



October 9, 2014

Dear World Health Organization Age-Friendly Committee,

**RE:** City of Guelph application for WHO age-friendly cities designation

As Mayor of the City of Guelph I am writing to confirm Guelph City Council's support of our City's application to join the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities.

In 2012 the City of Guelph developed an Older Adult Strategy using the WHO age-friendly framework. This involved comprehensive engagement with seniors in our community, key stakeholders, and City staff. People were asked to articulate their vision for the city as it relates to older adults – and the Strategy reflects what we heard.

In November 2012 Council approved the final report of the Older Adult Strategy and adopted its Goal, Vision, and Guiding Principles (see attached).

A foundational recommendation of the Strategy is, "THAT the City of Guelph commit to a comprehensive multi-year Older Adult Strategy to ensure the City is age-ready and can be designated age-friendly." (pg. 43, Older Adult Strategy, 2012)

To that end, the City has committed to and begun work on the Network Cycle of 4 Steps:

1. *Establishment of mechanisms to involve older people throughout the Age-friendly Cities and Communities cycle.*
  - A Project Steering Committee was formed for the purpose of the Older Adult Strategy Development. This committee was made up of older adults, organizations that serve older adults and municipal staff.

**Office of the Mayor**

City Hall  
1 Carden St  
Guelph, ON  
Canada  
N1H 3A1

T 519-837-5643  
TTY 519-826-9771  
F 519-822-8277  
E mayor@guelph.ca

[guelph.ca](http://guelph.ca)

- The World Health Organization World Café methodology was used as the format for hosting several community engagement sessions.
- The City is in the process of creating a Community Action Team, which will involve older adults and other community partners in the Implementation of the Older Adult Strategy.

2. *Development of a baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the city/community*

- In 2014, the City of Guelph worked with the University of Guelph Research Shop and many community agencies to create a community profile. This information will serve as a baseline of age-friendliness for Guelph.

3. *Development of a 3-year city-wide action plan based on the findings of this assessment*

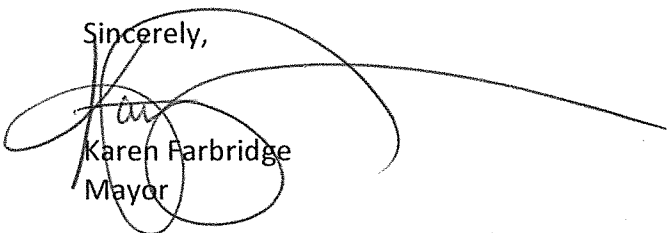
- As noted, the Older Adult Strategy serves as a guiding process for the creation of a city wide implementation/action plan. Staff have successfully applied for and received a grant from the Ontario Seniors Secretariat which will support the development of a Community Action Team to develop an informed action plan, based on findings within the community profile.

4. *Identification of indicators to monitor progress against this plan.*

- As the Community Action Team creates an Implementation Plan, it is our intention to develop outcome measurements to help us continually improve and develop towards an age-friendly city.

The City of Guelph is committed to ensuring we are prepared to meet the needs of our older adult population as our city continues to grow. We recognize the value of being involved in the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and look forward to being designated.

Sincerely,



Karen Farbridge  
Mayor

**GOAL:** Guelph is a great place to live and age well.

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**VISION:**

Guelph is an age-friendly community that:

- values and supports older adults
- optimizes opportunity for choice, independence, and quality of life
- celebrates diversity
- is inclusive of all, reducing inequities (is fair and just)

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

The City of Guelph will ensure that all services, policies and programs are designed, delivered and resourced, using the following guiding values and principles:

- participation and inclusion of all citizens
- respect and dignity
- active engagement in communication and decision making
- access to a safe living environment
- fairness and equity
- self determination and choice

The City of Guelph commits to:

- long term engagement in the older adult strategy
- review recommendations regularly
- report annually on progress of the implementation plan