

3.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

VISION

Strathcona County is an age-friendly and caring community that values the contributions and strengths of older adults, is responsive to their diverse needs and desire for choice, and provides a spectrum of opportunities for active and purposeful lives.

1. PURPOSE

The Older Adults Plan for Strathcona County identifies and plans for the current and future needs of older adults. Although the plan is designed for residents 55+ years, it is important to recognize that health, rather than age, plays a critical role in determining what services are needed by older adults. Older adults are a great resource; the plan recognizes the many strengths and skills they contribute to the overall well-being of our community. At the same time, strategies have been developed to address the unique needs of older adults, along with plans to assist those who are the most vulnerable members of this population.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Older Adults Plan for Strathcona County has seven main objectives:

1. To explore the major issues facing older adults that include:
 - social determinants including social supports, social connections and life long learning opportunities
 - physical environment determinants including housing, transportation and mobility, accessibility and safety issues
 - economic determinants including income, employment and social protection
 - behavioral determinants including recreation and leisure, healthy lifestyles and volunteerism
 - health and social services determinants including health, long term care, mental health and outreach services
2. To recognize the strengths and assets that older adults contribute by developing a strength based approach
3. To identify gaps in services, currently and anticipated in the future

A good plan is like a road map: it shows the final destination and usually how to get there.

H. Stanley Judd



4. To recommend strategies/programs to address issues and gaps, in the short (1-3 years), mid (4 - 14 years) and long term (15+ years)
5. To identify respective roles for implementing the Older Adults Plan, recognizing that it requires a coordinated effort from all departments and senior serving organizations
6. To ensure the sustainability of programs for older adults
7. To maximize opportunities for older adults to contribute to their families, community and economy



3. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Development of the plan has included:

- A. An analysis of the older adult population of Strathcona County
- B. Extensive community consultation involving over 1100 participants
- C. A review of older adult programs and services delivered by the federal government, the Government of Alberta, Alberta Health Services (Capital Health), and Strathcona County



A steering committee, which included a cross-section of community agencies and Strathcona County departments having a major stake in the delivery of services to our older adult population, has provided guidance for the development of the Older Adults Plan. (Appendix I) The Committee was consulted and provided ongoing input and advice at all key stages of the plan. The involvement of all service delivery stakeholders at the local level ensures a knowledge base toward the development of a collaborative process in the implementation stages.

In addition, the Strathcona County Seniors Advisory Committee (Appendix II) has provided valuable feedback throughout the development of the plan.



A. STRATHCONA COUNTY'S 45+ POPULATION STATISTICS

1. Population Composition - Age and Gender

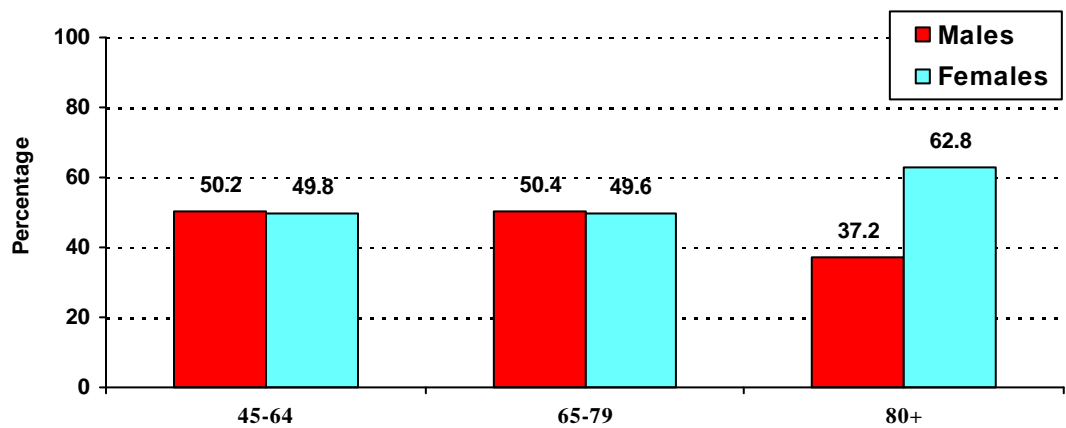
TABLE 1

Age Groups	Total Strathcona County		Sherwood Park		Rural Strathcona	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
45-64	25,489	30.2%	16,673	28.4%	8,816	34.2%
65-79	6,670	7.9%	4,715	8.0 %	1,955	7.6 5
80+	1,616	1.9%	1,299	2.2%	317	1.2%

Age Breakdowns of Older Adults
(Percentages based on the total population, including those under 45)

- 38 per cent of the entire Strathcona County population is aged 45 or older
- 9.8 per cent of the entire Strathcona County population is aged 65 or older

FIGURE 1
Gender Comparisons by Age



2. Rural/Urban Residents

TABLE 2

	Total Persons 45+		45-64		65-79		80+	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Urban Resident	22,687	67.2%	16,673	65.4%	4,715	70.7%	1,299	80.4%
Rural Resident	11,088	32.8%	8,816	34.6%	1,955	29.3%	317	19.6%

- As residents grow older, there is a tendency to live in Sherwood Park rather than the rural area

3. Marital Status

TABLE 3

	Total Persons 45+		45-64		65-79		80+	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Married	26,328	78.4%	20,557	80.8%	5,108	76.9%	663	44.1%
Common Law	1,344	4.0%	1,220	4.8%	112	1.7%	12	0.8%
Separated/Divorced	2,673	8.0%	2,229	8.8%	387	5.8%	57	3.8%
Never Married	1,100	3.3%	951	3.7%	122	1.8%	27	1.8%
Widowed	2,149	6.4%	492	1.9%	912	13.7%	745	49.5%

- The majority of seniors are married. This percentage drops as residents get older at which time the percentage of widowed seniors increases.

4. Employment

TABLE 4

	Total Persons 45+		45-64		65-79		80+	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Employed Full Time	18,974	56.7%	18,043	71.2%	907	13.7%	24	1.6%
Employed Part Time	3,246	9.7%	2,718	10.7%	516	7.8%	12	0.8%
Student (K-12 or Post-Secondary)	47	0.1%	46	0.2%	Nil	Nil	1	0.1%
Not in the Work Force/Retired	11,213	33.5%	4,548	17.9%	5,206	78.5%	1,459	97.5%

- The majority of pre-seniors are employed full time. Retirement (or not being in the workforce) increases significantly as residents age, though over 20 per cent of older adults remain in the workforce.



5. Income Profile

2005 Taxfiler data from Statistics Canada including 90 per cent of Strathcona's population, the median income for all ages was \$79,600.

Age	Couples	Individuals
55 – 64	\$105,400	\$40,700
65+	\$59,500	\$23,000

Older Adults Median Income 2005

6. Home Ownership

TABLE 5

	Total Persons 45+		45-64		65-79		80+	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Owned	31,475	93.5%	24,160	95.0%	6,238	94.0%	1,077	67.0%
Rented	2,204	6.5%	1,274	5.0%	400	6.0%	530	33.0%

- The majority of pre-seniors and older adults (to age 79) own their residence
- The percentage of renters 80 or older increases compared to other age groups

7. Dwelling Type

Information refers to Table 6, page 30

- The numbers column refers to the number of people who live in the dwellings, and does not refer to the number of actual dwellings
- Single detached are the most common type of dwelling owned by residents in each age category
- The majority of residents who live in apartments are renting in each age category
- The percentage of residents living in a collective dwelling (which includes seniors residences) increases among those aged 80 or older, while only about 20 per cent of residents within the 65-79 category are living in a collective dwelling



TABLE 6

Type of Dwelling	Owned		Rented	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Age 45-64				
Single detached	22,410	92.9%	710	55.8%
Suite in single detached	14	0.1%	14	1.1%
Duplex, semi-detached	515	2.1%	93	7.3%
Row (town) house	377	1.6%	214	16.8%
Apartment	230	1.0%	175	13.7%
Single dwelling attached to non residential structure	19	0.1%	0	0.0%
Manufactured home	537	2.2%	41	3.2%
Other moveable dwelling	14	0.1%	2	0.2%
Collective dwelling	17	0.1%	24	1.9%
Age 65-79				
Single detached	5,092	81.7%	105	26.3%
Suite in single detached	4	0.1%	6	1.5%
Duplex, semi-detached	383	6.1%	21	5.3%
Row (town) house	232	3.7%	71	17.8%
Apartment	269	4.3%	108	27.0%
Single dwelling attached to non residential structure	10	0.2%	1	0.3%
Manufactured home	231	3.7%	6	1.5%
Other moveable dwelling	4	0.1%	0	0.0%
Collective dwelling	4	0.1%	82	20.5%
Age 80+				
Single detached	735	68.3%	21	4.0%
Suite in single detached	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Duplex, semi-detached	106	9.9%	8	1.5%
Row (town) house	52	4.8%	16	3.0%
Apartment	150	13.9%	91	17.2%
Single dwelling attached to non residential structure	1	0.1%	0	0.0%
Manufactured home	20	1.9%	2	0.4%
Other moveable dwelling	2	0.2%	0	0.0%
Collective dwelling	10	0.9%	392	74.0%



B. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

1) SURVEYS

Two surveys were developed and administered in August 2008. The Older Adult Survey (also known as the Seniors Plan Survey) was administered to 676 adults ages 55 and older. The Next Generation Survey was a random sample conducted by phone with 300 adults between the ages of 45 and 54. This was done to ensure the long term recommendations considered the needs of this group. The surveys and their analysis are included in the Appendices.

2) DIRECT CONSULTATION

A total of 38 key stakeholder interviews were held with both internal and external individuals. Nine stakeholder focus groups organized around the themes were held involving 80 invited participants. Two roundtable discussions were open to individuals who had completed the survey, with a total of 48 people in attendance.

3) OVERVIEW OF SURVEY RESULTS

In August 2008, Banister Research & Consulting Inc. was contracted by Strathcona County Family and Community Services to analyze results from the survey. The intent of the survey was to gather a clear and accurate representation of the needs and strengths of the community's population 55 years of age or older. For the purposes of this report, older adults are defined as individuals 55 years of age or older. Detailed information about survey results related to each social determinant are contained in Section 3, Goals and Strategies.

The top three issues identified by older adults in the survey were:

1. Access to senior's housing - 65 per cent
2. Access to health care - 58 per cent
3. The rising costs of living relative to fixed incomes - 56 per cent.

This is similar to results of the 2008 Findings Report of the Demographic Planning Commission which identified the top three issues as:

1. Being able to afford the cost of living
2. Being able to stay in the home
3. Affordability of pharmaceuticals and health care aids

When asked how Strathcona County should ensure the sustainability of older adult programs and services, respondents in the Older Adult Survey indicated the following:

- 43 per cent stated that programs should target those in need
- 26 per cent mentioned universal programs funded through property taxes
- 25 per cent mentioned cost recovery for seniors' programs



Other responses in the Older Adult Survey included the following:

- 82 per cent of respondents stated that overall they were “happy” or “very happy”
- 64 per cent indicated they were not currently employed
- 90 per cent indicated they planned to live in Strathcona County throughout their retirement
- 82 per cent felt their overall physical health was good, very good or excellent
- 92 per cent of respondents felt their mental health was good, very good, or excellent
- 93 per cent of older adults agreed that they are confident or physically stable moving around in their home
- 81 per cent agreed that they are able to get transportation when needed

4) KEY ISSUES

The top issues identified as a result of all consultations (surveys, key stakeholder interviews, roundtables and focus groups) were:

1. Access to seniors housing
2. Access to health care
3. Rising living costs combined with fixed incomes
4. Availability of personal care and home services
5. Transportation
6. Outreach services
7. Information about programs and services



I am looking forward to doing something meaningful, leaving a legacy.

....Quote from a Strathcona County resident in the Older Adult Survey



C. A REVIEW OF OLDER ADULT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Programs for older adults are provided at all three levels of government. The responsibility of the federal government is primarily in income security and housing, while the Province of Alberta has responsibility for additional income support, health services, and housing. Strathcona County supports a wide range of services to older adults including adult education, public transit, accessible transit, recreation and cultural programming, community policing, and information and volunteer services, including a senior's line. Alberta Health Services delivers health services within the region.

A complete listing of federal and provincial programs for older adults is available in Appendix V.



Just because I'm
an old tree
doesn't mean
I grow
old apples.
anonymous

STRATHCONA COUNTY PROGRAMS

The municipality provides a broad range of services for older adults. Some are provided directly by county staff while others are delivered through volunteer organizations that receive financial support from the county.

Accessibility

Strathcona County requires Barrier Free Design based on the Alberta Building Code for new construction as well as for renovated buildings. As a result, buildings are accessible with ramps and push button entry. Inside, there are non-slip floors and accessible bathrooms. In developing outdoor space, consideration is given to walkable sidewalks and pathways, rest areas, benches and washrooms. When choosing bus stop locations, Strathcona County Transit uses a variety of determinants, including a 400 metre walking distance guideline and proximity to marked crosswalks.

Community Policing

Wise Owl is a fraud prevention program that provides information to older adults on telemarketing, renovation, and consumer fraud.

Crime Watch and Citizens on Patrol have a large number of volunteers who are older adults. An estimated 95 per cent of the 1548 Crime Watch registrants are over 60. Between 50 per cent and 75 per cent of the members of Citizens on Patrol are over the age of 50.

The police service also recruits older adults as volunteers for Victim Services.



Emergency Services

Strathcona County operates an integrated emergency services department. Older adults account for 43 per cent of the medical incidents. The Emergency Services Department partnered with Alberta Health services to pilot a falls prevention program at Silver Birch Lodge and Clover Bar Lodges.

Family and Community Services

Home Support

Strathcona County provides home care to older adults under a contract with Alberta Health Services. Eligibility for this service is determined by Alberta Health Services and includes light housekeeping, personal care, medication and respite care.

In addition, the Home Support program provides services to residents who are not eligible to receive services through Alberta Health Services. This includes housekeeping assistance. Clients pay \$6.25 to \$15.75 per hour for these services based on their net monthly income.

Home Support has 325 clients with 36 clients on the waiting list. About 80 per cent of the clients are female. The average age is 82.

Seniors Resource Worker

Family and Community Services has a part time seniors resource worker. His/Her role is to plan events for older adults, such as the Seniors Jamboree, Active Living Conference, workshops, and information series. They also liaise with Seniors Centres to help them with planning.

Seniors Jamboree

Strathcona County organizes a Seniors Jamboree each year to celebrate the contributions of older adults. Resource material on older adult programs is also available at the event.

Property Tax Rebate for Seniors

The Strathcona County Property Tax Rebate Program is a flat-rate rebate available to low-income seniors' households. The rebate is \$100 per qualifying household. A Strathcona County senior will be eligible for a property tax rebate if he/she, as of May 1, 2009, is 65 years of age or older, resides in Strathcona County, owns a residential property in Strathcona County, and is eligible for the Alberta Seniors Benefit program.

Quote from a
Strathcona County
resident...

"The staff at the
lodge are
wonderful."



Recreation, Parks and Culture

Recreation Programs

Strathcona County has a designated recreation programmer to coordinate its older adult activities. This includes liaising with older adults and service providers, exploring partnerships and representing older adult interests in RPC projects and initiatives. There are currently 648 older adults with Millennium cards. Older adults (65+), representing about four per cent of the total card holders at the three facilities (Millennium Place, Glen Allan Recreation Centre, and Kinsmen Leisure Centre), receive a discounted rate of \$30 per month or \$6 off the adult rate of \$36.

While the recreation facilities offer a variety of programs geared towards the older adult, the minimum age requirements for recreation programs are being removed where appropriate, and programs are designed based on ability, not age.

Recreation programs for older adults are also offered at the Kinsman Leisure Centre and Glen Allan Recreation Centre (GARC) including the Young at Heart Club, aquasize classes and low impact aerobics.

There are several older adult and senior citizens clubs focused on recreation. These clubs include:

- Seniors Curling League
- GARC Seniors Skating Club
- Strathcona Singles Club
- Senior Men's Baseball League
- Old Crocks Hockey
- Gentlemen's Soccer League

Cultural Programs

Strathcona County has a cultural programmer who organizes adult cultural programs within the county. These programs are focused on art and include pottery and glaze making, water colour painting, acrylic painting, pastel drawing, print making, and picture frame decorating. They are geared to adults of all ages with no specific programs for older adults. Festival Place is the cultural centre of Strathcona County. As well, there are several arts groups for older adults including:

- Singers of Note
- The Elk Island Art Club
- Festival Singers
- Sherard Musical Theatre Association
- Ardrossan Players
- Ardrossan Seniors' Painting Group

Beautiful young people are accidents of nature, but beautiful old people are works of art.

Eleanor Roosevelt



Transit & Accessible Transit

Strathcona County operates a local and commuter transit system that includes subsidized fares for older adults and provides accessible transit for the disabled and older adults. Strathcona County already provides a significant subsidy to all transit passengers in addition to the available subsidized fares for qualifying older adults.

Service	Senior
* Local Seniors Off Peak	free
Commuter one way	\$4.00
Monthly Seniors Commuter Pass	\$22.50
Annual Seniors Pass	\$270.00
Annual Seniors Subsidized Pass (GIS requirement)	\$135.00
Monthly Subsidized Commuter Pass	\$20.00

* Seniors off peak pass is available to older adults having a maximum household income of \$50,000

Strathcona County Accessible Transportation (SCAT) fares in effect February 1, 2009

Sherwood Park	
Cash	\$4.75
Tickets – package of 10	\$45.00
Rural Strathcona County to Sherwood Park	
Cash	\$7.00
Tickets – package of 10	\$65.00
Sherwood Park to Edmonton	
Cash	\$7.50
Tickets – package of 10	\$70.00
Rural Strathcona County to Edmonton	
Cash	\$14.50



OTHER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR OLDER ADULTS IN STRATHCONA COUNTY

Adult Literacy

The volunteer Adult Literacy program provides one-to-one volunteer tutoring.

Churches and Faith Organizations

Many churches in Strathcona County have seniors groups who organize activities for both members and community older adults.

Collective Kitchens

Small groups of people meet to plan menus and prepare economical meals that are divided up and taken home.

Community Adult Learning Council

Community Adult Learning Council (CALC) offers courses and workshops including those that specifically targets older adult interests.

Continuing Education - Elk Island Public Schools

In 2007/2008, there were 50 older adults enrolled in the computer classes. A few also participated in the language classes.

Housing

There are a number of condominiums for older adults, as well as private residential care facilities in Strathcona County.

- All Seniors Care Living Centre - Summerwood Village

Provides 170 units with a variety of layouts and a full range of services. The facility includes a coffee lounge with a grand piano, an internet lounge, dining facilities, a movie theatre, a chapel, a small theatre, a library, a spa, a workout gym, as well as games, billiards, hobby and craft rooms. The centre will contain 60 affordable living units for which they have received a grant of \$1.7 million.

- Clover Bar Pioneer Court

Provides 42 self-owned retirement condominiums as well as eight rental units for seniors aged 60 years or older. Services provided include a lounge, games room, coffee area, beauty parlour, cable TV and recreation equipment, and a 21-passenger mini-bus for shopping excursions and social events.



- Country Cottage Seniors Residence

Country Cottage Seniors Residence has 48 units including independent living and assisted living. There are 22 one bedroom independent suites and 26 studio suites that are designated assisted living units. The seniors living in the independent suites are provided with one meal a day and weekly housekeeping. The facility has a library, a lounge with a fireplace, a common room, a games room, an outdoor patio with a barbeque, and a big screen TV room.

- Life Lease -Bedford Village

Provides 63 suites in the first phase of a life lease project. Bedford Village will include a dining room, meeting rooms, craft room, carpentry shop, exercise room, guest suites, and a pub.

- Pioneer Housing Foundation

Pioneer Housing Foundation was incorporated by Strathcona County in 1993 to provide management services to publicly and privately funded housing projects created for seniors' use within Strathcona County. In collaboration with Strathcona County, Pioneer Housing Foundation provides management services to Seniors Management Services for low and modest income seniors.



TABLE 8

Facility	Units
Silver Birch Lodge	100
Clover Bar Lodge	79
Apple Blossom Manor	20
Lakeside Legion Manor	81
Josephburg Homestead Place	8

Older adults in the apartments pay 30 per cent of their income on rent. The monthly rates for the lodges are \$935 to \$1755, depending on room size. Housekeeping and full meal service is provided. Each lodge has a recreation director who organizes exercise programs, games, and social programs.

Currently, an expansion is planned for Silver Birch Lodge. This will include an expansion of the kitchen and dining area, recreation space, and independent living apartments with supportive features. Residents can purchase services such as meals and housekeeping from the lodge.

Information & Volunteer Centre

The Information and Volunteer Centre operates the seniors' information and referral line for Strathcona County. It handles 697 information requests per year and serves over 10 per cent of the older adult population.



Information & Volunteer Centre—continued

211 services are available. You can call 211 anytime, any day to get connected to a full range of non-emergency social, health, and government services.

The Information and Volunteer Centre includes a volunteer component which refers individuals to potential volunteer opportunities with community agencies. It does not, however, match volunteers with requests from individuals. It would be unable to coordinate a seniors matching seniors or other direct matching program.

Library - Adult Programs

In 2008, about 1300 older adults held library cards, which is about 20 per cent of the older adult population in Strathcona County. The Library offers a range of programs and services designed to appeal to older adults. Programs range from monthly book clubs, movies, and conversation circles, to weekly computer training, to information programs on a wide range of topics. Services include in depth print, audio, dvd and online collections, as well as staff to provide expert help in finding information and answering questions. The Library also has special collections and assistive technology for people who have difficulty reading or holding print material. If health or physical conditions prevents people from coming to the Library, Outreach Volunteers will deliver material, free of charge, once every two weeks to homes and lodges. The Library is buying a new low floor bookmobile with plans to expand service to include urban and rural seniors lodges and long term care facilities.

Linking Generations

Linking Generations is a program that pairs students from local junior high or high schools with older adults living in a lodge.

Meals on Wheels

Strathcona County provides financial support for this program through the Social Services Grants Program. All meals are prepared by the Sherwood Park Care Centre. Older adults who are not able to prepare meals or are not eating properly, recovering from an illness, or referred by a physician may be eligible for the program. The client pays a portion of the cost.

The Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton (SAGE) also delivers frozen meals to its members living in Strathcona County.



Respite Adult Day Programs

Sherwood Park Adult Day Program (through Alberta Health Services) provides respite care for caregivers by offering social and recreational activities for older adults with mild cognitive or physical impairment.

Community Day Support Program (through CapitalCare Strathcona) provides respite care for caregivers by offering socialization and structured recreation, as well as physical/ occupational therapy for older adults who require assistance to meet health needs or improve health conditions.

Senior Centres

The centres offer a wide variety of social and recreational activities as well as crafts and hobbies. In addition they often organize outings and dinners.

Strathcona County provides operating support, contributions for building expansions and improvements and assists with \$45,000 in utility costs for 4 seniors' centres:

- Sherwood Park 55 Plus Club

Members are able to play cards, pool, and shuffleboard, participate in floor curling and carpet bowling, use the computers, do ceramics, and have educational sessions. Members are able to come to the Centre for companionship as many members are widows or widowers who live alone or in lodges.

- Ardrossan Senior Centre

The Club offers a number of programs and special events including exercise class, scrabble, pot luck, painting group, whist, crib, pool, floor curling, and an activity fun night.

- South Cooking Lake Senior Centre

The Club provides such activities as pool, carpet bowling, shuffleboard, games and crib tournaments. In addition, special events are hosted including group quilting, strawberry tea, pie sales and pot lucks dinners.

- Josephburg Senior Centre

Weekly activities include art club meetings and games, with monthly pot luck dinners. Annual events include a Christmas pot luck supper and a spring tea.



Seniors United Now (SUN)

SUN is a non-profit organization which provides a forum regarding the needs, concerns and challenges that affect all older adults.

Sherwood Park Primary Care Network

The Sherwood Park Primary Care Network (PCN) is a multidisciplinary health care team who focus on complex medical issues such as chronic diseases, cognitive impairment, multiple medication use and related social issues. Comprehensive geriatric assessment services are also available.

Strathcona County Seniors Advisory Committee

The Seniors Advisory Committee is a Strathcona County Council appointed committee that makes recommendations to Council regarding seniors issues and needs.



