



“The priorities represented by the Age-Friendly designation are reflective of Salem’s values as a whole. The goals of a livable, safe, and vibrant city serve to lift up all of our residents, no matter their age or ability.” -Mayor Kim Driscoll

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“In Salem, we’re thoughtful about how we approach the future.”

-Mayor Kim Driscoll

About *Salem for All Ages*

Message from Mayor Kim Driscoll on Five Years of Salem for All Ages

As we reach the milestone of the end of five years of Salem for All Ages, we are grateful, as a city that values and includes people of all ages and abilities in our community, for the many individuals and organizations who have contributed to the success of the initiative.

I am thankful for the time and attention the Leadership Council members have devoted to helping prioritize the initiative’s work and shape its growth and trajectory over the past five years. And I’m especially appreciative for the efforts of the members of the Task Force, for managing the day-to-day work of implementing the action plan’s recommendations. We all share a common vision of a welcoming city that supports and includes people of every age.

Since 2016, Salem for All Ages has celebrated many achievements.

To help provide greater access to community resources, the task force went to work in year one setting up a website, www.salemforallages.org, and social media presence, as well as a printed Salem for All Ages resource guide, which is mailed out each month to Salem residents who have turned 65 years old. To better connect older adults with volunteer opportunities in our city, Salem for All Ages took on the overhaul of www.salemvolunteers.org, to provide connections between organizations in need of help and residents eager to get involved to better the community.

Sharing information is a key part of the Salem for All Ages mission and the group has fulfilled that by hosting numerous events, symposiums, and speakers over the years. Highlights include presentations on universal design by the Institute for Human-Centered Design, a transportation fair to share information about the multiple options for getting around Salem and the region, and a speaker series of doctors and health professionals organized in collaboration with North Shore Physicians Group and North Shore Medical Center. Task force leaders have also been invited to speak and present to other cities and towns throughout Massachusetts interested in emulating the Salem for All Ages model to create their own age-friendly programs.

The Salem for All Ages health subcommittee helped with Salem Together’s thousands of well-being check-in phone calls to Salem seniors in the spring of 2020 during pandemic lockdown. The group has also been part of Salem Food For All’s efforts to expand community gardens and nutritious food options at the Community Life Center

and its drive-through farmer's market, our community's pantry sites, and through emergency food delivery for homebound seniors during the pandemic. Most recently they have been working closely with North Shore Medical Center on a "food is medicine" program to help better align medical care with diet and nutrition with local healthcare providers.

In order to expand our age-friendly practices throughout the community, Salem for All Ages launched the Age-Friendly Business certification program, to highlight those businesses that met key standards and metrics for inclusivity and accessibility. In addition, Task Force members have given presentations and trainings to major employers in the community, helping them better understand customer service and approaches for respectful personal interactions with older customers, patrons, and clients. These trainings have also included for City staff and personnel.

Some of the most visible work of the Salem for All Ages initiative, however, is visible in the incredibly popular Salem Skipper program, the completion of the City's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan, and our recent adoption of a law allowing affordable Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), sometimes also called in-law apartments.

The Salem Skipper is a low-cost, on-demand public shuttle made possible thanks to an initial planning grant from the Tufts Health Plan Foundation that had been secured by the Salem for All Ages Task Force's Transportation Subcommittee, in partnership with the City's Traffic and Parking Department. Since the service launched in December 2020 the Skipper has given over 20,000 rides, including thousands to residents over the age of 65. What's more, by operating in a ride-share model, the service has off-set tons of carbon dioxide from avoided private passenger travel.

Salem is one of the half of Massachusetts municipalities with an updated ADA Transition Plan. The most recent update to our plan came in 2019-2020, thanks to initial work by the Salem for All Ages Task Force's public spaces subcommittee. The plan identifies opportunities for improving accessibility in city buildings, parks, and other spaces, as well as strategies to make city websites, services, and information more broadly accessible. The Task Force, in partnership with the Salem Commission on Disabilities and the city's capital projects director and our Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator and assistant are now working on implementing those recommendations and instilling a culture of accessibility in every future project and program we undertake.

Lastly, the work of the Salem for All Ages Task Force's housing subcommittee was instrumental in making possible a major overhaul to our city's Accessory Dwelling Unit

law. ADUs are endorsed by the AARP as a critical tool in helping seniors to age in place. Not only can they provide additional income to older homeowners, many of whom are living on fixed incomes already, in some instances they can provide housing themselves for the older resident, allowing them to downsize to a more suitable and accessible space, while still remaining in the house where they have lived for so long. Salem's ADU law went even further than many others, requiring steep levels of affordability, the preservation of neighborhood parking and character, and compliance with the design and dimensional requirements of the zone in which the ADU is built.

Salem is for everyone. We have always been a community defined by our diversity. From the dock workers of the Great Age of Sail, living in tenements around the corner from the sea captain's mansions, to the generations of immigrants from so many countries, working in tanneries and factories with dreams of planting their own roots and raising their families here.

Salem for All Ages is a continuation of those values, of that tradition, and of those centuries of variety, of mixture, and of growth.

While one out of every five Salem residents are over the age of 60 today, that figure is expected to climb to one in four by 2030, increasing from around 8,000 individuals today to as many as 12,000 people in just a few years' time.

Some of these individuals are moving to Salem, attracted by our cultural and historic amenities, our active waterfront and downtown, our walkability, and our numerous community, social, and health care service providers. Many more, however, are already living here in Salem today. They are the population of rising seniors who are mobile, active, and love the community where they live. They want to age in place – perhaps not in the exact house, condo, or apartment where they are living today, but certainly right here in Salem. Our senior population and those who will become seniors over the coming decades are a dynamic group. They want to be active, civically engaged, and to have their voices heard. Salem for All Ages honors those aspirations and strives to meet them.

In Salem we are thoughtful about how we approach the future. Great cities do not happen by accident. They take careful planning, public input, and meaningful action. I am so pleased by the work of the Salem for All Ages team over the last five years. Their efforts have truly made Salem a city that works for and welcomes everyone.

Message from Massachusetts AARP Director Michael Festa on Five Years of Salem for All Ages

A little over three years ago I had the honor of attending the ribbon-cutting of the new Mayor Jean Levesque Community Life Center in the city of Salem. Salem was, at that time, just about two years into implementation of its five-year age-friendly action plan, Salem for All Ages.

From the very start of Salem for All Ages to today, as the first five years come to a close, Salem's community-based, collaborative effort to create a more welcoming city for people of all ages and abilities has become a model that other municipalities – in Massachusetts and in other states – have looked to in order to emulate. The supports and networks created by Salem for All Ages proved especially beneficial to the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The "Age-Friendly City" is one that strives to achieve the highest levels of accessibility and engagement across eight domains: housing, transportation, outdoor spaces and buildings, community supports and health services, communication and information, social participation, respect and social inclusion, and civic engagement and employment. It is not enough to simply identify how each domain intersects with a community's older adult population, however. The purpose of the age-friendly action plan is to systemically examine where a community can improve in each domain in respect to serving residents of all ages, and then lay out an intentional roadmap of specific, measurable actions to complete that work.

Salem residents should be immensely proud of Salem for All Ages and how their city approached this initiative. Following a careful needs assessment, conducted in partnership with the Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging at the John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy at UMass-Boston, Salem set up a series of goals within each of the eight domains.

Responsibility for achieving those goals was vested in the Salem for All Ages Task Force – a group of community stakeholders, city staff, and volunteers – who met as a group and in subcommittees each focused on one of the domains. Broader guidance was provided by a leadership council of city leaders and elected officials, who helped keep the initiative true to its guiding principles and to Salem's larger values as a community.

In September 2018, when I stood before the crowd of Salem residents gathered to celebrate the opening of the long-awaited Community Life Center, I saw a community

dedicated to one another and committed to a vision of being a truly age-friendly and inclusive place. It was a celebration of just how important it is – and how hard it can be – to overcome the barriers confronting any community that tries to take on the systemic challenges of age- and accessibility-based bias.

It takes more than a building to do that, though, which is why Salem for All Ages was – and is – so critical to that work. That spirit and that effort continued on through programs, policies, and community dialogues created by Salem for All Ages. To the residents of Salem, congratulations on five years of the AARP Age-Friendly Community certification and best wishes for continued accomplishment in the future years of the valuable and successful Salem for All Ages initiative.

How We Got Here

In November 2016, the City of Salem formally submitted its age-friendly action plan, *Salem for All Ages*, to the AARP and the World Health Organization. The process of preparing that plan started earlier that year, when the City was accepted into the AARP's national network and WHO global network of Age Friendly communities, becoming the first City on the North Shore to join and only the third in the Commonwealth.

To help prepare the action plan, the City worked closely with experts from the Center for Social & Demographic Research on Aging at the Gerontology Institute of the University of Massachusetts Boston. Working with a team comprised of City officials, local volunteers, and other stakeholders, the plan was developed based on an exhaustive document review of existing City plans and reports, a community survey completed by over 400 Salem residents over the age of 50, three focus groups, and multiple public listening sessions and convenings throughout the community. In December, AARP and WHO notified the City that they had accepted the plan and that implementation could get underway.

What Is In The Plan

The *Salem for All Ages* Action Plan establishes a vision, based on the research completed during the study process and public input, that focuses on what AARP and WHO called the “eight domains” of an age-friendly community:



Within each domain, a vision statement for the future of an Age-Friendly Salem is described, following a series of recommendations to achieve that vision. Within each recommendation there are corresponding action steps for the City and its partners to fulfill the recommendations and achieve the vision for that domain.

Implementation of the action steps falls to the Salem for All Ages Task Force, a group of individuals representing City departments, local agencies, community residents, and nonprofit organizations, which meets monthly to review the status of their work. Guidance for the Task Force's priorities and focus is provided by the Salem for All Ages Leadership Council, comprised of community leaders and elected officials, which meets twice yearly to hear from the Task Force and provide feedback and recommendations.

Completion of Year 5

This report provides the final summaries from the Task Force's subcommittees, which have been working on implementing or preparing for implementation of the action items selected to address in 2021, the fifth year of the Salem for All Ages initiative.

Looking Ahead

Finally, this report provides a look ahead at the planned goals and action items for future years of Salem for All Ages.

Salem for All Ages Task Force

Task Force Co-Chairs and Communications Subcommittee

- Dominick Pangallo – Chief of Staff, Office of Mayor Kimberley Driscoll
- Patricia Zaido – former Executive Director, Salem Partnership

Health Subcommittee

- Kerry Murphy, Chair – Health and Wellness Coordinator, Salem Health Department
- Terry Arnold – Director, Salem Council on Aging
- Robyn Burns – Executive Director, The Salem Pantry
- Karin Carroll – Director of Community Programs, North Shore Community Health
- Rosanna Donahue – Activities Coordinator, Salem Council on Aging
- Patricia Small – Member, Salem Council on Aging Board

Transportation Subcommittee

- David Kucharsky, Chair – Director, Salem Department of Traffic & Parking
- Jay Carroll – Assistant Engineer, Salem Engineering Department
- Russell Findley – Mobility Coordinator, Salem Department of Traffic & Parking

Respect, Social Participation & Inclusion Subcommittee

- Tara Mansfield, Chair – Director, Salem Public Library
- Amy Everitt – Professor, Salem State University
- Alyssa Jones – Human Rights Campaign
- Ellen Soares – Docent Program Manager, Peabody Essex Museum

Housing Subcommittee

- Deborah Tucker, Chair – Assistant Executive Director, Salem Housing Authority
- Amanda Chiancola – Deputy Planning Director, Salem Department of Planning & Community Development
- Sharon Felton – Social Worker, Salem Council on Aging
- Diane Moses – Housing Advocate, North Shore/Merrimack Valley Elder Services
- Rosa Ordaz – Resident Services & Community Engagement, Harborlight Community Partners

Accessible Infrastructure Subcommittee

- Debra Lobsitz, Chair – Chair, Salem Commission on Disabilities
- Deborah Barber – Director, Disability Resource Center
- Patricia O'Brien – Director, Salem Dept. of Parks, Recreation & Community Services

Salem for All Ages Leadership Council

Chairperson

- Kim Driscoll – Mayor, City of Salem

Leadership Council

- Margaret Brennan – Executive Director, North Shore Community Health Center
- Linda Coffill – Chair, Salem Council on Aging Board
- Jeff Cohen – Chair, Salem No Place for Hate Committee
- Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development, City of Salem
- Elizabeth Debski – Executive Director, Salem Partnership
- Rosaleen Doherty – Owner, Right at Home
- Kate Fox – Executive Director, Destination Salem
- Cathy Hoog – Executive Director, Salem Housing Authority
- Judith Kane – Administrator, Brookhouse Home
- John Keenan – President, Salem State University
- Dennis King – Acting Chief, Salem Police Department
- Paul Lanzikos – Former Executive Director, North Shore Elder Services
- Sherry Leonard – Director of Community Relations, John Bertram House
- Christine Madore – President (2021), Salem City Council
- Mickey Northcutt – Executive Director, North Shore Community Development Coalition
- Rinus Oosthoek – Executive Director, Salem Chamber of Commerce
- Dr. David Roberts – President & CEO, North Shore Medical Center/Salem Hospital
- Siddhartha Shah – Director of Education & Civic Engagement, Peabody Essex Museum
- Kylie Sullivan – Director, Salem Main Streets
- Dr. Stephen Zrike – Superintendent, Salem Public Schools

Communications Subcommittee Report

Building on work begun in Year 1 of the initiative, the Communications Subcommittee updated and continued to publish the comprehensive Salem for All Ages Resource Guide, which is mailed to all Salem residents when they turn 65 years old. In 2020 513 copies of the guide were mailed out. The subcommittee continued to maintain and update the initiative's website, www.salemforallages.org (6,687 page views in 2021, up 21% over 2020), as well as the Salem for All Ages Facebook page. The subcommittee worked with City IT staff to implement recommended changes to the City website based on the 2019 ADA Transition Plan report.

In Year 5 of Salem for All Ages, the subcommittee collaborated with the *Salem News* to continue publication of the monthly column, begun in Year 3 and written by a rotating group of authors among the Task Force membership, focusing on the many programs, accomplishments, and goals of the Salem for All Ages initiative.

2021 brought many challenges from a communications perspective due to the pandemic. Salem for All Ages was a key part of the Salem Together effort to connect residents in need with important resources to get through COVID-19. Part of that was an innovative communications program, in which dozens of volunteers enlisted to place well-being check-in phone calls to thousands of Salem seniors.

In the past five years, the Age-Friendly initiative has spread throughout the country. Salem for All Ages Co-Chair Patricia Zaido has given approximately 25 presentations to cities and town officials throughout New England. She has presented at the Northeast District of the American Planning Association, at an AARP/MA conference, to numerous Councils on Aging, and many organizations such as Rotary, the Salem Partnership, North Shore Community Health Network, and North Shore Elder Services. Every semester she teaches two classes at Salem State University related to Salem for All Ages: one to a leadership class of Health Services majors and one to a senior Spanish class. Every semester, she also supervises interns from these classes. In 2021, Patricia spoke to town representatives in Fairfield, Connecticut, and Easton and Ipswich Massachusetts. She also spoke to Salem's No Place for Hate Committee and was interviewed at the launch of the "Salem Skipper" shuttle for the AARP's June 2021 "Bulletin."

Transportation Subcommittee Report

On December 16th, 2020, the city launched the Salem Skipper in partnership with Via, an on-demand transit service provider, who oversees the management and operations of the service for the City. The Skipper is an app based, on-demand transit service offering shared rides that operates within the city limits. The service has been available Monday - Friday, 7:00 am – 7:00 pm and on Saturdays from 10:00 am – 6:00 pm. Since launching, the Skipper has provided over 35,000 rides saving over 18,600 miles of individual vehicle trips and reducing CO₂ output by over 16,500 lbs. Due to the overall success and popularity, the service hours were expanded this past October. Users are now able to ride the service Monday - Thursday 7:00 am – 12:00 am, Fridays 7:00 am – 1:00 am, Saturdays 10:00 am – 1:00 am and Sundays 10:00 am – 8:00 pm.

The Skipper has improved access to transportation for a variety of historically disadvantaged groups. Some of our highest ridership is taking place in the Point neighborhood where approximately 42% of the neighborhood lies below the poverty line and over 24% of the households do not own a vehicle. Since launch, over 6,000 pickups and drop offs have occurred in this area and a Spanish version of the app was introduced last March to better serve the City's Hispanic population. In addition, a significant number of seniors, students, and those with accessibility needs make up approximately 10% of the ridership. Residents have been using the Skipper for essential trips, including food and shopping, medical, as well as after school activities. Some of the top destinations include Salem Hospital, the MBTA Station, Salem University, Salem High & Middle Schools as well as major retail establishments.

City staff are continuing to work with Via and other community stakeholders to promote the service and build partnerships to ensure its stability moving forward. Salem University is now contributing funds towards the service to assist with its student population's transportation needs and a pilot program with Salem Hospital will be launched soon which will provide the hospital with a custom booking platform to book rides for discharged patients who do not have access to transportation. We are also looking at providing vouchers to Middle & High School students that will allow them to take trips between specified locations with the City.

Housing Subcommittee Report

At our first meeting in January 2021 the housing subcommittee identified the following as its goal and focus for the year:

To continue its work to advocate for, promote, and support affordable housing efforts throughout the City of Salem and will work in conjunction with the other SFAA subcommittees to provide ideas and services that promote age-friendly initiatives for the citizens of Salem.

Our 2021 Action Plan Items included:

- Continue to promote Universal Design concepts to developers and builders for both new construction projects and rehabilitation projects.
- Support the feasibility study being conducted at the SHA's oldest public housing development, Leefort Terrace in the hopes that it would support redevelopment and the creation of additional affordable housing units.
- Support the SFAA website listing of age-friendly contractors and businesses who could aid seniors with home maintenance needs.
- Continue to support the SHA and its administration of the Transitional Rental Assistance program to those needing financial aid.
- Follow and support the City's next steps with their housing needs and demands analysis followed by the next Housing Production Plan.

Accomplishments in 2021 included:

- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) approved. Credit goes to Amanda Chiancola and the City of Salem's Planning department for their work to revise and define the ADU ordinance. A legislative change allowed for a simple majority approval by the City Council. There have already been some applications made for ADUs.
- Transitional Rental Assistance Grant. The program is funded through a generous \$120,000.00 Community Preservation grant. The grant was awarded based on an application by the Council on Aging Board and the Salem Housing Authority. The program is administered by the Salem Housing Authority and continued this year with \$46,422.37 having been dispersed and another \$11,200 committed. Funds were provided to assist with payment of rent for those low-income residents, especially senior citizens. The Salem Housing Authority (SHA) manages this transitional assistance program to provide short term funds to assist those low-income renters, including senior citizens, who have fallen behind and are struggling to pay their rent. The SHA works with the Council on Aging social

workers, the Disability Resource Center, the Salvation Army, NSCAP and referrals made by these agencies as well. There are qualifying criteria such as residency, income limits, rent, reason for request, etc. To assist as many of those in need as possible the grant funds are limited to \$350 per month with a cap of \$4,200 annually per household. Additionally, the applicant must agree to participate with service coordination efforts with the SHA staff. These efforts include assistance with applying for more affordable housing assistance, referrals for financial literacy classes, job readiness, or additional measures to promote financial stability. The SHA is the contact for housing resources and assists with where to apply, can scan documents for people, etc. There is an email for help at emergencyhousingassistance@salemha.org, one can reach out to for assistance.

- Feasibility Study at Leefort Terrace. The feasibility study funded by a \$225K grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development continues. The study is for the redevelopment of its first and oldest elderly housing development at Leefort Terrace, which was built in 1958. The hope is that this property will be able to be redeveloped with the goal of providing the replacement of the 50 units as well as more affordable housing units. Work continues with studying this land and meetings have been held with stakeholders, residents, and the Salem community.

Other Housing items:

- North Shore CDC has been working developing affordable properties around the City.
- The City is looking towards redevelopment of the crescent lot near the MBTA station.
- The Affordable Housing Trust will be working to address multi-family condominium conversions and the effect of displacement on renters.
- The Planning department is working with a consultant on a new 5-year housing production plan, which will analyze the City's housing needs, trends, and demographic shifts. A "road map" for future housing needs will be developed.
- Housing Navigator website launched through the Executive Office of Elder Affairs with lists and links to both private and public housing through the state.
- Community Housing Forum was held in November
- The Affordable Housing Trust is working on the matter of apartment conversions to condominiums and the possibility of displacement of the renters. They will also be taking up the matter of the City's disposition policy on vacant properties and land with an eye to affordable housing options.

- Communication. The subcommittee has been working to increase the announcement and advertisement of opportunities and services offered. Some of these have been the meals provided by Root and coordinated by Kerry Murphy, free groceries through food pantries held at various locations, the Skipper rideshare transportation service, Covid updates and testing, housing opportunities, Speaker Series, etc.

Notifications are being made by inclusion on websites for Salem for All Ages, the City, and the Salem Housing Authority. The Salem Housing Authority continues to post flyers and hand deliver and/or mail notices to its residents, and a reverse robocall system is being utilized for SHA residents, who opt in for the service.

- Universal Design. The subcommittee continued work on a Universal Design concepts plan for developers and builders. The goal is to incorporate concepts of Universal Design, or “inclusive design”, into a brochure for those seeking building permits. Many of the concepts (wider doorways, lowered cabinets and light switches, etc.) could be incorporated into redevelopment or new construction.

Patricia Zaido and Amanda Chiancola worked with Valerie Fletcher of the Institute of Human Centered Design and put together another presentation in October. This was held by Zoom and geared towards presenting the concepts to local developers and realtors.

The hope is to highlight the success of a project which used these design principles to show that it is doable and affordable and to be an example to other developers.

Social Isolation Remedies. In response to social isolation issues, the SHA worked with other subcommittee members on several programs to alleviate some of the loneliness our seniors have been experiencing due to Covid. Some of the programs we assisted with notifications were the food pantries, Root, Chat with a Trooper, and Salem Stories.

Respect, Social Participation & Inclusion Subcommittee Report

The Respect, Social Participation, and Inclusion Subcommittee focuses on reducing social isolation by creating intergenerational relationships, offering training on how to better communicate with older adults, and by encouraging organizations to make their spaces more accessible for older adults.

In 2021, Respect, Social Participation, and Inclusion subcommittee continued our efforts to reduce isolation, connect generations, and foster respect. We had some setbacks this year due to the pandemic. We worked for months planning a special event for older adults that involved a tour the Salem Stories exhibit at the PEM followed by a writing workshop to help participants share their own stories. The event has been postponed, but we hope to reschedule at some point.

We also had some successes. The How to Communicate with Older Adults training developed the previous year was given to Peabody Essex Museum staff. We partnered with Root to collect printed and digital notes of kindness to be delivered with meals to members of the community. We launched an intergenerational pen pal program and matched older adults with members of the community so they could correspond in by mail, email, or telephone. And finally, Salem State University students were asked to interview older adults and collect their stories and we're working on getting the wonderful results published online.

Accessible Infrastructure Subcommittee Report

Two years ago, the City of Salem received a grant from the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities to conduct a citywide evaluation of services, programs and properties for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Institute for Human Centered Design was hired to do the study and provide recommendations for a Transition Plan to bring the city into compliance. In January of 2020, the Institute for Human Centered Design finalized their report. It was received with enthusiasm and commitment and is the basis for the city's Transition Plan.

Two fire stations and 8 public schools were included in the 25 city buildings evaluated. In addition, 12 parks and two parking garages were evaluated. The report includes a catalog that lists each facility and detailed element-by-element photos of compliance issues, location and measurements, and recommendations with cost estimates for each accessibility issue. The report can be found at: <https://www.salem.com/adaplan>.

In response, every city department was provided a budget for ADA improvements and the Director of Capital Projects & Municipal Operations designed a tracking tool of all projects involving compliance upgrades. ADA compliance strongly supports all the goals of Salem for All Ages. Some of the work already underway includes sidewalk improvements, better access to city buildings, city website improvements, park upgrades, easier access to programs and services.

Most importantly, the ongoing support and commitment of the Mayor and city employees to this effort ensures that this work will continue into the future.

Health Subcommittee Report

Food security and nutrition continued to be a priority during 2021 as the pandemic is still causing an increased need for food assistance.

Emergency response programs like the City's partnership with Root and the Salem Housing Authority to deliver meals to seniors at low-income housing continued until July 2021.

The COA continued to coordinate volunteer grocery shoppers for older adults unable to leave their homes as well as refer residents in need to the Salem Pantry for weekly food deliveries.

We also continued to work on our goals from 2021 that we were unable to implement due to Covid:

Food is Medicine

The Food is Medicine initiative includes a number of preventive health strategies such as physicians "prescribing" healthy foods to patients using vouchers to farmers markets or grocery stores, medically tailored meals and other healthy food programs.

We were able to make some progress on this in 2021:

Our newest subcommittee member, Robyn Burns from the Salem Pantry partnered with Salem Hospital to start a monthly healthy food program for patients and community members at the NSPG location at 331 Highland Ave.

The Salem Pantry also partnered with The Mack Park Farm, a City-led community farm at Mack Park, to provide fresh local produce at their weekly mobile markets, including senior housing sites. The farm was able to provide over 5000 pounds of produce to the Pantry this year.

The COA continued to host a drive-up free farmers' market at the CLC this year and also used grant funds to build 3 accessible raised garden beds and give out 50 grow bags to seniors. The COA is also working with The Salem Pantry to consolidate their monthly pantry program with the Greater Boston Food Bank.

The COA and the Health department have continued the Taste & Talks program virtually since the pandemic started. This program includes a nutrition lecture

combined with a cooking demonstration that pre-pandemic were given in-person at both the CLC and senior housing sites. This program will hopefully return to in-person in 2022.

The COA was also able to hire a full-time Nutrition and Culinary Coordinator to expand on the nutrition programming offered through the Community Life Center.

Walking Program

We were hoping to start the Walk with A Doc program in 2021, where a local physician volunteers to give a brief talk on a health topic and then walk with participants to answer questions, but with our healthcare partners still so inundated, the COA and Health department started a monthly walking program where we invite a special guest from any background and follow a similar format. The program is free and open to anyone. Everyone receives a pedometer, water bottle and healthy snack. We hope to be able to include our local healthcare workers in the future.

Medical Escort Program

We have finally launched the medical escort program and we're in the process of promoting it and recruiting volunteer drivers. Residents in need of transportation outside of regular COA transportation hours can use this program to get to routine medical appointments or procedures that do not require physical assistance.

Goals for 2022

- Restructure the subcommittee and recruit new members comprising healthcare and behavioral health
- Strengthen our partnerships with local healthcare facilities,
- Develop a targeted outreach plan for our Spanish-speaking residents to ensure that preventive health resources for older adults are communicated equitably

Expand on the nutrition/Food is Medicine programming as well as provide more active living opportunities for residents

The Future of Salem for All Ages

For 2022 and beyond, Salem for All Ages is refocusing itself on four specific action items, each of which will be taken up by new subcommittees specifically intended for that action item.

Engagement — Growth of the Mayor Jean Levesque Community Life Center through such activities as the new speakers' series, more exercise opportunities, workshops including technology classes, healthy food programs and updated communication efforts.

Health — With a focus on healthy and active aging in Salem through collaborative diet, nutrition, and preventive medicine efforts.

Inclusion — First, expanding communication efforts with Salem residents of all ages. Second, raising awareness about how ageism affects all of us and how we can work together to dismantle it.

Interconnection — Help strengthen existing efforts to connect residents of all races and backgrounds with one another and their community and create new ones, with a particular focus on Salem's older Latino residents.

These are significant goals, but essential ones for the city of Salem. As we prepare for the future of Salem for All Ages, we invite you to be part of this journey and this important work. Discover more about the initiative at www.salemforallages.org or reach out to info@salemforallages.org.

Salem for All Ages will keep working to ensure our community is a place that welcomes and works for residents of every age and ability for many years to come.