

# Community Age-Friendly Priorities

## Winkler, Manitoba

### Age-Friendly Winkler Community Consultation Summary

October 20, 2009

Community consultations are being held with seniors and community members in a number of communities in Manitoba as part of a larger Age-Friendly Initiative. The goal of these community consultations is to assist communities to prioritize issues that will help them form action plans to make their community as age-friendly as possible. On October 20, 2009, 17 individuals from the City of Winkler, Manitoba came together to talk about age-friendly priorities and issues within their community. Participants also had the opportunity to complete a survey of the age-friendliness of their community. The following is a summary of the age-friendly priorities identified at the meeting and survey results.



# Summary of Group Discussion

## Age-Friendly Winkler Benefits

- Trails are well designed and easy to use
- Good lighting on roads
- Roads are well maintained
- Snow is removed promptly in winter
- Many parks available with ample green space
- Used exposed granite on pathways for easier mobility
- Public washrooms are available in parks, malls, and public buildings
- Intergenerational programs are provided, e.g., curling
- School programs include seniors
- Public buildings are well used such as the library and concert hall
- Churches have programs for seniors
- Many seniors are actively involved in activities and volunteering
- Services are available for people moving into Winkler, e.g., German language translation
- Multiple channels for communication are available: local paper, church bulletins, Pembina Valley Online, CVHN, and Winkler City web site
- The City of Winkler celebrates the diversity of other cultures and displays the country flags of new immigrants
- Appreciation for health services at the Boundary Trails Health Centre



## Priority: Increase accessibility in outdoor spaces

### Potential Actions:

- Add pedestrian crosswalks, with lights, at high traffic areas, e.g. Main Street by the medical clinic, recreation centre, and schools
- Maintain sidewalks
- Place sidewalks by malls, the Superstore, and on Roblin
- Add benches and outdoor fitness equipment to walkways and parks

## Priority: Ensure safe scooter driving

### Potential Actions:

- Develop smooth paths designated for scooter use
- Increase awareness of driving safely with scooters



## Priority: Increase transportation options

### Potential Actions:

- Start handi-van service and offer during hours that it is needed
- Enforce handicap parking spots
- Provide public transportation around Winkler, to Boundary Trails Health Centre and between Winkler and Morden

## Priority: Design Street Signs to be More Visible

### Potential Actions:

- Display speed bump signs more visibly for motorists
- Trim tree branches so signs and addresses can be read
- Increase the lettering size on street signs

## Priority: Develop public buildings

### Potential Actions:

- Build a new convention centre for community and business use
- Build a new recreation centre
- Redesign the stairs at Royal Hall to increase accessibility



## Priority: Increase housing choices

### Potential Actions:

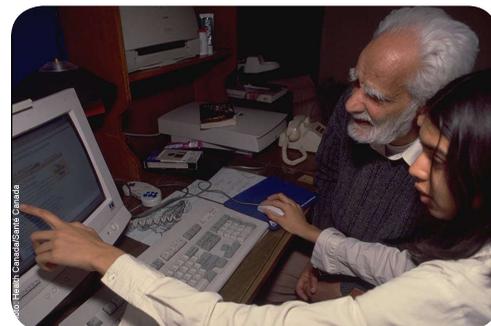
- Add supportive living option
- Salem Home very good, assess respite available
- Provide family caregivers with needed services



## Priority: Encourage older workers to mentor younger workers

### Potential Actions:

- Develop a seniors job bank and connect it to the Winkler and Morden city Web sites
- Encourage seniors to submit their job skills on the job bank



## Priority: Increase senior programs

### Potential Actions:

- Offer congregate meal programs on the week-ends
- Increase day programs for seniors
- Provide more programs at the senior centre

## Priority: Communicate emergency response plan to residents

### Potential Actions:

- Ensure residents receive the emergency booklet
- Promote the emergency plan through the local radio station
- Present the plan to business leaders and staff

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## Summary of Survey Responses

As part of a community consultation held in Winkler on October 20, 2009, individuals were asked to complete a brief questionnaire designed to collect information on the age-friendliness of their community. A total of 17 questionnaires were completed by individuals attending the consultation. An additional 26 questionnaires were completed by individuals living in Winkler who had not attended the community consultation. This report summarizes the findings from the 43 individuals who completed the Age-Friendly Communities Survey; 65% identified themselves as a senior.

### Most Age-Friendly Areas

Based on the survey results, the majority of Winkler residents feel seniors are generally treated with respect and that the city has enough pleasant places for walking. Residents also identified that health care services provided meet the needs of seniors, snow clearing is done in a timely manner so walking and driving is safe, and local parks or walking trails are accessible and easy to use for seniors. Also identified as age-friendly through the survey is the community events information is readily available to seniors.

## Least Age-Friendly Areas

The majority of residents identified transportation as an important issue based on their survey responses. They identified that public transportation is neither sufficient for individuals with disabilities nor is it sufficient to go shopping, senior centres, religious or cultural events, or health care services. Housing was also identified as important by Winkler residents. Most feel that waiting times to get into senior supportive housing is not reasonable, and there could be more housing and subsidized housing for low-income seniors to meet seniors needs. They also feel that isolated seniors could be contacted, visited or taken to activities more within the community .

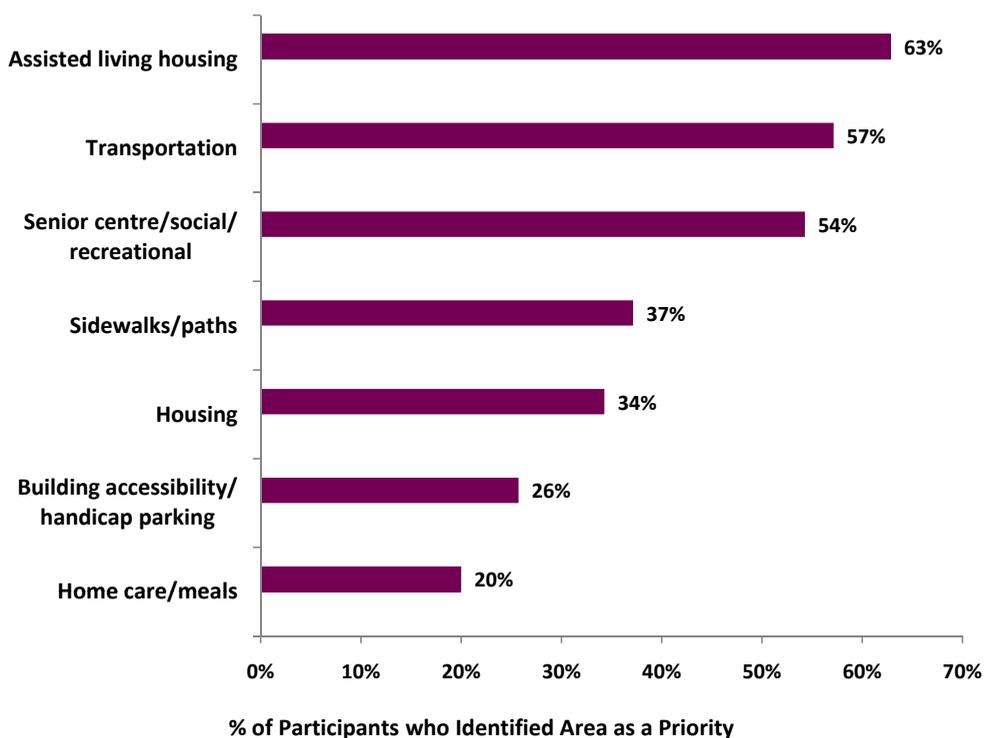
## Priority Areas

Individuals were also asked to write down the top five issues they felt needed to be most urgently addressed in their community. Thirty-five of the 43 individuals (81.4%) identified at least one priority area.

These written comments were grouped into the priority areas as shown in Figure 1:

- assisted living (e.g., assisted living, affordable assisted living);
- transportation (e.g., public transportation, affordable transportation, Handi-van);
- senior centre/social/recreational (e.g., senior centre replaced, larger senior centre, new senior centre, social participation, activities for seniors other than cards);
- sidewalks/paths (e.g., wider sidewalks, fix sidewalks, sidewalks are uneven, downtown paths and walkways, crosswalks);
- housing (e.g., senior housing, supportive housing, affordable housing);
- building accessibility/handicap parking (e.g., better access to public buildings, washrooms in public buildings, observe handicap parking spaces); and
- home care/meals (e.g., home care services, more home care services, meals).

**Figure 1: Priority Areas Identified by Participants**



## Age-Friendly Survey Responses

Housing	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
There is enough housing that meets the needs of seniors.	2.4	87.8	9.8
Housing for seniors is affordable.	26.3	47.4	26.3
There is enough subsidized housing for low-income seniors.	2.4	78.0	19.5
The waiting times are reasonable to get into senior housing that provides supports to seniors (e.g., assisted living, nursing homes).	7.3	78.0	14.6
There is enough housing for younger people.	31.7	51.2	17.1

Transportation	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
The public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to shopping, senior centres, religious events, cultural events, and so forth is sufficient.	9.8	82.9	7.3
The public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to and from medical appointments is sufficient.	7.3	90.2	2.4
The transportation that is available for individuals with disabilities (e.g., Handi-Van) is sufficient.	12.2	75.6	12.2
The public transportation (not provided by family or friends), including Handi-Van that is available in my community is affordable for seniors.	20.0	55.0	25.0
There are volunteer drivers or an informal network of drivers available for seniors who need transportation.	48.8	12.2	39.0
There are enough parking spaces close to services and stores.	52.4	28.6	19.0
There are enough "handicap" parking spaces close to services and stores.	47.6	33.3	19.0

Respect and Social Inclusion	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Seniors are generally treated with respect.	95.2	2.4	2.4
Seniors serve in an advisory role to municipal government (e.g., there is a seniors' council).	17.5	40.0	42.5
Community consultations specifically include seniors.	34.1	19.5	46.3
Planning processes specifically consider the needs of seniors (e.g., planning for housing or transportation).	48.8	14.6	36.6

Safety	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Crime and vandalism are a problem.	46.3	46.3	7.3
Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the <i>day</i> .	78.6	14.3	7.1
Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the <i>night</i> .	26.2	42.9	31.0

<b>Outdoor Spaces and Buildings</b>	<b>Percent Responding</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
The road signs are easy to read and large enough for older drivers.	67.4	18.6	14.0
There are sidewalks linking residences and essential services in most or all areas of my community.	66.7	19.0	14.3
Sidewalks in most or all areas of my community are well maintained (even surfaces or paved, not a lot of cracks).	26.2	61.9	11.9
Snow clearing is done in a timely manner so walking and driving is safe.	83.7	9.3	7.0
There are enough street crosswalks in busy <i>business</i> areas.	39.5	48.8	11.6
There are enough street crosswalks in busy <i>residential</i> and/or <i>recreation</i> areas.	35.0	52.5	12.5
There are enough public washrooms in key areas of my community (e.g., business and recreation areas).	44.2	46.5	9.3
Public washrooms accommodate people with wheelchairs.	50.0	16.7	33.3
Most or all businesses and public buildings are easily accessible to everybody (e.g., have wheelchair ramps, automatic doors).	57.1	16.7	26.2

<b>Social Participation/Recreation</b>	<b>Percent Responding</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
My community has enough pleasant places for walking (e.g., walking trails, parks, well-treed streets).	90.2	7.3	2.4
Local parks or walking trails are accessible and easy to use for seniors (e.g., paths with even surfaces).	82.9	17.1	0.0
There are enough resting areas with benches along paths or trails.	31.7	46.3	22.0
There are enough exercise classes specifically for seniors.	41.5	12.2	46.3
There are enough recreation programs specifically for seniors (e.g., card games, arts, crafts).	48.8	26.8	24.4
There are enough lifelong learning programs specifically for seniors (e.g., learning new things such as the use of computers).	31.7	29.3	39.0
There are enough programs in my community that bring seniors and children together (e.g., school reading programs, children spending time with seniors).	24.4	51.2	24.4
Recreational activities, such as exercise and other recreational programs, are generally affordable for seniors.	71.4	11.9	16.7
Isolated seniors (e.g., those who don't have anybody) are contacted, visited or taken to activities.	9.8	36.6	53.7

<b>Community/Work Force Participation</b>	<b>Percent Responding</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
There are enough volunteer opportunities for seniors.	76.2	2.4	21.4
There is enough official recognition for seniors who volunteer (e.g., an appreciation banquet or volunteer awards).	53.7	26.8	19.5
There are enough paid job opportunities for seniors.	17.5	22.5	60.0
The job opportunities in my neighbourhood accommodate the needs of seniors (e.g., part-time work is available).	33.3	21.4	45.2

Information/Advocacy	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Information about community events is readily available to seniors.	78.6	4.8	16.7
Information about the services and programs provided by various organizations is readily available to seniors.	64.3	7.1	28.6
Official, written information, such as forms or brochures is easy to read and understand (e.g., large print, clear language).	45.0	25.0	30.0
Public telephone answering services are adapted to the needs of seniors (e.g., instructions are given clearly and slowly).	21.1	18.4	60.5
There is enough assistance available for completing official forms (e.g., help with filling out government or income tax forms).	61.0	12.2	26.8
There are enough seniors' advocacy services available (e.g., an ombudsman to inform others of seniors' needs).	30.0	30.0	40.0

Health and Community Services	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
The home care services that support seniors in their own home (e.g., meal preparation, nursing care) are sufficient.	47.6	33.3	19.0
The services that help seniors around the home (e.g., snow removal, lawn care, garbage brought to the street) are sufficient.	32.5	32.5	35.0
The congregate meal programs available (e.g., lunch at a recreation or senior centre) are sufficient.	64.3	7.1	28.6
The meal delivery services that bring meals to seniors' homes are sufficient.	43.9	9.8	46.3
The health care services that are provided in my community meet the needs of seniors (e.g., hospital, physicians, eye care).	85.0	10.0	5.0
Public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to health care services that are <i>not</i> provided in my community is sufficient.	7.5	75.0	17.5
Access to health care that are <i>not</i> provided in my community is generally convenient (e.g., services not too far away, appointment times are convenient).	38.5	30.8	30.8

The views expressed herein reflect the opinions of the participants and do not necessarily represent the views of the Age-Friendly Communities Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) or the Centre on Aging.

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