

Wauwatosa Senior Commission
Planning Document for 2017 and beyond
developed October 17th & November 21st, 2016

Mission: To affirm dignity and value for all aging Wauwatosans by:

- Advocating for identified issues or concerns that effect all aging Wauwatosans
- Linking seniors with existing social, health, financial, and support agencies
- Respecting overall physical, social, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional well-being
- Conducting a community assessment to determine strengths and needs
- Communicating assessment findings and recommendations to guide future planning within our community

2017 Goals (proposed revision)

Goal 1: Enhance communication so that more seniors and caregivers are aware of available resources and more community members and policymakers are aware of seniors and their issues.

Background: The Senior Commission serves as the liaison between older adults, policymakers, program administrators, and other stakeholder audiences. Examples of Commission strategies related to communication:

- “Adding Life to Years” 2015 survey
- Brochures
- Advocating for a senior liaison in neighborhood association

Proposed Strategies:

A) Increase the dissemination points of senior information and news to include additional newsletters and places where seniors gather**

* Church bulletins, NAC News blasts, Newswatch for Block Captains, McDonalds, George Webb’s, Maxfields, Denny’s, beauty salons, churches, Hart Park senior center, Wauwatosa Senior Club (library), pharmacies, Mayfair Mall, grocery stores, doctors’ offices, library, residential facilities, Tosa Now, Recreation Dept., Facebook pages maintained by City and by Senior Commission organizations, Tosa public access channel, newsletters of organizations serving seniors (Interfaith, Froedtert, Meals on Wheels, etc.)

1. Develop an electronic dissemination list
2. Determine which community sites need print materials
3. Develop list of who will distribute to each

B) Continue to develop the Senior Liaison initiative within the Neighborhood Associations

1. Create a “job description” for Senior Liaisons
2. Determine how to best disseminate information to Senior Liaisons
3. Recruit/select 1-2 Senior Liaisons for the Senior Commission

Measuring Success: (Note: *The Commission should consider measurable outcomes to answer the question, “How will we know if we have succeeded?”*)

Goal 2: Develop, promote and enhance “**senior-friendly**” initiatives in Wauwatosa.

Background: The Senior Commission has taken steps to explore models of senior-friendliness in neighboring communities. At the same time, a Memory Café has opened at Cranky Al’s and the Health Department developed a community education series under the umbrella of “dementia-friendliness”. After discussion of the overlap and differences between “senior-friendliness” and “dementia-friendliness”, the Commission decided to keep the focus general, i.e., senior-friendliness, while ensuring that efforts are made to incorporate “dementia-friendly” components under this umbrella.

What does a senior friendly Wauwatosa look like?

- Older people feel connected
- Seniors and their caregivers know where to turn to for help
- Seniors are involved in community activities
- Seniors feel safe and comfortable in own home
- There is designated seating is available for seniors school events, public events,
- Seniors are asked what they really want
- A mix of generations, seniors and young families are aware of each other and get together
- Neighbors know how to be helpful to older neighbors
- Community facilities are accessible and easy to navigate
- Housing is affordable for seniors; services to maintain housing are available and reliable
- More sidewalks have curb cuts

- There's an awareness of seniors and senior issues throughout the community

Additional dementia friendly components to consider:

- Education at the grocery stores & places of business
- Community member education (could be similar to the school district's "first aid for mental health" initiative)
- Dementia training for community organizations
- Repeating the Health Dept's community education series on dementia (with additional marketing)

After discussion and voting, members decided that the following are priority issues for the Commission to pursue under Goal 2.

- Ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of housing that is safe and affordable for seniors (8 votes)
- Broadening intergenerational interaction (6 votes)
- Working to make seniors feel connected to the community (6 votes)
- Promoting dementia friendliness in various community sectors (5 votes)
- Increasing the senior-friendliness/accessibility of the city's public infrastructure (5 votes)

Developing community partnerships to ensure that a variety of stakeholders are around the table for discussion of strategies is essential.

Potential Partners for Goal 2 priority issues

1) Housing: It's important for seniors to feel safe and comfortable in their homes, whether they are owners or renters. There needs to be a sufficient supply of housing in Wauwatosa that is affordable and accessible for seniors. Residents who are homeowners also need to be able to find reliable home maintenance contractors.

Partners to bring to the table to discuss the issue of **affordable housing**

City Development office (Paulette Enders)

City Plan Commission – focused on land use

Community Development Common Council (Cheryl Berdan)

Developers responsible for Hawthorne Glen; Hart Park; the development behind Pick & Save;

Reilly-Joseph Company (subsidized property @124th and North Ave.)

– fact finding in terms of process and challenges to building affordable housing

Realtors' representative
Seniors – facility residents, community residents

Partners to bring to the table to discuss the issue of **home maintenance/repair**

City Development Block Grant official (Jen Ferguson)
Interfaith Neighborhood Outreach Program
Rebuilding Together Milwaukee
Someone with background in preventing fraud
A resident who uses Angie's List
Neighborhood Association representative

The first question to discuss: Is the supply enough to meet demand? Is it a linkage problem or a supply problem?

Partners to bring to the table to discuss the issue of **safety**

Fire & Police Departments – environmental scan programs
Health department
Milwaukee County Department on Aging/Adult Protective Services Unit
Someone with an architectural background in senior design & accessibility
Someone with an OT background
Seniors

The first step is to convene a focus group of seniors to assess their perceptions and priorities in terms of safety.

2) Intergenerational Interaction: It's important that our neighborhoods are comprised of people of many ages and that they are aware of each other and have opportunities to interact.

Partners to bring to the table to discuss the issue of **intergenerational interaction**

Those already involved in intergenerational activities (Lutheran Home, Senior Buddies, Hawthorne Terrace)
Superintendent of Wauwatosa Schools
Wauwatosa Catholic school principal
Neighborhood Association representative
Wauwatosa Recreation Department
Wauwatosa Public Library
Interfaith Neighborhood Outreach Program
Police Department (Tosa Night Out)
Business Improvement District BID (Senior Day)

The first question to ask is what type of intergenerational opportunities are already available? How do we promote these? How do we do a better job of accommodating /attracting seniors in

terms of community events?(Note: The “Generations United” international intergenerational conference will be held in Milwaukee June 14-17 2017.)

3) Connectedness: It’s important for seniors to feel connected to the community and to each other.

Partners to bring to the table to discuss the issue of promoting **connectedness**

Seniors

Neighborhood Association

Congregations

Senior Dining Program

Wauwatosa Public Library & someone involved with Little Free Libraries

Interfaith Neighborhood Outreach Program

Senior Clubs (Wauwatosa Women’s, Suburban Women’s)

Block Watch Captains

A School

Questions to start with: How can we promote a sense of connectedness to the community and to each other? How can we ensure that seniors and their caregivers know where to turn for resources? How can we help residents who want to help their senior neighbors?

Other issues of importance to the Commission

4) Dementia friendliness (5 votes): Education for places of business, community members, community organizations; offering the Health Department education series again - partner with the Library, Froedtert.

5) Infrastructure (5 votes): Promoting walk-ability by placing more benches along walking paths and sidewalks; designating senior seating at school and other public events; increasing the accessibility of public facilities; analyzing the timing of lights at intersections to allow seniors enough time to cross; ensuring every bus stop as a bench; instituting more curb cuts at intersections.

Next steps

- Identify Commission members interested in working in each of the 3 priority areas
- Figuring out what is needed to move the issue forward, i.e., additional data or discussion? A preliminary meeting with a stakeholder to gauge interest?
- Convene a meeting of potential partners and/or form a work group
- Develop a work plan with both long term and short-term strategies. Look for areas of early success, i.e., where’s the low-hanging fruit?
- Develop outcome measures to answer the question, “How will we know if we’ve succeeded?”

Additional Background: Wauwatosa at a glance

Assets for Seniors:

- Considered a walk-able community
- Respected, connected health department w/ a focus on senior issues
- Sense of moving forward
- City leadership is on board with senior focus
- Many excellent community facilities – Hart Park Senior Center, Lutheran Home, Interfaith Neighborhood Outreach
- Multigenerational neighborhoods, strong community school connections
- Excellent health care centers, research park
- Park system, walking opportunities. pedestrian/ bike trail
- Strong churches & congregations
- Respected fire and police departments – Pulse Point, senior home assessments, welfare checks
- Neighborhood Association Council & associations
- Block watch
- Transit system & Go Pass
- Memory Café at Cranky Al’s
- Library - developing a dementia resource center. Known as an excellent library
- Alzheimer’s Association SE asset – close to Wauwatosa; 24 hour help line
- Good restaurants, retail, groceries, mall, smaller groceries—friendly
- Local theaters

Barriers for Seniors:

- Transportation, particularly individual rides for shopping, church, beauty salon, and for people who don’t drive (at night, winter)
- A way to reach people who are 85 who are living alone
- Lack of affordable options for senior housing
- Home maintenance and repair - affordable and reliable
- Chore/housekeeping services - affordable & reliable
- Fear of being removed from their home by others coming in, e.g., social services
- Seniors being targeted by scammers
- “Invisibility” of seniors in the community
- Community Festivals, events and activities not inclusive for elders. Could do more in terms of transportation, seating, timing, opportunities, senior drop off area
- Public seating – more benches needed to promote walking
- Senior parking at shopping areas & other places
- Timing of street lights and crossing guards for walk-ability

- Infrastructure to reach out to vulnerable people in a way that is not demeaning or threatening, e.g. making an effort to band together to help people get to the food pantry
- Seniors don't want to bother people, can be set in their ways
- City departments are not always customer-friendly with older adults; training is needed for City officials to help seniors
- Need to ramp up communication efforts
- Need for a clearinghouse for information about senior resources
- Money for work of Senior Commission limits our scope: (budget is \$3,000+)
- HIPPA laws – everything is so private

Development of this plan was facilitated by

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