

INFORMATION NOTE

Title:	Schlegel Villages Green Bench Campaign
Date Prepared:	June 18, 2025
Report To:	Committee of the Whole
Councillor and Role:	Councillor Jill Bruce, Community Services and Special Events
Ward:	N/A

Issue: Updating Council on a partnership with Schlegel Villages.

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

The City of St. John's received a request from Schlegel Villages, a Canadian leader in long-term care and retirement living, to invite our organization to partner with them in a unique and meaningful initiative – the 10th anniversary of #ElderWisdom.

Schlegel Villages is a proudly Canadian-owned and operated organization with over 70 years of service to seniors in Ontario. For the past decade, the Green Bench has served as a symbol of respect and a platform for sharing the wisdom of older adults. Each year, they bring the bench into public spaces and invite members of the community to sit down, connect, and engage in heartfelt conversations with seniors from their Villages.

This campaign has been a driving force in combating ageism, fostering intergenerational connections, and celebrating the wisdom of older adults.

This year, they are taking the Green Bench beyond their Villages and into the world.

Selected residents will embark on journeys to places of deep personal significance – whether their hometowns or long-dreamed-of destinations – including London (England), St. John's (Newfoundland and Labrador), Ottawa (Ontario) and Elmira (Ontario)

Information on residents selected to travel to St John's:

Joan Demetriadis

The youngest of fourteen children, Joan's heart never left St. John's, where she grew up surrounded by family, faith, and the warmth of community. She dreams of seeing the icebergs drift south, revisiting her childhood school and church, and reconnecting with family at Memorial University.

ST. JOHN'S

Anneke Hann

Born in The Netherlands, Anneke has traveled across Canada but never to Newfoundland. Diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, she thought her traveling days were over. Now, she hopes to witness Newfoundland's breathtaking fjords, attend a true "kitchen party," and maybe even meet Alan Doyle (Great Big Sea) or Rick Mercer – her Newfoundland heroes.

While visiting St. John's, the Green Bench will be placed in the 'Community Event Space' during the Downtown Pedestrian Mall on July 15th from 12pm to 4pm.

Additionally, the Green Bench will be visiting Party in the Park, in Bowring Park, on 16th from 1pm to 4pm. During this time, representatives from Schlegel Villages along with Joan and Anneke will be gifting their Green Bench to the City of St. John's for placement in one of our Parks, Community Centres or along our Shared Use Pathway.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: None identified at this time.
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: Schlegel Villages
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions:

A Connected City: Increase and improve opportunities for residents to connect with each other and the City.

A Connected City: Develop and deliver programs, services and public spaces that build safe, healthy and vibrant communities.

4. Alignment with Adopted Plans: 2025 Recreation Master Plan - Recommendation #5: Support the hosting of sport, recreation, arts and cultural events to realize community benefits.
5. Accessibility and Inclusion: We will consult with the Healthy City and Inclusion team, as well as our Parks Department, to ensure the Green Bench is placed in an accessible location.
6. Legal or Policy Implications: None identified at this time.
7. Privacy Implications: None identified at this time.

8. Engagement and Communications Considerations: We will work with Communications to ensure the promotion of the Green Bench, once we have secured a permanent placement location.
9. Human Resource Implications: None identified at this time.
10. Procurement Implications: None identified at this time.
11. Information Technology Implications: None identified at this time.
12. Other Implications: None identified at this time.

Conclusion/Next Steps: The Green Bench placed in the 'Community Event Space' during the Downtown Pedestrian Mall on July 15th, and will be presented to the City by representatives from Schlegel Village at this summer's Party in the Park on June 16th.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Schlegel Villages Green Bench Campaign.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Jun 19, 2025

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

Tanya Haywood - Jun 19, 2025 - 9:26 AM