

Letter from Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council



EDMONTON
SENIORS
COORDINATING
COUNCIL

April 16, 2018

Elaine Betchinski, Director, Citizen Access & Inclusion
Citizen Services, Community Inclusion and Investment
City of Edmonton, P.O. Box 2359
Edmonton, AB T5J 0J4

Dear Elaine:

Thank you for attending the March 26, 2018 ESCC Board Meeting to present information on work relating to the motion made by Councillor Henderson in June of 2017 "That Administration provide a report on the development and implementation of a seniors' advisory council, similar in scope to NextGen – providing advice on City wide matters." We appreciate the opportunity to provide some thoughts from our Board and Staff.

Between ESCC and the Age Friendly Edmonton (AFE) leadership tables, we believe there is opportunity for seniors to provide input from their multi-generational perspective. Adding another council called a 'Seniors Advisory Council' would be confusing and would dilute and fragment the input of this group after a decade of ESCC working to build collaboration. Seniors organizations in the City are experiencing capacity issues where it is hard for many of them to find new board members and volunteers. We would like to see existing structures enhanced to increase engagement opportunities and expand the scope of discussions and advice. This would need resources but so would a new Seniors Advisory Council.

If the concept is not about seniors' issues but rather to be a group of advisors chosen for expertise in valuable areas, a more identifiable name would be helpful. Besides ESCC and AFE, one avenue that may provide an opportunity would be to engage seniors in Vision 2050. People could be invited to participate for a purpose. Outcomes would be more tangible and the satisfaction of the participants would be higher.

There is merit in looking at the concept of ageism in relation to this work. ESCC and AFE focus on the contribution seniors can continue to make, but are careful to avoid using any stereotypes. Even positive stereotypes can be harmful and counterproductive to the whole challenge of dealing with ageism.

Whatever options are put forward to Citizen Services Committee, ESCC requests to be advised of the research and recommendations in order to explore avenues to align. We welcome the opportunity to share ESCC's collective voice.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Joan Welch in black ink.

Joan Welch, Co-Chair

Handwritten signature of Holly Matthews in black ink.

Holly Matthews, Co-Chair

#255 Bonnie Doon Shopping Centre, 8330-82 Ave., Edmonton, AB T6C 4E3 P: 780-423-5635 F: 780-428-3844
executivedirector@seniorscouncil.net memberservices@seniorscouncil.net

www.seniorscouncil.net