

Age Friendly Oronoco Area Action Plan

Mission Statement

Age-Friendly Oronoco Area Committee's mission is to create a community where the quality of life of residents will be enhanced by partnering with other organizations; addressing housing needs for residents to age in place; removing barriers in community buildings and parks; enhancing communication; fostering socialization; and encouraging volunteerism.

Vision Statement

Envision an Oronoco Area that brings livability and enjoyment to residents—no matter their age

Value Statement

- All residents add value to our community, regardless of age
- Being able to age in your home brings comfort and a sense of relief and control over your life
- There is value in intergenerational learning and volunteering
- Communication is key in achieving an age-friendly community
- Community involvement and support are of value to the health and wellness of all residents

Age Friendly Oronoco Area Committee Members



Front Row (L to R) Kevin McDermott, past Oronoco Mayor; Rosemary VanHouten, former Pine Island Area Home Services director; Ryland Eichhorst, Oronoco Mayor; Back Row (L to R) Katie Dudley, Oronoco Parks Committee Rep; Kay Lovett, New Haven Township resident; Dana Bergner, Three Rivers Community Older Adult Services Specialist; Holly Brown, Elder Network Respite and Companion Care Coordinator; Joy Bertsinger, past Oronoco Mayor; Not pictured Dan Conway, SE MN Area Agency on Aging

The Age Friendly Oronoco Area Committee is sponsored in part by AARP. Committee members include Rosemary VanHouten, Kevin McDermott, Ryland Eichhorst, Katie Dudley, Kay Lovett, Dana Bergner, Holly Brown and Joy Bertsinger. Members met monthly beginning in January 2022 guided by Dan Conway from South East MN Area Agency on Aging. We designated our service area to include residents in the 55960- zip code area. This includes the city of Oronoco, and areas in Oronoco and New Haven Townships.

Committee members bring experience in understanding the needs of area residents. Elected Oronoco officials (past and present), Oronoco Committee members, Township residents, as well as representatives from eldercare agencies are all familiar with needs of the elderly. Throughout our discussions, members have brought new insight and visions of what an age-friendly community could be for area residents.

Members used their expertise and experience to begin our assessment of what area resident's needs are and what **positives** make our community a GREAT place to live. Next, we heard from residents through a community survey and sought information from area agencies on what services they could provide for area residents. We find it valuable to hold more listening sessions and resource fairs to gain more insight into needs and services available.

After reviewing results of the community survey and the agency surveys, the committee proceeded to complete the twenty-five page Action Plan for years 2024-2026. We reviewed the eight domains of livability provided by the World Health Organization and the AARP. Of those, the committee selected five domains- Community and Health Services, Communication and Information, Housing (including adaptive solutions for existing homes), Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, and finally Social Participation.

The Action Plan identifies goals and specific activities along with potential partners, outcomes and completion dates. The Goals and activities are outlined in the Action Plan for years 2024, 2025 and 2026. The Action Plan provides opportunity for the community to apply and potentially receive grants provided through AARP and other organizations.

Two of our goals for 2024 were met in April 2024. A Listening Session was held on April 2nd from 4-6 pm at the Presbyterian Church of Oronoco. Oronoco area residents were invited to attend to express their concerns and needs. The second goal was a Resource Fair scheduled on April 24th from 3-6 pm at the School House Events (the brick schoolhouse) in Oronoco. Fifteen agencies/groups were in attendance to offer help and guidance to area residents.

The Oronoco City Council reviewed and approved the Age Friendly Oronoco Area Action Plan. This was the first step in potentially receiving AARP grants that will benefit Oronoco area residents. The Age Friendly Oronoco Area committee continues to work towards the goals set forth in the Age Friendly Oronoco Area Action Plan for years 2024 – 2026.