

# Halton Region Older Adult Plan 2015-2018: Implementation Summary



Vibrant, aging-friendly and inclusive communities

# Introduction

*In 2015, Halton Region developed the Halton Older Adult Plan (HOAP). Demographics in our local communities are shifting towards a larger segment of older adults. This Plan responded to the growing aging population by promoting inclusion, engagement, aging-friendly environments, vibrant communities and healthy active aging.*

## Background

HOAP was a corporate initiative that aligned with Halton Region's Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018 and was connected to Halton's Strategic Priority identified as: Connecting People and Services.

The Plan was informed by local data, provincial documents, strategies of other municipalities, involvement of internal staff, and consultations with community stakeholders and Halton Region's Older Adult Advisory Committee.

HOAP focused on priorities, objectives and actions that are within Halton Region's authority to plan, manage and deliver. Halton Region's Health and Social and Community Services Departments led the Plan's implementation with the involvement

of all departments across the corporation. The Plan aimed to ensure quality and accessibility with services that are professional, consistent, informative and friendly to older adults.

## Framework for the Halton Older Adult Plan

The Plan's priorities, objectives and actions were structured using Halton's three communications pillars:

### Resident Focused

- To ensure older adults are included and engaged.

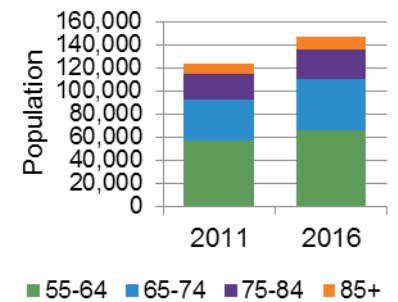
### Well Planned

- To promote aging-friendly environments and vibrant communities.

### Safe and Healthy

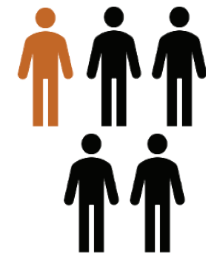
- To support healthy, active aging for residents at all stages of life.

**Figure 1. Older Adult Population, Halton Region 2011-2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

**Figure 2: Projection of residents over the age of 65**



By 2036, one in five Halton residents will be over the age of 65

Source: Ministry of Finance. June 2016. Growth Projections Halton Region.

# Implementation of HOAP

This section is organized by the six priorities of HOAP and their related objectives. The Plan committed to implementing 46 actions within current operating budgets. A few of the more than 80 projects and activities across the corporation are provided below as examples.

## RESIDENT FOCUSED

Ensuring older adults are included and engaged

### Priority 1

Consider older adults in the development of policies and delivery of programs

- ✓ Apply an older adult perspective to Regional policies, programs and services.
  - Dedicating staff to support the use of Halton’s Older Adult Perspective.
  - Informed health and tourism initiatives using demographic and market segment profiles of older adults.
  - Informing long term care and seniors’ housing supports, property tax policy, program reviews, and desired general outcomes by involving older adults for input.
  - Offering innovative eLearning for leadership development.
- ✓ Promote quality customer service that is responsive to older adults.
  - Developing a Customer Service Access Strategy that recognizes the unique challenges of older adult customers.
  - Monitoring the implementation of Halton’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
  - Providing communications best practices to program areas.

### Halton’s Older Adult Perspective

Halton’s Older Adult Perspective (Perspective) provides staff with an approach to understanding what currently influences older adults’ quality of life, based on what older adults themselves hold to be important.

An online repository of Perspective tools and resources was created. Using the Perspective to increase the effectiveness of staff’s work will enable Halton Region to successfully serve its growing and changing community.





## RESIDENT FOCUSED

Ensuring older adults are included and engaged

### Priority 2

Optimize the engagement of older adults with Halton Region

- ✓ Ensure that information produced or distributed by the Region is accessible and applicable for older adults.
  - Annually updating materials based on guidelines for effective communication.
  - Offering a range of communication channels, including in-person, print and electronic.
- ✓ Engage older adults to participate in the development of Regional policies, programs and services that affect them.
  - Developing a Public Engagement Strategy that aligns with Halton's Older Adult Perspective.
  - Developed diversity resources and inclusion tools, and guidelines for accessible public events.
  - Consulted Older Adult Advisory Committee on the property tax deferral program, housing services, healthy aging initiative, waste management strategy; Halton Region Accessibility Advisory Committee also consulted by Asset Management among others.
  - Including older adults who use Regional Services routinely in accreditation and service development and review processes.
  - Using older adults' expertise through intergenerational programming in Halton Community Housing and volunteering opportunities offered by Services for Seniors.

## WELL PLANNED

To promote aging-friendly environments and vibrant communities.

### Priority 3

Support the enhancement of aging-friendly Regional environments

- ✓ **Promote and optimize the use of Regional facilities by older adults**
  - Annually updating Halton Assisted Housing Design Guidelines.
  - Seeking older adult input on relevant capital improvement projects including Halton Regional Centre redesign.
- ✓ **Implement Regional plans and strategies that promote aging-friendly Regional places and spaces**
  - Complying with universal, barrier-free access designs for aging-friendly renovations that make Regional spaces such as Allendale Long Term Care better for workers and clients.
  - Consulting on opportunities to co-locate Regional programs/ services.
- ✓ **Develop and maintain a Regional transportation network that is aging-friendly and supports all modes of transportation.**
  - Implementing Halton Region Active Transportation Master Plan.

### Allendale Long Term Care Tub Room

The redesign phase of the Allendale Long Term Care tub room included consultation with older adults. The accessibility and safety needs of both residents and workers were taken into consideration. The tub room now features a shower area and improved room layout including enhanced turning radius for wheelchairs.



## WELL PLANNED

To promote aging-friendly environments and vibrant communities.

### Priority 4

Support opportunities for older adults and Halton communities to prosper

- ✓ Increase awareness about the impact of the aging population on Halton businesses and workplaces.
  - Providing staff with accessibility training module/materials on accommodating physical and sensory disabilities in service delivery and when seeking feedback.
  - Fostered discussions on attracting and communicating with older adults and their expectations of a tourism experience at the Third Annual Halton Region Food Tourism Summit and Halton's Pumpkins to Pastries Trail.
  - Hosted conversations with local businesses on promoting wellness in an intergenerational workforce.
- ✓ Optimize the participation of an aging Regional workforce.
  - Comprehensively reviewed Regional Human Resources policies (2015).
- ✓ Support older adults to work.
  - Incorporating mentorship in Halton's leadership strategy development.
  - Supporting older adults exploring second careers through Small Business Centre.
  - Developing new strategies to better support older Ontario Works participants.

## SAFE AND HEALTHY

To support healthy, active aging for residents at all stages of life.

### Priority 5

Support older adults to be active, connected and to age well

- ✓ **Facilitate community mobilization to support Halton residents to age well.**
  - Involved older adults and stakeholder agencies in building visions for healthy active aging both living with and without supportive care.
  - Working towards designation as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization in Regional long-term care homes.
- ✓ **Enhance access to Regional services.**
  - Strengthened relationships with assisted living partners to better connect older adults with available services.
  - Using updated program brochures and resident/client handbooks.
  - Provided educational presentations, service fairs, income tax preparation, on-site in the common rooms of seniors' buildings.
  - Piloted wellness checks and provided information to older adults by paramedics in two Halton Community Housing buildings.

### Halton Housing First

Halton Housing First is a partnership between Halton Region, Wesley Urban Ministries, Halton Housing Help, Canadian Mental Health Association and the Children's Aid Society.

Working with clients who are chronically and episodically homeless, community partners and Halton Region provide case management, housing and mental health supports.



## SAFE AND HEALTHY

To support healthy, active aging for residents at all stages of life.

### Priority 6

Support older adults to maintain their independence

- ✓ **Work with community partners to support service innovation and enhance coordination**
  - Participating in Health Links in Mississauga Halton and Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Local Health Integration Networks.
  - Community partners and Halton Region co-deliver Halton Housing First Program, providing wrap-around supports to clients.
- ✓ **Identify Regional policies, programs and services required to complement the system of support for older adults.**
  - Supporting older adults living with dementia, mental illness and addictions better through Halton Housing First, Supports for Daily Living, and Long Term Care.
  - Health equity action planning in Services for Seniors community programs, as well as food security and health initiatives.
  - Identified opportunities for more coordinated service delivery with community partners by a review of older adult services.
  - Exploring opportunities following the review of Halton Region's Services for Older Adults.
  - Offering student placements to attract more health professionals to work with an aging population



# Moving Forward

Halton is now home to nearly 82,000 adults aged 65 years and older, up from 67,000 in 2011 when the development of Halton's Older Adult Plan began. Older adults continue to be Halton's fastest growing segment of the population.

Between 2011 and 2016, the number of Halton adults in the 85 and over age group grew the most rapidly, with a 32 per cent increase, followed by the 70-74 year old age group with a 27 per cent increase. It is projected that by 2036 there will be approximately 180,000 residents over the age of 65 representing a 121 per cent increase from 2016.

All municipalities in Halton continue to experience increases in the number of older adults living in their communities. Since 2011, the greatest change was seen in Milton, with a 57 per cent increase to 10,145, followed by Oakville with a 20 per cent increase to 28,170, Burlington with a 19 per cent increase to 35,320 and Halton Hills with a 16 per cent increase to 8,180.

*Is Halton Region now prepared to respond to this growing and changing older adult population?*

HOAP provided a thoughtful approach to enhancing quality of life for older adults and addressing the current and future needs of older adults living in Halton through changes in policy, programs and services that are within Halton Region's authority to plan, manage and deliver.

Many actions and objectives of HOAP have been achieved to date, while many others are broad and will occur over a number of years. These actions and achievements will support a citizen-centred, evidence-informed approach as Halton's population grows and ages into the future. Concurrent strategies for Customer Service Access, Public Engagement, Accessibility, Inclusion, and Communications will carry the aims of the Halton Older Adult Plan forward.



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On a broader level, Halton Region's response to population aging includes a commitment to working with community partners to develop and support new ways to respond to the changing needs of older adults, enabling residents to age in place. Collaborative work with the Halton community, across roles, functions, and geographies, will ensure our responsiveness to these changing needs. Exploring innovative and promising practices that leverage the Region's assets, while continuing to advocate to the LHIN and upper levels of government for appropriate funding, remain key.

The Halton Older Adult Plan supported timely knowledge, skills, perspectives and resources that have assisted in anticipating wisely and planning proactively, and support keeping Halton "a great place to live" for older adults. The success and completion of HOAP will be reported to Council through the Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018 updates and milestones. Any ongoing actions, initiatives and enhancements to services related to HOAP will be identified through departmental level operational plans.

For more information about the *Halton Region Older Adult Plan* visit:  
[halton.ca/HOAP](http://halton.ca/HOAP)



Visit [halton.ca/OAAC](http://halton.ca/OAAC) to access the Halton Older Adults' Directory which contains important information about services provided to older adults in Halton.

