



Age-Friendly Georgetown

Mission Statement

This mission of Age-Friendly Georgetown is to help our family members, neighbors, and friends live safe, healthy, and socially active lives in our hometown by supporting and enhancing Georgetown's culture of caring with resources and volunteer efforts.



Truly,
"A Community for All Ages"

June 23, 2023

Age-Friendly Georgetown

AARP Year Three Progress Report

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I. Executive Summary

Georgetown Maine is a small island community in the southern portion of Maine's Midcoast region. It is a bridged island, so it does not have some of the isolation and "apartness" endemic to Maine's non-connected islands, but we surely share the deeply imbedded characteristics of independence and self-reliance for which Mainers are renowned.

Our town was founded and built over 300 years ago on its connection to the sea. That heritage remains in our ethos and psyche. In the 21st century, we are a blend of fishermen, shipbuilders, artists, office workers, professionals, and more, complemented by a thriving summer community which nearly triples our population, many of whom have deep roots in the island's past and participate in community service activities.

On the one hand, these diverse groups have merged into a caring, well integrated small town. On the other hand, we have several isolated "villages" with some individuals who are best characterized by the spirit of "we are fine taking care of ourselves." We know, however, that is not always the case and that all Georgetowners need connection, by either occasionally receiving support or by providing it. That is emphasized by our aging population; as of 2021, 40.6% of our residents were 65 or older. In our six years of activity as Age-Friendly Georgetown (AFG), we have seen a steady progression from those providing services to those receiving them. At one of our early organizational town meetings, a fifth-generation resident expressed that we didn't need this kind of group in our town. Now she is on our Steering Committee, one of our most active and committed volunteers, and a strong connection to our town's history and multi-generational population. Our work has brought together participants from all our various constituencies and woven the mission of AARP's Age-Friendly programs into our town culture. Of course, we are not done with this work. We continue to reach out to all our town residents, whether full-time or those who can only be with us for a few months a year.

We have made significant progress on our Action Plan goals. Those will be discussed in more detail, but these are three of our favorites:

Communication Network

When we started our communications in 2017, we had 40 people in our network. As of April of 2023, we now send regular communications to over 350 of our town folks. We provide health and safety alerts, weather warnings, notice of town meetings and events, socialization opportunities, information about education and recreation happenings, and much more.

Georgetown Trekkers



In 2020, we formed the Georgetown Trekkers to stimulate activity in the great outdoors. Georgetown has 15 nature preserves and provides wonderful opportunities to get exercise and the camaraderie of activity with like-minded folks. We created “passports” for adults and a separate program for Georgetown youth with their own “passport”.

Gleaning Program

To provide nutritional supplements to our residents, we partnered with the Merrymeeting Gleaners, now a part of Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program, to gain access to fresh local produce gleaned from area farms. Every week in our May to October season, we create a Gleaning Table at our Town Office for folks to pick up there if they can. We make more than ten deliveries as well, for those not able to get to the table.



Our Steering Committee, with almost all our original members and strengthened by several new ones, remains committed to improving the lives of all Georgetowners and enhancing their ability to live rich, active, and safe lives in their own homes.

II. Introduction

A. The Origin of Age-Friendly Georgetown

Age-Friendly Georgetown originated out of Georgetown's 2017-2019 project to update the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Many of the issues and challenges discussed were seen through a prism of our town's aging population. The median age of Georgetown residents is over 61 and more than 40% of residents are 65 years old or older. In addition, much of our housing stock is very old, requiring continual maintenance and upgrading. Those factors often make it difficult for older folks to live safely in their homes. It is widely accepted that physical and cognitive decline can accelerate if folks are forced to uproot from their home and community and move to another town or to some type of care facility. Striving to help our family members, friends, and neighbors "age in place" is well worth the effort.

Though our initial focus was elder-centric, we soon came to realize that our work would be much more beneficial if we expanded our scope to include all Georgetowners in inter-generational work, making our town "A Community for All Ages". We now work to support Georgetowners of all ages and abilities, while never losing our priority of the older residents in town.

The activities that comprise Age-Friendly Georgetown (AFG) Action Plan have been and will continue to be driven by the needs and desires of our community members. Our efforts started by connecting with existing organizations and programs that were already doing wonderful work and seeing how we could support and expand those efforts, along with starting some new and needed projects.

Age-Friendly Georgetown remains a completely volunteer organization, supported by, but not officially affiliated with, town infrastructure. AFG continues to be a vibrant organization after 6 years, with most of the original Steering Committee members still in place, along with new members and a wide array of committed volunteers.

B. Barriers Encountered

The initial and most difficult barrier we encountered was the deeply imbedded Maine trait of not wanting to accept support. Georgetowners are fiercely independent and strong-willed. They readily and willingly offer help to others but often demur when they are made aware of services or programs that would make their lives safer and easier. We have worked diligently over the past six years to whittle away at this barrier through successful projects that have been shown to help many of our town folks.

Another challenge has been finding effective ways to connect with and remain in communication with all island residents. The internet is a great connecting system but not everyone, especially the older generations, has computer skills or an internet account. We responded to this barrier by supporting folks new to the world of computers with training and access to tablets and internet connections. We have built our island communication network to over 350 participants, in a town of a little over 1,000.

Given our old housing stock and the need for continual maintenance, the lack of available tradespeople, such as plumbers and electricians, can be a real barrier for folks staying safely in their homes. AFG created a “Job Squad” to provide volunteer support for individuals who no longer can handle some household chores or projects. However, some necessary work requires a licensed technician. In addition, the lack of liability insurance for volunteers working in someone’s home is another barrier. We do have liability waivers for our volunteer workers and clients, but having proper liability insurance for our efforts would be a much better solution.

C. Initial Activity

It was agreed upon and understood that the Age-Friendly Committee would begin some of its work in parallel with the completion of the Comprehensive Plan. The interplay between the two efforts was beneficial to both.

In accordance with the AARP guidance, our initial thrust was to do a comprehensive assessment of our town’s needs and status of support services. We created an extensive survey tool during the first half of 2018. Then, using an AARP planning grant, we sent, via first class mail, the survey to all Georgetown residents and property owners, 980 copies. The survey and mailing envelope was a canary yellow to stand out. We publicized the color of the mailing and had people watch for it. We also made the survey available on-line. and in the end, received 259 responses by the end of 2018.

We spent the next few months sorting and analyzing the data. We then scheduled three “town meetings” to present our findings and to gather community reaction and input. These meetings were held in different parts of our town to attract as many participants as possible and we were pleased with the large turnout at each session. The meetings were lively and informative and provided much guidance for our on-going work. We also held “stakeholder” meetings with such groups as the Selectboard, Georgetown Working League, and Georgetown Community Center.

We followed this assessment with a series of educational meetings to increase the knowledge and awareness of issues affecting Georgetown residents. These sessions included:

- Local law enforcement (Sagadahoc County Sheriff and Bath Police Department.

- Georgetown’s Local Health Nurse
- Alzheimer’s Association of Maine
- Catholic Charities SEARCH Program (Seek Elderly Alone, Renew Courage and Hope).
- Habitat for Humanity
- Bath Housing Authority
- Midcoast Maine Community Action

III. Essential Partnerships

A fundamental part of our success has been productive partnerships, starting with AARP Maine. We realized early on that our work would be much more productive if we reached out to town and area organizations to find ways to work together on common goals. This has proven very fruitful, and we have created many on-going relationships in all areas of our work. The partnerships include:

Age-Friendly Communities of the Lower Kennebec

AARP Maine

Bath Housing Authority

National Digital Equity Center

Georgetown Selectboard/Town Office Staff

Georgetown Central School

Georgetown Community Center

Georgetown Conservation Commission

Georgetown Historical Society

Georgetown Recreation Committee

Georgetown Volunteer Fire Department

Georgetown Working League

Habitat for Humanity, Seven Rivers

Kennebec Estuary Land Trust (KELT)

Laura E Richards Library

Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program (MCHPP) and Merrymeeting Gleaners

People Plus

Sagadahoc County Sheriff’s Department

Town of Arrowsic, a small adjacent town with shared challenges and interests

IV. AARP Domains of Livability

Assessment of Progress on AARP Domains of Livability Addressed in Action Plan.

A. Housing

These goals were listed in our Action Plan:

1. To ensure Georgetown residents are able to stay in their homes as they age.
2. To address the barriers that keep older Georgetown residents from being able to stay in their homes as they age.
3. To mobilize existing resources within town and the larger community to support older Georgetown residents in remaining in their homes as they age.

How we've done:

1. Staying at Home: We believe the sum of our activities have made a substantial improvement in keeping residents' homes safe and comfortable for Georgetowners allowing them to stay at home. These activities include:
 - a. Job Squad: We provide support, assisting with chores, making minor repairs and fixes, and connecting folks with other resources such as Bath Housing Authority's Comfortably at Home and Habitat for Humanity's Aging in Place/Weatherization and Repair programs.
 - b. Several of our efforts have focused on making residents' lives safer, more engaged, and healthier. These include:
 - i. Gleaning: providing fresh, local produce to residents, both at our Gleaning Table and by delivery to folks who can't make it to the table.
 - ii. Georgetown Trekkers: We conduct regular walks/hikes in many of our local nature preserves, providing exercise and socialization.
 - iii. Access: An important part of our outdoor activity is the Schoener Forest "Easy Access" nature trail. This trail has a smooth surface and several resting spots to allow those with limited mobility to spend time in the great outdoors. We also partnered with the Laura E. Richards library to set up a Story Walk to encourage families to bring youngsters into the woods, especially when accompanied by an elder.
 - iv. Sand Buckets: Working with the Sagadahoc County Sheriff Department, we coordinate delivery of sand buckets during the winter to keep walkways and stairs safer.
 - c. Home Heating Purchasing Group: the high cost of home heating fuels is a major financial obligation, especially for retired individuals living on fixed incomes. We established a Georgetown Buying Group with local fuel suppliers for propane and heating oil, negotiating lower rates than could be obtained by residents on their own. We have received great feedback that this program has saved people hundreds of dollars each year, and in some cases thousands of dollars.

- d. House Numbering: In partnership with the Georgetown Volunteer Fire Department, we create and install reflective house number plaques, making it easier for emergency vehicles to locate houses in the dark.
 - e. Affordable Housing: This is a major challenge in our town and one with no easy answers. There is a lack of affordable homes and buildable land. One third of land in town is in nature preserves, which is a great benefit, but limits building opportunities. We are looking at various options, such as home sharing, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). This will be one of our largest challenges going forward. Half of our housing is for summer residents.
2. Barriers: There are several barriers that challenge older residents staying in their home:
- a. Older Homes: Many of the homes in our town are very old and need constant maintenance and repair. This is a big challenge for older and disabled residents.
 - b. Financial: Housing costs have risen dramatically in many areas, including heating, food and other basic necessities, fuel and maintenance for automobiles, contractors, and service providers, and more.
 - c. Availability/Affordability of Tradespeople: With homes needing more maintenance, a big challenge is to find tradespeople, such as electricians, plumbers, carpenters, and those that do yard care, plowing/shoveling, and more.
 - d. Isolation: Many elders now live alone and can slide into increasing isolation. Reaching out to these folks and convincing them to be involved in social activities can sometimes be difficult.
 - e. Health: As we age, health concerns often arise, many times quite serious issues that might take away the ability to live safely and productively at home.
3. Mobilizing Existing Resources: There is a wealth of services and support systems that can provide essential aid and we have benefited from and connected folks with many of them:
- a. AARP Maine: Through this organization's support and guidance, we have been able to develop and implement a wide array of programs and services. Beyond their direct help, they frequently connect us with other Maine communities which have plowed the ground in many support areas and are very willing to share their success and caution about things that didn't work out. This has given us great ideas and guidance.
 - b. Habitat for Humanity, Seven Rivers: Their Aging in Place and Weatherization and Repair programs are available to Georgetown residents, and several have taken advantage of their offerings.
 - c. Bath Housing Authority: The Comfortably Home program has provided many safety and improvement services to Georgetowners, such as dryer vent cleaning, smoke and CO detector installation, cleaning refrigerator coils, replacing lightbulbs, minor repairs, and accessibility modifications and much more.
 - d. People Plus: Age-Friendly Georgetown became a member of People Plus Volunteer Transportation Program (VTN) as one of our first services. We have volunteer drivers who transport those without their own transportation to medical appointments, shopping trips, other errands, visits to family and friends, and more.

- e. Georgetown Working League: The Working League has been an important partner in connecting with a great number of older residents. Through their deep knowledge of the community and its residents, they often alert us to a resident who could benefit from our assistance. We have partnered with them on many initiatives.
- f. Georgetown Community Center: The Community Center is an integral part of the town's support infrastructure. They provide financial assistance, open their facility as a warming center when needed, deliver food baskets, and hold many community events. We work in concert with them whenever we can.
- g. National Digital Equity Center: NDEC provide a wide array of excellent technology services and training programs. They conducted several in-person training sessions in town until the COVID pandemic ended those. Several of our residents transitioned to their on-line programs. Now with pandemic restrictions lifted we are working with NDEC to restart in-person training in town.

B. Transportation

This goal was listed in our Action Plan:

To ensure Georgetown residents have access to safe, reliable, affordable transportation to get them where they need to go.

How we've done:

Transportation support was one of our earliest initiatives. As residents age, or their abilities change, they may not be able to continue to provide their own transportation. Many are able to depend on relatives, friends, and neighbors/neighbor to give them the rides they need. But others do not have that option available, and our transportation program is providing them that service. We enrolled in the People Plus (PP) Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN) and that system provides the infrastructure of matching riders needs with driver availability, along with an overarching liability insurance policy. As part of the Age-Friendly Georgetown project, we have local volunteer drivers who are registered with PP, after background checks and verification of insurance and valid licensing. Those needing rides, register in the system and then call in when they need a ride for a doctor appointment, shopping, errands, or any other need. We have averaged over 3,000 miles of transportation support.

Given the nature of our aging population, we expect that need to grow as more people lose their ability to drive.

C. Communication/Information

These goals were listed in our Action Plan:

1. To ensure Georgetown residents are aware of activities, resources, safety alerts in a timely, organized and easily accessible manner.

2. To support the work of the Three Bridged Islands group to upgrade internet service to meet current Broadband standards.

How we've done:

1. Awareness
 - a. One of our most effective accomplishments has been the creation of an email distribution network to provide information directly to town residents. As of this writing there are more than 350 individuals in our network. In a town of a little over 1,000 residents, and considering spouses, partners, and children of the recipients, we are reaching a very large portion of Georgetowners. We send out information on health, safety, resources, nutrition, weather alerts, town events, town government issues, education, recreation, and more. We have received innumerable comments that these messages have provided valuable and much appreciated information.
 - b. Finding ways to connect and stay in touch with those who don't use computers.
 - c. In addition to these mailings, we also regularly have articles in our town's newspaper, the Georgetown Tide, and have our brochures available and posters displayed around town to stay in touch with those who don't use computers.
 - d. Further, we expanded the information and resources on our Age-Friendly Georgetown website, providing a wealth of information. Some of the key sections address:
 - i. Local activities
 - ii. Food security
 - iii. Health
 - iv. Home Maintenance
 - v. Safety
 - vi. Transportation
 - vii. Local contractors and service providers.
2. We partnered with Georgetown Broadband, LLC, the local organization developing the Town's broadband installation. Using our extensive communication network, we kept residents apprised of progress and the actions they needed to take to get connected to the system. As the installation team has hooked up homes, we have assisted many with guidance and hands on help getting their routers running; in several cases we provided residents with free routers and information about discounts on the monthly service fee.

D. Outdoor Spaces/Buildings

This goal was listed in our Action Plan:

To create more opportunities for older Georgetowners and/or people with mobility impairments to access our beautiful outdoor areas in town.

How we've done:

A major early accomplishment was the creation of an "Easy Access" nature trail at the Schoener Forest Preserve on Route 127 in town. We partnered with the University of Maine, the preserve owner, and the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust (KELT), the preserve manager, to create a walking trail in the woods for those with limited mobility. The trail is firm, smooth, and root and rock free to allow use of walkers and wheelchairs. This was made possible by a grant from the Maine Community Foundation, the donation of trail materials by RSU #1 from their school construction site, and many local contractors and volunteers. After creation of the trail, we partnered with the Laura E. Richards Library to install a StoryWalk® display consisting of a dozen signboards telling a children's story to have fun and build literary skills. It provides a great opportunity for intergenerational activity, and we have had several reports from our community of grandparents taking the children for the walk.

We created the Georgetown Trekkers program to take advantage of the 15 nature preserves in our town, providing recreation, exercise, and the opportunity to make new friends and be with others in the outdoors. We have periodic hikes from spring to late fall, and even have done some winter hikes when conditions permit.

Our group initiated the formation of the Friends of Reid State Park (FRSP) to support and promote the park and its staff and encourage residents and everyone to use the park and to care for it. Our first activity was to keep the boardwalks leading to the beach clear of snow and ice throughout the winter. We had many folks tell us they were hesitant to go to the beach when the boardwalks and pathways were covered with snow and ice. Our volunteers have done that for several winters now and will continue. Our first major project for FRSP will be helping create an Interactive Learning Center, providing intergenerational education and learning programs. The team leading this project is currently identifying current programs that can be strengthened and expanded and investigating new programs that can be implemented. The plan is to house the program in the old concession stand building, which will undergo substantial rehabilitation over the next couple of years.

Many Georgetowners enjoy walking year-round for exercise, but our roads are narrow. This makes it especially difficult in the winter when it is slippery. We made an arrangement with Georgetown Central School to open the gymnasium for walkers when the roads were not safe to walk.

E. Social Participation

This goal was listed in our Action Plan:

To facilitate opportunities for Georgetowners of all ages to engage in social activities that meet their varying needs.

How we've done:

We have created numerous opportunities for Georgetowners to engage in social activities. These include:

- Georgetown Trekkers
- Gleaning Table
- Intergenerational programs with the local elementary school
- Creation and delivery of Thanksgiving and Easter baskets, with hand-made cards created by elementary school kids
- "Easy Access" trail at the Schoener Forest Preserve
- Technology training programs
- Community Forums on a variety of topics
- Age-Friendly Georgetown Steering Committee meetings
- Assistive Technology displays at events
- Creation of the Friends of Reid State Park and associated activities

F. Community Support and Health Services

This goal was listed in our Action Plan:

To facilitate access to services and support that meet the needs of Georgetown residents.

How we've done:

Food Security: This has been an area of significant achievement. Our work started with our Gleaning Program. In partnership with the Merrymeeting Food Coalition and Merrymeeting Gleaners (now part of Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program), we provide access to fresh, local produce, gleaned from area farms. We set up a Gleaning Table at our Town Office for people to come and select their choices and we deliver as well. Throughout the season, from June into October, we serve an average of 25 families, with 10 or more done by our volunteer delivery team. In addition, we formed a coalition during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic to provide food and basic necessities to Georgetown residents.

Emergency Contact System: The winter of 2022-2023 provided some serious and dangerous challenges with power outages. In December of 2022, there was an extended outage lasting over a week for some residents. While there are some informal networks in town, consisting of friends, neighbors, and relatives who keep in touch with folks at risk without power, there had been no overall system to ensure that all residents had contact points to make sure they are safe and comfortable during an outage. Age-Friendly Georgetown convened a meeting with the Selectboard, Town Office staff, the Fire Department, Georgetown Community Center, and the Five Islands Church to review what had happened during the outage and who might have been left out of a contact arrangement ensuring their well-being. From the work of that group, a contact system was created with AFG making the contact with residents who opted in to the system. This was tested in early 2023 and worked effectively.

Drug Take-Back Program: This program is sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Agency, working with local law enforcement departments. Each fall we set up a collection point at our town's fire department building and collect unneeded and unwanted prescription medications so they are safely and environmentally responsibly disposed of. This has been a very popular program over the past several years.

Shredding: The buildup of documents and other paper products can be challenging and too much for small home shredding machines. Age-Friendly Georgetown, in partnership with the Age-Friendly Communities of the Lower Kennebec (Arrowsic, Bath, Georgetown, Phippsburg, West Bath, and Woolwich) have worked with AARP Maine to conduct shredding events in our region. Held at the Bath Police Department parking lot, and with the PD's support, these events have been very popular. Our last one, in early May of 2023, we collected over 9,000 pounds of paper for shredding and recycling. The shredding company said it was one of their biggest collections to date.

Resource Sharing: This is key to our work in Community Support and Health Services. A large percentage of our communication to our email network of over 350 recipients deals with information about health and safety, as well as other resources available to our residents. We receive regular feedback from the recipients how much they value getting the information and they often pass on the contact information for their friends and relatives to have them included in the network.

Decluttering: As we get older, we often find that there is an abundance of old items around our homes that are no longer needed and can be a burden to maintain and keep around. We held a seminar on "Decluttering", with a professional coach to provide some valuable tips and methods in how to reduce the clutter and make the home cleaner and safer.

Community Forums: As mentioned in other sections, we have provided several community forums on a variety of topics. These not only deliver important information, but they are also positive community events bringing folks together.

CPR Training: We organized CPR training for town residents, enlisting the support of our fire department to conduct the sessions.

Assistive Technology: To help folks struggling with various Activities of Daily Living (ADL), we purchased a variety of assistive tools and devices to take to various events and organizations meetings. We also loan the devices so people can try them out before purchasing and can also provide financial assistance if needed.

G. Respect and Social Inclusion

This goal was listed in our Action Plan:

To foster relationships between generations within Georgetown to ensure social inclusion and respect among people of all ages.

How we've done:

Scrapbooks: We led an initiative to have our elementary school children brainstorm ideas on how they could provide support to residents who live alone and may need various types of support. This project was wholeheartedly embraced by the administration, teachers and staff. Working by grade, ideas were generated in group sessions, the children drew pictures of them helping folks. Across all the grades, the recurring theme was contacting older residents and learning about their needs and desires and how the kids could be there for them. Ideas included sitting and talking, reading to them, doing chores, sharing activities, and much more. Then, scrapbooks were put together for all to see. They have been on display in several venues and now reside at our town library.

StoryWalk®: In support of this Laura E. Richards library project, AFG made our "Easy Access" trail at the Schoener Forest Preserve available to install the walk. Using a dozen storyboards mounted on posts, multiple generations have participated in reading a story along the trail. Participation of older or disabled folks with limited mobility is made possible by the well-maintained smooth trail.

Team Logo: Our team made an effort to develop a team logo that embraced the culture and feel of our town. As our focus and efforts developed and we expanded our view to include all Georgetowners, we added a tag line to our logo to reflect that: "A Community for All Ages".

Inclusion in the "Digital Age": Many seniors are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with computers, email, and the internet. We partnered with the National Digital Equity Center (NDEC) to provide devices, training, and support to folks who wanted to develop the skills and comfort level to step into the new world of communication and

connection. This is a big step for individuals who have never been exposed to that environment. The training by NDEC, and AFG's on-going training and support has opened these resources up to many in our community.

Thanksgiving and Easter Baskets: This has been a joint effort to have young Georgetowners create hand-drawn Thanksgiving and Easter cards for older residents. Working with the Community Center, the Five Islands church, and parents, we bought an array of food items and treats. The kids were able to join us on some of the deliveries and the recipients were delighted.

V. Where Do We Go from Here

These were the items listed in our Action Plan and the current status:

- Continue the Gleaning Program: This program has thrived and is much anticipated each year. Each year, more local gardeners share their bounty.
- Continue with the enhancement of the Age-Friendly website to provide a source of information and supporting resources. www.agefriendlygeorgetown.org: The website continues to be maintained and is well used throughout town.
- Work with the Fire Department on carbon monoxide detectors and lock boxes: We have discussed smoke and carbon monoxide project with the Fire Department and the Red Cross. Several have been installed and there is opportunity to expand this effort.
- Expand the Job Squad Program: The Job Squad has grown significantly over the years. There was an interruption during the pandemic, when visiting homes was not appropriate. Since inception, we have performed over 120 jobs for our residents.
- Explore opportunities for building a senior center/intergenerational center with the Town-Owned Property Management Board: We have had discussions, but this idea has not moved forward at this time.
- Continue to promote the Volunteer Transportation Program, including recruiting volunteers to drive and people who need rides: Our transportation program has continued to be a success. We have averaged over 3,000 miles of rides provided. Many of the rides have been to medical appointments.
- Update the list of contractors and service providers for those who can pay: This list is updated as we find new contractors and service providers to participate. Our biggest challenge is to find licensed tradespeople, such as electricians and plumbers.
- Find ways to improve communication throughout town for activities, events, and available resources: This is an on-going effort. The biggest accomplishment is our ever-expanding email network of over 350 recipients. In addition, we partner with other town organizations to share contact lists and promotional materials for events and activities. Our relationship with the Working League, Community Center and Recreation

Committee provides ample opportunities to improve communication and connectedness.

- Create a list of volunteers those who have offered their skills and services: We maintain listings of those who have worked with us in many different capacities. We use those lists to recruit assistance when new projects or needs arise.

In addition to these items that were listed in the Action Plan, there are additional items to consider in “Where Do We Go from Here”:

- One of the biggest, and most difficult, challenges facing Georgetown and many towns and cities in Maine is the lack of affordable housing. We worked on this in our Comprehensive Plan update and have continued to look for ways to make housing available in our town. This is critical to provide opportunities for young families and individuals to live in Georgetown. Reasonable rentals in a coastal town are few and far between for workforce members, restricting local business’s ability to operate at their highest potential. The high price of housing and land, and the lack of buildable sites, limit the ability to create congregate housing or other multi-unit projects. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), small houses, and home sharing are options to be explored.
- Recruiting new members to the Age-Friendly Steering Committee is an on-going process. We are blessed in that most of our original members have stayed with the program and continue to enthusiastically support the work. For fresh ideas and sustainable vitality of our efforts, we need to continually seek out new members.
- Technology training and support is an important area that will always be with us. Getting older folks trained and connected is the first step, but in the challenging and ever-changing world of the internet and digital devices, we will need to continue our training and support efforts. We are engaging with our partner National Digital Equity Center to bring in-person training back to our town.

VI. Summary

Age-Friendly Georgetown has made significant improvements for our community and its residents, young and old. We have learned many lessons over the almost six years of our work. We have formed alliances with many groups leveraging our abilities to assist folks in living safe, healthy, productive, and inclusive lives in our town. We provide support in their homes, transportation when they are no longer able to drive, healthy food for good nutrition, recreation, information to keep folks apprised of important information and events, opportunities for connection and inclusion, and more.

Given that we are an older town, in an older state, and that it is difficult for younger people to move into town, we will continue to grow older as a community. That means that the work we are doing now will only expand and it will be up to us to rise to the challenge. We will need to recruit more members and volunteers and work closely with all the other creative and

supportive groups and organizations in town and in the region, keeping Georgetown a caring place to age safely and productively in our homes.