

Priorities Committee Meeting_Jul09_2024

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AND UPDATE

2024 Older Adults Engagement Update

Report Purpose

To provide the Priorities Committee with an update on the engagement plan for older adults.

Our Strategic Goals

Goal 2 - Healthy and Safe Community

Goal 4 - Municipal Excellence

Goal 2 Priority - Social supports that enhance community well-being and safety, and build community connection

Goal 4 Priority - Optimal use of resources that meets the community's needs

Report

On March 5, 2024, in response to a motion from Council, Administration brought forward an older adults engagement strategy to gather feedback on the range of programs and services to best serve Strathcona County's 55+ population. Family and Community Services, in collaboration with Corporate Communications and Recreation, Parks and Culture developed a phased engagement process to capture feedback on:

- A vision for Strathcona County's 55+ population
- Priority needs across different cohorts of the diverse 55+ population
- Existing service responses from the seniors-serving sector, inclusive of provincial and federal mandates
- How the needs and preferences relate to a possible seniors' centre in the context of services already in place

Phase 1

Phase 1 of the project took place from March to May 2024 and included a community conversation to develop a draft vision for older adults and a survey to capture the needs and priorities of older adults.

On March 18, 2024, seniors-serving organizations and groups, members of the Seniors Advisory Committee and leaders from Strathcona County's 55+ group came together to develop a draft vision for older adults in Strathcona County. This draft vision was tested broadly through the older adults survey.

The older adults survey was available from April 10 – May 10, 2024 and was distributed through multiple methods, including telephone surveys, promotion of the online survey and in-person survey distribution.

Organizations prioritized for outreach included seniors' centres and clubs, community halls, agricultural societies, seniors' residences, seniors-serving organizations, advisory committees, recreation organizations, service clubs and rural and urban businesses.

Survey results

There were 400 responses targeted and received via our telephone data collection. This sample is roughly representative of Strathcona County's older adult population on gender

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and location within the County. It is also representative on age, with the exception of those aged 85+ who are difficult to reach with this format of recruitment.

The open survey, which was largely conducted online with the possibility of using a paper survey or phoning a County representative to complete the survey, was completed by 2,441 respondents. This is an exceptional response – far in excess of the target of 800 respondents, and reflective of the extensive communications and outreach efforts deployed to support data collection. Included in this report are topline results, and a fulsome analysis to bring a deeper understanding of the data will be ongoing through phases 2 and 3 of the engagement.

Topline results are as follows:

- Net comfort with draft vision statement – 65% telephone sample, 50% online sample
- Net importance of a potential seniors’ hub –71% telephone sample, 66% online sample
- Net frequent use of a potential seniors’ hub –39% telephone sample, 36% online sample
- Net comfort with potential tax increases to support seniors’ hub –33% telephone sample, 32% online
- Net comfort with potential user fees to support seniors’ hub—60% telephone sample, 51% online sample
- Priority for funds to support older adults in Strathcona County
 - Telephone sample
 - Non-medical supports in my home (21%)
 - Building a new seniors’ hub (17%)
 - Affordable services (17%)
 - Expanded transit services (17%)
 - Expanding spaces and services in existing seniors centres in the County (13%)
 - Additional programs and services for older adults (9%)
 - None of the above (6%)
 - Online sample
 - Building a new seniors’ hub (22%)
 - Additional programs and services for older adults (21%)
 - Expanding spaces and services in existing seniors centres in the County (18%)
 - Affordable services (15%)
 - Non-medical supports in my home (13%)
 - None of the above (6%)
 - Expanded transit services (5%)

Next steps

Older adult engagement will continue through Phase 2 (June – September) with a community conversation to understand the survey results and targeted conversations with specific groups for a nuanced interpretation of the data. Phase 3 will take place from September to November and will include finalizing the vision for older adults and reporting back to Council.

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Seniors' centre Council motion

On May 7, 2024, Council approved that the design and planning for a potential seniors' centre be included in the 2025 budget process for Council's consideration. Given the early results from the survey, and in alignment with the motion, there are three options that exist for the development of a seniors' centre:

1. Expand a current facility
2. Lease space and include facility development in the lease costs
3. Build a new facility

These options will be brought back to Council for discussion.

Council and Committee History

May 7, 2024	Council approved: THAT the addition of design and planning for a potential Senior's Center to the approved 2024-2026 capital plan be included in the 2025 budget process for Council's consideration.
March 5, 2024	Priorities Committee update on the older adults engagement strategy.
December 5, 2023	Council approved: THAT Administration prepare a report for Council's consideration by the end of March 2024 with a strategy to engage a representative sample of all seniors with respect to the range of programs and services they require in Strathcona County, including a Seniors Hub in Sherwood Park.
March 7, 2023	The Priorities Committee was provided with considerations for non-capital-intensive alternatives to a seniors' hub in Strathcona County.
May 17, 2022	Council approved: THAT Administration investigate non-capital-intensive alternatives and provide a report for Council's consideration.
January 18, 2022	Council approved: THAT an expenditure of \$200,000 to initiate an expression of interest process that identifies a seniors-focused, non-profit organization to provide coordination and programming for older adults in Strathcona County, to be funded \$100,000 from Municipal Reserves and \$100,000 from the existing base fund in 2022, be approved; and THAT Administration include an additional \$100,000 in the proposed budgets for 2023 and 2024 for further engagement with the selected non-profit organization to provide programming and services to older adults in Strathcona County.
September 7, 2021	Administration provided an update to Priorities Committee on the findings from the needs assessment component of the Seniors' Supports and Services Project.
January 26, 2021	Council approved: THAT the January 26, 2021 Seniors Advisory Committee report, Seniors Hub Concept, be referred to Administration for a report, by the end of the fourth quarter of 2021, on options for establishing a seniors hub, including potential collaboration opportunities with stakeholders and options to combine with planned or existing County facilities or sites; and that the report include information on the implications, costs, and feasibility of the identified options.

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Other Impacts

Policy: The Recreation and Culture Strategy, Community Safety and Wellbeing Strategy, Accessibility Framework and Transportation Master Plan.

Financial/Budget: Utilizing existing 2024 FCS budget allocations to implement engagement plan tactics. Options for a potential Senior's Centre will be included in the 2025 budget process.

Legislative/Legal: n/a

Interdepartmental: Collaboration with Corporate Communications and Recreation Parks and Culture to support engagement planning and implementation.

Master Plan/Framework: n/a

Communication Plan

Family and Community Services and Corporate Communications worked in collaboration with community partners and organizations to maximize their reach and connection to older adults 55+ in Strathcona County. Through extensive and various tactics, the communications plan ensured older adults were well informed about the Older Adults survey and Healthy Aging project and supported in their ability to provide their feedback and ideas to shape the vision of healthy aging in Strathcona County.

Enclosure

1 2024 Older adults engagement update presentation