



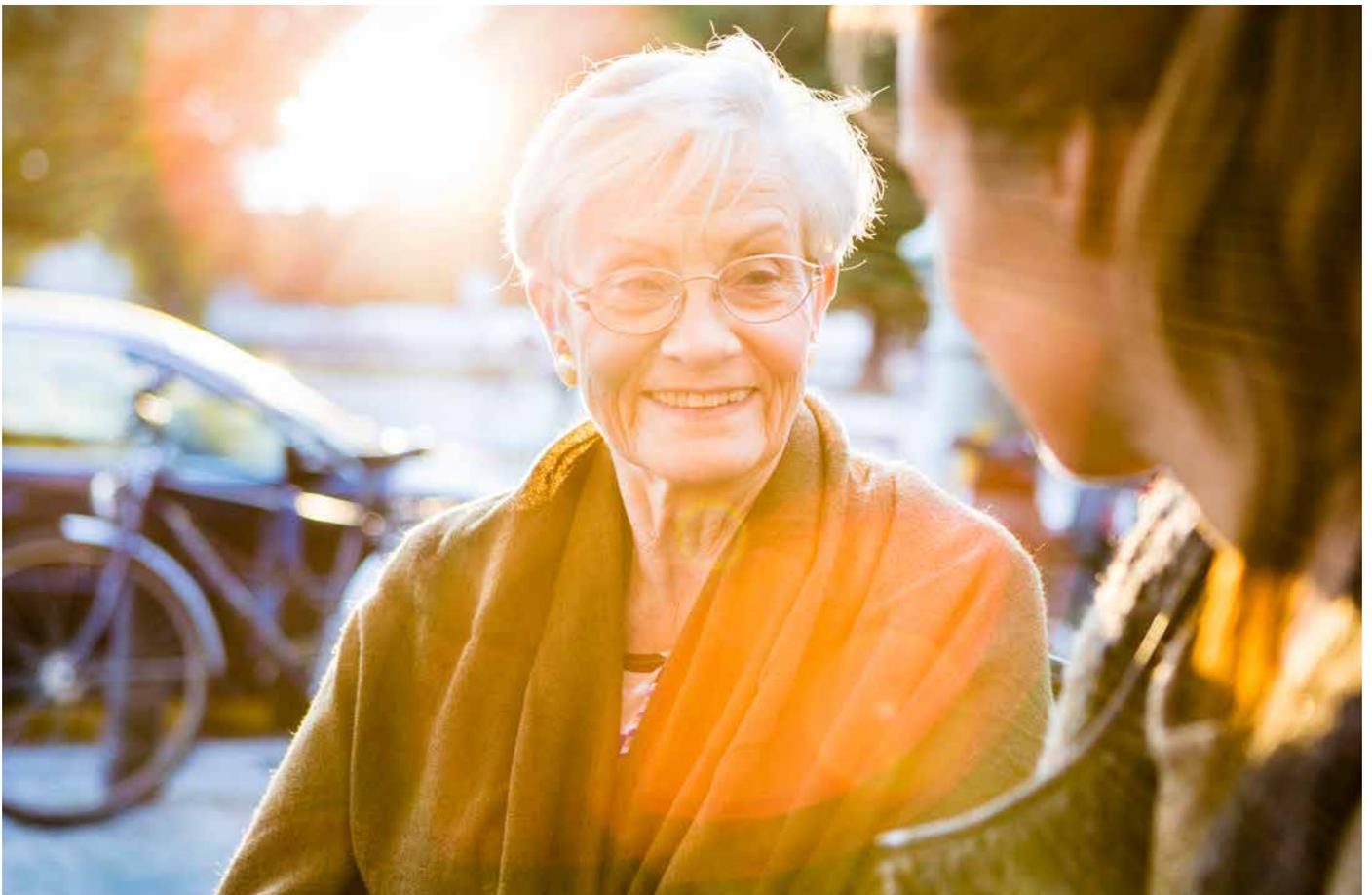
Age-Friendly Calgary

Steering Committee

2017-2018 Report
to the Community



More Calgarians are living longer, healthier lives. To meet this new reality, we need to find innovative approaches to the opportunities and challenges of an aging population. The Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy provides a roadmap for Calgarians and local organizations to work together to make Calgary a place where everyone can age well.



Introduction

Age-Friendly Calgary is a collaborative initiative of Calgary organizations and citizens to prepare for Calgary's aging population. Stakeholders are working together to implement the **Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy and Implementation Plan 2015-2018**, which was approved by Calgary City Council in June 2015. Work is also underway to develop an implementation plan for 2019-2022. This refreshed implementation plan will include actions that were started over the past four years, as well as new and emerging issues that we need to address. The following Report to the Community highlights the progress that has been made on Age-Friendly Calgary initiatives between June 2017 and May 2018.

Age-Friendly Calgary is led by a Steering Committee with representatives from the following organizations and sectors:

- Alberta Health Services
- Alberta Seniors and Housing
- Calgary Police Service
- The City of Calgary
- Dementia Network of Calgary and Area
- Immigrant-serving agency
- Non-profit seniors housing
- Older Adult Council of Calgary
- University of Calgary
- Older adult community members

Age-Friendly Calgary featured initiatives



Promoting an Age-Positive Culture Shift

Promoting an age-friendly culture shift is a key component to fostering an age-friendly community treats everyone equitably. There are ways that older people in our society are marginalized and their contributions minimized, and education and open discussion are key to addressing these issues. Age-Friendly Calgary has shared information about aging and hosted discussions about what it means to age in our society through community presentations and through the Changing Perceptions of Aging in Calgary Meetup Group. As of May 2018, this new Meetup group has 68 members and has hosted five discussions and one film screening. Age-Friendly Calgary is also proud to support and promote projects of our community partners that challenge current perceptions of aging, including the Top 7 Over 70 Awards and the Third Action Film Festival.



Active Aging Strategy

Calgary Recreation's Active Aging Strategy works towards a goal of "more older adult Calgarians are more active and creative more often". In the last year, Calgary Recreation has hosted events and activities with a focus on older people, including 75 free activities during Seniors' Week, and new development and pilots of the following:

- Community based fitness - partnering with community associations to shorten travel time to fitness programs
- Recreation Education – a workshop to help with short term and long-term planning for an active life
- Skating programs – redesigning adult learn to skate and hockey programs for those who grew up on the ice and those trying to skate for the first time.

Calgary Recreation was also instrumental in inviting Age-Friendly Calgary to sign Calgary's Play Charter, and supporting the Intergenerational Play initiative.



Age-Friendly Business

Age-Friendly Business is a City of Calgary initiative to help Calgary businesses and organizations develop services and spaces that can support an aging population. Businesses can also benefit from a growing older customer base by meeting their needs and preferences. The Age-Friendly Business program helps Calgarians find businesses that can meet their needs by publicly recognizing those businesses that are accessible and welcoming to older adults. In 2017-2018, the Age-Friendly Business program approved applications by local businesses in all four quadrants of the city.



Missing Seniors/Silver Alert

In Calgary, approximately 180 vulnerable seniors are reported missing each year. These incidents place a tremendous toll on family members, friends, and neighbours of the missing person, and often require the involvement of costly emergency services to search. Silver Alert systems engage the community in locating missing older people who have cognitive challenges. During Seniors' Week 2018, local Silver Alert stakeholders, including Calgary Police Service, will conduct a mock exercise of a communication tool being developed at the University of Alberta to assist with finding missing vulnerable older adults. In conjunction with this exercise, the Silver Alert Action Team will share information with the public about what to do when a vulnerable senior is missing.



Aging-in-Place Laneway House Pilot

The University of Calgary has continued to work with The City of Calgary to pilot an innovative housing option that supports the needs of medically frail older adults in a community setting. The Aging-in-Place Laneway house project is a prototype test of a 460 sqft one bedroom prefabricated unit that can be temporarily located in the backyard of a typical residential lot. In addition to providing a high-quality place to live that is both safe and accessible for seniors to use, the Aging-in-Place Laneway House incorporates advanced medical monitoring technology that will allow medically frail older adults to remain living well in their home, and close to family, for as long a period as possible.

The Aging-in-Place Laneway House prototype was constructed in the fall of 2017, a development permit was approved for the temporary placement of the unit in the backyard of a house in Altadore, and the unit was successfully delivered and hooked up the host house's services. An older adult couple volunteered to participate in the study by living in the house for one month in late fall 2017. The unit was then successfully moved off the Altadore property, and livability data on the residency was collected by University of Calgary researchers through interviews with the owners of the host property and the volunteer residents. The results will be available from the University of Calgary at the conclusion of the study, projected as winter 2019.

In late 2017 a development permit was secured to locate the prototype unit on the grounds of the Brenda Strafford Foundation's Wentworth Manor in Southwest Calgary. The unit was successfully delivered and hooked up to the facility's utilities. In the first four months of 2018 the unit underwent a series of weather tests and the installation and testing of the behavioral monitoring system. As of May 2018, the research team was involved in recruiting a volunteer for a second 30-day residency trial. The prototype will be moved to the third deployment location in the summer of 2018. This will be a rural location and negotiations are currently underway with several potential communities.



Mental Health and Housing Research

People who are living with mental illness, poverty, and homelessness or the risk of homelessness often appear to age more quickly than others, and may have needs similar to much older seniors as early as age 45 or 50. This population may be further marginalized by community support and housing services that are not designed to support people experiencing combined effects of aging, poverty, and mental health. In 2017, the Older Adult Council of Calgary commissioned a series of position papers on the topics of homelessness, outreach services, integrated care and housing, and the education and training needs of housing providers for older adults with mental health issues. Funding has been secured in 2018 to act on the recommendations from these position papers.



Intergenerational Play Initiative

On September 2017, the Age-Friendly Calgary Steering Committee became a signatory to Calgary's Play Charter along with 35 other local organizations as part of the 20th International Play Association Triennial World Conference. The Charter outlines why play is important for children and how the Calgary community can create a community that supports and encourages play. As a signatory to the charter, Age-Friendly Calgary is working with older Calgarians to collect descriptions of games that they played as children. These will be compiled and shared in intergenerational settings to provide an opportunity for older Calgarians to share their knowledge and experience with children, and promote relationship-building between generations.



Prevention and response to elder abuse

In 2017, four organizations collaborated to develop a shared reporting system to track the prevalence of elder abuse cases in Calgary. The data that is gathered from this process allows the stakeholders who are working together to prevent and respond to elder abuse in Calgary to understand the extent and nature of the issue. Stakeholders in this area also hosted elder abuse conversations cafes, commemorated World Elder Abuse Awareness Day with a public gathering, and produced and distributed a brochure for with local elder abuse information. The Coordinated Community Response to Elder Abuse Action Team also produced a literature and program review of support services for elder abuse offenders, which was presented at the “Face It: Elder Abuse Happens” provincial conference in April 2018.



Housing Information Navigation Tool

Calgarians face many housing options as they age. Those who choose to stay in their current home may need to make accessibility modifications or arrange for support services. Those who want to or need to move may be looking for housing that allows them to stay within their budget, meet medical or social needs, maintain important aspects of their lifestyle, and live in their preferred community. Age-Friendly Calgary has created a tool to help older adults to navigate the older adult housing system and find the information that is most relevant to them. The tool is currently being tested and will be launched to the public later this year.



Neighbourhood Connection Program

Calgary Seniors Resource Society and Calgary Neighbourhoods are working with St. Peter's Anglican Church to connect community volunteers with isolated older adults in the community of Chinook Park. The program will provide access to information and social connection for people who are aging in place in the community. This program is being run as a pilot to test its effectiveness at meeting the needs of isolated seniors, and the potential to replicate it in other communities.



Public Engagement on Seniors Transit

Age-Friendly Calgary worked with Calgary Transit and the City of Calgary's Engage Resource Unit to ask older Calgarians about their needs and preferences when using public transit.

The engagement process included in-person sessions throughout the city, as well as opportunities to provide feedback online or by phone. Age-Friendly Calgary also provided connections to local seniors' organizations and diverse community groups so that the opportunity to provide input could be widely advertised. The results of the public engagement process are being included in Calgary Transit's Fare and Revenue Framework report in June 2018.

Other areas that we are working on:

Access to information and service navigation
Civic engagement
Caregiver support
Volunteer opportunities
Older adult employment

Aligned projects and achievements that benefit Calgary's aging population

Although these projects and achievements were not led by Age-Friendly Calgary, they contribute to Calgary becoming a more age-friendly city:

- A new local Dementia Connections magazine was launched, providing information to people with dementia and those who provide care for them.
- The Brenda Strafford Foundation, with funding from the Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services, launched a Dementia Friendly Communities pilot in several Southwest Calgary communities. As part of this initiative, the Calgary Fire Department has trained all its uniformed staff on how to respond to calls that involve Calgarians who have dementia.
- Calgary City Council approved a more streamlined process for secondary suite applications
- The new Top 7 Over 70 Awards ceremony took place on October 2, 2017.
- The new Third Action Film Festival, which showcases films about aging, will run from June 8-10, 2018.

Looking ahead

The Age-Friendly Calgary Steering Committee is leading the development of a Seniors Age-Friendly Implementation Plan for 2019-2022. This plan will include the further development and sustainment of long-term actions identified in the 2015-2018 implementation plan, as well as new actions based on emerging issues and lessons learned. The City of Calgary continues to be committed to supporting the wellbeing of Calgarians. One of City Council's directives, which provide a shared vision and priorities for The City's 2019-2022 service plans and budget, states:

The City needs to work with community partners to address social issues impacting older Calgarians enabling them to receive the services they need to age in place.

What can you do?

1. Increase the font size on your letters, emails, and other documents to make them easier to read.
2. Offer to support a family caregiver by delivering groceries, cutting their grass, shoveling snow, walking their dog, or providing care for a few hours while the caregiver takes a break.
3. If you think first responders would benefit from information about your health, mobility, or physical or cognitive disability in an emergency, consider signing up for the Vulnerable Person Self-Registry online or by calling 403.428.8399.
4. Learn how you can prepare your current or future home to be accessible older family members and for yourself as you age. Consider the accessibility of your home if you could not climb stairs temporarily due to accident or illness.
5. Volunteer your time and skills throughout your life. It is a good way to meet people, learn new things, and make a difference for others.
6. Find out where to go for help if you or someone you know is experiencing elder abuse.

Visit calgary.ca/AgeFriendly to:

- Read the **Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy and Implementation Plan 2015-2018**.
- Sign up for the Age-Friendly Calgary email newsletter and learn about opportunities to be involved in Age-Friendly Calgary initiatives.
- Read statistical information about Calgary's aging population.
- Learn more about available programs and services for seniors.
- Gain access to Age-Friendly Calgary resources and project updates.
- Learn about the Age-Friendly Business program and how to find participating business locations.

Call 311 for more information.



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