

AGE-FRIENDLY VICTORIA

DECLARATION

Vision

The vision of the Victorian Government and the Municipal Association of Victoria in signing this Declaration is for better state and local planning for the creation of age-friendly communities. This is the focus of our shared activities on common goals and directions.

Population ageing is a world-wide phenomenon as a consequence of increasing life expectancy. In Victoria, people are living longer and many of today's young Victorians will live beyond 90, even 100, years. We need to create communities that respond to this significant social change and better support people as they age.

It is vital that governments focus on the opportunities as well as the challenges of an ageing population. While older people contribute significantly to our communities, there is more to be done to support and develop the roles and contributions of older people. Ageing populations require actions that promote quality of life and wellbeing, value the contributions that older people make to their communities, remove barriers to participation, and enable people to 'age in place' and maintain local connections and community belonging.

Age-friendly communities encourage active ageing and optimise opportunities for good health, social and economic participation and personal security. They recognise the great diversity of our older population, promote inclusion of older people and respect their decisions and lifestyle choices. They involve service providers, businesses, community leaders and older people in planning to meet ageing-related needs. They enhance quality of life for people as they age, and benefit the whole community.

Local government plays a key role in planning and establishing age-friendly communities and has been assisted in this by the Victorian Government in collaboration with the Municipal Association of Victoria. The Victorian approach is informed by the World Health Organization's *Age-friendly Cities* framework, and the experience of councils' use of World Health Organization's information and tools.

Experience shows that the best way to strengthen the age-friendly capacity of local communities is through partnerships between seniors, governments, communities, businesses, services and support agencies. In partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Victorian Government has been supporting local government since 2006 with initiatives aimed at improving their capacity to plan for and support seniors, and to create communities that better accommodate their ageing populations.

This partnership approach has raised the awareness of ageing across both levels of government, improved knowledge and understanding of international age-friendly cities and communities, and created local age-friendly initiatives. This Declaration builds on these strengths and furthers the partnership between state and local government to continue to support and assist Victorian councils to create age-friendly communities.


Martin Foley MP
Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing

Date: 14 April 2016


Cr Bill McArthur
President, Municipal Association of Victoria

Commitment

The Victorian Government and the Municipal Association of Victoria will build the age-friendly capacity of local communities by:

1. **promoting an age-friendly Victoria** through the role and achievements of local government in creating age-friendly communities and providing leadership to encourage local councils and stakeholders to develop the principles of the age-friendly cities and community directions
2. **supporting** state and local planning processes to create age-friendly communities and using the knowledge, information and tools available through the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities
3. **providing** local councils with leading advice, expertise, access to networks, policy information and other support to encourage local age-friendly initiatives
4. **empowering** seniors' involvement in local age-friendly initiatives by assisting councils to develop active engagement structures and models of localised seniors community input
5. **encouraging** seniors to get involved in areas they see as important such as local community transport, volunteering, community participation, diversity of housing options, seniors safety, technology access and lifelong learning
6. **addressing** the built environment, transport, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication, and community support and health services for age-friendly communities as listed in the 2008 World Health Organization's *Age-friendly Cities: A Guide*
7. **valuing** stakeholder engagement and working together to promote and strengthen partnerships with peak bodies, community organisations, businesses, retailers and council-run facilities.