

Creating an Age Friendly Saco, Maine

November 6, 2017



Status Report:

- On 1/19/16 one of annual goals adopted by the Saco City Council was :

“To actively seek an AARP grant that would assist in the development of a plan to make Saco an Age Friendly Community.”

Timeline of Events:

- 1/19/16 Council Goal to become Age Friendly
- 2/16/16 Formation of Steering Committee
- 3/16/16 Application to become a WHO
- (World Health Organization) Age Friendly designation
- Logo designed/mission statement created:

AGE FRIENDLY SACO

Mission Statement:

Age Friendly Saco's Mission, "A Community for a Lifetime", is to promote active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, engagement, and safety while removing barriers that prevent our citizens from remaining in their homes as they age. This will be accomplished through collaboration with community organizations as well as collaboration with the City of Saco and the recruitment of community volunteers for the delivery of services that will empower residents to remain in and engaged in their community.



Timeline (cont'd)

- 5/16 AARP Grant received: \$7,000 Grant money used to conduct a community survey.
- 8/16-11/16 : 1,000 surveys sent out 400 responses received. Results indicated:

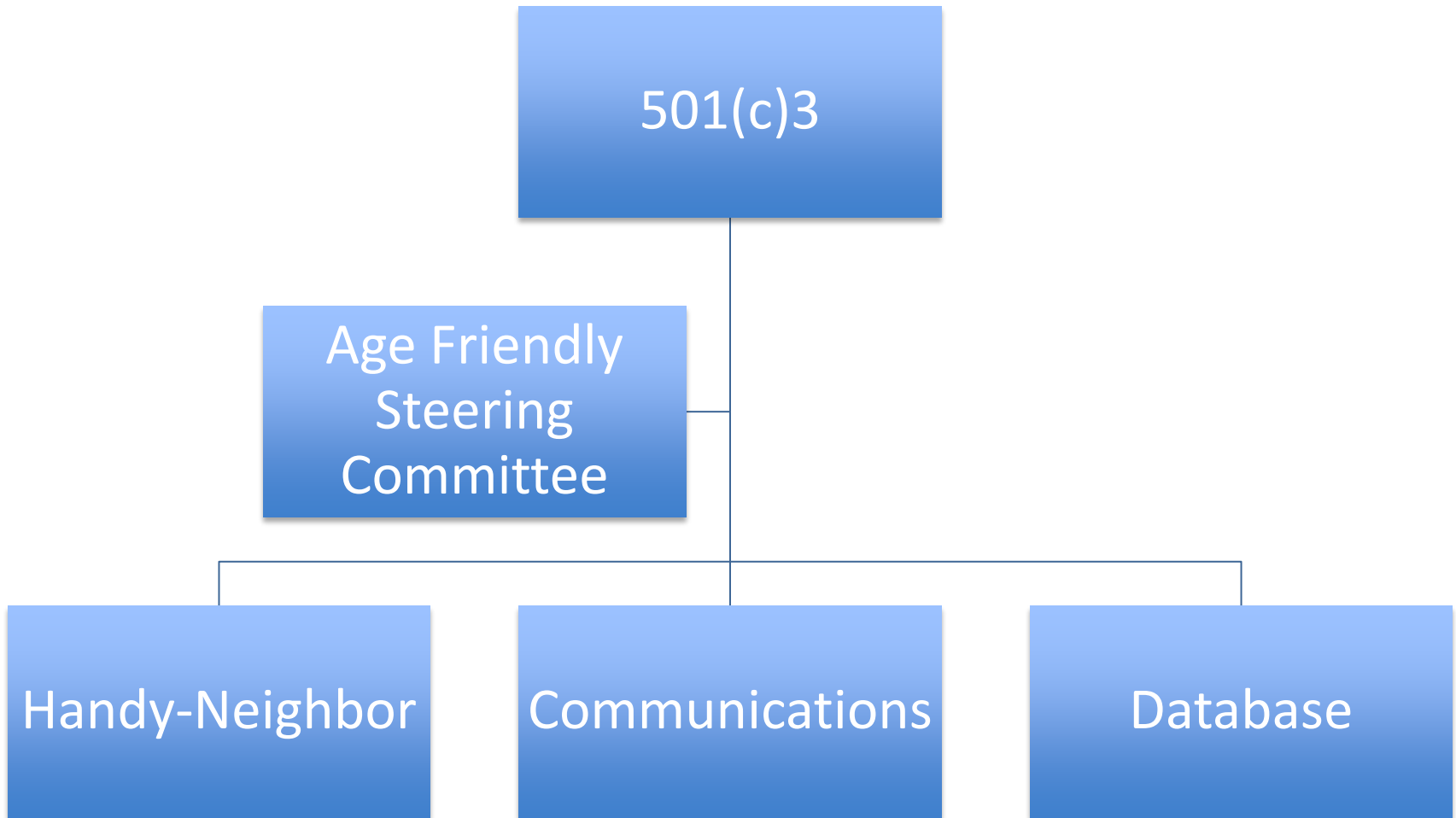
Challenges and Opportunities:

- **1. Strong desire to stay:** Majority of respondents rated Saco as an excellent or good place to live and wish to remain in the city as they age.
- **2. Improving Communications:** 3 out of 4 respondents said information about resources to support aging was not easy to find.
- **3. Housing modifications:** 9 out of 10 respondents found in-home support services to be very or somewhat important. In particular home repair contractors who are trustworthy were very important to the vast majority (84.7%)

Timeline (cont'd)

- 1/17 Community Survey Results to Council and Steering Committee
- 4/20/17 Public Forum at TA presenting Community Survey results.
- 6/17 Formation of subcommittees: Handy-Neighbor, Communication, Database and Social Events.

AGE FRIENDLY ORGANIZATION



Tri-Community Efforts:

- Old Orchard Beach and Biddeford have become Age Friendly Communities and we are coordinating with them to form a Transportation Committee to address the needs of the tri-community.

AGE FRIENDLY SACO OFFICE



Grants applied for 2016-17

- AARP grant approved : \$7,000
- Saco and Biddeford Savings: \$4,000
- (Handy-Neighbor support)
- Saco Bay Rotary: \$350
- (Signage/communications)
- Huntington Commons: \$ 5,000
- (Tool lending library)
- AARP Challenge Grant (w/Biddeford) not funded
- (Riverwalk signage)
- Maine Charity Foundation (in process) \$10,000
- (Multi-generational gardening)
- EPA Healthy Places: Healthy People pending

Ongoing Projects:

- We have developed a community resource directory of important numbers/ programs.
- We are in the process of creating a Handy-Neighbor program that will provide minor home repairs and home maintenance services.
- We have created a tool lending library in the Community Center where seniors can come and learn about as well as borrow these assistive devices.

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Projects cont'd

- Hampton Inn in Saco has created an Age Friendly rate so that our older residents can consider staying at the inn for an extended period from Nov-March at a reduced rate or on a “as needed basis” perhaps during a storm/loss of power.
- We have an Age Friendly database that will be used to match consumer needs with volunteer resources.

Cont'd

- We are talking with the Fire Department about collaborating on a “knox box” program for Saco. Knox Homebox is a small metal box that is secured to the exterior of a house and holds a key to a homeowners house and only could be opened by Saco Fire and Rescue so that in the event of an emergency , they can enter the home without causing any damage and get to the person in need faster.

Knox Box Program

Projects (cont'd)

- We have partnered with Atlantic Heights to provide Healthy Cooking Classes for our older residents at no cost throughout the year.
- Nov. 4th held our First Annual Volunteer Forum and Wellness Fair. We had over 90 people in attendance to hear about volunteer opportunities and we had a wellness fair with 14 vendors offering everything from blood pressure screenings, flu shots, massage therapists, acupuncture as well as Medicare assistance.

AGE Friendly Saco Volunteer Forum/Wellness Fair

