



The Senior Agenda Coalition of Rhode Island

Strategic Plan 2020 to 2024

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April 2020

I. Introduction

The Senior Agenda Coalition’s previous strategic plan was developed in 2008 when it evolved from a program of the RI Gray Panthers into an independent agency. That plan defined our mission as community organizing and advocacy for policies, legislation and state Medicaid funding that promoted “aging in the community.” We have achieved notable successes in that mission, especially during the past five years. However, our growth in membership and organizational resources has not matched our organizing and advocacy efforts. This new strategic plan embraces the opportunity to mobilize the power of Rhode Island’s senior citizens into a force for social change. It provides a road map for growth in the organization’s membership, funding resources and impact on social policy and programs to benefit present and future older Rhode Islanders.

II. Stakeholder Participation and Planning Process

This strategic planning process was launched in January 2020 with the support of an organizational capacity grant from The Rhode Island Foundation. Through the planning process, the Senior Agenda Coalition has engaged older Rhode Islanders through mailed and online surveys, regional focus group discussions and three days of planning sessions with a core stakeholder group¹ of community leaders. A total of 139 surveys were collected and analyzed. Four focus groups were held in January, in Cranston, Bristol, Lincoln and South Kingstown, involving 51 older adults in 90-minute discussions of needs and programs supporting aging in the community.

With this data from surveys and focus groups as a foundation of information, a planning team of 29 stakeholders, including community leaders and representatives from partner organizations,¹ met on January 14, February 13 and February 27 to identify critical issues, review past coalition successes, vision the future, conduct a SWOT analysis and develop strategic goals and action strategies. These discussions provided the Senior Agenda Coalition’s Executive Director and Board of Directors with a range of possible strategic actions that has been compiled and prioritized into a five-year strategic plan of action.

¹ **Strategic Planning Stakeholder Group:** Linda A’Vant Deishinni, Craig Baker, Brenda Clement, Bob Cox, Doris Donovan, Todd Farias, Tom Fleming, Bill Flynn, Ray Gagner, Jeanne Gattegno, Stephanie Gill, Rabbi Jeff Goldwasser, Virginia Gonsalves, Linda Katz, Maureen Maigret, Bob Marshall, Karen Mensel, Senator Harold Metts, Mary Lou Moran, Manny Murray, George Neubauer, Cy O’Neil, Jack Reinholt, Susan Saccoccia Olson, Paul Salera, Barbara Schermack, Brenda Seagrave-Whittle and Meg Underwood.

III. The Mission of Senior Agenda Coalition of RI

The Senior Agenda Coalition is an independent and diverse coalition of agency and individual members. Our mission is to mobilize people and implement an agenda that improves the quality of life of older Rhode Islanders. We accomplish this through community organizing, public education and legislative action.

IV. Positioning Statement

The Senior Agenda Coalition's track record of successful campaigns makes it clear that our social movement organizing work has been the key to our success. We believe that our best opportunity for sustainability and mission effectiveness means that we must focus our strategic plan on building an even stronger statewide movement for seniors in the next five years. We are a social movement that works for social change through development of power by individual constituents and Coalition member organizations.

We help them achieve that power by developing leaders and building relationships among individual and organizational members. That power enabled us to carry out campaigns for change, such as winning permanent state funding for the No-Fare Bus Pass Program for seniors and persons with disabilities, increasing

\$330,000 in annual funding for Meals On Wheels, higher pay for home health care workers, and restoring \$400,000 in senior centers' funding.

As a movement, we are coalition-based and turn out large numbers of people for interaction with our political leaders. This strategy has won important victories, time and again. Our movement work sets us apart from other public policy education and advocacy organizations. We have demonstrated the ability to mobilize Rhode Islanders and help them build power to win significant victories for our state's seniors and their caregivers. As we build our movement's membership and communicate our issues, our work and our victories, we will have become poised to attract increased funding from individuals, member organizations, and philanthropic sources.

V. Strategic GOALS 2020-2024

Senior Agenda Coalition’s strategic plan incorporates 28 strategic actions to achieve 8 goals, under three overarching pillars: ***Valuing the Contributions of Older Rhode Islanders, Increasing Supports for Aging in Community*** and ***Growing the Movement***

Pillar I. Valuing the Contributions of Older Rhode Islanders

GOAL 1 - Mobilizing the Power of Older Adults to reduce ageism and create a culture that recognizes the value, experiences and contributions of older Rhode Islanders.

Pillar II. Increasing Supports for Aging in Community

GOAL 2 - Accessing Information: Increase access to information for all older Rhode Islanders to support aging in community including housing supports/options, transportation services, healthcare and local engagement and socialization opportunities.

GOAL 3 – Increasing Housing Supports and Options: Expand options for older Rhode Islanders to age in their own homes or in affordable units in their community.

GOAL 4 – Improving Transportation Services: Increase access to dependable and affordable transportation services for older Rhode Islanders.

GOAL 5 – Enhancing Health Care: Increase supports for home and community--based healthcare services to serve more older Rhode Islanders in low and moderate-income households.

GOAL 6 – Reducing Isolation: Increase support for Senior Centers, Meals On Wheels, and other community services that reduce social isolation and provide intergenerational social engagement and volunteer opportunities for building social capital for aging in community.

Pillar III. Growing a Senior Movement

Goal 7 – Increasing Membership: Recruit individuals and partner agencies to garner 15% growth in new membership annually.

Goal 8 – Expanding Organizational Capacity: Create a growth plan for the Senior Agenda Coalition to increase staffing and operational resources to fulfill its strategic goals and mission.

VI. Strategic Actions

I. Valuing the Contributions of Older Rhode Islanders

GOAL 1. Senior Agenda Coalition will mobilize the power of older adults to reduce ageism and create a culture that recognizes the value, wisdom and contributions of older Rhode Islanders.		
Strategic Actions	Resources	Start Month
1. Convene regional Senior Agenda Coalition meetings throughout the state to identify and develop local issues and to recruit greater participation for statewide action and membership.	Exec Dir & Organizer	
2. Mobilize to amend the RI State Comprehensive Plan to include greater participation of older Rhode Islanders on policy-forming and planning groups throughout the state.	Exec Dir & Board	
3. Create a leadership academy to train older adults to serve in leadership roles in our community organizing efforts.	Exec Dir & Organizer	
4. Organize and collaborate with other agencies to provide community and statewide opportunities to address ageism and to empower older adults to improve the quality of life in the community.	Exec Dir & Board	
5. Collaborate with intergenerational groups to provide opportunities for seniors to contribute their experience, knowledge and wisdom .	Exec Dir & Board	

II. Increasing Supports for Aging in Community

GOAL 2 - Access to Information: Increase access to information for all older Rhode Islanders to support aging in community including home and community-based care options, housing supports, transportation services, health care and local engagement and socialization opportunities.		
Strategic Actions	Resources	Start Month
1. Advocate for thorough analysis of current United Way 211 and The Point information system to ensure access for all older adults, including those without Internet resources.	Exec Dir & Board	

2. Advocate for increased State funding for improvements in The Point including mass marketing and dissemination of information about its benefits to a diverse population of all older adults through various digital and non-electronic vehicles.	Exec Dir & Board	
3. Advocate for a continually updated, printed resource guide distributed to Senior Centers, libraries and promoted through Senior Agenda Coalition community outreach meetings.	Exec Dir & Organizer	

GOAL 3 - Housing Supports and Options: Increase options for older Rhode Islanders to age in their own homes or in affordable units in their community.

Strategic Actions	Resources	Start Month
1. Join with other collaborative partners to support affordable housing options policy.	Exec Dir & Organizer	
2. In partnership with housing coalitions, promote a set-aside in the State housing budget for older adult and special needs housing developments, and appointment of a State Housing Director to oversee these developments.	Exec Dir & Organizer	

GOAL 4 - Transportation Services: Increase access to dependable and affordable transportation services for older Rhode Islanders.

Strategic Actions	Resources	Start Month
1. Organize and advocate to ensure RI's Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) services meets the needs of Medicaid recipients.	Exec Dir & Organizer	
2. Review annually current initiatives for accessibility and affordability of transportation services for older adults in RI.	Exec Dir & Organizer	

GOAL 5 – Health Care: Increase supports for in-home health care and at adult day health programs to serve more older Rhode Islanders of low to moderate household income level.

Strategic Actions	Resources	Start Month
1. Organize and advocate support for expanding eligibility for cost-sharing home care programs.	Exec Dir & Organizer	
2. Work with partner agencies to create a plan for multi-year campaign to grow public state Medicaid resources.	Exec Dir & Organizer	

3. Advocate for increasing health care support for aging in community and to rebalance public funding from nursing home care to in-home and community-based alternative supports	Exec Dir & Organizer	
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GOAL 6 – Reducing Isolation: Increase support for Senior Centers, Meals On Wheels, and other community services that reduce social isolation and provide social engagement and volunteer opportunities for building social capital for aging in community.

Strategic Actions	Resources	Start Month
1. Promote intergenerational opportunities and activities with partner organizations to foster meaningful relationship and learning opportunities.	Exec Dir & Organizer	
2. Join with Senior Centers, Meals On Wheels, Library Outreach programs and other civic and faith-based organizations to promote legislation to increase state funding support for their outreach and engagement services.	Exec Dir	
3. Organize to enact specific legislation expanding support for outreach programs to reduce social isolation and support aging in community.	Exec Dir & Organizer	

III. Growing a Senior Movement

Goal 7 – Increase Membership: Recruit individuals and partner agencies to garner 15% growth in new membership annually.

Strategic Actions	Resources	Start Month
1. Create a communications and marketing plan for Senior Agenda Coalition to increase name recognition, brand identity and facilitate recruitment of membership.	Coms/Mktg expert & work group	
2. Articulate and market a value proposition to potential funders, individual and organizational members.	Board meeting	
3. Broaden the age-range of individual members to encourage inter-generational learning/sharing and participation of family caregivers.	FT Organizer	
4. Create an Issues Advisory Council (IAC) consisting of member-leaders representing regions of the state to advise Executive Director and Board of Directors of SAC on issue and campaign priorities.	Executive Director	

5. Organize regional meetings in communities throughout the State for membership development, recruitment and agenda-building.	FT Organizer	
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Goal 8 – Expanding Organizational Capacity: Create a growth plan for the Senior Agenda Coalition to increase staffing and operational resources to fulfill its strategic goals and mission.		
Strategic Actions	Resources	Start Month
1. Create multi-year financial plan and budget , to include a fund development plan inclusive of grants, business sponsorships, membership dues and donations, individual non-member donor contributions and annual events.	Development Expert & work group	
2. Build Board of Directors to increase ethnic/racial, geographic and age diversity ; Inventory Board skills/expertise and develop matrix of needed Board attributes to guide recruitment efforts.	Board/Exec. Dir.	
3. Strengthen Board fund development capacity utilizing personal/professional networks to reach prospective supporters of Senior Agenda Coalition.	Board/Exec. Dir.	
4. Provide Board leadership training to prepare members for representational/organizing work of Senior Agenda Coalition.	Board/Exec. Dir.	