



Age-friendly Assessment Community Workshop

Archie Browning Sports Centre, Thursday, April 28

Summary, Highlights, and OCP Policy Direction

Cross cutting themes/attributes

The following attributes were mentioned frequently and across most of the age-friendly themes:

- Inclusive
- Accessible
- Autonomy
- Collaboration
- Respect
- Local
- Flexibility
- Adaptability
- Inter-generational
- Functionality

1. HEALTH SERVICES

Now: the current state of affairs

Health services provided by Island Health feel distant and bureaucratic; family doctors are not available in town and there are excessive clinic waits. Ambulance and paramedics are excellent.

Wow: future aspiration

We have locally accessible health care and services without excessive waiting. There is an adequate number of nurses and general practitioner family doctors in town. Seniors have greater autonomy in their decision making about health care.

How: actions to achieve our desired future

- Simple treatment procedures should be offered efficiently and effectively locally in clinics
- Attract family doctors and nurse practitioners to practice in town
- Expand Better at Home service for the intermediate, more healthy seniors

OCP policy direction

- Encourage and provide for local medical services (general practitioner doctors and nurses) within commercial/service nodes
- Ensure sufficient medical office zoning is in place in commercial/service nodes
- Require or incentivize medical offices to locate in the redeveloped village centre
- Partner with Island Health to attract nurse practitioners and doctors to set up practice in Esquimalt

2. COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Now: the current state of affairs

Single females are particularly in need of social support. Home delivered meals are no longer available. Communication of information about supports is lacking. The Better at Home service program is not reaching enough people. Isolation is a problem for older adults.

Wow: future aspiration

We have full access to information and resources. Social settings for community events are fully inclusive for all ages. Health care workers are valued and well paid. City planning is inclusive.

How: actions to achieve our desired future

- Conduct a drive to sign up volunteers
- Improve access to community support information

OCP policy direction

Promote formal and informal social support initiatives.

Provide age-friendly information about social supports

3. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION & RECREATION

Wow: future aspiration

Affordable social activities, including recreation facilities, are available.

How: actions to achieve our desired future

- Design inter-generational social & recreation activities
- Provide funding for recreation and gym memberships

OCP policy direction

Discussion item: topics raised here are perhaps more appropriately addressed via the Parks & Recreation Strategy.

3. RESPECT & CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Now: the current state of affairs

Culturally there is a lack of respect for and acceptance of older adults.

“Ageism” is evident. There is a lack of respect for care-givers by their employers: e.g. getting time off, paying for care-giving.

Wow: future aspiration

Older adults are engaged in giving back to the community. Men are as generally engaged as women.

How: actions to achieve our desired future

- Better pay for care-givers
- Increase funding for public “care-giving” sector
- Lobby for more time off to care for older adults
- Make it easy to participate in all civic activities
- Educate people on ageism and how to avoid it

OCP policy direction

- Consultation includes all ages
- Use inclusive language in policy and regulation
- Eliminate “ageism,” either explicit or implicit in policy and regulatory language

4. OUTDOOR SPACE, BUILDINGS, LAND USE

Now: the current state of affairs

There are uneven, discontinuous or absent sidewalks, there is too much street parking (NOTE: gain deeper understanding about what this really means), and a lack of facilities such as good family restaurants and community meeting rooms.

Wow: future aspiration

A more complete community with family restaurants, community meeting rooms, and accessible public spaces with regard to hearing, seeing, and walking. It is possible to age safely.

How: actions to achieve our desired future

- Attract a 4 to 5 star hotel with a family restaurant and meeting rooms

Intelligence, Innovation, Inspiration

- Repair and maintain sidewalks so they can accommodate walkers and scooters safely
- Reduce speed limit
- Ensure Township Village has public space designated in plan with no charge for community groups
- Increase functionality of existing spaces (multi-use, example Lacrosse Box and Basketball)
- Construct more rest benches along streets and in parks where they are needed
- Relocate and disperse compost facility
- Encourage more development
- Re-zone areas for commercial that are currently residential
- Build more sidewalks & restrict parking on some streets

OCP policy direction

- Public spaces are more functional, multi-use
- “Complete street” policy, including review of speed limits on Township streets
- Review on street parking policy, including pay parking
- Composting policy
- Identify locations for full service hotel

5. MOBILITY & PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Now: the current state of affairs

Public transit has shortcomings including a lower than desirable frequency of bus service, cost of bus passes, and the disparity of 12X between subsidized and regular fares. HandyDart reservation and wait times are too long. Access to ride services for those with mobility devices (e.g. taxi) is limited

Wow: future aspiration

Transit fares are affordable for all, high frequency bus service to downtown Victoria is in place, HandyDart service is more convenient and reliable, and there is full access to ride services for those with mobility devices. Folks can get around safely and conveniently without a car. The walking environment is comprehensive, safe, and convenient.

How: actions to achieve our desired future

- Educate adults on alternate mobility and transit options
- BC Transit reinstates the 6 minute bus service frequency on Esquimalt Road for route to downtown
- Reduce the gap between subsidized and non-subsidized fares
- Taxi service provides mobility device option
- Local trolley bus service is considered

OCP policy direction

- Partner with BC Transit to:
 - create a “well served” transit community wherein all citizens are within a ¼ mile walking distance from bus service with maximum 15 minute service intervals (check with BC Transit for definition)
 - establish high frequency bus service to downtown
- Require taxi service in Esquimalt to offer service to those with mobility devices
- Establish suitable sidewalk standards and network policy. This may be accomplished incorporating or referencing principles of the Pedestrian Charter.
- Pursue more accessible taxi services via comments to the Passenger Transportation Board

6. HOUSING

Now: the current state of affairs

There is an “addiction” to the nuclear family model for housing and many older adults are socially isolated in their homes.

Wow: future aspiration

We have flexible zoning and our homes are adaptable and affordable. Our culture is moving toward extended family model and intergenerational young families are moving into the area

How: actions to achieve our desired future

- Promote greater density as people age: e.g. duplex zoning, properties zoned but non-conforming
- Promote shared housing to reduce isolation
- Provide incentives to adapt housing for aging adults
- Increase the number of assisted living units
- Increase flexibility within bylaws to suit seniors unique situation
- Amend the zoning bylaw to 3 to 4 boarders
- Allow suites within multiplexes
- Host welcome events for inter-generational families

OCP policy direction

- Promote flexible, adaptable housing, including secondary suites and accessory dwellings
- Eliminate or modify the concept of “single family” housing and support multi-generational housing
- Set policy that addresses existing non conformities to encourage infill development with duplexes and multiplex (several units) housing
- Promote or require adaptable residential home construction
- Promote affordability by supporting a reduction or elimination of unit and lot sizes
- Encourage assisted living in existing single family homes

- Encourage aging at home support through means such as:
 - Low or no fee permits for modifications
 - Loosen restrictions on ramps, etc.

7. COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

NOTE: The following actions were lifted from a table of another topic and did not include any “now” or “wow” comments.

How: actions to achieve our desired future

- Improve access to information about what is available
- Communication: how?
 - Organized senior network
 - Telephone, land lines
 - Local newspaper
 - Face-to-face
 - CHEK TV
 - bulletin boards
 - Mail-outs

OCP policy direction

It may be more appropriate to include these actions in a Township communication strategy.