



Community and Health Services
Office of the Commissioner

Memorandum

TO: Members of Committee of the Whole
FROM: Adelina Urbanski, Commissioner, Community and Health Services
DATE: November 5, 2015
RE: **Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Seniors and Housing: The Challenge Ahead**

This memorandum provides Committee with an update on the recent release of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) report entitled, *Seniors and Housing: The Challenge Ahead*. It is the second in a two-part series on Canada's aging population and the municipal role. This report:

- Explores the role housing and transportation play in meeting the needs of an aging population
- Highlights how municipalities are developing solutions where seniors can continue to live and be active and engaged citizens
- Includes a York Region community snapshot highlighting the demographic shift in the Region, the development of the York Region Seniors Strategy, the Make Rental Happen campaign and the myRide Travel Training Program
- Examines what the federal government can do to work with cities and communities to address this shift, to meet the housing needs and ensure a high quality of life for all Canadians

Background:

FCM leads the Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS) initiative which measures, monitors and reports on changes in social, economic and environmental factors to assess the quality of life in Canada's largest cities and communities.

Seniors and Housing: The Challenge Ahead was launched October 5, 2015 and showcased at the Big City Mayor's Caucus meeting in Montreal on October 6, 2015.

Highlights from Seniors and Housing: The Challenge Ahead:

- There is a lack of suitable housing and transportation options to meet the needs of Canada's diverse seniors population.
- Several trends are straining physical and social infrastructure in Canadian cities, revealing key gaps in the housing options and supports available to seniors. These include rapid demographic changes, persistent and growing financial vulnerability, lack of critical home care supports and long standing under investment in affordable housing.
- The report encourages partnerships aimed at creating healthy age friendly communities that provide affordable housing choices and transportation options.
- The report highlights the lack of affordable housing and the need for more rental housing to accommodate a diverse, aging population, and enhanced supports to allow seniors to stay in their communities. The report supports the direction of the York Region Seniors Strategy, Make Rental Happen campaign and Housing Solutions: A place for everyone.
- The report call for all levels of government and their community partners to pool their expertise and coordinate their resources to meet the impacts and implications of the coming demographic wave. The housing challenges that seniors and communities face requires a collaborative approach to create supportive communities where seniors can thrive.

Next Steps:

Community and Health Services staff will continue to work with FCM and other communities to share data and support advocacy efforts. The next In Brief report is expected in Winter 2015 and will provide an analysis on building livable cities and communities, exploring dynamic populations, affordable housing options, safe city building and environmental sustainability.

A copy of Seniors and Housing: The Challenge Ahead can be accessed using the link below.

http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/reports/FCM/Seniors_and_Housing_Report_EN.pdf

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