

Age-Friendly MacGregor Community Consultation Summary

MacGregor, Manitoba

May 30, 2012



Community consultations are being held with seniors and community members across Manitoba as part of a larger Age-Friendly Initiative. The goal of these community consultations is to assist communities with prioritizing issues that will help them form action plans to make their communities age-friendly. On May 30, 2012, 30 residents from the Town of MacGregor, 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 the survey results.

Summary of Group Discussion

Age-Friendly MacGregor Benefits:

- Outdoor spaces provide opportunities for walking, cycling, camping, golfing, and other activities
- Town was recognized as a 'Community in Bloom'
- Intergenerational opportunities (Collegiate students interact with seniors by teaching them computer skills)
- Residents work together to support fundraising needs and accomplish goals
- Congregate meal and meal delivery programs for seniors are available
- The Hub is a gathering place for youth
- A new handi-van will be available soon
- A new community hall is being built



Priority: Improve Safety for Walking Along Trails, Sidewalks and Roads

Potential Actions:

- Link the trails in town and expand current trails to provide more walking opportunities (e.g., along the old highway, to the new town hall)
- Increase lighting on trails and residential streets so motorists can see pedestrians, especially during winter evenings
- In certain areas, use overhead lighting that cannot be vandalized
- Repair sidewalks to reduce tripping hazards
- Consider adding a sidewalk from Woodlawn Drive to MacGregor Collegiate to increase pedestrian safety
- Trim tree branches and hedges to keep sidewalks clear



Priority: Enhance Social Opportunities

Potential Actions:

- Meet with residents to choose appropriate social programs for the Senior's Drop-In Centre
- Consider offering intergenerational and social programs for younger adult age groups at the Senior's Drop-In Centre



Priority: Improve Street Signage

Potential Actions:

- Place signs on the main streets that indicate where facilities are located, e.g., Normac Centre ice rink
- Place a *Welcome to MacGregor* sign near the Trans-Canada highway so visitors can easily find the town
- Add handicapped parking spaces and signage in the downtown area, especially in front of the Senior's Drop-In Centre and the entrance near the ramp at the Normac Centre ice rink



Priority: Increase Awareness About Safe Driving

Potential Actions:

- Replace the speed bump with a graduated speed bump between MacGregor Collegiate and the Normac Centre ice rink on Saunders Street, and add additional speed bumps
- Find a way to better control the parking lot traffic near the ice rink
- Build awareness about street safety and cautious driving with MacGregor Collegiate students
- Work with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to increase awareness about speed limits and U-turns



Priority: Widen the Communication Choices So People Of All Ages Hear About Events and can Find Information

Potential Actions:

- Consider summarizing emergency information for local citizens so they have a handy, concise reference
- Improve the Town of MacGregor website to include more current event updates and it becomes a quick and easy resource
- Explain the available community services better (e.g., their mandates, current services, resources and contact information)
- Encourage the use of larger font sizes for easier reading



Priority: Improve Accessible Entrances to Buildings

Potential Actions:

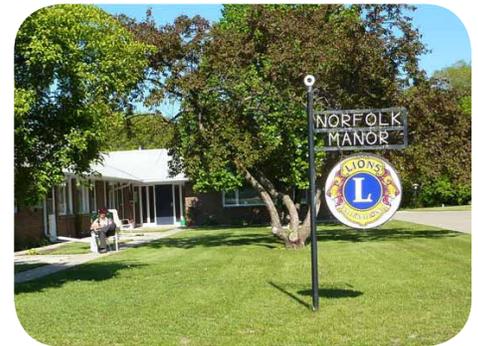
- Ensure that doors open away from ramp access and not into the ramp
- Assess if improvements can be made to the heavy door at the Senior's Drop-In Centre
- Contact the Post Office owner to determine if an easier opening door could be installed (e.g., automatic)



Priority: Explore Options to Add More Housing Choices

Potential Actions:

- Assess the need for building more condos, life-lease or rental housing for younger seniors wishing to sell their larger homes for a more streamlined lifestyle
- Encourage business development that will assist those seniors who desire to remain in their larger homes (e.g., home repairs, home maintenance, yard care)



Summary of Survey Responses

As part of a community consultation held in MacGregor on May 30, 2012, residents were asked to complete a brief questionnaire designed to collect information on the age-friendliness of their community. Twenty-six residents living in MacGregor completed questionnaires. This report summarizes the findings from the 26 residents who completed the Age-Friendly Communities Survey; 61.5% identified themselves as a senior.

Most Age-Friendly Areas

The vast majority of residents who completed a survey agreed that seniors in the community are generally treated with respect and that seniors generally feel safe when walking alone during the day in the community. Many also felt that the community has sufficient meal delivery services that bring meals to seniors' homes. Around 70% of residents agreed that the community has enough pleasant places for walking and enough parking spaces close to services and stores.

Least Age-Friendly Areas

Housing, transportation, and accessibility/public washrooms were identified as important areas. Very few felt that the community has enough housing that meets the needs of seniors, especially subsidized housing. Many felt that the wait times to get into senior housing are not reasonable. No residents agreed that there is sufficient public transportation; areas of concern included transportation to medical appointments and handi-van transportation. In terms of accessibility, most felt that the community's buildings and businesses need to be made more accessible (e.g., ramps, automatic doors) and that more public washrooms are needed.

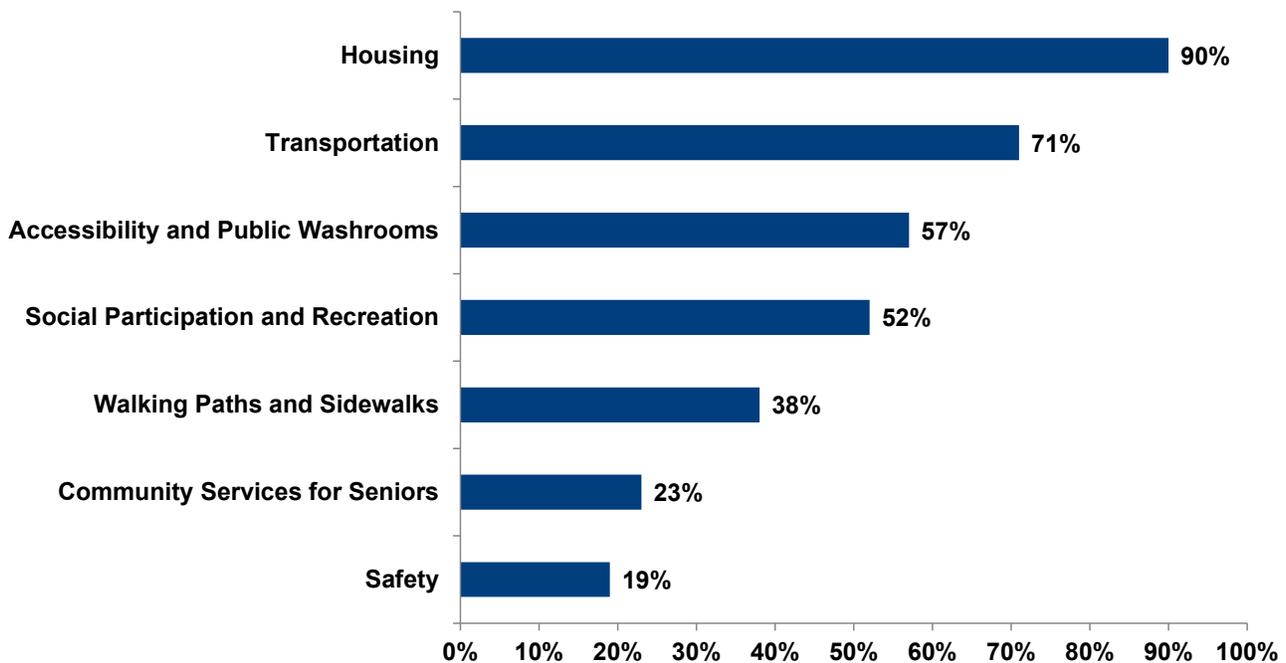
Priority Areas

Residents were also asked to write down the top five issues they felt needed to be most urgently addressed in their community. Twenty-one out of the 26 residents (80.8%) identified at least one priority area.

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

- Housing (e.g., more affordable housing, need more senior housing, supportive/assisted living option, housing for young people);
- Transportation (e.g., handi-van, handi-transit service, transportation to Winnipeg for medical appointments);
- Accessibility and public washrooms (e.g., accessibility to buildings, more ramps, automatic door at post office, street curbs are too high, public wheelchair accessible washrooms);
- Social participation and recreation (e.g., affordable/suitable leisure activities, evening social activities, more activity in senior drop-in, indoor pool, senior curling and sports);
- Walking paths and sidewalks (e.g., more pathways for walking, more care for walking trails);
- Community services for seniors (e.g., home and yard services—grass, snow, small jobs, home visiting for seniors, grocery delivery, medication delivery); and
- Safety (e.g., safety, more visibility of RCMP patrolling).

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.	8.0	84.0	8.0
Housing for seniors is affordable.	50.0	16.7	33.3
There is enough subsidized housing for low-income seniors.	4.2	66.7	29.2
The waiting times are reasonable to get into senior housing that provides supports to seniors (e.g., assisted living, nursing homes).	8.0	72.0	20.0
There is enough housing for younger people.	48.0	40.0	12.0

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.	0.0	92.0	8.0
The public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to and from medical appointments is sufficient.	4.0	84.0	12.0
The transportation that is available for individuals with disabilities (e.g., Handi-Van) is sufficient.	4.0	92.0	4.0
The public transportation (not provided by family or friends), including Handi-Van that is available in my community is affordable for seniors.	4.3	52.2	43.5
There are volunteer drivers or an informal network of drivers available for seniors who need transportation.	60.9	13.0	26.1
There are enough parking spaces close to services and stores.	70.8	29.2	0.0
There are enough "handicap" parking spaces close to services and stores.	12.5	75.0	12.5

Respect and Social Inclusion	Percent Responding (%)		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Seniors are generally treated with respect.	96.2	0.0	3.8
Seniors serve in an advisory role to municipal government (e.g., there is a seniors' council).	12.0	76.0	12.0
Community consultations specifically include seniors.	23.1	30.8	46.2
Planning processes specifically consider the needs of seniors (e.g., planning for housing or transportation).	53.8	15.4	30.8

Safety	Percent Responding (%)		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Crime and vandalism are a problem.	37.5	37.5	25.0
Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the <i>day</i> .	92.3	3.8	3.8
Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the <i>night</i> .	38.5	34.6	26.9

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	Percent Responding (%)		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
The road signs are easy to read and large enough for older drivers.	64.0	24.0	12.0
There are sidewalks linking residences and essential services in most or all areas of my community.	65.4	30.8	3.8
Sidewalks in most or all areas of my community are well maintained (even surfaces or paved, not a lot of cracks).	48.0	44.0	8.0
Snow clearing is done in a timely manner so walking and driving is safe.	68.0	28.0	4.0
There are enough street crosswalks in busy <i>business</i> areas.	36.0	60.0	4.0
There are enough street crosswalks in busy <i>residential</i> and/or <i>recreation</i> areas.	39.1	60.9	0.0
There are enough public washrooms in key areas of my community (e.g., business and recreation areas).	12.0	88.0	0.0
Public washrooms accommodate people with wheelchairs.	24.0	60.0	16.0
Most or all businesses and public buildings are easily accessible to everybody (e.g., have wheelchair ramps, automatic doors).	7.7	80.8	11.5

Social Participation/Recreation	Percent Responding (%)		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
My community has enough pleasant places for walking (e.g., walking trails, parks, well-treed streets).	72.0	20.0	8.0
Local parks or walking trails are accessible and easy to use for seniors (e.g., paths with even surfaces).	43.5	43.5	13.0
There are enough resting areas with benches along paths or trails.	40.0	56.0	4.0
There are enough exercise classes specifically for seniors.	17.4	73.9	8.7
There are enough recreation programs specifically for seniors (e.g., card games, arts, crafts).	30.4	39.1	30.4
There are enough lifelong learning programs specifically for seniors (e.g., learning new things such as the use of computers).	47.8	26.1	26.1
There are enough programs in my community that bring seniors and children together (e.g., school reading programs, children spending time with seniors).	60.0	12.0	28.0
Recreational activities, such as exercise and other recreational programs, are generally affordable for seniors.	60.9	13.0	26.1
Isolated seniors (e.g., those who don't have anybody) are contacted, visited or taken to activities.	32.0	32.0	36.0

Community/Work Force Participation	Percent Responding (%)		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
There are enough volunteer opportunities for seniors.	56.0	16.0	28.0
There is enough official recognition for seniors who volunteer (e.g., an appreciation banquet or volunteer awards).	8.0	68.0	24.0
There are enough paid job opportunities for seniors.	15.4	53.8	30.8
The job opportunities in my neighbourhood accommodate the needs of seniors (e.g., part-time work is available).	23.1	46.2	30.8

Information/Advocacy	Percent Responding (%)		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Information about community events is readily available to seniors.	50.0	26.9	23.1
Information about the services and programs provided by various organizations is readily available to seniors.	52.0	28.0	20.0
Official, written information, such as forms or brochures is easy to read and understand (e.g., large print, clear language).	46.2	30.8	23.1
Public telephone answering services are adapted to the needs of seniors (e.g., instructions are given clearly and slowly).	20.0	24.0	56.0
There is enough assistance available for completing official forms (e.g., help with filling out government or income tax forms).	24.0	32.0	44.0
There are enough seniors' advocacy services available (e.g., an ombudsman to inform others of seniors' needs).	7.7	53.8	38.5

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.	44.0	24.0	32.0
The services that help seniors around the home (e.g., snow removal, lawn care, garbage brought to the street) are sufficient.	24.0	32.0	44.0
The congregate meal programs available (e.g., lunch at a recreation or senior centre) are sufficient.	68.0	16.0	16.0
The meal delivery services that bring meals to seniors' homes are sufficient.	84.6	11.5	3.8
The health care services that are provided in my community meet the needs of seniors (e.g., hospital, physicians, eye care).	34.6	38.5	26.9
Public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to health care services that are <i>not</i> provided in my community is sufficient.	23.1	53.8	23.1
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).	40.0	44.0	16.0

The views expressed herein reflect the opinions of the participants and do not necessarily represent the views of the Age-Friendly Manitoba Initiative, Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba, or the Manitoba Association of Senior Centres.

This summary was prepared by the Age-Friendly Manitoba Resource Team.

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