



“The priorities represented by the Age-Friendly designation are reflective of Salem’s values as a whole. The goals of a livable, safe, and vibrant city serve to lift up all of our residents, no matter their age or ability.” -Mayor Kim Driscoll

City of Salem

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www.SalemForAllAges.org

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“In Salem, we’re thoughtful about how we approach the future.”

-Mayor Kim Driscoll

About Salem for All Ages

How We Got Here

In November 2016, the City of Salem formally submitted its age-friendly action plan, *Salem for All Ages*, to the AARP and the World Health Organization. The process of preparing that plan started earlier that year, when the City was accepted into the AARP’s national network and WHO global network of Age Friendly communities, becoming the first City on the North Shore to join and only the third in the Commonwealth.

To help prepare the action plan, the City worked closely with experts from the Center for Social & Demographic Research on Aging at the Gerontology Institute of the University of Massachusetts Boston. Working with a team comprised of City officials, local volunteers, and other stakeholders, the plan was developed based on an exhaustive document review of existing City plans and reports, a community survey completed by over 400 Salem residents over the age of 50, three focus groups, and multiple public listening sessions and convenings throughout the community. In December, AARP and WHO notified the City that they had accepted the plan and that implementation could get underway.

What Is In The Plan

The *Salem for All Ages* Action Plan establishes a vision, based on the research completed during the study process and public input, that focuses on what AARP and WHO called the “eight domains” of an age-friendly community:



Within each domain, a vision statement for the future of an Age-Friendly Salem is described, following a series of recommendations to achieve that vision. Within

each recommendation there are corresponding action steps for the City and its partners to fulfill the recommendations and achieve the vision for that domain.

Implementation of the action steps falls to the Salem for All Ages Task Force, a group of individuals representing City departments, local agencies, community residents, and nonprofit organizations, which meets monthly to review the status of their work. Guidance for the Task Force's priorities and focus is provided by the Salem for All Ages Leadership Council, comprised of community leaders and elected officials, which meets twice yearly to hear from the Task Force and provide feedback and recommendations.

Completion of Year 3

This report provides the final summaries from the Task Force's subcommittees, which have been working on implementing or preparing for implementation of the action items selected to address in 2019, the third year of the Salem for All Ages initiative. Some action items were begun in 2019, but not completed; in those cases, the groundwork that was laid for that item in 2019 will serve as a basis for the continuation of work into Year 4 in 2020. Other action items remain ongoing on a permanent basis for the duration of the initiative.

Looking Ahead

Finally, this report provides a look ahead at the planned goals and action items for Year 4 of Salem for All Ages. While much of the Task Force's efforts in Year 4 will be the continuation of prior years' actions, there are opportunities for new action items to be added to the group's agenda. With input and recommendations from the Salem for All Ages Leadership Council, the Task Force intends to add six new action items for 2020 to its work.

Salem for All Ages Task Force

Task Force Co-Chairs and Communications Subcommittee

- Patricia Zaido – former Executive Director of the Salem Partnership
- Dominick Pangallo – Chief of Staff, Office of Mayor Kimberley Driscoll

Health Subcommittee

- Kerry Murphy, Chair – Health and Wellness Coordinator, Salem Health Department
- Terry Arnold – Director, Salem Council on Aging
- Lucia Coale – Social Worker, South Bay Community Services
- Linda Coffill – Chair, Salem Council on Aging Board
- Deborah Colbert – Registered Nurse, North Shore Elder Services
- Suzanne Darmody – Public Health Nurse, Salem Health Department
- Sharon Felton – Social Worker, Salem Council on Aging
- Gerry Giunta – Chief, Salem Fire Department
- Kate Stephens – Captain, Salem Police Department

Transportation Subcommittee

- David Kucharsky, Chair – Director, Salem Department of Traffic & Parking
- Jay Carroll – Assistant Engineer, Salem Engineering Department
- Russell Findley – Mobility Coordinator, Salem Department of Traffic & Parking
- Jessica Pessimarto – Case Manager, North Shore Elder Services

Respect, Social Participation & Inclusion Subcommittee

- Tara Mansfield, Chair – Director, Salem Public Library
- Lucia Coale – Social Worker, South Bay Community Services
- Philip Higgins – Private practice social worker
- Alyssa Jones – Human Rights Campaign
- Charity Lezama – Executive Director, Salem YMCA

Housing Subcommittee

- Terry Arnold, Chair – Director, Salem Council on Aging
- Deborah Barber – Director, Disability Resource Center
- John Boris – Chair, Salem Housing Authority Board
- Abigail Butt – Board Member, Salem Council on Aging Board
- Amanda Chiancola – Staff Planner, Salem Dept. of Planning & Community Development
- Diane Moses – Housing Advocate, North Shore Elder Services
- John Russell – Member, Friends of the Salem Council on Aging
- Deborah Tucker – Assistant Executive Director, Salem Housing Authority

Accessible Infrastructure Subcommittee

- Debra Lobsitz, Chair – Chair, Salem Commission on Disabilities
- Deborah Barber – Director, Disability Resource Center
- Patricia O'Brien – Director, Salem Dept. of Parks, Recreation & Community Services

Salem for All Ages Leadership Council

Chairperson

- Kim Driscoll – Mayor, City of Salem

Leadership Council

- Margaret Brennan – Executive Director, North Shore Community Health Center
- Mary Butler – Chief, Salem Police Department
- Linda Coffill – Chair, Salem Council on Aging Board
- Jeff Cohen – Chair, Salem No Place for Hate Committee
- Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development, City of Salem
- Elizabeth Debski – Executive Director, Salem Partnership
- Rosaleen Doherty – Owner, Right at Home
- Stephen Dibble – President (2019), Salem City Council
- Lynda Hartigan – Deputy Director, Peabody Essex Museum
- Judith Kane – Administrator, Brookhouse Home
- John Keenan – President, Salem State University
- Paul Lanzikos – Former Executive Director, North Shore Elder Services
- Sherry Leonard – Director of Community Relations, John Bertram House
- Mickey Northcutt – Executive Director, North Shore Community Development Coalition
- Rinus Oosthoek – Executive Director, Salem Chamber of Commerce
- Dr. David Roberts – President & CEO, North Shore Medical Center/Salem Hospital
- Kathleen Smith – Interim Superintendent, Salem Public Schools

Communications Subcommittee Report

Building on work begun in Year 1 of the initiative, the Communications Subcommittee updated and continued to publish the comprehensive Salem for All Ages Resource Guide, which is been mailed to all Salem residents when they turn 65 years old.

The subcommittee continued to maintain and update the initiative's website, www.salemforallages.org, as well as the Salem for All Ages Facebook page.

2019 marked the second year of a partnership between the subcommittee and North Shore Physicians Group, in which the medical practice brings specialists and doctors in various fields to the Community Life Center for public presentations and symposia. While the program proved popular in 2018, attendance diminished in the past year and the subcommittee will be studying approaches to help possibly increase turnout for future similar events.

Lastly, in Year 3 of Salem for All Ages, the subcommittee collaborated with the *Salem News* to publish a monthly column, written by a rotating group of authors among the Task Force membership, focusing on the many programs, accomplishments, and goals of the Salem for All Ages initiative. The column will continue in Year 4.

In the next year of Salem for All Ages, the subcommittee will be initiating a public information campaign to address ageism and age-related discrimination in the community. This effort may include print media, digital ads and promotions, and community partnership efforts.

Transportation Subcommittee Report

Shuttle Service (Rideshare)

The City conducted a shuttle feasibility study in 2018. Following its completion, a consulting firm was hired to perform a market analysis and service assessment in order to identify and evaluate shuttle alternatives including fixed route and on-demand ride share services. An on-demand service is similar to Uber and Lyft, except all rides would be shared. Based on the findings of the assessment and evaluation of the alternatives, the city is moving forward with efforts to establish an on-demand rideshare service. City staff have recently submitted a grant application to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) to assist with the funding of the service. In addition, a Request for Proposals (RFP) is being drafted that seeks vendors who provide this type of service.

Moving forward, city staff will proceed with the RFP process to select a vendor to operate an on-demand ride share shuttle service as well as continue to identify available funding sources.

Community Car Share Service

Over the past year the city has been exploring the possibility of establishing a community car share service which would provide an opportunity for residents who may not own a vehicle to rent one on an hourly basis. Staff have been investigating a model where the city purchases or leases multiple vehicles that are strategically located throughout the city and made available to the public to book trips via a web-based platform. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was released this past September seeking vendors to operate the online platform as well as oversee the management of a fleet of 10-12 city-owned vehicles. Staff are completing their evaluation of the vendor submissions as well as continuing to investigate vehicles for leasing.

Moving forward, the city will continue with the RFP process to select a vendor, investigate leasing/purchasing opportunities and identify locations in the city where the vehicles will be made available.

MBTA Accessibility & Bus Shelters

To improve the passenger experience and encourage bus ridership, the MBTA is seeking vendors to design, implement, and maintain a network of new and existing bus shelters as part of a greater Bus Shelter System. As part of this effort they have reached out to municipalities, including Salem, asking for feedback on priority bus shelter locations. City staff have shared their feedback including providing a list of locations based on previous efforts by Salem for All Ages to install benches at strategic stops in the city.

In addition, the MBTA is also moving forward with efforts to improve accessibility to T services. The T's Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) identifies and prioritizes repairs for accessibility barriers at all MBTA bus stops and stations. This included an evaluation of the 138 stops in Salem serving six distinct bus routes. A summary of the evaluation has been provided to city staff for review and comment which includes information related to sidewalk widths, proximity to crosswalks as well as identifying obstructions.

Moving forward, the Transportation Subcommittee will continue to engage with MBTA representatives on both efforts. In addition, other grant opportunities will be pursued to fund the purchase and installation of bus shelters and benches.

Housing Subcommittee Report

The goal of the Housing Subcommittee is a primary goal of AARP: to “improve accessibility and accommodations for people of all ages and abilities.” Salem is seeing similar increases in its older population as the nation as a whole: between 2010 and 2050 America’s senior population is expected to increase from being 13% of its total population to being 20% of its total population.

In Year 3, a significant part of the committee’s activity was receiving education and information from the City’s Planning Department, which has apprised the committee on the City’s ordinances and public forums, which provided opportunities for input from the committee and the community at large. Some committee members served as facilitators at evening housing forums to hear about the wants, needs and concerns of Salem residents regarding local housing.

The subcommittee also continued Year 2 Goals of vetting local contractors to be listed on the Salem for All Ages website with the assistance of interns and studied home-sharing models to evaluate if fitting for Salem. There was a conversation with Nesterly, a Boston-based home-sharing model and we determined that it would be too expensive to implement this model in Salem at this time.

The committee began dialogue with the former director of the Salem Housing Authority to assess potential for more subsidized housing and will continue dialogue with the new SHA Director.

Interns researched Accessory Dwelling Unit requirements in other communities and the committee continues to look at housing models that help people age in place in their own home. In January, AARP will present their Home Fit Guide at the Community Life Center. This guide offers smart solutions to modify one’s home for comfortable aging in place.

Going forward, the committee will continue to advocate and help create solutions for needed housing models and potentially host a Housing Fair, so that residents can be apprised of housing options in Salem.

Respect, Social Participation & Inclusion Subcommittee Report

The Respect, Social Participation, and Inclusion Subcommittee focuses on reducing social isolation by creating intergenerational relationships, offering training on how to better communicate with older adults, and by encouraging organizations to make their spaces more accessible for older adults.

In Year 3, the subcommittee has worked on creating intergenerational mentorships through a Book Buddy program at the YMCA that matches an older adult and a child. Salem State University students have also begun visiting older adults at the Council on Aging to share experiences and wisdom several times during the academic year.

This year the subcommittee established an Age Friendly Business certification program. Initial businesses that have been certified include a bank, two hotels, and a retail establishment.

The subcommittee has also been rethinking the accessibility of meeting information and are working towards increasing the availability of printed materials for older adults, instead of relying on online information sharing. They are especially concerned about reaching older adults at risk of isolation. Some upcoming efforts include group walks and visiting the YMCA's Green Space. Transportation information will be included to make the activities more accessible.

Finally, the subcommittee is working on developing community partnerships to create a Spanish language conversation table for older adults and students.

Accessible Infrastructure Subcommittee Report

This year the Accessible Infrastructure Subcommittee and the Transportation subcommittee merged into a single subcommittee because of the overlap in both participants and focus.

ADA Transition Plan

Last winter the city received a substantial planning grant from the Municipal Americans with Disabilities Act Improvement Grant Program through the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities for the purpose of determining the next steps in bringing Salem into ADA compliance.

The grant was used to hire the Institute for Human Center Design because of their expertise in assessment of the built environment, services, and web evaluation to identify barriers. Beginning in April, IHCD performed an assessment of the city's current compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. City programs, services, activities and city owned facilities were evaluated. This includes City Hall, the Police Station, Fire stations, public schools, parks and playgrounds. The IHCD has drafted a Transition Plan that identifies and prioritizes the areas that are in need of improvements so that Salem is compliant with ADA standards. The Transition Plan Draft will be presented on December 17, 2019 at the Community Life Center. The IHCD will conclude their evaluation at year's end.

Our goal for the upcoming year is to continue the collaboration with city departments and the Commission on Disabilities to implement the areas of need designated in the Transition Plan. This includes, but is not limited to upgrades in City Hall and the Annex that improve communication and ease of navigation, public park renovations and the installation of accessible playground equipment, the installation of accessible picnic tables in public spaces, accessible ramps, walkways and paths at public beaches, sensory sensitive spaces along parade routes and at public events, and improved access for all city services.

With the Transition Plan in place, the city can seek additional funding for needed projects from the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities. The capital fund for the grants has increased substantially and will remain available for the next 5 years.

Sidewalk Maintenance

Over the last several years the City's Engineering Department has been working with a consulting firm to inspect and evaluate the city's roadway network in order to assist with the development of a Pavement Management Program. This program will allow the city to create a multi-year prioritized plan which will result in

a more proactive approach. This effort included an assessment of every single pedestrian ramp as well as a sidewalk inventory of the Downtown, Salem State University, the Point neighborhood area and the Derby Street corridor including side streets between Essex Street and the harbor. City staff who serve on both the Accessible Public Infrastructure and Transportation subcommittees have begun evaluating the conditions of the sidewalks along these roadways to determine if sidewalk repairs are needed and when feasible will schedule the sidewalk work prior to the roadway work.

Moving forward, on this issue, the combined subcommittee will work with the Commission on Disabilities and pertinent City Departments to explore the feasibility of conducting an assessment of the entire sidewalk network so that the City may develop a similar prioritized maintenance plan that will be coordinated with the roadway work.

Health Subcommittee Report

Implementation of *Are You OK?*

The committee's biggest achievement this year was the implementation of the *Are You OK?* Program, a free, opt-in call service where automated check in calls are placed at the same time each day to high-risk residents. This program is currently housed at the CLC and monitored remotely by SPD. Extensive community outreach has been done and will continue to make residents aware of the program. All participants are automatically enrolled in the Lockbox Program, which provides a secure key box on the outside of the home for ER's to quickly access a residence.

Lockbox Program

This program is for Salem residents who have a medical condition or are disabled and require frequent emergency medical services. A lockbox is a secure box that holds a key to the residence so that emergency responders can have expedited access to a participant's residence and avoid causing damage to the property when they do so. The box is portable and is secured to an exterior location of the participant's home. The boxes are provided free of charge for income-eligible residents and is mandatory for anyone enrolled in the *Are You OK?* program.

Behavioral Health Supports

The committee supported the Council on Aging in applying for and receiving a Behavior Health grant that will allow for one clinical social worker from North Shore Community Health to provide both individual counseling and support groups every Friday at the Community Life Center.

Food Insecurity and Preventive Health

The Community Life Center now has 81 registered participants for their monthly food pantry, up from 53 last year. The Taste & Talks Program is a partnership between the Salem Board of Health and Jewish Family & Children's Service, which provides nutrition education and cooking demonstrations in conjunction with a free farmers' market at Salem Housing Authority sites for older adults and at the Community Life Center. This was initially a seasonal, grant-funded program, but is now permanent and year-round.

The committee is working with North Shore Medical Center to find ways to partner on a "Food Is Medicine" (FIM) initiative. Approximately 80% of older adults suffer from at least one nutrition-related chronic disease. Harvard Law School just

published the FIM state plan, which serves as a blueprint for how communities and health care facilities can drastically reduce chronic disease and address associated health care costs through initiatives such as a produce prescription program in which doctors write prescriptions for fruits and vegetables that can be used as vouchers at local grocery stores and farmers' markets. Some hospitals have food pantries on site that act as a "food pharmacy" for these prescriptions. The committee is in discussions with North Shore Medical Center on how we can partner on grants that could help launch this program here in Salem.

Year 4 Planned Goals

Continuation of Year 3 Work

The Salem for All Ages Task Force will continue, in Year 4, to implement many of the components of their Year 3 efforts.

The **Transportation** subcommittee will continue to be engaged in implementing the pilot phase of the intra-city shuttle, including supporting operations and marketing.

The **Accessible Infrastructure** subcommittee will work with City departments to begin prioritization and implementation of recommendations from the City's new ADA Transition Plan. They will also continue collaborating with the City's Engineering Department on completion of the sidewalk master plan and development of a work order system for sidewalk repairs that takes age/ableness of residents into consideration when prioritizing repair work.

The **Communications** subcommittee will continue to publish the Salem for All Ages Resident Guide updates as necessary and mail the guide to residents when they turn 65. The subcommittee will support the growth of the newly launched SFAA Facebook page and maintenance of the initiative's website. The subcommittee will continue the monthly column in the *Salem News*.

The **Housing** subcommittee will continue the compilation and publishing of the contractors listing offering senior discounts or rates. They will also continue working with the Affordable Housing Board and the Salem Housing Authority to identify opportunities for the construction of affordable senior housing, including the on-going study at Salem State University's South Campus and City-owned properties.

The **Social Participation & Inclusion** subcommittee will continue working with Salem Public Schools and Salem State University on intergenerational mentorships. It will also work to provide customer service training opportunities for City staff on how to interact with older residents. It will also continue offering the Age Friendly Business certification program.

The **Health** subcommittee will continue to grow and strengthen its food security efforts, including the Taste & Talks, pantry, and Food Is Medicine initiatives.

New Goals for Year 4

The Salem for All Ages Task Force evaluated action items remaining in the plan and made a series of recommendations within the eight domains to the Leadership Council at the Council's fourth meeting, on November 13, 2019. Based on the

Leadership Council's feedback, the Salem for All Ages initiative will focus on the following goals for 2020, the fourth year of the program:

Housing

- As the City evaluates online permitting systems, work with the Building Department and Information Technology department to determine if there is a need for an "express permit line" option for seniors or others carrying out accessibility related modifications.
- Support reforms to accessory dwelling unit ordinances to expand housing options for seniors and offer Salem seniors an income stream that will also help them be able to age in place.

Transportation

- Launch and promote the City's community car sharing pilot. Utilize MBTA PATI data to prioritize size and install bus shelters and benches.

Accessible Infrastructure

- Explore the feasibility of installing public exercise equipment in Salem parks – especially those about to undergo improvement projects. Concurrently, encourage more outreach to older adults about existing programming taking place in Salem parks.

Communication

- Developing and launching a public information campaign targeting ageism and striving to reduce instances of age-based discrimination in the community.

Social Participation & Inclusion

- Create a language conversation table program for Spanish-speaking senior volunteers to converse with Salem High School and SSU students studying Spanish, and for ELL students to converse with English-speaking senior volunteers.
- Encourage organizations and departments to review the accessibility of their meetings and replace language in written documents and plans with age and ability appropriate verbiage.

- Publish a formal City style guide that reflects person-first language and standards for documents and publications that recognize the challenges that some older adult and low vision readers may experience.
- Work with Salem Housing Authority on strategies to improve engagement and connections with senior tenants to reduce isolation.

Health

- Study and launch a medical escort service for senior residents.