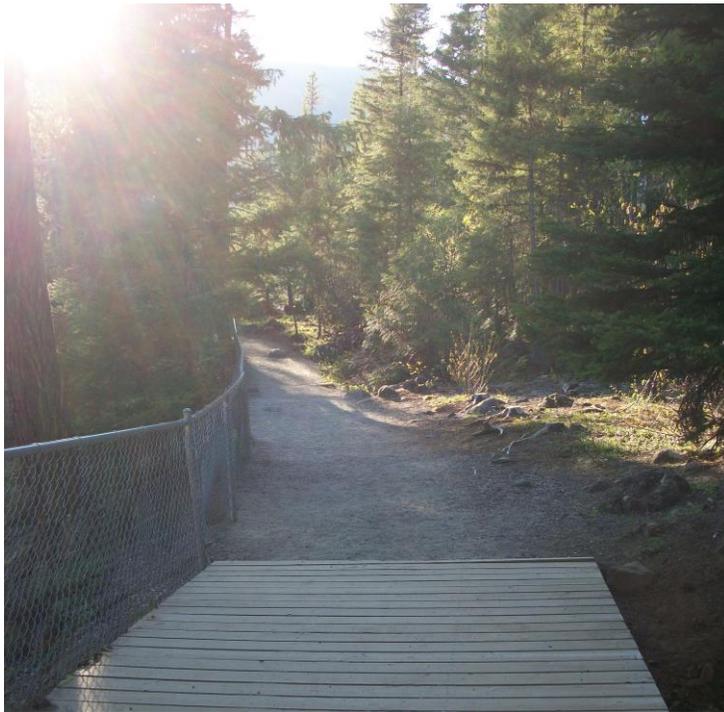


Front Door to Grocery Store: Getting Seniors Where They Want to be in Clearwater

Report on Seniors Summer Mobility in Clearwater Business, Service and Local Facilities



Prepared by the Community Development Institute
University of Northern British Columbia
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Availability

Copies of this project report have been provided to the District of Clearwater. Copies of the report have also been deposited in the District of Clearwater Office. They may also be accessed through the UNBC Community Development Institute's website at:

<http://unbc.ca/community-development-institute/research-projects>

Project Reports

- A Community For People of All Ages and Stages of Life – Clearwater Community Economic Development Plan (2012)
- Clearwater Socio Economic Profile (2012)
- Clearwater Seniors Needs Survey Report (2012)
- Clearwater Age Friendly Community Plan Recommendations (2012)

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background

In the past decade, there has been a significant increase in senior populations in small northern and interior communities in BC. In fact, from 2001-2011, Clearwater BC experienced a 53 percent increase in the population age 65 years and older, an increase much greater than the BC average. In a recent assessment of seniors needs conducted with the UNBC Community Development Institute (CDI), it was uncovered that many older adults want to remain in Clearwater as they age, but face significant challenges to mobility in the community. The particulars of these challenges, however, are still unclear; but it is known within the community health research field that there is a strong relationship between seniors mobility and their health, wellbeing, independence, level of physical activity and social engagement. Thus, it is integral to the health of seniors that mobility in Clearwater is explored.

1.2 Project Goals and Objectives

In order to address the issue of mobility, the community of Clearwater has begun a three year research and planning project that looks to uncover insights into seniors mobility needs, challenges, and support. This project, called *From Front Door to Grocery Store: Getting Seniors Where They Want To Be in Clearwater*, has three main goals:

1. To develop a comprehensive understanding of the mobility needs of seniors in Clearwater, with a particular focus on challenges related to income and increasing frailty;
2. To identify barriers and supports to seniors mobility, with particular attention to the conditions that exist in summer and winter;
3. To determine the key features of a seniors mobility strategy to be implemented by various government, non-profit, and for-profit organizations in the community.

In alignment with these goals, the intended long-term outcome of this project is to construct a community mobility tool kit and mobility assessment process that specifically considers the circumstances of small communities (e.g. winter climates, poor existing infrastructure, and a lack of services), that can be adapted for use by other rural and small towns in BC and beyond.

1.3 Methods

The information contained in this report was developed from the findings of four key research methods: mobility journals, interviews, field trips, and a workshop. The mobility journals provided information on individual mobility patterns, key areas of concern, and areas for further exploration

in interviews and field trips. The interviews provided information on seniors mobility patterns, supports, challenges, services, and programs. The field trips produced information on the specific challenges seniors faced in key locations in Clearwater. The workshop brought together the information collected during the project to date, and served four functions: to verify what was heard, to determine if there were any gaps in the information, to prioritize the issues, and to develop solutions and recommendations that will address the key challenges.

A group of 16 people were followed through each stage of research. These 16 people were systematically selected to represent a wide range of background characteristics; participants have a range of incomes, genders and ages, and use a variety of mobility devices (e.g. cane, walker, scooter, wheelchair, etc.).

1.4 Results

Through combining the above methods, insights into Clearwater's mobility supports, challenges, and needs were uncovered. These insights were synthesized into the five subtopics that make up the results section of this report:

- Section 5.1 summarizes the aspects of the community which support the mobility of seniors who both do and do not experience mobility challenges (including those aspects of community planning that aid in supporting seniors mobility into the future, and opportunities to expand these areas);
- Section 5.2 to section 5.5 depicts community members' vision for mobility in the future, and the opportunities for improvements/recommendations identified in the first phase of research activities. This section is broken into General Areas; Roadways, and Parking Areas; Pathways, Sidewalks, and Outdoor Seating Areas; and Business/Service/Facility Interiors and Doorways.

1.4.1 Mobility Supports

Clearwater boasts a variety of services, activities, and programs that support seniors to live healthy and active lives. The following points outline the key findings on mobility supports in Clearwater.

- The community is well equipped to support seniors mobility with health services, but would benefit from a long term local physiotherapist.
- Clearwater has numerous recreation, leisure, and sports activities both for seniors who are relatively healthy and for those who have mobility challenges; however, some residents suggested that the community would benefit from a dedicated swimming pool.
- Arts and culture are ever-present aspects of life in Clearwater; the community possesses a variety of activities and groups that feed the different interests of residents, including events specifically designed to keep seniors active and engaged in community life.

- Clearwater has a wide variety of social groups that meet often, including two groups that are specifically for seniors.
- There are five transportation options in Clearwater: local and regional transit service, door-to-door handyDART service, taxi, Greyhound Bus, and passenger trains. Residents have mentioned that in the future they would like to see transit service expanded, a taxi service program, and a change in the Greyhound bus schedule as current pickup times are in the middle of the night.
- Within Clearwater’s planning documents, there are already a number of strategies and policies in place which address the current mobility challenges, including an Age Friendly Plan, several aspects of Clearwater’s Official Community Plan (OCP), and parts of Clearwater’s Community Economic Development Plan. The OCP, however, would benefit from additional, specific statements that fully explain how mobility and accessibility should be considered. This would reinforce the importance of these concepts to those who are using this document, and could be inserted into the plan’s vision, the social sustainability principles, in each guiding principle section, in the development guidelines, and in both the residential and commercial land use strategy sections.

1.4.2 Strategic Mobility Planning

The following recommendations are organized into four different categories: 1. Programming or Projects – recommendations that involve the development of programs, committees, groups or projects; 2. Information – recommendations that involve either the provision of information or the development of an information-based resource; 3. Bylaws, Policies or Strategies – recommendations that involve the development of a bylaw, policy, or strategy for addressing challenges; and 4. Infrastructure or Modifications – recommendations that involve the development of new infrastructure or the modification of existing infrastructure. Although most of these categories are present throughout each implementation timeframe, in the short and medium term recommendations are weighted on developing strategies and municipal regulations that will ensure Clearwater proceeds in a mobility friendly fashion, and in the long term the focus is on both developing the infrastructure needed to support mobility, and modifying infrastructure that currently limits the mobility of residents.

Abbreviations Used

AFAC: the Age Friendly Advisory Committee

CSS: Clearwater Secondary School

DOC: the District of Clearwater

IHA: Interior Health Authority

TNRD: Thompson-Nicola Regional District

YCS: Yellowhead Community Services

1.4.3 Short-Term (Up to 1 year)

Programming or Projects

Develop a short-term program to improve public comfort with the new roundabout

- **Key Locations:** The Roundabout on the Highway and Park Dr.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** IHA Community Health.

Develop a volunteer weed removal program*

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater, sidewalks in the Weyerhaeuser Subdivision, and sidewalks in front of the Medical Centre.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Clearwater Girl Guides and AFAC.

Create a volunteer community work bee program to carry out small mobility fixes*

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** CSS.

Develop a partnership with the RCMPs crime prevention unit to produce joint presentations

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC and RCMP.

Information

Release mobility information to the public

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC.

Develop a priority list for mobility related infrastructure upgrades

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Council, DOC Planning, and AFAC.

Develop a 'Mobility Friendly Business' checklist*

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC, DOC, and the Chamber of Commerce.

Develop and facilitate 'Mobility Friendly Business' Presentations

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.

- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC, the Chamber of Commerce, and individual services and businesses in Clearwater.

Bylaws, Policies, and Strategies

Develop a policy requiring mobility/accessibility-related corporate responsibility

- **Key Locations:** See improvements requested throughout this report.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Council and incoming corporations.

Create a seniors engagement strategy to involve seniors in community decisions

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC and DOC Council.

Develop a policy to require future parking plans to be reviewed for access prior to construction

- **Key Locations:** All areas of Clearwater
- **Key Lead Agencies:** The DOC Planning, DOC Council, and AFAC.

Develop a parking bylaw that requires all future parking areas to be accessible

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** The DOC Planning and DOC Council.

Develop a bylaw to require public transit drop off area in all future commercial developments

- **Key Locations:** The future site of the Grocery Store/Mall and the new District Office.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Local Businesses and Services, DOC Council, YCS and TNRD.

Develop a District policy requiring wheelchair seating/tables where applicable

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC, DOC Council, and individual services and business in Clearwater.

Infrastructure or Modifications

Designate new accessible parking spaces*

- **Key Locations:** Dutch Lake Beach, Brookfield Mall, Rotary Sports Park, Legion, New District Offices, and Evergreen Acres.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Individual businesses, services, and land owners.

Create new crosswalks*

- **Key Locations:** Across Park Drive at Robson St.; the intersection (all directions) of Murtle Cres. and Park Dr.; across the Old North Thompson Highway at Dutch Lake; across the Yellowhead Highway from the Old North Thompson Highway to Clearwater Village Rd.; across the hospital road from the pathway to the walking shoulder, on Dutch Lake Rd. and around the new District offices.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Public Works, and the AFAC.

Paint the edges of sidewalks and curbcuts bright yellow*

- **Key Locations:** Future site of the Grocery Store/Mall, the roundabout, the Weyerhaeuser Subdivision, and the Brookfield Mall.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Individual services and businesses, DOC, and AFAC.

1.4.4 Medium-Term (Between 1 and 5 years)

Programming or Projects

Establish an accessibility and mobility review committee to review development for access/mobility

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC – Planning, AFAC, and DOC Infrastructure Standing Committee.

Develop a mobility literacy program to educate the public on local mobility and accessibility features

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC and Clearwater’s seniors organizations.

Develop a memorial bench dedication program (or modify the current program)

- **Key Locations:** Along Park Dr., the cemetery, the tennis courts, in front of businesses, and all of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, IHA, Individual Businesses, and AFAC.

Develop a sponsorship program for local pathways/trails

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, DOC Parks and Recreation Committee, Rotary, IHA, and AFAC.

Information

Develop an education campaign on mobility and scooter use

- **Key Locations:** Entire Clearwater Area.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** ICBC and the AFAC.

Create an inventory of all the pathways/trails in Clearwater and the mobility improvements needed

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, IHA, and AFAC.

Bylaws, Policies, and Strategies

Develop an accessibility and mobility review process for all future development

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC – Planning, AFAC, and the DOC Infrastructure Standing Committee.

Make the highway standards bylaw consistent with the guidelines outlined by the mobility project

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Planning and DOC Council.

Create a bylaw requiring all commercial areas to provide a scooter parking area

- **Key Locations:** The new Grocery Store/Mall, the new District Office, the Brookfield Mall, the Library, the Medical Centre, and the Hospital.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Individual businesses and services, DOC Council, and DOC Infrastructure Standing Committee.

Create a bylaw requiring all commercial areas to provide a seniors priority parking area

- **Key Locations:** The new Grocery Store/Mall, the new District Office, the Brookfield Mall, the Library, the Medical Centre, and the Hospital.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Individual businesses and services, DOC Council, and DOC Infrastructure Standing Committee.

Create a bylaw (or modify existing one) that outlines accessibility standards for sidewalks

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Planning and DOC Council.

Ensure District's bylaw or policy on curbcut requirements for commercially zoned properties meets the guidelines set out in this document

- **Key Locations:** Future site of the Grocery Store/Mall.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC and the AFAC.

Develop 'Universal Signage' standards for accessible features and doorways in Clearwater

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC, the Chamber of Commerce, and individual services and businesses in Clearwater.

Develop a district policy to provide incentives for the creation of public washrooms

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Planning and DOC Council.

Infrastructure or Modifications

Review accessible commercial parking spaces and install curbcuts or ramps where necessary

- **Key Locations:** Hospital.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Individual businesses and services.

Install signage to improve clarity on roadways for pedestrians and vehicles

- **Key Locations:** Before the roundabout (a warning) in both directions on the Yellowhead Highway; at the roundabout (to explain the roles of pedestrians); and on the highway (to indicate which way to turn to get to Wells Gray Park).
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Public Works and the BC Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

Eliminate all visual obstacles at Clearwater intersections

- **Key Locations:** The bushes and signs at the intersection of Dutch Lake Rd. and the Old North Thompson Highway.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** RCMP, the DOC Public Works, and the BC Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

Develop and modify existing picnicking sites to accommodate people using mobility devices

- **Key Locations:** Picnic area around the Farmers Market and Rafting Centre, and all of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, BC Parks, and individual businesses.

Create an accessible and short outdoor pathway loop/ multi-use, multi-season pathway/trail

- **Key Locations:** Near or around CSS.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, CSS, Rotary, IHA, and the AFAC.

Created a wider paved shoulder on roadways that can be used as a multi-use roadside pathway

- **Key Locations:** The area north of the Highway from Jim's Supermarket to the Blue Loon; around the new supermarket; down 'Hospital Hill', the Weyerhaeuser Subdivision; and the Old North Thompson Highway from Dutch Lake to the Brookfield Mall.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Public Works and the BC Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

1.4.5 Long-Term (5+ years)

Programming or Projects

Develop a community age friendly legacy fund

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, and AFAC.

Develop an accessible local businesses and recreation areas program

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC, the Chamber of Commerce, Tourist Information Centre, and individual services and businesses in Clearwater.

Infrastructure or Modifications

Construct turning lanes at high speed highway intersections

- **Key Locations:** The intersection at the Highway and Haywood Rd., and the intersection at Highway 5 and Jenkins Rd.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and DOC.

Identify and develop nearby areas for additional or overflow parking

- **Key Locations:** Dutch Lake Beach, the Legion, and Evergreen Acres.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Planning, individual businesses, services, and landowners.

Square off intersections or construct roundabouts (at high risk highway intersections)

- **Key Locations:** The intersection across the Yellowhead Highway at the Old North Thompson Highway and Clearwater Village Rd.; and the intersection at Norfolk Rd. and Park Dr.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and DOC.

Enhance accessibility at Dutch Lake Beach

- **Key Locations:** Dutch Lake Beach.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC.

Develop new accessible recreation sites in lieu of those sites which cannot be made accessible

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, TNRD, and BC Parks.

Increase accessible trail/pathway development

- **Key Locations:** The Medical Centre and Library, Dutch Lake, around CSS, and all of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, IHA, and the AFAC.

Develop trail/pathway infrastructure for publically accessible trails/pathways

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, IHA, Tourist Information Centre, and AFAC.

2. Introduction

2.1 Project Background

In 2012, the UNBC Community Development Institute (CDI) conducted a survey of seniors needs in Clearwater, BC. This survey indicated that several older community members struggle with mobility. This is significant because the community is also developing a rapidly increasing population of older adults. In fact, from 2001 to 2011 Clearwater experienced a 53% increase in people ages 65 and older. The particulars of the aforementioned mobility challenges, however, are still unclear—but it is known within health research fields that there is a strong relationship between seniors' mobility and their health, wellbeing, social engagement, independence, and level of physical activity. The combination of mobility issues and the high level of seniors could pose major issues for years to come in Clearwater. Barriers to mobility can cause a decrease in physical activity, independence, social engagement, health and well-being for people of all ages, but especially for seniors who may experience other health issues as well. Moreover, research done by the CDI has shown that many older adults want to remain in their 'home' communities because they enjoy the quality of life and have developed the strong social networks that are common in rural areas. Their concern is that they will have to leave because of failing health and mobility, lack of support and services, or both. It is clear then, that mobility for seniors in Clearwater is an issue that cannot go ignored.

After the exploration into seniors needs in 2012, Clearwater made a commitment to becoming an age friendly community, and in early 2013 this project, called *From Front Door to Grocery Store: Getting Seniors Where They Want to be in Clearwater*, was initiated to explore dimensions of seniors mobility in Clearwater. Led by the CDI, this project partners with the District of Clearwater, local seniors and older adults, and the Age Friendly Advisory Committee (made up of representatives from Evergreen Housing Society, Friendly Club, Interior Health Authority, the Chamber of Commerce, the Wells Gray Country Seniors Society, Wells Gray Country Services, and Yellowhead Community Services). The project is primarily funded by a Community Health Research Grant that the CDI received from the Vancouver Foundation.

The CDI took the lead on this project in Clearwater as a result of its longstanding relationship with the community. From Clearwater's incorporation in 2007, to the development of a Community Economic Plan in 2011, the CDI has helped Clearwater through a gradual process of community and economic transformation, by facilitating community development projects; these projects helped Clearwater to develop a vision for the community's future, and to realize many of their goals.

2.2 Project Goals and Objectives

From Front Door to Grocery Store: Getting Seniors Where They Want To Be in Clearwater has three main goals:

Goal 1: Develop a comprehensive understanding of the mobility needs of seniors in Clearwater, with a particular focus on challenges related to income and increasing frailty.

Objectives:

- Document the mobility needs of seniors in Clearwater.
- Determine whether/how mobility needs differ based on:
 - Level of mobility functioning;
 - The reason for impaired mobility;
 - The location in which seniors live; and
 - Income.

Goal 2: Identify barriers and supports to seniors mobility, with particular attention to the conditions that exist in summer and winter.

Objectives:

- Identify barriers that inhibit seniors mobility and, therefore, restrict their ability to access community services and programs in summer and winter.
- Identify facilitators that support seniors mobility and, therefore, enhance their ability to access community services and programs in summer and winter.

Goal 3: Determine the key features of a seniors mobility strategy to be implemented by various government, non-profit, and for-profit organizations in the community.

Objectives:

- Develop recommendations to enhance seniors mobility in the community, thereby enhancing their ability to access community services and programs.
- Identify key questions (a seniors mobility lens) to consider when designing programs, services and infrastructure.
- Ensure a mechanism for ongoing seniors involvement in monitoring and implementing community strategies.
- Implement strategies identified by the project.

In alignment with these goals, the intended long-term outcome of this project is to construct a community mobility toolkit that specifically considers the circumstances of small communities (e.g. location, seasonality, poor existing infrastructure, and a lack of services), that can be adapted for use by other rural and small towns, especially those in northern and interior BC.

2.3 Project Report Information

This report includes the combination of information that arose from the first year of research activities, including: one week-long mobility journaling exercise, one series of interviews, three sets of field trips over three weeks, and one community mobility workshop. After outlining some background information about Clearwater, the remaining pages are divided into five sections:

- Mobility Supports;
- Strategic Mobility Planning: General Areas;
- Strategic Mobility Planning: Roadways and Parking Areas;
- Strategic Mobility Planning: Pathways, Sidewalks and Outdoor Seating; and
- Strategic Mobility Planning: Business/Service/Facility Interiors and Doorway Areas.

There are two topics included in each of the four strategic mobility planning sections:

- Community Developed Vision Guidelines, and
- Key Recommendations (divided into short, medium, and long term recommendations).

Both the vision and the recommendations are generated from the ideas, needs, and desires of community members.

For project methodology, see separate Appendix A: Methodology.

3. Results

3.1 About This Report

The information contained in the following sections combine findings from the mobility journals, interviews, field trips, and workshop to identify Clearwater’s mobility supports, challenges, and needs. The results comprise the first stage of Clearwater’s mobility plan. Section 3.3 summarizes mobility supports, including the services available that help residents stay healthy and active in Clearwater, and those aspects of community planning that aid in supporting seniors mobility into the future. This section also outlines the opportunities to expand these supports. Section 3.4 to section 3.8 summarizes the vision for a mobility friendly Clearwater and the opportunities for improvements identified from the first phase of research activities; these sections are divided into General Areas; Roadways, and Parking Areas; Pathways, Sidewalks, and Outdoor Seating Areas; and Business/Service/Facility Interiors, and Doorways. Within these sections there are two subsections: *Community-Developed Guidelines for the Vision*, and *Key Recommendations*. The subsection called *Community-Developed Guidelines for the Vision* explains how residents would like to see Clearwater support mobility needs in the future. These guidelines can be referred back to during implementation to ensure all actions are aligned with the community’s priorities. They can also be used as an information resource on what a mobility friendly community looks like. The other subsection describes the actions that need to be taken to improve mobility in Clearwater. Recommendations are organized strategically to assist with implementation. First, the recommendations are organized by the type of area where it should be implemented:

- General Areas;
- Roadways, and Parking Areas;
- Pathways, Sidewalks, and Outdoor Seating Areas; and
- Business/Service/Facility Interiors, and Doorways.

Second, the recommendations are organized by timeframe:

- short term (under 1 year),
- medium term (1 to 5 years), and
- long-term (over 5 years).

Last, the recommendations are organized by the kind of recommendation it is:

- *Programming/ Projects* – recommendations that involve the development of programs, committees, groups or projects;
- *Information* – recommendations that involve either the provision of information or the development of an information-based resource;
- *Bylaws, Policies or Strategies* – recommendations that involve the development of a bylaw, policy, or strategy for addressing challenges; and

- *Infrastructure/Modifications* – recommendations that involve the development of new infrastructure or the modification of existing infrastructure.

This plan and the recommendations contained herein should be viewed as a living document; over the next few years the recommendations should be reviewed and modified to suit the ever changing context of Clearwater. Included under each recommendation are the *Key Locations* and the *Key Lead Agencies* for implementation. The *Key Locations* heading lists all the areas where the recommendation should be employed. These areas should be used as a starting point but are not meant to represent the only locations for implementation. Since this report is a living document, the locations should be reviewed and modified over time. The *Key Lead Agencies* heading identifies groups and organizations who can champion particular activities. Identifying these agencies was meant to facilitate action and is not meant to exclude any group or individual from participation. The *Key Lead Agencies* are not meant to be the only groups taking the recommendations forward, they are merely met to be the agencies leading the process and recruiting other agencies to assist. The implementation tracking tool (See Appendix J) can be used to check the implementation progress, and review and modify the strategies used for moving forward.

Abbreviations used in this section

AFAC: the Age Friendly Advisory Committee

CSS: Clearwater Secondary School

DOC: the District of Clearwater

IHA: Interior Health Authority

TNRD: Thompson-Nicola Regional District

YCS: Yellowhead Community Services

3.2 Report Implementation Guiding Principles

Four pieces of advice came out of the research process that applies to how residents would like to see mobility improvements taken forward in the future. These pieces of advice should guide how recommendations are followed and how this report is utilized by lead agencies.

Focus on High 'Senior Traffic' Areas

Clearwater community members acknowledged that some areas in the community are used more by seniors than other areas and thus, residents want implementation to focus on these areas.

Residents explained that there are many locations in Clearwater where seniors congregate.

Examples include the location of the 'coffee-katches' (A&W and the Wells Gray Inn), the hospital, the shopping centre; and the medical centre. These are noted as areas of concern and should be the focus when considering where to make improvements in the community.

Focus on New Developments

In order to ensure that new buildings and community structures are designed and constructed properly from the start, efforts should focus on ensuring that plans for new developments address mobility and accessibility issues, and that all future infrastructure projects are built to a high standard of mobility and accessibility. Mobility retrofits are very costly; therefore, residents stressed that new developments should be the primary focus for encouraging accessibility and mobility friendly design. Encouraging the renovation of existing structures to improve accessibility and mobility is viewed as secondary to this focus.

Raise Awareness about Mobility Challenges

Clearwater residents have determined that raising awareness about the mobility challenges identified during this project is integral to creating solutions. Helping the public understand the importance of correcting the issues will help to ensure that implementation will occur in the future.

Start Now!

Residents recognized that each of the project goals have different timelines, but many individuals are interested in starting implementation immediately. Participants noted several recommendations which could be easily implemented; these are outlined in this plan. Identifying which of the strategies are easy to apply now will enable Clearwater to build momentum in the community for future improvements. **Note: easily implemented items are identified throughout this report with an asterix.**

3.3 Supports

Clearwater has a variety of services, activities, and programs that support seniors to live healthy and active lives. These include a variety of health, safety and social services, Home Care Services, Active Living Services and Activities, Leisure and Community Recreation services, arts and cultural activities, community interest groups, clubs and societies, seniors' organizations, religious and spiritual groups, seniors housing complexes, educational services, legal services, financial services, and government resources. See separate Appendix F for a full list of available supports.

3.3.1 Supports: Health Services

For a town of under two thousand people, Clearwater is well-equipped to support seniors with health services. In addition to having both a hospital and a separate medical centre, Clearwater has several levels of seniors home supports and care services, counseling services, and victim services. Although Clearwater is currently supporting seniors health well, many residents mentioned concerns with retaining a local physiotherapist. Obtaining and retaining this service would support seniors mobility over the long term.

3.3.2 Supports: Recreation, Leisure, and Sports

Seniors recreation, sports, and leisure activities are plentiful in Clearwater. The community hosts a variety of sporting activities, such as badminton, tennis, and curling that meet the needs of all community members, including those seniors who are not experiencing mobility challenges. Clearwater also has a healthy living program that offers a variety of seniors-oriented recreation supports to meet the needs of those seniors who do experience mobility challenges. These supports include: walking clubs, 'sit and be fit', yoga, tai-chi, carpet bowling, bingo, and health seminars. Clearwater is also home to many recreation facilities that support senior's mobility, such as a fitness centre and a recreation centre (hockey and curling rink); however, many community members have commented on the lack of public swimming facilities. Clearwater Lodge opens its pool to community members for therapy purposes, with the provision of a doctor's note, which fills some of the swimming facilities gap.

3.3.3 Supports: Arts and Culture

Arts and culture are ever-present aspects of community life in Clearwater. In addition to having many arts and culture events and activities that feed the interests of all community members (e.g. After Hours Theatre, Artists Cooperative, Celebration of Arts Festival, Community Choirs, Drumming Group, Quilters Guild, and Writers Association), seniors groups in the community also put on arts and cultural events specifically directed towards seniors such as music nights and seniors writing club. The community also has public arts and culture infrastructure, such as an Art Gallery, an Aboriginal Sharing Centre, a Community Garden, and several religious places of worship.

3.3.4 Supports: Social Activities

Clearwater has a wide variety of social groups that meet often. Most of these groups are open to people of all ages; however, Clearwater also has two community groups specifically for seniors (the Clearwater Friendly Club and the Wells Gray Country Seniors Society). These two groups host a number of social activities for seniors, including coffee and conversation events, pot luck lunches, Sunday lunches, and bus trips.

3.3.5 Supports: Transportation

Compared to many similar-sized communities, Clearwater has robust transportation options. Clearwater has two separate bus loops that operate three runs a day through much of the community. Clearwater also has a Valley Connector bus that runs to and from Kamloops twice a week. Additionally, the community has handyDART service that does door to door pickup for people with mobility challenges. Clearwater also has a taxi service, and is served by both the Greyhound Bus and a passenger train. As Clearwater further develops its transit system, community members have mentioned that they would like to see transit service to businesses and service areas improve (this will be further explored in the latter phases of this project).

Taxis were mentioned to be much more convenient for running errands than transit; however, they are also a costly form of transportation that some residents cannot afford. Many individuals mentioned wanting to take the taxi in Clearwater, but are unable to afford this service on a fixed income. Some participants expressed the need for a 'taxi saver program' in Clearwater, which would provide taxi discounts for those seniors below a certain income level.

An issue with Greyhound bus scheduling was also identified by participants as a factor that limits seniors mobility. The bus leaves Clearwater at 1:30 a.m. to head north and 4:05 a.m. to head south, but the bus station is only open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Participants noted challenges getting to and from the bus station at those times and a lack of places to wait when the bus is late.

3.3.6 Supports: Policies and Planning (Progress Report and Opportunities)

Although there are still plenty of opportunities to expand efforts to support seniors mobility in Clearwater's strategic planning, the community already has a number of plans and policies in place which help to address the present challenges. One of the most pertinent plans is the Age Friendly Community Plan (2012). Within this plan are recommendations to enhance Clearwater's ability to better meet the needs of seniors, including mobility needs. Of the 40 recommendations included in this report, 32 are already either completed or underway. The recommendations focus on five areas for action: communication and coordination, housing, transportation, mobility, and health services. Recent successes emerging from these recommendations include:

- Developing seniors programming through the Healthy Living Program;
- Hiring an Age Friendly Coordinator to organize monthly informational seniors luncheons;
- Expanding regional transit routes;
- Developing a trail master plan;
- Completing a roundabout on the Yellowhead Highway between Park Drive and Clearwater Valley Road;
- Developing of a weekly winter walking group inside CSS;
- Developing a seniors centre to be put into the new District Hall, set to open in June 2014; and
- Recruiting new physicians to Clearwater.

Mobility and seniors needs themes are also present in Clearwater's Official Community Plan (OCP). Several community sustainability principles are outlined in the vision section of the OCP, many of which relate to seniors mobility. In the Social Sustainability Principles section, two policies stress the importance of creating a community for people of all ages and stages of life, with particular reference to health care and housing. The Guiding Principles section of the plan mentions the importance of encouraging residents of all ages to volunteer in the community. Within the Healthcare Networks and Social Services Guiding Principles section are policies that encourage the

creation of services for community seniors (e.g. assisted living and end-of-life care). There is also a section within the Guiding Principles called ‘Seniors’ and Affordable Housing’, which outlines policies on establishing and increasing different types of seniors housing in Clearwater.

There are, however, several areas of the Official Community Plan where mention of mobility and accessibility could be added. Mobility and accessibility can be thought of as ‘fitting into’ many of the sections where policies or objectives talk about ‘meeting the needs of the entire community’, the importance of ‘connectivity’, ‘pedestrian friendly areas’ or other similar broad statements. However, it is helpful to specifically mention how mobility and accessibility should be considered in order to reinforce the importance of these concepts to those who are using this document. The following are ways to specifically consider mobility within an official community plan:

- Mention mobility or accessibility specifically in the overall community vision.
- Highlight the importance of enhancing community mobility and accessibility as a policy under the Social Sustainability Principles.
- Describe the importance of ‘accessible tourism’ under the Tourism Sector Guiding Principles.
- Include policies on the importance of having mobility friendly and accessible retail/commercial areas under the Retail/Commercial Sector Guiding Principles.
- Enhance mobility and accessibility in policies in the Transportation and Infrastructure Guiding Principle section.
- Go beyond referring to ‘connectivity’ and ‘pedestrian friendly’ spaces and create policies on mobility friendly and accessible recreation areas and trails in the Park Inventory and Greenspace Guiding Principles.
- Point to the importance of creating accessible residential areas in the Residential Land Use Strategy section.
- Create specific objectives on why it is important to create mobility friendly and accessible commercial areas in the Commercial Land Use Strategy.
- Develop a policy requiring accessible features at all community institutions in the Institutional Land Use Strategy.
- Create a policy or objective on developing mobility friendly and accessible parks, trails, and recreation areas in the corresponding Land Use Strategy.
- Expand on what being ‘accessible’ means in the Development Guidelines under the Development Permit Areas section.
- Add points about mobility friendly and accessible signage into the signage subsection of the Development Guidelines section.

Another planning document that contains suggestions to improve mobility for seniors is Clearwater’s Community Economic Development Plan, called *A Community for People of All Ages and Stages of Life*. This report includes several measures to assist Clearwater in supporting the needs of seniors. In fact, the report includes an economic development section on ‘Retirement’.

Within this section are several areas of opportunities and recommendations that the community has already made headway on, including:

- Initial work on a seniors directory;
- The development of a walking program;
- The exploration of a partnership with the Clearwater Lodge to develop a swimming facility;
- The development of recreation programming for seniors;
- The increase in transit to Kamloops;
- The installation of benches along popular walking routes; and
- Plans for the development of a framework for seniors housing development.

A future step outlined in the Economic Development Plan is to work with local businesses to identify opportunities for age friendly and accessible shopping areas. This recommendation has been identified as a priority for the community. Enhancing the accessibility of business areas has economic benefits by both attracting consumers who struggle with mobility and creating opportunities for an ‘accessible tourism’ market.

While there are still opportunities to enhance community mobility in Clearwater, it is clear from this review of community planning initiatives and supports that many steps have already been taken in making Clearwater a community that fully supports seniors mobility.

3.4 Strategic Mobility Planning: General Areas

3.4.1 Key Recommendations: General Areas

This sections includes general recommendations. These are recommendations that community members identified as important, but do not fit specifically into Roadways and Parking Areas; Sidewalks, Pathways, and Outdoor Seating; and Business/Service Interiors and Doorways.

Short-Term

Information

Release mobility information to the public*

As information from the seniors mobility project is released, provide simple ‘tid-bits’ of information to the public in easily understandable forms. Newspaper articles are a good format for this type of information.

* Indicates an ‘easily implemented’ item.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC.

Bylaws, Policies, and Strategies

Develop a policy requiring mobility/accessibility-related corporate responsibility

Develop a District policy requiring mobility/accessibility-related corporate responsibility for companies with revenues over an agreed-upon amount. This would involve developing accessible and mobility friendly infrastructure in the Clearwater area. Priority lists can be used to assist with this process.

- **Key Locations:** See improvements requested throughout this report.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Council and incoming corporations.

Create a seniors engagement strategy to involve seniors in community decisions

Create a strategy to specifically target Clearwater seniors and older adults for engagement in decisions regarding future infrastructure upgrades that could potentially impact seniors' mobility. The strategy could involve open houses targeted to seniors (at times and locations that work well for these groups) and presentations at seniors' organizations meetings.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC and DOC Council.

Medium-Term (Between 1 and 5 years)

Programming or Projects

Establish an accessibility and mobility review committee to review development for access/mobility

Establish a District committee to review all future development plans solely for accessibility and mobility (e.g. an Accessible Design Advisory Committee). This committee would meet with developers during the review stage of all proposed buildings, pathways, parking lots, or roadways. During this stage, the committee would have an opportunity to review the plans, ask questions, and make recommendations for accessibility and mobility adjustments. The committee should include members of the Age Friendly Advisory Committee and the District Infrastructure Standing Committee. The Accessible Design Advisory Committee may also determine and recommend to Council additional mobility or accessibility-related policies or bylaws needed by the District.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC – Planning, AFAC, and DOC Infrastructure Standing Committee.

Develop a mobility literacy program to educate the public on local mobility and accessibility features

Create a program that educates the public on the mobility and accessibility features of communities and what these features mean, such as mobility signage, cross lines next to accessible parking spots, purpose of curbcuts, etc.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC and Clearwater’s seniors organizations.

Bylaws, Policies, and Strategies

Develop an accessibility and mobility review process for all future development

Develop a process to review plans for all future buildings, pathways, parking areas, and roadways solely for accessibility and mobility requirements. Together with the Age Friendly Advisory Committee the District should create a general list of accessibility characteristics they would like to see in future community structures. The District should also create a requirement stating that all future development must go through a review stage where an Accessible Design Advisory Committee meets with the developer, reviews plans, asks questions, and makes recommendations for accessibility and mobility adjustments.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC – Planning, AFAC, and the DOC Infrastructure Standing Committee.

3.4.2 General Area Priorities

Throughout the research process several priorities were mentioned repeatedly that do not fit neatly into one of the categories in the latter part of this report. These are classified as general community priorities, and are as follows:

- Enhancing the overall accessibility of Dutch Lake Beach area;
- Ensuring the new shopping mall is fully accessible;
- Making the new District Office/Community Centre the model for community accessibility;
- Increasing the overall outdoor accessibility of the area north of the Yellowhead Highway (from Jim’s Supermarket to the Blue Loon) and the Weyerhaeuser Subdivision.

3.5 Strategic Mobility Planning: Roadways and Parking Areas

3.5.1 Community-Developed Vision Guidelines for Mobility Friendly Roadways and Parking Areas

Parking lots should:

- have safe, obstacle free, and well-maintained pedestrian walking routes from parking spots to the sidewalk or building entrance.
- be provide ample space for parking for special events, especially in recreation areas and events grounds.
- have poles in the front and centre of all sidewalk adjacent parking spaces to prevent vehicle overhang on sidewalks. Note: if cement barriers are used instead of poles, they should be far enough from the sidewalk to prevent vehicle overhang and should not impede access to the sidewalk between parking spaces.
- have brightly painted lines designating all parking spaces.
- include yellow painted stripes on all parking barriers.
- have directional signage indicating traffic flow and parking lot entrances and exits.
- have many wider-than-average (3.0 metres or greater) parking spaces.
- have curbcuts directly next to all accessible parking spaces.
- have obstacle free pedestrian pathways/no parking zones next to all accessible parking spaces.
- require an increased number of wide (3.7 metres) and extra wide (4.7 metres) accessible parking spots in all commercial zones, many of which have dual access to walkways (a walkway on each side).
- have both tall standing signs and ground signs for all accessible parking spaces.
- have ample space (1.0 metre) between all parking spaces to allow people to travel with a mobility device between vehicles (see Figure 6-1 in Appendix B).
- have alternative 'priority parking' spots close to store entrances for seniors and people with young children.
- include a 'scooter parking' section close to entrances that is sectioned off from vehicle parking, includes plug-ins for charging, and is well signed. Note: if the 'scooter parking' is on the sidewalks it should not obstruct clear walking space.

Roadways should:

- have wide shoulders where two mobility devices can pass side-by-side (2.0 metres).
- have turning lanes off of all major roads to ancillary roads.
- have clear and bright road-lines in all areas.
- have large and clear signage on major traffic routes indicating the location of key community features (e.g. Wells Gray Park).

Intersections should:

- be square to the roads around them wherever possible. Note: intersections can be squared off using inexpensive techniques such as: planting gardens on intersection corners to separate roadways from walking areas and to modify the corners to a 90° angle; moving stop-signs further towards the road at intersections to separate roadways from walking shoulders and direct cars to a central location; and repainting road-lines at intersections to better square off the area.
- be reconstructed as roundabouts when they are problematic in high use areas on the highway.
- be clear of obstacles and built away from large signs, bushes, and fences.
- have clearly painted and reflective road-lines directing traffic through the intersection.
- have clear signage to direct pedestrians.

Speed limits should:

- be low (30 km/hr) in dangerous high traffic portions of roads with poor visibility, such as around sharp corners.
- be low (30 km/hr) in high pedestrian traffic areas.

Crosswalks should:

- be painted in all high-traffic (both pedestrian and vehicle) areas of the community.
- include flashing lights and audible sensors at the highest risk intersections.
- be painted bright yellow to ensure they are visible to people with visual impairments.

3.5.2 Key Recommendations: Roadways and Parking Areas

Short-Term

Programming or Projects

Develop a short-term program to improve public comfort with the new roundabout

Develop a short-term program to improve public comfort with using the newly constructed roundabout in Clearwater. The program should target different age groups and forms of mobility (e.g. pedestrian, vehicle, mobility scooter, etc.). Field trips should be a key focus of this program.

- **Key Locations:** The Roundabout on the Highway and Park Dr.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** IHA Community Health.

Bylaws, Policies, and Strategies

Develop a policy to require parking plans to be reviewed for accessibility prior to construction

Create a District policy that requires the review of all parking plans for accessibility prior to construction. Parking plans should be reviewed based on the mobility and accessibility vision guidelines outlined in the previous section.

- **Key Locations:** All areas of Clearwater
- **Key Lead Agencies:** The DOC Planning, DOC Council, and AFAC.

Develop a parking bylaw that requires all future parking areas to be accessible

New District Bylaws should be created to ensure that all future parking areas are accessible and consistent. The bylaw should enforce all of the guidelines outlined under Parking Lots in Section 5.3.1 and should require an increase in the minimum number of accessible parking spaces needed in commercially zoned parking lots.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** The DOC Planning and DOC Council.

Develop a bylaw to require public transit drop off area in all future commercial developments

A bylaw should be created to require that all commercial developments include a potential accessible area for transit pick-up and drop-off. For future locations this parking should be designed into the parking lot plan. For current locations, this parking should be created by repainting areas of the parking lot where ever possible.

- **Key Locations:** The future site of the Grocery Store/Mall and the new District Office.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Local Businesses and Services, DOC Council, YCS and TNRD.

Infrastructure or Modifications

Designate new accessible parking spaces*

Designate new accessible parking spaces that are between 3.7 and 4.7 metres wide in all commercial and recreation areas of Clearwater.

- **Key Locations:** Dutch Lake Beach, Brookfield Mall, Rotary Sports Park, Legion, New District Offices, and Evergreen Acres.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Individual businesses, services, and land owners.

* Indicates an 'easily implemented' item.

Create new crosswalks*

New crosswalks should be constructed in key areas throughout the community. In the highest risk areas the crosswalks should be accompanied with flashing lights and audible sensors. Future crosswalk placement will take into consideration input from different groups in the community.

- **Key Locations:** Across Park Drive at Robson St.; the intersection (all directions) of Murtle Cres. and Park Dr.; across the Old North Thompson Highway at Dutch Lake; across the Yellowhead Highway from the Old North Thompson Highway to Clearwater Village Rd.; across the hospital road from the pathway to the walking shoulder, on Dutch Lake Rd. and around the new District offices.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Public Works, and the AFAC.

Medium-Term (Between 1 and 5 years)

Information

Develop an education campaign on mobility and scooter use

Once community pathways are designated and adjusted for scooter accessibility, develop an education campaign on mobility and scooter use for both scooter users and non-users. This campaign would educate people of all ages on proper scooter use. The campaign would include: information sessions, presentations at meetings for different community groups, brochure development, and newspaper articles.

- **Key Locations:** Entire Clearwater Area.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** ICBC and the AFAC.

Bylaws, Policies, and Strategies

Make the highway standards bylaw consistent with the guidelines outlined by the mobility project

Amend the newly passed Subdivision and Development (Highway Standards) bylaw to make it consistent with the guidelines outlined in the vision section.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Planning and DOC Council.

Create a bylaw requiring all commercial areas to provide a scooter parking area

Create a bylaw requiring all commercially zoned properties to provide a signed area for scooter parking. For future areas: plan to create a large inset area of sidewalk where scooters can be

* Indicates an 'easily implemented' item.

parked and plugged in. For current areas: section off an area of sidewalk or parking near entrances that can be used for scooter parking (see parking vision guidelines for more information on scooter parking).

- **Key Locations:** The new Grocery Store/Mall, the new District Office, the Brookfield Mall, the Library, the Medical Centre, and the Hospital.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Individual businesses and services, DOC Council, and DOC Infrastructure Standing Committee.

Create a bylaw requiring all commercial areas to provide a seniors priority parking area

Create a bylaw requiring all commercially zoned properties to sign and provide an area close to entrances for seniors-specific parking. In future locations this parking should be part of the parking lot design. In current locations 'regular' parking spots should be modified for these uses.

- **Key Locations:** The new Grocery Store/Mall, the new District Office, the Brookfield Mall, the Library, the Medical Centre, and the Hospital.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Individual businesses and services, DOC Council, and DOC Infrastructure Standing Committee.

Infrastructure or Modifications

Review accessible commercial parking spaces and install curbcuts or ramps where necessary

Review all accessible parking spaces in commercial zones throughout Clearwater to ensure there are curbcuts or curb ramps next to them. If no ramp or cut is present install a curb ramps wherever possible.

- **Key Locations:** Hospital.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Individual businesses and services.

Install signage to improve clarity on roadways for pedestrians and vehicles

New signage should be installed to improve clarity on roadways for both pedestrians and vehicles, and to provide directions to key community locations.

- **Key Locations:** Before the roundabout (a warning) in both directions on the Yellowhead Highway; at the roundabout (to explain the roles of pedestrians); and on the highway (to indicate which way to turn to get to Wells Gray Park).
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Public Works and the BC Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

Eliminate all visual obstacles at Clearwater intersections

High traffic intersections need to be assessed for visibility and obstacles removed in order to improve safety and mobility.

- **Key Locations:** The bushes and signs at the intersection of Dutch Lake Rd. and the Old North Thompson Highway.

- **Key Lead Agencies:** RCMP, the DOC Public Works, and the BC Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

Long-Term

Infrastructure/Modifications

Construct turning lanes at high speed highway intersections

Create turning lanes at high speed highway intersections for turning onto ancillary roads.

- **Key Locations:** The intersection at the Highway and Haywood Rd., and the intersection at Highway 5 and Jenkins Rd.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and DOC.

Identify and develop nearby areas for additional or overflow parking

Identify and develop areas that are near high use locations, for additional or overflow parking spaces.

- **Key Locations:** Dutch Lake Beach, the Legion, and Evergreen Acres.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Planning, individual businesses, services, and landowners.

Square off intersections or construct roundabouts (at high risk highway intersections)

Square off or create roundabouts at high use/high risk intersections in Clearwater.

- **Key Locations:** The intersection across the Yellowhead Highway at the Old North Thompson Highway and Clearwater Village Rd.; and the intersection at Norfolk Rd. and Park Dr.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and DOC.

3.6 Strategic Mobility Planning: Pathways, Sidewalks, and Outdoor Seating Areas

3.6.1 Community Developed Vision Guidelines for Mobility Friendly Pathways, Sidewalks, and Outdoor Seating

Pathways/Trails should:

- be inventoried before accessibility developments are made.
- be located in areas that are highly used by pedestrians.
- be multi-use and inclusive to all types of non-motorized traffic such as mobility scooters, bicycles, pedestrians, and skateboards. Note: whenever possible pathways should be built or adjusted with special consideration to senior mobility device users.

- be plentiful in seniors high-use areas. Note: there should be one dedicated pathway that is well-maintained for seniors walking in the summer and winter.
- be completely separate from roadways whenever possible. Note: if pathways are on road shoulders they should be sectioned off with brightly painted road lines, road signs, and cement barriers (see Figures 6-2, 6-3, and 6-4 in Appendix B).
- be wide enough to allow two mobility devices to pass (2.0 metres).
- be built to use existing infrastructure features such as medians.
- be clear of debris, vegetation, and fallen foliage and have similar/consistent surfaces and maintenance.
- have smooth transition areas between all parts of the pathways.
- include signage indicating how accessible they are to different types of users.
- be mapped. These maps should be available at the information centre and on site.

Cement sidewalks should:

- be wide enough for two mobility devices to pass (2.0 metres) in all business and service areas.
- have a walking space that is clear of weeds, foliage, and obstacles (e.g. benches, sandwich boards, planters, furniture, etc.).
- use curb ramps, instead of curbcuts, to make sidewalk accessibility improvements where applicable.
- have bright yellow paint on all curbcuts, ledges, and accessibility features.

Benches should:

- be located close to trails whenever possible (note: there should be a barrier free path from the trail to the bench).
- be located in all areas where people need to rest or wait for a ride outside buildings.
- be located in all areas where people need to rest or wait for a ride on the street.
- be increased along high use walkways.
- be placed near street lights.
- be placed on clear cement pads where possible.
- be protected from the elements when used as bus-stops.
- have handrails to assist seniors with standing up.
- be high enough to accommodate seniors who have trouble standing up from low areas.
- be indestructible.
- be installed using a memorial bench dedication program.

Recreation areas should:

- be fully accessible, including better maintained designated accessible trails.
- have railings at all outdoor stair sets, even when only one step is present.

3.6.2 Key Recommendations: Pathways, Sidewalks, and Outdoor Seating

Short-Term

Programming/Projects

Develop a volunteer weed removal program*

Develop a volunteer weed removal program for community sidewalks and pathways.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater, sidewalks in the Weyerhaeuser Subdivision, and sidewalks in front of the Medical Centre.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Clearwater Girl Guides and AFAC.

Create a volunteer community work bee program to carry out small mobility fixes*

Create a volunteer community work bee program to carry out small mobility fixes in Clearwater (e.g. cleaning up pinecones).

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** CSS.

Information

Develop a priority list for mobility related infrastructure upgrades

Develop a priority list for infrastructure upgrades to pathway, sidewalk, and outdoor seating areas based on accessibility and mobility for community members. Consult this list for all future community infrastructure upgrades.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Council, DOC Planning, and AFAC.

Infrastructure or Modifications

Paint the edges of sidewalks and curbcuts bright yellow*

Paint the edges of sidewalks and curbcuts bright yellow to enhance visibility for people with visual impairments. Create a bylaw which enforces this standard in all commercial and residential areas.

- **Key Locations:** Future site of the Grocery Store/Mall, the roundabout, the Weyerhaeuser Subdivision, and the Brookfield Mall.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** Individual services and businesses, DOC, and AFAC.

* Indicates an 'easily implemented' item.

Medium-Term (Between 1 and 5 years)

Programming/Projects

Develop a memorial bench dedication program (or modify the current program)

Develop a memorial bench dedication program or modify the current Rotary bench program to increase the number of benches on key pathways in Clearwater. The program should involve consultation with community members (e.g. seniors, physiotherapists, etc.), and use specific criteria to make bench placement decisions (e.g. distance from other benches, length of pathway, and use by seniors). Seniors should be involved in testing bench designs to ensure accessibility. All benches should have armrests. A fund should be developed using this program for long term bench maintenance, as well as construction and installation.

- **Key Locations:** Along Park Dr., the cemetery, the tennis courts, in front of businesses, and all of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, IHA, Individual Businesses, and AFAC.

Develop a sponsorship program for local pathways/trails

Develop a sponsorship program for local public trails/pathways where different community agencies, businesses, clubs, or individuals could take responsibility for maintaining different trails/pathways or parts of trails/pathways around Clearwater for a given timeframe.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, DOC Parks and Recreation Committee, Rotary, IHA, and AFAC.

Information

Create an inventory of all the pathways/trails in Clearwater and the mobility improvements needed

Create an inventory of all of the pathways/trails in Clearwater, their level of difficulty, and the accessibility improvements needed.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, IHA, and AFAC.

Bylaws, Policies, and Strategies

Create a bylaw (or modify existing one) that outlines accessibility standards for sidewalks

Create either a separate accessible sidewalk bylaw or develop requirements for Bylaw No. 111 that address the sidewalk guidelines listed in the above vision. The bylaw should apply to both residential and commercial areas and should include requirements on minimum sidewalk width, obstacle allowances, and placement of outdoor seating and planters.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Planning and DOC Council.

Ensure the District’s bylaw or policy on curbcut requirements for commercially zoned properties meets the guidelines outlined by this document

The District of Clearwater should either update their current bylaws and policies or create a new bylaw or a policy requiring all future commercially zoned properties provide curbcuts near every building entrance of the building and on all newly created sidewalks. Bylaws and policies should be made consistent with the guidelines in this document.

- **Key Locations:** Future site of the Grocery Store/Mall.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC and the AFAC.

Infrastructure/Modifications

Develop and modify existing picnicking sites to accommodate people using mobility devices

Develop and modify existing community picnicking sites to accommodate people using mobility devices. Sites should include smooth, level, step-free surfaces and paths, and accessible picnic tables (see Figure 7-5 in Appendix B).

- **Key Locations:** Picnic area around the Farmers Market and Rafting Centre, and all of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, BC Parks, and individual businesses.

Create an accessible and short outdoor pathway loop/ multi-use, multi-season pathway/trail

Create an accessible and short outdoor pathway loop that will be well maintained all year round and that can be used by seniors for exercise in all seasons. This pathway should be wide enough for two mobility devices to pass and should have a consistent surface throughout.

- **Key Locations:** Near or around CSS.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, CSS, Rotary, IHA, and the AFAC.

Created a wider paved shoulder on roadways that can be used as a multi-use roadside pathway

Create a wider paved shoulder on roadways to allow for the creation of a roadside multi-use lane when repainting roadways in the future. Wherever possible, separate these shoulders from the road using meridians (see Figures 6-2 and 6-3 in Appendix B).

- **Key Locations:** The area north of the Highway from Jim’s Supermarket to the Blue Loon; around the new supermarket; down ‘Hospital Hill’, the Weyerhaeuser Subdivision; and the Old North Thompson Highway from Dutch Lake to the Brookfield Mall.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Public Works and the BC Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

Long-Term (5 years +)

Programming/Projects

Develop a community age friendly legacy fund

Develop a community age friendly legacy fund that can receive donations by anyone and can develop capital from a nominal tax or licensing fees. This fund could be used to provide grants for future infrastructure projects that meet the criteria laid out in the Mobility Plan and enhance community accessibility and mobility.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, and AFAC.

Infrastructure/Modifications

Enhance accessibility at Dutch Lake Beach

Enhance accessibility at Dutch Lake Beach: create a wheelchair accessible dock, and a wheelchair accessible pathway from parking areas to the beach and dock.

- **Key Locations:** Dutch Lake Beach.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC.

Develop new accessible recreation sites in lieu of those sites which cannot feasibly be made accessible

For each recreation sites which cannot feasibly be made accessible or mobility friendly, work on increasing the number of accessible recreation sites by finding and opening other recreation sites which can be made accessible.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, TNRD, and BC Parks.

Increase accessible trail/pathway development

Increase the number of accessible pathways/trails in high pedestrian traffic areas of the community. In addition to using Clearwater's upcoming trail plan, density of seniors residences, and location of services and amenities should be factors in pathway/trail development decisions.

- **Key Locations:** The Medical Centre and Library, Dutch Lake, around CSS, and all of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, IHA, and the AFAC.

Develop trail/pathway infrastructure for publically accessible trails/pathways

Signage should be placed at the trailheads of all publically accessible community pathways indicating the level of accessibility and the trail route (once the pathway inventory is complete and accessibility improvements are made). Brochures with maps of the pathways/trails should be available at the tourist information centre and should be distributed to residents (especially new residents).

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC, Rotary, IHA, Tourist Information Centre, and AFAC.

3.7 Strategic Mobility Planning: Business/Service/Facility Interiors and Doorway Areas

3.7.1 Community Developed Vision Guidelines for Business/Service/Facility Interiors and Doorways

Doorways should:

- have push button or automatic doors where possible (note: push-buttons should be large, easy to see and find, and out of the way of the opening door, and automatic doors should have distinctive 'in' and 'out' signs).
- have light, easy to open manual doors when automatic doors cannot be installed.
- have 'mini-ramps' or wedges installed over any lips or slight steps into doors.
- have a covered outdoor area where possible.
- have 'storm-doors' or 'air-locks' where possible.
- have taped down mats to eliminate tripping hazards.

Aisles should:

- be clear and obstacle free.
- be wide enough to accommodate two mobility devices side-by-side (2.0 metres).
- not be overloaded with items.
- not have items, especially heavy items, located too high or low to be reached by a person sitting in a wheelchair or scooter.
- locate the majority of items, especially sale or commonly used items, near the centre of shelves.

Signage should:

- be universal at all businesses, services, and facilities in Clearwater.
- be enlarged to enhance visibility and include hours, phone numbers, and general information.

- be universal and large for all doorway buttons.
- be enlarged when located at the top of aisles in businesses, and should indicate where goods are.
- have large print and be close to the centre of aisles for all item prices and labels in businesses.

Seating should:

- be located in interior areas where people need to rest or wait.
- include wheelchair accessible seating spaces in areas where people wait.
- include wheelchair accessible tables in restaurants or eateries (see Figure 6-6 in Appendix B).

Front counters/checkouts should:

- have purse shelves and cane hooks for seniors.
- have options for sit-down checkouts or counters designated for accessible and seniors use (see Figure 6-7 in Appendix B).

Washrooms should:

- be increased for public use.
- be well-signed.
- be accessible to people using all types of mobility devices.
- be large enough to accommodate one person standing and one person using a mobility device.
- have higher toilets (between 45 to 48 centimetres from the ground) to eliminate difficulties standing up from low seating.
- have lever-style door handles and taps.

3.7.2 Key Recommendations: Business/Service/Facility Interiors and Doorways

Short-Term (Up to 1 year)

Programming/Projects

Develop a partnership with the RCMPs crime prevention unit to produce joint presentations

Develop a partnership between the Age Friendly Advisory Committee and the Clearwater RCMP to explore the possibility of producing joint presentations on crime prevention and mobility, as many of the strategies overlap. The information from the mobility project can be used for these purposes.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC and RCMP.

Information

Develop a ‘Mobility Friendly Business’ checklist*

Develop a ‘Mobility Friendly Business’ checklist to assist local businesses in identifying necessary mobility improvements. Distribute this list to businesses in Clearwater and ensure that new businesses receive the checklist, possibly with their business licenses (once license program is initiated).

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC, DOC, and the Chamber of Commerce.

Develop and facilitate ‘Mobility Friendly Business’ Presentations

Develop a presentation on accessibility standards for non corporately owned businesses in Clearwater. Resources such as grants that can be used for accessibility upgrades could also be presented here. The presentations should also include information on the economic benefits and importance of creating mobility friendly shopping and service areas.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC, the Chamber of Commerce, and individual services and businesses in Clearwater.

Bylaws, Policies, and Strategies

Develop a District policy requiring wheelchair seating/tables where applicable

Develop a District policy requiring wheelchair seating and, where applicable, table areas in public waiting areas.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC, DOC Council, and individual services and business in Clearwater.

Medium-Term (Between 1 and 5 years)

Bylaws, Policies, and Strategies

Develop ‘Universal Signage’ standards for accessible features and doorways in Clearwater

Develop a Clearwater standard based on currently available standards for accessible features in doorways. This should include universal signage for all accessible and push button doors, and business signage.

* Indicates an ‘easily implemented’ item.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC, the Chamber of Commerce, and individual services and businesses in Clearwater.

Develop a district policy to provide incentives for the creation of public washrooms

Develop a District policy to provide incentives, such as tax exemptions, business licensing discounts, accelerated application review, and waving application fees, to business owners and developers who include public washrooms in their designs or buildings.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** DOC Planning and DOC Council.

Long-Term (5 years +)

Programming /Projects

Develop an accessible local businesses and recreation areas program

Develop an accessible local business and recreation program to promote local businesses and recreation areas that are mobility friendly. The program would include a guide to accessible locations in Clearwater, and an 'accessible site' sticker for display at accessible businesses and recreation areas. Businesses could apply to be a part of the program.

- **Key Locations:** All of Clearwater.
- **Key Lead Agencies:** AFAC, the Chamber of Commerce, Tourist Information Centre, and individual services and businesses in Clearwater.

4. Implications

Clearwater has made a commitment to becoming an Age Friendly Community and a place for people of all ages and stages of life. Following the recommendations from the above sections of this report will assist in this goal. There are many positive implications of improving mobility in Clearwater that extend well beyond the fact that people will have an easier time getting around.

Improvements in community mobility can have a profound impact on seniors health. Keeping seniors mobile and active is a proven way to help them avoid diseases that arise from inactivity. Improved mobility can also prevent advanced deterioration and frequent use of acute health care facilities, thereby reducing a significant burden on health care systems. The opportunities for physical activity for seniors can be increased by implementing many of the aforementioned strategies. When in place, these strategies can remove or limit barriers to mobility and improve seniors' access to parks and walking trails from residential neighborhoods.

Mobility improvements can also help alleviate social issues experienced by some seniors. Mobility and accessibility challenges often prevent older individuals from attending events simply because they cannot get in the front door, leading to social exclusion and isolation. Carrying out the recommendations in this report will reduce many of these social issues over time.

Community safety can also be enhanced by implementing mobility improvements in Clearwater. Many of the hazards that make communities unsafe for travel also impact community mobility. Improvements such as reconstructing intersections, removing visual barriers, creating additional crosswalks, and separating pathways from roads all act to simultaneously improve safety and mobility. Following the recommendations in this report will make Clearwater a safer place to travel, live, work, and play in for years to come.

Improving community mobility and accessibility also works to retain older populations. Removing the barriers seniors face to performing daily activities in Clearwater ensures that seniors – many of whom have spent their entire lives working and volunteering here – will be able to remain in their homes as they age. Improving walkability, connectivity, mobility, and age friendliness works to keep Clearwater attractive to seniors as they move into old age.

Improving seniors' mobility and developing accessible infrastructure in Clearwater also ensures that the community is accessible and mobility friendly for tourists. Accessible tourism is a growing industry (Buhalis and Darcy, 10). By ensuring that businesses and recreation areas are accessible to all community members, Clearwater will create an opportunity to develop an accessible tourism market in the future.

Finally, enhancing mobility in Clearwater for seniors improves the community for all residents. Communities designed to enhance seniors mobility positively impact the health and well-being of everyone: they reduce the mobility stressors of parents using strollers, students carrying textbooks, and even delivery people wheeling large or heavy loads. A more accessible and mobility friendly community is one where people of all ages and abilities can live, play, and work with ease.

5. References

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