

Senior Friendly Community Implementation Plan



February 2017



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The City of Cornwall is committed to being recognized as a senior-friendly community. A wide variety of City services, policies, and programs already exist to support Cornwall's older adults, and the City's Strategic Plan has affirmed the development and alignment of programs and activities for seniors as one of its priorities.

In July 2015, the City of Cornwall received a \$35,000 grant from the Ontario Government's Age-Friendly Community Planning Grant Program. As part of this grant, consultation with over 700 Cornwall seniors occurred, and feedback was collected and used to develop this comprehensive action plan to address both the current and future needs of older residents in Cornwall.

This Senior Friendly Community Implementation Plan has identified specific, practical recommendations for the City of Cornwall that will ensure we remain a safe, affordable, accessible and enjoyable city for everyone. Individual suggestions provided during the consultation process have been grouped together under the categories listed by the World Health Organization (WHO) as its age-friendly focal areas.

Communication and Information

The City will:

1. Create a Senior Friendly Community Implementation Committee to advance the Senior Friendly Implementation Plan.
2. Dedicate additional City staff time to better communicate information of interest to Cornwall seniors. (E.g. A part-time Senior Friendly Community Liaison Officer was hired in September 2016.)
3. Expand communication channels to connect Cornwall's seniors to senior specific City information and its community partners. (e.g. Establish a section of the City of Cornwall website for seniors, create a newsletter.)

Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings

The City will:

1. Increase the number of mobility friendly benches in public spaces.
2. Continue to expand public and fee-based athletic opportunities for seniors (e.g. pickleball).
3. Expand snow clearing program on pedestrian bicycle paths in downtown area (e.g. Le Village and Lamoureux Park); ideally expand snow clearing between Boundary Road and Lock 19 over the next 5 years.
4. Modify signage in Lamoureux Park to encourage bike courtesy and safety.
5. Continue to monitor street crossings for appropriate light duration, signage, and crosswalk placement to ensure safe crossing opportunities for seniors.
6. Encourage universal language on municipal signage; where possible, use symbols/pictures for clarity.
7. Continue to monitor speed limits, especially near parks, schools and retirement homes, and amend signage as needed.
8. Continue to monitor sidewalks to facilitate walking ease.
9. Improve snow removal around parking meters.

10. Streamline reporting opportunities for seniors to report outdoor space health hazards (e.g. burnt out street lights; sidewalk cracks).
11. Continue to ensure that municipal buildings conform to accessibility standards.
12. Consider improved accessibility (e.g. comfort height toilets; unisex/family washrooms) as City infrastructure is modified or newly built.

Housing

The City will:

1. Continue to offer a comprehensive public sector Social Housing program. The City offers a range of residential opportunities from Rent-Geared to Income, Rent Supplement, Affordable Housing and Modified Units for persons with disabilities. Access to these opportunities is gained through the Social Housing Division at 340 Pitt Street, 613-937-7512. In addition, the Social Housing Division administers provincial program renovation grants for privately-owned homes that meet established criteria.
2. Explore the opportunity for the creation of a seniors village in Cornwall (e.g. public-private partnership)

Social Participation

The City will:

1. Continue to assist the Senior Centres that deliver Ministry of Health programming as well as programming that enhances the social, physical and recreational opportunities for older adults in Cornwall.
2. Establish a page on the City website dedicated to sharing information about Cornwall seniors' interests.
3. Encourage the plan for an Arts and Culture Centre in Cornwall. Investigate multigenerational programming and senior specific programming at this location once the facility is ready.
4. Continue to support the Cornwall Public Library to offer accessible materials, services and programming of interest to seniors (e.g. large print books, one-on-one computer assistance).
5. Continue to promote and publicize the City's Fee Assistance Policies related to recreational opportunities offered through the City.
6. Continue to offer recreational activities of interest to seniors at the Benson Centre, Civic Complex and Aquatic Centre, and continue to work with community partners to encourage no and low cost fitness opportunities for seniors in the City. (E.g. installation of the Rotary Outdoor Gym in Lamoureux Park in 2016.)

Respect and Social Inclusion

The City will:

1. Refer to the Cornwall City Police to consider establishing a "seniors watch" program.
2. Establish new City policy (2016) to require all City employees to wear name tags and identify themselves when answering their telephones.
3. Coordinate with the Alzheimer's society to ensure City staff receive dementia training.

Transportation

The City will:

1. Complete a 2016 comprehensive Transit Master Plan to review the transit system and determine how city transit can better address the community's needs while balancing budgetary constraints. (e.g. is Sunday service feasible?)
2. Continue to offer discounted monthly passes and ten-ride ticket cards for older adults.
3. Continue to offer the "Community Bus Service", a bus service that follows a fixed route between senior apartment buildings and popular community locations (e.g. medical and shopping centres, grocery stores).
4. Continue to offer door-to-door Handi Transit service for physically challenged individuals.
5. Increase the number of accessible conventional busses as the current fleet is replaced.

Civic Participation and Employment

The City will:

1. Establish a list of "senior friendly" civic participation opportunities (non-profit and public sector) on the City of Cornwall's website.

Community Support and Health Services

The City will:

1. Continue to support outreach services to the citizens of Cornwall (e.g. through Glen Stor Dun Lodge)

Advocacy Role

Other suggestions shared with community stakeholders

Some feedback received during the consultation process revealed suggestions and concerns that were outside of the City's jurisdiction or mandate. As we acknowledge that these suggestions are important to Cornwall seniors, they have been addressed or will be shared with the appropriate community stakeholders.

Public Spaces

To the suggestion that more accessible portable washrooms should be available at private festivals and events held on City properties, we note that private event organizers must apply to use city space using the City Park User Permit, but they make their own arrangements for portable washrooms. The City Park User Permit will be amended in 2017 to encourage special event organizers to provide at least one accessible portable washroom, in an accessible location, when planning for their event.

To the suggestion that improved snow removal is needed around Canada Post community mailboxes, we note that Canada Post is responsible for maintenance, including snow removal and salting/sanding operations, around community mailboxes. You are encouraged to contact Canada Post with your concerns: <https://www.canadapost.ca/> or 1-866-607-6301.

Housing

To the suggestion that a Senior's Advocacy Centre to help seniors stay in their own home, get support services or get on a waiting list for a nursing home, we note the availability of two sources which are funded by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, and which can assist with access to services.

The first source is the Champlain Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) which connects people of all ages (including seniors) to services including nursing, physiotherapy, palliative care, and programs such as assisted living and day programs. Once a potential client makes contact, qualified nursing staff will complete an assessment of the person's needs and initiate the type and level of care required. It is also the starting point for anyone who wishes to apply for admission to a long-term care facility. In Cornwall, the CCAC offices are located at 709 Cotton Mill Street, and the phone number is 613-936-1171.

The second kind of source are the agencies which provide community support services such as meals on wheels, community transportation, respite, homemaking, friendly visiting, caregiver support, foot care and a host of others. In Cornwall, these services are provided by the Canadian Red Cross (613-932-0231), Carefor Health and Community Services (613-932-3451), Alzheimer Society of Cornwall & District (613-932-4914) and the Glen-Stor-Dun Lodge Outreach Services (613-933-3384). A call may be made to any of the agencies to inquire or access services. Like the CCAC, an assessment of need will be completed to confirm need and required service or care.

All services of these agencies and the CCAC are listed on the Champlain Health Line at <http://www.champlainhealthline.ca>.

Transportation

To the suggestion that grocery stores should be invited to offer shuttle bus services, the Senior Friendly Community Implementation Committee will write a letter (2017) to the Cornwall Chamber of Commerce asking that they share this concern with their members.

Civic Participation and Employment

To the suggestion that more employment opportunities are needed for seniors, the Senior Friendly Community Implementation Committee will write a letter (2017) to all employment agencies identifying this concern and will ask that their future planning of services consider this issue.

To the suggestion that civic participation opportunities should be encouraged for seniors, the city of Cornwall recognizes that retired persons have a wealth of experience, knowledge, and leadership skills. Through committees of council, membership in one of the service clubs (<http://www.cornwallserviceclubcouncil.com/>), participation in recreational seniors' clubs and/or other agencies in the volunteer sector, seniors enrich the community greatly and new members are always welcome. Churches are also an access point for community involvement.

Community Support and Health Services

To the suggestion that faster access to long-term care is needed, we note that the City will continue to work with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and its partners to advocate for faster access.

To the suggestion that discounted parking fees are needed for visitors of people with extended stays at the Cornwall Community Hospital, we note that while the parking fees for the Cornwall Community

Hospital are not under the City of Cornwall's jurisdiction, the Cornwall Community Hospital does offer reduced parking fees for extended stays. Information can be found at:

<https://www.cornwallhospital.ca/en/Parking>

To the suggestion that the City offer a Healthy Heart Program for people who have recently undergone heart surgery, we note that while the Healthy Heart Program is not a City initiative, it is available within our community through the Seaway Valley Community Health Centre: <http://seawayvalleychc.ca/> or 613-936-0306.

To the suggestion that the Government of Ontario needs to allocate more funding to healthcare and home services for seniors (e.g. home care, respite care, and transportation services for out of town doctor appointments), we note that the Senior Friendly Community Implementation Committee will write a letter (2017) to M.P.P. Jim McDonnell identifying these community concerns.

Other

To the suggestion that private restaurants should be encouraged to have more accessible entrances for walkers and wheelchairs, and they should also offer smaller, discounted portion sizes for seniors, the Senior Friendly Community Implementation Committee will write a letter (2017) to the Cornwall Chamber of Commerce asking that they share this concern with their members.

To the suggestion that senior friendly businesses should be honored with some kind of recognition, the Senior Friendly Community Implementation Committee will write a letter (2017) to the Cornwall Chamber of Commerce asking to share this suggestion with their members.

To the suggestion that a new grocery store is needed in downtown Cornwall, we note that Economic Development continues to work with the Cornwall Chamber of Commerce to further private sector opportunities.

Other suggestions for the City

A few recommendations made during the consultation process were of universal interest, and the City is aware of these suggestions. For example, this includes: reducing the impacts of Canada geese in public spaces; establishing a City dog park; improving access to beaches; and ensuring the inclusion of the LGBTQ community within Cornwall.