



## A New Vision of Aging for Canada

May 28, 2015

Dear Mayors,

CARP is calling on you to lead Canada's major urban centers to become model age friendly cities. Nearly 80% of older Canadians [55-plus] already live in urban areas and others are moving to cities at ever increasing rates<sup>1</sup>. The aging of the baby boom generation places greater urgency on city governments to ensure that as their residents age, they can meet their daily living and health care needs, remain physically active and engaged in their communities and contribute to civic life without making drastic changes in their living circumstances.

Among the greatest concerns for many older Canadians, as they confront health or financial challenges, is "Will I have to move?" In a truly Age Friendly City, the answer is "no".

Enclosed please find CARP's brief on Age-Friendly Cities – which calls for a conceptual shift in the relationship and responsibilities that cities have with their citizens of all ages to ensure that there are no barriers to their participation and engagement in their community throughout their life course.

CARP is a national, non-profit, non-partisan organization committed to improving the quality of life of all Canadians as we age with 300,000 members across Canada and 60 local chapters.

The WHO description of age friendly communities has been interpreted in various ways but all focus on freedom of movement and engagement in the public sphere and in the home.

Universal design principles ensure that all public and private spaces are accessible to people of all ages and abilities. Young children, mothers with strollers, people with disabilities, and seniors with cognitive and mobility challenges, should be able to access public spaces and built environments within their community, safely and barrier-free.

Universal mobility goes beyond discount transit passes to ensuring that people can easily get to what they need including just walking. Community hubs in which public health services are co-located with recreational facilities or schools serve the local community build social glue.

Urban planning must therefore be viewed through the lens of age-mindfulness to ensure that as their citizens age, they never have to ask, "Will I have to move?"

We look forward to an early opportunity to working with you to create model age friendly cities. With this letter we are also introducing you to the chairs of our local chapters in your respective cities who would be pleased to explore the local opportunities with you.

Sincerely,

Susan Eng, VP Advocacy

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/inpr/bude/hoolca/hoolca\\_vol\\_001/hoolca\\_vol\\_001\\_009.cfm](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/inpr/bude/hoolca/hoolca_vol_001/hoolca_vol_001_009.cfm)