

All hands on deck – why preserving mobility for seniors is everyone's job

1 We need to deal with the legacy of 65 years of suburban growth

- We focused on the journey to work
 - Car-dependent employment
 - Car-dependent shopping
 - Car-dependent living
- We built low density housing that functions well for one stage in the lifecycle but which is often distant from amenities and hard to serve with transit
- We have built our cities on a funding model from the “horse and buggy age,” and as a result, our communities have not been able to make appropriate investments in “necessary” infrastructure.

2 The impact of demographic change will shift financial priorities for all orders of government, the private sector and ordinary citizens:

- Much attention has been paid to the rise in the percentage of Canadians 65+. From the perspective of mobility, we should also be concerned about 75+ and 85+
- As the dependency ratio moves from 5:1 to 2:1, the federal government will be pressured to prioritize spending on key services. As the population ages, older citizens will require *more* government services but there will be proportionately *fewer* people to pay for those services
- Increased levels of immigration may be part of the solution, but we also have to be concerned about our ability to provide the conditions that will allow us to continue to compete globally for immigrants.
- The federal government’s relationship with provinces to address reform of CPP, funding OAS out of current accounts, immigration policy, not to mention establishing a national strategy for public transit, and tax policy that restores incentives to construct rental housing
- Provincial governments will have to make hard choices between priority funding for infrastructure, education or healthcare
- Municipal governments will need to recalibrate their capital budgets to drive more sustainable built form
- Municipalities will also need to adjust how they provide services to older citizens living in hard to reach suburbs (public health, social services, public transit) and pay for statutory requirements like long term care facilities
- Ordinary citizens without defined benefit pension plans needing to cope with rising property taxes, house maintenance and energy bills.

- 3 **Moving the dial to create “age friendly communities” will require unprecedented levels of innovation and collaboration:**
- The federal government should be encouraged to continue building bridges between public health and those responsible for designing and managing the built environment
 - Provincial, regional and municipal governments will need to collaborate with the private sector on all manner of infrastructure investments to make sure that every dollar invested delivers value
 - Of the eight “domains” for AFC identified by the WHO, planners (et al) are principally focused on “transportation,” “housing,” “outdoor spaces and buildings” that affect urban form, mobility and, at the neighbourhood scale, walkability.
 - Municipal leaders will work collaboratively with provinces to promote smart intensification (such as the efficient retrofitting of suburbs to facilitate the ability of seniors to “age in place” in their neighbourhoods) – as well as ensuring that new developments are designed to avoid replicating mistakes of the past
 - Regional and municipal governments will re-think “mobility” to create sustainable urban form. This is defined as the layout of our communities as defined by major roads, highways and transit routes and land use policies. The goal is to make it possible for people of all ages to access the goods, services and amenities they need to enjoy a high quality of life, whether it be across a city, within a neighbourhood or specific street or development.