Age-Friendly Puyallup

2023 Progress Report

“We are celebrating aging as the next chapter of living rather than the last chapter of life.”

—LeadingAge
Submitted by:
Age-Friendly Puyallup Action Plan Task Force

March 2023

Celebrate Puyallup

Family & Community
February 27, 2023

To the AARP,

It is my privilege to continue supporting our City’s Age Friendly Puyallup Action Plan, which details the City’s commitment to make Puyallup a friendly community for all ages, including our senior citizens.

The City of Puyallup began our commitment towards becoming an age-friendly city in 2001, when we chose to participate in the Advantage Initiative. Multiple stakeholders, including the City Council and Pierce College, joined together to engage in that process. Although the initiative has since ended, the City has remained committed to making Puyallup a better place to live for residents of all ages. In March 2016, the City of Puyallup became the first Age Friendly City in the State of Washington.

With the support of the City and the dedicated members of the Puyallup Area Aging in Community Committee, an Action Plan was initiated based on the feedback from residents throughout the City, on items such as housing, transportation, communication, respect, and social inclusion. The information gathered was used to address concerns and create solutions to identify needs from our seniors. The plan henceforth is the culmination of those planning efforts and outlines how the City will continue to move forward as an age-friendly city. In short, we made a promise to our seniors that we will firmly commit to making Puyallup a safe, active, healthy, and friendly community for them and all age groups.

It is my honor, as the Mayor of Puyallup, to announce that we intend to make good on that promise and continue striving to be an age-friendly community.

[Signature]
Dean Johnson
Mayor, City of Puyallup
INTRODUCTION

Puyallup, WA

Puyallup, Washington is located in the Puget Sound region of Washington State, 35.6 miles southeast of Seattle and 10.5 miles east of Tacoma. Named by the Puyallup Tribe of Native Americans, Puyallup means the generous people.

Puyallup has enjoyed a steady population growth in part because of more affordable housing, its attractiveness and is deemed to be a good place to retire, especially from the perspective of military families who were formerly based at JBLM. At the time of Puyallup’s age-friendly city’s designation in 2016, the population was estimated to be 36,312. According to the 2020 census, the population was predicted to be 42,973 and forecast to reach 43,260 by 2022. The Puget Sound Regional Council estimates a growth of 50,000, with an increase of 13,070 new residents.

Historical Perspective
The process of becoming an age-friendly city has been a long one culminating in the March 2016 designation as the first Age-Friendly City in Washington State. In January 2020 the Puyallup City Council adopted and submitted our Age-Friendly City Action Plan to AARP, which was accepted in March 2020. Our Action Plan focused on four domains: communication, transportation, housing and respect and social inclusion.

Age-Friendly Puyallup is unique given that unlike most age-friendly cities, we are community-driven and not city-driven, which has been a challenge since we do not receive funding and rely on volunteers to complete the plan’s objectives. In addition, implementation of our plan has been difficult given that soon after it was accepted, COVID-related closures occurred, which significantly impacted on our work. Even with COVID restrictions, however, we are proud of our ability to develop a greater awareness of being an age-friendly city and to have made a difference in the community through our work-to-date. Continuing COVID-related issues and our dependance on volunteers, many of whom have restrictions on their available time, have slowed down our progress. However, current task force members are enthusiastic in their commitment.

Our Vision as an Age-Friendly City

We believe that the benefits of being a livable community for all ages are both tangible and intangible and that the essence of a livable community is a shared belief that all residents, no matter their age, beliefs or nationality, are sought and valued for their differences as well as their similarities.
Selected Domains

The following four domains were selected as the focus of our action plan. Highlighted are our vision for each and our key accomplishments.

Communication Domain

**Our Vision:** The multi-pronged efforts made by the City of Puyallup to ensure that we remain an age-friendly city will be largely overlooked without a comprehensive communication plan. To enable residents to learn about the transformative initiatives undertaken by the City, information to residents should be disseminated in an integrated, structured and purposeful way. We envision a community where there is a more robust presence of age-friendly city information across all communication platforms.

In June 2020 we began working on the communication objectives not only because issues related to communication were critical to building awareness about being an age-friendly city but could be implemented even with COVID restrictions.

Other communication objectives relate to providing community-based resources. The Puyallup Activity Center (PAC) offers both in-person and virtual programs to provide resources to older adults. Virtual programming was increased during closure of the Activity Center due to COVID.

In keeping with the objective of exploring creating a series of informational webcasts, the pandemic necessitated modifying the objective to include determining whether people were already using virtual platforms to access information. If so, could we tap into those platforms to offer virtual classes or webinars through the Activity Center.

We designed a survey to determine whether there was a willingness in the community to participate in resource webinars and to determine what topics might be of interest. The survey was posted on the city web site July 30, 2020 through Survey Monkey. Ninety-seven responses were submitted. Survey results supported in-person learning opportunities over virtual programs. Because the center remained closed due to COVID, a virtual newsletter was created to stay in communication with our participants. The newsletter had links to virtual programs as well as puzzles, mind teasers, recipes, fitness tools and other activities that could be done at home.
Key Accomplishments

Updated city’s web page to increase awareness of being an age-friendly city, created age-friendly city links with connections to resources and services. Used the web page to highlight age-friendly city information, to solicit volunteers for domain teams and to survey users about their interest in participating in virtual webinars.

Usage in part is being measured through city-monitored clicking system. Webinar interest was solicited too early in the pandemic when people were not comfortable in online participation.

Google Analytics – Age Friendly City Webpage
2021 – 19 visits to the page
2022 – 169 visits of which 67% were first time visitors to the site
2023 – So far, 37 visits of which 54% are first time visitors to the site.

In addition, we partnered with the Puyallup Public Library to create a special Aging Resources Center where fiction and non-fiction books, information related to community activities and other information relevant to aging will be housed. Weekly, volunteers from Celebrate Seniority are available to help visitors find information. Future plans call for the area to be the location of aging-related classes or activities in partnership with the Activity Center.

The city’s intention is to continue supporting the annual Aging EXPO presented by the Puyallup Area Aging in Community Committee with an annual contribution of $2500 beginning in 2020. However, due to COVID the event was cancelled in 2020 and 2021. It was held again in 2022. It was successful and attendance was estimated at nearly 100, typical of past events.

EXPO 2022 featured a session on “What can you expect from Puyallup as you age?” It highlighted being an age-friendly city and specifically introduced the work of the transportation domain. The newly produced Transportation Tips at a Glance was distributed. The 2023 Aging Expo is planned for Saturday, May 6, 2023 and will feature two well-known keynote speakers, additional educational sessions and vendor area highlighting organizations and services of interest to those interested in aging services.
Puyallup Aging Resources Center

Information Center includes free brochures regarding health, housing, activities, senior tips etc.
Games & puzzles are also located here for check out!

Current Links on the City Website – www.cityofpuyallup.org

https://www.cityofpuyallup.org/1208/Age-Friendly-City
https://www.cityofpuyallup.org/DocumentCenter/View/15741/At-a-Glance-Transportation-Guide
https://www.cityofpuyallup.org/387/Senior-Services
https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/701/Transportation-Options
http://www.cityofpuyallup.org/DocumentCenter/View/10841/Low-Cost-Senior-Housing-Options-in-Puyallup
https://www.cityofpuyallup.org/DocumentCenter/View/15752/May-2022-Activities-Calendar
Aging with Enthusiasm EXPO 2023 is scheduled for Saturday May 6 from 8:00 am-2:00 pm at the Pierce College Campus Center Building in Puyallup. This year’s event invites participants to learn about the new realities of aging as we enter our third chapter highlighting resiliency, optimism, learning and feeling good. The event is free to the public with complimentary assorted lunch snacks. The EXPO offers an exciting day with two dynamic keynote speakers, breakout educational sessions and visits with exhibitors representing a broad array of information and services.
Transportation Domain

**Our Vision:** In recent surveys of older adults living in Pierce County, transportation has been identified as a clear need. Residents may lose the ability to drive as they age or may not be able to afford automobile insurance and upkeep. We envision an age-friendly city that will consider the transportation needs of residents who live away from the city center and ease their use of existing transportation options.

**Key Accomplishments**

In March 2021, the transportation team was formed. Community partners include representatives of the community and Pierce Transit. While transportation has been identified as a need, many people don’t actually know what’s available. A primary objective was to identify existing transportation options and price range. The At-A-Glance Transportation Guide was developed and distributed first at the Aging EXPO May 2022. A larger more extensive guide was also produced. Distribution of the smaller guide is at the Activity Center and other appropriate locations. We learned that the smaller version is more useful and an updated version is in production.

The City has worked with Pierce Transit and a Puyallup Connector Bus Route has been added to provide additional Public Transportation options within the City. The Connector provides riders with key connections to community destinations including medical, shopping and recreation. The Puyallup Connector is a local route designed for the community. In addition, staff and committee members met with Pierce Transit to discuss bus training rides for seniors through the Activity Center. Practice rides will be scheduled in mid-2023. The goal is to assist those unfamiliar with public transportation in learning how to effectively utilize public transportation when needed.
Transportation (Continued)
The City continues to advocate for adequate transit hub parking locations. The new Sounder parking garage is currently under construction and will provide additional weekend and evening parking locations for downtown events and visitors.

The City has also completed a parking study to evaluate parking needs and availability. The results will be used to determine additional parking options for the downtown area. This effort is being led by the Economic Development Manager.

**Come Ride with Me - Rideshare Buddy Program**
# Transportation Guide

## At-A-Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pierce Transit Shuttle</th>
<th>Ride Share (Uber, Lyft, Taxi)</th>
<th>Private, Non-Emergency Medical Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ease of Access</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$$</td>
<td>$$$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available anytime</td>
<td>Yes, for curbside services</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/Individualized service</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can go anywhere</td>
<td>Limited to Pierce County</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to travel urgently</td>
<td>Need to schedule ahead of time</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistive Requirements</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory (no assistance needed)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Limited availability of wheelchair accessible vans</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some assistance needed</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full assistance needed</td>
<td>Variable level of service</td>
<td>Variable level of service</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No assistance needed (cane/walker)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some assistance needed (cane/walker)</td>
<td>Variable level of service</td>
<td>Variable level of service</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger has dementia/cognitive impairment</td>
<td>Variable level of service</td>
<td>Variable level of service</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger weight 300+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Varies by driver</td>
<td>Varies by company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door-through-door service</td>
<td>Curb-to-curb</td>
<td>Curb-to-curb</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will wait for you if your appt. runs late</td>
<td>Next available shuttle will return</td>
<td>Can re-order</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitized between passengers</td>
<td>Variable consistency</td>
<td>Variable consistency</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disclaimer:** Current Health Department guidelines should be followed by transportation providers and riders are encouraged to verify sanitation and masking requirements.

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*A product of the Puyallup Age Friendly City Action Plan Transportation Task Force*
Housing Domain

Our Vision: Understanding that housing is at the heart of an age-friendly city, we envision housing options that attract and keep lifelong residents. The majority of older adults want to be able to age-in-place. They are not seeking to move away from the neighborhoods, their friends and the day-to-day routines that they have established through years of residency. However, factors such as accessibility and affordability can force older adults out of their communities in search of better options.

Key Accomplishments

The task force was formed in early 2022. Community partners represent construction, city government, real estate and a former mayor. Overall objectives include supporting the construction of innovative, affordable housing solutions such as mixed-use developments, accessory dwelling units and accessible, single story housing options and support the education of Puyallup residents on creative housing options.

Prior to forming the plan task force, the city received a grant to develop a Puyallup Housing Action Plan, which was approved and is being implemented by the Planning Department. Our task force began by providing information on different types of housing options, introduction of a land trust and importance of universal design. The group believes that it will have greater impact by supporting the Housing Development Plan and serving as a sounding board to the Planning Department as it develops the 2024 comprehensive plan. The initial work product was the development of a comment letter sent to the Planning Department and to the City Council related to specific areas including ADUs, universal design standards, town homes and missing middle housing options.
Respect and Social Inclusion Domain

Our Vision: As we age, we often face overt and subtle forms of ageism. We envision an age-friendly city that embraces all older adults by creating opportunities for older adults to contribute to the community, and by fostering opportunities for different generations, different cultures and different ethnicities to share knowledge and life experiences with one another. Regardless of one’s age, beliefs, or nationality, individuals are sought and valued for their differences as well as their similarities.

Key Accomplishments

The group initially was formed in March 2022 and included members of the community, Senior Advisory Board and original age-friendly city stakeholders group. The team began exploring ways to find activities various organizations were providing once groups began offering activities post pandemic. The idea of being a clearing house for activities and then distributing to various locations appeared to be an appropriate method of disseminating information.

The Puyallup Activity Center which serves the 55+ community has fully reopened and again is offering programs and activities for older adults. Programs include cards, crafts, bingo, exercise and fitness classes, woodcarving, painting, trips and tours and more. In addition, the Activity Center offered our first community concert targeted to the older adult population. Prime seating was provided for the seniors who attended and they were treated to a light dinner prior to the concert. The event was a huge success and is planned to be held again in July 2023.

Citizens Launch Age-Friendly Business Certification

What does it mean to be an age-friendly business? The term “age-friendly” can often be associated with seniors or the elderly. But it is a term that impacts a much broader group of people than just seniors. Age-friendly is a commitment to treating all age groups in a friendly, professional manner, especially from a business standpoint. The Puyallup Area Aging in
Community Committee, in partnership with the Puyallup Main Street Association (and endorsed by the City), recently won an AARP Challenge grant to create an Age-Friendly Business Certification program, which hopes to promote a more welcoming business environment for seniors and all families who shop in Puyallup.

City Staff spoke with Committee member Linda Henry about the origins of the program, its mechanics, and steps that businesses can take to become certified.

“Some years ago, our committee did research in the community and found that there was a need to create a program that would entice businesses to be age-friendly,” says Henry. “We applied for an AARP Challenge Grant to kickstart the program, but the initiation of the grant was delayed due to COVID. The program is running and today we have the first group of graduates.”

At the October 10, 2022, Senior Advisory Committee meeting, certificates were awarded to six businesses that went through the program, Charlie’s Restaurant, Ashley’s Room, Trove, Cascades, Johnson Jewelers, and Newel Hunt Furniture. These businesses completed the steps necessary to become an Age-Friendly Certified Business. [https://mailchi.mp/puyallupwa.gov/citizens-launch-age-friendly-business-certification](https://mailchi.mp/puyallupwa.gov/citizens-launch-age-friendly-business-certification)

**SUMMARY**

Although we have reached the conclusion of our 5-year action plan, we know that we have learned much and are positive that we have made a difference in our community. While our team members will change, we anticipate new opportunities will arise in the future. We are confident that we can continue to champion Puyallup as a community for all ages.
Thank you,

Puyallup Age Friendly Action Plan Task Group