



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

SURVEY OF “AGING-FRIENDLY” COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

The fact that more individuals are living longer makes it important for the communities which they reside to be or become “aging-friendly”; that is, to be places where people can live their entire lives, if they so desire, rather than having to relocate when they experience the personal changes that accompany aging. This survey focuses on several areas of community living that affect the quality of life of all residents of a community, including those who are older. Listed for each area are several characteristics of an “aging-friendly” community. For more information about aging-friendly communities, visit <https://aging.extension.wisc.edu/topics/aging-friendly-communities/>.

Please complete the information below and the following survey questions to the best of your knowledge.

Name of the state where you live:

Name of the county where you live:

Name of the community (village, township, city) where you live:

For how many years have you lived in this community?

Read the bulleted list of aging-friendly characteristics for each area, and then use the following rating scale to indicate how many of the characteristics your community has:

1 = "none of them"; 2 = "a few of them"; 3 = "about half of them"; 4 = "most of them"; 5 = "all of them"

Housing	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):				
	1 (none)	2 (a few of them)	3 (about half)	4 (most of them)	5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing options – including assisted living – are both available and affordable to a broad range of older people. ▪ Affordable housing for older people is available in areas that are safe and close to services and the rest of the community. ▪ Skilled home modification and home repair services are available and affordable to older people. ▪ Home maintenance services such as backyard trash pickup are available to older people. ▪ Housing codes (“universal design”) that meet the needs of an aging population are promoted. 					

Transportation, Accessibility & Parking	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):				
	1 (none)	2 (a few of them)	3 (about half)	4 (most of them)	5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most older people can walk or use an affordable transportation to get to and from hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, senior centers, parks, adult day services, grocery stores, faith communities, spectator sporting events, and cultural events/activities ▪ Streets and parking, pedestrian crossings, sidewalks and curb cuts, signage, and outdoor seating have been designed with the needs of older drivers and pedestrians in mind. ▪ Road design is tailored to the needs of older drivers (larger signage, left turn lanes, clear road markings). ▪ Priority parking and drop-off spots for people with limited mobility or other health related concerns are available and respected. 					

Sidewalks & Pedestrian Crossings	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):				
	1 (none)	2 (a few of them)	3 (about half)	4 (most of them)	5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pedestrian crossings are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disability, with nonslip markings, visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times. ▪ Sidewalks and street crossings are made safe and accessible (bump-outs, extended crosswalk countdown, island in middle). ▪ Sidewalks are well-maintained and free of obstructions. ▪ Sidewalks are wide enough for wheelchairs and have dropped curbs to road level. ▪ Drivers give way to older pedestrians at intersections and pedestrian crossings. 					

Community & Health Care Services	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):
	1 (none) 2 (a few of them) 3 (about half) 4 (most of them) 5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a single entry point or “one-stop-shopping” for community resources and health services available for older people. ▪ Older people have access to health care options that meet a variety of needs. ▪ There are affordable in-home support services (e.g., home health care) that enable older people to live independently. ▪ There is at least one primary care physician for every 1,000 residents (of all ages). ▪ Older people are offered free preventive screenings, such as mammograms and blood pressure checks. 	

Family Caregiving	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):
	1 (none) 2 (a few of them) 3 (about half) 4 (most of them) 5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educational opportunities are provided for individuals to learn how to care for themselves while at the same time shouldering responsibilities of caring for one or more older or ill family members. ▪ Most employers offer accommodations - including flexible work schedules - for employees who are caring for one or more older or ill family members. ▪ There are educational programs for people caring for a loved one suffering from a type of dementia, such as Alzheimer’s disease. ▪ There are respite care services for families who provide care for an older loved one who cannot live by themselves. ▪ Caregiver support groups are offered for families caring for an older or ill loved one. ▪ There is training and support for grandparents who are raising grandchildren. 	

Nutrition and Wellness	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):
	1 (none) 2 (a few of them) 3 (about half) 4 (most of them) 5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residents easily find out about and participate in exercise and wellness programs. ▪ Nutrition classes or informational workshops for specific health and related financial needs are provided ▪ Communal/congregate meals are hosted at recreation or senior centers. ▪ Home-delivered meals are available for older residents who are not able to attend congregate meal sites or prepare their own meals. ▪ Exercise and wellness programs are tailored to specific health concerns such as heart disease or diabetes. 	

Arts, Culture, and Lifelong Learning	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):				
	1 (none)	2 (a few of them)	3 (about half)	4 (most of them)	5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Older people can receive discounts to attend cultural programs and activities. ▪ Cultural opportunities reflect the ethnic diversity of residents in the community. ▪ Venues for events and activities are conveniently located, accessible, well-lit, and easily reached by public transport. ▪ Cultural events and activities are held at times convenient for older people. ▪ Cultural activities and attractions are affordable, with no hidden or additional participation costs. ▪ Good information about cultural activities and events is provided, including details about accessibility of facilities and transportation options for older people. ▪ A wide variety of cultural events and activities are offered to appeal to a diverse population of older people. ▪ There are opportunities in the community for older people to continue learning. ▪ The library(ies) in your community has/have a program to deliver books to people in their homes. ▪ There is wide public access to computers and the Internet, at no or minimal charge, in public places such as government offices, community centers and libraries. 					

Employment & Workforce Development	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):				
	1 (none)	2 (a few of them)	3 (about half)	4 (most of them)	5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The qualities of older employees are well-promoted in your community. ▪ Workplaces in your community are generally adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities. ▪ Your community offers formal job training and retraining programs to help older people remain in the workforce. ▪ Employers in your community offer flexible employment options for older people. ▪ Job banks in your community help to connect older people with appropriate employment. ▪ Training in post-retirement options are provided for older workers. ▪ Discrimination on the basis of age alone is forbidden in the hiring, retention, promotion and training of employees. 					

Public Safety and Emergency Planning	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):				
	1 (none)	2 (a few of them)	3 (about half)	4 (most of them)	5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most older people would say that they feel safe. ▪ Police and fire departments actively focus on preventing injuries and threats to older people. ▪ Local law enforcement is trained in elder abuse/neglect identification and prevention. ▪ Neighborhood watch programs are in place. ▪ Plans exist for evacuation of older people in the event of a natural disaster or homeland security event. ▪ Local government has knowledge of where older people reside in order for services to be provided in case of severe weather or other situations that prevent residents from leaving their home. ▪ Community emergency planning takes into account the vulnerabilities and capacities of older people. 					

Respect and Social Inclusion	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):				
	1 (none)	2 (a few of them)	3 (about half)	4 (most of them)	5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is consistent outreach to include people at risk of social isolation, particularly those who are older. ▪ Older people are regularly consulted by public, voluntary and commercial services on how to serve them better. ▪ Services and products to suit varying needs and preferences are provided by public and commercial services. ▪ Older people are visible in the media and are depicted positively and without stereotyping. ▪ Community-wide settings, activities and events attract all generations by accommodating age-specific needs and preferences. ▪ Older people are specifically included in community activities for “families”. ▪ Schools provide opportunities to learn about aging and older people and involve older people in school activities. ▪ Older people are recognized by the community for their past as well as their present contributions. ▪ Older people with limited resources have good access to public, voluntary and private services. 					

Community Connectedness: Civic Engagement and Volunteering	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):				
	1 (none)	2 (a few of them)	3 (about half)	4 (most of them)	5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A range of flexible options for older volunteers is available, with training, recognition, guidance and compensation for personal costs. ▪ Decision-making bodies in public, private and voluntary sectors encourage and facilitate membership of older people. ▪ There is a central clearinghouse that people can visit or call to learn about volunteer opportunities. ▪ Older people commonly serve on government advisory boards and other committees. ▪ Local non-profits and other community organizations provide meaningful volunteer opportunities suited for older people. ▪ Older people have been surveyed about their volunteer interests. 					

Taxation, Finance, & Protection Against Fraud	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):				
	1 (none)	2 (a few of them)	3 (about half)	4 (most of them)	5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For older residents most in need, there are programs that offer tax assistance and/or tax relief (allow older residents to “work off” their property taxes). ▪ There are educational programs for older people about how to protect themselves against financial fraud and predatory lending. ▪ Bank personnel are trained to detect financial fraud schemes aimed at older clients. ▪ Older people are aware of reverse mortgages and receive training on how to select a reverse mortgage option. ▪ Older people know how to contact law enforcement to report being victimized by financial fraud schemes. 					

Community Leadership & Intergenerational Collaboration	How many of the characteristics listed below does your community have? (Circle one):				
	1 (none)	2 (a few of them)	3 (about half)	4 (most of them)	5 (all)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local (community and/or county) leadership strives to promote interaction and collaboration between all generations. ▪ Local leadership (community and/or county) understands that universal design concepts not only aid a specific demographic, but society as a whole. ▪ The local government acts as an advocate and catalyst for developing partnerships, new programs and systems to aid and engage older people. ▪ Local leadership (community and/or county) actively harnesses the talent, wisdom and experience of older people to contribute to the community at large. 					

Over the past five years, to what extent has the community where you live prepared for a growing aging population?

- No planning efforts or action
- At least some planning has been done, but no action yet
- Yes, there have been some planning efforts, but only a little action
- Yes, there have been planning efforts coupled with focused action
- Do not know

From the list below, please indicate the TOP FOUR areas that aging-readiness planning activities should be focused on in your community within the next 3 to 5 years.

Use the numbers 1-4 to rank your choices. "1" indicates your highest priority; "2" indicates your second highest priority; "3" indicates your third-ranked priority; and "4" indicates your fourth-ranked priority.

- Housing
- Transportation, Accessibility, and Parking
- Sidewalks and Pedestrian Crossings
- Community and Health Care Services
- Family Caregiving
- Nutrition and Wellness
- Arts, Culture, and Lifelong Learning
- Employment and Workforce Development
- Public Safety and Emergency Planning
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Community Connectedness: Civic Engagement and Volunteer Opportunities
- Taxation, Finance, and Protection Against Fraud
- Community Leadership and Intergenerational Collaboration

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