



Livability For All

in

San Antonio

**An Age-Friendly Community Survey
of Residents Age 50-plus**

AARP[®]
Real Possibilities

2016

Background

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.¹ 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 that influence the quality of life of those in a community, particularly older adults. The eight areas or domains are: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Housing, Transportation, 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 age-friendly community in order to help communities: (1) establish a baseline with regards to older adults being able to age in place, and (2) conduct a community needs assessment to identify and prioritize areas of focus.

To minimize the survey length as well as respondent burden, the AARP 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 domains of age-friendly community are:

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

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 for all.



¹ Learn more at www.agefriendlyworld.org

Executive Summary

For San Antonio residents, the most important age-friendly community features center around healthcare services, housing features that support independent living, and safe streets and sidewalks.

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 San Antonio Age-Friendly Community Survey**" of adults age 50-plus living in San Antonio was commissioned to help the city's decision makers achieve the goal of an age-friendly, livable community.

Survey results show that older San Antonio residents have deep roots in their community. More than half (53%) have lived in their community for over 25 years and the vast majority intend to stay in San Antonio. Nearly nine in ten (88%) say their community is a good, very good or excellent place for older people to live.

Based on the eight domains of an age-friendly community, survey findings also help identify the community features that are most important to San Antonians age 50-plus:



On average, **Health and Wellness** features are rated most important. Specifically, San Antonio residents consider it important to have hospitals, clinics and facilities that are well-maintained and convenient; as well as personalized healthcare services that are helpful, easily accessible and affordable.



Well-maintained homes and reliable home repair contractors from the **Housing** domain also top the list of what is important to San Antonians for an age-friendly community.



Aspects of street safety round out the top tier of important community features for age-friendly living, from the **Outdoor Spaces & Buildings** and **Transportation** domains. According to residents, it is highly important to have well-lit streets and intersections that are safe for all users such as pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers; and sidewalks that are suitable for pedestrians and people of all abilities.

More information on the importance of community features by each of the eight age-friendly community domains can be found in the following pages of this report.

Executive Summary

The top reported need gaps in San Antonio are concentrated in the areas of Job Opportunities, Volunteering and Engagement, Community Information, and Age-Friendly Housing

In order to identify the needs of San Antonians age 50-plus, survey respondents were asked about the importance of a community feature or service, and then they were asked if these features and services exist in their community. These questions were then paired together to identify community needs or "gaps."

While features of Health and Wellness dominate the list of what is important for an age-friendly San Antonio according to survey respondents, the largest community need gaps are concentrated primarily in the areas of Job Opportunities, Volunteering, and Engagement and Community Information. There are also gaps in Housing and Health services that would help residents remain in their homes as they age.



Job Opportunities for older adults is an unmet need for 50-plus adults in San Antonio according to survey results. Job training, job flexibility and jobs adapted to needs of the disabled are all among the largest need gaps.



The chief need for connecting older residents to **Volunteer and Engagement** opportunities is providing transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it. Making information on volunteer opportunities easy to find, and providing volunteer training opportunities are additional unmet needs to supporting community volunteering.



Large gaps are identified regarding the dissemination of **Community Information** that is delivered in person, printed in large lettering, automated and accessible from a central location.



Two features of the **Housing** domain rise to the top of unmet needs that would help residents stay in their own homes: home repair services for low income and older adults; and homes built or designed for older adults such as no-step entrance, wider doorways and ground floor living.



In the **Health** domain, one need gap stands out above all others: affordable home health providers. This again underscores a desire for improved in-home services that allow residents to age in place.

More information on the community need gaps by each of the eight age-friendly community domains can be found in the following pages of this report.



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. San Antonio residents are no different.

Community Experience

The majority of San Antonians age 50-plus are long-time residents who say the city is a good place to live as they age.

More than half (52%) of San Antonio residents age 50-plus have lived in their community for 25 years or more; and 60% have been in Bexar county for 45 years or more. Hispanic residents age 50 and older are even more likely to have roots in San Antonio: 75% have been in Bexar County for 45 years or longer.

How would you rate San Antonio as a place for people to live as they age?



The majority of 50-plus residents (71%) consider San Antonio to be a Very Good or Good place for older people to live as they age. Another 17% rate it as Excellent. One in ten (10%) give it an assessment of Fair or Poor. Ratings are similar between Hispanic and Non-Hispanic San Antonians.

San Antonians want to live independently in their own home for as long as they can.

Nearly nine in ten (86%) say it is extremely or very important to live in their own home as they age; and half (50%) feel it is important to remain in their communities. In addition, most San Antonio residents age 50-plus expect to stay in their current home during their retirement years.

Important to live in your own home as you age

86%

Important to remain in your community as you age

50%



Few intend to move during retirement.



10%

Likely to move to new community



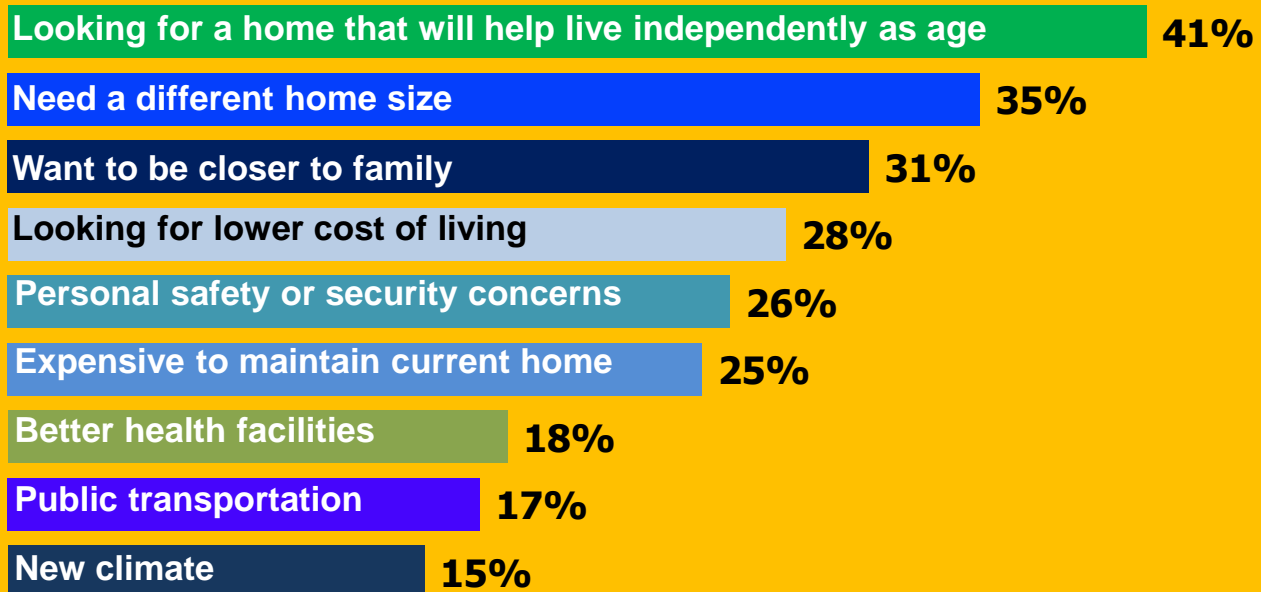
6%

Likely to move to new home, same community

Community Experience

Age-friendly and right-sized housing are influential factors for residents considering a move in retirement.

If San Antonio residents were to consider moving during retirement, four in ten (41%) say needing a home that supports independent living as they age would be a factor in their decision and 35% say needing a different home size is a factor. Wanting to be closer to family is a motivator to move for one in three (31%). Secondary community factors include looking for an area with a lower cost of living (28%), safety concerns (26%) and the expense of maintaining current homes (25%). Slightly fewer cite better health facilities (18%) or more access to public transportation (17%) as reasons to move.



Most residents age 50-plus in San Antonio own their own homes. Single family homes are most common and many will need modifications to support aging-in-place preferences.

Eight in ten (82%) residents age 50-plus in Alamo City own their home. Almost one in ten rents (9%) and 6% have some other arrangement such as living with family. Single family homes are by far the most dominant (86%) with about ten percent living in some form of multi-unit structure such as an apartment (6%), townhome or duplex (2%) or condo (2%). While most say they want to age-in-place, six in ten (63%) say they will need to make some home modification in order to stay in their current home.

Many San Antonio homes will need modifications to enable aging in place.

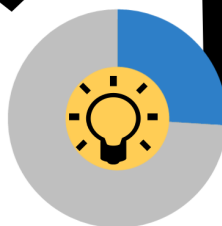
63% At Least 1 Home Modification Needed



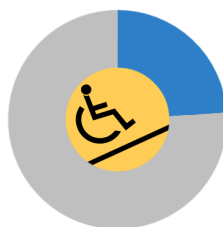
47%
Bathroom
modifications



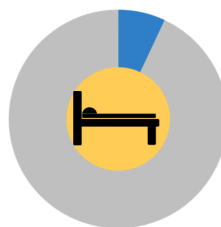
33%
Install medical
emergency response
system



26%
Improve lighting



24%
Easier home access
(ramps, wider doorways,
chairlift)



7%
Add room to
first floor

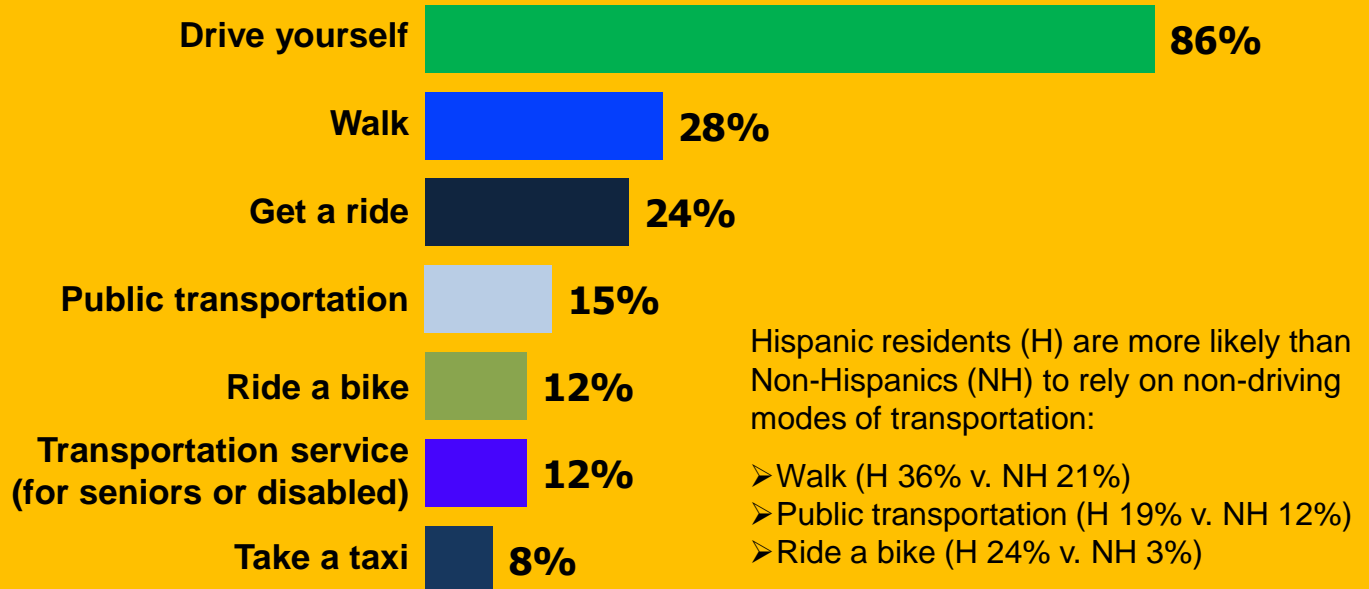
Home Modifications

Nearly half of San Antonio residents age 50+ say they will need to make bathroom modifications in order to stay in their home as they age, such as installing grab bars, handrails, high toilet seats or non-slip tile. Installing emergency response systems are a likely modification for one in three. About one fourth each say they will need to make home modifications like ramps or chairlifts for easier access into and within their home or improve lighting. Only 7 percent say they will need to make structural changes like adding a bedroom or bathroom on the first floor.

Community Experience

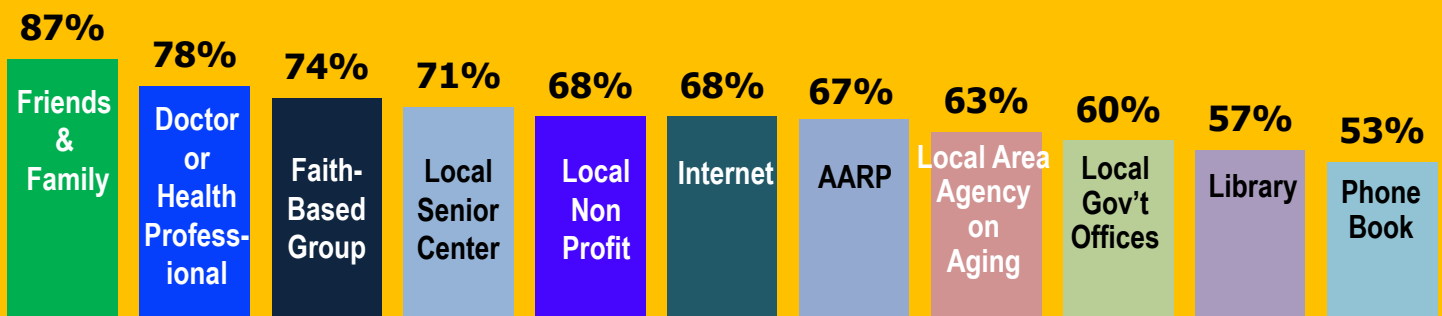
Most San Antonio residents age 50-plus drive themselves when they need to get around.

San Antonio is predominantly a driving town. To get around for things like shopping, visiting the doctor, or running errands, almost nine in ten (86%) drive themselves and 24% get a ride. Walking is a mode of transportation for over one-fourth (28%) of residents age 50 and over.



San Antonians are most likely to turn to family and friends for information on services for older adults.

Almost nine in ten say people they know are the most common source of information about services for older adults such as caregiving, home delivered meals, home repair, medical transport, or social activities. About three-fourths would turn to their doctor or other health professional, or faith-based organization. Local senior centers, local non-profits and AARP are also identified as resources for this type of information by about seven in ten, about as often as the Internet. Local government (60%), libraries (57%) and the phone book (53%) are somewhat less likely sources.





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.

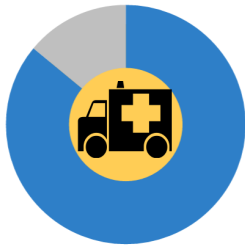
San Antonio residents rated their community on 66 characteristics across eight domains (Health and Wellness, Transportation, Housing, Outdoor Spaces, Social Participation, Volunteering and Civic Engagement, Job Opportunities, and Community Information) in order to identify important and available community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

Summary of Importance: 8 Age-Friendly Community Domains



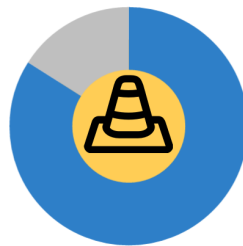
Average Importance Rating of Community Features within Each Domain
(on a 5 point scale where 5 = Extremely Important and 1= Not At All Important)

Health and Wellness



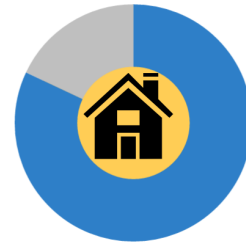
4.27

Transportation



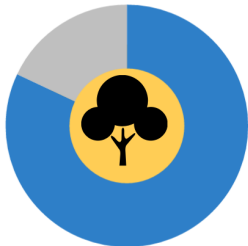
4.22

Housing



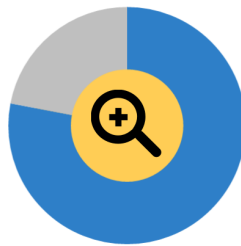
4.14

Outdoor Spaces



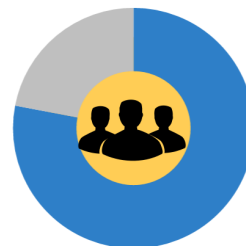
4.13

Community Info



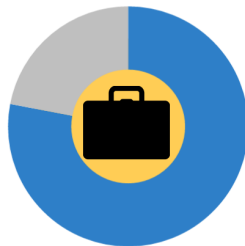
4.06

Social Participation



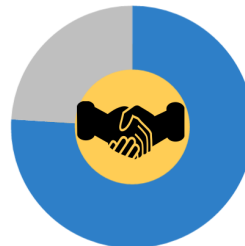
4.00

Job Opportunities



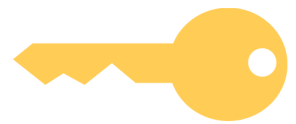
3.93

Volunteer & Civic Engagement



3.88

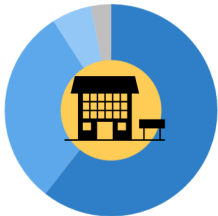
Summary of Important Community Features by Domain



Top Important Feature Within Each Community Domain

(% of respondents who rated feature ■ Extremely ■ Very ■ Somewhat Important)

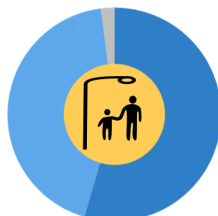
Health and Wellness



97%

Well-maintained hospitals

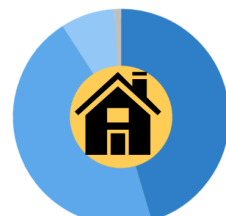
Transportation



97%

Well-lit, safe streets and intersections for all users

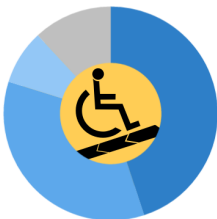
Housing



99%

Well-maintained homes and properties

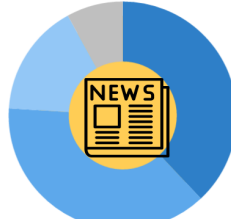
Outdoor Spaces



96%

Sidewalks are good, safe and accessible

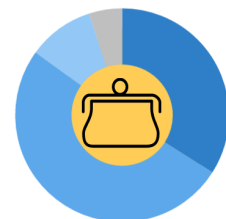
Community Info



92%

Community information delivered in person to home-bound residents

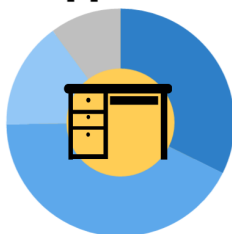
Social Participation



95%

Activities that are affordable to all

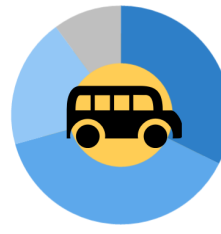
Job Opportunities



90%

Jobs that meet the needs of people with disabilities

Volunteer & Civic Engagement



90%

Transportation to and from activities



Top Tier Important Community Features

Across All 66 Features in 8 Domains

(percent of respondents who rated the item as Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important)

The top tier of important features to San Antonio residents age 50-plus are concentrated in Health & Wellness, Housing and Transportation & Streets.

Top Overall Community Features	Importance	Domain
Well-maintained homes and properties	99%	Housing
Home repair contractors who are trustworthy, do quality work and are affordable	97%	Housing
Well-lit, safe streets and intersections	97%	Transportation
Well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities	97%	Health and Wellness
A variety of health care professionals	97%	Health and Wellness
Conveniently located emergency care centers	97%	Health and Wellness
Respectful and helpful hospital and clinic staff	97%	Health and Wellness
Easily understandable and helpful hospital answer services	96%	Health and Wellness
Easy to find information on local health and supportive services	96%	Health and Wellness
Affordable home health providers	96%	Health and Wellness
Sidewalks that are in good conditions safe for pedestrian use and accessible for all abilities	96%	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings



Community Needs

A need can be identified as a gap between what is and what should be. Every community has its own culture, social structure, traditions, history, and needs. A Needs Assessment is a tool to understand and identify community needs. In order to identify the needs of San Antonio 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.

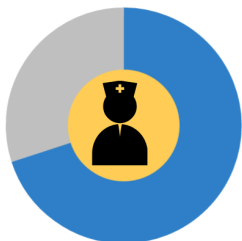
To compare these questions, respondents who said a feature or service is extremely, very, or somewhat important were aggregated and then compared to respondents who said whether or not the feature or service existed in their community.

Summary of Community Need Gaps by Domain



Top Community Need Gap Within Each Domain
(Need Gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)

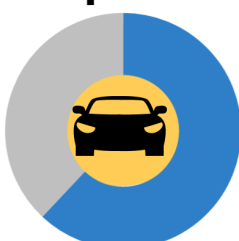
Health and Wellness



70%

Affordable home health care providers

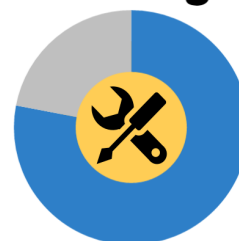
Transportation



62%

Driver education / refresher course

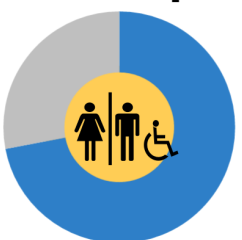
Housing



78%

A repair service for low-income and older adults

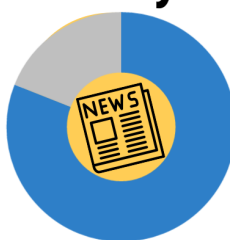
Outdoor Spaces



72%

Well-maintained public restrooms

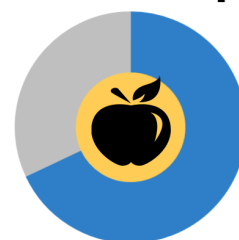
Community Info



81%

Information delivered in person to home-bound residents

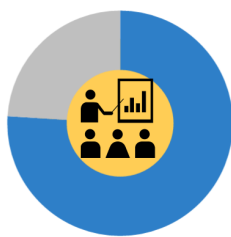
Social Participation



68%

Local schools that involve older adults

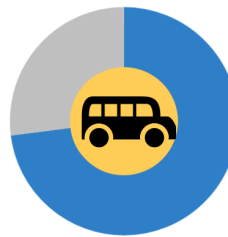
Job Opportunities



76%

Job training opportunities for older adults

Volunteer & Civic Engagement



73%

Transportation to and from activities

Top Tier Community Need Gaps



Across All 66 Features in 8 Domains

(Need Gap Is the Difference between Importance and Present:
% Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)

The largest need gaps in San Antonio are in the areas of Job Opportunities, Volunteering & Engagement, Community Information and Housing

Top Overall Gaps	Gap	Domain
Information delivered in person to people who have difficulty leaving their home	81%	Community Information
Home repair services for low income and older adults	78%	Housing
Printed information that has large lettering and is clearly displayed	77%	Community Information
Job training opportunities for older adults	76%	Job Opportunities
Transportation to and from volunteer activities	73%	Volunteering & Engagement
A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults	72%	Job Opportunities
Well maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of all abilities	72%	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
An automated community information source	72%	Community Information
Access to information in one central location	71%	Community Information
Volunteer training opportunities	71%	Volunteering & Engagement
Jobs adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities	71%	Job Opportunities
Homes equipped with things like a no step entrance, wider doorways, grab bars, first floor bedrooms	70%	Housing
Easy to find information on available local volunteer opportunities	70%	Volunteering & Engagement
Affordable home health care providers	70%	Health and Wellness



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Items Ranked by Importance

Features	% Important	% Present
Sidewalks that are in good condition, safe for pedestrians and accessible for all abilities	96%	45%
Well-maintained public buildings that are accessible to people of different physical abilities	95%	40%
Neighborhood watch programs	94%	40%
Well-maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities	94%	22%
Well-maintained and safe public parks within walking distance of home	92%	38%
Separate pathways for bicyclists and pedestrians	90%	31%
Public parks with enough benches	89%	32%

The largest unmet need in outdoor spaces and buildings is



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

72%

94% say it is important to have well-maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities. Only **22%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **72%**.

(Need Gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Housing Features

Items Ranked by Importance

Features	% Important	% Present
Well-maintained homes and properties	99%	70%
Home repair contractors who are trustworthy and affordable	97%	31%
Home repair service for low-income and older adults that help with repairs	95%	17%
Homes that are equipped with things like a no step entrance, wider doorways, etc.	92%	22%
Affordable home prices for residents of varying income levels	88%	27%
Seasonal services such as lawn work	87%	31%
Well-maintained and safe low-income housing	84%	25%



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

78%

95% say it is important to have a repair service for low-income and older adults that helps with things like roof or window repair. Only **17%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **78%**.

(Need Gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Transportation and Streets

Items Ranked by Importance

Features	% Important	% Present
Well-lit, safe streets and intersections for all users	97%	46%
Easy to read traffic signs	95%	70%
Special transportation services for seniors or people with disabilities	94%	58%
Well-maintained public transportation vehicles	94%	57%
Well-maintained streets and roads	94%	52%
Enforced speed limits	94%	51%
Accessible and convenient public transportation	93%	65%
Reliable public transportation	93%	57%
Public parking lots and areas to park	93%	44%



Transportation and Streets, cont.

Features	% Important	% Present
Affordable public transportation	92%	63%
Audio/visual pedestrian crossings	91%	35%
Driver education/ refresher course	91%	29%
Affordable public parking	89%	36%
Safe public transportation stops or areas	92%	49%

The largest unmet need in transportation features is

62%

Driver education or refresher course



91% say it is important to have driver education or refresher course. Only **29%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **62%**.

(Need Gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Job Opportunities

Items Ranked by Importance

Features	% Important	% Present
Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities	90%	19%
Job training opportunities for older adults	89%	13%
A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults	87%	15%



The largest unmet need in employment features is



Job training opportunities for older adults

76%

89% 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 **13%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **76%**.

(Need Gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Community Information

Items Ranked by Importance

Features	% Important	% Present
Information delivered in person to people who have difficulty leaving their home	92%	11%
Printed information that has large lettering and is clearly displayed	91%	14%
Access to information in one central location	91%	20%
Free access to computers and the internet in public places	90%	46%
An automated community information source	89%	17%
Information that is available in different languages	86%	20%

The largest unmet need in communication and information is



Information delivered in person to people who have difficulty leaving their home

81%

92% say it is important to have information delivered in person to people who have difficulty leaving their home. Only **11%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **81%**.

(Need Gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Volunteering and Civic Engagement

Items Ranked by Importance

Features	% Important	% Present
Transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it	90%	17%
Easy to find information on available local volunteer opportunities	90%	20%
Volunteer training opportunities to help better perform volunteer role	90%	19%
Opportunities for older adults to participate in decision making roles	90%	23%
A range of volunteer activities to choose from	86%	27%

The largest unmet need in volunteering and civic engagement is



Transportation to and from volunteer activities



90% say it is important to have transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it. Only **17%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **73%**

(Need Gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Social Participation, Inclusion, and Education Opportunities

Items Ranked by Importance

Features	% Important	% Present
Widely publicized reliable information about activities	95%	28%
Activities specifically geared towards older adults	95%	30%
Activities that are affordable to all residents	95%	29%
Activities that offer senior discounts	94%	38%
Activities that involve both younger and older people	94%	29%
Conveniently located venues for entertainment	93%	44%
A variety of cultural activities for diverse populations	91%	28%
Continuing education classes	89%	48%
Social clubs such as book, gardening, craft or hobby	89%	28%
Local schools that involve older adults in events and activities	89%	21%

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



Local schools that involve older adults in events and activities

68%

89% say it is important to have local schools that involve older adults in events and activities. Only 21% say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of 68%.

(Need Gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)



Health and Wellness

Items Ranked by Importance

Features	% Important	% Present
Well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities	97%	65%
A variety of health care professionals	97%	61%
Conveniently located emergency care centers	97%	61%
Respectful and helpful hospital and clinic staff	97%	58%
Easily understandable and helpful hospital answering services	96%	46%
Easy to find information on local health and supportive services	96%	32%
Affordable home health care providers	96%	26%
Conveniently located health and social services	95%	45%
Well-trained certified home health care providers	95%	32%



Health and Wellness, cont.

Features	% Important	% Present
A service that helps seniors find and access health services	95%	32%
Health and wellness programs and classes	95%	39%
Fitness activities specifically geared towards older adults	94%	40%
Home care services including health, personal care, and housekeeping	94%	36%
Health care professionals who speak different languages	86%	49%

The largest unmet need in health services is



Affordable home health care providers

70%

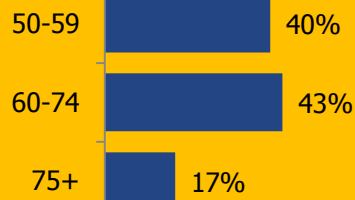
96% say it is important to have affordable home health care providers. Only **26%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **70%**.

(Need Gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)

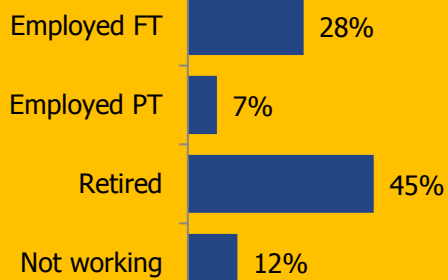
Demographics

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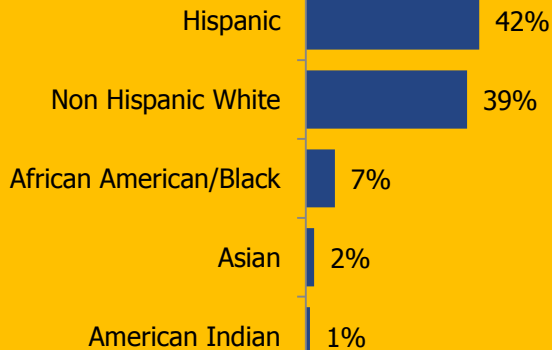
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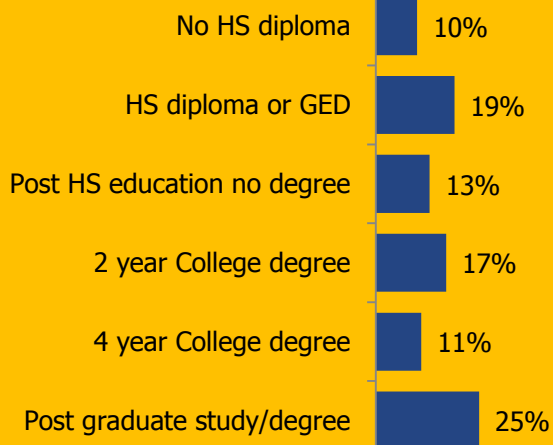
WORK STATUS



RACE/ETHNICITY



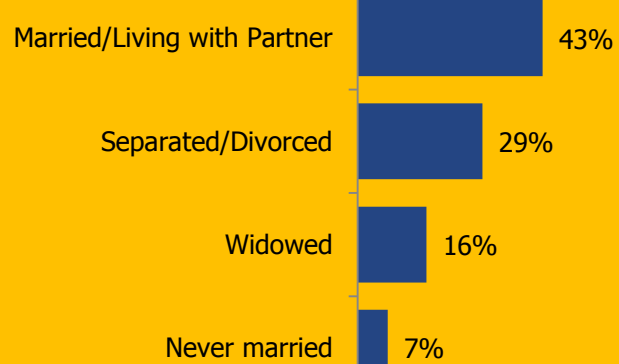
EDUCATION



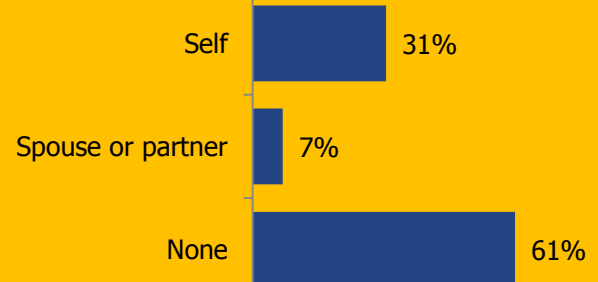
GENDER



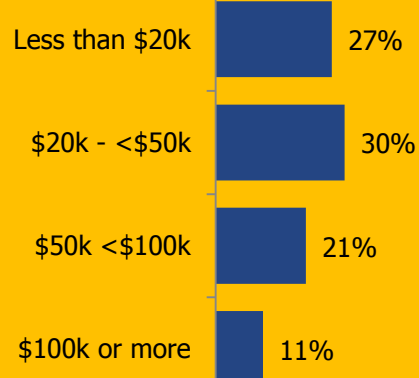
MARITAL STATUS



DISABILITY



INCOME



Survey Methodology

This report is based on data from a mail survey of San Antonio residents age 50-plus. Resident addresses were provided by Survey Sampling International's (SSI) proprietary database.

The survey was mailed to 3,000 resident households in San Antonio. Out of the total mailing, 86 were returned undeliverable and 358 returned completed surveys by the cut-off date for a response rate of 11.9 percent. The sample has a margin of error of +/- 5.2 percent.

Surveys were fielded from July 7, 2015 through August 18, 2015. Each resident sampled was contacted four times receiving the following pieces of mail: 1) Pre-notification postcard; 2) survey; 3) reminder postcard; and 4) second survey copy.

Vupoint Research was commissioned to enter and tabulate the data from returned surveys.

The sample was weighted by age, gender and AARP membership. Two sources were used for the weighting: the AARP membership database and Nielsen Pop Facts Advanced demographic data, 2015. Age was imputed for those who did not indicate their age on the survey. Any respondent with an initial weight of zero received a weighting of 1.0. 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 in the text may vary slightly from those in the annotation or in graphs.

Acknowledgments

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Photos courtesy of AARP Texas.

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Real Possibilities

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