



**OFFICE OF THE LORD MAYOR**

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Dr. John Beard  
Department of Ageing and Life Course (ALC)  
World Health Organization  
Avenue Appia 20  
CH-1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland

February 5, 2018

Dear Dr. John Beard,

I am pleased to write this letter to support the process required for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada to join the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. As Lord Mayor of this great community, I can assure you Niagara-on-the-Lake is strongly committed to initiating, assessing and improving the age-friendliness of our Town. Our senior citizens (defined as 65 plus) account for more than thirty percent of our population and this number continues to grow. In June 2015, in response to this growth, Council followed the Regional Municipality of Niagara's Aging Strategy and Action Plan by establishing an Age-Friendly Steering Committee. The Steering Committee consists of four senior residents, one Councillor, and Town staff who convened to assess the current situation against the WHO's Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. Here is a brief summary of the progress to date:

- 1. Establishment of mechanisms to involve older people.** The Town has initiated an Age-Friendly Steering Committee comprised of senior residents to provide recommendations to Council on matters that are of interest to seniors. Opportunities exist to appoint additional senior committee members should there be interest. Town staff, in collaboration with Ryerson University, are beginning to develop and prioritize an action plan that assesses the eight themes of WHO's Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide. This action plan will engage senior residents through presentations at workshops, participation in interviews, leadership of working groups, volunteering to assist with programs and assistance in survey administration.
- 2. A baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the Town.** The WHO's checklist of Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities was used as baseline assessment for the age-friendliness of our Town. The checklist was reviewed by the Steering Committee and used to identify areas within the eight

themes of WHO's Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide that require improvement or further consideration.

3. **Development of a Town-wide action plan based on the findings of this assessment.** Town staff in collaboration with the Steering Committee, aim to create a community where all residents age safely, enjoy good health, and participate fully in the community. The Steering Committee assists in the process of Niagara-on-the-Lake becoming an age-friendly community by engaging our older adult community members. Town staff's involvement with the Committee, in addition to the assistance provided by Ryerson University, ensures the action plans will be viable and relevant to the community.
  
4. **Identification of indicators to monitor progress against this plan.** In partnership with Ryerson University, Town staff is working with the findings from the checklist to develop a list of priorities to assist making Niagara-on-the-Lake more age-friendly. The Town's action plan will include the development of outcome measures to continually assess and improve the age-friendliness of the Town.

I am inspired and excited about the work being done by Town staff, Ryerson University and the Age-Friendly Steering Committee. I look forward to Niagara-on-the-Lake joining the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

Sincerely,



Pat Darte  
Lord Mayor