



# Better at Home

## **Mission Community Developer Final Report**

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## Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
1.1. The Better at Home Program.....	3
1.2. Community Developer profile.....	3
1.3. Community Developer approach.....	4
2. Community Profile.....	5
2.1. Description of community demographic.....	6
2.2. Summary of Community Assets.....	11
2.3. Seniors' Needs.....	13
2.4. Integration opportunities.....	15
3. Community Readiness.....	15
3.1. Explanation of community readiness.....	15
3.2. Potential risks.....	15
4. Local Better at Home details.....	16
4.1. Better at Home services.....	16
4.2. Proposed lead agency.....	20
5. Recommendations and Next Steps.....	20
Appendices.....	20
A) Summary notes from consultations.....	20
B) List of community assets both stakeholders and relevant services for seniors.....	27
C) Documentation of media coverage.....	29
D) List of common acronyms and abbreviations.....	31
References:.....	32

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. *The Better at Home Program*

Better at Home is a program that helps seniors with simple day-to-day tasks so that they can continue to live independently in their own homes and remain connected to their communities. The program is funded by the Government of British Columbia and managed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland, with services delivered by a local non-profit organization. The Better at Home program is designed to address the specific needs of local seniors, allowing communities to choose from the following basket of services:

- friendly visiting
- transportation to appointments
- light yard work
- snow shovelling
- minor home repairs
- grocery shopping
- light housekeeping

Mission has been identified as a potential Better at Home site. Pamela Alexis was contracted as community developer to assess community readiness, identify seniors' assets, needs and priorities in regards to the basket of services, and help identify a potential lead organization best suited in the community to deliver the Better at Home program. This report reflects the findings of the community developer and will be used by the lead organization to design an appropriate local Better at Home program that meets community needs.

## 1.2. *Community Developer profile*

The Community Developer Team consisted of Pamela Alexis and Alan Fry, both of Cafsystems Associates Inc.

The project leader, Pam Alexis, (BFA, PDPP) is a well known Mission Rotarian, community advocate and non-profit champion. Her experience in public forums, public workshops, seminars and events both as a participant and as an organizer is exemplary, spanning more than 15 years in the Mission Community. She was elected for two terms as a School Trustee for the Mission School District and served as aboriginal liaison representing the school board at the Aboriginal Elders' Committee meetings. She is intimately familiar with many issues ranging from educational issues in the South Asian and aboriginal communities to parks, recreation, cultural and social development issues. She has also assisted in organizing cultural events such as the annual Diwali celebrations. Currently she is a board member of the Mission Chamber of Commerce, Chair of the Tourism for the District of Mission,

Chair of the Cultural Resources Commission (District of Mission), and vice-president of the BC 2014 Winter Games in Mission. She understands the value of seniors' contributing to the local economy.

Technical assistance is provided by Alan Fry, MS, PhD – A self employed entrepreneur during the past 15 years. In addition to expert knowledge in statistics and technical writing skills, his business background brings skills in project management and knowledge of business finance. He served as a director of the Mission District Seniors Housing Association for 7 years as well as shorter terms on the boards of the Mission Historical Society and Mission Association for Seniors Housing.

### **1.3. Community Developer approach**

A series of stake holder interviews were conducted. These included MASH (Mission Association for Seniors' Housing), MSAC (Mission Seniors' Advisory Committee), MSCA (Mission Seniors' Centre Association), OAP (Old Age Pensioners' Organization), MFC (Mission Friendship Centre), MCSS (Mission Community Services), LLCS (Lifetime Learning Centre Society), FHA (Fraser Health Authority), DOM (District of Mission), etc.

In person visits were made to consult with and to distribute and collect surveys to the following organizations (contact information may be found in the appendix):

- Lifetime Learning
- Seniors' Activity centre
- Mission Friendship Centre
- St. Joseph's Catholic Church
- Cedar Valley Mennonite Church
- Mission Healthcare Auxiliary
- Clarke Theatre Ushers
- Royal Canadian Legion
- Mission Rotary Club
- Mission Arts Council
- Sikh Temple
- Lunch with a Bunch
- Kathleen Court
- St. Andrews Housing Complex
- Welton Towers.
- Edwards Estate
- Briskam Manor

In order to establish which categories are most important, and the validity of the Better at Home basket of services, a survey process was conducted to solicit input from seniors and stakeholders regarding their ideas and opinions about issues they faced, and services they were currently using or providing as well as services they felt were needed in the community.

## 2. Community Profile

Our mandate is to cover the Mission geographical area as defined by Local Health Area 75 of the Fraser Health District. The map [1] below (Figure 1) shows the geographical extent of LHA 75. Most of Mission is built on hillsides, particularly the older parts where the majority of seniors live, presenting significant challenges to seniors' mobility. Grocery shopping is located in three supermarkets, none of which is easily accessible on foot by seniors who live in the downtown areas.



Figure 1: Mission and surrounding areas (School district/LHA 75)[1]

## 2.1. Description of community demographic

### *Seniors' geographical distribution*

LHA 75 corresponds geographically to British Columbia School District 75 (Mission), encompassing Mission City Municipality and Mission parts of the Fraser Valley Regional district (green) as shown. It consists of three Canada census [2] areas: Mission (5909056) DM 00000, Fraser Valley F (5909060) RDA 02000, and Fraser Valley G (5909062) RDA 01000. Additionally, there are the Skweahm and Lakahahmen Indian reserves which the census tabulates separately. The District of Mission can be further broken into various census tracts. The layout of these census geographical areas is shown in Figure 2.

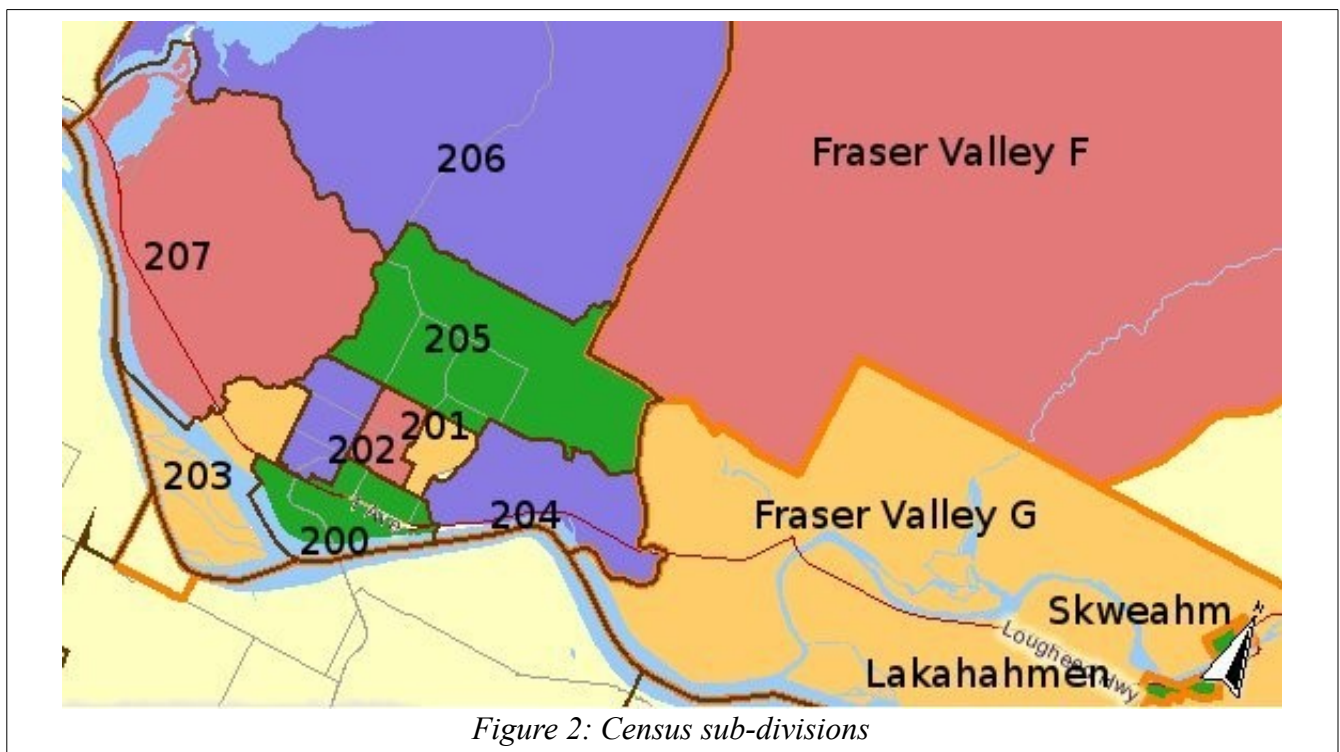


Figure 2: Census sub-divisions

Source: 2011 Census [2]

The number of seniors by census subdivision is shown Table 1 below:

Census Division	Population aged 65 and up
93202-200	560
93202-201	870
93202-202	1135
93202-203	275
93202-204	365
93202-205	565
93202-206	315
93202-207	235
Fraser Valley F	200
Fraser Valley G	250
Skweahm 10	70
Lakahamen 11	25
Total of all Divisions	4865

Table 1: Population of seniors by Census Division (2011) [2]

Figure 3 shows the percentage of the general population which are seniors. Downtown Mission and many of the rural areas have a population with relatively higher proportions over the age of 65, however, the absolute number of seniors in the outlying areas is small.

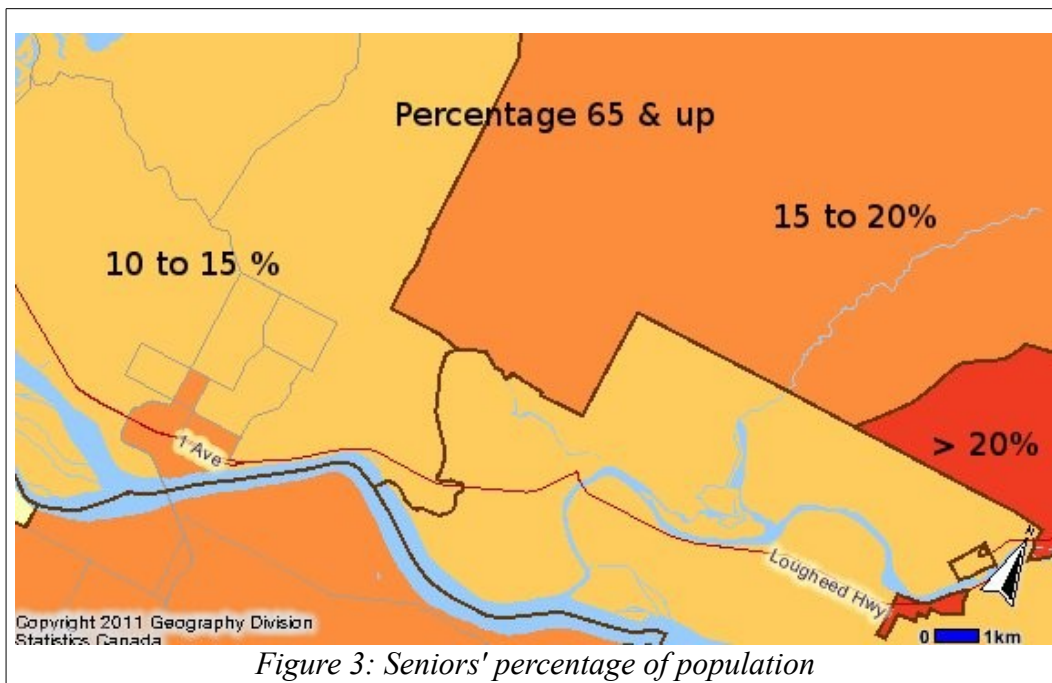
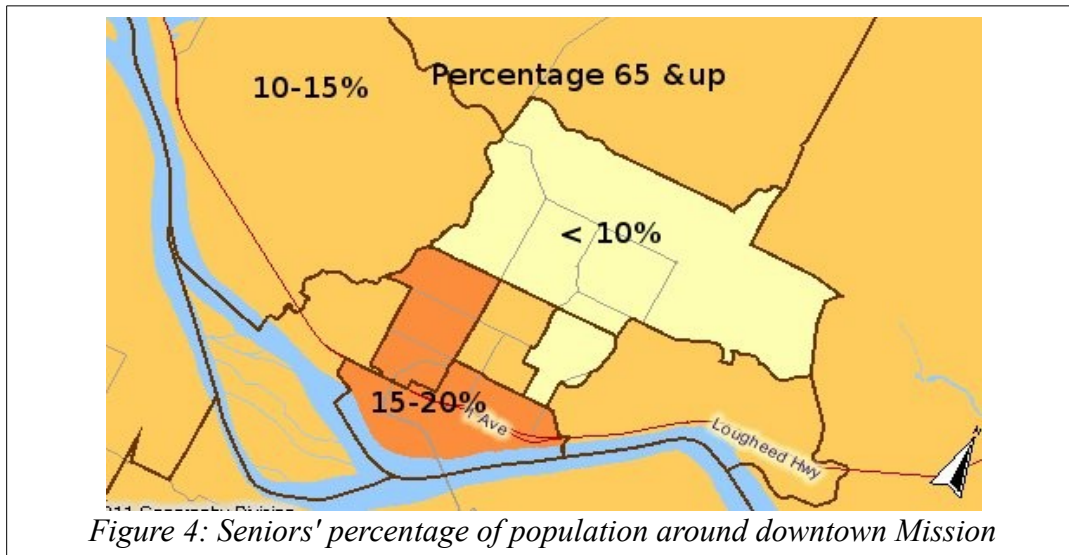


Figure 3: Seniors' percentage of population

Zooming in we can see (Figure 4) that areas with a greater proportion of seniors are concentrated in and around the Mission downtown core area where the proportion is in the range of 15-20% of the general population.



Using Canada census information from 2011 [2], we have determined that approximately 12% of the overall population is aged 65 years and up. Of that, 15% of male seniors and 28% of female seniors live alone. We also found that 93% of seniors live in a private dwelling (94% of male seniors and 92% of female seniors).

The number of seniors declines with age as shown in Table 2, for example less than half (43%) of all seniors aged 65 and up are 75 or older. Note the steep decline in numbers from the 60-64 year old cohort compared to the first cohort of seniors aged 65 to 69 (2011 census)

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Number*</i>	<i>On reserves</i>
60 – 64 years**	2345**	40**
65-69 years	1580	35
70-74 years	1185	30
75-79 years	880	20
80-84 years	640	5
85 + years	580	5
<b>Total (65 and up)</b>	<b>4865</b>	<b>95</b>

Table 2: Number of seniors by age group

\* Number includes those on reserves

\*\* Numbers not included in totals (many of these are now 65 & up in 2013)

### Population Projections

The population of seniors aged 65 and up in Mission SD 75 is growing. BCSTATS compiles statistics for population in 5 year increments of age, both historically and projecting into the future. Using statistics from <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx> [3] we tabulated the information for seniors in LHA 75. Figure 5 shows that the number of seniors aged 65 is currently about 5000 (2013) and will more than double to about 11000 by 2030. In the near term, we can expect about 1000 more seniors by 2015. There are slightly more women seniors than male seniors. The number of seniors as a percentage of the population will grow, from 12.2 % in 2013 to 19% in 2030.

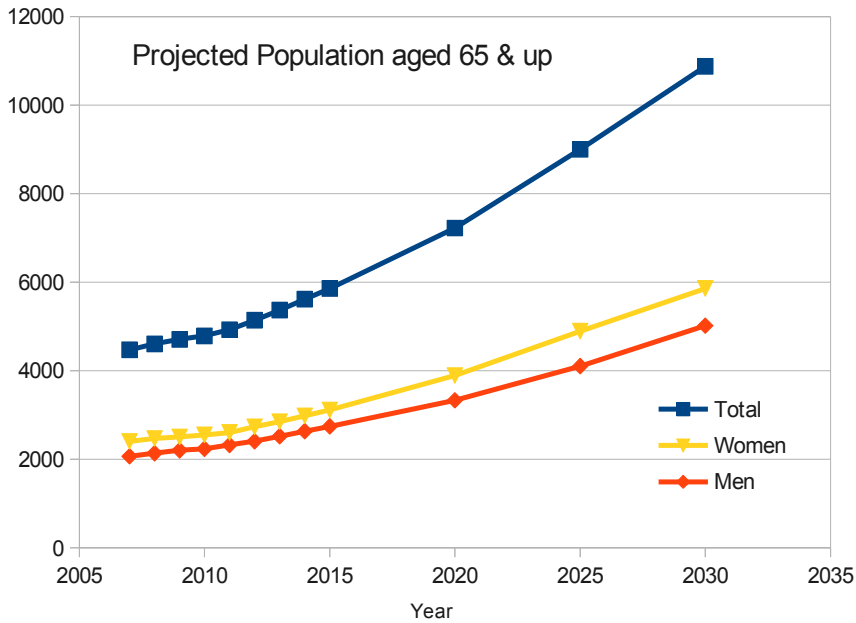


Figure 5: Projected number of seniors

The numeric details of the projections are summarized in the Table 3 below:

Year	Seniors (Total)	Male	Female
2007	4473	2068	2405
2013	5371	2521	2850
2015	5858	2744	3114
2020	7224	3332	3892
2030	10879	5019	5860

Table 3: Projected numbers of seniors

Based on projections from:

<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx>[3]

### *Ethnicity*

The ethnic make up of the population can be extracted from the 2011 census for the Abbotsford – Mission census agglomeration, however, the detailed numbers for census tracts and subdivisions have not yet been released. Unfortunately, the ethnic make up of the much larger Abbotsford metropolitan area is significantly different from that of the district of Mission. For example, the Abbotsford -Mission 2011 census preliminary numbers estimate the visible minority population as approximately 26% of the total population and that South Asians number 19% of the total population. The 2006 census [4], for just the district of Mission however tell us that approximately 11% of the population belongs to a visible minority. More than half of this was South Asian comprising 6.6 % of the general population. 5.9% of the population claims an aboriginal identity.

### *Living conditions and income*

The 2011 census [2] indicates that 92% of seniors live in their own home. About two thirds (66%) of these live in single detached homes while the rest live in apartments, condos, townhouses, and mobile homes.

Seniors' incomes vary widely as shown in Table 4. Approximately 60% have incomes less than \$25,000. This distribution will be important in determining the fraction which seniors of a given income level should co-pay for Better at Home services.

<b>Age /Income</b>	<b>65-74</b>	<b>74 &amp; up</b>	<b>65 &amp; up</b>
Under \$5000	3.2%	0.9%	1.5%
Over \$10000	89.3%	94.6%	94.7%
Over \$25000	38.8%	32.6%	40.5%
Over \$35000	24.5%	16.7%	24.7%
Over \$50000	11.5%	6.6%	11.8%
Over \$100000	1.9%	1.0%	1.8%

*Table 4: Income characteristics of seniors in Mission (2011 census)*

## **2.2. Summary of Community Assets**

A variety of services for seniors are provided by non profit groups and government in the local community (shown below in Table 5). There is a large degree of overlap in some of the services provided, which is not necessarily a bad thing as it permits seniors' to pick and choose those that they prefer, and may provide a degree of competition for the senior's loyalty. It seems that Mission non-profits are doing a great job in the activities and advisory capacities for seniors, however, simple home repairs, light yard work and snow removal are completely absent. Mission Community Services Society provides the broadest range of services.

	Personal care	Light Housekeeping	Meals	Medical devices	Nurse care	Grocery Shopping	Simple Home Repair	Light Yard Work	Visiting	Activity	Advice	Transport to Appointments	Snow Removal
MASH		X									X		
MSCA										X	X		
OAP									X	X	X		
MFC						X			X	X	X	X	
MCSS			X			X			X	X	X	X	
LLCS										X	X		
FHA	X			X	X					X	X		
MSAC											X		
DOM										X			
Red Cross				X									
Transit												X	

*Table 5: Non-profit/government subsidized services currently provided in the Community*  
Similarly we show in Table 6 the availability of various private providers.

	Personal care	Light Housekeeping	Meals	Medical devices	Nurse care	Grocery Shopping	Simple Home Repair	Light Yard Work	Visiting	Activity	Advice	Transport to Appointments	Snow Removal
Safeway						X							
Better Meals			X										
Hurd Pharmacy				X									
Molly Maids		X											
Nurse Next Door	X	X	X		X	X			X	X		X	
We Care	X	X			X				X				
Home Instead	X	X	X			X			X	X		X	
Taxi												X	

*Table 6: Private for-profit services currently provided in the Community*

We note also, that the gaps in services are the same here as they were with the non-profit group: simple home repairs, light yard work and snow removal.

### **2.3. Seniors' Needs**

Seniors' needs were identified through meeting with various organizations and surveying their needs. A list of organizations is found in Table 7. A total of 575 surveys were distributed.

Lifetime Learning	Seniors' Activity Centre
Mission Friendship Centre	St. Joseph's Catholic Church
Cedar Valley Mennonite Church	Mennonite Central Committee
Mission Healthcare Auxiliary	Clarke Theatre Ushers
Royal Canadian Legion	Mission Rotary Clubs
Mission Arts Council	Sikh Temple
Lunch with a Bunch at Carrington House	Kathleen Court
Edwards Estates	Welton Towers
St. Andrews Housing Complex	Briskam Manor

Table 7: Organizations visited

Regarding the organizations listed in Table 7, a few points should be noted:

Interviews at the **Sikh temple** highlighted social isolation, especially for women as a major problem. They frequently mentioned that “*Being Inclusive*” as a criteria for the lead agency. They agreed with others surveyed that the lack of transportation was at the crux of many issues.

**Welton Towers** is a low income highrise for people aged 55 and up which is run under the MASH umbrella. It is the only highrise in Mission, having approximately 60 one bedroom apartments available at rents suitable for welfare recipients (about half the renters are on welfare or seniors' support). The residents can opt to receive weekly housekeeping and many need it in order to keep down bedbugs and fire hazards. A need for a communal kitchen where residents can socialize and have healthy meals prepared for them (or even in cooperation with them) was identified.

**Mission Friendship Centre** is trying to get a new program off the ground for their elders based on the the four spheres of the medicine wheel and the four seasons of wellness. They identified social isolation and transportation as major issues to be surmounted.

**Edwards Estates** is a higher income seniors' housing establishment. They commented that they wanted to see programming and services that were available to all income levels.

A recurring theme, was that there is no single list of available services or “one-stop shop” for seniors. There was a general lack of awareness by seniors as to the what was available, and indeed the service organizations also demonstrated a similar lack of awareness regarding the activities of organizations other than their own. Transportation was the top concern for Mission seniors. Mission is quite hilly, and has very limited public transportation services. Shopping and other services are not accessible to seniors. Many felt that HandiDart failed to provide service that was easy to use or reliable. The top three general needs for seniors were transportation, housekeeping, and personal care.

Seniors frequently expressed the desire for continuity in dealing with volunteers so that they could build trust. They were wary of strangers entering their homes for housekeeping and simple home repairs. Trust was an important issue.

Isolation and lack of socialization were also problems. Seniors wanted friendly visiting, outings and activities, perhaps at a central meeting or activity centre. They wanted to be with people they related to and understood, people who were similar culturally and preferably in a similar age bracket.

#### **2.4. Integration opportunities**

The survey respondents frequently pointed out that the lead organization should have involvement by seniors and should have a good degree of cultural awareness. It should have compassionate, consistent, and local volunteers, and a good understanding of seniors' needs. They also pointed out that to achieve these criteria, the organization will have to integrate and cooperate with existing organizations. It will be desirable to build on to existing services provided by organizations who already excel in their own niches. The lack of a “one-stop shop”, and the general ignorance as to what services are available speaks to various integration opportunities. Private companies should contract with the lead agency to provide designated services at favourable rates to augment those services which can be provided through a volunteer base. Often a private company is able to offer needed services that are not part of Better at Home, such as personal care and nursing. Better at Home volunteers can recognize these needs and make appropriate referrals. The reverse is also true, in that private personnel may make their clients better aware of services that can be obtained through the Better at Home program. It should be emphasized that it is not the intention of the Better at Home program to undercut the price of services which are provided privately, but rather to fill in gaps, and provide services to individuals who are in need but unable to pay the full price.

### **3. Community Readiness**

#### **3.1. Explanation of community readiness**

As reflected in the strong community response, Mission demonstrates both a readiness in terms of the need for services and an interest in involvement by way of volunteering. Mission has a reputation as a community with substantial volunteer capacity and commitment. There are many service organizations present in Mission as well as for-profit organizations that can assist in the delivery of services to seniors. Both private for-profit and non-profit organizations expressed interest in participating in the delivery of the Better at Home basket of services as advisors and as service providers. A total of 15 individuals who completed surveys expressed interest in being on the advisory board for delivery of services. A total of eleven stake-holders also expressed interest. Their names and contact information will be passed on to the lead agency (see Appendix). It is important to note that *the purpose of the advisory committee is specifically limited to that of guiding the delivery of the Better at Home program by the lead agency.*

#### **3.2. Potential risks**

Delivery of the Better at Home program will require increased and stable funding to the lead agency. It is important that the programming put in place make maximal use of volunteers but at the same time not displace paid services by undercutting prices for those who can afford to pay. It will be difficult to

obtain the trust of seniors. Proper screening, background checks, and photo id of volunteers as well as planning and scheduling that provides continuity between each volunteer and senior will help to deliver professional services that seniors can trust.

It will be advisable for the lead agency to start small, choosing a small and narrowly defined subset of the basket of Better at Home services. Gaining seniors' trust will take time. As the number of volunteers increases and experience grows with delivering the Better at Home program, service can be slowly and prudently expanded. Maintaining flexibility to adapt services quickly should funding or conditions change by contracting with existing service providers to provide things such as light house keeping will be advantageous.

Maintaining a high degree of credibility in the community is an absolute necessity. The lead agency and the advisory committee must adhere to the highest standards of not-for-profit governance. Failure to do so will result in non-functional cooperation among the various stake-holders, and mistrust by the public. As Mission is a relatively small community, it will take vigilance to avoid conflicts of interest and/or the appearance of such conflicts. The lead agency and the advisory committee will ideally include representatives from stake holders who are in the business of delivering some of these services whose experience and knowledge will be invaluable in making the right choices for the delivery process.

## **4. Local Better at Home details**

### **4.1. Better at Home services**

The Better at Home program is currently designed to offer a basket of services selected from the following seven categories:

*Transportation*

*Light Housekeeping*

*Grocery Shopping*

*Simple Home Repairs*

*Friendly visiting*

*Light Yard Work*

*Snow Shovelling*

In order to establish which categories are most important, and the validity of the Better at Home basket of services, a survey process was conducted to solicit input from seniors and stakeholders regarding their ideas and opinions about issues they faced, and services they were currently using or providing as well as services they felt were needed in the community.

Of 575 surveys distributed, 190 were returned (10 of which were blank). The main responses to question 1 of the survey in Table 8 show the top three issues were transportation, housekeeping and personal care, the first two of which are in the Better at Home basket of services.

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| • Transportation      | • Affordability        |
| • Light housekeeping  | • Social Activities    |
| • Personal Care       | • Yard work            |
| • Regular visiting    | • Help with shopping   |
| • Medical Devices     | • Assistance by family |
| • Meals               |                        |
| • Lack of information |                        |

*Table 8: What are the main issues to keep seniors in their homes longer?*

Responses to question 2 of the survey identified the top three service providers. First was Mission Community services' basket, providing transportation, Meals on Wheels, Lunch with a Bunch, friendly visiting and phone calls, and help with grocery shopping. BC transit was second, with HandiDart, Shoppers' Shuttle, and regular bus service. The third most frequently identified provider as Fraser Health and their home care programming.

Other services (beyond the top 3) which were identified are listed in Table 9 .

Organization	Type of service
Mission Leisure Centre	Fitness
Youth Outreach	Yard work
Lifetime Learning	Osteo-fit classes
Fraser Valley Regional Library	Library outreach
Ministry of Health	Nurse help line
We Care Home Instead Senior Care Nurse Next Door	Private nursing and personal care some visiting and other services as needed
Hurd Pharmacy	Medical devices
Taxi	Transportation
Housekeeping companies (e.g. Molly maid)	Housekeeping

Table 9: What are current services, programs and providers?

The respondents indicated the services were accessible but qualified their answers by questioning affordability, wait times, and physical access. Repeated concerns were expressed regarding issues of assessments and wait times for Fraser Health services.

Part one of question three of the survey asked the participants to indicate which services they would use from the Better at Home basket (see Table 10). The meeting on June 13th also asked participants this question, allowing each participant to select three of the seven services from the Better at Home basket of services. Their response in the rightmost column of Table 10 confirm the survey results.

Service	Survey Responses	June 13th Responses
Transportation	164	20
Light Housekeeping	145	15
Grocery shopping	143	10
Friendly visiting	138	9
Simple home repairs	126	8
Light yard work	122	6
Snow shovelling	122	1

Table 10: What services from the Better at Home basket would you use?

Part two of question three enquired about other non-medical services that might be needed. After loosely categorizing the responses, the most important issues emerged:

- List of available services
- Social gatherings
- After hospitalization support
- Personal care (hair, toe nails, etc)
- Help with meals
- Help with laundry
- Spring cleaning

Other issues deserving mention were:

- fitness
- nutrition
- stress management training
- someone to walk with
- someone to spend time with
- financial and legal advice
- support group
- outdoor activities
- list of bonded helpers for home repair
- medical devices fair
- accompany to medical appointments to advocate and take notes
- help with technology (DVD players, TV etc)
- phone support
- daily supporting
- evening HandiDart
- transport for entertainment
- pet care
- blockwatch for seniors.

Question four asked what criteria they respondent felt were important in selecting a lead organization for delivering the Better at Home program. The top criteria categories were:

- Being inclusive
- Involvement by seniors
- Good governance
- Integration with various seniors' organizations
- Bonded workers
- Local and consistent volunteers
- Cultural awareness
- Quick assessments
- Leadership
- Understanding of seniors' needs

Other criteria are summarized here:

- Empathy and compassion
- Dealing with day to day problems
- Regular consults
- Stable funding
- Qualified staff
- Affordability
- Non-profit
- All income levels
- Clear goals and mission statement
- Community partnership building
- Available by phone
- Buddy system
- Better awareness of services
- 

Fifteen of the respondents indicated they would like to be on the advisory committee.

The stake-holders were also interviewed. Their responses echoed the responses of seniors at large.

There was a certain amount of myopia, in that various stake-holders were largely unaware (just like seniors were) of services provided by other stake-holders. The stake-holders articulated similar issues and services in questions 1 through 3. Ideas such as a “one-stop shop” were mentioned as well as programs like “Walk with a Doc”. Parks and Recreation urged the medical establishment to “write prescriptions for the various fitness programs they provide”. There was repeated emphasis on the need for a “medical connection process” that works and for increased funding.

Their responses to question 4, regarding criteria for the lead organization, listed credibility and governance, knowledge and experience, and an existing infrastructure (volunteers, transportation). Also, the ability to collaborate, to have medical connections and to be inclusive were important.

#### **4.2. Proposed lead agency**

It was quite clear, that in Mission there is only agency that currently is capable of organizing the delivery of the Better at Home Program, as well as being identified and supported by the community process. *Mission Community Services Society* currently provides the most services to seniors in Mission. It was the most recognized agency providing services to seniors in the survey process. It meets most of the important criteria for a lead agency, in that it is a non-profit which has credibility in the community, a long history as a society, many volunteers, experience in dealing with seniors including transportation to medical appointments and shopping. It also has some experience in connecting seniors with medical services. It has the infrastructure to act as a strong lead agency with financial stability, accreditation and desire to provide services to the growing senior population.

### **5. Recommendations and Next Steps**



The Mission Community Services Society should submit an application for funding to the United Way of the Lower Mainland which manages the Better at Home program. Initial focus should be on a limited program concentrating on the top three or four needs identified in the survey. An advisory committee consisting of seniors and stake-holders should be instituted to guide this process. MCSS should try to act as an “umbrella” or “facilitating” organization whenever possible. Proposals from for-profit and not-for-profit (volunteers) organizations should be invited regarding “contracts” for the provision of the services. Promotional material detailing services available to seniors should be developed. On going effort will be required to ensure inclusivity of all cultural groups, hopefully through the advisory committee membership.

## **Appendices**

### **A) Summary notes from consultations**

#### **Survey brochure:**

**Mission Community Development Survey**

**Are you a... Senior " and/or a Service provider "**

1. What are the main issues to keep Mission seniors living longer in their own homes?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What services and programs are currently offered that help Mission seniors live longer in their homes—and who provides them?

<i>Service</i>	<i>Provider</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

b. Are they accessible? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What non-medical home support services from the Better at Home basket of services are needed in Mission?

<input type="checkbox"/> Light housekeeping	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendly visiting
<input type="checkbox"/> Grocery shopping	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation to appointments
<input type="checkbox"/> Simple home repairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Snow shovelling
<input type="checkbox"/> Light yard work	

a. What non-medical home support services not listed above do you think are needed in Mission?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What criteria would be important for a strong lead organization to offer Better at Home services in Mission?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. If you are interested in being on the Advisory Committee, please provide name and tel:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Use the back of the page for comments**

**Places visited to talk about the Better at Home program and distribute surveys**

It was important to make contact with various seniors' groups to distribute and collect surveys. In order to gain seniors' trust and to be seen as credible in their communities it was necessary to visit and

participate with them in their organized activities.

- Lifetime learning – participated in walk-athon and book launch
- Seniors Activity Centre – birthday celebrations, membership meetings, ombudsman visit, visit Sophie Zehner of OAP
- Mission Friendship Centre – lunch with Elders, visit with Grace Cunningham
- St. Joseph's Catholic Church – visit to the executive, after hours visit to food bank
- Cedar Valley Mennonite Church and Mennonite Central Committee – visit with executive
- Mission Healthcare Auxiliary at Mission Memorial Hospital – visit at shop in hospital
- Clarke Foundation Theatre ushers – visit volunteers who are seniors
- Royal Canadian Legion – visited twice at lunch time
- Mission Rotary Club – announce survey to members, distributed surveys to individuals
- Mission Arts Council – volunteer (seniors) for tea services in afternoons
- Sikh Temple – visited three times through seniors' healthy living classes and for lunch on a Sunday
- Lunch with a Bunch (MCSS) – attend lunch to distribute surveys, returned following month to have lunch and talk about surveys
- Kathleen Court, Edwards Estates, Briskam Manor – Individual seniors assisted in distributing surveys
- St. Andrew's housing complex – volunteer Joan Hendriks distributed 100 surveys of which more than half were filled out and returned. Joan also provided a pamphlet with the survey from MCSS detailing information about their seniors' programming.
- Welton Towers (part of MASH) – visited social gathering of tenants for coffee and doughnuts which was very well attended. Staff person was very helpful.

### June 13th Community stake-holders and seniors' meeting

A community stake-holders and seniors' meeting was held at the Mission Leisure Centre on June 13th, 2013 (see Photo 1). There were 15 stake-holder representatives and 14 seniors from the public in attendance, as well as two representatives associated with the United Way/Better at Home project and two community developers who were responsible for facilitating the meeting.



*Photo 1: June 13th Meeting of Stake-holders and Seniors*

Debbie Sharp (Better at Home) presented an overview of the Better at Home program. This was followed by a presentation by community developers, Alan Fry and Pam Alexis, describing the demographics of Mission community and an overview of the results of an extensive interview and survey process concerning seniors' needs and their relation to the Better at Home program. They also tested the public availability of information for seniors' programming both medical and non-medical and found information for the Mission area is sparse and out of date. The BC 211 program, a new information and referral program, funded by United Way, is becoming an excellent resource for finding senior's services.

A group activity (see Photo 2) followed in which each participant was asked to make their top three choices of services from the basket of seven offered by Better at Home. The results confirmed the more extensive seniors' survey results, as already discussed above. In particular they identified the services in descending order of importance: Transportation, Light Housekeeping, Help with Grocery shopping, Friendly visiting, simple home repairs, light yard work, and snow shovelling.



*Photo 2: Group activity to prioritize the Better at Home basket of services*

The next activity was done in groups to elucidate what criteria each group felt would be best for a lead agency? Each group selected a leader to present their results:

1<sup>st</sup> group: Credibility, availability, ability to provide services, community connections, leadership and governance, stability and strong agency, experience, flexibility

2<sup>nd</sup> group: strong admin, min. admin costs, integrity and trust, someone there to answer, etc.

3<sup>rd</sup> group: current facilities, f/t staff, competent, volunteer manager, respect from current community, current funding for some seniors services, website, accessibility to services, s/o to answer phone

4<sup>th</sup> group: collaborative, navigator for systems, involved in services, strong leadership, service-oriented, hire the right person for intake

5<sup>th</sup> group: well-known, access to other service providers, knowing who to contact, knowledge of area, establish trust, volunteers already

6<sup>th</sup> group: inclusive of all groups, knowledge of client needs, lead org. should have an accessible facility, adequate funding and staffing, partnerships, make community aware

We assigned each of the descriptive words from the above into one of four categories in the report (these categories necessarily overlap and it may have been more appropriate to assign some comments to more than one category):

*Credibility and governance:* integrity, trust, competent, respect from community, well-known, leadership and governance, stability and strong agency.

*Knowledge and experience:* Knowledge of the area, knowing who to contact, navigator for systems, competent, knowledge of client needs, volunteers already, strong agency, already involved in services.

*Infrastructure and delivery:* website, current funding for some seniors services, someone to answer phone, accessible facility, accessibility, someone to answer phone, accessible facility, flexibility, adequate funding and staffing, establish trust, minimal admin costs, making community aware, service oriented.

*Inclusive and collaborative:* collaborative, hire the right person for intake, inclusive of all groups, access to other service providers, partnerships.

Next, the lead organization was announced as Mission Community Services. There was no visible dissension.

Next, Meg Sherring, the acting director of Mission Community Services presented an overview of MCSS. MCSS has existed since 1972, and they are currently in the process of finding a new director. Again the issues of gaining seniors trust and awareness were pointed out. Seniors are generally mistrustful, some even thinking that the program might endanger their pension eligibility. Photo-ID and background checks for volunteers was offered as a possible solution. Some questions were asked about the mechanics of Better at Home funding.

Following lunch, a stake-holders meeting was convened. Debbie Sharp gave a short overview of the Better at Home implementation process. Followed by a presentation by Felice Clements of MCSS regarding existing services. MCSS has about 50 volunteers serving over 2000 clients in a year. Volunteers receive reference and criminal record checks as well as training as needed. Felice is a half time employee. She briefly summarized each service category:

#### Shopping and medical transportation

Medical transport is a priority for which they have 10 volunteers. Usually they require 48 hours notice and they turn away very few requests. Typical charges included \$5 for two hours of shopping and \$5/hour after two hours of medical transport. Volunteers received \$0.45 per km.

Tax returns

They assisted in doing approximately 1000 returns in their Community volunteer tax return program.

Seniors' Connection

Consists of several sub-programs, including phone support and friendly visiting by the same person each week at no cost to the client. They get a lot of referrals from general practitioners and Fraser Health. The Meals on Wheels program delivers \$6 meals three times a week to about 20 seniors for a total of 275-350 meals per month. About 30-40 seniors attend a Lunch with a bunch for \$10, held at Carrington house. Optional transportation is provided for \$5. An in home shopping program is provided at the Cedars and Carrington Homes in the form of a volunteer-run store selling simple necessities like snacks and toiletries.

Further discussion ensued, many points which have been made in the body of the main report were made here:

Re the advisory committee:

It is important that the advisory committee consist of profit and non-profit members.

The focus of the advisory group is solely on the Better at Home program and not to duplicate work done by other advisory groups.

Re assets and resources:

Welton Towers already has weekly housekeeping.

Home Instead offers discounts if they have 5-6 clients in the same building

BusyBus has a capacity of 17 people with walkers, or 8 wheel chairs, up to 23 people and is an affordable asset for groups, already used by many care homes.

Communications: utilize all the different means and vehicles used by organizations at this meeting.

Comfort Keepers: cleaners are another set of eyes and should communicate with lead agencies more easily about specific seniors' needs they see.

Other advice/input for the lead organization:

Wayne Green (United Way): Other communities are further along, learn from them what works. Follow their examples when doing RFP's and the like, it will make it easier and more likely to be successful.

Judith Ray (MASH): Contract out things like light housekeeping to maintain flexibility.

Start small, walk before you run

Connect with the Fraser Health continuing care manager to integrate services and to collaborate.

## **B) List of community assets both stakeholders and relevant services for seniors**

### **Mission Association for Seniors' Housing (MASH) – Contact: Judith Ray**

MASH is a non-profit umbrella organization made up of a number of different societies that oversees the operation of five different seniors' housing facilities. These include:

Welton Towers (low income housing), The Cedars (assisted and supportive housing), Pleasant View Care Home (full care), Pleasant view apartments (independent living) and Cedar Valley Manor (Life Lease now under construction).

### **Mission Seniors' Advisory Committee (MSAC)- Contact: Bryan Fawcett**

MSAC is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the interests of seniors by providing a recognized voice for seniors in the community.

### **Mission Seniors' Centre Association (MSCA) – Contact: Bob Ingram**

MSCA is a non-profit association that intends to establish and relocate to a permanent seniors' centre in the community.

### **Old Age Pensioner's (OAP) – Contact: Sophie Zehner**

OAP is a non-profit organization that acknowledges and respects the needs of seniors in the community and advocates to government on behalf of pensioners. It has been in existence for 80 years.

### **Mission Friendship Association – Contact: Grace Cunningham**

MFA's purpose is to meet the needs of Aboriginal and First nations people. They provide a facility for socialization and counseling, and referral of services. Their Elder outreach program coordinator is establishing a program for seniors based on the four spheres of the “medicine wheel”: spiritual, emotional, physical and mental well being.

### **Mission Community Services Society (MCSS) – Contacts: Laura Hope & Felice Clements**

MCSS is a non-profit society that delivers a basket of services to the community. Their motto: *“helping people, changing lives, building community”* reflects their purpose in delivering the “Seniors' Connect Program” which is made up of a variety of services including:

Help with income tax returns, shopping transportation and delivery, medical transportation to appointments, friendly visiting and phone calls, Meals on Wheels, lunch with a bunch, and in home shopping at Carrington House.

### **Fraser Valley Health Authority (FHA) – Contacts: Sandra Gruenhage , Carl Dragt, Ron Plowright**

FHA provides a specialized seniors clinic (SSC) addressing some of the medical needs of geriatrics with complicated medical conditions. The goal is to reduce premature or inappropriate hospitalization and delay residential care placement and encourage a shift from “in-patient care” to “out-patient care”.

**Lifetime Learning Centre Society (LLCS) – Contact: Diane Muntigl**

LLCS is a non-profit which provides active living and healthy aging opportunities in the community by delivering general interest adult educational programming.

**District of Mission (DOM) – Contact: Stephanie Key**

DOM Parks and Recreation department provides programming that caters to all ages including some which is focused on seniors interests and needs.

**Red Cross Loan - Contact: Mission Hospital**

Loans medical devices at no charge

**BC Transit – Contact: Mission/Abbotsford Transit Committee at Mission City Hall**

Operates HandiDart, Shoppers' Shuttle, and provides bus service in the Mission area as well as service linking Mission and Abbotsford.

**Canada Safeway**

Has some grand-fathered grocery delivery services for seniors.

**Better Meals**

Paid service which delivers frozen food to seniors on Wednesdays in Mission.

**Hurd Pharmacy**

Delivers prescriptions to care homes. Has a comprehensive medical supplies and equipment inventory. Provides in home measuring and compression stockings. Offers a 15% seniors' discount on Mondays.

**Molly Maids**

Paid service which offers house cleaning. Regular customers pay about \$80 per hour.

**Nurse Next Door**

Paid service 24x7 offering personal and medical care as needed. They provide three pillars of care: taking care, enriched care and vital care, as reflected by their motto: *“our talent is caring”*.

**WeCare**

Paid service which is committed to at home care, including nursing and other services. Motto: *“helping you live your life”*.

**Home Instead**

Paid service offering a wide range of trusted home care, including personal care, housekeeping, help

with meals, and transportation.

### **Mission Taxi**

Seniors' discounts are available.

## **C) Documentation of media coverage**

The following articles and press releases appeared in the local news papers:

### **[The Times June 6, 2013: "Seniors asked for input on home help"](#)**

*Survey results released at June 13 session*

*By Christina Toth, The Times June 6, 2013*

*Mission seniors and service providers are invited to a Better at Home community meeting on June 13 to discuss what older residents require in order to remain living in their homes for as long as possible.*

*The event starts at 10 a.m. at the Mission Leisure Centre and continues in the afternoon for service providers, said Pam Alexis, the community developer for the provincially funded Better at Home program.*

*Registration is required to determine requirements for space and the light lunch.*

*During the morning session, Alexis will provide an overview of the Better at Home program and release details of a survey conducted in Mission this spring.*

*The 200 surveys that were returned provided a good sampling from every economic background in the community, she said.*

*Seniors and family members who care for seniors who may have specific insights to share may be interested in attending.*

*Those at the meeting will be asked for their input to help prioritize the seniors' services that are needed most in Mission.*

*The session continues at 1 p.m. for non-profit and service group members.*

*They'll be asked to define and create innovative solutions for the delivery of services to seniors in Mission, said Alexis.*

*The Better at Home program helps provide non-medical services such as friendly visiting, grocery shopping, light housekeeping, transportation to appointments, simple home repairs, yard work and snow shoveling.*

*The intent is to keep seniors living independently and safely in their own homes.*

*Alexis said the goal is to launch the program in Mission in the fall.*

*To register, contact Alexis at 604-302-2005 or email [palexis@cafsystems.com](mailto:palexis@cafsystems.com) for a reservation.*

*You can learn more about the program at [www.betterathome.ca](http://www.betterathome.ca).*

*[CToth@abbotsfordtimes.com](mailto:CToth@abbotsfordtimes.com)*

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**Mission City Record June 3, 2013: "Learn Details of the Better at Home Program"**

**By Staff Writer - Mission City Record**

**Published: June 03, 2013 4:00 PM**

**Updated: June 03, 2013 4:16 PM**

*A meeting held next Thursday will explain the benefits and intricacies of the Better at Home program.*

*The endeavour is a B.C. government-funded initiative to help seniors in Mission stay in their own homes longer. It includes non-medical services such as friendly visiting, grocery shopping, light housekeeping, transportation to appointments, simple home repairs, yard work and snow shovelling. The goal is for implementation by this fall.*

*According to community developer Pam Alexis, seniors and service providers are invited to the June 13 meeting at the Mission Leisure Centre. The morning session will consist of an overview of the Better at Home program and then the local survey findings will be released. Those in attendance will also be invited to help prioritize the services needed most here.*

*The community meeting will continue at 1 p.m. for service providers, who will define and create innovative solutions for the delivery of service to Mission seniors.*

*Registration is required as a light lunch will be served at noon. Please call Pam at 604-302-2005 or send an e-mail to [palexis@cafsystems.com](mailto:palexis@cafsystems.com) for a reservation.*

**Mission City Record, July 15th 2013: "Keeping Seniors at Home"**

**by Carol Aun - Mission City Record**

**Published: July 15, 2013 2:00 PM**

**Updated: July 15, 2013 2:45 PM**

*Transportation, grocery shopping and housekeeping were identified as the top three concerns for Mission seniors, according to the Better at Home survey conducted in May.*

*Survey organizer Pam Alexis recently released the results and identified Mission Community Services Society as the lead organization to implement programs to help keep seniors living in their own homes longer.*

*There are about 5,000 seniors in Mission and that number is expected to double in 17 years. By 2030, seniors will make up 19 per cent of the local population.*

*"Our senior population is growing rapidly," said Alexis, who distributed 575 survey and analyzed the results of 200 which were returned. Numerous people from different cultural and economic backgrounds participated in the study.*

*What Alexis found most surprising was the need for transportation wasn't just about getting from one place or another, it was also about having appropriate vehicles, which allow seniors to get in and out of with ease.*

*It's difficult to walk up and down the hills of Mission and "you have to be pretty badly off to qualify for HandyDart services," she explained.*

*Mission Seniors Activity Centre president Bob Ingram said the findings "definitely reflected comments from our members."*

*One of the most common things among seniors is they want to stay in their own home for as long as possible, he explained. "A lot can look after themselves with a little assistance."*

*Everyone is limited, whether it's their physical ability to cut the grass or fix things around the house, or their financial ability to hire help to get those projects done, said Ingram, who believes the*

*program has a lot of potential to assist the aging population.*

*"Generally speaking, health services isn't the major need."*

*The Better at Home program is funded by the B.C. government and managed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland.*

*Once Alexis finalizes her report at the end of the month, an advisory panel will be formed to apply for grants and decide how to roll out the services required, hopefully by year's end.*

## **D)List of common acronyms and abbreviations**

MASH..... Mission Association for Seniors Housing

MSAC..... Mission Seniors Advisory Committee

MSCA..... Mission Seniors Centre Association

OAP..... Old Age Pensions Organization

MCSS..... Mission Community Services Society

ECAC..... Elder Citizen Action Coalition

LLCS.....Lifetime Learning Centre Society

MFC.....Mission Friendship Centre

FHA.....Fraser Health Authority

DOM.....District of Mission

## References:

[1] <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Geography/ReferenceMaps/Schools.aspx>

[2] Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population Statistics Canada. 2012. British Columbia (Code 5909880) and Fraser Valley, British Columbia (Code 5909) (table). Census Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012.  
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[4] Statistics Canada. 2007. Mission, British Columbia (Code5909056) (table). 2006 Community Profiles. 2006 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa. Released March 13, 2007.

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