Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities

This checklist of essential age-friendly city features is based on the results of the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities project consultation in 33 cities in 22 countries. The checklist is a tool for a city’s self-assessment and a map for charting progress. More detailed checklists of age-friendly city features are to be found in the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide.

This checklist is intended to be used by individuals and groups interested in making their city more age-friendly. For the checklist to be effective, older people must be involved as full partners. In assessing a city’s strengths and deficiencies, older people will describe how the checklist of features matches their own experience of the city’s positive characteristics and barriers. They should play a role in suggesting changes and in implementing and monitoring improvements.

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.

**Housing**

- Sufficient, affordable housing is available in areas that are safe and close to services and the rest of the community.
- Sufficient and affordable home maintenance and support services are available.
- Housing is well-constructed and provides safe and comfortable shelter from the weather.
- Interior spaces and level surfaces allow freedom of movement in all rooms and passageways.
- Home modification options and supplies are available and affordable, and providers understand the needs of older people.
- Public and commercial rental housing is clean, well-maintained and safe.
- Sufficient and affordable housing for frail and disabled older people, with appropriate services, is provided locally.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

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.

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