

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE



2015

Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge

Seniors Engaged, Energized, and Collaborative:
Community Dialogue and Action Planning

Acknowledgments

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Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows

Municipal Advisory Committee on Accessibility Issues

The Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows Municipal Advisory Committee on Accessibility Issues (MACAI) advises Council on civic matters which affect people with disabilities. MACAI strives to remove the social, physical and psychological barriers that prevent people from fully participating in all aspects of community life. The committee's focus is to create equal access in the areas of employment, education, housing, transportation and recreation. Projects include sensitivity training for City staff and residents, to create a greater awareness regarding accessibility issues, public facility design consultations and an annual award program.

Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Katzie, Seniors Network

The Seniors Network is a seniors' community planning table that formed in 2008. The Seniors Network promotes and supports working in collaboration with community members in order to improve the health and well-being of seniors in Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows and the Katzie First Nation. The primary goal of the Seniors Network is to strengthen the availability and quality of services, programs and resources for seniors and to develop a seamless approach to seniors' service delivery. The Table was funded, along with tables in eight other communities, by the United Way of the Lower Mainland from 2008 to mid-2015.



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Age-friendly Communities Initiative

PITT MEADOWS AND MAPLE RIDGE

What is an Age-friendly City?

An age-friendly community is one where older adults can enjoy good health, support and feel a sense of security as they engage and participate in the community. In practice, an age-friendly city works to ensure its structures and services are accessible and inclusive for older people with varying needs and capacities.

In 2004, the Union of BC Municipalities launched the Seniors' Housing and Support Initiative (SHSI) to assist local governments to prepare for an aging population. In 2007, the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport provided resources to further support the initiative and local age-friendly projects.

Age-friendly planning in British Columbia is based on guidelines established by the World Health Organization (WHO). In 2007, the WHO released *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide*, which identified eight aspects or 'dimensions', of community life that overlap and interact to directly affect older adults. This policy framework recognizes that older people face increasing challenges due to the sensory, physiological and other changes that age brings.

Key Features of an Age-friendly Community	
Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Outdoor spaces and public buildings are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.
Transportation	Public transportation is accessible and affordable
Housing	Housing is affordable, appropriately located, well built, well designed and secure.
Social Participation	Opportunities exist for social participation in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities with people of all ages and cultures.
Respect & Social Inclusion	Older people are treated with respect and are included in civic life.
Civic Participation and Employment	Opportunities for employment and volunteerism cater to older persons' interests and abilities.
Communication and Information	Age-friendly communication and information is available.
Community Support and Health Services	Community support and health services are tailored to older persons' needs.
Adapted from WHO, <i>Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide</i>	
* Emergency Preparedness	Emergency plans and procedures are in place to care for our older adults in the event on an emergency or natural disaster.

*Although not originally identified by the WHO, this feature was highlighted at the community level as being important to local age-friendly planning.

Building an Age-friendly City

The World Health Organization determined communities can encourage a good quality of life” in three ways:

Society – seniors are supported to age actively, enjoy good health, remain independent and stay involved in communities.

Economy – Businesses are better able to support older workers and benefit from support of older customers.

Physical environment – Buildings and streets are safe and barrier-free, with better access to local businesses and facilities. Cities have adequate green spaces.

Everyone benefits when we have safer streets and sidewalks, more inclusive and accessible facilities and services and significant contributions to our communities from seniors. Secure neighbourhoods are safe for children, youth, women and older adults. Families experience less worry and stress when their older relations have the services and supports they need. Older people are a resource for their families, communities and economies in supportive and enabling living environments. Ensuring cities are age-friendly is one of the most effective ways to respond to our aging demographic.

Building an Age-friendly Action Plan

The Age-friendly Communities Initiative is a collaboration between the City of Pitt Meadows, City of Maple Ridge, our local seniors planning table the Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows and Katzie, Seniors Network under the guidance of Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Parks and Leisure Services’, and the Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Municipal Advisory Committee on Accessibility Issues (MACAI).

This council endorsed initiative brought together residents, stakeholders and resource people to

Everyone benefits when we have safer streets and sidewalks, more inclusive and accessible facilities and services and significant contributions to our communities from seniors.

look at optimizing opportunities for health, participation, and security in order to enhance quality of life as our resident’s age.

This Age-friendly Assessment Report is a series of recommendations identified during the Age-friendly Communities Initiative in Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge in 2015.

Funding for the Age-friendly Communities Initiative was provided through the 2014 Seniors Housing and Support Initiative offered by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and the Healthy

Families of BC program. UBCM launched this initiative in 2004 to assist local governments with preparing for an aging population.

Background & Previous Projects

Age-friendly planning has been ongoing in Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge for many years through the work of the Municipal Advisory Committee on Accessibility Issues (MACAI) and the Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Katzie, Seniors Network. An initial Age-friendly Inventory Assessment and Seniors Community Forum were held in 2009. Over 200 residents participated in these events and the priorities identified have been incorporated into a variety of city and community work plans. To date the following initiatives have been accomplished:

- Sustained operation of the seniors planning table – Seniors Network
- Consultation evenings with ICBC, RCMP and Engineering Departments to improve community safety
- MACAI published Universal Design Guidelines for Outdoor Spaces
- Seniors Network published three editions of a Seniors Resource Guide
- Offered “Aging Gracefully” free education series at public libraries for three years
- Supported the creation of a senior mentorship program “Grand Buddies”
- Volunteer management program developed by RMSS
- Construction of the Intergenerational Garden (22527 121 Ave., Maple Ridge)
- Establishment of Seniors’ Housing, Transportation and Outreach Task Groups
- Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows became pilot community for Better at Home program (provincially funded home support services for seniors)
- Resource seminar held for building managers of seniors’ housing complexes
- Free Seniors Housing Advisor service offered
- Annual community promotion of BC Seniors Week celebration
- Recognition of contributions of senior volunteers

Community Engagement Process

The Age-friendly Advisory Committee, comprised of seniors, community agencies and organizations, community facilitators and staff, made it a priority to reach out to as many organizations, agencies, businesses, non-profit groups and segments of society as possible in just a few months.

Seniors from both cities played an active role in our age-friendly communities’ assessments, providing essential input into each city’s positive characteristics and barriers and suggesting priorities for change. Engaging seniors, their caregivers and service providers was important to ensure we focused on the actions that are most needed to ensure Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge are age-friendly communities.

Phase One: Community Consultation

The first phase of the Age-friendly project was a day long Community Consultation event held in June. Professional facilitators led the discussions around the eight key Age-friendly Cities topic areas and focused around the “lived” experience of older people – what seniors experience in their daily lives. The goal was to assess both communities’ strengths and weaknesses in promoting

active aging. Almost 100 residents from Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge attended. The participants were primarily English speaking, age 55 and older and of multiple diverse abilities.

Phase Two: Age-friendly Solutions Workshops

Age-friendly Solutions workshops were held in each community (Pitt Meadows – September 15, 2015 and Maple Ridge – October 1, 2015). The goal of these workshops was to review the opportunities and challenges specific to each community that were identified during the Community Consultations earlier in the year.

Participants included older adults, caregivers, community associations and local service providers representing agencies such as Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services, Fraser Health, and HandyDART etc.

Workshops were held on each of the eight key age-friendly topics and the groups collaborated to develop recommendations for change. There were between 50 and 60 participants in each workshop ranging in age, ability and professional expertise. The discussions were focused on generating recommendations for the Age-friendly Action Plan.

Surveys, Note Boards and Focus Groups

Efforts were made to gather feedback from as wide a cross section of the two communities as possible. To help achieve this, a survey was developed by the Age-friendly Advisory Committee. The survey was made available in print and on-line and was distributed to key locations (recreation centres, seniors' centres, community events, etc.) in the community. The number of survey returns was small (57 total) and not statistically significant. However, it did allow the committee to include an additional segment of the population in the community consultation process. The survey data is included in Appendix A of this report.

In addition to the surveys, Post-it Note Boards were displayed for several months at similar locations to capture quick comments from those who did not have time to complete a full survey.

To ensure as much representation as possible in data collection, three focus group discussions were added with First Nations Elders, private retirement home residents and residents of a low-income independent rental building.

Local Voices, Community Actions

Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge are quickly growing in population and evolving from rural communities to major urban centres. Fortunately, the communities have maintained much of their small town atmosphere. The cities are large enough to support many services and yet small enough that residents still know their neighbours and look after one another. Volunteer **transportation** services such as those offered by the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society and Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services ensure our older adults are able to get to medical appointments locally and around the lower mainland. Very few seniors rely on the Translink service to access other communities as it is inadequate to meet their needs.

Access to adequate **seniors' affordable rental housing** is an issue in Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge just as it is in many communities in British Columbia. At the time of writing, there were 15 homeless seniors on the streets of Maple Ridge and likely many more living at risk of losing their

housing. The cutting of federal subsidies for co-op housing developments is a major concern for local residents. Waitlists for existing accessible, affordable and appropriate seniors rental units are long, and in several cases, can take multiple years.

What is the role of the community and the City in supporting the **“vulnerable” seniors** in Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge? Population groups defined as vulnerable, in general, identify with some type of barrier to accessing a good quality of life. Dimensions of vulnerability could include but are not limited to:

- Economic insecurity
- Social isolation
- Inadequate, inaccessible and unaffordable housing
- Poor mental and physical health
- Inaccessible transportation and built environments
- Food insecurity
- Physical mobility limitations
- Marginalized identities and cultures
- Barriers to multi-lingual communication and lack of multi-lingual services

The United Way of the Lower Mainland Report (2007) “Towards and age-friendly community,” highlighted the lack of advocacy and information and referral services for seniors in Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge. In 2008, the community came together and the local seniors planning table – The Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Katzie, Seniors Network was formed. This table has been filling this information and advocacy gap since that time.



Recommendations

Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge

The following recommendations came out of the community consultation event and age-friendly solutions workshops and ongoing engagement with the local community. Thank you to everyone who participated in the process and shared their experiences, ideas and suggestions. The residents of Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge are a valuable resource and this work was made possible through their generous participation.

Our hope is that this **Age-friendly Assessment Report** and the subsequent **Age-friendly Action Plan** will be living documents that grow and flex to meet the changing needs of our communities. A lot of work has already been done in both Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge to ensure we meet the needs of our growing senior's population. The goal of this document is to celebrate that work, identify new priorities and keep looking for ways to improve.

Two important pieces of age-friendly work to note are the publication a report entitled, "Universal Design Guidelines for Outdoor Spaces: Plan and Design for Choice in January 2009 by the Municipal Advisory Committee on Accessibility Issues. This document has been an excellent reference for new development of community outdoor spaces and playgrounds. In 2014 both the City of Pitt Meadows and City of Maple Ridge published Housing Action Plans which also provide valuable recommendations and background for the development of new housing. Information on how to access these reports is available in the Reference section on pg. 39.



Age-friendly Solutions Workshop – Pitt Meadows
Photo by Ron Harris

Community Profiles

Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge

The Maple Ridge Local Health Area encompasses the Cities of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows and is also known as Ridge Meadows. Maple Ridge measures 266 km² and Pitt Meadows 86.5 km².

This area is experiencing unprecedented population growth. The total estimated population in Ridge Meadows in 2014 was 97,592, 14 percent of which or 13,663 of residents were age 65 and over.

Population 2011 Census:

Pitt Meadows- 17,736

Maple Ridge- 76,052

Total 93,788

In the next ten years it is anticipated the senior's population in Ridge Meadows will grow by 62 percent, (compared to 53% in the overall Fraser Health Region) adding an additional 8,494 seniors to the area. By 2027 it is projected one in five residents of Ridge Meadows will be over 65 and the older age groups (75+ and 85+) will make up around 8% and 2% of the community's total population, respectively*. (UW Moving Towards Age-Friendly Communities).

In 2014, according to the Fraser Health; My Health, My Community Report, over 93% of the population in the area reported English as their home language followed distantly by Korean (1%) and Punjabi (1%).

Census Canada reported in 2011 that 27% of seniors in Maple Ridge and 24% in Pitt Meadows lived alone. 13% of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows seniors were low-income (living below the Low-income Cut-Off line as defined by Statistics Canada).



Pitt Meadows

Features of Age-friendly Cities



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Does the natural and built environment help older persons get around easily and safely in the community and encourage active community participation?

Community Strengths

Residents of Pitt Meadows enjoy the well maintained green spaces, street boulevards and proximity to the dykes for walking and cycling. Older adults report feeling safe on the streets and appreciate the walkability of the community. Recent development has taken into account the walkability of the community.

Current Initiatives

The Municipal Advisory Committee on Accessibility Issues (MACAI) continues to consult on the development of new community buildings and outdoor spaces. This group also published, the ‘Plan and Design for Choices – Universal Design Guidelines for Outdoor Spaces’ which is an excellent resource.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Green Spaces and Walkways
Provide more opportunities for urban parks within town core area, including access to public washrooms
2. Outdoor Seating
Increase bench seating (with arm rests) along specific seniors’ walking routes within the core community area, including urban park areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoffman Park • Harris Road (between Lougheed Hwy and Civic Centre) • Others as identified
3. Roads Safety and Pedestrian Safety
Provide an opportunity for senior populations, city staff (engineering, parks, planning) and like organizations to walk the community looking specifically at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk safety (cracks, roots, vegetation growth) • Street crossing safety • Lighting • Sidewalk surfacing • Curb letdowns • Street parking impeding pedestrian crossing (visibility at crosswalks when cars parked on the street)
Look at feasibility of lowering speed limits within the core area of the city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower speed limit between Hoffman park and Civic Centre
Work with engineering to explore timing of automated crosswalk systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the duration of time allowed for crosswalks • Increase the volume of the automated systems
Work with ICBC, RCMP and local engineering department to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate public on crosswalk standards and the walk/hand signals

<p>Work with ICBC and RCMP to provide scooter safety education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maneuvering tips • Right of way
4. Cycle Paths
<p>Partner with the local chapter of HUB: Your Cycling Connection (formerly Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition) to promote age-friendly cycling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult trikes • Wheelchairs with hand cycle attachments • Develop and encourage more cycling specific routes with separation from high traffic areas
5. Public Toilets and Services
<p>Provide access to public washrooms within the core area and specifically after public building and business hours, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public events and festivals • Provide access to public drinking fountains and water sources within the core of the community, urban parks and open spaces
6. Weather Related Concerns
<p>Educate residents and business owners regarding the City snow removal bylaw and enforce violators.</p>
<p>Look at opportunities to partner with community agencies/ organizations to reinstate the Snow Angels program (neighbours helping neighbours):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local high schools • Faith organizations • Community service clubs
7. Directional Signage and Wayfinding
<p>Develop a signage and wayfinding policy for all City streets and buildings that is age-friendly and accessible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve visibility of wayfinding signage (font sizing) • Incorporate visual clues within signage (multi lingual and dementia friendly) • Develop consistency within signage and wayfinding
<p>Ensure that there is an adequate and up-to-date printed map available for the community, highlighting points of interest (shopping/ health services/ recreation/ parks etc.).</p>

Transportation

Can older persons travel wherever they want to go in the community, conveniently and safely?

Community Strengths

Residents benefit significantly from the volunteer driving services offered through the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society and Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services which provide transportation for seniors both locally and throughout the lower mainland respectively.

Current Initiatives:

The Seniors Network continues to advocate to Translink to improve local bus service. Issues of accessibility, affordability and safety are addressed. The Consumer Advocate for HandyDART regularly attends Seniors Network meetings and makes presentations in the community on changes to the service.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Input into regional transportation issues
Form a local, transportation advisory committee to represent the needs of Ridge Meadows residents to Translink and the provincial government.
2. Reliability and frequency
Advocate to Translink to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate and appropriate bus connections, specific to age- friendly travel destinations (medical appointments/ hospital visits etc.) • Service is reliable and frequent to meet the needs of age- friendly demands (after hours access to metropolitan areas for medical appointments) • Adequate weekend, and evening service • Mid-day and after hours West Coast Express train service
3. Specialized Services
Advocate to HandyDART to improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance booking system (one time appointments) • Reliable and adequate service for specialist appointments that fall within and outside regular scheduled time frames and service locations (Pitt Meadows/ Maple Ridge to Mission/ Abbotsford area) • Serve availability and decrease denial rate • Security of transfer points, specifically in rural areas
4. Transport Stops and Stations
Ensure all bus stops are accessible and provide shelter and seating.
5. Information
Advocate to Translink to ensure bus schedules are easily accessible either in print format or electronically and provide adequate details.
6. Taxis
Provide education and sensitivity training to local taxi companies pertaining to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting older adults • Accessibility and affordability of service • Safety

7. Parking

Review age-friendly parking design, specifically:

- Proximity to buildings
- Width of parking stalls

8. Ridership Education

Provide local ridership education, specific to age-friendly access to public transit:

- Scooter, wheelchair and walker access on public transit, Compass card (payment format), etc.



Housing

Do older persons have housing that is safe and affordable and which allows them to stay independent as their needs change?

Community Strengths

The Pitt Meadows Adaptable Housing Bylaw which incorporates SAFERhomes Standards into its policies and regulations is a definite advantage. All new multi-unit dwellings must include barrier free access and design and construction features that can be modified at minimal cost to suit the changing needs of people over time, therefore reducing the need for major renovations at a later time.

Current Initiatives:

The City of Pitt Meadows Housing Action Plan is a positive community initiative. The Seniors Network's Housing Task Group continues to research local seniors' housing issues, develop relationships and advocate for the development of new, affordable, rental accommodation.

Recommendations and Actions	
1. Accessibility	
Form a Seniors Housing Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent the needs of local seniors • Conduct a seniors housing needs assessment • Develop strategic partnerships to encourage the development of new, affordable rental accommodation for older adults
Affordability	
Advocate to the provincial government to increase the local stock of affordable rental housing for seniors (55+).	
Advocate to the provincial government to reinstate subsidies to cooperative housing organizations (this topic was discussed and voted on at the 2015 UBCM).	
Encourage the development of affordable rental housing by waiving development cost charges, applying inclusionary zoning and density bonuses and other methods.	
2. Community Integration	
Support the creation of a Seniors Outreach Worker position to assist vulnerable seniors with finding and maintain suitable housing.	
Support building managers of seniors residential complexes by connecting them to community supports and health care for the residents.	
Develop a program for peer relationship – seniors visiting seniors (isolation).	
Develop a seniors Neighbourhood Watch program.	
3. Living Environment	
Educate administration of housing complexes and rental units on the importance of developing a pet-friendly policy, allowing seniors to age in place with their pets.	
4. Housing Action Plan	
Implement all recommendations as outlined in the City endorsed Housing Action Plan as it relates to the seniors population.	

Respect & Social Inclusion

Are public services, media, commercial services, faith communities and civic society respectful of the diversity of needs among seniors and willing to accommodate seniors in all aspects of society?

Community Strengths

Pitt Meadows has a small but growing immigrant population. The cultural diversity of the City continues to expand and the newcomers are welcomed by the residents. The Katzie First Nation band actively participates in community celebrations and enriches the cultural diversity of the area.

Current Initiatives

The Compassionate Communities project initiated by Parks and Leisure Services last year has kept the idea of respect and social inclusion top of mind for residents. The Pitt Meadows Seniors Centre continues to increase its offerings and expand its efforts to bring new seniors to the Centre.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Intergenerational and Family Interactions
Create an intergenerational garden, partnering with a local elementary school and the local senior centre.
Provide opportunities for local seniors to engage with youth and children through intergenerational learning opportunities (taping into the knowledge of seniors and sharing experiences): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School reading buddies • School art buddies • Community festivals and events
Provide opportunities for the local seniors to engage with young mom's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community kitchens • Seniors helping young mom's (mentoring programs)
2. Public Education
Develop age-friendly, low or no cost learning opportunities with local post-secondary institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elder college
3. Economic Inclusion
Evaluate the annual \$25 per membership for Ridge Meadows Senior Society and look for ways to support individuals with low-income: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop low or no-cost social program opportunities

Social Participation

Do seniors have opportunities for developing and maintaining meaningful social networks in their neighbourhoods?

Are the needs and preferences of seniors considered in planning by a diverse range of agencies and institutions?

Community Strengths

During the community engagement process many older adults expressed appreciation for the quality and variety of activities and programs offered by the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society. The Pitt Meadows Seniors Centre is a valuable resource in the community.

Community Initiatives

Parks and Leisure Services and the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society conducted an Active Aging Symposium in 2014. The priorities identified in this initiative are being incorporated into the work plans of both organizations. The Seniors Network's Senior Outreach Task Group continues to look for opportunities to support low-income and isolated seniors.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Accessibility of Events and Activities
Educate event organizers on the importance of planning age-friendly events to ensure adequate and accessible washrooms, adequate and accessible event seating, transportation and walkways etc.
2. Affordability
Explore with the local Parks and Leisure Services opportunities to ensure affordable recreational activities for seniors with lower income.
3. Leisure and Recreation
Evaluate public programming to identify any service gaps and ensure the leisure and recreation needs of all seniors (and more specifically the newly retired seniors 55+ and vulnerable seniors) are being met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical, social, mental and emotional wellbeing • Outreach to senior populations • Senior specific programming • Senior specific inclusion marketing
Look for opportunities to educate parks and leisure staff on the importance for planning, programming, implementing for and working with the seniors' population.
4. Business Opportunity
Work with a local businesses to establish and operate a 'cat' café (cats roam inside café with customers).

Communication & Information

Are seniors aware of the diverse range of programs and services available within their community?

Is information readily available, appropriately designed and delivered to meet the needs of seniors?

Community Strengths

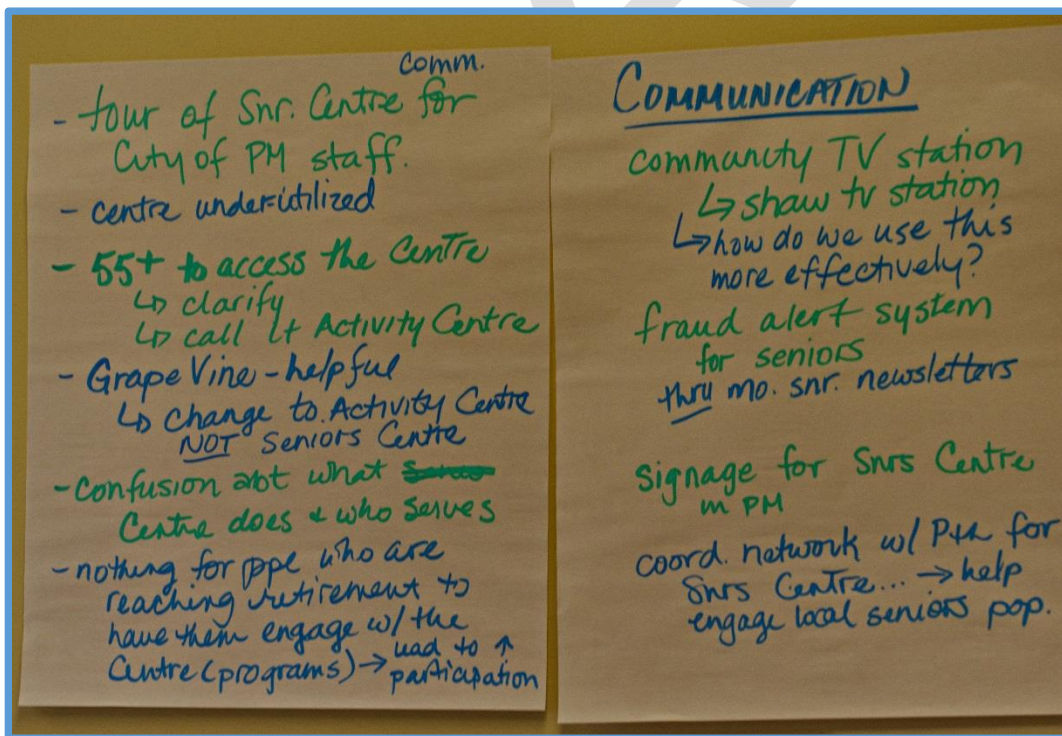
The seniors' community is well supported by its two weekly newspapers and monthly magazine. All three publications provide a considerable amount of advertising and editorial space to seniors' issues and events. The City's website is also tremendous sources of information. Council meetings are live streamed and televised.

Current Initiatives

The Ridge Meadows Seniors Society is continually improving its print newsletter and website. The Seniors Network coordinates the "Seniors Datebook" in "As We Age" section of the Maple Ridge News. This is a new monthly supplement to the paper that has been well supported by advertisers.

Recommendations and Actions	
1. Information offer	
Ensure communication is distributed via multiple media:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print material • Internet/ electronic material • Distribution centres • Information distribution systems to reach isolated populations • Phone tree 	
2. Oral Communication	
Explore opportunities to offer a local resource and referral information line (live and/or answering service with call back):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local government agencies and services • Local housing • Local social and special events information 	
3. Printed Information	
Review the information included within the 'GrapeVine' senior specific publication (RMSS newsletter):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of plain language • Ease of information access • Relevance of information • Number of yearly publications 	
Improve distribution of print material and promotion of:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals on Wheels • Library program (home delivery) • Information sheets/resources available at high visited locations (Doctor Offices/ pharmacists etc.) 	
Explore opportunities to ensure that all relevant age-friendly information is available in print	

format: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger font size • Contrasting colour schemes
4. Plain Language
Work with communication media to educate regarding simplicity of language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using simple and plain language • Use of pictures and symbols
5. Automated Communication and Equipment
Evaluate the need for FM equipped public meetings rooms to ensure individuals with hearing devices can actively participate in discussions.
6. Computers and the Internet
Advocate for City websites being user friendly and accessible to all abilities.
7. Asset Mapping
Develop a mapping system that will highlight all services/opportunities within the community (including but not limited to the following): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places of worship • Health service providers • Shopping centres/grocery stores • Parks and recreational opportunities • Senior centres



Civic Participation & Employment

Do older persons have opportunities to participate in community decision making?

Do older persons have opportunities to contribute their experience and skills to the community in paid or unpaid work?

Community Strength

The City of Pitt Meadows provides opportunities for residents to participate on Advisory Committees to Council. The growing retail sector in the City is able to offer part-time employment opportunities to older adults in the community.

Current Initiatives

The City of Pitt Meadows is continually expanding the information available on its website. Community Business Plans, Newsletters, Reports and more are available for residents to review.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Volunteering Options
Local government to advocate for the provision of financial incentives to volunteer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax receipts • Cash savers for transportation costs (fuel reimbursement/ taxi savers/ bus fare etc.)
Promote volunteer roles that will fit the needs of the isolated and/or not socially engaged older adults within the community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers with cognitive impairments • Vulnerable seniors
Look to service providers/agencies to host an employment and volunteer fair specific to the seniors' population
2. Employment Options
Collaborate with WORK BC to offer employment information sessions targeting those 55+.
Promote the creation of age appropriate employment opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior drivers • Senior shoppers and greeters • Teachers, mentors, business consultants, etc.

Community Support & Health Service

Do older persons have access to social and health services they need to stay healthy and independent?

Community Strengths

Although separate Cities, Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge seamlessly share many of the health resources between both communities. The Community Network is a tremendous strength and helps to ensure service providers work together to meet the needs of both communities.

Current Initiatives

The Ridge Meadows Division of Family Practice is actively engaged in their “GP For Me” project to bring additional new doctors to Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge. So far it has been very successful. The Seniors Network continues to advocate for the expansion of health services (clinics, etc.) offered in Pitt Meadows.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Service Accessibility
See Transportation – ensure adequate availability of transportation to specialist appointments within and outside of the community.
Build a seniors clinic with multiple services available in one location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MD • Pharmacists • Home care • Social work • Physiotherapy • Occupational therapy • Mental health (information and assessments) • Day programs • Dental services
Reduce parking fees for seniors and/or all users of the service.
2. Offer of Services
Provide more respite services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in adult day programming options • Increase in respite hours available to older adults who continue to live independently (aging in place)
Find funding to support a ‘Dementia-friendly Communities Project’
Hire a ‘Seniors Outreach Worker’ to assist seniors with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System navigation • Hospital discharge planning and follow-through
3. Dental Options
Advocate for and explore opportunities to provide low cost dental services for seniors locally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinstate Community Dental Day – free cleaning and check-ups for low-income residents

Emergency Preparedness

In the event of an emergency or natural disaster are adequate plans and procedures in place to care for our older adults? – (This category was developed by the local Age-friendly Advisory Committee)

Community Strengths:

The communities of Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge has invested much time and resources in preparing both the communities and residents in the event of a community emergency. Ongoing education and resources are offered and available to residents.

Current Initiatives:

The Seniors Network has applied for funding through New Horizons for seniors to create an Emergency Preparedness book for seniors. Funding approval is pending.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Community Emergency Preparedness
<p>Create an age-friendly emergency preparedness protocol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping vulnerable seniors place of residency • Evacuation procedures/protocol • Sheltering seniors • Senior specific medical needs and access to medications in case of an emergency
2. Senior Specific Emergency Preparedness
<p>Offer education to seniors regarding importance of emergency preparedness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of fire hall regarding physical evacuation needs • 72 hours self-efficient preparedness • How to Communicate in a mass emergency • Education regarding earth quake and fire preparedness • Pet preparedness



IN AN AGE-FRIENDLY BRITISH COLUMBIA, OLDER PEOPLE ARE SUPPORTED TO LIVE ACTIVE, SOCIALLY ENGAGED, INDEPENDENT LIVES. OUR VISION IS OF A PROVINCE WHERE PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES FEEL INCLUDED AND VALUED IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

Maple Ridge

Features of Age-friendly Cities



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Does the natural and built environment help older persons get around easily and safely in the community and encourage active community participation?

Community Strengths

Age-friendly Initiative participants expressed appreciation of the parks and green spaces in Maple Ridge. The work by the City to improve traffic and pedestrian safety along 224th street in the past few years was also acknowledged. The construction and operation of the Intergenerational Garden in the downtown core has been a successful addition to the neighbourhood.

Current Initiatives

The Municipal Advisory Committee on Accessibility issues has been surveying residents to get detailed feedback about the accessibility of both cities. Increased security patrols in the downtown core of Maple Ridge have improved residents feelings of safety.

Recommendations and Actions	
1. Green Spaces and Walkways	
Provide more opportunities for Urban parks within core town areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to public washrooms • Off leash dog area [small dogs within the core town area; close to high density age-friendly living areas] • Age-Friendly, accessible urban walking routes with accessible surfacing (wheelchair/walkers/scooters etc.) • Adequate green spaces and walkway overhead lighting 	
Improve the access (walkability) to waterfront area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surfacing • Gradient • Lighting • Safety 	
Work with Ridge Meadows Seniors Society and Parks and Leisure Services to develop, implement and evaluate park-based programming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking groups • Park exercise groups 	
2. Outdoor Seating	
Increase bench seating (with arm rests) along specific seniors' walking routes within the core community area, including urban park areas and downtown core areas.	
3. Roads Safety and Pedestrian Safety	
Provide an opportunity for senior populations, city staff (engineering, parks, planning) and like organizations to walk the community (walkability study) looking specifically at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk safety (roots and vegetation growth) • Street crossing safety • Lighting • Sidewalk surfacing and cracks • Curb letdowns • Street parking impeding pedestrian crossing (visibility at crosswalks when cars parked) 	

on the street)
Look at feasibility of lowering speed limit within the core area of the city <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower speed limits along 224th street • Lower speed limits along 222nd street
Identify and enforce specific truck routes within the down town core area.
Work with engineering to evaluate local automated crosswalk systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the duration of time allowed for crosswalks • Increase the volume of the automated systems
Educate the public on crosswalk safety and the walk/hand signals
Provide scooter safety education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maneuvering tips • Right of way
4. Traffic
Provide driver education and enforcement of right of way on right hand turns when pedestrians are in the cross walks.
5. Cycle Paths
Partner with the local cycling HUB: Your Cycling Connection (formerly Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition) to promote age-friendly cycling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult trikes • Wheelchairs with hand cycle attachments
Develop more cycling specific routes with separation from high traffic areas.
6. Safety
Please see 'Walkability Study' (#3) to include an assessment on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown core safety • Downtown core lighting • Vegetation overgrowth
7. Buildings
Develop/distribute accessibility materials for local businesses highlighting the importance of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible front door access • Accessible products and services (shelving, width of isles etc.) and washrooms
8. Public Toilets and Services
Provide access to public washrooms within the downtown core area and specifically after public building and business hours, including public events and festivals.
Provide access to public drinking fountains and water sources within the core of the community, urban parks and open spaces.
9. Weather Related Concerns
Educate residents and business owners regarding the City snow removal bylaw and enforce regulations.
Partner with community agencies/organizations to reinstate the Snow Angels program (neighbours helping neighbours): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local high schools • Faith organizations • Community service clubs
10. Directional Signage and Wayfinding

Develop a signage and wayfinding policy for all City streets and buildings that is age-friendly and accessible:

- Improve visibility of wayfinding signage (font sizing)
- Incorporate visual clues within signage (multi-lingual and dementia-friendly)
- Develop consistency within signage and wayfinding

Ensure there is an adequate and up to date printed map available for the community, highlighting points of interest (shopping/ health services/ recreation/ parks etc.).



Transportation

Can older persons travel wherever they want to go in the community, conveniently and safely?

Community Strengths

Residents benefit significantly from the volunteer driving services offered through the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society and Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services which provide transportation both locally and throughout the lower mainland respectively.

Current Initiatives

The Seniors Network continues to advocate to Translink for the improvement of local bus transportation. The Consumer Advocate for HandyDART regularly attends the Network's meetings and offers information sessions in the community. RMSS is working to expand the number of users of its volunteer transportation service.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Provide input into regional transit issues
Form a local, transportation advisory committee to represent the needs of Ridge Meadows residents to Translink and the provincial government.
Reliability and frequency
Advocate to Translink to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate and appropriate bus connections, specific to age-friendly travel destinations (medical appointments/ hospital visits etc.); • Service is reliable and frequent to meet the needs of age- friendly demands (afterhours access to metropolitan areas for medical appointments) • Adequate weekend and evening service
3. Specialized Services
Advocate to HandyDART to improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance booking system (one time appointments) • Providing reliable and adequate service for specialist appointments that fall within and outside regular scheduled time frames and service locations (Pitt Meadows/ Maple Ridge to Mission/ Abbotsford area) • Decrease denial rate • Security of transfer points, specifically in rural areas.
4. Transport Stops and Stations
Ensure all bus stops are accessible and provide shelter and adequate seating and washrooms.
5. Information
Advocate to Translink to ensure bus schedules are easily accessible either in print format or electronically and provides adequate details.
6. Taxis
Offer education and sensitivity training to local taxi companies pertaining to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting older adults • Accessibility and affordability of services • Safety
7. Parking
Review accessible parking design with city engineering, specifically:

- Proximity to buildings
- Width of parking stalls
- Time limits

Create more:

- Drop off zones in front of public buildings
- Drop off zones in front of medical (service agency) buildings
- Free long term downtown parking

Establish an inventory of:

- current accessible parking within the core town
- need for additional accessible parking

8. Ridership Education

Provide local ridership education, specific to age-friendly access to public transit:

- Scooter, wheelchair and walker access on public transit, Compass card (payment format), etc.



Age-friendly Solutions Workshop – Maple Ridge
Photo by Heather Treleaven

Housing

Do older persons have housing that is safe and affordable and which allows them to stay independent as their needs change?

Community Strengths

Residents benefit from the location of many health and social services in the downtown core. Three non-profit housing societies operate affordable, seniors' rental accommodation (Baptist Housing, Affordable Housing Society, Royal Canadian Legion). A significant amount of new, multi-unit housing stock is being built in the downtown core which provides the opportunity for the addition of some subsidized units.

Current Initiatives

The Seniors Housing Task Group of the Seniors Network has held several community events to raise awareness about the need for new affordable senior's rental housing. The group continues to build relationships and research how to move forward with this initiative. The Maple Ridge Housing Action Plan includes some positive recommendations that will also hopefully help to improve the amount of affordable, seniors, rental housing.

Recommendations and Actions	
1. Affordability	
Advocate to the provincial government to increase the local stock of affordable, rental housing for the seniors' population.	
Advocate to the provincial government to increase the 'SAFER' subsidy available through BC Housing for the senior population with lower income.	
Advocate to the provincial government to re instate coop subsidies (this topic was discussed and voted on at the 2015 UBCM).	
2. Accessibility	
Form a Seniors Housing Coalition	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • represent the needs of local seniors • conduct a needs assessment • develop strategic partnerships to encourage the development of new, affordable, rental accommodation for older adults 	
3. Design	
Develop and endorse a bylaw specific to accessible housing in new multi-level building applications. Include a higher standard of the basic building code to ensure that accessibility modifications are implemented and easily achieved.	
Work with City government (planning department) to ensure that rental and affordable units are adequate in size.	
4. Community Integration	
Develop a program for peer relationship – seniors visiting seniors (to combat isolation and improve security)	
In partnership with Ridge Meadows Seniors Society and RCMP, develop a senior Neighbourhood Watch program.	
5. Living Environment	
Educate building managers of seniors' housing complexes and rental units, on the importance of developing a pet-friendly policy allowing seniors to age in place with pets.	

6. Housing Action Plan

Implement all recommendations as outlined in the City endorsed Housing Action Plan as it relates to the seniors' population.

7. Building Incentives

Encourage the development of affordable housing by waiving development cost charges, applying inclusionary zoning and density bonuses and other methods.

8. Housing Referral

Develop a seniors housing referral service is to:

- Keep an up-to-date database of all affordable and accessible housing available within the community,
- Assist and advocate for seniors who are needing support in locating and accessing affordable housing (filing of appropriate documents and applications etc.)



*Age-friendly Solutions Workshop – Maple Ridge
Photos by Heather Treleven*

Respect & Social Inclusion

Are public services, media, commercial services, faith communities and civic society respectful of the diversity of needs among seniors and willing to accommodate seniors in all aspects of society?

Community Strengths

Several age-friendly initiative participants expressed appreciation for the residents of the area, noting that overall people are courteous, helpful and kind. Particular mention was made of the youth population and how respectful and helpful they can be toward seniors.

Current Initiatives

Homeless Action Week activities provide an opportunity to raise awareness of the needs and compassion for the local homeless population. Awareness of the annual Seniors Week celebration continues to grow as does the number of groups who offer events and programming during the week.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Respectful and Inclusive Services
Create an age-friendly business recognition award and age-friendly business accreditation process.
Develop a business related sensitivity training program specific to supporting and serving older adults.
2. Intergenerational and Family Interactions
Engage seniors with a variety of local youth and children through intergenerational learning opportunities (tapping into the knowledge of seniors and sharing experiences): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School reading buddies • School art buddies • Community festivals and events
Create opportunities for the local seniors to engage with young mom's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community kitchens • Seniors helping young mom's (mentoring programs)
3. Public Education
Work with local post-secondary and continuing education facilities to develop age-friendly learning opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free or low cost
4. Economic Inclusion
Promote the availability of subsidized recreation fees for low-income seniors.

Social Participation

Do seniors have opportunities for developing and maintaining meaningful social networks in their neighbourhoods?

Are the needs and preferences of seniors considered in planning by a diverse range of agencies and institutions?

Community Strengths

During the community engagement process many older adults expressed appreciation for the quality and variety of activities and programs offered by the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society. Although the membership fees are quite low, some still find the cost to participate in programming at the Seniors Centre and Family Leisure Centre prohibitive.

Current Initiatives

The Community Dinner offered by Golden Ears United Church and Community Kitchens operated by Golden Ears FEAST provide an opportunity for isolated, older adults to connect with community. The Grand Buddies program at Eric Langton Elementary school is growing and connecting more at-risk students with senior mentors (Grand Buddies).

Recommendations and Actions
1. Accessibility of Events and Activities
Educate event organizers on the importance of planning age- friendly events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate and accessible washroom facilities, event seating and accessible transportation and walkways etc.
2. Affordability
Work in partnership with the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society and Parks and Leisure Services, exploring and planning social opportunities for seniors with lower income.
Offer affordable recreational activities for low-income seniors.
3. Leisure and Recreation
Connect RMSS and Parks and Leisure Services to ensure the leisure and recreation needs of all seniors (and more specifically the newly retired seniors 55+) are being met (evening and weekend programming): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical, social, mental, emotional wellbeing • Outreach to senior populations • Senior specific programming • Senior specific inclusion marketing
Educate parks and leisure staff on the importance for planning, programming, implementing and working with the seniors' population.

Communication & Information

Are seniors aware of the diverse range of programs and services available within their community?

Is information readily available, appropriately designed and delivered to meet the needs of seniors?

Community Strengths

Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows benefit from two community-minded newspapers and a monthly magazine all of which generously support seniors' service organizations. The City of Maple Ridge operates an electronic reader board with event information. Council meetings are live streamed and televised and social media employed to share information.

Current Initiatives

RMSS continues to improve its print and online publications and information resources. The Seniors Network is preparing to print the fourth edition of its Seniors Resource Guide which helps connect seniors to community programs and resources.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Oral Communication Offer a local resource and referral information line (live and/or answering service): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local government agencies and services • Local housing • Local social and special events information
2. Printed Information Review and evaluate distribution of print material: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals on Wheels • Library program (home delivery) • Kiosk information (events, programs, services) • Information sheets/resources available at frequently visited locations (Doctor Offices/ pharmacists etc.)
3. Automated Communication and Equipment Evaluate the need for FM equipped public meetings rooms to provide individuals with hearing devices the ability to actively participate in discussions.
4. Computers and the Internet Advocate for City websites to be user-friendly and accessible to people of all abilities.
5. Asset Mapping Develop a mapping system that will highlight all age-friendly services/opportunities within the community (including but not limited to the following): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places of worship • Health Service providers • Shopping centres/grocery stores • Parks and recreational opportunities • Senior Centres

Civic Participation & Employment

Do older persons have opportunities to participate in community decision making?

Do older persons have opportunities to contribute their experience and skills to the community in paid or unpaid work?

Community Strengths

The City of Maple Ridge invites community engagement through its Municipal Advisory Committees. The broadcast of Council meetings and availability of information through social media was acknowledged. The proportion of residents, particularly older adults, who support their community through volunteer activities is very high.

Current Initiatives

Through the Age-friendly communities initiative connections between Work BC and the seniors' population were improved and will lead to future information sessions and the promotion of the availability of older adult workers to employers. RMSS and Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services continue to try and recruit younger senior volunteers to assist with their programs.

Recommendations and Actions

1. Volunteering Options

Host a volunteer fair specific to the senior population wishing to volunteer.

2. Employment Options

Develop and promote employment opportunities for older adults.

3. Civic Participation

Create a Seniors Advisory Committee that reports directly to the local government on senior-related city, provincial and federal issues.



Community Support & Health Services

Do older persons have access to social and health services they need to stay healthy and independent?

Community Strengths

The Ridge Meadows Division of Family Practice has been very successful at recruiting new GPs (doctors) to open practices in the area. The majority of survey participants (90% in Pitt Meadows and 97% in Maple Ridge) have a family doctor. Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services operates the Better at Home program which provides home support services for seniors on a sliding scale based on income. It is possible for very low-income seniors to receive services under this program. The Golden Seniors Wellness Clinic operated by RMSS at the Maple Ridge Seniors Centre is a tremendous asset.

Current Initiatives

The Seniors Network is advocating for the creation of a seniors clinic in Ridge Meadows similar to those offered by Fraser Health in Abbotsford and Surrey. It would be a one-stop clinic that offered GP offices as well as a pharmacy, social workers, connection to community programs, etc. The need for a dedicated Seniors Outreach Worker has been identified and the Seniors Network is coordinating efforts to establish funding for the position.

Recommendations and Actions
1. Service Accessibility
See Transportation – ensure adequate availability of transportation to specialist appointments within and outside of the community.
Build an open seniors clinic with multiple services available in one location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MD • Pharmacists • Home care • Social work • Physiotherapy • Occupational therapy • Mental health (information and assessments) • Day programs • Dental services
Explore alternatives to pay parking for seniors and/or all users of the medical services.
2. Offer of Services
Offer adult respite services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in adult day programming options • Increase respite hours available to older adults who continue to live independently (aging in place)
Explore funding opportunities to create and support a ‘Dementia-Friendly Communities Project’
Hire a ‘Seniors Outreach Worker’ to assist seniors with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System navigation • Hospital discharge planning and follow-through • Isolation intervention including light to moderate shopping and housework etc.

Support building managers of seniors rental complexes:

- Connect residents to home support programs and services
- Provide assistance with obtaining mental health assessments

3. Dental Options

Work with the BC Dental Association and local dentists, to advocate for affordable dental services for low-income seniors:

- Reinstate Community Dental Day – once a year event where low-income residents can receive a free dental check-up and cleaning
- Advocate for the creation of a local, low-cost dental clinic



Emergency Preparedness

In the event of an emergency or natural disaster are adequate plans and procedures in place to care for our older adults? – (This category was developed by the local Age-friendly Advisory Committee to respond to local concerns).

Community Strengths

The RMSS Wellness Clinic offers a free information session to older adult groups on how to prepare for an unexpected hospital visit. The Maple Ridge Fire Department promotes fire safety and the need for working smoke detectors. In the event of a major fire, the community is very generous and supportive of its fellow residents.

Current Initiatives:

The recent apartment fire in Maple Ridge has raised awareness in the community of the need for emergency preparedness plans to support vulnerable populations. The Seniors Network has applied for funding through New Horizons for Seniors to create an Emergency Preparedness book for seniors. Funding approval is pending.

Recommendations and Actions
3. Community Emergency Preparedness Establish an seniors' emergency preparedness protocol including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping location of vulnerable residents • Developing evacuation procedures/protocol • Sheltering protocol for vulnerable residents • Attending to medical needs of vulnerable residents
4. Senior Specific Emergency Preparedness Offer education to vulnerable populations regarding importance of emergency preparedness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of fire hall regarding physical evacuation needs • 72 hours self-sufficient preparedness • How to communicate in a major emergency • Education regarding earthquake and fire preparedness • Pet preparedness

Next Steps

Develop and Publish an Age-friendly Action Plan

The Age-friendly Assessment Report provides an overview of the assets, barriers and strengths of both Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge with regards to encouraging quality of life for their older adults. The key priorities and outcomes outlined in this report can be further developed into an action plan with goals, objectives, timing, lead agencies, funding and other resources and target measures.

Once an Action Plan has been approved by Council, application can be made for Age-friendly BC Recognition for the respective city. Recognition applications are accepted throughout the year and awards are made once a year.

Engage Lead Agencies

Many local service agencies and organizations participated in the Age-friendly Communities Initiative. Their participation has been integral to the depth and breadth of recommendations that have emanated from the project. Going forward the participation of these organizations will be essential to the success of implementing solutions and moving forward as age-friendly communities.

Conduct Annual Action Planning

Annual Action Planning will ensure that the Age-friendly Action Plan continues to be a living process and, most importantly, that it creates on-the-ground action and results. Those involved in the action planning should review the results of past actions, evaluate the most recent performance data, assess local and regional opportunities, and present a recommended set of actions for the following year. Ongoing communication and collaboration between community and service providers is essential to this process to ensure service gaps are identified and agencies work collaboratively to avoid duplication and create new programs and services where required.



References

Age-friendly British Columbia: Lessons Learned, 2010, by Elaine Gallagher and Angie Mallhi submitted by Gerotech Research Associates to the Seniors' Healthy Living Secretariat, Ministry of Health Services

Becoming an Age-friendly Community: Local Government Guide, 2011, Seniors Healthy Living Secretariat, BC Ministry of Health

Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide, 2007, World Health Organization

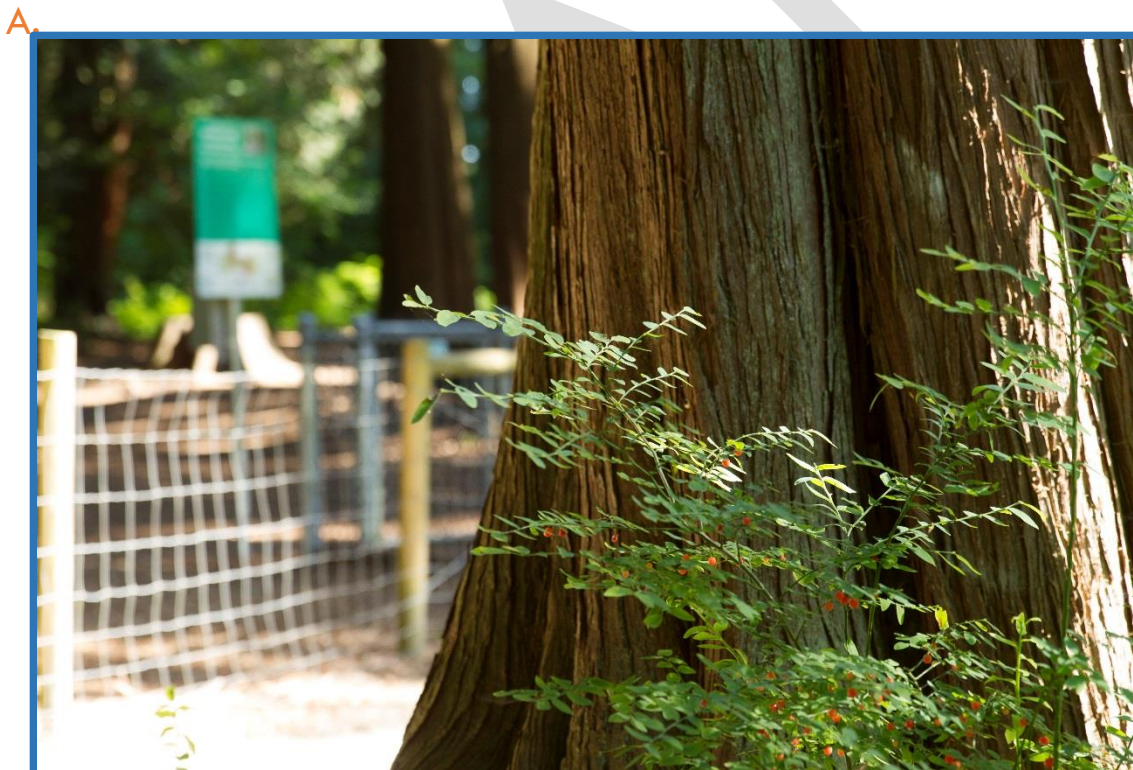
Maple Ridge Housing Action Plan: mapleridge.ca/246/Housing-Action-Plan

My Health, My Community Report, 2014, Fraser Health: myhealthmycommunity.org

Pitt Meadows Housing Action Plan: pittmeadows.bc.ca/EN/main/business/1156/housing-action-plan.html

Seniors Vulnerability Report, 2011, United Way of the Lower Mainland

Plan and Design for Choice: Universal Design Guidelines for Outdoor Spaces, pittmeadows.bc.ca/assets/Planning/pdfs/accessibility_guide09.pdf








Appendices

A. Age-friendly Communities Initiative Participants


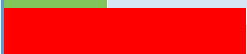
Affordable Housing Society	Katzie First Nation Elders
Agency for Cooperative Housing	Maple Ridge City Council
Alzheimer Society of BC	Maple Ridge Group for the Visually Impaired
Baptist Housing	Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services
BC Federation of Housing Co-ops, Aging in Place Committee	Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Katzie, Seniors Network
BC Non Profit Housing Association	Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Parks and Leisure Services and Neighbourhood Development
Begin Again Widow's Support Group	Maple Ridge Towers Residents
Chartwell Willow Retirement Community	Ministry of Health
CEED Centre Society	MLA Doug Bing
City of Maple Ridge: Engineering, Bylaws, Communications, Operations, Transportation, Social Planning	City Advisory Committee on Accessibility Issues
City of Pitt Meadows, Engineering, IT, Communications	Parkinson's Society of BC
Coast Mountain Bus, HandyDART Consumer Advocate	Pitt Meadows Active Transportation Committee
Comfort Keepers	Pitt Meadows City Council
Downtown Maple Ridge Business Improvement Association	Raging Grannies
Fraser Health (Bailey House, Built Environment, Fall & Injury Prevention, Home Health, Ridge Meadows Hospital, Nurse Practitioners, Public Health)	Red Hat Society, Ridge Meadows Chapter
Fraser River All Nations Aboriginal Society	Ridge Meadows Community Network
Golden Ears FEAST	Ridge Meadows Division of Family Practice
Golden Seniors Wellness Clinic, Ridge Meadows Seniors Society	Ridge Meadows Hospice Society
Haney Farmer's Market Society	Ridge Meadows Seniors Society
HUB Cycling Committee	Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 88, Housing Committee
Immigrant Services Society	Senior Citizens Association of BC, Branch 149
	Seniors Helping Seniors, Ridge Meadows Seniors Society
	Work BC

B. Detailed Survey Results – Pitt Meadows

Age Range:

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
40-54		30.0%	3
55-60		10.0%	1
61-69		30.0%	3
70-79		10.0%	1
80-89		20.0%	2
90 +		0.0%	0
Total Responses			10




Gender:

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Male		30.0%	3
Female		70.0%	7
Total Responses			10

What is it like for you to live in Pitt Meadows? Please comment below:




- Love the natural feel, mountains and small town feel.
- Lots of easy walking (library, parks, leisure, stores etc.)
- Enjoy all the family events.
- Great neighbourhoods and neighbours.

2. Are local parks and walking trails accessible to you?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		70.0%	7
No		10.0%	1
Comment:		20.0%	2
Total Responses			10




- Not after surgery.
- Yes, but too many dogs off leash.

3. Do you find it easy to access buildings, such as public offices or stores?




Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		80.0%	8
No		0.0%	0
Comment:		20.0%	2
Total Responses			10

- Sometimes there is a lack of parking.
- Stair access and no automated doors makes access more difficult.

4. Do you feel safe in your community?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		100.0%	10
No		0.0%	0
If not, why not?		0.0%	0
Total Responses			10

5. Do you use public or community transportation?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		10.0%	1
No		10.0%	1
If not, why not?		80.0%	8
Total Responses			10



- Some respondents said that they are either not familiar with public transit or it takes too long to use.
- Most respondents said that they drive and/or use other modes of private transportation.
- A few mentioned cycling and walking as their main mode of transportation.

6. Are there places you would like to go/need to go that you cannot get to?




Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		20.0%	2

No		80.0%	8
Comment:		0.0%	0
		Total Responses	10

7. Are you happy where you live now?



Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		90.0%	9
No		10.0%	1
Comment:		0.0%	0
		Total Responses	10

8. If your needs change, do you have choices for housing in the community?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		40.0%	4
No		30.0%	3
Comment:		30.0%	3
		Total Responses	10

- Some residents mentioned that there is very limited housing options available in their community for seniors.




9. Do you have a family doctor?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		90.0%	9
No		10.0%	1
		Total Responses	10

10. Tell us about your experience with the health and social services locally?




- Most residents mentioned that they either had difficulty or are unable to secure a family doctor; in addition, most social services are located in Maple Ridge (food bank, community services etc.).
- Some residents mentioned the difficulty with accessing walk in clinics (long wait times).

11. Does your community show respect for you as an older person?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		77.8%	7
No		0.0%	0
Comment:		22.2%	2
Total Responses			9

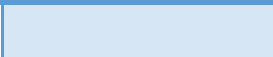


- Some respondents feel that people are not so friendly on the streets, however they are willing to hold open doors.

12. Is it easy to socialize in your community?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		80.0%	8
No		10.0%	1
Comment:		10.0%	1
Total Responses			10




- It would be nice if there were monthly events – community meet and greets, community garage sale, community picnics, nature walk – family meet up spots.

13. Do you have difficulty getting information about events and services?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		0.0%	0
No		70.0%	7
Comment:		30.0%	3
Total Responses			10




- Need a central location for all community events.
- Find it difficult to find the information pertaining to the events (internet, newspaper etc.).

14. Do you volunteer?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		40.0%	4
No		60.0%	6
Comment:		0.0%	0




Total Responses	10
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Are you working or looking for paid-work?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		30.0%	3
No		60.0%	6
Comment:		10.0%	1
		Total Responses	10




#	Response
1.	working full time

15. Do you participate in City committees?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		20.0%	2
No		60.0%	6
If not, why not?		20.0%	2
		Total Responses	10

- Unaware of the opportunities and possibilities to be involved.

16. Do you think City planning processes consider the needs of seniors?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		55.6%	5
No		22.2%	2
Comment:		22.2%	2

- Feel there is a need for an additional pool in Pitt Meadows, the pool in Maple Ridge is getting over crowded.
- There is a need for more low impact classes in Pitt Meadows – the ones being offered are over-crowded for the space.







17. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

- The senior rate is expensive for fitness. We should be encouraged more to keep fit. I realize that the Provincial government does nothing to encourage fitness in seniors but it should be free or subject to a tax credit. Why do we wait for senior health care to drain the health budget then go on about the expensive of seniors?
- More fitness programs as the classes get bigger and too crowded.
- There needs to be a plan to assist the homeless, prostitutes and drug addicted people in Pitt Meadows.
- Look at adding an inter-generational garden in Pitt Meadows.
- Look at adding more low-income housing, and wheelchair accessible housing - there is a shortage of rental units.
- Pitt Meadows could use a recycling centre to drop off items - glass, plastic bags, batteries, etc.
- Look at adding new sidewalks each year - to streets that do not currently have them - to ensure people have a place to walk safely.
- Look at some education regarding rules/bylaws regarding the 4-wheeled scooters. I am not sure if they are to ride on the sidewalks or on the city streets as if they were cars or bicycles.
- Transportation





C. Detailed Survey Results – Maple Ridge

Age Range:

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
40-54		17.0%	8
55-60		12.8%	6
61-69		17.0%	8
70-79		19.1%	9
80-89		23.4%	11
90 +		10.6%	5
Total Responses			47




Gender:

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Male		30.4%	14
Female		69.6%	32
Total Responses			46
Total Responses			47

What is it like for you to live in Maple Ridge? Please comment below:


- Majority of respondent's stated that Maple Ridge is a great community with wonderful access to parks, green space, community events and services, including Ridge Meadows Seniors Services.
- Some residents expressed concerns with lack of public and private transportation options, neighbourhood safety (including affordable housing options for the soon to be or homelessness population), and the lack of local shopping within walking distance.

2. Are local parks and walking trails accessible to you?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		51.1%	23
No		22.2%	10
Comment:		26.7%	12
Total Responses			45


- Main barrier to accessing parks and walking trails is the lack of public transportation outside of the core area and in some cases the costs to camping within the provincial park.
- Some respondents mentioned personal access issues for individuals with walking and mobility impairments and feelings of personal insecurities (personal safety).

3. Do you find it easy to access buildings, such as public offices or stores?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		78.3%	36
No		4.3%	2
Comment:		17.4%	8
Total Responses			46

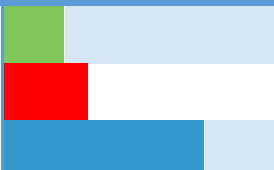
- Most respondents mentioned the lack of accessible parking within the downtown core area, with some mentioning difficulties accessing specific buildings with stairs and steps.

4. Do you feel safe in your community?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		64.4%	29
No		4.4%	2
If not, why not?		31.1%	14
Total Responses			45

- Many respondents mentioned feeling unsafe within the downtown core area after dark (lack of policing resources, increased homelessness etc.), and unsafe pedestrian crossings.

5. Do you use public or community transportation?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		17.8%	8
No		24.4%	11
If not, why not?		57.8%	26
Total Responses			45

- The majority of respondents stated that they are still driving and have reliable access to a private car.
- The main reason for not using public or community transportation is:
 - Unreliable;

- Inconvenient;
- Lack of public transit (rural areas);
- Takes too long to get to destination.

6. Are there places you would like to go/need to go that you cannot get to?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		9.1%	4
No		72.7%	32
Comment:		18.2%	8
Total Responses			44

- Some respondents mentioned that they avoid going out due to unreliable HandyDART drop off and pick-ups.
- One respondent mentioned that she would like to see more evening opportunities for seniors to be active – currently all opportunities happen during the day.

7. Are you happy where you live now?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		73.3%	33
No		0.0%	0
Comment:		26.7%	12
Total Responses			45



- Majority of residents stated they like where they live. However many noted most of their income, pension is being directed to their rent and living expenses.

8. If your needs change, do you have choices for housing in the community?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		46.7%	21
No		20.0%	9
Comment:		33.3%	15
Total Responses			45

- Majority of residents mentioned that if they had to find new housing that they would not be able to due to high rent (low-income seniors)
- Some residents mentioned that there is need for rental properties that are pet friendly (dogs and cats)

9. Do you have a family doctor?




Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		97.8%	45
No		2.2%	1
Total Responses			46

10. Tell us about your experience with the health and social services locally?

A variety of comments were record:




- Some respondents stated that the services are good, accessible and appropriate if you are connected to the systems through a GP
- Some respondents do not feel supported within the Health Care system, having to access services outside of the community (specifically - supported public housing – living last several months or years outside of the community)

11. Does your community show respect for you as an older person?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		79.5%	35
No		6.8%	3
Comment:		13.6%	6
Total Responses			44

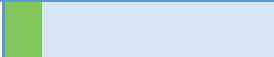

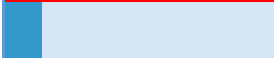
- Most respondents stated most of the time they feel respected. Several noted that at other times, 'people are people'.

12. Is it easy to socialize in your community?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		68.9%	31
No		17.8%	8
Comment:		13.3%	6
Total Responses			45



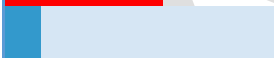
- Some respondents believe that Maple Ridge is a social place, especially considering all the special events, and public community centres (library, community centres RMSS etc.)
- Some respondents find it difficult to socialize and make new friends due to negative past social and emotional experiences.

13. Do you have difficulty getting information about events and services?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		11.1%	5
No		77.8%	35
Comment:		11.1%	5
Total Responses			45

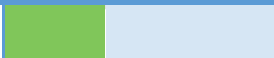


- Some respondents stated community and agency based information is readily available on-line and easily accessible if you are computer literate.
- Others mentioned turning to the local newspapers and library
- Some residents do find it difficult for they are not able to access internet information and find that too much communication/marketing is done on-line only.

14. Do you volunteer?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		43.5%	20
No		45.7%	21
Comment:		10.9%	5
Total Responses			46

- Many responding reported they are not able to volunteer due to varying abilities.

Are you working or looking for paid-work?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		29.3%	12
No		58.5%	24
Comment:		12.2%	5
Total Responses			41

- Most responding stated they are not actively working or looking for work as they are retired.




15. Do you participate in City committees?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		22.7%	10

No		54.5%	24
If not, why not?		22.7%	10
		Total Responses	44

- Many responding stated they do not participate in municipal committees due to the timing of the meetings and feeling unsafe being out after dark.

16. Do you think City planning processes consider the needs of seniors?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		34.1%	15
No		34.1%	15
Comment:		31.8%	14
		Total Responses	44

- Many residents believe city planning does consider some senior needs but more can be done to consult seniors early in the planning process (safety, public washroom access, pedestrian safety, etc.)
- Some residents also stated they feel seniors' needs are only highlighted during election time and then the issues are lost.

17. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

- I love Maple Ridge BC and the consideration they give to SENIORS, my only complaint, is the state of the sidewalks, DEPLORABLE and TERRIBLY UNSAFE.
- Great work by all involved in making this age-friendly Initiative happen
- In view of the recent warm/hot weather, I hope future planning will allow for more trees to be added in civic areas. I miss the trees near the municipal buildings ...taken out to make way for road improvements. Addition of more shade trees and benches (especially for seniors to access) would be helpful.
- Adequate affordable housing for seniors is lacking.
- I see that many seniors in my local community are out and about walking and accessing local stores etc. I would just like to ensure safety of these vulnerable people so that they can continue to enjoy their community independently as long as possible. More lighting, safer streets and well-marked crosswalks are all steps to ensure their safety (especially along 224th street).
- I worry about crime in Maple Ridge and the amount of policing. If I were an elderly person living downtown (and I believe most do) then I would be concerned about the amount of homelessness and drug users in downtown Maple Ridge.

- Maple Ridge is a beautiful community, it is noticeably without parks where children can play, people can socialize and walk their dogs, sit, read, etc. Maple Ridge is rapidly expanding, people are moving in resulting in road development that is unable to keep up with the increased traffic. New housing is on the outskirts resulting in urban sprawl, increased traffic and construction. This construction is negative to the natural beauty and rural feel of Maple Ridge. I suspect the only people benefiting from this fast paced and ill-planned development is developers and realtors. Perhaps the taxes are increasing for the city but with the increased commuting this money comes with a damaging price for the environment. Maple Ridge is becoming a bedroom community and losing the feel of the small town inclusiveness, this saddens me.
- Maple Ridge used to be a nice quiet place to live. Now it is like living in the city. I don't like it. It is too busy, too much traffic and not enough places to swim and go camping.
- Try engaging with local youth on a regular basis as they enjoy supporting and working with seniors.
- Fix the homeless problem.
- It seems to me that the City would prefer it if businesses could proceed with out and community input.
- A small park with water feature, flowers, winding paths, benches for conversation, well-lit for seniors.
- More small stores in seniors' communities.
- Lower land taxes.
- More shopping - big box stores.
- Need more handicapped parking.
- Too far to walk - need more than one seniors centre.
- New buildings are more for families –i.e. condos - not for seniors.