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Ministry of Health

Delta receives Age-friendly BC grant

DELTA – Delta seniors will benefit from a \$20,000 age-friendly grant to help address the needs of the municipality’s senior residents.

The Corporation of Delta is one of 27 communities receiving grants for 2013.

“Age-friendly projects like the one here in Delta are helping B.C. seniors to remain independent and involved in their communities,” said Minister of State for Seniors Ralph Sultan. “Seniors right around the province have told me that isolation is a key issue for them and I am pleased that this pilot bus service will provide North Delta seniors with additional transit options, allowing them to get out in the community and engage in healthy activities.”

The Corporation of Delta will use the grant to undertake planning for the North Delta Seniors’ Bus pilot program. The bus will provide seniors with accessible, affordable and reliable transportation options and offer convenient access to seniors’ activity centres, shopping, local medical services, banking and other community amenities. This service is intended to improve transit options for seniors and encourage isolated or inactive seniors to become engaged in recreation, social and healthy lifestyle activities.

“The North Delta Seniors’ bus will provide local seniors with reliable access to a variety of services from shopping to medical appointments,” said Delta Mayor Lois E. Jackson. “This community has so much to offer and it is great news that this funding will allow us to offer seniors improved access to affordable transportation options.”

The age-friendly planning and project grant program is a partnership between the government of B.C. and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). Grants of up to \$20,000 are provided through UBCM to help establish, or continue, a variety of projects that support healthy, active seniors.

Applications for age-friendly planning and projects grants were reviewed by staff from UBCM and the Ministry of Health. They were scored on a variety of factors, including goals, proposed activities, involvement of seniors and other key partners, budget, and innovation and sustainability.

Since 2007, 117 B.C. communities have received funding to support age-friendly planning and projects. Examples include age-friendly assessments, ensuring services are more accessible, supporting transportation and social connection to help prevent social isolation, and improving the community by increasing garden and green space.

In September 2012, government announced \$500,000 in funding was available for the 2013 round of grants. Fourteen of the 27 successful applicants for 2013 have not received previous funding through the program.

The age-friendly grant program is just one aspect of Age-friendly BC, which focuses on providing communities with support, information and recognition to help meet the needs of an aging population. Local governments can achieve age-friendly recognition and officially become an Age-friendly BC community once they have completed four basic steps that focus on community engagement, commitment, assessment and action. To learn more about Age-friendly BC and the age-friendly grant program, please visit: www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly

The age-friendly grant program reflects the goals of B.C.'s Family Agenda, which supports seniors by encouraging healthy, active aging. To learn more, visit: www.familiesfirstbc.ca

Media Contact: Ryan Jabs
Media Relations Manager
Ministry of Health
250 952-1887 (media line)

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