

Community Engagement Report

Your Organization/Affiliation: Waunakee Senior Center	Your Name and Email: Moderator – Betsy Strahin strahin.betsy@countyofdane.com
Community Engagement Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Community Forum or Listening Session – virtual or in person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus Group Discussions – virtual or in person <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Interviews – by phone or in person <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook Live or Social Media Virtual Event <input type="checkbox"/> Paper or Internet Survey <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe): _____	
Date/s of Event or Effort: 7/15/2021	Number of Participants or Respondents: 3
Key Issues Discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From your personal experiences, what the main issues, problems, and challenges adults age 60 and older are facing in Dane County? - How can Dane County Support older adults in remaining independent for as long as possible? - What does Dane County have to change to be closer to your ideal community to age in? / What do you appreciate most about what Dane County already provides? 	
Key Takeaways/Findings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This group wants things specific to their subset of older adults. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identified three distinct groups of older adults: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. 55-62 the new retirees, they tend to be active, still interested in learning, and transitioning to a new stage of life ii. 70's are experiencing some physical issues, but overall still in good health iii. Severe medical group are in need of help because their families are not able to take care of them (too busy, too far, etc.). They may need meal delivery and/or assistance with appointments. b. Need: Education for senior care staff on these groups would help them create more appropriate activities at the senior centers 2. They are interested in enrichment activities. Examples include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Computer classes for a low cost (like in the past \$3-\$5) b. Classes to learn to play the card games senior centers host (e.g. bridge) c. Activities for those without medical problems at retirement. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Ballroom dancing, bands, polka, and parties with live music that is uplifting and exciting. Things outdoors like horseshoes and bags. ii. Sauk County brought up as an example of doing well. Multi-page pamphlet of activities including bicycling, park gatherings, campfires, pickleball... iii. Bingo, cards, and movies are fine to keep doing but are not active enough for those in good health wanting to maintain that health. d. Need: Wider variety of activities for the able-bodied (bonus if it can be adapted to accommodate those of lesser ability) 	

3. There is also concern about being alone – social isolation and who will take care of you when things go wrong.
 - a. They mentioned coming to Waunakee to be with family but then their children move away and they are left behind.
 - b. Friends are dying and it is challenging to make friends as an adult.
 - c. Worried about living alone and what happens when there's a fall, heart attack, or stroke. They want someone who can check on them. Children call frequently to check in, if don't answer the phone then they start to get worried.
 - d. Loss of pets is hard on this group. It is like losing a family member. In a perfect world they would have help getting to vet appointments, support for grieving loss, and education to understand costs associated with aging pets.
 - e. **Need:** Someone to check in and coverage in weekend gaps of services and gaps around the holidays. Better designed senior apartments – there are only emergency pull cords in the bathrooms at Cannery Row by the toilet. Afraid this would be hard to get to if fall in the shower and emergencies in other rooms are possible.
4. There was a strong focus on multi-generational activities.
 - a. Feel this will help make friends in different senior age groups, helps combat loneliness when friends start passing away.
 - b. Get excited to learn from and teach younger generations. They brought up examples of being pen pals with teenagers (organized with local schools and dropped off at a central box so didn't have to worry about postage), helping out with reading programs for first graders, and communication with third graders via the computer.
5. They also highlighted a need for better education.
 - a. They want to know if there is help to set up Power of Attorney or guardianship for medical reasons. They need to learn more about case management services.
 - b. They are currently learning by word of mouth or observing. They are compiling that information to create a system for their "what happens when I..." but would be helpful to have assistance with this planning.
 - c. Senior Center has a newsletter and Cannery Row has "Silver Notes" which can be used as communication channels.
6. Although not brought up until the end of the group, they say transportation should be a takeaway need.
 - a. It is needed when people can no longer drive.
 - b. Taxis and better bus service would be nice.
 - c. There is transportation to meals at the senior center and to go shopping – can this be expanded to activities like paid bus trips to the theatre to see a show.
 - d. The pandemic exposed holes in transportation to appointments (RSVP). Taxi service "fell apart." Van-Go taxi was the only service for appointments so it could not be used for other reasons, limiting non-medical taxi trips.
 - e. Would like to see organizations get involved –
 - i. Churches bringing older people to the church instead of going to them – helps remain part of the larger community
 - ii. Businesses sponsor a bus, in return they would get the added foot traffic.
 - f. Example of well-done transit – Fourth of July in Waunakee: free buses, 15 minute schedule, multiple pick up and drop off points.

Planned Response:

Share this form with AAA of Dane County to inform the drafting of their 2022-2024 strategic plan.