



***Positive Aging in the New Nova Scotia***

**Department of Seniors Business Plan 2008-2009**

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## A. MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

It is with pleasure that I present *Positive Aging in the New Nova Scotia* – a business plan for the fiscal year 2008-2009 that shows a busy and exciting year lies ahead for the new Department of Seniors.

Premier Rodney MacDonald announced the new Department of Seniors on September 10, 2007. The Seniors' Secretariat Committee of Cabinet Ministers remains an important part of the new department, and it continues to ensure inter-departmental coordination of policies, programs and services affecting seniors, but there is now a stronger voice at the Cabinet table and a Deputy Minister to ensure the voice of seniors is a vital contributor to corporate planning and priorities.

This year's business plan reflects a new leadership role for the new department and it accelerates the pace for implementing the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. It also integrates Government's clear direction for making Nova Scotia more prosperous and self-sufficient by building on existing strengths and seizing opportunities. This year's business plan demonstrates why positive aging is a key contributor to *The New Nova Scotia: A Path to 2020*.

The priorities for this year focus on developing community-based solutions that address the needs of seniors while also helping to prepare Nova Scotia for the aging of our population. The department will undertake key initiatives that enhance the age-friendliness of Nova Scotia communities, support community organizations that involve seniors and enhance their well-being and safety, promote the business and social opportunities associated with the "silver economy," and develop an innovative approach to growing volunteerism. Partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders will ensure we maximize resources, build on the strengths of existing networks, and benefit from the insights and experiences of seniors and non-profit organizations from across the province.

Our department can be proud of the accomplishments to date. Nova Scotia's *Strategy for Positive Aging* was a first in Canada when it was released two years ago, and it remains a source of information and inspiration to a wide range of people - from entrepreneurs and community groups to Senate committees and international networks. Organizations across Nova Scotia, provinces and territories across Canada, federal government departments, national organizations, and jurisdictions well beyond our border have used the Strategy as a guide for developing their own plans for adapting to population aging and meeting the needs of seniors.

Population aging has broad implications in Nova Scotia and around the world. It is in everyone's interest to ensure that seniors are encouraged and supported to remain self-reliant, are able to contribute to family and community in meaningful ways, and can feel safe and secure in their homes and communities. The priorities in the fiscal year 2008-2009 have been chosen because they work toward creating strong, vibrant, sustainable, and senior-friendly communities. This work will benefit seniors, and it will contribute to the economic and social prosperity of Nova Scotia today and in the future.



Honourable Len Goucher  
Acting Minister on behalf of Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson, Minister of Seniors

## **B. MISSION, VISION AND MANDATE**

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### **Mission**

The Department of Seniors is committed to ensuring the inclusion, well-being, and independence of seniors in Nova Scotia by facilitating the development of policies on aging and programs for seniors across government and through the provision and coordination of strategic planning, support, services, programs and information. This will be achieved through leadership and collaboration with our partners.

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### **Vision**

*Nova Scotia is an inclusive society of caring communities that supports the well-being of seniors and values their contributions (Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, 2005).*

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### **Mandate**

- (a) To lead the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*.
- (b) To facilitate the planning, development, and coordination of policies, programs, and services for seniors in partnership with government departments, seniors, and voluntary seniors' groups.
- (c) To consult with seniors and ensure their views are considered by the province in the development of policies, programs, and services.
- (d) To serve as a single entry point to the Government of Nova Scotia – providing information on programs and services for seniors and their families and responding to seniors' issues and concerns.

## **C. LINK TO THE NEW NOVA SCOTIA: A PATH TO 2020**

### ***Nova Scotia's Vision: Building for Families, Building for the Future***

The *Strategy for Positive Aging* is a 10-15 year planning guide for maximizing opportunities so that Nova Scotia is equipped to manage the challenges associated with population aging. The Strategy is clearly and consistently aligned with government's long-term vision for *The New Nova Scotia* and the frameworks that guide this vision – *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity* and *Weaving the Threads: Our Framework for Social Prosperity*.

### ***The New Nova Scotia: A Path to 2020***

*Businesses, governments and citizens need to understand that the bar is being raised for all of us — and there is no opting out. Doing the same things won't be enough and won't get us better results (Premier Rodney MacDonald)<sup>1</sup>.*

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<sup>1</sup> Speech by Premier Rodney MacDonald, Bridgewater Chamber of Commerce, March 22, 2007

The Department of Seniors' focus on preparing Nova Scotia for demographic change advances all the priorities in *The New Nova Scotia*. However, there are five strategic goals and priorities in the corporate path that are most closely aligned with the department's activities:

- Globally Competitive Business Climate
- Globally Competitive Workforce
- Healthy, Active Nova Scotians
- Accessible Services
- Vibrant Communities

#### Globally Competitive Business Climate and Workforce

*Workplace policies and human resource practices that were developed during times of high unemployment and a surplus of young workers are ill suited for the coming demographic changes. Older workers represent a huge amount of human capital and wasting talent is as self-defeating as burning money (Strategy for Positive Aging, p. 130).*

Demographic change and aging are commonly regarded as a threat. The Department of Seniors believes a shift in both attitude and approach is required. Nova Scotians need to consider demographic change and the aging of our society as a challenge *and* as an opportunity for economic growth and improving our province's competitiveness.

In partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development and other stakeholders, the Department of Seniors will host the Silver Economy Conference in the fiscal year 2008-2009. The first in North America, this conference will bring together businesses, the voluntary and higher learning sectors, and all levels of government to learn about new marketing approaches, new products and services, and a wide range of business opportunities that are emerging with demographic change in Nova Scotia and around the world. The conference will also share best practices for workplace policies that attract and retain older workers, volunteer environments that appeal to baby boomer retirees, and learning environments that foster a culture of life-long learning and support the needs of the business community.

The Silver Economy Conference will emphasize *global competitiveness* by featuring international speakers. A formal relationship between the Province of Nova Scotia and the Silver Economy Network of European Regions will also be announced - making Nova Scotia the first region outside of Europe to receive this distinction.

#### Healthy, Active Nova Scotians

*The lack of a defined role for seniors is becoming more of an issue as the number of disability-free years in old age increases. This is not to suggest that seniors must change involvements in which they are currently engaged, but those who are inactive and unengaged represent significant resources that are currently under-utilized. Furthermore, the physical and mental benefits of active living and community involvement are well documented (Strategy for Positive Aging, p. 63).*

The *Strategy for Positive Aging* emphasizes the social and economic benefits of increasing involvement among seniors. This year, the Department of Seniors will implement the Positive Aging Fund - a grant program providing up to \$10,000 to non-profit community organizations for creating projects that advance the implementation of the goals and actions outlined in the *Strategy for Positive Aging*, with a focus on the health, well-being, and community participation of Nova Scotia seniors.

#### Accessible Services

*Transportation is vital to ensuring seniors maintain quality of life (access to essentials such as medical appointments, grocery stores, and pharmacies) and a high quantity of life (access to nonessentials such as the nursing home to visit a spouse, the hairdresser, the local seniors' centre, a nutrition or exercise program, or adult day programs)* (Strategy for Positive Aging, p. 107).

To advance the implementation of transportation-related actions in the *Strategy for Positive Aging*, the Department of Seniors will sponsor an inclusive transportation event to provide networking and strategic planning opportunities for a wide range of government and community partners. Participants will explore innovative models from across North America and beyond. The event will bring diverse perspectives together to find sustainable solutions that address a wide range of needs and build on the diverse strengths of communities across Nova Scotia.

#### Vibrant Communities

*At every Task Force on Aging consultation meeting across the province, participants confirmed that the best solutions for an aging population are found in Nova Scotia's strong sense of community. The emphasis is on supporting volunteers and not-for-profit organizations, better utilizing existing community resources, addressing the challenges that are unique to Nova Scotia's rural communities, and improving literacy* (Strategy for Positive Aging, p. 137).

This year, the department will implement the following initiatives in support of vibrant communities:

- Age-Friendly Communities Program - Building on Nova Scotia's participation in national and international age-friendly initiatives, this program involves a province-wide initiative to introduce *Age-Friendly Communities Guidebooks* to municipalities. This initiative will engage elected officials, staff, and planners in dialogue about how they can ensure that the needs of older residents are considered an important part of the community planning process. The initiative also includes an Age-Friendly Communities Fund to provide municipalities with grants of up to \$5,000 to assist them in creating a range of services, infrastructure, and built environments that ensure seniors are able to lead healthy, active, injury-free lives in their own communities.
- Time Banking Program Development – This unique approach to volunteerism is similar to the “pay it forward” philosophy - for every hour you spend doing

something for someone in your community, you earn one Time Dollar, which you can spend on having someone do something for you. Time Banking programs help people of different ages and abilities while empowering them to help others. The department will provide support to volunteers and stakeholder organizations in developing models for community engagement and hosting events that gauge community interest and open dialogue about the potential for Time Banking programs.

- Seniors' Literacy and Learning Initiatives - In partnership with the Skills and Learning Branch of the Department of Education, the Department of Seniors provides funding for a seniors' literacy coordinator to support and evaluate the ongoing work of eight literacy projects that are funded through the Department of Education's Seniors' Literacy and Learning Grants program.

### ***Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity***

*Nova Scotia is moving into a period of demographic transition. We will likely see a decline in population coupled with more elderly people and an aging workforce. This change will have profound impacts on our social, economic, and labour markets. We cannot definitively predict the nature of all of these impacts, but we can prepare to manage the situation* (Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity, p. 11).

This excerpt is one of many references to Nova Scotia's aging population found in *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity*. The *Strategy for Positive Aging* was the first Government initiative to address the complexity and broad impact of demographic change. It predated *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity* and, thereby, informed and influenced its focus on achieving sustainable competitiveness by eliminating waste of all kinds – in particular, waste caused by underutilizing and undervaluing people.

Both the *Strategy for Positive Aging* and *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity* are ground breaking frameworks that have received national and international attention. At the time of their release (December 2005 and April 2006 respectively), no other province in Canada had attempted this type of approach to addressing the impact of demographic change on the social and economic fabric of Canadian society. Other provinces have since used both frameworks as models for developing their own strategies, and both frameworks have guided the work of federal government officials, senate committees, and national non-government organizations.

Although the *Strategy for Positive Aging* places particular emphasis on meeting the needs of Nova Scotia seniors now and in the future, several of the goals are strongly aligned to *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity's* focus on integrating economic, social, and environmental systems. Specifically, the Positive Aging goals pertaining to “celebrating seniors, maximizing independence, employment and life transitions, valuing diversity, and supportive communities” all emphasize the value of building on community and individual assets and encouraging various sectors to adapt to change by seizing opportunities. The most noteworthy link between the *Strategy for Positive Aging* and

*Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity* is a shared commitment to better utilize the ideas, talents and productive capacity of Nova Scotians of all ages and abilities in both paid and unpaid work.

***Weaving the Threads: Our Framework for Social Prosperity***

*Weaving the Threads* cites the *Strategy for Positive Aging* under Goal 5 (Access and Inclusion) as one of four plans and activities that are already under way and fully consistent with Government’s social prosperity framework. The Access and Inclusion Goal states that, “*the talents and contributions of all Nova Scotians are recognized, valued, and celebrated, and all Nova Scotians have equitable access to opportunities to meet their full potential and contribute to our social prosperity*” (*Weaving the Threads*, p. 33).

The Department of Seniors’ focus on preparing Nova Scotia for demographic change advances all the priorities in the social prosperity framework. However, the most noteworthy link between the *Strategy for Positive Aging* and *Weaving the Threads* is a shared commitment to building the capacity of individuals and communities.

At the heart of the *Strategy for Positive Aging* is the belief that Nova Scotia will be much better equipped to manage the challenges of population aging tomorrow if we are able to maximize the opportunities today. By beginning to plan and prepare now, we have the extraordinary opportunity to empower people to arrive at their senior years in better health and we have the opportunity to seek the full inclusion and participation of seniors in the community.

This year, the department will focus on key initiatives that:

- enhance the age-friendliness of communities
- support community organizations that involve seniors and enhance their well-being
- promote the business and social opportunities associated with the “silver economy”
- develop an innovative approach to growing volunteerism.

**D. PLANNING CONTEXT**

*It’s up to everyone, individuals, governments, business, community organizations and the voluntary sector to anticipate the challenges and take the steps needed to meet them. Some steps can be taken by one sector acting alone, while most would benefit from joint or combined action* (National Advisory Council on Aging).

The *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia* is a framework for government. It is also a comprehensive guide for assisting *all* sectors in planning for an aging population. The Strategy reflects the direct input of more than 1,000 Nova Scotians who participated in Task Force on Aging consultations in 2004-2005. Endorsed by Cabinet in December 2005, the Strategy represents Government’s commitment to ensuring *Nova Scotia is an*

*inclusive society of caring communities that supports the well-being of seniors and values their contributions.*<sup>2</sup>

### **New Department, New Direction**

Premier Rodney MacDonald announced the new Department of Seniors on September 10, 2007 with Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson as Minister. The Seniors' Secretariat Committee of Cabinet Ministers remains an important part of the department, and it continues to ensure cross-departmental coordination of policies, programs and services affecting seniors, but with departmental status there is now a stronger voice at the Cabinet table and a Deputy Minister to ensure the voice of seniors is a vital contributor to corporate planning and priorities.

Upon creating the Department of Seniors, the government provided additional funding of \$800,000 and issued a clear directive that the new department would focus on implementing the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. These significant events empowered and enabled the new department to develop and lead key initiatives that advance this objective.

### **Strategy Adopted as Strategic Framework**

The 2008-2009 business plan is the first for the new Department of Seniors. By adopting the *Strategy for Positive Aging* as the department's strategic framework, this business plan integrates Government's clear direction and demonstrates why positive aging is a key contributor to *The New Nova Scotia: A Path to 2020*.

The 2008-2009 business plan articulates a set of 12 priority initiatives to be undertaken to advance implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. The plan includes concrete initiatives that support the province's social prosperity and sustainable prosperity frameworks.

### **Demographic Considerations**

It is clear that Nova Scotia is undergoing a demographic shift that will have a far-reaching effect on every facet of society.

**Population Aging** - Based on the percentage of the population over the age of 65, Nova Scotia is the oldest province in Atlantic Canada and the second oldest in Canada. Each month, nearly 700 Nova Scotians turn 65.

There are approximately 138,200 seniors in the province and it is expected that by 2031, the number of seniors will almost double. Thus, by 2031, seniors will represent more than a one-quarter (29 %) of the population. In 2006, the average age of all citizens in Nova Scotia was 41.8. Among Canadian jurisdictions, only Newfoundland and Labrador was slightly higher.

Seniors are the fastest growing population group in Nova Scotia and Canada. The rapid aging of Nova Scotia's population is already evident in many communities. Almost a

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<sup>2</sup> Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia - Vision Statement

third of Nova Scotia seniors live in Halifax County (44,970), which represents 12.1% of the population of the County. In comparison, 20% of the residents in Annapolis, Cumberland, and Guysborough counties are 65+ with many other counties in the province nearing 20%.

***Income Levels*** - The overall incidence of poverty for Nova Scotia seniors is comparable to the rate for younger adults aged 18-64. Federal programs such as Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, and Canada Pension Plan help ensure that most seniors are living above the poverty line. However, despite income security programs, 3 in 20 seniors (15 %) or 18,000 older Nova Scotians were living below Statistics Canada's low-income cut-off (LICO) in 2001. The vast majority (67 %) of seniors living in economic hardship were women living by themselves.

Younger seniors (65-74) have a somewhat higher income compared to older seniors (75+). In 2002, the average income for seniors between 65-74 was \$25,200 or 11% more than the income of \$22,700 of older seniors.

Also in 2002, seniors aged 65-74 derived nearly half (46 %) of their incomes from Old Age Security (OAS) and Canada Pension Plan (CPP), followed by private pensions (35 %), investments (10 %), and employment (10 %). In comparison, older seniors (75+) derived more than half (54 %) of their income from public benefits, while 32 % came from private pensions, 13 % from investments, and a modest 1 % from employment.

Unlike younger generations, seniors have relatively fixed incomes due to their limited ability to increase their income through employment or education.

***Labour Force Issues*** - The aging of the baby boom generation, lower fertility rates and net out-migration of young people has accelerated the aging of Nova Scotia's population. *Baby boomers are the larger than expected post-war generation who were born between 1946 and 1964 - the oldest among them have recently entered their 60s.*

Long-term outlooks clearly show slowing population growth and reduced labour force participation rates resulting from the aging of the workforce and retirement of the baby boomers. In fact, Nova Scotia's labour force growth is expected to drop to zero by the end of this decade. If current trends continue, the economic cost of low labour market participation among older workers will be substantial.

***Volunteering*** - In 2004, approximately 35% of seniors in Nova Scotia volunteered in their communities for an annual average of 258 hours. Nationally, the percentage was 32% for an annual average of 245 hours.

According to a Genuine Progress Index study, Nova Scotia lost approximately 30,000 volunteers between 1997 and 2000. Many not-for-profit groups have reported severe challenges in recruiting and retaining volunteers.

**Education and Literacy** -Nova Scotia seniors generally have low literacy. In 1994, fewer than 1 in 5 seniors had the minimum level of literacy required for coping effectively with day-to-day activities and interactions. When considering this, it is important to remember that the educational opportunities available when today's seniors were young were considerably more limited than they are for young people today.

**Living Arrangements** - In 2001, the majority of seniors (94%) in the province resided in private households, and the remaining 6% lived in collective dwellings such as healthcare facilities. Approximately 75% of seniors living alone in 2001 were female.

### **Opportunities**

**Planning for Nova Scotia's Aging Population** - The Government of Nova Scotia has made seniors a priority in recognizing the impact the province's aging population will have on its economy and way of life. Through the *Strategy for Positive Aging* initiative, the province has taken on the challenge of looking beyond today's seniors and considering how Nova Scotia will prepare its programs, services, and infrastructure for the seniors of tomorrow.

The Department of Seniors is the lead agency in implementing the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. In order to better manage the long-term implementation process, the department has committed to supporting and tracking cross-governmental activities related to the Strategy, and to ensuring that each fiscal year significant progress is made in advancing at least one societal action within each of the Strategy's nine goals – Celebrating Seniors, Financial Security, Health and Well-Being, Maximizing Independence, Housing Options, Transportation, Respecting Diversity, Employment and Life Transitions, and Supportive Communities.

**Volunteerism** - Nova Scotia's ability to mobilize the kind of community support needed to meet the challenges of an aging population will depend on growing and strengthening the voluntary sector.

Retiring baby boomers represent a very large pool of highly skilled, capable, and active volunteers. If baby boomers decide to volunteer in their retirement at the rate they did when they were in their 40s and 50s, 1 in 3 will do so. An opportunity exists to strategically influence the volunteer rates of baby boomers in retirement.

**Inter-generational Bonds** – Among the most segregated groups in our society are the young and the old. Both have misconceptions about each other. An opportunity exists to strategically bring the generations together to increase their knowledge and understanding of each other, reduce misconceptions and fears, and foster a culture of caring. Initiatives to ensure community-based programs, schools, and long-term care facilities involve and include all age groups will make better use of existing resources and help bridge the gap between generations. Since baby boomers are less likely to segregate themselves by age and more likely to be involved in activities that include other age groups, it appears that the timing is right to pursue this opportunity.

***Labour Force Issues and Age-Friendly Workplaces*** - Labour shortages in the skilled trades and in some service industries are already being experienced, including a shortage of paid health care providers. Low workforce participation rates among older workers further exacerbate this situation. If Nova Scotia's rates were merely at the national level, the province's workforce would be larger by about 25,000 workers.

Workplace and taxation policies and human resource practices developed during times of high unemployment and a surplus of young workers are ill suited for the coming demographic change. According to the Conference Board of Canada, 75% of Canadians age 51-61 would take advantage of phased-retirement policies to remain in the workforce longer – provided retirement income, pension systems and other financial considerations such as professional fees were modified to eliminate financial disincentives.

In an era where jobs will soon out-number workers, there is a significant opportunity to encourage and support workplace policies and practices that enable Nova Scotia companies to become employers of choice and gain a competitive advantage on a national and global scale.

In addition to enabling businesses to become more competitive, these policies can also influence the way Nova Scotians view their careers and the time they spend in the workforce - creating a society where more time is devoted to children, aging relatives, lifelong learning, and volunteerism. Furthermore, policies that address life-work balance can play an increasing role in retaining baby boomers and attracting the next generation of workers, and workplace modifications that accommodate the physical needs of older workers also open opportunities to people with disabilities.

## **E. STRATEGIC GOALS, CORE BUSINESS AREAS, PRIORITIES & PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

### **Strategic Goals**

1. To improve innovation and collaboration to ensure the diverse needs of seniors are met.
2. To increase the age-friendliness of communities and promote active, healthy aging.
3. To improve the financial security of seniors, particularly those with low and modest incomes.
4. To increase awareness of the value of older workers and the economic benefits of older worker participation in the labour force.
5. To enable seniors to live in safe and supportive living environments, free from danger, fear, and exploitation.

6. To support and promote the important work of volunteers.

## **Core Business Areas**

The Department of Seniors will carry out its responsibilities through the following four core business areas:

### **1. Intergovernmental, Interdepartmental and Government-Wide Collaboration and Policy Development**

The Department of Seniors will:

- Work with seniors and government department/agencies and organizations to support initiatives affecting seniors
- Develop strategies to improve service
- Coordinate meetings of the Seniors' Secretariat Committee of Cabinet Ministers to ensure cross-government collaboration and decision-making on issues affecting seniors
- Collaborate on joint initiatives and participate in ongoing discussions with the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors and Committee Officials

### **2. Stakeholder Consultation and Collaboration**

The Department of Seniors will:

- Serve as a resource to seniors and other government and non-government stakeholders on aging policies, programs, and services
- Participate on issue-specific standing committees of government and non-government agencies
- Facilitate the participation of seniors in the work of the department, and seek their advice on policy issues

### **3. Planning, Coordinating and Delivering Programs and Services**

The Department of Seniors will:

- Collaborate with various government and non-government stakeholders to develop age-friendly programs and coordinate service delivery
- Support and promote efforts at the community level that enhance the well-being and quality of life for Nova Scotia seniors
- Develop and implement new seniors' programs that support implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*

### **4. Communications and Information Sharing**

The Department of Seniors will:

- Assist in the communication of issues and concerns of seniors to government

- Inform and educate various government and non-government stakeholders and the public on aging issues, programs and services for seniors, and promote the contributions made by seniors to family and community life
- Inform government, not-for-profit and private sectors of the economic and social benefits of retaining and retraining older workers and the value of increasing the participation of aging baby boomers in paid and unpaid work.
- Promote innovative solutions for seizing opportunities associated with demographic change and ensuring programs and services for seniors are sustainable

### **Note About Performance Measures**

In 2006, the Department of Seniors (then the Senior Citizens' Secretariat) launched its formal performance measurement system to provide useful information about its work. The initial system enabled baseline data to be collected and targets to be set by the end of the fiscal year 2007-2008. At the end of the fiscal year 2007-2008 (during the preparation of the Department of Seniors 2006-2007 Accountability Report), it became evident many of the measures put in place in 2006 may not be the most suitable measures for the department to track over time. In the 2006-2007 Accountability Report, the department indicated a number of measures were to be reviewed and/or discontinued.

The evolution of the Secretariat into a department, in addition to the department's new focus of providing a number of community grant programs, requires a new focus of the department's performance measures. Therefore, it is important that the department spend time in the 2008-2009 year on revising and/or developing the most appropriate and informative measures. Due to these circumstances, no new measures have been added through this year's business planning process but it is the department's intention to review and adjust previous measures, as well as develop and add new measures, in the 2009-2010 business plan. A change for this year's business plan is, however, that the performance measures have been re-organized under Strategic Goals rather than Core Business Areas to be consistent with a new approach to identifying the work and priorities of the department. This change resulted in our performance measures being listed under fewer strategic goal areas, in contrast to previous years, in which performance measures were more adequately distributed over core business areas. Therefore, in 2008-2009, the department will also ensure that there is a more equal distribution of measures across the strategic goal areas.

The department is committed to having a robust accountability system in place and will ensure this is completed in 2008-2009.

### **2008-2009 Priorities and Performance Measures**

The strategic goals of the Department of Seniors continue to support and advance the Government of Nova Scotia's goals for creating winning conditions and building for individuals, families and communities. The strategic goals are also aligned with and support the implementation of the economic and social prosperity frameworks (*Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity* and *Weaving the Threads – Our Framework for Social Prosperity*).

The following are Department of Seniors goals, with corresponding priorities and performance measures:

**STRATEGIC GOAL 1: To improve innovation and collaboration to ensure the diverse needs of seniors are met.**

Creative thinking, innovative problem solving, and collaboration across departments, governments, and all sectors of society are key to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the policies, programs, and services required to age positively in Nova Scotia. As stated in the *Strategy for Positive Aging*, “solutions to meeting the needs of seniors and all Nova Scotians today and in the future do not rest in convenient thinking, they lie in our collective creativity.”

**PRIORITY** – Collaborate on joint initiatives and participate in ongoing discussions with federal/provincial /territorial jurisdictions on seniors’ issues.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Support the participation of Nova Scotia’s Minister of Seniors in the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors, planned for Prince Edward Island in Fall 2008.
- Provide staff support, including the CEO serving as Provincial/Territorial Co-Chair on the F/P/T Committee of Officials, in the preparatory work for the meeting of Ministers.
- Participate in sub-committees of the F/P/T Committee of Officials including Safety and Security and Healthy Aging, and additional new committees focusing on financial capability and positive images of aging.

**PRIORITY** – Collaborate on joint initiatives, provide informed contributions, and support the work of initiatives led by other provincial government departments that undertake work which impacts seniors, supports community development, and responds to demographic change.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Host scenario planning sessions on the impact of demographic change involving the members of the interdepartmental working group tasked with developing the Action Plan for Positive Aging. (Scenario planning is a method for learning about the future by understanding the nature and impact of the most uncertain and important driving forces affecting our world. The method is most widely used as a strategic management tool, but is gaining popularity for facilitating other types of group discussion about a common future.)
- Engage the Action Plan for Positive Aging Working Group in creating a report to communicate Government progress on implementing the *Strategy for Positive Aging*.
- Participate on aging related standing committees across Government.

- Continually scan and review national and international research and innovations related to a wide range of aging issues.
- Participate in educational and networking opportunities that enable the department to maintain its expertise in aging issues, learn about innovative solutions, and develop partnerships locally, nationally, and internationally.

***Other Supporting Activities:***

- Participate on issue-specific standing committees of government and non-government agencies. *In 2008-2009, representatives of the department will participate on more than 30 committees focused on issues that include: long-term fiscal planning, community development, volunteerism, older workers, caregiving, women/work/care, healthy active living, literacy and lifelong learning, and falls prevention.*

***PRIORITY*** – Lend support to community-based seniors’ organizations, promote the continued growth of Nova Scotia’s seniors’ networks and intergenerational programs, encourage the participation of seniors in the work of the department, and seek their advice on policy issues.

***Strategic Actions:***

- Host regular forums such as meetings of the Group of IX Seniors’ Advisory Council of Nova Scotia and host Spring and Fall Consultations, which bring together nearly 100 representatives of seniors’ groups and people who work with seniors for a full day of information sharing.
- Provide staff and financial support for the second annual Lieutenant Governor’s Award for Intergenerational Programs.
- Encourage the participation of seniors on standing committees, other special task forces, and through special forums related to advancing implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*.
- Provide opportunities for seniors to increase their knowledge and share information, participate in public policy consultations and identify solutions to seniors’ issues.

## **PERFORMANCE MEASURES - STRATEGIC GOAL 1:**

### **Performance Measure: Number of collaborative initiatives, projects and publications of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum.**

While this data was tracked in 2006-2007 and reported on in the 2006-2007 Accountability Report, it was indicated in the 2006-2007 Accountability Report that the measure will be reassessed to determine its suitability as the data gathered did not lend itself to a comparison from year to year. This assessment will be done in 2008-2009.

### **Performance Measure: Measure Related to the Completion of the *Action Plan for Positive Aging*.**

It was intended in 2006-2007 that a number of measures would be put in place related to the *Action Plan for Positive Aging* in which all departments and agencies across government would contribute to the plan. All of these measures depended upon the completion of the Action Plan. However, the plan was not completed due to the need for the Department to accommodate a significant, and somewhat unanticipated, number of requests for speaking engagements, and most significantly, the Department chose to move ahead the completion date of the plan in order to strategically capitalize on new opportunities that were emerging for collaborative joint work with other departments. In fact, it is the realization of these opportunities that will assist in the collaborative development of the *Action Plan for Positive Aging* in the coming year.

New initiatives, such as the Social Prosperity Framework, Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity, the Action Plan for Volunteerism, the Community Development Policy Initiative and the Long Term Planning Council led by the Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee, all provide a requirement and opportunity for the integration of corporate priorities. Certainly, these connections will affect the development of the *Action Plan for Positive Aging*. Due to these changes and opportunities, this measure will be reviewed and an appropriate measure determined.

**Performance Measure: Consultations with Seniors and Nova Scotia's Seniors' Networks.**

<b>Performance Measure: Consultations with Seniors and Nova Scotia's Seniors' Networks</b>					
<b>OUTCOME (immediate or inter-mediate)</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>DATA</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>TARGET Year (Ultimate Target)</b>	<b>Strategic Actions to achieve target</b>
<p>Seniors, seniors' organizations and senior-serving agencies have opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues.</p> <p>Increased awareness and knowledge of the policies, programs and services available to seniors in Nova Scotia.</p>	<p>Satisfaction level of seniors' organizations with information provided by the department on the policies, programs, and services available to seniors and the mechanisms in place for bringing issues of concern to the attention of the Nova Scotia government.</p> <p>Evaluation form to assess Group of IX (<i>advisory committee to the department comprised of seniors' organizations from across the province</i>) satisfaction (low, med, high) with the opportunity to provide advice on public policy issues.</p> <p>In 08-09, a new evaluation form will be developed to determine the satisfaction level (low, med, high) of seniors' organizations attending the Department's Spring and Fall consultations.</p>	<p>Base Year: 2006-2007</p> <p>53% high satisfaction 40% medium satisfaction 7% mixed/unknown</p> <p>Base Year 2008-2009</p>	<p>Target: 2008-2009</p> <p>70% high overall satisfaction</p> <p>To be established at end of 2008-2009</p>	<p>Ultimate Target: 2009-2010</p> <p>80% high overall satisfaction</p> <p>To be established at end of 2008-2009</p>	<p>Hold regular meetings with the Group of IX Nova Scotia Seniors' Organizations.</p> <p>Continue to hold regular consultations with seniors' organizations.</p> <p>Collect data on Seniors' Information Line using updated data collection form.</p> <p>Continue to update Ministers of the department on emerging aging issues identified by seniors.</p>

**Performance Measure: Number and type of standing committees the department participates in.**

<b><u>Performance Measure:</u> Number and type of standing committees the department participates in</b>					
<b>OUTCOME (immediate or inter-mediate)</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>DATA</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>TARGET Year (Ultimate Target)</b>	<b>Strategic Actions to achieve target</b>
Partnerships with government departments and non-government organizations in identifying and addressing the needs of seniors.	Number of standing committees the department participates in.	Baseline: 2006-2007 35 committees	This measure will be revised in 2008-2009.	TBD	<p>Continue to work with the Office of Health Promotion and Protection to: support seniors in their efforts to be active; develop new community-based approaches to healthy active living for seniors; and prevent falls.</p> <p>Continue to implement the senior abuse strategy with assistance from the Senior Abuse Strategy Committee, comprised of internal and external partners.</p> <p>Continue to collaborate with the Dept. of Education on seniors' literacy initiatives.</p> <p>Continue to collaborate with internal and external stakeholders on the seniors' oral health initiative.</p>

**STRATEGIC GOAL 2: To increase the age-friendliness of communities and promote healthy, active aging.**

Age-friendly communities promote positive aging and are guided by the principles of dignity, fairness, participation, respect, safety, self-determination, self-fulfillment, and security. Age-friendly communities provide programs, services, and an infrastructure that enable seniors to access the community's educational, cultural, spiritual, and recreational resources. The broad range of community-based health services, transportation and housing options available in age-friendly communities enable seniors to maximize their independence and pursue active lives that promote good health. Age-friendly communities promote inter-generational programs and activities to eliminate ageism and encourage interdependence between friends, family members, and neighbours.

***PRIORITY*** – Implement the Age-Friendly Communities Program to provide support to municipal governments for creating a range of services, infrastructure, and built environments that ensure seniors are able to lead healthy, active, injury-free lives in their own communities.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Evaluate the results the program's initial release (February 2008) and apply lessons learned by making program modifications as needed.
- Communicate funded projects and promote innovative applications.
- Engage municipalities in exploring options and long-term strategies for improving the age-friendliness of Nova Scotia communities.

***PRIORITY*** – Implement the Positive Aging Fund to support non-profit community organizations in creating projects that advance the implementation of the goals and actions outlined in the *Strategy for Positive Aging*.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Evaluate the results the program's initial release (February 2008) and apply lessons learned by making program modifications as needed.
- Communicate funded projects and promote innovative applications.

***PRIORITY*** – Organize and host the annual 50+ Expo and coordinate Seniors Week Activities.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Fund an events coordinator to organize the 19<sup>th</sup> annual 50+ Expo (June 13-14), secure sponsors, and encourage the participation of exhibitors to provide entertainment and a showcase of products, programs and services for older adults.
- Proclaim Seniors' Week during the third week of June.
- Coordinate Seniors' Week activities and encourage province-wide participation.
- Coordinate the selection and presentation of the Remarkable Seniors Awards for leadership, volunteerism, and community service.

**PRIORITY** – Prepare and distribute publications including: *Programs for Seniors*, *Seniors’ News*, and the *Directory of Seniors’ Organizations*

**Strategic Actions:**

- Maintain the quality and distribution levels of *Programs for Seniors* – a publication that has earned a solid reputation as a reliable and informative resource for seniors, their families, and people who work with seniors.
- Review the content of the *Seniors’ News* newsletter to ensure it reflects the department’s new strategic direction and to ensure it informs a broader audience and identify ways to expand electronic distribution.

**Other Supporting Activities:**

- Continue to support the activities of the Seniors Healthy Active Living Initiative, in partnership with Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection and Recreation Nova Scotia.
- Provide financial support to the Tools for Life Conference, including supporting an inclusive transportation event that will enable cross-province stakeholders to come together to formulate objectives and expected outcomes related to an Inclusive Transportation Summit.
- Continue to provide funding for a seniors’ literacy coordinator to support and evaluate the ongoing work of eight literacy projects that are funded through the Department of Education’s Seniors’ Literacy and Learning Grants Program.
- Coordinate an informative cross-province tour that combines laughter and learning to promote positive aging and increase awareness of Department of Seniors and other Government activities. (The initiative will involve support from private, public, and not-for-profit partners.)
- Continue to coordinate and promote the Seniors’ Art and Photo Gallery.
- Continue to improve and maintain the department’s website to ensure it is a portal to information about new programs and on-going activities of interest to seniors.
- Use the documents *Making Your Printed Health Materials Senior Friendly* (produced by the US-based National Institute on Aging), *Communicating with Seniors* (produced by Health Canada), and *National Framework on Aging* (produced by the F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors) as lenses to determine the senior-friendliness of department communications and policy, and encourage stakeholders to communicate in a senior-friendly format.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES - STRATEGIC GOAL 2:**

**Performance Measure: Consultations with Seniors and Nova Scotia’s Seniors’ Networks**

<b>Performance Measure: Consultations with Seniors and Nova Scotia’s Senior’s Seniors’ Networks</b>					
<b>OUTCOME (immediate or inter-mediate)</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>DATA</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>TARGET Year (Ultimate Target)</b>	<b>Strategic Actions to achieve target</b>
Information on programs and services for seniors is communicated in a senior-friendly format.	Survey method will be used to assess current communications vehicles (quarterly newsletter, Programs for Seniors directory, and website on characteristics such as: suitability of contents, comprehensive-ness, readability, layout, and design. Participants will include seniors and individuals who work with seniors.	Baseline will be established at end of 2008-2009.	To be set at end of 2008-2009.	Set at end of 2008-2009.	<p><i>Programs for Seniors:</i> Maintain contact with seniors’ networks in Nova Scotia to ensure the directory is inclusive and comprehensive.</p> <p><i>Newsletter:</i> Update per feedback from stakeholders</p> <p><i>Website:</i> Update per feedback from stakeholders.</p>
Greater public awareness of the Department and its role and function.	Number of speaking engagements	Baseline 2006-2007: 76 speaking engagements.	Target 2008-2009: 100 speaking engagements	Ultimate Target 2009-2010: 125 speaking engagements	Ensure public awareness of department’s events, activities and accomplishments through effective communications planning and actions.
	Number of visits to the Department website.	Baseline 2006-2007: Data available Aug 1-Mar 31 average 4,883 visits a month. Based upon this average – estimate for entire fiscal would be 58,593.	Target 2008-2009: 70,000 visits	Ultimate Target 2010-2011: 80,000 visits	Website will be maintained and enhanced.
	Number of <i>Seniors’ News</i> distributed.	Baseline 2006-2007: 6,126 (4 editions)	Target 2008-2009: Maintain current distribution	TBD	
	Number of calls received on the Senior Information Line	Baseline 2006-2007: 2,797	Target 2008-2009: 3,000 calls	Ultimate Target 2009-2010: 3,500 calls	Staff will be encouraged to keep up to date the completion of tracking and data forms.

**STRATEGIC GOAL 3: To improve the financial safety and security of seniors, particularly those with low and modest incomes.**

Adequate income is a key determinant of health and strongly influences an individual's ability to age positively. Reducing the rate of economic hardship among those who fall below the poverty line (low-income cut-off), many of whom are single women alone, is key. Taking steps to improve taxation and benefit policies to assist low and modest income seniors, and ensuring baby boomers are financially ready for retirement, is crucial to improving the financial security of seniors today and tomorrow.

***PRIORITY*** – Implement the *Senior Abuse Awareness and Prevention Strategy* with a focus on aspects of the Strategy that address financial abuse.

*Strategic Actions:*

- For a full description of activities related to preventing and responding to the abuse of older adults, see Goal 5. Within this work, there is a specific focus in the coming year on raising awareness and preventing financial abuse, including promoting public service announcements.
- Participate in a new Federal/Provincial/Territorial Officials Responsible for Seniors Working Group to review the financial issues of seniors, with a view to discussion and recommendations on pension reform.

**STRATEGIC GOAL 4: To increase awareness of the value of older workers and the economic benefits of older worker participation in the labour force.**

In an era where jobs will soon out-number workers, there is a significant opportunity to encourage and support workplace policies and practices that enable Nova Scotia companies to become employers of choice and gain a competitive advantage on a national and global scale. Efforts to maximize the skills, contributions and participation of older workers in the labour force will better utilize the ideas, talents and productive capacity of Nova Scotians of all ages and abilities in both paid and unpaid work.

***PRIORITY*** – Host the Silver Economy Conference to bring together businesses, the voluntary and higher learning sectors, and all levels of government to learn about a wide range of opportunities that are emerging with demographic change in Nova Scotia and around the world.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Engage government and non-government partners in planning and executing a conference which:
  - Informs Nova Scotia businesses about the baby boomer market and the opportunities for new products/services related to demographic changes that are taking place on a global scale.
  - Encourages the growth of entrepreneurship within this large, well-

- educated, and soon-to-retain sector of the population.
- Highlights trends in the tourism industry that respond to the interests and needs of an aging market.
- Shares best practices for developing workplace policies and programs that attract and retain older workers and improve workforce participation among other under-represented groups.
- Shares best practices for developing not-for-profit organizations and volunteer environments and opportunities that appeal to the interests and aspirations of young retirees.
- Profiles trends in post-secondary education that attract retirees by sharing best practices for creating the type of learning environment that appeal to older people, support the needs of the business community, and foster a culture of life-long learning.
- Emphasizes *global competitiveness* by featuring international speakers and through the announcement of a formal relationship between the Province of Nova Scotia and the Silver Economy Network of European Regions – making Nova Scotia the first region outside of Europe to receive this distinction.

*Other Supporting Activities:*

- Continue to participate, with partners across Government, on the Long-Term Planning Council (led by Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee) intended to share information on future trends and projections to better respond to coming challenges and opportunities.
- Participate in issue-specific projects and standing committees initiated by a range of external partners, including NovaKnowledge and Nova Scotia Community College.

**STRATEGIC GOAL 5:** *To enable seniors to live in safe and supportive living environments, free from danger, fear, and exploitation.*

Many sectors and community-based organizations have a role to play in developing safe communities and ensuring the safety of seniors. Reducing social isolation, falls among seniors, crime rates, and senior abuse is key. Promoting seniors' safety in an emergency, and increasing their knowledge of medications, frauds and scams; and legal documents such as power of attorney and wills is also crucial. When prevention is not enough, providing supports to those who are victimized is paramount.

***PRIORITY*** – Continue to build momentum in preventing and responding to abuse of older adults by leading the implementation of the *Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention*.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Collaborate with our Federal/Provincial/Territorial, national and provincial partners, including the Senior Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee, to prevent senior abuse, including a particular focus on financial abuse.
- Coordinate, support, and promote province-wide activities that recognize Nova Scotia's fourth annual Senior Abuse Awareness Day and the third World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Continue implementing the senior abuse education and awareness campaign to increase awareness and promote use of the Senior Abuse Support Line.
- Support the further development of the two pilot senior abuse prevention community networks and evaluate options for new networks.
- Consult and collaborate with various departments, agencies/organizations and other partners who have expertise and interest in issues surrounding senior abuse.

**PRIORITY** – Implement the Safety for Seniors Program in partnership with the Department of Justice.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Strengthen links between seniors' safety programming, Government's senior abuse prevention and crime prevention strategies, and collaborative work related to emergency preparedness.
- Support the professional development of seniors' safety coordinators across the province.
- Provide financial support to existing seniors' safety programming.
- Determine a strategy for expanding seniors' safety programming into communities where they currently do not exist.

*Other Supporting Activities:*

- Follow through on collaborative relationships built through the department's participation in two international Seniors and Emergency Preparedness Conferences (the second international conference was held in Nova Scotia in March 2008).

**STRATEGIC GOAL 6:** *To support and promote the important work of volunteers.*

Nova Scotia's ability to mobilize the kind of community support needed to meet the challenges of an aging population will depend on growing and strengthening the voluntary sector. Retiring baby boomers represent a very large pool of highly skilled, capable, and active volunteers and an opportunity exists to strategically influence the volunteer rates of baby boomers in retirement.

**PRIORITY** – Increase awareness of the time banking concept and engage community partners in dialogue about its potential for creating supportive communities by attracting

volunteers, increasing intergenerational interactions, supporting a seniors-helping-seniors approach, and valuing the assets and contributions of marginalized groups.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Provide support to volunteers and stakeholder organizations in developing models for community engagement and hosting events that gauge community interest and open dialogue about the potential for Time Banking programs.

*Other Supporting Activities:*

- Participate on the Volunteerism Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee led by the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection.

## F. HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY

Human Resources staff from the Department of Health carries out the human resource functions on behalf of the Department of Seniors.

In 2008-2009, the Department will have seven authorized Full Time Employees (FTEs) in place at the beginning of the fiscal year with the plan to fill an additional three authorized Full Time Employees (FTEs) over the course of the year. It is also anticipated that additional staff will be required to fulfill the development of the department.

The Department will also provide learning experiences to university students in a variety of disciplines including Family Studies & Gerontology, Public Administration, and Public Relations, as the opportunity permits.

Human resource priorities for fiscal year 2008-2009 are closely aligned with the government's Corporate Human Resource Strategy. The human resource priorities for the coming year are focused upon the growth and development of existing and new Departmental staff. They include:

- Creating an agency employee recognition program
- Developing an orientation program for new staff to the Department
- Providing mentorship to new staff both informally and formally through assigned mentors to new staff
- In the building of the Department, determine organizational effectiveness strategies to maximize efforts and results
- Continuing to utilize internal communications strategies and tools such as regular staff meetings
- Continuing to provide leadership development and core competency development opportunities
- Explore potential for a Career Starts intern to join the Department potentially in the area of policy development and evaluation
- Increasing staff awareness of diversity issues and support training requests
- Support and encourage policy staff involvement in *Policy Network* activities coordinated by Treasury and Policy Board
- Identify Occupational Health and Safety requirements of the Department and ensure representation on joint Occupational Health and Safety
- Encourage staff to be cognizant of programs such as the Employee/Family Assistance Program and *Take Back the Lunch*, the importance of ensuring life/work balance and the need to have fun while at the workplace
- To support healthy workplace goals, ensure all departmental meeting catering is nutritious and healthy
- Supporting staff to attend French language courses to enhance the Department's capacity to deliver services in French
- In a broader view of human resource development, the Department promotes and supports seniors to be involved in committees and task forces across government.

The Department also promotes the value of older workers, within and outside government, as a critical way to address advancing workforce issues.

## **G. BUDGET CONTEXT**

The Department of Health carries out finance, human resources and information technology functions on behalf of the Department of Seniors. This enables the Department of Seniors to function with minimal expenditure for administrative overhead.

The Department of Seniors budget and staffing complement have seen an increase in 2008-2009 which will enable it undertake new activities related to the implementation of the Strategy for Positive Aging, including the development, communication and release of three new community grant programs.

<b>Nova Scotia Department of Seniors Estimated Budget Expenditures 2008-2009</b>			
	2007-2008 Estimate	2007-2008 Forecast	2008-2009 Estimate
	\$ Thousands	\$Thousands	\$Thousands
Program Expenses	(718)	(1,090)	(1,442.8)
Salaries and Benefits	(568.4)	(536)	(684.2)
Total Operating Costs	(1,286.0)	(1,626)	(2,127)
Funded Staff (FTE's)	7.8	7.39	10.0

## **H. FISCAL MANAGEMENT, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS**

In 2008-2009, a number of activities and priorities will create significant implications in the area of financial management, information technology and communications. Specifically, the development and release of three new community grant programs (beginning in 2007-2008), but continuing into 2008-2009, will require the Department to

put in place and refine financial tracking systems, build an easy to access on-line application process for grant proposals, as well as spending a considerable amount of time communicating both the availability and the details of application for the grants.