

Official Plan Review Peel 2041

REGION OF PEEL

PLANNING FOR AN AGING POPULATION

Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Paper



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Integrated Planning Division
Region of Peel
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List of Acronyms

Act	Ontario Planning Act
APSC	Aging Population Term of Council Priority Steering Committee
FCM	Federation of Canadian Municipalities
LHINs	Local Health Integration Networks
PPS	Provincial Policy Statement
ROP	Regional Official Plan
ToCP	Term of Council Priority
WHO	World Health Organization

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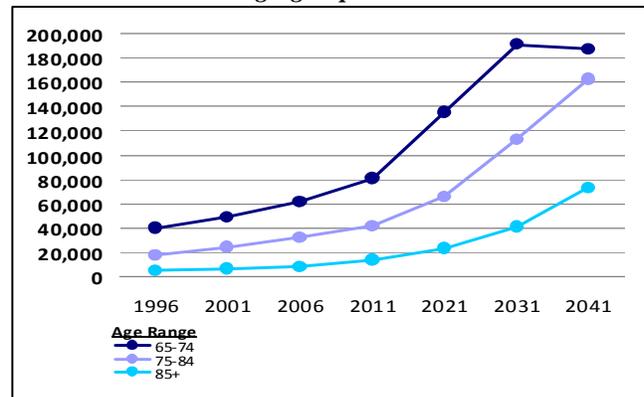
1.0 Introduction

Seniors are the fastest growing age group in Canada. Statistics Canada estimates that the proportion of Canadians aged 65 and older (65+) will grow from one in seven Canadians in 2011, to roughly one in four by 2036 (Canada's Aging Population: The Municipal Role in Canada's Demographic Shift, FCM, 2013). This trend seen throughout Canada will be mirrored in Ontario and in Peel. Population projections developed by the Peel Data Centre show that in 2011, seniors (65+) within Peel will grow from approximately one in ten people to roughly one in four people by 2041 (as opposed to 2036 noted above).

In response to an increasing aging population in Canada and worldwide, governments have recognized the need to make communities more age-friendly. The World Health Organization (WHO) has taken a leadership role in this area by developing a number of tools and resources that are being utilized by governments around the world. WHO defines an age-friendly community as one that “provides an inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes *active aging* through supportive policies, services and infrastructure” (WHO Global Age-friendly Cities Guide, 2007:5). Active aging is the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age (Ibid).

In 2012, Ontario set out a new vision to make the province the healthiest place in North America to grow up and grow old. To fulfill the government's vision, municipalities will need to foster the development of age-friendly communities that encourage active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, civic engagement, and security to enhance quality of life as people age (Living Longer, Living Well, 2012). Making communities more age-friendly is a practical response to promote the contributions and well-being of older residents. For example, adapting environments and services that are accessible and inclusive for seniors and other populations that

Figure 1: Peel Region's Demographic Profile for an Aging Population



have varying needs and abilities will help ensure that citizens remain active and engaged members of the community. Increased civic and social participation is beneficial to the community at large, but has also been shown to improve quality of life and key health outcomes (Ibid).

When planning for an age-friendly community, municipalities should consider the following (Developing Age-Friendly Cities: Policy Challenges & Options, 2012):

- Cross-departmental integration and planning of services
- Location and accessibility of services
- Accessibility of the built environment
- Public spaces which promote a sense of place and social cohesion
- Appropriateness of housing available
- Complete communities to facilitate active and healthy aging
- Meaningful community engagement of older adults
- User friendly information technology

2.0 Purpose and Scope of Project

Municipal governments, such as the Region of Peel, deliver a number of programs to seniors that support them to live active, healthy and engaged lives. Regional programs and services delivered to seniors will be impacted by Peel's aging population due to increased demand, changing needs of seniors or other pressures.

Of key importance is significant funding needed to support the needs of a growing aging population. This is especially important for high growth communities, such as Peel, which struggle today to meet the community's needs. Preliminary financial projections by the Region of Peel through to 2041 suggest that it would not be sustainable for the Region to continue to serve the same proportion of seniors as it does today through the current mix of programs and services for seniors. Regional programs facing the most financial pressure from an aging population are paramedic services, affordable housing and long term care. This is due to the projected increase in service demand and the increasing needs of the aging population. The

Region must consider new and innovative ways to continue to serve the needs of this changing population.

Peel Regional Council has identified the need to prepare and plan for the aging population as a priority for the 2010-2014 Term of Council, establishing Term of Council Priority (ToCP) #11: “assess the impacts of the aging population on Health and Human Services delivered.” The Aging Population Term of Council Priority Steering Committee (APSC), a sub-committee of Regional Council, was established in May 2013 to assess and determine the appropriate role(s) for the Region of Peel to support the aging population now and in the future. The work of APSC is guided by the vision for Peel to become a more age-friendly community where seniors have access to supports that enable them to age safely and with dignity while maximizing their quality of life. As APSC and Regional Council is aware, this vision is multifaceted and connects with and complements a number of other Regional Council priorities outlined in Box 1.

Box 1: Vision for an Age-Friendly Peel Region and Connection to Other Regional Priorities

ToCP #7	Increase the supply of appropriate housing options
ToCP #12	Explore the feasibility of community paramedicine partnerships and strategies to reduce non-essential transports
ToCP #16	Increase accessible transportation services
ToCP #18	Promote a supportive environment for healthy living
ToCP #19	Build community capacity
ToCP #23	Enable the delivery of Regional services and related municipal government and community services through Integrated Service Delivery
ToCP#24	Proactively address emerging planning policy issues through an update to the Regional Official Plan

In a parallel process, the Region of Peel is currently undertaking a five-year review (entitled Peel 2041) and amendment process of the Regional Official Plan, as mandated by the *Ontario Planning Act*. There are opportunities through the Regional Official Plan Review to support the vision for Peel to become a more age-friendly and to complement Regional decision-making about the appropriate roles and service levels for the Region’s Health and Human Services Departments to best respond to the needs of the aging population in Peel.

Through the Regional Official Plan Review, the Region of Peel can work with the three area municipalities to incorporate age-friendly planning principles and can develop new or revise existing policies to better support the needs of Peel’s changing population.

3.0 Age-Friendly Approaches

The importance of building age-friendly communities has been recognized by all levels of government. This is evidenced by the development of significant policy and position papers developed by international, national and provincial bodies. Three key examples of international, national and provincial attention are outlined below.

3.1 International Level

World Health Organization (WHO) Global Age-friendly Cities Guide, 2007

In 2006, the World Health Organization (WHO) brought together 33 cities in 22 countries for a project to help determine the key elements of the urban environment that support active and healthy aging. The result of the project was the development of the *Global Age-friendly Cities Guide in 2007*. The guide identifies eight core elements of an age-friendly city that influence the health and quality of life for older adults (Figure 2). It also provides a checklist of age-friendly features. The checklist provides core age-friendly city features that consider both the physical and social dimensions that contribute to independent and active aging. It is a tool for a city’s self-assessment and a map to chart progress to becoming age-friendly (Appendix A).

Figure 2: Core Elements of an Age-friendly City (WHO Global Age-friendly Cities Guide, 2007)

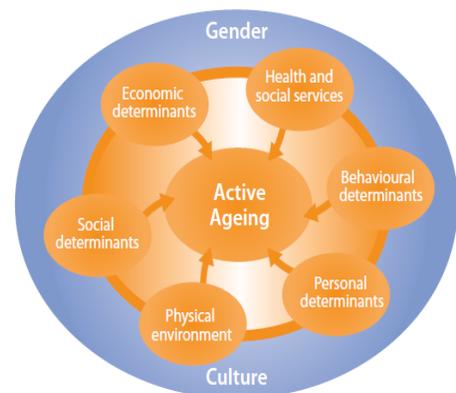


- 1. Outdoor spaces and buildings:** the design of buildings and the spaces between them have an impact on the ability of older people to age in place.
- 2. Transportation** – Personal mobility is important for both accessing day-to-day destinations and a sense of independence among seniors.
- 3. Housing** – Appropriate, affordable housing that can adapt to changing demographic conditions and in turn allow seniors to stay at home longer in life has an impact on the quality of life and independence of seniors.
- 4. Social participation** – Maintaining social activity is an important part of maintaining good health and well-being, especially for seniors.
- 5. Respect and social inclusion** – The extent to which older people participate in the social, civic and economic life of the city is closely linked to their experience of inclusion.
- 6. Civic participation and employment** – Many adults choose to work beyond the age of retirement, or to contribute to the community as a volunteer. Age-friendly communities help older adults contribute to voluntary work or continued paid work.
- 7. Communication and information** – Age-friendly cities both disseminate and collect information using a variety of media and in a way that is clear and easy to understand.
- 8. Community support and health services** – Age-friendly cities provide appropriate community supports and health services that are accessible and in close proximity to amenities, such as transit, to enhance quality of life as people age.

The eight core elements of an age-friendly city cover the essential features of the community’s structure and its physical environment, as well as the extent to which its services and policies reflect the determinants of active aging. For example, **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation** and **Housing** are key features of a community’s physical environment that have a strong influence on personal mobility, safety from injury, security from crime, health behaviours and social participation.

Respect and Social Inclusion, Social Participation, and Civic Participation and Employment

Opportunities reflect various aspects of social environments and culture that affect participation and mental well-being. **Communication and Information** and **Community Support and**



*Figure 3: Determinants of Active Aging
WHO Global Age-friendly Cities Guide,*

Health Services involve both the social environments, and health and social service determinants (Figure 3).

3.2 National Level: Government of Canada

The Government of Canada, through the Public Health Agency of Canada has introduced a number of innovative documents and approaches to developing age-friendly communities in Canada. A few of these initiatives are described below.

Age-friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide (2006)

Modelled after the WHO's *Global Age-friendly Cities Guide*, in 2006 Public Health Agency of Canada led the development of a guide to assess the age-friendliness of rural and remote communities in Canada. The Age-friendly Rural and Remote Communities Guide uses the same model and research framework of the Global Age-friendly Cities, and has two main objectives (2006:5):

- To increase awareness of what seniors need to maintain active, healthy and productive lives within their community by identifying indicators of age-friendly rural or remote communities, and
- To identify common barriers and foster dialogue and action that supports the development of age-friendly communities in rural or remote areas across the country

The guide uses the eight core elements developed by the World Health Organization in the Global Age-friendly Cities Guide, accompanied by a checklist of age-friendly features for rural or remote communities (Appendix B).

Age-Friendly Communities in Canada: Community Implementation Guide (2012)

In 2012, the Public Health Agency of Canada put together a 'toolbox', containing practical tools and resources to help make communities more age-friendly. This document includes leading examples from across Canada of work plans, time lines, checklists, guidelines and other helpful tips to help implement and assess progress made towards developing an age-friendly community. More specifically, the document references 22 specific tools within the toolbox.

3.3 Provincial Level: Government of Ontario

The Government of Ontario and its ministries have introduced a number of progressive strategies, plans and guides to better support the needs of our aging population, including:

- *The Aging at Home Strategy (2007)*;
- A report by Dr. Sinha, provincial expert lead for the development of a seniors' strategy in Ontario, titled *Living Longer, Living Well (2012)*;
- *Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors (2012)*; and
- *The Age-Friendly Community Planning Guide (2013)*.

These four documents are described in greater detail below.

Ontario's Aging at Home Strategy, 2007

The provincial government, through the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, announced a four-year *Aging at Home Strategy* in 2007. The strategy delivers a wide range of community-based services so seniors can stay healthy and live more independently in their homes, avoiding premature admission to long-term care homes or hospitals. In 2010, the strategy was expanded to include an additional 125 Aging at Home projects that will assist seniors in receiving the appropriate care in their homes and communities.

The Aging at Homes Strategy reflects a broader shift within the health system towards investing in community-based services that respond to the needs and preferences of seniors to receive care at home or in the community, rather than in the hospital or other institutional settings

Living Longer, Living Well (2012) - Report by Dr. Samir Sinha (Provincial Lead, Ontario's Seniors Strategy)

- On May 24, 2012, the Ministers of Health and Long-Term Care announced the appointment of Dr. Samir Sinha (Director of Geriatrics in Mount Sinai and the University Health Network Hospitals) as the Provincial Seniors Strategy Expert Lead. His mandate was to lead the development and implementation of a Seniors Strategy for Ontario through a comprehensive provincial consultation process. The report, *Living Longer, Living Well (2012)*, provides overall highlights and 166 recommendations to inform a Seniors Care Strategy that will fulfill the government's mission to make Ontario the best place to group up and grow old. Of importance to this paper is Dr. Sinha's

recommendation to develop age friendly communities to respond to both the opportunities and challenges of an aging population. His recommendations for developing age friendly communities are two-fold (page 17):The Government of Ontario should support its communities and citizens to ensure they have access to a variety of programs and supports that will enable them to adapt their residences to accommodate their evolving functional needs so that they can continue to age in place whenever possible and for as long as they desire.

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, in partnership with the Ministry of Transportation and through partnerships with Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), Municipalities and Community Support Sector agencies, needs to further enhance the development and availability of a non-profit, safe, dignified, and consumer-oriented transportation systems for older Ontarians across urban and, wherever possible, rural communities as well.

Dr. Sinha emphasizes the importance of strengthening the health care system for seniors, building on the principles of ‘Aging at Home’ initiatives and developing age-friendly communities. Dr. Sinha’s work has also informed the development of Ontario’s Action Plan for Seniors.

Ontario’s Action Plan for Seniors, 2013

The province launched *Independence, Activity and Good Health: Ontario’s Action Plan for Seniors* on January 15, 2013 to help seniors stay safe, healthy, vibrant and active. This Plan was informed by Dr. Sinha’s report and outlined existing and planned provincial policies and programs that support seniors to maintain their health and independence in order to age safely in their community. The Seniors’ Action Plan included 22 different actions that fall under three main goals (Box 2) and outlines a significant number of programs and initiatives to provide better access to health care, high quality resources and improved safety and security.

Box 2: Three Main Goals in Ontario’s Action Plan for Seniors (Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, 2013)

Healthy Seniors

We will help seniors find and access the health care services they need to be healthier and stay at home longer to improve their quality of life.

Senior-Friendly Communities

We will harness the potential and maximize the contributions of our seniors by promoting the development of age-friendly communities that weave together services and policies to enhance seniors' well-being and participation.

Safety and Security

We will ensure that Ontario seniors are provided with the programs, services and supports that help them live safely, independently, and with dignity.

It also proposes the development of a provincial Seniors Care Strategy to establish sustainable best practices and policies that will support the delivery of health, social, and community care services at the local level, along with the provision of accessible/affordable housing and transportation.

Age-friendly Community Planning Guide, 2013

As a follow-up to the commitment in Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors, on August 20, 2013, the provincial government released a new guide, the *Finding the Right Fit Age-friendly Community Planning Guide*, to help municipalities address the needs of an aging population and ensure that seniors are able to continue contributing to all aspects of community life. The guide provides information to municipalities on the development, implementation and evaluation of plans for age-friendly communities that are socially and physically accessible.

4.0 Peel 2041 - Regional Official Plan Review and Age-Friendly Planning

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2014 issued under section 3 of the *Ontario Planning Act* (herein "Act") sets out the "government's land use vision for how we settle our landscape, create our built environment, and manage our land and resources over the long term to achieve livable and resilient communities" (Provincial Policy Statement, 2014). Sub-section 1.1.1 provides a list of how healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained. It refers to the need to provide affordable housing and housing for older adults. As well, it refers to the need to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by identifying, preventing and removing land use barriers which restrict full participation in society.

The *Ontario Planning Act* sets out the rules for land use planning in Ontario. Under Section 16 of the *Act*, contents of an Official Plan shall “contain goals, objectives and policies established primarily to manage and direct **physical change** and the effects on the social, economic and natural environment of the municipality.” (*Ontario Planning Act*, 1988, c3, s 6(a)).

Existing policies in the Regional Official Plan relate to the physical environment or Regional infrastructure, such as buildings, transportation, and housing. The desired goal of the Aging Population Term of Council Priority (ToCP) for Peel to be an age-friendly community, where seniors have access to supports that enable them to age safely and with dignity, and maximize their quality of life. Three core elements of age-friendly communities – **outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation and housing** – relate to the Regional Official Plan. By developing policies within the Regional Official Plan that support age-friendly principles, the Region and Peel can continue to work towards achieving the vision outlined through the Aging Population ToCP.

Existing Age-Friendly Policies in Peel’s Regional Official Plan

Currently the Regional Official Plan (ROP) has a number of policies relating to aging but they are indirect and dispersed throughout the plan under the following themes:

- Aging within the Same Community
- Housing Options and Affordability
- Accessibility and Age-Friendly Infrastructure (i.e. accessible housing/transportation)
- Creating Complete Communities, and
- Human and Health Services

4.1 Aging within the Community

For many seniors the ability to remain in their community or neighborhood for as long as possible is desirable. It is important to work towards enabling seniors to remain in their community in spite of potential changes in health and functioning in later life. The concept of aging within one’s community is an important tool to enable seniors to age safely, and with dignity, and maximize quality of life. Therefore, it is important to work towards creating ‘life cycle communities,’ where residents are able to live comfortably through the full spectrum of

their lives. One way to do this is through identifying land use barriers which restrict accessibility.

Indirect policies that relate to aging within the same community include planning for affordable housing (section 5.8.2) and the establishment of secondary units (section 5.8.3).

Existing Policies:

- 5.8.2.3 Encourage and *support* the efforts by the area municipalities to plan for a range of densities and forms of housing affordable to all households, including low and moderate income households, enabling all Peel residents to remain in their communities.
- 5.8.3.2.6 – Encourage and support the *area municipal official plans* to permit *secondary suites* in new and existing residential *development, redevelopment* and *intensification* while ensuring compliance with provincial legislation, plans and municipal standards.
- 5.8.3.2.7 – Encourage the area municipalities to explore the legalization of existing *secondary suites* to ensure compliance with health and safety standards.

4.2 Housing Options and Affordability Policy Theme

Access to a range of housing options, including safe, adequate and affordable housing, is a critical component of active aging.

The ROP has a number of policies under section 5.8 (Housing) which relate to housing options and affordability. These policies encourage and support a mixture of housing types, options and tenure that are directed at Peel’s residents, including seniors. A diversity of affordable housing options is critically important for the seniors population, as safe and affordable housing accommodations can positively impact one’s health and well-being.

Section 5.8.2 – General Policies

Existing Policies:

- 5.8.2.4 – Assist public agencies at the federal, provincial, Regional and area municipal levels in identifying and maintaining an inventory of available public lands and buildings suitable for housing for low and moderate income households in *Peel Region*.

- 5.8.2.5 – *Support* the initiatives of the area municipalities in the construction and retention of rental housing.
- 5.8.2.7 – Develop an implementation plan, in collaboration with human services stakeholders, for the *Regional Housing Strategy* by setting priorities and timeframes among various housing needs of residents and identify and implement programs and actions to address these needs.
- 5.8.2.8 – Monitor and evaluate activities undertaken in support of the *Regional Housing Strategy* to revise and set new priorities on an ongoing basis as the housing needs of Peel residents change.
- 5.8.2.10 – Encourage the area municipalities to establish minimum new housing unit targets that are affordable in secondary plans where appropriate, to ensure a diverse mix of housing type and tenure.

Section 5.8.3 - Supply of Affordable Housing

Existing Policies:

- 5.8.3.2.1 – Explore, in collaboration with the area municipalities, the feasibility of implementing incentives such as waivers, deferrals or grants in-lieu of *development charges*, other municipal planning and building fees and charges, and Regional property taxes to promote the *development of affordable housing*.
- 5.8.3.2.2 – Work with the area municipalities to explore opportunities to coordinate the fast-tracking of planning approvals for affordable housing projects.
- 5.8.3.2.3 – Encourage the area municipalities to develop *alternative development and design standards*, where appropriate, to encourage *affordable housing development*.
- 5.8.3.2.5 – Advocate to the Province to explicitly provide municipalities the authority to use *inclusionary zoning* as a tool to require *affordable housing*.
- 5.8.3.2.9 – Give priority to the *development of affordable housing* on surplus Regional municipal property while ensuring the goals, objectives, and policies of this Plan and the area municipal *official plans* are adhered to.
- 5.8.3.2.10 – Encourage the area municipalities to give priority to sell or lease surplus municipal properties for the *development of affordable housing* while ensuring the goals, objectives and policies of this Plan and the area municipal *official plans* are adhered to.

- 5.8.3.2.11 – Encourage residential *development, redevelopment and intensification* to include an *affordable housing* component by promoting incentives or funding from different levels of government.
- 5.8.3.2.12 – Encourage community agencies and landowners of suitably sized sites to develop *affordable housing*.
- 6.2.2.13 – Encourage and support the area municipalities in creating and maintaining appropriate opportunities for the provision of affordable housing, including social and special needs housing.

Section 5.8.4 - Retention of Existing Rental Housing Stock

Existing Policies:

- 5.8.4.2.1 – Encourage the area municipalities to develop official plan policies with criteria to regulate the conversion of residential rental to ownership units.
- 5.8.4.2.2 – Encourage the area municipalities to develop official plan policies with criteria to prohibit the demolition of existing residential rental units without replacement of the same or higher number of residential rental units.

4.3 Accessibility Policy Theme

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (2005) places considerable responsibility on municipalities to identify, remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities in housing, transportation and the built environment. When older adults view a neighbourhood that is safe and accessible it encourages outdoor activities and engagement with the community. An adequate number of accessibility policies already exist in the ROP that touch upon accessible housing (section 5.8.6), barriers to access housing (section 5.8.7), and accessible transportation (section 5.9.11).

Section 5.8.6 - Housing Options for Persons with Special Needs and Diverse¹ Populations

Existing Policies:

- 5.8.6.2.1 – Encourage the area municipalities to develop policies in their official plans to support the development of special needs housing in locations with convenient access to existing or planned infrastructure (e.g. transit), amenities and support services.
- 5.8.6.2.2 – Encourage the area municipalities to explicitly identify *special needs housing* as permitted uses in residential or other suitably zoned lands where appropriate in area municipal zoning by-laws.
- 5.8.6.2.4 – Encourage the area municipalities to identify additional areas where *special needs housing* is permitted, to ensure they are in close proximity to amenities, support services and other existing services, such as transit.
- 5.8.6.2.5 – Explore, *jointly* with the area municipalities, strategies to encourage the incorporation of *universal accessibility features* in existing residential *development*.
- 5.8.6.2.6 – Work with the area municipalities, building industry and Regional and area municipal accessibility advisory committees to develop and implement guidelines to include *universal accessibility features* in all new residential *development, redevelopment and intensification*.
- 5.8.6.2.7 – Implement Regional guidelines requiring the incorporation of *universal accessible features* in existing and new Regionally funded or managed *affordable housing development*.
- 5.8.6.2.8 – Encourage and facilitate the development of partnerships among housing providers, service providers, community organizations and other stakeholders to provide *special needs housing* and related services.
- 5.8.6.2.9 – Develop, in collaboration with the area municipalities, measures to provide opportunities to meet the housing needs of *diverse populations*.
- 5.8.6.2.10 – Consider preferences and values of *diverse populations* in the design and construction of *social housing*.

¹ Diverse populations are distinct groups within our population that require different levels of services and needs which may include and are not limited to **older adults**, children, youth, diverse ethnic populations, Aboriginal persons, and recent immigrants (Regional Official Plan, page #235).

Section 5.8.7 - Barriers to Access Housing

Existing Policies:

- 5.8.7.2.3 – Encourage and facilitate the involvement of service providers, community organizations and stakeholders to address identified issues related to housing barriers.
- 5.8.7.2.4 – Facilitate the development of new and improved income supports for households affected by economic housing barriers.
- 5.8.7.2.5 – Encourage and facilitate a greater community awareness of key issues related to socio-economic housing barriers.

Section 6.2 Regional Human Services

Existing Policies:

- 6.2.2.9 – Encourage the area municipalities to develop appropriate accessibility policies and regulations in their Official Plans, Zoning By-laws, Urban Design Guidelines, and Site Plan Manuals, in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- 6.2.2.12 – Request developers of affordable housing, including social and special needs housing, and their funding partners to consult with the Region and area municipalities when making locational decisions, to ensure an appropriate and equitable distribution of affordable housing throughout Peel.
- 6.2.2.13 – Encourage and support the area municipalities in creating and maintaining appropriate opportunities for the provision of affordable housing, including social and special needs housing.
- 6.2.2.17 – Encourage the provision and maintenance of an adequate supply of affordable rental and ownership housing to meet the diverse needs of all Peel residents, in partnership with the area municipalities, non-profit and private providers, and through the effective use of all available and appropriate affordable housing programs and housing rehabilitation funding sources.
- 6.2.2.18 – Facilitate the provision of rent-geared-to income components within housing program initiatives and develop a plan for the allocation of rent-geared-to income subsidies.

Section 5.9.11- Accessible Transportation

The condition and design of transportation-related infrastructure such as signage, traffic lights and sidewalks affect a person's mobility. Personal mobility is important for accessing day-to-day destinations and acquiring independence among seniors. Hence, accessible and affordable transportation plays an important role in a person's quality of life and becomes more necessary as people age.

Given the Region's role and mandate, the following policies are in place to reflect accessible and affordable transportation in the ROP:

Existing Policies:

- 5.9.11.2.1 – *Support* increased coordination of transportation *services* among TransHelp, the Accessible Transportation Coordination Office, the area municipalities, *community*-based agencies and taxi companies to provide a collaborative, integrated and equitable transportation *services* for persons with *disabilities*.
- 5.9.11.2.2 – Work with the Province, Local Health Integration Networks, human *services* agencies and transit providers to coordinate and facilitate inter-Regional transportation for persons with *disabilities*.
- 5.9.11.2.3 – *Support* the coordination of eligibility criteria between and among all providers of transportation *services* for persons with *disabilities*.
- 5.9.11.2.4 – Encourage *public transit* providers to make service accessible to people with *disabilities* as identified in the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- 5.9.11.2.5 – Encourage area municipalities and GO Transit to introduce a great number of accessible low floor bus routes and other transit accessibility improvements to accommodate the travel needs of persons with *disabilities* in *Peel Region*.
- 5.9.11.2.6 – Ensure that TransHelp eligibility criteria are designed to accommodate the mobility needs of those unable to use conventional transit.
- 5.9.11.2.7 – Develop and implement programs and services that meet the transportation needs of persons with *disabilities* who do not qualify for TransHelp.
- 5.9.11.2.8 – *Support* efforts to educate the general public about the transportation needs and issues of persons with *disabilities* through collaboration with such groups as Local Health Integration Networks, accessible taxi service providers and colleges and universities.

- 5.9.11.2.9 – Work with the area municipalities, transit providers and the private sector to provide and maintain a built environment that *supports* trips made using *accessible transportation services* (such as through the provision of curb cuts and accessible entrances to buildings).
- 5.9.11.2.10 – Work with the Province and other appropriate agencies to identify and secure *sustainable*, predictable funding to *support* the provision of transportation for persons with *disabilities*.
- 5.9.11.2.11 – Work with Metrolinx on matters related to universal access and to develop Region-wide and local implementation strategies to improve specialized transit coordination and delivery.

4.4 Walkable / Complete Community Theme

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006) also supports building complete communities. A “complete community” is defined as a community that “meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime by providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, a full range of housing and community infrastructure including affordable housing, schools, recreation and open space for their residents. Convenient access to public transportation and options for safe, non-motorized travel is also provided” (page 48). The principles, ideas and concepts described in this definition aligns with the principles of age-friendly communities described by the World Health Organization, as well as national and provincial bodies as noted in this paper. At a high level, both terms seek to encourage the development of healthy, vibrant communities that support and respond to the needs of the all members of the community.

In the current ROP there are some policies that encourage the provision of healthy, age-friendly, complete communities for people living and working in the Region. These policies offer a wide range and mix of housing, employment, and recreational and cultural activities that are accessible by public transit to support walking and cycling.

Section 5.5.4 - Greenfield Density

Existing Policies:

- 5.5.4.2.6 – Direct the area municipalities to incorporate official plan policies to plan for complete communities within designated Greenfield areas that create high quality public open spaces with site design and urban design standards that support opportunities for transit, walking and cycling.
- 5.8.7.2.2 – Ensure that future development of Regionally funded *affordable housing* be located in support of developing compact, complete communities throughout Peel to allow for more transportation options with improved access to services and amenities.

4.5 Human and Health Services Policy Theme

The Region is responsible for planning, delivering and/or contributing to the funding of a wide range of human services, health services, social services and housing among others to improve the quality of life of all people in Peel.

In the ROP policies exist that address the provision of human service facilities and programs to meet the needs of current and future populations in the Region under section 6.2 (Regional Human Services).

Section 6.2 Regional Human Services

Existing Policies:

- 6.2.2.1 – Ensure Regional human service facilities and programs are provided in a manner consistent with the needs of present and future populations in Peel, based on a *changing population age structure*, multicultural and ethnic diversity, disability and in keeping with the Region's financial objectives.
- 6.2.2.4 – Encourage the area municipalities to take into account the availability and location of existing and future human services and access to public transit when considering and revising secondary plans, and to have regard for the impact of such plans, on the provision of human services in an effective, efficient and logical fashion, by the Region.

- 6.2.2.5 – Ensure that Regional human services facilities are located and designed to be accessible to all people in Peel and are supportive of the Regional Structure policies of this plan.

5.0 Aging-Related Policy Analysis

Upon reviewing the Regional Official Plan for aging and accessibility-related policies as well as consulting with Regional and area municipal planners on the Region’s vision of age-friendly community where seniors have access to supports that enable them to age safely and with dignity, the following policy analysis has been determined. It should be noted that the following reflects the current state of the policy environment, however there may be policy changes in these areas in the future.

- Existing aging-related policies are indirect and dispersed throughout various sections of the ROP.
- An adequate number of accessibility-related policies for persons with special needs and diverse populations (including older adults) exist as it relates to accessible housing / transportation.
- An adequate number of affordable housing and rental housing stock policies exist to meet the needs for all Peel residents, including older adults.

However, there are:

- No direct policies targeting an aging population in the current ROP.
- Minimal policies addressing opportunities for Peel residents to age within the same community.
- Minimal policies directed at the establishment of complete/walkable communities to promote active aging for seniors.
- No existing policy to implement the Health Background Study Framework, developed by Peel Health Services which provides a tool for planners, developers and others to assess the health consequences for Peel residents of proposed development applications. The Health Background Study Framework supports the establishment of safe, walkable communities to encourage active and healthy aging for people of all ages.
- No direct policy promoting the use of universal design in the physical (built) environment. The ROP has several policies encouraging the incorporation of universal accessible features for Regionally-owned and managed facilities but this is different from

universal design. Universal design creates environments that respond to the needs of the population to the greatest extent possible. More specifically, it provides a more accessible and inclusive environment for all people who have various strengths and abilities (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005).

6.0 Next Steps

The current Regional Official Plan review process is an opportunity for the Region and area municipalities to amend and/or develop new policies that align with and build on the directions and future recommendations of the Aging Population Steering Committee (APSC), and help to ensure that Peel is positioned to respond to and support the needs of seniors now and in the future.

To do this, a new section should be inserted in Chapter 6 (Regional Services), following the Regional Human Services section, as renumbered section 6.3 entitled Age-friendly Planning. The new section will list some high level objectives and aging-related policies to accommodate the needs of older people in our communities. This section will be supported by including a few new glossary terms.

6.3 Age-Friendly Planning

Peel Region's demographic profile will change substantially in the coming years with the seniors population defined as those aged 65 and older doubling in size by 2031. While demographic changes in *Peel* are already being experienced, the strongest impacts will be felt over the next several decades as the baby boomer population ages. It is important that the Region and the area municipalities plan, prepare and adapt our programs and services to meet the needs of the growing and changing senior population.

The increase in the senior population will impact the planning and delivery of Regional and area municipal services including affordable housing, accessible transportation, recreation, physical infrastructure and community health. The Region and the area municipalities recognize the challenges and opportunities posed by an aging population and are beginning to plan for age-friendly communities that enable residents to age actively through supportive policies, services and infrastructure.

The Region of Peel supports the establishment of age-friendly communities and will work collaboratively with the area municipalities to work towards this outcome. This includes providing access to a range of housing options that are affordable, transit that is accessible and the use of universal accessibility design in the physical environment. The vision is to establish a more age-friendly community throughout *Peel Region* where seniors have access to supports that enable them to age safely and with dignity, while maximizing their quality of life.

6.3.1 Objectives

- 6.3.1.1 To provide for the needs of Peel's changing age structure and allow opportunities for seniors to age within their community.
- 6.3.1.2 To promote the use of *universal accessibility* design in *Peel Region's* built environment to enhance the safety, mobility, and independence of seniors.
- 6.3.1.3 To promote *active aging* for older adults by establishing healthy, complete communities that are in close proximity to amenities, support services and transit.

6.3.2 Policies

It is the policy of *Regional Council* to:

- 6.3.2.1 Encourage the area municipalities to develop policies in their official plans to support seniors to *age* within their community.
- 6.3.2.2 Encourage the use of *universal accessibility* design in the built form to create a safe, barrier-free and more inclusive environment that will enhance the mobility and independence of all residents, including seniors.
- 6.3.2.3 Encourage the area municipalities in implementing the *Health Background Study Framework* to create healthy, walkable communities close to amenities, services and programs to support independent, active and healthy aging for all residents in *Peel*.

It is proposed that the above section be supported by the following glossary terms.

Active Aging: the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.

7.0 Conclusion

The current Regional Official Plan has many existing policies that relate to Peel's aging population. This includes the provision of housing options and affordability, the incorporation of universal accessible features in Peel's infrastructure (including housing and transportation), the establishment of walkable, complete communities, and the delivery of human and health services to support *seniors* to age actively by optimizing opportunities for health, civic engagement and security with the purpose of maximizing their quality of life as they age.

However, after conducting an assessment of the above-mentioned policies it is clear there are some gaps. First, there are minimal policies to support Peel's seniors to age in within the same community. Second, there are minimal policies targeting the establishment of walkable communities to promote active and healthy aging. Third, there are no policies to promote the use of universal design in the Region's physical environment that will respond to the needs and inclusivity of *all* citizens, including an aging population.

Peel is undertaking a five-year review of the Regional Official Plan to ensure the plan remains current, conforms to matters of provincial interest, and is consistent with Provincial Policy Statements (Consolidated Draft, June 2013). The Regional Official Plan review process is an opportunity for both Regional and area municipal planners to review and establish aging related policies, where appropriate, in their official plans.

At the Regional level, this discussion paper recommends the inclusion of a new section titled **Age-Friendly Planning** in Chapter 6 of the Regional Official Plan to accommodate the needs of older people Region-wide. To establish a more age-friendly community through Peel, three objectives and three policy recommendations have been suggested. The aim is to provide our seniors with access to the supports that will enable them to age safely and with dignity, while maximizing their quality of life.

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Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities

This checklist of essential age-friendly city features is based on the results of the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities project consultation in 33 cities in 22 countries. The checklist is a tool for a city's self-assessment and a map for charting progress. More detailed checklists of age-friendly city features are to be found in the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide.

This checklist is intended to be used by individuals and groups interested in making their city more age-friendly. For the checklist to be effective, older people must be involved as full partners. In assessing a city's strengths and deficiencies, older people will describe how the checklist of features matches their own experience of the city's positive characteristics and barriers. They should play a role in suggesting changes and in implementing and monitoring improvements.

Outdoor spaces and buildings

- Public areas are clean and pleasant.
- Green spaces and outdoor seating are sufficient in number, well-maintained and safe.
- Pavements are well-maintained, free of obstructions and reserved for pedestrians.
- Pavements are non-slip, are wide enough for wheelchairs and have dropped curbs to road level.
- Pedestrian crossings are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disability, with non-slip markings, visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times.
- Drivers give way to pedestrians at intersections and pedestrian crossings.
- Cycle paths are separate from pavements and other pedestrian walkways.
- Outdoor safety is promoted by good street lighting, police patrols and community education.

- Services are situated together and are accessible.
- Special customer service arrangements are provided, such as separate queues or service counters for older people.
- Buildings are well-signed outside and inside, with sufficient seating and toilets, accessible elevators, ramps, railings and stairs, and non-slip floors.
- Public toilets outdoors and indoors are sufficient in number, clean, well-maintained and accessible.

Transportation

- Public transportation costs are consistent, clearly displayed and affordable.
- Public transportation is reliable and frequent, including at night and on weekends and holidays.
- All city areas and services are accessible by public transport, with good connections and well-marked routes and vehicles.

- Vehicles are clean, well-maintained, accessible, not overcrowded and have priority seating that is respected.
- Specialized transportation is available for disabled people.
- Drivers stop at designated stops and beside the curb to facilitate boarding and wait for passengers to be seated before driving off.
- Transport stops and stations are conveniently located, accessible, safe, clean, well-lit and well-marked, with adequate seating and shelter.
- Complete and accessible information is provided to users about routes, schedules and special needs facilities.
- A voluntary transport service is available where public transportation is too limited.
- Taxis are accessible and affordable, and drivers are courteous and helpful.
- Roads are well-maintained, with covered drains and good lighting.
- Traffic flow is well-regulated.
- Roadways are free of obstructions that block drivers' vision.
- Traffic signs and intersections are visible and well-placed.
- Driver education and refresher courses are promoted for all drivers.
- Parking and drop-off areas are safe, sufficient in number and conveniently located.
- Priority parking and drop-off spots for people with special needs are available and respected.

Housing

- Sufficient, affordable housing is available in areas that are safe and close to services and the rest of the community.
- Sufficient and affordable home maintenance and support services are available.
- Housing is well-constructed and provides safe and comfortable shelter from the weather.
- Interior spaces and level surfaces allow freedom of movement in all rooms and passageways.
- Home modification options and supplies are available and affordable, and providers understand the needs of older people.
- Public and commercial rental housing is clean, well-maintained and safe.
- Sufficient and affordable housing for frail and disabled older people, with appropriate services, is provided locally.

Social participation

- Venues for events and activities are conveniently located, accessible, well-lit and easily reached by public transport.
- Events are held at times convenient for older people.
- Activities and events can be attended alone or with a companion.
- Activities and attractions are affordable, with no hidden or additional participation costs.

- Good information about activities and events is provided, including details about accessibility of facilities and transportation options for older people.
- A wide variety of activities is offered to appeal to a diverse population of older people.
- Gatherings including older people are held in various local community spots, such as recreation centres, schools, libraries, community centres and parks.
- There is consistent outreach to include people at risk of social isolation.

Respect and social inclusion

- Older people are regularly consulted by public, voluntary and commercial services on how to serve them better.
- Services and products to suit varying needs and preferences are provided by public and commercial services.
- Service staff are courteous and helpful.
- Older people are visible in the media, and are depicted positively and without stereotyping.
- Community-wide settings, activities and events attract all generations by accommodating age-specific needs and preferences.
- Older people are specifically included in community activities for “families”.
- Schools provide opportunities to learn about ageing and older people, and involve older people in school activities.

- Older people are recognized by the community for their past as well as their present contributions.
- Older people who are less well-off have good access to public, voluntary and private services.

Civic participation and employment

- A range of flexible options for older volunteers is available, with training, recognition, guidance and compensation for personal costs.
- The qualities of older employees are well-promoted.
- A range of flexible and appropriately paid opportunities for older people to work is promoted.
- Discrimination on the basis of age alone is forbidden in the hiring, retention, promotion and training of employees.
- Workplaces are adapted to meet the needs of disabled people.
- Self-employment options for older people are promoted and supported.
- Training in post-retirement options is provided for older workers.
- Decision-making bodies in public, private and voluntary sectors encourage and facilitate membership of older people.

Communication and information

- A basic, effective communication system reaches community residents of all ages.
- Regular and widespread distribution of information is assured and a coordinated, centralized access is provided.

- Regular information and broadcasts of interest to older people are offered.
- Oral communication accessible to older people is promoted.
- People at risk of social isolation get one-to-one information from trusted individuals.
- Public and commercial services provide friendly, person-to-person service on request.
- Printed information – including official forms, television captions and text on visual displays – has large lettering and the main ideas are shown by clear headings and bold-face type.
- Print and spoken communication uses simple, familiar words in short, straightforward sentences.
- Telephone answering services give instructions slowly and clearly and tell callers how to repeat the message at any time.
- Electronic equipment, such as mobile telephones, radios, televisions, and bank and ticket machines, has large buttons and big lettering.
- There is wide public access to computers and the Internet, at no or minimal charge, in public places such as government offices, community centres and libraries.

Community and health services

- An adequate range of health and community support services is offered for promoting, maintaining and restoring health.
- Home care services include health and personal care and housekeeping.
- Health and social services are conveniently located and accessible by all means of transport.
- Residential care facilities and designated older people's housing are located close to services and the rest of the community.
- Health and community service facilities are safely constructed and fully accessible.
- Clear and accessible information is provided about health and social services for older people.
- Delivery of services is coordinated and administratively simple.
- All staff are respectful, helpful and trained to serve older people.
- Economic barriers impeding access to health and community support services are minimized.
- Voluntary services by people of all ages are encouraged and supported.
- There are sufficient and accessible burial sites.
- Community emergency planning takes into account the vulnerabilities and capacities of older people.

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1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Sidewalks, Pathways and Trails

- Sidewalks, pathways and trails are well-maintained, cleared, non-slip and accessible.
- Sidewalks are continuous, with low curbs and can accommodate wheelchairs and scooters.
- Snow removal is prompt and considerate of seniors (e.g., consideration is given to how snow is piled for those who need to get in and out of cars, and that seniors may be in wheelchairs or using scooters).
- Parking lots are well-maintained and cleared of snow and ice.
- Streets are well-maintained.
- Rain shelters are available to support pedestrians.

Public Restrooms and Rest Areas

- Public washrooms are accessible and can accommodate people with a variety of disabilities (accommodations include push buttons, wide doors, hand rails, locks that are easy for those with arthritis to use) and are located at convenient locations with proper signage.
- Accessible benches (the appropriate height for seniors) are located along sidewalks, paths or trails and are spaced at regular intervals.

Safety and Security

- Action is taken to lower crime rate.
- Neighbourhoods and trails are well-lit.
- Traffic volumes are low and/or well-controlled.

Buildings

- Buildings are accessible and have the following:
 - ramps with a slope appropriate for wheelchairs
 - fewer stairs to get into buildings and within buildings
 - non-slip flooring
 - accessible washrooms located on the main floor
 - parking that is well-maintained and located near public buildings for easier access

Amenities (grocery stores, churches, government buildings, community centres)

- Services are grouped together, located in close proximity to where older people live and can be easily accessed (e.g., are located on the ground floor of buildings, include wheelchair ramps).

2. Transportation

Roads

- Roads are well-maintained, well-lit and are supported by clearly visible signage.
- Traffic flow is well-regulated (especially in summer cottage communities that experience increased traffic in the summer months).
- Flexible rules of the road—speed limit is not enforced (slower), not too many traffic lights, seniors given wide berth on the roads by other drivers.
- Traffic lines on pavement are clear and visible.

Snow Removal

- Snow removal of roads and parking areas is prompt.

Parking

- Parking lots and street parking are located close to amenities.
- Parking regulations are enforced (preventing people from parking in emergency zones and in disabled parking spaces).
- Drop-off and pick-up areas are clearly marked.
- There are a sufficient number of disabled parking spots.

Community Transportation Services

- Affordable and accessible community transport services (including shuttle vans) are available to take seniors to events, shopping excursions and field trips.
- Volunteer and/or an informal network of drivers are available and compensated (e.g., gas money) for their efforts.

Health Transportation (including to larger centres)

- Accessible transportation services are available to take seniors to and from health appointments (including appointments in larger cities)—this includes boat and air transport from remote communities.

Assisted Transportation

- Accessible transportation for persons with a variety of disabilities is available across the range of transportation services.

Public Transport

- Accessible, affordable and convenient public transportation (buses, ferries, etc.) is available to older adults to conduct their daily activities—to reach such destinations as hospitals, health/community centres, shopping malls and banks.
- Public transportation services are coordinated.
- Services are available throughout the day and evening.

Taxis

- Taxis are available, accessible and affordable to seniors.

Information

- Information is provided to seniors about the range of transportation services (public and private) available to them, including information on how and where to access them, timetables and cost.
- The use of public and alternative transportation is promoted in the community.

3. Housing

Housing Options

- A range of appropriate and affordable housing options (for sale and for rent) is available and includes apartments, independent living, smaller condominiums and family homes.
- Housing is affordable and includes subsidized housing.
- Home sizes reflect the needs and lifestyles of seniors today.
- Housing is located in close proximity to services.
- Housing is adapted for seniors and those with disabilities.

Aging in Place

- Affordable supports are available to enable seniors to remain at home.
- Assisted living options are available to all.
- “In-between” housing is available (i.e., options between the large family home and the small apartment, but with more assisted living options that can be considered an “intermediary” step).
- “Alert systems” are available for seniors living alone (i.e., systems that alert someone when a senior needs help).

Long-Term Care

- Affordable long-term care options are available that prevent the separation of families and the need to move out the community.

Maintenance and Modifications

- General maintenance of homes is affordable by seniors on fixed incomes.
- Affordable or free general maintenance (e.g., yard work) is available for seniors.
- Housing is modified for seniors as needed and new housing is built with seniors in mind.
- Housing (including houses and apartments) meets the needs of those with disabilities.
- Housing modifications are affordable, with financial assistance provided in the form of grants and subsidies.
- Information on financial assistance programs for home modifications is readily available and easily accessible by seniors.
- Home insurance is affordable.

4. Respect and Social Inclusion

Respect, Kindness and Courtesy Shown

- Seniors are treated respectfully by the community as a whole—they are addressed using appropriate titles, their input on community issues is sought, their contributions are honoured and their needs are accommodated.

Intergenerational Respect and Interaction

- Community activities bring together different generations—they include pleasure activities (e.g., arts and crafts, etc.) and practical activities (e.g., youth-taught computer courses, “honorary grandparenting” programs).
- Programs are offered to children and youth that focus on how to treat seniors with respect, and to explain what it like to get older.

Inclusive Communities

- Seniors are asked to participate at council meetings and similar activities and are recognized for their contributions.
- Older persons are asked for their input to public issues (at the local and provincial levels).
- Seniors receive “social” visits from members of their community.

Recognition Events or Awards

- Contributions of seniors are honoured in the community through events and/or awards.
- Seniors are “celebrated” through the media (e.g., their stories are documented and shared).

5. Social Participation

Events and Activities

- There is a range of events and activities for seniors of all ages—some are age-specific and others are intergenerational. Activities include physical/recreational activities, spectator sporting events, church and school related events, gatherings with food, etc.
- Activities available include outdoor (e.g., walking) and indoor activities (e.g., bingo, cards, darts, etc.).

Transportation

- Events and activities are held in locations that are served by affordable and accessible transportation.

Preventing Isolation

- Home visits are provided to those who do not, or cannot, leave their homes.
- A buddy system is set up to include seniors who are not normally active in the community.
- The needs of seniors who are not interested in participating in community life are respected.

Courses, Crafts and Hobbies

- A wide range of courses is accessible and affordable (or free), and courses are offered in convenient locations (e.g., community centre, university) that are served by public transportation.

Affordability and Accessibility

- Activities and events are held in convenient locations and are accessible for all—including those with disabilities.
- Events, activities and cultural events (e.g., music, theatre) are affordable to all seniors.

Family-Oriented

- Events and activities are intergenerational and designed to appeal to people of different ages and backgrounds.

Promotion of Activities

- Activities are well-publicized to seniors.

6. Communication and Information

Widespread Communication

- There is regular and reliable distribution of information about events and programs (including contact information) through local government and/or voluntary organizations.
- Information is disseminated/ posted where seniors conduct their daily activities—such as the post office, places of worship, local centres and town halls.
- Local channels (TV and radio) advertise community events and news items of interest to seniors—for example, through “community access channels.”
- There is a central directory where older adults can find information about what activities and services are available, and how to access them (including phone numbers).

Interactive Contact (word of mouth)

- Important information is disseminated in public forums (including public meetings and information sessions).
- Information to older adults who are socially isolated is delivered by phone, or through personal visits.
- An interactive speaker series is created that delivers important information (e.g., on health issues, protecting against fraud).

Accessible Information

- Written communication is clearly printed in large letters and is easy to read, with simple messaging.
- Literacy programs are available.
- Seniors are recruited and used as volunteers as experts, disseminators of information and trainers.

New Technologies

- Access to computers and the internet is available at a local centre open to the public.

- Training courses on new technologies are available and accessible to seniors.

Types of Information

- Information of interest to seniors is disseminated—such as local events (including obituaries), vital information (health, security, etc.), and programs and services that are available to them.
- Seniors' accomplishments are highlighted occasionally in the media.

7. Civic Participation and Employment Opportunities

Volunteering

- Volunteers are supported in their volunteer work—for example, by providing them with transportation, reimbursing their costs and/or paying them an honorarium.
- A range of volunteer opportunities is available that meets the interests of seniors.
- Volunteering options allow for intergenerational involvement.
- Opportunities for volunteering are flexible (e.g., short-term) to accommodate seniors who travel or have other commitments.

Employment

- There is a range of paid employment opportunities for seniors.
- Older adults are fairly compensated for their work.

Accessibility

- Seniors with disabilities are accommodated in volunteer, civic or paid work.
- Transportation is available and accessible to older adults who want to participate in volunteer, civic or paid opportunities.

Encouragement to Participate

- Older adults are encouraged to volunteer and remain engaged in the community by providing them with flexible and accessible opportunities.
- Individuals are approached personally to participate in volunteer activities.

Training Opportunities

- Older adults expected to use newer technologies in paid, civic or volunteer work are provided with appropriate training.

Recognition and Appreciation

- Older adults are acknowledged for their contributions in volunteer, civic and paid work.

Civic Participation

- Older adults are well represented on councils, boards and committees.

8. Community Support and Health Services

Caring and Responsive Professionals

- Physicians are available in the community.
- Public health nurses are available at health centres and to conduct home visits.
- Specialists (including gerontologists) conduct assessments on a regular basis in the community and arrange follow-up with primary care physicians.

Home Health and Support Services

- Affordable and available health and home services are in place and include health, personal care and housekeeping.
- Home supports are available in a timely manner.
- Affordable meal programs are available to *all* seniors in the community, regardless of their health status.
- Delivery services (groceries, medicines, etc.) or escorted shopping services are available to seniors.
- Delivery of services is well-coordinated (e.g., through a “cluster of care” model).
- Health assessments are conducted during home visits.

Diversity of Health Services and Facilities

- Health care facilities include clusters of services (e.g., doctors, podiatrists, occupational therapists, pharmacists), providing “one stop” health or wellness services.
- Affordable palliative care services are available in the community.
- Specialty services are available in the community, including mental health services, mammogram and diabetes clinics, and cancer care outreach.

Availability of Equipment and Aids

- Medical equipment (including medical alerts) is available through a loan program, at no cost to seniors.

Caregiver Support (including respite)

- Caregivers are “given a break” from their responsibilities through programs such as home support and seniors daycare programs.
- Education programs on elder care and similar available services are provided to families who are, or will be, caring for an older adult.

Information

- Older adults are kept well-informed, through a variety of media, of the services that they may be entitled to and how they are accessed.
- A speaker series provides information to seniors on a range of health and wellness topics.