

Seniors are helping to define Edmonton's character

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Like a great wine, a great plan takes time to develop.

The Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council (ESCC) knows this from first-hand experience (the planning, not the grape stomping kind) and worked with its community partners for more two years to come up with a draft *Strategic Plan for Services to Edmonton's Seniors: Towards 2015*.

Following consultation with seniors and other stakeholders, the draft plan was revised and fine tuned.

As part of that process it was also renamed and, in early 2011, will be published as a *Vision for an Age Friendly Edmonton*.

This will make it part of a family of documents that includes *Edmonton Seniors: A Portrait* and the *Edmonton Seniors Declaration*. Both were released to the public in 2010.

As 2010 drew to a close, the World Health Organization approved Edmonton's application to become part of its Global Network of Age-friendly Cities.

Next steps

But, as we all know, plans don't always result in action. To keep the planning process moving forward and to prevent the *Vision for an Age Friendly Edmonton* from simply gathering dust, the ESCC has hired consultant Carol Greenaway to assist in addressing the document's first goal, which is to "ensure community support services are inclusive and responsive in meeting the needs of seniors". A group of senior-serving staff and volunteers has been formed to guide the work, which involves defining the core and optional community support services needed and how they should be delivered to assist seniors to age in place. Watch for information about how you can have your say. Details will be announced soon.

Transportation

The other project that is underway aims to support, develop and increase the capacity of the member agencies that are involved, or wish to be involved, in offering assisted transportation to seniors. For this project, assisted transportation is defined as "door-through-door transportation for seniors who have mobility challenges and other special needs that prevent them from using public transportation or other existing ride services".

Carol Greenaway and associates will illustrate how existing services are meeting needs, identify gaps and overlaps (from existing research), and work with stakeholders to develop a more coordinated, effective and efficient service model.

This may include coming up with a common method of collecting data and generating statistical reports; exploring the use of a centralized request and dispatch system; developing a sliding fee scale; developing a how-to toolkit for driver recruitment, screening, training, orientation and appreciation; recommending how services can effectively serve multicultural seniors; looking

into potential funding sources and sponsorship strategies; and recommending promotion options to increase awareness of the enhanced model.

*The ESCC supports and encourages shared planning, coordination and collaboration among senior-serving organizations. For more information email Sheila Hallett at [sheila@seniorscouncil.net](mailto:sheila@seniorscouncil.net) or call 780-423-5635.*