



Age-Friendly Advocacy Playbook

December 2025

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Section 1: How to Use This Playbook

Who is this playbook for?

This playbook is for anyone who believes aging is a natural part of life and wants communities to reflect that. It offers simple ways to influence the people and organizations around you, so Minnesota is welcoming at every age.



How to use this playbook



You don't need to read it cover to cover.

Start anywhere.

Many people will use it in three ways:



1. Learn about age-friendly work: Sections 2–5 give background on what age-friendly means, who's involved, and how policy change happens in Minnesota.



2. Find ways to support: Do you want to sharpen your message, contact a lawmaker, or tell your story? Each tool focuses on an advocacy skill and gives you concrete steps, examples, and templates you can use.



3. Take the next step: When you're ready, try another tool or review the ***Get Involved*** tool to make your advocacy commitment.

What to expect



The tools in this playbook are:

- **Brief** — you can use them in minutes, not hours
- **Practical** — concrete steps, not theory
- **Flexible** — useful for individuals, teams, and communities
- **Minnesota-specific** — grounded in what works in our state

Use what you need, when you need it.

Section 2: What does “Age-Friendly” mean?

Age-friendly means creating communities that support people at every age — places where staying connected, active, and included is possible throughout our lives.

What makes a community age-friendly?

Age-friendly communities share a few simple qualities. They are places where:

- People can get where they need to go.
- Homes, public spaces, and businesses are safe, welcoming, and accessible.
- People can stay socially connected and involved in community life.
- Information is easy to find and understand.
- Resources and services help people live well in their community.



These efforts look different from place to place, but all are part of a global, national, and local movement to create communities where people can age well.

Age-Friendly in Minnesota

Across Minnesota, communities are putting age-friendly ideas into action in ways that fit their local values and needs. Examples include:



Improving walkability and accessibility in parks, trails, downtowns, and public spaces



Expanding transportation options that help people stay connected to work, health care, and community life



Creating intergenerational activities that bring people of different ages together



Supporting housing and neighborhood designs that help people live well in their community

No two communities look the same, but a growing number are looking for more ways to support people as they age.

Why it matters

We are all aging. Age-friendly efforts help ensure that each of us can live well, stay involved, and remain part of our communities throughout our lives.



Section 3: Who's Involved in Age-Friendly?

People and organizations across Minnesota are bringing age-friendly ideas into their daily work and lives — in schools, public health, health care, local communities, and businesses — to make our state a great place for people at every age.

A Growing Number of Age-Friendly Partners

Age-Friendly
Universities



Age-Friendly
Public Health



Age-Friendly
Health Systems
(and Pharmacies)



Age-Friendly
Communities



Age-Friendly
Employers and
Businesses



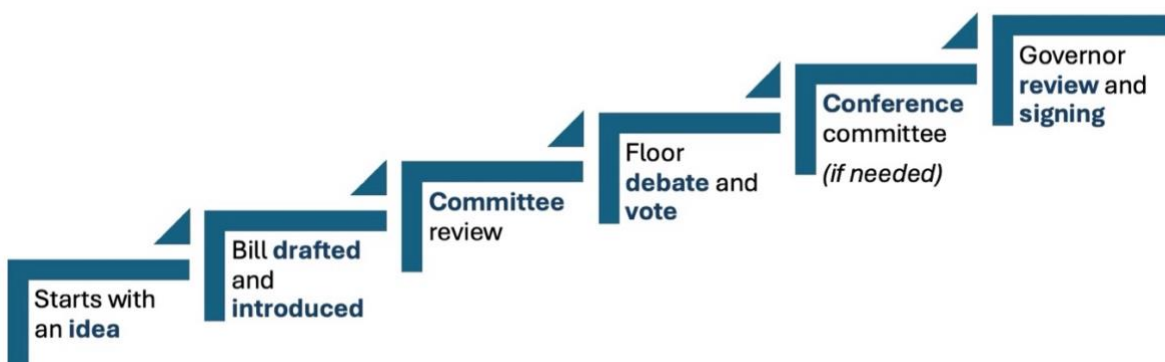
Age-Friendly looks different in each organization and community. By sharing ideas and coordinating efforts, partners help build an age-friendly movement that grows stronger through collaboration.

Section 4: How Policy Change Happens in MN

Policy making can be messy, but it generally follows a few common steps. Understanding the typical flow helps you know where your voice can make the biggest difference.

How a bill becomes a law in Minnesota

The process can be summarized in **6 steps** described below.





1. It starts with an idea

Bills usually start with real experiences, stories, or problems that need solving. Advocates, legislators, state agencies, and community groups all bring forward ideas.

How you can help: Share stories, identify issues, talk with local leaders about solutions.



2. A bill is drafted and introduced

A legislator agrees to sponsor the idea and works with staff to draft the bill. It is then introduced in the House or Senate and assigned to a committee.

How you can help: Contact legislators to request they sponsor a bill, help provide sample bill language or other support for drafting and introducing the bill.



3. Committees review and shape the bill

Committees hear testimony, gather information, and decide what moves forward. Many ideas are combined into larger “omnibus” bills at this stage rather than moving ahead as stand-alone proposals.

How you can help: Testify at committee hearings, submit comments, or contact committee members.



4. Floor debates and votes

If a bill passes out of committee (or is packaged into an “omnibus bill”), it may go to the full House or Senate for debate and a vote.

How you can help: Reach out to your lawmakers, share updates with your networks, send letters of support.



5. Conference committee (if needed)

If the House and Senate pass different versions of a bill, a “conference committee” works out the differences and negotiates a final proposal.

How you can help: Stay informed and help keep attention on your priorities, contact conference committee members or legislative leaders.



6. Governor review and signing

The final bill is sent to the Governor, who can sign it, veto it, or let it become law without a signature.

How you can help: Thank legislators, share what the change will mean, and help with next steps.



Putting it all together

This process can move slowly for months and then speed up with little notice. Many important decisions happen early in committees, but things can also change quickly later in the process, especially as bills are combined or revised.

Even small actions – like sharing a brief story with a legislator, sending a quick email ahead of a hearing, or letting others in your community know what is happening – can make a big difference when well timed.

Section 5: Our Roles in Advocacy

Age-friendly is a shared effort. People and organizations across Minnesota contribute in different ways and each role helps move the work forward. Understanding these roles can help you see where you fit and how you can make the biggest difference.

How different roles fit together

Age-friendly advocacy depends on four kinds of partners working together:

- Local advocates and community leaders
- Advocacy organizations or coalitions
- State agencies
- Formal councils and statewide bodies



Together, these roles reinforce one another and help age-friendly ideas gain momentum across the state.

Role Cards: Where Do You Fit?

These cards give you a simple way to see how different roles contribute to age-friendly work and how they fit together. You might see yourself in more than one role, or your role may shift over time. What matters most is recognizing your contributions as part of something larger.

1 Local Communities

Includes individual advocates, neighbors, local leaders, community groups, employers, and others rooted in their communities.

Core role: Uplift lived experience and build grassroots energy.

What you bring:

- Real stories and local knowledge
- Trusted relationships
- Early identification of needs and opportunities

How you can contribute:

- Share stories with policymakers
- Organize neighbors or events
- Participate in town halls, community meetings, or advisory boards

2 Advocacy Organizations and Coalitions

Includes nonprofits, provider associations, grassroots networks and coalitions, and membership organizations.

Core role: Shape policy ideas and mobilize direct advocacy.

What you bring:

- Policy expertise and analysis
- Communications and organizing capacity
- Networks that amplify action

How you can contribute:

- Coordinate advocacy campaigns
- Draft bill language or messaging
- Mobilize members to contact legislators, testify, or take action

3 State Agencies

Includes staff and leaders in departments such as health, human services, transportation, housing, and other state programs that affect people as they age.

Core role: Integrate age-friendly principles into programs, policy, and daily work.

What you bring:

- Knowledge of programs, rules, and operations
- Ability to adjust policies or processes
- Cross-agency connections and partnerships

How you can contribute:

- Identify barriers and opportunities
- Improve communication or access
- Bring an aging “lens” to planning and decision-making

4 Formal Councils and Statewide Bodies

Includes the Age-Friendly MN Council, the Minnesota Board on Aging, and other statewide advisory councils or commissions focused on aging.

Core role: Connect local and statewide perspectives and advise leaders on aging-related needs and solutions.

What you bring:

- A statewide view of trends and priorities
- Relationships with state leaders
- Cross-sector connections

How you can contribute:

- Advising leaders on needs and better solutions
- Lifting local stories into statewide conversations
- Aligning partners around shared age-friendly goals

The tools that follow, including the **Align as a Team** and **Get Involved** tools, show how people in different roles can work together to advocate.



Tool: Craft Your “Elevator Speech”

Find a simple, confident way to describe what Age-Friendly means in your own words.

Why this tool?

Whether you're meeting a legislator, talking to your neighbors, or speaking at a public meeting, it's helpful to have a simple message you feel confident sharing. This tool helps you describe why Age-Friendly matters and start building a short message (or “elevator speech”) that is your own.

Sample message

“Age-friendly is about making communities better for all of us, at every age. We focus on practical changes that support health and connection — so that all people can be active and involved in the places they call home. When we plan for aging, we build stronger communities for everyone.”

What makes a good elevator message?

- ☒ **Brief:** Aim for 30–60 seconds
- ☒ **Clear:** Use plain language
- ☒ **Personalized:** Connect to your work, audience, and community
- ☒ **Inviting:** Help others see where they can fit in

Other ideas you can mix and match:

- “We are all aging — age-friendly isn’t about ‘them,’ it’s about all of us.”
- “We bring people together across sectors to improve the experience of aging in every Minnesota community.”
- Aging isn’t a problem — it’s a natural part of life to plan for and support.”
- “As we age, we all benefit from walkable neighborhoods, housing that meets our needs, and opportunities to stay connected.”
- “Age-friendly isn’t a program; it’s a movement to change how we think about aging.”

Build your own

Use the prompts below to create a message that reflects **your voice**, **your audience**, and **your role**.

What is Age-Friendly, in your own words?

Tip: Think about what it means in your town, daily work, or life.

Why does it matter? What's one example or result you could share?

Tip: What's changed or improving in your community because of Age-Friendly?

Now put it together in 3–4 sentences:

Tip: Read it out loud. Would it feel natural to say in a conversation? If not, adjust it.





Tool: Align as a Team

Clarify shared advocacy goals and explore the unique role you or your organization can play.

Why this tool?

Advocacy works best when different people or groups lift up the same issues and solutions. This tool helps your team align so policymakers hear a clear, consistent case for age-friendly policies.

Part 1: Start the Conversation

Use these prompts to explore where your group or coalition has shared priorities and how each person or organization can contribute.



Discussion Questions

- 1. What issues or advocacy goals matter most to us right now?**
(What are we seeing or hearing in our communities?)
- 2. Where do we have shared priorities with others at the table?**
(Are there issues more than one person or group here cares about?)
- 3. What role can we each play in advancing those goals?**
(Think about what you or your organization offers — relationships, time, influence, lived experience, etc.)
- 4. Who else should be part of this conversation or effort?**
(Is anyone missing who could expand our perspective or reach?)

Part 2: Reflect on Your Role

Advocacy looks different depending on your role, and that's a good thing! Use these questions to reflect on how you or your organization can best contribute to age-friendly goals.

Reflection Questions

1. **What role(s) feel most natural or possible for me or my organization to play right now?**

(Tip: Consider your connections, capacity, and position.)

2. **Where could we stretch or grow to better support shared age-friendly goals?**

(Are there things we haven't done before but could try? What is missing from the group that we could bring?)

Sample Advocacy Roles*

Role	Example of Advocacy Actions
Local advocates or community leaders	Share lived experience and community stories with elected officials or groups to illustrate why age-friendly work matters.
Nonprofit or coalition staff	Organize others around shared priorities and help advocates stay informed, build skills, and act.
State agency staff	Integrate age-friendly principles into programs or processes and identify opportunities to improve access or collaboration.
Age-Friendly MN Council or Action Team members	Advise leaders on statewide needs and lift local stories into decision-making spaces.

**See Section 5 of this playbook for full descriptions*



Tool: Plan Your Time

Stay active and up to date with a simple framework for what to do and when.

Why this tool?

Advocacy can feel confusing if you don't know what happens when. This tool breaks down the state legislative cycle so you can plan ahead.

Part 1: Follow the Rhythm

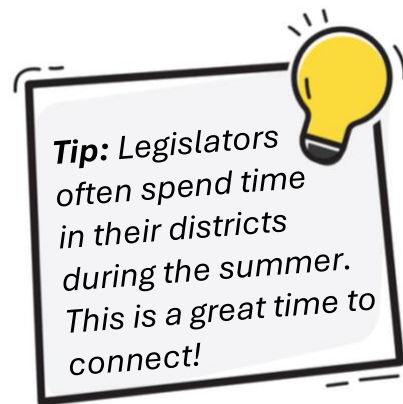
Use this seasonal guide to see what advocacy typically looks like across the year. Whether you're part of a local initiative, a state agency, or a broader coalition, these tips can help you plan, stay connected, and act.



Summer (Jun–Aug)

Be visible and plan ahead:

- ✓ Share stories and updates with your networks
- ✓ Look for local events to stay connected
- ✓ Begin thinking about next session's goals



If you are...

- **A Local Advocate or Community Leader** → Strengthen relationships, attend local events, and share age-friendly stories or examples.
- **Advocacy Organization or Coalition Staff** → Gather stories or data, reconnect with partners, and begin thinking about shared priorities.
- **State Agency Staff** → Identify ways to integrate age-friendly principles into programs, planning, or internal processes.
- **Member of a Formal Council or Statewide Body** → Prepare to reconnect in the fall and review insights emerging across Minnesota communities.



Fall (Sept–Nov)

Set priorities and build relationships

- ✓ Talk with your team or network: What matters most this year?
- ✓ Meet with local or state leaders before the legislative session begins in the new year
- ✓ Connect with other age-friendly advocates



If you are...

- **A Local Advocate or Community Leader** → Meet with local officials, attend town halls, and help lift up community priorities before session begins.
- **Advocacy Organization or Coalition Staff** → Align messaging across partners and support advocates as they prepare for the session.
- **State Agency Staff** → Assess upcoming policy or budget opportunities and identify where an aging lens could strengthen internal work.
- **Member of a Formal Council or Statewide Body** → Help connect local work with statewide priorities and support alignment across networks.



Winter (Dec–Feb)

Show up and share your message

- ✓ The legislative session begins in January or February — reach out early!
- ✓ Write or meet with legislators – prepare to testify
- ✓ Use stories and local examples to make your message real

If you are...

- **A Local Advocate or Community Leader** → Reach out to legislators, share community stories, and participate in hearings or local advocacy events.
- **Advocacy Organization or Coalition Staff** → Mobilize partners, prepare testimony or letters of support, and keep advocates informed of opportunities to act.



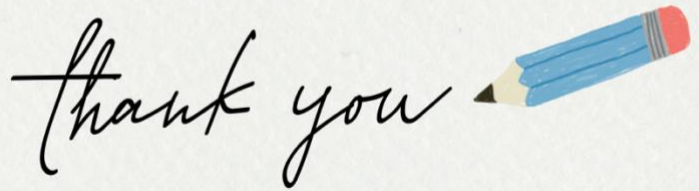
- **State Agency Staff** → Track proposals related to aging and share key updates internally to support decision-making.
- **Member of a Formal Council or Statewide Body** → Amplify statewide age-friendly messages and share timely updates with partners.



Spring (Mar–May)

Finish strong and reflect

- ✓ Follow up on bills or decisions
- ✓ Thank decision-makers for support
- ✓ Reflect on what worked — and what didn't



If you are...

- **A Local Advocate or Community Leader** → Share timely updates with neighbors or groups and highlight what your community still needs as decisions take shape.
- **Advocacy Organization or Coalition Staff** → Keep partners informed, support final outreach or testimony, and begin capturing lessons for next year.
- **State Agency Staff** → Monitor proposals that affect aging and talk with your team about what they might mean for your programs or services.
- **Member of a Formal Council or Statewide Body** → Share what you're hearing from across the state and help keep age-friendly priorities on the radar as decisions are made.

Part 2: Map Out Your Year



Everyone's advocacy journey looks different. Use the space below to reflect on what's ahead for you or your organization.



Summer (Jun–Aug)

Stay connected

How can you keep momentum going after the legislative session? Any events or outreach you want to plan?



Fall (Sept–Nov)

Plan ahead

What advocacy goals are most important this year? What relationships or conversations should you start now?



Winter (Dec–Feb)

Take action

Who do you want to reach during session? What message or story do you want to share?



Spring (Mar–May)

Reflect and respond

What's happening during session? What's worth celebrating — and what should be carried forward?



Tool: Tell Your Story

Use a real-life example to help others understand why Age-Friendly matters.

Why this tool?

Stories are one of the most powerful tools we have to influence change. Research shows that stories — more than facts or data — help people understand new ideas, shift perspectives, and feel connected. This tool gives you a simple formula and tips to build a story that's clear, personal, and action ready.

Part 1: Build Your Story

Use the simple formula: **Challenge** → **Change** → **Impact**

Prompts:

Challenge	Change	Impact
What makes things harder for people as they age? (in your community, your work, or your own life)	What helped? (program, support, or shift in thinking that made a difference)	What changed as a result? How did it improve life for you or others?

Use the space below to build your story:

Challenge:

Change:

Impact:



Tips to make your story meaningful:

- Use your own words and speak from the heart
 - Be specific: name people, places, or situations
 - Keep it brief: aim for 1–2 minutes, at most
-

Sample Story:

“Many older adults don’t drive, and in our small town that meant there wasn’t an easy way for them to get around. With support from an Age-Friendly Minnesota grant, a local nonprofit was able to purchase an accessible van and start a weekly route. Now, residents who don’t drive can get to the grocery store, the community center, and other places that help them stay connected and independent.”

Want to go deeper?

Stories can take many forms, including written, spoken, visual, or social media. This tool helps you craft a brief version for quick conversations or meetings. When you have more time or a chance to present, a more in-depth story may make sense.

To explore more examples and guidance, check out this free, downloadable [storytelling guide](#) from Dawn Fraser.





Tool: Sharpen Your Message

Craft a clear message that highlights why Age-Friendly matters and what you're asking people to do.

Why this tool?

When it comes to advocacy, your message matters. The best messages are simple, memorable, and include a clear ask. This tool helps you sharpen your message so it's clear and easy for others to act on and repeat.



Tips for a Strong Message

Use these tips as a checklist to build your message or strengthen one you already use.

- ☐ **Start with your audience.** What's important to them? What values do you share?
- ☐ **Be clear and focused.** Say what's happening, what needs to change, and why it matters.
- ☐ **Keep it simple.** Use everyday language that's easy to remember and repeat.
- ☐ **Back it up.** Add data, a story, or example to make your message stronger.
- ☐ **Show “win-win”.** How does this help older adults and the broader community?
- ☐ **Include an ask.** End with a clear call to action or next step.

Part 1: Do Your Homework

Use these prompts to think through your message before writing it. Jot down thoughts, phrases, or examples that feel relevant.

1. Who are you talking to?

What's important to them? What values or goals do you share?

→

→

2. What's the issue or opportunity?

What's happening that needs attention?

→

→

3. Why does it matter?

Who's affected, and what's at stake?

→

→

4. What needs to change?

Describe the solution, policy, or shift you're advocating for.

→

5. What supports your message?

Do you have data, an example, or a personal story to help make your case?

→

6. What's your call to action?

What specifically do you want your audience to do next?

→

Part 2: Create Your Message

Now turn your reflections into a focused message. Choose 3–4 short, memorable points you want your audience to remember about Age-Friendly.

Remember to include:

- ☐ What's happening
- ☐ What needs to change
- ☐ Why it matters
- ☐ What you want your audience to do



Use the space below to draft your bullet points. These can help you guide a short conversation, write a letter, or prep for a meeting.

-
-
-
-

Sample Message

- *“Age-Friendly efforts are helping communities become more inclusive and livable for people of all ages.”*
 - *“In our town, that’s meant improving access to transportation and public spaces so people could get where they need to go.”*
 - *“These changes support health, independence, and connection for everyone.”*
 - *“Please continue to support Age-Friendly Minnesota so this progress can grow across the state.”*
-



Tool: Meet with Confidence

Feel more confident and prepared for conversations with policymakers.

Why this tool?

You don't need to be an expert to advocate — you just need to be prepared and be yourself. Whether you're meeting with a legislator at the Capitol or connecting with a city council member in your community, this tool helps you prepare, make it personal, and follow through.

Before the Meeting



- **Learn who you're meeting with.** What are their priorities? Where might your story or goals connect?
- **Get clear on your message.** Know what you want to say, why it matters, and what you're asking for. See the [*Sharpen Your Message*](#) tool for tips.
- **Schedule early and confirm details.** Be flexible if plans change.

During the Meeting



- **Be personal and authentic.** Your lived experience matters.
- **Keep it short.** You may only have 5–15 minutes (or less).
- **Be direct.** Make a clear ask. Don't assume they'll read between the lines.



After the Meeting



- **Say thank you.** Send a personal note, email, or post a thank-you message publicly.
- **Follow up.** If you promised to share more information, send it. Keep the door open and share updates on your work.

Dos and Don'ts

Here are some simple dos and don'ts to help your meeting go smoothly.

 DO	 DON'T
Prepare and practice in advance	“Wing it” or read from a script
Make it personal and brief	Overload them with too many facts
Make a clear ask	Leave it open-ended or vague
Know your audience and speak to their priorities	Assume they already understand or support your issue
Follow up with a thank-you and offer to stay in touch	Disappear after the meeting



Tool: Make Contact

Simple ways to reach out and examples you can personalize.

Why this tool?

Reaching out to lawmakers and other decision-makers doesn't need to be intimidating. They rely on people like you to share real experiences, so they know what matters to Minnesotans. A short, personal message helps your voice be counted. This tool gives you simple steps, real examples, and a template to help you get started.



How to Reach Out and Who to Contact

Reaching out can be simple. Here's where to start:

Email is often best: It's fast, personal, and easy for decision-makers and their staff to track.

Reach out to the people who influence your issue: This could be a state legislator, city council member, county commissioner, Tribal leader, or staff from a state agency.





Finding contact information: Most officials list their email and staff contacts online. To find your state legislators, use Minnesota’s [“Who Represents Me?”](#) tool:

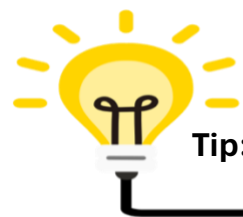
Aides are key partners: Staff help schedule meetings, track messages, and flag important issues. It’s appropriate to email both the official and their aide if you have their contact information.

Phone calls and letters work too: Calls help with time-sensitive issues. Handwritten letters can make an impact in the long run. But email is often the quickest and most reliable.

How to Make a Good Impression

You don’t need fancy language. Just keep it simple and personal.

- **Say who you are:** Your name, your town, and your connection to age-friendly work
- **Say why you’re writing:** What issue or opportunity you want to highlight
- **Make it personal:** One sentence about what you’re seeing in your community
- **Make a clear ask:** What you hope they will support or pay attention to
- **Close with thanks:** Advocacy is built on relationships



Tip: Keep it short — about 4–6 sentences is plenty.

Email Examples

1: Support for Age-Friendly Minnesota and its grant program

Subject: Continued Support for Age-Friendly Minnesota

Hello Senator Rasmusson,
I'm a resident of Otter Tail County, and I've seen firsthand how Age-Friendly Minnesota's grants help communities better support all community members. Recent grants have supported volunteer driver programs here in Otter Tail County and helped Tribal Nations like the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe purchase accessible vans for elders. These are small investments that help people age well in their communities.

I hope you'll continue supporting Age-Friendly Minnesota and its grant program so more communities can benefit.

Thank you for your leadership and support,
[Your Name]

2: Considering aging in policy decisions

Subject: Why Aging Should Be Part of Every Policy Decision

Hello Representative Franson,
I'm a resident of Alexandria and writing with a simple but important message: we are all aging. Yet aging isn't often considered in policy decisions. Whether we're talking about transportation, housing or community planning, policies work better when they reflect the needs of people across the lifespan.

In our community, small changes – like more accessible sidewalks and flexible housing options – are already helping residents of all ages. I hope you'll continue to champion policies that recognize aging as a natural part of life and something we can plan for intentionally.

Thank you,
[Your Name]

Fillable Template

Use this template to create your own short email or letter. Just fill in the blanks and make it your own.

Subject: *[Your subject line here]*

Hello *[Representative/Senator/Commissioner]*,

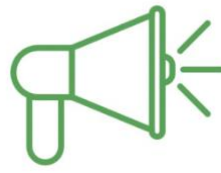
My name is *[Your name]*, and I live in/work in *[Your community]*. I'm reaching out because *[Brief statement about the issue or opportunity you want to highlight]*.

In my experience, *[Short example that shows why this matters]*.

I hope you will *[What you want them to do]*.

Thank you for your leadership and for considering this perspective,

[Your Name, Organization or Contact Information]



Tool: Spread the Word

Sample social media posts to help you raise awareness and build support.

Why this tool?

Social media is a great way to reach more people and invite them to get involved. You don't need a big following or polished graphics. Authentic, real posts often make the biggest impact. This tool gives you quick tips and ready-to-use examples to help you spread the word about age-friendly ideas.



Tips for Effective Social Media Posts

- ☐ **Lead with the “why”:** Start with one sentence that tells people why aging or age-friendly work matters.
 - ☐ **Show, don't tell:** Photos or short videos get more attention than text alone. A picture of a sidewalk improvement or a community gathering can go a long way.
 - ☐ **Use real examples:** People connect with real moments:
“Today our walking group had three generations together on the trail...”
 - ☐ **Tag key people or groups:** Tagging legislators, partner organizations, or local leaders helps your message reach the right people.
(Example: @SenJimAbeler)
 - ☐ **One message per post:** Pick one idea (a story, a thank-you, or an ask) and save the rest for another post.
 - ☐ **Use hashtags sparingly:** One or two meaningful ones is plenty
(Example: #AgeFriendlyMN #WeAreAllAging)
 - ☐ **Invite engagement:** Ask a simple question or prompt:
“What age-friendly change would you love to see in your neighborhood?”
-

Sample Posts You Can Use

Below are four post types or examples you can adapt for Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, or LinkedIn.

1. Awareness Post (What is age-friendly?)

“Aging is something we all share. Planning for it makes our whole community stronger. #AgeFriendlyMN #WeAreAllAging”



Visual idea:

Photo of a community space like a park, Main Street, or gathering place showing everyday life.

2. Local Moment Post (Casual, real-life example)

“Stopped by the community center this morning and saw a full room — neighbors of all ages learning something new together. This is what age-friendly looks like. ❤️ #AgeFriendlyMN”



Visual idea:

Photo of real people engaged in an activity or connecting.

3. Appreciation Post (Tag a partner or legislator)

“Grateful for partners like @SenJimAbeler who support age-friendly efforts. When leaders value aging, we all benefit. #WeAreAllAging”

Visual idea:

A photo from a meeting, community event, or a project their support helped make happen.

4. Invitation Post (Ask others to engage)

“What’s one small change that would make your daily routine easier? A bench, a safer crossing, a community class? Share your ideas and let’s imagine an age-friendly community together. 📍 #AgeFriendlyMN”



Visual idea:

Photo of a walking path or favorite gathering spot from your daily routine.



Tool: Get Involved

Choose advocacy actions that fit what you can give.

Why this tool?

Everyone has a role in advocating for age-friendly policies. Your position, relationships, and experiences shape how you can contribute. Use this tool to identify concrete actions you can take — whether you're just getting started or able to do more.

How to use this tool

Start by finding the role that best describes you today. Under each role you'll see different ways to get involved, from simple actions you can take on your own to opportunities to influence bigger decisions. After exploring the options, take a few moments to create your personal advocacy commitment.

Section 1: Ways You Can Get Involved

Each role includes potential actions at three levels of involvement:



Learn & observe:

Simple steps that help you understand what is happening and notice opportunities to support age-friendly work.



Speak up & participate:

Actions where you share your voice, connect with others, or take part in community or policy discussions.



Mobilize & influence:

Deeper involvement where you help shape decisions, coordinate others, or influence policy or organizational direction.



You don't have to move through these levels in order. Consider actions that fit what you can give.

Role	Learn & observe	Speak up & participate	Mobilize & influence
Local advocates or community leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend a town hall • Comment on a local article or post • Share a story with a neighbor or group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write or call elected officials • Post or share age-friendly updates on social media • Participate in or volunteer at community events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with your elected officials • Testify at a public meeting or hearing • Join an advisory board or committee to shape community priorities
Advocacy organization or coalition staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about age-friendly efforts in your community • Identify connections to your work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present or share age-friendly information in your community • Draft or review letters of support • Write or call elected officials • Post or share age-friendly updates on social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with elected officials • Provide or coordinate testimony at public meeting • Engage partner organizations to align policy priorities • Help organize others to contact their legislators or attend events
State agency staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review age-friendly resources and note connections • Identify aging-related barriers in your agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest simple access improvements or plain language updates • Connect age-friendly resources with internal teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor internal age-friendly workgroups • Adopt policy or process changes that align with age-friendly principles
Member of a formal council or statewide body”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay up to date on age-friendly efforts • Notice gaps where aging is missing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend events on behalf of age-friendly • Present or share age-friendly information with new audiences • Post or share age-friendly updates on social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent age-friendly in meetings with elected officials • Testify or present at public meetings • Represent Age-Friendly MN on statewide committees or task forces

Section 2: Make Your Advocacy Commitment



Our impact grows when each of us takes meaningful steps. Use the space below to identify **two actions**: *one you can take now* and *one that stretches you* or uses your influence in a deeper way.

One action I will take now (*in the next month*):

One action I will take that stretches me or uses my influence (*in the next 6 months*):

Who can I share this with to keep me accountable?
