



AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES IN MANITOBA

Report on Survey Findings

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba conducted a project, entitled the 'Age-Friendly Communities Survey' to collect information from all municipalities in Manitoba (towns/cities and rural municipalities) as to where communities currently stand in terms of age-friendliness from the perspective of local government. An instrument previously used in the United States to survey communities (*The Maturing of America: Getting Communities on Track for an Aging Population*), which was also used in British Columbia, was adapted for the present purposes. The survey is designed to address domains of age-friendliness, with questions focusing on whether particular programs or services are available in the community and, if so, what role the municipal government plays in administering and funding them. This report summarizes the findings from the Age-Friendly Communities Survey.

2.0 METHODS

2.1 Data Collection

A list of all municipalities in Manitoba (n=198), with contact information was taken from the Association of Manitoba Municipalities website. Survey packages that included a cover letter, a study information sheet, the survey and a return stamped envelope were prepared and mailed to the municipalities on February 14, 2008. Packages were addressed to the Mayor or Reeve of the municipality.

The first reminder was sent via e-mail on March 11, 2008. This reminder was sent to the Chief Administrative Officer of the communities who had not yet returned their completed survey. A second e-mail reminder that included an electronic version of the survey (in Word) was sent on March 24, 2008. Lastly, to test the feasibility of an online survey, the survey was made available online on March 31, 2008.

Table 1 shows the distribution of completed surveys. Slightly over one-third of the total mailed surveys were completed and returned prior to the first e-mail reminder. A total of 130 surveys were completed with an overall response rate of 65.7%.

Table 1: Distribution of Completed Surveys

Date Surveys Returned	Number of Surveys Returned	Percent of Total Mailed (n=198)
Prior to 1 st reminder (Mar. 11 th)	70	35.4%
After 1 st reminder & before 2 nd reminder (Mar. 12 th – Mar. 23 rd)	31	15.7%
After 2 nd reminder (Mar. 24 th)	25	12.6%
Completed online survey	4	2.0%
Total number completed	130	65.7%

Municipalities were classified in three different ways: a) by municipality type as per the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (rural municipality/local government district referred to hereafter as RM, village, town, or city); b) by total population (<1000, 1000-2,499, 2,500-9,999 or $\geq 10,000$); and, c) by the percentage of the total population age 65 and over (< 14%, 14%-19% or $\geq 20\%$) as obtained from the 2006 Census of Canada (Statistics Canada, Community Profiles, 2006). The distribution of completed surveys¹ by these three classifications is shown in Table 2.

In 2008, over one-half of the municipalities in Manitoba (59.6%) were rural municipalities followed by towns (25.8%). The distribution of the completed surveys was similar to that of the total sample. Almost one-half (48.5%) of the municipalities surveyed had a population of less than 1,000 people (Table 2). According to the 2006 census, 14% of Manitoba's population was age 65 or over. However, almost two-thirds of the communities surveyed had 14% or more of their population age 65 or over, with 36.4% of the communities having 20% or more of their population age 65 or over. Proportionally, somewhat fewer of the municipalities with a high proportion of older adults responded to the survey, relative to municipalities with a lower proportion of older adults.

Table 2: Distribution of Surveys by Classification Group

Classification	Total Surveyed (n=198)		Total Responded (n=129)		Responded as % of Total Surveyed
	N	%	N	%	
a) Municipal Type					
RM	118	59.6	72	55.8	61.0
Village	20	10.1	16	12.4	80.0
Town	51	25.8	34	26.4	66.7
City	9	4.5	7	5.4	77.8
b) Population (2006 Census)					
< 1,000	96	48.5	58	45.0	60.4
1,000 to 2,499	55	27.8	37	28.7	67.3
2,500 to 9,999	39	19.7	27	20.9	69.2
$\geq 10,000$	8	4.0	7	5.4	87.5
c) Percent of Population 65+					
< 14%	73	36.9	44	34.1	60.3
14% to 19%	53	26.8	29	22.5	54.7
$\geq 20\%$	72	36.4	56	43.4	43.4

¹ One completed survey was dropped from further analysis as the information for the RM appeared to be a duplicate of information provided for the 'village' in the RM. The final 'n' for analysis was 129 surveys.

3.0 RESULTS

Survey results are first discussed in terms of overall availability, as well as the local government (municipalities) role in providing these services. This is followed by a discussion of availability of services by municipality type and percent of population age 65+.

3.1 Housing

About two-thirds of communities reported that subsidized housing for low-income seniors (62.8%) and services to support seniors in the community (69.2%) is available (Table 3). Fewer communities (37.2%) indicated that home maintenance/repair assistance is available. The percentage that reported 'no role' in the provision of these housing services ranged from 50.0% for services to support seniors in the community to 75.0% for home maintenance/repair assistance.

Table 3: Housing: Availability and Municipal Government Role

Housing	Is available regardless of provider	Municipal Government Role ¹ (If available in your community, check all that apply)				
		Provides program	Funds all or part of program	Publicizes program	Partners in program	No Role
Subsidized housing for low-income seniors (n=81)	62.8	7.4	4.9	8.6	16.0	66.7
Services to support seniors in the community (e.g., snow removal, lawn care, garbage brought to the street) (n=88)	69.2	21.6	15.9	6.8	15.9	50.0
Home maintenance/repair assistance and modification of existing home to accommodate the needs of seniors (e.g., building ramps for easier access, modifying showers) (n=48)	37.2	6.3	6.3	6.3	10.4	75.0

¹ Percentages may add to greater than 100% as respondents can give more than 1 answer

Fully 75% of villages, towns, and cities reported that subsidized housing for low-income seniors is available compared to less than 50% of rural municipalities (RM) (Table 4). In addition, four-fifths of communities with 20% or more of their population age 65 or over compared to 34% of communities with less than 14% of their population 65+ indicated that subsidized housing is available. This trend is also evident for the availability of services to support seniors in the community.

Table 4: Housing Availability by Municipality Type and Percent 65+

Available Regardless of Provider (%)	Municipality Type				Percent 65+		
	RM (n=72)	Village (n=16)	Town (n=34)	City (n=7)	< 14% (n=44)	14-19% (n=29)	≥ 20% (n=56)
Subsidized housing for low-income seniors	48.6	75.0	82.4	85.7	34.1	72.4	80.4
Services to support seniors in the community (e.g., snow removal, lawn care, garbage brought to the street)	56.9	81.3	82.4	85.7	52.3	72.4	78.6
Home maintenance/repair assistance and modification of existing home to accommodate the needs of seniors (e.g., building ramps for easier access, modifying showers)	26.4	50.0	50.0	57.1	25.0	34.5	48.2

3.2 Transportation

Nearly 70% of communities (68.2%) indicated that transportation is provided to medical appointments both within the community, and outside the community, while 72.9% of communities reported transportation services for persons with a disability, for example a Handi-van service (Table 5). The municipal government plays a substantial role within these services, with between 26.1% and 41.5% of communities reporting they fund all or part of the program providing these services.

Table 5: Transportation: Availability and Municipal Government Role

Transportation	Is available regardless of provider	Municipal Government Role ¹ (If available in your community, check all that apply)				
		Provides program	Funds all or part of program	Publicizes program	Partners in program	No Role
Public (not provided by family or friends) transportation (e.g., to senior centres, shopping, faith communities, cultural events) (n=83)	64.3	18.1	33.7	16.9	47.0	22.9
Transportation to and from medical appointments in the community (n=88)	68.2	15.9	29.5	15.9	42.0	29.5
Transportation to and from medical appointments in another community (n=88)	68.2	14.8	26.1	13.6	39.8	31.8
Transportation for individuals with disabilities (e.g., Handi-van) (n=94)	72.9	19.1	41.5	16.0	46.8	16.0

¹ Percentages may add to greater than 100% as respondents can give more than 1 answer

Further, 70% of villages and towns and 100% of cities reported having public transportation available (Table 6). Regarding transportation to medical appointments within the community, a comparable number of towns and cities provide the service (85.3% and 85.7% respectively), whereas over 75% of villages and towns provide transportation to appointments in another community, compared to the 57.1% of cities that provide the same service. Rural municipalities account for the lowest percentage of communities providing transportation services, yet nearly 60% of RMs provide transportation within the community and over 60% provide transportation to other communities and for persons with a disability.

A trend also occurs for the percent 65+ in the community; as the percentage of individuals over the age of 65 in the community rises (from less than 14% to between 14-19% and over 20%), the percentage of communities with these services also increases.

Table 6: Transportation Availability by Municipality Type and Percent 65+

Available Regardless of Provider (%)	Municipality Type				Percent 65+		
	RM (n=72)	Village (n=16)	Town (n=34)	City (n=7)	< 14% (n=44)	14-19% (n=29)	≥ 20% (n=56)
Public (not provided by family or friends) transportation (e.g., to senior centres, shopping, faith communities, cultural events)	55.6	75.0	70.6	100.0	50.0	58.6	78.6
Transportation to and from medical appointments in the community	58.3	68.8	85.3	85.7	54.5	58.6	83.9
Transportation to and from medical appointments in another community	61.1	75.0	82.4	57.1	56.8	58.6	82.1
Transportation for individuals with disabilities (e.g., Handi-van) (n=94)	65.3	75.0	82.4	100.0	56.8	72.4	85.7

3.3 Infrastructure

While nearly two thirds of communities (65.9%) indicated having sidewalks that link residential areas to service areas, only 52.7% of communities contain businesses that are accessible to the senior population (i.e. have wheelchair ramps or automatic doors) (Table 7). Fifty-five percent of communities reported having washrooms for public use in business and recreation areas. Furthermore, under half of communities reported having street crosswalks within business, recreation or residential areas (46.5%). With the exception of senior accessible businesses, municipal governments reported having a large role in infrastructure, with 'no role' responses ranging from 3.5% for sidewalks linking residences to services, to 12.7% for public washroom availability.

Table 7: Infrastructure: Availability and Municipal Government Role

Infrastructure	Is available regardless of provider	Municipal Government Role ¹ (If available in your community, check all that apply)				
		Provides program	Funds all or part of program	Publicizes program	Partners in program	No Role
Road signage adapted to the needs of older drivers (e.g., large signs) (n=22)	17.1	68.2	36.4	0.0	13.6	0.0
Sidewalks linking residences and essential services in most/all areas of the community (n=85)	65.9	62.4	50.6	2.3	3.5	3.5
Well-maintained, even sidewalks in most/all areas of the community (n=78)	60.5	60.3	52.6	1.3	1.3	6.4
Street crosswalks in business, recreation, and/or residential areas (n=60)	46.5	55.0	43.3	0.0	8.3	6.7
Public washrooms in key areas of the community (e.g., business and recreation areas) (n=71)	55.0	46.5	39.4	1.4	16.9	12.7
Most/all businesses are accessible to seniors (e.g., have wheelchair ramps, automatic doors) (n=68)	52.7	5.9	5.9	2.9	14.7	58.8

¹ Percentages may add to greater than 100% as respondents can give more than 1 answer

A high percentage of villages (81.3%) and towns (88.2%) reported having sidewalks linking residences and essential services, and over 75% of those indicated that sidewalks are well maintained (Table 8). Road signage adaptation occurs less in rural municipalities and cities (about 14%), than in villages and towns (18.8% and 23.5%). Public washroom availability was reported by a higher percentage of RMs, towns and villages (from 43.8% in villages to 70.6% in towns), than cities (42.9%) Excluding the road signage category, the percentage of communities supporting infrastructure rises with the proportion of seniors living in the community.

Table 8: Infrastructure Availability by Municipality Type and Percent 65+

Available Regardless of Provider (%)	Municipality Type				Percent 65+		
	RM (n=72)	Village (n=16)	Town (n=34)	City (n=7)	< 14% (n=44)	14-19% (n=29)	≥ 20% (n=56)
Road signage adapted to the needs of older drivers (e.g., large signs)	13.9	18.8	23.5	14.3	15.9	20.7	16.1
Sidewalks linking residences and essential services in most/all areas of the community	48.6	81.3	88.2	100.0	47.7	58.6	83.9
Well-maintained, even sidewalks in most/all areas of the community	43.1	87.5	76.5	100.0	40.9	58.6	76.8
Street crosswalks in business, recreation, and/or residential areas	29.2	50.0	70.6	100.0	31.8	48.3	57.1
Public washrooms in key areas of the community (e.g., business and recreation areas)	51.4	43.8	70.6	42.9	50.0	44.8	64.3
Most/all businesses are accessible to seniors (e.g., have wheelchair ramps, automatic doors)	47.2	68.8	55.9	57.1	45.5	51.7	58.9

3.4 Exercise/Recreation

The majority (82.2%) of communities indicated that they support recreation programs for seniors, such as card games and crafts, however nearly 60% of municipal governments reported having no role in those programs (57.5%) (Table 9). Over 70% reported having walking or biking trails for physically active seniors, for which 90.2% of municipal governments indicated having some role. Another half of communities (52.7%) reported organized exercise classes for seniors, and 44.2% of communities provide lifelong learning programs for seniors, for example, computer courses.

Table 9: Exercise/Recreation: Availability and Municipal Government Role

Exercise/Recreation	Is available regardless of provider	Municipal Government Role ¹ (If available in your community, check all that apply)				
		Provides program	Funds all or part of program	Publicizes program	Partners in program	No Role
Local parks or walking/biking trails that are safe and accessible to seniors (n=92)	71.3	38.0	43.4	8.7	26.1	9.8
Exercise classes specifically for seniors (n=68)	52.7	16.2	16.2	8.8	23.5	42.6
Recreation programs specifically for seniors (e.g., card games, arts, crafts) (n=106)	82.2	6.6	15.1	4.7	19.8	57.5
Lifelong learning programs specifically for seniors (e.g., computer courses) (n=57)	44.2	7.0	17.5	14.0	36.8	40.4

¹ Percentages may add to greater than 100% as respondents can give more than 1 answer

A greater percentage of villages, towns, and cities reported having local parks and walking paths than do RMs, and over 80% of communities with over 20% of their population over the age of 65, indicated having such facilities (Table 10). In addition, over 70% of villages and towns support exercise classes for seniors, and over 93% of villages and towns and 70% of RMs reported having recreation programs specifically for seniors. Where the percentage of the population over 65 years is more than 20%, nearly 95% of communities reported providing recreation programs for their seniors.

Table 10: Exercise/Recreation Availability by Municipality Type and Percent 65+

Available Regardless of Provider (%)	Municipality Type				Percent 65+		
	RM (n=72)	Village (n=16)	Town (n=34)	City (n=7)	< 14% (n=44)	14-19% (n=29)	≥ 20% (n=56)
Local parks or walking/biking trails that are safe and accessible to seniors	58.3	87.5	88.2	85.7	63.6	62.1	82.1
Exercise classes specifically for seniors	36.1	75.0	70.6	85.7	36.4	44.8	69.6
Recreation programs specifically for seniors (e.g., card games, arts, crafts)	70.8	93.8	97.1	100.0	68.2	79.3	94.6
Lifelong learning programs specifically for seniors (e.g., computer courses)	29.2	43.8	67.6	85.7	29.5	41.4	57.1

3.5 Information/Advocacy

Forty-five percent of communities offer services to assist seniors in completing forms, such as income tax, while only 12.4% of communities reported a seniors' advocacy service, such as an ombudsman (Table 11). Furthermore, less than one-quarter of communities have official, written information adapted for seniors (i.e. forms or brochures) (24.0%).

Table 11: Information/Advocacy: Availability and Municipal Government Role

Information/Advocacy	Is available regardless of provider	Municipal Government Role ¹ (If available in your community, check all that apply)				
		Provides program	Funds all or part of program	Publicizes program	Partners in program	No Role
Official, written information (e.g., forms, brochures) adapted to the needs of seniors (e.g., large print) (n=31)	24.0	9.7	22.6	9.7	25.8	32.3
Public telephone answering services adapted to the needs of seniors (e.g., instructions are given slowly) (n=10)	7.8	20.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	60.0
Assistance with completion of forms (e.g., income tax) (n=58)	45.0	10.3	8.6	6.9	22.4	51.7
Seniors' advocacy service (e.g., ombudsman) (n=16)	12.4	12.5	18.7	25.0	37.5	25.0

¹ Percentages may add to greater than 100% as respondents can give more than 1 answer

A higher number of rural municipalities reported having adapted written information for seniors (20.8%), as compared to villages, towns and cities (Table 12). Almost as high a percentage (27.3%) of communities with under 14% of their population over age 65 indicated they provide this adaptation, compared to communities with over 20% of their population over age 65 (28.6%). Only 2.8% of RMs indicated having public telephone answering services adapted to seniors' needs, and less than 20% of villages, towns and cities reported this service. One-third of RMs (33.3%) and up to 71.4% of cities provide assistance with completion of forms, such as income tax. No villages reported having seniors' advocacy services available.

Table 12: Information/Advocacy Availability by Municipality Type and Percent 65+

Available Regardless of Provider (%)	Municipality Type				Percent 65+		
	RM (n=72)	Village (n=16)	Town (n=34)	City (n=7)	< 14% (n=44)	14-19% (n=29)	≥ 20% (n=56)
Official, written information (e.g., forms, brochures) adapted to the needs of seniors (e.g., large print) (n=31)	20.8	18.8	11.8	14.3	27.3	10.3	28.6
Public telephone answering services adapted to the needs of seniors (e.g., instructions are given slowly)	2.8	18.8	11.8	14.3	2.3	10.3	10.7
Assistance with completion of forms (e.g., income tax)	33.3	43.8	64.7	71.4	40.9	37.9	51.8
Seniors' advocacy service (e.g., ombudsman)	11.1	0.0	14.7	42.9	6.8	13.8	16.1

3.6 Nutrition

Congregate meal programs are offered in over two-thirds of communities (67.4%); 60.9% of municipal governments reported having 'no role' in these programs (Table 13). Sixty-two percent of communities reported offering meal delivery to seniors in their homes, but again the municipal government plays a minimal role, with 62.5% indicating 'no role' in this service.

Table 13: Nutrition: Availability and Municipal Government Role

Nutrition	Is available regardless of provider	Municipal Government Role ¹ (If available in your community, check all that apply)				
		Provides program	Funds all or part of program	Publicizes program	Partners in program	No Role
Congregate meal programs (e.g., lunch at a recreation or senior centre) (n=87)	67.4	5.7	12.6	10.3	16.1	60.9
Meals delivered to homes (n=80)	62.0	6.3	15.0	8.8	13.8	62.5

¹ Percentages may add to greater than 100% as respondents can give more than 1 answer

In addition, congregate meal programs were reported as being available in 75% of villages and towns, and 59.7% of rural municipalities (Table 14). Meals delivered to homes were reported by 75.0% of villages and 82.4% of towns compared to 45.8% of RMs. The provision of these services increases with an increased proportion of residents over the age of 65 in the community.

Table 14: Nutrition Availability by Municipality Type and Percent 65+

Available Regardless of Provider (%)	Municipality Type				Percent 65+		
	RM (n=72)	Village (n=16)	Town (n=34)	City (n=7)	< 14% (n=44)	14-19% (n=29)	≥ 20% (n=56)
Congregate meal programs (e.g., lunch at a recreation or senior centre)	59.7	75.0	76.5	85.7	52.3	69.0	78.6
Meals delivered to homes	45.8	75.0	82.4	100.0	40.9	51.7	83.9

3.7 Public Safety/Emergency Services

Municipal governments play a large role (only 3.5% indicate 'no role') in plans for the evacuation of seniors in the events of natural disasters or emergencies, with 88.4% of communities having plans already in place (Table 15). A further 66.7% of communities reported knowledge of where seniors live so that services may be delivered in situations such as severe weather. Two-fifths of communities (40.3%) also have programs or services for socially isolated seniors, such as friendly visiting. Concerning the safety of seniors, just over one quarter of communities provide elder abuse/neglect identification and elder abuse/neglect prevention programs, 25.6% and 26.4% respectively. Slightly less than one-third (31.8%) of communities provide education and information to seniors regarding financial fraud. Few communities (14%) provide training for municipal government staff in dealing with the senior population, and of those, in under 40% of communities, training is provided directly by the municipal government (38.9%).

Table 15: Public Safety/Emergency Services: Availability and Municipal Government Role

Public Safety/Emergency Services	Is available regardless of provider	Municipal Government Role ¹ (If available in your community, check all that apply)				
		Provides program	Funds all or part of program	Publicizes program	Partners in program	No Role
Neighbourhood Watch programs (n=57)	44.2	12.3	17.5	15.8	33.3	24.6
Plans for evacuation of seniors in the event of natural disasters or other emergencies (n=114)	88.4	53.5	31.6	16.7	29.9	3.5
Knowledge of where seniors reside so services (e.g., home-delivered meals) can be provided in severe weather or other situations that may prevent residents from leaving their homes (n=86)	66.7	37.2	18.6	8.1	29.1	16.3
Specialized training for municipal government staff in dealing with seniors (n=18)	14.0	38.9	11.1	11.1	38.9	11.1
Education and information for seniors about financial fraud (n=41)	31.8	12.2	12.2	14.6	29.3	36.6
Programs/services for socially isolated seniors (e.g., friendly visiting, telephone check-ups) (n=52)	40.3	9.6	15.4	7.7	21.2	55.8
Elder abuse/neglect identification (n=33)	25.6	12.1	15.2	9.1	30.3	42.4
Elder abuse/neglect prevention (n=34)	26.4	8.8	14.7	11.8	29.4	38.2

¹ Percentages may add to greater than 100% as respondents can give more than 1 answer

More than 80% of all RMs, villages, towns and cities reported having evacuation plans in place for their senior populations, with 91.2% of towns and 88.9% of RMs having strategies in place (Table 16). Additionally, more than 75% of villages and towns (87.5% and 76.5% respectively) stated knowledge of where seniors reside, so that services may be provided, whereas only 58.3% of RMs and 57.1% of cities indicated that they have this knowledge. Over 80% of communities with less than 14% of their population above age 65, and 90% of communities with more than 14% of their population above age 65, reported plans for the evacuation of seniors.

Four fifths of communities with 20% of their population over age 65, have knowledge of where their seniors live. Communities with less than 14% of their population over the age of 65 reported the highest involvement in neighbourhood watch programs (50.0%). Less than 50% of all RMs, villages, towns and cities reported having either elder abuse/neglect identification or elder abuse/neglect prevention programs. Just under 20% of RMs and villages reported this type of programming, while between 38.2% and 44.1% of towns and cities reported having elder abuse/neglect identification or prevention strategies. Noteworthy is that no cities reported having specialized training for municipal staff for dealing with seniors.

Table 16: Public Safety/Emergency Services Availability by Municipality Type and Percent 65+

Available Regardless of Provider (%)	Municipality Type				Percent 65+		
	RM (n=72)	Village (n=16)	Town (n=34)	City (n=7)	< 14% (n=44)	14-19% (n=29)	≥ 20% (n=56)
Neighbourhood Watch programs	38.9	31.3	52.9	85.7	50.0	44.8	39.3
Plans for evacuation of seniors in the event of natural disasters or other emergencies	88.9	81.3	91.2	85.7	81.8	93.1	91.1
Knowledge of where seniors reside so services (e.g., home-delivered meals) can be provided in severe weather or other situations that may prevent residents from leaving their homes	58.3	87.5	76.5	57.1	47.7	69.0	80.4
Specialized training for municipal government staff in dealing with seniors	15.3	18.8	11.8	0.0	9.1	20.7	14.3
Education and information for seniors about financial fraud	26.4	25.0	41.2	57.1	20.5	31.0	41.1
Programs/services for socially isolated seniors (e.g., friendly visiting, telephone check-ups)	33.3	31.3	52.9	71.4	31.8	37.9	48.2
Elder abuse/neglect identification	19.4	18.8	38.2	42.9	22.7	17.2	32.1
Elder abuse/neglect prevention	18.1	18.8	44.1	42.9	25.0	20.7	30.4

3.8 Community/Work Force Participation

Over 70% of communities offer volunteer opportunities for seniors (72.1%), while only 38.0% support job opportunities that accommodate the needs of seniors (Table 17). Over one-half of municipal governments indicated having 'no role' in providing these opportunities (45.2% and 65.3% respectively). In addition to providing volunteer opportunities, 56.6% of communities offer official recognition for volunteers, and 71.2% of municipal governments play a role in that recognition.

Table 17: Community/Work Force Participation: Availability and Municipal Government Role

Community/Work Force Participation	Is available regardless of provider	Municipal Government Role ¹ (If available in your community, check all that apply)				
		Provides program	Funds all or part of program	Publicizes program	Partners in program	No Role
Volunteer opportunities for seniors (n=93)	72.1	7.5	9.7	15.1	29.0	45.2
Official recognition for volunteers (e.g., banquet, volunteer awards) (n=73)	56.6	17.8	21.9	12.3	26.0	28.8
Job opportunities that accommodate the needs of seniors (e.g., part-time work) (n=49)	38.0	14.3	8.2	2.0	6.1	65.3

¹ Percentages may add to greater than 100% as respondents can give more than 1 answer

Volunteer opportunities for seniors were greater in villages (93.8%) and towns (94.1%) compared to cities (85.7%) and RMs (55.6%) (Table 18). All cities reported official recognition for volunteer efforts, while approximately 75% of villages and towns reported recognition given officially to volunteers. As the percentage of seniors over 65 years of age in communities increases, the percentage of communities indicating opportunities for senior volunteers also increases, from 52.3% where less than 14% is over age 65, to 87.5% where more than 20% of the population is over age 65.

Table 18: Community/Work Force Participation by Municipality Type and Percent 65+

Available Regardless of Provider (%)	Municipality Type				Percent 65+		
	RM (n=72)	Village (n=16)	Town (n=34)	City (n=7)	< 14% (n=44)	14-19% (n=29)	≥ 20% (n=56)
Volunteer opportunities for seniors	55.6	93.8	94.1	85.7	52.3	72.4	87.5
Official recognition for volunteers (e.g., banquet, volunteer awards)	38.9	75.0	76.5	100.0	43.2	62.1	64.3
Job opportunities that accommodate the needs of seniors (e.g., part-time work)	23.6	50.0	58.8	57.1	27.3	37.9	46.4

3.9 Policies/Guidelines that Benefit Seniors

Only 19.4% of communities reported having seniors act in advisory roles in municipal governments (Table 19). Of those that support this senior involvement, only 12% of municipal governments indicated having 'no role'. Community consultations with seniors are occurring in about one third of communities (33.3%), while planning processes considering the needs of seniors are conducted by 40.3% of communities. Community design or redesign that supports walkability is reported by 39.5% of communities, and is highly supported by municipal governments, with only 9.8% indicating 'no role'.

Table 19: Policies/Guidelines that Benefit Seniors: Availability and Municipal Government Role

Policies/Guidelines that Benefit Seniors	Is available regardless of provider	Municipal Government role ¹ (If available in your community, check all that apply)				
		Provides program	Funds all or part of program	Publicizes program	Partners in program	No Role
Seniors serve in an advisory role to municipal government (e.g., seniors' council) (n=25)	19.4	28.0	24.0	4.0	40.0	12.0
Community consultations that specifically include seniors (n=43)	33.3	30.2	18.6	18.6	32.6	18.6
Planning process that specifically considers the needs of seniors (n=52)	40.3	19.2	7.7	13.5	44.2	19.2
Community design/redesign that supports walkability (n=51)	39.5	31.4	33.3	5.9	37.3	9.8
Zoning requirements that support the development of active seniors communities (e.g., density levels, lots per acre) (n=33)	25.6	48.5	21.2	12.1	30.3	6.1

¹ Percentages may add to greater than 100% as respondents can give more than 1 answer

In terms of seniors serving in an advisory role to municipal government, a higher percentage of RMs, villages and towns reported this involvement (from 16.7% in RMs to 31.3% in villages) than do cities (14.3%) (Table 20). A higher percentage of cities, however, reported having consultations with seniors in the community (57.1%) than did RMs, villages and towns. Furthermore, more RMs, villages and towns (from 31.9% to 64.7%) reported planning processes that consider the needs of seniors, compared to only 14.3% of cities indicating this type of planning specific to seniors.

**Table 20: Policies Guidelines that Benefit Seniors
by Municipality Type and Percent 65+**

Available Regardless of Provider (%)	Municipality Type				Percent 65+		
	RM (n=72)	Village (n=16)	Town (n=34)	City (n=7)	< 14% (n=44)	14-19% (n=29)	≥ 20% (n=56)
Seniors serve in an advisory role to municipal government (e.g., seniors' council)	16.7	31.3	20.6	14.3	15.9	20.7	21.4
Community consultations that specifically include seniors	27.8	37.5	38.2	57.1	27.3	34.5	37.5
Planning process that specifically considers the needs of seniors	31.9	37.5	64.7	14.3	36.4	31.0	48.2
Community design/redesign that supports walkability	27.8	31.3	61.8	71.4	34.1	37.9	44.6
Zoning requirements that support the development of active seniors communities (e.g., density levels, lots per acre)	25.0	6.3	35.3	28.6	25.0	20.7	28.6

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

Data from the Age-Friendly Communities Survey provide useful insights into where Manitoba municipalities currently stand in terms of 'age-friendliness'. The high response rate (65.7%) allowed us to examine responses for the province as a whole, as well as by type of Municipality (rural municipality, village, town, and city) and by the proportion of seniors in the community.

The Most Age-Friendly Aspects

Communities in Manitoba have many age-friendly features. Aspects that are present in the majority of communities include the following:

- The majority (over 80%) of villages, towns and cities have support services for seniors (e.g., snow removal, lawn care, etc.)
- In the area of transportation, the majority of municipalities reported that some form of public transportation is available, as well as transportation to and from medical appointments in their community and to other communities. The majority of municipalities also have transportation for individuals with disabilities, such as Handi-van.
- A variety of recreation programs are available for seniors in most communities, including local parks or walking/biking trails, and recreation programs specifically for seniors.
- Congregate meal programs are available in most communities and so are programs where meals are delivered to individuals' homes.
- Volunteer opportunities for seniors are also available in the majority of communities, with volunteers being officially recognized for their contribution in most communities.

The Least Age-Friendly Aspects

Areas where communities generally are not as age-friendly pertain to information/advocacy, public safety/emergency services, and policies and guidelines that benefit seniors. Specifically:

- A minority of communities reported that official, written information and public telephone answering systems are adapted to the needs of seniors, and relatively few communities indicated that seniors' advocacy services are available.
- In most communities, there is no education and information for seniors about financial fraud, nor are there programs or services for socially isolated seniors (e.g., friendly visiting, telephone check-ups). Moreover, only a small proportion of communities indicated that elder abuse/neglect identification or prevention programs are available.

- The lack of policies/guidelines that benefit seniors was evident in all municipalities, regardless of municipality type or proportion of seniors, with a minority of communities indicating that: seniors serve in an advisory role, and community consultations and planning processes specifically include seniors.
- A minority of communities indicated that zoning requirements support the development of active seniors' communities (e.g., density level, lots per acre).

The Percentage of Seniors in the Community Makes a Difference

Municipalities are clearly responsive to the percentage of seniors in the community; as the percentage of seniors increases, age-friendly features increase as well. Noteworthy is that this pattern is evident throughout the responses to the questionnaire, both in areas where most communities are quite age-friendly, as well as in areas where most communities are not as age-friendly.

For example, 68.2% of communities with less than 14% of the population age 65 and over reported having recreation programs specifically for seniors, compared to 94.6% of communities with 20% or more of their population age 65 and over. Similarly, 6.8% of communities with less than 14% of the population age 65 and over reported having seniors' advocacy services, compared to 16.1% of communities with 20% or more of their population age 65 and over.

The Type of Municipality Makes a Difference

We examined responses for four types of municipalities: RM, village, town, and city. Differences emerged across these four types for most of the questions. Overall, and not surprisingly given their population base and geographic dispersion, RMs had fewer age-friendly features than villages, towns, and cities.