

# REPORT

## *DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT*

To: Mayor W. Wright and Members of Council in Committee of the Whole      Date: November 24, 2008

From: Lisa Spitale, Director of Development Services      File: #91473

Subject: Seniors' Housing and Support Initiative – Summary

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

*THAT City Council receive this report for information.*

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### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide City Council with a summary of the activities and events which occurred as a result of the funding accessed under the Seniors' Housing and Support Initiative.

### **SUMMARY**

The Seniors' Housing and Support Initiative has been instrumental in assisting seniors to access information and services. A print directory containing information on over 200 programs and services available to seniors in New Westminster was distributed to about 16,000 households in the City. Three resource and information fairs were held which involved over 40 service providers and 385 participants, the vast majority of which were seniors. A database containing information on over 400 programs and services available to seniors in New Westminster has been created and a website is being developed to enable seniors and family members of seniors to easily access this information. These three initiatives, together, will enable more seniors to lead active, healthy, independent and involved lives.

### **BACKGROUND**

In December 2007, the City of New Westminster, with the assistance of the Seniors Services Society, submitted an application for pilot project funding under the Seniors' Housing and Support Initiative, Local Government Program Services Branch.

The application was approved for a total of \$35,000. As part of the application process, Council endorsed “a resolution indicating full support of the proposal and a willingness to provide overall grant and financial management.”

As proposed, the project would improve access to and availability of information for seniors, enabling them to lead more active, healthy, independent and involved lives. It would also address the needs of isolated and marginalized seniors in New Westminster.

More specifically, the project would result in the following activities:

- That a centralized database containing information about programs and services for seniors be developed, managed and regularly updated.
- That a print directory of programs and services for seniors be developed and widely distributed.
- That a website be developed that targets the needs of caregivers, seniors and senior serving organizations and that it be linked via the City’s website.
- That information and resource fairs for seniors be held in Queensborough, Sapperton and the Uptown/Downtown.

### **EXISTING POLICY/PRACTICE**

The City’s Senior Social Planner’s mandate includes assisting and advocating on behalf of seniors and senior serving organizations in New Westminster. More specifically, he sits on both the Seniors Advisory Committee and Seniors Services Task Force. He is also coordinating the Seniors’ Housing and Support Initiative (which is the subject of this report) and working on a New Westminster Age-Friendly City Initiative. Regarding the latter, this initiative encourages active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security to enhance quality of life as people age. To date, 46 seniors have taken the time to complete a ‘Checklist of Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities,’ which was developed by the World Health Organization as part of its Global Age-Friendly Cities Project.

### **ANALYSIS**

As cited in the Background, the three main activities are the creation of a database and website; the development of a directory of seniors programs and services; and the staging of three information and resource fairs for seniors.

## Database and Website

The purpose of the database is to provide ready access to current information on the full-range of programs and services available to seniors in the City of New Westminster. More specifically, the database contains information on over 400 programs and services and will be easily searchable by way of a number of subject heading categories. The database uses the Taxonomy of Human Services, which is the national standard chosen by InformCanada and the 211 services. The adoption of this standard of indexing will allow for the smooth transition of the database to BC211 when it is developed.

The database and website will be maintained by the Seniors Services Society and will be regularly updated to ensure its currency and relevance. To assist in this task, the software developer has incorporated an application that will automatically send e-mails annually to each contact person for a program or service requesting that they use their password to the system and verify the accuracy of the information.

## Directory

The purpose of the directory is to provide a print version of the database which can be used as a reference and resource. More specifically, the directory contains information on over 200 programs and services available to seniors in the City of New Westminster. In order to ensure as wide a distribution as possible, the directory was included as a supplement in the October 30, 2008 edition of the NewsLeader. In total, 16,000 copies were produced, of which about 9,000 were distributed to homes and about 3,000 were distributed to apartments. Another 3,000 copies were left for targeted distribution and these are now being distributed to Dunwood Place, Legion Manor, Rotary Tower, etc.

## In My Back Yard (IMBY) Fairs: Connecting Seniors to Services

The purpose of the three fairs is to connect seniors to services thus enabling them to lead more active, healthy, independent and involved lives. The format for each of the three fairs included a resource component whereby service providers offered information about their services and answered any questions. (For a listing of service providers, refer to attachment #1.) Some service providers also did testing and product demonstrations. About 40 service providers were featured at each of the three fairs.

The fairs also provided information by way of guest speakers and pamphlets and offered free entertainment, food and games. Regarding the latter, many seniors commented on the opportunities for social interaction and networking, which was consistent with the overall purpose. Seniors took an active role in the planning for and implementation of the three fairs. In total, there were over 30 volunteers, the vast majority of whom were seniors.

The fairs attracted 385 people, the majority of which were seniors. In fact, 73.6% were 65 years or older and 39.3% were 75 years or older. Based on exit survey results at all three events, 98.7% of participants rated the fairs as very good (78.0%) or good (20.7%). Additionally, 92.6% of participants reported that the fairs met their information needs. Regarding what they liked most about the fairs, the ten most often cited responses, along with the number of seniors citing that response, are as follows:

- excellent information – i.e., quality, range, relevance and usefulness (44);
- excellent entertainment – e.g., Barbershop Quartet, Century House Singers, etc. (20);
- great guest speakers – e.g., Dr. Davidcus Wong, Katherine Guilbride, etc. (20);
- good food – i.e., free, healthy, nutritious and tasty (19);
- enthusiastic, friendly and helpful volunteers (18)
- everything (15);
- very educational and informative (14);
- ability to ask questions and get an immediate answer (13);
- variety of service providers participating at the fairs (13);
- well coordinated and organized (12).

For complete entry and exit survey results, refer to attachment #2.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

Regarding the database and website, the Senior Services Society will be responsible for updating the information and maintaining the site. Regarding the directory, efforts will be made to secure sponsorships, which along with advertising revenues, should ensure its continued publication on an annual basis. Regarding the resource and information fairs, efforts will be made to secure funding to at least stage one fair on an annual basis.

### **LEGAL AGREEMENTS**

The City will provide a final report to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, which outlines activities, impacts and lessons learned, along with the final budget.

### **INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON**

Development Services worked closely with Parks and Recreation to implement the three In My Back Yard (IMBY) Fairs: Connecting Seniors to Services. Additionally, two of the three fairs were held in Parks and Recreation facilities – i.e., Century House and the Queensborough Community Centre.

**CONCLUSION**

The Seniors' Housing and Support Initiative will have a lasting legacy for the seniors of New Westminster. The database and website will provide ready access to up-to-date information on over 400 programs and services available to seniors in the City of New Westminster. The fairs, which involved 385 people, facilitated access to information and enabled seniors to get immediate answers to their questions. The directory will be an important reference and resource for seniors and, if sponsorships can be secured, it will become an annual publication.

John Stark,  
Senior Social Planner

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Approved for Presentation to Council

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Lisa Spitale,  
Director of Development Services

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Paul Daminato,  
City Administrator

## **Attachment #1: List of Participating Service Providers**

- Alzheimer's Society of BC
- Arthritis Society
- BC Seniors Advocacy Network
- Canadian Diabetes Association
- Canadian Academy of Certified Senior Advisors
- Canadian Hard of Hearing Association
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind
- Century House
- Council of Senior Citizens of BC
- Crossroads Hospice Society
- Driving Miss Daisy
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver: Victims' Services
- Fraser Health: Home Health, Hospice and Palliative Care, Lifeline, Fall and Injury Prevention
- Fraserside Community Services Society
- Golden Legacy Preserved
- Good Samaritan Society Victoria Heights Assisted Living
- Heritage Wellness Centre
- Home Instead Senior Care
- Kidney Foundation of Canada
- Molly Maid
- New Westminster Fire Department
- New Westminster Police
- New Westminster Public Library
- Nurse Next Door
- Queen's Park Day Health Program
- Savvy Space Solutions
- Seniors Services Society
- Seniors Well Aware Program
- TransLINK
- Vancity Credit Union
- Welcome Home Health Care
- Westminster Savings Credit Union

## Attachment #2: Combined Entry and Exit Survey Results

### Entry Survey Results:

There were 385 people who participated in the IMBY Fairs at Sapperton (June 14); Queensborough (September 27) and the Uptown/Downtown (October 18). Of this number, 73.6% were 65 or older and 39.3% were 75 or older. Additionally, the vast majority (80.3%) were female.

Regarding the three fairs, 144 people attended in Sapperton; 75 attended in Queensborough; and 175 attended in the Uptown/Downtown.

#### 1. Gender:

▪ Female .....	309	...	88.3 %
▪ Male .....	<u>76</u>	...	19.7 %
	385		

#### 2. Age Range:

▪ 44 or Less .....	15	...	03.9 %
▪ 45-54 .....	19	...	04.9 %
▪ 55-64 .....	66	...	17.1 %
▪ 65-74 .....	130	...	33.7 %
▪ 75-84 .....	105	...	27.3 %
▪ 85 or More .....	44	...	11.4 %
▪ No Response .....	<u>6</u>	...	01.6 %
	385		

#### 3. How did you hear about the IMBY Fair?

▪ Newspaper Ad ...	86	...	22.3 %
▪ Word-of-Mouth ...	85	...	22.1 %
▪ Multiple Ways ...	34	...	08.8 %
▪ Invitation .....	29	...	07.5 %
▪ Poster .....	29	...	07.5 %
▪ E-Mail .....	6	...	01.6 %
▪ Newspaper Story .	5	...	01.3 %
▪ Other .....	<u>111</u>	...	28.8 %
	385		

Other:

- Century House (42)
- Clarion (29)
- Sapperton Pensioners (12)
- Volunteer (10)
- Exhibitor (8)
- Walk-In (3)
- Queensborough Community Centre (2)
- Seniors Services Society (2)
- Cosco (1)
- Dunwood Place (1)
- Victory Heights (1)

**Exit Survey Results:**

162 participants took the time to complete and return an exit survey form. Based on the results, 98.7% rated the fair as very good (78.0%) or good (20.7%). Additionally, 92.6% reported that the fair met their information needs. Regarding the open ended responses, the number in brackets denotes the number of participants with that or a similar response.

1. What is your overall impression of the IMBY Fair?

▪ Very Good .....	124	...	76.5 %
▪ Good .....	33	...	20.4 %
▪ Average .....	02	...	01.2 %
▪ Poor .....	00	...	00.0 %
▪ Very Poor .....	00	...	00.0 %
▪ No Response .....	<u>03</u>	...	01.9 %
	162		

2. What did you like most about the IMBY Fair?

Top 15 Responses:

- Excellent information – i.e., quality, range, relevance and usefulness. (44)
- Excellent entertainment – e.g., Barbershop Quartet, Century House Singers. (20)
- Great guest speakers – e.g., Dr. Davidicus Wong, Katherine Guilbride, etc. (20)
- Good food – i.e., free, healthy, nutritious, tasty, etc. (19)
- Enthusiastic, friendly and helpful volunteers. (18)
- Everything. (15)
- Very educational and informative. (14)

- Ability to ask questions and get an immediate answer. (13)
- Variety of service providers participating at the events. (13)
- Well coordinated and organized. (12)
- Get to take the information home with you to read. (8)
- Great displays. (8)
- Everything in one place – i.e., one-stop shopping. (7)
- Lots of fun to attend – i.e., opportunities for social interaction. (4)
- Bus transport – i.e., usually I cannot attend such events. (3)

3. Were your information needs met at the IMBY Fair?

▪ Yes	.....	137	...	84.6 %
▪ Mostly	.....	01	...	00.6 %
▪ No	.....	10	...	06.2 %
▪ No Answer	.....	<u>14</u>	...	08.6 %
		162		

If no, what information was missing?

Multiple Responses:

- Information about housing – i.e., types, cost, availability, etc. (2)
- Information about mental health services. (2)
- Information about recreational opportunities – e.g., fun outings, walking trails. (2)
- Information about volunteering. (2)

4. Were there senior serving agencies that were not profiled?

▪ No	.....	115	...	71.0 %
▪ Yes	.....	19	...	11.7 %
▪ No Answer	.....	<u>28</u>	...	17.3 %
		162		

If yes, what are they?

Multiple Responses:

- Arthritis Society. (3)
- Alzheimer's Society. (3)
- Mental Health. (3)
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind – i.e., using guide dogs. (2)
- None that I noticed. (2)

- Osteoporosis Society. (2)
- Parks and Recreation Programming. (2)
- Red Cross. (2)
- SPCA. Many seniors could benefit by having a pet. (2)

5. What would you change, if anything, about the IMBY Fair?

Multiple Responses:

- Nothing. (38)
- More advertising – i.e., seniors could really benefit from attending. (10)
- Make it an annual event. (8)
- Very good. (4)
- More entertainment and games. (3)
- Perfect. (3)
- Provide more time – i.e., I could not get around to all the booths. (3)
- Very loud – i.e., it was difficult to hear the presentations and exhibitors. (3)