

## Caledon's Adult 55+ Strategic Plan to become age-friendly

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The Adult 55+ Strategic Plan was approved back in 2015, and within the five years there have been several accomplishments, but, as with anything, there continues to be room for improvement

Katie Sawyers, Coordinator of Adult 55+ alongside Nora Martin, member and past president of the Seniors Task Force, presented to Council on Tuesday (Jan 14), a new action plan to improve and broaden the current Strategic Plan to an Age Friendly Action Plan.

Since the development of the Adult 55+ Strategic Plan in 2015, there have been several accomplishments and developments. A series of internal studies were completed in 2017, which was advocated by the Seniors Task Force to consult on housing, age friendly studies and transit feasibility.

Three key accomplishments presented by Sawyer and Martin is the advocacy of alternative housing options for older adults, increasing awareness of programs and services offered and revising the Adult 55+ Strategic Plan to meet the requirements of an Age Friendly Action Plan.

This document was designed as an effort to prepare and plan for the future of Caledon residents. The development of the 55+ Strategic Plan followed a frame work, that is consistent with the elements of age friendly designation through the World Health Organization, explains Martin in the presentation.

Staff, as well as the Senior Task Force, are confident and committed on the transition of the Adult 55+ Strategic Plan to an Age Friendly Action Plan by extensive review, checklists, consultations, resources and approval from Council.

Working from a document that is over five years old is challenging, as items indicated on the plan are outdated and complete. Housing is an ongoing challenge due to the timeline for development and land use restrictions, says Martin when discussing certain challenges staff and members of the Seniors Task Force endure throughout the years.

Mayor Allan Thompson agreed with the presentation, noting items such as these are needed to be presented and discussed as the work of the new Caledon Official Plan is in the works.

With the Official Plan that we're working on, it's essential that we have your input going forward, comments Mayor Allan Thompson.

He added in regards to the housing challenge, 73 per cent of the detached homes, two bedrooms or more are owned by seniors. 65 per cent without a mortgage or line of credit. That is going to grow and if we don't find a solution on how to allow seniors to be able to downsize and stay in community, we're going to have a surplus of detached homes within the next 10-year period.

The World Health Organization (WHO) describes an age-friendly community as an inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes active aging. Creating an age-friendly community allows for services to be better accessible for seniors.

For more information about the Adult 55+, please visit [caledon.ca/adult55](#).