



Livability For All: The 2016 AARP Age-Friendly Community Survey of Washington County, Oregon Registered Voters Age 45-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 registered voters age 45-plus living in Washington County, Oregon. The survey was fielded from July 8 to August 19, 2015. Registered voter 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 530 completed surveys were returned by the cutoff date of August 19th. There were 110 undeliverable addresses.

This survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.3 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 4.3 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every registered voter age 45-plus in the sampled area were asked the same questions. The sample is weighted by age and gender and age to reflect the actual distribution of registered voters age 45-plus in Washington County, Oregon. The weighted number of respondents is 530.

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 Washington County Community Features Are Concentrated In Three Domains: Health, 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 Washington County, Oregon Registered Voters Age 45-plus"** was commissioned to help Washington County decision makers achieve the goal of livability. Using an operationalization of the World Health Organization's eight areas of livable community, the findings show:

- Washington County registered voters age 45-plus have deep roots in their community. More than half (58%) have lived in their community for 15 years or more. Most do not plan to move, and eight in ten (94%) say their community is a good place for older people to live.
- On average, features within Health and Wellness, Transportation and Streets, and Outdoor Spaces and Buildings are rated as the most important for Washington County registered voters age 45-plus among all eight domains. The Health and Wellness items relate to convenient and well-maintained health care facilities and a variety of affordable and respectful health care professionals. The Transportation and Streets items relate to well-maintained streets and safe transportation stops or areas. The Outdoor Spaces and Streets items concern sidewalk safety and accessibility.
- Well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities and well-maintained streets are the top two important community features (94% for each), followed closely by easy to read traffic signs, safe public transportation areas, and respectful and helpful hospital and clinical staff (92% for each).

Executive Summary cont.

The Top Reported Washington County Community Needs Are Concentrated In Four Areas: Job Opportunities, Volunteering and Civic Engagement, Housing, and Community Information

- In order to identify the needs of Washington County registered voters age 45-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 Health and Wellness and Transportation and Streets dominated the list of important features, the top community needs gaps are spread across the areas of Job Opportunities, Volunteering and Civic Engagement, Housing, and Community Information.
- Job training opportunities for older adults and transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it are identified as the top community needs gaps (77% for each), followed by a home repair service for low-income and older adults, a range of flexible job opportunities for older adults, and clearly displayed printed information with large lettering (74% for each). Refer to the Key Findings for a summary of the top 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."

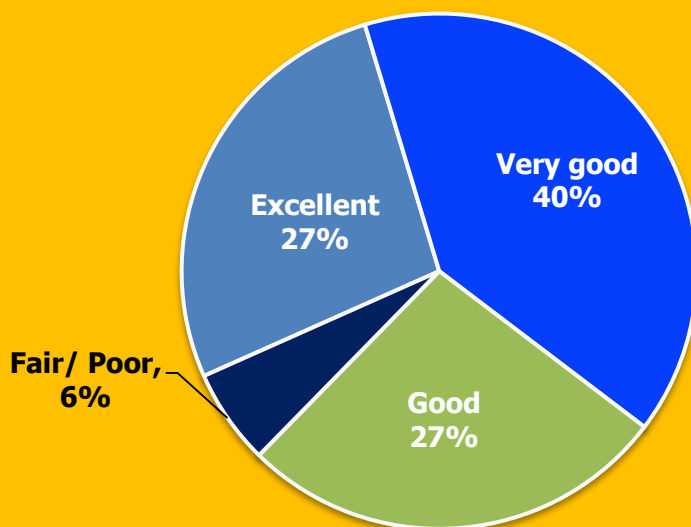
Across the nation, individuals make connections and commitments to homes, friendships, community organizations, and local social ties within their community and want to age-in-place. Washington County registered voters are no different.

Community Experience

Over half (58%) of Washington County registered voters age 45-plus have lived in their community for at least 15 years and nearly all say their community is a good place to age in place.

Washington County registered voters age 45-plus have deep roots in their community. Nearly three in ten (28%) have lived in their community for at least 25 years. Another three in ten (31%) have lived in their community between 15 and 25 years, and two in five (41%) have lived in their community between 0 and 15 years.

Rate Community as Place to Age in Place



Nearly all (94%) 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 15 years and desire to remain there as they get older.

Many Washington County registered voters age 45-plus are unlikely to move into a different home within their community (54%) or move outside their community (47%) in their retirement years.

Washington County registered voters age 45-plus want to continue to live in their community and their home for as long they can. Over two in five (46%) say it is extremely or very important to stay in their community as they age. Almost 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

46%

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

54%

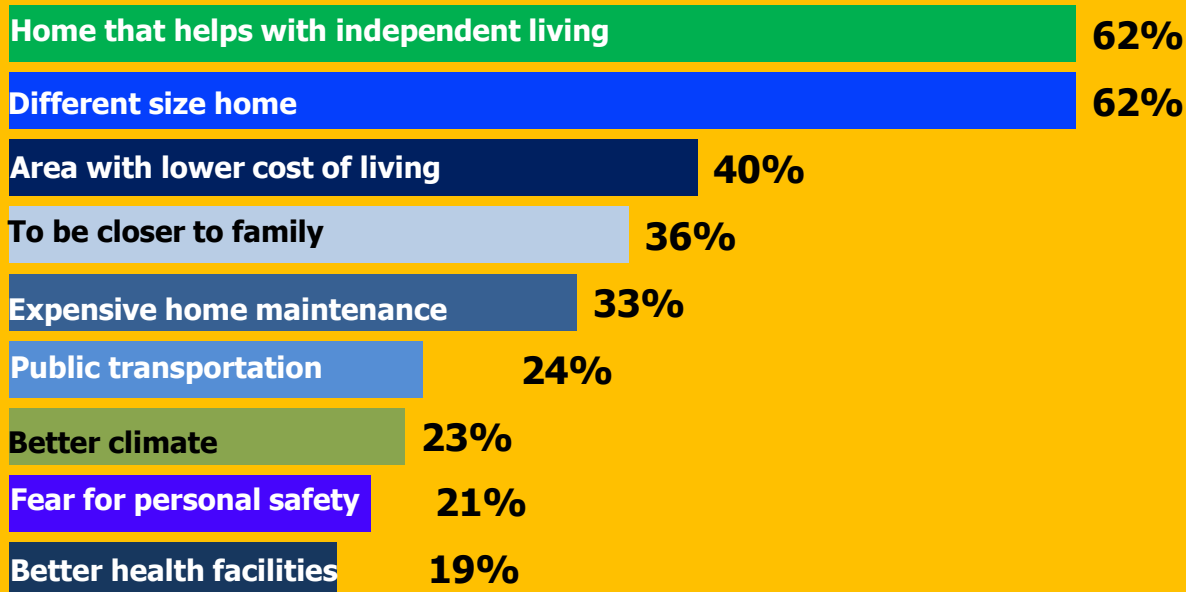
Not likely to move to a different home in a new community

47%

Community Experience

Registered voters 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 (46%) respondents to remain in their community as they age, if Washington County registered voters were to consider moving when they retire and do not work, more than three in five say that they would move because they want a home that will help them live independently as they age (62%) or is a more suitable size home (62%).

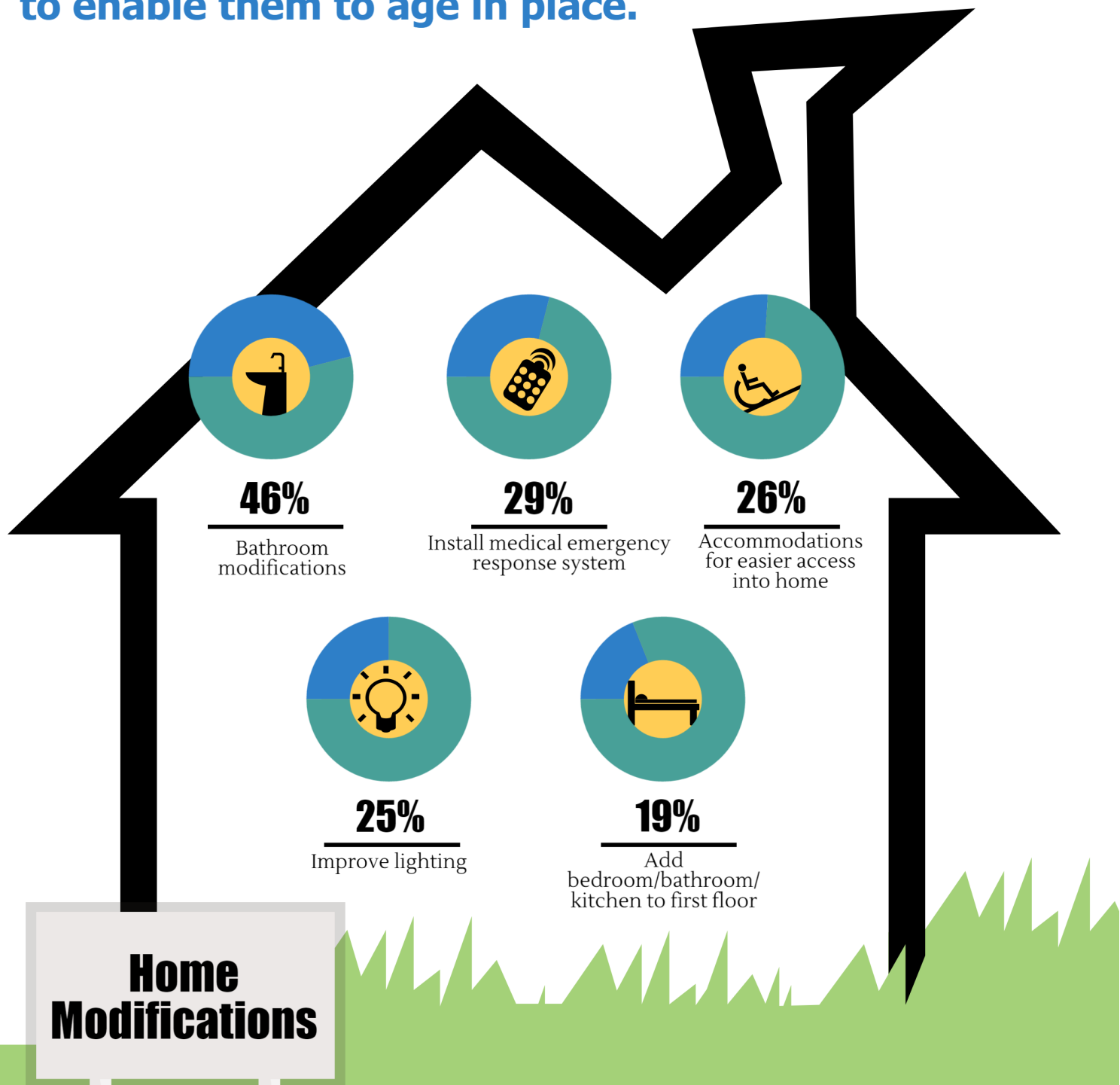


The majority of Washington County registered voters age 45-plus own their own home and live in a single family home.

Four in five respondents (80%) own their home while nearly one in five (18%) rents. More than three-quarters live in a single family home. One in ten lives in an apartment and fewer than one in ten lives in condominium, townhome or duplex, 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	77%
Apartment	10%
Condominium	5%
Townhouse/Duplex	3%
Mobile home	2%

Many Washington County registered voters age 45-plus say they will need to make home modifications to enable them to age in place.

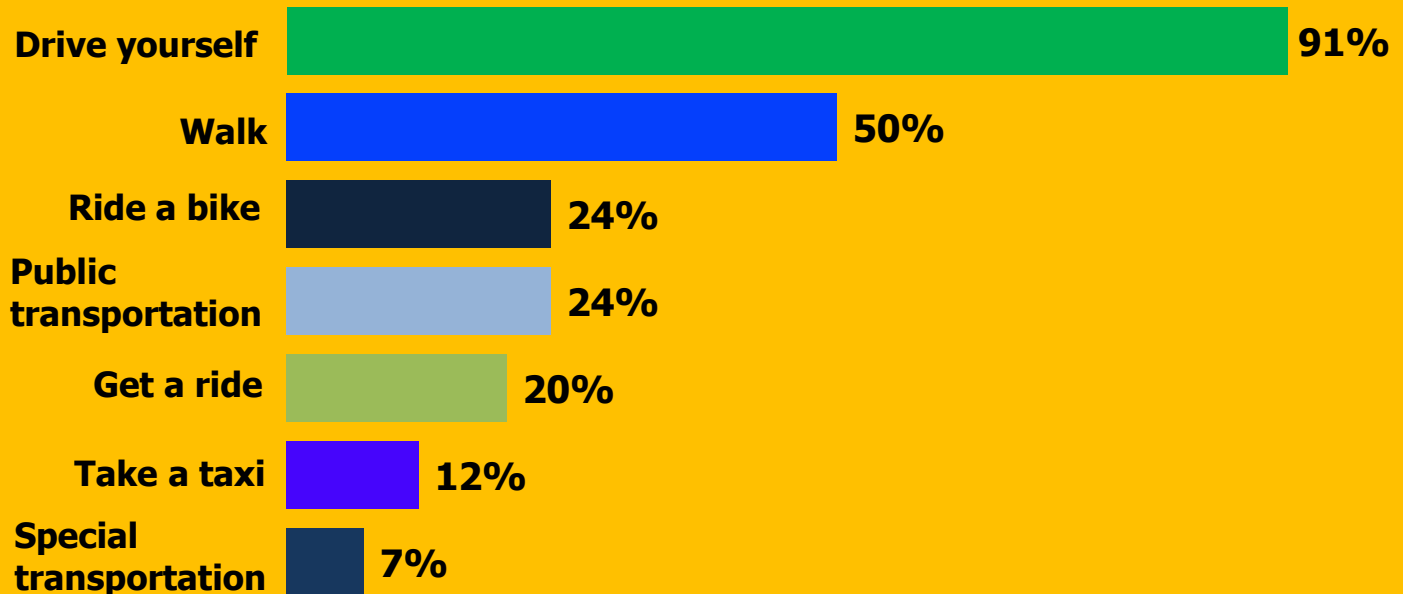


Nearly a half of Washington County registered voters age 45-plus say the top home modification they will need to make in order to stay in their home as they age are bathroom modifications such as installing grab bars, handrails, high toilet seats or non-slip tile. Installing emergency response systems are a likely modification for nearly three in ten. About a quarter says they will need to add things like ramps or chairlifts for easier access into and within their home or improve lighting. Nearly one in five says they will need to make structural changes like adding a bedroom or bathroom on the first floor.

Community Experience

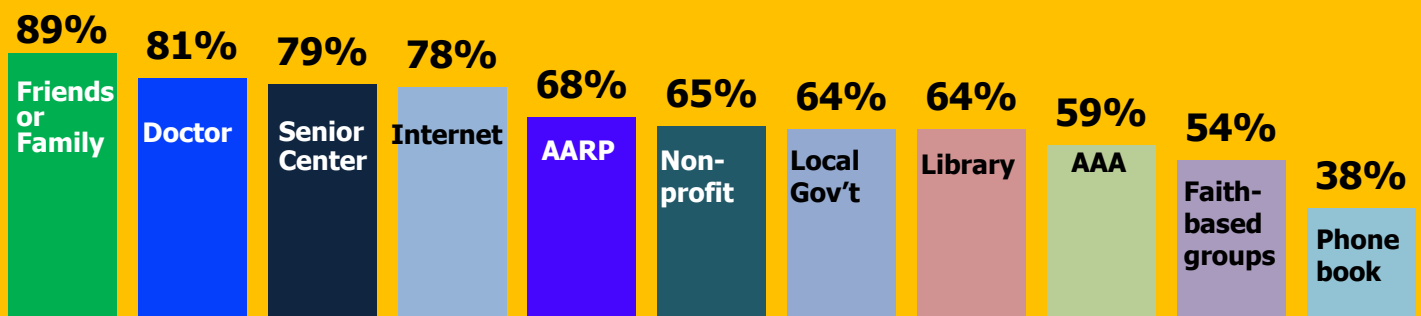
Most Washington County registered voters drive themselves when they need to get around. Many also walk, ride a bike, or use public transportation.

More than nine in ten say when they need to get around for things like shopping, visiting the doctor, or running errands they drive themselves.



Registered voters in Washington County 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 a local senior center or the Internet, while about two-thirds would look to AARP, a local nonprofit, local government, or the library for this type of information. Over half would turn to the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) or faith-based organizations while nearly two in five would use 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.

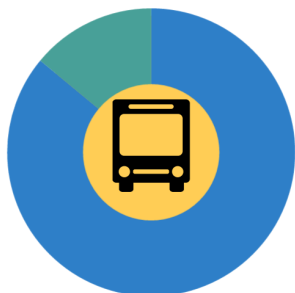
Washington County registered voters rated their community on 66 characteristics across eight domains (Health and Wellness, Transportation, Housing, Outdoor Spaces, Social Participation, Volunteering and Civic Engagement, Job Opportunities, and Community Information) in order to identify important and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

Summary of Average Community Feature/Domain



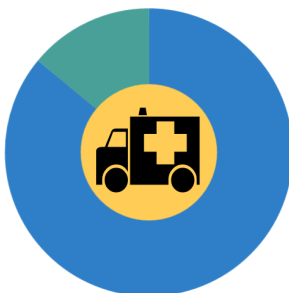
Average Importance Rating of Features within each Washington County Community Domain
(On a 5 point scale where 5 = Extremely Important and 1= Not At All Important)

Transportation



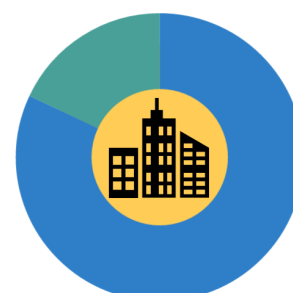
4.33

Health and Wellness



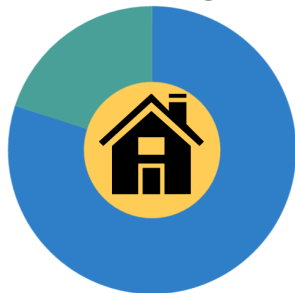
4.26

Outdoor Spaces



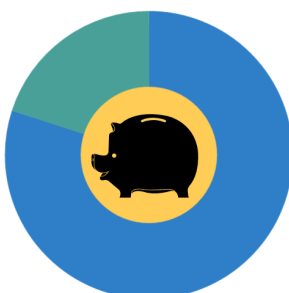
4.10

Housing



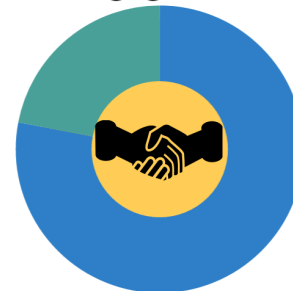
4.03

Job Opportunities



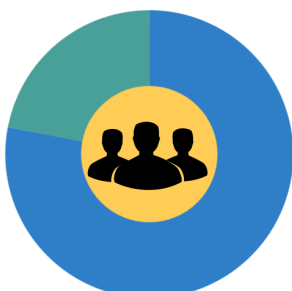
4.03

Volunteer and Civic Engagement



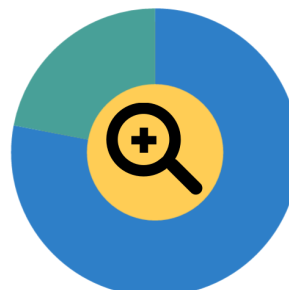
3.88

Social Participation



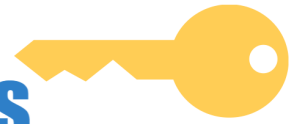
3.85

Community Info



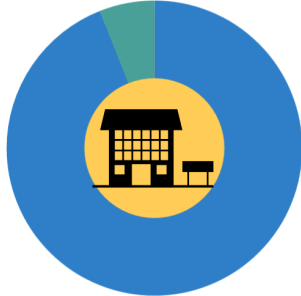
3.83

Summary of Extremely/Very Important Community Features



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

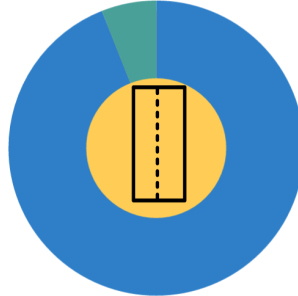
Health and Wellness



94%

Well-maintained
hospitals and health
facilities

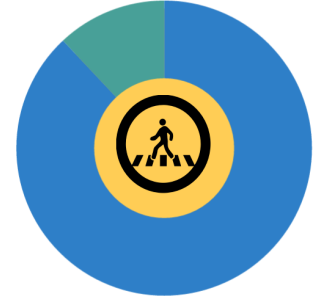
Transportation



94%

Well-maintained
streets

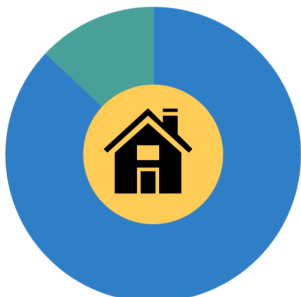
Outdoor Spaces



88%

Sidewalks in
good condition

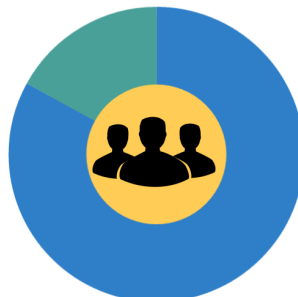
Housing



87%

Well-maintained
homes and properties

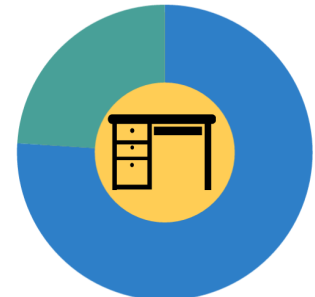
Social Participation



83%

Affordable
activities for all

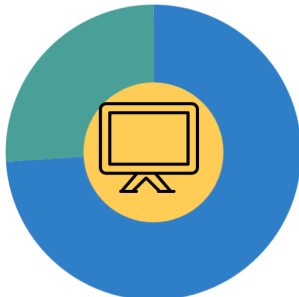
Job Opportunities



76%

Jobs that meet the needs
of people with disabilities

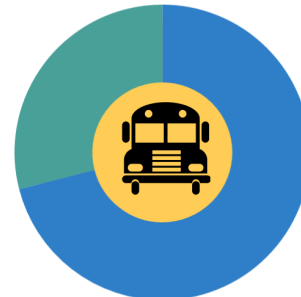
Community Information



74%

Free access to
computers/Internet

Volunteer and Civic Engagement



71%

Transportation to and
from activities

Top Extremely/Very Important Community Features



Top Washington County 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 hospitals and health care facilities	94%	Health and Wellness
Well-maintained streets	94%	Transportation and Streets
Easy to read traffic signs	92%	Transportation and Streets
Safe public transportation stops and areas	92%	Transportation and Streets
Respectful and helpful hospital and clinical staff	92%	Health and Wellness
Well-lit, safe streets and intersections	91%	Transportation and Streets
A variety of health care professionals	88%	Health and Wellness
Sidewalks that are in good condition and free from obstruction and are safe and accessible for wheelchairs and other assistive mobility devices	88%	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
Affordable home health care providers	88%	Health and Wellness
Conveniently located emergency care centers	88%	Health and Wellness

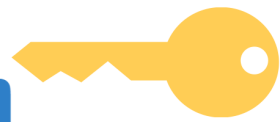


Community Needs

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 Washington County registered voters age 45-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 Washington County Community Needs Gap Item Within Each Feature/Domain
(Needs gap = % Extremely/Very/Somewhat Important - % Present)

Volunteer and Civic Engagement



77%

Transportation to and from activities

Job Opportunities



76%

Job training opportunities for older adults

Housing



74%

A repair service for low-income and older adults

Community Info



74%

Clearly displayed printed information

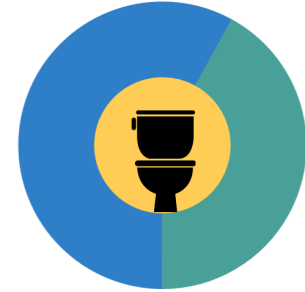
Health and Wellness



67%

Affordable home health care providers

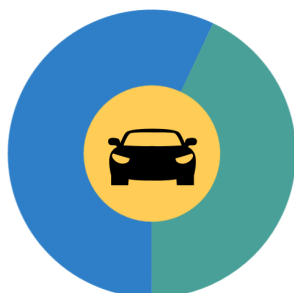
Outdoor Spaces



58%

Well-maintained public restrooms

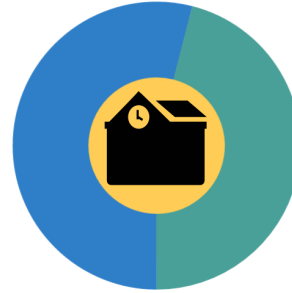
Transportation



57%

Driver education/refresher course

Social Participation



54%

Activities at local schools for older adults

Top Community Needs Gaps



Top Washington County 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	77%	Job Opportunities
Transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it	77%	Volunteering and Civic Engagement
A home repair service for low-income and older adults	74%	Housing
A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults	74%	Job Opportunities
Clearly displayed printed community information with large lettering	74%	Community Information
Access to community information in one central source	73%	Community Information
An automated community information source that is easy to understand	73%	Community Information
Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities	72%	Job Opportunities
Community information that is delivered in person to people who may have difficulty or may not be able to leave their home	72%	Community Information
Volunteer training opportunities	69%	Volunteering and Civic Engagement



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Features	% Important	% Present
Sidewalks that are in good condition	97%	63%
Well-maintained public buildings that are accessible to people of different physical abilities	95%	66%
Well-maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities	95%	37%
Well-maintained and safe public parks	94%	77%
Neighborhood watch programs	92%	40%
Separate pathways for bicyclists and pedestrians	91%	44%
Public parks with enough benches	90%	59%



The largest unmet need in outdoor spaces and buildings is

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

58%

95% say it is important to have well-maintained public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities. Only **37%** 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
Well-maintained homes and properties	97%	85%
Home repair contractors who are trustworthy and affordable	92%	50%
Homes that are equipped with things like a no step entrance, wider doorways, etc.	91%	30%
Home repair service for low-income and older adults that help with repairs	91%	17%
Affordable home prices for residents of varying income levels	89%	39%
Seasonal services such as lawn work	87%	35%
Well-maintained and safe low-income housing	84%	28%



The largest unmet need in housing features is

A repair service for low-income and older adults

74%

91% say it is important to have a home 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 74%.

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



Transportation and Streets

Features	% Important	% Present
Easy to read traffic signs	97%	84%
Well-maintained streets and roads	96%	72%
Well-maintained public transportation vehicles	96%	69%
Safe public transportation stops or areas	96%	64%
Well-lit, safe streets and intersections for all users	95%	62%
Affordable public transportation	95%	71%
Accessible and convenient public transportation	95%	75%
Reliable public transportation	95%	71%
Enforced speed limits	94%	71%



Transportation and Streets, cont.

Features	% Important	% Present
Special transportation services for seniors or people with disabilities	94%	69%
Public parking lots and areas to park	93%	70%
Affordable public parking	93%	63%
Audio/visual pedestrian crossings	91%	46%
Driver education/ refresher course	85%	28%

The largest unmet need in transportation features is

57% Driver education/refresher course



85% say it is important to driver education and refresher courses. Only **28%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **57%**.

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



Job Opportunities

Features	% Important	% Present
Jobs that are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities	92%	20%
Job training opportunities for older adults	91%	15%
A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults	89%	15%



The largest unmet need in employment features is



Job training opportunities for older adults

76%

91% 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 **15%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **76%**.

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



Community Information

Features	% Important	% Present
Access to information in one central location	93%	20%
Free access to computers and the internet in public places	92%	63%
Information delivered in person to people who have difficulty leaving their home	89%	17%
Printed information that has large lettering and is clearly displayed	89%	15%
An automated community information source	88%	15%
Information that is available in different languages	81%	24%



The largest unmet need in communication and information is

Printed information that has large lettering and is clearly displayed

74%

89% say it is important to have printed information that has large lettering and is clearly displayed. Only 15% say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of 74%.

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



Volunteering and Civic Engagement

Features	% Important	% Present
Easy to find information on available local volunteer opportunities	92%	26%
A range of volunteer activities to choose from	91%	42%
Opportunities for older adults to participate in decision making roles	91%	35%
Volunteer training opportunities to help better perform volunteer role	90%	21%
Transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it	90%	13%

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 **13%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **77%**.

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



Social Participation, Inclusion, and Education Opportunities

Features	% Important	% Present
Activities that are affordable to all residents	96%	43%
Widely publicized reliable information about activities	93%	42%
Activities that involve both younger and older people	93%	41%
Conveniently located venues for entertainment	93%	62%
Activities that offer senior discounts	92%	55%
Activities specifically geared towards older adults	91%	42%
A variety of cultural activities for diverse populations	86%	37%
Social clubs such as book, gardening, craft or hobby	85%	47%
Continuing education classes	84%	52%
Local schools that involve older adults in events and activities	82%	28%

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



Local schools that involve older adults in events and activities

54%

82% say it is important to have local schools that involve older adults in events and activities. Only 28% say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of 54%.

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



Health and Wellness

Features	% Important	% Present
Well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities	97%	81%
Respectful and helpful hospital and clinic staff	97%	72%
Conveniently located emergency care centers	97%	72%
Affordable home health care	97%	30%
A variety of health care professionals	96%	71%
Conveniently located health and social services	96%	61%
Home care services including health, personal care, and housekeeping	96%	39%
Well-trained certified home health care providers	96%	33%
A service that helps seniors find and access health services	95%	35%



Health and Wellness, cont.

Features	% Important	% Present
Easily understandable and helpful hospital answering services	94%	55%
Fitness activities specifically geared towards older adults	94%	52%
Easy to find information on local health and supportive services	94%	38%
Health and wellness programs and classes	91%	53%
Health care professionals who speak different languages	78%	45%

The largest unmet need in health services is

67% **Affordable home health care providers** **67%**

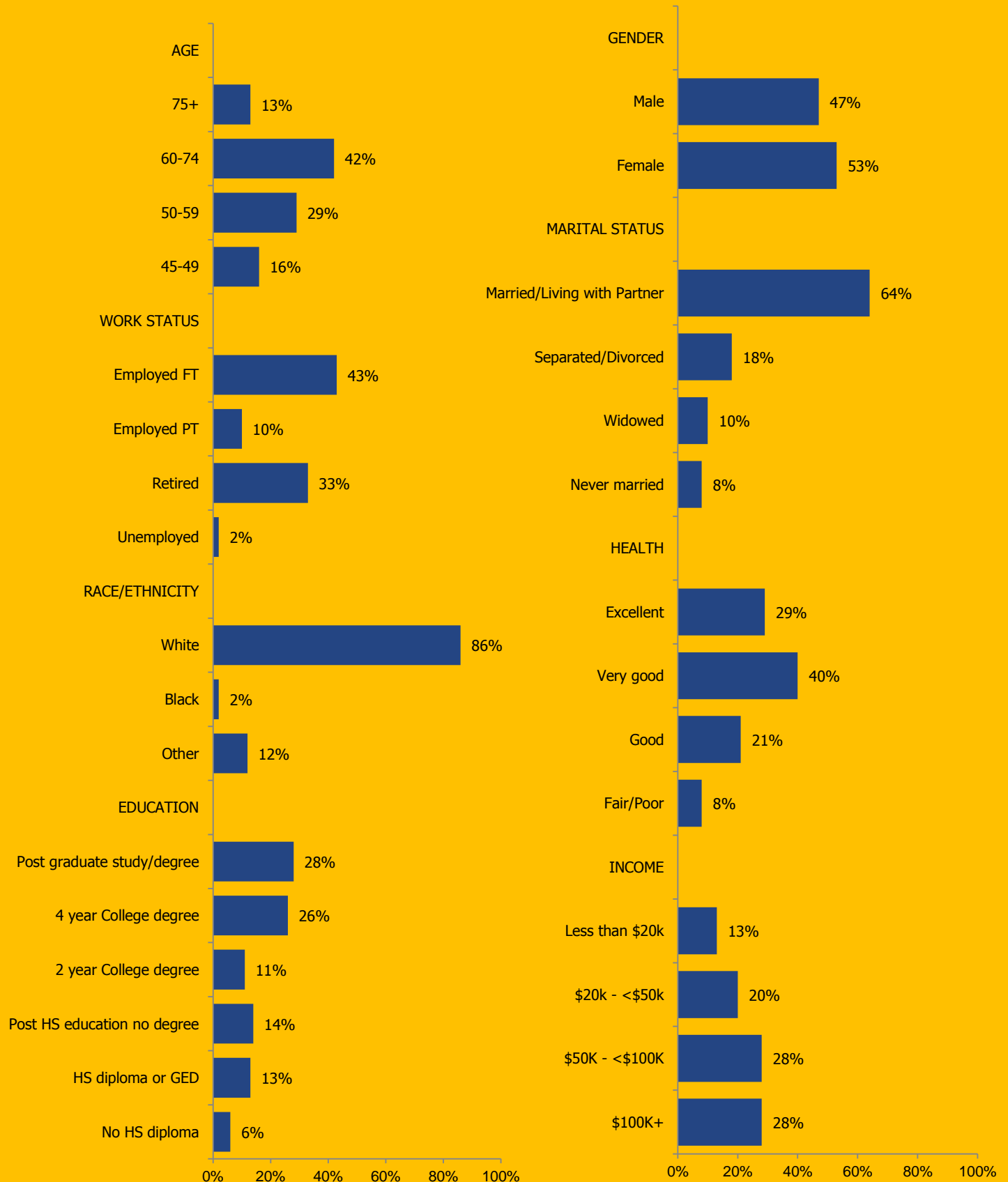
97% say it is important to have affordable home health care provider. Only **30%** say this is present in their community; resulting in a gap of **67%**.



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

Demographics

n= 530





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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