

AGE FRIENDLY AND ACCESSABILITY TRACKER

<u>Item</u>	<u>Recommendation in Action plan</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>	<u>Status</u>
5.1	5.1 Develop volunteer programs to combat social isolation of seniors - This is offered through the umbrella of services of Better at Home, the challenge has been with gathering volunteers who are interested in providing this service: Staff promote Better at Home's search for volunteers through City media channels.	Oct 3, 2024: Volunteers have been recruited. A new program will be rolling out in November regarding social isolation. Friendly telephone calls and visiting. Community coffee have been taking place, an increase in the new year. A goal once more volunteers acquired to include groceries.	<u>Oct 31, 2024 BAH update:</u> BAH now offers Friendly Phone Calls/Visits with seniors by way of volunteers (overseen by the program coordinator) – Current BAH coordinator has been recruiting volunteers, with 2 fully on-boarded & 3 additional waiting satisfactory CRC.
5.2	5.2 Reading Buddies - School district has a one-to-one reading program. The School Board could be encouraged to host an information session at Gillis house or Florentine to advise seniors what opportunities are available for volunteering:	Jana Heffernan to contact the School Board to ask if there a want or need for the City to assist in recruiting volunteers for this program through City media channels.	
5.4	5.4 Sharing local knowledge - the City library or museum could coordinate a speaker series for the fall or winter season. Ideas included video tape locals sharing their stories and create data base to be shared on social media.	Staff to speak with the NV Museum Coordinator to encourage development of such a program	<u>Oct 31, 2024 BAH Update:</u> BAH would be interest in partnering for hosting such events. Starting in December 2024, BAH will be hosting a Saturday Seniors' Social at ICS (on the first 3 Saturday's each month). There is space for knowledge sharing – in person & online.
5.6	5.6 After school work programs - Better at Home is implementing a program to provide grocery pick up for seniors. Meal prep and delivery is not a program that is being developed by Better at Home, the Committee inquired if NVIT catering students could provide meals for seniors.	The city list this as a possible future grant initiative. the Committee inquired if NVIT catering students could provide meals for seniors.	<u>Oct 31, 2024 BAH Update:</u> As the Friendly Phone Calls/ Visits program develops, the next plan is to investigate the need for & most efficient ay to develop a grocery shopping/delivery program, which would be largely done by volunteers. The Saturday Seniors' Social will be providing light lunch. There will be an option to eat at the event or take the food to go.

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5.7	National Seniors Day - proclaim annually and cultural session by seniors association. Consider establishing a budget for 2022 for the Seniors Centre and Committee to organize an event and explore options for approaching other organizations to develop programs for specific events.	Bring forward to Council during the next grant in aid budget session.	<u>Oct 31, 2024 BAH Update:</u> BAH is interested in collaborating if events/community awareness take place.
5.8	Community garden in central business district - the City is exploring parklets and vertical gardens.		
26-Jul-21	Ms. Ava Dean brought forward information on Provincial services available for isolated seniors; the documents will be circulated to members to investigate which service options would benefit Merritt residents	The Committee suggested that the Men's Shed would be beneficial for elderly men who wish to continue power tool hobbies as they downsize their living arrangements.	
4.1	Ensure events are held in venues that adhere to accessibility standards.	Establishment of a Festival Society which includes a member of the Age Friendly & Accessibility Committee could bring an accessibility lens to the planning process.	
4.3	Partner with local professionals and students to develop senior based affordable social programs. Suggestions included:	Bring the First Nation population into to the process as they have valuable contributions that can be made. Opportunity to further expand some of the offerings in the recreation guides and provide the programs through City facilities led by other organizations to keep the costs down. Seniors centre needs upgrading to	

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		<p>build on its current mandate, parking would also need to be addressed. Reach out to the fitness centres, Sikh community and Arts Council to provide programs to seniors.</p>	
26-Jul-21	<p>CFDC/NV Chamber of Commerce be encouraged to organize a convention spotlighting public services to senior's fair at the Civic Centre.</p>		
4.4	<p>4.4 Establish educational programs for service providers to learn more about geriatric care.</p>	<p>The Committee suggested this action item would dovetail well into the annual Health Fair.</p>	
3.2	<p>3.2 Promote the creation of new affordable housing units or innovative housing forms through incentives.</p>		
3.4	<p>3.4 Provide assistance for home renovation and adaptation through grants; There is a Federal program providing a grant for a home energy efficiency report and low-interest loans to complete identified adaptations. Tax incentives are available for the completion of adaptation renovations. The City will be implementing the STEP program later this year as a provincial requirement, the building bylaw will be dovetailed with this update.</p>		
3.5	<p>3.5 Create and distribute an Aging-In-Place checklist. Options will be presented at the next Committee meeting.</p>		

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3.6	Promote the conversion of unoccupied space above shops into housing units. The Official Community Plan has created mixed-use zoning which addresses this action item.		
3.7	Incentivize the creation of mixed-use developments. The Tax Revitalization Policy can be revamped to target residential redevelopment.		
3.8	Consider partnerships with NVIT for affordable maintenance and renovation services. Better-at-Home programs include general maintenance such as painting or changing light bulbs on a volunteer basis. Ms. Dean volunteered to speak with NVIT to encourage the establishment of a program to provide general maintenance to seniors and the disabled in the City	<p><u>Oct 31, 2024</u>: Better at Homes does not have specific program for general maintenance. However, if a Friendly Visit is taking place and the senior requests assistance with something that the volunteer deems safe and is comfortable to support with, there is a possibility of support that way.</p> <p>It was noted that the provider of a service and a local association should be the two who partner on such a program; the City can apply for funding where other partners are not available to apply for the grant.</p> <p>Sep 27, 2021: NVIT is willing to include community projects for seniors in the curriculum as they fit within the program, instructors make the final decision on the suitability of projects.</p>	<p><u>Oct 31, 2024</u>: BAH Program Coordinator is working on preparing a list of community resources & businesses(including home -based) & areas of expertise (ie: if a senior needs gutters cleaned) – to be able to refer seniors to call.</p>
1.3	Pedestrian crossings: An improvement program is in place to create more audible crossings and signals.	<p>May 31, 2021: Nicola Avenue Crosswalk timing was extended. Section 4.4 of the Merritt Active Transportation Plan: Review and update pedestrian crossing times at</p>	

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		intersections to provide adequate crossing time for all users. This includes reviewing signal phasing and considering the needs of all users, including those with reduced mobility.	
1.4	Cycling infrastructure	<p>The West Merritt Active Transportation Plan grant application has been submitted to the province for creation of a circular path in the City; when the route is finalized it will be brought forward to the Committee for review.</p> <p>Appendix D of the Merritt Active Transportation Plan: Action 1.3: Implement a complete and connected city-wide cycling network for people of all ages and abilities through a phased implementation approach.</p>	
1.5	Parks, pathways, and open space connections: Provide better access to open spaces and park areas, increase the park areas, and improve path networks.	Appendix D of the Merritt Active Transportation Plan: 1.2: Implement a complete and connected city-wide pedestrian network through a phased implementation approach.	
1.6	Intersection connections:	<p>Widen corner letdowns to improve alignment with crosswalks.</p> <p>Ensure that snowplows do not leave sidewalks and alleyway crossings blocked when clearing roads.</p> <p>Remove snow and ice in a timely and regular manner from letdowns</p>	
1.7	<p>Rest areas: create an inventory of street infrastructure and identify areas of deficiency.</p> <p>Promote a bench dedication program to increase seating infrastructure.</p>	<p>Consider incorporating seating in the proposed Active Transportation Plan section between Diamond Vale and the City centre.</p> <p>Increase the number of benches at bus stops.</p>	

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1.9	Branding: Develop an age-friendly branding package to identify businesses which have implemented age-friendly initiatives.	Research current initiatives in other communities, consider incentives for promotion such as GIS mapping, digital or physical stickers or business license discounts.	
1.10	Commercial/retail renovations:	<p>Research a cost-effective means of installing automatic door openers and possible grants for installation by businesses. This would be something that the City could help promote; installation and grant applications must be completed by businesses or building owners.</p> <p>Encourage outside seating areas as part of larger programs and incentives for businesses to get involved in improving accessibility.</p> <p>Create a pamphlet for businesses to highlight the benefits of creating accessible locations.</p> <p>Consider adopting a bylaw requiring building owners to install automatic door openers.</p>	
1.11	Promote commercial activity in the evenings: Initiative is in line with economic initiatives for open and accessible businesses. Council is reviewing the OCP to facilitate mixed use in the downtown core which would assist in revitalizing the downtown core area.	During COVID local restaurants were encouraged to build on street patio spaces in parking spots.	
08-Feb-21	Elder abuse and senior's advocacy on reserve land; and,		

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1.1	Implement a voluntary snow removal program (i.e. Snow Angels) as incentive for able-bodied residents to help others in clearing snow.	Program operated for two years with paid contractor, has now ceased due to lack of funds. Investigation in 2024 for implementation of volunteer program was not well received.	
	Recognition of the isolation being experienced by seniors in ethnic communities.		
Completed			
27-Sep-21	Public Service Directory	The local news paper already runs one	
5.3	5.3 Locate child minding facilities within seniors facilities -	the Committee determined it was best left to facility coordinators to determine the individual needs of facilities.	
5.5	5.5 Increase participation of aging residents on committees;	the Committee determined this has been accomplished through the establishment of the Age Friendly and Accessibility Committee.	
26-Jul-21	ACTION: Set up a template to develop the scope of projects.		
3.1	3.1 Lobby for subsidized assisted living in Merritt.	BC Housing has partnered with Merritt in this process, there have been successes, and a variety of options will be coming forward in the future	
29-Mar-21	Accessible Taxi Service	Program Merritt does not have a HandyDART service but does have an OnDemand system.	