

Age and Ability-Friendly Bucksport, Maine

3-Year Action Plan (2019-2021)



Local businesses ensure their entrances are accessible and safe for everyone to enjoy.



Low cost shuttle buses within Bucksport and between Bucksport and Bangor help citizens with their shopping, medical appointments, and other errands.



Bucksport Heart and Soul, Regional School Unit 25, Main Street Bucksport, and the Senior Resource Committee of Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition partnered to place benches like this one along the Main Street bus route.



A 26 unit HUD supported housing program allows residents to remain independent.

Profile of Bucksport

The Town of Bucksport, population 4,937 is located in Hancock County, bordered by the beautiful Penobscot River. 2016 census data identifies the median age in Bucksport as 41.8 years. 18.5% of the population is over the age of 65, and the community has a median household income of \$35,509. There are 50 miles of town roads and an additional 15 of State roads in the community. There are 11 miles of sidewalks, and over 700 commercial and residential units served by public water and sewer. The Town has a full time police department as well as full time fire/EMS services, and a public works department. Recreational programming for all ages is provided in the community by a contract with the Downeast Family YMCA. The Town owns and operates a seasonal marina facility, a public dock, and has over 8 miles of recreational trails. The Town partners with RSU 25 for use of recreational fields, a performing arts center, technology, and social worker services. The Town seeks partnerships with other local and regional groups in order to provide the best services possible to its residents in the most cost-effective manner possible.

In 2014 Bucksport lost its major employer and nearly forty percent of its community valuation when the VERSO paper mill closed permanently. Long term planning on the part of the Town for that eventuality helped to cushion the blow financially, resulting in continued comprehensive town services as well as a reasonable property tax rate. Significant planning efforts including an updated comprehensive plan, Community Heart & Soul, and a \$200,000 EPA area wide planning grant have provided a strong foundation and 'roadmap' for future community redevelopment. Mill site redevelopment has begun with the initial stages of a \$250 million land based aquaculture business with Whole Oceans, a mariner training institute being developed by Maine Maritime Academy, and a gas-generation power plant that is now serves as backup to the power grid with ISO New England. The Town added eight lots to its business park and has two new major tenants, and every storefront in the downtown has a business. The community is in the process of transitioning from a 'mill-town' to its future self and credits the work ethic, commitment, and support of its residents as a key to making good things happen.

Bucksport's Age and Ability Friendly Story -- A Work in Progress

The journey for Bucksport in working toward becoming an age and ability friendly community started in earnest in 1998 with the establishment of the Bucksport Community Health Advisory Committee for the Town of Bucksport. It was championed by a group of residents who believed that the health of the community needed to be an active topic of discussion and work. The mission of this group was derived from the World Health Organization's Model of Healthy Communities.

The Committee was part of local government and received an annual appropriation for its work, and also applied for and received numerous grants. It was responsible for the development of a comprehensive community health plan which became part of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The plan involved years of work,

hundreds of thousands of dollars in grant funding and the work of 140 volunteers. The group had assistance with the plan from a VISTA Volunteer provided through a grant from Johnson & Johnson and was recognized nationally for this work.

As a result of these efforts and the evolution of the Town Committee to a regional 501 c(3) called Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition, for the purposes of Bucksport – community health is about more than medical care. It also involves the quality of life, housing, economic, transportation, social, safety, and educational needs of the community. Examples of how the Town, Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition, Senior Resource Committee, and other organizations such as Eastern Area Agency on Aging have worked for two decades to increase the age and ability ‘friendliness’ of the Town of Bucksport include:

- The Town along with BBHCC and the Senior Resource Committee engaged the University of Maine’s Center on Aging to conduct a comprehensive study on the housing and service needs of older adults in Bucksport. This study created a 10-year roadmap for creation of housing and services for older adults,
- The Town provided funding assistance for redevelopment of a historic property into 16-bed assisted living program with significant on-site services for residents,
- The Town provides a 20-hour per week director for the Senior Citizen’s Center and an annual stipend for programming & activities,
- The Town provides a Senior Citizen Center located at Bucksport Square Apartments – a senior housing facility with 25 apartment units,
- The Town provides space for senior exercise and strength programs at the Jewett School Community Center,
- The Town provides office space for the Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition and provides an annual appropriation in support of the work done by the coalition,
- In conjunction with the Senior Center Director the Senior Resource Committee worked to establish the Bucksport Area Senior Meals Program at the senior center with the local school district food service providing the meals on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at a cost of \$5 with delivery available for those who cannot get to the center and funds available to offset the meal cost for those who cannot afford to pay.
- As a result of work by the Senior Resources Committee of the BBHCC, the Town changed winter sidewalk maintenance to insure that crosswalks and sidewalks are maintained to a level which is safe and accessible for those with ability challenges
- The Town approved development of a grant program for local businesses to assist with making their businesses more accessible.
- The Town has added two handicapped accessible spots to the downtown area, relocated a third, and upgraded a fourth after a ‘walking tour’ with the Senior Resource Committee.
- The Town approved funding for installation of automatic handicapped accessible doors for the municipal building as part of its 2016/17 annual budget.

- BBHCC established a Thriving in Place program in 2015 in conjunction with 16 partner agencies to help meet the health, safety, housing, transportation and financial needs of those with chronic illness or disability – many of whom are also part of our senior population.
- BBHCC established a Healthy Living Workshop program that is a series of annual workshops designed to help plan for health, safety, financial stability and overall well-being as people age with a goal of assisting people to age in place in their residences and communities of choice.
- Downeast Transportation operates a bus and taxi program funded through the Town of Bucksport and BBHCC that enables seniors and others who do not have or operate vehicles to do shopping and attend appointments.
- With the help of the BBHCC the Town received the AARP designation as an age-friendly community and the Senior Resources Committee serves as the review committee to insure that the Town continues to work toward maintaining and improving infrastructure to support that designation

Methodology of AARP's Age Friendly Assessment

The past history of community collaborations informs current efforts to further understand the needs of older adults in Bucksport. Multiple community development efforts emerged in response to the closure of the local paper mill, the largest employer in the region. The town was in the midst of completing its Comprehensive Plan when the paper mill closed. This extraordinary business closure led to a community wide visioning process based on the Orton Foundation Heart & Soul community development model. Additionally, the town created a partnership with the Eastern Maine Development Corporation to develop a community-driven redevelopment plan for the former paper mill site. Along with these multiple community assessment processes Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition had previously completed an updated Health Plan with recommendations that were incorporated in the most recent Bucksport Comprehensive Plan.

Heart & Soul, Project ADAPT, and the Bucksport Comprehensive planning processes used a combination of focus groups, town meetings, key informant interviews, storytelling, community potluck suppers, and surveys to obtain citizen viewpoints on the vision for the future, unmet needs, and recommendations for economic and infrastructure changes. Common themes emerged from all of these community development efforts which form the basis of recommendations that are included within the AARP core domains.

The Bucksport Age Friendly core domain recommendations include:

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Outdoor spaces, such as parks, and buildings affect the independence and quality of life of residents of all ages, but especially older adults. Some Maine communities have made parks more accessible by increasing the width of paths and adding benches. Others have increased the number of designated parking spaces near key services and added accessible features.

Assessment Data

In the last U.S. Census, nearly one in five Americans reported a disability that impacts their daily lives. That means universal design is not an outlier concept created to avoid ADA lawsuits. It is an essential and basic planning tool that serves more than 60 million end users of zoning codes, complete streets guides, corridor studies, and other master plans. And, when it's well designed, integrating universal design into the public realm is not only a seamless experience for disabled users, it benefits everybody. -American Planning Association, Design for Everybody by Steve Wright and Heidi Johnson Wright. Results of two walkabouts between 2014-2016 with public officials and Senior Resource members

Among other things, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ensures access to the built environment for people with disabilities. The ADA Standards establish design requirements for the construction and alteration of facilities subject to the law. These enforceable standards apply to places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, and state and local government facilities. - United States Access Board. Data provided from citizen action alerts.

Winter sidewalk snow removal: Town Council approved purchase of new snow removal equipment and increased staffing hours to improve sidewalk conditions in the winter

Expected Outcome: Safer pedestrian walking in the business district

Responsible Parties: Town Manager, Bucksport Town Council, Senior Resource Committee

Timeline: 2014-2016 Completed

Sand Barrels along Main Street: Chamber of Commerce acquired barrels, Town of Bucksport placed barrels and kept full of sand throughout winter, business owners and private citizens agreed to spread the sand on sidewalk areas to business district

Expected Outcome: Less hazardous walkways preventing unnecessary falls and potential bone fractures

Responsible Parties: BBACC, Town of Bucksport, local Main Street business owners, private citizens agreed to spread the sand on sidewalk areas in business district

Timeline: Completed

Sidewalk obstruction pole removal: Hazardous Fairpoint telephone pole removed from sidewalk

Expected Outcome: Safer high pedestrian traffic walking area

Responsible Parties: Town of Bucksport

Timeline: Completed

Handicap parking spaces: Existing handicap parking space resurfaced and expanded with handrail added for safer access, two additional handicap parking spaces on Elm Street and Main Street

Expected Outcome: Community Pharmacy handicap parking space vastly improved wheelchair access to Main Street walkway and additional parking areas added

Responsible Parties: Town of Bucksport

Timeline: Completed

Sidewalk replacement: 42 sidewalk panels replaced on Main Street in business

Expected Outcome: Safer pedestrian walkways in the business district

Responsible Parties: Town of Bucksport

Timeline: Completed

Business loan fund for accessibility improvements: Town council voted to approve the improvement of sidewalks, increase in handicap parking and business loan fund created

Expected Outcome: Increased accessibility to local businesses and organizations along Main Street

Responsible Parties: Town of Bucksport

Timeline: Ongoing

Improved access to walk signal: MDOT moved the push button for walk signal closer to the sidewalk

Expected Outcome: Significantly improved access for people who are wheelchair users or affected by other ambulatory disabling conditions

Responsible Parties: MDOT, Arline Reed

Timeline: Completed

Educate AARP Action Team members on all aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act in addition to oversight responsibilities by state and local officials.

Expected Outcome: Ensure that all Bucksport citizens can fully participate in all aspects of community life.

Responsible Parties: Alpha One - Jill Johanning, Disability Rights Maine, Maine Fire Marshal Office, Legal Services for the Elderly, Bucksport Town Manager and Code Enforcement, Senior Resource Committee, BBHCC

Timeline: Ongoing

Engage the town of Bucksport to include the need for accessibility improvements be incorporated the town's comprehensive plan, ordinances, policies and practices.

Expected Outcome: Accessibility ordinances, policies, and practices will set up systems to monitor and improve unsafe conditions along sidewalks, building entrances, and other related areas.

Responsible Parties: Bucksport Town Manager and Code Enforcement, BBHCC, Senior Resource Committee, Alpha One-Jill Johanning

Timeline: Ongoing

Strategies in Development

- Stubborn Cow Glass
- Irving Gas Station
- Central Street sidewalk reconstruct next to MacLeod's entrance
- Acknowledge area businesses which made modifications to improve accessibility.

Transportation

Affordable and accessible public and volunteer transportation programs, is key to aging in place safely and independently. Some communities have created transportation resource guides that include information about public and private options. Others have created volunteer programs that provide rides to where people need to go and may offer help with, for example, shopping or getting in and out of a building.

Assessment Data

Maine State Plan on Aging 2016-2020. The data suggests that a growing percentage of Maine's aging population will "age out" of their vehicles and they will no longer be able to willing to drive. Many of these older individuals, having one or more disabilities, results in a greater need for alternative forms of transportation. Many older Mainers are unable to relocate from rural areas to access service options to stay in their homes. Many older Mainers are unable to stay in their homes and access service options due to the rural nature of the state.

MDOT Strategic Transit Plan 2025. To the extent possible within the limits of available funding and in recognition of the goal of achieving services to meet 20% of the theoretical demand support efforts to expand and improve existing systems or establish appropriate new systems or appropriate services in areas with limited or no transit service, in particular expanding volunteer networks and alternatives to traditional transit services. This will help increase the overall availability of services in order to begin meeting the minimally acceptable levels of demand throughout the state.

Bucksport 2017 Comprehensive Plan. As the population ages, the town needs to prepare for an increasing number of residents unable to drive vehicles. This will make it important to improve the sidewalk system based on the priorities listed in a sidewalk master plan. Further expansion of public transit may also be needed. The Transportation Committee monitors needs, identifies funding sources and presents its recommendations to the Town Council to support grants or other funding sources. This would require coordination with regional transportation providers.

Assess capacity of current public transportation services in the Bucksport Bay region and create short and long term recommendations to improve access and coordination of local transportation services: Survey bus and taxi riders on their experience in using local transportation services; Hold local meeting summit with public and private transportation providers to determine transportation infrastructure needed to meet anticipated increased needs for public transportation in the Bucksport Bay area

Expected Outcome: Transportation plan that outlines steps to improve service coordination and access to local and regional transportation services

Responsible Parties: Town of Bucksport convene a collaborative consisting of representatives of BBHCC, Downeast Transportation Services, City Cab Connection, LogistiCare, Downeast Community Partners, CARE, HOME Coop, Faith In Action, EAAA, Hancock County Planning Commission and Main Street Bucksport

Timeline: Ongoing

Improve faded or non-existent road markers, where applicable, to improve driving for older drivers as well as all drivers: Collaborate with the Town of Bucksport's Public Works Department to determine if striping portions of heavily traveled town roads could be accomplished.

Expected Outcome: Reduced accidents in addition to improved conditions for all drivers

Responsible Parties: Bucksport Public Works Department and Bucksport Senior Resource Committee

Timeline: Ongoing

Housing

Safe and affordable housing promotes well-being and is key to older residents being able to age comfortably and safely in the house and community of their choice. Communities can make regulatory changes to encourage additional housing options or can create new housing. Some initiatives have started their own “Handy brigade”, others have partnered with existing services to increase awareness of home modification and home maintenance services.

Assessment Data

Maine State Aging Plan 2016-2030. Maine seniors, particularly renters, are often overburdened by housing costs. Seniors who spend more than 30 percent of their total household income on housing costs comprise nearly 50 percent of that population. For low-income renting seniors, this value is dramatically higher at 38.2 percent. Housing affordability is especially relevant among seniors, many of whom live on fixed incomes. Bucksport Comprehensive Plan 2017 If population growth remains stagnant or declines, the town will not experience a significant increase in new home construction. The town will likely need additional units for the elderly and disabled. One specific need is more opportunities for “aging in place.” This means offering home care services for the elderly as well as housing developments that provide a continuum of care from assisted living to full nursing care. A Profile of Maine’s Older Population and Housing Stock –Maine Affordable Housing Coalition, 2015 Many older people, motivated by a variety of reasons, choose to move to a new home as they age. Older people can find themselves —over-housed, and unable to keep up with the maintenance required of a larger home. Some older householders may find their current residence is ill-equipped to accommodate new physical or cognitive limitations, or the existing housing has become unaffordable due to retirement or a change in income. To address these needs, new models of housing for older adults are emerging. Co-housing communities are senior developments where residents typically live in small homes that are clustered around a common area that serves as a hub for social activities, shared meals, and laundry and other facilities. The Green House Project housing provides shared living arrangements for seniors who need long-term care but lack the resources to pay for private round-the-clock care in their own homes.

Research model housing options for older adults with low to moderate incomes

Expected Outcome: Establish housing model that will be used for local housing development.

Responsible Parties: Town of Bucksport – Economic Development Committee
BBHCC - Senior Resource Committee

Timeline: 7/1/19 - 3/1/20

Research non-profit retirement housing models congruent with older adult demographics in Bucksport.

Expected Outcome: Reduce number of older adults who are displaced from the community because of limited housing options to meet their needs.

Responsible Parties: Town of Bucksport – Economic Development Committee
BBHCC - Senior Resource Committee

Timeline: Ongoing

Identify local organizational partner to oversee housing development in Bucksport

Expected Outcome: Establish organizational partner or network of partners to implement marketing study recommendations.

Responsible Parties: Local Housing Organization Town of Bucksport – Economic Development Committee

Timeline: 7/1/19 - 3/1/20

Social Participation

Socializing with friends and neighbors who don't live in the same home with you-- is connected to physical and cognitive health. Some communities have started a "senior" center or added to the opportunities available. Others have partnered with local organizations such as life-long learning programs, an art center or library to increase programming for adults.

Assessment Data

Research shows that older adults who participate in senior center programs can learn to manage and delay the onset of chronic disease and experience measurable improvements in their physical, social, spiritual, emotional, mental, and economic well-being. -From National Council on Aging.

Bucksport Senior Center partner with other organizations to offer lifelong learning and aging transitional educational programs.

Expected Outcome: Older adults who have the knowledge and skills to know how to advocate and obtain information and services to meet their needs.

Responsible Parties: Senior Center, RSU 25 Adult Education Program, Senior Resource Committee

Timeline: Ongoing

Respect and Social Inclusion

The lack of contact between generations and lack of knowledge about aging are two reasons why stereotypes that exclude older people from full participation in the community continue. Aging adults who feel welcomed and respected for their contribution are more likely to remain actively engaged in economic, social and civic life than those who do not feel included.

Assessment Data

Young people do better when they experience a strong web of relationships with many people. Each relationship can be an important source of strength. But, young people do even better when they have a strong web of many developmental relationships. This finding reinforces the importance of nurturing many developmental relationships in young people's lives, each of which complements and reinforces the others. From -Relationships First Creating Connections That Help Young People Thrive

Launch Senior/Youth Mentorship Program in conjunction with RSU 25.

Expected Outcome: Intergenerational learning experience that prevents social isolation for both youth and older adults

Responsible Parties: Bucksport YMCA, RSU 25, Heart and Soul, Senior Resource Committee

Timeline: Ongoing

Civic Participation and Employment

Older people do not stop contributing to their communities when they turn 65 or 85 or 105. An age-friendly community provides opportunities for residents who want to or need to work past traditional retirement age and encourage people of all ages to volunteer and participate in the political process.

Assessment Data

Older adults today are healthier and more engaged than any generation before them. They bring a lifetime of experience and knowledge to everything they do. Many of today's elders want to stay actively involved in their communities. Research has shown there are benefits to an individual's health and well-being when he/she is civically engaged. From- Civic Engagement by Paula Burnett, Program Director, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and Andrew Matlins, Program Director, Senior Sense AmeriCorps*VISTA Program

Create networking events for older adults as well as new residents moving to Bucksport to learn about volunteer opportunities in the community.

Expected Outcome: Increased civic engagement that strengthens relationships and community infrastructure.

Responsible Parties: Heart and Soul, YMCA, Bucksport NEXT, Chamber of Commerce, BBHCC

Timeline: Ongoing

Communication and Information

Staying connected with activities, resources, and people is key to optimal aging. Some communities have created information portals on their town website to increase access to information about local activities and resources making them easy to find. Other communities have created resource manuals.

Assessment Data

BBHCC Health Improvement Plan, Thriving in Place assessment, Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman listening session

Integrating mediation process in municipal/community service planning

Building an effective infrastructure of services in a rural area requires active on-going planning between multiple local and regional service organizations and municipalities. In order for services to be accessible locally municipalities and community service organizations may need to use mediation as a tool to find solutions to community needs.

1. Identify mediation resources in Maine for community planning and service disputes.
2. Hold municipal sponsored meeting with community service organizations to develop an ongoing planning process to assess, problem-solve, and secure commitments to fill service gaps. Such information will be included in the annual municipal goals and objectives.

Pew Research:

- Seniors are the group most likely to say they never go online. About four-in-ten adults ages 65 and older (41%) do not use the Internet, compared with only 1% of 18-29 year olds.
- Household income and education are also indicators of a person's likelihood to be offline.
- Adults from households earning less than \$30,000 a year are roughly eight times more likely than the most affluent adults to not use the Internet.
- Rural Americans are about twice as likely as those who live in urban or suburban settings to never use the Internet.

Creation of a social marketing campaign, Show You Care: Partnership established between the Town of Bucksport, BBACC and BBHCC to implement social marketing campaign (4/30/15)

Expected Outcome: Community residents educated on the need to improve access to public and private properties so that all citizens can participate in all aspects of community life.

Responsible Parties: BBHCC, BBACC, Town of Bucksport

Timeline: Ongoing

Educate committee members and other community volunteers, business owners and municipal leaders on their knowledge of ADA regulations: Marketing posters circulated throughout community on training event. Training presentations by Alpha One on ADA laws and regulations (11/2/15)

Expected Outcome: Training participants increased their knowledge of how to approach accessibility planning in the community

Responsible Parties: Alpha One, Jill Johanning, Chris Johnson, BBHCC, Senior Resource Committee, Town of Bucksport

Timeline: Ongoing

Implementation of Show you Care media ad campaign: (a) Campaign goals published in local and regional newspapers. (b) Toolkits developed for private homes and businesses renovation options to improve access, (c) weekly newspaper ads, describing sample renovations at home or business to improve access

Expected Outcome: Improved community awareness of need to take action steps to ensure safety and inclusion of all

Responsible Parties: BBHCC, BBACC, Bucksport Enterprise

Timeline: 09/01/19 - 12/31/19

Educate organizational partners on the ADA laws and the agencies responsible for compliance to the laws: Held ADA Compliance meeting with key stakeholders agencies (6/23/15)

Expected Outcome: Increased understanding of Show You Care partner organizations how to partner with state and regional organizations to increase accessibility in the community

Responsible Parties: State Fire Marshal, Maine Human Rights Commission, Disability Rights Maine, Town of Bucksport, BBHCC, Senior Resource Committee

Timeline: Ongoing

Educating municipal leaders through public testimony on the need for accessibility: Public testimony at Bucksport Town Council and Ordinance meetings

Expected Outcome: Town Council recommended the Streets and Roads Committee further investigate the problem and need to take action

Responsible Parties: Bucksport Town Council, Bucksport Town Manager and BBHCC Senior Resource Committee

Timeline: Ongoing

Network with regional and statewide partner organizations to increase knowledge on local organizing activities: Made presentation at 2015 Maine Aging Summit

Expected Outcome: Increased knowledge of other community strategies and local organizing efforts across the state

Responsible Parties: AARP Peter Morelli, BBHCC Senior Resource Committee, Pearl Swenson

Timeline: Ongoing

Networking with other communities on mutual planning efforts to improve accessibility: Contacts with Sally Walsh of Freeport about accomplishments of town planning efforts

Expected Outcome: Mutual learning of planning strategies and organizing approaches

Responsible Parties: Sally Walsh, BBHCC Senior Resource Committee

Timeline: Ongoing

Consistent marketing of the Show You Care messaging: Dissemination of Show You Care information to media outlets, organizational partner newsletters, municipal communications and other sources

Expected Outcome: Marketing messaging is strengthened through repetitive information circulated by multiple partners

Responsible Parties: BBHCC, BBACC, BBHCC Senior Resource Committee, TIP Partner organizations

Timeline: Ongoing

Thriving in Place Information clearinghouse: TIP programs services as first point of contact to network of programs and services for older adults: TIP programs services as first point of contact to network of programs and services for older adults

Expected Outcome: Timely access to programs and services that could avoid unnecessary and costly interventions

Responsible Parties: BBHCC Thriving in Place program and partner organizations

Timeline: Dependent on re-start of program.

Identify mediation resources in Maine for community planning and service disputes. 2. Hold municipal sponsored meeting with community service organizations to develop an ongoing planning process to assess, problem-solve, and secure commitments to fill service gaps. Such information will be included in the annual municipal goals and objectives.

Expected Outcome: Increase the use of computer technology by older adults to improve health and social support needs per individual Healthy Living Plans.

Responsible Parties: Town of Bucksport, BBHCC's Senior Resource Committee, and community-based service organizations operating in Bucksport Bay area.

Timeline: Ongoing

RSU 25 Adult Ed offers free computer literacy classes. Implement a social marketing campaign that focuses on computer literacy skills as tools to assist older adults in living independently at home: Convene partnership of resource agencies to devise a comprehensive plan to engage and educate older adults to increase their computer literacy skills to meet their Healthy Living Plan objectives.

Expected Outcome: Increase the use of computer technology by older adults to improve health and social support needs per individual Healthy Living Plans.

Responsible Parties: BBHCC-TIP, BRHC, Bucksport Senior Center, RSU 25 Adult Education, EAAA

Timeline: Ongoing

Community Support and Health Services

Access to health care and services to support aging in place is key for the health and well-being of older residents. Some communities have emphasized food security in this area. Others have looked at elder abuse prevention or added disaster preparedness.

Assessment Data

Maine State Plan on Aging 2016-2020. The US census bureau estimates that in 2015 Maine's had a population of 1.3 million residents. The percentage of Maine's population 65 and older is 19 percent and this segment is growing faster than either the New England or National average. By 2030, Maine's population age 65 and will reach 28 percent. Maine's median age was 43 in 2010 and it will rise to age 46 by 2030, compared to the median age of 39 nationally. According to the Muskie School of Public Policy, by 2025, the number of Mainer's age 85 and over (which is the group with the highest demand for services) will grow by 4,000 people, a 14 percent increase. 18 Research indicates almost two thirds of adults age 65 and older are expected to need long term services and supports in their lives. This becomes a critical factor for Maine because it is one of the oldest populations in the country. This trend is expected to continue through 2030.

Maine DHHS. All of the nursing homes in Maine are privately owned. Since 2012 five (5) nursing homes have closed in Hancock and Washington Counties. Testimony at CON Hearing for Nursing Home in Bucksport -Lack of nursing home beds put patients at risk of being displaced to other regions of the state away from family and friends at a time when such support is so critical.

2019 EPA Report. The Planning for Natural Disaster Debris guidance assists communities in planning for natural disaster debris before a disaster occurs, including hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, volcanoes, floods, wildfires and winter storms, by providing useful, relevant information that is intended to increase community preparedness and resiliency.

Columbia University and First Street Foundation Climate Change Planning. The lost home values were recorded between 2005 and 2017 in a study by Columbia University and First Street Foundation, a Brooklyn, New York-based nonprofit that studies sea level rise and its effects. Areas susceptible to flooding in Maine are mostly coastal and include Kittery, York, Kennebunk, Saco, Rockland, Searsport, Biddeford, Falmouth, Bucksport, Winter Harbor and Southwest Harbor.

Reinstate the Thriving in Place which was funded under a MEHAF grant by Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition for 4 years ending in 2017.

Expected Outcome: Bucksport area older adults will have access to a coordinated system of care and support to assist them to remain in the community and housing option of their choice.

Responsible Parties: Town of Bucksport, BBHCC, Senior Resource Committee, former Thriving in Place organizational partners

Timeline: Ongoing

Verify the need with Maine DHHS that more long-term care beds are needed based on the previous CON application by the First Atlantic Corporation. 2. Research public and non-profit owned long term care homes as option to address shortage in residential long-term care beds. 3. Explore with Maine DHHS the Certificate of Need regulations that determines, in part, adequacy of residential long term care beds in a region.

Expected Outcome: Prevent dislocation of local citizens from their home communities because of inadequate number of residential long term care beds in the Bucksport Bay region.

Responsible Parties: BBHCC, Senior Resource Committee. DHHS Office of Aging and Disability Services, Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Timeline: 3/1/19 - 3/1/20

Further research other studies on flooding potential as well storm severity. Educate public on potential threats and need for planning at home. 2. Review regional and town emergency preparedness plans to respond to prolonged periods of lack of shelter, electricity, food, fuel, and water. 3. Based on review findings, recommend changes to municipalities to ensure adequate resources will be available.

Expected Outcome: Citizens will have greater protection in the case of town and regional emergencies to avoid displacement and personal harm.

Responsible Parties: BBHCC Senior Resource Committee, Heart and Soul

Timeline: Ongoing

Implementation Domain Strategy

The town of Bucksport has requested that the Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition's Senior Resource Committee serve as the AARP Action Team. This committee is comprised of older adults who have considerable knowledge and experience with the domain strategies listed in this plan. Under each domain a committee member will be recruited to serve as a coordinator for implementation work. Coordinators will recruit additional volunteers and organizational partners to help with implementation of the strategies. The Senior Resource Committee meets monthly when each of the coordinators report on the activities under their domain strategies. At present members are recruiting additional coordinators to manage additional strategies. The Bucksport Town Manager will meet with the Senior Resource Committee quarterly to discuss progress on the action plan. The Chair of the Senior Resource Committee will make a progress report to the Bucksport Town Council annually.

Accomplishments

Implemented Programs (Domains)

Programs & Documents

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

- Created the Golden Shovel Award for businesses that keep sidewalks accessible during winter months. The program is designed to increase pedestrian safety/winter.
- Improved municipal winter sidewalk snow removal in the business district through increased staffing time and new equipment.
- Accessibility Improvements accomplishments include: proper hand railings at business entrances, doorbell for mobility assistance to open doors, automatic door openers, ramps, replacement of 42 concrete sidewalk panels, removal of hazards impacting sidewalk in the business district, renovation of public bathroom areas to include mobility safety supports, signage at building locations that direct the public to handicap accessible entrance, increased handicap parking spaces along Main Street, and increased benches along Main Street for walkers to rest.
- Fifteen (15) businesses and organizations have made accessibility improvements since the Show You Care Program was launched.

Transportation

- Weekly shuttle bus services in the Bucksport compact area.
- Weekly \$1 Taxi to public transportation for older folks and people with disabilities.
- Plan to offer shuttle bus services during community festivals and other large events.
- Development of local transportation planning committee to coordinate current and future transportation services

Housing

- Established 26-unit supportive apartment complex for older adults and adults living with disabilities.
- Established 16-bed assisted living program.
- Window Dresser Program installed panels in apartment complex units occupied by older adults.
- Established housing committee who will explore housing models and programs to meet the future needs of older adults.

Civic Participation and Employment

- Recruiting volunteers for Bucksport Age-Friendly advisory team as well as people interested in working on a specific initiative or domain.
- Members of the Bucksport Age-Friendly Team successfully advocated for the town to revise local building code ordinances to include additional information on the requirements of the Americans with Disability Act.

Social Participation

Active senior center supported by Town of Bucksport with social dining opportunities, trips, and other activities.

Communication and Information

- Developed Show You Care Marketing Campaign to encourage local businesses to enhance accessibility throughout the community. Two brochures that describe the overall goals of the Show You Care Campaign and importance of installation of proper handrails were published and distributed.
- Partnership with RSU 25's Adult Education Program to offer computer literacy classes to older adult