District of Saanich, British Columbia, Canada
World Health Organization's
Global Age-Friendly Cities Project
Why am I here?

To provide:
1. an overview of the development of the Age Friendly Cities’ guidelines and checklist

2. strategies of how a municipality or community can address the needs of an aging population,

3. a discussion of how an age friendly city demonstrates the connection between the social and built environment and the impact on quality of life
Why am I here?

A Lifelong Canadiens Fan!!!
Global aging and urbanization

First trend - The world is rapidly ageing:

- In 2006, the number of persons aged 60 and older was 650 million.
- In 2025, the number will be almost double: 1.2 billion people will be 60 and older.

Second trend - Our world is a growing city:

- In 2007, over half of the global population lives in cities. By 2030 about three out of five people will live in cities.
District of Saanich, British Columbia

### Numbers and Proportion of Older Persons Population in Saanich (Total population = 108,265)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>% of Pop.</th>
<th>Total persons in Age Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60-74</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>14,620</td>
<td>6,920</td>
<td>7,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>75 &amp; older</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>10,335</td>
<td>4,330</td>
<td>6,005</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census Profile
Active aging policy is defined as "optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age."
Influenced by interacting Determinants

- Gender
- Economic determinants
- Health and social services
- Behavioural determinants
- Social determinants
- Physical environment
- Personal determinants

Active Ageing

Culture
From Active Aging to an Age Friendly City?

In an age-friendly community, policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to "age actively" -- that is, to live in security, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in society.
WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities Initiative

- Adopted a locally-driven "bottom-up" approach

- Started with the experiences of older persons
  - what is, and what is not, age-friendly,
  - what can be done to improve their community

- Utilized focus groups and interviews to understand the perspective of seniors, caregivers and voluntary and commercial service providers
Age Friendly Cities Process in Saanich

Community Consultations and Partnerships

**Phase 1**: Focus groups with citizens, caregivers and senior serving agencies

**Phase 2**: Two advisory planning committees
1. Elected officials, provincial government, local business, health authority, transit, citizens and NFP agencies
2. Representatives from every municipal department from planning to recreation to roads to police and fire.
A Guide to an Age Friendly City

- The core of the Guide is the checklist, a user friendly tool for a city's self assessment and map to chart progress.
Checklist of Essential Features of Age Friendly Cities

Checklist and research covered the following categories:
1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Respect and Social Inclusion
5. Social Participation
6. Communication and Information
7. Civic Participation and Employment
8. Community and Health Services
1. Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

- Safe outdoor spaces
- Adequate signage – streets, buildings
- Sidewalks, curb cuts, crosswalks
- Pedestrian and cyclist pathways
- Benches, washrooms
2. Transportation

- Public transit is accessible, reliable, affordable
- Streetscape safety and visibility improvements
- Roads and crossings well lit and maintained
- Parking and drop off areas address seniors’ needs
3. Housing

- Sufficient, affordable housing options facilitating the opportunity for “aging in preferred place,”
- Housing is designed to provide the ability to adapt to the needs of aging homeowners
4. Respect & Social Inclusion

- Intergenerational connections
- Recognition of the achievement of elders
- Older people are depicted positively in the media
- Inclusion in community family events
5. Social Participation

- Accessible facilities and venues
- Age appropriate scheduling
- Variety of activities
- Outreach efforts to socially isolated seniors
6. Communication & Information

- Regular and widespread distribution of information through multiple sources
- Promote personal interactions
- Improvements to website and print materials
7. Civic Participation & Employment

- Range of options for older volunteers
- Meaningful roles on committees and boards
- Workplace adaptability and training/learning opportunities
8. Community Support & Health Services

- Range of health and community support services
- Health promotion and education
- Care facilities located near and connected to community retail and recreation opportunities
- Community emergency planning
It’s all connected!!

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

Age Friendly Community
Key Principles to Guide our Work

• Understand the connection between the needs of seniors and the built environment.

• Embrace the idea that a healthy community allows for persons of all ages to live, work and play in a safe, supportive environment.
Key Principles to Guide our Work

• Ensure that the age-friendly lens is applied to planning and budget deliberations.

• Involving seniors and professionals to determine the priorities for achieving an age-friendly community is critical
Key Projects and Initiatives Undertaken in Saanich, British Columbia

Improving the Shelbourne Corridor – one neighbourhood at a time

- Highest density older population in Saanich
- High level of assisted living and seniors residences
- Mixed land use area – residential, retail, health services, recreation, banking, food and social outlets
Pedestrian Thoroughfare

Approximately 70% of the seniors living in the target area do their business within walking distance of their residence.

Do You Walk to Business Destinations or For Leisure? (S2Q9)

(118 completed out of 122 surveys)
Improving Mobility to Increase Social Connectivity and Healthy Lifestyle Choices

Access to Transit Study and Implementation

• Strategies to improve transit accessibility in the built environment

• Priorities:
  – handyDart service
  – Bus stops
  – Sidewalks
  – Corners and crosswalks
  – Pathways and entranceways
Pedestrian Mobility Improvements
Improve pathways to increase participation in community life
Promoting the option of “aging in place,”
Supporting the development of local housing options

Saanich Adaptable Housing Guidelines – Bylaw Amendments
## Promoting Respect and Social Inclusion in the Business Community

### Senior Friendly Business Checklist

**Business Name:**

**Address:**

**Phone No.:**

**Date:**

1. **Is there room to maneuver with scooters/walkers?**
   - Yes  No
   - Doors away from open or automatic doors
   - Entrance is safe, level & clutter free
   - Counters/tables are at appropriate height
   - Aisles at least 4' wide, clutter free
   - Tilt and slip resistant floor surfaces
   - Recommendations:
   - Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. **Are the washrooms accessible?**
   - Yes  No
   - Doors wide enough for wheelchairs
   - Stall with grab bars
   - Recommendations:
   - Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. **Is the music at a comfortable level?**
   - Yes  No
   - Comfortable level or none at all
   - Recommendations:
   - Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. **Is there sufficient lighting?**
   - Yes  No
   - Adequate lighting inside
   - Adequate lighting outside
   - Recommendations:
   - Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. **Is there a safe and visible area to park a scooter or walker inside the business?**
   - Yes  No
   - Safe parking area
   - Visible parking area
   - Recommendations:
   - Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Awful</td>
<td>Many Problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many Problems</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Awful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **Have staff been trained to be senior friendly?**
   - Yes  No
   - Staff trained to be aware of special needs: hearing, or vision loss
   - Recommendations:
   - Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

**Total Score:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>32-36</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>27-31</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>12-16</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6-11</td>
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**Sticker Provided:**

- Yes  No

### Senior Friendly Business Specific Guidelines

- **Bank**
  - Adjustable ATM screens to reduce glare for person with visibility issues
  - LED display easily read from a sitting position
  - ATM machines accessible for wheelchairs, scooters and walkers
  - Comfortable chair with arm rests but no low, soft couches
  - Information pamphlet printed in large, clear print, or Braille

- **Restaurant**
  - Waiting areas equipped to accommodate wheelchairs, and walkers
  - Smaller portions at lower prices
  - Tables located away from cold air vents
  - Contrasting china and table linens

- **Retail Outlet**
  - Exterior/Interior signage which is easily identified
  - Store directories that are easy to locate and printed in large, clear print
Living Actively in your Community

Leisure Education workshops in partnership with the Vancouver Island Health Authority

Group discussions identifying barriers to recreation and leisure participation

Shared learning of how to overcome those barriers and fears

Tours and orientations of facilities
Intergenerational Programs
Groups of seniors from local assisted living/residence complexes meeting to play cards and games with local teens
Cordova Bay Community Place
Development of a Seniors Activity Centre
In an Elementary School

A declining school enrolment threatened closure

A growing, active seniors association helped create a community focal point
15 years ago a group of seniors started the Cordova Bay 55+ Association to provide activities for seniors in their neighbourhood.

Now, they have over 300 members and have raised over $150,000 towards an expansion of their facility.
Improving neighbourhood life
Creating social connections

Seniors play an active role in addressing community needs

Intergenerational focus

Children, parents and seniors in this community are in contact everyday
Improve mobility and transportation
Sidewalks, pathways and a community bus route
Improved access to the school and Cordova Bay Community Place
The Way Forward…
Lessons Learned

1. Listen Well - Value older persons and their input

2. Responsive planning and design of the built environment has major impacts on social participation and quality of life

3. It’s a philosophy and a vision – Age Friendly principles support a healthy community for all ages

4. Small changes make a difference – becoming age friendly does not have to mean huge, new resources

5. It takes a whole community…to be Age Friendly
Saanich Report on the WHO Age-Friendly Cities Project is available at: www.saanich.ca

For more information, Steve Meikle District of Saanich, Community Services Phone: (250) 475-5409 steve.meikle@saanich.ca

An Age-Friendly future is exciting…really it is!!