



SENIORS FOR SOCIAL ACTION (ONTARIO)

ADVOCACY BULLETIN

HOUSING ACCESSIBILITY FOR OLDER ADULTS – IT’S FINALLY HAPPENING!

September 21, 2026

THE FEDS HEARD US

In August of 2025, the Federal Government’s Build Canada Homes put out a Market Sounding paper and asked for feedback (Build Canada Homes, 2025).

Seniors for Social Action Ontario provided that feedback the same month and it was acknowledged with thanks from both Build Canada Homes and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure (SSAO, August, 2025).

In its response SSAO mentioned accessibility and community as being very important to older adults.

The Federal government heard us. Canada Mortgage and Housing MLI Select program has now worked with 370 projects comprising 34,000 units across Canada that have accessibility commitments (Vega, 2026).

OUR THANKS TO KATE CHUNG

Thanks are due to long time accessibility advocate Kate Chung, a member of SSAO, who went public almost two years ago pointing out that with the lack of accessible housing available, older adults have nowhere to downsize to (Vega, 2024). Kate has long advocated universal design principles be applied to all housing. Kate is a living example of how advocacy and speaking up can create change.

Looks like the Federal government heard her too and has built accessibility standards into the requirements for new builds.

THANKS TO OLDER ADULTS FOR RAISING THEIR VOICES

Thanks also to many of you for speaking up and telling builders, developers, and architects that you prioritize independence, mobility, and proximity to family and care. That you want choice, social connection and support available (Vega, 2026).

Apparently, our collective voices are now loud enough and the Federal government's new standards are strong enough that even developers are getting the message. Developers, concerned about running headlong into the "grey glacier" are finally looking at innovative alternatives and fulfilling "aggressive" accessibility standards (Vega, 2026).

It's about time. "In 2022, 40 per cent of seniors reported having a disability, while 27 per cent of Canadians 15 and older reported being disabled" (Vega, 2024). Ontario's Building Code has been sadly lacking, requiring only 15% of housing to be built to accessibility standards.

WELL DONE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT!

But the Feds are right on the mark. Canada Mortgage and Housing's Mortgage Loan Insurance MLI Select, and the Apartment Construction Program are "supporting the delivery of purpose-built rental housing of both market and affordable mixes" and incentivizing developers to pursue more "aggressive accessibility targets and more accessible environmental sustainability targets as well" (Vega, 2026).

DEVELOPERS ARE WAKING UP – THE ACCELERATING ACCESSIBILITY COALITION

Developers are finally waking up to the fact that doing good can create a market of potential older adult tenants as well as providing access to Federal financing.

The best developers are now members of the Accelerating Accessibility Coalition – "an award-winning pioneering community of real estate development and accessibility leaders who share a vision for a more accessible Canada. Through education, resource-sharing and thought leadership, the AAC challenges and encourages home builders to make physical accessibility a greater priority as they build new homes for the growing and evolving needs of the Canadian population" (Accelerating Accessibility Coalition, 2026).

WANT MORE ACCESSIBLE HOUSING IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT AGING IN PLACE?

Talk to your municipal and regional councillors. They are talking to developers every day. Tell them about the Accelerating Accessibility Coalition and the need for affordable, accessible housing for older adults that is now being supported with funding from the Federal government.

Show them this article and tell them you want to see affordable, accessible housing in your town to support your own aging in place goals.

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