ALBERNI VALLEY
Age-Friendly Plan

JUNE 2020

ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT REGIONAL DISTRICT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ACRD is growing, aging, and changing. It is also rural and diverse, which results in unique social and environmental challenges for its communities, which are different from those facing urban populations. The 2016 Census notes that 21.8% of the total population in the ACRD is 65 years or older, which is higher than the provincial average of 18.3%. Additionally, the population of residents 55 years and older in the Alberni Valley (AV) Electoral Areas (EAs) (Area 'B' Beaufort, Area 'D' Sproat Lake, Area 'E' Beaver Creek, and Area 'F' Cherry Creek) makes up over 45% of the total population. With this aging population, the ACRD recognizes the need to consider planning initiatives that support the ability to age in place and to be an age-friendly community through accessibility, transportation, housing, health care, food security, lifelong learning, and recreation.

In 2019, the ACRD received a Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Age-Friendly Communities grant to develop a local Age-Friendly Plan (AF Plan) for the four AV EAs. The AF Plan was developed between October 2019 and May 2020, and is the outcome of a robust community engagement process. It has also been informed by eight key themes of an age-friendly community, which were developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and used to evaluate a community's age-friendliness through an age-friendly lens. The overarching project goal of the AF Plan is to inform ACRD policy, specifically in the Zoning Bylaw and Alberni Valley Official Community Plans (OCPs), further mobilize community action, and for the ACRD to be recognized as an age-friendly community through the Province of BC and BC Healthy Communities.

The ACRD undertook a series of community engagement initiatives as part of the AF Plan development to obtain the views of community members and gain a deeper depth of participation that only residents and stakeholders can contribute. Based on the community input received, it is clear that the Alberni Valley has many things to celebrate. However, it is also facing many challenges in terms of being an age-friendly community. Despite such challenges, community members are passionate and generally optimistic, about the future for all ages living in the Alberni Valley.

The AF Plan outlines a framework to emphasize the importance of building age-friendly communities and promoting active aging. **The Alberni Valley Age-Friendly Action Plan expands on this framework by setting and prioritizing actions to make a community more accessible and inclusive, and to create opportunities for community members to become leaders and champions for the initiative.**

As part of the development of the action plan, an age-friendly assessment was completed to see how the ACRD aligns within each of the WHO's eight age-friendly themes. Ten age-friendly goals were then developed from the framework, assessment, and extensive community consultation. Lastly, 12 priority actions were highlighted for immediate consideration for stakeholders and community members as they **work collaboratively to ensure seniors in the Alberni Valley are included, respected, and supported to age well, and contribute through active participation in their community.**

ACRONYMS & DEFINITIONS

ACHN	Alberni Clayoquot Health Network
ACRD	Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
AF	Age-Friendly
AFSAC	Age-Friendly Stakeholder Advisory Committee
AV	Alberni Valley
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
MoTI	Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
NIC	North Island College
OCP	Official Community Plan
SD70	School District 70 (Alberni)
WHO	World Health Organization

Age-friendly	In an age-friendly community, the policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to help seniors age actively (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2010).
Age in place	The ability of people to choose to live in the home and community of their choice as independently and safely as possible (Edmonton, 2011).
Senior	An older person, over the age of 55 years, and includes Elders and older adults.

Building on the wealth of existing information and services focused on seniors, combined with valuable input from residents and community partners, this Age-Friendly Plan strives to represent the collective voice of Alberni Valley residents. This will ensure that the community informs the Plan to assist in making the Alberni Valley more age-friendly for all residents.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The ACRD is growing, aging, and changing. It is also rural and diverse, which results in unique social and environmental challenges for its communities. These challenges can have an impact on health and healthy aging different from those facing urban populations (Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors, 2007). Most community agencies, services providers, health and long-term care, recreational, and educational facilities are located outside of the Alberni Valley (AV) Electoral Areas (EAs), mainly in the City of Port Alberni. This results in a lack of or limited support available to enable EA seniors to remain independent, as well as limited housing and transportation options.

The ACRD regionally is growing in population and diversifying economically while maintaining a higher than the provincial average of senior residents, with 21.8% of the total population being 65 years or older (Statistics Canada, 2017). As a rural and more remote community, the aging population, who predominantly want to age in place, face unique challenges. Those Alberni Valley EA residents that want to age in place face barriers to remaining in their homes and staying active and engaged in their communities. In addition, residents are frequently required to travel out of the Alberni Valley for health services, which creates a range of challenges for themselves, and their families and caregivers. With these and other aging in place challenges in mind, the ACRD recognizes the need to consider resiliency planning initiatives that support the ability to age in place and to be an age-friendly community through accessibility, transportation, housing, health care, food security, lifelong learning, and recreation.

21.8%
of ACRD residents are
65+

1.2 PROJECT CONTEXT

In October 2018, the ACRD Board of Directors directed staff to apply to the 2019 Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Age-Friendly Communities grant program to develop a local Age-Friendly Plan for the four AV EAs (Area 'B' Beaufort, Area 'D' Sproat Lake, Area 'E' Beaver Creek, and Area 'F' Cherry Creek). In November 2018, UBCM approved funding for the creation of an Alberni Valley Age-Friendly Community Action Plan.

The AV Age-Friendly Plan (AF Plan) includes actions to guide the development of local age-friendly policies and initiatives, which will enable the ACRD to apply for future funding opportunities. One of these opportunities includes additional UBCM age-friendly funding, which focuses on the development of local projects once an action plan is in place.

The overarching project goal of the AF Plan is to inform ACRD policy, further mobilize community action, and for the ACRD to be recognized as an Age-Friendly Community through the Province of BC and BC Healthy Communities.

The AF Plan focuses on residents 55 years and older in the AV EAs (shown on the map), but considers all ages and abilities, as an age-friendly community benefits all people. The Plan also considers all Alberni Valley residents, including those who live in the City of Port Alberni.
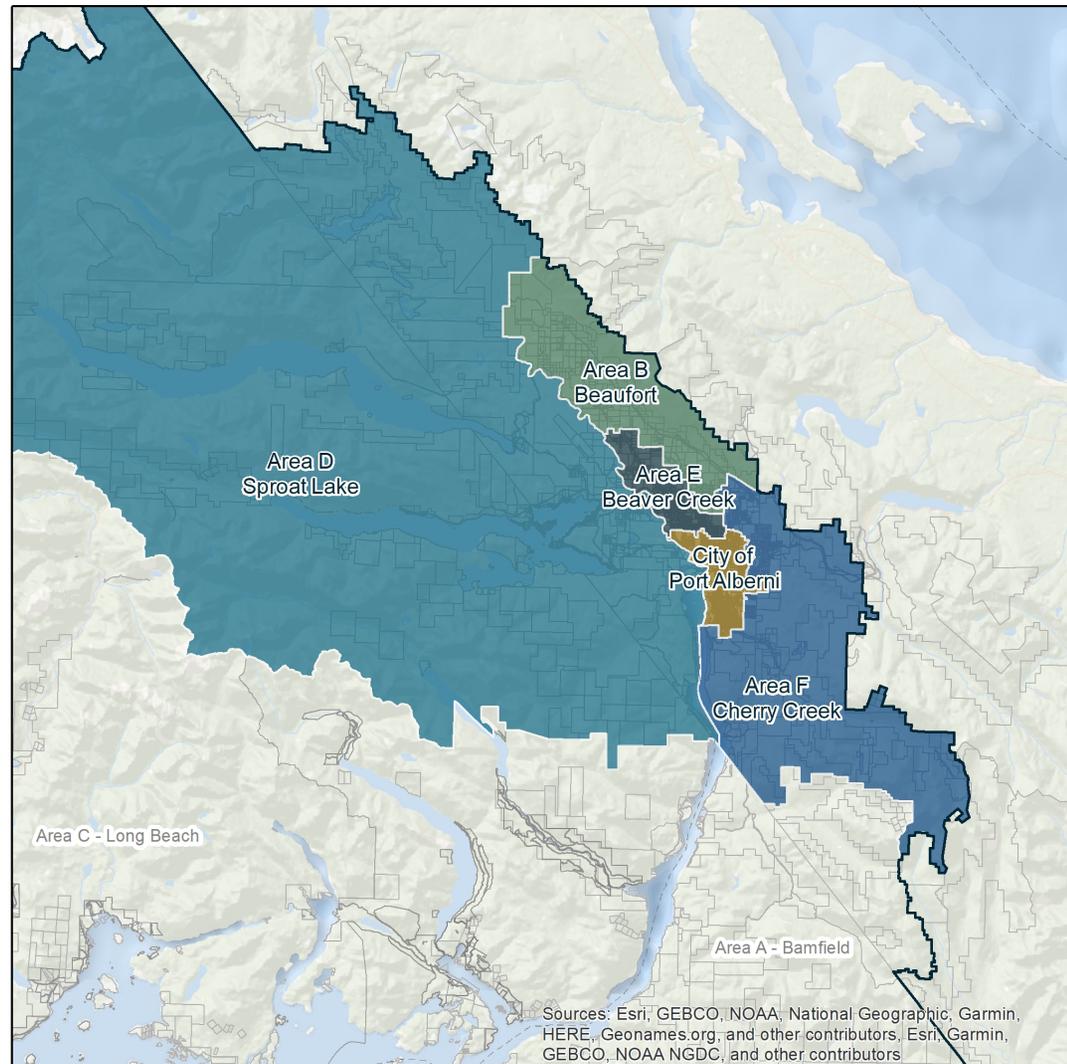
Although the AF Plan is focused on the four AV EAs, the project team involved and engaged with other agencies and organizations who also represent other areas such as First Nations, the City of Port Alberni, the Alberni Clayoquot Health Network, and other established committees and groups. Plan development incorporated related activities and reports from ACRD member municipalities, including existing age-friendly plans for the Districts of Tofino and Ucluelet, and the age-friendly planning process for the City of Port Alberni. Current projects including the ACRD Zoning Bylaw Review, corresponding Official Community Plan (OCP) amendments, and AV EA Transit Feasibility Study, were also considered in the development of the AF Plan.

The project timeline shows how the AF Plan was completed over the following four phases between October 2019 and May 2020, with additional details included in Appendix A.

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

1 PROJECT STRATEGY

DECEMBER - FEBRUARY

2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FEBRUARY - MARCH

3 PLANNING/NEEDS ASSESSMENT

MARCH - MAY

4 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

IMPLEMENT PLAN (ongoing)

An Age-Friendly Working Group (WG) was established to help guide the AF Plan development, and provide overall guidance for project activities. The WG was led by the project team (ACRD staff and a Planning Consultant), and comprised of a diverse group of ACRD residents, community members, service providers, organizations, agencies, and government representatives. Sproat Lake Director Penny Cote was appointed to the WG as the Chair at the November 13, 2019 Board meeting.

Alberni Valley Age-Friendly Working Group included representatives from the following:

- ACRD Regional Board of Directors
- ACRD Alberni Valley Electoral Area residents
- Island Health, Community Health Services
- First Nations Health Authority
- City of Port Alberni
- ACRD Agriculture Support Worker/Air Quality Council
- Constituency Assistant to Scott Fraser, MLA/City of Port Alberni Age-Friendly Committee member

- Echo Sunshine Club
- Port Alberni Better at Home
- AV Seniors Services Sector Coop
- Home care worker
- ACRD staff
- Planning Consultant (Cherie Enns Consulting Inc.)

This Plan is the outcome of a robust community engagement process, and has been informed by eight key themes of an age-friendly community that were developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and used to evaluate a community's age-friendliness through an age-friendly lens. These WHO themes are further discussed in Part 2, and form the basis of the action plan in Part 5.

"Making communities age-friendly is one of the most effective strategies to promote healthy and active aging, and contributes to the creation of sustainable, healthy communities which benefit all British Columbians."

Ministry of Health

2.1 GLOBAL, NATIONAL & PROVINCIAL AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

According to United Nations estimates, the number of seniors 60 years and older will double from the current 600 million to 1.2 billion by 2025, and again, to 2 billion by 2050. The vast majority of older people live in their homes and communities within environments that have not been designed with their needs and capacities in mind (WHO).

To support government in developing and strengthening policies in an aging world, a number of global age-friendly initiatives have been developed to identify factors that make environments more age-friendly, including:

- In 2002 a Policy Framework on Active Ageing (WHO);
- In 2006 the Global Age-Friendly Cities Project, created by the Word Health Organization (WHO); and
- In 2010 the organization of the Global Networks of Age-Friendly Communities, which includes 320 cities and communities across 80 countries.

These tools emphasized the importance of building age-friendly communities and promoting active aging, to increase people's independence by allowing them to stay in their homes longer, provide safe infrastructures, and develop affordable and accessible policies, programs, services, resources, and communication tools for all

The inner courtyard of a complex of flats in London, designed for over 75's. Credit: Witherford Watson Mann.

people (WHO). Active aging refers to the capacity for individuals to continue to participate fully in their communities throughout all stages of life, regardless of age or ability, and is influenced by economic, social, and physical factors.

The WHO Global Age-Friendly 2006 Cities Project brought together communities from around the world interested in supporting healthy aging by becoming more age-friendly. These community leaders gathered information from seniors, care providers, and other groups and individuals with an interest in age-friendly communities. This information helped to identify and frame eight key areas of community life in which communities can use to become more age-friendly.

Through the Global Age-friendly Cities Project, the World Health Organization (WHO) established eight themes to help evaluate issues and develop strategies to create age-friendly communities:

1. **OUTDOOR SPACES AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS** that are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.
2. Public **TRANSPORTATION** that is accessible and affordable.
3. **HOUSING** that is affordable, appropriately located, well built, well designed and secure.
4. Opportunities for **SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PARTICIPATION** in leisure, social, lifelong learning, cultural and spiritual activities with people of all ages and cultures.
5. Seniors are treated with **RESPECT** and are **INCLUDED** in civic life.
6. Opportunities for **CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT** that cater to older persons' interests and abilities.
7. Age-friendly **COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION** are available.
8. **COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES** are tailored to senior's needs.

| Outdoor Spaces & Buildings | Transportation | Housing | Social Participation | Respect & Social Inclusion | Civic Participation & Employment | Communication & Information | Community Support & Health Services |

The Government of Canada, through the Public Health Agency of Canada and in partnership with the provinces and territories, has played a lead role in the development and promotion of the WHO framework in the promotion of the Age-Friendly Communities initiative across Canada. The Government of Canada continues to encourage this age-friendly planning to help make communities better, safer, and healthier places for Canadians to live and thrive as they age.

Using the WHO themes to apply an age-friendly lens to all planning decisions helps local governments make informed future decisions regarding land development, parks and open space, transportation, and social services, and ensure that community investments are implemented as needed. To achieve the vision of the AF Plan in the eight key themed areas, the ACRD must

facilitate and foster a culture that allows for people to actively age with dignity, respect, and independence. Nurturing a corporate culture and policy commitment to an age-friendly future will be an essential factor in successfully implementing this AF Plan.

Becoming an age-friendly community is an ongoing process. For the ACRD, an age-friendly cultural evolution could include:
- Viewing all community issues and policies through an age-friendly lens;
- Applying a comprehensive approach to integrate age-friendly initiatives into a community-wide, intergenerational agenda;
- Strengthening connections and partnerships with service groups and government agencies that support age-friendly initiatives;
- Continuing to build civic advocacy and advisory capacity; and
- Liaising with provincial and federal agencies.
(Township of Langley, 2014)

BC Best Practices

The Province of BC has made significant headway in achieving Age-Friendly Communities province-wide. Between 2012 and 2018, BC Healthy Communities recognized 47 communities, including Vancouver Island municipalities such as the District of Tofino, the District of Sooke, and the City of Langford.

Also, BC Healthy Built Environment is a Population and Public Health program that strives to support the creation of built environments that can support physical, mental, and social health and well-being (BC Centre for Disease Control). Island Health utilizes the program to influence the built environment to promote health by collaborating with municipal planners, community organizations and other stakeholders.

AF Community Recognition

BC Healthy Communities

2012-2018, 47 communities across BC have been recognized

2018 (2 communities)
- District of Mackenzie
- City of New Westminster

2016 (3 communities)
- City of Maple Ridge
- City of Pitt Meadows
- Village of Harrison Hot Springs

2017 (6 communities)
- City of Abbotsford
- Village of Keremeos
- Village of Salmo
- District of Sicamous
- Town of Smithers
- District of Tofino

2015 (11 communities)
- District of 100 Mile House
- Village of Burns Lake
- Town of Golden
- Village of Kaslo
- City of Langford
- Township of Langley
- City of North Vancouver
- District of North Vancouver
- City of Richmond
- District of Sooke
- Sun Peaks Mountain Resort Municipality

2.2 COMMUNITY RESILIENCY & PANDEMICS

Amid the 2020 COVID-19 global health crisis, there has been an international rejuvenation of implementation strategies related to planning and responding to the needs of seniors in pandemics. Older persons have an increased vulnerability to medical conditions and weakened immune systems, making the population a high risk for the contraction of the coronavirus.

The WHO emphasizes that it is everyone's responsibility to protect and support seniors because they are one of the most vulnerable populations. Provincially, BC's concern with keeping seniors safe, connected, and both physically and mentally healthy suggests using language that is encouraging, recognizing that negative language and isolation can lead to decreased mental health (BC Healthy Communities). They recognized the importance of the diversity of the older population and that their perspective must be at the forefront of the pandemic response.

The regional Alberni Valley response to COVID-19 is a partnership between the ACRD and City of Port Alberni, which led to the development of a Response Plan and Path to Recovery Plan (ACRD). The Response Plan aims to help prepare for the potential arrival of COVID-19 and to strengthen preparedness at the local level, both publicly and within the two government organizations. The Path to Recovery Plan intends to chart a pathway for recovery in the region while taking direction from the Provincial Health Officer. The role of the Plan is to fit within the COVID-19 response and recovery framework provided by the Province. Other local organizations and agencies, such as the Alberni Clayoquot Health Network, are also responding by providing various resources for the ACRD.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the cultural narrative towards prioritizing senior's needs and recognizing opportunities to address accessibility, affordability, communication, and safety challenges. Many of the community connections made in the development of the Age-Friendly Plan are being relied upon as part of a broad Community Stakeholder Group that is helping guide the implementation of the COVID-19 Path to Recovery Plan and the ongoing efforts to promote resiliency within the region.

Credit: victoriastandard.ca

2.3 BEST PRACTICES & ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In becoming an age-friendly community with a thriving age-friendly culture, the ACRD should consider the role of local government structures in the implementation of this plan, including but not limited to:

- Developing policy and planning;
- Initiating and partnering with businesses, community organizations, and other public agencies;
- Providing leadership, insight, and strategic support on key initiatives;
- Providing services, spaces, and funding within the legislative mandate where appropriate;
- Supporting or leading communication efforts for information and raising community awareness about planning initiatives;
- Being (or identifying) a local champion to advocate for and carry initiatives forward; and
- Initiating action planning and engaging the community on a frequent basis and monitoring its progress.

An age-friendly assessment was completed to see how well the ACRD is doing within each of the WHO's eight age-friendly themes, and was also used to identify some:

- existing structures and services;
- other organizations or groups working to make the Alberni Valley more accessible and inclusive for seniors; and
- barriers to age-friendliness.

3.1 ACRD SNAPSHOT

The population of the ACRD has decreased slightly by less than 1% between 2011 and 2016, although an increase is anticipated over the next ten years. The BC average of the total population over 65 years is 18.3%, and the ACRD exceeds the provincial average with a population of 21.8%. While this is older than BC's average, it is younger than the Vancouver Island average.

Additionally, the largest population group in the ACRD is 45 to 64 years (30%), with the greatest growth expected in the next 20 years for those 75 and older. The median age in ACRD is 46.6 compared to BC's median age of 43. Of the entire ACRD population, 19.1% identify as Indigenous people, significantly above the provincial average of 6.6%, however fewer identify as a minority (4.9%) compared to the BC average (30.3%). (Statistics Canada, 2017)

21.8% of total population is **65+** (18.3% BC) | Median age is **46.6** (43 BC)

Largest group: **45-64 years** (30%)

19.1% identify as Indigenous people (6.6% BC), fewer identify as a minority (4.9%)

Life expectancy: **79** (82 Island Health/BC)

Greatest growth **75+** age group in **next 20 years** (2,505 to 5,000+)

High rate of home care/support clients/visits for **75+** age group

High rate of ER/urgent care visits for **75+** (992/1,000), (783/1,000 Island Health)

Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

Largest population group in the ACRD is 45 to 64 years (30%)

The population of residents 55 years and older in the AV EAs makes up over 45% of the total population and includes:

6,748 total population | 3,075 residents 55+

B Beaufort

443 total population
- 200 residents 55+ (45%)
- 100 residents 65+
- 100 residents 55-64 years

D Sproat Lake

1,616 total population
- 915 residents 55+ (57%)
- 490 residents 65+
- 425 residents 55-64 years

E Beaver Creek

2,754 total population
- 1,120 residents 55+ (41%)
- 640 residents 65+
- 480 residents 55-64 years

F Cherry Creek

1,935 total population
- 840 residents 55+ (43%)
- 460 residents 65+
- 380 residents 55-64 years

Stats Canada, 2016 Census

Over 40% of all four of the AV EAs total population of 6,748 includes those over 55 years of age, with Sproat Lake EA having the highest percent of seniors (57%), this is followed by Beaufort (45%), Cherry Creek (43%), and Beaver Creek (41%).

3.2 AGE-FRIENDLINESS OF THE ALBERNI VALLEY

The Alberni Valley is generally attractive to seniors but has its challenges related to remoteness and rural elements. For example, residents are frequently required to travel out of the Alberni Valley for health services, which creates a range of challenges for themselves, and their families and caregivers. The senior population within these smaller communities and rural areas face the most challenges. In more rural areas, the smaller tax base often can make it difficult to provide seniors with necessary services, such as local health services or transportation, and other services required to maintain their personal health and well-being (Village of Harrison Hot Springs, 2015).

A preliminary assessment of age-friendly communities in 2010 identified eight key factors contributing to success in creating a more age-friendly community (Gallagher and Mallhi, 2010). One of the steps to assessing the age-friendliness of the Alberni Valley included highlighting some important steps the ACRD is taking, including examples of success to date, with respect to government policy (included in Appendix B). Additionally, the many stakeholders and local initiatives considered throughout the community is summarized in Appendix E. The ACRD currently includes some age-friendly practices, such as developing this AF Plan; however, there are many ways improvement can be made to government policy to create a more age-friendly Alberni Valley.

As a next step in the age-friendly assessment, a checklist, which was adapted from the Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities Guide (2007), was applied to key ACRD documents. This Age-Friendly Communities checklist includes commonly understood criteria to monitor and assess a community over time, and is based on the WHO age-friendly themes. This tool was used to assess the Alberni Valley's current situation to help find ways it can improve, guide the development and implementation of the action plan in Part 5, and specifically to identify a list of priority actions.

The following summary diagram indicates some current ACRD age-friendly policies and regulation related to each criterion. Important next steps include finalizing the Zoning Bylaw Review, a Housing Needs Report to be completed in 2020-21 that will include areas within the Alberni Valley, future updates to the Alberni Valley OCPs, and expansion to the AV EA transit system. Key areas of improvement are needed relating to housing, health, and transportation, and will be included as part of the AF Plan implementation.

Photo credit: ncoa.org

Summary of Current ACRD Age-Friendly Policies & Regulation

Sidewalks, pathways & trails

- **ACRD Parks & Trails Strategic Plan** includes policies around accessible and friendly outdoor recreation opportunities for all ages and abilities; focuses on residents and visitors having a high quality of life, and healthy lifestyle choices. It also includes policies focusing on encouraging alternate modes of travel to improve pedestrian, cycling, boating and equestrian travel options; and guiding principles on accessiblity and universal design.
- **Alberni Valley Emergency Plan** includes policies around promoting safer accessibility; and providing non-medical support for persons in need.

Public restrooms & rest areas

- **ACRD Parks & Trails Strategic Plan** suggests a legacy fund be established with opportunities for business or public to donate to ongoing parks and trails projects to ensure accessible benches are provided.

Parking

- **ACRD Draft Zoning Bylaw Review** includes regulation for clearly marked off-street parking and loading, and sufficient number and size of accessible parking spots for persons with disabilities.

Housing

- **ACRD Current Zoning Bylaw & Draft Zoning Bylaw Review** include regulation permitting accessory dwelling units on a property at least 1 acre in size in the form of a secondary suite attached to a single family dwelling or a suite located within an accessory building (above a garage or barn), carriage home, cabin, cottage, garden or granny suite.
- **ACRD Alberni Valley Electoral Area OCPs** include policies to facilitate the provision of safe, affordable rental housing; and special needs housing, senior's accommodation, and affordable rental housing through various forms.
- **ACRD Housing Needs Report** will review housing accessibility in the community. Planning process to be completed in 2020-21.

Events & Activities

- **ACRD Parks & Trails Strategic Plan** includes policy encouraging opportunities for local residents and visitors to have a high quality of life, healthy lifestyle choices, and opportunities for outdoor recreation.
- **ACRD Alberni Valley Electoral Area OCPs** include policy supporting small-scale food production.
- **Alberni Valley Agricultural Plan** promotes food production and increased food security within the region.

Volunteering

- **ACRD Parks & Trails Strategic Plan** includes actions to develop a regional parks volunteer strategy outlining tasks for all ages and abilities; and encouraging expanding the diversity of user group volunteers.

It is important to also highlight a selection of age-friendly initiatives in the community:

- Alberni Valley Official Community Plans (2011-14): Include objectives for the provision of safe, affordable rental housing, and special needs housing, and senior's accommodation; accessible transportation, access to trails and supporting small-scale food production.
- Alberni Valley Agricultural Plan (2011): Includes objectives that promote food security and more inclusive access to food within the community.
- City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club, a volunteer driven, membership based organization, that provides opportunities and activities to improve end enhance the quality of life for adults and seniors 50 years and older. Offers a range of programs and activities, many of which focus on physical activity for seniors (e.g. pickle ball, dancing, hiking, bowling, volleyball, etc.).
- Alberni Valley Hospice Society Grief and Bereavement Program provides counselling services for all ages.
- The ElderCollege at North Island College (NIC) provides an opportunity for adults 50 years and older to explore new areas of learning, and Joy of Lifelong Learning offers academic courses at reduced rates. NIC also helps to strengthen partnerships and connections in support of various intergenerational activities.
- Farmer's Market coupon program providing low-income seniors with access to local, healthy food.
- Grocery home delivery.
- Alberni Lifeline monitoring is owned and operated by the West Coast General Hospital Foundation, and was set-up to give seniors and those with chronic medical conditions access to help at the press of a button, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- Volunteer Friendly Phone Service from the Port Alberni Sunshine Club with the cooperation of the RCMP - free program, those who register will get a daily call from a volunteer.
- City of Port Alberni Parks and Recreation provides senior's recreation programming.
- The proposed Housing Needs Report is a critical tool for addressing housing concerns and needs of all residents, including seniors desiring to age in place.
- Sproat Lake Community Hall offers pickle ball and some other activities for seniors. Beaver Creek and Cherry Creek Community Halls are also available for activities within their communities.
- Port Alberni Friendship Center offers First Nations focused programs and services.

The assessment completed outlines the features and elements found in an age-friendly community organized around major aspects of community life. It is important to restate that in most areas the Alberni Valley is very age-friendly but has increasing challenges, which can be addressed through collaboration and leadership.

3.3 BENEFITS OF A MORE AGE-FRIENDLY ALBERNI VALLEY

In an age-friendly community, residents are able and encouraged to actively participate. This could include:
- participating in the workforce;
- recreation suitable to stage in life and varying ability;
- social activities including intergenerational opportunities; and
- volunteer opportunities.

Community wide benefits of becoming more age-friendly include:
- Residents are able to age in place;
- People of all ages, backgrounds, and circumstances can interact, share experiences, and contribute;
- Better use of public resources;
- Designing and delivering public services in age-friendly ways can lead to improved use of tax dollars;
- Age-friendly public facilities and infrastructure (such as buildings and parks) can be used by more citizens;
- Services become more accessible to residents and have a greater impact;
- Businesses attract and retain knowledgeable and skilled workers;
- Lifelong learning options for intellectual stimulation and social engagement (to maximize independence, meaningful community engagement, and as a preventative way to enhance overall health and well-being); and
- Enhanced focus on citizenship: Age-friendliness leads to a community that recognizes, appreciates and values the contributions made by different members of the community and engages them in all aspects of community life. (Age-Friendly Alberta)

Participation and engagement contribute to the quality of life and health of all members of the community, including seniors. Not only will seniors' well-being be served, but the entire community will benefit from their life experience, skills, and free time.
Seniors are already major contributors to volunteer social action and need community support to continue that role.

The ACRD is taking steps to further address the needs of seniors and facilitate a greater quality of life for all residents. The following Part 4 of the AF Plan highlights further insights from stakeholders. In summary, the assessment of the Alberni Valley verifies that for residents who want to age in place there is more to be done to address barriers to remaining in their homes, and staying active and engaged in their communities.

"An age-friendly city is an inclusive and accessible community environment that optimizes opportunities for health, participation and security for all people, in order that quality of life and dignity are ensured as people age."

World Health Organization

4.1 WHO & HOW

From December 2019 to May 2020, the ACRD undertook a series of community engagement initiatives as part of the AF Plan development to obtain the views of community members and gain a deeper depth of participation that only residents and stakeholders can contribute. This part of the AF Plan builds off of a wide variety of background research undertaken on global, national, provincial, and local age-friendly initiatives. Community engagement was used to identify issues, needs, gaps, and priorities from different perspectives, to provide the framework for developing the action plan in Part 5.

To ensure all stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide input on the AF Plan, advertising included various methods of social media and print including the ACRD website, Facebook (ACRD AV Age-Friendly Plan and City of Port Alberni pages), Twitter, the AV News, a mail out to all households in the AV EAs, and posters placed around the Alberni Valley. Many detailed communications through phone, email and in-person were also made throughout the project, resulting in important networking and relationship building to assist in collaborating to work towards making the Alberni Valley more age-friendly.

Detailed community engagement findings are included in the appendices, while a summary of key findings from some of the engagement methods is included below.

The following community engagement events were held as part of the AF Plan development:
- ACHN project introduction presentation and brainstorming discussion (October 16, 2019) - approximately 20 attendees
- Age-Friendly Project introduction presentation to the ACRD Regional Board (November 13, 2019)
- Age-Friendly Community Survey (December 9, 2019 to January 15, 2020) - 376 respondents
- Sunshine Club presentation at General Meeting (January 22, 2020) - over 50 attendees
- Island Health, Community Health Services Team, presentation (January 22, 2020) - approximately 40 staff participants
- Age-Friendly Working Group Meeting (January 24, 2020) - 20 participants
- ACHN Services Fair information table (January 27, 2020) - approximately 50 interactions
- Age-Friendly Community Workshop (February 6, 2020) - approximately 40 attendees
- Working Group Meeting (virtual action planning engagement due to COVID-19)

Community engagement also included many additional presentations, and interactions through phone calls, emails and in-person conversations, where the project team received valuable feedback from stakeholders across the ACRD.

Community Survey

The AF survey was available online and in hardcopy for a six-week period at various locations in the Alberni Valley. The project team was grateful for the 376 participants who provided valuable input on a variety of AF questions based on the WHO age-friendly themes. The survey was open to anyone in the Alberni Valley, including both ACRD and City of Port Alberni residents, to gain a clearer demographic understanding of residents, those who work with and for seniors, and anyone else who is passionate about making the Alberni Valley more age-friendly. Additional survey results are included in Appendix C.

78% 55+

50% retired

65% married

66%
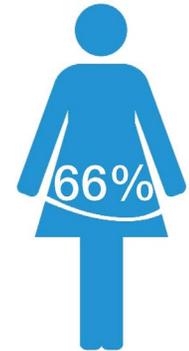
A snapshot of all survey respondents includes:
- 78% were 55 years and older
- 66% were female | 50% were retired | 65% were married
- 57% live in the AV EAs, while 44% live in the City of Port Alberni
- 64% have lived in their community for 15 years or more (including 35% for 35 years or more)
- 73% see themselves living in their own home in 10 years
- 97% drive themselves to get around for shopping, medical appointments, errands or other

RESPONDENT'S DEMOGRAPHICS

Age	Percent
95 years+	0%
85-94 years	2%
75-84 years	11%
65-74 years	28%
55-64 years	37%
45-54 years	9%
19-44 years	13%
0-18 years	0%
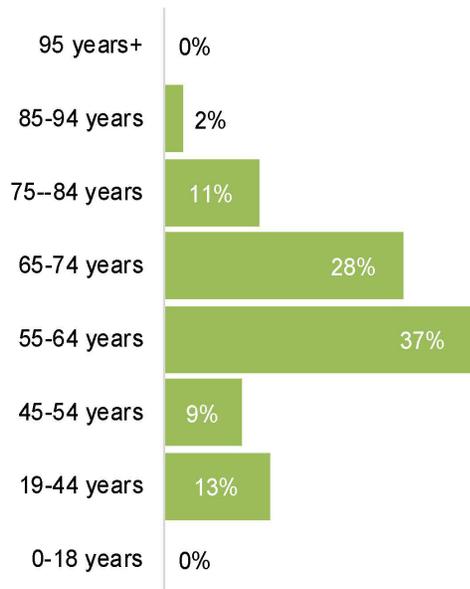
WHAT RESPONDENTS MOST LOOK FORWARD TO AS THEY AGE

healthy health care Staying healthy Watching friends grandkids free time relaxing Continuing financial Things Relaxation able Maintaining grandchildren long living gardening community age Enjoying volunteer family spending time time life travel Staying Retirement Port Alberni working Independence good health children active helping health nothing hobbies freedom good seeing Freedom spend time family activities including Time Enjoying life love family now grow

Age-Friendly Working Group

Approximately 20 representatives from a range of community organizations, Electoral Area representatives (ACRD Board members and residents), community members, the project team, and other ACRD staff participated in the Working Group meeting on January 24, 2020. The main objective was to introduce the project and receive input through a visioning activity that was informed by the survey results. Results of the visioning activity helped to develop priority action areas that were used at the Community Workshop.

Community Workshop

On February 6, 2020 an Age-Friendly Community Workshop was attended by approximately 40 people. The Workshop was another very valuable method to obtaining rich input on the strengths and challenges related to the age-friendliness of the Alberni Valley, as well as ideas for the Plan's goals and actions. Following a small group exercise, attendees were each given dots and asked to choose their top three priorities from the lists that were developed at the Workshop. The highest priority actions included: creating a community hub, more affordable senior's housing, and more independent low maintenance housing.

Additional Working Group and Community Workshop information is included in Appendix D.

4.2 KEY FINDINGS

Based on the community input received, it is clear that the Alberni Valley has many things to celebrate. The community members that participated in the engagement activities highlighted many strengths and things they enjoy about living in the Alberni Valley, including easy access to nature and agriculture, options for community participation and recreation, and considering the rural and remote nature, that seniors are generally well serviced. It is also important to note that residents reported that they are active (82% of survey respondents engage in physical activity at least a few times per week), healthy (65% of survey respondents describe their health as excellent or very good), and 90% of survey respondents are generally satisfied with friends and/or family relationships.

However, the Alberni Valley is also facing many challenges in terms of being an age-friendly community. Key issues identified by the community are outlined in more detail in Part 5: action plan, and organized into the eight WHO age-friendly themes. Issues related to community support and health, transportation, affordable housing, and communication and information emerged as some of the key priorities for action. Additionally, survey respondents identified other primary concerns as declining health (63%), losing independence (52%), difficulty physically getting around (48%), and financial stress (43%). Also of concern is that 25% of survey respondents stated they are delaying retirement for financial reasons, which leads to the importance of making efforts to creating age-friendly business, as well as opportunities for seniors to volunteer and participate in the workforce.

Despite such challenges, community members are passionate, and generally optimistic, about the future of the Alberni Valley. The information and ideas gathered from the community engagement served as the foundation for the development of the action plan, also found in the following Part 5.

Credit: strathcona.ca

5.1 AGE-FRIENDLY FRAMEWORK

An action plan is useful for setting and prioritizing actions to make a community more accessible and inclusive. It may also create opportunities for community members to become leaders and champions for the initiative.

Throughout the development of this assessment and action plan, the WHO themes were used as a guiding framework for all aspects of the report content. Although broad, these themes provide guidance to reflect on all aspects of community through an age-friendly lens that affect all members, with a focus on seniors. Ten age-friendly goals (shown to the right) were developed from the framework, assessment and community perspective, and are included in order of community priority based on the public input received. Additional action planning details are included in Appendix E.

The age-friendly goals are stated in each of the following eight themes. The themes also include a summary of the project findings based on:
- A snapshot of community engagement results, including key voices, from the survey and Community Workshop.
- Common issues identified in the context of research and community engagement.
- Proposed objectives and future actions for what can be done next.

A summary of age-friendly features included in current ACRD documents that benefit all residents, including seniors in the Alberni Valley is included in Part 3.

Next steps further refine the proposed objectives and actions with recommended priority actions to be considered and undertaken, including a timeline for achievement. Priority action items are linked to possible community leads and/or partners to provide guidance for future collaboration and discussion.

ALBERNI VALLEY AGE-FRIENDLY GOALS
(listed in order of community priority based on input received):

1. **Community support & health:** Increase access to community support and timely health services for all seniors, including for those who are most vulnerable.
2. **Housing:** Facilitate and support a range of suitable and affordable housing options for people of all ages, including seniors, and people with mobility challenges.
3. **Transportation:** Improve access to a range of affordable and appropriate transportation options.
4. **Communication & information:** Regularly and effectively communicate information on services, emergency response, home support, and social activities.
5. **Respect & social inclusion:** Provide opportunities for social participation for people of all ages, abilities and cultures, including seniors.
6. **Civic participation & employment:** Formalize civic and corporate commitment to making the Alberni Valley a more age-friendly community.
7. **Outdoor spaces & buildings:** Ensure public spaces, trails and buildings are easily accessed with many opportunities for all ages and abilities, including seniors, to enjoy and appreciate.
8. **Communication & information:** Build individual and community resiliency, with emphasis on emergency planning.
9. **Civic participation & employment:** Strengthen opportunities for civic participation, volunteerism, and employment.
10. **Social participation:** Ensure seniors have access to a range of recreational and social activities within the communities where they live.

Creating an age-friendly community is a complex process with many different players. The influence of federal and provincial policies, limited funding, lack of local government resources, and reliance on local organizations and aging volunteers, make it challenging to address some of the key priorities for seniors, such as healthcare and affordable housing.

5.2 AGE-FRIENDLY THEMES & GOALS

THEME 1: COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES

Goal 1: Increased access to community support and timely health services for all seniors, including for those who are most vulnerable.

Access to health and support services are integral to maintaining health and independence in the Alberni Valley. Seniors frequently note concerns over the availability of high quality health care that is accessible and meets their needs. A wider range of health services, options of home care, well-located services, and residential facilities are some strategies for creating age-friendly health services.

Community perspective
"Health" was a dominant theme throughout the community engagement. At the Working Group meetings and Community Workshop the presence of health agencies and social groups was cited as positive. At these meetings, the need for a more robust home support system and additional mental health supports were also discussed.

Overall, 24% of survey respondents responded that their health was "excellent" when compared to most people their age. However, 62% of Alberni Valley residents responded that declining health is something that worries them about thinking about their future older adult years. Respondents felt very strongly that the Alberni Valley would benefit from additional information on local health and support services, and especially more home care support and services.

> **Community input highlighted there is a great need and desire for opportunities for residents to grow their own food:**
>
> "*Lots of agriculture, so access to local food products.*"
>
> "*We need more farmers growing food locally. Programs that help seniors access affordable locally grown food.*"

Key issues identified:
- Services, such as in-home care are not affordable and inadequate.
- Need for more nurse practitioners and physicians.
- Limited health services and specialists available without leaving town, including very limited clinic hours.
- Need for mental health supports.
- Need for affordable transportation to in and out-of-town medical appointments.

Proposed objectives and future actions:

Many of the community support and health objectives and actions are beyond the capacity of the ACRD. However, political support and advocacy from the ACRD remains a vital role in their implementation and achievement, some of which is included in the mandate of the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional Hospital District and Alberni Clayoquot Health Network (ACHN). The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the pressing need for improved access to health and support services in the community.

Objective 1.1: Support the improvement of health care services available to seniors in the Alberni Valley.
Objective 1.2: Support improved transportation options for in and out-of-town appointments and services.
Actions focus on:
- Increasing awareness and capacity of existing programs and services.
- Engaging with and supporting health care providers, including Better at Home, to identify social needs and utilize community resources to support seniors in managing their health and health care, while aiming at reducing social isolation.
- Supporting the establishment of, and working with, organizations to expand volunteer patient support program, which accompanies seniors to out-of-town appointments.
- Lobbying for increased handyDART services in the Alberni Valley.
- Collaborating for better use of technology to mitigate travel or in-person appointments.
- Developing or expanding neighbourhood programs or community hubs.
- Recruiting physicians and community health care workers.

Objective 1.3: Develop strategies to reach more seniors who lack access to services.
- Actions focus on supporting Island Health, the ACHN, and other organizations such as Echo Sunshine Club and the Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative to develop or expand services to improve outreach to disconnected or socially isolated seniors.

Objective 1.4: Identify resources for community projects and programs that promote and support healthy aging, and age-friendly neighbourhoods and communities.
Actions focus on:
- Supporting Island Health, the ACHN, and other organizations and/or levels of government to identify, promote, pursue and support existing opportunities to fund and develop age-friendly projects and programs.
- Support for increased opportunities around food security to access and grow local food, and improve knowledge of low cost food programs (e.g. North Island College Market Gardner Program in partnership with Port Alberni Shelter Society, and other mentorship programs between youth and seniors for growing food and skills related to post harvest).
- Establishing a community hub at a vacant school with adult and child daycare, a senior's community centre, community garden, farmer's market stalls, community watch, and at an accessible location.
- Increasing collaboration with established agriculture agencies and organizations such as the ACRD Agriculture Support Workers, Alberni Farmers' Institute, Farmers' Markets, and community associations.

Objective 1.5: Encourage the ACRD to support mental health in the Alberni Valley.

- Actions focus on increasing community connectivity between the City of Port Alberni, ACRD and rural communities to promote social interactions and reduce social isolation, increase access to green and open spaces, and prioritize initiatives to strengthen community identity and sense of belonging through programming, collaboration, and partnerships.
- Some suggestions for next steps include updating policies in the ACRD AV OCPs, and collaborating with programs such as Echo Sunshine Club, and others.

THEME 2: HOUSING

Goal 2: Facilitate and support a range of suitable and affordable housing options for people of all ages, including seniors, and people with mobility challenges.

Access to a range of safe, diverse, affordable, and accessible housing options, both public and private, is vital to the well-being, health, independence and quality of life of seniors. Housing that is designed to be adaptable and accessible enables seniors to age in place and ensures that they can remain in their community of choice as long as possible. Approximately 80% of the time of people aged 70 years and older is spent at home and in their immediate surroundings, hence the importance of appropriate housing and high quality physical environment (Age UK).

Community perspective
When asked about living independently, 68% of respondents expressed that it is extremely important for them to live independently as they age. Additionally, 25% of respondents indicated that moving into more suitable housing is what worries them most when asked, "What worries you most thinking about your future adult years?".

> **Community input highlighted there is a need for both housing for all ages and housing specific to those 55 years and older:**
>
> *"There are affordable housing shortages for all demographics in this town."*
>
> *"Eliminate 55+ only housing - community includes everyone."*
>
> *"We need 55+ housing options at Sproat Lake." "Build more facilities to house 55+."*

Key issues identified:
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Transportation from housing in rural areas to appointments, etc.
- Demand for in-home services, including maintenance, that allow residents to age safely in their homes.
- Availability of housing supports.
- Limited housing stock available for rural residents wanting to downsize in their community.
- Insufficient housing options that support aging in place – seniors housing, cooperative housing, cohousing, and smaller units are all unavailable.

Proposed objectives and future actions:
Objective 2.1: Support the development of a range of suitable and affordable housing options for seniors in the Alberni Valley.
Objective 2.2: Investigate ACRD strategies to support age-friendly housing in the ACRD.
Objective 2.3: Incorporate age-friendly provisions in EA OCPs.

Objective 2.4: Improve the accessibility of housing in the Alberni Valley.
Actions focus on:
- Undertaking a Housing Needs Report for the Alberni Valley, and an Attainable Housing Policy focusing on lower income seniors.
- Working with local and other partners to help identify demand and future housing needs for alternative, safe, affordable, and accessible housing.
- The need for more assisted living/long-term care facilities in the Alberni Valley.
- Working with local and other partners such as BC Housing, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and non-profits to encourage a range of housing types to meet the needs of seniors and citizens with special needs. Also, to allow seniors to age in place, including exploring opportunities for funding and permits to live on agricultural properties in the Agricultural Land Reserve once retired from farming.

Some suggestions for next steps:
- Include healthy and inclusionary policies in the AV OCPs (including resident housing, affordable housing in new developments, density bonusing, and inclusionary housing policies).
- Encouraging the development of affordable rental housing for seniors.
- Supporting the construction of assisted living/long-term care facilities.
- Developing adaptable housing standards to guide future development.
- Advocating and working with the City of Port Alberni, other local partners, local governments, and levels of government, such as BC Housing and CMHC.

Objective 2.5: Implement strategies for seniors with financial challenges to stay in their homes.
- Actions focus on expanding home repair and maintenance programs for seniors, and increasing awareness of and funding opportunities for affordability programs and affordable housing.
- Some next steps include utilizing Provincial Social Welfare Programs, and working with local non-profits such as the Port Alberni Shelter Society and the Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative.

THEME 3: TRANSPORTATION

Goal 3: Improve access to a range of affordable and appropriate transportation options.

Public transportation is an important option for seniors who may not be able to drive a vehicle. As with active transportation, access to public transportation options helps to ensure that seniors are able to safely and comfortably carry out daily tasks such as working, volunteering, shopping or attending appointments. Accessible and affordable public transportation is also vital to supporting participation in the social, cultural, and recreational life of a community, thereby decreasing the risk of social isolation.

Research has shown that the consequences of poor transportation include missed medical appointments, difficulty shopping for nutritious food and medicine, increased social isolation, and pushing older adults to leave their homes and move to residential care. Investment in all transportation modes, including walking and cycling paths, ride shares, community buses, and transit networks, becomes increasingly more important as the population ages in the Alberni Valley.

Community perspective
Throughout the community engagement, residents noted the importance of, and need for, multiple modes of transportation in the Alberni Valley. Over 70% of survey respondents answered that accessible, affordable, and safe transportation is either "extremely important" or "very important" to them. Almost all (97%) of survey respondents indicated that they drive themselves to get around for things like shopping, medical appointments, and errands. This further highlights the importance of planning now for when respondents will not be able to drive themselves.

> **Community input highlighted there is a need for improved transportation in the AV:**
>
> *"Better transportation routes in rural areas".*
>
> *"Safe walking paths along rural roads that connect communities together. So many roads unsafe to walk."*
>
> *"I hope that work will come out of this to strengthen public transportation, fix pedestrian infrastructure, welcoming public areas, and safe, separated bike infrastructure."*
>
> *"Need a walk/path way along Beaver Creek Rd for the safety of all who don't drive or just enjoy walking or biking."*
>
> *"Would be desirable to have some transit service along Faber and Stirling Arm, even if just for daytime trips for shopping, appointments, etc."*

Key issues identified:
- General lack of transportation options.
- Poor connectivity and accessibility for dedicated active transportation networks (walking routes, biking routes).
- Current level of bus service does not adequately support an independent senior.

- Taxis are too expensive to use as a viable mode of transportation.
- Traveling at night is difficult; many do not feel safe in dark or winter conditions.
- Inability of those without cars to get to goods and services in many rural areas.

Proposed objectives and future actions:
Objective 3.1: Improve pedestrian safety in the Alberni Valley.
Objective 3.2: Calm traffic and improve safety for pedestrians at high priority areas.
Objective 3.3: Integrate transit-oriented design including alternative transportation methods.
Actions focus on working with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) to:
- Increase accessibility and pedestrian safety measures, especially near schools, seniors housing, and at key crossings.
- Install pedestrian activated lights for road crossings at key locations.
- Improve pedestrian and cycling access, and traffic calming mechanisms (such as landscaped medians) focusing on major roads such as Beaver Creek Road, Cherry Creek Road, and Highway 4, and integrate objectives into the AV OCPs including transportation junctions with the City of Port Alberni.

- Address arterial densification/prioritize corridor development in OCP policies and goals, by increasing the density on main corridors to increase the viability of transit services.
- Pursue funding to conduct a Street and Intersection Pedestrian Safety Study and Action Plan.

Objective 3.4: Support the development of community and organization led convenient and affordable transportation options.
Objective 3.5: Continue to plan and advocate for convenient and affordable transportation options with the Province (MoTI) and BC Transit.
Objective 3.6: Actively pursue funding opportunities to support transportation in the Alberni Valley.
Actions focus on:
- Supporting alternative transportation options (volunteer driver programs, community shuttles, development of a community co-op bus program, and utilizing school buses when not in use).
- Supporting and advocating for existing low-cost medical and non-medical transportation, such as Wheels for Wellness (low-cost transportation for non-emergency physician-related medical care).
- Exploring funding options, including provincial, federal, and municipal grants, for rideshare programs to provide funding and support to volunteer drivers.

THEME 4: COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

Goal 4: Regularly and effectively communicate information on services, emergency response, home support, and social activities.
Goal 8: Build individual and community resiliency, with emphasis on emergency planning.

Staying connected with community events and people, having access to timely information, and having opportunities for lifelong learning is necessary for creating an age-friendly community. Evolving communications technologies can create barriers for those who do not know how, or do not have the means, to access them. Reaching everyone with the right information, at the right time, using the right medium is extremely challenging and is vitally important. Simple changes, such as age-friendly formatting and design, and distributing information through a variety of avenues, can help to reach more community members and ease frustration and other difficulties.

Community perspective
When asked about the importance of accessing community information, 66% of respondents say it is extremely or very important to access information in one source, and 60% of respondents say it is extremely or very important to make information available in person. Social media was the preferred method of getting information about activities, events and/or news (72% of respondents), followed by newspaper (64%), and word of mouth (55%). At the Working Group meetings and Community Workshop, enhancing the communication of existing services was recommended as a way of improving the age-friendliness of the Alberni Valley.

> **Community input highlighted there is a need for improved communication and information in the AV:**
>
> *"There should be a central "info" source for people that age, perhaps in the form of a pamphlet, so that amenities can turn into benefits once you know of their existence."*
>
> *"I for one know I would take dance, cooking, swimming, hiking and anything dog training related if it were offered in a Port Alberni Activity Guide like the Nanaimo one."*

Key issues identified:
- Lack of central resource for senior's information (physical location, print location, online location).
- Need to formalize/expand existing informal communication support networks.
- Lack of cell service in rural areas.
- Impacts on transportation (bridge out) and communicating in an emergency.
- ACRD and City websites could be improved to better serve seniors.

Proposed objectives and future actions:
Objective 4.1: Enhance the level of dialogue and coordination among the ACRD, agencies that support seniors, and seniors.

Objective 4.2: Broaden the ACRDs information dissemination in the Alberni Valley.
Actions focus on:
- Working with community partners to develop an awareness campaign to ensure seniors know who to contact regarding services, especially health and social services, in the Alberni Valley.
- Increasing options for public community bulletin boards and online community boards, with current news and resources in places seniors frequent, and developing a community resource directory.
- Continuing to evaluate the progress of the AV AF Plan and communicate progress.

Some suggestions for next steps include:
- Creating a joint City of Port Alberni and ACRD AV Age-Friendly Committee, as well as collaborating with community partners.
- Expanding information sharing within the Alberni Valley with regular newsletters in each Electoral Area, and better utilizing the Community Hall's Facebook pages, as a means of information sharing.
- The ACRD could utilize more platforms for communication and information, instead of only the ACRD website and Twitter.
- Utilize existing groups such as the ACHN, Echo Sunshine Club, North Island College (ElderCollege and Joy of Learning courses), Hospice volunteers, and the Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative.

Objective 4.3: Strengthen bonds with local stakeholders, partners, and First Nation communities.
Actions focus on exploring ways to reach out to First Nations Elders to identify needs and areas of mutual support and interest. Some suggestions for next steps include collaborating with the Port Alberni Friendship Centre to reach out in their monthly newsletter, and host a community-to-community dialogue to connect stakeholders across the Alberni Valley and local First Nations.

Objective 4.4: Ensure seniors are informed and well prepared, before, during and after an emergency.
Many of the actions are a part of the Alberni Valley Emergency Program and focus on:
- Developing and implementing strategies to disseminate emergency preparedness information to seniors, and involving more seniors and people with disabilities with this and safety programs across generations.
- Exploring options for a more flexible model for volunteers to not require a long-term commitment.
- Providing training on preparedness to seniors, caregivers and their families and organizations serving seniors, as well as involving seniors in the training of an emergency notification system, and creation of an emergency preparedness package, and any related programming.
- Some suggestions for next steps include collaborating with local partners and care homes, such as Alberni Lifeline, North Island College (ElderCollege) and others, when there are air quality advisories, or to provide other important emergency notifications and information.

THEME 5: RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION

Goal 5: Provide opportunities for social participation for people of all ages, abilities and cultures, including seniors.

Attitudes and behaviours towards older people can vary greatly based on circumstances. Elders are often regarded with respect, yet their needs for social services and inclusion in community may not be fully considered. Age-friendly communities take a holistic approach to foster inclusive and respectful relationships between all ages.

Community perspective

While many responses showed Alberni Valley residents have frequent social interactions, 16% of residents responded that they interact with their family, friends, or neighbours once or less per week. Over 90% of all respondents are very satisfied with relationships with family and/or friends, while 41% stated they feel left out or a lack of companionship. Alberni Valley residents also stated it is extremely important to have accessible community events (78%), and activities involving young and older people (74%). At Working Group meetings and the Community Workshop, residents communicated that they would like to see more intergenerational knowledge sharing and social interactions, and many seniors want to contribute to and feel connected to their community.

> **Community input highlighted there is a great need and desire to be respectful, and for opportunities for social inclusion:**
>
> *"Encourage people from all walks of life to look after and respect each other regardless of age. We all have an important part to play in our community."*
>
> *"Social isolation is a major issue culturally we put a strong emphasis on being independent but as we age we need opportunities to support each other."*
>
> *"I feel like services for families are lacking and that more events to bring seniors and families together would be good."*
>
> *"Would love to see more positive events for youth and youth interaction with elders in the community."*

Key issues identified:
- Activities aimed at intergenerational mingling are lacking and would help to improve the resiliency of the community as a whole.
- Need to connect seniors with local schools, and a desire to share knowledge with younger generations.
- Need for targeted outreach to isolated seniors.
- Need for greater inclusion of seniors in community events.

ACRD | ALBERNI VALLEY AGE-FRIENDLY PLAN

Proposed objectives and future actions:

Objective 5.1: Use an age-friendly approach in ACRD rural planning initiatives.

Objective 5.2: Educate Regional District employees, boards, and commissions about the impacts of age, disability, and memory loss.

Actions focus on:

- Encouraging seniors to participate more in the local government public participation process, such as OCP updates, and appointing an ACRD and City of Port Alberni staff champion to work on existing and future age-friendly plans and initiatives.
- Evidence-based cultural training for aging health and human services professionals, and creating a Regional District "no wrong door" information and assistance program.

Objective 5.3: Create opportunities for intergenerational activities, services, housing, and other programs.

Objective 5.4: Foster community integration and inclusion.

Objective 5.5: Welcome, encourage, and celebrate the inclusion of seniors in community events.

Objective 5.6: Help local community groups and businesses become more aware of the needs and interests of seniors.

Actions focus on:

- Partnering with schools, non-profits, First Nations, and other community organizations to provide opportunities for seniors and intergenerational programming, such as storytelling, technology training, and student volunteer programs at the high school, and initiating an "adopt-a-grandparent" or Elder tutoring program.
- Establishing clear and meaningful accessibility guidelines for community events, especially around communicating with seniors, accessible transportation, seating, and washroom facilities.
- Collaborating with local agencies, businesses, organizations, and places of worship to explore ways of better engaging and supporting seniors in the community.
- Some suggestions for next steps include: establishing an event or program associated with Seniors Week, International Day of Older Persons, Grandparents Day, Family Day or another similar occasion, and developing communication material to welcome and inform seniors that are new to the Alberni Valley.

THEME 6: CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT

Goal 6: Formalize civic and corporate commitment to making the Alberni Valley a more age-friendly community.
Goal 9: Strengthen opportunities for civic participation, volunteerism, and employment.

Older people continue to contribute to their community long after retirement. This demographic includes the highest numbers of people engaged in volunteerism and the political process. Many have a desire to continue working and can, especially if supported by tailoring employment opportunities to their needs.

Community perspective
When asked, "What are some opportunities for improving the age-friendliness of the Alberni Valley?", the Working Group responded that most of the volunteers are seniors and that they would like to see the number of senior volunteers grow. As a whole, Alberni Valley survey respondents expressed interest in more opportunities for volunteering and paid work. This is indicative of a number of things: the need to communicate available volunteer and work opportunities in an accessible way, a desire for additional volunteer and employment opportunities, and capacity for additional volunteer and employment opportunities.

> **Community input highlighted there is a great need and desire for opportunities for volunteering:**
>
> *What I most look forward to as I age: "Staying healthy and being able to volunteer and give to others including my family."*
>
> *"I volunteer with Special Olympics and interact with a lot of people with physical and intellectual disabilities. A lot of them have difficulty accessing many programs and buildings in the area."*
>
> *"Encourage volunteers to participate in local affairs."*

Key issues identified:
- Targeted communications, specifically for seniors, regarding activities and available resources in the community are needed.
- Need for more coordinated and better communicated information regarding volunteer opportunities in the community for seniors.
- Barriers to volunteering need to be overcome - awareness, mobility, motivation, incentives, and concerns over the amount of commitment needed to volunteer and contribute to the community.
- Need for more senior involvement in civic decision-making.

Proposed objectives and future actions:
Objective 6.1: Develop and implement an Age-Friendly Plan.

Actions focus on collaborating on the implementation of the AV AF Plan through applying for joint ACRD and City of Port Alberni Age-Friendly Community recognition from BC Healthy Communities, auditing policies and bylaws through an age-friendly lens, and forming a joint ACRD and City of Port Alberni Age-Friendly Committee.

Objective 6.2: Determine strategies for all ACRD meeting rooms and gathering places.
Actions focus on implementing and/or improving audio-visual systems and assisted listening needs of all ACRD and City owned or leased rooms, event spaces and gathering places, and ensuring ACRD and City meetings are available for public viewing.

Objective 6.3: Mobilize the wisdom and experience of seniors, and provide them opportunities to live with passion and purpose.
Actions focus on collaborating with local businesses on senior's needs and hiring advantages, encouraging them to recruit, hire and retain seniors, and define age-friendly businesses with a brand and certification process (senior specific logo to identify senior friendly business).

Objective 6.4: Include seniors in preserving and sharing of community history.
Objective 6.5: Increase the civic participation and active engagement of seniors in the Alberni Valley.
Objective 6.6: Provide opportunities for seniors to actively participate in local governance.
Actions focus on:
- Creating more flexible options for older volunteers.
- Encouraging partnerships between local organizations to promote joint lifelong learning programs, and advocating for the establishment of, and support existing, community, neighbourhood, and resident associations, such as collaborating with Community Futures Alberni-Clayoquot, the Alberni Valley EA Community Halls, North Island College (NIC), and the Rural Crime Watch program in partnership with the RCMP.
- Collaborating with First Nations, education providers (such as NIC ElderCollege), local government and other community partners to identify ways to preserve and pass down history, heritage and stories.

Objective 6.7: Provide opportunities for seniors to better support one another where possible.
Objective 6.8: Increase the active engagement of seniors in the community.
Actions focus on:
- Exploring the necessary tools for establishing a seniors sharing service where peer-to-peer support can take place, and establishment of a repair café for seniors where volunteers can exchange and trade services and skills.
- Collaborating to recruit volunteers to support the AV AF Plan actions, and hosting an annual volunteer fair.

THEME 7: OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS

Goal 7: Ensure public spaces, trails and buildings are easily accessed with many opportunities for all ages and abilities, including seniors, to enjoy and appreciate.

The public realm, including outdoor spaces such as parks, trails and buildings, affects the quality of life for older people and their ability to age in place. The quality of the public realm can impact mobility, access, and safety. Age-friendly outdoor spaces and buildings are pleasant, clean, have high-quality green spaces, include places to rest, such as benches, are accessible, and include safe pedestrian crossings. The rural nature of the Alberni Valley provides many opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, but there must be careful consideration for the needs of seniors to access and enjoy outdoor spaces and buildings.

Community perspective

When survey respondents were asked to rate features in their community, 65% rated green or open spaces (trails, community gardens, etc.) that are within walking/rolling distance to their home as excellent or good, while 47% rated public buildings and facilities that are accessible to people with different abilities as poor or that they didn't know. In terms of pedestrian crossings, 46% of all respondents rated safe crosswalks as poor. Community Workshop attendees identified accessible trails and connectivity for walking as high priorities to increase the age-friendliness of the Alberni Valley.

> **Community input highlighted there is a great need for improvements to outdoor spaces in the AV:**
>
> *"In the valley, there are not enough places for us to ride our bikes safely and would love there to be flat bike trails around the valley ... We would be thrilled if there were safe biking trails in our valley."*
>
> *"Better lighting, cross walks and sidewalks on main streets and popular walking areas."*
>
> *"The way to keep people walking which makes them healthier is to please provide better walking areas."*

Key issues identified:
- Need for more places to rest and distance between rest places when out in the community.
- Accessibility of public buildings and facilities for people with different physical abilities.
- Lack of accessible public restrooms, clear signage, lighting in public spaces, connectivity for walking, and safe crosswalks.
- Need for additional neighbourhood watch programs or improving advertising and involvement of existing ones.
- Accessible trails: Log Train Trail and Inlet Trail could have more access to get on and off trail, smaller routes with signage, degree of difficultly, and parking visibility.

Proposed objectives and future actions:
Objective 7.1: Complete an accessibility assessment of public buildings and outdoor spaces.
Objective 7.2: Include a commitment to accessibility and inclusion in the EA OCPs.

Actions focus on:
- Developing trail guidelines to respond to the needs of seniors and people with special needs, disabilities, and/or mobility challenges.
- Collaborating to pursue universal accessibility throughout all trails, sidewalks, parks and public facilities by considering the needs of all users (pathway grades, surface materials, traffic signals, and signage), and promoting the application of universal design and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to the built and social environments.

Objective 7.3: Create walkable and accessible communities.
Actions focus on:
- Working with the MoTI and other partners to improve connectivity for walking, expanding on existing community walking trails, and developing new trails in the Alberni Valley EAs.
- Working with the MoTI to establishing a roadside, multi-use pathway along main roads (Beaver Creek Road, Cherry Creek Road, and Highway 4).
- Encouraging development of new and retrofit of existing parks to include accessible sidewalks, trails and infrastructure.

Objective 7.4: Actively pursue and support funding opportunities for outdoor spaces, buildings, and public facilities.
Objective 7.5: Increase the number of age-friendly amenities located on pathways and trails.
Actions focus on:
- Exploring partnerships and grant opportunities to help fund parks and trails.
- Exploring internal and external funding opportunities for pedestrian upgrades that benefit seniors directly, including increased lighting and street furniture.

Objective 7.6: Improve access to nature, parks, open spaces, and trails for people of all ages and abilities, and enhance signage and wayfinding.
- Improving wayfinding signage throughout the Alberni Valley, and consider signage for age-friendly trails that indicates difficulty level and length of trail.
- Improving access to public washroom facilities.
- Working with the Air Quality Council on educating and informing about the importance of clean air and air quality issues, and encourage clean air lifestyles and business practices.

THEME 8: SOCIAL & CULTURAL PARTICIPATION

Goal 10: Ensure seniors have access to a range of recreational and social activities within the communities where they live.

Community engagement is a contributing factor in creating the types of communities where people want to live, work and raise their families. The social and cultural life of a community flourishes when seniors are able to fully contribute their knowledge, experience, skills and talents as volunteers, artists, participants, and patrons.

Community perspective

It is apparent that Alberni Valley residents have a desire to be involved socially and culturally. The Community Workshop reiterated a need to build hubs or utilize community halls, to facilitate social participation. When asked how important it is to have opportunities for social and cultural participation in their community many survey respondents answered that it is extremely and very important to have: accessible community events (82%), activities involving younger and older people (75%), recreation programs and activities geared towards seniors (73%), and a variety of cultural activities for diverse populations (63%).

> **Community input highlighted there is a great need and desire for increased opportunities for social and cultural participation:**
>
> *"Would love to see more positive events for youth and youth interaction with elders in the community."*
>
> *"More events to bring seniors and families together would be good."*
>
> *"More adult events during the evenings."*

Key issues identified:
- Timing and cost of programming.
- Lack of options in own community (each Electoral Area).
- Seniors feel isolated, especially in rural areas and express need for more community outreach.
- Lack of transportation from rural areas, and lack of accessible transportation, to attend events.

Proposed objectives and future actions:
Objective 8.1: Strengthen intergenerational, culturally informed, and age-friendly programming.
Objective 8.2: Increase accessibility to programming for seniors.
Actions focus on collaborating to:
- Support accessible and inclusive community events, groups, places, art and cultural experiences, and North Island College and the ElderCollege to expand lifelong learning opportunities for seniors.

- Evaluate senior's programming needs, explore ways to offer low cost program rates and drop in fees for lower income seniors, and explore new seniors and intergenerational programming, to encourage participation and support active living in all seniors.

Objective 8.3: Establish a senior's centre/hub/gathering place within the Alberni Valley.
Actions focus on working with partners to evaluate funding and location options for senior's gathering spaces within the AV EAs, assessing the appropriateness of Community Halls as potential senior gathering spaces, and funding a senior's gathering space, coordinator to oversee services, and manage volunteers.

Objective 8.4: Identify gaps in serving the social participation needs of seniors at risk of social isolation, and develop strategies to reach out to them.
Actions focus on working with university partners to use technology and surveys to increase access to information and services with emphasis on seniors and adults with disabilities, and examining social isolation data.

5.3 NEXT STEPS & PRIORITY ACTIONS

Creating a more age-friendly Alberni Valley in alignment with WHO guidelines is a shared responsibility of all stakeholders. Transformative, age-friendly community change involves building on community strengths and the coordination from all levels of government - First Nations, the private sector, the non-profit sector, and the community. An implementation plan that influences change through legislative tools, funding, and the collaboration and ingenuity of all stakeholders is central to the achievement of each goal and objective which were previously highlighted. In consultation with stakeholders, the following 12 priority actions for immediate consideration are highlighted for seniors in the Alberni Valley to be included, respected, and supported to age well, and contribute through active participation in their community.

WHAT ALBERNI VALLEY SENIORS LOOK FORWARD TO AS THEY AGE:

"Enjoying outdoor activities, access to lake, rivers, parks, etc. Social activities."

"All the senior programs."

"The social aspects of retirement. More free time to do the things I like to do spend more time volunteering locally."

"Continuing to be able to contribute to society."

"Seeing my kids grow up, getting grandchildren, continuing to volunteer for my community."

"Continuing to maintain my health."

"Being able to continue what I do now. Keeping physically active, walking in neighbourhoods and on trails, gardening, family time, small town friendly atmosphere."

Each priority action aligns with several goal areas, focuses on the ACRD role as a leader, and aligns with shared identified community principles:

- Inclusivity - a place for all ages and abilities;
- Recognize and build on the strengths of the community;
- Collaborates with all stakeholders;
- Promotes participation and respect of all within the community;
- Meets the housing, recreation and health needs of all residents, including facilities for every age and varying mobility requirements of community members;
- Good communication of programs and emergency responses; and
- Ingenuity, resource mobilization and innovation.

RECOMMENDED SHORT-TERM PRIORITY ACTIONS		
PRIORITY ACTION & TIMEFRAME	**INDICATOR(S)**	**SUGGESTED LEAD AGENCY / AGENCIES**
Aligns with all Age-Friendly Action Plan Goals #1-10		
PRIORITY ACTION 1: INTEGRATE AF ACTION PLAN Integrate the AV Age-Friendly Action Plan (AF Plan) items into staff work plans and annual reporting. **Short-term (0-2 years), ongoing**	Age-friendly planning is included in ACRD work plans and strategic planning.	• ACRD
PRIORITY ACTION 2: FORM AN AF COMMITTEE Form an inclusive Age-Friendly Stakeholder Advisory Committee (AFSAC), and be recognized as an Age-Friendly Community by the Ministry of Health and Province of BC. **Short-term (0-2 years), ongoing**	Age-Friendly Committee is formalized. The ACRD is recognized as an Age-Friendly Community.	• ACRD • Age-Friendly Stakeholder Advisory Committee
PRIORITY ACTION 3: IMPLEMENTATION & FUNDING STRATEGY Develop an implementation and funding strategy related to the AF Plan. **Short-term (0-2 years), ongoing**	The strategy is ratified by key stakeholders. Grant applications are submitted and innovative funding sources are explored.	• ACRD • Age-Friendly Stakeholder Advisory Committee
PRIORITY ACTION 4: ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION Advocate and promote alternative transportation options including delivery systems, virtual healthcare, volunteer driver programs, community shuttles, and development of a co-op bus program for community. **Medium-term (2-4 years), ongoing** Survey respondent: What do you look forward to as you age: *"Being Able To Go Out & About With The Handy Dart"*	Increased transportation options for seniors are promoted and utilized. Transportation planning addresses the unique needs of seniors.	• Age-Friendly Stakeholder Advisory Committee • Echo Sunshine Club • Health providers • BC Transit
PRIORITY ACTION 5: AF DESIGN POLICY & CHECKLIST Develop an Age-Friendly Design Policy and Checklist to audit existing and plan for new ACRD-owned parks and infrastructure. **Medium-term (2-4 years), ongoing**	Checklist is used for all new initiatives. Improved and more accessible parks and infrastructure.	• ACRD • Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) funding future capital plans

Aligns with Age-Friendly Action Plan Goals #1, 3-6, 8-10		
PRIORITY ACTION 6: FUNDING FOR PROGRAMMING & HUBS Apply for funding to expand integrated programming and intergenerational community hubs to reduce social isolation of seniors and their caregivers. **Medium-term (2-4 years), ongoing** **Long-term (5+ years), ongoing** Survey respondent: *"Social isolation is a major issue culturally we put a strong emphasis on being independent but as we age we need opportunities to support each other"*	Increased number of seniors participating in community programs and/or events. Senior led intergenerational programming is launched.	• Age-Friendly Stakeholder Advisory Committee • ACRD • Community Halls/Centres • City of Port Alberni • Alberni Clayoquot Health Network (ACHN) • Vancouver Island University (VIU) • North Island College (NIC)
PRIORITY ACTION 7: VOLUNTEER BANK Launch a virtual volunteer bank, matching people's skills and interest to the community's needs. **Medium-term (2-4 years), ongoing**	Increased number of seniors volunteering. Volunteer opportunities clearly promoted.	• Age-Friendly Stakeholder Advisory Committee • ACRD • City of Port Alberni • Echo Sunshine Club • NIC ElderCollege
PRIORITY ACTION 8: INCREASED ER COMMUNICATION Update and implement strategies to involve more seniors and people with disabilities in intergenerational neighbourhood emergency preparation, information dissemination, and safety programs. **Medium-term (2-4 years), ongoing** Survey respondents: *"There should be a central "info" source for people that age, perhaps in the form of a pamphlet, so that amenities can turn into benefits once you know of their existence."*	Emergency plans address the needs of seniors including issues related to pandemics. Multiple forms of communication are used related to emergency responses. Updated websites that are more age-friendly.	• Alberni Valley Emergency Program • North Island College
Aligns with Age-Friendly Action Plan Goals #1, 2, 4 & 5, 8-10		
PRIORITY ACTION 9: RESOURCE DIRECTORY & AWARENESS CAMPAIGN	Seniors are better informed about community resources.	• ACRD

Develop a Community Resource Directory with age-friendly branding to identify the services and programs offered locally and regionally. Create an awareness campaign related to the Age-Friendly Plan and related actions. **Medium-term (2-4 years), ongoing** Survey respondents: *"Relaxation and good health. Being able to have a seniors community centre to go to for socializing. Having access to medical care and help as I age including grocery services, meals on wheels, in home personal care needs and access to mental health care. All if these services at an affordable rate based on income."* *"Going to library; reading; swimming at new pool; community service; Sproat Lake; more beach time."*	Increased number of seniors participating in community services and programs.	• Age-Friendly Stakeholder Advisory Committee • City of Port Alberni • Echo Sunshine Club
PRIORITY ACTION 10: HOUSING NEEDS REPORT Undertake a Housing Needs Assessment and Report that, in part, identifies the future housing needs of the Alberni Valley's aging population and explores ways to meet those needs. **Short-term (0-2 years), ongoing (needs to be updated every 5 years)** Survey respondent: *"In 10 years, where do you see yourself living?: Hopefully in my own home or perhaps a senior building"*	Current and future housing needs are identified and prioritized. Additional housing targeted for seniors is built and/or made available.	• ACRD • UBCM • City of Port Alberni • Alberni Clayoquot Health Network
Aligns with Age-Friendly Action Plan Goals #1, 4-7, 9 & 10		
PRIORITY ACTION 11: TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS Promote increase of bench dedication program; target specific locations on seniors' walking routes. Explore the inclusion of alternative wheel-friendly trails which maintain the natural look for trails while providing inclusive trails for all ages and abilities. **Short-term (0-2 years), ongoing** **Medium-term (2-4 years), ongoing** Survey respondent: *"Ability to continue to explore nature with my children and have access to nature."*	Increased use of trails and green spaces by seniors, and increased number of benches to provide additional places to rest.	• ACRD

PRIORITY ACTION 12: FIRST NATIONS PARTNERSHIP Support more cultural inclusion and begin a dialogue with Tseshaht First Nation (TFN) and Hupacasath First Nation (HFN) regarding senior's initiatives and possible win-win initiatives. **Short-term (0-2 years), ongoing**	First Nations age-friendly strategy is drafted, with increased participation from First Nation Elders.	• Tseshaht First Nation • Hupacasath First Nation • Port Alberni Friendship Center • ACRD • City of Port Alberni • NIC ElderCollege

It is important to note that priority action items are linked to possible community leads and/or partners. While in some cases actions may not meet the specific mandate of the listed lead/partner, the intent of the action item is to provide guidance for future collaboration and discussion.

In summary, this Age-Friendly Plan aims at helping partners and stakeholders advocate for, and address, active living needs of ACRD's residents and the broader community that they serve. An essential first step is to form an Age-Friendly Stakeholder Advisory Committee (AFSAC) as a catalyst for the implementation of priority actions, cooperation on funding applications, and advocacy for innovation. Following the formation of the AFSAC, it is recommended that a goal of the AF Plan be achieved by the ACRD by applying for age-friendly designation from the Province of British Columbia, which could further position the ACRD in implementing many of the key ideas presented in the action plan.

It is recommended that the actions outlined in this action plan be reviewed and followed with an implementation plan with a funding strategy that looks for government, corporate and non-profit resources to be developed. The AF Plan must also be a living document that is annually revisited to review completed or ongoing actions, evaluate indicators, assess current conditions and opportunities, and check-in on priority actions. Community partners will play a key role in this important work moving forward, as the role of the ACRD and community stakeholders will be to work collaboratively to enhance the social and economic sustainability of Alberni Valley residents and the community as a whole.

Building on the wealth of existing information and services focused on seniors, combined with valuable input from residents and community partners, this AF Plan strives to represent the collective voice of Alberni Valley residents. This will ensure that the community informs to assist in making the Alberni Valley more age-friendly for all residents. The AF Plan aims to ensure current and future generations can enjoy the best possible quality of life living in the Alberni Valley from early to older years, and provides the groundwork for actions in the short, medium, and long-term.

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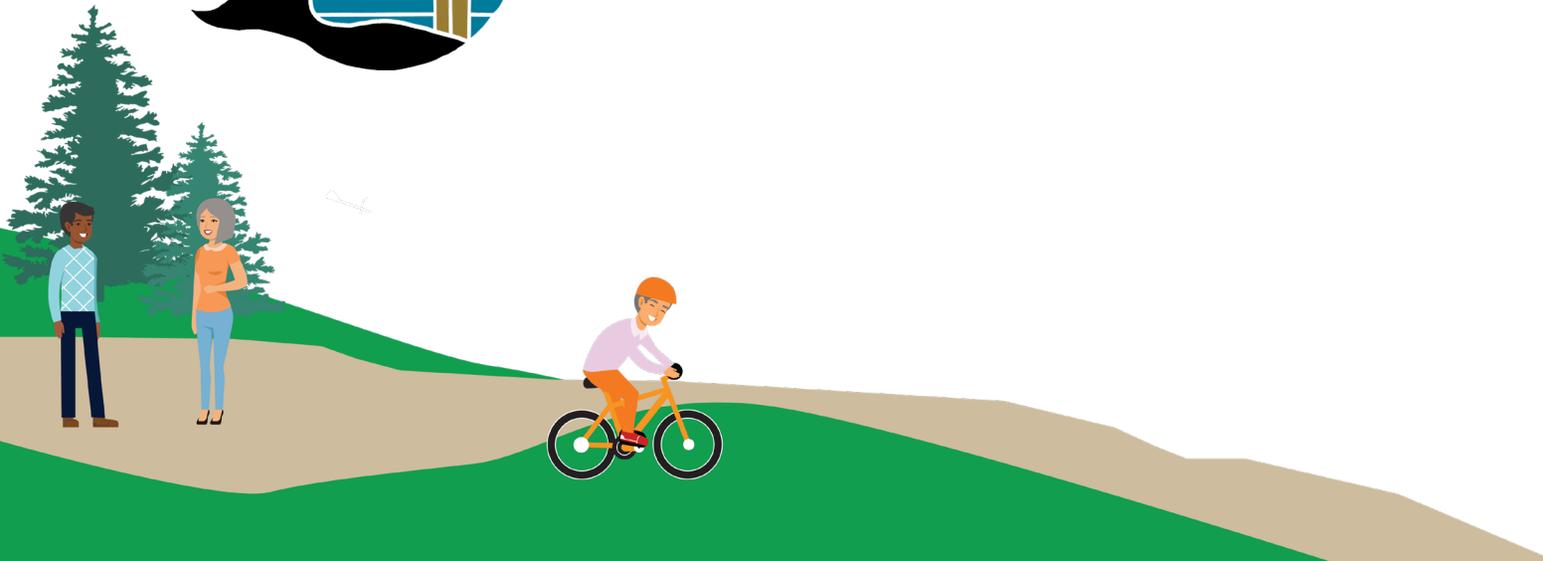
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ALBERNI VALLEY
Age-Friendly Plan
APPENDICES

A supporting document to the Alberni Valley Age-Friendly Plan

ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT REGIONAL DISTRICT

CONTENTS

APPENDIX A: PROJECT TIMELINE & WORKPLAN

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

(1) PROJECT STRATEGY

DECEMBER - FEBRUARY

(2) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FEBRUARY - MARCH

(3) PLANNING/NEEDS ASSESSMENT

MARCH - MAY

(4) PLAN DEVELOPMENT

IMPLEMENT PLAN (ongoing)

Phase 1: Project Strategy | October-December 2019
- Assessment of local policy and review of relevant best practices
- Identify partners and stakeholders
- Community engagement strategy
- Project introduction presentation and discussion with Alberni-Clayoquot Health Network (October 2019)
- Create web presence (ACRD website, AV Age-Friendly Facebook page)
- Recruit AF Working Group members
- Project introduction to ACRD Regional Board (November 2019) and Sproat Lake Director Penny Cote was appointed to the WG at the November 13, 2019 Board meeting as the WG Chair
- Age-Friendly Survey (December 9, 2019 to January 15, 2020)

Phase 2: Community Engagement | December 2019-February 2020
- Resident and service provider Age-Friendly Survey (December 9, 2019 to January 15, 2020)
- Echo Centre-Sunshine Club, and Vancouver Island Health Authority presentations and discussions (January 22, 2020)
- Age-Friendly Working Group Meeting (January 24, 2020)
- ACHN Services Fair (January 27, 2020)
- Age-Friendly Community Workshop (February 6, 2020)

Phase 3: Planning/Needs Assessment | February-May 2020
- Analysis of community engagement to develop draft action planning
- Working Group Meeting (originally scheduled for March 13, 2020, but was shifted to virtual engagement due to COVID-19)

- Draft Action Planning: online survey, and proposed AF vision, goals, objectives and actions review by Working Group and other stakeholders
- Draft AF Plan development

Phase 4: Plan Development
- Draft AF Plan development, including action planning with an age-friendly lens, policy development to inform updates to ACRD documents (Zoning Bylaw, Alberni Valley EA OCP's, Alberni Valley Parks and Trails Strategic Plan, Alberni Valley Agricultural Plan and Coastal Addendum, and Alberni Valley Emergency Plan)
- Virtual Working Group Meeting to discuss Draft AF Plan
- Draft AF Plan revisions
- Final AF Plan development
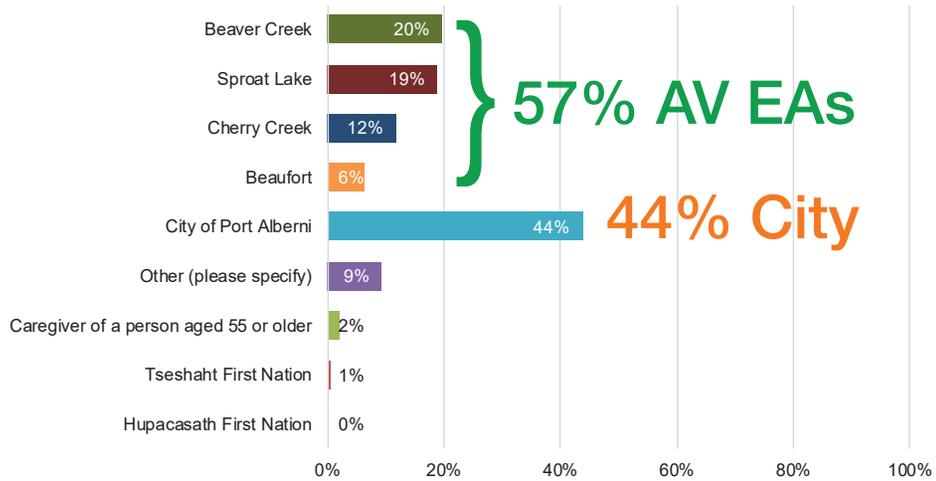- AF Plan presentations

APPENDIX B: AGE-FRIENDLY ASSESSMENT

A preliminary assessment of age-friendly communities in 2010 identified eight key factors contributing to success in creating a more age-friendly community (Gallagher and Mallhi, 2010). The following chart highlights some important steps the ACRD is taking with respect to government policy.
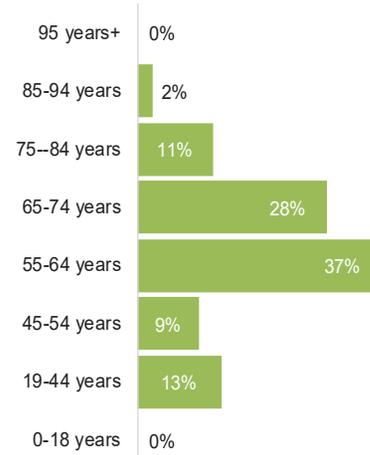
KEY FACTOR	ACRD SUCCESS TO DATE
1. Had the strong support of local government.	October 24, 2018 ACRD Board of Directors passed a resolution directing staff to apply to the 2019 UBCM Age-friendly Communities grant program to develop a local age-friendly plan.
2. Had a champion in the community, someone passionate about the issue.	Part of the AF Plan implementation is to identify a community champion to ensure the important work and actions identified in the Plan are not lost or forgotten.
3. Appointed a dedicated staff person to work on the initiative.	The ACRD Board of Directors supported staff in applying for the UBCM grant and developing this AF Plan. They provided guidance and support throughout the Plan development.
4. Had strong local partnerships that were inclusive of seniors and other stakeholders.	The Age-Friendly Working Group was made up of a variety of members from residents to ACRD Board members to health care professionals and more. This diverse group enabled rich, informative feedback and overall project guidance. Part of the AF Plan implementation includes recommending that the AF Working Group continues on as an newly established Age-Friendly Stakeholder Advisory Committee (AFSAC).
5. Obtained a small grant to get started and used that to leverage additional money and resources.	The AF Plan would not have been possible without the generous grant funding from the BC Ministry of Health, through the 2019 Age-friendly Communities Program, administered by UBCM.
6. Introduced small changes at the outset of the project.	Part of the AF Plan implementation includes recommending priority actions that can be completed immediately with minimal or no cost or resources.
7. Cultivated a good relationship with the local media.	Since age-friendly planning is a new undertaking for the ACRD, there is limited coverage, aside from the coverage for the City of Port Alberni's age-friendly planning initiatives. The Community Workshop held in February 2020 as part of the AF Plan development was attended by a AV News reporter and a story was included in the April 22, 2020 edition of the AV News (refer to Appendix C).
8. Took full advantage of the services offered by the Age-friendly Communities Implementation Team.	Not yet undertaken.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Q1. Where do you live?

Beaver Creek	20%
Sproat Lake	19%
Cherry Creek	12%
Beaufort	6%
City of Port Alberni	44%
Other (please specify)	9%
Caregiver of a person aged 55 or older	2%
Tseshaht First Nation	1%
Hupacasath First Nation	0%

57% AV EAs

44% City

Q37. Age

95 years+	0%
85-94 years	2%
75--84 years	11%
65-74 years	28%
55-64 years	37%
45-54 years	9%
19-44 years	13%
0-18 years	0%

78% 55+

50% retired

65% married

66%

COMPANIONSHIP

All Respondents

Do you feel left out or a lack companionship?

Never	51%
Sometimes	41%
Prefer not to answer	5%
Often	4%
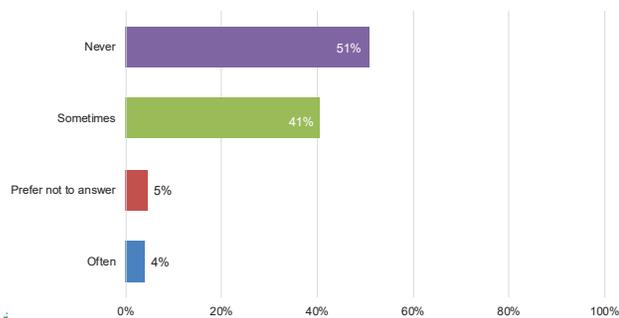
AV Electoral Areas

Do you feel left out or a lack companionship?

Never	55%
Sometimes	36%
Prefer not to answer	5%
Often	4%
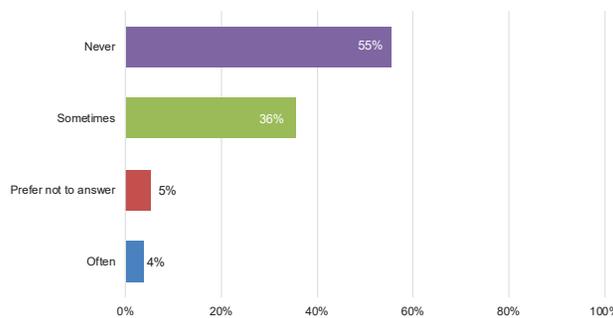
City of Port Alberni

Do you feel left out or a lack companionship?
(City of Port Alberni Residents)

Sometimes	65%
Never	29%
Prefer not to answer	3%
Often	3%

ALBERNI VALLEY Age-Friendly Plan
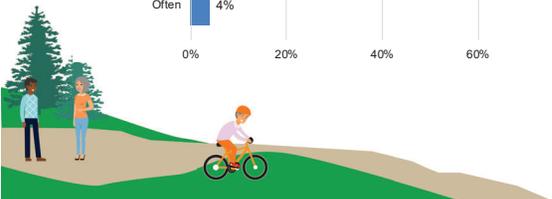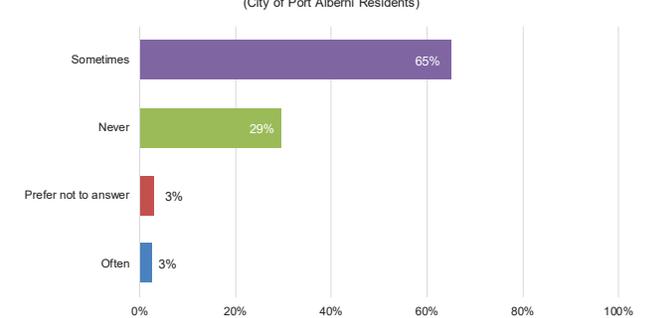
YEARS IN COMMUNITY

All Respondents

How long have you lived in your community (eg. Beaufort, Beaver Creek, Cherry Creek, Sproat Lake, City of Port Alberni, etc.)?

Category	Percentage
N/A	1%
More than 35 years	35%
25 to 34 years	17%
15 to 24 years	12%
5 to 14 years	20%
Less than 5 years	15%
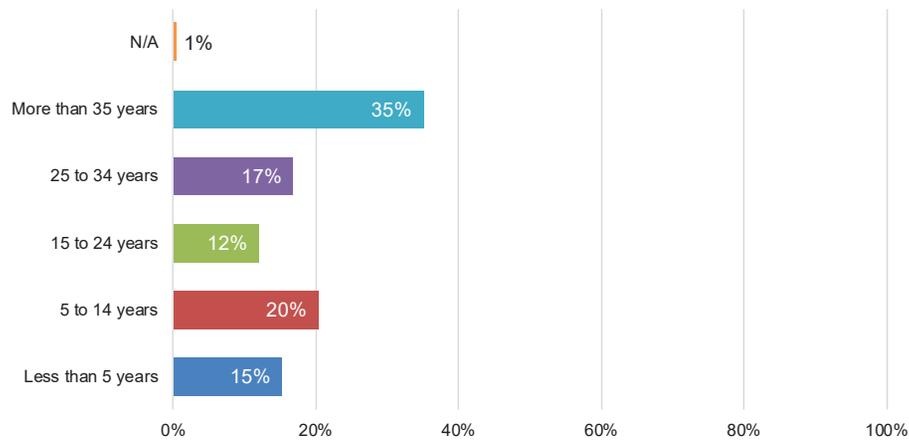
AV Electoral Areas

How long have you lived in the Alberni Valley?

Category	Percentage
N/A	1%
More than 35 years	29%
25 to 34 years	23%
15 to 24 years	15%
5 to 14 years	19%
Less than 5 years	13%
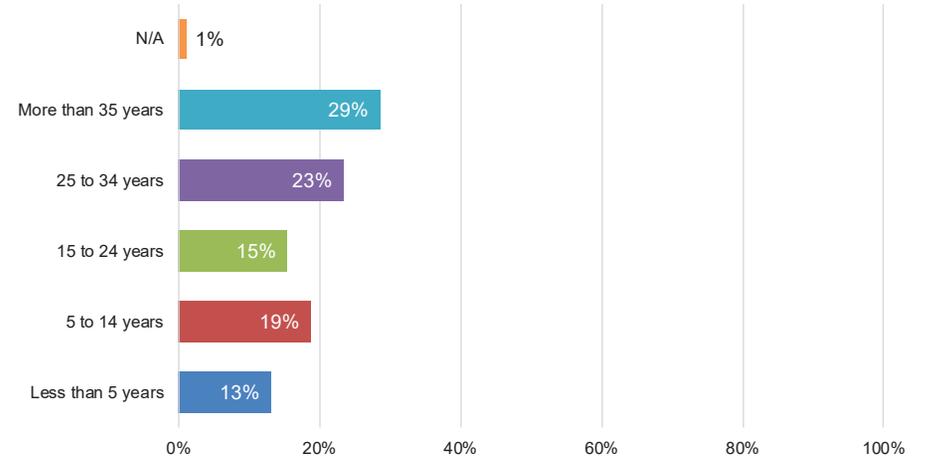
City of Port Alberni

How long have you lived in the City of Port Alberni?

Category	Percentage
N/A	1%
More than 35 years	43%
25 to 34 years	11%
15 to 24 years	8%
5 to 14 years	21%
Less than 5 years	17%
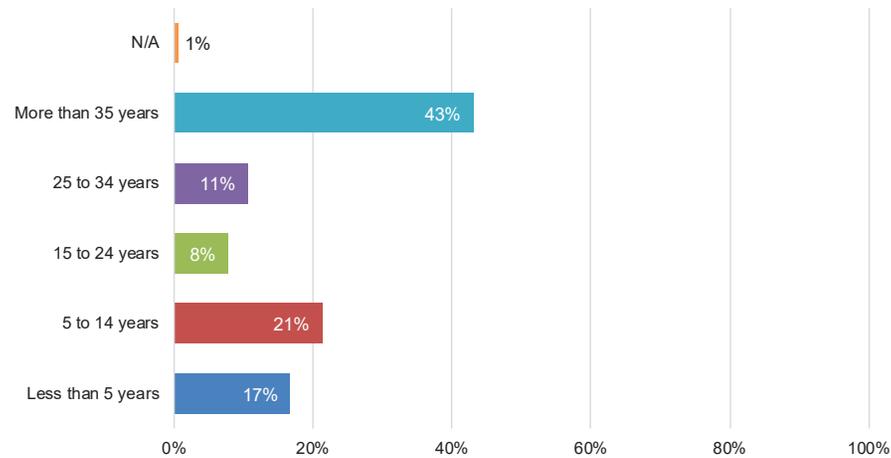
SOURCE OF INFORMATION

All Respondents

Where do you regularly go to get information about activities, events, and/or news in the Alberni Valley? (Check all that apply)

Source	%
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	72%
Newspapers	64%
Word of mouth	55%
Local radio	35%
City of Port Alberni website	32%
Posters	27%
Newsletters and mail outs	26%
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District website	23%
Echo Sunshine Club	20%
Other website	13%
Other (please specify)	6%
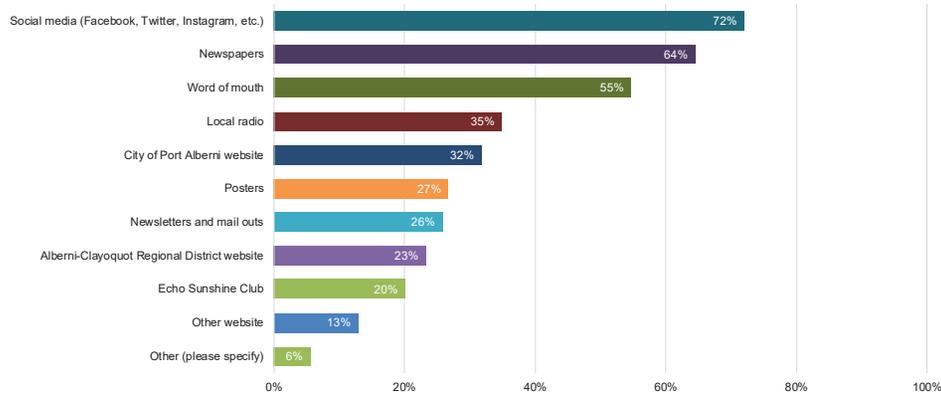
AV Electoral Areas

Where do you regularly go to get information about activities, events, and/or news in the Alberni Valley? (Check all that apply)

Source	%
Newspapers	68%
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	65%
Word of mouth	60%
Local radio	34%
Newsletters and mail outs	31%
Posters	27%
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District website	26%
City of Port Alberni website	22%
Echo Sunshine Club	21%
Other website	11%
Other (please specify)	5%
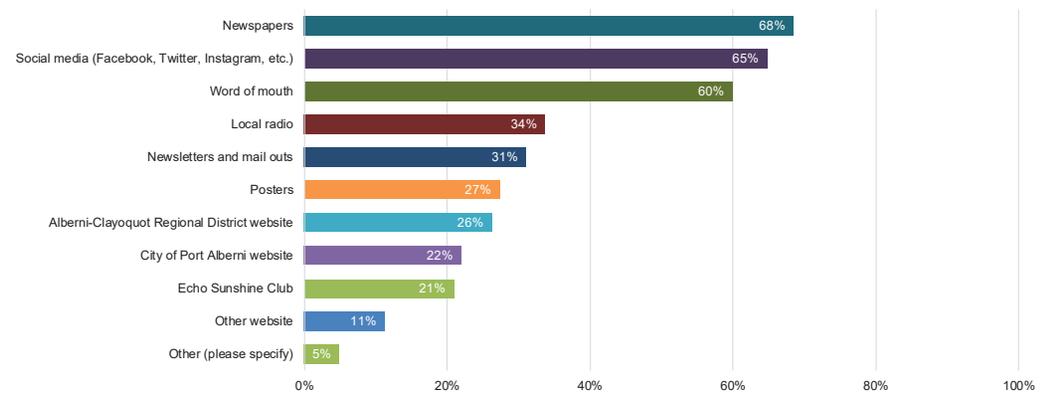
City of Port Alberni

Where do you regularly go to get information about activities, events, and/or news in the Alberni Valley? (Check all that apply)

Source	%
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	82%
Newspapers	61%
Word of mouth	50%
City of Port Alberni website	44%
Local radio	35%
Posters	26%
Echo Sunshine Club	22%
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District website	20%
Newsletters and mail outs	19%
Other website	15%
Other (please specify)	5%
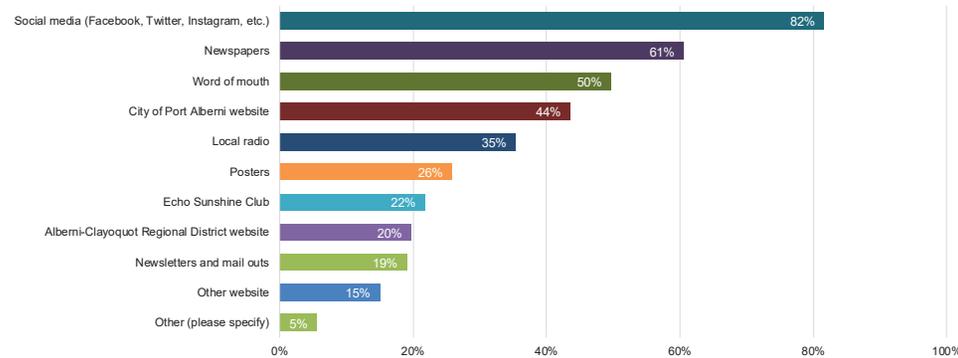
WORRIES ABOUT AGING

All Respondents

What worries you most as you think about your future older adult years? (Check all that apply)

Category	Percentage
Declining health	63%
Losing my independence	52%
Difficulty physically getting around	48%
Financial concerns	43%
Losing my driver's licence	39%
Moving into more suitable housing	25%
No one to take care of me	23%
Growing old alone	23%
Other (please specify)	6%
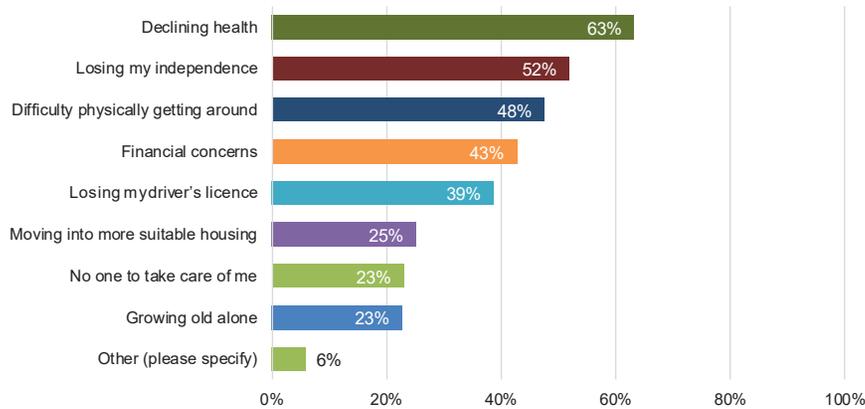
AV Electoral Areas

What worries you most as you think about your future older adult years? (Alberni Valley) (Check all that apply)

Category	Percentage
Declining health	62%
Losing my independence	49%
Difficulty physically getting around	47%
Losing my driver's licence	41%
Financial concerns	38%
Moving into more suitable housing	24%
Growing old alone	19%
No one to take care of me	18%
Other (please specify)	6%

City of Port Alberni

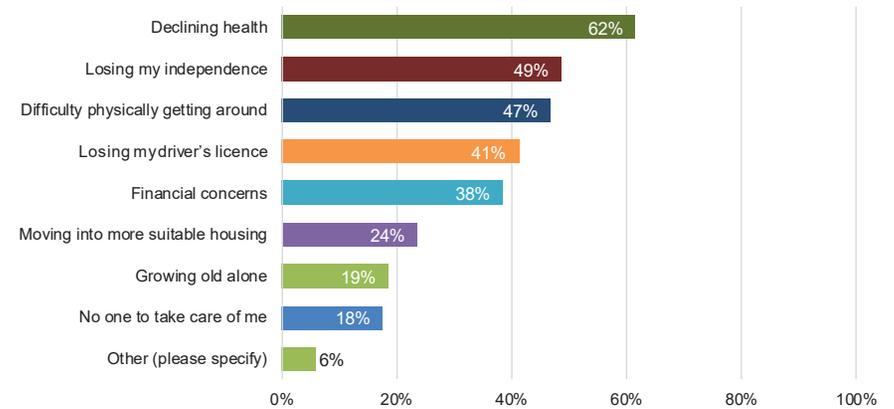What worries you most as you think about your future older adult years? (City of Port Alberni) (Check all that apply)

Category	Percentage
Declining health	63%
Losing my independence	55%
Difficulty physically getting around	48%
Financial concerns	46%
Losing my driver's licence	37%
No one to take care of me	30%
Growing old alone	27%
Moving into more suitable housing	27%
Other (please specify)	5%
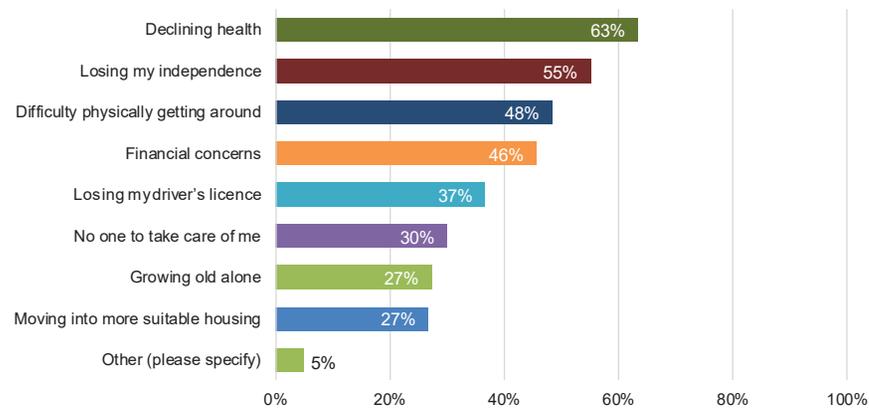
RATING OF COMMUNITY AMENITIES

All Respondents

Green or open spaces that are within walking/rolling distance from your home (e.g. trails, community garden, etc.)

Rating	%
Excellent	32%
Good	33%
Fair	23%
Poor	11%
Don't Know	2%
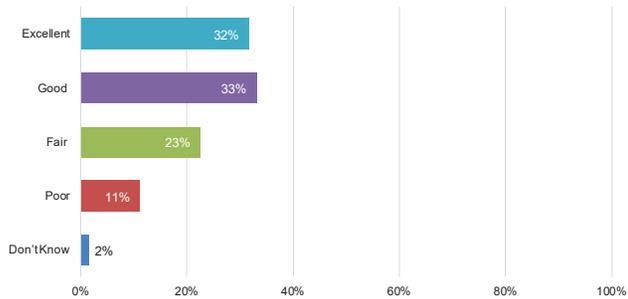
AV Electoral Areas

Green or open spaces that are within walking/rolling distance from your home (e.g. trails, community garden, etc.)

Rating	%
Excellent	37%
Good	24%
Fair	21%
Poor	16%
Don't Know	2%

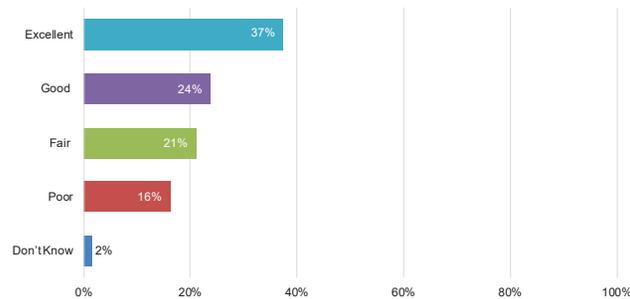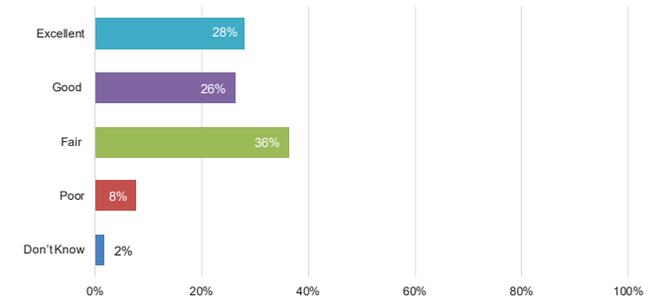## City of Port Alberni

Green or open spaces that are within walking/rolling distance from your home (e.g. trails, community garden, etc.)

Rating	%
Excellent	28%
Good	26%
Fair	36%
Poor	8%
Don't Know	2%

All Respondents

Neighbourhood watch programs

Rating	%
Excellent	3%
Good	11%
Fair	22%
Poor	29%
Don't Know	35%
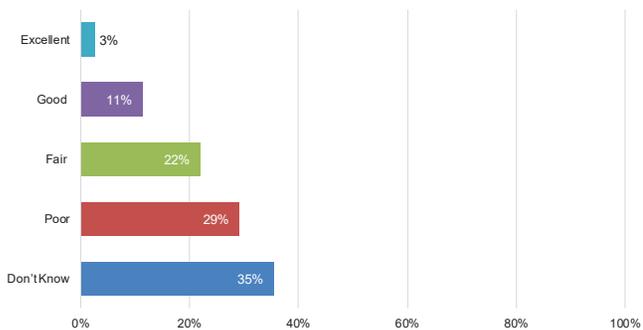
AV Electoral Areas

Neighbourhood watch programs

Rating	%
Excellent	4%
Good	10%
Fair	25%
Poor	25%
Don't Know	36%
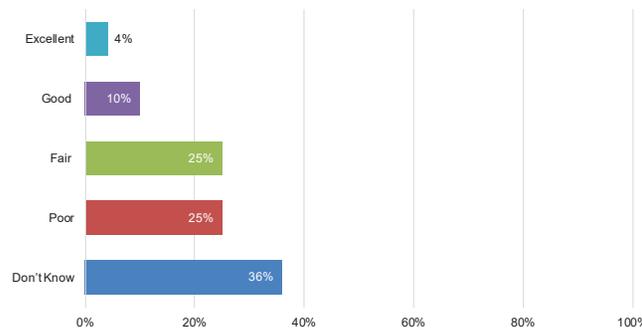
City of Port Alberni

Neighbourhood watch programs

Rating	%
Excellent	1%
Good	13%
Fair	20%
Poor	32%
Don't Know	35%
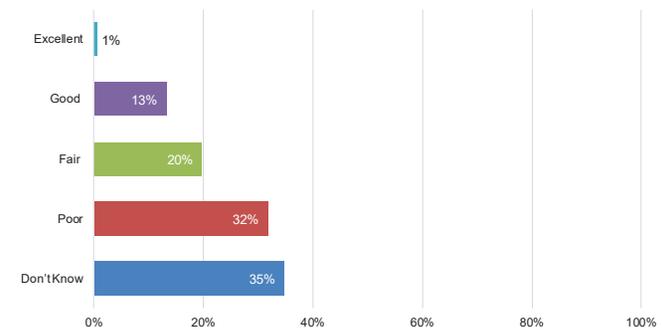
IMPORTANCE OF TRANSPORTATION

All Respondents

Even if the following items are not currently available in your community, how important do you think it is to have them?

	Accessible and convenient public transportation	Affordable public transportation	Safe public transportation stops or areas	Special transportation services for people with disabilities and older adults
Blue	47%	48%	51%	52%
Red	36%	36%	34%	37%
Green	11%	12%	9%	9%
Purple	4%	2%	3%	2%
Teal	3%	3%	2%	1%

AV Electoral Areas

Even if the following items are not currently available in your community, how important do you think it is to have them?

	Accessible and convenient public transportation	Affordable public transportation	Safe public transportation stops or areas	Special transportation services for people with disabilities and older adults
Blue	41%	43%	44%	46%
Red	33%	34%	34%	31%
Green	15%	15%	13%	14%
Purple	6%	4%	4%	5%
Teal	5%	5%	4%	3%

City of Port Alberni

Even if the following items are not currently available in your community, how important do you think it is to have them?

	Accessible and convenient public transportation	Affordable public transportation	Safe public transportation stops or areas	Special transportation services for people with disabilities and older adults
Blue	38%	54%	57%	59%
Red	55%	37%	38%	37%
Green	6%	8%	5%	4%
Purple	1%	1%	1%	1%
Teal	0%	0%	0%	0%

APPENDIX D: OTHER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Age-Friendly Working Group
Approximately 20 representatives from a range of community organizations, Electoral Area representatives (Regional Board members and residents), and community members participated in the AF Working Group meeting on January 24, 2020. The meeting began with an introduction to the project, a description of the role of the Working Group, a project overview and deliverables, and a presentation of the preliminary results of the survey.

Staff and a consultant facilitated a visioning activity that was informed by the survey results. This was followed by an administrative portion where the Working Group helped generate ideas for the February 6, 2020 Age-Friendly Community Workshop. Lastly, the Working Group provided feedback on the project approach, which was followed by the survey completion prize draw, and next steps.

Visioning Exercise
The working group split into three groups to complete a visioning exercise. The exercise included the following questions:
  A1. What are the strengths of the Alberni Valley relating to aging?
  A2. What does the Alberni Valley need to become more age-friendly?
  B1. What are some opportunities for improving the age-friendliness of the Alberni Valley?
  B2. What are some of the benefits of the Alberni Valley becoming more age-friendly?

A1. What are the strengths of the Alberni Valley relating to aging?
The Working Group generated multiple ideas, which generally fell into five themes:
1. Community connections and inclusiveness
2. Nature, parks, and open spaces
3. Recreation and community programing
4. Health services
5. Social connections

A2. What does the Alberni Valley need to become more age-friendly?
When asked what the AV needed to become more age-friendly, the Working Group ideas fell generally into five categories:
1. Transportation and accessibility
2. Housing options and affordability
3. Home supports and initiatives to create independence
4. Health services
5. Increased recreational and outdoor opportunities

B1. What are some opportunities for improving the age-friendliness of the Alberni Valley?
The Working Group discussed their vision for an age-friendly Alberni Valley. Themes included:
1. Improved transportation
2. Opportunities for social connections with youth
3. Accessible recreation facilities/parks and trails

4. Food security
5. Enhancing existing services and communication of services
6. Opportunities for volunteerism

B2. What are some of the benefits of the Alberni Valley becoming more age-friendly?
1. Attract more people to Alberni Valley
2. Healthy, happy seniors
3. Benefits all community members

Community Workshop

Approximately 40 people attended a two hour Community Workshop on February 6, 2020 at Gyro Youth Centre. The format was a project introduction presentation, small group activity to develop actions around the eight WHO themes, and a dot prioritization exercise.

For the prioritization exercise attendees each received three dots and were asked to place a dot next to their top three priorities for opportunities, needs, strengths, ideas and actions. Ranked below is order of highest to lowest priority:

- Create a community hub – possibly at a vacant school that would include: daycare, senior's community centre, community garden, playground, farmer's market stalls, community watch office, and on a bus route. Have child care funding available, mix adult and child day care. (15 votes)
- More affordable senior's housing – build low maintenance homes (10 votes)
- Independent housing (eg. tiny homes with support) – laneway homes, more housing options, small homes on 38 foot lots, duplex and four-plex, ALR allowing retired residents to stay on farm (8 votes)
- Accessible trails – Log Train Trail and Inlet Trail, more access to get on and off trail, smaller routes with signage, degree of difficulty, parking visibility, pathway through Fouler Rd easement access to mal away from highway (5 votes)
- Engage business community to consider mobility issues in their space – senior specific logo to identify senior friendly business (contest to create), engage Chamber of Commerce (5 votes)
- Expanded public transportation – ACRD to continue advancing (look for links to City services) (5 votes)
- Connectivity for walking – lobby Province for sidewalks (4 votes)
- More robust home support system – meal prep, yearly assessments (4 votes)
- Mental health support – offer social activities in community halls, satellite Sunshine Club (4 votes)
- Housing options in local area – levels of care (3 votes)

Advertising

To ensure all stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide input on the AF Plan, advertising included various methods of social media including the ACRD website, Facebook (ACRD AV Age-Friendly Plan and City of Port Alberni pages), and Twitter. Ads were placed in the AV News encouraging residents to complete the survey and attend the Community Workshop, and an article was published in the AV News reporting on the Community Workshop. A mail out was sent to all households in the AV EAs advertising for the survey and Community Workshop. Posters were also placed at various locations around the City and ACRD, in addition to paper copies of the survey at the ACRD office and Echo Centre. The project team also attend the ACHN Services Fair on January 27, 2020

advertising for the Community Workshop, and to increase project awareness. Many detailed communications through phone, email and in-person were also made throughout the project, resulting in important networking and relationship building to assist in collaborating to work towards making the AV more age-friendly.

Alberni-Clayoquot
Regional District

Governance ▾   Community ▾   Business ▾   Planning & Development ▾   Services ▾

WHAT'S NEW

▶ **Statement from the Chair of the Board**
Posted: Jun 3, 2020

▶ **Draft AV Age-Friendly Plan**
The Draft AV Age-Friendly Plan is available for review by June 3, 2020.

▶ **Fayette & Lamarque Rd Water Main Replacement**
The project to commence May 19th, 2020 through to October, 2020. See notice for more details.

NEXT

AV Age-Friendly Plan

Air Quality Council Web Directory

Bear Smart Info

Community Links

Emergency Preparedness

Fire Departments

Fireworks Permits

Highway 19 Connector to Highway 4 Route Study

Image Gallery

Parks & Trails

Regional District Information

Alberni Valley Age-Friendly Plan

Home > Community > AV Age-Friendly Plan

The **Draft Alberni Valley Age-Friendly Plan** and **Appendices** are now available for review by June 3. Let us know if you have any comments or questions, and continue to check this page for project updates!

Background

The 2016 Census notes that 21.8% of the total population in the ACRD is 65 years or older, which is higher than the provincial average of 18.3%. The largest population group in the ACRD is 45 to 64 years (30%), with the greatest growth expected in the next 20 years for those 75 and older. With this aging population, the ACRD needs to consider planning initiatives that support age-friendly communities such as accessibility, transportation, housing, health care, food security, and recreation.

In October 2018, the Board of Directors directed staff to apply to the **2019 UBCM Age-Friendly Communities grant program** to develop a local Age-Friendly Plan. In November 2018, UBCM approved Stream 1 funding for the creation of an Alberni Valley Age-Friendly Community Action

ALBERNI VALLEY
Age-Friendly Plan

The ACRD is growing, aging & changing.

Have your say.

TAKE THE AGE-FRIENDLY SURVEY

Help the ACRD plan for the future by completing the survey: **www.acrd.bc.ca/agefriendly**

ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT REGIONAL DISTRICT

📞 250-720-2700   ✉ agefriendly@acrd.bc.ca   🌐 www.acrd.bc.ca/agefriendly

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

February 6
1:30 - 3:30 pm
Gyro Youth Centre | 3245 7th Ave

ALBERNI VALLEY
Age-Friendly Plan

ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT REGIONAL DISTRICT

📞 **250-720-2700** ✉ **agefriendly@acrd.bc.ca**

🌐 **www.acrd.bc.ca/agefriendly**

AVDRA pursues permanent facility

Continued from A1

After this year's disappointment, Beecroft said the AVDRA is looking at a "new direction" for the future.

"We understood that we'll never get back to a permanent location at the airport," he said. "We know that will never happen."

In the fall of this year, the association started meeting with members of Port Alberni's city council, including Mayor Sharie Minions, to discuss the possibility of building a permanent drag strip in town. They have identified several potential locations, although Beecroft did not want to discuss them yet.

Minions said there is "general support" from Port Alberni's city council to build a permanent drag strip within city limits.

"We do see a very realistic chance that in the next two years, we could have a permanent drag strip in the city

We're not giving up. We really want to race.

– Dave Beecroft

of Port Alberni," she said on Wednesday.

Beecroft said that the AVDRA has talked to most of the leaseholders at the Alberni Valley Regional Airport about the proposed three-year lease, although they are still waiting to hear back from a few.

"No one has said 'no' so far," said Beecroft.

The request will be brought to the Alberni Valley and Bamfield Services Committee meeting in January, after which it will come back to the ACRD board for a final decision. The AVDRA has asked

for a decision to be made in January so that they can start fundraising.

"I think they got our message," said Beecroft after the meeting.

He pointed out that Stamp Avenue was not an ideal location for the drag races because it interrupted traffic in town, and a permanent position at the airport will not be possible. So the AVDRA is looking in a new direction, searching for a "low impact area" within city limits to host a permanent facility.

"We're not giving up," he said. "We really want to race."

A petition that has been travelling around the Alberni Valley since the summer has garnered more than 6,000 signatures supporting the return of the annual Thunder in the Valley drag races.

"We know we have the community's support," Beecroft said on Wednesday.

ACRD action plan aims to activate seniors

MIKE YOUDS
Special to the News

Twenty-two percent of Alberni Valley rural residents are senior citizens, a significantly higher proportion than the B.C. average of 13 percent.

More significantly, over the next 20 years the number of Valley residents aged 75 and over is expected to double.

Those figures spoke volumes at an age-friendly workshop hosted Feb. 6 by the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District.

While the city has pursued age-friendly recognition since 2013, the ACRD is just getting going with an action plan to be implemented in April.

Seumas McCombie jots down housing ideas during a recent ACRD age-friendly workshop (MIKE YOUDS/ Special to the AV News)

"The goal is to be recognized by UBCM as an age-friendly community," ACRD Planner Amy Anaka told workshop participants.

Age-friendliness is a social planning movement launched 15 years ago by the World Health Organization. Shifting demographics — the so-called silver tsunami — helped inspire the movement, but its broader vision has been to improve quality of life overall. B.C. is a recognized leader with more than 40 communities recognized so far.

Age-friendly communities allow people to remain as independent as possible for as long as possible, said Cherie Enns, planning consultant.

"It's important to note this is a global initiative and it speaks to community," Enns said. "There are so many times that place is excluded for us due to age."

Last year, for the first time, people over 65 outnumbered those age 14 and younger, she noted.

The World Health Organization recognizes eight "domains of age-friendliness." These include safe, accessible environments (indoors and outdoors), transportation, housing, social inclusiveness, support and health services. This calls for an integration of all aspects of community, Enns said.

"There are just so many ways we can rethink community and how we can remain active at all levels," Enns said.

> ## The goal is to be recognized by UBCM as an age-friendly community.
>
> – Amy Anaka

Anaka offered a snapshot of electoral area age composition. With a median age of 47, 30 percent are between 45 and 64, the largest age group. Average life expectancy is 79. More significantly, over the next 20 years, the number of residents aged 75 and over is expected to double, she said.

While the ACRD plan is focused on rural areas, city and valley are closely linked: "Really, it's a plan for the entire valley," Anaka said.

"There's already been a lot of age-friendly work done locally and we're going to make sure we work off that," she added. Planning revolves around the ACRD zoning bylaw, official community plan, agricultural plan and emergency plan as well as parks and trails.

A resident survey this winter year yielded direct feedback. Among common concerns, accessibility and transportation alternatives were prominent. Safe cycling is limited within the rural areas.

"A lot of people commented on Beaver Creek Road in particular," Anaka said.

Health concerns include a chronic shortage of physicians and a single walk-in clinic. Respondents also showed strong interest in growing their own food.

"We need many more farmers growing food locally and programs to help people access that food."

OPEN BURNING BAN IN EFFECT

To reduce the risk of wildfires and the impacts of smoke on people's health, there is a province-wide burning ban on all fires, expect for very small campfires measuring 0.5 meters by 0.5 meters. This fire ban includes fireworks, burn barrels, slash piles and fire lanterns. The City and ACRD green spaces remain open and we ask you to continue to practice social distancing while using these spaces.

The public can report wildfires and open burning through:

RAPP line 1-877-952-RAPP or
Telus cellular #7277 or
BC Wildfire 1 800 663-5555
toll free or *5555 on a cellphone
If the fire is an immediate threat or danger call 911

CORONAVIRUS • COVID-19
ALBERNI VALLEY COMMUNITY UPDATE
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
letsconnectpa.ca/covid-19

APPENDIX E: ACTION PLANNING

ALBERNI VALLEY AGE-FRIENDLY PLAN | DRAFT ACTION PLANNING

VISION: All seniors in the Alberni Valley are included, respected, and supported to actively age and contribute to their community.

Disclaimer: The following draft action plan links action items to possible community leads/partners. While in some cases actions may not meet the specific mandate of the listed lead/partner, the intent of the action item is to provide guidance for future collaboration and discussion.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES		
Goal 1: Increased access to community support and timely health services for all seniors, including for those who are most vulnerable.		
Objective 1.1: Support the improvement of health care services available to seniors in the Alberni Valley.		
Action	**Lead/Partners**	**Actions To Date or In-Process**
Investigate ways to increase local visits from medical specialists, including decreasing the need for local medical specialists through the use of technology.	Island Health Province of British Columbia	ACRDHD (Hospital District) – cost sharing with province with ACRDHD paying 40%. Facilities include: Bamfield Outpost Hospital, Tofino General Hospital, West Coast General Hospital.
Develop or expand recreation and neighborhood programs or community hubs to reduce social isolation experienced by many caregivers.	ACRD City of Port Alberni Alberni-Clayoquot Health Network (ACHN) Vancouver Island University (VIU)	
Increase awareness about caregiving and caregiver support.	Home care workers Residential care workers Better at Home Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative Island Health Family physicians Province of British Columbia	
Collaborate to create a program, or identify and communicate existing programs, to help guide seniors through their health process.	ACHN Island Health Home care workers Residential care workers Better at Home Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative	

Engage with health care providers to increase identification of social needs and utilization of community resources to support older patients in managing their health and health care.	Home care workers Residential care workers Better at Home Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative Island Health Family physicians Vancouver Island University North Island College	Increase awareness and expand around the Farmers' Market coupon program to provide low income seniors with access to local, healthy food.
Support Island Health, ACHN, and other organizations to engage with health care providers to increase identification of social needs and utilization of community resources to support older patients in managing their health and health care.	Island Health Family physicians ACHN Educational partners Better at Home Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative	
Objective 1.2: Support improved transportation options for in and out-of-town appointments and services.		
Support the establishment of, and work with, organizations to expand the volunteer patient support program that accompanies seniors to out-of-town appointments. Also consider use of technology to reduce the need to travel to out of town appointments.	Island Health BC Transit Private industry Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative	
Lobby for increased handyDART services in the Alberni Valley.	ACRD City of Port Alberni BC Transit	
Objective 1.3: Develop strategies to reach more seniors who lack access to services.		
Support Island Health, ACHN, and other organizations to develop or expand services to improve outreach to disconnected and socially isolated older adults, particularly in communities with health disparities.	Island Health ACHN Vancouver Island University North Island College Community Associations First Nations	
Support Island Health, ACHN, and other organizations to engage with health care providers to increase identification of social needs and utilization of community resources to support older patients in managing their health and health care.	Home care workers Better at Home Island Health ACHN	

	Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative	
Objective 1.4: Identify resources for community projects and programs that promote and support healthy aging, and age-friendly neighbourhoods and communities.		
Support Island Health, ACHN, and other organizations to identify and promote existing opportunities to fund age-friendly projects.	Island Health ACHN BC Healthy Communities UBCM ACRD Rotary Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club North Island College ElderCollege	Recommendation: Rotary intergenerational cooking program. Sunshine Club various activities: cooking, recreational (pickle ball, bowling, curling), pottery, etc.
Collaborate with Island Health, ACHN, and other levels of government for more funding based on the needs of older adults in the Alberni Valley (eg. home-care supports).	Home care workers Better at Home Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative Island Health ACHN BC Healthy Communities UBCM ACRD Vancouver Island University North Island College	
Pursue and support funding/grant applications in development of age-friendly projects.	ACHN BC Healthy Communities UBCM ACRD Vancouver Island University North Island College	Recommendation: Registered charity/not-for-profit (create a Community Hub at a vacant school (Gill) with a daycare, senior's community centre, community garden, playground, farmer's market stalls, community watch, on a bus route) Child care, housing, and age-friendly opportunities could be combined – idea needs to be further developed.
Increase opportunities to access and grow local food, and improve knowledge of low cost food programs (eg.	ACRD Agriculture Support Workers Alberni Farmer's Institute Farmer's Markets	North Island College Market Gardner Program in partnership with Port Alberni Shelter Society.

	Community Associations North Island College ElderCollege	

Objective 1.5: Encourage the ACRD to support mental health in the Alberni Valley.

Increase community connectivity between the City of Port Alberni and rural communities to promote social interactions and reduce social isolation.	ACRD City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club UBCM BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) Community Halls AV Hospice Society	Recommendation: Programming in Community Halls. Grant in Aid for Alberni Valley Hospice Society ($4,000.00 in 2019) to contribute to their Grief and Bereavement Program (provide counselling services for all ages).
Increase access to green and open spaces through planning policy and local partnerships.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	Recommendation: Benches and seating areas.
Prioritise place making, public art, and other initiatives to strengthen community identity and sense of belonging to promote connectedness and positive mental health.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	ACRD current Zoning Bylaw review, and future OCP updates.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT
Goal 2: Formalize civic and corporate commitment to making the Alberni Valley a more age-friendly community.

Action	Lead/Partners	Actions To Date or In-Process
Objective 2.1: Develop and implement an Age-Friendly Plan.		
Develop an Age-Friendly Action Plan.	ACRD Community Futures Alberni-Clayoquot	In process.
Apply for age-friendly joint community recognition from BC Healthy Communities.	ACRD City of Port Alberni BC Healthy Communities UBCM	ACRD can apply once AV Age-Friendly Plan is complete.
Audit policies and bylaws through an age-friendly lens.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Form a joint age-friendly committee.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	Continue with established AV Age-Friendly Working Group.
Objective 2.2: Determine strategies for all ACRD meeting rooms and gathering places.		
Inventory audio-visual systems and assisted listening needs of all ACRD and City owned or leased meeting rooms, event spaces, and gathering places.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	

Record all ACRD and City meetings and upload for later viewing and access, and live broadcast ACRD Board and City Council meetings.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	ACRD in process of determining a system to live broadcast Board meetings. City of Port Alberni currently live broadcasts Council meetings via City of Port Alberni Local Government - YouTube.

Goal 3: Strengthen opportunities for civic participation, volunteerism, and employment.

Objective 3.1: Include seniors in preserving and sharing of community history.

Identify ways for history, heritage and stories to be preserved and passed down.	First Nations ACRD City of Port Alberni SD70 University partnerships North Island College ElderCollege and Joy of Lifelong Learning Community Associations	

Objective 3.2: Increase the civic participation and active engagement of seniors in the Alberni Valley.

Increase the range of flexible options for older volunteers at a local level.	City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club Specific organizations Community facilitators	ACRD Grant in Aid funding founding for non-profits.
Advocate for the establishment of, and support existing, solutions-oriented and proactive community, neighbourhood, and resident associations in the Alberni Valley.	City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club Sproat Lake Community Association Beaver Creek Community Hall Cherry Creek Community Hall	Funding program for Community Associations. Current Rural Crime Watch Program in partnership with RCMP.
Encourage partnerships between local organizations to promote joint lifelong learning programs.	City of Port Alberni Library Echo Centre Community Halls North Island College ElderCollege and Joy of Lifelong Learning Other	

Objective 3.3: Provide opportunities for seniors to actively participate in local governance.

Increase opportunities to be involved in local government meetings and community matters.	ACRD City of Port Alberni Community Associations	

Consider ways to increase the Regional District's social planning capacity to prepare for its growing population of older adults.	ACRD City of Port Alberni Community Futures Alberni-Clayoquot	
Involve older adults on Regional District commissions and boards, and in program planning and outreach (eg. include policies for inclusivity).	ACRD City of Port Alberni Community Associations	
Train new Board and commission members on age and accessibility issues.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Objective 3.4: Provide opportunities for seniors to better support one another where possible.		
Explore the necessary tools for establishing a seniors sharing service where peer-to-peer support can take place.	Community Associations Echo Sunshine Club Non-Profit Organizations	
Work with local seniors groups and support the establishment of a regular repair cafe event for seniors where volunteers can exchange and trade services and skills.	Educational Partners - Volunteer hours for Secondary Students City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club ACRD	Echo Centre woodshop. Lease for 3rd Ave Recycling Depot Port Alberni Maker Space in progress. Will the location be accessible (no elevator to get to the second floor).
Objective 3.5: Increase the active engagement of seniors in the community.		
Host a yearly volunteer fair – invite all local volunteer organizations to recruit and share information about their services. Investigate supporting transportation to and from this event.	ACHN ACRD City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club	Advertise during Senior's Week: June 7-13, 2020
Recruit volunteers to support Alberni Valley age-friendly actions.	City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club Community Associations	Advertise during Senior's Week: June 7-13, 2020. Advertise in Echo Sunshine Club monthly newsletter.
Objective 3.6: Mobilize the wisdom and experience of seniors, and provide them opportunities to live with passion and purpose.		
Educate local businesses on seniors' needs and hiring advantages.	Chamber of Commerce Rotary Club Uptown Merchants' Association City of Port Alberni Economic Development Community Futures Alberni-Clayoquot	

Encourage local employers to recruit, hire, and retain older workers.	Chamber of Commerce Uptown Merchants' Association City of Port Alberni Economic Development Community Futures Alberni-Clayoquot	
Develop criteria to define age-friendly businesses with a recognizable brand and certification process.	Chamber of Commerce Uptown Merchants' Association City of Port Alberni Economic Development	

TRANSPORTATION		
Goal 4: Improve access to a range of affordable and appropriate transportation options.		
Objective 4.1: Improve pedestrian safety in the Alberni Valley.		
Action	**Lead/Partners**	**Actions To Date or In-Process**
Actively pursue funding to conduct a Street and Intersection Pedestrian Safety Study and Action Plan	ACRD	Communication with ACRD Environmental Services and MOTI on clarifying roles, jurisdictions, and opportunities for collaboration.
Use the recommendations in the action plan to increase accessibility and pedestrian safety measures, especially in the vicinity of schools and seniors housing.	ACRD BC Ministry of Transportation	
Install pedestrian-activated lights for road crossings at key locations.	BC Ministry of Transportation	
Objective 4.2: Support the development of community and organization led convenient and affordable transportation options.		
Support alternative transportation options such as volunteer driver programs, community shuttles, and development of a co-op bus program for community use.	ACRD Port Alberni City BC Transit	
Work with existing agencies to establish a service for medical and non-medical volunteer transportation.	Better at Home Echo Sunshine Club Health Organizations	Wheels for Wellness provides low-cost transportation options for non-emergency, physician-related medical care. Better at Home provides non-medical services for B.C. seniors living independently in their own homes.
Support initiatives that use school buses or other available vehicles to transport older adults during off hours or when not in use.	SD70	

Objective 4.3: Continue to plan and advocate for convenient and affordable transportation options with the Province (MOTI) and BC Transit.		
Lobby the Province for sidewalks and main transportation corridors.	ACRD	
Improve community routes (e.g. smaller buses, more buses, increase frequency, access on weekends, middle of day and evenings) including the implementation of a seniors' oriented transit service.	BC Transit ACRD City of Port Alberni	ACRD/BC Transit Feasibility Study is underway.
Better communicate and provide information regarding handyDART services to seniors.	BC Transit ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Explore ways to improve and expand handyDART to be more convenient for seniors in need, allowing for more spontaneity in day-to-day activities.	BC Transit	
Create opportunity for a 2-way dialogue and feedback on current and needed transportation services between BC Transit, ACRD, and local citizens.	ACRD BC Transit	
Objective 4.4: Integrate transit-oriented design including alternative transportation methods.		
Address arterial densification/prioritize corridor development in OCP policies and goals (ie. Increase the density on main corridors to increase the viability of transit services).	ACRD Community Futures Alberni-Clayoquot	Zoning Bylaw review and OCP updates currently underway.
Objective 4.5: Actively pursue funding opportunities to support transportation in the Alberni Valley.		
Explore funding options, including provincial, federal, and municipal grants, for rideshare programs to provide funding and support to volunteer drivers	Non-Profit Organizations	
Objective 4.6: Calm traffic and improve safety for pedestrians at high priority areas.		
Share AV Age-Friendly Plan with MOTI - continue to lobby for pedestrian and safety improvements at, in particular, the highway crossing at (list key areas).	ACRD MOTI	
Work with MOTI to assess the feasibility of traffic calming mechanisms along the highway (e.g., landscaped medians).	ACRD MOTI	
Integrate objectives for traffic calming into the ACRD Alberni Valley Official Community Plans, including transportation junctions with the City of Port Alberni.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION		
Goal 5: Regularly and effectively communicate information on services, emergency response, home support, and social activities.		
Objective 5.1: Enhance the level of dialogue and coordination among the ACRD, agencies that support seniors, and seniors.		
Action	**Lead/Partners**	**Actions To Date or In-Process**
Develop a Community Resource Directory to identify the services and programs offered locally and in adjacent communities; and develop a volunteer bank based on skills and interests to help match people's skills to the community's needs.	ACRD City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club Home care workers Better at Home Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative Island Health ACHN Vancouver Island University North Island College ElderCollege	Karen Freethy (Sunshine Club Liaison, City of Port Alberni Recreation Programmer) has started on this with the Emergency Social Services (ESS) program development. Additional work to do to develop a volunteer bank. AV Emergency Program/ESS Program. Current Volunteer Friendly Phone Service from the Port Alberni Sunshine Club with the cooperation of the RCMP – free program, those who register will get a daily call from a volunteer.
Continually evaluate the progress of the AV Age-Friendly Plan and communicate progress to residents.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Encourage important information for seniors be made available in the places they frequent, including libraries, doctors' offices, pharmacies, banks, shopping malls, grocery stores, recreation centres, and others.	Joint ACRD/City of Port Alberni AV Age-Friendly Committee (to be created) North Island College	
Create a senior-specific District mailing list with senior-related information.	ACRD City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club	
Objective 5.2: Strengthen bonds with local stakeholders, partners, and First Nation communities.		
Explore ways to reach out to local First Nations, particularly Elders, to identify needs as well as areas of mutual support and interest.	ACRD First Nations Port Alberni Friendship Center First Nations Health Authority North Island College ElderCollege	Port Alberni Friendship Center programs and services.
Consider hosting a community-to-community dialogue that connects stakeholders across the Alberni Valley and local First Nation communities to seek win-win partnerships and initiatives.	ACRD City of Port Alberni First Nations Friendship Center First Nations Health Authority North Island College ElderCollege	Funding through UBCM.
Objective 5.3: Broaden the ACRDs information dissemination in the Alberni Valley.		

Working with community partners to develop an awareness campaign that ensures older adults know who to contact when they want to find out about 55+ services in the Alberni Valley.	Chamber of Commerce Echo Sunshine Club ACRD City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club Home care workers Better at Home Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative Island Health ACHN Vancouver Island University North Island College ElderCollege	
Identify one or more public locations to create a bulletin board for up-to-date news and resources. Also consider technology in this area as the newer seniors are comfortable with technology and it's more accessible.	ACRD City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club Port Alberni Friendship Centre Island Health	Current community boards/flyer distribution: Harbour Quay (Salmonberrys), ACRD, Beaver Creek Market, Save On Foods, Quality Foods, Canadian Tire, Echo Centre, North Island College, Share Kare, Jumping Slug, Pete's Mountain Meat, Buy Low, Steampunk, Starbucks, TD Bank, Animal Ark, Credit Union, Library, Chamber of Commerce, Co-Op Handouts: Echo Centre in the holders and on coffee table, front desk Chamber of Commerce
Where possible, support the coordination of information about community, health and social services for older adults.	ACHN Port Alberni Friendship Center ACRD City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club Home care workers Better at Home Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative Island Health Vancouver Island University North Island College ElderCollege	

Goal 6: Build individual and community resiliency, with emphasis on emergency planning.

Objective 6.1: Ensure seniors are informed and well prepared, before, during and after an emergency.		
Develop and implement strategies to disseminate emergency preparedness information to older adults and caregivers, and involve more older adults and people with disabilities in neighborhood emergency preparation and safety programs across generations.	ACRD Protective Services Manager Alberni Lifeline	Part of ACRD Protective Services Manager's work plan. Identification and integration of air shelters in the emergency response plan for when Port Alberni has Air Quality Advisories as seniors fall into the vulnerable population category. Or potential notifications that go to care homes when advisory is put out by provincial government. Collaboration between local government staff, community stakeholders, and volunteers needs to be visible and frequent for the emergency program to be effective and credible. Engage faith- and community-based organizations. These relationships need to be built prior to an emergency. Alberni Valley Rescue Squad Grant in Aid of $13,552.00 for the work they do related to public safety and volunteer work in emergency services and emergency preparedness. (They completed 20 public engagement events in 2018)
Include enrollment of a senior's representative on the AV Emergency Planning Liaison Group to provide an age-friendly perspective in emergency planning.	ACRD Protective Services Manager	Part of ACRD Protective Services Manager's work plan.
Explore options for a more flexible model for volunteers, to not require a long term commitment.	ACRD Protective Services Manager	Part of ACRD Protective Services Manager's work plan and ESS Program development.
Provide training on preparedness to older adults, caregivers, their families, and organizations serving older adults (e.g., Community Halls, Echo Centre).	ACRD Protective Services Manager Community Halls Engage faith- and community-based organizations Alberni Lifeline	Part of ACRD Protective Services Manager's work plan.
Involve seniors in the training of an emergency notification system (once developed), and creation of an emergency preparedness package, once in place.	ACRD Protective Services Manager Community Associations Alberni Lifeline	Part of ACRD Protective Services Manager's work plan. Arrowsmith Amateur Radio Club Grant in Aid of $4000.00 to complete a wireless Mesh System for wireless communications for First Responder and Life Line organizations.

RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION		
Goal 7: Provide opportunities for social participation for people of all ages, abilities and cultures, including seniors.		
Objective 7.1: Use an age-friendly approach in ACRD rural planning initiatives.		
Action	**Lead/Partners**	**Actions To Date or In-Process**
Invite seniors to participate in the development or revision of the OCP as well as in other local government public participation processes.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Appoint an ACRD and City of Port Alberni staff member to champion existing and future age-friendly plans and initiatives.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Objective 7.2: Create opportunities for intergenerational activities, services, housing, and other programs.		
Explore opportunities for new seniors and intergenerational programming, such as a storytelling event or youth providing technology training to seniors.	Educational partners Library North Island College ElderCollege and Joy of Lifelong Learning	North Island College helps to strengthen partnerships and connections in support of intergenerational activity: NIC-ADSS collaborative projects, and working with long-term care residences, engaging students to work on senior's project work.
Explore student volunteer programs at high school to provide community support to seniors.	SD70 North Island College ElderCollege and Joy of Lifelong Learning	See above.
Initiate an "Adopt-a-Grandparent" or elder tutoring program, possibly in association with local schools, non-profit organizations, or other community organizations.	Non-Profit Organizations Educational partners SD70 NIC	See above.
Implement best practices known to successfully nurture and strengthen ties across generations.	All stakeholders	See above.
Objective 7.3: Foster community integration and inclusion.		
Support more cultural inclusion within the community and begin a dialogue with Tseshaht First Nation and Hupacasath First Nation regarding seniors initiatives and possible win-win initiatives.	TFN HFN Port Alberni Friendship Center ACRD City of Port Alberni North Island College ElderCollege	
Objective 7.4: Welcome, encourage, and celebrate the inclusion of seniors in community events.		
Establish simple but meaningful accessibility guidelines for community events, with consideration given to communicating with seniors as well as provision of	All stakeholders Non-Profit Organizations	

accessible transportation, seating, washrooms, and other facilities.		
Objective 7.5: Help local community groups and businesses become more aware of the needs and interests of seniors.		
Engage with local agencies, businesses, organizations, and places of worship to explore ways of better engaging and supporting seniors in the community.	Faith Communities Non-Profit Organizations	
Objective 7.6: Educate Regional District employees, boards, and commissions about the impacts of age, disability, and memory loss.		
Develop and implement an evidence-based cultural training program for aging, health, and human service professionals.	ACRD	
Create a Regional District "no wrong door" information and assistance service.	ACRD	

OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS **Goal 8: Ensure public spaces, trails and buildings are easily accessed with many opportunities for all ages and abilities, including older adults and seniors, to enjoy and appreciate.**		
Objective 8.1: Complete an accessibility assessment of public buildings and outdoor spaces.		
Action	**Lead/Partners**	**Actions To Date or In-Process**
Develop trail guidelines to respond to the needs of seniors and people with special needs, disabilities, and/or mobility challenges.	ACRD City of Port Alberni BC Parks	Grant in Aid, 2019: Funding awarded to the Central Westcoast Forestry Society for the Lost Shoe Creek Habitat Restoration and Educational Trail Program ($3,500.00)
Objective 8.2: Include a commitment to accessibility and inclusion in the EA OCPs.		
Pursue universal accessibility throughout all trails, sidewalks, parks and public facilities by considering the needs of all users regarding pathway grades, surface materials, traffic signals and signage.	ACRD City of Port Alberni BC Parks	
Promote application of Universal Design and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to the built and social environments.	ACRD City of Port Alberni BC Parks	
Objective 8.3: Create walkable and accessible communities.		
Expand on existing community walking trails and develop new trails in the Alberni Valley EAs (similar to Sproat Lake, Cherry Creek)	ACRD BC Parks	
Establish a roadside, multi-use pathway along (Beaver Creek, Cherry Creek, other roads) and explore the potential	ACRD MOTI	

for similar pathways along other roads in the Alberni Valley.	BC Parks	
Develop all new parks and retrofit existing parks, when redevelopment occurs, with accessible sidewalks, trails and infrastructure (emphasis on the Log Train Trail an Inlet Trail from WG meeting).	ACRD Corporations BC Parks	
Objective 8.4: Actively pursue and support funding opportunities for outdoor spaces, buildings, and public facilities.		
Explore partnerships and grant opportunities to help fund parks and trails.	ACRD Community Associations BC Parks	
Objective 8.5: Improve access to nature, parks, open spaces, and trails for people of all ages and abilities, and enhance signage and wayfinding.		
Improve wayfinding signage throughout the Alberni Valley; consider signage for age-friendly trails that indicates difficulty level and length of trail.	ACRD residents ACRD MOTI City of Port Alberni BC Parks	
Conduct an outdoor spaces furniture study to determine places to place new furniture that would best serve the community.	ACRD City of Port Alberni BC Parks	
Improve access to public washroom facilities.	ACRD City of Port Alberni BC Parks	
Educate and inform about the importance of clean air and air quality issues, and encourage clean air lifestyles and business practices.	Air Quality Council ACRD Agriculture Support Workers	Various work is underway with the Air Quality Council. Grant in Aid ($10,000.00 in 2019) to support programs such as the ACRD Wood Stove Exchange Program.
Objective 8.6: Increase the number of age-friendly amenities located on pathways and trails.		
Explore internal and external funding opportunities for pedestrian upgrades that benefit seniors directly, including increased lighting, street furniture.	ACRD Private business and sponsorship	

HOUSING Goal 9: Facilitate and support a range of suitable and affordable housing options for people of all ages, including seniors, and people with mobility challenges.		
Objective 9.1: Support the development of a range of suitable and affordable housing options for seniors in the Alberni Valley.		
Action	**Lead/Partners**	**Actions To Date or In-Process**
Undertake a Housing Needs Report that, in part, seeks to identify the future housing needs of the Alberni Valley's aging population and explores ways to meet those needs.	ACRD UBCM City of Port Alberni ACHN	UBCM grant received in January 2020 to complete Housing Needs Reports (HNR) for the 6 ACRD EAs. UBCM grant received in 2019 to complete a HNR for the City of Port Alberni.
Work with local partners to study the demand for alternative and affordable housing options.	ACRD City of Port Alberni UBCM Port Alberni Shelter Society	
Actively encourage the development of affordable rental housing for older adults.	ACRD City of Port Alberni BC Housing CMHC Port Alberni Shelter Society	
Actively support the construction of an assisted living/long-term care facilities in the Alberni Valley.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Support and invest in healthy housing initiatives, promoting safe, affordable, and accessible housing (eg. add a healthy housing strategy to the ACRD Housing Needs Report to guide ACRD policies, regulations, and programs for diverse and affordable housing. Include healthy and inclusionary policies in the Alberni Valley OCPs, including resident housing, affordable housing in new developments, and inclusionary housing policies).	ACRD City of Port Alberni BC Housing Port Alberni Shelter Society Alberni Valley Community Stakeholders Initiative to End Homelessness Committee (AVCSI) ACHN	Build off of 2017 Alberni Valley Housing Forum.
Objective 9.2: Investigate ACRD strategies to support age-friendly housing in the ACRD.		
Support opportunities that provide residents to age in place by advocating with other levels of government, and consider applications for residential land uses and housing options.	BC Housing CMHC Agricultural Land Commission Ministry of Agriculture ACRD City of Port Alberni	

Evaluate additional regulatory and policy levers for the development of affordable seniors housing (e.g., OCP objectives and policies, density bonusing, pre-zoning, permitted uses).	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Consider developing an Attainable Housing Policy for the ACRD, which includes provisions for lower income seniors, building on the work of a Regional Affordable Housing Needs Assessment.	ACRD	
Encourage mixed-use housing options within specific neighbourhoods to facilitate an older person to move into alternative housing enabling the retention of social networks.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Objective 9.3: Incorporate age-friendly provisions in EA OCPs.		
Encourage a range of housing types to meet the needs of seniors and citizens with special needs (eg. tiny homes).	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Advocate for the development of adaptable housing standards and/or guidelines to guide future development in the Alberni Valley. Incorporate related policies into OCP update.	ACRD	
Objective 9.4: Improve the accessibility of housing in the Alberni Valley.		
Advocate for the development of adaptable housing standards and/or guidelines to direct development.	ACRD City of Port Alberni BC Housing	
Identify ways to support contractors and developers in the introduction of accessible or adaptable features in new homes.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Objective 9.5: Implement strategies for seniors with financial challenges to stay in their homes.		
Expand home repair and weatherization programs to serve older adults.	Provincial Social Welfare Programs	
Increase public awareness of affordability programs.	Non-Profit Organizations Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative Port Alberni Shelter Society	
Investigate funding opportunities for affordable housing.	ACRD City of Port Alberni CHMC BC Housing	

	Alberni Valley Seniors' Services Sector Cooperative Port Alberni Shelter Society	

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION **Goal 10: Ensure seniors have access to a range of recreational and social activities within the communities where they live.**		
Objective 10.1: Strengthen intergenerational, culturally informed, and age-friendly programming.		
Action	**Lead/Partners**	**Actions To Date or In-Process**
Strengthen the mental and spiritual health residents by supporting accessible and inclusive community events, groups and places.	Community Halls City of Port Alberni Echo Centre	
Promote accessible, culturally relevant, and age-relevant art and cultural experiences.	City of Port Alberni Library Museum North Island College ElderCollege	
Explore new seniors and intergenerational programming.	City of Port Alberni Sunshine Club North Island College ElderCollege	
Work with partners to evaluate the program needs of seniors and consider adding additional programming (eg. wellness, arts, technology, skills training)	ACHN City of Port Alberni North Island College	
Support ElderCollege and NIC to expand learning opportunities for seniors.	North Island College	
Objective 10.2: Increase accessibility to programming for seniors.		
Explore ways to offer 'low barrier' program rates and drop-in fees for lower-income seniors, in order to encourage participation and support active living in all older adults.	ACRD City of Port Alberni	
Objective 10.3: Establish a senior's centre/hub/gathering place within the Alberni Valley.		
Work with partners to evaluate funding and location options for senior's gathering spaces within the AV EAs.	ACRD Community Halls	
Assess the appropriateness of Community Halls as potential senior gathering spaces, taking into consideration accessibility, access to transportation, size, location, cost, etc.	ACRD Sproat Lake Community Association Beaver Creek Community Hall Cherry Creek Community Hall	

Work with local community organizations to fund a seniors gathering space, coordinator to oversee services, manage volunteers, etc.	City of Port Alberni Echo Sunshine Club SD70 ACRD Port Alberni Farmer's Market	Expand on Workshop idea: Registered charity/not-for-profit (create a Community Hub at a vacant school (Gill) with a daycare, senior's community centre, community garden, playground, farmer's market stalls, community watch, on a bus route)
Objective 10.4: Identify gaps in serving the social participation needs of seniors at risk of social isolation, and develop strategies to reach out to them.		
Examine social isolation data using a racial equity lens to improve outcomes for all.	University Partners	
Use technology and surveys to increase access to information and services with emphasis on older adults and adults with disabilities.	University Partners	