



Livability For All: The 2016 AARP Age-Friendly Community Survey of Southeast and Southwest Atlanta, Georgia AARP Members Age 50-plus

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Background and Methodology

The World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Age-Friendly Cities and Communities project was created to help cities prepare for the rapid aging of populations and the increase in urbanization. The program targets the environmental, social, and economic factors that influence the health and well-being of older adults. The WHO has identified eight areas of livability that influence the quality of life of those in a community, particularly older adults. The eight domains, or areas of livability, are: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information, and Community and Health Services.

AARP Research developed a survey instrument that captures the WHO eight areas of livability in order to: (1) help communities establish a baseline with regards to older adults being able to age in place, and (2) conduct a community needs/gap analysis to identify and prioritize areas of focus. To minimize the survey length as well as respondent burden the survey encapsulates the WHO eight areas of livability in a slightly different structure.

According to the AARP survey and for the purposes of this report the eight areas are:

1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
2. Transportation and Streets
3. Housing
4. Social Participation, Inclusion, and Education Opportunities
5. Volunteering and Civic Engagement
6. Job Opportunities
7. Community Information
8. Health and Wellness

To identify needs/gaps, survey respondents were asked how important community features and services were to them and whether or not these features and services exist. To compare these questions, respondents who said a feature or service is extremely, very, or somewhat important were aggregated and then compared to respondents who said the feature or service was present in their community.

The present report is based on data from a mail survey of 2,000 AARP members age 50-plus living in the Southeast and Southwest sections of Atlanta, Georgia. The zip codes included in this survey were: 30030, 30080, 30083, 30305, 30307, 30308, 30310, 30311, 30312, 30313, 30314, 30315, 30316, 30317, 30327, 30331, 30354, 32211. The survey was fielded from June 12 to July 24, 2015. The sample was drawn from AARP's membership database. Each sampled member was contacted four times receiving the following pieces of mail: pre-notification postcard, the first survey, a reminder postcard, and a second survey. A total of 576 completed surveys were returned by the cutoff date of July 24th. There were 43 undeliverable addresses.

This survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.2 percent. This means that if 95 out of 100 samples of this same size and population were given the same survey, the responses to the questions would fall within a range of plus or minus 4.2 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every AARP member age 50-plus in the sampled area were asked the same questions. The sample is weighted by age and gender to reflect the actual distribution of AARP members age 50-plus in Atlanta, Georgia. The weighted number of respondents is 502.

An annotated questionnaire and addendum tables are available upon request. Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. Also due to rounding, the percentages reported in the text may vary slightly from those in the graphs or the annotated survey.

Executive Summary

The Top Reported Atlanta Important Community Features Are Concentrated In Two Domains: Transportation and Outdoor Spaces

A livable community provides resources that allow residents to age-in-place, and fosters residents' engagement in their community's civic, economic, and social life. The **"2016 AARP Age-Friendly Community Survey of Atlanta, Georgia AARP Members Age 50-plus"** was commissioned to help Atlanta decision makers achieve the goal of livability. Using an operationalization of the World Health Organization's eight areas of livable community, the findings show:

- Atlanta members age 50-plus have deep roots in their community. About half (49%) have lived in their community for 25 years or more. Most do not plan to move, and nearly eight in ten (78%) say their community is a good place for older people to live.
- On average, features within Transportation and Streets are rated as the most important for Atlanta members age 50-plus among all eight domains. The Transportation and Streets items relate to well-maintained streets and safe and reliable public transportation. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings ranks as the second most important livable community domain with items that relate to well-maintained sidewalks and public buildings.
- Well-lit, safe streets and intersections (95%), easy to read traffic signs (95%), and well-maintained streets and roads (95%) are the top three important community features for Atlanta members.

Executive Summary cont.

The Top Reported Atlanta Community Needs Are Concentrated In Four Areas: Job Opportunities, Community Information, Volunteering and Civic Engagement, and Health

- In order to identify the needs of Atlanta members age 50-plus, survey respondents were asked about the importance of a community feature and service, then they were asked if these features and services existed in their community. These questions were then paired together to identify community needs or "gaps."
- While Transportation and Outdoor Spaces dominated the list of important features, the top community needs gaps are identified in the areas of Job Opportunities, Community Information, Volunteering and Civic Engagement, and Health and Wellness.
- Job training opportunities for older adults (79%) and jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities (78%) are identified as the top community needs gaps followed by community information that is delivered in person to those who have difficulty leaving their home and clearly displayed printed community information with large lettering (77% for each). Refer to the Key Findings for a summary of the top 10 community needs by WHO Areas.
- An important element of creating livability for all must be individual preferences. These survey findings help policymakers, planners, and others better understand the needs of an aging population in order to begin to brainstorm steps and policies that can be taken to improve livability.





Community Experience

From a simple perspective, a "livable community" is a place that allows individuals to age-in-place. A comprehensive definition of a livable community is one that is "safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and offers supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence; allow residents to age in place; and foster residents' engagement in the community's civic, economic, and social life."

Across the nation, individuals make connections and commitments to homes, friendships, community organizations, and local social ties within their community and want to age-in-place. Atlanta residents are no different.

Community Experience

About half (49%) of Atlanta members age 50-plus have lived in their community for at least 25 years and most say their community is a good place to age in place.

Atlanta members age 50-plus have deep roots in their community. About half (49%) have lived in their community for at least 25 years. One in six (16%) has lived in their community between 15 and 25 years, and about a third (34%) has lived in their community between 0 and 15 years.

Rate Community as Place to Age in Place



Nearly eight in ten (78%) say their community is an excellent, very good or good place for older people to live. This high rating of their community is likely influenced by the fact that many have lived there for at least 25 years and desire to remain there as they get older.

Most Atlanta members age 50-plus are unlikely to move into a different home within their community (63%) or move outside their community (52%) in their retirement years.

Atlanta members age 50-plus want to continue to live in their community and their home for as long they can. More than half (51%) say it is extremely or very important to stay in their community as they age. Even more respondents (83%) say it is extremely or very important to stay in their own home as they age.



Important to stay in your own home as you age

83%

Important to stay in your own community as you age

51%

Not likely to move to a different home in the same community

63%

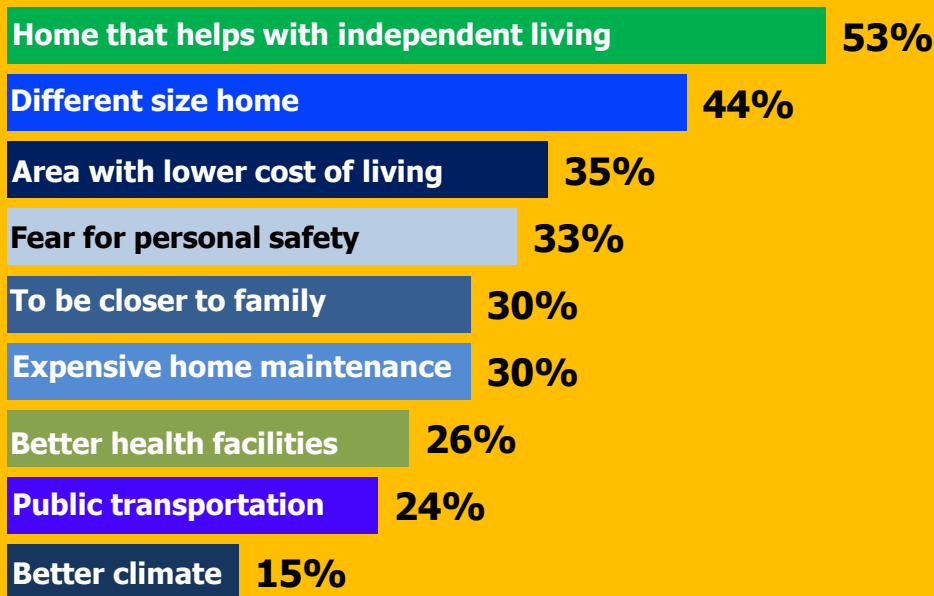
Not likely to move to a different home in a new community

52%

Community Experience

Members say the top factors that would impact their decision to move out of the area are finding a home that helps them live independently and is an appropriate size for their needs.

While it is important for many (51%) respondents to remain in their community as they age, if Atlanta members were to consider moving when they retire and do not work, over half (53%) say that they would move because they want a home that will help them live independently as they age.

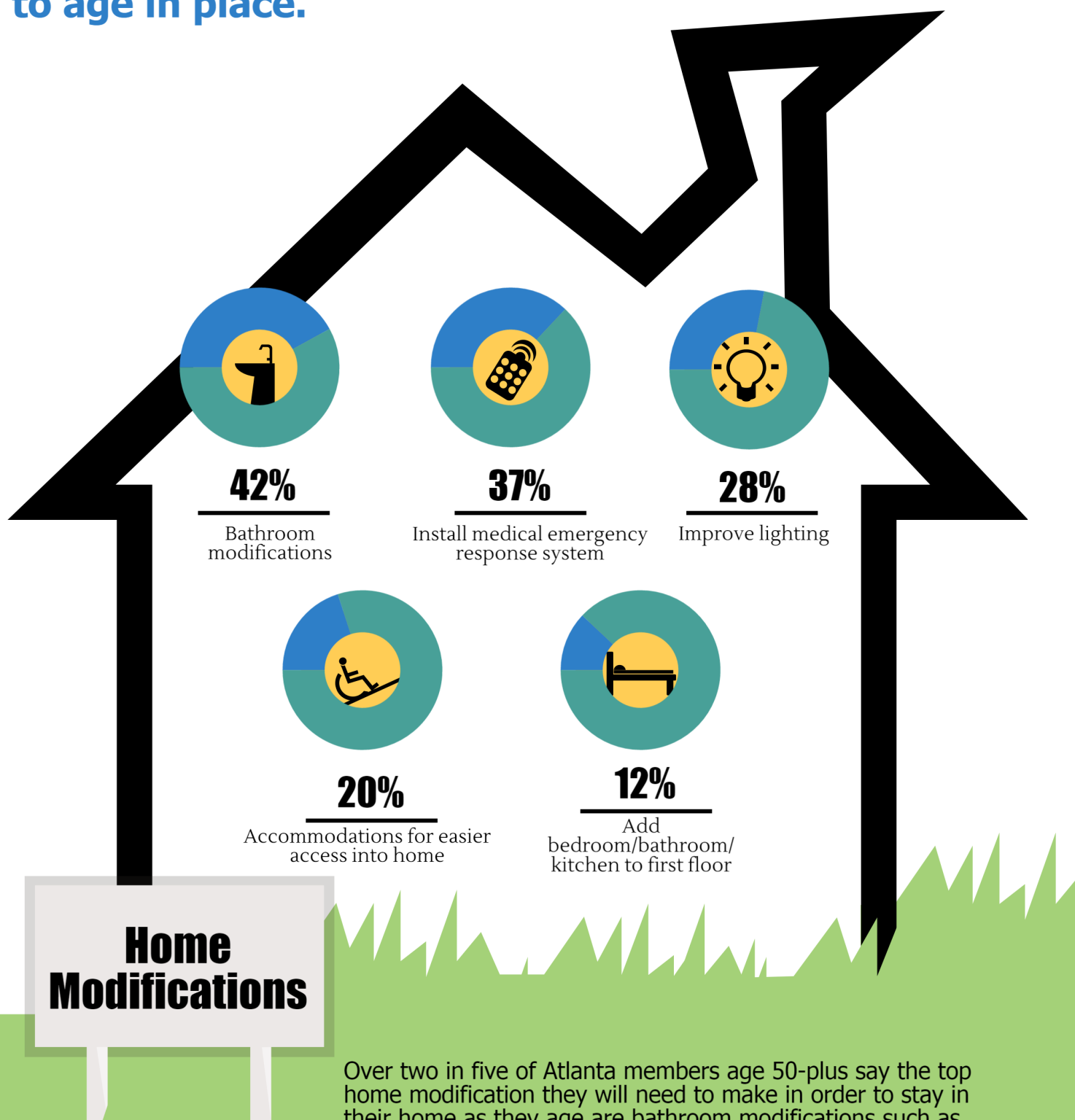


The majority of Atlanta members age 50-plus own their own home and live in a single family home.

Two-thirds of respondents (66%) own their home while about a quarter (26%) rents. Two-thirds live in a single family home. One in seven lives in an apartment and fewer than one in ten lives in condominium or townhome or duplex. While most say they want to age-in-place, many will need to make home modifications in order to do so.

Type of Home	
Single Family Home	67%
Apartment	14%
Condominium	7%
Townhouse/Duplex	5%

Many Atlanta members age 50-plus say they will need to make home modifications to enable them to age in place.



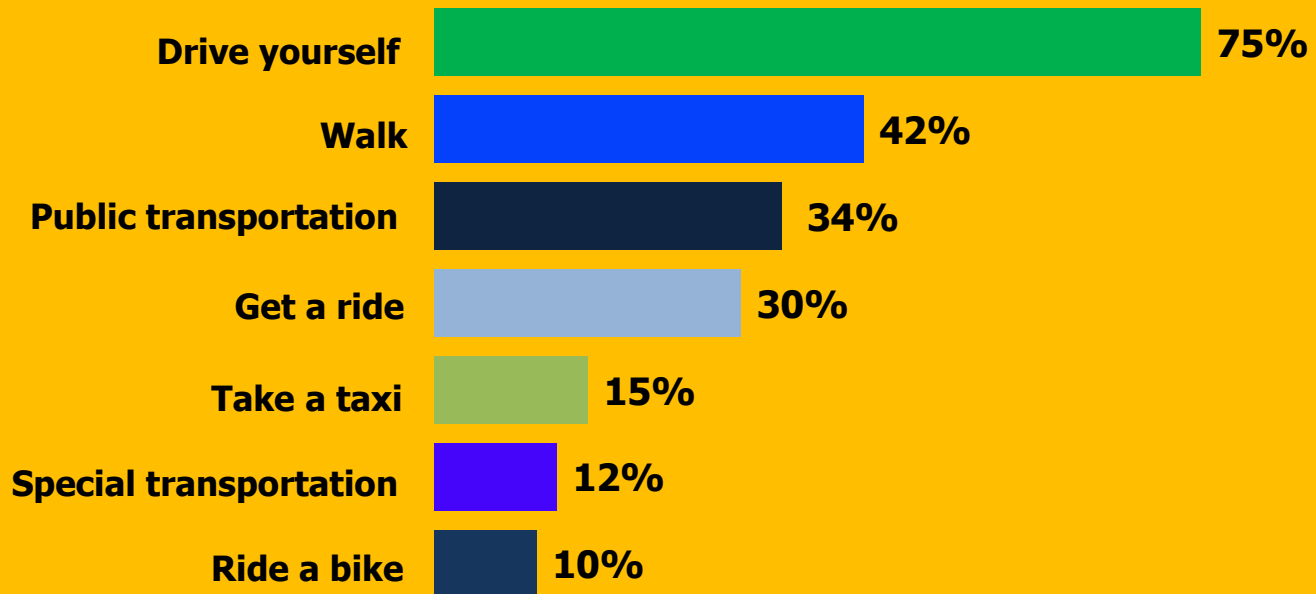
Home Modifications

Over two in five of Atlanta members age 50-plus say the top home modification they will need to make in order to stay in their home as they age are bathroom modifications such as installing grab bars, handrails, high toilet seats or non-slip tile. Installing emergency response systems are a likely modification for over one in three. Another three in ten expect to improve lighting and one in five will need to add things like ramps or chairlifts for easier access into and within their home. Only 12 percent say they will need to make structural changes like adding a bedroom or bathroom on the first floor.

Community Experience

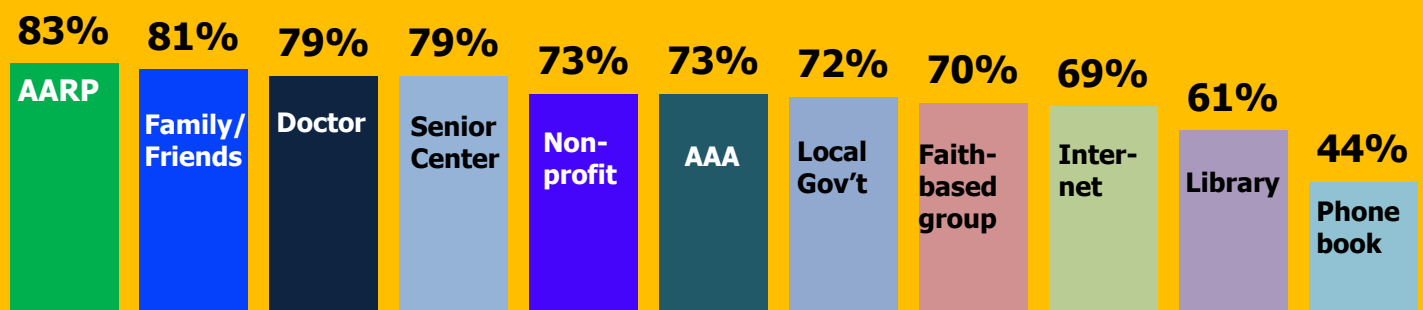
Most Atlanta members drive themselves when they need to get around. Many also walk, use public transportation, or get a ride.

Three-quarters (75%) say when they need to get around for things like shopping, visiting the doctor, or running errands they drive themselves.



Atlanta members say they would turn most to AARP or family, friends, or neighbors for information on services for older adults.

Over four in five say they would turn to AARP or family or friends for information about services for older adults such as caregiving, home delivered meals, home repair, medical transport, or social activities. About eight in ten would turn to a local doctor or health care professional or a local senior center. At least seven in ten would turn to a local non-profit, local Area Agency on Aging, local government, or faith-based organizations for this type of information. More than three in five would look to the Internet or the library and over two in five would turn to the phone book.





Community Features

The formula for what makes a community livable isn't particularly complex. For the most part, the features are fairly simple. In a livable community, people of all ages can go for a walk, safely cross the street, ride a bike, get around without a car, live comfortably, work or volunteer, enjoy public places, socialize, spend time outdoors, be entertained, go shopping, buy healthy food, find the services they need, and make their city, town, or neighborhood a lifelong home. A community that includes all of these livable community features can be great for people of all ages.

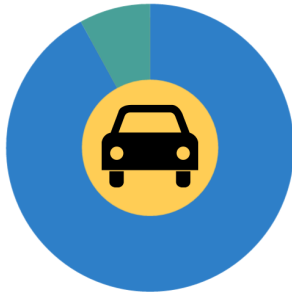
Atlanta members rated their community on 66 characteristics across eight domains (Health and Wellness, Transportation, Housing, Outdoor Spaces, Social Participation, Volunteering and Civic Engagement, Job Opportunities, and Community Information) in order to identify important and available community features.

Summary of Average Community Feature/Domain



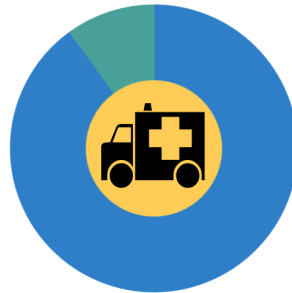
Average Importance Rating of Features within each Atlanta Community Domain
(On a 5 point scale where 5 = Extremely Important and 1= Not At All Important)

Transportation



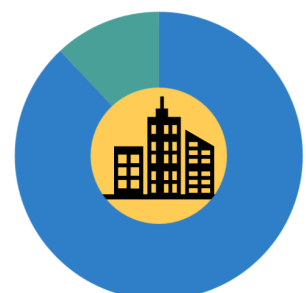
4.59

Health and Wellness



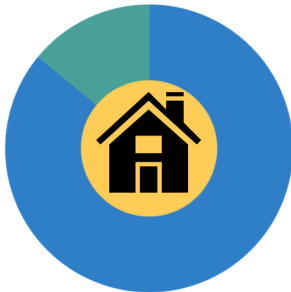
4.49

Outdoor Spaces



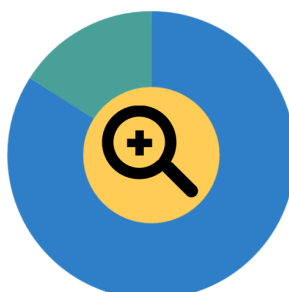
4.39

Housing



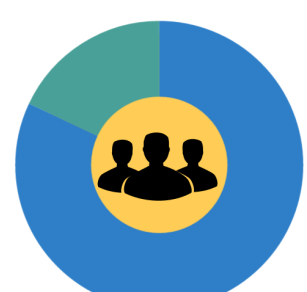
4.27

Community Info



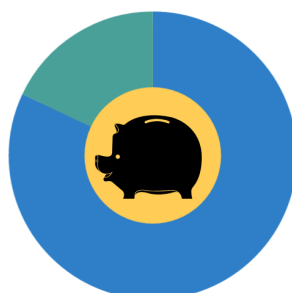
4.18

Social Participation



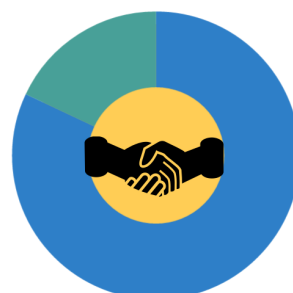
4.14

Job Opportunities



4.13

Volunteer and Civic Engagement



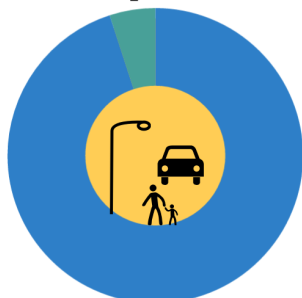
4.12

Summary of Extremely/Very Important Community Features



Top Important Item Within Each Atlanta Community Feature/Domain
(Percent of respondents who rated the item as Extremely/Very Important)

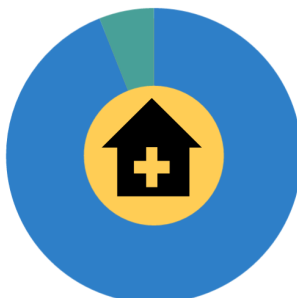
Transportation



95%

Well lit, safe streets
for all users

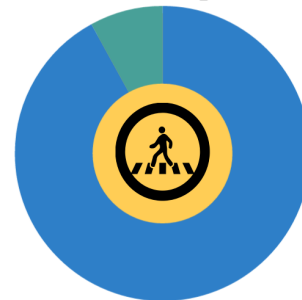
Health and Wellness



94%

Well-maintained
hospitals and
health facilities

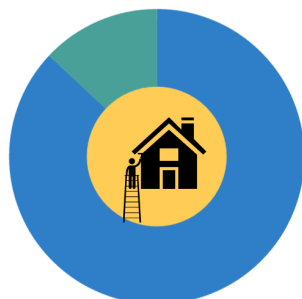
Outdoor Spaces



92%

Sidewalks that are
in good condition

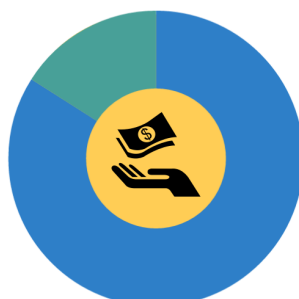
Housing



87%

Well-maintained
homes and properties

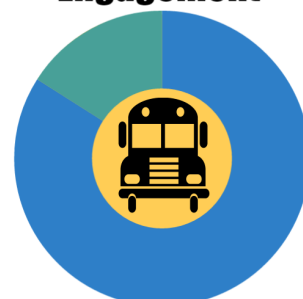
Social Participation



84%

Activities that offer
senior discounts

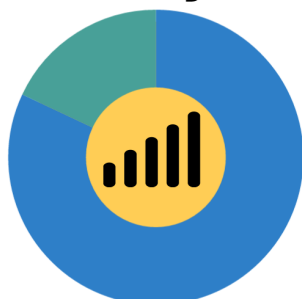
Volunteer and Civic Engagement



84%

Transportation to
and from activities

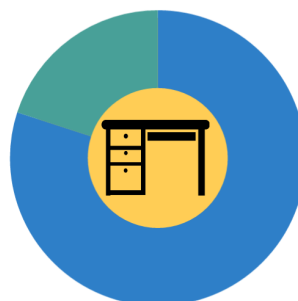
Community Info



82%

Free Internet in
public spaces

Job Opportunities



80%

Jobs that meet the needs
of people with disabilities

Top Extremely/Very Important Community Features



Top Atlanta Important Community Items Across All 66 Features/8 Domains
(Percent of respondents who rated the item as Extremely or Very Important)

Top 10 Overall Community Features	Importance	Feature/ Domain
Well-lit, safe streets and intersections	95%	Transportation and Streets
Easy to read traffic signs	95%	Transportation and Streets
Well-maintained streets	95%	Transportation and Streets
Special transportation services for people with disabilities and older adults	93%	Transportation and Streets
Reliable public transportation	93%	Transportation and Streets
Affordable public transportation	93%	Transportation and Streets
Well-maintained public transportation vehicles	92%	Transportation and Streets
Sidewalks that are in good condition, free from obstructions, and safe and accessible for wheelchairs and other assistive mobility devices	92%	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
Safe public transportation stops or areas	91%	Transportation and Streets
Well-maintained public buildings and facilities that are accessible to people of different physical abilities	91%	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings



Community Needs

Every community has its own culture, social structure, traditions, history, and needs. A community needs assessment is a tool to understand and identify community needs defined as the gap between what is and what should be. In order to identify the needs of Atlanta AARP members age 50-plus, survey respondents were asked how important community features and services were to them. Then they were asked if these features and services existed in their community. These questions were then paired together to identify community needs or “gaps” between the importance of a feature or service and its existence in the community.

To compare these questions, respondents who said a feature or service is extremely, very, or somewhat important were aggregated and then compared to respondents who said whether or not the feature or service existed in their community.

Summary of Community Needs Gap by Feature/Domain



Top Atlanta Community Needs Gap Item Within Each Feature/Domain
(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)

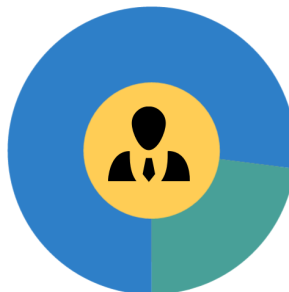
Job Opportunities



79%

Job training opportunities for older adults

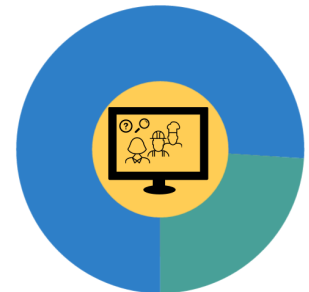
Community Info



77%

Information delivered in person

Volunteer and Civic Engagement



76%

Volunteer training opportunities

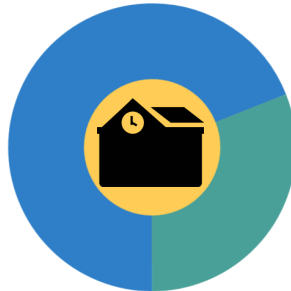
Health and Wellness



72%

Affordable home health care providers

Social Participation



69%

Local schools that involve older adults in events

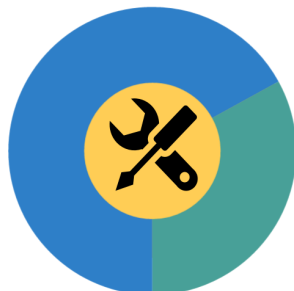
Outdoor Spaces



68%

Well-maintained public restrooms

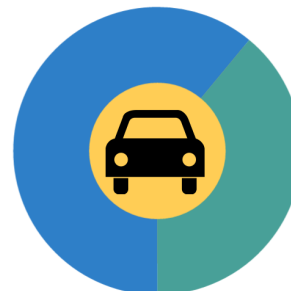
Housing



67%

A repair service for low-income and older adults

Transportation



61%

Driver education courses

Top Community Needs Gaps



Top Atlanta Community Needs Gap Item Across All 66 Features/8 Domains
(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)

Top 10 Overall Gaps	Gap	Feature/ Domain
Job training opportunities for older adults	79%	Job Opportunities
Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities	78%	Job Opportunities
Community information that is delivered in person to people who have difficulty or may not be able to leave their home	77%	Community Information
Clearly displayed printed community information with large lettering	77%	Community Information
Volunteer training opportunities	76%	Volunteering and Civic Engagement
Transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it	75%	Volunteering and Civic Engagement
Access to community information in one central source	74%	Community Information
Community information that is available in different languages	73%	Community Information
Affordable home health care providers	72%	Health and Wellness
Easy to find information on available volunteer opportunities	72%	Volunteering and Civic Engagement



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Features	% Important	% Present
Sidewalks that are in good condition	96%	38%
Well-maintained public buildings that are accessible to people of different physical abilities	96%	45%
Neighborhood watch programs	96%	45%
Well-maintained and safe public parks	95%	60%
Well-maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities	94%	26%
Public parks with enough benches	92%	37%
Separate pathways for bicyclists and pedestrians	90%	35%



The largest unmet need in outdoor spaces and buildings is

Well-maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities

68%

94% say it is important to have well-maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities. Only **26%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **68%**.

(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Housing Features

Features	% Important	% Present
Well-maintained homes and properties	93%	64%
Home repair contractors who are trustworthy and affordable	91%	37%
Affordable home prices for residents of varying income levels	90%	35%
Well-maintained and safe low-income housing	89%	30%
Seasonal services such as lawn work	89%	30%
Homes that are equipped with things like a no step entrance, wider doorways, etc.	88%	30%
Home repair service for low-income and older adults that help with repairs	88%	21%



The largest unmet need in housing features is

A repair service for low-income and older adults

67%

88% say it is important to have a home repair service for low-income and older adults that helps with things like roof or window repairs. Only **21%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **67%**.

(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Transportation and Streets

Features	% Important	% Present
Well-maintained streets	96%	51%
Easy to read traffic signs	96%	74%
Well-lit, safe streets and intersections for all users	96%	50%
Special transportation services for seniors or people with disabilities	96%	65%
Reliable public transportation	95%	71%
Well-maintained public transportation vehicles	95%	67%
Enforced speed limits	95%	53%
Affordable public transportation	95%	74%
Accessible and convenient public transportation	95%	80%



Transportation and Streets, cont.

Features	% Important	% Present
Public parking lots and areas to park	95%	56%
Audio/visual pedestrian crossings	94%	43%
Safe public transportation stops or areas	94%	57%
Affordable public parking	94%	44%
Driver education/ refresher course	88%	27%

The largest unmet need in transportation features is

61%

**Driver education/
refresher courses**



88% say it is important to have driver education/refresher courses. Only **27%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **61%**.

(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Job Opportunities

Features	% Important	% Present
Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities	91%	13%
Job training opportunities for older adults	90%	11%
A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults	83%	11%



The largest unmet need in employment features is



Job training opportunities for older adults

79%

90% say it is important to have job training opportunities for older adults who want to learn new job skills within their job or get training in a different field of work. Only **11%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **79%**.

(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Community Information

Features	% Important	% Present
Free access to computers and the internet in public places	92%	59%
Information delivered in person to people who have difficulty leaving their home	92%	15%
Access to information in one central location	92%	18%
Clearly displayed printed community information with large lettering	92%	15%
An automated community information source	89%	17%
Information that is available in different languages	88%	15%



The largest unmet need in communication and information is

Community information delivered in person

77%

92% say it is important to have information that is delivered in person to those who may not be able to leave their home. Only 15% say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of 77%.

(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Volunteering and Civic Engagement

Features	% Important	% Present
Opportunities for older adults to participate in decision making roles	93%	27%
Transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it	92%	17%
A range of volunteer activities to choose from	92%	26%
Easy to find information on available local volunteer opportunities	91%	19%
Volunteer training opportunities to help better perform volunteer role	91%	15%

The largest unmet need in volunteering and civic engagement is



Volunteer training opportunities

76%

91% say it is important to offer volunteer training opportunities to help people perform better in their volunteer roles. Only **15%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **76%**.

(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Social Participation, Inclusion, and Education Opportunities

Features	% Important	% Present
Activities that offer senior discounts	93%	34%
Activities that are affordable to all residents	92%	27%
Widely publicized reliable information about activities	91%	30%
Activities that involve both younger and older people	91%	31%
Activities specifically geared towards older adults	91%	34%
A variety of cultural activities for diverse populations	90%	28%
Continuing education classes	88%	31%
Social clubs such as book, gardening, craft or hobby	88%	34%
Local schools that involve older adults in events and activities	87%	18%
Conveniently located venues for entertainment	86%	43%

The largest unmet need in social participation, inclusion, and education opportunities is



Local schools that involve older adults in events and activities

69%

87% say it is important that local schools that involve older adults in events and activities. Only **18%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **69%**.

(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Health and Wellness

Features	% Important	% Present
Fitness activities specifically geared towards older adults	98%	43%
Conveniently located health and social services	97%	45%
A service that helps seniors find and access health services	97%	33%
Well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities	96%	60%
A variety of health care professionals	96%	53%
Respectful and helpful hospital and clinic staff	96%	56%
Conveniently located emergency care centers	96%	51%
Easily understandable and helpful hospital answering services	96%	43%
Easy to find information on local health and supportive services	96%	31%



Health and Wellness, cont.

Features	% Important	% Present
Home care services including health, personal care, and housekeeping	96%	28%
Affordable home health care	95%	23%
Well-trained certified home health care providers	95%	26%
Health and wellness programs and classes	95%	37%
Health care professionals who speak different languages	89%	33%



The largest unmet need in health services is

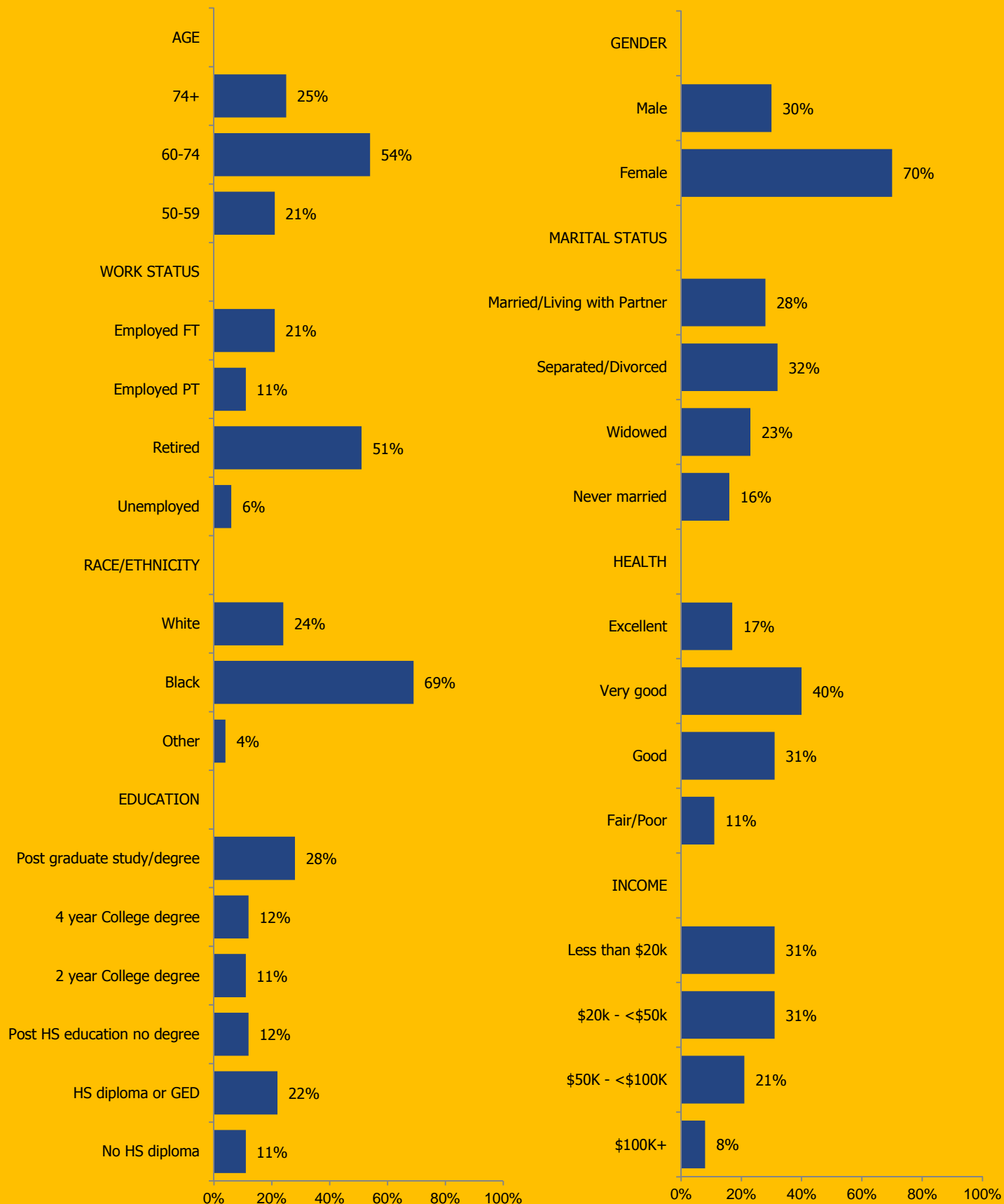
Affordable home health care **72%**

95% say it is important to have affordable home health care providers. Only **23%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **72%**.

(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)

Demographics

n= 502





Real Possibilities

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as health care, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse. We advocate for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; www.aarp.org; AARP TV Et Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Espanol, a Spanish-language website addressing the interests and needs of Hispanics. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. The AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at www.aarp.org.

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