
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2019HLTH0026-000133
Feb. 1, 2019

Ministry of Health
Island Health

Better supports for seniors on Vancouver Island with age-friendly grants

VICTORIA – From Sooke to Port Hardy, seven communities on Vancouver Island are receiving age-friendly grants to support seniors so they can live active, socially engaged and independent lives.

“We are listening to seniors in this province and providing funding for age-friendly action items to help them age at home in their communities,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “Seniors who are connected to their communities and are active live longer, healthier lives and our government wants to keep that continuing.”

A total of \$729,500 in age-friendly grants are being provided to First Nations and B.C. communities in 2019.

“Seniors are at the heart of their communities, and it’s important that they are able to age well at home so they can continue to contribute positively to their neighbourhoods,” said Anne Kang, Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors. “The impact of the age-friendly grants is great, and because of the success of the program, we have seen it grow year after year.”

Grants will be distributed to Alberni-Clayoquot, Cumberland, Nanaimo, Port Alberni, Port Hardy, Tahsis and Sooke. The communities’ projects and plans include:

- creating an action plan to make Alberni-Clayoquot more age-friendly;
- assessing and planning so Cumberland can better include seniors and help them age in place;
- conducting an assessment to make Nanaimo more age-friendly, including reducing social isolation and improving social networks/organizations;
- doing an age-friendly assessment to ensure Port Alberni’s seniors are supported;
- creating a garden space for the Hardy Bay Seniors’ Centre;
- planning for an age-friendly community in Tahsis; and
- Sooke is continuing its Healthy Eating for Active Living program.

The 2019 age-friendly grants will be distributed to 37 communities throughout B.C., three more than the number that received grants in 2018 and more than double the number that received grants in 2017. Together, up to \$140,000 will be awarded to communities on Vancouver Island to help make them more accessible and inclusive for older adults.

The age-friendly communities grant program is a partnership between the Province and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities. In September 2018, local governments and First Nations communities were invited to apply for grants and encouraged to consider projects that focused on accessibility, aging well, physical activity and non-medical home supports. Successful applicants are eligible to apply for a range of services from BC Healthy Communities

Society to support their project.

Learn More:

More information about Age-friendly BC can be found online:

<http://www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly>

A backgrounder follows.

Contact:

Ministry of Health

Communications

250 952-1887 (media line)

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BACKGROUND

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2019 age-friendly community planning and project grant recipients

Alberni-Clayoquot

Project: The regional district will create an age-friendly community action plan that will include objectives and strategies to promote the development of the rural areas of the Alberni Valley as age-friendly communities. The action plan will engage the community to participate and share information to improve seniors' services in the Alberni Valley.

Amount: \$24,750

Cumberland

Project: Cumberland, with a vibrant and engaged seniors' population, will undertake an age-friendly assessment and action plan to ensure seniors feel supported, included and valued in their community, and are able to age in place.

Amount: \$25,000

Nanaimo

Project: The regional district will conduct an age-friendly assessment and add an age-friendly lens to existing plans and policies, including the Oceanside Community Recreation facilities accessibility audit. It aims to increase social participation and strengthen networks with stronger communication between older adult recreation services and organizations.

Amount: \$25,000

Port Alberni

Project: Port Alberni's goal for its age-friendly needs assessment is to have people of all ages and abilities benefit from safer, barrier-free buildings and streets, and better access to local businesses, facilities and green spaces. Seniors will be supported to age actively, enjoy good health and remain independent and involved in their community.

Amount: \$25,000

Port Hardy

Project: This project is focused on the creation of outdoor garden spaces for the Hardy Bay Senior Centre, which will lead to improved healthy eating. The garden beds will be raised to allow for increased accessibility, reducing the need to kneel or bend.

Amount: \$12,500

Tahsis

Project: One of the Village of Tahsis's goals in the development of its age-friendly action plan is to identify community activities that are catalysts the community and community partners rely on to enhance and improve services for older adults.

Amount: \$24,290

Sooke

Project: Sooke continues its age-friendly work with this program that will work to inform seniors on nutritional cooking and healthy eating, physical activity at home, social interaction with peers and increase awareness on regional services for seniors. Sooke is an age-friendly recognized community.

Amount: \$15,000

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