

Terms of Reference for the RAIC Age Friendly Housing Options Task Force (February 2016)

1. **Name:** RAIC Age Friendly Housing Options Task Force

2. **Purpose:**
 - 2.1 The Canadian population is aging. Seniors are now the fastest growing age group in the country with nearly 5 million adults now aged 65 and over, an increase of 27% since 2001. This number will increase to more than 10 million by 2036. By that time, four out of every five new households will be formed by people over 65 and older individuals will account for 80% of the housing demand¹.
 - 2.2 The vast majority of older adults (85%) want to remain living independently, and in their own community, for as long as possible, even if they experience changes to their health². However, almost all houses in Canada have been designed for able-bodied people in good health. These houses can quickly become difficult, isolating, and even dangerous places for older persons to live, particularly for those suffering from chronic diseases or cognitive impairment.
 - 2.3 If this situation remains unchanged many seniors may lose the ability to stay in their own homes. This could adversely affect their quality of life and further stress an already overburdened health care system.
 - 2.4 It is the position of the RAIC that the architectural profession has a responsibility to help address this situation with design solutions that assist older individuals to live well and safely in their community of choice.
 - 2.5 To achieve this, the task force will investigate innovative housing options and best practice aging-in-place design guidelines. It will prepare detailed documentation to advocate government, health care professionals and service providers, and the residential industry (homebuilders, renovators, realtors, and financial institutions) about the need for age friendly designed homes and communities.

3. **Membership:**
 - 3.1 Task force members will include RAIC members with professional experience in residential architecture with a focus on age friendly design.
 - 3.2 Task force members may also include RAIC members at large interested in advancing this issue.
 - 3.3 The Chair of the task force shall be elected by the members of the task force. The Board of Directors shall ratify the selection of the chairperson.

¹ Federation of Canadian Municipalities. *Canada's Aging Population: The Municipal Role in Canada's Demographic Shift*, (2013).

² Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Research Highlight, Socioeconomic Series. *Impacts of the aging of the Canadian population on housing and communities*, (2008).

3.4 A Board liaison will be selected by the Board of Directors.

4. Authority and Resources:

4.1 The work of this task force will be performed by its volunteer members, with RAIC office contributions limited to periodic use of the conference calling account (up to 2 hours/month), and the production of occasional communications pieces.

4.2 Any additional resources (budget, staff time, etc.) are approved by the Board of Directors. All efforts to obtain additional revenue are to be coordinated with the Board of Directors via the Executive Director to avoid any conflicts amongst the program streams.

5. Deliverables:

5.1 The Age Friendly Housing Options Task Force will provide to the Board of Directors recommendations for advocacy positions in relation to quality of life issues for older individuals.

5.2 Documentation will be focused, detailed, and grounded in well-documented research.

6. Operation:

6.1 The business of this committee will be conducted primarily through email and conference calls.

7. Amendments of the Terms of Reference:

7.1 Amendments to the Terms of Reference will be made by the Board of Directors.