



## **Staff Report for Committee of the Whole**

**Date of Meeting:** October 4, 2023

**Report Number:** SRCS.23.18

**Department:** Community Services  
**Division:** Recreation and Culture Services

**Subject:** **SRCS.23.18 Age-Friendly Community Strategy**

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### **Purpose:**

To present the 2023 Age-Friendly Community Strategy for approval.

### **Recommendations:**

- a) That Staff Report SRCS.23.18 regarding the 2023 Richmond Hill Age-Friendly Community Strategy be received; and,
- b) That the 2023 Richmond Hill Age-Friendly Community Strategy, attached as Appendix A to SRCS 23.18, be approved.

### **Contact Person:**

Donald Hearn, Director, Recreation and Culture, extension 2503

### **Report Approval:**

**Submitted by:** Tracey Steele, Commissioner of Community Services

**Approved by:** Darlene Joslin, City Manager

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

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### **Background:**

On June 10, 2020, Council received SRCS.20.20, which described the provincial initiative for Age-Friendly Community Planning. Consideration of developing a strategy was referred to the strategic planning process that was underway. In November 2020 Council approved Strategic Priorities for 2020 to 2022 and the Age-Friendly Community initiative was highlighted as one of the implementation actions supporting the priority of creating a Strong Sense of Belonging.

On May 25, 2022, Council received and approved the recommendations of SRCM.22.03, which presented the results of the Richmond Hill Age-Friendly Community Needs Assessment, recommended a Terms of Reference for the Age-Friendly Community Council (the “AFCC”) and directed staff to recruit for the initial term of the AFCC. The AFCC was established and met for the first time in January of 2023.

### **Richmond Hill Age-Friendly Community Strategy:**

Work to develop an Age-Friendly Community Strategy (the “AFCS”) commenced in November of 2022 with the retention of J Consulting Group and development of a plan for research, engagement and creation of the strategy. The research phase of the process defined the current state in Richmond Hill by reviewing relevant City policies, plans and reports as well as the results of the 2022 Age-Friendly Needs Assessment. An analysis of demographic data, benchmarking and current trends was completed, along with a review of existing services for older adults. The community and stakeholder engagement stage of the project used a variety of methods, including an online survey, key stakeholder interviews, focus groups with staff, community members and organizations, and community round tables. Almost 300 participants provided their input and experiences about the current age-friendly needs in Richmond Hill, in addition to the over 800 who participated in the Richmond Hill Age-Friendly Community Needs Assessment.

The recommended Richmond Hill Age-Friendly Community Strategy is attached to this report as Appendix A. The Strategy includes a vision for an age-friendly Richmond Hill to be “An inclusive, accessible and welcoming community where all ages and abilities enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle.” It also recommends 21 Strategic Actions for the City of Richmond Hill, presented within the framework of the World Health Organization’s eight domains for an Age-Friendly Community.

### **Implementation of AFCS Recommendations**

Implementation of the five year AFCS will be a collective responsibility that requires partnerships and collaborative action between the City, partner agencies, and the community. The following steps, which are identified and explained in further detail in the AFCS, will be implemented in the short-term to establish key structures important to successful implementation of the Strategy:

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- Continue the Age-Friendly Community Council as a venue for collaboration and communication between the City and the older adult community, local businesses and service providers.
- Incorporate the recommendations of the AFCS into City work plans as appropriate.
- Monitor and measure the AFCS progress and prepare an 'Annual Report to the Community'
- Join Ontario's Network of Age-Friendly Communities.
- Share the Strategy with York Region and other community partners.

The following AFCS Strategic Actions have also been identified for implementation in the short-term (continuing or commencing in 2023 and 2024):

- Through parks design, continue to ensure parks, trails and open spaces are accessible and encourage activity for all ages.
- Explore opportunities to improve the maintenance of sidewalks and walkways, particularly during winter months.
- Share information on current transit needs of Richmond Hill residents with York Region.
- Incorporate a "complete street" framework into the Transportation Master Plan update.
- Support advocacy to senior levels of government for additional funding and incentives towards the creation of affordable and supportive housing in Richmond Hill.
- Share and promote information and resources on programs and services that support social connection and inclusion.
- Partner with community organizations and groups to offer a learning seminar series on issues impacting seniors (such as cyber security and estate planning).
- In partnership with local organizations and community partners, continue to coordinate Seniors' Month celebrations and re-establish the Seniors Fair.

### **Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:**

The Strategic Actions identified above for implementation in 2023 and 2024 can be accommodated within the framework of current operating budget allocations. Staff time is required for implementation of many of the recommendations and the most significant demands in this regard will be in the Recreation and Culture Division. Other short-term Strategic Actions address work that is already underway and for which staff resources are already being dedicated (for example, Public Works Operations staff are already reviewing winter sidewalk and walkway maintenance).

In future years, implementation of additional AFCS Strategic Actions will be considered through the annual work planning processes and required implementation funds will be requested through annual budget processes as appropriate.

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### **Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities 2020-2022:**

The Age-Friendly Community Strategy is directly related to creating a sense of belonging for older adults.

### **Climate Change Considerations:**

Climate change considerations are not applicable to this staff report.

### **Conclusion:**

The 2023 Age-Friendly Community Strategy provides a five year vision for making Richmond Hill an age-friendly community, where older adults can enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle. The AFCS was developed through a consultative, data-driven process and reflects input from over 1,100 residents, community organizations and businesses.

The recommended Richmond Hill Age-Friendly Community Strategy is attached to this report as Appendix A. The Strategy includes a vision for an age-friendly Richmond Hill to be “An inclusive, accessible and welcoming community where all ages and abilities enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle” and presents 21 Strategic Actions consistent with the World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Cities Framework for implementation.

### **Attachments:**

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. All attachments have been reviewed and made accessible. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

Appendix A – Richmond Hill's Age-Friendly Community Strategy

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### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCS.23.18 Age-Friendly Community Strategy.docx
Attachments:	- SRCS.23.18 - Appendix A - Richmond Hill Age-Friendly Community Strategy.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Sep 24, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Tracey Steele - Sep 20, 2023 - 1:57 PM**

**Darlene Joslin - Sep 24, 2023 - 8:08 PM**