

Elgin St. Thomas

AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLAN



This project received funding from the Government of Ontario

October 30, 2017

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Elgin St. Thomas Public Health Unit and its partners have developed an Age Friendly Community Plan funded from a Healthy Communities Grant from the Government of Ontario.

An Age-Friendly Community (AFC) is one where policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments support and enable older people to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in their communities.

Implementation will be closely linked to existing plans such as the Public Health's Strategic Plan, the City of St. Thomas' Strategic Plan and Official Plan, as well as documents developed by the St. Thomas Elgin Community Leaders Cabinet. Implementation should also build on the plans of other key Elgin and St. Thomas groups and organizations.

Approach

Work commenced in February 2017 and was complete in October 2017. Steps in carrying out the project were the following:

- Recruitment of an external consultant and establishment of a community-based Steering Committee to oversee the project,
- A review of relevant background information,
- A needs assessment questionnaire completed by 35 service providers from a broad cross-section of local organizations,
- A community survey completed by 200 respondents,
- Seven focus group sessions directly engaging 244 seniors,
- Phone interviews with 13 key informants including political officials, senior service providers and other community leaders,
- A half-day facilitated community stakeholder forum that was well attended by a dynamic mix of over 55 seniors and service providers, and
- An implementation planning session to identify specific actions, time frames and potential partners for moving the plan forward.

High levels of stakeholder engagement were achieved. The needs assessment and consultation process generated more than 600 interfaces with seniors, family members, service providers and community members accomplished through the various meetings, interviews, surveys, community forum and implementation planning session.

There was great consistency in the views expressed across the various groups leading to a high level of confidence in the data.

Needs identified through the consultation/data gathering initiatives were the following:

Transportation Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intercommunity transit • Volunteer, shuttle and pooled driving • Reduced costs • Shorter booking times • Expanded transit routes and hours of service • Sidewalk and “walkability” improvements • Bike and scooter lanes
Housing Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home maintenance supports • Appropriate seniors housing options • RGI (rent geared to income) units • Cost relief for taxes and utilities • Affordable retirement homes • Aging in place supports • More long-term care spaces • Consistent home care through adequate staff
Recreation Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation to venues • More seniors groups and clubs in rural areas • More recreation facilities • Cost relief/subsidies for events and facilities • More trails and paths
Health Care Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorter wait times for appointments • Cost relief for hearing, dental and vision care • Expanded clinic hours of operation • Mental health and dementia supports • Coordination between service providers • Transportation to specialists • Caregiver supports • Palliative and hospice care • System navigation

Goals and Objectives

Thirty goals emerged from the process addressing priorities related to transportation, housing, services and supports, community life and information and communication.

1. Housing

- 1.1 Establish and pursue affordable housing targets based on identified need within each municipality.
- 1.2 Development of new affordable housing following universal design standards.
- 1.3 Identify strategies to assist seniors to remain in their homes and age in place.
- 1.4 Explore innovative housing options such as HUB arrangements, cooperatives and progressive care models.
- 1.5 Increase the number of long-term care spaces in Elgin St. Thomas.
- 1.6 Pursue new bed subsidy for retirement homes
- 1.6 Advocate for mandated provincial regulations for retirement homes.

2. Transportation

- 2.1 Develop a multi-modal transportation system across Elgin County including buses, rail/train passenger connections, ride share arrangements and coordinated scheduling.
- 2.2 Minimize dependence on transportation through outreach, use of technology and telemedicine opportunities.
- 2.3 Improve existing public transit to provide flexible and accessible service with more availability.
- 2.4 Provide subsidies and cost relief to seniors using transportation services.
- 2.5 Ensure that city and county residents know about the transportation options available and how to use them.
- 2.6 Advocate for active transportation with political representatives, advocacy groups and seniors.
- 2.7 Develop a county-wide trail strategy with the leadership of the Healthy Communities Partnership to increase walkability and bikability.

3. Recreation

- 3.1 Expand access to existing recreational facilities for families and seniors tailored to ability and age.
- 3.2 Increase recreational activities and social outlets in rural areas.
- 3.3 Increase educational options, volunteer and employment opportunities for seniors.

4. Health Care

- 4.1 Increase access to primary care through clinics, mobile units, increased use of nurse practitioners and expanded use of technology.
- 4.2 Increase access to specialists.
- 4.3 Improve coordination of care and service navigation across providers.
- 4.4 Expand and enhance community supports to reduce long-term care admissions.
- 4.5 Expand mental health programs and dementia supports.
- 4.6 Expand hospice and palliative care.
- 4.7.1 Expand Services in long term care facilities.

5. Community Life

- 5.1 Design and build seniors HUBs with access to shopping, recreation, entertainment, services and information.
- 5.2 Improve accessibility to buildings and outdoor space throughout the county.
- 5.3 Increase the engagement of seniors in all aspects of community life.
- 5.4 Pursue intergenerational programming.
- 5.5 Address safety, security and elder abuse issues.
- 5.6 Increase overall awareness of services and supports.

Suggested strategies to achieve the goals are described in the body of the report.

Next Steps

Experience from other jurisdictions has shown that age friendly community plans require some form of a permanent entity in order to ensure successful ongoing implementation, monitoring, revision and evaluation of goals and strategies.

On reviewing the various options for a sustainability model it is recommended that responsibility for ongoing coordination, monitoring and updating of the AFC plan be overseen by a newly formed “Seniors Advisory Committee”.

The Elgin St. Thomas’ Age Friendly Community Plan will be a living document to serve as a blueprint for ongoing community relationship building and collaborative planning by the Public Health Unit and its partners, other levels of government, service agencies, businesses and the community at large.

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October 30th, 2017

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An Age-Friendly Community (AFC) is one where policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments are designed to support and enable older people to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in their communities.

Following receipt of a Healthy Communities Grant from the Province of Ontario, the Elgin St. Thomas Public Health Unit and its partners issued a request for proposals and selected a consulting firm to facilitate the development of a County and City wide Age Friendly Community Plan. Shercon Associates Inc. of Oakville was engaged and a work plan was approved on March 28, 2017. The project was overseen by a Steering Committee co led by the Public Health Unit and the City of St. Thomas with representation from major service provider organizations and community leaders. Steering Committee members are listed in Appendix A. A comprehensive needs assessment and consultation process was carried out throughout the spring with a draft report being submitted to the Steering Committee for review in mid-October, and the final report submitted on October 30, 2017.

This report outlines the project methodology, reports on the findings from the needs assessment and consultation process, outlines goals, objectives and strategies and recommends a model for implementation and ongoing sustainability.

Implementation will be closely linked to existing plans such as the Public Health's Strategic Plan, the City of St. Thomas' Strategic Plan and Official Plan, as well as documents developed by the St. Thomas Elgin Community Leaders Cabinet. Implementation should also build on the plans of other key Elgin and St. Thomas groups, tables, and organizations.

The Elgin St. Thomas Age Friendly Community Plan will be a living document to serve as a blueprint for ongoing community relationship building and collaborative planning by the Public Health Unit, other levels of government, service agencies, businesses and the community at large.

2.0 THE PLANNING PROCESS

2.1 Methodology

The project made extensive use of the Age-Friendly Community (AFC) checklists and assessment tools developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and closely referenced the guidelines for Age-Friendly Community Planning outlined in the 2013 Ontario Seniors Secretariat publication “Finding the Right Fit: Age-Friendly Community Planning”, and the “Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide” prepared by the Healthy Aging and Wellness Working Group of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Committee of Officials. It also drew on approaches employed in several master aging plans developed in the United States and adapted by the consultants in their earlier AFC work, in several Ontario municipalities.

Best practices in planning for the needs of older adults suggest that services should be targeted to seniors on the basis of their functional abilities rather than on arbitrary age groupings. Recommended clusters based on the consultants’ experiences with similar projects are the following:

- Well and fit seniors,
- Seniors requiring some assistance with activities of daily living, and
- Seniors requiring 24-hour support.

The focus of any age-friendly strategy should be on maintaining seniors in their present ability grouping and slowing down their transition to higher needs groups. The project methodology therefore involved identifying community needs and mapping them on a matrix crossing World Health Organization (WHO) dimensions against groupings of seniors with different needs and capabilities.

WHO Category	Well and Fit	Require some ADL assistance	Require 24 hour support
Transportation			
Housing			
Social participation			
Respect and social inclusion			
Civic participation and employment			
Communication and information			
Community support /health services			
Outdoor spaces and buildings			

The matrix also served as a useful guiding template during the goal setting and action planning stage of the project.

2.2 Information Review

At the outset of the project relevant background information was reviewed including World Health Organization literature about age-friendly communities, leading practices from other jurisdictions, provincial government planning and policy documents, municipal plans, the 211 and South West Healthline service listings and websites and literature of community groups and service provider organizations.

2.3 Community Survey

A questionnaire was designed to solicit information from members of the Elgin St. Thomas communities on their perceptions of the system of services and supports for seniors. The questionnaire was made available in hard copy form at numerous community locations, sent to seniors groups and organizations, handed out at focus groups and distributed on-line through the Public Health Unit and City's websites and e-mail distribution lists.

The survey followed the WHO categories and utilized some of the questionnaire items suggested in the Ontario Senior's Secretariat guidelines. Two hundred responses were received reflecting a good geographical cross-section of the Elgin St. Thomas population, particularly seniors and family members. The sample size obtained permitted some statistical generalizations and enabled some limited cross-group comparisons. The community questionnaire along with the detailed findings obtained appears as Appendix B.

2.4 Service Provider Survey

In order to gather detailed input from direct and indirect providers of services to seniors in the Elgin St. Thomas area, a service provider questionnaire was constructed and distributed on-line to the agencies and individuals identified through the Steering Committee, information review, and community resource inventory. The survey questions addressed perceptions of service effectiveness and gaps between demand and supply. The survey also focused on the WHO AFC dimensions. Thirty-five local service providers representing 20 different organizations across the area completed and returned the questionnaire.

The provider questionnaire along with the detailed findings obtained appears as Appendix C.

2.5 Seniors Focus Groups

Direct in-person contribution from seniors and their families was the centrepiece of the needs assessment and consultation process. Seven separate focus group sessions were scheduled to ensure involvement of the different population segments - well-fit (WF) seniors, seniors requiring some assistance with activities of daily living (ADL) and seniors requiring 24-hour supports (24 hr) and were hosted by different community groups and organizations.

Dates and locations of the community focus group sessions appear below:

Date	Location	Venue	Group	#
May 2	West Lorne	CHC Hub luncheon	WF/ADL	60
May 3	Aylmer 1	Terrace Lodge	24 hr	27
May 3	Dutton	Bobier Villa	24 hr	12
May 3	Straffordville	Bingo	WF/ADL	45
May 11	Aylmer 2	Menno Lodge	ADL	55
May 15	St. Thomas 1	Seniors Centre	WF	2
May 30	St. Thomas 2	Golden K Kiwanis	WF	43
Total Participants →				244

The facilitation approach at the sessions varied depending upon the group size and included a briefing on the project, likes/dislikes of existing services and supports, improvement suggestions, and future priorities. All the groups were lively, positive and generated good discussions that revealed high levels of consensus regarding seniors' needs. Notes were produced and a cumulative record of input was maintained.

2.6 Key Informant Interviews

Semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted by the consultants with a range of key informants including political officials, county/city staff, senior service providers and other community leaders. The respondents are listed in Appendix A. Starting with a briefing on the project, the questions covered high level perceptions of the current system of services and supports for seniors in Elgin St Thomas, key trends, events and emerging issues, and comments and advice regarding the planning process underway. Thirteen formal interviews were carried out by the consultant as well as numerous informal discussions with key players over the course of the project.

Points raised by the key informants included:

Transportation:

- Transportation is an issue across the county
- Demands for walking trails, cycling, outdoor activities, authentic experiences such as bird watching, fishing, etc.
- Need to consider alternatives i.e. Uber, ride share/discounted transportation
- Affordable transportation study is currently underway
- City uses “Complete Streets” model to find a better balance for cars, bikes and pedestrians

Health Care

- Excellent hospital
- Doctor shortages – people go to ER
- Home supports – CCAC good, but gap between hospital and home filled by family members

Recreation

- Recreational groups, clubs are scarce, resources are underutilized—need marketing

Housing

- New housing being developed, retirement residence, school repurposed, Seasons Retirement (122 suites), developers interested in area
- City launching city block to become a “family campus” for all ages, (there may be some opportunity for AFC plan to influence)
- Rising value of real estate, supply and demand tough on seniors

Community

- We don’t know what we don’t know until faced with a situation--people don’t know where to go
- Seniors not always on Council’s radar – focus on youth and families
- Need to look at how to integrate seniors with community—leverage resources from other groups so all feel welcome and included
- Cyber abuse, elder abuse, threats, seniors may not be connected to the news to know about them
- Isolation is a issue
- St. Thomas has seniors’ centres but not in rural areas—no place for them to meet, advocate etc.

2.7 Community Stakeholder Forum

A half-day facilitated community stakeholder forum was held at the Elgin St. Thomas Public Health Unit on Monday, June 5, 2017. It was attended by members of the Steering Committee, municipal officials, service providers and a solid contingent of seniors. Activities and deliberations included the following:

- Presentation of the information from the surveys, interviews and focus groups,
- An exercise to assemble a “SWOT” analysis identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to services and supports for Elgin St. Thomas seniors,
- Visioning and brainstorming exercises to identify potential initiatives,
- Breakout work, followed by plenary discussion to develop broad strategic goals related to identified needs areas in the WHO age-friendly categories, and
- A session debrief and written evaluation.

The community forum was attended by about 55 participants and the dynamic mix of seniors, service providers and municipal officials resulted in high quality input and advice stemming from the day. Participant feedback about the session was positive.

2.8 Discussion Paper

A discussion paper was prepared to update citizens and service providers about the project and solicit responses to the emerging goals and objectives, resulting from the needs assessment and community forum. The paper was widely distributed on-line and in hard copy format over the summer. Responses were received from 25 seniors, family members and providers. Draft goals and objectives were then revised to reflect input from the discussion paper.

2.9 Implementation Planning Workshop

On the afternoon of September 21, twenty-one service providers, seniors, and municipal representatives, participated in a three-hour implementation planning workshop. Participants reviewed the output from the community forum, surveys, and discussion paper responses, refined the emerging goals and identified specific actions, time frames and potential partners for moving the plan forward. A draft implementation template reflecting the work at the session was used to finalize the plan that was submitted to the Steering Committee for review.

2.10 Stakeholder Engagement

The table below identifies the stakeholder interfaces (seniors, officials, and providers) achieved through the needs assessment and planning process. Identified needs were highly consistent across the groups.

Steering Committee	10
Key Informant Interviews	13
Community Survey	200
Provider Survey	35
Focus Groups	244
Community Forum	55
Discussion Paper	25
Implementation Planning Workshop	21
Total Stakeholder Interfaces:	603

There were 603 individual stakeholder interfaces during the needs assessment process, indicating the highly consultative nature of the process to develop Elgin St. Thomas Age Friendly Community Plan.

3.0 NEEDS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

3.1 System Overview

Members of the Steering Committee and attendees at the June community forum and other participants in the AFC planning process identified the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats pertaining to the overall system of services and supports for seniors in Elgin St. Thomas:

Strengths

- Informal community supports
- Meals on Wheels
- VON free SMART exercises
- Voyageur Transportation – free
- Service group assistance
- Visibility of baby boomers
- VON accessible van
- Seniors Picnic in the Park
- Accessible parks
- Walking paths and increased connectivity

... Cont'd

SWOT ANALYSIS (Cont'd)

Community partnerships
 Seniors committed to change
 More affordable housing compared to large centres
 Recreational opportunities
 Close to large healthcare facilities
 Excellent LTC and community supports
 Accessibility standards
 Rural quality of life
 Community cohesion
 Increased appetite for collaboration across sectors
 "Powers that be" are willing to listen
 Sense of commitment to issues
 Development of plan coming out of community voices
 Community growing and adding ideas/money
 Citizens for Active Transportation – advocacy group
 Area is improving, not declining
 Private investments

Weaknesses

Lack of funding
 Affordable housekeeping and repairs
 Organizational mandates – municipal structure
 Lack of non-ER services
 After hours health services
 Lack of family support
 Affordable recreation opportunities
 Need for more public transportation
 Lack of financial supports
 Lack of volunteers
 Rural accessible transportation
 Other competing age categories
 Accessible and affordable housing
 Communication to seniors and families
 Lack of information
 Accessible businesses
 Home upkeep
 Internet service in rural areas
 Need for wider sidewalks
 Employment opportunities
 Private homes not included in broader planning
 Total number of beds and lack of subsidized beds available in Elgin
 Inconsistent service information
 Health care navigation
 Accessibility to entrances in public buildings and homes

... *Cont'd*

SWOT ANALYSIS (Cont'd)

Opportunities

Housing subsidy – portable housing benefit
 Diverse housing – mixed services available
 Trail strategies and bike lanes
 Multi-use trails in neighbourhoods
 Community HUB – with overnight respite care
 Better collaboration between municipalities and private sector (transportation and housing sector)
 Federal funding for seniors (high speed internet transportation)
 Tax relief for seniors
 Mixed use subsidies
 Incentives for PSWs to come to rural areas
GROWING THE SENIORS MOVEMENT
 Promotion of volunteerism for seniors and youth
 Better education and resources
 Alzheimer's education – continue umbrella program
 Senior Advocates
 Sub region Integration Table in Elgin via Southwest LHIN
 Intergenerational support/contact
 Stopgap
 Senior incentives
 Tax credits
 Community recognition
 Grants – e.g. New Horizon

Threats

Increased numbers of individuals with dementia
 Increased numbers of seniors
 Reduced number of PSWs and therapists (cutbacks)
 Increased costs and reduced funding available
 Lack of affordable/appropriate housing
 Lack of physicians and geriatric specialists
 Wait list for LTC
 Population decline in some geographic areas
 Unresponsiveness to community concerns
 Isolation
 Poverty
 Decline in volunteerism (personal risk/liability issues)
 Growing mental health issues with lack of supports
 Not changing/updating policies
 Lack of cross-sector engagement
 Lack of health funding supports to keep people at home
 Caregiver pressure and supports

Any initiatives undertaken as part of the Elgin St. Thomas Age Friendly Community Plan should build on strengths, rectify weaknesses, capitalize on opportunities and address threats.

3.2 Target Service Groups

The study focused on target groups of seniors based on their abilities rather than ages. This approach was employed as it offers a meaningful way of focusing on needs based upon personal circumstances rather than arbitrary age distinctions. The broad characteristics of the three different groups are described below:

Well/Fit Seniors (WF)

These individuals generally are in good health and able to live independently without assistance. The goal of services for this population is to help them maintain their health and independence for as long as possible. Previous work carried out by the consultants in other Ontario communities, and confirmed in discussions with the Steering Committee produced the following profile:

- Wide age range from 50 to 80+ (typical is late 60's)
- Many are retired, some working beyond typical retirement age
- Living independently in own homes – although affordable and appropriate future housing is often an issue
- Closely oriented to their local community
- Physically mobile and most drive
- Varying family situations
- Increasing in number and more demanding of services
- May have some early stage health issues
- Becoming more “tech-savvy” and beginning to use social media

Minimal specialized supports are required for this group although it will be important to watch for risk factors such as isolation, health issues and depression which could jeopardize their wellness.

Seniors Requiring Some Assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADL)

This population requires some assistance with activities of daily living in order to allow them to stay in their own homes. In many cases the support comes from family members. This group can be profiled as follows:

- Mid and lower income, with increasing numbers of low income
- Some have financial concerns and challenges
- Predominantly female

- Families living elsewhere
- Acute and chronic disease and illness including diabetes, stroke, MS, arthritis, Parkinson's, heart and renal disease
- Increasing dementia and mental illness issues
- Some are driving, others have friends/caregivers who drive
- Some are invisible and inaccessible especially in outlying and rural areas
- Most have local family doctors – who are gradually retiring
- Increasing expectations for services and supports

The need for services that support caregivers and individuals to stay in their own homes is very evident with this group.

Seniors Requiring 24 hour Support (24 hr)

The majority of these individuals reside in long-term care or retirement homes. The consultants profiled this group as follows:

- Age range 50 to 85+, with the majority in older age groups
- Entering long-term care older and more frail
- About two-thirds are female
- Increasing acuity and complexity of needs with higher care requirements
- Increasing behavioural challenges related to dementia

Quality of care is a priority issue for this segment of the older population.

The next six sections outline seniors' needs identified through the surveys, focus groups, interviews, meetings and review of existing data. There was strong convergence of findings across the various research methods suggesting good levels of data validity.

3.3 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

The 2007 World Health Organization (WHO) guide on age-friendly cities states that the outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the independence and quality of life of older people and their ability to “age in place”.

Findings from the community survey related to outdoor spaces and buildings appear below:

Green = High rating 3.0+ Red= Low rating < 2.0 Yellow = Midrange	N=200 Average	(4) Excellent	(3) Good	(2) Fair	(1) Poor
	#	%	%	%	%
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings – Consider sidewalks, trails, bike and scooter lanes, building accessibility, etc. Comparatives range from 2.5 to 2.9	2.7	22	44	24	10

1. Average is based on a four-point scale where 4=excellent; 3=good; 2=fair; 1=poor
2. Comparatives drawn from AFC needs assessments of five other Ontario communities conducted by the consultants in 2015 and 2016.

The survey ratings are mid-range with the worst rating for not enough lanes for bicycles and scooters (2.3), and the highest rating for public areas that are clean and pleasant (3.3).

Focus group participants did not indicate that this WHO category “Outdoor Spaces and Buildings” was a priority for them at this time. Some “walkability” issues were flagged i.e. benches, and the need for more lanes and paved road shoulders for bicycles and scooters was identified. These issues are reflected in the transportation section. This category may re-surface in the future as other category needs and issues are resolved.

3.4 Transportation

The 2007 WHO guide on age-friendly communities identifies transportation as a key factor influencing active aging. Being able to move about the community determines social and civic participation as well as access to services. Community survey findings related to transportation appear below.

Green = High rating 3.0+ Red= Low rating < 2.0 Yellow = Midrange	N=200 Average	(4) Excellent	(3) Good	(2) Fair	(1) Poor
	#	%	%	%	%
Transportation – Consider roads, public transit, special transit, roads, taxis, etc. Comparatives range from 2.2 to 2.9	2.3	15	34	23	28

1. Average is based on a four-point scale where 4=excellent; 3=good; 2=fair; 1=poor
2. Comparatives drawn from AFC needs assessments of five other Ontario communities conducted by the consultants in 2015 and 2016.

Transportation ratings are low with over half of the respondents giving a negative rating (fair or poor), only slightly higher than other rural/urban mix communities studied by the consultants. Half (51%) of the survey respondents indicated that transportation and the geographic location of services was a concern for seniors.

Elgin St. Thomas Public Health recently published a study “Addressing Affordable Access to Transportation in Elgin St Thomas” in May 2017, and was very involved in this AFC planning process. Their work in scoping best practices throughout the province, inventorying existing transportation resources in the city and county, and developing an action plan, will greatly advance the AFC Committee’s work on the goals identified in this domain.

<i>N=35 service providers</i>		<i>Seniors Group Served:</i>		
<i>Category</i>	<i>Service/Support</i>	<i>Well/Fit Seniors</i>	<i>Some ADL Assistance</i>	<i>24 hour support</i>
Transportation <i>6 gaps >12</i>	Public transit	7	17	14
	Special transit	4	18	17
	Taxi services	2	9	8
	Volunteer, shuttle and pooled driving	10	17	15
	Driver supports – signage, parking, etc.	2	5	2
	Active transportation: Pedestrian and cycling friendly environment	3	0	0

Shaded items were identified as a gap by more than 12 (one-third) service provider respondents.

Focus group participants referred to the importance of being able to drive, especially in rural areas, and the need for inter-community transportation connectivity, specifically when one spouse is in long term care, and where specialist services are required i.e. in London.

Expanded transportation options rated very high on the seniors’ “wish lists” created at each focus group session, and initiatives “voted” on at the community forum.

3.5 Housing

The 2007 WHO AFC guide cites appropriate housing as an important determinant of the independence and quality of life of older people.

Housing is a major concern in Elgin St. Thomas. The two major needs were identified as:

- the number of subsidized, accessible rental units (89%), and
- the shortage of long term beds in the community (86%).

Green = High rating 3.0+ Red= Low rating < 2.0 Yellow = Midrange	N=200 Average	(4) Excellent	(3) Good	(2) Fair	(1) Poor
	#	%	%	%	%
Housing – Consider housing supply, home maintenance, affordability, in-home supports, retirement homes, long-term care homes, etc Comparatives range from 1.5 to 2.3	2.0	8	21	35	38

1. Average is based on a four-point scale where 4=excellent; 3=good; 2=fair; 1=poor
2. Comparatives drawn from AFC needs assessments of five other Ontario communities conducted by the consultants in 2015 and 2016.

Personal finances are a determinant of housing satisfaction. One informant said

“Median income (in Elgin St. Thomas) is below Ontario’s, not a wealthy place, and seniors are challenged, poverty compounds other issues”.

Findings from the service provider survey are reported below and parallel the community survey data, with providers identifying major gaps in long-term care beds, affordable housing options including rent geared to income accommodation, in-home supports, and home maintenance and renovation supports.

N=35 service providers		Seniors Group Served:		
Category	Service/Support	Well/Fit Seniors	Some ADL Assistance	24 hour support
Housing 8 gaps >12	Home maintenance and renovation supports	5	13	7
	Affordable and accessible housing options	10	18	11
	Rent geared to income accommodation	10	16	9
	In-home supports – meals, housekeeping, etc.	4	15	9
	Personal support workers	3	14	15
	Retirement homes	3	9	5
	Long-term care beds	1	11	17

Shaded items were identified as a gap by more than 12 (one-third) service provider respondents.

Affordable housing was the number one item on the wish list at the Focus Groups. Community Forum participants asked for affordable housing targets to be set for each municipality, and incentives for developers to encourage building affordable housing complying with Universal Design standards.

3.6 Social and Recreational Opportunities

In describing the AFC “Social Participation” dimension the 2007 WHO guide points out the importance of seniors participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community.

Green = High rating 3.0+ Red = Low rating < 2.0 Yellow = Midrange	N=200 Average	(4) Excellent	(3) Good	(2) Fair	(1) Poor
	#	%	%	%	%
Social and Recreational Opportunities – Consider clubs, recreation facilities, activities and events, education, volunteer opportunities, employment opportunities, etc. Comparatives range from 2.6 to 2.9	2.6	16	48	25	11

1. Average is based on a four-point scale where 4=excellent; 3=good; 2=fair; 1=poor
2. Comparatives drawn from AFC needs assessments of five other Ontario communities conducted by the consultants in 2015 and 2016.

All the needs in this category received mid range ratings except for “There is a sufficient amount of information about social and recreational opportunities in Elgin St Thomas” which received a 2.4 rating (lowest). Communication is significant for all categories as the means for sharing information varies with the ages of the population and their comfort with and availability of computers, finances, culture and isolation.

As one key informant stated “We don’t know what we don’t know until faced with a situation”.

Service provider survey respondents did not identify any major gaps in social and recreational opportunities, although recreation centres, clubs and social groups were centred out as needs areas for seniors requiring some assistance with daily living. Employment and educational opportunities were also seen as important for the ADL group as well as for well/fit seniors.

<i>N=35 service providers</i>		<i>Seniors Group Served:</i>		
<i>Category</i>	<i>Service/Support</i>	<i>Well/Fit Seniors</i>	<i>Some ADL Assistance</i>	<i>24 hour support</i>
Social and Recreational <i>0 gaps >20</i>	Recreation centres	2	7	7
	Clubs and social groups	2	8	6
	Faith based organizations	0	0	2
	Arts and culture organizations	0	2	3
	Library resources	1	5	2
	Educational opportunities for seniors	3	6	5
	Volunteer opportunities for seniors	3	5	3
	Employment opportunities for seniors	6	6	4
	Parks and outdoor space	1	2	1

Focus group participants raised some affordability, accessibility and transportation issues related to attending programs and events and many participants indicated a need for more information about available recreational opportunities.

3.7 Health Care

The 2007 WHO AFC guide cites health and support services as an important dimension vital to maintaining independence in the community. Good mental and physical health is deemed essential to quality of life and a key determinant of a senior's ability to socialize and engage in social activities.

Community survey findings related to health care appear below and the majority ratings for all areas are good to fair.

Green = High rating 3.0+ Red = Low rating < 2.0 Yellow = Midrange	<i>N=200</i>	<i>(4)</i>	<i>(3)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(1)</i>
	<i>Average</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>
	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Health Services – Consider medical services, therapies, health care providers, coordination of services, dental, etc. Comparatives range from 2.4 to 3.1	2.6	18	38	29	15

- 1 Average is based on a four-point scale where 4=excellent; 3=good; 2=fair; 1=poor
- 2 Comparatives drawn from AFC needs assessments of five other Ontario communities conducted by the consultants in 2015 and 2016.

The community survey also revealed health service issues with:

- transportation (86% fair/poor),
- information availability (90% fair/poor), and
- Wait times were noted as “a large concern” by 62% of the community survey respondents.

Several community members commented on service coordination with one stating;

“more continuity (is needed) between service providers. One service doesn’t know what the other is providing.”

Service provider survey respondents, reported below, identified gaps across most categories and service groups, particularly with primary care, medical specialists, mental health supports, caregiver supports and system navigation. End-of-life care was also identified as a gap area by many service providers.

<i>N=35 service providers</i>		<i>Seniors Group Served:</i>		
<i>Category</i>	<i>Service/Support</i>	<i>Well/Fit Seniors</i>	<i>Some ADL Assistance</i>	<i>24 hour support</i>
Health Care <i>13 gaps >12</i>	Health education and promotion	2	5	4
	Primary care – family physicians, clinics	12	14	9
	Medical specialists	4	7	5
	Therapies – Physio, OT, etc.	1	5	4
	Pharmacy	0	1	1
	Dental, vision and hearing	1	2	4
	Foot care	3	9	6
	Dementia care	3	13	12
	Palliative care/hospice	5	11	15
	Mental health supports	15	20	19
	Addictions services	4	3	4
	Supports for caregivers – respite, training, etc.	9	15	14
	System navigation-connecting people to the right services	13	16	14

Shaded items were identified as a gap by more than 12 service provider respondents

3.8 Other Community Needs

The 2007 WHO AFC guide states that “Respect and Social Inclusion”, the general feeling of respect and recognizing the role that older adults play in society is a critical factor for establishing an age-friendly community. The item on the community survey related to this dimension appears below.

Green = High rating 3.0+ Red= Low rating < 2.0 Yellow = Midrange	N=200 Average	(4) Excellent	(3) Good	(2) Fair	(1) Poor
	#	%	%	%	%
Community Life – Consider respect for seniors, involvement in decision making, volunteer opportunities, employment opportunities, etc. <i>Comparatives not available</i>	2.8	24	44	24	8

- 1 Average is based on a four-point scale where 4=excellent; 3=good; 2=fair; 1=poor
- 2 Comparatives drawn from AFC needs assessments of five other Ontario communities conducted by the consultants in 2015 and 2016.

The availability of information about services and supports was a persistent theme across all the AFC categories. Forty-five percent of respondents felt “somewhat informed” and 39% felt “not too informed”.

Traditional forms of media (newspapers and flyers/brochures 73%, posters 41%, radio 34%) were vastly preferred over websites (44%) and social media (18%) as a way of finding out about information. As the various cohorts age there will be an increasing preference for electronic communication.

While Elgin St. Thomas faces some challenges in addressing seniors’ needs, there is evidence that there has been some progress in achieving the eight WHO dimensions for age-friendly communities. Key points from the needs assessment appear below.

WHO Dimension	Existing Strengths	Improvement Areas
1. <u>Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:</u>	Green space	Accessibility/walkability, Bike/scooter lanes

Con’t...

WHO Dimension	Existing Strengths	Improvement Areas
2. <u>Transportation:</u>	Existing public transit Parallel Transit Some shuttle and volunteer options Transportation Study	More transportation options, within and among municipalities Expanded special transit Out of town transit
3. <u>Housing:</u>	Existing housing stock, retirement homes and LTC beds	Affordable and accessible housing Expanded LTC beds Home maintenance supports
4. <u>Social Participation:</u>	“Strength in numbers” a stronger voice for seniors to lobby Churches Service Clubs Recreation centre	Educational options Intergenerational programs Rural programming
5. <u>Respect and Social Inclusion:</u>	Welcoming community accommodating seniors	Expand seniors’ profile and awareness
6. <u>Civic Participation and Employment:</u>	Overall support and commitment to seniors’ issues	Employment opportunities Talent Bank Engage seniors Financial supports
7. <u>Communication and Information:</u>	Community partnerships and collaboration Libraries	Service coordination Knowledge and awareness of existing services Seniors HUB- one stop shopping
8. <u>Community and Health Services:</u>	Rural quality of life Proximity to large and specialized services Community Health Centre	Wait times for health care Number of doctors Service navigation and coordination Mental health supports Dementia care Geriatric services Expanded in-home care

The next section describes the Age Friendly Community Plan developed to address the findings from the needs analysis and move Elgin St Thomas closer the WHO notion of an age-friendly community.

4.0 MOVING FORWARD

4.1 Guiding Principles

The Steering Committee participated in an exercise at its inaugural meeting on February 24, 2017 to identify broad principles to govern the development and implementation of the AFC plan. These were compared and found to be consistent with the guiding principles suggested on the University of Waterloo AFC website, a source recommended in the Ontario Seniors Secretariat AFC guidelines.

The three guiding principles for the Elgin St. Thomas Age Friendly Community Plan are therefore the following:

1. Inclusion,
2. Collaboration, and
3. Impact and Sustainability

These principles governed the development of the St. Thomas Age Friendly Community Plan and will guide its ongoing implementation.

4.2 Vision

A vision statement describes the "preferred future state" of a community and its stakeholders. The Steering Committee and community forum participants engaged in several visioning exercises to develop elements of a future vision for seniors in Elgin St. Thomas.

Elgin St Thomas is a community that:

Provides affordable and accessible services that meet the needs of all its seniors, and values their leadership and engagement in community life. This alliance ensures our seniors' health and well being to allow them to age in place.

Achievement of the vision will position Elgin St Thomas as a leading age-friendly community in the province.

4.3 Goals

Thirty goals emerged from the planning process addressing priorities related to transportation, housing, services and supports, community life and information and communication. The goals appear below.

ELGIN ST.THOMAS AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLAN GOALS

Thirty goals emerged from the process addressing priorities related to transportation, housing, services and supports, community life and information and communication.

1. Housing

- 1.1 Establish and pursue affordable housing targets based on identified need within each municipality.
- 1.2 Development of new affordable housing following universal design standards.
- 1.3 Identify strategies to assist seniors to remain in their homes and age in place.
- 1.4 Explore innovative housing options such as HUB arrangements, cooperatives and progressive care models.
- 1.5 Increase the number of long-term care spaces in Elgin St. Thomas.
- 1.6 Pursue new bed subsidy for retirement homes.
- 1.7 Advocate for mandated provincial regulations for retirement homes.

2. Transportation

- 2.1 Develop a multi-modal transportation system across Elgin County including buses, rail/train passenger connections, ride share arrangements and coordinated scheduling.
- 2.2 Minimize dependence on transportation through outreach, use of technology and telemedicine opportunities.
- 2.3 Improve existing public transit to provide flexible and accessible service with more availability.
- 2.4 Provide subsidies and cost relief to seniors using transportation services.
- 2.5 Ensure that city and county residents know about the transportation options available and how to use them.

2.6 Advocate for active transportation with political representatives, advocacy groups and seniors.

2.7 Develop a county-wide trail strategy with the leadership of the Healthy Communities Partnership to increase walkability and bikability.

3. Recreation

3.1 Expand access to existing recreational facilities for families and seniors tailored to ability and age.

3.2 Increase recreational activities and social outlets in rural areas.

3.3 Increase educational options, volunteer and employment opportunities for seniors.

4. Health Care

4.1 Increase access to primary care through clinics, mobile units, increased use of nurse practitioners and expanded use of technology.

4.2 Increase access to specialists.

4.3 Improve coordination of care and service navigation across providers.

4.4 Expand and enhance community supports to reduce long-term care admissions.

4.5 Expand mental health programs and dementia supports.

4.6 Expand hospice and palliative care.

4.7 Expand services in long term care facilities

5. Community Life

5.1 Design and build seniors HUBs with access to shopping, recreation, entertainment, services and information.

5.2 Improve accessibility to buildings and outdoor space throughout the county.

5.3 Increase the engagement of seniors in all aspects of community life.

5.4 Pursue intergenerational programming.

5.5 Address safety, security and elder abuse issues.

5.6 Increase overall awareness of services and supports.

4.4 Linkages to Other District Plans

Implementation will be closely linked to existing plans such as the Public Health's Strategic Plan, the City of St. Thomas' Strategic Plan and Official Plan, the Transportation Report, as well as documents developed by the St. Thomas Elgin Community Leaders Cabinet. Implementation should also build on the plans of other key Elgin and St. Thomas groups and organizations.

IMPLEMENTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.8 Implementation Template

This section describes the strategies, accountabilities and time frames necessary for achieving the goals of the Age Friendly Community Plan. The template is based on work completed by participants at the implementation planning workshop held on September 21, 2017 and further discussion with the Steering Committee.

It is presented as a preliminary draft and will need to be expanded and refined as AFC implementation proceeds.

1. HOUSING

1.1 Establish and pursue affordable housing targets based on identified need within each municipality.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
1.1.1 Identify existing numbers of units and target numbers needed in the future in each municipality, through the Affordable Housing Strategy.	City of St Thomas, County of Elgin	spring 2018
1.1.2 Advocate for funds to meet the identified targets in the Affordable Housing Strategy.	City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, provincial and federal governments	spring 2018 ongoing

1.2 Development of new affordable housing following universal design standards.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
1.2.1 Create municipal incentives to encourage the development of new affordable housing following universal design standards.	City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, Home Builders Assoc, provincial government, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. (CMHC)	spring 2018 ongoing

1.3 Identify strategies to assist seniors to remain in their homes and age in place.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
1.3.1 Incent housing developers to exceed minimum building code requirements for barrier free units in new apartment buildings	City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, lower tier municipalities, Home Builders Assoc.	spring 2018
1.3.2 Expand the network of services and supports to keep seniors in their homes longer including home maintenance and safety, housekeeping, shopping, transportation to appointments and socialization.	City of St. Thomas, seniors' groups and organizations, service providers, emergency services, church groups, service clubs, local contractors, March of Dimes, SWLHIN grants for home maintenance, VON programs	2018-2019
1.3.3 Seek grants and funding to allow seniors to stay in their homes.	City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, provincial government	2018 and as funding becomes available
1.3.4 Identify and offer grants for renovations to make homes senior friendly.	City of St. Thomas, provincial government, service clubs	2018 and as funding becomes available
1.3.5 Provide information on seniors' property tax deferrals, subsidies and other cost relief initiatives (see 5.3.7)	City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, SouthWesthealthline.ca	2018 ongoing

1.4 Explore innovative housing options such as HUB arrangements, cooperatives and progressive care models.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
1.4.1 Explore options for home sharing, including new home construction models, include in Affordable Housing Strategy.	City of St Thomas, Homebuilders Builders Assoc., CMHC, CARP, Municipalities thru Planning Depts., Homebuilders Halton Home Share Toolkit (model)	Spring 2018 ongoing

1.4.2	Review alternative/creative housing designs and ensure all seniors housing fosters aging in place with supports provided along the aging continuum.	City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, SWLHIN, CARP, Home Builders Assoc., CMHC, seniors support agencies and organizations	spring 2018 ongoing
1.4.3	Create a housing registry for shared space for seniors.	City of St. Thomas, City of Waterloo (model)	2019 and as shared housing becomes available

1.5 Increase the number of long-term care spaces in Elgin St. Thomas.

	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
1.5.1	Advocate for increased long term care beds to address projected increase in Elgin St. Thomas senior's population.	City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, SWLHIN, MOHLTC, LTC providers, MPP	2018 ongoing

1.6 New bed subsidy for retirement homes

	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
1.6.1	Advocate for subsidies for people in retirement homes in financial need.	City of St. Thomas, SWLHIN, MOHLTC, retirement Home providers	2018 ongoing

2. **Transportation**

2.1 Develop a multi-modal transportation system across Elgin County including buses, rail/train passenger connections, ride share arrangements and coordinated scheduling.

	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
2.1.1	Appoint a liaison person from the AFC committee to the Transportation Working Group to work on this collective effort, with an AFC perspective.	Transportation Working Group, City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, taxi companies, volunteer drivers, service clubs, school boards, Chamber of Commerce, West Elgin CHC, VON, Mennonite Resource Centre, Cancer Society, CMHA, SouthWesthealthline.ca	2017-2019

2.1.2	Assist the Transportation Working Group in the development of a ridership survey re: times, stops, accessibility, etc.	Transportation Working Group, community transportation providers (public, private, volunteer), City of St Thomas, County of Elgin	2018
2.1.3	Engage service users, including seniors, in transportation planning.	Transportation Working Group, City of St Thomas, service clubs, seniors' centres	2017 ongoing
2.1.4	Coordinate and expand volunteer and pooled driving options.	Transportation Working Group, city/county reps., taxi companies, organizations with volunteer drivers, service clubs, school boards, retirement homes, church groups	2018-2019
2.1.5	Expand volunteer, shuttle and pooled driving arrangements.	Transportation Working Group, city/ county reps., taxi companies, organizations with volunteer drivers, service clubs, school boards, retirement homes, church groups	2018-2019

2.2 Minimize dependence on transportation through outreach, use of technology and telemedicine opportunities.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
2.2.1 see 4.1		
2.2.2 Promote service coordination among providers to reduce the number of medical visits.	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, SWLHIN, Health Links	2018-2019

2.3 Improve existing public transit to provide flexible and accessible service with more availability.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
See 2.1.1	With the exception of the County of Elgin	

2.4 Provide subsidies and cost relief to seniors using transportation services.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
2.4.1 Explore cost reduction strategies for seniors using taxi services.	Transportation Working Group, taxi companies, City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin	2018

2.5 Ensure that city and county residents know about the transportation options available and how to use them.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
2.5.1 Develop a public awareness and marketing campaign about what options are available in the city and county. See 2.1.3 and 5.3	Transportation Working Group, Organizations with volunteer drivers, service clubs, seniors' centres, local media, Chamber of Commerce, 211, SouthWesthealthline.ca	2018 ongoing

2.6 Advocate for active transportation with political representatives, advocacy groups and seniors.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
2.6.1 Provide clear policy support for active transportation in the City and County Official Plans.	Transportation Working Group, City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, Health Communities Partnership	2017 ongoing

3. Recreation

3.1 Expand access to existing recreational facilities for families and seniors tailored to ability and age.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
3.1.1 Advocate for subsidies and "free trials" for all seniors, to increase awareness and participation.	YMCA, recreations centres, private health and fitness clubs, VON, Alzheimer's Society, community support services	2018 ongoing
3.1.2 Explore new indoor activities i.e. Elgin Mall indoor walking, Timken Centre-indoor track.	Healthy Communities Partnership, City of St. Thomas, VON, Alzheimer's Society, Chamber of Commerce	2018
3.1.3 Identify community champion(s) who is/are well and able to promote activities.	Healthy Communities Partnership, YMCA, VON, Alzheimer's Society, local seniors' groups	2018
3.1.4 Encourage active living thru promotions such as "Fit bit" giveaways, free pedometers etc.	Chamber of Commerce / businesses, Public Health Unit, YMCA, community support services	2018
3.1.5 Engage the Alzheimer's Society to assist in engaging seniors with dementia.	Alzheimer's Society	2017
3.1.6 Request provincial funding for Seniors Active Living Centre.	City of St Thomas, provincial government, Public Health Unit	2019

3.2 Increase recreational activities and social outlets in rural areas.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
3.2.1 Establish working group to inventory existing recreational groups and activities in the county, identifying areas that are underserved.	County of Elgin and municipalities, Healthy Communities Partnership, Mennonite Resource Centre, thehealthline.ca Information Network	2018
3.2.2 Working group to partner with existing groups offering recreational activities to expand to underserved areas. Where none exist, work with municipality, schools, local churches and services clubs to meet the need. See 3.1	County of Elgin and lower tier municipalities, Healthy Communities Partnership, Public Health Unit, Mennonite Resource Centre, thehealthline.ca Information Network	2018-2019
3.2.3 Develop comprehensive communication plan and transportation plan to invite seniors to these activities. Special outreach to isolated and hard to reach seniors. See 5.3	Rural service providers, local media, De Brigj, Healthy Communities Partnership, service clubs, seniors' centres, local Chambers of Commerce, Public Health Unit, Mennonite Resource Centre, thehealthline.ca Information Network	2018-2019

3.3 Increase educational options, volunteer and employment opportunities for seniors.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
3.3.1 Approach school board, libraries and Fanshawe College to offer courses / programs geared to the needs of area seniors.	Fanshawe College, libraries, school boards	2018
3.3.2 Approach associations of retired persons to open their education workshops to general public i.e. planning for retirement, downsizing etc.	Retired Teachers Assoc., OMERS, CARP	2018
3.3.3 Recruit, train and deploy volunteers to help with friendly visiting, grocery delivery, respite, light home maintenance and other services for seniors.	Service clubs, churches, Fire Dept, EMS, Victims Services, Alzheimer's Society, service clubs, retired persons associations, service providers	2018 ongoing

3.3.4 Establish a senior's talent bank.	Library	2018 ongoing
3.3.5 Pursue economic development opportunities and seek grant opportunities for seniors' employment.	City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, provincial government	2018 ongoing
3.3.6 Offer seniors employment skills training/upgrading business consultation/mentoring and start up help.	City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, Fanshawe College, Chamber of Commerce, Small Business centres, YMCA Employment Services	2018 ongoing
3.3.7 Promote employing seniors.	City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, Chambers of Commerce	*2017 ongoing

* designated for early action as a "quick win"

3.4 Develop a county-wide trail strategy with the leadership of the Healthy Communities Partnership to increase walkability and bikability.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
3.4.1 Continue to pursue County-wide Trails Strategy.	Healthy Communities Partnership, County of Elgin	2017 ongoing
3.4.2 Establish leaders for walking groups to use new trails.	Healthy Communities Partnership, County of Elgin	Dependant on Trails Strategy

4. Health Care

4.1 Increase access to primary care through clinics, mobile units, increased use of nurse practitioners and expanded use of technology.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
4.1.1 Encourage primary physicians to use open access scheduling.	Dr. Kellie Scott, Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, SWLHIN	2018
4.1.2 Increase number of primary care providers and gerontologists, working with a physician recruiter for the City of St. Thomas.	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, Hospital Board, MPP, Public Health Unit, Health Recruitment Partnership	2018-2020

4.1.3 Encourage Walk-In clinics to be more age friendly i.e. times, accessible to bus routes etc.	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, SWLHIN, MOHLTC	2018-2019
4.1.4 Expand role of paramedics and first responders through Community Paramedics program.	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, EMS, MOHLTC, SWLHIN	2018-2020
4.1.5 Build on the work of the Elgin Health Systems Planning Group to continually seek opportunities for service consolidation through partnership agreements, resource sharing and articulation protocols.	Service agencies, SWLHIN, CHC, primary care physicians, Family Health Teams, hospital, MOHLTC, pharmacies, mental health and addictions services, Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, Public Health Unit	2018 ongoing
4.1.6 Support a universal health care recording system or a (less desirable) option of system compatibility.	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, SWLHIN, CHC, family physicians, Family Health Teams, hospital. MOHLTC, MPP	2018 ongoing

4.2 Increase access to specialists.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
See 4.1.2		

4.3 Improve coordination of care and service navigation across providers.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
4.3.1 Advocate for the expansion of Community Health Centres, and Family Health Teams.	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, Chief Clinical Lead at SWLHIN	2017 ongoing
4.3.2 Advocate for the development of a navigation system that provides services and supports to diverse seniors with varying levels of ability.	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, SWLHIN, Public Health Unit, 211 thehealthline.ca Information Network, VON	2018 ongoing

4.4 Expand and enhance community supports to reduce long-term care admissions.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
4.4.1 Enhance disease prevention and health promotion activities thru better and earlier communication.	school boards, 211, SouthWesthealthline.ca, Public Health Unit	2018 ongoing

4.4.2 Establish community HUBs for seniors in the central, east and west.	Chamber of Commerce / business, City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, municipal councils, business development, school boards, Public Health Unit	2018 ongoing
4.4.3 Promote a “senior focus” at medical schools and ongoing training.	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, Public Health Unit, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, MOHLTC, SWLHIN	2018 ongoing
4.4.4 Advocate for increased funding for home care and rehabilitation services .	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, SWLHIN, MOHLTC, MPP, community support services	ongoing
4.4.5 Increase respite care and day programs.	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, SWLHIN, City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, MPP, Public Health Unit	2018, ongoing

4.5 Expand mental health programs and dementia supports.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
4.5.1 Support provincial “Dementia Friendly” initiatives.	Alzheimer’s Society, local business/ Chamber of Commerce, community support services	2017 ongoing
4.5.2 Establish a Crisis Outreach and Support Team (COAST).	City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, SWLHIN, EMS	2018-2019
4.5.3 Significant need identified in consultation process. Specialists to meet to determine action plan for this strategy.	CMHA, Alzheimer’s Society, Public Health, hospital, CHC, Elgin Sub Region Integration Table	2018
4.5.4 Offer information sessions and support to families and providers on dementia care.	Alzheimer’s Society, CMHA, CHC, service providers, Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, SWLHIN, SouthWesthealthline.ca	2018 ongoing
4.5.6 Establish mental health support groups for seniors and their families.	Alzheimer’s Society, CMHA, CHC, service providers, Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, SWLHIN	2018

4.5.7 Increase mental health services and supports.	Alzheimer's Society, CMHA, CHC, service providers, Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, SWLHIN	2018 ongoing
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4.6 Expand hospice and palliative care.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
4.6.1 Build a case by gathering data on past and projected use of hospice beds.	St. Thomas Hospice, hospital, LTC providers, SWLHIN, MOHLTC, Elgin Sub Region Integration Table	2018-2019
4.6.2 Identify and pursue provincial and other funding sources.	St. Thomas Hospice, hospital, LTC providers, SWLHIN, MOHLTC, Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, MPP	2019->TBD

4.7 Expand Services in Long Term Care Facilities

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
4.7.1 Establish services such as ADP, foot care, baths, audiology etc. and have these services available to community seniors. These could be known as "Elderly Persons Centres".	Elgin Sub Region Integration Table, Ministry of Community and Social Services, MOHLTC, SWLHIN, local private and public service providers	2019-> TBD

Community

5.1 Design and build seniors HUBs with access to shopping, recreation, entertainment, services and information.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
5.1.1 Ensure there is a "system navigator" at each library / community HUB to assist residents with information and services available, similar to the Sheddon Keystone hub that has a library branch, recreation facility and hall.	Sheddon Keystone HUB (model), library, City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, service providers, SouthWesthealthline.ca, London model "Community Connectors"	2018 ongoing

5.1.2	Identify municipalities that can host a HUB, i.e. those with space in municipal offices, community centres, high schools, areas etc.	Upper and lower tier municipalities, school boards, service clubs, libraries, CHC, churches	2018 ongoing
5.1.3	Engage local municipal staff (library recreation) to develop community HUBs that meet the needs of their local residents.	Upper and lower tier municipalities, school boards, service clubs, libraries, CHC, churches	2018 ongoing

5.2 Improve accessibility to buildings and outdoor space throughout the County.

	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
5.2.1	AFC committee to liaise with and support City and County Accessibility committees to ensure an age friendly perspective to improve accessibility to outdoor spaces and buildings.	City and County Accessibility Committees, local municipalities, developers, businesses, CHC	2018 & ongoing

5.3 Increase the engagement of seniors in all aspects of community life.

	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
5.3.1	Establish a “Seniors Advisory Group” for Elgin St. Thomas to inform policy and decision making with respect to WHO AFC requirements, and the goals of the Elgin St. Thomas AFC Plan.	AFC Plan Steering Committee, service providers and seniors	2017*
5.3.2	Establish a liaison between the Seniors Advisory Board and libraries to guide and inform them re: seniors’ and age friendly programming.	AFC Plan Steering Committee, City and County library boards	2018
5.3.3	Promote (non computer) communication i.e. 211.	AFC Plan Steering Committee, local media, 211	2017
5.3.4	Target post secondary schools with exposure to senior care.	School boards, Retired Teachers Association	2018
5.3.5	Increase profile of seniors’ activities and accomplishments.	AFC Plan Steering Committee, local media, SouthWesthealthline.ca, 211	2017

5.3.6	Continually advocate for seniors' issues and causes.	AFC Plan Steering Committee, Municipal Councils, CARP, MPP, community support services	2017 ongoing
5.3.7	Increase dissemination of information about services through electronic and conventional media.	AFC Plan Steering Committee, 211, SouthWesthealthline.ca, local media, City and County websites, libraries, seniors' centres, churches	
5.3.8	Continually monitor, evaluate, update and communicate progress on all AFC goals.	AFC Steering Committee, City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, Public Health Unit, MPP	2017 ongoing

* *designated for early action as a "quick win"*

5.4 Pursue intergenerational programming.

	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
5.4.1	Advocate for and encourage intergenerational programming such as ; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PA day initiatives with older adults, • Building on meals on wheels model at the VON, • Seniors homes offering housing to students, • High school volunteer hours, • Investigate other best practices. 	school boards, VON, EMS, City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, retiree groups, seniors' centres, community support services	2018 ongoing
5.4.2	Explore synergies with existing youth programs.	City of St Thomas, County of Elgin, Healthy Communities Network, youth groups	2018 ongoing
5.4.3	Utilize high school volunteer credits for providing services to seniors.	School boards	2018 ongoing

5.5 Address safety, security and elder abuse issues.

	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
	Methodology to be determined	Safe Communities St .Thomas Elgin, Elder Abuse Elgin, OPP, City Police Services	TBD

5.6 Increase overall awareness of services and supports.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Potential Champions/Partners</i>	<i>Timing</i>
5.6.1 Investigate retirement groups that offer pertinent info and workshops to seniors and see if these can be made widely available to area residents through public workshops, newsletters etc. See 3.3.2	Professional retired associations such as; Retired Teachers Assoc., CARP, OMERS, utilize 211, SouthWesthealthline.ca	2018 ongoing
5.6.2 Produce “Active Elgin” specific to seniors’ activities. See 3.3.1	Public Health Unit, utilize 211, SouthWesthealthline.ca	2017*
5.6.3 Promote “no wrong door” approach to services.	Service providers, utilize 211, SouthWesthealthline.ca	2018 ongoing
5.6.4 Formalize and expand role of libraries and community gathering places as key community information HUBs. See 4.4.2 and 3.4	Libraries, seniors’ centres, City of St. Thomas, County of Elgin, utilize 211, SouthWesthealthline.ca	2017*
5.6.5 Identify content/timing requirements for communicating on multi-media platform.	AFC Steering Committee	2017*
5.6.7 Develop a comprehensive communication strategy.	AFC Steering Committee, Communications/Marketing Consultant (agency?)	2017*
5.6.8 Implement and evaluate.	AFC Steering Committee 2018 ongoing	2018 ongoing

* *designated for early action as a “quick win”*

Note that the Elgin St. Thomas AFC plan currently consists of five priority areas, 30 goals and 86 individual strategies to achieve the goals. Detailed action steps will need to be developed to execute the strategies as the plan is built out further.

The implementation template should remain a perpetual draft, changing frequently as strategies and actions are executed and new ones are identified.

5.2 Sustainability Model

Experience from other jurisdictions has shown that community age-friendly plans require some form of a stable entity in order to ensure sustainability for implementation, monitoring, revision and evaluation of goals and objectives.

The consultants have direct experience with several sustainability models used in other jurisdictions:

1. A separately incorporated not-for-profit unit (Brantford and Brant County Master Aging Plan, 2012; Niagara Aging Strategy and Action Plan, 2014).
2. Identified local organizations, groups and individuals to act as plan champions (Oxford County Master Aging Plan, 2012; Wasaga Beach AFC plan, 2016).
3. Independent and autonomous local committees not formally affiliated with municipal Council (Arnprior AFC Plan, 2016; Petawawa AFC Plan, 2016).
4. A local community advisory group as a formal standing committee of Municipal Council (Municipality of South Huron AFC Plan, 2016; Barrie AFC Plan, 2016, District of Muskoka 2016).

The Elgin St. Thomas Steering Committee and its partners are well positioned to continue their work with seniors by stewarding the Elgin St Thomas Age Friendly Plan. Although the decision on a sustainability model will be up to the AFC Steering Committee, the consultants recommend a variation of Option 4, with the formation of a standing Seniors Advisory Committee reporting to the City of St. Thomas Municipal Council.

The current AFC Steering Committee that oversaw the development of the plan could be expanded and reconstituted as a standing committee. Secretariat support and implementation coordination could be actioned through the Public Health Department or City Social Services, at least for the first year or two of the plan rollout.

Functions of the “Seniors Advisory Committee” related to the carrying out the Age Friendly Community Plan could include:

- Detailed action steps, outcomes and measurements related to the 86 strategies,
- Ongoing communication of the plan and its various initiatives to the Elgin St Thomas community,

- Recruitment of partners to participate in executing AFC strategies,
- Continually identifying service gaps and shortfalls,
- Regular alterations to the plan based on changes in the environment and maintenance of the Implementation Plan Template as a “living document”,
- Monitoring progress on goals against pre-determined outcome measures, and
- Identifying and pursuing resources such as grants, new funders, corporate sponsorships or in-kind donations.

5.3 Immediate Next Steps

Suggested steps for moving forward are the following:

1. Present the final plan to the City of St. Thomas and County of Elgin Municipal Councils in the fall of 2017 for formal endorsement.
2. Visit all Town and Township Councils and develop a collaborative with lower-tier municipalities to move the plan forward.
3. Develop terms of reference and establish a Seniors Advisory Committee. Identify any additional resources required for the committee to discharge its mandate.
4. The Advisory Committee would then initiate an ongoing communication program with the following key messages:
 - The fact that the needs and solutions in the plan are based on extensive bottom-up input from 600+ members of the community and as such have considerable legitimacy,
 - The fact that it is not a conventional plan but rather a template that draws linkages to existing and planned actions by community groups, individuals and organizations, and
 - The fact that the plan will strive to be cost-neutral wherever possible and even cost reducing due to the resource coordination efficiencies it will achieve.
5. Assign Advisory Committee members as champions of the various goals who can approach potential partners for involvement and support. The Advisory Committee would then establish action plans for priority strategies identifying specific tasks, deliverables, time frames and accountabilities and resource requirements.
6. Expand the list of strategies and identify quick wins that can be implemented immediately. Include these in early communications.

The ultimate success of the initiatives in the Age Friendly Community Plan will be dependent on broad and sustained engagement of the city and county service providers and agencies, community members and most of all, seniors themselves.

Effective implementation will require some new initiatives, but many of the strategies are already underway through various tables, municipalities, existing organizations and providers.

The plan should guide collaboration and resource sharing, advocacy and long-term planning by all sectors.

Throughout the implementation journey ongoing community engagement will be a key success factor.

Deb Ballak, Associate
SHERCON ASSOCIATES INC.
October 2017

APPENDIX A

Steering Committee, Working Groups and Key Informants

Steering Committee Members *Listed in alphabetical order*

Shirley Biro	Retired Nurse and Volunteer
Pam Buys	Coordinator of Client Services, VON Middlesex-Elgin
Michael Carroll	Administrator, Valleyview Home, St. Thomas
Rhonda Duffy	Director of Homes and Senior Services, Elgin County
Steve Evans	Senior Planner, County of Elgin
Jennifer Gritke	Regional Manager, South West Healthline
Jessica Lang	Health Promoter, Elgin St. Thomas Public Health
Elizabeth Sebestyen	Director, St. Thomas-Elgin Social Services
Rebecca Sutcliffe	Home and Community Care Manager, Southwest Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)
Shelley Vergeer	Community Supports Coordinator West Elgin Community Health Centre (WECHC)

Key Informants Interviewed *Listed in alphabetical order*

Janet Given	Program Coordinator, Elgin Elder Abuse Committee
Bob Hammersley	CEO, St. Thomas & District Chamber of Commerce
Abe Harms	Executive Director, Mennonite Central Committee
Lynn Hinds	System Design and Integration Lead Southwest LHIN
Heather Jackson	Mayor, City of St. Thomas
Grant Jones	Warden, County of Elgin
Dr. Joyce Lock	Medical Officer of Health, Elgin St. Thomas Public Health
Shelley McCorkell	Executive Director, Alzheimer's Society Elgin St. Thomas
Mark McDonald	Chief Administrative Officer, County of Elgin
Dan McKillop	Chair, Healthy Communities Partnership & Councillor for the Municipality of Dutton Dunwich
Darryl Pinnell	Police Chief, St. Thomas Police Service
Earl Shea	Retired Businessman in Port Burwell
Ross Tucker	Director of Parks and Recreation and Property Management, City of St. Thomas
Dr. Nancy Whitmore	CEO, St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital

APPENDIX B

ELGIN ST. THOMAS AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLAN

Survey of Community Members

The Elgin St. Thomas Age-Friendly Steering Committee is developing a community plan for residents of Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas. An age-friendly community is one where policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments support and enable older people to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in their communities. Work on the plan is underway and will be complete by the end of the year.

This survey is one of several community consultation initiatives to be launched and is seeking the views of residents about the current environment for seniors in our area. It will take about 10 minutes to complete. Findings will be presented at a Community Stakeholder Forum to be held at Elgin St. Thomas Public Health, 1230 Talbot Street in St. Thomas on Monday, June 5 and used to develop goals and objectives.

We are interested in the opinions of all members of the community. Your answers will help us better understand the needs of older adults in Elgin St. Thomas.

Based on 213 responses – 95 on-line and 118 paper

1. A list of statements about services and supports for seniors in Elgin St. Thomas appears below. Thinking of your local community, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. It is not necessary to answer all the questions. If you are unsure, or an item is not applicable to your area, leave it blank.

Averages based on four-point scale where 4=excellent; 3=good; 2=fair; 1=poor.

Comparatives drawn from AFC needs assessments of six other Ontario communities conducted by the consultants in 2015 and 2016

Green = High rating 3.0+					
Red = Low rating <2.5					
Yellow = Mid range					
	Av.	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings					
Overall average = 2.8	#	%	%	%	%
Comparative range: 2.3 to 2.9					
Public areas are clean and pleasant	3.3	39	53	7	1
Buildings are accessible for individuals with limited mobility	2.9	22	51	21	6
Sidewalks are in good condition and	2.9	27	43	23	7

free of obstructions					
	<i>Av.</i>	<i>Agree Strongly</i>	<i>Agree Somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree Somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>
Snow and ice clearing on sidewalks is adequate	2.7	20	41	28	11
There are enough lanes for bicycles and scooters	2.3	8	30	41	21
There are enough pedestrian crossings	2.8	19	47	25	9
There are enough parking spaces for disabled individuals	2.7	24	39	22	15
It is easy for seniors to get around walking	2.7	17	48	27	8
Transportation Overall average = 2.4 Comparative range: 1.9 to 2.9	#	%	%	%	%
Public transit is frequent and reliable	2.1	10	29	20	41
Bus stops are in convenient locations	2.3	13	35	17	35
Bus routes meet the needs of seniors	2.0	7	28	24	41
Sufficient special transit is available for people with limited mobility	2.4	14	39	18	29
Taxis are accessible and affordable	2.2	7	32	30	31
Parking is conveniently located	2.8	17	53	20	10
There are good options for volunteer, shuttle or pooled driving	2.3	10	34	33	23
There is a sufficient amount of information about transportation options for seniors	2.1	7	23	39	31
Other transit options are needed and should be explored (<i>neg. scored</i>)	2.6	51	32	9	8
Housing Overall average = 2.0 Comparative range: 1.5 to 2.3	#	%	%	%	%
Sufficient housing appropriate to the needs of seniors is available	2.1	7	22	44	27
Affordable home maintenance and renovation services are available	2.4	13	29	40	18
There are enough local retirement homes	1.8	5	16	35	44
There is an adequate number of long-term care beds in the community	1.6	4	10	27	59

	<i>Av.</i>	<i>Agree Strongly</i>	<i>Agree Somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree Somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>
There is an adequate amount of subsidized (rent geared to income) accessible accommodation	2.0	9	22	33	56
There are sufficient supports to allow seniors to remain in their homes (meals, housekeeping), personal care)	2.3	11	33	29	27
There is a sufficient amount of information about housing options for seniors	2.0	8	19	40	33
Social and Recreational Overall average = 2.7 Comparative range: 2.6 to 2.9	#	%	%	%	%
Clubs and social groups offer a good variety of activities of interest to older people	2.9	18	61	15	6
Recreation facilities meet the needs of seniors	2.7	14	52	23	11
There are adequate programs and leisure opportunities offered for seniors	2.6	13	50	25	12
Venues for events and activities are conveniently located	2.7	17	48	25	10
There are enough educational opportunities available for seniors	2.5	11	42	29	18
There are enough volunteer opportunities available for seniors	2.9	23	51	19	7
Activities, events and attractions are affordable	2.8	16	50	27	7
There is a sufficient amount of information about social and recreational opportunities in Elgin St. Thomas	2.4	13	33	39	15
Health Overall average = 2.6 Comparative range: 2.3 to 3.1	#	%	%	%	%
There is an adequate range of medical services available in Elgin St. Thomas	2.6	20	40	23	17
Most health care providers are aware and sensitive to the unique needs of seniors	2.9	23	46	24	7
	<i>Av.</i>	<i>Agree Strongly</i>	<i>Agree Somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree Somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>

Services are well coordinated	2.5	15	35	34	16
Health services are available when needed	2.5	17	34	31	18
There is a sufficient amount of information about health services	2.5	14	35	35	16
Community Overall average = 3.0 Comparatives not available	#	%	%	%	%
This is a safe and secure community for seniors	3.1	30	55	13	2
Cost-relief and financial support is available to seniors who need it*	2.5	14	32	42	12
Retail and service staff are courteous and helpful to seniors	3.0	39	48	16	6
There are enough employment opportunities available for seniors*	2.3	10	29	44	17
Seniors are welcomed at community events, activities and settings	3.3	40	49	9	2
Older people are recognized by the community for their past and present contributions	3.0	24	54	19	3
Decision making bodies welcome and use input from seniors	2.6	15	42	31	12

* Excluded from overall average

2. In general how would you rate the overall services available to older adults in your community?

5% Excellent **47%** Good **41%** Fair **7%** Poor

3. How informed or uninformed do you feel about services, programs and activities provided to seniors in your community?

11% Very informed **39%** Not too informed
46% Somewhat informed **4%** Not at all informed

4. What is your preferred way of receiving information about programs, services and activities? *Check all that apply:*

64% Newspapers **40%** Posters in facilities
37% Radio **40%** Websites

- 26%** TV
67% Flyers/brochures
11% Some other way - ***Word of mouth; groups; service providers***

5. Accessing services can sometimes be challenging for individuals. Potential obstacles or barriers to services are listed below. Please indicate the extent to which you feel each of these is a concern to seniors in your community:

	<i>Not a concern at all</i> %	<i>Somewhat of a concern</i> %	<i>A large concern</i> %
The hours that supports or services are available	22	61	17
The geographic location of where the services are provided	15	57	28
Transportation	14	43	43
Being physically able to get to services	17	45	38
The financial cost or out-of-pocket expenses to individuals	8	51	41
Long wait lists/wait times	9	29	62
Not meeting eligibility criteria for services	12	49	39
Lack of awareness of services	10	49	41
Language or cultural differences	50	36	14

6. If you could only make one suggestion to improve senior`s services what would it be?

More than 100 comments and suggestions received

About You - Your answers to these questions will help us analyse the data:

- Your age: **8%** Under 55 years
 18% 56 to 65
 59% 66 to 80
 15% Over 80 years

Where do you live?

City of St. Thomas **(81 responses)**

Municipality of Bayham **(10 responses)** – includes Corinth, Eden, Froggets Corners, North Hall, Port Burwell, Richmond, Springer’s Hill, Straffordville, Vienna and Wadger

Town of Aylmer **(26 responses)**

Township of Malahide **(4 responses)** – includes Candyville, Crossley-Hunter, Copenhagen, Dunboyne, Fairview, Glencoln, Grovesend, Jaffa, Kingsmill, Lakeview, Little Aylmer, Luton, Lyons, Mile Corner, Mount Salem, Mount Vernon, Ormond Beach, Port Bruce, Seville, Springfield, Summers Corners and Waneeta Beach.

Municipality of Central Elgin **(34 responses)** – includes Belmont, Dexter, Lawton’s Corners, Lyndale, Lynhurst, Mapleton, New Sarum, Norman, Port Stanley, Sparta, Union, Whites and Yarmouth Centre

Township of Southwold **(8 responses)** – includes Fingal, Iona, Iona Station, Paynes Mills, Shedden and Talbotville

Municipality of Dutton-Dunwich **(5 responses)** – includes Dutton, Wallacetown, Duttona Beach and the western parts of Iona and Iona Station

Municipality of West Elgin **(24 responses)**– includes Rodney, West Lorne and communities of Churchville, Clachan, Crinan, Eagle, Kintyre, New Glasgow, Port Glasgow and Twin Valleys

Other location **(2 responses)** (please state): **Outside of area**

Conducted April/May 2017

SHERCON ASSOCIATES INC.

June 1, 2017

APPENDIX C

ELGIN ST. THOMAS AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLAN

Survey of Providers

The Elgin St. Thomas Age-Friendly Steering Committee is developing a community plan for residents of Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas. An age-friendly community is one where policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments support and enable older people (55+) to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in their communities. Work on the plan is underway and will be complete by the end of the year.

This survey is one of several community consultation initiatives to be launched and is designed to gather service provider perceptions of the current system of service and supports for seniors in our area. It will take about 15 minutes to complete. Findings will be presented at a community stakeholder forum to be held at Elgin St. Thomas Public Health, 1230 Talbot Street in St. Thomas on Monday, June 5 and used to develop goals and objectives.

Please complete and return this on-line questionnaire no later than Friday, May 19, 2017. *Your responses will be confidential and will go directly to the external consultants helping us with the project.*

It is not necessary to answer all the questions. If you are unsure, or an item is not applicable, leave it blank.

1. Please provide the following background information:

Organization: **35 respondents from 20 organizations (see attached)**

Type of Organization: Check all that apply

10	Home support	2	Transportation
3	Hospice	5	Government
13	Health care	4	Retirement home
10	Social services	2	Supportive housing
2	Recreation	2	Faith based organization
5	Other	2	Pharmacy

Estimated percentage of your services that are provided to seniors/older adults (55 years and older): **75%**

Which groups of seniors receive services from you or your organization?

45% Well-fit seniors living independently

73% Seniors requiring some support with activities of daily living (ADL)

61% Seniors requiring 24-hour support
What is your service catchment area?

65% East Elgin **56%** West Elgin
82% Central Elgin **32%** Outside of Elgin County

As you answer these questions think in terms of the overall services provided for seniors across the region as a whole rather than the specific services that you offer:

2. A list of services and supports for seniors in Elgin St. Thomas appears below. Please review the list and indicate those services and groups that you feel are currently experiencing system pressure in terms of gaps between supply and demand. Consider each service across the three senior's groups. Only check a box if you feel a gap exists.

Shaded items identified as a gap by more than 12 (one-third) of respondents

Category	Service/Support	Seniors Group Served:		
		Well/Fit seniors	Some ADL Assistance	24 hour Support
Transportation 6 gaps > 12	Public transit	7	17	14
	Special transit	4	18	17
	Taxi services	2	9	8
	Volunteer, shuttle and pooled driving	10	17	15
	Driver supports – signage, parking, etc.	2	5	2
	Active transportation: Pedestrian and cycling friendly environment	3	0	0
Housing 8 gaps > 12	Home maintenance and renovation supports	5	13	7
	Affordable and accessible housing options	10	18	11
	Rent geared to income accommodation	10	16	9
	In-home supports – meals, housekeeping, etc.	4	15	9
	Personal support workers	3	14	15
	Retirement homes	3	9	5
	Long-term care beds	1	11	17
Social and Recreational 0 gaps > 12	Recreation centres	2	7	7
	Clubs and social groups	2	8	6
	Faith based organizations	0	0	2
	Arts and culture organizations	0	2	3
	Library resources	1	5	2
	Educational opportunities for seniors	3	6	5
	Volunteer opportunities for seniors	3	5	3
	Employment opportunities for seniors	6	6	4
Parks and outdoor space	1	2	1	

Category	Service/Support	Well/Fit seniors	Some ADL Assistance	24 hour Support
Health Care 13 gaps > 12	Health education and promotion	2	5	4
	Primary care – family physicians, clinics	12	14	9
	Medical specialists	4	7	5
	Therapies – Physio, OT, etc.	1	5	4
	Pharmacy	0	1	1
	Dental, vision and hearing	1	2	4
	Foot care	3	9	6
	Dementia care	3	13	12
	Palliative care/hospice	5	11	15
	Mental health supports	15	20	19
	Addictions services	4	3	4
	Supports for caregivers – respite, training, etc.	9	15	14
	System navigation – connecting people to the right services	13	16	14

3. Thinking in general terms, rate the overall effectiveness of the system of services and supports for seniors throughout Elgin St. Thomas in accomplishing the following:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Responding to the unique needs of seniors	0%	32%	61%	7%
Coordination across programs and service providers	0%	29%	50%	21%
Providing flexibility and choice to seniors	0%	21%	54%	25%
Ensuring individuals receive the right services	0%	29%	64%	7%
Ensuring individuals receive services in a timely fashion	0%	25%	61%	14%
Communicating information about services available	0%	31%	55%	14%
Identifying and responding to community needs	0%	14%	79%	7%
Having a positive impact on the lifestyle and well-being of seniors	0%	27%	73%	0%
Effectively addressing seniors' needs in urban centres	0%	52%	40%	8%
Effectively addressing seniors' needs in rural areas	0%	7%	38%	55%

4. Assume that you have some new funding to distribute to the various services and supports for seniors in Elgin St. Thomas. Thinking in terms of your answers to the previous questions, allocate these funds by assigning percentages across the services below:

You can allocate the funds any way you like but the total should add up to \$100.00.

Category	Amount
Transportation	\$27.00
Housing	\$25.00
Social and Recreational	\$18.00
Health Care	\$30.00
Total (must equal \$100)	\$ 100.00

Respondents

1. Beattie Manor Retirement Residence
2. Caressant Care
3. Chartwell Aylmer Long Term Care *2 respondents*
4. City of St. Thomas Housing Services
5. Closing the Gap Healthcare
6. County of Elgin – Bobier Villa and Elgin Manor
7. Elgin County Foot Services
8. Elgin Counselling and Mediation Centre Inc.
9. Elmwood Family Health Organization
10. Goodness Retirement Living
11. HOPE Hospice Outreach programs of Elgin *2 respondents*
12. Metcalfe Gardens Retirement Residence
13. Mennonite Community Services *2 respondents*
14. Municipality of Dutton Dunwich
15. Shoppers Drug Mart Talbot Street St. Thomas
16. Southwest CCAC *6 respondents*
17. St. Thomas Elgin Social Services
18. Valleyview Home *4 respondents*
19. Valleyview Adult Day program
20. VON Middlesex Elgin *2 respondents*

SHERCON ASSOCIATES INC.

May 30, 2017