



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Seniors Strategy – Development Process

Date:	May 12, 2011
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report outlines the process that will be used to develop the Seniors Strategy in partnership with other orders of government, community organizations, individuals, businesses and research institutions. This will be a working strategy that builds on existing research and best practices and includes two development structures and an engagement plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director of Social Development Finance & Administration recommends that:

- 1) Staff develop a Seniors Strategy that builds on the existing work of the City and partners, as well as current research and best practices, including:
 - a. convening a Senior Staff Steering Committee including all City divisions, agencies, boards, commissions and corporations affecting the needs of seniors;
 - b. convening a Working Committee with outside stakeholders including the federal and provincial governments, school boards, local agencies serving seniors, research institutions, and members of the Toronto Seniors' Forum to ensure all partners are engaged in the process and committed to supporting the outcome; and
 - c. developing an engagement plan that builds on the existing networks and outreaches to seniors, service providers, policy developers and program funders.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report. The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

EQUITY STATEMENT

The development of a Seniors Strategy for the City of Toronto will identify the diversity of the senior's population in terms of income, immigration status, ethno-racial backgrounds, family status, physical ability and many more factors. By specifically identifying the diversity of this growing population the Strategy will intentionally document the range of supports required to care for all people as they age.

DECISION HISTORY

At its April 12 and 13, 2011, meeting, City Council adopted a motion titled "A Strategic Plan for Toronto's Seniors" which directed the City Manager to report back on a development process for a Seniors Strategy, to be considered at the May 27, 2011, Community Development and Recreation Committee meeting.

CD2.4 A Strategic Plan for Toronto's Seniors

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2011/cd/bgrd/backgroundfile-36683.pdf>)

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Toronto's demographic makeup is changing in many ways, and seniors are the fastest growing population. This is a global trend and it is projected that by 2050, there will be more older people than children for the first time in the world's history. Based on the 2006 census, seniors (65+) make up 14% of Toronto's population (or about 355,000 people). By 2031, it is projected that this segment of the population will increase by about 40% and make up approximately 17% of Toronto's population. This growing senior population is diverse in terms of health, income, immigration status, ethno-racial backgrounds, family status, mobility and many more factors.

As the population changes the City needs to reconsider how it supports its residents. The City has continuously responded to the needs of seniors in a number of ways. In the past, the Toronto Seniors' Task Force final report, "Building a City For All Ages" (1999), developed 55 recommendations. In 2006, the Toronto Mayor's Roundtable on Seniors wrote the "Housing Toronto Seniors" report which established six key directions on housing. Currently the Seniors' Forum, which was a recommendation of the Seniors' Task Force, supports the seniors voice and outreach activities including a recent consultation on age-friendly communities (June 16, 2009).

City Council has now directed staff to develop a new working strategy for seniors. This Seniors Strategy gives the City an opportunity to gather, evaluate, and refocus its attention in order to align its work with other organizations and develop a plan that enhances the well-being of seniors. The Strategy will develop recommendations that could include service delivery, partnership or advocacy.

This report outlines the process to develop a Seniors Strategy. The City Manager has delegated the lead to the Executive Director of Social Development, Finance and Administration on this initiative, in close consultation with the Acting General Manager of Long-Term Care Homes & Services, and has endorsed this development process.

COMMENTS

Seniors Strategy Overview

The Seniors Strategy will build on the City's motto "Diversity Our Strength." By creating a plan for seniors to live well, the City will also strengthen access and equity for all, from physical accessibility to social integration.

The Seniors Strategy will be grounded in the awareness that there is an ageing spectrum. By defining ageing on a spectrum this working strategy can map stages of ageing in relation to themes of health, housing, isolation, income security, and others. Each theme will catalogue and analyse the current programs, services, and delivery mechanisms. Planning within the City's current operating reality, the Strategy will then define expectations and responsibilities, partnership opportunities and service gaps.

The development of the Seniors Strategy will build on existing research and best practices and include two development structures and an engagement plan.

Development Structures

Two development structures will be convened; each will bring a unique perspective and create opportunities for information exchange and service alignment. A Steering Committee will be established that is staffed by senior management from all program areas involved in affecting the quality of life of seniors, including social, economic and environmental dimensions. City agencies, boards, commissions, corporations and divisions represented will include Long-Term Care Homes & Services, Toronto Public Health, Parks, Forestry & Recreation, Toronto Community Housing Corporation, Toronto Transit Commission, Revenue Services and others. This Steering Committee will ensure all City program areas evaluate their services and respond to the changing needs of the ageing population.

A Working Committee will also be formed that brings together outside service providers including other orders of government, school boards, relevant community organizations, individuals, businesses and research institutions. This Working Committee will ensure the Strategy is complete and connected to seniors' issues and networks beyond the City.

Build on the Existing Knowledge Base

The Strategy will build on current research and best practices from Toronto and around the world, much of which has been developed with seniors. For example, the World Health Organization has developed eight age-friendly policy domains to support cities in becoming more age-friendly and recognizing the potential that older people represent.

On June 16, 2009, Toronto Seniors' Forum hosted a community meeting with over one hundred organizations and individuals to discuss the eight age-friendly policy domains. A Book of Proceedings was compiled from this event and this, along with past City reports, will serve as a resource for the development of the Seniors Strategy.

The City of Toronto is also the new home of the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) which advocates for "a world where the political, social and physical environment are in line to support and enable older people to live in security, enjoy good health, be valued members and participate fully in their communities." Resources like these will inform the Seniors Strategy.

Engagement Plan

An important part of the Seniors Strategy will be outreach to key stakeholders. Critical to a successful outreach approach is support for meaningful dialogue that will affect the outcome. The engagement process will be targeted and specific, and be designed to encourage residents, businesses, institutions, and community organizations participation in the development of the Seniors Strategy. The outreach will also utilize the results from recent and on-going City engagement processes including the Recreation Service Plan, the Core Service Review, the 2012 Budget and others, which will document seniors concerns and issues.

Finally, by building on the existing foundation of the Seniors' Forum, and other networks, the voice of seniors will shape the Strategy.

The detailed stakeholder engagement process will be developed with the Seniors Staff Steering Committee and the Working Committee.

Time Line

Staff will begin by compiling and synthesizing current work on seniors issues (Summer 2011). At the same time staff will convene the Steering Committee which will also identify and bring forward relevant information (Summer/Fall 2011). The Steering Committee will document the spectrum of ageing and themes affecting seniors, as well as identify representation on the Working Committee. The Working Committee will be convened and begin by reviewing and supplementing the findings of the Steering Committee (Fall 2011).

Once the spectrum of ageing and needs has been mapped the Steering Committee will develop the Strategy in the context of the City's mandate and operating realities. The Working Committee will complement the City's finding by identifying the roles and responsibilities of other partners (Winter 2012). During this process an outreach plan will be devised. Once the draft Strategy is ready the targeted outreach plan will be implemented (Spring 2012). With feedback from the outreach the Strategy will be revised and a final report will be prepared for consideration by City Council (Summer 2012).

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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