

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

5. Asking Staff to Put Money for a Seniors' Planner in the Draft 2023 Budget

Co-submitted by: Councillors Boyle and Swanson

WHEREAS

1. Currently in the City of Vancouver based on 2021 Census data, 29.7% of the population of the City of Vancouver are 55 years and older, 23% are 60 years and older, and 17% are 65 years and older;
2. Based on CMHC data (2016) over 50% of all older adults who are renters are in core housing need. The City of Vancouver's Homelessness Services outreach team has seen an increase in the number and percentage of seniors (aged 65+) that staff work with to access a number of services such as access to health supports, income, and appropriate housing. The City of Vancouver Renter's Office staff also hear concerns of low-income senior renters, particularly those facing growing health issues, being able to keep their housing;
3. Stats Canada has estimated that by 2046 the population of the older adults and elders age 85 and above will triple. With more seniors living to 85 and beyond, an increasing number of individuals will face limitations and long-term health challenges. Older persons can face unique barriers to civic participation such as health limitations, mobility challenges, and cognitive decline. This will put increasing pressure on all levels of government to ensure adequate support, in areas such as housing, health care and home care, as well as transportation, among other things. These barriers put older persons at increased risk of experiencing social isolation, loneliness, and economic vulnerability. This is an important part of creating "complete communities" and ensuring there are adequate programs and services to better address the needs and interests of an ageing population;
4. Recent health and climate emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the heat dome, have disproportionately impacted older persons. These crises have highlighted the seriousness and urgency of addressing existing gaps in policies, systems, housing, community services and programs to prevent further devastating impacts on many people living in the city, including on older persons;
5. Older adults face much higher levels of social isolation and homelessness than the general population. Given the diversity and intersectional nature of older adults and Elders, that in addition to their experience of system-based and individual-based discrimination given their ethno-cultural, racial, gender, sexual orientation, lower income levels and health challenges they also face the added burden of ageism which is pervasive across society;
6. The World Health Organization has declared 2021-2030 as the Decade of Healthy Ageing and has incorporated additional metrics under the Healthy Cities strategy toward improving quality of life specifically for older persons (mitigation

of poverty, food security, expand opportunities for civic engagement, opportunities for lifelong learning, age and gender equality, job opportunities, internet access and digital support, housing, etc.). New metrics have not been updated in the City of Vancouver's commitment to the City of Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy;

7. The Seniors' Advisory Committee has conducted a jurisdictional scan of major urban centres across Canada, and has found:
 - i. The City of Richmond with the co-ordination of a full-time dedicated seniors' co-ordinator is in the final stages of a public review of a community-informed Seniors Strategy 2022–2032 and is seeking final input from adults aged 55 years and over, their families and those who work with the 55+ population. All Seniors' related queries, requests, complaints are directed to the Program Lead of Seniors Services which has created efficiencies in both outreach and internal communication;
 - ii. The City of Ottawa, using a team approach, created a community-informed two year 2020-2022 Older Adult Plan that includes 24 actions across different domains (Public Transportation, Walkability and Pedestrian Safety, Accessibility of Public Spaces, Healthy Ageing, Active Living, Respect and Social Inclusion) listing lead department and assisting department leads, and reporting indicators. The City of Ottawa holds regular cross-department meetings to collaborate and review progress;
 - iii. The City of Toronto using a comprehensive cross-department team approach is completing Toronto Seniors Strategy (TSS2.0), with 27 high-impact community-informed recommendations (accountability leads in each department) that built upon the original Seniors Strategy to improve the wellbeing of seniors throughout Toronto. The domains of action in the TSS2.0 are: Transportation, Housing, Health, Employment and Income, and Access to Information. Outcomes are monitored by the Toronto Seniors Strategy Accountability Table, consisting of multi-sector stakeholder group focused on seniors and aging which includes seniors, caregivers, community agencies, advocacy, equity and diversity organizations, academic and research partners, community funders, provincial and federal partners, local businesses, school boards, hospitals, long-term care homes, and the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network. Annually the TSS2.0 co-chairs publishes status updates to Council and the public. This complements other landmark initiatives including the establishment of a Seniors Housing Corporation, the creation of a new Integrated Service Model in TCHC seniors buildings, improved information-sharing and access to services, a focus on understanding the specific needs of Black and Indigenous seniors and Elders and other racialized and equity-deserving groups, and services provided by divisional partners across the City including dental care, funding to seniors organizations, older adult recreation, etc. [Note the formal engagement of federal and provincial stakeholders in planning and monitoring outcomes facilitates buy-in and investment.];
 - iv. The City of Edmonton co-funds (\$600K of 1 million budget) the Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council (ESCC), co-funds with the province a Family and Community Support Services Liaison (0.5 FTE dedicated to Seniors) to

address (a) Mobility including built environments and accessibility; (b) age-friendly lens; (c) social work lens; (d) the physical build of seniors' centres. The city also dedicates time for a Community Strategic Planning Analyst to this portfolio. The ED of the ESCC, Family and Community Support Liaison and Community Strategic Planning Analyst have regular meetings to plan and address this portfolio. Currently the City of Edmonton are completing Phase II of implementing cross-department initiatives to support healthy ageing;

8. 35 senior serving community organizations and four advisory committees supported the January 27th council motion seeking staff support for a seniors planner;
9. To date there has been no update, possibly as a result of limited staff time and provisos to not interrupt other social equity initiatives in place indicating that budget and resources need to be place to advance efforts to address the diverse unmet needs and interests of older adults and elders; and
10. The Seniors' Advisory Committee have asked Councillors Boyle and Swanson, as their Council liaison's, to bring this motion forward.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council request that City staff meet with representatives from the Seniors' Advisory Committee, Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee, Women's Advisory Committee, Urban Indigenous Peoples Advisory Committee and 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee for input, and prepare options for a budget item for a planner for older persons and necessary resources for that planner, and that this budget item be in the draft 2023 budget prepared for council's consideration.

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