The Toronto Seniors Strategy

Community Development and Recreation Committee
CD 20.1 - Wednesday, April 17, 2013
The Toronto Seniors Strategy outlines the beginning of an ongoing process to make Toronto more age-friendly.

The Strategy was developed to achieve better results for older adults with limited resources.

Focus is on issues that fall within the City’s authority to plan, manage, and deliver.
Who was Involved?

**ABCDs**
Senior Management
Steering Committee and Technical Working Group comprised of 17 City of Toronto Agencies, Boards, Corporations and Divisions.

**Expert Panel**
33 leaders from the community, universities, business, medical and seniors’ advocacy organizations.

**Seniors’ Forum**
Formal advisory body of City Council supported by City staff. The primary consultation body responsible for providing voice to age-related issues.

**Public Consultation**
Residents submitted suggestions and concerns through a consultation workbook available in multiple languages. 524 completed responses received from individuals and groups.

**Provincial Strategy**
Ontario lead, Dr. Samir K. Sinha, participated in strategy development process, helping to ensure both strategies were in alignment.
The Demographic Imperative

Population Change (2001-2011) in Older Adult Population 55+

- Adults 55+ in 2001: 559,090
- Adults 55+ in 2011: 680,945
- 10-year Change: 22%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census
Prepared by: Social Policy, Analysis & Research Unit, Social Development, Finance & Administration

The Toronto Seniors Strategy
The City must be ready to address the growing number of diverse older adults.

The number of older adults is forecasted to grow by up to 60% in the next 20 years.

Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. 2012
Older Adults Have Diverse Needs

Examples

Over 114,000 families
with at least one member 65 years or older have low incomes.

54%
of adults 65 years or older have an activity limitation or disability.

37%
of adults 55 years or older speak a non-official language.

68%
of adults 55 years or older are immigrants
Public Consultation Events

May 24, 2012
Public consultation opens

June 28, 2012
Toronto Seniors’ Forum Event

December 7, 2012
Second Seniors Expert Panel Roundtable

June 19, 2012
First Seniors Expert Panel Roundtable

October 31, 2012
Public consultation closes

February 15, 2013
Third Seniors Expert Panel Roundtable
• 524 responses to consultation workbook (91 in non-English languages).

• Top three priorities were health, housing and transportation.

• Participants emphasized that older adults in Toronto are highly diverse. This leads to unique issues compared to other communities.
Residents want an age-friendly approach to service delivery that supports people of all ages, including Toronto’s older adults, to live active, socially engaged, healthy, and independent lives.

“There has to be more support put in place to assist seniors in remaining in their own homes.”

“[It is] important not to forget that a large majority of older adults are capable, active, independent and a resource to the community. We are part of the solution as well as the ‘problem.’”
The Toronto Seniors Strategy closely aligns with Ontario’s Seniors Strategy.

Dr. Samir K. Sinha
Provincial Lead, Ontario’s Seniors Strategy

*Living Longer, Living Well*
Report submitted to the Minister of health and Long-Term Care and the Minister Responsible for Seniors on Recommendations to Inform a Seniors Strategy for Ontario
Why Develop a Provincial Strategy?

• In 2011, the province announced a new vision to make Ontario the best place to grow up and grow old in North America.

• Development of Ontario’s Seniors Strategy began in 2012 to establish sustainable best practices and policies at a provincial level.

• Focus on ensuring equity, quality, access, value and choice.

• Recommendations developed that could support older Ontarians to stay healthy and independent for as long as possible.
The way in which our cities, communities, and our health care system are currently designed, resourced, organised and delivered, often disadvantages older adults with chronic health issues.

As Ontarians, our Care Needs, Preferences and Values are evolving as a society, with increasing numbers of us wanting to age in place.
Top 5 System Barriers in Ontario

1. We do little to empower older adults and caregivers.
2. We don’t know what we don’t know.
3. We don’t talk to each other well.
4. We plan in silos and not as a system.
5. We plan for today and not for tomorrow.
The Toronto Seniors Strategy is well aligned with the directions and recommendations in the Provincial Strategy:

- Consultation processes occurred over the same time frame;
- In both processes, seniors identified the same principal concerns;
- Both identify recommendations that are practical and largely achievable within existing resources; and
- Leads for the two strategies were in constant communication throughout the development of these strategies, sharing findings and insights throughout.
The Toronto Seniors Strategy

Recommendations
**Recommendations**

**Issues Identified**

For each theme, issues are identified. These are based on what we heard from consultations, insights from demographic research, and gaps identified after taking an inventory of what the City does currently.

**Recommendations Proposed**

From the 25 identified issues, we developed 25 broad recommendations to address each issue. These recommendations define the strategic direction the City will take to address older adult issues.

**Recommended Actions to Implement**

Each recommendation contains a series of short, medium, and long-term actions proposed by City ABCDs. These define the specific, implementable steps the City will take to accomplish each recommendation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Cost Implications</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short-Term</strong></td>
<td><strong>No new net costs.</strong> Achievable within existing budgets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actions that can begin implementation immediately.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Medium-Term</strong></td>
<td>Costing to be referred back to ABCDs for consideration in the 2014 City budget process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actions that can begin implementation within two years.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Long-Term</strong></td>
<td>Costing to be referred back to ABCDs for consideration in 2015 and beyond.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actions that can begin implementation after 2015.</td>
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Age-Friendly Themes

To ensure alignment with other communities in Canada, the Strategy is organized using the World Health Organization’s framework for age-friendliness:

1. Respect & Social Inclusion
2. Civic Engagement, Volunteering & Employment
3. Social Participation
4. Community Support & Health Services
5. Housing
6. Transportation
7. Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
8. Communications & Information
Respect & Social Inclusion

Recommended Action 1a

Apply to be a World Health Organization Age-Friendly City.

**Timeframe:** Medium-Term

**Lead:** Social Development, Finance & Administration
Respect & Social Inclusion

Recommended Action 3b

Train staff on best practices when communicating with vulnerable older adults.

**Timeframe:** Medium-Term

**Lead:** City Manager’s Office
Recommended Action 11h

Expand the Community Paramedicine program

**Timeframe:** Long-Term

**Lead:** Emergency Medical Services
Housing

Recommended Action 14c

Provide senior friendly public education for homeless, at risk and low-income older adults, their families and caregivers.

**Timeframe:** Short-Term  
**Lead:** Shelter Support & Housing Administration
Recommended Action 14d

Amend the Official Plan to allow for Secondary Suites in existing homes, and update the Secondary Suites resource kit.

Timeframe: Short-Term
Lead: City Planning
Recommended Action 19a

Work to complete updates to intersection crossing times to provide longer walk times across the city.

**Timeframe:** Short-Term

**Lead:** Transportation Services
Accountability & Monitoring

Each recommended action in the Strategy contains three key elements for accountability and monitoring:

- Clearly identified lead program area with responsibility to implement
- Timeframe for implementation
- Identified measure(s) to track the status of each action

The wellbeing of Toronto’s older adults in Toronto will also be monitored to provide context for the ongoing implementation of the strategy.
A Living Document

- Continual monitoring of the wellbeing of older Torontonians using Wellbeing Toronto.

- Ongoing evaluation of Strategy conducted by staff in consultation with community partners.

- Together, staff and partners will review and refine Strategy.

- First progress report on Strategy to Council in 2015.
For more information, contact:

Chris Brillinger
Executive Director
Social Development, Finance & Administration
E-mail: cbrillin@toronto.ca
Phone: 416-392-5207

Lydia Fitchko
Director
Social Policy, Analysis & Research Unit
Social Development, Finance & Administration
E-mail: lfitchko@toronto.ca
Phone: 416-392-8614