**Moving Together Phase III: Implementing a Transportation Action Plan for Kootenay Boundary Seniors**

**Project Overview**

Moving Together Phases I & II: A Collaborative Approach to Addressing Seniors’ Transportation Barriers

(2014, funded by Vancouver Foundation) identified specific transportation service gaps and barriers. A project Working Group of local stakeholders including local/regional transit managers, seniors, community services, and regional/municipal government developed solutions in three categories: Transit, Interior Health/Community Transportation Services, and Public Education & Marketing. The recommendations were presented to a larger regional-provincial stakeholder group that worked together to identify challenges and opportunities for implementation. The most promising recommendations emerging from this gathering were formulated into an Action Plan.

Moving Together Phase III: Implementing a Transportation Action Plan for Kootenay Boundary Seniors, will operationalize the Action Plan in two segments: 1) A Transportation Animator position to connect seniors to appropriate transportation services, raise community awareness of seniors transportation challenges (including health professionals and community services providers), and promote collaboration among transportation providers; and, 2) Policy, Practice & Project Development to further develop and/or implement the remaining recommendations through participation in wider transportation initiatives with partner groups, i.e. the West Kootenay Transit Committee, City of Nelson, and Interior Health (IH).

The Action Plan includes achievable recommendations for making existing transit and other transportation services more accessible to seniors, as well as recommendations focused on strengthening collaboration among service providers. The project has already been successful in initiating a dialogue among service providers and has engaged area governments in supporting the project’s recommendations and collaborative approach. The Transportation Animator will help seniors find transportation services that are accessible, affordable and appropriate to their needs and help rural seniors prepare for “life after driving”. Having a trusted source of information and assistance will reduce seniors’ isolation, enhancing their ability to engage in community life and meet their health needs. The animator will also educate health and community service professionals, seniors’ advocates and the public about transportation resources and seniors transportation challenges.

The recommendations at the heart of this project were developed by a Working Group comprised of representatives from municipal/regional transit, community transportation services, and seniors/health services advocates. Representatives of key sectors subsequently worked with seniors and community to identify the most promising recommendations, and challenges and opportunities to implementation. The Action Plan for Phase III is based upon these collective deliberations. It has been reviewed by stakeholders – including senior planners, policy developers and decision makers from Transit, Interior Health and Ministry of Transportation, as well as municipal and regional government representatives - and dialogue is continuing between phases of the project to ensure continued engagement. While there are challenges to making change within large institutions like BC Transit and Interior Health, there remains a willingness to work together to improve seniors transportation services in the region. We have enlisted strong allies, including the Mayor of Nelson, and comprehensive media coverage has engaged broad community support. By engaging both senior management and local service providers we are able to continue to offer practical solutions developed by people inside the system. For example, a proposed transit route change initially met with resistance by BC Transit however local transit staff was able to further develop and reintroduce the recommendation with more favourable results.

Transportation Animator: public education campaigns on seniors’ transportation challenges and transportation resources, including presentations and “how-to” transportation service demonstrations; reach out to isolated rural seniors for “life after driving” planning; phone, e-mail and in-person transportation support to seniors; work with IH to improve appointment scheduling for rural seniors’ to better mesh with transit schedules.

Policy, Practice & Project Development: coordinate the affairs of the Working Group and facilitate their participation in various transportation initiatives that further the goals of the Action Plan; work with partners and key stakeholders to further develop and/or implement Phase II recommendations. Focus will be on strengthening existing services through service coordination, service enhancements, and changes to policy and practice, as well as project/fund development.

Several Working Group members are seniors. Seniors were also well-represented at the Stakeholder

Gathering, including rural seniors who struggle with transit and other transportation services and so have firsthand knowledge of the issues. These seniors will be engaged in Phase III as advisors and as Working Group members to work on recommendation-specific initiatives. The Animator will seek community champions among the senior population to create local action on transportation issues and build resilience in rural communities.

**Anticipated outcomes for the project**

Short-term: Seniors, service providers and the public are aware of transportation resources available in the region

Indicators/outputs:

- Measurable increase in number of seniors accessing specific transportation services (transit, volunteer driver programs, rideshare, etc.)

- Number of Transportation Animator presentations and contacts

- Number of print information resources distributed

- Number of members of public accessing online information resources

Medium-term: Seniors social isolation is reduced, making them less vulnerable to abuse, neglect and self-neglect and more likely to experience positive health outcomes

Indicators/outputs:

- A measurable increase in Transportation Animator clients participating social/recreational activities and engaging in community and civic life

- A measurable increase in Transportation Animator clients accessing health and community services

- A measurable improvement in Transportation Animator clients’ perception of their health and social well being

- A measurable reduction in Transportation Animator clients’ perception of their loneliness and isolation

- A measurable increase in Transportation Animator clients actively planning for “life after driving”

Medium-term: Key stakeholders continue to engage with one another to enhance seniors’ transportation resources in the region

Indicators/outputs:

- Number and diversity of key stakeholders meeting with Working Group members to work on relevant aspects of the Action Plan

- Number of meetings, committees, and contacts

- Number of recommendations successfully implemented

Medium to Long-term: The region’s public and community/private sectors offer seniors transportation service options that are adequate, accessible, affordable and appropriate

Indicators/outputs:

- Publicly-owned shuttle buses are made available during idle time to fill gaps in other transportation services (e.g. transit, HandyDART)

- A regularly-scheduled transit bus meets the North Short bus to Nelson and travels direct to Trail Hospital without requiring passengers to transfer buses at Selkirk College in Castlegar; scheduled bathroom stop at Castlegar Complex seniors centre.

- Health professionals offer appointment scheduling that better meshes with transit schedules and better accommodates seniors who must travel long distances

- Seniors’ family members, caregivers and support workers book a wheelchair accessible vehicle through

Kootenay Carshare

- A measurable increase in number of seniors accessing Kootenay Rideshare

With the support of a consultant the Project Coordinator will develop an Evaluation Framework (draft appears above) to measure outcomes. Working with partners, the Coordinator and the Transportation Animator will use measurement tools, such as:

Pre- and post-test administered to all Transportation Animator clients

Transportation Animator activity statistics

Project Coordinator activity statistics

Kootenay Seniors website analytics

Statistics shared by partner Summit Psychology (DriveABLE)

Policy changes/IT enhancements as reported by collaborating health services

Kootenay Carshare vehicle usage statistics

Kootenay Rideshare website statistics

As we did in Phases I/II of the project – basing recommendations on evidence garnered through research and broad community and stakeholder consultation – knowledge gained throughout Phase III will continuously influence and inform the work as it progresses. Outcomes will be continuously reviewed by project staff and the Working Group; adjustments will be made to the Action Plan and/or project activities, or new strategies developed, innovating as needed to achieve desired outcomes. Stakeholder Gatherings (September 2016 and June 2018) will provide opportunities to report progress to the community and sector stakeholders. Holding the first gathering at the end of the first year of the project will allow us to incorporate broader community feedback into activities planning for years two and three.