

Executive Summary

Overview

There is a growing need to develop age-friendly communities to meet the challenges seniors face as they age (Cerde and Bernier, 2013). By the year 2050, the population will be comprised of a greater proportion of older people (aged 60 and over) than children (aged 0 to 14) for the first time in human history (Plouffe and Kalache, 2010). The World Health Organization (WHO) is trying to encourage cities to become more age-friendly and has identified eight key themes, relating to a city's structures, environment, services and policies, which are conducive to a community that promotes active aging (WHO, 2007a). Although active aging is a complex concept and extends beyond solely ensuring that seniors remain physically active, designing neighbourhoods that promote mobility is critical since many seniors want to "age in place" (Smith, 2009). Seniors that experience fewer limitations on their mobility maintain a stronger sense of independence and control over their lives (Hodge, 2008).

Since 2012, the City of Kingston has been engaged in the process of becoming classified as an age-friendly city (City of Kingston, 2012). The City's commitment to this initiative provided

to this idea that the physical environment influences an individual's ease of mobility (WHO, 2007a).

topics closely linked

Report Objective

The objective of this report was to investigate how two suburban developments in Kingston, Ontario promote mobility for seniors by assessing and comparing the age-friendliness of the pedestrian environment and existing public transportation infrastructure and services. The two suburban developments selected were the recently developed Walnut Grove, an 'adult-lifestyle community', and Bayridge West, an older suburban development. These developments share the commonality of possessing a high proportion of older adults (aged 55+) compared to other areas in the City, and differ in terms of their built form. In addition to comparing the age-friendliness of these two suburban developments, this report also examined whether the weaknesses uncovered through the analyses of these sites were city-wide problems, or site-specific.

Methods

This report used the comparative case study approach (Yin, 2014) to compare the age-friendliness of these two sites. The primary method of data collection involved conducting field observations

