**Discussion points for BAC 4/16 – Glenn McRae**

A set of notes that I have been taking as I work through the plan that I would like to run by the council.

Plans should not perpetuate stereotypes, myths, or ineffectual approaches. Have we made the right choices to ensure that our plan is not doing this?

**LANGUAGE**

<https://publichealth.wustl.edu/age-inclusive-language-are-you-using-it-in-your-writing-and-everyday-speech/>

Terms: (What should we use)

* Terms like seniors, elderly, the aged, aging dependents, old-old, young-old, and similar “othering” terms connote a stereotype, avoid using them.
* Terms such as older persons, older people, older adults, older patients, older individuals, persons 65 years and older, or the older population are preferred.
* Use older adults, a term less likely to connote discrimination and negative stereotypes, when describing individuals 65 years old and older.

**What title is best? What best captures a call to action and possibility of success**

* Reframe Aging: An action Plan for Burlington
* Creating an Age Friendly Burlington: An Action Plan
* Age Strong Burlington: An Action Plan
* *Other*

**Further additions, refinements, corrections?**

I only received a few comments back on any of the 5 action plans sent out. *Want to thank Alison who reviewed and sent back notes on each, some substantive feedback as well as good editing catches.* I want to make sure that the whole document is something that each member of the council is both familiar with and can sign off on. No surprises.

I have made some edits to the 5 documents based on the limited feedback. The only real substantive change is an addition I am recommending based on a current issue in the city regarding ADUs and Housing. Recommend adding as #10 under *Actions: Burlington Aging Council and Age-Friendly Organizational Network (including City Departments) with Staffing Support*

10. Expand ADU definition and inclusion for innovative solutions appropriate for rapid deployment (e.g., [WheelPad](https://www.wheelpad.com/), a temporary accessible unit that can be installed on wheels like a tiny house).

While we have a lot more flexibility in the city to consider new types of housing and house renovations, we do not have allowances for rapid response technologies that are becoming more available and are inhibited due to current zoning. We have all read about the backlog of people at the hospital and rehab waiting to go home, but homes are not really adequate to safely meet their needs short or long terms, and nursing homes are not appropriate or desirable for most. It would be nice to have Burlington be on the forefront of rapid responses for aging adaptations while we await the years and decades that it will take to build our way out of the situation.

**Reframing Aging and our approach to Ageism**

* We are all aging – it is a shared experience.
* Solutions relying on individual action and effort do not provide a real path forward.
* How do we reframe it as a whole community issue -
  + The current way we address a growing aging population is that it is a set of problems about a uniform group of individuals who simply because of a passing a shared age marker are now a drain on society and the economy.
  + Can we change this conversation celebrating the diversity that comes with aging and focusing on concrete paths forward that result in outcomes of broad community prosperity?
* There is high urgency (not working on this is creating a crisis sensibility), coupled with high efficacy (there are many things we can do, short and long term that will have a direct positive impact on people’s lives that will also contribute to strengthening community).

See: Frameworks Institute (<https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/issues/aging/>).

The CEO keynoted the recent National Movement to Reframe Aging Summit (last Wednesday) that I attended. <https://www.reframingaging.org/Events/Summit-2024-The-Movement-to-Reframe-Aging>. His talk and highlights from the summit will be available in a few weeks.

The main message was about how we present ideas if we want to inspire action.

* Focusing on vulnerability elicits sympathy but little action.
* Focusing on collective progress and prosperity increases peoples’ willingness to act.

We need to give careful thought to how we are going to present this action plan to city council and the new mayor so that it has the best chance of moving up the list of city priorities.