



Age-Friendly Community Action Plan

**Village of Tahsis
B.C.**

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Executive Summary

It is widely acknowledged that Canada's aging population is on the rise. As members of the Baby Boomer generation continue to reach 65 years of age and beyond, Canada is presented with unique challenges and opportunities that come with an aging population.

The Province of British Columbia is home to many of Canada's seniors, including a large portion of seniors who are residing in rural communities. Specifically, the Village of Tahsis; a beautiful remote municipality situated at the head of a fjord inlet on the west coast of Vancouver Island, has one of the highest median ages (58 years) in the Province (SCHN 2018).

Over 44% of the residents of Tahsis are over the age of 60 and 50% of the population are currently retired (OCP Survey 2019).

With their largest age cohort being older adults, the Village of Tahsis embarked on a journey to discover how best to support its aging population through receipt of a grant from the Age-Friendly Communities Program from the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM). The objective is to ensure the Village is well positioned through its plans, policies and programs to support and sustain active, social and independent lifestyles for its mature adults and seniors.

O'Hara Aging + Accessibility Consulting was retained to support the Village to develop a realistic Age-Friendly Community Action Plan through the following project tasks:

- ✓ **Task 1** creating a detailed inventory and evaluation of the current state of age-friendliness
- ✓ **Task 2** producing an asset map which provides a visual representation of assets for older adults
- ✓ **Task 3** conducting a community wide survey on the needs and priorities of seniors in Tahsis

- ✓ **Task 4** hosting two world café meetings with members of the public to identify gaps in present resources and generate discussion
- ✓ **Task 5** interviewing several key community stakeholders and analyzing all qualitative/quantitative findings
- ✓ **Task 6** engaging in a review of all Village policies and plans with an age-friendly lens and developing an age-friendly framework to be applied to future policies/plans

The results of the above tasks were presented to Council on October 8, 2019 which focused on key findings and recommendations including that despite the resource constraints, the Village of Tahsis is rich with culture and a sense of community connectedness.

However, the findings indicate there are definitive gaps related to:

- **Transportation**
- **Food Security**
- **Social Isolation & Mental Health Supports**
- **Specialized Healthcare**

Dissatisfaction with transportation was, not surprisingly, the highest marker for dissatisfaction among residents. Head Bay road has over 70km of unpaved gravel and the number of winding, steep and sharp corners as it weaves across the mountain range makes for a challenging drive even when conditions are ideal.



Seniors voiced they do not feel safe driving on the road and maintenance costs to their vehicles are becoming increasingly expensive. Roundtrip travel from Tahsis to Campbell River including fuel and vehicle maintenance (rate of 0.58/km) costs \$177.48 (SCHR 2018).

The next biggest marker of dissatisfaction is the availability of fresh, affordable healthy food. Tahsis is described anecdotally as a “food desert” because the closest grocery store is in Campbell River which is a 3-hour drive, 360km roundtrip.

Mental health support was identified as a resource gap as it was found that both the lack of options and the awareness of those options for mental health support was a large marker for dissatisfaction among older adults.

30% of respondents live alone and 7% indicated that if they were having a bad day, they did not have someone that they could phone or talk to (Seniors Survey 2019).

There was great dissatisfaction surrounding access to specialized healthcare services. Senior’s indicated that when they need to see a specialist that they have to travel to Campbell River which is challenging when you aren’t feeling well and are unable to safely drive.

It was also mentioned repeatedly that the home care workers provided through the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) have many restrictions surrounding the type of home care that they can provide. This is frustrating for seniors in a rural community who don’t have access to other personal support workers to help supplement the types of assistance they require.

The final recommendations within this Age-Friendly Community Action Plan are categorized based on the “*Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide*” by the World Health Organization (WHO). The guide uses eight domains of healthy living to focus on in order to ensure that the community has adapted its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.

It is important to acknowledge that the Village of Tahsis has several constraints in both capacity and funding that occur naturally within a small remote rural community and the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan focuses on recommendations which are achievable in small incremental steps.

This Community Action Plan consists of 20 recommendations spanning across all eight domains of healthy living. The following are the top six recommendations that will have the most meaningful impact for seniors in Tahsis.

Top 6 Recommendations
<p>WHO Domains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Community Support & Health Services ✓ Housing ✓ Transportation ✓ Social Participation ✓ Respect & Social Inclusion
<p>Recommendation #19 Establish a Task Force – Specialized Healthcare</p> <p>Recommendation #9 Conduct a Seniors Housing Needs Assessment</p> <p>Recommendation #7 Establish a Public/Private Transportation Partnership</p> <p>Recommendation #10 Develop a Community Programming Partnership Framework</p> <p>Recommendation #11 Provide Seniors Specific Programming</p> <p>Recommendation #13 Develop a Friendly Visitor Program</p>

It is recommended to begin the process of implementing the Age-friendly Community Action Plan by establishing the **Tahsis Age-Friendly Action Committee (TAAC)** which will involve multiple stakeholders and representatives who are well-placed to encourage collaborative work in this area.

Before putting the plan into action, the TAAC should develop a detailed implementation plan. This will consist of reviewing all of the recommendations in this report and the established priorities and then determining a schedule with key milestones which will ensure progress is made. It is recommended the TAAC monitor and report progress to Council on a quarterly basis.

Most importantly the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan is a living document which will benefit from continuous review and future iterations. Rural communities such as Tahsis can benefit from reviewing their age-friendly plans in a cyclical review in accordance with overarching strategies such as the Official Community Plan.

Overall Tahsis is a beautiful and majestic community where many seniors are enjoying their retirement. Ultimately, if the Village is able to action the recommendations outlined in this plan, it will be able to remain this way for many more years to come.



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Introduction

An increasing number of Canadian seniors are living longer and living well. For the first time ever in our nation's history; the number of seniors exceeds the number of children aged 14 years or younger. By 2036 the number of people aged 80 and older is expected to more than double and the number of people 100 years and older could triple (Stats Can 2016). Now more than ever, seniors must be at the forefront of municipal strategies and official plans to ensure we are meeting the needs of this ever-growing subset of our population.

While the majority of Canadians live in urban settings, a significant portion of seniors live in rural or remote areas. It is estimated that approximately 23% of seniors in Canada live in rural areas and small towns (Rural Guide 2006). Current research on rural and remote communities show they face unique social and environmental challenges, which can have an impact on health and healthy aging. These challenges differ from those facing aging populations in urban communities.

For seniors who wish to "age in place" in rural communities, there can be additional barriers to remaining in their own homes or staying active and engaged in their communities. Such barriers include a lack of or limited support available to remain independent, as well as very limited housing and transportation options. In addition, seniors in rural and remote areas are frequently required to travel out of their communities for health services, which creates a range of challenges for themselves and their families (Rural Guide 2006).

The Province of British Columbia is home to many of Canada's seniors, including a large portion of seniors who are residing in rural communities. The Village of Tahsis (the Village), a beautiful municipality situated at the head of a fjord inlet on the west coast of Vancouver Island, has one of the highest median ages (58 years) in the Province (Stats Can 2016). Over 44% of the residents of Tahsis are over the age of 60, and 50% of the population is retired (OCP Survey 2019).

The Village is a premier ecotourism destination with an unparalleled abundance of nature, featuring stunning coastal scenery nestled in the heart of Nootka Sound. Many residents choose to retire in Tahsis for its beauty and access to the outdoors. Furthermore, according to (SCHN 2018) the median home value is \$80,125 and the monthly cost of ownership is \$282, making this an attractive retirement destination where Canadian seniors can significantly stretch their retirement savings in comparison with urban communities.

Due to the growing number of seniors choosing to retire in Tahsis, it is paramount that the Village is prepared to support an aging population. Upon receipt of a grant from the Age-Friendly Communities Program through the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), the Village of Tahsis began an age-friendly action project to ensure the Village is positioned through its plans, policies and programs to support and sustain active, social and independent lifestyles for its mature adults and seniors.

The objectives of this project are:

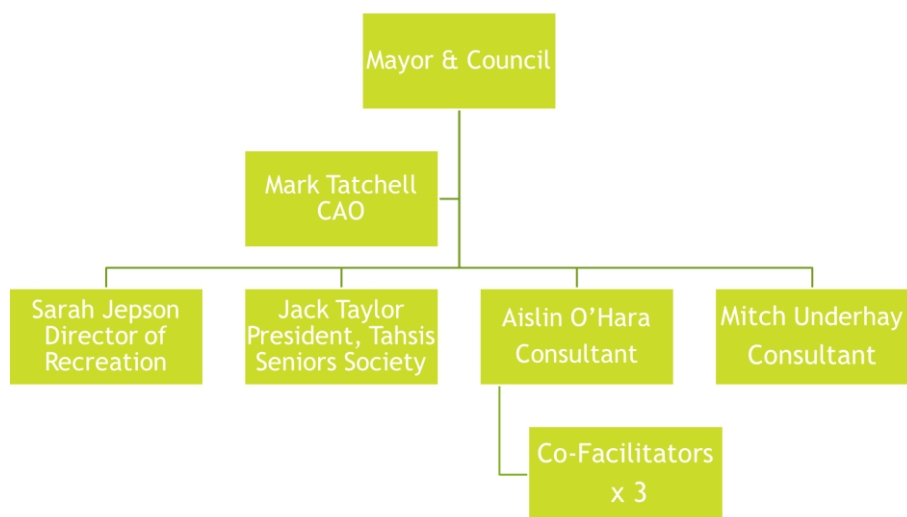
- ✓ Evaluate the current state of age-friendliness
- ✓ Actively engage the Tahsis community
- ✓ Articulate the needs of mature adults and seniors living in the Village
- ✓ Identify gaps in programs and services to inform future strategies
- ✓ Develop a realistic and achievable community action plan which improves the quality of life for seniors in Tahsis now and in the future

Ultimately, the Village of Tahsis is striving to be a place where mature adults and seniors are able to live active, engaged and independent lives through policies, services and structures designed to support them.



Project Objectives

O'Hara Aging + Accessibility Consulting was retained to lead the development of this age-friendly project. To successfully execute the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan, a locally-driven and participatory approach using grassroots methods was employed. The goal was to involve and encourage the active participation of older adults in examining and discussing issues related to aging in their community. To employ this approach the following project team structure was used:



In order to ensure a Community Action Plan was developed for seniors by seniors, the President of the Tahsis Seniors Society was embedded in the Project Team. Additionally, three local seniors from the community were hired as Co-Facilitators to foster awareness, increase participation and act as champions of the age-friendly initiative within the community.

At a high-level the project methodology included the discovery of the present state of age-friendliness through inventories of current services and by actively engaging the Tahsis community and stakeholders. The findings along with relevant policies, were then thoroughly analyzed to identify services and resource gaps. The community action plan addressed these issues, and includes both recommendations and implementation strategies.

The approach was delivered over three key phases with the following deliverables:

Phase 1 Discovery	Phase 2 Analysis	Phase 3 Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 Inventory List <i>Categorizes and ranks the availability of all community assets for older adults</i> Task 2 Community Surveys <i>Identifies the needs & priorities for seniors in Tahsis as well as risk/social isolation assessment</i> Task 3 World Café <i>Facilitated public meeting to solicit feedback from all community members</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 4 Analysis of Phase 1 data <i>Inventory list, surveys, world café data</i> Task 5 Asset Map <i>Visual representation of all services/resources as well as the type/availability</i> Task 6 Policy Review <i>Apply an age-friendly lens to all policy/planning & strategy documents</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 7 Community Action Plan Report <i>Tasks 1-6 will culminate in a final community action plan report including the identified needs for seniors and recommendations on how to best meet those needs</i> Task 8 Presentation to Village of Tahsis <i>Specific recommendations & implementation strategies will be presented to Tahsis Council for consideration & incorporation into Village plans, policies and programs</i>

This work ensures the Village is positioned appropriately through its plans, policies and programs to support and sustain active, social and independent lifestyles for its mature adults and seniors.



Evaluation of Current State

This report begins with an assessment of the assets of the community through an inventory that determines the current state of age-friendliness in Tahsis. This comprehensive assessment identifies what Tahsis is already doing well, including how initiatives and programs are supporting older adults in the community. This “baseline” is helpful for identifying gaps and barriers and will serve as a way to measure progress and help set priorities for action and change.

Presently the Village and its residents do a considerably good job at providing programs and services to seniors. However, there are definitive gaps related to specialized healthcare, transportation, food security and social isolation which will be addressed in the recommendations section.

The following are examples of what’s working well for seniors in Tahsis:

- ✓ **Recreation Centre** – open seven days a week year-round, featuring an indoor swimming pool with a sauna, five-pin bowling, weight room, rock climbing wall, snack bar and free Wi-Fi.
- ✓ **Literacy Society** – a volunteer group promoting literacy and fostering community participation at events.
- ✓ **Community Garden** – a local garden with over 20 beds and a green house for planting and harvesting healthy produce.

- ✓ **Tahsis Seniors Centre** – a local, accessible space where seniors can gather for events, has a kitchen, a mini library, ample parking and access to washrooms.

Tahsis Seniors Society – volunteer-based organization, open every Wednesday and Friday from 1 to 3 pm. The Society runs programming for people over 50, hosts weekly coffee meet ups, monthly potluck dinners and is active in all community events.



- ✓ **Twang Gang** – a local senior's music group which performs at all of the local community events, meets regularly and use a variety of instruments.
- ✓ **Salmon Enhancement Society** – a national, award-winning society which raises and releases over 200,000 salmon fry, staffed 100% by extremely dedicated volunteers who are 65+ years in age.
- ✓ **Library** – local free book and movie selections, access to computers & Wi-Fi, classes available on 'starting tech' Tuesdays with library employee available for assistance.
- ✓ **Tahsis Health Centre** – a clinic with one full-time critical care nurse, one after-hours nurse, a doctor's presence in town two days per week, an urgent care room, ambulance, lab services two days per week, VIHA homecare worker program, a counselor available by request or teleconferencing, a community paramedicine program and HealthLink BC 811.

- ✓ **Community Cupboard** – a confidential program for persons with low income who need support with access to food and basic supplies; currently providing for up to 86 individuals with deliveries on a weekly basis.
- ✓ **Community Events** – Tahsis Days are an annual three-day community event held over the summer months with activities for the whole community including a parade,

contests, scavenger hunts, the Tahsis Salmon Enhancement Derby held annually on the third weekend in August and a Halloween Fireworks Display.

The results of the assessment of services, programs and other initiatives which exist for older adults in the community served as a focal point for discussions to expand the dialogue during the World Café's and the Seniors Community Survey. A detailed inventory of all community assets and services can be found in Appendix I and an asset map providing a visual of community assets can be found in Appendix II.



Portrait of Seniors & Older Adults in Tahsis

The Village of Tahsis is home to 248 Canadians with 44% of the population age 60 years or older (Stats Can 2016). The majority of Tahsis residents, approximately 59% live in the village year-round on a full-time basis and 94% of all residents own their homes (OCP Survey 2019).

A Seniors Survey was conducted as part of this work. The survey was mailed to every household on the Village registry; the response rate from households who completed and returned the survey was quite high (n=58). The survey was considered a good indicator of the health and well-being of Tahsis seniors, as over 63% of participants were over the age of 65. More than half of the seniors live with a partner or spouse (62%), over half feel engaged and connected with their community (52%) and the majority of Tahsis seniors self-reported they are in good or excellent health (67%).

Of importance to the Village are the **74% of respondents who stated they plan to remain in Tahsis for their retirement and are not planning to relocate**. This means



the majority of the population will continue to age and the average/median age of the community will increase. The Village needs to apply careful consideration to these findings, and when planning for the future, the needs of older adults should be at the forefront.

Additionally, 30% of respondents were found to live alone and **7% indicated if they were having a bad day, they did not have someone to talk to**. This is a very important statistic for the Village, as it is a measure to gauge risk factors for social isolation. Research shows older adults are at a higher risk of social isolation; when

seniors do become socially isolated; it is a major detriment to their health and well-being.

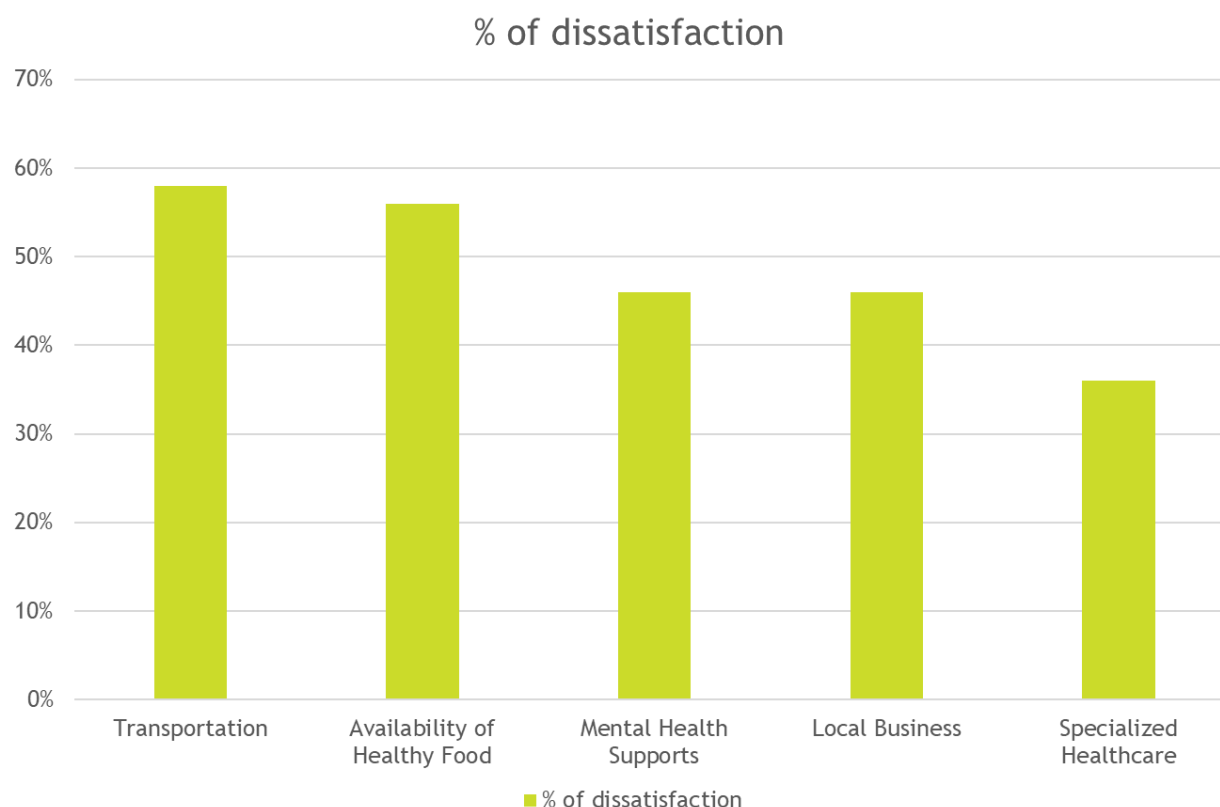
Experiencing social isolation has been found to be as harmful to one's health as smoking up to 15 cigarettes per day (WHO 2016). It is imperative the Village implement recommendations associated with social participation, respect and social inclusion as these tools have shown to offset physical and mental health conditions later in life.

Key Findings



The following key findings are a combined analysis of results from two World Café public meetings, the Seniors Survey and over 14 community interviews. Overall seniors and older adults enjoy living in the community of Tahsis. However, there are a few major points of dissatisfaction that are impacting the health and well-being of older residents.

The following are the top five markers of dissatisfaction for older adults in Tahsis:



Transportation

Dissatisfaction with transportation was, not surprisingly, the highest marker for dissatisfaction among residents. Older adults were dissatisfied with the condition of Head Bay Road, the main road that leads in and out of the Village.

The road has over 70km of unpaved gravel and the number of winding, steep and sharp corners as it weaves across the mountain range makes for a challenging drive even when conditions are ideal. Seniors voiced they do not feel safe driving on the road and maintenance costs to their vehicles are becoming increasingly expensive. **Roundtrip travel from Tahsis to Campbell River including fuel and vehicle maintenance (rate of 0.58/km) costs \$177.48** (SCHR 2018).

“Obviously the road is the most challenging, it is unsafe about 100% of the time.”

Older adults said the road needs to be paved for safety reasons. This sentiment was echoed by Paramedics, who indicated that transporting ill patients on the gravel road is difficult at the best of times and unsafe during poor weather conditions. Transportation for patients may result in high-risk scenarios and patient delays.

Older adults stated the road should be graded more often and the conditions of the road should be communicated more widely to all Village residents so they can make safe and informed decisions about whether to travel. Better signage and installation of barriers, particularly around steep corners on high cliffs where the road is close to the edge, have been suggested to increase safety.

Although 76% of Tahsis residents have a driver's license, many are worried about their ability to drive as they continue to age (OCP Survey 2019). Older adults also felt transportation was a barrier not only to get in and out of Tahsis, but also around the Village itself. Transportation is a larger issue because of its connection with accessing specialized health care and food. Residents vehemently expressed the need for a regularly scheduled shuttle service to and from Campbell River to allow for grocery shopping and appointments with medical specialists and veterinary care.

“Road is (or can be) a challenge in winter. If snow in upper elevations, poor snow clearing (especially poor coverage and timing) If no snow - HORRENDOUS pot holes.”

Availability of Healthy Food

The next biggest marker of dissatisfaction is the availability of fresh and affordable healthy food. Tahsis is described anecdotally as a “food desert.” **The closest grocery store resides in Campbell River, a three-hour drive away and 360 km round-trip.** While there is a local grocery store in Tahsis, the cost of food is higher than average which is a barrier for many Tahsis seniors, who are classified as low-income. The median household income in Tahsis is \$34,304 which is \$30,000 less than Gold River and almost \$20,000 less than the Strathcona Regional District median of \$55,487 (SCHR 2018).

Statistics from the Community Cupboard food donation program and the Campbell River food bank in 2018 support the notion of a lack of food security. In 2018 alone, the Community Cupboard supplied 86 individuals from Tahsis, and the Campbell River food

bank supported 29 residents. (SCHR 2018). While a food subscription box program, “The Good Food Box” has been established, it requires further support and participation to be able to scale upwards and provide for more older adults. The Community Garden is a resource regarded favourably by residents, although many highlighted it does not solve the challenges surrounding access to fresh produce during the winter months.

What do you find the most challenging about living in Tahsis?

“Lack of affordable groceries and supplies”

Mental Health Supports

Feedback made evident that seniors need more mental health supports within the community. The community was unsure if the Tahsis Health Centre had regular counselling services available and voiced concerns about facing stigma if they were seen to be going to the Health Centre only on days when the counsellor was available.

Many seniors indicated the Village would benefit from the opportunity to learn more about mental health. Concerns were raised over the possible suffering of others, residents who may not be aware of what condition they have or how to seek appropriate treatment. It was found that both the lack of options and the awareness of those options for mental health support was a large marker for dissatisfaction among older adults.

Local Businesses

It was clear residents were pleased with the current businesses operating in Tahsis. They are dissatisfied with the lack of availability, variety and opportunities for new businesses to open in Tahsis. Many indicated they would like to see a pub open up, one with senior’s nights and which provided a space to host gatherings other than at the Seniors Centre.

Specialized Healthcare

Overall Tahsis seniors were very satisfied with their access to primary healthcare and were satisfied with the services provided by paramedics and fire. There was great dissatisfaction surrounding access to specialized healthcare services. Senior's indicated

when they required to see a specialist for eye care, dental care, surgery etc., they had to travel to Campbell River. This scenario is challenging for residents already undergoing a possible issue with their health and are unable to safely drive.

Seniors felt the necessary travel to Campbell River for access to specialized healthcare was an added cost and burden due to the length of the trip requiring overnight accommodation.

It was mentioned repeatedly that Home Care workers provided through the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) have many restrictions surrounding the type of home care they can provide. This is a frustrating scenario for seniors in a rural community who don't have access to other personal support workers to help supplement their care.

Needs of Seniors

When members of the community were asked if the needs of seniors and older adults were being met, two key themes regarding resource gaps emerged: general labour and healthy living programs. Specifically, seniors have identified a need for general labour assistance to help with house maintenance and repair.

A shared sentiment was expressed over the difficulty in finding someone to hire for odd jobs. Compounding this, many residents stated they didn't know how to advertise the job or ask for help. The gaps in general labour to assist older adults have the potential to become an escalating issue for the Village as 17.2% of homes are in need of major repairs (SCHR 2018).

"Is there a list of Labourers, repair people? Seniors need help around the house to repair small items, or do some heavy lifting, etc."

Another resource gap identified surrounds healthy active living programming specifically targeted for seniors. As one residents comment illustrates *"recreational activities focused on people over 50+ — chair yoga, stretching, low impact movement."*



This finding was consistent with overall survey results which showed 80% of seniors rated health and fitness programming as important as well as the timing of such programs, *"Hours open of rec center that meets needs, i.e. morning hours for swim, class times not in the evening."*

It was also identified that 74% of respondents felt senior-specific programs were important. There was a strong desire for more educational opportunities, how-to seminars, training courses and certification programs to allow seniors to continue to learn and engage their minds.

Priorities Identified by World Café

The final recommendations for the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan are categorized based on the “*Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide*” by the World Health Organization (WHO). This guide uses eight domains of healthy living to focus on in order to ensure the community has adapted its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.



The eight domains of healthy living are:

1. Outdoor spaces & buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social participation
5. Respect & social inclusion
6. Civic participation & employment
7. Communication & information
8. Community support & health services

Older adults and seniors from Tahsis participated in two World Café public meetings where small roundtables of participants came up with recommendations to improve life within their community. These recommendations were then posted at the front of the room and all participants then voted on which recommendations were of the highest priority to them.

The recommendations were then grouped based on the eight domains of healthy living as identified above by the WHO.



Below are the results which indicate the top priorities of seniors and older adults in Tahsis.

Category	Score
Community Support & Health Services	110
Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	93
Transportation	69
Social Participation	58
Respect & Inclusion	33
Communication & Information	26
Housing	26
Food Security	21
Civic Participation & Employment	10



Recommendations & Community Action Plan

The following thoughts, ideas and suggestions were gleaned from two World Café public meetings, Village wide Seniors Survey and interviews with several key staff and volunteers within Tahsis. These recommendations are intended to foster dialogue and action that supports and enables older people to “age actively”—that is, to live in security, to enjoy good health and to continue to participate fully in society.

The following recommendations have been identified for Mayor & Council and Village Staff as they work to ensure their policies, services and structures take into consideration the needs and desires of seniors.

Ultimately this action plan is based on the recognition that leadership by local governments and seniors is critical—and every part of a community (including provincial governments, voluntary organizations, the private sector and citizens’ groups) can play a role in helping to build age-friendly communities. (Rural Guide 2006).

The eight domains of healthy communities are factors presented separately in this report, but interrelate in key areas. For example, respect and social inclusion are reflected in the accessibility of buildings and spaces, and in the range of opportunities offered to older persons for social participation, entertainment or employment. Housing influences the need for community support services—social, civic and economic participation partly depend on the accessibility and safety of outdoor spaces and public buildings.

In particular, transportation, communication and information interact with all domains—without transportation or adequate means of obtaining information to allow people to meet and connect, other rural facilities and services that could support active aging become inaccessible (Rural Guide 2006).

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people and affect their ability to “age in place”.

Recommendations:

1. Add an additional 8-10 public benches placed strategically around main walking paths that connect the community.
2. Designate a fenced area for a dog park with seating options such as benches or picnic tables.
3. Develop a designated waterfront space for public access by clearing the brush, creating accessible walkway and seating options. Consider installing public washrooms & a gazebo for public performances & events.
4. Pursue the Rick Hansen Foundation Grant to improve accessibility of the Recreation Facility.

Transportation

Transportation, including accessible and affordable public transport, is a key factor influencing active ageing. It is a theme running through many other areas of discussion. In particular, being able to move about the city determines social and civic participation and access to community and health services.

Recommendations:

5. Launch a communications campaign to increase awareness of road conditions. This should include notifying residents of ways to access information about the road conditions, including when it was last graded/cleared. This should be communicated

on the Village website with links to other information sources such as Facebook groups dedicated to road safety & awareness.

6. Formalize a carpool initiative by developing a Village webpage dedicated to carpooling trips in and out of Tahsis. This page would allow residents to post an upcoming trip they are taking, offer available seats to other residents, indicate if they are able to bring back any supplies/groceries and state whether they are charging a fee. They can include their contact information so other residents can call to inquire about the carpool service.
7. Establish a Public/Private Transportation Partnership through a Ride-Sharing Program. Host a public information session and have Uber/Lyft participate via teleconference. Show residents how they could benefit from driving for a ride share company. Establish if there is a way for the Village to subsidize costs of trips, particularly within Tahsis.

Housing

Housing is essential to safety and well-being. There is a link between appropriate housing and access to community and social services in influencing the independence and quality of life of older people. The availability of housing and support which allows older people to age comfortably and safely within the community to which they belong are universally valued.

Recommendations:

8. Create a Community Jobs board at the Recreation Centre and/or Library where residents who are in need of assistance in maintaining their homes or other tasks can post their name & contact information, a description of the work/assistance they need and a range of how much they can pay for this task. It will allow other residents who are able to provide the help and who are looking to supplement their income to connect with older adults in need.
9. Conduct Needs Assessment of Seniors Housing to determine the appropriate viable options for meeting needs of older adults over the next five to ten years. Options that should be explored in the study include HomeShare Program, NORC – Naturally Occurring Retirement Community and Care facilities.

Social Participation

Social participation and social supports are strongly connected to good health and well-being throughout life. Participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities within the community, as well as with family, allows older people to continue to exercise their competence, to enjoy respect and esteem, and to maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships. It fosters social integration and is the key to staying informed.

Recommendations:

10. Develop a Community Programming Partnership Framework to foster partnerships in community programming at the Recreation Centre by developing a policy, application form and a procedure for running programs using Village facilities.
11. Provide senior specific programming at the Recreation Centre. Specifically look to include Tai Chi and Yoga and ensure seniors programming is offered during daytime rather than evening hours.
12. Tahsis Seniors Society (TSS) should aim to increase its membership by another 50%. TSS may benefit from planning group outings such as day trips or tours to Nootka Island. Consider introducing a small annual membership fee which can be put towards an event.

Respect & Social Inclusion

Older people report experiencing conflicting types of behaviour and attitudes towards them. On the one hand, many feel they are often respected, recognized and included, while on the other, they experience lack of consideration within the community, regarding services and in their family. This clash is explained in terms of a changing society and behavioural norms, lack of contact between generations, and widespread ignorance about ageing and older people. It is clear from the consultation that the respect and social inclusion of older people depend on more than societal change: factors such as culture, gender, health status and economic status play a large role. The extent to which older people participate in the social, civic and economic life of the city is also closely linked to their experience of inclusion.

Recommendations:

13. Community Paramedicine Program should develop and manage a volunteer run "Friendly Visiting" program for seniors/members of the community who are at risk for

social isolation. This would include a weekly phone call to each at risk senior and a monthly visit.

14. Tahsis Seniors Appreciation Day should be hosted once per year, preferably in the summer months. It is recommended the Village partner with the school to host this as a year end event and foster intergenerational partnerships.

Civic Participation & Employment

Older people do not stop contributing to their communities once retired. Many continue to provide unpaid and voluntary work for their families and communities. In some areas, economic circumstances force older people to take paid work long after they should have retired. An age-friendly community provides options for older people to continue to contribute to their communities, through paid employment or voluntary work if they so choose, and to be engaged in the political process.

Recommendations:

15. The Village should create ongoing educational and learning opportunities for seniors to be meaningfully engaged. A library/literacy society could offer monthly "how-to" courses for topics such as filing income taxes, understanding income security programs such as OAS/GIS and courses on technology and social media. Specifically, the Village should offer seminars on how to start a business and entrepreneurial supports should be offered. In addition, seniors in Tahsis should be made aware of free, virtual education courses and certificates which are available via e-learning and to support them in successfully registering for any of these programs.

Communication & Information

Staying connected with events and people and getting timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing. There is a variety of information from many different general and specialized media for older people. Yet the fear of missing information and of being left out of the mainstream is voiced almost everywhere. Rapidly evolving information and communication technologies are both welcomed as useful tools and criticized as instruments of social exclusion. The central concern is to have relevant information which is readily accessible to older people with varying capacities and resources.

Recommendations:

16. Launch a quarterly community newsletter to increase communication & awareness of key topics for all Village residents including seniors. Should feature local news, Council

projects, current programming offerings, a community directory and most importantly a section dedicated to seniors, authored by the Tahsis Seniors Society.

17. Village should apply the age-friendly framework/policy toolkit to all public documents to ensure they are accessible, inclusive and available to all members of the community in a variety of formats.

Community Support & Health Services

Health and support services are vital to maintaining health the and independence of older persons in community. Many of the concerns raised by older people, caregivers and service providers deal with the availability of good quality, appropriate and accessible care. Older people everywhere voice a clear desire for basic health and income support. The range of support services and the proximity and availability of these services are important factors. How can community-based, for-profit and voluntary groups play an important role in delivering support and care.

Recommendations:

18. Village of Tahsis is recommended to spearhead a “Task Force – Specialized Healthcare” in partnership with Vancouver Island Health Authority, the Medical Officer of Health and the Strathcona Community Health Network to create an action plan which addresses the gaps in access to specialized health care for Tahsis seniors and ensures current barriers to specialized healthcare are resolved.
19. Village of Tahsis should launch an increase in the utilization of virtual telehealth counselling as a mental health support. Part of this initiative should include an awareness campaign to reduce stigma around mental health, increase awareness on what mental health is and what the available options are for residents.
20. Support & encourage entrepreneurial residents to re-launch a “bulk-buying” program for food security. Assisting the initial start-up phase will help ensure affordable healthy food options are available to seniors and older adults. Effective communication surrounding the program and its costs will ensure long-term success.



Implementation & Next Steps

It is recommended that due to the limited resources and financial constraints of a small rural community, the following top six recommendations are the most important for the Village of Tahsis to focus on and will yield the most impact to older adults within their community.

Top 6 Recommendations

WHO Domains

- ✓ Community Support & Health Services
- ✓ Housing
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Social Participation
- ✓ Respect & Social Inclusion

Recommendation #18 Establish Task Force – Specialized Healthcare

Recommendation #9 Conduct a Seniors Housing Needs Assessment

Recommendation #7 Establish a Public/Private Transportation Partnership

Recommendation #10 Develop a Community Programming Partnership Framework

Recommendation #11 Provide Seniors Specific Programming

Recommendation #13 Develop a Friendly Visitor Program

Implementation Plan

Step 1 Tahsis Age-Friendly Action Committee (TAAC)

It is recommended to begin the process of implementing the Age-friendly Community Action Plan by establishing a *Tahsis Age-Friendly Action Committee (TAAC)* which will involve multiple stakeholders and representatives who are well-placed to encourage collaborative work in this area.

A member of Council is recommended to delegate as Chair of the Committee, and the President of the Tahsis Seniors Society be appointed as Vice-Chair. Additional members should include the Village CAO, Director of Recreation as well as representation from Health Services and the Community Paramedicine Program.



To ensure a strong representation of older adults, it is recommended that three additional members of the Tahsis Seniors Society be nominated to join this committee. The TAAC should meet once per month at minimum for the first year of the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan implementation.



Step 2 Formalize Implementation Plan

Before putting the plan into action, the TAAC should develop a detailed implementation plan. This would consist of reviewing all of the recommendations in this report and the established priorities, and then determining a schedule with key milestones which will ensure progress is made. Careful consideration will need to be given to both financial and human resources required for implementation.

Step 3 Monitor & Report Back

By including clear and measurable goals and targets within the implementation plan, communities can monitor their progress towards increased age-friendliness. Monitoring also enables planners to re-evaluate plans and adjust priorities and targets at predetermined intervals. Ideally, monitoring is an ongoing process.

It is recommended the TAAC report progress to Council on a quarterly basis.

Step 4 Continuous Review

This **Age-Friendly Community Action Plan** is a living document which will benefit from continuous review and future iterations. Rural communities such as Tahsis can benefit from reviewing their age-friendly plans in a cyclical review in accordance with overarching strategies like the Official Community Plan.

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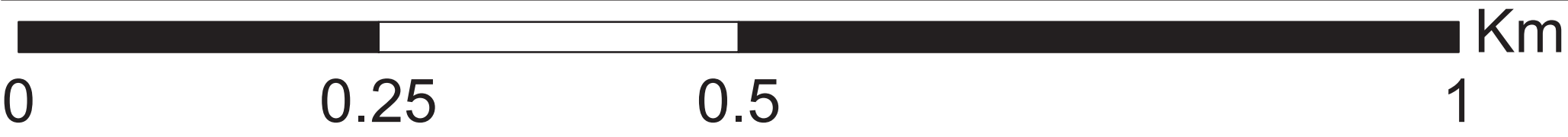
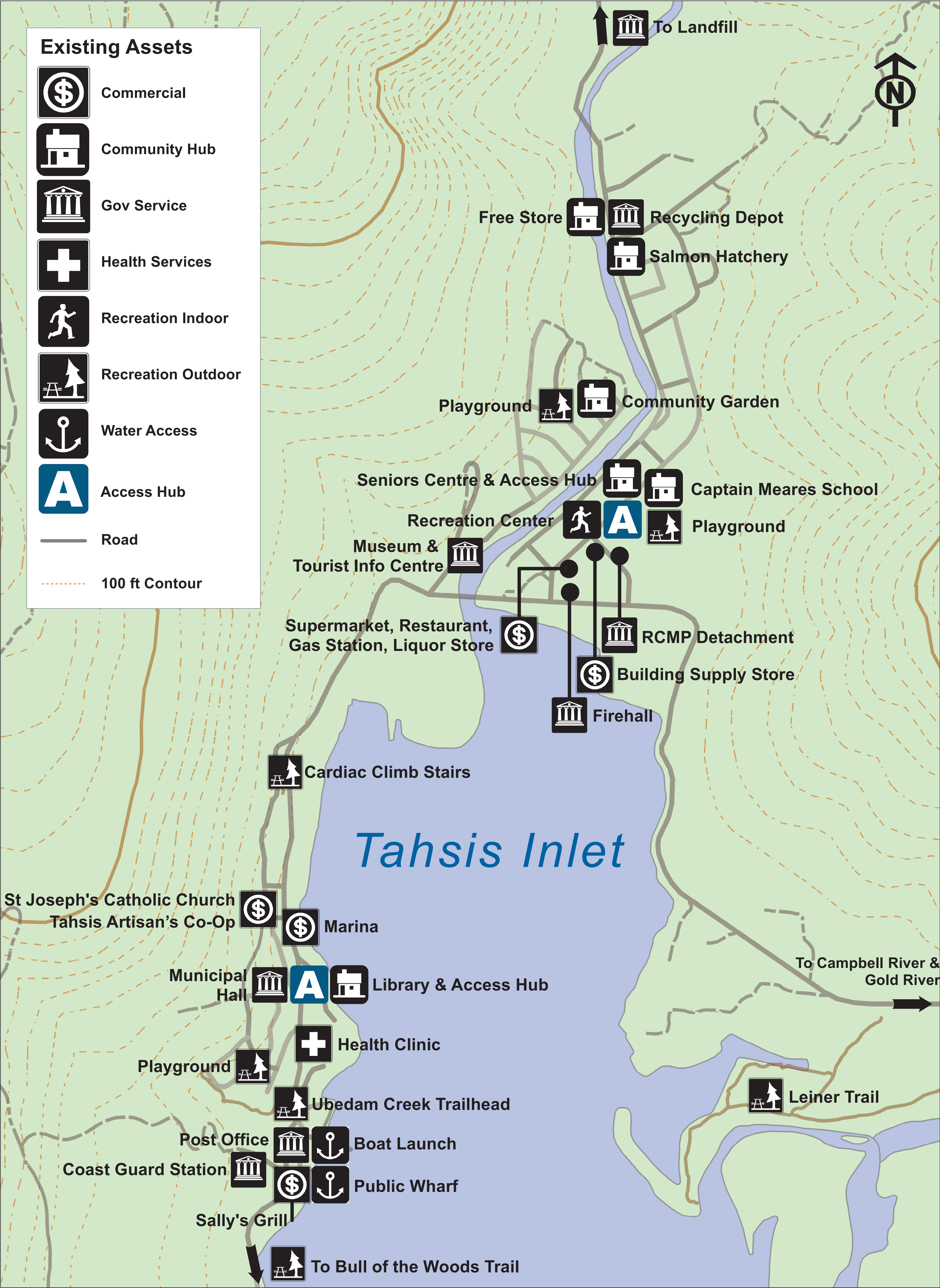
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Tahsis Asset Map





Tahsis Asset Inventory

Physical Assets

Asset	Season	Description
Recreation Center	Year Round	The Tahsis Recreation Centre is open 7 days a week year round and offers an indoor swimming pool with a sauna, 5-pin bowling alley, weight room, showers, licensed daycare (pre-registration required), meeting rooms, gymnasium, billiard table, free wifi and concessions.
Sally's Grill	Year Round	Restaurant with good availability, wifi access, view of the inlet and liquor license.
Seniors Centre	Year Round	Community hub for seniors open every Wednesday and Friday 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. In addition, the Society runs programming for people over 50 such as coffee and cinnamon bun meet ups every Sunday starting at 9:00 a.m., and monthly potlucks, first Thursday of every month, starting at 6:30 p.m.
Free Store	Year Round	A free exchange for household goods and other donation items.

St Joseph's Catholic Church	Year Round	The church has a visiting priest once a month with a full mass, and a Social following. Members of the congregation conduct a communion service the rest of the month. Everyone is welcome, visitor or local, to attend the services on Sunday at 11:00 a.m., and to attend the Socials following when the Priest has given the Mass. Special services are held during Christmas and Easter weeks.
Public Wharf	Year Round	Government wharf and dock for sea planes.
Boat Launch	Year Round	Public boat launch.
Supermarket	Year Round	Offers a grocery store and a restaurant with wifi and liquor license.
Post Office	Year Round	Post Office is responsible for receiving mail and various community supplies.
Municipal Hall	Year Round	Municipal offices and Council Chambers.
Library	Year Round	Located on the upper floor of the Municipal Hall, the library houses computers with high-speed Internet access and online library resources. A library staff member is available for assistance. Hosts educational information sessions. The library loans movies, music, children's games, & more.

Captain Meares School	Year Round	Public school with community facilities.
Health Center	Year Round	The Health Centre is staffed with a receptionist and one full-time Remote Certified Nurse and a Registered Nurse on 24-hour call. A doctor is available for appointments on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The Health Centre has an urgent care room, lab services Wednesdays and Fridays, home Registered Nurse care, and immunizations. A counselor may be available to the Health Centre, to offer counseling when sufficient appointments are set up to make the trip or via teleconferencing. Home support services are supplied by the Vancouver Island Health Authority homecare worker once an assessment has been done. Prescriptions are filled via the tele-pharmacy.
Tahsis Ambulance Service	Year Round	One full-time ambulance in Tahsis. Emergency & non-emergency phone numbers. Patients go to the Tahsis Health Centre Emergency Department, which has one Remote Certified Registered Nurse on 24-hour call. If the patient's condition warrants, they can be evacuated by road or helicopter to Campbell River Hospital. Community Paramedicine Program provides regular health clinics, community outreach and health promotion workshops.

HealthlinkBC	Year Round	HealthLinkBC provides BC residents with non-emergency health information and an opportunity to contact a range of registered health professionals including nurses, dietitians and pharmacists by simply dialling 8-1-1 or visiting www.healthlinkbc.ca
BC211	Year Round	Vancouver-based nonprofit organization that specializes in providing information and referral regarding community, government and social services in BC. Help line services include 211, the Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service (ADIRS), the Problem Gambling Help Line, VictimLink BC, and the Youth Against Violence Line. Available by calling or texting 2-1-1, or online at http://www.bc211.ca/
Marina	Seasonal	Port for charter fishing trips, fish processing station, kayak rentals, restaurant and fire pit with wifi access and liquor license and gift shop.
Bull of the Woods trailhead	Seasonal	Trail
Cardiac Climb Stairs	Seasonal	Trail
Ubedam Creek Trailhead	Seasonal	Trail

Tahsis Artisan's Co-Op	Seasonal	Located within St. Joseph's Catholic Church Hall daily during the summer months. The gift shop features the work of local artisans such as knitting, crocheting, pottery, photography, jewellery, painting, quilt work, cross stitch, etching, jam/jelly, & more.
Playground	Seasonal	Playground available for community access.
Community Garden	Seasonal	Free membership for access to a garden plot to grow produce is available to village residents with a Tahsis mailing address. They host many events at the garden such as a Slugfest, celebrations of seasonal equinox or solstice, & more.
Info Center/Museum	Seasonally	The Tahsis Museum is open to the public seasonally, and during the off-season, it can be accessed by contacting any member of the Tahsis Heritage Society.
Salmon Hatchery	Fall/Winter/Spring	Successful volunteer run Salmon Hatchery with high success rates. Managed by the Tahsis Salmon Enhancement Society.



Tahsis Asset Inventory

Community Groups

Asset	Season	Description
Seniors' Society	Year Round	The Tahsis Senior's Society Center is open every Wednesday and Friday 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. In addition, the Society runs programming for people over 50 like Coffee and Cinnamon Bun meetups every Sunday starting at 9:00 a.m. Monthly Potlucks are hosted on the first Thursday of every month, starting at 6:30 p.m.
Twang Gang	Year Round	Group of local musicians who join together to perform at various community events and during holidays such as Christmas.
Community Cupboard	Year Round	Volunteer based organization supplying food and basic need supplies to those in need.

Good Food Box Program	Year Round	Subscription based food delivery program available to residents. Provides bulk orders of produce delivered to Tahsis for a fee.
Literacy Society	Year Round	Non-profit mostly volunteer group working together to try to improve literacy levels. Meets regularly to organize literacy related events for the community.
Tahsis International Lion's Club	Year Round	The Tahsis Lions Club has been active for over 30 years raising money for charity, and contributing to community events such as Tahsis Days, BINGO's, Halloween, Christmas Tree Lighting, Santa Claus Candy Run, and Polar Bear Swim. They also provide a yearly bursary to a local high-school graduate for their post-secondary education.
Nookta Sound Watershed Society	Year Round	Group of local community members, DFO employees, First Nations representatives, local elected representatives, biologists, industry representatives, commercial fishermen, sport fishermen, educators and stewards with one common goal: to see a healthy revival of salmon stocks to the Nootka Sound and Esperanza Inlet watersheds.



Tahsis Asset Inventory

Community Events

Asset	Season	Description
Canada Day	July 1st	Celebrations are held on July 1st at the Info Centre & Museum at 12 noon. The family-oriented festivities include games for children, free hot dogs, adult trivia contest, Canada birthday cake, & music by local talents.
Tahsis Days	Summer	Tahsis Days is normally held annually on the third weekend in July and is a family-oriented weekend with plenty of festivities for the whole community. Parade, ducky race, Jell-o eating contest, raft race, scavenger hunts, & much more.
Tahsis Salmon Enhancement Derby	Summer	The Tahsis Salmon Enhancement Days Fishing Derby is held annually on the third weekend in August. There are thousands of dollars in prizes, and all net proceeds go to the Tahsis Salmon Enhancement Society.
Halloween Fireworks Display	Fall	Hot dogs & hot chocolate for sale by the Tahsis Lions Club plus a pumpkin carving contest and costume judging for kids all take place at the Tahsis Rec Centre. Warm up by the bonfire while you watch a fireworks display put on by the Village of Tahsis.

Christmas Craft Baazar	Nov/ Dec	The Christmas Craft Bazaar held at the end of November in the Captain Meares School gym is a popular community event for local artists, with craft displays, fundraising bake tables for local organizations, and food concessions.
Christmas Tree Lighting	December	Watch our community Christmas tree light up! Held across from the Heliport during the first week in December, join in singing Christmas carols, enjoy a hot dog, hot chocolate, and stay warm by the bonfire.
Polar Bear Swim	January	On January 1st, the Polar Bear Swim is held at the public boat launch at 12:00 p.m. Adults and children are welcome to participate, and free hot dogs and hot chocolate are provided after.
Easter Festivities	April	The Tahsis Recreation Centre hosts Easter festivities for children and families. The Easter Bunny comes for a visit.
Spring Baazar	Spring	Held at the beginning of spring, this is an opportunity for local artisans to display and sell their work and for community groups to fundraise.