



SUBJECT: Burlington Active Aging Plan

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Parks & Recreation Department

Report Number: PR-02-17

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 901-02

Date to Committee: June 26, 2017

Date to Council: July 10, 2017

Recommendation:

Approve the Burlington Active Aging Plan (BAAP) as a strategic framework to guide the development of services, infrastructure and community partnerships that support the older adult population in staying active, healthy and engaged in the community; and

Direct the Director of Parks and Recreation to implement strategies in the BAAP that can be undertaken with existing resources in priority sequence based on community need and impact; and

Direct the Director of Parks and Recreation to bring forward any projects or program initiatives under the BAAP that require funding, for consideration as part of the City's normal budget / reporting process.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to present an Action Plan to keep older adults active, healthy and engaged in their community. For the definition of this report and plan, an older adult refers to the 55+ demographic. In addition, this report helps to satisfy various objectives found in Burlington's Strategic Plan 2015-2040;

- A City that Grows: "Seniors are supported by a strategy that promotes health, recreation, transportation and aging in place. An Age Friendly Strategy for seniors will be developed within three years to ensure sufficient seniors' programming space is provided throughout the city."
- A Healthier and Greener City: "Recreation programs are widely available to all residents through partnerships. The city will work with public, private and

community groups to provide recreation programs that reflect the city's demographics.”

Background and Discussion:

The City of Burlington is in the midst of a considerable and continual demographic shift, marked by the growing proportion of older adults (55+). This demographic shift will change the complexion of our community and impact public services, policies, and infrastructure. Many cities around the world have adopted age-friendly community action plans to ensure citizens of all ages feel a sense of belonging and have access to services and opportunities that enrich their lives.

In 2015, the City received a \$50,000 grant through the Ontario Senior's Secretariat to develop an age-friendly community action plan. The funding was provided to support the community engagement process which included the use of an experienced consultant. It should be noted that in 2015, Halton Region adopted the [Halton Older Adult Plan \(HOAP\)](#) which addresses the Region's response to the dimensions and services within their jurisdiction such as public health, social services, housing and public safety / security. The Regional and City plans are intended to complement one another.

The BAAP focuses on the World Health Organization's eight dimensions of an Age Friendly City and is further defined by the [Province of Ontario](#).

As mentioned, the BAAP focused on areas which are closely connected to the city, namely:

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Transportation
- Social Inclusion which includes Respect and Social Participation
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information.



Source: World Health Organization
[Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide](#)

Below are the eight (8) key features of an age-friendly community:

1. Outdoor spaces and public buildings are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible
2. Public transportation is accessible and affordable
3. Housing is affordable, accessible, secure and enables aging in place

4. Opportunities for older adults to participate in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities
5. Older adult contributions are valued and recognized, and individuals 55+ live with a sense of respect and inclusion in civic life
6. Opportunities for meaningful employment and volunteerism recognize the skills and interests of older adults and encourage paid and non paid contributions
7. Communication and information is available in accessible and easy to understand formats
8. Community support and health services allow for quality care and enable independence and aging in place

As highlighted by the Province of Ontario;

“It’s no secret that the population is aging and each of us hopes that our aging experience is a positive one. Successful, healthy and active aging requires a combination of personal and environmental factors that work together to support the best possible experience”.

Strategy/process

The following process was undertaken when developing the BAAP. The development was completed in four distinct phases; Project Development, Situation Analysis, Community Engagement, and Plan Development. Each phase, a description of the work completed, and the respective timelines are highlighted below:

Stage	Description	Timeline
Project Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execute provincial contribution agreement • Prepare terms of reference • Establish staff team • Hire consultant • Recruit citizen’s working group 	Oct-Dec 2015
Situation Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff team orientations • Citizen’s working group orientations • Consultant orientation and tours • Inventory of existing services • Demographic analysis • Current policy analysis • Trend analysis • Internal data collection • Situation analysis report • Report back to staff and citizen groups 	Jan-May 2016

Stage	Description	Timeline
Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council interviews • Public survey (online and paper versions) • Community forums (x3) • Documentation and analysis of results • Citizen’s working group review meetings 	May-Sep 2017
Plan Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and citizen groups workshops to draft prepare, review and refine plan • Final plan prepared 	Oct-Mar 2018

Financial Matters:

The BAAP is not intended to become an unfunded master plan. Rather, the plan provides a framework with data and methodologies, highlighting considerations and objectives in an effort to becoming an Age Friendly city. The plan also highlights the need to develop new partnerships and strengthen existing ones as essential when moving forward. In the event that initiatives do require tax-base funding, items would be brought forward to Council as part of any normal business cycle. For example, items would be brought forward through committee reports, business plan cycles and / or the budget process for consideration, with reference to the BAAP. Some items within the plan can be undertaken with existing resources in priority sequence based on community need and impact. Once the plan is endorsed, staff would work toward prioritization and implementation of these items.

Connections:

The BAAP contains many connections both internally and externally. The plan helps to identify the City’s role in becoming age-friendly and also recognizes that the City can work with the community through collaboration to optimize existing community resources and to build community capacity. This approach requires continued and enhanced relationship building, partnerships and community development to foster sustainable and positive linkages. Strengthening connections with many partners like the Burlington Public Library, Halton Region and our community and service organizations will create dynamic development and collective impact.

Internal to the City, this Plan needs to connect closely with the vision of the Corporate Strategic Plan, align with the Official Plan currently underway, and connect with other important initiatives like the Asset Management Plan and the Transportation Strategy.

Moreover, a close link with advisory committees to Council including Burlington Seniors' Advisory Committee (BSAC) and their annual workplan will be important in maintaining a continued and current touchstone with older adult interests, needs and priorities in the community. Departments, Directors, Service Owners, the Burlington Leadership Team and Council members have all had opportunity to help shape this plan and will also be critical in ensuring this plan continues to have momentum and a strong connection to Burlington's Strategic Plan 2015-2040.

Public Engagement Matters:

The BAAP was built by the community, for the community. Extensive engagement occurred with both invested individuals, and over twenty older adult local and provincial stakeholders representing associations, educational institutions, cultural groups and more, as referenced in the acknowledgements section of the Plan. The BAAP reflects the community's needs, ideas and interests. The Burlington Active Aging Plan is the result of almost a year of community engagement work that targeted adults 55+ and included input from local residents, businesses, community groups, City staff and Council. One component of the overall engagement strategy saw over 1,400 individual survey responses submitted. Six different formats were used to engage the community and collect feedback and data:

1. Public Survey: distributed in a variety of methods across the entire city and also available online.
2. Community Forums: very well attended community forums were hosted at three different locations around the city at various times of the day.
3. Community Working Group: were made up of a variety of community based organizations and individual champions.
4. Council Members: provided input at the onset of this study through individual discussions with the consultant.
5. City Staff Working Group: made up of key individuals in departments and service owners.
6. Key Service Owners and the Burlington Leadership Team: who provided support and direction throughout the process.

We heard a lot! For the most part, adults 55+ felt a strong community connection and saw themselves as a respected part of community life. Feedback received also indicated older adults felt they had a variety of opportunities to participate, and enjoyed a good quality of life here in Burlington. As part of the engagement process, it was also discovered that many residents were not aware of some of the age-friendly initiatives

already underway within the city. In an effort to highlight these current initiatives, each of the five areas of focus list age-friendly practices “Currently Underway”.

Of equal importance were ideas brought forward by residents to address reducing age-friendly barriers. These key considerations have been identified, and City staff built upon the community input to list strategies to address these barriers and considerations in the “Call to Action” sections of each focus area. The strategies and recommendations in this area are intended to evolve through a process of implementation, review and continual improvement. The “Call to Action” sections are intended to be ever evolving, growing and adapting, without the intention of being a conclusive list, tasks and ideas.

Conclusion:

Through active participation and involvement in the BAAP, Burlington citizens made it clear that the Plan needs to become a living document that evolves with the city. Innovative improvements and proactive planning were established as cornerstones to the implementation of the strategy. Creative community partnerships and the support of the whole community are needed in order to become a city where enabling environments, respectful attitudes, valued recognition and meaningful contribution result in increased aging in place. To ensure this Plan becomes a living document, the following four (4) strategies will be activated:

- Monitoring, measuring and reporting on the progress of the various initiatives
- Achieve Age-Friendly City recognition
- Ensure ongoing and meaningful collaboration continues, both internally and externally
- Designate Parks and Recreation as the Age-Friendly champion of the City, with sponsored support from the Burlington Leadership Team.

The Burlington Active Aging Plan will help ensure the City proactively plans for an evolving community where older adults are active, healthy and engaged.

Respectfully submitted,

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Manager of Recreation

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Appendices:

- A. Burlington Active Aging Plan (BAAP)

Notifications:

- Halton Region Older Adult Advisory Committee (OAAC)
- Burlington Seniors Advisory Committee (BSAC)

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, Director of Finance and Director of Legal. Final approval is by the City Manager.