



## Newport Age-Friendly Planning: Key Best Practices

*Lessons for Municipal Leaders & Community Planners | Source: Newport For All Ages Webinar, May 2026. Transcript.*

Overview: Newport became the state's first accredited age-friendly community by combining municipal leadership, cross-sector partnerships, community engagement, and long-term planning. These lessons can help other cities and towns build more inclusive, livable communities for residents of all ages.

### Key Best Practices

#### 1. Start with Municipal Leadership

- Embed age-friendly work within city government.
- Identify elected officials or staff champions.
- Use formal resolutions to create accountability and long-term commitment.

#### 2. Build Strong Community Partnerships

- Bring together nonprofits, healthcare systems, universities, planners, transportation leaders, and residents.
- Include older adults directly in the planning process.
- Build trust before seeking funding.

#### 3. Use Data to Create Urgency

- Analyze local demographic trends.
- Use census data to demonstrate current and future community needs.
- Frame aging as a community-wide planning issue — not just a senior issue.

#### 4. Focus on the Domains of Livability

Key planning areas include:

- Housing
- Transportation
- Outdoor spaces & buildings
- Social participation
- Communication & information
- Health services & supports to remain at home
- Civic participation
- Respect & inclusion

#### 5. Design for All Ages

Adopt an “8 to 80” mindset:

- Safe sidewalks benefit children and older adults.
- Accessible transportation helps the entire community.
- Public spaces should support mobility, safety, and social connection for everyone.
- For more information, visit [880cities.org](https://880cities.org).

## 6. Prioritize Visible, Measurable Wins

Examples from Newport:

- Public AARP FitLot exercise space
- Safer pedestrian crossings on busy roads
- Local resource: pocketbook guide for older adults
- Expanded programming at the Edward King House Senior Center

## 7. Treat the Plan as a Living Document

- Avoid overly rigid timelines.
- Revisit priorities regularly.
- Adapt to changing demographics, leadership, funding, and infrastructure needs.

## 8. Invest in Relationships & Trust

- Collaboration grows through consistency and shared experiences.
- Long-term progress requires patience.
- Sustainable initiatives are built through relationships — not quick wins.

## 9. Keep the Public Informed

Maintain momentum by:

- Celebrating achievements
- Sharing progress publicly
- Reporting measurable outcomes
- Keeping stakeholders engaged

## 10. Plan for Inclusion & Future Generations

- Provide multilingual communications and resources.
- Build systems that support today's older adults and tomorrow's aging population.
- Recognize that age-friendly planning improves quality of life for all residents.

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## Newport's Biggest Takeaway

Age-friendly planning is not a short-term project, it is a long-term civic commitment requiring leadership, collaboration, patience, and continuous adaptation.

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