

HEALTHY AGING

**City of Brantford Age-Friendly Strategy
2022-2024**

Accessible formats and communication supports available upon request.

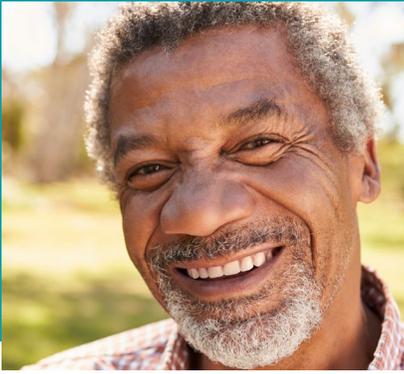
For more information, please contact the City of Brantford Municipal Accessibility Coordinator by telephone at (519) 759-4150 or by e-mail at accessibility@brantford.ca.



Table of Contents



Age-Friendly Planning in the City of Brantford	04
Timeline of Age-Friendly Planning	05
City of Brantford’s Age-friendly Strategy 2022-2024.	06
Healthy Aging Action Plan	07
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	08
Transportation	09
Housing	10
Social Participation.	11
Respect and Social Inclusion	12
Civic Participation and Employment.	13
Communication and Information.	14
Community and Health Services	15
Measuring Success.	16



Background of Age-Friendly Planning in the City of Brantford

In 2018, the City of Brantford launched the first Healthy Aging: The City of Brantford's Age-Friendly Strategy. This strategy was developed with specific actions to be implemented over three years. The Healthy Aging Strategy was built on foundational research including an internal audit of the City's Age-Friendly policies and programs, as well as best practices identified within Age-Friendly networks, including the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, the Southern Ontario Age-Friendly Network, and the Seniors Health Knowledge Network (Age-Friendly Communities Network).

The Healthy Aging Strategy was also informed by extensive community engagement, and in 2017, the City worked in partnership with the Grand River Council on Aging who led the Community Summit Series, which consisted of eight forums for each of the WHO's domains of an Age-Friendly Community.

The City of Brantford Age-Friendly Planning Recognition

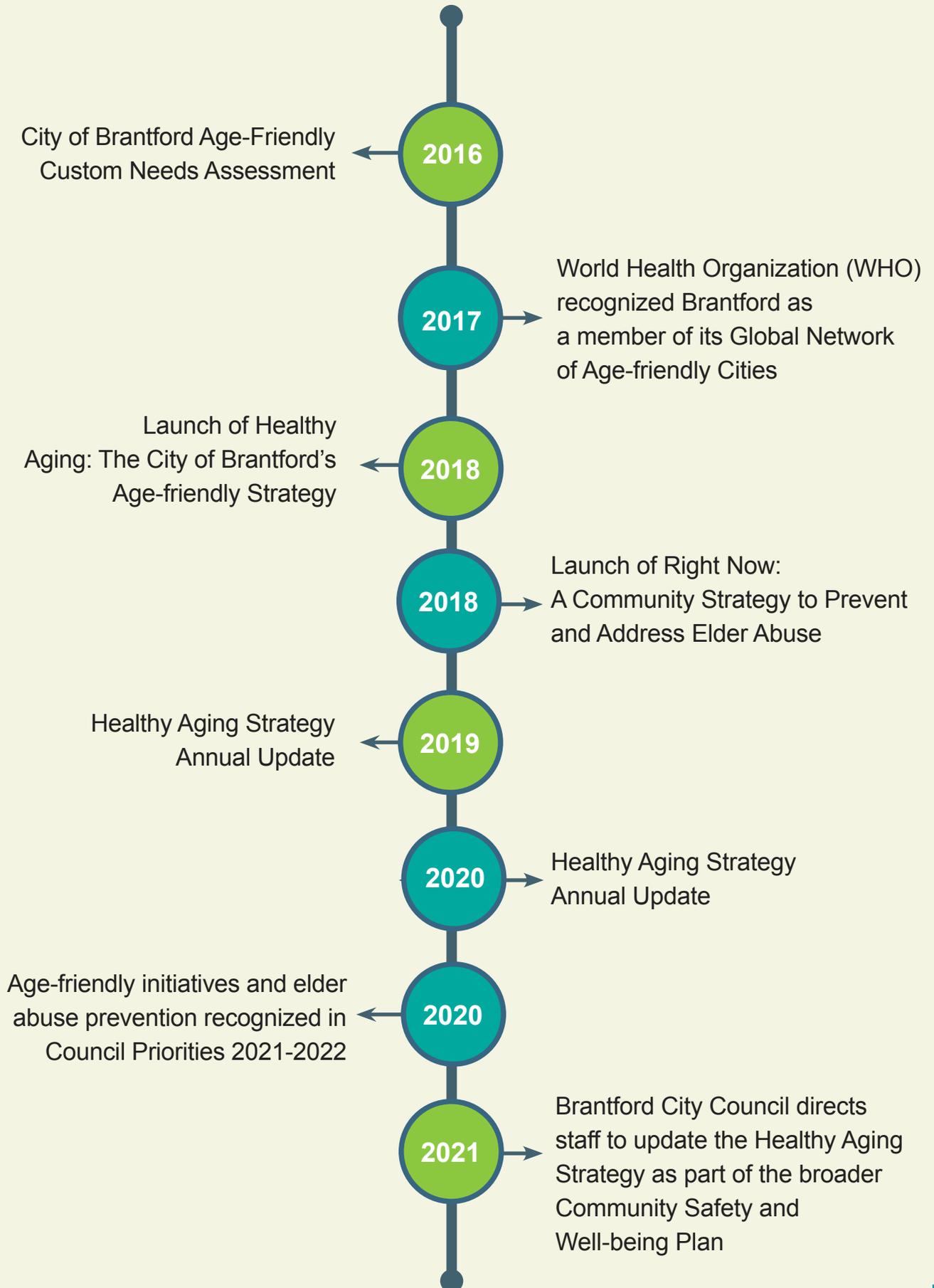
As a result of the Age-Friendly planning process and the significant milestones our community has achieved, the City of Brantford was internationally recognized by the World Health Organization as an Age-Friendly community. In July 2017, the City of Brantford was officially welcomed to the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. Membership in the Global Network reflects the City's dedication to achieving an Age-Friendly community. As a member of the Global Network, the City of Brantford will have the opportunity to connect with a global network of aging experts, including senior officials, program managers, researchers, and older persons; stay informed on Age-Friendly initiatives; share the City's progress to support other communities; and be inspired by what others have achieved. In addition to global recognition, the City's efforts have been highlighted by the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; the Ministry of Seniors Affairs; the Retired Teachers Association of Ontario, and the International Federation on Aging.

Brantford City Council Prioritizes Age-friendly Planning

Additionally, in 2020 Brantford City Council identified key priorities for 2021-2022 which outlined key actions that align with the updated Healthy Aging Strategy, including the following:

- All neighbourhoods in the City are safe, vibrant, attractive, and inclusive
- Social services support is provided to Brantford residents in need
- Support the continued implementation of the Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy and other age-friendly initiatives

Age-Friendly Planning in Brantford





Healthy Aging: City of Brantford's Age-friendly Strategy 2022-2024

Healthy Aging: City of Brantford's Age-friendly Strategy 2022-2024 outlines the City of Brantford's ongoing commitment to age-friendly planning. The updated Healthy Aging Strategy builds on the successes from 2022 - 2024 and provides an opportunity to address new actions over the next three years.

Continued Community Engagement

In addition to the extensive engagement of the 2017 Age-friendly Community Summit Series, the City of Brantford and community partners have continued to identify older adults and age-friendly planning in various Corporate strategies, community strategies, and consultations over the last three years, including:

- Mayors' Housing Partnership Task Force Action Plan
- Brantford-Brant 10-year Housing Stability Plan
- A Review of Homeless Shelter and Housing with Supports System in the City of Brantford
- Brantford Downtown Master Plan
- Brantford Accessibility Plan 2020-2025
- Brantford Customer Service Strategy
- Transportation Master Plan
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Community Safety and Well-being Plan
- Together for Youth: A Coordinated Youth Services Strategy for the City of Brantford and the County of Brant
- Right Now: A Community Strategy to Prevent and Address Elder Abuse
- Brant Vital Signs Report
- Brantford Immigration Partnership Strategic Plan
- Brantford-Brant Community Drugs Strategy
- Brantford Police Service Strategic Plan
- Brant Community Healthcare System Strategic Plan
- Brantford Public Library Strategic Plan

The City partnered with the GRCOA to engage older adults in virtual sessions that captured perspectives of residents, caregivers and services providers, and informed various actions and updates to the Healthy Aging Strategy. The City also consulted with various sector partners and senior serving agencies to capture their perspectives and recommendations.

Healthy Aging ACTION PLAN



The City of Brantford's Healthy Aging Strategy is centered on the 8 key domains established by the WHO, which include:

Healthy Aging ACTION PLAN

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 and Health Services



Figure 2.
WHO Age-Friendly
Dimensions



1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings



Outdoor spaces and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence, and quality of life of older people and affect their ability to age in place. Age-Friendly outdoor spaces and buildings encompass green spaces, outdoor seating, pavements, public washrooms, and accessible buildings.

Strategy 1.1 Improve the walkability of municipal sidewalks and trails.

Action A. Install additional pedestrian crossing signals, curb cuts, and tactile warning indicators.

Action B. Improve light levels and energy efficiency of street lighting.

Action C. Replace brick paver sidewalks in downtown core.

Strategy 1.2 Improve the walkability of municipal parks and trails.

Action A. Expand and promote network of paved trails.

Action B. Provide additional benches in busy areas.

Action C. Provide more directional signage in parks and on trails.

Action D. Post rules for bicycles and scooters in parks and on trails.

Action E. Explore features including shaded seating, washrooms, and water fountains in public spaces.

Strategy 1.2 Ensure buildings are accessible, inclusive, and safe.

Action A. Continue to implement Brantford's Accessibility Plan.

Action B. Ensure public washrooms are accessible, clean, and well-lit.

Action C. Provide additional gender-neutral washrooms within facilities.

Action D. Continue to recognize organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to providing excellent accessibility.



2. Transportation



Being able to travel within a community has a significant impact on social participation and access to community and health services. The World Health Organization defines Age-Friendly transportation as accessible and affordable public transit and taxis; well-maintained roads and parking lots; and competent drivers.

Strategy 2.1 Improve access to public transit.

- Action A.** Expand opportunities to educate riders on navigating the transit system, such as an instructional video.
- Action B.** Increase number of bus shelters at bus stops.
- Action C.** Continue improvements of downtown transit terminal.
- Action D.** Review accessibility of current ticketing system.
- Action E.** Implement recommendations of the Comprehensive Transit Review.

Strategy 2.2 Improve accessibility of city roads and municipal parking.

- Action A.** Increase size of street signs.
- Action B.** Implement signal phasing and equipment enhancements to improve vulnerable road user safety at busy intersections.
- Action C.** Implement physical infrastructure improvements with a focus on vulnerable road user safety at busy intersections.

Strategy 2.3 Support initiatives that promote active and connected transportation systems.

- Action A.** Expand cycling network.
- Action B.** Collaborate with community agencies to enhance additional transportation options.



3. Housing



Housing is essential to safety and well-being. Adequate housing enables older adults to comfortably age in place and remain connected to their community. Age-Friendly housing relates to affordability, design, options, and aging-in-place.

Strategy 3.1 Increase affordable options for older adults.

Action A. Expand affordable housing units available for older adults (As outlined in Mayors' Housing Partnership Taskforce Affordable Housing Action Plan).

Action B. Host additional social housing education workshops to inform residents on the waitlist time, associated costs, and pet and smoking policies.

Strategy 3.2 Increase accessibility of affordable housing.

Action A. Continue to support accessibility needs of older adults within affordable housing units.

Action B. Expand social and health programming at senior affordable housing sites.

Strategy 3.3 Support older adults to age in place.

Action A. Promote information regarding home maintenance and support services.

Action B. Promote grants and programs that support older adults to age in place.

Action C. Provide additional resources and information to support seniors, families, and caregivers (seniors toolkit, tax clinics, power of attorney information).



4. Social Participation



Participating in leisure, social, cultural, and spiritual activities in the community, and with family, enables older adults to maintain strong connections, experience joy, and stay informed. One's ability to participate in social activities relates to the availability, cost, location, awareness, and range of opportunities, as well as the health and preference of the participant.

Strategy 4.1 Enhanced Access to Recreation.

Action A. Continue to deliver senior focused recreational activities and events.

Action B. Review fees and charges annually to ensure affordability for recreational programs.

Action C. Support seniors groups in accessing grant opportunities to enhance programming.

Strategy 4.2 Prioritize neighbourhood based programming.

Action A. Expand neighbourhood hub programs, neighbourhood associations, and recreation at community centres.

Action B. Promote opportunities for community partners to deliver neighbourhood based programming.

Action C. Develop events and programs that celebrate inclusion and diversity.

Action D. Work with community agencies to promote volunteer opportunities.

Strategy 4.3 Implement programming to support isolated older adults.

Action A. Research and implement best practices to reduce social isolation among older adults, with a particular focus on vulnerable populations (older adults with various abilities, Indigenous, Newcomers, and LGBTQ2S+).

Action B. Support community partners in development of in-person and virtual programs to support socially isolated older adults.

Action C. Develop events and programs that celebrate inclusion and diversity.

Strategy 4.4 Respond to emerging interests and opportunities to support older adults.

Action A. Increase digital inclusion of older adults through skills training and access to technology.

Action B. Promote workshops that reflect the interests of older adults (health and wellness, recreation, volunteerism, finances).

Action C. Create unique experiences to celebrate older adults and their contribution to our community.



5. Respect and Social Inclusion



While many older adults feel respected, recognized, and included in their communities, others report experiences of exclusion and disrespect. Age-Friendly communities prioritize public education and build relationships between generations.

Strategy 5.1 Continue to engage older adults.

- Action A.** Continue to seek input from older adults and provide multiple avenues to provide feedback, including online, paper, phone, and/or in person options.
- Action B.** Review and implement best practices to engage seniors of diverse backgrounds (New Canadians, Indigenous residents).
- Action C.** Promote opportunities for intergenerational engagement.

Strategy 5.2 Enhance opportunities for corporate Age-friendly training.

- Action A.** Ensure staff have training opportunities related to accessibility and age-friendly themes (age-friendly customer service training, dementia awareness training, AODA standards, age-friendly planning).

Strategy 5.3 Work with community partners to address elder abuse.

- Action A.** Continue to work in partnership with the Brant Elder Abuse Awareness Committee to implement recommendations identified in Right Now: A Community Strategy to Prevent and Address Elder Abuse.
- Action B.** Provide opportunities for elder abuse awareness and prevention training sessions and workshops, including Power of Attorney workshops and resources.



6. Civic Participation and Employment



Older adults continue to contribute to their communities as they age. Many older adults become self-employed, seek new employment opportunities, volunteer in their communities, and provide voluntary work for their families.

Strategy 6.1 Continue to engage older adults in community planning.

- Action A.** Engage older adults in the development of City of Brantford operational and strategic plans.
- Action B.** Consult with older adults to understand their emerging needs as part of the COVID-19 Pandemic recovery.
- Action C.** Work in partnership with the Grand River Council on Aging to review current and future age-friendly initiatives.

Strategy 6.2 Support older adults to access employment opportunities.

- Action A.** Promote the City of Brantford's alternative recruitment processes that exist to support job applicants who do not have access to a computer.
- Action B.** Continue to work with community partners to provide opportunities for entrepreneurship programs to assist and support older adults.
- Action C.** Continue to work with community partners to provide opportunities for learning and skills development (digital skills, social media, computer basics, iPad Basics, cyber safety).



7. Communication and Information



Access to information is a key concern for older adults. Age-Friendly communication relates to digital and paper distribution methods, timing, word of mouth, format and design, and information technology.

Strategy 7.1 Improve access to municipal information.

- Action A.** Research and implement best practices to enhance access to municipal information.
- Action B.** Continue redevelopment of municipal websites to improve customer service.
- Action C.** Ensure online social media and Let's Talk Brantford engagement tools are accessible for older adults.
- Action D.** Create Age-Friendly event planning guides to encourage municipal staff to consider the venue, location, parking, transportation, time of day, and promotion strategies when planning events for older adults.

Strategy 7.2 Utilize creative methods to communicate with older adults.

- Action A.** Continue to share the Seniors Toolkit resource booklet throughout the community.
- Action B.** Work with community partners to improve how socially isolated older adults' access information and to ensure information is updated in newsletters and community calendars.
- Action C.** Encourage community volunteers, neighbourhood associations, and "Age-Friendly champions" to spread the word on Age-Friendly services and programs in the City of Brantford.
- Action D.** Explore other platforms for sharing information, such as using radio or advertisements on utility bills.



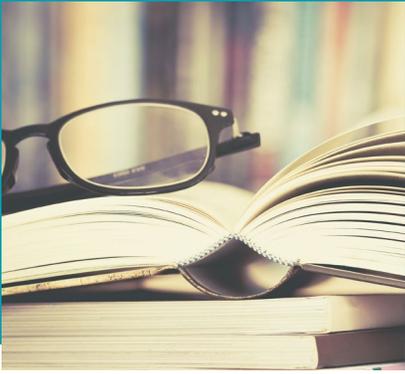
8. Community and Health Services



Health and support services are critical for older adults and caregivers to maintain independence in the community. Municipalities can collaborate with agencies to address community health challenges and support programs that foster healthy and active living.

Strategy 8.1 Provide community programs focused on healthy and active living.

- Action A.** Develop and host additional neighbourhood programs focused on healthy lifestyles, including nutrition, exercise, and falls prevention programs.
- Action B.** Work with community partners to provide older adults increased access to health education programming.
- Action C.** Support the goals of the Ontario Health Team and other community partners, as they relate to the health and well-being of older adults.

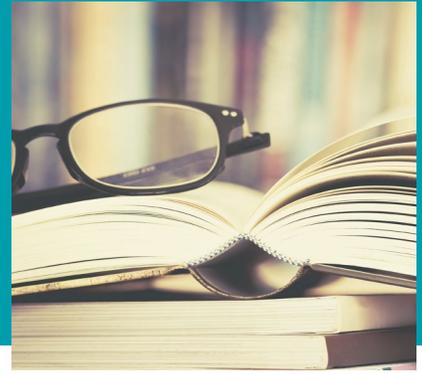


Measuring Success

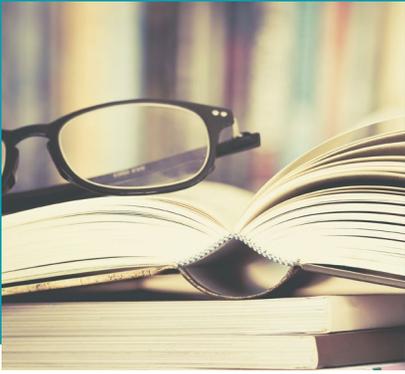
An internal audit of the City’s policies, programs, and services identified tangible Age-Friendly targets that would help to further measure the success of the City’s Age-Friendly Plan. Each metric outlines a specific item that the City is tracking to measure enhancement. The “Current State” outlines the starting point to which the City is building from, and the “Target” is the goal we aim to reach by the end of the three years.

1. Outdoor Buildings and Spaces	Current State (2021)	Target (2024)
Sidewalk walkability Metric: km of sidewalks	587.3 km	597 km
Park walkability Metric: km of paved paths	18.34 km	21.34 km
Accessibility modification Metric: number of Capital Priority Initiatives	63 projects	73 projects
2. Transportation	Current State (2021)	Target (2024)
Accessible transit fleet Metric: % of fully accessible public transit buses	100%	100%
Transit Shelters Metric: % of transit stops with shelters	14%	30%
Transit Access Metric: % of residences within 400m of transit stop	94%	95%
Cycle network Metric: km of dedicated bike lanes	43 km	49 km

Measuring Success

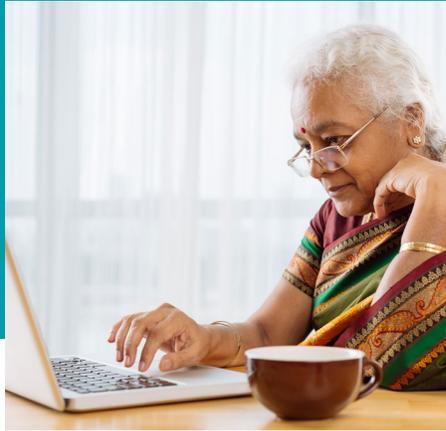


3. Housing	Current State (2021)	Target (2024)
Affordable housing units Metric: : # of affordable housing units created	34 (135 in progress)	506 (2030)
4. Social Participation	Current State (2021)	Target (2024)
Participation in recreation Metric: # of older adults (50+) participating in seniors community programming	2,668	3,549
5. Respect and Social Inclusion	Current State (2021)	Target (2024)
Train all new staff in Age-Friendly customer service Metric: % of new staff who receive training in Age-Friendly customer service	100%	100%
Age-Friendly Training Metric: # of age-friendly related workshops available to all City staff	New Initiative	10
6. Civic Participation and Employment	Current State (2021)	Target (2024)
Participation in skills training Metric: # of adults in community workshops and programs	656	1,000



Measuring Success

7. Communication and Information	Current State (2021)	Target (2024)
Social Media Participation Metric: # of Facebook followers	17,300	21,000
High traffic on municipal website Metric: # of brantford.ca website yearly page views	2,436,508	3,500,000
8. Community and Health Services	Current State (2021)	Target (2024)
Access to health education Metric: # of programs that focus on health promotion information and awareness	11	22



For more information and resources visit
[Brantford.ca/HealthyLiving](https://brantford.ca/HealthyLiving)

