



AGE-FRIENDLY BUSINESS GUIDE





Age-Friendly Business Guide

June 2023

This Guide was developed by the Town of Lincoln's former Age-Friendly Advisory Committee (AFAC). The AFAC was formed in 2019 with a mission to create a vibrant, healthy, and diverse community where quality of life, inclusivity and ageing well is supported through all stages of life. An age-friendly community enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities and treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. In 2022, the Age-Friendly Advisory Committee expanded its mandate to include a focus on active living and well-being as part of a the newly formed Age-Friendly and Active Community Advisory Committee.

This Guide is designed to help business owners identify, improve, and promote their age-friendly features. We encourage you to complete the age-friendly checklist. To further assist you, a list of valuable resources has been included.

The Town of Lincoln's Age-Friendly and Active Community Advisory Committee looks forward to working with you to make our community's businesses and services more age-friendly.

What is Age-Friendliness?

Age-friendliness is a lens through which everyone can look to ensure that the people they reach are all given equal access to their services. The World Health Organization defines the key aspects of age-friendliness through eight 'domains':



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings



Transportation



Communication and Information



Housing



Respect and Social inclusion



Civic Participation and Employment



Community Support and Health Services



Social Participation

What Makes a Business Age-Friendly?

An age-friendly business is one that provides a welcoming and positive experience for all customers, regardless of age, and that actively seeks to ensure that their business' reach is inclusive and diverse. An age-friendly business is a people-friendly business that is welcoming and comfortable for older adults, caregivers with children in strollers, expectant mothers and individuals with injuries, disabilities, or other limitations.

An age-friendly business takes into consideration people's diverse needs and sensibilities when it comes to the physical environment, communication, and attitude. An age-friendly business also understands the community in which it is placed, and seeks to make its amenities available to everyone, providing added value such as social activities, volunteering opportunities and support where possible.

Included below is a best practice checklist that will assist business owners and operators in assessing and improving age-friendly features of their business. It is suggested that businesses speak with their customers to get direct feedback through an age-friendly lens on ways to celebrate or improve business methods.

When completing the checklist, businesses should evaluate aspects of arrival, parking, entering the facility, conducting business including selecting and paying for a purchase, customer service and exiting the business. Each business is unique; the placement within a community will not be the same for each business, nor will what they may be able to offer a customer, but the key considerations are universal.

The checklist below will assist in asking the right questions on how interactions can be improved and provide inspiration to follow the path to becoming more age-friendly.





Age-Friendly Business Checklist



ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY

Available parking is well maintained and located nearby for easy access

- Parking areas are well lit
- Drop-off and pick-up areas are available, obstruction free, clearly marked, and conveniently located
- Accessible parking spaces are available close to the entrance
- Parking lot and sidewalks are promptly cleared of wet leaves, puddles, snow and are kept free of ice and other hazards
- Sidewalk area(s) are level and well-maintained, with curb cuts where needed
- Doors are easy to open and wide enough for use by someone using a wheelchair or walker
- Stairs are safe, with sturdy hand railings on both sides
- Doors are automatic with accessibility buttons, and remain open long enough to allow people to easily enter
- Flooring and entrance ways are non-slip
- Mats are level with the floor and are beveled to avoid creating a tripping hazard
- Service counters, aisles, change rooms and washrooms are accessible and seating is placed in waiting or line-up areas
- Multiple floor or stores are accessible by elevator, escalator, or ramp
- Individuals using a wheelchair or mobility device can easily navigate through the entrance, aisles and spaces inside
- Products are displayed at visible and reachable heights
- Ensure adequate lighting, especially at entrances, exits, and hallways
- In areas where customers sit or wait for longer time periods, the temperature is held at a comfortable level

Age-Friendly Business Checklist



COMMUNICATIONS

- Signage is prominently posted in large, easy to read format
- Information about the business, i.e. operating hours, is easy to find
- Print and spoken communication uses simple, familiar words in short, straight forward sentences
- Background music is absent or low in volume
- Marketing material is available in a variety of formats, (newspapers, newsletter, social media, bulletin boards), and options (braille, audio)
- Websites are easy to navigate with zoom and text resizing features
- Print materials are provided in different languages depending on what might be required in your neighbourhood
- A live representative answers the phone or the phone service is easy to navigate

CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Staff orientation includes training specific to serving older adults and those with special considerations (first aid, dementia friendly, psychological first aid)
- Staff are mindful and sensitive to needs (i.e. vision, mobility, reaching, seating) and avoid condescending behaviour (i.e. speaking too loudly, showing impatience)
- Personalized service (in-store help, home delivery, carry-out) is made available
- Staff are prepared to deal with medical incidents and emergencies or situations (falls, outbursts)
- Customer concerns are addressed promptly and courteously
- Special discounts or specials are considered and provided when appropriate
- Implement a regular “quiet hour” where music is turned off and lights are dimmed
- Consider how you can contribute to the community (i.e. available meeting space, fund-raising support, volunteer opportunities, connection to care homes or schools)



Resources



Accessibility Ontario
accessON.ca



Canadian Hearing Society
chs.ca



Accessible Training Modules
accessforward.ca



CNIB
cnib.ca/en?region=on



Age-Friendly Niagara Network
agefriendlyniagara.com



Crimestoppers
ontariocrimestoppers.ca



Alzheimer's Society - Niagara
alzheimer.ca/niagara/en



Downtown Bench BIA
downtownbenchbeamsville.com

Resources



Elder Abuse Ontario
eapon.ca



INCommunities - 211
incommunities.ca/en/



**Joint Accessibility
Advisory Committee**
[lincoln.ca/council-
administration/council-and-
committee-agendas-and-minutes/
advisory-boards-committees](http://lincoln.ca/council-administration/council-and-committee-agendas-and-minutes/advisory-boards-committees)



Niagara Benchlands
niagarabenchlands.ca



Ontario Age-Friendly
[ontario.ca/page/creating-
more-inclusive-ontario-age-
friendly-community-planning-
guide-municipalities-and-
community](http://ontario.ca/page/creating-more-inclusive-ontario-age-friendly-community-planning-guide-municipalities-and-community)



Ontarians with Disabilities Act
ontario.ca/laws/statute/01o32



**Town of Lincoln Chamber
of Commerce**
lincolnchamber.ca



**Town of Lincoln Age-Friendly
and Active Community
Advisory Committee**
[lincoln.ca/council-
administration/council-and-
committee-agendas-and-
minutes/advisory-boards-
committees](http://lincoln.ca/council-administration/council-and-committee-agendas-and-minutes/advisory-boards-committees)

Schedule for Document Review

Date: June 2023

Scheduled for review: Minimum every 2 years

a place to
GROW

a place to
PROSPER

a place to
BELONG

