



Committee Report

To:	Warden Hicks and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	May 27 th , 2021
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-14-21
Title:	Age Friendly Community Strategy and Action Plan
Prepared by:	Stephanie Lacey-Avon
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All Municipalities in Grey County
Status:	Adopted as presented by Committee of the Whole through Resolution CW89-21; Endorsed by County Council CC49-21

Recommendation

- 1. That Report PDR-CW-14-21 regarding the Age Friendly Community Strategy and Action Plan be received for information.**

Executive Summary

The County was approved for funding from the Province through the Inclusive Community Grants Program project, to undertake an Age Friendly Community (AFC) Strategy and Action Plan. The County retained WSP Canada Inc. through an RFP process to assist with this project. It will build on recent policy and research initiatives undertaken by the County to design a roadmap guiding the corporation and informing the work of local municipalities and other community partners to help ensure the decisions and actions reflect and respond to the needs of everyone; including youth, working-age, older adults, and people with disabilities. This strategy and action plan will focus on the World Health Organization's (WHO) eight age-friendly community domains. Significant community and stakeholder engagement will take place throughout the duration of this project. Project completion date as per the funding requirements is March 31st, 2022.

Background and Discussion

The County was approved for funding from the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility through the Inclusive Community Grants Program project for 2020-21 to 2021-22, to undertake an Age Friendly Community (AFC) Strategy and Action Plan. The County retained WSP Canada Inc. through an RFP process to assist with this project. The project will build on recent policy and research initiatives undertaken by the County (i.e. Grey County Official Plan, Age-Friendly study by University of Guelph students, Grey Bruce Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, etc.), to

design a roadmap guiding the corporation and informing the work of local municipalities and other community partners to help ensure the decisions and actions reflect and respond to the needs of everyone; including youth, working-age, older adults, and people with disabilities.

This strategy and action plan will focus on the World Health Organization's (WHO) eight age-friendly community domains: outdoor spaces and public buildings, transportation, housing, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, community and information, community support and health services, and social participation. While also following the AFC framework provided by the following provincial documents - [Creating a More Inclusive Ontario: Age-Friendly Community Planning Toolkit \(2021\)](#) and [Creating a More Inclusive Ontario - Age-Friendly Community Planning Guide for Municipalities and Community Organizations \(2021\)](#).

The *Age-Friendly Community Planning Guide for Municipalities and Community Organizations (2021)* provides a general framework for how this strategy and action plan will unfold, with four key steps.



Figure 1: AFC Process Province of Ontario (2021)

The project will have three main phases.

- **Phase 1 – Draft Age Friendly Community Strategy**
 - *Project Background* – introduction to Age-Friendly concept;
 - *Municipal Policy Influences* – assessment of background documents, policies and plans that will inform the remainder of the project;
 - *Approach, Vision and Direction* – exploration of the engagement efforts, combined with WSP's team analysis of local context and resources. These inputs will be used to generate the Vision and Goals for the Strategy and Action Plan – being high-level guiding principles that will inform short- and medium-term implementation actions.
- **Phase 2 – Develop Age Friendly Community Action Plan**

- *Implementation Priorities* – take the goals and principles articulated in the Strategy and refine them into an ambitious yet achievable Action Plan – identifying leads, timelines, and resource allocation to ensure successful implementation.
- **Phase 3 – Implementation**
 - County staff, local municipal stakeholders, and members of the public will begin project implementation, through guidance from the *Implementation and Monitoring* strategies provided through the Action Plan. There will be key performance indicators (KPIs) through which to measure successful implementation. Scorecards will be provided detailing timelines, high-level cost estimates for each item, department/persons responsible.

Both the County and WSP see this project being highly collaborative with members of the public, to best capture local interests and needs. And to truly have a strategy and action plan driven by community consultation.

It will be pivotal for future project success during implementation to gain support from many key partners, local municipalities, and other stakeholders. Staff recognize and understand the role elected officials play in identifying strategic priorities, as heard by their local constituents. Throughout the entirety of this project, all members of council will have an opportunity to participate in this project, through the many different engagement strategies proposed (as per below). The three main targeted engagement strategies for council and local municipal staff will center around focus group discussions and presentation and discussion of the draft strategy and draft action plan (respectively).

Some of the engagement strategies that will be used for this project include (but are not limited to):

- stakeholder committee meetings (6 total meetings, will aim to advise the development and implementation of the AFC Strategy and Action Plan)
- community visioning workshops (municipal and agency partners and the public)
- key representative interviews
- focus groups
- community conversation workshops
- Facebook live chat
- PublicInput (engagement platform that will be available on the County's website – includes tools like surveys, ideation boards and mapping tools, voicemail, text messaging, etc.)
- AFC strategy and action plan video presentation
- discussion forum

Because of the uncertainty with the pandemic (COVID-19) and relatively short project timeline, the County opted to rely solely on virtual public engagement, mail, and telephone strategies to connect with Grey's community. This will allow staff and the project managers to ensure the funding requirements related to project completion can be adequately met.

The scope of work will be carried out with an intention to implement and inform Grey County, as well as to align with any existing and forthcoming County strategies, plans, programs, services, and initiatives – maximizing impact of the deliverables produced. Staff are extremely pleased to

build on the significant age-friendly related work that has been completed and is currently underway within the County, throughout all 9 local municipalities. Grey's aging demographic is anticipated to continue growing, as increasing numbers of retirees choose to relocate here for lifestyle purposes and with natural population shifts. The County also wants to better support and retain our youth and young families to ensure Grey meets the needs of all residents. Staff, alongside WSP are looking forward to connecting with Grey County's community in the coming months as this project begins to unfold.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

There are currently no legal or legislative considerations.

Financial and Resource Implications

This project will be primarily funded through the Inclusive Community Grant received by the Ontario government, totaling \$60,000. The remaining project costs being \$10,215 will be funded using funds included in the approved 2021 budget for this project.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal: All County departments will be consulted as part of this study.
- External: County staff, Municipal staff, community organizations serving all aged demographics within Grey (i.e. Accessibility Advisory Committee, Grey Bruce Council on Aging, YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce, School Boards, Parks and Recreation staff, Grey Bruce Public Health, etc.) will be consulted as part of this study.

Appendices and Attachments

None