Council Direction:

On May 22, 2013, City Council approved the following:

(a) That the Hamilton Municipal Senior of the Year Awards Ceremony be broadened to a large scale event to recognize seniors across all sectors of the community; and

(b) That the 2013 Hamilton Municipal Senior of the Year Awards ceremony be postponed until June 2014 to provide adequate time for staff and senior community representatives to plan and organize a more prestigious ceremony.

Information:

The Ontario Senior of the Year Award is provided by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and is awarded to one outstanding resident who, after the age of 65, has enriched the social, cultural or civic life of his or her community. This award is presented annually in the month of June, which the Ontario Government recognizes as Seniors’ month.

Since 1995 staff and volunteers from the Recreation Division of the City of Hamilton have organized a small ceremony and event to recognize volunteer contributions by seniors within the community, and to award one resident with the honour of Senior of the Year. Over the past few years general attendance for this event has declined with approximately 70 in attendance in 2012. In addition, feedback received suggested creating an awards event and ceremony that is more grand and prestigious in nature and celebrates the diversity of seniors in our community.
In February 2013, a committee was formed including staff from Macassa Lodge (Volunteer Coordinator as lead role), Recreation (Seniors Services and Marketing), Strategic Services (Communications), and Tourism and Culture (Planning and Economic Development) with representation from members of the Seniors’ Advisory Committee and previous Seniors Award members.

Since then, the committee has selected a date and venue for the event. The Senior of the Year Awards and Gala event will take place June 24, 2014 at Michelangelo’s Events and Conference Centre.

In order to create more awareness of the new Senior of the Year Awards and Gala event, the event will be advertised and promoted through various media channels. The planning committee’s Marketing Specialist will be creating promotional advertisements which will be seen in local newspapers and broadcast on radio and television. Promotional flyers and posters will be distributed to both non-profit and private sector organizations, local schools, recreation centres and libraries. This will aide in promoting the event, sponsorship, nominations and ticket sales.

The planning committee has created a nomination package, which has been professionally formalized by the Recreation Division (Marketing). Eight additional award categories have been developed to recognize those seniors who have contributed to the Hamilton community in a variety of ways. The new recognition awards are as follows:

- Lifetime Achievement
- Innovation
- Behind the Scenes
- Diversity and Cultural
- Leadership
- Compassion and Companionship
- Economic Leadership
- Healthy and Active Living

Call for nominations and distribution of the nomination packages will occur in January 2014. A contact list has been developed to ensure thorough distribution of the package throughout the Hamilton community.

**Budget**

The committee is anticipating that there will be 300-400 attendees at this event. Consistent with previous years, approximately 130 of these attendees (nominees & guest, sponsors and members of city council) will receive a complimentary ticket. The remaining attendees (family and friends) will pay $20.00 per person, which is $5.00 less than previous years for this event. It has been decided by the planning committee to
keep the ticket price modest even though the event will be a formal sit down & highly celebrated dinner.

The total anticipated costs which includes tickets, promotion, awards, certificates, as well as entertainment is $15,300 - $16,600 based on the proposed number of attendees. The projected revenue is $18,300 - $19,600 and is comprised of $10,000 from volunteer event funds in Strategic Services, $6,000 from the Recreation Department (funds used on an annual basis for event) and $3,000 in sponsorship. If ticket sales are less than projected, the additional revenue ($3,000) will mitigate any potential loss.

This goal for both ticket sales and sponsorship is very modest considering the quality of the event, the importance of the awards and initial interest from the corporate community to support this worthwhile endeavour celebrating the outstanding achievements of Hamilton Seniors.