

Senior Citizen Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Presents:

December, 2018

Report of Findings and Recommendations



Presented to the South Portland City Council

December, 2018

Table of Contents

Introduction.....3

The Assessment.....3

Conclusion of Survey

Results.....5

Conclusion from Focus

Groups.....8

Gap

Analysis.....10

Recommendations.....11

Recommendation based on

Domains.....11

Special Thanks.....18

Appendix A.....19

Appendix B.....24

Appendix C.....25

Appendix D.....43

Appendix E.....46

Appendix F.....47

On August 21, 2017 the South Portland City Council voted unanimously to create an Ad Hoc Senior Citizens Advisory Committee to ensure the city's elder residents "have access to services and infrastructure enabling them to live safely and with dignity as they age".

The committee was provided with \$6,000 to conduct a needs assessment of residents aged 65 and older. This committee proceeded to identify existing programs already in place, to ascertain any gaps between needs and services, to determine ways to plug these shortfalls, develop a comprehensive strategy for communicating to seniors' programs available to them and deliver recommendations to the south Portland City Council for how to address these deficiencies. The Committee held its first meeting on September 12, 2017 and continued to meet as a whole and in subgroups monthly.

THE ASSESSMENT

A framework for the survey was built using the construct of the World Health Organizations Eight Domains of Livability as adapted by AARP to measure age friendly communities. Those eight domains are:

1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Outdoor space and buildings have a major impact on mobility, independence and quality of life and affects the ability to "age in place". People need places to gather indoors and out. Parks, sidewalks, safe streets, outdoor seating and accessible buildings can be used and enjoyed by people of all ages.

2. Transportation

Transportation allowing one to ably to move about the city determines social and civic participation and access to community and health services. Driving shouldn't be the only way to get around. Public transit options can be as expansive as a train system or as targeted as a taxi service that provides non-drivers with rides to and from a doctor's office.

3. Housing

A link has been shown between appropriate housing and access to community and social services in influencing the independence and quality of life of older persons. Most older adults want to age in place. Doing so is possible if homes are appropriately designed or modified-and if a community includes affordable housing options for varying life stages.

4. Social Participation

Social participation and social support are strongly connected to good health and well-being throughout life. Regardless of one's age, loneliness negatively affects a person's health and sense of wellbeing. Isolation can be combatted by the availability of accessible, affordable and fun social activities.

5. Respect and Social Inclusion

The extent to which older people participate in the social, civic and economic life of a city is also closely linked to their experience of inclusion. Intergenerational activities are a great way for young and old to learn from one another, honor what each has to offer and, at the same time, feel good about themselves.

6. Civic Participation and Employment

An age-friendly community provides ways older people can, if they choose to, work for pay, volunteer their skills and be actively engaged in community life.

7. Communication and Information

Age-friendly communities recognize that not everyone has a smartphone or Internet access and that information needs to be disseminated through a variety of means.

8. Community and Health Services

At some point, everyone gets hurt, becomes ill or simply needs a bit of help. While it's important that care be available nearby, it's essential that residents are able to access and afford the services required.

Survey questions were identified to elicit the survey respondents' opinions of how they are able to live in their community of South Portland against these standards.

A total of 4,185 surveys were mailed through a professional mailing company. One thousand ninety-nine (a return rate of 26%) surveys were returned. There were 163 respondents age 60-64 which were excluded for this report. This analysis was conducted using 837 surveys; 704 age 65-84 and 133 age 85 and older. The responses were fairly well distributed among voting districts with slightly more received from District 1. Data was entered into Survey Monkey and results compiled by a professor and graduate assistants at USM.

Additionally, the committee convened four separate focus groups. The purpose was to obtain input from a variety of individuals and organizations that interact with seniors frequently. Representatives from the City included the library, firefighters and EMTs, police, public works, parks and recreation, housing and transportation. Additionally, there were family members, nurses from community agencies, individuals from religious entities, food pantry, 211, The Hub, businesses, civic clubs, Chamber of Commerce, Meals on Wheels and Southern Maine Area Agency on Aging.

Conclusion of Survey Results

A significant majority (98%) of respondents said that they felt safe at home and in their community. They are able to access buildings and outdoor spaces in South Portland. However, the challenge of poorly maintained and unsafe sidewalks, poorly lit street and unsafe intersections were experienced by over half of the respondents. The buildings and outdoor spaces are easily accessible but the paths to get there (roads, sidewalks) are not. It is interesting to note that access to buildings and open spaces was not raised as a concern in any of the focus groups.

Respondents live primarily in single family homes or condominiums with a greater number in the older age bracket residing in apartments or senior housing. A smaller percentage of respondents answered that home maintenance was noted as a challenge. Of that limited number of individuals who answered, the majority indicated that they did not need help with cost or labor for home repairs; however, one quarter indicated needing help with labor and slightly less with cost. There were a significant number of comments noting the need for help

with property tax relief. Well over half of the respondents indicated a need for assistance with snow removal and yard work followed by carpentry and painting. Snow removal and help with decluttering and cleaning were cited in the focus groups. Focus groups members also felt that the choices for affordable housing are limited, denying seniors enough options to move from their single-family home to a congregate setting that is in their community. Waiting lists for subsidized housing, unavailability of options for those not eligible for subsidized housing and prohibitive costs relative to income also impacted on the affordable housing options. Rising expenses in terms of taxes, utilities and repairs were cited as challenges to individuals remaining in their homes.

A personal vehicle is senior's primary mode of transportation, followed by rides from family members or friends for those ages 85 and older. The use of one's own vehicle declined with age. There was no mention of the use of volunteer ride service. The lack of transportation did not impede respondents from going places. Clearing of ice and snow was the most cited response to the question of what would help you to get around to use businesses or shopping, followed by more parking and better street lighting. Slightly more than a third of the respondents age 85 and older cited affordable ride service. Focus groups participants felt access to various forms of transportation such as bus, taxi, RTP were lacking in availability and were costly. Walking to and from public bus stops was identified as difficult, challenges as to getting to the bus stops, timing of trips and locations of drop off were cited as barriers to using public transport. Winter conditions of ice and dark compound the problem. A question of when seniors should be encouraged to stop driving was also discussed.

The need for personal care was not indicated. However, when asked if they had someone to help with personal care, one-third of the respondents indicated they did not have someone to assist them. It is unclear if that response is because they do not need help versus do not have someone. A very small number of individuals said they were not able to pay for basic expenses and all were under the age of 85. Similarly, the few who said they have gone to bed hungry in the last month are also under the age of 85. Focus group members identified the need for supportive services in the form of case managers and advocates as benefiting seniors. Such

services would assist in navigating the health and social service system, provide oversight with medication management and reduce the incidents of unnecessary 911 calls and emergency room visits. Education on a variety of age-related topics was deemed as helpful and increase need for family support and respite services was also mentioned. Focus group participants also felt that food insecurity may be an issue and specifically cited the method of publicizing the availability of food pantries and access to them as challenges.

The majority of the respondents use the newspapers as their primary source of community information, especially for those in the older age bracket, followed by television. Word of mouth was the third most noted method of obtaining information. Access to and knowledge of resources was seen by focus groups members to be inadequate. It was noted that resources may be presented in many ways that are not user friendly to seniors.

A large number of individuals stated that they were not interested in volunteer opportunities and less than half of the respondents answered the question on the desire to socialize more. Those who indicated a barrier to more socialization cited cost, mobility issues, find out too late, and no one to go with as reasons.

The focus groups also identified the following issues that were not noted as such by the senior respondents: information availability and financial resources; safety in terms of fall prevention, food spoilage, burns while cooking, medication errors; fraud and scams and food insecurity and social isolation interactive with health and transportation.

Summary of comments on survey:

When asked "Is there anything else you would like us to know?", the single largest comments received were with respect to buildings and open spaces. Respondents overwhelmingly spoke to inadequate street lighting, poorly maintained sidewalks, parking, lack of snow removal, particularly on sidewalks and where town plow leaves snow in driveway, speeding traffic (concerned for neighborhood children) and difficulty crossing intersections.

Property taxes were mentioned the second most often by commenters. Concerns cited were the inability to keep up with the cost on a retirement/fixed income, the potential of losing or

having to sell home and inadequacy of the current property tax assistance program.

Suggestions included lowering or freezing tax rate for those 70 and older.

Commenters would like to see good, reliable information on neighborhood events, suggesting a local newsletter that seniors can sign up to receive. It was noted that adding phone numbers to website references would be helpful as many seniors do not use computers. A suggestion was made to create a community bulletin board to post community events and to look to Scarborough at their senior programming.

Although most respondents were not concerned with needing personal care assistance, they did mention individuals they were aware of who could use some help.

A suggestion was made for local grocery stores to add benches throughout the store for seniors to rest on while shopping. Grocery home delivery was also mentioned.

Transportation related comments included adding a bus stop at Broadway and Benjamin Pickett St., more frequent bus stops, bus routes that come closer to housing, more appropriate stop signs, use volunteers to drive a shuttle to assist seniors who need transportation.

Complements were received regarding the care of the Greenbelt, the good job public works department does, the SOPO library, the community center and lots of thanks to city officials for caring and doing this project!

Conclusion from Focus Groups

The focus group notes were analyzed for themes by two individuals working separately. While sometimes they used slightly different terminology, they described identical themes which were:

- ✓ Access to/knowledge of resources: it was identified that resources may be presented in many ways that are not user friendly to seniors.
- ✓ Supportive services (words used were care coordinator, case manager, transition planner, senior advocate): services identified as requiring help included advocacy in navigating

social and health care system; medication management particularly after transitions, and a holistic framework of coordinated care. Support in these areas was described as promoting stability of health and decreased 911 calls and ER visits. Family support and respite is also needed. Wellness check ins were considered to be helpful in preventing problems.

- ✓ Education on topics noted were changes of aging and alternatives for future planning and transitions including burial, accommodations for impairments of aging such as changes in mobility, vision and hearing would be helpful as well as education about avoiding fraud and abuse.
- ✓ Transportation: access to various forms of transportation such as bus, taxis RTP, were discussed in terms of cost and availability. Walking to and from public bus stops was identified as difficult, if the bus went where needed, when needed. Winter conditions of ice and dark compound problems. Also discussed was problem of when and how senior drivers should be encouraged to stop driving.
- ✓ Social isolation: was felt to be a problem. It was seen as interactive with health and transportation, information availability and financial resources
- ✓ Home Maintenance: mentioned was snow removal. Help in decreasing clutter and cleaning were identified in addition to home safety.
- ✓ Safety: topics frequently mentioned were fall prevention, food spoilage and burns while cooking in addition to medication errors and fraud and scams. It was noted that the senior citizen has the right to choose independence over safety and that this can be difficult for family members. Wellness checks and fall alarms are valuable, can be costly and can be refused.
- ✓ Food insecurity: people may not be able to get to the food pantry, the pantry can do some deliveries if knows of problem, in addition to issues of getting food, there may be problems of safe storage and preparation.
- ✓ Affordable housing: choices are limited in terms of leaving one's house and remaining in the community in spite of increase in home values. There are waits for places with subsidized rents, for those who are not eligible for that help, costs may be prohibitive

relative to income in terms of other available options. Staying in one's home may be financially prohibitive related to rising expenses in terms of taxes, utilities, and repairs. Focus groups included representatives from the city: library, firefighters and EMTs, police, public works, parks and recreation, transportation; there also were family members, nurses from community agencies; people from the food pantry, churches, 211, the hub, businesses, rotary, chamber of commerce, meals on wheels and Southern Maine Area Agency on Aging. It is important to remember that this information comes from providers who work with seniors in our community rather than the seniors themselves.

Gap Analysis

The gap analysis identified needs from the survey and the focus groups and then looked at resources available. Some needs are under the city's authority to address, for example: taxes, sidewalks, streets lights, traffic and road crossing, bus service, and affordable housing. There are other needs where resources to meet them exist, for example: home care, medical management, financial education, companionship and transportation services. The adequateness of service to need was not specified. However, adequacy will be further identified as recommendations are formulated. Some issues such as social isolation and unmet health needs will require additional information. Finally, there were needs identified for which no services were available, for example: free or low-cost snow removal or yard work and a non-electronic communication method.

Recommendations

The Ad Hoc Senior Advisory Committee proposal originally submitted to the council stated that after the assessment process of the survey, focus groups and available resources, the committee would *"identify gaps between needs and available services and determine partnerships and option to fill."* The recommendations below achieve that end. However, to further this goal, the Committee recommends that **an ad hoc Senior Steering Implementation Committee be appointed to lead and coordinate the work of implementing the recommendations.** This work would include forming and facilitating the work of sub-

committees as noted below and reporting on a regular basis to the City Council and public. We recognize that many recommendations may take several years to fully implement while others could be implemented on a shorter time frame. It will be important to develop measurable and time-oriented goals for recommendations as the sub-committees begin their work. Note: the committee formed to work on implementation may be different than the one that focused on assessment.

Recommendations Based on Domain

Domain 1: Buildings and Outdoor Spaces

Most respondents indicated that they were able to access buildings and use outdoor spaces in South Portland (98% seniors age 65 - 84, 92% 85 and older). Approximately half of the respondents (and almost 70% in Districts 1 and 2) did cite that they were challenged by poorly-maintained sidewalks, poorly-lit streets and un-safe sidewalks and crosswalks. Twice as many aged 85 and older noted inaccessible or inconvenient transportation was an issue.

Recommendations:

Establish an ad hoc outdoor space subcommittee that would:

1. Work with the Bike/Pedestrian Committee and existing city initiatives and Public Works to:
 - a. Develop a dialogue with districts and neighborhood that both communicates need to appropriate city committee or department and also communicates regular feedback on progress of initiatives to residents.
 - b. Prioritize specific goals related to making streets safe for all users that address traffic speed, crossing lights, cross walks and bike lanes.
 - c. Continue safety initiatives for crossing the street on Cottage Road and Broadway.
 - d. Request report on the on an ongoing sidewalk upkeep plan.

- e. Increase focus on maintaining clear access to city buildings and sidewalks, especially during inclement weather.
 - f. Establish regular inspection plan for lighting.
2. Develop a plan for volunteers to provide sand from Public Works to seniors who request it.
 3. Set up economic incentives to have buildings become more ADA compliant and more age friendly.
 4. Work with local businesses to sponsor a regularly scheduled “Senior Shopping” day.
 5. Survey all South Portland parks, describing their accessibility and ensure a few in each neighborhood are fully accessible.

Note: items # 3,4 & 5 were not specifically cited per se in survey, but are recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee.

Domain 2: Transportation

Overall, personal vehicles were the primary mode of transportation for survey respondents (93% respondents 65-84, & 68% respondents age 85 +). Advanced aged respondents indicated a decrease in personal vehicle usage and an increase in friends and family serving as the primary mode of transportation. This same trend was evident when asked if the lack of transportation prevents them from going places. However, respondents noted that clearing of ice and snow on sidewalks and parking areas, more designated parking and better street lighting would assist them to better access public services and shopping. For the 85+ respondents, 31% indicated a need for affordable ride services. Focus groups participants felt access to various forms of transportation such as bus, taxi, RTP were lacking in availability and were costly. Walking to and from public bus stops was identified as difficult; challenges as to getting to the bus stops, timing of trips and locations of drop off were cited as barriers to using public transport. Winter conditions of ice and darkness compounded the problem. A question of when seniors should be encouraged to stop driving was also discussed.

Recommendations:

1. Establish an ad hoc transportation committee including the South Portland Director of Transportation to address the following:
 - a. Convene a focus group with senior citizens to identify their desired transportation destinations focusing on medical care, drug store and food shopping
 - b. Convene a meeting of all public and private transit providers in the community to compare and contrast available services.
 - c. Develop a city-wide transportation network building on existing resources to provide free and low-cost rides to facilitate mobility of residents to meet medical needs and grocery shopping.
 - d. Expand transportation services to allow social participation in events at recreation center, library, high school plays and concerts.

Domain 3: Housing

Three-quarters of respondents age 65-84 live in single family homes. Not unexpectedly this drops to 66% for the older seniors with the balance living in senior housing (20%) and apartments (13%). The majority of both groups noted they did not need assistance with home repair labor or cost. Thirty-three percent of those age 65-84 and 41% of 85+ respondents responded to the question of needing assistance with home repair or maintenance. The need for help with snow removal, steps, sidewalks, driveways and roof was cited by 69% of respondents. This was followed by help with carpentry and painting, then plumbing and electrical services. There were a significant number of comments noting the need for help with property tax relief. Snow removal and help with decluttering and cleaning were cited in the focus groups. Focus groups members also felt that the choices for affordable housing are limited, denying seniors enough options to move from their single-family home and stay in their community. Waiting lists for subsidized housing, unavailability of options for those not eligible for subsidized housing and prohibitive costs relative to income also impacted on the affordable

housing options. Rising expenses in term of taxes, utilities and repairs were cited as challenges to individuals remaining in their homes.

Recommendations:

1. Establish an ad hoc subcommittee that would:
 - a. Gather data about developing a plan to decrease tax burden on senior citizens.
 - b. Develop a volunteer handyman service for seniors by working in the school systems and with area service clubs to provide for snow removal, lawn care, and small home project repairs.
 - c. Establish vetting process for reliable contractors for seniors' work with the business community.
 - d. Promote available programs that exist now for energy efficiency, safety.
 - e. Ensure that Planning Department, Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee, Housing Authority and Affordable Housing Committee devise plan for changes needed as people age; needs include affordable housing including apartments, accessible housing as population ages and walkable neighborhoods.
 - f. Require all housing designed as 55+ and built with private funds meet ADA building requirements.

Domain 4: Social Participation

Of the total respondents, less than half answered the question “what prevents you from socializing more?”. For those that did, no one to go with, mobility issues and finding out about events too late were the most frequent responses. There were a number of “other” responses which cited health as a deterrent to socializing more.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a subcommittee to:

- a. Establish a young senior volunteer companion group through the Department of Parks and recreation.
- b. Sponsor high school seniors with “Growing with Seniors” or “Seniors to Seniors” group through the school system.

Domain 5: Respect and Social Isolation

A majority (99%) felt safe both at home and in the community. Focus group members felt social isolation to be a problem for seniors. It was seen as interactive with health and transportation, information availability and financial resources.

Recommendations:

It is a credit to the city of South Portland that almost all of the respondents felt safe at home and in the community. We recommend that this positive environment continue.

Domain 6: Civic Participation

The majority of respondents (77%) indicated no interest in volunteer opportunities. However, 33% of respondents between the ages of 65 and 84 indicated that they were willing to volunteer.

Recommendations:

1. Establish a Senior Coordinator for Volunteers to recruit volunteers and establish volunteer activities/programs.

Domain 7: Communication and Information

The majority of respondents (73%) use newspapers as their primary source of learning about community information. This trend is especially strong among the 85+ group. The second method was television, more so with the older respondents. This was followed by word of mouth for both groups. Focus group members felt that information is not always presented in a manner that is user friendly to seniors.

Recommendations:

1. Charge the Senior Citizen's Ad Hoc Advisory Committee's Communication subcommittee to implement their Communication Strategy Plan and additional communication strategies included in this report.
2. Establish a senior information kiosk at recreation center.

Domain 8: Community Support and Health Services

Almost all respondents (94%) noted that they had someone to check on them if they get sick. The majority also said they do not need help with personal care. However, 1/3 of respondents indicated that they had no one to help with personal care. It is unclear if the response indicates no person available or no need for care. Ten individuals, all in the cohort of 65-84, noted that they were not able to pay for monthly expenses and a few (13) had gone to bed hungry during the past month. Focus group members identified the need for supportive services in the form of case managers and advocates as benefiting seniors. Such services would assist in navigating the health and social service system, provide oversight with medication management and reduce the incidents of unnecessary 911 calls and emergency room visits. Education on a variety of age-related topics, increased need for family support and respite services were deemed as helpful. Focus group members also felt that food insecurity may be an issue and specifically cited the method of publicizing the availability of food pantries and access to them as challenges.

Recommendations:

1. Established a Senior Citizen advocate working in a proactive preventive role to help seniors navigate the system.

The City of South Portland is well positioned to become a premier Age-Friendly Community. It has many natural elements for a viable livability standard now and in the future. We believe

that if the City of South Portland acts on these recommendations, the city will reach its goal of being a community where residents will be able to successfully “age in place”.

Respectfully submitted by the Senior Citizens Ad Hoc Advisory Committee

Councilor Maxine Beecher

Cathy McDonald

Councilor Susan Henderson

Sheila Szafran

Elizabeth Ross-Holmstrom

Linda Best

Adele Edelman

Joan Herzog

Kathleen Babeu, Director of Social Services

Meredith Tipton

Special Thanks

Special thanks to the following volunteer contributors

Marilyn Reilly

Sharon Martin

Bernadette Kroon

Mary Pelletier

Michelle Denois

April Caricchio

Kylie Stevenson-Lyon

Jennifer Caswell

Arthur Handman, Director of Transportation

Phil Smith, South Portland Housing Authority

Chase Hewitt, Intern City of South Portland

Karla Doyan, Parks and Recreation

Appendix A

ORIGINAL SURVEY

The City of South Portland recognizes the contributions our senior residents have made to this community. We would like to have your feedback to support you in the future. Please take a few minutes to provide your answers and return the completed survey using in the included stamped, addressed envelope. We greatly appreciate your time.

-The South Portland Senior ad hoc Workgroup

Demographics:

What is your South Portland Voting District? (Circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 (If you aren't sure, please see map on Page 5)

What is your year of birth? _____ **What is your primary language?** _____

What is your gender? _____ **Today's Date:** _____

Survey Questions:

1. Are you able to enter the businesses/buildings you need to in South Portland?
(Circle one)

Yes No

2. Are you able to use outdoor spaces in South Portland?

Yes No

3. Do you experience any of the following in South Portland? (Check all that apply)

_____ Inaccessible or inconvenient transportation

_____ Poorly-maintained sidewalks

_____ Limited or poorly maintained parking lots or parking spaces

_____ Poorly-lit streets, unsafe sidewalks, or and intersections

4. Please indicate your primary source for South Portland community information:
(Check one)

_____ Newspapers

_____ Radio

_____ Internet

_____ Flyers/Posters

_____ Television

_____ Church Bulletin/Newsletter

_____ Word of Mouth

_____ Facebook/Social Media

_____ Newsletter/Mail

_____ Not Interested

_____ Other (Please Specify) _____

5. If you get sick, do you have someone to check on you? (Circle one)

Yes

No

6. Do you need help with personal care (meals, bathing, dressing, toileting)? (Circle one)

Yes

No

7. Do you have someone to help with personal care (meals, bathing, dressing, toileting), if needed? (Circle one)

Yes

No

8. Are you able to pay for necessary and basic monthly expenses (food, housing, utilities, etc.)? (Circle one)

Yes

No

9. In the last month, have you gone to bed hungry due to lack of food? (Circle one)

Yes

No

10. Do you feel safe: (Circle one for each below.)

At Home?

In the Community?

Yes No

Yes No

11. **Are you interested in volunteer activities?** (Circle one)

Yes No

12. **What programs or community activities would you be interested in?**

13. **Please indicate your current housing from the list below:** (Check one)

_____ Single Family Home

_____ Senior Housing

_____ Condominium

_____ Assisted Living

_____ Apartment

_____ Other

14. **Do you need help with any of the following home repair or maintenance services?** (Check all that apply)

_____ Snow removal: steps, sidewalks, driveways, roof

_____ Heat/Cooling

_____ Ramps, grab bars, non-slip materials in bath/shower, railings on steps

_____ Carpentry/Painting

_____ Plumbing/Electrical

_____ Other _____

15. **DO YOU NEED HELP WITH HOME REPAIR:** (CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH BELOW.)

Labor?

Cost?

Yes No

Yes No

16. **If you would like to socialize more, what prevents you?** (Check all that apply)

- Mobility Issues
- Health Issues
- No one to go with
- Find out about events too late
- Not much to do
- Events/schedule not convenient
- Too costly
- Lack of transportation
- Other

17. **What is your primary mode of transportation?** (Check one)

- My vehicle
- Friends/Family
- South Portland Bus
- Independent Transportation Network (ITN)
- Taxi/Private
- Volunteers
- N/A

18. Does the lack of transportation prevent you from going places? (Circle one)

Yes No

19. What would help you to get around South Portland to use public services or shopping? (Check all that apply)

_____ Sidewalks/Parking Areas cleared of ice and snow

_____ Better maintained streets

_____ More designated parking and street lighting

_____ Affordable ride services

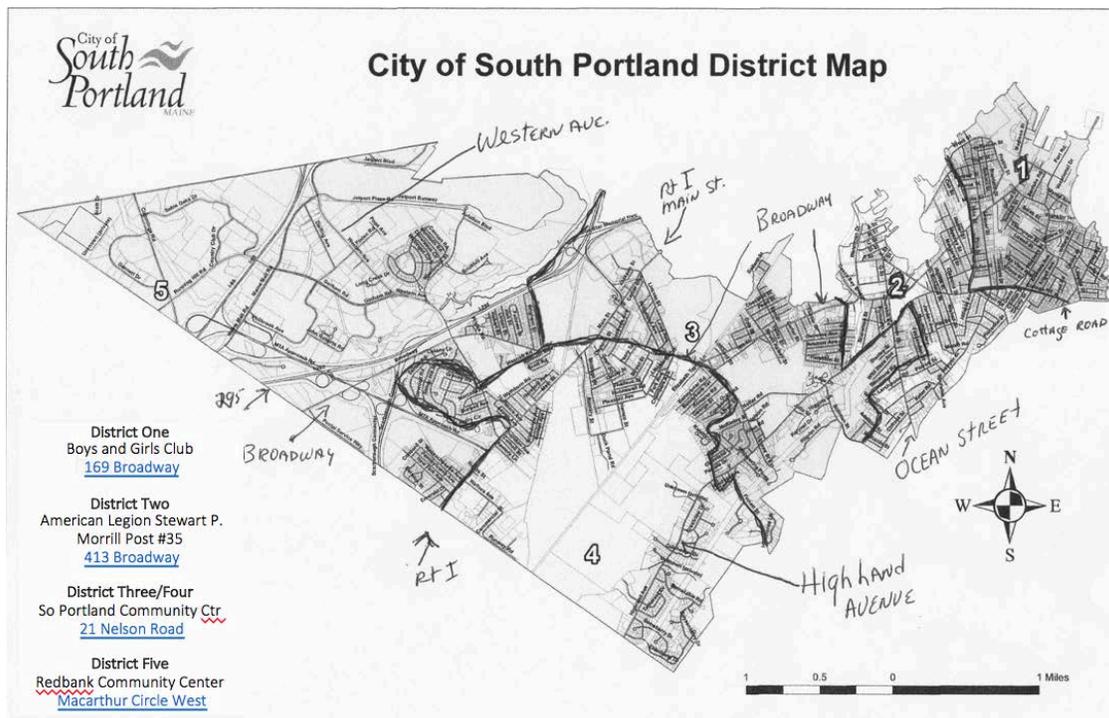
_____ Seating with Arms

_____ Wheelchair ramps

_____ Other

20. Is there anything else we should know?

Please use this map to determine your voting district for the first demographic question on Page 1.



Appendix B

FOCUS GROUPS

The South Portland ad hoc Senior Advisory Committee was established last year with the goal of ensuring seniors have access to services and infrastructure enabling them to live safely and with dignity as they age. The work began with an assessment of needs. A survey was mailed to seniors (60+) this past November. The committee has received over 1100 survey back and a summary of responses is being completed at this time. As part of the assessment process, the committee is inviting participation from professions, caretakers and those with knowledge working with our senior population to participate in a focus group. The purpose of the Focus groups is to obtain information or opinion from providers of services to our elders on their perceptions of problems. Personal information about individuals will not be identified.

Discussion Questions

- A. What do you say to yourself when you encounter a challenge for a senior and you say ...” if I were in charge I would do or change or put in place.... [fill in the blank]to help this person”?
- B. In your present role, what unmet needs of seniors in our community do you and your co-workers observe?
- C. In your experience, what are some difficulties seniors face staying in their home communities as they increase in age?
- D. If you could do three things to increase the health and community support of senior citizens what would you suggest?
- E. If you could do three things to increase the health and community support of senior citizens what would you suggest?

Appendix C

SENIOR AD HOC COMMITTEE

DATA SUMMARY

Qualitative and Quantitative Data from Survey and Qualitative Data from Focus Groups

Documented by DOMAIN and DISTRICT

July 26, 2018

TOTAL responses by data columns

60-65 = 163

65-84 = 704 (voting district answered 666 skipped 38)

85+ = 133 (voting district answered 119 skipped 14)

TOTAL Population by district

District 1	226	4426
District 2	195	4593
District 3	125	4006
District 4	124	3907
District 5	115	3141

Domain: Buildings and Outdoor Spaces											
QUESTION			Possible answers	percent							
Data #	Survey #			60-65	65-84	85+	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
5	1	Are you able to enter the businesses/buildings you need to in South Portland?									
			Yes	99	98	98	98	98	98	100	96
			No	1	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
6	2	Are you able to use outdoor spaces in South Portland									
			yes	98	98	92	98	98	96	99	96
			no	2	2	8	2	2	4	1	4
7	3	Do you experience any of the following in South Portland									
			Inaccessible or inconvenient transportation	7	12	27	7	12	22	12	22
			Poorly-maintained sidewalks	53	55	58	69	61	42	38	51
			Limited or poorly maintained parking lots or parking spaces	40	12	18	10	8	22	12	18
			Poorly-lit streets, unsafe sidewalks, or and intersections	67	72	36	69	68	69	80	69

No input from focus groups

Additional input from question 21 (If you would like to socialize more, what prevents you?) age 65-84:

- *Steps without railings. Need to be dropped off at door*
- *Trouble driving at night*
- *Finding safe bicycle trails*

Additional input from question 25 (anything else you would like us to know) no age breakdown:

- *You have interesting pre-conceptions about "seniors" I need an elevator in my building and laundry in the building*
- *More lighting;*
- *We need street lights on Arbutus, lots of kids, some with handicaps. Lots of cars. Adults walk dogs in pitch black. All neighbors complain about street lights;*
- *Street lighting is awful. In winter going out after 4:30pm can be difficult.*
- *We need a street light in the Cleveland circle area. Lower section. NOW. TOO DARK.;*
- *Need more street lighting-difficult night driving;*
- *The poorly lit streets are a big problem for me as I often need to walk dogs after dark, this is worse with snow- and ice-covered sidewalks. Overall, city services are adequate for my current needs, except lighting/snow removal.*
- *More street lights, hard to see crosswalks and side streets.*
- *My wife would like to see more street lights on at night in Redbank village far end Wermouth Rd.*
- *I filled out the survey for my husband and I. We are both 74 years old and have lived in South Portland since 1972. We owned our home on Alfred st for 43 years. We downsized and moved to Summit Terrace apts two years ago. We feel that So.Portland has been a great place to live. AS traffic has increased over the years we feel that street lighting and more designated parking is a concern for our senior citizens.*
- *Love the Greenbelt walkway, great upkeep.*
- *I love the greenway, please keep it maintained.*
- *Why is it people do not clean up trash/ dog poop along the green belt. Why aren't there any signs warnings them to obey these laws?*
- *Clarks pond- handicapped path not accessible to those who are in a w/c let alone ones who are. It is all over grown.*
- *Please provide some open areas where dogs are not allowed. Millcreek, BugLight or Hinckley Park.*
- *Too many cars left on streets.*
- *Coming out of Hannaford left by the post office with cars and parked on cottage road you can't see cars coming. Parking shouldn't be allowed on Cottage road.*

- *The Willow street/Preble street intersection is dangerous because of obstructed vision when cars are parked facing west between scratch and corner of willow. There needs to be a no parking sign there. Have witnessed several near collisions. Thank you.*
- *I feel the parking situation in mill creek which has been changed from angled parking to parallel parking has made it much more difficult to access Smahas. I used to go to Smahas for most of my shopping but often can't find parking close to the store so I have stopped going. It is not very senior friendly.*
- *Fix the sidewalks, so that older people can walk without falling.*
- *Terrible sidewalks make walking dangerous.*
- *Sidewalks are poorly maintained, cannot walk safely on them in my area.*
- *Again, I feel bad the kids on Providence Ave- they can't ride bikes- no sidewalks. Increase of traffic avoiding intersections. They're getting more aggressive not following speed limit. It's a race track during the night; You all already have more complaints about this street. Why nothing is done? I don't know, \$? We need sidewalks so the kids can safely go to the school or speed bumps. Please stop ignoring us.*
- *Right now and every year I don't walk as much as I do in warmer weather- the sidewalks are icy and I have to climb over mountains of ice chunks to cross the street when sidewalks are blocked off with snow mounds from plowing the streets it limits where I can go- I have a dog- I love walking around Knightville- I feel lucky to walk along Waterman dr. but now it's awful to walk around. It's slippery and I don't feel safe.*
- *My pet peeve is seeing cars pulled up and parked on sidewalks. This forces pedestrians into the street. I walk often and have seen this in different areas. Particularly on Mitchel Rd. Seems there is no enforcement.*
- *Many sidewalks are in bad shape, especially side streets. I fell and twisted my ankle last year because there was a chunk of concrete missing from the sidewalk that I didn't see.*
- *Sidewalks and curbs in my neighborhood.*
- *Many streets have sidewalks on one side, needed on both sides. Ex. Broadway- very busy- no sidewalks on both sides- have to cross back and forth, dangerous.*
- *I would like South Portland to be more walkable-wider sidewalks on Ocean Street from Sawyer-Millcreek.*
- *Easier crossing on Broadway on foot. Thank you*
- *Heavy traffic and high rates of speed on streets make walking dangerous and unsafe for children and adults with limited mobility.*
- *Focus on helping people traveling on foot and bikes for a safer, healthier community. Bike lanes inadequate now. Need safe bike lane on Casco Bay Bridge, I've tried crossing it at times with traffic. It's a too close call at times. Why not widen walking so foot and bikes can be in same lane.*
- *Getting around by foot is dangerous because of speed limits are not enforced and cross walks should be painted several times a year and have large signs in the middle road to indicate pedestrian crossing. Photo radar should be used to control speeding and encourage respect for traffic laws.*
- *The plowing in our area has deteriorated over the past 2-3 years.*
- *I live at Broadway, when the city snow plows the road in front of my house which has 3 lanes, they have 2 trucks one behind the other, these trucks put 3-6 inches of snow on the sidewalk in front of my house then the city snow blowers come along, and blows it on to my front lawn, front of my picture window to the sidewalk. I have had to put in 5 lawns because of the new chemicals*

and salt. I am 84 years old and wish that type of snow blowing could change. It is costing me a lot of money and people have to help me.

- I am disabled and have to pay for snow removal. Then the sidewalks plow comes through and blows snow into my walk and driveway. Makes me very upset as I cannot afford to have it done again, one time is hard enough.
- I feel our public works dept. does a very fine job winter and services. Thank you for the senior ad.
- I'd like to call attention to the "street smokers" in the road on Broadway and Henley (Betsy Ross house) those folks need safe places to smoke. I'm not a smoker but fear they will be hit by a car or oil truck. They stand in the dark 3-6 inches from the street. It needs to be addressed before there is an accident. BRH is a SoPo property and the smokers need to be addressed. Simply putting them on the street isn't enough, Thank you!
- Do we really have to treat smokers so badly by making them cross the busiest street in South Portland to have a cigarette? Don't we have a tiny little corner on the property that would suffice to smoke and yet not intrude on others that don't? 1200 Broadway- St. CRY CTR
- Bike riding on Preble is worst now until wider sidewalks and parking on both sides.

Domain: Communication											
question		answer	percent								
Data #	Survey #7										
∞	4	Please indicate your primary source for South Portland community information	60-65	65-84	85 plus	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	
		newspapers	71	72	80	76	75	69	77	73	
		radio	8	8	16	8	7	6	11	11	
		internet	32	22	17	25	20	21	23	18	
		Flyers/posters	9	11	15	10	12	14	11	18	
		television	29	35	50	37	29	33	35	54	
		Church bulletin/newsletter	5	5	17	7	7	10	6	4	
		Word of mouth	24	23	24	29	19	20	19	24	
		Facebook/social media	18	10	5	9	9	8	9	9	
		Newsletter/mail	18	19	19	19	21	18	17	21	

			Not interested	1	1	0	0.4	0	2	1	0
			Other (specify)	10	8	6	8	5	3	12	8

Focus group observation: Access to/knowledge of resources. It was identified that resources may be presented in many ways that are not user friendly to seniors. —

Additional input from question 21(If you would like to socialize more, what prevents you?) age 65-84:

- *Need a good (reliable, detailed, and inclusive) source of information on neighborhood (by district?) events, activities and clubs.*
- *Not aware of upcoming events-monthly senior newsletter would be nice*
- *Not well advertised*
- *Better coordinated information.*
-

Additional input from question 25 (anything else you would like us to know) no age breakdown:

- *Need a local newsletter that seniors sign up to receive services, events;*
- *It would be helpful if you could mail us the schedule of things taking place at the community centers, a printed schedule would be good;*
- *Would like to have printed information via USPS on what is available at community Rec center. Know I can find out more via internet but don't always check that in timely manner. Miss some community events because I didn't know about them until after the fact;*
- *Would like a phone number for adds not just computer websites;*
- *Let people know if there is a community bulletin board posting events, classes, gatherings, and how or where to access it, and keep it updated. Thank you.*

Domain: Community Support and Health Services											
Question		Answer	percent								
Data #	Survey #		60-65	65-84	85+	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	
9	5	If you get sick, do you have someone to check on you?									
		yes	93	94	93	92	95	94	93	96	
		no	7	6	7	8	5	6	7	4	
10	6	Do you need help with personal care									

		(meals, bathing, dressing, toileting)									
			yes	1	3	7	3	4	2	2	5
			no	99	97	93	97	96	98	98	95
11	7	Do you have someone to help with personal care (meals, bathing, dressing, toileting), if needed									
			yes	65	64	62	64	64	65	63	59
			no	35	36	38	36	36	35	37	41
12	8	Are you able to pay for necessary and basic monthly expenses (food, housing, utilities, etc.)?									
			yes	98	99	100	99	98	98	99	97
			no	2	1		1	2	1	1	3
13	9	In the last month, have you gone to bed hungry due to lack of food?									
			yes	1	1	2	2	0.5	2	1	3
			no	99	99	98	99	100	98	99	97

Focus group observation:

- ✓ Services identified as requiring help included advocacy in navigating social and health care system; medication management particularly after transitions, and a holistic framework of coordinated care. Support in these areas was described as promoting stability of health and decreased 911 calls and ER visits.
- ✓ Education on topics like changes of aging and alternatives for future planning and transitions including burial, accommodations for impairments of ageing such as changes in mobility, vision and hearing would be helpful as

well as education about avoiding fraud and abuse. Family support and respite is also needed. Wellness check ins might be helpful in preventing problems.

Safety was frequently mentioned in terms of fall prevention, food spoilage and burns while cooking in addition to medication errors and fraud and scams. It was noted that the senior citizen has the right to choose independence over safety and that this can be difficult for family members. Wellness checks and fall alarms are valuable, can be costly and can be refused.

- ✓ Food insecurity: people may not be able to get to the food pantry, the pantry can do some deliveries if knows of problem, in addition to issues of getting food, there may be problems of safe storage and preparation.

Additional input from question 25 (anything else you would like us to know) no age breakdown listed:

- *I worry about my elderly neighbors with no local family, transportation issues, declining cognitive abilities and no one to monitor their status. Community commitment to seniors: Programs, resources such as transportation, events and cultural embracing them, their values to our community.*
- *Although I have no issues at the time, I have two elderly neighbors who live at home. I try to check on them but it worries me that they have no reliable help for shopping or health care. They are very isolated. Thank you for looking at this topic.*
- *He has Alzheimer's and just went to the Dr today and they done blood work for PD*
- *Lots of seniors with memory issues are lonely, isolated but do not necessarily need all daycare services. They would like a weekly get together-perhaps at the senior center- for a few hours. Thank you.*

Domain: Respect and Social Isolation											
QUESTION			ANSWER	Percent							
Data #	Survey #			65-84	85 plus	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	
14	10	Do you feel safe at home									
			yes	99	99	98	100	98	98	100	
			no	1	1	2	.45	2	2	0	
15	10	Do you feel safe in the community									
			yes	98	98	97	99	99	94	98	
			no	2	2	3	1	1	6	2	

Focus group observation: Social isolation was felt to be a problem. It was seen as interactive with health and transportation, information availability and financial resources

Only one question asked in survey #16; data 21 under social participation

32% find out too late

29% no one to go with Do not know...transportation issue

Additional input from question 25 (anything else you would like us to know) no age breakdown listed:

- *Something needs to be done about the problems on Main Street. It is no longer a safe place. I have lived in SP all my life and until the last 5 years considered it a safe place to raise a family. My children and grandchildren used to walk to the Friendly's and Dunkin Donuts but I no longer consider it to be safe for them.;*
- *I am concerned about the Thornton Heights area. I lived there for 46 years and am now afraid to even stop there.*
- *In both Shaws and Hannaford virtually no places to sit down within the main part of the store*

Domain: Civic Participation and Employment											
Question			ANSWER	Percentage							
Data #	Survey #			60-65	65-84	85 plus	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
16	11	Are you interested in a volunteer opportunity?									
			yes	30	32	14	35	35	22	22	29
			no	70	68	86	65	65	78	78	71

No focus group input into this domain

Data question 17, survey question 12—domain civic participation and employment

Only about 25% of respondents answered this question. Those who did answer requested exercise classes and groups, volunteer work, library and rec. center activities, and general activities that lead to socialization. The desire to engage in activities from this group seems to validate a desire for socialization in the senior citizen community.

Additional input from question 25 (anything else you would like us to know) no age breakdown listed

- *Volunteer opportunities should be better advertised;*
- *I'd like to work part time but can find anything I can get to affordably. Jobs needed*

Domain: Housing											
Question			Answers	percentage							
Data #	Survey #			60-65	65-84	85 plus	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5

18	13	Please indicate your current housing from the list below									
			Single Family home	74	71	56	69	73	63	79	52
			Senior Housing	4	7	20	9	5	19	4	6
			Condominium	9	13	7	11	8	14	14	21
			Assisted living	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1
			Apartment	10	8	13	9	12	2	2	20
			Other Specify	3	1	3	3	2	0	1	0
19	14	Do you need help with any of the following home repair or maintenance services									
			Snow removal, steps, sidewalks, driveways, roof	51	67	69	62	68	76	68	63
			Heating cooling	14	13	9	12	14	7	11	14
			Ramps, grab bars, non-slip material in baths and showers, railings on steps	6	13	16	11	17	17	9	16
			Carpentry, Painting	35	44	42	42	44	38	49	49
			Plumbing electrical	27	38	33	31	38	31	45	41
			Other specify	32	21	18	21	23	24	21	14
20	15	Do you need help with home repair									
		Labor	yes	17	28	26	30	23	23	42	21
			no	83	72	74	70	77	77	58	79
		Cost	yes	10	13	5	13	11	10	13	10
			no	90	87	95	87	89	90	87	90

Focus group observation:

- ✓ Home Maintenance mentioned was snow removal. Help in decreasing clutter and cleaning were identified in addition to home safety.
- ✓ Affordable housing choices are limited in terms of leaving one's house and remaining in the community in spite of increase in home values. There are waiting lists for places with subsidized rents, for those who are not eligible for

that help, costs may be prohibitive relative to income in terms of other available options. Staying in one's home may be financially prohibitive related to rising expenses in terms of taxes, utilities, and repairs.

Additional input from question 25 (anything else you would like us to know) no age breakdown listed:

- *Lower my taxes.*
- *Taxes are too high and will force me to move away as I am transitioning to a fixed income.*
- *Property taxes are prohibitively expensive, I need more help paying them or lower them for seniors.*
- *A bigger tax break for seniors.*
- *Property tax- scale down for elderly by income.*
- *Not raising taxes on those 70 or 75.*
- *Need help with taxes. I lived in this beautiful city for 76 years and am still able to pay my fair share of taxes. The day is going to come where this will become a as I head into a fixed income. At this time taxes will become an issue.*
- *We need to have our taxes reasonable.*
- *Upon retiring in 2 years I am sure my living expenses and needs will change. Taxes at my home are going to be my biggest issue staying in my home.*
- *I would like some help with property tax relief so I can afford to live here.*
- *House taxes going up every year, I live alone, 89 years old city is forcing me out of my house. Taxes for someone over 70 years of age should be frozen and that level, no kids in school for 45 years lived in SoPo for at least 65 years;*
- *Seniors are being forced out of their homes and social security increases are few and far between. The property tax assistance program us a joke you have to jump through hoops for a very small reduction;*
- *Taxes will make me lose my home if they go up more!*
- *Please provide property tax relief. Seniors should not have to pay more than 4/5% of their income on property tax.*
- *Being retired with limited income taxes are excessive I feel there should be discounts for seniors.*
- *Taxes are too high*
- *Taxes are a problem for people on fixed income! Is there any way taxes can be reduced for senior citizens on school tax and registration on vehicles? We have not had a child in school in many, many years, thank you!*
- *Income based housing for elderly! If So Portland wants to current residents this will have to be discussed. Thank you!*
- *More affordable housing for seniors who still choose to work but can't afford the going rate of apartments in the area particularly if they have pets they love. Clarks pond- handicapped path not accessible to those who are in a w/c let alone ones who are. It is all over grown.*
- *My biggest concern is housing. Affordable apartments for single elderly woman are scarce. First floor small apartments should be offered. The cost of apartments and places for people over 55 are too pricey for single people in South Portland and Portland. Rent is 1500+ per month that takes most of my social security check. If I need to move because I am on the second floor I would have to move to Biddeford or Saco*
- *Currently I am working and in good health. I appreciate any work we can do to help our aging population. Especially affordable housing for seniors. Seems we lack enough places that people want to go and can afford. Maybe I just haven't heard of them. We recently*

helped a friend in his 80s move out of his family home into Betsy Ross, which he likes. I hope the one street project will include affordable housing for seniors, as well as young families. Thank you for your work.

- This means you need to develop more affordable housing for seniors -elevators-laundry and not AVESTA.
- better neighborhood planning, pharmacies close by, stores, groceries, banks
- We are in senior housing are blessed with very kind and knowledgeable young men and woman on out maintenance crew if only superiors would allow them enough time to complete their work before being called away.
- Residents should have "heavy pick up" at least once a year! It is very difficult to dispose of unwanted articles and expensive when allowed to accumulate. Thank you!
- Senior housing-Snow removal has become a nightmare.
- I had open heart surgery last year and my wife has severe kidney stones and arthritis and I am 78 and a veteran. My heart doctor does not want me to shovel snow so every time it snows the plows pile the snow in front of our driveway we have trouble getting out. We are on fixed income and we could use someone to help with the snow when it piles up.
- Our major snow removal problem is often related to snow left at the driveway by SoPo plow.
- A volunteer problem to shovel out seniors. Portland has had very successful programs for years but the woman who was the head of the program retired.
- I hire people in 2015 to do house repairs. Lots of crooks, shoddy work, BS what I needed. I fired quite a few people.
- Having a list if names for inexpensive helpers for occasional job around home that family members done have time for.
- I have had problems finding help for house hold repairs and leaf raking, other maintenance issues. Difficult to find help to pay for this, sometimes I require help with heavy jobs/mowing/carrying/shoveling other outside chores.
- I am hoping to age in place and will be making my house into single floor living as possible. Great neighborhood/ town for seniors

Domain: Social Participation											
Question			Answers	percentage							
Data #	Survey #			60-65	65-84	85 plus	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
21	16	If you would like to socialize more, what prevents you?									
			Mobility issues	12	20	33	24	18	29	16	23
			No one to go with	32	31	24	27	25	27	37	31

			Find out about events too late	48	34	17	30	29	29	35	35
			Not much to do	4	7	12	7	8	8	9	10
			Events/events not convenient	18	20	12	14	25	21	23	10
			Too costly	14	19	4	16	15	21	16	8
			Lack of Transportation	10	9	26	7	12	18	12	15
			Other (specify)	28			47	41	33	28	42
			Health		21	38					
			Work/too busy		7	0.1					
			n/a or no interest		3	0.1					
			Misc.		8	0.3					

Focus group observation:

- ✓ Social isolation was felt to be a problem. It was seen as interactive with health and transportation, information availability and financial resources
Only question asked survey 16; data 21
32% find out too late. 29% no one to go with, Do not know, transportation issue.

Additional input from question 21(If you would like to socialize more, what prevents you?) age 65-84:

- *Sometimes being too late;*
- *More diverse activities*
- *No shared interest*

Input from question 21 not categorized:

- *Inertia, Lazy, Worthy walking companion, nothing prevents me, socialize with family and friends, not particularly social, haven't decided to do this yet, I'm mostly shy and reclusive, getting settled after move*

Additional input from question 25 (anything else you would like us to know) no age breakdown listed:

- *SOPO library is a wonderful asset to the city, you didn't ask any questions about the library;*
- *Somebody who wants to rent some nice little 15 or so catboats for the summer sailing season, that's what I miss most;*
- *We are excited about the new upcoming hot tub at the pool, super for elder therapy. The rec center generally does a fantastic job addressing the needs of the local seniors- wonderful programs, great variety. Kudos*
- *I use to go on many adventures with community center. I find that not too much is available. I was told senior activities were too expensive for city. Centering more on youth. A lot of friends are going to Scarborough.*
- *I am still very active. I still play tennis, and am a musician. I am also still working part-time. I would love to see SoPo further expand available recreational resources for seniors. For example: indoor tennis courts, weight training activities, musical social groups;*
- *The things I need and want at this moment are more exercise classes for seniors at a low cost. I know there are classes at the community center and I admit I have not looked at the online brochure this fall. I want yoga and I know several who would like a class that concentrated on balance and just good strengthening and basic strength training. Also would like painting classes where thy have had in the past. Maybe knitting and crocheting;*
- *Compared to Scarborough South Portland Senior bus trips, programs, are not good; I participate in Scarborough programs at Martins Point, Bingo, cards twice a week and my husband and I go to leever (sic)on weds. They really take care of their seniors.*
- *I moved to South Portland in 1998, very nice here! Now that I am retired, I attend several outings offered through the Recreation Center (55+), keep up the good work!*
- *Participated in adult basketball for many years- unable to do so anymore due to physical limitations. Attend high school sports that grandchildren participate in;*

Domain: Transportation												
Question			Answers	percentage								
Data #	Survey #			60-65	65-84	85 plus	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	
22	17	What is your primary mode of transportation?										
			My vehicle	93	93	68	88	90	90	93	88	
			Friends/family	3	4	26	8	6	9	3	10	
			South Portland Bus	4	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	
			Independent Transportation	0	.3	2	0.5	1	0	1	0	

			Network (ITN)								
			Taxi/Private	0	.1	2	0	1	0	0	1
			Volunteers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			N/A	0	.1	0	0	0	0	1	0
23	18	Does the lack of transportation prevent you from going places?									
			yes	5	6	24	6	9	14	5	10
			no	95	94	76	94	91	86	95	90
24	19	What would help you get around South Portland to use public services or shopping?									
			Sidewalks/Parking areas cleared of ice and snow	64	70	50	73	72	62	73	54
			Better maintained streets	18	20	16	25	21	12	15	22
			More designated parking and street lighting	40	36	26	33	38	42	27	41
			Affordable ride services	8	17	31	15	26	22	20	26
			Seating with arms	3	5	3	4	3	3	4	11
			Wheelchair ramps	3	5	5	2	3	5	6	11
			Other (specify)	12	9	8	11	9	3	9	9

Focus group observation:

- ✓ Access to various forms of transportation such as bus, taxis RTP, were discussed in terms of cost and availability. Walking to and from public bus stops was identified as difficult, if the bus went where needed, when needed. Winter conditions of ice and dark compound problems. Also discussed was problem of when and how senior drivers should be encouraged to stop driving.

Additional input from question 25 (anything else you would like us to know) no age breakdown listed:

- *Enforce basketball hoops on the side of the road, so many kids are darting into streets especially on streets where lighting has been cut back;*
- *People still cross Broadway where cross walks have been removed. Created unsafe practices. I love the Greenbelt walkway, great up keep;*

- **cross walks: please keep them highlighted and cleared of snow.*
- **more appropriate stop signs at locations throughout SOPO,*
- **A "round about" to make the Willard Sq intersection locations, safer for walkers, bikers and cars. Either add taller stop signs or yellow signage for all who use the Willard sq streets and sidewalks.*
- *SP bus service was removed from Knightville letter streets during construction, why hasn't it been restored to this increasingly vital part of the city?*
- *Income too large to quantify for rides to medical treatment and friends not always available. Prefer to be independent.*
- *A bus stop at Broadway & Benjamin Pickett st;*
- *Better bus service to and from Portland would be very helpful and would be something I would use regularly. My idea is an additional route to shorten existing ones, with smaller buses making more frequent trips;*
- *South Portland bus has limited weekend hours;*
- *Speed bumps needed on Pillsbury street by the playground. Pain and add crosswalks on Cottage and Broadway. Do not use cut outs on Cottage road it adds to the problem and congestion does not help pedestrians and cottage and Broadway and the bridge;*
- *My wife and I are very happy in South Portland and we are aware of people who need transportation within the area mentioned in question 12. Volunteers could run the shuttle if one or two people were available. Many people cannot afford a taxi or wait in cold/hot weather for a bus.*
- *More frequent bus stops.*
- *Primary care physicians, Martins Point, moved out of South Portland so now long distance to travel. My dermatologist Dr. Sabean is now in prest so no available nearby services available. Despite my age in place but that because problem for getting groceries and prescriptions delivered to me when I can no longer drive.*
- *Bus routes that come much closer to housing,*
- *Id like to work part time but can find anything I can get to affordably.*
- *Transportation needed.*
- *Would be happy to volunteer but transportation times are a problem.*
- *Right now I have my own car but that could change in the near and that talking to others who use the So. Portland bus service, it does appear to be very convenient and seems to lack enough busses to cover the city for more frequent times without long rides in order to get to your desired destination. Right now im not going through this but it could be in the near future.*
- *I am 92 years old with mobility and health issues so I dont go out much. I rely on the nursing home and family for all my transportation needs.*

Additional input from question 25 (anything else you would like us to know) no age breakdown listed:

- *Please do what you can to stop Maine from taxing my pension. I work in ME but may not be able to stay here after 2 years. No tax on my pension in MA and NH, why ME?*
- *Supermarkets doing home deliveries.*

- *SOPO's work on sustainability is also to be applauded, is Julie Rosen bach and our city council*
- *I know you will be there for me/us when needed. Thank you*
- *Suggestions as to where a senior might go to get legitimate motor vehicle sticker (without being scammed or overcharged) A list of local resources might be helpful.*
- *How about more mailboxes where we ca mail "general mail" instead of driving to the post office?*
- *My only problem is my driveway.*
- *Replace the Portland pipeline with solar farm and windmills instead of that old tank farm, WFT?*
- *The attached map, while intended to help is impossible to read. I am a 64-year-old with good eyesight and I could barely figure it out and read it. However, this survey shows interest in seniors/elderly in our community which is a sign of compassion culture, so thank you.*
- *I am only 61 years old, you should send this survey to 80+.*
- *I am very proud that I am a resident of South Portland. Our community, as shown by this survey and its committee, is looking to the future.*
- *I am so encouraged by the forming of this ad-hoc committee that SP is on the right track.*
- *So far, I am well and can do what I need to, I am wondering how the answers you receive will be addressed;*
- *Thanks for all your efforts.*
- *Thank you for contacting me.*
- *No, but this is a great thing you are doing, thank you!*
- *Thank you for reaching out to senior citizens. South Portland is definitely a caring community.*
- *Thanks for doing this!*
- *The questionnaire is a great idea and hopefully will help those in most need which I'm sure is your aim.*
- *Thank you for putting this out to the people! Love this city!*
- *This is a great project! Are you going to publish/distribute the results? Good luck*
- *Thanks for doing this.*
- *Thanks for caring!*
- *Presently I am of good health and not need of assistance, but I commend the city of South Portland for reaching out to those that are in need.*
- *Appreciate the survey, I am 68 and at this time quite capable to care for myself and property. In the future perhaps.*
- *Thank you for your service to the community.*
- **Very lengthy and difficult to read, please see survey**
- *Thank you for looking ahead for senior services needed to enable seniors to age in place be it in a house or rental apartment as abilities deteriorate with age.*
- *So far so good, who knows what the future will bring.*
- *We are getting older and may need help in a few more years, but right now we are able to drive and keep our house.*
- *Right now I am pretty independent and not in the need of assistance.*
- *I love South Portland and look forward to retiring and growing old in my beloved community;*
- *Still driving;.*

- *I just turned 60 and would not consider myself a "senior" yet.*
- *I am only 62 I really don't think I am the target demographic for the summer.*
- *At this moment my husband and I are alert, active and independent. We know this could change suddenly. In that case, our need for services might change as well.*
- *I grew up in rural MA now essentially Boston suburb. Lived in Bangor 40 years. I love living in South Portland it fills "smallish" from to ME yet offers most of the services and options I need to live a full life.*
- *Family lives in MA, I travel there often.*
- *My roots are deep...I have lived in South Portland since 1941. A great city. I am proud to call it "home", educated here, brought up my family here, will be buried here.*
- *I'm 77 next month. I am healthy and active. I can take care of my yard, play pickle ball, exercise, walk the beltway and ski in Maine and Utah. My mother lived to 99 and skied till 94, I hope to stay on the same track.*
- *Love South Portland that is why I have lived here my whole life.*
- *Nothing I am able to get around ok with my transportation*
- *At this time I am quite ambulatory but in 5 years or so that could change. I would like to see another survey in the future, thanks!*
- *We recently just moved here and are very happy with South Portland, thanks*
- *South Portland is a great city.*

Appendix D

SUMMARY OF TOP ISSUES REPORTED IN SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS

First tier of survey priorities:

⇒ **Transportation**

- Lack of affordable transportation
- Lack of bus use
- Dependence on Family/Friends, particularly 85+

Focus group summary:

Transportation: access to various forms of transportation such as bus, taxis, RTP were discussed in terms of cost and availability. Walking to and from public bus stops was identified as difficult, along with if the bus went where needed, when needed. Winter conditions of ice and dark compound problems. Also discussed was problem of when and how senior drivers should be encouraged to stop driving.

⇒ **Taxes Too High**

Focus group summary:

Affordable housing: choices are limited in terms of leaving ones house and remaining in the community in spite of increase in home values. There are waits for places with subsidized rents, for those who are not eligible for that help, costs may be prohibitive relative to income in terms of other available options. Staying in one's home may be financially prohibitive related to rising experiences in terms of taxes, utilities, and repairs.

⇒ **Sidewalks Are Difficult to Use**

- Crosswalks mentioned as lacking – unsafe intersections

Focus group summary:

see above re transportation

⇒ **Need for Care of Home – Interior and Exterior Upkeep and Repairs**

- Snow shoveling and snow removal
- Lawn, yard, garden care

Focus group summary:

Home Maintenance: mentioned was snow removal. Help in decreasing clutter and cleaning were identified in addition to home safety.

⇒ **Socialization –Desire to Socialize is Not Being Met**

- They find out about options too late
- Unable to attend due to mobility or health issues
- They have no one to go with

Focus group summary:

Social isolation was felt to be a problem. It was seen as interactive with health and transportation, information availability and financial resources.

Second tier of survey priorities:

→ food insecurity

Focus group summary:

People may not be able to get to the food pantry, the pantry can do some deliveries if knows of problem, in addition to issues of getting food, there may be problems of safe storage and preparation.

→ Issues related to health needs such as someone to help when sick was noted by a small number of survey recipients, but deemed important. Some comments on survey stated a need for development of neighborhood networks.

Focus group summary: Supportive services (words used were care coordinator, case manager, transition planner, senior advocate). Services identified as requiring help included advocacy in navigating social and health care system; medication management particularly after transitions, and a holistic framework of coordinated care.

Support in these areas was described as promoting stability of health and decreased 911 calls and ER visits.

Education on topics like changes of aging and alternatives for future planning and transitions including burial, accommodations for impairments of ageing such as changes in mobility, vision and hearing would be helpful as well as education about avoiding fraud and abuse. Family support and respite is also needed. Wellness check-ins might be helpful in preventing problems.

Safety was frequently mentioned in terms of fall prevention, food spoilage and burns while cooking in addition to medication errors and fraud and scams. It was noted that the senior citizen has the right to chose independence over safety and that his can be difficult for family members. Wellness checks and fall alarms are valuable, can be costly and can be refused

→ Survey data demonstrated some interest in help with both labor and costs of home repairs.

Focus group summary: Affordable housing: choices are limited in terms of leaving ones house and remaining in the community in spite of increase in home values. There are waits for places with subsidized rents, for those who are not eligible for that help, costs may be prohibitive relative to income in terms of other available options. Staying in one's home may be financially prohibitive related to rising experiences in terms of taxes, utilities, and repairs.

→ Survey data illustrated changing housing patterns with increasing age that could be illustrative of need for affordable housing that is physical accessible and safe for changes of aging.

Focus group summary: Affordable housing: choices are limited in terms of leaving ones house and remaining in the community in spite of increase in home values. There are waits for places with subsidized rents, for those who are not eligible for that help, costs may be prohibitive relative to income in terms of other available options. Staying in one's home may be financially prohibitive related to rising experiences in terms of taxes, utilities, and repairs.

***COMMUNICATION:** Survey data identified preferences related to gaining information: **Communication will be discussed further as a deliverable (see appendix F).** Education on online communication also a need. Need for a resource directory in a communication form accessible to seniors.

Focus group summary: Access to/knowledge of resources. It was identified that resources may be presented in many ways that are not user friendly to seniors.

Appendix E

RESOURCES AND NEEDS GAP ANALYSIS

There were twelve (12) issues raised from data analysis from both sources: the surveys returned by the senior population and information obtained through the focus groups of senior caregivers/professionals. Except for isolation and communication concerns, the groups identified different matters that seniors needed to successfully age in place. It is clear that aging is viewed differently among those that are aging and those who interact professionally with seniors. The topics were divided into 4 major categories: cities responsibility; need additional information; no known nonprofit services available; services provided for the need. The table below illustrates the results.

Senior Programs Identified Need vs. Availability		
	SURVEY	FOCUS GROUPS
CITY Responsibility	Transportation (affordable, getting to bus stops, dependent on family, friends); Taxes too high; Sidewalk issues; Crosswalks – lacking; unsafe at intersections.	Staff training dealing with elderly; Affordable housing
Additional information needed	Transportation (as above) Mobility and health issues as a factor in social isolation	Neighborhood support groups; Type of technology education needed
Services needed	Home care (snow shoveling; yard work; Non- electronic communication methods (newspaper, tv, word of mouth)	Comprehensive resource directory in many formats; Multiple communication methods for community events;
Services Available	Financial education; companionship	Medical management; mental health; food insecurity; heating, cooling issues; home clutter.

Appendix F

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY TO SENIOR CITIZENS

OF THE CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

The Senior Citizen’s survey conducted in the fall of 2017 indicated that the Seniors of South Portland overwhelmingly receive information through newspapers. This is particularly the case for individuals age 85 and older. The second source was television followed by word of mouth. Respondents, in commenting about why they don’t socialize do not attend community events or don’t know where to look for information on services they need help on and remarked they were not aware (of a particular service or activity), items were not adequately advertised or did not know where to find the information. With this in mind, the following chart outlines the strategy that the Advisory Committee believes to be the most effective methods for reaching our seniors.

What	Who	Where	How	Frequency
Newspapers	Sentry	Throughout City of South Portland	Publish monthly “Senior’s Corner” in paper. Improve publication and distribution of senior events and general information of interest to seniors Advertise as able	Monthly On going On going
Television	SPCTV	Cable TV station	Offer to have local senior specific interviews aired	quarterly
Word of Mouth	Recreation Center, Social Services, local businesses	Throughout City of South Portland	Place kiosks and brochures in strategic locations throughout the city.	On going
Internet	City of South Portland Social Services web page	The Web	Encourage providers and churches to sign up for City newsletter Place Resource Directory on city Home Page Establish Facebook page for seniors	On going
Other	211	Throughout city of South Portland	Coordinate with 211 to fulfill role of information and referral	On going

