

Staff Report 2024-0485

Meeting Date: October 1, 2024

Subject: Age-Friendly Advisory Committee 2024 – 2025 Workplan

Submitted By: Katie Sawyers, Coordinator, Age-Friendly; Community and Human Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the Age-Friendly Advisory Committee (AFAC) 2024 – 2025 Workplan be adopted to promote and work towards supporting a community where Caledon residents can age well and age in place, as outlined in Staff Report 2024-0485.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

The Age-Friendly Advisory Committee (AFAC) operates based on the 2021 – 2031 Age-Friendly Action Plan, which was approved by the council in May 2021. For 2024-2025, the AFAC has developed a Committee Work Plan that outlines initiatives aimed at addressing key issues affecting older adults in Caledon. These initiatives are in line with the deliverables identified in the Age-Friendly Action Plan.

Key areas of focus include affordable housing, transportation, volunteer engagement, social isolation, and financial support.

DISCUSSION

In May 2024, staff recommended transitioning the Age-Friendly Task Force into an Advisory Committee. This allowed for the continuation of ongoing work without mid-term recruitment, ensuring the momentum from the beginning of the term is maintained. The newly formed AFAC is tasked with developing an annual work plan that aligns with the broader goals of the Age-Friendly Caledon Action Plan.

Overview of Priority Areas (2024-2025)

Upon their appointment, AFAC members identified several priority areas that are crucial for improving the quality of life for older adults in Caledon:

- Affordable Housing: There is a need for more affordable housing options for older adults in the community.
- Transportation: Many older adults face difficulties with transportation and transit options in Caledon.

- Volunteerism: Post-pandemic, there is a shortage of volunteers in services and community supports.
- Social Isolation: Older adults are increasingly experiencing social isolation, which has significant impacts on mental health.
- Information & Resources: There is a need for increased information and resources to raise awareness about available supports for older adults.
- Financial Challenges: The economic impact of inflation, coupled with post-COVID financial challenges, has heightened the need for financial support for older adults.

Key Projects for 2024

Three primary projects have been identified for focus during the 2024 work year. These projects have already commenced, with additional support from working groups.

1. Volunteer Working Group
 - Aimed at increasing volunteerism among older adults.
 - Financial support from the New Horizons for Seniors Grant was secured for 2024/2025.
 - The project will include a series of volunteer engagement fairs and an appreciation event focused on educating and raising awareness about the importance of volunteering for older adults.
 - Expected completion by December 2024.
2. Abbeyfield House 2.0
 - This initiative explores the potential for additional Abbeyfield House developments to provide affordable housing for older adults in Caledon.
 - The timeline for the project is yet to be determined.
3. 55+ Business Discount Directory Project
 - Development of a comprehensive directory listing businesses and services offering discounts or credits for older adults in Caledon.
 - Project Complete in September 2024.

Member Feedback for 2025 Deliverables

During June 2024, AFAC members provided input for the 2025 deliverables. Key feedback included:

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- Recommendations around starting the investigation of Age-Friendly Caledon deliverable 2.3 in 2024/25.
- Suggestion for incorporating more action items addressing health issues for older adults.
- Stressed the importance of aligning AFAC's work with the National Seniors Council's report "Supporting Canadians Aging at Home: Ensuring Quality of Life as We Age," published in June 2024. Full report reflecting in Staff Report 2024-0492.
- Expressed concerns about funding for projects and future facilitation.
- Supported deferring the work on deliverable 2.3 until further details are clarified.
- Advocated for prioritizing affordable housing and supported making a stronger recommendation for a feasible transportation plan for older adults, given the longstanding community need.

Incorporating the recommendations and feedback from AFAC members, Schedule A outlines an updated Workplan for the remainder of 2024 and into 2025. This revised workplan ensures that the committee's priorities are aligned with the needs of the community while addressing the key areas highlighted in the feedback received from members. The workplan includes the continuation and enhancement of ongoing projects, as well as new initiatives based on identified concerns and opportunities for improvement.

NEXT STEPS

Moving forward, AFAC members and key staff will collaborate to implement the deliverables outlined in the 2024-2025 Workplan. Key actions include the development of project working groups and the coordination of activities to ensure timely and effective progress on each initiative.

In Fall 2025, AFAC members will conduct a comprehensive review of the progress made on the current initiatives. This evaluation will help assess the impact of the 2024-2025 projects and inform the creation of a 2026 Workplan, ensuring that the committee continues to address the evolving needs of older adults in Caledon.

This iterative process will help keep AFAC's efforts aligned with its goals and responsive to community needs.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications in association with this staff report. Items outlined in the AFAC 2024-2025 workplan may incur financial recommendations to support implementation. Upon review and approval of the projects recommended by AFAC members, staff will review any associated financial implications for potential inclusion in the 2025 budget. An additional ongoing staff review of funding opportunities (grants,

partnerships, subsidies) in support of selected project recommendations associated with this workplan and the Age-Friendly Action Plan will be facilitated.

COUNCIL WORK PLAN

Strategic Plan 2023-2035

This report is directly related to the following priority in Caledon's 2023-2035 Strategic Plan:

Community Vitality and Livability/Service Excellence and Accountability

Community Vitality: A guiding principle of the 2023-2035 Strategic Plan is community vitality and livability, ensuring all community members are involved in decision making.

Livability: To adopt an innovative approach that adapts to the changing needs and expectations of our community while supporting best practices.

Service Excellence: Caledon offers services and programs that support a healthy, engaged and inclusive community. Caledon continuously improves the way we deliver service, offering alternative and accessible formats. **Accountability:** The Town of Caledon is committed to providing quality goods and services which are accessible to all persons we serve.

Details about Caledon's 2023-2035 Strategic Plan can be found at caledon.ca/strategicplan.

ATTACHMENTS

Schedule A: AFAC 2024-2025 Workplan