

Staff Report for Decision

DATE OF MEETING March 20, 2019

AUTHORED BY JOHN HORN, SOCIAL PLANNER

SUBJECT SENIORS CONNECT FUNDING EXTENSION

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To obtain Finance and Audit Committee direction regarding federal government funding to continue the Seniors Connect project to the end of 2019. |

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council continue to receive funding from Employment and Social Development Canada under the New Horizons for Seniors program to continue existing Seniors Connect projects until 2019-DEC-31.

BACKGROUND

Council, at its Regular Committee of the Whole Meeting of 2016-MAY-09, passed the following resolution:

"That Council support the allocation of the Government of Canada, Ministry of Employment and Social Development for a 3-year \$168,360 New Horizons for Seniors Grant."

The City of Nanaimo is part of a community collaborative named "Seniors Connect" involving Nanaimo Family Life Association, Nanaimo Women's Resources Society, HealthWell Foundation and the Nanaimo Hospital Foundation Lifeline Program. The intent of Seniors Connect is to take a collective impact approach to reducing social isolation among seniors in Nanaimo. The collaborative received \$2,071,895 for a three-year period commencing 2016-APR-01 and ending 2019-APR-30. As part of this, the City of Nanaimo received a share of \$168,360 to develop and implement two programs: Living History (an oral history series) and City Builders (age-friendly public infrastructure). To date, this funding has been used to deliver the Living History Speaker Series of 20 free events highlighting the stories of seniors in Nanaimo. The City Builders initiative has delivered two bus shelters, conversational seating in a park and an age-friendly crosswalk. |

In February 2019, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) has communicated with current projects across the country offering additional funding to extend the projects to 2019-DEC-31 to help support the potential for projects to become sustainable. This is an 8-month extension and represents a total allocation of \$388,000 for the Nanaimo collaborative. From this amount, the City of Nanaimo would receive approximately \$15,500 to continue the Living History and City Builders initiatives. As noted in the staff report titled "New Horizons for Seniors" dated 2019-FEB-11, several projects remain in the pipeline for City Builders from the current funding: four bus stop shelters and two crosswalks that are expected to complete prior

to the expiration of the funding. As other priorities have since arisen, the capacity to continue this component of the original funding is limited. For the purposes of this extension, we are contemplating one project that has already been identified, scoped and costed by Staff and is manageable within our current capacity.

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council continue to receive funding from Employment and Social Development Canada under the New Horizons for Seniors program to continue existing Seniors Connect projects until 2019-DEC-31.
 - **Budget Implication:** The 2019 – 2023 Financial Plan will be amended to increase the budget for the New Horizons Seniors Grants Program by \$15,500 funded by a grant for the program extension to 2019-DEC-31.
 - **Strategic Priorities Implication:** This work furthers the Community Value of Social Equity.
2. That Council provide alternative direction. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- \$2,071,895 was allocated from an ESDC New Horizons for Seniors Grant to Nanaimo in 2016 to support a collaborative effort (Seniors Connect) to reduce social isolation in seniors.
- The funding originally covered the three-year period from 2016-APR-01 to 2019-APR-30 but ESDC has offered an additional \$388,000 funding to extend existing programs to 2019-DEC-31.
- The City of Nanaimo's share of the funding extension would be approximately \$15,500 and would be used to support a continuation of the Living History and City Builders initiatives.

Submitted by:

Lisa Bhopalsingh
Manager, Community and Cultural Planning |

Concurrence by:

Dale Lindsay
Director, Community Development

Laura Mercer
Acting Director, Financial Services