

AGE FRIENDLY Manitoba

Age-Friendly Melita

Community Consultation Summary



Melita, Manitoba April 24, 2018

Community consultations are held with seniors and community members across Manitoba. The goal of these community consultations is to assist communities with prioritizing issues that will help them form action plans to make their communities more age-friendly. On April 24, 2018, 35 residents (including the Mayor and representatives from the town council and staff), came together to talk about age-friendly priorities and issues within their community.

There had been a discussion of the many positive activities and projects occurring within the community to date. The following is a summary of the age-friendly priorities discussed and identified at the meeting and the survey results.

Summary of Group Discussion

The participants had the following to say about the benefits of living in Melita

- The town has a unique structure, layout and looks very inviting to visitors.
- There are ample opportunities and a diverse population that mentors and supports people in a wide variety of areas i.e. business, and community work.
- Residents have a great sense of freedom and safety “you can do what you want, when you want”.
- Everyone knows everyone. The community is very friendly and supportive.
- Community feels socially welcoming and friendly.
- There is a good shopping and a good pharmacist - very helpful for seniors.
- Most services are close by, including the pharmacy, library, fitness places, and groceries.
- Melita is a safe and quiet place to live.
- Great recreation facilities i.e. curling, swimming, golf course, theatre, and visual arts
- The parks are great and there is lots to do.
- Seniors are respected and valued.
- Nice to have the RCMP in town.
- The food at the Chinese restaurant is good.



Priority 1: Transportation

Potential Actions:

- Although Melita's three Handi-vans generally provide excellent service, the following potential actions were discussed:
 - Explore coordination of a booking mechanism for trips outside of Melita i.e. Brandon while protecting Personal Health Information
 - Explore ways to cost-share
 - Increase awareness of the availability of the service
 - Communicate the booking process widely for community residents.
- Some signs and lighting could be improved upon.
- Some roads are rough and in need of upgrades.
- Review the need for more accessible parking spots, especially at the pharmacy, bakery, along Main Street and the recreation complex.
- Consider changing the crosswalk location to better reflect most used access points.



- Review location and size of crosswalk signage as it is not easily seen by traffic.
- Improve snow removal in front of pharmacy and other parking areas especially accessible parking.
- Consider developing a volunteer driver network.
- Consider improved signage throughout town to locate major facilities.

Priority 2: Outdoor Spaces

Potential Actions:

- Up keep of some sidewalks that have grass growing in, tree growing through e.g. Maple Street.
- Consider the need to encourage/engage homeowners to trim the overgrowth of bushes and the boulevards as presently there is no by-law in place.
- Consider the addition of more park benches along the public access areas (parks, sidewalks between the Lodge and Main Street, the golf course etc.). Determine a “rule of thumb” for the spacing and distance of these benches.
- Review possible grants for outdoor parks to improve accessibility and upgrading i.e. Community Places, Enabling Accessibility. When designing/upgrading, keep lighting, signage, accessibility and benches in mind.
- Assess the walking trail west of town for improvements to be more age-friendly.
- Continue to improve accessibility of the Communi-plex, curling rink and the swimming pool.
- Review the effectiveness of the LED street lights especially for wintertime.
- Enhance public access to washrooms.
- Communicate location and hours (of public washrooms) to public at large.
- Consider better signage for all amenities.

Priority 3: Housing

Potential Actions:

- As this is an “older” community (older population), consider planning ahead and being proactive to develop age appropriate housing.
- Consider doing an inventory of existing housing stock with a view to upgrading existing units towards more modern needs.
- Consider providing a local needs assessment and census of residents to project housing requirements into near future.
- Consider working with and partnering with the local community clubs i.e. Lions club, the K-40's.



Survey Responses

As part of the Age-Friendly Consultation, individuals from Melita, Manitoba were asked to complete a brief questionnaire designed to collect information on the age-friendliness of their community. A total of 25 questionnaires were completed. This report summarizes the findings from the individuals who completed the Age-Friendly Communities Survey; 73% identified themselves as a senior.

Summary of the Most Age-Friendly and Least Age-Friendly Areas

The following is a summary of the **most age-friendly** aspects of the community, defined as those areas in which 70% or more of the respondents indicated 'yes'.

- The transportation that is available for individuals with disabilities is sufficient (86%).
- Public transportation is affordable (73%).
- There are enough parking spaces close to services and stores (73%).
- The road signs in my community are easy to read and large enough for older drivers (71%).
- Seniors in my community are generally treated with respect (90%).
- The home care services that support seniors in their own home are sufficient (76%).
- The congregate meal programs available are sufficient (70%).
- Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the day (95%).

The following is a summary of the **least age-friendly** aspects of the community, as defined by those areas in which 20% or less indicated "yes".

- There is enough subsidized housing for low-income seniors (19%).
- The waiting times are reasonable to get into senior housing that provides supports to seniors (20%).
- There are enough public washrooms in key areas of my community (e.g., business and recreation areas) (18%).
- Sidewalks in most or all areas of my community are well maintained (14%).
- Public washrooms accommodate people with wheelchairs (19%).
- There are enough resting areas with benches along paths or trails (14%).
- There are enough lifelong learning programs specifically for seniors in my community (15%).
- Isolated seniors (e.g., those who don't have anybody) are contacted, visited or taken to activities (15%).

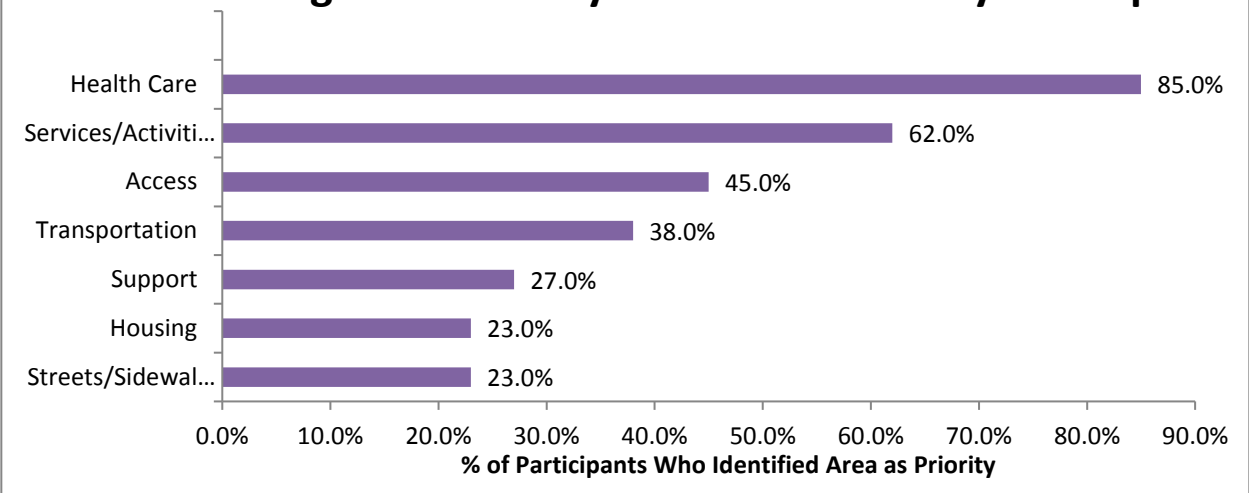
- There are enough public washrooms in key areas of my community (19%).
- Public telephone answering services in my community are adapted to the needs of seniors (6%).
- There are enough seniors' advocacy services available in my community (e.g. ombudsman) (0%).
- Seniors serve in an advisory role to municipal government in my community (15%).
- The health care services that are provided in my community meet the needs of seniors (e.g. hospital, physicians, eye care) (5%).
- Access to health care that are not provided in my community is generally convenient (e.g. not too far away and appointment times) (20%).

Priority Areas

Individuals were also asked to write down the top five issues they felt needed to be most urgently addressed in their community. Thirteen participants (59%) identified at least one priority area. These written comments were grouped into the priority areas as shown in Figure 1 with examples:

- **Health Care** (e.g., stabilize and improve services, need more doctors/nurse practitioners, reduce wait times, fully functional hospital, improved home care).
- **Services/Activities** (e.g., walking trails, outreach to seniors outside of facilities, more programming/activities for seniors, Adult Day Program in lodge, improved communication between facilities, improved awareness of services, more police presence, attract more businesses, meals available on weekends and evenings).
- **Access** (e.g., better signage, publicly accessible washrooms, cross walks, parking at Lodge, handicap parking spots, recreational facilities consider seniors when planning type of activities).
- **Transportation** (e.g., more efficient and affordable use of Handi-van organized trips, taxi service)
- **Support** (e.g., volunteer appreciation, intergenerational communication and activities, keep seniors engaged in community, encourage lodge residents to participate in outside activities, address isolation issue).
- **Housing** (e.g., future higher-grade housing, assisted living, 55+ affordable housing, larger rooms at lodge).
- **Street/Sidewalks** (e.g., general improvement and clean-up).

Figure 1: Priority Areas Identified by Participants



Findings

	Percent* Responding		
	% Yes	% No	% Don't Know
Housing			
There is enough housing that meets the needs of seniors.	40	48	12
Housing for seniors is affordable in my community.	64	12	24
There is enough subsidized housing for low-income seniors in my community.	25	29	46
The waiting times are reasonable to get into senior housing that provides supports to seniors (e.g. assisted living, personal care homes).	22	61	17
There is enough housing for younger people in my community.	68	8	24
Transportation			
	% Yes	% No	% Don't Know
The transit service to shopping, senior centres, religious events, cultural events, and so forth is sufficient.	60	36	4
The public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to and from medical appointments is sufficient.	64	28	8
The transportation that is available for individuals with disabilities (e.g., Handi-van) is sufficient.	88	12	0
Public Transportation (including Handi-van) is affordable.	76	12	12
There are volunteer drivers or an informal network of drivers available for seniors who need transportation.	52	16	32
There are enough parking spaces close to services and stores.	72	28	0
There are enough accessible parking spaces close to services and stores.	50	46	4
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings			
	% Yes	% No	% Don't Know
The road signs in my community are easy to read and large enough for older drivers.	63	25	13
There are sidewalks linking residences and essential services in most or all areas of my community.	50	46	4
Sidewalks in most or all areas of my community are well maintained (even surfaces or paved, not a lot of cracks).	13	83	4
Snow clearing in my community is done in a timely manner so walking and driving is safe.	61	39	0
There are enough street crosswalks in busy business areas.	58	25	17
There are enough street crosswalks in busy residential and/or recreation areas.	36	41	23
There are enough public washrooms in key areas of my community (e.g., business and recreation areas).	17	75	8
Public washrooms accommodate people with wheelchairs.	17	54	29
Most or all businesses and public buildings in my community are easily accessible to everybody (e.g., have wheelchair ramps, automatic doors).	56	44	0

Age-Friendly Communities Consultation/Survey

	% Yes	% No	% Don't Know
Community/Work Force Participation			
There are enough volunteer opportunities for seniors in my community.	63	17	21
There is enough official recognition for seniors who volunteer in my community (e.g., an appreciation banquet or volunteer awards).	35	26	39
There are enough paid job opportunities for seniors in my community.	32	27	41
The job opportunities in my neighbourhood accommodate the needs of seniors (e.g., part-time work is available).	46	25	29
Social Participation			
My community has enough pleasant places for walking (e.g., walking trails, parks, well-treed streets).	70	26	4
Local parks or walking trails in my community are accessible and easy to use for seniors (e.g., paths with even surfaces).	25	63	13
There are enough resting areas with benches along paths or trails.	13	75	13
There are enough exercise classes specifically for seniors.	77	5	18
There are enough recreation programs specifically for seniors in my community (e.g., card games, arts, crafts).	67	21	13
There are enough lifelong learning programs specifically for seniors in my community.	17	52	30
There are enough programs in my community that bring seniors and children together.	32	32	36
Recreational activities, such as exercise and other recreational programs are generally affordable for seniors.	61	22	17
Isolated seniors (e.g., those who don't have anybody) are contacted, visited or taken to activities.	13	43	43
Information/Advocacy			
Information about community events is readily available to seniors.	38	46	17
Information about the services and programs provided by various organizations is readily available to seniors.	48	19	33
Official, written information, such as forms or brochures is easy to read and understand.	29	24	48
Public telephone answering services in my community are adapted to the needs of seniors.	14	48	38
There is enough assistance available for completing official forms (e.g. government or income tax forms).	42	21	37
There are enough seniors' advocacy services available in my community (e.g. ombudsman).	4	30	65

Age-Friendly Communities Consultation/Survey

Respect & Social Isolation	% Yes	% No	% Don't Know
Seniors in my community are generally treated with respect.	91	4	4
Seniors serve in an advisory role to municipal government in my community.	17	39	43
Community consultations in my community specifically include seniors.	41	5	55
Planning processes in my community specifically consider the needs of seniors (e.g. housing, transportation).	43	17	39
			% Don't Know
Health and Community Services	% Yes	% No	% Don't Know
The home care services that support seniors in their own home (e.g. meal preparation, nursing care) are sufficient.	75	17	8
The services that help seniors around the home (e.g. snow removal, lawn care) are sufficient.	38	17	46
The congregate meal programs available (e.g., lunch at a recreation or senior centre) are sufficient.	74	13	13
The meal delivery services that bring meals to seniors' homes are sufficient.	54	21	25
The health care services that are provided in my community meet the needs of seniors (e.g. hospital, physicians, eye care).	5	91	5
Public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to health care services that are not provided in my community is sufficient.	25	46	29
Access to health care that are not provided in my community is generally convenient (e.g. not too far away and appointment times).	22	57	22
			% Don't Know
Safety	% Yes	% No	% Don't Know
Crime and vandalism are a problem.	0	77	23
Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the day.	96	0	4
Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the night.	54	21	25

*Due to rounding up or down, some rows may not add to 100 per cent.