



AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN 2018



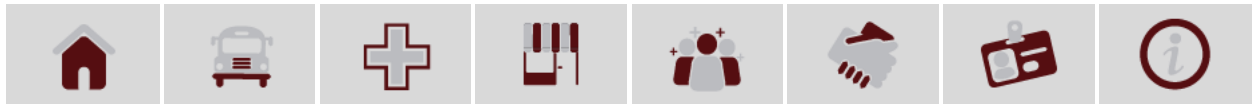


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Introduction

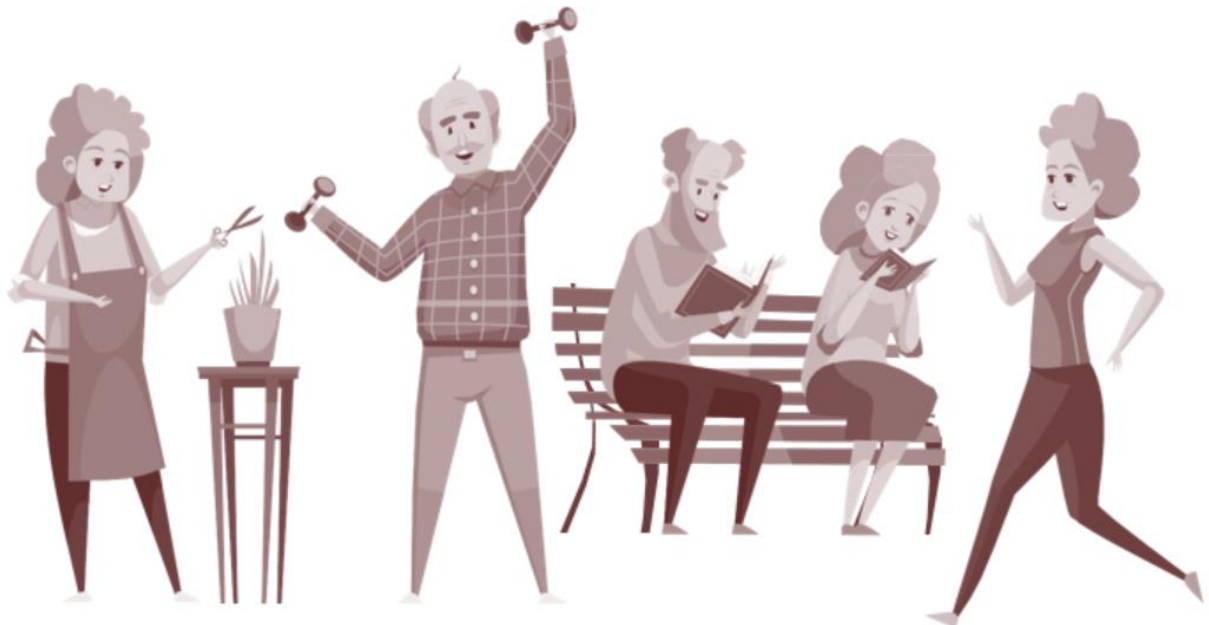
What is an age-friendly community?

An age-friendly community is one where older adults can “age actively” – that is, to live in security, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society. And the good news is that becoming age-friendly not only improves quality of life for seniors, it also creates a more inclusive, safe and accessible community for everyone.

Why is age-friendly planning important?

In 2016, 13% of the Rossland’s population was 65 years and older. This represents a 20% increase over the 2011 census data of 11% and is likely reflective of the baby boomer generation entering their senior years within this timeframe. At just 13%, Rossland’s proportion of seniors in the overall population is lower than the rest of the province where seniors now account for 18% of the population, and for some small BC communities the proportion is closer to 30%.

Regardless of being lower than the provincial figure, one thing is for sure: Rossland’s population is aging, and being able to age in one’s own community is a desirable objective for all communities, which is at the heart of this planning process and the City of Rossland’s decision to undertake it.





Age-friendly focus areas

The following World Health Organization (WHO) age-friendly themes or topics, which are used extensively by other communities and cities within and beyond Canada, were used throughout Rossland's age-friendly planning process and they provide the structure for this plan:



Housing: Includes the spectrum of housing needed through the aging process, as well as the housing-related services (e.g. home repairs) required through the spectrum.



Transportation: Includes private, public and volunteer transportation options, as well as the accessibility of non-motorized transportation modes such as walking, biking, scooters.



Community support and health services: Includes health care and preventive services, as well as health support at home with the aim that these services are accessible, affordable and meet the needs of seniors.



Outdoor spaces and buildings: Includes the safety, accessibility and suitability of public buildings and spaces for seniors.



Social participation: Includes opportunities for seniors to participate in a range of social, recreation, cultural and spiritual activities.



Respect and social inclusion: Focuses on ensuring that older people are treated with respect and are included in all aspects of community and civic life.



Civic participation and employment: Focuses on ensuring that opportunities for employment and volunteering include older generational interests and abilities.



Communication and information: Focuses on ensuring that information and communications is accessible to seniors of all ages and abilities.

The first three topics above (housing, transportation, and community support and health services) will require regional partnerships and solutions and cannot be addressed by Rossland alone. The other topics also have regional linkages, but they should be delivered by and within each community as much as possible.



How this plan was developed

The City of Rossland age-friendly planning process was done in conjunction with processes undertaken by the Village of Montrose and the City of Trail. All three age-friendly planning projects were fully funded by the Union of BC Municipalities' Age-Friendly Communities grant program and was led by the Whistler Centre for Sustainability.

The first phase of the process included an age-friendly assessment of the communities in each of the eight WHO topic areas. Community engagement to inform this age-friendly assessment included a survey, a drop-in event, and workshops with the Age-Friendly Task Force. These engagement opportunities are summarized below, and the results are reported in the 2018 Age-Friendly Assessment under separate cover. The second phase of the process included action planning workshops with the Task Force using the assessment information gathered through the first phase. The results of this second phase are the recommended actions contained in this document.

Community survey: There were two slightly different versions of the survey – one for people under 60 and one for those older than 60; the number of respondents from these groups 84 and 54 respectively for a total of 138 responses. The survey was available online and on paper from early April to April 30, 2018. Two \$50 gift certificates for Ferraro Foods were used to encourage residents to respond. The online survey was promoted through a number of communication channels, and the paper survey was available at City Hall for those unable to access the online version.

Community Drop-in Event: On April 11th, about 30 community members attended the drop-in event at Miners Hall where the consultant delivered a brief presentation, which was followed by a table discussion and opportunity to provide input on posters around the room. Refreshments were provided, and people were encouraged to drop-in for 5 minutes or stay for as many as 50 minutes – whatever their schedules would allow.

Focused conversation: A conversation was held on June 27, 2018 with ten older adult and senior citizens to further explore some of the input gathered through the community survey and event.

Age-Friendly Task Force workshops: A joint task force of approximately 40 people was created to include residents from the three communities of Rossland, Montrose and Trail, representing a range of local organizations and areas of experience and expertise. Through a series of four workshops, the task force informed the age-friendly planning process, culminating in the development of the recommended actions to make their communities and the region more age-friendly.



Age-Friendly Assessment Highlights

As part of the age-friendly planning process conducted in 2018, an assessment of Rossland current age-friendliness was undertaken. This section summarizes highlights of what was learned through the assessment phase of the planning process, and then the following pages include high-level assessment information for each of the eight WHO topics.

The full assessment results can be found in the 2018 Age-Friendly Assessment document under separate cover.

Overall age-friendliness

While Rossland's steep topography and snowfall make it a more challenging community than others in the region for aging in place, most seniors who responded to the survey (81%) still felt that the community is age-friendly, especially when it comes to being treated with respect (96% responded positively).

Both the under 60 age group and the over 60 age group surveyed in 2018 shared the same top five reasons for staying in Rossland as they age, albeit in a slightly different ranked order. The top five reasons shared by the groups were: recreation/fitness activities, social connections, feeling safe, being included in the community, and housing. (Given the limited seniors' and affordable housing, the housing referenced is likely the homes they currently own and reside in.)

Key assets and challenges

Some of the Rossland's key age-friendly assets include:

- Health services located within the community or in nearby Trail, including the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital;
- Recreation, leisure and cultural offerings available to more active seniors; and
- The high level of participation, volunteerism and engagement amongst Rossland seniors.

Like many other small communities, Rossland's key challenge areas related to aging in place are transportation and having access to the spectrum of housing to meet the needs of seniors. Transportation challenges include getting around Rossland on foot or by car due to steep slopes and snowy winters, as well as, getting to other nearby communities without a private vehicle.

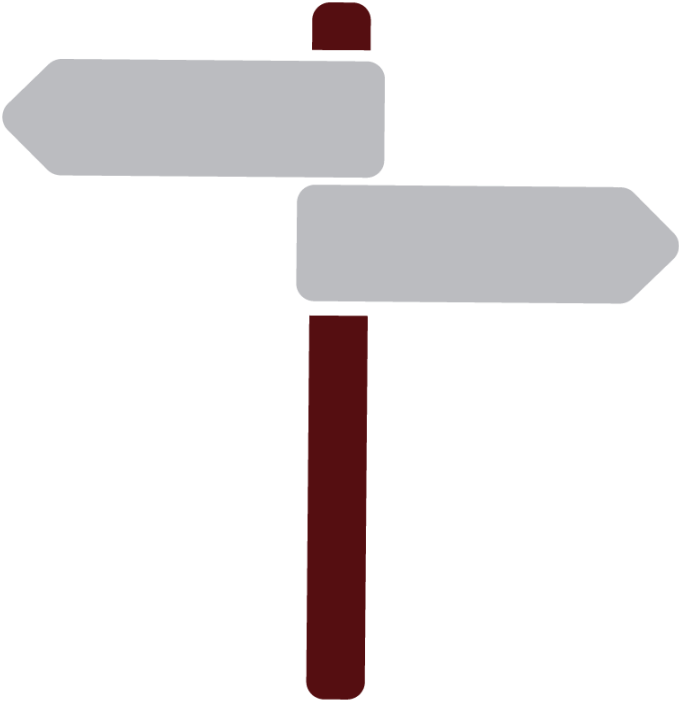


How we're Moving Forward (the Action Plan)

The actions on the following pages are recommended by the Age-Friendly Task Force as the most effective way to improve the age-friendliness of the communities and the region in the next few years. The following page provides an overview of all recommended actions, and then details for each WHO topic are provided on the pages after that.

The City of Rossland will lead on the recommended actions as opportunities arise and as resources allow, other than the region-wide actions, which require many partners and are indicated with an asterisk (*).

In addition to the recommended actions, essential age-friendly features recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) are also included within each topic to help guide future action planning processes.





Action Plan on a Page

WHERE WE'RE GOING								
Vision	To become an age-friendly community and region where older adults can “age actively,” living in security, enjoy good health, and continuing to participate fully in society.							
Goals¹	Housing*	Transportation*	Community support + health services*	Outdoor spaces + buildings	Social participation	Respect + social inclusion	Civic participation + employment	Communication + information
	The community and region has a range of housing options that are affordable, appropriately located, well built, well designed and secure.	Public transportation and other mobility options exist, and they are accessible and affordable.	Community support and other mobility services are accessible, affordable and meet the needs of seniors.	Outdoor spaces and buildings that are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.	The community has opportunities for seniors to participate in a range of social, recreation, cultural and spiritual activities.	Older people are treated with respect and are included in all aspects of community and civic life.	Opportunities for employment and volunteering cater to older generational interests and abilities.	The community has accessible and available age-friendly information and communications.
HOW WE'RE MOVING FORWARD ²								
Actions	<p>Encourage or incentivize new developments to include age-friendly features (e.g. elevators).</p> <p>Support regional efforts to increase the number of units of seniors' housing through: an attainable regional housing plan; coordination of housing providers; and strategic access to funding.**</p> <p>Grant tax-exemptions to developers of low-income housing.</p> <p>Address gaps in home repair, maintenance and other support services, by establishing a Better at Home program in the Lower Columbia to enable seniors to stay in their homes longer.**</p> <p>Support the recommendation made to the BC government to create a home maintenance/repair subsidy program for low-income home-owners, similar to the SAFER subsidy program for low-income renters.**</p> <p>Continue advocacy for supported and assisted living in Rossland.</p> <p><i>Lower Priority</i></p> <p>Encourage research and communications regarding shared housing opportunities by a community volunteer or organization.</p>	<p>Explore opportunities to enhance the use of excess capacity within current transportation operators (private and public) and apply a subsidy program to enable access for low-income community members.**</p> <p>Encourage BC Transit to improve regional routes and infrastructure (e.g. bus stop seating, weather protection), and re-examine the manner in which service utilization data is considered.**</p> <p>Support the expansion of the West Kootenay Volunteer Driver Program Coordinator to more days per week and to include non-medical needs.**</p> <p>Advocate to the RDKB to establish a subsidy program for regional transportation options for low-income residents.**</p> <p><i>Lower Priority</i></p> <p>Explore a 'gripper' campaign to promote pedestrian safety during the winter months.</p>	<p>Explore options for developing/re-introducing a meal delivery program for the region, ideally once per day for seniors in the region.**</p> <p>Address gaps in home repair, maintenance and other support services, by establishing a Better at Home program in the Lower Columbia to enable seniors to stay in their homes longer.** (repeated from Housing section)</p>	<p>Develop public washrooms in the downtown core.</p> <p>Install signage that meets the needs of seniors.</p> <p><i>Lower Priority</i></p> <p>Install shaded benches where possible.</p> <p>Install phone and Internet services at Seniors Hall. (Rossland Seniors Association)</p>	<p>Create a seniors' program for Rossland, Warfield and Trail that replicates the best practices of the Beaver Valley Seniors Program. (Rossland, Trail and Warfield)</p> <p>Encourage the creation of a secondary seniors group to complement the existing association, sharing the Seniors Centre space and covering costs. (City of Rossland, Seniors Association, volunteers)</p>	<p>Continue creating opportunities (events, programs, etc.) that are welcoming and inclusive of seniors. (City of Rossland and other community partners)</p>	<p><i>Rossland is doing fairly well in this area, therefore it is relatively lower priority compared to the other topics.</i></p> <p><i>Lower Priority</i></p> <p>Communicate volunteer and employment opportunities to seniors (future regional seniors' coordinator)</p>	<p>Support the ongoing production of the Closing the Gap seniors' guide for the Lower Columbia that provides all seniors' information in one place (online and on paper).**</p> <p>Regularly communicate the Closing the Gap seniors guide and elements of it (e.g. transportation, housing) to raise awareness about services available to seniors.</p> <p>Advocate for a Basin-wide Seniors Action Network coordinator following the Youth Action Network model whose responsibilities would include providing comprehensive information and advocacy services to seniors, and who would complement the coordinator(s) responsible for delivering seniors' programming in the region.**</p>

¹ These goals are summarized from the World Health Organization's (WHO) age-friendly check-list that is structured according to the eight age-friendly themes. For a more detailed description of the goals within each topic, see the WHO age-friendly guide or checklist.

² How we're moving forward is made up of actions that will be undertaken as resources permit and opportunities arise. They are prioritized on a relative basis, according to higher or lower priority.

*Topics that require regional perspective and solutions and cannot be addressed by each specific community alone. The other topics also have regional linkages, but they can and should be delivered by and within each community as much as possible.

**These are region-wide actions identified by the joint Age-Friendly Task Force. They reflect concerns shared by the three participating communities (Montrose, Rossland and Trail) and will require collaboration amongst regional partners to implement successfully.



Housing

Housing is essential to safety and well-being. Providing housing that offers progressively higher levels of support as people age is important for the region, as is enabling seniors to remain in their homes comfortably and safely for as long as possible.

Our goal: The community and region have a range of housing options that are affordable, appropriately located, well-designed, well-built and secure.

How are we doing?

Rossland currently has some affordable rental housing available to seniors and another affordable rental development is in the works. Creating new seniors' and affordable housing in the region, with the new provincial and federal funding, will continue to be important, but this will be a longer-term undertaking. In the meantime, focusing on extending the time that seniors can remain in their current homes is critical.

For more information, see the 2018 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

Age-Friendly Actions

The actions below are recommended to make Rossland and the region more age-friendly. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are the regional-wide actions that reflect the concerns shared by the three participating communities (Montrose, Rossland and Trail); they will require regional collaboration to implement successfully.

High Priorities

- Encourage or incentivize new developments to include age-friendly features (e.g. elevators).
- Support regional efforts to increase the number of units of seniors' housing through: an attainable regional housing plan; coordination of housing providers; and strategic access to funding.*
- Grant tax-exemptions to developers of low-income housing.
- Address gaps in home repair, maintenance and other support services, by establishing a Better at Home program in the Lower Columbia to enable seniors to stay in their homes longer.*



- Support the recommendation made to the BC government to create a home maintenance/repair subsidy program for low-income home-owners, similar to the SAFER subsidy program for low-income renters.*
- Continue advocacy for supported and assisted living in Rossland.

Lower Priorities

- Encourage research and communications regarding shared housing opportunities by a community volunteer or organization.

WHO Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities/Communities

- Sufficient, affordable housing is available in areas that are safe and close to services and the rest of the community.
- Sufficient and affordable home maintenance and support services are available.
- Housing is well-constructed and provides safe and comfortable shelter from the weather.
- Interior spaces and level surfaces allow freedom of movement in all rooms and passageways.
- Home modification options and supplies are available and affordable, and providers understand the needs of older people.
- Public and commercial rental housing is clean, well-maintained and safe.
- Sufficient and affordable housing for frail and disabled older people, with appropriate services, is provided locally.



Transportation

Transportation, including accessible and affordable public transport, is a key factor influencing active ageing. In particular, being able to move about the city determines social and civic participation, as well as access to community and health services. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: Public transportation and other mobility options exist, and they are accessible and affordable.

How are we doing?

Rossland's steep topography and snowfall make getting around in Rossland more challenging than in many other BC communities. Further, getting between Rossland and other communities in the region for those without a private vehicle is a key challenge and is especially important to address given that many services and amenities are provided elsewhere.

For more information, see the 2018 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

Age-Friendly Actions

The actions below are recommended to make Rossland and the region more age-friendly. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are the regional-wide actions that reflect the concerns shared by the three participating communities (Montrose, Rossland and Trail); they will require regional collaboration to implement successfully.

High Priority

- Explore opportunities to enhance the use of excess capacity within current transportation operators (private and public) and apply a subsidy program to enable access for low-income community members.*
- Encourage BC Transit to improve regional routes and infrastructure (e.g. bus stop seating, weather protection), and re-examine the manner in which service utilization data is considered.*
- Support the expansion of the West Kootenay Volunteer Driver Program Coordinator to more days per week and to include non-medical needs.**



- Advocate to the RDKB to establish a subsidy program for regional transportation options for low-income residents.**

Lower Priority

- Explore a 'gripper' campaign to promote pedestrian safety during the winter months. (City of Rossland)

WHO Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities/Communities

- Public transportation costs are consistent, clearly displayed and affordable.
- Public transportation is reliable and frequent, including at night and on weekends and holidays.
- All city areas and services are accessible by public transport, with good connections and well-marked routes and vehicles.
- Vehicles are clean, well-maintained, accessible, not overcrowded and have priority seating that is respected.
- Specialized transportation is available for disabled people.
- Drivers stop at designated stops and beside the curb to facilitate boarding and wait for passengers to be seated before driving off.
- Transport stops and stations are conveniently located, accessible, safe, clean, well-lit and well-marked, with adequate seating and shelter.
- Complete and accessible information is provided to users about routes, schedules and special needs facilities.
- A voluntary transport service is available where public transportation is too limited.
- Taxis are accessible and affordable, and drivers are courteous and helpful.
- Roads are well-maintained, with covered drains and good lighting.
- Traffic flow is well-regulated.
- Roadways are free of obstructions that block drivers' vision.
- Traffic signs and intersections are visible and well-placed.
- Driver education and refresher courses are promoted for all drivers.
- Parking and drop-off areas are safe, sufficient in number and conveniently located.
- Priority parking and drop-off spots for people with special needs are available and respected.



Community Support and Health Services

Affordable and accessible community support and health services are vital for seniors to maintain their health and independence in the community. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: Community support and health services are accessible, affordable and meet the needs of seniors.

How are we doing?

With the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital in nearby Trail and health practitioners in Rossland, health care services were not a major concern for Rossland residents engaged in the 2018 age-friendly planning process. However, transportation to health care needs and home support services, such as nursing care and meals, were rated less favourably.

For more information, see the 2018 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

Age-Friendly Actions

The actions below are recommended to make Rossland and the region more age-friendly. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are the regional-wide actions that reflect the concerns shared by the three participating communities (Montrose, Rossland and Trail); they will require regional collaboration to implement successfully.

High Priority

- Explore options for developing/re-introducing a meal delivery program for the region, ideally once per day for seniors in the region.*
- Address gaps in home repair, maintenance and other support services, by establishing a Better at Home program in the Lower Columbia to enable seniors to stay in their homes longer.* (*repeated from Housing section*)

WHO Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities/Communities

- An adequate range of health and community support services is
- Delivery of services is coordinated and administratively simple.



offered for promoting, maintaining and restoring health.

- Home care services include health and personal care and housekeeping.
- Health and social services are conveniently located and accessible by all means of transport.
- Residential care facilities and designated older people's housing are located close to services and the rest of the community.
- Health and community service facilities are safely constructed and fully accessible.
- Clear and accessible information is provided about health and social services for older people.

- All staff are respectful, helpful and trained to serve older people.
- Economic barriers impeding access to health and community support services are minimized.
- Voluntary services by people of all ages are encouraged and supported.
- There are sufficient and accessible burial sites.
- Community emergency planning takes into account the vulnerabilities and capacities of older people.



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people, affecting their ability to age in place. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: Outdoor spaces and buildings that are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.

How are we doing?

Public washrooms, snow clearing and sidewalks were topics that were of concern amongst the under 60 group surveyed, and received low satisfaction levels amongst the over 60 group. Of least concern and highest satisfaction were Rossland's trails, parks and green spaces. For more information, see the 2018 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

Age-Friendly Actions

The actions below are recommended to make Rossland and the region more age-friendly.

High Priority

- Develop public washrooms in the downtown core.
- Install signage that meets the needs of seniors.

Lower Priority

- Install shaded benches where possible.
- Install phone and Internet services at Seniors Hall. (*Rossland Seniors Association*)



WHO Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities/Communities

- Public areas are clean and pleasant.
- Green spaces and outdoor seating are sufficient in number, well-maintained and safe.
- Pavements are well-maintained, free of obstructions and reserved for pedestrians.
- Pavements are non-slip, are wide enough for wheelchairs and have dropped curbs to road level.
- Pedestrian crossings are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disability, with nonslip markings, visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times. Drivers give way to pedestrians at intersections and pedestrian crossings.
- Cycle paths are separate from pavements and other pedestrian walkways.
- Outdoor safety is promoted by good street lighting, police patrols and community education.
- Services are situated together and are accessible.
- Special customer service arrangements are provided, such as separate queues or service counters for older people.
- Buildings are well-signed outside and inside, with sufficient seating and toilets, accessible elevators, ramps, railings and stairs, and non-slip floors.
- Public toilets outdoors and indoors are sufficient in number, clean, well-maintained and accessible.



Social Participation

Social participation and social support are strongly connected to good health and well-being throughout life. Participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with the family, allows older people to continue to exercise their competence, to enjoy respect and esteem, and to maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships. It fosters social integration and is the key to staying informed. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: The community has opportunities for seniors to participate in a range of social, recreation, cultural and spiritual activities.

How are we doing?

Rossland's Seniors' Centre and Seniors' Association provide programs and support for Rossland's older senior demographic, and Rossland's many recreation, leisure and cultural offerings satisfy Rossland's more active senior demographic. Learning activities were rated somewhat less favourably, suggesting this might be an area for improvement.

For more information, see the 2018 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

Age-Friendly Actions

The actions below are recommended to make Rossland and the region more age-friendly.

High Priority

- Create a seniors' program for Rossland, Warfield and Trail that replicates the best practices of the Beaver Valley Seniors Program. (*Rossland, Trail and Warfield*)
- Encourage the creation of a secondary seniors group to complement the existing association, sharing the Seniors Centre space and covering costs. (*City of Rossland, Seniors Association, volunteers*)



WHO Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities/Communities

- Venues for events and activities are conveniently located, accessible, well-lit and easily reached by public transport.
- Events are held at times convenient for older people.
- Activities and events can be attended alone or with a companion.
- Activities and attractions are affordable, with no hidden or additional participation costs.
- Good information about activities and events is provided, including details about accessibility of facilities and transportation options for older people.
- A wide variety of activities is offered to appeal to a diverse population of older people.
- Gatherings including older people are held in various local community spots, such as recreation centres, schools, libraries, community centres and parks.
- There is consistent outreach to include people at risk of social isolation.



Respect and social inclusion

Respect and social inclusion of seniors is being threatened due to changes in society and behavioural norms, lack of contact between generations, and widespread ignorance about ageing and older people. It is also impacted by factors such as culture, gender, health and economic status. The extent to which older people participate in the social, civic and economic life of the city is closely linked to their experience of inclusion. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: Older people are treated with respect and are included in all aspects of community and civic life.

How are we doing?

Rossland seniors reported very high levels of respect and inclusion through the 2018 assessment, and as a result, this age-friendly topic area was given lower priority relative to the other topic areas for the purposes of action planning by the Age-Friendly Task Force.

For more information, see the 2018 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

Age-Friendly Actions

The actions below are recommended to make Rossland and the region more age-friendly.

High Priority

- Continue creating opportunities (events, programs, etc.) that are welcoming and inclusive of seniors. *(City of Rossland and other community partners)*

WHO Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities/Communities

- Older people are regularly consulted by public, voluntary and commercial services on how to serve them better.
- Services and products to suit varying needs and preferences are provided by public and commercial services.
- Service staff are courteous and helpful.
- Older people are specifically included in community activities for “families”.
- Schools provide opportunities to learn about ageing and older people,



- Older people are visible in the media, and are depicted positively and without stereotyping.
- Community-wide settings, activities and events attract all generations by accommodating age-specific needs and preferences.
- Older people are visible in the media, and are depicted positively and without stereotyping.
- Older people are recognized by the community for their past as well as their present contributions.
- Older people who are less well-off have good access to public, voluntary and private services.
- Older people are visible in the media, and are depicted positively and without stereotyping.
- Older people are recognized by the community for their past as well as their present contributions.
- Older people who are less well-off have good access to public, voluntary and private services.



Civic participation and employment

Older people do not stop contributing to their communities on retirement. Many continue to provide unpaid and voluntary work for their families and communities. In some areas, economic circumstances force older people to take paid work long after they should have retired. An age-friendly community provides options for older people to continue to contribute to their communities, through paid employment or voluntary work if they so choose, and to be engaged in the political process. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: Opportunities for employment and volunteering cater to older generational interests and abilities.

How are we doing?

Generally, the sense is that Rossland seniors are highly involved in the community and engaged in volunteer opportunities, and the survey revealed that of the over 60 group, approximately 80% were satisfied with volunteer opportunities. With respect to employment opportunities, the majority of the over 60 group responding to the survey said they 'don't know'. Of those who did know, most were dissatisfied with the opportunities that exist.

For more information, see the 2018 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

Age-Friendly Actions

The actions below are recommended to make Rossland and the region more age-friendly. Rossland is doing fairly well in this area, therefore it is relatively lower priority compared to other actions.

Lower Priority

- Communicate volunteer and employment opportunities to seniors (*future regional seniors' coordinator*)



WHO Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities/Communities

- A range of flexible options for older volunteers is available, with training, recognition, guidance and compensation for personal costs.
- The qualities of older employees are well promoted.
- A range of flexible and appropriately paid opportunities for older people to work is promoted.
- Discrimination on the basis of age alone is forbidden in the hiring, retention, promotion and training of employees.
- Workplaces are adapted to meet the needs of disabled people.
- Self-employment options for older people are promoted and supported.
- Training in post-retirement options is provided for older workers.
- Decision-making bodies in public, private and voluntary sectors encourage and facilitate membership of older people.



Communication and information

Staying connected with events and people and getting timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing. Rapidly evolving information and communication technologies are both welcomed as useful tools and criticized as instruments of social exclusion. Regardless of the variety of communication choices and the volume of information available, it is essential to have relevant information that is readily accessible to older people with varying capacities and resources. (WHO 2007)

Our goal: The community has accessible and available age-friendly information and communications.

How are we doing?

While general community and City information was rated very favourably by Rossland seniors surveyed, knowing where to look to access information about services and programs specific to seniors was identified as a barrier through the age-friendly planning process. This is not surprising and in fact, access to information about services, activities, events, etc. is a barrier that is not unique to Rossland or to seniors – it is often cited across communities and ages as one of the barriers to active community engagement and participation. A key asset in this area for Rossland and the rest of the Lower Columbia area is the existence of the “Closing the Gaps in Seniors’ Care: A Guide to Public, Community and Private Services for Lower Columbia Seniors” that is updated annually and distributed in print and online www.kb.fetchbc.ca. This is a comprehensive resource that simply needs broader distribution and use by community organizations and seniors’ service providers.

For more information, see the 2018 Age-Friendly Assessment document.

Age-Friendly Actions

The actions below are recommended to make Rossland and the region more age-friendly. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are the regional-wide actions that reflect the concerns shared by the three participating communities (Montrose, Rossland and Trail); they will require regional collaboration to implement successfully.

High Priority

- Support the ongoing production of the Closing the Gap seniors’ guide for the Lower Columbia that provides all seniors’ information in one place (online and on paper).*



- Regularly communicate the Closing the Gap seniors guide and elements of it (e.g. transportation, housing) to raise awareness about services available to seniors.
- Advocate for a Basin-wide Seniors Action Network coordinator following the Youth Action Network model whose responsibilities would include providing comprehensive information and advocacy services to seniors, and who would complement the coordinator(s) responsible for delivering seniors' programming in the region.*

WHO Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities/Communities

- A basic, effective communication system reaches community residents of all ages.
- Regular and widespread distribution of information is assured and a coordinated, centralized access is provided.
- Regular information and broadcasts of interest to older people are offered.
- Oral communication accessible to older people is promoted.
- People at risk of social isolation get one-to-one information from trusted individuals.
- Printed information – including official forms, television captions and text on visual displays – has large lettering and the main ideas are shown by clear headings and bold-face type.
- Public and commercial services provide friendly, person-to-person service on request.
- Print and spoken communication uses simple, familiar words in short, straightforward sentences.
- Telephone answering services give instructions slowly and clearly and tell callers how to repeat the message at any time.
- Electronic equipment, such as mobile telephones, radios, televisions, and bank and ticket machines, has large buttons and big lettering.
- There is wide public access to computers and the Internet, at no or minimal charge, in public places such as government offices, community centres and libraries.



Implementation

Implementing this action plan will require commitment and contributions by many community members and partners. This section outlines some of the key approaches to ensuring the plan is implemented and updated in the coming years.

Ongoing action planning

Annual or bi-annual action planning will ensure that the Age-Friendly Action 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 years.

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 City of Rossland and other municipalities, regional and community organizations, and senior citizens.

At the very least, these groups should be engaged in the action planning process. Beyond annual action planning, age-friendly partners can accept actions for implementation, align their decisions and activities with the Age-Friendly Action Plan, help to raise awareness about age-friendly issues, and engage others in creating a more age-friendly community and region.

Monitoring progress and performance

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

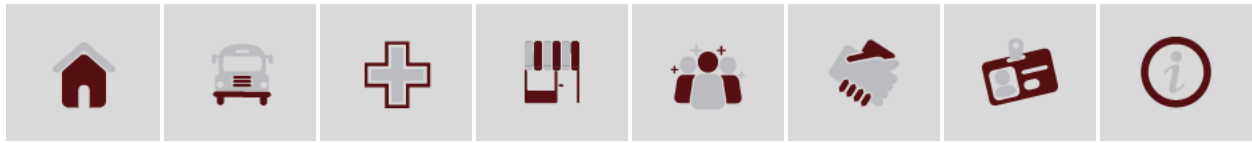
- Satisfaction with overall age-friendliness.
- Perception of respect and inclusion.
- Satisfaction with access to health services.
- Satisfaction with transportation services.



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 communities and to best cases around the world can also help to gauge performance and determine areas where opportunities for accelerated improvement might exist.





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