AGE FRIENDLY STRATEGY
FOR SENIORS

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VISION

Surrey is an age friendly city where people enjoy lifelong activity and engagement.
Message from the Mayor

Surrey’s growing community of seniors have an important role in shaping our city. Combined with insightful wisdom and a strong spirit of service, we appreciate the wealth of skills, knowledge and experience that seniors contribute to our community. Surrey City Council adopted the Age Friendly Strategy for Seniors to create a city where people can enjoy being actively engaged for life. The Age Friendly Strategy provides a clear path forward for ensuring Surrey’s seniors are active and fully engaged by focusing on four key outcomes:

- Safety, Health and Wellness
- Transportation and Mobility
- Home
- Buildings and Outdoor Spaces

As we shape our city’s future, our continued strength as our City depends on our sense of community – and every effort is made to include the participation of residents from all walks of life and of all ages. Through City initiatives we will continue to provide opportunities to support healthy active aging and to engage in the community.

As a designated Age Friendly Community, we are proud to support healthy active aging through advocacy, policy development, partnerships and service delivery. I am proud of our Age Friendly Strategy and invite you to see how the City of Surrey is supporting its community of seniors.

Linda Hepner
Mayor

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
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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 for Seniors 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 for Seniors 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 Public Safety Strategy, Plan for the Social Well Being of Surrey Residents, 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)
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Pop.</td>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Total Pop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>3,374,000</td>
<td>428,000</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>4,076,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Vancouver</td>
<td>1,647,500</td>
<td>198,100</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>2,082,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>269,000</td>
<td>31,400</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>387,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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%.

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

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).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># of senior immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000-2010</td>
<td>12,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Vancouver</td>
<td>10,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>2,105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># of seniors who could not speak English</th>
<th>% of seniors who could not speak English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Metro Vancouver 44,785</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surrey 9,630</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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

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%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>65-74 years</th>
<th>75 years+</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>With activity limitations</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>308,580</td>
<td>135,200 (44%)</td>
<td>257,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Vancouver</td>
<td>139,265</td>
<td>58,040 (41.7%)</td>
<td>117,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>24,330</td>
<td>10,940 (45%)</td>
<td>19,095</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Seniors in the Lower Mainland: A Snapshot of Facts & Trends March 2013
City of Surrey –
Age Friendly Strategy Framework

Surrey’s Age Friendly Strategy for Seniors 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

VISION
SURREY IS AN AGE FRIENDLY CITY
WHERE PEOPLE ENJOY LIFELONG ACTIVITY AND ENGAGEMENT

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 support necessary to remain as independent as possible

BUILDINGS AND OUTDOOR SPACES
Public places, outdoor spaces and buildings are designed to be welcoming, safe and accessible
The stated outcomes related to the Age Friendly Strategy will be achieved using four strategic areas of focus.

**Programs and Services**
A continuum of programs and services from prevention to intervention will be available for all seniors, including at risk and vulnerable seniors.

**Engagement with Seniors**
Engaging seniors in a respectful way to play a role in achieving age friendly outcomes.

**Collaboration with Partners**
Collaboration with partners to offer programs and services that benefit seniors.

**Communication and Promotion**
Multi-lingual and multi-modal communication and promotion to seniors to raise awareness of issues and provide information about services and programs.
The Age Friendly Strategy is based upon these guiding principles:

- INCLUSION FOR ALL
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- RESPECT
Roles of the City

The Age Friendly Strategy for Seniors 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.
- 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.
- Provide leadership on specific issues ie: 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 appropriate staff 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 Strategy for Seniors 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 Come Share 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 AND 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 Public Safety Education, 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 public safety 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 and 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.¹

- 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.


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/
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.² 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.

² (Source: 2011 census)
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 tree 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.

Seniors 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 Coast Mountain Bus Company to improve accessibility at bus stops. Currently 75% of the city’s bus stops are accessible.

Homesafe - Fire, Safety and Prevention
A program designed by the Surrey Fire Service 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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What do age friendly cities look like, and what can your local authority do to create a welcoming space. Kate McCann, Guardian Professional, Saturday 20 October 2012 10.29 BST


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