



# Steering Committee

2018-2019 Report  
to the Community



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



## Introduction

Age-Friendly Calgary is an initiative to prepare for Calgary's aging population. It is a collaboration between several community service providers, Calgary citizens and other stakeholders. Age-Friendly Calgary was formed in June 2015, when the [Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy and Implementation Plan 2015-2018](#) was approved by Council.

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

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

The Age-Friendly Calgary Steering Committee recently developed a Seniors Age-Friendly Implementation Plan for 2019-2022. This plan continues to focus on the six priority areas, vision, principles and community-wide indicators that were identified in the 2015-2018 plan. Actions that were started over the past four years will be continued, as well as new actions and emerging issues that we need to address.

As part of this process, the governance model for Age-Friendly Calgary was reviewed. Moving forward, the Steering Committee will be restructured to support strategic leadership and build stronger connections between action teams. In addition, a new Older Adult Advisory Table will be formed, consisting of older adults with diverse lived experiences. Recruitment to the new Steering Committee and Older Adult Advisory Table will take place in late 2019. More details about the new implementation and governance model can be found at [Calgary.ca/Agefriendly](http://Calgary.ca/Agefriendly)

This Report to the Community highlights the progress that has been made on Age-Friendly Calgary initiatives between June 2018 and May 2019.

# Progress made in the Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy 2015-2018

Age-Friendly Calgary made considerable progress against the short- and medium-term actions in the 2015-2018 Implementation Plan. Below is a summary of the actions that were completed across the six priority areas:



**40 (50%)** of all action items were executed and completed. Some will continue into the next phase of implementation.



**39** other actions items are in progress.

	Completed actions, or completed but with ongoing support <sup>1</sup>	Actions currently in progress	Total short-term and medium-term actions
Access to information and services	5	5	11
Community support and health	4	6	10
Housing	7	3	10
Participation and inclusion	9	19	30
Prevention and response to elder abuse	9	1	10
Transportation and mobility	6	2	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>80</b>

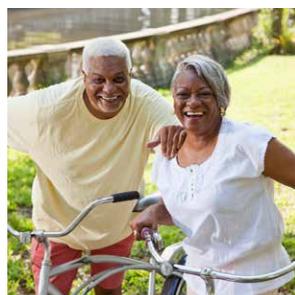
<sup>1</sup>Completed: actions completed in 2015-2018 and no further work is required.

Completed but with ongoing support: actions completed in 2015-2018, but require sustainment for long-term impact.

# Age-Friendly Calgary featured initiatives

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Age-Friendly Calgary has a new logo which depicts a thriving person as the central focus. This person is supported by the six identified priority areas represented by six different colours. Age-Friendly Calgary community partners are using this new visual identity to help raise awareness of the collaborative work taking place to make Calgary a more age-friendly city.



## Promoting an Age-Positive Culture Shift

Promoting an age-positive culture shift is a key component to fostering an age-friendly community that treats everyone equitably. There are ways that older people in our society are marginalized and their contributions minimized, and education and open discussion are key to addressing these issues.

Age-Friendly Calgary has shared information and hosted discussions about what it means to age in our society through community presentations and through the *Changing Perceptions of Aging in Calgary Meetup Group*. As of June 2019, there are 140 members of the *Age-Friendly Meetup Group*, and events have covered topics as diverse as safety of older drivers and pedestrians and, aging in place with pets. One meeting included the dress rehearsal of a play about ageism.

During Seniors' Week 2019, Age-Friendly Calgary hosted a resource fair, focused on the theme of changing perceptions of aging.

Age-Friendly Calgary is also proud to support and promote projects by our community partners that challenge current perceptions of aging, such as the THIRD ACTION Film Festival and the Top 7 over 70 awards.



## Resources for Seniors

People who are living with mental illness, poverty and homelessness (or the risk of homelessness) often appear to age more quickly than others. As early as age 45 or 50, they may experience needs that we usually expect to see with much older people. This population may be further marginalized by community support and housing services that were not designed to support people experiencing the combined effects of aging, poverty and mental health.

In 2017, the Older Adult Council of Calgary commissioned a series of position papers on the topics of homelessness; outreach services; integrated care and housing; and the education and training needs of housing providers for older adults with mental health issues.

Presentations on the papers were delivered by the Mental Health and Housing Action Team at the 7 Cities Conference on Housing and Homelessness in June 2018, and the Grey Matters Pre-Conference in September 2018. The action team is also using feedback on the papers, collected from a community dissemination event held in February 2019, to direct its work over the next year.



## Active-Aging

Calgary Recreation continues to provide programming opportunities for older adults at The City of Calgary’s recreation facilities and community spaces. In 2018-19, almost 700 people participated in free programming provided in City facilities as part of Seniors’ Week. Twelve community fitness programs, that run throughout the year at City of Calgary facilities, were also well attended.

Calgary Recreation is collaborating with post-secondary institutions on active-aging research projects:

- Five projects with the University of Calgary Faculty of Kinesiology relate to social participation in physical activity programs.
- A project with Mount Royal University School of Nursing & Midwifery is looking at the health benefits of physical activities.

These research projects are intended to support the delivery of high quality recreation programming and address continued service delivery improvements for older adults.



## Intergenerational Play Initiative

In September 2017, Age-Friendly Calgary became a signatory of [\*\*Calgary’s Play Charter\*\*](#). The Charter outlines why play is important for children and how Calgarians can create a community that supports and encourages play. Age-Friendly Calgary collected descriptions of games that older Calgarians played as children through the “Good Old Days of Play” initiative. It was an opportunity for older Calgarians to share their knowledge and experience with children and promote relationship-building between generations.



## Information Listings and Sources for Seniors

Improving access to information, services and programs for older adults is a key factor in reducing the social isolation of older adults. Age-Friendly Calgary is working with service providers to support better understanding of each other's services, so they can work together to achieve shared goals. Together, they have created a list of "Essential Phone Numbers" for seniors in Calgary, to support older adults and their families to find the most appropriate service to meet their needs.



## Neighbourhood Engagement

Calgary Seniors Resource Society and Calgary Neighbourhoods are working with members of St. Peter's Anglican Church to connect community volunteers with isolated older adults in the community of Chinook Park. Fifteen volunteers have been trained and participated in distributing information packages about important key services. The program is creating social connections for people who are aging in place in the community. This program is a pilot to determine its effectiveness at meeting the needs of isolated seniors, with a view to replicating the program in other communities.



## Prevention and Response to Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is any action or inaction that causes harm to the health and well-being of an older adult. Elder abuse can take several forms, including financial, emotional, physical, sexual, medication and neglect. Elder abuse is often committed by a person in a position of trust, such as a family member, friend or caregiver.

Members of the Coordinated Community Response to Elder Abuse Action Team published a brochure to help people identify the signs of elder abuse and where to find help. The brochure was made available in ten languages.

Age-Friendly Calgary has recently started working with community partners to develop elder abuse prevention training and multi-lingual resources based on the *It's Not Right* program. The program is a best practice approach to teaching neighbours, friends and family of all ages to recognize warning signs, and how to respond safely and effectively to elder abuse. Community stakeholders have also raised awareness through hosting elder abuse conversation cafés and commemorating World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15.

Four programs/services participated in a shared reporting process pilot and work is underway to refine the process. By working together in this way, programs and services can improve the understanding of elder abuse in Calgary. In November 2018, community stakeholders participated in a community forum. This was an opportunity to reflect on the work completed to date and identify ways to continue working collaboratively to support their shared goals.



## Missing Seniors/Silver Alert

In Calgary, approximately 180 vulnerable seniors are reported missing each year. These incidents place a tremendous toll on family members, friends and neighbours of the missing person, and often require the involvement of costly emergency services. Silver Alert systems engage the community in locating missing older people who have cognitive challenges. In the past year, the Calgary Coordinated Response to Missing Seniors Action Team has created materials to help the public know what to do when a senior goes missing. The team also presented to the Canadian Association on Gerontology Conference and participated in an International Consortium on Dementia and Wayfinding meeting, hosted by carya in Calgary. In January 2019, the action team held a community conversation event to update community partners about the work completed and identify priorities for future work.



## Older Adult Employment

Older adults contribute to the community in many ways, including through leadership, mentorship, volunteering and employment. Supporting older adults that wish or need to continue working is a key objective of Age-Friendly Calgary. The Mature Worker Action Team conducted research on best practices for employment of older adults. The action team received project funding for promoting and educating employers on the value of hiring and retaining older adult workers. The project will also support older adult job seekers by providing them with the skills, information and connections they need to re-enter and/or retain employment.



## Caregiver Support

Caregivers assisting older adults that are family members or friends often face complex challenges. Many do not identify as caregivers and therefore do not seek help as caregivers when needed. Others find it a challenge to locate and access services that can help them.

The Caregiver Support Action Team participated in a cross-country social media campaign for National Carers Day 2019. The objective of the campaign was to help raise awareness of the role of caregivers. The action team is working with Caregivers Alberta to put in place a system for caregivers from Calgary, who call the Caregivers Alberta resource line, to be redirected back to appropriate services in Calgary for local support. The action team collaborated with the University of Calgary, School of Public Policy on a community dialogue event in June 2018, on issues of service fragmentation for caregivers.

The event enabled multiple sectors to share experiences and increase knowledge of a wide range of services. Stakeholders also came up with recommendations to improve caregiver support. Age-Friendly Calgary is working with The School of Public Policy to identify opportunities to implement these recommendations.

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## Other areas that we are working on:

- Housing Options Guide
- Civic Engagement
- Access to interpretation services

## Aligned projects and achievements that benefit Calgary's aging population

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

- In June 2018, Dementia Network Calgary held a one-day think tank event called *Dementia Reimagined* to facilitate discussions about excellence in person-centred care and ensure that people with dementia are living as fully as possible.
- In 2017, the Brenda Strafford Foundation, with funding from the Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services, launched a dementia-friendly communities pilot in southwest Calgary. As part of this initiative, the group has been piloting dementia-friendly training for businesses. They are also developing a toolkit to help create dementia-friendly communities throughout Alberta.
- Calgary City Council approved a *Social Wellbeing Policy* and created a Social Wellbeing Advisory Committee, which identified **principles** that help The City of Calgary to achieve social wellbeing for all Calgarians, including older adults.
- The second annual THIRD ACTION Film Festival, which showcased films about aging, took place during Seniors' Week 2019.

## What can you do to help Calgary become more age-friendly?

1. Increase the font size on your letters, emails, and other documents to make them easier to read.
2. Offer to support a family caregiver by delivering groceries, cutting their grass, shoveling snow, walking their dog, or providing care for a few hours, while the caregiver takes a break.
3. Learn how you can prepare your current or future home to be accessible for older family members and for yourself as you age. Consider how accessible your home would be if you could not climb stairs due to accident or illness.
4. Volunteer your time and skills throughout your life. It is a good way to meet people, learn new things and make a difference for others.
5. Find out where to go for help if you or someone you know is experiencing elder abuse.
6. Sign up to the *Changing Perceptions of Aging Meetup Group*, attend monthly meetings to learn more about aging and ageism, or suggest a topic for a presentation.

## Visit [calgary.ca/AgeFriendly](https://calgary.ca/AgeFriendly) to:

- Read the Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy and Implementation Plan 2015-2018 and the revised 2019-2022 implementation plan.
- Sign up for the Age-Friendly Calgary email newsletter and learn about opportunities to be involved in Age-Friendly Calgary initiatives.
- Read statistical information about Calgary's aging population.
- Learn more about available programs and services for seniors.
- Gain access to Age-Friendly Calgary resources and project updates.
- Find out about the Age-Friendly Calgary Older Adult Advisory Table recruitment process and apply to become a member, or encourage someone you know to apply.

# Collaborating Partners

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- Alberta Health Services
- Alzheimer Society of Calgary
- Bethany Care Society
- Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
- Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens' Association
- Calgary Homeless Foundation
- Calgary Police Service
- Calgary Seniors' Resource Society
- carya
- Community members
- Confederation Park 55+ Activity Centre
- CPHR Alberta
- Dementia Network Calgary
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary
- Distress Centre Calgary
- Foothills PCN
- Government of Alberta (Alberta Ministry of Health, Alberta Community & Social Services, Alberta Labour)
- HomeFront Calgary
- Hospice Calgary
- Immigrant Services Calgary
- Jewish Family Service Calgary
- Kerby Centre
- MCG Careers
- Options Plus
- Silvera for Seniors
- Talent Pool
- The City of Calgary
- The Way In
- Trinity Place Foundation of Alberta
- United Way of Calgary and Area
- University of Calgary



**Call 311** for more information

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