

Marsh Street Centre
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September 4, 2024

Town of the Blue Mountains
32 Mill Street
Thornbury, ON
N0H 2P0

Dear Town of the Blue Mountains Council Members,

My name is Michele Myrah, current President and Chair of the Marsh Street Community Centre (“the Centre”) Board of Directors.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I and our Vice President Erna Scholz are requesting a letter of community support from the Mayor's office for submission to the Federal New Horizons for Seniors Grant Application due on Sept 12th, 2024.

The Centre, located in Clarksburg, is applying for the Federal New Horizons for Seniors Grant for funding to cover the program costs of the Centre's successful and expanding weekly Seniors Wellness Program for April 2025 to March 2026. A letter of community support is required for the application and support from the Town of the Blue Mountains will greatly help our case for grant funding.

The Centre provides affordable and accessible facilities for community programs, arts groups, and gatherings, such as weddings and celebrations of life, that provide the opportunity for social connection for people of all ages and backgrounds in our rural community. Seniors, as members of the Centre's Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers, have always played a critical role in the operation of the Centre.

One of our most successful community programs offered since 2021 has been our weekly Seniors Wellness Program, formerly known as Seniors Lunch and Learn. Every Monday we offer this 2 1/2 hour program, on a “pay what you can” basis, that includes age-appropriate fitness exercises, lunch, and a speaker from the community. Speakers, many of whom will be seniors, include experts to educate the participants about physical and mental health, safety and financial security, as well as notable local artists, musicians, authors, and entrepreneurs. Attendance has increased dramatically with as many as 35 seniors attending the program some weeks. We are especially proud that between 5 to 10 local seniors are regular volunteers who help to organize, plan and host these sessions and look forward to seeing the participants.

We are looking to expand the program in 2025 by offering virtual/on line participation so that seniors who are not able to join in person can still benefit from the presenters' information and also to access remote delivery of the speaker's presentations.

The costs to run the program at the Centre include the cost of a fitness instructor, lunch, a part-time staff member dedicated to running the program, and occasional supplies and speaker's honorarium. With the increasing number of attendees, the monthly costs average over \$2,000 per month. The Federal New Horizons for Seniors Grant will provide up to \$25,000 to cover the majority of the program costs for the year April 2025 to March 2026. This Federal funding, plus donations, would allow us to keep offering this important program to the seniors in The Blue Mountains community.

The draft letter of community support from the Mayor, using the template set out in the grant application guidelines, is attached.

The Centre has greatly appreciated the on-going support of the Town of the Blue Mountains as we strive to fulfill our purpose to enrich the community's cultural life by providing space suitable for a wide variety of gatherings for people of all ages and backgrounds.

We thank you in advance for your support of our application for Federal grant funding of this important program.

Yours sincerely,



Michele Myrah
President/Chair
On behalf of the Marsh Street Community Centre Board of Directors

**Draft Letter from the Town of the Blue Mountains
In Support of the New Horizons for Seniors Program Funding
For the Marsh Street Community Centre**

[insert Town of the Blue Mountains letterhead]

September 9, 2024

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)
New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP)
44 Hurontario Street
Collingwood, Ontario, L9Y 2L6

Subject: Support Letter for “ Seniors Wellness Program ”

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Town of the Blue Mountains Town Council in support of an application submitted by the Marsh Street Community Centre in Clarksburg, Town of the Blue Mountains, Ontario for funding through the Community-based stream of the New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP).

The Town of the Blue Mountains is a municipality located in Ontario that is composed of communities that are built on a foundation of agriculture, processing, manufacturing and recreation. Seniors are a growing demographic at close to half of the population and are an integral part of The Blue Mountains community. The Town of the Blue Mountains supports our seniors to serve as active members in civic participation, volunteering and employment.

The mandate of the Marsh Street Community Centre (“the Centre”) is to enrich the community's cultural life by providing space suitable for a wide variety of gatherings for people of all ages and backgrounds. We support the Centre because it provides affordable and accessible facilities for community programs, arts groups, and gatherings, such as weddings and celebrations of life, that provide the opportunity for social connection for people of all ages and backgrounds in our rural community. Seniors, as members of the Centre’s Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers, have always played a critical role in the operation of the Centre and creation of community programs. Seniors on low incomes or with mobility challenges have been able to participate in no or low cost programs and attend seasonal events and music/cultural performances in the Centre’s accessible building. We consider the Centre to be a unique advantage to our community and its seniors.

With the NHSP funding for 2025/2026, the Centre will offer an expanded Seniors Wellness Program that will include a weekly 2 1/2 hour program, on a “pay what you can” basis that includes age-appropriate fitness exercises, lunch, and a speaker from the community. Speakers, many of whom will be seniors, include experts to educate the participants on matters such as physical and mental health, safety and financial security, financial fraud and scams, and seniors abuse prevention, as well as notable local artists, musicians, authors, and

entrepreneurs. The program expansion will include ways to access remote delivery of the speaker’s presentations, as well as offer virtual/on line participation so that those seniors not able to join in person can still benefit from the presenters’ information. In addition, a weekly Seniors Coffee Club later in the week will further enhance social interaction in a less structured way, directed by the attendees.

This Seniors Wellness Program aims to reduce social isolation and support the mental health and physical health challenges that many seniors, especially those on a low income or with mobility challenges, have faced. The predecessor “seniors lunch and learn program” has been very successful and attendance is growing, resulting in the need to expand the program with an online/virtual element. In addition, 5 to 10 volunteers, all of whom are seniors, organize, plan and host the weekly sessions and have developed mutually beneficial relationships with the participants.

This project will advance the established National Priorities to support healthy aging by helping seniors to age in place in their communities that they are familiar with, and with their families and friends nearby. Grant funding will allow the Centre to offer the program at no or low cost to ensure there is no financial barrier to attending the program. Seminars from experts on health, safety and financial matters will also support the National Priority on preventing elder abuse and supporting the financial empowerment of seniors.

I, and the Town of the Blue Mountains council, strongly support this project as it helps our seniors, especially our lower income and mobility-challenged seniors, to continue to be active and engaged members of our community. Overall the project will have an impact on seniors in our community by helping our seniors combat isolation and loneliness, improve their mental health, maintain or improve their physical strength, and continue to participate actively in the community for as long as possible. The program promotes volunteerism by seniors and engagement within our community.

For the reasons noted above, we are excited to support the Marsh Street Community Centre’s funding request for this important program to be offered in 2025/2026.

Yours sincerely,
[insert signature]

[Name]
[Title]
[Name of Organization]
[Address]

[email address]

Sample letter for supporting organization taken from the Federal Government website

Letter of support template

Community support is an important element of a New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP) funding application for the \$25,000 grant process. When organizations apply for funding, they are required to provide at least 1 letter or document from another organization or group showing community support for their project.

Because of the importance of a letter of support, a letter is required for all \$25,000 grant applications. Applications missing a support letter are considered incomplete and screened out as ineligible. ESDC will not accept letters of support after the CFP deadline of September 12, 2024.

Letters of Community Support must include:

- A signature date of no earlier than July 1, 2024
- the name and a description of the organization offering the support
- the supporter's name, position title, and signature, as well as the signature date
- the supporter's knowledge of the applicant organization and why they support them
- the supporter's knowledge of the proposed project and why they support it
- the **need** that will be addressed by the proposed project in your community
- the project's impact on seniors in the community
- where possible:
 - be written on the author's organization letterhead and include the website address, email address, postal address and phone number
 - mention a previous activity the organization undertook that was a success, to demonstrate the supporter's view of the organization's value to seniors

The project endorsement within a letter of support will be assessed by the Department. The letter will be evaluated against the NHSP [program objectives](#) and the [National Priorities](#) of the Call for Proposals (CFP).

NOTE: Letters from project partners or members of your group or organization are not valid

Letter template

[Date] (no earlier than July 1, 2024)

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)

New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP)

Regional office address

[City, Province Postal Code]

Subject: Support Letter “ [Project Title] ”

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you on behalf of [name of supporting organization] in support of an application submitted by [applicant organization name] in [insert location], for funding through the New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP) through Community-based stream.

Our mandate is to [brief description of the supporting organization]

The mandate of [applicant organization name] is to [brief description of the applicant organization]. We support this organization because [brief description].

Through the NHSP funding, [applicant organization name] aims to [brief description of the project].

I support this project as it will support local and community needs such as [provide at least 1 example]. Overall the project will have an impact on our seniors in our community by [provide a short sentence or 2 on the impact on seniors in the community]

For the reasons noted above, I am excited to support your funding request.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

[Name of Organization]

[Address]

[email address]