

# DECISION/DIRECTION NOTE

**Title:** Age-Friendly Cities

**Date Prepared:** December 8, 2021

**Report To:** Committee of the Whole

**Councillor and Role:** Councillor Debbie Hanlon, Inclusion

**Ward:** N/A

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**Decision/Direction Required:** To obtain approval from City Council to start the application process to be recognized as an Age-Friendly City through the World Health Organization.

## **Discussion – Background and Current Status:**

### **What is an Age Friendly Community, and Why Become Age Friendly?**

We live in an aging community and statistics show that Canada's senior population is growing. Therefore, it is crucial that we support the health and well-being of older Canadians. This allows for older adults to live healthy and active lives and stay involved in their communities

In age-friendly communities, policies, services and structures are designed to help seniors remain active and ensure the community supports seniors in living safely, staying healthy and staying involved in their community.

### **An age-friendly community:**

- recognizes that seniors have a wide range of skills and abilities;
- understands and meets the age-related needs of seniors;
- respects the decisions and lifestyle choices of seniors;
- protects those seniors who are vulnerable;
- recognizes that seniors have a lot to offer their community; and
- recognizes how important it is to include seniors in all areas of community life

In 2019, the Seniors Advisory Committee formed an Age-Friendly Cities sub-committee. The sub-committee, comprised of members Robyn Dobbin, Devonnie Ryan, Sharron Challahan, Ruby Constantine, Glenda Reid, Gordan Kirby, Neil Hamilton and staff Christine Fitzgerald, were tasked with reviewing the eight key domain checklists used by the World Health Organization as a standard to qualify as an "Age-Friendly City."

The World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities was established in 2010. Their goal is to connect cities, communities and organizations with the mutual vision of making their community a place to grow old and participate successfully. Ideally this results in adopting policies and offering services that

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provide an opportunity for older adults to participate fully in their community and promotes healthy and active ageing.

Membership to the Network is not an accreditation for age-friendliness. Rather, it reflects a cities' commitment to listen to the needs of their ageing population, assess and monitor their age-friendliness and work collaboratively with older people, across sectors to create age-friendly physical and social environments. (<https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/who-network/>)

The checklists includes eight key domains to becoming age-friendly. The sub-committee, through the support and involvement of City employees in many departments, have reviewed each domain checklist to help formulate key recommendations.

1. **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings-** reviewed by Brian Head- Manager of Parks & Open Spaces and Leslie O'Brien- Manager of City Buildings.
2. **Transportation:** reviewed by Judy Powell- Metrobus and Lalita Thakali-Transportation Systems Engineer
3. **Housing:** reviewed by Judy Tobin- Manager of Housing.
4. **Social Participation:** reviewed by Recreation staff including Community Services Social Worker
5. **Respect and Social inclusion:** reviewed by Recreation staff including Community Services Social Worker
6. **Civic participation and Employment:** reviewed by Bonnie Perry- Human Resources Advisor
7. **Communication and Information:** reviewed by Shelley Pardy- Communications & PR Officer
8. **Community Support and Health Services:** reviewed by Recreation staff including Community Services Social Worker

Below are recommendations the committee would like to bring forward as part of the City's approval

- **Development of Age-Friendly Policy** - To develop an age-friendly policy to help guide city decision making.
- **Improved Communication** - To assess and determine best practices with regards to communication with the senior population in the City. This could include increased signage in public and open spaces, increased awareness of the Calendar of Events, e-updates, and recreational programming.
- **Intergenerational Programming** - Our goal is to bridge the gap between children, youth, and seniors by offering more opportunities for intergenerational activities within our City.
- **Housing** - The demand for affordable housing for the older adult population is rising. With the continued work from the City's Housing Division, the intention is to ensure that this division communicates and disseminates information pertaining to housing and the Affordable Housing Strategy to all residents.
- **Voice of Seniors** - As outlined in the Seniors Advisory Committee terms of reference, we are committed to providing increased opportunities for committee members to participate in relevant forums, engagement sessions and workshops. Furthermore, the

committee with guidance from City staff will continue to seek opportunities to engage with seniors on civic matters that enhance healthy aging within our City.

- **Diverse Representation** - To ensure that diverse populations within our City are represented in the overall Age-Friendly planning. This may include a review of the Seniors Advisory Committee terms of reference to ensure diverse population and organizations are being represented.

### **Key Considerations/Implications:**

1. Budget/Financial Implications: TBD
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: TBD
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans:
  - A sustainable City- A City that is sustainable today and for future generations; economically, environmentally and financially
  - A City That Moves- A city that builds a balanced transportation network to get people and goods where they want to go safely
  - A Connected City- A city where people feel connected, have a sense of belonging, and are actively engaged in community life
  - An Effective City- A City that performs effectively and delivers results
4. Legal or Policy Implications: N/A
5. Privacy Implications: N/A
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: TBD
7. Human Resource Implications: N/A
8. Procurement Implications: N/A
9. Information Technology Implications: N/A
10. Other Implications: N/A

### **Recommendation:**

That Council approve the request from the Seniors Advisory Committee to obtain a letter of commitment from Mayor Danny Breen and to apply to be recognized as an Age-Friendly City through the World Health Organization.

**Prepared by: Robin Dobbin, Community Services Coordinator**

**Approved by: Karen Sherriffs, Manager, Community Development**

**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	Age-Friendly Cities- World health Organization Membership.docx
Attachments:	- Age Friendly Cities.pptx
Final Approval Date:	Dec 9, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Karen Sherriffs - Dec 9, 2021 - 12:53 PM**

**Tanya Haywood - Dec 9, 2021 - 5:01 PM**