

Terrace and Area Seniors' Needs Project
Methodology Report

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Acknowledgements

This winter, our research team visited Terrace to conduct key informant interviews and focus groups as part of the Terrace and Area Seniors Needs' Project. We wish to thank all the residents, community groups, business members, service providers, policy makers, and municipal staff who took the time to help out and to answer our many questions. Thanks to the many community members who helped out including Doug Foster, Cliff Best, Melodie Johnson, Blaine Stronsgaard, and Susan Makela. Specific thanks to members of a local advisory group who helped provide input and feedback on the project. This includes Lynne Christiansen, Marylin Davies, David Block, Denise Fisher, and Andrew Webber.

On our research team, we wish to thank Chelan Hoffman for her assistance with the Statistics Canada data collection, Joanne Doddridge for her work in arranging and coordinating the interview process.

We also wish to extend our sincerest appreciation to all of the residents in Terrace and area who took the time to participate in the interviews or focus groups. Their response and enthusiasm demonstrates the importance of this issue within the community.

Funding for this project came from the City of Terrace. We would like to extend a special thanks to Denise Fisher who served as our key contact at the City.

Laura Ryser, Carla Martin, Greg Halseth, and Neil Hanlon
Prince George
March 2006

Availability

Copies of all reports associated with the Terrace and Area Seniors Needs' Study are available in a number of locations. In Terrace, copies have been deposited with the City and the public library. At the University of Northern British Columbia, copies have been deposited at the Weller Library or can be accessed on the Community Development Institute website: <http://www.unbc.ca/cdi/research.html>

Project Reports

- Methodology Report
- Population Background and Trends
- Final Report
- Executive Summary

Contact Information

For further information about this topic and the project, feel free to contact Greg Halseth, Acting Director of UNBC's Community Development Institute:

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Terrace and Area Seniors' Needs Project Methodology Report

1.0 Project Description

Since the 1980s, Canada's population has been aging. In small towns, the provision of housing, services, and facilities influence the decisions of individuals when choosing to retire in a community. In the City of Terrace, there were about 686 people over the age of 65 in 1991, but by 2001 there were about 1041 people over age 65 (Census, 2001). The increase in the number of older residents, and the increase in the number of residents who wish to remain in Terrace 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, UNBC and the City of Terrace are working together to assess the needs of older residents.

The purpose of the Terrace and Area Seniors Needs Project is to examine housing and support service needs for seniors in the City of Terrace. Given that Terrace is a service hub for a wider region, interviews and focus groups included people from the surrounding rural areas and neighbouring First Nations' communities. The 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 2006.

This report includes the methodology details and materials for the community interviews and focus groups.

Table 1.1 Timeline

December 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project application developed• Terrace funding confirmed• Project Contribution Agreement confirmed• UNBC Research Ethics Board process completed
January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project begins• Review with Terrace Advisory Group• Initiate review of local population data and preparation of population change report• Organize interviews and focus groups for assessment of seniors' needs• Begin local interviews
February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• January 30 to February 18 conduct key informant interviews• February 1 to 16 conduct focus groups• Completion of analysis from interview and focus group data• Complete population change report
March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of draft project reports with Terrace Advisory Group• Final reports completed and sent to City of Terrace

2.0 Methodology

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

- a review of Census population data,
- key informant interviews, and
- community focus groups.

Census Data

As noted in the Population Background and Trends Report, population data were collected from Statistics Canada's Census database. The Census is undertaken every five years and provides information on the age distribution of local populations. While the age groupings vary between Census periods, it is none-the-less possible to reconstruct the recent population history of the community. Analysis of this population data assessed the following issues:

- 1) the rates of population growth,
- 2) the changing age structure of the population,
- 3) the rates of seniors' retention, as estimated by the age structure of the population over time and the number of seniors' remaining in the community, and
- 4) an estimate of potential growth in the seniors' population based on the current age distribution of the population.

Data for the City of Terrace is derived from Statistics Canada's 'Census Subdivision' (CSD) category. In BC, CSD's correspond with the boundaries of our incorporated municipalities. For the area immediately surrounding the City of Terrace, however, it must be noted that population information is not as straightforward to obtain or compare. It is not collected at a geographic scale that would allow it simply to be added to the Terrace data.

One way to capture this broader sense of a municipality and its surrounding region is through Statistics Canada's Census Agglomeration (CA) category. A CA includes an urban core population (the municipality) together with any neighbouring Stats Can data collection unit where 50% or more of the employed labour force commutes to work in the urban core. Statistics Canada uses such labour market commuter flows as a proxy for a 'functional region'.

Therefore, data in the population report are listed for the City of Terrace, the Terrace CA, the Kitimat-Stikine Regional District, and the province of BC. The goal is to give a range of contexts against which the changes occurring in Terrace can be compared.

A final caution concerns the Census recording of First Nations and aboriginal population data. Such has proved to be a challenge for Statistics Canada and both the City and Terrace CA data should be treated as 'undercounting' First Nations and aboriginal population data.

Research Ethics

Each of the other two research methods used in the study (key informant interviews and focus groups) involved interactions with local residents. Because this is a university based research team, we are bound by standard protocol which identifies that all research conducted with people be sent to UNBC's Research Ethics Board for review and approval. The key informant interviews and the focus group script each passed through this review.

Key to ethics review is that participants are advised of the purposes of the study and that their participation is voluntary. This information is given in the consent forms attached in Appendices A and B. In addition, it is important that participants be advised as to how the research shall protect their anonymity and confidentiality through the process, as well as how through the analysis no linkages are made between the data and the individuals, and that no individuals should be identifiable through the analysis. Again, these points are described in the applicable consent forms. Each participant was given a copy of the consent form.

Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews were conducted between January 30th and February 14th, 2006. A copy of the interview guide is attached (Appendix A).

The purpose of the interviews was to provide background information for the future development of a community survey instrument. Key informants were drawn from community groups, service provision agencies, and local government in order to obtain views from people actively engaged in seniors' issues. The key informants were selected from publicly available lists as well as from suggestions received from the City's project advisory committee.

A total of 54 interviews were conducted. As several of the interviews involved meeting with more than one person, a total of 74 people participated in the interviews. A general breakdown of interview participants by community sector is shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Interview Respondents

Sector	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Health Care	5	6.8
Housing	5	6.8
Government	4	5.4
Social Support Services	15	20.3
Social and Recreational Activities	15	20.3
Senior - general	27	36.5
Other	3	4.1
Total	74	100.0

Source: Terrace Seniors' Needs Assessment Interviews, 2006.

Potential interview participants were contacted by telephone to describe the project, how they were identified as a key informant, and to ask if they would be willing to participate. For those willing to participate, we arranged a meeting at a time and place convenient to the key informant. Prior to the interview, they were again advised about the purpose of the research, the issues in the consent form outlining ethics and confidentiality arrangements, and the completed consent form was collected. During the interview, the interviewer took handwritten notes for the responses.

Information from the key informant interviews also helped to identify topics and issues for discussion in the community focus groups. All interviewees received a copy of the final project report.

Focus Groups

The final stage of the research involved a series of focus groups with residents in Terrace. The purpose of the focus groups was to provide additional background information for the City and the possible future development of a community survey on seniors' issues. Focus groups were conducted between February 1st and 16th 2006. A copy of the focus group discussion guide is attached (Appendix B).

Focus group participants were identified in a number of ways. The City’s project advisory group identified potential groups that might wish to host a focus group, as well, many of the individuals and groups contacted through the key informant interviews also volunteered to arrange groups to discuss seniors’ issue further.

A total of 10 focus groups were conducted for the Project. A total of 76 people were able to participate through these events¹. A general breakdown of the focus groups by community sector, as well as the number of participants, is shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Focus Group Participants

Sector	Number of Participants	% of Participants
Seniors Advisory Committee	12	15.8
Health Advisory Committee	10	13.2
OAP Happy Gang	12	15.8
Emergency Shelter	7	9.2
First Nations’ Elders	5	6.6
Service Providers	4	5.3
Terraceview Family Council	8	10.5
Senior – general A	7	9.2
Senior – general B	6	7.9
Senior – general C	5	6.6
Total	76	100.0

Source: Terrace Seniors’ Needs Assessment Interviews, 2006.

Potential focus group participants were contacted by telephone to describe the project, how they were identified as a potential participant, and to ask if they would be interested in participating. For those who were interested, we arranged a focus group schedule at a time and place convenient to them. Most of the focus group events were held in UNBC’s Terrace offices. Prior to each focus group session, participants were again advised about the purpose of the research, the consent form issues around ethics and confidentiality, and completed consent forms were collected.

The focus groups were facilitated by a member of the UNBC research team. A second research team member took notes and operated the tape recording equipment. The focus group information was then compiled into a thematic summary of issues and topics.

All focus group participants received a copy of the final project report.

¹ From the 150 people who participated in the interviews and focus groups, 17 helped out by participating in both an interview and a focus group.

**Terrace and Area Seniors' Needs Project
Appendix A**

**Interview Materials
Consent Form
Interview Guide**

Terrace and Area Seniors' Needs Project
Interview Consent Form

Purpose – The purpose of this project is to examine housing and support service needs for older residents in the City of Terrace. The work will be carried out by a research team from UNBC with a goal to provide decision-makers and community groups in Terrace with information relevant to decision-making over community planning and infrastructure investments. The project will involve an analysis of local population trends, as well as interviews and focus groups with seniors, decision-makers, service providers, and residents.

How Respondents Were Chosen - The interview participants were selected from publicly available information lists from community groups, service provision agencies, as well as from suggestions made by a community advisory group from the City of Terrace. The interviewees were selected for their potential to provide information about issues relevant to present and future seniors' housing and service needs so as to inform development of a future community survey.

Anonymity And Confidentiality - The names of participants will not be used in any reporting, nor will any information which may be used to identify individuals. All information shared in this interview will be held within strict confidence by the researchers. All records will be kept in a locked research room at UNBC and will be accessible only to the research team. The information will be kept until the final report of the project is complete. After this time, shredding will destroy all information related to the interview.

Potential Risks And Benefits - This project has been assessed by the UNBC Research Ethics Board. The project team does not consider there to be any risks to participation. We hope that by participating you will have a chance to provide input into issues relevant to seniors' housing and service needs in the City of Terrace.

Voluntary Participation - Your participation in the research project is entirely voluntary and, as such, you may chose not to participate. If you participate, you may choose to not answer any question that makes you uncomfortable, and you have the right to terminate the interview at any time and have all the information you provided withdrawn from the study.

Research Results - In case of any questions that may arise from this research, please feel free to contact Dr. Greg Halseth (250-960-5826) or Dr. Neil Hanlon (250-960-5881) in the Geography Program at UNBC. The final project report will be distributed to all interviewees.

Complaints - Any complaints about this project should be directed to the Office of Research, UNBC (250) 960-5820 <officeofresearch@unbc.ca>.

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

(Name -please print)

(Signature)

(Date)

**Terrace Seniors' Needs Project
INTERVIEW SCRIPT**

Interviewee Name: _____

Contact Information: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____ Place: _____

Interview Time: Start _____ Finish _____

SECTION A: Background Information Questions

The first section of questions asks you how long you have been in Terrace, and the benefits or drawbacks of retiring in the community.

A1. How long have you lived in Terrace?

A2a. Are you retired?

1. Yes – go to A2b
2. No – go to A3

A2b. How long ago did you retire? – go to A4

A3. Are you planning on retiring in Terrace?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

A3a. If **NO**, where are you going to retire? Please explain why.

A3b. If **NOT SURE**, why? Please explain.

A4. What is / was your main employment here in town?

Prompt:

What sector

A5. What do you think are the advantages to retiring in Terrace?

A6. What are the drawbacks or disadvantages of retiring in Terrace?

SECTION B:

Housing

In this section, I would like to ask you some questions relating to the housing situation in Terrace for older and senior residents.

B1a. Would you say the current housing situation in Terrace meets the needs of seniors?

**If the interviewee is not a senior, go to B2:

**If the interviewee is a senior, not in seniors' housing, go to B1b

**If they are in seniors' housing, go to B1c:

B1b. If you require seniors' housing:

- are you on a waiting list?

- for which facility?

- how long have you been waiting?

- what level of care will you need in the new housing?

B1c. If you are already in seniors' housing:

- did you have to go on a waiting list first?

- how long was the placement waiting period?

- what level of care does this senior housing facility provide? Does it provide multiple levels of care?

B2. Do you think the design, location, and availability of housing in Terrace is supportive of seniors' independence? Why?

B3. What types of housing do you think Terrace needs to have for seniors?

Prompts:

To maintain their independence

For assisted living (nursing homes; home care; meals on wheels; visiting)

For long term care facilities

B4. Who should be responsible for developing and maintaining seniors' housing?

Prompts:

Municipal Government, Federal Government, Provincial Government

Private Funding

Voluntary Sector

B5. Who should pay for seniors' housing?

Prompts:

Municipal Government, Federal Government, Provincial Government

Private funding

Residents of housing

SECTION C: Health Care

In this section, I would like to ask you some questions about health care needs for yourself and to seniors in general in Terrace.

C1. In general, how well do you think the health care system responds to the needs of seniors in Terrace?

C2. What do you think are the most useful health care services now provided to seniors in Terrace?

C3. What do you think are the critical health care service needs for seniors in Terrace?

C4a. Does anyone in your household require special health services?

C4b. If yes, please specify the types of services that are needed?

C4c. How long did it take for this health condition to be diagnosed?

C5. Are there any other health care issues related to seniors that you would like to raise?

SECTION D: Social / Support Services

In this section, I would like to ask you some questions about social / support services for seniors in Terrace.

D1a. Please describe the key organisations that provide social / support services for seniors in Terrace.

D1b. What are the strengths of current seniors' services? Compared to 10 years ago?

D1c. What are the weaknesses of seniors' services in Terrace?

D2a. Do you think people are aware of / hear about programs and services provided for seniors?

D2b. What are some of the ways that information on seniors programs and services could be better provided?

Prompts:

Newspaper, Television / radio, Word of mouth

Telephone, Information brochures, flyers, Website / e-mail, other

D3. What new / additional services for seniors do you think Terrace needs most?

Prompts: Social support (meals on wheels, home maintenance)

Support groups

Retail

Recreation and leisure

Information (library, health resources)

Service Providers:

*****If they work / volunteer with an organisation that deals with seniors ask:***

Preamble: I would now like to ask you some questions about the services provided by your organisation.

D4. What are the roles and responsibility of your organisation with respect to seniors in your community?

D5a. Please explain how the services provided by your organisation are delivered:

Prompt:

Partnerships?

D5b. How does your organization promote / advertise programs / services provided for seniors?

D6. What are some of the challenges facing your organisation with respect to delivering seniors in your community?

Prompt:

Funding

Limited partnerships

Lack of expertise

Economies of scale

Lack of volunteers

Volunteer burnout

Change in government mandate

First Nations / non-aboriginal services

SECTION E

Transportation

In this section, I would like to ask you some questions relating to transportation for seniors in Terrace.

E1. Would you say the current types of transportation options in Terrace meets the needs of seniors?

E2a. What types of transportation services do you think should be provided for senior citizens?

E2b. In the case where seniors need to travel out of town for health or other services, what types of transportation services do you think should be provided?

E3. In your opinion, are the sidewalks well maintained in Terrace?

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
1	2	3	4	5

Prompt:
Any specific concerns?

SECTION F

Physical Environment

In this next section, I would like to ask you some questions relating to the physical environment in Terrace.

F1. Are there any physical barriers that prohibit seniors from moving / walking around town? If so, where?

Prompts:

- Weather
- Distance
- Snowclearing
- Doorways/Access
- Stairs/Ramps
- Sidewalks

F2a. What are some of the things that need to be done to allow seniors to move about Terrace and go to various stores and buildings?

Prompts:

- Elevators
- Wheelchair ramps
- Snow and ice clearing in parking lots and sidewalks
- Sidewalks / paths
- Canopies / covered entrances / awnings

F2b. Who should be responsible for paying for these changes?

Prompts:

- Municipal government
- Provincial government
- Federal government
- Private sector
- Non-profit sector
- Residents
- Partnership: please specify _____

F3. Are there enough handicap / seniors' parking spaces in town?

Yes/No – explain

SECTION G

Social Environment

In this next section, I would like to ask you some questions regarding the social environment for seniors.

G1. Please describe the key community groups or clubs that are available for seniors?

G2. What types of recreation or leisure programs are available for seniors?

G3. What types of social / recreational activities or programs should be provided to help seniors maintain their health and independence?

Social Prompts:

- Recreation and leisure programs
- Community clubs
- Social events
- Library
- Volunteer groups
- Visiting

Daily Living Service Prompts:

- Shopping
- House cleaning
- Yard work
- Delivery of services and goods

G4. Are there any other social or recreational issues related to seniors that you would like to raise?

SECTION H

Quality of Life and Cost of Living

In this next section, I would like to ask you some questions concerning the quality of life and cost of living for older residents.

H1. What factors do you think contribute to the quality of life of seniors living in Terrace?

Positive factors:

Negative factors:

H2. Do you feel there are adequate opportunities to be involved / participate within the community?

Prompts:

Belonging - private/safe seniors' space

Becoming - participate within the community

H3. In your opinion is the cost of living in Terrace reasonable for older residents? Explain.

Prompts:

Recreation

Groceries

Assisted Living (meals on wheels, home care nursing)

Home maintenance

Retail services

Health Costs (prescription, specialists)

H4. Does the cost of living in Terrace affect seniors' quality of life?

If **YES**, describe how:

SECTION I: Informal and Formal care Networks

In this section, I would like to ask you some questions about informal and formal care networks available to yourself and to seniors in general in Terrace.

****Ask older respondents only.**

I1. Do you have family or friends in Terrace who could be thought of as a support network, or who you could turn to for help when needed?

I2. What organisations are available to support or provide assistance to seniors who do not have family or friends to rely on for help?

Prompt:

- Home care nursing
- Home occupational therapy
- Health Unit
- Community Groups
- Adult day care programs
- Meals on Wheels
- Visiting Programs
- Volunteer sector
- Cleaning Services

SECTION J: Concluding Questions

J1. From the experiences you have had in Terrace, do you have anything else that has not been touched on here about meeting the needs of older and senior residents that you would like to comment on?

J2. Can you suggest any [community members 50 years or older, service providers, government offices] who are interested in seniors' issues who would possibly be interested in participating?

**Terrace and Area Seniors' Needs Project
Appendix B**

**Focus Group Materials
Consent Form
Discussion Guide**

Terrace and Area Seniors’ Needs Project
Focus Group Consent Form

Purpose – The purpose of this project is to examine housing and support service needs for older residents in the City of Terrace. The work will be carried out by a research team from UNBC with a goal to provide decision-makers and community groups in Terrace with information relevant to decision-making over community planning and infrastructure investments. The project will involve an analysis of local population trends, as well as interviews and focus groups with seniors, decision-makers, service providers, and residents.

How Respondents Were Chosen - The focus group participants were selected from suggestions made by a community advisory group from the City of Terrace as individuals with an interest in seniors’ housing and support needs topics. The focus group participants were selected for their potential to provide information about issues relevant to present and future seniors’ housing and service needs so as to inform development of a future community survey.

Anonymity And Confidentiality – The names of participants will not be used in any reporting, nor will any information which may be used to identify individuals. The nature of focus group discussions means that we will be sharing information amongst everyone present. However, all information shared in this focus group will be held within strict confidence by the researchers. All records will be kept in a locked research room at UNBC and accessible only to the research team. The information will be kept until the final report of the project is complete. After this time, shredding will destroy all information related to the focus group.

Potential Risks And Benefits - This project has been assessed by the UNBC Research Ethics Board. The project team does not consider there to be any risks to participation. We hope that by participating you will have a chance to provide input into issues relevant to seniors’ housing and service needs in the City of Terrace.

Voluntary Participation - Your participation in the research project is entirely voluntary and, as such, you may chose not to participate. If you participate, you may choose not to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable, and you have the right to terminate your participation in the focus group at any time and have all the information you provided withdrawn from the study.

Research Results - In case of any questions that may arise from this research, please feel free to contact Dr. Greg Halseth (250-960-5826) or Dr. Neil Hanlon (250-960-5881) in the Geography Program at UNBC. The final project report will be distributed to all focus group participants.

Complaints - Any complaints about this project should be directed to the Office of Research, UNBC (250) 960-5820 <officeofresearch@unbc.ca>.

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

(Name -please print)

(Signature)

(Date)

**Terrace Seniors' Needs Project
FOCUS GROUP GUIDE**

Focus group: _____

Facilitator: _____

Notes take by: _____

Date: _____ Place: _____

Interview Time: Start _____ Finish _____

TOPIC AREAS:

- Opening Questions
 - Migration/Mobility
 - Housing
 - Services
 - Transportation
 - Informal and Formal Care Networks
 - Physical Environment
 - Quality of Life
 - Health Care
 - Concluding Question
-

A. Opening Questions

Around the table, what is your name and how long have you lived in Terrace?
What do you like about living in Terrace?
What do you dislike about living in Terrace?

B. Migration/Mobility

With respect to seniors:
What are the advantages to retiring in Terrace?
What are the drawbacks or disadvantages of retiring in Terrace?

C. Housing

Would you say the current housing situation in Terrace satisfies the needs of seniors?

Prompts:

Problems or advantages of available housing

What types of housing do you think Terrace will have to develop to meet the needs of seniors?

Prompts:

Maintain their independence

Assisted Living (nursing homes)

D. Health Care

In general, how well do you think the health care system responds to the needs of seniors in Terrace?

Prompts:

Most useful health care services now provided to seniors in Terrace?

Critical health care service needs for seniors in Terrace?

Does anyone in your household require special health services?

Prompts:

Types?

How long did it take for this health condition to be diagnosed?

E. Services

Do you think local services currently meet the needs of seniors in Terrace?

Prompts:

Health

Social support (meals on wheels, home maintenance)

Retail

Recreation and leisure

Information (library, health resources)

What additional services for seniors do you think Terrace needs the most?

F. Transportation

What do you think are the key transportation needs for seniors in Terrace?

Prompts:

Inside the community

Travel out-of-town (i.e. medical)

G. Informal and Formal Care Networks

We wanted to ask about family and friends and their role as an informal care network. Do you have family and / or friends living in Terrace who might do this?

What are your options if you need assistance with your daily activities, and your family and friends are unable to provide you with assistance?

Prompts:

- Home care nursing
- Home occupational therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Adult day care programs
- Meals on Wheels

H. Physical Environment

What physical barriers prohibit seniors from walking around town?

Prompts:

- Weather
- Safety issues
- Distance to services
- Snowclearing
- Parking spaces
- Doorways/ access
- Stairs/ ramps

I. Quality of Life

What community activities and programs should be provided to help seniors maintain their health and independence?

Prompts:

- Recreation and Leisure Programs
- Community clubs
- Social events
- Library
- Volunteer Groups

J. Concluding Question

From the experiences you have had in Terrace, do you have anything else that has not been touched on here that you would like to comment on?