



CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES

Corporate Report

Report from Recreation and Community Services, Programs and Cultural Services

Date of Report: June 12, 2013

Date of Meeting: July 8, 2013

Report Number: RCS-177-2013

File: 10.3.16, 10.3.17

Subject: Age-Friendly Community Update

Recommendation

That Council direct staff to submit application to the World Health Organization (WHO) for St. Catharines to receive Age-Friendly designation. FORTHWITH

Summary

This report is being presented to provide an update to Council on the status of the City of St. Catharines' becoming an Age-Friendly Community.

Background

At its meeting on June 11, 2012, Council received a presentation by Virginia Stewart, Community Coordinator at the Region of Niagara, regarding Niagara's Age-Friendly Community Initiative.

At this same meeting, Council approved the following motion:

"That Council receive the presentation by Virginia Stewart, Community Coordinator, Region of Niagara regarding Niagara's Age-Friendly Community Initiative; and

That Council direct staff to prepare a report on the opportunity for the City to become an "Age-Friendly Community" and;

That Council direct staff to consider the joint motion of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Mayor's Advisory Committee for Older Adults in support of becoming an Age-Friendly Community as outlined in the minutes of its meeting held May 23, 2012; and

That the report include established programs offered within the City for older adults; and

That Council direct staff to follow up with the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Mayor's Advisory Committee for Older Adults."

On September 24, 2012, Council received an information report on the status of the City of St. Catharines becoming an "Age-Friendly Community". This report recommended that staff liaise with the Mayor's Advisory Committee for Older Adults in an effort to raise awareness and gain feedback from the community. This would be achieved through the coordination of information sessions with the Niagara Age-Friendly Coordinator. Staff advised that an update would be provided in a year's time on the status of the initiative.

Overview of an Age-Friendly Community

Age-Friendly Communities create safe and secure environments that foster community participation, personal health and well-being. An Age-Friendly Community is expected to take into consideration the needs of all citizens. There is particular focus on older adults with attention directed towards youth and the physically challenged.

Joint motion as outlined in the minutes of its meeting held May 23, 2012

The Mayor's Advisory Committee for Accessibility (MACOA) and the Mayor's Older Adult Advisory Committee (COA) identified that most Age-Friendly requirements have or are being addressed through the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Standards as well as the City's own proactive initiatives. These actions are intended to remove and prevent barriers in its provision of goods, services and facilities. By virtue of this commitment to all City facilities, including the four Older Adult Recreation Centres, and by adhering to the requirements under AODA, the City of St. Catharines is already recognizing the importance of being an age-friendly community.

Motion as outlined in the minutes of its meeting held on February 6, 2013

COA endorses the submission of an application to the World Health Organization for St. Catharines to receive Age-Friendly designation.

Report

As defined by the Niagara Age Friendly Community Initiative, Year 1, 2010 -2011 Evaluations Summary report, the main themes that Age-Friendly communities work towards attaining include:

1. Better communication practices and information sharing;
2. Improving accessibility for all;
3. Ensuring a community culture that values older adults;
4. Promoting Age-Friendly principles and values to local municipal and Niagara wide official planning.

St. Catharines can apply for the designation

St. Catharines has completed the necessary steps in order to meet the objectives required to submit an application to the WHO. Should the City be accepted as an Age-Friendly Community and receive designation, the City will become part of a networking group that shares ideas and accomplishments.

All objectives identified have been met by St. Catharines

The first three themes identified with their related objectives are required to achieve the Age-Friendly Community designation. The fourth theme outlined above is met by those who have the designation and participate in the forums available.

1. Better communication practices: The City of St. Catharines reinstated the Mayor's Advisory Committee for Older Adults in January of 2011. The purpose of the committee is to provide input to Council on behalf of the population to identify, explore, and implement healthy living opportunities along with supports to assist them. Recreation and Community Services has implemented meetings with the Presidents of the three Senior Associations that work collectively on the operations of the Older Adult Centres in order to respond and advocate on behalf of the membership they reside in.
2. Improved Accessibility for all: The Niagara Age-Friendly Community Initiative focuses on the following areas; and the City of St. Catharines complies with all legislation and other services offered by the Region of Niagara.
 - a. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings (AODA, draft Accessible Built Environment Standard)
 - b. Transportation (AODA, Integrated Accessibility Standard., Transportation Section, O. Reg. 191/11)
 - c. Social Participation (The St. Catharines Older Adult Centres that provide recreation and leisure opportunities for an annual membership fee. Programs include but are not limited to: gentle exercise, arts and crafts, tai chi, cards, bingo, table tennis, line dancing, outdoor summer concert series in Montebello Park, outdoor traveling walks hosted by two community groups, bus trips, and social events hosted by the Senior Associations.
 - d. Respect and Social Inclusion (A fundamental of the AODA, Bill 118)
 - e. Civic Participation and Employment (AODA, Integrated Accessibility Standard, Employment Section, O. Reg. 191/11)
 - f. Communication and Information (AODA, Integrated Accessibility Information and Communication Section, O. Reg. 191/11)
 - g. Community Health and Support Services capture by the Region of Niagara.
3. A community culture valuing older adults is established through Council's support, commitment and encouragement of its volunteers who assist citizens of all ages, the various community groups and advisory committees. Council also supports the engagement community stakeholders in the development of new initiatives and projects.

Niagara Aging Strategy working group to guide those with the designation

The Niagara Region has supported a working group that is working towards a Niagara Aging Strategy. This will act as collaborative work to provide ideas about developing an

Aging Strategy & Action Plan. This Strategy would guide Niagara community partners that have Age-Friendly designation in taking action to become more responsive to Niagara's older adults as they age.

Financial Implications

Not applicable.

Conclusion

With Council's approval, staff will submit an Age-Friendly application form to WHO to request designation for the City of St. Catharines. If the designation is provided, the City and its related Committees and will be positioned to share ideas and accomplishments through access to the networking group, including the Niagara Aging Strategy group.

Submitted by:

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Approved by:

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