



ACT
Government

Community Services

AGE-FRIENDLY CANBERRA

A VISION FOR OUR CITY



Minister's Message

Canberra is a city built by many of our older Canberrans. In 1950, Canberra was home to less than 20,000 people, and now the city is preparing for a population of more than 500,000 by 2030.

According to 2016 Census data, 12.5% of Canberrans are aged 65 years and over. This is about 50,000 people – and this number will continue to grow. We recognise the increasing number and proportion of Canberrans who are older as an asset to the city. At the same time we recognise the increased responsibility to ensure our city's services, culture and infrastructure support and value older people.

Our recent Age-Friendly City Survey highlighted the active role older Canberrans play. They work, volunteer, assist family and friends and undertake advisory roles. Older Canberrans have the highest rates of volunteering and caring nationally and are the most educated in the country. They bring significant resources to the social, community and economic life of our city.

Canberra was accepted as a member of the World Health Organisation's Global Network of Age-Friendly cities in 2011. This membership recognises that the ACT Government is already working on age friendly approaches in transport, infrastructure, health, justice and human rights – but we want to do more.

The *Age-Friendly Canberra - A Vision for our City* outlines the government's priorities for ensuring, as our city grows, it continues to evolve as an age friendly city. The Vision identifies eleven key principles which will guide ongoing work and provide the foundations for an *Age-Friendly City Plan* which the government will be developing over the next year.

I thank the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing for their work towards preparing this Vision. I also thank Canberrans who have participated in consultations – your insights have been integral in setting the direction for Canberra's future. We all have a role to play to grow Canberra as an inclusive city that values the contributions and involvement of older Canberrans.

Gordon Ramsay MLA

MINISTER FOR SENIORS AND VETERANS

THE ACT GOVERNMENT PROVIDES:

Free bus travel for Canberrans over 70 years of age and free off-peak travel for all senior card holders.



The Age Friendly Suburbs Program is delivering improvements to footpaths, additional ramps, and upgraded lighting.



The Mature Workers Grant program, launched in 2017-18, is providing \$500,000 over two years to support employment for mature age workers.

The Older Persons ACT Legal Service (OPALS) commenced operations on 1 July 2018 to provide a specialist legal service for older people in the ACT.

ph: 6243 3436





Involved, connected and valued

Older people bring experience, wisdom and personal and economic resources to our city. Everyone benefits when the intrinsic worth of older people and their active involvement in the community, and as decision makers, is valued and fostered.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- 1.** The contribution that older people make to the Canberra community is valued and recognised.
- 2.** Older people's engagement in community life is fostered, including in employment, volunteer, and advisory roles.
- 3.** Older people are consulted and empowered. The voice of older people is heard in policy development and delivery.
- 4.** The special commitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders in their contributions to the ACT region through sharing their extensive history, cultural knowledge and traditions is acknowledged.

29% OF SURVEY
RESPONDENTS SAID:

They had experienced age discrimination.



“

I have been bypassed in shops so that the assistant could serve younger people. This has happened several times.”

It's important that we better value the experience and knowledge of older people.

“

59% OF SURVEY
RESPONDENTS SAID:

Their most preferred information source was online.



Safe, secure and free from abuse and discrimination

Canberra was the first jurisdiction in Australia to pass a Human Rights Act.

All Canberrans have the right to dignity, security, and to equality regardless of their age, income, status, background, location or any other social or economic factors.

Fundamental to the human rights of older Canberrans is that they are able to live free from abuse, violence and exploitation.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- 5.** The human rights of older Canberrans are protected. Barriers preventing the full exercise of those rights are identified and removed.
- 6.** Ageism is addressed by changing community attitudes and perceptions, showing respect, and affording dignity and agency to older people.
- 7.** The abuse of older people in any form is not tolerated. The protection of older people from any form of abuse is a priority and is paramount.



Information, services and supports which embrace diversity

Access to information, services and supports is key to assisting Canberrans stay connected and active to enjoy a good quality of life as they age. Service provision needs to be responsive to individual circumstances and to recognise older people's equal right to choice and control over their lives.

KEY PRINCIPLES

8.

Access to information, services and supports for older people to engage in the life of the community is provided. Older people are assisted in their use of digital technology.

9.

Older people's diversity in all its forms is celebrated and culturally appropriate means are available to address needs.

The proportion of older people in the ACT seeking assistance with housing increased from 11% to 17%.



There needs to be better information on services for senior Canberrans.

It is important that public transport and parking is readily available and that walkways are safe.



1,900
CANBERRANS
aged 65+ have
limited English.



A city for all ages

We want a city for all ages, where the physical environment including pathways, buildings, open spaces and roads, are safe and easy to navigate to enable all Canberrans to be active and involved.

Access to affordable, secure and appropriate housing is fundamental to older people's wellbeing. Accessible and user friendly transport enable older Canberrans to remain active.

KEY PRINCIPLES

10.

The city's services meet the specific needs of older people.

11.

Older people are consulted about, and have access to, affordable and accessible housing options that are close to transport and community services and suited to their needs.

A Vision for Our City Overview

VISION STATEMENT Older Canberrans are recognised as valued members of our community and enabled to lead productive and active lives as they age.

Informing the Vision for Our City

In 2018, the ACT Government began planning for the next steps for an age-friendly Canberra.

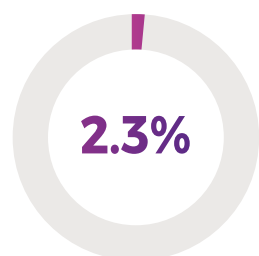
An important part of that planning was The Age-Friendly City Survey (768 responses), which asked older Canberrans to share their views and experiences on what was working well and what needed to improve.

Results show older Canberrans have a high level of engagement with community and actively help and support family and friends. Almost all respondents indicated they had the information and support needed to stay healthy and connected.

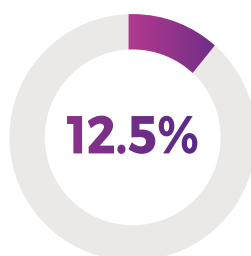
However, results also indicate we need to better value the experience and knowledge of older people. Twenty nine percent of respondents said they had been subject to age-based discrimination, including being made to feel invisible or underestimated often when shopping or in the workplace.

Many respondents identified housing and transport as priority areas for older Canberrans. They indicated there is a need for more ground level, single story, affordable housing options close to transport and amenities. They also indicated the importance of readily available and accessible public transport and parking as well as safe walkways.

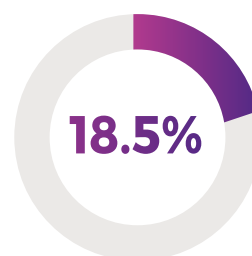
The proportion of the total population of Canberrans aged 65+ is increasing over time.



2.3%



12.5%



18.5%

The total number of Canberrans aged 65+ is increasing over time.

1,170
1966

50,000
2016

143,000
2069

Next Steps for an Age Friendly Canberra

Results of the Age-Friendly City Survey and the expertise of the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing were used to identify a set of eleven foundational principles, identified in the *Age-Friendly Canberra - A Vision for our City*, that will guide our work to foster Canberra as an age-friendly city.

These principles will be applied to work impacting older Canberrans now and into the future. They will also be used to inform an *Age-Friendly City Plan* to be developed in consultation with older people and the community.



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