Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project

Roundtable Theme Report

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Acknowledgements

Availability

Copies of all reports associated with the Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project are available in a number of locations. In Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Hudson's Hope, Pouce Coupe, Taylor, and Tumbler Ridge, copies are available at local municipal halls and public libraries. In Dawson Creek and Fort St. John, copies have been deposited with the Peace River Regional District offices. In Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Hudson's Hope, and Pouce Coupe, copies have also been given to the local seniors' hall. At the University of Northern British Columbia, copies have been deposited at the Geoffrey R. Weller Library. Reports can also be accessed on the Community Development Institute website:

http://www.unbc.ca/cdi/research.html

Project Reports

- Methodology Report
- Population Background and Trends Report
- Survey / Interview Report
- Roundtable Theme Report
- Executive Summary Report

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**Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project
Roundtable Theme Report**

1.0   Project Description

Since the 1980s, Canada's population has been aging. In small towns, the provision of housing, services, and facilities influences the decisions of individuals when choosing to retire in a community. In the Peace River Regional District, there were about 3,300 people over the age of 65 in 1991, but by 2001 there were about 4,350 people over age 65 (Statistics Canada, 1991; Statistics Canada, 2001a). The increase in the number of older residents, and the increase in the number of residents who wish to remain in the region when they retire, have raised the level of interest in how the community, local services, and available housing options will meet the needs of a growing seniors' population. As a result, UNBC's Community Development Institute and the Peace River Regional District are working together to assess the needs of older residents.

The purpose of the Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project is to examine housing and support service needs for seniors in the communities and rural areas of the region. The work was carried out by a research team from UNBC with the goal of providing local leaders with information relevant to decision-making regarding community planning and infrastructure investments. The project was carried out in the Fall of 2006 and Winter of 2007 (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1   Timeline

May – July 2006	- Project application developed - Funding confirmed - Project Contribution Agreement confirmed - UNBC Research Ethics Board process completed - Research team established
August 2006	- Relevant local planning documents identified and obtained - Project logistics schedule completed ○ Field work ○ Household survey
September 2006	- Draft household survey - Draft interview guides - Draft roundtable guides
October 2006	- Review of draft household survey and information letters by Project Advisory Group - Teleconference meeting with Project Advisory Group
November 2006	- Initiate household survey distribution ○ Rural mail out ○ Municipal partnerships - Construct survey databases (SPSS and WORD) - Media releases to publicize household survey
December 2006	- Complete household survey distribution - Household survey data entry begins - Finalize contacts for interviews and roundtables
January 2007	- Household survey data entry completed - Initiate population change report - Edit interview and roundtable guides
February 2007	- Organize interviews and roundtables for assessment of seniors' needs - Preliminary analysis of household survey - Conduct key informant interviews - Conduct community roundtables
March 2007	- Analysis of interview and roundtable data - Complete population analysis - Complete interview and roundtable analysis - Complete survey analysis
April 2007	Complete draft project reports
May 2007	- Review of draft project reports with Regional District and Project Advisory Group - Final reports completed and distributed

2.0 Methodology

The data and information for this project was collected through four methods. These include:

- a review of Census population data,
- a household survey,
- community roundtable discussions, and
- key informant interviews.

This report focuses on the results from the roundtable discussions that were undertaken with local residents, including seniors and those who are involved with and/or are aware of seniors' needs. The purpose of the roundtable discussions was to collect information relevant to local communities and to explore some of the preliminary survey results. Roundtables were conducted between February 19th and February 23rd, 2007. A general breakdown of the roundtable discussions by group affiliation is shown in Table 2.1a. Additionally, a breakdown of the roundtable discussions by community is shown in Table 2.1b.

Table 2.1a
Roundtables – by group affiliation

Seniors	9
Community Associations	4
Service Providers	3
Women's Organizations	3
First Nations	1
Total	20

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table 2.1b
Roundtables – by community

Rural	7
Chetwynd	4
Dawson Creek	3
Tumbler Ridge	3
Hudson's Hope	2
Pouce Coupe	1
Total	20

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

The discussion guide that was used in the roundtable sessions is available in the Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project Methodology Report (Appendix B).

3.0   Background

The purpose of the Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project was to examine housing and support service needs for seniors in the communities and rural areas of the region. The goal is to provide information of use to the Regional District, the municipalities, service providers, and the voluntary sector about how to prepare for the housing and service needs of future populations.

Information was first collected through a household survey, mailed in November and December of 2006. The purpose of the survey was to gauge how households felt about existing (and future) housing, care, and service needs in the region. Preliminary results were generated from surveys that were returned to UNBC by the end of January 2007.[1] The preliminary results informed a series of roundtable discussions in the second phase of information collection. When conducting the roundtable discussions in February 2007, participants were shown the preliminary survey results and asked to identify their priorities for seniors' needs. From this work, this report presents a set of summary notes which capture the key priorities under six sections:

- Migration and mobility,
- Housing,
- Health care,
- Services,
- Transportation, and
- Physical environment.

Following the summary notes, a more detailed description of the issues and topics raised is compiled in tables (Appendix A). For some of the questions that were posed in the roundtable discussion, two tables are presented – 'Table X.a' and 'Table X.b'. The data are presented this way because, for these questions, participants were asked to prioritize a given number of responses that they felt were *most important*. However, many groups frequently felt that many items or issues were important. In this case, the groups were asked to identify a given number of their *top priorities*. The tables that contain the top priorities are identified in Appendix A as Table X.a and have the words "Top Priority" in the title. Other responses that were vocalized, but not identified to be the top priorities, are included in Appendix A as Table X.b, and have the word "Secondary" in their title. The discussion in this report draws mostly upon the prioritized responses, but all responses are considered.

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[1] Final survey results were generated with surveys that were returned to UNBC by the end of March 2007.

4.0   Results

This part of the report summarizes the main themes that emerged from each section of questions at the roundtable discussions. Questions that gauge participants' opinions about existing housing, services, and infrastructure were asked in the roundtable discussion guide (see Methodology Report, Appendix B). Each section of the discussion guide is addressed in the following discussion independently, but linkages exist between sections due to the integration of various services. For example, some comments in the health care section relate to medical transportation, and some comments in the housing section relate to the provision of community health support services. As a result, related issues sometimes emerge in different sections.

Additionally, comments emerge about the design and layout of buildings, housing, municipalities, and the region. Readers may ask if these are 'design issues' (related to the way that the municipalities and region are physically constructed) or if they are 'aging issues' (related to people noticing these things more as they get older – especially if mobility is affected). The answer is that these comments are both 'design issues' and 'aging issues'. Most city design and planning across North America is based upon land use separation and low density developments. Different types of land uses are then joined by road networks for automobile accessibility. The outcomes of low density developments are noticed more as seniors and older residents have to traverse long distances to services and activities.

Migration and mobility

In order to assess factors that may influence migration and retention of residents, participants were asked to describe advantages and disadvantages of retiring in the area. In terms of depicting the top advantages of retiring in the Peace River region, the most dominant theme was access to social networks, including family, friends, and other support networks. The benefits of small town living and environmental assets also emerged as top advantages at some roundtables. Small town living included qualities such as peace and quiet, area familiarity, and friendly people. Environmental assets entailed climate, weather, and area beauty.

When considering the top disadvantages of retiring in the area, three primary themes arose. The most dominant of these surrounded transportation concerns, including high transportation costs and limited availability of transportation services. Participants noted that it was expensive when they had to leave the community. Additionally, participants felt that the lack of public transit in some communities, poor public transportation networks, and a lack of out-of-town transportation contributed to the limited availability of transportation services in the Peace River region. The second most predominant disadvantage of retiring in the region noted by participants was the limited availability of health care services. Participants noted that inadequate medical services, a lack of ambulance services, and a lack of specialized medical services all contributed to the limited availability of health care services in the region. The third most dominant theme included physical barriers, particularly poor road maintenance and the lack of snow and ice removal.

Housing

In order to get a sense of the housing needs in the area, roundtable participants were asked what types of housing are needed. Most groups felt that independent living units and assisted living units are the top priorities. For example, participants called for seniors' gated communities, apartments, condominiums, and duplexes. Related to this, participants called for multi-level care facilities so that residents could move into independent living units and gain access to higher levels of care as needed. This would reduce the stress of having to relocate as the need for care increases.

In the discussion about what is needed for seniors' housing in the Peace River region, comments arose with respect to a seniors' housing shortage, confusion about provincially provided care facilities, and financial barriers to securing seniors' housing. Participants expressed that the region is faced with a housing shortage for seniors and older residents. This was reinforced by participants commenting on the long waiting lists for existing seniors' housing. The closing of existing housing and care facilities in the region was opposed, and participants felt that more long-term care facilities are needed in the region to meet demands. Participants also noted that, given recent changes to provincially provided care facilities, there is now some confusion about what each level of care now entails. One participant also raised concerns about the application process for shelter subsidies for seniors. When seniors apply for shelter subsidies, the application process assumes that they are already in the housing which they want to apply the subsidy to. However, the housing demand in the region is so high, that seniors do not always live in the intended housing when they are applying. This was identified as being a barrier to obtaining shelter subsidies. It was generally agreed upon as a secondary priority that low cost rental units are needed. Additionally, concerns were raised about the recruitment and retention of required staff for a new facility.

Participants provided a number of comments and suggestions about the development, building, and operation of seniors' housing in the Peace River Regional District. When considering developments that could be constructed in the Peace River region, participants drew examples from housing complexes that exist in other communities. The housing complexes that were set as models were based on the inclusion of services such as meals, personal care, emergency aid, and housekeeping. It was suggested that it is not financially feasible to expect the provincial government to provide all of the services that participants are calling for. Participants felt that the private sector should work in conjunction with the provincial government and the non-profit sector to develop seniors' housing. There was also agreement that there is a need for increased access to funding by non-governmental groups to develop, build, and operate seniors' housing.

Participants also provided a number of comments and suggestions about the design and location of seniors' housing in the Peace River Regional District. First, a range of design features to enhance residents' quality of life and to accommodate those with limited or declining mobility are needed. Qualities that enhance a residents' quality of life include the incorporation of common areas for socializing, suites for couples, access to greenspace, and room for visitors to stay at the housing complex. In order to accommodate those with limited or declining mobility, design features such as elevators, century tub baths, handrails, and lower counters and cupboards are needed. Participants also noted that a range of services are needed to support independent

living, such as the provision of meals, strata fees, and an emergency help button. Regarding location, most participants felt that it would be beneficial to have seniors' housing located near other services, such as medical services, transportation services, and general services provided in a downtown. Some participants noted that vacant buildings could be used for seniors' housing by retrofitting the buildings to accommodate those with limited or declining mobility. Finally, when rural participants were asked where they felt housing for rural seniors should be located, participants generally felt that independent living facilities should be located in rural areas. However, housing that required increased levels of care (i.e. long-term care) should be located in larger municipalities within the Peace River region to be closer to services.

Health care

Participants were asked to assess how they felt the health care system responded to seniors' needs. Notably, participants were asked to identify the most useful health care services currently provided to seniors, and the most critical health care service needs of seniors.

Overall, when asked about how the health care system responds to seniors' needs, prominent issues concerned the availability of services, the quality of services, and how the health care system is operated. Participants noted again (see migration and mobility) that there is a general lack of health care services available to seniors in the region. This is further demonstrated by residents' need to travel to access health services and long wait times for services. Regarding the quality of services, participants noted that they have received inadequate quality health care and that the system does not respond sufficiently to the needs of seniors. Participants felt that health care services were impacted by operational problems, including program cutbacks, lack of funding, inadequate management, and limited accountability from health care service providers and the provincial government. One roundtable group argued that rural health system structures should not be based on models intended for urban centres.

Regarding the most useful health care services provided to area seniors, four primary themes emerged. Many positive comments were offered about how health care providers, such as doctors, nurses, and other medical staff, respond to the needs of area seniors. Participants also noted that specialists in the area, such as ophthalmologists, orthopaedists, and surgeons, are key health care service providers for seniors. Additionally, participants felt that community health support services, such as caregiver house calls, adult day care programs, services provided by mental health and home support, and long-term care, all contribute to the well-being of seniors in the Peace River region. Emergency services, such as hospitals, ambulance, medevac, and 911, are also important health care services.

When asked about the critical health care needs of seniors in the area, five prominent themes arose. These included the need for more health care professionals, specialists, transportation services, emergency services, and community health support services. Participants felt that more health care professionals, including doctors, nurses, medical staff, pharmacists, and surgical nurses, are critical for seniors' health needs. Participants also called for specialists such as surgeons, dentists, neurologists, and ophthalmologists. Concerns were expressed about the need to provide transportation for medical appointments inside and outside of the community.

Additionally, participants felt that financial assistance is needed for those who have to leave the community for medical reasons. Regarding emergency services, concerns were raised about the lack of ambulance service and air evacuation in communities, such as Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge. Participants noted that airstrip and helipad landing size regulations have become stricter, and some communities no longer meet the minimum requirements to receive these services. Participants indicated that this service gap could be filled by Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society (STARS), which operates out of Grande Prairie. Regarding community health support services, participants felt that more home support, home care, and visiting services are needed.

Participants provided a number of comments and suggestions about potential improvements to the health care system, specifically regarding funding distribution and operations. Support was expressed for more funding to be allocated to health care, particularly for rural outreach services. Participants also felt that funding should be based on the population of the catchment area that a facility serves, and not on the local population size. Regarding operations, participants indicated that medical facilities in Chetwynd and Hudson's Hope are not fully utilized. In this situation, participants felt that closed facilities, such as operating rooms or hospital wings, should be reopened.

Services

In order to assess how to help seniors maintain their health and independence, roundtable participants were asked to identify which social and support services are needed most. Overwhelmingly, participants identified that social support services are needed, such as home care/home support, nursing care, personal care, respite care, and visiting opportunities. Some participants also identified home maintenance services, food services, and transportation services as priority services that are needed to help seniors maintain their health and independence. Home maintenance services that participants felt are needed included house cleaning, shopping assistance, and yard work. Food services included Meals on Wheels, the delivery of goods and services, assistance with meal preparation, and the Wheels to Meals program[2]. Regarding transportation services, participants felt that assistance with medical trips and more local transportation are needed.

In discussing the types of social and support services that are needed in the region, participants noted a number of problems associated with the delivery of support services. Concerns about a lack of support services, financial barriers, and regulatory barriers were the most frequent problems identified. Primarily, participants were concerned about a lack of home support services and a lack of services to help familial caregivers. Participants identified financial barriers to accessing support services, as the costs for respite and home support services are high. Concerns were also expressed about regulations that prevent the provision of flexible care to seniors. Specifically, qualification guidelines prevent capable retired, but no longer licensed, support workers from providing personal care to seniors. Such individuals may include retired nurses, care aides, or care givers. Additionally, friends and family members are not able to bring food to seniors in long-term care facilities because the food is prepared in a home kitchen and

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[2] The Wheels to Meals program is provided in Chetwynd. The program is designed to take seniors to a group meal, also providing a social element.

not a certified food safe kitchen. Some participants felt that if these regulations were relaxed, then better quality of life could be given to seniors.

In order to assess space availability for seniors' recreation and leisure services, roundtable participants were asked if a seniors' activity centre is needed in their community. Most participants noted that a seniors' activity centre is not needed in their community, or that space for seniors' recreation and leisure is already available. Concerns were raised about existing seniors' centres not being attended regularly. However, participants from some rural areas and Tumbler Ridge thought that their communities need a seniors' activity centre. Of those who thought that a seniors' activity centre was needed in their area, some thought that it could be located in an existing community building, such as a community hall or a community centre. However, concerns were raised about the potential inaccessibility of these buildings for seniors (i.e. lack of an elevator). Most participants from rural areas felt that a seniors' activity centre should be located in a rural area to retain seniors. Some participants thought that a seniors' activity centre in a rural area should be combined with seniors' housing or located near other services to create a central place for seniors.

In order to understand what types of activities and services a seniors' activity centre should provide, participants were asked to identify those they felt were most needed. Participants noted five prominent activities that are needed, including health programs, physical activities, special events, food programs, and games. Health programs included health and wellness clinics, foot care clinics, and massage services. Physical activities included fitness programs, dance lessons, and dances. Special events included day activities, such as bus tours and local outings, social opportunities, and other activity groups. In terms of food programs, participants called for hot lunches, coffee and snacks, hot dinners, and potlucks. Recommended games included shuffleboard, cards, bingo, billiards, and darts.

Transportation

To get a sense of how seniors' mobility is enhanced or limited by transportation services, roundtable participants were asked what they felt were the key transportation needs for area seniors inside and outside of their communities. Participants indicated that they need a range of transportation services inside the community, such as informal transportation providers, public transportation, transportation provided by community organizations and service clubs, and private transportation. Informal transportation could be provided by volunteers, friends, and family. One participant noted that seniors could be matched with 'buddies' who could provide them with transportation assistance. However, while volunteer drivers are important, concerns were expressed about insurance issues for volunteers driving seniors around town. Uncertainty and the potential for liability are barriers to the provision of this service by volunteers. In terms of public transportation options, participants felt that city transit, HandyDART, and publicly subsidized taxi programs are great services for seniors. Participants further noted that these services are needed in communities where they do not already exist. In terms of transportation provided by community organizations and service clubs, participants noted that services like 'Step Up and Ride' and the 'Easter Seal Bus' are important. Finally, participants also felt that increased taxi service or another privately operated service is needed. However, it was also

emphasized that transportation options have to be affordable for seniors, as their incomes can be limited.

Regarding transportation needs outside the community, two primary themes emerged. Participants felt that public transportation for medical services and general purpose private transportation are seniors' greatest needs for out-of-town transportation. Most participants agreed that the Northern Health Connections bus service is beneficial for those who have to travel within and outside of the region for health services. However, concerns were raised about a lack of medical evacuation service in the region. Participants also indicated that an inter-community bus and affordable air transportation are needed for transportation outside of the region.

Physical environment

In order to understand seniors' mobility within their communities and in the region, roundtable participants were asked to identify physical barriers that prohibit mobility for seniors. Three primary themes emerged from this question. Participants felt that snow and ice, design problems collectively, and traffic safety concerns are barriers that prevent seniors from walking around their community. For example, ice was again (see migration and mobility) identified to be a barrier on sidewalks, roads, driveways, and parking lots. There were two primary areas where design was noted to be problematic: municipal infrastructure and public and private sector buildings. Regarding municipal infrastructure, lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, and stop lights were all identified as being prohibitive to seniors' mobility. When discussing private and public sector buildings, design features such as lack of handicapped washrooms, lack of ramps, stairs, and lack of elevators were identified to inhibit seniors' mobility. Participants also noted that safety is a concern when it comes to traffic – specifically crossing a highway or street. Speeding traffic and large trucks pose safety concerns for seniors.

In order to improve mobility and accessibility, participants frequently offered recommendations to improve municipal and rural infrastructure, building design, and snow and ice removal. Suggestions were made to install more sidewalks, crosswalks, signage for handicapped parking, stop lights, and stop signs to alleviate mobility barriers in municipalities and rural areas. Regarding road networks in municipalities and rural areas, suggestions were made for paving improvements and widening roads. Building accessibility could be improved through the installation of automatic doors, elevators, handicapped washrooms, and more ramps. Participants also noted that increased measures should be taken to ensure safe conditions for seniors through improved snow removal from sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots, and increased sanding for roads and sidewalks.

5.0   Concluding Comments

The purpose of this report has been to highlight some of the dominant themes that resulted from roundtable discussions held in February 2007 as part of the Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project. Appendix A contains the detailed tables that outline the full range of responses to each question. These themes, together with the nuances captured in the appendix, can form the basis both for action now, and for future planning.

As a report for the Regional District, the municipalities, service providers, and the voluntary sector of the Peace River region, there are a number of issues which fall into different jurisdictions. While some topics may become advocacy points to raise with different levels of government, others can be addressed now. To this end, we have included some possible areas for action:

Housing – Seniors' housing shortages in the Peace River region need to be addressed. With the onset of an older population and residents already feeling that there is a shortage, investments need to be made to develop and build seniors' housing. Innovation can play a role in providing multiple levels of care within a facility. In doing so, partnerships should be explored between various levels of government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to develop, build, and/or operate seniors' housing. In this process, the affordability of seniors' housing should be considered given the high demand in the housing rental market. Ensuring that affordable seniors' housing is available prevents the marginalization of seniors in economic boom periods.

Social support services – There is a need for increased provision of supports in the homes of seniors and older residents. Formal service and care provision is becoming less able to meet the needs of an aging population in the Peace River region. Given this, gaps in care provision and other critical services for seniors are being taken up by the voluntary sector and other informal networks (i.e. family and friends). This relates to how participants noted that access to social networks is a prioritized advantage to retiring in the area. The Regional District and/or the communities need to find ways to assist voluntary and service groups to carry out such tasks (i.e. facilitate networking and partnerships). Given the role of informal care providers in providing services, support for these groups will contribute considerably to local quality of life. These services are needed in rural and urban areas alike.

Health care – There is a need for increased flexibility in the provision of health care in rural areas. Provincial benchmarking does not address the unique service delivery challenges faced by rural and small town places, nor does it recognize place-based differences in service utilization. By considering flexible provision of rural health care, pressures can be removed from provincial health care services – which can be difficult to provide in areas of low population density. However, liability concerns and qualification standards for health care provision must be considered.

Transportation networks – Residents' concerns about air evacuation in the region need to be addressed. With regionalized health care services in the Peace River Regional District, emergency services should be available to fill service gaps. In addition to emergency services, general purpose transportation networks within the region need to be assessed to provide access to regional service centres. This service is important to seniors in rural areas and communities outside of the regional service centres. Also, transportation for seniors and older residents must be affordable due to low and fixed incomes and to accommodate that the high costs of transportation are a disadvantage to retiring in the Peace River region.

Physical environment – There is a need to implement maintenance and safety improvements regarding snow and ice removal, and traffic on highways and local streets. Special considerations should be taken to ensure that hindrances to seniors' mobility are mitigated through improvements to sidewalks, safe crossing areas, and snow clearing in areas of high utilization, as this was identified as a disadvantage to retiring in the Peace River region. Additionally, improved road maintenance in the rural areas facilitates rural seniors' independence. Following concerns raised about industrial encroachment and traffic safety, seniors' mobility is being impacted through the presence of industrial activity in the region.

Infrastructure and planning – The allocation of services and facilities should be assessed regionally, as there is value in creating 'clustered' developments in urban and rural areas where any number of services (i.e. housing, medical, recreational, shopping, and social) are brought together. In creating higher density developments, increased convenience is provided to less mobile populations. Additionally, the renovation of existing facilities, and the addition of new facilities, must meet accessibility requirements of older residents.

The response and enthusiasm that the Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project received while the research was being executed demonstrates the importance of seniors' needs within the region. Most of the Peace River region now has a 'bubble' of older workers nearing retirement. There is a need to start planning for the housing, service, care, and infrastructure needs of this aging population. By starting now, the Regional District, municipalities, service providers, and voluntary sectors of the Peace River region have time to prepare for how they will meet these needs of an older population in the near future.

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Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project
Appendix A

Roundtable Discussion Responses

SECTION A: Migration and Mobility

Table A1.a   Top Priorities – Advantages to Retiring in the Area

Social Networks (31)
Family (16)
Friends (11)
Support network (4)

Small Town Living (25)
Small town (9)
Peace & quiet (7)
Area familiarity (6)
Friendly people (3)

Environmental Assets (13)
Area beauty / nature (8)
Climate / weather (5)

Cost of Living (12)
Affordable housing (5)
Own home / farm (4)
Cost of living (3)

Recreational Assets (6)
Recreation opportunities (6)

Health Care Services (5)
Doctors (3)
Short waiting periods for medical services (2)

Low Crime Rate (5)
Low crime rate / safe (5)

Municipal Infrastructure / Services (4)
Community centre (1)
Community is well planned (1)
Good garbage pickup (1)
Good road maintenance (1)

Social Support Services (3)
Church / religion (3)

Other (5)
Lifestyle (4)
Quality of life (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table A1.b   Secondary Priorities – Advantages to Retiring in the Area

Small Town Living (20)
Area familiarity (6)
Friendly people (5)
Small town (5)
Peace & quiet (2)
Easy to get around (1)
No traffic (1)

Environmental Assets (14)
Climate / weather (9)
Area beauty / nature (3)
Environment (2)

Social Networks (11)
Family, close to (5)
Friends (4)
Support network (2)

Health Care Services (7)
Good doctors / medical services (4)
Short waiting periods for medical services (2)
Medical clinic (1)

Cost of Living (6)
Low cost of living / affordable (5)
Own house (1)

Recreational Assets (3)
Groups / clubs to get involved in (1)
Library (1)
Swimming pool (1)

Municipal Infrastructure / Services (2)
Community centre (1)
Good snow removal (1)

Social Support Services (2)
Band provides financial assistance for out-of-town
    medical trips (1)
Church (1)

Other (9)
Quality of life (3)
This is home (2)
Employment (1)
Family, away from (1)
Lifestyle (1)
Will profit when sell house (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table A2.a   Top Priorities – Disadvantages to Retiring in the Area

Limited Availability of Services – Health (20)
Inadequate medical services (11)
Lack of ambulance & air ambulance service (3)
Lack of specialized medical services (3)
Have to leave town for medical services (1)
No dentist (1)
Wait lists for medical services (1)

Physical Barriers (13)
Poor road maintenance (6)
Lack of snow / ice removal (3)
Poor winter road maintenance (2)
Poor sidewalks (1)
Stairs in homes (1)

High Transportation Costs (12)
High transportation / travel costs (12)

Limited Availability of Services – Transportation (10)
Lack of public transit (3)
Poor public transportation networks (3)
Lack of direct flights (1)
Lack of transportation to out-of-town medical appointments (1)
Lack of wheelchair accessible transportation (1)
No airport (1)

Lack of Housing (9)
Lack of seniors' housing (6)
Lack of Aboriginal housing (2)
Wait lists for seniors' housing (1)

Isolation (7)
Distance from larger centres (7)

Cost of Living (6)
High cost of housing (3)
High cost of living – general (2)
High cost of fuel (1)

Environmental Liabilities (6)
Climate / weather (5)
Don't like highway driving in poor weather (1)

Industrial Encroachment (6)
Industrial encroachment (oil & gas / mining / forestry) (6)

Safety Concerns (5)
High crime rate (3)
Traffic (2)

Limited Availability of Services – Other (2)
Lack of cell phone coverage (1)
Lack of help with home repair (1)

Limited Recreation Opportunities (2)
Limited recreation opportunities (2)

Overcrowding (1)
Overcrowding (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table A2.b   Secondary Priorities – Disadvantages to Retiring in the Area

Limited Availability of Services – Health (17)
Lack of medical services (6)
Lack of doctors (4)
Long waitlists – medical services (3)
Lack of ambulance service (1)
Lack of services – eyecare (1)
Lack of services – home care (1)
Long waitlists – specialists (1)

Isolation (7)
Distance to larger centres (7)

Limited Availability of Services – Other (7)
Lack of services – social support (3)
Lack of services – general (2)
Lack of services – retail (1)
Small grocery store (1)

Cost of Living (6)
High cost of housing (3)
High cost of living – general (3)

Environmental Liabilities (6)
Climate / weather (6)

Limited Availability of Services – Transportation (6)
Lack of out-of-town transportation (3)
Have to leave rural area if health deteriorates (1)
No direct flights (1)
Poor road maintenance when mines don't operate (1)

Lack of Social Networks (4)
Distance from family (3)
Friends leave community (1) **Safety Concerns (3)**
High / increasing crime rate (2)
Loose dogs (1)

Industrial Encroachment (2)
Decreasing air quality due to industry (1)
Industrial encroachment (oil & gas / forestry) (1)

Lack of Housing (2)
Lack of seniors' housing – general (1)
Lack of seniors housing that will allow pets (1)

High Transportation Costs (1)
High transportation / travel costs (1)

Limited Recreation Opportunities (1)
Lack of entertainment (1)

Physical Barriers (1)
Lack of wheelchair accessibility (1)

Other (2)
ATVs & skidoos are a nuisance (1)
Lack of awareness of services (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

SECTION B: Housing

Table B1.a Top Priorities for Housing Needs

Independent Living Units (23)
Independent living units – general (16)
Gated community for seniors (4)
Duplex or condominium (1)
Independent living units – like Tremblay House (Pouce Coupe) (1)
Seniors' apartments (1)

Assisted Living Units (17)
Assisted living units – general (15)
Abbeyfield style housing (1)
Assisted living units – 25 to 30 units (1)

Long-Term Care Facilities (10)
Long-term care facilities – general (9)
Long-term care facilities – for Aboriginals (1)

Palliative Care (4)
Palliative care – general (4)

Respite Care (4)
Respite care – general (3)
Respite care – 2 beds are needed (1)

Multi-Level Care Facility (3)
Combine independent and assisted living (1)
Combine respite and palliative care (1)
Multi-level care home – 30 units (1)

Culture-specific Housing (2)
Housing specifically for Aboriginals (2)

Low Income Housing (2)
Low income housing (2)

Family Supported Living (1)
Family homes to take on assisting a senior (1)

Other (1)
Supportive living (between independent living and assisted living) (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table B1.b   Secondary Priorities for Housing Needs

Low Income Housing (6)
Low cost rental units for seniors (2)
Affordable co-op housing for seniors (1)
Government subsidized rental units (1)
Lack of affordable housing options (1)
Rent based on income (1)

Respite Care (6)
Respite care – general (3)
Respite care – local, not a regional centre (2)
Respite care should not be phased out in Pouce Coupe (1)

Palliative Care (5)
Palliative care – general (3)
Palliative care – could use room in medical unit (1)
Palliative care – more than one unit in Dawson Creek (1)

Multi-level Care Facilities (4)
Multi-level care facility – general (2)
Combine independent living and assisted living (1)
Multi-level care facility – in smaller communities (1)

Long-Term Care (2)
Long-term care facilities – general (1)
Long-term care facilities – local, not a regional centre (1)

Need Housing for Residents with Mental Illness (2)
Lack of housing for mentally ill (1)
Need housing for seniors with dementia (1)

Independent Living Units (1)
Apartments with a bathroom and kitchenette (1)

Rental Units (1)
Rental units – general (1)

Other (1)
Independent living units with nurse check-ins (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table B2   Other Housing Issues

Lack of Seniors' Housing (6)
Lack of seniors' housing – general (3)
Assisted living shortage in region (2)
Lack of seniors' housing options to move parents into from out-of-province (1)

Long Waiting Lists for Seniors' Housing (5)
Long waiting lists – general (2)
Long waiting lists – long-term care (2)
Long waiting lists – Silver Willows (Hudson's Hope) (1)

Seniors' Facilities Should Not be Closed (3)
Peace Haven (Pouce Coupe) should not be closed (2)
Facilities in Dawson Creek / Pouce Coupe should not be closed (1)

Confusion About Different Levels of Care (2)
General public is unclear what assisted living entails (1)
Misinformation / confusion about changing criteria for different levels of care (1)

Financial Concerns (2)
Have all bills combined each month (1)
Need pre-approval process for SAFER when housing demand is high (1)

Human Resource Concerns (2)
More staff are needed if new housing is built (1)
Need better staffing in existing seniors' housing (1)

Increase Home Care (1)
Increase home care to alleviate need to build housing (1)

Lack of Housing Options (1)
Need something to downsize to from your house (1)

Lack of Information (1)
Need better information about how to get into existing housing (1)

Other (2)
Many seniors live with their children (1)
Concerns about non-local seniors living in local seniors' housing (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table B3   Housing Recommendations – Development, Building, and Operation of Facilities

Development Models (11)
Like the complex in Prespatou (2)
Like the multi-level care complex in Beaverlodge, AB (2)
Expand Prespatou Country Lodge (with two bedroom suites) (1)
Expand Rotary Manor (Dawson Creek) (1)
Like the complex in Burns Lake (1)*
Like the complex in Chase, BC (1)**
Renovate existing multi-family dwellings to suit seniors' needs (1)
Replace Peace Haven (Pouce Coupe) (1)
Supportive living (1)***

Potential Developers for Future Seniors' Housing (6)
Lutherans should work with Palliative Care Society in Dawson Creek to build seniors' housing (1)
Need more cooperation with Northern Health Authority to build housing (1)
Need someone to take first development initiatives in seniors' housing (i.e. service club) (1)
Private developer to work with a consortium to give people what they want (too expensive to be developed by
    government) (1)
Private developer to work with Northern Health Authority for a multi-level care complex (1)
Privately developed gated community (1)

Potential Funding Sources for Future Seniors' Housing (3)
Donations from industry (1)
Need more service clubs to help with fundraising (1)
Non-profit society operated housing with government financial assistance (1)

Concerns About Decision Making for Housing (2)
Decision making should be more local (not Victoria) (1)
Each community should be assessed for housing (1)

Lack of Funding to Develop Seniors' Housing (2)
Need funding for seniors' housing (2)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.
* Participants liked the idea of the complex in Burns Lake offering 17 units with meals, housekeeping, and an
    emergency button.
** Participants liked the idea of the seniors' cooperative in Chase that is owned by the residents and that the cost of
    the unit does not change with market fluctuations.
*** Supportive living would offer housekeeping, personal care, and emergency button. This is different from
    assisted living in that you do not have to qualify based on financial, medical, or poor health status.

Table B4   Housing Recommendations – Design

Common areas (i.e. living area, dining room, activity room, kitchen) (7)
Meals provided (5)*
One-storey / ground level entry (5)
Strata fees to have maintenance included (i.e. yard work, snow shovelling, and small handy jobs) (5)
Housing for couples (4)
Larger units (4)
Elevators (3)
Gardens / central park (3)
Ramps / no stairs (3)
Room for family to visit / stay (2)
Shared laundry (accessible by inside access) (2)
Wheelchair accessible (2)
Ability to expand at a later date (1)
Ability to spend time indoors or outdoors (1)
Appropriate level cupboards (1)
Automatic doors (1)
Century tub baths (1)
Covered parking (1)
Double sinks (1)
Emergency help button (1)
Handrails in bathroom (1)
Large entrances (1)
Larger bathrooms (1)
Light doors (1)
Lower counters (1)
Small lots for seniors to have land (1)
Two bedrooms (1)
Two exits (one to the hallway and one to outside) (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.
* Suggested that meals could be provided by community members.

Table B5   Housing Recommendations – Location

Near medical services (3)
Close to downtown (2)
Near transportation (2)
Away from hills (1)
Close to amenities (1)
In a residential area (1)
In areas with sidewalks (1)
Respite care should be available outside of a hospital (1)
Vacant office buildings could be converted into seniors' housing (already have elevators) (1)
Vacant schools could be converted into seniors' housing (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table B6   For Rural Residents: Where should independent living facilities be located?

Cecil Lake (2)
Chetwynd (2)
Hudson's Hope (2)
Pouce Coupe (1)

In a larger centre / on the edge of a larger centre (1)
In a rural area – general (1)

Not in a rural area (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table B7   For Rural Residents: Where should long-term care facilities be located?

Fort St. John (2)
Chetwynd (1)
Pouce Coupe (1)
Prespatou (1)

Not in Hudson's Hope (1)
Not in Kamloops (1)
Not in Pouce Coupe (1)

Not in a rural area (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table B8   For Rural Residents: Where should other housing facilities be located?

Assisted Living
    Cecil Lake (1)
    Dawson Creek (1)
    Fort St. John (1)

    Not in Prince George (1)

Palliative Care
    Dawson Creek (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

SECTION C: Health Care

Table C1 **In general, how well do you think the health care system responds to the needs of area seniors?**

Availability of Services (13)
Required to travel for health services (4)
Long wait times (3)
Lack of services – general (2)
Lack of assistance for seniors retiring in their homes (1)
Lack of specialists (1)
Must use the Internet to access health care information (1)
Nobody available to care for seniors when families move away (1)

Quality of Services – Negative (11)
Quality of health care received is inadequate (6)
Health care system does not respond to the needs of area seniors (3)
Room for improvement in the health care system – general (1)
Standard of care dropping over time (1)

Operations (7)
Cutbacks have been detrimental (2)
General health care management unsatisfactory (1)
Lack of accountability from health care providers and government (1)
Lack of government funding (1)
Northern Health Authority withholds information from seniors (1)
Rural health care system structures cannot be based on urban-centre models (1)

Quality of Services – Positive (5)
Quality of health care received is good (4)
Quality of acute care received is good (1)

Infrastructure (1)
Lack of beds (1)

Other (5)
Families are placed under pressure looking after loved ones (2)
Don't use health care services (1)
Fear of losing the doctor in Hudson's Hope (1)
Fear of losing the x-ray technician in Hudson's Hope (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table C2   What do you think are the most useful health care services now provided to seniors in the Peace River Regional District?

Health Care Professionals (16)
Doctors (13)
Nurses (2)
Medical staff – general (1)

Community Health Support Services (14)
House calls by caregivers (4)
Adult Day Program (2)
Mental health (2)
Canadian Cancer Society (1)
Home support workers (1)
Long-term care (1)
Palliative care (1)
Personal care (1)
Pharmacy located in clinic (1)

Specialists (14)
Ophthalmologists (4)
Orthopaedists (2)
Specialists – general (2)
Surgeons (2)
Internists (1)
Otologists (1)
Podiatrists (1)
Urologists (1)

Emergency Services (11)
Hospital (4)
Ambulance (2)
Emergency services – general (2)
911 alert line (1)
Medevac (1)
New ambulance facility (1)

Equipment (7)
X-ray equipment (2)
Blood testing equipment (1)
Defibrillator (1)
Equipment – general (1)
Lab – general (1)
Mammograms (1)

Rehabilitation Services (3)
Addiction (1)
Physiotherapy (1)
Respiratory therapy (1)

Transportation (1)
Northern Health Connections bus (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table C3   What do you think are the critical health care needs for seniors in the Peace River Regional District?

Health Care Professionals (29)
Doctors (14)
Nurses (7)
Medical staff – general (5)
Pharmacists (2)
Surgical nurses (1)

Specialists (24)
Specialists – general (8)
Surgeons (6)
Dentists (3)
Neurologists (2)
Ophthalmologists (2)
Cardiologists (1)
Oncologists (1)
Orthopaedists (1)

Transportation (15)
Financial assistance for out-of-town medical travel (5)
Transportation to medical appointments – general (5)
Bus for out-of-town medical travel (4)
Medibus (1)

Community Health Support Services (12)
Home support workers (4)
Home care (2)
More healthy food served by the Northern Health Authority (2)
Socialization (2)
Assistance with administering in-home medication (1)
Volunteer organizations to provide health care services (1)

Emergency Services (12)
Ambulance (4)
Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society (STARS) should come to the region (4)
911 dispatch is needed in the region (1)
BC Ambulance won't use Tumbler Ridge airport (1)
BC Ambulance won't use Chetwynd airport (1)
Hospital (1)

Rehabilitation Services (8)
Physiotherapy (7)
Massage therapy (1)

Equipment (7)
Dialysis equipment (4)
Health care equipment – general (2)
X-ray equipment (1)

Health Care Services (6)
Health care services – general (6)

Infrastructure (6)
More beds in hospital (2)
Health care centre (1)
Dentist facility (1)
More rooms in hospital (1)
Operating room (1)

Information/Communication (4)
Better liaison between doctors, nurses, and patients concerning health and wellness (1)
Dispersal of information about Northern Health Connections bus (1)
Need a central information source about accommodation for out-of-town medical travel (1)
Need a mediator between communities and the Northern Health Authority (1)

Subsidized Medical Services (3)
Subsidized home care (1)
Subsidized medication costs (1)
Subsidized physiotherapy (1)

Operations (1)
Longer days/hours of operation at the health clinic (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table C4   Health Care Recommendations

Funding (6)
Need increased investment in the health care system (3)
Money should be raised for the hospital in Chetwynd (1)
Money used for gun control should be invested into the health care system (1)
Service funding allocation in rural areas should be based on catchment area, not population size (1)

Operations (4)
Clinic in Hudson's Hope should utilize all available facilities (1)
Operating room in Chetwynd should be reopened (1)
Patients should not be taken out of the region by Medevac without clothing or wallets (1)
Retired workers with skills should be allowed to provide health care services (1)

Distance to Services (1)
Medical services should be located in Fort St. John or Dawson Creek (1)

Information/Communication (1)
Health centres should not be sign-posted as hospitals (1)

Transportation (1)
Air ambulance should take patients to Fort St. John, not Vancouver (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

SECTION D: Social and Support Services

Table D1.a   Top Priorities for Support Services to Help Seniors Maintain Health and Independence

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Social Support Services (48)
Home care/home support (17)
Nursing care (9)
Personal care (7)
Respite care (5)
Support services – general (4)
Visiting/socialization (3)
Adult daycare (1)
Physical assistance (1)
Volunteer support (1)

Home Maintenance Services (18)
House cleaning (10)
Help with shopping (3)
Home maintenance – general (3)
Yard work (2)

Food Services (15)
Meals on Wheels (9)
Delivery of goods and services (3)
Meal preparation (2)
Wheels to Meals (1)

Transportation Services (14)
Assistance with medical trips (10)
Local transportation (4)

Information Services (2)
Promotion of available support services (1)
Seniors' counsellor / advocate (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table D1.b   Secondary Priorities for Support Services Needed to Help Seniors Maintain Health and Independence

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Social Support Services (36)
Home care/home support (7)
Personal care (6)
Respite care (6)
Nursing care (4)
House cleaning (3)
Volunteer support (3)
Support services – general (2)
Adult daycare (1)
Foot care service (1)
Palliative care (1)
Rehabilitation services (1)
Visiting/socialization (1)

Food Services (11)
Meals on Wheels (6)
Delivery of goods and services (3)
Meal preparation (1)
Restaurants (1)

Home Maintenance Services (10)
Yard work (6)
Home maintenance – general (2)
Help with shopping (1)
Snow removal (1)

Transportation Services (8)
Assistance with medical trips (5)
Local transportation (2)
Transportation 'buddy system' (1)

Information Services (1)
Promotion of available support services (1)

Other (1)
Hairdressing (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table D2   Problems Associated with Support Services

Lack of Services (10)
Lack of home support services (4)
Lack of support for familial caregivers (4)
Lack of support for seniors staying in their own home longer (1)
Home care does not do house cleaning (1)

Financial Barriers for Social and Support Services (4)
High costs to care for seniors (2)
High costs for respite care in rural areas (1)
High costs for home support services (1)

Regulatory Barriers (3)
Licensing rules / qualification guidelines prevent support workers providing care for seniors (i.e. personal care) (2)
Certification barriers prevent families from being able to bring home made food to residents in care home (1)

Communication Problems (2)
Lack of awareness about service availability in rural areas (1)
Many seniors don't fully understand their health conditions or their medications (1)

Concerns with Quality of Food Services (2)
Food in care home is not prepared locally (1)
Poor quality of Meals on Wheels food (1)

Cutbacks and Closure of Services (2)
Home support workers have reduced time allotted for each patient (2)

Limited Availability of Services (1)
Meals on Wheels is not available on weekends (1)

Limited Human Resources (1)
Some home support workers lack expertise (1)

Operational Challenges (1)
Inconsistency in services provided by home support workers (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table D3   Does Your Community Need a Seniors' Activity Centre?

No (26)
Already have one, but few seniors utilize it (11)
Not needed (11)
Already have one (4)

Yes (10)
In a community centre/hall (2)
In a seniors' complex (2)
Integrated with other seniors' services (2)
Yes – general (2)
In a location with an elevator (1)
Locally (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table D4.a   Top Priorities for Activities that Could be Provided at a Seniors' Activity Centre

Health Programs (19)
Health and wellness clinics (12)
Foot care clinics (6)
Massages (1)

Physical Activities (15)
Fitness programs (10)
Dance lessons (3)
Dances (2)

Special Events (15)
Bus tours (4)
Local outings (3)
Socialization/visiting events (3)
Special events – general (3)
Activity groups (2)

Food Programs (14)
Hot lunches (9)
Coffee and snacks (3)
Hot dinners (1)
Potlucks (1)

Games (12)
Shuffleboard (4)
Cards (3)
Bingo (2)
Pool (2)
Darts (1)

Arts/Education Programs (10)
Arts and crafts (3)
Computer lessons/Internet (2)
Information liaison for seniors (2)
Financial workshops (1)
Legal workshops (1)
Library book delivery service (1)

Sports (7)
Swimming (3)
Bowling (2)
Walking (2)

Entertainment (2)
Movies (1)
Slide shows (1)

Other (6)
Barber/beauty salon (5)
Adult daycare (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table D4.b   **Secondary Priorities for Activities that Could be Provided at a Seniors' Activity Centre**

Games (24)
Cards (7)
Bingo (5)
Darts (4)
Shuffleboard (3)
Pool (2)
Game nights (1)
Other game tables (1)
Ping pong (1)

Special Events (13)
Socialization/visiting events (6)
Special events – general (3)
Activity groups (2)
Bus tours (2)

Health Programs (12)
Health and wellness clinics (7)
Foot care clinics (4)
Counselling (1)

Arts/Education Programs (10)
Computer lessons/Internet (4)
Arts and crafts (3)
Guest speakers (1)
Information liaison for seniors (1)
Woodworking (1)

Dance/Fitness Classes (10)
Fitness programs (4)
Dance lessons (3)
Dances (2)
Tai Chi (1)

Food Programs (10)
Hot lunches (4)
Coffee and snacks (3)
Potlucks (2)
Hot dinners (1)

Sports (8)
Bowling (4)
Curling (3)
Broomball (1)

Entertainment (1)
Live bands (1)

Other (4)
Volunteer/charity work (3)
Inexpensive yearly membership fees (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table D5   **For Rural Participants: Where Should a Seniors' Activity Centre be Located?**

Cecil Lake (2)
Fort St. John (1)
Goodlow (1)
Hudson's Hope (1)

Not in a regional centre (in a rural area) (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

SECTION E: Transportation

Table E1   Key Transportation Needs for Area Seniors – Inside the Community

Informal Transportation (13)
Volunteer drivers' group (7)
Friends/family (3)
Personal vehicle (2)
Transportation 'buddy system' (1)

Public Transportation (12)
City transit (5)
HandyDART (5)
Adult Day Away program (1)
Taxi Saver program (1)

Community Organization / Service Club Transportation (7)
Step Up and Ride (4)
Easter Seals bus (1)
Lion's bus (1)
TR Cares to provide a van (1)

Private Transportation (7)
Taxi (4)
Private transportation service – general (3)

Affordable Options (6)
Affordable/subsidized transportation (6)

Barriers to Transportation Provision (4)
BC Ambulance won't use Tumbler Ridge airport (1)
Conflict with private sector in establishing other transportation options (1)
Helipad at Dawson Creek Hospital is too small for STARS to land (1)
Volunteer drivers concerned about insurance liability (1)

Service Improvements (2)
Extended days/hours of operation (1)
Extended transportation routes (1)

Other (7)
Minibus (5)
Seniors have difficulty boarding city transit buses (1)
Offer snowmobile rides for short trips (1)

Doesn't Matter (4)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table E2   Key Transportation Needs for Area Seniors – Outside-of-Community

Public Transportation – Medical Purpose (25)
Northern Health Connections bus (16)
Medibus (4)
STARS (3)
BC Ambulance service (1)
Medevac vehicle (1)

Private Transportation – General Purpose (23)
Bus (10)
Commercial bus service (5)
Air transportation (4)
Bus tours (2)
Minibus/van (1)
Taxi (1)

Service Improvements (13)
Extended transportation routes (7)
Extended days/hours of operation (6)

Affordable Options (11)
Affordable/subsidized transportation (11)

Informal Transportation (11)
Friends/family (4)
Volunteer drivers (4)
Personal vehicle (2)
Transportation 'buddy system' (1)

Public Transportation – General Purpose (7)
Minibus/van (4)
HandyDART (3)

Improved Communication About Available Options (6)
Information distribution about available transportation services (6)

Community Organization / Service Club Transportation (4)
TR Cares van (2)
Edmonton Cancer Clinic bus (1)
Lion's bus (1)

Infrastructure Improvements (3)
Extend Jackfish Lake Road to Fort St. John (1)
Oil and logging companies should help cover road maintenance costs (1)
Road maintenance (1)

Other (1)
Accompaniment for out-of-town travel (1)

Doesn't Matter (3)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

SECTION F: Physical Environment

Table F1.a   Top Priorities for Physical Barriers that Prohibit Seniors from Walking Around the Community

Snow and Ice (23)
Icy sidewalks (12)
Icy roads (4)
Weather (4)
Icy driveways (1)
Icy parking lots (1)
Sidewalks are covered during snow removal operations (1)

Safety Concerns – Traffic (10)
Speeding traffic (3)
Crossing the highway (2)
Trains blocking traffic (2)
Trucks on the highway (2)
Crossing the street (1)

Design Problems – Municipal Infrastructure (10)
Lack of sidewalks (6)
Lack of crosswalks (2)
Lack of stop lights (1)
Poor sidewalk design (1)

Design Problems – Buildings (9)
Lack of handicapped washrooms (2)
Lack of ramps (2)
Stairs (2)
Heavy doors (1)
Lack of elevators (1)
Small bathrooms (1)

Distance (6)
Distance – general (4)
Distance from services (1)
Distance from town centre (1)

Other Barriers (4)
Gravel on roads (2)
Gravel on sidewalks (1)
Lack of assistance to hold doors open (1)

Safety Concerns – Personal (2)
Crime (1)
Increasing transience (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table F1.b **Secondary Priorities for Physical Barriers that Prohibit Seniors from Walking Around the Community**

Snow and Ice (23)
Snow (6)
Icy sidewalks (4)
Ice (3)
Driveways are filled in by snow removal operations for roads (2)
Weather (2)
Freeze/melt patterns (1)
Icy driveways (1)
Icy parking lots (1)
Icy roads (1)
Inadequate snow removal (1)
Poor sidewalk maintenance (1)

Design Problems – Buildings (21)
Heavy doors (7)
Stairs (7)
Limited wheelchair accessibility (2)
Difficulty locking and unlocking doors (1)
Lack of automatic doors (1)
Lack of functioning elevators (1)
Lack of ramps (1)
Poor quality ramps (1)

Safety Concerns – Personal (7)
Fear of falling (4)
Fear of animals (2)
Crime (1)

Safety Concerns – Traffic (6)
Crossing the road (3)
Bus stops are busy (1)
High-traffic road (1)
Speeding traffic (1)

Design Problems – Municipal Infrastructure (5)
Lack of sidewalks (4)
Uneven sidewalks (1)

Distance (4)
Distance from city transit bus stops (2)
Distance – general (1)
Distance from services (1)

Other Barriers (3)
Hills in rural areas (2)
Gravel on roads (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table F2.a   Top Priorities for Recommendations to Improve Physical Mobility

Municipal and Rural Infrastructure (19)
Install more sidewalks (10)
Install more crosswalks (2)
Install more benches (1)
Install more handicapped parking signage (1)
Install more paths (1)
Install more stop lights (1)
Install more stop signs (1)
Pave roads (1)
Widen and smoothen roads (1)

Building Design (14)
Install more automatic doors (3)
Install more elevators (3)
Install more handicapped washrooms (3)
Install more ramps (3)
Install more letter drop boxes (2)

Snow and Ice Removal (14)
Plough sidewalks (5)
Plough driveways (3)
Sand roads (3)
Plough parking lots (1)
Sand sidewalks (1)
Take measures to prevent slipping outside of seniors' housing units (1)

Support Services (1)
Develop an 'adopt a senior' program (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.

Table F2.b   Secondary Priorities for Recommendations to Improve Physical Mobility

Municipal and Rural Infrastructure (10)
Install more paths (4)
Install more sidewalks (3)
Install more crossing lights (2)
Install more bus shelters (1)

Building Design (8)
Install more elevators (3)
Install more ramps (3)
Ensure that newly constructed buildings are wheelchair-accessible (1)
Install more automatic doors (1)

Snow and Ice Removal (8)
Plough sidewalks (3)
Plough roads (2)
Designate neighbours to plough driveways for one another (1)
Plough driveways (1)
Plough paths (1)

Support Services (4)
Enforce community policing (2)
Develop a community service map for seniors/disabled people (1)
Develop a community watch group (1)

Other (2)
Ensure that seniors wear proper footwear on ice (1)
Move train switching yard out of town (1)

Source: Peace River Regional District Seniors' Needs Project, 2007.