

Clause 15 in Report No. 11 of Committee of the Whole was adopted by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on June 25, 2015 with the following amendment to recommendation 2:

2. The Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force members be comprised of the following members:

Regional Councillor Armstrong
Regional Councillor Ferri
Mayor Hackson
Regional Councillor Heath
Regional Councillor Hogg
Regional Councillor Rosati
Regional Councillor Wheeler

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York Region Seniors Strategy Update
and Advisory Task Force

Committee of the Whole recommends:

1. Receipt of the presentation by Lisa Gonsalves, Director, Strategies and Partnerships.
2. Adoption of the following recommendations contained in the report dated May 22, 2015 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services:

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse the Terms of Reference for the Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force as outlined in this report.
2. Council appoint the Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force members.
3. The Regional Clerk circulate a copy of this report to the local municipalities.

2. Purpose

This report provides an update on the development of the York Region Seniors Strategy (Strategy) and seeks Council approval for the Terms of Reference establishing an Advisory Task Force (Task Force) to support the continued development of the Strategy.

3. Background

The development of a Corporate Senior's Strategy was approved in the 2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan as the impending global demographic shift in the senior's population highlighted the importance for proactive and responsive policy decisions. In January 2014, Council approved the research and consultation activities, which were completed as part of that phase of the Strategy. This report focuses on the development of the Strategy itself.

The development of a Corporate Seniors Strategy responds to the changing seniors demographic

An aging population can pose challenges across many program areas under the oversight of the Region, including long-term care, housing and community planning. A Strategy will ensure that as growth in the seniors population accelerates, the Region's role will evolve in the right ways. The Strategy will provide guidance in adjusting service levels and altering service delivery models as needed. It will also prepare the Region to respond to provincial directions to have seniors age in place. By defining the Region's appropriate role in serving seniors, it will set realistic expectations moving forward.

At the same time, recognizing the Region has limited resources, the Strategy will serve as a guide to:

1. Define the Region's appropriate role in serving seniors
2. Establish a collaborative corporate strategic direction to meet the needs of seniors
3. Respond to the changing demands on Regional programs and services

The draft Strategy is expected to come to Council for approval in the fall of 2016.

Other levels of government provide important seniors services and are responding to the changing seniors demographic

The Region's programs and services are part of a much broader set of seniors-related programs, services, and policies at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels. Some of these programs include:

- Federal: income tax credits, government pension plans, tax-free savings plans and priority access to veterans for long-term care
- Provincial: income tax credits, senior homeowner property tax credits, the Ontario drug benefit plan, priority access to primary care and family health teams, the Ontario Seniors Strategy and a Seniors Secretariat
- Regional: property tax deferrals, long-term care, public health programs and services, regional planning, public transit and paramedic services
- Local municipal: snow clearing, local planning and recreation, leisure and cultural programming, and property tax deferrals

Different levels of government are responding in different ways to the growing seniors demographic. For example, federally, the government has changed criteria for the Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security. These changes include economic incentives to delay receiving benefits and, for Old Age Security, a planned shift to 67 years from the current 65 as the earliest age for receiving benefits. Provincially, the Province has placed a renewed focus and effort on helping seniors age in place to divert costs away from emergency rooms, hospitals and long-term care. In addition, the Central Local Health Integration Network is a key player in seniors services, responsible for a wide scope of health-care programs, services and policies. Finally, municipalities across Ontario are responding in a variety of ways, implementing grassroots "age friendly community" approaches while others are taking a more corporate focus.

4. Analysis and Options

A growing and changing seniors population illustrates two major policy challenges: growth and fiscal sustainability

The report, *Towards a Seniors' Strategy for York Region* (see Attachment 1), is a background document that provides a high level overview of the research and policy issues identified and being considered in the development of the Strategy. Key learnings from this research include:

- Need to balance the needs of seniors with the needs of other growing population groups (e.g., youth, children)
- Younger segments of the seniors population have different needs than older
- Opportunities exist now to explore moving away from traditional discounts and subsidies based on age to discounts based on an individual's ability to pay
- Develop a guideline that will help the Region to determine what programs it is in, out of and where the Region may consider filling gaps in the community

In sixteen years, one in five York Region residents will be 65 years of age or older

Like other jurisdictions, locally and abroad, York Region's population is aging. From 2011 to 2031, the senior population (65 or older) in York Region will be growing at a much faster pace than any other age group. Also, by 2031, the number of seniors in York Region will be more than double 2011 figures with about one in five (or 21%) residents being 65 or older.

Although the seniors population is growing across the Region, so too are other segments of the population. Between 2011 and 2031, the overall York Region population is expected to increase 40% to approximately 1.5 million residents. The Region is in a unique position of growth at all ages.

York Region residents can also expect to live longer than their Ontario and Canada counterparts

York Region seniors are living longer than in the past. As a result people are in their "senior years" longer than before. In 2009, a York Region resident turning 65 years old could expect to live another 20 years. Life expectancy for people at age 65 continued to increase for York Region residents between 2007 and 2009. In fact, the increase in life expectancy for York Region residents is longer than either their Ontario or Canadian counterparts.

Gains in life expectancy among seniors, decreasing trend of mortality rates among Canadians and the large size of the baby boomer population all translate to an increasing number of seniors accessing the Region's services longer than before. This has implications for regional services as the need for additional support is far greater among older seniors.

Regional programs and services are already being impacted by a growing seniors population

The Region's Paramedic Services and Long-Term Care programs are already being impacted by a growing seniors population in terms of emergency transports and age of residents living in the homes. In addition, work is already under way to address the seniors population as evidenced by programs across the Region, including: Expanding Paramedicine in the Community pilot, myRide Travel Training Program, review of the Regional Official Plan and Public Health falls prevention training.

York Region baby boomers and seniors have a higher net worth than their Canadian counterparts

On average, York Region seniors have a net worth of \$550,000, which is higher than that of average Canadian seniors (\$460,700). Boomers in York Region, on average, have a net worth between \$790,000 and \$890,000. In comparison, on average, boomers in Canada have a net worth of between \$378,300 and \$533,600. Reasons for this gap in net worth could include higher-than-average incomes generally in York Region and the tendency for older adults to continue working past age 65. With many people still employed and planning to work past age 65 and even into their 70s, average net worth among seniors may grow in the future.

Several research studies have raised the question of the inequity between older and younger generations in relation to government benefits and spending. This raises important questions for all levels of government on the changing social and economic needs associated with aging. That is not to say that there are not seniors living on low incomes, in need of additional support. Instead what it suggests is the opportunity to apply subsidies based on income to all age groups as needed.

Seniors are the only population group with a guaranteed minimum income

Seniors aged 65 years of age or older can be eligible to receive a guaranteed minimum income through three federally and provincially administered income sources: Old Age Security (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) and Ontario Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS). In 2014, the minimum monthly incomes received by individuals who have no other sources of income (e.g., pensions, employment) was \$1,411.

It is unknown how many seniors in York Region rely solely on OAS, GIS and GAINS for monthly income. However, according to 2012 Tax Filer Data, there are approximately 4,400 individuals living alone aged 65 or older reporting less than \$15,000 on their income tax.

There are emerging opportunities to explore how subsidies are provided to all residents

The relative high net worth of boomers and seniors suggests that new ways of providing and subsidizing services can be explored to make the best use of limited resources. Many of these individuals have either the capacity or ability to pay for services, or both. Moving toward this method of funding services would enable a better balance to taxpayers of all ages and resource levels.

Volunteering has the capacity to bring about economic, health and social benefits for seniors and the Region

Research shows that volunteering provides many benefits to seniors and the community. Numerous economic, health and social benefits of volunteering have been identified including: contained organizational costs or wage replacement, better physical functioning, enhanced emotional wellbeing and strengthened mental capacity. There are also many social advantages as volunteering prevents isolation by helping individuals meet new people and stay connected within the community. How volunteering can be included in service delivery in the Strategy will be explored further.

An Advisory Task Force will help advance the development of the Strategy and provide advice on emerging policy issues

The Seniors Strategy will involve different ways of planning, providing and paying for services – in short different ways of thinking about seniors. The policy issues and opportunities resulting from the growing seniors population require the Region to consider new and alternative ways to keep pace, while balancing the needs of all residents, young and old. To further develop the Region's actions in responding to these issues and opportunities, a Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force is being recommended. The mandate of the Task Force is outlined in the Terms of Reference (see Attachment 2).

The Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force is proposed to promote discussion and gather feedback into these policy discussions. The Task Force would be a temporary advisory body to Regional Council. By establishing this advisory group, members of Council can provide advice to position the Region to sustain services and proactively respond to the changing seniors demographic. A similar approach was used in Peel Region in the development of their Seniors Strategy and it was found to be a successful approach in engaging members of Council and facilitating discussion on the issues.

The Task Force membership will include members from and appointed by Council

Draft Terms of Reference (Attachment 2) have been prepared to reflect the purpose and objectives of the Task Force. The Task Force will be supported by representatives from all Regional departments and the York Regional Police. This will provide diverse representation of interests from across the corporation and region. The term of the Task Force would begin in September 2015 and conclude with the completion of the Strategy for approval by Regional Council in the fall of 2016.

Meetings of the Task Force will be organized around key themes covering the scope of Regional programming, and will help define and clarify what the Region can do within its role for seniors. Each meeting will include presentations and discussions on existing Regional programming, emerging opportunities, best practices from other jurisdictions and learnings from experts in the field about how to support and benefit from the growing seniors population.

Link to key Council-approved plans

Development of the Strategy aligns with York Region's strategic direction and priorities included in Vision 2051, under the goal area "A Place Where Everyone Can Thrive" and the 2015 to 2019 Corporate Strategic Plan, under the strategic priority area "Support Community Health and Well-Being." The Strategy is a planned Regional activity under the strategic objective of making communities more welcoming and inclusive.

5. Financial Implications

The 2015-2018 multi-year budget has included approximately \$210,000 per year for the development and implementation of the Strategy. These funds will be used to conduct ongoing research, strategic planning and implementation activities. The funds will also support any planned initiatives that are within the scope of the Strategy and its objectives going forward.

6. Local Municipal Impact

Population growth and changing demographics will impact all nine local municipalities. Local municipalities are responsible for providing many front-line programs and services that help keep seniors healthy and engaged (e.g., parks and recreation programming, library services).

Staff have been and will continue to meet with representatives from the nine local municipalities. These ongoing discussions will foster open dialog between the Region and the local municipalities and allow for coordinated planning.

7. Conclusion

A Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force will help assist staff in the development of a Strategy that will position the Region to both sustain services and proactively respond to the changing and growing seniors population. It will be increasingly important to have the Strategy in place to manage and deliver services that meet residents' expectations in a fiscally sustainable manner.

The development of a Corporate Seniors Strategy will ensure that as growth in the seniors population accelerates, the Region's role evolves in the right ways.

For more information on this report, please contact Lisa Gonsalves, Director, Strategies and Partnerships at ext. 72090.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

May 22, 2015

Attachments (2)

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request



YORK REGION SENIORS STRATEGY

TOWARDS A SENIORS STRATEGY FOR YORK REGION

MAY 2015



TOWARDS A SENIORS STRATEGY FOR YORK REGION

Introduction

Like many other jurisdictions, The Regional Municipality of York is seeing growth in the number of seniors in its population. People over 65 are now our fastest-growing demographic group. By 2031, we expect that more than 310,000 residents, accounting for 21 per cent of the Region's population, will be 65 years of age or older. York Region needs a strategy to effectively serve this group. This report explains why, discusses what shape it is likely to take and sets out the path to creating it.

An aging population can pose challenges across many program areas, including long-term care, housing and community planning. The growth in the senior population is already having an impact on some of York Region's services and costs.

A seniors strategy will ensure that as growth in this group accelerates, York Region's role will evolve in the right ways. It will guide us in adjusting service levels and altering service delivery models as needed. A strategy will prepare us to respond to provincial direction to help seniors age in place. By defining York Region's role in serving seniors, it will set realistic expectations moving forward. It will help seniors know what programs and services are available and how we engage with community partners.

At the same time, recognizing that we have limited resources provides a guide to plan services that address the needs of residents, beginning from childhood, through to their working years and into their senior years, in ways that balance services based on need and ability to pay. It will provide a focus for our efforts on seniors' programs, services and policies so that they are both efficient and effective.

Seniors' needs have impacts on a wide range of Regional policies, programs and services. For that reason, all departments need to work together to support a strategy.

To support those aims, the strategy will result in a decision-making tool to help determine what services are within York Region's role, and how best to deliver them. It will also help determine the most equitable funding arrangements. With many demands across the age spectrum in York Region and a relatively wealthy seniors population, this may mean a move toward subsidies and benefits based on need instead of age.

This report:

- Describes the Regional and broader fiscal and policy context for the initiative
- Explains the characteristics of York Region seniors and the needs of other age groups in the region
- Gives background on policies, programs and services for seniors at the federal, provincial and municipal levels
- Outlines our current approach to serving seniors and how it could shift based on the evidence
- Lays out the next steps in creating the strategy

The strategy's **purpose** is to:

- Define our appropriate role in serving seniors
- Respond to changing demand
- Establish a collaborative corporate strategic direction

Potential **outcomes** include:

- Better decisions about what programs to stay in and get out of, how to fill identified gaps and work with partners
- Altering service levels and models based on changing needs and program effectiveness
- Decisions based on evidence

THE CONTEXT

Regional Council recognizes the need to prepare for a growing senior population. In January 2014, Council endorsed the three goals of the strategy (refer to textbox on page 1). The Seniors Strategy is a priority in the current strategic plan and reflects the long-term goals of Vision 2051.

Council recognizes that any response to the growth in the senior population must align with overall Regional priorities and pressures.

Services for seniors put pressure on York Region’s budget. Under provincial legislation, York Region is required to deliver long-term care, paramedic services and housing, three services heavily affected by growth in the seniors population. In 2013, costs to deliver programs for seniors under these areas were approximately \$67 million.

However, unlike many other Ontario municipalities, York Region is experiencing growth across its population, not just in the senior group. The impacts of this broad-based growth include rising demand for both services and infrastructure, and the potential need to take on debt to meet these demands.

York Region has responded to concerns about its long-term financial sustainability with a fiscal strategy to reduce debt levels. The current multi-year budget underlines the need for continuing prudence.

While the province shares in the funding of many municipally-delivered programs, it has committed to balancing its own budget by 2017-2018. This is already reducing the share of funding Ontario provides for some programs and that erosion is likely to continue. At the same time, the province is placing more responsibility for service delivery on municipalities. This is likely to add to municipal costs.

This is the context in which the Seniors Strategy is being developed: within both a growth and fiscal challenge that must fit into York Region’s overarching priority of financial sustainability.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHALLENGES

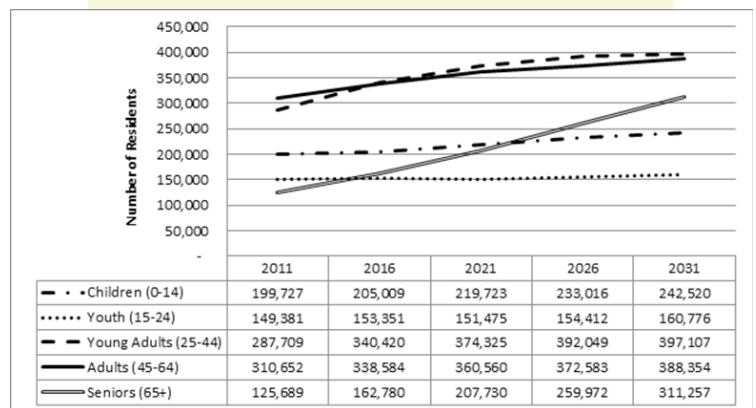
York Region’s Seniors: An Increasing Share, and Living Longer

Seniors will make up an increasing share of York Region’s population, with those 65 and older rising from 12 per cent in 2011 to a projected 21 per cent by 2031. This rate of growth is faster than that of any other group.

The increasing growth reflects two demographic drivers:

- The high proportion of baby boomers in York Region today. Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964 are the single largest group driving the growth of the senior population. By 2031, the youngest members of this group will already be over 65.
- People are living longer than in the past. For example, in 1921, Canadians could expect to live to age 75 on average. Today, they are likely to live well into their 80s.

On average, York Region residents are living longer than other Canadians. This means an increase demand on our programs and services for longer period of time.



In 16 years, 1 in 5 York Region residents will be 65 years of age or older.

Additional years of life expectancy at age 65 (three-year average):

	2000-2002	2007-2009	Per Cent Change
Canadian	18.9	20.2	6.9%
Ontarian	18.9	20.3	7.4%
York Region resident	19.9	21.6	8.5%

Source: <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a47>

This has implications for our services because the need for additional support is far greater among older seniors. Today's seniors under the age of 75 tend to resemble those under 65. For example, those between 55 to 75 years of age are:

- More likely to be seeking ongoing education and personal development and to be engaged in the community
- Generally healthier and wealthier
- Often caring for their own elderly relatives and/or supporting adult children still living at home.

However, seniors over the age of 75 are more likely to be:

- Experiencing decline in their physical and/or mental health
- Caring for a spouse, family member or other senior
- At increased risk of falling, and facing more serious consequences from falls.

Implication:

Not only will the number of people over 65 be large, but as time goes on the senior population will be heavily weighted toward people over 75, whose health care and other needs tend to be greater, more complex and more costly. This could place higher demand on Regional services such as Paramedic Services, Long Term Care and Housing.

Younger Seniors Are More Likely to be Working

Those aged 55 and older in York Region are staying in the workforce longer than ever, with labour force participation rates rising from 36.3 per cent in 2006 to 44.8 per cent in 2012. While this trend is also evident elsewhere in Canada, in York Region the increase is greater than that of Ontario or Canada as a whole. (Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2006-2012).

To provide a better picture of current and future seniors in the Region, we had Ipsos Reid carry out a survey of residents born in 1965 or earlier. It showed that:

- The average expected retirement age is 67
- 47 per cent of those still working plan to work past age 65 and 25 per cent plan to retire in their 70s

Current and Future Seniors Have Relatively High Net Worth

York Region seniors have, on average, higher net worth than others of the same age elsewhere in Canada. This is especially true for the boomers who will be transitioning into seniors over the next few years.

	Current Boomers ¹	Current Seniors ²
Net Worth	York Region: \$790,000-\$890,000 Canada: \$378-\$533,600	York Region: \$550,000 Canada: \$460,700
Retirement Income	Tied to market performance	Tied to government sources
Debts	Mortgage: \$203,000 Line of Credit: \$87,000	Mortgage: \$161,000 Line of Credit: \$66,000
Retirement Preparation	39 per cent are actively saving, but other expenses prevent them from maximizing these opportunities	Nearly 60 per cent feel better planning would have improved their quality of life in retirement
Top Current Expenses	Children/grandchildren (e.g., tuition or living expenses), line of credit, mortgage, car payments	Medications and medical supplies, credit card debt, medical insurance

Sources:

- Ipsos Reid, Financial Security and Future Service Needs of Baby Boomers and Seniors in York Region, 2014, except for Canada net worth.
- Canada net worth is from the Conference Board of Canada, 2012, cited in Maclean's Magazine, September 15, 2014

Several factors contribute to this including higher-than-average incomes generally in York Region and the tendency of older adults to continue working past 65. With many people who are still employed planning to continue working past 65 and even into their 70s, average net worth among seniors may grow in the future.

While there are risks to this picture of relative affluence, for example from downturns in the financial or housing markets, these are risks that would affect younger York Region residents, as well. Moreover, the impacts on older retirees might be lower, as much of their income comes from government sources.

Implication:

The relatively high net worth of boomers and seniors suggest that new ways of providing and subsidizing services can be explored to make the best use of limited resources since many have the capacity and/or the ability to pay. It will be important for assistance to be available for those who need it, whether they are a senior or a working family. This enables a better balance to taxpayers of all ages and resource levels. This is an opportunity to review policies regarding subsidies for all age groups where needs have been identified.

¹. Boomers are people born between 1946 and 1965.

². Seniors are individuals who were born in 1945 and earlier.

Needs Range Across the Age Spectrum

York Region also faces a number of challenges across the under-65 age spectrum that should be considered and are likely to create competing demands for resources:

- While generally still affluent, York Region is seeing an increase in the share of younger households struggling to make ends meet, owing in large part to the high cost of housing and slower increase in employment and income
- Providing such services as early intervention for children is critical to avoiding much higher financial and social costs later
- Better understanding of the complex issues driving mental health challenges has prompted York Region to put forward a collaborative approach to address the issue
- With increasing urbanization, demand for services in such areas as public health, transit and homelessness is rising
- There is an ongoing need to invest in economic development and our working-age residents to support growth and labour force replacement needs as people retire, and to ensure a healthy and stable workforce

Implication:

Planning services to meet the needs of the whole York Region population means finding ways to balance service needs across all ages.

SENIORS' PROGRAMS: AN EVOLVING LANDSCAPE

York Region's programs and services are part of a much broader set of seniors-related programs, including services and policies at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. Some of these include:

- Federal: income tax credits, government pension plans, tax-free savings plans, and priority access for veterans to long-term care
- Provincial: income tax credits, senior homeowner property tax credits, the Ontario drug benefit plan, priority access to primary care and family health teams, introduction of the Ontario Pension Plan, the Ontario Seniors Strategy and a Seniors Secretariat
- Regional: property tax deferrals, long-term care, public health programs and services, public transit and fare discounts, social housing, programs that support aging in place and paramedic services which are not exclusively for seniors, but experience high demand from that age segment
- Local municipal: snow clearing, local planning and community design, recreation and leisure

Governments are responding to the growth in seniors, the increasing affluence of seniors and the competing demands from other age groups in a variety of ways. At the federal level, recognizing the risks to financial sustainability of the current system as the senior population grows, the government has changed the criteria for the Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security. These changes include economic incentives to delay receiving benefits, and, for the Old Age Security, a planned shift to 67 years from the current 65 as the earliest age for receiving benefits.

At the provincial level, there is concern that some of today's middle-income earners may not be saving enough for retirement. To help Ontario workers retire with a predictable source of retirement income, the government is developing the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, with implementation to begin in 2017.

As well, through both the Ontario Seniors and Aging at Home Strategies, the provincial government has placed a renewed focus and effort on helping seniors age in place. This focus will help divert expensive costs away from emergency rooms, hospitals and long-term care and put them toward providing individuals with the services they need to age for as long as possible where they live.

Municipalities across Ontario are also responding in a variety of ways. For example, many are implementing a grassroots, "age-friendly community" approach, while others are taking a more corporate focus. An example of the "age-friendly community" approach is the 8/80 rule, a method of city planning that considers needs across the lifespan, from eight years to 80 years of age. This perspective is considered when planning safe walking, cycling and interconnected transportation routes, enabling people of all generations to be more physically active.

As the box below outlines, there appears to be an impending policy shift across Canada and other municipalities, such as Hamilton, Windsor, Calgary and Kingston, away from providing subsidies and deferrals based on age to an income-tested model.

Income-Based Benefits Help Both Young and Old

In February 2015, the Institute for Research on Public Policy released a paper, *No Seniors' Specials: Financing Municipal Services in Aging Communities*, noting that the original motivation for age-linked programs and benefits was to alleviate Canada's elderly poverty rate, which was 36.9 per cent in 1976.

This picture has since changed considerably, as the paper points out. Citing research from the Conference Board of Canada, the paper finds that the elderly poverty rate had fallen to 12.3 per cent in 2010, and one advocacy group has shown that it is now considerably lower than for younger Canadians.

Some municipalities are now considering the affluence of their seniors, especially in places where other age groups have major needs. It lists several Canadian municipalities, for example Hamilton, Windsor, Calgary and Kingston that base benefits on income and not just age, an approach that helps all low-income residents, young as well as old.

Of note, seniors are the only segment of the population guaranteed to receive a minimum income level. Through the combination of federal and provincial government benefits, a senior can expect to receive a minimum of \$1,411 monthly so long as they receive no other private sources of income (e.g., pensions, employment, etc.)

York Region’s Programs and Services for Seniors

In preparing to draw up this report, staff compiled a Region-wide inventory to identify programs, services and strategies that would need to respond to a growing senior population. It also relates each program, service or strategy to one of six themes that align with high-level outcomes that the program, service or strategy supports. The following table sets out the themes, their intended outcome(s) and examples.

Theme	Intended outcome(s)	Program example(s)
Health promotion, prevention and protection	Protecting and improving physical, social and/or mental health	- Fit to Retire - A Step Ahead to Falls Prevention - Paramedicine in the Community
Civic and community engagement	Making it easier to engage with local government and find and use community resources	- Emergency Preparedness - Access York - Health Connection - Customer Service Strategy - Public information meetings
Mobility and transportation	Making it easier to move across and within York Region’s geography	- York Region Transit/Viva - myRide Travel Training Program - Transit Fare Policy - Transportation Master Plan that specifies safety-related requirements for streetscaping, signage and traffic signals
Social supports	Supporting people in need, at risk or vulnerable	- Long Term Care - Adult Day Programs - Integrated Psychogeriatric Outreach Program
Research and policy	Providing evidence and informing policy decisions	- Age-Friendly Communities Pilot Project - Review of Regional Official Plan - Regional Accessibility Planning
Aging in place	Enabling residents to age where they live, either in their current home or their community, for as long as they wish and are able	- Paramedics and Elders at Risk of Independence Loss - Housing York - Home Repair Program

We are already seeing the impacts of growth in the senior demographic on some services. For example:

- In 2013, of the almost 53,000 total Emergency Medical Services transports that took place, roughly 34 per cent were for people 75 or older. Without an appropriate response, we will face a major increase in costs as the over-75 segment of the population grows
- The Region’s two long-term care homes (Newmarket and Maple Health Centres) have seen an increasing number of residents aged 81 and older. Since 2005, both homes have seen an increase of 27 per cent in the number of clients aged 81 and over, while those aged 60 or younger decreased 50 per cent and those aged 61-80 decreased 33 per cent

The potential for escalating costs and resulting shifts in resources from younger to older residents – and conversely, the opportunities to provide more effective programs and services – act as a reminder that all departments must take seniors into account as they develop policies and programs. This is also a reminder to consider the needs of all ages across the spectrum when assigning resources and funding.

There are also opportunities to increase residents’ awareness of existing programs and services. Where feasible and sustainable, York Region could also start looking at enhanced fee-based programs and services that would allow willing residents to pay additional fees for additional services.

Expanding Paramedicine in the Community (EPIC)

The EPIC clinical study between York Region Paramedic and Seniors Services, Regional Family Health Teams and St. Michael's Hospital is an example of an intervention aimed at reducing the number of Paramedic responses to, and improving the quality of life and health of seniors.

Through the study, Community Paramedics take on a greater role by visiting patients, including those known to call Paramedic Services frequently, on a non-emergency basis. The Community Paramedics in EPIC are linked directly to the patient's Primary Care Physician and work as part of the health care team managing patients with chronic diseases in their home.

EPIC program Community Paramedics provide assessments, treatments, information and advice in such areas as taking medications as prescribed, chronic disease management and how to connect to local supports and care.

Creating a Policy Lens

Existing activities, such as the Expanding Paramedicine in the Community clinical study (see text box above), are important to report, but another aspect that is potentially more critical is assessing proposed new directions, especially as the senior population grows.

This involves the very complex business of considering how seniors' needs and interests will intersect with a broad range of Regional policies and ensuring that we understand and prepare for the impacts. Without the right policy decisions now, the result could be expectations for costly interventions later.

For example, research tells us that people strongly prefer to age in place – that is, in their current homes or, if they move, in the same neighbourhood or community. Our research also suggests that in York Region, moving is likely to be a popular option, as many boomers and seniors appear to be planning to sell their homes to finance their retirement.

However, the lack of downsizing options – townhomes, smaller properties and apartments – and the high cost of what is available may make it hard for them to stay here after selling. Additional work is needed to understand what aging in place means for Regional services and how the programs and services provided are able to support this approach.

Our Regional Official Plan and related policies are encouraging this work by supporting developments that supply the appropriate housing types. This helps avoid the risk of seniors facing the choice of leaving their community or moving into long-term care before they need or want to. Through ongoing reviews of the Regional Official Plan, the planning language for how new communities are planned and built can be strengthened, placing a renewed focus on building walkable, age friendly communities.

Other examples might be working on limiting the ability for intensified areas to be downzoned and the addition of secondary suites. This is just one example of how broader policy decisions and directions could consider seniors.

As the text box below outlines, another area where the characteristics of an aging population will impact is our own role as an employer. An important purpose of the strategy will be to help create a lens for seniors' issues and encourage all departments to use it.

Impacts on the Region as Employer

- Responding to employees wanting to remain in the workforce longer than ever before
- Need for flexible work arrangements as boomers and seniors take on increasing caregiving role
- Transition supports to help older workers retire on terms that work with their unique needs
- Providing health, safety and wellness supports for older employees
- Planning for additional demands on benefits and insurance programs
- Need for succession planning for the organization as a whole
- Collaboration with the unions to consider ways to support the needs of an aging workforce
- Understanding and maximizing the impact of volunteers in program and service delivery, while respecting the Region's Collective Agreements with unionized staff

How a Decision-Making Tool Will Help

A key feature of the strategy will be to develop a tool to support better decision-making. The tool might be guided by and help to answer such questions as:

1. What are the **outcomes** we want? Examples might include:
 - Clarifying the Region's role within our mandate and defining what can be done within our role and how it fits within the broader service system
 - Helping older people age in place
 - Supporting the development of age-friendly communities
 - Ensuring we have assessed the ability to pay for different groups when creating subsidies
 - Focusing support on those who most need it, including seniors and working families
 - Maintaining a thriving and fiscally sustainable Region
2. Have we considered all the **mechanisms** by which those outcomes might be achieved, and the Region's role in each? Mechanisms might include:
 - Providing a program ourselves or using a partner for service delivery
 - Leveraging volunteers to deliver services – will require a culture shift within the Region to tap into this growing, engaged and educated sub-group of the population
 - Providing information to allow seniors to make their own choices (e.g., system navigation or way finding)
 - Creating the policy environment that supports the best outcome
 - Taking an advocacy role with federal and provincial governments to ensure policies and roles affecting municipalities are well thought-out

Getting Onboard With myRide Training

York Region Transit's myRide program prepares people to make safe, independent journeys using public transit. Aimed at seniors and others who want to learn more about their public transit options, myRide training is tailored to individual needs and abilities. It can be a cost-effective alternative to special mobility services, giving riders more freedom and flexibility with their travel needs.

The choice of mechanism(s) will need to take into account our need to deliver certain programs and services as mandated by the province, as well as having discretion to provide our own.

We do have, however, some flexibility in how we deliver services, whether mandated or discretionary. For mandated services, that flexibility may increase as the province gives the Region and other municipalities a larger role in service delivery and as system managers.

This is likely to provide opportunities to develop innovative ways of doing things that better support outcomes and lower costs while still delivering on our mandate, such as myRide Training (see box above). Determining the best delivery model will therefore be an important part of the approach.

Another important need will be to build stronger collaboration among departments, possibly including a formal coordination mechanism, because seniors' issues can have broad impacts that often are not taken into consideration. A particularly important area is ensuring consistency in how we provide subsidies and benefits.

3. Are we collecting the right **evidence** to make the best decisions? Sources of evidence might include:

- Cost-benefit measures of the mechanisms available to us
- Analysis of what activities best avoid higher costs in future
- Analysis of the financial impacts of a given mechanism across all York Region taxpayers
- Performance measures for programs we fund and/or provide
- Experiences of other municipalities
- Census and/or our own survey data

4. Given the evidence, which mechanisms best align with all of our goals and outcomes?

The answer to this question is central to making decisions about programs, services and policies for our seniors population. It brings together what we want to achieve not just for seniors, but for everyone in York Region and how we want to get there through a guided and evidence-based approach.

GETTING TO THE SENIORS STRATEGY

The Seniors Strategy will involve different ways of planning, providing and paying for services – in short, different ways of thinking about seniors.

To move the development of the strategy forward, a Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force is recommended to provide advice and feedback into policy discussions at the organizational level. This Task Force would include members of Council supported by senior Regional staff. Members would attend a series of meetings focused on the themes of Regional programs and services for seniors. These meetings would address the current landscape, what the future of programming could look like and how the Region can adapt and move forward. Specific activities might include:

- Build Council engagement and awareness about the need to prepare for a changing seniors demographic
- Advise Council on the long-term delivery of programs and services for seniors, including determining how well existing programs, services, benefits and policies align with current and expected needs
- Engage in strategic planning activities to develop the Strategy
- Receive and share information to identify and explore opportunities for new service delivery models, innovative approaches or leverage program efficiencies through the use of performance measures and available program evidence
- Identify and engage partnerships, including local municipalities, seniors serving organizations, government and non-profit sector to achieve objectives of the Strategy
- Develop a decision-making tool to determine appropriate services for seniors in York Region

The Task Force would have a time-limited mandate and would contribute towards the draft Seniors Strategy to be presented to Council for approval in Fall 2016.

CONCLUSION

Defining York Region's role in providing services for our growing senior population will help to inform the development of a corporate Seniors Strategy. It will guide the delivery of effective and efficient seniors' programs, services and policies that are capable of responding to the continued growth in the senior population and follow the provincial direction to help seniors age in place.

With growth occurring in all age groups across the Region, the need to continue meeting growing demands for programs that serve all ages and stages must also be considered. The Seniors Strategy will recognize that York Region has limited resources and will guide the provision of services for seniors based on need and ability to pay. Seniors will know what programs and services are available from the Region and how we work with community partners to deliver services.

Developing and implementing the Seniors Strategy will provide opportunities to consider new, more integrated models of service delivery, leverage existing partnerships and seek out new service delivery partners to achieve more with our existing resources. Once completed, the Seniors Strategy will define York Region's role in serving seniors and guide the adjustment of service delivery as the senior population changes, while at the same time ensuring the needs of residents of all ages are considered so everyone can thrive.



Terms of Reference

Council Advisory Task Force: Seniors Strategy

Purpose	What will this committee do and why?
	<p>The Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force (Task Force) is a temporary advisory body to Council to provide feedback to York Region staff in the development of the York Region Seniors Strategy. The Task Force will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build engagement and awareness to prepare for a changing seniors demographic • advise Council on the Region’s appropriate role in providing programs and services to seniors • engage in strategic planning activities to develop the Strategy • receive and share information to identify and explore opportunities for new service delivery models, innovative approaches or enhance program efficiencies through the use of performance measures and available program evidence • identify ways to leverage partnerships, including local municipalities, seniors serving organizations, government and non-profit sector to achieve objectives of the Strategy • develop a decision-making tool to determine Regionally appropriate services for seniors
Background	Why it was created?
	<p>In November 2012, Council directed staff to develop a Seniors Strategy to address the growing seniors’ population. The three goals of the Seniors Strategy are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To define the Region’s appropriate role in serving seniors 2. To establish a collaborative corporate strategic direction to meet the needs of seniors 3. To respond to the changing demands on our programs and services <p>The Seniors Strategy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • position the Region to both sustain services and proactively respond to the rapidly changing seniors demographic • provide services to an increasingly large segment of the population while balancing the emerging needs of younger generations • allow for a collaborative approach to service delivery that leverages and initiates partnerships where it makes sense • help ensure the long-term financial sustainability of programs and services provided by the Region that fall within its mandated and discretionary responsibilities <p>The Seniors Strategy is not expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable the Region to be everything to future seniors. It is not meant to expand the role of the Region, but rather clearly define our business areas. Decisions on whether or not to enter new programming will be evidence-based, respond to identified needs, be an appropriate fit with the Region and sustainable.

Team Composition	Who is on the Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force?
<p>The Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force will be composed of Regional Council members as appointed by Council or the Regional Chairman. The Seniors Strategy Task Force will be supported by the following Regional staff:</p> <p>Staff Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner, Community and Health Services (Community and Health Services) • Chief Planner (Planning and Economic Development) • Director, Human Resources (Corporate Services) • Director, Environmental Promotion and Protection (Environmental Services) • Director, Office of the Budget (Finance) • Director, Strategies and Initiatives (Office of the CAO) • General Manager, Transit (Transportation) • Director, Strategies and Partnerships (Community and Health Services) • Chief and General Manager, Paramedic and Seniors Services (Community and Health Services) • Medical Officer of Health (Community and Health Services) • Superintendent, Community Programs (York Regional Police) 	
Term of Membership	How long is the commitment for the Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force?
<p>The term of the Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force will begin in September 2015 and conclude with the completion of the Strategy for approval by Regional Council in the fall of 2016.</p>	
Decision-Making	How does the Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force make decisions?
<p>The Advisory Task Force is an advisory body to Council. Decisions will be made by Regional Council.</p>	
Responsibilities	How will the Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force work together to meet its purpose?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force members will attend meetings • Supporting the Strategy's development including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ active participation in ongoing strategic planning activities; ○ building awareness and engagement amongst other Councillors; and ○ building awareness of the Region's corporate role to community partners, constituents and residents • Identifying and engaging in activities that identify best or promising practices to support growing diverse seniors communities • Undertaking other initiatives as identified 	

Meeting Logistics	When does the Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force meet?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force will hold up to six meetings to support the development of the Seniors Strategy between September, 2015 and fall 2016. • Meetings will be organized around key themes covering the scope of regional programming using a workshop format, including a combination of presentations and discussion 	
Accountability	What needs to be done and by whom?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regional Clerk, in consultation with Community and Health Services will solicit agenda items and prepare meeting agendas and minutes • Community and Health Services staff will be responsible for the meeting related activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - workplan development, monitoring, maintenance and reporting - activities to support completion of deliverables of the Advisory Task Force - overall administration of the Advisory Task Force. • Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force members input will be integrated into consultations and guide staff recommendations 	

York Region Seniors Strategy

Presentation to
Committee of the Whole

Lisa Gonsalves, Director
Strategies and Partnerships Branch

June 11, 2015



TODAY'S PRESENTATION

RECAP



UPDATE



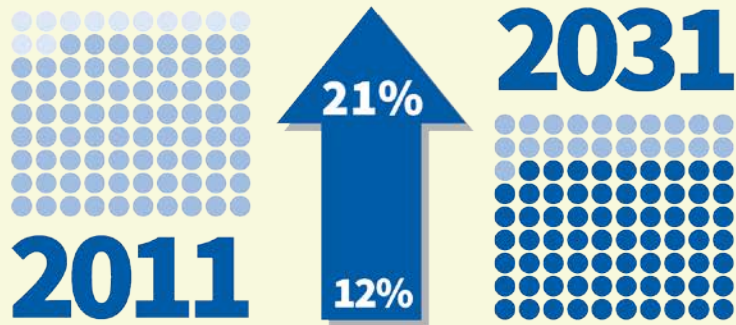
INTRODUCE



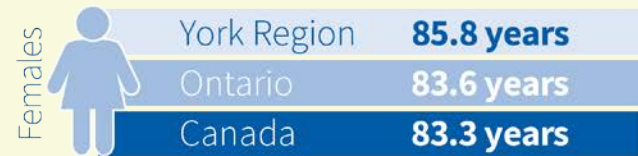
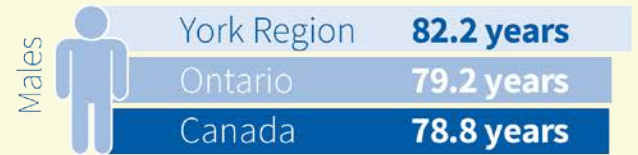
NEXT STEPS



THE SENIOR POPULATION IN YORK REGION



Seniors will make up **21%** of the region's **total population** in 2031



The financial security of current and future York Region seniors

	Seniors (i.e., current seniors)	Boomers (i.e., future seniors)
York Region Net Worth	\$550,000	\$790,000 to \$890,000
Canada Net Worth	\$460,700	\$378,300 to \$533,600
Income	Retirement income tied to stable government sources	Retirement income tied to performance of the markets

The Senior Population: A Key Policy Issue for Governments

Areas for Consideration:

- The seniors population will be become heavily weighted toward people over 75
- Better understanding needed of the relatively high net worth of boomers and seniors and ability to pay for services
- Planning regional services to balance the needs of all age groups as we grow

TOWARDS A SENIORS STRATEGY FOR YORK REGION

Looking at the issue from every angle

- Operations and Service Delivery
- Service Effectiveness
- Fiscal Sustainability



DEVELOPING THE SENIORS STRATEGY

Need to think about seniors differently

Start with a new approach

Consult with members of Council

Determine the outcomes we want



ESTABLISHING A SENIORS STRATEGY ADVISORY TASK FORCE

Deliverables



Temporary Advisory body to Council

Provide advice on appropriate role

Receive and share information

Identify ways to leverage partnerships

Develop decision-making tool

PROPOSED STRUCTURE

- Members of Regional Council
- Senior Regional staff from key areas
- Up to six working meetings
- Meeting Structure
 - Presentations and discussion on existing programming, emerging opportunities, best practices from other jurisdictions, potential partnerships and recommendations
- Term
 - September 2015 - Fall 2016
 - Disbanded upon approval of Strategy by Council

SENIORS STRATEGY TIMELINE

