

Strategies and Initiatives for An Elderly Friendly Environment in the Development Plans in Malaysia: The Case of Perak, Malaysia

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Abstract: *Malaysia is expected to become an aging country by 2035, with 15% of the population being aged. The phenomenon has great impact on the provision of facilities, infrastructure, and services. Development plans are tools accustomed to guide the country economic, physical, social, and human development, have been outlining strategies, initiatives and programs (SIP) to archive specific development, progression, and transformation over certain periods. As SIP pertaining to elderly friendly population are expecting to also be translated in various forms of development plan, this raising concerns on the comprehensiveness of SIPs in addressing the aging population phenomenon. Therefore, the study aims to explore the comprehensives of the development plans to address aging population well-being. A strategy was devised to observed SIPs in development plan if a development were taken place in Perak, a state in Malaysia with the highest elderly population. Content analyses using pre-determined matrix table was used to systematically cross-examine SIPs in development plan with key age-friendly city dimensions. The comparison identified most age-friendly city dimensions have been considered, with each development plan has unique objectives in addressing a wide spectrum of challenges within certain period frames. Although, discrepancies to address the breadth of the age-friendly city dimension existed, collectively, the study ascertained that development plans understudied have taken the best feasible approach to adhere to and complementing issues pertaining to aging population in Perak.*

Keywords: Aging Population, Age-Friendly City, Cross-Examine, Development Plans, Strategies.

1. Introduction

According to World Health Organization, the aging society is shall be regarded as on where the elderly population that consisting of people aged 65 years old and above, has reached seven percent or more of the total population (United Nations, 2015). In context of Malaysia, Department of Statistic Malaysia (DOSM) has estimated that Malaysia population with increase from 28.6 million in 2010 to 32.6 million in 2020, with elderly population shown the highest increment. Similarly, United Nations (2019) has found that elderly population estimated to increase from 2.3 million in 2020 to 6.0 million in 2040 with 38.2 percents.

In addressing the concern, the Malaysia government has developed related strategies, initiatives and programs (SIP) to ensure wellbeing of elderly. For example, Ministry of Health (MOH) has issued the policy on National Policy for Older Person, 1995 (Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, 1995), with a primary focus on the health of the elderly. The policies introduced initiatives aimed to minimise mortality rates among elderly population, while at the same time emphasizing on health care service. In addition, Ministry of Woman, Family and Community Development through Department of Social Welfare has acknowledge has recognised policies that are aligned with National Senior Citizen Policy or *Dasar Warga Emas Negara* (DWEN) and National Elderly Action Plan or *Pelan Tindakan Warga Emas Negara* (Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, 2011). The policies are primarily centred on the provision of the facilities and support services for elderly. Thus, in intention to achieve the wellbeing elderly, these policies are designed to create an independent, active, positive, healthy, and productive elderly which capable of making important contribution to the national social agenda.

In the context of strategic planning in Malaysia, the translation of policies and strategies from national level into a more operational form, predominantly takes the shape of development plans. Development plans in Malaysia can be differentiated based on the government hierarchy cascading from federal, state to local level. In broad, development plan is referred to comprehensive policies, strategies, and initiatives to guide the country economic, physical, social and human development (Abdullah et al., 2022). The plans outline goals and allocated resources to archive specific development, progression, and transformation over certain periods. Rancangan Malaysia or Malaysia Plan has been utilised periodically since 1966 as a significant tool by federal government to manage physical, economic and social development over specific of timeframes (Hezri, 2005; Hezri & Nordin Hasan, 2006; Jeevan et al., 2015). Aside of it, various development plans such National Transformation 2050 (TN50), Vision 2020, New Economic Policies (NEP) and National Vision Policy that have been developed to strategically steer Malaysia's growth over the years (Department of Information Services Malaysia, 2017). Each development has been identified to have unique objectives and timeframes; however, Malaysia Plan has been regarded to be persistently prepared and comprehensive.

For the perspective of town and regional planning in Malaysia, Town and Country Planning act or Act 172, describe development plans as concepts to plan, manage and regulating spatial developments. The act also explicitly categories development plan in accordance with the administrative structure that cascades from state, district and local levels (Abdullah et al., 2022). Structure Plan or Rancangan Struktur is a planning document that describes long term planning strategies for an entire state. Local plan or Rancangan Tempatan refers to a details and more specific development plan that deals with land use planning, zoning, development controls of areas with the administrative boundary at district level and action plan is a development plan that address specific issues at local level (Khailani & Perera, 2013).

Also, there are some states in Malaysia develop its own development plans tailored with its potential, capacity economic, social needs, and human development. The First Selangor Plan (RS1) is a comprehensive development plan that serve as the state Selangor strategic development in becoming a smart, liveable and economic prosperous state in the year 2025 (UPEN, 2022). While Perak Sejahtera 2030 (PS2030) was launch in 2022 is a comprehensive state development designed for long term development (peraksejahtera2030, 2021). Three main principles; dynamic, realistic and achievable forms the strategic plan. These plans outline comprehensive strategies, initiatives and programs (SIP), and allocation of resources to achieve

targeted outcomes. Although development plans prepared by state government are considered as official documents, however, these plans are commonly not gazetted or legally bounded.

The topological aspects of development plan observed suggesting that each development plan has unique objectives in addressing a wide spectrum of challenges within certain period frames. Despite, the fact that discrepancies are strongly defined across, the study also ascertained that each development plans are adhering to and complementing the scopes of other the developments plans.

In Malaysia, strategies are designed to supplement current government policies, particularly when developing a development plan (Abdullah et al., 2022; Khailani & Perera, 2013). In relation to address the issues of aging population, National Policy for Older Person (2009), Dasar Warga Emas Negara (DWEN) and National Elderly Action Plan or Pelan Tindakan Warga Emas Negara (PTWEN) and likewise need to consider by a development plan. However, the application in these plans were identified vague, especially in terms of the width of development plan in tackling the aging population phenomenon (Aziz & Ahmad, 2019). To reduce the ambiguity, it is critically important to assess the policies, strategies, initiatives, and programs (SIP) outlined in development plans. Therefore, the study aims to explore the comprehensives of the development plans to address aging population well-being by assessing development plans in Malaysia. This paper examines layers of development plans in the path to identify strategies, initiatives, and programs (SIP) that address to the issue of aging population in Malaysia. The case study attempts to highlights how the national strategies cascade to local strategies and initiatives as well as comparing the SIPs in the state's development plans with elderly friendly related framework i.e., age-friendly city and aging in place. It is envisioned, by doing so, the study could uncover prospective SIPs that holds relevance may not have been dully addressed in the development plans.

2. Literature Review

Age-Friendly City

Age-friendly city approach was eventuated to address the aging population phenomenon. In the initial form, the approach was originally known as The Active Aging Framework (Orpana et al., 2016; Plouffe & Kalache, 2011; World Health Organization, 2003) before being further improved into Age-friendly city approach in 2007 (Rashid et al., 2022; World Health Organization, 2003, 2007). While, maintaining the fundamental, the age-friendly city approach also considered the needs for other spectrum of demography. The aging population phenomenon has elicited overwhelming responses in the literature culminating in development frameworks, policies, strategies, and initiatives for improving elderly well-being in development. Inspecting on the age-friendly city, the study identified there are eight (8) dimensions that acknowledged to be important towards achieving wellbeing of elderly (refer Table 1). Since introduced, the approach has been adapted in many countries that among those include Japan, Spain, USA, and New Zealand. This implies that the framework can be adapted to match a variety of socio-cultural contexts. (Table 1)

Table 1: Age-Friendly City Checklist

Topic Areas	Checklists
Building and Outdoor Services	Provision of pleasant and clean environment, green areas, friendly walkways, road, pavement cycle path, traffic, accessible building, and services.
Transportation	Affordable transport, reliability and frequency, key destination, specialized service and priority seating area, safe and comfort, appropriate driver, safe road and accessible information.
Housing	Affordable housing and maintenance, friendly design and modification, accessible to facilities and services for aging in place and comfort environment.
Social Participation	Accessible for elderly to join, convenience with facilities and setting, promoting the awareness of activities and fostering community integration in society.
Respect and Inclusion	Respectful and inclusive services, community, economic inclusion and public education.
Civic Participation and Employment	Given volunteer and employment option, provide training and accessible job opportunity, entrepreneurship, civic participation and job payment.
Communication and Information	Inclusive communication and information approaches such as internet, oral and printed.
Community Support and Health Service	Accessible and adequacy services of health, residential, facilities, and economic.

Source: WHO, 2017

Age-Friendly City in the Context of Malaysia

Aging population has become the major concern in Malaysia, implying for several research have been conducted to propose solutions for the phenomenon. As seen via the prism of Aging-in Place, (Tobi et al., 2017) attempts to address the issues through housing, facilities, and support services provision. Observing details especially the broad structure of the framework and entailed themes, ones will certainly be able to establish clear relationship with the age-friendly city framework developed by the World Health Organization (who, 2007). Tobi et al., (2017) established a framework based on three (3) main themes that represent areas concerns with aging in place including housing, facilities and service, and social. The intangible aspects of housing include providing lands for activities, consistent income aid and age in place policy development. While the tangibles are more concern with elderly housing design, maintenance and universal design application. For the facilities and service theme, concerns are on centred distribution and activities at facilities, the deliverability and accessibility of ambulances, medical assistance, caretakers and carers and educational programs. Whereas, transportation and mobility relates to accessibility and usability of public local transport.

Rashid et al., (2022) proposed Malaysia City for Aging Population (MCAP), which is based on the WHO age-friendly city framework and consider local socio-culture perspectives. The framework involves eight (8) themes which include building and outdoor spaces, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information and community support and employment, as main dimensions. Link to the dimensions is 24 key city features that are considered as necessary to being considered as quick win strategies to adapt city to become more elderly friendly. (Table 2)

Table 2: Features of Age-Friendly City Based on the Importance in Context of Ipoh and Taiping

Dimension	Features
Building and Outdoor Spaces	Age-friendly business environment
	An age-friendly pedestrian system that includes railing and non-slippery surface
	Sufficient and accessible public toilet for all ages, mainly the elderly
Transportation	Public transport service to key destination
	Training for transportation staff
	Roads that are well maintain
Housing	Residential design for elderly
	Housing assist in living
	Fund to own or rent a residential unit
	Elderly housing option
Social Participation	Access to facilities
	Availability of age-friendly events and activities in the neighbourhood or city centre
	Guide service on social participation (e.g; age-friendly school, colleges, universities and events)
	Opportunities for older adults to participate in decision-making bodies
Respect and Inclusion	Intergenerational cultural program/celebration
Civic Participation and Employment	Provide service assistant to the elderly and respect
	Employment assistant service for the elderly
	Staff training to conduct elderly program
	Volunteering option for the elderly
Communication and Information	Database of the elderly living alone
	Elderly-friendly information and communication tools
Community Support and Health Services	The elderly emergency system that connects the elderly with emergency service
	Crime free in the elderly living environment
	Emergency planning for disaster
	Health and support social services

Source: Rashid et al., 2022

Considering the scarcity of elderly friendly frameworks suited for the Malaysian context, both frameworks by Tobi et al., (2018) and Rashid et al., (2022), are worth considering as benchmarks to measure age-friendly city environments. Although both frameworks are originated from World Health Organisation, age-friendly city framework and wellbeing concepts, the features or subthemes forming the frameworks differ slightly. The differences are anticipated considering the variation of goals of the research, needs of local participants and above all are conditioned by unique scopes and limitations. Therefore, considering the dimensions between framework are highly similar, maintaining the use of comparable dimensions and recomposing those that are dissimilar will be able to yield a comprehensive framework for this study. Assessment made on dimensions identified Tobi et al have included mobility as component in transportation. This suggesting being independently mobile instead to solely based on availability of transportation service is a proxy of independent and active aging (Ryan et al., 2015). Similarly, Rashid et al show same trait by considering maintenance of road that relate with mobility independent in the framework. For housing, Tobi suggesting universal design and maintenance as pivotal elements whereas Rashid include ownership and assistance. Regardless of the differences across between frameworks, the study ascertained that

each framework adheres to and enhances the scopes of other framework. Considering this, the study identified eight main dimensions as proposed by WHO (2017) remains as the key dimensions of age-friendly city and inclusion of universal design, maintenance in housing dimension, whilst mobility is merged with transportation, will certainly incapsulate more vital elements to address well-being of aging population.

3. Methodology

To achieve the goal, a two-stage sequential approach was used. In the first stage, population analyses using online based demographical data was conducted to examine aging population trends across states in Malaysia and determine the study area. A strategic approach was then conducted to examine development plans in the scenario of an occurrence of development within the Malaysia state characterised by the highest aging population. For this reason, related development plans pertaining to the state were initially identified, read through and the strategies, initiatives and program (SIP) related to, or addressing with, aging population phenomenon were recognised. The SIPs were then arranged within a matrix table, where row is corresponds to a specific SIP, and each column represents a key dimension associated with age-friendly city. Each SIP was systematically cross-examined with the dimensions of age-friendly city to determine its relevancy to a particular dimension. The tabulated data were then analysed to identify patterns and trends, aiming to pinpoint potential disparities between SIPs and the dimensions of age-friendly city.

Study Area Selection: Population Analysis

The determination of the study area is contingent upon analysis of population. The data of state population distribution in Malaysia as for the year 2020, were sourced from Department of Statistic Malaysia (DOSM). This analysis remains as the tool for discerning demographical trends within and across states in Malaysia. Leveraging the findings, particularly the distribution of aging population, along with its proportion relative to the overall population, enable demarcation of optimal study area. The analyses in Table 3, highlights Perak has the highest concentration of aging population accounting for a percentage of 10.6 or equating to 266,283 aged people. Although the absolute count of aging people in Selangor surpassed that of Perak, standing at 339,477, however, its percentage was comparatively lower. This discrepancy is mainly due to the overall population in Selangor is much higher compared to Perak. Given the empirical findings, the study has ascertained Perak as the most pertinent state for further investigation. (Table 3)

Table 3: Aging Population in Perak Local Authorities Projection

State	Overall Population	Aged Population	Percentage
Johor	3,749,400	269,957	7.2
Kedah	2,180,600	172,267	7.9
Kelantan	1,885,700	122,571	6.5
Melaka	930,700	77,248	8.3
Negeri Sembilan	1,130,300	90,424	8.0
Pahang	1,674,600	120,571	7.2
Perak	2,512,100	266,283	10.6
Perlis	254,400	23,150	9.1
Pulau Pinang	1,774,600	152,616	8.6
Sabah	3,903,400	132,716	3.4
Sarawak	2,812,800	213,773	7.6
Selangor	6,528,400	339,477	5.2
Terengganu	1,245,700	71,005	5.7
Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur	1,780,700	128,210	7.2
Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan	99,300	4,369	4.4
Wilayah Persekutuan Putrajaya	103,800	1,661	1.6
Total	32,566,500	2,186,298	6.7

Source: DOSM, 2020

4. Result and Findings

The following sections elucidate the content analyses examining age-friendly city dimension in strategies, initiatives and program (SIP) across development plans. The outcomes are strategically organized by highlighting findings for each development plan, commencing from federal level and cascading to state, district and local tiers. (Table 4)

Twelve Malaysia Plan

The Twelve Malaysia Plan (RMK12) is primarily oriented towards the resolution of post pandemic issues. The plan encompasses of three main themes and underpinning by four policy enablers. Of the themes, two were identified to be highly relevant in addressing the issues of aging population. First, Theme 2 which is Strengthening Safety, Wellbeing and Inclusivity which emphasizes the aspect of health care facilities and the provision of facilities for the elderly. This theme is led through Strategy B1: Streamlining health care and Strengthening the Elderly Health Care Program. This strategy (C3-1) emphasizes the design aspects of elderly care facilities that comply with the Private Elderly Health Care Facilities and Services Act 2018 and the Care Centres (Amendment) Act 2018. This strategy also includes an awareness program on aging and healthy eating. While Strategy C3-2 in this theme, is related to efforts to create inclusive housing for the elderly, that emphasizes on the use of universal design in housing projects and the provision of age-friendly facilities for public parks and recreational spaces. The theme also places significant emphasis on the facet of physical activity, as articulated by Strategy D1-1. This strategy is designed to promote sports for an active and healthy life through the provision of specific facilities to meet the requirement of specific demographical segments (D1-2). This is particularly evident in the development of new sports facilities and recreational areas.

Second, in theme 5, Strategy F4 Enhancing the Well-being of the Elderly outlines steps to improve Care and Support for the Elderly. It is implemented by introducing laws to protect the rights of the elderly, create a comprehensive long-term framework, improve the quality and services of care for the elderly and stimulate the social care industry. In fact, this strategy also

focuses on an awareness campaign program on healthy old life. The strategy also supports efforts to make elderly care a professional career. The aspect of cooperation between public and private health care providers will be strengthened especially in palliative care services. In fact, healthcare services will go through a modernization phase with the use of the internet of things (IoT) for home care monitoring and virtual medical consultation. The cross examination involving the interplay of SIPs of the RMK12 has revealed that the plan has exclusively addresses five (5) dimensions of age-friendly city. These dimensions encompass building outdoor services and facilities, housing and universal design, social participation, respect and inclusion, and community support and health service. However, it is noteworthy that three (3) age-friendly city dimensions namely transportation and mobility (TM), crime prevention environment (CPI) and Respect and Inclusion (RI) and communication & Information (CI) have not directly considered in the development plan. The Plan was identified to revolve around health care and carer service and housing for elderly. It is evident the plan's focuses on healthcare, career service and elderly housing is well founded and aligned with the broader national goals, particularly in the context of post Covid-19 and resilience building.

Perak Structure Plan 2040 (PSP2040)

The State of Perak Structure Plan 2040 (PSP2040) is consisting of four main pillars that entailed with 24 strategies, 70 implementation strategy and xx implementation initiatives. Of these SIPs only 3 strategies, 6 implement strategy and xx implement strategies are related with age-friendly city dimension. In broad, RSP2040 put great afford to address four main issues of elderly population that includes housing provision, elderly housing design, alleviating welfare facilities, provision of accessible and age friendly recreation facilities and empowering employment. In details, SP3.1 and SP3.2 outlines initiatives to address elderly housing issues that include the need to provide housing that integrates with elderly friendly design and equipped with suitable facilities. In accordance with this, development of public housing should also allocate house at lower level for elderly. Similarly, to increase housing allocation for elderly, the RSP2040, through SP14.11 encourage the development of integrated retirement village for veterans that equipped with elderly friendly facilities and allocating two (2) percent of affordable housing for veterans.

Welfare facilities improvement is explicitly mentioned in SP4.1, with the specific intend to address the shortage of welfare facilities for elderly through town planning mechanism and process. In accordance with this, new developments within the state are require allocating designated areas to accommodate elderly housing or *rumah warga emas* as well as elderly activity centre. The dimension of elderly recreation is addressed by SP5.9, emphasizing the provision of parks should accommodate the needs and capability of the demographic group, focusing on ensuring accessibility and elderly friendly designed are catered.

The RSNP 2040 address employment dimension, through four initiatives. These encompasses of provision of training, facilitation of employment and business opportunity, flexible working hours as initiatives for aged people to work, establishment of various forms of facilities and infrastructure aimed at creating barrier free environment for elderly and specific target group. In all, RSNP 2040 has underpinned five dimensions of (5) age-friendly city encompassing building outdoor services and facilities, housing and universal design, social participation, civic participation and employment, and community support and health service.

Perak Sejahtera 2030 (PS2030)

Within the PS2030, there are 18 flagship Programs, together with the project associated with, serve as indicators and measurement for each development theme. The study identified there

are three (3) main flagship programs that are relevant to age friendly dimension and elderly, encompassing of provision of building and outdoor, opportunity for employment, social participation/inclusion, health and community support and health service.

Empowerment of Human Capital and Lifelong Learning coded as P5 address the necessity of the state to uplift the quality of life of the community from both economic and social perspectives. This is address by providing better access to education, upscaling skills, better access to internet and entrepreneurship. The Vulnerable Groups Programs, as delineated within the P7, encompasses of three project which are Taiping age-friendly city, elderly appreciation program and vulnerable group database. The age-friendly city program will be primarily focusing on Taiping (P7-1), stands as the pioneering effort in the state to demonstrate a better physical setting to the needs of elderly. In the context of the appreciation program (P7-2), elderly individuals will be provided with shopping voucher to be utilised within the state. Furthermore, to ensure targeted assistance to elderly, a database project dedicated to elderly individual (P7-3) is considered in the PS2030. While to foster a healthy lifestyle by balancing work and life demands, health related programs have been developed as part of the P8 flagship program. Of these programs, one is oriented towards physical health and other focuses on mental well-being. However, both programs are set not to target a specific demographical group.

In the context aligning the SIPs with the AFC dimension, it is evident that the PS2023 have comprehensively address most of these dimensions. However, it also noted that three dimensions encompassing of housing design, respect and inclusion and crime prevention environment are not specifically mentioned in the plan.

Ipoh Local Plan 2035 (ILP2035)

Generally, ILP2035 encircled four development thrusts which consists of spatial sustainable land use, vibrant and competitive economic, social prosperity community, and viable governing. Within the four development thrusts, two thrusts indicate seven SIPs that realigned to the age-friendly city dimension and elderly specifically. The relevant SIPs enclosed the building and outdoor space (BOS), transportation and mobility (TM), housing, maintenance, and universal design (HMUD), respect and inclusion (RI), communication and information (CI), and community support and health services (CSHS). Hence, ILP 2035 has encompasses six over eight age-friendly city dimensions toward achieving wellbeing of elderly.

Inspecting on the SIPs in LIP2035, the elderly population have been stated in the Development Thrust 2: Vibrant and Competitive Economic which realign on managing the commercial in systematic plan equipped with the facilities and supporting services which needed by the community especially for elderly and disable group. Thus, this thrust has reaffirmed the implementation action on E3-2: The Integration of Commercial areas with Public Community which reinforcing the commercial areas with the facilities for the community such as green area, recreation area, playground, and space activities for elderly. Next, the same thrust has included the elderly community in tourism consideration through strategy of empowering tourism supporting facilities in context of transportation, E18-3 on hop-on hop-off bus ticket focusing on the elderly and children usage by day. The route of the bus connects to the main city of Ipoh which is convenient for the community without transportation. In Thrust 3: Prosperity Social Community, the elderly have been considered in housing and village settlement aspect by the proposal of providing the access on flexible expenditure facilities for re-build and rehabilitate the village settlement. Implementation action S3-1 defined on giving and providing the expenditure on the village housing for the purposes. Yet, in context of aging

in place, this strategy has come as one of the alternatives to preserve the shelter for the elderly. Furthermore, this thrust also stated on strategy to develop the retirement village purposely for the elderly community in S12-2. As stated, the retirement village shall be completed with the facilities with conducive plan for the elderly. In terms of public facilities provision, the strategy has emphasized on upgrading the existing facilities through implementation action S21-1 on providing the public facilities master plan for elderly usage in city. The adaptation of smart living and smart people concept, the facilities for elderly recognized on strategy to provide health support quality through digital technology such as E-health for clinical consultation.

The next thrust in the local plan determined as Thrust 4: Management and Implementation considering the elderly community in creating the smart application to expand the community access on services. The proposal of Golden Citizen Apps provided the information and data for elderly in context of health to assist the community during the emergency phase. Moreover, the apps of Smart Community Centre have met the aim of giving the opportunity for elderly in millennium world phase by using technology as the medium to get information in Ipoh city.

In a comprehensive analysis, it is apparent that ILP2035 has taken into considered most age-friendly city dimensions. Notably, the dimensions of building and outdoor and housing, maintenance and universal design (HMUD) are the two dimensions with the highest consideration. This trend is expected, as ILP2035 is fundamentally function as an implementation plan that provide basis for assessing development application that encapsulate housing, facilities, infrastructure and materials change (Act172, xx). Comparatively, age friendly dimension that was least considered are social participation and employment (SPE) and crime prevention environment (CPE).

Larut Matang Local Plan 2035 (LMLP2035)

In common, LMLP2035 stipulates four development strategies which incorporate sustainable environment, resilient green economic growth, increment residence, liveable district and rural urbanize, and infrastructure reinforcement and utility efficiency. Subsequently, the enlisted SIPs demonstrate more on physical development that focuses on sustaining environment, economic growth, liveable and efficient infrastructure all in alignment with the vision of establishing an eco-heritage district. As an overview, this district enclosed the vision of “Taiping Municipal of Garden Heritage” with five (5) thrusts. Conversely, LMLP2035 seems to be overlooked of strategies in context of elderly community. The strategies for elderly had solely emphasized on establishment of elderly care center in the district. The strategies correspond with Community Support and Health Service (CSHS) of the age-friendly city. Generally, the local plan does not expressly connect with other age-friendly city dimensions. Within the framework of LMLP 2035, there appears to be lack of focus on strategies pertaining to elderly well-being, despite the district remains as the second highest elderly increment in the population distribution.

Table 4: Cross-Examine SIPs in Development Plan with Key Age-Friendly City Dimensions

Program, Strategies and Initiatives (PSI)	Age-Friendly Theme							
	BOS	TM	HMUD	SPE	RI	CPE	CI	CSHS
Twelve Malaysia Plan (RM12)								
B1-1								
B1-2								
C3-1			/					
C3-2	/							
D1-1	/			/				

D1-2				/				
F4-1								
F4-2								/
F4-3	/							
F4-4								/
F4-5								/
F4-6								/
F4-7								/
Perak Sejahtera 2030 (PS2030)								
P5	/							
P7-1	/						/	
P7-2				/			/	
P7-3								/
P8								/
Perak Structural Plan 2040(PSP2049)								
S3-1-3			/					
S3-2-1			/					
S3-2-3			/					
S3-2-4	/		/					
S5-4-1	/							
S5-4-4	/		/	/				
S5-9-2	/			/				
S5-9-4	/			/				
S14-1-1	/		/					
S14-1-3			/					
S14-1-4	/			/				/
S14-2-1				/				
S14-2-2				/				
S14-2-3				/				
S14-2-4	/		/	/				/
Ipoh Local Plan 2035 (ILP2035)								
E3-2	/		/					
E18-3		/						
S3-1	/		/					
S12-1	/		/					
S20-3							/	/
S21-1	/	/	/		/			
U5-1							/	/
U5-3							/	/
Larut Matang Local Plan 2035(LMLP2035)								
S1								/

Notes:

BOS – Building Outdoor Space

TM – Transport and Mobility

HMUD – Housing, Maintenance and Universal Design

SPE – Social Participation and Employment

RI – Respect and Inclusion

CPE – Crime Prevention Environment

CI – Communication and Information

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The age-friendly city framework by World Health Organization (World Health Organization, 2007) has been widely used by various agencies as the guide in overcoming the aging population phenomenon (Ronzi et al., 2020). The framework shall continue as a pivotal guideline to develop policies, strategies, and initiatives in various forms to adapt cities to becoming more aging friendly (Rashid, 2022). Although the development plans examined in the study have included various elderly friendly policies, strategies and initiatives, yet the study identified additional strategies and programmes that are possible to be considered in adapting the state of Perak and its cities to becoming a more age friendly.

The assessment identified that all dimensions of age-friendly city have been considered across all development plans. There are 11 SIPs in the RMK12 were identified related. Most SPIs in the plan are mainly focusing on health care facilities and services and building and outdoor space. While there no apparent SPI that are specifically address the issues pertaining on elderly transportation and mobility, respect and inclusion, crime prevention environment and communication and information. Two possible reasons for the prevalence of the trends, particularly within the context of RMK12 can be attributed to its roles as a post pandemic strategic plan. As such most budgetary and resources with the time frame of plan were allocated towards enhancing health and social welfare (Nor Asiah et al., 2021)). Furthermore, considering the comprehensive nature of the plan, which encompassing spatial and thematic domains, dimension such TM, RI, CPE, and CI may be concisely integrated.

Conversely, PSP2040 exhibits a higher degree of age friendliness, as it encompasses 22 SIPs aligned with age friendly dimensions. A detail inspection reveals these SIPs are centred on building and outdoor space (BOD) and housing, maintenance and universal design (HMUD), underscoring the significance of creating an aged friendly environment or communities as way forwards development trajectory for the state (Benjoe, 2018; Steels, 2015). However, to further enhance this approach, it is imperative for the future state structure plan should also incorporate SIPs related to crime prevention environment, to be comprehensively embrace a total age-friendly city conception.

The PS2030 have notably considered a critical dimension, Communication and information (CI) which was not addressed by two preceding higher tiers plan. Although there are attempts to address the challenges of elderly population through SIPs, these endeavours appear somewhat limited in their scope, falling to comprehensively encompass the divers facet of the aging phenomenon. Furthermore, the study also identified, the development plan is exclusively designated Taiping as the area with aging communities, which contras with the findings of (Elsawahli et al., 2017; Soffian et al., 2022)). These sources have indicated that Kinta, along with Taiping are the highest concentrated population of elderly in Malaysia.

The adoption of SIP pertaining to age-friendly city is well spawn in the ILP2035 covering most of dimensions. Building and Open Space and housing, maintenance and universal design that were highest dimensions, paring with communication and information (CI) and Community Support and Health Service (CSHS) to form an elderly friendly environment. Although the plan should accordance or aligned with the state plan, the development plan at the city level does not clearly transpire some of the age-friendly city SIPs at the state plan. It is apparent the Ipoh Local Plan (ILP2035) is lacking on SIPs pertaining to Social Participation and

Employment, despite the emphasis that was highlighted in the upper tier state structure plan or PSP2040. To ensure to be a more comprehensive and approach, it is imperative that future local plan for Ipoh to considers initiative involve recruitment services for older people to identify job that suit with their experiences and capabilities, training programme for staff to organise programmes for older people, encourage volunteering programme for older people, a range of flexible and appropriately paid opportunities for older people and Decision-making bodies in public, private and voluntary sectors encourage and facilitate membership of older people (Morris, 2016; Rashid et al., 2022; World Health Organization, 2007)

Conversely, Larut Matang local plan (LMLP) does not expressly connect with other age-friendly city dimensions with only SIPs relevant is relate with Community Support and Health Service. However, details analysis identified PS20230 have mentioned flagship project that attempt to transform Taiping, the capital city in Larut Matang to become age-friendly city through adoption on physical development initiatives.

Examining age-friendly city dimensions across all development plan, it has been identified two dimensions, that include transportation and mobility and respect and inclusion, were least mentioned. Consequently, it is deemed necessary for these dimensions to be thoughtfully address in the future plans. It is noteworthy that existing literature underscores the consistent, secure, cost effective and easily accessible public transportation as critical elements to facilitate active aging and social inclusion (Rashid, 2013; Rashid & Yigitcanlar, 2015; Wixey et al., 2005). Since private vehicle dependency in Malaysia are identified to be relatively high (Abdullah et al., 2020; Othman & Ali, 2020) improvement of road condition should also gain attention by responsible agencies as key measures for transportation and mobility. These measures should encompass of routine upkeep of roadside, well-maintained road surface with adequate visibility and lighting (Rashid et al., 2020).

Respect and social inclusion are resonance with the need of elderly engagement with social environment, culture and inclusion. Collectively, these measures contribute to maintaining mental wellbeing of the elderly. However, the topic of respect and social inclusion has received the least attention in the literature (Ronzi et al., 2020). This scarcity of attention is similarly reflected within the development plans. Consequently, this prevailing consequence has resulted on limited knowledge on establishing suitable and practical measures for policy makers to be deliberate upon. Among enablers programs and initiatives that promote respect and inclusion are intergenerational programs and space, campaign on the contribution of elderly community and involvement of elderly in decision making process (Morris, 2016; Rashid et al., 2022; Ronzi et al., 2020; Teerawichitchainan et al., 2015; World Health Organization, 2007).

The study has identified a significant finding on the body of knowledge pertaining to age-friendly city dimensions and practices. The research can conclude that the implementation on age-friendly city framework as stipulated by World Health Organisation (WHO), in Malaysia in broad, and in the state of Perak are overwhelming. Malaysia. The process of developing support, facilities and conducive environment for elderly population were identified shows continuous improvement (Aziz & Ahmad, 2019). This is exhibited by the implementation on SIPs related to age-friendly city across development plans signifying the acknowledgement of policies makers on the elderly population phenomenon.

However, the research recommends that for future research on age-friendly city should delve to develop measures for establishing an elderly friendly environment and subsequently identify suitable strategies that tailored to Malaysia context. As measures of age-friendly city are highly

relies on the local context and unique needs of community, it is imperative to gain comprehensive understanding on the issues and formulation of strategies to foster independent living among elderly. Elderly friendly environment or age friendly communities should not be restricted to only on physical elements but also incorporate service and facilities within community that are important for elderly. Currently, there are noticeable increase in locally health service, aimed to bridging that were left by government funded service. However, it is essential for the policy makers to ensure these services should extend beyond health care, encompassing crime prevention and disaster management. These measures should encompass various forms that include neighbourhood design, transportation and mobility, community participation and emergency preparedness.

In conclusion, development plans remain as an important guidance for development. As aging population has tended to growth, the development plans also shall reinforce and consider more on the strategies to overcome the aging phenomenon and be prepared for the consequences from the population trend. As Ipoh and Taiping have acknowledged as the city with highest elderly population, it is compulsory for the city to be prepared on providing conveniences for the elderly community. Hence, the age-friendly city framework is the accurate guide for a city to be developed towards elderly-friendly and achieving the wellbeing. In the nutshell, the findings of this study demonstrate on how the related government dealing with the aging population through inspecting the development plans and its strategies. Therefore, this study can become the stepping-stone in preparing Malaysia's cities towards age-friendly city and achieving wellbeing of elderly through development plans.

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