

In October 2017, SWESA asked these questions...

1 - SWESA is the newest district seniors centre in Edmonton and has 400 members out of a population of over 25,000 who are 55+. How would you see us developing over the next 3-5 years?

2 - SWESA was formed in 2012 and since then has been building capacity and experience in running programs and providing services out of leased space. We are now working with a full Board of 12, two part time staff, and approximately 90 enthusiastic volunteers. How will you and your fellow Councillors support the ongoing development of this seniors centre for Southwest Edmonton?

3 - One of SWESA's newest programs is the Seniors Home Supports Program (supported through a city-wide committee and a FCSS grant.) The program is one way that SWESA reaches out to seniors who may be isolated and in need of support to continue living well - at home, by finding housecleaning, yard work, snow shovelling and home maintenance services. We want to maintain a follow up component to our referral system and to vet the services we recommend to seniors in SW Edmonton. SWESA is hopeful that it will be a priority for ongoing funding. Will you continue to support us in the work we are doing?

In alphabetical order, here are the replies that have been received to date from Ward 9 Council Candidates

Rob Agostinis

1. As one of the founding members of SWESA, our initial focus is to provide an organization for those 55+ seniors, a place where together we would engage in a variety of programs through social connections. Our ultimate pursuit is to build a centre for recreation, programming and assembly.

With the development of sustainable funding models and acquisition of charitable status, I see our SWESA membership increasing to a point where we would be in a good position to look at potential sites for a new

physical centre, where we would provide core services such as: social services, recreation programs, nutrition service, health & wellness, community development and volunteerism.

Since, SWESA serves a large south west area, there is an opportunity for a central hub and spoke model. Accesability, and proper transportation and transit strategy is a must when it comes to the placement of this centre. The design has to be senior friendly and accommodate our culturally inclusive and diverse seniors community.

There are many potential sites for this core centre or satellite centres as well as, potential partners: South Pointe Community Centre, a site adjacent to the Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre, a partnership with a school, a partnership with a community league, a new stand alone building, or a partnership with other services such as the Edmonton Public Library as a community hub on a surplus school site.

Ultimately, our focus is to provide seniors with a good quality of life (both mentally and physically).

2. As a councillor, my first priority is to engage with all seniors and the SWESA board and membership to get a better understanding of their needs, the senior centres model and the various funding models. I want to continue working with the board on an ongoing basis, bringing in resources from the City and private sector to achieve their goals. As well, I want to collaborate with other seniors agencies and other levels of government. This type of ongoing collaboration will result in a sustainable seniors centre model and ongoing funding.

Furthermore, I would assist in getting the necessary resources and partners to building the next best seniors recreation centre and community hub.

3. After a successful pilot program, the Seniors Home Supports Program, in my opinion is essential to providing support services for seniors. Now that SWESA is in full control of managing this program, I think it is essential it is funded appropriately and we provide for the coordination of this program and the vetting of service providers.

Again, it is essential that we review the funding model and that it is sustainable. Any lapse in funding, we will look at other alternative funding sources.

SWESA is very well run, and support for this association is essential to maintaining a good quality of life for all seniors.

Tim Cartnell

1. The key focus of my Ward 9 campaign is to build better communities. I firmly believe that we need to have strategies in place to ensure that residents have the choice to age in place in their neighbourhood.

As the number of persons over 55 in Edmonton will double in the next five years, I see SWEMSA's membership increasing proportionally. The City of Edmonton therefore needs to invest in a dedicated seniors facility in Southwest Edmonton, the only quadrant in Edmonton that does not currently have one.

I see several possibilities for a dedicated southwest seniors centre. There are several new housing development opportunities available in southwest Edmonton, and there is an ongoing and increasing need for seniors focused housing. There is the potential to integrate a new senior's centre into such a development.

We need to be bold and creative in our use of space. There is the possibility of integrating a senior's centre component into a new city operated facility, such as a library. The Riverbend Branch of EPL has outgrown its space and there may be opportunities for a partnership development.

Finally, there may be the opportunity to develop a new, stand-alone senior's centre. One possibility is to add a facility to the Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre campus at Leger Park. There is one school site that has not yet been declared surplus that might suit this purpose. In this instance, we should look at the Lions Seniors Centre as a potential model for a new development.

2. First and foremost, collaboration with your organization would be a top priority. Community engagement often leads to the best outcomes, and

that would certainly be the case in listening to your active and informed membership.

In my private sector work, I have been the project manager on three seniors lodge developments for the Greater Edmonton Foundation, and more recently on the Vermillion Lodge Rehabilitation Project in Vermillion, Alberta. As such I have been able to gain a better understanding of the needs of seniors generally, albeit in a lodge environment, and the supports that seniors need to continue to lead enjoyable, healthy, rewarding lives.

As a Councillor, I would build on that private sector experience and the knowledge I have obtained. I would support providing advisory and facilitation services, to assist the seniors of southwest Edmonton to determine what their facility needs are, to determine the best form of building they need, and to help them develop an operating model for their new building. I would like to see the City assist in the exploration of partnership possibilities should that be the direction that the SWESA wants to pursue. I would assist SWESA in assessing and understanding design challenges made in similar recently developed facilities. And I would support the use of city administration resources in the procurement and management of the construction of a new facility.

3. The Seniors Home Supports Program is directly aligned with my goals of building better communities that serve residents of all walks of life.

I would support the continued funding of SWESA. It is noted that programs that receive Family and Community Support Services grant funding generally see that funding continue, as long as their programming remains consistent and effective. The final decision is left to the Citizen Services Advisory Board, and I would respect the decisions made by that Board. Should that source of funding no longer be available, I would support finding alternative funding sources.

Our seniors population continues to rapidly grow, and we need to ensure that we provide the supports our seniors need. We need to ensure that their healthcare and nutrition needs are being attended to, and ensure they are comfortable and safe in their homes. The work of SWESA in this regard is extremely valuable and I want to see it continue.

Mark Hope

1. I can only foresee more growth, as the South West of Edmonton is growing very quickly, and baby boomers are getting older. I would like to see more inclusive communities where all walks of life are represented, and as personal circumstances change, such as age, people are able to stay in the same areas.
2. I think we need to be prepared for the growth I mentioned above, and manage it accordingly.
3. I would like to continue support for SWESA, and make sure those who are vulnerable, are not forgotten. For this specific plan, I would need to look at it in detail, but it sounds like it could be beneficial. I would also like to say that I intend to improve transparency and communication with the public. Part of that is about making sure everyone is represented and has a voice at City Hall. I would like to be able to communicate with individuals along with organizations such as SWESA to gain input and feedback. Hope isn't just my last name, it is what I bring to make a better Edmonton.

Sandy Pon

1. I am 52 years old and have lived in southwest Edmonton for the past 26 years. So in the next 3 years, I will have the privilege to be a member of the SWESA. Edmonton is has a very young population under 35 but it also has the highest number of Baby Boomers in the country. There are lot of needs for young families and seniors and upcoming seniors. But this is great. Today's seniors are the most energetic and dynamic compared to the seniors of the last generation. That means we are more active and mobile. However, in Edmonton and particularly in Ward 9, we need more senior housing and amenities. Housing options for the very independent to the assisted living styles must be planned now with providers, developers and government. We should be proactive than reactive to developing more programs, care facilities and housing.
2. A Healthy City is a strategy Edmonton is working to achieve. With this mandate, the entire City Council and the administration must do our best

to attain. With this goal, I will advocate more city-wide programs and funding for SWESA programs. A healthy senior will have less cost on health care. So it is smarter to spend the dollar ahead for health maintenance. A smarter and healthier city, the less tax dollars will be needed for the future.

3. Yes, I will support of funding for the service maintenance and referral program. Isolation and loneliness are the greatest catalyst to major illnesses for seniors. Daily interaction with care providers is a positive component. The physical limitation to daily routines is unavoidable as one ages. This creates vulnerability in seniors on their dependence on other people. It often lead to abuses in seniors physically, mentally and financially. Government has a responsibility to make sure services provided to seniors are creditable and legitimate.