Augusta Age-Friendly Action Plan
June 5, 2017
Augusta’s Age-Friendly Community Advisory Council Members

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March 30, 2017

In the continuing effort to move the City of Augusta into a better place to live, work, play, raise a family, and create a high quality of living, we feel being an Age Friendly Community is essential to those goals.

As a result of the self-study we have been enlightened to our strengths and weaknesses which will be the catalyst to changing our community for the betterment of aging citizens.

We have already begun to address the issues facing all age groups. We believe being age friendly extends beyond the elderly population into the entire community as a whole. Engaging the valuable resource of seniors with the younger generations will be a great asset to Augusta in the future.

I want to recognize the efforts of Robert McDougall, chair of the Age Friendly Committee, for his leadership and dedication to making this an outstanding community. Our goal is to become the “Best Little City” in New England. A big step in that direction is to have an Age Friendly environment for people to live in.

Sincerely,

David M Rollins
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CITY PROFILE
Augusta is the State Capital, located in the center of the state with access to many facilities and services, as well as some of the most beautiful natural areas of the state.

Augusta's Beginnings
Long before Europeans came up the Kennebec River to the "head of the tide," Algonquian-speaking Indians, considered Wabanaki or "People of the Dawn," were already here. As early as 1607, the area was explored by English settlers from the short-lived Sagadahoc or Popham Colony at the river’s mouth.

Representatives of Plymouth Colony were the first English to actually live here. In 1625, on a river expedition to find a place to trade agricultural products for Indian furs, Plymouth pilgrims chose the east shore for their "House at Kennebeck." The post, probably built in 1628, was operated by the original traders and, later, by Plymouth Company with varying degrees of success, until it was abandoned sometime between 1669 and 1676.

There were French as well as English influences here in the 17th and 18th centuries. In 1646, a Jesuit priest, Gabriel Dreuilletes, visited "an English settlement named Kinibeki" and established a mission nearby for the Kennebec
natives. It was then that the term "Cushnoc," ("Coussinoc" or "Kouissnoc") first appeared in reference to the Plymouth trading post.

After years of conflict involving the French, Indians, and English and several decades during which Kennebec settlements were deserted, the Kennebec Proprietors, successors to the Plymouth Company, erected Fort Western near the Cushnoc site. Located below the falls at the head of navigation, the fort was intended as a supply depot for Fort Halifax 17 miles upriver. The proprietors also initiated efforts to settle the region. When military staffing was no longer needed, Captain James Howard, who had commanded the fort, stayed on as the first permanent settler. The fort’s main building served as a residence and a store.

The village called "the Fort" was the upriver part of the town incorporated as Hallowell in 1771. In February, 1796, the Fort residents petitioned the Massachusetts Legislature for permission to build the first Kennebec bridge. Although "the Hook," as the lower Hallowell village was called, wanted the bridge on its shore, the Fort request was granted. The following February, in 1797, the legislature approved separation of the Fort from Hallowell. Incorporated first as Harrington, the new town changed its name to Augusta on June 9, 1797.

In 1799, Augusta became the shire town of the newly formed Kennebec County. In 1827, the town was designated the capital of Maine, which had entered the union in 1820 as the 23rd state. The Maine Legislature met here for the first time in January, 1832. Augusta was chartered as a city in 1849.

In addition to its governmental roles, Augusta has been, through the years, a frontier trading place, an inland shipping port, a center for publishing and manufacturing, and, now, post-secondary education.

**AGING POPULATION**
Like the state of Maine and cities across the country, the population of Augusta is aging. The graph below shows Maine’s age distribution in green. The blue areas
show where the city of Augusta’s population percentage for each age range is greater than that of the state overall. Where the blue is not visible, the percentage of the city’s population is less than that statewide. The City is populated by a larger than statewide percentage of 20-34 year olds, partly attributable to the University of Maine at Augusta. The City also has a larger population for every age group over the age of 70.

Figure: 1

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS
In order to understand the percentage of seniors in the area that we should expect in the next five years, we look to the rate of change observed over the past five years. The proportion of residents over the age of 65 has increased more for Augusta and for the state of Maine than it has nationally.
AUGUSTA AGE-FRIENDLY

MISSION STATEMENT
Augusta Age-Friendly is devoted to making Augusta, Maine a livable community for all ages; supporting healthy aging by advising the City Council about policy changes that will make Augusta more livable, partnering with community organizations to enhance existing services, and encouraging volunteerism and active citizen participation in the social, economic, and civic life of Augusta.

VISION STATEMENT
Dedicated to making Augusta a Capital Opportunity for living, working, and playing; for all ages!

VALUES
- People of all ages share the need for affordable and safe access to community businesses and services
- Seniors are contributors to the community
- The local economy benefits from age-friendly business development
- Seniors prefer to age in place
- Age-friendly efforts raise awareness of community resources that benefit all ages
HISTORY OF AUGUSTA AGE-FRIENDLY

The Augusta City Council first voted to consider joining the Age Friendly Network during the 2016 goal setting meeting following a grassroots initiative led by Carol and Bob MacDougall working closely with AARP Maine, the Select Board, and municipal departments.

Augusta Age-Friendly applied for and received an AARP-Gorman Foundation planning grant. Three focus groups comprised of Augusta residents and persons employed within the city were held at Cony High School, Lithgow Library and the Inn at City Hall Assisted Living Facility. All were well attended with participants including high school students and senior citizens.

The 2017 Augusta City Council goal setting meeting determined that the city will explore ways to implement recommendations made by Age-Friendly Augusta. Augusta Age-Friendly is currently forming eight sub-committees, one for each of the eight domains of livability from the AARP Age-Friendly Network, to increase our volunteer base and engage volunteers who are not part of the steering committee but have a special interest in one of the eight domains. Work and recommendations for infrastructure or policy changes in each of the eight domains will be reported to the Select Board.
DEVELOPMENT OF AUGUSTA AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN

The Augusta Age-Friendly action plan is based on data compiled from a survey conducted by AARP in 2016, community information, the three focus group meetings, and a public meeting. The public meeting was held at the Buker Community Center, attended by about 40 residents including our local and state community leaders and introduced by the city mayor.

DETAILS OF THE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The Augusta Age-Friendly Committee contracted with AARP to conduct a telephone survey of residents. In addition, the Committee contracted a local firm, Analytic Insight, to analyze the AARP survey data, research census data to create a profile of the Augusta area, conduct three focus groups and provide a written summary of the groups, plan and conduct one large community forum and provide a written summary of the meeting, prepare a list of action alternatives, facilitate a priority setting meeting with the age-friendly committee and work with the committee to develop this report.

Several themes emerged from all of the data sources: the Census information, survey and focus groups, and the community forum. These themes are the need for transportation, meeting places for socialization and improving walkability, each of which is addressed by the committee in the action plan.
During examination of the data sources, several strengths of the area also emerged. These include the natural beauty of the area and the accessibility of natural areas through the Rail Trail, Fort Western, the Pine Tree State Arboretum, and the views of the Kennebec River from many of the city’s vistas. The committee has also addressed these strengths through the action plan, by placing benches throughout the downtown area, for example, to expand seniors’ access to the area by providing a series of resting places.

The full focus group findings and summary of the community forum are included as Appendices to this document.

FOCUS GROUP METHODS
Focus group participants were recruited through public notices and the age-friendly committee spreading the word through local groups and organizations. Groups were held at Lithgow Library, Cony High School and the Inn at City Hall. The focus groups consisted of mostly seniors, with four teens attending the Cony High School group.

The average age of participants was 67 with ages ranging from 16 to 95. Ten men attended and 17 women. The groups were moderated by Amy Flowers of Analytic Insight.

PUBLIC FORUM
A public forum was also held at the City Center and was attended by approximately 40 Augusta residents and Mayor Rollins. Members of the public were invited to attend through notices in the Kennebec Journal and outreach to groups involved in senior interests and issues.

SURVEY
AARP conducted the 2016 City of Augusta Age-Friendly Community Survey. The survey was conducted by telephone and consisted of 316 interviews with residents of Augusta age 50 and older. It included a margin of error of 5.5% at a 95% confidence interval.
THE EIGHT DOMAINS OF LIVABILITY

The purpose of the community assessment was to understand the Augusta area’s strengths and opportunities for improvement regarding eight domains of livability. These domains were developed by the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities and provide a framework to help anticipate the needs of seniors. The discussions in the focus groups and community forum were organized to touch on issues related to each of the domains.

The eight domains are:

1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social Participation
5. Respect and Social Inclusion
6. Civic Participation and Employment
7. Communication and Information
8. Community Support and Health Services
1. OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

CURRENT SERVICES
The survey and focus group results showed that Outdoor Spaces and Buildings is a domain of great interest to many residents. The survey results showed a high percentage of “very good” and “excellent” ratings for easy to read traffic signs (44.7%), well-lit, accessible, safe streets and intersections for all users (36.8%), enforced speed limits (34.2%) and well-maintained streets (31.5%). Well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities (64.3%), conveniently located emergency care centers (43.4%) and conveniently located public parking lots and areas to park including handicapped parking (40.5%) were each also highly rated.

Living in the State Capital is a source of pride and many focus group participants expressed the desire to participate in the public spaces and activities available locally. As one focus group participant said, “You don’t have to go very far to find something to do.” Several improvements appear to be important to enhancing the ability of seniors to participate in Augusta’s outdoor spaces.

GAPS IN SERVICE
During the focus groups, the discussion centered on specific locations such as the rotary circle, where they had experienced difficulty crossing streets. The committee addressed these needs by arranging a visit from a police officer to demonstrate the timing of the lights and help seniors and others with mobility challenges to practice crossing safely.

AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

Benches and resting places at key places
Seniors, those with limited mobility, and many residents benefit from benches or resting places at key placements on city sidewalks and trails. The committee has already been successful in having two benches placed so that seniors and others can sit when waiting for transportation outside Shaws and Hannafords.
The committee is exploring the possibility of constructing benches as a form of public art. Bob MacDougall is working with the Augusta Downtown Alliance art commission through a “Call to Art” request for proposal to design and construct appropriate resting places.

Sidewalk walkability
The sidewalks in extended areas around senior housing need to accommodate walkers, wheelchairs and residents with physical limitations in order to enable these residents to participate in the outdoor spaces available to them. This is a particularly difficult issue in winter, but these areas should be able to accommodate residents of all abilities throughout the year.

Volunteers will be engaged to conduct walking inspections in these areas to help to prioritize repair and snow removal. In addition, they are working with local businesses to raise awareness of the needs for sidewalk maintenance in the downtown area.

Crossing near the rotaries
Pedestrians trying to cross rotary traffic can find it very challenging and even dangerous. Jared Mills, Deputy Chief of Police and Age-Friendly Committee member, explained at the Community Forum that the speed limit around the rotaries is 15 miles per hour. If cars travel at the speed limit pedestrians would be able to cross safely and thus, pedestrian safety is largely a driver education and enforcement issue. The committee will work with the Augusta Police Department in educating the public about the speed issue around rotaries and enhancing speed limit enforcement in priority areas.

During the focus groups, participants expressed concerns about the length of time available to cross Cony street between the Inn at City Hall and Fort Western. The Age-friendly Committee tested the timing of the lights and observed that the timing was adequate for pedestrians to cross, even though the flashing lights might be disconcerting to a pedestrian as they approach mid-crossing.
A demonstration project is being set up with the resource officer from the Augusta Police Department to explain the light timing to the seniors and help them practice street crossings, so that they will be more comfortable and confident about their ability to cross. This demonstration is for residents of The Inn at City Hall, an assisted living facility for low-income individuals in need of daily assistance. This residential facility is located in the historic Augusta City Hall building, which has been restored and renovated into 31 assisted-living apartments. The building is ideally located in the downtown area with access to Augusta’s downtown and the historic Fort Western where many concerts and events are held. After the demonstration, many residents will be able to enjoy the park and events held across the street.

_Gathering places for coffee, small social gatherings_
Several teens from Cony High School attended a focus group that was held at their school. During the discussion, both teens and seniors expressed interest in having a gathering place where they could meet for coffee, access the internet and have small social gatherings. The committee is working with the City’s Economic Development Department and participating in meetings with the department to explore the potential development of an Internet café with comfortable seating in the downtown area.
2. TRANSPORTATION
Transportation underlies several other domains of livability by providing access to community services and social events. The goal of transportation services is to give older adults the ability to reach their destination safely, affordably and independently.

CURRENT SERVICES
The area is currently served by Central Maine Private Transportation, Kennebec Valley Community Action Program (KVCAP) and taxi services. Each of these has limitations with regard to cost, range of services and evening and weekend availability.

GAPS IN SERVICE
Transportation was an area of concern for Augusta residents. The survey results showed that the vast majority of residents over 50 (85.8%) drive themselves as a primary mode of getting around the community. During the focus group held at Cony High School with teenage and senior participants, both the youth and seniors agreed that driving a car is a necessity for getting around the greater Augusta area.

As shown in the chart that follows, less than ten percent of respondents rated any transportation related item as “excellent” and less than half rated any item as either “good”, “very good” or “excellent” combined. In addition, almost one in four survey respondents said the transportation service listed “doesn’t exist” or they were “not sure”.

AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES
Augusta Age-Friendly is reaching out to the neighbor city of Hallowell (also in NAFC) to discuss partnering in a regional transportation program.

Augusta Age-Friendly is participating in a pilot program that offers software management of a volunteer driver program. ITN Country is a low cost rural state pilot program currently being studied in Maine and Tennessee and expected to roll-out nationwide. It connects affiliate communities into a national network that manages logistics for senior transportation services, including ride scheduling and volunteer management.
3. HOUSING
Two-thirds of survey respondents said they live in a single-family home and the majority said they would like to remain in their home as they age. The prevalence of older homes in the area makes repairs and modification especially important and costly for residents who wish to age safely and independently in their own homes.

CURRENT SERVICES
Augusta is home to many contractors and handypersons who are able to help with repairs and modifications. Seniors may need help however, accessing their services and ensuring that services are affordable. In a survey item rating housing and public spaces, availability of “homes that are built with things like a no step entrance, wider doorways, grab bars in bathrooms, and first floor bedrooms and bathrooms” received the lowest average rating among a dozen items.

GAPS IN SERVICE
The challenge for many seniors is accessing existing contractors to make improvements, the cost of hiring contractors, and the trust needed to invite a stranger into one’s home. Affordability is a problem for many of the older residents in our area—10.9% of seniors over the age of 65 in Augusta lives in poverty.

AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES
Augusta Age-Friendly is collaborating with Augusta Housing Authority and the Capital Area Landlord’s Association to address the shortage of senior housing which has a current wait list of up to two years through increased awareness of all resources.

The committee is developing a list of available contractors who may be willing to make low-cost modifications and through which referral information would be made available to interested seniors.
The committee is researching neighboring volunteer programs such as the Village Lodge Handy Brigade, a group of Masons doing repairs for seniors in Richmond and Bowdoinham.

The committee is working with local bankers to develop a Community Support Loan program that will allow residents to borrow up to $2400.00 to make needed modifications or emergency repairs to their homes. The low-interest loans will be available to low-income residents age 60+.

4. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Maine’s Capital City is well known for its leisure and cultural activities. Participating in social activities has many documented benefits including health, better longevity and lower rates of depression. Opportunities to participate socially however, often become more challenging with aging, due to lessened physical abilities, lack of transportation or other barriers.

Over 60% of survey respondents rated conveniently located entertainment venues, activities with senior discounts and continuing education classes or social clubs as being “excellent”, “very good” or “good”. Local schools that involve older adults received a high percentage of “not sure” and “does not exist in my community” responses. The committee is working with Cony High School to address this issue.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>How would you rate your community on social participation opportunities?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Conveniently located entertainment venues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Activities geared specifically towards older adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Activities that offer senior discounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Activities that are affordable to all residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Activities that involve both younger and older people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. A variety of cultural activities for diverse populations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>G. Local schools that involve older adults in events and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Continuing education classes or social clubs to pursue new interests, hobbies or passions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.0%</td>
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**CURRENT SERVICES**
Augusta is truly limited in what it offers for social participation beyond the parks and green spaces. The Buker Community Center offers a place for meetings as does the YMCA. The Lithgow Library was recently renovated and has space available for meetings and groups.

**GAPS IN SERVICE**
Organized social events and intergenerational activities were of interest to focus group and community forum participants such as river walks, farmers markets and sponsored music venues held at city parks. The survey results showed a very high level of awareness of public places for free access to computers and the internet, which may be interpreted as an awareness of some services of the Lithgow Library.

Other available places to meet was the subject of discussion at the focus groups. Participants often named places in the neighboring city of Hallowell, but struggled to name a coffee shop or other venue in Augusta that offers internet service and comfortable seating for seniors and others to meet.

**AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES**
The Age-Friendly Committee is partnering with Cony High School to have students help seniors learn to use computers at the high school.

The Committee is partnering with the Friends of Lithgow Library to raise awareness of places and events by using social media and community access television.
5. RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

During each of the three focus groups, social inclusion and a feeling of belonging were among the most important and most discussed features of aging in the Augusta area. As one respondent said, “everybody knows everybody, and if you ever need anything, there is always someone to help you.”

The survey results also revealed a close-knit community. Almost half of respondents (47%) said they have contact with family, friends or neighbors every day.

![Chart showing how often respondents have contact with family, friends, or neighbors who do not live with them.]

CURRENT SERVICES

The City of Augusta has indicated its desire to include the experiences of older adults in the work planned by the municipality. The City Council and Mayor Rollins have enthusiastically embraced including an aging lens in the economic planning and community development work of the City. Augusta Age-Friendly has been featured on the Mayor’s Desk local cable television program.

GAPS IN SERVICE

Even in a tight-knit community, seniors can be isolated in their homes. The survey also showed that about 5% of seniors have contact with family, friends or
neighbors once a month or less and almost one in 100 respondents said they “never” have contact with family, friends or neighbors.

AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES
Age-Friendly Augusta stickers have been commissioned and printed through AARP. The sticker, which is shown on the cover of this report, was designed by Duane Scott, a member of the Age-friendly Committee. They are being distributed throughout the city and visible at many businesses and public locations. Their purpose is to spread awareness of the efforts to make Augusta more age-friendly and to let seniors know they are welcome and respected throughout the city.

Augusta Age-Friendly is working with the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce and Augusta Downtown Alliance to establish a Certified Age-Friendly Business program. The program is part of a nationwide effort in several communities that rates the level of senior friendliness of restaurants, retail stores, and services.

The City of Augusta has expressed interest in integrating the Age-Friendly plan into the City’s own comprehensive plan. The City, by incorporating the lessons learned about needs of seniors and the strategies we have developed to address them, is demonstrating respect for older residents and a willingness to ensure that they are able to be active in the community as they want to be.
6. CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

It is often a conundrum of the focus groups that the people who attend are very positive about the opportunities for civic participation, given that they are participating in a focus group and are therefore likely to participate in other civic and social events. One focus group participant talked about how much she enjoyed visiting seniors who had trouble getting out, and that she enjoyed talking to them as much as they enjoyed her visit.

Survey respondents were also very positive about the civic participation opportunities in Augusta. Half of respondents or more said that the range of volunteer activities, opportunities to participate in decision making, and availability of information on volunteer opportunities was “good”, “very good” or “excellent.”

Now I am going to ask you about volunteering in your community. How would you rate your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>This service does not exist in your community</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. A range of volunteer activities to choose from</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Volunteer training opportunities to help people perform better in their volunteer roles</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>44.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Opportunities for older adults to participate in decision making bodies such as community</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Easy to find information on available local volunteer opportunities</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>43.6%</td>
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CURRENT SERVICES
There are many opportunities to volunteer in Augusta. Volunteers work with the municipality and with the many non-profits located in Augusta. Training opportunities for volunteers who want to enhance their skills are available through the University of Maine Encore Leadership Core.

Augusta is a hub for non-profit and for-profit businesses. Older workers can look for paid employment and can receive training and support from the Maine Career Center located at 21 Enterprise Drive in Augusta.

GAPS IN SERVICE
The lowest rated item in the Civic Participation and Employment domain was transportation to and from volunteer activities. The committee has several initiatives in progress under the Transportation domain, including a volunteer driver program, which would provide transportation to volunteer activities, as well as additional opportunities for volunteering and making social connections.

AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES
Augusta Age-Friendly is working with Mayor Rollins to establish a social group for recreational and social activities. In addition, many of the initiatives for other domains involve volunteer opportunities for seniors, teens and others such as including a cross-generational program to have high school students offer computer training to seniors at the high school, the addition of an Internet café with comfortable seating in the downtown and improvements to walkability.

The committee recently filmed “The Mayor’s Corner” with the Mayor geared toward highlighting Age-Friendly to the community at large and all of the volunteer opportunities available.
7. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION
Like Transportation, Communication and Information has the potential to effect all of the other domains. If information about available services and events does not reach seniors, services will be underutilized and even the best of social events will have few in attendance. The Augusta Age-Friendly committee is looking at ways to deliver current information to residents regardless of their ability to connect to the Internet or their socioeconomic status.

CURRENT SERVICES
Free access to computers and the Internet in public places was very highly rated by the survey respondents, with 82% saying it was “excellent”, “very good” or “good.” Less than one in ten (7.6%) were unsure or said the service was not available.
GAPS IN SERVICE
Less than half of respondents rated access to community information, including information provided in a number of languages, in large lettering or delivered in-person as being “excellent,” “very good” or “good”. Materials such as the resource guide described below will include large lettering to improve access. According to the Census, just 3.3% of Augusta residents speak English “less than very well.” Thus, it may not be necessary to offer messages in other languages. Materials will be delivered to the Inn at City Hall and other senior residences to offer access to those who may not be able to access them.

AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES
An advertisement has been placed to connect with seniors through the tourism map of Augusta, which will be offered at businesses and locations throughout the city.

A resource guide that pulls together resources for each of the other domains is currently being developed. United Way Quick Reference Cards are also under consideration as a format for distributing the resource guide.

Eight sub-committees of the Age-friendly Committee are posted on the United Way website to recruit volunteers and spread awareness about the opportunities available to be part of the Age-Friendly community. To view, go to: http://uwkv.galaxydigital.com/agency/detail/?agency_id=66596

The Age-Friendly Committee published a series of eight weekly articles in the Kennebec Journal, each focused on a domain and a ninth has followed. The articles were written by committee members Robert MacDougall, Sara Grant, and Roberta Record. Since then, Kennebec Journal has also agreed to print quarterly articles for the Age-Friendly Committee to provide readers with updates on progress made by the committee, issues of interest, and upcoming events. Links to these articles are provided on the following page.
Links to Kennebec Journal Articles


The Committee maintains a Facebook page and posts frequently on Committee events, local activities and other related news (https://www.facebook.com/augusta.age.friendly2016/).

The City of Augusta is developing a new website and the Committee has secured the placement of an age-friendly button with a link leading to information about age-friendly resources and activities.
8. COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES

CURRENT SERVICES
Augusta is home to many health services, including the Alfond Cancer Center, Assistance Plus, Bridges Home Care, Catholic Charities, Concentra, Goold Assessment (formerly Goold Health Systems and now Change HealthCare), Maine General, Aging Excellence and Elder Independence of Maine. A potential opportunity is that all these services are disconnected so coordination of services between them would benefit the community.

GAPS IN SERVICE
Given the excellent health services and community support available in Augusta, the needs discovered by the Age-Friendly research focus on the accessibility of services, particularly for those who have low-income, mobility issues or lack transportation.

AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES
The volunteer driver program will address transportation needs for those who have trouble accessing the available community support and health services available.

The Resource Guide will help seniors connect with these services. The Resource Guide can also direct residents to the local Area Agency on Aging (Spectrum Generations) to obtain referrals from trained Aging & Disability Resource Counselor. Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) provide seniors and adults with disabilities resource and referral information, assistance with applications and health insurance counseling. They often help individuals with low-income find appropriate services to help with medical care, food, housing and other needs.

The committee is working with Augusta Public Works Department to develop a Sand Buckets for Seniors program that will help older residents of Augusta to have sand available for their steps and walkways during the winter months. The
sand buckets will be delivered by students in Cony High School and other community volunteers. The goal of the program is to prevent falls and to increase engagement with community residents.

The Committee Chair has met with the Catholic Charities Search program, the Maine General Retired and Senior Volunteer Program coordinator, a University of Maine Center on Aging Senior Companion Program representative and the Augusta Food Pantry to coordinate activities and explore the potential for sharing resources.
OTHER AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES
The Age-Friendly Committee is utilizing existing community resources and other state resources and available information to avoid duplication and these efforts will support existing programs and services where they are available. These programs include the Spectrum Generation’s Resource File, Augusta Police Department’s Wanderer’s Program, and local elder abuse prevention efforts.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
Age-Friendly Augusta has joined with the Augusta School Department’s Future SEARCH committee to create partnership opportunities, advance intergenerational connections and encourage volunteerism between our school system and the senior community with a goal to be completed by September 2017, output is a policy for volunteer involvement of our senior community and Cony High School within the domain respect and social inclusion and our partner being the Future Search committee with a metric of program implementation for school year 2017-2018.

Age-Friendly Augusta wants to become known throughout our community with people of all ages and organizations, so Augusta Age-Friendly has also reached out and met with the following partners through our communication and information initiative: Augusta First, Family Medical Institute Geriatrics Team, Augusta Downtown Alliance, Wisdum, Capital Area Multi-Faith Association, Capital Area for New Mainers, Kennebec County Sheriff’s Department, Augusta Masons Lodge, Kennebec County Chamber of Commerce, University of Maine Senior College, United Way of Maine, Augusta Food Bank, Spectrum Generations and their Meals on Wheels program, Council on Aging, Maine Primary Care Association, City of Augusta Senior Housing and the National Active and Retired Federal Employees.

COMMUNITY EVENTS
Several scheduled community events are part of our Age-Friendly outreach including an AARP annual shredding event with the Kennebec County Sheriff’s

The Augusta Age-Friendly Committee is looking forward to partnering with community organizations and agencies to participate in other future events, help with coordination efforts, and possibly host future events for the City of Augusta.

PRESENTATIONS

- "The Mayor's Desk" TV Appearance on CTV-7 (Local Channel 7 or 4147)
  https://livestream.com/accounts/1785601/events/6926952/videos/152479

- The UMA Senior College Transportation Forum
  https://maine.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=934a2c02-f00e-4176-98ec-30338272cf6e (Chairperson Robert MacDougall’s speech begins at 27:40).
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<tr>
<td>Benches and resting places at key places</td>
<td>Outdoor Spaces</td>
<td>Improve walkability</td>
<td>Roberta Record Augusta Downtown Alliance Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Buy-in from local businesses, placement of two benches</td>
<td>Placement of two benches (date), expanded use of downtown by seniors and others, increased social involvement and visibility</td>
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<td>Sidewalk walkability</td>
<td>Outdoor Spaces</td>
<td>Improve walkability</td>
<td>Outdoor spaces sub committee</td>
<td>Walkability assessment</td>
<td>Better understanding of areas in need of improvement; better focused efforts for most efficient use of resources, improved walkability and accessibility</td>
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<td>Slow traffic for easier crossing near the rotaries</td>
<td>Outdoor Spaces</td>
<td>Improve walkability by slowing traffic through increased awareness and to review signage</td>
<td>Jared Mills (APD)</td>
<td>Walkability assessment</td>
<td>Improved safety and security for pedestrian crossing and auto traffic, increased number of people crossing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Length of traffic light crossing</td>
<td>Transportatio n</td>
<td>Improve safe street crossing through educational outreach to seniors</td>
<td>Jared Mills (APD) and Robert MacDougall Complete Streets policy in place</td>
<td>Seniors use crossing, eliminate isolation</td>
<td>More residents of the Inn at City Hall using the park and facilities across the street, increased safety and use of crossing for all residents</td>
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<td>Gathering places for coffee, small social gatherings</td>
<td>Outdoor Spaces</td>
<td>Provide socialization opportunities for seniors and teens, improving intergenerational interaction</td>
<td>Outdoor spaces sub committee Augusta Downtown Alliance</td>
<td>Creation of community venue for socialization of coffee shop or venue for socialization</td>
<td>Café in the downtown area, increased foot traffic in downtown, increased opportunities for social interaction for seniors, teens and other residents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gather public transit information with adjacent towns</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Improve transportation options</td>
<td>Transportation sub committee City manager</td>
<td>Cooperation and resource sharing between City and committee</td>
<td>Access to transportation throughout greater Augusta area for travel between towns, increased access to services and goods outside of Augusta for people with transportation needs</td>
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<td>Volunteer driver program</td>
<td>Transportatio</td>
<td>Improve transportation options</td>
<td>Robert MacDougall</td>
<td>Acquisition of software, program implementation, # of drivers, riders</td>
<td>Access to transportation throughout area for seniors, low-income, adults with disabilities</td>
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<td>Work with Augusta Housing Authority and Capital Area Landlords Association to address the availability of senior housing</td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Improve availability of low-income housing units, assisted living options and other housing for seniors</td>
<td>Dan Nichols</td>
<td>Meetings, cooperation on program</td>
<td>Available housing suitable for seniors, including low-income, accessible for mobility challenged, centrally located</td>
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<td>List of contractors willing to make low-cost modifications</td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Improve housing for seniors</td>
<td>Housing sub committee</td>
<td>List/Resource Guide</td>
<td>Improved access to home improvements for seniors, including low-income seniors, improved safety and accessibility for existing housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer program for home repairs for seniors</td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Improve housing for seniors</td>
<td>Housing sub committee Augusta Masonic Lodge Shriners</td>
<td>Program implementation/ Number of participants, volunteers, repairs made</td>
<td>Improved access to home improvements for seniors, including low-income seniors, improved safety and accessibility for existing housing</td>
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<td>Age-Friendly Community Support Loans</td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Encourage banking community to offer low-interest home modification loans under $2400 to low-income older homeowners</td>
<td>Robert MacDougall</td>
<td>Number of Loans made</td>
<td>Improved ability of low-income seniors to make needed modifications to their homes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intergenerational community programs within Augusta school system</td>
<td>Social Inclusion &amp; Respect</td>
<td>Implement intergenerational social and educational opportunities</td>
<td>Cony High Future Search</td>
<td>Program implementation/ Number of participants</td>
<td>Improved tech skills for seniors, increased access to Internet, relationships between seniors and students, improvements to cross-generational knowledge and respect</td>
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<td><strong>Use social media and community access television to raise awareness of available opportunities</strong></td>
<td>Communication &amp; Community Support</td>
<td>Educate seniors about meeting places, social opportunities, Age-Friendly Committee</td>
<td>Sara Grant</td>
<td>Number of airings on CCTV; resident awareness of tv spots, available opportunities, # of media hits, presentations and social media engagements</td>
<td>Improved knowledge of available opportunities, greater access to opportunities to participate for those with no access to written materials, including the Blind or visually impaired</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sticker Campaign - downtown</strong></td>
<td>Communication &amp; Information</td>
<td>Educate public about age-friendly project</td>
<td>Robert MacDougall and Sara Grant</td>
<td>Number of stickers distributed Over 1,300 stickers distributed (date)</td>
<td>Awareness of age-friendly initiatives, improved respect for seniors, greater involvement of public in the initiatives</td>
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<td>Sticker Campaign - city buildings, businesses</td>
<td>Communication &amp; Information</td>
<td>Educate public about age-friendly project</td>
<td>Robert MacDougall</td>
<td>Number of stickers distributed</td>
<td>Awareness of age-friendly initiatives, improved respect for seniors, greater involvement of public in the initiatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with Mayor Rollins on social groups</td>
<td>Social Participation</td>
<td>Expand socialization opportunities</td>
<td>Mayor Rollins</td>
<td>Program implementation/ Number of participants</td>
<td>Increased awareness of age-friendly initiatives and resources, more volunteers for events, more awareness of issues impacting seniors, low-income adults and adults with disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quarterly articles in the Kennebec Journal</td>
<td>Communicatio and Information</td>
<td>Educate public about age-friendly services and activities</td>
<td>Robert MacDougall</td>
<td>Number of articles/newspaper reach</td>
<td>Increased awareness of age-friendly initiatives and resources, more volunteers for events, more awareness of issues impacting seniors, low-income adults and adults with disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age-friendly ad in the tourism map of downtown Augusta</td>
<td>Communicatio and Information Community Support</td>
<td>Educate public about age-friendly services and activities</td>
<td>Robert MacDougall Augusta Downtown Alliance</td>
<td>Number of maps distributed</td>
<td>Increased awareness of age-friendly initiatives and resources, more volunteers for events, more awareness of issues impacting seniors, low-income adults and adults with disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Facebook page</strong></td>
<td>Communication and Information</td>
<td>Educate public about age-friendly services and activities</td>
<td>Sara Grant</td>
<td>Number of people reached, likes per post, number of followers</td>
<td>Increased awareness of age-friendly initiatives and resources, more volunteers for events, more awareness of issues impacting seniors, low-income adults and adults with disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>City website’s Age-Friendly button</strong></td>
<td>Communication and Information</td>
<td>Educate public about age-friendly services and activities</td>
<td>Dan Nichols City of Augusta</td>
<td>Number of people reached (page hits); 256 followers as of April 2017</td>
<td>Increased awareness of age-friendly initiatives and resources, more volunteers for events, more awareness of issues impacting seniors, low-income adults and adults with disabilities</td>
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<td>Resource Guide</td>
<td>Community and Health Services</td>
<td>Expand seniors’ access to information about services and events</td>
<td>Sara Grant</td>
<td>Number of guides distributed</td>
<td>Increased access to services, contractors, transportation and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way Clearinghouse to avoid duplication of efforts</td>
<td>Communication and Information</td>
<td>Increase volunteerism through listing at: <a href="http://uwkv.galaxydigital.com/need/">http://uwkv.galaxydigital.com/need/</a></td>
<td>Robert MacDougall United Way website</td>
<td>Number of volunteers recruited</td>
<td>Increased volunteerism, increased exposure, stronger partnership with United Way</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnership with the Augusta Police Department for elderly wellness checks</td>
<td>Community Support and Health Services</td>
<td>Develop a mechanism for check-ins with isolated seniors</td>
<td>Jared Mills Sara Grant</td>
<td>Number of check-in participants</td>
<td>Reduction in senior isolation, identification of seniors with severe needs so that they can be connected with appropriate services</td>
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<td>Age-Friendly Community Support Loans</td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Encourage banking community to offer low-interest emergency loans under $2400 to low-income seniors</td>
<td>Robert MacDougall</td>
<td>Number of Loans made – there needs to be some type of follow up on this.</td>
<td>Improved ability of low-income seniors to deal with a crisis or emergency</td>
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<td>Certified Age-Friendly Business Program</td>
<td>Community Support Civic Participation</td>
<td>Economic Growth &amp; Development</td>
<td>Robert MacDougall, Chamber of Commerce, City of Augusta, Augusta Downtown Alliance</td>
<td>Businesses Participating AND Businesses Expressing Interest in obtaining certification</td>
<td>Increased awareness of age-friendly initiatives and resources, partnerships with local businesses</td>
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<td><strong>Sand Buckets for Seniors</strong></td>
<td>Community Support and Health Services</td>
<td>Provide free winter sand to seniors</td>
<td>Sara Grant, Augusta Public Works</td>
<td>Number of sand buckets distributed</td>
<td>Fewer falls, increased access for seniors to downtown, services and other areas of Augusta during winter season</td>
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APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Introduction
Thank you all for coming along today and volunteering your time.

The purpose of this group is to understand what it is like to grow older in Augusta, what the good things and the bad things are and what the City and the residents can do to make Augusta more age-friendly.

There are no right or wrong answers. Every person's opinion is important. Your names will not be used in any reporting on the group.

The session is being tape-recorded so that I can go back and fill in my notes after the group is over. I may quote you in a report, but your name and any identifying information would not be included.

So that we can understand the tape it is important that only one person speaks at a time, and we will make sure that everyone gets a chance to have their say.

Group Introductions
So we can get to know each other a little bit before we start, let’s go around and each person tell the group your first name and who the oldest person is that you know in Augusta. I’ll start....

Challenges of Aging in Augusta
What are the challenges of aging in Augusta? Write down the first three things that come to mind on your handout.

Discussion

Assets of Age-Friendly Augusta
What are the good things about growing older in Augusta? What assets do you think the community has that are helpful to older people?

Write down the first things that come to mind.
Discussion.

Do you want to stay in Augusta as you grow older?

**Discussion of Livability Domains**

**OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS**
What is it like to step outside of your home to go for a walk to get fresh air, run errands or visit?

What is it like to go into buildings, such as public offices or stores?

Cover accessibility, sidewalks and restrooms.

**TRANSPORTATION**
What is it like to drive in your community? How is the signage, road width, ease of navigating, parking?

How many here have used public transportation in the past 6 months? Ever? What are the barriers to using?

**HOUSING**
What kinds of changes do you think you might need to make to your home to continue living there as you grow older?

What are the alternatives if your needs change, what are your choices for housing in the community?

What are the challenges to staying in your home? Do you want to stay? For what reasons?

**SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**
In what ways does your community include older people in activities and events?

What are the opportunities for socializing? What are the barriers to participation?

Volunteering?
RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
How does the community show respect for you as an older person?
How can they show more?

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT
How easily can you socialize in your community?
Are activities like concerts, recreation or spiritual activities easy to find out about? How do you learn about what is going on?
How many here currently volunteer?
How do you find information about volunteering? Do you think volunteers are currently used well? Are the opportunities available? Transportation?

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION
How do you find out information you need about services? Where would you look?
What is your experience getting the information you need in your community, for example, about services or events?

COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES
What is your experience with the services in the community to help older persons? What needs exist that are not currently being met? What efforts are underway to provide more or better services?

WRAP UP
Are there any issues that we haven’t discussed that you would like to raise?

Thank you so much for coming!
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Introduction
This report presents the results of three focus groups held in Augusta Maine in January 2017. The groups were held at Lithgow Library, Cony High School and the Inn at City Hall. Members of the public were invited to attend through notices in the Kennebec Journal and outreach to groups involved in senior interests and issues. The groups were moderated by Amy Flowers of Analytic Insight.

COMPOSITION OF THE GROUPS
The groups consisted of mostly elders, with four teens attending the high school group. The average age of participants was 67 with ages ranging from 16 to 95. Ten men attended and 17 women.

DISCUSSION FORMAT
The groups began with an introduction and overview of the purpose of the focus group, followed by participant introductions. Each participant filled out a brief survey that included a listing of their perception of the biggest advantages and challenges of aging in Augusta, in addition to a few demographic questions including age, sex and employment status. Participants completed their handouts before discussing the issues with other participants.
KEY FINDINGS

ADVANTAGES OF AGING IN AUGUSTA
The most commonly mentioned advantage of aging in the Augusta area is the people, neighbors and residents that provide a sense of community (12 participants). In addition, the availability of a range of services and businesses were mentioned by eight participants, and several ascribed this to Augusta being the state Capital.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages of the Aging in the Augusta Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People and sense of community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of services and businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rail trail and local natural beauty</td>
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<tr>
<td>UMA Senior College or Book club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of medical care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library and museums</td>
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<tr>
<td>Available housing options</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety and low crime rate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social activities</td>
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COMMUNITY
“Everybody knows everyone and if you ever need something there is always someone to help you.” Participants overwhelmingly agreed in each of the three focus groups that the friendliness and community atmosphere is a great asset to the Augusta area for both seniors and youth. The Kennebec River heritage, including the natural beauty, the historic buildings, public events and the centrality of services were features associated with being the capital of the state.

During the discussion of the advantages Augusta has to offer, several participants noted that many free concerts and social events are available to residents, but that residents who are unable to drive may not have attend the events.

Several respondents described Augusta as a safe place to be, where there is little worry regarding crime. Others however, felt that the downtown area does not always feel safe
for older residents. In addition, the safety of the downtown area was diminished for some
by businesses that do not clean their sidewalks of snow and ice in the winter.

BRIDGING THE GAPS
Some respondents in the Cony High School group expressed the desire to have events
and activities that would help bridge the gap between younger and older residents by
including both groups. As one respondent said “I fell that there’s a line between young
and old.” This same respondent, a teenager, said that as a result of the focus group
discussion she already felt more understanding for older people.

In addition to bringing young and older residents together, the groups included some
discussion of the importance of an intercultural dialogue. A high school student
suggested building on the intercultural work done at the high school to build “dialogue
groups” that include seniors and high school students, working together. High school
students already have a requirement of five hours of community services each year, and
this could be utilized to help seniors and build a robust intergenerational exchange.

The high school clubs were also discussed as a way to bring seniors and students
together. The Latin club, French club and Key club were mentioned as places where
seniors might choose an interest that corresponds with their interests or skills and
participate in a group with high school students. An “adopt-a-senior” program or tutoring
programs could also help to bridge these gaps and bring benefits to all residents, young
and old.

The group of seniors residing at The Inn at City Hall were very interested in participating
in volunteer and other activities. The barrier preventing them from participating is
transportation. If transportation could be provided, interest in volunteering and
participating in co-generational events appeared to be high.
DISADVANTAGES OF AGING IN AUGUSTA
Transportation was by far the most frequently mentioned challenge for aging residents of Augusta (18 participants).

The weather also presents a challenge, in addition to the unique geography of the area, including the hills and the traffic patterns, which can be difficult for pedestrians to navigate.

TRANSPORTATION
One participant noted that her greatest fear was no longer being able to drive, because of the difficulty of using public transportation. Another noted that the KV Van transportation program, which offers door-to-door van and volunteer driver services to elderly, disabled and low income passengers, does not help passengers with packages bring them into their homes. In addition, there is often a wait for the van pick up without seating or shelter.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
Although the hills and topography of the area was named as a challenging feature for seniors, some respondents named malls, the hospital or Barnes and Noble as places that seniors can walk or gather when weather prohibits outdoor activity. Several residents of The Inn at City Hall mentioned the importance of a bench or resting spot when they are out walking.
Conclusions
The residents of Augusta were seen as one of the cities greatest assets throughout the three focus group discussions. This asset can be utilized through:

1. Establishing a communication network for better access to events and services
2. Mobilizing volunteers
3. Establishing volunteers to provide needed services such as in-home repairs or transportation

Transportation was the greatest concern, along with limited walkability, particularly in the winter months. These two issues, lack of transportation and limited walkability serve to isolate seniors.

A word cloud is a graphic that summarizes open-ended, verbatim comments. The larger the number of times a word was mentioned, the larger it appears in print.

The word cloud that follows shows all of the comments written by the focus groups participants on the advantages of aging in Augusta. The largest words represent important themes – the Rail Trail, people, beautiful (area), services, UMA, facilities and community are all assets of the Augusta community to build upon.
Focus Group Appendix A: Verbatim Comments

ADVANTAGES OF AGING IN AUGUSTA

1. Access to I 95  
2. Activities nearby  
3. Any agency, service or commercial venture is available  
4. Awareness of all levels of needs  
5. Availability of services for aging persons  
6. Beautiful people  
7. Beautiful pretty serene  
8. Beauty of living on the lake  
9. Better than dying  
10. Bus, though limited  
11. Caring community  
12. Concern and loving care at the Inn  
13. Central location  
14. Everyone knows their neighbors  
15. Everything is close by  
16. Everything within reasonable driving distance  
17. Excellent city services like fire, police and ambulance  
18. Extra special food  
19. Family lives nearby  
20. Friendly population  
21. Friendly, caring people  
22. Good medical support  
23. Good place to live  
24. Hospital is new and well-equipped  
25. Housing options  
26. Library  
27. Lithgow Library and the Arboretum  
28. Living at this beautiful Inn  
29. Local health care facilities  
30. Maine State museum  
31. Medical facilities  
32. Medical facilities  
33. Neighbors  
34. Nice people
35. No traffic
36. Positive peers
37. Progressive City Council
38. Proximity of businesses, hospital and services
39. Quiet life in a friendly neighborhood
40. Rail Trail
41. Rail Trail
42. Rail Trail
43. Rail Trail
44. Safety
45. Safety and low crime rate
46. Small city friendliness
47. Small community
48. State capital has multiple services available
49. State Museum, UMA and Fort Western
50. There are a lot of nursing homes and assisted living for independent living.
51. UMA Book club and adult education
52. UMA Senior college
53. Wonderful loving supportive people
54. YMCA

DISADVANTAGES OF AGING IN AUGUSTA

55. Ability to stay active especially in winter
56. Ability to stay in home and deal with winter
57. Activities
58. Activities
59. Affordable housing
60. Bridge the gap between younger and older residents
61. Businesses on Water Street
62. City is divided geographically, with no center
63. Communicating information for all people
64. Distance from airlines
65. Getting around safely as a pedestrian
66. Getting to shopping and appointments
67. Hills
68. Housing
69. Housing options
70. Housing that matches elders needs
71. Lack of gathering spots
72. Lack of walkability
73. Lack of walkability, especially in winter
74. More options are needed for status and wellness checks by neighbors or community services
75. No great places to go or a community hub
76. Pedestrian access and safety
77. Physical isolation and rural areas
78. Politicians who cannot differentiate between Augusta the Capital and Augusta the City
79. Public transportation
80. Sidewalks
81. Sidewalks
82. Sidewalks
83. Snow
84. Social Isolation
85. Staying connected with others face to face
86. Taxes
87. Taxes
88. Taxes
89. Transportation
90. Transportation
91. Transportation
92. Transportation
93. Transportation
94. Transportation
95. Transportation
96. Transportation
97. Transportation
98. Transportation
99. Transportation
100. Transportation
101. Transportation
102. Transportation
103. Transportation
104. Transportation
105. Transportation
106. Transportation
107. Unsafe areas
108. Winter
FOCUS GROUP APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP HANDOUT

What are the biggest advantages of aging in Augusta?

1. ______
2. ______
3. ______

What are the greatest challenges of aging in Augusta?

1. ______
2. ______
3. ______
APPENDIX C: COMMUNITY ASSETS

Understanding what community assets are available is a crucial step in determining what changes and improvements will make the community more age-friendly. In addition to the focus groups, information on community assets was collected by the Augusta Age-Friendly committee. These assets are listed below.

EDUCATION
1. Augusta Adult Education
2. Kaplan University
3. Lithgow Library
4. State Library
5. UMA

TRANSPORTATION
6. Augusta Regional Airport (Delta airlines)
7. Central Maine Private Transportation
8. KVCAP
9. Taxi
10. Uber

MEDICAL
11. Elder Independence of Maine
12. Alfond Cancer Center
13. Assistance Plus
14. Bridges Home Care
15. Catholic Charities
16. Concentra
17. Goold Assessment
18. Maine General
19. Aging Excellence

PUBLIC SAFETY
20. Augusta Police Department
21. State Police
22. Kennebec County Sheriff's Dept.
23. Fire & Rescue

HOUSING
24. 98 Water Street Apartments
25. Chateau Cushnoc
26. Hodgkins
27. Inn at City Hall
28. Flatiron Apartments
29. Kennebec Plaza
30. John Marvin Towers
OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

PUBLIC PARKS AND PLACES
31. Bicentennial Park
32. Bond Brook Park
33. Bond Brook Park
34. Calumet Playground
35. Capitol Park
36. Cunningham Park
37. East Side Boat landing
38. Front Street Park
39. Gage Street Park
40. Greenway
41. Market Square Park
42. McCall’s playground
43. Mill Park
44. Mt. Vernon Playground
45. Pleasant
46. Savage Park
47. Trail Systems (UMA & Kennebec Rail Trail)
48. Williams Playground
49. Memorial Park
50. Youth Memorial Park

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
51. Augusta Recreation Program
52. Maine General Fitness Programs
53. YMCA

PRIVATELY OWNED PARKS WITH PUBLIC ACCESS
54. Augusta Nature Center
55. Pine State Arboretum
56. University of Maine at Augusta

PRIVATE FACILITIES
57. Anytime Fitness
58. Cross Fit Gym
59. Fort Western
60. GEvolution Fitness
61. Planet Fitness
62. Spectrum Generations/Matter of Balance Program
63. United Fitness
APPENDIX D: SURVEY RESULTS

Livability for All in the City of Augusta
An Age-Friendly Community Survey of Residents Age 50-Plus

Community Information
1. 78% majority of residents age 50-plus own their home
2. 68% of respondents currently live in a single family home
3. 43% of respondents have lived in their community for over 30 years

Community Insight
1. 77% rated their community as excellent, very good or good place for people to live as they age
2. 64% of respondents say remaining in their current home is extremely or very important
3. 64% of respondents say remaining in their current community is extremely or very important

Did You Know?
- Community residents age 50-plus have resided in their community an average of...32 years
- Community residents age 50-plus have lived in their home an average of...22 years

Did You Know?
- Top two factors that influence residents to move as they age...
- 47% say wanting a home that will help them live independently as they age is a major factor
- 36% say the cost of maintaining their current residence is a major factor

Majority of residents age 50-plus expect to stay in their home or community as they age.
- 57% of residents are more likely to...stay in their current residence and never move
- 22% of residents are more likely to...move to a different community
- 15% of residents are more likely to...move into a different residence in their community
# Age-Friendly Community Domains of Livability

## Community & Health Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 2 Features</th>
<th>Extremely/very good</th>
<th>Bottom 2 Features</th>
<th>Fair/poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>Affordable fitness activities for older adults</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful and helpful hospital and clinic staff</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>Conveniently located emergency care centers</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Did You Know?** 77% of respondents say they consider their health to be excellent, very good, or good.

## Civic Participation & Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 2 Features</th>
<th>Extremely/very good</th>
<th>Bottom 2 Features</th>
<th>Fair/poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A range of volunteer activities to choose from</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for older adults to participate in decision making bodies</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>Job training opportunities for older adults</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Did You Know?** 29% of respondents say they are employed.

## Social Participation, Respect & Inclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 2 Features</th>
<th>Extremely/very good</th>
<th>Bottom 2 Features</th>
<th>Fair/poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuing education classes or social clubs</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>A variety of cultural activities for diverse populations</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities that offer senior discounts</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>Activities geared specifically towards older adults</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Did You Know?** 89% of respondents say they are in contact with family, friends, or neighbors weekly.

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*Source: 2016 AARP Age-Friendly Community Survey of the City of Augusta Residents Age 50–Plus*

*For more information, contact: Joanne Binette, AARP Research, jbinette@aarp.org*

*www.aarp.org/2016agefriendlycommunity*
The Augusta Age Friendly committee is a group of Augusta residents who are working toward improving the livability of the Augusta community and the ability of residents of all ages, incomes and abilities to live independently and comfortably in the area.

The committee recently contracted with AARP to conduct a survey of Augusta residents over the age of 50. In addition, they contracted a local firm, Analytic Insight, to conduct a series of three focus groups, a public forum and a strategic planning session.

This report presents the results and lessons learned from the public meeting, held February 8, 2017 at the Buker Center in Augusta. Approximately 40 people attended the meeting, including Mayor David Rollins.

Contents of the Presentation
Dr. Amy Flowers of Analytic Insight presented the results of the survey and focus groups. The presentation was structured around AARP’s eight domains of livability:

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information
- Community and Health Services

The PowerPoint presentation slides that were used as a discussion point are included as an appendix to this document.
Public Discussion of the Issues
The discussion focused on the domains that were appeared to be the greatest challenges based on the surveys and focus group discussions. These included Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, particularly with regard to walkability, benches and rest stops, Transportation, particularly public transportation and ride-sharing, Social Participation and Communication and Information.

Establishing Common Goals
The focus group conducted at Cony High School included three high school students. The discussion touched on some of the comments made by the high school students regarding the potential for mixed age events and using high school student volunteerism requirements to provide services for seniors and for livability projects that would benefit both teens and older residents.

Identifying Partnering Opportunities
An important part of the public discussion focused on establishing partnering opportunities and building on existing services. Spectrum Generations, for example, currently provides a range of services for seniors including health and wellness classes. KVCAP provides transportation and may be receptive to working with the committee and others on expanding transportation services available to seniors.

Conclusions of the Public Meeting
The strong public turnout for the meeting was an indication of public interest in improving the livability of the area, especially related to the needs of older residents. As observed in the focus group discussions, the public meeting also included strong interest in intergenerational approaches to meeting the needs of both seniors and youth. Transportation was recognized as a fundamental need that often underlies other needs, as many people lack transportation to attend social events,
engage in volunteer opportunities and participate fully in all the Augusta community has to offer.

Slide Presentation: