



Age-Friendly Allegany County



Table of Contents

Table of contents -----	pg. 3
Resolution 159-20 -----	pg. 4
Leg. Crandall Letter of Support -----	pg. 5
AFAC Planning Committee Roster -----	pg. 6
Executive Summary -----	pg. 7
The 8 Domains of Livability -----	pg. 8
Common Themes by Domain -----	pgs. 8-16
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings -----	pg. 9
Transportation-----	pg. 10
Respect and Social Inclusion-----	pgs. 11-12
Housing-----	pgs. 12-13
Personal and Household Health -----	pg. 13
Civic Participation and Employment -----	pg. 14
Communication and Information -----	pg. 15
Health Care and Services -----	pg. 16
In Conclusion -----	pgs. 17-18
Vision and Mission Statements-----	pg. 18

RESOLUTION NO. 159-20

RESOLUTION TO SEEK MEMBERSHIP IN THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Offered by: Ways & Means Committee

WHEREAS, as 20 percent of Allegany County is currently over 60 years old with that figure expected to increase significantly by 2030; it is of great importance to solidify communities that are equipped to support active aging, and

WHEREAS, inclusive and supportive, social, environmental, and built, infrastructures play a critical role in helping residents thrive in their communities as they age, and

WHEREAS, Allegany County is committed to developing programs, services, facilities, and projects that are planned, designed, operated, and maintained to best accommodate users of all ages and abilities, and

WHEREAS, becoming an age-friendly community requires widespread community support, and a shared mindset must be incorporated into every sector of the county to work together on an initiative to support all ages of life, and

WHEREAS, Ardent Solutions, Inc. resolves to take the lead role in implementing the Age-Friendly Communities initiative for Allegany County in cooperation with the Allegany County Office for the Aging, Long Term Care Council, and other entities as fit the mission, and

WHEREAS, joining the AARP and W.H.O. Network of Age-Friendly Communities will connect Allegany County with communities across the country and the world to unify our efforts to make communities a great place to live for all ages and stages of life, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED:

1. That in order to ensure the communities of Allegany County are well-designed, livable communities that promote health and sustained economic growth for residents of all ages, Allegany County supports the planning process and requests participation in the AARP and W.H.O. Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

I, Brenda Rigby Rieble, Clerk of the Board of Legislators of the County of Allegany, State of New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a correct copy of the original on file in my office and the whole thereof of a resolution passed by said Board on the 27th day of July 2020.

Brenda Rigby Rieble Dated at Belmont, New York, this 28th day of July 2020
Clerk, Board of Legislators, Allegany County

Moved by: Stockin Seconded by: Fanton VOTE: Ayes: 12 Noes: 2 Absent: 1 Voice:
Absent: Burdick
Voting No: Barnes, Decker

An original copy of Resolution 159-20 can be found at:
<https://livablemap.aarp.org/member/allegany-county>



Board of Legislators

County Office Building, Room 201
7 Court Street
Belmont, New York 14813
Phone: 585-268-9222

July 15, 2020

Lisa Nenadich
AARP New York State Director
750 Third Avenue, 31st floor
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ms. Nenadich:

On behalf of Allegany County, New York, I am pleased to offer this letter of our ongoing commitment to creating an age-friendly environment. We are excited to join AARP's Age-Friendly Communities network. Allegany County is committed to becoming a livable community to promote health and sustainable growth and contribute to the well-being of citizens in all stages of life.

Allegany County wants to promote successful aging and improve the quality of life for all residents. There is great value in utilizing the AARP's Eight Domains of Livability in establishing a more age-friendly community: making outdoor spaces and buildings more senior friendly, increasing the accessibility and affordability of transportation and housing, increasing access and opportunities for social participation and inclusion through programs that promote ethnic and cultural diversity, supporting work and volunteer opportunities, access to communication and information, and supporting the ability of older people to age in place through community support and health services.

As a participant in the AARP and the World Health Organization (WHO) Age-Friendly Community initiative, it is the intent of Allegany County to:

- Pursue the active engagement of older adults in the planning process through outreach and inclusion by bringing events to where older people live and recreate.
- Pursue outreach through churches, civic organizations, AARP, providers of aging services and host events designed for older people.
- Establish a plan of action that responds to the needs identified by older people.
- Develop a means to measure our activities, reviewing action plan outcomes and plans to determine we are meeting our goals.
- Keep the public, especially older people, informed throughout the process.

We look forward to working with AARP New York State staff, members, and volunteers to make our county a place where we can all age with dignity.

Sincerely,


Curtis W. Crandall, Chairman
Allegany County Board of Legislators

Curtis W. Crandall, Chairman
CrandallCW@alleganyco.com

Brenda Rigby Rietle, Clerk of the Board
RietleBA@alleganyco.com

The full letter can be found at <https://livablemap.aarp.org/member/allegany-county>

Age-Friendly Allegany County (AFAC) Planning Committee

Established 2020

Dusti Wilson (Fidelis Care)
Ashley Conti (Healthy Community Alliance)
Yvonne Morris (Jones Memorial Hospital, Bolivar Lions Club)
Danielle Kielar (Catholic Charities)
Jonathan Chaffee (Tobacco-Free CCA and Partners for Prevention in Allegany County)
Sue Hannon (Directions in Independent Living)
Ann Weaver (ACASA)
Robin Fuller (Ardent Solutions)
Beatriz (Cecy) Curcio (Belfast Central School Board)
Megan Burdick (Ardent Solutions)
Steve Havey (Allegany County Legislator)
Mike Freeland (Allegany County Office for the Aging/NYConnects)
Jose Soto (Ardent Solutions)
Christopher Clow (Allegany County DSS Adult Service Unit)
Tom Donnarumma (First Transit, Inc.)
Darcy J. Dwaileebe (Recovery Options Made Easy)
Rima O'Connor (Alfred Box of Books Library)
Irene Dieteman (Allegany County Office for the Aging/NYConnects)
Jennifer Irwin (Nascentia Health)
Judy Peck (Arc Allegany-Steuben)
Dr. Danielle D. Gagne (Alfred University)
Melissa Peck (Venture Forthe)
Kier Dirlam (Allegany County Office of Planning)
Nick Arquette (Allegany County Office of Planning)
Timothy Puda (Allegany County Department of Social Services)
Jeanette Carlin (The Alzheimer's Association)
Erika Benson (ACCORD)
Dawn Butts (Ardent Solutions)
Reita Lynch (Allegany County Employment & Training)
Nancy Kehl (Directions in Independent Living)

AFAC Organizers:

Danielle DeLong, Age-Friendly Communities Coordinator (Ardent Solutions)
Anita Mattison (Allegany County Office for the Aging)
Lyndi Scott-Loines (Allegany County Office for the Aging)



AGE FRIENDLY ALLEGANY COUNTY

Executive Summary

08.18.2021

Compiled by **Danielle DeLong, Ardent Solutions**
Age-Friendly Communities Coordinator

On July 27th, 2020, the Allegheny County Legislative board passed Resolution No. 159-20 in support of Allegheny County joining over 500 other communities across the United States in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. Chairman of the Allegheny County Legislative board, Curtis Crandall, provided a letter of support to accompany the resolution and further showed the county’s commitment to adopting age-friendly practices in to both social and built environments throughout the county. By joining the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities, Allegheny County entered a 5-year program cycle including a community assessment survey which will inform a 3-year action plan to make sustainable changes and new developments towards improved livability across communities in Allegheny County.

Becoming age-friendly requires true community collaboration across multiple sectors throughout the county thus the Age-Friendly Allegheny County Committee of stakeholders was formed as of September 2020. The AFAC Committee includes representatives from local non-profit organizations, Allegheny County Planning, Allegheny County Employment and Training, local libraries, Alfred University, Jones Memorial Hospital practices, First Transit and Access Allegheny, and more. This committee meets monthly to advance the efforts of the initiative as outlined in a comprehensive workplan. Ardent Solutions is spearheading the initiative, in partnership with the Allegheny County Office for the Aging, and will be responsible for moving the initiative through each phase of the 5-year program cycle.

Age-Friendly Allegheny County will follow the AARP Network of Age-Friendly communities’ guidelines for the initiative which outlines the 5 year cycle in to three main objectives:

1. Develop a community assessment survey and collect responses,
 2. Develop an action plan utilizing the data collected in the survey,
 3. Implement the action plan items.
- Along the way, this committee is responsible for submitting the survey and results to AARP, and later the action plan for approval.

The final submission to AARP includes a summary of the work that was completed through the action plan; at that time we will be allowed to rejoin the AARP Age-Friendly Network and repeat this cycle towards bettering our communities for all ages and stages of life!

At the time of this report, the committee has completed the first two steps on the checklist above and is currently working to identify the highest areas of need from the survey report to develop the action plan that is due by July 2022.

AFAC 5-Year Cycle	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1. Develop an AFAC Committee
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2. Community Assessment Survey
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Develop Action Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Implement Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Assess progress and submit results to AARP
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Start new 3 year cycle!

The Eight Domains of Livability

The age-friendly initiative is guided by eight domains of livability and as such our survey was also influenced by these eight sectors of a community. These domains were developed by the World Health Organization as a result of a survey of people from around the world regarding what aspects were important to enable them to remain active in their communities; their feedback is what formed the “8 Domains of Livability”. The domains can be divided into physical environments and social environments.

The 8 Domains of Livability

The availability and quality of these community features impact the well-being of older adults — and help make communities more livable for people of all ages



1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social Participation
5. Respect and Social Inclusion
6. Civic Participation and Employment
7. Communication and Information
8. Community and Health Services

Listed below are the 8 domains with examples of how they are reflected in our communities and what aspects of livability each domain covers as we assess our communities.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings: Outdoor seating such as benches, pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, age-friendly buildings and public restrooms, handicap accessible spaces

Transportation: Affordable and available public transit, community-led transport, road conditions, driver safety and awareness

Housing: Home modifications and maintenance, lawn care/snow removal, affordable senior housing, long term care communities, housing with access to nearby retail, groceries, and services,

Social Participation: Engaging programs and opportunities, combatting social isolation, virtual opportunities, encouraging awareness of available programs

Respect and Social Inclusion: Combatting agism, inclusive and equitable programs, respect for all, intergenerational opportunities, economic inclusion

Civic Participation and Employment: Volunteer and paid volunteer opportunities, part-time or full-time employment opportunities, accommodations for the older adults, equal opportunity, entrepreneurial opportunities

Communication and Information: Age-friendly formatting, access to information for services and programs available, a centralized news source, access to technology, access to internet service

Health Services: Accessible and affordable care, readily available specialists, home care, long term care and rehab care services, mental health services available and encouraged for older adults, grief support, end of life care planning, network of community health services

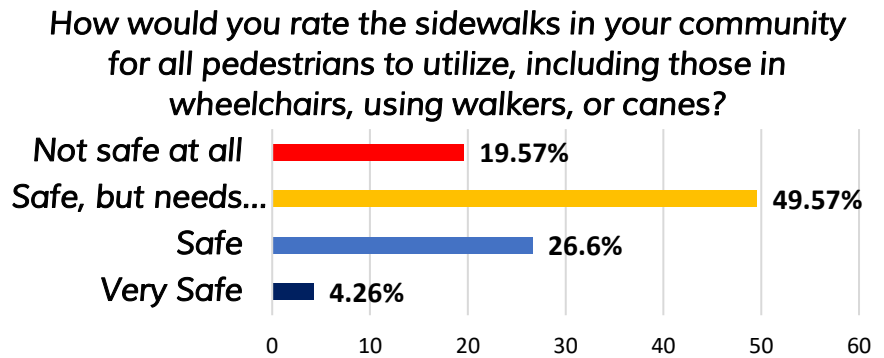
COMMON THEMES BY DOMAIN

Throughout this next section of the report, you will find a summary of the main themes derived from the survey results and analysis. While all eight domains are crucial to creating age-friendly environments, Age-Friendly Allegany County will utilize the survey results and other input collected to identify which domains are of greatest concern and put them at highest priority as we set up the action plan for 2022-2025.

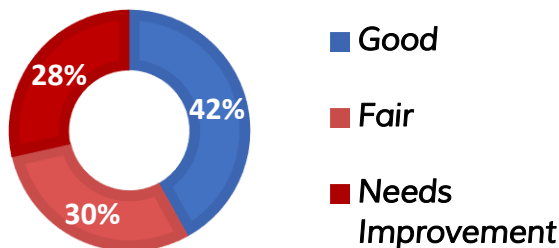
OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

Areas covered on the survey under this domain included: safety of sidewalks and pedestrian crossings, benches and resting areas, public buildings and spaces, and outdoor activity. Two main themes emerged from the results; sidewalk safety and handicap accessibility.

Concern over sidewalks, especially for those using an assistive device, was reported in Questions #7 on the survey which asks, “How would you rate the sidewalks in your community for all pedestrians to utilize, including those in wheelchairs, using walkers, or canes?” This question received 470 responses that reported 69% of respondents noting that the sidewalks either need improvement or are completely unsafe in their communities.



How would you rate the public buildings in your community on being accessible to all ability levels?



Survey respondents were later asked in question #11 to rate their community public buildings on supporting all ability levels. The results showed 28% find their buildings to need improvement, with an additional 30% citing only “fair” conditions. Post offices, libraries, and pharmacies were among those public buildings that were cited as needing improved handicap accessibility.

Further evidence to support these themes were found in the open response section where Dr. Gagne’s analysis found that of 120 responses 14.81% noted “Safety Concerns: Sidewalks” and 20.74% noted “Handicap Access” and as areas of improvement. Direct feedback received included:

“Many of the "walkers" in my neighborhood inspire me to be more active but many of them use the streets for walking as there are sidewalks that are uneven some raised from tree roots potentially a trip hazard and other areas that don't have sidewalks.”

“New crosswalks are very difficult to navigate w/ a walker.”

“Sidewalks are a problem. Many are uneven and present trip hazards. [...]”

“The sidewalks are in big need of fixing, I don't feel safe of walking very far I also don't walk down town the sidewalks are uneven and I always have to be looking down.”

“Many (sidewalks) are in disrepair and very dangerous when walking! [...] It seems like the new crosswalks using brick would be difficult to navigate with a wheelchair....”

“Our pharmacy isn't handicapped [accessible]. Has 3 steps to go up to get in the store.”

“Our public library is not handicap accessible. Community Bank is another one. We have no grocery store. Our sidewalks are in terrible shape. (Andover)”

TRANSPORTATION

Of the Allegany County residents 50 years or older that were surveyed on their personal mobility, 81.49% reported that they can walk with no supports, while approximately 15% reported using a walker, wheelchair, cane, or other support for personal mobility; this supports the next question on the survey about personal transportation options. When asked “How do you usually get around your community for things like shopping, visiting the doctor, running errands, or other things?”, the overwhelming majority of Allegany County residents at 85.5% selected the option that they are able to “drive themselves”. In the same question, a fairly low number of residents stated that they utilize transportation services such as the Access Allegany bus system (3.73%) or the Office for the Aging volunteer driver service (3.74%) for transportation. Walking (38.38%) and having others drive you (19.51%) were the other top responses. Note: respondents were allowed to select more than one option.

While the ability of so many residents to drive themselves currently is fantastic, it also leads to concerns for their future needs. As we know, Americans typically outlive their ability to drive by approximately 10 years, thus understanding that a large portion of our residents are currently transporting themselves to access goods and services, we need to be aware that as this group ages we will need adequate transportation options to continue to support their independence.

“By 2030, there will be more than 70 million people age 65 and older, and approximately 85-90 percent of them will be licensed to drive. In fact, seniors are outliving their ability to drive safely by an average of 7-10 years and for the first time in history, we must plan for our “driving retirement” just as we plan for our financial retirement.”

AAA Senior Driver Safety and Mobility
<https://exchange.aaa.com/safety/senior-driver-safety-mobility/>

As the open response portion of this section was analyzed by Dr. Gagne, common themes surrounding future concerns for transportation were identified. Below is direct feedback from the survey regarding concerns from independent drivers about their future.

“I’m currently well able to drive myself but if that should change in the future, my options are limited”

“I have concerns as I get older about being able to get to drs appointments in Hornell or Olean. Groceries. The pandemic has made it clear how difficult this can be.”

“Although I have no difficulties traveling now, but 10 years from now because I have been blessed and can still drive, I really do not know anything about the bus service that’s available here but I have seen small buses I think like bus #3 drive by while walking. Would like to know where I would be able to obtain information on the buses available for transportation before I am in need...like routes, schedules, etc.”

“Seems to be very little public transportation available in the county. Just glad I can still drive.”

“Since I live way out of town, I may be forced to move in 10 years or so because services are not close to my home, including transportation. If I have to move, I am more likely to move to an area with better retail, more cultural events, and more sophisticated medical care without travel requirements.”

RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The survey results revealed that about half of the older adults that completed the assessment, felt they, as well as their opinions, are appreciated in their communities. Over a third of respondents are unsure if they feel appreciated and valued, or that their opinions were valued in their communities leads us to reflect on what or where we could improve in our communities to ensure we are allowing older residents to feel confident that they are included and appreciated for their contributions.

Under this domain, older adults were surveyed on social opportunities including activities that are of most interest and the barriers that would prevent them from participating in social opportunities in their communities.

In question #21 participants were asked to choose from a list of what activities they would be interested in; of those, activities that are affordable (16.7%), offer senior discounts (14.5%), or involve a mixed variety of ages (13.9%), were of highest interest. Continuing education and social clubs also ranked high in interest level at 12% response.

In her analysis, Dr. Gagne combined the “other” responses from question #21 with responses from question #22 which asked respondents to enter what types of events or activities they would like to see in their communities that are NOT currently available. Her results posted 12 themes of which are broken down further in to 4 categories below. Please note, this is not a complete list; please see Dr. Gagne’s report for full results.

Do you feel older residents are valued and appreciated in Allegany County?
YES 51.71%
NO 14.10%
UNSURE 34.19%

I feel that my community highlights the contributions of older adults in Allegany County.
YES 38.79%
NO 21.98%
UNSURE 39.22%

I feel my opinion is valued in my community.
YES 43.26%
NO 16.96%
UNSURE 39.78%

Physical Activity	Socialization	Clubs or Groups	Classes
Gardening	Board games and card nights	Widower support	Pottery and painting
Dance classes/opportunities	Bingo	Grief support	Cooking
Indoor track	Broadway or Off-Broadway shows	Substance abuse support	How to use computers and computer software
Updated playgrounds	using theater	Astronomy club	such as Microsoft Office products
Bird watching	Dinner and a show	Walking clubs	How to use smart phones, tablets, kindles
Historical walking tours	TED -type talks	Book clubs	Computer literacy
	Block parties		Genealogy
	Weekly social gatherings		

RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION cont...

The largest barrier to participating in community activities was identified as “not being made aware of events and activities” with 47.74% of respondents choosing that option from a “check all that apply” list. We see this theme of “lack of access to information” emerge later in the survey under communication and information as well. Other options included not being interested (21.81%), not feeling included (10.49%), and limited or no transportation (9.47%). There was an option for “other” in which physical limitations such as not being able to drive at night due to vision or hearing difficulties, lack of time to attend, lack of activities available, cost of activities, caregiver responsibilities, personal preference, and technical issues accessing online registrations, were noted as other barriers to participating in community events.

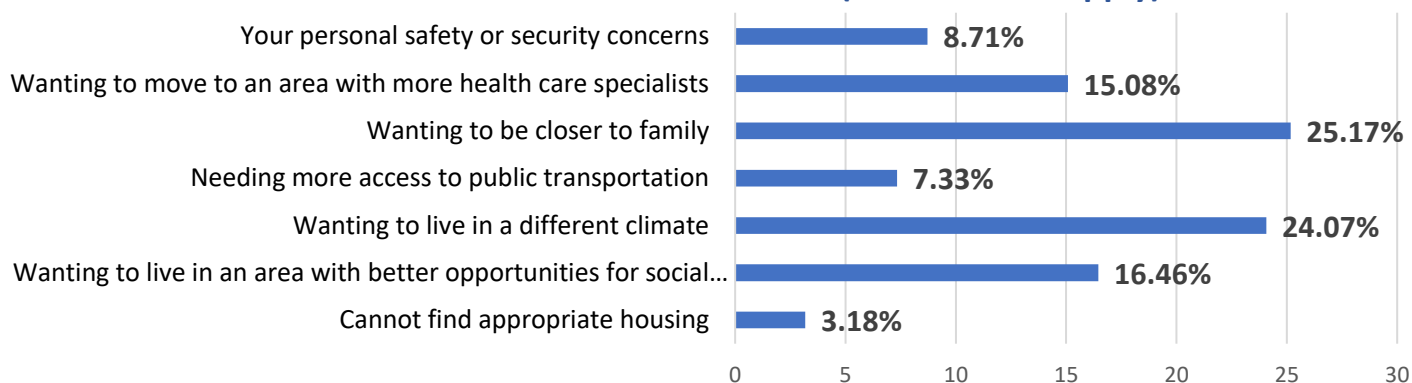
HOUSING

As stated earlier in the report, nearly 75% of residents surveyed have resided in Allegany County for more than 25 years. The majority of those surveyed reside in single family homes (83.6%) and own their place of residence (85.5%).

Respondents identified reasons why they might move out of their current residences in the future and among the top responses were: wanting a home that would allow for independent living such as a home without stairs (33.52%), the cost of maintaining their current home (27.96%), and wanting a smaller home (23.52%). Additionally, the open response section provided repeated input that residents would consider moving into a senior housing building or an assisted living facility from their current home as the need arises.

Our results show that older adults in Allegany County feel strongly connected to their communities and want to remain here as they age, but that they do have concerns about their ability to do so.

Some people find that they need or want to move out of their community as they get older. If you were to consider moving out of Allegany County, what factors would contribute to that decision? (check all that apply)



The harsh New York winters can be hard on older residents; slippery walkways increase falls, slippery roads decrease driving abilities, and snow removal can be impossible, so it is no surprise that the second highest response as to what factors might cause residents to leave Allegany County, is the climate! While we cannot change the weather, we can make sure our environments are enabling for those that need assistance to

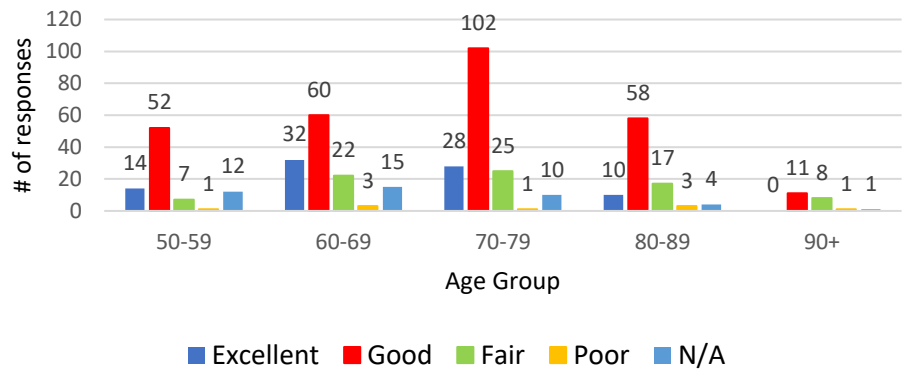
navigate the cold weather months such as clearing snow and ice to maintain walkways, offering snow removal assistance, and providing transportation services or running errands for a neighbor.

PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD HEALTH

Due to the impact of the coronavirus on social engagement for almost a year prior to the survey, a “Personal and Household Health” category was added to the survey in lieu of the traditional “Social Participation” domain. The AFAC committee decided that input regarding social participation would not be reliable as they would likely be influenced by the isolation of the government shutdowns and social distancing safety regulations that did not allow residents to have “normal” interactions in the community for the time leading up to the survey.

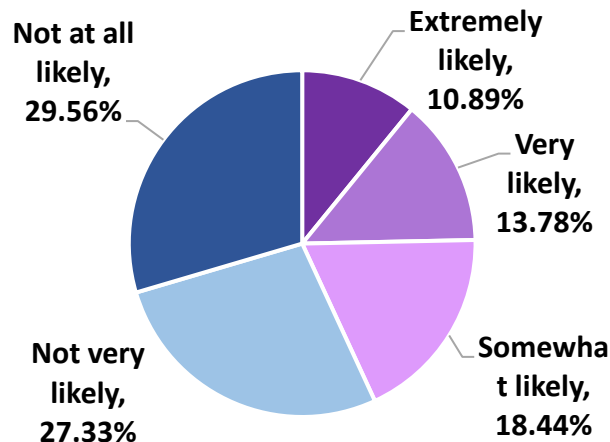
Respondents were asked to rate their personal health from poor to excellent. The majority of residents surveyed rated their personal health as “good” at 61.82% with an additional 18.22% reporting “excellent” health. As residents aged there was a decline in confidence about their personal health with the 80+ age groups dropping to a “fair” rating for the second highest response.

How would you rate your personal health? (by age group)



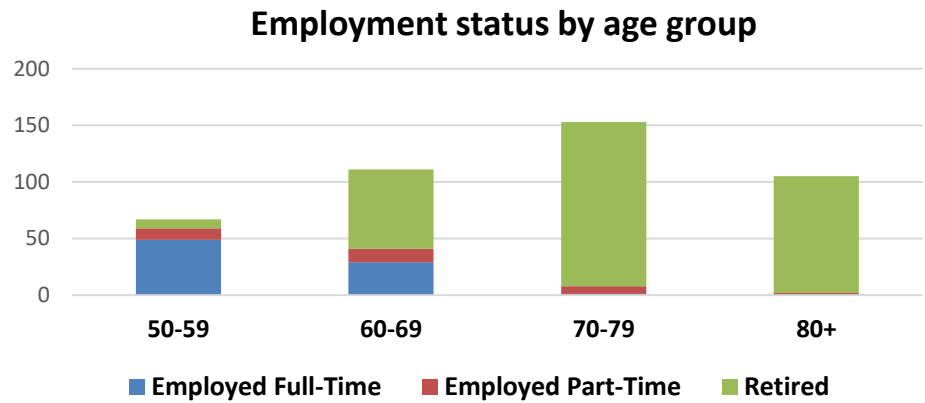
We surveyed for caregivers under this section and found that 17.69% of the respondents are caregivers either in their home (9.98%) or caring for someone outside of their home (7.71%). An additional 43.11% responded some level of likeliness that they would become a caregiver in the future

How likely is it that you will provide unpaid care to an adult in or outside of your home in the future?



CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Nearly three-fourths (72.03%) of those surveyed are currently in retirement. The employment status by age group is on trend with the standard age of retirement of 67 years old that is set by the Social Security Administration. The majority of those residents survey in their 50s are still in the workforce with that number decreasing as age increases.

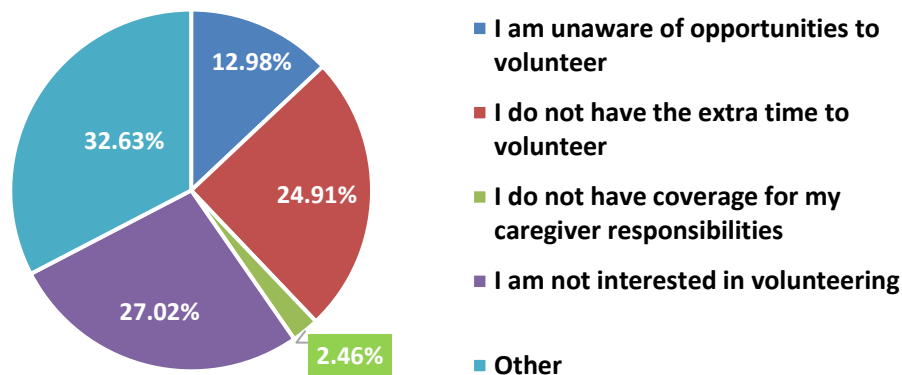


Volunteer opportunities are a great opportunity for residents to remain active and contribute to their communities after leaving the workforce, however, it is not always an option for some due to a variety of factors. Approximately fifty-five percent (55.06%) of those surveyed indicated that they spend zero (0) hours volunteering. When asked “If you do not volunteer currently, why not?” the results showed that 24.91% just simply do not have the extra time to volunteer. Additional input received in the “other” option that was selected by 32.63% of surveyed respondents, supported the lack of time and other common themes were noted as well.

Trending responses received under the “other” answer response as to why residents cannot or do not volunteer include:

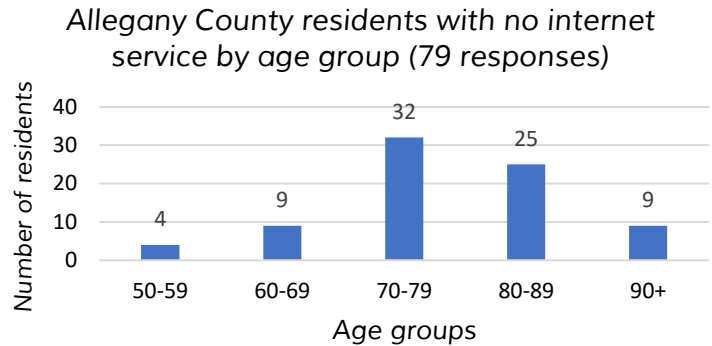
- Personal physical limitations
- Age
- Caregiver responsibilities (spouse, grandchildren)
- Personal chronic disease conditions

In you do not currently volunteer, why not?



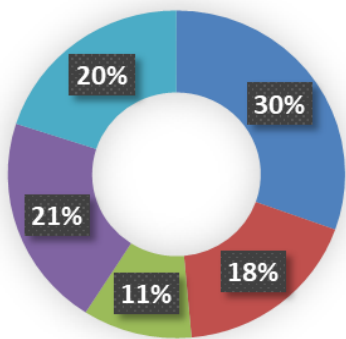
COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

The survey showed that 80.35% of respondents reported having a computer, laptop, or tablet, and furthermore 82.52% reported they have internet service connected to a device, including smartphones. Looking at the age demographics of those that reported having no internet access capability, we can identify that the older the respondent the increase in the inability to be reached with information by internet.



The internet is the fastest and most up to date way to distribute information about community events, news, services available, etc, but for many accessing an internet connection is not always possible. The high cost of service, no availability of connections in rural areas, and access to equipment to utilize the internet, are all main themes that residents stated as reasons they cannot or do not access the internet.

If you do not have the internet, why not?

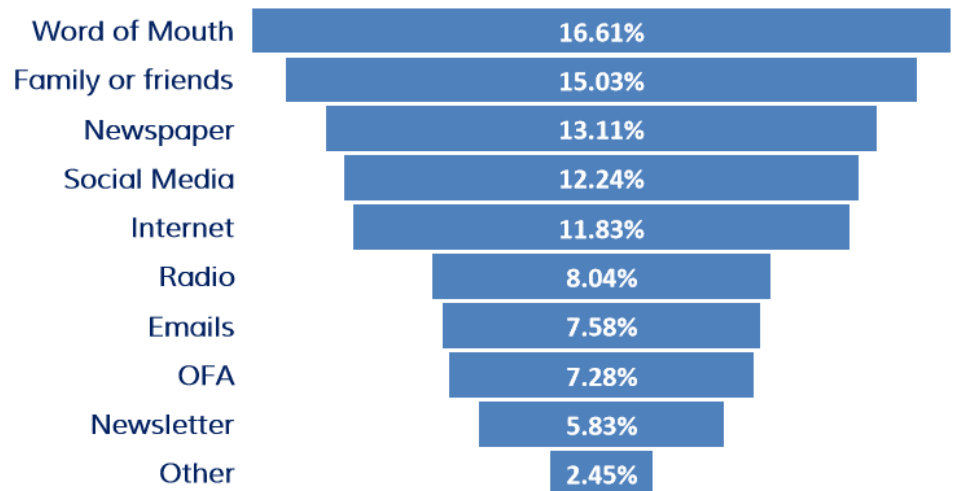


- Other
- I do not want internet service
- Internet is not available where I live
- I do not have a computer or other device that requires internet
- I cannot afford internet access

Reaching Allegany County residents with information about services available, upcoming events, news and other alerts, is important to ensuring residents are aware of what is going on in their communities and what

programs are available to support their needs. Only 40% of residents surveyed said they are able to access information about community events and local services with ease, with nearly the same number of residents (39%) stating that they are unable to access the same information easily.

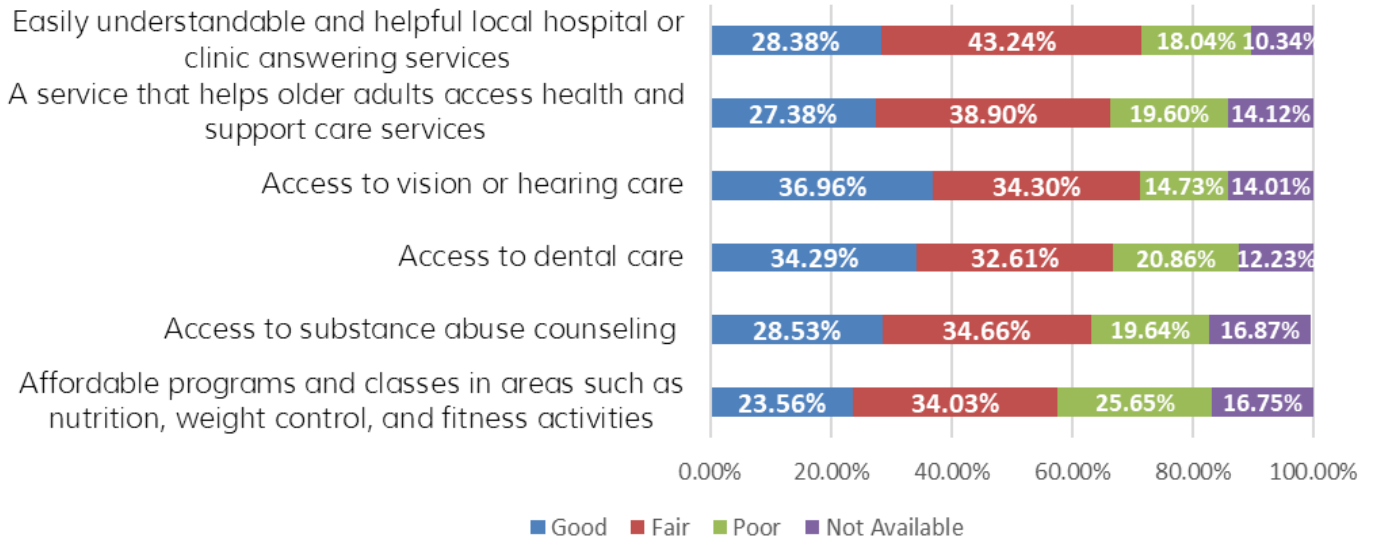
So how are Allegany County residents getting the information they are looking for about community services, local news, and events? The internet actually came in as the 5th highest response. The survey details “Word of Mouth” and “Family and Friends” as the top ways older adults get information in their communities.



HEALTH CARE AND SERVICES

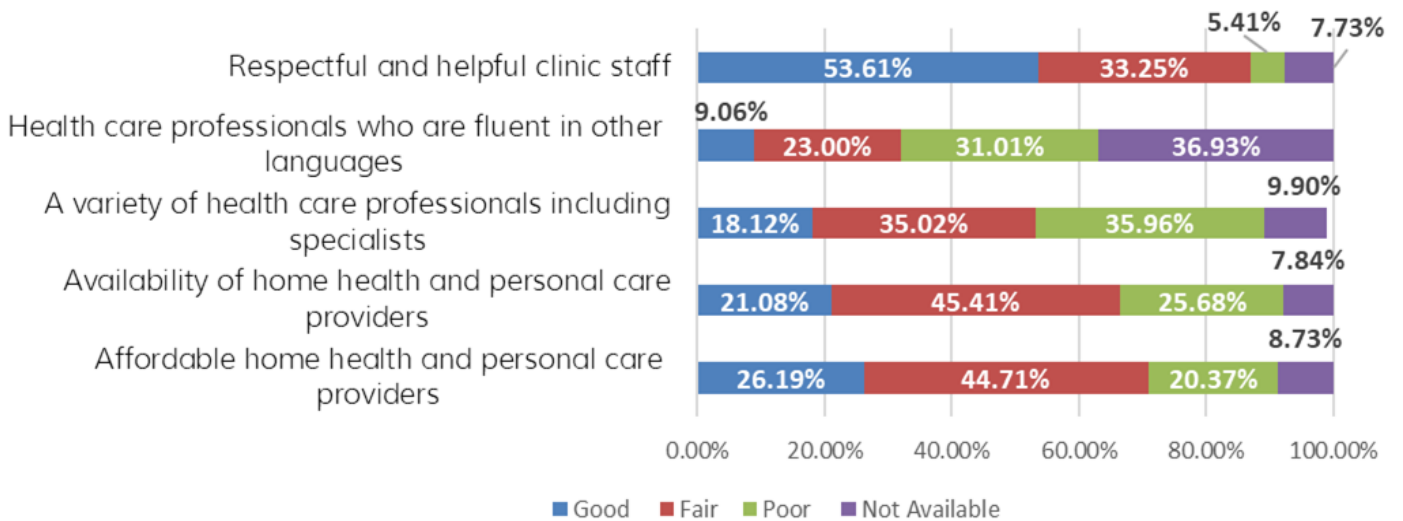
Providing health care and health services in a rural community often presents challenges that more urban areas do not face, such as longer travel distance to providers and specialists, availability of home care services, and overall availability of vision, dental, and medical providers. We asked survey respondents to rate their communities on health care and health and wellness services.

Thinking health and wellness services in your community, how would you rate the following:



Overall the positive responses outweighed the negative in most areas of both health care and health services, however the numbers dip in the areas concerning health care professionals that are fluent in other languages and having a variety of health care specialists.

Thinking about health care professions in your community, how would you rate your community on having the following:



IN CONCLUSION

Overall Allegany County residents identified that they enjoy living in their communities and hope to remain here as they age, however they are very in tune with what areas they would like to see improved to enable them to do so. This survey provided those residents that participated with a chance to voice their opinions and concerns, and many were grateful for the opportunity.

“Allegany Co. is a great place to live. It is true that some products and services are not available locally. But they are not far as long as you are driving. Regional buses are very important to many people.”

“Allegany County may be poor economically but the people here are kind and hearty (strong). The area is a well-kept secret for now. We are happy to be here. Transportation is needed for many. Assistance with home maintenance is necessary as the younger people move away and it is difficult to find help. The data shows many families can't pay rent without going in to grocery money. We tried to get a volunteer assistance with these issues covered, but we were short volunteers and long on needs.”

“Allegany is a beautiful county which would attract more people if availability of health care, stores, and general updated infrastructure was had. Thank you for this new endeavor”

“For being one of the less busy and social activity [counties] I do believe we take care of over communities very well. [...] I love my town and can't think of any other I'd rather live in. We have great churches with God fearing preachers and community, caring school staff and leaders. People that care and help their neighbors. Andover is the greatest.”

“I chose to live in a rural area and know there may challenges in my future. So far things have gone well for me. Office for the aged helped me keep my mother in law with me as long as I could care for her. They were very helpful with services I needed for her.”

“I have lived here since 1949- 72 years. And it is home, I have no desire to leave but [obviously] I will soon. I have worked, raised a family, lost a spouse, retired, but it's still home, Thank you Allegany County!”

“I have lived in Allegany County 47 years. I appreciate the rural setting. There have been some isolated occasions that I used OFA services that were valuable.....”

“I have lived here in Wellsville all my life and feel very blessed. My late husband and I raised 4 children and they took advantage of Alfred State and Alfred University. We also have a great hospital, with advantage of Mercy Flight when necessary. We could use a department store but do have stores that have the necessities if needed. The office of the aging does a great job. We are so lucky.”

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"I love living in this community and wish we could promote it for a retirement community. It's a great place to live except for the lack of health care though I appreciate and support our local hospital and it's affiliation with U of R. It's a great place to live - even in the winter! It seems to have a lot of support systems in place for the aging even though I haven't been in need yet, thankfully. :)"

"It was little long survey but I made it. I'm happy to live in Scio, Allegany County. USA"

"nice survey - great way to assess and evaluate services - glad to help..."

"Thank you for taking the time to gather this information."

"Thank you for contacting me - I am happy that many years ago I chose to leave an urban area and moved to allegany county with a previous partner..."

"Thank you for the opportunity to participate."

"The County does a good job and they try hard. very good Office of Aging. thank you! nice survey - great way to assess and evaluate services - glad to help..."

"I appreciate the survey - hope you get some useful information as aging is something we all must face. Thank you!"

Age-Friendly Allegany County Mission Statement:

Our mission is to support Allegany County residents through every stage and every age of life by providing enabling physical and social environments, opportunities to create meaningful experiences, and equitable, affordable, programs and services.

Age-Friendly Allegany County Vision Statement:

Our vision is to build upon the strengths of the communities in Allegany County while developing new opportunities that will further support all residents as they grow older. By 2025, we will:

- Create new social opportunities, including intergenerational activities
- Assess and improve physical environments to be more accessible for all
- Foster collaborations between organizations to strengthen our impact and extend the reach of services to Allegany County residents
- Build on and enhance the infrastructure in our communities that positively impact the quality of life for all residents, especially older adults and those living with a disability.