500 Londoners consulted

+ 100 Task Force members

+ 50 community conversations

= 1 vision of an age friendly London
Londoners are proud of their city and care deeply about its future development. This sense of mission has motivated more than one hundred citizens to participate in an extensive series of workshops and meetings over the past year. The Age Friendly Task Force speaks for seniors as well as many community stakeholders representing a great diversity of cultures, backgrounds and services.

The Age Friendly Task Force applauds Council for encouraging and supporting many community groups to participate in a broad process of consultation and the many citizens across the city who are participating in this process. Extensive consultation with the people who live here is indeed the best foundation for building the future of London.

Under the proficient and skillful facilitation of City of London staff, the Age Friendly Task Force has met formally for more than 30 hours over the past year as well as countless hours of study and conversation around the issues and challenges of fostering a more age friendly London.

The result has been the creation of many recommendations for action in eight distinct themes of enrichment of life and community experience in London. This document will provide Council with a 3 year road map to the future along with a toolkit of strategies and actions to transform plans to reality.

We are proud of our work. We do not see this report as the end of our task, but rather the beginning of the steps needed to succeed. Many of the recommendations are no-cost or low-cost and many involve the development of community partnerships. All are designed to increase the age friendly atmosphere of the City of London and to enhance the quality of life in London for all citizens.
OUR VISION OF AN age friendly LONDON

A diverse, vibrant, caring and healthy community which empowers all individuals to age well and have opportunities to achieve their full potential.
Linda Adamson
Marylou Albanese
Kate Albert
Guloo Austin
Gina Barber
Sue Barnes
Carol Beaumont
Rae Belcourt
Wendy Bice
Mardelle Bishop
Dianne Blais
Sylvia Bohdanowicz
Charlotte Broadfoot
Zelda Brown
Christian Bullas
Carol Burns
Janette Butler
Ruth-Anne Calhoun
Anne Callon
Delores Campbell
Judith Carter
Joyce Castanza
Adriana Castellanos
Julie Chalykoff
Sandra Collier
Nancy Collister
Pamela Commodore
Diana Cook
Joyce Cook
Richard Cook
Sue Cornelius
Sherry Coulson
Lynda Cowie
Alice Cox
Chris Curry
Sheila Davenport
Claudia Day
Dennis de Freitas
Michelle Dellamora
Lucy Duffinais
Holli-Lynne Elash
Kathleen Ellis
Kim Elsdon
Inge Evans
Mike Evans
Bev Farrell
Catherine Forster
Donna Forward
Linda Galloway
Sara Galsworthy
Michelle Gatt
Bill Gow
Ric Graham
Sid Greenberg
Elisha Greenham
Rose Gregory
Lena Guerra
Jennifer Halliday-Dinon
Dan Hamond
Gillian Hamson
Candice Harris
Doris Hawkins
Colin Hendry
Marlene Hendry
Suzanne Holmes
Jo-Ann Hutchinson
Huda Hussein
Susanne Jants
Arthur Jutan
Maureen Khan
Brigitte Kiosis
Marita Kloseck
Jean Knight
Kathy Kosatschenko
Dharshi Lacey
Laurie Lalonde
Joyce Larsh
Marion Lavoie
Bong-in Lee
Linda Levertown
Stephanie MacDonald
Kathleen Martin
Rosa Martin
Bruce McDonald
Kelly McManus
Sue McPherson
Nancy McSloy
Gerda Meyer
Bryan Mills
Lisa Misurak
Monica Naskret
Yaghoub Norouzi
David Norton
Sonia O’Donnell
Leanne Oke
Manolita Pace
Clara Parra
Doug Paterson
Deb Peckham
Dale Pineau
Fern Pinet
Ian Pittendreigh
Jules Poirier
Terry Poirier
Elaine Poston
Sue Potten
Marlene Powner
Bonnie Quesnel
Brenda Ryan
Homa Salem
Mabel Salisbury
Nick Sauter
Diana Schell
Bill Scott
Linda Scott
Robert Sexsmith
Marnie Sherritt
Pam Simmons
Dagma Speechly
Linda Stephenson
Carola Turton
Jean Twigg
Sally Vandesompel
Robert Walters
Aleksandra Zecevic
Maureen Zunti

Older adult participants wishing to remain anonymous
What is Age Friendly London?

In 2010, London became the first city in Canada to join the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network of Age Friendly Cities. Membership in the Network represents a city’s commitment to improving its age friendliness, and to engaging older adults in the process.

In 2011, City Council established the Age Friendly London Task Force. The Task Force is a group of over 100 older adults, baby boomers, service providers, caregivers and other community members.

Over the past year, the Task Force has met on a monthly basis to develop a vision, strategies and action steps focused on improving the quality of life for older adults in London. The Task Force engaged a broader group of citizens and stakeholders throughout this process.

The Age Friendly London Action Plan is a road map for improving London’s age friendliness over the next three years.

It builds upon the numerous initiatives already underway in London, and identifies that everyone in our community has a role to play in improving age friendliness.

did you know?

London’s older adult population is growing at twice the rate of the overall population.
eight focus areas

the WHO defined these eight areas as being key elements of an age friendly city:

- Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect & Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation & Employment
- Communication & Information
- Community Support & Health Services
Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older adults, and affect their ability to ‘age in place’.

“I love London for its trees!”

**Strategy #1:** Advocate City Council to advance the timing of construction of multi-purpose recreation facilities.

**Strategy #2:** Improve cleanliness of parks, trails and pathways.

Continue implementation of the ongoing [Adopt-a-Park](#) program.

Improve the ongoing [Clean & Green](#) initiative where volunteers pick up litter in parks and along pathways.

**Strategy #3:** Improve access to washrooms.

Increase number of washrooms that are open all year.

Increase number of washrooms in parks and along trails.

**Strategy #4:** Ensure older adult needs are considered in the design and construction of new or repurposed community centres and parks.

Create opportunities for older adults to participate in the design of new and repurposed community centres.

Ensure [accessibility standards](#) are met or exceeded in new construction and repurpose/renewal projects at community centres (years 1-3, as projects occur).

Ensure older adult [program needs](#) are considered in the design of community centres, including the potential to cluster services (years 1-3, as projects occur).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 2</strong></td>
<td>Continue to advocate City Council to advance the timing of construction of multi-purpose recreation facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue implementation of the ongoing Adopt-a-Park program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to improve the Clean &amp; Green initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to increase number of washrooms open all year, and in parks and along trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 3</strong></td>
<td>Continue to advocate City Council to advance the timing of construction of multi-purpose recreation facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to improve the Clean &amp; Green initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop signage at park entrances that identifies locations of washrooms, including hours of operation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investigate age friendly park design as a way to create gathering places and community focal points in parks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to create opportunities for older adults to participate in the design of new and repurposed community centres as projects occur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure accessibility standards are met or exceeded in community centre projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outdoor Spaces & Buildings**
Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older adults, and affect their ability to ‘age in place’.

“Recreation facilities are the heart and soul of a neighbourhood.”

Strategy #5: Increase walkability and safety of sidewalks, trails and pathways.

Investigate potential to improve sharing of the pathway and trail system for pedestrians and others - speed limit enforcement, separated bike paths, and other ideas to improve safety.

Develop rules for electric bikes using pathways and trails.

Identify priority areas that need improved connectivity of sidewalks, trails and pathways.

Strategy #6: Increase seating everywhere in the city.

Increase number of benches in parks and along pathways (years 1-3).

Strategy #7: Improve age friendliness of signage across the city.

Improve the readability of street signs by changing the font size and style.

Strategy #8: Improve age friendliness of businesses and increase support of local business.

Investigate best practices around Age Friendly Businesses.

Develop a plan for implementation of an Age Friendly Business designation program (years 1-2).

Continue the Walk-to-Shop initiative (years 1-3).

Strategy #9: Increase the number of community gardens.

Increase number of community gardens in the city, especially in areas where older adults live.
Provide **distance markers** and **directional signage** along pathways to identify locations in case of emergency (years 2-3).

Investigate feasibility of increased **snow clearing** (years 2-3).

Investigate potential to improve seasonal **maintainence of sidewalks**.

Improve connectivity of sidewalks, trails and pathways within and between neighbourhoods (years 2-3).

Increase **seating at businesses**, big box stores, etc (years 2-3).

Investigate partnering with schools or colleges to **engage students in building benches**.

Investigate feasibility of increased **snow clearing** of pathways.

Investigate creation of a **winter walking conditions bulletin**.

Investigate possibility of developing **site plan standards** to require more benches in new, large commercial developments.

Continue to encourage businesses and other service providers to improve visibility of **street numbers and signage**.

Implement an **Age Friendly Business** program.

Continue implementation of an **Age Friendly Business** program.

Increase number of **community gardens** in the city, especially in areas where older adults live.

Increase number of **community gardens** in the city, especially in areas where older adults live.
Transportation

Transportation is a key factor influencing active aging. It is an area that impacts other focus areas such as civic participation and access to community and health services.

**Strategy #1:** Increase awareness of existing transportation supports.

- Develop a comprehensive document to raise awareness of transportation supports available to older adults.
- Encourage community partners to engage London Transit Commission through the Get On Board program to educate Londoners on how to use the bus system (years 1-3).

**Strategy #2:** Improve participation of older adults in the transit planning process.

- Work with London Transit Commission to hold annual Town Hall meetings.
- Encourage older adult representation on the Accessible Public Transit Advisory Committee (years 1-3).

**Strategy #3:** Improve amenities at bus stops.

“Transportation links us to each other!”
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue London Transit Commission annual <strong>Town Hall meetings</strong>.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review existing system to improve <em>amenities at bus stops</em> (benches, shelters, information displays on schedules and rates, etc.).</td>
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</tr>
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Transportation

Transportation is a key factor influencing active aging. It is an area that impacts other focus areas such as civic participation and access to community and health services.

Strategy #4: Address access to public transit for older adults and older adults with a disability.

Develop education and training program for all drivers (bus, taxi, etc.) on how to be sensitive to older adult needs and how to handle those with support needs (years 1-3).

Strategy #5: Increase opportunities for safe and active transportation.

Improve pedestrian safety at crossings by installing countdowns and longer crossing times in areas where older adults live or access services (years 1-3).

Petition Province to change traffic laws to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety at roundabouts.

Increase, improve and maintain bike lanes and paths throughout the city (years 1-3).

Provide more bicycle parking with lockups downtown and in other areas.

Strategy #6: Improve parking for older adults across the city.

Consider longer maximum times on downtown parking meters.

Advocate malls and hospitals to set aside spaces for seniors only parking.
Investigate and consider non-peak **free or nominal fares** for older adults.

Investigate ways to improve **affordability** of public transit for older adults and persons with disabilities.

Investigate and implement a **bike sharing** program.

Investigate effectiveness of current **traffic calming** measures and identify specific sites for future traffic calming.

Investigate and implement **priority parking** for seniors.

Improve **accessibility of parking** spaces in and around parks.

Continue to investigate ways to improve **affordability** of public transit for older adults and persons with disabilities.

Investigate and implement a **car sharing** program.
Housing is essential to safety and well-being. Where we live is more than just a roof - it’s a home. A place that is familiar and loved, and where most older adults want to stay as long as possible. Housing and community supports are a key part of quality of life and independence.

**Strategy #1:**
Ensure older adult participation in London’s Community Housing Strategy.

Consult older adults in monitoring the implementation of the Community Housing Strategy, including the revision of local priority rules of social housing waiting lists and the creation of more affordable housing (years 1-2).

**Strategy #2:**
Investigate and improve awareness of housing options for older adults.

Update Housing Directory to include definitions.

Update Housing Directory to include accessible and subsidized housing.

Investigate potential housing models, options and best practices for older adults and assess the feasibility for implementation in London - including examining opportunities for co-housing or shared housing, creating secondary units, integrating support services and age friendly design, improving access to transportation, etc.

“There is no place like home!”
Ensure older adults participate in the 18-24 month **Community Housing Strategy review** and updates.

Continue to ensure older adults participate in the 18-24 month **Community Housing Strategy review** and updates.

Identify the emerging market for **housing choices** and advocate for them (years 2-3).

Develop a **communication strategy** to inform the community of the Housing Directory and housing options.

Implement **communication strategy** to inform the community of the Housing Directory and housing options.

“Housing nourishes pride.”
Social Participation

Participating in recreation, leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with family, allows older adults to enjoy respect and esteem, and maintain and establish supportive relationships.

“Social participation keeps me young!”

Strategy #1: Improve access to and knowledge about facilities available for use by older adults.

- Inventory available space in neighbourhoods including churches, libraries, etc.
- Foster partnerships to improve access to space for older adult programming.
- Advertise age friendly amenities of facilities (years 1-2).

Strategy #2: Improve access to programming and socializing at the neighbourhood level.

- Investigate opportunities to continue support for Senior Neighbourhood Advisory Councils (SNACs).
- Develop matching program for newcomer seniors.

Strategy #3: Encourage older adults to participate by providing the programs and services they need.

- Hold an annual Age Friendly London conference.
- Develop more opportunities for older adults to learn about technology from other adults.

Strategy #4: Develop programs and services that meet the needs of isolated older adults and remove barriers to participation.

- Expand the Leisure Education Awareness Program (LEAP) to train other groups to follow the approach to bring people into activities through transition approaches.
- Encourage large building managers and landlords to have a greater connection to senior residents.

Strategy #5: Create a network of neighbourhood hubs to access information about programs and services.

- Identify which facilities or gathering places could serve as key places to go to find information and get connected.
Advertise **age friendly amenities** of facilities.

Develop a ‘Doors Open’ event for older adults including facilities, services, retirement homes, etc.

Investigate opportunities to expand **SNACs** to other neighbourhoods.

Improve access to information on **subsidies** for program participation.

Dedicate a portion of time at all community centres and gathering places for free, drop-in **older adult socializing** (years 2-3).

Develop senior-led **cultural programming** by those who have skills to share (eg. cooking).

Continue annual **Age Friendly London conference**.

Determine the program and service needs and **barriers to participation** of isolated seniors through a survey or research.

Investigate potential of a **mentoring program** for isolated seniors.
Older people report experiencing conflicting types of behavior and attitudes towards them. Sometimes they feel respected and included; other times they experience a lack of consideration from others. The amount of respect and inclusion people experience is tied to their quality of life and social participation.

**Strategy #1:**
Increase the number of intergenerational programs.

**Strategy #2:**
Change the stereotype of seniors and stop ageism.

**Strategy #3:**
Improve recognition and acknowledgement of older adults in the community.

---

**year 1**

Review success of current intergenerational programs particularly within the newcomer community, and review best practices.

Create an *Advocacy Committee* of the Age Friendly Network that can coordinate this work.

Encourage seniors and their support networks to become educated and empowered to *stand up for themselves* (years 1-3).

Provide *family education* sessions on how to support aging family members (years 1-3).

Identify and inventory events that recognize accomplishments of seniors in the community.
Create and expand intergenerational programs.

Develop a gardening program to match older adults (landowners or those with skills to share) with students.

Identify key areas of focus for a campaign and identify partners.

Develop a campaign to change the stereotype of aging/seniors that is organization/industry specific.

Develop a strategy to deal with ageism in the healthcare industry and with healthcare professionals.

Increase the profile of events recognizing the accomplishments of seniors.

Advocate to have seniors category added to the Mayor’s honour list.

“We can only truly be an age friendly city when we all respect one another.”
Civic Participation & Employment

Older adults do not stop contributing to their communities upon retirement. Many continue to provide paid, unpaid and voluntary work. An age friendly community offers opportunities for older adults to continue to contribute to their communities through paid employment, volunteerism and civic participation.

**Strategy #1:**
Increase quantity and quality of volunteer opportunities specific to older adults. Inventory volunteer and mentorship opportunities specific to older adults.

Investigate barriers to volunteering, including affordability (years 1-2).

**Strategy #2:**
Improve access to employment opportunities for older adults (who wish to work).

Identify training opportunities that exist for older adults in London.

Improve linkages of older adults to employment agencies.

**Strategy #3:**
Encourage more older adults to participate in civic affairs.

Encourage senior participation by asking for their input and feedback (through meetings, surveys, etc.).

Increase opportunities on the City of London website for input into decision making.

Review best practices and investigate potential of developing a mechanism for older adults to advise Council.

Implement a mechanism for senior input to Council.

"An adequate income is key to health, housing and the ability to participate."
Develop a ‘how to volunteer’ guide that highlights London success stories.

Develop a recognition program for older adult volunteers in the community.

Develop a resource kit for employers and employees to learn about the value of older adults in the workplace.

Develop workshops for older adults to generate ideas on how to turn a hobby into a business, or to create training and mentorship opportunities.

Implement workshops for older adults to generate ideas on how to turn a hobby into a business, or to create training and mentorship opportunities.
Staying connected to people, activities and events, and the ability to access information, is vital for active aging. The rapid evolution of information and communication technologies means that there are more and more ways to stay connected, but requires access for older adults to new technologies.

**Strategy #1:**
Create a sustainable source for all information related to older adults.

Connect with Information London/thehelpline.ca/Savvy Seniors/Seniors Helpline/2-1-1 to determine the **scope of information available**.

Coordinate efforts around **access to information** across the community.

Identify what **information older adults are looking for** and how they prefer to access information.

Create a **Facebook page** for older adults to share information and ideas.

**Strategy #2:**
Improve access to older adult program information.

Investigate possibility of creating a **seniors only Spectrum** program.

Investigate possibility of **sorting Spectrum programs by neighbourhood**.

**Strategy #3:**
Develop an Age Friendly Accreditation program for agencies, organizations and service providers.

**Strategy #4:**
Provide networking opportunities for agencies and organizations that service older adults.

Provide agencies and organizations that provide programs and services to older adults with **networking opportunities**.

**Strategy #5:**
Engage media to communicate the age friendly message.

“If there is no communication there is no action; and if there is no action things remain stagnant.”
Identify the ‘go-to’ place for information and build awareness of it.

Develop an education program for older adults on where to go for information, in multiple languages.

Work with other organizations in the community to improve access to their program information.

Investigate the development of an Age Friendly Accreditation program for agencies, organizations and service providers that demonstrate age friendly policies and actions.

Increase use of existing infrastructure and space to promote information (libraries, community centres, bus stops, doctors’ offices, etc.).

Implement an Age Friendly Accreditation program, including offering a ‘seal of approval’.

Establish a community of practice for older adult service providers.

Engage local television and radio stations to devote time for older adult programming and advertising.

Engage local newspapers to provide advertising of age friendly activities.

Explore possibility of publishing a Seniors Scene magazine with local media.
Community Support & Health Services

Health and support services are essential to maintaining vitality and independence for older adults. This includes a wide network of services including hospitals, healthcare providers, caregivers, family supports, home care, and community organizations.

**Strategy #1:**
Improve caregiver supports.

- Develop a broad definition of caregiver and **identify caregiver needs**.
- Review comprehensiveness of information available on the **Caregiver Exchange**.
- Investigate opportunities for **respite care** in London and raise awareness of these opportunities.
- Amend **zoning bylaw** definition of ‘daycares’ to include adult caregiving.

**Strategy #2:**
Improve awareness of and access to home care supports so more people can age in place.

- Investigate developing a phone or visitor **’check in’ service** for isolated older adults.
- Create comprehensive list of **home care supports** available.

“This ensures we are the best we can be.”
Implement ‘check in’ service for isolated older adults.

Advocate Provincial and Federal governments for better home supports for older adults.

Investigate the idea of ‘time banks’ and ‘seniors-helping-seniors’ initiatives to improve supports to age in place (years 2-3).

Continue to advocate Provincial and Federal governments for better home supports for older adults.
Community Support & Health Services

Health and support services are essential to maintaining vitality and independence for older adults. This includes a wide network of services including hospitals, healthcare providers, caregivers, family supports, home care, and community organizations.

**Strategy #3:**
Improve older adults’ access to and experience with the healthcare system.

Provide better access to home support information to healthcare professionals (years 1-3).

Develop a volunteer program for multilingual "system navigators" that will act as an advocate for seniors accessing health services (years 1-3).

Raise awareness of and monitor implementation of the Senior Friendly Hospitals Framework.

**Strategy #4:**
Raise awareness and access to prevention and education programs.

Investigate best practices and develop an education series on self managed healthcare.

Coordinate prevention and education opportunities related to health promotion through the Stepping Out Safely Partnership.
Advocate Provincial and Federal governments for **improved health supports** for older adults.

Develop a mechanism for greater **integration of older adult service providers**.

Develop **referral maps** for older adult service providers.

Implement and publicize **education series** on how to navigate the healthcare system.

Continue to raise awareness of and monitor implementation of the **Senior Friendly Hospitals Framework**.
Our Next Steps

This Three Year Action Plan represents the next step in London’s journey to become more age friendly. It builds upon the numerous initiatives already underway in London, and identifies that everyone in our community has a role to play in improving age friendliness.

There are many action steps identified in this plan that require the involvement of specific organizations, and a number that identify an “Age Friendly London Network” (AFL Network) as the lead.

The Task Force has recommended that, in addition to the endorsement of this Action Plan, that a community-wide AFL Network be established involving older adults, baby boomers, service providers, community organizations and other stakeholders.

The Network, supported by the City of London, would oversee the implementation of this plan over the next three years.

The Task Force has also recommended that the action items in this plan be considered by and integrated into other community planning processes such as the Official Plan Review, ReThink London.

Achieving our vision of a more age friendly London will require significant collaboration in our community, but by working together we will make London a city that is friendly for all ages.
an age friendly city
is a people friendly city
london.ca/agefriendly