



Age-Friendly MINNEDOSA



This report was developed by students in the Master of City Planning program as part of the Neighbourhood / Community Planning Design Studio focused on age-friendly environments.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As people grow older, they can face challenges remaining in their community. This report discusses aspects of age-friendliness in Minnedosa, Manitoba. Nestled in Southwestern Manitoba along the Little Saskatchewan River, Minnedosa, a town of just over 2,500, has an aging population; Over 25% of the population is over the age of 65. In analyzing age-friendliness in the town, the World Health Organization's (WHO's) Age-Friendly Communities framework is used. This framework guides a discussion of age-friendliness across a variety of areas. The four discussed are housing, transportation, buildings and outdoor spaces, and social infrastructure.

In conducting this analysis, meetings were held with residents of the town, particularly older adults over the age of 65, as well as representatives of the community. Residents partook in activities and discussed the current state of the four areas of analysis, as well as their ideas for potential improvements. Based on the information gathered, precedents were studied in each area, and these precedents informed options that would be presented to the community as potential ways in which they might make their community more age friendly.

The initial stage of this analysis saw residents point to a number of challenges they face on a day-to-day basis. In terms of transportation, residents expressed concerns with the Handivan service as well as difficulty getting to other nearby regional centres. In terms of housing, residents noted the development of a new active living facility, residents of nearby smaller communities retiring in the town, a lack of potential land to build on, and the impacts of flooding of the river on the town. Social and Outdoor Spaces analysis saw similar trends, with residents expressing challenges with communication and barriers to social involvement, a desire for outdoor social spaces, and an interest in infrastructure improvements to outdoor spaces and facilities such as sidewalks. Residents also highlighted strengths in these areas as well.

In addition to this analysis with residents of the community, an overview of other contemporary challenges and an independent analysis of the community informed the directions that were taken in further steps. Precedent research was conducted, both for this report and for other similar reports being conducted for other regional communities, in several areas. These areas were those which appeared as themes across the region and in age-friendliness as expressed by residents and identified in the analysis. Options meant to provide potential next steps that communities might wish to take were then developed from informed analysis, independent analysis, and precedent research,

Options were intended to capture a variety of timeframes, potential levels of investment, and scales of impact. These characteristics led to the categorization of options into short- medium- and long-term. Options were further broken down as those intended for Minnedosa's Main Street, neighbourhoods, and the whole community. Options for Transportation and Housing remained independent, while similarities between those of Buildings and Outdoor Spaces and Social Infrastructure led to the integration of options in those two areas. Options are wide-ranging, regarding such topics as active transportation and improved accessible and regional transportation, mixed-use and infill development, and wayfinding, shelter, and outdoor space improvements throughout the community.

Overall, this analysis is intended to serve as a guide to the Town of Minnedosa, providing a sample of the potential options it may wish to implement to improve age-friendliness within the community. While these options are not exhaustive, and this analysis was limited by timeframe, scale, and an inability to determine the needs of every older adult in the community, those outlined in this report are worthy of consideration and might help to improve the quality of life for all those who call Minnedosa home and choose to visit the town.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 About Minnedosa

Minnedosa is a town in the southwestern part of the Canadian province of Manitoba and is situated 50 km north of Brandon, Manitoba, and 50 km north of south of riding Mountain National Park. The town is serviced by Highway 16A, part of the Yellowhead Highway, which runs from Manitoba to the west coast of BC. The Little Saskatchewan River flows through the town centre and the Minnedosa Dam forms Minnedosa Lake in the northeast.

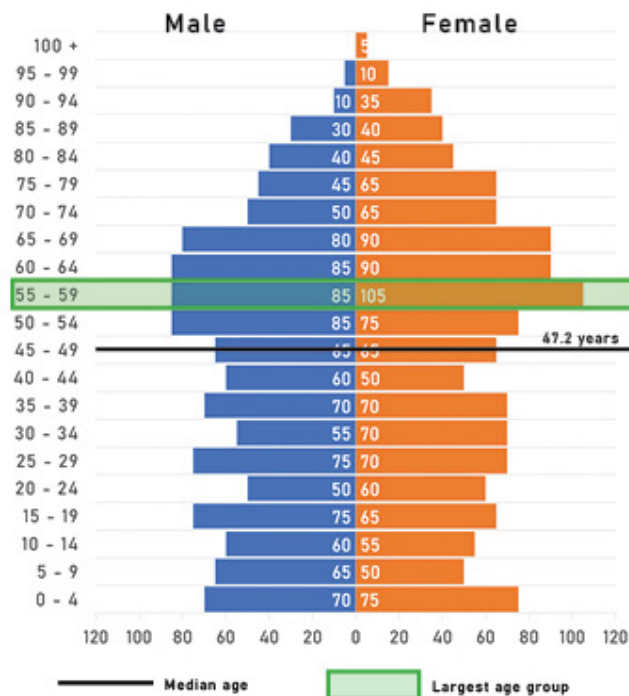
1.1.1 History

“Minnedosa” is a Sioux word that translates as flowing water which was named in 1880 by J. S. Armitage and John Tanner. The town of Minnedosa is situated on the Old Edmonton Trail and was called Little Saskatchewan Valley by many, and by others Tanner’s Crossing, being the next stopping place aimed for by travellers from the east after they left Third Crossing - later Gladstone. For the last few thousand years before the arrival of European settlement, the area was alternately occupied by Cree, Assiniboine, Sioux, and Ojibwa.

1.1.2 Demographics

According to the 2021 Census of Population Minnedosa had a population of 2,741 (Statistics Canada, 2023), which was up 11.9% from 2016. Older adults aged 65 and over make up a growing proportion of Minnedosa’s population, increasing from 625 people (25.5% of the population) in 2016 to 715 people (26.1% of the population) in 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2017, 2021). This proportion is significantly higher than the Province of Manitoba as a whole, which had a total of 17.1% of the population aged 65 and over. The median age in Minnedosa was 47.2 years which was also substantially higher than the provincial average of 38.4 years (Figure 1).

2016 Census of Population - Minnedosa



2021 Census of Population - Minnedosa

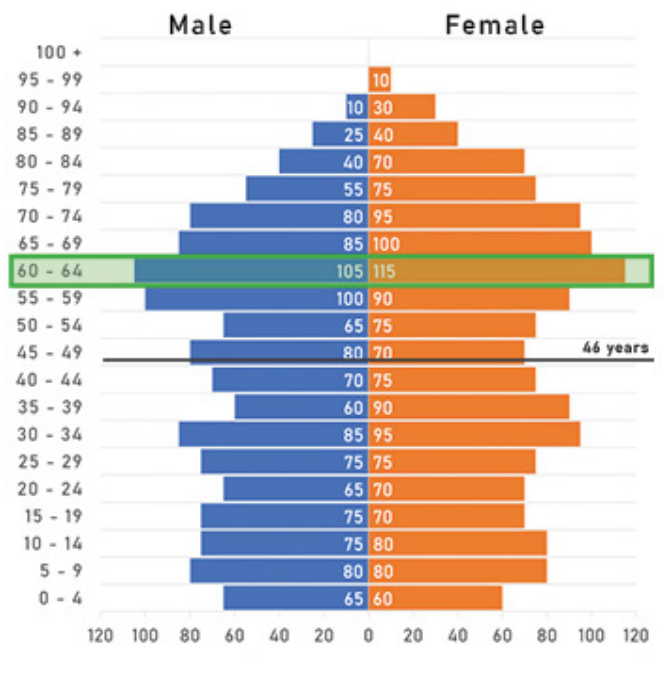


Figure: 1. Minnedosa Population Pyramid (2016 and 2021)

Figure: 2. Minnedosa and Manitoba comparison (2021)

2021 Census of Population	Minnedosa	Manitoba
Population	2,741	1,342,153
Median Age	47.2 years	38.4 years
Population 65+	26.1 %	17.1 %

Census data from 2021 also identified the largest age group in Minnedosa as 60 to 64 years, meaning that this group has just reached retirement age and will face the challenges of aging in the coming years (Figure 2).

1.1.3 Stakeholders

It is important to understand that projects can be influenced by individuals or groups who have the potential to impact them positively or negatively. The group acknowledged this fact and recognized the varied dimensions of these effects on project design and implementation for the age-friendly project in Minnedosa town. Stakeholders were involved in the decision-making process from start to finish to ensure that the assignment objectives aligned with the needs and expectations of the community members impacted by the project. The following are stakeholders that were involved in the process:

- Older adults living in Minnedosa, including:
 - Older adults who attended meetings and provided input
 - Older adults who did not attend meetings and were not able to provide input
- Mayor and town councillors
- Town staff
- Older adult programming staff
- Tanner's Crossing Planning District staff
- Handivan service operators
- Taxi service operators

1.2 Project Overview

1.2.1 Who We Are

This project was conducted by a group of first-year students in the Master of City Planning program at the University of Manitoba. It was part of the first-year studio course, which focused on the age-friendliness of communities in southwest rural Manitoba. Students in the studio course were divided into small groups and each group focused on different communities with the intent of identifying the strengths and challenges of each community and developing age-friendly options for the communities to consider. Other groups work with the towns of Neepawa and Carberry, while this group worked with the Town of Minnedosa. As a result of this project, students were able to gain practical experience working with real issues facing communities in terms of analysis, precedent research, and identifying potential options.

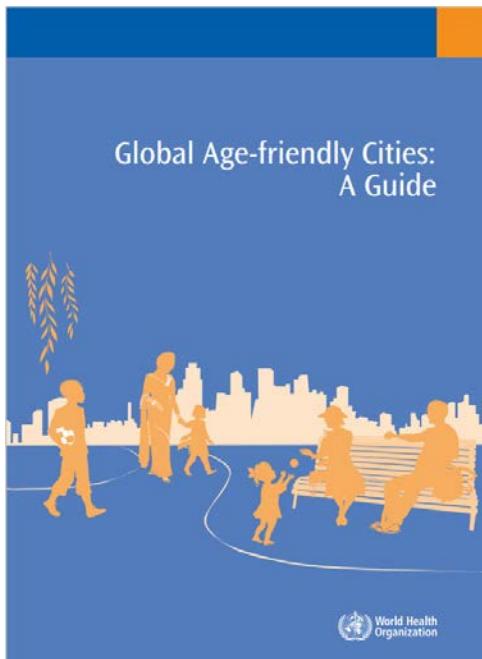
Figure: 3. World Health Organization Global age-friendly cities: a guide. World Health Organization (IRIS)

1.2.2 Guiding Documents

To help guide the project and provide a framework for understanding age-friendly initiatives, the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide and the Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide were used to structure the analysis and subsequent options.

Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide.

The Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide was developed by the WHO in 2007 to help address the rapid increase of the aging population globally. The guide presents eight interconnected domains that encompass the areas of life and environment that affect the well-being of older adults, as well as suggestions on how to help communities plan for the aging population (WHO, 2007) (Figure 3).



Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide.



Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide

The Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors published the *Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide* in 2007. This document was developed based on the WHO's *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide*, but primarily focused on addressing the range of needs and challenges of aging rural communities across Canada. It provides an overview of the challenges that older adults may face in rural communities and acts as a guide to help plan for the development of age-friendly initiatives in a rural community (Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors, 2007) (Figure 4).

1.2.3 Why Age-Friendly?

To understand the importance of implementing age-friendly initiatives, one must first understand what an age-friendly community is. The WHO defines an age-friendly community as a community with policies, services, settings, and structures that enhance the quality of life as people age and encourage active aging (WHO, 2007). Age-friendly communities allow people to participate in their community safely and comfortably at all ages and enable them to live longer and healthier lives. The key ideas that surround age-friendly initiatives and how age-friendly communities support people as they age include:

- Recognizing the wide range of capacities and resources among older people.
- Anticipating and responding flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences.
- Respecting their decisions and lifestyle choices.
- Protecting those who are most vulnerable.
- Promoting their inclusion in and contribution to all areas of community life (WHO, 2007, p.5).

Figure 4. *Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors: Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide (Public Health Canada)*

Even though an age-friendly community places emphasis on how to accommodate older adults, age-friendly communities benefit residents of all ages and capabilities as aging is a lifelong process. Age-friendly communities strive to create communities that are accessible, diverse, inclusive, and safe to grow older in. By removing barriers for older adults, age-friendly communities and initiatives also help improve the quality of life of everyone else in the community. For example, a safe neighbourhood not only allows older adults to safely leave their homes but also helps younger women and children feel safe going outside of their homes. Communities that become age-friendly benefit all residents and help foster a more productive community (WHO, n.d.).

1.2.4 Process

Phase 1

To begin the project, multiple trips were made to Minnedosa to look at the existing built environment and better understand its history and current state. Further to this, statistics, relevant research, and case studies were analyzed to further outline the current state of age-friendliness in the community. As part of the research and documentation, the group also hosted a community meeting to discuss with residents and officials of the town to help identify some of their concerns. During the meeting, a dot exercise was conducted; this involved the residents placing different coloured dots on a map of Minnedosa to show their daily routines and concerns about the town (Figure 5). After initial observations and identification of the challenges and strengths of Minnedosa, the group held a community presentation outlining the findings of the analysis (Figure 6).



Figure: 6. Community Presentation 1

Phase 2

In phase two, all students in the studio course, including those working with other communities, came together to research precedents that may help develop age-friendly options. The precedents looked at major areas of concern that each student was interested in and provided examples of ideas that other communities and organizations have done previously to address these concerns. These precedents were intended to provide ideas for potential solutions based on projects that have been implemented elsewhere, and which might be relevant as options for implementation in the groups were working with.

Phase 3

After phase two, the group began developing age-friendly options for the town to consider based on the initial documentation and precedent research. A community meeting was held on November 21st, which allowed for feedback from residents before finalizing the options. To conclude, a final community presentation and this report were developed to document the group's findings and

options that Minnedosa might wish to consider helping the community become more age friendly.

1.2.5 Report Organization

The report is categorized into four categories:

Transportation, Housing, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, and Social Infrastructure.

- Transportation – Relates to how accessible and affordable it is for older adults to travel and access their community’s amenities, services, and social events.
- Housing – Relates to housing conditions and its relationship to allowing older adults to age independently and actively participate in their community.
- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings – Relates to how accessible, clean, and safe it is for older adults to engage with the natural and built environment.
- Social Infrastructure – Relates to how older adults participate and stay engaged with their community.

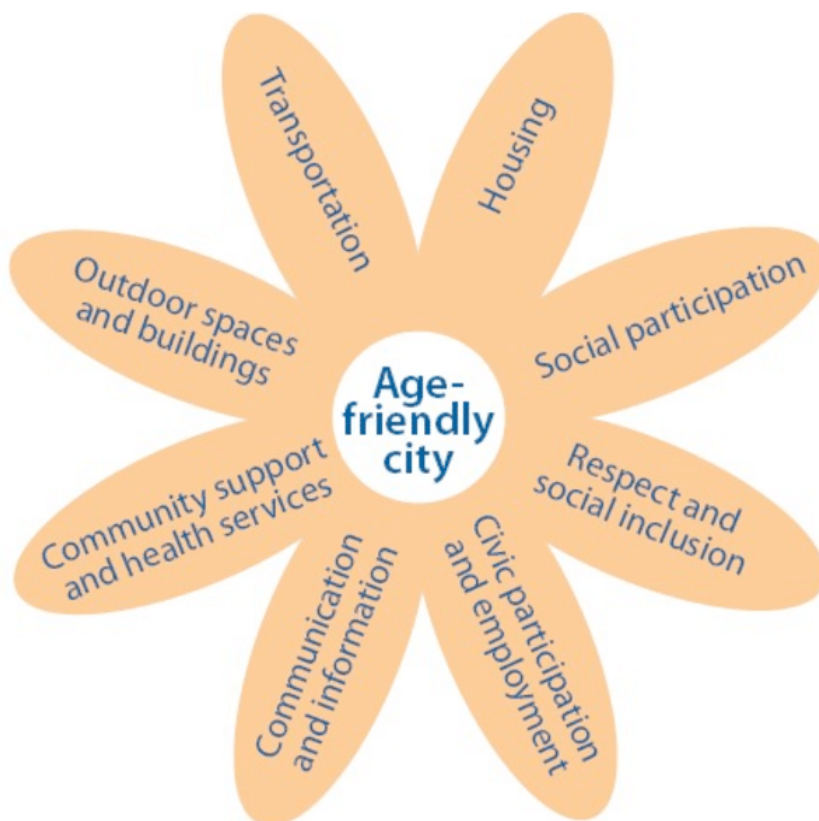


Figure: 7. World Health Organization Age-Friendly City Domains (Research Gate)

The four categories are a condensed version of the domains outlined by the WHO in the *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide* (Figure 7). Together, these categories represent a comprehensive approach to meeting the diverse needs of Minnedosa's older adults.

Each category includes a section detailing what the group learned about Minnedosa related to that area, such as its strengths and weaknesses. Following the background overview sections, options related to those categories will be presented. For the outdoor spaces and buildings and social infrastructure sections, the options are combined into one section as the group had found that the options were able to address the weaknesses of both sections.

The report ends with a general conclusion that synthesizes the group's findings and options. It also includes information and feedback that the group received during the final community presentation.

1.2.6 Options Organization

In developing options for the community, two primary considerations were made regarding the timeframe and level of investment required of the option presented, as well as the scale and impact of the specific option. These considerations will help decision-makers in the community who are considering implementing these options to determine which might be best for them to consider at a particular point in time given the context of costs, level of impact, and timeframe.

Timeframe

The options are organized into short- medium- and long-term timeframes. These timeframes reflect both the time required to implement the option and the level of investment that might be required. These considerations account for things such as whether an option can be implemented through a relatively quick policy change or program, whether studies or additional planning may be required for their

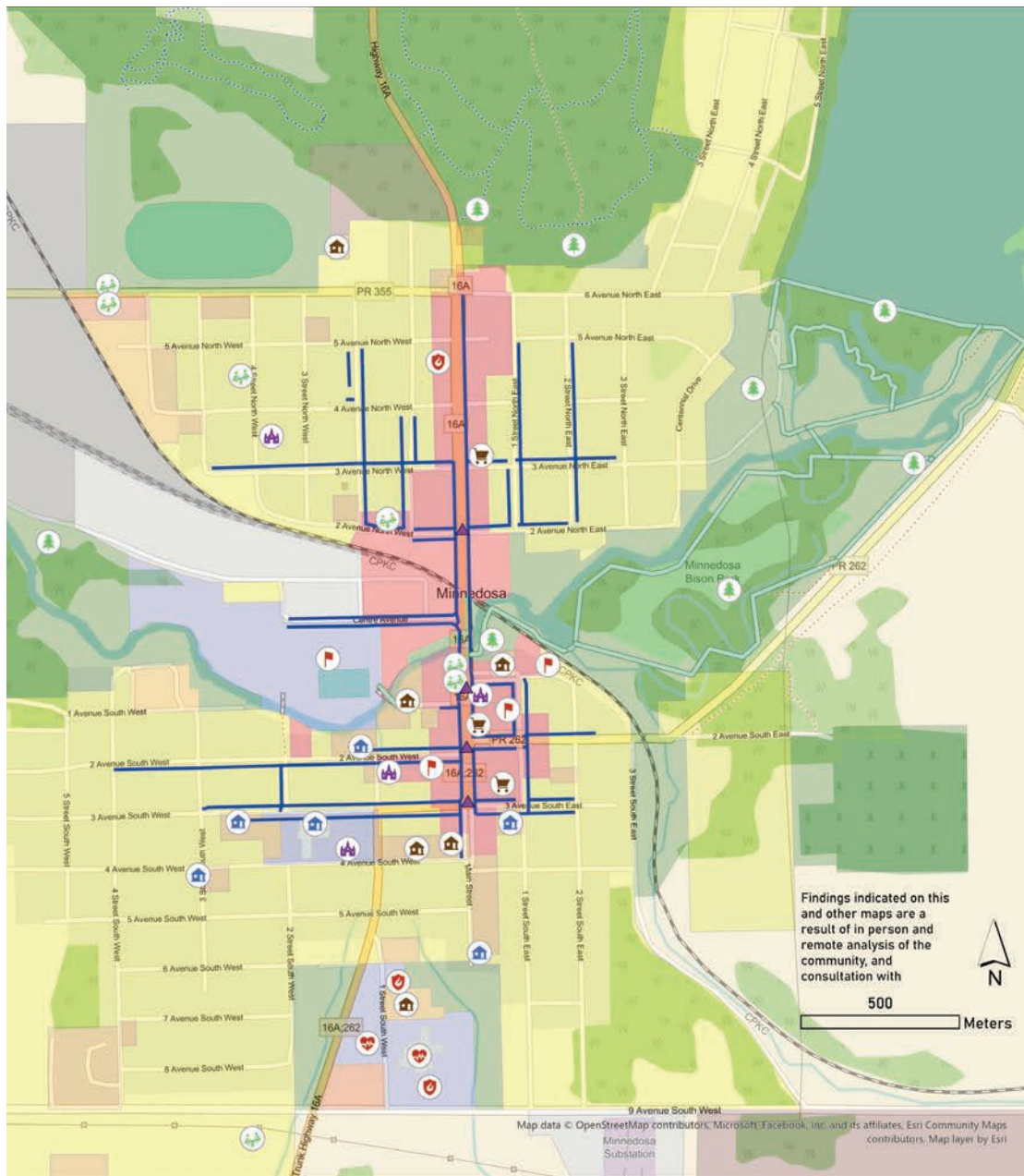
implementation, and whether a significant policy like bylaw changes or coordination with other communities may be required. In terms of infrastructure and other physical forms of development and construction, considerations are made for the time it would take to construct or implement the option as well as the cost that would be required. Examples might include line painting as a short-term option with a low level of investment, the construction of temporary structures or small infrastructure projects as medium-term options, and the development of large-scale permanent and more expensive infrastructure as a long-term option.

Scale

Regarding the scale of the options, they are organized into Main Street, neighbourhood, and community scale, based on the area in which the development might occur and the level of impact on the community. Main Street options include specific developments and potential alterations to Main Street and the surrounding area. Neighbourhood options impact the neighbourhoods that exist surrounding Main Street itself. And finally, community scale options present the potential for impact on a more community-wide scale.

1.3 Current Situation

The map in Figure 8 shows the current situation of housing, transportation, amenities, and zoning in Minnedosa.



Legend

▲ Crossings — Trails — Sidewalks - Existing Seniors - Existing Specific Housing - Existing Multi-Unit Housing	- Minnedosa Emergency Services - Minnedosa General Amenities - Minnedosa Grocery Amenities - Minnedosa Religious Amenities	- Minnedosa Recreational Amenities - Minnedosa Outdoor Spaces	- Commercial Highway Zone - Industrial Heavy Zone - Industrial Light Zone - Institutional Zone - Open Space/Recreational Zone	- Residential Large Lot Zone - Residential Mobile Home Zone - Residential Multiple Zone - Residential Single Zone - Residential Unserved Zone
Amenities Minnedosa Community Health Services		Zoning - Agricultural (Limited) Zone - Commercial Central Zone		

Figure: 8. Map of Housing, Transportation, Amenities and Zoning in Minnedosa

2.0 TRANSPORTATION

2.1 Overview

Minnedosa’s older adults get around using various modes of transportation, including driving private vehicles, getting rides from family or friends, taking community transportation like the Handivan or taxi, or using active transportation such as walking or cycling. Each of these modes has its unique strengths and challenges, which are outlined in the next sections of this report. The transportation needs of older adults in Minnedosa should be well-understood to develop a strategy which ensures that transportation is age friendly.

2.2 What We Heard

2.2.1 Private Vehicles

Driving a Private Vehicle

Many of Minnedosa’s older adults drive a personal vehicle as their primary mode of transportation. There is no information available specifically to older adults but commuting data for the town of Minnedosa from the 2021 Census of Population (Figure 9) shows that 85% of commuters drive a vehicle.

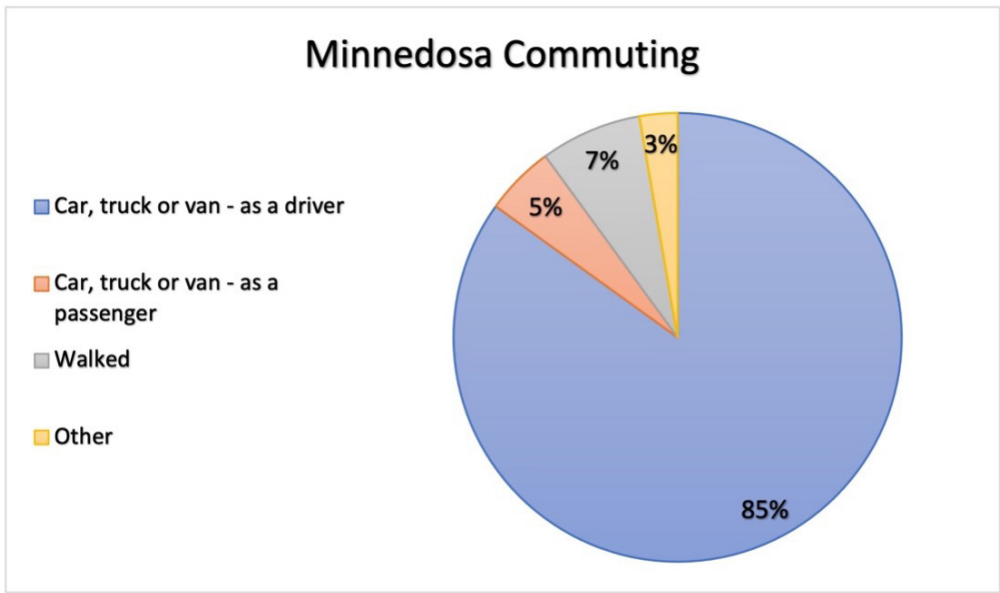


Figure: 9. Minnedosa Commuting Data

Older adults in Minnedosa who drive private vehicles enjoy a high degree of ease of travel within the town and to other destinations. Private vehicles provide amenities like a convenient way to move items such as groceries, pick up and drop off passengers, and remain comfortable in severe weather. It is also easier to maintain social connections with this mode of transportation as a wider array of destinations are easy and quick to access when compared to modes of transportation like walking or taking community transportation.

Private vehicle ownership comes with some significant responsibilities, such as the high cost of vehicle ownership and maintenance. Not all older adults can afford private vehicles and those who may have relied on them while working may not be able to afford them in retirement.

Older adults who lose their license may feel isolated or trapped at home, and as people age there is an increased likelihood that they will lose their ability to drive. There is also an increased risk of collisions as people lose vision and motor reflexes in old age. Many older adults may restrict the time of day or conditions under which they will drive, which restricts their mobility even if they retain their vehicle and driver's license.

Other factors like the availability of accessible parking will also determine whether private vehicles will meet the transportation needs of all older adults. If a key community amenity like a grocery store or bank lacks appropriate accessible parking people who rely on private vehicles may be unable to make essential trips without accompaniment.

Another obvious issue with private vehicles is that they are less environmentally friendly than active or community transportation. As communities across Manitoba make hard decisions about their climate impact, efforts to encourage people to drive less may become more common.

Passengers in a Private Vehicle

Another common primary mode of transportation among older adults in Minnedosa is being driven by family or friends. This mode gives them much of the freedom of having a private vehicle but is complicated by the fact that it requires coordinating schedules with the person or people who do the driving.

Scheduling conflicts may leave people without a means of travel in some instances. These arrangements may create a burden on family or friends, especially if one caregiver is doing all the driving themselves. There may also be issues if the older adult needs assistance when getting in and out of the vehicle as some assists require special training to ensure safety.

2.2.3 Active Transportation

Many older adults in Minnedosa get around by walking, cycling, and other forms of active transportation. This may be their primary mode of transportation, or it may be used in combination with other transportation options (Figure 10).

Staying active helps older adults stay healthier for longer and active transportation is a great way to do this. Activities like walking and cycling also promote connection to the community since it is easier to observe and interact with



Figure: 10. Left: Older Adults Riding Bikes (Simple Learning Solutions)

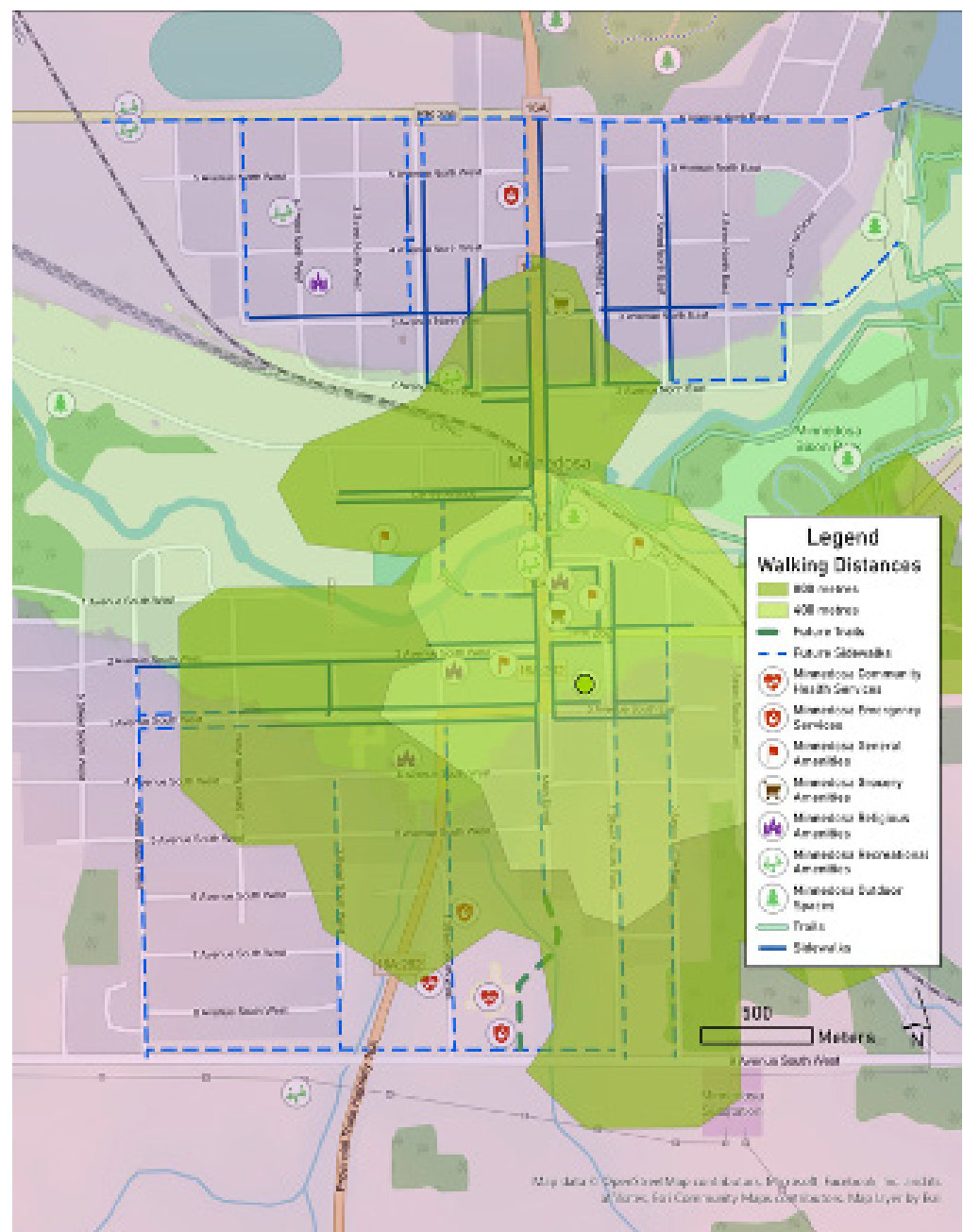


Figure: 11. Right: Residential Street (Urban Indy)

surroundings when someone is moving slowly and is not sheltered from the elements inside a vehicle. There are already many community trails, walking paths, and attractions that are accessible when walking or cycling and that are highly valued by the community (Figure 11).

These modes of transportation are very affordable, making them accessible to many older adults in Minnedosa, even those with low or fixed incomes. Given Minnedosa's relatively small size, walking to many destinations within town is possible for many older adults (Figure 12).

Figure: 12. Map of Walking Distances in Minnedosa.



The harsh winters in Manitoba make active transportation difficult at certain times of the year. Minnedosa's hills can also be challenging for older adults with mobility or health issues. Certain amenities may be too far for some to walk, depending on where they live. For example, the health centre is quite far from many residential areas and is at the top of a hill which makes access by active transportation challenging. The proposed location of the active living centre faces similar challenges.

2.2.4 Community Transportation

Minnedosa has both a Handivan and private taxi as community transportation options, and the combination of these two services has the potential to serve the entire community. The Handivan (Figure 13) can accommodate those with special mobility needs but could also be used to transport anyone. Community members value these services and want to ensure that they continue, but both services are under-used for a variety of reasons.



Figure: 13. Shuttle Bus
(California HVIP)

The cost of both the Handivan and the taxi are prohibitive for some older adults with low or fixed incomes:

- Handivan - \$7.50 flat fee one way within town, cost of mileage out of town
- Taxi - \$10 flat fee one way within town, cost of mileage out of town

The Handivan requires that a person has mobility issues to qualify to ride, but the process for defining what is considered a mobility issue is unclear. Additionally, since the Handivan drivers are volunteers, they are not allowed to assist with entry or exit to the vehicle or destination.

2.3 Options

2.3.1 Main Street

Short Term

Wayfinding Signs

Wayfinding is a term that describes how people find their way around a community using things like signs and landmarks. Wayfinding signs incorporate the use of bold design, bright colours, and place names to make navigation

pleasant and easy. Signs can indicate the location of community amenities and tourist attractions and are used by people who live in the community as well as visitors (Figure 14). Details like walking time and distance help people know whether they can walk to a destination based on their time and mobility level.

Figure: 14. Wayfinding Signs (CBC News)



Wayfinding is important for older adults dealing with memory loss or dementia, as familiar names and colours can make finding their way easier.

Medium Term

Bike Racks

Bike racks are a great way to signal that cyclists are welcome in Minnedosa and that the town wants people to cycle (Figure 15). Bike racks are relatively inexpensive and easy to install.

Main Street is the obvious place to start installing bike racks, and there could be a partnership developed with businesses



Figure: 15. *Bike Parking (City of Pasadena)*

to sponsor advertising on the racks. Racks with custom designs like the town logo can also be part of a beautification campaign.

Long Term

Protected Bike Lanes

Main Street is very wide and could easily be redesigned with protected bike lanes on either side. Protected bike lanes provide a safe and comfortable option for people not comfortable riding in fast-moving traffic, which would benefit people of all ages. Separating cyclists and drivers reduces the risk of collisions and disputes, which creates a safer environment for everyone (Figures 16-19).



Figure: 16. *1st Avenue, Manhattan (NYC Street Design)*

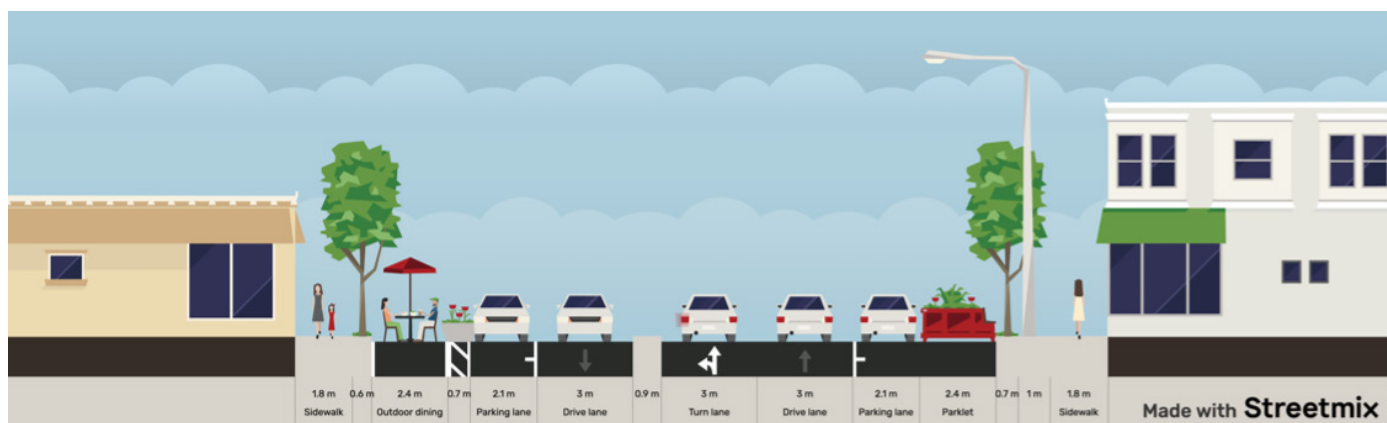
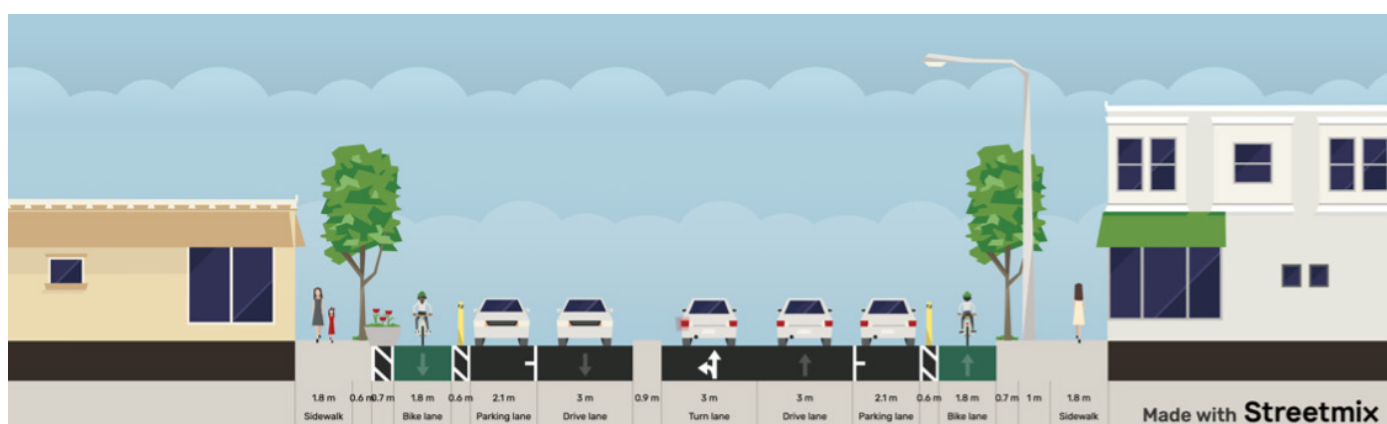
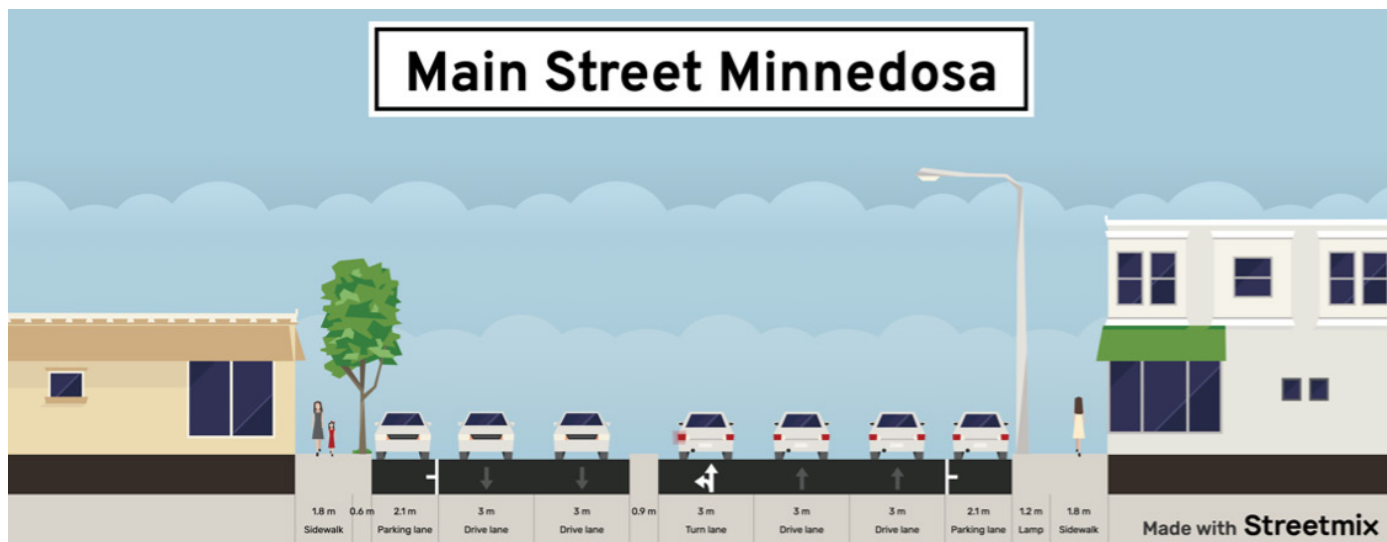


Figure: 17. Top: Main Street Option 1

Figure: 18. Middle: Main Street Option 2

Figure: 19. Bottom: Main Street Option 3

2.3.2 Neighbourhood

Short Term

Temporary Pedestrian and Cycling Routes

Temporary pedestrian and cycling routes can provide a great opportunity for older adults to get active. Closing key residential streets to vehicles at certain times like weekends and holidays can provide a space for people to move around their community without feeling that they are competing with vehicles in the space [Fig2-9].



Figure: 20. *Open Streets Program Signs*
(CBC News)

Identifying routes that are already popular with active transportation users is important to ensure that these routes will be well used. Temporary closures can also test whether these routes should see future investments in sidewalks and cycling infrastructure.

Medium Term

Expanded Sidewalk Network

A complete sidewalk network should provide pedestrian access to all major amenities and the central business district from all neighbourhoods. Minnedosa currently has a partial network of sidewalks within the neighbourhoods and key investments could improve this (Figure 21).

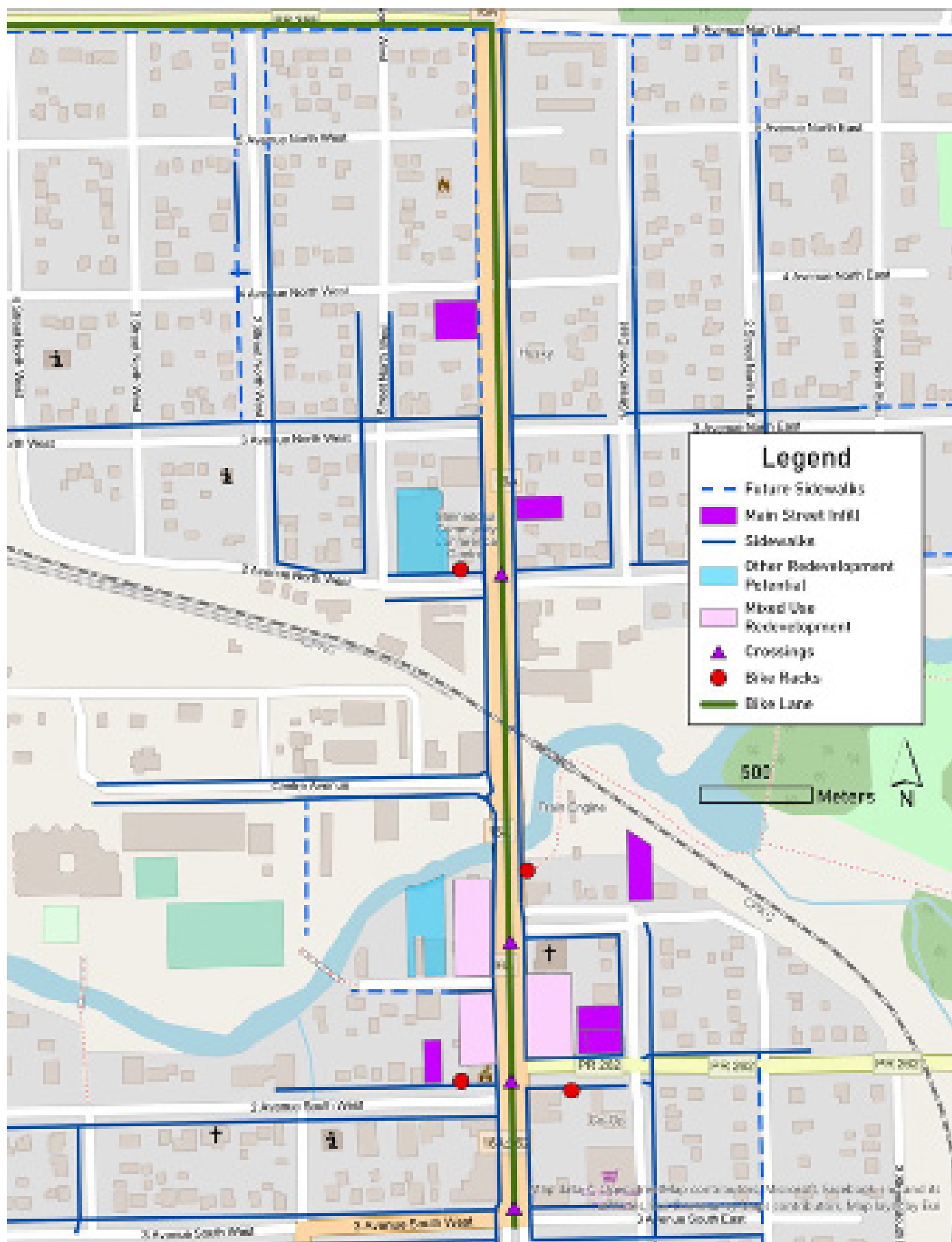


Figure: 21. Map of Minnesdora Sidewalk Network

Sidewalks provide enhanced safety and comfort for pedestrians of all ages (Figure 22). Separating vehicle traffic from pedestrians reduces the risk of collisions, especially on well-used pedestrian routes.



Good sidewalk design and maintenance are very important. Sidewalks should be level and free of ruts and other obstructions. Areas where the sidewalk meets the road should have proper curb cuts and other accessibility features, such as brightly coloured, textured sections for those with visual impairments. Clearing snow from sidewalks in a timely fashion in winter is very important and should be given high priority along high-traffic routes.

Scheduled Handivan Routes in Town

Regularly scheduled routes give users predictability for scheduling and would increase ridership of the Handivan. Well-used routes with increased ridership lower the cost per ride and increase affordability. Opportunities exist to partner with local businesses for sponsored routes, such as a regular route to the grocery store (Figure 23).

Developing some regularly scheduled routes also provides a foundation for the future development of a public transportation system. As these routes become more well-established and demand increases, more routes can be introduced, providing an incremental move toward public transit.



Figure 22. Left:
Residential Street
(Urban Indy)

Figure 23. Right:
Senior Couples Outside
Shuttle Bus (iStock)

2.3.3 Community

Short Term

Driver Training Classes

Driver training helps people drive more safely as they age. These classes train drivers to understand their limitations and restrict the conditions under which they drive if necessary. Ongoing education around safe driving can ease the transition if the loss of a driver's license is imminent. Below are some areas that Manitoba Public Transportation advises to include in older driver training (Manitoba Public Insurance, n.d.):

- *Vision* – making sure eye checks and prescriptions are up to date and avoiding the use of tinted lenses at night.
- *Medication* – ensure that the driver works with their healthcare provider to understand any impact that medication may have on the ability to drive and adjust accordingly.
- *Alertness* – drivers should make sure that they are not driving when drowsy or tired.
- *Traffic* – avoid busy intersections and driving during times of day in which traffic is heaviest.
- *Weather and time of day* – driving in poor weather conditions, at night, or in low light should be avoided.
- *Transportation alternatives* – older adults are encouraged to explore alternative modes of transportation like community transportation, active transportation, or carpooling.

Scheduled Handivan Trips to Brandon and Winnipeg

Currently, older adults needing to visit Brandon or Winnipeg do not have access to any scheduled routes. It is important to provide access to these centres as there are a variety of services not available in town that require these trips, including:

- Shopping for clothes
- Attending concerts or sporting events
- Visiting family and friends

Regularly scheduled trips to Brandon and Winnipeg give users predictability for scheduling. Since the Handivan charges mileage for trips outside of town, the trips also become more affordable if the van is full.

Enhanced Road Maintenance

The quality of roads determines safety for all drivers, not just older adults. Roads should be well-lit and well-maintained in all seasons, including snow and ice clearing in winter months. Given the harsh winters and hot summers in Manitoba, road infrastructure is costly to maintain, and this takes up a significant portion of municipal budgets.

Age-friendly road maintenance ensures that the organizations in charge understand the needs of older adults and set standards accordingly. This could include adjusting the amount of snow accumulation on roads which triggers snow plowing or setting standards around pothole repair and maintenance.

Medium Term

Accessible Parking Policy

Accessible parking that is available and well-maintained is crucial for older adults who drive private vehicles (Figure 24). It is important to create policies around parking accessibility and maintenance that are clear and consistently

Figure: 24. Accessible Parking Space (Global News)



enforced in the community. Many businesses and public buildings already make this type of parking available in Minnedosa, but some do not. Since accessible parking is an investment that property owners make, it is important not only to enforce a requirement to have it but also to help them understand why the requirements exist.

Increasing Access to Transportation Alternatives

Having several transportation alternatives in the community can provide older adults who rely on rides from family and friends a greater degree of freedom so that they have another choice if scheduling conflicts or other issues arise.

Consulting the older adults in the community is a key part of this process. Gaining an understanding of what other types of transportation they already use will make it easier to tailor the alternatives to Minnedosa. For example, if many older adults walk as an alternative form of transportation in the summer, then a focus can be placed on determining if other interventions would make walking a viable option year-round (e.g., better snow clearing on sidewalks).

Community Transportation Vouchers

Many communities in Canada subsidize transportation costs for select groups that face financial barriers. Providing a transportation voucher program for low-income older adults would help create a more equitable transportation system, and creating vouchers for both the Handivan and the taxi would help support both services.

Community Transportation Vouchers

Many communities in Canada subsidize transportation costs for select groups that face financial barriers. Providing a transportation voucher program for low-income older adults would help create a more equitable transportation system, and creating vouchers for both the Handivan and the taxi would help support both services.

An example of a community that has implemented a voucher program is Lloydminster, Alberta (City of Lloydminster, n.d.). Although Lloydminster is larger than Minnedosa, the basic structure of the program does not require a large population. These vouchers are specific to their taxi service and a five dollar voucher provides one non-stop trip within town.

These programs may be funded in various ways, including from municipal budgets, provincial funding, grants, or a combination of those. The impact of these vouchers is significant in the lives of older adults who struggle to afford transportation.

Transportation Plan

A community transportation plan helps to coordinate all modes of transportation in one document. This guiding document provides a long-term strategy and helps make better use of the limited municipal resources. Having a clear understanding of the strengths and challenges in the entire transportation network allows for more effective requests to be made when asking outside bodies like the provincial government for funding.

Creating a document like this usually requires hiring a consultant, but much of the groundwork can be completed by the community. For example, understanding what modes of transportation older adults are currently using is an important aspect of creating a transportation plan, and this information could be gathered in advance by those who currently work with older adults in Minnedosa.

Long Term

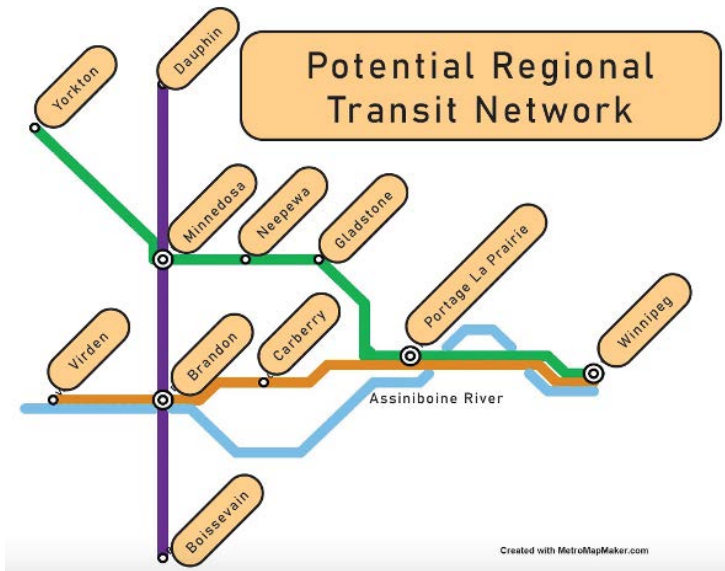


Figure: 25. Minnedosa as part of a potential regional transit network.

Regional Bus Service Partnership

The discontinuation of private regional bus service in Manitoba left a significant gap for older adults without private vehicles needing to access major centres like Brandon or Winnipeg. This type of bus service is vital for many people living in small towns and rural areas. Several major centres could serve as anchors at the beginning and ending of routes (Figure 25):

- Brandon to Winnipeg
- Winnipeg to Yorkton
- Dauphin to Brandon

Working together, small communities can pool their resources to fill this gap. There are examples of these types of organizations in other Canadian provinces, such as Nova Scotia and Ontario:

- The Rural Transportation Association in Nova Scotia provides services to individuals, community organizations, and group charters in over 20 communities (Rural Transportation Association, n.d.).
- Lanark Transportation provides transportation to people in Lanark County and the Town of Smith Falls, ON for only \$4 per person (Lanark Transportation, n.d.) (Statistics Canada, 2023).

3.0 HOUSING

3.1 Overview

Housing is an important factor in the age-friendliness of communities. Housing is not just the place where someone resides but is a determining factor in one's ability to access the needs of daily life when considering its location in relation to amenities and services. The subsequent section discusses housing in Minnedosa through an analysis of its current state based on discussions with residents, statistics, and other forms of analysis, and provides potential options the town may wish to pursue to improve housing outcomes for older adults and to better integrate housing options with the community's transportation network and social and outdoor spaces.

3.2 What We Heard

Based on meetings with residents and subsequent analysis, three areas of housing strengths and challenges were identified. Broadly summarized, these were housing availability, choice, and location. Analysis of Minnedosa's housing situation involved identifying existing housing for older adults in the town, identifying existing multi-unit developments, and more broadly identifying where older adults are living in single detached housing units. Further to this, the locations of housing were related to the locations of amenities and services throughout the town, with a particular focus on social and recreational amenities, the hospital, and services along Main Street such as grocery stores.

3.2.1 Existing Housing Options

In terms of housing options within the town, 80 percent of the existing housing mix is currently single detached (Statistics Canada, 2021) (Figure 26). Single detached housing takes the form of a single unit that encompasses an entire lot. This form of housing often hinders walkability, increases the land required to house the same number of

people, and contributes to automobile dependency. For older adults, single detached housing may become more difficult to maintain over time, with residents expressing experience with these types of challenges. During meetings with residents, an exercise was performed in which residents placed dots on a map indicating where they live, or where they are aware other older adults live on their own or in multi-unit facilities, and then related these locations to the amenities and spaces they visit on a regular basis, such as the pharmacy, the hospital, and retail stores, as well as pointing out places where they find difficulty when navigating throughout the town to access these amenities.

When discussing housing options within the community, residents agreed that it is necessary to diversify the housing mix. Residents discussed the existing forms of multi-unit housing within the community and discussed potential alternatives to that which currently exists. These discussions informed the options presented to the community. Housing which currently exists that is dedicated to older adults or which residents pointed out many older adults presently live in includes:

- Personal Care Home
- Legion Gardens
- Kinsman Court
- Townview Manor
- Stewart House

Further to this, it was determined that the current housing mix provides the foundations for more diverse housing to build off. There is existing multi-unit development within the community, in the form of both dedicated housing for older adults and other multi-unit developments. The town's zoning bylaws allow for this type of development, and such developments are often zoned on a lot-by-lot basis. Residents did not express opposition to future multi-

unit development and were interested in precedent cases presented and eager to learn more about how they might be implemented in their community.

When meeting with residents, the potential for downtown redevelopment incorporating housing was also discussed. Residents agreed that residential development along their Main Street might aid in ensuring that new housing options are within walking distance of amenities and services that they require. Representatives from the Town also expressed interest in these forms of development, particularly mixed-use development, and pointed to examples of such development in other relevant communities of their size that they might wish to see replicated within their community.

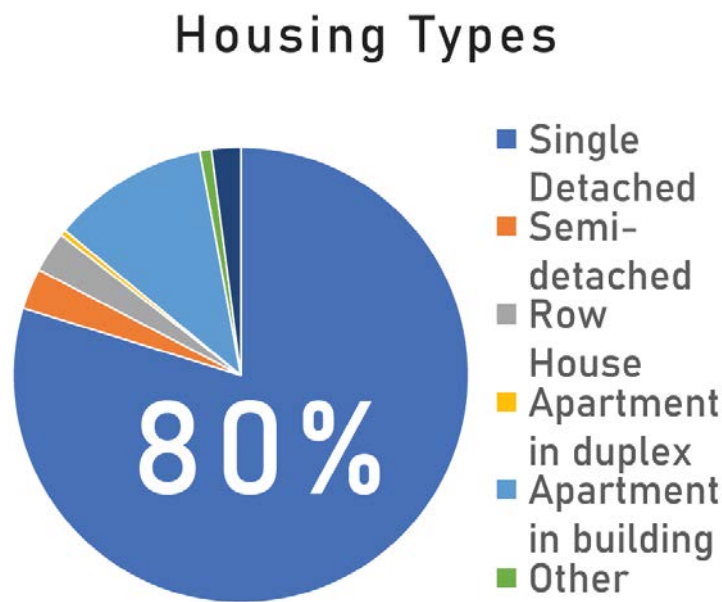


Figure: 26. Minnedosa Housing Types (2021)

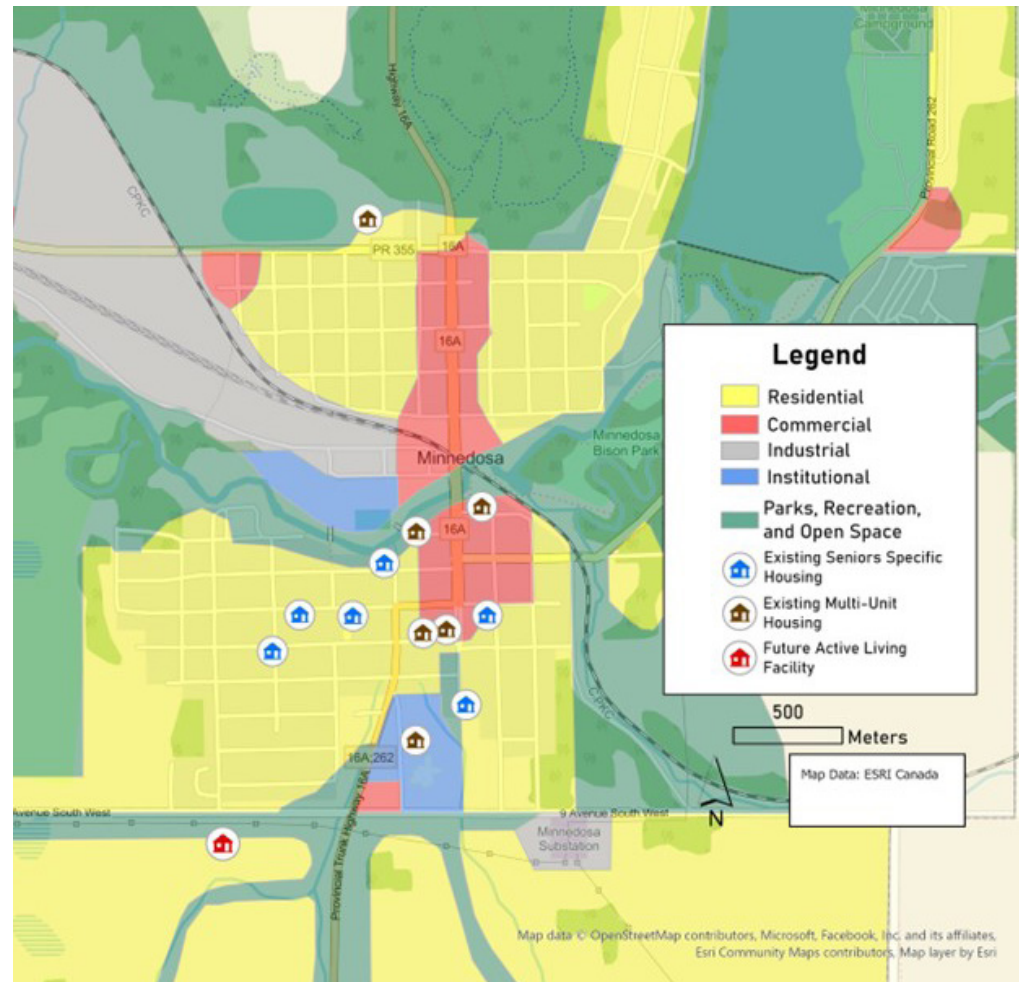
Zoning for Residential Uses

Based on a review of the Town’s zoning bylaws, it was determined that Minnedosa has zoning in place to allow for multi-unit and subsidiary-unit residential development, as well as mixed-use development. Multi-unit development typically occurs through lot-specific zoning, subsidiary units are allowed in specific residential zones (check if permitted or conditional), and specific forms of mixed-use development are allowed in the town’s Central Commercial

Zone. These forms of development have the potential to improve housing options for older adults and the public alike, and these considerations are accounted for in the development of housing options for Minnedosa (Figure 27).

3.2.2 Housing Locations

Figure: 27. Minnedosa zoning for residential uses.



Residents expressed that they were happy with current housing being located close to amenities. Despite this, they were unsure where future housing will be developed that is close to amenities, as most amenities are located at the centre of the town surrounded by existing development. The regular flooding of the river through the town was mentioned as another concern that might hamper future development in this area.

The town is planning for a future Active Living Facility; however, this is intended to be located on the outskirts of

the town, away from amenities on Main Street. Despite this, it will be relatively close to the hospital, but without adequate sidewalk infrastructure the space will lack adequate pedestrian connections to the hospital and the rest of the town. This facility is intended to be an assisted living facility for older adults who wish to retain some level of independence while receiving assistance in some areas. Residents mentioned that this facility is intended to serve local and regional populations, and that they hope to eventually share services with similar potential developments throughout the region.

In terms of the existing multi-unit developments, such as those specific examples highlighted above, many are located in close proximity to Main Street and associated amenities. Access to the sidewalk network is available from most as well. Specific locations in relation to sidewalks and amenities are highlighted in Figure 28.

Walkability of services from residential areas

Walkability from residential areas to the amenities of day-to-day life can assist older adults in that they might still be able to easily access such services in the event that they are no longer able to drive. Currently, much of the housing that exists in Minnedosa is within adequate walking distance of amenities on Main Street. These include amenities such as the seniors centre, the co-op grocery store, and the pharmacy. Despite this, access to the hospital is a challenge as it is located on a hill away from many of the town's residential areas and is not connected to the town's sidewalk network.

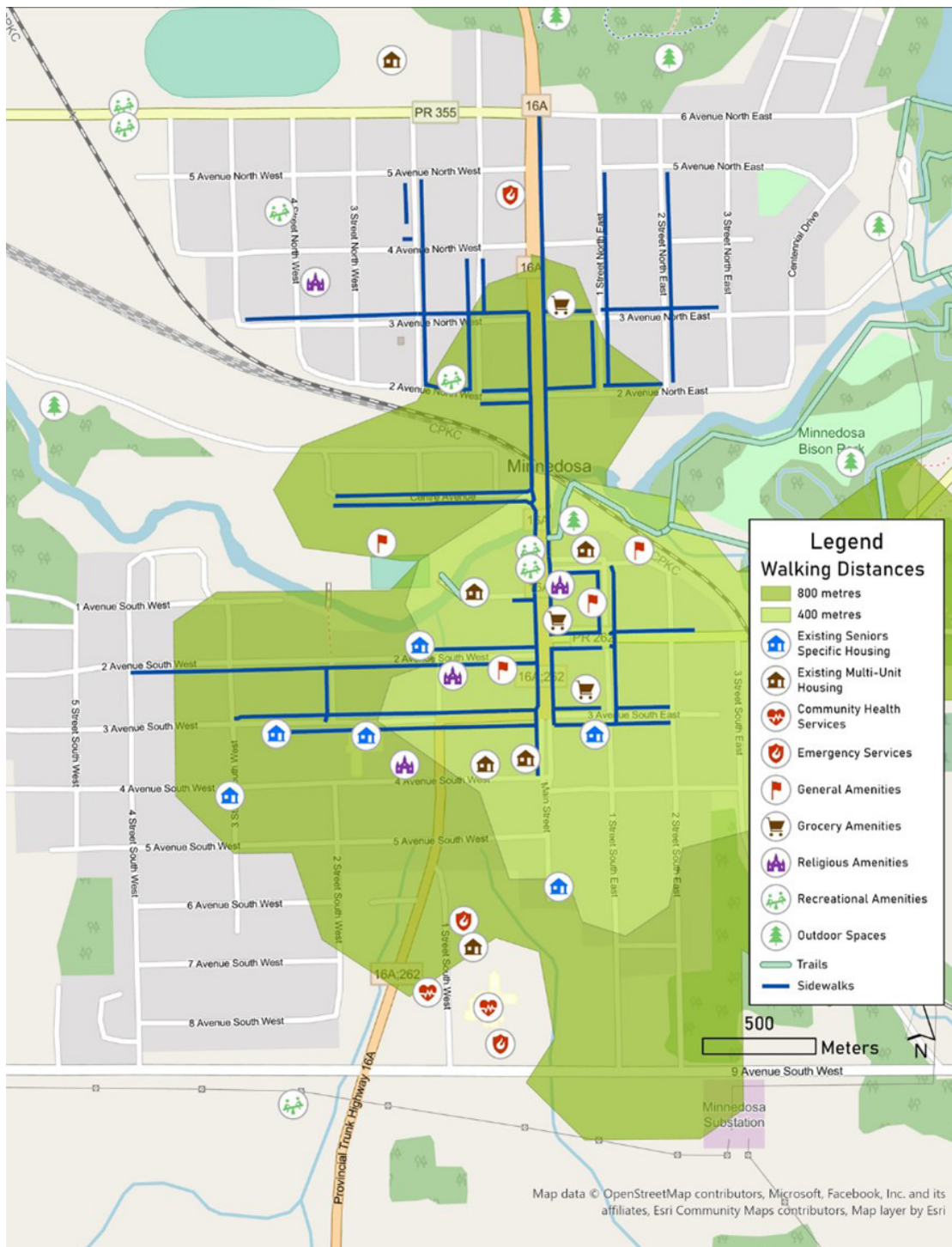


Figure: 28. Map of multi-unit developments in relation to sidewalks and amenities.

Potential for flooding in areas near the river

A concern that is pressing for residents of Minnedosa is the issues of the flooding of the Little Saskatchewan River. This river bisects the town, and floods regularly, with recent floods occurring in 2020 and 2021. These floods present a number of challenges for the community. There are only two pedestrian and one road crossing of the river within the town, and in the event of a flood these may become impassable to pedestrian and vehicle traffic. Given that some services are located exclusively on one side of the river, this can present challenges in accessing services or leaving one's place of residence in the event of a flood. Residents noted that there were instances where residents' homes have been destroyed by flooding.

Current zoning regulations related to mixed and multi-unit residential uses.

Access to sidewalk network from residential areas

As mentioned previously, much of the town is within an adequate walking distance of community amenities. However, there are still concerns regarding the accessibility of sidewalk infrastructure from existing residential development. Sidewalks can help to provide safe walking spaces away from vehicle traffic. While Minnedosa has the foundations of a sidewalk network to build upon, it does not reach far into the town's residential areas, nor to the hospital, new community centre, or outdoor spaces.

3.2.3 Other

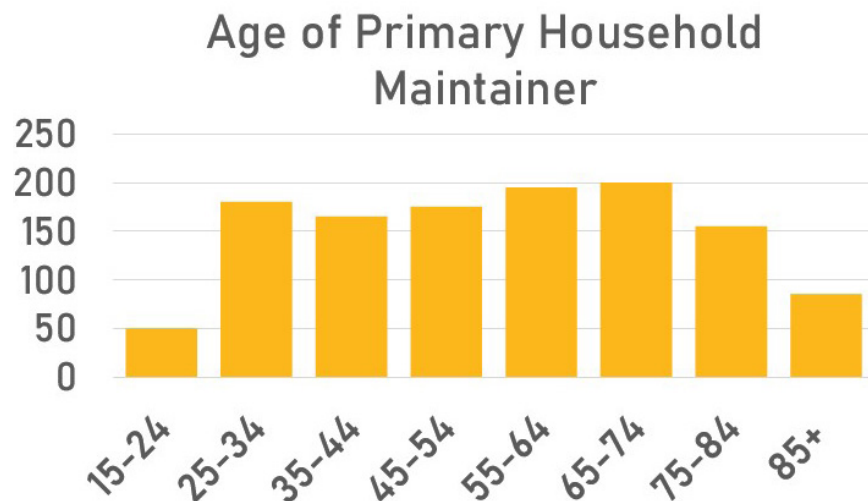
During meetings with residents, several other concerns were raised. These include the affordability of housing, the influx of new older adult residents to the town from surrounding rural communities often forcing local older adults to move elsewhere to find suitable housing for their needs, and the existence of underutilized seasonal housing near Lake Minnedosa. These, alongside the factors outlined above, helped to shape the options presented to the community to

improve housing for older adults in the community moving forward.

Age of Primary Household Maintainers

Minnetdosa has a significant population in both the 65+ and 55-65 age ranges who are the primary maintainers of their household (Statistics Canada, 2021). Primary household maintainers are those who perform the tasks of maintaining a household. As people age, it may become more challenging to maintain a household which is old or requires maintenance. To allow those in this group to age within their community, housing options which are less burdensome in terms of maintenance and accessibility may lessen the workload for older adults who are primary household maintainers (Figure 29).

Figure: 29. Age of Primary Household Maintainer Data



3.3 Options

3.3.1 Main Street – Mixed Use

Regarding housing on Main Street, options have been developed for mixed-use development. Mixed-use development is a development type that includes a variety of uses, residential, commercial, office, and industrial, in one building or development area (Figure 31). This type of development can have several benefits for older adults, given that it can help to ensure walkability and ease of access to amenities and services (Zhang & Zhang, 2017). Research has found that older adults in mixed-use neighborhoods are more likely to be active and better able to maintain independence when unable to drive (Chau & Jamei, 2021; Schmitz, 2005).

The inspiration for developing options for mixed-use development stems from discussions with residents and representatives of the Town, who expressed interest in attracting commercial development to the town and highlighted specific sites which they deemed to have potential for development. Options below present ways in which the town might proceed with development that meets their desire for attracting new commercial uses, and the need to improve housing options for older adults (Figure 30).



Figure: 30. *Mixed Use Infill Proposal (NextSTL)*

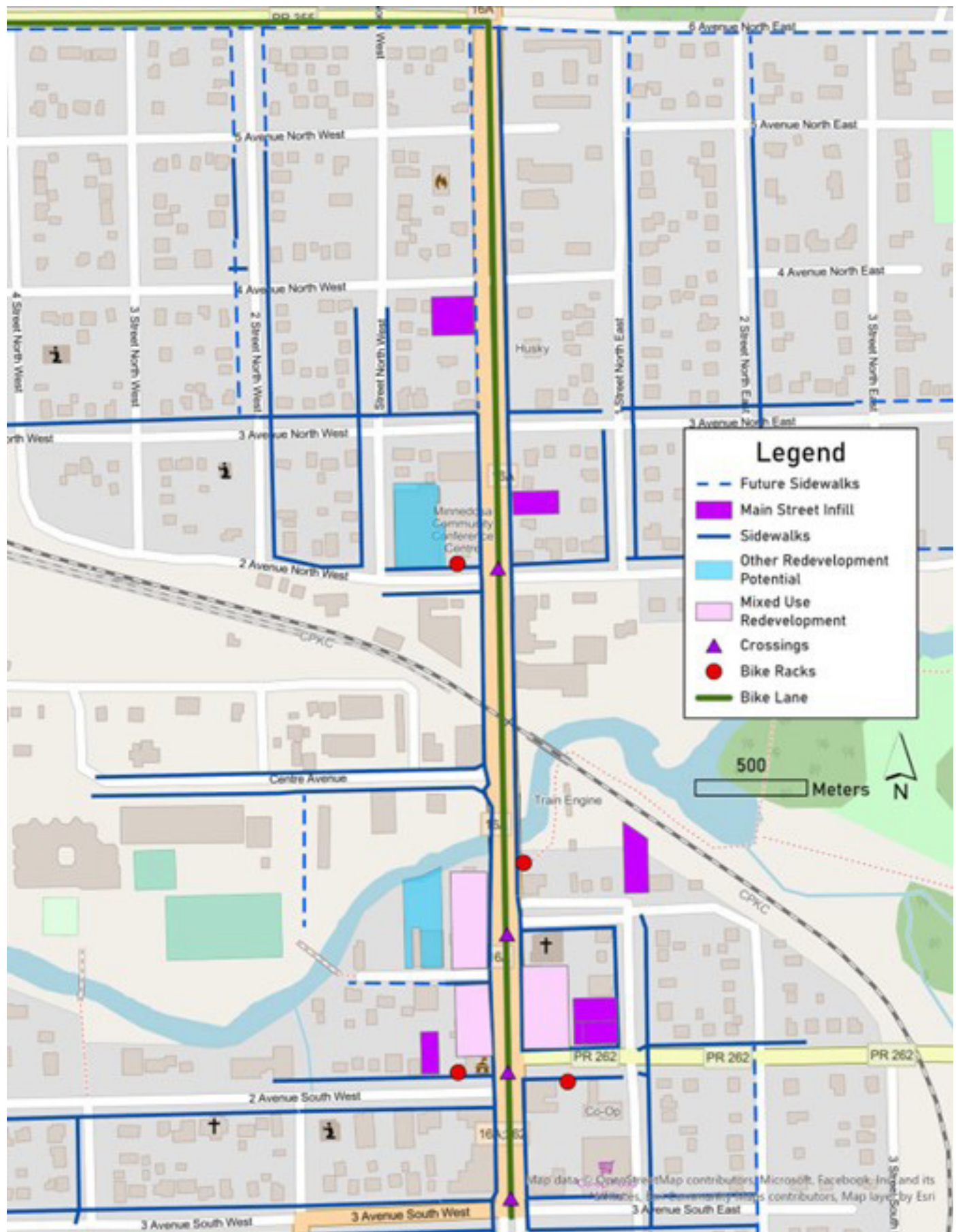


Figure: 31. Proposed Mixed-Use Development
42

Short Term

Determine potential uses of identified redevelopment sites.

This option would see the town identify potential sites, in addition to those highlighted in previous discussions, such as the former arena, and determine potential uses for these sites. The town's zoning bylaws currently allow for mixed use development, however there are limitations highlighted in the bylaw that restrict these types of uses. In identifying potential uses of these sites, the town can then determine which uses might be permitted within existing zoning regulation, and which might require alterations to zoning bylaws which would constitute a longer process.

Site-specific zoning for mixed-use opportunities

In the meantime, the town then has the option to proceed with any necessary rezoning for mixed use developments that are allowed within existing zoning bylaws, or proceed with development within the zone that currently allows for such forms of development. Pursuing these forms of development first will allow the town to proceed with

Figure: 32. Wyndham Hotels (Wyndham Hotels)



development quicker than developments that might require additional work in changing the zoning bylaws (Figure 32).

Medium Term

Develop and adopt a set of mixed-use plans and policies.

This option would see the town engage in work to create a comprehensive set of plans and policies surrounding mixed use development. Having a set of plans or policies surrounding mixed use development would be a procedural change that would not require alterations to zoning bylaws, but as an exercise might aid the town in determining the scope of work required for these changes. Having a comprehensive set of plans and policies can also help to provide certainty to developers who wish to engage in these forms of development within the town or aid the Town in any development in which it wishes to engage.

Work to attract desired potential uses to new / redevelopment sites.

For this option, the town would work to attract development to identified sites for its desired uses on those sites. This option can be performed in conjunction with others, in that these activities might be informed by its work on mixed use plans a policy, identifying sites and uses, and identifying necessary changes to implement its desired forms of development. Development can then be pursued based on this previous work or based on already identified desired uses as discussed in meetings (Figure 33).



Figure: 33. Meaford's Proposed Downtown (Simcoe)

Long Term

Create a 'Mixed-use' zone to encourage more mixed-use development.

For this option, the town can work to alter zoning bylaws to develop a mixed-use zone which better allows for mixed use development both along Main Street and throughout other areas of the town. This zone would be beneficial as there is the potential to alter zoning bylaws in a manner that can see both additional mixed-use development within buildings, as well as mixed use development in which residential and other uses remain separated. This can allow for the development of larger scale mixed use areas outside of a single building and help to advance development within the same building in desired manners. This has been identified as a long-term option as zoning bylaws can require lengthier processes to change, and this could be considered as opportunities arise with regular development plan and bylaw reviews.

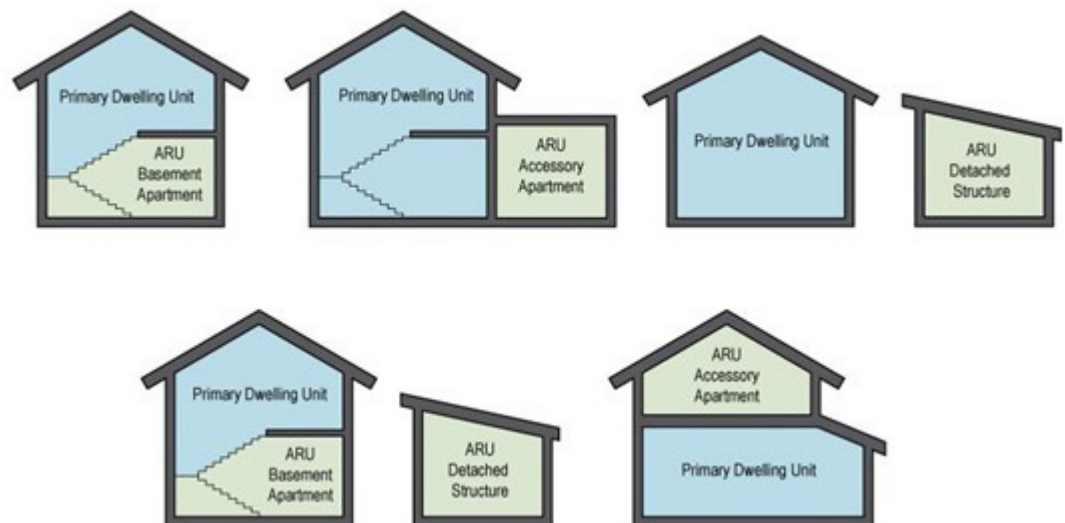
Redevelop other spaces along Main Street into mixed use.

These options would see the town identify spaces along Main Street which might have the potential for redevelopment but currently have another use. This might include redeveloping existing commercial blocks to include residential units above or behind the existing commercial development. These forms of development are often conducted in a manner that retains the character of existing buildings and can be performed in conjunction with options in other areas to help revitalize the town's Main Street area. Residents noted that the revitalization of Main Street through the attraction of new uses and streetscaping measures is a priority for them.

3.3.1 Neighbourhood - Infill – Subsidiary Dwelling Units

At the neighbourhood scale, options are proposed for the develop additional housing through the promotion of subsidiary and accessory dwelling units. Subsidiary and accessory dwelling units are housing units that exist as secondary to a primary unit (Figure 34). This might include a basement apartment, secondary suite, or carriage house. These forms of development are allowed within Minnedosa's

Figure: 34. Residential Units Types (Port Hope)



existing zoning regulations and have the potential to allow for additional housing development within existing developed areas. This can help to allow for development that is walkable and close to existing services and amenities (Figure 35).

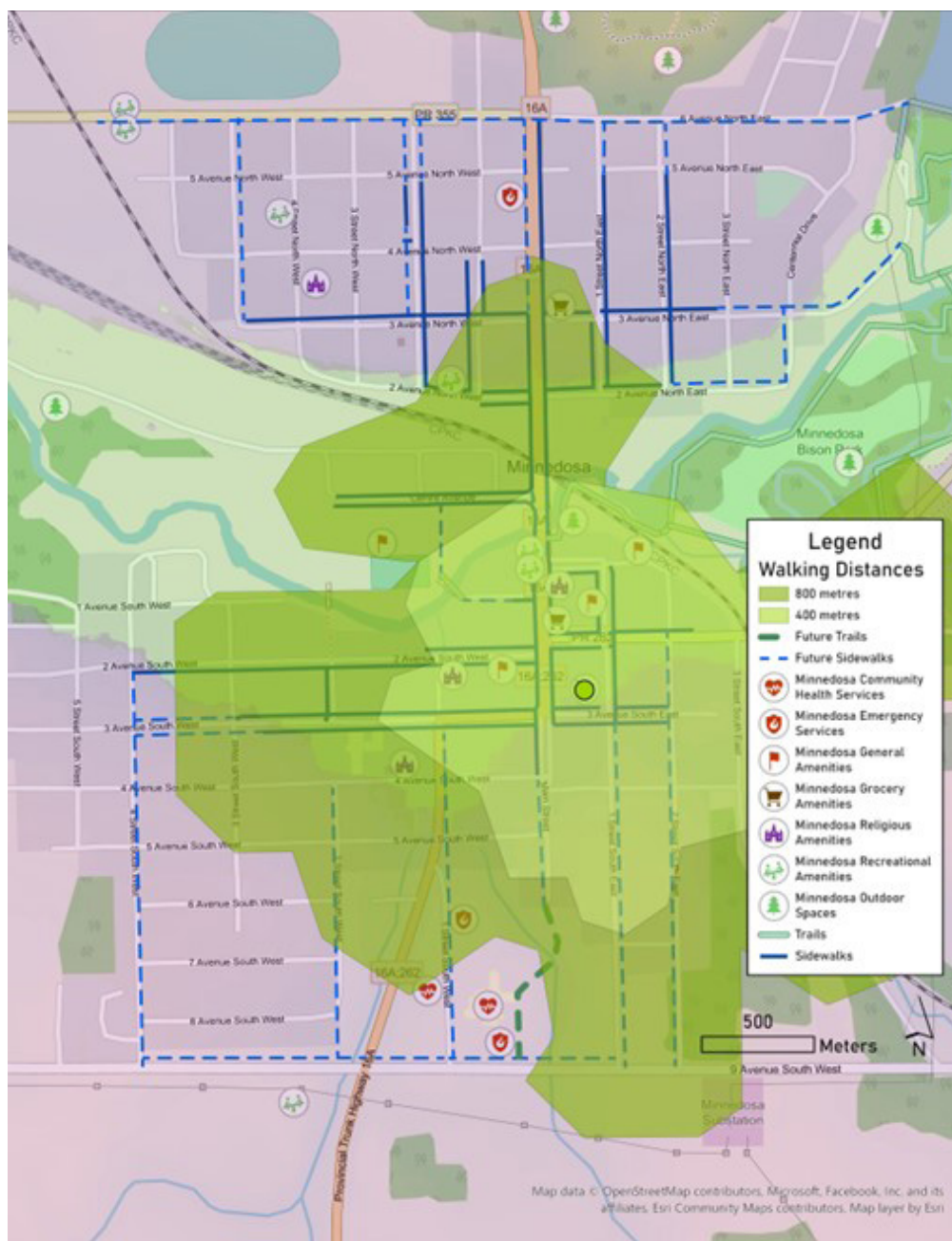


Figure: 35.
Development in relation to walking distances.

Short Term

Capitalize on existing zoning allows accessory dwelling units.

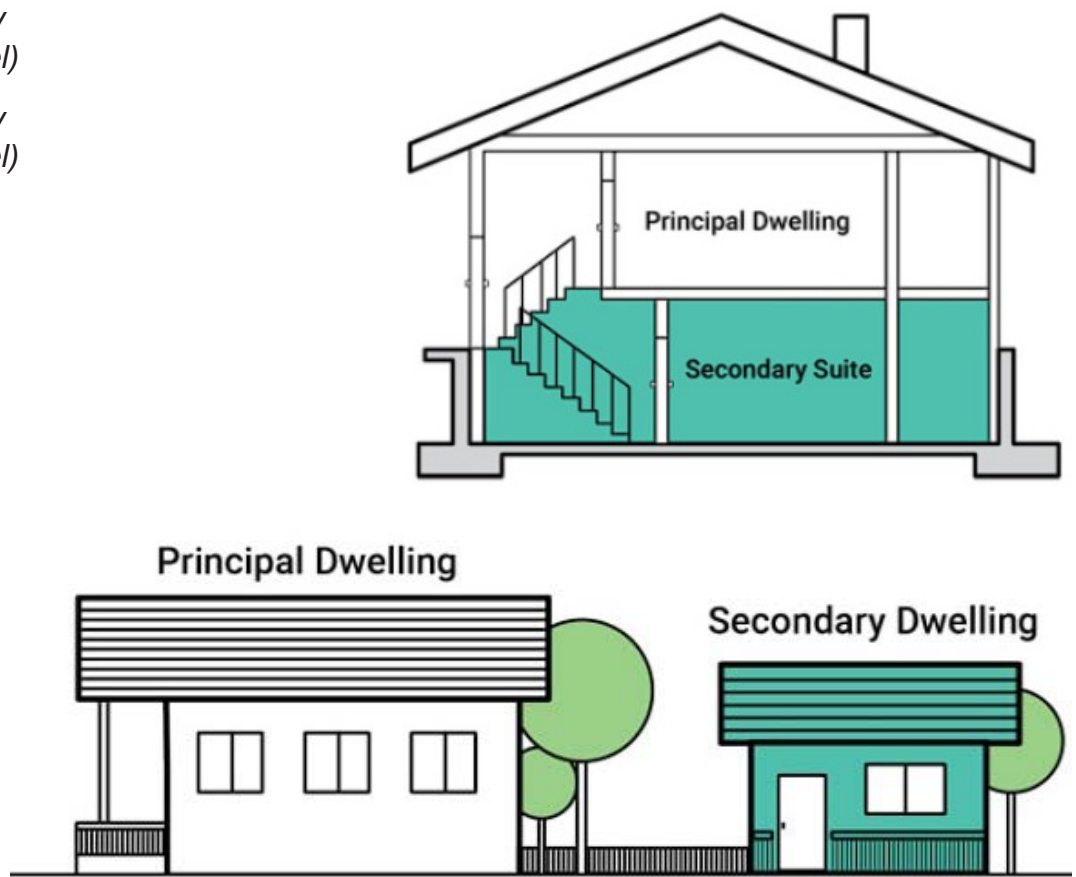
In the short term, the town of Minnedosa can capitalize on the fact that its existing zoning bylaws currently allow for the development of subsidiary units. The town can work with interested property owners to develop these units and tout the benefits of this form of development.

Align with other projects, such as sidewalk buildout, to improve walkability.

Future subsidiary unit development can be aligned with other priorities outlined as options in this report. Ensuring that development occurs in line with things such as sidewalk build out can ensure that new development is walkable and appropriate for older adults who may not be able to drive.

Figure: 36. Secondary Suites (City of Quesnel)

Figure: 37. Secondary Suites (City of Quesnel)



Medium Term

Develop and implement subsidiary unit guidelines & strategy.

Developing a strategy and guidelines for subsidiary unit development can help to aid in ensuring these forms of development meet the needs of the community. The town has the opportunity to identify the greatest needs that exist within the community and develop a strategy to ensure that subsidiary unit development that occurs is coordinated with the needs of the town.

Make considerations for flooding when determining optimal infill locations.

Given the nature of flooding within the town, this option allows for the town to further ensure that additional units of housing are developed in areas that have a lower flood risk. For this report, basic mapping was conducted showing the highest potential risk Areas that are within 5 meters of elevation of the river, and the town may wish to pursue additional studies that more specifically determine the

Figure: 38. Britespace Dwelling (CNN)



potential impacts of flooding on the town. This then provides the town with the option to pursue development outside of these areas and in areas where the risks of flooding are lower (Figure 38).

Long Term

Adapt zoning to allow for permitted subsidiary unit development.

This option would see the town adapt its zoning bylaws to permit subsidiary unit development in a number of forms and in a number of applicable zones. This change is long-term as there is a process associated with changing zoning bylaws and development plans, and the town may wish to conduct this process the next time it reviews its bylaws rather than immediately. The foundations presently exist to allow for these forms of development in certain areas of the town, but amendments to the bylaws could add certainty and clarity and allow for additional development.

Remove other barriers to this type of development.

This option would see the town conduct a review of subsidiary unit development from a procedural standpoint. Should the town identify any processes or procedures, or other barriers that might exist that are within the town's purview to change that hinder potential subsidiary unit development, it can then pursue these changes, as necessary. Procedural changes may be quick or might take time to implement, and a review could potentially take time, therefore this is classified as a long-term option.

3.3.3 Community - Infill – Full Lot & Multi-Unit Developments

At the community scale, these options would see the town pursue infill development throughout the town in optimal locations (Figure 40). Infill development occurs when empty lots in existing developed areas are developed. There are several benefits to infill development, as it can allow for new development using existing infrastructure and allow for development near areas where services and amenities already exist. Infill development can take many forms, but the options below highlight the potential for multi-unit infill development. Multi-unit development can include duplexes, triplexes, condominiums, and apartment buildings. Some of which might potentially be built using existing residential lots. These options are based on findings of identified lots within the town without regard to the ownership of the lots. If pursuing this option, consideration should be made when identifying potential infill development and selecting lots based on the potential for flooding and walkability to existing services and amenities. Considerations can also be made for proximity to social and outdoor spaces (Figure 39).

Figure: 39. *Infill Homes on Vivian Avenue (CBC)*



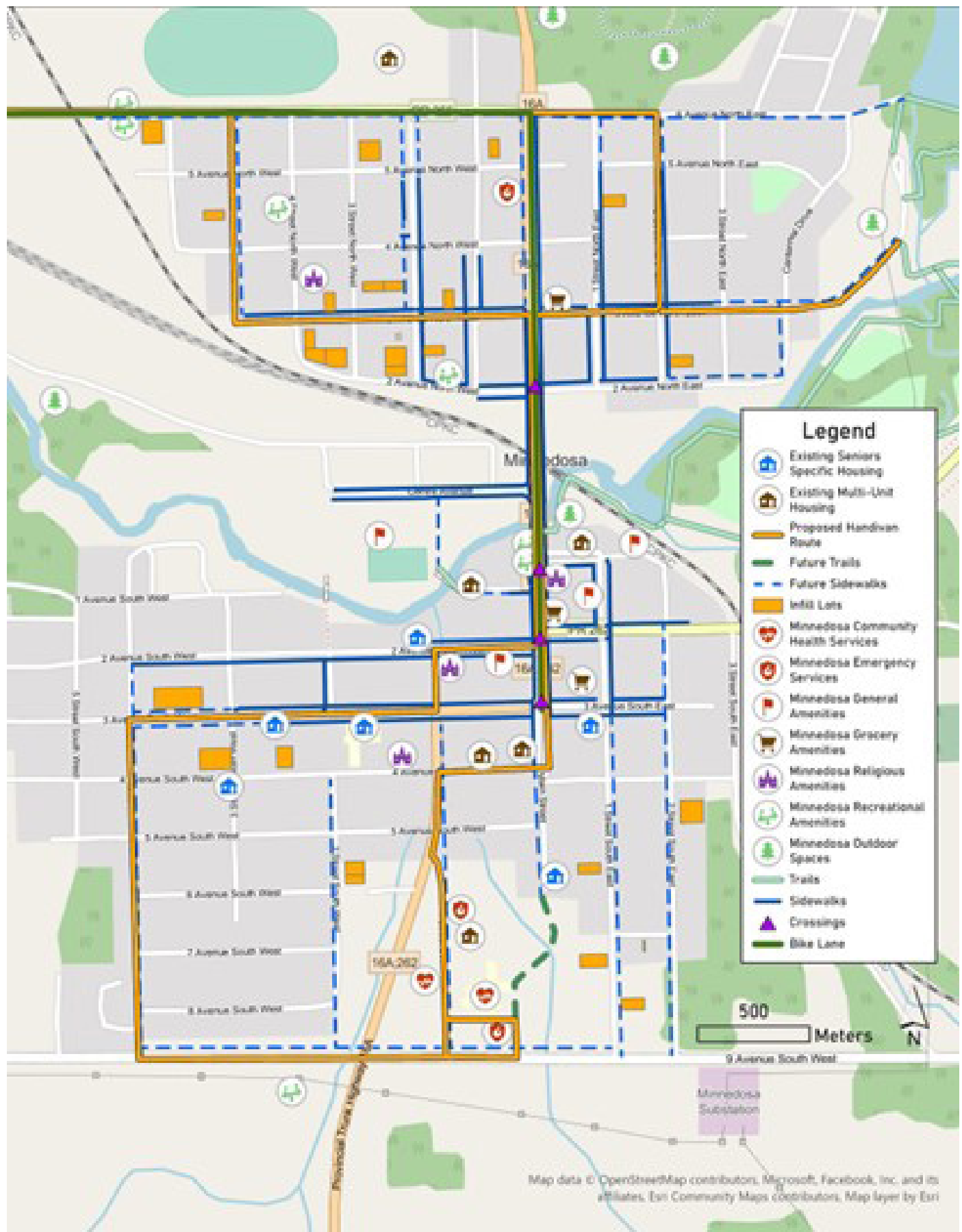


Figure: 40. Optimal Locations for Infill Development
52

Short Term

Capitalize on existing zoning allows multi-unit development.

The town's existing zoning allows for multi-unit development. Multi-unit residential developments within the town all exist within the same zone. The town might pursue these forms of development in the short-term using rezoning processes to allow for multi-unit developments on existing lots.

Ensure development aligns with need for a more diverse housing mix.

During meetings, residents expressed a desire to see the town's housing mix improve. The housing mix constitutes the variety of different forms of housing that exist within the town, from single dwelling units to apartment buildings. An optimal housing mix would see a range of housing types, and Minnedosa's is currently primarily single-detached. While infill development can take the form of single detached housing units, the town may wish to explore this as a means to diversify its housing mix and develop more multi-unit housing (Figure 41).



Figure: 41. Portland's Residential Infill Project (City of Portland)

Medium Term

Develop and implement infill unit guidelines & strategy.

Should the town wish to pursue these forms of development, they might seek to develop a strategy and guidelines around infill development. This can help to outline the town's priorities in this area, including which forms of development they wish to see developed, and can be aligned with any housing needs identified within the community. Such a strategy might also outline which lots have the potential to be developed in a manner that allows for development with a lower potential for flooding and in conjunction with transportation and other developments. Additionally, those wishing to develop these units might find that such a strategy will aid in the development and provide additional certainty.

Develop guidelines to ensure existing and new development is accessible.

Given the focus of this work on age-friendliness and the specific needs of older adults, the town may wish to pursue the development of a set of guidelines to ensure new development that occurs is done so in a manner that accounts for the accessibility requirements of those who wish to live there as well as their guests. There exist examples of such guidelines, with one example being Universal Design, which may serve as inspiration for the town should they wish to pursue this option (Figure 42).

Figure: 42. St. Johns
Infill Development
(Google Earth)



Long Term

Adapt zoning to allow for permitted multi-unit infill development.

This option would see the town alter its zoning bylaws to allow for multi-unit infill development throughout the town by right. Presently, the town rezones specific lots for multi-unit development which has a rezoning process associated with it. To speed up development, such a strategy can be implemented in conjunction with others outlined above to determine which lots within the zone might allow for specific types of infill development based on lot characteristics such as its dimensions. This option might help to speed up the development process, while still providing certainty to existing residents as to what can be developed on empty lots within their neighbourhood.

Remove other barriers to this type of development.

Throughout the processes outlined above, should the town identify further barriers to these forms of development outside of its zoning bylaws, this option would see them eliminate such barriers in a manner that would permit additional infill multi-unit development. Barriers might be procedural or internal processes, or opposition from residents to such development. In each of these cases, the town may wish to do what it can within its scope of capabilities to remove identified barriers and help to ensure more multi-unit infill development occurs.

4.0 OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

4.1 Overview

As communities continue to face the challenges of aging populations, creating age-friendly environments becomes increasingly important. Outdoor spaces and buildings are one of the key domains of an age-friendly city. These spaces and structures play a crucial role in promoting the well-being and social inclusion of older adults. Age-friendly outdoor spaces and buildings are designed to be accessible, safe, and inclusive for people of all ages and abilities. They should be designed with features such as level pathways, ramps, and handrails for easy navigation. In addition, age-friendly buildings should have amenities and services that cater to the needs of older adults, such as accessible entrances, elevators, and clear signage. These outdoor spaces and buildings should also prioritize the comfort of older adults by providing ample seating areas, shade, and adequate lighting. Moreover, age-friendly outdoor spaces and buildings should be aesthetically pleasing and provide opportunities for recreation and socialization.

Minnedosa is known for its picturesque surroundings and a harmonious blend of outdoor spaces and buildings (see Figure 8). The town is home to well-maintained parks and recreation areas which provide residents and visitors with spaces for picnics, sports, and family outings. The town prioritizes outdoor activities, with an extensive network of walking, biking, and hiking trails, encouraging an active and healthy lifestyle.

4.2 What We Heard

Based on community meetings and observations the group made around the town, findings regarding buildings and outdoor spaces were grouped into two main areas: accessibility and shelters.

4.2.1 Accessibility

In this aspect, analysis was conducted to determine how designed and construed structures ensure equal access and usability for all individuals, including those with disabilities (Figure 43). This involves removing physical barriers, such as steps or narrow doorways, and implementing features like ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms. One of the key issues highlighted during discussions was the absence of ramps, which makes it challenging for individuals with mobility aids such as wheelchairs or walkers to access public

Figure: 43. NPS
Graphics Disability
Symbols (Wikimedia)



buildings easily. Ramps are essential not only for wheelchair users but also for those who may have difficulty navigating stairs due to age-related limitations.

Additionally, elevators were identified as another component that is often missing in public buildings with more than one floor. The absence of elevators makes it impossible for older residents or individuals with mobility issues to access the upper floors. This limitation affects their ability to participate in activities held on different floors and hinders their overall inclusion in community events and services. During conversations with older community members, the lack of an elevator in the Town Hall emerged as a specific concern. Many highlighted the difficulties they face in reaching higher floors, impacting their ability to engage in civic activities, attend meetings, and participate in decision-making processes.

Furthermore, a lack of accessible public restrooms in the community was another aspect of the accessibility issue that was highlighted during discussions. The single existing public restroom was not only insufficient but also poorly maintained. Residents described how unhygienic and unsafe the facility was, which discouraged people from using it. As a result of the inadequate and poorly maintained public restrooms, older people in the community are forced to rely on private facilities, primarily those within their own homes (Figure 44).

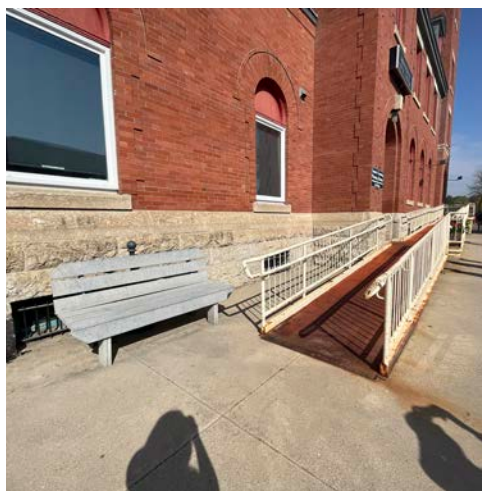
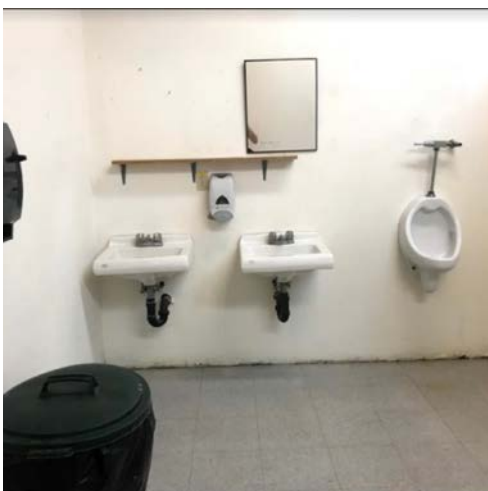


Figure: 44. Left: Leader Lions Campground (CampReservations)

Figure: 45. Right: Benches Outside Town Hall

Lastly, many of the sidewalks observed on Main Street and around the community had uneven surfaces which created obstacles for pedestrians, particularly those using mobility aids (Figure 45). This was a significant safety concern, as uneven surfaces can cause people to trip and fall, potentially resulting in serious injuries. Some areas had cracked (Figure 46-47) and unpaved sidewalks (Figure 48) with some residential areas with no sidewalks (Figure 49). This makes it difficult for people with mobility issues to navigate the sidewalks, which limit their ability to access important services and amenities in the community.

4.2.2 Shelters

It was observed there were no shelters available in the town and buildings had no shelter to protect older people in adverse weather conditions such as rain, extreme heat and snowing seasons. During adverse conditions, older people

Figure: 46. Top:
Cracked Sidewalks

Figure: 47. Bottom:
Unpaved Sidewalks

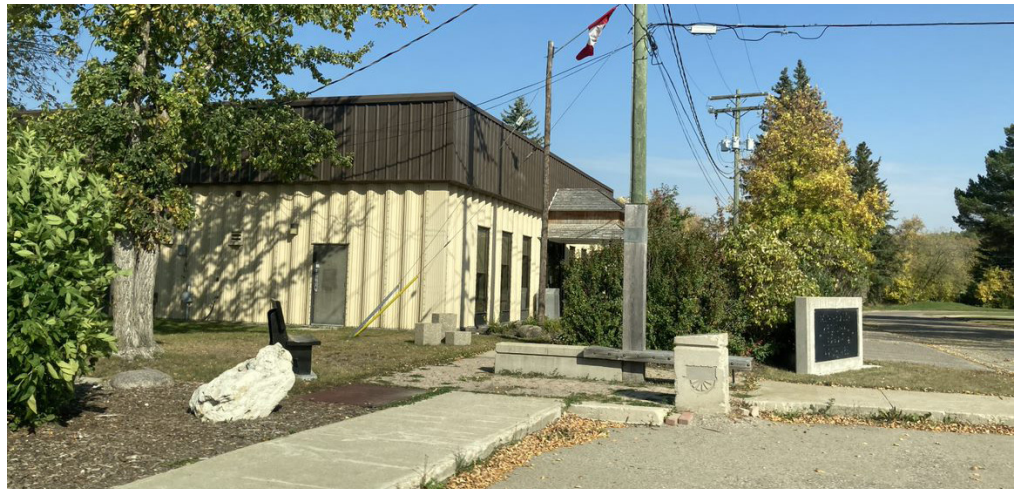




Figure: 48. Top:
Unpaved Sidewalks

Figure: 49. Bottom:
Residential Street



face challenges when navigating the town which limits their capacity to engage in routine outdoor activities or travel to essential services without being subjected to the weather conditions.

Furthermore, the lack of shelters poses a considerable inconvenience for older individuals who may require a place to rest, especially during longer walks or when waiting for a ride outside their business centers and offices. This has not only impeded the comfort of older residents but also hinders their ability to maintain an active and independent lifestyle.

4.2.3 Community Assets

During visits to Minnedosa, it was observed that the community had several valuable assets. It was also noted that the trails were well-maintained and in excellent condition. Additionally, there were many options for

recreation, and the community seemed to prioritize the health and well-being of its residents. There was lighting along many roads, which contributes to safety and security. Furthermore, the streets were clean and well-maintained, providing a pleasant environment for residents and visitors alike. Finally, there were many outdoor recreation spaces available, which is essential for fostering a sense of community and promoting an active lifestyle.

Safe, clean, and walkable outdoor spaces are important resources for older adults. Being able to go on frequent walks of suitable distance helps to keep older adults healthy in several important ways. Frequent walkers tend to have better cognitive capacity; taking frequent walks outside can help older adults with things like verbal memory, fluently categorizing information, and better attention (Weuve et al., 2004).

5.0 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

5.1 Overview

Social infrastructure and connectivity are important aspects of age-friendliness. As people age, their social networks are more likely to decrease. Without adequate social infrastructure, older adults may feel socially isolated and disconnected from their community; resulting in older adults feeling less inclined to age within and participate in their community. Social infrastructure can help older adults feel a sense of belonging and connection to their community by presenting a variety of opportunities for older adults to build relationships and participate in their community via social events, volunteerism, employment, or the political process.

5.2 Social Infrastructure Findings

5.2.1 Social Participation

Based on community meetings and research, there appear to be adequate opportunities for older adults to participate in the community. Multiple organizations, such as the

Figure: 50. Minnedosa 50+ Activity Centre Meeting (Minnedosa 50+ Activity Centre)



Senior's 50+ Activity Centre, Lion's Club, and the Recreation Centre, host events specifically for older adults, as well as intergenerational events (Figure 50). From discussions in community meetings, most of the attendees of community events were residents who have lived in town for a while and have already established a solid social network in town. Individuals who are new to town and have a limited social network are hesitant about attending events due to the town's flooding issues and the increase in social isolation from the COVID-19 pandemic. It was also found that the intergenerational events held by the organizations hosted by older adult-specific organizations typically lack attendance by youth. The events that are typically attended by all generations are sporting events and outdoor recreational activities.

The map shown in Figure 52 was developed to illustrate where some social hotspots are in town and where people are likely to meet someone. The information on the map was based on the dot exercise that was done during the first meeting. It is important to note that the data on the map is limited and only reflects the information that was gathered during the community meetings and individual research. To fully understand how people are meeting, a larger group of older adults, especially newcomers to town, should be consulted.

5.2.2 Communication

Regarding communication in the town, there is a strong social media and digital presence. Most of the events in town are communicated through the event organizers' social media pages like Facebook (Figure 51). Other methods of communication used in the town include word of mouth, newsletters, posters, electronic billboards, and bulletin boards. From discussions during the second community meeting, residents who did not have access to social media mentioned that word of mouth and the bulletin boards

located inside the Co-Op Grocery store were their primary methods of accessing information in the town.

Based on these findings, communication about events going on in town is a barrier for residents who do not have access to social media as most of the focus on event information appears to be focused on the town’s social media pages. While some individuals may be able to rely on word of mouth, newcomers who may not have as many social connections in the town will have to rely on other methods of communication and may have difficulty figuring out where to access information. It is important to note that nearly all the older adults who attended community meetings were not new to town, so a consultation with newcomers and individuals who do not use social media would be needed to fully understand how residents access information.

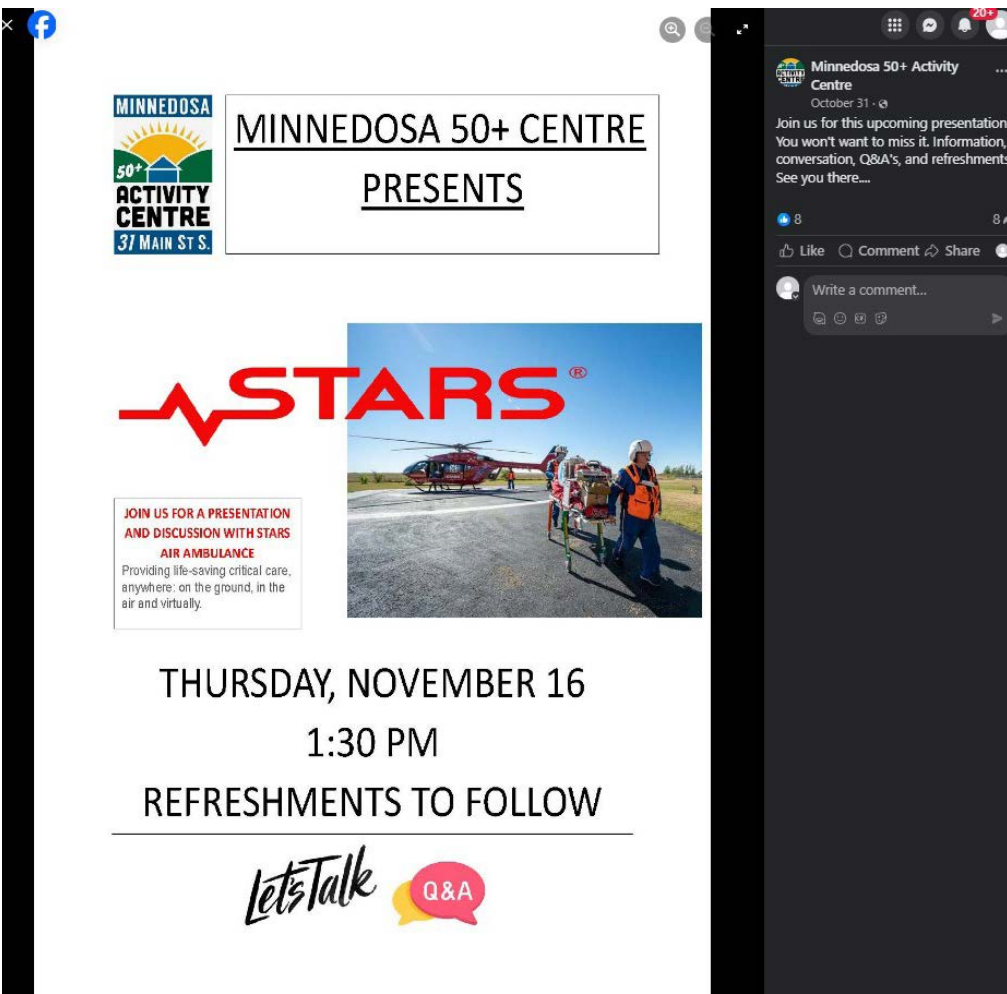


Figure: 51. Minnedosa 50+ Activity Centre Presentation Poster (Minnedosa 50+ Activity Centre)



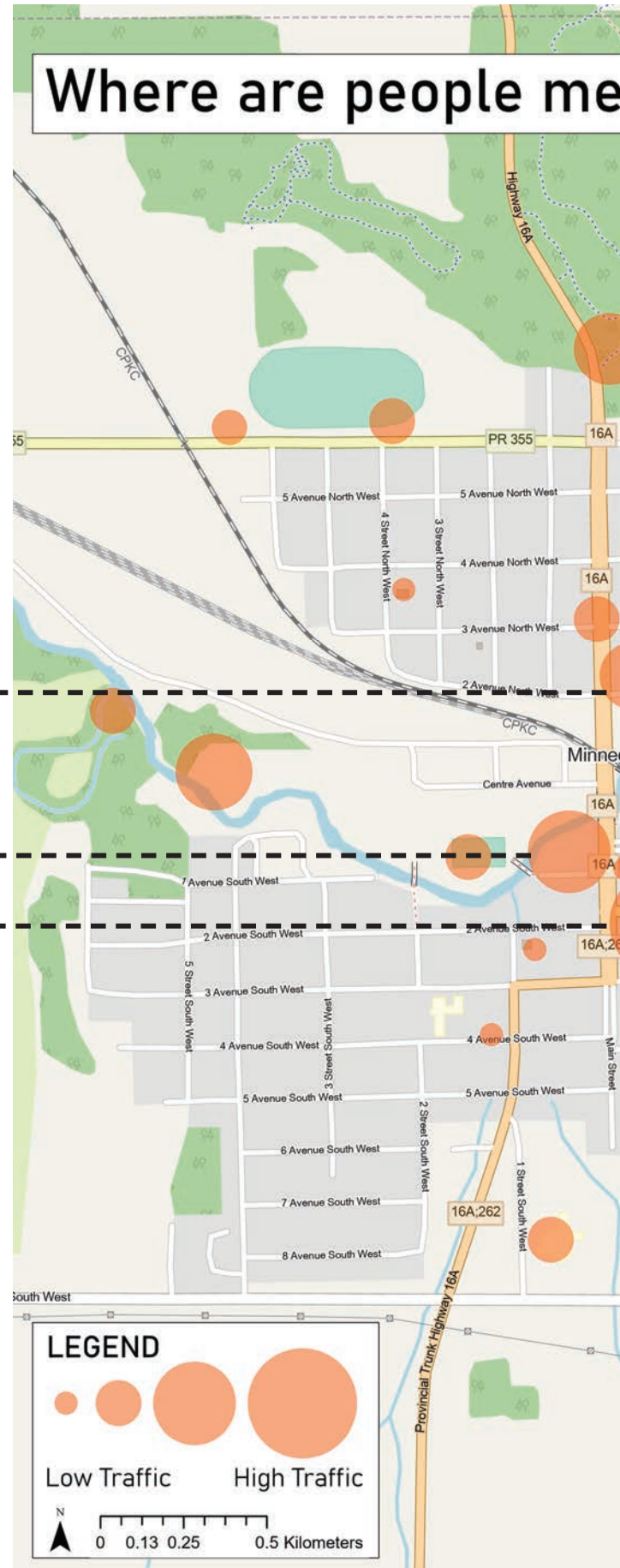
Farmhouse 50
Photograph by Alandra Barairo

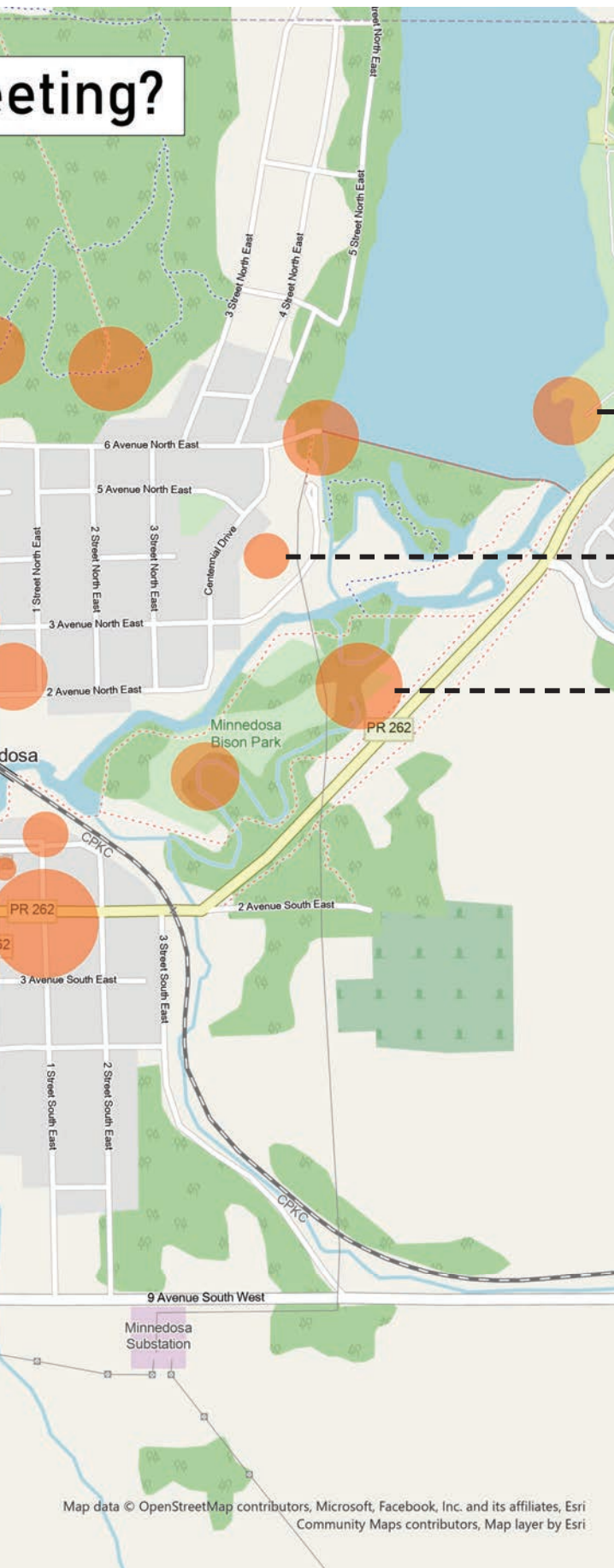


Minnedosa 50+ Activity Centre
Credit: Facebook



Co-Op Grocery Store
Credit: Google





Minnedosa Beach

Credit: Travel Manitoba



Heritage Village

Credit: Travel Manitoba



Oxbow Nature Trail

Credit: Manitoba Cooperator

6.0 OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE OPTIONS

Figure: 53. Sidewalk Mural (Mamam)



6.1 Main Street Options

6.1.1 Wayfinding

Wayfinding is a tool that can help residents more easily orient themselves and make navigating through town more accessible. Not only does wayfinding increase accessibility it can also help beautify spaces and attract more visitors to Main Street. The development of wayfinding tools can also present more volunteering and employment opportunities; for example, painting a wall mural can potentially be done by a group of volunteers.

Short Term

The short-term options for wayfinding include temporary or simple options such as wall murals, sidewalk murals, and simple directional signage (Figure 53-55). These options are important for residents who have dementia as these can help residents identify where they are and how to navigate to their desired location. These wayfinding options can also create new opportunities for social gatherings as they also beautify the space. While these options may be relatively

Figure: 54. Dane Dog Mural (AthenaMogdam)





Figure: 55. Bike Wayfinding sign (City of Edmonton)

simple and easy to implement, it is important to consider that these options may not be completely visible during the winter months and are susceptible to vandalism.

Long Term

The long-term options for wayfinding include the development of permanent infrastructure or require more resources to implement. These options include audible pedestrian signals (APS), tactile pavements, and landmarks. APS and tactile pavement can potentially be added to the new crosswalks along Main Street to allow residents with visual impairments to cross the street safely and more comfortably (Figure 56-57). Similar to the short-term options, landmarks can help residents orient and identify where they are. Landmarks can range from a public art installation, statue, or even a distinguishable tree (Figure 58).



Figure: 56. Left: Accessible Pedestrian Signals (SFMTA)



Figure: 57. Right: Tactile pavement (Kaw Valley Engineering)



Figure: 58. *Symphony Park Landmark (Las Vegas Sun)*

6.1.2. - Shelters and Rest Areas

Short Term

Partner with businesses to implement sharing services.

One of the short-term options is for Minnedosa town officials to partner with local businesses for the implementation of an umbrella-sharing service. The advantageous placement of umbrella-sharing stations will be areas regularly visited by older residents. These designated locations will include popular gathering spots, community centers, or areas near healthcare facilities, ensuring that older individuals have easy access to umbrellas when they need them the most. This initiative will not only address a practical need but also foster collaboration between businesses and the community, reinforcing the idea that innovative solutions can enhance the quality of life for residents of all ages (Figure 59).

Moreover, partnering with local businesses to establish a station for snowshoe service during the winter season to cater to community people who might need it. Also encouraging winter sports for community residents. Winter sports and activities are not only enjoyable but also contribute to physical well-being, making snowshoeing a popular choice for outdoor recreation during the colder months. By strategically placing these snowshoe-sharing stations, particularly in areas with easy access to parks or nature trails, this initiative will encourage residents, including older individuals, to embrace the winter landscape (Figure 60).

Lastly, as the community lacks a public washroom one option for the community is to partner with local businesses to open their washrooms for use during working hours. This can be a temporary solution to address the immediate need for restroom facilities. The town, working together with local businesses, could leverage existing infrastructure and resources, such as plumbing and cleaning services, to provide accessible and safe public washrooms for the community members. This approach also has the added benefit of potentially increasing foot traffic and business opportunities for local establishments (Figure 61).



Figure: 59. Top:
Umbrella Sharing
Service (Reddit)



Figure: 60. Bottom:
Snowshoes (Gear Lab)



Figure: 61. Nette Toilette in Freudenstadt (Schwarzwald)
(Wikimedia Commons)

Medium Term

For the medium-term option, the community can repair and improve existing benches and sidewalks. The need to repair and improve existing benches and sidewalks arises from the fact that these are important features of streets and public spaces. Benches provide a place for people to rest and relax while enjoying the outdoors, while sidewalks are essential for safe and convenient pedestrian travel. When these elements are in disrepair, they can not only detract from the appearance of the community but also pose safety risks to those who use them. By identifying the areas that are in the greatest need of attention, efforts can be prioritized in a way that maximizes impact and create safer, more functional public spaces for everyone to enjoy (Figure 62).

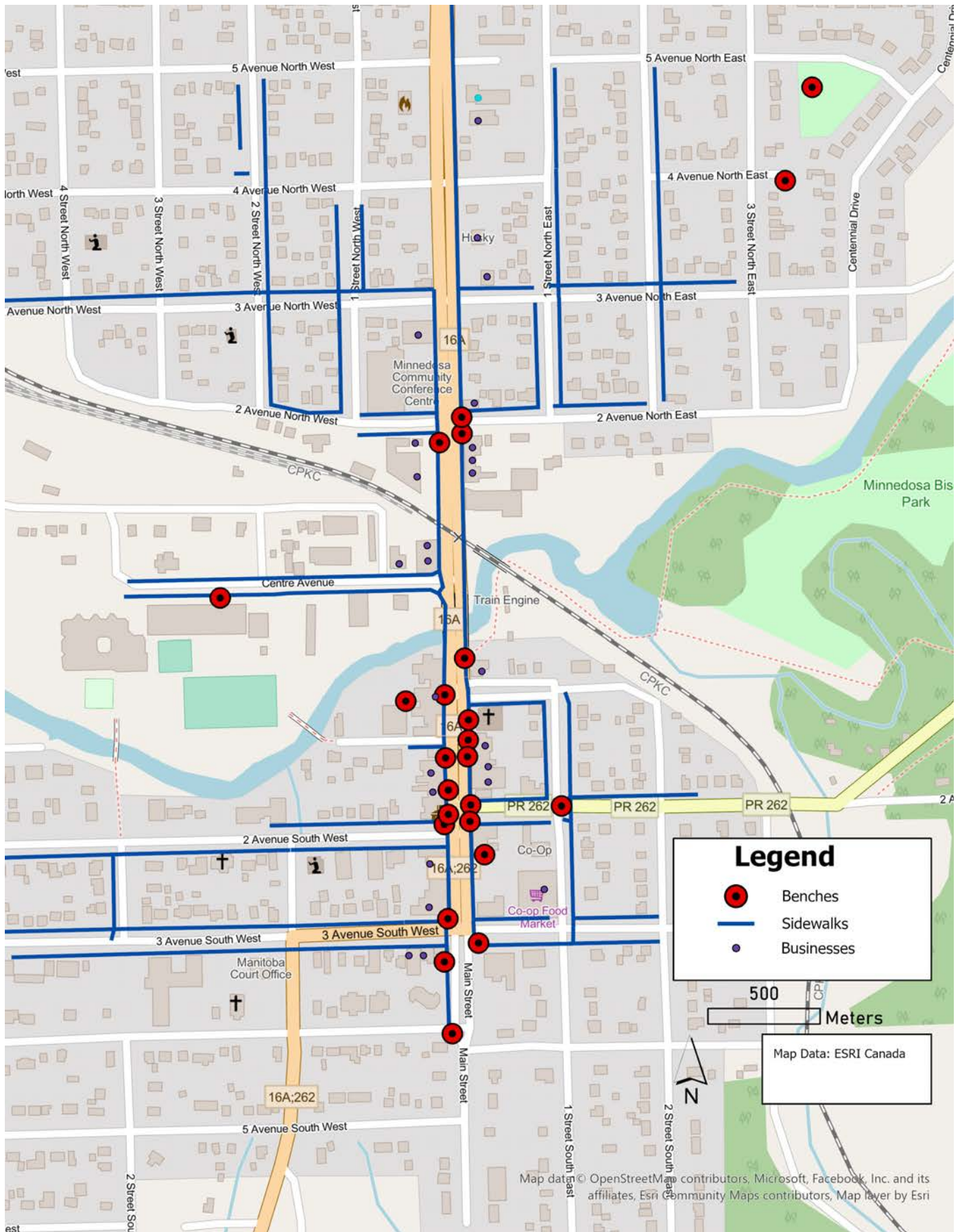


Figure: 62. Map of benches and sidewalks in need of repair.

6.2 Neighbourhood Options

6.2.1 Shelters and Streetscaping

As highlighted in Figure 62, there is a lack of shelters in the surrounding neighbourhoods and most of the rest areas are situated along Main Street. Implementing more shelter and washroom options throughout the town can help older adults feel confident and comfortable going outside of their homes and into the community. If a resident travels a long distance on foot, shelters and additional rest areas throughout the town can provide residents with an area to quickly take a break. Additionally, these options can also develop new social hubs outside of Main Street for people to gather without being too far from their own homes.

Short term

For short-term options, temporary shelters that are used seasonally or can be easily moved are presented. These shelters can also be used as a preliminary test for the town to see if a permanent option would be beneficial in the area (Figure 63). Pop-up washrooms are temporary washrooms

Figure: 63. *Pop-up Winnipeg Public Toilet (Downtown Winnipeg Biz)*



that can be moved throughout the town depending on the needs and demands of the area. These pop-up washrooms can help keep the streets clean and provide residents with an option to use the washroom without relying on a private business.

Tent shelters can be placed near outdoor greenspaces in the town or during events with high traffic. These tent shelters are ideal in the summer months as they can protect residents from UV rays and heat (Figure 64). Pop-up outdoor patios are an option that can be implemented by the town or private businesses can be encouraged to implement. Pop-outdoor patios can temporarily create a new space for residents to gather, socialize, or allow residents to take a break. As seen in Figure 65, the City of Brandon established a temporary outdoor patio in their parking lot and street parking located outside their government buildings.



Figure: 64. Top: Lycra Structure (Stretch Structures)

Figure: 65. Bottom: Temporary Outdoor Patio (City of Brandon)



Figure: 66. Left: Bench with Public Art (Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale)

Figure: 67. Right: Winterbourne Wall Attached Shelter (NBB Outdoors)



Long Term

The long-term options for shelters and streetscaping are like the short-term options, however, they are permanent instead. These options would ideally be usable throughout all seasons and most weather conditions. It is important to note that some of the options may not be as practical or functional in the winter months or the flooding season, so further precedent studies may need to be taken before implementing these options (Figure 66-68).

In Figure 69, possible opportunities and locations for these options to be developed were identified. These locations were chosen for their proximity to housing for older adults, outdoor spaces, and amenities.

Figure: 68. Ecological Public Restroom in Trado (ArchDaily)



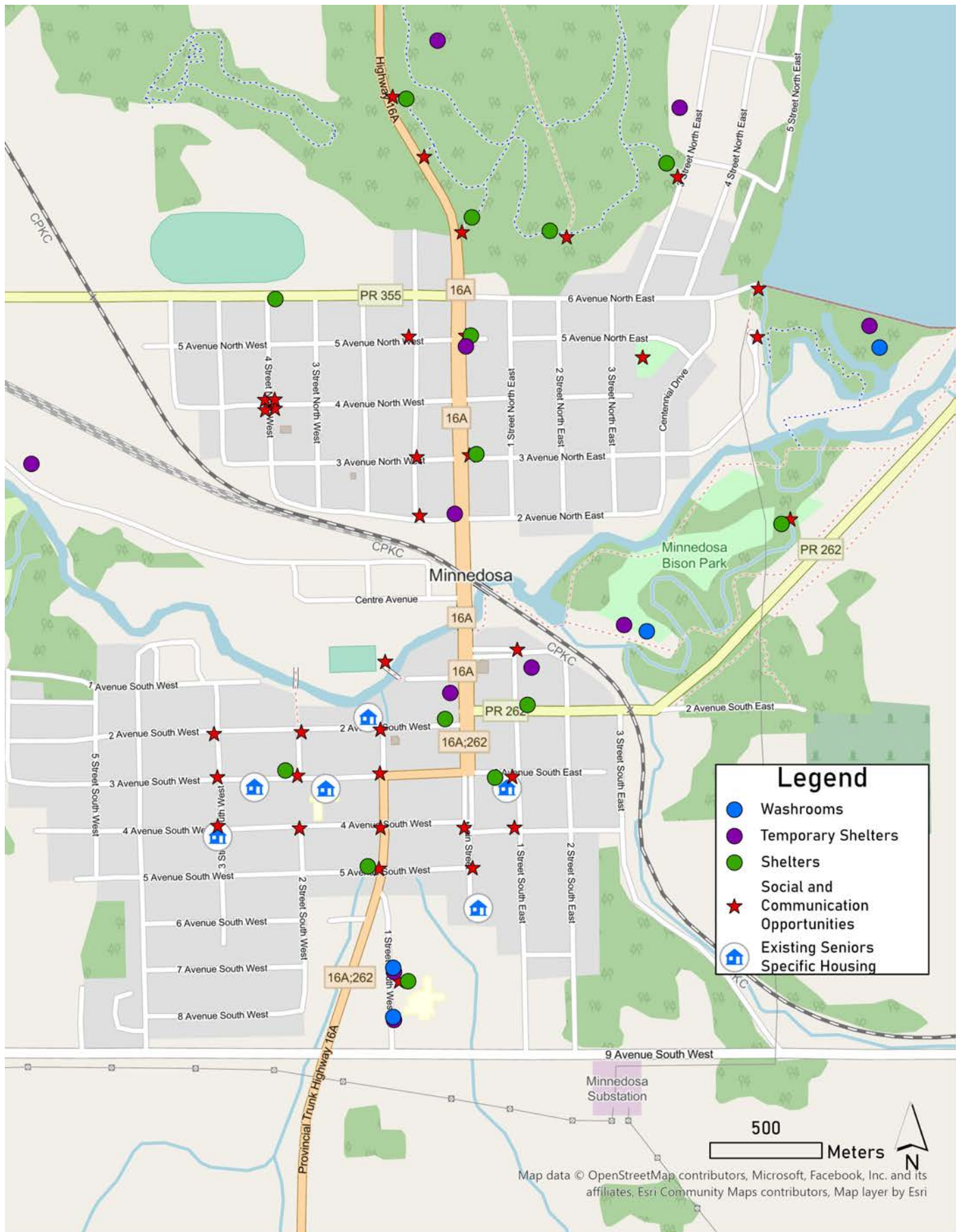


Figure: 69. Location opportunities for public washrooms and shelters.

6.3 - Community Options

6.3.1 - Face-to-face communication

Face-to-face communication is a very important aspect of making information accessible and allowing older adults to actively participate in town without relying on social media or digital communication. The following options aim to help make face-to-face communication easier by providing options that can be easily integrated into residents' daily routines.

Short Term

The short-term options for improving face-to-face communication include partnering with private businesses and working with broadcast stations. These options may help residents gain information without social media. By partnering with private businesses, the town's newsletters or other forms of physical communication can be delivered to residents in their shopping bags, receipts, or water bills. These are items that residents might typically see as part of their daily routines. Broadcast stations from Neepawa and Brandon are another option to consider as they can deliver news and information through radio or TV stations. A radio station or TV broadcast may potentially be playing in the background of a space and residents might passively gain new information or news as they go about their day. This option may also help older adults who are visually impaired get information.

Medium Term

For medium-term options, building communication hubs with community message boards on existing infrastructure such as benches or outdoor parks and trails can increase the opportunity for residents to communicate face-to-face. This option can also help create another space for individuals to meet and socialize outside of their homes (Figure 70-71).



Figure: 70. Left:
Community Sign and
Bench (X)



Figure: 71. Right:
Community Bulletin
Board (Wordpress)

6.3.2 Warming Huts

Long Term

Warming huts as shelters are needed in the community during the winter season. These huts can be set up in outdoor recreational spaces such as parks, ski slopes, and hiking trails. In case of any unforeseen circumstances, such as sudden weather changes, the warming huts will provide a haven for people to stay warm and wait for help. Moreover, the warming huts can also be used as rest stops for individuals engaging in outdoor activities during the winter season. Besides providing shelter and a rest area, the warming huts will also create new opportunities for people to gather and socialize. These huts should be equipped with basic amenities such as heating systems and seating areas which will make them convenient (Figure 72-73).



Figure: 72. Top:
Patkau Architects'
Jellyfish pavilion
(CanadianArchitect)

Figure: 73. Bottom:
Hygge House / Plain
Projects + Pike Projects
+ Urbanink (Archdaily)

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 General Conclusion

Minnedosa, like many other small rural communities throughout Canada, is facing challenges as a result of an aging population. These challenges, however, can be viewed as opportunities to implement improvements that might improve the quality of life for older adults, and other residents throughout the community alike. Minnedosa has a number of underlying strengths which can be built upon to improve such outcomes. In working with Minnedosa, first-year Master of City Planning students from the University of Manitoba used the principles of age-friendliness, as outlined by the WHO, as a guide for structuring this project.

Throughout this process, age-friendliness in the town of Minnedosa was analyzed, precedents were studied for how similar communities have improved age-friendly outcomes, and specific options were developed for the town to consider implementing that may improve age-friendliness. Through meetings, site visits, discussions, and activities, residents and representatives of the town and other community organizations were eager to provide feedback and areas of discussion to inform the process. Analysis of statistics and other forms of data were also conducted to build upon these discussions.

Across the four areas of analysis, transportation, housing, buildings and outdoor spaces, and social infrastructure, there were a number of options identified that the town may wish to pursue. These options highlight specific opportunities in each of these areas, as well as how the areas intersect and how improvements in one area can be integrated with improvements in others to provide more significant benefit to the community. Further to this, the analysis and options ended up looking beyond the community itself to identify how improvements, particularly in transportation, can be implemented in cooperation with partners throughout the region and at other levels

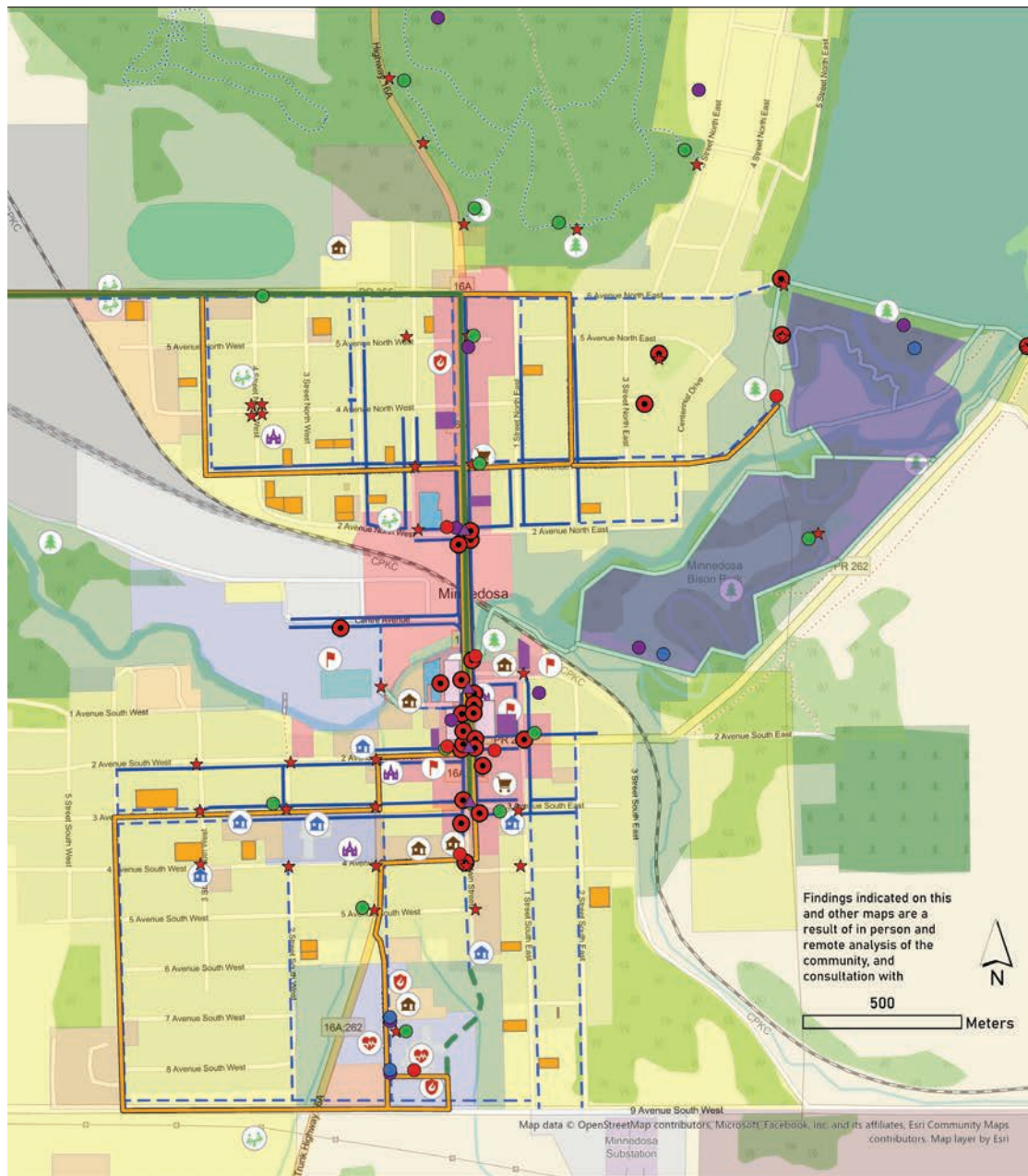
of government to improve outcomes for communities throughout southwestern Manitoba.

In conclusion, the group conducting this report wishes to thank the community for their support and eager participation throughout this process. It is the wish of the group that the options presented might spark discussions within the community on how they might implement age-friendly initiatives, improve outcomes for their older adult population, and work together with other communities to improve outcomes on a regional scale. The section below highlights some of the feedback received at the final session during which final options were presented to the community.

Figure 74 shows what Minnedosa could potentially look like if all of the options were implemented.

7.2 Final Meeting Feedback

On December 12th, 2023, the group presented their findings and options to the town. Besides some of the town's older adults, the mayor, council members, and representatives from Minnedosa & District Services to Seniors and the Economic Development office were in attendance. The options that the attendees seemed most interested in were the wayfinding options and how they may positively impact individuals with dementia or who are visually impaired. Attendees also expressed an interest in bringing the transportation options that were mentioned in a future meeting between the town and the Transportation Options Network for Seniors (TONS). Residents and officials alike expressed interest in development opportunities highlighted throughout the town, with a particular focus on bringing a more diverse mix of uses (residential and commercial) to the Main Street area. Overall, the options presented by the group were generally well-received by the attendees (Figure 75-76).



Legend

- | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike Racks Bike Lane Crossings Trails Future Trails Sidewalks Future Sidewalks Washrooms Shelters Temporary Shelters Benches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social and Communication Opportunities Existing Seniors Specific Housing Existing Multi-Unit Housing Proposed Handivan Route Mixed Use Redevelopment Other Redevelopment Potential Potential Flood Mitigation Area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infill Main Street Infill Infill Lots Amenities Community Health Services Emergency Services General Amenities Grocery Amenities Religious Amenities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational Amenities Outdoor Spaces Zoning Agricultural (Limited) Zone Commercial Central Zone Commercial Highway Zone Industrial Heavy Zone Industrial Light Zone | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional Zone Open Space/Recreational Zone Residential Large Lot Zone Residential Mobile Home Zone Residential Multiple Zone Residential Single Zone Residential Unserved Zone |
|--|---|--|---|---|

Figure: 74. Map of Minnedosa with all options implemented in this report.

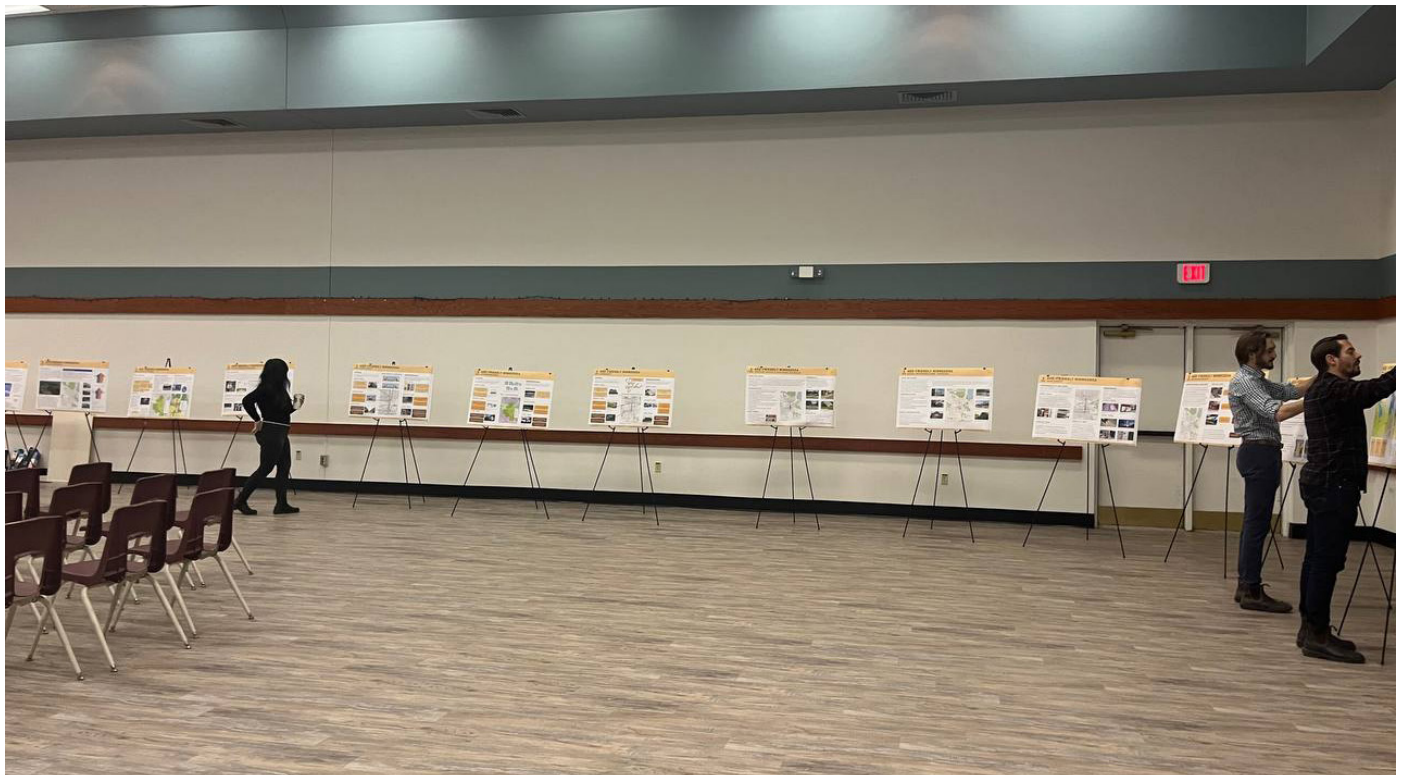


Figure: 75. Top:
Final Presentation in
Minnedosa

Figure: 76. Bottom:
Final Presentation
Boards

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