RECOMMENDATION


2. THAT the Regional Clerk forward a copy of Report No. SS-23-15/MO-12-15 and the Attachment be forwarded to key community stakeholders including the City of Burlington, Town of Halton Hills, Town of Milton and the Town of Oakville for their information.

REPORT

Executive Summary

- The Halton Region Older Adult Plan (2015-2018) is a cross-departmental plan that identifies how the Region is responding to the growing aging population in Halton.

- The plan includes six priorities, 14 objectives and 46 actions that seek to enhance quality of life for older adults through meaningful engagement, strengthened community partnerships, integrated service delivery and application of an older adult perspective to all Regional policies, programs, services and environments.

- The Halton Region Older Adult Plan 2015-2018 focuses on priorities, objectives and actions that are within Halton Region’s authority to plan, manage and deliver.
Background

As outlined in SS-38-13/MO-40-13 re: “Toward a Halton Response to a Growing Older Adult Population” (November 2013), the Halton Region Older Adult Plan (HOAP) is a four year plan that is responsive to changing demographics in Halton. In this plan older adults are defined as 65 years and older. The focus throughout the plan is on creating aging-friendly policies, programs, services and environments so that older adults in Halton can stay healthy as they age. This plan aligns with Halton Region’s Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018 and other Regional plans and strategies including but not limited to Halton’s Regional Official Plan and the Comprehensive Housing Strategy Update 2014-2024.

According to Halton Region’s current Best Planning Estimates forecast to 2031 as approved Regional Council in July 2011 (LPS54-11), the number of older adults (65+) in Halton will nearly double to 127,000 by 2031. This demographic shift is also occurring at a provincial and national level. People are living longer and healthier lives. As the baby boomer generation reaches the age of 65, the number of older adults living in our communities is increasing. Population projections over the next 10 – 20 years indicate this shift will steadily increase. It is imperative that planning for the future considers the impact this demographic shift will have on Regional programs and services.

In HOAP, Regional staff have identified aging-friendly and inclusive priorities, objectives and actions that promote accessibility, engagement and well-being. The goal is to support the health and well-being of older adults in Halton. The proposed enhancements to Regional policies, programs, services and environments in this plan are beneficial for older adults and all residents in Halton.

Development of the plan

The Halton Region Older Adult Plan is informed by Provincial documents including Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care (2015), Dr. Samir Sinha’s report Living Longer, Living Well (January 2013) and Independence, Activity and Good Health: Ontario’s Senior Action Plan (January 2013). Older adult strategies developed by other municipalities, as well as local initiatives such as the Age-Friendly Communities Project developed by Halton Region’s Older Adult Advisory Committee (previously Elder Services Advisory Committee) informed the plan.

Consultations conducted in 2014 and 2015 also contributed to the development of the plan. Regional staff met with Halton Region’s Older Adult Advisory Committee and received feedback from community stakeholders including representatives from:

- Alzheimer Society of Hamilton Halton
- Canadian Association of Retired Persons – Halton Chapter
- City of Burlington (Parks and Recreation Department)
- Community Development Halton
- Community Foundation of Burlington
- Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Community Care Access Centre
• Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network
• Mississauga Halton Community Care Access Centres
• Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network
• Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning – Sheridan Centre for Elder Research
• Town of Halton Hills (Recreation and Parks Department)
• Town of Milton (Recreation Services Department)
• Town of Oakville (Recreation and Culture Department)
• United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton
• United Way of Milton
• United Way of Oakville

Discussion

HOAP highlights the Region’s commitment to Regional policies, programs, services and environments that support older adults to stay healthy as they age. Healthy aging is most successful in communities that are inclusive, sustainable, healthy, accessible, interdependent and engaging.

The plan identifies priorities, objectives and actions that, through Regional initiatives and in collaboration with other stakeholders, will contribute to a community for older adults that:

• Respects, values and engages older adults with opportunities and choices for meaningful activities, employment, social connections, and healthy lifestyles
• Enables access to information, required services and amenities
• Enhances aging-friendly environments
• Supports older adults to be independent and make choices that help them to achieve a high quality of life
• Ensures safety and security in home and community

The term “aging-friendly” is used throughout HOAP as it broadly applies to supporting all Halton residents including older adults to stay healthy as they age. Healthy aging is most successful in communities that are inclusive, sustainable, healthy, accessible, interdependent and engaging. The term “Age-Friendly” is often used by Local Municipalities in their plans to improve life for older adults and work towards the World Health Organization’s Age-Friendly Cities designation. As an Upper Tier Municipality, Halton Region is not eligible to apply for this designation.

Six priorities are identified in the plan:

• Consider older adults in the development of policies and delivery of programs
• Optimize the engagement of older adults with Halton Region
• Support the enhancement of aging-friendly Regional environments
• Support opportunities for older adults and Halton communities to prosper
• Support older adults to be active, connected and to age well
• Support older adults to maintain their independence

A full listing of the 14 objectives and 46 actions in the plan are detailed in the Attachment. The next phase of work will focus on the development of the detailed work plans. The detailed work plans will identify the timing, outcomes and measures to achieve the priorities and objectives over the next four years. This plan is a living document that will continue to evolve to be responsive to changes in the community. HOAP highlights the Region’s commitment to older adults and acknowledges that investments at every age support us all to age well in Halton. Collaboration and shared expertise across the organization is essential to the success of this plan.

A key element in HOAP is the recognition that older adults are diverse in many ways. Older adulthood is a time of many changes. Halton residents, including older adults vary in terms of socio-economic status, physical and sensory mobility, literacy levels, generational attitudes, marital status, being a newcomer to Canada, sexual orientation, gender identity and cultural backgrounds and identities.

Throughout the plan there are references to the application of an older adult perspective when planning, developing and/or implementing Regional policies, programs and services. The older adult perspective incorporates the values and priorities that older adults have identified as important to them. Customer service standards and training are enhanced through this plan to ensure all staff apply an older adult perspective to the work they do. The progress of the plan will be reflected as part of the annual update on Halton Region’s Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018.
FINANCIAL/PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

The work to complete this phase of the plan was funded from the approved operating budgets for the Health, and Social and Community Services departments. The next phase of the plan will develop detailed work plans to implement the HOAP. Any actions identified requiring additional funding will be brought forward for consideration as part of the annual budget process.

Respectfully submitted,

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If you have any questions on the content of this report, please contact:

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Document Under Separate Cover – Halton Region Older Adult Plan 2015-2018