

# REPORT

## *DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT*

To: Mayor W. Wright and Members of Council in Committee of the Whole      Date: June 15, 2009

From: Lisa Spitale, Director of Development Services      File: #108329

Subject: Age Friendly City Initiative – Consultation Results

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

*THAT City Council receive this report for information.*

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### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council about the Age Friendly City Initiative; the results of the consultation which was undertaken in support of this initiative; and some of the outcomes based on the consultation.

### **SUMMARY**

An age friendly city encourages active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security to enhance quality of life as people age. In practical terms, an age friendly city adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older adults with varying needs and capacities.

A key first step to developing an age friendly city is to consult with older adults to better understand their needs. To this end, older adults were engaged in an assessment process using a 'Checklist of Essential Features of Age Friendly Cities,' which was developed by the World Health Organization.

In total, 46 older adults took the time to complete and return the checklist. The average age of respondents was 72, with the range being 58 to 92. About 70% of respondents reported a disability or mobility limitation.

The checklist was organized according to the following eight areas of inquiry:

- Outdoor Spaces and Civic Facilities
- Transportation

- Housing
- Information and Communication
- Social Participation
- Civic Involvement and Volunteerism
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Health and Support Services

It should be emphasized that the City has more influence over certain areas than others but it can partner and work with other levels of government and community groups and organizations to create a more age friendly city.

### **BACKGROUND**

Similar to other municipalities in Metro Vancouver, New Westminster has an ageing population. Currently, about 13.6% of the population are 65 years or older. According to BC Stats, the percentage of the population 65 years or older will have increased to over 20% by 2031.

### **EXISTING POLICY/PRACTICE**

The City's Official Community Plan (June 15, 1998) cites that older adults "make up a significant segment of New Westminster's population." It also contains the following goal: "Monitor the needs of an ageing population and advocate that these local needs be addressed by senior levels of government or by relevant agencies." Additionally, it contains the following policy direction: "Continue to support independent living for older adults and 'ageing in place' housing choices."

### **ANALYSIS**

Based on the complete consultation results (see appendix #1), the following summary highlights some of the key findings in the eight areas of inquiry:

#### Outdoor Spaces and Civic Facilities:

The vast majority of respondents (78%) felt that services were appropriately grouped and accessible, especially in the Sapperton and Uptown neighbourhoods. Regarding civic facilities and programs, they were generally seen as accessible both from a distance and mobility perspective; however, several respondents did comment on the perceived lack of community, leisure and/or recreational amenities in the Downtown, Queensborough and West End neighbourhoods.

The majority of respondents (65%) felt that public parks and open spaces were sufficient to meet the needs of older adults. A far lower percentage (48%) felt that public parks and open spaces were clean, pleasant and safe. Cited concerns included inadequate lighting, overgrown or poorly maintained vegetation, people loitering, and the presence of graffiti.

Transportation:

Although not probed as part of the questions, a number of respondents made positive comments regarding the pedestrian-orientation of the City, particularly with regard to the Sapperton and Uptown neighbourhoods.

Regarding public transportation, respondents were not as complementary. While cost and coverage were cited as strengths; many respondents identified concerns, including: difficulty accessing transit information, especially print; inadequate priority seating on transit vehicles; limited number of bus shelters; overcrowding on SkyTrain vehicles, even during off-peak hours; poor cleanliness and safety at SkyTrain stations; and poor maintenance of elevators and escalators at SkyTrain stations.

Housing:

Less than half of respondents (46%) felt that there was sufficient affordable housing in areas that are safe and close to services. An even lower percentage (33%) felt that there was sufficient affordable housing for frail and disabled older adults. Cited concerns included the lack of assisted living units; the limited supply of ground-oriented housing, including garden apartments and town homes; and the low vacancy rates and high rents for market rental housing.

Information and Communication:

About half of respondents (48%) felt that there was regular and widespread distribution of information and a coordinated, centralized place to access information. An even lower percentage (41%) felt that one-on-one information from trusted individuals is available to isolated and marginalized older adults. A number of respondents felt that insufficient attention is paid to this population, with some attributing this oversight to cutbacks in home support and outreach services.

### Social Participation:

Social participation and support were seen as being strongly connected to good health and wellbeing throughout life. The majority of respondents felt that there was adequate programming and accessible information to facilitate social participation. In particular, Century House was frequently cited as a welcoming place that offers a range of programs geared to the abilities, interests and needs of older adults.

Concern was expressed about isolated and marginalized older adults, as just over half of respondents (52%) felt that there was consistent outreach to this population. Several respondents made suggestions to enhance inclusion and participation, including buddy, friendly caller and transport programs. As one respondent stated: "It is a lot easier to make the first step if someone is there to make it with you."

### Civic Involvement and Volunteerism:

The vast majority of respondents (76%) felt that there were adequate opportunities for older adults to get involved in civic affairs and volunteer in their community. A number of respondents referred to the many civic committees, including Multiculturalism, Seniors Advisory, and Special Services and Access. Others cited the many volunteer opportunities, including the Century House Association and the Seniors Services Society.

### Respect and Inclusion:

The vast majority of respondents (83%) felt that community-wide settings, activities and events attract all generations by accommodating age-specific needs and preferences. Many respondents cited events in which they like to attend with family members, including the Hyack Festival, the Queensborough Fall Fair and the Santa Claus Parade.

Lower percentages of respondents felt that service staff were generally courteous and helpful towards older people (69%) and that products and services suited their varying needs and preferences (54%). An even lower percentage of respondents (46%) felt that older adults are visible in the media and are depicted positively and without stereotyping.

### Health and Support Services:

The majority of respondents (61%) felt that health and support services were conveniently located and accessible by all modes of transport. A far lower percentage of respondents (26%) felt that there was an adequate range of health and support services that promote, maintain and restore health. Several respondents cited increasing privatization of health services such as home support, which may limit access for those living on fixed or low incomes. Other respondents emphasized either the lack of certain

types of services such as assisted living or the difficulty in accessing information about the range of services which are available.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The City has been very active in accessing grants to enhance service provision and to improve access to information for older adults in New Westminster. In the past year, the City has realized \$60,000 in non-matching funding for such purposes. The City is also working closely with senior serving bodies and organizations, including the Seniors Services Task Force.

Some recent initiatives include:

- The creation of a database containing information on over 200 programs, services and supports targeting seniors.
- The development of a Seniors Directory of Services which was circulated to over 16,000 households in New Westminster.
- The staging of three “In My Back Yard Fairs: Connecting Seniors to Services” in 2008, which attracted 385 people, with a fourth fair to be held on June 13, 2009.
- The implementation of a “Wheelability Project,” which will improve mobility for older adults who are reliant on scooters, wheelchairs, walkers and other mobility aids.

In 2009/10, the City will be working with the Seniors Services Task Force on a number of possible initiatives that will benefit older adults, including:

- The Brochure Rack Project, which will facilitate the display of brochures targeting the information needs of older adults. These racks will be located in civic, community and commercial establishments.
- The Bus Buddy Needs Assessment, which will document the need for a program to assist older adults to gain the tools and confidence to travel using public transit.
- The Seniors’ Consultation Guide, which will assist City staff and other professionals to effectively engage older adults in consultation processes. Topics will include: effective communication and promotion, key contacts, scheduling, and venue choice.
- The Sharing Experiences and Knowledge Initiative, whereby older adults will conduct tours with elected officials, City staff and other professionals. The purpose will be to inform decision-makers about the challenges faced by older adults in navigating the

built environment around them. This initiative could incorporate a forum in order to share the learnings with a larger segment of the population.

### **OPTIONS**

That Council receive this report for information.

### **INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON**

The Age Friendly City Initiative will directly benefit a number of City Departments, including Development Services, Engineering, and Parks and Recreation. It will provide a database by which City staff can better understand the needs of older adults, while identifying specific barriers or challenges that can be addressed.

### **CONCLUSION**

The creation of an age friendly city in New Westminster will facilitate active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security to enhance quality of life as people age. In practical terms, structures and services will be adapted to be accessible to and inclusive of older adults with varying needs and capacities.

The creation of such a city will not just benefit older adults. Barrier-free buildings and streets enhance mobility for families with young children using strollers and people with disabilities. Safe and secure neighbourhoods allow children and women to participate in outdoor leisure and social activities.

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Approved for Presentation to Council

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## **Appendix #1: Complete Consultation Results**

### **Concept:**

An age friendly city encourages active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security to enhance quality of life as people age. In practical terms, an age friendly city adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older adults with varying needs and capacities.

An age friendly city does not just benefit older adults. Barrier-free buildings and streets enhance the mobility of families with young children using strollers and people with disabilities. Secure neighbourhoods allow children and women to participate in outdoor leisure and social activities.

### **Context:**

Similar to other municipalities in Metro Vancouver, New Westminster has an ageing population. Currently, about 13.6% of the population are 65 years or older. According BC Stats, the percentage of the population 65 years or older will have increased to over 20% by 2031.

### **Consultation:**

To explore the concept of an age friendly city for New Westminster, the City consulted with older adults to better understand their needs. To this end, they were asked to complete a 'Checklist of Essential Features of Age Friendly Cities,' which was developed by the World Health Organization as part of its Global Age-Friendly Cities Project.

The checklist was available at Century House and the Sapperton Pensioners' Hall and was distributed as part of the Sapperton "In My Back Yard (IMBY) Fair." In total, 46 older adults took the time to complete and return the checklist. The average age of respondents was 72, with the range being from 58 to 92. About 70% of respondents reported a disability or mobility limitation.

### **Deliverables:**

The checklist was primarily intended as the basis for the development of an age friendly lens which would be used to inform planning and development in New Westminster. The results will also be shared with appropriate civic departments to address issues of a more immediate nature (e.g., inaccessible public places, potential trip hazards, etc.).

**Results:**

The checklist was organized according to the following eight areas:

- Outdoor Spaces and Civic Facilities
- Transportation
- Housing
- Information and Communication
- Social Participation
- Civic Involvement and Volunteerism
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Health and Support Services

It should be emphasized that the City has more influence over certain areas than others but it can partner and work with other community groups and organizations to create an age friendly city.

**Outdoor Spaces and Civic Facilities:**

Outdoor spaces and civic facilities have a major impact on the independence, mobility and quality of life of older adults.

Forty-eight percent of respondents felt that public parks and open spaces were clean, pleasant and safe. Public parks and open spaces that received high ratings included Moody and Queens Parks, while ones receiving lower ratings included Albert Crescent Park, Glenbrook Ravine and Hyack Square. A number of respondents expressed concern about the safety of public parks and open spaces, especially in the Downtown and in the late afternoon and evening. Cited concerns included inadequate lighting, overgrown or poorly maintained vegetation, people loitering, and the presence of graffiti.

Sixty-five percent of respondents felt that public parks and open spaces were sufficient to meet the needs of older adults. The one exception was in the Downtown, where public parks and open spaces were seen as being deficient. Generally speaking, respondents wanted smaller parks closer to where they live. They also wanted parks where they can spend time and recreate with their grandchildren.

Twenty-six percent of respondents felt that sidewalks were well-maintained and free of obstacles. As such, the majority of respondents felt that improvements could be made. Cited concerns included lack of curb cuts at intersections; narrow sidewalks; presence of newspaper boxes and sandwich boards; raised sidewalks in the vicinity of trees; and the use of decorative pavers which can present a trip hazard. A number of respondents also

expressed concern about the lack of outdoor seating, which was cited as a necessity for many older adults given the steep topography.

Eighty-three percent of respondents felt that pedestrian crossings were sufficient in number and strategically located. Of those respondents that commented, the most often cited concern was the lack of lit crosswalks which facilitate detection during inclement weather and at night. Several respondents emphasized the need for traffic calming measures including curb extensions and pedestrian islands to reduce the width of larger streets and to provide safe 'refuges.' The vast majority of respondents felt that drivers gave way to pedestrians at pedestrian crossings; however, driver distraction was cited as a potential hazard, particularly with regard to the use of cellular phones.

Civic facilities were generally seen as accessible both from a distance and mobility perspective; however, several respondents did comment on the lack of community, leisure and/or recreational facilities in the Downtown, Queensborough and West End. Regarding accessibility, there were a number of comments regarding the inadequate size of the elevators at City Hall and the Police Department and the lack of non-slip surfaces at the entries to many civic buildings. Another identified concern was the lack of directional signage oriented to pedestrians, which would assist older adults with way finding.

Seventy-eight percent of respondents felt that services were appropriately grouped and accessible, especially in the Sapperton and Uptown neighbourhoods. A number of respondents did cite the lack of services, especially those to meet daily needs, in the Downtown, Queensborough and West End. Several respondents emphasized the importance of locating seniors housing in close proximity to services, including medical and retail, as well as to public transit.

#### Transportation:

Transportation, including accessible and affordable public transit, is a key factor influencing active ageing. Being able to freely move about the community influences civic and social participation and facilitates access to health and support services.

Although not probed as part of the questions, many respondents made positive comments regarding the pedestrian-orientation of the City, particularly with regard to Sapperton and the Uptown. It was noted that many parts of the City are easy and safe to walk and that they offer pleasant environments in which to appreciate nature, enjoy heritage and shop. It was felt that these attributes should be built upon.

Regarding public transit, respondents were not as complimentary. While cost and coverage were cited as strengths, as was driver etiquette; many respondents commented on the lack of conveniences and information. Regarding the former, the limited number of bus shelters was a major issue. Other cited concerns included inadequate priority seating on transit vehicles; lack of benches or seating areas at transit stops and stations; and poor maintenance of elevators and escalators. As for information, many respondents stated that it was difficult to access print information (given that the vast majority of information was now available on-line). Several respondents suggested that more information should be available on transit vehicles and posted at transit stops.

The majority of respondents had a negative perception of SkyTrain, with several stating that they avoided this service unless absolutely necessary. Cited concerns included cleanliness and safety of stations and vehicle overcrowding, including during non-peak hours. Several respondents reported that they had observed illegal activities in the vicinity of SkyTrain and that they perceived security to be inadequate or non-existent.

Regarding other transportation options, respondents emphasized the importance of HandyDART and volunteer transportation services but felt that were inflexible and under-resourced. Several respondents commented that such services usually give priority to medical appointments and are difficult to book for social outings and shopping. They are also generally not available during evenings and weekends. As for taxis, only 22% of respondents felt that they were accessible and affordable, and that drivers were courteous and helpful. Several respondents stated that taxi drivers should take customer service courses, including seminars related to ageing.

More than half of respondents indicated that they no longer drive. Of those that commented on the road network, most felt that it was in good condition and that traffic flows were well regulated. Several respondents reported that they only drive during off-peak hours and on weekends. Several other respondents commented on the aggressiveness of drivers and that the majority of drivers do not obey posted speed limits. Seventy-two percent of respondents emphasized the need for driver education and refresher courses for all drivers, including specially designed courses for older drivers.

#### Housing:

Housing influences the independence and quality of life of older adults. Important factors include affordability, design and location and the ability to age in place.

Forty-six percent of respondents felt that there was sufficient affordable housing in areas that are safe and close to services and the rest of the community. An even lower percentage (33%) felt that there was sufficient affordable housing for frail and disabled older adults. Cited concerns included the lack of assisted living units; the limited supply

of ground oriented housing, including garden apartments and town homes; and the low vacancy rates and high rents for market rental housing. Some respondents also cited the ageing stock of non-market and rental housing and the lack of adaptable housing which would enable older adults to age in place.

Twenty-six percent of respondents felt that there was sufficient and affordable home maintenance and support services. It was emphasized that such services are essential to enabling older adults to maintain their independence and live in the neighbourhoods of their choice. A number of respondents cited the privatization of home support services, with several noting that they could no longer access such services due to their high cost. Additionally, some respondents called for government grants to enable them to adapt and modify their homes as they age and to upgrade heating and hot water systems to reduce energy costs.

#### Information and Communication:

Staying connected with events and people and receiving timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing.

Forty-eight percent of respondents felt that there was regular and widespread distribution of information and a coordinated, centralized place to access information. A number of respondents cited information sources such as the Clarion, the two local newspapers and the Seniors Services Society. Regarding the former, it was felt that it was more geared to meeting the leisure and recreational needs of older adults. A number of respondents also cited the “In My Back Yard (IMBY) Fairs: Connecting Seniors to Services,” noting that they facilitated access to a range of information and enabled participants to receive immediate answers to their questions. Several respondents also cited the soon to be released Seniors Directory of Services.

Forty-one percent of respondents felt that one-on-one information from trusted individuals is available to isolated and marginalized older adults. A number of respondents felt that insufficient attention is paid to this population, with some attributing this oversight to cutbacks in home support and other outreach services. Cited groups that were identified as being most at-risk were men, newcomers who do not speak English, and older adults who live alone. Regarding the former, several respondents stated that men have more limited social support networks and are reluctant to seek out help. As for better serving this population, suggestions included a buddy program and expanded outreach. As for the latter, several respondents referred to the Home Library Service.

Social Participation:

Social participation and social support are strongly connected to good health and wellbeing throughout life. Participating in cultural, leisure, recreational, social and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with family, allows older adults to continue to exercise their competence, gain respect, and maintain or establish caring and supportive relationships.

Fifty-four percent of respondents felt that civic facilities and venues are conveniently located, accessible and easily reached by public transit. In particular, respondents cited Century House, with many noting that it was an accessible and welcoming place that offered a range of programs geared to the abilities, interests and needs of older adults. Respondents felt that other civic facilities and venues were more difficult to reach by public transit and that they only offered limited programming for older adults. Several respondents called for more programming for older adults in Queensborough.

Seventy-four percent of respondents felt that there was good information about activities and events to facilitate social participation. Many respondents referred to the Active Living Guide, the Clarion and the Queensborough Times. A lower percentage (52%) felt that there was consistent outreach to include older adults at risk of social isolation. Several respondents made suggestions to enhance inclusion and participation, including buddy, friendly caller and transport programs. As one respondent stated: "It is a lot easier to make that first step if someone is there to make it with you."

Civic Involvement and Volunteerism:

Opportunities to become involved and to make a meaningful contribution provide many benefits both to the individual and to the recipient community. For the individual, benefits can include a sense of purpose and self-worth, connectedness to others, and feelings of belonging.

Seventy-six percent of respondents felt that there were adequate opportunities for older adults to get involved in civic affairs and volunteer in their community. A number of respondents referred to the many civic committees, including Multiculturalism, Seniors Advisory, Special Services and Access, etc. Others cited the many volunteer opportunities, including the Century House Association and the Seniors Services Society. Several respondents referred to the ageing Baby Boom generation and the significant contribution that they could make to the community. It was noted that this generation appears to be less willing to get involved and that a strategy should be developed which speaks to their needs and interests as potential volunteers.

A number of respondents did not feel that their opinions were actively solicited in the making of decisions, especially where they had a vested interest. Several respondents expressed gratitude at being involved in the Age Friendly City Initiative and Finding Home, in which older adults gathered information which could inform decision-making. It was noted that the City of New Westminster and Fraser Health often do not go out of their way to involve older adults. For example, it was emphasized that most public meetings are held during the evening hours when older adults are reluctant to attend as many are day-oriented and many are reluctant to venture out after dark. Others have mobility challenges that can make involvement difficult or impossible, depending on the venue. Several respondents called for more outreach, in which those seeking direction come to where older adults congregate or live.

#### Respect and Social Inclusion:

While many older adults felt respected, recognized and included, others experienced a lack of consideration in the community, in the family and in using services. This ‘clash’ can be explained in terms of a changing society and behavioural norms, lack of contact between generations, and misconceptions about ageing and older adults. The extent to which older adults participate in the civic, economic and social life of the community is closely linked to their experiences of respect and social inclusion.

Sixty-nine percent of respondents felt that service staff were generally courteous and helpful towards older adults and 54% of respondents felt that products and services suited their varying needs and preferences. Several respondents cited commercial establishments in which they felt that staff provided exceptional service, including transporting groceries to their car. Other respondents cited ‘seniors’ days, in which older adults receive a discount and displays and promotions target their needs.

Forty-six percent of respondents felt that older adults are visible in the media and are depicted positively and without stereotyping. A number of respondents, while generally complimentary of the local newspapers, felt that they could do more to profile older adults and the significant contributions they are making to the community. It was felt that this increased exposure would raise awareness about volunteer opportunities, while positively shaping people’s perceptions about ageing.

Eighty-three percent of respondents felt that community-wide settings, activities and events attract all generations by accommodating age-specific needs and preferences. Many respondents cited events in which they like to participate with their family members, including Family Days, the Hyack Festival, the Queensborough Fall Fair and the Santa Claus Parade. Regarding community-wide settings, a number of respondents called for more parks in which different generations can recreate together. For example, locating playgrounds in close proximity to seating areas or as part of plazas.

### Health and Support Services:

Health and support services are vital to maintaining the health and independence of older adults in the community.

Only 26% of respondents felt that there were an adequate range of community and health service that promote, maintain and restore health. Several respondents cited increasing privatization of health services such as home support, which may limit access for those living on fixed or low incomes. Other respondents emphasized either the lack of certain types of services such as assisted living or the difficulty in accessing information about the range of services which are available. Regarding the latter, several respondents called for more resource and information fairs, similar to the In My Back Yard (IMBY) Fairs, which target the needs of older adults.

A number of respondents felt that there were some exceptional community services in the City, including Century House, the New Westminster Public Library, and the Seniors Services Society. It was felt that these services, plus others, make a significant contribution to the quality of life of older adults. Several respondents commented on the need for a designated space or facility for older adults at the Queensborough Community Centre. Several other respondents felt that the Sapperton Pensioners' Hall could provide a wider range of programming targeting older adults. Regarding the latter, it was felt that there was a lack of services on the eastside of the City.

Sixty-one percent of respondents felt that health and support services were conveniently located and accessible by all modes of transport. Regarding neighbourhoods, Sapperton and the Uptown neighbourhoods were seen as being the most convenient and accessible, while the Downtown and Queensborough neighbourhoods were seen as being the least convenient and accessible. Regarding the latter, it was noted that many older adults have to relocate due to the lack of services. Several respondents emphasized the need for improved HandyDART service, especially with regard to social outings and shopping.

## **Verbatim Responses**

### Outdoor Spaces and Civic Buildings:

- Clean-up the old Canadian Tire property. It is home to discarded belongings, garbage and graffiti.
- Consider initiating (at least once per year) a community-wide clean-up day. We need to encourage more pride in the City.
- Ensure that any changes to Hyack Square include an accessible overpass to the Quay. The current situation is unacceptable.

- I have noticed a lot more trash blowing around on City streets. A lot of it comes from those free newspaper boxes – the newspapers get scanned and then tossed away or left lying on the seat at a bus stop. Additionally, there are fast food containers tossed away near outlets.
- Improve street cleaning around Colborne and Klute Streets and in the vicinity of the old Canadian Tire property. Additionally, maintain landscaping behind the Public Works Canada building.
- Limited places to recreate with my grandchildren in the Downtown.
- Plant more street trees along McBride Boulevard between Eighth and Tenth Avenues. This would cut down on noise and pollution.
- Presence of graffiti on buildings and in parks. This gives the impression that the place is poorly maintained and may be unsafe.
- Presence of people selling and doing drugs at Hyack Square. Such activities deter seniors from accessing the Waterfront Esplanade.
- Public toilets are inaccessible during large functions at Queens Park. There are also inadequate public toilet facilities at Moody Park and the Quay.
- Raised sidewalks along East Columbia Street in Sapperton. Given the number of seniors who access health services in the area, this is very concerning.
- Raised sidewalks on the south side of Royal Avenue between Sixth and Seventh Streets.
- The perception is that large green spaces (e.g., Moody Park) are not safe, especially in the evening. We need more neighbourhood pocket parks and mini-plazas where people can sit and enjoy their local neighbourhoods, without feeling that they are out-of-sight of possible help if problems arise. Most neighbourhoods do not have well located seating.
- There are ‘binners’ in our neighbourhood that toss a bin then walk away and leave garbage everywhere.
- There is a lack of park benches on either side of Sixth Street between Front Street and Third Avenue.
- There is a lot of construction going on in New Westminster. During my walks, I notice a lot of the construction sites do not exhibit respect for adjacent sidewalks. Often, sidewalks are damaged (by trucks driving over them) and they have construction materials protruding over the sidewalk. Surely, the City has a bylaw about this and, if yes, it should be rigorously enforced.
- Use of cobblestones at the upper entrance to the plaza of the Provincial Law Courts. This surface is extremely uneven and very slick when wet.

Transportation:

- Address issues related to safety at SkyTrain stations. Many seniors do not use this service due to fears for their safety.
- Appropriate traffic signs are in place but it is common these days for drivers not to look for them. As such, they do not see them, which means they do not obey them. It is a problem with driver behaviour rather than a problem with signage.
- Bus 154 and 155 should operate every 20 minutes.
- Bus shelters on Eighth Avenue and McBride Boulevard and on Eighth Avenue and Colborne Street.
- Bus stops should have posted information as to arrival times and connections.
- Crowded conditions on SkyTrain, including during non-peak hours.
- Crosswalk on Colborne Street is totally inadequate. Many seniors would benefit from a well demarcated and lit crosswalk.
- Difficulty in booking HandyDART, especially for non-medical reasons.
- Eliminate sandwich boards and newspaper boxes from sidewalks, as many sidewalks are already too narrow.
- Encourage City engineers to leave their comfortable offices and work with seniors to address transportation issues. Several walkabouts would provide a world of education for these engineers and would provide a forum for seniors.
- Ensure that all sidewalks have curb cuts at intersections.
- I do not feel completely safe around any SkyTrain station in the late afternoon or evening. Some station surroundings are not clean. TransLINK probably tries but some of the passengers and those who loiter around the stations are irresponsible.
- I regularly walk around or through Moody Park which has a 30 km/h speed limit on all four sides. This is also a playground zone. Nobody respects the speed limit. Police know that cabs, cars and trucks, even City and police vehicles, drive above this limit. Some drive through the zone at over 50 km/h. There is seldom enforcement or regulation.
- I think that drivers know how to drive but they are just in the habit of not obeying the rules nor are they in the habit of exercising correct driver behaviour. Bad driving habits prevail and it is not driver education or refresher courses that will resolve them. It is enforcement.
- Improve access during construction – e.g., Canada Safeway store off of McBride Boulevard.
- Inability to access platforms at the Westminster SkyTrain Station as a result of the Plaza 88 construction. There is a need to develop contingency plans.
- Inability to use coins or certain types of credit cards in the parking machines at the New Westminster Quay.
- Inadequate number of SkyTrain cars during off-peak hours, weekends and holidays.

- Inoperable elevator at Fourth Street SkyTrain Station. This elevator is typically down which inconveniences the disabled, mothers with strollers and seniors.
- Introduction of new community shuttle buses on the C3/C4 routes which are not low floor which makes it more difficult for older passengers to board. There is a lift but this is located at the rear of the vehicle and is inconvenient to use.
- Lack of a pedestrian crossing on Carnarvon Street at Lorne Street.
- Lack of bus shelters to protect passengers during inclement weather.
- Limited accessibility to SkyTrain stations and cars. Accessibility appears to have been an afterthought.
- Limited priority seating for seniors on buses and SkyTrain.
- Limited transportation options at Victoria Hill.
- Maintain sidewalks to ensure an even and unimpeded surface in which to move.
- Many transit stops do not have either adequate seating or shelter.
- Poor condition of sidewalk at Peele Street and Royal Avenue.
- Priority seating is generally respected but sometimes you have to ask for it.
- Prohibit trucks from making deliveries during late evening hours – e.g., use of audible back-up safety features.
- Provide easier access to the Westminster Quay Market.
- Reduce traffic speeds along Eighth Avenue in the vicinity of Colborne Street.
- TransLINK may try to keep vehicles clean but the rules governing no drinks and food on vehicles is ignored. Consequently, there are discarded drink and food containers rolling around. Additionally, there are those ubiquitous free newspapers.
- Unsafe crossing at Eighth Avenue and Colborne Street.

#### Housing:

- Develop more seniors housing in and around Moody Park. This neighbourhood is ideally sited given its proximity to Century House and to medical and retail services.
- Enhance housing options for seniors in Queensborough. Most seniors upon downsizing must leave their beloved community.
- Increase the supply of subsidized housing for seniors. Many seniors are on fixed and low incomes and are at the mercy of landlords.
- Locate an assisted living facility in Queensborough. This would be a first step in retaining our seniors population.
- There are few assisted living options in New Westminster.
- There are more seniors who are becoming homeless. This situation is completely unacceptable.
- There is a lack of affordable housing for all age groups. To ensure a reasonably comfortable retirement, I need a non-market unit. In this way, I will not be at the mercy of unscrupulous landlords with regard to rent increases.

Information and Communication:

- Continue to hold “In My Back Yard” (IMBY) Fairs. These fairs enabled seniors to access information and to ask questions. They were also fun outings.
- I am looking forward to the Seniors Directory of Services. There is a need to have all the information related to the needs of seniors in one print format.
- I commend the efforts of the Seniors Services Society. We are very fortunate to have them located in New Westminster.
- The Clarion is an excellent publication but it could include more information about health and social services.

Social Participation:

- Consider a name change for Century House. I am in my early fifties but I am very reluctant to be a member of a seniors’ centre.
- Consider developing a buddy program as a way of involving isolated seniors.
- Explore an elder college where seniors can learn about a range of topics and meet others with similar interests.
- I live in Queensborough and it is very difficult to access programs at Century House. It would be nice if we had a designated space in Queensborough.
- It is difficult to access facilities in Queen’s Park.
- Offer more outreach services for isolated seniors.
- Older people range in age from 50 to 100. It is huge range with much diversity. As long as there is a wide variety of activities available within the larger community, seniors, at whatever age, will find things to do.

Civic Involvement and Volunteerism:

- Engage seniors more in the planning process. All too often, meetings are held at 7:00 p.m., which makes it very difficult for seniors to attend.
- Given that the Baby Boom generation is reaching retirement age, they represent a large potential source of volunteers.
- Have City staff make more presentations at Century House.
- I really enjoy sitting on the Seniors Advisory Committee.
- Many seniors want to get involved. They need meaningful opportunities to have a say in decision-making.
- The Century House Association does a lot of great work based on volunteerism.
- The views of older people are seldom sought and are often ignored.
- There are lots of great civic committees for seniors to become members.

Health and Support Services:

- Cutbacks in health services are a real concern.
- Difficulty applying for my disability pension. Staff were unfriendly and suspicious and this caused great stress.
- Home services offered by the library are efficient and timely and staff are friendly and thoughtful.
- I am not convinced that ‘we’ have an adequate range of health services in New Westminster but it’s not the City’s responsibility to provide a wide range of health services. There is a lot more that needs to be done by the Federal and Provincial governments.
- Improve home support services as I do not want to move to a care home.
- Increasing privatization means that many seniors will not be able to access services that enable them to lead healthy and independent lives – e.g., home support.
- It is next to impossible to access information about the many services offered by Fraser Health.
- Many seniors want to live independently but need the right supports to do so.
- There are a lack of health services in Queensborough. As I got older, I decided to move to Uptown New Westminster.

Other:

- Ensure that homeowners remove snow from sidewalks that front their properties. For seniors, the lack of snow removal places them at risk of falling.
- Ensure that retailers enable seniors to purchase smaller portion sizes – e.g., baked items, eggs, meat, poultry, etc.
- I would like to thank the City’s Planning Department for being concerned about the safety and wellbeing of seniors. I would also like to thank the Department, plus other diligent groups, for preserving our historical buildings. Additionally, I would like to thank the Parks and Recreation for creating delightful walks along Glenbrook Ravine, the Quay and Queen’s Park.
- Limited leisure and recreational offerings at the Sapperton Pensioners’ Hall.
- Make greater use of the Standards of Maintenance Bylaw – e.g., old Canadian Tire property.