

DATE OF MEETING July 22, 2019

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SUBJECT CITY OF NANAIMO AGE-FRIENDLY CITY PLAN

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To obtain Council's endorsement of the draft "Nanaimo Age-Friendly City Plan (2019-2023)", to be included as a key component of the City of Nanaimo's application to be recognized as an Age-Friendly British Columbia community.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. endorse the "Nanaimo Age-Friendly City Plan (2019-2023)";
2. direct Staff to submit the plan to the Province, as part of the City of Nanaimo's application for age-friendly recognition; and
3. acknowledge the Nanaimo Seniors Task Force as the lead agency in coordinating plan implementation.

BACKGROUND

The Age-Friendly Community initiative started with the World Health Organization in 2006 and involved 33 cities of varying sizes throughout the world. *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide* contains the lessons, strategies, and information learned through discussions in these cities. Building on this and Canadian age-friendly initiatives, the Province, through Age-Friendly BC (AFBC), has supported the development of age-friendly communities since 2007.

Council, at its Regular meeting of 2017-JUL-10, passed the following motion:

"That Council endorse the application to the Age-Friendly British Columbia recognition program in order to acknowledge the City of Nanaimo's efforts in improving accessibility and fostering social inclusion for older persons."

Council, at its Regular meeting of 2019-APR-01, received an information report that outlined Nanaimo's ongoing efforts to be recognized as an age-friendly community. The Provincial guidelines for achieving AFBC recognition include the following three steps:

- 1) Conduct an age-friendly assessment in consultation with older adults:

This assessment was completed between 2016 and 2018 through the Seniors Connect project, of which the City is a partner.

- 2) Establish an age-friendly community advisory committee that includes the active participation of older adults:

This advisory committee was established under the leadership of the Seniors Connect project and is called the Nanaimo Seniors Task Force (NSTF).

- 3) Develop and publicize an age-friendly city plan (AFC Plan):

The NSTF, building on the recommendations of the Seniors Connect community engagement, developed an AFC plan for Nanaimo in partnership with the City and other organizations (see Attachment A). A summary of the engagement and consultation activities that informed the Nanaimo AFC Plan is included as Attachment B.

DISCUSSION

The Nanaimo AFC Plan looks at issues facing seniors and other Nanaimo residents across nine topic areas. Eight of the themes are consistent with the World Health Organization's key guidelines: Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings; Transportation; Housing; Social Participation; Health and Community Services; Respect and Social Inclusion; Civic Participation, Volunteerism and Employment; and Communication and Information. The additional topic of Food Security and Healthy Eating was added by the NSTF to reflect the importance of this domain to seniors in Nanaimo.

The Nanaimo AFC Plan outlines what is currently being done by the City and other community partners in these nine topic areas, identifies what other barriers seniors are currently experiencing, and recommends objectives and strategies for overcoming these barriers. For example, under the area "Outdoor Spaces & Public Buildings", one of the identified barriers is "Insufficient access to public washroom facilities". The corresponding objective is to "Improve access and availability of public washroom facilities". The plan suggests three strategies for achieving this objective (e.g., "NSTF to develop an awareness campaign for local businesses to provide access to washrooms for people with mobility challenges, seniors, and children").

All of the Nanaimo AFC Plan content came directly from feedback gathered through the community engagement activities, which was then reviewed and categorized by importance. As well, the perceived ability for the NSTF, or another organization in the community, to address the issue at the local level was considered. Objectives chosen for inclusion in the plan were based on the availability of creative solutions, the impact the objective would have on the community, and the likelihood of successful implementation should the Nanaimo AFC Plan be endorsed. Strategies are rated in the following ways: Impact (High or Low) and Difficulty of Implementation (Easy, Moderate, or Hard). The community has had several opportunities to provide input into the development of the Plan and review drafts through attending open houses and other events, or submitting online feedback. A final opportunity for the community to review the Plan took place on 2019-JUN-19.

Endorsement of a document is distinct from adoption of a municipal bylaw or City plan in that it indicates City support in principle, but does not obligate the City to implement every element of the plan. The intention is that this document will serve as guidance in the implementation of City policy and planning documents, and where there are inconsistencies, Staff will aim to uphold the vision of the AFC Plan, but may not be able to fully implement every element.

The recommendation is that the NSTF be recognized as the lead agency in coordinating plan implementation, as this was the group primarily responsible for creating and championing the AFC Plan. The NSTF has also requested that the City acknowledge their role as lead agency.

The Nanaimo AFC Plan reflects extensive community engagement undertaken by the NSTF throughout its development over the past two years. The significant research and public input that went into creating this document will be helpful in guiding City priorities in the future. Staff are pleased to recommend that Council endorse this document as a key step in Nanaimo's application to become an Age-Friendly BC community. |

OPTIONS

1. That Council:
 1. endorse the "Nanaimo Age-Friendly City Plan (2019-2023)";
 2. direct Staff to submit the plan to the Province, as part of the City of Nanaimo's application for age-friendly recognition; and
 3. acknowledge the Nanaimo Seniors Task Force as the lead agency in coordinating plan implementation
 - The advantage of this option: Endorsement of the proposed Nanaimo AFC Plan will allow the City to proceed with its application to become an Age-Friendly BC community and supports the City's strategic themes of livability and governance excellence.
 - The disadvantage of this option: Denial of the proposed Nanaimo AFC Plan will stop the City from proceeding with its application to become an Age-Friendly BC community and will remove an opportunity to support the City's strategic themes of livability and governance excellence.
2. That Council provide alternative direction. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- Council endorsement of the Nanaimo Age-Friendly City Plan is a key component of the City's application to the Province to achieve Age-Friendly BC recognition.
- An age-friendly engagement process was undertaken by Nanaimo Seniors Connect, leading to information and recommendations to make Nanaimo more age friendly.
- Under leadership of Seniors Connect, the Nanaimo Seniors Task Force was created to support the development and implementation of an age-friendly city plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

- ATTACHMENT A: Nanaimo Age-Friendly City Plan (2019-2023)
ATTACHMENT B: Summary of Engagement and Consultation Activities

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