



SUBJECT: Burlington Active Aging Plan Update

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Parks & Recreation Department

Report Number: PR-02-19

Wards Affected: all

File Numbers: 901-02

Date to Committee: November 4, 2019

Date to Council: November 18, 2019

Recommendation:

Receive and file recreation services department report PR-02-19 which provides an update on the Burlington Active Aging Plan and Adult Program Service Expansion.

Purpose:

Over the past two years, two key items have been approved by Council: Burlington Active Aging Plan (approved by Council in 2017), and the expansion of the Adult Recreation Program service delivery (approved through the 2019 budget process). This report will provide Council with an update on these two key items and highlight next steps.

The Burlington Active Aging Plan ([BAAP](#)) was developed following the World Health Organization's guidelines for creating an age-friendly community. The Plan focused on creating accessible and enabling spaces and services in the five key dimensions of social inclusion, civic participation, transportation and transit, communications/information and outdoor spaces and buildings. It identifies the process of demographic trends and the extensive process of public engagement.

Driven by the interests and needs of residents and stakeholders, the BAAP prioritized the community's input to create action items to guide staff annual work plans. In collaboration with our regional partners we continue to support age-friendly health care and housing initiatives also identified as a priority with Burlington's older adults. This plan supports Burlington's intention to be:

A City that Grows

- Focused Population Growth

A City that Moves

- Increased Transportation Flows and Connectivity

A Healthy and Greener City

- Healthy Lifestyles

An Engaging City

- Community Building through Arts and Culture via Community Activities

Background and Discussion:

Burlington like other communities is in the midst of a significant demographic shift. Findings from the Active Aging Plan situational analysis projected an anticipated 71% increase in the older adult population from 2006-2026. Eleven years into this period of growth, it is estimated that a further 35% growth in this segment of our community is yet to occur. Greater cultural diversity, adults living longer, diversity of four distinct generational interests within the older adult community, and non-traditional work and retirement patterns require a flexible response to a now broader spectrum of recreation interests and needs for seniors.

Within the Recreation Service Plan, a vibrant series of programs and partnerships are in place which support the various interests of our adult and older adult residents. A central-hub of activity continues to thrive at the Burlington Seniors Centre with satellite programming happening at a number of other locations including: Tansley Woods, Brant Hills, Mainway, Haber, Music Centre, Central, Mountainside and Aldershot. Burlington Seniors' Memberships are held by over 3,400 members and the City is seeing attendance in registered fitness, social and personal development programs of 150,496 annually. Drop-in programs which offer flexible commitment and payment options see another 66,954 participant visits each year.

Additionally, adults and older adults participate in many other city programs and services at our various pools, arenas and Tyandaga golf course. The Adult and Older Adult Recreation Team also works to support over 90 community service providers facilitating recreation experiences. Collaborative work with service clubs, public libraries, health care providers, Regional partners, and personal care practitioners are only a few of the community groups we work with to broaden our services by tapping into the specific expertise these partners offer. Through the sharing of resources and collaborative program administration, space and/or leadership practices, the City and community members are enriched by these relationships. Finally, the commitment to

provide meaningful volunteer experiences continues to be a cornerstone of the 55+ program model, with staff supporting numerous volunteer planning committees, food service teams, special event delivery, and roles integrated into our administrative and customer service needs.

Supported by the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility and with the Recreation Services Department championing development of the BAAP, clear Calls to Action have been outlined under each age-friendly dimension.

As a result of this Plan, the Calls to Action, and the commitment to activate it, the City of Burlington earned recognition as an “Age Friendly Community” by the Ministry in 2018. In 2019 the City began activating the Plan with the following initiatives underway.

2019 Progress on BAAP Initiatives

1. Intergenerational program and sharing resources with community schools

BAAP Dimension: Social Inclusion; Call to Action p30

A new partnership with Central Public school, Probus Service Club of Canada – Burlington District, and the City of Burlington Adult Recreation Services has been fostered to enhance intergenerational mentorship to teach Pickleball in the school’s phys-ed curriculum. Sparked by the vision of an adult actively participating in 55+ Pickleball programs, the Adult Recreation unit will support the 3-way relationship by supplying equipment kits to the school’s youth and will support volunteer Probus members who will be developing a program of skills, physical literacy, teamwork and fun competition.

2. Increase convenience of recreation registration process

BAAP Dimension: Social Inclusion; Call to Action p30

Multiple registration launches have been identified as a pain-point causing stress for older adults to experience several times a year. To help alleviate this concern, this fall 2019 staff opened up access for participants to register for the Fall and the Winter seasons in one combined registration launch. Registration continues to be open for anyone wishing to sign-up after the opening day, with non-resident registration opening up one week later. This change was received well by many registrants. Improvement to the efficiency of the supporting software continues.

3. Restorative programs for older adults and care partners

BAAP Dimension: Social Inclusion; Call to Action p30

In October 2019 service expansion will now enable the pilot of a new program developed by Burlington Family Health Care team to bridge the gap between physiotherapy and community-based independent fitness programs. The new program

named S.T.A.N.D. (Stability and Neuromuscular Development), targets adults facing significant challenges with mobility and balance and is developed to encourage healthy exercise habits three times each week within a supportive group setting and invites the support and participation of each participant's care partner. Fall registration saw an outpouring of support for this program and filled to capacity on Registration Launch day with a waiting list underway.

4. Address Social Isolation and develop education and referral systems for Senior's experiencing isolation.

BAAP Dimension: Social Inclusion and Regional Collaboration; Call to Action pgs 9 & 30

Adult Recreation Services has been a key contributor to the Regional working group designed to inventory resources, identify gaps and apply collaboratively for funding to address loneliness specifically faced by seniors. Food banks, emergency services, municipalities, shelters, health and recreation services are among the 40-person regional team addressing increasing awareness of isolating factors for older adults, pooling regional resources to create a system of response to individuals experiencing loneliness, and training system navigators to connect those in need with services available. A regional funding application was submitted to assist with these goals and approved in September 2019 to fund the development of educational and training materials. Work continues on deliverables.

5. Expanding opportunities for engagement

Recognizing and valuing the contributions of Older Adults by celebrating the contributions of Burlington's Centenarians

BAAP Dimension: Civic Engagement; Call to Action p34

Services Targeting Adults Round Table (S.T.A.R.T.) was designed to empower citizens to develop solutions to priority interests of our community. It's an action table collaborative approach with an assigned staff facilitator, which matches the skills of community volunteers to a BAAP Call to Action item. The proposed solution would be ideally ready for pilot within a one-year timeframe.

The first START action table pilot began in March '19 and concluded in August '19 with a community team of four volunteer citizens designing a recognition program for Centenarians. Guidelines for the action table were to work within existing services, to create community enrichment, and to keep the program cost effective. After four highly structured meetings where team members presented their research completed between meetings, they refined their proposal, and then presented the program concept to staff.

Action Table members found the experience to be extremely gratifying as their commitment was short-term and high-yield, they felt informed and empowered, and their

proposal met their goal to create an 'opt-in' recognition and sharing program and a beautiful community space. The S.T.A.R.T. action table proved to be a scalable process able to be used by any department and which increased respect and understanding among all members.

6. Burlington Seniors Advisory Committee (BSAC) Age-friendly facility review

BAAP dimension: Social Inclusion; Call to Action p31

The BAAP identified BSAC as a key partner in championing the Calls to Action of the Plan. In 2017 BSAC worked with staff to align a number of initiatives to be added to the 2018 workplan. Staff assisted in the development of a facility assessment tool to subjectively determine comfort factors in existing Community Centres as seen through the lens of seniors. BSAC conducted reviews of key amenities and is creating a report and recommendations based on findings. Staff and Council will be provided with findings to consider in workplans when developing enhancements to public spaces. With final updates underway, staff anticipate sharing the report with appropriate teams by Q4 of 2019 to capture in 2020 workplans as applicable.

Service Expansion

In June, through the budget process Council approved a plan for a service level expansion to recreation programs serving Adults and Older Adults. This expansion includes enhancements to services which promote personal wellness for seniors and staffing resources required to actively develop relationships with community members, stakeholders and service providers in order to reach many of these outcomes collaboratively.

Additional full-time and part-time FTEs were approved by Council in an effort to address broader community interests. Staff developed a three-year plan to grow high priority programs and enhance participation in existing available facilities. The following initiatives are currently underway as a direct result of the Service Expansion.

1. Recruitment/hiring part-time Recreation Programmer and full-time Recreation Coordinator

The part-time Recreational Programmer position was filled in June '19 allowing the expansion of the Day Trip outing schedule, more social activities and enabling greater involvement of community members in the planning of special events for their peers. Using a Community Development approach, a volunteer Social Committee was struck and has resulted in a busy agenda of community planning meetings for upcoming 2019 and 2020 social events and outings. Hiring of the Recreation Coordinator with a wellness portfolio was completed in August '19 and training and workplan development

is in now in place for fall 2019. These positions have already enabled the following activities.

2. Social communal dining expansion

Social isolation for single older adults is most profoundly felt during the simple daily ritual of eating meals. With the addition of many more opportunities for sharing food that is good for the body, and friendships which are good for the soul, we have increased the emphasis on social dining programs by adding a new Dinner at the Bistro program seeing 30 diners at the monthly program, expanded the Breakfast at the Bistro program now running 10 months a year and providing 80 participants monthly with a hearty breakfast, entertainment and socialization. Additionally, day outings have expanded to always include a dining component and are seeing maximum registration numbers reached for every trip.

3. Nutritious “Bistro Express” take-out program

Building on the growing success of the staff-lead and volunteer-run Seniors’ Centre Bistro, a new volunteer driven “Bistro Express” program is in development to create convenient and healthy comfort food for those who find it challenging to prepare meals. Envisioned by the community and facilitated by Recreation Programmers who possess Chef Certification and Quick Service Industry training, the peer to peer take-out program aims to encourage in-home healthy eating.

Additionally, a new Test Kitchen Club of volunteers has been another volunteer driven concept now in development which will tap into the volunteer team’s interest in cooking and baking and will share culturally diverse family recipes through the Bistro Express take-out program. Volunteer training is currently planned for a Winter ‘20 roll-out.

4. Collaborate with community to increase neighbourhood access to recreation services and reduce transportation and accessibility barriers.

Capacity for day time programming has been reached in the Tansley Woods Community Centre, and the adjacent neighbourhoods are part of the growing north Burlington community. Through community development outreach, the recreation team has fostered a relationship with Schlegel Villages Retirement Community with the potential to introduce City recreation programs in a publicly accessible store-front type space designed to welcome the broader community into the complex. This location will appeal to older adults who wish to enjoy a full day of socializing, activity and personal care with limited transportation required. Piloting of test programs to begin in Winter ’20.

5. Expansion of programming into available City facilities.

Program offerings have flourished and become established in all available locations. A snapshot of expanded services offered this fall include:

Aldershot: Continued piloting of programs in this area sees mixed results. New summer/fall Chess Club program developed due to citizen requests has had limited uptake, but a new City offering of Yoga has filled to capacity with a second about to be offered. Bolus Park saw the addition of Pickleball lines and new outdoor nets mid-Fall.

Burlington Seniors' Centre: Filled to capacity currently, day time program changes occur primarily through attrition. Evening and weekend expansion will see 5 new programs/workshops that include tech support, fitness, and creative programs in addition to all social and dining growth previously outlined.

Brant Hills: Currently a hub for arts, continual learning and fitness programs running through the day and pickleball recreational play during the evenings. Additional programs include: new technology programs, a community-run parent/child fitness program, and a new city-lead Oil Painting program which has registered to capacity.

Haber: This currently active 19+ & 55+ sport hub home to pickleball, basketball and fitness programs will see addition of a new full-year community-lead rental arrangement to grow advanced pickleball play on a weekly basis.

Mainway: Recreational Pickleball runs daily at and beyond capacity. Further expansion of 12 new Pickleball instructional programs will commence Fall 2019 and continue for Winter and Spring. Based on community input these programs and workshops have expanded into weekend hours to capitalize on greater access for working adults.

Mountainside: Piloting continues at this site seeing continued interest in Pilates and Yoga. New in 2019/20 Fall/Winter/Spring is a fitness partnership that will broaden program offerings. Planning for increasing wellness programs run from this location is underway with partnership development and Instructor recruitment to start late Fall for targeted mindfulness and wellness activities and programs.

Tansley Woods: Adult 19+ and 55+ programs are currently offered during all available day time hours with evening program expansion to include Ballroom and Latin partnered dance programs in Fall 2019.

Tyandaga Golf Course: While Fall '19 sees consistent use of the dining room space, plans to pilot a sequence of social and learning activities in the winter months in 2019 / 2020 are underway.

Financial Matters:

In 2017 Burlington was successful in securing \$50,000 in funding from the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat Age Friendly Community Planning Grant developed to ensure that municipalities were prepared for the rapidly shifting demographic change coming. The funds supplemented the completion of a thorough situational analysis of the community including: developing a current community profile, assessing opportunities to make Burlington more age-friendly, and creating a community Plan in areas over which the municipality has jurisdiction. This Plan is now known as the Burlington Active Aging Plan (BAAP).

As part of the 2019 budget process, Council approved additional staffing of approximately \$190,000 to enable Program, Customer Service and Operations units to collectively support the expansion of recreation experiences to Burlington's older adults and seniors across the city. This additional staffing will make it possible to now foster even more community relationships and collaborative service models. The resulting increase in service is expected to generate revenues of \$75,000 annually for an approximate net impact of \$115,000. The roll out of this has begun and will be fully realized over the next two years.

Conclusions:

Managing responsive and equitable growth that optimizes available space, balances community interests, mobilizes community resources and responds to BAAP priorities both challenge and energize the Adult Recreation team. The Active Aging Plan outlined that open dialogue between Council, staff and community would be vital in keeping the Plan a living document. Committed to this process, staff will focus on relationship development with community partners interested in supporting new wellness initiatives as tied to both the Active Aging Plan and the Service Expansion. Community connections will be enhanced via an updated Active Aging website designed to keep community members abreast of progress, and regular communication with Council will highlight the status of initiatives designed to continue to enrich the diversity, inclusiveness, and engagement of Burlington's community members.

Respectfully submitted,

Mandy Newnham

Supervisor of Recreation

905-335-7600 ext.6339

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.