

**City of Duncan**

**Age-friendly Seniors Safety**

**Project Report**

This Report is respectfully submitted to the City of Duncan  
by  
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## Message from the Mayor

In the spring of 2009, the City of Duncan responded to a funding call from the UBCM (Union of BC Municipalities) Seniors' Housing and Support Initiative with the goal of engaging seniors specifically to review recommendations from the 2007 Official Community Plan (OCP). In the fall of 2009, when we learned we were successful in that bid, a group of individuals and organizations responded to our call to lead the project. It is with great appreciation that the City of Duncan carried out this project. Recognition is due to the seniors of Duncan and the Duncan Seniors Safety Advisory Team. Their community service on this committee created social change as it worked toward the goals outlined at the beginning of the project.

I would also like to extend our appreciation to the Age-Friendly Implementation Team of British Columbia. They shared their skills, resources, and valuable knowledge of communities throughout British Columbia to support the work of project.

The wide range of issues raised and the creative recommendations contained in this report show that many of the issues and recommendations require collaboration with the multiple surrounding jurisdictions, various community organizations and service providers, all levels of government, and all of us in our daily lives.

It is with great appreciation that the voices of our elders have been collected and it is with a great sense of responsibility that the City and the Seniors Safety Advisory Team will continue to work toward creating a safer city for seniors, and ultimately, for all age groups.

We thank all the volunteers who worked so diligently on this and *mostly we thank the seniors* who took the time to share their experiences with us.

*Phil Kent, Mayor of City of Duncan*

## Acknowledgements

The City of Duncan would like to acknowledge the following organizations and individuals who participated in this project in various ways, and who did so in addition to their regular community work.

Seniors Safety Advisory Team Members: Active Guidance and / Or Provision of Resources

- BC Coalition for Health Promotion
- Cairnsmore Neighbourhood Working Group
- City of Duncan
- Cowichan Community Policing Advisory Society (CPAS)
- Cowichan Family Caregivers Support Society
- Cowichan Intercultural Society (CIS)
- Cowichan Seniors Care Foundation
- Cowichan Women Against Violence Society (CWAV), *Safer Futures Program*
- Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP
- Social Justice and Outreach Committee, Duncan United Church
- Elder College
- Hiiye'yu Lelum, House of Friendship Society
- Cowichan Independent Living
- St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
- Seniors Resource & Support Society - Cowichan (SRSS-C)
- Social Planning Cowichan (SPC)
- Sul'hween Elders Program
- Volunteer Cowichan
- Individual community members

Seniors Safety Resource Team: Informed of project progress, events, and provided assistance with outreach

- Cowichan Tribes
- Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)
- Cowichan Family Life Association
- Youth Inclusion Program (YIP)
- Community Options Society (COS)
- Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA)
- Success by Six
- United Way
- CVRD Community Safety Advisory Committee (CSAC)
- Island Savings Community Centre

***This project would not have happened without you!***

## Introduction

Some people wonder why we would embark on a project targeting solely seniors. According to the Public Health Agency (PHA) 2008 *Report on the State of Public Health in Canada*, along with other cities around the globe, Canada's population is aging. The percentage of Canadians over the age of 65 years has more than doubled since 1970 with an increase from 8 to 14%. During the same time period, children under the age of 10 (11%) and youth between the ages of 10 and 19 years of age (13%) make up less than one quarter of Canada's population. This trend of seniors outgrowing the number of youth is expected to continue to 2020. Another significant note about Canada's ageing population is that our life expectancy is increasing; Canada's life expectancy at birth as of 2004 was one of the highest in the world (just over 80) (Public Health Agency, 2008).

On a local level, recent Census Canada (2006) statistics show that Duncan has a significant population of seniors. Acknowledging this trend towards having more seniors living in our area, the city of Duncan was inspired to harness the work of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the province of British Columbia's Age-Friendly Community Programming funding to further the work of the Official Community Plan (OCP).

This report begins with a brief description of the City of Duncan, including why the city wanted to embark on this project, and is followed by a description of the Age-Friendly Communities Model that was developed by the World Health Organization (WHO). The next section shows why the Age-friendly model fits with the Duncan Seniors Safety Project objective of engaging seniors' input into policies and actions arising from recommendations within the most recent review of Duncan's (OCP). That section is followed by a summary of the project activities and then the Results section that includes Issues identified, community based Recommendations, 'Suggested Champions' for those recommendations, and a list of 'What is Working'. It is worth noting that many of the Recommendations require further exploration with municipal staff, community service providers and organizations, and government departments. The 'Suggested Champions' sections is included because some issues and recommendations fall under the purview of the City of Duncan and some fall under the purview of other organizations and jurisdictions. The report closes with action items for the City of Duncan and the Seniors Safety Advisory Team.

There are three Appendices as well. The first, **Appendix A**, is a map of the City of Duncan. The second, **Appendix B**, *Seniors Voices*, is particularly important. In meeting with individuals and groups of seniors during the months of April and May 2010, the depth of answers made it clear that those who answered the call to consult had given considerable thought, time, and energy into sharing their information, knowledge, and experiences. For these reasons, Appendix B contains the voices of the seniors in point form that were used to inform the Recommendations contained in the main document. It is the hope of those who worked on this project that these seniors' voices will continue to carry to various audiences including the general public, policy makers, elected officials at all levels of government, as well as community organizations and members of the business community. **Appendix C**, *Glossary of Acronyms*, is provided as a quick reference to the full names of the organizations for which abbreviations have been used.

## **The Characteristics of the City of Duncan**

Duncan's population is 5035 and is roughly one square mile in size (Accessed: [www.duncan.ca](http://www.duncan.ca), on March 7 2010). It is bordered by the District of North Cowichan, Electoral Area D on the east (Cowichan Bay), Electoral Area E to the west and south (Cowichan Station/ Sahtlam/ Glenora) and Cowichan Tribe lands, and has a section of the Trans Canada Highway running through the city (See Appendix A, Map of the City of Duncan). Duncan is the site of many commercial and organizational activities within the Cowichan Valley. Politically, Duncan is part of the Cowichan Valley Regional District which comprises four municipalities and nine electoral areas all of which share the territory of surrounding First Nations. Being the commercial centre for these neighbouring jurisdictions, Duncan serves approximately 80,000 people (Accessed: from <http://www.duncan.bc.ca/>, on March 7 2010).

### ***Demographic Characteristics of Duncan***

The proportion of Duncan's senior population is considerably higher than the rest of the province (double). According to Statistics Canada 2006 Census Duncan's population of people over the age of 65 is 28.6% compared with the provincial percentage of 14.6%; and similarly, while Duncan's population over the age of 75 is 19.2%, the provincial average is 7.0% (nearly triple).

### ***Duncan's History of Creating a Safer Community through Social Development***

As the urban centre of the Cowichan Valley, the City of Duncan has a history of taking action on safety issues. In addition to being a member of the Cowichan Valley Regional District's (CVRD) Community Safety Advisory Committee (CSAC), and the Cowichan Community Policing Advisory Committee Society (CPAS), Duncan has been taking other steps that demonstrate the importance of public and personal safety including:

- 2005: adopted a Safer Community Action Plan
- 2006 to the present: actively involved with Cairnsmore Neighbourhood Working Group. This is a group of residents, organizations, and business operators that was created using a, *crime prevention through social development*, model.
- 2007: embedded a *Safety Lens* into the Official Community Plan (see Appendix 9, City of Duncan OCP, 2007)
- Present: Mayor's Task Force for People Living With Disabilities
- Active supporter of Block Watch and other Crime Prevention Programs

### ***City of Duncan Official Community Plan***

The following Community Vision guides Duncan's Official Community Plan (2007): "To be one of the most livable small towns in Canada" (OCP, p. 1). To do this, the OCP is built around six main goals:

1. Managed growth
2. A thriving economy and business community
3. Responsible stewardship of the environment
4. Strong community connections
5. A safe, healthy community
6. A well-serviced community

This project was built on the fifth goal, *A Safe, Healthy Community* as a lens to look at the recommendations for a senior-friendly community. According to the Official Community Plan (OCP), a safe and healthy community is one where all sectors work together to achieve the social, economic and environmental well-being of residents. Further to that, a safe, healthy community will be achieved by providing adequate and accessible green space and recreational facilities, health, social, and educational services; proactive policing, fire protection, and emergency planning; a supportive institutional environment; and a physical environment designed to improve community and individual security and well-being (Official Community Plan 2007, p.3).

During the development of the Official Community Plan (OCP), through community workshops and community surveys, a number of recommendations were developed in regard to the needs of seniors in the community. The 9 identified components of the OCP that pertain to seniors' well-being in Duncan are:

1. Downtown to appeal to urban, young professionals, students, seniors, smaller families, & diverse incomes (OCP 2007, p. 25).
2. Include places for youth and seniors' activities and programs (6.2.11).
3. Enhanced services and opportunities for families, youth, seniors, and people with mobility challenges...where diversity is embraced and inclusiveness is inherent (9.5)
4. Consider the feasibility of providing a new senior's centre within Downtown (9.5.3).
5. Encourage seniors' housing and care facilities in suitable locations, with appropriate amenities (9.5.4).
6. Conduct an audit of facilities and infrastructure to determine if they are fully accessible for persons with disabilities, (e.g. adequate parking, drop curb cuts, audible street crossings, entranceway ramps, etc.) ( 9.5.9).
7. Encourage universal or adaptable design standards in housing so that people can remain in their homes as they age or if they become mobility impaired (9.5.11).
8. Work with community organizations and partners (including multi-purpose recreation facilities) to identify gaps in services and develop traditional and non-traditional programs and services directed at age-specific groups, including youth and seniors that will develop social, physical and intellectual health (9.6.11).
9. Work with the health sector, in particular with VIHA, to ensure an adequate level and type of care, and improved accessibility to services. This may include such initiatives as ensuring that services for seniors remain a priority (9.8.1).

In keeping with the concept of the Safety Lens around which the OCP review was created, and specifically within the context of engaging the people of Duncan to keep the Official Community Plan alive, the city found a good fit with the Age-Friendly Cities model developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2007. Additionally, the 9 recommendations within the OCP (listed above) correspond with the 8 features of an age-friendly community (listed on page 10). Because of the complementary nature of these recommendations and age-friendly areas, the project team aligned this report with the age-friendly categories.

## What is an Age-Friendly City?

The World Health Organization (WHO) describes an “age-friendly” community as one that optimizes opportunities for health, participation, and security to enhance the quality of life for people as we age. To do this requires policies, services, and structures in the physical and social environments that are designed to support older people. Age-friendly communities are those that:

- recognize the great diversity among older persons,
- promote their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life,
- respect their decisions and lifestyle choices, and
- anticipate and respond flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences.

Additionally, an age-friendly community is one that takes into account the biological, psychological, behavioural, economic, social and environmental factors that operate over the course of a person’s life to determine health and well-being in later years.

Creating an age-friendly community that is safe for our elders creates a community that is friendly and safe for people of all ages. As community development projects in Cowichan and elsewhere throughout the WHO model show, safe neighbourhoods help foster living environments where children, youth, women and older adults feel secure. Feeling safe and having barrier free buildings and streets enhance mobility and independence of both younger and older persons with disabilities. The active participation of older people in the community, including in volunteer and paid work benefits the entire community. “And because active ageing is a lifelong process, an age-friendly city is a city for all ages” (WHO 2007 p. 4).

## Duncan’s Story: Becoming Age-Friendly November 2009-June 2010

### *Gathering Local Resources:*

- Outreach to:
  - City Council
  - Community organizations re: seniors, safety, specific populations
  - Local and regional committees and advisory groups (CSAC, Social Planning Cowichan, Regional Housing Affordability Directorate, Cowichan Elders, Cowichan Intercultural Society, and CPAS)
- Conducted a web search of available resources for Age-Friendly Community Development for distribution to committee members
- Formed two types of Committees to participate in this project:
  1. Seniors’ Safety Advisory Group: Active participants, more intricately involved with the project through meetings, provision of resources, and who otherwise contributed guidance
  2. Project Resource Group: These organizations were informed of project progress and events, and were asked for assistance with outreach
- Created relationship with BC Age-Friendly Implementation Team



### ***Project Activities November 2009 to May 2010:***

- The overall objective of this project was to assist the City of Duncan prioritize actions specific to recommendations within the OCP in relation to seniors' safety for presentation to Duncan City Council
- Compiled work done to date in Duncan on the subject of safety and accessibility so that this project could complement that work
- Created a list of guiding questions for mini-discussion groups with various seniors groups between the months of April and May 2010. The questions were designed to help the City of Duncan prioritize the 9 recommendations from the Duncan OCP 2007, and were also based on the 8 features from WHO for creating an age-friendly community
- Additional potential funding sources were investigated for implementation of recommendations that were emerging

### ***Gathering Local Voices:***

- Engaged seniors who reside in, and who are otherwise 'live' in Duncan through media, community networks, and outreach to seniors' specific service providers
- Widely advertised Series of Drop In Sessions at partnering agencies: Seniors Resource and Support Society, Cowichan Valley Seniors Centre, Volunteer Cowichan (1-4pm Monday Friday, April 1 to May 7<sup>th</sup>)
- Presented project at local seniors gatherings and facilities: Arthritis Society, Seniors Residences, Seniors Resources and Support Society Monthly Tea, Cowichan Elders Luncheon
- Held series of mini-discussion groups: Cowichan Chinese Canadian Community, Sherwood and Wedgewood Houses, The Meadows, Kiwanis Village and its neighbours, and Duncan Manor (cancelled due to flu of residents). Initial outreach was made to Cowichan Indo-Canadian Community however that was also cancelled due to illness
- Compiled results from mini-discussion groups in preparation for the wider community meeting intended to create action items
- Discussed project and issues arising from mini-focus discussion groups with local, First Nations, Regional, and provincial levels of government and departments
- With the provincial Age-Friendly Implementation Team, co-hosted an afternoon Community wide meeting: Duncan Age-friendly Seniors Safety Community Meeting on May 20<sup>th</sup>. During that meeting, the issues and recommendations that were compiled during the mini-discussions were presented in two formats: one specific to each of the 9 recommendations from the 2007 OCP, and the second one was specific to the 8 areas from the WHO Age-Friendly Community model

As stated earlier, the issues identified during this process by residents and service providers, as well as the recommendations arising from both the mini-focus discussions and the wider community meeting held in May are presented within the Age-Friendly Communities model in the next section.

## Community Voices, Community Recommendations

Participants were asked to comment on 8 age-friendly areas as defined by the World Health Organization:

### 1. Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

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

### 2. Transportation

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

### 3. Housing

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

### 4. Respect & Social Inclusion

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

### 5. 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?

### 6. 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?

### 7. 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?

### 8. Community Support & Health Services

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

## Results

Those who held the mini-focus groups estimate that between 150 and 200 seniors participated in the engagement process. The focus groups revealed a number of barriers and issues faced by seniors in the community. These findings were subsequently presented at a community forum co-hosted by the Duncan Seniors Safety Advisory Team and the BC Age-Friendly Implementation Team. This community meeting was attended by residents, representatives of community agency representatives, elected officials (including the Mayor and the City Council's Seniors Safety Advisory Team representative, provincial, and federal representatives), municipal staff (Duncan and North Cowichan), representatives from the Duncan Seniors' Safety Advisory Team, and the Director of the Seniors Secretariat, Province of British Columbia. During this forum, concrete ideas on how to create a more age-friendly environment in Duncan were discussed.

Based on the discussion of all of these topics, participants at the community forum then further identified six issues that they felt were the most critical for seniors in Duncan. These are the specific issues that came out of the larger discussion of the age-friendly topic areas, and many of them appeared in multiple topic areas (for specific comments, see Appendix B, *Seniors Voices*):

1. Transportation and mobility
2. Public transit
3. Safety
4. Affordable housing & support
5. Health (affordability & information)
6. Cross-cultural issues

The results of this entire consultation process have been categorized by the 8 age-friendly topic areas and summarized in the following format:

- a. Issues identified
- b. Recommendations
- c. Suggested Champions
- d. What is working

The 'Suggested Champions' are community agencies, organizations, or government departments that the Seniors Safety Advisory Team identified as *potentially* appropriate resources to lead actions on recommendations. The Advisory Team recognizes that those identified as 'Suggested Champions' might not have the required resources to act, nor might the action fit within their work plan. The reason that the Advisory Team decided to suggest champions is to continue discussions so that collectively we can either work toward accessing resources for that champion, or determine more suitable champions for that specific recommendation.

The 'What is Working' section was included because it became apparent in talking with the seniors and community organizations, that much is currently being done that fosters a safer and more age-friendly community. Additionally, the Seniors' Safety Advisory Team hopes that the information pulled together during this project will provide *another* step in the community planning and community relationship building that is characteristic of the Duncan area.

# 1. Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

## Issues Identified

- There are an insufficient number of parking spaces, particularly spaces for people with accessibility challenges
- Sidewalks are difficult to negotiate with scooters, walkers and wheelchairs due to the following:
  - Poor markings and indicators on crosswalks
  - Lack of ramps/slopes from sidewalks to roadways
  - Barriers are often present within sidewalks and many are too narrow
  - Intersections are not smoothly paved
  - Crossing times at intersections are too short
  - Aggressive and speeding drivers make walking in the community dangerous
- Many doors to enter buildings are too heavy to easily open
- While most citizens find downtown welcoming and friendly during the day (especially the City Square area), they feel unsafe in the area at night (primarily because of panhandlers, drug use, rude and abusive behaviour)

## Recommendations

- Improve markings on crosswalks and ramps/slopes from sidewalks to roadways place first
  - Suggested Champions: City
- Increase crossing times at crosswalks
  - Suggested Champions: City
- Create a map/directory of downtown organizations and businesses at the train station
  - Suggested Champions: City and / or DBIA
- Put on workshops for developers and builders to encourage implementation of Cowichan Safety Lens so that it includes Age-Friendly components
  - Suggested Champions: City, CSAC and/ or RAHD
- Offer public education events to raise awareness of both drivers and pedestrians regarding safety issues, particularly at crosswalks
  - Suggested Champions: Community Policing
- Increase foot and bike patrols and police presence in the downtown and Kinsman Park areas
  - Suggested Champions: RCMP

- Increase enforcement of laws regarding illegal activity
  - Suggested Champions: City
- Improve crime prevention through environmental design (e.g. lighting, hiding places)
  - Suggested Champions: Safer Futures and Community Policing

### **What is Working:**

- Recent improvements to some sidewalks are better for walkers (slopes make it easier)
- CSAC is holding community collaboration sessions to address panhandling issue on a community wide level
- DBIA and Community Policing have each created pamphlets to assist people in dealing with panhandling
- Ongoing safety information through media, website and workshops are provided through Community Policing
- City of Duncan's *Urban Design Guidelines for Developments, Designing for Safety*
- Mature Driving Course offered for free through Community Policing
- Mayor's Task Force on Disabilities annually identifies & prioritizes improvements for wheelchair access
- Cowichan Independent Living completed accessibility audits of businesses within the Cowichan Region in 2009
- Safe Harbour Program offered through Cowichan Intercultural Society
- City Commissioners on foot patrol downtown

## 2. Transportation and Mobility

### Issues Identified

- Using public transportation is challenging because of the following:
  - Not enough buses scheduled and bus schedules are inconvenient
  - Not enough HandyDart services scheduled or available
  - Lack of bus shelters and benches
  - Recently revised bus schedule is confusing
  - Some bus drivers are courteous and helpful, while others are not (do not offer assistance in getting on and off the bus, start moving before passengers are seated)

### Recommendations

- Trolley by donation that goes around downtown to shopping, etc (e.g. Ladysmith and Langford)
  - Suggested Champions: DBIA, Chamber of Commerce, Social Agencies
- Encourage transit providers to focus more on driver training re seniors' needs
  - Suggested Champions: CVRD Transit Committee
- Increase seating at bus shelters, as well as on the bus for seniors and people with disabilities
  - Suggested Champions: CVRD Transit Committee
- Increase bus service at night and on Sundays
  - Suggested Champions: CVRD Transit Committee, CSAC
- Create a bus ambassador program to educate seniors who are not used to taking transit
  - Suggested Champions: CVRD Transit Committee and/or Seniors Resource & Support Society- Cowichan (SRSS-C)
- Explore possibility of free bus passes for seniors, or at least increase affordability
  - Suggested Champions: seniors community resources
- Encourage cooperative use of buses among organizations that have buses because some buses not always in use by various organizations/owners
  - Suggested Champions: CVRD Transit Committee for feasibility and/or coordination
- Use directed taxi-cab type service, for example, dial-a-ride

### What is Working:

- Transit system issues at the Regional District level have already initiated by Mayor
- Free Bus Days sponsored by the CVRD

## 3. Housing

### Issues Identified

- There is a lack of affordable housing for people on low income
- Lack of housing options within walking distance to multiple services
- There is a lack of housing type options (such as multi-level care)
- Inadequate affordable home support
- Mobility challenges impact an individual's ability to maintain independent living

### Recommendations

- Encourage creation of more affordable housing options such as Kiwanis, Duncan Manor, and Cowichan Lodge (many said should not have been closed)
  - Suggested Champions: VIHA, CCHN, RAHD and non-profit organizations
- Promote awareness of alternative affordable housing strategies for seniors, such as grassroots house sharing model (and not just seniors living with seniors, but perhaps also a multigenerational occupancy model)
  - Suggested Champions: VIHA, CCHN, RAHD and non-profit organizations
- Involve seniors actively in the planning of new developments so that the quality of life - not just affordability - are considered
  - Suggested Champions: City, VIHA, CCHN, RAHD and non-profit organizations
- Encourage universal or adaptable design standards so that people can remain in their homes as they age or become mobility impaired
  - Suggested Champions: City and RAHD
- Encourage higher density housing where it is possible to walk to multiple services
  - Suggested Champions: City and RAHD
- Encourage increased density by accommodating renovation of unused spaces such as garages to suites
  - Suggested Champions: City and RAHD
- Encourage housing by more green space or near park-like settings
  - Suggested Champions: City and RAHD

- Accommodate multi-level care should it be required
  - Suggested Champions: VIHA and CCHN
- Create more semi-independent housing, where you can have company when you want it but live independently
  - Suggested Champions: VIHA, CCHN, RAHD and non-profit organizations
- Promote housing where pets are allowed
  - Suggested Champions: VIHA, CCHN, RAHD and non-profit organizations

### **What is Working:**

- The Regional Affordable Housing Directorate is creating a Regional Affordable Housing Strategy for the Cowichan Region that is scheduled to be released in the fall of 2010. The Strategy will provide feedback from community members on best practices for creating adequate affordable housing within the Cowichan Region.
- Accommodations Guide on Affordable Housing published by SRSS-C



## 4. Respect and Social Inclusion

### Issues Identified

- Need more grassroots (especially neighbourhood level) peer support
- Need to have services provided in culturally sensitive manner, as well as in different languages
- Desire for wider range of activities that respond to seniors of various cultures
- Would like an activity centre that is open in evenings
- Desire for intergenerational connections through schools and community programs

### Recommendations

- Encourage partnerships with schools, for example in the following ways: use of facilities and programs with youth and children; create a 'buddy system' linking generations; have school choirs perform at seniors' care home facilities
  - Suggested Champions: Seniors Resource & Support Society-Cowichan, Social Planning Cowichan, and /or School District 79
- Access resources of Cowichan Intercultural Society (CIS), Hiiye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship), and Cowichan Tribes regarding culturally responsive methods of communicating City Business
  - Suggested Champions: City, other governments, and local agencies
- Encourage and promote use of English language training services already available to the immigrant community, for example, RCMP language interpreters list
  - Suggested Champions: City, other governments, and local agencies

### What is Working:

- Some materials from Blockwatch are available in Punjabi and Cantonese

## 5. Social Participation

### Issues Identified

- Partaking in recreational activities, such as going to the pool, is too expensive
- Need easier walking and other transportation options to reach activities
- Need a wider range of social activities to be available, particularly in the evenings

### Recommendations

- Encourage businesses and organizations to schedule more activities that are wider in range and held in evenings
  - Suggested Champions: Cowichan Valley Seniors and Seniors Resource & Support Society-Cowichan
  - Suggested Champions: Duncan Business Improvement Area Society (DBIA)
- Encourage low/minimal cost for activities that include a fitness and wellness education component (for example, walking groups or shopping groups then tea afterwards)
  - Suggested Champions: seniors' residences (activity and recreation departments)

### What is Working:

- City Square - concerts and other gatherings
- Good cross-section of not-for-profit organizations that promote volunteer for seniors to keep them connected to the community and benefit from their skills and experience
- Cowichan Green Community Gardens and Fruit Save Program

## 6. Communication and Information

### Issues Identified

- Many older persons are uninformed or confused about existing support and assistance available; would like to know what initiatives and services are offered by local organizations
- Need to have hard copies of Service Directories available that can be easily updated as services and organizations change within the community
- Need greater support within neighbourhoods, particularly when residents living on their own are faced with medical emergencies

### Recommendations

- Facilitate communication networks within neighbourhoods (e.g. telephone trees)
  - Suggested Champions: Seniors Resource & Support Society – Cowichan and Volunteer Cowichan
- Promote information about the initiatives and services provided by organizations, such as support materials for residents available at Seniors Resource & Support Society – Cowichan Drop-in Centre and Volunteer Cowichan
  - Suggested Champions: City, other jurisdictions and other organizations

### What is Working:

- Cairnsmore Neighbourhood Working Group
- James Alexander Neighbourhood Working Group
- Seniors Resource & Support Society- Cowichan Monthly Teas and monthly Speaker Program as well as newsletter
- The recent formation of a *Seniors Services Network* in Cowichan currently facilitated through Cowichan Family Caregivers Support Society (CFCSS)
- Cowichan Seniors Care Foundation: Seniors' Guidance Directory provides a comprehensive listing of seniors programs and services within the Cowichan Region
- Volunteer Cowichan: Community Services Directory provides on-line information on a wide range of services within the Cowichan Region
- Social Planning Cowichan: Status of the Community Report 2010 provides updated information on services and organizations in the Cowichan Region as well as updated statistical data
- Many seniors and other community service providers' monthly newsletters

## 7. Civic Participation and Employment

### Issues Identified

- Feelings of disempowerment, where seniors' concerns are perceived to have no impact at the government level
  - e.g.1) Some participants commented that they did not think participating in this project would result in any changes
  - e.g.2) Many provided copies of previous correspondence with various government agencies and some wondered if their concerns were filed to be kept on record and/or if any action had been taken on their concerns

### Recommendations

- Demonstrate better respect when citizens' concerns are expressed by following response procedures
  - Suggested Champions: City and other levels of government
- Increase seniors and community involvement in consultation process before buildings go up, before programming is created, etc. by establishing a Referral Process
  - Suggested Champions: City and community service providers
- Have interpreters available at municipal meetings, local government service stations, public hearings, etc. when needed or requested
  - Suggested Champions: City and community social, health, environmental, and economic service organizations
- Establish liaison with community agencies to encourage participation of multicultural groups in public hearings/meetings
  - Suggested Champions: City and community social, health, environmental, and economic service organizations

### What is Working:

- Seniors Resource & Support Society – Cowichan has volunteers involved in program delivery
- Volunteer Cowichan has a resource centre and volunteer registry available to all residents and service providers

## 8. Community Support and Health Services

### Issues Identified

- Need to have more seniors helping each other, sharing the caring; more grassroots support and communication within neighbourhoods
- Desire to have access to people and services in various languages and cultures, eg. Cantonese
- Need for better education regarding self-help/ preventative healthcare
- Need for more affordable health supplies, such as life-sustaining equipment, eyeglasses, dentures, etc.
- Need information, support and advocacy regarding medication use (example, to guard against over-medicating)

### Recommendations

- Work with health sector, in particular VIHA, to ensure an adequate level and type of care, and improved accessibility to services , assuring that services for seniors remain a priority – put seniors’ health issues on the CCHN
  - Suggested Champions: City
- Coordinate services across agencies and organizations, including governments, schools, recreation programs
  - Suggested Champions: SPC and CCHN
- Encourage ongoing voluntary program evaluation and development of community services by those to whom service is geared and/or provided
  - Suggested Champions: SPC and CCHN
- Explore the idea of a health co-op, such as Cool Aid in Victoria
  - Suggested Champions: SPC, CCHN, and seniors organizations
- Encourage “community kitchens” for seniors which provide both socializing and nutrition information sharing opportunities
  - Suggested Champions: Community Kitchens Program, VIHA, CCHN, and seniors organization
- Promote use of the food purchasing co-op at the Cowichan Independent Living Resource Centre, where you can purchase food, etc. in small quantities
  - Suggested Champions: SPC, CCCHN, and all social and health service providers

## **What is Working:**

- Seniors Resource & Support Society- Cowichan provides a number of free services for seniors living under a specified income (for example, food, tax preparation, information & advocacy, internet access, newsletter, and shopping services)
- Social Planning Cowichan: Status of the Community Report 2010 provides updated information on services and organizations in the Cowichan Region as well as updated statistical data
- Volunteer Cowichan: Community Services Directory provides on-line information on a wide range of services within the Cowichan Region

## Next Steps: Duncan 2010-2011

The City of Duncan values the voices of our seniors and has committed to incorporate their experiences and ideas into strategic planning. Further, although some of the issue and recommendations are beyond the scope of municipal jurisdiction, we encourage community agencies, businesses, and other organizations to engage seniors directly in their planning and proposals as well.

### **Action Items Arising from Community Engagement:**

- The Mayor of Duncan will bring this report to the Transit Committee of the CVRD with the request that all jurisdictions review the concerns and ideas compiled through this project. Specifically, because of the geography of the region, that the Transit Committee consider becoming a *Transportation Committee*. Such a change could streamline cross jurisdictional responsibility challenges and could help mitigate ‘competing’ modes of transportation that currently present challenges to people’s ability to move safely and affordably within the Cowichan Region.
- The Mayor participates in the Cowichan Communities Health Network and will raise the issues and recommendations compiled through this project.
- City staff will assess how the issues and recommendations from this community engagement process can be incorporated into the City’s Operations and Strategic Plan.
- The City of Duncan will direct staff to research and report back to council on the feasibility of establishing a Referral Policy for Re-zoning and Development Variance Permits so that seniors’ perspectives are included in applications.
- A volunteer committee (from this advisory group) was struck on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2010 to assist the City in implementation of these goals. The committee will report to Council on a quarterly basis with progress reports on the status of the recommendations contained within this report. Because the members of this volunteer committee are also involved in other groups and services, they will continue to carry the information gathered through these seniors’ voices to other relevant services providers and jurisdictions.

## **Resources accessed for this project**

City of Duncan  
[www.duncan.ca](http://www.duncan.ca)

British Columbia Ministry of Health  
[www.gov.bc.ca/health](http://www.gov.bc.ca/health)

British Columbia Seniors Information Web site  
[www.seniorsbc.ca](http://www.seniorsbc.ca)

Public Health Agency of Canada, Division of Aging and Seniors  
[www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/index.htm](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/index.htm)

World Health Organization  
[www.who.int/ageing/projects/age\\_friendly\\_cities/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/ageing/projects/age_friendly_cities/en/index.html)

University of Victoria's Centre on Aging  
[www.coag.uvic.ca](http://www.coag.uvic.ca)

## **Supporting and Related Documents**

Duncan Official Community Plan, 2007  
<http://www.duncan.ca/pdf/Bylaw%202030%20OCP%20to%20Nov%2013,%202007.pdf>

Cowichan Safety Lens: included as Appendix 9 in Duncan OCP Review 2007  
<http://www.duncan.ca/pdf/Bylaw%202030%20OCP%20to%20Nov%2013,%202007.pdf>

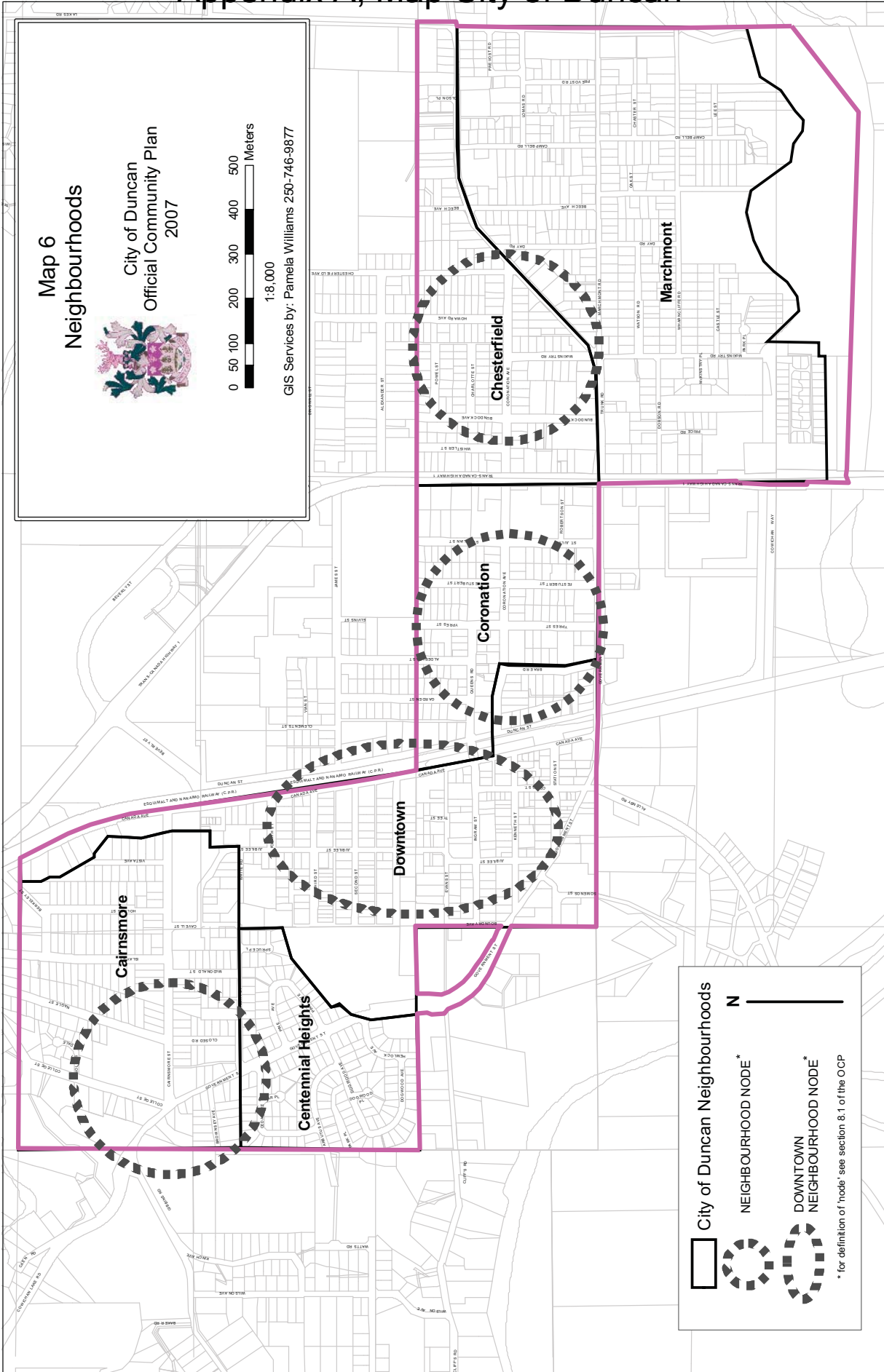
WHO Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities  
[http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age\\_friendly\\_cities\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age_friendly_cities_checklist.pdf)

Duncan Seniors Safety Age-Friendly Safety Project, OCP Recommendations: Feedback from Seniors April-May 2010 (Summary of Findings from mini-focus Discussions presented to Duncan City Council Committee of the Whole July 5<sup>th</sup> 2010)

City of Duncan Age-Friendly Seniors Project: Eight Areas of Focus to be Age-Friendly, May 2010 (Summary of Findings from mini-focus Discussions presented to Duncan City Council Committee of the Whole July 5<sup>th</sup> 2010)



# Appendix A, Map City of Duncan



# **SENIORS' VOICES**

Appendix B of the Report:  
*City of Duncan*  
*Age-friendly Seniors Safety Project*

This Report is respectfully submitted  
by  
Pam Alcorn  
Project Facilitator  
July 2010

## Seniors Voices

### Introduction

This document is intended to complement the Report, *City of Duncan Age-friendly Seniors Safety Project* produced in July 2010 (included as Appendix C of that report). The City of Duncan embarked on this project to get seniors' direct input regarding 9 recommendations from the 2007 OCP review. In carrying out this project, a Seniors' Safety Advisory Team was struck comprised of representatives and individuals who could work with or are members of specific community groups. This team, with the assistance of the BC Age-Friendly Implementation Team, compiled the responses from 10 questions that were created to obtain feedback related to the OCP recommendations and the age-friendly community model (see Introduction of *City of Duncan Age-friendly Seniors Safety Project*).

In meeting with the various groups of seniors during the months of April and May 2010, the depth of answers made it clear that those who answered the call to consult had given considerable thought, time, and energy into sharing their information, knowledge, and experiences. For these reasons, this document contains the voices of the seniors in point form that were used to inform the Recommendations contained in the main document. It is the hope of those who worked on this project that these seniors' voices will continue to carry to various audiences including: the general public, policy makers, elected officials at all levels of government, as well as community organizations and members of the business community.

### Structure of this report:

The first section, *Questions for Seniors/Elders* presents seniors responses during mini-focus groups that were held with:

- Cowichan Chinese Canadian Community
- Sherwood and Wedgewood Houses
- The Meadows
- Kiwanis Village and its neighbours
- Duncan Manor had been planned however that session had to be cancelled due to flu of residents.
- Similarly, initial outreach was made to Cowichan Indo-Canadian Community however that was also cancelled due to illness.

Drop-in sessions were also held at:

- Seniors Resources and Support Society
- Cowichan Valley Seniors Centre
- Volunteer Cowichan.

The discussions were guided by a set of 10 questions. Because so many of the issues, ideas and recommendations fell within the 8 areas of focus to create an age-friendly community, the second section, *Relating the 10 Questions to the 8 components of an Age-Friendly Community*, provides more detailed responses to those areas, especially in the area of transportation and mobility.

## Questions for Seniors / Elders

1. Do you feel there are spaces or places within the City of Duncan as a whole that you find are friendly, welcoming, and safe to be in or that are NOT friendly, welcoming, and safe? This could be places in the downtown core (business section) or in specific neighbourhoods.

### What like:

#### **DOWNTOWN:**

- Shopping in town, feels that 'everyone knows her name'; merchants are friendly
- Sidewalks okay for walkers with slopes; appreciate the improvements seeing
- Feels safe during day (except when people ask for money and yet others fine with)
  - Most places friendly, hospitable, welcoming, senior friendly
- City Square - concerts etc., gathering place
- Like cultural opportunities
- Members of the Chinese Canadian community said feel safe and don't feel threatened by street people

#### **CAIRNSMORE**

- Becoming more scooter friendly

### What not safe, welcoming, and friendly:

- Panhandlers, drug use in the train station/CIBC corner and Phoenix area
  - **Note:** many seniors also said that they are not concerned about panhandlers
- post office area- bus stop –swearing & drug use
- Parking – not enough
  - lost spaces during renovations
  - need more handicapped spaces- easier to park at mall
- Sidewalks:
  - bumpy- not good for walkers or scooters-sometimes go on road
  - debris- leaves, ice
  - Government Street is too narrow and hard to see around shrubbery
  - Need level parts for scooters and walkers and slopes so can enter streets
- Crosswalks- should not have removed the one closest to Wedgewood House
- Heavy doors are difficult to open
- Not enough places to eat after 4:00 pm
- Railing behind Valley Seniors Centre (woman willing to pay if permitted)
- Bikes on sidewalks pose difficulty to pedestrians
- Crosswalks along Government Street: speed limit on Government Street – not enforced
- Downtown market hard for some drivers when traffic blocked off
- Too many boutiques (high priced stores)

## **ISLAND SAVINGS COMMUNITY CENTRE AREA**

- Parking lot often full - high school people park there
- Need more handicapped parking spaces

## **KINSMAN Park:**

- Students congregate day and night – drugs and loud talking; seniors feel threatened even when as few as 3 youth together
  - RCMP not stopping and seniors want RCMP to stop and walk around the area
  - Would like more lighting around Kinsman Park
  - Question about putting up a gate
- 

## **2. Do you think there is something that can make downtown Duncan more appealing to you as a senior?**

### **Outside Spaces:**

- More shaded areas- parks; more benches
- To feel safer downtown at night (although some feel fine)
  - increased police presence downtown at night –walk the beat- bikes
  - more stores, restaurants and events downtown at night
- Places to rest and visit:
  - Benches at a reasonable space; more people; more flowers; more green spaces; protected from wind
- Identification of those (silent, creep up on) on a scooter- safety of riders and others
- Traffic is a barrier for some- maybe one way streets?

### **Parking**

- More parking – most people asked for
- Change to one hour or perhaps two, to allow for more access
- More disabled parking available in downtown

### **Sidewalks**

- Marking where bumps are
- Sidewalks kept clear of debris (snow and leaves)- residents and businesses
  - enforce by-laws

### **Crosswalks and intersections:**

- More crosswalks (especially along Government Street & Trunk Road)
- Sloped corners at sidewalks intersections
- Get poles out of crossings of sidewalks
- More ramps by Joe's Tire on Government Street
- Guy wires on poles in crossings difficult to see, navigate
- More prominent white markings on crosswalks

### **Businesses and Services**

- Doors that open easily and/or buttons to open
- More cafes or coffee houses (not Starbucks) open Evenings and Sundays
- Map of downtown at train station showing where businesses are (like in malls)

- Store to buy groceries
- More attractions than banks for seniors
- More places to have inexpensive meals (fixed incomes) and inexpensive items
- More public washrooms, more seating – washrooms often locked at train station
- Get rid of rude and abusive people
- Have greeters at door

### **Transportation Options and Mobility**

- Better transit with shelters at bus stops to get to downtown
    - Maple Bay to Duncan- one bus removed & would like it returned
  - Members of Chinese Canadian Community said are afraid of taking bus, so mostly shop in perimeter of city core
- 

### **3. Would you like more involvement with community organizations or groups** (for example children, youth, other seniors)

- Majority of the people we talked with said they had enough going on in their lives
  - Many live in seniors residences
- Some always want more
- Some would like children's groups to visit
- Some said good to go to Valley Seniors, Seniors Resources and Support Services, and Island Savings Community Centre
- Some would like to be more involved but mobility and transportation makes it hard, and some want to be independent- HandyDart is good
  - Transportation too costly in addition to costs of activities and with limited incomes for so many seniors
- Need more options and need help with gas to participate
- More options for physical activities for some: swimming pool too expensive
- Good to have delivery of groceries
- Be good to discuss this question further with other seniors
- More public education about accessibility barriers for organizations and public for example, about white canes
- Need to have easier walking options
- Shared use of facilities should be possible if available. Schools, for example, are public facilities and should/could be used for community activities as well
- Members of the Chinese Canadian community said would participate more if they had access to people who speak their language, including exercise and other forms of recreation
- Some would like "buddy system" linking generations
  - junior/senior school student, to develop understanding/respect, perhaps assist with spring/fall chores...outside window washing? Snow removal? And, concern expressed not to exploit helpers
- Members of Chinese Canadian Community said that they liked being asked directly for their input into this project

#### 4. Do you want more opportunities to spend time with youth?

- Some people said they had had enough time with youth throughout their lives and were interested in spending time with other seniors right now and their own grandchildren
  - Some said not interested because feel youth's behaviour disrespectful; others said would welcome if youth wanted to interact with seniors
    - Would like to pass on knowledge and history
  - Seniors living in residences particularly liked the idea:
    - Young people from day care come at Halloween for ½ hour- nice
    - School choirs come to residence- develop their talent (practice) and learn to communicate with seniors and seniors learn to communicate with young
    - "Our attitudes make a big difference to relationships with youth"
      - Powell River does this and it increases awareness and appreciation of what people been through and seniors feel like they are participating in community
  - Members of the Chinese Canadian Community do have gatherings with youth
- 

#### 5. Would you like to see a centre downtown that is multi-purpose, for example for seniors, youth, families, children, people with diverse lives, backgrounds, and abilities?

- This question received a 50-50 split of *yes* and *no* with those living in independent living residences mostly saying *no*
  - Some said good if strong leadership - organized and good people skills; various cultural activities and art exhibitions
    - Something more inclusive of different cultures - that "feels" more inclusive
    - Open in the evenings
    - 'place where everyone can go and feel welcome" no matter the background- income, culture, ethnicity
    - maybe connected with House of Friendship and/or Intercultural Society
    - One woman who could hardly speak said that having an indoor multi-purpose space would be good for her because she cannot move around and this way she could watch activity
  - Library downtown
  - Some feel they already have the community centre; we don't need to spend more money on this - put it toward affordable housing
  - If thinking of including youth, ask young people
  - We have good centre with downtown square
    - Some thought walking groups would be good
-

## HOUSING QUESTIONS

### 6. What type of home or housing do you live in (rent, own, or facility)?

- Of those who answered this question, more people rent (31%); 18.9 % own; and 21 % live in semi-independent facility

### 7. What kind of housing do you see as a priority for seniors in Duncan, for example,

- a. More care facilities,
- b. More home support
- c. More assisted living facilities (for example, semi-independent)
  - Affordable (please give estimate of affordable)
- d. Housing that allows for physical movement (example, wheelchair level kitchens and bathrooms)

#### **Care Facilities:** (this received the most responses and strongest reactions)

- Cowichan Lodge was good, new place is not because of highway and concrete; need facilities “like Cowichan Lodge”
- Change institutions: need more grassroots and response to residents’ wants and needs; good to see more seniors helping seniors if they can and want to (both ways, not mandatory)
- Multi-level care so that can go into independent and then have more services available as need them (participant referred to Cowichan Lodge as example, “We need the lodge” that was followed by round of applause)
- More access to people and services in various languages and cultures, eg. Cantonese

#### **Home Support:** (moved to next section)

#### **Affordable Housing:** (of all types)

- More affordable facilities
    - “On \$1,000 a month, what is reasonable? Not much. No one is going to rent a small apartment for \$300.00”
  - More like Duncan Manor
  - More residences like Kiwanis Village, well kept and clean, however, with 24/7 manager in place, however concern re how long it is taking for burned out residents to return to Village
    - more subsidized housing
  - Housing where small pets be allowed
-



## **8. What services, designs, and locations do you think are important for creating housing for seniors?**

### **SERVICES**

- More options like meals
- Regular care givers
  - need affordable, accessible, secure, safe, access to transportation
- Services: help with cleaning & cooking
- Security- no ground floor living; underground secure parking
- More HandyDart and taxi vouchers
- Communication within neighbourhood

### **DESIGNS**

#### **Physical Movement**

- Width of doors and height of counters
- One floor single living with home support
- Housing that allows for wheelchair level kitchens and bathrooms
- Need Wheel chair accessible housing
- Enough space to comfortably and safely move around (assistive devices)

#### **Environmental Designs:**

- Quiet, smaller and cheaper for people in between- 900 sq ft
- Smaller buildings - fewer units
- Green spaces
- Accessibility, social areas, dining services, shuttle services
- Full kitchens, in-suite laundry, elevator, 2<sup>nd</sup> bedroom or study area (relatives)
- Reasonable amount of living space: 800-9000 sq ft not 400 sqft
- Excellent lighting, useable bathroom; toilets allow space for support unit; chair lifts in houses; reasonable amount of storage space, wider doorways
- Large communal area - community kitchen?
- Green buildings – solar energy, homes made from hay bales or packed earth or bamboo floors, sound proofing, energy efficient appliances; composting toilets; water saver showers, garden space
- More semi-independent housing and rent geared to income: company when want it but independent to live
- Bachelor pad - ground floor
- Very expensive accommodation is available but more affordable accommodation is necessary
- Meal options - prepare own and have dining room service
- Multi-purpose space - dining, games, entertainment, party space
- In house shoppers for milk (in semi-independent residences)

## **LOCATION**

- Easy access to stores (groceries), doctors' offices, pharmacies, dentist, physio-therapists, salons, post office, banks, etc.
    - within walking distance,
  - Quiet, green with small creek, water
  
  - Park-like setting (not between two gas stations)
  - More places to go after 4:00 pm
  - Less traffic noise; not fancy but comfortable; controlled traffic
  - Old Cowichan Lodge is an ideal spot for a care facility
  - Location - access to transit options
  - Near Valley Seniors Organization where can have lunch, play card games, bingo, join activities, obtain free food to take home or for donation
  - Close to grocery store
- 

## **9. Are there changes you need made in your own home that would make it more likely for you to age in your home?**

- Wider doorways; ramp; railings
  - Bathroom needs adjustments; security bars, bath toilet; shower seats
  - Motion sensors
  - Smoke alarm on wall
  - Affordable (SAFER program not enough) to have physical needs to live independently
  - Roof repairs
  - One - level living and entry
  - Home security – renters at risk of forced moving
  - Bathroom safety bars; bath toilet; wider doorways for wheel chairs; shower seats
  - Reliable home support
  - More awareness among builders of needs of seniors
  - Volunteer seniors drivers who bring people to appointments
    - Network of retired seniors
-

## **10. Are there services that would make it more likely that you can remain in your home while you age?**

Responses have been categorized: home care, home support, transportation. The underlying themes are affordability and quality of care and services, and adequate income

### **Home Care**

- Affordable and adequate home care
- More complete VIHA home support services. “help with washing the floor, shopping, cooking when ill, etc.,
  - help from consistent workers who don’t need to be ‘shown the ropes’ each visit, who come when expected (or notify when unable).
- Home Support Services could use money more wisely by scheduling more consistent workers, etc.
- Many commented that consistent and reliable care is only available in institutions, where independence is lost
  - assisted living and home care needs to improve and be more affordable

### **Home Support**

- Help with home maintenance; risk of injury high after 70 years; teens could help-volunteer groups to help with these things
  - shovelling during winter
  - someone to help clean monthly - home makers
  - will need help with purchasing groceries because there is no easy bus service to any of the grocery stores, for example, meals on wheels

### **Finances**

- More financial support to access health services, such as physio-therapy coverage of 10 per year not enough
  - Worried about costs of care - as age, need more and not sure can afford
- More financial support to access prescriptions
- Bigger pension:
  - Some living on \$1,200 / month and less

### **Transportation**

- More bus services:
  - (Gibbins Road);
  - more bus service to Maple Bay on weekends;
  - bus should go all the way to the Bay
- Affordable transportation - often stay in after dinner because cumulative cost of going out too high - transportation, cost of event, etc.
  - together increases feelings of isolation, lack of stimulation and boredom

### **Other Comments from couple of seniors**

- More policing (one participant)
- Someone to walk with

## Relating the 10 Questions to the 8 components of an Age-Friendly Community

This section contains responses that fit within the 8 Categories to create an Age-Friendly Community that informed the summarized body of Responses within the Report: *City of Duncan Age-Friendly Seniors Safety Project Report*, July 2010

### 1. OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

- Need sidewalks on part of Beverly
- Need sidewalks on Lewis
- Require way to cross highway - overpass or sidewalks on both sides

#### **Parking:**

- Need more dedicated for handicapped at shopping malls and downtown
- Need more behind Valley Seniors

### 2. TRANSPORTATION and MOBILITY

Transportation largest concern - bus system

- Driver education, for X walks and more generally safe driving practices
- concern that BC is too lenient with driver's licences
- Concern about the Highway and its busyness mixed with commercial opportunities
- Concern about the possibility of one-way streets (Canada Ave and Duncan Street)

#### **Bus Shelters:**

- Need more bus stop enclosures (with benches) in Duncan and adjacent areas

#### **Bus Schedules:**

- Review schedules, especially route #3, Quamichan (several hundred seniors)
- #3 stop on Day street for 3-5 minutes rather than at bus depot for 10-30 minutes
- One woman - said good system but could use more buses
- Needs better coordination - why did they change the location of where buses connect?
- Bus Station: Confusion and muddle - sidewalk narrow; people with luggage for local and regional buses - congestion interferes with mobility with walker
- Many would like bus services to be as were before the latest changes in schedule
- transfers "awful", long waits to connect to needed bus
- Very hard to get to Beverly Corners and back in reasonable time
- Could a bus stop outside the parking lot? By the Oil Change depot?
- Transfers to access downtown a problem
- Suggest 'circle routes' where perhaps, loops might be made twice a day to enable shopping, appointments, etc.
- Evening service is needed
- Would like HandyDart services to be more available, accessible for walkers, wheelchairs, help from drivers

#### **Buses:**

- Signs reserving seats for senior & handicapped posted on buses need to be maintained

- Drivers do not always wait for seniors or people with physical challenges to sit down
- Make bus stop signs more visible
- Appreciate the service booked out of Comox Valley, local drivers, book early, Wheels for Wellness (W4W) calls night before with pickup time, etc. Donation basis.

### **Signal Lights:**

#### **Trans Canada Hwy (TCH): South end by Bridge and Duncan Way:**

- hard to cross and has huge grooves
- Trying to stay independent but hard
- Drivers frequently ignore pedestrians, crosswalks, often doing unsafe right turns
- Boys Road difficult to cross
- Crossing at 'Super Store/London Drug' needed?
- All intersections should have talking or otherwise audible lights

#### **TCH and Trunk:** drivers do not follow law and do not give right of way to pedestrians

- All intersections need more crossing times for pedestrians
- South West corner- difficult for seniors with walkers - deep and wide gaps between road surface and sidewalk, especially on Trunk
- When it rains corner collects in large and deep puddles
- Trunk Railway crossing - wide gaps between road surface and rails (not as bad at Queens)
- Crossing TCH needs to be easier and safer.
- Trunk Road is particularly unsafe; Coronation is difficult.

#### **Trunk Road and Festubert:**

- Crossing a particular "death trap"

#### **Trunk & Coronation:** pedestrian crossing signals hard to reach for people with walkers

- Obstruction for people with walkers in middle of intersection as crossing Coronation East

#### **Ingram and Canada Avenue:** cut for scooters but no crosswalks markings

- Talking lights for visually impaired

#### **Queens and Ingram:** cut for scooters but no crosswalks markings

### **Cross Walks:**

- Better located and maintained Zebra stripes across trunk to access shopping mall to south
- Speed limit too fast on Trunk
- Crosswalk signs too short duration (people often half way over when light changes)
- Painted crossing at Blockbuster and Coronation Street would be good
- Better lighting of crosswalks
- Cars have to wait for green lights, how about same for crosswalks?

### **Government Street:**

- From Griffiths corner to Wedgewood should be another crosswalk in addition to one with lights
- **Boundary & Government-** signs, bikes on sidewalks, buses turning, speed issues
- Curb needs to be cut back
- Sign should say “seniors crossing”
- people still crossing where old cross walk was - should not have moved it
- the new cross walk to replace old cross walk has a lamp standard in the middle of it
- they can't see light once they have pushed the alert button
- want audible signals for crossing
- street and sidewalks broken up - needs to be smoother
- 30 km not being respected - want speed enforced: speed watch and more policing
- Crosswalks are too far apart
- maybe a railing along sidewalk because not enough level space for scooters
- Suggest more cross walks and more visible markings (fluorescent colours)
- **Government and Jubilee:** Crosswalk at (Valley Seniors /Totem Restaurant) often ignored by drivers

### **Canada Avenue:**

- hard to make left hand turn coming out of Island Savings

### **Sidewalks:**

- Sunridge Place on Bundock between **Trunk & Coronation:**
- Increased traffic, lack of visitor parking, **Coronation** no sidewalk= hazard for pedestrians (those from Georgina Gardens)
- Sidewalk would help, or zebra stripes connecting parking lot at Georgina Gardens on East side to West side of street
- Remove high curb and strip of grass there now
- Sundridge- woman on crosswalk hit- need better markings for pedestrians and motorized vehicles
- Some best practices: Victoria - flashing lights; Banff- fluorescent colours; visible count-down for time to cross
- People live close to town to maintain independence and so mobility important
- Keep cyclists off sidewalks; TCH should have bike lanes
- Suggest one sidewalk (east side?) for pedestrians, the other (west?) for bikes/scooters, etc

### **Kenneth:**

- Sidewalks lumpy
- Businesses and residential property owners need to be held responsible for snow and ice removal - Shovel off sidewalks

### **Alternative Transportation:**

- HandyDart is good, easy, drivers helpful
- WHEELS FOR WELLNESS, service to drive for appointments, some use and many unaware of it

- Appreciate the service booked out of Comox Valley, local drivers, book early, W4W calls night before with pickup time, etc. Donation basis.
- Create a walking path

### **Bicycles & motorized scooters**

- Bells to warn pedestrians
- Ferries and buses along island should be free for seniors (too costly)

### **3. HOUSING**

Answers that fall into this category are fully covered in the section above, Responses to 10 Questions asked: numbers 6-10

### **4. RESPECT AND INCLUSION**

- Feeling that seniors are not heard
- What is old, what is senior? We all need to shift our thinking
- Need to protect our valued elders
- Some bring things to city's attention, but feel not satisfactory responses and wonder if their letters or verbal complaints are kept on file?
- Respect in public spaces eg. Stores, shoppers stopping to talk and not aware they are blocking movement of others and people too shy to ask to move
- Would be respectful if people learned about cultures within the community, for example, the elders from the Chinese Canadian Community provided history with their responses

### **5. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**

Answers that fall into this category are fully covered in the section above, Responses to 10 Questions asked: numbers 3-5

- People who live outside of downtown area feel isolated from Duncan (transportation issues)
- VSO closes too early for many (bus connections?)
- Chances less friendly, more expensive with emphasis on machines, less on Bingo
  - miss "the downtown experience before and after Bingo"

### **6. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION**

- Resource BOOK useful, out of date, better than computer, like coil binding, aware Volunteer Cowichan is redoing, (Suggest some hard copies for facilities, library, City hall, etc. Three ring binder for easy updating as needed.)

### **7. CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

- Importance of going to people when you want to consult, rather than have them come to you!
- Try to bust the expectation of pay for doing everything
- Fun and challenging pieces to volunteering

## **8. COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES**

- Health issues: doctors prescribing medicines
- Walkers are costly
- Make canes available to any senior (free or cheaper) and fold up white ones
- Consolidate senior care organizations
- Urgent need for government-funded financial assistance for independent living for low-income seniors for heavy cleaning and lifting in house
  - families often live in other communities and their friends are in the same condition



## Appendix C:

### Glossary of acronyms or other abbreviations used in this report

- British Columbia Coalition for Health Promotion (BCCHP)
- Cairnsmore Neighbourhood Working Group (CNWG)
- City of Duncan (City)
- Cowichan Community Policing Advisory Society (CPAC)
- Cowichan Family Caregivers Support Society (CFCSS)
- Cowichan Independent Living (CIL)
- Cowichan Intercultural Society (CIS)
- Cowichan Seniors Care Foundation (CSCF)
- Cowichan Tribes
- Cowichan Women Against Violence Society (CWAV) Safer Futures
- Duncan Business Improvement Area Society (DBIA)
- Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP (RCMP)
- Elder College
- Hiiye'yu Lelum, House of Friendship Society (HOF)
- Regional Affordable Housing Directorate (RAHD)
- Social Justice and Outreach Committee, Duncan United Church
- St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
- Seniors Resource & Support Society- Cowichan (SRSS-C)
- Social Planning Cowichan (SPC)
- Sul'hween Elders Program
- Volunteer Cowichan
- Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA)
- CVRD Community Safety Advisory Committee (CSAC)
- Island Savings Community Centre (ISCC)