



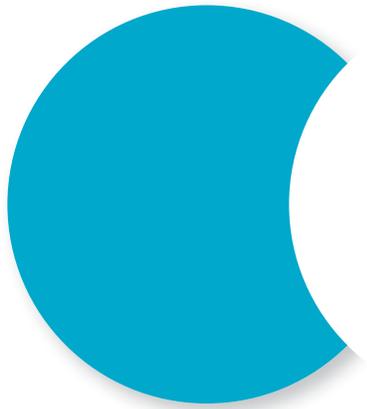
OAK BAY  
**age friendly**  
ACTION PLAN

**FEBRUARY 2016**

Accepted by Council - February 22, 2016

DISTRICT OF  
**OAK BAY**





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# 1

## Introduction & Context

Locally, nationally, and worldwide communities are aging. The World Health Organization has predicted that the proportion of people aged 60 and older could double from 12% to 22% by 2050. Canada is also experiencing this shift. For the first time, there are more Canadians who are older than 65 than there are children under the age of 15. This demographic trend brings with it the need to adapt the physical design of our communities, our approach to housing, transportation, and recreation; as well as the health services and other supports people need to remain healthy, active, independent, and involved in their communities as they age.

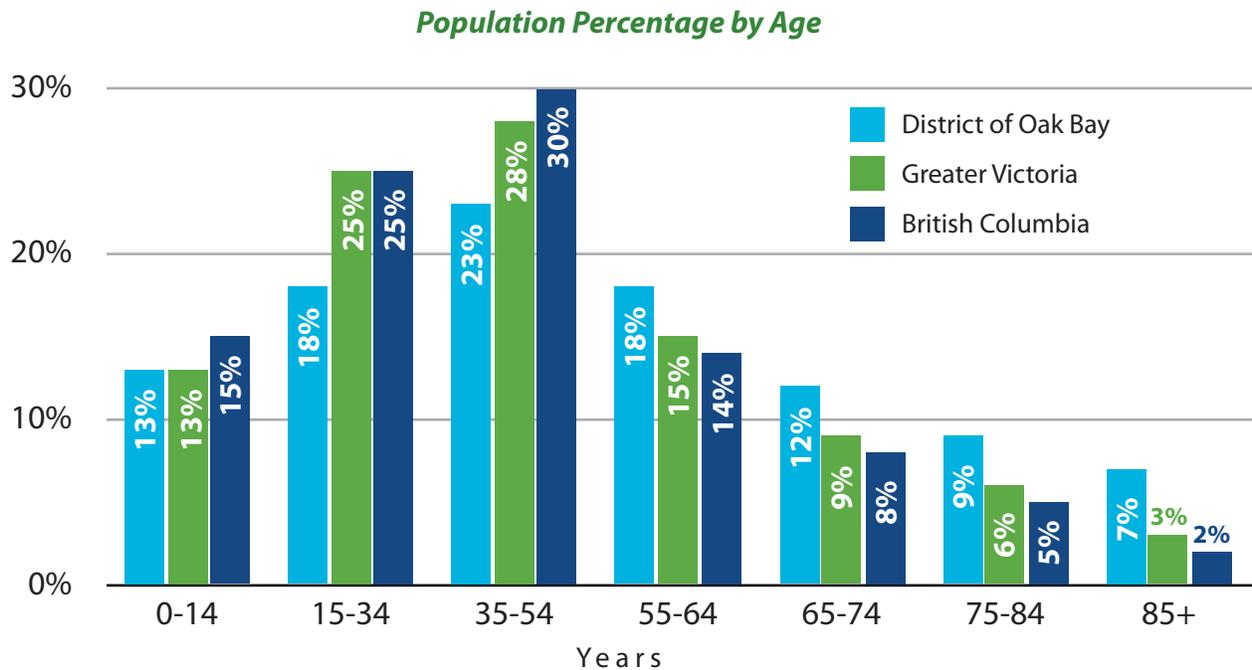
Just as the *baby boomers* had an enormous impact on the physical, cultural, and economic structure of society, the expected *seniors boom* has the potential to influence communities again. However, anticipating this demographic shift is not simply a matter of building more care facilities or seniors' centres. Age friendly communities are intended to work for everyone – fostering social connection, active living, and independence for people of all ages. And, while this shift will likely translate into proportionally greater needs for health care and supports specific to older residents, it also presents an opportunity to build on the strengths of a generation that has much to offer.

With support from SeniorsBC and the Age-friendly BC initiative, many communities have embraced age-friendly planning, and are preparing for an aging population. While there are common themes across the province, strategies and actions contained in an age-friendly plan respond to the specific context of a community.



## The Oak Bay Context

Oak Bay is home to families with children, students, and adults of all ages. However, the proportion of residents over the age of 64 has historically been higher than both Greater Victoria and BC as a whole. As of the 2011 Census, the proportion of residents 65+ in Greater Victoria was 15.7% compared to 13.7% provincially. In comparison, 27.8% of Oak Bay residents were 65 or older (see chart below). In fact, between 2006 and 2011, this age cohort grew by 11%, while those aged 15-64 decreased, and the proportion of children under 15 remained nearly the same.



Source: 2011 Census, Statistics Canada

Reflecting this demographic pattern, Oak Bay has a rich array of facilities, programs and services geared towards the needs and interests of older adults, which draw participation locally and around the region. While offering valuable resources for older adults, children, youth, and adults also have access to exceptional social, cultural and recreational pursuits. Additionally, all residents have access to a variety of scenic walking routes, parks, public facilities, clubs, activities, and community events held throughout the year. Many residents are actively engaged in volunteer pursuits, giving back to the community in a variety of ways.

While there are many successful examples of how Oak Bay supports its older residents, there are some challenges facing the community, including issues related to walkability; efficient transit; availability of affordable, appropriate housing; and access to support services and health care. These challenges are not exclusive to older residents, however; and addressing these topics could benefit the community as a whole.

Recognizing that many organizations and levels of government provide services and support older adults in the community, this Plan focuses on things the District has the potential to undertake independently, support, or influence. Implementing the Action Plan will require commitment from the District to work collaboratively with external partners and the community.

The Oak Bay Age-friendly Action Plan is intended to provide a framework to guide decisions and inform continued dialogue about creating a community that is safe, accessible, and welcoming to all – an age-friendly community.



# 2

## What is an Age-friendly Community?

The Age-friendly Community Initiative was launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2006 to establish a shared understanding of the significant demographic shift occurring worldwide, and develop tools to help communities adapt to the changing needs of aging populations.

Working with national and community partners (including the District of Saanich), WHO developed the Global Age-friendly Cities Guide. The guide and the eight topics of age-friendly communities have been used as the basis for developing strategies, influencing policy, and designing initiatives to help communities become more age-friendly.

Age-friendly planning promotes:

- Planning for the full spectrum of life;
- Recognizing the diversity among the population;
- Support for *active aging*; and
- Helping to identify and address the barriers that people encounter as they grow older.



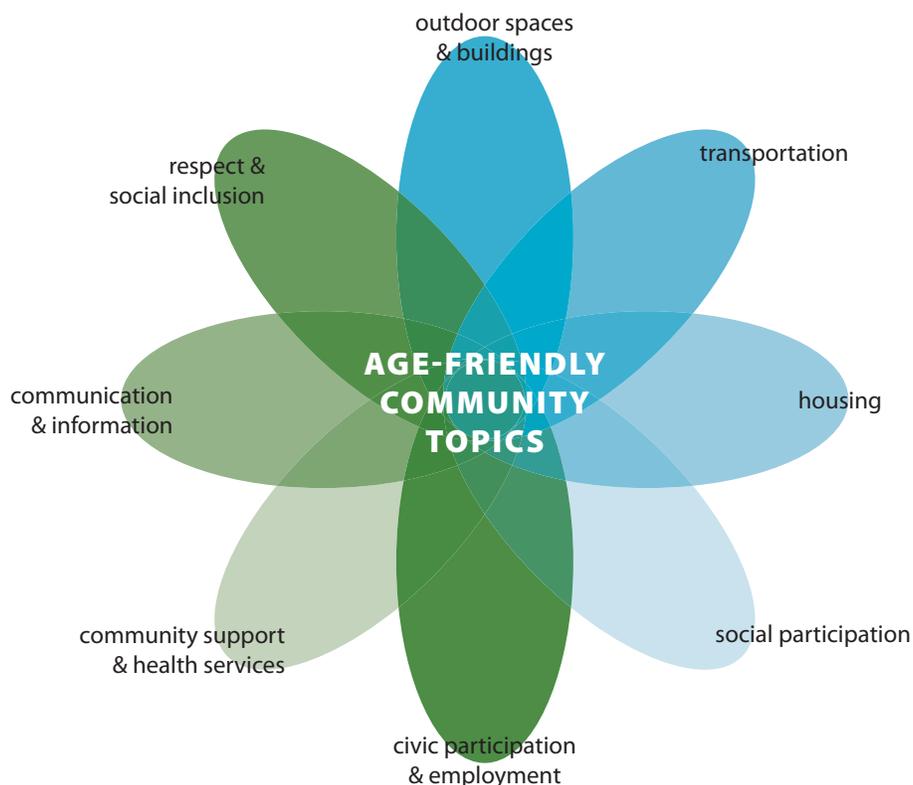
## Age-friendly Topic Areas

In an age-friendly community, the policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to help older adults with varying needs and capabilities *age actively* – meaning that people can participate in all aspects of society, access health care and supports when needed, and remain safe and independent for as long as possible.

While the needs of older adults are a primary focus of the age-friendly cities movement, many researchers and urbanists<sup>1</sup> advocate that cities should work for people who are eight or 80 years old. This underscores the impact that the physical and social environment can have on the health, safety, and well-being of people at all stages of life. In many cases, efforts made to improve communities for older people also benefit others. For example, streetscape improvements to widen sidewalks, provide ramps and automatic door openers will make it easier for the elderly as well as people with physical disabilities and parents with strollers to navigate their communities. Likewise, a range of housing types provides opportunities for people to find housing that meets their needs at any stage of life; and more effective transit allows youth and others who do not drive to travel independently.

Oak Bay has used the topics developed by the World Health Organization to guide conversations with the community, evaluate the unique challenges and opportunities in Oak Bay, and recommend strategies and actions for the future that will help to create a more age-friendly community.

<sup>1</sup> Gil Penelosa, [www.880cities.org](http://www.880cities.org)



# 3

## Building an Age-friendly Community – The Process

With financial support from a BC Healthy Communities and Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) grant, the District of Oak Bay worked with CitySpaces Consulting to assess the community, and engage the public to develop an Age-friendly Action Plan. The process included the following steps:

### 1

#### BACKGROUND RESEARCH & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Review and analyze relevant District policies and practices.
- Identify issues and opportunities with the Age-friendly Working Group and key stakeholders.
- Share emerging directions and gather input from the greater community.

### 2

#### DRAFT THE AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN

- Develop an overall vision and guiding principles for the Plan.
- Identify strategies and actions to address community needs in both the physical and social environment, as based on results of background research and community engagement.
- Refine the draft strategies and actions with the Working Group.
- Share the draft strategies and actions with the greater community.

### 3

#### COMPLETE THE AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN

- Share the draft Action Plan with the Working Group and greater community.
- Revise and finalize the Action Plan with District staff.
- Present the Oak Bay Age-friendly Action Plan to Council.

## METHODOLOGY

Research for the Age-friendly Action Plan began with a review and evaluation the Official Community Plan, Active Transportation Strategy and Zoning Bylaw, as well as relevant reports and current initiatives<sup>2</sup>. The purpose of this review was to assess the current policy framework, and determine how the recommendations of this Plan could address any policy gaps, or build on those areas where a strong foundation is already in place.

The Age-friendly Action Plan builds on some key goals from the Official Community Plan.

**HOUSING.** Encourage and support the development of diverse and inclusive housing options that accommodate residents of all ages, incomes, and family situations, including those with special needs.

**COMMUNITY & SOCIAL WELL-BEING.** Encourage and support community and social facilities and services that benefit residents of all ages and needs, foster interaction across generations and cultures, and strengthen community networks and services in recreation, education, and health and well-being.

**PARKS & OPEN SPACE.** Maintain and enhance parks and open space, including trails and walkways, and provide opportunities for residents to enjoy the natural beauty of the municipality and to pursue active and healthy outdoor lifestyles.

**TRANSPORTATION.** Offer a diverse range of transportation options, and encourage and establish infrastructure for active modes of transportation to enhance safety, mobility, connectivity and access within Oak Bay and to surrounding communities.

*Note: In Sections 4 and 5 of this Plan, a policy reference has been provided where a strategy or action directly reflects, or supports a policy in the OCP.*

A key component in developing the Age-friendly Action Plan was engagement with the community. A range of methods were used to reach the public, including a dedicated Age-friendly Working Group, a workshop with representatives from local stakeholder groups, and outreach to the general public through open houses and online communications. See Section 4 for more detail on how the community was engaged.

This combination of background research and community engagement informed development of strategies intended to provide guidance to the District in addressing existing challenges, and preparing to meet the evolving needs of an aging population.

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<sup>2</sup> Additional material reviewed included: Seniors Housing Committee Report, Oak Bay Secondary Suites Review Committee Report, Active Transportation Advisory Committee Report on Accessibility, OCP Renewal Community Survey Report, Oak Bay Walking Trails brochure, Complete Streets Policy and Handbook (in progress).

# 4

## Working with the Community

An Age-friendly Working Group, consisting of community residents and representatives from District Council, and District staff (Planning, Engineering, Parks) was established to provide local insight and guidance for developing the Plan.

A stakeholder group, representing service providers, partner agencies, community organizations, and District staff, was also created.

To identify the key issues, opportunities, and priorities for the Plan, workshops were held with the Working Group and the Stakeholder Group. The workshops were facilitated to focus on several questions:

- What is working well?
- What challenges exist?
- What could be done?

The information and ideas generated at these workshops, along with the background policy research, helped shape a set of emerging directions that were shared with the public at an open house in June 2015. Feedback from the community was sought to confirm the emerging directions, and identify specific examples of actions that would improve the community for people of all ages.

A second workshop with the Working Group and public open house were held in November 2015 to review draft strategies, and gather feedback to refine the Action Plan.



To ensure the draft age-friendly strategies and actions were widely available for review and comment, the open house boards were also installed at Monterey Centre, with comment forms available for completion.

Approximately 35 residents participated in the first open house, which was held at Oak Bay Recreation Centre on June 23, 2015. The second open house was held at Municipal Hall on November 5, 2015 and attracted more than 60 residents. Both events were advertised in the Oak Bay News, on the District's website, and posters were distributed through the stakeholder groups.

Feedback from the public, the Working Group, stakeholders, and District staff helped to develop and refine the draft Action Plan. Once the draft was complete, it was circulated to the Working Group for comments. As well, the draft Action Plan was posted to the District website and a newspaper ad was published to invite further public feedback. Comments were then incorporated into the final draft for presentation to Council.



*CitySpaces Consulting*



*CitySpaces Consulting*



## VISION

Oak Bay is an age-friendly community that supports the diverse needs of older adults, provides opportunities for active living and community involvement, and is safe, accessible, and welcoming to all.

## Guiding Principles

The following set of principles were identified to guide development of the Action Plan, and to assist the District in implementing the Plan:

- **An Inclusive Approach:** Brings together a range of stakeholders representing community organizations, service providers, partner agencies, and local residents.
- **A District-Wide Focus & Beyond:** Considers issues and intends to develop solutions and strategies that are relevant on both a District-wide basis and within a regional context.
- **Build on Achievements to Date:** Identifies current policies, initiatives, and practices that the District already has in place, and ways to build on this framework to support the community's age-friendly objectives.
- **Intergenerational Perspective:** Seeks to draw on the knowledge of residents of all ages and abilities.
- **Effective Engagement:** Meaningfully engages the community to identify issues, and discuss solutions efficiently and collaboratively.



# 5

## Physical Environment

An age-friendly **physical environment** encompasses transportation, outdoor spaces, buildings, and housing. In order to build on the community's strengths in developing strategies for the Action Plan, residents, members of the Stakeholders Group and the Working Group, and other community interests were asked to identify:

### THINGS THAT ARE WORKING WELL

- Great parks and open spaces, including both active and passive parks.
- Excellent recreation facilities, with a wide range of programs for people of all ages.
- Well used public library.
- A range of housing types close to amenities.
- Walkable village centres, for example:
  - Oak Bay Avenue
  - Estevan Village
  - Foul Bay Road and Neil Street
  - Estevan Avenue at Cadboro Bay.
- Policies in the Official Community Plan, the Active Transportation Strategy, and the Complete Streets Handbook provide a strong framework to support age-friendly initiatives.

### WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- A wider range of housing options, and more housing supply would improve the ability of older adults to age-in-place as their needs or personal circumstances change.
- More seating is needed in public spaces, and along walking routes to provide resting places.
- Public gathering places are not well distributed throughout the community.
- Transit improvements are needed for better north/south connections, better access to Oak Bay High School and other popular destinations, and to reduce walking distances to some stops.
- Walkability improvements (connectivity, sidewalk provision, smooth surfaces) are needed in and around Village Centres.
- Use of mobility scooters is increasing, and there is no clarity about where they should be used, or where they should be parked.
- Some District facilities are at capacity, while others are underutilized for community use.

## Buildings & Outdoor Spaces

In an age-friendly Oak Bay, the built environment is designed to be safe and easy to navigate, and provides opportunities for community use and social interaction. Outdoor public spaces and parks are designed to accommodate community gatherings, encourage active healthy living, and ensure people of all ages and abilities can access and enjoy these amenities.

### STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

#### BUILDINGS

- Conduct an audit to assess civic buildings and facilities for consistency with the BC Building Code provisions for accessibility, and identify priorities and timelines for upgrades.
- Ensure wayfinding and signage is clear, consistent, distinctive and well placed, especially in high traffic areas and around public buildings (OCP Policy PR7).
- Continue to explore and evaluate opportunities to provide intergenerational activities and programs in the Neighbourhood Learning Centre space at Oak Bay High School, and other public facilities.
- Optimize the use of existing public facilities by identifying appropriate spaces that could be made available for community use.



#### OUTDOOR SPACES

- Establish an inventory of inconsistent connections (trails, sidewalks) or impediments to accessibility (trees, electrical poles, sandwich boards, newspaper boxes), and incorporate the items into plans for sidewalk improvements and replacement (OCP Policy T10).
- Incorporate accessibility criteria in streetscape improvement plans for all Villages to improve conditions for all pedestrians, including people with mobility challenges (walkers, wheelchairs, mobility scooters), and people with strollers, by ensuring adequate width, obstacle removal, and consistent pavement surfaces.
- Assess crossings and crosswalks for accessibility and safety features including curb cuts, texture warning strips, audible signals at high traffic intersections, and adequate length of crossing time. Priority areas identified include Monterey, Wilmot, Foul Bay, Elgin and Mitchell Streets, around Municipal Hall, and in Village Centres.
- Explore development of regulations to address parking, charging stations, and safe use of mobility scooters.
- Explore opportunities to improve street lighting to improve pedestrian safety at night.

## PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES

- Expand the number of places to sit in public spaces (along streets, pathways, and in parks) through the bench dedication program and/or installation of unique seating options (e.g. tables and chairs in public areas or parklets). The need for seating along pedestrian routes and pathways, not just at destinations or viewpoints, was highlighted by the community. The route between Oak Bay Avenue, and along Bowker Creek to Oak Bay High School and the Oak Bay Recreation Centre is one example (OCP Policy PR14).
- Create new, or improve existing outdoor gathering places around the community that can become focal points for public events and informal gatherings (OCP Policy CF6).
- Promote and celebrate outdoor improvements at Oak Bay High School.
- Review the trails map to highlight locations of public washrooms.
- Consider installing public washrooms in popular areas, such as Cattle Point and McNeill Bay.
- Continue to implement the recommendations of the *Active Transportation Strategy* with regard to establishing new public pathways and trails, and improving the condition of existing routes (OCP Policy PR11).
- Ensure trails around Henderson Park are well maintained, and amenities, such as benches and public washrooms, are available.
- Explore opportunities to widen the sidewalk along Esplanade and provide an accessible connection from Willows Beach to Cattle Point and Uplands Park (OCP Policy T10).



## Transportation

In an age-friendly Oak Bay, transportation options allow people of all ages and abilities to get where they need to go, conveniently and safely.

### STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

- Apply universal design standards to address accessibility issues around bus stops, and provide appropriate amenities, such as benches, shelter, lighting, garbage bins, and signage and route/schedule information.
- Work with BC Transit to assess transit access to popular destinations within the District, such as schools, recreation centres, and shopping areas; and advocate for introduction of a community bus program to serve local routes (OCP Policy T14).
- Advocate to BC Transit to enhance nighttime bus service to serve seniors, youth, and those who do not drive (OCP Policy T14).
- Advocate to BC Transit for enhanced HandyDART service to meet growing demand (OCP Policy T14).
- Encourage and promote volunteer driving programs in the community.
- Review current sidewalk standards to anticipate the increasing use of motorized mobility scooters, and ensure sidewalks will safely accommodate riders and pedestrians.
- Identify priority locations for additional bicycle parking in public areas, and install new bike racks; amend the Zoning Bylaw to include bicycle parking requirements for multi-unit residential, commercial, and institutional uses to provide more bicycle parking and end of trip facilities (OCP Policy T11, T18).
- Identify priority locations, and assess the feasibility of installing cyclist-controlled intersection buttons.



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## Housing

**In an age-friendly Oak Bay, a variety of appropriate, affordable, and accessible housing options are available. Older adults are able to age-in-place and remain independent, or access higher levels of support and care as their needs change.**

### STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

- Identify housing needs and gaps, and define strategies to address local needs, and enhance the availability of affordable and inclusive housing. Examine the options for both market and non-market housing along the continuum from independent housing forms (duplexes, townhouses, secondary suites, co-housing, intergenerational housing) to supported living and long-term care. Consider zoning amendments or other mechanisms that may facilitate an appropriate range of housing options (OCP Policy H2 & H4).
- Consider implementing requirements for new multi-unit developments to ensure a certain proportion of Adaptable Housing units are provided (OCP Policy H11).
- Utilize Housing Agreements (voluntary agreement between the District and a property owner) during the approval process for new housing development to secure affordable housing (OCP Policy H4).
- Review the Zoning Bylaw to ensure accessibility modifications to existing homes, such as ramps, are not precluded by zoning regulations, such as lot coverage and setbacks.
- Ensure that information on programs offered by other levels of government is available to older homeowners and renters, including Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER), Home Adaptations for Independence (HAFI), and Property Tax Deferment Program.
- Work with the development industry, non-profit housing providers, BC Housing, and Island Health to facilitate development of additional housing (for example, rental, subsidized, independent, assisted living, care facilities) that will fit the neighbourhood context, and meet the evolving needs of Oak Bay residents (OCP Policy CIS19).
- Explore options for incentives to encourage development of more housing units for older adults, such as reduced parking requirements or density bonusing.





# 6

## Social Environment

An age-friendly **social environment** seeks to meet the social well being and health needs of an aging population. In order to build on the community's existing strengths in developing strategies for the Action Plan, stakeholders, members of the Working Group, and other residents were asked to identify:

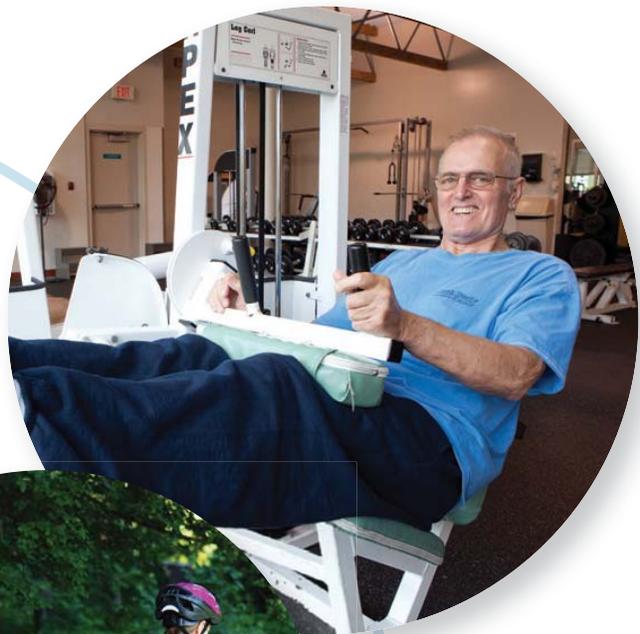
### THINGS THAT ARE WORKING WELL

- Oak Bay is seen as a safe community with visible and responsive fire and police services.
- Social participation and cultural vitality of the community are enhanced by a wide range of community groups and events, including:
  - Arts, walking, and environmental clubs
  - Service clubs
  - Faith communities
  - Year-round, all ages community and cultural events (for example, Oak Bay Village Night Market, Oak Bay Tea Party, Collector Car Festival, Tweed Ride, Oak Bay Arts and Culture Festival, Bowker Creek Brush-up).
- Oak Bay offers excellent recreation programs. Some are intergenerational and others are targeted towards youth or older adults.
- The new Neighbourhood Learning Centre space at Oak Bay High School offers potential for greater interaction and relationship-building between youth and all members of the community.
- Oak Bay Volunteer Services Society provides many volunteer opportunities for residents of all ages, and offers a range of services to older adults that help them to stay in the community.
- There are many services and programs for older adults related to health and well being, including expansion of the United Way Better at Home program into Oak Bay.



## WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Lack of public gathering spaces aside from parks.
- Concern about access to affordable, quality, in-home supports that enable older residents to safely stay in their own homes.
- Concern about social isolation of older adults who remain in their homes without adequate family, friends, or health care.
- Need for better communication with older adults, and among community groups and service providers working with older adults. Important to find the right way to get the right information to the right people at the right time.
- Better connections between generations could improve the ability of youth to become engaged in the community
- Need to recognize the differing needs and abilities of the 65+ cohort (the needs and abilities of 65-year old seniors may be very different from those who are 75+, 85+ or 90+), and address these differences through policies and programs.



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## Respect & Inclusion

In an age-friendly Oak Bay, public services, local media, businesses, faith organizations, service providers, and society as a whole respect the diversity of needs and abilities among older adults, and provide opportunities to involve every resident in community life.

### STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

- Support programs and initiatives in the community that encourage respectful behaviour, combat ageism, and prevent elder abuse.
- Develop events and activities to encourage community participation in days recognizing youth, families, and older residents, such as:
  - Family Day
  - International Youth Day
  - International Day of Older Persons
  - Elder Abuse Awareness Day
  - Dementia Awareness Week
- Utilize the *Alzheimer Society of BC Dementia-Friendly Communities Toolkit for Local Government* to augment the Age-friendly Action Plan, and help find ways to specifically support those with dementia, as well as their families and caregivers.
- Develop programs to bring youth and older adults together, in order to foster intergenerational interaction, mutual understanding, and respect.
- Initiate a proactive approach to creating an age-friendly culture in the District by providing education and training to all District staff in order to promote respectful, effective engagement with people who are hard of hearing, or have communication challenges, and ensure everyone has the opportunity to express their thoughts and ideas.
- Specifically promote respectful, effective engagement with people who are hearing impaired, or who have communication challenges due to stroke, dementia, or other cognitive issues.



## Social Participation

In an age-friendly Oak Bay, older adults are able to develop and maintain valuable social networks through a variety of programs and services, avoiding social isolation and continuing to be connected to their communities.

### STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

- Continue to expand the rich variety of Recreation Oak Bay programs geared towards healthy active living and social interaction for older adults to meet growing demands.
- Continue to support the efforts of Oak Bay Volunteer Services Society, and other community groups and organizations offering outreach, education, and social engagement opportunities to older residents in Oak Bay.
- Encourage community organizations to promote opportunities for youth to be involved in social activities with other adults as program assistants, guest speakers/instructors, or as active participants.
- Identify and promote spaces in the community (indoor and outdoor) that may be used as meeting spaces, particularly in the Estevan Village area and in North Oak Bay.



## Civic Participation & Employment

In an age-friendly Oak Bay, everyone has opportunities to observe and/or participate in community decision making. There are also opportunities to engage in volunteer activities or paid work.

### STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

- Continue to encourage participation from both youth and older adults on District of Oak Bay advisory bodies.
- Provide information about federal, provincial and municipal elections and promote opportunities, such as free bus fares on voting day.
- Promote opportunities for education and training in the business and broader community that respond to the issues facing older adults.
- Work with the Oak Bay Business Improvement Association (BIA) to introduce an age-friendly business program, with a recognizable brand and certification process.
- Facilitate self-employment among older adults by identifying and addressing potential barriers in District regulations (for example, zoning or business licensing).
- Encourage partnerships between the School District and Oak Bay High School with local organizations to create opportunities for students to receive credit for volunteering with older adults in the community.
- Work with the School District to identify opportunities for community members to share their skills, knowledge, and experiences with local students as mentors, guest speakers/instructors, club sponsors, or in other ways.
- Continue to recognize the important contributions and achievements of older adults and youth in the community (OCP Policy CIS6).



## Communication & Information

In an age-friendly Oak Bay, older adults are aware of the diverse range of programs and services available in the community. Information is easily accessed, appropriately designed, and effectively reaches those who need it.

### STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

- When updating the District's website, consider developing a seniors resource page to provide links to information and services for older adults, their families, and caregivers. The page could link to relevant resources, such as:
  - Recreation Oak Bay facilities and program schedules
  - Libraries
  - Oak Bay Volunteer Services
  - Island Health
  - BC Transit
  - BC Housing
  - BC Seniors Advocate
  - The United Way
  - Alzheimer Society of BC
  - Faith organizations
  - Local service clubs
- The page should be monitored and updated regularly to ensure links are active, and reflect a wide range of services and supports available in the community.
- Promote information about programs offered by other levels of government, including Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) Home Adaptations for Independence (HAFI), and the Property Tax Deferment program.
- Explore opportunities to partner with community organizations, local service providers, and regional and provincial agencies to organize a service fair designed to showcase the range of services and resources available to older residents.
- Utilize a wide variety of methods to communicate with residents, including bulletin boards, Oak Bay News, radio stations, local TV, and scheduled District mail-outs, such as property tax statements.
- When seeking public input and feedback on District initiatives, identify and implement effective ways to encourage participation from target groups, such as youth, new residents, and different cohorts of older adults (OCP Policy CIS8).
- Explore the need to provide hearing assists in Council Chambers to ensure all interested residents are able to follow Council proceedings.
- Consider livestream webcasting of Council meetings.



## Community Support & Health

In an age-friendly Oak Bay, older adults have access to social and health services needed to support healthy active living, maintain and enhance social connections, and remain independent and safe.

### STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

- Continue to expand the rich variety of Recreation Oak Bay programs geared towards healthy active living, promoting social interaction between older adults.
- Explore opportunities to expand recreational facilities and social programs in Central and North Oak Bay (for example, a second small library, or satellite location of Monterey Centre) to enhance access to these services.
- Continue to support community organizations, such as Oak Bay Volunteer Services Society, service clubs, and other groups providing support for residents in the community through funding opportunities, cross-promotion, and other means.
- Look for opportunities to partner with Island Health, BC Housing, Alzheimer Society of BC, University of Victoria, and other agencies and organizations to offer education and training on health, wellness, and communication topics that will be valuable for older adults, their families, and caregivers.
- Encourage a safe and caring community by providing information about how to look out for neighbours through residents associations, Block Watch programs, faith communities, schools, and community organizations.





# 7

## Conclusion & Next Steps

The Age-friendly Action Plan provides a set of strategies and actions that respond to current and anticipated needs in the community. The Plan builds on Oak Bay’s existing policy context and incorporates examples of initiatives identified by the community and local stakeholder groups. Suggested strategies and actions focus on things the District has the ability to implement or support, but also identify areas where the District may need to act as an advocate to other organizations or levels of government.

The Age-friendly Action Plan is intended to act as a guide for making decisions and supporting initiatives that will help the District build on the things that are working well, address existing challenges, and prepare to meet the evolving needs of an aging population. This Plan, and the strategies within it, represent a starting point for the District to work with residents and its partners to continue building an age-friendly community.

- 1** **ADOPT THE ACTION PLAN.**
- 2** **COMMIT TO IMPLEMENTING AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES.**
- 3** **IDENTIFY A “LEAD” FOR EACH STRATEGY.**
- 4** **WORK WITH DISTRICT DEPARTMENTS & PARTNERS TO DEVELOP A DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN WITH BUDGET & TIMELINE CONSIDERATIONS.**
- 5** **MONITOR & EVALUATE THE SUCCESS/IMPACT OF THE ACTION PLAN**

## Implementing the Age-friendly Action Plan

Implementing the Age-friendly Action Plan will involve the commitment and cooperation of the District, community partners, and residents.

Multiple departments may each play a role in implementing the Action Plan, with Engineering and Planning likely taking leadership roles. In some cases, partnerships with community organizations or agencies, such as BC Housing or Island Health, may be required to achieve the intent of a strategy. Continued efforts to develop a detailed implementation plan, which will: prioritize the strategies and actions, identify internal and external partners, and allocate appropriate resources will be an important step towards successfully implementing the Action Plan. As a starting point, the following section identifies a suggested lead department, and potential partners that might be involved.

## Buildings & Outdoor Spaces

Proposed Strategies & Actions	Suggested Lead
<b>BUILDINGS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct an audit to assess civic buildings and facilities for consistency with the BC Building Code provisions for accessibility, and identify priorities and timelines for upgrades.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> <li>BUILDING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure wayfinding and signage is clear, consistent, distinctive and well placed, especially in high traffic areas and around public buildings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> <li>BUILDING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to explore and evaluate opportunities to provide intergenerational activities and programs in the Neighbourhood Learning Centre space at Oak Bay High School.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimize the use of existing public facilities by identifying appropriate spaces that could be made available for community use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>
<b>OUTDOOR SPACES</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an inventory of inconsistent connections (trails, sidewalks) or impediments to accessibility (trees, electrical poles, sandwich boards, newspaper boxes), and incorporate the items into plans for sidewalk improvements and replacement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate accessibility criteria in streetscape improvement plans for all villages to improve conditions for all pedestrians, including people with mobility challenges (walkers, wheelchairs, mobility scooters), and people with strollers, by ensuring adequate width, obstacle removal, and consistent pavement surfaces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess crossings and crosswalks for accessibility and safety features including curb cuts, texture warning strips, audible signals at high traffic intersections, and adequate length of crossing time. Priority areas identified include Monterey, Wilmot, Foul Bay, Elgin and Mitchell Streets, around Municipal Hall, and in village centres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore development of regulations to address parking, charging stations, and safe use of mobility scooters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to improve street lighting to improve pedestrian safety at night.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> </ul>

## Buildings & Outdoor Spaces

Proposed Strategies & Actions	Suggested Lead
<b>PARKS &amp; PUBLIC SPACES</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the number of places to sit in public spaces (along streets, pathways, and in parks) through the bench dedication program and/or installation of unique seating options (e.g. tables and chairs in public plazas). The need for seating along pedestrian routes and pathways, not just at destinations or viewpoints, was highlighted by the community. The route between Oak Bay Avenue, and Oak Bay High School and the Oak Bay Recreation Centre is one example.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> <li>PLANNING</li> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create new or improve existing outdoor gathering places around the community that can become focal points for public events and informal gatherings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and celebrate outdoor improvements at Oak Bay High School.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TO BE DETERMINED</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the trails map to highlight locations of public washrooms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider installing public washrooms in popular areas, such as Cattle Point and McNeill Bay.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to implement the recommendations of the <i>Active Transportation Strategy</i> with regard to establishing new public pathways and trails, and improving the condition of existing routes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> <li>PLANNING</li> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure trails around Henderson Park are well maintained and amenities such as benches and public washrooms are available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to widen the sidewalk along Esplanade and provide an accessible connection from Willows Beach to Cattle Point and Uplands Park.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> </ul>

## Transportation

Proposed Strategies & Actions	Suggested Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply universal design standards to address accessibility issues around bus stops, and provide appropriate amenities, such as benches, shelter, lighting, garbage bins, and signage and route/schedule information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> <li>PLANNING</li> <li>BCTRANSIT</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with BC Transit to assess transit access to popular destinations within the District, such as schools, recreation centres, and shopping areas; and advocate for introduction of a community bus program to serve local routes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> <li>BCTRANSIT</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to BC Transit to enhance nighttime bus service to serve seniors, youth, and those who do not drive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> <li>BCTRANSIT</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to BC Transit for enhanced HandyDART service to meet growing demand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> <li>BCTRANSIT</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage and promote volunteer driving programs in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TO BE DETERMINED</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review current sidewalk standards to anticipate the increasing use of motorized mobility scooters, and ensure sidewalks will safely accommodate riders and pedestrians.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify priority locations for additional bicycle parking in public areas, and install new bike racks; amend the Zoning Bylaw to include bicycle parking requirements for multi-unit residential, commercial, and institutional uses to provide more bicycle parking and end of trip facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> <li>PLANNING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify priority locations, and assess the feasibility of installing cyclist-controlled intersection buttons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ENGINEERING</li> </ul>

## Housing

Proposed Strategies & Actions	Suggested Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify housing needs and gaps, and define strategies to address local needs, and enhance the availability of affordable and inclusive housing. Examine the options for both market and non-market housing along the continuum from independent housing forms (duplexes, townhouses, secondary suites, co-housing) to supported living and long-term care. Consider zoning amendments or other mechanisms that may facilitate an appropriate range of housing options.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLANNING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider implementing requirements for new multi-unit developments to ensure a certain proportion of Adaptable Housing units are provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLANNING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize Housing Agreements (voluntary agreement between the District and a property owner) during the approval process for new housing development to secure affordable/special needs housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLANNING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Zoning Bylaw to ensure accessibility modifications to existing homes, such as ramps, are not precluded by zoning regulations, such as lot coverage and setbacks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLANNING &amp; BUILDING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that information on programs offered by other levels of government is available to older homeowners and renters, including Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER), Home Adaptations for Independence (HAFI), and Property Tax Deferment Program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FINANCE</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the development industry, non-profit housing providers, BC Housing, and Island Health to facilitate development of additional housing (for example, rental, subsidized, independent, assisted living, care facilities) that will fit the neighbourhood context, and meet the evolving needs of Oak Bay residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLANNING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore options for incentives to encourage development of more housing units for older adults, such as reduced parking requirements or density bonusing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLANNING</li> </ul>

## Respect & Inclusion

Proposed Strategies & Actions	Suggested Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support programs and initiatives in the community that encourage respectful behaviour, combat ageism, and prevent elder abuse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> <li>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop events and activities to encourage community participation in days recognizing youth, families, and older residents, such as: Family Day, International Youth Day, International Day of Older Persons, Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Dementia Awareness Week.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> <li>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize the <i>Alzheimer Society of BC Dementia-Friendly Communities Toolkit for Local Government</i> to augment the Age-friendly Action Plan, and help find ways to specifically support those with dementia, as well as their families and caregivers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ALZHEIMER SOCIETY</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop programs to bring youth and older adults together, in order to foster intergenerational interaction, mutual understanding, and respect.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> <li>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate a proactive approach to creating an age-friendly culture in the District by providing education and training to all District staff in order to promote respectful, effective engagement with people who are hard of hearing or have communication challenges, and ensure everyone has the opportunity to express their thoughts and ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TO BE DETERMINED</li> </ul>

## Social Participation

Proposed Strategies & Actions	Suggested Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to expand the rich variety of Recreation Oak Bay programs geared towards healthy active living and social interaction for older adults to meet growing demands.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support the efforts of Oak Bay Volunteer Services Society, and other community groups and organizations offering outreach, education, and social engagement opportunities to older residents in Oak Bay.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CORPORATE SERVICES</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage community organizations to promote opportunities for youth to be involved in social activities with other adults as program assistants, guest speakers/ instructors, or as active participants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TO BE DETERMINED</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and promote spaces in the community (both indoor and outdoor) that may be used as meeting spaces, particularly in the Estevan Village area, and in North Oak Bay.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>

## Civic Participation & Employment

Proposed Strategies & Actions	Suggested Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to encourage participation from both youth and older adults on Council advisory bodies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CORPORATE SERVICES</li> <li>DEPARTMENTS THAT LIAISE WITH COUNCIL</li> <li>COUNCIL ADVISORY BODIES</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide information about federal, provincial and municipal elections and promote opportunities, such as free bus fares on voting day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CORPORATE SERVICES</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote opportunities for education and training in the business and broader community that respond to the issues facing older adults.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLANNING</li> <li>BUSINESS COMMUNITY</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Oak Bay Business Improvement Association (BIA) to introduce an age-friendly business program, with a recognizable brand and certification process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLANNING</li> <li>OAK BAY BIA/ BUSINESS COMMUNITY</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate self-employment among older adults by identifying and addressing potential barriers in District regulations (for example, zoning or business licensing).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLANNING</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage partnerships between the School District and Oak Bay High School with local organizations to create opportunities for students to receive credit for volunteering with older adults in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OAK BAY HIGH SCHOOL</li> <li>OAK BAY BIA</li> <li>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the School District to identify opportunities for community members to share their skills, knowledge, and experiences with local students as mentors, guest speakers/ instructors, club sponsors, or in other ways.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OAK BAY HIGH SCHOOL</li> <li>OAK BAY BIA</li> <li>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to recognize the important contributions and achievements of older adults and youth in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COMMITTEES/ ORGANIZATIONS RECOGNIZING YOUTH &amp; OLDER ADULTS</li> </ul>

## Communication & Information

Proposed Strategies & Actions	Suggested Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When updating the District’s website, consider developing a seniors resource page to provide links to information and services for older adults, their families, and caregivers. The page could link to relevant resources, such as: Recreation Oak Bay facilities and program schedules, libraries, Oak Bay Volunteer Services, Island Health, BC Transit, BC Housing, BC Seniors Advocate, United Way, Alzheimer Society of BC, faith organizations, and local service clubs. The page should be monitored and updated regularly to ensure links are active, and reflect a wide range of services and supports available in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CORPORATE SERVICES</li> <li>ORGANIZATIONS, AGENCIES &amp; SERVICE PROVIDERS</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote information about programs offered by other levels of government, including Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) Home Adaptations for Independence (HAFI), and the Property Tax Deferral program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TO BE DETERMINED</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to partner with community organizations, local service providers, and regional and provincial agencies to organize a service fair designed to showcase the range of services and resources available to older residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> <li>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize a wide variety of methods to communicate with residents, including bulletin boards, Oak Bay News, radio stations, local TV, and scheduled District mail-outs, such as property tax statements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CORPORATE SERVICES</li> <li>ALL DEPARTMENTS ISSUING PUBLIC INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When seeking public input and feedback on District initiatives, identify and implement effective ways to encourage participation from target groups, such as youth, new residents, and different cohorts of older adults.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> <li>PLANNING</li> <li>ENGINEERING</li> <li>CORPORATE SERVICES</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the need to provide hearing assists in Council Chambers to ensure all interested residents are able to follow Council proceedings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CORPORATE SERVICES</li> <li>FINANCE</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider livestream webcasting of Council meetings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CORPORATE SERVICES</li> <li>FINANCE</li> </ul>

## Community Support & Health

Proposed Strategies & Actions	Suggested Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to expand the rich variety of Recreation Oak Bay programs geared towards healthy active living, promoting social interaction between older adults.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to expand recreational facilities and social programs in North Oak Bay to enhance access to these services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TO BE DETERMINED</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support community organizations, such as Oak Bay Volunteer Services, service clubs, and other groups providing support for residents in the community through funding opportunities, cross-promotion, and other means.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TO BE DETERMINED</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for opportunities to partner with Island Health, BC Housing, Alzheimer Society of BC, University of Victoria, and other agencies and organizations to offer education and training on health, wellness, and communication topics that will be valuable for older adults, their families, and caregivers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TO BE DETERMINED</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage a safe and caring community by providing information about how to look out for elderly neighbours through residents associations, Block Watch programs, faith communities, and community organizations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TO BE DETERMINED</li> </ul>





# Acknowledgments

## Age-Friendly Working Group

Janet Barclay, *Recreation Oak Bay*

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Tom Croft, *Oak Bay Councillor*

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*All images provided by Recreation Oak Bay,  
unless otherwise identified.*

## Stakeholder Groups

Baptist Housing Society

Beacon Community Services

BC Transit

Community Association of Oak Bay

Dementia Society of BC

Emmanuel Baptist Church

Hampshire Hill Neighbourhood Association

Island Health

North Henderson Residents Association

Oak Bay Art Club

Oak Bay Business Improvement Association

Oak Bay Community Artist Society

Oak Bay High School,

Neighbourhood Learning Centre

Oak Bay Kiwanis Housing Society

Oak Bay Rotary Club

Oak Bay Seniors Activity Society

Oak Bay United Church

Oak Bay Volunteer Services Society

St. Mary's Church





