

**ESPANOLA  
AGE-FRIENDLY  
COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**



FEBRUARY 27, 2024

K.A COMMUNITY CONSULTING

# OVERVIEW

- About Age Friendly Community Planning
- Local Context
- Process and Timelines
- Phase 1: Detailed Update
- Community Engagement
- Community Profile
- Key Findings
- Next Steps

# WHAT IS AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLANNING

- An Age Friendly Community is one that
  - Recognizes the range of capabilities and resources among older people
  - Anticipates and responds to age-related needs
  - Respects the decisions and lifestyle choices of the elderly
  - Protects the vulnerable
  - Promotes seniors' inclusion in all aspects of community life
- Age Friendly Community Planning considers eight domains and identifies actions that support and enhance the well-being of older adults



# LOCAL CONTEXT

- Supporting the senior population responds to priorities in the recently adopted Strategic Plan, Our Gateway to Growth (2023 – 2027), and the LaCloche Foothills Community Safety and Well-being Plan (2021 – 2025).
- Espanola has a higher percentage of seniors than the provincial or national average

|          | <b>%<br/>Residents<br/>65+</b> | <b>%<br/>Residents<br/>85+</b> |
|----------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Espanola | 25.2                           | 2.9                            |
| Ontario  | 18.5                           | 2.4                            |
| Canada   | 19.0                           | 2.3                            |

# PROCESS AND TIMELINES

## Phase 1: Age Friendly Assessment (December 2023 – February 2024)

- Facility Assessments
- Literature Review / Environmental Scan
- Community Engagement & Survey
- Program, Service, Admin and Budget Review
- Complete Inventory and Report to Council

## Phase 2: Age Friendly Action Plan (February – March 2024)

- Identify Actions and Create Recommendations
- Identify Resource Requirements and Possible Partners
- Create Marketing and Communications Strategy
- Create Tools for Monitoring and Evaluation
- Complete Age Friendly Action Plan and Present to Council

# DETAILED UPDATE

- Kick-off Meeting
- Information Gathering
  - Literature review and environmental scan
  - Site visits
  - Community engagement
- Project Communications
  - Website content
  - 2 media releases, media coverage Mid-North Monitor
  - Announcement with Minister Cho
  - Radio advertisement
  - Social content
- Analysis and Report
- Council Update

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



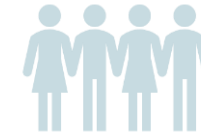
## One-on-One Interviews

11 Interviews  
January – February 2024



## Focus Group Sessions

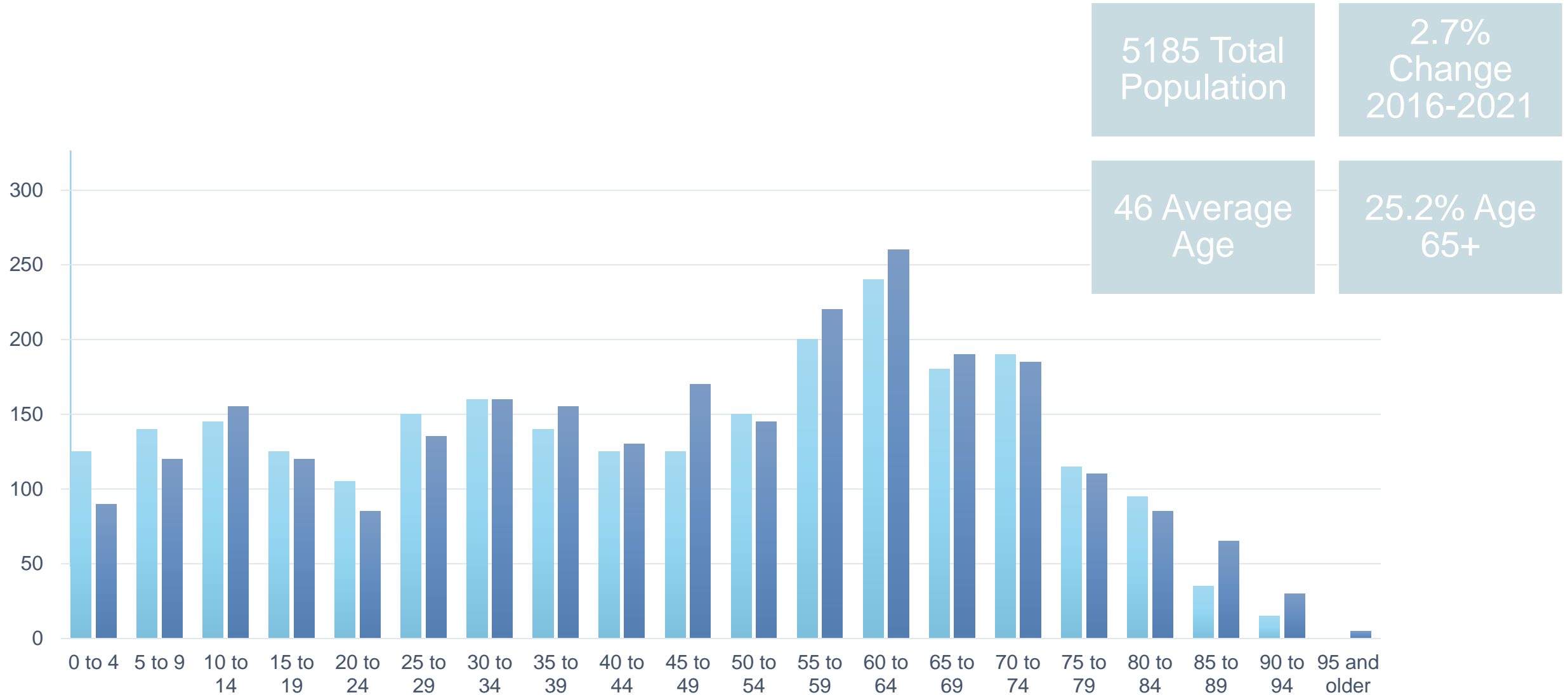
2 Sessions: 18 Participants  
2+ hour sessions  
January 2024



## Community Survey

311 Responses  
January 2024

# COMMUNITY PROFILE





# KEY FINDINGS



# SWOT ANALYSIS



## STRENGTHS

- Service groups and community organizations
- Care Van services
- Good basis of medical care and services
- Variety of recreational programs and facilities
- Overall sense of community
- Espanola Public Library programs and services



## WEAKNESSES

- Lack of housing supply and options
- Access to health care
- Ineffective and uncoordinated communications
- Declining volunteer base
- Pedestrian corridors
- Limited benches/seating
- Inadequate accessibility noted in some areas



## OPPORTUNITIES

- Enhance Care Van services
- Accessibility improvements in the built and natural environment
- Improved communications
- Foster engagement and participation
- Increase and promote volunteerism
- New business opportunities
- Training to build capacity



## THREATS

- Impact of social isolation
- Domtar closure
- Services keeping up with demand
- Climate change
- At-risk behaviours in the community
- Aging Infrastructure
- Cost of living
- Potential population decline

**VISION**



# PARTNERS

Rainbow  
District School  
Board

Service Groups  
and Community  
Organizations

VON and  
Bayshore

Manitoulin  
Sudbury Social  
Services Board

Neighbouring  
municipalities

Long-term Care  
Home

Espanola Public  
Library

Health Care  
Team

Seniors Club

Paramed  
Services

Foodbank

Upper levels of  
government

# PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND OUTDOOR SPACES

## What we heard

- Public areas are clean and pleasant
- Public buildings are accessible, well-lit, with doors that are easy to open
- Several recent accessibility related improvement in parks
- Buildings well signed with few minor exceptions

## Priorities

- Accessibility
- Seating
- Pedestrian corridors
- Safety and security



# TRANSPORTATION

## What we heard

- Care Van service is excellent
  - 85% of survey participants are aware of the service
- Discussion around medical transportation
  - Only 40% aware of new service
- Roads were found to be well maintained, lines are clear and visible
- Active transportation options can be improved (e.g., sidewalk maintenance, new paths and walkways, cycle infrastructure)

## Priorities

- Review options to enhance Care Van hours
- Increase awareness of all transportation options
- Evaluate options to enhance pedestrian and cycle corridors



# HOUSING

## What we heard

- 85% of survey participants own their own home, and 83% feel that it meets needs now and in future
- Concern within the community about the range and supply of housing options
- New residential development is happening
- Home and yard maintenance services options needed
- Financial support mechanisms do exist; they need to be better communicated

## Priorities

- Increasing housing supply
- Ensuring affordable options are available
- Home support services are affordable to allow seniors to stay in their homes longer



# RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

## What we heard

- Most people think that Espanola is an ideal place for older adults
- Programs, events, and activities consider older adults
- Seniors Appreciation Event is found to honour older adults

## Priorities

- Improve communication conduit between residents, organizations, service groups, and the town
- Outreach with older adults
- Continued effort to consider seniors in the planning of program, events, and activities
- Honouring the contribution of older adults





# SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

## What we heard

- 28% socialize once a day; 40% socialize a few times each week
  - Lack of information about opportunities is the biggest barrier
- There is a HUGE range of program options delivered by the Town and other providers
- Generally, these programs are events are found to be in accessible locations, at convenient times, and are affordable

## Priorities

- Bolstering participation and engagement
- Effective communications and promotion
- Coordination among service providers
- Safety and security



# COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION

## What we heard

- Survey results show
  - 32% feel very informed
  - 57% feel somewhat informed
  - 20% do not feel informed
- Word of mouth, internet, and social media are the most common sources of information
  - More information would be welcome via social media, mail, internet, and print news
- Communications, lack of awareness, and availability of information cited as a challenge

## Priorities

- Broader communications and streamlined access to information
- Coordination of communications efforts



# CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

## What we heard

- 61% of survey participants were retired
- 49% responded that they do not volunteer but plan to in future
- 26% give 1-5 hours / week
- 12% are not interested in volunteering
- 40% feel there is a range of volunteer opportunities; only 20% feel there is a range of suitable employment opportunities for older adults

## Priorities

- Volunteer recruitment and retention
- Promotion of volunteer and employment opportunities
- Building capacity within the volunteer sector



# COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES

## What we heard

- Over 70% of survey participants state they are good to very good in terms of their overall health and wellness
- Only 20% aware of the video appointment service available at EPL
- The good basis of health services is noted, but it is further recognized that there are shortfalls and barriers for some
- There is a general lack of awareness about home services

## Priorities

- Education and awareness related to the aging process and the local services that are available
- Access to physicians and specialized services
- Supporting the actions identified in other strategic guiding documents



# NEXT STEPS



Identify and prioritize actions

Develop recommendations

Create communications and marketing strategy

Prepare Age-Friendly Action Plan

Present to Council for adoption

# THANK YOU

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