



*Gatineau, an  
age-friendly  
municipality*

THE APPROACH THAT  
LED TO RECOGNITION



# GATINEAU, AN AGE-FRIENDLY MUNICIPALITY

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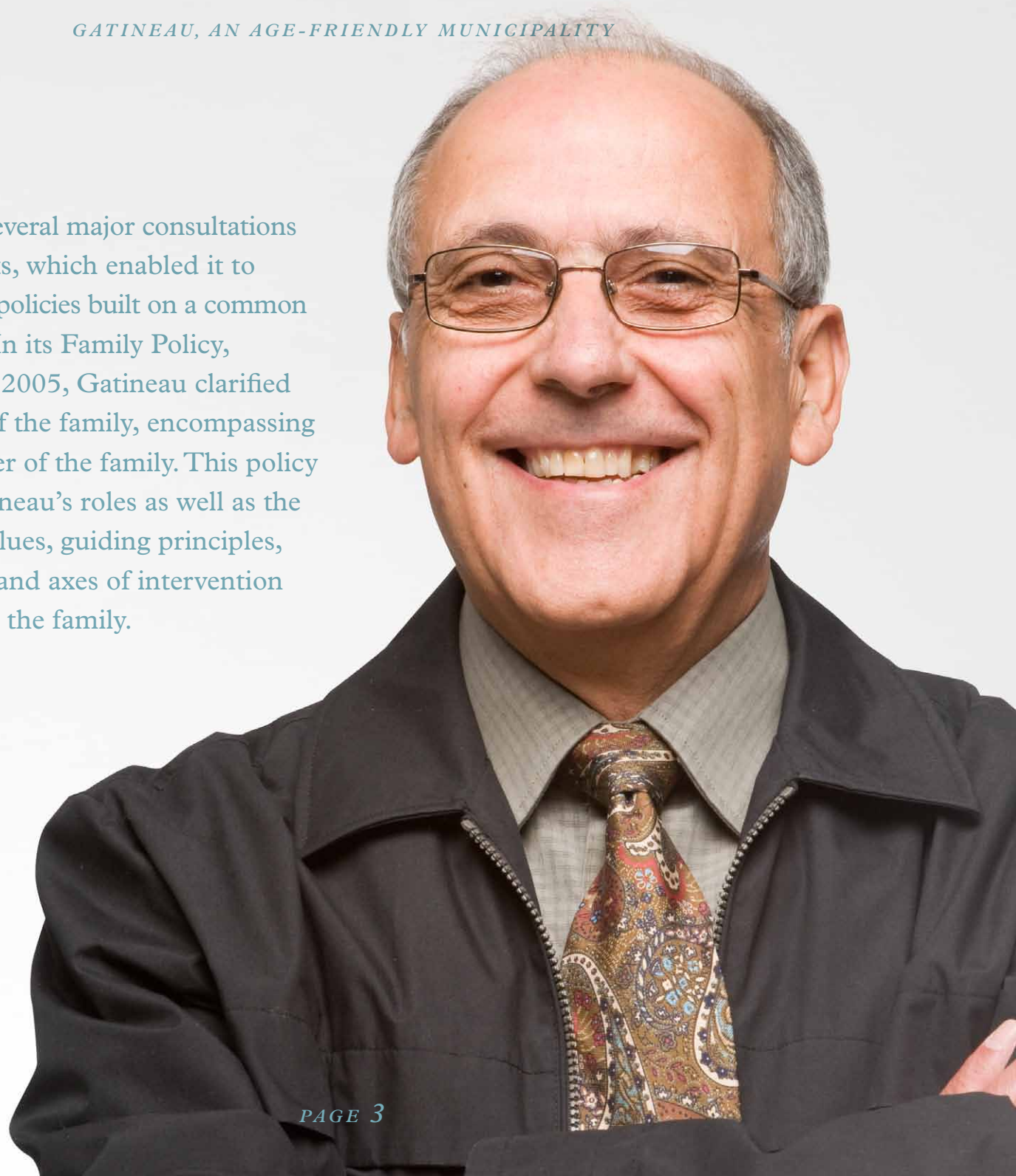
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# STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

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Since its creation following the municipal amalgamations in 2002, Gatineau has made a tremendous effort to harmonize the practices that had been in place in the former cities of Hull, Aylmer, Gatineau, Buckingham and Masson-Angers.

This led to several major consultations with residents, which enabled it to develop new policies built on a common foundation. In its Family Policy, published in 2005, Gatineau clarified its concept of the family, encompassing every member of the family. This policy sets out Gatineau's roles as well as the municipal values, guiding principles, orientations and axes of intervention in relation to the family.



**KEY ORIENTATIONS OF THE FAMILY POLICY:**

- *to develop harmonious and sustainable communities; and*
- *to reduce inequities in order to achieve an equitable community in which everyone participates.*

The framework for integrating persons with disabilities and reduced mobility, entitled *Gatineau, An Inclusive City*, supports the Age-Friendly Municipality (AFM) approach. This framework was introduced in 2006 further to the amendments to *An Act to secure the handicapped in the exercise of their rights with a view of achieving social, school and workplace integration*.

It aims to promote integration for everyone in order to ensure that all residents have the chance to live their lives fully.

In 2009, a financial assistance agreement was signed with the Minister responsible for seniors, confirming Gatineau's intention to secure recognition for becoming Gatineau, an Age-Friendly Municipality in order to help

improve and maintain living conditions for its seniors.

By offering seniors the opportunity to remain active as they age, Gatineau hopes to help them continue to grow. To this end it is involved in several initiatives aimed at transforming seniors' surroundings to better meet their needs.

**TO IMPROVE LIVING CONDITIONS FOR GATINEAU'S SENIORS, THE CITY WOULD LIKE TO:**

- *promote their physical, psychological, affective and social autonomy;*
- *recognize, use and highlight their potential;*
- *establish partnerships with associations and organizations serving seniors;*
- *pay special attention to the more disadvantaged; and*
- *foster the social involvement of seniors.*



Gatineau encourages strong participation by seniors in municipal life. The activities organized for them help break their isolation and develop outreach networks that promote active aging. This entails ongoing involvement in social, economic, professional, cultural, intellectual and civic activities. Active aging gives seniors the opportunity to achieve their potential and develop their skills, to maintain a social network and to build a positive self-image. Thus, for Gatineau, it means mobilizing around a common objective: “optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.” (Quebec, 2013).

A positive outlook on aging carries a multitude of benefits, including a tremendous sense of usefulness and accomplishment,

as outlined in Erikson’s model of the eight ages of Man. Seniors must be able to play a significant active role in our cities. These residents are not only dynamic elements that enrich our family and community lives, but also boundless sources of knowledge, wisdom and inspiration (Carrefour action municipale et famille, 2010). Support and involvement by partners and the community are indispensable to the success of the AFM approach initiatives. With the help of the different municipal departments, Gatineau hopes to turn our city into a true age-friendly municipality. Gatineau is expressing its wish to be ever more inclusive, and has identified its vision as: *Gatineau, a City for All Ages*.

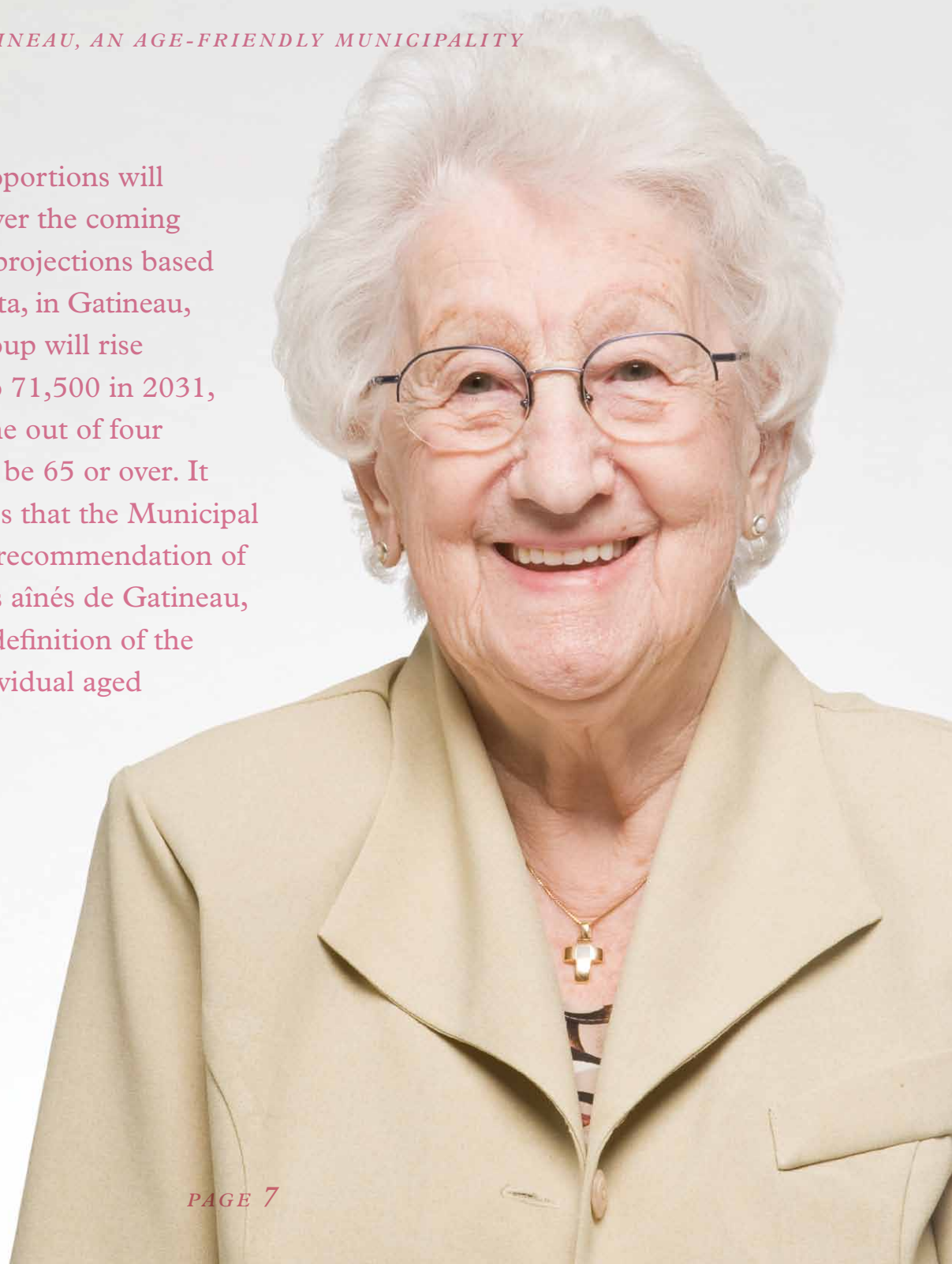
# CONTEXT OF THE AFM APPROACH

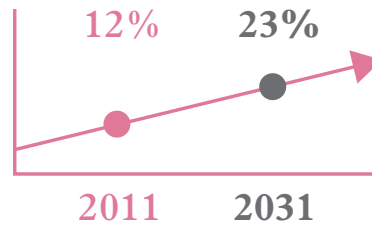
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In Gatineau, people aged 65 and over make up 11.7% of the population, compared to 14.8% nationally. Gatineau attaches tremendous importance to the current and future concerns of its older residents.



Their numbers and proportions will significantly increase over the coming decades. According to projections based on Statistics Canada data, in Gatineau, the 65 and over age group will rise from 31,090 in 2011 to 71,500 in 2031, at which time nearly one out of four Gatineau residents will be 65 or over. It is in part because of this that the Municipal Council, following the recommendation of the Commission sur les aînés de Gatineau, adopted the following definition of the term “senior”: “an individual aged 65 or over.”





This significant demographic change will have a direct impact on our society's progress. Gatineau has decided to take the lead, and is now officially recognized as an Age-Friendly Municipality. In order to follow through on this project, it wishes to:

- *adapt its policies, services and structures to the needs of residents of all ages;*
- *promote ongoing involvement by seniors in consultations and activities;*
- *rely on the involvement and mobilization of the entire community; and*
- *stop discrimination against seniors, which constitutes a serious impediment to active aging.*



In order to maintain and improve living conditions for its seniors, in 2011 Gatineau set up the Commission sur les aînés. The mandate of this Commission is to establish partnerships with the community and ensure ongoing communications with all stakeholders involved in the community in order to help truly enrich the quality of life of seniors in Gatineau. Its mandate also includes consulting with seniors and making recommendations to the Municipal Council and the municipal administration on all matters concerning them.

Since the beginning of the AFM accreditation process, Gatineau has made sure to involve community organizations for seniors, as well as the Gatineau and Papineau health and social service centres. It plans to work in

collaboration with the entire community, but also with organizations that provide services to seniors, in order to better coordinate activities. Gatineau's intervention with seniors involves several municipal departments, including urban planning, infrastructures and public works. However, the relationship with organizations for seniors that take part in the offer of services to residents essentially involves the recreation, sports and community development department (SLSDC) (Deault and Assari). Thus, the SLSDC has been mandated to coordinate the AFM approach in order to ensure that the project is coordinated and implemented in a consistent and comprehensive manner.

# THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND THE STAGES OF THE AFM APPROACH

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The role of the AFM steering committee was to assist the SLSDC through the different stages leading up to the adoption of the AFM four-year action plan. There are seven steps in the process of obtaining AFM recognition:



Thus, the AFM steering committee brought together a municipal councillor, municipal employees, a resident and community and institutional stakeholders.

The committee comprises the following members:

**LUC ANGERS**

*Municipal Councillor, in charge  
of seniors' issues*

**ANYCK BASTIEN**

*An official with the Gatineau,  
Municipalité amie des aînés program,  
Division de la qualité de vie et du  
développement communautaire,  
Service des loisirs, des sports et du  
développement des communautés*

**SONIA BISSON**

*An official with the Famille et aînés  
program, Division de la qualité de vie  
et du développement communautaire,  
Service des loisirs, des sports et du  
développement des communautés*

**PIERRE LAGACÉ**

*A development officer at the Aylmer  
service centre*

**YVAN MOREAU**

*In charge of community development,  
Division de la qualité de vie et du  
développement communautaire,  
Service des loisirs, des sports et du  
développement des communautés*

**MARC-OLIVIER  
BOUCHARD**

*A development officer with the Hull  
service centre*

**RICHARD MYRE**

*A development officer with the  
Gatineau service centre*

**KARINE DESAULNIERS**

*A development officer with the  
Buckingham and Masson-Angers  
service centres*

**RACHEL GAUDREAU**

*Representative of the residents*

**LORRAINE LEGAULT**

*Table de concertation des aînés et  
retraités de l'Outaouais*

**NANCY MAILLOUX**

*Director, Centre d'action bénévole  
de Gatineau*

**ISABELLE AUBRY**

*A community organizer, CSSS  
de Gatineau (replacing Raymond  
Carrière)*

**MARIE-PIER MACAMEAU**

*A community organizer, CSSS de  
Papineau*

This committee's diversified representation aims to keep it dynamic and influential in its community.

# THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE 2013–2016 AFM FOUR-YEAR ACTION PLAN



## ASSESSMENT

In order to complete the process of being recognized as an AFM and to help set up its four-year action plan, Gatineau decided to consult its seniors and the stakeholders and service providers for seniors within its territory.

To this end, it organized focus groups between September 26 and October 6, 2011. In total, 232 participants took part in the AFM focus groups. These included 27 stakeholders and service providers, 11 members of the Commission sur les aînés, and 194 senior residents (156 women and 38 men between 59 and 90 years of age).

The review of reports on previous consultations, extracts from the AFM focus groups, and the inventory of services offered to seniors in Gatineau helped with the preparation of a needs analysis from the seniors' point of view. We then prepared the document entitled *Diagnostic du*

*milieu*, which provides a current overview of the situation.

After thoroughly exploring the documents pertaining to Gatineau's seniors, the SLSDC prepared an inventory of the policies, programs and services available to seniors in Gatineau. For its review of the policies, practices and services offered by the public sector, the SLSDC worked in collaboration with the Gatineau and Papineau health and social services centres, as well as with the Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de l'Outaouais. Each of the city's four sectors also assigned a representative to help with preparing the inventory of the

different activities in their community. A representative from the Centre d'action bénévole de Gatineau (CABG) lent a hand for the Gatineau sector, another one from the Centre d'action bénévole de Hull (CABH) did the same for the Hull sector, a third one from the Centre d'action bénévole ACCÈS provided information for the Aylmer sector, and a fourth one from the Centre action générations des aînés de la Vallée-de-la-Lièvre was the contact for the Buckingham and Masson-Angers sectors.



# ACTION PLAN

Further to the assessment, the SLSDC, along with the AFM steering committee, identified the axes of intervention, objectives and measures required to meet the seniors' expectations. Four axes of intervention were prioritized to adapt our living environments to seniors' needs with regard to active living:

## The living environment

Provide Gatineau's seniors an accessible and safe environment that is adapted to their needs.

## Transportation

Make it easier for seniors to get around.

## Culture, recreation, sports, the outdoors and community development

Organize activities for Gatineau's seniors that are adapted to their needs and that promote active aging.

## Information and communications

Inform seniors.

# SUMMARY OF THE 2013–2016 AFM FOUR-YEAR ACTION PLAN

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## LIVING ENVIRONMENT

### Objective

Provide Gatineau’s seniors an accessible and safe environment that is adapted to senior’s needs

### Means

1. Improve our understanding of the needs of seniors in communities and of the issues they face, and at the same time provide them a living environment that is conducive to healthy lifestyles

**2013** ➤ Ensure strategic monitoring of the issues and needs related to healthy lifestyles for seniors in their communities

**2013** ➤ Identify, in each of the city’s sectors, the community centre that is most frequented by seniors, and determine and rectify any accessibility issues

**2013** ➤ Take into consideration seniors’ needs in the design of rest areas

**2014** ➤ Inform owners of private properties used by the public at large (e.g., stores, clinics) of seniors’ accessibility requirements

2. Promote the construction of social and community housing adapted to seniors and located close to services such as health care, banks and municipal facilities

**2013** ➤ Pursue the construction of affordable housing for seniors under the AccèsLogis Québec program

**2015** ➤ Mandate an organization to prepare the inventory of Gatineau’s rental sector

3. Introduce and pursue measures aimed at providing a safe environment for seniors that is conducive to a healthy lifestyle

**2014** ➤ Identify intersections where there is not enough time for seniors to cross safely

**2014** ➤ Analyze the time it takes to cross the targeted intersections, and, based on the findings, adjust the crossing time

**2014** ➤ Integrate into Gatineau’s road safety awareness program, entitled *Ralenti, tout le monde te voit!* A section on the realities faced by seniors

**2014** Review the coordination of municipal departments in charge of snow clearing around bus stops and bus shelters

**2015** Target certain strategic locations, such as sidewalks, where seniors cannot always cross safely

**2015** Make any necessary adjustments at the identified locations

**2015** Assess the appropriateness of introducing in Gatineau the kit developed by the Sûreté du Québec entitled *Renseignements antipollution de prévention et de protection des intoxications domestiques + OR de prévention (RAPPID + OR)*

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## TRANSPORTATION

### Objective

Make it easier for seniors to get around

### Means

1. Assist the Société de transport de l'Outaouais (STO) in identifying seniors' public transportation requirements

**2013** Provide statements and observations from the AFM consultations that are related to public transportation

2. Increase consultation among municipal departments, the STO and the concerned partners and organizations

**2014** Set goals for improving transportation for seniors

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## CULTURE, RECREATION, SPORT, OUTDOORS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Objective

Develop a range of services that promote active aging

### Means

1. Ensure a better match between the available services and the needs of seniors

**2013** Compile seniors' requests expressed during the consultations with residents

**2014** Review and, if required, adjust the services available to seniors

**2016** Conduct a survey among senior residents to determine their level of satisfaction after the changes have been made to the services provided

2. Ensure better accessibility to recreation, sport, outdoor and cultural activities for seniors with limited incomes

**2014** Adapt the registration fee structure for activities

3. Make it easier for seniors to register for recreation, sport, outdoor and cultural activities

**2015** Organize a promotional campaign for the Accès Gatineau card, and explain the registration process to seniors

**2015** Develop new ways to make it easier for seniors to sign up for the Accès Gatineau card and for recreation, sport, outdoor and cultural activities organized by Ville de Gatineau

4. Make it easier to identify the recreation, sport, outdoor and cultural activities organized for seniors using the existing tools

**2015** Identify barriers to the use of existing tools, and if applicable, develop new complementary tools

5. Encourage residents' associations, neighbourhood associations and neighbourhood houses to include in their programs activities for seniors during their neighbourhood celebrations

**2015** Prepare a list of ideas and activities for event organizers

**2015** Acquire equipment and materials that can be used to entertain seniors

6. Provide equitable support and coherent interventions for seniors' organizations

**2013** Apply the recommendations developed by Soutien municipal équitable aux organismes pour aînés à Gatineau

7. Promote the development of intergenerational activities

**2013** Implement a financial assistance program for intergenerational activities

8. Increase public awareness about the prejudices and discrimination directed at older people

**2013** Conduct an awareness campaign on ageism (age discrimination)

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## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

### Objective

Improve access to information and communications for Gatineau's seniors

### Means

1. Spread the word about the programs and services that are available to seniors, and about the measures introduced in connection with the AFM approach

**2013** Develop and implement a communication strategy

**2013** Identify (2013), revise (2014) and adjust the existing communication tools, and (if necessary) develop new ones

**2013** Structure and deploy a communication network adapted to seniors

**2013** In municipal communications, apply the criteria of legibility, comprehensibility and simple language in documents written for seniors





Ville de  
**Gatineau**

Gatineau, Age-friendly  
municipality

*Thank you to the residents, municipal elected officials  
and municipal employees who took part in and  
contributed to the work of the AFM steering committee  
and the Commission sur les aînés de Gatineau.*

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Municipalité  
amie des aînés