

Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs

Final Survey Report

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Table of Contents

	Page Number
Acknowledgements	iv
Availability	v
Project Reports	v
Contact Information	v
1.0 Project Description	1
2.0 Methodology	3
3.0 Who Responded to the Survey	6
4.0 Housing	11
5.0 Mobility	18
6.0 Community Services	22
7.0 Family, Friends, and Care Networks	25
8.0 Retirement and Retirement Planning	26
9.0 Social, Recreational, and Educational Programs	28
10.0 Summary	31
Appendix A Consent Form	33
Appendix B Door-to-door Household Survey	35
Appendix C Drop-off Letter	43
Appendix D Drop-off Household Survey	45

List of Tables

	Page Number
Table 1.1: Timeline	2
Table 2.1: Response Rate	4
Table 3.1: Respondent marital status	6
Table 3.2: Age profile of respondent	6
Table 3.3: Gender Profile of Respondents	7
Table 3.4: How long have you lived in the community?	7
Table 3.5: How long have you lived in Tumbler Ridge?	8
Table 3.6: Respondent employment status	8
Table 3.7: Annual household incomes	9
Table 3.8: Do you consider yourself to be one of the following?	9
Table 3.9: Does anyone in your household require special medical attention? If yes, please specify:	10
Table 4.1: Housing profile	11
Table 4.2: Stairs	11
Table 4.3: Would you say the current housing in Tumbler Ridge meets the needs of seniors?	12
Table 4.4: Would you say that current housing in Tumbler Ridge meets the needs of seniors? (ie: design, location, affordability, etc.) Please explain.	13
Table 4.5: Do you think Tumbler Ridge needs a seniors' housing complex?	14
Table 4.6: Do you think Tumbler Ridge needs a seniors' housing complex? If YES, where would the best location be?	14
Table 4.7: Types of seniors' housing needed	15
Table 4.8: Do you need seniors' accommodation at this time?	16
Table 4.9: What kind of seniors' housing are you looking for?	16
Table 5.1: Road and sidewalk maintenance in your community	18
Table 5.2: What types of local transportation services should be provided for older residents?	19
Table 5.3: What barriers might prohibit older residents from walking around town?	20
Table 5.4: What needs to be done to allow older residents to move about the community easily?	21
Table 6.1: What services do you think are needed in Tumbler Ridge to help older residents maintain their health and independence?	23
Table 6.2: What services do you think are most needed in Tumbler Ridge to help older residents maintain their health and independence? Priority ranking	23

	Page Number
Table 7.1: Family and/or close friends in the area	25
Table 8.1: If you are not retired, are you planning on retiring in Tumbler Ridge?	26
Table 8.2: If you are retired, are you planning on retiring in Tumbler Ridge? If NO, where are you going to retire?	26
Table 9.1: What types of social programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?	28
Table 9.2: What types of recreational programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?	29
Table 9.3: What types of educational programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?	30

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Laura Ryser, Greg Halseth, and Neil Hanlon
Prince George
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Availability

Copies of all reports associated with the project have been provided to the Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs.

Project Reports

- Population Report
- Focus Group Report
- Survey Report

Contact Information

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Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Final Report

1.0 Project Description

Many rural and small town places in northern BC were established and designed to attract young families. Since the 1980s, however, the population of these communities has been aging. In Tumbler Ridge, there were approximately 280 people (11.5% of total population) over the age of 65 in 2006 (Statistics Canada, Census). At the same time, the proportion of the older workforce (aged 45 and older) has grown from 10.7% in 1986 to 46.7% in 2006. The increase in the number of older residents, and the increase in the number of residents who wish to remain in Tumbler Ridge when they retire, have increased 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, the Community Development Institute at the University of Northern British Columbia and the Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs are working together to assess the needs of older residents.

The purpose of the Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs is to examine the following seniors' needs: infrastructure / planning, housing, health care, social support services, transportation networking, physical environment, and education.

The project work was carried out by a research team from UNBC with the goal to provide local leaders with information relevant to decision-making over community planning and infrastructure investments. The project was carried out in the winter of 2008.

This report includes results from the door-to-door survey.

Table 1.1: Timeline

<p>January 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project outline developed • Funding confirmed • Project Contribution Agreement confirmed • UNBC Research Ethics Board process completed • Research team established • Relevant local planning documents identified and obtained • Project logistics schedule completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Field work ○ Household survey • Draft door-to-door survey • Draft focus group script • Complete summary report
<p>February 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct survey database • Enumerator training • Door-to-door survey distributed • Focus groups completed
<p>March 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door-to-door surveying completed • Complete survey data entry • Analysis of focus group data • Analysis of survey data • Complete draft survey report • Complete focus group report
<p>April 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete final reports for survey and focus groups • Review of project reports with the Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs • Community meeting to share results

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Focus Groups 2008.

2.0 Methodology

The data and information for this project was collected through 3 methods. These include:

- a review of Census population data,
- a community survey, and
- community focus groups.

This report covers the information collected through the community survey.

Survey Implementation

The seniors' needs survey was distributed over a three week period between February 25th and March 17th, 2008. The door-to-door survey and analysis was coordinated by Greg Halseth of the University of Northern British Columbia and executed by a research team from UNBC and numerous local enumerators. The survey was developed in cooperation with the Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs.

A standard requirement for research conducted by UNBC is that the survey and methodology be reviewed by the university's Research Ethics Board. A key component to this protocol is to provide research participants with a copy of the consent form (Appendix A) that outlines the purpose of the study, how the research process will protect their anonymity and confidentiality, and that their participation is voluntary.

The survey was administered through a door-to-door campaign in the community (Appendix B). The Mayor's Task Force wanted to avoid an impersonal approach of a telephone survey. Door-to-door enumerators included UNBC research staff, members from the Lion's Club, four students from the high school's leadership group, TR News staff, and numerous residents. During the three week period, the enumerators knocked on every door in the community (many of these were not occupied) and obtained 438 completed surveys from households. In cases where the residents were not at home, the research plan was to knock on each door at least three times, at different times of the day or week, to give residents a chance to participate. Due to accessibility issues, drop-off packages were left with residents in apartment buildings during a third pass.

For those who were not at home, a drop-off package was prepared and left on their doors. Each drop-off package included a community survey (Appendix D); a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey, how anonymity / confidentiality would be protected, and the voluntary nature of the respondent's participation (Appendix C); and an envelope to insert and drop off the completed survey at one of two locations. Residents were able to drop off completed surveys in locked boxes located at the town hall and the community centre.

Drop-off packages were left at 482 households. After one week, enumerators canvassed the community to pick up any packages that were still remaining on doors; indicating a vacant property. In total, 43 drop-off packages were picked up from vacant properties. Finally,

participants were also given the opportunity to fill out or drop off surveys during a municipal by-election at the community centre on March 8, 2008.

Table 2.1: Sample / Response Rate

Completed door-to-door surveys	438	83.6%
Completed drop-off surveys	86	16.4%
Total completed surveys	524	100.0%

Sample size	880	
Response rate	59.5%	

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Survey 2008.

Given the difficulty in assessing the number of absentee landlords, the total number of households that defined the sample was based on the number of residents that receive the Tumbler Ridge News. In total, 880 households receive the Tumbler Ridge News on a weekly basis. With a total of 524 completed surveys, the response rate of nearly 60% is outstanding for a community survey. When interpreting the survey results, it is important to keep in mind that responses are from a sample of the local population. There is always a level of ‘sampling error’ when you do not have results from every household. With 524 completed surveys, the sampling error for this work is between 2.7 and 4.5 percent, 19 times out of 20.

Questionnaire Content

The purpose of the Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs was to identify general concerns and issues which the community might identify around housing and support service needs for older residents. This report assembles results from the community survey which captures key themes through each section of the research project. A detailed description of questions asked in each section is provided in Appendix B for the door-to-door survey and Appendix D for the drop-off survey.

In Section A of the community survey, questions were asked to better understand the demographic composition of the households living in Tumbler Ridge. Questions were also asked to gauge overall community support for developing seniors’ housing in the community. In Section B, three groups were identified to further explore seniors’ needs in Tumbler Ridge including:

- Older residents (65 and older)
- Near ‘older residents’ (50-64 years of age)
- People with experience with seniors’ needs (cared for / will soon care for...)

Responses by these groups were viewed to be important to help the Task Force identify priority issues. Questions in Section B covered 6 topic areas including:

- housing,
- mobility,
- community services,
- family, friends, and care networks,
- retirement and retirement planning, and
- programs for seniors.

The survey included both open and closed ended questions. Closed ended questions are those which provide a limited set of response categories and ask the respondent to choose the one most appropriate. For some closed ended questions, respondents were allowed to select all the response categories that applied. Open ended questions allow the respondent to answer in their own words.

Analysis

In general, the survey data reported in this report give totals for respondent answers to the various questions asked. Responses to closed ended questions were entered into an SPSS database. In undertaking an analysis of these responses, it is typical to explore facets that may explain possible differences in responses across the survey sample. As a result, the analysis was carried out using a set of evaluative variables, and throughout the report, additional reference is made to these evaluative variables where they point out differences from the ‘overall’ pattern of responses. These evaluative variables include ‘length of residency’, ‘age’, ‘gender’, ‘employment status’, ‘housing tenure’, ‘income’, ‘type of survey respondent’. These evaluative variables are outlined in more detail in the next section about who responded to the survey.

For open ended questions, a qualitative analysis was done to identify, code, and categorize themes from the data. Once themes were identified, responses were tallied. Qualitative tables consist of theme headings and sub-headings. The theme headings are bolded and have a numerical count beside them of the total number of comments received for that particular topic. Under each theme are sub-headings that are in plain, non-bolded font. Beside each sub-heading is a numerical count of the total number of respondents who raised a specific issue.

For example, in Table 4.4, participants were asked to explain why the current housing situation in Tumbler Ridge meets, or does not meet, the needs of seniors. The most prominent theme was design issues. For example, while 53 respondents were concerned about too many stairs, 19 respondents noted that homes were not wheelchair accessible. When all of the sub-heading comments are added up, the theme of inappropriate design was raised 172 times.

3.0 Who Responded to the Survey

This section provides a brief review of the survey respondents' characteristics. In terms of marital status, about 63% of respondents were married, while nearly 15% were separated (Table 3.1). This pattern is quite typical of populations across northern BC.

Table 3.1: Respondent marital status

Marital Status	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Single	50	9.6
Married/common-law	328	63.0
Separated	76	14.6
Divorced	27	5.2
Widowed	28	5.4
	n=521	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

When we look at the age distribution of respondents, just over 16% are 65 years or older (Table 3.2). By comparison, just under 35% of the respondents are between 50 and 64 years of age. While the coming 'bubble' of retirees from the workforce means growth in the local seniors' population (see Population Report), the high participation by older residents in this survey suggests that support service needs are a motivating local concern even now.

Table 3.2: Age profile of respondent

Age Profile	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Under 30 years of age	67	13.0
30-39	83	16.1
40-49	106	20.5
50-64	178	34.4
65 years of age and over	83	16.1
	n= 517	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

In terms of gender, most survey respondents were female (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Gender Profile of Respondents

Gender Profile	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Male	226	44.0
Female	288	56.0
	n=514	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Survey 2008.

Most of the people who responded to the survey have lived in Tumbler Ridge for a short period of time (Table 3.4). While just under 39% of the respondents are ‘newcomers’ (lived in Tumbler Ridge for less than three years) or ‘relative newcomers’ (having lived in the area for less than five years), almost 29% have lived in Tumbler Ridge for at least ten years.

Across the evaluative variables, those respondents who were renting were more likely to have moved to the community in the last three years, while those who owned their dwelling were more likely to be medium and long-term residents. Newcomers were also more likely to be under 40 years of age. Furthermore, a greater proportion of seniors or those with lower household incomes were medium-term residents. Many of these residents took advantage of low housing prices offered during the Tumbler Ridge housing sale that started in 2000.

Table 3.4: How long have you lived in the community?

Length of time	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Newcomers	122	23.6
Relative newcomers	78	15.1
Medium-term residents	167	32.3
Relative long-term residents	58	11.2
Long-term residents	92	17.8
	n= 517	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Survey 2008.

The Tumbler Ridge Housing Corporation sale was a significant event that stemmed from the closure announcement of the Quintette mine in March 2000. When we further grouped respondents according to whether they lived in Tumbler Ridge before or after the housing sale, almost 70% of them had moved to the community during or since the housing sale (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5: How long have you lived in Tumbler Ridge?

Length of time	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Newcomers since TR housing sale	358	69.2
Long-term residents	159	30.8
	n= 517	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Survey 2008.

In terms of employment status, almost 23% of respondents reported that they are retired (Table 3.6). Most other respondents are working in a range of full-time, part-time, or temporary jobs. About 9% are employed part-time, and approximately an additional 9% are homemakers.

Table 3.6: Respondent employment status

Employment Status	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Employed / self-employed full-time	244	46.8
Employed / self-employed part-time	49	9.4
Contract worker	18	3.5
Not employed	24	4.6
Student	2	0.4
Retired	119	22.8
Homemaker	49	9.4
Other	16	3.1
	n=521	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Survey 2008.

When respondents were asked about their annual household incomes, about 25% identified incomes below \$40,000 (Table 3.7). By comparison, roughly 44% reported annual household incomes between \$40,000 and \$99,999, and just over 31% made more than \$100,000. Across the evaluative variables, retirees were more likely to report lower incomes, as were those who were unemployed.

Table 3.7: Annual household incomes

Annual Income	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
0 - \$19,999	36	8.6
\$20,000 - \$39,999	67	16.0
\$40,000 - \$59,999	53	12.6
\$60,000 - \$79,999	64	15.2
\$80,000 - \$99,999	68	16.2
\$100,000 - \$119,999	36	8.6
\$120,000 - \$139,999	36	8.6
\$140,000 - \$159,999	26	6.2
\$160,000 or more	34	8.1
	n=420	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Survey 2008.

Respondents were asked to identify if they fell into one of the following three groups: those who are seniors (65 years of age and older), those who will retire soon (between 50 and 64 years of age), and those who have experience caring for, or meeting the needs of, seniors (Table 3.8). As noted earlier, respondents who fell into one of these three groups were targeted to complete Section B of the door-to-door survey. In this respect, most of the respondents were approaching retirement, followed by seniors. Those who have experience with seniors’ needs may include family members of older residents or health and social service providers.

Table 3.8: Do you consider yourself to be one of the following?

Length of time	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Older residents (65 and older)	82	29.4
Soon to retire group (50-64 years)	163	58.4
People experienced with seniors’ needs	34	12.2
	n= 279	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Survey 2008.

When asked if anyone in their household required special medical attention, 24.7% of respondents answered ‘yes’. More prominent illnesses included diabetes, asthma, and general heart conditions. A more detailed listing of the special medical conditions is provided in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9: Does anyone in your household require special medical attention? If yes, please specify:

Diabetes (29)	Multiple sclerosis (2)	Medical disability, unspecified (1)
Asthma (19)	Paraplegia (2)	Obsessive-compulsive disorder (1)
Heart, general (16)	Prosthetic limbs (2)	Old age (1)
Arthritis (9)	Psychiatric aid (2)	Oppositional defiant disorder (1)
High blood pressure (7)	Specialists, general (2)	Osteoporosis (1)
Epilepsy (5)	Stomach (2)	Polio (1)
Knee (5)	Stroke (2)	Polymyalgia rheumatica (1)
Breathing problems/oxygen assistance (4)	Bipolar disorder (1)	Post-traumatic stress syndrome (1)
Full-time care (4)	Blood, general (1)	Premature baby (1)
Physiotherapy (3)	Breast cancer (1)	Rheumatic fever (1)
Allergies (2)	Cancer, unspecified (1)	Short-term memory loss (1)
Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (2)	Crohn's disease (1)	Sleep apnea (1)
Back (2)	Dental care (1)	Thyroid (1)
Fibromyalgia (2)	Gout (1)	Vascular disease (1)
Heart attack (2)	Heart surgery (1)	
Kidney disease (2)	High cholesterol (1)	
Leg (2)	Hip (1)	
Medications, unspecified (2)	Hypertension active disorder (1)	
	Internal medicine (1)	
	Kidney transplant (1)	
	Lactose intolerance (1)	
	Lung (1)	

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

Summary

In summary, almost two-thirds of those surveyed are married and nearly 15% are separated. In terms of age, the greatest proportion of respondents are approaching retirement, followed by those between 40 and 49 years of age, and those over 65 years of age. In terms of gender, most survey respondents are female. Most of the people who responded to the survey have generally lived in Tumbler Ridge for a short period of time. In fact, almost 70% of the respondents had moved to the community since the Tumbler Ridge Housing Corporation sale that started in 2000. Most of the respondents reported that they were employed full-time, followed by those who were retired. While approximately 44% of respondents came from middle-income households, retirees were more likely to report having low incomes. Finally, just under 25% of the respondents reported having someone in their household who required special medical attention.

4.0 Housing

The survey asked people a number of questions related to housing. These covered not only the housing status of respondents, but also their views on housing needs for older residents. In terms of housing tenure, approximately 82% of respondents owned their dwelling (Table 4.1). Across the evaluative variables, rental rates were greater amongst low income respondents.

In terms of housing types, about 85% of respondents lived in a single detached house (Table 4.1). Those with lower incomes were more likely to live in apartments, mobile homes, or townhouses.

Table 4.1: Housing profile

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent	
Tenure			
Owned	427	82.1	
Rented	93	17.9	
	n=520	100.0	

Type			
Single detached house	436	85.2	
Apartment	21	4.1	
Mobile home on property	23	4.5	
Mobile home in mobile home park	15	2.9	
Townhouse / rowhouse	8	1.6	
Other	9	1.8	
	n=512	100.0	

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

Stairs in houses are an important consideration for older households. When respondents were asked if there were stairs at the main entrance to the household, about 91% said 'yes' (Table 4.2). Approximately 71% of these places had four or fewer sets of stairs.

Table 4.2: Stairs

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent	n=
Are there stairs at the main entrance	468	90.9	515
4 or fewer sets of stairs	311	70.7	440
More than 4 sets of stairs	129	29.3	440

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

Considering that the community has experienced a significant influx of retirees, and has an aging workforce, we asked residents if they felt the current housing situation in Tumbler Ridge is able

to meet the needs of older residents. In response, about 76% said ‘no’ (Table 4.3). Across the evaluative variables, female respondents or those who were experienced with seniors’ needs were less likely to believe that the current housing stock is able to meet the needs of older residents.

Table 4.3: Would you say the current housing in Tumbler Ridge meets the needs of seniors?

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Yes	114	24.2
No	358	75.8
	n=472	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Survey 2008.

Respondents were also asked to explain aspects of the current housing situation that are not appropriate to address seniors’ needs (Table 4.4). Prominent concerns stemmed from design issues, such as too many stairs, split level houses, and a lack of wheelchair accessible housing. Rising costs was the next most prominent theme, followed by a lack of seniors’ housing in Tumbler Ridge.

Table 4.4: Would you say that current housing in Tumbler Ridge meets the needs of seniors? (ie: design, location, affordability, etc.) Please explain.

<p>Design Issues (172) Too many stairs (houses) (53) Inappropriate design of houses for seniors (47) Multiple or split levels (20) Houses are not wheelchair accessible (19) Cathedral entrances (10) No elevators in apartments/condos (7) Narrow doorways (houses) (6) Small entrances (4) No ramps with railings (3) Narrow hallways (houses) (2) Outdated (2) Steep sloped driveways (2) Ambulance stretchers cannot get through cathedral entrances (1) Narrow/steep stairs (1) Narrow walkways & driveways (1) No rails for steps leading up to house (1) No rails in bathrooms (1) Small bathrooms (1) Too many chairs (1) Washer / dryer are not on the main level (1)</p>	<p>Availability of Housing (87) Lack of seniors' housing (31) No care home/assisted living/seniors' complex (28) Lack of low-cost housing (12) Lack of smaller housing units (8) Lack of housing in downtown core (2) Shortage of rentals (2) Lack of choice (1) No seniors' housing for couples (1)</p> <p>Location (11) Far from essential services (8) Poor location of low-cost housing (2) Nowhere to walk (1)</p> <p>Housing and Support Services (10) Difficulty maintaining larger homes (5) Difficulty maintaining larger yards (2) No pets allowed in rentals (2) Privately owned apartment do not provide informal support networks (1)</p> <p>Lack of Support for Rental Costs (1) BC Housing supports maximum rent of \$750 and does not cover rental costs in Tumbler Ridge (1)</p> <p>Regulatory Barriers (1) Hard to get approval for renovations (1)</p> <p>Other (37) Don't know (19) Housing affordable (6) Houses appropriate for healthy seniors (5) BC Housing is affordable (2) Good availability of real estate (2) Most seniors bought affordable housing during housing sale (2) People should renovate (1)</p>
<p>Housing Costs (116) Current housing prices are high (87) High rental costs (27) High costs for heating (1) People buying houses just to make money from them (1)</p>	

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

One of the key questions in the survey was whether the community needs a housing complex for older residents and what would be the best location for that housing complex. In terms of need, approximately 86% of respondents supported the need for a seniors' housing complex (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Do you think Tumbler Ridge needs a seniors' housing complex?

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Yes	428	86.3
No	68	13.7
	n=496	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

In terms of a possible location for a seniors' housing complex, many respondents would like a seniors' housing complex to be located in the downtown area close to services, medical facilities, and amenities (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Do you think Tumbler Ridge needs a seniors' housing complex? If YES, where would the best location be?

Downtown (156)	Lower bench (2)
Middle bench (65)	Upper bench (2)
Close to shops and services (39)	Apartment complex (1)
Near health centre (35)	Away from hills (1)
Claude Galbois School (28)	Behind Tags (1)
Central location (15)	Beside Public Works building (1)
Close to town (10)	Bottom of town (1)
Anywhere (9)	Close to family (1)
Near Tumbler Ridge Secondary School (7)	Close to Greyhound service (1)
Near golf course (6)	Corner of Southgate & Founders Street (1)
Near Legion across from Tags (5)	Inside community centre (1)
Next to Town Hall (5)	Near a park (1)
Next to Tumbler Ridge Inn across from clinic (4)	Near cemetery (1)
Between Days Inn & Legion (4)	Near Tumbler Ridge Elementary School (1)
Close to community centre (4)	New apartments across from fire hall (1)
Old helicopter pad (4)	Scenic location (1)
Pioneer Loop (4)	Towards Chetwynd (1)
Quiet location (3)	Utilise existing building (1)
Wilderness Lodge (3)	Utilise existing condominiums (1)
Empty spot (2)	Utilise government building (1)
Low-income housing in lower bench (2)	Don't know (36)

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

Respondents were asked about the types of housing needed to meet the needs of older residents. Five general types of housing were listed:

- *Independent living* units can include private apartments with available meals, housekeeping, laundry, and home care services.
- *Assisted living* units are like independent living but with greater care available in meals, grooming, medication, and home care services.
- *Long-term care* facilities are often referred to as nursing homes and provide a high level of care.
- *Respite care* facilities provide adult daycare services designed to give temporary relief for the primary caregivers of seniors with ongoing care needs.
- *Palliative care* facilities are designed to provide care for terminally ill residents.

Respondents were allowed to identify any and all types of facilities they felt were needed.

In Table 4.7, the highest support was for housing with modest levels of assistance. Approximately 80% called for independent living units, about 72% called for assisted living units, and 51% called for respite care. Long-term care facilities and palliative care was supported by nearly 46% of respondents.

When comparing responses across evaluative variables, assisted living units received a greater proportion of support among homemakers, respondents between 30 and 39 years of age, those with part-time employment, and newcomers to Tumbler Ridge. Respite care was also recommended by a greater proportion of newcomers, as well as by a greater proportion of respondents with part-time work or who had experience caring for seniors' needs. Support for palliative care was greater amongst those who had experience caring for older residents. Support for long-term care facilities was generally lower among respondents who owned their dwelling.

Table 4.7: Types of seniors' housing needed

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Independent living units	229	79.5
Assisted living units	208	72.2
Respite care	147	51.0
Long-term care facilities	132	45.8
Palliative care	132	45.8
	n= 288	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

There was specific interest in the Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey around immediate needs for seniors' accommodation. As a result, the survey asked several questions on this topic (Table 4.8). When asked if they needed accommodation at this time, only about 4% of respondents said 'yes'. Participants were also asked how much they were willing to pay for renting or purchasing housing accommodations. For those who were looking to rent, their ability to pay monthly rent ranged from \$200 to \$1,250. In terms of purchasing a home, respondents were willing to pay between \$70,000 and \$100,000.

Table 4.8: Do you need seniors' accommodation at this time?

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Yes	11	3.7
No	283	96.3
	n=294	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

When asked, 30 respondents identified that they were actively looking for housing (Table 4.9). Many of these respondents were looking for independent living options, such as a single family dwelling, an apartment, or a condominium. This is not surprising given the relatively 'young' age profile of the seniors' population in the region as well as the coming 'bubble' of new retirees. Interest in apartments or condominiums speaks to the efforts many aging households undertake to reduce their housing maintenance tasks. Of interest, however, there were also a number of respondents seeking higher levels of care through long-term or intermediate care facilities.

When examining differences in responses across the evaluative variables, male respondents, those who were renting, those who were newcomers to the community, or those who were approaching retirement were more likely to be searching for an apartment. By comparison, those who owned their own dwelling or were retired were more likely to be looking for intermediate care facilities. Female respondents, as well as those who were long-term residents or were approaching retirement, were more likely to be looking for a single family dwelling.

Table 4.9: What kind of seniors' housing are you looking for?

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent	n=
Long-term care	10	33.3	30
Single family dwelling	10	33.3	30
Apartment	8	26.7	30
Condominium	7	23.3	30
Intermediate care	7	23.3	30

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

Summary

Housing is one of the key issues for older residents and our seniors' survey asked a number of housing questions. While most respondents owned their dwelling and lived in a single family dwelling, about three-quarters felt that the current housing situation is not able to meet the needs of older residents. Stairs can be a risk and a barrier for older households, and in the survey about 91% of respondents said there were stairs at the main entrance of their house. Other key design concerns included too many split level homes and limited wheelchair accessibility. High housing and rental costs for older residents was also an important concern. When asked about the types of housing needed to meet the needs of older residents, the highest support was for housing with modest levels of assistance (independent living and assisted living). Respite care was also supported by a majority of respondents.

5.0 Mobility

This section includes a number of questions dealing with how people move about their community. Consideration of seniors' needs must address issues of mobility since they include not only daily needs, but access for social purposes and for various medical and health care needs.

Road and sidewalk maintenance is important for older residents. This involves not only safe travel by vehicle, but also the ability to move about by foot, especially in the winter when snow and ice may create hazards. When respondents were asked if road and sidewalk maintenance is adequate, they identified sidewalk maintenance as an area for one investment (Table 5.1). For example, respondents felt that winter sidewalk maintenance needed to be improved in the downtown area and around schools. Concerns were also expressed about uneven sidewalks and a lack of wheelchair accessible curbs. Some recommended that a grader be used to ensure snow is not left behind in driveways during snow removal operations. It is important to note that approval rates for road maintenance (general and winter) in Tumbler Ridge exceeded 80%. When we examined differences across the evaluative variables, respondents who had part-time work demonstrated lower rates of satisfaction with winter road maintenance. Contract workers were less likely to be satisfied with sidewalk maintenance.

Table 5.1: Road and sidewalk maintenance in your community

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Are roads well maintained?	282	87.9
Is winter road maintenance adequate	261	81.3
Are sidewalks well maintained?	209	65.1
Is winter sidewalk maintenance adequate	160	49.8
	n=321	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

Mobility issues are clearly very important. When asked about the types of transportation services that should be provided to older residents within the community, the most common responses were for shuttle bus or Handy DART services (Table 5.2). When considering out-of-town transportation needs, respondents called for out-of-town bus service.

Table 5.2: What types of local transportation services should be provided for older residents?

Local Transportation Needs (222)	Out-of-Town Transportation Needs (45)
Shuttle bus/handiDART (113)	Out-of-town bus service (25)
Bus/van service, unspecified (50)	Weekly transportation to Dawson Creek (15)
Wheelchair-accessible transportation (21)	Greyhound service (4)
Medical transportation (10)	Private bus to Dawson Creek (1)
Bus/van strictly for seniors (7)	
Step Up 'N' Ride (5)	Useful transportation services (27)
Volunteer driver system (4)	Taxi (16)
Private bus system (3)	TR Cares van (11)
Subsidies for taxi fares (3)	
Taxi with wheelchair access (2)	Don't know (6)
Car pool (1)	
Free transportation (1)	
Public transportation (1)	
Tricycle rentals (1)	

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

In terms of barriers to walking around town, more than half of the respondents talked about icy sidewalks, weather, and snow (Table 5.3). Fewer concerns were expressed about stairs, distances, loose gravel on roads and walkways, heavy doors, and community safety. Other barriers identified by respondents included a lack of wheelchair accessible sidewalks, poor lighting in some sidewalk areas, lack of elevators, lack of ramps, lack of benches, steep hills, loose dogs, and concerns with skateboarders and snowmobilers.

Across the evaluative variables, those who rented or respondents who have experience with seniors' needs had more general concerns about distances and accessibility. A greater proportion of female respondents, those experienced with seniors' needs, as well as those who were unemployed were concerned about stairs. Homemakers and newcomers who had moved to Tumbler Ridge since the housing sale were more likely to be concerned about snow. Access into buildings was more likely to be an issue for homemakers, those with part-time employment, or those with higher household incomes. Lack of sidewalks was a greater concern for respondents with higher household incomes. Furthermore, a greater proportion of homemakers cited the weather, loose gravel on roads and walkways, and heavy doors as barriers impacting mobility in the community. Of interest, older residents were the least likely to be concerned about stairs.

Table 5.3: What barriers might prohibit older residents from walking around town?

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Ice on sidewalks	240	74.8
Weather	205	63.9
Snow	170	53.0
Stairs	97	30.2
Distances	92	28.7
Loose gravel on roads / walkways	83	25.9
Heavy doors	76	23.7
Concern over safety	68	21.2
Doorways / access to buildings	54	16.8
Lack of sidewalks	50	15.6
Other	37	11.5
	n=321	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Survey 2008.

When asked about some of the things that needed to be done to allow older residents to move around the community and to go into various stores and buildings, snow and ice clearing on sidewalks were the most common response (Table 5.4). Other suggestions included automatic entrance doors, snow and ice clearing in parking lots, and wheelchair ramps. More specifically, respondents called for automatic entrances to be installed in public buildings, such as the post office and the medical clinic. Elevators, canopies, and covered entrances were identified by a smaller portion of respondents. Respondents also identified a number of ‘other’ improvements to improve mobility for older residents, such as railings for steps, more ramps and wider aisles in stores, benches, and parking spaces for seniors.

Across the evaluative variables, those who were female, those who rented, those who were homemakers, or those who have experience with seniors’ needs were more likely to support the wheelchair ramp improvements within the community. A greater proportion of female respondents recommended improved snow and ice clearing from parking lots. Relative newcomers were also more likely to support snow and ice clearing in parking lots, as well as the provision of canopies and covered entrances. By comparison, long-term residents were more likely to endorse automatic entrance doors.

Table 5.4 **What needs to be done to allow older residents to move about the community easily?**

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Snow and ice clearing on sidewalks	189	60.0
Automatic entrance doors	149	47.3
Snow and ice clearing in parking lots	149	47.3
Wheelchair ramps	135	42.9
Elevators	93	29.5
Canopies / covered entrances / awnings	65	20.6
Other	27	8.6
	n=315	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs Survey 2008.

Summary

Seniors’ transportation and mobility issues are important as they not only affect basic daily needs, but also quality of life and personal safety. With limited transportation options within the community, the wide use of personal vehicles means that road and sidewalk maintenance (general and winter) is especially important. While respondents in Tumbler Ridge are more satisfied with road maintenance, sidewalk maintenance (especially in the winter) has clearly been identified as an area for additional investment. As the population ages, support is moving towards alternative modes of transportation, such as a wheelchair accessible shuttle bus. Respondents would also like to see a bus service established to improve access to services in distant regional centres. This option is particularly important for those who do not have a vehicle or who are uncomfortable driving in poor winter conditions.

Winter weather, especially snow and ice, were the key barriers identified by respondents for seniors to walk and move about their communities. Sidewalk issues were especially notable in Tumbler Ridge. When asked about some of the things that needed to be done to allow older residents to move around their communities, snow and ice clearing on sidewalks were frequently mentioned.

6.0 Community Services

Community participation and local service provision are critical parts of planning for older residents. This section reviews the engagement of respondents in community groups and their level of satisfaction with a range of local services.

The survey asked about the services people feel are needed to help older residents maintain their health and wellness (Table 6.1). Most of the services listed received high levels of support, especially for home care, transportation to doctor's appointments, and assistance with medical trips. This is not surprising given earlier recommendations to expand both local and non-local transportation options for the community. Other services with a transportation component, including Meals on Wheels and delivery of goods and services, were endorsed to support independent living of older residents. Strong support was also provided to develop services commonly associated with the physical maintenance of residences, such as housecleaning and yard work.

Respondents also talked about 'other' support services that would be important to maintaining seniors' health and independence. These included a dentist, a physiotherapist, nutrition programs for seniors, workshops to help older residents cope with limited mobility, hearing tests, an overnight bed at the medical clinic, and a walk-in clinic. Financial assistance for accessing services and affordable assistance for car repairs were also recommended. In terms of information needs, respondents requested a local information line or a 'one-stop shop' be established for services, and they requested a key contact person be acquired to provide assistance with filling out government forms. Recommendations to expand shopping services included a health food store and a store with more feminine products.

Across the evaluative variables, those who rented were more likely to support the provision of nursing care and other services. Respondents who are experienced with seniors' needs were more likely to endorse the provision of personal care. Respite care was recommended by a greater proportion of respondents with higher household incomes. Support for home repair and maintenance services was greatest amongst respondents who are employed on a contract basis. Support for Meals and Wheels and assistance with shopping was greatest amongst respondents with higher household incomes. Furthermore, respondents who were contract workers or homemakers were more likely to support help with meal preparation.

Table 6.1: What services do you think are needed in Tumbler Ridge to help older residents maintain their health and independence?

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent	n=
Home care	266	89.9	296
Transportation to doctor's appointments	263	88.0	299
Assistance with medical trips	262	87.9	298
Meals on Wheels	233	79.8	292
House cleaning	229	78.4	292
Yard work	230	77.2	298
Delivery of services & goods	225	76.5	294
Nursing care	224	76.2	294
Respite care	220	74.6	295
Personal care	210	73.2	287
Home repair & maintenance	211	71.0	297
Help with shopping	201	69.3	290
Visiting	185	64.7	286
Help with meal preparation	175	59.9	292
Other	46	15.4	298

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

While so many services may be deemed necessary to have within the community, it is important to explore which services are deemed to be a priority. For respondents, priority services most needed include home care, nursing care, and assistance with medical trips (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2: What services do you think are most needed in Tumbler Ridge to help older residents maintain their health and independence? Priority ranking

	Most Needed	2 nd Most Needed	3 rd Most Needed	Not Ranked	n=
Home care	21.5	13.6	4.4	60.4	316
Nursing care	17.4	5.1	1.9	75.6	316
Assistance with medical trips	10.8	5.7	9.8	73.7	316
Transportation to doctor's appointments	4.1	6.3	9.2	80.4	316
Meals on Wheels	4.1	5.1	7.6	83.2	316
Personal care	4.4	3.8	4.7	87.0	316
House cleaning	3.2	3.8	3.5	89.6	316
Home repair & maintenance	0.9	5.1	3.5	90.5	316
Yard work	1.6	4.1	1.6	92.7	316
Delivery of services & goods	0.6	4.4	1.9	93.0	316
Respite care	0.9	2.8	2.8	93.4	316
Visiting	1.3	0.9	3.2	94.6	316
Help with meal preparation	0.0	0.9	1.6	97.5	316
Help with shopping	0.0	0.9	1.3	97.8	316

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

Summary

Local service provision is a critical part of planning for older residents. This section highlights the services people feel are needed to help older residents maintain their health and wellness. Home care and transportation services to medical services were the most widely supported services that older residents need to remain healthy and in their own homes. They also talked about a set of services needed to support the physical maintenance of residences.

7.0 Family, Friends, and Care Networks

Access to care networks is an important part of support for older residents. It can play a crucial role in quality of life, how long seniors maintain their independence, and how long they remain in their own homes. The presence of a support network may influence whether older residents decide to remain in a community after they retire.

While nearly all of the respondents identified that they had close friends living in Tumbler Ridge, less than half had other family members in the community (Table 7.1). Those who owned their dwelling were more likely to have close friends in the area. Not surprisingly, long-term residents were more likely to have family in the community, and newcomers of less than 3 years were less likely to have close friends in the area.

Table 7.1: Family and/or close friends in the area

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent	n=
Do you have family in the area?	137	42.7	321
Do you have close friends in the area?	277	86.6	320

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

Summary

The results suggest that many respondents do not have a high level of support from family in the community. However, most had developed close friendships in Tumbler Ridge. This is important as social networks are critical for seniors to obtain support and care when needed.

8.0 Retirement and Retirement Planning

An important aspect of the Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey is to understand how many residents were planning on retiring in the community. This is very important for future planning of infrastructure and services to meet the needs of older residents. As noted earlier, nearly one-quarter of respondents were retired. Of those who are not retired, almost 44% are planning to retire in the area. It is important to note, however, that nearly 33% of respondents are not sure about where they would like to retire. Respondents who owned their own dwelling or who were long-term residents were more likely to plan on retiring in town.

Table 8.1: If you are not retired, are you planning on retiring in Tumbler Ridge?

	Total # of Respondents	Survey Percent
Yes	225	43.9
No	120	23.4
Not sure	167	32.6
	n=512	100.0

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

For those who are not planning on retiring in the area, a prominent destination included larger service centres in BC or communities in southern BC that have a warmer climate. This was followed by international destinations and other provinces in Canada.

Table 8.2: If you are retired, are you planning on retiring in Tumbler Ridge? If NO, where are you going to retire?

<p>British Columbia (23) British Columbia, general (3) Okanagan (3) Southern British Columbia (2) Vancouver Island (2) Bridge Lake (1) Chetwynd (1) Cranbrook (1) Creston (1) Fort St. John (1) Grand Forks (1) Kamloops (1) Kootenays, general (1) Pouce Coupe (1) Prince George (1) Prince Rupert (1)</p>	<p>BC Cont'd Smithers (1) Vancouver (1)</p> <p>International (9) Australia (2) Argentina (1) Costa Rica (1) Hawaii (1) Maui (1) South Africa (1) South Pacific (1) Thailand (1)</p> <p>Alberta (8) Alberta, general (4) Calgary (3) Grande Prairie (1)</p>	<p>Rest of Canada (8) Newfoundland (4) Nova Scotia (2) Ontario (1) Saskatchewan (1)</p> <p>Other (33) Not sure (16) Further south (7) Somewhere warm (6) Community with more amenities/stores (1) Elsewhere (1) Further east (1) Less isolated community (1)</p>
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Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey 2008.

Summary

This section explored respondents' retirement plans in order to facilitate future planning of infrastructure and services to meet the needs of older residents in Tumbler Ridge. This is especially important since less than 25% of the survey respondents were already retired. Of those who are not retired, almost 45% were also planning to retire in the area. This supports the Population Report suggestion that the local seniors' population is poised for considerable growth. With nearly one-third of residents still undecided about their retirement destination, it will be important to further explore factors that will influence their decision.

9.0 Social, Recreational, and Educational Programs

In the final section, participants were asked to identify social, recreational, and educational programs that should be provided to help older residents maintain their health and independence. In terms of social programs, social events were a prominent suggestion (Table 9.1). The development of a seniors' drop-in centre was deemed to be important to facilitate informal social activities, such as having coffee or visiting with friends. It would also provide a space in which other recommended social programs, such as dances or potluck dinners, could be organized. Many respondents reinforced their support for community clubs that provide a focal point to engage in social activities. Some social support programs, such as visiting, were deemed to be important to support emotional well-being of older residents that have more restricted mobility.

Table 9.1: What types of social programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?

<p>Social Events (191) Seniors' drop-in centre (39) Dances (31) Social events (17) Coffee (16) Potluck dinners (14) Live music (10) Fun activities (9) Movie nights (9) Teas (7) Luncheons (5) Better use of community centre (4) Choir/singing (4) Church nights (4) Dinners (4) Picnics (4) Movie theatre (3) Barbecue (2) Live entertainment (2) Monthly social (2) Block parties (1) Breakfasts (1) Comedy (1)</p>	<p>Social Events Cont'd Guest speakers (1) Slideshows (1)</p> <p>Community Clubs (29) 49 Forever (12) Happy Hookers (7) Itchy Feet (6) 55 Plus (2) Garden Club (1) Toastmasters (1)</p> <p>Social Support Programs (28) Companionship / visiting (8) Program with youth (5) Mental health programs (3) Counselling (2) Buddy system (1) Home support (1) Meals on Wheels (1) Respite care (1) Shopping services (1) Soup kitchen (1)</p>	<p>Social Support Programs Cont'd Stroke rehabilitation (1) Support groups (1) Therapy (1) Transportation for shut-ins (1)</p> <p>Cooperation / Fundraising (2) Cooperation with other volunteer groups (1) Social coordinator (1)</p> <p>Other (6) Transportation to bigger centre (3) More for people who aren't mobile (2) Bus service (1)</p> <p>Currently provided social programs are adequate (34)</p> <p>Don't know (8)</p>
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Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs 2008.

Social interaction through recreation and leisure programs helps to strengthen mental and physical health, and reduce feelings of isolation or loneliness. When respondents were asked to identify recreational programs that should be provided, they discussed a range of indoor and outdoor programs that were important mechanisms for generating social and physical well-being (Table 9.2). Cards, exercise programs, and swimming were prominent indoor recreation and

leisure activities. In terms of outdoor recreation and leisure programs, walking programs, lawn bowling, organized trips, golfing, and hiking were amongst the top recommendations.

Table 9.2: What types of recreational programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?

Indoor Recreation & Leisure (245)	Indoor Recreation and Leisure Cont'd	Outdoor Recreation & Leisure (94)
Cards (35)	Darts (4)	Walking (22)
Exercise programs (34)	Hobby shop with tools (4)	Lawn bowling (17)
Swimming (26)	Aerobics (2)	Organised trips (17)
Bowling (17)	Pool/billiards (2)	Golf (11)
Floor curling (15)	Scrabble (2)	Hiking (10)
Aquafit (13)	Scrapbooking (2)	Organised activity (6)
Games (12)	Sewing (2)	Fishing (4)
Bingo (11)	Creative writing (1)	Boat trips (2)
Carpet bowling (8)	Cultural activities (1)	Horseshoes (2)
Cribbage (7)	Food canning (1)	Senior games (2)
Curling (7)	Library room (1)	Mine tours (1)
Knitting (7)	Male-oriented activities (1)	Current recreational programs are adequate (41)
Quilting (6)	Skating (1)	
Arts & crafts (5)	Tai chi (1)	
Book reviews/clubs (5)	Whist (1)	Don't know (6)
Bridge (5)	Yoga (1)	
Shuffleboard (5)		

Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs 2008.

To support seniors' health and lifelong learning, respondents discussed a range of educational programs and information needs. Prominent recommendations concerned computer and Internet training. For older residents, developing computer skills will help them to keep in touch with family and friends who are living in distant places. Health and wellness programs, such as nutrition programs, health and body care, and how to cope with specific illnesses, were deemed to be important to help older residents cope with the aging process. Furthermore, respondents requested a number of 'how-to' workshops, such as arts and crafts, woodworking, and home improvement.

In terms of information needs, key requests involved assistance with government forms and obtaining information about government programs. Information sessions about financial and retirement planning issues, such as financial planning and investment, will preparation, maximizing pensions, and estate planning, were also suggested.

Table 9.3: What types of educational programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?

<p>Education Programs (206) Computer programs (54) Internet training (17) Nutrition (17) Health and body care (16) Arts & crafts workshops (11) Updating technology (9) Woodworking lessons (8) Access to college/university programs (6) Independent living/dealing with aging (6) Home safety courses (5) Library programs (5) Coping with diabetes (4) E-mail (4) Home improvement (4) How-to workshops (4) Learning new languages (4) Ceramics/pottery (3) Cooking (3) Education (general) (3) How to care for elderly (3) Gardening (2) Medication advice (2) Music workshops/lessons (2) Using DVD players (2)</p>	<p>Education Programs Cont'd Wellness & lifestyle programs (2) Assistance with cell phones (1) Creating websites (1) Dancing instruction (1) Eye care (1) Guitar lessons (1) Heart & stroke program (1) History (1) Leatherwork lessons (1) Pet care (1) Using HDTV (1)</p> <p>Information (54) Assistance with government forms (12) Information on local and government programs (7) Assistance with taxes (6) Financial / banking / investment advice (5) Assistance with applying for social services (4) Will preparation (3) Helpline for seniors (2) How to maximise pensions (2)</p>	<p>Information Cont'd Information on activities and events (2) Assistance with living in isolated places (1) Criminal awareness (1) CPR courses (1) Elderhostel program links (1) Estate planning (1) Information on senior rights (1) Legal information (1) List of health programs available (1) Local news (1) Scam/extortion awareness (1) Wood stove use and maintenance (1)</p> <p>Employment Opportunities for Seniors (2) Have seniors teach younger people (1) Part-time employment (1)</p> <p>Currently provided educational programs are adequate (24)</p> <p>Don't know (6)</p>
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Source: Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs 2008.

Summary

This section explored respondent recommendations for social, recreational, and educational programs that would enhance the health and quality of life of older residents. Social events and the development of a seniors' drop-in centre are key areas for community investment in social programs and infrastructure. While a number of respondents felt that current recreation programs are adequate, others supported the on-going provision of card games, seniors' exercise classes, or swimming programs. Key educational programs included computer training, health and wellness workshops, and home improvement workshops. Finally, important information needs included a 'one-stop shop' for information about services, assistance with government forms, and workshops on financial and retirement planning.

10.0 Summary

The purpose of the Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Project was to examine housing and support service needs for seniors. The work was carried out by the UNBC Community Development Institute to provide local decision-makers with information relevant to service planning and infrastructure investments. The project was carried out in the winter of 2008 and included Census population information, community focus groups, and a door-to-door household survey. This report covered the door-to-door survey results.

With 524 surveys completed out of a working sample of 880 households, the response rate is 59.5%. When interpreting the results, it is important to keep in mind that responses are from a sample of the local population and that the 'sampling error' is between 2.7 and 4.5 percent, 19 times out of 20. In sharing the results, the analysis also probed responses by 'length of residency', 'age', 'gender', 'employment status', 'housing tenure', 'income', and 'type of survey respondent'.

About two-thirds of our survey respondents were married. By age, half of the respondents were approaching retirement or were retirees themselves. Most survey respondents were female and most had moved to Tumbler Ridge since 2000. Most respondents were employed full-time or were retired. The largest share of respondents came from middle-income households. In planning for service and infrastructure investments, it is important to consider that a greater proportion of older residents had low annual household incomes of less than \$40,000.

Housing is one of the key issues for older residents. While most respondents owned their dwelling, most respondents felt that the current housing situation in Tumbler Ridge does not meet the needs of older residents. Key design issues included too many stairs, split level homes, and limited wheelchair accessibility. Rising costs for housing and rent were additional important concerns. Most respondents supported the development of a seniors' housing complex in Tumbler Ridge. Preferred locations were in the middle bench, close to services in the downtown core. When asked about the types of housing needed to meet the needs of older residents, most supported housing with modest levels of assistance (independent living and assisted living). Respite care was also strongly supported.

Seniors' transportation and mobility issues are important as they not only affect basic daily needs, but also quality of life and personal safety. Limited transportation options in the community make walking or use of a personal vehicle an essential part of daily life. As such, road and sidewalk maintenance (general and winter) are especially important. As the population ages, support is moving towards developing wheelchair accessible local shuttle bus service. Bus services were also recommended to improve access to services in other communities. For those who are walking within the community, winter weather conditions, especially icy sidewalks, were identified as barriers impacting mobility for older residents. In response, improved snow and ice clearing on sidewalks were frequently mentioned as ways to make it easier for older residents to move around the community.

In terms of community services, home care and transportation to medical services were most frequently recommended to help older residents maintain their health and wellness. Services that

help older residents to maintain their home, such as house cleaning and yard work, were also well supported. Family and social networks are also critical for seniors to obtain support and care when needed. The results suggest that while most residents are able to draw upon a high level of support from friends living in the community, fewer have local family networks.

With nearly one-quarter of respondents already retired, approximately another 44% of respondents are planning to retire in Tumbler Ridge. Although many of the remaining respondents are undecided about where they would like to retire, this still indicates that the local seniors' population is poised for growth. This will have important implications for services and infrastructure investments.

While many respondents are satisfied with services and programs currently provided in Tumbler Ridge, they offered suggestions to expand social, recreational, and educational programs. While the development of a seniors' drop-in centre is a long-term goal, it will be an important piece of infrastructure for the community as the population ages. Such a centre will be able to support ongoing social events and recreation programs for seniors. Finally, to support life-long learning, respondents recommended computer training programs, health and wellness workshops, and 'how-to' workshops for home improvements. A central focal point for information about services and programs will be important to assist residents to make difficult decisions as they age.

Appendix A

Consent form

Door-to-door Survey Consent Form

Purpose – The Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs is collecting information to assist in its work. Part of the needed information includes an up-to-date profile of the local population. This survey, which will create that updated population profile, is being carried out for the Mayor’s Task Force under the direction of Dr. Greg Halseth of the University of Northern British Columbia.

How respondents were chosen - The survey work is going door-to-door to every household in Tumbler Ridge. Non-resident property owners will receive a mail-out version of this same survey.

Anonymity and Confidentiality - No participant names will be collected through the survey, and no information will be reported such that individuals could be identified. All information shared in this survey will be held within strict confidence by the researchers. All records will be kept in a secure research room at UNBC and will be accessible only to the research team. The information will be kept until the final report of this project is completed later this spring. After this time, all survey documents will be destroyed.

Potential Risks and Benefits - This project has been assessed by the UNBC Research Ethics Board. We do not anticipate any risks to participants. We hope that by participating you will have a chance to provide input into the Task Force’s recommendations report to Town Council.

Voluntary Participation - Your participation in the survey is entirely voluntary and, as such, you may choose not to participate. If you do participate you should feel free to not answer any questions that make you uncomfortable. You have the right to terminate your survey participation at any time and your information will be withdrawn from the study.

Research Results – For questions that may arise from this research, please feel free to contact Lonny Miller at the Tumbler Ridge Town Office (tel. 242-4242, or lonny@dtr.ca) or Greg Halseth at UNBC (tel. 250-960-5826, halseth@unbc.ca). The project reports will be provided to the Task Force, with copies donated to the Tumbler Ridge Public Library.

Complaints - Any complaints about this project or the survey should be directed to the Office of Research at UNBC (tel. 250-960-5820, reb@unbc.ca).

I have read the above description of the survey and I understand the conditions of my participation. My signature indicates that I agree to participate in the survey.

(Name - please print)

(Signature)

(Date)

Appendix B

Door-to-door survey

SURVEY NUMBER: _____

**Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs
Community Survey
February – March 2008**

Enumerator: _____

Property Address: _____

Survey Check Dates: _____

Survey Check Times: _____

Consent Form Signed:

Copy of Consent Form given to respondent:

Partners:

District of Tumbler Ridge
Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs
Community Development Institute at the University of Northern British Columbia

House Type:

SFD MH on property Townhouse/Rowhouse
 Apt. MH in MH Park Other _____

Are there stairs at main entrance:

Yes 4 or fewer More than 4
 No

Section A Questions For All Households

This first section is for every household. We would like to ask about you and your family. These questions are important because they help to create a profile of Tumbler Ridge. The answers are completely confidential.

A1. How long have you lived in Tumbler Ridge? _____ years.

A2. For each person normally living in the residence, please describe their age and whether they are male/female, starting with yourself:

	Age	Male or Female
Yourself		
Person 1		
Person 2		
Person 3		
Person 4		
Person 5		
Person 6		

A3. Please describe your employment status. *(Please check one)*

- Employed / Self-employed full-time
- Employed / Self-employed part-time
- Contract worker
- Not employed
- Student
- Retired
- Homemaker
- Other, please specify: _____

A3a. If you are not retired, are you planning on retiring in Tumbler Ridge?
(Please check one)

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If NO, where are you going to retire?

A4. What is your marital status? (Please check one)

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single - never married | <input type="checkbox"/> Separated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Married | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Live-in partner or common-law partner | <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed |

A5. What is your total household income for the past year, before taxes and deductions? (Please check one)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 - \$19,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 - \$119,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 - \$39,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$120,000 - \$139,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000 - \$59,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$140,000 - \$159,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60,000 - \$79,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$160,000 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$80,000 - \$99,999 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do not know | |

A6. Does anyone in your household require special medical attention?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | If Yes, please specify: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | _____ |

A7. Is this dwelling?

- Owned (even if it is still being paid for)
- Rented

A8. Would you say that current housing in Tumbler Ridge meets the needs of seniors? (ie: design, location, affordability, etc)

- Yes
- No

Please explain: _____

A9. Do you think Tumbler Ridge needs a seniors' housing complex?

- Yes
- No

A9a. If YES, where would be the best location?

Section B Questions For Older Residents

This section is for:

- older residents (65 and older)
- near “older residents” (50 - 64 years)
- people with experience with seniors’ needs (cared for/will soon care for ...)

These questions are important because they will help the Task Force identify priority issues. The answers are completely confidential.

HOUSING

B1. What types of housing should Tumbler Ridge have to meet the needs of older residents?
(Please check all categories that apply)

- Independent living units (*ie: private apartments with available meals, housekeeping, laundry, and home care*)
- Assisted living units (*ie: like independent living but with greater care in meals, grooming, medication, and home care*)
- Long term care facilities (*ie: nursing home*)
- Respite care facility (*ie: adult daycare facility designed to provide temporary relief for primary caregivers of seniors with ongoing needs*)
- Palliative care (*ie: facility designed to provide care for terminally ill residents*)

B2. Do YOU need seniors’ accommodation at this time?

- Yes
- No

B2a. If yes, how much are you willing to pay?

- \$_____ per month to rent
- \$_____ purchase price

B2b. What kind of housing are you looking for?

- Single Family Dwelling Unit
- Apartment
- Condominium
- Seniors’ Housing – Long term care
- Seniors’ Housing – Intermediate care
- Other _____

MOBILITY

B3. To assist with Seniors' Mobility within Tumbler Ridge:

	Yes	No
B3a. Do you think the roads are well maintained in Tumbler Ridge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B3b. Is winter road maintenance adequate in Tumbler Ridge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B3c. Do you think the sidewalks are well maintained in Tumbler Ridge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B3d. Is winter sidewalk maintenance adequate in Tumbler Ridge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B4. What types of local transportation services should be provided for older residents?

B5. What barriers prohibit older residents from walking around the community?
(Please check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weather | <input type="checkbox"/> Snow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concern over safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Distances |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doorways / access into buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of sidewalks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ice on sidewalks | <input type="checkbox"/> Stairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loose gravel on roads and walkways | <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy doors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: _____ | |

B6. What are some of the things that need to be done to allow older residents to move about the community/local stores more easily? *(Please check all that apply)*

- Elevators
- Wheelchair ramps
- Snow and ice clearing in parking lots
- Snow and ice clearing on sidewalks
- Canopies / covered entrances / awnings
- Automatic entrance doors on stores/offices
- Other, please specify: _____

SUPPORT SERVICES

B7. What support services do you think are needed to help older residents maintain their health and independence?

Services	Is it needed? (Please write <u>yes</u> or <u>no</u>)	Of these services, which is the most needed?
Nursing care		
Home care		
Personal care (<i>ie: bathing, foot care</i>)		
Respite care (<i>ie: caregiver relief program</i>)		
House cleaning (<i>ie: cleaning, laundry housework</i>)		
Yard work (<i>ie: gardening, snowclearing</i>)		
Home repair and maintenance		
Help with shopping		
Delivery of services and goods		
Meals-on-wheels		
Help with meal preparation		
Visiting (<i>informal or formal</i>)		
Assistance with medical trips		
Transportation to doctor's appointments		
Other – please specify:		

FAMILY, FRIENDSHIPS, AND CARE NETWORKS

B8. Do you have family in Tumbler Ridge?

- Yes
- No

B9. Do you have close friends in Tumbler Ridge?

- Yes
- No

PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS

B10. What types of social programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?

B11. What types of recreational programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?

B12. What types of educational programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us. We appreciate your assistance.

From your experiences, do you have anything else to add that was not touched on here about meeting the needs of older residents?

Appendix C

Drop-off letter

Tumbler Ridge Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs Survey

The population of Tumbler Ridge is changing. One result is an increased interest in how to provide services to older residents. The Mayor's Task Force on Seniors' Needs is collecting information to assist in its work. Part of the needed information includes an up-to-date profile of the local population. This survey, which will create that updated population profile, is being carried out for the Task Force under the direction of Dr. Greg Halseth of the University of Northern British Columbia.

To complete the population profile, a door-to-door survey of every household in Tumbler Ridge is being conducted. Unfortunately, we missed connecting with you at home and have left this letter, survey, and return envelope for you to fill out. Input from as many residents and property owners as possible will help the Task Force to better understand housing, care, and service needs.

Your participation is voluntary and if you examine the survey you will see that there is no way to identify individual respondents. Ideally, we would like you to answer all of the questions that apply to you, but please feel free to ignore any questions you would rather not answer. All information shared in this survey will be held in strict confidence and no results will be presented such that any individual could be identified. The survey information will be stored in a secure research room at UNBC and will be accessible only to the research team. The survey information will be kept only until the project is completed later this spring. After that, all surveys and data will be destroyed. The project has been evaluated by the UNBC Research Ethics Board. The research team considers that this survey poses no risk to participants.

When you have finished filling out the survey, please put it into the enclosed envelope and drop it into one of the locked drop boxes located at the Tumbler Ridge City Hall and the Tumbler Ridge Community Centre.

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact Lonny Miller at the Tumbler Ridge Town Office (tel. 242-4242, or lonny@dr.ca) or Greg Halseth at UNBC (tel. 250-960-5826, halseth@unbc.ca). Any complaints about this project should be directed to the Office of Research, UNBC (250) 960-5820 (reb@unbc.ca).

The project reports will be provided to the Task Force, with copies donated to the Tumbler Ridge Public Library.

Thank you for your time. Sincerely,

Greg Halseth

Geography Program, UNBC

Prince George, B.C. V2N 4Z9

Tel: (250) 960-5826

Fax: (250) 960-5539

Email: halseth@unbc.ca

Appendix D

Drop-off community survey

SURVEY NUMBER: _____

**Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs
Community Survey
February – March 2008**

Partners:

District of Tumbler Ridge
Tumbler Ridge Mayor’s Task Force on Seniors’ Needs
Community Development Institute at the University of Northern British Columbia

Section A Questions For All Households

This first section is for every household. We would like to ask about you and your family. These questions are important because they help to create a profile of Tumbler Ridge. The answers are completely confidential.

A1. How long have you lived in Tumbler Ridge? _____ years.

A2. For each person normally living in the residence, please describe their age and whether they are male/female, starting with yourself:

	Age	Male or Female
Yourself		
Person 1		
Person 2		
Person 3		
Person 4		
Person 5		
Person 6		

A3. Please describe your employment status. *(Please check one)*

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employed / Self-employed full-time | <input type="checkbox"/> Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employed / Self-employed part-time | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contract worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not employed | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: _____ | |

A3a. If you are not retired, are you planning on retiring in Tumbler Ridge?
(Please check one)

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure | |

If NO, where are you going to retire?

A4. What is your marital status? *(Please check one)*

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single - never married | <input type="checkbox"/> Separated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Married | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Live-in partner or common-law partner | <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed |

A5. What is your total household income for the past year, before taxes and deductions? *(Please check one)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 - \$19,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 - \$119,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 - \$39,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$120,000 - \$139,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000 - \$59,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$140,000 - \$159,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60,000 - \$79,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$160,000 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$80,000 - \$99,999 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do not know | |

A6. Does anyone in your household require special medical attention?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | If Yes, please specify: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | _____ |

A7. What is your house type:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single family dwelling | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile home on property |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Townhouse/Rowhouse | <input type="checkbox"/> Apartment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile home in mobile home park | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

A8. Is this dwelling?

- Owned (even if it is still being paid for)
- Rented

A9. Are there stairs at main entrance of your housing?

- No
- Yes if yes, 4 or fewer
- More than 4

A10. Would you say that current housing in Tumbler Ridge meets the needs of seniors?
(ie: design, location, affordability, etc)

- Yes
- No

Please explain: _____

A11. Do you think Tumbler Ridge needs a seniors' housing complex?

- Yes
- No

A11a. If YES, where would be the best location?

Section B Questions For Older Residents

This section is for (if one applies, please ‘tick’ and proceed with this section):

- older residents (65 and older)
- residents who will be retirement age in next 10-15 years (50 - 64 years old)
- people experienced with seniors’ needs (ie: caring for an older person)

These questions are important because they will help the Task Force identify priority issues. The answers are completely confidential.

HOUSING

B1. What types of housing should Tumbler Ridge have to meet the needs of older residents?
(Please check all categories that apply)

- Independent living units (ie: private apartments with available meals, housekeeping, laundry, and home care)
- Assisted living units (ie: like independent living but with greater care in meals, grooming, medication, and home care)
- Long term care facilities (ie: nursing home)
- Respite care facility (ie: adult daycare facility designed to provide temporary relief for primary caregivers of seniors with ongoing needs)
- Palliative care (ie: facility designed to provide care for terminally ill residents)

B2. Do YOU need seniors’ accommodation at this time?

- Yes
- No

B2a. If yes, how much are you willing to pay?

- \$ _____ per month to rent
- \$ _____ purchase price

B2b. What kind of housing are you looking for?

- Single Family Dwelling Unit
- Apartment
- Condominium
- Seniors’ Housing – Long term care
- Seniors’ Housing – Intermediate care
- Other _____

MOBILITY

B3. To assist with Seniors' Mobility within Tumbler Ridge:

	Yes	No
B3a. Do you think the roads are well maintained in Tumbler Ridge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B3b. Is winter road maintenance adequate in Tumbler Ridge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B3c. Do you think the sidewalks are well maintained in Tumbler Ridge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B3d. Is winter sidewalk maintenance adequate in Tumbler Ridge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B4. What types of local transportation services should be provided for older residents?

B5. What barriers prohibit older residents from walking around the community?
(Please check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weather | <input type="checkbox"/> Snow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concern over safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Distances |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doorways / access into buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of sidewalks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ice on sidewalks | <input type="checkbox"/> Stairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loose gravel on roads and walkways | <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy doors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: _____ | |

B6. What are some of the things that need to be done to allow older residents to move about the community/local stores more easily? *(Please check all that apply)*

- Elevators
- Wheelchair ramps
- Snow and ice clearing in parking lots
- Snow and ice clearing on sidewalks
- Canopies / covered entrances / awnings
- Automatic entrance doors on stores/offices
- Other, please specify: _____

SUPPORT SERVICES

B7. What support services do you think are needed to help older residents maintain their health and independence?

Services	Is it needed? (Please write <u>yes</u> or <u>no</u>)	Of these services, which is the most needed?
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Respite care (<i>ie: caregiver relief program</i>)		
House cleaning (<i>ie: cleaning, laundry housework</i>)		
Yard work (<i>ie: gardening, snowclearing</i>)		
Home repair and maintenance		
Help with shopping		
Delivery of services and goods		
Meals-on-wheels		
Help with meal preparation		
Visiting (<i>informal or formal</i>)		
Assistance with medical trips		
Transportation to doctor's appointments		
Other – please specify:		

FAMILY, FRIENDSHIPS, AND CARE NETWORKS

B8. Do you have family in Tumbler Ridge?

- Yes
- No

B9. Do you have close friends in Tumbler Ridge?

- Yes
- No

PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS

B10. What types of social programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?

B11. What types of recreational programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?

B12. What types of educational programs should be provided for older residents in Tumbler Ridge?

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From your experiences, do you have anything else to add that was not touched on here about meeting the needs of older residents?
