



Investing in community: age-friendly approaches to creating a vibrant Summerland

Project Update
May 2020

What we did ...

The District of Summerland surveyed the community in October 2019 as part of the Summerland age-friendly assessment and action planning project (phase 1). **Over 60%** of people who answered the survey agreed ...

*“Summerland is an age-friendly
community”*

We were happy to hear this, but there is always room for improvement! Survey respondents gave us some good ideas about where to get started ...



The 8 key features of an age-friendly community



Outdoor spaces and public buildings are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.



Public **transportation** is accessible and affordable.



Housing is affordable, appropriately located, well built, well designed/accessible and secure.



Opportunities exist for **social participation** in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities with people of all ages and cultures.



Older people are treated with respect and are **included in civic life**.



Opportunities for **employment and volunteerism** cater to older persons' interests and abilities.



Age-friendly **communication and information** is available.



Community **support and health services** are tailored to older persons' needs.

Adapted from: [*Becoming an Age-friendly Community: Local Government Guide*](#), BC Ministry of Health, updated 2014.

**An age-friendly community is accessible, inclusive
and equitable ... for everyone!**

What we found ...

Transportation options locally and regionally, were generally described as poor in quality, affordability and accessibility. The need for street design that supports active transportation (walking, bikes, strollers, power chairs) was also noted.

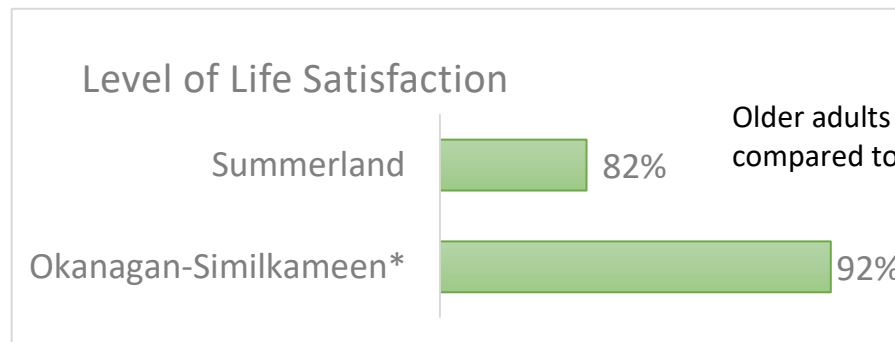
Public spaces and buildings need attention. Survey respondents appreciated the friendly, compact and accessible downtown area of Summerland for shopping and socializing. But sidewalks and curbs need better accessibility, and businesses need power assist doors and ramps. The lack of public washrooms was also identified as a problem for older adults, young families and people with mobility challenges.



Housing was reported as meeting the needs of most survey respondents. However, more availability of affordable and accessible rental housing was indicated. Older adults reported needing more help transitioning to supportive housing and care facilities.

Information and communication were generally rated as high, with most respondents saying they have the information they need about events and social opportunities. However, many people said there needs to be more support for using computers and accessing the Internet.

Supports and services such as access to food programs (e.g. Meals on Wheels, Food Bank), driving supports (e.g. NeighbourLink) and recreation programs were rated highly by survey respondents. General health and social service supports were rated as low by survey respondents most familiar with them. Many people also noted a lack of learning programs oriented to older adults.



Older adults in **Summerland** reported lower levels of life satisfaction compared to those in the wider Okanagan-Similkameen region.

*Okanagan-Similkameen data from Statistics Canada, 2016.



Everyone has a role to play to improve Summerland's age-friendliness ...

Citizens, organizations, businesses and local governments have an opportunity to implement any number of collaborative leadership projects, from small to large, by working in ***five key action areas*** ...

5. Local & Regional Government

Priorities like improved data collection for evaluation, and ensuring a regional approach to transportation and affordable housing.

4. Business Leadership

Actions like implementing an [age-friendly business checklist](#) and support a staff training program.

1. Accessible Environments

Projects like a [walkability assessment](#) of specific neighbourhoods, promotion of [accessible-home renovation grants](#), or setting up a volunteer-based [Cycling Without Age](#) program.

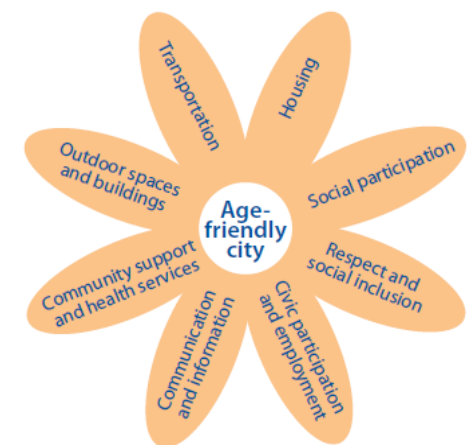


2. Health for All

Initiatives like supporting the local [PRIME first responder project](#), develop a [dementia-friendly community plan](#), or advocate for an [active transportation plan](#).

2. Intergenerational Citizenship & Learning

Activities like setting up a [Men's Shed](#) or a "borrow a senior" program at the library.



World Health Organization, 2007.

Next steps ...

Develop planning supports ...

... including an age-friendly stakeholder working group and tools to map age-friendly priorities against current community plans and upcoming planning processes.

Engage the community ...

... by hosting focus groups with older adult populations under-represented in the assessment survey and creating a community cafe event with citizens and representatives from stakeholder organizations.

Draft a community action plan ...

... that includes an evaluation framework and build commitment through a community event to share the plan.

The District of Summerland has applied for funding to develop an implementation plan as **Phase 2** of the Age-Friendly Summerland Project.

Links to Made-in-BC Resources

- [Seniors BC](#)
- [BC Healthy Communities](#)
- [UBCM Age-friendly communities](#)

For more information please contact:

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And a special thank you to everyone who participated in the Advisory Group, answered the survey and attended focus groups.

Survey implementation in brief

- Survey was available October 1-15, 2019. Formats included electronic or paper, with boxes in the community to collect completed forms.
- Promoted in the monthly Summerland Newsletter, posters at the Library, grocery stores and community bulletin boards, and through local organizations, clubs and associations.
- 224 completed responses were received, representing 4% of those aged 65 and older.
- Low response rate from men, younger families, those with low-income and minority groups.