AGE-FRIENDLY CITY PLAN 2020-2024

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MINISTER’S
FOREWORD

The Age-Friendly City Plan will guide the ACT Government over the next four years as we continue to work towards helping older Canberrans live their best lives. The Plan is guided by the principles outlined in Age-Friendly Canberra – A Vision for Our City.

Our older Canberrans are an asset for our city. We can all learn from their knowledge and experience, and they also make enormous contributions through caring for family and friends, volunteering and in advisory roles. In turn, we need to make sure older Canberrans are acknowledged and cared for, and that we adapt our services to suit their needs as their journey through life continues.

The focus of the Plan is on practical achievements that address the barriers older Canberrans have told us they face in living free from abuse, staying mobile and socially connected and accessing services. Implementation of actions relies on collaboration across the ACT Government, with our Commonwealth and state and territory counterparts, and with the community sector to achieve wide-ranging and holistic reforms. I am immensely proud of securing such commitment to improving the lives of some of our most vulnerable Canberrans.

I would like to thank the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing for the guidance and wisdom they have shown in the development of this Plan. I would also like to thank the community members and organisations who have participated in forums for their willingness to come together to tackle these issues.

We know that there are about 50,000 Canberrans aged 65 years and over, and that this number will continue to grow. Together, we can all contribute to the ongoing development of Canberra as an inclusive city that values the contributions, involvement and needs of older Canberrans.

Gordon Ramsay MLA
Minister for Seniors and Veterans
HOW WE GOT HERE

According to the World Health Organisation, an age-friendly world:

... enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities and treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. It is a place that makes it easy for older people to stay connected to people that are important to them. And it helps people stay healthy and active even at the oldest ages and provides appropriate support to those who can no longer look after themselves.

Since 2010, the ACT Government, with input from the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing, has been actively working to drive better support, connections and initiatives for older Canberrans across the areas of transport, infrastructure, health, justice and human rights.

In 2011, Canberra was accepted as a member of the World Health Organisation’s Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities.

In 2018, older Canberrans participated in the Age-Friendly City Survey, which asked them to share their views and experiences on what was working well and what needed to improve. Results revealed that older Canberrans have a high level of engagement with community and actively help and support family and friends. Almost all respondents indicated they had the information and support needed to stay healthy and connected.

However, results also indicated that we need to better value the experience and knowledge of older Canberrans, with nearly a third of respondents stating that they had been subject to age based discrimination, including being made to feel invisible or underestimated often when shopping or in the workplace.

With regard to housing, respondents indicated there is a need for more ground level, single storey, affordable housing options close to transport and amenities. In terms of transport, respondents spoke of the importance of readily available and accessible public transport and parking as well as safe walkways.

Taking into account the insights gained from the Age-Friendly City Survey, in 2019 the ACT Government released Age-Friendly Canberra- A Vision for Our City (the Vision), which provided a foundation for our ongoing work to further develop Canberra as an age-friendly city.

The Vision outlined twelve principles across four focus areas:

1. Involved, connected and valued
2. Safe, secure and free from abuse
3. Information, services and supports which embrace diversity
4. A city for all ages
March to April 2018

AGE FRIENDLY CITY PLAN

768 respondents
80% of respondents aged over 60 years
47% of respondents aged over 70 years

February 2019

AGE FRIENDLY CITY SURVEY

47% of respondents aged over 70 years

A city for all ages
Involved, connected
Informations services and supports
Safe, secure and free from abuse and discrimination

Involved, connected
Which embrace diversity

July to December 2019

CONSULTATION

2019

AGE-FRIENDLY CANBERRA

A VISION FOR OUR CITY

AGE-FRIENDLY CITY PLAN

March 2020

47% of respondents aged over 70 years

2020-2024

768 respondents
80% of respondents aged over 60 years

Consulation 2019

3
The Age-Friendly City Plan should be read in conjunction with the Vision. The principles in the Vision guided the development of this work, providing the basis for the consultation forums that were held throughout 2019. These forums built on what we heard through the Survey, bringing together community members and representatives of community agencies and government services to develop solutions to address the barriers that older Canberrans face.

As Canberra has been working toward becoming an age-friendly city for some years, some programs and initiatives already exist, such as the Age Friendly Suburbs Program and the ACT Seniors Card. The Age-Friendly City Plan seeks to add value to these, and address gaps that were identified through the consultation process. It is designed to align with other key ACT Government Frameworks, not to duplicate them. These frameworks include, but are not limited to:

> ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028;
> ACT Housing Strategy;
> ACT Multicultural Framework 2015-2020;
> ACT Planning Strategy 2018;
> ACT Wellbeing Framework;
> Healthy Canberra: ACT Preventive Health Plan 2020-2025;
> Capital of Equality, ACT Government LGBTIQ+ Strategy; and
The Plan seeks to further embed age-friendly approaches in future service design and delivery. Crucially, the Plan also aligns with work at the national level, particularly the *National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians 2019-2023*.

The *Age-Friendly City Plan* is organised under the same four focus areas as the Vision. Each focus area has designated outcomes, actions and indicators for achievement. It is holistic, intersecting across areas including health, public transport, human rights and planning.

Internationally, we have learnt from the Dementia Friendly Rotorua project and the Age-Friendly Manchester Programme. Nationally, we have gleaned insights from projects and frameworks including but not limited to, the *WA Strategy to Respond to the Abuse of Older People (Elder Abuse) 2019-2029* and the *City of Fremantle Age-Friendly City Plan 2019-2024*. 
WHAT WE HEARD IN CONSULTATIONS

To inform the development of the Age-Friendly City Plan, consultation forums with community members and organisations were held in the second half of 2019.

While each session was focused on one focus area of the Vision, the discussion intersected across many themes including:

> Respect, human rights and combating ageism
> The suitability of public infrastructure for older Canberrans’ needs
> Accessible and convenient transport options
> Affordable and accessible housing
> Assistance with the cost of living.

Respect, human rights and combating ageism

> The need to educate employers about the value of employing older workers
> The need to educate the community about the responsibilities of Power of Attorney
> More funding for services to address elder abuse
> Educating the community about services available for assistance with elder abuse.

Infrastructure and Transport

> The need for accessible parking at public transport interchanges, shops and health centres
> Expansion of the flexible bus service
> Ensuring older Canberrans can sit down on public transport
> Ensuring footpaths and walkways are age-friendly.

Accessible services

> Ensuring services incorporate face to face interaction and don’t rely solely on the internet or the phone
> Services come to older Canberrans rather than older Canberrans always going to the service.

Housing

> Housing needs to conform to universal accessibility standards
> Appropriate housing options that allow older Canberrans to age in place
> Affordable housing for older Canberrans.

Cost of living

> Utilities can be expensive for some older Canberrans.
AGE-FRIENDLY
CITY PLAN
ACTION PLAN
Older Canberrans bring experience, wisdom and personal and economic resources to our city. Everyone benefits when the intrinsic worth of older Canberrans and their active involvement in the community, and as decision makers, is valued and fostered.

**KEY DRIVERS/OUTCOMES**
> The experience and wisdom of older Canberrans is valued
> Older Canberrans experience less age discrimination
> Older Canberrans are supported to maintain relationships with friends and family and to stay engaged with the community
> Older Canberrans are supported to keep contributing to the community economically through employment and volunteering opportunities.

**ACTIONS**
> Promoting the achievements of older Canberrans through current award programs such as Canberra Citizen of the Year, Canberra Gold Awards and ACT Senior Australian of the Year and Australian Honours recipients
> Increasing the number of intergenerational playgroups held across Canberra
> Building upon the awareness of local business in supporting older Canberrans by piloting community events to foster social connection and sense of place
> Promoting the purpose and operation of the whole of government flexible work policy, including employment opportunities across whole of government for older Canberrans
> Improving the volunteer administration system at Transport Canberra and City Services to better support volunteers, including older volunteers
> Piloting a targeted campaign of local businesses to provide employment opportunities for older Canberrans
> Improving the ACT Government’s engagement and communication with older Canberrans by:
  - ensuring analysis of older Canberrans’ needs are specified in ACT Government community consultation guidelines and frameworks
  - ensuring that a demographically representative sample of older Canberrans is recruited to the YourSay Community Panel
  - reflecting older Canberrans in government advertisements and communications
> Developing indicators that report on wellbeing outcomes for older Canberrans
> Supporting the revitalisation of the Ngunnawal language through a workshop for Ngunnawal elders and community and the production of recorded voice and video content for use by the ACTPS.
MEASURES
> Increase promotion of and nominations for award programs
> Growth in the number of intergenerational playgroups and attendees
> Hold community events promoting engagement with older Canberrans, in conjunction with local businesses throughout Canberra
> Implement strategies for attraction and recognition of the contribution of older Canberrans within the ACTPS
> Increase the number of older Canberrans registering with Transport Canberra and City Services to volunteer
> Roll out campaigns about the employment of older Canberrans
> Increase the number of older Canberrans who are employed
> Develop a whole of government resource promoting the engagement of older Canberrans
> Recruit demographically representative samples of Canberrans to the YourSay Community Panel
> Reflect older Canberrans in government advertisements and campaigns
> Develop wellbeing indicators
> Implement initiatives to support the revitalisation of the Ngunnawal language.
Canberra was the first state or territory in Australia to pass a Human Rights Act.
All Canberrans have the right to dignity, security and equality regardless of their age, income, status, background, location or any other social or economic factors.
Fundamental to the human rights of older Canberrans is that they are able to live free from abuse, violence and exploitation.

**KEY DRivers/OUtCOMES**

> The Canberra community becoming more aware of the contribution of older Canberrans
> Elder abuse being made a criminal offence
> Older Canberrans being able to access remedies for elder abuse more easily
> Older Canberrans feeling safer in their homes.

**ACTIONS**

> Working with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions to develop a national register of powers of attorney documents and to improve consistency of power of attorney legislation
> Considering ways to strengthen the powers of the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) in providing remedies and redress for the misuse of powers of attorney, and guardianship/financial management appointment
> Amending record-keeping requirements under power of attorney legislation to ensure that requirements are consistent regardless of the capacity of the principal\(^1\)
> Evaluating the changed attitudes and perceptions of the Canberra community to older Canberrans through YourSay Community Panel surveys
> Running a broad inclusion and diversity social media awareness campaign including a focus on age discrimination
> Piloting a series of e-learning modules for ACT Government employees on ageism awareness
> Introducing legislation that makes elder abuse a criminal offence
> Targeting promotion of the Home Safety Program for older Canberrans.

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1. A power of attorney is a document that allows a person (the principal) to authorise another person (the attorney) to make decisions and do particular things on their behalf. This authorisation creates a legal relationship between the principal and the attorney, and the attorney has a duty to the principal. In the ACT, there are two types of powers of attorney: a general power of attorney, and an enduring power of attorney. Currently, an attorney only needs to keep accurate records and accounts of all dealings and transactions under the power when the principal does not have capacity. This action seeks to impose the obligation even when the principal still has capacity.
MEASURES

> Achieve progress on the development of a national register of powers of attorney documents
> Engage the community about options to strengthen ACAT’s powers to provide remedies and redress for misuse of powers of attorney, guardianship, and management of property orders
> Introduce legislative amendments to ensure that attorneys are required to keep and produce records of powers exercised under a power of attorney, whether or not the principal has capacity
> More Canberrans contact the Human Rights Commission on age-related matters
> Monitor attitudes of the Canberra community towards older Canberrans through YourSay Community Panel surveys
> Deliver e-learning modules
> Introduce legislation that makes elder abuse an offence
> Promote the Home Safety Program to older Canberrans.
Access to information, services and supports is key to assisting Canberrans to stay connected and active to enjoy a good quality of life as they age. Service provision needs to be responsive to individual circumstances and to recognise older Canberrans’ equal right to choice and control over their lives.

**KEY DRIVERS/OUTCOMES**

> Older Canberrans can access the services and supports they need to stay active, connected and enjoy a good quality of life
> Service provision is responsive to individual circumstances
> Older Canberrans can exercise choice and control over their lives.

**ACTIONS**

> Promoting the Home Library Service to older Canberrans
> Undertaking a feasibility study to explore options for developing regional community hubs that have an intergenerational focus
> Piloting designated dementia-friendly spaces, including hosting dementia-friendly events, within ACT Government shopfronts and at major events across Canberra
> Celebrating Canberra’s rich language and cultural diversity through intergenerational Bilingual Story Times series
> Supporting LGBTIQ+ elders through ongoing social and creative action that combats ageism, social isolation, and discrimination, in line with the Capital of Equality ACT Government LGBTIQ+ Strategy
> Implementing a national code of conduct for non-registered health professionals
> Implementing a strategy to support the mental health and wellbeing of older Canberrans
> Undertaking targeted promotion of the Nature Prescriptions Program through allied health practitioner networks and ACT Health.

**MEASURES**

> Increase promotion of the Home Library Service
> Complete feasibility study for community hubs and consider options arising from it
> ACT Government shopfronts become dementia-friendly and host dementia-friendly events
> Provide dementia friendly spaces at major events across Canberra
> Record the number of bilingual story times and participation at them
> Support LGBTIQ+ elders to engage with and participate in community
> Achieve progress on the implementation of the national code of conduct for non-registered health professionals
> Implement the strategy to support the mental health and wellbeing of older Canberrans
> Undertake targeted promotion of the Nature Prescriptions Program.
We want a city for all ages, where the physical environment including pathways, building, open spaces and roads, is safe and easy to navigate to enable all Canberrans to be active and involved.

Access to affordable, secure and appropriate housing is fundamental to older Canberrans’ wellbeing. Accessible and user-friendly transport enables older Canberrans to remain active.

**KEY DRIVERS/OUTCOMES**
- Older Canberrans find pathways, buildings, open spaces and roads safer and easier to navigate
- Older Canberrans feel safer accessing public transport
- Older Canberrans can more conveniently access public transport and parking
- Public housing design standards incorporate the needs of older Canberrans.

**ACTIONS**
- Using the Seniors Grant Program to support activities which occur in local outdoor community spaces
- Promoting the benefits of the Seniors Card, particularly public transport concessions, to encourage increased uptake
- Undertaking a review of community transport services to better support community needs, including those of older Canberrans
- Continuing rollout of the Age Friendly Suburbs Program, including feedback and evaluation of its impact for Canberrans
- Promoting avenues for Canberrans to make recommendations regarding improvements and access to city services and facilities, with the view to establish a committee to oversee this function
- Undertaking a review of the Mobility Parking Permit Scheme and investigating parking provision requirements to inform future Government parking policy and management
- Planning for future supply of a range of housing options to support ageing in place and diverse community needs
- Reviewing homelessness services for gaps that may exist for older Canberrans as part of the 2021 homelessness service contract design phase.
MEASURES

> Develop grant guidelines with a specific focus on local outdoor community spaces and record the number of grant activities funded under this category
> Monitor change in patronage by ACT Seniors Card holders through MyWay data
> Complete the review of community transport services and implement actions arising as a result of the review
> Continue roll-out of the Age Friendly Suburbs Program and measure the impact of the Program
> Increase engagement and feedback from older Canberrans on required works and establish a body to oversee this function
> Consider findings from the review of the Mobility Parking Permit Scheme to support accessibility and transport policy
> Strategic planning identifies opportunities for a range of housing options to meet the needs of older Canberrans, to support ageing in place and meet the diverse needs of the community
> Address service system gaps during the 2021 homelessness service contract design phase.
MONITORING AND EVALUATION

An annual statement will be made in the Assembly to report on the progress of actions in the *Age-Friendly City Plan*.

To inform these progress reports, ACT Government directorates will provide reporting on a six-monthly basis against actions for which they are identified as the lead agency.

Governance workshops will be held on a six-monthly basis across the term of the *Age-Friendly City Plan* to monitor progress and maintain engagement. These will be attended by key stakeholders, including community sector organisations, local business and ACT Government directorates.