



VILLAGE OF FRASER LAKE

AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN 2019



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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS AN AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY?

An age-friendly community is one where older adults can “age actively” – that is, to live in security, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society. And the good news is that becoming age-friendly not only improves quality of life for seniors, it also creates a more inclusive, safe and accessible community for everyone.



WHY IS AGE-FRIENDLY PLANNING IMPORTANT?

In 2016, 18% of the Fraser Lake’s population was 65 years and older – up from 13% in 2011. The current proportion of seniors is the same as the rest of the province where seniors also account for 18% of the population. For some small BC communities, this proportion is closer to 30%. Fraser Lake’s next group of seniors – those who are currently 50-65 years of age – represent 23% of the population.

Planning to become more age-friendly helps today’s seniors enjoy better quality of life now, and it also helps the next generation of adults as they make decisions about where they will spend their later years. Being able to age in one’s own community is a desirable objective for all communities – and this is at the heart of this planning process and the Village of Fraser Lake’s decision to undertake it.



AGE-FRIENDLY FOCUS AREAS

The following World Health Organization (WHO) age-friendly themes or topics, which are used extensively by other communities and cities within and beyond Canada, were used throughout Fraser Lake’s age-friendly planning process and they provide the structure for this plan:



Social participation: Includes opportunities for seniors to participate in a range of social, recreation, cultural and spiritual activities.



Transportation: Includes private, public and volunteer transportation options, as well as the accessibility of non-motorized transportation modes such as walking, biking, scooters.



Outdoor spaces and buildings: Includes the safety, accessibility and suitability of public buildings and spaces for seniors.



Respect and social inclusion: Focuses on ensuring that older people are treated with respect and are included in all aspects of community and civic life.



Housing: Includes the spectrum of housing needed through the aging process, as well as the housing-related services (e.g. home repairs) required through the spectrum.



Civic participation and employment: Focuses on ensuring that opportunities for employment and volunteering include older generational interests and abilities.



Community support and health services: Includes health care and preventive services, as well as health support at home with the aim that these services are accessible, affordable and meet the needs of seniors.



Communication and information: Focuses on ensuring that information and communications is accessible to seniors of all ages and abilities.

The first three topics above (housing, transportation, and community support and health services) will require regional partnerships and solutions and cannot be addressed by Fraser Lake alone. The other topics also have regional linkages, but they should be delivered by and within the community as much as possible.

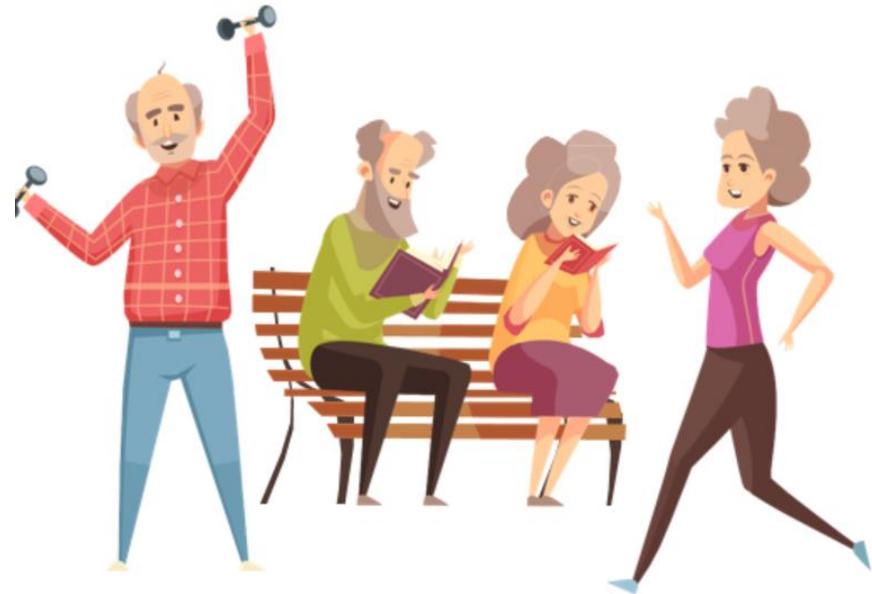


HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The Village of Fraser Lake age-friendly planning process was fully funded by the Union of BC Municipalities' Age-Friendly Communities grant program, led by the Whistler Centre for Sustainability and the Village of Fraser Lake, and involved community members through a number of engagement opportunities.

The first phase of the process included an age-friendly assessment of Fraser Lake in each of the eight WHO topic areas. Community engagement to inform this age-friendly assessment included a survey, a drop-in event, and workshops with the Age-Friendly Task Force. These engagement opportunities are summarized below, and the results are reported in the 2019 Age-Friendly Assessment under separate cover and in summary form in the next section (Age-friendly Assessment Highlights).

The second phase of the process included action planning workshops with the Task Force using the assessment information gathered through the first phase. The results of this second phase are the recommended actions contained in this document.



Community survey: There were two slightly different versions of the survey – one for people under 60 and one for those older than 60; respondents were able to select which group they most associate with and respond to the survey as part of either group. The number of respondents within each these groups was 49 and 31 respectively, providing a total of 80 responses. The survey was available online and on paper from early March to April 5, 2019. Two prizes for \$75 Chamber Dollars were used to encourage residents to respond. The survey was promoted through a number of communication channels, and the paper survey was available at Village Office for those unable to access the online version.

Community Drop-in Event: On April 16, 2019 a community event was held, refreshments were provided, and people were encouraged to drop-in for 5 minutes or 50 – whatever their schedules would allow. Approximately 10 community members attended the drop-in event at the Fraser Lake Recreation Complex where the consultant was on hand to discuss the project and answer questions. Participants could also provide input on posters around the room.

Focused conversation: A conversation was held on May 21 with ten Silver Birch Lodge seniors’ housing residents to further explore some of the input gathered through the community survey and event.

Age-Friendly Task Force: The task force acted as a sounding board for ideas, identified local issues, and helped the Village,

consulting team and Council engage a range of community members and seniors to inform the project. Three workshops were held with the task force to: gather their input on the current age-friendliness of the community; review, discuss and draw conclusions from the community survey and event input; and identify and recommend actions to make Fraser Lake more age-friendly.

Thank you to everyone who participated.



Task force members at workshop 3



AGE-FRIENDLY ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

As part of the age-friendly planning process conducted in 2019, an assessment of Fraser Lake current age-friendliness was undertaken. This section summarizes highlights of what was learned through the assessment phase of the planning process, and then the following pages for each of the WHO topics also include high-level assessment information. The full age-friendly assessment results can be found in the 2019 Age-Friendly Assessment document under separate cover.

OVERALL AGE-FRIENDLINESS

Overall, Fraser Lake is considered to be a fairly age-friendly community, as indicated by the majority (close to 90%) of the over and under 60 groups responding to the survey. When it comes to being treated with respect and feeling included in community activities, close to 90% of both groups agreed in both cases (over 60% of both groups *totally agreed* with the statements of respect and inclusion). Social connections, feeling safe and housing were amongst the top reasons for staying in Fraser Lake for both age groups.

KEY ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

Many Fraser Lake seniors enjoy strong social connections and the community has many long-time residents. As for opportunities to engage socially, Fraser Lake has many and they are varied thanks to a small but critical group of program and service providers in the community, including the Village, Autumn Services, the Legion, and the Men's Shed. The Village Recreation Coordinator position is also an important asset to be able to deliver and ultimately enhance age-friendly offerings.

Further, Fraser Lake enjoys relatively flat topography, a central commercial area with essential community amenities and a number of key service providers and locations offering support and gathering spaces for seniors. Community health services (physicians, laboratory, x-ray and public health) are provided at the health centre operated by Northern Health, which also offers home health support services in the community.

Not surprisingly, transportation between Fraser Lake and other communities for those without a private vehicle is a key challenge and is especially important to address given that many health and other services are provided in other communities. There are a number of options that do exist but the missing piece is *daily* door-to-door, on-call service that can offer transportation within, but also beyond the community.

Getting around within Fraser Lake is facilitated by the community bus (which offers door-to-door service twice per



week) and relatively flat topography that makes walking a viable option for many.

Aside from the Silver Birch Lodge, which offers independent living units for seniors, there are no other seniors' housing options in Fraser Lake that offer supported or assisted living, requiring many seniors to leave the community as they age and their housing needs change. Extending the time seniors can remain in their existing homes is extremely important.

For many communities in BC, including Fraser Lake, the winter season exacerbates transportation challenges and presents additional challenges around the home with snow clearing of sidewalks and driveways. These challenges exist regardless of

age but can be especially challenging for seniors. The winter season underscores the importance of making home maintenance and repair services accessible to seniors – both in terms of having the information about available services, but also having them affordable for residents at various income levels. The Village offers snow-clearing free of charge to seniors who own their own property.

Underpinning all of the above is the need for complete, consistent and ongoing communication tailored to seniors to ensure they have and can access the information they need, when they need it.



HOW WE'RE MOVING FORWARD (THE ACTION PLAN)

The actions on the following pages are recommended by the Age-Friendly Task Force as the most effective way to improve the age-friendliness of the communities and the region in the next few years. The action plan is made up of 'first step' and 'next step' actions that will be undertaken as resources permit and opportunities arise. They should be reviewed and adjusted every two or so years to ensure ongoing progress, and this review process should again engage community members.

The first of the following pages provides an overview of all recommended actions, and then details for each WHO topic are provided on the pages after that.

In addition to the recommended actions, essential age-friendly features recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) are also included within each topic to help guide future action planning processes.





ACTION PLAN ON A PAGE

WHERE WE'RE GOING ¹								
Vision	To become an age-friendly community and region where older adults can “age actively,” living in security, enjoy good health, and continuing to participate fully in society.							
Goals ¹	Social participation	Outdoor spaces and buildings	Housing*	Community support and health services*	Transportation*	Respect and social inclusion	Civic participation and employment	Communication and information
	Fraser Lake has opportunities for seniors to participate in a range of social, recreation, cultural and spiritual activities.	Outdoor spaces and buildings that are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.	The community and region has a range of housing options that are affordable, appropriately located, well built, well designed and secure.	Community support and health services are accessible, affordable and meet the needs of seniors.	Public transportation and other mobility options exists and are accessible and affordable.	Older people are treated with respect and are included in all aspects of community and civic life.	Opportunities for employment and volunteering cater to older generational interests and abilities.	Fraser Lake has accessible and available age-friendly information and communications.
HOW WE'RE MOVING FORWARD ²								
First Steps	1. Expand the Village Recreation Coordinator position's responsibility for seniors to include coordination of a number of actions identified in this action plan. (Village)	3. Convene seniors to inform specific walkability improvements throughout the community, as related to actions 4, 5, 7, 12 and 13. 4. Install benches where gaps exist along key streets used by seniors as an interim step until more complete walkability improvements can be made in conjunction with infrastructure upgrades (see action 14). (Village)	14. Conduct a housing needs assessment (or participate in a regional process) to better understand the needs of seniors' specifically and the community generally, and then pursue options as needed and as possible. (Village; housing needs assessment provincially mandated every 5 years)	16. Re-establish the caregiver support group, hosted by a trained facilitator. (Northern Health) 17. Create and annually update a contact list of all the health-related services that seniors are referred to, including those within and beyond the services offered by Northern Health and within and beyond those offered in Fraser Lake; provide the list to seniors at the clinic and embed it into the comprehensive seniors' directory. (Cttee of Village, Autumn Services, Northern Health, Legion reps)	<i>Note: Expanding the Village Recreation Coordinator's responsibility for seniors is the first step (see action 1)</i> 18. Establish a seniors' volunteer driver program by exploring and selecting a model that will work best for Fraser Lake, considering an expanded Better at Home offering or the Kootenay Seniors Volunteer Driver Program model. (Village & Autumn Services) 19. Improve utilization of the Community Bus, considering trips to neighbouring communities for fitness-related activities as most needed by seniors. <i>Note: No 'next steps' identified at this time.</i>	20. Invite neighbouring First Nations elders to attend Fraser Lake events and activities, and collaborate with them to integrate cultural opportunities into the events. (Village) 21. Collaborate with the Nadleh Whut'en First Nation and the Stellat'en First Nation to host an elders/seniors dinner with Community Bus transportation, and consider it becoming an annual event that rotates between the three communities. (Village)	<i>Note: Expanding the Village Recreation Coordinator's responsibility for seniors is the first step (see action 1)</i> 22. Engage seniors regularly (at least every two years) to identify needs and prioritize changes or additions to services, activities, communications, etc. (Village & Autumn Services) 23. Convene Fraser Lake organizations that provide services/programs for seniors' (at least every two years) to review input from seniors, coordinate existing initiatives and identify 'next step' actions to meet emerging needs. (Village & Autumn Services)	24. Create and annually update one comprehensive central directory of seniors' services, including those offered within and beyond Fraser Lake that might be needed. (Cttee led by Village and including other service providers) 25. Update, promote and release one monthly calendar of community-wide and seniors-specific events and programs. (Village and Autumn Services) 26. Create a section in the Phraser Connector that provides important seniors-related information, focusing on one topic monthly and revisiting the set of topics on an ongoing basis. (Autumn Services) 27. Offer Internet and computer training to enable seniors to communicate and gather information using online platforms (e.g. search engines, social media, apps, etc.). (Village Library and/or Learning Centre)
	Next Steps	2. Continue to pursue the long-term vision/objective of building a community centre, including space for programs, community gatherings, a café, etc. (Village)	5. Identify and clear a primary winter walking route, considering a loop route that uses existing trails, sidewalks, flat/smooth streets and accessible public washrooms. (Village) 6. Extend and communicate public washroom hours/months of operation to accommodate the needs of seniors and others in the community. (Village) 7. Advocate for safety improvements to the pedestrian crossing at Hwy 16 and Chowsunket Street. (Village) 8. Ensure accessible parking stalls exist and are clearly marked throughout the community. (Village) 9. Install an 'Acorn Stairlift' or other type of lift device for the stairs in the Recreation Centre/Complex/public space. (Village) 10. Install button-activated doors and/or ramps in key public buildings where needed, considering the Recreation Complex and Village Office as initial priorities. (Village) 11. Enhance a centrally located and easily accessible green space with benches, picnic tables and a covered/shaded area for public use, considering an area adjacent to the library or shopping mall. (Village lead, Chamber assist) 12. Improve walkability (i.e. build more sidewalks, improve street surfaces, add benches and lighting) on key walking routes used by seniors as work is done to upgrade road, water and sewer infrastructure. (Village) 13. Plan for, develop (i.e. pave and light) and then seasonally snow-clear a universally accessible perimeter loop walking trail that is predominantly off-road (i.e. on sidewalks and trails). (Village, longer-term)	15. Facilitate interested citizen groups should they choose to pursue alternative housing models (e.g. co-ops) and enable resulting initiatives as possible. (Village)				

1 Where we're going is based on the World Health Organization's definition of age-friendly and eight age-friendly themes. For more detail, see the WHO age-friendly guide or checklist.

2 How we're moving forward is made up of 'first step' and 'next step' actions that will be undertaken as resources permit and opportunities arise.

*Topics that require regional perspective and solutions.



SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Social participation and social support are strongly connected to good health and well-being throughout life. Participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with the family, allows older people to continue to exercise their competence, to enjoy respect and esteem, and to maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships. It fosters social integration and is the key to staying informed. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: The community has opportunities for seniors to participate in a range of social, recreation, cultural, learning and spiritual activities.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Many Fraser Lake seniors enjoy strong social connections and the community has many long-time residents. As for opportunities to engage socially, Fraser Lake has many and they are varied thanks to a small but critical group of program and service providers in the community, including the Village (through the Recreation Coordinator position), Autumn Services, the Legion, the Men’s Shed and the Fraser Lake Crisis Line and Drop-In Centre. Autumn Services’ central location, with a kitchen, meeting room, food bank, seating areas and more, provides an important informal, drop-in gathering place for seniors and is also open to others in the community. The Village Recreation Coordinator position is an important asset to be able to deliver and ultimately enhance age-friendly offerings. For more information, see the 2019 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

WHO essential features of age-friendly cities/communities

- Venues for events and activities are conveniently located, accessible, well-lit and easily reached by public transport.
- Events are held at times convenient for older people.
- Activities and events can be attended alone or with a companion.
- Activities and attractions are affordable, with no hidden or additional participation costs.
- Good information about activities and events is provided, including details about accessibility of facilities and transportation options for older people.
- A wide variety of activities is offered to appeal to a diverse population of older people.
- Gatherings including older people are held in various local community spots, such as recreation centres, schools, libraries, community centres and parks.
- There is consistent outreach to include people at risk of social isolation.



AGE-FRIENDLY ACTIONS

The actions below were recommended by the task force to make Fraser Lake more age-friendly. They consist of 'first step' and 'next step' actions that will be undertaken as resources permit and opportunities arise.

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Goal: Fraser Lake has opportunities for seniors to participate in a range of social, recreation, cultural and spiritual activities.

First Step

- **Expand the Village Recreation Coordinator position's responsibility for seniors to include coordination of a number of actions identified in this action plan. (Village)**

Next Step

- Continue to pursue the long-term vision/objective of building a community centre, including space for programs, community gatherings, a café, etc. (Village)



OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people, affecting their ability to age in place. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: Outdoor spaces and buildings that are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Streets, sidewalks and public washrooms were topics that received lower satisfaction levels amongst the over 60 group and much attention from the task force during discussions and action planning. Of least concern and highest satisfaction were Fraser Lake's snow clearing, trails, parks and green spaces; however, the task force discussions and action planning included trail enhancements and development as an area for the community to focus on in the future. For more information, see the 2019 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

WHO essential features of age-friendly cities/communities

- Public areas are clean and pleasant.
- Green spaces and outdoor seating are sufficient in number, well-maintained and safe.
- Pavements are well-maintained, free of obstructions and reserved for pedestrians.
- Pavements are non-slip, are wide enough for wheelchairs and have dropped curbs to road level.
- Pedestrian crossings are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disability, with nonslip markings, visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times. Drivers give way to pedestrians at intersections and pedestrian crossings.
- Cycle paths are separate from pavements and other pedestrian walkways.
- Outdoor safety is promoted by good street lighting, police patrols and community education.
- Services are situated together and are accessible.
- Special customer service arrangements are provided, such as separate queues or service counters for older people.
- Buildings are well-signed outside and inside, with sufficient seating and toilets, accessible elevators, ramps, railings and stairs, and non-slip floors.
- Public toilets outdoors and indoors are sufficient in number, clean, well-maintained and accessible.



AGE-FRIENDLY ACTIONS

The actions below were recommended by the task force to make Fraser Lake more age-friendly. They consist of ‘first step’ and ‘next step’ actions that will be undertaken as resources permit and opportunities arise.

OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS Goal: Outdoor spaces and buildings that are pleasant, clean and secure and physically accessible.	
First Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene seniors to inform specific walkability improvements throughout the community. • Install benches where gaps exist along key streets used by seniors as an interim step until more complete walkability improvements can be made in conjunction with infrastructure upgrades (see action 14). (Village) • Identify and clear a primary winter walking route, considering a loop route that uses existing trails, sidewalks, flat/smooth streets and accessible public washrooms. (Village) • Extend and communicate public washroom hours/months of operation to accommodate the needs of seniors and others in the community. (Village) • Advocate for safety improvements to the pedestrian crossing at Hwy 16 and Chowsunket Street. (Village) • Ensure accessible parking stalls exist and are clearly marked through the community. (Village)
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install an ‘Acorn Stairlift’ or other type of lift device for the stairs in the Recreation Centre/Complex/public space. (Village) • Install button-activated doors and/or ramps in key public buildings where needed, considering the Recreation Complex and Village Office as initial priorities. (Village) • Enhance a centrally located and easily accessible green space with benches, picnic tables and a covered/shaded area for public use, considering an area adjacent to the library or shopping mall. (Village lead, Chamber assist) • Improve walkability (i.e. build more sidewalks, improve street surfaces, add benches and lighting) on key walking routes used by seniors as work is done to upgrade road, water and sewer infrastructure. (Village) • Plan for, develop (i.e. pave and light) and then seasonally snow-clear a universally accessible perimeter loop walking trail that is predominantly off-road (i.e. on sidewalks and trails). (Village, longer-term)



HOUSING

Housing is essential to safety and well-being. Providing housing that offers progressively higher levels of support as people age is important for the region, as is enabling seniors to remain in their homes comfortably and safely for as long as possible.

***Our goal:** The community and region have a range of housing options that are affordable, appropriately located, well-designed, well-built and secure.*

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Silver Birch Lodge offers 23 units of independent living units for seniors and is Fraser Lake's only dedicated seniors' housing. There are no other seniors' housing options in Fraser Lake that offer supported or assisted living, requiring many seniors to leave the community as they age and their health needs transition to these higher levels of care. Extending the time seniors can remain in their existing homes is extremely important to enable Fraser Lake seniors to remain in the community for as long as possible. One such offering are the home health support services offered by Northern Health. See the Community Support and Health Services section for more information.

WHO essential features of age-friendly cities/communities

- Sufficient, affordable housing is available in areas that are safe and close to services and the rest of the community.
- Sufficient and affordable home maintenance and support services are available.
- Housing is well-constructed and provides safe and comfortable shelter from the weather.
- Interior spaces and level surfaces allow freedom of movement in all rooms and passageways.
- Home modification options and supplies are available and affordable, and providers understand the needs of older people.
- Public and commercial rental housing is clean, well-maintained and safe.
- Sufficient and affordable housing for frail and disabled older people, with appropriate services, is provided locally.



AGE-FRIENDLY ACTIONS

The actions below were recommended by the task force to make Fraser Lake more age-friendly. They consist of ‘first step’ and ‘next step’ actions that will be undertaken as resources permit and opportunities arise.

HOUSING	
Goal: The community and region has a range of housing options that are affordable, appropriately located, well built, designed and secure.	
First Step	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a housing needs assessment (or participate in a regional process) to better understand the needs of seniors’ specifically and the community generally, and then pursue options as needed and as possible. (Village; housing needs assessment provincially mandated every 5 years)
Next Step	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate interested citizen groups should they choose to pursue alternative housing models (e.g. co-ops) and enable resulting initiatives as possible. (Village)



COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES

Affordable and accessible community support and health services are vital for seniors to maintain their health and independence in the community. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: Community support and health services are accessible, affordable and meet the needs of seniors.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Like most small communities in BC, there is no hospital in Fraser Lake but there is a health centre that is the hub for emergency services, a rotating physician, x-ray facilities, laboratory, public health services, and Northern Health Connections bus service. Northern Health also offer home health support to residents. Patients requiring care beyond these services are referred to the nearest hospital in Vanderhoof, 56 km away. For more information, see the 2019 Age-Friendly Assessment document. There are a number of services offered by local organizations that support seniors to live independently in their homes including home health support, meal deliveries, and some home repairs and maintenance, and other services offered throughout the community (e.g. Friendly visiting, transportation, light yard work, minor home repairs, light housekeeping, grocery shopping and snow shoveling).

WHO essential features of age-friendly cities/communities

- An adequate range of health and community support services is offered for promoting, maintaining and restoring health.
- Home care services include health and personal care and housekeeping.
- Health and social services are conveniently located and accessible by all means of transport.
- Residential care facilities and designated older people's housing are located close to services and the rest of the community.
- Health and community service facilities are safely constructed and fully accessible.
- Delivery of services is coordinated and administratively simple.
- All staff are respectful, helpful and trained to serve older people.
- Economic barriers impeding access to health and community support services are minimized.
- Voluntary services by people of all ages are encouraged and supported.
- There are sufficient and accessible burial sites.
- Community emergency planning takes into account the vulnerabilities and capacities of older people.



There are a number of services offered by local organizations that support seniors to live independently in their homes including home health support, meal deliveries, and some home repairs and maintenance. The Better at Home program offers some additional services, but they are limited as the program is shared with Vanderhoof and Fort St. James.

AGE-FRIENDLY ACTIONS

The actions below are recommended to make Fraser Lake and the region more age-friendly. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are the regional-wide actions that reflect the concerns shared by the three participating communities (Montrose, Fraser Lake and Trail); they will require regional collaboration to implement successfully.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES	
Goal: Community support and health services are accessible, affordable and meet the needs of seniors.	
First Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-establish the caregiver support group, hosted by a trained facilitator. (<i>Northern Health</i>) • Create and annually update a contact list of all the health-related services that seniors are referred to, including those within and beyond the services offered by Northern Health and within and beyond those offered in Fraser Lake; provide the list to seniors at the clinic and embed it into the comprehensive seniors' directory. (<i>Village and local service providers</i>)
Next Step	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No next steps identified at this time.</i>



TRANSPORTATION

Transportation, including accessible and affordable public transport, is a key factor influencing active ageing. In particular, being able to move about the community determines social and civic participation, as well as access to community and health services. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: Public transportation and other mobility options exist, and they are accessible and affordable.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Getting around within Fraser Lake is facilitated by the community bus that offers door-to-door service twice a week and the relatively flat topography that makes walking a viable option. Not surprisingly, transportation between Fraser Lake and other communities for those without a private vehicle is a key challenge and is especially important to address given that many health and other services are provided in other communities. Within Fraser Lake, the Fraser Lake Community Transportation Service (also known as the Community Bus) offers door-to-door service two days per week; yet the service is currently

WHO essential features of age-friendly cities/communities

- Public transportation costs are consistent, clearly displayed and affordable.
- Public transportation is reliable and frequent, including at night and on weekends and holidays.
- All community areas and services are accessible by public transport, with good connections and well-marked routes and vehicles.
- Vehicles are clean, well-maintained, accessible, not overcrowded and have priority seating that is respected.
- Specialized transportation is available for disabled people.
- Drivers stop at designated stops and beside the curb to facilitate boarding and wait for passengers to be seated before driving off.
- Transport stops and stations are conveniently located, accessible, safe, clean, well-lit and well-marked, with adequate seating and shelter.
- Complete and accessible information is provided to users about routes, schedules and special needs facilities.
- A voluntary transport service is available where public transportation is too limited.
- Taxis are accessible and affordable, and drivers are courteous and helpful.
- Roads are well-maintained, with covered drains and good lighting.
- Traffic flow is well-regulated.
- Roadways are free of obstructions that block drivers' vision.
- Traffic signs and intersections are visible and well-placed.
- Driver education and refresher courses are promoted for all drivers.
- Parking and drop-off areas are safe, sufficient in number and conveniently located.
- Priority parking and drop-off spots for people with special needs are available and respected.



underutilized. A missing piece in the transportation puzzle is door-to-door, on-call service offered any day of the week to locations beyond Fraser Lake.

AGE-FRIENDLY ACTIONS

The actions below were recommended by the task force to make Fraser Lake more age-friendly. They consist of ‘first step’ and ‘next step’ actions that will be undertaken as resources permit and opportunities arise.

TRANSPORTATION	
Goal: Public transportation and other mobility options exists and are accessible and affordable.	
First Step	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the Village Recreation Coordinator position’s responsibility for seniors to include coordination of a number of actions identified in this action plan. (Village)
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a seniors’ volunteer driver program by exploring and selecting a model that will work best for Fraser Lake, considering an expanded Better at Home offering or the Kootenay Seniors Volunteer Driver Program model. (Village & Autumn Services) Improve utilization of the Community Bus, considering trips to neighbouring communities for fitness-related activities as most needed by seniors.



RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Respect and social inclusion of seniors is being threatened due to changes in society and behavioural norms, lack of contact between generations, and widespread ignorance about ageing and older people. It is also impacted by factors such as culture, gender, health and economic status. The extent to which older people participate in the social, civic and economic life of the community is closely linked to their experience of inclusion. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: Older people are treated with respect and are included in all aspects of community and civic life.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Fraser Lake seniors responding to the survey reported very high levels of respect and inclusion through the 2019 assessment, and as a result, this age-friendly topic area was given lower priority relative to the other topic areas for the purposes of action planning by the Age-Friendly Task Force. Close to 90% of both groups agreed that seniors are generally treated with respect, and are welcome and included in Fraser Lake; over 60% of both groups totally agreed with the statements.

For more information, see the 2019 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

WHO essential features of age-friendly cities/communities

- Older people are regularly consulted by public, voluntary and commercial services on how to serve them better.
- Services and products to suit varying needs and preferences are provided by public and commercial services.
- Older people are visible in the media, and are depicted positively and without stereotyping.
- Community-wide settings, activities and events attract all generations by accommodating age-specific needs and preferences.
- Service staff are courteous and helpful.
- Older people are specifically included in community activities for “families”.
- Schools provide opportunities to learn about ageing and older people, and involve older people in school activities.
- Older people are recognized by the community for their past as well as their present contributions.
- Older people who are less well-off have good access to public, voluntary and private services.



AGE-FRIENDLY ACTIONS

The actions below were recommended by the task force to make Fraser Lake more age-friendly. They consist of ‘first step’ and ‘next step’ actions that will be undertaken as resources permit and opportunities arise.

RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION	
Goal: Older people are treated with respect and are included in all aspects of community and civic life.	
First Step	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite neighbouring First Nations elders to attend Fraser Lake events and activities, and collaborate with them to integrate cultural opportunities into the events. <i>(Village)</i>
Next Step	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the Nadleh Whut’en First Nation and the Stellat’en First Nation to host an elders/seniors’ dinner with Community Bus transportation, and consider it becoming an annual event that rotates between the three communities. <i>(Village)</i>



CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Older people do not stop contributing to their communities on retirement. Many continue to provide unpaid and voluntary work for their families and communities. In some areas, economic circumstances force older people to take paid work long after they should have retired. An age-friendly community provides options for older people to continue to contribute to their communities, through paid employment or voluntary work if they so choose, and to be engaged in the political process. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: Opportunities for employment and volunteering cater to older generational interests and abilities.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

As with most communities, especially smaller ones, there is no shortage of volunteer opportunities in Fraser Lake, but burnout amongst the very active volunteers is a challenge. Both the under 60 and over 60 groups responding to the survey (conducted through the assessment phase of the project) responded very favourably when asked about volunteer opportunities in Fraser Lake. The majority (60-70%) of the over 60 group didn't know about age-friendly employment opportunities, suggesting that they haven't needed to access employment in their senior years. For more information, see the 2019 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

WHO essential features of age-friendly cities/communities

- A range of flexible options for older volunteers is available, with training, recognition, guidance and compensation for personal costs.
- The qualities of older employees are well promoted.
- A range of flexible and appropriately paid opportunities for older people to work is promoted.
- Discrimination on the basis of age alone is forbidden in the hiring, retention, promotion and training of employees.
- Workplaces are adapted to meet the needs of disabled people.
- Self-employment options for older people are promoted and supported.
- Training in post-retirement options is provided for older workers.
- Decision-making bodies in public, private and voluntary sectors encourage and facilitate membership of older people.



AGE-FRIENDLY ACTIONS

The actions below were recommended by the task force to make Fraser Lake more age-friendly. They consist of ‘first step’ and ‘next step’ actions that will be undertaken as resources permit and opportunities arise.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT	
Goal: Opportunities for employment and volunteering cater to older generational interests and abilities.	
First Step	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the Village Recreation Coordinator position’s responsibility for seniors to include coordination of a number of actions identified in this action plan. (Village)
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage seniors regularly (at least every two years) to identify needs and prioritize changes or additions to services, activities, communications, etc. (Village) Convene Fraser Lake organizations that provide services/programs for seniors’ (at least every two years) to review input from seniors, coordinate existing initiatives and identify ‘next step’ actions to meet emerging needs. (Village)



COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

Staying connected with events and people and getting timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing. Rapidly evolving information and communication technologies are both welcomed as useful tools and criticized as instruments of social exclusion. Regardless of the variety of communication choices and the volume of information available, it is essential to have relevant information that is readily accessible to older people with varying capacities and resources. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: The community has accessible and available age-friendly information and communications.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Underpinning all of the other WHO topics in the previous sections is the need for complete, consistent and ongoing communication tailored to seniors to ensure they have and can access the information they need, when they need it. The clear majority of the over 60 group were very satisfied and satisfied with community information; however, the task force recognized the need for more coordination, consistency and one place for all information related to seniors.

WHO essential features of age-friendly cities/communities

- A basic, effective communication system reaches community residents of all ages.
- Regular and widespread distribution of information is assured and a coordinated, centralized access is provided.
- Regular information and broadcasts of interest to older people are offered.
- Oral communication accessible to older people is promoted.
- People at risk of social isolation get one-to-one information from trusted individuals.
- Printed information – including official forms, television captions and text on visual displays – has large lettering and the main ideas are shown by clear headings and bold-face type.
- Public and commercial services provide friendly, person-to-person service on request.
- Print and spoken communication uses simple, familiar words in short, straightforward sentences.
- Telephone answering services give instructions slowly and clearly and tell callers how to repeat the message at any time.
- Electronic equipment, such as mobile telephones, radios, televisions, and bank and ticket machines, has large buttons and big lettering.
- There is wide public access to computers and the Internet, at no or minimal charge, in public places such as government offices, community centres and libraries.



AGE-FRIENDLY ACTIONS

The actions below were recommended by the task force to make Fraser Lake more age-friendly. They consist of ‘first step’ and ‘next step’ actions that will be undertaken as resources permit and opportunities arise.

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION	
Goal: Fraser Lake has accessible and available age-friendly information and communications.	
First Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and annually update one comprehensive central directory of seniors’ services, including those offered within and beyond Fraser Lake that might be needed. (Committee led by Village and including other service providers) • Update, promote and release one monthly calendar of community-wide and seniors-specific events and programs. (Village produces online version; Autumn Services distributes a printed version in the Phraser Connector) • Create a section in the Phraser Connector that provides important seniors-related information, focusing on one topic monthly and revisiting the set of topics on an ongoing basis. (Autumn Services)
Next Step	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer Internet and computer training to enable seniors to communicate and gather information using online platforms (e.g. search engines, social media, apps, etc.). (Village Library and/or Learning Centre)



IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing this action plan will require commitment and contributions by many community members and partners. This section outlines some of the key approaches to ensuring the plan is implemented and updated in the coming years. In addition to the primary objective of making Fraser Lake more age-friendly, implementing actions within this plan will also result in Fraser Lake being officially recognized as an Age-Friendly British Columbia Community.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ANNUAL BUDGETING

The actions identified in this plan should be reviewed and considered as part of Village strategic planning and annual budgeting process, integrating the actions and other age-friendly needs into ongoing operations and new initiatives as possible.

ONGOING ACTION PLANNING

Annual or bi-annual action planning will ensure that the Age-Friendly Action Plan continues to be implemented and create on-the-ground action and results. Those involved in action planning should review the results of past actions, evaluate

the most recent performance data (see monitoring section below), strategically assess local and regional opportunities, and then present a recommended set of actions for the following years.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

Convening the various senior service providers has the potential to create lasting partnerships and achieve more progress than could otherwise be achieved by everyone working in isolation. The organizations and institutions providing services (of all kinds) to seniors should meet on a more regular basis (at least every two years) to look for synergies and partnership opportunities. Partners should include provincial government agencies, the Village of Fraser Lake and other municipalities, regional and community organizations, and senior citizens.

At the very least, these groups should be engaged in reviewing past actions and then planning the next set of actions every two years or so. Beyond action planning, age-friendly partners can accept actions for implementation, align their decisions and activities with the Age-Friendly Action Plan, help to raise awareness about age-friendly issues, and



engage others in creating a more age-friendly community and region.

MONITORING PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE

Monitoring progress and performance is essential to provide transparency, inform decision-making, and enable continuous improvement. Monitoring Fraser Lake's age-friendliness could include indicators such as the following gathered through surveys with Fraser Lake seniors:

- Satisfaction with overall age-friendliness.
- Perception of respect and inclusion.
- Satisfaction with access to health services.
- Satisfaction with transportation services.

The age-friendly survey used to create this plan captures the indicators above (and more), so the questions are available and baseline data now exists to compare to future survey results.

Communicating results will build excitement and support for the overall process, and should ideally be done on a regular basis and to support future action planning. Reporting in the same format and using the same metrics year after year will allow for trend spotting and systematic updating.

Benchmarking performance to other communities and to best cases around the world can also help to gauge performance and determine areas where opportunities for accelerated improvement might exist.



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