

Staff Report 2023-0161

Meeting Date: April 4, 2023

Subject: World Health Organizations (WHO) Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities and Annual Update on the Age-Friendly Caledon Action Plan

Submitted By: Katie Sawyers, Age-Friendly Coordinator, Community and Cultural Development

RECOMMENDATION

That staff be directed to apply for membership in the World Health Organizations (WHO) Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities for international recognition of the beneficial impact of the Age-Friendly Caledon Action Plan.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2021 Council approved the Age-Friendly Caledon (AFC) Action Plan as a ten (10) year strategic plan to support and enhance the community's ability to age well and age in place.
- The action plan was developed based on the World Health Organizations (WHO) eight (8) community dimensions (areas of focus) for an age-friendly community. These dimensions outline the physical and social aspects of communities that contribute to independent and active ageing.
- Throughout 2022, there was a notable increase in internal and external collaboration and teamwork and increased awareness of Age-Friendly principals across Caledon.
- As COVID-19 health measures become less of an immediate concern, staff shifted focus towards the social impacts of COVID-19 such as increase social isolation, mental health issues, decreased physical wellness and increased financial challenges. Staff worked closely with key services to revive and reinvent many social and community wellness programs to inform and connect residents prior to their needs becoming an emergency situation.
- Some keys Goals for 2023 include continued advocacy towards Affordable Housing options and building awareness of housing retrofit programs that support ageing in place, partnerships that promote wellbeing and reduce social isolation, continued discussions with local service providers on ways to amplify cross sector and cross regional health and community supports, education and awareness and many other important initiatives to better the lives of older adults. A full list is outlined in this report.
- As a next step in the recognition and support towards being an Age-Friendly Community, staff propose that the Town apply to the Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities through the World Health Organization. While membership in the GNAFCC is not an accreditation for age-friendliness, involvement in this network will build on Caledon's commitment to the needs of the older population. The application process is outlined in the Report.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this report is to provide an Update on the Town's Age-Friendly Caledon Action Plan and to outline the goals of the Plan for 2023. In addition, staff are recommending that the Town applies to be a member of the World Health Organization's Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

In 2021 Council approved the Age-Friendly Caledon (AFC) Action Plan as a ten (10) year strategic plan to support and enhance the community's ability to age well and age in place. This action plan was developed based on the World Health Organizations (WHO) eight (8) community dimensions (areas of focus) for an age-friendly community. These dimensions outline the physical and social aspects of communities that contribute to independent and active ageing. The eight dimensions have been outlined below for reference.

1. Housing
 - The availability of appropriate and affordable housing options that incorporate flexibility and adaptive features suitable to the needs of older adults and an ageing population across Caledon.
2. Mobility
 - Personal mobility and the ability to navigate a community safely in addition to the availability and access to safe, reliable, and affordable public/specialized transportation options when driving becomes challenging.
3. Communication
 - Access to information about important services, supports, activities and events in reliable, readily accessible, inclusive, and multiple formats that are appropriate to older adults.
4. Community Support and Health Services
 - The range of services for mental and physical wellbeing to support and maintain independence to people of all ages is available and accessible.
5. Respect and Inclusion
 - Ensure that residents are respected and included in the decision-making process, and that their insights are valued.
6. Participation
 - Build, support and advocate for local programs that promote social participation with an emphasis on health, friendship, environmental stewardship and life-long learning.
7. Safety and Accessibility
 - Remove barriers and impediments that limited the use of outdoor spaces and public buildings for residents with mobility challenges or safety concerns.
8. Community Engagement
 - Provide resources and supports that connect older adults with meaningful volunteer and employment options in Caledon.

These dimensions outline key community needs anticipating an increase in the challenges that our communities will face as our population ages. Within each area of focus (dimension)

provides key deliverables required in the community to ensure residents ability to age in place. To ensure accountability and progress, annual reports are key components of the Age-Friendly Communities guiding principles and are encouraged by the WHO and Government of Ontario to support implementation.

The AFC Annual Report for 2022 (attached as Schedule A to this report) has been broken down into the eight dimensions outlining progress made in 2022 as well as anticipated goals for 2023. Additionally, as key progress indicators are essential for long-term tracking, each domain outlines components that have been established and recorded. It is important to note that not all deliverables have been initiated at the time of the report. Additional ongoing projects and initiatives identified may have also been transitioned from the work developed through the Adults 55+ Strategic Plan (2015-2020) which the AFC document derives from.

Overview

As outlined in the Age-Friendly Caledon Action Plan, successful implementation of the deliverables identified requires:

- Collaboration with a broad range of community stakeholders, local municipalities, regions, Provincial, Federal and World based Age-Friendly networks, and Caledon resident support.
- Leveraging all departments throughout the Town of Caledon and working collaboratively with the Region of Peel.
- Ongoing engagement and involvement with community networks and stakeholders providing supports and services to residents.
- Sustainable financial and personnel resources to support Age-Friendly programs, and/or initiatives in alignment with the Age-Friendly Caledon Action Plan.

During 2022, the AFC project team made significant progress on many key deliverables of the Action Plan. Throughout the year there was a notable increase in internal and external collaboration and teamwork and increased awareness of Age-Friendly principals across Caledon. An Age-Friendly Action plan is a long-term endeavor as it takes years to build momentum and support from the community, however it is felt that during this year the community support increased significantly.

As COVID-19 health measures become less of an immediate concern, staff shifted focus towards the social impacts of COVID-19 such as increase social isolation, mental health issues, decreased physical wellness and increased financial challenges. Staff worked closely with key services to revive and reinvent many social and community wellness programs to inform and connect residents prior to their needs becoming an emergency situation.

Highlights

2022 saw a shift from virtual back to in-person engagement. The AFC focused efforts on community outreach and awareness, supporting community programming, and advocating for

remedial supports to prevent the long-term effects of social isolation and loneliness.

2022 Accomplishments:

- Development and implementation of the new “Snow Removal Financial Assistance Program” for low-income older adults (65+) and low-income persons with a disability.
- Supported Energy and Environments Healthy Community grant application to implement a “Older Adult Outdoor Fitness Park” on the North Hill by CCRW in Bolton.
- Continuation of the Age-Friendly Caledon monthly eNewsletter with an increase of subscribers.
- Successful recipient of the 2021-2022 New Horizons for Seniors Grant to offer the following programs:
 - Supporting 750 Seniors Month Swag Bags with community information and resources.
 - Offering free programs throughout the month of June in honour of Seniors Month in partnership with local community stakeholders
 - Offered free fitness classes in partnership with the Town’s recreation team from August until December to support the restart of the 55+ fitness programs post-COVID shut down.
 - Supporting \$7000 worth of 55+ equipment to support the restart of the Towns fitness classes post-COVID shut down.
 - Developed and implemented five (5) “Let’s Talk Caledon” series sessions supporting key discussions on 2SLGBTQIIAA Older Adults, Health Communication, Ageing Well, Staying Safe in a Connected Community and Cultural Competency.
 - Developed the new “Health and Wellness Ambassador” volunteer program to support outreach and engagement of AFC information and resources to the community.
- Re-launched annual seniors’ day informational expo as “Age-Friendly Expo” on October 1, 2022 in recognition of “International Day of Older Persons” with support and donations from Visit Caledon, Caledon Recreation, and local Non-Profit Organizations.
- Contributed and participated in the new “Peel Council on Aging” to support AFC implementation across the Region of Peel.
- Partnered with Caledon Fire to successfully secure funding from the Government of Ontario’s Senior Community Grant to develop the “Older Adult Home Safety Program” to ensure residents 65+ have working smoke/CO detectors, a home fire safety plan, and referrals to any additional support required.
- Support and promotion of the Region of Peels “Igniting Housing Possibilities Solutions Lab” including the Canada HomeShare Peel Pilot Program.
- Provided insight and recommendations to the Active Transportation Master Plan development and key recommendations for community/older adult engagement.
 - An Afternoon in the Garden Outreach – June
 - Seniors Task Force Presentation – July
 - Caledon Seniors’ Centre Workshop – September

- Formalized the annual nomination process for the Senior of the Year award and presented the award to the selected recipient in June 2022 as part of Seniors' Month.
- Presented as part of Volunteer MBC's (Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon) Seniors Virtual Volunteer Expo on March 31, 2022. Showcasing how AFC and Volunteerism can enhance the lives of residents and the health and wellness of our community.

2023 Goals:

- Continued advocacy and supporting staff and projects that encourage increased Affordable Housing options and building awareness of housing retrofit programs that support ageing in place.
- Continued development and promotion of the snow removal financial program to residents to increase uptake in the program.
- Continue to increase awareness of the Age-Friendly Caledon eNewsletter to increase subscribers.
- Partner with Caledon Seniors Center on the implementation of the Links2Wellbeing Social Prescribing Program offered through the Ontario Association for Seniors Centres (OACAO) to support increased participation and reduced community social isolation.
- Offer internal educational opportunities for Town staff on Ageism, Elder Abuse and the challenges faced by diverse older residents.
- Ongoing discussions with local service providers on ways to amplify cross sector and cross regional health and community supports for older residents to help reduce emergency events and potential social isolation.
- Participation in the newly developed Hills of Headwaters Ontario Health Team frail older adults' advisory group to further support residents with complex health needs to age well and age in place.
- Support Caledon Fire in their outreach and engagement for the Older Adult Home Safety Program.
- Educate Fire prevention officers volunteering as part of the "Home Safe Home" community outreach on key identifiers of potentially vulnerable or at-risk older adults they encounter during the annual campaign.
- Engagement with Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario Network (EAPON) to formalize AWICD as an Elder Abuse Prevention Network and increase awareness, programming and services to reduce Elder Abuse and Ageism in the Caledon Dufferin communities.
- Continue to participate in community collaboratives and partnerships in support of Age-Friendly and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives.
- Continue to support the awareness of 211 services to residents and service providers.
- Partnership with Rogers TV to develop AFC TV Segments highlighting key information and resources available to residents in the community.
- Ongoing advocacy for both print and digital communication to ensure residents who have limited connectivity and/or do not utilize technology continue to receive information on services, supports, and programs in a timely manner. Additionally, to ensure that these residents are provided with the equitable access to contribute to Caledon by providing feedback, opinions and ideas on Town programs and services.
- Development of a printed and translated Age-Friendly Guidebook for residents 55+.

- Continue to maintain collaborative partnerships with key community supports and health service providers across Caledon and the hills of Headwaters Collaborative Ontario Health Team to ensure that program modifications, service gaps and information updates are proactively addressed.
- Work with staff and community champions to continue advocating for increased diverse, equitable and inclusive accommodations and supports for all residents.
- Continue to support program innovations for Older Adults within Caledon facilities, especially those that encourage greater participation from new Canadians, recent immigrants and members of our 2SLGBTQ+ community.
- Continue to monitor financial funding opportunities to support the growth and expansion of programs and improve the Town's position as an Age-Friendly Community.

Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC)

As a next step in the recognition and support towards being an Age-Friendly Community, staff propose that the Town apply to the Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities through the World Health Organization. While membership in the GNAFCC is not an accreditation for age-friendliness, involvement in this network will build on Caledon's commitment to the needs of the older population. Caledon will also be able to learn, share and engage with age-friendly communities worldwide to help find innovative and evidence-based solutions for our community to ensure that when Caledon builds Caledon we are promoting healthy and active ageing and a good quality of life.

The mission of the GNAFCC is to stimulate and enable cities and communities around the world to become increasingly Age-Friendly. The Town of Caledon is currently registered with the Pan-Canadian Age-Friendly Reference Group and the Ontario Age-Friendly Network.

The Network seeks to do this by:

- inspiring change by showing what can be done and how it can be done
- connecting cities and communities worldwide to facilitate the exchange of information, knowledge and experience
- supporting cities and communities to find appropriate innovative and evidence-based solutions

Schedule B of this report outlines the full mandatory requirements, membership commitment, values and principles for review. Application requirements include the following components, high level responses have been provided for each component:

- Letter of Commitment from the Mayor of Caledon
- A strategy or action plan to make your city/community more age-friendly
 - Age-Friendly Caledon Action Plan
- Participation in a Network Affiliated Program
 - Pan-Canadian Age-Friendly Reference Group
- A designated contact person for the Global Network

- Coordinator, Age-Friendly Caledon
- Summary of Caledon's Policies, programs and services targeted at older people and how the Town is planning to make it more age-friendly.
- A logo that represents your age-friendly activities
 - Age-Friendly Caledon Logo
- A dedicated webpage
 - www.caledon.ca/adult55 | www.caledon.ca/en/government/afc-action-plan
- A baseline assessment of city/community
 - Age-Friendly Caledon Background Report (2020)
- Overview of how the Town is engaging older adults in the process of becoming Age-Friendly.
 - Age-Friendly Task Force | Health and Wellness Ambassadors | Ongoing outreach and feedback to community residents and stakeholders.
- Mechanisms to support/facilitate cross sector collaborative planning.
 - Ageing Well in Caledon Dufferin Collaborative | Peel Council on Aging | Internal partnerships | Regional Partnerships | Age-Friendly Ontario Network
- Motivation to become a member of the WHO Global Network
 - Increase awareness of the need for older adult supports in Canada and Ontario.
 - Global support and information sharing on age-friendly practices.
- Contribution to Global Network
 - Information and idea sharing, ongoing advocacy for the needs of older adults and age-friendly practices.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications. Future budgets will continue to request sustained resources to maintain program development, outreach and human resources in support of this action plan and the deliverables therein.

COUNCIL WORK PLAN

Sustainable Growth

- Develop a housing plan that allows for increased community diversity
- Continue the implementation of the Transportation Master Plan
- Continue the development of a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan
- Pursue intensification in concert with accessibility and public transit, Bolton GO Station and other transit hubs.

Connected Community

- Promote community enrichment through support of local groups, enhances partnerships and events
- Promote an **age-friendly** community through the formation of youth and senior retention plans

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- Understand community needs and provide services based on urban/rural differences
- Break down barriers for volunteers and local community groups to enable and help empower volunteer groups

Improved Service Delivery

- Build and maintain **parks** and green spaces
- Plan and fund recreation infrastructure that meets the changing needs of the community
- Explore community hub models for service delivery
- Apply a diversity lens (age, language, culture) throughout the Town's operations and services
- Increase education and awareness of available services and **accessibility** options

ATTACHMENTS

Schedule A: Age-Friendly Caledon Action Plan Annual Report - 2022

Schedule B: Membership requirements for the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC)