

University-Integrated Seniors Village



Potential for Innovation Report

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2022

University-Integrated Seniors Village Report Series

With funding from the Jalynn Bennett Estate held at Trent University, the University-Integrated Seniors Village Report Series was established in 2021 to provide information for Trent's University-Integrated Seniors Village development. Hosted by the Trent Centre for Aging & Society, this series features the following three reports based on consultations with experts in the field, a review of academic, research and sector grey literature, and a profile of existing university-integrated Seniors Village initiatives around the world. These and future reports in the series are available from the Trent Centre for Aging & Society (www.trentu.ca/aging).

University-Integrated Seniors Village Report Series

1. Poulin, L.I.L. (2022). *University-Integrated Seniors Village: State of Knowledge Report*. Peterborough, Ontario: Trent Centre for Aging & Society, Trent University, 45 pgs.
2. Poulin, L.I.L. (2022). *University-Integrated Seniors Village: Environmental Scan Report*. Peterborough, Ontario: Trent Centre for Aging & Society, 176 pgs.
3. Poulin, L.I.L. (2022). *University-Integrated Seniors Village: Potential for Innovation Report*. Peterborough, Ontario: Trent Centre for Aging & Society, 28 pgs.

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Please visit www.trentu.ca/aging and/or email aging@trentu.ca.

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INTRODUCTION

Pursuing innovation in a university-integrated Seniors Village relies on more than the provision of quality older adult care or the facilitation of student placements and research opportunities. Instead, innovation is sought through the identification of a clear vision and supplementary goals that align with the needs and preferences of local populations. Through this community approach, multi-leveled partnerships, physical designs, programs, services and amenities are continually adjusted to ensure the economic sustainability and support of the local community. This collaborative approach enhances the lives of older populations while expanding the range of transformative experiences that foster learning and discovery.

From the *State of Knowledge Report*, it was determined that the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan provides an unprecedented opportunity to become a leader in the field. In particular, the objectives of the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan align with the current political landscape, which expands the community and governmental partnerships available to support development and operation. The findings from the *Environmental Scan Report* reinforce the need for this prescient approach, establishing the lack of socially inclusive and/or environmentally sustainable Seniors Village models currently in operation.

In alignment with the objectives of the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan, this report summarizes the knowledge gained from this research project and provides areas for potential innovation that could distinguish Trent as an international leader in the field. Below is a summary of these critical points to consider:

-  The inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and teachings to inform a prescient Seniors Village model.
-  Intergenerational interaction and sustainable intergenerational living opportunities.
-  The social inclusion and support of BIPOC¹, LGBTQIA+², people with lower socio-economic needs, people living with cognitive and physical disabilities and/or other marginalized populations.
-  The integration of Seniors Village models that foster an informal continuum of care.
-  Interdisciplinary education and research opportunities beyond aging, health and care.




¹ Black, Indigenous, People of Colour.

² Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, two-spirited and other expressions of self-identity.

SENIORS VILLAGE MODELS

Several Seniors Village models have been identified in academic literature, however, in practice, each Seniors Village is uniquely designed to align with the political landscape, community partnerships and the populations it aims to serve. While the most common Seniors Village model employed in Canada is the Campus of Care Model, other models such as homesharing, cohousing, ecovillages and dementia villages have been used worldwide as a means of supporting older populations.

POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATION





-  Cohousing and ecovillage models have yet to be included on a university campus and have been underexplored particularly within the Canadian context.
-  While homesharing initiatives are increasingly being pursued by Canadian universities, many of these projects are based on short-term grants and there is a lack of homesharing opportunities provided in long-term care residences.
-  Only one university-affiliated dementia village exists in Canada presenting a potential area for innovation.

ALIGNING WITH THE TRENT LANDS AND NATURE AREAS PLAN

LEARNING AND DISCOVERY

In university-integrated Seniors Villages, 'Living Labs' and/or 'Living classrooms' provide transformative learning experiences and research opportunities that are mutually beneficial to students and seniors. These opportunities aim to support practical knowledge and skill formation that assist students to become more confident and competent in practice. In addition, most universities provide educational opportunities specifically for seniors highlighting the importance of lifelong learning.

POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATION

-  Interdisciplinary education and research opportunities beyond aging, health and care are underexplored within university-integrated Seniors Villages. Acknowledging connections to other interdisciplinary fields at Trent and other universities/colleges may enhance the well-being of both students and aging populations.
-  In Canada, the provision of research and education on the connection between environmental sustainability and aging is limited to short-term projects that often lack longevity.
-  Although intergenerational living options are becoming more common in Canada there is an absence of intergenerational education and research opportunities that support these experiences.
-  Cohousing and ecovillage models present a rich educational and research context that has yet to be included on a university campus in Canada. Similarly, dementia villages can provide experiential education and applied research opportunities and yet there is only one university-affiliated dementia village in Canada.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE AND INTEGRITY




Environmental Sustainability

Contemporary university-integrated Seniors Villages embrace environmentally friendly physical designs and provide some environmental programming to residents. Internationally, ecovillage models have been particularly effective in supporting environmentally sustainable approaches to caring for aging populations.

Indigenous Knowledge and Teachings

There is a burgeoning interest in supporting the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and teachings in education and research as well as in the care provided to older people. Case examples from long-term care and one case example at the college level provide insight into these pursuits, illustrating approaches that integrate Indigenous and westernized practices. While these initiatives have made great progress, legislation, policies and care regulations at a provincial level can challenge the implementation of these models in practice.

POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATION

-  Indigenous knowledge and teachings have yet to be encompassed into a university-integrated Seniors Village.
-  Some academic researchers propose that cohousing, homesharing and ecovillage models are reflective of traditional ways of living of First Nations People.
-  In Canada, environmentally sustainable models of care have been underexplored and ecovillages have not been included on a university campus.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE, LEADERSHIP AND INTEGRITY

Contemporary Seniors Villages use mixed funding models and ownership to support economic resiliency. Regardless of the funding and ownership model maintained, collaborations with community partners are established as a means of pursuing innovative methods of education, research and care. These connections result in increased resources, funding and operational efficiencies.

Aligning with the Political Landscape

Contemporary university-integrated Seniors Villages aim to align themselves with the current political landscape. Governmental partnerships on a municipal, provincial and federal level are imperative to the development and operation of Seniors Villages as they increase funding, resources and political support. These government connections allow university-integrated Seniors Villages to act as sites of innovation, pursuing methods of integrated and coordinated care that enhance the support provided to aging populations.

Designated Leadership

Often co-funded by multiple community partners, designated leaders seek out mutually beneficial practices that contribute to development and generate operational efficiencies (e.g., resource sharing, bulk purchasing etc.). These leaders ensure Seniors Villages are continually adapting to fit political priorities as well as seek out new community partnerships, secure funding and pursue innovative methods of practice.

POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATION



The current political landscape in Canada highlights the pressing need for affordable housing and for initiatives that are inclusive of populations other than the dominant norm. The most prominent of these political priorities highlight the importance of Indigenous inclusion. Specifically, identifying care models, educational and research approaches as well as affordable housing options for and including Indigenous populations have been centralized in government initiatives at all levels (See Federal and Provincial Priorities that Align with the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan).



The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the growing need to train the next generation of health professionals and to adequately prepare them for real-world contexts of care. This focus has been identified as a priority by the Ontario government (See Federal and Provincial Priorities that Align with the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan).

SOCIAL RESILIENCE, COMMUNITY AND INCLUSIVITY

A Community Approach

Including input from the broader community is a critical component of contemporary university-integrated Seniors Village models to fit the needs of local residents and include the voices of community members that are frequently under-represented. Community partners and organizations play a key role in shaping, funding and resourcing Seniors Villages and all partners pursue a shared overall vision and objectives. Partnerships between educational institutions are particularly common to expand the mutually beneficial education and research opportunities available within Seniors Villages.

Physical Design and Accessibility

The amenities, services and physical spaces of university-integrated Seniors Villages are designed to be adaptive and multi-functional to support the diverse and changing needs of students, residents and the broader community. As such, physical designs of university-integrated Seniors Villages vary widely depending on the unique vision and goals pursued. While these physical designs are diverse, all Seniors Villages consider accessibility and are inviting to the community, students and older residents. Many Seniors Villages include community approaches to seniors care such as “Age-Friendly”, “Dementia-Friendly” or ‘Walkable Community’ frameworks. By doing so, their physical designs, amenities and services aim to support a wide range of age groups and are inclusive of people living with memory/cognitive impairments, physical disabilities and mental health diagnoses.

Aging-in-Place and Holistic Health

Supporting older people to age-in-place by providing a continuum of care is a prominent feature of contemporary Seniors Village models. This approach to seniors’ care fosters holistic health, quality of life and well-being rather than only medical health and physical care. Although this holistic approach is critical to the care of aging populations, the biomedical focus of publically available care in Ontario can challenge older peoples’ pursuit of quality of life and holistic health in practice.







Including Populations other than the Dominant Norm

Several Seniors Village models have been designed to support older populations other than the dominant norm. For example, some Seniors Village models incorporate mixed housing options to account for the diverse economic backgrounds of older people or embrace culturally appropriate care models. Education and research programs have also been created to enhance knowledge and/or improve the care provided to marginalized populations. While these socially-inclusive models exist they are underexplored by universities within the Canadian context.

Fostering Intergenerativity

More recent Seniors Village developments aim to foster intergenerativity through on-site childcare centres, education/research initiatives, homesharing options and/or by providing community services to a range of age groups. These experiences support meaningful intergenerational interactions that are mutually beneficial to those involved. While intergenerational living has been used worldwide to support aging populations, universities in Canada typically provide only temporary homesharing opportunities based on short-term research projects. In addition, the physical designs of Seniors Villages in Canada predominantly only support older populations and therefore the services, amenities and physical designs of these Seniors Villages are not inclusive of younger generations.

POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATION

-  The City of Peterborough presents a supportive context in which to employ the community approach utilized in contemporary Seniors Village models. Certainly, many community planning initiatives within the city align with the objectives of the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan (See [Community Plans that Align with the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan](#)).
-  Most university-integrated Seniors Villages utilize an overarching framework to support the inclusion of older populations (e.g., 'age friendly', 'dementia friendly' or 'walkability' etc.), yet there is a lack of university-integrated Seniors Villages that utilize these frameworks in combination to enhance accessibility.
-  While university-integrated Seniors Villages aim to provide a continuum of care to assist older people to age-in-place, the wait-list and bed allocation process in Ontario inhibits a true continuum of care. Similarly, biomedicine is engrained in provincial policies, staffing structures and practices that guide care provision of older populations, which restricts older peoples' pursuit of quality of life.
-  Cohousing and ecovillage models include principles of co-caring that can assist older people to age-in-place by fostering an informal continuum of care, however, the impact of this approach on education, research and care has been underexplored in Canada.
-  In Canada, there is a dearth of university-integrated Seniors Villages that are inclusive of BIPOC, LGBTQ+, people living with dementia and people living with lower socioeconomic means.
-  While intergenerativity has been a fundamental aspect of caring for older populations around the globe, university-integrated Seniors Villages in Canada have not embraced the importance of intergenerativity in their physical designs or in the living options, education and/or research provided.

RESOURCES

LEARNING AND DISCOVERY RESOURCES

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ECONOMIC RESILIENCE, LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION RESOURCES

COMMUNITY PLANS THAT ALIGN WITH THE TRENT LANDS AND NATURE AREAS PLAN

Age-Friendly Peterborough: Community Action Plan

A community plan that is supported by the Age-Friendly Peterborough advisory committee.

Website: <https://www.peterborough.ca/en/city-hall/resources/Documents/Age-friendly-Peterborough.pdf>

City of Peterborough – Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan

Financial incentives to stimulate construction of affordable housing in Peterborough including three grant and incentive programs.

Website: <https://www.peterborough.ca/en/doing-business/grants-and-incentives.aspx#Affordable-Housing-Community-Improvement-Plan-programs> ; <https://www.peterborough.ca/en/doing-business/resources/Documents/Affordable-Housing-Community-Improvement-Plan.pdf>

City of Peterborough – Housing and Homelessness Plan

The Housing and Homelessness Plan establishes new targets for ending chronic homelessness and building more affordable housing in Peterborough.

Website: <https://www.peterborough.ca/en/city-hall/10-year-housing-and-homelessness-plan.aspx#Housing-First>

City of Peterborough – Community Wellbeing Plan

Community planning initiative focused on improving environmental stewardship, democratic and community engagement, good jobs, safety and health communities, housing, income and poverty and transportation in the City of Peterborough.

Website: https://www.peterborough.ca/en/city-hall/resources/Documents/Community-Wellbeing/CWBPlan-Accessible_PAC_Report.pdf; <https://www.peterborough.ca/en/city-hall/community-well-being-plan.aspx#Fact-Sheets>

City of Peterborough 10 Year Strategic Plan for Recreation, Parks, Arenas and Culture

Outlines the strategic plan for attending to recreation, parks, arenas and culture in the City of Peterborough

Website: <https://www.peterborough.ca/en/city-hall/resources/Documents/Vision-2025-Strategic-Plan.pdf>

Dementia Friendly Canada

Resources to support dementia friendly interactions, spaces and communities.

Website: <https://alzheimer.ca/en/take-action/become-dementia-friendly/dementia-friendly-canada>

Dementia Friendly Ontario

Community planning approach to ensure that communities are dementia-friendly.

Website: <https://alzheimer.ca/on/en/take-action/become-dementia-friendly/dementia-friendly-communities-ontario>

Peterborough Region - Community Safety and Well-being Plan

Broadens the community wellbeing plan initiated by the City of Peterborough the Community Safety and Well-being Plan focuses on the same key areas of focus but for the broader Peterborough region.

Website: <https://www.cavanmonaghan.net/en/local-government/resources/Community-Safety-and-Well-being-Plan---Interim-Report.pdf> ; <https://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/local-kawartha-lakes/news/2021/02/11/kawartha-lakes-to-develop-plan-to-promote-community-safety-and-well-being-in-the-wake-of-covid-19.html?originator=mykawartha.com&showmsg=1> ; <https://www.kawarthalakes.ca/en/news/community-safety-and-well-being-plan-advisory-committee-members-appointed.aspx>

Sustainable Peterborough Community Plan

This is the overall vision for community sustainability in Peterborough.

Website: <https://sustainablepeterborough.ca/community-plan/theme-areas/>

World Health Organization Towards a Dementia Inclusive Society

A framework to support community inclusion of people with dementia.

Website: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240031531>

World Health Organization Age-friendly Cities Framework.

A framework to support communities that are inclusive of aging populations.

Website: <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/age-friendly-cities-framework/>

FEDERAL & PROVINCIAL PRIORITIES THAT ALIGN WITH THE TRENT LANDS AND NATURE AREAS PLAN

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