

Towards an Age-friendly City:

Participation of Senior-Serving Organizations in Planning Processes

by

Rebecca L. Raddatz

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Department of City Planning
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg

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ABSTRACT

North American populations are aging, yet the issues and challenges faced by older adults remain largely unaccounted for in planning processes. This research examines this invisibility in the specific case of Winnipeg, MB and through University of Manitoba's Centre on Aging Age-Friendly Communities Community University Research Alliance (CURA) that builds on the World Health Organization (WHO 2006) notion of age-friendly cities. The research will first document the relationship between aging issues, age-friendly cities and planning through a review of planning and aging-related literature. The second aspect of the research is focus groups interviews with community partners in the Age-Friendly Communities CURA, and semi-structured interviews with municipal planners. Recommendations developed outline how organizations working towards a more age-friendly city can more effectively engage with planning processes, particularly during the review of Winnipeg's official plan.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Cities are filled with people of all ages and face the challenge of supporting the spectrum of people living, working and playing within their boundaries. The global population is aging, as is Canada's. Manitoba's proportion of people 65 years or older is slightly higher than the national average. The majority of older people live in urban settings and so experience the impacts of, and have the potential to have impacts on, city planning through participation in planning processes.

In 2007 The University of Manitoba Centre on Aging started a five-year project called the Age-friendly Communities Community University Research Alliance (CURA) with the goal of assisting communities in becoming more age-friendly. The Age-friendly Communities CURA, with its partnering community organizations, uses the definition of age-friendly cities developed by the World Health Organization:

An age-friendly city encourages active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. In practical terms, an age-friendly city adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities (WHO, 2007).

I work for the Age-friendly Communities CURA as a student researcher and this practicum is part of this five-year project. Also, the City of Winnipeg started a year-long public engagement process called SpeakUpWinnipeg which is being used as a foundation for the creation of the new Winnipeg development plan called OurWinnipeg. I work for the City of Winnipeg on SpeakUpWinnipeg as a 'Public Consultation Planner' where I coordinate focus-group type consultations and manage partnerships with

community organizations, including the University of Manitoba Centre on Aging. These three factors are the motivation, context, and major influences on this research, and are where this research can have influence.

The main purpose of this research is to find out how senior-serving organizations, specifically looking at the Age-friendly Communities CURA project and member organizations, can effectively engage in planning processes to work towards a more age-friendly Winnipeg. I anticipated the need for technical information and straightforward, step-by-step guides to participation in planning processes. However, through my analysis of the interviews with City of Winnipeg planners and focus group interview with Age-friendly Communities CURA community members, I found that more importantly than having technical knowledge of planning processes, organizations can most effectively engage by acting as organizations: through networking, tying actions to mandates, and through strategic plans. I found that there are also opportunities for planners to change their relationships with organizations; how people are invited to engage, and the development of transparent evaluation of success of public engagements.

I developed recommendations for senior-serving organizations, specifically the Age-friendly Communities (CURA) project member organizations, and for planners and planning in Winnipeg as a result of this research. The recommendations for senior-serving organizations are broken into three main themes: participate as an organization; build on established resources; and develop a long-term strategy. The

recommendations are discussed fully in section 5.0 Recommendations and Conclusions and are as follows:

Participate as organizations

- Clearly declare that planning is an important tool in achieving goals;
- Tie participation in planning processes to organizational mandates;

Build on established resources

- Build relationships with City of Winnipeg planners;
- Develop an educational component on planning and participation;

Develop a long-term strategy

- Form a core strategic planning group
- Develop a strategic plan for participation past the end of the five year Age-friendly Communities CURA timeframe; and
- Document involvement and track outcomes.

The recommendations for planners and planning are:

- Clearly state and acknowledge that people in a neighbourhood change over time;
- Actively invite specific organizations and groups to participate;
- State clear goals for public engagements; and
- Develop criteria for assessing public engagements, and make these evaluations public.

This document will go through the steps taken to get to the recommendations stated above. The Introduction sets the context, stating the research questions, and describing age-friendly cities, the Winnipeg context, and SpeakUpWinnipeg. The Literature Review explores agism and cities, how agism is reflected in built and social environments, and the relationship between aging, agism, and transportation. The literature review also looks at the role of participation in planning. The Research Methods section outlines how this research was done, the analytical process, and how research ethics were

addressed. The Analysis and Research Findings section outlines the outcomes and analysis of the interviews and the Recommendations and Conclusions section more fully explains the recommendations listed above.

1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this research is to develop resources to support the increase of effective participation in planning processes of senior-serving organizations. This research is based on three main principles. Firstly, social and physical environments both reflect and shape the understanding and experience of aging. Secondly, social and physical environments need to become more age-friendly. Thirdly, participation of older adults and their advocates in planning processes is a means to work towards more age-friendly cities.

The main questions this project will address are:

1. How can the participation of older adults and their advocates be increased in planning processes?
2. What questions, strategies, and documentation approaches do advocacy groups need to develop to effectively and comfortably engage in planning processes, to work towards a more age-friendly city?

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE

This research will contribute to work started by the World Health Organization (WHO) towards age-friendly cities, and more specifically, to work locally towards an age-friendly Winnipeg. Winnipeg already has many dedicated individuals and organizations working with and for older adults. These individuals, many of whom are older adults and organizations are also working towards a more age-friendly Winnipeg. To date, however, these organizations have not engaged directly with planning processes to work towards this goal. The materials developed out of this research will serve to enable more effective engagement towards creating a more age-friendly Winnipeg.

More generally, this research will raise the profile of planning as a tool that may be used by those working towards age-friendly cities. This research will add to the growing understanding and attention given to aging issues in the planning field.

The recommendations developed from this research may be used by future groups for more effective engagement with planning processes. This will contribute to the practice of participatory processes by examining what groups can do before attending planning events to have more successful participation. This may also lead to improved design of participatory and public processes used by the City of Winnipeg.

1.3 ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

One assumption of this study is that planning is a tool that should be used by older adults and those who are working towards an age-friendly city. There are many avenues, levels of government, fields, and scope in which an individual or organization can pursue in working towards more age-friendly cities, and members of the Age-friendly Communities CURA are doing work in these other areas. Planning is an additional avenue which these senior-serving organizations can use which can have immediate and long-term influence on the age-friendliness of the built and social environments in Winnipeg.

It is also assumed that working within established planning processes is the primary way to engage with planning to work towards this goal. The Age-friendly Communities CURA, as an alliance, and individual member organizations are large, established, funded, educated, and well connected. It is assumed that established planning processes in Winnipeg have not erected insurmountable barriers that the network of senior-serving organizations involved in the Age-friendly Communities CURA could not overcome through established channels. The network is large and potentially influential enough, and Winnipeg planning processes are open and flexible enough, that these organizations could be effective within the current participation framework used by the City of Winnipeg. My assumption is that senior-serving organizations can enter and then work within the planning system in the City of Winnipeg in order to then change it to more actively address issues of aging.

This study is limited in its scale. It will examine the needs of a group to engage with planning processes more effectively and comfortably, but will not assess the impact of this engagement on the City of Winnipeg Development Plan. Further study is recommended for tracking the change in profile of aging issues in the City of Winnipeg planning areas, and the continued participation in planning processes of those involved in this study.

1.4 CONTEXT SETTING

Worldwide the total number of people aged 60 or over is expected to double in the next 25 years, and reach two billion by 2050 (Kalache, Barreto, Keller 2006). The total global population will increase by 50 percent between 2000 and 2050, whereas the global population of those aged 60 or older will increase by 300 percent, and those aged 60 or older in developing countries will increase by 400 percent (Kalache, Barreto, Keller 2006). The proportion of people aged 60 years or older is increasing in all countries in the world.

In 1981 the population in Canada of those aged 65 or older was 2.4 million, or 9.6 percent of the total population. In 2005 it was 4.2 million, or 13.1 percent (Statistics Canada 2006). Between 2005 and 2036 the number, and proportion of seniors is expected to rise to 9.8 million and 24.5 percent of the population. Both the number of older adults, and their proportion of the population in Canada are increasing. The

majority of older Canadians are women, at 57 percent of those 65 years or older. In Canada, 93 percent of seniors live in their own homes, and 71 percent are homeowners. Although most live in family settings, 30 percent live alone, the majority of these being women (Hodge 2008, 34). The average proportion of older Canadians across the provinces is 13.27 percent, but the highest numbers live in Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia. The highest proportions per province, however, are found in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia (Hodge 2008, 43). The majority of these older adults live in urban settings, and mostly in large cities (Hodge 2008, 70).

1.4.1 AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES

The World Health Organization defines age-friendly cities as those that provide opportunities for active-aging through “optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age” (WHO 2002). Age-friendly cities must include support and opportunities in eight areas: outdoor spaces and buildings; transportation; housing; respect and inclusion; social participation; civic participation and employment; communication and information; and community supports and health services (WHO, 2007). These eight areas fall under the purview of planning.

The WHO project involved 33 cities worldwide, with four cities in Canada. Some members in the Age-friendly Communities CURA took part in the World Health

Organization's (WHO) Age-Friendly Cities project in Portage la Prairie in 2006 (WHO 2007). The project focused on engaging older adults and their communities in making a more age-friendly Portage la Prairie (WHO 2007). The project was approved by the City Council, and the research was led by the University of Manitoba Centre on Aging. There were four focus groups with older adults ranging in age from 61 to 92, one focus group with caregivers, and three focus groups with service providers, business representatives, and members of volunteer organizations (WHO 2007). After the completion of the project, an age-friendly committee continued the work, and Portage la Prairie continues to be involved in the Age-friendly Communities CURA project.

1.4.2 AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES CURA PROJECT

The Age-friendly Communities Community University Research Alliance (CURA) project includes representatives from universities, community organizations, government departments and service providers. It is a representative group of people involved in aging issues in the city of Winnipeg, with involved, highly-educated members from the forefront of aging research, specifically those studying active aging.

One of the Age-friendly Communities CURA's goals is to contribute to the development of age-friendly communities. As outlined in the original Age-friendly Communities CURA funding proposal, the goals of the project are to:

1. Raise awareness of the importance and benefits of age-friendly communities;
2. Contribute to the development of age-friendly communities by generating knowledge of the factors that contribute to it, and examining the factors and processes that help with implementation; and
3. Build capacity in research and community development among seniors, students, government officials, services providers and researchers to address issues around active aging and age-friendly communities (Menec 2007).

Participation in planning processes as part of the Age-friendly Communities CURA

project is not explicitly stated in the goals of the project, but could fall under any or all three of these goals.

1.4.3 WINNIPEG CONTEXT

This research was conducted in Winnipeg, Manitoba within the context of the Age-friendly Communities CURA. Winnipeg is a relatively isolated city which contains approximately 60 percent of the entire provincial population at 666,600 people (City of Winnipeg 2009). The population is projected to grow by more than 180,000 people by 2031. In Winnipeg, 13 percent of the population is over the age of 65 (McCrimmon, 2006). The nearest major urban centre is Minneapolis, an eight hour drive away. Winnipeg is a flat winter city, with snow cover for about five months of the year and temperatures in winter that are known to drop below -40C. Winnipeg is a slow-growth city (Leo, 2000), with a population increase of approximately one percent a year over the last 40 years. The physical growth of the city has far outpaced this 'slow-growth'

and has seen a great expansion of the suburbs, more than doubling its footprint over the same 40 years (Milgrom, 2008a).

Winnipeg has an existing infrastructure deficit of \$3.8 billion over the next ten years (Chartier 2009). This is the added investment that would be required to maintain existing infrastructure at the lowest long term preservation costs. The new strategic infrastructure deficit, that is the added investment that would be required for any new infrastructure required for growth, is \$3.6 billion. This calculation is influenced by predicted development as outlined in the municipal development plan. The total infrastructure deficit for the City of Winnipeg over the next ten years is \$7.4 billion. With such a large deficit, the City does not have the flexibility to put as much money into social services or existing infrastructure that are required for an age-friendly city.

This expansion of suburbs and deterioration in the dense downtown has led to a decrease in walkability, reduction in services, and the perception of the loss of safety. More directly, new suburban development has led to single-use neighbourhoods designed for personal automobiles as the primary form of transportation, with large homes and yards (Sjoberg and Leo, 2005). Increase in urban area and the proliferation of suburban development has pulled money away from maintaining infrastructure in dense, walkable, age-friendly neighbourhoods, social services used by older adults, and the maintenance of more age-inclusive neighbourhoods (Milgrom, 2008b).

Review of planning documents has revealed a general lack of acknowledgment of the aging of the Winnipeg population, and has no targeted policy to support this

demographic and cultural shift (Milgrom and Raddatz, 2008). The current development plan, Plan Winnipeg 2020, mentions older adults but has no specific policy statements (City of Winnipeg, 2001). The City has Universal Design Guidelines for all City owned and leased property, but this does not extend to the private realm.

1.4.4 WINNIPEG DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The City of Winnipeg started its development plan review process, called SpeakUpWinnipeg, with an official launch on April 25th, 2009. The City must review its development plan every five years by law outlined in the City of Winnipeg Charter (Manitoba 2002). The new plan, to be called OurWinnipeg, is scheduled to be completed in April, 2010. The current plan, titled Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision, was completed in 2001 (City of Winnipeg, 2001).

The City is involving all departments in the process of writing the new plan, with a core team based in the Planning, Property and Development department. The plan uses seventeen background studies (Appendix A). The entire plan is using a sustainability framework including environmental, social and economic sustainability.

The supporting principles of OurWinnipeg are:

- Include everyone: goals and actions need to consider all Winnipeggers and address accessibility.
- Work towards equity: wealth, opportunities and access should be shared.
- Make decisions transparently: all decision making must be transparent.

- Be both continuous and resilient: the plan needs to be permanent and to live beyond political cycles, but it also needs to respond to new inputs and threats, like Peak Oil.
- Everything should align: every part of the plan, from its vision, through to its goals, objectives, targets and measurement need to work together.
- Measure progress: every goal needs targets, indicators and regular measurement, and results should be reported.
- Adapt and self-correct: lessons learned from measurement and experience should lead to changes, and new ideas should be accommodated.
- Address unsustainable thinking: deal with the causes of our challenges to sustainability, some of which are based on habits and old ways of doing things.
- Change behaviour: address the human dimension, raise awareness, educate and support changes towards sustainable behavior (City of Winnipeg 2009).

The process for creating this new development plan has not been used before in Winnipeg. OurWinnipeg is intended to be an entirely new plan, and not a review of Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision. The process, SpeakUpWinnipeg, is a one year initiative, and is meant to be the most comprehensive public engagement process ever used by the City of Winnipeg. The first six months of SpeakUpWinnipeg have involved four major means of public engagement: the website www.speakupwinnipeg.com, focused roundtable discussions, the 'Speak Up Squad' (a group of planning graduate students who talked to people at public events such as festivals), and two major public forums. By November, 2009, SpeakUpWinnipeg made contact with approximately 30,000 people.

The website has blog content written by City of Winnipeg employees from many different departments, polls, surveys, a calendar of events including roundtable discussions, video essays, and video 'question of the day', which can be commented on. As of November, 2009, there have been 5.5 million hits, 14,000 visitors, and 1,600 comments on the website. Throughout the SpeakUpWinnipeg process, the website has

been improving to be more accessible and user-friendly. The core 'SpeakUpWinnipeg team' reads user comments daily and has the appropriate City staff person answer the questions on the website.

My role, as part of the SpeakUpWinnipeg team, has been to design, coordinate and run focused roundtable discussions. With the inclusion of neighbourhood-based and housing-focused discussions, there have been approximately sixty roundtable meetings involving roughly 800 people. My experience in this role has both shaped, and been shaped by, my research. I was hired to design and coordinate roundtables with people who 'may be especially impacted by city planning, sectors that may have particular expertise in areas such as poverty or food security, or groups that may be less likely to engage online through the website www.speakupwinnipeg.com,' with neither direction nor restriction other than a very tight time-line. In order to organize as many roundtables with as many different groups as possible in a short timeframe, and to reduce the organizational burden on myself, I contacted key people in key organizations and proposed a partnership for holding roundtable discussions. One of the organizations SpeakUpWinnipeg partnered with to conduct engagements with older adults in Winnipeg was the Age-friendly Communities CURA project.

This approach resulted in higher number of participants and easier implementation in comparison to roundtables where SpeakUpWinnipeg did not have a community partner. By working with these organizations, I developed appropriate public engagements for different groups with consideration of location, time of day, culturally appropriate food,

need for interpretation, respite workers, supplementary material, and the level of formality. This led me to examine the potential of this engagement approach for groups in general, and for older adults and their advocates in particular. Many groups wished to participate using their previously scheduled meetings, because supports such as transportation, caregivers, and work schedules were already in place.

My work also highlighted the importance of communication between planners and organizations, and between organizations and their members. Organizations can reach their members quickly through emails or newsletters, and often network with other organizations, by passing information and invitations along. Participants also suggested other groups for me to contact. Key people in organizations would forward invitations to their members and indicate that, because of the direct invitation, they felt the City was 'serious' about hearing what they had to say. People also seemed more at ease coming to a roundtable where their organization was a partner, either due to familiarity or trust. I distributed information updates and other public engagement invitations through these networks to spread information and to encourage these groups to stay involved in SpeakUpWinnipeg.

Throughout my work on SpeakUpWinnipeg, I examined the roles of community organizations in the city, and the relationships between the City of Winnipeg and these organizations. I also changed the approach to how organizations were, and could be involved in the large public engagement process SpeakUpWinnipeg. This experience influenced my research and my research influenced how I worked with community organizations in coordinating roundtable meetings.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review is a focused exploration of aging, the relationship between planning and aging issues, agism in the built and social environment, and changing understanding of aging and consequent design changes in the physical environment. Participation and its changing role in planning, along with the changing role of planners in facilitating participation and its importance to planning decisions are examined. This literature review supports the recommendation of participation of senior-serving organizations in planning processes by outlining the relationships between aging, agism, the built and social environment, and well-being, and the potential of participation in planning processes to bring about change. This literature review was also intended to inform the creation of a tool to increase the effectiveness of senior-serving organizations' participation by providing specific and supported information and insight into the connection between planning and potentially age-friendly cities.

In Winnipeg, like many North American cities, development patterns and the results of current land use planning support reliance on automobiles. The built environment can serve to enable or disable its inhabitants. Being able to comfortably do the actions of daily living depends on the interaction of the individual and the demands and resources available in the environment, and older adults are able to do more, with greater ease in a supportive environment with many resources (Schaie 2006). Better environmental design can improve quality of life and the disability threshold can be lowered through

appropriate environmental changes (Kalache et al. 2006). Older adults who live in areas with multiple physical and social barriers are more prone to isolation and increased mobility problems (Kalache et al. 2006).

In many neighbourhoods there are few amenities within walking distance of houses. Additionally, public transit options are limited. Older adults may become reliant on family members, or shuttle buses, like those that serve seniors' centres, for transportation (Cvitkovich 2001). The activities of everyday life, such as shopping or going to the bank may become restricted. In addition to increasing dependence on others for transportation, this may also limit trips and social interaction. It may be more difficult to ask for, or receive rides for things that may be seen as 'unnecessary'. For example, an older person may accept a ride to a doctor's appointment, but would not ask to be driven to a coffee shop to meet with friends every day. Or conversely, the caregiver may be unwilling or unable to provide such a service (Litman 2009).

2.1 AGISM AND CITIES

This section of the literature review will look at agism and cities in the areas of work and retirement, gender, built environments, abling and disabling environments, and universal design. Aging is not merely a physical process but is expressed in cultural, social, economic, familial, and civic arenas (Gilleard 2006). Likewise, planning does not merely address physical issues, but it is also a reflection and a tool of cultural, social,

economic, and civic relationships. Aging issues and planning intersect in all these areas. Agism was defined by Robert Butler as “a process of systematic stereotyping of, and discrimination against, people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this for skin colour and gender” (quoted in Johnson, 2006, 339). Agism is a socially constructed set of social practices which is expressed at every level of social interaction. Laws (1995) adds that as agism is constantly changing, so is its expression in the built environment, and it is reflected in the historical development of cities. Setterson (2006) states that current design approaches, neighbourhood development, and changing expectations and attitudes of older adults continue to change the built environment and reflect the evolving understanding and social construction of old age. According to Laws (1993), age is a social relation, and agism is an ideology that ascribes certain attributes and abilities to people because of their age. It is also a form of prejudice and oppression, and limits people and shapes perceptions of older adults (Laws 1995). According to Gilleard (2006) age is central to the construction of identity, and informs social relations on interpersonal and larger societal levels.

2.1.1 WORK AND RETIREMENT

Laws (1995) states that as agism is a socially constructed set of social practices, it is a product of historical context, and does not emerge the same way in different times. Over time there is a continual acceptance, rejection and transformation of aged

identities along with other social changes (2005). Setterson (2006) also adds that the understanding of age also changes as different cohorts enter 'old age.' Different experiences over the life course are projected to influence the experience of 'old age,' and baby boomers are expected to be more affluent and demanding than their predecessors.

The literature speaks of how agism is expressed in a number of different arenas. Laws (1995) outlines that in a capitalist system, where self-respect and citizenship may be seen to be gained through work, the development of retirement has removed older adults from this system. Johnson (2006) states that retirement was developed as a way to take old men, seen as unproductive, out of the workforce, to make way for younger, 'productive' workers. Pensions were seen as encouraging dependency as opposed to productivity (Johnson 2006), although reduced retirement income economically marginalizes many older adults (Laws 1995). Older adults have been blamed for 'draining the public purse,' diverting money from children, and taking up hospital beds (Johnson 2006).

Phillipson (2006) describes how as older adults are more likely to have entered retirement or to be working reduced hours, they are more likely to be on fixed or reduced incomes. Cutler (2006) states that as life expectancy continues to rise, people may be living on pensions or other savings for over 30 years. Older adults are also likely to give transfer payments/help their children and grandchildren financially. These constraints on income limit choices in housing or neighbourhoods. Changes in health

due to old age require better nutrition and exercise to maintain strength, balance, flexibility and overall well-being (Cutler 2006).

Adequate recreation opportunities and accessible grocery stores are not always available in areas with affordable and appropriate housing for seniors. Howe (2001) describes how if older adults need to move to appropriate housing, affordable choices are not always available in their neighbourhoods, resulting in loss of contact with/proximity to their community and supports. Additionally, fixed-income places older adults at risk of not being able to afford their homes if housing prices increase due to gentrification, and their housing choices are often limited if forced to move.

2.1.2 GENDER

The literature states that agism is also interrelated to sexism and gender inequality. Estes et al (2006) write of how families are sustained through the continued exploitation of women's domestic labour. Daichman (2006) notes that older women are more likely to live alone than older men, and are more likely to be seen as 'inevitable' caregivers, either for children, spouses, or their own aging parents. Estes et al add that the increase in unpaid volunteer activities in older adults, or the continuation of unpaid work by many older women also occurs in the public sphere, and Kalache, Barreto and Kelloer 2006 add that older adults contribute to the economy through volunteer work. Volunteering requires adequate transportation, accessible facilities, safe environments,

and opportunities for participation. Lack of reliable and affordable transportation options is a major barrier to participation in volunteer activities. Estes et al (2006) state that this is a reflection on the undervaluing of unpaid work. Despite the contributions to the economy of volunteer work, volunteers are not compensated for the costs of travel, and existing transit options are designed and geared towards the employed work force. Laws (1995) adds that agism is also expressed within the family system through elder abuse, and Daichman (2006) notes that this can take the form of psychological abuse, physical, verbal, sexual, and financial abuse, and neglect.

2.1.3 BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

Laws writes of how built environments are socially as well as physically constructed, and are value laden. The urban form reflects social organization, and changes in the social organization will be reflected in changes in cities (Laws 1995). As such, agism is expressed in the built environment as in other venues of social interaction. Agism influences the built form and function of modern cities (Laws 1993). The relations between ages are expressed through the separation of age groups in space. This is expressed, for example, through playgrounds for children, and homes for the aged. This separation in space reflects perceptions of the roles and values of different ages (Laws 1993).

The changes in attitudes towards and the construction of old age are reflected in the changes in the built form of cities. Laws (1995) states that the urban process is 'part and parcel' of the causes of agism. During the 1920s industrialization resulted in the separation of work and home, and intergenerational conflict over jobs in urban areas led to the development of retirement (115). Old age began to be associated with poverty, and disease. Older people, no longer able to work, were seen as a burden (Laws 1993). This economic separation, between younger, employed people, and older, retired people, was reflected in the built environment by the development of 'retirement homes' (117). This separation in the built form, along with the conditions of poor houses, served to re-enforce agism, and age-segregated housing was a visibly identifiable element of the early twentieth century city in western countries (117).

Laws (1995) describes how state age-related policy also influences the urban form. In the 1950s American federal subsidies for low-income elderly housing development led to the concentration of older adults living in high-rise apartments concentrated in inner cities. Changes to Medicare in the 1960s increased the proportion of funds available to pay for supportive housing in the United States. This led to a 'proliferation' of nursing homes and greater segregation by age and functional ability (Laws 1995, 117). The creation of retirement also led to the development of retirement communities, and the 1960s saw the beginning of subdivisions developed exclusively for older adults.

The post-war period saw a great increase in the development of suburbs, designed for young, middle-class families. And as stated by Hodge (2008) these suburbs are home to

a largely older adult population, living in neighbourhoods designed for cars and the car-oriented needs of young families (221). Laws (1995) states that this urban development pattern contributed to the increased separation of generations, and resulted in the concentration of older adults in the inner city (117). Suburban developments, with large houses, yards, and gardens are not designed for people whose physical strength is declining. Clarence Perry, in 1929, influenced planning with his description of the neighbourhood unit, outlining four essential elements; the elementary school, small parks and playgrounds, local shops, and the residential unit (34). The design, understanding and use of the neighbourhood focused on families with young children.

Furthermore, suburban development is designed around the use of the automobile, and the lack of density is prohibitive to function of public transit. According to Laws (1995) agism was, and is further expressed through revitalization projects, where revitalization is aimed at the 'culture of youth' with the building of casinos and other mega-projects in downtown areas (117). These and other projects have been seen to lead to the deterioration of amenities needed by older adults, while the increase in rental prices disadvantage older adults on fixed pension incomes. This has led to older adults being a significant proportion of people displaced by gentrification (Laws 1993).

Agism and the changing social construction of old age, is reflected in the changing built environment. Phillipson, (2006) describes how as the development of retirement relegated older people to segregated housing, the changing views of older adults as consumer and a potential market is changing the face of the built environment. The

built form is predicted to continue to change with the movement of the baby boomers into 'old age'. Lornic (2006) adds that affluent adults are increasingly moving towards downtown high rises and condos in Toronto. Senior housing is moving towards a more apartment style, with assisted living floors, and flexible to the changing needs of its residents. Older adults are predicted to be more demanding of retrofits, or additional in-house services, to enable them to live in their condos for a longer period. According to Hodge (2008) when Canadian older adults do move, the majority move within only 50 kilometres of their previous dwelling, with the main reason cited being the need for a smaller home (66). These new forms of supportive housing and long-term care, along with a desire to live in downtown areas could bring about a more compact, pedestrian-friendly built form (Lornic 2006). The changing perceptions of aging and old age, along with the changing experiences and expectations of older adults, will continue to influence forms of urban development (Laws 1993).

2.1.4 ABLING AND DISABLING ENVIRONMENTS

Agism in the built environment influences greater social and intergenerational relationships and has a direct effect on individual well-being. Kalache et al (2006) describe how poverty and harmful living conditions, which may result from reflections of agism in the built environment, reduce functional capacity in older adults. Built environments that are unsafe, and with multiple physical barriers, increases the risk of

isolation, loss of mobility, and institutionalization. Redesign of the physical environment can reduce the level of individual disability (Kalache et al. 2006) and there is a growing understanding of how people are disabled by their environments (Burton and Mitchell 2006). Cvitkovich (2001) adds that resources and supports in the environment allow older adults to adapt to age-related declines in competence. Additionally, Schaie (2006) states that the built environment can have a great impact on well-being, function, and competence of older adults.

Hodge (2008) explains this 'senior-environment system' as something in which every environment makes a behavioural demand to which a person must respond (106).

Hodge uses the term *environmental press*, developed by Lawton (1978) to which an older adult must adapt, depending on an individual's competence. Competence is a combination of physical health, personal outlook, and social norms (Hodge 2008, 106).

Hodge outlines four key points of the senior-environment system as;

1. Environmental press can be too high or too low for an older adult depending on his or her competence, resulting in either stressful or boring outcomes;
2. Environments and resulting environmental press change over time, through things such as new buildings, a street becoming busy, or loss of neighbourhood amenities, which require learning and adaptation;
3. Different times of day or seasons create different levels of environmental press, and;
4. Competence is a product of the interaction of several factors such as physical health, psychological and social attributes, and individual choice.

While products, buildings and cities may be in the midst of being designed to be more age-friendly, Hodge states that it is mostly older adults who must adapt in everyday activities, as physical environments are more difficult to change in the short term (106).

In addition to the calls for changes in transportation planning to meet the needs of older adults, developing design principles are beginning to reflect changing attitudes towards older people. These changing attitudes are also stemming from a growing awareness of disability rights and a desire to bring people with disabilities and older people into the 'mainstream' (Burton and Mitchell 2006). Design perspective is shifting from adapting the individual to fit the environment, to designing the environment to suit people of all ages and ability (Burton and Mitchell 2006).

As with physical disability, the built environment can have positive or negative influences on mental health and cognitive impairment, positive or negative (Burton and Mitchell 2006). Burton and Mitchell (2006) have conducted research in to how the built environment, the streets and neighbourhood, act to facilitate the use by older adults, both with and without dementia. Through this research they have developed many design guidelines for age-friendly streets, such as signs designed to maximize clarity and acuity, frequent wooden benches with arms and backs, and smooth, simple pavement without patterns (to prevents falls and confusion). This growing research and developing design guidelines reflect a change in understanding and attitude towards older adults.

2.1.5 UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Universal Design is an approach to building design that is reflective of a change of attitudes towards inclusivity of all people. Follette, Mueller, and Mace (1998) describe how the universal design approach seeks to design buildings, and all features of buildings to be usable by people of all ages and abilities. With its roots in the disability rights movement, it recognized that community attitudes and physical barriers in the built environment prevent people with disabilities and older adults from fully participating in society. Universal design grew out of barrier-free design, which resulted in such things as ramps, which were usually located at back entrances, ugly, and visually labeled users as 'different' (Follette, Mueller, Mace 1998). This developed into designing all entrances and other features of buildings being accessible to all users. Using the same door, regardless of age or ability, reflects an inclusive attitude reflected in the built environment.

Much of the changes in perception of old age are being reflected in the design of homes, interior spaces, and entrances to buildings. Burton and Mitchell (2006) are conducting research into the optimal design of neighbourhood streets for the accessibility of older adults with changing physical and cognitive needs. At the neighbourhood scale, the placement of older adult oriented housing is increasingly examined in relation to the proximity to shopping and other amenities. On the city scale, the re-integration of work, housing, and leisure, is an approach which works to address the segregation of generations brought about by suburban developments. In

the United Kingdom, ‘Lifetime Homes’ are being built to serve people through their life course, or at any stage of the life course (Habinteg Housing Association, 2009). Overall, the built environment, on a scale from universally designed can openers, to accessible public buildings, to the planning of a city, is reflecting a changing perspective of integrating generations, and recognizing the citizenship of older adults.

Agism is reflected and influenced by social and physical environments, and changes over time with the experience social understanding of age and aging. Work and retirement, gender, historical context, abling and disabling environments, and the development of new approaches to design reflect changing approaches and understanding of aging in cities. Agism is also reflected in our systems, physical design, and expectations of the time and purpose and use of space, such as in the form of transportation.

2.2 TRANSPORTATION

This section looks at the relationship between aging, agism and transportation.

Transportation systems reflect expectations of time and purpose of use of space.

Transportation impacts social, financial, gender and physical inequities and affects well-being and health. Agism is reflected in the built environment in the area of transportation. Denmark (1998) states that the transport system has been developed on nodes of employment and services, from which older adults have been removed through retirement. Coughlin (2001) adds that transportation that is geared towards

older adults is focused on trips to health care facilities, and not broader needs such as social or shopping outings. Neighbourhoods designed without sidewalks or curb cuts can present hazards and limit older adults and people with disabilities (Bors, Altpeter, Luken 2004). Also, Cvitkovich (2001) adds that compared to all services provided for older adults, comparatively little funding has been allocated for transportation. This component of the city, both the provision of transit services and the design of neighbourhoods, is a reflection of the agist view of older adults as people who stay home, are sedentary and removed and are separated from younger, active, employed citizens.

2.2.1 AGING AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Coughlin (2001) describes how although older age was once characterized as time of idleness, isolation, and illness, baby boomers intend to be more active in their retirement. Even now older adults are living and driving longer, with walking as the second most popular mode of transportation (Nasvadi and Wister 2006). Parallel to this, however, is that older adults are more likely to be injured or die in an automobile accident than younger adults (Nasvadi and Wister 2006) and older adults top the list of pedestrian fatalities (Coughlin 2001). Cvitkovich (2001) says that older adults are proactive in making their environment more amenable to their changing needs, and Denmark (1998) states that if new travel opportunities are offered, the demand for such

opportunities is likely to increase (236). Transportation needs of older adults cannot be met with change only on the scale of the individual, but need to be addressed by society. This is a challenge, as Coughlin (2001) states that changes to transportation infrastructure take years, or decades to implement, and at this stage would not be ready for the first of the baby boomers entering retirement.

Coughlin (2001) writes that in the United States, transportation is defined as driving, and baby boomers have grown up with the car. These baby boomers and older adults are less likely to use public transportation because of travel behaviours developed as young adults (Coughlin 2001). Additionally, most of the population has access to a car (Denmark 1998), nearly 70 percent of older adults live in suburban or rural locations (Coughlin 2001), and even when older adults stop driving, they are most likely to ride in cars as passengers as a transportation alternative (Nasvadi and Wister 2006).

Linked to the transportation behaviour of older adults, or perhaps even the cause of it, is the automobile-based design of cities. Newman (1996) identifies how post-war falling energy prices and rising car ownership transformed cities, and Cvitkovich (2001) writes of how low density land use created dependence on the automobile for transportation. Not only has this resulted in increased car dependence, energy use, and global pollution, but also a decline in pedestrian accessibility, longer trips, and a lack of population density needed for viable public transportation (Cvitkovich 2001). Denmark (1998) also writes of the effect of low density housing on commercially viable transport systems,

and states that the problems lie in spatial organization, supply, frequency, vehicle design, economic cost, and security.

2.2.2 TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGE

Although old age has been seen as a descent into disability, advocates and planners are now beginning to look at how the environment disables individuals. Denmark (1998) describes how transit systems have not changed much since 1910 and are more focused on the movement of employees and goods rather than the transportation of citizens.

The systems are developed around nodes of employment and services in relation to the city, designed around able-bodied workers, instead of being planned around the diversity of needs of all citizens, including those of older adults. Although many public transport projects are justified by the argument that they ‘provid[e] equity,’ most transport systems are built for able-bodied employed commuters (Denmark 1998, 236).

Those who do not have a car may also have difficulty using transit because of poverty, disability, frailty or other conditions (Denmark 1998). Older adults often are physically able to drive longer than they are physically able to use public transit because of such challenges as using stairs, or maintaining balance while standing in a moving vehicle.

Transport disadvantage is defined as “the inability to travel when and where one needs without difficulty” (Denmark 1998, 234). With the design of current transit systems, older adults can be doubly disadvantaged through decreased finances due to

retirement, and reduced physical capabilities (Denmark 1998). Additionally, Denmark writes of the assumption that poor or disadvantaged people will use transit *anyway* so no effort is taken to provide better services for these groups. People with lower incomes, including retired people, are more likely to live in underserved areas, creating a location disadvantage. Denmark goes on to describe how transit routes are designed to attract a wide variety of passengers, mostly along major routes, but this lack of specialization restricts the mobility of many people. If a car is used to compensate for this lack of transportation, a disproportionate percentage of income must be spent on the car, creating a still greater economic disadvantage (Denmark 1998).

In addition to the transportation disadvantage on a macro scale, older adults can be disadvantaged through transit design that does not accommodate changes in physical or cognitive function associated with age. Older adults may not use public transit due to fears of falling, being rushed, crowding, waiting and difficulties getting on and off vehicles (Denmark 1998). Difficulties of mobility lead to the avoidance of stairs, long distances, and crowded places (Anjali and Zimring 2007). Difficulties reading signs, and hearing announcements are also a barrier to use. As Denmark states, “access to destinations is the issue, not just access to transport services” (236) and this lack of access can lead to a reduction in trips to the doctor, for shopping, and for meeting with friends. Cvitkovich (2001) also draws the connection between being transportation restricted and a decrease in quality of life. Denmark (1998) writes of the potential of

land use planning to ameliorate transportation disadvantage, but as discussed earlier, most development is designed on the assumption that most people can and do drive.

Despite the importance of transportation on well-being, compared to all services provided for older adults comparatively little funding has been allocated for transportation (Cvitkovich 2001). Additionally, less than 2 percent of transportation budgets is allocated for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and programs, which results in a marginalization of these forms of transportation (Chanam and Moudon 2004). Most examinations of the transit system focus on the financial issues of the system (Nasvadi and Wister 2006) and non-able bodied commuter populations are seen to reduce the efficiency of running transit systems, by increasing costs, and systematic problems, such as scheduling (Coughlin 2001).

Denmark (1998) writes of the economic benefits of providing adequate transportation options to older adults. These benefits include saving on the costs of professional caregivers, institutional care, health care, and the benefits of keeping people with disabilities employed. Furthermore, much of the volunteer workforce is made up of older adults (Coughlin 2001). Bors, Altepeter and Luken (2004) write of the economic benefits of creating active communities. Older adults and baby boomers now entering retirement age are more confident in their ability to exercise, are more likely to participate, and are more willing to spend money on active amenities. This group also supports the use of local government funds for walking and jogging trails (Brownson et al. 2001).

2.2.3 WELL-BEING AND TRANSPORTATION

The literature examines the relationship between adequate transportation and the well-being of older adults. Cvitkovich (2001) states that “the importance of social support and transportation support has been largely underappreciated in comparison to the emphasis on health status, disability, and function” (825). As an individual experiences decline in function, their environment becomes increasingly important in affecting well-being (Cvitkovich 2001). Nasvadi and Wister (2006) also address the importance of alternative transportation systems for older adults to minimize social isolation, maintain social interaction, reach community and community services, and access to health care. Coughlin (2001) states that trips that are not ‘critical’, i.e. trips to the doctor, are equally important to quality of life and that the ability to stay connected to friends and community is important to physical and emotional health. Transit that is oriented for older adults mostly focuses on ‘critical’ trips and does not provide transportation for more social needs.

Cvitkovich (2001) and Coughlin (2001) also write of the psychological importance of having transportation options. Older adults see the capacity to go where, when, and how they want as embodiment of personal freedom, and driving cessation may lead to depression, which in turn may be a precursor to physical illness (Coughlin 2001).

Indeed, without transportation options, loss of a driver’s license can result in “virtual house arrest and isolation” (Coughlin 2001). If transportation needs are unmet, older adults focus their energy within their home, and have an increased likelihood of

becoming housebound or institutionalized (Cvitkovich 2001). Cvitkovich (2001) found that older adults were able to maintain well-being as long as transportation needs were fulfilled, regardless of how they were fulfilled, be it para-transit, walking, or getting a ride from a caregiver.

2.2.4 TRANSPORTATION EQUITY

These authors address not only the challenges of meeting the transportation needs of older adults through policy, but also acknowledge the need for such changes. They address the need to include transportation in the realm of senior-oriented policy.

Cvitkovich writes of how the social and health policy focus is on keeping people in their homes as long as possible, and therefore argues that funding must be allocated to transportation to connect older adults to their communities and services (2001, 811).

Coughlin (2001) also writes of how the aging policy agenda is focused primarily on healthcare costs and retirement, and transportation does not get serious attention.

Nasvadi and Wister (2006) write of how transportation planners need to expand levels of service to provide better transportation alternatives to older adults, to complement reliance on family and friends.

Automobile dependence can erode neighbourhood life, and transit planning can act as a protective force, helping to reclaim residential neighbourhoods (Cvitkovich 2001). This automobile dependence is happening in conjunction with longer life, different

expectations and social structures which are presenting more aging policy issues than previous generations (Coughlin 2001).

As transport disadvantage is linked to wider issues of social justice, Denmark (1998) and Cvitkovich (2001) speak of transit as a tool for creating equity in a city. Transportation needs and dependence involve environmental factors, where individual competence and environmental demands interact. These authors look at how transit, or the environment, can act to enable older adults, and create equity. Resources and supports in the environment may compensate somewhat for age-related declines in competence (Cvitkovich 2001). These authors also address the inter-related nature of environmental equity and social and economic realms. Cvitkovich states this well, saying “If the goal is to provide for the most efficient, equitable and human form of transport, this means a city with provision for cycling, good walking space on streets and in public squares, and traffic-free shopping streets. Any city that neglects this dimension will find social and economic problems as well as the obvious environmental ones” (2001, 811).

When looking at active transportation options for older adults, the call for planning improvements is coming from the public health literature. Walking is the most frequently engaged in physical activity (Chanam and Moudon 2004), and walking is the second most popular form of transportation after the car. Walking is also the most popular form of physical activity for adults over 75 (Anjali and Zimring 2007). Walking and biking are unique forms of physical activity because they transcend traditional

physical activity classifications, and walking is the most practical way to achieve healthful levels of physical activity for all age groups (Chanam and Moudon 2004).

2.2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON HEALTH

Bors, Altpeter and Luken state that land use patterns, transportation systems, and the presence and proximity of recreational and fitness facilities have significant impact on health (2004, 25). Outdoor, freely available neighbourhood facilities are the most frequently used facilities for exercise, as are open spaces, parks, and trails (Chanam and Moudon 2004). In the Chanam and Moudon (2004) study, 46 percent of respondents used neighbourhood streets with only 11 percent who used gyms for physical activity. The combination of walking as both a popular exercise and form of transportation for older adults underscores the importance of neighbourhood planning in the well-being of older adults.

These authors look at the impact of neighbourhood design on walkability for older adults. One such important factor is the distance to destinations, as many older people cannot walk more than ten minutes without a rest (Burton and Mitchell 2006; Bors, Altpeter, and Luken 2004; Chanam and Moudon 2004; Brownson et al. 2001; Anjali and Zimring 2007). Secondly, well-maintained sidewalks with curb cuts positively influenced walking in older adults. Places to sit and rest, proximity to green spaces, interconnectivity of footpaths, and seeing others walking are all positively associated

with walking. Interconnected with greater transportation planning, busy, high-speed roads, traffic fumes, and unsafe road crossings deter walking, especially among older adults.

Demographics and demographic projections can be used to plan for the growing need for transportation for older adults. Additionally, experience over a person's lifetime affects the experience of age (Settersen 2006). Each cohort of people entering retirement age will have a different experience of 'old age' than those who came before. Planning for the transportation needs of older adults cannot be based solely on the needs and experiences of today's older adults, but will need to be flexible and adaptable to the changing experiences of rising cohorts.

Cvitkovich (2001) describes transit planning as an expression of a city's cultural values, and as such, if the city values the needs of children, youth, and other citizens who do not drive cars, transit services should reflect these needs. Nasvadi and Wister (2006) also state that transportation planners need to expand the level of service to provide better transportation alternatives to older adults. This change in transportation planning comes about along with changes in understanding and attitudes towards the transportation needs and lifestyles of older adults. Access to alternative transportation systems is crucial to minimize social isolation, maintain social interaction, and reach community and social services, and access health care (Nasvadi, Wister 2006).

Transportation options, for trips of all nature, are important to quality of life, and the ability to stay connected to friends and community is integral to physical and emotional

health (Coughlin 2001). Developing transportation options for older adults is both a way to address the disadvantage of agism in the built environment, and a way to change views of older adults as mobile, active members of the community. It may be a way of addressing the segregation of generations in modern cities, at least in transit and on the streets.

These two sections of agism and cities and transportation outlined how agism is reflected in the built and social environment of cities, how the design and planning of cities influences the well-being of older adults, and planning, use and function of transportation systems reflect and influence agism and well-being. The next section, participation, looks at the role of participation in planning, the roles of planners and people in participation, its importance to the profession of planning, and the potential for change through participation.

2.3 PARTICIPATION

This section looks at the role of participation in planning. First it defines participation and describes its essential characteristics (Sanoff 2000). It then looks at the role of participation in planning, the role of the planner, and the place of participation in the profession and professionalism of planning. This is followed by participation as democracy and participation as a form of learning. The section then looks at the

potential of participation to change relationships through transformative planning (Sandercock 2003).

The understanding and approach to the role of participation and its reflection and impact on relationships of power in planning has changed over time. Whereas Sanoff primarily focuses on the methodology of participation in planning processes, the other works covered in this section of the literature review take a more theoretical stance. Davidoff (1965) and Arnstein (1969) write from the theory of *advocacy planning* which, with its roots in the civil rights and student movements of the 1960's, acknowledged the political nature of planning, and sought to make planners, and planning resources available to marginalized groups. Rocha (1997) examines how power and empowerment occurs from the individual to the community level where empowerment is gaining the capacity to bring about change in the future. Sandercock (2003) and transformative planning look at participation not only as a means to create planning goods, such as housing, but a process in which all parties have valid knowledge and new relationships, dialogues, and decision making processes can be formed. Outcomes of participation in this understanding include positive physical products but also increased capacity of those involved through mutual learning, but also increased capacity to make informed decisions and bring about positive change.

Participation is a fundamental concept in planning and in age-friendly cities (WHO 2007). It is a means to involve people in decision-making, and change physical and social relationships between diverse groups (Sandercock 2003). It is tied to the role of

the citizen and an action of democracy (Arnstein 1969). Participation is also a means of learning, about design, physical environments, and individual and collective understanding of community (Sanoff 2000). Participation in planning involves many people with different roles; individuals, community organizations, elected officials, and planners. The role of planners in participatory processes is changeable, defined by the planner and the situation, but is part of the Canadian Institute of Planners (2008) Code of Professional Conduct, and as such an integral part of the planning field.

Participation is one of the eight areas of age-friendly cities as outlined by the WHO (2007). Sanoff (2000) defines participation as the 'collaboration of people pursuing objectives that they themselves have defined'. In this definition, all citizens hold equally valid knowledge, and can contribute to active discourse (14). Participation is contextual, and varies in type, intensity and frequency (8). It can act as social learning and iterative discourse leading to consensus (14). Genuine participation occurs when people are empowered to control the action taken (9). In this, any citizen regardless of age, has equally valid knowledge, and can both contribute to, and gain from, social learning and iterative discourse.

Sanoff (2000) describes the main purposes of participation as involving people in design decision-making processes, to increase trust, to help people accept decisions and work within the system, to provide people with a voice to improve plans, and to promote a sense of community. This community is made of diverse participants, with different ages, experiences and perspectives on processes and desired outcomes. According to

Sanoff (2000) the four essential characteristics of participation are that participation is inherently good, and it is a source of wisdom and information about local conditions, needs, attitudes, and improves decision making. Participation is an inclusive and pluralistic approach by which fundamental needs are fulfilled and user values are reflected. It is also a tool for defending interests and needs of marginalized groups. It is a means of bringing light to previously unnoticed needs and user values brought about by changes in the population and physical environment. Participation is an ongoing process and is continuously changing. The final decision is not the end of the process, but participants go on to manage, evaluate, and adapt the project to changing needs (12).

2.3.1 PARTICIPATION AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

The Canadian Institute of Planners identifies participation as part of its Code of Professional Conduct. Under the Planner's Responsibility to the Public Interest (section 1.0):

Members have a primary responsibility to define and serve the interests of the public. This requires the use of theories and techniques of planning that inform and structure debate, facilitate communication, and foster understanding. Accordingly, a CIP member shall:

1.4 identify and promote opportunities for meaningful participation in the planning process to all interested parties.

2.3.2 PARTICIPATION AND PLANNING VALUE

Participation, in addition to being a part of the planning professional code of conduct, is a reflection of planning values. Davidoff (1965) states that “appropriate planning action cannot be prescribed from a position of value neutrality, for prescriptions are based on desired objectives”. Planning and the built environment are not value neutral. Davidoff states that "physical relations and conditions have no meaning or quality apart from the way they serve their users. But this is forgotten every time a physical condition is described as good or bad without relation to a specified group of users". Community and physical design reflect values and directly impact the well-being of those that use these spaces. Sanoff (2000) states that “community design, as a movement, emerged from a growing realization that mismanagement of the physical environment is a major factor contributing to the social and economic ills of the world and that there are better ways of going about design and planning.”

Participation in planning is a reflection of the value of people deciding their space and their future for themselves, as members of a community. Participation, according to Sanoff, is "based on the principle that the environment works better if the people affected by its changes are actively involved in its creation and management instead of being treated as passive consumers." Participation strengthens plans through the wealth of input, and the community is strengthened through learning about itself (10). At the base of the valuing of participation in planning is the contribution of community members. Sanoff describes how expert decisions are not necessarily better than lay

decisions, and there is no one 'best solution' (13). Sanoff states that "interest in user needs or user participation is not rooted in romanticism about human involvement but rather in the recognition that users have particular expertise different than, but equally important to, that of the designer" (1).

The role of the planner in participatory processes has been given many definitions. Davidoff states that 'planners should be able to engage in the political process as advocates of the interests both of government and of such other groups, organizations, or individuals who are concerned with proposing policies for the future development of the community' (402). Davidoff argues for different groups to develop alternative plans to those of the official planning department, and that planners can play a role in the competition of alternative plans. Davidoff argues for 'advocate planners' who educate other groups on the group they are presenting, and educating the group they are representing on the technical information about planning and related information. Day, (1997) states that planners must constantly deal with the tension between rational, bureaucratic, technical systems and democratic, social and political systems (421).

Sanoff (2000) states that in the practices of participation, it is not the professional's job to produce a finished and unchangeable solution, but to assist in the development of solutions from continuous dialogue (12). The planner's role is to make the planning task transparent for participants, so that 'after understanding the components of design decisions and exploring alternatives, the users in effect can generate their own plan rather than react to one provided for them' (14).

2.3.3 PARTICIPATION AS LEARNING

Sanoff describes participation as a learning process. Learning happens on two levels; individual learning through increased awareness of the problem, and community learning through increased awareness of issues and group members (10). Sanoff writes of the "collective intelligence that comes from insight of group processes, where the sum is more than the collection of its individual parts" (213). Sanoff states that participation can be used to maximize the learning process through using a clear, communicable and open process which encourages dialogue, debate and collaboration (10). Through this process, "the main source of inner satisfaction is not the degree to which a person's needs have been met, but the feeling of having influenced the decisions" (12). Participation in planning processes also provides learning opportunities for technical and skill development. Sanoff states that "designing for community participation prepares citizens for involvement in technical issues and an awareness of the consequences of environmental decisions" (3). Sanoff (2007) states that all individuals learn participatory skills and can effectively participate to make decisions about their environment (213).

2.3.4 PARTICIPATION AS DEMOCRACY

Sherry Arnstein describes participation as a principle of democracy, a principle she describes as one which everyone supports in theory although does not always employ in

practice (1969). Participation, as a form of democracy, has a diversity of expression.

Sanoff (1978) describes participation as developing solutions from continuous dialogue, in which the process needs to be transparent to make decisions clear. Sanoff goes on to state that “the basis for a participatory democracy lies in a volunteer society whereby citizens can work in partnership with public and private efforts to accommodate human and environmental needs” (3).

Sherry Arnstein (1969) states that citizen participation is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future (235). The level of participation, and the level of power, has significant gradations, which Arnstein describes as manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, delegated power, and citizen control.

Sanoff (1978) also states that participation can result in power (2) and Rocha (1997) outlines how processes of empowerment can influence across the spectrum from individual to community power (33). Older adults are a diverse group with differing levels of power and influence and can be represented at any point across the spectrum.

Davidoff (1965) challenged the role of citizen to be changed from reacting to proposed plans, to making their own. Sanoff (2000) states that citizens, through participation, become actively engaged in the design and management of their environments through the four stages of awareness, perception, decision making, and implementation (10).

Citizens at this stage take on responsibility with professionals to see that there are

results and continuous discourse (10). Citizens come together in open forum to share ideas and learn from and about each other (14).

2.3.5 PARTICIPATION AND TRANSFORMATIVE PLANNING

Sandercock (2003) looks at planning and the actions and relationships of all groups and those involved as a potential for transformative planning. Transformative planning is ‘those actions which contribute to a more socially and environmentally just city and one which is tolerant of difference, open and culturally pluralist’ (160). It is not the participation of the public or planners alone which causes change. Participation and planning is a complex relationship where ‘professionals do not act alone, and that they are most effective when they act in a transparently political way, in association with residents, politicians, and mobilized communities’ (158). Participation of mobilized groups can create ‘political space’ in which new relationships, dialogue, and decisions can be formed, and it is the role of the planner to “design the space which has been created through political action” (166). Groups can demand, through political pressure, new relationships or means of communication in planning processes, and planners then design and develop how these meetings and dialogues can take place. In this way, participation involves community members, planners, and political persons in a dynamic and evolving process of relationship building. In transformative planning it is possible for the, “building of trust between the social planner and the various community

factions, then among community factions and finally between community and social planner and local council, developing new working and neighbouring relationships, and mending broken ones” (166).

Rocha (1997) states that participation can affect change from individual coping to altering systems and institutional arrangements (34). In Rocha's *ladder of empowerment* the locus of empowerment runs from the individual to the community. Individual empowerment can be seen to increase individual efficacy, and at the other end of the scale, political empowerment is where a community used political action to bring about structural change (40). In this way, a mobilized group uses political processes, such as through participation in planning, to change the understanding, knowledge, and decision-making structures such as policy and legislation. Individuals are not the focus of empowerment in this situation, but individuals benefit from the outcomes of structural change, and communities and mobilized groups gain capacity to bring about change in the future (40).

As participation in planning is a part of democratic life, a process for potential increase in community power and capacity, and a means to design and manage cities and projects, participation is a foundational component of both planning and age-friendly cities.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODS

My research focused on finding ways for senior-serving organizations to more effectively engage in planning processes. While looking at the Age-friendly Communities CURA project and member organizations in the context of the Winnipeg development plan public consultation process, I planned to develop tools for organizations to use when preparing for, participating in, and evaluating and documenting participation in planning processes. My literature review supports the participation of senior-serving organizations in planning processes by outlining the connection between agism, the built environment and well-being, and the potential of participation in planning to bring about change. I chose and designed my research methods based on this idea of developing a participation tool to increase the effectiveness of senior-serving organizations in planning processes to work towards an age-friendly city.

This section outlines the theory used for framing of the research, and the theory used for analysis of the data. This section then outlines the use of focus group interviews and individual semi-structured interviews. The questions used in the interviews are outlined. This section ends with the description of the ethical treatment of participants and their information.

My own experiences and position as a member of the Age-friendly Communities CURA project as a student researcher and as a planner with the City of Winnipeg cannot be separated from the methods or analysis of this research. My understanding of the Age-friendly Communities CURA project, age-friendly cities, and member organizations is influenced by the numerous meetings, workshops, conferences and symposiums I have attended with Age-friendly Communities CURA members, and my understanding and perspective on the work of planners and their relationships with community members is influenced by my day-to-day work environment, observing the work of other planners, casual conversations and requests for advice, and my own work coordinating roundtable discussions for SpeakUpWinnipeg. My experiences especially blend in the experience of partnering with the Age-friendly Communities CURA project to conduct roundtables with older adults for SpeakUpWinnipeg. This has benefited my understanding and recognition of some of the practical, and sometimes mundane, workplace planning considerations while analyzing my data and developing recommendations for senior-serving organizations, Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations, and City of Winnipeg planners.

This research builds on research conducted with Dr. Richard Milgrom entitled “Regulatory Impediments to Age Friendly Communities: Winnipeg MB,” which, in part, examined the awareness of planners of aging issues, and the awareness of age-friendly advocates of planning. The first stage of this practicum research was a literature review of planning, environmental studies, gerontology, public health, and transportation

research. This revealed the possible effectiveness of planning as a means to work towards an age-friendly city, but a lack of connection between planning and age-friendly research. Based on this finding, I decided to develop a form of guide to support effective participation of senior-serving organizations in planning processes. To build this guide, I interviewed City of Winnipeg planners and Age-friendly Communities CURA community organization members.

I use critical social science for this research. According to Newman (1997) research using this approach is conducted to ‘critique and transform social relations’ and empower people to create social change (74). Social reality is seen as changing over time, where change is part of tensions of social relations or institutions (75). There is an objective world with only a few correct points of view, in which there are unequal control over resources and power (77). Critical theory seeks to “provide people with a resource that will help them understand and change their world” (77) and inform practical action or suggest what to do. Newman refers to Harding's (1986) description of critical theory as:

it challenges the belief that science must be protected from politics. It argues that some politics – the politics for emancipator social change – can increase the objectivity of science (Harding, 1986:162) (79).

Within this approach, knowledge is understood as a type of power, and knowledge can have tangible effects on people’s lives (79).

My research examines the social relations between senior-serving organizations and planning processes, represented by municipal planners and elected officials. The

research identifies barriers and possible practical actions that organizations and planners can take to change these relationships. The current and potential power of organizations and planners in these relationships are examined, and actions are suggested to change this dynamic. The purpose of this research is to provide knowledge as the basis of practical action to improve the lives of older people through the participation in planning processes of senior-serving organizations.

I used simultaneous data collection and analysis, where codes and categories are formed from reading the data as opposed to a predetermined system (Charmaz, 2006). This first stage was a form of open coding, looking for key themes, and a second reading to search for connections and comparison (Del Balso and Lewis, 1996, 290). This analysis included a reading and rereading of the material, with developing comparisons within and between individual and focus group interviews, where patterns gradually emerged (Del Balso and Lewis, 1996, 290). Using this method allowed me the flexibility to see different relationships than had been examined in previous research, resulting in unexpected results and consequently recommendations for future action.

This project is based on a combination of focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews. This combination is a reflection of the combination of people to be interviewed, and the different perspectives involved.

3.1 FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups are used for focused research, and to better understand the group dynamics that affect individuals' perceptions and decision makings (Stewart, Shamdasani, Rook, 2007, 8). This approach also is used to uncover individuals and groups' attitudes, preferences, and motivations (11). According to Stewart, Shamdasani and Rook (2007) a focus group should hold eight to ten people, last from 1.5 to 2.5 hours with a moderator acting to ask the research questions and structure the discussion.

My focus group, in part due to the nature of summer in Winnipeg, involved three people. I acted as the moderator. Focus groups are often used early in a research project (Stewart, Shamdasani, Rook, 2007, 41). This practicum is part of a larger research project addressing older adults and planning processes, and as such, focus groups are appropriate for this initial exploratory stage. The focus groups involved people who are members or affiliated with the Age-friendly Communities CURA project, and who work for and with organizations addressing aging issues. This approach was used for the economical advantage of capturing many voices in a shorter amount of time; but for richness, these potential participants already work mostly in groups, or as an established group. A group discussion approach may also lead to greater brainstorming, and 'sparking ideas' between participants. Additionally, as members of the Age-friendly Communities CURA project, these participants already had a common interest and goal of working towards a more age-friendly city. This research is also

focusing on how a group with a specific goal of age-friendly cities can go on to effectively engage with planning processes.

I emailed a two-page overview of the research project, of planning, and the current City of Winnipeg SpeakUpWinnipeg public consultation process to focus group members.

This was done to set the stage for the focus group interview, provide some basic information on planning processes, and define the type of public consultations I wanted to focus on during the interviews. This backgrounder can be found in Appendix B.

Members of the Age-friendly Communities CURA project were selected for this research for their knowledge and experience of working with aging issues, and their involvement with the age-friendly cities project. This group is knowledgeable about the many different factors influencing age-friendly environments, and also knowledgeable about the City of Winnipeg and its particular challenges and opportunities for older adults.

Through their work and their involvement with the Age-friendly Communities CURA, these participants are already dedicated to working towards a more age-friendly Winnipeg. The gap in knowledge is how to effectively engage with planning processes to work towards this goal. I developed the interview questions in order to find out what specific type of information and possible tool member organizations would want to use, and what type of tool would make them feel most comfortable in engaging in planning processes.

3.2 INTERVIEWS

The semi-structured interviews were used for planners. I interviewed two planners, chosen for their recent and large amount of public consultation work. The information sought from these participants was fairly specific, but also would reflect their opinions as a professional planner. There were concerns that in a focus group setting planners may not wish to share certain opinions with their colleagues as they may seem less professional. Also, participants were from the City of Winnipeg, and any group discussion may be influenced by office culture and staff hierarchy. In a semi-focused interview I expected the planner to be more likely to take on the 'teaching' role of the planner. Part of a planner's job is to answer questions and to give information.

Interviews were chosen because the subject is not well defined or well known. Zeisel (2006) states that the purpose of interviews is to "find out in depth how people define a concrete situation, what they consider important about it, what effects they intended their actions to have in the situation, and how they feel about it" (227). The purpose of the interviews was to gauge attitudes, and prioritization of factors influencing healthy aging. Whereas questionnaires are "used to discover regularities among groups of people by comparing answers to the same set of questions asked of a large number of people" (257) this study assessed the general outline of this undefined issue.

Planners from the City of Winnipeg were also chosen to provide technical planning information. Also, as experienced planners working in the City of Winnipeg, planners were be able to contribute information on how people may be better able to engage

with planning processes. The planners have a range and depth of knowledge and information of the City of Winnipeg and its planning operations, and have experience with its public engagement processes. Having experience of seeing a variety of people engage with these processes to different degrees of efficacy may help planners project what may work in the future for concerned groups.

3.3 QUESTIONS

Both the focus group interviews and the semi-structured interviews were intended to take place in two phases. The first phase was expected to identify information and processes needed for groups to be better able to effectively engage with planning processes. The second phase was meant to evaluate, adjust, and improve materials developed out of phase one.

The focus group questions were formed to be used primarily to outline what information is required about planning and planning processes, and what steps should be taken before attending a public engagement.

The questions used were;

1. Do you think Winnipeg is a good place to be old in?
2. What types of public engagement has your organization been involved in?
3. What has made this engagement successful, comfortable or effective?
4. Have you been involved in a public city planning engagement?

5. What are the ranges and types of information that you and your organization could use to increase participation in city planning processes?
6. What type of materials would be the most useful? Fact Sheets? Work Sheets? Strategies?
7. What type of information would you like to have about city planning and public engagements?

Semi-structured interviews with planners were formed to focus on specific technical knowledge planners feel people should have to effectively engage, and more generally what planners, from their public engagement experiences, wish people knew for engaging in planning processes. This may be in the form of ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ knowledge. Questions used were

1. Why types of public engagements have you been involved in?
2. What have been some of the most successful public engagements that you have worked on? (What made it successful?)
3. What are some things about planning and the City that you wish people knew?
4. How do people currently get information?
5. What do you wish people knew about public engagements?
6. Can you tell me about a person or a group that was really successful at a public engagement? What made it that way?
7. What can people do to really get their message across at a public engagement?
8. What should people do before they come to a public engagement?

For the second set of interviews, the questions were meant to focus on the technical accuracy of the information, as well as the perceived potential efficacy of the material.

The questions would also seek to bring out information on possible gaps and extraneous information in the materials.

Individual interviews and focus group interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed. The pages of the transcription were split into two columns, one with the transcribed interviews, and the other blank. I then went through and wrote a key word or idea for each line of every interview. This was the first reading. I then went through it again and picked out key themes, ideas or stories. I then arranged and rearranged these themes into tables, comparing between individual interviews, and between the individual interviews and the focus group interviews. This way I examined the similarities and differences between how planners and member organizations understood their roles, relationships, and processes, highlighting gaps and possible areas of future action.

Through the analysis of the first set of individual interviews and focus group interview, it became clear that the barrier to participation was not a lack of knowledge, and that an educational tool or step-by-step guide was not what member organizations were looking for, or what planners were recommending. I continued with my analysis of the interview transcripts, and developed recommendations for organizations and planners out of this material. I did not develop any tools as my primary results, although a type of check-list can be found in the Recommendations and Conclusions. The recommendations that came out of this research are largely organizational and political, which would require much time and resources, in addition to collaborative decision making, and so will not be tested within the scope of this project.

3.4 ETHICS

The primary research methods of this project were semi-structured and focus group interviews with human participants. All participants are adults and are not part of a vulnerable group. Participation was fully voluntary and participants gave consent.

Focus group participants were members of the University of Manitoba's Centre on Aging Community University Research Alliance Age-friendly Communities project. As such, participants are known to each other, and participation may be known to the Age-friendly Communities CURA project team. Possible participants were suggested by the Age-friendly Communities CURA project core team and director.

Personal and organizational names were not used in this research. Audio recording files were labeled in an unidentifiable manner (i.e. Focus Group #1). Other identifying information is rendered anonymous by exclusion or the use of pseudonyms.

Participants are informed of their possible identifiability due to the nature of the group and small number of people with their expertise knowledge. Two types of consent were provided – that for total anonymity, and for consent with the possibility of being identified.

The research questions draw on public and professional knowledge, and not directly on personal knowledge and experience. As such, it was not expected that participants needed complete anonymity, but the choice was available.

For the semi-structured interviews, this same choice of level of anonymity was given.

There are a limited number of planners at the City of Winnipeg, so there is a higher chance of individuals being identifiable from the interviews.

Upon the publication of the research, all research material including all audio recordings, notes, transcripts and any other materials used in the interviews was destroyed.

4.0 ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

I interviewed two City of Winnipeg planners and held a focus group interview with members of the Age-Friendly Communities CURA project. The questions were structured around the topic of public planning engagements, what people should know and do before becoming involved, and when involved and about their engagement experiences. The purpose of these interviews was to inform the development of a tool, which organizations could use to be involved, and be more effective when involved in planning processes. I anticipated knowledge- and information- based barriers to effective participation, which would result in a fairly logical, step-by-step engagement tool which I could create for organizations. However, the results of these interviews suggest roles, relationships and expectations, politics, leadership and etiquette are major factors influencing the involvement of organizations in planning processes. Technical tools may be helpful only after these larger issues are addressed or these relationships more fully understood.

The analysis and research findings section looks at the main themes that emerged from the focus group and semi-structured interviews. These themes are how roles in planning are understood, and how the Age-friendly Communities CURA project and member organizations are currently involved in planning processes. This section then looks at the importance of leadership and decision making in participation, and how groups should prepare for participation in planning processes. The section then looks at

the political nature of planning and aging, and how success is defined for public engagements. Lastly this section looks at the tension between neighbourhood and issue-based involvement in planning processes, and the relationships between aging, planning and advocacy.

4.1 IMPORTANT ROLES IN PLANNING PROCESSES

Public engagements are social events. People gather in one form or another to meet, share views, make a point, argue, influence, be seen, learn, and discuss. The three players in public engagements identified during and discussed in these interviews were *planners, groups* and *elected officials*. I asked about the roles of planners and groups directly through the interview questions. Elected officials, however, were brought into the conversation by participants.

According to the planners interviewed, groups can be highly influential in planning processes depending on their numbers of interested members, their ability to network with other groups and individuals, their capacity to build and deliver articulate and supported arguments, and their influence on elected officials. Groups benefit from relationships with planners through access to information and direct influence, and planners benefit from relationships with groups through access to information, distribution of information to group members and community networks and the validation of public engagement processes. Planners also stated that groups, through

consistent involvement, also can come to have long term influence by becoming recognized by as influential planners, resulting in them receiving targeted invitations to participate in planning events, and by building on networks and involvement which outlast political terms.

Planners want a relationship and input from groups through public engagement processes and other means, such as direct phone calls, emails, or requests for meetings. One planner stated, “people need to realise those public engagement events aren’t the only way they can engage, they can call us or email us or want to have a meeting with us at any time” (interview #2). Planners’ roles and approaches in public engagements are highly flexible, and they are receptive to input. Planners feel that groups should be confident in approaching them before, during and after public engagements. It is their role, and their job, to listen to the public’s concerns. Groups also serve as a resource to planners by providing information about other groups in the area, key players, and as a means of distributing information to community members. Groups can act as a go-between for planners and the larger community. This is an important role as many older adults may not be able to attend, or speak to their needs in public engagements.

Planners stated that particular knowledge of planning is not required for effective participation in planning engagements. As one planner stated, “I don’t think you need to be educated in planning to participate in public engagements. Maybe that is a huge barrier to not going to these things because they think or assume that you have to know a lot of planning to give your opinion” (interview #1). Planners also encourage groups to

contact them with any questions, or to request a meeting before or after any engagement to provide clarity or convey information in a different format.

From the planners' perspective, groups act to represent many individuals and have specialized knowledge and concerns about issues. According to the planners, groups can be a powerful voice and presence in planning processes and decisions. As one planner noted, groups "need to realise that they do have a voice, a very strong one at that if they choose to become organized, mobilized and engaged" (interview #2). Groups are seen by planners as influential, yet too rare participants in planning processes. The planners stressed that groups must first *choose* to act and be involved, and be passionate about what they are working towards. Successful groups argue articulately and rationally while also being passionate. Groups can and should communicate with planners, community members and elected officials. They can lobby officials directly, and hold sway through their influence on votes. As one planner stated;

For groups to get organized and to be involved and to be seen as a presence, when the elected official sees 20 or 50 or 100 bodies sitting in the seats and talking passionately and rationally and are articulate, and at more than one meeting, it really gets their attention (interview #2).

The number of people participating, and the number of people supporting planning recommendations validates processes and decisions to elected officials. Elected officials are more likely to approve the planners' recommendations if they know a large, organized group is in agreement. As one planner said, "I've seen politicians change their mind because there's been 500 or a hundred people in the audience saying yes do this or no don't do this" (interview #2).

Groups can build and maintain relationships in the city, with planners and other groups, which outlast political terms. Groups can use prior involvement in planning processes to hold elected officials to decisions. With long-term involvement, groups can be seen as a presence having influence, and planners and elected officials may come to seek them out in formal and informal planning processes. As stated, “we also try to target if we know there are active community groups in an area we try to engage them, particularly when we are trying to formulate plans like neighbourhood plans or OurWinnipeg we actively try to engage, we actively try to inform them” (interview #2).

Planners and elected officials have different roles and different levels of power in planning decision making. Planners make recommendations to elected officials who then use this information as part of their decision making process. So in addition to speaking with the planner, planners recommend that groups lobby their elected officials. Elected officials are not spoken of in terms of having a role, but as in a group to influence, lobby, and convince. As one planner said, “when people get mobilized and show up at these hearings it does strike a chord and it does make the decision makers notice” (interview #2). Planning processes are political. This is why the size of the organization, or coalition of organizations, has such a large impact on participation outcomes.

According to planners, groups are important to the larger community in public processes because organized numbers have a higher influence on decisions – on planners, elected officials, and other individuals. Groups give the community a stronger

voice in the process, and can offer an organized presentation. Groups are more likely to have the numbers and resources to put together a full, well-researched argument. Groups also are able to work with other organizations to address common issues, creating an even stronger influence in planning processes.

Planners stressed that groups are in the position to hold elected officials to decisions by citing their work and involvement in planning processes. A large organized group is less likely to let council ignore decisions made through a long, intensive process with staff planners. Citing involvement in planning, one planner said that groups can say, “we worked with your planning department to put this plan together and you better darn well approve it because this is our vision for the area”(interview #2). Groups also influence elected officials by lobbying them to look at and address important issues, starting a process with continual opportunities for involvement and influence.

Established, issue-based organizations have the potential to be highly influential players in planning processes through their sheer numbers, established organizational structure, information networks, formal and informal relationships with other organizations, specialized knowledge and experience sharing this knowledge, and broad membership base. The disadvantage lies in the over-crowded schedule of these organizations, the established mandate and funding-based projects, and the organizational structure and hierarchy.

4.2 CURRENT INVOLVEMENT OF SENIOR-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

The focus group sees the group's role to act as an organization, according to its mandate, in service to its members. Currently, Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations – the senior-serving organizations of Winnipeg, are engaging in planning processes by forwarding public engagement notices to their members (like Speak Up Winnipeg) through newsletters or emails. They do not actively encourage their members to participate. As one focus group member said about engagement notices and other information, "I forward everything I get from the City email to the board and kind of leave it to them As a concerted regular thing I don't ...get involved" (focus group). Information is shared, but organized participation is not undertaken or encouraged. Participation in planning processes is left up to individual members' initiative.

Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations are often invited directly to age-related meetings or consultations, mostly with other organizations, the provincial or federal government. As such, they do not actively seek out additional meetings, or actively encourage their members to do so. Focus group participants repeatedly referred to the 'overwhelming' number of aging-related meetings and projects. As participants agreed, "You can't get any work done for your organization's mandate if you're constantly going to consultations so then we have to pick and choose what we go to and then we run the risk of not having the input or being out of the loop." As such, member organizations do not have the time or resources to attend all consultations that

they are specifically invited to, and so do not have the time or resources to seek out participation in open planning processes.

4.3 LEADERSHIP

Lack of involvement in planning processes was attributed to lack of time and resources, and lack of clear connection between planning engagements and organizational mandate by focus group participants. Focus group participants identified a need to coordinate resources and energy to work towards measurable and tangible goals. Member organizations are waiting for permission, direction, or approval for such involvement, and the use of time, energy and resources. These organizations want a clearer direction such as a coordinated strategic plan for senior-serving organizations on moving towards age-friendly communities. There is a desire to use time and resources more effectively, but to also put energy into what will have the greatest effect. As discussed in the focus group, a more directed effort by involved senior-serving organizations would be welcome. As one participant stated, “We have our own mandate of course but to gear it towards, if the focus is on [planning], then we can probably better serve our senior clients if we had an idea” (focus group).

Focus group participants suggested a need to clearly outline the relationship between the Age-friendly Communities CURA project goals and planning, and that “more of an effort should be made with the partners and CURA to somehow make that connection

for us...and say, as partners this is an area that is really important to get involved in” (focus group). There is an understanding and expectation of Age-friendly Communities CURA leaders to indicate and spearhead any direct involvement with any initiative or other organization, such as the City of Winnipeg. They also hoped that the City would reciprocate by acknowledging the importance of this information sharing by mandating planner attendance at any age-friendly presentation. As one focus group member stated, the leaders of the Age-friendly Communities CURA team, “should be going into the City ... and so those planners, if the City is agreeing, then they should have their employees attend this session to find out what it’s all about” (focus group).

The focus group expressed the view that organizations should be invited by the City to have a meeting or do a presentation on age-friendly cities. Unlike planners’ description of their own roles, focus group members see planners as more directed and agenda setting players. From the focus group’s perspective, planners should identify and understand issues, such as age-friendly cities, and should invite key players, such as the member organizations of the Age-friendly Communities CURA to participate in planning processes. Planners are expected to seek out, and then clearly convey information on issues. In essence, the focus group members expect planners to act as other organizations they are used to working with - as issue-oriented and targeting specific groups to invite to the table.

The focus group also stated that the principal investigator and community lead of the Age-friendly Communities CURA project should be doing more to contact the City,

planners and others involved to set up meetings or do presentations. After discussing Speak Up Winnipeg, the focus group decided that either the principal investigator or community lead should contact the City and make a presentation on age-friendly cities to the planners. The Age-friendly Communities CURA team and team member organizations should engage with the planning process as an organization with rank and established decision-making processes.

4.4 PREPARATION

When asked about what a group should do before engaging in planning processes, the planners provided advice in the areas of specific technical actions, general approach, argument structuring, and political actions. According to the planners, to be successful the group should be as knowledgeable as possible, be clear on the issues, and have an unambiguous and rational argument. Technically, groups should check out another meeting to observe the process, identify who speaks first, and see how the room is set up. Groups should call the planner working on the project before the public meeting in order to ask any questions, regarding either the process or the topic. The group should identify what the engagement is for, and what their goal is for that engagement. Simply, the group should make notes on paper on what it is they want to say, and weed out any point which may undermine their argument.

Communication and networking with other groups will serve to strengthen influence on planning decisions. While preparing the argument, the group should anticipate other's standpoints, and work to articulate their issue as something that impacts a wider spectrum. As one planner stated of an example of an effective group, "they made their issue more than just their issue. I think that is how they were effective" (interview #2). There should be a strategy chosen, depending on the type of engagement and the expected audience. An organized presentation should be prepared, with people playing different roles. The argument should be specific, and the group should prepare to 'sell' the vision. Questions should be anticipated and responses prepared. The group should prepare possible solutions, alternatives, and areas for compromise, or where compromise would not be accepted.

4.5 PLANNING IS POLITICAL, AND AGING IS A POLITICAL ISSUE

Planners and elected officials have different roles and different levels of power in planning decision making. Whereas planners provide professional recommendations, elected officials make the final decision based on many factors. As one planner said, "when people get mobilized and show up at these hearings it does strike a chord and it does make the decision makers notice" (interview #2). Planning processes are political. This is why the size of the organization, or coalition of organizations, has such a large

impact on participation outcomes, that is large organizations represent large numbers of votes, and a large influence on votes even outside the organization.

In building an overall strategy, a group should prepare to be continually involved in the process while expressing consistent arguments. Specifically, “get in there early and get in there often and constantly engage” (interview #2). The group should be as knowledgeable as possible, be clear on the issues, and have an unambiguous and rational argument. Communication and networking with other groups will serve to strengthen influence on planning decisions.

Planners said that groups should identify who will be at the engagement, including elected officials, and other groups. These participants’ political stances should be researched. Key players should be identified. Considerations of the audience should be given while constructing the presentation of the argument. As one planner stated, groups “should think about who the audience is, who are the councilors and if they know of how the councilors think, are they conservative, liberal, what neighbourhood they come from” (interview #1). Elected officials, councilors, planning directors and planners can all be contacted before public engagements to discuss the topic or topics.

4.6 DEFINING SUCCESS

From the planners’ perspective a successful planning process can be measured by the number of people who were involved, the level of opposition and support at a public

hearing, and the passing of the bylaw. Success can also be measured by feedback from the public – if the public feels they have talked enough, and had their say. It can also be measured by internal feedback from superiors within the City – one planner cited the direct approval of the Mayor as a measurement of success of both process and outcome of a particular planning process.

the Mayor, he asked me two or three questions but the one that sticks out in my mind was what was your engagement process, how did you consult with people, what kind of feedback did you get. So I thought, ok this, is this legitimate, has there really been an engagement, have we really talked to people, does this really represent the viewpoints of the community (interview #1).

Public engagements can be seen as having two purposes from the planners' perspective – to have public involvement and input into planning decisions, and to validate planning recommendations to council. In looking at public engagement as having the purpose of gaining public input, success is measured by planners as having many people speak, and having as many people speak as much as possible. As one planner stated, “you almost want people to say I’ve talked enough I don’t want to engage anymore as opposed to saying I’ve never had an opportunity to use my voice” (interview #2). Planners also noted the secondary outcomes of successful public engagement as different community members and groups speaking with each other, networking, and having the opportunity to work together and form the basis of future relationships. In an example of a successful group engaging in a planning process, the group, “got involved, often they worked with other likeminded groups, they networked with the mountain biking association, the hiking groups” (interview #2).

Groups serve another purpose by validating planning processes. Large numbers of people at planning engagements validate the processes – efforts to notify the public are seen as successful and any outcomes from the process can be supported by these numbers. One engagement was described as;

we had close to 300 people came through over 2 nights, looked at the plan , made a variety of comments, the feedback we got from the public was very positive, the phone calls and emails, the exit surveys, the comments were very positive, and the best way to describe this, when the plan went to the public hearing which would be the opportunity for those with a concern to speak up no one showed up and it sailed through unopposed which seemed to be a reflection that we had captured the key interests and key concerns and vision for the future (interview #2).

The number of people participating and supporting planning recommendations, and the ease to which decisions pass through public hearings validates processes and decisions to elected officials. Elected officials are more likely to approve the planners' recommendations if they know a large, organized group is in agreement. As one planner said, "I've seen politicians change their mind because there's been 500 or a hundred people in the audience saying yes do this or no don't do this" (interview #2).

Success in planning processes is defined differently depending on the role played.

According to planners, groups can be successful by arguing articulately and consistently, supported by large numbers of interested members. Large numbers of people participating in planning processes is also considered successful by planners because it is believed to show elected officials that recommendations coming out of the process are supported by the people. At the end point, planners deem a planning process a success

if there is no opposition to the decision. Within this framework, there is little incentive to ask whose voice was not heard, or to question why decisions might be passed without opposition.

4.7 NEIGHBOURHOOD OR ISSUE BASED INVOLVEMENT?

Public participation in planning processes and engagements is built around the idea of people living in a geographically-based community participating in deciding how that community will change and grow over time. Planning is set up for and prepares for change over *time* and engages with people based on *place*. Issue-based organizations, such as the Age-friendly Communities CURA members, operate on a large scale, often provincially or regionally, and communicate directly organization to organization with targeted meetings and topic specific agendas. Neighbourhood and place-based planning engagements and issue-based organizations are not connecting due to both scale and understood means of connecting and communication.

Public engagements are geographically, physically based, with expectations of individuals, neighbourhood members and 'citizens' engaging in the process. Groups and organizations referred to in the planners' interviews about successful engagements were formed around a geographically-based issue directly related to a specific public engagement process. These were like-minded individuals living or working in the area affected who organized to form a powerful voice within the process. Planners also

highlighted the value of ‘neighbourhood’ or ‘local’ knowledge, referring to it as ‘real’ knowledge. As one planner said, “it wasn’t this plan being dreamed up by the planners, you know, the pointed headed intellectuals, it was from the community, and these are the people that really know, so that was important” (interview #1). Planners gave examples of people talking to their neighbours, putting together petitions or lobbying “your councilor,” all presupposing a place-based involvement in the planning process.

Many planning engagements are neighbourhood-based, and are set up for the involvement of individuals from the neighbourhood. Notices are distributed locally, and are placed at the site of the proposed development or proposed change. The focus is on what current residents want for the short- or long-term future of the neighbourhood. Planners assess the success of public engagement processes by how many local people come out for public events, and how many local groups or organizations are involved. Local and resident based involvement in planning is also part of the political facet of planning engagements. Planners emphasized that local residents can hold sway in planning decisions due to their ability to vote in future municipal elections, unlike issue-based organizations.

Age-friendly Communities CURA involved organizations are not neighbourhood based, but issue-based, as seniors-serving organizations. Many Age-friendly Communities CURA organizations are also provincial organizations, for example Manitoba Society of Seniors or Creative Retirement. Focus group members outlined that these organizations do not conduct their regular business on the city or neighbourhood level. These

organizations seem to act primarily on an organization to organization basis. As stated in the focus group; “if there’s anything to do with seniors, we’re often called to the table to consult, and it can get overwhelming at times”. These organizations do not seek out age-friendly related meetings. Focus group members talked about how they are often invited to anything to do with seniors’- that is issue-based meetings - along with all other seniors-related organizations.

In addition to neighbourhood or place-based approach to public engagements, the process for becoming involved is different than how these issue-based organizations normally operate. Unlike the meetings and consultations these organizations are usually involved in, with targeted invitation lists and aging specific agendas, the City normally does not target specific groups or invite organizations to planning engagements. As a planner said, “we’re doing public engagement, is that we’re not aiming at to target certain groups” (interview #2). The City uses broad, general, and often geographically specific notifications of public events. Planners emphasized that it is then up to individuals or groups to choose to attend. The topic does not identify issues or explicit groups which may be affected by the decisions coming out of the process. The City also does not invite issue-specific groups that are not based in the neighbourhood affected.

This is a possible explanation for current lack of engagement in planning processes. Identifying a meeting in which senior-serving organizations should be involved is unfamiliar in that the relationship to their mandate is not made explicit, and the process

or etiquette of becoming involved is dissimilar where organizations are not being directly invited. The engagement and topic of the engagement are also place-based and often neighbourhood specific, with notices targeted to that scale.

Planners, groups, and elected officials play different roles in planning processes. Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations act according to their mandates and so participate in targeted, explicitly senior-related meetings, but have not be actively participating in neighbourhood-based or general planning processes. Planners outlined how large, organized and articulate groups can be successful in planning processes, and how the support of these groups, or lack of opposition, helps planners and elected officials judge processes successful. These processes, however, are geographically based, and are not designed for encouraging the participation of issue-based organizations, such as Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations. The next section outlined recommendations for increasing the participation, and effectiveness of that participation of the Age-friendly Communities CURA and member organizations, and recommendations for planners to increase the participation of issue-based organizations, and those not represented in geographically based processes.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In this practicum I set out to develop tools for senior-serving organizations to use to increase the effectiveness of their participation in planning processes. I surveyed the literature on aging, agism, design, and well-being, and the role and potential of participation in planning processes. I designed my research methods around gaining information with which to make this tool. As outlined in the Results section, however, I discovered that a participation tool was neither a desired or recommended first step in increasing the effectiveness of the participation of organizations in planning processes. I then re-examined the literature for not only reasons to participate, but how senior-serving organizations could effectively participate in planning processes. I combined this literature review and the analysis of the interviews and focus groups to develop recommendations for senior-serving organizations and planners and planning in Winnipeg.

The recommendations for senior-serving organizations, specifically Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations are broken into three main themes: participate as organizations; build on established resources; and develop a long-term strategy. The recommendations are discussed fully in this chapter, and are as follows:

Participate as organizations

- Clearly declare that planning is an important tool in achieving goals;
- Tie participation in planning processes to organizational mandates;

Build on established resources

- Build relationships with City of Winnipeg planners;
- Develop an educational component on planning and participation;

Develop a long-term strategy

- Form a core strategic planning group
- Develop a strategic plan for participation past the end of the five year Age-friendly Communities CURA timeframe; and
- Document involvement and track outcomes.

The recommendations for planner and planning are:

- Clearly state and acknowledge that people in a neighbourhood change over time;
- Actively invite specific organizations and groups to participate;
- State clear goals for public engagements; and
- Develop criteria for assessing public engagements, and make these evaluations public.

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SENIOR-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

As outlined in the literature review, agism is reflected in built and social environments, agism and its manifestation changes over time, and participation in planning processes is a means for affecting change. The understanding of aging and agism is reflected in the history of cities (Laws 1995) and our changing understanding of aging and disability is reflected in design and planning changes focusing on the needs of all users (Setterson 2006).

Individual older adults adapt and change their environments, or their behaviour, to compensate for unsupportive environments and changing abilities (Hodge 2006, Lornic 2006). Individual older adults also participate in planning processes (Interview #1, Interview #2) but this can be seen as a means to adapt individual or personal

environments. Rocha (1997) outlines the spectrum of individual to community empowerment. In Rocha's terms, the purpose and stage for the participation of senior-serving organizations in planning processes is *political empowerment* where the group acts to change larger structural and legislative relationships to improve the well-being of all community members. As stated by Rocha, "Although each ... person would potentially benefit from such changes, the process of change does not include individual participation or transformation," (Rocha 1997, 40). These recommendations for senior-serving organizations are meant to support this political empowerment and structural level change, where the city becomes age-friendly at the political and policy level - such as in the municipal development plan.

These recommendations are also based on the idea of participation as a continuous dialogue involving many players affecting change on their environments. Sanoff describes participation as developing solutions from continuous dialogue (1978). As the experience and understanding of aging is continuously changing (Settersson 2006) there is a need for senior-serving organizations to build and maintain relationships with planners, and continuously participation in planning processes so as to maintain the knowledge and understanding of aging issues in planning decisions. Participation is also a process of individual and community learning (2000) where previously unknown or understood needs and values are brought into discussions, and individuals, communities, planners and elected officials can learn about their environments and community. It is also a means for individuals and groups to gain experience and

capacity to more effectively impact decisions made about their environments in the future. As such, I recommend that senior-serving organizations develop an educational component to their participation in planning processes to both increase the knowledge of aging and aging issues of planners and other, and increase the knowledge of participation in planning, planning and aging issues of their members and individuals.

The participation of senior-serving organizations is also an opportunity for transformative planning. As described by Sandercock (2003) participation of mobilized groups, such as senior-serving organizations, can create 'political space' where new relationships can form, and new dialogue and decisions can be formed. Through these complex and evolving relationships, new understanding and communication can take place. Agism is reflected in the built environment, and so too in planning decisions. Through the participation of senior-serving organizations dialogue and communication about aging and agism can develop and be incorporated into planning and decision making processes. As such, I recommend organizations participate in planning processes as organizations, highlight and build understanding and knowledge about aging issues and agism through continuous dialogue and educational components, build relationships with planners, elected officials, and organizations, and document and measure outcomes to examine these evolving relationships and whatever changes they may bring about.

Established, issue-based organizations, like the Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations, have the potential to be highly influential players in planning processes through their sheer numbers, established organizational structure, information networks, formal and informal relationships with other organizations, specialized knowledge and experience sharing this knowledge, and broad membership base, as outlined by the planners interviewed. The Age-Friendly Communities CURA currently has 33 research members representing 15 organizations, a steering committee of five, and an international committee of four (Appendix C).

The Age-friendly Communities CURA project as a network and its member organizations are not actively involved in planning processes. To become involved, these organizations can build on established organizational frameworks. The organizations must clearly identify planning as something for the organization to be involved in. This must be done at the leadership level. Planning must then be tied directly to the organization mandate. Member organizations should develop a long term strategic plan, with established roles and communication strategies, with means of tracking and measurement of involvement. Within this process, member organizations should develop educational material and opportunities for members and planners. Member organizations and the Age-friendly Communities CURA network should build on and develop long term relationships with municipal planners and elected officials as part of a long term strategy for successful involvement in planning processes.

5.1.1 PARTICIPATE AS ORGANIZATIONS

The Age-friendly Communities CURA project as a network, or individual member organizations could be highly influential in planning processes with their existing characteristics. The organizations have the numbers and the technical expertise to step into planning participation. However, as the planners stated, groups and individuals must *choose* to becoming involved in planning processes. The Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations must choose to become involved the same way they choose to do anything as an organization. The two main factors identified by the focus group in making this decision are organizational leadership advocating for this choice, and tying the action to the organizational mandate.

CLEARLY DECLARE THAT PLANNING IS AN IMPORTANT TOOL IN ACHIEVING GOALS

One of the mandates of the Age-friendly Communities CURA project is to assist communities to become age-friendly. Although the Age-friendly Communities CURA project is defined as a *research* project, one of the goals of this five year undertaking is to help communities to become more age-friendly. As stated earlier, the goals of this Age-friendly Communities CURA project, as outlined in its research proposal are:

1. Raise awareness of the importance and benefits of age-friendly communities;
2. Contribute to the development of age-friendly communities by generating knowledge of the factors that contribute to it, and examining the factors and processes that help with implementation; and
3. Build capacity in research and community development among seniors, students, government officials, services providers and researchers to address issues around active aging and age-friendly communities. (Menec, 2007)

The connection between this mandate, its nature and scope, and how organizations choose to become involved, in general, or how organizations engage with planning in particular, needs to be clearer. The support and development of strategic involvement in planning processes, including building relationships with planners, doing workshops or presentations on age-friendliness to City staff, highlighting age-friendly issues in public meetings, and developing a long-term strategy of involvement including education on planning and participation of member organizations individually or as a network, can be supported by these three established goals.

The Age-friendly Communities CURA project members and the main CURA team need to clearly declare that planning is important and a potential tool for working towards the Age-friendly Communities goal. As Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations are familiar, and work with the WHO Age-friendly cities model, the connection between planning and age-friendliness can be framed through the eight areas of transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, community support and health services, outdoor spaces and buildings. It needs to be clear that planning is an important means of achieving organizational goals, and that participation in planning is worth the time, effort and resources of the Alliance and individual organizations.

TIE PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING PROCESSES TO ORGANIZATIONAL MANDATE

The Age-friendly Communities CURA team and individual member organizations need to make a clear choice to being involved in planning. This choice needs to be tied directly and clearly to the organizational mandate, and clearly communicated to all organizational members.

Focus group participants identified a need for a clear direction on engaging in planning, and a desire for a concerted and coordinated effort and investment of resources. If planning is identified as an important means in working towards the organizational mandate, the Age-friendly Communities CURA project could clarify, or add to this mandate by stating that The Age-friendly Communities CURA project will ‘assist communities to become age-friendly by supporting engaging in planning processes.’

The Age-friendly Communities CURA team, once this choice has been made, needs to create a strategic plan for involvement, both for the network of senior-serving organizations, and for individual organizations to carry on after the end of the five year research project. Long-term involvement in planning results in larger influence and greater success, according to the planners interviewed. Long-term involvement can result in relationships with planners and elected officials, higher public profile, agenda setting, and targeted invitation to involvement in municipal matters.

5.1.2 BUILD ON ESTABLISHED RESOURCES

After planning has been identified as an important tool in working towards an age-friendly city, and engagement in planning processes as a role of the Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations, the CURA network of senior-serving organizations could build on established knowledge, skills and networks to build capacity in planning participation. Results from the interviews with the planners showed that organized groups can be highly effective in planning processes, both in short term projects and in long term agenda setting ways. The Age-friendly Communities CURA is a large network, comprised of many member organizations, the University of Manitoba, and the Province of Manitoba. The Age-friendly Communities CURA project has an existing structure, network, goals, and communication system. Each member organization on its own also has these attributes, along with the numbers to influence planning decisions. Members of the Age-friendly Communities CURA have high level understanding of aging issues, and passionate, rational, and organized presentations of this knowledge, which have been presented locally, nationally, and internationally. Academic papers, newsletter and professional journal articles, and even a video have been developed through this project. The Age-friendly Communities CURA project and the member organizations have organized internal structures, with people in different roles.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH CITY OF WINNIPEG PLANNERS

The Age-friendly Communities CURA team and member organizations already have a level of engagement in planning which could be built upon by the development of the strategic plan. Currently, planning engagement information is passed on to organizational members, and Age-friendly Communities CURA members receive information on planning and age-friendliness through presentations at conferences, research forums, and research series. This existing network and introduction to planning and age-friendliness should be an advantage in any new addition or focusing of organizational mandate into planning participation. Members have also been introduced to such processes as 'SpeakUpWinnipeg' and have some connection with the City of Winnipeg through the Mayor's Senior Advisory Committee. The Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations could build on this relatively passive involvement in planning, to a more active advocate involvement.

In addition to a long term development and implementation of a strategic plan, the Age-friendly Communities CURA team and member organizations could begin the process of developing relationships with municipal planners. As stated in the interviews, planners want a relationship with organizations, and are open to being contacted directly and requested for meetings. The City of Winnipeg is in the midst of SpeakUpWinnipeg, the consultation process for the development of the new municipal plan, OurWinnipeg, to be released in April, 2010. It is unlikely that a strategic plan would be completed and implemented before April, 2010, and so a simple and direct approach should be taken

within this time frame. As focus group members stated, the leaders of the Age-friendly Communities CURA project should contact the City directly, request a meeting, and do a presentation on age-friendly communities to municipal planners and staff.

An ongoing relationship with municipal planners and being known to elected officials is part of a long term approach to successful engagement in planning processes. The Age-friendly Communities CURA team and member organizations have experience with inter-organizational relationships, and relationships with government through their work with the Province of Manitoba Healthy Aging Secretariat. To continue the process of building relationships with municipal planners, the Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations could build on organizational processes underway, such as inviting planners to project meetings, including planners and elected officials on mailing lists, and directly inviting planners to research forums. Communication with planners should be consistent, and normalized as part of routine organizational functions. As relationships develop, more information will be able to be exchanged, planners will be more likely to extend targeted invitations to participate in planning processes, and elected officials will recognize and anticipate the involvement and influence of age-friendly organizations.

DEVELOP AN EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT ON PLANNING AND PARTICIPATION

Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations have resources in planning knowledge, development of educational programs, and experience with the

development and dissemination of information. The Age-friendly Communities CURA is a university-based project, partnered with many organizations who serve their members through peer-to-peer educational services. There is existing capacity to establish and maintain a 'basics of planning' education program. There is great potential for 'planning and age-friendly cities' focus, and 'age-friendly cities through planning participation.'

The knowledge and skill already exists within the organization, and any additional knowledge could be gained through developing relationships with municipal planners, based on their stated desire for a more direct and ongoing relationship with groups.

Possible topics for education for organizational members are; *What is planning? Why be involved? How to get involved?* The Age-friendly Communities CURA project and member organizations could also adapt and build on presentations used for Manitoba communities, and national and international conferences to create educational workshops for planners, staff and elected officials. The Age-friendly Communities CURA project has material on the basics of age-friendly, and the impacts of quality of life and active aging which could be used for multiple audiences. There is also future potential to build networks to other groups and interested individuals by highlighting the connection between age-friendly and other issues, such as active transportation, active and safe routes to school, or sustainability and community economic development.

5.1.5 DEVELOP A LONG-TERM STRATEGY

The focus of this research is senior-serving organizations, primarily looking at member organizations of the Age-friendly Communities CURA project. This is a five year project which will be completed in 2013, before the next review of the Winnipeg municipal plan. Successful engagement in planning is enhanced by long term, consistent involvement, so the development of a strategic plan should incorporate the transition from Age-friendly Communities CURA supported to network, or member organization ownership of participation in planning processes. Each organization should make a clear choice to be involved in planning in an ongoing nature, with clear ties between planning and the organizational mandate.

FORM A CORE STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP

Before the end of the Age-friendly Communities CURA project, member organizations should choose how ongoing involvement will take place. Organizations can still network and work together, but must be able to work independently as well. Each organization has its own specific mandate, so may choose different means to participate in planning processes, or specific topics or issues to focus its resources on.

I recommend that a core group, or strategic planning group be formed, to focus involvement, disseminate information, serve as a networking portal, and centralized voice for working with planners, elected officials, and other organizations or individuals. Member organizations should also continue to work together to provide educational

opportunities, and to develop educational programs for the understanding of the ties between planning and age-friendly communities, and how to effectively be involved in planning processes.

DOCUMENT AND TRACK OUTCOMES

A long-term strategy and long term organizational involvement also would benefit from the keeping of records, information and resources. Documentation of involvement could be used to track and evaluate organizational involvement, and used to further influence planners and elected officials. The organization could evaluate the effectiveness of certain strategies, and hone and focus their approach – improving outcomes and using time and resources more efficiently. These records could also be used, in addition to existing literature, to highlight the value and impact of involvement in planning on age-friendliness. Record keeping and evaluation would benefit the resource limited organizations, and support the ongoing research focused objectives of the University of Manitoba and Age-friendly Communities CURA research affiliates.

As part of a long term strategic plan for engaging in planning processes, while building on the Age-friendly Communities CURA project research and education strengths, the CURA members could develop a documentation tool for member organizations, or individuals who wish to participate in public planning engagements. Standardized documentation of participation in planning processes supports the Age-friendly Communities CURA project research focus, and by tying participation to outcomes, it

provides a means of assessing resource allocation which was highlighted by focus group members as a concern. Also, standardized documentation would allow member organizations to track involvement and build on existing networks through the communication of involvement, arguments made, and new contacts developed. Furthermore, documentation is a resource which member organizations can use in communications with elected officials and planners in tracking and assessing the connection between participation and outcomes of planning processes.

The planners interviewed outlined key information that would be useful in successfully engaging in planning. The tool, in the box below includes questions which tie the engagement to the age-friendly communities framework, identifies key people – planners, elected officials, and other groups and individuals-which the participant should identify and work with and influence. The tool also highlights the importance of communication and networking before, during and after the engagement. Also, the tool provides an outline for the preparation and presentation of an organized and rational argument, along with a reminder to submit a written version of the presentation to the planner for additional strength.

Tool For Engagements

Technical Questions

1. *What is the Issue?*
2. *Involvement in this is part of our mandate because _____*
3. *Which of the Eight Areas of Age-friendly Communities does this impact?*
 - *Transportation*
 - *Housing*
 - *Social Participation*
 - *Respect and Social Inclusion*
 - *Civic Participation and Employment*
 - *Communication and Information*
 - *Community Support and Health Services*
 - *Outdoor Spaces and Buildings*
4. *How is this age-friendly?*
5. *How can it be improved?*
6. *Is this a Public Hearing, Open House, Roundtable, Design Charrette, _____ ?*
7. *The Planner in charge is _____*
8. *The Councilors in this area are _____*
9. *Seniors related organizations in this area are _____*
 - *Group Contact _____*
 - *Invited?*
10. *Other groups possibly in attendance will be _____*

Step: Email information to organization members.

Step: Contact all people listed above before engagement.

For the Engagement when presenting...

1. *Speakers are _____*
2. *The message is _____*
 - a. *Sub point _____ Speaker _____*
 - b. *Sub point _____ Speaker _____*
 - c. *Sub point _____ Speaker _____*
3. *Alternatives _____*
4. *Questions we might be asked are _____*
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

At the Engagement

1. *Summarized notes submitted to the planner*
2. *In Attendance _____*
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
3. *Contact/follow up with _____*
4. *Possible networking opportunities _____*
5. *Next meeting is _____*

Follow up contact with _____

Based on my literature review, analysis of the focus group and individual interviews, and my experience working with SpeakUpWinnipeg, I recommend that the Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations participate in planning as organizations, build on established resources, and develop a long-term strategy of involvement in order to be more effective in participating in planning processes. The challenges, even with following these recommendations, are that public planning events are not targeted to specific groups or issues, and are geographically based. The following pages outline my recommendations for planners and planning for making participatory processes more inclusive and representative of neighbourhoods and cities as they and the people in them change over time.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLANNERS AND PLANNING

Participation is a fundamental value and component of planning processes (Sanoff 2000) and planners interviewed for this research expressed a strong desire for continuous open dialogue with groups and individuals. Planning literature examines the importance and challenge of including community members, and members of different groups in meaningful participation in planning processes. As Sanoff (2000) stated, participation is a means to bring light to previously unknown user needs and values, however, with aging populations user needs and values are continuously changing (Gilleard 2006). The

challenge for planners and anyone involved in making planning decisions is that even with the meaningful participation of all community members (in an ideal situation) there is still a need to plan for the future needs of those living in a neighbourhood. A participatory planning process happens at a point in time, but those involved will age, and older people will move into the neighbourhood, and their individual and collective experience of aging will change over time.

I developed these recommendations for planners and planning to accommodate for this place-limited approach to participatory processes, and to support the effective participation of issue-based groups in these processes. As quoted previously, Sandercock (2003) describes participation and planning as a complex relationship where 'professionals do not act alone, and that they are most effective when they act in a transparently political way, in association with residents, politicians, and mobilized communities' (158). Planners' role is to design the 'political space' created by mobilized groups, such as senior-serving organizations. As such, by incorporating dialogue about aging into planning discussions, and by actively inviting specific organizations to participatory processes, planners support communication between these groups, and the sharing of information. Creating actively open public engagements also supports opportunities for changing relationships and understanding between groups, potentially impacting planning decisions and future processes. In this way, planners can be "most effective when they act in a transparently political way, in association with residents, politicians, and mobilized communities" (Sandercock 2003, 158).

The recommendations to "state clear goals for public engagements; and develop criteria for assessing public engagements, and make these evaluations public" are also intended to support continuous dialogue and evolving relationships. As Sandercock describes, groups can demand new relationships and communication in planning processes, and planners then design and develop how these dialogues can take place. Participation in planning processes is also a learning process, where individuals and community members can learn about themselves, their community, and build capacity to effectively engage in future processes (Sanoff 2000). By creating clear goals and assessment of public engagements, and making these public, planners can design and develop another layer of political transparency and area for dialogue. It also gives individuals and groups more information and context with which to decide whether to participate, and a means of tracking decisions and outcomes.

Public planning engagements and planning processes largely focus on, and are set up for the involvement of local people on a place-specific issue. Neighbourhoods, and the people who live in them, however, change over time. Current residents may not advocate for future older people living in their neighbourhood, or acknowledge that they might age in place and become those older people. The issue of aging and age-friendliness manifests itself in neighbourhood and city based decisions – accessible transit, buildings and information, appropriate housing, social inclusion and health are all impacted by local planning decisions. Planners should clearly acknowledge and communicate that neighbourhoods are both physically and demographically changing,

use demographic data and projections in decision making, identify who is missing from discussions, and send targeted information to groups. Planners should also challenge current means of evaluating planning processes and decisions, and make evaluation more transparent and inclusive.

CLEAR STATE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT PEOPLE IN A NEIGHBOURHOOD CHANGE OVER TIME

Although effective groups cited by planners were formed around planning issues and were neighbourhood based, aging and agism is not a place- or person- based issue. Older adults move through the city, entering buildings, accessing information, starting new jobs or meeting new people. People also move into old age. It is not a static group with consistence experiences and expectations, but one which we all, if lucky, will be members of. The experience of aging is continually evolving as different people enter it, the physical environment changes, and social, technical and medical advances impact it. Planning decisions cannot be made on the number of older people in a particular neighbourhood, and aging issues should not be expected to be argued for only the older people living in a particular neighbourhood. All things need to be age-friendly, even nursery schools, even in neighbourhoods with young families or areas filled with junior professionals.

How does planning address the inclusion of perspective of not only the population as it now is, but what it will be? Current neighbourhoods may be filled with young families, which may age in place, or see the movement of older adults into the neighbourhood in

the future. There is individual denial of aging and a refusal to plan for old age, which can be seen as reflected in cities. Consistent highlighting of aging issues in planning engagements cannot be indefinitely dismissed as other people's problems.

If neighbourhood knowledge is 'real' then it is unclear where broader knowledge, applicable in any neighbourhood in the city, and those who advocate for broader issues fit into planning processes. Age-friendly Communities CURA members or seniors-serving organizations may not have neighbourhood knowledge, or a neighbourhood base, but have age-friendly knowledge. Senior-serving organizations are experts on a topic which is present in every planning decision.

In order to address the issue of the limits of neighbourhood or place-based involvement in planning processes, planners and elected officials must first clearly state and acknowledge that those living, working and planning in an area will change over time, and that neighbourhoods and cities need to anticipate and plan for change. This change occurs in the individual – aging, disability, children, marriage, job loss or gain etc. – and in the population – aging, gentrification, immigration, economic changes.

ACTIVELY INVITE SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS TO PARTICIPATE

With this acknowledgement comes the need to question the nature of public planning engagements. Planners need to have knowledge of demographic data, both current and forecasted for neighbourhoods in which they are working. With this knowledge, planners need to identify who is missing from neighbourhoods as they are, and who is

missing from planning processes. Planners need to actively invite organizations and groups in addition to the local, open notices about public planning events. Also, questions used in planning processes need to challenge denial of individual and societal aging. Questions can more actively illicit the type of think and response which incorporates thinking on individual and neighbourhood needs over time.

STATE CLEAR GOALS FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS

Challenging and changing the current means of conducting public engagements and having participation in planning processes will also challenge the current means of assessing the success of these processes. Planning processes are considered successful if many people are involved and if plans are passed by council with little or no opposition in public hearings. This does not measure the representativeness of those who were involved, inclusiveness, or long term physical and demographic changes of neighbourhoods or cities. Additionally, there is no means for the public to evaluate engagements, or have an external check on the system. That is, all measures of success are internal to the City, with no public dialogue on these processes.

Planners need to state clear goals for public engagements, including specific goals for each engagement, and a consistent goal for all City planning engagements. Planners also need to develop criteria for assessing public engagements, and make these evaluations public. This creates a clear expectation for all involved, and also continues the ongoing participation of the public in planning processes. This also increases the

transparency of City functions and planning decisions. Planners need to also develop a long-term view in public engagements, including possible future issues, demographic changes, and imaging to make change over time a more immediate and easier to grasp concept impacting planning decisions.

DEVELOP CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS, AND MAKE THESE EVALUATIONS PUBLIC

There is currently no official means of evaluating and measuring public engagements at the City of Winnipeg, nor is there a standard for deeming engagements successful, or sufficient. Possibly, the measurement of passing of by-laws and adoption by council is the assumed means of evaluation. This, however, does not ask or answer the question of inclusivity, comprehensiveness, or equitable engagement.

Planning needs to address the inclusion of perspective of not only the population as it now is, but what it will be. Current neighbourhoods may be filled with young families, which may age in place, or see the movement of older adults into the neighbourhood in the future. The development of standards of evaluation for public engagements, informed by demographic data and the participation of issue-based organizations could begin to address this need.

Standards for the evaluation of participatory planning processes need to be made public, and the results of these evaluations should be shared. This would aid in providing clear goals for planning events and a means for individuals and organizations

to track and assess the influence of their participation. Standardized evaluation and public results might also shift the focus of validation and determination of success from primarily elected officials and planners to the public. This may also be a means to address barriers and assumptions of not being heard, or not influencing planning outcomes.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

As Canada's population continues to age, and as the experience of aging continues to evolve, the need for older adults and their advocates participating in planning processes also increases. Agism reflected in built and social environments of cities leads to everyday and long term *environmental press* on older adults. Challenging this agism through planning processes can lead towards more age-friendly cities.

Agism is reflected in the built and social environment and has impacts on the well-being of older adults (Gilleard 2006). Agism is expressed in built and social environments, through such things as the segregation of housing and recreation, the design of transportation systems around employment and the movement of goods, and the size of neighbourhoods (Hodge 2008, Denmark 1998, Perry 1929). Agism in built and social environments can be challenged through planning tools like the implementation of universal design, accessible housing, and planning of dense, walkable neighbourhoods (Follette, Mueller, Mace 1998, Burton and Mitchell 2006). However, for this to happen there needs to be an awareness of age and agism. As Sandercock states, "there is no scrutiny of the ideology, class, gender, or ethnic origins or biases of planners, or of the class, gender or ethnic effects of their work" (1998, 4). This is also true about age. Aging needs to be made visible in planning processes. Age needs to be included in planning discussions and work towards equitable cities.

In starting this research project, I was looking at how the participation and the effectiveness of this participation, of older adults and their advocates could be increased. To answer these questions, I interviewed City of Winnipeg planners and Age-friendly Communities CURA members, but found that the detailed information and step-by-step tools were not what was needed, wanted, or suggested for having increased and effective participation in planning processes. Instead I found that organizations must participate in planning processes as organizations and planners must expand inclusion in planning processes.

This research provides recommendations for senior-serving organizations, specifically the Age-friendly Communities project, member organizations, and City of Winnipeg planners. To increase participation in planning processes, and to be effective in working towards an age-friendly Winnipeg, Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations must decide to participate through organizational leadership and hierarchy, tie participation in planning directly to organizational mandates, and create a long-term strategic plan for individual organizational and coordinated participation. Also, organizations should build on their strengths as organizations – numbers of members, networks with other organizations and levels of government, knowledge and passion about ageing issues, and presentation, communication and educational resources.

The challenge for these organizations, and for City of Winnipeg planners, is that current planning processes are not geared towards organizational or issue-based involvement.

Currently, planning engagements are not designed for the involvement of issue-based organizations, and Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations are not specifically set up to engage in geographically based public planning engagements.

To address these challenges organizations such as the Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations must pursue relationships with planners through continued communication, meetings, presentations and age-friendly workshops. Planners need to adapt planning processes to encourage and support the participation of organizations, by receiving these communications, identifying specific organizations and sending targeted invitations, and by re-evaluating the means of measuring success of planning processes. If organizations such as Age-friendly Communities CURA member organizations are involved, and planning processes are adapted to engage such groups, the Age-friendly Communities CURA project, senior-serving organizations and planners would benefit as per their own identified goals of working towards age-friendly cities, and having input and relationships with the community.

Future research is needed to evaluate the implementation of these recommendations and their impacts on the volume and success of senior serving organizations in planning processes. Possible means of research would be the analysis of participation records of member organizations, and analysis of planning and public engagement reports.

Additionally, future research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of this participation on the planning of the City of Winnipeg, in the development of more age-friendly policies, and the change, or lack of change in the design and function of the built form.

The evaluation of success of public planning engagements and planning processes is another area of potential research. The question of whose success is valued, who deems processes successful, and the role of the public in this measurement need to be addressed. It is possible a clear understanding of current goals and evaluation of public engagements may lead to more consistent processes and evaluation. There is a need for further exploration of the role of inclusiveness and representation in the evaluation of planning processes in the City of Winnipeg.

Throughout my experiences as a researcher on the Age-friendly Communities CURA project and as a consultation coordinator for SpeakUpWinnipeg I learned that organizations can be powerful and knowledgeable participants and allies in planning processes. The City of Winnipeg is in the middle of its year-long process of creating a new long-term plan for the City. Through SpeakUpWinnipeg, the City's goal is to have the most public participation possible in this planning process. The Age-friendly Communities CURA, and member organizations, can begin to participate in planning processes, build on established networks and relationships with City of Winnipeg planners and elected officials, and to document involvement and track outcomes. The City is scheduled to review its long-term plan in five years, which provides a window of opportunity for the Age-friendly Communities CURA network and member organizations to become more familiar with planning processes, develop educational resources on planning and participation, and to plan for continued involvement before the end of the five-year research project in 2012. Likewise, this is an opportunity for the City of

Winnipeg to benefit from the knowledge, networks, and work of the Age-friendly Communities CURA project in creating an age-friendly long-term plan. The increased and more effective participation of senior-serving organizations, and involvement by planners of issue-based organizations in planning processes, lead towards a more age-friendly Winnipeg.

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APPENDIX A

OURWINNIPEG BACKGROUND STUDIES

Residential Lands and Infill Strategy,
Commercial Lands Strategy, Employment Lands Strategy
Downtown Employment Study
Downtown Residential Opportunities Study
Sustainable Transportation Strategy
Transit Oriented Development Guidelines
Parks, Places and Open Spaces Strategy
Urban Design Background Study
Sustainable Water and Waste Infrastructure Strategy
Ecologically Significant Natural Lands
Heritage Conservation Management Plan
Active Transportation Action Plan
Origin-Destination Study and the Sustainability Strategy
City of Opportunity
Improving our City's Competitiveness

(City of Winnipeg 2009)

APPENDIX B

THE BACKGROUNDER

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH?

My thesis is based on three main principles. Firstly, social and physical environments both reflect and shape values. Secondly, social and physical environments need to become more age-friendly. Thirdly, participation of older adults and their advocates in planning processes is a means to achieve more age-friendly cities. My thesis is looking at what information is needed for community members of the University of Manitoba's Centre on Aging Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) Age-Friendly Communities project to effectively engage with the City of Winnipeg planning processes. Engaging with planning processes can be used to work towards developing an age-friendly Winnipeg. It will lead to the development of engagement tools for community groups working towards an age-friendly Winnipeg.

The main questions this project will address are

1. How can the participation of older adults and their advocates in planning processes be increased?

2. What questions, strategies, and documentation approaches do advocacy groups need to develop to effectively and comfortably engage in planning processes, to work towards a more age-friendly city in the area of active transportation?

A lack of knowledge and familiarity with planning processes is a barrier to participation.

My thesis seeks to have participants identify information and tools that would make participation in city planning more comfortable and effective.

WHAT PLANNING IS,

Community and physical design reflect values and directly impact the well-being of those that use these spaces. The Canadian Institute of Planners defines planning as “the scientific, aesthetic, and orderly disposition of land, resources, facilities and services with a view to securing the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of urban and rural communities” (CIP 2009). Planning is how we decide what to do with our shared space, money, environment, resources, and visions for the future. As such planning is an essential and powerful tool that can be used by advocates working to develop Winnipeg and its neighbourhoods as places that can enhance the quality of life for all ages.

WHAT SPEAKUPWINNIPEG IS,

Winnipeg is currently in the midst of a one year development plan review process. A development plan guides the location and nature of growth, states its visions and values, and acts as a high level policy document which guides all other decisions in the

City. The new Winnipeg development plan will be called OurWinnipeg, and the process is called 'SpeakUpWinnipeg.' This year-long process is being identified by the City of Winnipeg as the most public engagement intensive development plan process ever used in Canada. The website www.speakupwinnipeg.com is the central means of communication, information dissemination, and interaction.

There are also focused discussions, which are also referred to as 'roundtables' or face-to-face consultations. These are being used for targeted groups such as people with disabilities, urban Aboriginal people, older adults, caregivers, and newcomers. These take the approach of small group discussion, prioritization exercises, and group feedback.

The next stage of the process will begin in autumn with the Call to Action report.

WHAT PARTICIPATION IS

Participation in city planning is one way to be involved with local government.

Participating in planning processes is a way to influence the built form of the city, and long-term development plans which may be in use longer than a political term.

Municipalities are required to inform the public on certain decisions, or hold public hearings. Meetings could also be instigated by community organizations, or as in the case of SpeakUpWinnipeg, the municipality may hold large scale public consultation initiatives with intense, and multiple opportunities to influence the planning of the city.

Participation in planning can occur in multiple ways. Development applications or zoning changes may apply to one lot in the city, but require a public hearing. Larger, long term planning initiatives, such as a development plan, can impact the entire city, or large parcels, and involves more intensive and multiple or long term participation in plan making. Also, participation in planning can take the form of a continual dialogue with planners, elected officials, and other community members and groups to maintain focus on certain issues.

APPENDIX C

Age-friendly Communities Community-University Research Alliance Team Members

Principal Investigator:

Verena Menec Community Health Sciences, University of Manitoba

Community Lead:

Patti Chiappetta Manitoba Seniors & Healthy Aging Secretariat

Co-Investigators:

Judy Chipperfield	Psychology, University of Manitoba
John Everitt	Geography, Brandon University
Bonnie Hallman	Environment & Geography, University of Manitoba
Richard Milgrom	City Planning, University of Manitoba
Frances Racher	School of Health Studies, Brandon University
Elizabeth Ready	Kinesiology & Recreation Management, University of Manitoba
Alexander Segall	Sociology, University of Manitoba
Laura Taylor	Social Work, University of Manitoba

Collaborators:

Frances Kuo	Natural Resources & Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Amanda Macrae	Age & Opportunity, Inc.
Barbara Payne	Community Health Sciences, University of Manitoba
Louise Plouffe	Division of Aging & Seniors, Government of Canada
Marjorie Wood	Creative Retirement Manitoba
Kimberly Weihs	Manitoba Society of Seniors

Students:

Lucelia Luna de Melo
Sheila Novek
Becky Raddatz

Community Liaison:

Louise Hutton
Project Coordinator:
Rachel Ines
Dawn Veselyuk

Partners

Active Living Coalition for Older Adults (ALCOA)
Age & Opportunity Centres, Inc.
Assiniboine Regional Health Authority
Brandon Regional Health Authority
Creative Retirement Manitoba
Division of Aging & Seniors, Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)
Federal Superannuates National Association (FSNA)
Manitoba Association of Multi-Purpose Seniors Centres (MAMSC)
Manitoba Council on Aging
Manitoba Seniors & Healthy Aging Secretariat
Manitoba Society of Seniors Inc.
NOR-MAN Regional Health Authority
Rural Development Institute
South Eastman Health
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA)
Winnipeg in motion
World Health Organization (WHO)