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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **May 22, 2014**

FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture** FILE: **5000-01**  
**General Manager, Planning & Development**  
**Acting General Manager, Engineering**

SUBJECT: **Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors**

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department, Planning and Development Department and Engineering Department recommend Council:

1. receive this report as information; and
2. adopt the City of Surrey *Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors*, attached as Appendix I of this report.

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to present the City of Surrey, *Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors* for Council's consideration. The Strategy identifies a framework for an age-friendly city, including a vision, four defined outcome streams, and recommendations for actions. The City, community partners and stakeholders can reference the strategy to ensure that policies, programs and practices are consistent in promoting an age-friendly community for Surrey's Seniors.

## BACKGROUND

The Mayor's Task Force, *Focus on Seniors* was appointed 2008 in response to the City's Crime Reduction Strategy's goal of generating awareness and education about elder abuse and neglect. The task force was successful in bringing together community stakeholders, government representatives and city staff, and to date has hosted twenty-five community forums, in four languages, involving each of the City's town centres.

In 2011, the Focus on Seniors Task force was replaced with the *Seniors Advisory and Accessibility Committee of Council, (SAAC)*; the Committee has been actively engaged in the development of the Strategy. In 2012, the City received recognition and designation from the provincial government as an Age-friendly City.

In March 2012, Council authorized staff to proceed with the development of a City of Surrey Strategy for Seniors. Development of the City of Surrey Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors included the following activities:

### **Framework Development**

Members of the SAAC, City staff, and key stakeholders worked together to develop an Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors Framework. The Framework referenced the World Health Organization's *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide* and the Provincial Government's *Age-Friendly BC* guide.

### **Research**

Age-friendly policies and practices from other cities, such as Edmonton, Richmond, Mississauga and London Ontario were reviewed. Reports on age- friendly cities was considered including information from *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide* and *Seniors in the Lower Mainland: A Snapshot of Facts* to ensure Surrey's Strategy incorporates the best thinking and promising practices from other jurisdictions.

### **Consultation**

Consultation occurred with members of the public, interested stakeholders including members of SAAC Committee, community partners, provincial service agencies and with city staff from each department.

Input received from Seniors was extensive and occurred over a six month period. The city hosted a focus group of twelve senior representatives from across the city in partnership with Provincial Age-Friendly representatives. Using surveys input from seniors was solicited both on-line and in person. Over two hundred completed forms were received. Seniors also provided comments and recommendations via City Speaks and facilitated workshop sessions were hosted by city staff during the Seniors Conference in May 2013 and at the Focus on Seniors Forum in September 2013.

Staff from a number of City departments contributed to the development of the Strategy. The staff consultations focused on gathering information on current City of Surrey policies and programs that promote an age- friendly city, as well as eliciting staff ideas on additional actions that the City could take.

Representatives from community and government agencies concerned with seniors in Surrey were invited to participate in consultation workshops. The Fraser Health Authority, DIVERSEcity Community Resource Society, Options Community Services, Sources BC, Seniors Comeshare Society, BC Responsible Gambling and the Surrey Seniors Planning Table were all involved in the strategy development process.

Initial framework and strategy development were presented in May and June of 2013 to City of Surrey Mayor and Council, the Social Planning Advisory Committee, Parks, Recreation and Sport Tourism Committee and the Diversity Advisory Committee for information and comment.

### **DISCUSSION**

The draft City of Surrey Age- Friendly Strategy for Seniors is attached as Appendix I of this report. Key features include:

**Vision:** Surrey is an Age-Friendly City Where People Enjoy Lifelong Activity and Engagement

**Four Outcome Streams:** Safety, Health & Wellness  
Transportation and Mobility  
Home  
Buildings and Outdoor Spaces

**Strategies to Achieve Outcomes:**  
Programs and Services  
Engagement with Seniors  
Collaboration with Partners  
Communication and Promotion

### **Implementing the Strategy**

The Age-Friendly Strategy outlines recommended actions to either achieve or maintain features that support seniors to live active and engaged lives. Some recommendations are achievable in the short-term and others will require a longer time frame. The recommendations also acknowledge features and measures that are already in place and contributing to an age-friendly city.

The successful implementation of the Strategy will involve the continued commitment of Council and staff from multiple departments. The Strategy's recommendations include monitoring and evaluating the City's progress and responding to emerging issues related to seniors. The recommendations are:

- Report on an annual basis to Mayor and Council on the implementation of the Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors.
- Convene community stakeholders on an annual basis to reflect on the implementation of the Strategy and to identify any emerging issues or priorities.
- Prepare a Profile of Seniors in Surrey that includes demographic and other relevant information that will provide an evidence-base for policy and program development.
- Treat the Strategy as a "living document" and introduce new actions in response to new opportunities and emerging community issues identified by seniors, community stakeholders, and the City.

### **Budget Considerations**

Some of the recommendations of the Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors will be implemented using existing staff resources and budgets. Where additional funds are required, funding will be sought on a project-by-project basis through the annual budget process.

### **Policy and Plan considerations**

The Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors responds to a number of corporate plans and priorities and reflects a coordination of policies and practices in supporting an age-friendly community.

- **Sustainability Charter:** The *Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors* reflects one of the key themes of the Sustainability Charter that states Surrey is a city that "is responsive to the needs of seniors and people of all abilities". The strategy is also reflective of the Charter's Socio - Cultural goals of providing livable communities that are inclusive, accessible, and affordable.

- **Official Community Plan (OCP):** Diversity and affordability in housing, practices to actively engage with seniors, addressing and removing barriers (physical, economic and social), and supporting community safety and perceptions about safety are all identified as important focuses for seniors in the current draft of the OCP.
- **Plan for the Social Well-being of Surrey Residents (Social Plan):** Elder Abuse was identified as a priority issue in the Social Plan. The Plan recommended focused outreach and dissemination of information on elder abuse, especially to immigrant and ethnic communities.
- **Crime Reduction Strategy:** The Crime Reduction Strategy includes recommendations related to crime prevention through social development and the need to “prioritize actions to address the most vulnerable first”. The Age-Friendly Strategy responds to some of the “social and physical support” recommendations in the Crime Reduction Strategy’s “Prevent and Deter” Strand as well as the “Reality and Perceptions of Crime Strand”.

## SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors reflects SC5, “Adapting to Demographic Change” and SC 12, “Create a Fully Accessible City” of the City’s Sustainability Charter.

## CONCLUSION

Twelve percent of the current, overall population of Surrey are over the age of 65 years with higher concentrations living in certain areas and these numbers will continue to grow. An Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors confirms and formalizes the City of Surrey’s commitment to being a community in which all seniors have opportunities to feel safe and connected to their community. It will contribute to making Surrey a vibrant, caring and sustainable city.

The City of Surrey Age-Friendly Strategy was developed:

- with the expertise from across all departments, community stakeholders, other municipalities and academics;
- to reflect the current strengths, practices and assets of the City of Surrey; and
- with active engagement and participation of seniors.

It is recommended that Council adopt the City of Surrey Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors attached as Appendix I of this report.

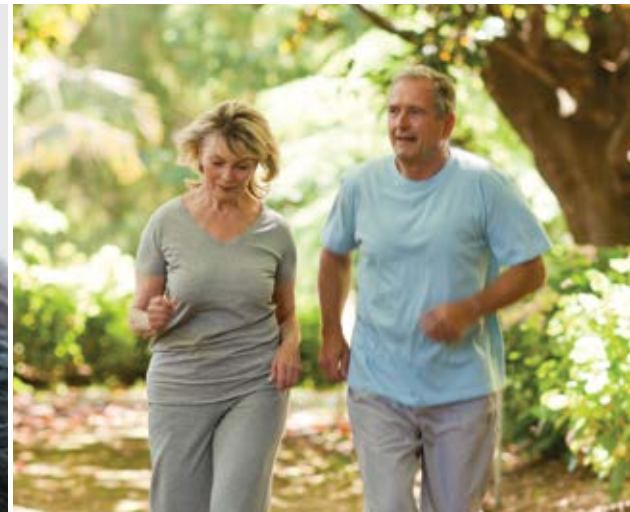
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## Appendix I - City of Surrey Age-Friendly Strategy

CITY OF SURREY  
SUPPORTING HEALTHY ACTIVE AGING



**AGE-FRIENDLY STRATEGY**  
FOR SENIORS





# **AGE-FRIENDLY STRATEGY**

## FOR SENIORS

# VISION

Surrey is an age-friendly city where people enjoy lifelong activity and engagement.

## Message from the Mayor



On behalf of Surrey City Council, I am pleased to present the Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors.

Seniors represent a very important and valued part of Surrey's community. They bring a wealth of skills, knowledge and experience that enriches the lives of all our residents. It is vitally important that they are empowered to be actively engaged in our community.

The City of Surrey Age-Friendly Strategy is a comprehensive plan that addresses the need for accessible places, services, resources and supports for seniors and their families. The City provides services for seniors in each town centre, supports age-friendly development and develops partnerships with not-for-profit and provincial partners to ensure that each of us are considering age-friendly features and partners in our work.

I am proud to support the City's Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors as a framework for working together to ensure seniors are supported and can remain actively engaged in our community.

Dianne L. Watts  
Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dianne L. Watts".

## Message from the Chair



As Chair of the Seniors Advisory and Accessibility Committee, I fully endorse the Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors as a guide to ensuring seniors and their families have access to adequate resources and services to assist them as they plan for their future.

Individuals, city staff, partner agencies, different levels of government, and families all play a role in sustaining an age-friendly city for seniors. This strategy acknowledges current age-friendly features and practices, and brings all of the stakeholders together to ensure a coordinated and effective approach to age-friendly planning.

I invite you to review this strategy to learn how we are working together to support our community of seniors.

Councillor Barbara Steele  
Chair of the Seniors Advisory and Accessibility Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barbara Steele".



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# Introduction



Surrey residents are generally living longer and the proportion of older adults in the total population is increasing. This demographic shift is not unique to Surrey, it is part of a national and a global phenomenon; population aging along with urbanization are the two major forces shaping the 21st century.

There has been a range of national and international responses to these trends, including the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide. The document identifies the elements needed in a community to support healthy and active aging. Adoption of the WHO model has occurred around the world and has been implemented by many communities in Canada.

The Surrey Seniors Advisory and Accessibility Committee launched the Surrey Age-Friendly Strategy as a means to hear from older adults and other key stakeholders about how to make Surrey a more age friendly community.

This document is the outcome of that consultation process. It has also been informed by the key elements of an age-friendly city which were developed by the WHO.

The Surrey Age-Friendly Strategy provides the key strategies and desired outcomes for developing an age-friendly community. The strategy was created through a multi-faceted consultation process and builds upon a suite of planning documents that together incorporate an integrated approach to addressing the needs of seniors throughout the city.

The Sustainability Charter and related plans such as the Crime Reduction Strategy, the Plan for Social Well Being, the Transportation Strategic Plan, Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Ten Year Strategic Plan, the New Walking Plan and the Greenways Master Plan, all contribute to the well-being of seniors in Surrey. Consistent themes emerge in all of these documents and emphasize the point that a community that meets the needs of seniors will in fact be a community that meets the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.

This becomes more evident when one compares some of the key actions from Surrey's Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy with the recommendations in this document. Developing walkable neighbourhoods, providing accessible green space, reducing the fear of crime, and ensuring regular opportunities for social interaction and community involvement emerge as priority actions in both documents.

### Promote a Society Where All Residents Feel a Sense of Belonging

Surrey will be a community where people have a strong sense of social connection, where volunteerism is widespread, and where there is pride in the community and a high level of citizen engagement. Surrey will be inclusive of persons of different ages, cultures, abilities, religions, backgrounds and lifestyles. It will be designed to be child, youth and senior friendly and accessible to those with special needs.

*From The Surrey Sustainability Charter (2008)*



An age-friendly city encourages active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.

In practical terms, an age-friendly city adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.

*From The WHO's Global Age Friendly Communities: A Guide (2007)*

## ■ ■ A Profile of Surrey Seniors

This section presents some key data about seniors in Surrey. The information provides a contextual background for public consultation stakeholder input and is helpful for developing an Age-Friendly Strategy that meets the needs of seniors in Surrey.



## Number and percentage of seniors in Surrey (2011)

In 2011, 62,100 seniors were living in Surrey (people aged 65 and older) which represents 12.6% of the municipality's total population of 493,200. This is an increase of 30,700 seniors since 1991. Along with Vancouver, Surrey saw the largest increase in the number of seniors in Metro Vancouver municipalities between 1991 and 2011.

What makes a community successful? One important measure is how well it meets the needs of its citizens in all stages of their lives. Is it safe? Affordable? Walkable? Healthy? Inclusive? Is it a great place to grow up and grow old? In short, is it "age-friendly?"

*Age-friendly communities ; the movement to create great places to grow up and grow old in America (2013)*

Table 1: Number and percentage of seniors, by municipality, 1991, 2001, and 2011

	1991			2001			2011			2021 (projected)		
	Total Pop.	Seniors	%	Total Pop.	Seniors	%	Total Pop.	Seniors	%	Total Pop.	Seniors	%
<b>BC</b>	3,374,000	428,000	12.7%	4,076,000	539,000	13.2%	4,577,000	701,000	15.3%	5,164,000	1,040,000	20.1%
<b>Metro Vancouver</b>	1,647,500	198,100	12.0%	2,092,900	245,400	11.7%	2,406,200	316,200	13.1%	2,783,500	485,100	17.4%
<b>Surrey</b>	269,000	31,400	11.7%	387,800	43,900	11.3%	493,200	62,100	12.6%	594,500	101,700	17.1%

Source: Estimates - Statistics Canada, Projections - BC Stats, April 2013

Note: All figures are as of July 1st of the year stated



### **Small solutions can make a big difference**

Lack of public toilets is often mentioned as a key barrier to social participation in consultations with older people. New York City is running an age-friendly business project where participating local businesses give access to their toilets to older people, as well as providing chairs to rest.

*Guardian Professional, Saturday 20 October 2012 Top tips: creating an age-friendly city. What do age-friendly cities look like, and what can your local authority do to create a welcoming space. Kate McCann*

### **Areas with the highest proportions of seniors**

In 2011, seniors comprised more than 10% of the population of most census tracts in Metro Vancouver (344 of 455).

Comparatively, seniors comprise more than 30% of the population in many census tracts in South Surrey.

## Number and percentage of seniors living alone in Surrey

In 2011, 18.1% of the seniors' population (9,680) in Surrey lived alone. This rate was significantly lower than the regional rate of seniors living alone which was 24.7%.

	2001			2006			2011		
	#of Seniors	#of Seniors living alone	% of Seniors living alone	#of Seniors	#of Seniors living alone	% of Seniors living alone	#of Seniors	#of Seniors living alone	% of Seniors living alone
<b>BC</b>	503,625	143,390	28.5%	566,135	154,750	27.3%	643,415	165,365	25.7%
<b>Metro Vancouver</b>	227,890	63,100	27.7%	256,655	68,145	26.6%	293,195	72,370	24.7%
<b>Surrey</b>	36,290	8,050	22.2%	43,425	9,000	20.7%	53,505	9,680	18.1%

Source: Seniors in the Lower Mainland: A Snapshot of Facts & Trends March 2013

## Number of senior immigrants coming to Surrey (2000-2010)

Between 2000 and 2010 Metro Vancouver received 10,600 new senior immigrants, of which, Surrey received the second highest number of immigrants, (2,105). Vancouver received the highest number (3,345).

	2000-2010 # of senior immigrants
<b>British Columbia</b>	12,620
<b>Metro Vancouver</b>	10,600
<b>Surrey</b>	2,105

Source: Seniors in the Lower Mainland: A Snapshot of Facts & Trends March 2013

## Number and percentage of seniors who could not speak English (2011)

In 2011, approximately 9,630 seniors in Surrey did not speak English, representing 17% of Surrey's senior population. This is greater than the Metro Vancouver average, where 15% (44,785) of seniors could not speak English.

	2011 # of seniors who could not speak English	2011 % of seniors who could not speak English
<b>Metro Vancouver</b>	44,785	15%
<b>Surrey</b>	9,630	17%

Source: Seniors in the Lower Mainland: A Snapshot of Facts & Trends March 2013



### Ratio of services to seniors in Surrey (2007)

In 2008, United Way of the Lower Mainland compared the number of seniors in each municipality in the Lower Mainland with the available services listed for seniors in that municipality. While Surrey/White Rock had 18.8% of the seniors' population, the municipalities only had 11.6% of the seniors' services.

	Number of services listed in 2007	% Share of total services in 2007	Number of seniors in 2007	% share of total seniors' population
<b>Lower Mainland/Sea to Sky</b>	189	100%	280,304	100%
<b>Surrey/White Rock</b>	22	11.6%	52,747	18.8%
<b>Vancouver</b>	85	45%	77,297	27.6%

Source: Moving Towards Age-Friendly Communities

### Number of seniors with activity limitations by age (2006)

In 2006, 10,940 (45%) seniors aged 65 – 74 in Surrey had activity limitations. For seniors aged 75 and older the rate of those with activity limitations rose to 12,625 (66.1%).

	65-74 years		75 years+		Seniors	
	Total	With activity limitations	Total	With activity limitations	Total	With activity limitations
<b>BC</b>	308,580	135,200 (44%)	257,555	172,960 (67%)	566,135	308,160 (54%)
<b>Metro Vancouver</b>	139,265	58,040 (41.7%)	117,395	77,165 (65.7%)	256,660	135,205 (53%)
<b>Surrey</b>	24,330	10,940 (45%)	19,095	12,625 (66.1%)	43,425	23,565 (54.3%)

Source: Seniors in the Lower Mainland: A Snapshot of Facts & Trends March 2013



# City of Surrey – Age-Friendly City Framework

Surrey’s Age-Friendly Strategy is based on the following key features which have been adapted from the World Health Organization’s work on Global Age-Friendly Cities.



1. Outdoor spaces and public buildings are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.
2. Public transportation is accessible and affordable.
3. Housing is affordable, appropriately located, well built, well designed and secure.
4. Opportunities exist for social participation in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities with people of all ages and cultures.
5. Older people are treated with respect and are included in civic life.
6. Opportunities exist for employment and volunteerism.
7. Age-friendly communication and information is available.
8. Community support and health services are tailored to older persons’ needs.

## Framework

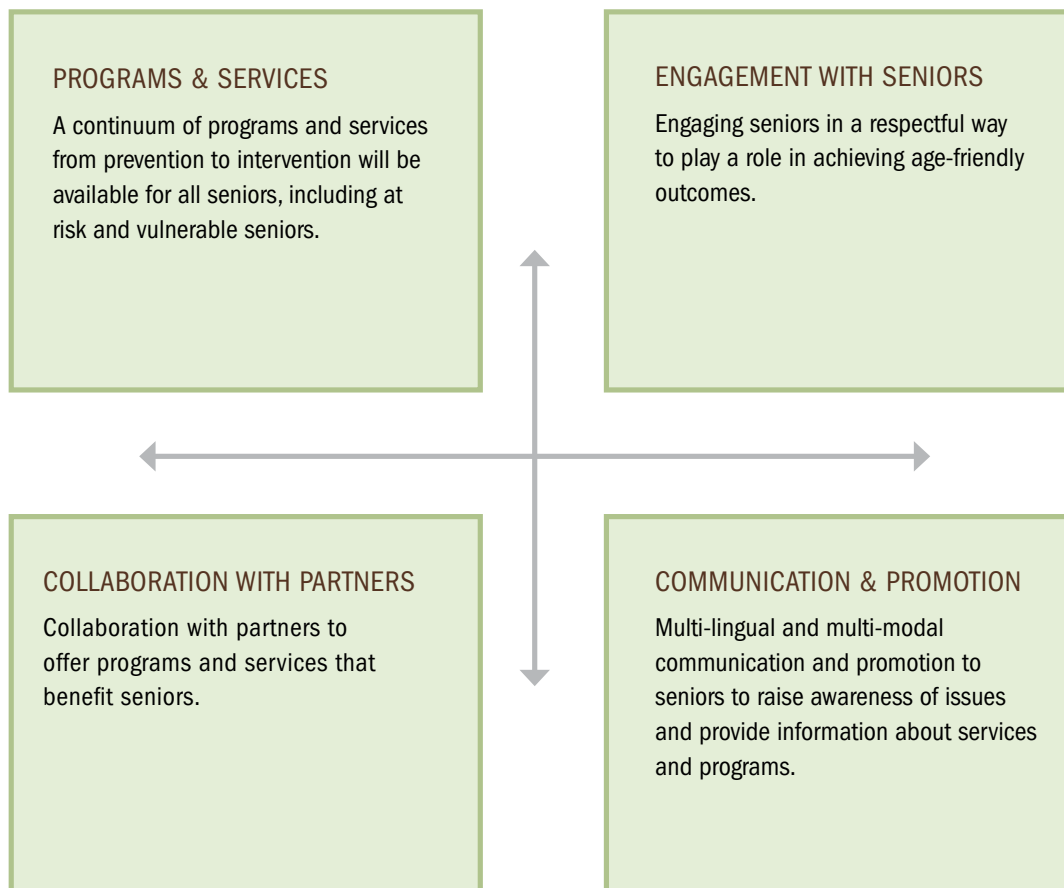
The following framework for the Age-Friendly Strategy for Surrey was initially developed with significant input from the Seniors Advisory and Accessibility Committee (SAAC). It was then presented and revised through a comprehensive consultation process, as outlined further in this report. The Framework provides the basis for the Age-Friendly Strategy for Surrey. It contains the vision and four main anticipated outcomes related to safety, health and wellness, transportation and mobility, home, and building and outdoor spaces.

# Age-Friendly Strategy Framework



# Strategies to achieve outcomes

The stated outcomes related to the Age-Friendly Strategy will be achieved using four strategic areas of focus.



# Guiding Principles

The Age-Friendly Strategy is based upon these guiding principles.



# Roles of the City

The Age-Friendly Strategy is broken down into these four roles:

## Advocacy

- Advocate for seniors at the provincial level of government.
- Run awareness campaigns on seniors issues.
- Provide education and support for families and caregivers about aging.
- Organizations provide leadership on specific issues re: health, wellness, and safety.
- Promote value of seniors and how they contribute to the community.

## Policy

- Balance service delivery with community development approaches.
- Connect the Age-Friendly Strategy to the Crime Reduction Strategy, Plan for Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents, Sustainability Charter, and Transportation Strategic Plan.
- Provide leadership on specific issues re: health, wellness, and safety.

## Partnering

- Work with others to source and leverage funding.
- Network between departments, cities and corporate stakeholders.
- Engage with seniors and seniors' organizations.
- Identify partnership opportunities - families, private funders, faith based and cultural organizations, service providers, emergency services, educational institutions, local health authority, and non-profit agencies.

## Service Delivery

- Provide spaces and infrastructure (buildings and outdoor spaces) to be active and engage with others.
- Train staff appropriately to recognize and respond to elder abuse and neglect.
- Provide low cost and no cost educational and participatory opportunities.
- Engage with seniors about programs and services that they want.

# ■ ■ Consultation Process

The consultation process for the development of the Age-Friendly City Strategy was initiated in April 2013 and included a series of focus groups with key stakeholder groups, presentations, and a survey administered on-line and in-person at key locations in the community. City staff have also been included in the consultation to ensure that the Age-Friendly Strategy is well informed by a cross-section of disciplines and sectors represented by staff.

## Focus Groups

In the course of the consultation process, focus groups were held with the following committees to gather input on the Age-Friendly Framework and Strategy:

- Seniors' Advisory and Accessibility Committee of Council
- Surrey Seniors Planning Table, funded by United Way
- Diversity Committee of Council
- Healthy Communities Committee of Council
- Social Policy Advisory Committee of Council

Input from a consultation session with senior residents of Surrey entitled "Age-Friendly BC Evaluation What We Heard – Surrey" held on January 23, 2013, was also included because the input collected during the session is quite relevant to the outcomes of the Age-Friendly Strategy.

## Survey

The survey was developed to collect input about the outcome areas from the general seniors population. The survey was posted online on both the City and Library websites including the City Speaks site from April 22 – June 21, 2013. Hard copies of the survey were available at all community centres and libraries, and it was translated into Punjabi and Arabic. It was also distributed at the Aging in Place Conference held on May 31, 2013. 221 survey responses have been received.

## Presentations

The draft framework for the Age-Friendly Strategy was presented at the following venues during the consultation process:

- Surrey City Council, May 6, 2013
- City Aging in Place Conference May 31, 2013
- Focus On Seniors Forum, September 21, 2013

## Staff Input

Input from a cross section of Surrey staff was gathered through a series of interviews with the following departments and divisions:

- Surrey Fire Services
- RCMP
- Libraries
- Planning and Development
- Social Planning
- Engineering
- Legislative Services
- Human Resources
- Heritage Services
- Parks, Recreation and Culture



# Framework Development

Members and agency representatives of Seniors Advisory and Accessibility Committee worked to define the vision and frame work for the Age-Friendly Strategy for Seniors.

## CITY OF SURREY SENIORS ADVISORY AND ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE

- DIVERSEcity
- Seniors Comeshare Society
- Fraser Health Authority - Adult Abuse and Neglect
- BC Securities Commission
- Options Community Services Society
- Sources Community Resources Society
- BC Responsible Gambling
- Council of Senior Citizens Organizations
- Surrey Seniors Planning Table
- BC Centre for Elder Advocacy and Support
- Surrey Fire Service
- RCMP Crime Prevention
- RCMP Community Safety
- Surrey Parks, Recreation and Culture
- Surrey Public Libraries



# Recommendations for Achieving Each Outcome

The consultation process sought out input on how each outcome could be achieved. Each of the four following sections provide a recommendation of the input that was gathered through this process and actions to achieve desired outcomes.

## KEY OUTCOMES

### **SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Seniors are supported to be active and engaged in their community and engagement practices are in place to prevent isolation.

### **TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY**

Seniors have a range of safe, convenient and affordable transportation options.

### **HOME**

Seniors have access to affordable and appropriate housing and supports necessary to remain as independent as possible.

### **BUILDINGS & OUTDOOR SPACES**

Public places, outdoor spaces, and buildings are designed to be welcoming, safe and accessible.

# SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Seniors are supported to be active and engaged in their community and engagement practices are in place to prevent isolation.

- Neighbourhoods matter: focusing on neighbourhood engagement models will help create new, and strengthen existing relationships between the resident and the community
- Build and support connections with people and services
- Support outreach strategies to connect with seniors in the community
- Remove barriers to participation - provide opportunities that respond to diversity of needs and abilities
- Support safety education, crime prevention and early intervention programs to foster inclusion and to prevent isolation

**Neighbourhoods Matter: Focusing on neighbourhood engagement models will help create new, and strengthen existing relationships between the resident and the community**

- › Create and facilitate the development of networks, relationships and connectedness.
- › Ensure that there are opportunities for activity and social interactions e.g. parks, and services that seniors can access within walking distance of homes.
- › Examine schools as neighbourhood resources – can they be used for addressing the need for social spaces.

**Build and Support Connections with People and Services**

- › Support multi-generational family connections and programs. Family events encourage extended families to come together – increasing multi-generational family time with grandparents, parents and children. Balance seniors' only programming options with options that are intentionally inter-generational.
- › Build a range of educational opportunities, for example, in Community Learning Centres, libraries, recreation centres, etc.; build on the existing Library programs (computer training, adaptive technology, etc.)
- › Design innovative programs with opportunities for seniors to develop new relationships and skills.

- › Develop relationships with different services on the continuum of health care relating to wellness and optimizing health. For example, collaborate with the Fraser Health Authority to provide healthy programs in Recreation Centres.
- › Build on the Seniors' Connector Resource and Referral Services. Consider neighbourhood based seniors advocates that can speak to local seniors issues.

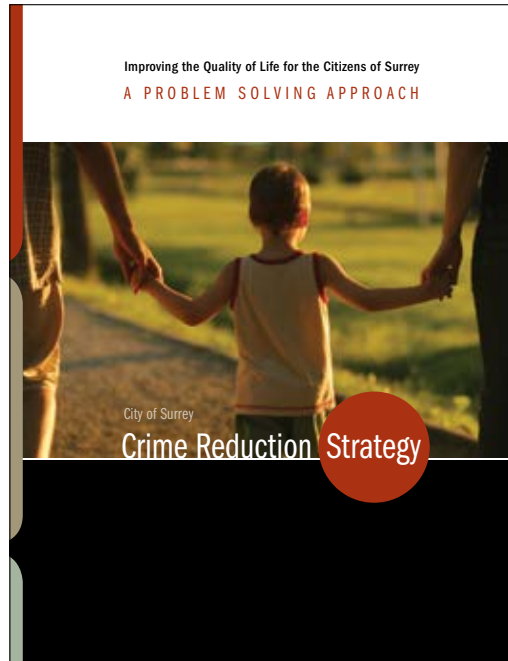
**Support outreach strategies to connect with seniors in the community**

- › Use appropriate media channels (TV, radio,) and social media to promote messages about safety, health and wellness.
- › Outreach and connection to isolated seniors using established services such as: Surrey Fire Services, Home Safe Program, Libraries, delivery of reading materials, Red Cross equipment loan and United Way Better at Home initiative.



**Remove Barriers to Participation – Provide Opportunities that Respond to Diversity of Needs and Abilities**

- › Ensure affordable, low cost programming options (formal & informal gatherings) are available, especially for fitness and social programs (eg. music, food, etc.)
- › Ensure language and culture specific supports are made available for communication and participation.
- › Identify sub groups who might face barriers to participation and develop specific strategies (eg. Immigrant/newcomers, seniors with disabilities, specific health issues).
- › Consider transportation when planning activities (build on existing mobile program).
- › Provide one-on-one support when new people or isolated seniors come out to events or activities.
- › Promote book clubs, volunteer reading buddies, computer training, brain gyms, and online services for seniors.
- › Focus on contributions to heritage and history – share stories of the past; celebrate stories and heritage.
- › Provide opportunities (space & support) for peer support groups to form around common issues.



**Support Safety Education, Crime Prevention, Fire Safety and Early Intervention Programs to Foster Inclusion and Prevention Isolation**

- › Build on the work of the Seniors Advisory and Accessibility Committee to promote safety and reduce isolation from a crime prevention perspective.
- › Continue to support education and awareness about seniors issues, specifically elder abuse and neglect.
- › Partner with college of physicians for in home screening.

**Explore an enhanced role with RCMP & Surrey Fire Services in the areas of outreach to:**

- › Identify isolated seniors.
- › Education of general members.
- › Firefighters who reach isolated seniors - help them to recognize and respond.
- › Victim Services staff can provide assessments.
- › Build on existing programs such as: Car 67 program - RCMP/Fraser Health partnership to provide on-site assessment and response; Seniors Connectors and HomeSafe program.

# TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Seniors have a range of safe, convenient and affordable transportation options.

- Improve public transit by advocating and collaborating with Translink
- Promote walking, cycling, and wheeling - continue to upgrade accessibility and safety (eg: crosswalks, bike lanes)
- Support older drivers with improved infrastructure and education
- Promote door to door transportation options
- Increase awareness of transportation options for seniors

## Improve public transit

The transit system, which includes both conventional buses as well as HandyDART, offers mobility to all residents and allows older residents to remain independent. For trips outside their neighbourhood, public transit is the only alternative to asking for a ride for many older non-drivers. Currently there are more than 45 transit routes in Surrey; however, some areas are better served by transit than others. The City's Sustainability Charter, Official Community Plan and Transportation Strategic Plan advocate for the expansion of transit services in order to provide better accessibility to health services, recreation, jobs, and education for all. The following actions are specific areas where the City has a role in improving transit:

- › Increase the number of accessible bus stops in Surrey in partnership with TransLink and CMBC, including sidewalk connections to and from bus stops.
- › Continue to install shelters and seating at bus stops as part of our annual bus shelter program.
- › Collaborate with TransLink, RCMP and other partner organizations to address transit-related safety concerns.
- › Continue to advocate for improved transit services in Surrey and work with TransLink to ensure that the best possible level of service is provided.
- › Actively participate in funding discussions with TransLink and the provincial and federal governments to ensure full implementation of the South of Fraser Area Transit Plan.
- › Collaborate with TransLink and Coast Mountain Bus Company to identifying additional bus stops.

## Promote walking, cycling and wheeling to neighbourhood destinations

Staying active is one of the most important ways to maintain physical and mental health for seniors. Providing safe, connected and accessible networks of walking and cycling routes is a fundamental role of the City. The City has in place a number of comprehensive policies within the Walking Plan, Cycling Plan and Greenways Plan. There are a range of specifications to improve opportunities for active transportation and promote walking as a viable alternative to the car, including creating a pedestrian environment that is safe, accessible and interesting. Although there are very many initiatives to support active modes of transportation, the key actions are to:

- › Ensure the application of the City's updated street design standards, which provide for wider, accessible sidewalks, international standards for bicycle lanes and enhanced boulevards to increase the separation between traffic and pedestrians and allow larger street trees.
- › Improve pedestrian safety and comfort through the use of traffic signals, safe street crossings and traffic calming features, where warranted.
- › Continue to install countdown timers for the pedestrian crossing phase at all signalized intersections. Review intersection crossing times and consider providing longer walk times in appropriate locations, i.e. where there is a higher number of elderly residents and/or seniors' facilities.
- › Continue to expand the cycling network including bike lanes, designated bike routes and multi-use pathways.
- › Review City by-laws to see whether they accommodate personal mobility devices in pedestrian environments such as sidewalks and multi-use pathways.
- › Develop a Safe Mobility Plan, which identifies actions for improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists, including seniors who are disproportionately affected by collisions.



The City of Surrey Transportation Strategic Plan recognizes that seniors need access to a full range of transportation options enabling them to go where they want, when they want, to continue to live full and active lives.

## Support older drivers

Driving remains a very important means of making social connections, getting to appointments or accessing services for many seniors, and the City, through its design standards, management of the road systems and relationships with road safety organizations can help ensure that getting around Surrey by car is safe and comfortable. In terms of supporting older drivers, some of the key actions are to:

- Continue to replace street name plates with signs that have larger font sizes.
- Identify opportunities to reduce the number of serious collisions through the development of the Safe Mobility Plan and improve road safety for drivers of all ages.
- Promote “Living Well, Driving Well” workshops for seniors, offered by BCAA.
- Raise awareness of the Parking Permit Program for People with Disabilities, offered by the Social Planning and Research Council (SPARC) of BC.

## Promote door to door transportation options

Door-to-door transportation options such as HandyDART, volunteer driving programs, and specialized transportation services respond to special mobility needs and often provide personal, “hands on” assistance such as help with entering destinations buildings. Seniors over the age of 85 are more likely to use these types of services.<sup>1</sup>

- Promote TransLink’s HandyDART and TaxiSaver programs through the City’s website.
- Provide information on community-based volunteer driving programs.

## Increase awareness of transportation options for seniors

Finally, the City can also play a role in terms of providing information on seniors’ issues such as transportation, by providing links to useful resources and connecting seniors and their families with service providers. Specifically, the City can:

- Provide information about seniors’ services and other resources on the City of Surrey website, including transportation options within the City.

<sup>1</sup>Statistics Canada. (2012). Profile of seniors’ transportation habits. Retrieved from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2012001/article/11619-3ng.htm>

Many of the changes that work for older people, such as walkable streets, accessible housing, better community health, and more volunteerism, benefit people of all ages.

Age-Friendly Communities:

The Movement To Create Great Places To Grow Up And Grow Old In America An Introduction For Private And Public Funders APRIL 2013 <http://www.giaging.org/documents/>





# HOME

Seniors have access to affordable and appropriate housing, and supports necessary to remain as independent as possible.

- Provide a diversity of housing types in Surrey's six communities
- Support Seniors to live independently in their own homes
- Ensure a sufficient supply of high quality supportive housing, assisted living and residential care beds
- Ensure low-income seniors live in housing that is affordable and adequate
- Address the needs of homeless seniors
- Improve access to information on seniors' housing, care and support services

The housing needs and preferences of seniors are diverse. Age, health, income, and culture are some of the factors that influence housing choices.

## Provide a diversity of housing types in Surrey's six communities

Approximately 63% of Surrey seniors live in a single-family house, while 20% live in an apartment. Most seniors own their own homes; 16% are renters as compared to 27% of Surrey's population as a whole.\* A diverse housing stock in all areas of the City provides Surrey residents with housing options as they age.

The City of Surrey's Official Community Plan, as well as Neighbourhood Concept Plans, supports the development of a range of housing types to meet the needs of Surrey residents at all stages of life.

\*(Source: 2011 census)

- › Continue to support policies and land use plans that encourage the development of multi-family housing in all of Surrey's communities.
- › Support a diversity of housing forms and innovative models that support seniors housing preferences including living with extended family, seniors' (55+ years) housing complexes or other housing arrangements. For example co-housing is a Danish model in which residents usually own their individual homes, which are clustered around a "common house" with shared amenities such as a kitchen, dining room and other communal spaces.

## Support seniors to live independently in their own homes

Most seniors wish to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. For some seniors, health problems and/or physical limitations make it challenging to remain at home. Accessible housing, at-home and community health care services, and assistance with day-to-day tasks, provide seniors with the supports necessary to continue to live independently in their own home.

- › Explore policy and regulatory options that support the development of housing units/features that make housing accessible for people with physical limitations. Consider making the development of adaptable housing units mandatory in multi-family apartment/condominium buildings.
- › Work in partnership with the Fraser Health Authority to ensure that provincial “Home is Best” health funding responds to demographic changes and population growth such that seniors in Surrey have access to adequate levels of at-home and community health services.
- › Advocate for the continuation/expansion of provincial programs such as “Better at Home” that support seniors with day-to-day household tasks and transportation. (Better at Home is provided through a partnership between the Province of BC, United Way and local agencies). Encourage other, and new initiatives that support seniors in living independently and staying connected to the community.
- › Work with other government and community agency partners to ensure that seniors’ health and support programs respond to the unique ethno-cultural needs of seniors in Surrey.



## Ensure that there is a sufficient supply of high quality supportive housing, assisted living and residential care beds

The majority of seniors live in their own homes; however, approximately 7% of Surrey seniors live in facilities that specialize in care for seniors including supportive housing, assisted living and residential care facilities. Surrey's housing stock includes: 2,475 care beds (2,097 of these are public beds); 508 assisted living beds (320 of these are public beds); and at least 700 or more supported housing units (95 of these are publicly funded).

- › Advocate for continued provincial funding for supported housing, assisted living, and residential care to meet the demand as Surrey's seniors' population continues to grow.
- › Advocate for provincial/health authority funding for a culturally sensitive care facility to support Surrey's large South Asian seniors' population.
- › Support the development of new seniors' supportive housing, assisted living and residential care facilities through planning support such as expediting the planning process and providing reductions in parking (where appropriate).

## Ensure low-income seniors live in housing that is affordable and adequate

The 2011 Census found that 6,505 or 12% of Surrey's seniors were considered to be in low income after tax (LIM-AT), slightly less than the Metro Vancouver average of 16%. Low income seniors are more prevalent in neighbourhoods such as the City Centre, where 39% of seniors are LIM-AT. Many low income seniors' households are renters; and 44% of senior-led renter households are considered to be in core housing need (paying more than 30% of income on rent).

BC Housing's Shelter Aid For Elderly Renters (SAFER) program provides low and moderate income seniors with monthly cash payments to subsidize their rent. In December 2013, 1,421 Surrey senior households received rent subsidies through the SAFER program.

Surrey has approximately 1,000 non-market or social housing units for low income seniors. These units are rent geared to income, meaning that residents pay 30% of income to rent. In March 2013, there were close to 250 Surrey households on the waiting list for seniors' social housing.

In 2012, the City of Surrey adopted THIS is How We End Poverty in Surrey: Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan. The Plan provides a comprehensive set of recommendations in the areas of transportation, housing, income and support to move toward the eradication of poverty for all Surrey residents, including seniors.

- › Continue to work with the Surrey Poverty Coalition to implement the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan.
- › Continue to advocate for a national housing strategy.
- › Support policies and regulations that increase and maintain the supply of private market rental housing.
- › Continue to advocate to the provincial government for amendments to the *Residential Tenancy Act* that will increase the effectiveness and accessibility of the residential tenancy dispute resolution process such that decisions or orders are enforced.

### Address the Needs of Homeless Seniors

Homeless service providers and Surrey Memorial Hospital staff report an increasing number of older people (50+ years) who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness in Surrey. Many of these seniors have significant health issues resulting from many years of poverty and homelessness.

In 2013, the City of Surrey adopted the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey. The Plan identifies priorities for long-term housing and support services for people who are homeless or at-risk, including seniors.

- › Continue to implement the recommendations of the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey.
- › Continue to partner with provincial and federal agencies, and regional and local committees to monitor emerging needs and issues, and advocate for solutions to homelessness among older people in Surrey.

### Improve access to information on seniors' housing, care and support services

Often seniors and their families are not aware of the housing services and supports that are available in Surrey.

In 2013, Surrey Libraries developed Low Cost and Free – a brochure series that lists resources and services available to Surrey residents. The City of Surrey's website hosts an interactive map of the resources, searchable by seniors' specific services. Low Cost and Free includes a list of housing resources.

- › Continue to promote and update the Low Cost and Free brochures and website.
- › Raise awareness about housing and support services and programs available for seniors in Surrey.



# BUILDINGS AND OUTDOOR SPACES

Public places, outdoor spaces and buildings are designed to be welcoming, safe and accessible

- Ensure buildings and outdoor spaces are accessible for seniors of all abilities
- Provide parks and outdoor spaces that support healthy and active living
- Provide public places that support social connections and gatherings
- Design public places based on the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles

## Ensure buildings and outdoor spaces are accessible to seniors of all abilities

Public places should be designed to be inclusive spaces that encourage activity and foster social connections. Accessible spaces give older adults a venue in which to lead healthy, active, and social lives. Simple considerations in the built environment can make places welcoming and accessible to people at all stages of life.

- › Use universal design principles to incorporate accessibility into all new civic buildings and facilities, including associated outdoor spaces such as walkways, plazas and parking lots. Continue to upgrade existing public infrastructure to current accessibility standards.
- › Ensure the accessibility of private services and amenities by applying principles of Universal Design at the site and building level.
- › Install benches in public places such as in parks and along trails and streets, providing resting places for people.
- › Use surface materials that allow for universal accessibility and reduce the risk of falls among seniors.

## Provide parks and outdoor spaces that support healthy and active living

The City of Surrey has more than 200 parks, providing diverse opportunities for residents to maintain healthy and active lives. The City's expansive network of trails, bike lanes and greenways offer active transportation options to residents of all ages and abilities.

- › Use the "Universal Design Checklist for Surrey Parks" during the design stage to ensure that new projects provide accessible experiences for all park users.
- › Develop an inventory of age-friendly parks, greenways and other public places, and make the list available on the City's website.
- › Continue to provide residents with access to natural areas by encouraging the construction of universal access/barrier free trails whenever possible.
- › Preserve and increase the City's tree canopy by providing treed boulevards where feasible and by protecting and retaining significant trees within neighbourhoods.
- › Engage seniors when planning and designing new neighbourhood and community level parks, ensuring that parks are designed to provide amenities for all age groups.



## Provide public places that support social connections and gatherings

**Social connections and sense of belonging are important components of healthy and happy living. The building and outdoor spaces can be designed to promote social connections between people of all ages.**

- › Incorporate spaces that facilitate informal gathering in the design of new civic facilities and outdoor spaces.
- › Support neighbourhood design and community building initiatives that bring people together in public places (e.g. places where seniors can play chess or practice tai-chi).

## Design public places based on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) Principles

**CPTED is an approach to planning and development that reduces the incidence and fear of crime through modifications to the physical environment. Examples of CPTED include improved lighting, tree pruning to improve natural surveillance, and maintenance such as graffiti removal.**

- › Incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles and practices into the review of all development applications and at the design stage of all civic facilities to create places that are inviting and safe.

# EXAMPLES OF CURRENT AGE-FRIENDLY FOR SENIORS PRACTICES

The following examples are just some of the age-friendly services and programs that are happening in your city.

## Focus on Seniors Forums

Members of the Seniors Advisory and Accessibility Committee, including city staff, community partners and government service agencies have host twenty-five community forums about elder abuse and neglect. The forums help seniors and their families understand what elder abuse and neglect is, how to recognize it and how to plan to prevent it. The forums have been produced in English, Punjabi, Mandarin and Korean.

## Senior Connector

A partnership with the Seniors Comeshare Society, the Seniors Connector resource and referral service is available at community, recreation or senior centres in each of the city's town centres. Trained volunteers are available to assist seniors or family members access information about any service or support that may be required.

## Sidewalks

The city supports a comprehensive sidewalk development program to help make walking safe and convenient, and to promote walking – to school, to the bus stop, and around the city.

## Bus Stops

The city continues to work with CMBC to improve accessibility at bus stops. Currently 75% of the city's bus stops are accessible.

## Surrey Fire Service Homesafe

Program is designed to keep Surrey safe from potential fires. Firefighters will schedule a free in home inspection of your private residence and provide recommendations to improve fire safety.



**Age-friendly community initiatives can include any of the following:**

- Municipal and regional planning, with an emphasis on community and older adult input;
- Housing and other building design, particularly affordable, adaptive/ accessible housing and multi-generational options;
- Social services, including meal delivery, adult day programs, and caregiver support;
- Transportation projects, including increased public transit and free or reduced-cost taxis and other rides, and promoting walkability and accessibility;
- Health promotion, including community activities to enhance wellness and greater access to health, mental health, and home health care;
- Civic engagement efforts, including intergenerational initiatives and opportunities for meaningful volunteering and paid work, and
- Efforts to promote access to information, including an effective communication system reaching community residents of all ages.

**Age-Friendly Communities**

*The Movement To Create Great Places To Grow Up And Grow Old In America : An Introduction For Private And Public Funders*

*Created for Community AGEnda, A program of Grantmakers In Aging, APRIL 2013 \_Primer.pdf*





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Where does your city rank? Milken Institute analyzes 359 metros to identify “Best Cities for Successful Aging. Milken Institute: Best Cities for Successful Aging <http://successfulaging.milkeninstitute.org/bcsa.taf?page=press-release>

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