



AGE-FRIENDLY PLANNING

A GUIDE BOOK FOR ALL



DECEMBER 2023

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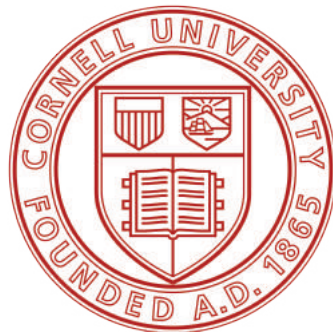
This report can be found at <https://labs.aap.cornell.edu/node/920>

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Overview

Tompkins County Framework

Tompkins County, a state-designated Age Friendly Center for Excellence, adopted the “Flower Framework” in its 2022 Age Friendly Ithaca and Tompkins County Action Plan. This framework, supported by the County Office for the Aging (COFA), is the basis for this guidebook, which defines and provides local examples and actions for each petal of the age-friendly flower.



Flower Framework from the Age Friendly Tompkins County Action Plan (2022)

International & National Frameworks

The World Health Organization’s (WHO) “Global Age-friendly Cities” guide and UNICEF’s “Building Child Friendly Cities” framework identify age-friendly principles at an international level, while the AARP Liveable Communities Framework and the American Planning Association’s (APA) Aging in Community Policy Guide identify national- and state-level age-friendly principles. These cross-level frameworks complement the Tompkins County Flower Framework and this guidebook.

Why our Guidebook?

Planning boards across Tompkins County are filled with volunteers looking to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their communities. Volunteers need adequate resources to make the best planning decisions for their communities, and these guidelines illustrate how planning boards can make planning meetings, review, and engagement more age-friendly.



Interviews with Local Organizations

- COFA
- Tompkins County Planning
- Ithaca Youth Bureau
- NY Department of State
- Town of Lansing Planning Department
- Town of Danby Planning Department



Literature Review

- WHO & UNICEF
- Tompkins County Age Friendly Action Plan
- Zhang, X, and Warner, M.E. (2023). Cross-Agency Collaboration to Address Rural Aging: the Role of County Government, Journal of Aging and Social Policy
- AARP Liveable Communities Framework

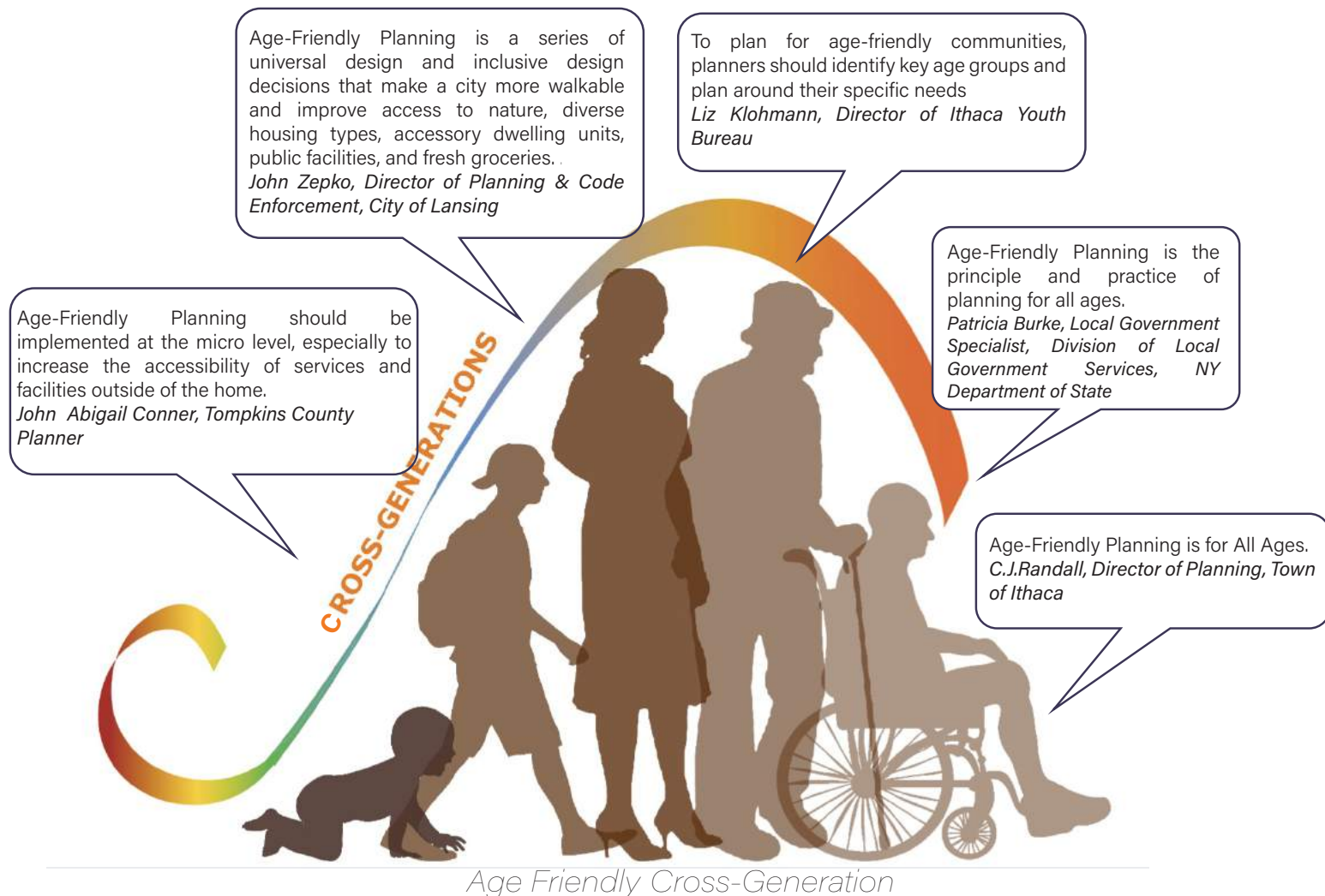


Review Trainings & Actions

- Actions adopted by municipalities and local leaders regarding age-friendly practices.

Overview

Age-Friendly Planning



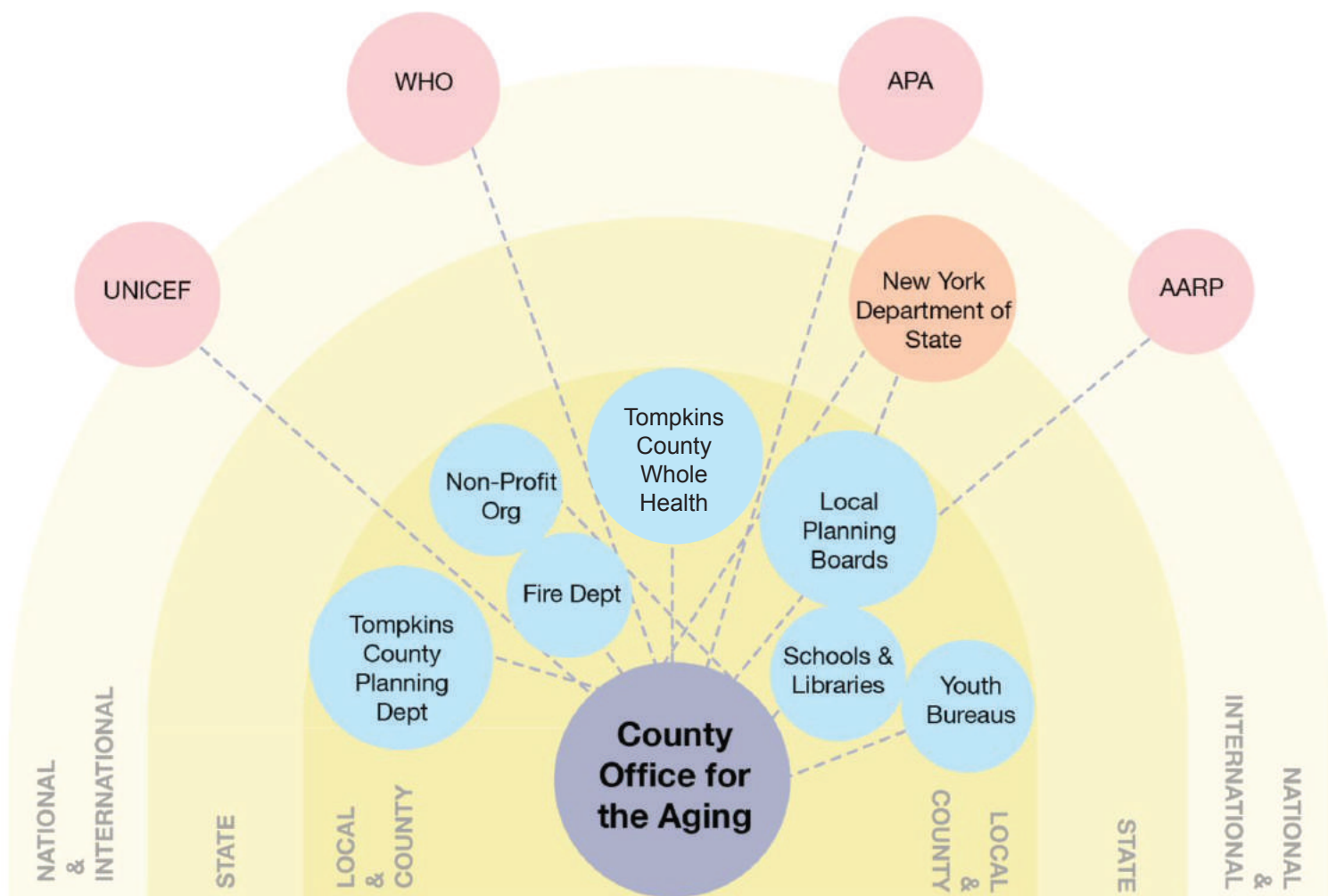
The Tompkins County Age Friendly Center for Excellence (TCAFCFE) says their goal is “healthy aging, which means transforming the social and physical environment to support health and well-being for community members across the lifespan. They state that age-friendly environments “are free from physical and social barriers and supported by policies, systems, services, products, and technologies that promote health and build and maintain physical and mental capacity across the life course; and enable people, even when experiencing capacity loss, to continue to do the things they value.”

The AARP defines an age-friendly community as a liveable community for people of all ages. A Liveable community “enhances personal independence; allows residents to remain in their homes and communities as they age; and provides opportunities for residents of all ages, ability levels, and backgrounds to engage fully in civic, economic, and social life.”

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that “Age-friendly cities and communities (AFCC) are designed to meet the needs of the wide diversity of older people, promote their health, autonomy, inclusion and contributions in all areas of community life, respect their decisions and lifestyle choices, and anticipate and respond flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences.”

Overview

Cross Agency Collaboration



Cross-agency collaboration in implementing age-friendly practices on a local governance scale involves pooling existing resources and maximizing the potential of individual local organizations and community members for community outreach and service provision.

First and foremost, collaboration enables the sharing of resources, such as data, expertise, and funding, among different agencies. This pooling of resources allows for more efficient planning and execution of age-friendly initiatives, avoiding duplication of efforts and optimizing the use of available assets. Additionally, the collaboration taps into the unique strengths and capabilities of individual local organizations, leveraging their specific expertise to contribute to a more comprehensive and well-rounded approach. Furthermore, involving community members in the planning and implementation process not only ensures that the initiatives are tailored to local needs but also fosters a sense of ownership and engagement within the community.

By maximizing the collective potential of agencies, organizations, and community members, cross-agency collaboration becomes a powerful mechanism for enhancing community outreach and service provision for the aging population.

Proposed Frameworks

Initial Redesign



Final Redesign



Concerns with Existing Framework

- Each of the petal has vague/ broad categories which could be further defined
- Categories like Respect, Inclusion & Trust are underlying aspects for the whole framework, rather than an individual category
- The 3 sections within the framework lack connection that could be further highlighted
- Revising the aesthetic of the framework to make it digestible to a wider audience

Successes of Existing Framework

- Simplicity of the Design
- Key concepts (e.g. Cross Agency Collaboration)

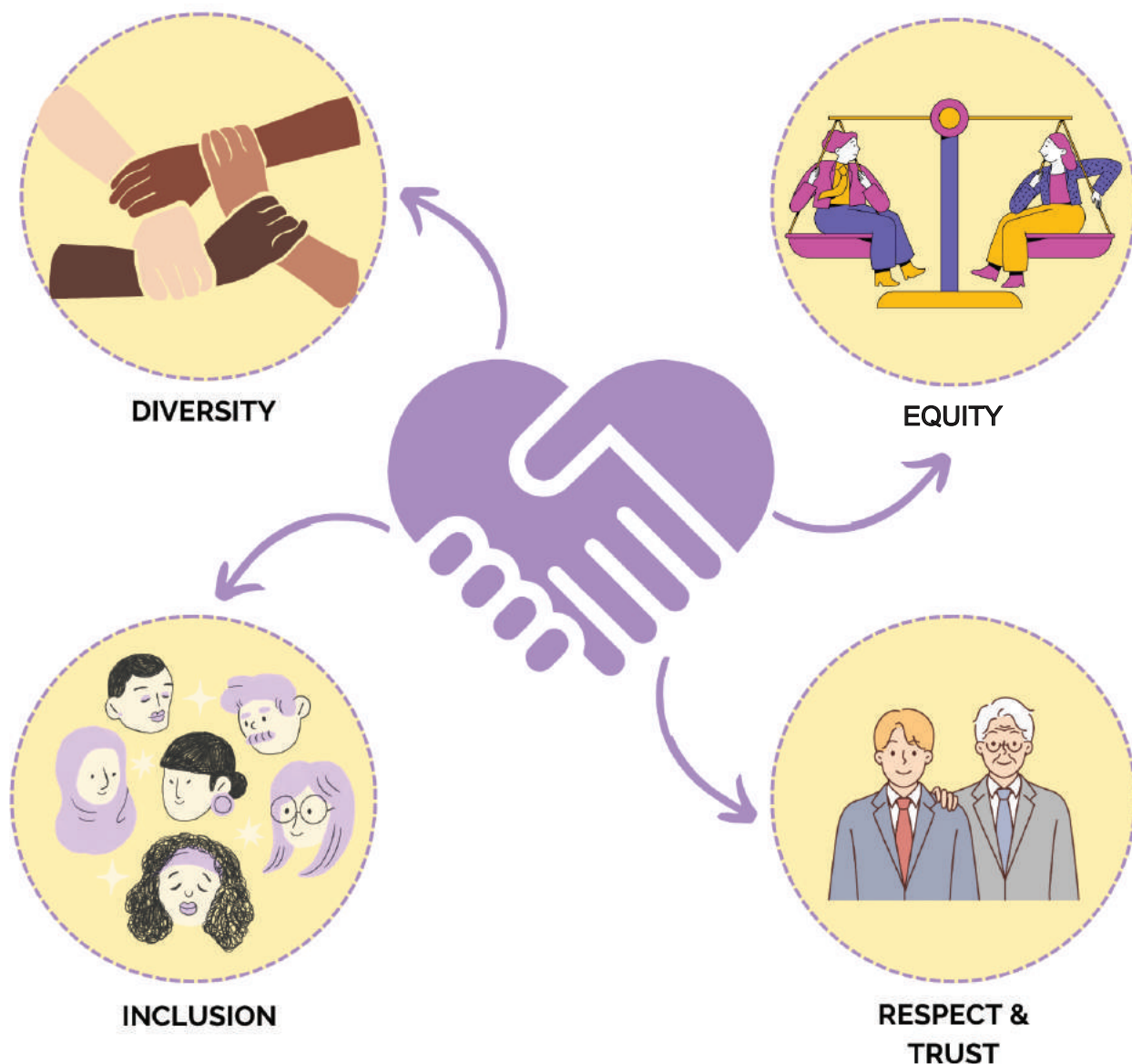
Initial Redesign

- Removal of arbitrary categories
- More intentional Color Choices
- Incorporation of hands to highlight trust and respect
- Minor aesthetic changes

Final Redesign

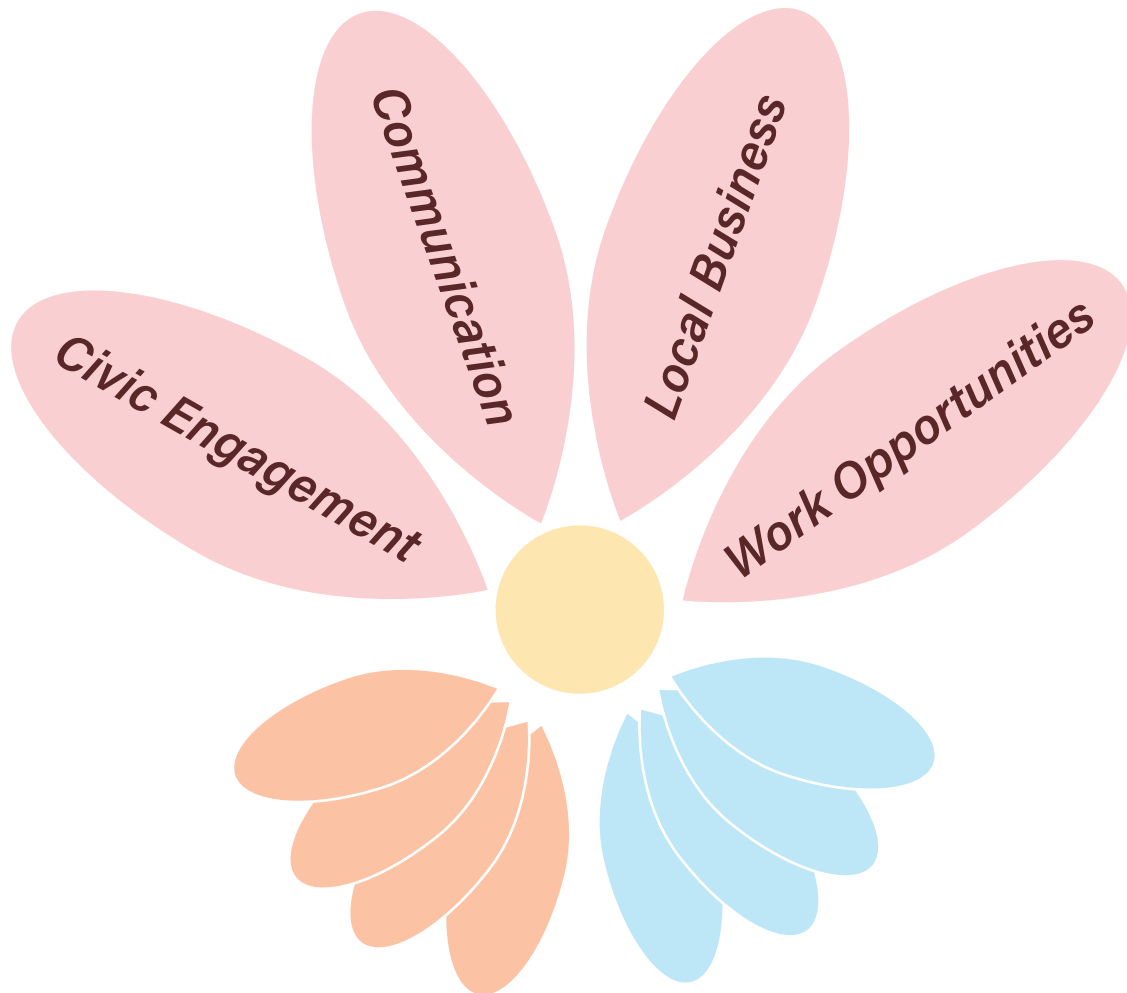
- Emphasizing cross-agency collaboration through the hands crossing
- Uplifting the framework through the show of hands below the framework
- Recognizing Respect, Inclusion and Trust as core principles of the Framework, thus listing them as framework principles rather than individual petal within the framework.

Core Principles of Age-Friendly Planning



Respect, Trust, Diversity, Inclusion, Equity are the underlying principles of the Flower Framework. They imply that all age-friendly practices across all the 3 sections should embody these principles. Through sensitive and local practices, one can achieve age-friendly practices that fulfill the mentioned principles. They are essential to implementation of age-friendly practices

COMMUNITY



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Civic & Social Engagement

Civic and social engagement should go beyond public information sharing volunteer opportunities. Adequate opportunities for play, intergenerational engagement, and learning should be encouraged.

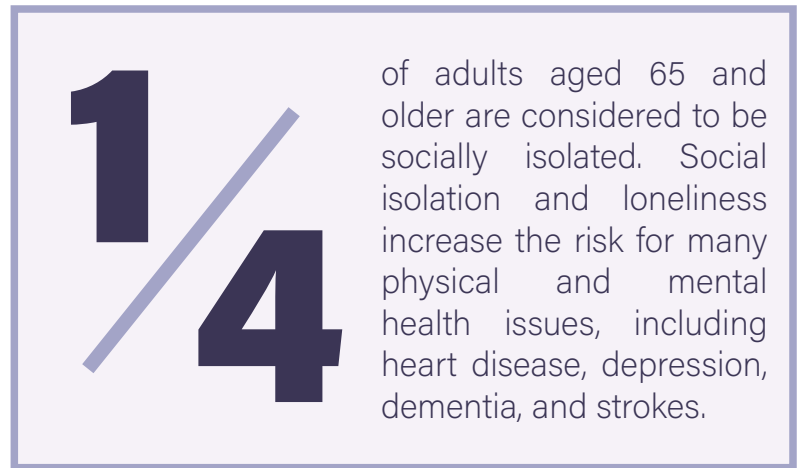
The Flower Framework gives Civic and Social Engagement its own petal, recognizing its importance, but separating it from everything else. In reality, planners and local planning boards should be providing opportunities for children and older adults to be engaged in civic and social activities related to all things. Land use decisions, service provision decisions, and efforts to strengthen communities should all include opportunities for children and older adults to have a say.



Source: blog.jumpinforhealthykids.org

Community Examples:

The **Ithaca Youth Council Ambassadors** program invites young people to engage in local government and specifically focuses on bringing awareness to issues that teens are facing in the greater Ithaca area. This could be expanded to include older adults and younger children and foster training and knowledge sharing around intergenerational solutions to problems.



Source: *The Centers for Disease Control*

Coordinated by COFA, **Project Generations** pairs older adults with college student volunteers who provide weekly visits and support to older adults and caregivers according to their needs. Student volunteers can provide friendly visits, run errands, shop for groceries, perform light yard work, and provide respite for caregivers.

Actions to Consider

- Hold listening sessions for children and older adults
- Create an Intergenerational Planning/Leadership Board that trains older adults and children on land use decisions, comprehensive planning, etc.
- Ensure children and older adults have access to meetings
- Consider land use decisions through the lens of a child or older adult
- Consider volunteer programs/initiatives that bring children and older adults together in social and civic settings
- Encourage youth to participate in local government
- Invite schools and other youth-serving agencies to gather information about the age-based needs and interests of children

Communication & Information

Age-friendly communication strategies should aim to overcome the primary barrier of age-related visual and auditory challenges. By leveraging informal channels, like community gatherings, and creating social occasions, relevant information can be shared with older individuals who may not be adept at using computers and the Internet. Transitioning to digital services and documentation, while improving access, can also risk further excluding those who are not digitally literate. Ensuring digital connectivity for children and their communities is vital to making information and communication universally accessible, affordable, safe, and reliable. This approach can also help reduce social isolation, particularly among older adults who have faced heightened loneliness and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

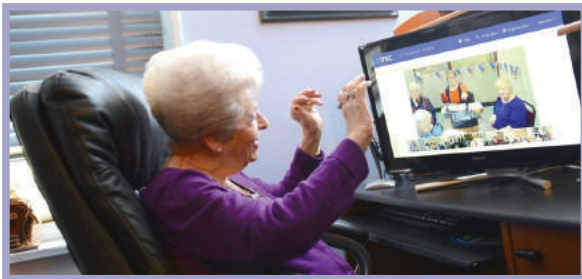
31, 100

locations lack broadband access within
Tompkins County.

Source: Tompkins County Action Plan

Community Examples:

With the Virtual Senior Center (VSC), older adults can learn, explore, and socialize without having to go anywhere. The VSC is an active online community with live courses available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This service is provided by Selfhelp Community Services in partnership with the local Lifelong Senior Center.



Source: Selfhelp

A Senior Planet Tablet Pilot Project was launched in the fall of 2020 to help older adults cope with loneliness caused by social isolation exacerbated by COVID-19. The county office provided project participants with an LG Tablet and 12-24 months of LTE (Long Term Evolution is a standard for wireless broadband). Additionally a partnership with Senior Planet, a program of the nonprofit Older Adults Technology Services (OATS), helped provide free technology support and social opportunities to Tompkins County residents through the Senior Center Lifelong, to provide a Senior Planet Tech Help Hotline

Actions to Consider

- Continue and expand connectivity initiatives in collaboration with schools and universities to provide tech support and virtual companionship.
- Enhance efforts to improve internet connectivity, particularly in rural areas, for better communication and outreach.
- Collaborate with local organizations to offer legal, financial, and information support to seniors.
- Ensure diversity and inclusion in communication and information access efforts.
- Offer computer training, tailored to individual needs and learning pace, preferably delivered by trusted individuals.
- Develop training and awareness materials on online services (delivery of food, medicines, etc) for older adults.
- Update town websites with town initiatives and streamline application and permit processes for easy accessibility.
- Support a village-to-village network for community engagement and outreach

Local Business

Older adults and youth are key consumer groups in local economies. However, many businesses are not age-friendly and don't consider these key demographic groups in their business models. Incorporating age-friendly design details and service provisions can greatly expand local businesses' consumer base. Age-friendly local businesses ensure there are places to rest, accessible bathrooms, easy-to-read signage, and they offer delivery services for those who may not be able to visit in-person. AARP recognizes the importance of age-friendly businesses, and many communities have implemented age-friendly business certification programs. Recognizing the intersection of age and local business support can strengthen community identity and cohesion.

People age 50 or older
contribute
\$8.3 tr.
to the U.S. economy each year,
or 40 percent of the U.S. gross
domestic product (GDP)

Source: Thompkins County Action Plan

Community Examples:

Dr. Janet Loebach's "Designing Age-Friendly Environments" course created an **Age-Friendly Business Action Plan** for Ithaca, NY. This action plan identified the key aspects of age-friendly businesses, like proper physical environments, customer service, and verbal communication. The action plan also drafted an Age-Friendly Business certification program and audit tool for Ithaca based on the identified aspects of age-friendly businesses. Other communities can benefit from an age-friendly business action plan.

Oneida County announced their **Age-Friendly Business Initiative** this August. This initiative allows businesses to self-assess their age-friendliness and receive the "Age-Friendly Business" distinction. This assessment is based on seating availability, discounts, clear signage, and respect for older adults' concerns. This initiative stemmed from Oneida County's Liveable Communities age-friendly efforts.



Source: Utica.edu

Actions to Consider

- Implement an Age-Friendly Business initiative for your community
- Work with chambers of commerce and volunteer organizations to implement an Age-Friendly Business certification program
- Upon issuance of a business license, provide age-friendly business resources
- Ask developers, architects, and business owners to consider more age-friendly layouts, signage, and services
- Hold educational seminars for local business owners
- Research how senior and family discounts could impact local businesses
- Consider how business models, including store layouts, can be adapted to better fit children, families, and older adults' needs

Work Opportunities

Older adults and children play a key role in identifying existing and future labor markets, skills, and education. Older adults may consider second careers in their lives, and communities should provide adequate career and personal development opportunities for those wishing to continue their labor activity in local markets. Job training, internships, apprenticeships, and volunteer opportunities all reflect potential for intergenerational programming. Older adults can use their own experiences to teach children about aging as a complex and fulfilling role that contributes to society. Communities can work more effectively with schools, libraries, and employers to create a more sound school-to-career pipeline. Businesses, local leaders, and the general public need a greater understanding of local economics, which encompasses children and older adults.

935,000

New Yorkers over the age of 55 contribute more than 495 million hours of community service at an economic value of more than \$13.9 billion annually.

Source: NYSOFA | July, 2022

Community Examples:

Youth Employment Service (YES), a program supported by the Ithaca Youth Bureau, connects dozens of teens to teen-specific jobs during the school year and throughout the summer. By providing one-on-one resume, application, and interview support, YES uplifts youth into the workforce and provides them with the skills they need to have successful careers.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) assists eligible individuals over 55 transition into the workforce. It provides subsidized, part-time community service roles at minimum wage for 20 hours per week, facilitating skill development for unsubsidized employment. Additionally, training is offered to equip participants for successful workforce re-entry.

The Women's Opportunity Center, a local nonprofit, seeks to provide employment training to women seeking to join or rejoin the workforce. Their goal is to provide flexible training programs, like career preparation and computer skills training, to accommodate and support women and their families.



Source 1: easterseals.com/scsep
Source 2: womensopportunity.org
Source 3: Facebook | YES Ithaca



Actions to Consider

- Utilize state funding opportunities for youth and older adult employment
- Propose and sustain development that provides secure employment for older adults
- Implement career education and/or volunteer opportunities between older adults and youth
- Recognize the role youth and older adults play in existing economies

SERVICES



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Education

The significance of educational activities for older adults accentuates the idea that learning knows no age bounds. Simultaneously, it champions the early development of young minds by endorsing educational initiatives within local libraries and schools, aiming to mold a generation cognizant of the transformative power of knowledge. Rooted in principles advocated by UNICEF, WHO, and AARP, education empowers seniors to lead fulfilling lives, equipping them with the tools to navigate an ever-evolving world. Education raises awareness about available services and unlocks individual potential. It envisions a society where older adults, armed with knowledge, contribute their expertise back to the community, thus creating an intergenerational exchange.

Community Examples:

Ithaca College/Longview Partnership creates a unique, shared environment that enriches the College's academic curriculum and affords members of both the College and Longview communities intergenerational educational and social experiences; to facilitate personal and professional growth; to promote volunteerism; and to enhance the quality of life. Every year, more than 700 Ithaca College students and more than 65 faculty and staff participate in hundreds of intergenerational activities at the Longview senior living community. Longview residents can be seen in classrooms across IC's campus, and are in attendance at many College performances and activities.



Source: ithaca.edu

Since 1976, **Tompkins Learning Partners** has been providing tutoring services, free of charge, to local residents who need help reading, writing, or speaking English. The knowledge that students gain allows them to meet personal goals, obtain or improve their employment, or continue their education by participating in training programs or college.

The Dryden Area Intergenerational Band & Chorus provides a non-competitive, fun, free summer music ensemble experience to anyone of any age or musical ability. It offers area musicians the opportunity to strive for musical excellence while promoting the exchange of skills and cooperation across generations.



Source: tompskinsweekly.com

Actions to Consider

- Promote intergenerational learning to facilitate the reciprocal sharing of expertise between learners of all ages. (Ithaca College Age Friendly Principles)
- Expand access to intergenerational learning opportunities through platforms like Cogenerate, Ithaca College/Longview Partnership.
- Support learning activities in children and youth programs like Ithaca's Family Reading Partnership.
- Support further mentoring programs for youth within rural communities and other targeted populations.
- Partner with local libraries, schools and organizations to provide learning platforms and hosting opportunities for knowledge-sharing.

Community Health

Accessible care, home care, prevention care, service networks, residential facilities, and volunteerism shape health services for older adults and children. Local governments, including planning boards, can address each of these issues in a way that serves their constituents. Providing health services amidst other development (mixed use) is one key way in which planners and planning boards influence health services. Services that support and expand networks of in-home care should also be encouraged and prioritized.

Community Examples:

Cayuga Health is redeveloping existing space in the Shops at Ithaca Mall to support and expand its health services along existing transportation routes and within an activated area. Cayuga Health's use of this space ensures its accessibility and allows families, older adults, and children to go to the doctor, shop, eat, and learn within a small area.

Project CARE volunteers, also the community residents, visit with older adults, run errands for caregivers, and even do work around the house for the older adult and caregiver. The "CARE" Program matching Cornell student with the care-giver resources center to provide the older adults with the assistance in their daily life.



Source: TompkinsWeekly



Source: volunteermatch.org

Actions to Consider

- ❑ Partner with COFA and Lifelong, and host health insurance counseling
- ❑ Identify the accessibility of services to long-term care facilities and work to create support networks for these facilities
- ❑ Foster staff cross-agency collaboration with Tompkins County and the Human Services Coalition
- ❑ Ensure residents have access to updated information about Medicare and Medicaid, prevention services, and other supports within your community
- ❑ Encourage healthcare development amongst existing services
- ❑ Meet with local providers about community needs, potential solutions, and opportunities for community health training/prevention

Childcare

Child care is an indispensable aspect of age-friendly planning. Child care affects the workforce, social inclusion, civic engagement, and the built environment as it serves as a critical institution within communities. Planners, local planning boards, and other community organizations can work to integrate child care into a broad age-friendly framework, considering networks of formal and informal care amidst decisions about meeting times, budget allocation, and open space allocation. Child care is a resource in great demand, and all avenues of cross-agency collaboration should be considered to increase the supply and sustainability of care.

Community Examples:

Cornell University is partnering with the Child Development Council to expand child care across Tompkins County. This partnership includes a financial commitment from Cornell to bolster staff and create more funding opportunities for child care providers.

Tompkins County currently has **4,296 children under the age of six** and only **1,396 licensed child care slots**. This **3:1** care disparity is mitigated informal family, friend and neighbor care, but there is still a major gap in care.

Ithaca College is partnering with Coddington Road Community Center and provided space on-campus for their preschool and afterschool programs. This temporary partnership has already initiated conversations about a long-term partnership between the college and the child care provider.



Source: Jady Davis/The Ithacan

Actions to Consider

- Recruit child care providers, understanding their necessary role in local economies
- Partner with anchor institutions, like schools, hospitals, community centers, and faith-based institutions to expand child care
- Help support informal child care providers, recognizing affordability constraints
- Conduct a needs assessment in your community
- Partner with larger institutions, like a nearby university, to expand care
- Welcome, inform, and refer new parents to parenting support, child care options, and community care
- Consult with the Child Development Council when considering key policy changes

Transportation

Transportation plays a crucial role in promoting active aging, as it permeates various aspects of life. More specifically, the ability to navigate within a city greatly impacts one's engagement in social and civic activities, access to community and healthcare services, and overall participation in public life. Inaccessible and unsafe transportation options, as well as poor street design, impedes independent mobility, especially for children and older adults. A lack of public transportation also cuts off the urban poor, limiting access to the urban, social, and economic infrastructure such as schools, libraries, work, businesses, parks and recreational activities. Mobility decisions should consider children, families and older adults as their needs are often unique and require special attention. Mobility determines agency and independence, which are rights held by people of all ages.

In 2020, **60%** of people in Tompkins County **drive alone to work**, while **14%** walk, **9.5% carpool**, and **6.7% take the bus**. The rest either bike, take some other form of transportation, or work at home.

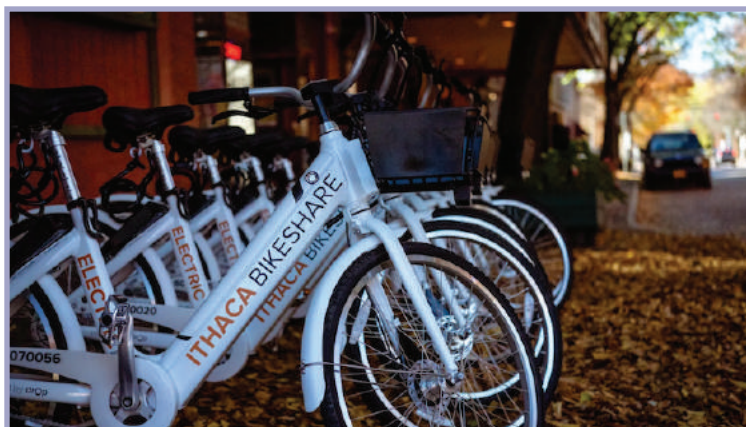
Community Examples:

Accessible parking is incredibly important for families and people with disabilities. The Village of Trumansburg regularly **ensures that public parking is accessible**, and they partner with private businesses and property owners to stripe and maintain existing lots open to the public.

The City of Ithaca celebrated the introduction of **Ithaca Bikeshare** last year following the shutdown of e-mobility options during the COVID-19 pandemic. This greatly increases individuals' independence as they are able to move more easily about the city.



Source: Kenneth C. Zirkel/Wikimedia Commons

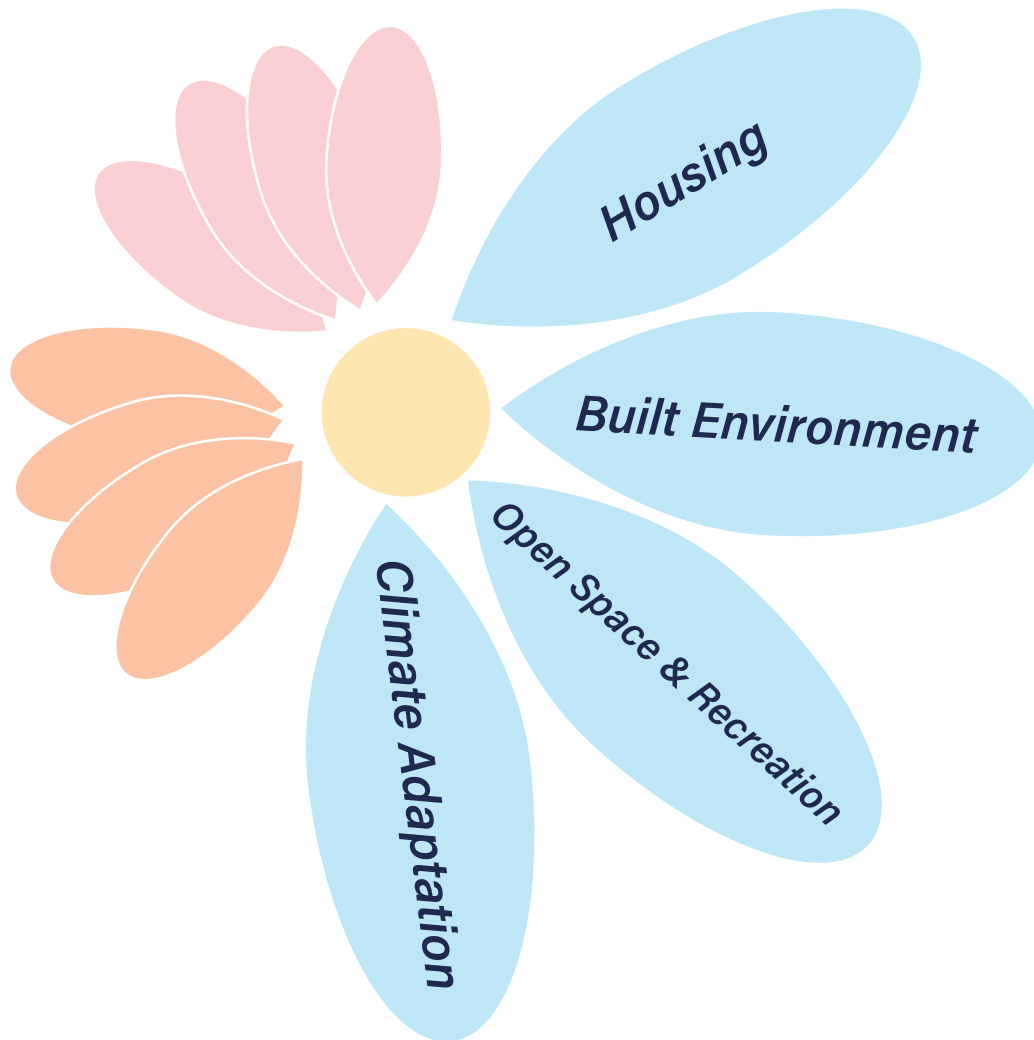


Source: Casey Martin

Actions to Consider

- Support organizations providing and promoting increased active transportation, including walking, biking, and transit
- Coordinate with transportation agencies to ensure services are safe, reliable, and accessible to all
- Ensure sidewalks, trails, and transit stops are designed with all ages and abilities in mind
- Identify issues, concerns, and impacts that come with lowering speed limits in areas where pedestrians and cyclists are at greatest risk
- Consider transportation vouchers, car share programs, or other methods of support that allow children, families, and older adults to make important medical and legal appointments

LAND USE



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Housing

Access to adequate and affordable housing influences the safety and well-being of people of all ages. Moreover, there is a link between appropriate housing and access to community and social services in influencing the independence and quality of life of older people and families with children. As housing and rent prices increase, and the costs of raising children increase, the ability to access suitable housing options and affiliated social services is important.

Age-friendly housing includes universal design features integrated into housing, but more broadly, it includes a mix of housing types that provides families and older adults with options to live around community amenities, including schools and health facilities.

Community Examples:

Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services (INHS) presented a proposal to turn the former Parker Elementary School into a residential community with up to 51 units. The rents for these units would be made affordable for qualified families, and 15% of the units would be set aside for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Town of Dryden welcomed **Second Wind**, a non-profit organization supporting unhoused individuals, in building a four-unit women's home designed for families. This initiative will allow families to remain united as they search for permanent housing.



Source: INHS/WXHC101



Source: Jeremy Huelin/The Cornell Daily Sun

Actions to Consider

- Refer residents to the AARP's HomeFit guide as they consider aging in place
- Refer residents to Cofa home safety assessment, for fall prevention and access to age-in -place specialist
- Ensure residents have access to information and resources about affordable housing in your community
- Review zoning codes to ensure home modifications and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) aren't restricted or place unnecessary burden on residents
 - See: Accessory Dwelling Units: A Tool for Aging in Place within Tompkins County - <https://labs.aap.cornell.edu/node/926>
- Track vacancies in existing building stock, including senior housing and affordable housing units
- Research options for supporting housing rehabilitation and restructuring, including rent-to-own models and workforce housing

Built Environment

The Built Environment petal recognizes man-made or modified structures that provide people with living, working, and recreational spaces. Feeling secure in one's living environment strongly affects people's willingness to move about in the local community, which in turn affects their independence, physical health, social integration, and emotional well-being. Well-programmed public spaces attract children and others to undertake multiple activities during extended hours, increasing social control and safety.

Planners, planning boards, and community organizations can foster age-friendly built environments by advocating for mixed housing types, form-based codes, universal design features, and safety when considering development. Walkability and mixed-use development should also be key considerations.

Community Examples:

The Town of Ithaca is looking to **improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure** along a route that connects a middle school to the Ithaca Youth Bureau. This project would greatly enhance accessibility to Stewart Park, a major recreation space, and the scenic Cayuga Waterfront Trail.



Source: The Town of Ithaca

Between 2015 and 2019, the **most common crash factor** was the driver's inattention to the road. Building safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure prevents injury even when drivers act irresponsibly.

Bike Walk Tompkins has produced the **Better Bike Network initiative**, which locates key bicycle routes and identifies guidelines for creating a more bike-friendly community. Connectivity, Safety, and Maintenance are key factors in this initiative, and they serve as a guide for good active transportation infrastructure.



Source: Bike Walk Tompkins

Actions to Consider

- ❑ Regularly inspect public facilities (elevators, escalators, ramps, doorways, pavement, signage, public restrooms) for accessibility and safety.
- ❑ Review the density of accessible public restrooms in your community, especially near city/town centers. Consider options to increase the number of restrooms and where they are most needed.
- ❑ Forge partnerships with local schools and community organizations to encourage children to visit and utilize public spaces. Break the gap between children and public spaces by hosting field trips and events within public spaces.
- ❑ Encourage the use of colorful and playful designs in public spaces. Color and playfulness not only encourage the use of public spaces but also provide comfort for children and older adults.

Open Space & Recreation

It is recommended that zoning plans include recreational spaces. In fact, the Ithaca Comprehensive Plan's Chapter on Healthy Communities recognizes a "need for community gathering places for youth to socialize and hang out in a positive environment." Open spaces and recreation are necessary for the well being of all people regardless of age, but become particularized when viewed from an age-based perspective. It is important that planners are sensitive to the sensibilities of their constituents in the context of age, especially in recreation.

Community Examples:

Ithaca Commons is a two-block pedestrian mall in the business improvement district. The State Street is the main retail corridor that has a wide central walkway that provides a clear pedestrian promenade, opens up sight lines between storefronts, and provides clear occasional service access. Facilitating walking and socializing, the vendors here are selected to be in age friendly programs, such as the used-book store, plants store, bakery shop and restaurants. Working with leading design consultants and the communities marks the success of this project, the final design was proposed by SASAKI and selected by citizen voting.



Source: Sasaki

Recently completed, the **Black Diamond Route** is an 8.4-mile rail route that connects Taughannock Falls State Park with Cass Park. The Lehigh Valley Railroad, a system of railroads that connected Buffalo, New York, and New York City, formerly included the path. Although the Lehigh Valley Railroad's primary purpose was the transportation of coal, the Black Diamond Express, a high-end passenger service, was operated on a particular track through Ithaca. The term "black diamond" designates the coal and, as of late, the path that took the place of the tracks.



Source: Chris Ray

Actions to Consider

- Examine street lighting and lighting in public spaces, especially for the places that are near residential areas and schools where children and older adults gather.
- Make a checklist and regularly check the regulatory signs in public places such as "No Pets", "No Smoking", "Path for the Disabled", "Pedestrians Only", "No Vehicles".
- Make a Practice Memo to remind and understand the needs of senior citizens with regards to leisure, social interaction and mobility, for example, they may need more public bathrooms, brighter lighting, more time to cross the street and more places to sit and rest.

Climate Adaptation

AARP's climate change adaptation policy for age-friendly communities strategically centers on sustainable energy, livable communities, and disaster planning. Prioritizing older and younger individuals, climate adaptation should address the immediate and enduring impacts of extreme weather, emphasizing community planning and equitable post-disaster recovery, to safeguard all residents, foster resilience, and align with global climate adaptation goals. Additionally, bridging gaps between local emergency management teams and organizations serving both older and younger community members ensures integrated disaster planning. This comprehensive approach underscores the interconnected well-being of diverse age groups, fostering a resilient and inclusive environment for all.

Community Examples:

Tompkins Ready hosts information on neighborhood preparedness as well as emergency preparedness. Ranging from seasonal safety tips to action plans for different emergencies, it aims to be a one-stop central resource for organization contacts, and helpful websites relating to disaster planning. It also shows links to trainings and seminars of the Citizen Preparedness Corps conducted by the State Department of Emergency Services.



The Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative (TCCPI) advocates for climate justice and sustainability in Ithaca, NY. TCCPI collaborates with organizations, civic leaders, and communities to promote a Green New Deal and achieve 2030 carbon neutrality. Emphasizing inclusive leadership, the initiative engages in grassroots efforts, policy development, and youth mobilization. The organization aligns with the principles of the Sunrise Movement, focusing on justice for marginalized communities. Additionally, TCCPI integrates mindfulness practices into its youth-led climate justice hub, fostering a peaceful approach to addressing the urgent climate crisis.

Actions to Consider

- Evaluate the susceptibility of critical County government facilities to climate change impacts.
- Formulate a comprehensive community disaster recovery plan, incorporating actions that enhance economic resilience for effective rebounding from potential disasters.
- Develop the Tompkins County Resiliency and Recovery Plan, update the Hazard Mitigation Plan (2013), and create tools for resilience and post-disaster economic recovery for town-specific concerns.
- Collaborate with community-based organizations to disseminate climate change adaptation information and resources, especially in rural areas across Tompkins County.
- Provide climate change education and green skills training for children, emphasizing their active involvement in influencing climate policy-making.
- Hasten progress on addressing loss and damage, placing the survival of vulnerable children and older adults at the core of discussions.
- Direct funding towards repairing homes damaged by extreme events, ensuring they pose no health risks to older adults.
- Enhance public infrastructure to mitigate community-wide risks, prioritizing access to safe housing for those displaced after natural disasters.
- Promote livability and resilience in rebuilding efforts by encouraging diverse housing options, varied mobility choices, access to sustainable public spaces, and proximity to essential services.

References and Acknowledgements

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Additional Resources

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