



SUBJECT: Inclusive Community Grants Program

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Corporate Strategy

Report Number: CS-05-21

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 155-03-01

Date to Committee: N/A

Date to Council: March 23, 2021

Recommendation:

Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to enter into the necessary terms and conditions outlined in the Agreement between the City of Burlington and the Province of Ontario regarding the Inclusive Community Grants Program to the satisfaction of the Executive Director of Legal Services and Corporation Counsel.

PURPOSE:

Vision to Focus Alignment:

- Building more Citizen Engagement, Community Health and Culture
 - Delivering Customer Centric Services with a Focus on Efficiency and Technology Transformation
-

Background and Discussion:

The Inclusive Community Grants program is designed to help communities become age-friendly by ensuring that the needs of Ontarians of all ages and abilities are considered at every stage of community planning and development. Inclusive communities respond to both the opportunities and challenges of an aging population by creating physical and social environments that support independent and active living and enable older adults and people with disabilities to continue contributing to all aspects of community life. Inclusive communities are also Age-Friendly Communities (AFC) – a World Health Organization endorsed planning and evaluation framework the

has been adopted internationally and in Canada. In 2018, The City of Burlington was recognized as an Age-Friendly community by the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility.

The World Health Organization identified eight domains of community life that overlap and intersect to affect an individual's personal well-being and their independent and active living in physical and social environments:

- 1.outdoor spaces and buildings;
- 2.transportation;
- 3.housing;
- 4.respect and inclusion;
- 5.social participation;
- 6.civic participation and employment;
- 7.communication and information; and,
- 8.community support and health services.

The grant program will provide funding of a maximum of \$60,000 per applicant.

In December 2020, the City of Burlington applied for the Installation of hearing loops in recreation facilities throughout the City. Hearing loops will of provide clearer and more intelligible sound for individuals who use hearing aids and cochlear implants. This will enhance their experiences and participation in recreation programs and activities.

As part of the Burlington Active Aging Plan, the City of Burlington has expanded recreational programs for older adults and seniors in facilities across the City. Burlington is experiencing a rapid growth in our seniors population cohort. Which has led to an increased demand for recreational services. A priority for Burlington is to keep our seniors active, healthy and engaged in our community and to offer recreation and social programs that will enrich the quality of their life.

We are noticing that many individuals rely on hearing aids, and in some environments, these individuals still have problems hearing clearly and participating meaningfully in their activities. In order to address this issue, the City is proposing the installation of hearing loops in various rooms and spaces in our recreation facilities. In addition, the City will also install hearing loops at customer service counters to provide clearer communications to patrons in busy and noisy lobby environments. This project will benefit many people, both old and young, that have a hearing loss.

The City is targeting these high priority community centre locations throughout the city that have high numbers of seniors programs: Seniors' Centre; Tansley Woods; Haber; Mountainside and Brant Hills. Following this we will address four indoor pool locations: Aldershot; Centennial; Angela Coughlan and Tansley Woods).

Financial Matters:

At this time the City has allocated a specified budget towards the project. This money is not sufficient to install hearing loops in all high priority city facilities. The Inclusive Community Grant is critical to augment our funding for this project in order to address all high priority locations.

In addition, by consolidating all hearing loop installations in various locations under one contract/initiative, we will receive better value and costing from the vendors/suppliers and the project will be managed far more efficiently by staff.

In addition, the City will be using existing staff resources to undertake the project within their normal duties and responsibilities. No additional staff costs will be incurred by the city for undertaking this project.

Climate Implications

N/A

Engagement Matters:

Staff will consult with the Burlington Accessibility Advisory Committee (BAAC) on the design and implementation of the new Hearing Loop System.

This project aligns with our Accessibility Plan, Active Aging Plan and Strategic Plan.

Conclusion:

The impact of this project is significant. Essentially, through this project we are setting a new standard of accessibility across our inventory of recreational facilities that will improve the quality of service to individuals with hearing loss. This is an important step in our vision to create a more inclusive and accessible community where all individuals can participate more fully in community life.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Walihura

Government Relations Manager

905-335-7600, ext. 7895

Appendices:

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.