

2023



# Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN

MAY 2023

## Acknowledgements

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Appendix A – Age & Dementia Friendly Palmer Community Survey & Responses

Appendix B – Recommendations from the Palmer Master Plan impacting older adults

## Introduction

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This Community Assessment Report was developed with assistance from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health’s Mass in Motion program and the Age Friendly Pioneer Valley Initiative through funding from Point 32 Health (formerly the Tufts Health Plan Foundation). These programs funded the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) to provide technical assistance to municipalities in the PVPC region (Hampshire and Hampden Counties) to assist communities in engaging older adults and municipal and community stakeholders in assessing how they are prepared to serve the needs of an older population. This assessment also comes after the adoption of the 2020 Palmer Master Plan which was developed through a robust community engagement process, including an online survey and multiple topic-based public forums. The forums were held virtually on Zoom and also allowed participation through Facebook Live and M-PaCT TV.

One of the Action items in the Health chapter of the Palmer Master Plan was for Palmer to become designated as an Age and Dementia Friendly Community. The Town applied for Age Friendly designation in December of 2021 and was awarded Age-Friendly status in January of 2022. Designation as a Dementia Friendly Community requires submission of a Dementia Friendly Pledge that is signed by a working group and an elected official. The Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Working Group will submit this pledge to the Palmer Town Council once the Action Plan is ready for submission to AARP and Dementia Friendly Massachusetts.

Since the Master Plan involved extensive community engagement and includes actions that promote healthy aging, PVPC conducted a more limited community engagement process to fill in the gaps of assessment around domains of Palmer’s social environment, and to introduce recommendations for making Palmer a welcoming and supportive community for people living with dementia and their care communities.

## Background

The total population of Palmer is approximately 12,145, with a population of 21.4% over the age of 60 and 15.5% over the age of 65. Approximately 98.3% of people over 65 are White, and 1.7% are Black or African American according to the Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative’s Community Profile Data (note that this data is a few years old as it is from 2013-2016 ACS 5-year estimates). The Profile notes that, compared to state averages, older residents of Palmer have higher rates of tooth loss, obesity, tobacco use disorder, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, hypertension, osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, and hearing impairment. They are also less likely to participate in physical activity or have dental exams.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 2018 Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative Community Profile.

Sixteen percent of older adults (over 65) are veterans of military service, and 40.8% of people over 65 live alone (compared to 30.2% in the state as a whole). The percentage of residents over 65 who have been diagnosed with deafness or hearing impairment (19.7%) is higher than the state average (16.1%), and 5.8% have self-reported vision difficulty (same as the state average). Over 25% of people over 65 have self-reported ambulatory difficulties while 4.4% have been diagnosed with mobility impairments, and 15.4% of people over the age of 65 have been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s or Dementia (compared to 13.6% in the state).<sup>2</sup>

The Town participated in the Mass in Motion program from 2015 to 2022 which included a community food assessment, walking maps, a park access study, and development of the Health chapter and Health Addendum of the 2020 Palmer Master Plan. As noted above, the Master Plan serves as the Community Assessment for much of the built environment, while this assessment focuses on the domains of an Age and Dementia Friendly Community that were not covered in the Master Plan and highlights actions that older adults have identified as being the most important steps for the Town to take to improve livability for older adults in the next five years.

## Community Engagement

Since a substantial community engagement effort was completed for the development of the Palmer Master Plan, the Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Working Group decided to take a more limited engagement effort which included a short (4-page) survey that was available both in print and online, and listening sessions held at the Palmer Senior Center and Palmer Public Library.

### Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Community Survey

The Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Community Survey was mailed to over 500 older adults living in Palmer, and a link was published on the Council on Aging and other Palmer community Facebook pages. The survey received 175 responses, of which 88% were over the age of 60 and 64% were over the age of 70. This response represents approximately 6% of the over 60 population living in Palmer. Responses to the Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Community Survey are included in **Appendix A**.

While the domains of the Built Environment (Housing, Transportation, Outdoor Spaces) are discussed in depth in the Palmer Master Plan, survey respondents were asked about which aspects of these domains were most important for the Town to focus on in the next five years. The survey also covered the domains of the Social Environment, Health and Community Services, and Public Safety.

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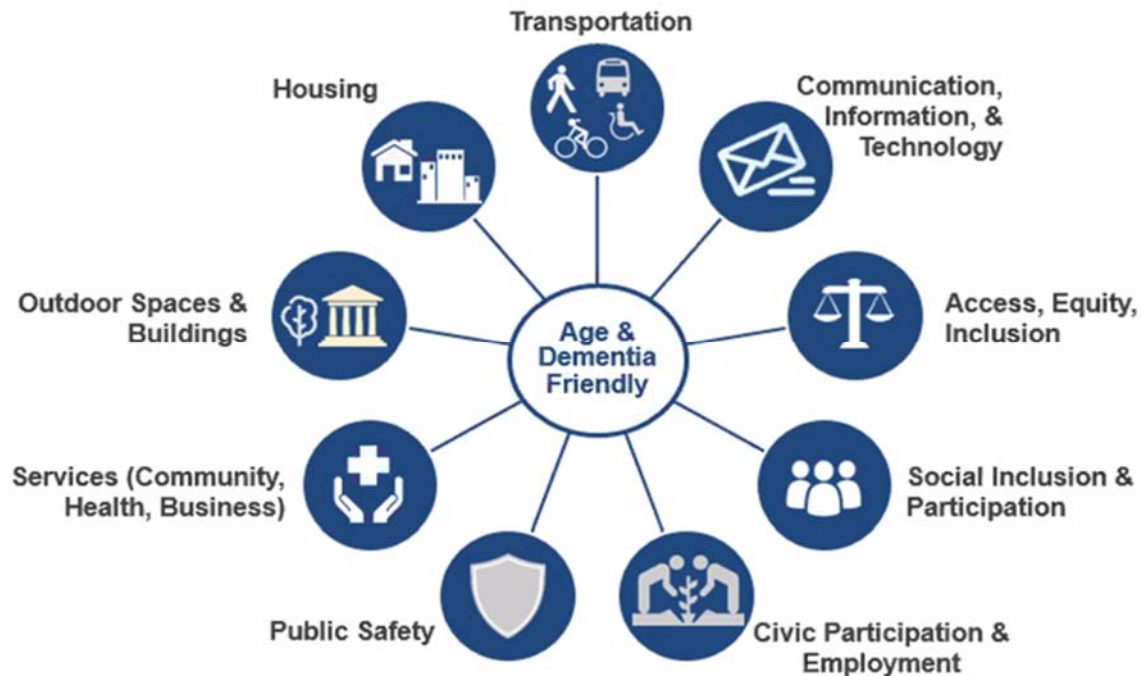
<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## The Domains of an Age and Dementia Friendly Community

The World Health Organization developed a model for assessing a community’s ability to support an aging population through assessment of domains of livability, or elements of the physical and social environments that are key determinants of whether people can remain healthy, independent and autonomous as they age. The original model included Eight Domains of Livability for an Age Friendly Community. Over time communities found that it made more sense to plan around domains of the community that impact their abilities to be both Age and Dementia Friendly. The Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative (MHAC) modified the Eight Domains of Livability into the Domains of an Age and Dementia Friendly Community, which includes nine domain areas. Some communities have also added domains such as Food Security or Financial Stability to the suggested domain areas.

We have used the MHAC model to assess where Palmer is in terms of the policies, programs, systems and environments that support older adults in each of the domain areas. The model is helpful in considering elements of a community that extend beyond the built environment and that are critical to the needs of older adults, but also contribute to healthy, active, more livable communities.

**Figure 1 - The Domains of an Age and Dementia Friendly Community**  
(Source: Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative)



## Planning for a Dementia Friendly Community

As populations age, the number of people diagnosed with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia also increases along with the need for understanding of the signs of dementia and how to work with and support people with dementia and the people who care for them. It is important for many sectors of the community to be educated about the signs of dementia and for communities to provide safe and comfortable spaces where people with dementia and their caregivers can meet or seek respite care. Dementia Friendly Communities foster the ability of people living with dementia to remain in community and engage and thrive.

Dementia Friendly America is a national network of communities, organizations and individuals seeking to ensure that communities across the US are equipped to support people living with dementia and their caregivers. Dementia Friendly America offers suggestions for how the following ten sectors of a community should be involved in planning for a dementia friendly community.

### Ten Sectors of a Dementia Friendly Community

1. **Transportation, Housing and Public Spaces** (local government) – Infrastructure that makes communities more livable for people with dementia and their caregivers.
2. **Businesses** – Dementia supportive customer service, environments and policies that support employee caregivers.
3. **Legal and Advance Planning Services** – Legal services that help vulnerable clients express their wishes early and avoid problems such as unpaid expenses.
4. **Banks and Financial Services** - Dementia friendly practices that help maintain clients' independence while protecting them from problems.
5. **Neighbors and Community Members** – Raising awareness to help neighbors and community members understand and support people living with dementia.
6. **Independent Living** – Home-based services available to maximize independence and promote autonomy and a high quality of life.
7. **Communities of Faith** – Faith communities use dementia friendly practices to provide a welcoming, compassionate environment and spiritual connection.
8. **Care throughout the Continuum** – Early diagnosis of dementia and ongoing medical care; patient education; and connecting patients and their caregivers with community resources that promote quality of life.
9. **Memory Loss Supports and Services** – A spectrum of settings and services needed by people with dementia – from long-term care facilities and assisted and independent living residences, to home care, adult day services, and hospice care.

10. **Emergency Planning and First Response** – Community planning and family preparation considers safety, security, and needs of people with dementia in disaster planning and emergency response.

This Community Assessment includes people with dementia in all recommendations within each Domain of an Age and Dementia Friendly Community. However, one of the main tasks of a Dementia Friendly Community involves building awareness among the sectors listed above. When asked whether they had a condition or cared for people with various conditions that often require additional caregiving services, 7% of survey respondents said that they had Alzheimer’s or dementia and 9.5% said that they cared for someone with Alzheimer’s or dementia. A larger percentage (12.7%) said that they experienced memory loss or forgetfulness and 17.6% said that they cared for someone with memory loss or forgetfulness.

Dementia can be caused by age or by Alzheimer’s, stroke, or other diseases that cause cognitive decline and progresses at different rates. In its early stages, Alzheimer’s causes decreased executive functions such as the ability to balance a checkbook or to make complex decisions. Later it may cause disorientation, confusion, or aggressive behavior. It is important for community members and others who work in the community to recognize the signs of dementia and to understand the best ways to communicate and work with people with dementia so as not to cause additional stress for the person with dementia.

The following recommendations are focused specifically on the next steps that Palmer can take to build awareness and support for people with dementia and their care partners.

### **Dementia Friendly Community Goals & Strategies**

**Goal 1:** Build awareness, acceptance, and a culture of support for people living with dementia and the people who care for them.

#### **Actions**

- 1.1 Work with partners such as the Alzheimer’s Association to offer and connect people to trainings on how to recognize signs of dementia and communicate with people with dementia for all leaders and staff of municipal departments, transit and volunteer drivers, library, businesses, banks, faith communities and other sectors that are public facing.
- 1.2 Work with the Police Department (and COA) to encourage residents to register on a list of people living with dementia or other health concerns.
- 1.3 Identify and reach out to people with dementia and family care givers to connect them with support programs and opportunities for meeting with other caregivers and people with dementia. Re-start the caregiver support program at the COA if there is interest.



- 1.4 Meaningfully engage people with dementia in developing programs and services such as support groups or memory cafes at the Senior Center, Library and other locations in the community.
- 1.5 Develop a Dementia Awareness committee to implement trainings and a public awareness campaign about dementia.
- 1.6 Recruit volunteers to become Dementia Friends Champions who will provide trainings for community groups and neighbors.

## The Built Environment

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Three of the domains of an Age Friendly Community fall under the theme of the built environment. These include Housing, Transportation, Buildings and Outdoor Spaces. The Healthy Community Design Toolkit, developed by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission in 2014 and amended in 2017 to include considerations for healthy aging, describes the effects of the built environment on older adults:

*As people age, the built environment of their immediate home and neighborhood has an increasing effect on them.<sup>3</sup> This is the result of two factors. First, a person's daily travel radius tends to shrink. Second, if an older person's physical capacity is diminished, barriers within the built environment can become more inhibiting. What was once solely an inconvenience—like a busy intersection between home and a grocery store—can become a significant deterrent to healthy living, keeping them venturing out.<sup>4</sup>*

Livable communities are safe, walkable, healthy and engaging. Walkability depends on the location of housing in relation to commercial areas, parks and gathering spaces.

The Palmer Master Plan includes a number of goals and actions to improve the infrastructure of Palmer for walking and biking, increase affordable housing, and make buildings and outdoor spaces accessible for all. Recommendations that were included in the Master Plan and benefit older adults have been included in **Appendix B** of this document. Additional Goals and Strategies that address the needs of older adults in Palmer are included in the sections below.

### Housing

As people age, their housing needs may change in terms of the amount of living space they need or can afford, and property they want to maintain. Many older adults choose to locate closer to services and amenities that they can walk to when they lose their ability to drive, or when they lose a spouse and want to locate closer to community centers. For people who want to stay in

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<sup>3</sup> 21 Hans-Werner Wahl, Susanne Larsson, and Frank Oswald. Aging Well and the Environment: Toward and Integrative Model and Research Agenda for the future. The Gerontologist Vol 52, No. 3, 306-316.

<sup>4</sup> Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. Healthy Community Design Toolkit, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. P. 11.

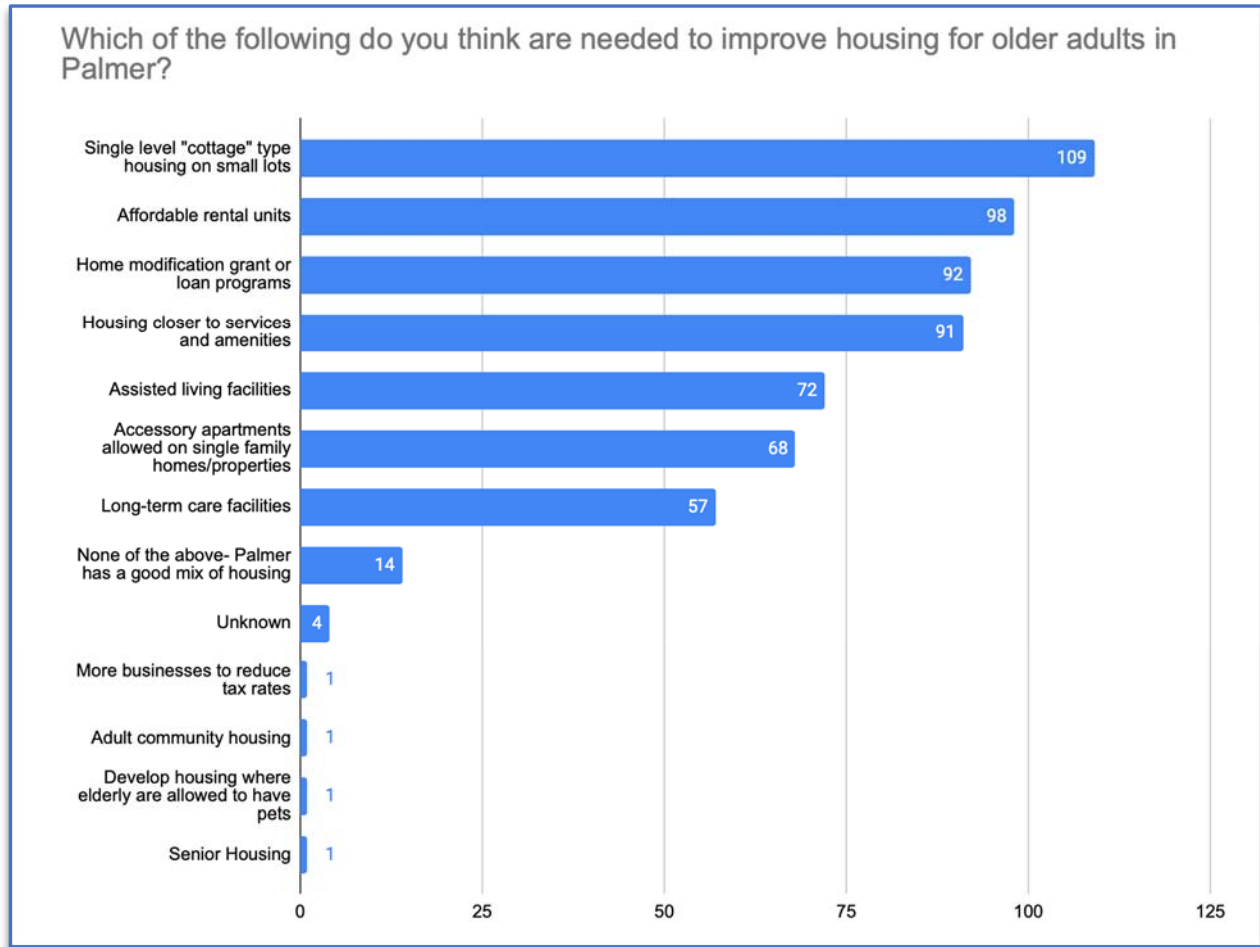
their own homes or communities, additional services may be required in order to allow them to continue to live independently or to “Age in Place.”

The following factors are important when considering housing for older adults:

- **Affordability** – Smaller or shared units, accessory apartments, tiny houses, home sharing
- **Accessibility** – 1st floor, or elevator access, wheelchair ramps
- **Safety** – Removal of trip hazards, grab bars in bathrooms to prevent falls, smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors installed
- **Assisted Living and Long-Term Care options** – Living spaces that provide a continuum of care to meet potential care needs as people age, and available home care providers for people aging in place
- **Smart Growth** – Housing is located near retail, services, amenities, and community centers and infrastructure is in place to allow for safe walking, biking and use of a wheelchair
- **Neighborhoods** – Safe, connected, well-lit and walkable

The Healthy Palmer Survey, which was distributed to gather data for the Health Addendum and Health chapter of the Palmer Master Plan, asked about types of housing that people in Palmer would like to see developed. Most respondents said that single level “cottage” type housing on small lots (109 respondents) or affordable rental units (98 respondents). In comments about other needs for older adults, fifteen respondents to the Healthy Palmer Survey said that Palmer needed more housing options for older adults. The Master Plan also includes a number of Actions for increasing the diversity and affordability of housing units in Palmer.

Figure 2 – Housing needs for the Town (2020 Master Plan Survey)

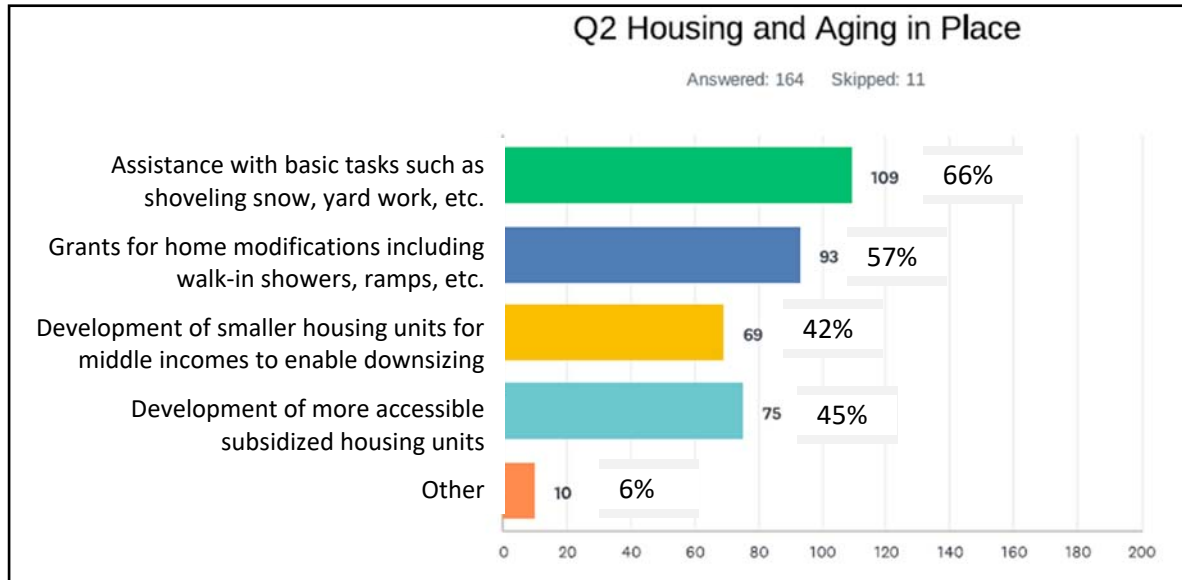


The Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Survey asked respondents about the issues that they thought were most important for the Town to focus on in the next five years. For Housing and Aging in Place, most (66%) wanted assistance with basic tasks such as shoveling snow, changing light bulbs, etc.; 57% wanted access to grants for home modifications, grab bars, walk-in showers, etc.; 45% said that there was a need for more accessible housing units; and 42% said there was a need for the development of smaller housing units to allow middle income households to downsize.

The Palmer Master Plan includes a number of recommended Actions for the Town to implement in order to add more affordable and “right-sized” housing in the community. These actions include developing a Housing Production Plan (Action H1-1 - in progress in Spring of 2023); preparing an inventory of underutilized properties for potential adaptive re-use (LU1-1.7); identifying opportunities for multi-family housing development projects (H2-2). The Plan also calls for zoning amendments that would allow smaller homes where appropriate; exploring opportunities to provide increased development flexibility for greater housing choice (LU1-1.5);

and building capacity and pursuing funding to develop more affordable housing units (H1-2 and H1-5).

Figure 3 - Assistance needed with Aging in Place (Age & Dementia Friendly Palmer Survey)



The following Goals and Actions are recommended for the Town to prioritize in the next five years to support residents who are aging in place. These actions supplement the Goals and Actions that were included in the Master Plan (and in Appendix B of this report) that mainly address the needs for building more housing in Palmer.

### Housing Goals and Actions

**Goal 2:** Provide support for Palmer residents who are aging in place.

#### Actions

- 2.1 Ensure that all older homeowners are familiar with the Property Tax Work-Off Program and eligible volunteer opportunities. Expand the program to enable additional participants.
- 2.2 Expand senior assistance program with QVDC or re-start program out of the Senior Center that was funded by CDBG to help people with basic tasks.
- 2.3 Assist homeowners in accessing funding and contractors to complete home modifications and basic maintenance.
- 2.4 Work with the Fire Department or Hampden County Sheriff's Department and local licensed contractors who can do home assessments (Home Safety Check program) and implement improvements for safety and fall prevention.

- 2.5 Work with schools, businesses, social clubs or other volunteers to develop a system for people to request or offer assistance with basic tasks (simple repairs, shoveling snow, doing errands) for people aging in their homes.
  - 2.6 Research and consider development of a volunteer-based Village or Neighbors Model at the local or regional level to provide assistance to elders who wish to remain in their homes and community.
  - 2.7 Connect people to resources and counseling (such as the Tenancy Preservation Program) for people at risk of eviction; identify shelters or programs to assist people who are un-housed.
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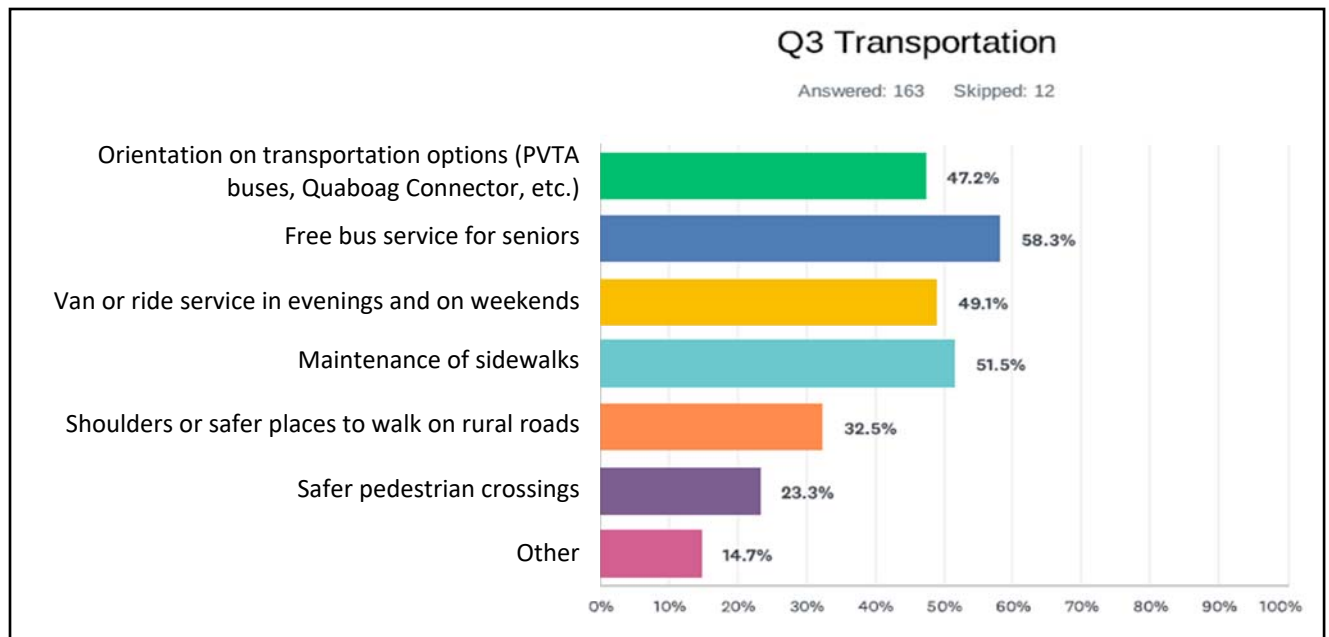
## Transportation

The decision to stop driving can be one of the most difficult transitions that comes with aging. Slower reaction times, difficulty seeing at night, and cognitive impairments are only a few of the challenges that people may face as they age, and that make driving more difficult and potentially dangerous. Features on newer automobiles such as backup cameras and distance monitors can help with some of the difficulties with aging, and often people choose their own methods of dealing with the changes such as not driving at night or avoiding left-hand turns. Eventually some people make the decision to stop driving and rely on friends or family members to drive them or use public transportation or other transportation services available in the community.

As people age, the assistance that they may need is a continuum from being independent and driving oneself, to not driving and taking public transit, to needing help getting to the door and then through the door. When people can use public transit and walk to transit stops or other destinations, it is important to have good lighting and sidewalks. When they can no longer walk, they may require paratransit or private transportation services, and in some cases caregivers to assist them into and out of vehicles.

In response to the question about what the Town should focus on in the next five years, most respondents (58.3%) said free bus service for older adults, and maintenance of sidewalks (51.5%) were some of the most important actions that the Town could take. Several respondents also added specific locations for safer pedestrian crossings (Figure 4, below).

Figure 4 - Improvements needed for transportation services and infrastructure (AFDF Palmer Survey)



The Town has an active Complete Streets program and has been awarded one round of funding for implementation of improvements for facilities that support use by pedestrians and people on bikes. The Old Mill School has also been active with the Safe Routes to School program which provides opportunities for funding of improvements to walking routes and areas for pick-up and drop-off on the school campus.

### Transportation Services

Services such as public transportation, senior center vans, and private transportation services are important to have in place when older adults in the community lose the ability to drive or the resources to maintain a personal automobile. Transportation services available in Palmer include fixed route bus service and on-demand van rides through the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA), van transportation offered through the Palmer Senior Center, and van service through the Quaboag Connector. Ride services such as Uber and Lyft are minimally available in the area.

#### Locations where safer pedestrian crossings are needed (per survey responses):

- Thorndike & Foster (ramp)
- Senior Center (2)
- All four villages
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Baptist Church
- Four Corners, Three Rivers, by Post Office and Citgo gas in Three Rivers
- Bondsville Post Office
- Library and Main Street
- In front of St. Thomas Church in Thorndike
- Multiple crossings on North Main Street need to be clearly marked
- Thorndike area (general)
- Walnut, Converse and Central Streets
- Main Street
- Shearer (2) & Fairview

As people transition from not driving to needing to use public transportation, orientation on the services available and how to reserve on-demand services can help people with understanding a complex transportation system. When people call to reserve a ride on the Quaboag Connector, staff will help with orienting riders to the areas served and whether they can make connections to other transportation services outside the area that the QC serves.

The Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Survey asked people to identify areas where they would like to go but that are not currently covered by the PVRTA or Quaboag Connector. Twenty people responded to this question, and suggestions is included in Figure 5.

### Transportation Goals and Actions

**Goal 3:** Ensure that transportation services and information on how to use them is easily accessible for residents of all ages and abilities to allow access to food, medical appointments, employment, education, and social connections.

#### Actions

- 3.1 Continue to assist people with finding transportation service through PVRTA (senior and paratransit services) and the Quaboag Connector. Expand the volunteer driver program as needed to help people get to appointments, etc.
- 3.2 Work with PVRTA and the Quaboag Connector to provide transportation orientation programs for people transitioning from driving to using public transportation or other transportation services.
- 3.3 Connect transit and COA van drivers to trainings on the unique needs of older adults, including best practices for how to interact, as well as recognize/respond appropriately to cognitive impairment, etc.
- 3.4 Work with PVRTA and/or the Quaboag Connector to identify grants or other funding to expand free bus or van service for older adults and others in the community to determine if this increases ridership.

**Goal 4:** Ensure that roads, sidewalks and trail networks are safe and comfortable for use by people of all ages and abilities.

**Figure 5 - Destination wish list for Transportation Services (AFDF Palmer Survey)**

- Additional destination wishes for transportation services (PVRTA, Quaboag Connector, Senior Center vans):**
- Medical visits (2)
  - Doctors appointments in Springfield
  - YMCA in Wilbraham
  - Malls, church (4)
  - Bondsville to downtown Palmer
  - Randall's in Ludlow
  - Chicopee, especially businesses and restaurants on Memorial Drive
  - MGM, movies, bowling
  - Palmer Food Share
  - Bus terminal
  - Airport (3)
  - Train station
  - Dollar Tree, Dollar General
  - Malls
  - Park (unspecified - 2), Beautiful places
  - Hospital
  - Daughter's home

## Actions

- 4.1 Develop a system for people to access help with shoveling sidewalks in the winter if they are responsible for a portion of sidewalk that is on their property.
- 4.2 Review pedestrian crossings for visibility and safety and apply for funding to upgrade as needed.
- 4.3 Work with the DPW and ADA Coordinator to identify and upgrade high traffic sidewalks and pedestrian crossings to meet ADA requirements and improve connectivity between housing for older adults, services, parks, and shopping.

**Goal 5:** Implement programs that promote safe driving and transition to other forms of transportation.

- 5.1 Support trainings for driver skill retention and setting up car for safety through partnerships with AARP, AAA, RMV, Auto Insurance providers.

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## Buildings and Outdoor Spaces

The amount of physical activity that people engage in is related, in part, to the availability of safe and convenient places to walk or ride a bike or participate in recreational or fitness activities. Buildings that are open to the public and outdoor spaces such as parks, sidewalks and park benches, provide places for people to gather, recreate, socialize and exercise both indoors and outside. Parks with accessible walking trails, sidewalks, bike paths and bike lanes, accessible buildings and restrooms are all facilities that are important for inviting active transportation, recreation, and social interaction. Amenities such as benches, shaded resting spots, and lighting all support older adults, people with disabilities, and people of all ages. In New England, places for indoor exercise and socializing are also important in winter months when sidewalks are covered with snow and ice, or weather is not as welcoming. During the pandemic, parks and open spaces were vital places for people to meet with friends or to get exercise while buildings and gyms were closed.

According to the Palmer Community Profile, 65.2% of people over 60 reported some physical activity within the last month (compared to 73.3% for the state), 20.7% met CDC guidelines for muscle strengthening activity (state average is 27.7%), and 54.3% met CDC guidelines for aerobic physical activity. The percentage of Palmer residents over 60 with a diagnosis of obesity is also worse than the state average at 27.4% (compared to 23.1% for the state).<sup>5</sup>

This health data suggests that it would be beneficial to improve the infrastructure for walking in Palmer, and to organize fitness programs for older adults. The Palmer Master Plan addresses the need for better sidewalk maintenance and connectivity between villages. Palmer offers a few

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<sup>5</sup> Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative Community Profile (2018)



trails that are accessible by people in wheelchairs and offer walking loops. The Swift River Trail, completed in 2019, is wide enough for a wheelchair and has a surface of crushed stone that allows for use by people in wheelchairs. The trail also has several benches that offer places to rest, and is shaded by trees, and offers views of the water. The exercise trail and equipment on Laviolette Field are popular destinations for walking and outdoor exercise. There are benches placed along the walking route around the field. However, adding a structure that would provide shade and handicapped accessible restroom would make the area more useable by people with disabilities. Suggested improvements from respondents to the Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Survey included more benches, particularly on Main Street in Three Rivers and at bus stops; bicycle racks; and an accessible path from Laviolette Field to Riverside.

In addition to updating the Palmer Master Plan, the Town of Palmer has also recently updated the Open Space and Recreation Plan (2021). The plan outlines the need for recreational opportunities for older adults and people with mobility limitations, including flat walking paths, more park benches along hiking trails and next to rivers and ponds.<sup>6</sup>

### Public Buildings

The Palmer Senior Center is located in Memorial Hall, originally constructed in 1890 for Civil War Veterans and later used as the Town's public library. The building was renovated in 2010 for use as a Senior Center and hosts congregate meals, programming and activities for older adults and people living with disabling conditions. The Palmer Master Plan notes that the building is adequate for its current use, but needs expanded parking, a new ramp, and additional shade outdoors. As the population of the town grows older, there will likely be a need to expand the building or find a new site as demand for services and programs increases. Respondents to the Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Survey said that a new senior center or expansion of parking for the existing Senior Center were the most important areas for the Town to focus on regarding buildings and outdoor spaces in Palmer.

The Palmer Library is an important resource for all members of the community, offering programming and access to computers as well as books in an ADA accessible space. The library has partnered with the Alzheimer's Association to offer programs for people with dementia and their care partners, and offers a good selection of books on memory loss and books that are more accessible to people in advanced stages of dementia. The library is interested in holding more programs in collaboration with the Senior Center.

### ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plan

Title II, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which says that as a recipient of state and federal funds, the Town is responsible for developing a Self-Assessment and Transition Plan to ensure that all facilities, public rights-of-way, programs, services, and activities are accessible

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<sup>6</sup> Palmer OSRP 2021, page 104.

and do not discriminate in regard to the programs, services and activities in the Town of Palmer.<sup>7</sup> In 2019, the Town contracted with Disability Access Consultants to complete an ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plan. The report focused on The Plan notes that “Town staff are scheduled to conduct accessibility inspections of the public rights of way (PROW) by 2024 in order to develop a transition plan for PROW. The Town plans to prioritize the high use sidewalks and remediate barriers by 2034, and lower priority sidewalks are expected to be remediated by 2039.”<sup>8</sup>

Recommendations in the ADA Self-Assessment and Transition plan include the following:

- *Consistent with best practices, the Town should consider utilizing a checklist for staff to review when sponsoring special events including but not limited to indoor and outdoor concerts, festivals, fairs, town hall meeting, luncheons, and ceremonies that are held on Town property or at other sites. Such a checklist would inform staff of their responsibilities under the ADA.*
- *Meetings and events open to the public should continue to be held in buildings that meet accessibility requirements, or in the accessible portion of the building with accessible elements that serve the area where the meeting or event is held. For example, parking, restrooms and drinking fountains that serve the area where the meeting and event is held should also be accessible.*
- *Information regarding the facility should include information regarding accessible features and elements of the site. For example, accessible parking, accessible restrooms and other items and elements should be indicated on documents and on the website. Indicating accessible paths of travel and accessible entrances also provides valuable information for individuals with disabilities. A contact number and email address should be provided for additional assistance.*

Other recommendations included trainings for staff, review of the construction oversight process for new construction, maintenance of alternative accessible pedestrian routes during construction, assurance that contracts with outside vendors and contractors contain language about compliance with state and federal building codes and developing a budget and schedule for removing barriers to accessibility on Town-owned facilities and rights-of-way.<sup>9</sup>

## Buildings & Outdoor Spaces Goals and Actions

**Goal 6:** Provide opportunities for use of public buildings and outdoor spaces by people of all ages and abilities.

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<sup>7</sup> Disability Access Consultants, LLC. Palmer ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plan (2019)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., page 9.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. (2019)

## Actions

- 6.1 Implement the recommendations in the ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plan to make public buildings, parks and sidewalks accessible and dementia friendly.
- 6.2 Appoint and activate the Commission on Disabilities to oversee, prioritize and track improvements to accessibility.
- 6.3 Develop a map of safe walking and biking routes for people of all ages and abilities and make it available throughout town in print and in digital form on the Town website. Provide information on levels of difficulty and whether or not they are ADA compliant and/or accessible to people in wheelchairs.

**Goal 7:** Increase programming and improve environments that encourage active living and social interaction for older adults in buildings and outdoor spaces in Palmer.

- 7.1 Encourage the creation of walking groups or walking buddy programs through council on aging or other municipal departments, posting on community website and bulletin boards.
- 7.2 Establish regular, organized activities in parks, both age-specific and multigenerational, through municipal recreation programming or partnering with local organizations.

## Health and Community Services, and Public Safety

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The Palmer Master Plan includes a chapter on Health and a Health Addendum, which were created from work completed through the Mass in Motion program, funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Access to healthy food, places to be active, and healthy aging were the focus of the Mass in Motion work. Issues that extend beyond the Master Plan include addressing the increase in the number of people with dementia, finding home health care providers, and those who care for people with dementia and other health conditions.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused many services and medical appointments to be put on hold. The Palmer Senior Center shifted from having on-site programming to distributing food through the brown bag pick-up and Meals on Wheels to help older adults who were used to meeting some of their food needs with meals at the Senior Center.

Municipal public safety personnel, including police and fire departments, are often the first point of contact when people are scared, lonely, or fall in their homes. Therefore, it is critical to involve emergency personnel in addressing the needs of older residents and to coordinate with Senior Center staff to determine who best to respond to residents' needs.

The sections below detail the health care and social services that are available to older adults in Palmer as well as the importance of integrating the care needs of older adults with planning for emergencies and long-term resiliency of the community.

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## Health and Community Services

Although not universal, as people age, some are increasingly likely to lose some of their physical or cognitive capabilities, and many have more health needs or require help with basic tasks such as yard work, cleaning, and cooking. Some cognitive and physical impairments lead to a need for full-time assistance from nurses, home health care providers, or family members. Respondents to the Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Survey said that the greatest need in the area of Health and Community Services was in getting home care services (89 respondents). Support for people with dementia was also a big need (77 respondents), and support for family or friends who provide caregiving services (69 respondents).

Due in part to the pandemic, there is a shortage of health workers nationwide. This shortage has also led to many family caregivers (mostly women) having to take time off of work to care for family members. The Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation (QV CDC) manages an Education to Employment program through funding from Baystate Health that is looking at health care jobs as one area of opportunity for employment and to fill an urgent need for workers.

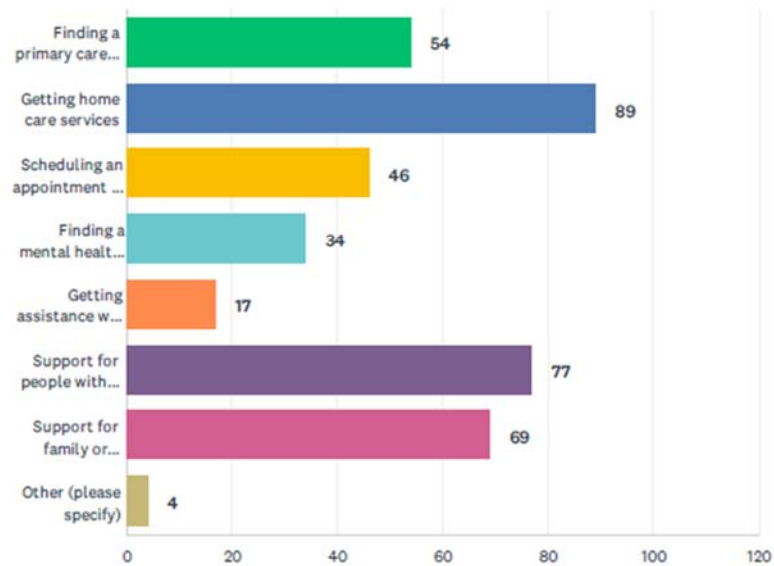
According to the Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Survey, a small number of respondents (32 in total) said that they either care for a spouse or parent, and some may care for both as well as a child or grandchild. According to the responses to Question 6 (above), there is a significant need for support services for family caregivers.

**Figure 6** – Health and Caregiver Service areas where respondents encountered barriers (AFDF Palmer Survey)

Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Community Assessment and Action Plan Finding my primary care physician Getting home care services	Page 17
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## Q6 Health and Caregiver Services

Answered: 154 Skipped: 21



### Health & Social Services

Residents of Palmer are fortunate to have access to a full-service hospital in their community. **Baystate Wing Hospital**, located on Wright Street, offers a broad range of medical, surgical and psychiatric services. The Emergency Department is open 24 hours/day and includes a critical care unit and primary stroke center. Inpatient and outpatient behavioral health and addiction treatment services are offered through the Griswold Behavioral Health Center and the Center for Geriatric Psychiatry. In addition, Baystate provides an urgent care walk-in clinic that is open seven days a week, and Dispatch Health, a service that provides care to people in their homes. The closure of the Baystate Mary Lane hospital in Ware may bring additional patients and employment opportunities to the Baystate Wing hospital, and also the need for transportation services for Ware residents to access health care services in Palmer.

**Greater Springfield Senior Services** is the area Agency on Aging that provides (to eligible older adults) assistance with home health services, ombudsman services for people living in long-term care facilities, training support for caregivers, food for meal delivery and congregate meals, workshops on healthy living, and assistance with basic needs including finding housing and transportation services. During the pandemic, GSSS provided shelf-stable meals at their congregate meal sites for pick-up or delivery. GSSS is available to provide workshops and presentations on the services that they provide at member community locations.

The **Palmer Senior Center** offers balance and fitness programs, hearing aid checks, assistance with insurance, SNAP and HIP, fuel assistance, congregate breakfasts and lunches, van service,

and assistance in finding local health or social services. Most survey respondents who use the Senior Center said that they attended congregate lunches, exercise or social programs; however, many also received SHINE (insurance assistance) counseling, and assistance with fuel and SNAP benefits. The Senior Center also provides rides to medical appointments and offers fresh produce for sale at the Senior Center during summer months. In the past, the Senior Center has offered free or low cost Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm shares that provide fresh locally grown produce in small shares to supplement residents' food supply with healthy fresh food.

The **Veterans Services Department** in Palmer assists veterans in the community to learn about and apply for benefits including housing, fuel assistance, financial assistance, SNAP, and other state and federal programs. The Brookfield Institute, located in Brookfield, also provides services for veterans including food delivery to families of veterans during the pandemic.

Several other health and community service organizations are located in Palmer and neighboring communities. The **Behavioral Health Network** provides addiction and recovery services, counseling and wellness programs, emergency services for individuals who are experiencing behavioral health crises, services to support individuals with developmental needs, and other trainings.

### Community Services

Many people who choose to remain in their homes as they age may need help with basic tasks such as snow shoveling or yard work, preparing meals, or handling finances. The highest need according to survey responses was for help with yard work or snow shoveling. Twenty-one respondents to this question said that they needed help with these tasks but did not know where to get it. Many communities have set up volunteer-based "Village" or "Neighbor" organizations that offer people opportunities to help their neighbors, and/or help with basic tasks. Social organizations such as the Elks Club or school programs that get youth involved in helping people in the community could be good places to start with developing a program or system of help for older adults or others who cannot otherwise do these tasks on their own.

### Health and Community Services Goals and Actions

**Goal 8:** Ensure that older residents of Palmer have access to health care and community services that support their ability to live long and healthy lives.

#### Actions

- 8.1 Increase awareness and aid accessing food benefit programs (SNAP, HIP, Senior CSA shares, etc.) to ensure that all who qualify are familiar with the programs and know where they can use them. Advocate for at least one location to use HIP in Palmer.

- 8.2 Collaborate with QVCDC to explore the need and funding available to expand services for older adults living in Palmer.
  - 8.3 Identify resources to provide respite care for family caregivers.
  - 8.4 Research the feasibility of developing a local or regional Neighbors program (or Village model) which coordinates volunteers to provide services that allow people to age in place. Services may include grocery and pharmacy delivery, safety monitoring programs, daily check-ins, and transportation assistance.
    - Seek assistance from Social Clubs such as the Elks, Lions, etc.; schools.
    - Develop neighborhood circles where neighbor volunteer to help other neighbors with basic tasks such as shoveling snow.
  - 8.5 Collaborate with 413-Cares to train local health care and social service providers on how to use the platform and inform clients about this resource.
  - 8.6 Promote programs that educate and employ home health care providers and set up internships so that students can gain experience by providing services to local residents.
  - 8.7 Support Medicaid reimbursement of higher wages for home care and home health care workers to build a more consistent and sustainable work force.
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## Public Safety

Police, Fire, and other emergency service providers are closely involved with the safety of older adults as they are often the ones that people call when they are not feeling safe or have had a fall. The Palmer Council on Aging participates with the Police, Fire and Hampden County Sheriff's Department in the Triad Program which is a national organization initially started by the National Sheriffs' Association, the International Chiefs of Police, and the AARP. Triad is a community policing initiative in which seniors, law enforcement and other service providers increase safety through education and crime prevention. Triad program members and staff at the Senior Center assist residents with filling out File of Life documents that include important medical information and are stored in a prominent location in case of emergencies.

In addition to assisting with File of Life documents, the Fire Department provides information on updating smoke and CO2 detectors, offers a Sand for Seniors program that delivers sand to people in winter months to prevent falling on ice, and places house numbers close to the street so that homes can be easily found by emergency personnel. A "lock box" program is also available to provide a key in a combination lock box for use by emergency personnel.

The Palmer Senior Center has developed a registry for people living with dementia or other conditions that may cause them to wander and not remember how to get back home. The program would be shared with emergency service personnel so that photos, home address and health concerns are readily available if someone is reported missing.

## Public Safety Goals and Actions

**Goal 9:** Ensure the safety of all residents, including older adults and people with dementia, through multi-sectoral partnerships and programming.

### Actions

- 9.1 Post information on the TRIAD or SALT programs on both the Senior Center and Police Department websites to educate residents about the File of Life and registry for people at risk of wandering. Encourage residents to keep their File of Life documents updated regularly.
- 9.2 Provide regular trainings for all emergency personnel on recognizing the signs of dementia and how to communicate with people with dementia.
- 9.3 Work with the Police and/or Fire Department (and COA) to create a shared registry for emergency personnel; encourage residents living with dementia and their care partners to sign up on this registry.
- 9.4 Educate older adults about what to do in the case of emergency and about the Town's Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP).
- 9.5 Collaborate with Police and Fire departments to hold safety talks at the Senior Center and broadcast recordings on MPACT TV and online.
- 9.6 Collaborate with the District Attorney's office to hold trainings on internet and phone scams.

## The Social Environment

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The social environment is not often the subject of municipal planning but is a key element of a community that supports the needs of older adults. The social environment is determined in part by the built environment in that there must be places to gather, both indoors and outside; a safe transportation network and broadband system that allows people to connect with one another; and housing that is located close to public spaces or that provides spaces for social interaction.

Opportunities for participation in social or civic events must also be inclusive of all members of the community. This may mean holding events at times that are convenient for those who may need to take public transportation or walk to an event. For non-English speakers, translation services or events held in other languages contribute to an inclusive social environment; and having sound systems available at public meetings, closed captioning for online meetings, and/or website tools for people with visual impairments can make public spaces more welcoming to people with disabling conditions.

During the pandemic, use of technology – including access to equipment, training on how to use it and access to high-speed internet – became elevated as a way to engage older adults and all



members of the community programming and meetings while avoiding physical interactions. Holding virtual meetings and programming also allows people with disabilities or who cannot drive themselves to participate in social and educational programming from their homes, as long as they have a laptop, tablet or smart phone; understanding of how to use that equipment, and access to affordable high speed internet services.

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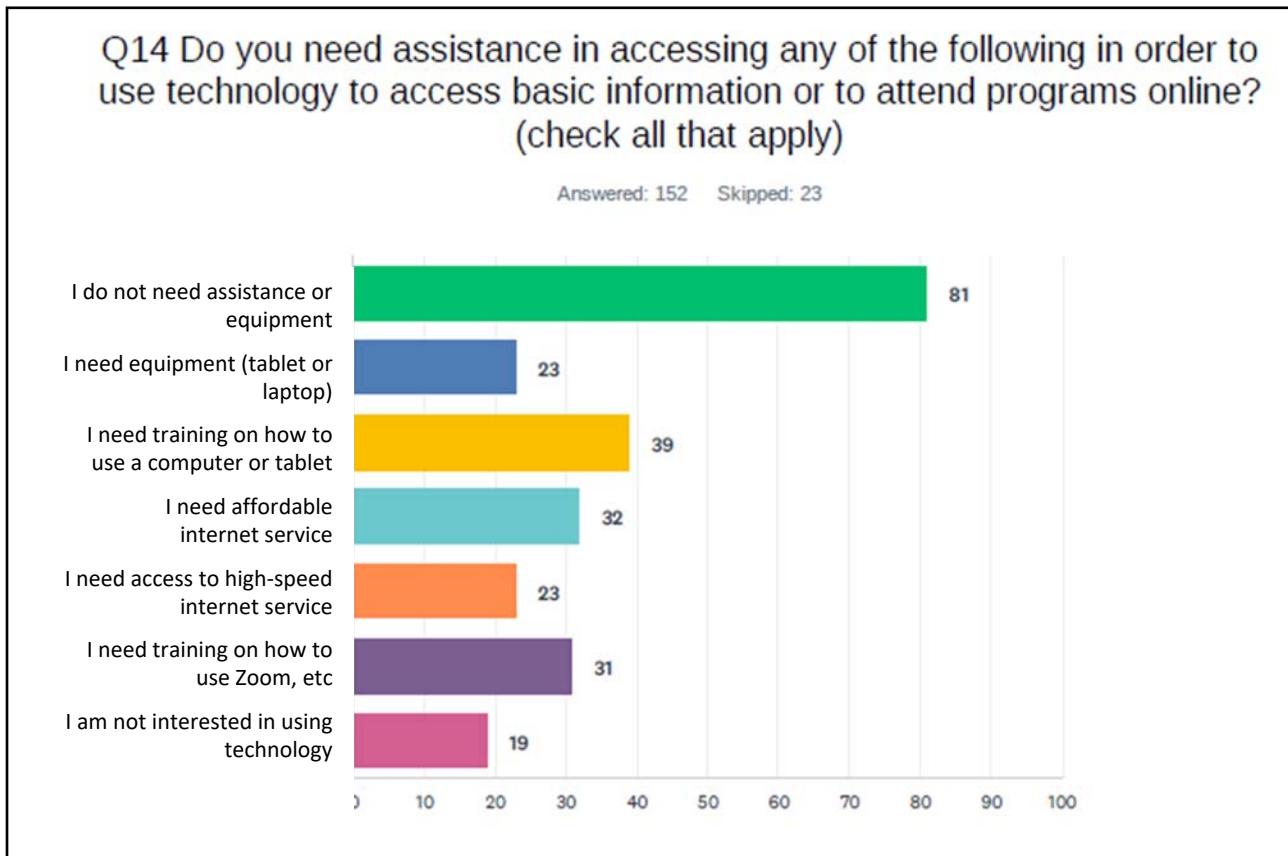
## Communications, Information & Technology

Surveys administered for the Palmer Master Plan during the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic exposed social isolation as a major concern among older adults as well as people of all ages. Stay-at-home orders, closure of the Senior Center to congregate meals and transportation services heightened feelings of social isolation, particularly for people who live alone and/or did not have access to technology to be able to participate in public meetings, video chats, or online programming. Although the Palmer Senior Center did not conduct many online programs, the Town took advantage of this platform during the development of the Palmer Master Plan, holding a series of public forums through Zoom, Facebook Live, and M-Pact TV, Palmer's local cable access channel.

The Town does not currently offer a program to loan out devices such as laptops or tablets, but the Library loans out WiFi "hot spots" that allow people to get internet access for the time of the loan period. Based on survey results, respondents wanted access to both equipment and training on how to use tablets or laptops. Of those who responded to the Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Survey, most (39) wanted training on how to use a computer or tablet, and training on how to use Zoom or other video conferencing software (31 responses). Many (32) also said that they needed access to affordable internet service.

Some providers offered affordable internet service during the pandemic, and in May of 2022 the Federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) was launched with agreements from providers to offer at least one high-speed internet plan (at least 100 mbs download speed) for no more than \$30/month. In Palmer the primary high speed internet service provider(s) are Spectrum and T-Mobile. The Older Adult Digital Equity Network, coordinated by Baystate Health and representatives from COAs in western Massachusetts meets regularly (as of Spring 2023) to discuss ways to improve digital connectivity for older adults.

Figure 7 - Technology Needs (AFDF Palmer Survey)



In addition to online communications, it is important to provide outreach in a number of formats for those who do not have equipment or internet access or prefer not to use technology. The Palmer Master Plan includes a recommendation to install bulletin boards in key locations around town in addition to posting information on the Town website and social media pages. The Senior Center distributes a regular newsletter by mail and online, and the local cable access television station, M-PACT TV is a key partner in sharing information through broadcasting print ads as well as conducting interviews with local officials and filming public meetings.

The Palmer Master Plan also promotes changing the narrative and language around aging:

- Change the narrative about the aging population to celebrate the wisdom, skills, talents and lived experience, both personal and professional, of older adults as well as the contributions that they have made to the community.

The Town could consider promoting events for all ages by including information about accessibility and transportation, including older adults and people with disabilities in planning, and increasing advertising or announcements in print media and on M-PACT TV.

## Communications & Technology Goals and Actions

**Goal 10:** Ensure that all residents have access to information about policies and programs that provide opportunities for health and community engagement.

### Actions

- 10.1 Assist older adults in acquiring equipment and training on how to use it and provide assistance with accessing low cost or free broadband service.
- 10.2 Provide accommodations for vision and hearing impaired on Town website and in spaces used for public meetings (closed captioning, interpreter).
- 10.3 Create a basic, but effective Municipal Communication Plan. Inventory what municipal info is being shared by each department, including both non-emergency and emergency channels.
- 10.4 Update the Town website regularly and poll users about the ease of navigation. Design for the broadest range of consumers, including those with visual or physical impairments, multiple languages, etc.

**Goal 11:** Facilitate a culture of support and acceptance for residents of all ages and abilities.

### Actions

- 11.1 Ensure that printed information – including official forms or invoices and text on visual displays in public spaces - has large lettering with main ideas in bold type; simple and straightforward sentences and simple language; and is available in multiple languages as needed.
- 11.2 Ensure that telephone answering services give instructions slowly and clearly and tell callers how to repeat the message at any time. Offer options for people with hearing impairments.
- 11.3 Ensure that reading glasses or magnifying glasses are available at election locations for people with visual impairments.
- 11.4 Research the cost and feasibility of offering information and other communications in other languages as needed (review updated Census data). Engage community members who speak languages other than English to determine whether interpreter and translation services are needed for municipal documents and public meetings.

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## Social Participation and Inclusion

Next to transportation, social isolation was listed as the biggest concern for older adults by respondents to the Healthy Palmer Survey which was conducted to gather information for the Health Addendum and Health Chapter of the Palmer Master Plan. In the general population, social isolation and loneliness increase the risk of mortality by 29% and 26% respectively, and are well known risk factors for the development and progression of a variety of conditions

including cardiovascular disease, functional decline, depression, and dementia.<sup>10</sup> During the pandemic, people experiencing dementia were prone to accelerated progression of the disease due to restrictions in social interactions.

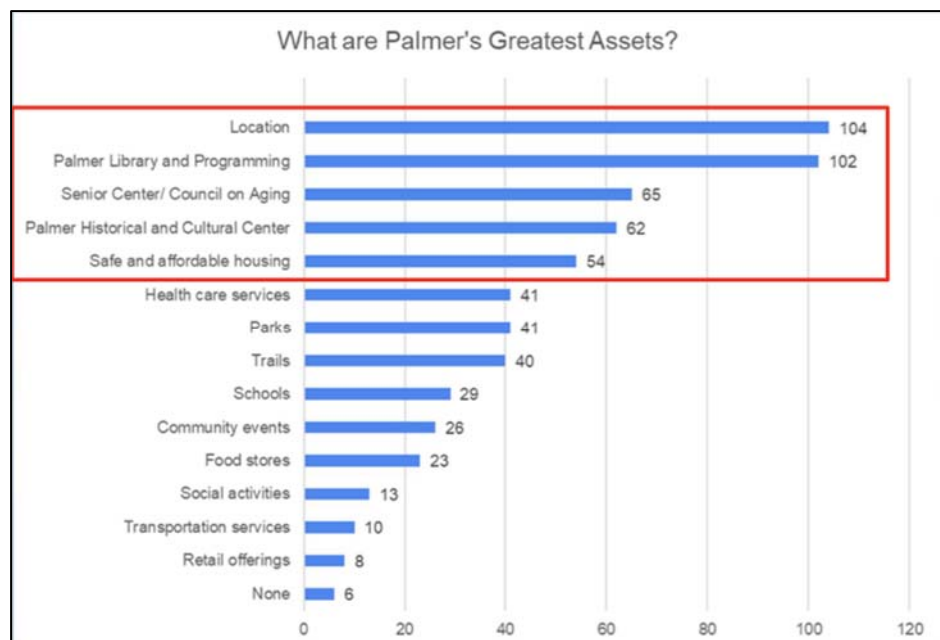
In a question about what people thought was most needed in terms of employment, and social and civic engagement, over 70% of respondents to the Age & Dementia Friendly Palmer Survey thought the Town needed more activities for people with dementia such as Memory Cafés. The library and senior center are considering such programs.

### Palmer Library

People who responded to the Healthy Palmer Survey ranked the Palmer Public Library as the greatest asset next to the Town’s location. The library has been a key partner in the Age and Dementia Friendly Communities project, with the head librarian serving on the Working Group and hosting public listening sessions. Unfortunately, the impact of the pandemic left many people cautious about going out to public events so there was very little participation at these forums as well as other community events. However, the tide may be changing as there were over fifty people in attendance at the library’s recent annual meeting.

The Library has hosted discussions and other programs with the Alzheimer’s Association, and has a collection of books both for caregivers and for people in earlier stages of dementia. Library staff are working on putting together “memory kits” which will contain books as well as games and other items for people at more advanced stages of dementia.

Figure 8 - Palmer's Greatest Assets (Palmer Master Plan Survey)

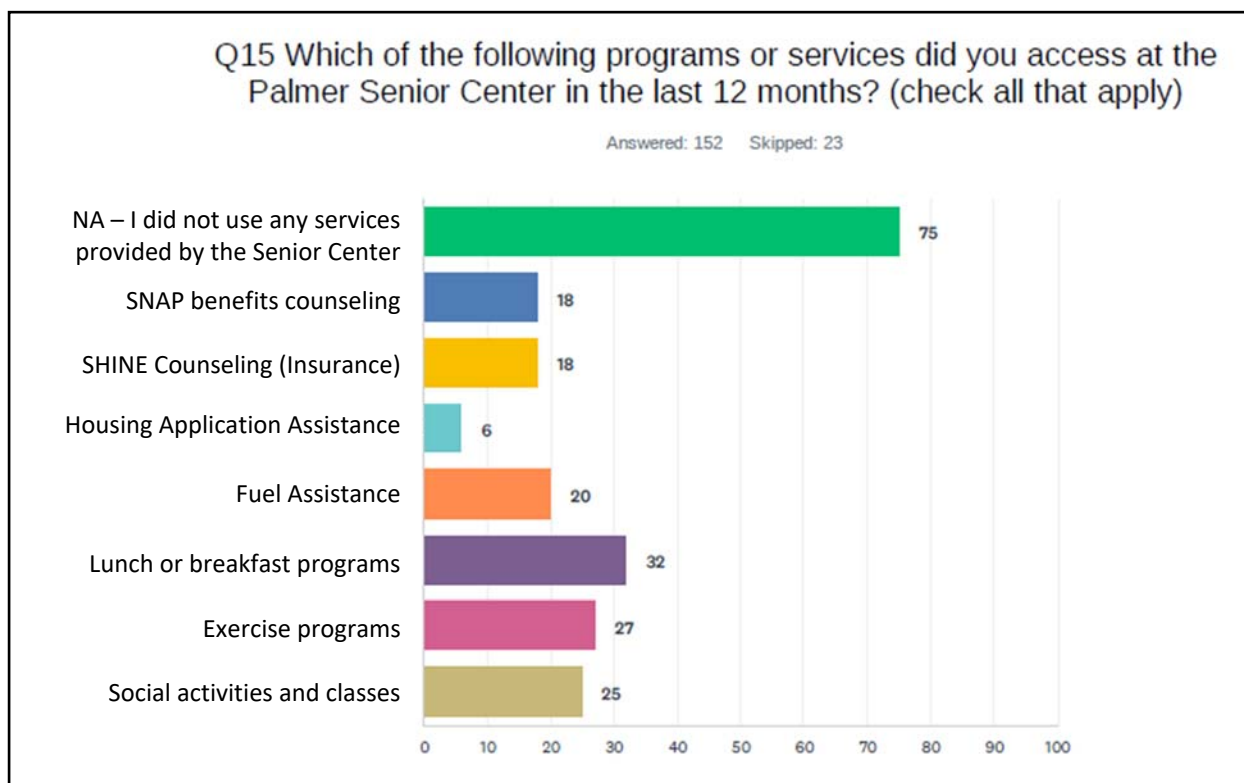


<sup>10</sup> A Curelaru, S Marzolf, J-C Provost, H Zeon. “Social Isolation in Dementia: The Effects of Covid-19.” <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8504102/>

## Palmer Senior Center

The Palmer Senior Center is an important social resource for older adults and people with disabilities. The Senior Center offers congregate breakfasts and lunches, fitness and educational programs, and social activities along with the services mentioned in the Public Buildings section above. According to survey respondents, congregate meals, exercise programs and social activities were the services that most people attended at the Senior Center.

Figure 9 - Programs or services used at the Senior Center (AF DF Survey)



The survey also asked for reasons why people did not use the Senior Center if it was not a place that they frequented. Most respondents said that they did not know what was available (15), they did not have time (14), or the hours of programs and services did not fit into their schedule (11). As most programs are during the day, those who work cannot generally attend events at the Senior Center. to attend programs at the senior center. Twenty-eight respondents provided additional responses to this question. Most responded said that they go when they need help or something interests them, and many said that they planned to use the Senior Center in the future. Some responded that parking was difficult, or that they could not attend due to medical conditions (2) or they were a caretaker for someone else and could not get away (2). In response to these last two comments, the Senior Center could consider providing programs for caregivers along with the people that they care for.

Respondents were asked to provide comments on additional programs that they would like to see at the Palmer Senior Center. Responses to this question are in Table 1 below.

Table 1 - Additional programs or services needed at the Palmer Senior Center (AFDF Palmer Survey)

Q17 Please list any other programs or services that you would like to see at the Senior Center that are not currently offered?	
Once/twice a month have an activity at the Senior Center (social parties, entertainr	3
Help with technology (smart phones, getting online, etc.)	3
No suggestions; happy with the Senior Center	2
Need more information of available programs/services	2
Additional drivers/vans	1
Garden Club	1
More programs for women to gather (knitting, crocheting, etc.)	1
Monthly cookout/picnic at the park	1
Keep BINGO as a weekly program	1
Resume tax prep service	1
Offer medical assessment for eligibility for personal/home care services	1
Singing	1
Teaching, guest lectures	1
Men's social group	1
Lending library	1
Swimming program (at high school or YMCA)	1
Walking group	1
Bicycling group	1
Expand Brown Bag eligibility	1
Day trips out of Palmer	1
Daily calls to homebound individuals	1
Tag sale; mini auction	1
More recreational activities (sports, fitness programs)	1
Mental health care services	1
Chess group	1

### Social Participation and Inclusion Goals and Actions

**Goal 12:** Ensure that older adults and people with dementia have opportunities for social interaction through access to technology, programming and planning of events.

#### Actions

- 12.1 Collaborate with MPACT TV and other senior centers to offer online and hybrid social and fitness programming that can be accessed online or re-broadcast on cable access TV.
- 12.2 Consider starting up a Memory Café or other activities for people with dementia and their caregivers (adult day programs, creative arts/music, intergenerational connections, outings/group activities). Meaningfully engage people with dementia in developing programs and services.
- 12.3 Provide information about accessibility of facilities and transportation options for community meetings and events.

- 12.4 Continue to identify and reach out to socially isolated residents via personal contact from trusted municipal staff; develop "Buddy system" with volunteers who can reach out to socially isolated residents.
- 12.5 Collaborate with existing community-based networks such as faith communities, civic groups, education channels, business groups, to share information and develop programming.

## Employment and Civic Engagement

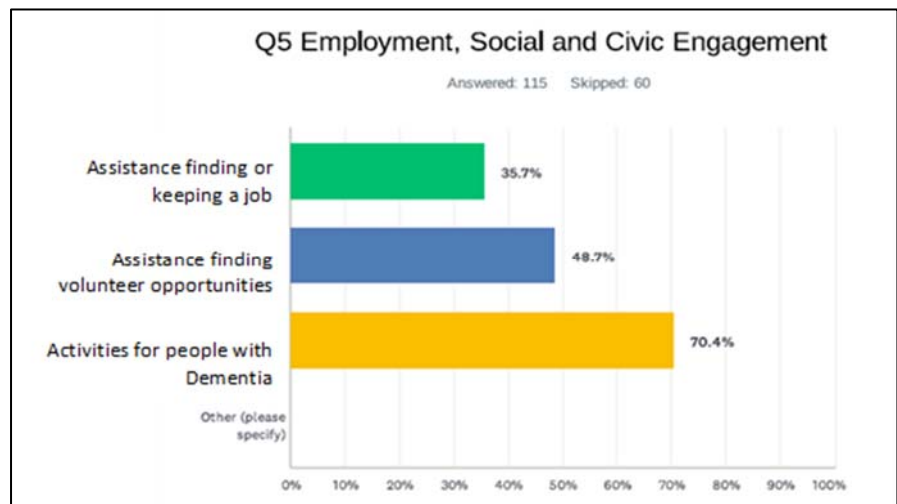
As the cost of living continues to rise, many people continue to work part time after retiring from full-time work. Others maintain social and professional interactions by participating in serving on local boards or taking advantage of the numerous volunteer opportunities available in the area. The RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) offers volunteer opportunities with agencies in Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire Counties including positions such as providing assistance with insurance (SHINE program), money management, food delivery, transportation, and Healthy Bones and Balance classes. RSVP volunteers also help with technology trainings or other skills.

For those who wish to continue working, the Massachusetts Councils on Aging administers a 50+ Job Seekers program that helps older adults to find work. This program offers a year-round, 12-week training program that helps people deal with agism, create resumes, find information on available positions, and work on interviewing skills.

The US Department of Labor provides a job training program for older adults called the Senior Community Service Employment Program. This program serves low income, unemployed people ages fifty-five and older who have experienced barriers to employment. The most local program serving this region is based in Springfield.

Although many survey respondents skipped the question on what was needed in Palmer around Employment, Social and Civic Engagement, 49% of respondents wanted assistance finding volunteer

Figure 10 - Programs or services needed to support Employment or Civic Engagement of older adults (AFDF Palmer Survey)



opportunities and 36% wanted assistance in finding or keeping a job. Palmer also offers the property tax work-off program which allows eligible older adults to work off what they owe in property taxes by doing volunteer work for the Town. Several of these positions are available through the Palmer Senior Center.

## Communication and Technology

It is important for communities to work with local business leaders to ensure that staff are educated about how to recognize and work with people with dementia. The Town may also want to consider an “Age and Dementia Friendly Business” certification program such as one that was developed by Age Strong Boston (see Age Friendly Business Checklist in Appendix C).

### Employment and Civic Engagement Goals and Actions

**Goal 13:** Provide opportunities and assistance for older adults who want to work and volunteer in the community.

#### Actions

- 13.1 Expand opportunities for qualified older adults to work in exchange for property tax reduction.
- 13.2 Provide flexible options for people with dementia to volunteer and provide training, recognition, guidance and compensation for personal costs.
- 13.3 Develop intergenerational skill building/mentoring opportunities with older adults community groups and local schools, i.e. youths teach elders about technology or other current studies, while elders teach youths about careers, life skills etc.
- 13.4 Increase public engagement with elected/appointed officials by increasing publicity/outreach for public meetings/calls for comment in a number of formats and venues.
- 13.5 Educate business leaders and staff about how to recognize and work with people with dementia.
- 13.6 Consider implementing an Age and Dementia Friendly certification program using the Age Strong Boston checklist as a model.

## Action Plan

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This Action Plan for an Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer details goals and strategies for improving Palmer’s social and built environments to make the town a welcoming place for people of all ages and abilities. This report and Action Plan are dynamic documents that will be amended as conditions change in the community.

The Goals and Actions included in the Action Plan are expanded from sections above to include lead entities, partner organizations or entities, metrics for measuring progress, and the priority



as identified through the results of community engagement and the capacity of the entities assigned. Priority levels are as follows:

- **Short-Term (ST)** – 1-3 years
- **Medium Term (MT)** – 4-6 years
- **Long Term (LT)** – 7-10 years

## Plan Implementation

The Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Working Group was formed to work with the PVPC on the development of this Community Assessment and Action Plan. An implementation committee made up of members of this working group and others identified by the Town will be developed to implement strategies on the following pages. In addition, the following steps are recommended for the implementation of this report.

- 1) Continue to build the Age and Dementia Friendly Working Group to include multiple sectors of the community as well as regional and state partner organizations and agencies.
- 2) Distribute the Community Assessment and Action Plan to Town boards, committees, social groups and faith organizations to solicit input and volunteers for an implementation committee, and to build awareness of ways that these groups can participate in making Palmer Age and Dementia Friendly.
- 3) Submit report to AARP and Dementia Friendly Massachusetts for final certification as an Age and Dementia Friendly Community.
- 4) Select strategies for implementation each year.
- 5) Report on successes and challenges – both to the community, AARP and Dementia Friendly Massachusetts.

## Dementia Friendly Community Strategies

<b>Goal 1:</b> Build awareness, acceptance, and a culture of support for people living with dementia and the people who care for them.				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Lead Entity/ Partners</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1.1	Work with partners such as the Alzheimer’s Association to offer and connect people to trainings on how to recognize signs of dementia and communicate with people with dementia for all leaders and staff of municipal departments, transit and volunteer drivers, library, businesses, banks, faith communities and other sectors that are public facing.	COA, Alzheimer’s Association, Cedarbrook Village, Palmer House	# of trainings	High/ST
1.2	Work with the Police Department (and COA) to encourage residents to register on a list of people living with dementia or other health concerns.	COA, Police Dept	# of people on registry	MT
1.3	Identify and reach out to people with dementia and family care givers to connect them with support programs and opportunities for meeting with other caregivers and people with dementia. Re-start the caregiver support program at the COA if there is interest.	COA, Alzheimer’s Association, Dementia Friends; Baystate Wing (?)	Caregiver support programs available; # of people contacted	ST
1.4	Meaningfully engage people with dementia in developing programs and services such as support groups or memory cafes at the Senior Center, Library and other locations in the community.	COA, Library, Alzheimer’s Association; Baystate Wing (?)	# programs; people with dementia involved	ST
1.5	Develop a Dementia Awareness committee to implement trainings and a public awareness campaign about dementia.	COA, Library, Alzheimer’s Association, Baystate Wing(?)	Committee in place	ST

1.6	Recruit volunteers to become Dementia Friends Champions who will provide trainings for community groups and neighbors.	COA, Jewish Family & Children's Services	# Dementia Friends and DF Champions	MT
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## Housing

Goal 2: Provide support for Palmer residents who are aging in place.				
Actions		Lead Entity/ Partners	Metrics	Priority
2.1	Assist homeowners in accessing funding (i.e Home Modification Loan Program through PVPC or grant programs) and finding contractors and/or people to help with basic maintenance.	GSSS, PVPC, COA	# grants or loans given; # applicants	ST
2.2	Work with the Fire Department or Hampden County Sheriff's Department and local licensed contractors who can do home assessments (Home Safety Check program) and implement improvements for safety and fall prevention.	COA, Fire Dept, Hampden County Sheriff's Dept.	Home assessment program in place	ST
2.3	Work with schools, businesses, social clubs or other volunteers to develop a system for people to request or offer assistance with basic tasks (simple repairs, shoveling snow, doing errands) for people aging in their homes.	COA, Library, Schools, Social Clubs	Community service program in place	MT
2.4	Research and consider development of a volunteer-based Village or Neighbors Model at the local or regional level to provide assistance to elders who wish to remain in their homes and community.	Volunteer leader; Friends group	Village or Neighbors program in place	MT/LT
2.5	Ensure that all older homeowners are familiar with the Property Tax Work-Off Program and eligible volunteer opportunities. Expand the program to enable additional participants.	COA, Town Manager	# of participants in the program; # of spots available	ST

2.6	Connect people to resources and counseling (such as the Tenancy Preservation Program) for people at risk of eviction; identify shelters or programs to assist people who are un-housed.	Berkshire Regional Housing Authority; COA; Community Action Pioneer Valley	# clients enrolled in eviction prevention programs and counseling	MT
2.7	Expand senior assistance program with QV CDC or re-start program out of the Senior Center that was funded by CDBG to help people with basic tasks.	COA; QV CDC; CD Dept.	Assistance program in place	ST

## Transportation and Streets

<b>Goal 3:</b> Ensure that transportation services are available and information on how to use them is easily accessible for residents of all ages and abilities to allow access to food, medical appointments, employment, education, and social connections.				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead Entity/ Partners</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Priority</b>
3.1	Work with PVTA and the Quaboag Connector to provide transportation orientation programs for people transitioning from driving to using public transportation or other transportation services.	COA, PVTA, Quaboag Connector	Programs or appointments scheduled	ST
3.2	Expand the volunteer driver program to help people get to appointments, etc. (Senior Center hours).	COA	# Volunteer drivers, # rides	ST/MT
3.3	Develop a map that shows bus stops as well as fixed routes and locations where riders can make connections to other routes.	COA, PVPC, PVTA	Map of transit routes	ST
3.4	Connect transit and COA van drivers to trainings on the unique needs of older adults, including best practices for how to interact, as well as recognize/respond appropriately to cognitive impairment, etc.	COA, PVTA, Alzheimer's Association	# driver training programs, # of participants	ST

3.5	Work with PVTA and the Quaboag Connector to pilot free bus or van service for older adults and others in the community to determine if this increases ridership.	COA, PVTA, Quaboag Connector (QVDC)	# older adults using the service	MT
<b>Goal 4:</b> Ensure that roads, sidewalks and trail networks are safe and comfortable for use by people of all ages and abilities.				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Lead Entity/ Partners</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Priority</b>
4.1	Review pedestrian crossings for visibility and safety and apply for funding to upgrade as needed.	Planning Board, PVPC	Bike & Pedestrian Network Plan	
4.2	Work with the DPW and ADA Coordinator to identify and upgrade high traffic sidewalks and pedestrian crossings to meet ADA requirements and improve connectivity between housing for older adults, services, parks, and shopping.	DPW, Planning, ADA Coordinator, COA	# Sidewalks and road crossings identified and upgraded	ST
4.3	Investigate Shared Winter Streets (MassDOT funding) for sidewalk improvements near bus stops.	DPW, Planning	Sidewalk improvements	ST/MT
4.4	Develop a system for people to access help with shoveling sidewalks in the winter if they are responsible for a portion of sidewalk that is on their property.	COA, Schools, Social clubs	Sidewalk maintenance program	ST/MT
<b>Goal 5:</b> Implement programs that promote safe driving and transition to other forms of transportation.				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Lead Entity/ Partners</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Priority</b>
5.1	Support and allow space for driver skill retention and setting up car for safety with community organizations, through partnerships with AARP, AAA, RMV, Auto Insurance providers.	COA, AAA, Insurance Agents, Mass Mobility	Driver skill retention programs	ST

## Buildings and Outdoor Spaces

<b>Goal 6:</b> Provide opportunities for use of public buildings and outdoor spaces by people of all ages and abilities.				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Lead Entity/ Partners</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Priority</b>
6.1	<p>Implement the recommendations in the ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plan to make public buildings, parks and sidewalks accessible and dementia friendly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activate the Commission on Disabilities to oversee, prioritize and track improvements to accessibility.</li> </ul>	Planning, Commission on Disabilities	Prioritized list of projects	ST
6.2	<p>Develop a map of safe walking and biking routes for people of all ages and abilities and make it available throughout town in print and in digital form on the Town website. Provide information on levels of difficulty and whether or not they are ADA compliant and/or accessible to people in wheelchairs.</p>	Conservation, Commission on Disabilities	Map of walking and biking routes	MT
<b>Goal 7:</b> Increase programming and improve environments that encourage active living and social interaction for older adults in buildings and outdoor spaces in Palmer.				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Lead Entity/ Partners</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Priority</b>
7.1	<p>Encourage the creation of walking groups or walking buddy programs through council on aging or other municipal departments, posting on community website and bulletin boards.</p>	COA, Parks & Recreation	# of Walking Groups	ST
7.2	<p>Establish regular, organized activities in parks, both age-specific and multigenerational, through municipal recreation programming or partnering with local organizations.</p>	COA, Parks & Recreation, Schools	Programming and participation	ST/MT

## Health and Community Services

<b>Goal 8:</b> Ensure that older residents of Palmer have access to health care and community services that support their ability to live long and healthy lives.				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Lead Entity/ Partners</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Priority</b>
8.1	<p>Research the feasibility of developing a local or regional Neighbors program (or Village model) which coordinates volunteers to provide services that allow people to age in place. Services may include grocery and pharmacy delivery, safety monitoring programs, daily check-ins, and transportation assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seek assistance from Social Clubs such as the Elks, Lions, etc.; schools.</li> <li>● Develop neighborhood circles where neighbor volunteer to help other neighbors with basic tasks such as shoveling snow.</li> </ul>	<b>COA</b> , community volunteers, regional partners, school	Research on the Village Model or similar programs.	MT
8.2	Increase awareness and aid accessing food benefit programs (SNAP, HIP, Senior CSA shares, etc.) to ensure that all who qualify are familiar with the programs and know where they can use them.	<b>COA</b> , D&R Farm, Palmer Food Share Inc.	# people signed up for SNAP % of SNAP recipients who use HIP	ST
8.3	Collaborate with QVCDC to explore the need and funding available to expand services for older adults living in Palmer.	<b>COA</b> , QVCDC	Senior Care program extended to Palmer	MT
8.4	Collaborate with 413-Cares to train local health care and social service providers on how to use the platform and inform clients about this resource.	<b>COA</b> , 413-Cares (Public Health Institute of Western MA)	# of service providers on 413Cares.com	ST

8.5	Work with health care providers at Baystate Wing Hospital to establish a system of care coordination for older patients and people with dementia.	<b>Baystate Wing, COA</b>	Care Coordination System in place	ST
8.6	Identify resources to provide respite care for family caregivers.	<b>COA, GSSS</b>		ST
8.7	Explore possible paths from education to employment for home health care providers and gaining experience in this field by providing services to local residents.	<b>COA, QVCDC, Pathfinder School</b>	Program for health careers; service program	MT
8.8	Support Medicaid reimbursement of higher wages for home care and home health care workers to build a more consistent and sustainable work force.	<b>COA</b>	Increased wages for home health care workers	ST

## Public Safety

**Goal 9:** Ensure the safety of all residents, including older adults and people with dementia, through multi-sectoral partnerships and programming.

<b>Actions</b>		<b>Lead Entity/ Partners</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Priority</b>
9.1	Post information on the TRIAD or SALT programs on both the Senior Center and Police Department websites to educate residents about the File of Life and registry for people at risk of wandering. Encourage residents to keep their File of Life documents updated regularly.	<b>COA, Hampden County Sherriff's Dept., Police, Fire Departments</b>	Information on File of Life posted # of documents/ filled out	ST
9.2	Provide regular trainings for all emergency personnel on recognizing the signs of dementia and how to communicate with people with dementia.	<b>COA, Alzheimer's Association, Dementia Friends</b>	# of trainings # of people trained	ST



9.3	Work with emergency personnel to develop a database of where people with dementia or other health concerns live; keep files up to date and educate community about how to add themselves or family members to this list.	COA; Police and Fire Departments	Persons at Risk file	ST
9.4	Educate older adults about what to do in the case of emergency and about the Town's Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP).	Police and Fire Departments, COA	Educational programs	ST/MT
9.5	Collaborate with Police and Fire departments to hold safety talks at the Senior Center and broadcast recordings on MPACT TV and online.	Police and Fire Departments, COA	Educational Programs	ST/MT
9.6	Collaborate with the District Attorney's office to have trainings on internet and phone scams.	COA, DA's Office	Trainings with DA's office	ST

## Communication, Information and Technology

Goal 10: Ensure that all residents have access to information about policies and programs that provide opportunities for health and community engagement.				
Actions		Lead Entity/ Partners	Metrics	Priority
10.1	Assist older adults in acquiring equipment and training on how to use it and provide assistance with accessing low cost or free broadband service.	COA, Library, Schools	# of people trained, laptops or tablets for loan	ST

10.2	Provide accommodations for vision and hearing impaired on Town website and in spaces used for public meetings (closed captioning, interpreter).	Town Manager, Town boards	Equipment for vision and hearing impaired; policy about using closed captioning, etc.	MT
10.3	Create a basic, but effective Municipal Communication Plan. Inventory what municipal info is being shared by each department, including both non-emergency and emergency channels.	Municipal Departments	Communications Plan	ST
10.4	Update the Town website regularly and poll users about the ease of navigation. Design for the broadest range of consumers, including those with visual or physical impairments, multiple languages, etc.	Town Manager & Town departments	Updated Town Website	ST
<b>Goal 11: Facilitate a culture of support and acceptance for residents of all ages and abilities.</b>				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Lead Entity/ Partners</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Priority</b>
11.2	Ensure that printed information – including official forms or invoices and text on visual displays in public spaces - has large lettering with main ideas in bold type; simple and straightforward sentences and simple language; and is available in multiple languages as needed.	Municipal Departments	Policy or memo about lettering; implementation of policy	ST
11.3	Ensure that telephone answering services give instructions slowly and clearly and tell callers how to repeat the message at any time. Offer options for people with hearing impairments.	Municipal Departments	Town Policy	ST
11.4	Ensure that reading glasses or magnifying glasses are available at	Town Clerk/Elections	Glasses at election	ST

	election locations for people with visual impairments.	Officials	locations	
11.5	Research the cost and feasibility of offering information and other communications in other languages as needed (review updated Census data). Engage community members who speak languages other than English to determine whether interpreter and translation services are needed for municipal documents and public meetings.	Municipal departments; Schools	Translation of materials and website	LT/as needed

## Social Participation and Inclusion

<b>Goal 12:</b> Ensure that older adults and people with dementia have opportunities for social interaction through access to technology, programming and planning of events.				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Lead Entity/ Partners</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Priority</b>
12.1	Collaborate with MPACT TV and other senior centers to offer online and hybrid social and fitness programming that can be accessed online or re-broadcast on cable access TV.	COA, MPACT TV	# of programs offered online	Ongoing/ST
12.2	Consider starting up a Memory Café or other activities for people with dementia and their caregivers (adult day programs, creative arts/music, intergenerational connections, outings/group activities). Meaningfully engage people with dementia in developing programs and services.	COA, Library, Alzheimer’s Association, Schools	# Memory Cafes Grant or other funding to hold programs	ST
12.3	Provide information about accessibility of facilities and transportation options for community meetings and events.	COA, Municipal departments	Information about accessibility	ST

12.4	Continue to identify and reach out to socially isolated residents via personal contact from trusted municipal staff; develop "Buddy system" with volunteers who can reach out to socially isolated residents.	COA	Buddy system in place	MT
12.5	Collaborate with existing community-based networks such as faith communities, civic groups, education channels, business groups, to share information and develop programming.	COA, MPact TV, Faith Community, Civic groups, etc.	Shared programming	MT

## Employment and Civic Engagement

Goal 13: Provide opportunities and assistance for older adults who want to work and volunteer in the community.				
Actions		Lead Entity/ Partners	Metrics	Priority
13.1	Provide flexible options for people with dementia to volunteer and provide training, recognition, guidance and compensation for personal costs.	COA, RSVP, Alzheimer's Association	# volunteer opportunities	MT/LT
13.2	Develop intergenerational skill building/mentoring opportunities with older adults community groups and local schools, i.e. youths teach elders about technology or other current studies, while elders teach youths about careers, life skills etc.	COA/Schools	Intergenerational programming	Ongoing/ST
13.3	Increase public engagement with elected/appointed officials by increasing publicity/outreach for public meetings/calls for comment in a number of formats and venues.	Municipal boards and departments	# of places calls for comment are posted, # of formats	ST
13.4	Expand opportunities for qualified older adults to work in exchange for property tax reduction.	COA, municipal departments, RSVP	# people in property tax reduction program	ST

13.5	Educate business leaders and staff about how to recognize and work with people with dementia.	COA, Alzheimer's Association, businesses	Educational programs in place	MT
13.6	Consider implementing an Age and Dementia Friendly certification program using the Age Strong Boston checklist as a model.	COA, businesses	# of businesses certified	MT

## Appendix A – Age & Dementia Friendly Palmer Survey & Responses

## Age-Friendly Pioneer Valley

### Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Community Survey – Spring 2022

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We want to hear from older adults and care providers in Palmer! Please fill out this survey and return it to the Palmer Senior Center, Palmer, MA. Surveys may also be filled in online at [www.tinyurl.com/AFPalmer](http://www.tinyurl.com/AFPalmer). Submit completed surveys by **April 30, 2022** to be eligible for a drawing for one of three \$25 gift cards to a local establishment. **Completed surveys may be mailed to the Palmer Senior Center at 1029 Central Street, Palmer, MA 01069.** Bring the survey to the Senior Center in person and receive a Thank-You gift.

#### YOUR COMMUNITY – PALMER, MASSACHUSETTS

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1. What is your age?

- <40    40-49    50-59    60-69    70-79    80-89    90+

Which of the following areas are most important for Palmer to focus on in the next five years to make the town a more livable community for older adults? (Check all that apply)

2. **Housing and Aging in Place**

- Assistance with basic tasks such as shoveling snow, changing light bulbs, yard work, etc.  
 Grants for home modifications including grab bars, walk-in showers, wheelchair ramps  
 Development of smaller housing units for middle incomes to enable me to downsize  
 Development of more accessible subsidized housing units  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Transportation**

- Orientation on transportation options including PVRTA buses, Quaboag Connector, ride services  
 Free bus service for seniors.  
 Van or ride service in evenings and on weekends  
 Maintenance of sidewalks.  
 Shoulders or safer places to walk on rural roads  
 Safer pedestrian crossings (at: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Buildings and Outdoor Spaces**

- More accessible trails  
 Signs or maps identifying trail accessibility and level of difficulty.  
 Benches in parks and along walking routes at: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Public restrooms  
 New or larger senior center  
 Additional parking and improvements for the existing Senior Center  
 Accessible public buildings, specifically: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Employment, Social and Civic Engagement**

- Assistance finding or keeping a job  
 Assistance finding volunteer opportunities  
 Activities for people with dementia such as Memory Café's (social gatherings for people with dementia and their care partners)

**6. Health and Caregiver Services**

- Finding a primary care physician
- Getting home care services.
- Scheduling an appointment for non-emergency medical needs.
- Finding a mental health service provider.
- Getting assistance with substance use for myself or a loved one.
- Support for people with early stages of memory loss or dementia.
- Support for family or friends who care for people with dementia.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Are there places that you want or need to go but can't get to on PVTA buses or the Quaboag Connector?

- Yes       No       NA – I don't use transportation services

8. If yes, where would you like to be able to go with bus or van service? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Who do you currently live with? (check all that apply)

- I live alone
- A spouse/partner
- My adult child(ren) (age 18+)
- My child(ren) (under 18)
- My grandchildren
- My parents
- A relative (other than above)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Are you a caregiver for any of the following? (check all that apply)

- Grandchild
- Child
- Spouse
- Parent
- Grandparent
- NA
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>11. Do you or someone you care for have any of the following resulting in the need for caregiver services? (check all that apply)</b>	<b>I have these conditions</b>	<b>The person I care for has these conditions</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>
Sensory impairment (e.g., vision, hearing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobility impairment (e.g., difficulty walking, climbing stairs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chronic disease (e.g., cancer, diabetes, asthma)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Memory loss or forgetfulness (age related or undiagnosed)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alzheimer's or dementia diagnosis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psychological condition (e.g., anxiety, depression)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intellectual or developmental disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



12. If you provide caregiver services to a friend or family member, do you (check all that apply):

- Share caregiving responsibilities with others
- Experience problems at work as a result of caregiving
- Experience any financial problems due to caregiving
- Need information and/or training in how to provide caregiver services
- Need assistance so that you can get some time off
- Have access to all the information on caregiving that you need
- Have access to a support group
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

13. In the columns to the right, please check all that apply regarding the services listed below.	I have received these services from a friend or relative	I have received these services from a professional caregiver	I provide these services	I need help finding these services
Home care/help with personal care needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with bills or finances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social and emotional support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nursing or medical services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yard work or snow shoveling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## COMMUNICATION, CIVIC & SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

14. Do you need assistance in accessing any of the following in order to use technology to access basic information or to attend programs online? (check all that apply)

- I **do not need** assistance or equipment
- I need Equipment (iPad or laptop)
- I need Training on how to use a computer or tablet
- I need Access to affordable internet service
- I need Access to high-speed internet
- I need Training on how to use Zoom, WebEx or Google Chats
- I am not interested in using technology

15. Which of the following programs or services did you access at the Palmer Senior Center in the last 12 months? (check all that apply)

- NA – I did not use any services provided by the Senior Center
- SNAP Benefits Counseling
- SHINE Counseling (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone)
- Housing Application Assistance
- Fuel Assistance Application Counseling
- Lunch or Breakfast programs
- Exercise Programs (Tai Chi, Line Dancing, Yoga) and/or fitness room
- Social Activities and classes (Card groups, Arts & Crafts, Book Club, etc.)

16. If you have never used the programs or services offered by the Palmer Senior Center, what is the main reason? (check all that apply)

- I am not interested or do not need these services
- I do not have time
- Hours of the programs and services are inconvenient
- I don't have transportation to get there
- I participate in programs elsewhere
- I am not old enough
- I don't know what programs/services are available
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

17. Please list any other programs or services that you would like to see at the Senior Center that are not currently offered? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Please provide any other comments on how Palmer can be a more supportive and welcoming community for people of all ages and abilities.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank-you for completing this survey!**

Please provide your name and **mailing address** if you would like to be entered into a drawing for one of three \$25 Gift Cards:

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide an email address or phone # if **you would be interested in participating in discussions** on topics around making Palmer an Age and Dementia Friendly Community and let us know if you are able to participate by Zoom or other online platform or if you would only participate in person.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

- I can participate on Zoom
- I will only participate in an in-person forum

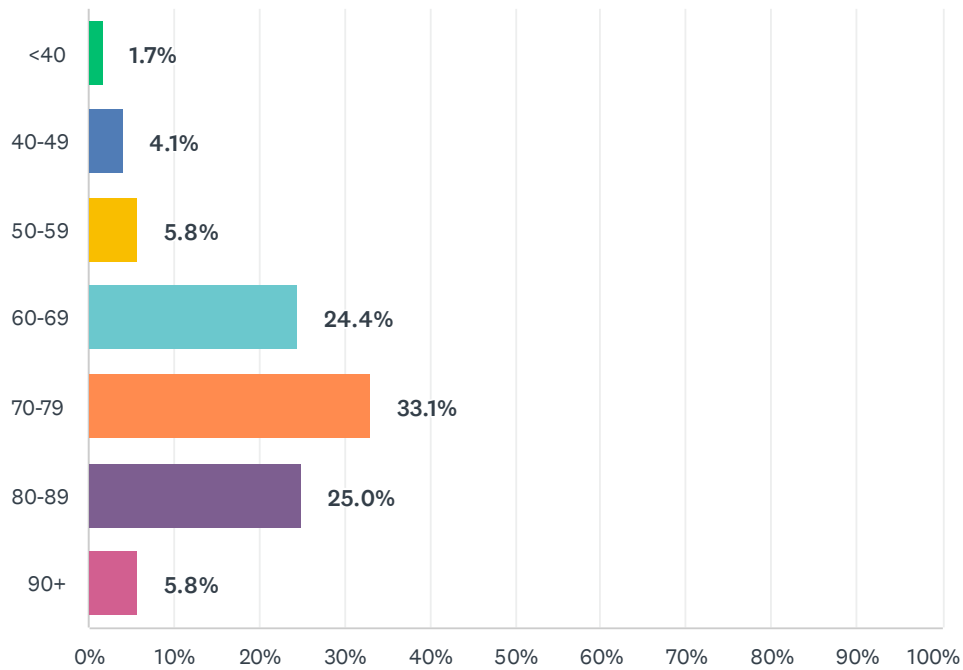
Would you like someone to contact you to follow up on some of the services or programs you would like to access based on this survey?  Yes  No

If yes, please provide contact information above or call the Palmer Senior Center at (413) 283-2670.

Please return completed surveys to: **to the Palmer Senior Center at 1029 Central Street, Palmer, MA 01069.**

## Q1 What is your age?

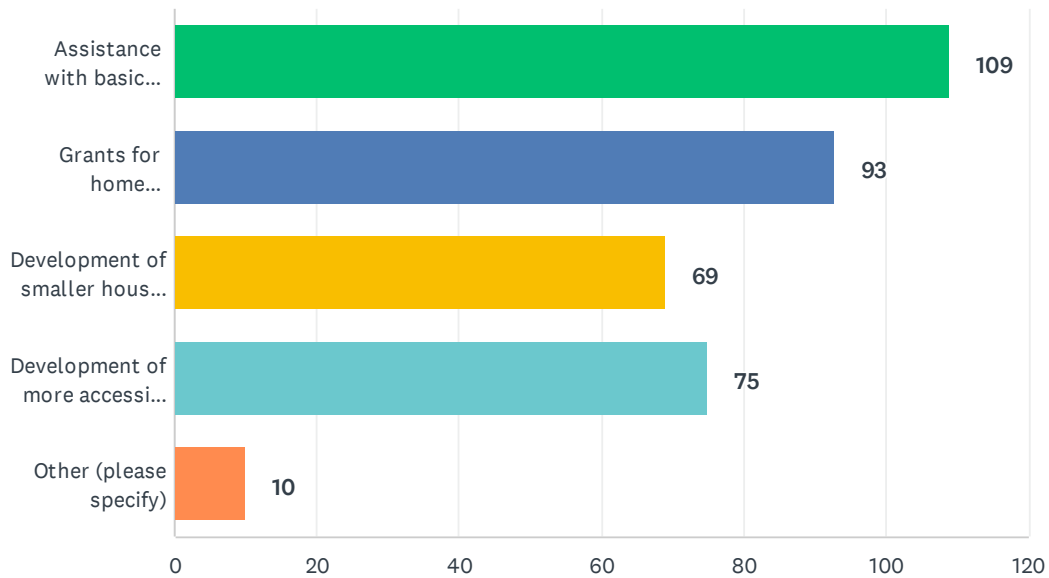
Answered: 172 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
<40	1.7%	3
40-49	4.1%	7
50-59	5.8%	10
60-69	24.4%	42
70-79	33.1%	57
80-89	25.0%	43
90+	5.8%	10
TOTAL		172

## Q2 Housing and Aging in Place

Answered: 164 Skipped: 11



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Assistance with basic tasks such as shoveling snow, changing light bulbs, yard work, etc.	66.46%	109
Grants for home modifications including grab bars, walk-in showers, wheelchair ramps	56.71%	93
Development of smaller housing units for middle incomes to enable me to downsize	42.07%	69
Development of more accessible subsidized housing units	45.73%	75
Other (please specify)	6.10%	10
Total Respondents: 164		

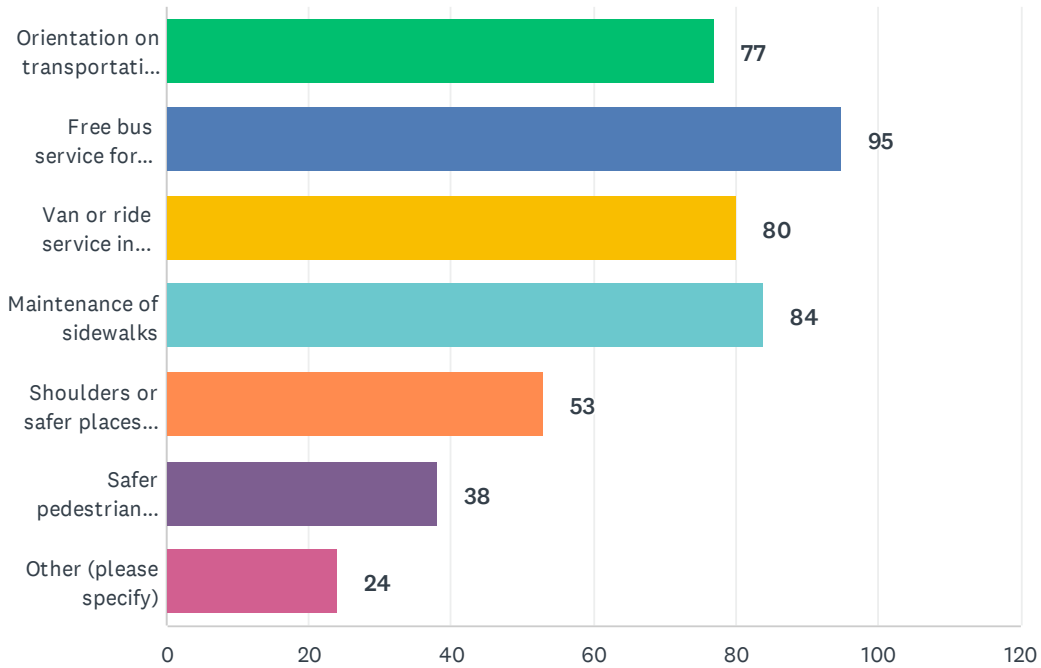
Q2

**Housing and Aging in Place**

<b>Answer Choices</b>		<b>Responses</b>	
Assistance with basic tasks such as shoveling snow, changing light bulbs, yard work, etc.		109	66.46%
Grants for home modifications including grab bars, walk-in showers, wheelchair ramps		93	56.71%
Development of smaller housing units for middle incomes to enable me to downsize		69	42.07%
Development of more accessible subsidized housing units		75	45.73%
Other (please specify)	Need help with transportation (public and private)	3	6.10%
	Help with housework	2	
	Need a bigger Senior Center	1	
	No issues (Palmer Green Estates)	1	
	2 Bridge needs work	1	
	Consider letting companies/businesses come to Palmer	1	
	Need more public benches	1	
	Develop smaller housing units that are purchaseable (not rentals)	1	

### Q3 Transportation

Answered: 163 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Orientation on transportation options including PVTA buses, Quaboag Connector, ride services	47.2%	77
Free bus service for seniors	58.3%	95
Van or ride service in evenings and on weekends	49.1%	80
Maintenance of sidewalks	51.5%	84
Shoulders or safer places to walk on rural roads	32.5%	53
Safer pedestrian crossings (please specify where below)	23.3%	38
Other (please specify)	14.7%	24
Total Respondents: 163		

Q3

**Transportation**

<b>Answer Choices</b>		<b>Responses</b>	
Orientation on transportation options including PVTA buses, Quaboag Connector, ride services		77	47.24%
Free bus service for seniors		95	58.28%
Van or ride service in evenings and on weekends		80	49.08%
Maintenance of sidewalks		84	51.53%
Shoulders or safer places to walk on rural roads		53	32.52%
Safer pedestrian crossings (please specify where below)		38	23.31%
Other (please specify)	Thorndike & Foster (ramp)	1	14.72%
	Safer pedestrian crossing at the senior center	1	
	State/Town should shovel sidewalks	1	
	A+W Root Beer to Haleys Grange store	1	
	Need no passing on right at crosswalks for safety	1	
	Need bicycle lanes	1	
	Need more benches	1	
	Trustworthy Uber/Lyft/Private Drivers that serve only Palmer elders	1	
	Return to original PVTA schedule	1	
	Train service to Boston and Springfield	1	

Q3

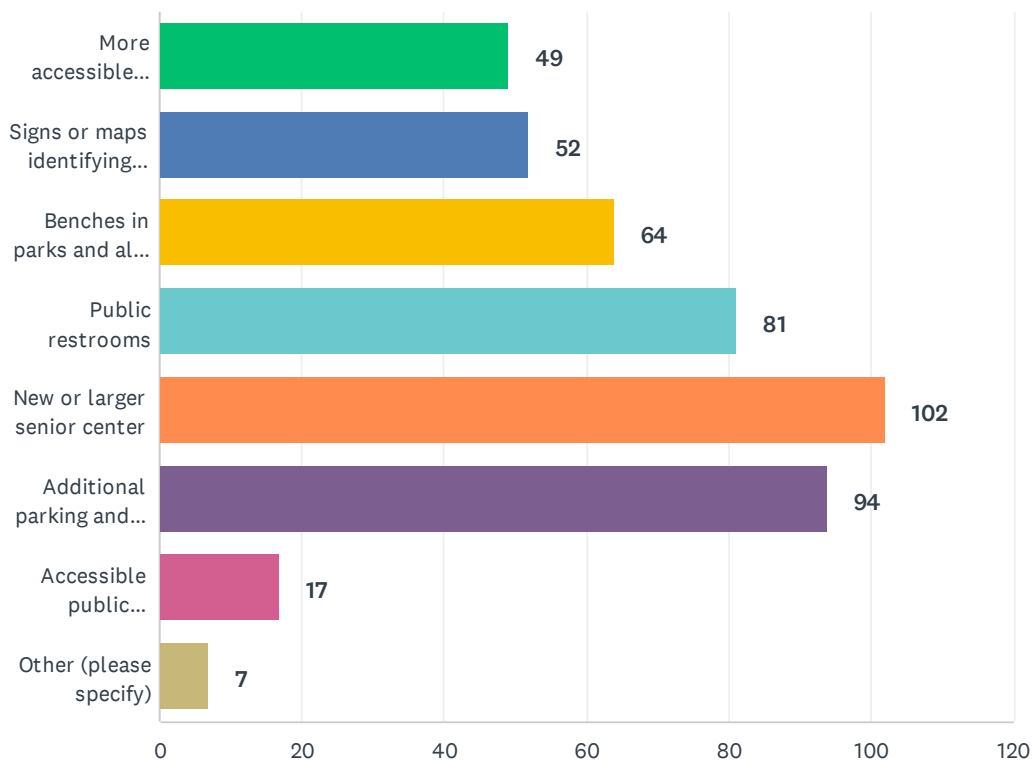
**Transportation**

<b>Safer pedestrian crossing at:</b>	
at Main St	4
at all 4 villages/corners	2
by Post Office (Bondsville)	2
at Thorndike in front of St Thomas Church	2
at Shearer and Fairview	2
by 2nd Baptist Church	1
3 Rivers	1
by Citgo gas (Three Rivers)	1
by Public Library	1
by Senior Center	1
at Walnut St	1
at Converse St	1
at Central St	1



## Q4 Buildings and Outdoor Spaces

Answered: 167 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
More accessible trails	29.3%	49
Signs or maps identifying trail accessibility and level of difficulty	31.1%	52
Benches in parks and along walking routes at (please specify where below)	38.3%	64
Public restrooms	48.5%	81
New or larger senior center	61.1%	102
Additional parking and improvements for the existing Senior Center	56.3%	94
Accessible public buildings (please specify where below)	10.2%	17
Other (please specify)	4.2%	7
Total Respondents: 167		

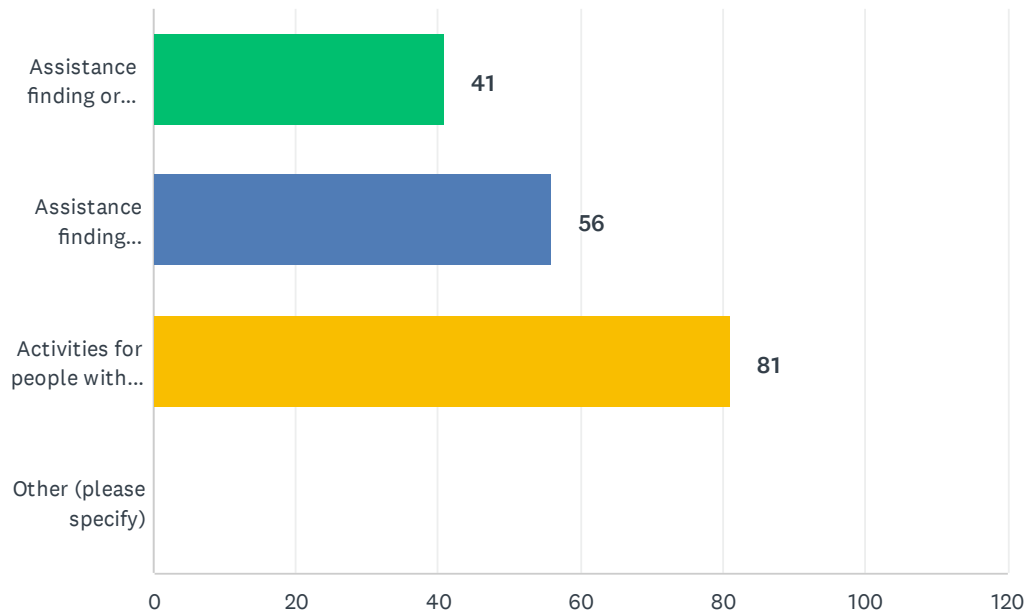
Q4

**Buildings and Outdoor Spaces**

<b>Answer Choices</b>		<b>Responses</b>	
More accessible trails		49	29.34%
Signs or maps identifying trail accessibility and level of difficulty		52	31.14%
Benches in parks and along walking routes at (please specify where)		64	38.32%
Public restrooms		81	48.50%
New or larger senior center		102	61.08%
Additional parking and improvements for the existing Senior Center		94	56.29%
Accessible public buildings (please specify where below)		17	10.18%
Other (please specify)	Accessible path from Laviolette Park to Riverside	1	4.19%
	More benches	3	
	Bicycle racks	1	
	Need benches on Main St (Three Rivers)	1	
	More benches along bus stops	1	

## Q5 Employment, Social and Civic Engagement

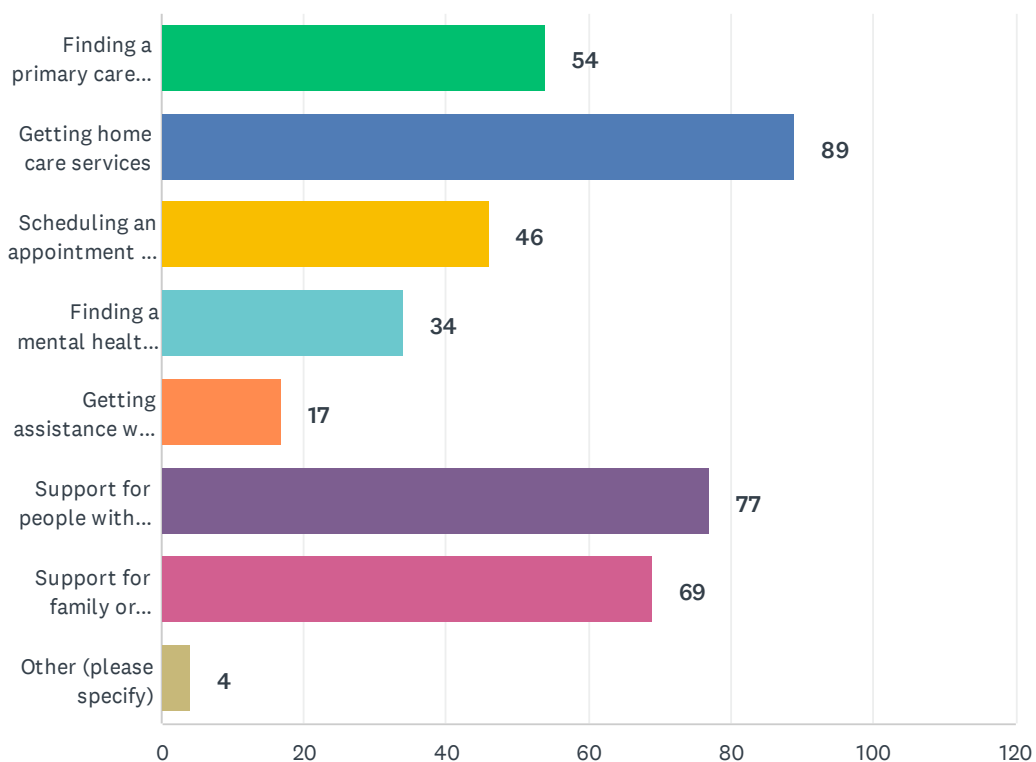
Answered: 115 Skipped: 60



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Assistance finding or keeping a job	35.7%	41
Assistance finding volunteer opportunities	48.7%	56
Activities for people with dementia such as Memory Café's (social gatherings for people with dementia and their care partners)	70.4%	81
Other (please specify)	0.0%	0
Total Respondents: 115		

## Q6 Health and Caregiver Services

Answered: 154 Skipped: 21



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Finding a primary care physician	35.1%	54
Getting home care services	57.8%	89
Scheduling an appointment for non-emergency medical needs	29.9%	46
Finding a mental health service provider	22.1%	34
Getting assistance with substance use for myself or a loved one	11.0%	17
Support for people with early stages of memory loss or dementia	50.0%	77
Support for family or friends who care for people with dementia	44.8%	69
Other (please specify)	2.6%	4
Total Respondents: 154		

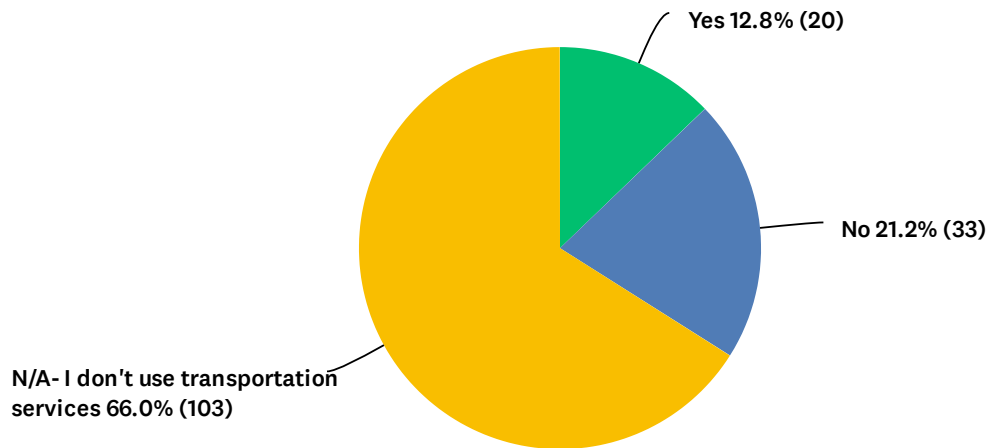
Q6

**Health and Caregiver Services**

<b>Answer Choices</b>		<b>Responses</b>	
	Finding a primary care physician	54	35.06%
	Getting home care services	89	57.79%
	Scheduling an appointment for non-emergency medical needs	46	29.87%
	Finding a mental health service provider	34	22.08%
	Getting assistance with substance use for myself or a loved one	17	11.04%
	Support for people with early stages of memory loss or dementia	77	50.00%
	Support for family or friends who care for people with dementia	69	44.81%
Other (please specify)	Support for caregivers	2	2.60%
	Concern about accessing these services in the future	1	

## Q7 Are there places that you want or need to go but can't get to on PVTA buses or the Quaboag Connector?

Answered: 156 Skipped: 19



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	12.8%	20
No	21.2%	33
N/A- I don't use transportation services	66.0%	103
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>156</b>

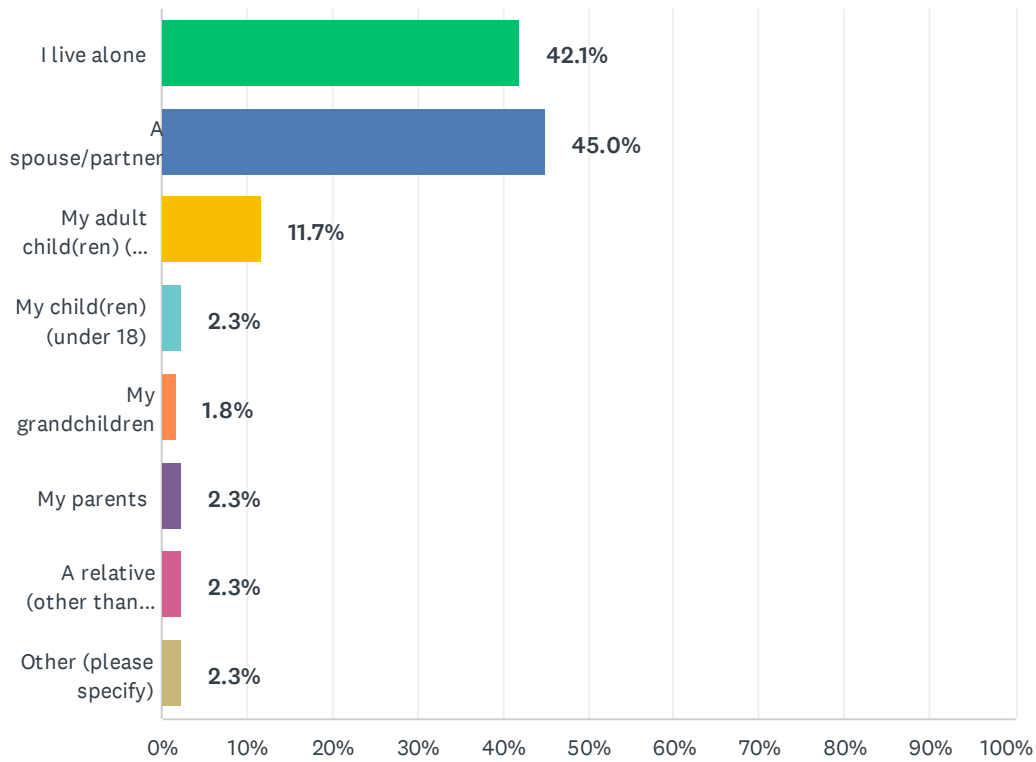
Q8

If yes, where would you like to be able to go with bus or van service?

Church	4
Medical Appointments	3
Airport	3
Shopping Malls	2
Bus Terminal	2
Medical Appointments in Springfield	1
Y in Wilbraham	1
Downtown Palmer	1
Randall's (Ludlow)	1
Chicopee (Memorial Drive)	1
MGM	1
Bowling	1
Movies	1
Palmer Food Share	1
Dollar Tree/Dollar General	1
Train Station	1
Senior Citizens' Park	1
Park	1
Relative/Friends House	1

## Q9 Who do you currently live with? (check all that apply)

Answered: 171 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live alone	42.1%	72
A spouse/partner	45.0%	77
My adult child(ren) (age 18+)	11.7%	20
My child(ren) (under 18)	2.3%	4
My grandchildren	1.8%	3
My parents	2.3%	4
A relative (other than above)	2.3%	4
Other (please specify)	2.3%	4
Total Respondents: 171		



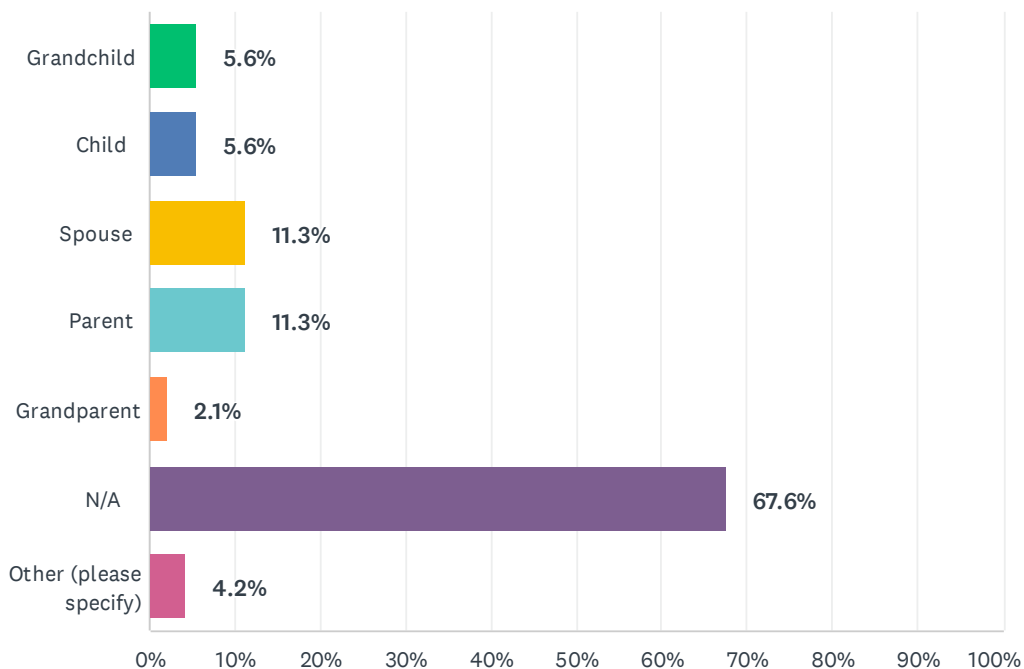
Q9

**Who do you currently live with? (check all that apply)**

<b>Answer Choices</b>		<b>Responses</b>	
	I live alone	72	42.11%
	A spouse/partner	77	45.03%
	My adult child(ren) (age 18+)	20	11.70%
	My child(ren) (under 18)	4	2.34%
	My grandchildren	3	1.75%
	My parents	4	2.34%
	A relative (other than above)	4	2.34%
Other (please specify)	With a friend	1	2.34%
	Rent out a room	1	

### Q10 Are you a caregiver for any of the following? (check all that apply)

Answered: 142 Skipped: 33



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Grandchild	5.6%	8
Child	5.6%	8
Spouse	11.3%	16
Parent	11.3%	16
Grandparent	2.1%	3
N/A	67.6%	96
Other (please specify)	4.2%	6
Total Respondents: 142		

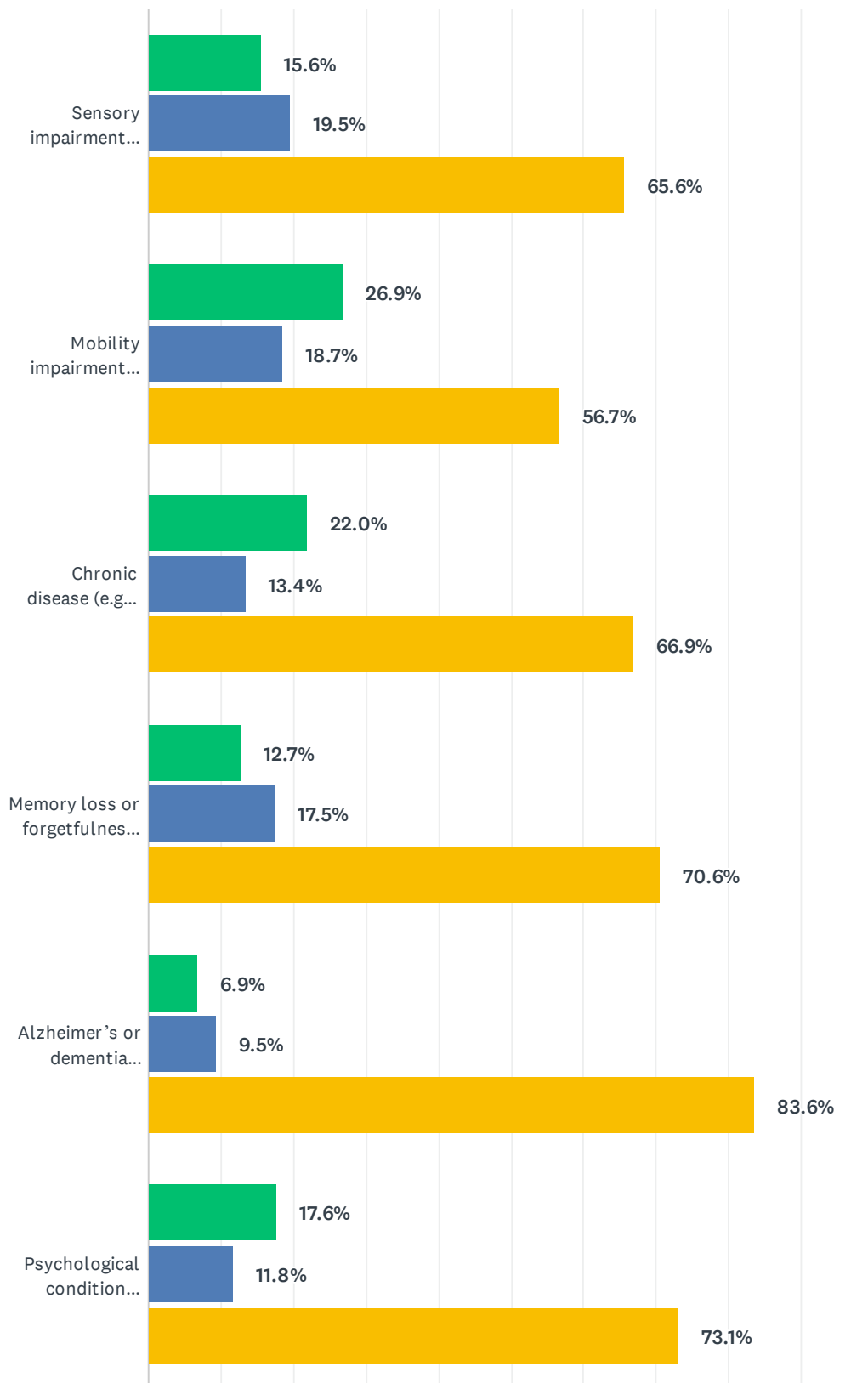
Q10

**Are you a caregiver for any of the following? (check all that apply)**

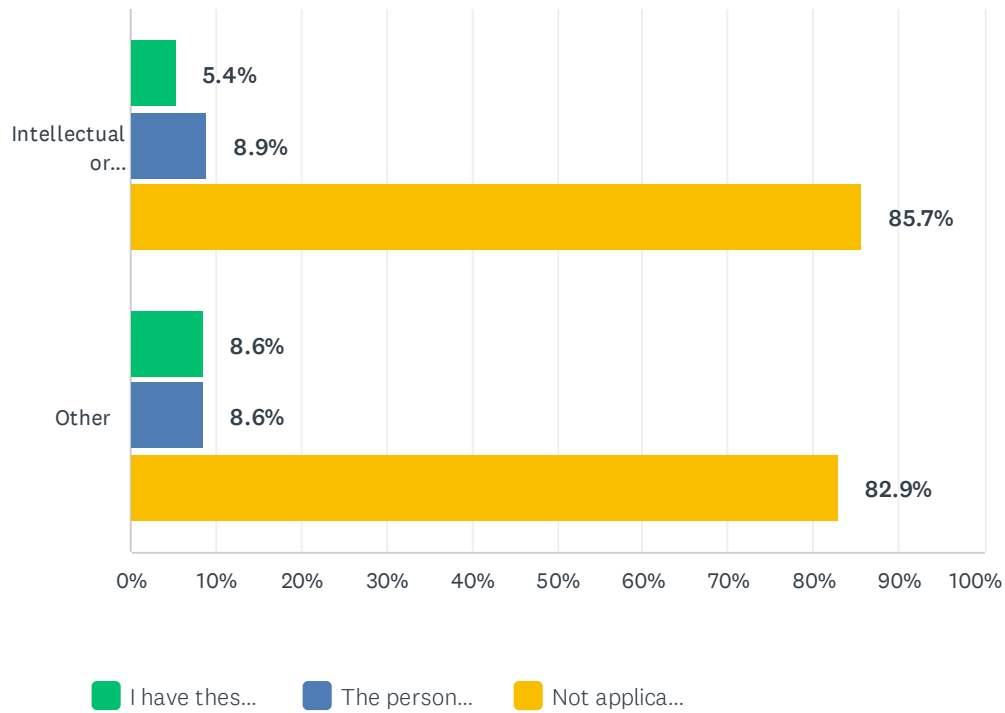
Answer Choices		Responses	
	Grandchild	8	5.63%
	Child	8	5.63%
	Spouse	16	11.27%
	Parent	16	11.27%
	Grandparent	3	2.11%
	N/A	96	67.61%
Other (please specify)	Friend	2	4.23%
	Sibling	2	

### Q11 Do you or someone you care for have any of the following resulting in the need for caregiver services? (check all that apply)

Answered: 153 Skipped: 22



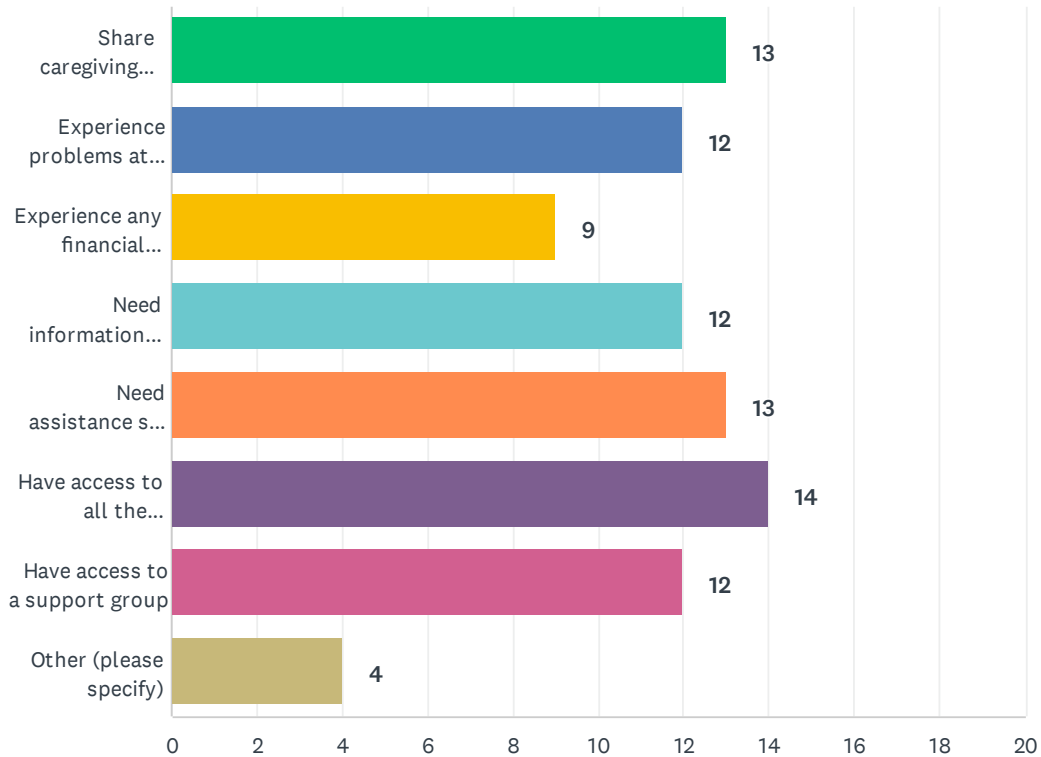
## Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Community Survey- Winter 2022



	I HAVE THESE CONDITIONS	THE PERSON I CARE FOR HAS THESE CONDITIONS	NOT APPLICABLE	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Sensory impairment (e.g., vision, hearing)	15.6% 20	19.5% 25	65.6% 84	128
Mobility impairment (e.g., difficulty walking, climbing stairs)	26.9% 36	18.7% 25	56.7% 76	134
Chronic disease (e.g., cancer, diabetes, asthma)	22.0% 28	13.4% 17	66.9% 85	127
Memory loss or forgetfulness (age related or undiagnosed)	12.7% 16	17.5% 22	70.6% 89	126
Alzheimer's or dementia diagnosis	6.9% 8	9.5% 11	83.6% 97	116
Psychological condition (e.g., anxiety, depression)	17.6% 21	11.8% 14	73.1% 87	119
Intellectual or developmental disability	5.4% 6	8.9% 10	85.7% 96	112
Other	8.6% 6	8.6% 6	82.9% 58	70

## Q12 If you provide caregiver services to a friend or family member, do you (check all that apply):

Answered: 48 Skipped: 127



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Share caregiving responsibilities with others	27.08%	13
Experience problems at work as a result of caregiving	25.00%	12
Experience any financial problems due to caregiving	18.75%	9
Need information and/or training in how to provide caregiver services	25.00%	12
Need assistance so that you can get some time off	27.08%	13
Have access to all the information on caregiving that you need	29.17%	14
Have access to a support group	25.00%	12
Other (please specify)	8.33%	4
Total Respondents: 48		

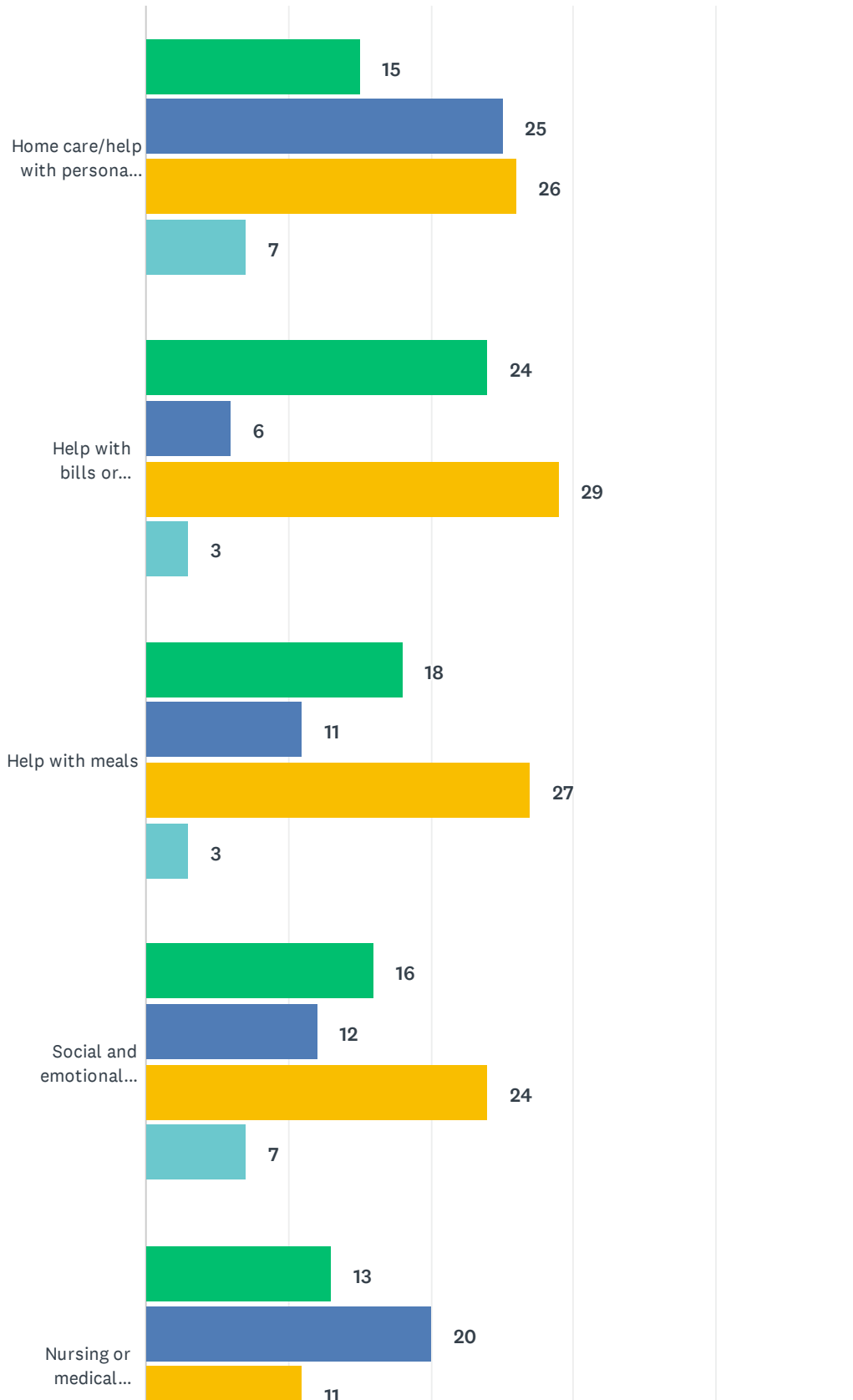
Q12

If you provide caregiver services to a friend or family member, do you (check all that apply):

Answer Choices		Responses	
	Share caregiving responsibilities with others	13	27.08%
	Experience problems at work as a result of caregiving	12	25.00%
	Experience any financial problems due to caregiving	9	18.75%
	Need information and/or training in how to provide caregiver services	12	25.00%
	Need assistance so that you can get some time off	13	27.08%
	Have access to all the information on caregiving that you need	14	29.17%
	Have access to a support group	12	25.00%
Other (please specify)	Need access to a support group	1	8.33%
	Need access to physical equipment	1	
	Concerns about accessing caregiver services in the future	1	

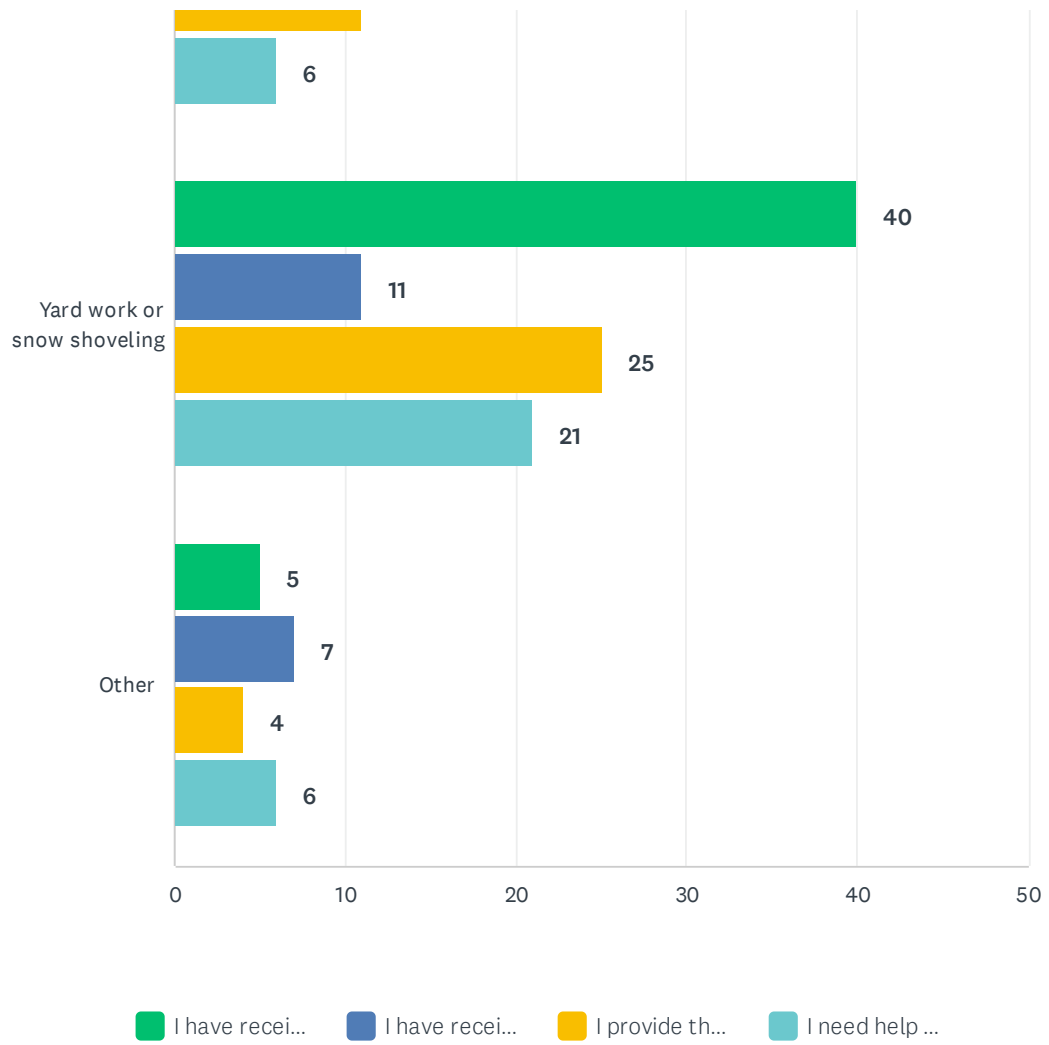
### Q13 Please check all that apply regarding the services listed below.

Answered: 113 Skipped: 62





# Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Community Survey- Winter 2022

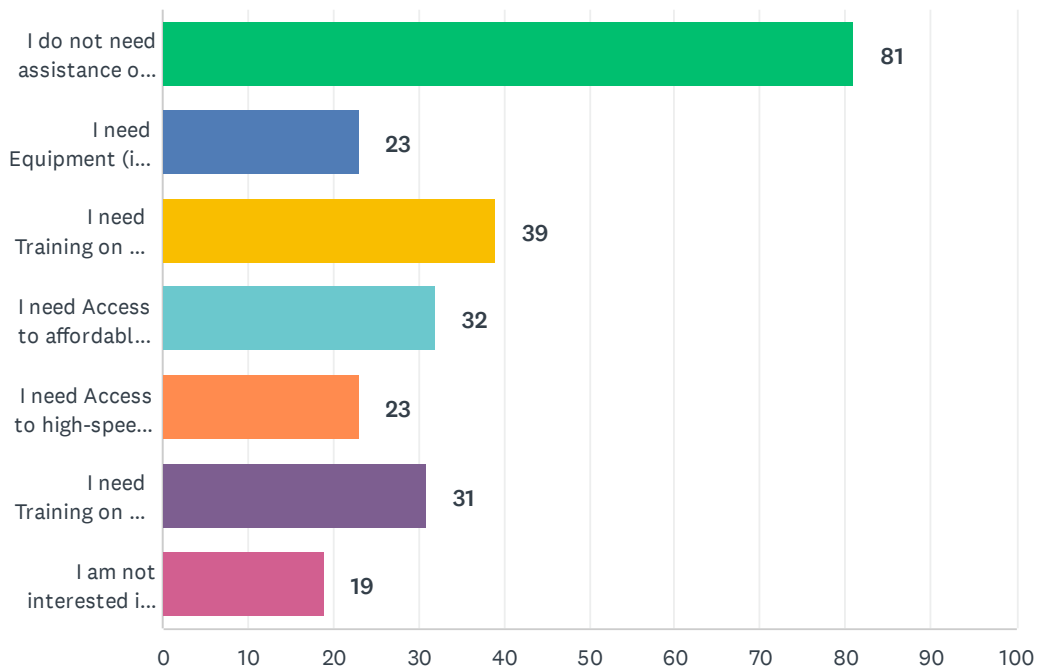


Age and Dementia Friendly Palmer Community Survey- Winter 2022

	I HAVE RECEIVED THESE SERVICES FROM A FRIEND OR RELATIVE	I HAVE RECEIVED THESE SERVICES FROM A PROFESSIONAL CAREGIVER	I PROVIDE THESE SERVICES	I NEED HELP FINDING THESE SERVICES	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Home care/help with personal care needs	22.73% 15	37.88% 25	39.39% 26	10.61% 7	66
Help with bills or finances	39.34% 24	9.84% 6	47.54% 29	4.92% 3	61
Help with meals	31.58% 18	19.30% 11	47.37% 27	5.26% 3	57
Social and emotional support	28.57% 16	21.43% 12	42.86% 24	12.50% 7	56
Nursing or medical services	26.53% 13	40.82% 20	22.45% 11	12.24% 6	49
Yard work or snow shoveling	44.44% 40	12.22% 11	27.78% 25	23.33% 21	90
Other	22.73% 5	31.82% 7	18.18% 4	27.27% 6	22

### Q14 Do you need assistance in accessing any of the following in order to use technology to access basic information or to attend programs online? (check all that apply)

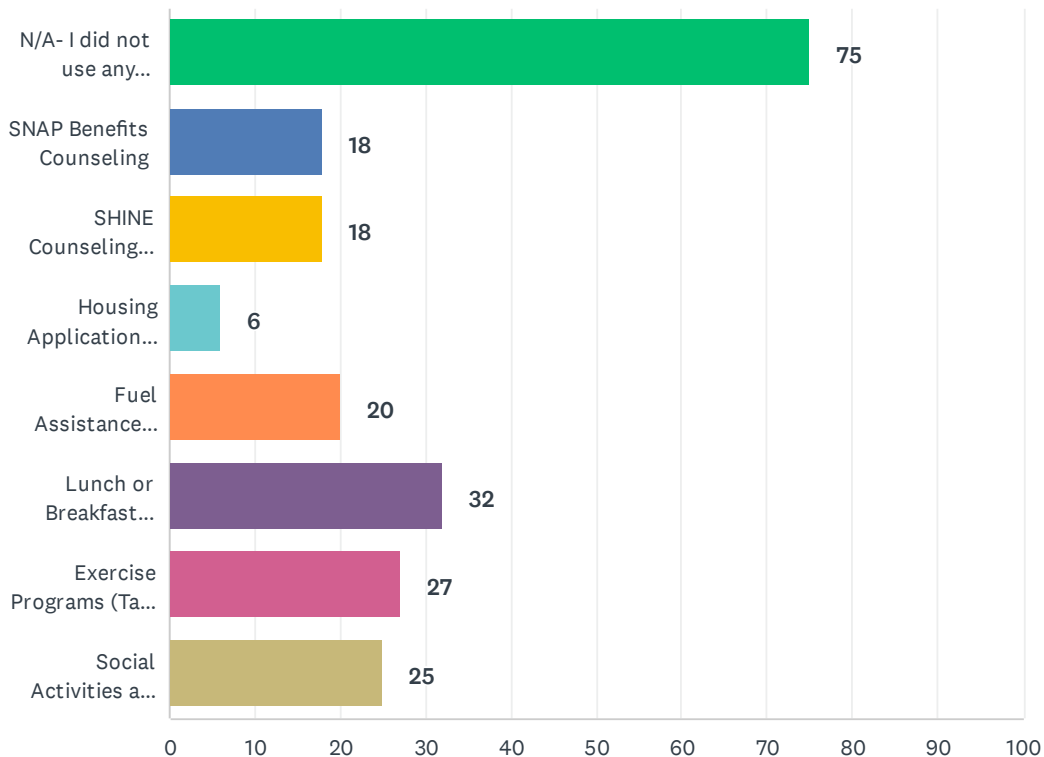
Answered: 152 Skipped: 23



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I do not need assistance or equipment	53.29%	81
I need Equipment (iPad or laptop)	15.13%	23
I need Training on how to use a computer or tablet	25.66%	39
I need Access to affordable internet service	21.05%	32
I need Access to high-speed internet	15.13%	23
I need Training on how to use Zoom, WebEx or Google Chats	20.39%	31
I am not interested in using technology	12.50%	19
Total Respondents: 152		

### Q15 Which of the following programs or services did you access at the Palmer Senior Center in the last 12 months? (check all that apply)

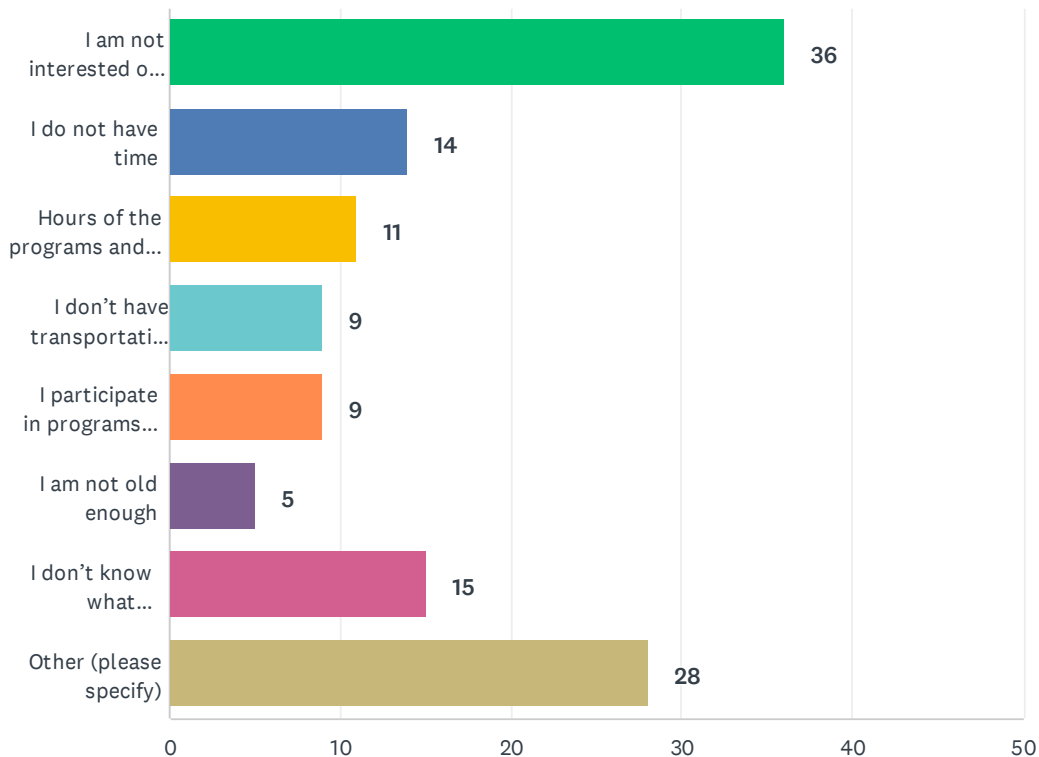
Answered: 152 Skipped: 23



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
N/A- I did not use any services provided by the Senior Center	49.34%	75
SNAP Benefits Counseling	11.84%	18
SHINE Counseling (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone)	11.84%	18
Housing Application Assistance	3.95%	6
Fuel Assistance Application Counseling	13.16%	20
Lunch or Breakfast programs	21.05%	32
Exercise Programs (Tai Chi, Line Dancing, Yoga) and/or fitness room	17.76%	27
Social Activities and classes (Card groups, Arts & Crafts, Book Club, etc.)	16.45%	25
Total Respondents: 152		

### Q16 If you have never used the programs or services offered by the Palmer Senior Center, what is the main reason? (check all that apply)

Answered: 103 Skipped: 72



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am not interested or do not need these services	34.95%	36
I do not have time	13.59%	14
Hours of the programs and services are inconvenient	10.68%	11
I don't have transportation to get there	8.74%	9
I participate in programs elsewhere	8.74%	9
I am not old enough	4.85%	5
I don't know what programs/services are available	14.56%	15
Other (please specify)	27.18%	28
Total Respondents: 103		

Q16

If you have never used the programs or services offered by the Palmer Senior Center, what is the main reason? (check all that apply)

Answer Choices		Responses	
	I am not interested or do not need these services	36	34.95%
	I do not have time	14	13.59%
	Hours of the programs and services are inconvenient	11	10.68%
	I don't have transportation to get there	9	8.74%
	I participate in programs elsewhere	9	8.74%
	I am not old enough	5	4.85%
	I don't know what programs/services are available	15	14.56%
Other (please specify)	Go when I need help or something interests me	7	27.18%
	Will use senior center in the future	6	
	Parking is difficult	2	
	Too old	2	
	Currently a caregiver to someone else	2	
	Need more information on programs/services available	2	
	Cannot attend due to medical conditions	2	
	Programs/services are too early	1	
	Time is consumed taking care of oneself (meals, laundry, etc.)	1	
	Poor eyesight	1	
	Not interested in group activities	1	
	Stopped lending library	1	

Q17

**Please list any other programs or services that you would like to see at the Senior Center that are not currently offered?**

Once/twice a month have an activity at the Senior Center (social parties, entertainr	3
Help with technology (smart phones, getting online, etc.)	3
No suggestions; happy with the Senior Center	2
Need more information of available programs/services	2
Additional drivers/vans	1
Garden Club	1
More programs for women to gather (knitting, crocheting, etc.)	1
Monthly cookout/picnic at the park	1
Keep BINGO as a weekly program	1
Resume tax prep service	1
Offer medical assessment for eligibility for personal/home care services	1
Singing	1
Teaching, guest lectures	1
Men's social group	1
Lending library	1
Swimming program (at high school or YMCA)	1
Walking group	1
Bicycling group	1
Expand Brown Bag eligibility	1
Day trips out of Palmer	1
Daily calls to homebound individuals	1
Tag sale; mini auction	1
More recreational activities (sports, fitness programs)	1
Mental health care services	1
Chess group	1

*Answered* 34

*Skipped* 141

Q18

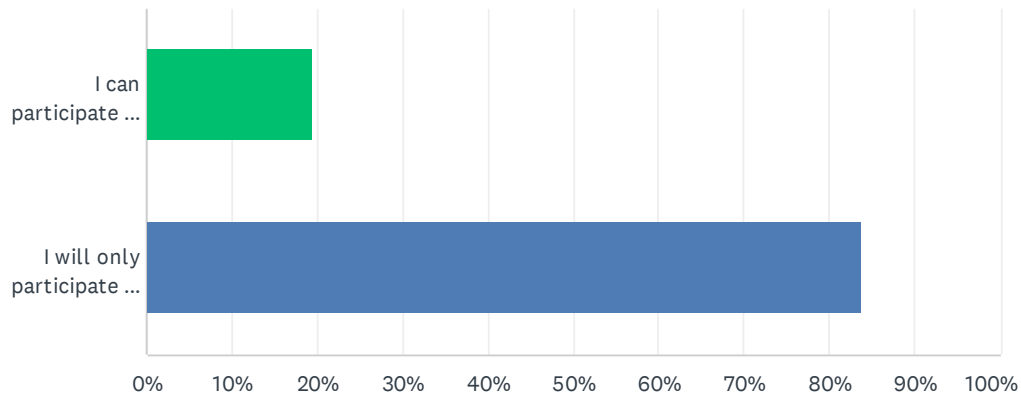
**Please provide any other comments on how Palmer can be a more supportive and welcoming community for people of all ages and abilities.**

Need better/more parking (in Town and at Senior Center)	5
Need a new Senior Center facility	4
Happy with the Senior Center and Palmer	4
Improve communication in town, maintain open communication	3
Cindy is always available!	2
Monthly lucheon, get-togethers with town leaders present	2
Lower taxes	2
More entertainment (public music concerts, etc.)	2
Have businesses keep senior discounts easy to access (limit technology)	1
Grateful for benefits provided through Palmer COA	1
Palmer needs more coffee shops	1
Palmer needs less liquor stores	1
Palmer needs affordable apartments	1
Have pamphlets about senior services available at local businesses	1
Re-elect people	1
Thank you for providing COVID-19 test kits	1
2&2 day flea markets June? and October? Sites senior-free vendors \$10 food truck \$20, rest room? or 2 sani cans? Flee market gets \$30-40 site?	1
Monthly distribution of senior activities inserted into Palmer Journal	1
Address loud noise from tractor trailers, autos, etc.	1
Consider putting an Aldi's store at Kmart Plaza (Palmer), Tenezar's Superette (Three Rivers)	1
Support small businesses	1
Need to better advertise senior activities	1
Lower gas prices and groceries	1
Repair bridges (ex: bridge to P.O)	1
Food share items	1
Would like town to shovel snow for public sidewalks	1
Allow for use of swimming pool at the high school	1
Provide free door-to-door service	1
Create a committee for solving problems about aging in Palmer	1
More public transportation	1
Develop more entertainment (gyms, bars) and better facilities (schools, medical) to draw people to live in Palmer	1
Provide more practical help	1
Palmer needs more sidewalks	1
Palmer needs more public trash cans- littering is an issue	1



## Q21 Preference for participating in further discussions

Answered: 31 Skipped: 144



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I can participate on Zoom	19.35%	6
I will only participate in an in-person forum	83.87%	26
Total Respondents: 31		

# Appendix B – Palmer Master Plan Recommendations Supporting Healthy Aging

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## Appendix B – Recommendations from the Palmer Master Plan (2021) affecting older adults

Communication, Information and Technology					
#	Goal/Actions	Lead Entities	Costs	Timeframe	Priority (High, Medium, Low)
<b>1</b>	<b>Ensure all older adults have access to affordable internet service, equipment, and training on how to use hardware and software for communication and social interaction.</b>				
1a <i>SCC3-3</i>	Find ways to expand broadband and Wi-Fi access throughout Palmer, particularly in limited- access and low-income areas, to ensure reliable access to information and Town-wide communications.	Town Council/Manager	\$	1-5 years (ongoing)	High
1b <i>PH5-2</i>	Work with service providers to ensure that discounted internet options are available to older adults and low-income households and promote awareness of these programs	Town Council/Manager	\$	1-5 years	High
1c <i>PH5-1</i>	Study the feasibility of implementing a program to loan tablets or laptops to households that do not currently own computers, and a system for training and connecting all households to affordable internet service.	Council on Aging (and Senior volunteers)	\$	1-5 years	Medium
<b>2</b>	<b>Provide information for older adults in multiple formats with large, easy to read lettering.</b>				
2a <i>PH6-1</i>	Promote installation of kiosks or community boards in neighborhoods (new and existing) as well as all communication resources (websites and social media) that can be used by the Town to post information about community resources, upcoming events, etc.	Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Medium
2b <i>ED1-3</i>	Create marketing materials (e.g., pamphlets, videos, social media, and other web content) around the agreed upon brand to promote the Town’s assets/resources throughout the region and state.	Planning and Economic Development; Hired PR Firm	\$	1-5 years	Low

Housing					
#	Goal/Actions	Lead Entities	Costs	Timeframe	Priority (High, Medium, Low)
<b>1</b>	<b>Develop a plan for adding more affordable and “right-sized” housing to Palmer’s housing inventory to allow older adults to downsize and stay in the community.</b>				
1a <i>H1-1</i>	Complete and regularly update a Housing Production Plan to identify housing needs in a targeted way and articulate specific actions, roles, and responsibilities for addressing each need. As part of this plan, attempt to understand the unique aspects of housing in Palmer’s four villages to inform land use, zoning regulations, and housing policies, as well as to provide for the efficient and effective allocation of resources.	Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Low
1b <i>LU1-1.7</i>	Prepare a comprehensive inventory of vacant and underutilized properties within the Village Center Districts and Town Residential District to understand and prioritize development and adaptive reuse/redevelopment opportunities.	Planning and Economic Development; Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Medium
1c <i>H2-2</i>	Identify key opportunity sites for non-single- family residential development projects, considering underlying land use and zoning regulations, water and sewer infrastructure, hazard potential, and proximity to the mixed- use, pedestrian-friendly Village Centers.	Planning and Economic Development; Public Works	\$	1-5 years	Low
1d <i>H1-3</i>	In coordination with the Housing Production Plan, evaluate the need to create a “Friendly 40B” policy that would encourage the pursuit and promotion of low- and moderate-income housing that qualify under the state’s regulatory requirements.	Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Low
<b>2</b>	<b>Consider amending Zoning to allow for greater diversity of housing types in areas with easy access to services.</b>				
2a <i>LU1-2</i>	Through a review and revision of the Town’s Zoning Ordinance, enable the development of smaller home typologies (e.g., tiny homes, microunits), where appropriate.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	1-5 years	Low

2b <i>LU1-1.5</i>	Explore opportunities to expand the Town Residential Districts along areas currently served by municipal water and sewer, to provide increased development flexibility that can support greater housing choice.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	5-10 years	Low
2c <i>H2-4</i>	Understand the barriers to and incentivize (e.g., through items such as density bonuses) the development of a range of smaller housing types to accommodate the demand for such units (e.g., from young professionals, young families, and seniors), which is expected to continue to increase as the average household size continues to decline.	Planning and Economic Development; Housing Authority	\$	5-10 years	Medium
2d <i>H2-6</i>	Promote the creative design of housing types that complement and meet the needs of Palmer's neighborhoods.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	5-10 years	Low
2e <i>H2-1</i>	Identify and work to eliminate or minimize barriers to non-single-family residential development where currently allowed by the Town's Zoning Ordinance – particularly in the Village Centers – through a review of the Town's dimensional and density and use regulations along with associated approval processes.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	5-10 years	Low
2f <i>LU1-1.3</i>	Examine opportunities to revitalize or re-zone areas along the connecting corridors, such as through new overlay districts, to encourage appropriate development and redevelopment.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	1-5 years	Medium
2g <i>LU1-1.6</i>	Explore augmenting the Village Center Districts with elements of form-based code. For example, street frontage/site configuration (e.g., building and parking lot location, building entry location), combined with architectural design guidelines (e.g., facade enhancements, ground level transparency).	Planning and Economic Development	\$	1-5 years	Low

5c <i>LU1-1.9</i>	Explore the potential of creating a Mill Reuse Overlay District in Thorndike, which could incorporate both commercial and light industrial activities, as well as residential uses, to foster creativity in growth. Explore the potential for designating and developing the area around the Thorndike Mill as an Eco District- essentially, a public-private innovation zone that prioritizes sustainability outcomes with focuses on equity, resilience, and climate protection.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	1-5 years	High
<b>3</b>	<b>Build capacity and pursue funding to develop more affordable housing in Palmer.</b>				
3a <i>H1-2</i>	Re-energize the Palmer Housing Authority, which has been largely inactive over the past few years. This should include revisiting the rules and regulations of the Authority and providing formal training sessions for board members and staff, as well as exploring an expansion of its programming – particularly in the area of social services.	Town Council/Manager	\$	1-5 years	High
3b <i>H1-5</i>	Explore the formation of a municipal housing trust, which would allow Palmer to collect and segregate funds for affordable housing and use these funds for local affordable housing initiatives.	Community Development	\$ (Depending on the Funding Source)	5-10 years	Low
3c <i>OSR1-3</i>	Seek the passage and adoption of the Community Preservation Act. This would provide necessary funding for expanding community housing locally.	Civic Grassroots Organizations; Palmer Historical and Cultural Center; Boy Scouts; Chamber of Commerce	\$	1-5 years	Medium
3d <i>H3-3.1</i>	Evaluate the Town's allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds, and dedicate a fair portion of such funds to housing rehabilitation projects (and affordable housing production) and promote awareness around program availability	Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Low
<b>4</b>	<b>Conduct education and outreach to facilitate more community discussion regarding affordable housing.</b>				

4a <i>H1-6</i>	Conduct targeted outreach to educate the community on affordable housing, engaging them in constructive dialogues, providing evidence of the widespread benefits of affordable housing, and showcasing design options within the context of Palmer's aesthetic characteristics.	Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Low
4b <i>H1-4.1</i>	In partnership with the community, and leveraging the Community Preservation Coalition program, craft and disseminate educational materials that explain the value of affordable housing with respect to its economic and social benefits	Housing Authority/ Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Medium
<b>5</b>	<b>Provide information regarding programs that help with home modification and weatherization to enable people to age in place.</b>				
5a <i>H3-3</i>	Evaluate existing housing improvement programs – both educational and financial - to assess if they are funded adequately, marketed broadly, and are being used effectively, or if they need to be supplemented with additional programming (e.g., targeted programs for seniors)	Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Low
5b <i>SCC1-8</i>	Conduct educational outreach (e.g., fairs) to share information on residential energy efficiency and home weatherization programs, concentrating on those that provide financial and technical support to low-income and elderly households (e.g., Mass Save – HEAT Loan Program, Residential and Small-Scale Ground-Source Heat Pump Rebate Program, LEAN Multifamily).	Future Energy Coordinator	\$	1-5 years	Low
<b>6</b>	<b>Develop supported housing for older adults in Palmer.</b>				
6a <i>H2-5</i>	Establish and maintain relationships with private developers that are experienced in developing senior care facilities (e.g., residential living, skilled nursing centers, fully- equipped medical facilities) for the purpose of bringing these facilities to Palmer.	Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Medium
6b <i>H2-3</i>	Understand the barriers to and incentivize the creative re-use of older, underutilized properties – for example, converting unused commercial space into housing or converting older single-family homes into multifamily buildings.	Community Development; Palmer Redevelopment Authority	\$	5-10 years	High

<b>7</b>	<b>Improve the social and built environments to create more welcoming residential neighborhoods.</b>				
7a <i>H3-2</i>	Encourage the development of neighborhood groups and associations that would not only foster a sense of community but could also supplement the Town's efforts to improve the look and feel of neighborhoods.	Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Medium
7b <i>H3-1</i>	Continue the Blight and Abandoned Property Reduction Initiative, which was designed to identify blighted and abandoned properties and enable the Town to work with property owners and the community on their clean up.	Town Council/Manager	\$	1-5 years	High
7c <i>H1-7</i>	Create new programs or expand program relationships with partners (e.g., Way Finders, Valley Opportunity Council) to provide greater financial assistance to existing homeowners and potential home buyers in Palmer. Such programs may include, but are not limited to, down payment and closing cost assistance, lease-purchase programs, no-interest loans, financial literacy and mortgage counseling.	Community Development	\$\$	1-5 years	Medium

<b>Buildings and Outdoor Spaces</b>					
<b>#</b>	<b>Goal/Actions</b>	<b>Lead Entities</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Priority (High, Medium, Low)</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Prioritize the needs of older adults and people with disabilities when planning for improvements to public parks and buildings.</b>				
1a <i>OSR1-6</i>	Update the Town's 2014 Open Space and Recreation Plan to guide the maintenance, protection, and improvement of its open spaces and recreation assets over the next several years, and enable the Town to continue to be eligible for state funds for conservation and recreation land acquisition and improvement projects	Conservation Commission	\$	1-5 years	Low



1b <i>OSR1-5</i>	Develop a plan to identify and improve means of access to the Town's open space and recreation assets with an emphasis on equity, including compliance with ADA guidelines.	ADA Coordinator	\$	1-5 years	Low
1c <i>PFS1-4</i>	Continue to implement the ADA Self- Evaluation and Transition Plan, and work with an accessibility consultant on all the Town's future facility construction activities, where appropriate, to ensure the incorporation of design, policies, and products that enhance access for all users.	Public Works; ADA Coordinator	\$	Annually	Low
1d <i>OSR1-4</i>	Prepare a proper inventory of the walking/biking trails within the community and centralize it, along with relevant information such as access and use restrictions, on the Town's website – with emphasis on usability and accessibility - and through an alternate physical medium (e.g., brochure).	Town Council/Manager	\$	1-5 years (ongoing)	High
1e <i>NHC1-7</i>	Conduct a tree inventory and analysis for all public trees on streets, parks, schools, and other public areas to inform a tree management program for maintenance, new plantings, and replacements, as necessary.	Tree Warden	\$	1-5 years (ongoing)	Low
<b>2</b>	<b>Explore funding opportunities to make accessibility improvements to buildings and outdoor spaces.</b>				
2a <i>ED3-5</i>	Continue to identify and pursue local and state grant opportunities to improve streetscapes, in concert with Action ED 2.4, and multi-modal facilities in the village centers (e.g., more pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, and adding appropriately designed lighting, benches, trash bins, etc.)	Community Development; Public Works	\$	1-5 years	High
2b <i>OSR1-1</i>	Increase financial/staffing resources allocated to the maintenance and renovation of the Town's open space and recreation assets.	Town Council/Manager	\$\$	1-5 years	High
2c <i>OSR1-1.2</i>	Seek a Parkland Acquisition and Renovations for Communities (PARC) grant to complete renovations at Burleigh Park.	Town Council/Manager	\$	1-5 years	High
<b>3</b>	<b>Conduct regular community engagement to identify priorities for accessibility improvements to parks and public buildings.</b>				

3a <i>OSR2-1</i>	Conduct a regular (e.g., bi-annual) community survey to identify and prioritize recreation needs and utilize the survey results to plan the Town's future recreation investments.	Town Council/Manager	\$	1-5 years (ongoing)	Low
3b <i>PH4-4</i>	Engage older adults and people with disabilities in the design for reconstruction of parks and recreation facilities.	Community Development; Council on Aging; Public Works; ADA Coordinator	\$	1-5 years	High
3c <i>PH4-5</i>	Develop outdoor recreational programming for residents of all age groups including older adults.	Recreation; Council on Aging; School Department	\$	1-5 years	High
4	Explore new development ideas				
4a <i>PFS1-5</i>	Explore the expansion, relocation, or new construction of the Senior Center to enable greater use of the facility by the Town's elderly population and perhaps, the larger community, and an expansion of programming now and in the future.	Town Council/Manager; Council on Aging	\$\$	1-5 years	High
4b <i>OSR2-5</i>	Continue to pursue the design and construction of in demand recreational amenities, including one or more boat launches along local waterways, a dog park, a public beach at Crystal Lake and Forest Lake, and winter sport facilities.	Conservation Commission	\$\$	Ongoing	High
4c <i>OSR2-6</i>	Identify suitable parcels, with priority given to those in underserved neighborhoods, for the construction of community gardening plots. Partner with local organizations that can support their development, organization/operation, and maintenance.	Conservation Commission; Future Community Garden Committee; Local Volunteer Groups	\$	Ongoing	Medium
5	Consider rezoning to encourage new developments and expand existing spaces				

5d <i>OSR2-2.3</i>	Encourage the incorporation of greenways, trails, or walking paths in proposed subdivision developments. Consider making such incorporations required as a condition of approval.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	Ongoing	High
5e <i>LU1-1.4</i>	Identify appropriate locations along Route 32, potentially including just north and south of its intersection with the Massachusetts Turnpike, which would support large-scale commercial mixed-use centers that would achieve local and regional growth opportunities (e.g., hotels, office parks, workforce housing, etc.)	Planning and Economic Development	\$	1-5 years	High
6	Explore opportunities to expand municipal land ownership and increase trail connectivity				
6a <i>OSR2-2.2</i>	Work with property owners to gain access to privately-owned lands along the Ware (namely, between Main Street in Thorndike and Route 181), Quaboag (namely, northwest from the Department of Public Works facility and Water Street Field), Chicopee, and Swift Rivers for the development of river walks - leveraging public lands where present.	Conservation Commission	\$	Ongoing	High
6b <i>OSR2-2</i>	Continue to seek opportunities to develop walking/biking trails, emphasizing connectivity with existing trails within the community and with those in adjacent communities.	Conservation Commission	\$	1-5 years (ongoing)	High
6c <i>OSR2-2.1</i>	Continue to work to develop a regional connection with Red Bridge State Park by expanding the trail system along the Chicopee River.	Conservation Commission	\$\$	1-5 years (ongoing)	High

7	Consider updating park amenities to improve accessibility and increase utilization				
7a <i>PH4-2</i>	Improve accessibility in and around parks through sidewalk maintenance and improvements; visible crosswalks, curb ramps and detectable warning strips at intersections; lighting; and adding benches and shaded rest areas.	Community Development; Public Works; ADA Coordinator	\$\$	Ongoing	Medium
7b <i>PH4-3</i>	Add accessible public restrooms to identified recreation areas to encourage more use.	Community Development; Public Works; ADA Coordinator	\$\$	1-5 years	High
7c <i>OSR1-2</i>	Seek improvements at Chase Memorial Park, such as the introduction of irrigation and parking, to enable greater use of this facility which exists within an environmental justice community	Town Council/Manager	\$\$	5-10 years	High

<b>Age-Friendly Communities</b>					
<b>Transportation and Streets</b>		<b>Lead Entities</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Priority (High, Medium, Low)</b>
1	Update and complete town plans				
1a <i>TM2-4</i>	Seek full compliance with the ADA within Town right-of-way (e.g., curbs, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings/signals) by ensuring ADA requirements are implemented as part of any new applicable construction or replacement project.	ADA Coordinator	\$	10-15 years	Medium
1b <i>TM1-1</i>	Work with applicable agencies to incorporate the concepts of Complete Streets into transportation improvement projects.	Complete Streets Committee	\$	1-10 years	Low

1c <i>TM1-2</i>	Continue to actively pursue and update priority projects through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT's) Complete Streets Funding Program.	Complete Streets Committee	\$	1-10 years	Low
1d <i>LU1-1.8</i>	Proactively prepare a Neighborhood Transit- Oriented Development Plan for the area around a preferred location for a new rail station associated with the East-West Passenger Rail Project. Ensure coordination and collaboration with the public residing in the neighborhood and the community at-large, as well as local landowners, private developers, and government stakeholders.	Planning and Economic Development; East/West Rail Steering Committee	\$\$	1-5 years	High
1e <i>TM2-2</i>	Develop a Town-wide Bicycle Network Master Plan to improve Palmer's bikeability, as well as provide connections to off-road paths and surrounding communities	Future Palmer Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee	\$	1-5 years	Medium
1f <i>TM2-1</i>	Create a Palmer Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation of pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, obtain funding for improvement projects, advocate for pedestrians and cyclists, and maintain continued dialogue with regional planning agencies.	Town Council/Manager; Board of Health	\$	1-5 years	Low
1g <i>PH3-1</i>	Evaluate walking and biking routes between areas of dense residential development, schools, retail and employment centers. Engage residents in walk audits to educate them on the elements of safe pedestrian infrastructure and to involve them in planning for improvements.	Board of Health	\$	1-5 years	Medium

1h <i>TM1-4</i>	Continue the Town's pavement management program as currently carried out by the Department of Public Works. Include a sidewalk management program as part of this effort to maintain existing sidewalks and identify areas of needed improvement. Prioritize sidewalk construction and repair within the vicinity of Town offices, commercial centers, senior and subsidized housing developments, the Palmer Senior Center, in school zones, and around medical facilities.	Public Works	\$-\$\$\$	1-5 years	Low
1i <i>PH9-4</i>	Ensure that Site Plan Review and Special Permit Review facilitate increased food access by requiring safe and easy access by pedestrians, bicyclists, people in wheelchairs, public transit users and automobiles.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	1-5 years	Low
2	Explore opportunities for grants and funding				
2a <i>TM1-3</i>	Identify and monitor a diverse array of potential federal, state, and private funding sources to complete transportation improvement projects throughout the Town. Examples of such sources as of this writing include the MassWorks Infrastructure Program, Community Transit Grant Program, Helping Hand Mini-Grants, the Workforce Transportation Program, and the Efficiency and Regionalization Grant Program.	Town Council/Manager; Planning and Economic Development; Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Medium
3	Increase community surveying to identify gaps in access				
3a <i>PH2-1</i>	Evaluate the needs of older adults and people with disabilities annually to ensure that they know about the transportation services available to them and that the services meet their needs in terms of travel destinations and support.	Council on Aging	\$	1-5 years	Low

3b <i>TM1-7</i>	In partnership with Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, Quaboag Connector, and other relevant organizations, administer a public transit rider survey(s) to discover what works best for transit users and to identify any populations with unmet transportation needs. Strive to target disadvantaged populations in the survey's distribution, e.g., those associated with the Palmer Food Share and Ware Regional Recovery Center.	Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Low
4	Expand transportation options				
4a <i>TM1-5</i>	Subject to available funding, advocate for the expansion of existing transit services (i.e., routes and schedules), including the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority's Palmer/Ware bus routes and the Quaboag Connector, to provide Palmer residents with more convenient access to local/regional destinations and regional populations with greater access to Palmer's employment and commercial centers.	Community Development; Pioneer Valley Planning Commission/ Mass in Motion	\$\$\$	1-5 years	Medium
4b <i>TM1-11</i>	Continue to advocate for the East-West Passenger Rail Project with a stop in downtown Palmer (Depot Village) and work with MassDOT and other stakeholders in advancing this important project that offers opportunities for improved local and regional connectivity, private partnerships, development, and improved infrastructure.	East/West Rail Steering Committee	\$	1-5 years	High
4c <i>TM2-7</i>	Continue to work with MassDOT and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, along with private landowner(s), to complete connections along the Massachusetts Central Rail Trail in Palmer between Belchertown and Ware.	Conservation Commission	\$\$	1-5 years	High
4d <i>TM2-7.2</i>	Explore opportunities to connect existing and future trails in Palmer to the Massachusetts Central Rail Trail to increase access to this future recreational and commuter transportation network.	Conservation Commission	\$	1-5 years	High

4e SCC 3-2	Identify and develop transportation options and support for vulnerable residents, including communication strategies and resource supplies (food, water, necessities), in case of disruptions in transportation, mail, and/or federal assistance programs, such as WIC and SNAP.	Municipal Vulnerable Preparedness Coordinator; Future Energy Coordinator	\$\$	1-5 years (ongoing)	Low
4f PH9- 2	Prioritize transportation infrastructure and services to ensure access to food retail and assistance programs. Include access to food retail options in prioritization of Complete Streets, public transit, and highway and sidewalk maintenance projects.	Community Development; Town Council/Manager	\$\$	Ongoing	Low
4g PH10 -3	Advocate for a stop by the Food Bank Mobile bus in Palmer.	Town Council/Manager	\$\$	1-5 years	High
4h TM3- 5	Collaborate with MassDOT on the development of a new Park and Ride lot for the Massachusetts Turnpike. Explore the potential of locating this lot near downtown Palmer (Depot Village) to increase the area's visibility and visitation.	Planning and Economic Development	\$\$\$	1-5 years	Medium
5	Transportation Improvements and increased distribution of transportation information				
5a TM3- 1	Evaluate the feasibility of implementing adaptive signal systems along high congestion corridors for locally maintained traffic signals, including along Thorndike Street, Ware Street/Route 32, North Main Street and South Main Street	Public Works; Public Safety	\$	1-5 years	Medium
5b TM3- 2	Explore the potential installation of smart technologies (i.e., streetlights, small cell wireless facilities, etc.) and related technology to capitalize on the early adoption of autonomous and connected vehicles, along with associated data collection, maintenance, and distribution.	Public Works; Public Safety	\$	5-10 years	Low



5c	Explore innovative methods to increase transit ridership, such as advancing the digitization of service information and developing audience-specific materials	<i>*Couldn't find on Masterplan</i>			
6	Expand pedestrian and bicycle options				
6a TM2-9	Coordinate with surrounding communities on the potential to join Valley Bike Share to enhance bicycle access and local/regional travel and connectivity.	Community Development	\$	10-15 years	Low
6b TM2-3	Explore opportunities to enhance or expand pedestrian and bicycle access in ways that support retail, business activities, schools, and arts/ cultural events. Seek funding through MassDOT's newly launched Shared Streets and Spaces Program.	Town Council/Manager; Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Medium
7	Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety to increase walk and bikeability				
7a TM2-5	Enhance the Town's sidewalk network, particularly along its arterial corridors, while incorporating traffic-calming measures to connect Palmer's villages.	Public Works	\$\$	10-15 years	Low
7b TM2-13	Ensure that safe and accommodating bicycle and pedestrian access is incorporated into local development projects. Explore additional enforcement mechanisms that can be integrated into the site plan review process.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	1-5 years	Low
7c TM2-6	Explore reducing the vehicle travel lane width of Main Street in Depot Village to allow for bicycle lanes and/or expanded sidewalks to accommodate all modes of travel.	Public Works; Public Safety	\$	10-15 years	Low
7d TM2-8	Explore bicycle and pedestrian improvements along Shearer Street, Route 181, and Route 32.	Palmer Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee	\$	1-5 years	Medium

7e <i>TM2-10</i>	Install bicycle parking and/or storage in strategic locations around each of the village center areas, employment centers, commercial centers, and other Town assets/amenities.	Palmer Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee	\$\$	1-5 years	Low
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Age-Friendly Communities					
Health and Community Services		Lead Entities	Costs	Timeframe	Priority (High, Medium, Low)
1	Explore opportunities for grants and funding				
1a <i>PFS3-4</i>	Identify additional revenue streams for the Community Development Department that can support its work in building and repairing infrastructure vital to the health and safety of the Town's residents, among its other assignments.	Town Council/Manager; Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Medium
2	Increase community surveying to identify gaps in access				
2a <i>PFS2-1</i>	Conduct regular surveys to understand the public perception of the Town's services and evolving service needs (particularly with respect to human services [e.g., mental health, youth development, substance abuse, food/nutrition, etc.], and pursue program changes accordingly.	Board of Health; Community Development	\$	1-5 years	Low
3	Expand education on food accessibility and promote programs that provide application assistance				
3a <i>PH10-2</i>	Provide information on signing up for the SNAP, and how to use HIP on the Town website and in all departments that offer public assistance programs.	Board of Health; Council on Aging; Veterans Agent	\$	1-5 years	Low

3b <i>PH10</i> -1	Partner with the Department of Transitional Assistance, health care providers, and other organizations that assist with public benefit programs to ensure that all residents who qualify for SNAP and other food assistance programs are aware of the resources and how to apply for enrollment.	Board of Health	\$	1-5 years	Low
3c <i>PH10</i> -5	Publicize eligibility criteria for Brown Bag pickup and other food assistance resources.	Council on Aging; School Department/ Pathfinder	\$	1-5 years	Low
3d <i>PH10</i> -4	Increase visibility of all emergency food resources (Palmer Food Share, Inc.; Second Congregational Church, Senior Center, School) in Palmer through Town website and printed resource guides. Print flyers and resources in large print for older adults and others with vision impairments.	Board of Health	\$	1-5 years	Medium
4	Expand food access				
4a <i>PH11</i> -2	Explore interest in making Palmer a Right to Farm community to signify the importance of local agriculture to the local economy and health of the community.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	5-10 years	Medium

4b <i>PH11</i> -1	Identify at least one Community Garden site and seek funding for construction and management.	Conservation Commission; Town Council/ Manager; Community Development; Board of Health; Open Space and Recreation Committee; Future Community Garden Committee	\$\$	1-5 years	Medium
4c <i>PH11</i> -3	Promote the development of home-based gardens through training programs on soil testing, building raised beds, home garden practices and food safety, and best practices for keeping chickens.	School Department/ Pathfinder	\$	1-5 years	Medium
4d <i>PH8-</i> 1	Reinstate a Farmers Market or a farm stand that accepts SNAP, HIP, and WIC benefits, or otherwise incentivizes purchase of healthy foods.	Community Development	\$\$	1-5 years	High
4e <i>PH8-</i> 2	Launch a Community Supported Agriculture program in cooperation with Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture and area farms with monthly shares available through HIP and delivery location(s) in Palmer.	Board of Health	\$	1-5 years	Medium
4f <i>PH8-</i> 4	Explore the feasibility of partnering with surrounding communities to provide a Mobile Food Market for sale of fresh local produce.	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission/ Mass in Motion	\$\$	1-5 years	Medium

4g <i>PH9-1</i>	Add healthy food retail provisions to local development processes through community benefits agreements, density bonuses, tax incentive packages or similar tools.	Town Council/Manager	\$	1-5 years	Low
4h <i>PH8-3</i>	Research eligible grant and loan programs to assist local corner stores in obtaining equipment and resources to provide fresh local food options.	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission/ Mass in Motion	\$	1-5 years	Medium
5	Expand health services options and accessibility				
5a <i>ED4-1</i>	Explore the potential for a medical overlay district to promote the development of a medical cluster around the Baystate Wing Hospital, with potential for assisted living/nursing homes, medical equipment manufacturing, medical research, etc.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	5-10 years	Medium

<b>Age-Friendly Communities</b>					
<b>Social Participation, Inclusion, and Respect</b>		<b>Lead Entities</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Priority (High, Medium, Low)</b>
1	Improve inclusion through community education				
1a <i>PH1-1</i>	Change the narrative about the aging population to celebrate the wisdom, skills, talents and lived experience, both personal and professional, of older adults as well as the contributions that they have made to the community.	Council on Aging; Veterans Agent	\$	1-5 years	Low
2	Increase community surveying to identify gaps in access				

2a <i>PH1-2</i>	Ensure that older adults, people with disabilities, and other marginalized populations are included in planning for improvements to the social and built environments in Palmer.	Town Council/Manager; Community Development; Conservation Commission; Council on Aging; ADA Coordinator	\$	Ongoing	Low
3	Expand intergenerational programming				
3a <i>PH12-6</i>	Investigate possible intergenerational programs for school or community gardening.	Council on Aging; School Department/ Pathfinder	\$	1-5 years	Low
3b <i>PH7-1</i>	Establish a mentoring program between older adults and prospective entrepreneurs to celebrate the knowledge and experience that older adults bring to the community, and to provide opportunities for intergenerational learning.	Council on Aging	\$	5-10 years	Medium
4 <i>LU1-1.10</i>	Build upon the existing hub of arts and culture in Three Rivers by reviewing the Town's Zoning Ordinance to ensure artistic uses are properly defined and allowed, providing density bonuses to promote artist live/workspaces, and promoting creative re- uses of vacant buildings as cultural facilities or otherwise allow for temporary or permanent artistic showcases.	Planning and Economic Development	\$	1-5 years	Medium

Age-Friendly Communities					
Civic Engagement and Employment	Lead Entities	Costs	Timeframe	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	

1 <i>OSR</i> 1-1.3	Expand the Conservation Commission’s volunteer program, for example, by establishing regular service days for efforts such as open space trash cleanup, facility graffiti removal, etc.	Town Council/Manager; Conservation Commission	\$	1-5 years	High
2 <i>PH7-2</i>	Ensure that people of all ages have access to employment opportunities through expanded transportation services and partnerships between the Council on Aging/Senior Center and local businesses.	Council on Aging	\$\$	5-10 years	Medium

<b>Age-Friendly Communities</b>					
<b>Public Safety</b>		<b>Lead Entities</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Priority (High, Medium, Low)</b>
1 <i>PFS2</i> -3	Ensure the Town’s public safety departments (i.e., police, fire, etc.) have the necessary members and support staff to meet the existing and projected service needs of the community.	Town Council/Manager; Police Department; Fire Districts; Public Works	\$	1-5 years	Low