

**From:** [Lucy Marco](#)  
**To:** [David Bailey](#); [Linda Moyer](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Boyd](#)  
**Subject:** FOLLOW-UP Re: Ontario Seniors Community Grant  
**Date:** Thursday, July 30, 2020 10:23:58 AM

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Hi again David.....this is a follow-up to my previous e-mail. The Grand River Council on Aging would very much appreciate a letter of support from the County of Brant, to complement a letter from the City, in support of our application as described below. I've copied Heather Boyd as well as it occurred to me that you may not be available. As advised previously, if this is possible, we need the letter by Tuesday, August 4.

COVID -19 has resulted in many activities, programs and services that were available in the community being canceled. The "Stay at Home" and "Social Distancing" rules resulted in forced "Social Isolation" for the 55+ population. Social isolation can result in feelings of loneliness and depression which, in turn, can trigger physical and mental health issues and even result in an increased risk of abuse. Many community organizations have developed digital and "drop-off" activities and promote their own offerings. Now, more than ever, there is a need, utilizing digital and printed materials, to have a recognized central source for ALL community information that can facilitate older adults, aging at home, to be safe and secure, and remain healthy, active and socially engaged.

Over 150 local organizations have provided their contact information, relative to webinars, activities and resources, to the Grand River Council on Aging "INFO HUB" (on [www.grcoa.ca](http://www.grcoa.ca) web site). The INFO HUB contains information related to housing options, food security, volunteerism, transportation options, directories, helplines, health services, care giving support services and safety (i.e. fraud, elder abuse awareness, etc.) The Home Page also features a local COVID-19 resource section. The project consists of a communication strategy that will develop, implement and promote bi-weekly, digital and printed, newsletters targeted at the 55+ population and their families and friends. This strategy will provide descriptions of current local activities and opportunities for engagement with survey questions, brain teasers, and volunteer recruitment. The printed version of the newsletter would be published in local print media and distributed to senior apartments, Retirement Homes, and senior centres to keep individuals engaged who are not computer literate or have access to a computer. A Coordinator will be contracted to ensure the local organizations are providing current information, coordinate the input of questions, brain teasers, etc. from volunteers, and coordinate the promotion activities through social and print media. It is also planned to identify opportunities to continue the "Community at Home" project beyond the end of the funding.

- 1) To continue the work of the Grand River Council on Aging (GRCOA) in the development of an "Age-Friendly Community" as outlined in the 2008 Master Aging Plan and the 2017 Community Impact Report.
- 2) To increase safety and well-being of isolated older adults by providing a resource that contributes to residents feeling empowered by the knowledge obtained, thereby allowing

them to make choices, to engage, and stay connected, and reduce feelings of isolation.  
3) To increase community engagement of older adults by providing volunteer opportunities.

Experts predict COVID 19 distancing measures will likely continue for at least another two years. The "Community at Home" project will provide opportunities for seniors to be engaged in the community through networking, learning new skills, participating in activities and volunteering. Although there are many older adults who are technology literate, a large number of the 55+ population is not. The biggest lesson learned during the GRCOA "age-friendly" research is "people don't know what they don't know.....until they have a need to know.....and then.....they don't know where to go!" Therefore, this project is designed to reach out, not only to the older adults, but also to families, friends, caregivers and service providers who can assist in connecting them to information and activities. The digital and printed newsletters will direct the readers to access the [www.grcoa.ca](http://www.grcoa.ca) web site "Info Hub". The "Info Hub" is an information centre of local community activities, resources and services as a result of collaboration with over 150 organizations providing services within the eight domains of an "age-friendly community".....civic participation & employment, communication & information, community support & health services, housing, outdoor spaces & buildings, respect & social inclusion, social participation and transportation. The web site also hosts a "COVID-19" local resource section on the home page.

The GRCOA is the backbone organization for promoting the development of an "age-friendly" City of Brantford, County of Brant, and Six Nations of the Grand. Since the production of the 2008 Master Aging Plan through to the publication of the 2017 Community Impact Report, collaborations with the municipalities have resulted in the recognition of both the City of Brantford and the County of Brant being recognized as Age Friendly Communities by the World Health Organization. The City now has its own "Healthy Aging: Age Friendly Community Plan", the County is in the process of developing its Plan and Six Nations of the Grand have completed their Age-Friendly Assessment and published it as "The Elders Journey". The GRCOA will celebrate its 10th incorporation anniversary in November 2020 as a result of the continuing efforts of its volunteers and contracted services. The Board of Directors consists of nine residents with many years of business and community experience and six representatives of community service partners (Laurier University, Grand River Community Health Centre, Alzheimer Society, John Noble Long Term Care Home, Brant County Health Unit, Brant Regional Indigenous Support Centre). In addition to the municipalities, the GRCOA is an active participant in many community planning committees e.g. Elder Abuse Awareness Committee, Healthy Brant Initiative, Seniors Safety Group. The GROCA has a demonstrated history of facilitating successful community forums and events, involving residents in informal research, effectively communicating the experience of the residents, as well as providing programs and resources to seniors where they live in (e.g. the City Seniors for Seniors program). All the work supporting this project will be done from home locations and is supporting the dissemination of information through technology and manual delivery of newsletters. COVID public health practices will be adhered to by those involved with manual delivery.

On 7/28/2020 11:40 AM, Lucy Marco wrote:

Hi David.....

The Grand River Council on Aging will be applying for a Stream 1 Grant in support of a "Community at Home" project as described on Pages 3 and 4 in the attached application form. Also attached is the article on the new "INFO HUB" that appeared in today's Expositor.

Is it possible to have a letter of support for this project? If so, who should I direct the inquiry to? We would like to receive it by Tuesday, August 5 when we will be submitting the application.

Lucy