

Clause 16 in Report No. 16 of Committee of the Whole was adopted by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on November 17, 2016, with the following additional recommendation:

4. Staff report back with options on how to improve opportunities for York Region residents to age at home for longer in the future.

16

2016 York Region Seniors Strategy – Thinking Ahead

Committee of the Whole recommends:

1. Receipt of the presentation by Lisa Gonsalves, Director, Strategies and Partnerships and Monica Bryce, Manager, Business Planning, Community and Health Services.
2. Adoption of the following recommendations contained in the report dated October 20, 2016 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services:
 1. Council approve the York Region Seniors Strategy (Attachment 1).
 2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report and offer to present the Strategy to local municipalities.
 3. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to York Region Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Parliament; the Central Local Health Integration Network; the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat; Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; Ministry of Housing; Ministry of Municipal Affairs; Ministry of Transportation; Employment and Social Development Canada; Public Health Agency of Canada; Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Federation of Canadian Municipalities; and the York Regional Police.

Report dated October 20, 2016 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services now follows:

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council approve the York Region Seniors Strategy (Attachment 1).
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report and offer to present the Strategy to local municipalities.
3. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to York Region Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Parliament; the Central Local Health Integration Network; the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat; Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; Ministry of Housing; Ministry of Municipal Affairs; Ministry of Transportation; Employment and Social Development Canada; Public Health Agency of Canada; Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Federation of Canadian Municipalities; and the York Regional Police.

2. Purpose

This report seeks Council approval of the York Region Seniors Strategy. The Strategy provides direction on how the corporation will respond to the growing seniors' population over the next 10 to 20 years by establishing: the Region's role; overarching policy direction; guiding principles; and specific action and advocacy areas.

3. Background and Previous Council Direction

Council previously provided direction to move forward with the development of a Strategy

In January 2014, Council received the report [Update on the Development of the York Region Seniors Strategy](#) approving research and consultation activities required to develop the Strategy, including an inventory of regional programs and services currently supporting seniors living in York Region, and A Profile of Baby Boomers and Seniors in York Region.

In June 2015, Council received the report [York Region Seniors Strategy Update and Advisory Task Force](#) endorsing the Terms of Reference and appointing Task Force members. The Task Force was made up of eight Regional Council members, and supported by senior staff from across the corporation and York Regional Police. Task Force members included:

- Regional Chair Emmerson (ex-officio)
- Regional Councillor Armstrong
- Regional Councillor Ferri (Chair)
- Mayor Hackson
- Regional Councillor Heath
- Regional Councillor Hogg (Vice Chair)
- Regional Councillor Rosati
- Regional Councillor Wheeler

The Strategy is building on the momentum of existing efforts across the corporation that already support seniors

- Building complete, vibrant, walkable communities under the Regional Official Plan
- Commitment to meet accessibility needs under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*
- Keeping seniors connected through various transportation options, including accessible conventional and Viva Services, Mobility Plus, Community Bus and dial-a-ride
- Responsive Paramedic Services, particularly in the area of Community Paramedicine
- Strong long-term care and seniors community programs, including adult day programs and psychogeriatric outreach
- Public Health prevention programs, particularly Fall Prevention
- Creating accessible trails by Environmental Services
- Creating vibrant senior communities within Housing York Inc. buildings
- One window access to service through Access York
- Keeping seniors safe through the work of Seniors Safety Officers, Elder Abuse Investigators, Victim Assistance Officers and mental health resources offered by York Regional Police

York Region's population is growing and aging resulting in increased demands on programs and services

Although there continues to be growth across all age groups, seniors make up the fastest growing population group in York Region, with one in five residents projected to be 65 years and older by 2031. The growing seniors population can

be attributed to the huge baby boomer cohort moving into their senior years. Not only is the senior population growing, but people are living longer. The average life expectancy in York Region is 84.1 years, meaning that a 65 year old today can expect to live for about 20 more years.

The growing aging population is leading to increased and varied demands across regional programs and services, particularly in the areas of long-term care, paramedic services, housing and policing. It is also important to note that seniors are not a homogenous group. Within the senior demographic there are diverse needs, wants and expectations, particularly between younger and older seniors.

The current system is under significant and growing pressure and York Region is rethinking how it serves seniors

The pressures created by the changing needs and increased demands of the growing seniors population, along with the changing policy landscape at the provincial level, requires the Region to rethink how it can best serve seniors.

Understanding the complex human services system involved in serving seniors has helped clarify the Region's appropriate role – where we have control and influence to effect change. The multiple players and complex relationships within the system (i.e. different levels of government, community organizations and private sector) means the Region cannot move forward in isolation.

Both the federal and provincial governments have roles in serving seniors. The federal government's role is largely focused on income assistance through the Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security Pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement. The provincial government's role touches on a number of areas, including health care, through policies, programs and services offered through the Local Health Integration Network's and Community Care Access Centres to name a few.

With this in mind, going forward it will be important to:

- Foster collaborative working relationships and partnerships within and outside the corporation to move certain actions forward
- Take action to deliver regional programs and services that respond to seniors needs in areas where we have control, while ensuring alignment with changes happening at other levels of government
- Advocate to other levels of government where there is an identified need, but the Region does not have a lead role

4. Analysis and Implications

The Strategy was informed by expert advice, evidence and discussions at the Task Force

The Task Force was a temporary advisory body established by Council to provide advice during the development of the Strategy. Task Force meetings were organized around key themes covering the scope of regional programming, including broad policy and finances, health, aging in place (housing and planning) and staying safe and connected (transportation and policing). Data sheets were created as a resource to support Task Force members at each themed meeting (see Attachment 2).

During Task Force meetings, members heard from external subject matter experts about key trends and research, innovative opportunities and best practices; while regional staff highlighted the impacts of the demographic shift on regional programs and services, and identified future opportunities and collaborations. Conversations at the Task Force resulted in the identification of the Region's role in serving seniors, guiding principles to focus program and service decisions and specific action and advocacy areas.

During the Strategy development process discussions were also initiated with internal program areas, and externally with service providers in the community, local municipalities, seniors and the provincial government to understand the impacts of the aging population and to begin thinking about seniors differently.

Hearing seniors identify issues related to finances, health, aging in place and staying safe and connected helped in defining the Region's role

The Strategy was informed by discussions with seniors groups and senior serving organizations. Over 140 people participated in these discussions. Some of the key findings from these discussions highlighted the need for:

- Improved awareness about programs and services available
- More public spaces available for social interaction
- Taking a holistic approach to seniors' health care
- More housing options to downsize, and more affordable options
- More transportation options, particularly in rural areas of the region

Engagement with Regional staff informed the guiding principles – what they look like in practice and potential outcomes, and reinforced discussions of the Task Force

Internal consultations, including an online survey, were conducted with staff from across the corporation. Discussions with staff provided a deeper understanding of program-level impacts of the growing aging population. They identified potential challenges, best practices and areas of opportunity, and informed the guiding principles. Key findings from staff consultations included:

- Increased demands on programs and services due to a growing and aging population
- Additional funding is needed to support increased demands
- Need for more collaboration and partnerships within and outside the Region
- Housing pressures due to the lack of downsizing options or affordable options
- Supports are needed for vulnerable seniors – financial, health, social isolation
- Need to target communication and education specifically to seniors

The Strategy establishes the collaborative corporate strategic direction for responding to seniors needs over the next 10 to 20 years, while balancing the needs of all residents

The Strategy ensures the Region's Role evolves in the right ways, accommodates the diverse needs of the aging population, makes the best use of resources, highlights the importance of collaboration and partnerships, and assists staff in making future program and service level decisions (see Figure 1 for an overview of the Strategy).

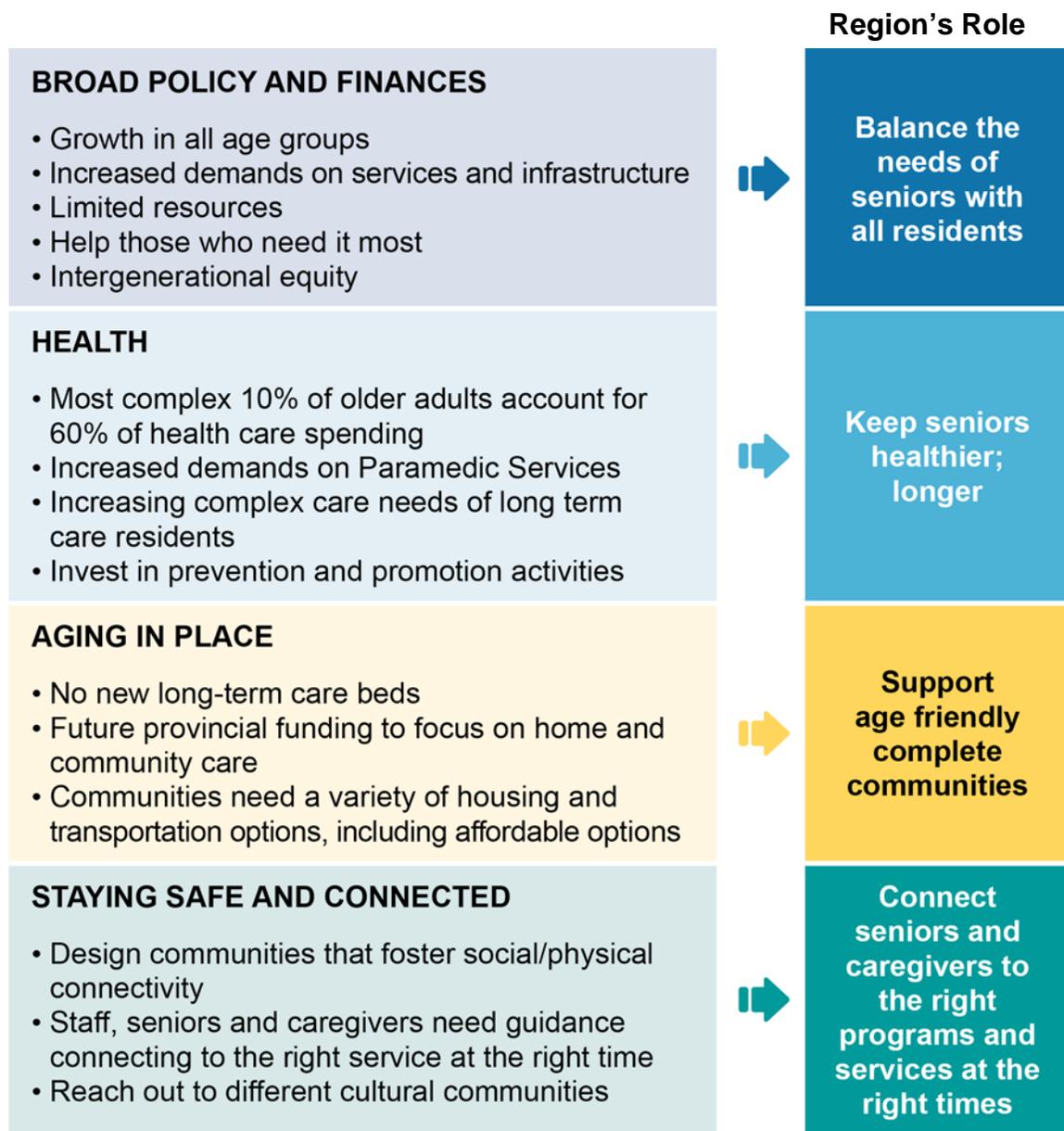
Figure 1
Overview of the Strategy

The Region's Role	Guiding Principles	Action and Advocacy Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance the needs of seniors with all residents • Keep seniors healthier; longer • Support age friendly complete communities • Connect seniors and caregivers to the right programs and services at the right times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence-Based Decision Making • Partnerships, Alignment and Collaboration • Prevention and Promotion • Education • Fiscal Sustainability and Balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action – Areas the Region has a role and can take action • Advocacy – Areas where the Region can influence the level of government responsible to take action

The Region's Role Serving Seniors – The Desired Results

The key pressures identified in the areas of broad policy and finances, health, aging in place and staying safe and connected, highlighted the desired direction and led to the identification of the Region's Role (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2
The Region’s Role**



Actions the Region will take to address seniors needs

Action areas emerged from Task Force discussions, as well as through consultations with staff, seniors groups and organizations serving seniors. All actions align with the Region’s Role. Some of the key actions are identified in Table 1 (see Attachment 1 for a complete list of the actions).

**Table 1
Action Areas**

Region’s Role	Actions
Balancing the needs of seniors with all residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop options for eligibility models that look at income, assets, user fees, collateral interest loans and private contributions. For example, one action includes looking at eligibility requirements of the Home Repair Program, and another is looking at different rent models for Housing York Inc. that considers different levels of rent based on income and assets.
Keep seniors healthier; longer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the business/industry sector to identify innovative new technologies, applications and other solutions to better serve the needs of seniors.
Support age friendly complete communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local municipalities, community agencies and the Central Local Health Integration Network to design and implement a multi-service centre that will co-locate services to respond to the needs of seniors.
Support age friendly complete communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate discussions with transit providers funded by various provincial ministries to look for ways to better coordinate services, look for innovative opportunities and enhance services and choice for seniors.
Connect seniors and caregivers to the right programs and services at the right times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate options for a single point of access for seniors to access information, including a self-serve option and guided system navigation options, such as one-on-one support models and care planning.

The Region will advocate to senior levels of government for increased supports for seniors

The Region’s advocacy agenda aligns with many of the recommendations of AMO’s September 2016 policy paper, [Strengthening Age-Friendly Communities and Seniors’ Services for 21st Century Ontario: A New Conversation about the Municipal Role](#), particularly in the areas of age-friendly community planning,

capacity planning, the need for provincial funding and support for improved integrated service delivery through the co-location of services.

Several areas of advocacy have been identified where the Region can influence needed policy and legislative changes, or where increased funding is required. Areas of advocacy have been identified in Table 2.

**Table 2
Advocacy Areas**

Region's Role	Advocacy Areas
Balancing the needs of seniors with all residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate to the federal and provincial governments to support seniors' basic needs, including income supports, dental benefits and supports for alternative therapies to reduce the need for medications.
Keep seniors healthier; longer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request the provincial government expand funding for prevention programs that improve and maintain seniors' health, including Public Health programs and Community Paramedicine. For example, consider the role Community Paramedicine plays in providing primary health care in the community.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request the provincial government work with the Region to improve policy planning and decision-making for long-term care beds by developing a forecast for York Region, including required number, type and location.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request the provincial government work with the Region to ensure the appropriate home and community care supports are available in the Region, including homecare, adult day programs and respite.
Support age friendly complete communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for increased funding from the Central Local Health Integration Network for home and community care services to support seniors in York Region Social Housing buildings and Homes with Support programs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of their capacity planning work, advocate to the provincial government for infrastructure funding for housing services and a variety of housing options, including rental, affordable retirement home, secondary suites and congregate living options.
Connect seniors and caregivers to the right programs and services at the right times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request funding and improved coordination and integrated service delivery from the provincial government to assist with system navigation to ensure seniors are connected to the right services at the right time.

Each action and advocacy area will consider opportunities for joint discussions, pilots and demonstrations, training and communication campaigns.

Implementation will begin in 2017 with the establishment of a Cross-Departmental Joint Implementation Team

Implementation of the actions and advocacy areas will begin in 2017. It is anticipated that by 2022, the majority of the actions will be implemented, depending on resources available. For example, the development of a multi-service centre for seniors will be contingent on additional resources. Each year actions requiring additional resources will be brought forward through the budget process and reflected in the various department budgets.

A Cross-Departmental Joint Implementation Team will coordinate and lead the implementation of the Strategy. The first task for the Team will be to identify priorities, project leads, timelines and the resources required for successful implementation of the action areas. To achieve this, the Team will identify areas for policy development, linkages between actions, and bring internal and external partners together, including local municipalities, the Central Local Health Integration Network and other community stakeholders.

Implementation of the action areas will require coordination across multiple regional programs and services. The work of the Joint Implementation Team will be supported by a small staff team dedicated to ensuring that the actions are prioritized, activities and areas of advocacy are coordinated and that timelines are met.

The Strategy supports many goals and action areas of Vision 2051, and is a planned Regional activity under the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan

The Strategy helps achieve the following goals of *Vision 2051*:

- A Place Where Everyone Can Thrive
- Liveable Cities and Complete Communities
- Appropriate Housing for All Ages and Stages
- Interconnected Systems of Mobility – promoting active, healthy living

The development of a Corporate Seniors Strategy was originally approved in the 2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan, and brought forward again in the 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan.

5. Financial Implications

Based on the 2015 approved budget, Community and Health Services spends an estimated \$89.4 million (\$44.3 million net tax levy) annually on programs and services benefiting seniors. Specifically, Seniors Services spends an estimated \$11.6 million (net tax levy) on seniors, which accounts for 100 per cent of their total budget; Paramedic Services spends an estimated \$14.6 million (net tax levy) on seniors, which is based on the fact that 47 per cent of their call volume is for those 65 years and older; and, Housing Services spends an estimated \$18.1 million (net tax levy) on seniors, which is based on the fact that 40 per cent of housing units are for those 65 years and older.

Transportation Services contributes about \$13 million (net tax levy) to seniors (YRT Mobility Plus and Community Buses), which is based on the fact that 70 per cent of Mobility Plus riders are seniors.

The operation of the YRT/Viva service is subsidized by approximately 56 per cent through municipal property taxes, 7.6 per cent gas tax, 35 per cent from farebox revenue and the remaining from other sources, such as advertising revenues. In addition to an already subsidized service, seniors fares are discounted 47 per cent (tickets) and 64 per cent (monthly passes) from the cash fare.

It is difficult to determine exactly how much the Region spends on seniors, as spending is not specifically tracked by age group. As well, these estimates only include those programs that target seniors or where seniors are a large user of the service.

6. Local Municipal Impact

Given the complex interconnected relationships among the various players within the human services system responding to seniors, it is important for the Region to align and partner with other levels of government, particularly the local municipalities.

Some of the Region's local municipalities are in the process of developing their own older adult strategies to guide future planning and the provision of municipal recreation services. Successful implementation of the York Region Seniors Strategy requires alignment with local strategies, information sharing, knowledge transfer and identifying areas for collaboration.

Potential areas for increased partnership with local municipalities include:

- Continuing work on building age friendly complete communities - Much community design happens at the local level. The Region will work with local municipalities to explore opportunities to become more age friendly in our community planning efforts through the establishment of a collaborative planning table.
- Exploring a senior hub model(s) and co-location of services models – Delivering services together in one location. Working with local municipalities on available locations, space and programs needed.
- Establishing a training program for York Region and local municipal staff on age-related changes and senior safety. Training outdoor staff to recognize signs of seniors in distress and develop notification protocols. This helps York Regional Police by putting more eyes and ears on the ground, and helps to ensure these seniors are connected to the right services.

7. Conclusion

The York Region Seniors Strategy is changing how the Region sees and responds to seniors. Some of the anticipated outcomes of implementing this Strategy for the corporation are to make the best use of resources and work effectively with relevant partners to: create a place where seniors can thrive; leverage funding opportunities; proactively contribute to systemic change and invest in the right programs and services at the right time for the right people.

For more information on this report, please contact Lisa Gonsalves, Director, Strategies and Partnerships, at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 72090.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

October 20, 2016

Attachments (2)

#7065972

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

York Region

Attachment 1

Seniors Strategy

Thinking Ahead



November 2016





Mayor
Frank Scarpitti
City of Markham



Regional Councillor
Jack Heath
City of Markham



Regional Councillor
Jim Jones
City of Markham



Regional Councillor
Joe Li
City of Markham



Regional Councillor
Nirmala Armstrong
City of Markham



Mayor
David Barrow
Town of Richmond Hill



Mayor
Maurizio Bevilacqua
City of Vaughan



Chairman & CEO
Wayne Emmerson



Regional Councillor
Vito Spatafora
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor
Michael Di Biase
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Mario Ferri
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Gino Rosati
City of Vaughan



Mayor
Margaret Quirk
Town of Georgina



Regional Councillor
Danny Wheeler
Town of Georgina



Mayor
Geoffrey Dawe
Town of Aurora



Mayor
Virginia Hackson
Town of East Gwillimbury



Mayor
Steve Pellegrini
Township of King



Mayor
Justin Altmann
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

A Message from York Regional Council

The Regional Municipality of York is facing unprecedented growth, with seniors becoming the fastest growing segment of our population. Over the next 20 years, the number of seniors living in York Region is projected to grow from 162,780 to over 310,000. As our community continues to grow and change we need to start thinking about seniors differently.

The *York Region Seniors Strategy* looks at the changing senior population, defines our role in serving seniors and sets the course for action to best support the aging population. It guides our work with other levels of government and community partners to better target seniors programming and services where there is the greatest need.

York Regional Council supports a community of fostering healthy aging where our seniors can continue to live, work and age in place. This strategy will inform present and future planning and support York Region in effectively and efficiently serving all generations in the years to come.



Regional Councillor
Brenda Hogg
Town of Richmond Hill

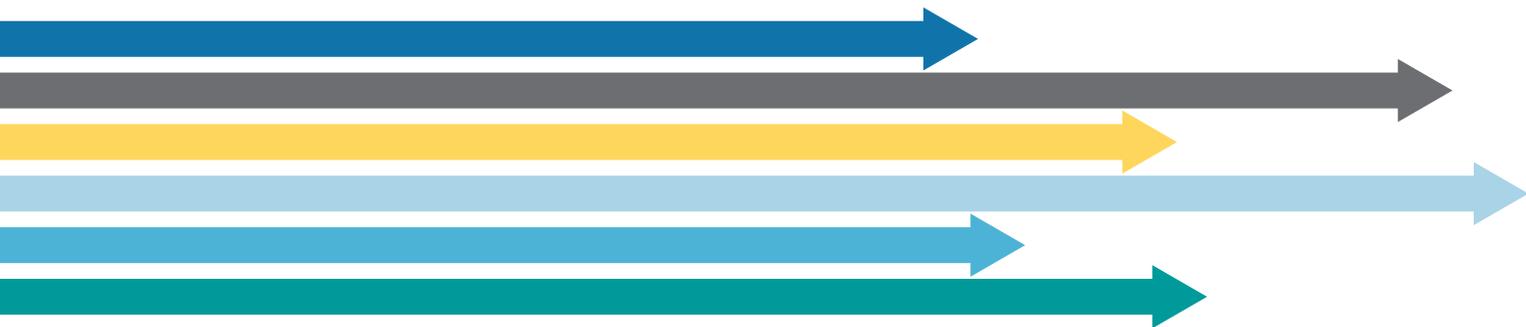


Mayor
Tony Van Bynen
Town of Newmarket



Regional Councillor
John Taylor
Town of Newmarket

York Region Seniors Strategy



Thinking Ahead



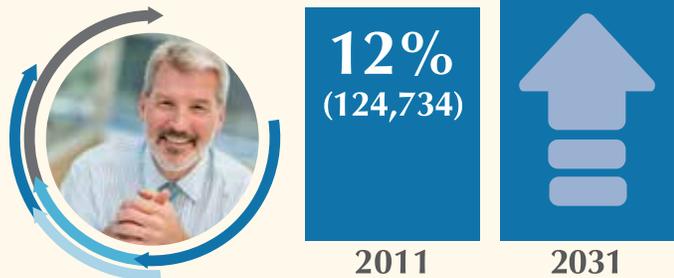
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Seniors in York Region

The seniors population is growing faster than any other age group.

1 in 5 people will be 65 years or older by 2031.



Seniors are living longer.

Three year average, 2007–2009.

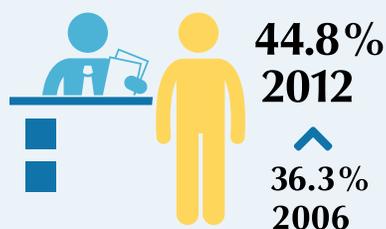
Average age

Canada	81.1
Ontario	81.5
York Region	84.1

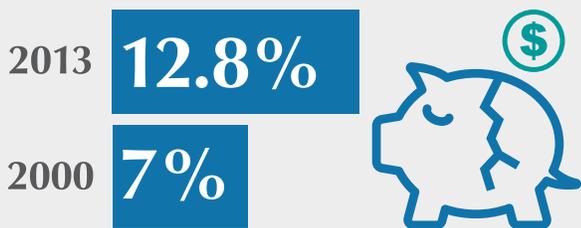


Many seniors are still working.

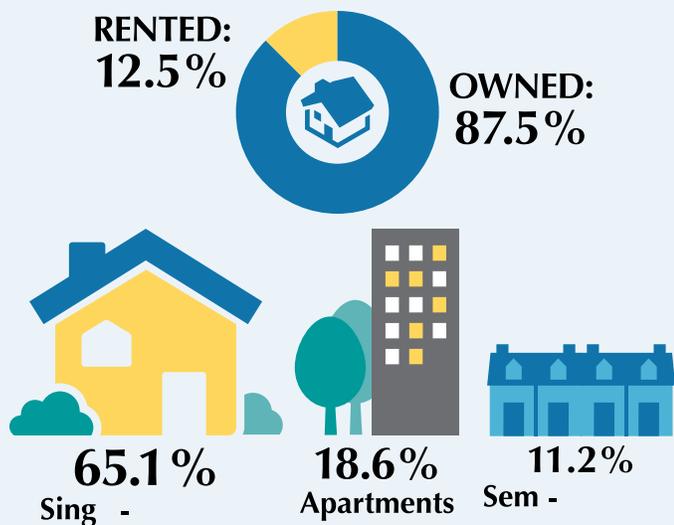
Labour force participation rates of those 55 years and older have increased.



Seniors make up a small portion of residents living with low income but their share has increased.



Most seniors in York Region are homeowners and living in single-detached homes. In 2011:



Seniors are not all the same.

Characteristics of younger seniors:

- ▶ Continuing to work
- ▶ Seeking ongoing education and personal development
- ▶ Healthier and wealthier
- ▶ Engaged in the community
- ▶ In a caregiving role

Characteristics of older seniors:

- ▶ Reliant on government sources of income
- ▶ Faced with housing challenges
- ▶ Experiencing declining health
- ▶ In a caregiving role
- ▶ Faced with mental health issues
- ▶ At an increased risk for falling





1. Why do we need a seniors strategy?

More people today are living into their senior years (broadly defined as after the age of 65) than at any other time in history. More than that, most are entering these years in good health and staying that way longer. Many are still working, either in paying jobs or as volunteers or mentors. They are also helping out their families, including caring for grandchildren, and are putting more time into pursuing lifelong interests like writing, painting, dance or music. In all of these roles, they contribute to the success and high quality of life in our communities. A growing senior population will add to the benefits that flow from their skills, knowledge and experience.

Developing this strategy involved talking about the opportunities a growing seniors' population creates, as well as the challenges that arise if seniors are isolated or in poor health and not able to take part in their community as fully as they would like to. We also wanted to better understand the Region's role in serving seniors. This prompted us to think differently about seniors – to understand that most are both willing and able to remain healthy, active and connected, and that our role is to support that aim. We also learned that seniors and baby boomers will be, for the most part, the most affluent in history. With increasing concerns about low income among younger residents, we also thought about how to be fair to all residents.

Our discussions and research also caused us to rethink how we view and serve seniors and how we might change our approach to bring about similar changes in other levels of government. This will also help us to be ready to request additional resources when federal or provincial funding opportunities arise. We understand, that to make the most of limited resources we must be innovative, especially around preventing problems and promoting healthy lifestyles, and take into account the needs of residents across the age spectrum.



York Region has a growing and aging population

As in many other jurisdictions, the population of York Region is increasingly made up of seniors. From 2011 to 2031, the population of people 65 and older in the Region will grow at a faster pace than any other age group. Out of a projected York Region population of 1.5 million in 2031, about one in five residents will be 65 or older, according to the Region's long-term planning projections.

Gains in life expectancy and the large population of baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1965) both contribute to this growing number. At the same time, the Region is experiencing growth in all other age groups, boosting the need for services across the age spectrum.

It's never too late to do something amazing

- At 62, J.R.R. Tolkien published the first volume of his fantasy series, *"Lord of the Rings"*.
- At 69, Canadian Ed Whitlock of Milton, Ontario became the oldest person to run a standard marathon in under three hours.
- At 70, Canadian author Alan Bradley had his first novel published to international acclaim. Since then he has written ten more best-selling volumes in his Flavia de Luce mystery series.
- At 72, Margaret Ringenberg flew around the world.
- At 77, John Glenn became the oldest person to go into space.

Seniors make efforts to stay healthy

- According to the *2009 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) – Healthy Aging*:
 - » 44 per cent of seniors perceived their health to be excellent or very good.
 - » In the same year, 37 per cent of seniors reported they had taken some action to improve their health, such as increasing their level of physical activity (71 per cent), losing weight (21 per cent) or changing their eating habits (13 per cent).



Older seniors have more complex needs

Because people are living further beyond 65 than they did in the past, they are spending more years as seniors. As a result, not only will the number of people over 65 years in York Region soon be larger, but as time goes on it will be heavily weighted toward people over 75 years.

Seniors under 75 generally resemble younger residents, in that they are more likely to be working or seeking ongoing education and personal development. They are also generally healthier and wealthier. Older seniors tend to be more vulnerable. Beyond 75, seniors must put more effort into maintaining their health, they are at increased risk of falling and they often need additional supports, care and medication. Without the right action, the implications for Regional programs and services could be significant.

An opportunity to respond with flexibility and adaptation

Under provincial legislation, the Region is required to deliver long-term care, paramedic services and social housing – three services that will be heavily affected by growth in the senior population. For example, based on current trends, the demand on paramedic services is expected to increase by 48 per cent from 2011 to 2021.

The impacts touch on services beyond those mandated by the province:

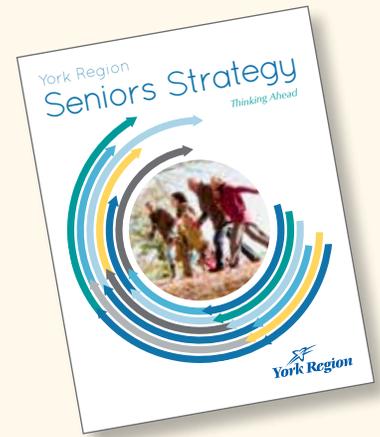
- Getting older in their own community and at home is likely to be an important goal for many seniors. We need to plan to ensure communities are designed with a variety of appropriate housing options.
- As well, seniors will need more accessible, convenient transportation to stay mobile and connected to the community.
- We will need to develop new ways of delivering services to meet seniors' expectations. In developing new options, the increased use of technology by seniors, especially baby boomers, will be helpful. According to Statistics Canada, since 2000, growth rates of Internet use have been highest among seniors.

The growing demand for services could put major pressure on the Region's budget, especially when we need to address the needs of other age groups as well. Fortunately, we have flexibility in the way services are delivered, and can plan and adapt to better meet seniors' needs and other priorities within available financial resources.

This is a major goal of the Seniors Strategy. Developing it opened the door to talking about challenges, opportunities and possible solutions. It led to a better understanding seniors' changing needs and to thinking about them differently, especially within our role as regional government.

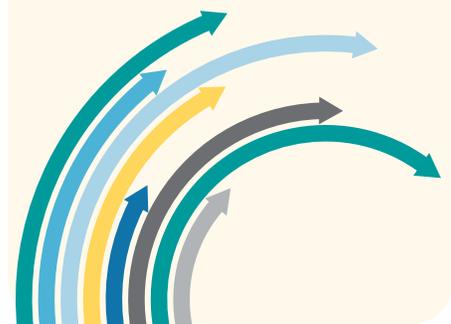
The Strategy will help achieve goals of Vision 2051

Preparing for the growing seniors' population reflects the long-term goals of *Vision 2051* to create a place where everyone can thrive.



The Strategy's purpose is to:

- Define York Region's appropriate role in serving seniors
- Respond to changing demand
- Establish a collaborative corporate strategic direction





2. Overview of the strategy

The current system is under significant and growing pressure and York Region has considered how it serves seniors in four areas

In each area we looked at the evidence and York Region's responsibilities and ability to act. This resulted in setting out four key roles for the Region.

Broad Policy and Finance



Region's role: Balance the needs of seniors with all residents

Health



Region's role: Keep seniors healthier, longer

Aging in Place



Region's role: Support age-friendly, complete communities

Staying Safe and Connected



Region's role: Connect seniors and caregivers to the right programs and services at the right times

Guiding principles

Applying a set of guiding principles will help in achieving the Region’s roles, and help us make consistent program and service decisions.

Guiding Principle	How it is applied
Evidence-Based Decision-Making	Use strong data and research, not assumptions
Partnerships, Alignment and Collaboration	Look to work with others in the field
Prevention and Promotion	Keep problems from happening or mitigate them when they do
Education	Get the word out to seniors and those close to them
Fiscal Sustainability and Balance	Can we afford it? Watch program costs and acknowledge competing demands

Implementation

We will start to put the Strategy into action in 2017, with the creation of a corporate implementation team whose work will be supported by a small project team.

One of the first tasks will be to identify the priorities, timelines and resources required to realize the Strategy’s actions. Timelines for each of the actions will be identified and phased in over the next five years.

Action and Advocacy Areas

What we are planning on doing

Specific areas of action and advocacy will bring the Strategy to life.

The actions focus on areas where the Region has a role, or where its advocacy can influence the level of government that is responsible for needed actions.



York Region Seniors Strategy Action and Advocacy Plan



Balance the needs of seniors with all residents

Action Areas

Develop a communication campaign related to preparing financially for retirement and to educate on eligibility options related to ability to pay

Develop options for eligibility for programs and services based on income levels, assets, user fees, loans vs. grants and private contributions (i.e. Home Repair Program)

Develop a decision making tool for applying the strategy to new programs and services

Advocate for:

Seniors basic needs:

- Increased income supports
- Dental benefits
- Promote a holistic approach to healthcare including alternative therapies that may reduce need for medication



Keep seniors healthier, longer

Action Areas

At a system level, understand what programs and services are required to support seniors to age in place and the capacity needed to deliver them (capacity includes policies, programs and staffing)

Expand existing prevention programs and identify new programs needed, including alternative programs for those on waitlists

Work with the business/industry sector to identify innovative new business solutions for seniors (i.e. new technology; apps for wellness checks, data solutions)

Advocate for:

Request the provincial government expand funding for prevention programs that improve and maintain seniors' health, including Public Health programs and Community Paramedicine. For example, consider the role Community Paramedicine plays in providing primary health care in the community

Request the provincial government work with the Region to improve policy planning and decision-making for long-term care beds by developing a forecast for York Region, including required number, type and location

Request the provincial government work with the Region to ensure the appropriate home and community care supports are available in the Region, including homecare, adult day programs and respite



Support age-friendly, complete communities

Action Areas

Better Integrated Services

Work with local municipalities, community agencies, private sector and Central Local Health Integration Network to design and implement a multi -service centre /hub model(s) that will co-locate services to respond to the needs of seniors

Initiate discussions with transit providers funded by various provincial ministries to look for ways to better coordinate services, look for innovative opportunities and enhance services and choice for seniors

Coordinate community outreach and communication activities internally and with York Regional Police

Age Friendly Communities

Establish an internal joint planning table to explore the age-friendly community concept

Establish an external joint planning table with the local municipalities on age friendly communities

Reduce complexities and costs associated with second suites

Leverage inclusionary zoning for needed housing options

Develop a variety of housing options including rental

Develop a variety of transportation options

Implement a communications campaign to raise awareness of the need for housing that is affordable, including rental for seniors

Advocate for:

As part of their capacity planning work, advocate to the provincial government for infrastructure funding for housing services and a variety of housing options, including rental, affordable retirement home, secondary suites and congregate living options

Increased funding from the Central Local Health Integration Network for home and community care services to support seniors in York Region Social Housing buildings and Homes with Support programs



Connect seniors and caregivers to the right programs and services at the right times

Action Areas

Evaluate options for single point of access for seniors to access information, including a self-service option (i.e. system navigation)

Explore how to guide seniors through the many services out there

Training

- Outside workers (local municipal, regional staff) to identify warning signs of senior distress
- Age sensitivity training
- Care for elderly with complex needs

Advocate for:

Request funding and improved coordination and integrated service delivery from the provincial government to assist with system navigation to ensure seniors are connected to the right services at the right time



3. Broad Policy and Finances



Balance the needs of seniors with all residents

What we heard:

- Growth across all age groups
- Increased demand on services and infrastructure
- Limited resources available
- Help those who need it most
- Many seniors and baby boomers are financially stable
- Start early with education and training to increase financial literacy and money management for retirement
- Portion of seniors living on low income is increasing at fastest rate
- Working-age adults make up largest portion of low-income population
- Programs and services must be fiscally sustainable



Why is it important?

Fairness to people in all age groups (sometimes called “inter-generational equity”) has been a critical consideration in developing this Strategy.

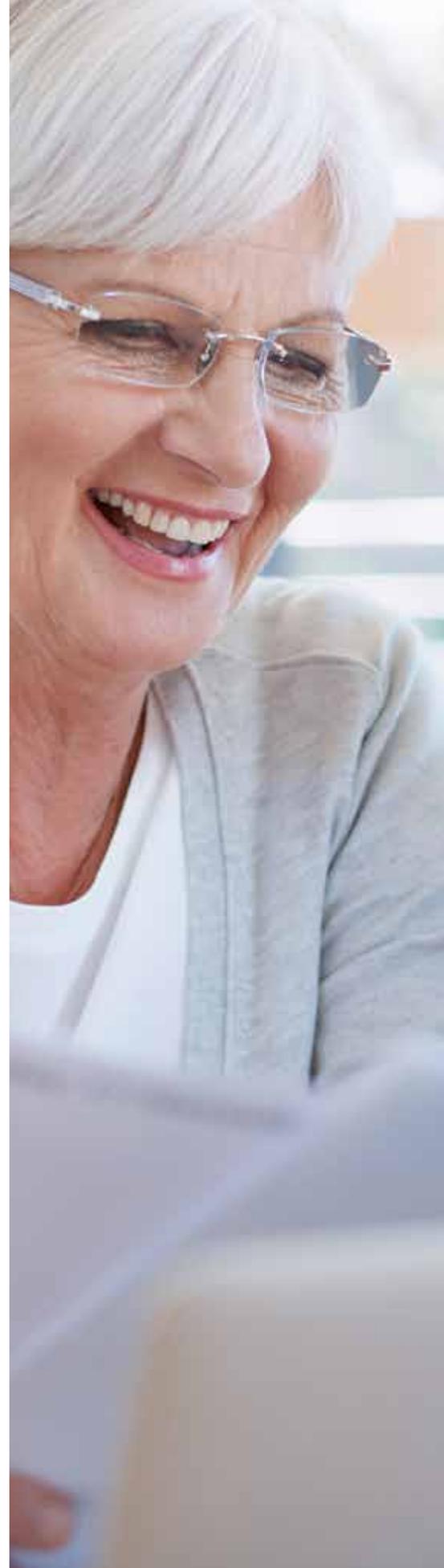
The number of low-income residents across all ages in York Region is growing faster than the population overall. Most of these low-income residents are not seniors. In fact, York Region seniors are, on average, among the most affluent in Canada.

Discounts and subsidies based solely on reaching a “senior” age, such as 60 or 65, are left over from a time when a very large share of seniors did need financial help.

Research has shown that investing in a child’s early years gives them a better life outcome and saves policing, social assistance, mental health and other costs later. There are similar social returns from investing in low-income, working-age people. Supporting every senior, regardless of their financial status, may make it harder to help the growing number of low-income seniors in York Region.

Providing subsidies to all seniors, no matter what their age, raises concerns about fairness and hampers program effectiveness.

But trying to do both is not possible either, given the Region’s limited financial resources. It will be important to strike the balance that helps those most in need.



- According to the *Environics Analytics, 2015, Wealthscape Database* the average liquid assets, per household led by seniors 65 years and older in York Region, was approximately \$760,000. Liquid assets excludes real estate and employer funded pension plans

- According to *Statistics Canada*:

- » Since 2011, the number of low-income residents has grown by 8.8 per cent, while the overall population has risen by 3.5 per cent
- » Adults between the ages of 18 and 64 years accounted for almost 65 per cent of the low-income population in 2013.

Strike the balance that helps those who need it the most

York Region seniors, and the boomers who will shortly become seniors, are relatively wealthy compared to others of the same age across Canada. Their affluence will likely continue to grow, because more people plan to work into their 70s and the equity in their homes will increase as prices rise.

Despite this general affluence, the share of seniors in the Region's low-income population increased from about 7 per cent in 2000 to 12.8 per cent in 2013 and is higher than the rate for the Greater Toronto Area and Canada. This will likely continue to increase as the senior population grows

What does this mean?

We may need to develop specific programs and services to address the needs of low-income seniors, while remembering that the vast majority of low-income residents are not seniors.

Some seniors may meet a low-income threshold, but own a significant asset, such as their house, which gives them a high net worth without producing income. There are likely to be seniors in this position in the Region, given increases in home value over the last several years. Nonetheless, these households must still pay other shelter costs, such as electricity, heat, water and property tax, and these costs may be absorbing a large share of the homeowner's income.

Factoring the ownership of a home into the discussion of need is complex. It involves such considerations as a resident's preference to stay in their current home, especially where they have strong ties to a community and few other suitable places to live. These residents might be helped in a number of ways, including by making more housing options available and building awareness of ways to access home equity without selling, if that is their preference. More research will be critical in understanding how to balance the needs of seniors with all residents including exploring different eligibility models.

To ensure the best outcomes, we should base support on need, no matter the age of the resident. A needs-based approach captures low-income seniors in York Region, as well as residents across all age groups who are financially vulnerable.



Balance the needs of seniors with all residents

What we are planning on doing

Action Areas	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
Develop a communication campaign related to preparing financially for retirement and to educate on eligibility options related to ability to pay	Fiscal sustainability and balance
Develop options for eligibility for programs and services based on income levels, assets, user fees, loans vs. grants and private contributions (i.e. Home Repair Program)	
Develop a decision making tool for applying the strategy to new programs and services	Evidence-based decision-making

Advocate for:	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
Seniors basic needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased income supports • Dental benefits • Promote a holistic approach to healthcare including alternative therapies that may reduce need for medication 	Fiscal sustainability and balance



4. Health



Keep seniors healthier, longer

What we heard:

- Age-related changes are normal but can be delayed by staying active physically and mentally
- Not all seniors are high users of healthcare services
- Falls are the leading cause of injuries for seniors
- Increased demands on paramedic services linked to growing number of older seniors
- Target prevention and promotion (encourage healthy choices, behaviours and self-care)
- Match response and resources to the situation
- Need to align with the broader system of care and bring in others including the private sector to be most effective (we are only one player)



Why is it important?

Seniors 75 years and older must put more effort into delaying or avoiding such age-related problems as declining health, dementia and other mental health issues, and falls. With longer lifespans, there will be more people in this age group in the Region. While many seniors are making healthy choices, some engage in behaviours such as smoking, eating poorly or being inactive that increase their risk of chronic disease.

Seniors with three or more reported chronic conditions had nearly three times the number of health care visits than seniors of the same age group with no such conditions.

The increased number of seniors in the population, especially with complex conditions, is driving higher demand for paramedic services, but many calls do not require this level of emergency response.

Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries among older adults. Seniors who fall are more likely to restrict their normal activities and become less confident, resulting in social isolation and loss of strength that may increase the possibility of another fall.

There are more residents over 80 in York Region's long-term care homes, more are being diagnosed with dementia and their medical needs are generally becoming more complex. This is increasing the need for more staff time and resources.

- In 2015, 35 per cent of all York Region residents transported by Paramedic Services were 75 years or older
- Since 2005, both the Newmarket Health Centre and Maple Health Centre have seen a 27 per cent increase in the number of residents 81 years and older
- Conversely, residents aged 60 years or younger decreased by 50 per cent, and those aged 61-80 years decreased by 33 per cent
- 40 per cent of long-term care residents have ten or more diagnoses, requiring more time and resources

- According to the *2013-2014 Canadian Community Health Survey*:

- » In 2013-14, 46 per cent of York Region seniors reported physical activity limitations as a result of a long-term physical condition, mental condition or health problem
- » 9 per cent of seniors smoked cigarettes
- » 18 per cent of seniors reported alcohol use above Canada's Low Risk Drinking Guidelines
- » Only 45 per cent of seniors consumed vegetables and fruits more than five times per day
- » Only 45 per cent of seniors were active or moderately active during leisure time

What does this mean?

Planning and prevention are required to reduce and manage an aging population's health-related demands.

Continuing Regional education programs in the areas of fall prevention, food safety and immunization, as well as new ways of helping seniors to stay healthier longer, will be needed. An individual's ability to benefit, however, may be limited by their income, social status, education, employment, gender, culture and physical environment.

For paramedic services, the focus will be on preventing and diverting non-emergency 911 calls by educating seniors on how to take care of themselves, ensuring they and their caregivers are connected to the right services at the right time, and creating a single entry point to access information.

To continue providing high-quality care, more focus in long-term care has to be placed on effectively training staff to respond to residents' increasingly complex conditions.

Over the last few years, to get ready for the growth in the seniors' population, Paramedic Services have been exploring new clinical and community programs that get people help before health crises occur. These efforts, which are based on known risks that individual seniors face, include Expanding Community Paramedicine, broadening how referrals are handled, and connecting Paramedicine to Long-Term Care. More of this type of work is needed to meet future demands.



Keep seniors healthier, longer

What we are planning on doing

Action Areas	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
At a system level, understand what programs and services are required to support seniors to age in place and the capacity needed to deliver them (capacity includes policies, programs and staffing)	Evidence-based decision-making
Expand existing prevention programs and identify new programs needed, including alternative programs for those on waitlists	Prevention and promotion
Work with the business/industry sector to identify innovative new business solutions for seniors (i.e. new technology; apps for wellness checks, data solutions)	Partnerships, alignment and collaboration

Advocate for:	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
Request the provincial government expand funding for prevention programs that improve and maintain seniors' health, including Public Health programs and Community Paramedicine. For example, consider the role Community Paramedicine plays in providing primary health care in the community	Prevention and promotion
Request the provincial government work with the Region to improve policy planning and decision-making for long-term care beds by developing a forecast for York Region, including required number, type and location	Evidence-based decision-making
Request the provincial government work with the Region to ensure the appropriate home and community care supports are available in the Region, including homecare, adult day programs and respite	



5. Aging in Place



Support age-friendly, complete communities

What we heard:

- There will be no funding for new institutional long-term care beds
- Future provincial funding will focus on home and community care models, beefed-up adult day programs, congregate living, and long-term care in the community
- Existing long-term care beds will be for the most complex cases
- Seniors prefer to age in place
- Need for affordable housing for seniors
- Need for a variety of housing options for seniors to age in place, including rental
- Need better integrated services to respond to seniors needs holistically



Why is it important?

The majority of seniors prefer to age in place – that is, to stay in their own home as they grow older or, if they must move to a different home, stay in their community.

Their preference aligns with the province's: Ontario has announced that it is not planning to expand the number of long-term beds. Instead, it will direct funding toward such care models as living at home with supports and/or stronger adult day programs.

For seniors to age in place they need to remain relatively healthy. Even those with minor disabilities or limitations can stay in their homes with the right support, such as help with household chores or daily personal care.

Seniors also need housing options and communities that help them remain independent. Owning a house, especially a large one, is expensive and requires significant upkeep. Other housing options include smaller houses or condominiums, renting, applying for subsidized housing or living in a retirement home.

Not every option is available to every senior. Many, for example retirement homes, are costly. This may be one reason why seniors, at 56 per cent, account for the largest group waiting for subsidized housing. Often, however, the problem reflects the way our communities have been designed, with an emphasis on single detached houses, big lots and home ownership.

- In 2011, single detached houses were home to 65.1 per cent of seniors; 18.6 per cent lived in apartments and 11.2 per cent in semi-detached and row houses.
- According to a 2014 *Ipsos Reid Survey*, 94 per cent of retirees in York Region plan to continue to live here, with 60 per cent intending to stay in their current dwelling.
- In a 2015 *EnviroNics Research Survey*, “support services to remain in their home” was identified by the largest group of respondents (26 per cent) as the most important service or support required by seniors, followed by transportation services (17 per cent) and income support (16 per cent).

- Housing costs affect both seniors who own their homes and those who rent:
 - » In 2011, more senior homeowners and in York Region spent 30 per cent or more of their household income on shelter costs; and,
 - » 51.1 per cent of households led by senior tenants spent 30 per cent or more of their income on shelter costs

Beyond offering appropriate housing options, communities need to provide easy access to public transit, shops and restaurants, health and community services, recreation and leisure space. “Walkability” scores – a metric widely used to show how close the average home is to these amenities – indicate that York Region’s communities lag behind major cities like Mississauga and Toronto, and smaller places like Perth, Gananoque and Orangeville.

What does this mean?

York Region needs to ensure age-friendly, complete communities that include innovative housing options, better ways of getting around and easily accessible support services.

Housing options might include new home designs that contemplate space for live-in caregivers, fewer barriers to adding second suites in existing houses, more opportunities for congregate living (retirement homes and similar options), using inclusionary zoning (which requires the addition of affordable units to new construction) and building more options such as rental.

To ensure seniors can get around easily, York Region must continue to invest in transit and in networks for walking and other forms of active transportation. The Region must also offer innovative options that respond cost-effectively to the needs of seniors with social, physical and accessibility challenges.

Partnerships will be crucial to making the appropriate home and community supports available and accessible. One approach would be to integrate seniors’ services into community hubs, a model being explored by the province to bring together services for a range of clients.

The collaboration among partners in a hub model, each bringing their expertise, funding, resources and services to the table, would allow York Region to respond to seniors and others holistically by providing programs and services, including housing, in one easily accessible location.

Another approach would be to create seniors’ hubs, with a tighter focus on supports specific to the senior population.

Approaches like this will require York Region to partner and collaborate with partners that might include local municipalities, provincial ministries, school boards, community organizations and the business community.



Support age-friendly, complete communities

What we are planning on doing

Action Areas	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
Better Integrated Services	
Work with local municipalities, community agencies, private sector and Central Local Health Integration Network to design and implement a multi -service centre /hub model(s) that will co-locate services to respond to the needs of seniors	Partnerships, alignment and collaboration
Initiate discussions with transit providers funded by various provincial ministries to look for ways to better coordinate services, look for innovative opportunities and enhance services and choice for seniors	
Coordinate community outreach and communication activities internally and with York Regional Police	
Age Friendly Communities	
Establish an internal joint planning table to explore the age-friendly community concept	Partnerships, alignment and collaboration
Establish an external joint planning table with the local municipalities on age friendly communities	
Reduce complexities and costs associated with second suites	
Leverage inclusionary zoning for needed housing options	
Develop a variety of housing options including rental	
Develop a variety of transportation options	
Implement a communications campaign to raise awareness of the need for housing that is affordable, including rental for seniors	
Advocate for:	
As part of their capacity planning work, advocate to the provincial government for infrastructure funding for housing services and a variety of housing options, including rental, affordable retirement home, secondary suites and congregate living options	Partnerships, alignment and collaboration
Increased funding from the Central Local Health Integration Network for home and community care services to support seniors in York Region Social Housing buildings and Homes with Support programs	



6. Staying Safe and Socially Connected



Connect seniors and caregivers to the right programs and services at the right times

What we heard:

- Design communities that foster social and physical connectivity
- Reduce likelihood of social isolation
- Provide more convenient transportation options for seniors
- Staff, seniors and caregivers require guidance to connect to the right services
- Police are spending extensive resources and time assisting seniors and their caregivers with non-emergency/non-criminal 911 calls and making referrals
- Need joint planning to ensure the right programs are available at the right times
- Work together as a system to keep seniors connected to the programs and services they need



Why is it important?

Social isolation – commonly defined as a low quantity and quality of contact with others – has serious implications for everyone’s mental and physical health, safety and overall well-being.

According to a 2014 report by the National Seniors Council, some of the top environmental risk factors contributing to the social isolation of seniors include lack of access to transportation, living alone, lack of awareness of or access to community services and programs, a rural or remote location and loss of sense of community.

For seniors who do not drive, walkability and convenient public transit are critical. Close to 8,000 registered users of Mobility Plus, the YRT/Viva service for those with disabilities, are seniors. Only 2 per cent of YRT/Viva customers are 65 or older, however.

The most common call York Regional Police respond to when it comes to seniors is for motor vehicle collisions, followed by natural death, theft under \$5,000, fraud and domestic disputes (not necessarily criminal). Seniors are the least likely demographic to suffer violent crime, but the most likely to suffer violence at the hands of a family member or caregiver.

York Regional Police are increasingly responding to non-criminal 911 calls related to seniors. They are being called by family members or others to check in on an older person, often because of mental illness, wandering or hoarding concerns. In responding to these, police are increasingly involved in connecting seniors with community agencies. This takes time and resources, and police are not best positioned to handle these calls.

- According to the Statistics Canada Report “*Healthy People, Healthy Places*”, Seniors with a strong sense of community belonging have higher odds of having good health, even when socio-demographic factors, behavioural risk factors, chronic conditions and stress are taken into account
- According to Transportation Services, the top two reasons for Mobility Plus trips for seniors in 2015 was travel to and from day centres and medical appointments
- According to a 2015 *GTA-wide Survey by Environics Research*, the things respondents enjoyed most about the quality of life in York Region are the parks and green spaces, and being close to amenities and work.

What does this mean?

Quality of life for seniors is about being connected, both physically and socially, to family, friends and community.

Communities need to be designed in ways that make seniors feel included and offer them places for social interaction.

York Region is already designing communities in this way, with greater emphasis on pleasant public spaces, street-scaping and accessibility. For example, York Region has two accessible forest trails that are welcoming to the growing seniors' population.

Transportation and mobility are key elements in helping seniors stay safe and connected. Mobility Plus has expanded its on-demand/dial-a-ride service, which is convenient for seniors going to day programs, medical appointments, and recreation, as well as shopping and other activities.

Seniors need to know what supports are available, where and how to access the information, and who to ask for help. In order to make navigating the support system easier, we need to develop various support options, including a self-serve one that lets seniors and caregivers find programs and services on their own and or with some degree of help.

Training for regional and local municipal staff who work outdoors or go into people's homes to deliver programs and services could help identify seniors in distress — for example, suffering from falls, wandering, neglect or hoarding. This way, we may be able to prevent problems before they become unmanageable and connect seniors to the right services at the right time.





Connect seniors and caregivers to the right programs and services at the right times

What we are planning on doing

Action Areas	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
Evaluate options for single point of access for seniors to access information, including a self-service option (i.e. system navigation)	Partnerships, alignment and collaboration
Explore how to guide seniors through the many services out there	
Training <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outside workers (local municipal, regional staff) to identify warning signs of senior distress• Age sensitivity training• Care for elderly with complex needs	Education

Advocate for:	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
Request funding and improved coordination and integrated service delivery from the provincial government to assist with system navigation to ensure seniors are connected to the right services at the right time	Partnerships, alignment and collaboration



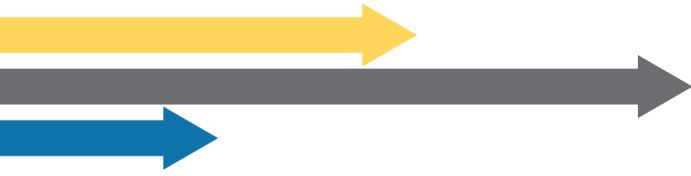
7. Guiding Principles

Providing the direction for future decision-making

In order to create a strategy that will apply broadly across the corporation, guiding principles were established to encourage a consistent approach to the development of seniors programs and services.

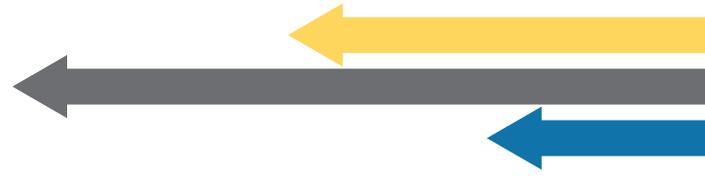
York Region staff will use these principles to make the most effective and efficient decisions about where to direct limited resources. Guided by them, we will build on what works where we have a role to play.

Guiding Principle	How it is applied
Evidence-Based Decision-Making	Use strong data and research, not assumptions
Partnerships, Alignment and Collaboration	Look to work with others in the field
Prevention and Promotion	Keep problems from happening or mitigate them when they do
Education	Get the word out to seniors and those close to them
Fiscal Sustainability and Balance	Can we afford it? Watch program costs and acknowledge competing demands



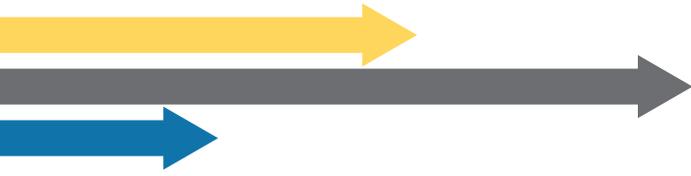
Guiding Principle: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Use strong data and research, not assumptions
What does it look like in practice?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are rigorous in finding and applying clear, unbiased evidence• Our sources include academic literature and partners, the findings of other jurisdictions, associations, the private sector and think tanks, client experience and survey census and other data.• We consider how well the evidence gathered elsewhere applies to the diverse needs of our seniors• We also leverage existing data and research from within the corporation, including that gathered from pilot and demonstration projects• We take part in and benefit from more, and expanded, avenues for information sharing through collaboration, data bases and other sources
Desired Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional decisions are more consistent and effective, and make resources go further• We better understand seniors and what supports/impairs the success of initiatives. For example, in trying to boost seniors' use of transit, is the current low level because of inconvenience, lack of familiarity, cost, excessive walking distance to a stop, or some combination of these factors?• We continuously adjust and improve programs and services as new evidence becomes available



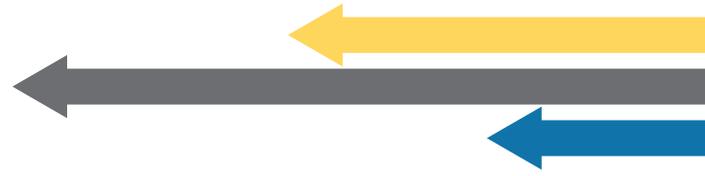
Guiding Principle: Partnerships, Collaboration and Alignment

Look to work with others in the field
What does it look like in practice?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We invest time and resources on relationships and partnerships, including building on existing links, to improve outcomes, information-sharing and knowledge transfer• We know who is good at what, and who is already doing what, and bring the right people to the table early in the process• By coordinating and leveraging internal partnerships, we reach out strategically together• We look for ways of creating or identifying benefits for all parties• We recognize that different insights, including those of faith-based communities, can allow for more opportunities and innovation• We tap into the expertise and knowledge of seniors and seniors' groups, and provide volunteering and mentoring opportunities for those who are interested
Desired Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A holistic approach with better integrated services, less duplication and less "silo" thinking• Increased capacity within the system• More sustainable outcomes, including improved client outcomes and satisfaction• More opportunities for innovation resulting from more and varied perspectives



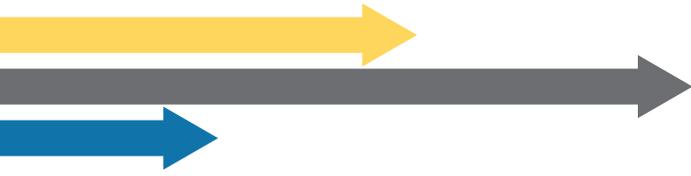
Guiding Principle: Prevention and Promotion

Keep problems from happening or mitigate them when they do
What does it look like in practice?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We focus our attention on prevention and start investments as early as possible• We understand risks, such as social isolation, that go hand-in-hand with vulnerability• When people are on waitlists, we craft strategies to help them in the meantime• Recognizing that seniors are not all the same, we find innovative ways of reaching them• We consider a senior's needs holistically, rather than trying to address each one in isolation• We provide more options than calling police or paramedics in acute situations
Desired Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All residents, including seniors, empowered to make choices to improve wellness and quality of life• Healthy independent seniors who are better prepared to age in place• Fewer preventable injuries and non-emergency calls; savings reinvested in more prevention efforts• Creation of age-friendly complete communities



Guiding Principle: Education

Get the word out to seniors and those close to them
What does it look like in practice?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We support continuous and sustainable learning across the life span, taking a train-the-trainers approach to expand our reach• We ask seniors what they want to know and deliver materials to match their preferences, including peer-to-peer education; where reaching them is a challenge, we turn to their families and caregivers• We take education campaigns to libraries, doctor's offices, medical clinics, and employers, and make better use of social media to reach seniors• We work together internally, form partnerships with academic institutions, and engage with external partners to develop stronger messages delivered in more ways
Desired Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seniors, including the most vulnerable, and caregivers are empowered and can better navigate the system, and are more aware of and understand the available programs, services and supports



Guiding Principle: Fiscal Sustainability and Balance

Can we afford it? Watch program costs and acknowledge competing demands
What does it look like in practice?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We ensure that programs and services make the best use of limited resources and are sustainable over the long term, especially by targeting resources and subsidies to those who need them most• We recognize the need to invest where the social and community outcomes justify it• For some services, we consider additional revenue sources like private foundations and user fees from those who can afford them• We look at innovative approaches like a revolving loan program for the Home Repair Program• We explore ability-to-pay models with a sliding scale of discounts, rather than one low-income threshold, and a holistic approach to eligibility that includes income, assets, existing support from family and/or friends, and risk of isolation, and consider the impact on current supports• We recognize and take into account differing cultural norms in such areas as families' financial support, discomfort with discussing finances, and tradition of multigenerational households
Desired Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The needs of all residents are balanced by applying the ability-to-pay concept to all age groups• Ability-to-pay eligibility criteria are holistic and respond to differing levels of need• With adequate revenue to meet demand, waitlists are reduced or eliminated and programs enhanced to provide more help to financially vulnerable seniors



8. Turning the Strategy into action

We will start to implement the Strategy in January 2017

Implementation will begin by setting up:

- A Seniors Strategy project support team
- A Cross-Departmental joint implementation team responsible for coordinating and leading implementation of the Strategy, including identifying priorities, project leads, timelines and resources required.

Implementation of the actions will consider opportunities for:

- Pilots and demonstrations
- Identifying and addressing training needs
- Collective communication campaigns



We will be more successful when we leverage opportunities to work better together through partnerships, alignment and collaboration with other players.

This includes working closely with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), which released a policy discussion paper in September 2016.

Many of the recommendations in the paper, *Strengthening Age-Friendly Communities and Seniors' Services for 21st Century Ontario: A New Conversation about the Municipal Role*, support the direction of the York Region Seniors Strategy, and set the stage to work more closely together.

Implementation of the actions requires further research, policy development and possible collaboration in five areas:

Ability to Pay Eligibility Model(s)

- » Developing fair eligibility models based on need and ability to pay, for all age groups

Capacity Planning

- » Identifying the services and programs seniors may need by making the right investments in the right services and working in partnership with the community to fill the gaps.

Creating Age-Friendly, Complete Communities

- » Supporting people to age actively in a socially inclusive and physically accessible environment

Better Connecting Seniors and Caregivers to Services

- » Connecting seniors and caregivers to services by improving awareness and making connections to the right services at the right time

Integrating the Delivery of Services

- » Delivering services using models such as hubs that respond to community needs



Successful implementation means:

- Program decisions made based on multiple sources of evidence (best practices, senior/caregiver experience, data)
- More places for seniors to access integrated services
- Greater focus on prevention to mitigate some of the risks associated with aging
- Seniors and caregivers are supported to navigate and access the system
- Decrease in non-emergency calls to 911 by seniors
- Resources and subsidies are targeted to those that need it the most, regardless of age.

We are in a good position to support the growing, aging population

The implementation of the Strategy will build on existing efforts. York Region is already well positioned to support the growing and aging population through efforts such as, building complete, vibrant, walkable communities; connecting seniors through a suite of transportation options including accessible conventional and Viva services, Mobility Plus, Community Bus and Dial-a-Ride; community paramedicine; strong long-term care and seniors' community programs; accessible trails; and keeping seniors safe through the work of York Regional Police, Senior Safety Officers and social workers.

Moving forward requires alignment and collaboration

Many organizations and individuals are preparing for an aging population. This is a reminder that the Region is just one of many players in the complex system of programs that serve seniors. Others include local municipalities, other levels of government, community organizations and the private sector. Developing this Strategy has clarified where the Region has control and can take action and where we can influence change through advocacy efforts.

Going forward, our actions, advocacy and work with our partners will ensure seniors in York Region receive the best possible support and services, while supporting a Region where everyone can thrive.



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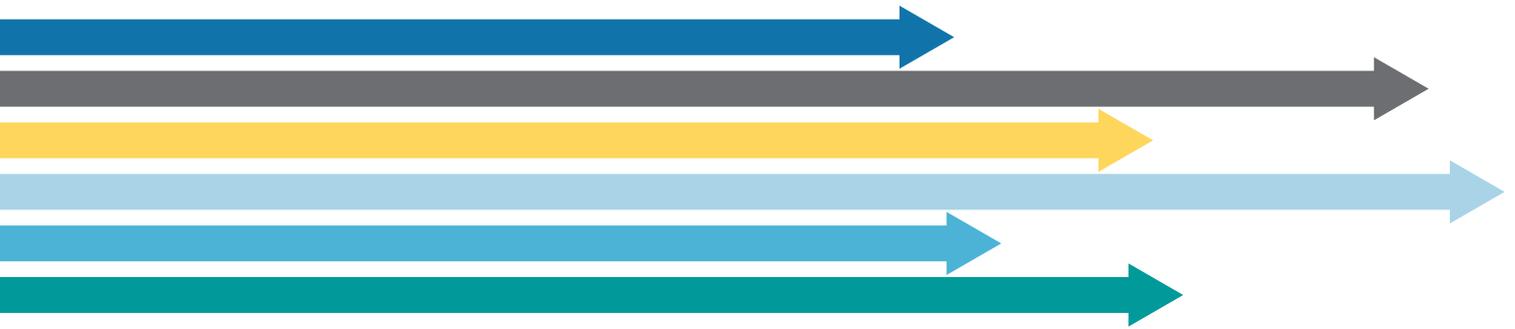
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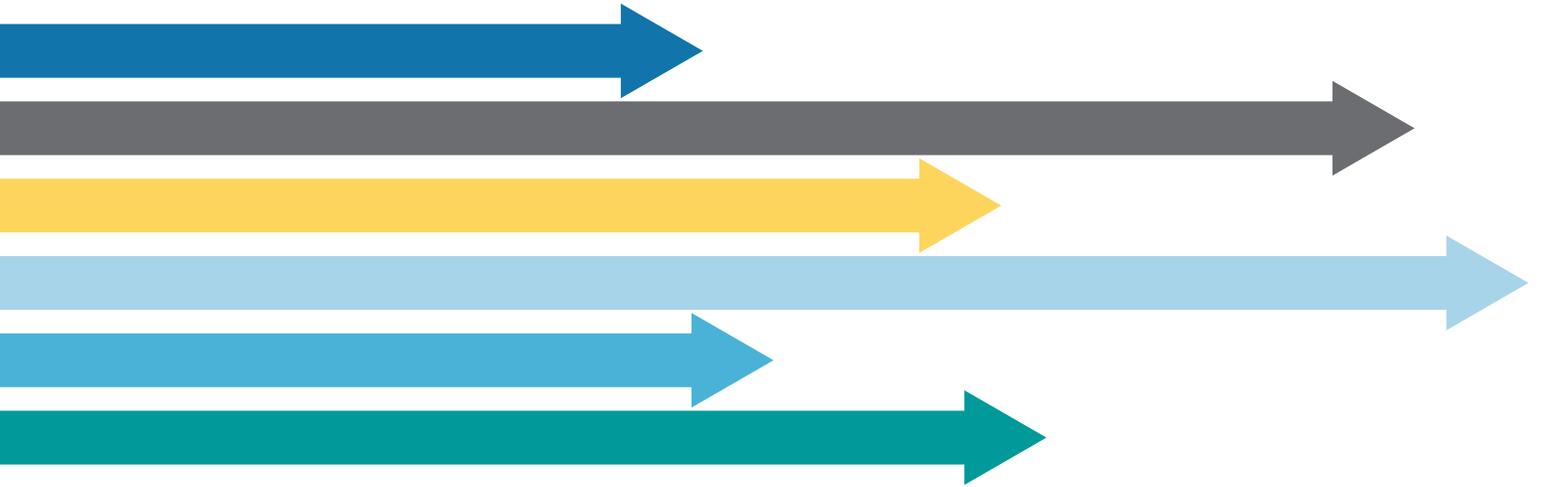


Many people were involved in the development of this Strategy. Their contributions and expertise helped to shape the actions and advocacy areas that will be implemented moving forward. Thank you to the Seniors Strategy Advisory Task Force, all of the seniors groups, seniors organizations, partners and agencies as well as staff from all departments who supported and provided information for this Strategy. Development of the Strategy was led by the Strategies and Partnerships Branch in the Community and Health Services Department.



York Region

Seniors Strategy



York Region Seniors Strategy
Advisory Task Force
Data Sheets

June, 2016





Seniors Population Data in York Region

Data fact sheets will act as a resource guide for Task Force members

- This fact sheet is intended to provide broad York Region population data. It is intended to act as a resource for Task Force members, so they have access to key data during Task Force meetings and throughout the process.

York Region continues to grow and population growth is expected across all age ranges

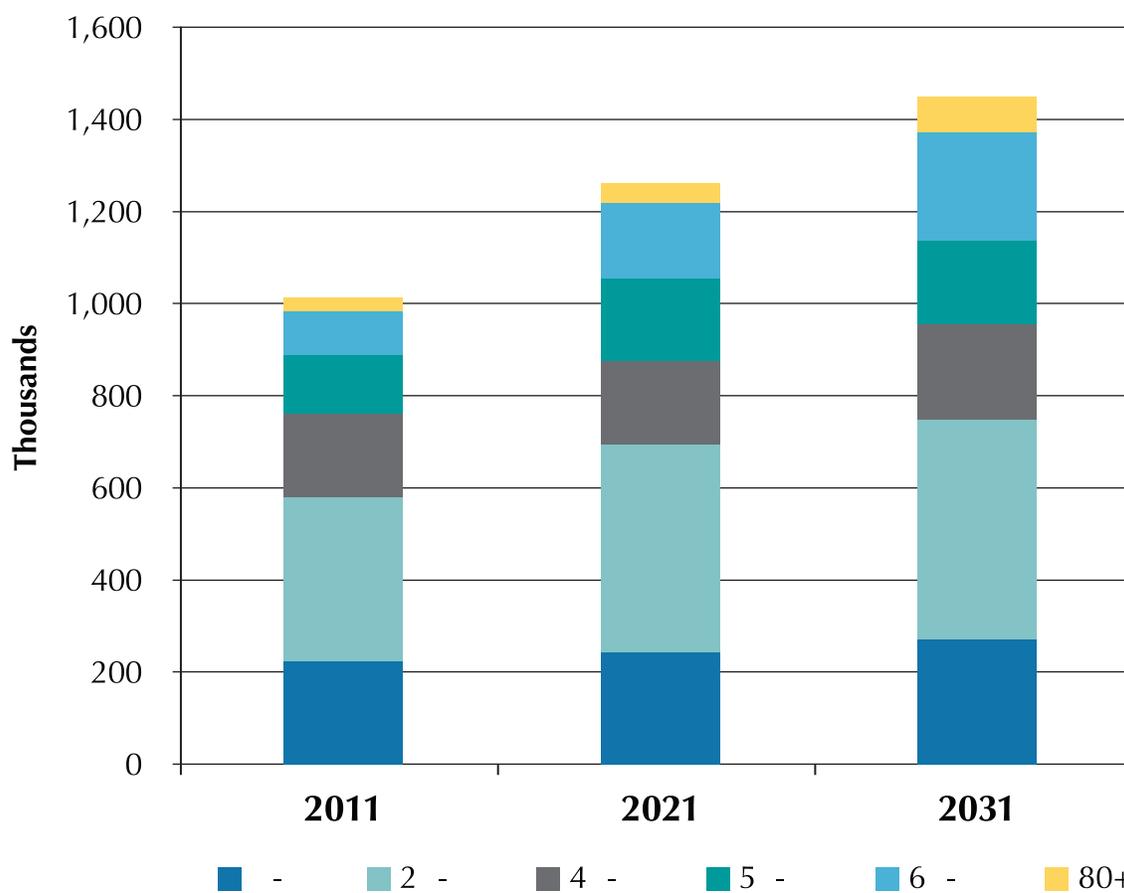
- York Region is set to experience tremendous growth in its seniors population. From 2011 to 2031, the senior population in York Region will be growing at a much faster pace than any other age group. In fact, the proportion of seniors in York Region will almost double by 2031; from 12 per cent of the region’s population in 2011 to 21 per cent by 2031 – meaning every 1 in 5 people will be 65 years or older by 2031.
- Based on the York Region Long Range Planning forecast, all age groups will grow between 2011 and 2031, bringing the total population to approximately 1.5 million people (Table 1).

Table 1: York Region Long-Range Planning Projections

	2011	2031
Children and Youth (0-19)	276,226	323,155
Adults (20-64)	664,265	865,602
Seniors (65+)	124,734	311,257

- Among seniors, those that are 85 and older are forecasted to grow from close to 14,000 people in 2011 to over 30,000 in 2031.
- Graph 1 shows how York Region’s population is projected to grow between 2011 and 2031. It illustrates that although seniors are growing at the fastest pace, there is forecasted growth across all age groups. For example, the children and youth group in York Region (those 0-19 years for the purpose of this document) is also forecasted to grow and make an even larger proportion of the population in 2031 at about 24 per cent.

Graph 1: Age Group Growth



Data Source: York Region Long Range Planning Branch, Corporate Services Department

Note: Based on the forecast approved by Council: 2016 to 2031 (based on approved York Region Official Plan – Population Forecast Model)

Baby boomers are driving growth in the senior population

- Those born between 1946 and 1965 are referred to as baby boomers. For planning purposes, we have grouped baby boomers into two cohorts based on year of birth:
 - » Baby Boomers Wave 1 – born between 1946 and 1955
 - » Baby Boomers Wave 2 – born between 1956 and 1965

Note: The term “Baby Boom” is a conceptual notion, which refers to the noticeable increase in the birth rate during a specific period in time. For the purposes of the Senior Strategy, the Baby Boom years in Canada are 1946-1965 inclusive.

- Table 2 demonstrates how the baby boomers are moving into older age groups over the next 26 years; revealing that by 2031 all baby boomers will fall into the seniors cohort (Note: Colours in the table correspond to the chart on the previous page).
- Once the baby boomers reach the final years of their lives, it is expected that growth of the senior population will slow down.

Table 2: Baby Boomer Cohorts As They Age

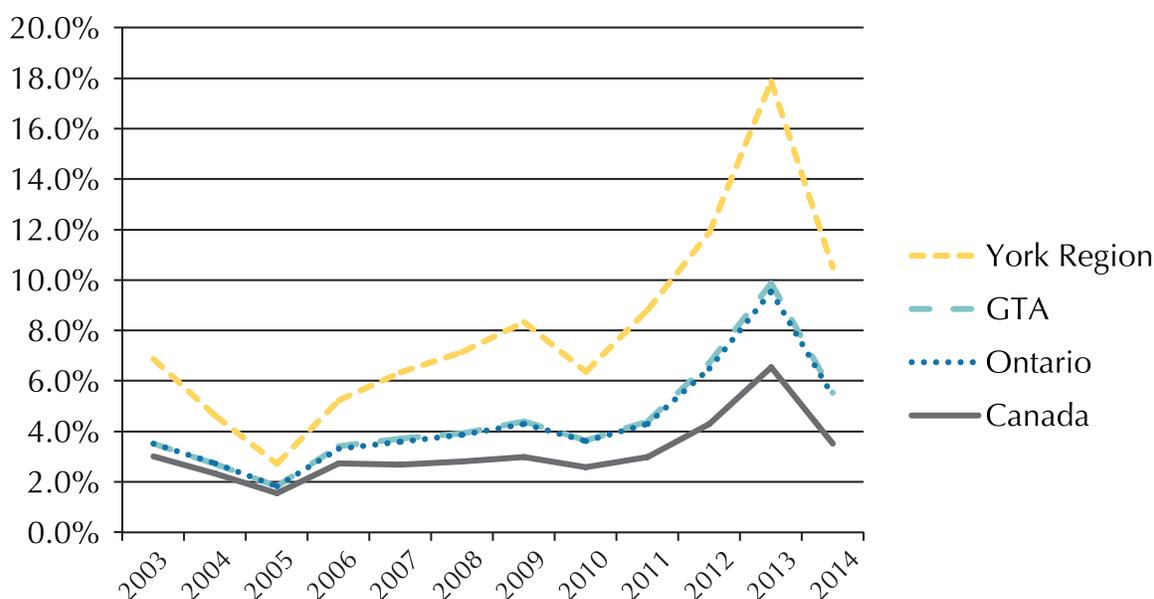
	Birth Year	Age			
		2011	2021	2031	2041
Boomers W1	1946	65	75	85	95
	1955	56	66	76	86
Boomers W2	1956	55	65	75	85
	1965	46	56	66	76
Colour Codes					
		45-54	55-64	65-79	80+

- In addition to the large baby boomer cohort driving growth of the seniors' population in York Region, people are also living longer than in the past.
- In 1921 middle-aged Canadians could expect to live to age 75 on average, whereas today the average life expectancy in Canada is 81.1 years and in York Region the average is 84.1 years – meaning that a 65 year old senior will live for approximately 20 more years. This is an important consideration for planning purposes.

Immigration to York Region is also contributing to growth in the senior population

- York Region receives a higher percentage of new permanent resident seniors in comparison to the GTA, Ontario and Canada (Chart 2).
- Seniors are the fastest-growing age group among permanent residents settling in York Region.
- More than 220,000 new permanent residents arrive in Canada annually; between 9,000 and 13,000 of these new permanent residents intend to settle in York Region (on average 4 per cent).
- The share of seniors 65 years and older increased from 5 per cent of York Region's new permanent resident population in 2003 to 11 per cent in 2014. Across the GTA, new permanent residents 65 years and older increased from 4 per cent of the new permanent resident population in 2003 to 6 per cent in 2014.
- As reflected in the overall population, most new permanent residents live in Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.

Graph 2: Seniors 65+ As A Percentage Of All New Permanent Residents 2003 - 2014



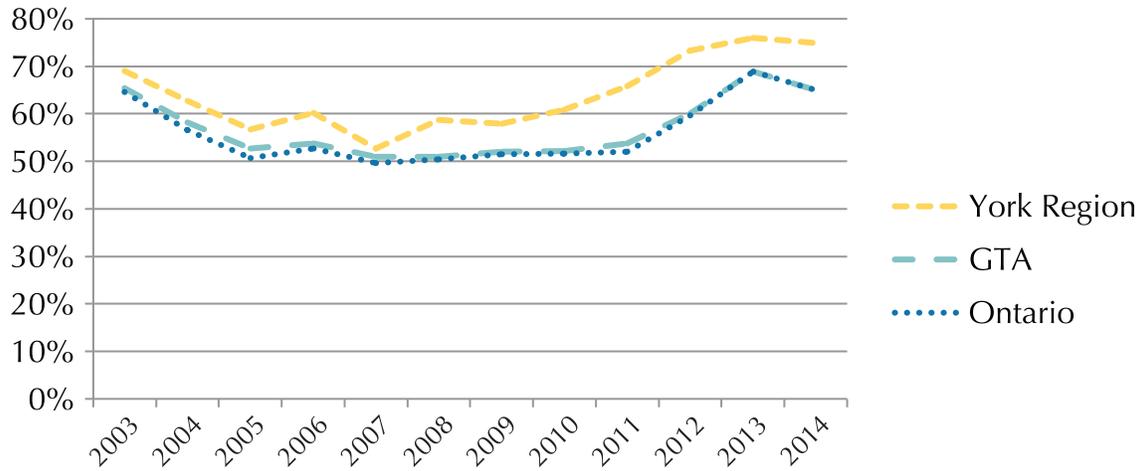
Source: Citizenship & Immigration Canada, RDM as of September 2015.

Most new permanent resident seniors arriving in York Region have no ability in English or French

- Of the 6,235 seniors who arrived in York Region between 2010 and 2014, 72 per cent had no ability in either English or French at the time of landing. During this time period, Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill received 92 per cent of all new permanent residents 65 years and older with no ability to speak any official language (Chart 3).
- Senior immigrants to York Region have lower language skills than senior immigrants in the GTA and Ontario.
- More than half of working-age new permanent residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher, whereas the most common education category for new permanent residents 65 and older is “high school or less”.
- Most new permanent resident seniors arrive in the “family class”. Between 2003 and 2012, 82 per cent of all seniors immigrating to Canada and 88 per cent of seniors immigrating to York Region arrived in the family class.

Note: family class is used to describe an immigration category that includes any family members sponsored to come to Canada by a Canadian citizen or permanent resident living in Canada who is 18 years of age or older.

Graph 3: Proportion Of Senior (65+) New Permanent Residents With No Official Language Ability At The Time Of Landing, 2003 - 2014



Source: Citizenship & Immigration Canada, RDM as of September 2015.

The Financial Lens

December 9, 2015



Seniors Finances in York Region

Seniors in York Region are generally wealthy

- York Region is set to experience tremendous growth in its seniors population.
- *A Profile of Baby Boomers and Seniors in York Region, January 2014* presented a broad profile of baby boomers and seniors in York Region as being generally wealthy.
 - » York Region seniors have, on average, higher net worth than others of the same age in Canada. This is especially true for the baby boomers.
 - » In 2014, the net worth of boomers in York Region was approximately \$790,000-\$890,000, compared to Canada where the net worth was about \$378,300-\$533,600 for the same age group. Similarly, the net worth of seniors in York Region was approximately \$550,000, compared to seniors in Canada who had an approximate net worth of \$460,700.
 - » Several factors contribute to this including higher-than-average income generally in York Region, as well as the tendency of older adults to continue working past 65 years of age.

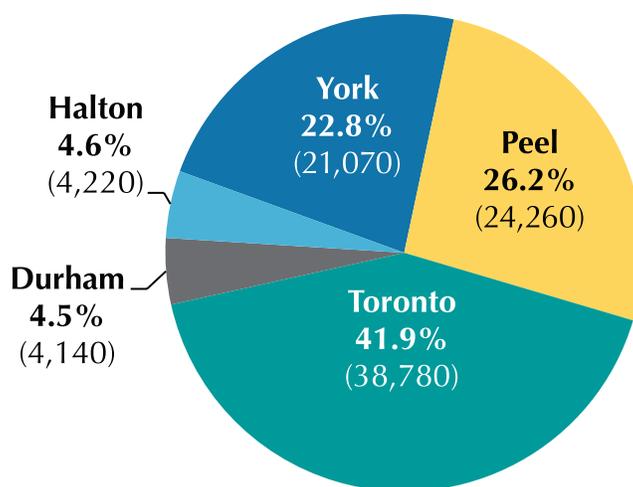
There has been an increasing trend in the number of seniors receiving income from employment in York Region

- Based on 2013 tax filer data, 26.7 per cent of seniors in York Region received income from employment, compared to 20.7 per cent of seniors reporting income from employment in 2005. The proportion of seniors in York Region with employment income is comparable with Canada, Ontario and most GTA municipalities.
- King (33.8 per cent), East Gwillimbury (32.5 per cent) and Aurora (30.4 per cent) had the highest proportion of seniors with income from employment in 2013. Vaughan and Markham had the lowest at 25.3 per cent and 25.6 per cent.

A growing number of seniors in York Region are low income

- In 2013, 847,520 seniors aged 65+ lived in the GTA. Of these, 92,420 were living with low income.
- Among the 92,420 low income seniors living in the GTA in 2013, 21,070 (22.8 per cent) lived in York Region.

Graph 1: Distribution Of Low Income Seniors In The GTA, 2013



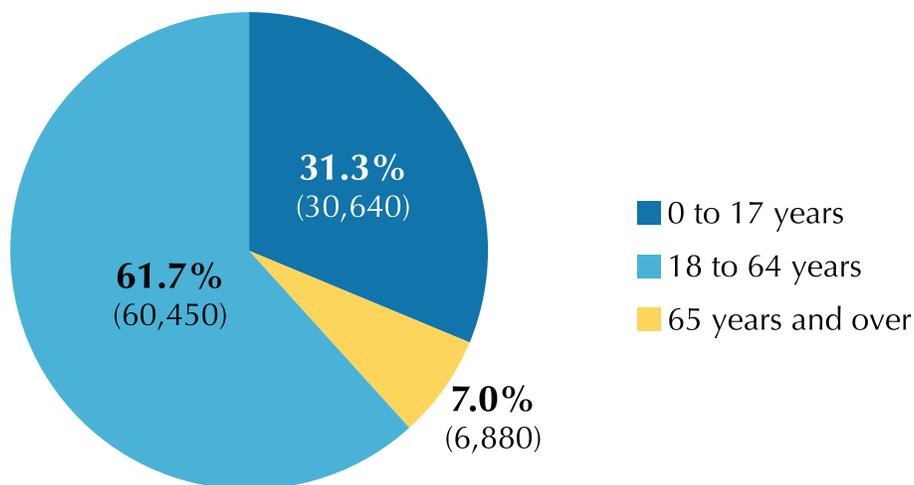
Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administrative Data Division, 2000-2011 Annual Estimates for Census Families and Individuals 13C0016

Seniors make up a small portion of York Region residents living with low income, but their share increased between 2000 and 2013

Note: the Low Income Measure–After Tax (LIM-AT) threshold for a single person is \$17,371, and for a couple is \$24,371.

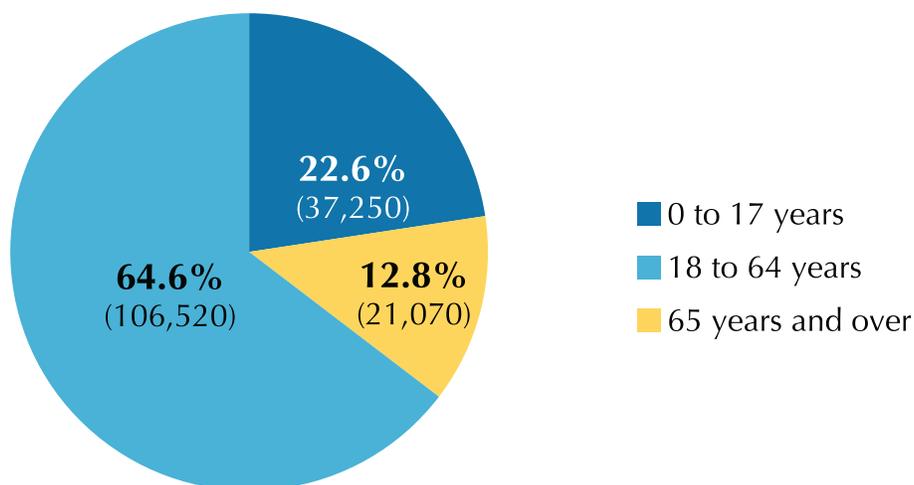
- The number of residents living with low income across all age groups in York Region increased from almost 98,000 in 2000 to almost 165,000 in 2013.
- The number of low income residents in York Region continues to grow faster than the overall population – 8.8 per cent increase in low income residents since 2011, compared to a 3.5 per cent increase for the overall population.
- In 2013, there were approximately 145,000 seniors aged 65+ in York Region. Of these about 21,000 were low-income, representing a low income rate of 14.6 per cent for seniors. This is similar to the rate for children (15.1 per cent) and working age adults (15 per cent) in the Region.
- By comparison, the low income rate for seniors 65+ in 2013 was 6.4 per cent for Canada and 6.5 per cent for Ontario.

Graph 2: Low Income Residents In York Region By Age Group, 2000



Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administrative Data Division, 2000-2011 Annual Estimates for Census Families and Individuals 13C0016

Graph 3: Low Income Residents In York Region By Age Group, 2013



Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administrative Data Division, 2000-2011 Annual Estimates for Census Families and Individuals 13C0016

- While seniors make up a small portion of York Region residents living with low income, their share has increased from approximately 7 per cent in 2000 to 12.8 per cent in 2013. This reflects York Region's overall aging profile, and could also be the result of:
 - » Increased number of immigrant seniors with little income and not eligible for Old Age Security benefits
 - » Decreasing coverage of private workplace pension plans
 - » Reduced returns from savings and investments
- The percentage of children living in low income families in York Region decreased from 31 per cent in 2000 to 23 per cent in 2013. The introduction of government Child Benefits is likely one of the factors contributing to some York Region families getting out of low income since 2000.

- The percentage of York Region working age residents living with low income also increased, from 62 per cent in 2000 to 66 per cent in 2013.
- While low income across all three age groups grew in numbers between 2000 and 2013, the seniors age group grew faster than working age and children living with low income.
- The trend is similar in Ontario, with the proportion of seniors and working age living in low income increasing between 2000 and 2013.

Seniors living alone are at higher risk of living with low income because they only have one income to rely on and are less likely to have the support of an additional family member(s)

- Seniors living alone are a vulnerable group in York Region. Of all low income seniors 65+ in York Region, 43 per cent live alone.
- In 2013, the low income rate for seniors living alone in York Region was 24.2 per cent (for a total of 9,000 residents). These residents included seniors living alone, as well as those single seniors living with someone else, whether related or unrelated to them. By comparison, the low income rate for seniors living in census families was 11.7 per cent (for a total of 12,000 residents).

More than half of seniors in York Region did not report income from private pensions

- In 2013, 47.8 per cent of seniors in York Region reported income from private pension (workplace pension plans), which pay a guaranteed income upon retirement. This means that more than half (52.2 per cent or 74,150 seniors in York Region) had to rely on income from Canada Pension Plan, RRSPs or personal savings.
- The proportion of seniors in York Region with income from private pensions is the lowest in the GTA and below provincial (61.8 per cent) and national (59.5 per cent) levels.
- Markham and Richmond Hill have the lowest proportion of seniors with income from private pensions, at 40.7 per cent and 42.1 per cent respectively. Aurora and East Gwillimbury have the highest proportion of seniors with private pensions, at 63 per cent and 62.5 per cent.

Many immigrant seniors arriving in York Region between 2010 and 2014 came from countries that do not have social security agreements with Canada, meaning they do not qualify for partial government pensions

- All residents who reach the age of 65 and reside in Canada for at least 10 years may be eligible for the federally funded Old Age Security program (OAS). Seniors receive the full amount if they have lived in Canada for 40 years and may qualify for a partial pension if they have lived in Canada for at least 10 years.
- Seniors who have lived in Canada for less than 10 years may still qualify for OAS if their previous country of residence has an international social security agreement with Canada (for example, if an immigrant senior lived and worked in the United States for four years, they will be able to receive a partial pension after living in Canada for six years).

- However, many immigrant seniors who arrived in York Region between 2010 and 2014 are from countries such as: China, Iran, Russia, Iraq and Pakistan, which do not have social security agreements with Canada. Therefore, 15,240 seniors in York Region (or 10.7 per cent) did not receive OAS or the Guaranteed Income Supplement in 2013, compared to 4.9 per cent in Ontario and 3.9 per cent in Canada. Peel Region has a similar number of seniors not receiving OAS – 10.6 per cent (16,120 seniors).

Many seniors in York Region do not have enough income for a healthy diet

- Research has shown that poverty is the root cause of food insecurity.
- Each year York Region conducts the Nutritious Food Basket Survey. This survey measures the cost of basic healthy eating, based on Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide and eating behaviours from the *Canadian Community Health Survey* results.

Table 1: The Cost of the Nutritious Food Basket in York Region (2015)

	Per Week	Per Month
Single man 51-70 years old	\$63.64	\$275.56
Single man over 70 years old	\$63.05	\$273.01
Single woman 51-70 years old	\$48.74	\$211.04
Single woman over 70 years old	\$47.89	\$207.36
Couple, over 70 years old	\$101.70	\$440.36

Reference: york.ca/wps/wcm/connect/yorkpublic/0c323f63-3371-4a14-bd6c-11214cbe8ae6/Nutritious_Food_Basket_Factsheet.pdf?MOD=AJPERES

- The health effects of not being able to afford a nutritious diet include:
 - » Having less milk, fruits and vegetables
 - » Often not getting enough important nutrients
 - » Finding it more difficult to manage chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure
 - » Being more likely to report having poor physical health, poor mental health, multiple health conditions, restricted activity and poor social support
 - » Being less productive at work or less able to do well in school

Preliminary data indicates that the value of liquid assets increases as age increases in York Region

- Preliminary data indicates that York Region’s low income seniors (65+) are better off compared to low income residents in the 45-54 and 55-64 age categories when considering liquid assets.
 - » The value of liquid assets in those York Region households maintained by someone 65 years of age and older, with an income below \$40,000, is approximately \$166,152; compared to \$137,000 for seniors in this category in Ontario.
 - » The value of liquid assets is estimated at \$153,589 for York Region households with incomes below \$40,000, which are maintained by a person 55-64 years of age.

- » The value of liquid assets is estimated at \$87,009 for York Region households with incomes below \$40,000 and maintained by a person 45-54 years of age.

Note: According to most major banks, “liquid assets” are defined as holdings readily converted to cash, such as mutual funds, stocks, bonds, term deposits, GICs, as well as chequing and savings accounts (does not include real estate).

Table 2: Average Liquid Assets of Households by Maintainers Age and Household Income, York Region, 2015

Age of Household Maintainers	Household Income			
	\$0-\$39,999	\$40,000-\$79,999	\$80,000-\$124,999	\$150,000+
Household Maintainers, 45-54 years	\$87,009	\$119,055	\$160,746	\$808,657
Household Maintainers, 55-64 years	\$153,589	\$195,801	\$286,797	\$1,307,913
Household Maintainers, 65 + years	\$166,152	\$396,374	\$777,709	\$2,921,583

Source: Environics Analytics, Liquid Assets Database, 2015

Canada does well compared to other G7 countries in providing an adequate standard of living for its seniors

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Income Distribution and Poverty Database, data extracted on February 1, 2016:

- France, at 3.4 per cent, has the lowest low income rate for seniors aged 66-77 among G7 countries, followed by Canada at 6.7 per cent. Japan and the United States have the highest low income rate for seniors in this age group at 16.6 per cent and 15.5 per cent.
- Canada also ranked second on this indicator for seniors 75 years and older with a low income rate of 7.0 per cent. France has the lowest low income rate for this age group at 5.5 per cent and United States has the highest at 23.7 per cent.

The Health Lens

February 24, 2016



Seniors Health in York Region

Seniors in York Region are generally healthy

- York Region is set to experience tremendous growth in its seniors population.
- *A Profile of Baby Boomers and Seniors in York Region, January 2014* presented a broad profile of baby boomers and seniors in York Region as being generally healthy.
- This fact sheet explores data related to the vulnerability of seniors when it comes to their health, in the areas of:
 - » Health behaviours
 - » Health status including, perceived health, chronic conditions, falls, mental health and dementia
 - » Social determinants of health

Leading a healthy lifestyle is critical to reducing the chances of health issues with aging

- Seniors aged 75 years and older are more likely to experience declines in their physical and/or mental health and are at increased risk of falling. This can often lead to chronic pain and reduced mobility, resulting in a loss of independence.
- York Region seniors engage in behaviours that increase the risk of chronic disease. For example in 2013-2014:
 - » Nine per cent of seniors smoked cigarettes.
 - » Eighteen per cent of seniors reported alcohol use above Canada's Low Risk Drinking Guidelines.
 - » Only 45 per cent of seniors consumed vegetables and fruits more than five times per day.
 - » Only 45 per cent of seniors were active or moderately active during their leisure time.
- Self-reported health behaviours for seniors in York Region were similar to those of seniors in Ontario.

Rates of chronic and other health conditions increase with age

- According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) (2011), the proportion of seniors who suffered from at least one chronic condition¹ increased with age, from 71 per cent for younger seniors (aged 65 to 74) to 80 per cent for those aged 75 to 84 but did not increase further among the very old seniors aged 85 and over. Moreover, regardless of the specific age group, seniors with three or more reported chronic conditions had nearly three times the number of health care visits than seniors of the same age group with no reported chronic conditions².
- In York Region, the self-reported rates of select health conditions were higher for seniors than for the 45-64 age cohort.

Table 1: Summary Of Select Self-Reported Health Conditions For York Region Seniors (2013-2014)

Health Conditions	Percent of York Region Seniors	Compared to Ontario
High blood pressure*	44 %	No difference
Diabetes	16 %	No difference
Heart disease	20 %	No difference
Effects of stroke*	3 %	No difference
Arthritis*	37 %	Lower
Overweight or obese	48 %	Lower
Physical activity limitations as a result of long-term condition(s)	46 %	No difference
Pain or discomfort that limits activities	25 %	No difference

**Interpret with caution, high variability is associated with the estimate.*

Data Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2013-2014, Statistics Canada, Ontario Share File, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

The incidence rate of cancer is consistently higher for seniors in York Region than for the 45-64 cohort

- In 2012, there were 1,931 new cases of cancer for every 100,000 York Region seniors, which is about three times the rate for the 45-64 age category (643 cases for every 100,000).
- In Ontario, there were 2,217 new cases of cancer for every 100,000 Ontario seniors.

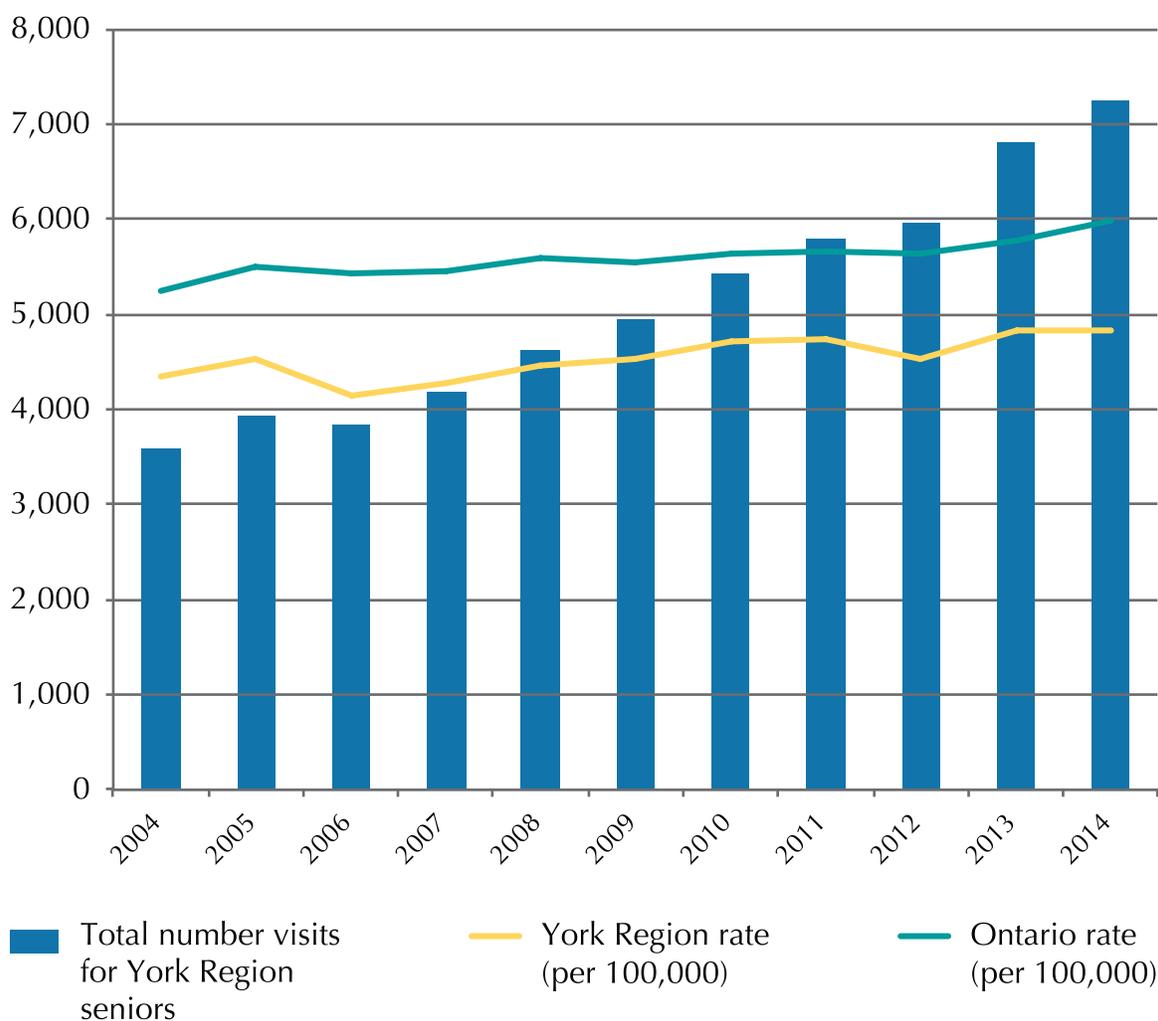
¹ According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), chronic condition includes high blood pressure, arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, chronic pain, asthma, depression, stroke and emphysema.

² Canadian Institute for Health Information (2011). *Seniors and the Health Care System: What if the Impact of Multiple Chronic Conditions?* Retrieved from https://secure.cihi.ca/free_products/air-chronic_disease_aib_en.pdf.

The number of fall-related emergency visits by York Region seniors has doubled since 2004

- Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and non-fatal injuries among older adults. As shown in Graph 1, while the emergency visit rate for seniors remained relatively stable between 2004 and 2014, the number of emergency visits doubled from 3,587 visits in 2004 to 7,255 visits in 2014.
- In 2014, approximately 1 in 20 York Region seniors (65+) had a fall serious enough to require a visit to an emergency department.
- The emergency visit rate increased with increasing age and is consistently higher for females than for males.
- The emergency visit rate in York Region was consistently lower than the rate in Ontario.

Graph 1: Number And Rate Of Fall-Related Emergency Visits Among York Region Seniors, 65 Years Of Age And Older, 2004-2014

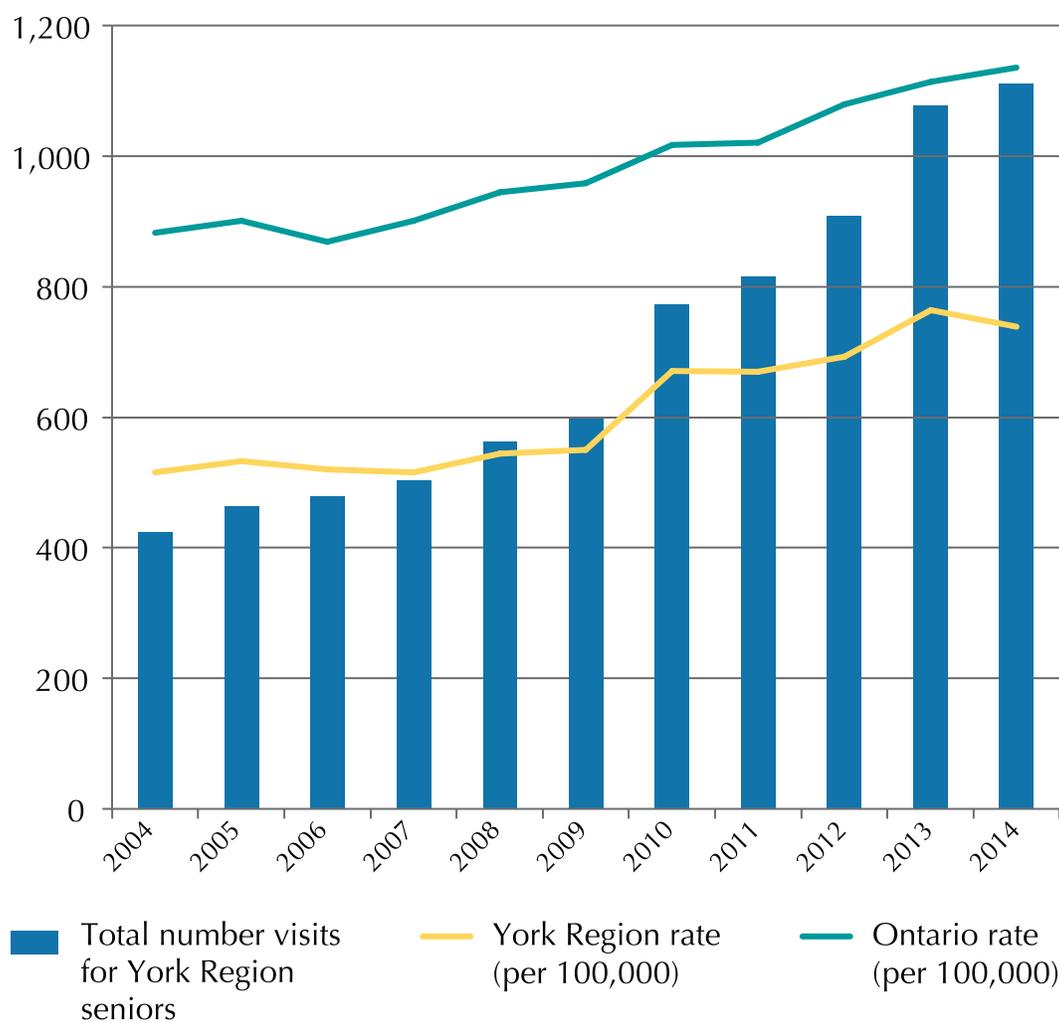


Data sources: Ambulatory Emergency External Cause [2004-2014], Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO. Population Estimates [2004-2014], Statistics Canada. Table 051-0062 - Estimates of population by census division, sex and age group for July 1, based on the Standard Geographical Classification (SGC) 2011, annual (persons), CANSIM (database). Extracted January 2016.

The number of emergency visits related to mental and behavioural disorders for seniors in York Region has more than doubled since 2004

- In 2014, there were 1,112 emergency visits for York Region seniors related to mental and behavioural disorders (corresponding to a rate of 739 visits per 100,000 population aged 65+)
- The York Region emergency visit rate for mental health and behavioural disorders was consistently lower than the Ontario rate (1,136 per 100,000 seniors in 2014)
- Rates have been increasing over time in all age categories and are highest in the age category of 20-44 years (1,260 per 100,000 for 20-44 year olds in 2014)
- Sixty-nine per cent of York Region seniors in 2013-2014 perceived their mental health status to be “very good” or “excellent”

Graph 2: Number And Rate Of Emergency Visits Related To Mental And Behavioural Disorders Among York Region Seniors , 65 Years Of Age And Older, 2004-2014

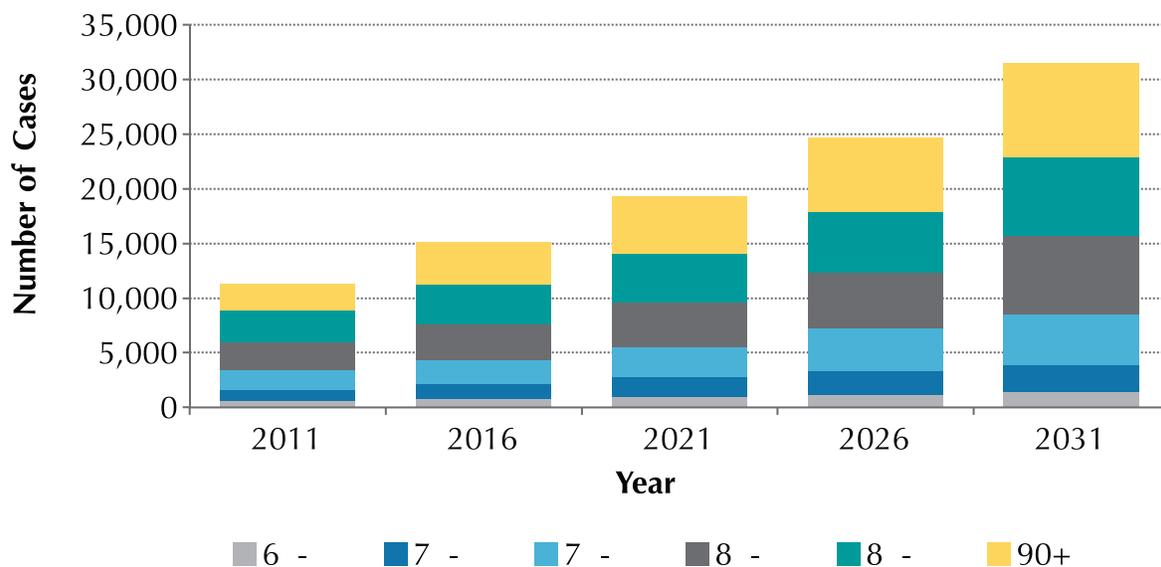


Data sources: Ambulatory Visits [2004-2014], Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO. Population Estimates [2004-2014], Statistics Canada. Table 051-0062 - Estimates of population by census division, sex and age group for July 1, based on the Standard Geographical Classification (SGC) 2011, annual (persons), CANSIM (database). Extracted January 2016.

The prevalence of dementia among seniors will increase rapidly over the next 20 years as the size of the senior population and life expectancy increase

- By 2031, the number of dementia cases is expected to increase by 163 per cent over the 2012 number (about 12,000 cases in 2012 compared with over 31,500 in 2031).
- The increase for Ontario as a whole is projected to be 95 per cent (about 195,000 cases in 2012 compared with about 380,000 in 2031).

Graph 3: Projected Dementia Cases For Seniors By Age Group, York Region, 2011 To 2031



Source: Hopkins, R. (June 2010). *Dementia Projections for the Counties, Regional Municipalities, and Census Divisions of Ontario*. Clinical/Research Bulletin number 16. PCCC Mental Health Services, Kingston, Ontario. Retrieved from alzheimerontario.org/ad_Statistics.htm#one

A complex set of factors or conditions determine an individual's level of health

- Non-medical factors that influence health, such as income, social status, education, employment, social environments, gender and culture, are referred to as the social determinants of health. These social and economic conditions have a cumulative effect on an individual's chances of remaining healthy or becoming ill (*Impact of Socioeconomic Factors on Health in York Region, 2014*).
- The key social determinants of health that have been identified by the Public Health Agency of Canada are:
 - » Income and Social Status
 - » Social Support Networks
 - » Education and Literacy
 - » Employment/Working Conditions
 - » Social Environments
 - » Physical Environments
 - » Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills
 - » Healthy Child Development
 - » Biology and Genetic Endowment
 - » Health Services
 - » Gender
 - » Culture

- York Region residents living in neighbourhoods with negative socioeconomic characteristics (higher levels of material deprivation, residential instability, dependency and lower neighbourhood average incomes) were more likely to have negative health outcomes, including higher rates of:
 - » Injury-related emergency room visits
 - » Intentional self-harm-related emergency department visits
 - » Premature death
 - » Hospitalization
 - » Fair or poor perceived health
 - » Circulatory disease hospitalizations
 - » Smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke in their homes
 - » Physical inactivity
 - » Drinking in excess of the low-risk drinking guidelines
 - » Obesity or being over weight

Aging in Place

April 8, 2016



Aging in Place in York Region

Introduction

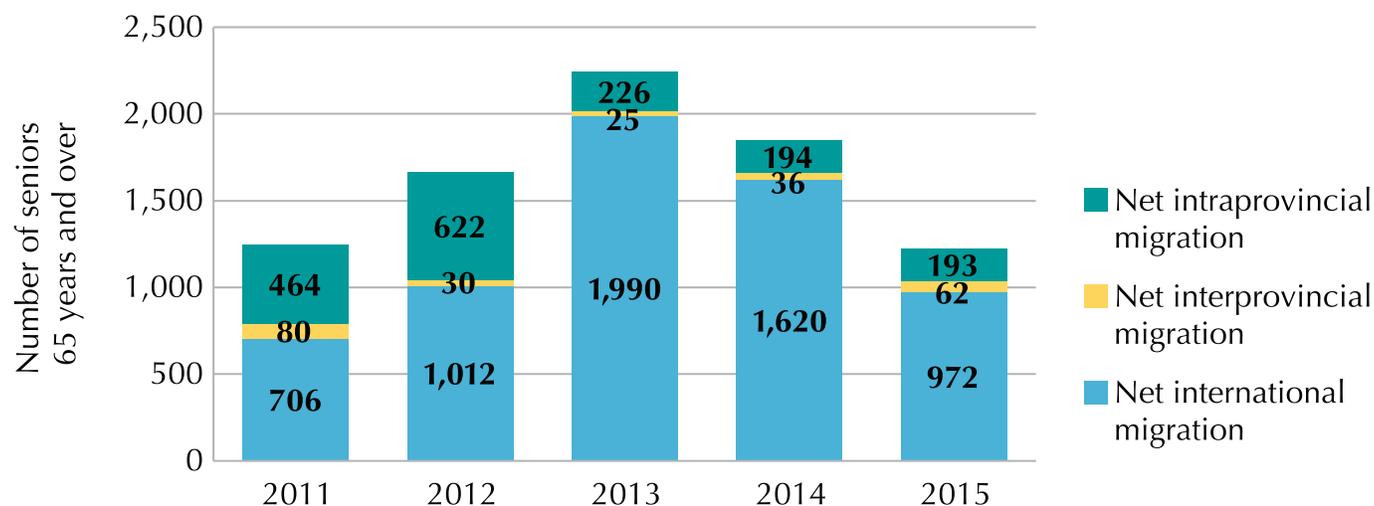
- According to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), *Impacts of the Aging of the Canadian Population on Housing and Communities*, 2008, aging in place allows seniors to “live in their current home and familiar community for as long as possible, even if their health changes”.
- Not only is aging in place more cost-effective than primary acute care, it appears that seniors prefer this option. According to one study, 85 per cent of Canadian seniors surveyed indicated they wanted to remain in their homes as long as possible (CMHC, *Seniors Housing Report*, 2011).
- According to the Ipsos Reid Survey of Financial Security and Future Service Needs of Baby Boomers and Seniors in York Region, 2014:
 - » More than nine in ten (94 per cent) retirees plan to continue live in York Region
 - » Six in ten (60 per cent) retirees plan to live in their current dwelling that they will own
 - » About nine in ten retirees and non-retirees think they will have access to the support and services they need to stay at home for as long as possible
 - » Six in ten non-retirees plan to downsize their primary residence or sell other real estate to help fund their retirement
- Housing options are important, but in order for seniors to successfully age in place, the communities in which they live need to be age-friendly and safe, with easy access to public transit, health and community services, and other amenities.
- Housing options for seniors in York Region include home ownership, renting, subsidized housing, retirement homes and collective dwellings. However, depending on a person’s circumstances (income, assets, availability and care needs) not all of these housing options are equally available.

On average, almost 1,650 seniors (65+) per year are moving to York Region

[see chart 1]

- Two factors contributing most to the senior’s population growth in York Region are the aging local population and migration.
- Net migration gains, whether from international sources, other parts of Canada (interprovincial) or other regions within Ontario (intraprovincial), are projected to continue to be a significant source of senior’s population growth.
- *Note: Net migration for a given region and period of time is the difference between immigration and emigration or difference between in and out-migrants.*

**Chart 1: Net Migration Gains From Different Sources
Among Seniors 65 Years And Over, York Region, 2011–2015**



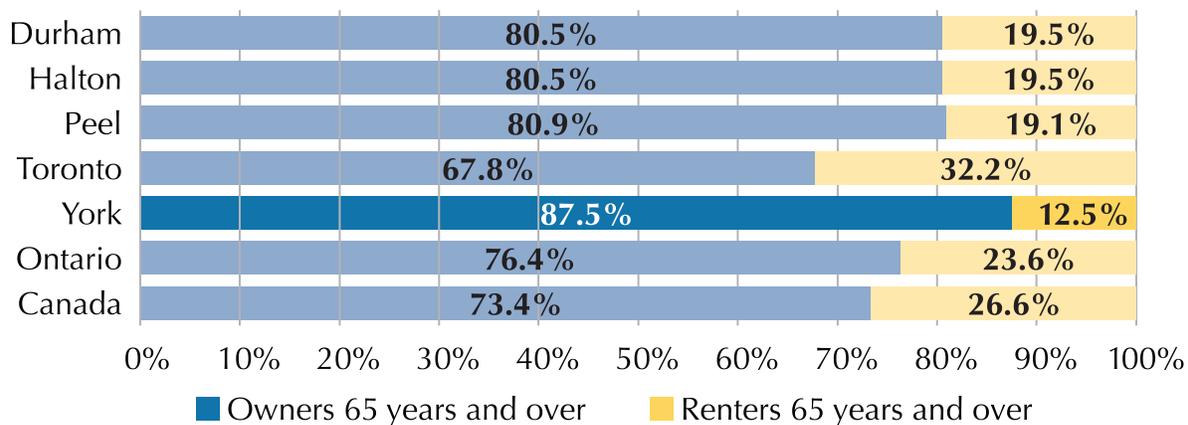
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 051-0063

- Overall, in 2015, the net migration (from all sources) among residents 65 years and over was 1,227 people, down from 1,850 people in 2014. However, net migration in York Region among senior residents remains strongly positive over the last five years. From 2011 to 2015, more than 8,200 seniors moved to York Region. That is an average of 1,646 people a year.

Older households are typically owners; younger households are typically renters

- There is a relationship between age and housing tenure. In general, the homeownership rate was higher for households with an older primary household maintainer, up to the age of 75 years, after which the rate started to decrease. At the same time, the proportion of renters among seniors 75 years and over is increasing.
- In York Region, the proportion of those renting was highest for those 25 years of age and under at 45.4 per cent, in 2011. The highest proportion of owner households in York Region was among those aged 45 to 64 at 90.4 per cent in 2011.
- In 2011, 87.5 per cent of households in York Region led by residents over 65 years of age were owners. This was the highest proportion of owner households in the GTA. In comparison, 76.4 per cent of senior households in Ontario and 73.4 per cent in Canada were owners (see chart 2).
- The limited rental market in York Region makes it difficult for older residents to find affordable housing. In 2011, only 12.5 per cent of total households led by residents 65 years of age and older were renters. This was the lowest proportion in the GTA. In comparison, 26.6 per cent of the total households with a maintainer 65 years and over in Canada and 23.6 per cent in Ontario were renters (see chart 2).

Chart 2: Households Led By Seniors 65 Years And Over By Tenure, GTA, 2011

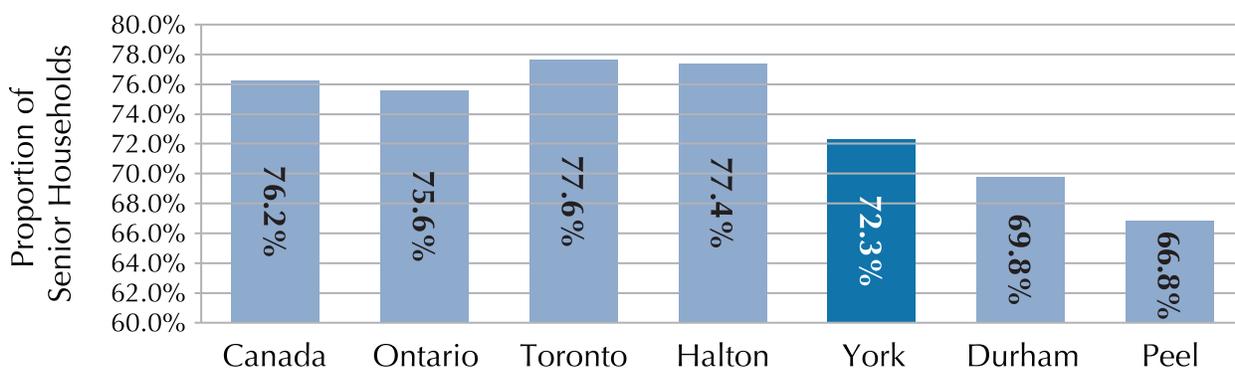


Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS

The mortgage-free homeownership rate was generally higher for households with an older primary household maintainer (65+)

- For primary household maintainers aged 65 years and over, mortgage-free homeownership was the most common tenure.
 - » Of all owner households with a primary maintainer aged 65 to 74 years, about 67.5 per cent were mortgage-free.
 - » Of all owner households with a primary maintainer 75 years of age and over, about 79.4 per cent were mortgage-free.
- In general, 72.3 per cent of York Region’s owner households with a primary maintainer aged 65 years and over were mortgage-free. The lowest mortgage-free homeownership rate among seniors 65 years of age and over in the GTA was observed in Peel Region (at 66.8 per cent) and Durham Region (at 69.8 per cent). Mortgage-free homeownership for this age group in York Region was below provincial and national levels, at 75.6 per cent and 76.2 per cent respectively (see chart 3).

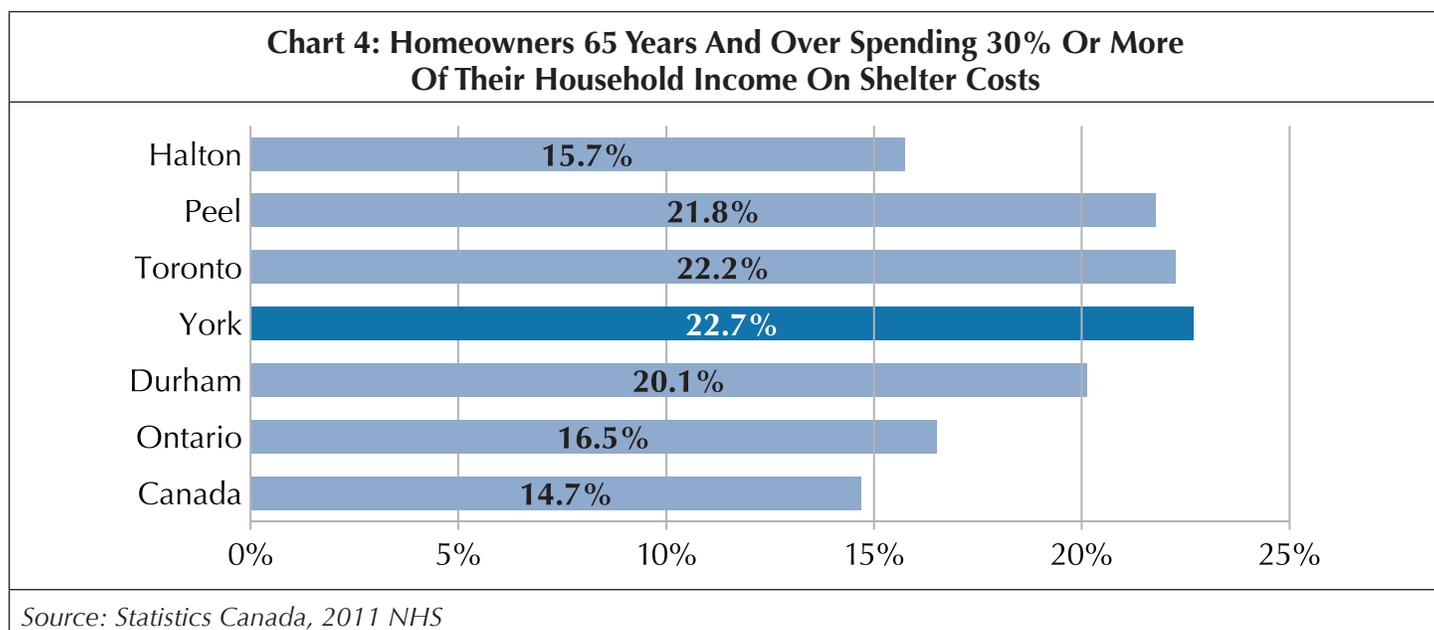
Chart 3: Homeowners 65 Years Of Age And Over In Mortgage-Free Households, Canada, Ontario And GTA



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS

More homeowners (65+) in York Region spend 30% or more of their household income on shelter costs compared to those living in other Regions, Ontario or Canada [see Chart 4]

- Note: Shelter cost includes, where applicable, the mortgage payment or monthly rent, the costs of electricity, heat, water and other municipal service, property taxes and condominium fees.
- With housing costs being an important part of overall household expenditure, 22.7 per cent of homeowners aged 65 years and over in York Region spend 30 per cent or more of their income on shelter, exceeding the CMHCs “affordability threshold”. This was the highest proportion in the GTA. In comparison, 14.7 per cent of the total owner households with a maintainer 65 years and over in Canada and 16.5 per cent in Ontario spend 30 per cent or more of their household income on shelter.
- Mortgage-free senior (65+) led households could still be spending 30 per cent or more on shelter costs. They could be living on low-income and therefore spending a large portion of their income on property tax, electricity and water, etc.
- 4,560 or 12 per cent of households led by seniors (65+) who own their homes without mortgages in York Region, are still paying over \$1,000 a month for shelter costs.



Single-detached houses remain the dominant housing type for seniors 65+ living in private households in York Region

- The 2011 Census of Population counted nearly 120,000 seniors aged 65 and over in York Region. Of these, 95.0 per cent lived in private households or dwellings (as part of couples, alone or with others), while 5.0 per cent lived in collective dwellings, such as residences for senior citizens or health care and related facilities.
- In 2011, single-detached houses were home to 65.1 per cent of seniors; 18.6 per cent of senior residents lived in apartments and 11.2 per cent in semi-detached and row houses.

Seniors' households (65+) in York Region are less likely to require major repairs compared to the same households in the GTA, Ontario or Canada

- Among current generation seniors, many aged 65 years and over live in the homes they occupied for years.
- People aged 65 and older tend to live in older dwellings compared to their younger counterparts. In York Region, 15.6 per cent of residents 65 years and over are occupying dwellings constructed before 1970, compared to only 9.6 per cent of residents less than 65 years of age living in dwellings built prior to 1970.
- Dwellings in need of major repairs are considered an indicator of inadequate dwellings by housing organizations. In 2011, the proportion of York Region households in need of major repair was 2.7 per cent among seniors; this was the lowest proportion in the GTA and below Ontario (5.0 per cent) and Canada (5.8 per cent).

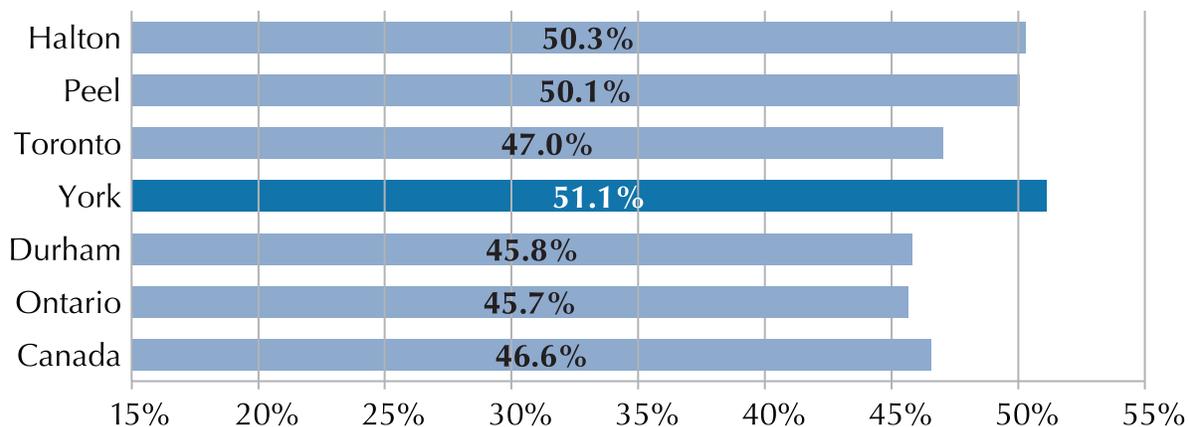
York Region's Home Repair Program helps eligible homeowners who need accessibility modifications or critical repairs to make their homes safer

- In 2015, 75 applications were received and 54 were approved for funding. 77 per cent (42 out of 54 awards) of all awards went to persons 60 years and older.

A large proportion of renter households led by seniors (65+) in York Region exceeded the affordability threshold

- In 2011, 51.1 per cent of households led by tenants 65 years and over spent 30 per cent or more of their income on shelter costs. This was the highest proportion in the GTA, and higher than both Canada (46.6 per cent) and Ontario (45.7 per cent) [See Chart 5].

Chart 5: Renters 65 Years And Over Spending 30% Or More Of Their Household Income On Shelter Costs



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS

York Region continues to experience pressure on the local rental market with extremely low vacancy rates and fewer housing starts intended for the rental market

- In 2015, only 40 out of a total of 9,775 housing starts were intended for the rental market (*Housing Now, January 2016, CMHC*). There was no significant change in York Region's average vacancy rate of 1.6 per cent in 2015 compared to the previous year.
- The high cost of rent and low vacancy rates in York Region make it difficult to find affordable rental options.

Seniors (65+) are more likely to live in subsidized housing compared to younger residents

- *Note: Subsidized housing includes rent geared to income, social housing, public housing, government-assisted housing, non-profit housing, rent supplements and housing allowances.*
- Of all York Region's tenant households led by residents 65 years and over in 2011, 29.3 per cent were subsidized. In comparison, the proportion of subsidized households led by residents *under* 65 years of age (non-seniors) was 11 per cent.
- In the GTA, Toronto and Peel Region have the highest proportion of subsidized tenant households occupied by residents 65 years and over at 31.7 per cent and 30.6 per cent. The proportion of subsidized tenant households led by seniors in York Region (29.3 per cent) was higher than both Canada (22.7 per cent) and Ontario (25.3 per cent).
- Subsidized housing in York Region continues to be in demand as a result of the low supply of affordable rental units and rising rental costs. As of December 2015, there were 12,130 eligible applicants on the waitlist. Seniors continue to be the largest group waiting for subsidized housing, making up about 56 per cent of the waitlist, followed by families at 23 per cent, singles at 20 per cent and Special Priority (applicants attempting to separate from someone abusive) at 1 per cent.

Retirement homes offer another option for seniors to live independently

- *Note: A retirement home is a privately-owned residence providing rental accommodation, making at least two care services available, such as meals and medication administration. The resident pays for accommodation, care and services without any subsidy or contribution from government or non-government organization.*
- According to the CMHC *Seniors' Housing Report* (2015), there were 29 retirement homes in York Region, with 3,339 standard spaces. There are 3,192 residents currently occupying these spaces. York Region has 20.5 per cent of all retirement spaces in the GTA.
- The main age group living in retirement homes are those aged 75 years and older. According to the same report, 4.9 per cent of York Region's population aged 75 years and older live in a retirement home, compared to a rate of 3.8 per cent for the GTA and 5.2 per cent for all of Ontario.
- The average rent for the most affordable *private/studio unit* in 2015, was \$3,651 per month in York Region, up from \$3,492 in 2014. Private/studio spaces in York Region are on average more expensive compared to the GTA. The average rent for the most expensive *two bedroom unit* in York Region was \$5,512 per month in 2015, below the GTA average of \$6,365. The average rent in York Region retirement homes (*for all unit types*) in 2015 was \$4,092.

- Larger retirement home spaces are not renting well in York Region. As a result, the vacancy rate for *two bedroom units* (24.4 per cent) is double than that for smaller *private/studio units* (12.4 per cent). The average vacancy rate in York Region retirement homes (for all unit types) in 2015 was around 14 per cent.

Older seniors (those 85+) are more likely to live in *Collective Dwellings* than those aged 65 to 69

- As people age they are more likely to live in collective dwellings that provide ongoing support and assistance services, professional health monitoring, care and treatment.
- In 2011, 5 per cent of York Region seniors aged 65 and over (6,030 people), lived in a collective dwelling that focussed on special care to seniors, such as nursing homes, chronic care and long-term care hospitals and residences for senior citizens, and group homes or institutions for people with psychiatric disorders or developmental disabilities.
- Among those 65 to 69, about 1.3 per cent lived in a collective dwelling in 2011. For seniors aged 85 and over, the proportion was 39.1 per cent.

Staying Safe and Connected

June 17, 2016



Staying Safe and Connected in York Region

Introduction

- In order for seniors to stay connected and age in place, the communities in which they live should be age-friendly, safe and accessible, as well as have easy access to public transit, community services and amenities.

Feeling connected and having a sense of belonging impacts the health of seniors

- Seniors with a strong sense of community belonging have higher odds of having good health, even when socio-demographic factors, behavioural risk factors, chronic conditions and stress are taken into account.¹
- In 2010, 63.6 per cent of people who reported a somewhat strong or very strong sense of belonging to their local community also reported very good or excellent health, compared with 55.6 per cent of those who felt weaker ties to their local community.²
- As Canadians age they tend to report a stronger sense of community belonging. It is suggested that the reason for this is that older Canadians have more time to participate in community life.³

The proportion of seniors in York Region who felt a somewhat strong or very strong sense of community belonging has remained stable between 2005 and 2014

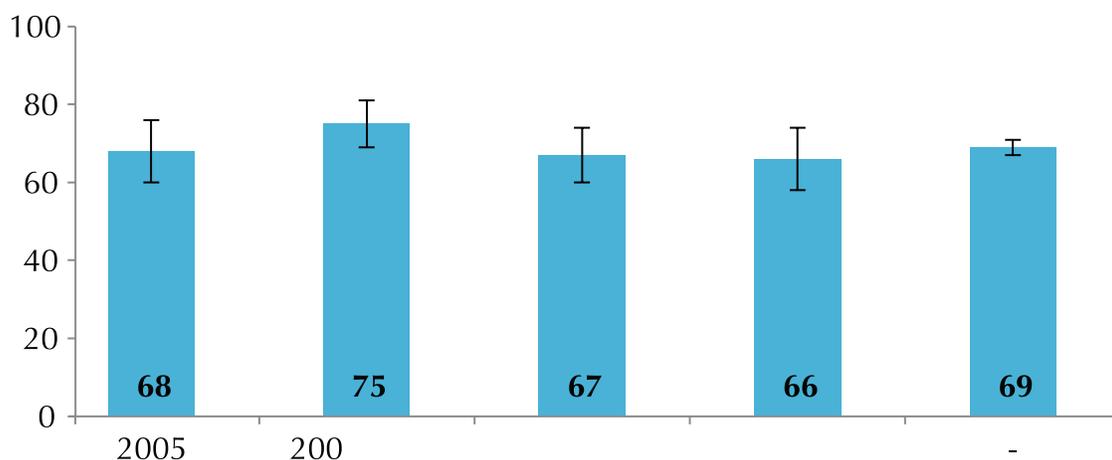
- According to the Canadian Community Health Survey, in 2013-2014 approximately 69 per cent of York Region seniors (65+) felt a somewhat strong or very strong sense of community belonging. (see Graph 1)

1 statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-229-x/2009001/envir/cob-eng.htm

2 statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-625-x/2011001/article/11465-eng.htm

3 statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-229-x/2009001/envir/cob-eng.htm

Graph 1: Proportion Of Seniors (65+ Years) Who Feel A Somewhat Strong Or Very Strong Sense Of Community Belonging, York Region, 2005-2014



⁴ Data Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2005-2014, Statistics Canada, Ontario Share File, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Transportation and mobility are key components of staying safe and connected

- According to the 2015 survey by Environics Research⁵ transportation continues to be the most important local issue identified by York Region residents.
 - » In 2015, 52 per cent of respondents identified transportation as the most important local issue, followed by development and Infrastructure at 10 per cent and Housing at 8 per cent. Furthermore, the number of residents who identify transportation as the most important issue has been increasing since 2011, when 31 per cent of respondents identified it as the most important local issue.

Part of staying connected for seniors, especially those that do not drive, is walkability and accessibility

- About half of York Region boomers and seniors live within five minutes walking distance to public transit.
- When looking at Transit Service Coverage in York Region, there are service guidelines that define the maximum walking distance to a bus stop for both urban and rural areas⁶.
 - » In Urban areas, 90 per cent of residents are within a maximum walking distance of 500 metres to a bus stop.
 - » In Rural areas, 90 per cent of residents are within a maximum walking distance of 1,000 metres to a bus stop where transit is provided. The implementation of transit service in rural areas depends on other standards for route performance and establishing new service.

⁴ Limitations: The data used for this indicator are self-reported and may be subject to errors in recall, over or under-reporting due to social desirability, and errors from proxy reporting. Also, data in 2005 is a full sample of data but the naming convention was different prior to 2007-2008.

⁵ The Environics Survey is an annual online GTA-wide survey conducted by Environics Research, which focuses on the most important local issues. The most recent survey was done in November 2015 and included 412 York Region residents.

⁶ The Regional Municipality of York, *Moving to 2020: YRT/VIVA 2016-2020 Strategic Plan*, Retrieved from: yorkregiontransit.com/en/aboutus/resources/YRT_5YSP_2016-2020-web.pdf

Staying safe and connected is about more than transportation, it is also about the physical/built environment

- According to the 2015 Survey by Environics Research, the things respondents enjoyed most about the quality of life in York Region are the parks and green spaces, and being close to amenities and work.
 - » In 2015, 12 per cent of respondents identified parks and green spaces, and another 12 per cent identified being close to amenities and work as the things they enjoy most about the quality of life in York Region.
 - » The majority of respondents (65 per cent) believe their community is a good place for seniors to live, and another 9 per cent indicated it is a great place for seniors to live.
- Other relevant findings from the 2015 Environics Research Survey include the following:
 - » “Support services to remain in their home” was identified by respondents as the most important service or support required by seniors, with 26 per cent of overall respondents identifying it as the most important service or support, followed by transportation services at 17 per cent and income support at 16 per cent.
- When asked whether they would support allocating or paying more tax to support the building of public transit infrastructure, 35 per cent of respondents indicated “yes” (down from 43 per cent in 2014), and 43 per cent of respondents indicated “no” (up from 30 per cent in 2014).

All YRT/Viva services are accessible, which is important for keeping seniors mobile and connected

- All YRT/Viva services are accessible, meaning all buses on these routes are low-floor accessible and/or equipped with a ramp.
- Additionally over 80 per cent of all YRT/VIVA stops are accessible meaning that it is safe for those using a mobility device to access YRT/Viva services at that stop. These stops are marked with an accessible symbol on the bus stop sign.
- Where a bus stop is not accessible, the bus operator will allow those using a mobility device to get on or off at the nearest location that is safe and acceptable to both the operator and customer.
- All YRT/Viva vehicles are equipped with on-board and exterior audio equipment to announce each stop and have designated accessible and priority seating available near the front of every vehicle.

For individuals with physical or functional disabilities that prevent them from taking conventional transit there is Mobility Plus

- Approximately 70 per cent of Mobility Plus riders are seniors (65+).
- Mobility Plus is part of YRT services providing rides to those with physical or functional disabilities that prevent them from taking conventional transit. It provides door-to-door service, but will use a combination of Mobility Plus and conventional service where possible.

The top two reasons for Mobility Plus trips for seniors in 2015 was travel to/from day centres and medical appointments (see Table 1)

Table 1: Detailed Breakdown of Mobility Plus Trips for 2015 for seniors aged 65 and over

Trip Purpose	Total Number of Trips
Day Centres	39,960
Medical Appointments	27,756
Other Specified Purposes	27,175
Dialysis	23,647
Recreation	12,249
Shopping	10,920
Religious	5,449
Blank (not specified)	4,188
Transfer/Connections*	2,858
Work	954
School	150
Student Work Program	4
Unspecified Purpose	16,187
Total Trips	171,497

**Transfer/Connections refer to when a customer is transferred to another region's or municipality's transit services using Mobility Plus.*

Seniors currently get a discount if using tickets or monthly pass

- If paying by cash on the bus, the price is the same regardless of age
- The price of a senior monthly pass is 58 per cent lower than an adult pass
- See Table 2 for a comparison between the York Region Transit senior fare and the senior fares offered by other municipalities and regions in 2015 (Note: Seniors are defined as 65+ for the municipalities and regions referenced in this table.)

Table 2: Comparisons to Other Municipalities and Regions: 2016 GTHA Senior Fares

Agency	Senior Cash Fare (\$)		Adult Cash Fare (\$)	Senior Ticket (\$)	Adult Ticket (\$)	Senior Presto (\$)	Senior Monthly Pass (\$)
	Resident	Non-resident					
Brampton	1.00	3.75	3.75	3.75	2.90	1.55	52.00
DRT	2.25	2.25	3.75	2.00	3.05	2.00	46.00
TTC	2.00	2.00	3.25	1.95	2.90	1.95	112.00
Mississauga	1.00	1.00	3.50	1.90	3.00	1.90	61.00
Oakville	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	2.85	1.80	50.00
Hamilton	2.75	2.75	3.00	2.15	2.30	1.80	26.50
Burlington	3.50	3.50	3.50	1.90	2.75	1.85	59.25
YRT	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.10	3.50	2.10	59.00
Average	2.50	3.11	3.53	1.97	2.91	1.87	58.22

Source: York Region Transit, "GTA Fare Comparisons Data Sheet", April 28, 2016, [3.basecamp.com/3108499/buckets/522140/uploads/125803096/download/2016 Fare Comparisons with 2016 Fare Increase](http://3.basecamp.com/3108499/buckets/522140/uploads/125803096/download/2016%20Fare%20Comparisons%20with%202016%20Fare%20Increase)

Fare parity is required between conventional and specialized transportation services

- The Integrated Accessibility Standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* mandates fare parity. These legislative requirements are found in subsections 66 (3)(5)(6), and state the following:
 - » Where a transportation service provider provides both conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services, the transportation service provider shall ensure that:
 - There is fare parity between conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services
 - The same fare structure is applied to conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services
 - The same fare payment options are available for all transportation services, but alternative options shall be made available to persons with disabilities who cannot because of their disability use a fare payment option
 - » In this section, "fare structure" means the fare price determined by fare media, such as cash, tickets, passes and bulk quantity discounts and by fare category, such as adults, seniors and students, but does not include promotional fares that a transportation service provider may employ from time to time.

Table 3: York Region Transit Ridership Statistics 2015

Ridership Age Groups	Conventional and Community Bus Services Ridership	Mobility Plus Revenue Ridership
65+	Revenue Riders*: 1,239,719 5.6 per cent of total ridership	Total Registered Riders**: 7,911 (65-99) 55 (100+, ride for free) Revenue Ridership: 171,000 (approx.)
Child	Revenue Riders: 166,723 0.8 per cent of total ridership	Total Registered Riders: 40
Student (excluding Post-Secondary)	Revenue Riders: 3,310,453 14.9 per cent of total ridership	Total Registered Riders: 114 Revenue Ridership: 1,667
Adult	Revenue Riders: 14,407,070 78.7 per cent of total ridership	Total Registered Riders: 2,358 Revenue Ridership: 146,312
<p>* Revenue ridership refers to those who have paid a fare for their trip. This distinction must be made, as those using Mobility Plus do not need to pay a fare for any attendants travelling with them.</p> <p>** Total registered riders refers to those who have been approved to use Mobility Plus services.</p>		





York Region Seniors Strategy – 2016 Thinking Ahead

Presentation to
Committee of the Whole

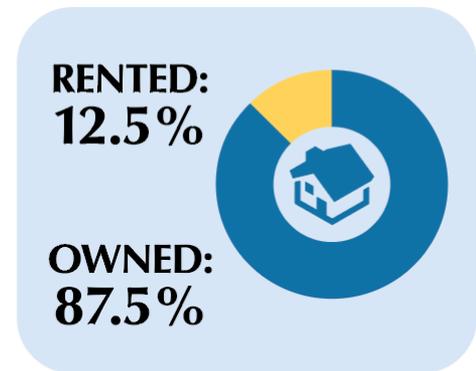
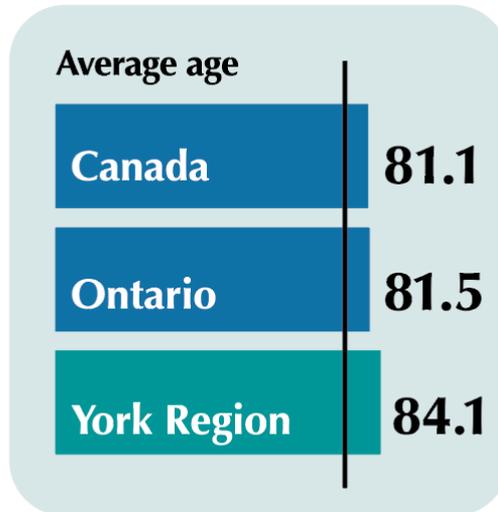
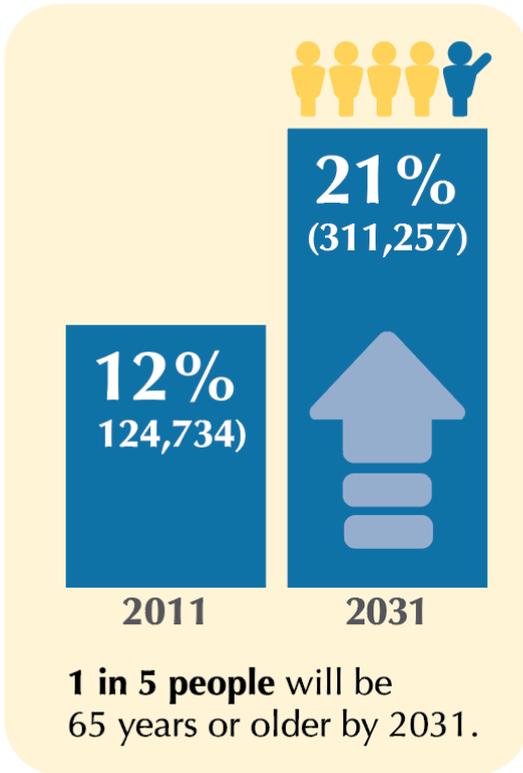
Lisa Gonsalves, Director, Strategies and Partnerships
Monica Bryce, Head Strategic Initiatives
Community & Health Services

November 3, 2016

Overview

- **Developing the Strategy**
- **The Seniors Strategy**
 1. The Region's Role
 2. Areas for Action/Advocacy
- **Moving Forward**

Seniors in York Region



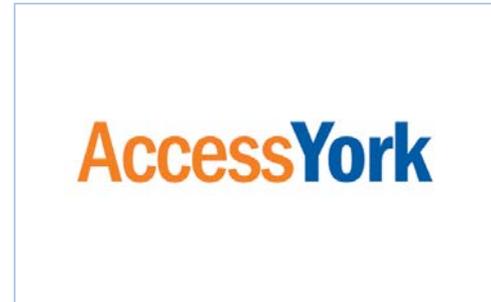
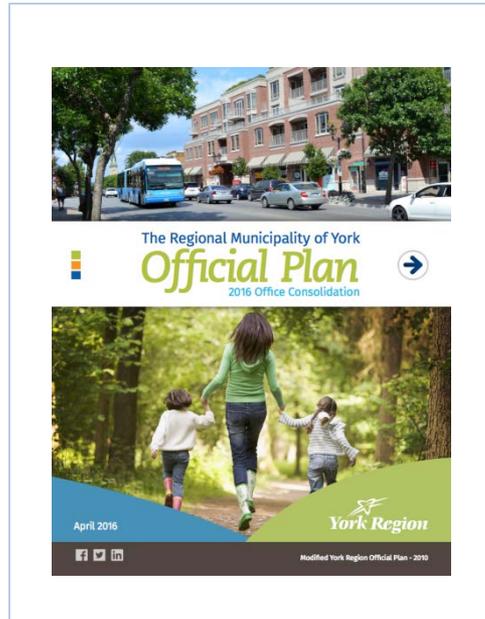
The demographic change impacts ALL departments

Strategy Development



What is the Region's role in serving seniors over the next 10-20 years?

York Region is well positioned



What is the Region's Proposed Role in Serving Seniors?



Balance the needs of seniors with all residents



Keep seniors healthier; longer



Support age friendly complete communities



Connect seniors/caregivers to the right programs and services at the right times

Setting the direction



Balance the needs of seniors with all residents

Action Areas	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
Develop a communication campaign related to preparing financially for retirement and to educate on eligibility options related to ability to pay	Fiscal sustainability and balance
Develop options for eligibility for programs and services based on income levels, assets, user fees, loans vs. grants and private contributions (i.e. Home Repair Program)	
Develop a decision-making tool for staff to use to apply the strategy to new programs and services	Evidence-based decision-making
Advocate for:	
Seniors basic needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Increased income supports•Dental benefits•Promote a holistic approach to healthcare including alternative therapies that may reduce need for medication	Fiscal sustainability and balance



Keep seniors healthier, longer

Action Areas	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
Develop a capacity plan: At a system level understand what programs and services are required to support seniors to age in place and the capacity needed to deliver them	Evidence-based decision-making
Expand existing prevention programs and identify new programs needed, including alternative programs for those on waitlists	Prevention and promotion
Work with the business/industry sector to identify innovative new business solutions for seniors	Partnerships, collaboration and alignment
Advocate for:	
Funding for prevention programs that improve and maintain seniors' health, including Public Health programs and Community Paramedicine.	Prevention and promotion
Improved policy planning for Long-term care beds by developing a forecast for York Region, including required number, type and location	Evidence-based decision-making
Appropriate home and community care supports in the Region, including homecare, adult day programs and respite	



Support age friendly complete communities

Action Areas	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with others to design and implement a multi-service centre that will co-locate services and respond to the needs of seniors	Partnerships collaboration and alignment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiate discussions with transit providers to look for ways to better coordinate services and offer a variety of options	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinate community outreach activities internally and with York Regional Police	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish internal and external joint planning tables to explore the age-friendly community concept	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce complexities and costs associated with second suites	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leverage inclusionary zoning for needed housing options• Develop a variety of housing options including rental	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a communication campaign to raise awareness of the need for housing that is affordable, including rental	



Support age friendly complete communities

Advocacy Areas	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
Advocate for:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Infrastructure funding for housing services and a variety of housing options, including rental, affordable retirement home, secondary suites, congregate living options	Partnerships, collaboration and alignment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding for home and community care services to support seniors in York Region Social Housing Buildings, Homes with Support programs	



Connect seniors/caregivers to the right programs and services at the right times

Action Areas	Link to Primary Guiding Principle
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Evaluate options for single point access for seniors to access information, including a self-serve option (i.e. system navigation)Explore how to guide seniors through the many services out there	Partnerships , collaboration and alignment
<p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Outside workers to identify warning signs of senior distress (including local municipal staff)Age sensitivity training (all staff)Care for elderly with complex care needs (staff working with seniors)	Education
Advocate for:	
Funding to improve coordination and integrated service delivery to assist with system navigation	Partnerships, collaboration and alignment

Creating a place where everyone can thrive

- Leveraging funding opportunities
- Proactively contributing to systemic changes
- Investing in the right programs and services at the right time for the right people

Ready for the future

Report Recommendations

- Council approve the York Region Seniors Strategy
- The Regional Clerk circulate this report and offer to present the Strategy to local municipalities.
- The Regional Clerk circulate this report to York Region Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Parliament; 13th Central Local Health Integration Network; the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat; Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; Ministry of Housing; Ministry of Municipal Affairs; Ministry of Transportation; Employment and Social Development Canada; Public Health Agency of Canada; Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Federation of Canadian Municipalities; and the York Regional Police.