

Hallowell officials step up effort to make city more age-friendly

www.pressherald.com/2017/07/21/hallowell-officials-step-up-effort-to-make-city-more-age-friendly/

By Jason Pafundi

HALLOWELL — City officials bidding to make Hallowell a more age-friendly city continue to make improvements to conform with the AARP's eight domains of livability that influence the quality of life for older adults.

City Manager Nate Rudy and intern Clio Barr are leading the effort that got a boost this year when Hallowell received a \$6,000 grant from AARP to begin an age-friendly action plan and become one of 39 communities in the organization's Network of Age-Friendly Communities.



Maggie Warren, 71, of Hallowell, pedals her recumbent bicycle Friday at Slate's Bakery in downtown Hallowell. The outdoor tables are an early morning gathering place. Staff photo by Joe Phelan



Hallowell city historian Sam Webber, shown in a June interview, said Hallowell offers events for senior citizens, including a holiday dinner. Staff photo by Joe Phelan



Search photos available for purchase: [Photo Store](#) →

Berwick, Biddeford, Kennebunk, Portland, Saco, Westbrook and Yarmouth are among the communities in southern Maine that belong to the network.

“AARP has been a trailblazer on livability and they have established a brand around trying to help communities make decisions on how to make the town more livable, people- and pedestrian-friendly, and also to increase outreach and communication with older folks,” Rudy said.

Rudy said more than 30 percent of residents are over 60, which is a higher-than-average number for Maine. That means a lot of people who have had careers and experiences might have extra time they can dedicate to serving on committees and sharing their knowledge.

A large number of them already are taking part in municipal government, from attending and speaking at meetings to serving on boards and committees, but some don’t want that much involvement yet still want to be heard. Rudy said the city is thinking of more ways to continue reaching out to them.

The city has demonstrated success in a number of the AARP’s eight domains of livability: outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and

employment, communication and information, and community and health services.

There are ample outdoor spaces, there is a high level of social participation among residents, and the city adopted a resolution to be known as a “welcoming city” earlier this year.

The city can improve in the areas of communication and housing, Rudy said.

“I’ve heard a number of people say they want the city to improve its communications outreach,” he said. “The council formed a communications committee, and we’re looking at the ways we reach out and the ways we can improve that within our budget.”

Community Housing of Maine has [pledged to convert a building on the Stevens Commons campus](#) into affordable senior housing, something the city set as a goal when it discussed what it was looking for from a potential developer of the 54-acre campus off Winthrop Street.

Barr, a student at Bates College who grew up in Hallowell and graduated from Hall-Dale High School, is leading the effort to gauge the city’s age-friendliness using a survey available online and around the city and through focus groups.

Jason Pafundi can be contacted at 621-5663 or at:

[\[email protected\]](#)

Twitter: @jasonpafundiKJ

Share

[Read or Post Comments](#)

[Send questions/comments to the editors.](#)

Want the news vital to Maine?

Our daily headlines email is delivered each morning.

- This field is for validation purposes and should be left unchanged.