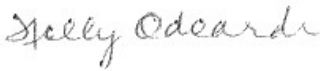




Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	April 6, 2023
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Seniors Strategy Update (HSC23018) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Lisa Maychak (905) 546-2424 Ext. 1721
SUBMITTED BY:	Holly Odoardi Senior Administrator, Long Term Care Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not applicable

INFORMATION

The City of Hamilton's Seniors Strategy has evolved over time and currently includes: Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan, Senior of the Year Awards, Seniors Kick-off event and staff liaison support to the Seniors Advisory Committee. In January 2023, the Senior's Strategy transitioned from the Children's and Community Services Division to the Long-Term Care Homes Division to better align the work that the City of Hamilton is engaged in to best serve the needs and priorities of older adults living in Hamilton.

Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan:

Hamilton is home to 183,265 residents age 55+ representing approximately 32% of the population, which is an increase from 30% in 2016. This age demographic is the fastest growing worldwide. In 2014, the City of Hamilton and key partners, the Hamilton Council on Aging (HCoA) and Seniors Advisory Committee (SAC) developed Hamilton's first Age-Friendly Plan as a response to this growing demographic and to begin planning for the needs and priorities of older adults living in Hamilton. The plan was informed by older adult residents and endorsed by City Council. This plan included

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seven goals, 25 objectives and 101 actions. By the end of the implementation phase in 2019, 81 actions were either completed or being implemented.

In 2019, the Age-Friendly Collaborative Governance Committee (AFCGC), comprised of members from the City, HCoA, SAC, and other community partners recognized that it was important to gain insight about the current experiences, interests, needs and priorities of as many older adults as possible to inform Hamilton's second Age-Friendly plan. In 2019, the AFCGC facilitated a broad community consultation in all 15 wards with a focus on vulnerable, marginalized and ethno-cultural communities. Over 4,100 older adults provided feedback about their experiences, challenges, and proposed solutions. Two sessions were facilitated with community service providers and City of Hamilton staff and leaders with the purpose of reviewing the barriers and solutions suggested by older adults and to begin the process of formulating recommendations for Hamilton's 2021-2026 Age-Friendly Plan.

The majority of consultations took place in 2019, therefore as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic additional consultations were facilitated in 2020 with the purpose of understanding how the pandemic had impacted older adults and to identify possible gaps and opportunities that could be included in Hamilton's second plan. At the same time, HCoA received funding for the "Empowering Dementia-Friendly Communities" project. In collaboration with the Alzheimer's Society of Brant, Haldimand Norfolk, Hamilton and Halton and other partners, HCoA engaged with individuals living with dementia and their care givers. As a result of this project, dementia-friendly recommendations have been integrated into Hamilton's 2021-2026 Age-Friendly Plan which makes it a unique plan.

In April 2021, the 2021-2026 plan, Hamilton's Plan for an Age-Friendly Community (CES14053(d)) was launched and like Hamilton's first plan, the new plan aligns with the City of Hamilton's vision to be the best place to raise a child and age successfully and is built on the same vision and principles. The new plan maintains the same seven principles, including equity, inclusion, and respect with the addition of an eighth principle, building a dementia-friendly community. The second plan has seven strategic goals with twenty-one objectives and sixty-one recommendations.

The seven strategic goals include:

1. Housing
2. Transportation
3. Information and Communication
4. Health and Community Services
5. Social Participation
6. Civic Engagement, Volunteerism and Employment
7. Outdoor Spaces

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To view the full plan including all objectives and recommendations, visit:
<https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/adults-55-services/age-friendly-hamilton>

Implementation Strategy:

Since April 2021, the City of Hamilton, HCoA and SAC have shifted their focus to implementation. This included a governance review and transition to a new organizational structure to better enable and support the implementation of the plan. This included the development of an Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee (AFCC) which includes goal champions representing various City departments and community organizations, and who are responsible for advancing the work of the plan.

Significant progress has been made over the last two years of the plan. Highlights include:

- In 2021, HCoA received funding for a one-year Ontario Inclusive Community Grant to develop an implementation strategy.
- In 2022, City Council approved an increase of \$10,000 in annual funding for HCoA to continue to work in partnership with the City and SAC on the implementation and evaluation of Hamilton's 2021-2026 Age-Friendly Plan.
- In 2021, broad community outreach through an online survey resulted in identifying 23 Age-Friendly initiatives that directly aligned with the goals and objectives in Hamilton's 2021-2026 Age-Friendly Plan. The findings from the online survey and actions of the Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee informed Hamilton's 2021 Age-Friendly Community Progress Report (HSC22031).
- City staff, HCoA and SAC created a production in partnership with Cable 14 that was broadcast in March 2022. The purpose was to create awareness and provide viewers with an update on Hamilton's Age-Friendly progress and to profile community partners who were implementing Age-Friendly initiatives.
- HCoA led the development of an Age-Friendly Action Planning Toolkit in partnership with the Social Planning and Research Council (SPRC).
- By the end of 2022, seven action and evaluation plans were implemented by goal champions that address key recommendations in the plan.

Examples of Hamilton's Age-Friendly Progress:

Goal 1: Housing

Recommendation H1.4:

"Focus on building complete neighbourhoods with a diverse housing mix that includes an increase in the availability of affordable housing and increase in rental units as well as the development and implementation of a Second Unit housing strategy."

Secondary Suites Forgivable Loan Program

Through the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI), the City's Housing Services Division launched this program in November 2022, which provides financial assistance of up to \$25,000 to eligible homeowners in the form of a 15-year forgivable loan to create affordable secondary suites in existing single-family homes or garden suites on the property lot of a single-family home that is the homeowner's sole and principal residence.

Goal 3: Information and Communication

Recommendation IC3.3:

Create awareness and provide education and ongoing training for municipal staff, community organizations, private businesses and the corporate sector about how to communicate with individuals living with dementia and their families.

Dementia-Friendly Training Workshop

Launched in May 2022, this workshop was an activity of the Empowering Dementia-Friendly Communities Project, a three-year funded project (April 2020- March 2023) led by HCoA in partnership with several community partners including the Alzheimer's Society. The workshop was co-designed and co-delivered by people living with dementia with the purpose of raising awareness about the stigma associated with dementia and to educate the community on what they can do to create social and physical environments that are inclusive to people living with dementia. A total of 23 workshops were facilitated with 183 participants from all sectors, including City of Hamilton employees from Hamilton Street Railway and the Recreation Division.

Goal 4: Health and Community Services

Recommendation HCS2.3:

Empower older adults with tools to be their own advocates when it comes to what they need and want from healthcare and/or community services.

Navigating the Healthcare System Workshops

HCoA received one-year funding (April 2021- March 2022) to develop and implement a series of workshops for older adults. The purpose of the workshops was to increase awareness and understanding of the principles of successful aging, as well as promote independence and a sense of empowerment in obtaining health care and ways to communicate their needs clearly and successfully to health care providers. Over the course of 11 months 17 workshops, including 50 sessions were facilitated by education volunteers with HCoA.

Goal 5: Social Participation

Recommendation SP4.2:

Foster alternative and creative means to communicate opportunities about social participation to ensure that more older adults are aware of programs offered.

Social Participation Resource Guide for Older Adults Living in Hamilton

Developed by the City's Recreation Division, Seniors Services and launched in March 2023, this guide will increase awareness of the importance of social participation and recreation in healthy aging. The guide will also include a listing of organizations across Hamilton who provide social and recreational programs for older adults.

Goal 6: Civic Engagement, Volunteerism and Employment

Recommendation CEVE3.1:

Offer workshops and/or webinars to educate agencies about the benefits and challenges inherent in recruiting and supporting older volunteers.

Employer and Older Adult Workshops

In partnership, Flamborough Connects and PATH Employment Services received funding for one year (April 2021- March 2022) to develop and facilitate two types of workshops. One, for older adults on job seeking strategies, and the other for employers on the benefits of hiring older adults. The two workshops were facilitated virtually and in person with a total of 40 participants.

Next Steps for Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan:

In December 2022, another online survey was launched and disseminated to both community organizations and City staff. Like the 2021 survey, the purpose was to identify Age-Friendly initiatives that were implemented in 2022 that align with the goals and objectives of Hamilton's 2021-2026 Age-Friendly Plan. The feedback from the survey and action plans of the Age-Friendly Collaborative Committee (AFCC) will inform Hamilton's 2022 Age-Friendly Community Progress Report. The full progress update and presentation will be shared with City Council in June of this year. The report and presentation will also be shared with older adults who attend the Seniors Kick-off event taking place in June and will be available online and in print format.

Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan is only one initiative under the Seniors Strategy. Staff is also responsible for the annual Senior of the Year Awards, Seniors Kick-off event and Seniors Advisory Committee.

Senior of the Year Awards

The Senior of the Year Awards began in Hamilton in 1995 to honour one citizen with the Senior of the Year Award. Over time, three additional awards were added to recognize senior volunteers in various areas which included Innovation, Lifetime Achievement and Community Achievement. The event took place at Sackville Hill Seniors Centre and hosted approximately 75 guests annually.

In 2014, staff was directed to elevate awareness of the Senior of the Year Awards as well as create a gala themed event to truly celebrate the volunteer contributions of

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valued seniors from the Hamilton community. A budget was allocated for the event, however securing additional funds through sponsorship was needed to host the gala event. The steering committee created additional award categories to recognize the many more areas of volunteer contributions. Senior of the Year, Innovation and Lifetime Achievement remained as award categories and the additional awards included the following: Leadership, Economic Leadership, Healthy & Active Living, Compassion & Companionship, Diversity & Cultural and Behind the Scenes. The Youth Supporting Seniors Award was created in 2018 to recognize a youth who voluntarily supports seniors in the community.

On the average, twenty-five nominations are submitted each year and four hundred guests attend the Senior of the Year Awards event. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there was not an event hosted in both 2020 and 2021 and fewer nominations were submitted. However, award recipients and nominees were still honoured for their volunteer commitment to the community. In fact, in 2021 a Seniors Awards event/production was hosted in partnership with Cable 14.

The 28th annual Senior of the Year Awards is scheduled for October 24, 2023 and will take place at Michelangelo's Event and Conference Centre. The call for nominations will launch in April of this year during National Volunteer Week.

Seniors Kick-off Event

The Older Adult Network (OAN), comprised of members from various community organizations who provide social and recreational programming for older adults, including the City's Recreation Division created this event in the 1980's, which at that time was called the Seniors Carousel. The purpose of the event was to do something special for older adults during Seniors' Month in June. This event was hosted annually until the 2000's.

In 2013, members of the OAN relaunched this event but renaming it the Seniors Kick-off. The event began as a small gathering on Concession Street, then moved to City Hall and Hamilton's waterfront to accommodate larger crowds. As the awareness and numbers increased the event required larger space, therefore moved to Michelangelo's Event and Conference Centre in 2017.

The Seniors Kick-off event has evolved over time and now includes an information and wellness fair with exhibitors from all sectors, various presentations on topics relevant to older adults, entertainment and a light lunch. In 2019, the event hosted approximately seven hundred older adults and eighty-five exhibitors. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an event was not hosted in 2020, however in June 2021 a production series was created in partnership with Cable 14 and was broadcast over three days. In 2022, this event was hosted in person at Michelangelo's but was also recorded and placed on the City's YouTube channel for older adults not able or not comfortable in attending the in-

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person event. The 2023 Seniors Kick-off event is set to take place on June 20, 2023 at Sackville Hill Seniors Centre.

The majority of members of the OAN have retired, therefore City staff have taken the lead role to coordinate and host the Seniors Kick-off event with the goal of continuing to provide information to older adults and to celebrate Seniors' Month. In addition, there is not a budget allocated to hosting this event, therefore sponsorship, donations and exhibitor table rentals are key to the success of this annual event.

Seniors Advisory Committee

The role of the Seniors Advisory Committee (SAC) is to work with City Council and staff to find solutions to seniors' needs, suggest improvements to policies or services offered to seniors by all levels of government, encourage the City to promote healthy aging through appropriate programs, work for the benefit of a diverse population of seniors across Hamilton who have various needs, and ensure that racialized communities and seniors isolated from the community are kept informed and involved.

In April 2021, City staff was assigned to be the Staff Liaison for SAC. Amongst the many responsibilities of a Staff Liaison, staff also worked with advisory committee members to align the work of their four working groups with the recommendations in Hamilton's 2021-2016 Age-Friendly Plan. The working groups include Communications, Housing, Elder Abuse and Transportation. Highlights of SAC's achievements include:

- In collaboration with Hamilton Police Services, produced a traffic safety video to inform older adults of ways to be safe as pedestrians and drivers.
- Consultation with the City's Web Strategy staff to provide feedback on the new City website. The outcome was a more user-friendly website that is easier to navigate for older adults.
- Presentation to City Council on "Transportation Options in Underserved Areas of Hamilton."
- In partnership with the City's Public Health Services and the Hamilton Council on Aging, developed three brochures on home adaptations (for renters, homeowners and property managers).

Next Steps

There are synergies with our Senior's Strategy and our LTC Division in serving, educating and supporting older adults, with excitement and desire about the endless opportunities with this closer connection of our collaborative work. As shared,

Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan includes the overarching principle of equity, inclusion, and respect. In 2023, one of the goals of the Age-Friendly Governance Committee is to develop an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) framework. This is also a focus on the Fixing Long-Term Care Homes Act 2021. One of the recommendations in Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan is creating awareness of EDI within long-term care homes and other senior's housing initiatives of the needs and interests of this diverse population. The transfer of the Senior's Strategy inclusive of Hamilton's Age-Friendly Plan to the Long-Term Care Division will help assist with this specific recommendation that all older adults living in Hamilton age in place successfully.

A follow-up report will be brought forward in June 2023 in recognition of Senior's Month.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not Applicable