



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Vernon selected for Age Friendly Communities Program and Grant

The City of Vernon and the Vernon Senior's Action Network (VSAN) are pleased to announce that Vernon has been selected as one of 25 communities to receive a valued provincial grant. The funds will allow Vernon to conduct a community assessment and develop its first age-friendly and dementia-friendly community plan.

The program is being administered by the BC Healthy Communities Society (BCHC) in partnership with the B.C. Ministry of Health. Of this funding group, Vernon is unique in highlighting the needs of individuals and families living with dementia and bringing a dementia-friendly component into the assessment and plan.

The grant application was endorsed by City Council and received letters of support from 11 community partners, including: VSAN, Interior Health, the Social Planning Council of North Okanagan, the Alzheimer Society of BC, the Shuswap North Okanagan Division of Family Practice, Vernon and District Immigrant and Community Services Society (VDICSS), Abbeyfield Houses of Vernon Society (AHVS), Men's Shed Vernon, Nexus BC, Regional District of North Okanagan, and internationally recognized dementia advocate Dr. Christine Thelker.

Current VSAN Coordinator and former City Councillor, Catherine Lord, who played a key role in the application, is thrilled with the news.

"With this funding, we'll be able to take inventory of what community assets and services are available for seniors and people living with dementia, as well as their needs and challenges," said Lord. "We will then work with the City to create a plan that makes Vernon an even more welcoming and inclusive community."

Mayor Victor Cumming is proud to see Vernon in the leadership group of BC municipalities following the World Health Organization's [Age Friendly City Network](#).

"The City is fortunate to have strong and collaborative networks in place offering many programs and services for seniors," said Mayor Cumming. "With thanks to the Vernon Senior's Action Network, we are in a great position to further explore how we can better meet needs for social connection, accessibility, transportation, housing and other goals over the next decade."

The \$25,000 grant and project are well-timed, as the age and dementia friendly assessment and action plan will inform the broader upcoming Official Community Plan update for the City. The project will be launched at the Vernon Senior's Fair on September 17 and will run through September 2023.