Township of Langley

AGE FRIENDLY STRATEGY

Policy & Promising Practices Review

Prepared by CitySpaces Consulting | May 2014

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INTRODUCTION

The Township of Langley has completed an age-friendly evaluation study, drafted policies in the new *Official Community Plan* (OCP), and supported the implementation of a range of age-friendly policies and initiatives throughout the community. To inform the Age-friendly Strategy, this background review includes a summary of relevant local policy documents (Township-specific), as well as a scan of promising practices and guiding documents from other communities and jurisdictions.

In total, ten policy documents were reviewed, ranging from high-level guiding policies, such as an OCP, to specific documents advising on trail standards or adaptable housing requirements. In addition, the *Promising Practices* section includes a review of ten documents, which share a framework based on the World Health Organization (WHO) guiding principles. These principles were developed as part of the global initiative on age-friendly cities, and include approaches for designing strategies. In addition, several age-friendly strategies and related documents from other municipalities have been included, providing ideas and insights from other communities.

Combined with input from stakeholder workshops and public feedback into emerging directions, the key findings of the policy review and range of promising practices will help to inform the development of a strategy for the Township of Langley that builds on current initiatives, and provides a framework to support an age-friendly future.

POLICY

POLICY REVIEW

The Age-friendly Strategy will build on the policies and plans currently in place in the Township of Langley and will, to the extent possible, dovetail with the initiatives already implemented. Towards this end, the following section includes a summary of Township documents, including key documents, such as the *Sustainability Charter* and the *Official Community Plan* (OCP), and policy documents that have a direct bearing on achieving a more age-friendly community. Plans for parks and library facilities, for example, provide specific details related to seniors issues, accessibility needs, and the types of programs and services that interest and serve seniors.

In addition to policies and plans, the results of the *Age-friendly Community Evaluation Study* were reviewed. This study gathered input from residents and service providers to identify needs and challenges in the Township. Common themes emerged that will provide a strong basis for moving forward.

Alongside direct input from targeted stakeholders and the Seniors Advisory Committee, this review of policy, planning, and other initiatives provides the basis upon which the priorities and recommended actions of the Age-friendly Strategy will be developed.

SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER (2008)

Overview

The *Sustainability Charter* provides a vision for the Township to ensure a socially, culturally, economically and environmentally balanced future. It outlines high-level goals and objectives to integrate sustainability into municipal decision-making. While not specific to seniors, goals within the Charter align with age-friendly planning principles. The Age-friendly Strategy should reflect and support the broad sustainability goals in the Charter.

KEY FINDINGS

Relevant goals and objectives include:

- Social/Cultural — Build community capacity:
  - Monitor changes in community values, aspirations and needs.
  - Respond to community and social needs.

- Social/Cultural — Provide and support community based leisure opportunities:
  - Provide parks, open space and recreation facilities.
  - Nourish the arts as an expression of cultural value.
  - Improve personal wellbeing and celebrate community spirit.
  - Deliver recreational programming and support community services.
  - Form partnerships to maximize leisure opportunities.

- Economic — Develop livable and vibrant communities:
  - Focus on compact urban form and mixed use neighbourhoods.
  - Make communities pedestrian and bicycle oriented.

- Economic — Integrate transportation and community planning:
  - Encourage and facilitate transit oriented developments
  - Provide safe and affordable transportation infrastructure.
  - Coordinate with other agencies and groups to improve transit.
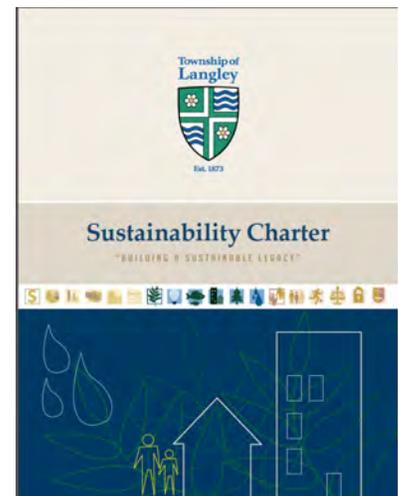
The Official Community Plan Update sets out a 30-year vision for the Township.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE (2013)

Overview

The *Official Community Plan* (OCP) provides a high-level guiding vision and framework for decision making in the Township. The OCP update builds on the principles of the previous Plan, providing new directions based on current data and community aspirations. Council has given third reading to the new OCP. Final adoption is anticipated in the near future.

KEY FINDINGS

- Recognizes that Langley is predominantly a young community, but one that will continue to age and become more diverse.

- Identifies the intent to create age-friendly policies and actions based on the *Age-friendly Community Evaluation*.

- Includes policy to support both child and elder care in future facilities and developments.

- Includes policy to cluster child and seniors' facilities, and promote joint programming.

- Aspires to meet the needs of a culturally and socially diverse population; support the needs of all residents; and provide housing and transportation that is accessible and affordable.

HOUSING ACTION PLAN (2011):
Consultation & Seniors Discussion

Overview

The *Housing Action Plan* identifies priorities and actions for the Township to make well-informed decisions about market and non-market housing. Discussions were held with a range of partner agencies, service providers, and stakeholders, including seniors and youth. These conversations offered some insight on key issues and challenges facing seniors and youth in the Township.

KEY FINDINGS

- Groups most affected by housing choice and affordability include low-income households, those with special needs, homeless individuals and those at risk of homelessness, and youth. Seniors may experience challenges finding appropriate and affordable housing in the Township, particularly those with low, limited, or fixed incomes; mobility, physical or mental health issues; and those facing changing life circumstances.

- Consultation participants noted that many lower income seniors are living in poor quality rental housing due to affordability, or ability to pursue landlords to resolve maintenance issues.

- Accessibility was identified as an issue for seniors of all income levels, as it can be difficult to get around without a car, and transit options may not be available. This was also identified as a key issue for youth.

- Social isolation and access to resources was also identified as an issue for seniors. For those who would prefer to age-in-place, necessary services and amenities may not be available, but moving to a new neighbourhood requires leaving established social connections.

- A lack of appropriate, affordable and accessible housing in the Township is a concern for all groups. Non-market solutions for seniors in need of health care, or other support services are also needed.

- Access to assisted living or care facilities was reported to be limited in the Township.

ADAPTABLE HOUSING POLICY (2010)

Overview

In 2010, the Township of Langley approved a policy to establish adaptable housing guidelines for new developments. If developers choose to build to the densities specified in new neighbourhood plans, as opposed to current zoning densities, the need for basic adaptable housing requirements is triggered. At the time of rezoning, the Township would require a minimum of 5% of single family and townhouse units, and 10% of apartment units in any development to meet the standards of the adaptable housing policy.

In 2014, this policy had resulted in 106 completed units (39 single detached, 18 apartments, and 49 townhouses). An additional 34 townhouses are under construction. The adaptable homes have been noted to be very marketable.

KEY FINDINGS

• The intent of the policy is to facilitate easy retrofitting of dwellings to provide basic universal housing for occupancy by aging or disabled persons.

• The Policy outlines requirements for circulation, parking, doors, doorways, windows, bathrooms, kitchens, bedrooms, storage, and outdoor spaces.

RECREATION, CULTURE AND PARKS MASTER PLAN (2015)

Overview

A process is currently underway to develop the Township of Langley Recreation, Culture, and Parks Master Plan. This process will produce a directional document that will address the long term future for Recreation, Culture, and Parks services. As part of the public consultation process, the Township is facilitating a number of focus group workshops. A seniors-focused workshop was held on May 7, 2014. Current and future provision of Recreation, Culture, and Parks services was discussed in a group setting with a representative group of Township seniors, including members of the Seniors Advisory Committee. There will be other consultation opportunities over the Spring of 2014. It is expected the final report, to be completed early in 2015, will include recommendations for increasing the accessibility of programs and services to an aging population.

A variety of parks and trails serve the recreation needs of the community

PARK LAND STANDARDS ANALYSIS (2014)

Overview

The Park Definitions and Standards Analysis was conducted to inform the update of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 2014. The review assessed the supply of neighbourhood, community, and municipal parks in relation to the current population in each of the main communities in the Township. It compared standards to similar municipalities in BC, reviewed the role of school open spaces, considered the effect of regional parks on park demands within the Township, and made recommendations for park supply.

KEY FINDINGS

Found that the park land supply exceeds the Township's standards for neighbourhood and community parks, but there are significant differences in the types and quality of parks across communities. While the current supply of park land exceeds the Township's standards, these standards are lower than some comparable communities (notably, Surrey), and should be increased.

Inventory noted that not all trails or greenways are included in park definitions, and should be included to recognize their importance in the community.

Older, more established neighbourhoods, have fewer opportunities to create new parks, or obtain more land for parks. For example, the rural areas and Aldergrove have far fewer acres of parkland per person than other communities within the Township.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS (1994)

Overview

Discover Active Living Thru Community Connections – Planning Document for a Municipal Trail Network was developed to promote and facilitate "Active Living" in the Township. In the Plan, the pursuit of Active Living is defined as "an individual choice, which can include creative endeavors, cultural expression, personal development, physical activity, and social interaction." Recognizing the value and priority placed on trails among Township residents, the Plan provides a framework to extend the trail network through the municipality in a manner that will promote recreation and community engagement, and be safe and accessible to people of all ages and abilities — important factors in age-friendly planning.
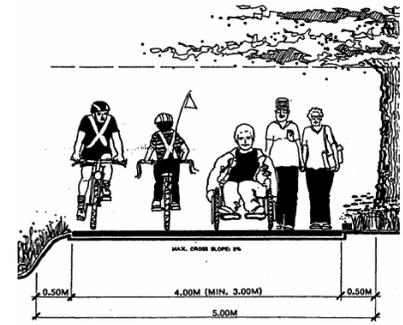
Example :
Shared Use Trail Cross-section

KEY FINDINGS

A key focus of the Community Connections document is that trail guidelines should accommodate a range of ages and abilities, and provide opportunities to pursue an active lifestyle.

Trail guidelines are provided for a range of trail types, with specifications based on use and location, including widths, surface treatments, and grade maximums.

The trail network should also accommodate a range of activities for the purposes of non-vehicular transportation and recreation.

Encourages the coordination of uses and the development of programs for the trail network to facilitate connections between communities, neighbours, the environment, local heritage, and cultural resources.

The Plan was developed with significant public and stakeholder input and public participation should continue to be a key aspect of updating and enhancing the Plan over time.

Recommends regular review and update of trail standards to ensure consistency with regional trail guidelines and locally emerging needs or trends.
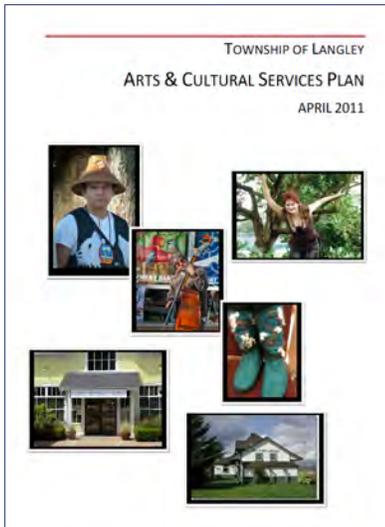
ARTS & CULTURAL SERVICES PLAN (2011)

Overview

The *Arts and Cultural Services Plan* outlines goals, strategies, and recommendations to strengthen arts and culture experiences in the Township. The Plan explores existing cultural assets and future opportunities. It also considers the health and social benefits of leading active lives, including participation in the arts, for people of all ages, but draws attention to the proven value of involvement in the arts to the lives of seniors and youth.

KEY FINDINGS

- Intent to reach out to all ages and groups, including seniors, families, youth, residents, and workers to promote access to arts and culture in the Township, with a key goal to: "Promote culturally, age-relevant arts and cultural experiences."

- Recommendation to use creative marketing methods to increase the reach of arts and cultural information.

- Recommendation to consider transportation, age, sex, race, physical ability, and language to ensure accessibility to arts and cultural activities for all residents.

- Recognition that affordability may restrict access to arts and cultural experiences.

NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING CENTRE JOINT USE AGREEMENT (2012)

Overview

An agreement between the Township of Langley and the Board of Education to provide space for community use in the new Lynn Fripps Elementary School and more recently, the Richard Bulpitt Elementary School.

KEY FINDINGS

- The additional 15% of Neighbourhood Learning Centre space incorporated into schools provides flexible areas that can be utilized by the Township to accommodate the needs of community groups and other users.

- Neighbourhood associations, organizations, and a wide variety of interest groups (e.g. clubs and social groups) are able to utilize space in the schools.

HCP initiatives engaged the community in a variety of ways

LANGLEY HEALTHIER COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (2010 TO DATE)

Overview

Langley Healthier Community Partnership (HCP) brought together representatives from municipal, health, and community leadership groups to improve the health, well-being, and quality of life of citizens through a preventative, action-oriented, and solutions-based approach. Between 2010 and 2013, the HCP included a multitude of activities designed to increase all aspects of health in both the Township of Langley and the City of Langley. Some events were community-wide, while other initiatives were targeted to specific stakeholder groups, such as seniors or youth. The activities of the HCP provide a foundation of awareness and action to improve health and well-being at the community level.

KEY FINDINGS

- Creation of the *Langley Seniors Action Table* to facilitate the mobilization, leadership, and involvement of seniors within the community.

- Supported the Child Youth Committee Task Group to hold events for professionals and families focused on strengthening families.

- New healthy seniors programs have been introduced:

  - *Food Skills for Families* teaches people how to make healthy meals to gain confidence in the kitchen. Seniors are a target sub-population.

  - *Seniors Healthy Living Bag* provides a variety of nutritious fruit and vegetables at a very low cost.

  - Assisted in the coordination of a transportation co-op for seniors access to local shops and venues.

- Increased involvement of seniors on advisory committees including the advocating for the creation of a Seniors Advisory Committee at the Township.

- Integration of *Healthy Built Environment* principles into neighbourhood planning policy through the connection of Fraser Healths professionals (Environmental Health Officer – Healthy Built Environment Program).

- Development of resource directories and websites to increase access to information related to health services.

# AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY EVALUATION STUDY (2010)

Overview

The Township of Langley's *Age-friendly Community Evaluation Study* provided a background assessment of issues, needs, preferences, and priorities among older residents in Langley.

The study defined an Age-friendly Community as "*a community for all ages and where policies, services, and structures of the physical and social environments are designed to support older community residents in making choices that will enhance their health and well-being, and reduce reliance on more costly alternatives.*"

The report details the results of the engagement activities, including specific feedback and suggestions for additional analysis or future policy directions.

KEY FINDINGS

- In March 2010, four community dialogues were held in Brookswood/Fernridge, Aldergrove, Walnut Grove, and Willoughby.

- The biggest challenges identified were providing accessible amenities and health care to older adults.

- The community dialogues identified a set of common themes and priorities:

  - Increased awareness, knowledge, and communication about services and activities is desired.

  - Transportation and accessibility issues are a priority, although the specific needs of each community differ.

  - Health services and overall well-being are priorities, with key areas that include social integration and social interaction; home support and medical visits; recreation opportunities; having a seniors centre in Walnut Grove along with other facilities; and outdoor areas that are more senior-friendly.

  - The loss of the Langley Seniors Centre funding for *Volunteer Outreach* drivers was noted by all groups.

- Concerns were expressed by service providers and non-profit agencies about their capacities to meet increasing levels of demand for services.
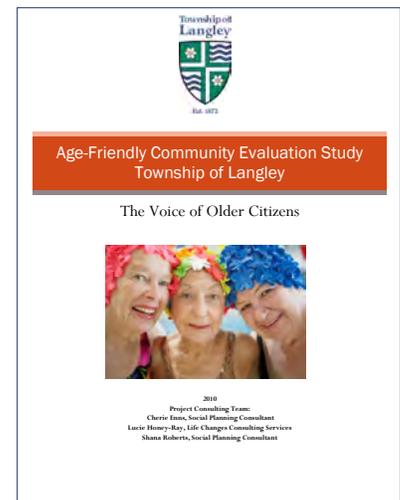
PROMISING PRACTICES

PROMISING PRACTICES REVIEW

This review of promising practices includes the original guide established by the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as Canadian and BC guides for developing and implementing age-friendly plans. The common themes and approaches reflected in these guides have informed the development of age-friendly strategies and initiatives both locally and worldwide. This review looked at several plans and age-friendly initiatives developed for BC communities, including Saanich, Revelstoke, and West Vancouver. Looking further abroad for inspiration, examples from Cambridge, Ontario and Portland, Oregon were reviewed. Additionally, to reflect the Township's belief that an intergenerational perspective is integral to an age-friendly community, the review included Surrey's *Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy*.

Learnings and key findings from each of the reviewed documents illustrate a range of approaches taken to respond to the WHO's eight principles of age-friendly communities. Addressing challenges common in many communities, these promising practices will be used to inform policy recommendations and strategic actions in the Township's Age-friendly Strategy.

GLOBAL AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES:
A Guide (2007)

Overview

In 2005, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched the *Age-friendly Project* at the opening session of the *XVIII IAGG World Congress*. Building on the interest in this global platform, WHO engaged nations and communities with the intent of furthering existing research. Among the primary participants was the *Public Health Agency of Canada*, which proved to be a crucial contributor to the project, hosting the initial meeting of participating cities in Vancouver. The City of Ottawa also aided in the advancement of the Project by pilot testing the research protocol.

WHO has published extensive research regarding the aging global population, and how this phenomena will affect cities around the world. Included in the guide are predictions of the population over age 60 doubling between the years of 2006 and 2050. On a global scale, it will be the first time in human history that older people will outnumber children. To create public awareness on the topic, and promote the mitigation of possible societal challenges, WHO developed eight areas for discussion:

1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

2. Transportation

3. Housing

4. Social Participation

5. Respect and Social Inclusion

6. Civic Participation and Inclusion

7. Communication and Information

8. Community Support and Health Services

Through advanced research conducted with national and city-based partners, WHO identified leading trends and mitigation tactics under each of the eight topic areas. The *Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide* details the attributes of each topic, and provides checklists and strategies for addressing challenges and barriers. Intended as a high-level framework, the guide has been adopted worldwide in the movement to respond to the needs and interests of an aging population.
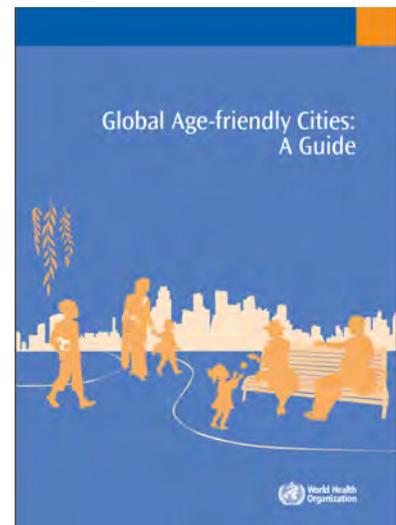
BECOMING AN AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY: Local Government Guide (2011)

OVERVIEW

This local government guide, *Becoming an Age-friendly Community*, provides a step-by-step format to assist communities in planning to address age-friendly principles. Intended for public organizations, the guide offers clear and concise recommendations.

A key feature of the guide is the section on lessons from previous age-friendly initiatives. Communities who began age-friendly initiatives were noted to be more successful it they:

- Had the strong support of local government.
- Had an age-friendly "champion" in the community.
- Appointed a dedicated staff person to work on the initiative.
- Had strong local partnerships that were inclusive of seniors and other stakeholders.
- Obtained a small grant to get started and used that to leverage additional money and resources.
- Introduced small changes at the outset of the project.
- Cultivated a good relationship with the local media.
- Took full advantage of the support services offered by the provincial government.

The guide provides directions on how to conduct an age-friendly assessment and develop an action plan. Resources and key notes are provided throughout the document, and information about the *Age-friendly British Columbia Recognition Program* is also included.

# AGE-FRIENDLY RURAL & REMOTE COMMUNITIES: A Guide (2007)

OVERVIEW

The *Age-friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide* establishes the importance of planning for seniors in rural communities and seeks to address the unique trends and challenges in these areas. As is common to many communities, seniors in rural areas often experience challenges with "aging in place." Remaining engaged with the local community becomes difficult, particularly where housing and transportation options are limited, and health care services require travel.

Ten rural communities from across the country were engaged in research and consultation to develop the guide, which is organized around the eight principles of age-friendly communities. Under each topic, age-friendly features, common barriers, and suggestions for improvement specific to the context of rural communities are provided. Selected suggestions include:

- Provide opportunities for intergenerational activities.

- Set up indoor walking clubs for poor weather times.

- Post signage indicating the location of public restrooms.

- Provide good lighting on trails and throughout neighbourhoods.

- Make driver refresher courses available.

- Provide taxi service that operates along specific routes.

- Offer support to families in challenging circumstances to help prevent elder abuse.

- Make younger people aware of aging issues.

- Establish outreach programs such as the telephone assurance program or phone committees.

- Use cluster care models to provide integrated services.

- Make use of retired professionals, such as pharmacists or nurses to provide volunteer support.

- Set up a *Safely Home* program for the cognitively impaired.

The guide also outlines a recommended approach for undertaking and implementing age-friendly studies and action plans, such as: incorporating stakeholder engagement; community evaluation; and ongoing monitoring. A checklist of age-friendly features summarizes the key recommendations.
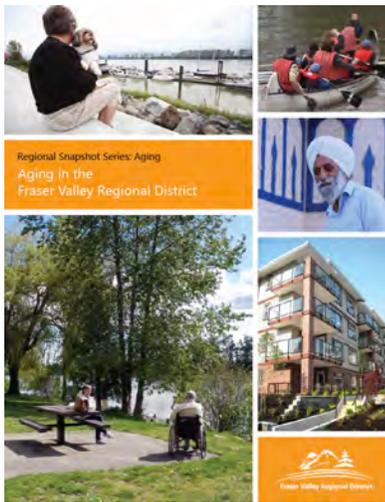
AGING IN THE FRASER VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT (2012)

OVERVIEW

The Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) is committed to age-friendly principles of development, acknowledging that more than 14% of the current population are classified as seniors. This figure is predicted to rapidly increase, with one in five people identifying as a senior by 2041. The *Aging in the Fraser Valley Regional District* document includes research into how the aging population is financially preparing for the future, as well as the financial impact seniors place on health care services. It highlights a range of initiatives in the region and across individual communities. The FVRD has called upon all levels of government, health authorities, the non-profit sector, and the private sector to work towards achieving the goal of maintaining a high quality of life for all local residents.

KEY FINDINGS

- The FVRD has initiated the *Fraser Valley Rent Assistance Project* in which individuals at risk of losing their homes are permitted a one-time loan or grant, enabling low-income seniors the opportunity to "age in place."

- In 2011, Chilliwack adopted a bylaw in which 50% of all new apartments are required to be "adaptable", as defined by the *BC Building Code* — featuring wider doorways, handrails, easy-to-grasp faucets, etc.

- Included in the FVRD snapshot is the successful partnership of the United Way and local non-profits in the implementation of the *Better at Home Program*, in which seniors are provided with help in daily tasks, including cleaning, grocery shopping, and transportation.

- In Hope, the volunteer-based program *Care Transit* provides complimentary transportation for seniors to medical appointments and health services.

- In addressing transportation challenges in the FVRD, the subsidized *Taxi Saver Program* was initiated to provide seniors with a cost effective (50% discount on taxi fares) means of transportation when HandyDART services were unavailable.

DISABILITY CONSULTATION REPORT: Moving Toward an Accessible BC (2014)
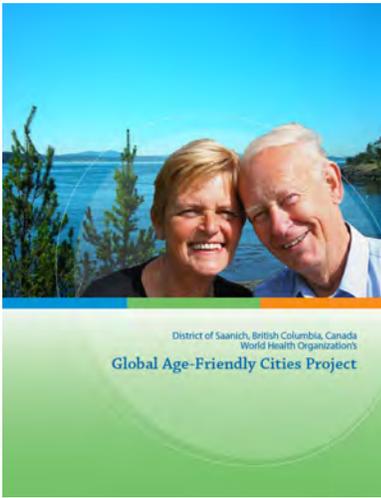
OVERVIEW

In 2013 and 2014, the BC government held a comprehensive public consultation process on what government, businesses, and communities can do to reduce barriers and increase accessibility for people living with disabilities. The options, ideas, and solutions relate very closely to the directions and priorities of communities striving to become more age-friendly. Twelve dominant themes emerged through the process, with numerous suggestions provided. The themes include:

- *Inclusive Government*. All people have the right to participate in government processes and influence decisions that affect them.

- *Accessible Service Delivery.* Providing services and supports in a straightforward, easy to access and fully accessible way.

- *Accessible Internet.* Accessible website and access to information helps to address social isolation.

- *Accessible Built Environment.* Includes everything from buildings and sidewalks to parks and recreational facilities to public spaces in neighbourhoods and cities.

- *Accessible Housing.* A significant lack of accessible, affordable housing was noted.

- *Accessible Transportation.* A strong need for safe, accessible and affordable transportation.

- *Income Support.* A call for an increase in disability assistance rates, and other suggestions.

- *Employment.* People with disabilities want to work and participate in their communities.

- *Financial Security.* Having the ability to build wealth gives people comfort and stability.

- *Inclusive Communities.*
  A stigma exists around people with disabilities.

- *Emergency Preparedness.* Making sure all are prepared in the event of an emergency.

- *Accessible Consumer Experience.* Having ability to choose where to shop, eat, and travel was commonly raised.

> "The White Paper discussion is a critical step in moving aspects of ACCESSIBILITY and INCLUSION forward within British Columbia."
>
> *– Moving Together Toward an Accessible BC*

DISTRICT OF SAANICH:
Global Age-Friendly Cities Project (2008)

OVERVIEW

As a partner in the World Health Organization *Global Age-friendly Cities Project*, the District of Saanich produced a report based on research from the University of Victoria Centre on Aging, and consultation with a variety of community agencies and stakeholders. The report identifies common barriers, seeks to build on existing initiatives, and provides recommendations and actions to support an age-friendly community.

KEY FINDINGS

- Supporting seniors to "age in place" and retain social networks, the report encourages mixed-use housing and suggests exploring mandatory adaptable housing regulations for new townhouse and single family housing to supplement existing requirements.

- The report identifies the need to address the increase in wheelchair and scooter use, suggesting a review of street design standards and parking areas (e.g. wider spaces, provision of electrical outlets).

- Completing the *Centennial Trails Project* is recommended to facilitate increased mobility between rural and urban Saanich, giving rural residents a greater sense of connection.

- To reinforce the value of social and civic participation, establish a *Seniors Award* system to recognize the contributions of seniors in the community.

- The report identifies the success of *Cordova Bay Community Place* in bringing youth and seniors together through shared spaces and programs and recommends expanding this approach.

- As a specific strategy to improve service delivery in the community, the report suggests establishing an annual community forum to bring together agencies, service providers, municipal representatives, and stakeholders to share information and explore partnerships to improve community support and health services.

"...making cities age-friendly is one of the best policy approaches for responding to an aging demographic".

– District of Saanich

AN AGE-FRIENDLY PLAN FOR REVELSTOKE & AREA (2009)

OVERVIEW

The Revelstoke Community Social Development Committee (RCSDC) led the development of an *Age-friendly Plan* in 2009. The Plan provides recommended actions, policy suggestions for the *Official Community Plan*, and an implementation strategy.

Recognized in 2012 by the Province of British Columbia as an *Age-friendly Community*, Revelstoke has been committed to the application of age-friendly initiatives from the Plan, stating in its application for recognition that: "enabling seniors to live out their lives and be supported in our community continues to be an important priority".

KEY FINDINGS

- Accessibility recommendations addressed the specific challenges of winter conditions (icy sidewalks, snow piles, etc.), and designating seniors walking routes that connect to services in the downtown as priorities for winter maintenance.

- The Plan provides direction to develop an age-friendly brochure for business owners, with accessibility guidelines for commercial properties.

- To overcome isolation experienced by older adults, the Plan encourages social participation through the creation of the *Seniors Link Up Program* and a volunteer driver program to provide home visits, phone calls, and transportation to medical appointments.

- To provide access to information, the Plan recommends development of a local resources guide and a support service to connect with seniors by phone, or through personal visits.

- The Plan encourages advocating for enhanced transit services, including extended bus services, HandyDART, partnerships with cab companies, and volunteer driver programs.

- To improve access to information, build skills, and increase opportunities for participation, computer skills courses, mature drivers' workshops, and other programs should be offered through the Revelstoke Seniors Centre.

WEST VANCOUVER:
Age-Friendly Community Initiatives

OVERVIEW

The District of West Vancouver was recognized by the Province as an *Age-friendly Community* in 2012. The District conducted survey-based research to assist in developing age-friendly strategies in the community and, under the supportive framework established in the *Blueprint for Social Responsibility and Change*, has implemented a variety of initiatives to reduce barriers and increase access for all citizens.

KEY FINDINGS

- The *North Shore LINKS for Healthy Living Initiative* was established and designed to encourage seniors to integrate into the greater community through social programming.

- Social programming through the *West Vancouver Senior Citizens Special Services Society* includes the *Seniors Helping Seniors Program* and provides opportunities for social engagement, volunteerism, and employment for seniors of a range of ages and abilities.

- The community recognizes the unique needs and challenges facing frail and isolated seniors and focuses on services and programs to reach out to these individuals.

- Specific action items related to improving the pedestrian realm for seniors include assessment of traffic light control systems for improvements, such as extending pedestrian crossing times and audible pedestrian signals.

- Recommendations included implementing adaptable housing regulations and variation in unit sizes as outlined in the *Housing Action Plan* for West Vancouver.

AN AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN FOR CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO (2013)

OVERVIEW

In 2010, led by the *Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries* (SPCCND), a forum entitled "Moving Towards an Age Friendly Community" examined issues of poverty and aging. The SPCCND then undertook an assessment of community needs for "older adults", and developed Cambridge's *Age-friendly Action Plan* in 2013.

KEY FINDINGS

- A key recommendation of the Plan is to increase the quantity and improve the economic efficiency of home care services, allowing older adults to "age in place."

- In addressing the health care needs of older adults, the Plan recommends that a single point of access to health services should be made available to community members, to better assess, monitor, and provide for changing needs as people age.

- Monitoring the trends and issues facing older adults and communicating this information should be undertaken by a designated ombudsperson.

- The Plan looks to create a central source of information for older adults that would be promoted in all facets of communication.

- The Plan recommends establishing partnerships with school boards to create opportunities to connect older adults with youth.

Images from consultation activities undertaken as part of Cambridge's Age-friendly Action Plan

> "...seize opportunities that improve the city for older adults, and that enable older adults to make the city even greater".
>
> – *Toward an Age-friendly Portland*

TOWARD AN AGE-FRIENDLY PORTLAND, OREGON (2012)

OVERVIEW

The City of Portland was one of 32 cities that collaborated on the development of the eight facets of age-friendly cities, as part of the World Health Organization's (WHO) *Age-friendly Cities Project.* Having participated in the development of the Project, the City then undertook an assessment of older adults, and completed an action plan towards implementing age-friendly initiatives. *Toward an Age-friendly Portland* supplements policies in the *Portland Plan* and focuses on neighbourhood design strategies, housing recommendations, and transportation options to guide Portland towards an age-friendly future.

KEY FINDINGS

- The report identifies the need for more small neighbourhood parks, community spaces, and gardens to provide older adults with access to natural spaces, recreation, and social connections.

- The importance of an inter-generational perspective to support community connections is reflected in the recommendation to work with neighbourhood schools to serve as community hubs — facilitating opportunities for older adults to engage in mentoring and participate in activities with youth.

- To create more pleasant and secure roadways for all users, the report encourages adopting a "twenty is plenty" ideology, limiting vehicle speeds to 20 miles per hour (approximately 30 km/hr) on all local roads.

- Among other transportation initiatives, the City intends to reassess bike routes to facilitate the improvement of "low-stress" bikeways accessible to all community members.

- Portland is simplifying the regional transit system, advocating for the "one call, one click, one card" system in which the public is easily connected to transit providers.

- Recognizing the challenges facing low and very low-income seniors in finding accessible affordable housing, the report recommends developing an affordable housing plan to identify resources and strategies specifically addressing the needs of this population, allowing people to age in place and maintain community connections.
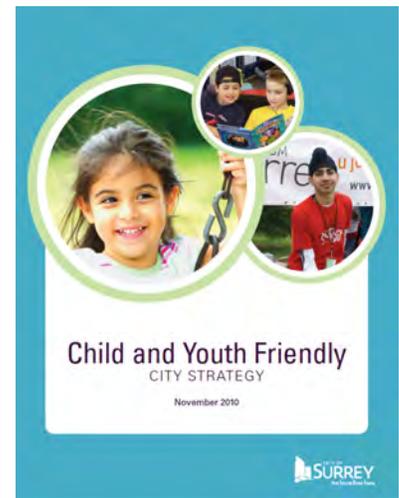
SURREY CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY CITY STRATEGY (2010)

OVERVIEW

Building on the *Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents* adopted in 2006, the City of Surrey brought forward the *Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy* in 2010. With a population of more than 100,000 children, Surrey's youth represent a thriving future and the City recognizes and endorses the capacity of this generation to contribute to the greater community. In supporting children and youth, Surrey hopes to create vibrant and empowered communities.

KEY FINDINGS

- A key component in the *Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy* is the inclusion of youth in adult-oriented City committees, providing this demographic with a public voice.

- As well as implementing age-friendly design features in residential and public spaces, the Strategy encourages the incorporation of interactive and engaging design features that promote unstructured play.

- The Strategy encourages the provision of supportive housing for vulnerable youth who are transitioning from government care.

- Suggested revisions to current youth programming and required space needs will enable youth services and facilitators to better provide safe spaces for socialization.

- The City intends to expand the *School Travel Planning Initiative* to promote safe travel routes to and from schools.

- The Strategy identifies the important role of bike and foot pathways to provide access to schools in new neighbourhoods, ensuring that schools will serve as meeting places for local communities.

The City is "committed to making Surrey a great place for children and youth to live, learn, and play".

– Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy , City of Surrey

C I T Y   S P A C E S