



**CITY OF OTTAWA**

**OLDER ADULT PLAN 2012-2014**

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## INTRODUCTION

Ottawa is an attractive community within which to grow older with its green spaces, sense of community, and abundance of activities. Most older adults who live in Ottawa experience a high quality of life and are active and integral members of our community. But the older population is changing, diversifying and growing in numbers. By 2031, the number of seniors living in Ottawa will more than double and will make up 20 percent of the overall population.

Like many other large municipalities in Canada and around the world, the City of Ottawa is responding to these demographic changes and has embarked on a process to make Ottawa a more age-friendly city. In 2009, City Council directed the development of a comprehensive and forward-looking older adult plan for the City of Ottawa. The goal was to develop an action plan of concrete and actionable recommendations that would address the needs of older adults now and in the future.

On October 3rd, 2011, the Mayor of Ottawa hosted a successful Seniors' Summit which launched a productive dialogue with older adults and re-affirmed the City of Ottawa's commitment to the well-being of the older adult population. In July 2011, City Council identified the Older Adult Plan as a strategic priority in the City's Strategic Plan (2011-2014). City Council approved \$500,000 in annual operating funding for the implementation of actions contained in the Older Adult Plan.

The Older Adult Plan is the product of extensive background research and open dialogue with the community. The plan covers key service areas of municipal responsibility: infrastructure, buildings and outdoor spaces, transportation, recreational activities, and support services. The plan represents a significant initiative towards enhancing the quality of life of older adults in our community.

### **Definitions/Terminology**

Developing the right terminology for this population is not an easy task. Ideas of what constitutes old age are changing as we live longer. People of the same age can show dramatic differences in their health, independence level, and interests. Moreover, cultural groups tend to define old age differently.

For the purpose of this project, the term 'older adult' is used to refer to a stage of life instead of a specific age-based group of people. This would certainly include individuals in their fifties and up. On the other hand, the term 'senior' is used when referring exclusively to people 65 years of age or over.

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## WHAT IS THE OLDER ADULT PLAN

The Older Adult Plan presents a forward-looking and coordinated approach to addressing the specific and evolving needs of older residents of Ottawa. The Plan introduces a long-term vision of a community that values, empowers, and supports older persons and their quality of life. It also presents 74 concrete actions that will be implemented in the shorter-term (2012-2014) towards the achievement of that vision. Many of the actions can be implemented at no or low cost, while others will require funding from the Older Adult Plan budget or other departmental budgets. The actions in the Plan will be completed in a coordinated and collaborative fashion, that is, departments will work together to achieve the desired outcomes.

The Action Plan is organized under the following eight strategic areas:

1. Outdoor Spaces and City Buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Communication and Information
5. Social, Recreational, and Cultural Participation
6. Civic Participation and Volunteering
7. Community Supports and Health Services
8. Respect and Social Inclusion

The plan is purposefully inclusive and strives to respond to the specific needs of older adults who have diverse backgrounds, whether related to language, cultural identity, sexual orientation, disabilities, or where they live. Of note, many of the actions contained in the plan aim at increasing the quality of life of older adults who are vulnerable due to low income or social isolation. This was specifically requested by a cross-section of older adults who participated in community consultations and who felt that this was an important municipal responsibility.

The plan represents a living document that will be refreshed at regular intervals. While the long-term vision and goals will continue to set the path forward, the list of actions will be reviewed and refreshed on a four-year cycle to align with new terms of Council. This approach will ensure past accomplishments and challenges are taken into consideration and that the plan remains feasible, relevant and responsive to the changing community.

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## HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The development of the Older Adult Plan followed a three-step process that included background research, an assessment of the priorities and needs of the older population through extensive consultations, and the development of a long-term vision, goals, and action plan. Most importantly, the plan directly responds to what was heard in conversations with Ottawa older adults.

More specifically, the Older Adult Plan was developed with input, guidance and direction from:

- a Steering Committee of City staff, the former Seniors' Advisory Committee, an Advisory Group with City Councillor and community representation, and other municipal advisory committees;
- the World Health Organization's Age Friendly Cities initiative;
- a thorough review of other municipal plans for older adults;
- a demographic analysis of Ottawa's older population with projections to 2031;
- an internal scan of existing City of Ottawa programs and services for older adults;
- focus groups with over 100 City staff from key City departments;
- consultations with over 600 diverse older adults, caregivers, service providers;<sup>1</sup> and
- community validation of a draft action plan with over 100 older adults.

Findings from the background research have previously been summarized in several reports including: *Background Research: Setting the Stage; A Portrait of Ottawa Older Adults: Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics*; and *Inventory of Programs and Services for Older Adults*. Results from the consultations are summarized in the report *Ottawa Older Adult Consultation Findings Summary*.

Finally, it is important to underscore that the Older Adult Plan is very much informed by the Age Friendly Cities initiative, developed by the World Health Organization (WHO). Based on extensive field research with 35 cities around the world, the WHO developed the *Global Age-friendly Cities Guide*, which contains a checklist of the essential features of an age-friendly city and provides a methodology for assessing the level of age-friendliness of a city.

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<sup>1</sup> Care was taken to meet with caregivers and service providers as well as groups of older adults who have unique backgrounds and service needs. These included francophones, Aboriginal residents, immigrants, residents on low income, rural residents, persons with disabilities, gay and lesbian residents, and isolated older adults.

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## PARTNERSHIP WITH AGE FRIENDLY OTTAWA

The City of Ottawa has been working in partnership with the Age Friendly Ottawa initiative, an initiative led by The Council on Aging that aims to make Ottawa an 'age-friendly' community as defined by the World Health Organization. Other partners include the Centre for Governance of the University of Ottawa and the United Way. Age Friendly Ottawa and the City of Ottawa Older Adult Plan represent mutually supportive initiatives as both aim to enhance the quality of life of older adults through changes in physical settings, programs, and services. The City of Ottawa Older Adult Plan is limited to the City's areas of municipal responsibility, whereas Age Friendly Ottawa's activities target the entire community.

As part of this initiative in 2011, Age Friendly Ottawa and the City of Ottawa successfully submitted a joint application to the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age Friendly Cities. The City of Ottawa will support the development of Age Friendly Ottawa's community-wide action plan, which will include elements of the Older Adult Plan. This community-wide action plan will be presented to the World Health Organization as one of the requirements for continued membership into the Global Network of Age Friendly Cities.

## A PORTRAIT OF OTTAWA OLDER ADULTS<sup>2</sup>

The age make-up of Ottawa's population is gradually changing. Growth in the number of older residents will outpace overall population growth in Ottawa over the next two decades. This aging of the population, along with some of the other trends highlighted below, represents one of the main reasons why the City of Ottawa is taking action by creating an Older Adult Plan.

The number of seniors living in Ottawa is expected to more than double over the next twenty years, representing by far the fastest growing population segment. While the number of seniors make up about 12 per cent of the population today, this group will represent over 20 per cent of the population by 2031. The main reason for this rapid growth is the large number of baby boomers who in 2011 started turning 65 years old.

The majority of seniors currently live in the central areas of Ottawa, with the largest numbers in the Bay, College, and Alta Vista wards. However, over the next 20 years, the suburban and rural areas will experience more rapid aging than Ottawa's urban areas. This is because these areas are currently home to large numbers of baby boomers.

The Ottawa seniors' population is also characterized by its vibrant diversity. Large numbers of older residents of Ottawa come from a culturally and linguistically diverse background. About one in five seniors living in Ottawa is francophone. Approximately 30 percent of seniors were born in another country, the numbers within visible minorities groups are growing according to immigration patterns. The diversity within the older population points to the need for services that are culturally sensitive and available in languages other than English and French.

Whether associated with the normal aging process or not, almost twenty per cent of the older population experience activity limitations, with 17 per cent of seniors using a cane, walker or wheelchair. For these older adults, the issue of accessibility is critical in their enjoyment of community life.

The economic situation of Ottawa seniors is encouraging, with a median income that is significantly higher than provincial and national averages. Ottawa seniors also draw a larger percentage of their income from private pensions than those who live in other parts of the province or country. While seven per cent of seniors live on low income<sup>3</sup>, this percentage is lower than for all other age groups in Ottawa. However, seniors living on low income represent

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<sup>2</sup> For a comprehensive description and analysis, please refer to the report *A Portrait of Ottawa Older Adults: Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics*.

<sup>3</sup> Low income is defined as an after-tax income that is below Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-Offs (LICOs).

one of the most vulnerable segments of our community and supports, like financial assistance and help connecting with services, are critical to their quality of life.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that the next generation of seniors will be different. The approximate 250,000 baby boomers who currently live in Ottawa grew up in a different social and economic climate and bring a different set of life experiences that will affect their needs, preferences, and attitudes about aging. Compared to existing seniors, baby boomers married less, divorced more and had fewer children. Baby boomers tend to have a higher education, often plan to work after retirement by choice, and are early adopters and skilled users of new technologies.

## CONSULTATIONS WITH OLDER ADULTS—KEY FINDINGS<sup>4</sup>

When asked about their life in Ottawa, older adults who participated in the consultations spoke very positively about Ottawa’s size, environment and services such as public libraries, while many felt that transportation, social participation, streets and sidewalks, and access to housing should be improved.

- **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings.** Older adults had mainly positive comments about Ottawa’s outdoor opportunities – especially green spaces and parks. However, maintenance and condition of sidewalks and the lack of public benches and washrooms were top barriers to older adults being able to enjoy the outdoors safely. Older adults with disabilities were particularly concerned with barriers to accessing public buildings. Of note, winter was mentioned as a prominent isolating factor for older adults.
- **Transportation.** Views on public transportation were influenced by health, location and level of income. Older adults who participated in the consultations appreciated the ride free days and several reported being pleased with transit employees. Challenges reported by older adults related to affordability, recent route changes, inconvenient bus stop locations, lack of age-friendly features at bus stops and the rigidity of the Para Transpo booking system. Rural participants reported that they felt somewhat isolated due to the lack of bus routes in their areas.
- **Housing.** Most participants expressed the desire to live in their own home as long as possible as well as to remain in their communities, close to family and friends. Older adults pointed to affordability as a key problem in finding new housing. Rural residents talked about the stress of having to relocate in another community due to the lack of suitable housing choices. With respect to the long-term care environment, gay and lesbian older adults stressed the need for safe and inclusive spaces, while older adults from multicultural backgrounds talked about having access to food according to their religious beliefs. Finally, the size, configuration, and maintenance of social housing units were perceived to be not well adapted to the needs of older adults.
- **Communication and Information.** Older adults indicated that word of mouth, print materials, and places such as libraries, community/seniors’ centres and churches were the best means of communication. Many older adults asked for a centralized or “one-stop-shop” information service. Isolated older adults lacking support (especially

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<sup>4</sup> For a comprehensive description and analysis, please refer to the report *Ottawa Older Adult Consultation Findings Summary*.

immigrants) were generally viewed as the group most likely to be missing out on relevant information. The Internet was perceived as being relied on too much by the City and not age-friendly by many.

- **Social Participation.** Older adults reported that Ottawa offered a good variety of activities for older adults. Libraries, community/seniors' centres and churches were identified as favourite places to socialize for many. Commonly-mentioned barriers to participation included the cost of activities, inadequate timing and locations, and lack of adequate advertisement. A number of participants mentioned they would like to see more opportunities for continuing education, active aging, and training on computer and internet skills. Francophone older adults were concerned that the activities in French were not equally distributed across the city.
- **Civic Participation and Paid/Unpaid Employment.** Older adults were generally satisfied with existing volunteering opportunities and confirmed that volunteering had positive benefits on their physical and mental health, as long as it was adapted to their capabilities and to what they were interested in. Costs incurred as well as complicated application procedures were viewed as important barriers to volunteering. Opportunities for mentorships were particularly appealing to older adults. Finally, many older adults indicated that they were interested in having access to meaningful ways to have their voices heard.
- **Community Support and Health Services.** In general, older adults had a positive impression of community health centres and clinics, as well as home support services provided by the City of Ottawa and other agencies. Many spoke about the importance of proper supports to facilitate aging at home. Health promotion was also seen as essential for active and healthy aging. There was a general impression that isolated older adults and those on lower incomes had a difficult time finding out about and connecting with required services. Other barriers included the cost of services, lack of services and caregiver support.
- **Respect and Social Inclusion.** Intergenerational respect took center stage in discussions related to respect during the consultations. Most older persons had positive comments to make about the level of respect in Ottawa; however, some identified additional measures to increase awareness about older adult issues, especially among service providers. Special groups (Francophones, immigrants, gay and lesbian older adults and those living in rural areas) were especially sensitive to the notion of respect and how decision-makers and service providers respond to their unique needs.

## THE OLDER ADULT PLAN

Older adults living in Ottawa value their independence. They want to live in their own homes as long as possible, remain connected to family and friends, participate in interesting and challenging activities, and continue to contribute to their community. Some worry about their ability to meet everyday needs.

The Older Adult Plan is anchored by a strong vision and value statements that were developed to reflect the views and priorities shared amongst older adults living in Ottawa. Together, these statements represent the aspirations of the community and provide the structure under which to develop recommendations for action.

Eight strategic areas and goals have been adopted for the Plan, based on the World Health Organization's Age Friendly Cities guide and based on what older adults told us. Each goal is advanced by several actions that show what will be done over the next few years towards achievement of the goal. While all actions contained in the Plan are focussed on older adults, benefits will be felt by all members of the community.

Actions contained in the Plan were developed to respond to what was heard during the consultations, or what was learned from the research (demographic analysis, inventory of programs and services, environmental scan). However, it was not possible to address all priorities and needs; therefore, the actions in this Plan represent what is feasible and what can be accomplished within the City's operational and fiscal realities.

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### VISION

Ottawa is an age-friendly and caring community that values the contributions of older adults, offers a broad range of opportunities for active living, and provides supports that are responsive to the diverse needs and choices of older adults.

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### VALUE STATEMENTS

- A recognition that older adults are contributors to our community and that all – regardless of cultural and religious background, language, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, abilities, financial situation, or geographic location – must be respected and included.

- A belief that older adults must have access to services that are people-centred, accessible, affordable, equitable, and appropriate to individual needs and abilities.
- A belief that vulnerable older adults must be supported and protected.
- A recognition that the majority of older adults prefer to age in place, in their familiar neighbourhood.
- A belief that older adults must be involved in deciding priorities, shaping actions and bringing about change.
- An awareness that age-friendly environments and communities benefit all age groups.

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## STRATEGIC AREAS: GOALS AND ACTIONS

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### 1. OUTDOOR SPACES AND CITY BUILDINGS

Outdoor Spaces and City Buildings include parks, roads and intersections, sidewalks, pathways, buildings as well as the way communities are designed. Ensuring that outdoor and built environments are safe, pleasant, and easy to navigate can have positive impacts on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people as well as people of all ages.

Based on the feedback received from older adults, the action items in this area aim to improve the accessibility of buildings and outdoor spaces, increase pedestrian safety, encourage the development age-friendly parks, and facilitate the development of neighborhoods that take into consideration the needs of older adults. These measures will have particular benefits for older adults experiencing age-related mobility difficulties as well as older persons with disabilities.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults reported that barriers to physical access, such as heavy doors and inaccessible washrooms can discourage them from leaving their homes and represents a significant barrier to participation in community life.**

**Action 1.1: Install additional accessible features in City facilities.** The City of Ottawa will target additional retrofit work to existing City facilities that are highly frequented by older adults or located in areas of the city with large older populations. For example, work will include installing additional automatic doors at the entrance of buildings and grab bars in public washrooms.

**Action 1.2: Publish accessibility ratings for public City facilities.** Knowing the level of accessibility of buildings would help older adults and other persons with disabilities plan their outings accordingly. In response, the City of Ottawa will develop a system to rank the level of accessibility of municipal facilities and make this information available to the public (on line, by phoning 311, and in print).

**Action 1.3: Update and implement the City's accessibility design guidelines in the construction of new City facilities.** The City of Ottawa will update its Accessibility Design Guidelines to provide a Council-approved best practice document for City staff and City contractors to follow in the design and construction of new and redeveloped City environments. This revised document will take into account: Canadian Standards (CSA), the Ontario Building Code (OBC) and related amendments, the current Draft City of Ottawa Accessibility Design Guidelines (2006) and proposed changes to provincial legislation

regarding requirements to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) - Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment).

**Action 1.4: Promote the City's accessibility design guidelines with community stakeholders to encourage the application of age-friendly principles in the community.**

The City will promote the integration of the City of Ottawa updated Accessibility Guidelines (once approved by Council) in the plans and development proposals of developers. This will be done through in person presentations or the use of electronic and print materials. This action aims to encourage the adoption and implementation of the most up-to-date accessibility design guidelines in new construction or renovations of private and commercial buildings in the community.

- ▶ **ISSUE: It is difficult for many older people to enjoy walking in our community without somewhere to rest. The availability of seating areas is viewed as one of the top urban age-friendly features for older people.**

**Action 1.5: Install additional benches in City parks, on roads, and pathways.** The City of Ottawa will install additional benches in parks and along roads and pathways. Priority will be given to locations that currently lack seating, especially in areas of the city where high number of seniors live. The City will also ensure that bench specifications meet accessibility standards, including proper arm and back rests.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Many older adults reported feeling intimidated by busy and large intersections.**

**Action 1.6: Install additional pedestrian signal technology to existing signalized intersections and develop a communications campaign on pedestrian intersection safety.**

The City of Ottawa will install additional pedestrian signals at selected intersections, based on consultation with older adults to identify the most suitable locations. Audible Pedestrian Signals use sound to indicate when it is safe to cross an intersection, while Pedestrian Countdown Timers provide a visual cue to pedestrians that indicate how long they have to safely exit an intersection. In addition, a communications campaign targeting older adults on signal timing, audible pedestrian signals, pedestrian countdown timers and pedestrian intersection safety will be developed. One of the key messages of the campaign will be to inform older adults that they can request a review of crossing times for specific intersections.

**Action 1.7: Implement measures such as pedestrian islands and roadway narrowings at selected intersections and mid-block crossings on selected roadways, where appropriate.**

The City of Ottawa will implement measures to improve pedestrian safety at intersections and roadways. By making the Pedestrian Safety Evaluation Program a permanent program and reviewing reconstruction projects with an emphasis on vulnerable road users, the

needs and concerns of older adults will be at the forefront of plans to improve pedestrian safety. The City will also work with the Provincial Ministry of Transportation and other municipalities to have marked and signed cross walks installed between intersections on suitable roadways.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Cracks and bumps in sidewalks often present tripping hazards and lack of sidewalk maintenance represents a barrier to staying active.**

**Action 1.8: Include walkability assessments in the prioritization of sidewalk maintenance.**

Sidewalks are inspected on an annual basis to identify deficiencies that could pose risks to pedestrians and to determine priorities for maintenance work. The City of Ottawa will modify the current practice of evaluating the condition of sidewalks to include findings from Walkability Assessments that will be done in neighborhoods with significant older populations. This will help to provide additional information which can be used to prioritize sidewalk maintenance throughout the year.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Winter is an important cause of isolation for older adults, especially when roads and sidewalks are temporarily unusable due to snow and ice accumulation.**

**Action 1.9: Increase the number of Yellow Grit Boxes along sidewalks.** Yellow Grit Boxes are located across the city, particularly in the downtown core, and contain the same material used by the City's snow operations staff to keep sidewalks safe and passable during the winter months. Residents are encouraged to spread the grit on slippery spots on sidewalks. The City of Ottawa will increase the number of Yellow Grit Boxes along sidewalks known to have a high volume of older adult pedestrians. To better promote this do-it-yourself service, a new logo will be placed on each box.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults identified parks as one of the top features of the city and made several suggestions for additional age-friendly features to encourage their use.**

**Action 1.10: Develop an Age Friendly Parks, Pathways and Public Spaces Checklist.** The City of Ottawa will develop an Age Friendly Parks, Pathways and Public Spaces Checklist for use in park development, subject to budget availability. The City's checklist will build on an Age Friendly Park Checklist already developed by the Seniors Health Promotion Coalition (a community-based group), an assessment of the Clare Gardens adult exercise equipment, and the City's Accessibility Guidelines.

- ▶ **ISSUE: The way communities are designed and built can have a significant impact on the health and well-being of older adults and their quality of life.**

**Action 1.11: Review the Official Plan to ensure it supports the land use needs of older adults.** The Official Plan is guided by the Provincial Policy Statement and specifically, Policy 1.1.1 states, in part, 'healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by ...improving

accessibility for persons with disabilities and the elderly by removing and/or preventing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society;'. During the Official Plan Review, existing specific policies relating to older adults will be reviewed to ensure they are still appropriate. Further, the Plan will be reviewed to determine whether there are policies which may present a deterrent to allowing older adults to fully participate in the community and whether new policies are warranted.

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## 2. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is an important component of older people's ability to remain independent and active, to participate in social, cultural, volunteer and recreational activities, to go to work, shop or attend appointments. Availability and accessibility of transportation options becomes increasingly essential for older people as they become less willing or less able to drive due to health, financial or other reasons. Without suitable transportation they cannot maintain their community involvement and are at greater risk of social isolation.

Action items in this area aim to improve access, safety, and use of public transit, specialized transit, as well as other means of transportation. In addition to the general older population, these measures will have particular benefits for older adults with disabilities and those living in rural areas.

► **ISSUE: Many older adults living on low income rely on public transportation to travel within Ottawa.**

**Action 2.1: Make public transportation more affordable for older adults.** In 2012, the City of Ottawa reduced the bus fare for those 65 years of age and older. Effective July 2012, a new reduced pay-per-ride fare was introduced on all regular routes and no cash "top-ups" are required for senior pass users on Para Transpo after 9 a.m. In addition, older adults continue to benefit from: pass discounts, with a seniors pass set at \$39 per month with unlimited travel on all routes (regular and express); Ride-Free Wednesdays, which permit customers 65 and over to ride free on all routes every Wednesday; and, free service on the new Rural Shoppers Routes 201 to 205, which provide weekly bus trips from rural villages to urban shopping destinations.

► **ISSUE: There are fewer transportation options available to older adults living in rural areas.**

**Action 2.2: Review the benefits of increasing the transportation options available to older adults in rural areas.** The City of Ottawa has recently undertaken several initiatives aimed at increasing the transportation options available to older rural residents. In January 2012, the City added four new Rural Shopper's Routes, free to rural residents 65 and over, providing a convenient and economical way for older adults to visit the urban areas of the city. In April 2012, the City increased its funding to three rural community support services to enable these agencies to provide an increased number of trips and travel options to rural seniors and persons with disabilities. The City will monitor the success of these initiatives on an ongoing basis, and consider additional opportunities to diversify the number of transportation options open to older adults through partnerships with community agencies and the private sector. The City will also continue to review transit

routes in both urban and rural areas of Ottawa on an ongoing basis, within established service standards and budgets, to ensure that they meet the travel needs of older adults.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults who use public transportation indicate that bus stops and shelters are often inconveniently located, lack proper signage and benches, and have ice and snow accumulations in the winter.**

**Action 2.3: Develop age-friendly guidelines for the design and placement of bus stops and shelters.** The City of Ottawa will improve access to stops and shelters through the development of formal guidelines for their design and placement. Guidelines will address such features as lighting, signage, shelter dimensions, seating and street furniture, as well as the location of stops and shelters in relation to other facilities and amenities, such as seniors' centres, hospitals and intersections. The City will also follow established Accessibility Design Guidelines for newly constructed, renovated or expanded conventional transit and light rail facilities.

**Action 2.4: Review current procedures and coordination between departments responsible for snow removal around bus stops and shelters.** The City of Ottawa will review its current procedures, standards and co-ordination between the Public Works and Transit Services Departments with respect to snow clearing in and around stops and shelters. This review will determine whether operational changes are required so that City staff can work more effectively together to improve service delivery to our customers and to enhance access to these facilities during the winter months.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older clients of Para Transpo report challenges related to wait times, booking procedures, and eligibility criteria.**

**Action 2.5: Investigate technology that would inform Para Transpo clients of their vehicle's approximate arrival time.** The City of Ottawa will investigate the implementation of technology that would enable Para Transpo to notify customers in advance of their vehicle's arrival – for example, by phone, by text or by smart phone application. This technology would provide Para Transpo customers with real-time information on their vehicle's estimated arrival time, potentially reducing the amount of time they would have to wait for scheduled pick-ups.

**Action 2.6: Review Para Transpo procedures to make advance booking easier.** The City of Ottawa will review Para Transpo's booking procedures, in the context of industry best practices, to identify the impact of easing existing time restrictions with respect to advance booking (currently 24 hours in advance). This review will also examine other options that would increase the flexibility of Para Transpo's booking system and reduce anxiety for customers.

**Action 2.7: Review Para Transpo eligibility rules in context of industry best practices.** In partnership with the Canadian Urban Transit Association and a number of other Canadian municipalities, the City of Ottawa will review best practices in determining eligibility for specialized transit service. Once this review is complete, the City will develop and implement consistent criteria and an appropriate process for determining Para Transpo eligibility.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Knowledge and use of alternative travel options becomes increasingly important as older persons become less willing or able to drive.**

**Action 2.8: Provide comprehensive information about travel options to older adults.** The City of Ottawa will coordinate the delivery of travel options information targeting older adults, and expand and enhance the information currently available. The City will consolidate existing information and add new information, and deliver it in both print and electronic (web-based) formats. With more and better information available, older adults will be able to make better, more well-informed travel choices.

**Action 2.9: Expand the Transit Travel Training Program for older adults.** Travel Training is a comprehensive instructional program designed to provide persons with disabilities, older adults and new immigrants with the skills and confidence to travel safely and independently on conventional public transit. Community agency staff and volunteers use OC Transpo-issued travel training passes to get onboard transit and provide trainees with the coaching necessary to use it in their daily lives. The City of Ottawa will expand Travel Training by actively engaging more community agencies in the delivery of travel training to older adults (through community outreach and by increasing the number of travel training passes available). It will also begin to proactively offer travel training as an option for older adults who apply for Para Transpo service. The City will also adapt its curriculum and training manuals to accommodate the specific and unique needs of older adult trainees. As well, the City will continue to modify its travel training curriculum on an ongoing basis to adapt to the addition of new facilities' and the eventual integration of light rail into the City's transit system.

**Action 2.10: Increase funding and promotion of the Taxi Coupon Program.** The Taxi Coupon Program allows all registered Para Transpo customers to obtain and use taxi coupons to book accessible cabs at a 40% discount, expanding the travel options available to these individuals. The Transit Services Department will request additional funding, as part of its 2013 departmental budget, for its pilot taxi coupon program, with the objective of making the program permanent. Although the taxi-coupon program was viewed positively, older adults were concerned that there was a general lack of awareness of the

program. Therefore, the City will also increase its promotion to ensure that Para Transpo customers are more aware of the full range of services at their disposal.

**Action 2.11: Develop cycling safety workshops for older adults and update the Ottawa Cycling Map.** The City of Ottawa will develop and deliver cycling safety workshops, adapted for older participants, at key community-based locations. These workshops aim to increase confidence with bicycle riding and teach basic cycling skills, safe practices, and how to share the road with other traffic. In addition, the City will add information about age-friendly amenities (such as rest areas and public washrooms) to its Ottawa Cycling Map, at the time of its next update and in consultation with older adults.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Many older pedestrians report feeling unsafe due to the presence of cyclists on sidewalks and pathways.**

**Action 2.12: Launch an awareness campaign to reduce sidewalk cycling and encourage safe sharing of pathways with pedestrians.** The City of Ottawa will launch a public awareness campaign that will promote mutual respect among pathway users, adherence to the rules of the pathway (as well as “no cycling on sidewalks”), with a focus on specific locations identified as concerns for older adults. The awareness campaign will be developed in collaboration with a key informant group, and will include a video, signs, online messaging and printed materials, as well as on-path interventions to inform pathway users, discourage inappropriate use, and encourage appropriate behaviour.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Population aging may lead to increasing numbers of mobility scooters and motorized wheelchairs on city sidewalks.**

**Action 2.13: Review the implications of increasing numbers of mobility scooters and motorized wheelchairs on designated bikeways.** As the population ages and residents seek alternative modes of transportation, it is expected that the small number of mobility scooters and motorized wheelchairs that are currently visible, will increase rapidly. The review would evaluate best practices, consider safety implementation and recommend changes to city bikeway technical design standards. This review would provide a rationale that could be used in developing an educational strategy so that all recreational pathway users will be able to effectively co-exist.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Education regarding driving behaviors can increase the safety of older drivers**

**Action 2.14: Launch a safety awareness campaign for older drivers.** The City of Ottawa’s Safer Roads Ottawa program will launch an awareness campaign with a focus on increasing the knowledge of senior drivers and the some of the following road safety matters: distracted driving, driving while fatigued, best times of the day to drive, effects of medication, driving ability and the top 10 collision types. As well, there will be a focus on

raising awareness of the educational driving resources that are currently available in the community. The campaign will be tailored to older adults and will involve all Safer Roads Ottawa internal partners (Ottawa Fire Service, Ottawa Paramedic Service, Ottawa Police, Ottawa Public Health and the Public Works Department) and our community stakeholders.

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### 3. HOUSING

Adequate housing is essential to the safety and well-being of older adults. Older persons prefer to live independently and to remain in their homes for as long as possible. In Ottawa, the majority of older adults live with family members such as a spouse, children or other relatives and approximately 25 percent live alone. Seventy percent own their own homes.

Action items in this area aim to impact the availability of housing options in the community (including rural areas) and support homeowners who are on low income. The measures also aim to improve the living conditions of older adults who reside in or use City-operated /subsidized facilities.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older persons who require alternate housing and cannot afford the cost of private retirement homes often mention that there is a lack of affordable housing options for older adults in the community.**

**Action 3.1: Organize a roundtable meeting to explore options to increase affordable housing choices for older adults.** Meeting the growing demand for affordable housing for low- and moderate-income older adults will require a concerted effort from municipal, provincial and federal governments, as well as from industry, community stakeholders, and older adults. As a first step, the City of Ottawa will organize a one-day roundtable event to discuss affordable housing needs for Ottawa older adults. This roundtable will bring together City staff, community stakeholders, housing providers, and older adult representatives. The event will be an opportunity to review best practices and discuss issues as well as potential approaches and strategies for further follow-up and action.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults living in rural areas who want to age in their communities report a lack of appropriate housing options, including assisted living arrangements.**

**Action 3.2: Conduct an assessment of housing needs within rural areas.** In order to assess the housing situation in rural areas, the City of Ottawa will coordinate a review of existing housing options available for older adults within rural Ottawa and compare it to the potential demand based on demographic data. This information will be gathered to assist City staff with effectively updating land use planning policies and in doing so encourage housing for older adults to be made available in areas of rural Ottawa with a shortage of housing geared to older adults. In addition, information gathered through this assessment will be shared with housing developers when researching market needs for older adult housing in rural Ottawa and assist them with the development of their business case.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older homeowners who live on low incomes may not have the resources to afford necessary home adaptations to allow them to age at home.**

**Action 3.3: Explore the Ottawa Renovates Program as a potential support for home adaptations for the most vulnerable, low income, adults.** As part of the Investment in Affordable Housing Program (IAH) funds provided to the City of Ottawa by the provincial and federal governments, City Council will allocate \$2.4M over a 2 year period for a home renovation program in Ottawa. The Ottawa Renovates program will begin in the spring of 2013 and end when the Federal and Provincial funding ends in March 2015. One overall goal of the program will be to foster increased independent living for vulnerable adults, mainly people with low income, seniors and/or persons with disabilities, by providing financial assistance for necessary home repairs to preserve the quality of affordable housing.

- ▶ **ISSUE: The maintenance of the social housing stock is a concern for older residents.**

**Action 3.4: Identify repair needs at social housing buildings.** In 2011, the City of Ottawa completed an updated Building Condition Assessment (BCA) program and financial planning program with social housing providers. This updated information is now being loaded into a new software system (Asset Planner) that will provide a comprehensive assessment of the current state and future repair needs for the entire social housing portfolio. Knowledge gained through this initial assessment and the ongoing process of updating the BCA information will be used strategically for future capital investments so as to address the most pressing repair needs where additional funding becomes available.

- ▶ **ISSUE: The City of Ottawa needs to ensure that living arrangements within City-funded residential care facilities meet the needs of residents, of which 20 percent are seniors.**

**Action 3.5: Encourage and educate residential care operators to increase the number of accessible units for individuals with disabilities.** Domiciliary hostels, also known as residential care facilities, provide supportive housing to vulnerable individuals who require care services to maintain their independence in the community. The City of Ottawa provides a subsidy for eligible low income residents of domiciliary hostels. In an effort to meet the increasing demand for accessible units, the City has recently contracted with a new operator to provide 30 additional accessible rooms with opportunity for further expansion. The City will continue its efforts to increase the number of accessible units by continuing to educate domiciliary hostel operators about the needs of individuals with disabilities through the provision of resource material including accessibility standards, loan and grant opportunities for renovations.

**Action 3.6: Refine domiciliary hostel standards using an older adult lens.** Standards governing domiciliary hostels were first developed and implemented in 2006, following broad input from domiciliary hostel operators, community partners and City staff. The City of Ottawa has begun a review of the standards to ensure that they meet industry best practices. In addition to broad consultation with local operators and stakeholders, including older adults, the review will include the use of an older adult lens and a comparison of local standards with other Ontario municipalities. Any changes to the current standards will be done in collaboration with key stakeholders.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Gay and lesbian older adults do not feel welcome within the long-term care environment.**

**Action 3.7: Raise awareness within City-operated long-term care homes on the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered older adults.** A new generation of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans and Queer (GLBTQ) older adults are entering long-term care facilities. The City of Ottawa is in the process of conducting GLBTQ awareness work with staff in one of the City-operated long-term care homes. The purpose of this work is to create an environment where all residents and their family members can feel welcome to be who they are, and can expect care that respects and values them as individuals. The work involves an on-going dialogue with staff, a 'mad graffiti' project for staff, and displays of informational posters regarding GLBTQ older adults. Next steps will involve incorporating inclusive events, entertainment, and religious services into regular programming. The goal is to implement this awareness strategy across all City-operated long-term care homes.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults who use emergency shelters on a regular basis have complex service needs.**

**Action 3.8: Conduct a survey to identify the specific service needs of older adults who use emergency shelters.** The City of Ottawa, through the Housing Services Branch, has provided funding for the completion of a Housing Preference Study for long stay men and women, including older adults, who access emergency shelters. Study results will be instrumental in identifying short and long-term housing needs for this population. Information gathered from a thorough review of the literature on best practices will also enable the development of a responsive service delivery model to ensure a sustainable transition from shelter to community living for older people who are chronically homeless.

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#### 4. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

Staying connected with events and people and getting timely and practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is essential for active aging. The way governments and other organizations choose to communicate with older adults can have profound implications for all aspects of older adults' lives and well-being. Older adults should be able to access or receive the right information, at the right time and in the format that meets their needs.

Action items in this area aim to improve the dissemination of and access to municipal information, encourage the use of formats and design that take into considerations the needs of older adults, and increase information outreach to older adults who are socially or culturally isolated and who do not have English as a first language.

- ▶ **ISSUE: One of the top findings from the consultations was the general lack of awareness of older adults about many of the key City of Ottawa programs and services.**

**Action 4.1: Develop innovative strategies to disseminate information about key municipal programs and services to older adults.** The City of Ottawa will develop a guide of City of Ottawa services targeting older adults, to be available in English, French as well as other languages. The French version of the guide will take special care to highlight programs and services that specifically target the francophone population. A special strategy will be developed to distribute the guide to older immigrants as well as older adults who may be isolated. A list of subsidies and programs offered to older adults on low income will also be included in the guide. Regular "Meet Your City Services" events will be organized at key community locations and events, in both English and French. The City will also establish an email distribution list (for community agencies and older adults) and provide regular updates and announcements of interest to older adults.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults who participated in the consultations were preoccupied with getting relevant information when needed. They strongly advocated for "one-stop" or single access points to information.**

**Action 4.2: Pilot satellite Client Service Centres offering in-person and self-service access to information and services at new locations.** ServiceOttawa is partnering with the Ottawa Public Library on a pilot project to provide citizens with easier access to City services. Beginning in November 2012, the Ruth E. Dickinson library will host a satellite Client Service Centre Counter for a six-month pilot. During their visit to the Ruth E Dickinson branch of the Library, City staff will be available to assist citizens to access services and carry out transactions like:

- OC Transpo Products, such as bus tickets and passes

- Parking ticket payment, consideration parking, (any kind of parking request)
- Water and Tax bill payment
- Request for pre-authorized water or tax payment
- New and Renewal of Animal Licenses
- Solid Waste Bin coupons, calendars, yellow bags
- New and Renewal of Burn Permit
- Any Service Request

In addition, the Cumberland library will host a self-service counter with a computer dedicated to accessing online services available through [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca) and a phone line connected directly to the City's 311 service. The pilot will run for a six-month period and will be re-evaluated at that time.

**Action 4.3: Enhance knowledge tools used by 311 and Client Service Centre staff.** In order to ensure that 311 and Client Service Centre staff provide accurate and consistent service to older adults, ServiceOttawa will be working with other departments to validate and create knowledge articles related to information and services for older adults. Agents will receive training to supplement these knowledge articles and will be informed of the older adult section on [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca) in order to provide better service to callers. Service Ottawa will also explore the feasibility of having older adults “self-identify” when calling 311, which will subsequently alert the agent at the onset of the call.

**Action 4.4: Develop a dedicated section on [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca) to serve as a central source of information and services for older adults.** In order to make the web experience easier and more intuitive for older adults, the City of Ottawa will create an older adult section on [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca). The following will be featured: information about the programs and services the City offers older adults (recreation, health, OC Transpo etc.); links to services for older adults that are offered by other levels of government and agencies; link to 211 information; and a calendar of events geared towards older adults. The calendar of events will have the capability to filter events by language. In addition, the City will optimize the search feature on [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca) and review content to ensure that it is clear and meets the needs of the older adult population.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Many older adults are not aware of the existence of centralized information services such as 311 and 211 or the differences between them.**

**Action 4.5: Develop an awareness campaign about 311, 211, 911, and [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca) targeted at older adults.** In order to raise awareness about various existing information services, the City of Ottawa will work with its external partners, including other levels of government, to create a multi-channel promotional campaign. The campaign will target older adults to

emphasize the existence of 211, 311, 911 and the array of programs and services each provides within the community.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Certain age-related changes, like visual perception, can affect older adults' ability to read and comprehend print materials.**

**Action 4.6: Create corporate accessible print design guidelines.** To ensure that corporate communications adhere to the highest industry standards, the City of Ottawa will create accessible print guidelines that will be used by staff in the development of communications products. For example, the guidelines would address such features as readability, lay out, font size, colors, and images. The Guidelines will apply to all corporate communications products such as posters, billboards, advertising materials, web content, and reports.

- ▶ **ISSUE: For best impact, communication methods should be tailored to the preferences and needs of older adults.**

**Action 4.7: Include an older adults lens in the corporate communication plan template.**

The Communications Plan Template is a tool that is used by City personnel when developing communications strategies to support corporate initiatives and special events involving the public. For example, the tool helps staff determine target audience, key messages and appropriate means of communication. The City of Ottawa will add an “older adult lens” to the template to ensure that City staff consider the specific needs of older adults when planning communication strategies. This will ensure that communications efforts for older adults are appropriate and tailored to their diverse needs.

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## 5. SOCIAL, RECREATIONAL, AND CULTURAL PARTICIPATION

Social networks, social participation and feelings of belonging are important to healthy living, disease prevention and the reduction of isolation among older adults. Research shows that those who remain actively engaged in life and socially connected are happier, physically and mentally healthier, and better able to cope with life's transitions common in older age. Regular and moderate exercise can cut age declines and significantly reduce the risk of all diseases.

Action items in this area aim to optimize and adapt older adult programming, improve information about and access to programs targeting isolated older adults and those living on low income, improve computer skills and access to public computers for older adults, improve promotion of older adult programming, and enhance training for City staff.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Public libraries were rated as one of the top positive attributes in Ottawa by older adults; in light of population aging, it is important to ensure that collections and services remain relevant in the future.**

**Action 5.1: Develop and implement a Seniors Services Strategy at the Ottawa Public Library.** In 2010, the Ottawa Public Library Board endorsed a Services for Seniors Position Statement. The next step involves the development of a Seniors Services Strategy which will expand on the vision and services standards created by the position statement. The strategy document will outline key service guidelines, goals and standards. It will also create an implementation plan for both system-wide and branch level services and programs. In addition the service strategy will define resource support required for the full implementation of seniors' services at Ottawa Public Library.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults indicated a preference for social and recreational opportunities that are organized in locations close to home, easily accessible by transportation, and held at convenient times during the day.**

**Action 5.2: Review older adult programming, taking into consideration demographic data as well as facility utilization patterns.** The City, as a partnership between departments, will undertake a review of existing older adult recreational and other programming with the goal of identifying gaps, duplications, and opportunities and make adjustments as appropriate. The review will take into consideration demographic information as well as ensure the optimal utilization of space in City facilities.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Certain groups of older adults (e.g. francophones, men, immigrants and gay and lesbian older adults) indicated that their unique needs were not adequately being met by existing programming.**

**Action 5.3: Develop or partner to offer inclusive programming for groups experiencing language, cultural, social, health, and other barriers.** The City will review its offerings as well as those from partner agencies to identify service gaps pertaining to the groups who have concerns with the ability of current programming to meet their needs. The findings from this review and analysis will then inform the development of pilots to test new programming with the goal of eventually integrating successful pilots into on-going programming.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Low income older adults are particularly concerned about their ability to engage in activities due to cost and difficulties with transportation.**

**Action 5.4: Provide recreational and learning programming to older adults living in social housing buildings.** Ottawa Public Health currently provides a variety of health promotion services in 11 Ottawa Community Housing buildings, as part of a broader initiative called the Aging in Place program. As a pilot project, the City of Ottawa will build on this work and provide free, on-site recreational and learning programming in two existing Aging in Place buildings. Public Health Nurses already working in the selected buildings will identify programming needs based on an assessment of the residents' needs, and will work with the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department and the Ottawa Public Library to develop program offerings. For example, program offerings could include creating walking maps and groups, computer classes, or a mobile book club.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults are interested to learn computer skills as a way to access information and stay socially connected; low income older adults often cannot afford to purchase a computer.**

**Action 5.5: Develop and implement a computer literacy and internet safety curriculum for older adults and train others in the community to deliver the curriculum in community facilities.** Ottawa Public Library (OPL) will create a computer literacy and internet safety curriculum to meet the specific learning needs of older adults. Once developed, computer and internet courses will be offered in library branches across the city to interested older adults. OPL will also develop a "train-the-trainer" model to engage community agency staff and volunteers in promoting and delivering the curriculum at other community-based locations. Particular emphasis will be placed on working with community agencies to engage older adults who are currently technologically knowledgeable to volunteer their time teaching their peers.

**Action 5.6: Install public access computers at City-operated seniors' centres and selected community centres.** Public access computers are available at Ottawa Public Library branches and other community locations but not necessarily in other City facilities where older adults naturally congregate. The City of Ottawa will broaden public access to computers (with internet access) at selected community centres, in neighborhoods with large older adult populations, as well as in all City-operated seniors' centres. The computers will also be used for one-on-one teaching purposes.

- ▶ **ISSUE: An aging population will lead to an increased number of older adults using fitness and recreation facilities; a portion of this clientele has increasingly complex health backgrounds.**

**Action 5.7: Promote specialized older adult fitness certification for Parks & Recreation's staff.** Since older adults can have such different medical backgrounds, functional abilities, and fitness goals, it is important to ensure that City of Ottawa staff have the relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes and experience to develop and deliver appropriate activity and exercise programs that meet the varying needs of the older adult population. The City will provide specialized training for identified employees who typically work with older adults. As much as possible, this specialized training will be offered to older employees involved in leading peer-to-peer classes.

- ▶ **ISSUE: One of the barriers to participation is the lack of knowledge about available opportunities; many older adults were disappointed that the Recreation Guide had been discontinued.**

**Action 5.8: Print a guide of social, recreational, and cultural programs targeted to older adults.** Paper copies of the city-wide Recreation Guide used to be printed and distributed widely across the city, mainly at recreation and community centres as well as libraries. Since 2011, however, the Guide is only available on-line. The City of Ottawa will produce a targeted printed guide of recreation and other programs specific to older adults. A targeted distribution strategy will be developed to reach target groups including older adults with limited computer skills or without access to computers as well as isolated older adults. The intent would be to phase-out this printed Social, Recreation and Cultural Guide as the older population becomes more computer literate in the future.

- ▶ **ISSUE: The four City-operated seniors' centres currently operate with different service delivery models and fee structures.**

**Action 5.9: Harmonize administrative and operating practices across City-operated seniors centres.** The four City-operated seniors' centres continue to operate under the pre-amalgamation practices of the former municipalities. This results in different service

delivery models (membership, drop-in or hybrid models) and fee structures across the city. The City of Ottawa will undertake an exercise to harmonize and streamline the administrative and operating practices of the four seniors' centres. Staff will make changes where they are feasible and align with the majority of existing operating facilities.

- ▶ **ISSUE: There is a lack of affordable venues in the rural areas for community groups to host activities targeting older adults.**

**Action 5.10: Review the impact of providing community groups with discounted or free access to City facilities.** As part of the Rental Policy Review, under Delegated Authority, the City of Ottawa will determine the feasibility of offering further rental reductions or free access to identified City facilities to older adult groups, during non prime times. This review will benefit older adult groups, while ensuring facilities continue to be well used.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Population projections predict that older adults will be the fastest growing segment of the population over the next two decades; this brings up issues of financial sustainability of providing subsidized programs.**

**Action 5.11: Review the impact of continuing to provide age-based discounts for programs that have user fees and provide recommendations.** The City will review the financial impact of continuing to provide these age-based discounts across various programs and services (excluding Transit), in light of the predicted increase in the seniors' population. This analysis will be part of the 2013 fee review under the recent Delegation of Authority report approved by Council. The review will make recommendations after an analysis of various options including the current age-based model, an ability-to-pay model, or others. The review will also take into consideration the needs of older adults who live on low income or in isolated rural environments.

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## 6. CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND VOLUNTEERING

Older adults have a great variety of skills, knowledge and time to contribute to their communities in a range of areas, including civic participation and volunteerism. Their participation contributes to the viability of the community, but also strengthens their own mental and physical health, and social connectedness. One of the most positive impacts of population aging could be an increasing number of people who are available to contribute in municipal affairs and share their time, skills and experience in a volunteering capacity.

Action items in this area aim to improve the promotion of volunteering opportunities at the City of Ottawa, facilitate the development of new volunteering opportunities that are of interest to older adults, and facilitate the engagement of older people in municipal affairs.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults indicated that there was a lack of information about available volunteering opportunities at the City of Ottawa and in the community.**

**Action 6.1: Develop innovative strategies to encourage older adults to volunteer at the City of Ottawa.** Only 7 percent of current City of Ottawa volunteers are over 50 years of age. This means there are significant opportunities to increase the percentage of volunteers who are in this age bracket. The City of Ottawa will develop new and innovative methods to reach potential older volunteers in the community. Since research shows that the easiest way to recruit older volunteers is to approach them, the City plans to hold volunteer recruitment events at community locations where older adults tend to congregate, like seniors' centres and community centres. This would allow potential volunteers to meet face-to-face with City staff and determine what opportunities align with their personal interests. In addition, information on volunteer opportunities will be posted on the Older Adult Section of the City of Ottawa web site. The City will also implement a practice of regular email communication with existing 50+ volunteers to inform them about any new opportunities and to encourage them to engage others in their own networks to volunteer.

**Action 6.2: Promote volunteering with retiring City of Ottawa employees.** Retired employees have the potential to make valuable contributions as volunteers because of their knowledge of the organization and their substantial skills and expertise accumulated throughout their careers. The City of Ottawa will begin promoting internal volunteering opportunities with its retiring employees. As a first step, a section on "Volunteering Post-Retirement" will be included in the Retirement Planning Booklet. This handbook is provided to participants of the City's one-day retirement course. It will address the topic of finding information about existing volunteering opportunities at the City of Ottawa.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults noted the importance of incentives and recognition to encourage volunteer retention.**

**Action 6.3: Ensure that City of Ottawa older adult volunteers are provided with incentives and recognition for their volunteer efforts.** The majority of City of Ottawa departments that engage volunteers have established volunteer recognition programs and, depending on the department, also offer incentives based on services delivered. The Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department will investigate various means to recognize its older volunteers, such as free “Public Swim Passes” or “Public Skating Passes” which would promote participation in recreational programs and active aging. This department is also investigating the possibility of inviting their older adult volunteers to attend various forms of training.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults confirmed that volunteering had positive benefits on their physical and mental health, as long as it was adapted to their capabilities and to what they were interested in.**

**Action 6.4: Develop new volunteer opportunities that meet the specific interests of older adults.** Following a survey of existing older City of Ottawa volunteers, the City of Ottawa will develop new volunteering opportunities that take into consideration the specific interests of this group. This might include opportunities to volunteer at homework clubs, teaching computer skills to other older adults, or participating in the planning of events for older adults. In addition, the City of Ottawa will showcase short-term volunteering opportunities and one-time events on its volunteer web page.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults seek continued and meaningful involvement in political and civic matters. The importance of being involved early in decision-making is key, especially related to issues that directly impact the lives of older adults.**

**Action 6.5: Ensure that the City’s Public Participation Policy and guidelines specifically address the engagement needs of older adults.** In order to create a consistent approach to public participation, the City of Ottawa will revise the corporate Public Participation Policy and develop a Public Participation Toolkit for use by staff across departments. The Toolkit will include a set of guidelines and tools that will assist staff in selecting the most appropriate methods of engagement. The needs of diverse clients will be referenced in the Policy and the particular needs of older adults will be identified (through consultation and research on best practices) and reflected in the toolkit.

## 7. COMMUNITY SUPPORTS AND HEALTH SERVICES

The vast majority of Ottawa older adults live at home and would like to remain there as long as possible. Of those, some require help from home care and other support services (housework, snow clearing, meal preparation, etc) to manage daily activities and care for their health conditions. In addition to practical support, these services also provide people with connections to their community, reducing their social isolation.

Action items in this area aim to improve home supports for older adults, enhance health promotion and prevention efforts, increase supports to natural caregivers, and improve access to supports and services for older adults who are socially isolated or living on low income.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Winter is a major isolating factor for older adults. Many older adults identify that it is difficult to clear their driveways.**

**Action 7.1: Enhance and increase promotion of the Snow Go and Snow Go Assist programs.** The Snow Go Program provides a matching service for older adults and people with disabilities seeking to hire an individual or contractors to clear snow and ice from private driveways and walkways. The Snow Go Assist Program provides financial assistance to eligible clients. With the anticipated increase in the aging population, the City of Ottawa will provide additional funding and increase promotion of the Snow Go and Snow Go Assist Programs. In addition, the City will ensure that these services are provided to residents in both official languages.

**Action 7.2: Launch a campaign to recognize community members who assist their older neighbours with snow clearing.** The City of Ottawa recognizes that many residents provide support and care for their elderly loved ones, friends, and neighbours. During the winter months, lending a helping hand to shovel snow and ice from an older person's driveway and walkway can make a big difference. In order to highlight the support provided to older adults during winter months, the Public Works Department will develop a campaign to recognize residents who voluntarily assist older adults and neighbours with disabilities to remove snow and ice at their residence. This campaign will form part of the Snow Go and Snow Go Assist Programs.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Many older adults identified the important role of health prevention and promotion with respect to active and health aging.**

**Action 7.3: Enhance health promotion and education activities and initiatives.** Ottawa Public Health will increase preventative care and expand its health promotion programming at additional community-based locations. Health promotion programming typically addresses topics like physical activity, healthy eating, tobacco and substance

misuse, and falls prevention. Activities to be offered will include healthy aging education, early screening and referral, as well as personal health plans. Older adults who participate in these activities will also be referred to other community services if appropriate.

**Action 7.4: Implement a CPR training program specifically designed for older adults.** The older population is at greater risk for cardiac arrest; moreover, cardiac arrest usually occurs in the home. The Ottawa Paramedic Service will implement a new training program called “CPR Essentials” that will train older adults in Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillation (AED). The CPR Essentials course will specifically target older people who are looking to learn these practical skills so they may help someone close to them in the event of a sudden cardiac arrest. The program will first train a select group of older adults as instructors who will then offer training to other older adults at seniors centres across the city.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Informal caregivers play key roles in the lives of older adults; many stressed the need to enhance supports to natural helpers.**

**Action 7.5: Reinforce information, education, and support services for family and friend caregivers.** Natural caregivers often do not have the training or information they need to provide quality care to their loved ones; in addition to information, caregivers also need recognition, respite care and support. Ottawa Public Health will provide information and support to natural caregivers through: interactive education sessions facilitated by Public Health Nurses; the development of electronic learning modules for those caregivers who cannot attend face-to-face activities; the development of a caregiver resource guide; and the provision of telephone or e-mail support for caregivers.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Older adults who do not have a supportive network of friends or live on low income have more difficulty connecting to and accessing appropriate services.**

**Action 7.6: Provide dental screening and education to older adults living on low incomes.** Low-income older adults lack access to preventive oral health services or treatment when and where they need it. Ottawa Public Health will develop a new program that will provide dental screening and education at no cost to at-risk older adults living on low income. The program will contribute to improving older adults’ oral health as well as access to services, while increasing knowledge and skills to maintain good oral health. These activities will be offered at community-based locations such as retirement or long-term care homes, Community Health Resource Centres, and Seniors Groups.

**Action 7.7: Train key individuals in the community to identify older adults who appear to be isolated and refer them to appropriate services.** Ottawa Public Health will implement a proactive ‘Gatekeeper’ program that will train community members on how to identify

home dwelling older adults that appear to be isolated and at-risk and refer them to appropriate services. 'Gatekeepers' are members of the community who come into contact with older adults on a regular basis; these include utility employees, bank personnel, apartment building managers, postal carriers, hairdressers and barbers, grocery store personnel, police, fire department, and paramedics to name a few. Ottawa Public Health will work with community partners to implement the Gatekeeper program across the city.

**Action 7.8: Develop a safety and well-being screening checklist for use by City staff who conduct home visits with older adults.** City employees who go to older adults' homes in the course of their work (home support workers for example) have an opportunity to quickly screen for key safety and well-being issues. The City of Ottawa will develop a standardized screening checklist that staff will use to quickly identify issues of concern and refer for additional supports if required. For example, an absence of a smoke detector would trigger a referral to Fire Services or isolation would trigger a referral to Ottawa Public Health. The checklist will be jointly developed by relevant City departments and will be utilized by staff across service areas. Partnerships with community partners in the use of the checklist will also be investigated.

**Action 7.9: Establish a paramedic program of regular home visits for check-up and support purposes.** A certain number of older adults rely on the 911 system to manage their growing health needs. The City of Ottawa will establish a Community Paramedicine Program where paramedics will make scheduled home visits with older adults to monitor their health status, identify emerging needs, and connect them with appropriate community health care resources if required. The program will also include an education component where paramedics will make community presentations about the 911 system and other options to access the health care system in retirement homes and other community venues. A funding request has been submitted to the Local Health Integration Network and there will be opportunities to link this initiative with the efforts of the Gatekeeper Program.

**Action 7.10: Simplify City procedures to access subsidized or financial assistance programs.** Low income older adults qualify for a number of City of Ottawa subsidized or financial assistance programs. Application procedures vary depending on the program and low income older adults are often required to re-submit their financial information with each application. The Community and Social Services Department (CSSD) recently implemented a new simplified income needs test using the low income cut-off (LICO) as a standardized determination for eligibility. The CSSD will work with other departments to

implement the same standardized income needs test and ensure that financial information is only required once in a specified period of time.

**Action 7.11: Support vulnerable low income older adults with health and social supports.**

Vulnerable older adults require additional supports in order to age in a healthy and dignified manner. The City of Ottawa will identify Older Adult Plan funding to prioritize health and social supports to vulnerable, low income, older adults.

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## 8. RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Feeling respected and socially included encourages older persons to take an active part in the community and contributes to their overall well-being. In fact, many of the factors limiting the participation and engagement of older people in the community are linked to ageism. Age friendly cities can take active steps to fight ageism by ensuring that older persons are valued and included in all aspects of the community.

Action items in this area aim to increase corporate and staff awareness about older adults' issues, build organizational capacity to ensure that the City of Ottawa is responsive to the needs of older residents, and facilitate the implementation of the Older Adult Plan.

- ▶ **ISSUE: Most older persons feel positive about the level of respect towards them; some identified measures to increase awareness about older adult issues, especially among service providers.**

**Action 8.1: Sensitize and educate City personnel about older adult issues.** The City of Ottawa will implement a series of measures to increase corporate and staff awareness about older adults' issues. An Older Adult Awareness Day as well as other more targeted sensitivity training events will be organized and materials will be developed under the existing Equity and Inclusion Lens initiative. The purpose of these efforts will be to enhance corporate awareness about aging issues and challenges, and the impact of ageism.

- ▶ **ISSUE: The City of Ottawa requires efficient and meaningful internal structures and processes in order to serve its older clientele in the best manner possible.**

**Action 8.2: Review and harmonize older adult terminology across the corporation.** There are various age-based definitions of what constitutes an older adult across City departments. For example, individuals registering for a fitness class are considered to be older adults beginning at 50 years old, but individuals have to be 60 years or older to access the Snow Go program and 65 years or older to access the Tax Deferral Program. The City of Ottawa will work across departments to review and harmonize terminology used across the corporation. This new terminology could then be integrated into descriptions of older adult programs and services.

**Action 8.3: Regularly monitor the satisfaction of older adults with City programs and services.** The City of Ottawa conducts broad resident satisfaction surveys in order to better understand client expectations, measure satisfaction with City services, and identify priorities for improvement. In addition, individual departments monitor the satisfaction of older clients with specific services or programs in various ways. Surveying clients' satisfaction represents yet another source of information that can be used to improve

programs and services. As a first step, the City of Ottawa will ensure that future resident satisfaction surveys have the capability to analyze and report on the satisfaction scores of older adults.

**Action 8.4: Monitor and circulate information about demographic changes and other emerging trends to internal and community stakeholders.** The City of Ottawa will refresh existing demographic information on older adults using data from the 2011 Census data and analyze findings in terms of new trends. User-friendly snapshots on groups of older adults with unique needs could also be developed. This refreshed report will be disseminated to internal and community stakeholders. Individual departments will be supported in the interpretation and continued use of this information for planning purposes.

► **ISSUE: The City of Ottawa is committed to the implementation of the Older Adult Plan as well as continued dialogue with the older population.**

**Action 8.5: Provide regular updates about the Older Adult Plan and opportunities for continued contributions by older adults.** Many older adults who participated in the consultation indicated that they would like to be kept informed about the Older Adult Plan and how they could participate in the future. The City of Ottawa will share updates about the progress of the Older Adult Plan with the community at key intervals. These updates may take the form of reports, City events, or presentations at community agencies. Since the Older Adult Plan is a living document that will be refreshed every few years, older adults will be invited to provide their feed-back, on a regular basis, on work accomplished to date, improvements and emerging priorities.

**Action 8.6: Create a staff working group to coordinate the implementation of the Older Adult Plan and monitor emerging trends and issues.** The City of Ottawa will create a staff working group that will coordinate the implementation of components of the plan, monitor the plan's progress, share information and resources, build relationships across departments, and monitor emerging older adult trends and issues. This working group will include representatives from key City departments, including the Accessibility Office, as was recommended during the research phase of the project.

**Action 8.7: Pursue the World Health Organization's age-friendly designation, in collaboration with Age Friendly Ottawa.** The city of Ottawa is a member of the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age Friendly Cities. Continued membership is contingent upon the completion of the steps of the improvement cycle, including the submission of a community-wide action plan based on the findings from consultations with older adults. The City of Ottawa will collaborate with Age Friendly Ottawa on the

preparation and submission of this community-wide action plan, followed by implementation and monitoring of progress.

## ACTION PLAN

The Older Adult Action Plan (table below) summarizes the recommended actions and provides additional information related to specific groups of older adults, timing, responsibility for implementation, funding requirements, and monitoring indicators.

**Specific Groups to Benefit:** Identifies groups with unique needs that will derive a particular benefit from the implementation of the action.

**Timing:** Indicates the time period within which the action will be implemented.

**Responsibility:** Indicates which City of Ottawa Department is leading or assisting in the implementation of the action.

Short forms for City of Ottawa Department names:

AO	Accessibility Office	OPL	Ottawa Public Library
CC	Corporate Communications	PGM	Planning and Growth Management
CSS	Community and Social Services	PRCS	Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
EPS	Emergency and Protective Services	PW	Public Works
IS	Infrastructure Services	SO	Service Ottawa
OPH	Ottawa Public Health	TS	Transit Services

**Funding:** Identifies if the action will be funded within existing departmental budgets, if Older Adult Plan funding has already been allocated, or if funding may be required in the future.

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**Implementation Indicators:** Identifies what implementation indicators will be monitored.

**Table 1. Older Adult Action Plan – Outdoor Spaces and City Buildings**

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
1.1	Install additional accessible features in City facilities	With disabilities	2012 and beyond	IS	-	B	# of additional automatic door openers. # of additional grab bars. Other retrofit work documented.
1.2	Publish accessibility ratings for public City facilities	With disabilities	2014	IS	AO	C	Accessibility ratings for City buildings published on City web site.
1.3	Update and implement the City’s accessibility guidelines in the construction of new City facilities	With disabilities	2013	AO	-	A	Adoption of City of Ottawa Accessibility Design Standards document by City Council.
1.4	Promote the City’s accessibility design guidelines with community stakeholders to encourage the application of age-friendly principles in the community	With disabilities	2013-2014	PGM	-	A	Outreach activities documented.
1.5	Install additional benches in City parks, on roads, and pathways	-	2013 and beyond	IS/ PRCS	-	B	# of additional benches installed.
1.6	Install additional pedestrian signal technology to existing signalized intersections and develop a communications campaign on pedestrian intersection safety	-	2013 and beyond	PW	-	B	# of additional signal improvements installed. Outreach activities documented. Awareness materials developed.
1.7	Implement measures such as pedestrian islands and roadway narrowings at selected intersections and mid-block crossings on selected roadways, where appropriate	-	2013 and beyond	PW	PGM/ IS	A	Pedestrian Safety Evaluation Program is a permanent program.
1.8	Include walkability assessments in the prioritization of sidewalk maintenance	-	2013 and beyond	PW	-	A	Process established to include older adult lens in prioritization of maintenance work.
1.9	Increase the number of Yellow Grit Boxes along sidewalks	-	2012 and beyond	PW	-	B	# of additional grit boxes.

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
1.10	Develop an Age Friendly Parks, Pathways and Public Spaces Checklist	-	2013	PGM	PRCS	A	Age Friendly Parks, Pathways and Public Spaces Checklist developed and in use.
1.11	Review the Official Plan to ensure it supports the land use needs of older adults	-	2013-2014	PGM	-	A	An Official Plan which promotes the development of complete communities.

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**Table 2. Older Adult Action Plan - Transportation**

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
2.1	Make public transportation more affordable for older adults	Low income	2012	TS	-	A	Senior's cash fare as a percentage of regular adult cash fare. Senior's monthly pass fare as a percentage of regular adult pass fare. Senior's pay-per-ride fare as a percentage of regular pay-per-ride fare. # of senior passes sold per month. # of senior pay-per-ride fares collected per month.
2.2	Review the benefits of increasing the transportation options available to older adults in rural areas	Rural	2013	TS	-	A	# of passengers boarding Rural Shopper's Routes in rural areas. # of one-way trips carried by community support agencies as a result of City funding.
2.3	Develop age-friendly guidelines for the design and placement of bus stops and shelters	With disabilities	2013	TS	-	A	Design guidelines completed and implemented.
2.4	Review current procedures and coordination between departments responsible for snow removal around bus stops and shelters	With disabilities	2013	TS/PW	-	A	Operational review completed and changes implemented.
2.5	Investigate technology that would inform Para Transpo clients of their vehicle's approximate arrival time	With disabilities	2013	TS	-	A	Technology review completed.
2.6	Review Para Transpo procedures to make advance booking easier	With disabilities	2013	TS	-	A	Procedural review completed.
2.7	Review Para Transpo eligibility rules in context of industry best practices	With disabilities	2014	TS	-	A	Eligibility criteria review completed, and new criteria and process developed for recommendation.

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
2.8	Provide comprehensive information about travel options to older adults	With disabilities	2014	PGM	-	C	Travel options information package developed and available in print and online.
2.9	Expand the Transit Travel Training Program for older adults	With disabilities Immigrant Low income	2013	TS	-	A	% increase in older adults provided with Travel Training. # of seniors' agencies added to the Travel Training program.
2.10	Increase funding and promotion of the Taxi Coupon Program	With disabilities	2013	TS	-	A	Funding increase approved by Transit Commission and Council.
2.11	Develop cycling safety workshops for older adults and update the Ottawa Cycling Map	-	2013-2014	PRCS/ PGM	-	A	# of workshops conducted # of consultations with older adults Updated Ottawa Cycling Map.
2.12	Launch an awareness campaign to reduce sidewalk cycling and encourage safe sharing of pathways with pedestrians	-	2014	PGM	-	C	Education / awareness materials developed. # of pathway intervention / outreach activities.
2.13	Review the implications of increasing numbers of mobility scooters and motorized wheelchairs on designated bikeways	With disabilities	2014	PGM	-	A	Study results.
2.14	Launch a safety awareness campaign for older drivers	-	2013	PW	-	A	Awareness materials developed # of outreach activities.

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**Table 3. Older Adult Action Plan - Housing**

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
3.1	Organize a roundtable meeting to explore options to increase affordable housing choices for older adults	Low income	2014	CSS	-	C	Roundtable held. Options documented.
3.2	Conduct an assessment of housing needs within rural areas	Rural	2014	PGM	-	A	Assessment conducted.
3.3	Explore the Ottawa Renovates Program as a potential support for home adaptations for the most vulnerable, low income, adults	Low income	2013-2014	CSS	-	A	As per documentation.
3.4	Identify repair needs at social housing buildings	Low income	2013-2014	CSS	-	A	Activity conducted.
3.5	Encourage and educate residential care operators to increase the number of accessible units for individuals with disabilities	With disabilities	2013 and beyond	CSS	-	A	Efforts documented.
3.6	Refine domiciliary hostel standards using an older adult lens	Low income	2013	CSS	-	A	Revised standards approved.
3.7	Raise awareness within City-operated long-term care homes on the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered older adults	GLBTQ	2012-2013	CSS	-	A	Documentation of activities undertaken.
3.8	Conduct a survey to identify the specific service needs of older adults who use emergency shelters	Low income	2013	CSS	-	A	Survey report.

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**Table 4. Older Adult Action Plan - Communication and Information**

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
4.1	Develop innovative strategies to disseminate information about key municipal programs and services to older adults.	Francophone Immigrant Isolated Low income	2013 and beyond	CSS	All	A	Guide of City services and programs available in print and online. # of "Meet Your Services" events. Email distribution list in operation. Promotional efforts to reach low income older adults documented.
4.2	Pilot satellite Client Service Centres offering in-person and self-service access to information and services at new locations	-	2013	SO	-	A	One satellite Client Service Centre in operation. One satellite self-service counter in operation.
4.3	Enhance knowledge tools used by 311 and Client Service Centre staff	Francophone	2012 and beyond	SO	-	A	Knowledge tools revised. # of trained staff.
4.4	Develop a dedicated section on ottawa.ca to serve as a central source of information and services for older adults	Francophone	2012 and beyond	SO	-	A	New older adult section (on City of Ottawa web site) live.
4.5	Develop an awareness campaign about 311, 211, 911, and ottawa.ca targeted at older adults	Isolated Francophone Immigrant	2013	SO	-	A	Awareness materials. # of outreach events.
4.6	Create corporate accessible print design guidelines	With disabilities	2013	CC	-	A	Accessible Print Design Guidelines adopted.
4.7	Include an older adults lens in the corporate communication plan template	All	2013	CC	-	A	Communications Plan Template updated.

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**Table 5. Older Adult Action Plan - Social, Recreational, and Cultural Participation**

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
5.1	Develop and implement a Seniors Services Strategy at the Ottawa Public Library	-	2014	OPL	-	A	OPL Seniors Services Strategy.
5.2	Review older adult programming, taking into consideration demographic data as well as facility utilization patterns.	Rural Francophone	2014	PRCS	OPH/OPL	C	Inter-departmental working group established and functional. Electronic inventory of older adult programming completed. Inventory of City facilities completed Documentation of changes to program offerings.
5.3	Develop or partner to offer inclusive programming for groups experiencing language, cultural, social, health, and other barriers	Immigrant GLBTQ Francophone With disabilities Aboriginal	2014	PRCS	OPH/OPL	C	# of pilot inclusive programming.
5.4	Provide recreational and learning programming to older adults living in social housing buildings	Low income Isolated	2014	PRCS/OPL	OPH	C	New programming present in # of social housing buildings.
5.5	Develop and implement a computer literacy and internet safety curriculum for older adults and train others in the community to deliver the curriculum in community facilities	Low income	2012 and beyond	OPL	-	B	Curriculum developed # of training events Volunteer program in operation.
5.6	Install public access computers at City-operated seniors' centres and selected community centres	Low income	2014	PRCS	-	C	# of new public access computers installed and in operation.
5.7	Promote specialized older adult fitness certification for Parks & Recreation's staff	-	2014	PRCS	-	C	# of staff trained.
5.8	Print a guide of social, recreational, and cultural programs targeted to older adults	Isolated	2013 and beyond	PRCS	OPH/OPL	B	Guide printed and circulated.

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
5.9	Harmonize administrative and operating practices across City-operated seniors centres	-	2013	PRCS	-	A	Documentation changes made to operating practices.
5.10	Review the impact of providing community groups with discounted or free access to City facilities	Rural	2013	PRCS	-	A	Report released.
5.11	Review the impact of continuing to provide age-based discounts for programs that have user fees and provide recommendations	-	2014	PRCS	CSS	A	Report released, including recommendations moving forward.

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**Table 6. Older Adult Action Plan - Civic Participation and Volunteering**

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
6.1	Develop innovative strategies to encourage older adults to volunteer at the City of Ottawa	-	2013 and beyond	PRCS	-	A	Information about volunteering opportunities posted on older adult section of Ottawa.ca. # of email communications/year with existing older volunteers. # of outreach events.
6.2	Promote volunteering with retiring City of Ottawa employees	-	2012	PRCS	-	A	Promotion included in Learning Centre hand-out.
6.3	Ensure that City of Ottawa older adult volunteers are provided with incentives and recognition for their volunteer efforts	-	2013	PRCS	-	A	Incentive program implemented within PRCS.
6.4	Develop new volunteer opportunities that meet the specific interests of older adults	-	2013-2014	PRCS	-	A	Survey conducted. # of new volunteering opportunities created.
6.5	Ensure that the City's Public Participation Policy and guidelines specifically address the engagement needs of older adults	-	2012-2013	CSS	-	A	Public Participation Policy adopted (with specific mention of older adults).

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**Table 7. Older Adult Action Plan - Community Supports and Health Services**

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
7.1	Enhance and increase promotion of the Snow Go and Snow Go Assist programs	Low income With disabilities Francophone	2013	PW	-	B	# clients served.
7.2	Launch a campaign to recognize community members who assist their older neighbours with snow clearing	-	2013	PW	-	A	Awareness materials developed.
7.3	Enhance health promotion and education activities and initiatives	-	2012 and beyond	OPH	-	B	4 additional community locations for regular OPH programming with at least one in the west end. 2 additional Aging in Place building. Systematic outreach to non-formal groups such as church groups, clubs and community agencies.
7.4	Implement a CPR training program specifically designed for older adults	-	2012 and beyond	EPS	-	B	Curriculum developed. # of train-the-trainer events.
7.5	Reinforce information, education, and support services for family and friend caregivers	-	2012 and beyond	OPH	-	A	Caregiver forum held. # of participants in interactive education sessions. # of participants in e-learning. # of caregiver resource guides distributed. # of caregivers supported by telephone/e-mail.
7.6	Provide dental screening and education to older adults living on low incomes	Low income	2012 and beyond	OPH	-	B	# of low-income older adults screened by dental hygienist. # of older adults who participate in dental education sessions.
7.7	Train key individuals in the community to identify older adults who appear to be	Isolated	2012 and beyond	OPH	-	B	# of gatekeeper training sessions. # of gatekeepers trained.

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
	isolated and refer them to appropriate services						# of older adults referred.
7.8	Develop a safety and well-being screening checklist for use by City staff who conduct home visits with older adults	Isolated	2013	CSS	-	A	Screening tool developed. # of staff trained to use tool.
7.9	Establish a paramedic program of regular home visits for check-up and support purposes	Isolated	2013 and beyond	EPS	-	A	Program developed and operational.
7.10	Simplify City procedures to access subsidized or financial assistance programs	Low income	2013	CSS	-	A	One standardized financial needs test implemented across City programs. Procedures changed so that eligibility test is done once.
7.11	Support vulnerable low income older adults with health and social supports	Low income	2012 and beyond	CSS	-	B	Funding allocated.

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**Table 8. Older Adult Action Plan - Respect and Social Inclusion**

#	Action	Target Groups to Benefit	Timing	Responsibility		Funding	Implementation Indicators
				Lead Department(s)	Assist Department(s)		
8.1	Sensitize and educate City personnel about older adult issues	-	2013 and beyond	CSS	-	A	# of staff trained. Older Adult Awareness Day held. Tools developed.
8.2	Review and harmonize older adult terminology across the corporation	-	2013	CSS	-	A	Terminology adopted across departments.
8.3	Regularly monitor the satisfaction of older adults with City programs and services	-	2013-2014	CSS	-	A	Corporate survey of client satisfaction implemented (with findings analyzed by age groups).
8.4	Monitor and circulate information about demographic changes and other emerging trends to internal and community stakeholders	-	2013	CSS	-	A	Revised demographic report produced and circulated.
8.5	Provide regular updates about the Older Adult Plan and opportunities for continued contributions by older adults	-	Starting in 2013 and beyond	CSS	-	A	Seniors Roundtable established Older Adult Plan progress report released.
8.6	Create a staff working group to coordinate the implementation of the Older Adult Plan and monitor emerging trends and issues	-	2013	CSS	All	A	Staff working group created with revised terms of reference and representation from Accessibility Office.
8.7	Pursue the World Health Organization's age-friendly designation, in collaboration with Age Friendly Ottawa	-	Starting in 2012 and beyond	CSS	-	A	Designation requirements met.

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## MONITORING AND REPORTING

Monitoring of the Older Adult Plan implementation involves checking that the various activities are being implemented as per the approved action plan and on time. Routinely gathering information on implementation progress will allow staff and management to make necessary adjustments should problems or issues arise.

Corporately, measuring implementation progress is required since the Older Adult Plan represents a strategic initiative within the Term of Council Strategic Plan (2011-2014). Monitoring of the implementation progress will be done on a routine basis by lead departments, according to the monitoring indicators in the Action Plan.

Progress on the implementation of the Older Adult Plan will be reported to senior management and City Council at regular intervals through the Corporate Planning Framework process. The City of Ottawa will also create a Seniors' Roundtable that will provide feed-back on the implementation of the Older Adult Plan. This Roundtable will bring together community members and will meet four times annually, with support from City staff.

Many older adults who participated in the public consultations expressed a desire to be kept informed about the progress of the Older Adult Plan in the future. To this end, the City of Ottawa will provide regular public updates on the progress of the Plan and will formally report to the community-at-large in 2015.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Ottawa Older Adult Plan 2012-2014 could not have been developed without the vision, support and commitment of all those involved throughout the process. A special thank you is extended to the Mayor and City Council for their leadership, to members of the former City of Ottawa Seniors Advisory Committee and to all older adults who participated in the community consultations.

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**Additional Information and Copies**

For more information or to obtain a print copy of the City of Ottawa Older Adult Plan 2012-2014, contact the Strategic Community Initiatives Branch under the Community and Social Services Department by phoning 311 or emailing [seniors@ottawa.ca](mailto:seniors@ottawa.ca).