

Building an Age-Friendly Rhode Island

NEWSLETTER

*I*t may be cold outside, but that's not stopping the Age-Friendly Rhode Island project from picking up steam.

In the first year, the Age-Friendly RI team traveled throughout the state meeting with older adults to listen to their concerns. The information gathered led to the creation of a strategic plan. This plan now provides the framework for addressing these gaps in services and the concerns that residents felt were the most pressing issues they face.



Earlier this year, following the January 25th kickoff event, group leaders began to emerge. Spearheading one of the nine domains - Communication and Information, Transportation, Community and Civic Engagement, Food Security and Nutrition, Supports to Remain at Home, Economic Security, Healthcare Access, Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings, and Housing - each of the team leaders has expertise and experience in their respective key area.

One of the first teams to get underway was the Community and Civic Engagement domain, co-led by Mary Lou Moran, the director of the Leon A. Mathieu Center in Pawtucket and Skye Leedahl, an assistant professor at URI. Another key area gaining traction is Open Spaces and Public Buildings led by Barbara Capalbo, of Hopkinton. This group is engaging land trusts, parks and recreation departments and others to open the lines of communication and find grants and untapped funding sources to help improve and create spaces that are friendly for all ages.

Work groups continue to expand bringing together a wide range of older adults, community and business partners and faith-based organizations. More than 100 people are already actively working to establish goals, brainstorm creative solutions and keep the momentum going. In the coming weeks, Age-Friendly RI will hit the road again, returning to cities and towns to report back about the progress being made and to encourage new age-friendly initiatives across the state.

Participants offer information and feedback during an Age-Friendly Rhode Island workshop session, further defining the the work to be done in the nine domain areas. (Photos by Susan E. Bouchard)

