

# Galion Ohio: How Age Friendly is my Community?

Zachary Deibig  
University of Findlay



University of Findlay®

## Abstract

The senior, over age 65, population is growing at an exponential rate in the United States, with over 84 million seniors projected by the year of 2050. This is leading to some problems in the healthcare system with how to best meet their needs. One idea that has been proposed to help with this issue is the concept of an Age Friendly Community. This concept embraces the idea that aging is a combination of behavioral, social, physiological, and environmental changes for the individual and the community. The purpose of this comparative analysis was to see if my hometown of Galion, Ohio meets the common criteria that makes a town or city and Age Friendly Community.

## Age Friendly Criteria

**Housing:** Accessible and affordable with access to retail, transportation, and social services.

**Outdoor Space and Built Environment:** Clean environment with green spaces, places to rest, age friendly pavements and safe walking areas. Active recreation and leisure opportunities to be physically and mentally active

**Transportation:** The ability to get to where they need to go when they want to do it. Needs to be available, affordable, and reliable.

**Social Environment:** Age friendly services available along with intergenerational activities that provide meaningful connection with family, friends, and neighbors.

**Community Support:** Encouraged to be engaged in the community as well as accommodations so they can volunteer and continue to work.

**Health and Wellness Services:** Access to a wide range of health services including but not limited to preventive care, medical services, mental health care, palliative care, home health, and assisted living facilities.

## Housing

### Affordable Housing:

- Galion East Apartments
  - Senior apartments with subsidized government rates
  - Cable, appliances, central air and heating available.
  - 1 Bedroom/ 1 Bathroom averages \$616 per month

### Assisted Living:

- Magnolia Terrace
  - 5 different room options based on individual needs
  - Daily activities for the residents to do while living there
  - Pricing ranges from \$4,700 to \$6,100 a month

### Nursing Home:

- Mill Creek Nursing Home:
  - Average cost is \$6,829 per month
  - 24/7 nursing care
  - PT, OT and Speech therapy programs offered

## Outdoor Spaces and Built Environment

- 4 different parks in town for them to spend time in
- During the summer there are concerts that take place in the main park in town
- There is a nature center a few miles outside of town that they can visit

## Social Environment

- Program called growing together where seniors and young children work together to grow a garden
- Crawford County Council on Aging gives them a voice in the community

## Transportation

### Two main options for transportation:

- SCAT
  - Fares range from \$2 to \$25 depending on the distance
  - Provide door to door transportation for anyone who needs it
- Council on Aging
  - No charge, only use donations to fund
  - Available Monday through Friday from 6 am to 5 pm

## Community Support

- The local hospital provides opportunities for seniors to volunteer there
- Senior work programs in place at local a few of the Goodwill's in town and around the area

## Health and Wellness

- Decently sized local hospital with larger hospitals in the same family that they can be transported to
- 3 local pharmacies spread around town for easy of access
- Also a number of assisted living facilities and nursing homes including what was previously mentioned
- Grocery delivery service called Instacart. \$14.99 for a monthly membership or pay \$5.99 per delivery

## Conclusions

I think my community has a good start on becoming an age friendly community, but it is not quite there yet. There is room for improvement in the Social Environment and Community Support areas, but I think everything else fits the criteria. For being a small town in the middle of Ohio I think it is making good progress towards becoming more age friendly.

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