

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (1) – APRIL 5, 2022**

**STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

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**Distributed March 25, 2022**

SC 1 Memorandum from the Deputy City Manager,  
Community Services, dated March 24, 2022

**Subject**

Staff update on New Business item  
– Subsidies for Low Income Seniors  
for Household Services (Item .17,  
Report No. 27, October 2, 2019)

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Please note there may be further Communications.

**DATE:** March 24, 2022

**TO:** Hon. Mayor Bevilacqua and Members of Council

**FROM:** Gus Michaels, Deputy City Manager, Community Services

**RE:** **STAFF COMMUNICATION – April 5, 2022 / CW (1)**  
**New Business – Subsidies for Low-Income Seniors for Household Services (Item 17, Report No. 27, October 2, 2019)**

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## **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this communication is to provide an informed response to Committee of the Whole [[Extract of Council October 2, 2019 – CW – Item 17, Report No. 27](#)] regarding potential subsidies for low-income seniors for household services that provides Committee/Council with clarity of the responsibilities and services provided by the City of Vaughan and more importantly the Regional Municipality of York (hereinafter referred to as York Region) who maintains primary responsibility of social and related senior services.

## **2. Background**

At the Committee of the Whole (2), September 24, 2019, a new business item recommended that staff report back to a future Committee of the Whole regarding potential subsidies for low-income seniors as it relates to household service was introduced.

Staff consulted with York Region, Community and Health Services in preparing this communication.

The City of Vaughan is a lower-tier municipality of York Region. Not unlike most lower-tier municipalities, social services that include, but are not limited to, housing, social/personal support services and many services that provide subsidy to seniors for households and other related needs primarily fall within the jurisdiction, scope and responsibility of York Region through York Region's Community and Health Services.

More localized wellness related responsibilities such as senior focused cultural activities, recreation programs including the related subsidy that supports space availability and allocations at City facilities for older adult groups and community services organizations (CSOs), parks and outdoor space/amenities, and continuing to move to an established age-friendly community action plan remains within the scope and responsibility of the local municipalities, such as the City of Vaughan.

While there are interdependencies that required reciprocal support for many such program areas, a number of key factors determine responsibilities, including but not limited to legislative authority of the region vs its local municipalities, tax distribution that funds the breadth of public service both locally and regionally and the established administrative responsibilities that differentiate service responsibilities within each level of local government. Most commonly known examples of this include School Boards, Public Transit, Public Health, Social Services, Regional Roads and Traffic, Police, etc. are a regional responsibility. Where more local responsibilities such as local libraries, community centres, snow removal of local roads, City planning, building and construction, by-law enforcement, licensing and permits, parks development, park use and maintenance, etc. remain the responsibility of local municipalities, accordingly.

### **York Region Seniors Strategy**

In June of 2021, York Region Community and Health Service provided a presentation of their York Region Seniors Strategy to the City of Vaughan's Older Adult Task Force that identified many of the services and subsidies available to seniors/older adults throughout York Region. This included information that demonstrated the general responsibilities of Federal, Provincial, Regional and local governments.

### **Highlights of York Region's Seniors Strategy included four key directions:**

- 1) Balance the needs of seniors with all residents;
- 2) Keep seniors healthier, longer;
- 3) Support Age-Friendly complete communities; and
- 4) Connect seniors/caregivers to the right programs at the right time.

### **Population Data**

Statistical population data demonstrates an expected and substantial continued increase of the older adult population, at the time reflective of 211,167 adults over the age of 65 in York Region and 55,467 in Vaughan. With a projected population by 2051 of 468,010 in York Region and 129,216 in Vaughan; further demonstrating the growing needs of this population segment, long term.

York Region will be reporting on a refreshed strategy with a two (2) year action plan (2022–24) at York Region Council this coming June. City staff continue to work closely with regional staff to identify mutually beneficial opportunities and ensure strategic alignment of services where possible. For more information, please see the following link: [www.york.ca/planforseniors](http://www.york.ca/planforseniors).

## **3. Analysis**

### **Examples of Services Provided to Seniors/Older Adults by the City of Vaughan**

- Allocation of space and amenities at various community centres/city facilities;
- Subsidized rental rates/no cost allocation for registered Older Adult Clubs;
- Elderly Homeowners (EHO) property tax Rebate program;

- Low-income property tax deferral program (Regional program administered by lower-tier municipalities – City of Vaughan);
- Established governance and direct community engagement through the Older Adult and Diversity and Inclusion Task Forces;
- Development of an Age-Friendly Community Action Plan (April 2022); and
- Partnership with not-for-profit organizations (e.g. 2021/22 CHATS snow removal program).

### **Examples of Services Provided to Seniors/Older Adults by York Region, Community and Health Services**

- Regionally operated long term care homes – Newmarket Health Centre and Maple Health Centre;
- Seniors Services – Adult Day Programs, Psychogeriatric Resource Consultants;
- Public Health – Healthy Aging and Fall Prevention; Seniors Dental Program;
- York Region Paramedic Services – Emergency Response Calls, Community Paramedicine Programs; Personal Medical Information Kits;
- Housing (Housing York Inc.);
  - Rent Subsidy Program;
  - Cooperative and Non-Profit Housing Providers;
  - Client Intervention and Support (Social Workers);
- Homeless Prevention Program;
- York Region Transit – Mobility On Request 65+, myRide Travel Training;
- Housing with Supports and Quality of Life Program and Homemakers and Nursing Services.

Various program subsidies and/or assistance programs are available through many of the services noted above, subject to eligibility.

## **4. Conclusion**

Responsibility for older adult services and programs is a multi-faceted very broad spectrum of needs and responsibilities that is shared between the Region and its local municipalities; with specific responsibilities falling within the scope of each level of municipal government. This ensures the most accessible, citizen centric service approach that establishes the most effective operational and fiscally responsible service model to best meet the needs of the older adult community while establishing clear roles and responsibilities for the related services.

As in most two-tier municipalities, areas of general wellness, culture, healthy activity and recreation services for example, fall within the scope of the lower-tier municipality, with the majority of more direct services such as housing, accessible transit, social services, policing, assistance programs, household services, etc. falling to the upper tier municipality, namely York Region.

While the above summary provides a high-level overview of many of the support programs available, greater details that include assessment, eligibility and availability are available through the appropriate program areas – publicly accessible through

contacting Access York, who ensures residents are connected with the appropriate departments and services provided by the region.

As the City progresses its vision of remaining a city of choice for all residents including older adults, staff continue their proactive exploration of opportunities to engage residence, better understand community needs and align related services accordingly. This includes enhancing accessibility to information of the valuable services provided by the Region, planned enhancements to the City's web pages that make it easier, remove barriers to accessing information and will better connect information/services provided with all residents and their needs.

Local strategic initiatives that include but are not limited to the *Age-Friendly Community Action Plan* currently in development is one of many strategic initiatives that will guide the City's decision-making processes to better ensure inclusivity of the needs of older adults. The continuation of the City's Older Adult Task Force and Diversity and Inclusion Task Force will further continue to enhance and ensure valued community engagement that will support and sustain the quality of life for all residents, inclusive of older adults.

The above information provides clarity of the wide variety of programs available to older adults within the local community and further clarity of the differing, although at times, interdependent services provided between the City of Vaughan and York Region.

This communication further identifies that subsidize assistance for household services remain the responsibility of York Region, through their Community and Health Services.

For more information, contact Gus Michaels, Deputy City Manager, Community Services at extension 8735 or by email at [Gus.Michaels@vaughan.ca](mailto:Gus.Michaels@vaughan.ca).

**Approved by**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gus Michaels', is positioned above the printed name.

Gus Michaels  
Deputy City Manager, Community Services