



Age-Friendly Community Plan

February 2016

Acknowledgements

The District would like to thank the Age-Friendly Committee members who helped shape the plan as well as the community members who shared their ideas through surveys, workshops and discussion groups.

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMITTEE:

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- Edie Holland, Sparwood Toys for Tots
- Councilor McKie, District of Sparwood Council
- Norma McDougall, Sparwood Chamber of Commerce
- Judi Loewen, Seniors Centre
- Mary Taylor, Seniors Centre


The District would also like to thank the Province of BC and Union of BC Municipalities for the age-friendly grant funding that made this plan possible.

A Community-Owned Plan

The Sparwood Age-Friendly Plan is a community-owned plan, based on input and ideas from Sparwood residents. Making Sparwood age-friendly is a shared responsibility of all community members. Commitment and action by many partners will be necessary to achieve this objective.



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Context

An age-friendly community not only improves the quality of life for seniors, it also creates a more inclusive, safe and accessible community for everyone, including people with disabilities and families with young children.



WHAT IS AN AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY?

According to the World Health Organization¹, an age-friendly community is one that supports and enables older people to “age actively” – that is, to live in security, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society.



WHY DOES SPARWOOD NEED A PLAN?

BC’s population is aging. In 2009, just under 15% of BC’s population was 65 or older and by 2036 this proportion is projected to be nearly 24%. Although Sparwood currently has a younger than average population compared to the Province as a whole, trends show that Sparwood’s share of older adults and seniors is increasing. Further, as much as 50% of Teck’s workforce is eligible to retire in 10 years.

So, the District has used grant funding from the Province and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to create this plan to make Sparwood more age-friendly with the aim of retaining retiring workers and attracting new residents who want to stay long-term and age in place.



¹ World Health Organization (2007). Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide.



CONTEXT



² Seniors' Healthy Living Secretariat, B.C. Ministry of Health

HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO OTHER PLANS?

The District recently completed an update to its Official Community Plan (OCP). The OCP outlines Sparwood's vision for 2035 to be a community that embraces social, cultural, and economic diversity. It includes the goal to encourage diverse housing types for people of all ages, incomes, and lifestyles to support residents through all stages of their lives. It also prioritizes a compact urban form combined with an effective and safe trail network and multi-modal transportation system, which will support community members of all ages and abilities.

Further, the Districts of Elkford and Sparwood Housing Needs Assessment (2012) identified the need to prioritize the development of owned and rented affordable and accessible housing for seniors.

For more information, visit www.sparwood.ca.

ELEMENTS OF AN AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY²

- 1. Outdoor spaces and buildings** are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.
- 2. Public transportation** and other **mobility** options are accessible and affordable.
- 3. Housing** is affordable, appropriately located, well built, well designed and secure.
- 4.** Opportunities exist for **social participation** in leisure, recreation, cultural and spiritual activities for all ages and cultures.
- 5.** Older people are treated with **respect** and **included** in civic life.
- 6.** Opportunities for **employment and volunteerism** cater to older person's interests and abilities.
- 7. Age-friendly information** is available & **communications** are accessible for all.
- 8. Community support and health services** are tailored to older person's needs.



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Between June and November 2015, we asked Sparwood residents how age-friendly the community is today and what needs improvement for the future. We reached out to seniors and people of all ages to find out what it's like to be a senior in Sparwood now, and what future generations will need in order for them to comfortably remain in the community as they get older.

Engagement Activities:

- An **Age-Friendly Advisory Committee** was formed, including representatives from local organizations, senior citizens and caregivers to act as a sounding board for ideas, identify local issues and help engage the community to inform the Plan.
- A **survey** (online and paper) was used to assess how age-friendly Sparwood currently is. Two separate surveys were created, one for residents under 60 and one for those older than 60. Surveys were distributed at key locations throughout town including the Seniors Villa, Lilac Terrace, Seniors Centre, Leisure Centre and District Office. Two \$75 gift certificates were used to encourage participation.
- To help reach a broader audience, several key questions were posted through the **District's Facebook page**. While responses to the polls were limited, the page was viewed by over 700 people, helping to raise awareness about the project and get people thinking about what it's like to age in Sparwood.
- A total of **four community workshops** were held to discuss how age-friendly Sparwood is today and what needs improvement for the future. Two workshops were held with seniors at the Seniors Villa and Lilac Terrace and two additional workshops were held for people of all ages.
- Community members were also invited to complete **citizen-led Kitchen Table Conversations** using structured workbooks to help identify potential actions to make Sparwood more age-friendly. A total of five groups submitted ideas.



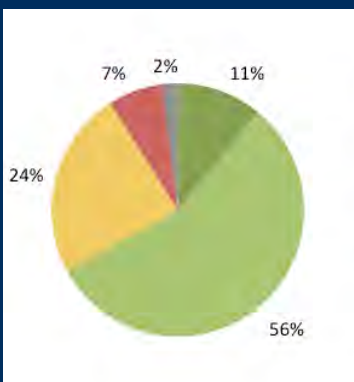


CONTEXT

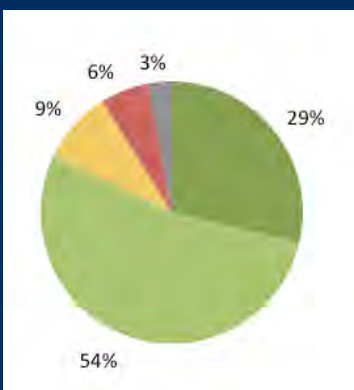
Overall, I believe Sparwood is an age-friendly community...



Survey respondents (under 60)



Survey respondents (over 60)



Overview of What We Heard:

Overall, senior respondents were more positive about aging in Sparwood than younger residents, which suggests there might be a gap between perception and reality of what it's like to age in Sparwood.

- **Overall age-friendliness:** The majority of survey respondents (both under 60 and over 60) felt that Sparwood is generally a friendly place to age.
 - » Those who disagreed (under 60) noted health care as the primary reason for Sparwood not being age-friendly.
 - » Those who disagreed (over 60) noted limited leisure/entertainment, limited health care, poor transportation, and lack of adequate housing as reasons for Sparwood not being age-friendly.
 - **Top reasons for staying in Sparwood** (for both age groups) included:
 - » Feeling safe
 - » Social connections
 - » Housing
 - » Recreation and fitness opportunities
 - » Seniors' Centre space and offerings
 - » Other
- Those under 60 also provided a number of other reasons including proximity to urban centres, low cost of living and the benefits of living in a small town such as little traffic.
- **Top concerns about staying in Sparwood** into your retirement/senior years (for those under 60) included:
 - » Health care
 - » Transportation / ability to get around
 - » Social connections (friends / family)
 - » Housing

Additional details can be found in the Public Input Summary available at www.sparwood.ca/age-friendly.



Key Issues:

Throughout the community engagement process (including the survey, community workshops and citizen-led discussions), a number of key issues emerged. Addressing these issues could significantly improve the age-friendliness of Sparwood.

- **Challenges in getting around:** Limited transit and taxi service makes it difficult for seniors to get around Sparwood and to neighbouring communities for hospital visits, shopping, or entertainment. Other issues include the safety and comfort of sidewalks and paths, the need for more benches, and snow clearing/maintenance.
- **Challenges in creating a sense of community:** Despite the fact that ‘strong social connections’ was reported as one of the top reasons people stay in Sparwood as they age, it was also reported as one of the top concerns for younger people as they get older. Isolation can be a serious problem for people of all ages, but especially for seniors living alone.

Creating more senior-specific and intergenerational activities and programs could help to build and maintain social connections and keep people active as they age.

- **Challenges in knowing what’s going on in town:** There are a number of activities, events, and programs happening in Sparwood but not everyone knows about them, especially new residents who don’t know where to look for information.

To get people more involved in community life, we need to find better ways to share information so everyone knows about available opportunities.



Sparwood can be challenging for pedestrians to get around, especially in winter months.





Example of a volunteer learning registry:

www.kudoz.ca

While this program focuses on adults with cognitive disabilities, it provides an example of how a central registry can help to connect those in need with those who want to help. This can strengthen individuals' sense of belonging and support a more accessible and inclusive community.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the feedback and ideas generated through the public and stakeholder engagement process, the Age-Friendly Advisory Committee, and best practice research on age-friendly communities, the District assessed the current state of Sparwood based on the 8 key elements of an age-friendly community (summarized on pg.2).

For each element, we assessed how age-friendly Sparwood is today - what's working and what's not - and developed a set of recommended strategies and actions to improve the community's livability and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities.

Through this process, a number of key ideas emerged. These issues can be addressed by a few "Big Moves" that can have significant impact on numerous different elements to create a more age-friendly community.

Recommended Big Moves

- 1 Explore the potential for a local transportation program:** A community bus or ride program could help to support local transportation. The District could explore the potential to work with local community organizations to develop a 'Town Rounder' route to supplement existing transit and maximize access and convenience for seniors.
- 2 Create a volunteer and learning registry:** A central registry could help connect people who need support with local volunteers who could provide rides, home/yard maintenance, home care, meals or social visits. This volunteer and opportunity database could also be used as a learning tool, connecting people who want to learn with others who can teach specific skills. This could be a great way to connect younger and older generations in Sparwood.



- 3 Hire a social planner:** A social planner could oversee age-friendly initiatives, apply for grant funding, and coordinate the volunteer registry (*Big Move #2*) as well as social and cultural programs. This could be a regional position to share costs with other communities.
- 4 Develop a Residents Guide:** An annual Residents Guide could be used to share information with all residents, including seniors. This guide could include helpful information and contact details about local services and programs including events, recreation programs, health services, provincial social services, tips for new families, wildlife concerns, volunteer opportunities, transit routes, and more.
- 5 Create more casual social gathering spots:** A number of small 'pocket parks' could be created surrounding new or existing sidewalk benches and community notice boards. These spots could help to encourage informal outdoor social gathering and provide more places for people to rest and relax on key walking/scooter routes.



Examples of 'pocket parks' with a variety of seating and amenities.



These Big Moves, along with other strategies and actions are listed in the sections that follow.

Actions have been assigned to the sections that are most relevant; however, many actions will have broader impact (ie., creating a volunteer registry could support employment/volunteering but also transportation, social participation, and respect/inclusion for seniors). These connections, along with other details, are provided in the Implementation Section.

Outdoor spaces and buildings

Our Goal: Sparwood has outdoor spaces and buildings that are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.



The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people and affect their ability to “age in place”.

HOW ARE WE DOING NOW?

A Safe and Accessible Community

Respondents from Sparwood’s recent Age-Friendly survey were generally satisfied with the safety and accessibility of **public buildings**. Ideas for improvement included more automatic doors, hand rails and wheelchair ramps/lifts, more parking for seniors, and more benches/seating in public places (especially in shaded/covered areas).

Senior survey respondents were generally satisfied with **public parks and green spaces** as well as **lighting** in public spaces. Suggestions included adding more lighting on streets and trails, more benches and sheltered areas, more walking paths through parks/gardens, and daily organized group walks for seniors.

Public washrooms received lower levels of satisfaction and participants suggested that more signage is needed to make people aware of public washrooms.

Over 80% of seniors agreed or totally agreed that overall, Sparwood is **a safe place for seniors**. However, only two-thirds of people under 60 felt the same.



CURRENT POLICY

Sparwood’s 2015 Official Community Plan aims to enhance the downtown with a mix of services, amenities, and public gathering spaces, all within walking distance. A concentration of activities and housing choices nearby with attractive and accessible buildings and public spaces will create a vibrant heart of the community that is suitable for people of all ages. Specific recommendations include improvements to Centennial Square, public open spaces, pedestrian and cycling connections, greenery, and signage. The District is already working on adding more trees and improving wayfinding for trails.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy: Improve the trail and park network to facilitate use by seniors and others with mobility challenges.



BIG MOVE: Explore opportunities to create small pocket parks surrounding new or existing sidewalk benches or community notice boards to support social gathering.

- Develop criteria for age-friendly park design and identify priority locations where these elements should be added into existing parks and public spaces. (*connected to Big Move #5*)
- Review trail guidelines for accessibility such as width, grade, surface materials, wayfinding, and lighting.
- Prioritize key trails (such as “easiest route” trails) to make accessible for all ages (i.e., smooth pavement, good lighting).
- Improve wayfinding for new and existing trails.
- Improve lighting, maintenance and accessibility of public spaces.
- Increase signage to public washrooms.
- Update the trail network Master Plan.

design for people

Sparwood’s OCP supports design for buildings and spaces that are safe, accessible, and pedestrian friendly. For example:

- **Improving safety with lighting improvements, beautification of public spaces, and community clean-ups.**
- **Providing roof overhangs to shelter pedestrians from rain/snow.**
- **Designing buildings so that snow falling from the roof doesn’t impact walkways, entrances, balconies, or parking.**
- **Avoiding large expanses of parking in front of buildings, so pedestrians can easily walk to the entrance.**
- **Wherever possible, ensuring all civic buildings and facilities are universally accessible for people with disabilities.**



OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS



Strategy: Encourage accessibility improvements for buildings

- Provide guidelines and incentives for existing buildings to improve accessibility (ramps, automatic doors, railings, accessible washrooms and parking, etc.)
- Advocate to local businesses to make building entrances accessible.
- Implement the District's Official Community Plan direction for new development to support pedestrian access by locating entrances near sidewalks and parking in rear.
- Create an 'Accessibility Award' program to recognize and celebrate buildings and organizations that support access for people of all ages and abilities.

Transportation and mobility

Our Goal: Sparwood has public transportation and other mobility options that are accessible and affordable.



HOW ARE WE DOING NOW?

Drivable and Walkable but Needs Improvement

Respondents from Sparwood's recent Age-Friendly survey were generally satisfied with **roads** and maintenance but noted streets are quite narrow and there should be dedicated lanes for bikes and scooters. Participants suggested some sidewalks are in need of repair. **Walkability** could be improved by adding more sidewalks and benches, widening sidewalks, ensuring snow/ice is removed in all areas, improving signage, and adding paved trails.

Senior respondents noted **scooters** are becoming more popular. Amenities such as covered parking, wider/smoothier sidewalks, and better maintenance of landscaping next to sidewalks would help to improve conditions for scooters.

A daily weekday bus connects Sparwood Heights with the Leisure Centre, Health Centre, and Greenwood Mall. A daily weekday bus also runs from Elkford to Fernie and a Health Connections bus runs from Elkford to Cranbrook on Wednesdays and Fridays. At this time there is no weekend transit service in Sparwood. Senior survey respondents ranked **public transit** the lowest in terms of comfort, safety, convenience, and physical access for getting around Sparwood and second lowest in terms of getting from Sparwood to neighbouring communities.

Taxi service received the second lowest level of satisfaction for seniors to get around Sparwood and the lowest for seniors to get from Sparwood to neighbouring communities.



Sparwood's roads, sidewalks, and trails are an important public assets to help people get around. The performance of our transportation network affects quality of life for all ages.



new trails

The Iron Rails CPR Overpass, Elk River Crossing Pedestrian Bridge, and Link Trail were officially opened in 2011, greatly improving the walkability between Sparwood Heights and Lower Sparwood.

The District plans to add even more trails to connect residential areas to the downtown.

150 min

People who walk 150 minutes a week achieve greater health benefits than non-walkers including increased heart health, stronger bones and lower blood pressure.

Harvard Health Publications, (2009)
"Walking: Your steps to health."

CURRENT POLICY

Sparwood's recently updated Official Community Plan aims to improve pathway and trail connections, address mobility concerns on trails, improve streetscapes and sidewalks, increase pedestrian safety, encourage the development of volunteer shuttle services, and work with BC Transit, the Regional District, and other neighbouring communities to increase public transit options.

RECOMMENDATIONS



BIG MOVE Strategy: Explore the potential for a 'made-in-Sparwood' local transportation program.

- Create a list of volunteer drivers with desirable skills (such as Class 4 license, first aid training). *(connected to Big Moves #1 and #2)*
- Explore the potential to work with local community organizations to support local transportation. *(connected to Big Move #1)*
- Identify the best 'Town Rounder' schedule to maximize access and convenience for seniors. *(connected to Big Move #1)*
- Determine whether the local program will focus on seniors or be available for all residents. *(connected to Big Move #1)*

Strategy: Explore the potential for a volunteer driver program (for private vehicles).

- Identify potential structures for booking, schedules, and routes. *(connected to Big Moves #1 and #2)*

Strategy: Improve public transit access and options.

- Continue to work with BC Transit and the Regional District to increase transit options (such as weekend service, more frequent service, more accessible buses, more local and out-of-town routes, and cheaper fares for seniors).
- Improve communications in Sparwood about available transportation routes and schedules. *(connected to Big Move #4)*

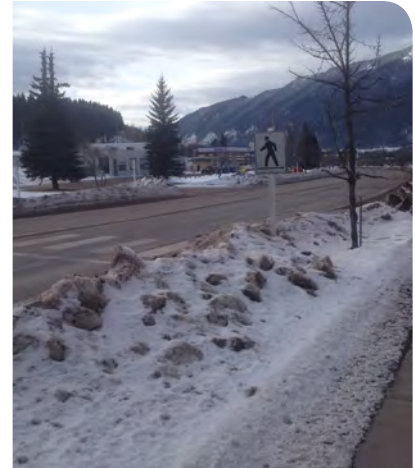


Strategy: Improve access to and the safety of scooters in Sparwood.

- Support the creation of a scooter safety training program.
- Encourage the creation of a scooter co-op program (available at key locations like the Seniors Centre and the mall).
- Create a physically separated bike/scooter lane in key locations (such as Pine Avenue).

Strategy: Improve road and sidewalk safety and access.

- Conduct a pedestrian safety evaluation to identify intersections that need to be improved, including traffic calming, sidewalks, curb cuts/letdowns, crosswalks, or pedestrian countdown timers. Prioritize actions for pedestrian network improvements based on available resources and opportunities.
- Update road standards to slow vehicle speed, include wider sidewalks (at least 1.5 m) and ensure sidewalk accessibility (see images page 14).
- Prioritize snow clearing on benches and sidewalks in key locations, especially 'windrows' at pedestrian crossings (see image top right).
- Add more public benches (potentially with shelter and community notice boards) at least every 400 m (typically a 5 minute walk) on key pedestrian connections including routes between the Seniors Villa, Lilac Terrace, Seniors Centre, Sasko Manor, Library, Centennial Square, and Recreation Centre. *(connected to Big Move #5)*
- Continue progress on the covered walkway between the Seniors Centre, Seniors Villa, and Lilac Terrace.
- Create a volunteer program to maintain seniors' driveways and walkways free from snow and ice. *(connected to Big Move #2)*



Above: example of a 'windrow' at a pedestrian crossing.

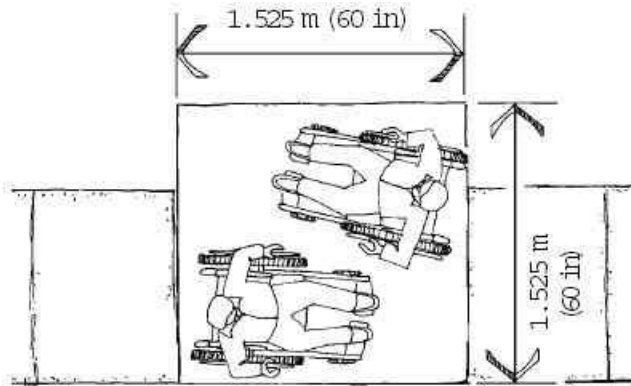




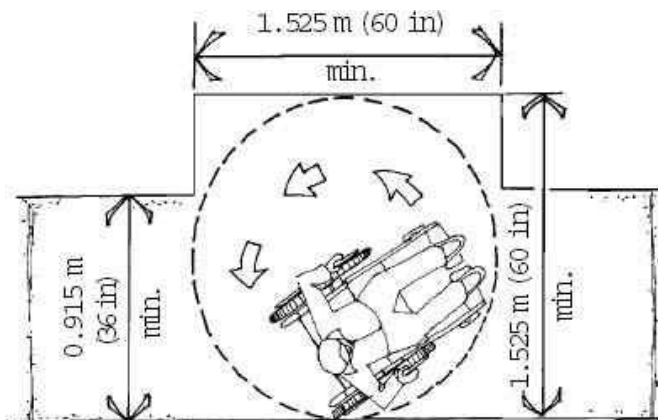
TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Sample sidewalk standards for accessibility¹:

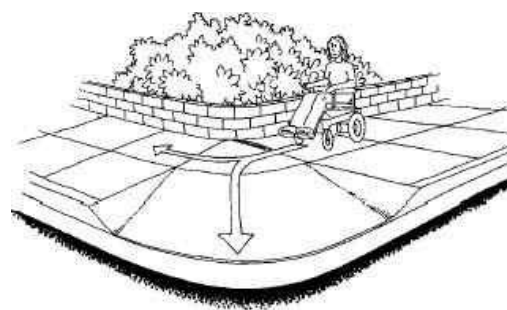
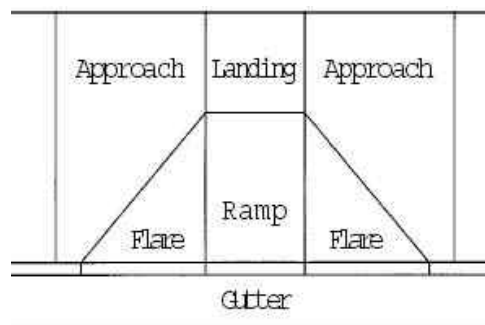
¹ U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Bicycle and Pedestrian Design
Program. Ch 4 - Sidewalk Design
Guidelines and Existing Practices.



Sidewalk width required for two wheelchairs/scooters to pass each other.



Sidewalk width required for wheelchairs/scooters to turn around.



Sidewalks should have a flat approach and landing so that a person on a scooter or in a wheelchair can pass the ramp without tipping sideways.

Housing

Our Goal: Sparwood has a range of housing options that are affordable, appropriately located, well built, well designed and secure.



HOW ARE WE DOING NOW?

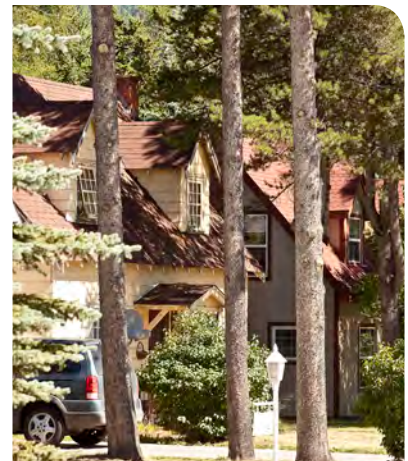
A Range of Housing Options¹

Sparwood has a relatively diverse range of housing options, including apartments, townhouses, mobile home parks, single family housing, and seniors housing. However, finding vacant housing can be a challenge, as well as smaller, low-maintenance options for seniors.

Many traditional single family houses are not designed for aging in place, because they lack design features for wheelchairs and walkers. Traditional single family homes can also isolate seniors who used to depend on cars to run errands, visit family, and meet friends. Research anticipates that more multi-family housing (e.g., rowhouses, apartments) or supportive housing complexes will be needed to help our seniors stay active and independent longer.

Housing Affordability

Average housing prices have risen significantly across the province in recent years and nearly tripled in Sparwood from 2001 and 2011. Not surprisingly, many find that single family homeownership is beyond their means. The District realizes that affordable housing for seniors is a priority as well as rental accommodations and supportive/assisted living.



A diverse range of affordable, safe and accessible housing is essential to the safety and well-being of residents of all ages and supports seniors to age in place close to their friends and families.

¹ Districts of Elkford and Sparwood Housing Need and Demand Assessments (2012)



HOUSING

0%

Vacancy rate for the 87 units of senior housing in Sparwood (February 2015).

Sparwood Staff Report to Council: Vacancy Rates (February, 2015).

38

Estimated number of seniors housing units needed by 2025 (equivalent to the Seniors Villa building).

Districts of Elkford and Sparwood Housing Need and Demand Assessments (2012).

\$305,000

value of a typical single family home in Sparwood in 2015 compared to \$287,000 in 2014.

BC Assessment (2015). Elk Valley News Release.

67%

of homes in Sparwood were built before 1980. At least 7% are in need of major repair.

Statistics Canada (2011). National Household Survey.

Adequate Housing

While affordability is important, housing must still be safe, appropriately located, and accessible to meet residents' needs. Some housing in Sparwood is in poor condition and in need of renovation and ongoing maintenance. An aging housing stock and an aging population could mean that our seniors may struggle to be independent as their physical needs and abilities change.

In Sparwood's recent Age-Friendly Survey (2015), close to 25% of seniors reported they were planning to move to more suitable housing within the next 2-5 years.

CURRENT POLICY

Sparwood's 2015 Official Community Plan encourages accessible and 'VisitAble Housing' with no steps at entrances, wide doorways and passages, and full amenities on the main floor. It also supports housing within walking distance to amenities and services and identifies the need to develop supportive/assisted housing and create an affordable housing strategy for the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy: Increase the diversity of seniors housing options.

- Encourage smaller, single-floor, low-maintenance housing (55+ housing), where appropriate.
- Encourage the development of more accessible and adaptable housing.
- Encourage construction of new seniors housing in locations that are serviced by transit and close to services and amenities.

Strategy: Support seniors to remain in their homes.

- Provide the technical support to establish secondary suites in homes (income and maintenance support).
- Support home retrofits for accessibility through incentives (such as homeowner grants and or property tax breaks).
- Coordinate with Teck on short-term worker housing placement to connect seniors with interns and shift workers.

Social participation

Our Goal: Sparwood has opportunities for social participation in leisure, recreation, cultural and spiritual activities for all ages and cultures.



HOW ARE WE DOING NOW?

A Variety of Social Activities

Senior respondents from Sparwood's recent Age-Friendly survey were generally satisfied with Senior's Centre space and offerings, recreation and leisure opportunities, gathering places, and social connections. However, less than half were satisfied with arts and cultural opportunities and suggested that more transportation options (such as bus services or community shuttles) would help seniors get out more and attend social events or locations like the Leisure Centre, church, or day-trips to neighbouring communities.

Outdoor recreation is a key activity in Sparwood. The area's abundant trails, rivers, and mountains provide opportunities for hiking, biking, boating, golfing, and much more.

In addition, Sparwood offers a variety of **indoor and outdoor recreation facilities** including the Leisure Centre (pool, fitness centre, arena, curling, dance studio, climbing wall, and racquet courts), playgrounds, skate and bike parks, sports fields and track, and disc golf course.

The District and partners such as the Seniors Centre, Sparwood Public Library, Sparwood Health Centre, and Chamber of Commerce offer a variety of **programs** for all ages throughout the year. The Elk Valley Society for Community Living also provides programs for people of all ages with developmental disabilities.



Social support and participation in leisure, recreation, cultural, and spiritual activities are strongly linked to good health and well-being and allow seniors to enjoy respect and esteem in their community.



SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

100+

Members are a part of the Seniors Drop-in Centre.

\$15

The low annual membership cost of the Seniors Drop-in Centre makes it affordable and accessible for all.

access

73% of Canadian seniors who drive took part in a social activity during the previous week, compared with 66% of walkers, 61% of transit users and 46% who rely on taxis or shuttles.

Statistics Canada (2011). Profile of seniors' transportation habits.

CURRENT POLICY

Sparwood's recently updated Official Community Plan aims to support a healthy, safe, engaged, and active community through a range of community services, events/festivals, local arts, culture and heritage organizations, social development initiatives and diverse opportunities for recreation and civic engagement. It also aims to integrate community services such as religious facilities, schools, care centres and seniors housing into appropriate residential areas to ensure they are accessible for all residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy: Increase opportunities for social participation.



- 2 BIG MOVE:** Create a volunteer and learning registry to connect people who can volunteer with those who need support (such as rides, home/yard maintenance, meals, grocery delivery, social visits, or teaching/learning new skills).
- Host social events that promote intergenerational connections (for example, movie nights with concessions staffed with youth). *(connected to Big Move #3)*
 - Support the creation of multi-generational community gardens. *(connected to Big Move #5)*
 - Support the creation of an outdoor amphitheatre. *(connected to Big Move #5)*
 - Encourage more senior-specific entertainment in Sparwood (such as concerts, arts and culture events, social clubs, etc.). *(connected to Big Move #3)*
 - Encourage more opportunities for senior field trips out of town for events and activities. *(connected to Big Move #3)*
 - Identify and create a public list of gathering spaces in partnership with schools and community organizations. *(connected to Big Move #5)*



- Add more benches and seating areas around town where there are community notice boards or other community amenities to encourage informal social gathering. *(connected to Big Move #5)*
- Promote a Lilac Terrace dinner program for seniors living in their own homes. *(connected to Big Move #3)*

Strategy: Improve intergenerational connections.

- Coordinate with local schools to connect student projects with seniors (for example, art, cooking, holiday decorations). *(connected to Big Move #3)*
- Support and promote intergenerational events (for example, invite seniors and provide transportation to school events like, bake sales, book fairs, and concerts). *(connected to Big Move #3)*
- Encourage and promote programs that acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of seniors and youth in Sparwood
- Support youth leadership groups.



Respect and inclusion

Our Goal: Older people in Sparwood are treated with respect and are included in civic life.



Seniors who are active and involved are less likely to experience social isolation and more likely to feel connected to their communities which contributes to better overall health and well-being.

Findings from communities around the world have reported that seniors can experience conflicting types of behaviour when it comes to respect and inclusion.¹ They may often feel that they are respected, recognized and included but may also experience a lack of consideration in their community or family. It is important to recognize that things like culture, gender, health, income, and the extent to which older people participate in community life are closely linked to their experience of inclusion.

HOW ARE WE DOING NOW?

A Tight-Knit Community

According to respondents from the District's recent Age-Friendly survey, Sparwood is generally a welcoming and inclusive community for seniors. Around 95% of seniors agreed or totally agreed that seniors are generally treated with respect and are welcome and included in community activities and programs.

Comments suggested more opportunities for recreation, entertainment, and socializing would help to increase opportunities for seniors to participate in community life. Specific suggestions include more senior-focused exercise programs at the Leisure Centre, more programs/activities at the Seniors Hall, more classes for seniors at the Drop-in Centre, more

¹ World Health Organization (2007). Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide.



intergenerational events and spaces (such as a local movie theatre, special arts/cultural events and concerts), more family-friendly events, a hall for social functions, and more informal all-ages places to socialize like coffee shops, bakeries, or ice cream shops.

CURRENT POLICY

Sparwood's recently updated Official Community Plan aims to increase the accessibility of community services for all residents, reaching out to new residents to support a welcoming and socially inclusive community, and finding ways to engage new residents in civic life and events.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy: Increase the visibility of Sparwood's heritage to connect current and past generations

- Celebrate and promote Ktunaxa and local heritage to honour and remember those who live(d) here. *(connected to Big Move #3)*
- Construct a trail from Sparwood to Michel/Natal with interpretive signage.
- Consider naming buildings, streets, and parks after people and places from Sparwood's and Ktunaxa history. *(connected to Big Move #3)*
- Encourage the use of local heritage and history as well as Ktunaxa history in public art. *(connected to Big Move #3)*
- Recognize local seniors who helped build the hospital (for example, anniversary event, oral history/art project) at the Sparwood Health Clinic. *(connected to Big Move #3)*

Strategy: Improve computer/internet literacy for seniors.

- Promote internet and computer skills programs for seniors at the library.
- Create an inter-generational education program to support youth in teaching seniors how to use social media and technology (such as tablets). *(connected to Big Move #2)*

Did you know?

Social isolation (especially among seniors) is as strong a factor in early death as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

J. Holt-Lunstadt, T.B. Smith, and B.L. Layton, "Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review," PLoS Medicine 7. (2010)

2x

Canadians with a strong sense of community belonging are more than twice as likely to report good health.

Nancy Ross, "Community Belonging and Health," Health Reports 13:3 (Statistics Canada, 2002) 37.

Seniors Birthday Book

In 2014, Sparwood recognized seniors with a special commemoration for seniors turning 75 (or over). A Seniors Birthday Book is kept at the Municipal Office as part of the community's heritage records.

Employment and volunteering

Our Goal: Sparwood has opportunities for employment and volunteering that cater to older person's interests and abilities.



Volunteering or working in paid employment can help to increase seniors' sense of self worth, levels of physical activity and help to maintain health and social connections.

HOW ARE WE DOING NOW?

Volunteer Opportunities but Limited Employment

According to respondents from the Age-Friendly survey, Sparwood generally has volunteer opportunities for seniors but limited opportunities for paid employment.

Close to 70% of seniors were satisfied with **volunteer opportunities** in Sparwood for seniors but less than 20% were satisfied with **employment opportunities** and as many as 60% didn't know about employment opportunities for seniors.

About two-thirds of participants under the age of 60 were concerned or very concerned about their future needs for employment and flexible employment opportunities as they aged.

Comments suggested there just aren't a lot of opportunities for employment for seniors (or young people), but better advertising for part-time employment and volunteering opportunities would help to let seniors know about opportunities that are available - especially as most non-profit groups are short-handed and could use their support. This could include an informational website or volunteer coordinator to help place volunteers/seniors to match their talents and interests to the needs of community groups.

Other specific suggestions included job sharing, employee owned and operated co-ops, inter-generational opportunities, and flexible volunteer options that work for seniors (e.g., aren't too strenuous, don't start too early, etc.).



CURRENT POLICY

Sparwood’s 2015 Official Community Plan aims to support the whole community with skills training and education, continue to recognize the important contributions of volunteers, and actively engage citizens by working with community service groups and encouraging diverse participation in District decision-making processes (such as civic committees).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy: Increase volunteer, employment and civic engagement opportunities for seniors.

3 ***BIG MOVE:*** Hire a social planner to coordinate social and cultural programs, coordinate volunteers, and apply for grants. Explore the potential for a regional coordinator or cost sharing with adjacent communities.

- Work with the Library, Recreation Centre, and other local organizations to identify and create more volunteer opportunities for seniors. *(connected to Big Move #2)*
- Encourage local organizations to provide volunteer and employment opportunities for seniors that are specific and manageable. *(connected to Big Move #2)*
- Partner with the Visitor Centre to hire seniors to welcome visitors.
- Encourage the creation of more local shops and services.
- Actively seek to include a cross-section of ages on Council Advisory Committees (including seniors and youth).
- Monitor the employment and income levels of seniors aged 50-65 and 65+ to determine employment needs.

94%

of people who volunteered in the past year say that volunteering improves their mood.

76%

of people who volunteered in the past year say that volunteering has made them feel healthier.

25%

of people said that volunteering has helped them to manage a chronic illness by making them more active or taking their mind off of their own problems by helping others.

United Health Group (2013). Doing Good is Good For You: 2013 Health and Volunteering Study.

Information and communications

Our Goal: Sparwood has accessible and available age-friendly information & communications.



Staying connected with community events and receiving timely and relevant information to meet personal needs and interests is vital for active aging and overall health and well-being.

HOW ARE WE DOING NOW?

Building on Existing Information and Communications

Residents in Sparwood can find information about local issues and events from a variety of sources such as the Sparwood Community Newsletter, Sparwood Council Facts, local newspapers like the Elk Valley Herald, District website and social media, and community calendars on the District's website, Chamber of Commerce, and Library. The Seniors Drop-in Centre also distributes information via posters and flyers that are sent to its members and to Lilac Terrace and the Seniors Villa.

According to respondents from Sparwood's recent Age-Friendly survey, seniors are generally satisfied with **information about local community events, programs and services**. Over 75% were satisfied or very satisfied with **District information**, agreeing that it is generally easy to read and understand.

Comments suggested more newsletters/flyers and more bulletins/notice boards around the community would be helpful as well as a seniors-only newsletter or section in local newspapers.

Around two-thirds were satisfied with **access to computers and the internet** although less than half were satisfied with **support for using computers or service for problems** they experience. Comments suggested better advertising for the services that are available at the Public Library, and more free classes for seniors at the library and or Drop-in Centre with drop-in assistance available for people with computer problems.



CURRENT POLICY

Sparwood’s recently updated Official Community Plan aims to improve the access and availability of information regarding community services by using plain language and clear communications, and reaching out to new residents to welcome them to the community and get them involved in civic life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy: Improve communications to seniors.



BIG MOVE: Develop a Residents Guide and update annually to provide current information and contact details on local services and programs for all ages including seniors.

- Promote existing District resources more (such as small business resources) using a variety of different formats. *(connected to Big Move #4)*
- Promote and advertise local community events and activities more using a variety of different formats. *(connected to Big Move #4)*
- Create and maintain a central community social calendar. *(connected to Big Moves #3 and #4)*

free

internet is available at the Sparwood Public Library.

53%

of (106) surveyed residents read Sparwood’s weekly community newsletter at least once a month compared to 38% who read the District’s website and 42% who check the District’s social media.

District of Sparwood (2015). Citizen Satisfaction Survey.

Support and health services

Our Goal: Sparwood has community support and health services that are tailored to older person's needs.



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

HOW ARE WE DOING NOW?

Extensive Health Services for a Small Community

While Sparwood does not have its own hospital, it does have quite extensive health services for a community of its size. The Sparwood Primary Health Care Centre offers: physicians, a nurse practitioner, a clinical nurse specialist, support staff, public health nursing, home care nursing, a home support program, a dietitian, a chronic disease management nurse, a chronic care physiotherapist, an acute care physiotherapist, a kidney dialysis clinic, lab and x-ray, addictions counselling for both adults and youth, mental health counselling, and counselling for children who have witnessed violence.

Interior Health also provides options for home visits, 'meals on wheels', food delivery, and 'lifeline' home monitoring as well as personal emergency response to seniors in Sparwood.

Additionally neurology, pediatrics, hepatology, psychiatry, otolaryngology, obstetrics and gynaecology visiting physicians are available in Fernie along with the Elk Valley Hospital, the nearest Level 1 acute care community hospital. Regional health care is offered at the East Kootenay Regional Hospital and the Cranbrook Health Unit. There is one BC Ambulance Station located in Sparwood.

In Sparwood's recent Citizen Satisfaction Survey (2015), public health was ranked as the top service that residents wanted to see improved. The District understands retaining primary care and emergency services in Sparwood is very important to the community.



CURRENT POLICY

While creating new health services is not within the District’s jurisdiction, Sparwood’s 2015 Official Community Plan recommends advocating for the BC Interior Health Authority and provincial government to secure 24-hour emergency care and an alternative model for a continuum of care facilities in Sparwood. It also encourages the development of a STARS-accessible helipad in Sparwood.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy: Improve access to health services in Sparwood.

- Establish/support the development of a health coalition to advocate for increased health services in Sparwood.
- Support access to local and regional health services (ie. Sparwood Health Centre and Fernie hospital) with affordable and accessible transportation. *(connected to Big Move #1)*
- Improve communications about existing health services. *(connected to Big Move #4)*

Strategy: Improve senior support services.

- Establish a volunteer program or buddy system to support home visits/services (such as grocery delivery, social visits, home/yard maintenance). *(connected to Big Move #2)*

Strategy: Enable seniors to make healthy living choices.

- Increase recreation programs at the Seniors Centre to support physical activity and social opportunities (for example, dances, curling, group fitness, swimming, pottery, organized walks, picnics, outdoor excursions). *(connected to Big Move #3)*
- Promote existing ‘Healthy Living’ programs for seniors to provide information and support for things like healthy eating, managing chronic illness, etc. *(connected to Big Moves #3 and #4)*

7 days/week

Sparwood Health Centre
Emergency Room is open
daily from 8 am - 7 pm.

2.5

physicians currently
practicing
in Sparwood.

20 min

drive to the Elk Valley
Hospital in Fernie.

transit

A Health Connections bus
runs on Wednesdays and
Fridays and connects the
Sparwood Health Centre
with the Elk Valley Hospital.

Implementation & Resources

This section focuses on how we will achieve the goals, strategies and actions listed in the plan and provides a list of useful resources and references.



Making Sparwood age-friendly is a responsibility of all community members. Commitment and action by many partners will be necessary to achieve this objective. The actions listed in this plan are recommended for implementation as soon as possible.

ONGOING ACTION PLANNING

Annual action planning will ensure that the Age-Friendly Community Plan continues to be implemented and create on-the-ground action and results. Those involved in action planning should review the results of past actions, evaluate the most recent performance data (see monitoring section below), strategically assess local and regional opportunities, and then present a recommended set of actions for the following year.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

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

At the very least, these groups should come together annually to identify and prioritize actions that may need multiple partners to ensure successful implementation. Beyond annual action planning, age-friendly partners can accept actions for implementation, align their decisions and activities with the Sparwood Age-Friendly Community Plan, help to raise awareness about age-friendly issues, and engage others in creating a more age-friendly Sparwood.



MONITORING PERFORMANCE & PROGRESS

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

- Satisfaction with overall age-friendliness.
- Satisfaction with quality of life.
- Satisfaction with access to health services.
- Satisfaction with transportation services.
- Seniors' perception of sense of belonging/social inclusion.

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

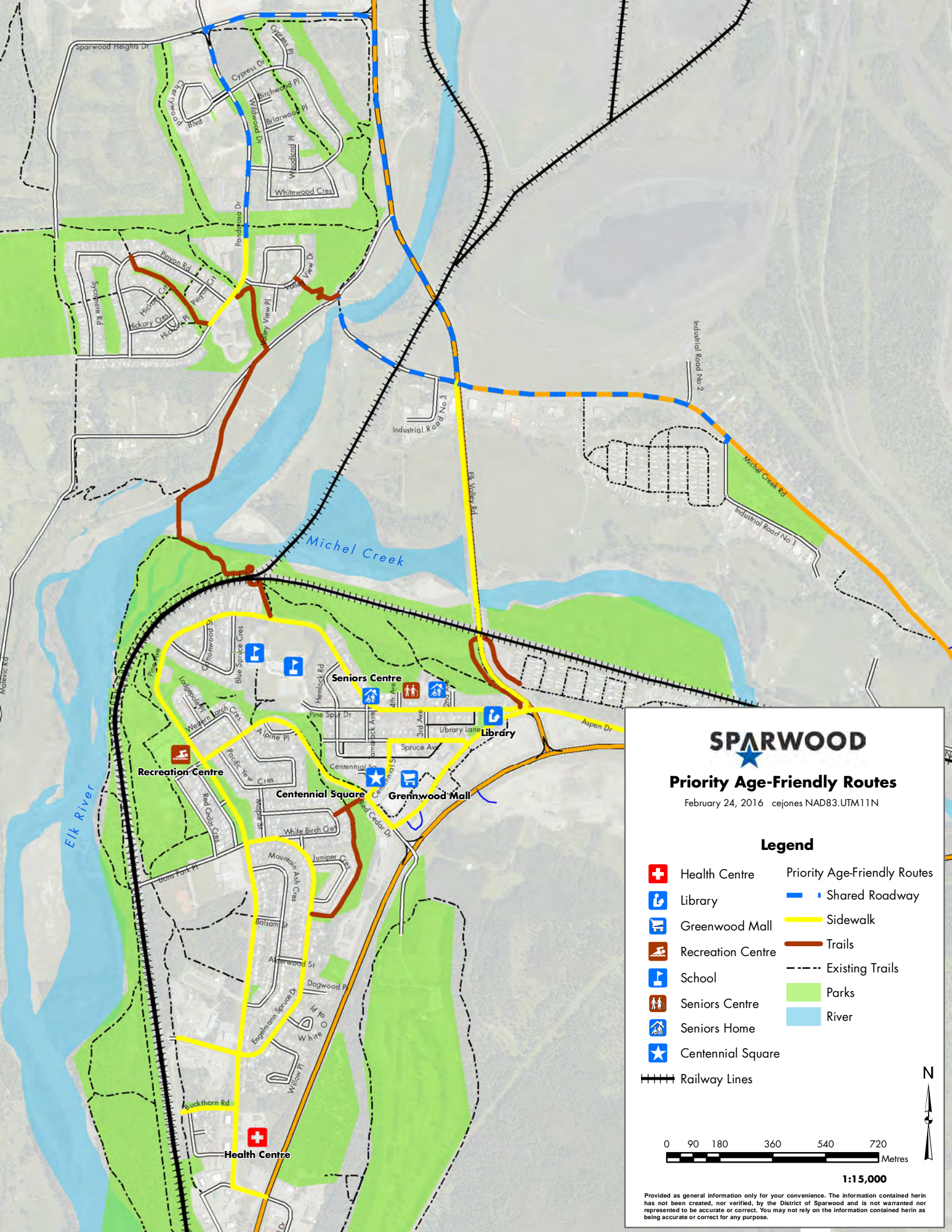
Communicating results will build excitement and support for the overall process, and should ideally be done on a regular schedule in time for annual action planning. Reporting in the same format and using the same metrics year after year will allow for trend spotting and systematic updating. Benchmarking performance to other regions and to best cases around the world can also help to gauge performance and determine areas where opportunities for accelerated improvement might exist.

Strategy: Implement the Plan.

- Designate a coordinator to promote plan implementation.
- Establish an ongoing volunteer Age Friendly Committee to advocate for and check in (at least annually) on plan implementation progress.

PRIORITIZING ACTIONS

A map of key locations and routes in downtown Sparwood is provided on the following page. This map identifies key routes (on roads and trails) to prioritize for transportation improvements to improve the age-friendliness of Sparwood's core area. Key locations on this map, including parks, also represent priority areas for social events and information sharing, through community notice boards or other formats.



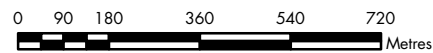
SPARWOOD

Priority Age-Friendly Routes

February 24, 2016 cejones NAD83.UTM11N

Legend

- Health Centre
- Library
- Greenwood Mall
- Recreation Centre
- School
- Seniors Centre
- Seniors Home
- Centennial Square
- Priority Age-Friendly Routes
- Shared Roadway
- Sidewalk
- Trails
- Existing Trails
- Parks
- River
- Railway Lines



1:15,000

Provided as general information only for your convenience. The information contained herein has not been created, nor verified, by the District of Sparwood and is not warranted nor represented to be accurate or correct. You may not rely on the information contained herein as being accurate or correct for any purpose.





IMPLEMENTATION

KEY RESOURCES

For more information on age-friendly communities and initiatives:

- Age-Friendly Communities Canada Hub (2012). **An Online Networking and Knowledge Exchange Platform**. Available at <http://afc-hub.ca/>
- BC Healthy Communities Society (2015). **Social Connectedness Action Guide**. Available at http://planh.ca/sites/default/files/hfbc-social-connectedness-actionguide-v02_06.28.15_web_logos.pdf
- Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors (2007). **Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide**. Available at http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2007/AFRRC_en.pdf
- Nova Scotia Centre of Aging, Mount Saint Vincent University (2012). Public Health Agency of Canada. **Age-Friendly Communities in Canada: Community Implementation Guide**. Available at [http://www.msvu.ca/site/media/msvu/AFC%20Implementation%20Guide%20ENG%20Nov%202012%20\(FINAL\).pdf](http://www.msvu.ca/site/media/msvu/AFC%20Implementation%20Guide%20ENG%20Nov%202012%20(FINAL).pdf)
- **Plan H** (BC Healthy Communities Society and Healthy Families BC). Available at <http://planh.ca/>
- Province of BC. **Age-Friendly BC**. Available at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/about-seniorsbc/seniors-related-initiatives/age-friendly-bc>
- Province of BC. **SeniorsBC Guide**. Available at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/about-seniorsbc/seniors-related-initiatives/bc-seniors-guide>
- Seniors' Healthy Living Secretariat, BC Ministry of Health (2011). **Becoming an Age-Friendly Community: Local Government Guide**. Available at http://www.ubcm.ca/assets/Funding~Programs/LGPS/Current~LGPS~Programs/SHSI/LGPS_AgeFriendly_Guide_Age-friendly_Community.pdf
- Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC) (2005). **Making Space for Everyone: Accessible, Inclusive and Safe Communities**. Available at <http://www.sparc.bc.ca/>
- UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (2004). **Building Child Friendly Cities: A Framework for Action**. Available at http://childfriendlycities.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/pdf/BuildingCFC_AFrameworkforaction_en.pdf
- World Health Organization (2007). **Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide**. Available at http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf









ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Transportation & Mobility	Housing	Social Participation	Respect & Inclusion	Employment & Volunteering	Information & Communications	Support & Health Services	POTENTIAL LEVEL OF IMPACT	TIME FRAME <i>Short 1-2 yrs</i> <i>Medium 3-5 yrs</i> <i>Long 5+ yrs</i>	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND LEAD ORGANIZATIONS
Strategy: Improve the trail and park network for increased use by seniors and others with mobility challenges.	✓	✓							Medium	Short - Ongoing	Local outdoor recreation organizations
★ BIG MOVE #5: Explore opportunities to create small pocket parks surrounding new or existing benches or community notice boards to support social gathering.	✓			✓					Medium	Short - Ongoing	
Develop criteria for age-friendly park design and identify priority locations where these elements should be added into existing parks and public spaces.	✓								Low - Medium	Medium	
Review trail guidelines for accessibility such as width, grade, surface materials, wayfinding and lighting.	✓	✓							Medium	Short	
Prioritize key trails (such as “easiest route” trails) to make accessible for all ages (i.e., smooth pavement, good lighting).	✓	✓							Medium	Medium	
Improve wayfinding for new and existing trails (for example, better signage on Red Cedar Dr to access the trailer park).	✓	✓					✓		High	Short	
Improve lighting, maintenance and accessibility of public spaces.	✓								Low - Medium	Medium	
Increase signage to public washrooms.	✓								Medium	Medium	
Update the trail network Master Plan.	✓	✓							Low - Medium	Medium	
Strategy: Encourage accessibility improvements for buildings.	✓				✓				Medium	Short - Ongoing	BC Housing
Provide guidelines and incentives for existing buildings to improve accessibility (ramps, automatic doors, railings, accessible washrooms, parking, etc.)	✓								Medium	Medium	Local businesses
Advocate to local businesses to make building entrances accessible.	✓								Medium	Ongoing	Local businesses
Implement the District’s Official Community Plan direction for new development to support pedestrian access by locating entrances near sidewalks and parking in rear.	✓	✓							Medium - High	Ongoing	Local businesses
Create an ‘Accessibility Award’ program to recognize and celebrate buildings and organizations that support access for people of all ages and abilities.	✓				✓		✓		Low - Medium	Short	Local businesses

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Transportation & Mobility	Housing	Social Participation	Respect & Inclusion	Employment & Volunteering	Information & Communications	Support & Health Services	POTENTIAL LEVEL OF IMPACT	TIME FRAME <i>Short 1-2 yrs</i> <i>Medium 3-5 yrs</i> <i>Long 5+ yrs</i>	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND LEAD ORGANIZATIONS
★ BIG MOVE #1 Strategy: Explore the potential for a 'made-in-Sparwood' local transportation program.		✓							High	Short	Community Organizations
Create a list of volunteer drivers with desirable skills (such as Class 4 license, first aid training).		✓				✓			High	Short	Community Organizations; Community members/volunteers
Explore the potential to work with local community organizations to support local transportation.		✓							High	Short	Seniors villa, Lilac Terrace, Sparwood Seniors Centre
Identify the best 'Town Rounder' schedule to maximize access and convenience for seniors.		✓		✓					Medium	Short	
Determine whether the local program will focus on seniors or be available for all residents.		✓							Medium	Short	
Strategy: Explore the potential for a volunteer driver program (for private vehicles).		✓				✓			Medium	Short	Seniors Centre; Community Organizations
Identify potential structures for booking, schedules and routes.		✓							Medium	Short	Community Organizations; Local businesses
Strategy: Improve public transit access and options.		✓							Medium	Short - Medium	BC Transit; Regional District; Elkford; Fernie
Continue to work with BC Transit and the Regional District to increase transit options in Sparwood and to other communities.		✓						✓	Medium	Medium	BC Transit; Regional District; Elkford; Fernie
Improve communications in Sparwood about available transportation routes and schedules.		✓					✓		Medium	Short	
Strategy: Improve access to and the safety of scooters in Sparwood.		✓							Low - Medium	Medium	Seniors Centre; Mall
Support the creation of a scooter safety training program.		✓							Low	Medium	
Encourage the creation of a scooter co-op program (available at the Seniors Centre and other key locations like the mall).		✓							Low - Medium	Medium	Community Organizations; Local businesses
Create a physically separated bike/scooter lane in key locations (such as Pine Ave).		✓							Medium	Medium	

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Transportation & Mobility	Housing	Social Participation	Respect & Inclusion	Employment & Volunteering	Information & Communications	Support & Health Services	POTENTIAL LEVEL OF IMPACT	TIME FRAME <i>Short 1-2 yrs</i> <i>Medium 3-5 yrs</i> <i>Long 5+ yrs</i>	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND LEAD ORGANIZATIONS
Strategy: Improve road and sidewalk safety and access.		✓							Medium	Short - Ongoing	Commercial area businesses
Conduct a pedestrian safety evaluation to identify necessary improvements including traffic calming, sidewalks, curb cuts/letdowns, crosswalks, or timers.		✓						✓	Medium	Short	
Update road standards to slow speed, include wider sidewalks (at least 1.5 m) and ensure sidewalk accessibility.		✓							High	Short	
Prioritize snow clearing on benches and sidewalks in key locations, especially 'windrows' at pedestrian crossings.	✓	✓							Medium	Ongoing	
Add more public benches (potentially with shelter) at least every 400 m on key pedestrian connections including routes between key locations.	✓	✓		✓					High	Short	
Continue progress on the covered walkway between the Seniors Centre, Seniors Villa, and Lilac Terrace.	✓	✓							High	Short	Sparwood Seniors' Centre, Seniors' Villa, Lilac Terrace, Elk Valley Thrift Society
Create a volunteer program to maintain seniors' driveways and walkways free from snow and ice.	✓	✓				✓			Medium	Short	Community Organizations; Community members/volunteers
Strategy: Increase the diversity of seniors housing options.			✓						Medium	Long	BC Housing; Seniors housing, local developers, Old Age Pensioners Society
Encourage smaller, single-floor, low-maintenance housing (55+ housing), where appropriate.			✓	✓					Medium	Long	BC Housing; Seniors housing, local developers, Old Age Pensioners Society
Encourage the development of more accessible and adaptable housing.	✓		✓						Medium - High	Medium	BC Housing; Seniors housing, local developers, Old Age Pensioners Society
Encourage construction of new seniors housing in locations that are serviced by transit and close to services and amenities.		✓	✓						High	Long	BC Housing; Seniors housing, local developers, Old Age Pensioners Society
Strategy: Support seniors to remain in their homes.			✓	✓	✓				Medium - High	Medium - Ongoing	
Provide the technical support to establish secondary suites in homes (income and maintenance support).	✓		✓						Medium	Ongoing	Homeowners
Support home retrofits for accessibility through incentives (such as homeowner grants and or property tax breaks).			✓						Medium	Ongoing	Homeowners
Coordinate with Teck on short-term worker housing placement to connect seniors with interns and shift workers.			✓	✓	✓				Medium - High	Medium	Teck Recruitment Centre and/or the HR Department of each site

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Transportation & Mobility	Housing	Social Participation	Respect & Inclusion	Employment & Volunteering	Information & Communications	Support & Health Services	POTENTIAL LEVEL OF IMPACT	TIME FRAME <i>Short 1-2 yrs</i> <i>Medium 3-5 yrs</i> <i>Long 5+ yrs</i>	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND LEAD ORGANIZATIONS
Strategy: Increase opportunities for social participation.				✓					Medium - High	Short - Medium	Seniors Centre; Schools; Community Orgs.; Regional District; Elkford; Fernie
★ BIG MOVE #2: Create a volunteer and learning registry to connect people who can volunteer with those who need support (such as rides, home/yard maintenance, meals, grocery delivery, social visits, or teaching/learning new skills).				✓		✓	✓		High	Short	Community Organizations; Community members/volunteers
Host social events that promote intergenerational connections (for example, movie nights with concessions staffed with youth).				✓	✓				Low - Medium	Ongoing	Community Organizations
Support the creation of multi-generational community gardens.	✓			✓	✓				Low - Medium	Medium	Community Organizations; Local schools
Support the creation of an outdoor amphitheatre.	✓			✓					Low - Medium	Long	Community Organizations
Encourage more senior-specific entertainment in Sparwood (such as concerts, arts and culture events, social clubs, etc.).				✓	✓				Medium	Ongoing	Seniors Centre; Recreation Centre
Encourage more opportunities for senior field trips out of town for events and activities.		✓		✓					Low - Medium	Ongoing	Seniors Centre; Elkford, Fernie
Identify and create a public list of gathering spaces in partnership with schools and community organizations.	✓			✓			✓		Low	Short	Schools; Community Organizations
Add more benches and seating areas around town where there are community notice boards or other community amenities to encourage informal social gathering.	✓			✓					High	Short	
Promote a Lilac Terrace seniors dinner program for seniors living in their own homes.				✓				✓	Low - Medium	Short	Lilac Terrace
Strategy: Improve intergenerational connections.				✓	✓				Low - Medium	Short	Seniors Centre; Community Orgs.
Coordinate with local schools to connect student projects with seniors (for example, art, cooking, holiday decorations).				✓	✓	✓			Medium	Short	Seniors Centre; Local schools
Support and promote intergenerational events (for example, invite seniors and provide transportation to school events like, bake sales, book fairs, concerts).		✓		✓	✓				Medium	Short	Seniors Centre; Community Organizations; Local Schools
Encourage and promote programs that acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of seniors and youth in Sparwood.				✓	✓				Low - Medium	Short	Community Organizations
Support youth leadership groups.				✓	✓				Medium-High	Short	Local schools; Community organizations

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings 	Transportation & Mobility 	Housing 	Social Participation 	Respect & Inclusion 	Employment & Volunteering 	Information & Communications 	Support & Health Services 	POTENTIAL LEVEL OF IMPACT	TIME FRAME <i>Short 1-2 yrs</i> <i>Medium 3-5 yrs</i> <i>Long 5+ yrs</i>	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND LEAD ORGANIZATIONS
Strategy: Increase the visibility of Sparwood's heritage to connect current and past generations.					✓				Low - Medium	Medium	Heritage Society; Seniors Centre
Celebrate and promote local heritage to honour/remember those who live(d) here.	✓				✓		✓		Low - Medium	Medium	Michel-Natal Heritage Society
Construct a trail from Sparwood to Michel/Natal with interpretive signage.		✓			✓		✓		Medium	Medium	Michel-Natal Heritage Society
Consider naming buildings/streets/parks after people and places from Sparwood's history.	✓				✓		✓		Medium	Medium	Michel-Natal Heritage Society
Encourage the use of local heritage/history in public art.	✓				✓		✓		Low - Medium	Ongoing	Michel-Natal Heritage Society
Recognize local seniors who helped build the hospital (for example, anniversary event, oral history/art project at the Sparwood Health Clinic.					✓				High	Medium	Sparwood Health Centre; Seniors Centre
Strategy: Improve computer/internet literacy for seniors.					✓		✓		Low - Medium	Medium	Library; Schools; Seniors Centre
Promote internet and computer skills programs for seniors at the library.					✓		✓		Low - Medium	Ongoing	Library
Create an inter-generational education program to have youth teach seniors how to use social media and technology (such as tablets).				✓	✓	✓	✓		Medium - High	Medium	Seniors Centre; Local schools
Strategy: Increase volunteer, employment and civic engagement opportunities for seniors.					✓	✓			Low - Medium	Medium - Ongoing	Library; Recreation Centre; Visitors Centre; Community Orgs.; Local businesses
★ BIG MOVE #3: Hire a social planner to coordinate social and cultural programs, coordinate volunteers, and apply for grants. Explore the potential for a regional communities.				✓	✓	✓	✓		High	Medium	Regional District; Elkford; Fernie
Work with the Library, Recreation Centre, and other local organizations to identify and create more volunteer opportunities for seniors.						✓			Low - Medium	Medium	Library; Recreation Centre
Encourage local organizations to provide volunteer and employment opportunities for seniors that are specific and manageable.						✓			Medium	Medium	Community Organizations; Local businesses
Partner with the Visitor Centre to hire seniors to welcome visitors.						✓			Low	Ongoing	Visitor Centre
Encourage the creation of more local shops and services.						✓			Low	Ongoing	Local businesses
Actively seek to include a cross-section of ages on Council Advisory Committees.					✓	✓			Medium	Ongoing	
Monitor the employment and income levels of seniors aged 50-65 and 65+ to determine employment needs.						✓			Medium	Ongoing	Local businesses

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS	Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	Transportation & Mobility	Housing	Social Participation	Respect & Inclusion	Employment & Volunteering	Information & Communications	Support & Health Services	POTENTIAL LEVEL OF IMPACT	TIME FRAME <i>Short 1-2 yrs</i> <i>Medium 3-5 yrs</i> <i>Long 5+ yrs</i>	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND LEAD ORGANIZATIONS
Strategy: Improve communications to seniors.							✓		Medium	Short; Ongoing	Community Organizations
★ BIG MOVE #4: Develop a Residents Guide and update annually to provide current information and contact details on local services and programs for all ages.		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	High	Short	Community Organizations
Promote existing District resources more (such as small business resources) using a variety of different formats.						✓	✓		Low - Medium	Ongoing	Community Organizations
Promote and advertise local community events and activities more using a variety of different formats.				✓			✓		Low	Ongoing	Community Organizations
Create and maintain a central community social calendar.				✓			✓		Medium	Short	Community Organizations
Strategy: Improve access to health services in Sparwood.								✓	High	Medium; Ongoing	Sparwood Health Centre
Establish/support the development of a health coalition to advocate for increased health services in Sparwood.								✓	High	Medium	Sparwood Health Centre
Support access to local and regional health services (Sparwood Health Centre and Fernie hospital) with affordable and accessible transportation.		✓						✓	High	Short	
Improve communications about existing health services.							✓	✓	High	Ongoing	Sparwood Health Centre; Health Authority
Strategy: Improve senior support services.								✓	Medium	Short; Medium	United Way; Seniors Villa
Establish a volunteer program or buddy system to support home visits/services (such as meals, grocery delivery, social visits, home/yard maintenance, etc.).					✓	✓		✓	Medium	Medium	Community Organizations
Strategy: Enable seniors to make healthy living choices.								✓	Low - Medium	Medium	Seniors Centre; Health Authority
Increase recreation programs at the Seniors Centre to support physical activity and social opportunities.				✓				✓	Medium	Medium	Seniors Centre
Promote existing 'Healthy Living' programs for seniors to provide information and support for things like healthy eating, managing chronic illness, etc.							✓	✓	Low - Medium	Medium	Health Authority
Strategy: Implement the Plan.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	High	Ongoing	District of Sparwood
Designate a coordinator to promote plan implementation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	High	Ongoing	District of Sparwood
Establish an ongoing volunteer Age Friendly Committee to advocate for and check in (at least annually) on plan implementation progress	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	High	Ongoing	District of Sparwood; Community organizations; seniors organizations

SPARWOOD ★ AGE FRIENDLY PLAN

