Place Audit for Building Age-friendly Communities:

WHY? WHAT? HOW?

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Place Audit for Building Age-friendly Communities: WHY?
Determinants of Health

• NOT hospitals, doctors and medical systems
• Four primary determinants of health
  – Individual behaviour
  – Social relationships
  – The physical environment
  – Economic status (McKnight, 2003, p.1)

• Positive conditions of a good life: health, wisdom, justice, community, knowledge and economic well-being (McKnight, 2003, p.2)

• The importance of citizens and their neighbourhoods!
Our Right to the City

• Our daily lives are shaped by the city!

• ‘The city and urban space as a creative product of and context for the everyday life of its inhabitants... a work of art’ (Purcell, 2003, p.578)

• The right to shape the city after our heart’s desire (Park cited in Harvey, 2008, p.23)... ‘A right to change ourselves by changing the city’ (Harvey, 2008, p.23)

• Those who live, inhabit the space, contributing through everyday practices/uses the rhythm, colour, smell, taste of city as a work of art: they have the right to USE and PARTICIPATE in making decisions on the production of space
What is an age-friendly community?

An age-friendly community is one in which ‘policies, services, settings and structures support and enable people to age actively’ (WHO, 2007, p.5)

WHO, 2007, p.5
Importance of Neighbourhoods

- **New Urbanism**: walkable, compact cities and neighbourhoods
- **Sustainable communities**: urban ecology, renewable energy, housing choices, transit-oriented development, education, health, local economy, etc.
- **Complete streets**: streets not just for vehicles but pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users
- **Walkable communities**
- **Place-making**
THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH: A Discussion of the Epidemiologic Literature

I. H. Yen and S. L. Syme
School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720-7360; email: xiavan@ucanr4.berkeley.edu

Associations between neighborhood perceptions and mental well-being among older adults

Anna Toma, Mark Hamer, Aparna Shankar

Therapeutic landscapes and wellbeing in later life: Impacts of blue and green spaces for older adults

Jessica Finlay, Thea Franke, Heather McKay, Joanie Sims-Gould

Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
Place Audit for Building Age-friendly Communities: WHAT?
Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
- Individual behaviour
- Social relationships
- The physical environment
- Economic status

Source: Inspired and modified from Shaffler and Kipp, 2010, p.64.
How can the PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT nurtures active, healthy individual behaviour, great social relationships & abundant employment opportunities?

Source: Inspired and modified from Shaffler and Kipp, 2010, p.64.

Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
### WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities: 33 cities in 22 countries

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Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
Active Individual Behaviour & Great Social Relationships

Outdoor spaces and buildings

☐ Public areas are clean and pleasant.

☐ Green spaces and outdoor seating are sufficient in number, well-maintained and safe.

☐ Pavements are well-maintained, free of obstructions and reserved for pedestrians.

☐ Pavements are non-slip, are wide enough for wheelchairs and have dropped curbs to road level.

☐ Pedestrian crossings are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disability, with non-slip markings, visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times.

☐ Drivers give way to pedestrians at intersections and pedestrian crossings.

☐ Cycle paths are separate from pavements and other pedestrian walkways.

☐ Outdoor safety is promoted by good street lighting, police patrols and community education.

☐ Services are situated together and are accessible.

☐ Special customer service arrangements are provided, such as separate queues or service counters for older people.

☐ Buildings are well-signed outside and inside, with sufficient seating and toilets, accessible elevators, ramps, railings and stairs, and non-slip floors.

☐ Public toilets outdoors and indoors are sufficient in number, clean, well-maintained and accessible.
**Transportation**

- Public transportation costs are consistent, clearly displayed and affordable.
- Public transportation is reliable and frequent, including at night and on weekends and holidays.
- All city areas and services are accessible by public transport, with good connections and well-marked routes and vehicles.
- Vehicles are clean, well-maintained, accessible, not overcrowded and have priority seating that is respected.
- Specialized transportation is available for disabled people.
- Drivers stop at designated stops and beside the curb to facilitate boarding and wait for passengers to be seated before driving off.
- Transport stops and stations are conveniently located, accessible, safe, clean, well-lit and well-marked, with adequate seating and shelter.

- Complete and accessible information is provided to users about routes, schedules and special needs facilities.
- A voluntary transport service is available where public transportation is too limited.
- Taxis are accessible and affordable, and drivers are courteous and helpful.
- Roads are well-maintained, with covered drains and good lighting.
- Traffic flow is well-regulated.
- Roadways are free of obstructions that block drivers’ vision.
- Traffic signs and intersections are visible and well-placed.
- Driver education and refresher courses are promoted for all drivers.
- Parking and drop-off areas are safe, sufficient in number and conveniently located.
- Priority parking and drop-off spots for people with special needs are available and respected.
Active Individual Behaviour & Great Social Relationships

Community and health services

- An adequate range of health and community support services is offered for promoting, maintaining and restoring health.

- Home care services include health and personal care and housekeeping.

- Health and social services are conveniently located and accessible by all means of transport.

- Residential care facilities and designated older people’s housing are located close to services and the rest of the community.

- Health and community service facilities are safely constructed and fully accessible.

- Clear and accessible information is provided about health and social services for older people.

- Delivery of services is coordinated and administratively simple.

- All staff are respectful, helpful and trained to serve older people.

- Economic barriers impeding access to health and community support services are minimized.

- Voluntary services by people of all ages are encouraged and supported.

- There are sufficient and accessible burial sites.

- Community emergency planning takes into account the vulnerabilities and capacities of older people.

Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
Great Social Relationships

Social participation

- Venues for events and activities are conveniently located, accessible, well-lit and easily reached by public transport.
- Events are held at times convenient for older people.
- Activities and events can be attended alone or with a companion.
- Activities and attractions are affordable, with no hidden or additional participation costs.

- Good information about activities and events is provided, including details about accessibility of facilities and transportation options for older people.
- A wide variety of activities is offered to appeal to a diverse population of older people.
- Gatherings including older people are held in various local community spots, such as recreation centres, schools, libraries, community centres and parks.
- There is consistent outreach to include people at risk of social isolation.

Knowledge & justice

Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
Great Social Relationships

Respect and social inclusion

☐ Older people are regularly consulted by public, voluntary and commercial services on how to serve them better.

☐ Services and products to suit varying needs and preferences are provided by public and commercial services.

☐ Service staff are courteous and helpful.

☐ Older people are visible in the media, and are depicted positively and without stereotyping.

☐ Community-wide settings, activities and events attract all generations by accommodating age-specific needs and preferences.

☐ Older people are specifically included in community activities for “families”.

☐ Schools provide opportunities to learn about ageing and older people, and involve older people in school activities.

☐ Older people are recognized by the community for their past as well as their present contributions.

☐ Older people who are less well-off have good access to public, voluntary and private services.

Community & justice
Great Social Relationships

Communication and information

☐ A basic, effective communication system reaches community residents of all ages.

☐ Regular and widespread distribution of information is assured and a coordinated, centralized access is provided.

☐ Regular information and broadcasts of interest to older people are offered.

☐ Oral communication accessible to older people is promoted.

☐ People at risk of social isolation get one-to-one information from trusted individuals.

☐ Public and commercial services provide friendly, person-to-person service on request.

☐ Printed information – including official forms, television captions and text on visual displays – has large lettering and the main ideas are shown by clear headings and bold-face type.

☐ Print and spoken communication uses simple, familiar words in short, straightforward sentences.

☐ Telephone answering services give instructions slowly and clearly and tell callers how to repeat the message at any time.

☐ Electronic equipment, such as mobile telephones, radios, televisions, and bank and ticket machines, has large buttons and big lettering.

☐ There is wide public access to computers and the Internet, at no or minimal charge, in public places such as government offices, community centres and libraries.
Economic Status

Civic participation and employment

☐ A range of flexible options for older volunteers is available, with training, recognition, guidance and compensation for personal costs.

☐ The qualities of older employees are well-promoted.

☐ A range of flexible and appropriately paid opportunities for older people to work is promoted.

☐ Discrimination on the basis of age alone is forbidden in the hiring, retention, promotion and training of employees.

☐ Workplaces are adapted to meet the needs of disabled people.

☐ Self-employment options for older people are promoted and supported.

☐ Training in post-retirement options is provided for older workers.

☐ Decision-making bodies in public, private and voluntary sectors encourage and facilitate membership of older people.

Economic well-being
Place Audit for Building Age-friendly Communities: HOW?
Singapore Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
**Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?**

**Partnership:** elderly, government departments, NGOs, District Council, local organisations

**Place Audit:**
- WHO guidelines

**Focus Groups:**
- Discussions & suggestions

**Inclusive Process:**
- Involving more local opinions

**Information to the relevant Departments:**
- Through formal meetings

**Monitoring implementation**

**Report to WHO**

**Continuous involvement by elderly**
Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
Recruitment & training of elderly participants & volunteers

Auditing the community space
Shatin & Western District: some experience

Promoting age-friendly communities

Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
Outdoor seats: have handles, have backs, with cover to avoid sunshine and rain and not too low.

Outdoor space: regular cleaning of river course, trees are great—add other colourful plants? Knowledge about trees?

Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
Transportation:
- Pavement should be smooth
- Road crossing facilities
- Conflicts among different users

Barrier-free design: railings, consistent tactile paving surface, access for the wheel-chair bound
Place audit for building age-friendly communities: WHY? WHAT? HOW?
Conclusion

• Hong Kong version of the WHO active aging policy?
• Place audit to develop age-friendly design guidelines?
  – Outdoor space and buildings
  – Transportation
  – Housing
  – Community support and health services
  – Social participation
  – Respect and social inclusion
  – Civic participation and employment
  – Communication and information
Accessible & green neighbourhood nourishing positive & active

Individual behaviour
Accessible & green neighbourhood nourishing positive & active Individual behaviour in a nurturing community
Accessible & green neighbourhood 
nourishing positive 
**Individual behaviour** &
an active life in 
a nurturing community 
with respect & 
engagement opportunities