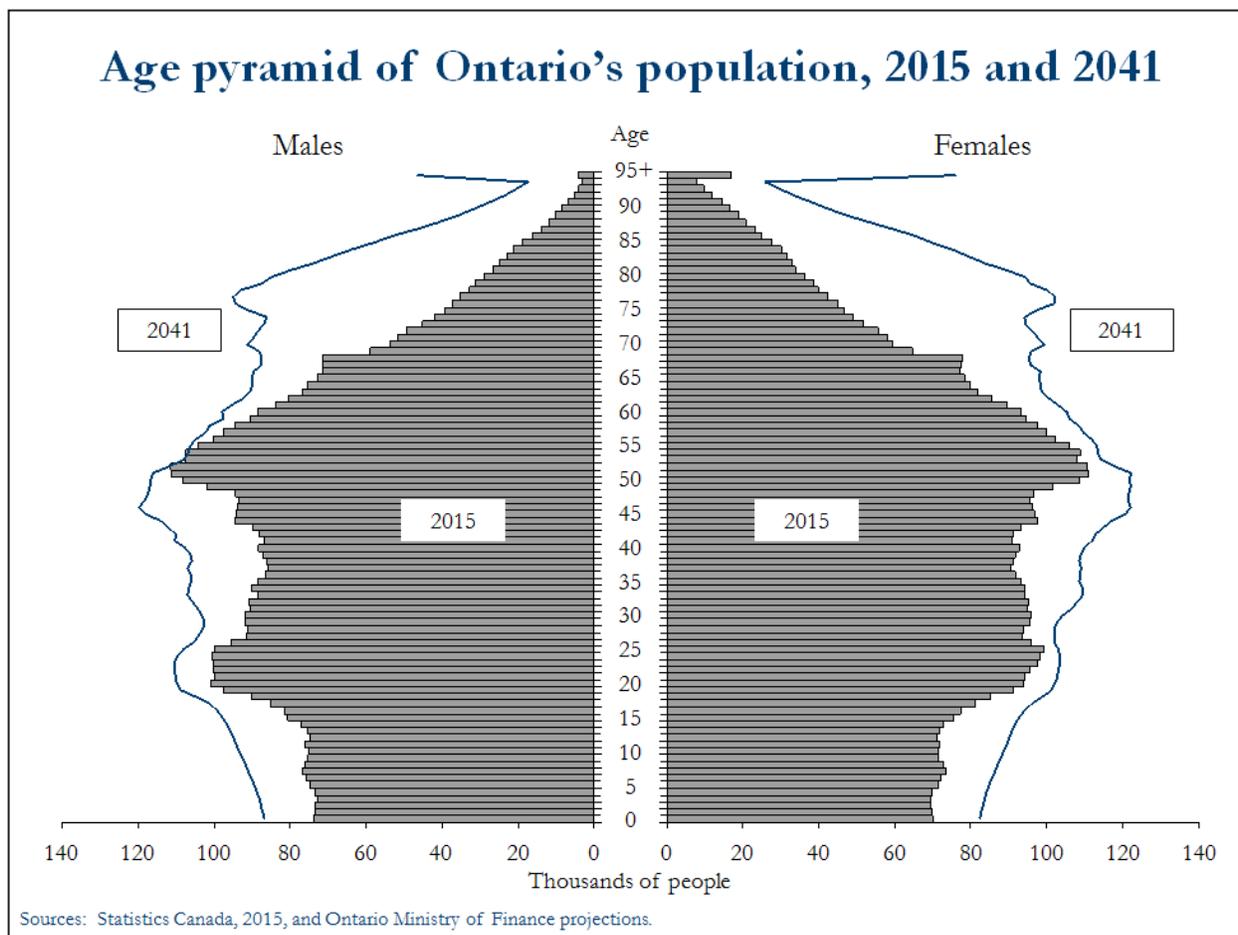
The power of demographics was first brought to national-level discussion in Canada by Dr. David Foot, a professor emeritus at the University of Toronto<sup>22</sup>. His analysis of an aging population – particularly the Boomer cohort – showed that massive social change was coming and would affect every aspect of our lives from housing, spending, health care, economic productivity, to leisure, civic participation, etc. Dr. Foot’s animated population pyramids visually highlighted the enormous demographic changes that have taken place in Canada over the past 100 years. One of the early charts in his series, shown below in **Figure 3**, represents the classic “triangle” shape that characterized Canadian society in the past when life expectancies were shorter and fertility rates were higher.

The Ontario Ministry of Finance conducted an extensive update of the provincial population projections by age and gender for each of the 49 Census divisions, based on the 2011 Census<sup>23</sup>. The age pyramid in **Figure 4** shows that the proportion of older seniors (75+) will account for the fastest growth among seniors from 2015 to 2041. Once the baby boomers have all reached age 65, their proportion of the total number of seniors will stabilize. During the 2015-2031 period, the growth rate of the senior population is expected to remain around 3.6%; thereafter, it will decrease to 1.2%. However, the number of older seniors (75+) will continue to grow much faster than the young seniors, young adults, and children population groups.

**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**



### 3.0 Age-Friendly and Related Initiatives

Age-Friendly planning can be linked to the World Health Organization's (WHO) **determinants of health** which include:

- The social and economic environment
- The physical environment, and
- The person's individual characteristics and behaviours.<sup>24</sup>

The idea underlying the determinants of health is that a combination of factors such as having access to safe roads, affordable housing, and meaningful social supports all combine to have a significant effect on one's health – even more than having access to health care services alone.

Age-friendly planning is a way of focusing the **determinants of health** through a senior's lens. We do this by considering the range of physical, social, and economic factors that may impede or enhance active aging.

### 3.1 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA)

Age-friendly communities set up their physical environment so that seniors – and by extension everyone – can participate safely and enjoyably in the activities and events of their communities. This means that sidewalks are well lit and kept in good shape with appropriate curb cuts for wheelchairs and assistive devices; buildings have adequate door widths with automatic openers and walk-up ramps (portable or permanent); municipal services provide various forms of communication formats such as large print or text transcripts of audio or visual information. All of these options have been captured under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA). Ontario holds the distinction of being the first district to mandate accessibility reporting. The goal is to prevent and remove barriers as defined in the Regulation by 2025.

Since July 1, 2011, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation provides accessibility supports to Ontarians with disabilities through the following four (4) required items:

1. Establishment, implementation, maintenance and documentation of a **multi-year accessibility plan**, which outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation;
2. Incorporation of accessibility criteria and features when **procuring or acquiring good, services, or facilities**;
3. Training; and
4. Other specific requirements under the Information and Communications, Employment Transportation Standards and Public Spaces.

### 3.2 Access Orangeville

Access Orangeville is the accessibility committee of Council for the Town of Orangeville<sup>25</sup>. As part of its mandate, Access Orangeville is required to develop a multi-year accessibility plan that details how the Town will comply with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation that falls under the AODA.



Access Orangeville, under the leadership of Councillor Gail Campbell (Chair) was awarded the David C. Onley Award for Leadership in Accessibility at Queen’s Park in June 2015. The award was given in the role model/champion category for working to “transform Orangeville into a barrier-free community that is an inspiration to towns and cities across the province”.<sup>26</sup> One of their many successful projects is partnering with businesses to make access a priority.<sup>27</sup>

Pictured above (left to right): Ontario Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure Brad Duguid, Joanne Jordan, Peter Roy, Diva Anderson, Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell (Lieutenant Governor of Ontario), Councillor Gail Campbell (Chair of Access Orangeville), Former Lieutenant Governor David C. Onley, Mike Gravelle, Sarah Murray and Larry Rankin.

### 3.3 How Age-Friendly is Similar to and Different from Accessibility

The development of accessibility criteria and features in the public and private sectors is an important first step in also promoting age-friendly needs and concerns. But it is not enough to meet the needs of an aging population. With the growth of the Age-Friendly Community initiatives at international, national and provincial levels, there has been a substantial body of research that addresses good urban design (public spaces) and its relationship to healthy physical, cognitive and social aging. Age-friendly planning is helping to change attitudes in that aging is not thought of as a “disease” but as a developmental stage that includes normal changes that can be anticipated and adapted to help older adults live a healthy and active life.<sup>28</sup>

An older population is one that often sees multiple physical and cognitive issues in individuals: for example, dementia, sensitivity to environmental noise, frailty or increasing balance issues leading to injurious and costly falls. These factors, and other age-related considerations, affect the safety, independence, and functional well-being of older adults. While accessibility issues dovetail with age-friendly in many areas, community planning from an age-friendly lens captures an even broader base of issues, and a broader spectrum of residents’ needs that go beyond what the Access to Ontarians with Disabilities Act can provide. For example, an age-friendly lens on community planning will consider not only the accessibility of the venue for a particular event, but also the opportunity for multiple ages to participate and interact together; or, the outreach to include seniors as event volunteers, mentors, and ambassadors. Age-friendly becomes a lens through which the social and civic needs of all residents are considered, and how participation in community life can reduce isolation and improve one’s health physically, cognitively, and socially.



## 4.0 Age-Friendly Orangeville Assessment

The priorities outlined in this action plan were arrived at by a series of research initiatives over the past two years. The research protocol is informed by the Government of Ontario resource, Finding the Right Fit: Age-Friendly Community Planning, and has been customized to reflect the unique needs of our community.

### 4.1 Seniors’ Survey

In June 2014, a seniors’ survey was developed and distributed to the community (aimed at residents aged 55+ years) with options to complete online or on paper. There were 256 responses, reflecting a statistically valid and significant response rate. The questions were based on a number of Quality of Life (QoL) and Age-Friendly Community (AFC) instruments that reflect person-based and environment-based questions respectively. The questions surveyed seniors’ perceptions and experiences in the community across the eight WHO domains. Together, the QoL and AFC instrument questions enabled researchers to consider **p-e fit** (person-environment fit) and look for gaps or mismatches in seniors’ lived experiences and the resources that the community provides.<sup>29</sup> The key gaps are identified under the heading “Opportunities for Improvement” for each of the World Health Organization pillars, beginning on page 18. Additional resources regarding the seniors’ survey can also be found on the Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee web page.

(<http://www.orangeville.ca/council-1/committees-of-council-1/mayors-seniors-advisory-committee>)



## 4.2 Focus Groups

The survey was followed up and supplemented with focus groups that asked seniors open-ended questions. The discussions fleshed out the survey with additional insights and helped the researchers to test the p-e survey questions.



### A Community's Path to Age-Friendliness: Finding the Gaps

1. What do older adults need to do, what do they prefer to do and what are they able to do?
2. What resources does the community environment offer and how does it offer them?

Source: Finding the Right Fit: Age-Friendly Community Planning



## 4.3 Stakeholder Interviews, Consultations, and Outreach

Interviews and consultations were conducted with the Dufferin Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (DNPEA); Town staff (Public Works; Planning; Economic Development; Parks and Recreation); Orangeville Police; Public Health; Georgian College Employment; Food Bank. These consultations provided additional statistics related to seniors' use of resources and agencies' services and qualitative data regarding the clients' needs.

## 4.4 Connections to Other Town Plans and Processes

A review of relevant municipal plans was made during the writing of this action plan: Official Plan, Municipal Cultural Plan, Police Services Business Plan, Fire Master Plan 2015, Accessibility Plan, Parks Master Plan, County of Dufferin Homelessness and Housing Plan, Transit Optimization Study, Procurement Review.

The committee had an opportunity to respond to the following reviews in 2015/16: Official Plan, Transit Optimization Study, Arts and Culture Summer Survey, Procurement Review. In each case, a Committee member and/or the Age-Friendly Consultant was asked to review a draft plan and/or attend an interdisciplinary committee meeting during the review process.

The committee provided specific recommendations to the Official Plan Review Committee:

- Include new section entitled **B.2.21 Age-Friendly Planning** that describes Canada's rapidly aging population trend and Orangeville's commitment to becoming an age-friendly community and member of the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities.
- Include **active aging** as part of Orangeville's future infrastructure planning, including housing and amenities that allow seniors to "age-in-place."
- Include provision for **affordable and accessible housing for older adults**, in proximity to a variety of services (e.g., banking, medical/dental, shopping, recreation, transportation), to help residents "age-in-place."



The committee continues to work with municipal staff and other community partners to build age-friendly awareness. By addressing age-friendliness at the planning stage, municipalities can more efficiently plan for the needs of an older population.

## 5.0 Vision for an Age-Friendly Orangeville

Every age-friendly community will look different based on their unique mix of demographics, resources, and environmental factors. This means that the recommendations in each community's action plan will emphasize and prioritize different areas. Regardless of the differences across age-friendly communities, they are also committed to the principle of "active aging".

The term "active aging" is the framework for the World Health Organization's "Age-Friendly Communities" initiative. The World Health Organization defines "active aging" as "the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance the quality of life as people age".<sup>30</sup>

Active aging will look different for every senior, but our goal is to remove as many barriers as we can for the full participation of our seniors in community life – in whatever manner they want to contribute and enhance their well-being. Thus our vision for an Age-Friendly Orangeville:

***A vibrant, safe community where we can all age  
with dignity, respect and purpose.***

## 5.1 Priority Areas and Strategies for Improvement

This plan is based on a three-year timeline. This is just the beginning of our community's age-friendly journey. Building an age-friendly community requires tremendous physical and social planning. During the process of writing the action plan, the Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee, community partners and Town staff have been busy laying the groundwork for many of the action items outlined in this document. Some of the items are well underway and the community partners involved in implementing those items have been making a difference in our seniors' lives; other items are still in the idea stage and need further research and development over the next few years.

## 5.2 Creating Priorities from the Assessment Data

During the assessment stage of the Seniors' Survey (2014), focus groups, review of age-friendly assets and municipal plans, several themes emerged from the data. These themes overlap several of the WHO domains, which is to be expected. For example, in the Seniors' Survey (2014), **loss of independence** was the number one area of concern reported by seniors when considering their future years. The loss of independence is tied to several WHO domains: inability to access **Outdoor Spaces & Buildings** because of reduced mobility; potential loss of driver's licence because of reduced health makes **Transportation** more difficult; it can also result in reduced **Social Participation**, and **Respect & Social Inclusion**. Thus the seniors' expressed fears of "losing independence" becomes a priority for an age-friendly community to address because it is both a voiced concern and a known risk factor for social, emotional, and physical health. Seniors' fear of "losing independence" becomes an age-friendly strategy of "reducing social isolation" using a variety of community resources. Some examples include the following: connecting seniors to each other through media and technological training; developing peer support programs; providing community supports; and, helping seniors with greater health issues access their needed supports.



Orangeville's five priorities for an age-friendly community are outlined below:

### **Priority #1 - Reducing Social Isolation**

- Reaching out to vulnerable older adults (e.g., cognitive deficiencies, physical injuries or disabilities, financial insecurity, single or widowed) with support, greater awareness of resources, and innovative opportunities to participate in the community
- Connecting seniors with other seniors through technology (Facebook, other social media)
- Connecting seniors with each other through peer support program

### **Priority #2 - Integrating Cross-Departmental Planning**

- Embedding age-friendly lens into departmental planning through representation on committees, providing feedback on public surveys, providing feedback on municipal plan reviews
- Ensuring that public surveys, open houses, and municipal events are designed with both accessibility and age-friendliness in mind

### **Priority #3 - Strengthening Accessibility with an Age-Friendly Lens**

- Developing partnerships with Access Orangeville to mutually support goals for greater accessibility for all residents of all ages
- Prioritizing infrastructure and public works initiatives that will help seniors to "age actively"
- Using technological tools to improve community planning and decision-making

### **Priority #4 - Building Age-Friendly Awareness & Supports in the Private Sector**

- Addressing issues of ageism in customer service, marketing and communications
- Building age-friendly awareness through outreach sessions
- Developing recognition programs that reward innovative age-friendly business initiatives
- Bridging public and private sector efforts to build age-friendly supports in the community

### **Priority #5 - Addressing Ageism Across All Sectors**

- Reviewing communications and media from community partners
- Helping community partners improve age-friendly visibility in employment, education, and community events
- Training and educating employees about the varying needs and abilities of seniors



## 6.0 Evaluation

In December 2015, the Public Health Agency of Canada published the Age-Friendly Communities Guide: Using Indicators to Measure Progress. As part of our accountability to both our funders and the Orangeville community, each action item that is implemented will be measured using specific indicators that relate to the eight WHO domains. The indicators will be a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative monitoring such as the following:

- Number and type of requests for information regarding age-friendly resources from seniors, other residents, private and public sector organizations
- Awareness of age-friendly supports and resources using Seniors' Survey 2014 data as baseline
- Tracking of age-friendly positive messaging in media (Baseline: Committee audit of public sector institutions at start of action item)
- Number of participants in senior outreach events (e.g., technology help, interest courses)
- Age-friendly criteria embedded within Town (Baseline: Reviews of Municipal Plans 2015/2016 with recommendations for Official Plan, Transit Study, procurement policies, Arts and Culture Survey 2016)
- Additional focus group follow-up to evaluate initiatives as required



According to the Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide, there are eight categories or dimensions of an age-friendly community. These are features of a community's structures, environment, services and policies that influence the process of active aging.

## Physical Environment



**Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:** "The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people that affect their ability to 'age in place'." p. 12



**Transportation:** "Being able to move about the city determines social and civic participation and access to community and health services." p.20



**Housing:** "There is a link between appropriate housing and access to community and social services in influencing the independence and quality of life of older people." p. 30

## Social Environment



**Respect and Social Inclusion:** "Many [seniors] feel they are often respected, recognized and included, while on the other hand they experience lack of consideration in the community, in services and in the family. This clash is explained in terms of a changing society and behavioural norms, lack of contact between generations, and widespread ignorance about ageing and older people." p. 45



**Social Participation:** "Participating in leisure, social, culture and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with the family, allows older people to continue to exercise their competence, to enjoy respect and esteem, and to maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships." p. 38



**Civic Participation and Employment:** "An age-friendly community provides options for older people to continue to contribute to their communities, through paid employment or voluntary work if they so choose, and to be engaged in the political process." p. 51

## Personal Well-Being



**Communication and Information:** "Staying connected with events and people and getting timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing." p. 60



**Community Support and Health Services:** "Health and support services are vital to maintaining health and independence in the community. Many of the concerns raised by older people deal with the availability of sufficient good quality, appropriate and accessible care." p. 66

## 7.0 Physical Environment

### 7.1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings



“The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people and affect their ability to “age in place.”  
Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide p. 12

**Age-Friendly issues include:** somewhere to rest, importance of green spaces, safe pedestrian crossings and accessible buildings and walkways

#### Age-Friendly Strengths

- **Access Orangeville** (Committee of Council for Accessibility) has met or exceeded many accessibility standards in municipal buildings, and has made great strides in making sidewalks, intersections, pedestrian crossings, and businesses safer for all residents (Town of Orangeville Accessibility Plan, 2015).
- **Snow Removal Policy**  
Since 2008, the Town has cleared all sidewalks using a priority matrix (municipal, business, public). Residents were invited to an open house and to fill out an online survey (n=464) in October 2015; majority of respondents (58%) indicated being in favour of clearing sidewalks in all areas in Town<sup>31</sup>
- **Continuous municipal improvements** such as adding sidewalk in front of Montgomery Village Retirement Residence; new bus shelters; Wayfinding Signage Project – eight additional accessible signs added in 2015 (Tourism and Development Marketing Plan, 2010)

#### Opportunities for Improvement

- Better awareness of, and signage for, accessible public washrooms
- Need for snow removal for isolated or physically-disabled seniors in independent housing
- Safety on multi-use trails (seniors, cyclists, skateboarders, etc.)
- Areas in Town requiring sidewalk maintenance and bridges between gaps for greater walkability to amenities

#### Strategies for Improvement

**Strategy #1:** Explore and invest in technological tools to improve age-friendly planning

##### Actions

1. Met with Dr. Lewis from the University of Waterloo regarding a GIS-based Urban Planning Tool: MyCommunity Vision; Note: signed agreement in place with Council approval spring 2016.
2. Partner with Access Orangeville to present to Council and approve Orangeville as a “test site”.
3. Work with U of Waterloo to develop tool for Orangeville with age-friendly perspective on designing and improving public spaces and buildings.



4. Involve feedback from older adults (Committee/Task Force) to identify areas of Town that require improvement for walkability, rest stops, etc.).

**Strategy #2:** Create and implement Snow Angel Registry to assist at-risk or shut-in seniors with snow removal

#### **Actions**

1. Research best practices of similar registries in other communities (e.g., City of Windsor).
2. Create criteria for Town's own registry (e.g., Police Check, Health & Safety, Privacy Laws).
3. Work with partners to train and enroll participants, advertise and promote volunteer opportunities through churches, schools, service providers and also to enroll at-risk seniors in registry.

**Strategy #3:** Develop trail use safety & awareness campaign

#### **Actions**

1. Identify areas of Town that have multi-use trails (especially near seniors' housing or senior population).
2. Conduct a "walkability survey" with committee/senior volunteers to identify problem areas (sightlines, blind spots) in combination with GIS-based technology if available (Waterloo).
3. Develop and install appropriate signage for multi-use trail etiquette and awareness, taking best practices from other communities.
4. Where appropriate, mark yellow lines to separate cyclists from walkers.

**Strategy #4:** Support county municipal staff to promote and help seniors use GIS-mapped accessible washrooms (project-in progress)

#### **Actions**

1. Support new technology by communicating its availability to seniors using various media channels when project is completed.
2. Support learning sessions for seniors using technology.
3. Investigate opportunities to use data with other GIS-based technological initiatives.

## 7.2 Transportation



“Being able to move about the city determines social and civic participation and access to community and health services.”

Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide p. 20

**Age-Friendly issues include:** affordability, reliable and frequent services, barrier-free vehicle design, passenger courtesy and priority seating.

### Age-Friendly Strengths

- Orangeville bus drivers are courteous and helpful (Seniors’ Survey 2014)
- Strong attendance at MTO Driver Refresher Courses (hosted by Library)
- Transit Optimization Study 2015/16 received age-friendly input from committee highlighting feedback from Seniors Survey and Focus Groups for routes and schedules
- Buses are accessible for wheelchairs
- Lighting along roadways is satisfactory
- Orangeville Police Service Business Plan (2016-2018) identifies key theme as promoting “road safety through strategic enforcement, education and community engagement”

### Opportunities for Improvement

- No bus service on Sundays or after 6:15 p.m. on weekdays; waiting time can be long (Seniors’ Survey): **UPDATE:** Age-Friendly sub-committee provided input into Transit Optimization Study from senior data and focus groups. Study recommended extending weekday service past 6:15 p.m.; limited Saturday bus service continues to be monitored; specialized bus service for persons with disabilities to be explored; routes optimized for less waiting by moving bus terminal to Westdale Mall (hub of community activity and employment).<sup>32</sup>
- Remove obstructions (e.g., shrubs) that block driver’s vision
- Rules of the road need more enforcement (road safety for pedestrians)
- Buses can be delayed due to weather, traffic, or passengers’ accessibility needs; not all buses are easy to exit or board

### Strategies for Improvement

**Strategy #1:** Develop a comprehensive transportation information hub to provide a “one-stop-shop” for seniors needing current information on buses and taxis

#### Actions

1. Research best practices for transportation hubs that are already in use in other age-friendly communities (e.g., City of Edmonton).
2. Define information needs that would help seniors navigate transit and taxi options (e.g, schedules, routes, bus accessibility features, maps).
3. Work with transit staff and local taxi providers to develop communications materials for hub.
4. With feedback from seniors, identify and prioritize area(s) of Town that would best serve hosting the



information hub.

5. Identify person(s) responsible to update and monitor hub on regular basis and the point person to answer questions and receive feedback from users.
6. Roll out awareness and education campaign to help seniors use hub.

**Strategy #2:** Host senior ride-a-bus day to promote transit opportunities for seniors and hands-on training for bus equipment and routes

#### **Actions**

1. Work with Public Works Department staff to develop an education day that helps seniors use the bus equipment and understand the schedules and routes that are available to them.
2. Identify any issues that arise from seniors' abilities to both use the equipment and understand the schedules/routes.
3. Strengthen communication efforts through transportation hub, media.
4. Encourage local businesses to identify in their media (website, brochures, in-store) how seniors can reach them by public transit.

**Strategy #3:** Engage citizens representing multiple age groups and abilities to act as "user group" when town budgeting for new equipment (buses, shelters, etc.)

#### **Actions**

1. Work with municipal staff to embed a senior lens in procurement and tendering processes.
2. Recruit seniors of varying abilities and ages for "user group" that will test and provide feedback for new equipment or retrofitting.
3. Engage other seniors with quick surveys (Facebook, Town website) to solicit feedback on programming and services; questions will address both person-environment issues.

**Strategy #4:** Support senior road safety (driving/walking) through public education and community partnerships

#### **Actions:**

1. Identify policies and themes in Orangeville Police Services Business Plan 2016-2018 that are compatible with promoting road safety for seniors.
2. Work with Police Services Community Liaison to discuss seniors' concerns regarding road/public safety.
3. Develop communication methods that will help community to be aware of senior or at-risk pedestrians.
4. Based on business plan goals for community outreach, help to promote public education regarding road safety for seniors as both drivers and pedestrians.
5. Connect committee representative to new Dufferin Falls Prevention Network that will promote education, community partnerships, and specific goals for reducing falls for seniors.

## 7.3 Housing



“There is a link between appropriate housing and access to community and social services in influencing the independence and quality of life of older people.”  
Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide p. 30

**Age-Friendly issues include:** range of housing options, age-friendly design & modifications, community & family connections and affordability

### Age-Friendly Strengths

- Most seniors still live in single-family dwellings that they own and most are happy with current living arrangements (Seniors’ Survey and focus groups 2014).
- Most seniors want to stay in this community (Seniors’ Survey and focus groups 2014).
- Official Plan Review 2015/16 requested and has received Age-Friendly review and discussion paper from committee for land use and implementing age-friendly policies.
- Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plan (County of Dufferin) specifically includes housing for seniors<sup>33</sup>  
**UPDATE October 2016:** new social housing building to be developed in Orangeville for seniors (\$1.1 million grant from Ontario government).<sup>34</sup>
- Access Orangeville has partnered with Fire Department to develop and promote Emergency Response Registry that encourages seniors living alone to register with emergency services.<sup>35</sup>

### Opportunities for Improvement

- Availability, affordability and accessibility of seniors housing continues to be a challenge (Seniors’ Survey; County of Dufferin statistics).
- Lack of awareness and funding for home modification, home maintenance and home care support services (Seniors’ Survey).
- Lack of awareness of available housing funding assistance (Seniors’ Survey).
- Seniors (and children under 10) are statistically most at risk of injury from fire (Town of Orangeville Fire Master Plan 2015, p.66).

### Strategies for Improvement

**Strategy #1:** Strengthen aging-in-place awareness and opportunities for seniors

#### Actions

1. Create inventory of contractors, developers, home maintenance and home care support providers in community that can provide universal design/barrier-free services and improvements to reduce potential for injuries and maximize independence.
2. Work with Dufferin Fall Prevention Network to provide practical tips (reminder that can be put on fridge) to improve home safety and reduce fall injuries.
3. Investigate emerging or innovative research from the Centre of Excellence for Innovation in Aging (University of Waterloo) to support more active, accessible living for seniors wishing to age-in-place.
4. Work with Emergency Services (Fire Department Plan) to promote recommended courses for seniors: fire safety education courses including “Older and Wiser” and “Remembering When”.



## **Strategy #2:** Investigate and improve awareness of senior housing options

### **Actions**

1. Work with municipal staff during Official Plan Review process (2016) to raise awareness of senior housing needs with aim to include age-friendly land use and planning policies where relevant and feasible.
2. Investigate variety of senior-appropriate housing models that exist in other communities and their best practices (e.g, Halton HomeShare Toolkit) to assess their suitability for Orangeville.
3. Engage with County of Dufferin staff to identify opportunities for greater awareness of housing options for low-income seniors and for those requiring accessible housing and help to fill out applications.
4. Support County staff's communication strategy to inform community of various housing options (10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan).

## 8.0 Social Environment

### 8.1 Respect and Social Inclusion



“Many [seniors] feel they are often respected, recognized and included, while on the other hand, they experience lack of consideration in the community, in services and in the family. This clash is explained in terms of a changing society and behavioural norms, lack of contact between generations, and widespread ignorance about ageing and older people.” Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide p.45

**Age-Friendly issues include:** respectful and disrespectful behaviour, ageism and stereotypes, intergenerational interactions and place within the community & family.

#### Age-Friendly Strengths

- Partnership between schools and retirement residence – **GrandPals** Program – has gained local attention, positive feedback and is being replicated in other communities.<sup>36</sup>
- Seniors’ homes are within walking distance to several elementary/high schools to allow for visitation or program opportunities.
- Seniors are reporting more respect towards seniors from youth, especially after spending time together (Seniors’ Survey).
- The majority of seniors report feeling valued as a resident in Orangeville (Seniors’ Survey).
- Orangeville is home to two community college campuses (Humber, Georgian) that have programs and/or courses about aging (Personal Support Worker, Nursing; Social Work).
- Organizations such as the Seniors’ Centre (membership-based) and the Orangeville Public Library provide opportunities for seniors to socialize and learn new skills.
- Seniors are represented on various Committees of Council to provide leadership and input (e.g., Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly, Access Orangeville, Arts and Culture).

#### Opportunities for Improvement

- When seniors report feeling disrespected because of their age, the two biggest sources are youth and businesses/staff (Seniors’ Survey).
- Seniors would like to see more opportunities to bring multi-generations together (Seniors’ Survey).
- Seniors report feeling left out of decision-making processes affecting older people or “invisible” to the rest of society (Seniors’ Survey).

#### Strategies for Improvement

**Strategy #1:** Address ageism in customer service through business outreach and information sessions

##### Actions

1. Research best practices in other communities that have implemented age-friendly business initiatives (e.g., Thunder Bay, New York).
2. Investigate the feasibility of developing an age-friendly certificate or recognition program (in-house or



external training from private sector that meets age-friendly criteria).

3. Create an Age-Friendly Business Guide to promote local businesses that have completed age-friendly training/certification for their employees.
4. Create an Age-Friendly Business Network that will receive updates on the Age-Friendly Initiative from the Committee and meet for future workshops and events to engage their older adult clients.
5. Highlight business age-friendly success stories with press release and/or media coverage (story in the local newspaper, publications, etc.).

**Strategy #2:** Develop additional intergenerational opportunities in community

#### Actions

1. Engage activation co-ordinators at local retirement homes to survey residents about preferred events/activities with youth (e.g., Christmas concert; chess or checkers club).
2. Survey Seniors' Centre to determine if there are senior-led teaching courses for students (e.g., wood working, other arts and crafts).
3. Create an outreach package for school board(s) and local principals/guidance counsellors to share resources with teachers on potential intergenerational programs in the community based on feedback from retirement homes and Seniors' Centre.

**Strategy #3:** Develop a seniors-assisting-seniors program that will connect trained senior volunteers with other seniors in the community who need information from trusted individuals

#### Actions

1. Create a sub-committee/task force to research Halton's successful peer-to-peer model and the best practices that can be applied to a customized model for Orangeville.
2. Test criteria for Orangeville's program on senior focus group.
3. Recruit ambassadors and program champions who can promote the program and help to recruit volunteers.
4. Develop media package to promote the program (Rogers interview; newspapers; Facebook).

**Strategy #4:** Integrate age-friendly perspective in municipal surveys and public consultations

#### Actions

1. Reach out to Committees of Council and Town staff with periodic age-friendly update and annual roundtable to get inventory of upcoming surveys, community consultations, municipal plan reviews, etc.
2. Develop calendar of dates that list municipal plan reviews and prepare to provide feedback as requested and where feasible.
3. Act as liaison to seniors in community by helping to promote senior feedback to surveys and consultations through Dufferin Seniors Circle Facebook; Seniors Centre; Library etc.
4. Orangeville Seniors Committee Councillor to share at Council meetings and advocate age-friendly lens on issues.
5. Publicize Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee contact information directly to seniors to share municipal concerns, comments, or questions.

**Strategy #5:** Strengthen lifelong learning opportunities for seniors with strong media/marketing representation at community colleges

#### Actions

1. Work with local post-secondary schools to bring awareness of ageism in media, workplace, etc.
2. Review marketing materials (website, print, Facebook) to assess positive and visible senior representation.
3. Encourage community partners to build age-friendly marketing campaigns that include seniors as lifelong learners and celebrate success stories of seniors returning to school or making a significant career change.
4. Investigate feasibility of developing college-specific senior peer support program that uses seniors as role models to help recruit, encourage and retain senior students returning to school.

# Grandpals





## 8.2 Social Participation



“Participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with the family, allows older people to continue to exercise their competence, to enjoy respect and esteem, and to maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships.”

Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide p. 38

**Age-Friendly issues include:** addressing isolation, awareness of activities and events, affordability and range of events and activities and accessible events and venues.

### Age-Friendly Strengths

- Comprehensive accessibility plan that meets or exceeds AODA standards
- Library, Theatre, Town Hall, Recreation Centres have accessible web and print-based communication
- Wide public access to computers and/or Internet at no charge (libraries, free Wi-Fi at local businesses)
- Library Homebound Delivery Service for those confined to home for reasons of health or mobility

### Opportunities for Improvement

- Customer service skills in both commercial and public spaces (Seniors’ Survey)
- Seniors report not knowing about events or activities until too late (Seniors’ Survey)
- Peer support model to boost seniors helping seniors information and connections (e.g., Halton Age-Friendly Peer Support Program)

### Strategies for Improvement

**Strategy #1:** Promote free leisure and relaxation areas in Town

#### Actions

**(Note – Parks and Recreation New Proposals August 22, 2016)**

1. Investigate partnership with Access Orangeville to create inventory of all accessible, age-friendly outdoor spaces.
2. Work with Parks and Recreation “30 Days of Free Fitness – Get Moving” – Facebook page that encourages residents to walk/bike different accessible trails or parks.
3. Investigate opportunities for intergenerational activities: Pickleball, Zumba classes, Nordic walking (outdoor).

**Strategy #2:** Promote and grow Dufferin Seniors Circle Facebook

#### Actions

1. Use media channels (print, Town/library website) to continue to promote Dufferin Seniors Circle Facebook (DSCF).
2. Offer periodic training in Facebook at library with particular training on the DSCF.
3. Evaluate awareness and use of Facebook with Survey Monkey (who is using the Facebook by gender, age, health/economic status).

### Strategy #3: Develop Orangeville Seniors-Assisting-Seniors Program

#### Actions

1. Research Halton's Peer Support Program for best practices in developing and sustaining peer support.
2. Investigate gaps in support for seniors, including types of assistance that are needed (information, referral).
3. Develop working group that will create customized peer program for seniors: recruitment, vulnerability checks, training.
4. Investigate feasibility of having one community agency champion or be "contact" organization for the Seniors-Assisting-Seniors Program.
5. Celebrate success stories with media outreach (article in newspaper, radio interview, etc.).



Launch of the Dufferin Seniors Circle Facebook Page (April 14, 2016): Darla Fraser, Kelly Welsh-Burns, Karen Stadnyk, Jennifer McCallum, Mary Margaret Evans, Pam MacInnis



## 8.3 Civic Participation & Employment



“An age-friendly community provides options for older people to continue to contribute to their communities, through paid employment or voluntary work if they so choose, and to be engaged in the political process.” Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide p. 51

**Age-Friendly issues include:** flexible paid volunteer opportunities, entrepreneurial opportunities and valuing older peoples’ contributions.

### Age-Friendly Strengths

- Community engagement is quite high. Over half of seniors report volunteering at least 1 to 3 hours per week. Over one-third of full-time working seniors also volunteer in some capacity.
- The majority of seniors report owning and using a computer, as well as having access to the Internet.
- Local presence of Georgian College and Humber College campuses offers general interest continuing education, academic upgrading, and full-time and part-time programs in social services, office administration, and health sciences.
- Many Committees of Council and non-profit boards of directors benefit from having seniors as volunteer directors and Committee members.

### Opportunities for Improvement

- The top three barriers that may prevent seniors from attaining paid or voluntary work: opportunities are not known or promoted; employers are not open to hiring older workers; low range of opportunities available (Seniors’ Survey).
- Seniors also report the following barriers to attaining paid or voluntary work: lack of available transportation to and from work; opportunities don’t include options for flexible hours; training in new skills like technologies is not offered (Seniors’ Survey).
- Forty percent (40%) of seniors reported “financial concerns” as being one of the issues that worries them the most as they consider their future (Seniors’ Survey).

### Strategies for Improvement

**Strategy #1:** Develop workshops on senior entrepreneurship and small business ownership

#### Actions

1. Research models for developing and promoting seniorpreneurship – opportunities for seniors to turn hobbies or skills into small businesses to supplement income.
2. Work with Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC) to develop and deliver workshops to seniors on business ownership, funding, and writing a business plan.
3. Promote success stories through media channels.



**Strategy #2:** Work with local employers on attracting and retaining senior employees

**Actions**

1. Research best practices on age-friendly workplaces.
2. Partner with local employment agencies (e.g., Georgian College – Employment Ontario) to develop employer resource kit, highlighting benefits of hiring older workers.
3. Recognize employers who have implemented age-friendly workplace environments (e.g., flexible arrangements, modified workspaces, continuing education).

**Strategy #3:** Work with local colleges to Identify and implement courses to help seniors retrain or develop their “Second Career”

**Actions**

1. Conduct market research on local training and education needs and interests of seniors.
2. Work with continuing education departments and local colleges to offer variety of courses: interest-based, skill-building, retraining, etc.
3. Research and promote “age-friendly” instruction methods and flexible classroom/course design so that courses will help all students, regardless of age or barrier.



## 9.0 Personal Well-Being

### 9.1 Communication and Information



“...Staying connected with events and people and getting timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing.”

Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide. p. 60

**Age-Friendly issues include:** importance of word-of-mouth and personal communication, communication formats and design and computer/IT training.

### Age-Friendly Strengths

- Seniors are online and seeking opportunities to improve and expand their technological skills.
- Seniors are using the library and other public spaces to access information.

### Opportunities for Improvement

- Automated-only telephone inquiries are a barrier to clear and understandable information (Seniors' Survey).
- Poorly-designed visual communication (small print or cluttered visuals) poses a challenge (Seniors' Survey).
- Local paper is the number one source of information, but seniors expressing interest in computer training (especially Internet) (Seniors' Survey).

### Strategies for Improvement

**Strategy #1:** Build communication supports and channels within town departments

#### Actions

1. Audit Town departments to assess awareness of age-friendliness when designing surveys, seeking public input for programming, and announcing events.
2. Develop unified plan to reach seniors using variety of media channels.
3. Ensure that municipal surveys are reviewed with an age-friendly perspective (Committee representative to act as liaison/reviewer).

**Strategy #2:** Work with Orangeville Polices Services and other emergency service providers to address seniors' issues (safety in home and public)

#### Actions

1. Identify appropriate liaison at OPS to act as contact person for Age-Friendly Committee.
2. Provide information kit to OPS on Age-Friendly Orangeville, including new communication channels available to reach seniors (Dufferin Seniors Facebook Circle).
3. Create opportunity for seniors to meet with community officer regarding their safety concerns or areas for improvement.



**Strategy #3:** Work with business community on age-friendly communication practices

**Actions**

1. Continue to engage with BIA, Orangeville Mall, and other community partners to provide age-friendly tips for businesses.
2. Reach wider audience through media channels (Facebook, TV or radio spots) to raise awareness.
3. Check in with businesses with periodic quick surveys to assess improvements or print audits of materials for age-friendly visual presentation.
4. Consider feasibility of holding workshop through Small Enterprise Business Centre on “best practices” in age-friendly communication as a follow-up to initial outreach in May 2016.



## 9.2 Community Support and Health Services



“Health and support services are vital to maintaining health and independence in the community. Many of the concerns raised by older people deal with the availability of sufficient good quality, appropriate and accessible care.” Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide. p. 66

**Age-Friendly issues include:** wider range of health services, aging-well services and home care.

### Age-Friendly Strengths

- Orangeville seniors are generally quite active, with 72% reporting that the number one activity outside the home is “going for a walk” (Seniors’ Survey).
- Variety of public-sector and non-profit community support and health services are available for seniors: Telecheck (Torchlight Canada); Community Living Dufferin; Canadian Cancer Society; Alzheimer’s Society; Community Paramedic Program; Salvation Army; faith-based services (Lighthouse).

### Opportunities for Improvement

- Falls are the leading cause of injury for seniors, many of whom resist using assistive devices because of the stigma associated with using them.
- Many support services are available but there is no “roadmap” for Orangeville seniors to understand how to access various services from the different community agencies.
- Seniors report shortage of mental health services available to them (Seniors’ Survey).

### Strategies for Improvement

**Strategy #1:** Develop integrated fall prevention services to identify and target specific issues within community

#### Actions

1. Commit age-friendly representative to being part of new Dufferin Fall Prevention Working Group.
2. Identify issues (physical/social) regarding fall injury that affect Orangeville seniors.
3. Identify gaps in services, and awareness of those services, for health rehabilitation, exercise classes, helpline and other support services as needed.
4. Develop campaign that will raise community awareness of helping seniors with assistive devices.

**Strategy #2:** Review awareness of community services to enhance co-ordination

#### Actions

1. Working with community partners, update survey data on seniors’ awareness and use of various community agencies.
2. Identify gaps in seniors’ abilities to access appropriate services.
3. Investigate feasibility of holding a community services “Doors Open” or Information Fair for seniors and their families (during Seniors’ Month) to get comprehensive information about facilities, services, housing.



4. Investigate feasibility of creating a community information hub (print or web-based) that provides a clear referral roadmap for how to access community supports, depending on need or issue.
5. Identify organization or community partner that could be the “information host” to promote this information to seniors.

**Strategy #3:** Monitor support services shortages or gaps and educate on self-advocacy

**Actions**

1. Work with service providers to review and improve co-ordination of services for vulnerable older adults.
2. Develop mechanisms to help seniors advocate for self-care in community.
3. Work with local MPP and MP to keep him/her informed of seniors’ issues in health care services.
4. Work with agency that has some oversight in particular area (e.g., Dufferin Area Physician Search Committee) to attract medical professionals with expertise in caring for seniors.



## 10.0 Acknowledgements

The Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Committee would like to thank all the Orangeville seniors who have shared their views with the committee through the Seniors' Survey, focus groups, e-mails, event outreaches, and personal conversations. In addition, the committee expresses its appreciation to Town staff, community agency partners, business owners, and other Orangeville residents who have shared their knowledge and ideas for Age-Friendly Orangeville. This plan is not static; we will continue to seek input from Orangeville seniors through future focus groups and surveys as we move from the implementation stages to the evaluation stages of the action plan.

Alzheimer Society  
Business Improvement Area  
County of Dufferin  
Dufferin Board of Trade  
Georgian College  
Humber College  
Orangeville Food Bank  
Orangeville Police Services  
Town of Orangeville  
Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health



Age-Friendly Business Session (May 27, 2016): Darla Fraser, Guest Speaker Liz Cunningham, Stacey Dittman, Joy Gaskin, Cathy Waters, Maxine Brownell, Cheryle Hamilton and Lorena Hurtubise.



## 11.0 End Notes

1. The Mayor's Seniors Advisory Committee was renamed in 2014 to Orangeville Seniors/Age-Friendly Community Committee.
2. See January 12, 2015 Council Agenda Pkg. Report #L-2015-01 for Report to Council details.
3. WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities. <http://www.who.int/ageing/Brochure-EnglishAFC9.pdf>.
4. World Health Organization. Ageing and life-course. [http://www.who.int/ageing/active\\_ageing/en/](http://www.who.int/ageing/active_ageing/en/)
5. World Health Organization. Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide. [http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global\\_age\\_friendly\\_cities\\_Guide\\_English.pdf](http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf)
6. The bottom-up participatory research method is recommended by the United Nations and the World Health Organization. Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide. page 7.
7. Canada's Aging Population: The municipal role in Canada's demographic shift. P. 7. [https://www.fcm.ca/Documents/reports/FCM/canadas\\_aging\\_population\\_the\\_municipal\\_role\\_in\\_Canadas\\_demographic\\_shift\\_en.pdf](https://www.fcm.ca/Documents/reports/FCM/canadas_aging_population_the_municipal_role_in_Canadas_demographic_shift_en.pdf)
8. Note that Census data defines "senior" as a person aged 65 and older. The Town of Orangeville's definition of "senior" is a person aged 55 and older.
9. Statistics Canada. 2012. Focus on Geography Series, 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-310-XWE2011004. Ottawa, Ontario. Analytical products, 2011 Census. Last updated October 24, 2012.
10. World Health Organization. Ageing and Health. Fact Sheet No. 404. September 2015. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs404/en/>.
11. Statistics Canada. The Daily. September 29, 2015.
12. Statistics Canada. 2012. Focus on Geography Series, 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-310-XWE2011004. Ottawa, Ontario. Analytical products, 2011 Census.
13. World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities. Brochure. <http://www.who.int/ageing/Brochure-EnglishAFC9.pdf>
14. [http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age\\_friendly\\_cities\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age_friendly_cities_checklist.pdf)
15. See <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/>.
16. [https://extranet.who.int/sree/Reports?op=vs&path=/WHO\\_HQ\\_Reports/G21/PROD/EXT/GNAFCC%202](https://extranet.who.int/sree/Reports?op=vs&path=/WHO_HQ_Reports/G21/PROD/EXT/GNAFCC%202).
17. Developing Age-Friendly Cities: Policy Challenges & Options, 2012.



18. Ontario Seniors' Secretariat Age-Friendly Community Planning Grant. <http://www.seniors.gov.on.ca/en/srsorgs/afcpag.php>.
19. For background discussion, see also Measuring the Age-Friendliness of Cities –A Guide to the Use of Core Indicators (WHO) p. 13
20. Parks Master Plan. Situational Analysis Report. The Town of Orangeville. September 2014.
21. A dissemination area (DA) is a small, relatively stable geographic unit composed of one or more adjacent dissemination blocks. It is the smallest standard geographic area for which all census data are disseminated. DAs cover all the territory of Canada. Each DA has 400 to 700 persons.
22. See FootWork Consulting Inc. <http://www.footwork.com/pyramids.asp>.
23. Ontario Population Projections Update: Spring 2016. Ministry of Finance. <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/economy/demographics/projections/projections2015-2041.pdf>
24. See World Health Organization, Health Impact Assessment. <http://www.who.int/hia/evidence/doh/en/>.
25. Access Orangeville. Town of Orangeville Committee of Council. <http://www.orangeville.ca/council-1/committees-of-council-1/accessibility-committee>.
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27. Sobeys Partners with Access Orangeville. July 24, 2014. <http://orangevillebusiness.ca/news/story/sobeys-partners-with-access-orangeville/>.
28. Suresh I.S. Rattan. Aging is Not a Disease: Implications for Intervention. 2014. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4037311/>.
29. Finding the Right Fit: Age-Friendly Community Planning.
30. World Health Organization. What is Active Ageing? [http://www.who.int/ageing/active\\_ageing/en/](http://www.who.int/ageing/active_ageing/en/).
31. Snow Clearing Recommendations to Council. Report #PW-2015-47 page 6.
32. See Transit Optimization Study – Final Report for more details. <http://www.orangeville.ca/documents/2016/04/19/orangeville-transit-transit-optimization-study-final-report-april-2016-executive-summary>.
33. 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan – Dufferin County. November 2013. Section 2.3 Increasing Seniors Population. <http://www.dufferincounty.ca/files/content-pdf/10-year-plan.pdf>



34. County Prepares to Build 24 Senior Housing Units in Orangeville. The Orangeville Banner. October 3, 2016. <http://www.orangeville.com/news-story/6891706-county-prepares-to-build-24-senior-housing-units-in-orangeville/>
35. Emergency Response Registry Form. <http://www.orangeville.ca/council-1/committees-of-council-1/accessibility-committee>
36. GrandPals Program. <http://orangevillerotary.ca/257-2/grandpals/>.



## Appendix A: Senior Population Maps for Town of Orangeville by Dissemination Area

