



Livability For All: The 2016 AARP Age-Friendly Community Survey of Lansing, Michigan Residents 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 3,000 residents age 50-plus living in Lansing, Michigan. The survey was fielded from July 24 to September 4, 2015. Resident addresses were provided by Survey Sampling International's (SSI) proprietary database. Each sampled resident 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 471 completed surveys were returned by the cutoff date of September 4, 2015. There were 328 undeliverable addresses.

This survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.6 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 4.6 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every resident age 50-plus in the sampled area were asked the same questions. The sample is weighted by age and gender and age and membership in AARP to reflect the actual distribution of residents age 50-plus in Lansing, Michigan. The weighted number of respondents is 471.

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 Lansing Community Features Are Concentrated In Two Domains: Transportation and Health

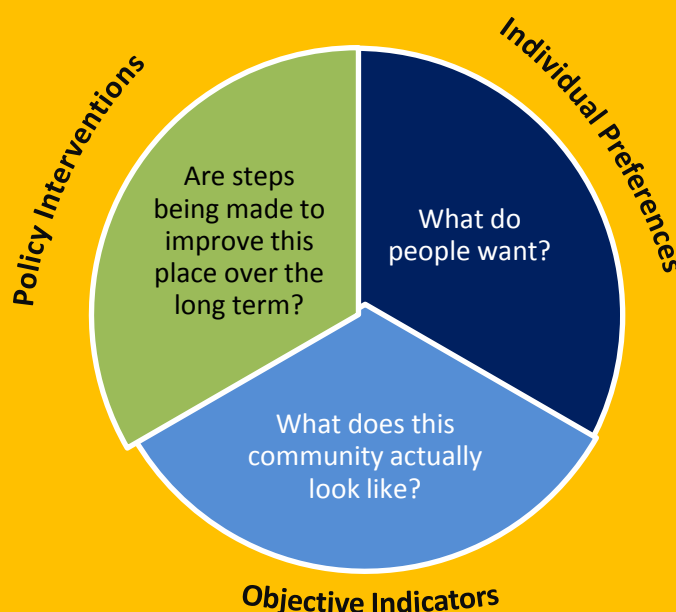
A livable community provides resources that allow residents to age-in-place, and fosters residents' engagement in their community's civic, economic, and social life. The **"2016 AARP Age-Friendly Community Survey of Lansing, Michigan Residents Age 50-plus"** was commissioned to help Lansing decision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

- Lansing residents age 50-plus have deep roots in their community. Three in five (61%) have lived in their community for 25 years or more. Most do not plan to move, and eight in ten (81%) say their community is a good place for older people to live.
- Overall, Transportation and Streets and Health and Wellness are rated as the most important livable community features/domains for Lansing residents age 50-plus among all eight domains. The Transportation and Streets items relate to well-maintained streets and safe and reliable transportation options. The Health and Wellness items relate to convenient and well-maintained health care facilities and a variety of affordable health care professionals.
- Well-maintained streets, conveniently located emergency care centers, well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities, and a variety of health care professionals (94% for each) are the top four important community features for Lansing residents.

Executive Summary cont.

The Top Reported Lansing Community Needs Are Concentrated In Five Areas: Community Information, Volunteering and Civic Engagement, Job Opportunities, Housing, and Transportation

- In order to identify the needs of Lansing residents 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 streets and health and wellness dominated the list of important features, the top community needs gaps are spread across the areas of community information, volunteering and civic engagement, job opportunities, housing, and transportation and streets.
- Clearly displayed printed community information with large lettering (77%) is identified as the top community needs gap followed by community information that is delivered in person to people who may not be able to leave their home (75%) and an automated community information source that is easy to understand (73%). 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. Lansing residents are no different.

Community Experience

Three in five (61%) Lansing residents 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.

Lansing residents age 50-plus have deep roots in their community. Three in five (61%) have lived in their community for at least 25 years. One in seven (14%) has lived in their community between 15 and 25 years, and a quarter (24%) has lived in their community between 0 and 15 years.

Rate Community as Place to Age in Place



Eight in ten (81%) 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.

Many Lansing residents age 50-plus are unlikely to move into a different home within their community (60%) or move outside their community (50%) in their retirement years.

Lansing residents age 50-plus want to continue to live in their community and their home for as long they can. Two in five (40%) say it is extremely or very important to stay in their community as they age. More than twice as many respondents (87%) 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

87%

Important to stay in your own community as you age

40%

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

60%

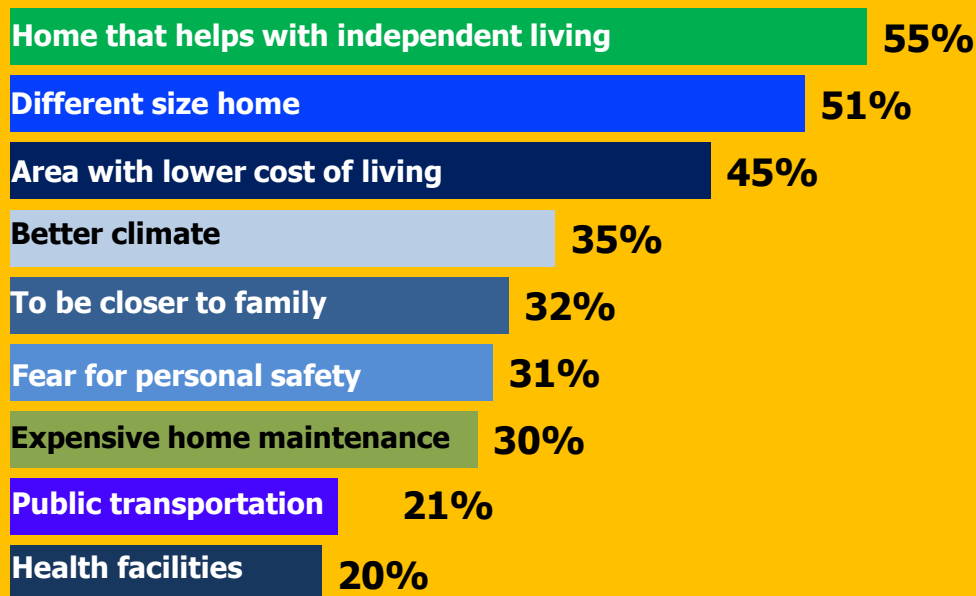
Not likely to move to a different home in a new community

50%

Community Experience

Residents 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 (40%) respondents to remain in their community as they age, if Lansing residents were to consider moving when they retire and do not work, over half (55%) say that they would move because they want a home that will help them live independently as they age or is a more suitable size home (51%).

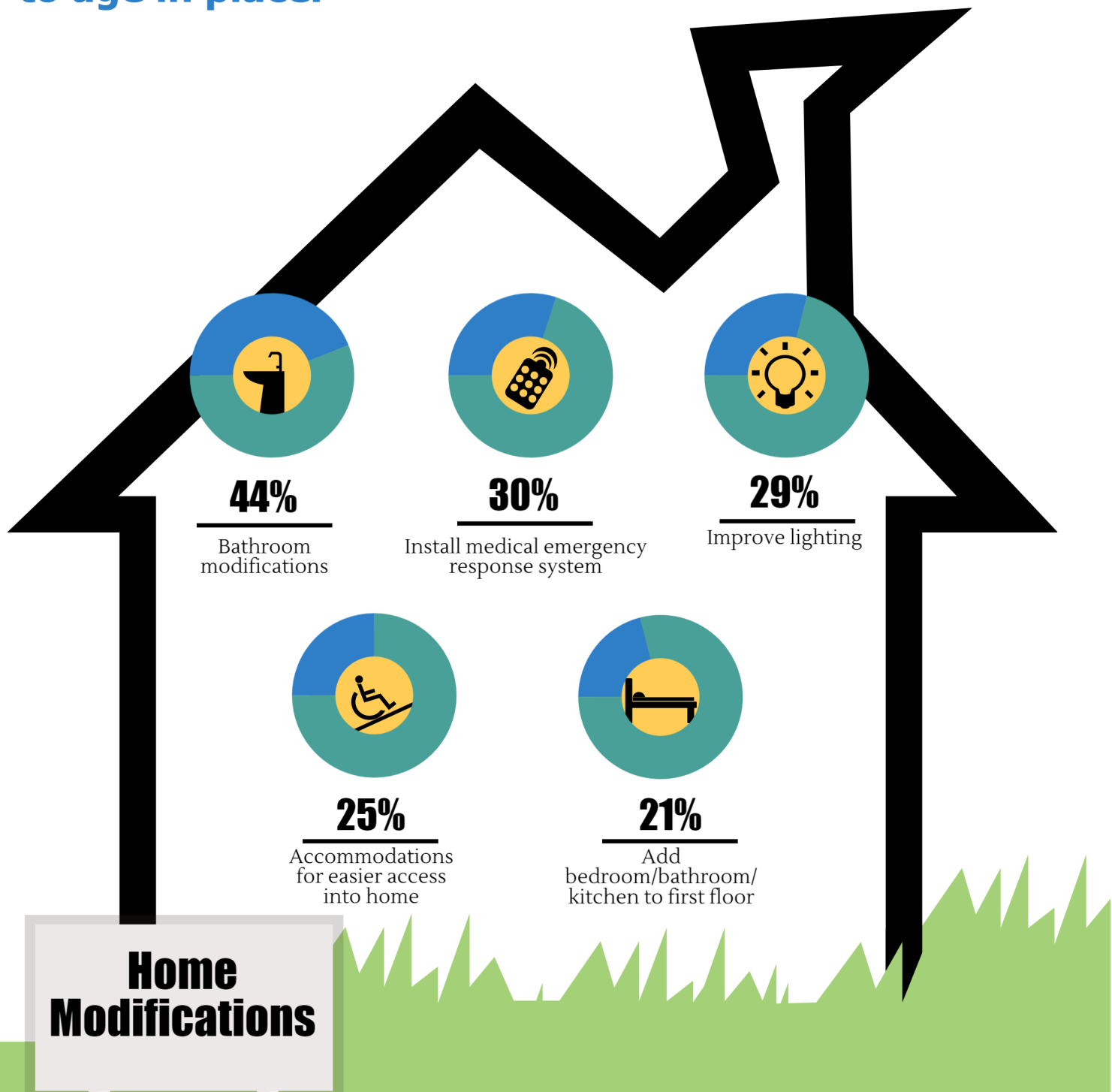


The majority of Lansing residents age 50-plus own their own home and live in a single family home.

Three-quarters of respondents (75%) own their home while about one in five (22%) rents. About three-quarters live in a single family home. One in ten lives in an apartment and fewer than one in ten lives in townhome or duplex, condominium, or mobile home. 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	73%
Apartment	11%
Townhouse/Duplex	6%
Condominium	5%
Mobile home	3%

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

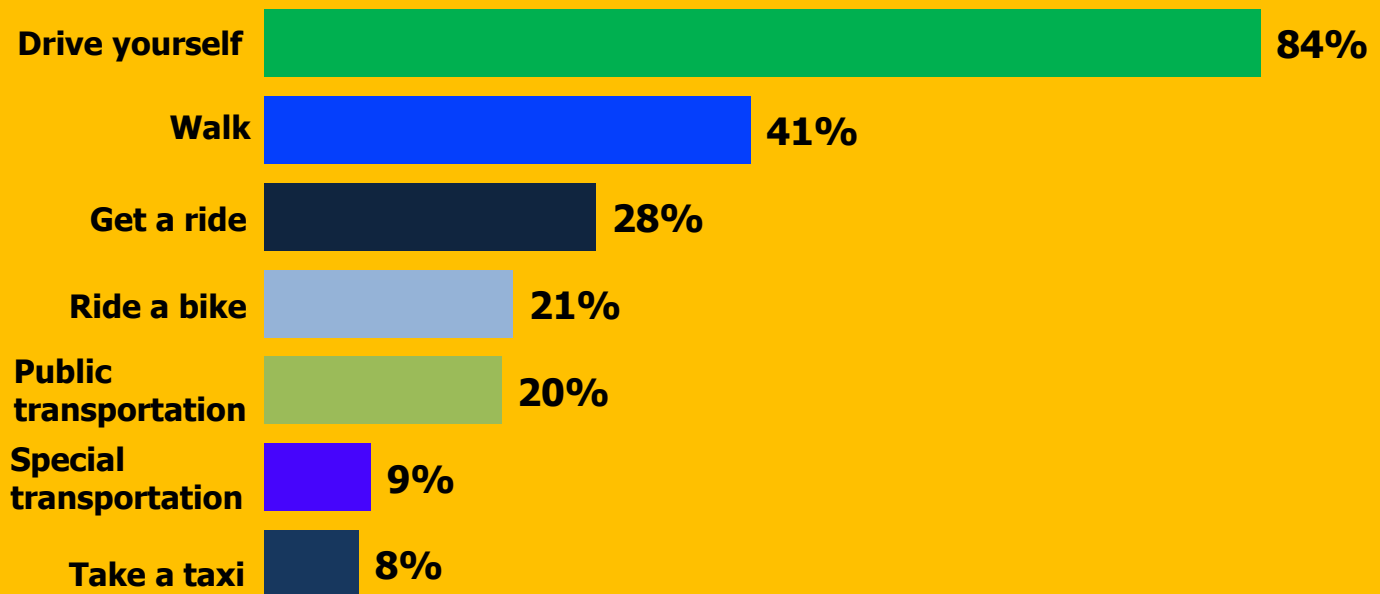


Over two in five of Lansing residents age 50-plus say the top home modification they will need to make in order to stay in their home as they age are bathroom modifications such as installing grab bars, handrails, high toilet seats or non-slip tile. Installing emergency response systems and improved lighting are a likely modification for about three in ten. A quarter says they will need to add things like ramps or chairlifts for easier access into and within their home. One in five says they will need to make structural changes like adding a bedroom or bathroom on the first floor.

Community Experience

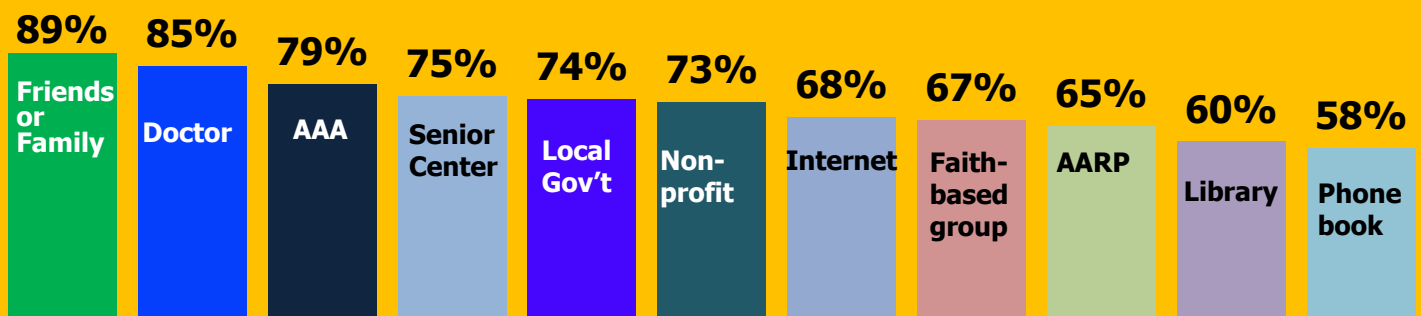
Most Lansing residents drive themselves when they need to get around. Many also walk or get a ride.

More than four in five (84%) say when they need to get around for things like shopping, visiting the doctor, or running errands they drive themselves.



Residents in Lansing say they would turn most to family, friends, or their doctor for information on services for older adults.

Over four in five say they would turn to family or friends, or their doctor or other health care professional for information about services for older adults such as caregiving, home delivered meals, home repair, medical transport, or social activities. More than seven in ten would turn to their Area Agency on Aging (AAA), a local senior center, a local government office, or a local nonprofit for this type of information. About three in five or more would look to the Internet, faith-based organizations, AARP, the library, or 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.

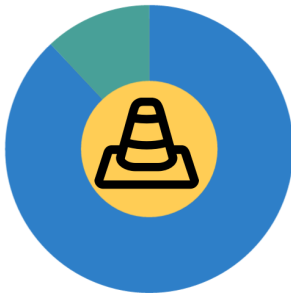
Lansing residents rated their community on 66 characteristics across eight domains (Health and Wellness, Transportation, Housing, Outdoor Spaces, Social Participation, Volunteering and Civic Engagement, Job Opportunities, and Community Information) in order to identify important and available community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

Summary of Average Community Feature/Domain



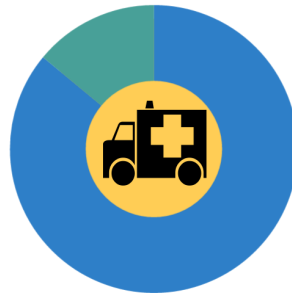
Average Importance Rating of Features within each Lansing Community Domain
(On a 5 point scale where 5 = Extremely Important and 1= Not At All Important)

Transportation



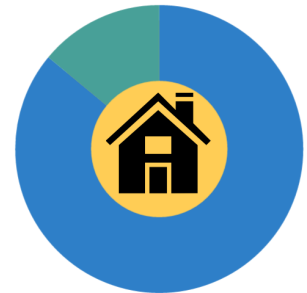
4.41

Health and Wellness



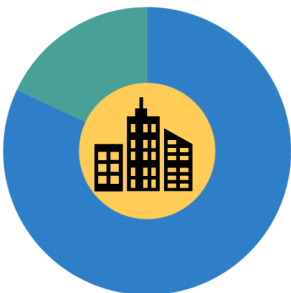
4.34

Housing



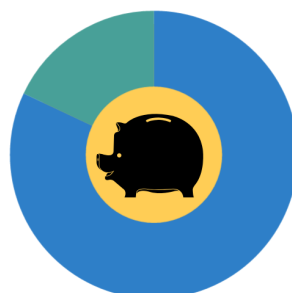
4.30

Outdoor Spaces



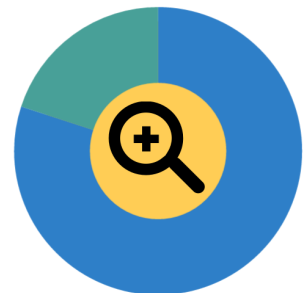
4.14

Job Opportunities



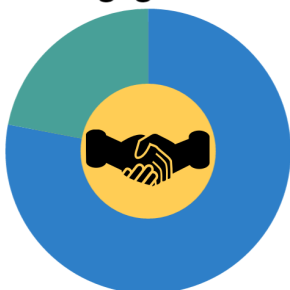
4.10

Community Info



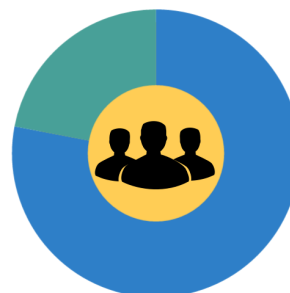
4.02

Volunteer and Civic Engagement



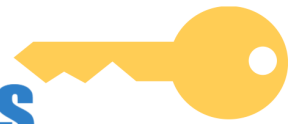
3.98

Social Participation



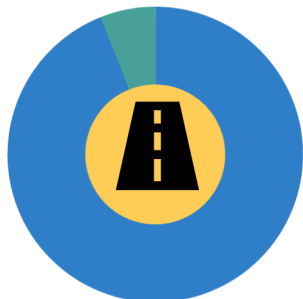
3.96

Summary of Extremely/Very Important Community Features



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

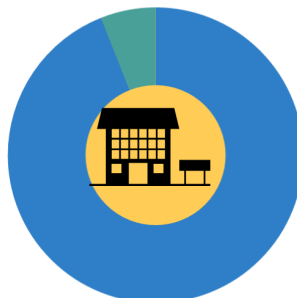
Transportation



94%

Well-maintained streets

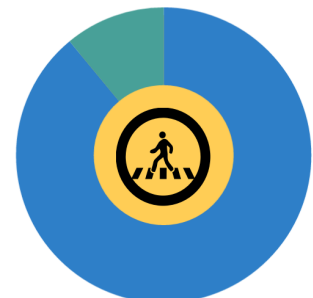
Health and Wellness



94%

Convenient emergency care center

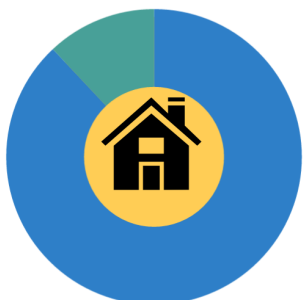
Outdoor Spaces



89%

Sidewalks in good condition

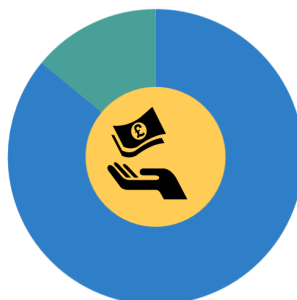
Housing



88%

Well-maintained homes and properties

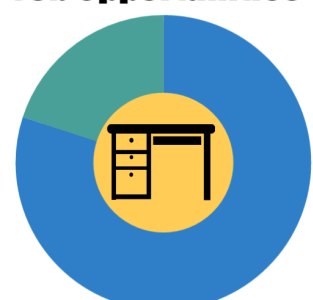
Social Participation



86%

Affordable social activities

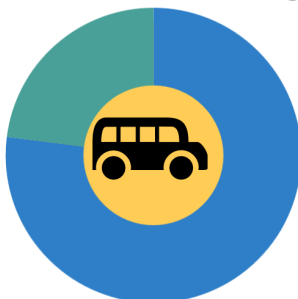
Job Opportunities



80%

Jobs that meet the needs of people with disabilities

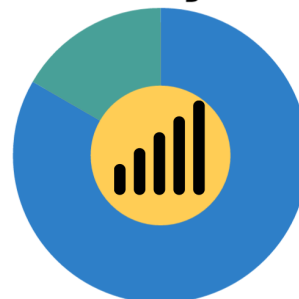
Volunteer and Civic Engagement



77%

Transportation to and from activities

Community Info



75%

Free access to computers and the Internet

Top Extremely/Very Important Community Features



Top Lansing 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-maintained streets	94%	Transportation and Streets
Conveniently located emergency care centers	94%	Health and Wellness
Well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities	94%	Health and Wellness
A variety of health care professionals	94%	Health and Wellness
Easy to read traffic signs	93%	Transportation and Streets
Well-lit, safe streets and intersections	92%	Transportation and Streets
Safe public transportation stops and areas	92%	Transportation and Streets
Special transportation services for people with disabilities and older people	90%	Transportation and Streets
Affordable health care providers	89%	Health and Wellness
Reliable public transportation	89%	Transportation and Streets

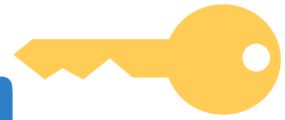


Community Needs

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

Community Info



77%

Clearly displayed information

Volunteer and Civic Engagement



72%

Transportation to and from activities

Job Opportunities



72%

Job training opportunities

Housing



70%

Home repair for low-income and older adults

Transportation



67%

Well-maintained streets

Health and Wellness



64%

Affordable home health care providers

Outdoor Spaces



58%

Well-maintained public restrooms

Social Participation



58%

Local schools involving older adults

Top Community Needs Gaps



Top Lansing Community Needs Gap Item Across All 66 Features/8 Domains

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

Top 10 Overall Gaps	Gap	Feature/ Domain
Clearly displayed printed community information with large lettering	77%	Community Information
Community information that is delivered in person to people who may have difficulty or may not be able to leave their home	75%	Community Information
An automated community information source that is easy to understand	73%	Community Information
Transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it	72%	Volunteering and Civic Engagement
Job training opportunities for older adults	72%	Job Opportunities
Access to community information in one central source	72%	Community Information
A home repair service for low-income and older adults	70%	Housing
Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities	69%	Job Opportunities
A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults	69%	Job Opportunities
Well-maintained streets	67%	Transportation and Streets



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Features	% Important	% Present
Well-maintained public buildings that are accessible to people of different physical abilities	96%	55%
Well-maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities	96%	38%
Sidewalks that are in good condition	95%	41%
Neighborhood watch programs	94%	62%
Well-maintained and safe public parks	91%	55%
Public parks with enough benches	91%	38%
Separate pathways for bicyclists and pedestrians	90%	46%



The largest unmet need in outdoor spaces and buildings is
well-maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities

58%

96% say it is important to have well-maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities. Only **38%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **58%**.

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



Housing Features

Features	% Important	% Present
Home repair contractors who are trustworthy and affordable	96%	49%
Well-maintained homes and properties	96%	69%
Well-maintained and safe low-income housing	95%	31%
Seasonal services such as lawn and snow removal	95%	25%
Home repair service for low-income and older adults that help with repairs	95%	25%
Homes that are equipped with things like a no step entrance, wider doorways, etc.	95%	37%
Affordable home prices for residents of varying income levels	92%	44%



The largest unmet need in housing features is
home repair service for low-income and older adults

70%

95% say it is important to have home repair services for low-income and older adults that help with repairs. Only **25%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **70%**.

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



Transportation and Streets

Features	% Important	% Present
Special transportation services for seniors or people with disabilities	98%	80%
Well-maintained safe streets and intersections for all users	98%	56%
Well-maintained streets and roads	98%	31%
Easy to read traffic signs	98%	73%
Well-maintained public transportation vehicles	98%	68%
Enforced speed limits	97%	53%
Safe public transportation stops or areas	97%	61%
Reliable public transportation	97%	72%
Public parking lots, areas to park	97%	61%



Transportation and Streets, cont.

Features	% Important	% Present
Affordable public transportation	96%	72%
Affordable public parking	96%	50%
Accessible and convenient public transportation	95%	80%
Audio/visual pedestrian crossings	95%	45%
Driver education/ refresher course	91%	25%

The largest unmet need in transportation features is

67%

Well-maintained streets



98% say it is important to have streets and roads that are well maintained. Only **31%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **67%**.

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



Job Opportunities

Features	% Important	% Present
Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities	93%	24%
Job training opportunities for older adults	92%	20%
A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults	89%	20%



The largest unmet need in employment features is



job training opportunities for older adults **72%**

92% say it is important to have job training opportunities for older adults. Only **20%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **72%**.

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



Community Information

Features	% Important	% Present
Clearly displayed printed community information with large lettering	94%	17%
Free access to computers and the internet in public places	93%	61%
Access to information in one central location	93%	21%
An automated community information source	93%	20%
Information delivered in person to people who have difficulty leaving their home	92%	17%
Information that is available in different languages	85%	21%



The largest unmet need in communication and information is

clearly displayed printed community information with large lettering

77%

94% say it is important to have clearly displayed printed community information with large lettering. Only 17% 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
Transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it	95%	23%
Opportunities for older adults to participate in decision making roles	93%	29%
Volunteer training opportunities to better perform	93%	29%
A range of volunteer activities to choose from	93%	45%
Easy to find information on available local volunteer opportunities	92%	26%

The largest unmet need in volunteering and civic engagement is



Transportation to and from volunteer activities



95% say it is important to have transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it. Only **23%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **72%**.

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



Social Participation, Inclusion, and Education Opportunities

Features	% Important	% Present
Activities that are affordable to all residents	94%	37%
Activities that offer senior discounts	94%	48%
Information about activities that is widely publicized	94%	42%
Activities that involve both younger and older people	92%	42%
Activities specifically geared towards older adults	92%	40%
Social clubs such as book, gardening, craft or hobby	90%	48%
Conveniently located venues for entertainment	89%	60%
A variety of cultural activities for diverse populations	88%	41%
Continuing education classes	88%	57%
Local schools that involve older adults in events and activities	88%	30%

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

Local schools that involve older adults

58%

88% say it is important to have local schools that involve older adults in activities. Only **30%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **58%**.

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





Health and Wellness

Features	% Important	% Present
Well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities	97%	81%
A variety of health care professionals	97%	78%
Conveniently located emergency care centers	97%	81%
Respectful and helpful hospital and clinical staff	97%	75%
Home care services including health and personal care	97%	52%
Affordable home health care providers	96%	32%
Well-trained certified home health care providers	96%	46%
Easily understandable and helpful hospital answering services	96%	53%
Easy to find information on local health and supportive services	96%	41%



Health and Wellness, cont.

Features	% Important	% Present
Health and wellness programs and classes	96%	55%
Conveniently located health and social services	95%	60%
A service that helps seniors find and access health services	95%	44%
Fitness activities specifically geared towards older adults	95%	47%
Health care professionals who speak different languages	87%	43%

The largest unmet need in health services is



**Affordable home health
care providers**

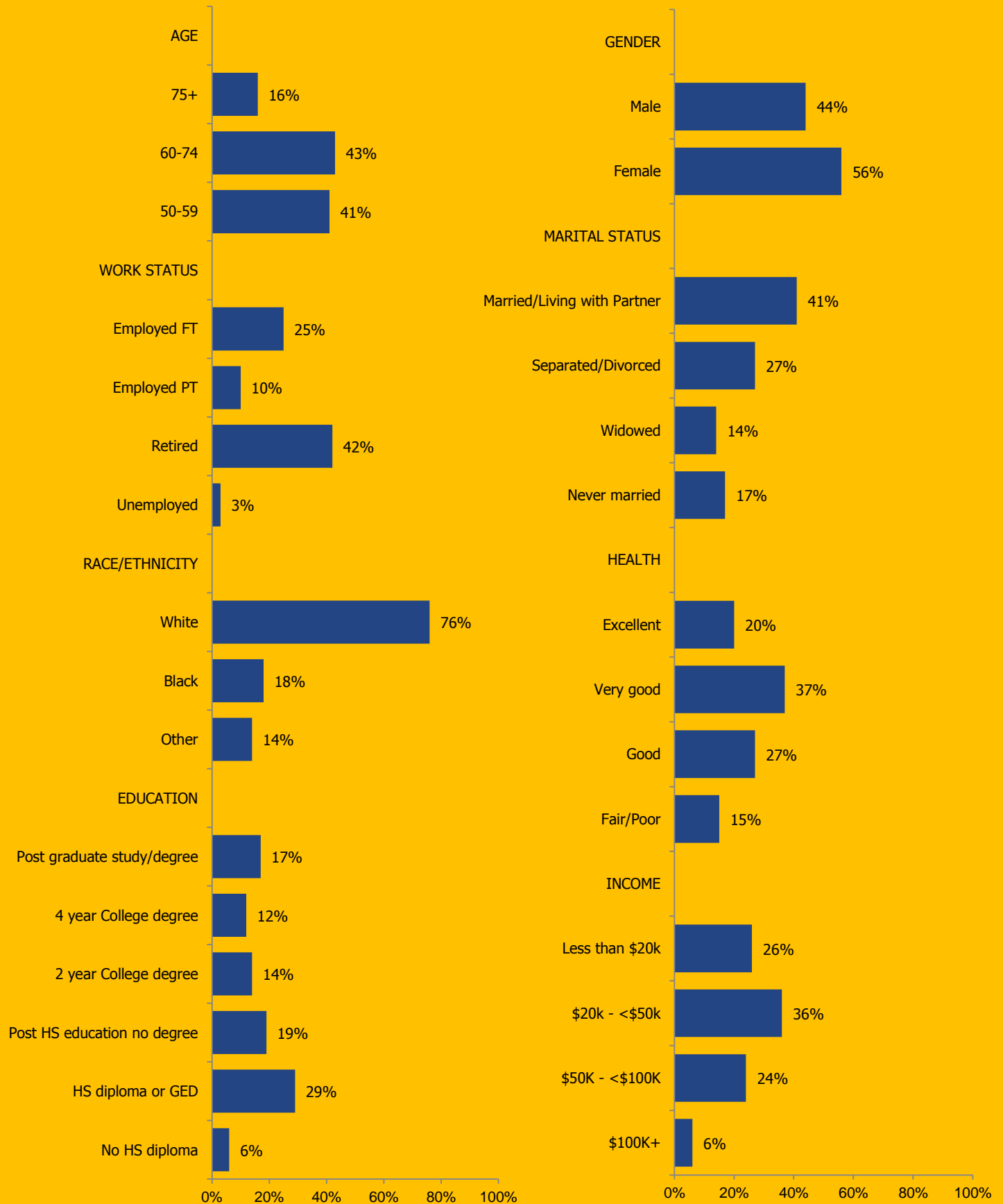
64%

96% say it is important to have affordable home health care providers. Only **32%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **64%**.

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

Demographics

n= 471





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.

Acknowledgments

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