



Our intention is to have in-person meetings going forward. For the time being, we will hold the City Committee Meetings, Plan Commission, Council and most others at the Community Room at 933 Michigan Avenue. This in-person location will meet the legal requirement for our open meetings.

We will have a virtual option available, but the technology for the hybrid style meeting may not be reliable all of the time.

Members

- Chair Kate Giblin
- Vice Chair Don Wigington
- Alderperson Olson
- Sarah Agena
- Pearline Douglas
- Lydia Iverson
- John Jury
- Katie Livernash
- Michele Miller
- Kaitlyn Wall
- Mykeerah Zarazua

AGENDA

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMISSION

Date and Time: June 17, 2026
5:00 PM

Location: Community Room
933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI

OR

Zoom Teleconferencing

Meeting ID: 835 9720 4442

Passcode: 355152

Computer:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83597204442?pwd=hccGVTCHp808S>

Phone: +1-312-626-6799 (US Chicago)

Opening Section:

1. Roll Call

Discussion and Possible Action on the Following:

2. Report of the May 21, 2025 meeting of the Age-Friendly Commission.
3. Introduction to the AARP Livability Index Platform.
4. Second review of proposed policy recommendations for the Stevens Point Aging Plan:
 - Housing
 - Transportation
5. First review of proposed policy recommendations for the Stevens Point Aging Plan:
 - Civic Participation & Employment
 - Social Participation, Communication & Information
6. Adjourn

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that any person who has special needs while attending these meetings or needs agenda materials for these meetings should contact the City Clerk as soon as possible to ensure that a reasonable accommodation can be made. The City Clerk can be reached by telephone at (715) 346-1569 or by mail at 1515 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481.

Maps further defining the above area(s) may be obtained from the City of Stevens Point Department of Community Development, 1515 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481, or by calling (715) 346-1567, during normal business hours.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that a quorum of the Common Council may be in attendance at this meeting.

REPORT OF THE AGE-FRIENDLY COMMISSION

May 21, 2025 – 5:01 PM
933 Michigan Ave, Stevens Point, WI 54481

PRESENT: Commissioner Avena, Commissioner Iverson, Commissioner Jury, Commissioner Livernash, Commissioner Miller, & Commissioner Zarazua

EXCUSED: Chair Giblin, Vice Chair Wigington, Commissioner Douglas, Commissioner Wall

ALSO PRESENT: Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator Kuhn

INDEX:

Opening Section:

1. Roll Call

Discussion and Possible Action on the Following:

2. Report of the March 25, 2025 meeting of the Age-Friendly Commission.
3. Refinement of housing and transportation recommendations for the Stevens Point Aging Plan.
4. Introduction of draft outdoor spaces and buildings recommendations for the Stevens Point Aging Plan.

Closing Section:

5. Adjourn
-

Opening Section:

1. Roll Call

Present: Avena, Iverson, Jury, Livernash, Miller, Zarazua

Motion by Commissioner Avena to nominate Commissioner Zarazua as Temporary Chair for the May 21, 2025 Age Friendly Commission Meeting.

Motion carried 6-0.

Discussion and Possible Action on the Following:

2. Report of the March 25, 2025 meeting of the Age-Friendly Commission.

Motion by Commissioner Miller to approve the March 25, 2025 minutes of the Age-Friendly Commission; seconded by Commissioner Zarazua.

Motion carried 6-0.

3. Refinement of housing and transportation recommendations for the Stevens Point Aging Plan.

Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator Kuhn presented minor refinements to the housing and transportation recommendations for the Stevens Point Aging Plan. Kuhn noted that a recent public informational meeting on the north side for the zoning code rewrite project emphasized interest in expanding housing options, particularly tiny homes and accessory dwelling units. Kuhn also

commented that transportation priorities focused on infrastructure improvements, updated education and programming, and enhanced pedestrian connectivity in high-traffic areas. Last, Kuhn opened the discussion to Commissioners to provide further recommendations and commentary.

No action was taken.

4. Introduction of draft outdoor spaces and buildings recommendations for the Stevens Point Aging Plan.

Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator Kuhn presented the draft Outdoor Space and Buildings recommendations for the Stevens Point Aging Plan, highlighting the importance of safety, accessibility, and inclusivity with the parks system. Kuhn outlined proposed improvements and opened the discussion to the Commission to discuss enhanced walking paths, increased seating, the establishment of universal design infrastructure, and increased lighting within parks. Kuhn concluded by noting he will be in contact with the Parks Director to further refine the recommendations discussed for additional review.

No action was taken.

Closing Section:

5. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 5:46 PM.

A recording of this meeting can be viewed/heard at: <https://stevenspoint.com/365/AgendasMinutesVideos>



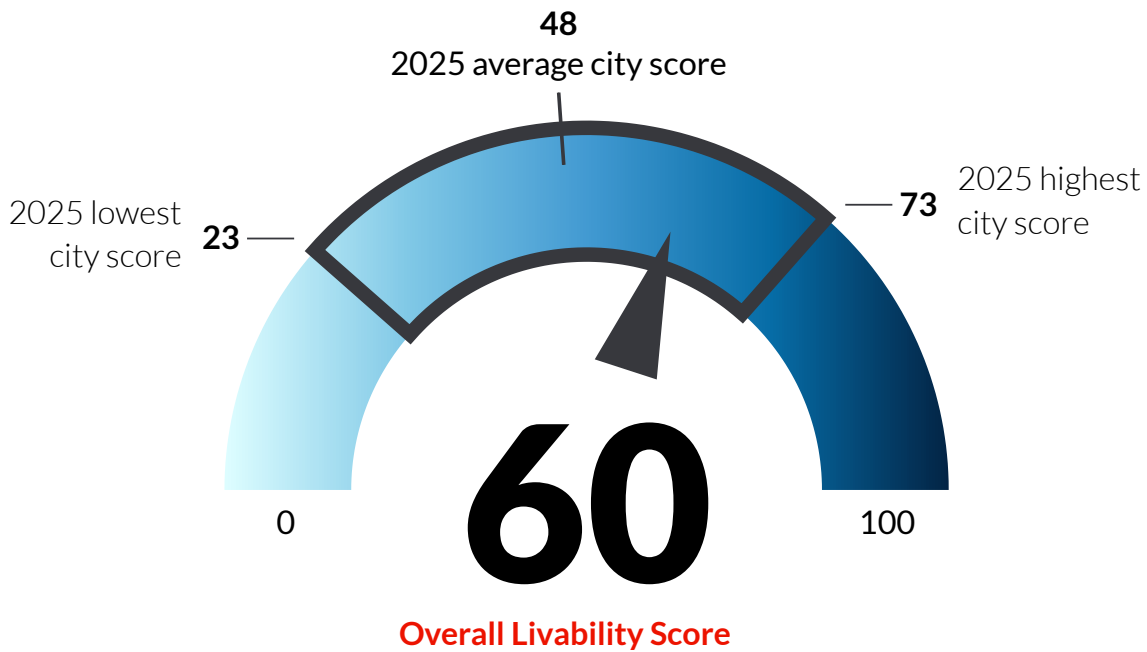
The AARP Livability Index™ Scores

Stevens Point, Wisconsin

Community Level : City

Location: [Wisconsin](#) > [Portage County](#)

Population: 25,497



The overall Livability Index™ score for **Stevens Point, Wisconsin** is **60**.

This is in the **top half** of **communities** in the U.S.

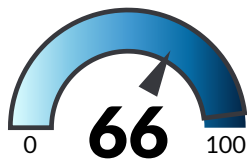
Surprised by the score? Issues surrounding livable communities are complex and interconnected.

USING THE AARP LIVABILITY INDEX™ PLATFORM

The AARP Livability Index™ platform promotes livability for everyone, regardless of factors such as income, ability level, and background, in all neighborhoods across the country. All communities have room to improve in one or more aspects of livability so that everyone has access to features, amenities, and services that create a safe and healthy environment in which to live. The platform should not be used to violate fair housing laws or discriminate in any way.

Category Scores

These are the category scores for Stevens Point, Wisconsin. Explore the metrics and policies behind the score.



Indicators: Metrics	2015 Value	Change	2025 Value & Measure	Tertile	2025 Median US City
Zero-step entrances			* 56.1% of units have zero-step entrances	☐☐☐	56.1%
Availability of multi-family housing	40.3% of units are multi-family	⬆️	44.2% of units are multi-family	☐☐☐	8.7%
Housing costs	\$750 per month	⬇️	\$930 per month	☐☐☐	\$943
Housing cost burden	13.1% of income spent on housing	⬆️	11.3% of income spent on housing	☐☐☐	13.4%
Availability of subsidized housing			157.4 subsidized housing units per 10,000 people	☐☐☐	0.0

Key: ⬆️ Getting Better = No Change ⬇️ Getting Worse * Imputed Data

Performance: ☐☐☐ Top Third of Communities ☐☐☐ Middle Third ☐☐☐ Bottom Third

Indicators: Policies	Is there a policy here?
State and local laws that make housing accessible for people of all abilities	❌ No Policy
State and local funds that support the development and preservation of affordable housing	❌ No Policy
State laws guaranteeing notice and/or first right of purchase to residents of manufactured housing communities prior to sale	❌ No Policy
State policies and programs that protect homeowners from losing their homes to foreclosure	❌ No Policy
State laws that facilitate the creation of local accessory dwelling units.	❌ No Policy
Communities that have taken comprehensive steps to prepare for the aging of the U.S. population	✅ City Policy

Neighborhood
Proximity and Security



Indicators: Metrics	2015 Value	Change	2025 Value & Measure	Tertile	2025 Median US City
Access to grocery stores and farmers' markets			0.8 stores and markets		0.0
Access to parks			2.6 parks		0.0
Access to libraries	0.2 libraries		0.2 libraries		0.0
Access to jobs by transit			0 jobs		0
Access to jobs by auto			14,210 jobs		5,339
Diversity of destinations	0.89 (Index from 0 to 1)		0.77 (Index from 0 to 1)		0.42
Activity density	7,049 jobs and people per sq. mi.		4,082 jobs and people per sq. mi.		205
Crime rate	192.0 crimes per 10,000 people		124.0 crimes per 10,000 people		195.3
Vacancy rate	4.9% of units are vacant		5.0% of units are vacant		11.1%

Key: Getting Better No Change Getting Worse Imputed Data

Performance: Top Third of Communities Middle Third Bottom Third

Indicators: Policies	Is there a policy here?
State and local programs that support transit-oriented development	No Policy
Communities that have taken comprehensive steps to prepare for the aging of the U.S. population	City Policy



Transportation

Safety and Convenience



Indicators: Metrics	2015 Value	Change	2025 Value & Measure	Tertile	2025 Median US City
Frequency of local transit service			* 0.0 buses and trains per hour	☐☐	0.0
ADA-accessible stations and vehicles			* 85.4% of stations and vehicles are accessible	☐☐	85.4%
Walkability index			9.19 (Index from 1 to 20)	☐☐	6.17
Congestion			* 0.0 hours per person per year	☐☐	0.0
Household transportation costs			\$13,792 per year	☐☐	\$17,507
Speed limits			29.7 miles per hour	☐☐	36.7
Crash rate			6.4 fatal crashes per 100,000 people per year	☐☐	11.4

Key: Getting Better No Change Getting Worse Imputed Data

Performance: Top Third of Communities Middle Third Bottom Third

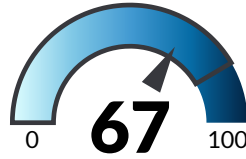
Indicators: Policies	Is there a policy here?
State and local Complete Streets policies	City Policy, State Policy
State human services transportation coordination councils	No Policy
State policies that remove barriers to volunteer driver programs	No Policy
Communities that have taken comprehensive steps to prepare for the aging of the U.S. population	City Policy

8% of households without a vehicle



Environment

Clean Air and Water



Indicators: Metrics	2015 Value	Change	2025 Value & Measure	Tertile	2025 Median US City
Drinking water quality			0.00% of people are exposed to violations		0.45%
Regional air quality			* 4.9 unhealthy air quality days per year		4.9
Near-roadway pollution			0.29% of people are exposed to near-roadway pollution		0.00%
Local industrial pollution			0.01 (RSEI Score)		0.00

Key: Getting Better No Change Getting Worse Imputed Data

Performance: Top Third of Communities Middle Third Bottom Third

Indicators: Policies	Is there a policy here?
State date-based policies prohibiting disconnection of utility service	State Policy
FEMA-approved local multi-hazard mitigation plans	City Policy, County Policy
State policies that support energy-efficient buildings, facilities, and appliances	No Policy
Communities that have taken comprehensive steps to prepare for the aging of the U.S. population	City Policy



Indicators: Metrics	2015 Value	Change	2025 Value & Measure	Tertile	2025 Median US City
Smoking prevalence			14.4% of adults smoke regularly		16.6%
Obesity prevalence			34.3% of adults are obese		37.1%
Access to exercise opportunities			71.1% of people have access		72.4%
Healthcare professional shortage areas	0.0 (Index from 0 to 25)		11.0 (Index from 0 to 25)		12.0
Preventable hospitalization rate			21.5 preventable hospitalizations per 1,000 patients		27.0
Patient satisfaction	72.0% of patients are satisfied		63.5% of patients are satisfied		69.0%

Key: Getting Better No Change Getting Worse Imputed Data

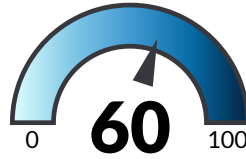
Performance: Top Third of Communities Middle Third Bottom Third






Indicators: Policies	Is there a policy here?
State and local laws that prohibit smoking in workplaces, restaurants, and bars	State Policy
Communities that have taken comprehensive steps to prepare for the aging of the U.S. population	City Policy





81 years of life expectancy




 Engagement






Civic and Social Involvement



Indicators: Metrics	2015 Value	Change	2025 Value & Measure	Tertile	2025 Median US City
Broadband cost and speed			85.3% of residents have high-speed, competitively priced service		89.5%
Opportunity for civic involvement			29.7 organizations per 10,000 people		34.0
Voting rate			75.9% of people voted		63.0%
Social involvement index			1.01 (Index from 0 to 2.5)		1.01
Cultural, arts, and entertainment institutions			6.2 institutions per 10,000 people		4.7

Key:  Getting Better  No Change  Getting Worse  Imputed Data

Performance:  Top Third of Communities  Middle Third  Bottom Third

Indicators: Policies	Is there a policy here?
Absence of state policies that prevent or discourage communities from operating public broadband networks	 No Policy
State laws allowing the following: all-mail and/or no-excuse absentee voting; adequate early voting; same-day voter registration; ballot "curing" procedures for absentee voters; automatic voter registration; and promoting voting access for people with disabilities.	 State Policy
Existence of a local human rights commission	 No Policy
Total score of 75 or greater from the Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index	 No Policy
Communities that have taken comprehensive steps to prepare for the aging of the U.S. population	 City Policy



Indicators: Metrics	2015 Value	Change	2025 Value & Measure	Tertile	2025 Median US City
Income inequality	0.42 (Gini Index from 0 to 1)	=	0.42 (Gini Index from 0 to 1)		0.45
Jobs per worker			0.76 jobs per worker		0.73
High school graduation rate			95.0% of students graduating within four years		89.3%
Age diversity	0.80 (Index from 0 to 1)	↓	0.75 (Index from 0 to 1)		0.84

Key: Getting Better No Change Getting Worse Imputed Data

Performance: Top Third of Communities Middle Third Bottom Third

Indicators: Policies	Is there a policy here?
Local government AAA general obligation bond rating	No Policy
State and local minimum wage is higher than the federal minimum wage and is adjusted for increases in the cost of living	No Policy
State policies that expand upon the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to provide additional leave benefits to workers	State Policy
Communities that have taken comprehensive steps to prepare for the aging of the U.S. population	City Policy

Additional Unscored Measures

Measure

\$56,218 median household income

77 Upward Mobility (income percentile at age 30-40)

Characteristics of Stevens Point, Wisconsin

Demographics

[View all Demographic Characteristics](#) ✓

Total Population:

25,497

Race/ethnicity

Black/African-American: 2%

Asian American: 3%

Hispanic/Latino: 4%

White: 89%

American Indian/Alaska Native: <1%

Hawaiian: 0%

Two or more races: 5%

Some other race: 1%

Age

Age 50+: 25%

Age 65+: 13%

Other

% of the population with a disability: 13%

% of the population with income below poverty: 16%

Employment

[View all Employment Characteristics](#) ✓

Average annual hiring rate for new workers:

15.7%

Average annual hiring rate for new workers (by age group)

Ages 25-34:	35-44:	45-54:	55-64:	65+:
17.1%	12.3%	9.2%	8.3%	13.7%

Average monthly earnings

Overall: \$4,360

Ages 25-34:	35-44:	45-54:	55-64:	65+:
\$3,937	\$5,005	\$5,781	\$5,227	\$3,693

Unemployment rate:

Data unavailable

Occupational employment

1. Office and Administrative Support Occupations

2. Production Occupations	22,080
3. Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	21,310
4. Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	19,310
5. Sales and Related Occupations	17,980

Median annual occupational wages

1. Management Occupations	\$103,150
2. Architecture and Engineering Occupations	\$80,110
3. Computer and Mathematical Occupations	\$79,990
4. Legal Occupations	\$79,860
5. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	\$79,250

Long-term employment projections

1. Computer and Mathematical Occupations	19.21%
2. Personal Care and Service Occupations	15.14%
3. Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	12.43%
4. Architecture and Engineering Occupations	12.26%
5. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	10.20%

Indeed and AARP have teamed up to help you find your next job.

[Search for your next job!](#) 

Climate

[View all Climate Characteristics](#) 

Average temperature in January, 2024:

22°

Temperature in January, 2024:

Lowest: 18°

Highest: 27°

Average precipitation in January, 2024:

1"

Average temperature in July, 2024:

70°

Temperature in July, 2024:

Lowest: 59°

Highest: 81°

Average precipitation in July, 2024:

4"

Natural Hazard Risk

Natural Hazard Risk Index value

Relatively Low

[View characteristics data sources](#)

Disclaimer

Current demographic, employment, climate, and natural hazard risk data are presented in a community's profile for informational purposes only. This information is not used in determining the community's score on the AARP Livability Index™ platform.

Advocacy/Collaboration

1. *Partner with local and regional advocacy groups to prioritize accessibility requirements for new housing units.*

This recommendation encourages the City to collaborate with local and regional planning partners, and local housing advocates to ensure accessibility features are provided in future residential development. To integrate accessibility standards early in the design or approval process, these groups would work with City staff, boards, and elected officials. Barriers may include limited staffing resources at the City, differing priorities among advocacy groups, and possible pushbacks from developers concerning construction cost. The City is also limited in requiring additional accessibility requirements beyond what residential and commercial building codes require. Exploration of advocacy work on the State level should occur to allow greater discretion in additional accessibility requirements, particularly if a developer agrees to said requirements.

2. *Collaborate with community-based organizations to assess the accessibility of the city's housing stock.*

The City should collaborate with local nonprofits, neighborhood groups, and service providers to facilitate accessibility assessments to evaluate existing housing conditions. These assessments would consider features like the availability of handrails and grab bars, sufficient lighting, maintenance of internal sidewalks, and location of accessible parking. Possible challenges that may arise include reluctance from property owners to participate, limited funding or staff to conduct assessments, and potential variations in data collection.

3. *Partner with landlords, community-based residential facilities and faith-based organizations to identify the needs of underserved community members and improve awareness of housing resources.*

Through ongoing dialogue and workshops, the City can partner with rental property owners, faith-based organizations, and residential care facilities to gain better perspective into housing barriers perceived by older residents, those with disabilities, and low-income individuals. Fostering these relationships can also play a vital role in expanding awareness of viable housing programs and resources within their networks. Potential inhibitors of this recommendation may include challenges managing inconsistent communication channels, low engagement levels, or limited staff resources to support sustained outreach.

4. *Host events with community organizations & departments (e.g., Police Department, Fire Department, Aging & Disability Resource Center, etc.) to identify and eliminate accessibility risks in their homes.*

This recommendation involves collaboration with the Police and Fire Departments, the Aging and Disability Resources Center, and local nonprofit organizations to carry out educational events or home-safety checks that help residents identify accessibility hazards. City staff, first responders, and social service partners would support these efforts. Possible barriers include staff availability, resident participation, and the need for adequate follow-up resources to address identified issues during the assessment.

Regulatory Reform

1. *Require a percentage of units receiving tax increment financing to meet ADA accessibility standards.*

When offering financial incentives for multi-family housing development, the City could require that a certain portion of units comply with ADA Standards for Accessible Design. City staff and developers would come together to establish thresholds and verify compliance. Potential setbacks to this effort may include developer resistance due to increased costs of construction and also there would be an added administrative burden of monitoring new accessibility standards.

2. **Pursue the following amendments to the City’s Zoning Ordinance to close the gap of missing middle housing:**

- *Reduce minimum size requirements for principal structures from 900 sq ft to 700 sq ft.*

To encourage more affordable and diverse housing options for smaller, older households, there will be reductions in minimum size requirements for homes. With support from elected officials, City staff would lead necessary ordinance changes. Barriers to this recommendation may include general public misconceptions of smaller homes and concerns about them impacting overall neighborhood character and potential political resistance to zoning changes.

- *Amend higher-density single-family zoning district standards to allow middle housing development to be permitted by right.*

This recommendation would modify land use standards in portions of the current “R-3” Single- and Two-Family Residence District to permit these types of developments, such as duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, or townhouses, without Common Council approval being needed. Key actors in the implementation of this proposal would consist of City staff and the Plan Commission. Potential challenges which may be faced with this include parking concerns, general and legal review of revised zoning language and standards, and public opposition to density.

- *Reduce minimum lot size requirements for condominium and multi-family residential uses.*

Updating and reducing lot-size standards would allow for more flexibility to build smaller, more accessible multi-family homes. With input from developers and elected officials, City staff would lead this analysis and execution. Setbacks that may need to be accounted for include the challenge of aligning smaller lots with existing infrastructure, utilities, and design standards and potential pushback from skeptical neighboring property owners.

- *Rewrite the City’s Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance to spur greater construction and use of ADUs within city limits.*

Housing Element

A complete rewrite of the ADU ordinance would allow for simplified regulations, limit permitting challenges, and better frame ADUs as an accessible and affordable housing options. City staff would spearhead this rewrite, additionally local municipality input may be useful in the drafting process. Potential concerns include the availability of parking and a change in neighborhood character.

- 3. Adopt a provision in the City's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to include a procedure for property owners to apply for an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).*

This proposal ensures equitable access to housing by providing a clear pathway for property owners to request reasonable accommodations under the ADA. Key participants in the implementation of this include the Zoning administrator, other related planning staff, and the Plan Commission. Challenges to this may include the continued insurance of consistent application of accommodation criteria.

Education:

- 1. Create and publicize a comprehensive list of resources related to housing issues that residents experience.*

The development of an easily accessible, straightforward, and centralized housing resource list which could consist of tenants' rights, home-repair assistance, financing and aid options, and accessibility or disability programs. This effort would include not only the City's communications team, but also community partners and organizations related to housing as well as the Aging and Disability Resource Center.

- 2. Increase educational programming to encourage the clearance of snow within curb cuts.*

This recommendation would encourage timely snow removal in order to keep curb cuts accessible for older populations and those with disabilities. This would be accomplished through public awareness campaigns, community workshops, and social media or website outreach. Some relevant partners may include ADA advocates, public works staff, neighborhood associations, and potentially local media. Potential barriers to this initiative may include inconsistency in compliance, challenges with enforcing these regulations, or lack of staff availability or capacity to provide available resources.

Transportation Element

Education:

1. *Partner with City Transit and other local organizations to create trip planning training opportunities that are geared for older adults.*

This project will involve the development of practical transit training workshops that teach older populations tips for reading schedules, planning routes, and how to utilize accessibility features. Sessions may be offered at local senior centers, such as the Lincoln Center, the Portage County Library, community centers, or schools. Key partners to aid in the achievement of this initiative include City transit staff, engagement coordinators at senior centers or other community centers, AARP chapters, and disability and age-friendly advocacy groups. Potential challenges include limited staff or volunteer capacity to conduct training sessions, possible technology constraints for some participants, and scheduling barriers for older demographics with health or mobility limitations.

2. *Increase access and marketing opportunities to driver education programs for older adults.*

The implementation of this recommendation includes expanding awareness through public campaigns for existing safe-driving courses, hosting accessible class locations, and offering discounts or sliding-scale class fees. Outreach can take advantage of community newsletters, the DMV office, healthcare providers, and age-friendly advocates. Key stakeholders that can be leveraged for this project include the Police Department, public health departments, driving instructors and DMV representatives, and local advocacy organizations. Potential inhibitors to the execution of this recommendation consist of limited participation incentives, inconsistent funding for course subsidies, and challenges engaging with a less technologically skilled audience.

3. *Pursue the adoption of an ADA Transition Plan by 2035.*

This proposal will focus on coordinating a comprehensive assessment of City facilities, right-of-way, and current infrastructure to identify gaps in accessibility. This would be followed by the development of a formal ADA Transition Plan which would also be aligned with federal standards. The goal of the plan would be to guide long-term accessibility and mobility-improving upgrades and establish investment priorities. This can be accomplished in collaboration with City staff, advocacy groups, and elected officials. Potential barriers that may be faced with the implementation of this include budgetary constraints which would hinder the correction of all identified gaps, staff capacity to complete evaluations and plan the corrective action process, and issues with multi-departmental communication and coordination.

Infrastructure:

1. *Identify funding and operational barriers to expand community-based transportation services.*

This recommendation requires the evaluation of current paratransit and volunteer driver programs in order to analyze unsatisfied needs and identify staffing, financial, and regulatory limitations of expansion. Deliverables from this initiative may include a feasibility report or recommended funding strategies in a centralized location. This can be completed in

Transportation Element

conjunction with City Transit, County Health & Human Services, related non-profits, and grant administrators. Challenges that could hinder the execution of this project consist of limited long-term funding sources, fluctuating volunteer commitment, and trouble coordinating with a multitude of organizations.

2. Prioritize closing gaps in the pedestrian network through the City's high injury network streets.

To address and identify missing sidewalks, unsafe crossings, and accessibility barriers, there needs to be a block-by-block assessment done followed by phased construction plans prioritizing high-risk corridors first. Stakeholders that can assist in the facilitation of this include the City's Public Works Department and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Street Safety Commission, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point partners, and community safety advocates. Potential barriers include right-of-way constraints, costs of construction, and disruptions to traffic flow during improvements.

3. Partner with the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Street Safety Commission to implement policy recommendations outlined in the 2026 Portage County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan.

This project requires alignment with the recommendations outlined in the 2026 Plan for City Ordinances, street design standards, and capital improvement plans. Strategies may involve developing demonstration projects, adopting bicycle and pedestrian safety policies, and updating design guidelines. Possible partners include the Bicycle and Pedestrian Street Safety Commission, City staff, and neighboring municipalities within Portage County. Inhibitor to the execution of this project may include differing priorities among jurisdictions, time constraints hindering the update of local codes and standards, and availability of sufficient funding.

4. Prioritize locations to install audible pedestrian signals.

This initiative involves the completion of accessibility audits at intersections, the prioritization of signal locations based on pedestrian volume and proximity to senior housing or disability focused facilities, and the construction of a phase installation plan. Key collaborators for this project include City staff and representatives specialized in supporting visually impaired individuals. Potential barriers may involve incompatibility with older signal hardware, higher than expected installation costs, and competing transportation priorities.

5. For multi-family and non-residential land uses, require in the City's Zoning Code that an accessible path shall be constructed between a parking lot main entrances into the principal building.

This project requires a revision of zoning regulations to ensure all applicable developments provide a continuous, ADA-accessible path from parking areas to building entrances. This will involve drafting code updates, hosting appropriate outreach, and coordinating with builders and developers to ensure continued compliance. Relevant stakeholders which can aid in this initiative include City staff, developers and architects. Potential challenges that may arise

Transportation Element

consist of builder resistance to increased design requirements, existing site constraints, and the issues with enforcement during the permitting process.

Programming:

1. *Collaborate with neighborhood associations in creating a sidewalk assistance volunteer program.*

This recommendation requires the organization of volunteers to assist older populations experiencing mobility limitations with snow removal, leaf clearing, and minor walkway maintenance. Program elements may involve volunteer training, neighborhood-based scheduling system, and liability guidelines. Prominent stakeholders that could assist in the implementation of this program include volunteer centers, senior groups, schools and the University, and the Public Works Department. Potential setbacks that may hinder this are safety and liability concerns, sustaining volunteer involvement, and coordinating services across neighborhoods.

2. *Obtain membership with the Wisconsin Bicycle Federation.*

This proposal involves joining the Wisconsin Bicycle Federation to access training, increased policy guidance, and statewide bicycle safety resources. Membership will foster additional collaboration on safety campaigns, education programs, and grant opportunities. The City's Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works Department, and local cycling and bicycle advocacy groups will act as key collaborators in this effort. Some potential barriers when accomplishing this may include securing funding for membership dues and maintenance of current and new projects which gained us membership, the integration of statewide resources into projects at the local scale, and staff capacity to engage in Wisconsin Bicycle Federation activities.

Civic Participation and Employment Element

1. Increase opportunities for aging populations to participate meaningfully in local civic life and the workforce:
 - Promote and support local programs and resource centers, like the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Portage County and the United Way of Portage County.
 - Assist in the marketing of senior volunteer and employment programs to match older residents with possible jobs or volunteer opportunities (e.g., public safety programs, schools, libraries, parks, etc.).
 - Increase civic engagement of aging residents by reserving seats for them on City committees, commissions, and groups.
 - Encourage the adoption of age-friendly hiring practices for local businesses, nonprofits, or even for volunteering initiatives. Examples may include increased flexibility for scheduling, phased retirement options, job sharing, and increased availability of part-time jobs.
 - Develop intergenerational programs to strengthen sense of community and provide opportunities for knowledge exchange. Examples may include mentoring, youth/senior partnerships, skills sharing workshops.
 - Partner with local businesses to identify industries or roles experiencing workforce shortages and explore jobs well suited for targeted populations.

2. Identify strategies to support these policy recommendations and reduce barriers that limit civic participation or employment among the aging population:
 - Conduct public outreach to identify civic participation and employment needs and barriers. Examples of barriers that may be found include technology competency or accessibility of digital platforms, transportation limits, discrimination, or physical accessibility concerns.
 - Findings of this assessment may be utilized to create informed adjustments to existing policies, practices, or other areas of the City's Aging Plan.
 - Develop or continue to foster partnerships with the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, local businesses, and non-profits to relevant, tailored skill-based courses/workshops for the aging community to strength confidence with technology, financial literacy, or workplace skills (e.g., interviewing, writing resumes, etc.).
 - Continue to and improve upon increasing access to civic meetings to encourage participation by offering different attendance options (hybrid, virtual, etc), captioning, accessible meeting spaces, and inclusive delivery (conscious of high-level vocabulary use, pausing for questions, etc.)
 - Ensure accessible, safe, and dependable transportation options for aging residents to utilize to get to work, volunteer events, public meetings, or training/support sessions.

Social Participation, Communication & Information Element

1. Improve access to engaging, affordable, and inclusive social opportunities for the aging community:
 - Support social programming at new or existing community organizations.
 - Partner with local schools, the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, faith-based organizations, and non-profits to create shared programming that connects generations through mentorship, art, technology, and recreation.
 - Identify areas with limited access to transportation or high abundance of eligible participants and prioritize direct programming in those locations.
 - Foster a strong sense of collective community through neighborhood gatherings, cultural celebrations, festivals, or volunteer-led interest groups to help reduce isolation.
 - Examples include small resident-led gatherings like coffee meetups, craft nights, book clubs, bowling nights, or trivia at local establishments, community centers, or living complexes.
 - Increase year-round participation through promotion of seasonal programs like spring gardening, winter baking, fall walking groups, or summer music in the parks.
 - Use additional multi-channel outreach system to connect the aging population to community events. Examples may include mailers, bulletin boards, local radio announcements, and selective door-to-door flyers.
 - Connect with relevant community partners to expand outreach initiatives.
 - Ensure communication styles are inclusive to all. Examples may include different language formats, cognizant of those with lower literacy skills, visions or hearing impaired conducive media.
 - Creation of a centralized, consolidated platform for relaying information
 - Encourage local businesses and recreation organizations to adopt discounts or sliding fee admissions or prices for older adults to improve equitable access to community events.
2. Identify strategies to find success with these policy recommendations and reduce barriers that limit social participation within the aging community:
 - Conduct public outreach to identify needs and barriers of social participation. Examples of barriers that may be found include transportation, lack of awareness, or financial limitations.
 - Findings of this assessment may be utilized to create informed adjustments to existing policies, practices, or other areas of the City's Aging Plan.
 - Increase the accessibility of social gathering places through the improvement of seating and lighting fixtures, wheelchair accessible paths/walkways, increased restroom stops and signage, and by creating spaces that are functional year-round.
 - Focus on the diversity of events offered to ensure there are opportunities that include a variety of different types of physical abilities, preferences, times of day/year, cost, and location.

Social Participation, Communication & Information Element

- Establish a social connection network by partnering with organizations (schools, nonprofits, faith-based organizations) to accompany residents to activities, check in with those that are high risk of isolation, and encourage continued participation.
- Use the City's Comprehensive Outdoor & Recreation Plan to evaluate City's parks for community inclusivity and economic diversity.