

June 2008

Dear Resident,

In cooperation with the City of Prince George and the Prince George Council of Seniors, the Institute for Social Research and Evaluation (ISRE) at UNBC is undertaking a survey of people who are 55 years or older living in Prince George. The survey is similar to ones conducted in 1999 and 2005 with the primary difference being that this survey focuses on the topic of housing.

The purposes of the survey are to (1) improve our understanding of older individuals' views and concerns about housing, (2) obtain information on trends related to seniors housing since the 1999 and 2005 surveys so we can identify declines and improvements over the years, and (3) collect information to help community and government organizations as well as developers and builders provide better housing services for older adults. There are no known risks to completing the questionnaire.

On average, we have found that the questionnaire takes about 30 – 45 minutes to complete. Feel free to complete the questionnaire in two or three sittings if that is more convenient.

We feel it is important to point out that your participation is voluntary and you are not required to complete this questionnaire. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, we ask that you do not put your name anywhere on the questionnaire. All information from the questionnaires will be transferred to electronic data files and stored indefinitely in the archives of the Institute for Social Research and Evaluation.

Data files may be made available to other researchers. The results of this survey will be made available to the public and summaries may be obtained after December 15, 2008 from the ISRE office at 960-5302 or from the City of Prince George Social Policy Facilitator at 614-7882.

Questionnaires will be available at a variety of locations including seniors' centres, libraries, and ISRE. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Dr. Alex Michalos at 960-6697 at the University of Northern British Columbia. The success of a survey like this depends on large numbers of people being willing to complete and return questionnaires. Thus, your response is very important to us.

Please complete this questionnaire and place it in the box or envelope provided at the distribution point where you got it by August 31, 2008. If you need any help with the questionnaire, please call Joy at 960-5302. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,
Dr. Alex C. Michalos

Director, Institute for Social Research and Evaluation

Quality of Housing Survey for People 55 Years of Age or Older- Summer 2008

If it is more convenient for you to fill out the questionnaire in more than one sitting, please feel free to do so.

HOUSING

H1. What is your present housing situation? *(Circle the number indicating the appropriate response)*

- 1. Own
- 2. Rent
- 3. Living with relatives or friends
- 4. Rent a room within a home
- 5. Care facility
- 6. Other: _____

H2. If you own your home, are you currently making mortgage payments? *(Circle the number of the appropriate response)*

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

H3. What percentage of your before-tax income is spent on housing-related costs (costs include rent or mortgage payments; heat and light; property taxes; water, sewer and garbage collection)? *(Circle one number below.)*

| | | | | | |
|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|
| 0-9% | 10-19% | 20-29% | 30-39% | 40-49% | 50% or more |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

H4. In what type of housing do you currently reside? *(Circle the single best response number)*

- 1. Single family detached house on one level
- 2. Single family detached house on more than one level
- 3. Duplex
- 4. Townhouse (row house with one or more floors)
- 5. Low-rise apartment (4 floors or less)
- 6. High-rise apartment (5 floors or more)
- 7. Mobile home
- 8. Public or private age-segregated (e.g., seniors') building without additional supports
- 9. Public or private individual units that have supports provided (e.g. meals, housekeeping, laundry, 24-hour emergency response)
- 10. Self-contained suite in home of family member
- 11. Private room in home of family member or friends
- 12. Care facility
- 13. Other: _____

H5. I have a problem using areas of my home because of the following (*Please circle all numbers that apply*).

1. Steps to front door
2. Front door that is too narrow for power chair or scooter
3. Hallways that are too narrow for power chair
4. Steps or stairs between living area (kitchen, living room, dining room) and my bedroom
5. Steps or stairs between living area and a bathroom
6. Not enough room in my bathroom for a walker or power chair to turn
7. Not enough room in my bathroom for another person to help me bathe
8. Not enough room in my kitchen for a walker or power chair
9. Kitchen not designed for use by someone with a walker or power chair
10. Elevator in my apartment building not big enough to take my scooter
11. No place in my residence to store a scooter
12. Other (*please specify*)_____

H6. One or more persons in my household have difficulty with the following (*Please circle all numbers that apply*).

1. Walking up and down a flight of stairs without resting
2. Moving from one room to another
3. Standing for long periods
4. Difficulty getting into and out of bed
5. Reaching overhead
6. Kneeling to reach objects below knee level
7. Hearing in conversations with one or more people, or hearing in a telephone conversation
8. Seeing ordinary newsprint, or clearly seeing someone's face from 12 feet away
9. Other (*please specify*)_____

H7. Do you currently think you will need to make a change from your present housing situation due to health concerns? (*Please circle one number only*)

1. No
2. Yes, within 1 year
3. Yes, within 3 years
4. Yes, within 5 years
5. Yes, within 10 years

H8. Do you currently think you will need to make a change from your present housing situation due to financial concerns? (Please circle one number)

1. No
2. Yes, within 1 year
3. Yes, within 3 years
4. Yes, within 5 years
5. Yes, within 10 years

H9. Do you currently think you will need to make a change from your present housing situation due to your changing needs or desires (e.g., family moving in, children leaving home)? (Please circle one number)

1. No
2. Yes, within 1 year
3. Yes, within 3 years
4. Yes, within 5 years
5. Yes, within 10 years

H10. Do you currently need to make a change from your present housing situation due to the design (e.g. stairs at entrance, stairs inside, bathroom design, kitchen design)? (Please circle one number)

1. No
2. Yes, within 1 year
3. Yes, within 3 years
4. Yes, within 5 years
5. Yes, within 10 years

H11. If you were to move, would you want to stay within the same neighbourhood? (Circle one)

1. Yes 2. No

H12. Thinking about the possibility that you might need or want to move, what types of housing would you seriously consider moving into in the future? (Please circle all numbers that apply, and also indicate if you would prefer to rent or own)

1. Single family detached house on one level (including manufactured/modular home)

Rent____ Own____

2. Single family detached house on more than one level

Rent____ Own____

3. Duplex or townhouse

Rent_____ Own_____

4. Low-rise apartment (4 floors or less)

Rent_____ Own_____

5. High-rise apartment (5 floors or more)

Rent_____ Own_____

6. Mobile Home

Rent_____ Own_____

7. Other _____

Rent_____ Own_____ Other_____

H13. This question is for OWNERS. Thinking about ways to stay in your own home, which of the following might be of interest to you? *(Please circle all numbers that apply)*

1. **Homesharing:** Two or more **unrelated** people live together in a private dwelling. Each person has a private space while sharing common areas such as a bathroom, kitchen, living room and dining room. In most cases, one person owns the home and the other pays rent or provides some services to the homeowner such as cooking, housekeeping or gardening in exchange for free or reduced rent.
2. **Modify your home** to make it more accessible. For example, add a ramp or stair lift, make a den on the main floor into a bedroom, or install grab bars in the bathroom.
3. **Live-in housekeeper:** Someone hired to live in the home and do housekeeping.
4. **Add a private suite:** Adapt your existing home to put in a private suite that can be rented out.
5. **Defer property taxes:** BC homeowners aged 55 and older can defer their property taxes until they die or until the property is sold, at which time the taxes plus interest are due.

6. **Reverse mortgage:** a plan that allows seniors to have extra income by using the equity or value that they have built up in their homes. Under this plan, an older homeowner who takes out a mortgage on the home is guaranteed a monthly income for a fixed period of time (usually 10 or 15 years), or in some cases for life. The mortgage and interest do not have to be repaid until the term expires, the owner dies, or the home is sold.
7. **Sale-leaseback:** Some people sell some of the equity in their home while retaining occupancy rights. They can sell their home to an investor who immediately leases it back to the seller for life. The seller becomes a renter in the home they have just sold.
8. **Life-hold estate:** Another way of doing a sale-leaseback. In this case you sell your home to an investor but title to the property does not transfer until the owner dies.

H14. This question is for EVERYONE. Thinking about the possibility that you might need to move, what types of housing would suit your needs *(Please circle all numbers that apply, and indicate if you would prefer to rent or own)*.

1. Single family detached house on one level

Rent_____ Own_____

2. Single family detached house on more than one level

Rent_____ Own_____

3. Duplex or townhouse

Rent_____ Own_____

4. Low-rise apartment (4 floors or less)

Rent_____ Own_____

5. High-rise apartment (5 floors or more)

Rent_____ Own_____

6. Other _____

Rent_____ Own_____

H15. This question is for EVERYONE. Thinking about the possibility that you might need to move, there are other types of housing that might suit your needs (*Please circle all numbers that apply*).

1. **Life leases:** Life lease projects provide older individuals and couples - usually 55 years or older - with affordable housing with a life time right to occupy a unit and have access to communal facilities and services with the assurance that their neighbours will be in the same age group. They acquire the life lease through a single upfront payment. Depending upon the project, the amount of that payment could be affected by various factors, including their life expectancy and the redemption value of the unit at the end of the lease. They are also responsible for paying modest monthly fees to cover management and upkeep. Life-lease residents are neither owners nor renters.
2. **Co-operative housing:** Purchasing shares in co-operative housing is an option of interest to some older people. Members of a co-op share in both the ownership and management of the housing developments they live in. After initially buying shares, they make monthly payments to cover part of the building's mortgage, interest, taxes and operating costs. This gives them the right to occupy a specific dwelling unit. When they leave, their shares are redeemed by the co-op. Co-operatives can include options such as women only, men only, mixed age, seniors only, etc.
3. **Garden suites ("granny flats"):** Small self-contained houses that are placed on the same lot as the home of close family members. They are designed for seniors who want to live close to their children while maintaining their independence and privacy. Most suites have one bedroom, a living room, a kitchen, and a bathroom as well as storage and laundry facilities. The suites are not intended as permanent additions to the lots. They are usually factory built and can be quickly and easily removed when no longer needed.
4. **Seniors' housing:** a type of housing that consists of self-contained apartments or small one-storey homes that are clustered in projects of 20 to 50 dwelling units. A key feature is that each unit is linked to the project manager by an alarm system.
5. **Congregate housing:** differs from seniors' housing primarily in the number of services provided. Residents have their own private apartments, which usually include a kitchen, so they can prepare light meals but eat main meals in a communal dining room. Housekeeping and personal care services are usually included in the accommodation package.
6. **Abbeyfield House:** Some people (usually 7 to 10) move into a large house called an Abbeyfield House, where they each have their own private room and share one or more meals a day and the services of a housekeeper in a family atmosphere. The house is acquired and operated by a non-profit society but the residents share in the operation of the house.

7. **Residential care facility:** 24-hour professional nursing care and supervision for people who can no longer be cared for in their own homes.

8. Other: _____

H16. Thinking about the possibility that you might have to move, which of the following things would you like in your neighborhood? (*Please circle all numbers that apply*)

1. Library
2. Parks
3. Social and recreational facilities for seniors
4. Sports facilities
5. Facilities for music, theatre and art
6. Medical/Dental services
7. Social Support Services (e.g. mental health, victim assistance)
8. Variety of retail stores
9. Customer services from government agencies
10. Churches
11. Adult education

H17. The following is a list of support services that you might value and would be willing to pay for. Please indicate the services that you would either want or be interested in. (*Please circle all numbers that apply*)

1. Not applicable
2. General housecleaning
3. Yard maintenance (e.g. lawn cutting, shrub pruning, etc.)
4. Snow removal
5. House maintenance (e.g. cleaning eavestroughing, painting, cleaning windows, etc.)
6. Meal preparation or delivery
7. Grocery shopping
8. Emergency medical response systems (e.g. Medic Alert, Lifeline, etc.)
9. Additional home security (e.g., extra security, gated security, home sitting service)
10. Other: _____

H18. From the list of home design features, please indicate those that you have. (*Please circle all numbers that apply*).

1. No step entrance
2. Wider doors throughout main floor
3. Bathroom on the main floor
4. Accessible bathroom on the main floor
5. Bedroom on main floor
6. Laundry on main floor

H19. The following is a list of home design features that you may value in a home. Please circle all numbers that you would want or are interested in.

1. No step entrance
2. Wider doors throughout main floor
3. Bathroom on the main floor
4. Accessible bathroom on the main floor
5. Bedroom on main floor
6. Laundry on main floor

H20. From the following list of home design features, circle all that you need but do not have.

1. No step entrance
2. Wider doors throughout main floor
3. Bathroom on the main floor
4. Accessible bathroom on the main floor
5. Bedroom on main floor
6. Laundry on main floor

H21. Have you had to make any home modifications due to changes in your abilities? (*Check one*)

Yes _____ No _____

H22. Can you afford to make all home modifications that you need? (*Check one*)

Yes _____ No _____

H23. Are you presently on a wait-list for government subsidized independent seniors' housing (e.g., Alward Place)? (*Circle one*)

1. Yes If yes, how long have you been waiting? _____ yrs. _____ mos.

2. No If 'No', would you like to be on such a wait-list? (Circle one.)

a. Yes b. No

H24. Are you presently on a waitlist for assisted living (e.g., Laurier Manor)? Assisted living is for seniors who require some support (e.g. with housekeeping, meals, personal care) but who do not need 24 hour institutional care.

1. Yes If yes, how long have you been waiting? _____ yrs. _____ mos.

2. No If 'No', would you like to be on such a wait-list? (Circle one.)

a. Yes b. No

H25. Are you or your partner/spouse presently on a wait-list for entry into a care facility (e.g., Parkside, Simon Fraser Lodge)?

- 1. Yes If yes, how long have you been waiting? _____ yrs. _____ mos.
- 2. No If 'No', would you like to be on such a wait-list? (Circle one.)
 - a. Yes b. No

PREFERENCES AND PROBLEMS

For the following statements, please circle the number that indicates your agreement or disagreement.

| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Applicable |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|----------------|-------|----------------|
|-------------------|----------|-----------|----------------|-------|----------------|

PP1. The **local** government should be involved in planning for housing for its older population.

1 2 3 4 5 0

PP2. The **provincial** government should be involved in planning for housing for its older population.

1 2 3 4 5 0

PP3. The **federal** government should be involved in planning for housing for its older population.

1 2 3 4 5 0

PP4. The **local** government needs to begin setting aside land to build housing for its older population.

1 2 3 4 5 0

PP5. The **provincial** government needs to begin setting aside land to build housing for its older population.

1 2 3 4 5 0

PP6. The **federal** government needs to begin setting aside land to build housing for its older population.

1 2 3 4 5 0

PP7. In winter I try to avoid going out because there is too much ice on walkways in my area.

1 2 3 4 5 0

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PP8. If I could afford to leave the neighborhood I am now living in, I would move. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| PP9. The neighbourhood in which I am now living is a good place to retire. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| PP10. There are enough stores in my area so that shopping is convenient. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| PP11. There are stores in my area but they are difficult to access. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| PP12. The stores in my area do not carry supplies that fit many of my needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| PP13. If the costs were the same, I would like to live in a housing development or building for seniors only. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| PP14. If the costs were the same, I would like to live in a housing development or building for seniors and middle-aged adults. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| PP15. If the costs were the same, I would like to live in a housing development or building for people of all ages, including families with children. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| PP16. I cannot visit the homes of certain friends and relatives due to stairs at the entrance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| PP17. Certain friends and relatives cannot visit my home due to stairs at the entrance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |

Description of Sample

The following questions are used to describe the sample of people who have taken part in this survey and for statistical purposes.

D1. Are you: _____ Female _____ Male (*Check one*)

D2. Your present age: _____ years

D3. How would you name your cultural, ethnic or national background? (e.g., Carrier Sekani, Chinese, English Canadian, Greek, Métis etc.)

D4. What is the **highest** level of education that you have completed? (*Circle one number*)

1. Elementary school - incomplete
2. Elementary school - complete
3. Secondary school - incomplete
4. Secondary school - complete
5. Some trade, technical, business or community college
6. Diploma or certificate from trade, technical, business or community college
7. Some university
8. University degree at bachelor's or any higher level

D5. Please describe your **primary** employment status. (*Circle one number only*)

1. Unemployed
2. Retired
3. Employed part-time
4. Employed full-time
5. Homemaker
6. Student
7. Unemployed due to disability
8. Self-employed
9. Other (Specify: _____)

D6. What is the postal code of your residence? _____

D7. What is your present marital status? (*Circle number*)

1. Now married
2. Live-in partner or common-law partner
3. Single - never married
4. Divorced
5. Separated
6. Widowed

D8. Do you use any of the following? (*Please circle all that apply*)

1. Walking stick/cane
2. Walker
3. Manual wheelchair
4. Power wheelchair
5. Three wheel scooter
6. Four wheel scooter

D9. How do you get around? (*Please circle the option you use most frequently*)

1. Personal vehicle
2. Vehicle owned by family or friends
3. Public transit (city bus)
4. Carefree/handyDART
5. Taxi
6. Walk

D10. What is the total income of all the members of this household for the past year before taxes and deductions?

\$_____

You have now completed this questionnaire. If you have any further comments to make about it, please use the space below. We sincerely appreciate your assistance and thank you for your time. Please place the completed questionnaire(s) in the box or envelope provided at the distribution point where you got it.

Your comments: