

Age Forward

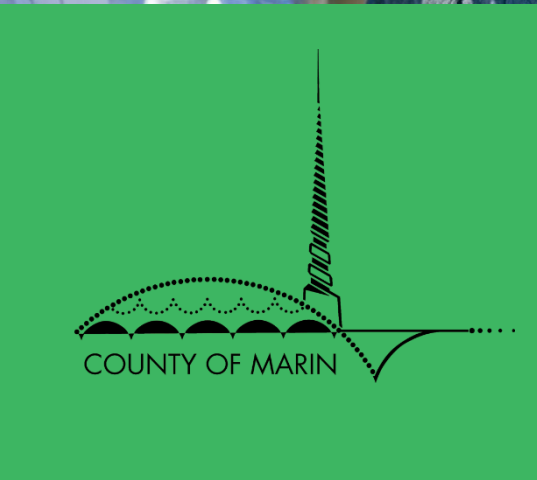
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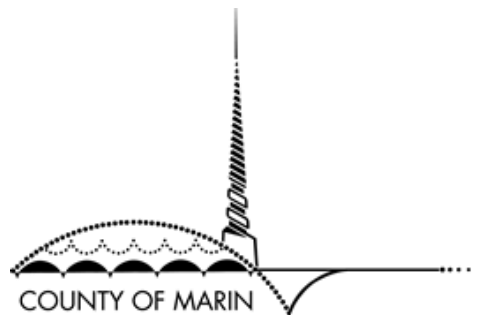
Age-Friendly County of Marin

January 2020



Livable
For
All





The research for and development of this plan was led by Marin County Aging and Adult Services with guidance from the Age-Friendly County of Marin Advisory Committee.

Significant strategic and tactical support was provided by Collaborative Consulting, Inc., a firm dedicated to the continuous advancement of health and human services organizations, cross-sector partnerships, and communities.

The plan was endorsed by the County of Marin Board of Supervisors on January 28, 2020.

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

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An Age-Forward Approach

This plan for creating an Age-Friendly County of Marin is a framework for establishing a universal practice of creating and adapting services, programs, policies, places, and spaces to be livable for all ages and generations now and into the future. Such a practice involves weaving or embedding an “age-forward” approach – or lens – into daily and long-range work to help the County advance a more equitable community for all residents across their lifespan.

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LETTER FROM THE MARIN COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR



Dear Residents of Marin County,

This Age-Friendly County of Marin plan was informed by many of you – Marin County residents and working professionals. It is a framework for making progressive enhancements to the ways we create and manage policies, how we interact and work together, and how we envision an ideal future for a community that is experiencing a rapid growth rate among its oldest generations. We all want to grow up and age in a community that allows us to be who we want to be, go where we want to go, and do what we want to do. We want to feel valued and respected no matter our age, income, or ability. With one in three residents over the age of 60 by 2025 and over 50% of older adults needing some assistance at some point, the challenges and opportunities for encouraging inclusive and responsive policies, practices, and places for people of every age have never been greater than they are today.

The Marin County Board of Supervisors proclaimed 2018 the Year of the Older Adult, orienting the County to the reality that our demographics are shifting. Leveraging the work of the Aging Action Initiative (AAI), we launched our five-year age-friendly endeavor by submitting our application to the World Health

Organization and AARP and getting to work on the research and development for this plan. We are proud to connect this county-level effort with an established, committed, and growing local network of age-friendly communities within Marin County. The time is also right on a broader level. California Governor Gavin Newsom in June 2019 signed an executive order calling for the creation of a Master Plan for Aging to be developed by October 1, 2020. California is also developing its age-friendly plan.

Over 2,000 Marin County residents, professionals, and advocates have contributed to the insights and ideas that constitute this plan. It reflects our lived experiences and ideas and recommends we infuse an age-forward awareness and inclusion of people across their entire lifespan into our policies, services, programs, and culture. We intend for this document to influence, initiate and propel changes and adaptations we can make at the County level – and encourage other organizations, institutions, local governments, and key stakeholders to do the same in their own policies and practices. Such a collective effort – formal and informal, public and private – will make Marin County the most age-friendly

community possible. Our approach is incremental and strengths-based, allowing us to identify existing policies and practices that can be enhanced, focusing on our assets and strengths, not on our deficits, to drive greater solutions.

This plan represents our Board of Supervisors' commitment to encouraging a concerted focus across County departments to improve and promote policies that are responsive to the needs of all generations of people living, working in and visiting Marin County. This plan sets a

foundation for ongoing efforts to adapt and evolve systems well into the future. The focus areas and action items herein are intended to initiate this process and set the stage for our future.

We are proud to be part of the growing worldwide age-friendly movement, to address some of our County's challenges and advance age-forward solutions through our ongoing commitment to equity, collaboration, and service to you, our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "MHymel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Matthew H. Hymel
County Administrator
January 2020

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Age-Friendly County of Marin effort is led and coordinated by leadership at the county's Aging and Adult Services agency. The Age-Friendly County of Marin Advisory Committee was created in March 2018 to oversee and guide the assessment phase and writing of this plan to arrive at specific action items that specific entities will undertake (see sections five and six). The committee completed its oversight objectives in October 2019 and was comprised of the following county department managers and representatives from local organizations:

- Gabriella Calicchio, Director, Marin County Cultural Services
- Chris Chamberlain, Assistant Director, Marin County Parks and Open Space
- Lorenzo Cordova, District 4 Aide, Board of Supervisors
- Brian Crawford, Director, Marin County Community Development Agency
- Laney Davidson, Disability Access Manager, Marin County Department of Public Works / ADA
- Jean Gunn, Commissioner of District 5, Marin County Commission on Aging
- Sara Jones, Director, Marin County Free Library
- Bill Kelley, Deputy Director of Building & Safety, Marin County Community Development Agency
- Max Korten, Director and General Manager, Marin County Parks and Open Space
- Benita McLarin, Director, Marin County Health and Human Services
- Bret McTigue, Emergency Medical Officer and Battalion Chief, Marin County Fire Department
- Jim Monson, former Commissioner of District 4, Marin County Commission on Aging
- Maureen Parton, District 3 Aide, to Board of Supervisors
- Raul Rojas, Director, Marin County Department of Public Works
- Jody Timms, Commissioner of Fairfax, Marin County Commission on Aging
- Jason Weber, Fire Chief, Marin County Fire Department
- Nancy Whalen, General Manager, Marin Transit

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Aging in Marin County

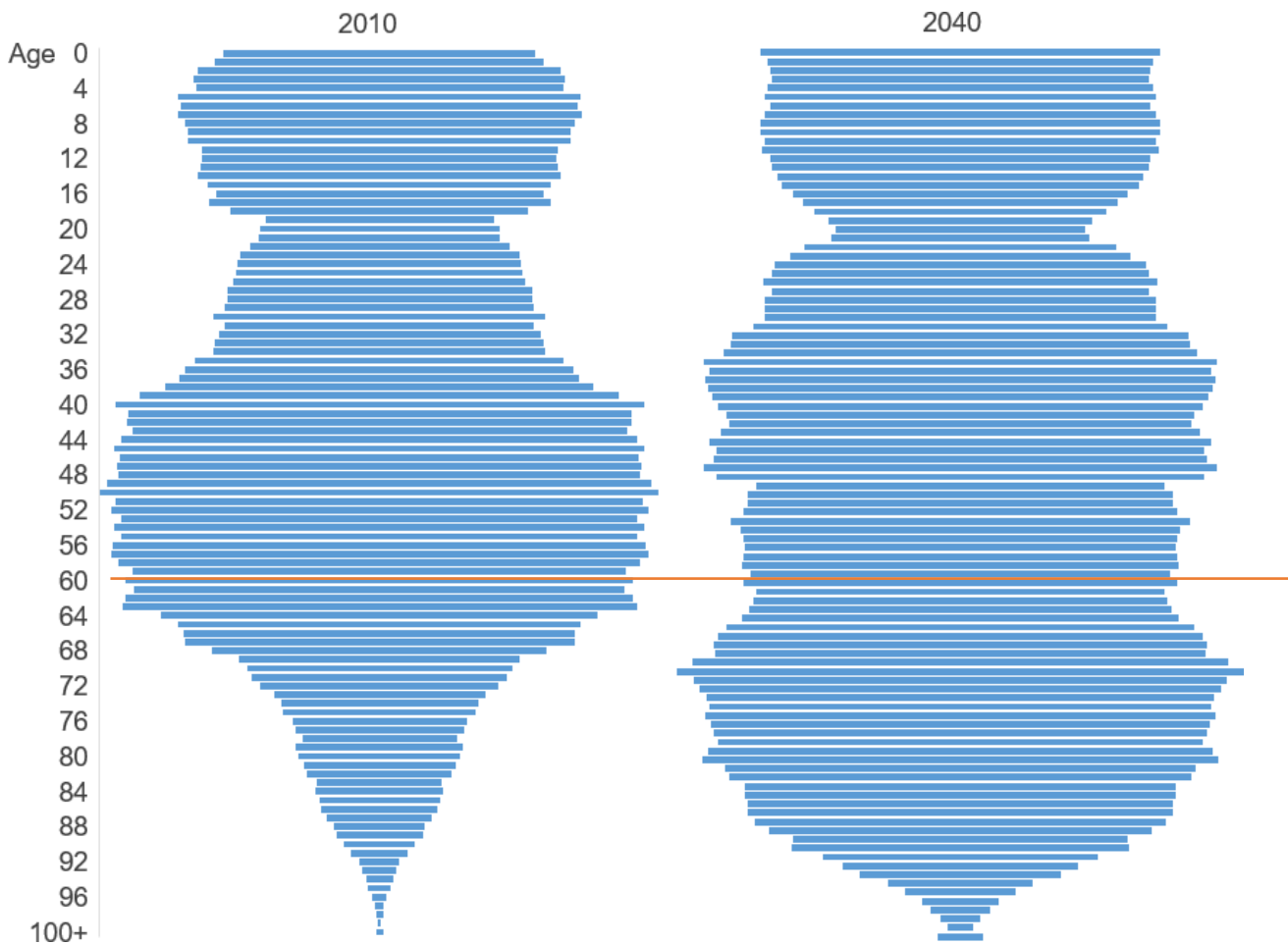
Marin County, like much of California and the United States, is undergoing unprecedented population change. Our residents are living longer lives than ever before and wish to remain in their homes and connected to their Marin County communities throughout their lives. Marin County's older adults (people age 60 and over) already comprise 28% of the total county population, making Marin one of the oldest counties in the Bay Area and nearly 10% higher than the California average.¹ The share of older adults in our community will continue to increase, and is projected to reach 35% of our county's population by 2025 and 38% by 2030.²

Known for its high quality of life and high cost of living, Marin County presents opportunities and challenges for residents wishing to remain in their homes and communities. While our county ranks very high across California and the US in areas such as health, life expectancy³, and income, these superlatives can overshadow the realities of many Marin residents who experience barriers and less access to opportunity, which, in turn, are associated with poor health outcomes. According to the County of Marin Department of Health and Human Services' **Strategic Plan to Achieve Health and Wellness Equity (2018)**, Marin County is the most inequitable county in

California.⁴ As a greater share of the older population will live longer, we will witness greater disparities within and between "older" age groups and subpopulations. This will inevitably place greater pressure on policies and programs that have not previously been designed to account for or address a greater volume and broader diversity of need.

This aging trend is also long-term. As the Baby Boomer generation further matures, the generations of their children, Generation X and the Millennials, are close behind, carrying similar population numbers with even longer life expectancies. This means we need to be planning not for short-term fixes but for significant and meaningful long-term changes and improvements in how we design our policies, services, and communities for greater anticipation of, responsiveness to, and inclusion of the many older adults among us – and those to come. This demands greater attention from a broader array of public and private stakeholders in our communities to advocate for and adopt more age-friendly and inclusive policies, raise awareness of and direct greater resources toward age-friendly services and programs, and collectively picture and realize what a truly age-friendly community looks like.

Population estimates and projections for Marin County, by age (2018)⁵



In order for us to achieve a future that is absent of explicit or implicit ageism, we will need to alter our personal, political, and institutional conditions that reinforce counterproductive policies, deficit-minded perspectives, and imbalanced resource flows. Making more intentional age-friendly investments in our community’s physical and social infrastructures creates greater opportunities for wellbeing, safety, and social connection across all generations – from newborns to “perennials” – yielding “longevity dividends” well into our future.

Why Age-Friendly County of Marin?

Addressing aging is no small feat – for individuals as well as communities and societies. Our thinking, our policies, and our systems have not seemed to catch up with our own bodies: our species is living longer than ever before. Aging is receiving greater public attention in ways perhaps not seen since the birth of Social Security in 1935 and the creation of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in 1965, when the average lifespan of

Americans was 61 and 70 years, respectively. Today, the average Marin County resident lives to see their eighty-fifth birthday.⁶

While there has yet to be structural reform at the scale of major federal programs, a confluence of activity has sprung up in the last decade largely driven by state and local governments, nonprofit and non-governmental organizations, community groups, and individual advocates. A new generation of older adults, the Baby Boomers, brings with them population numbers never seen and perceptions and desires around aging that are challenging legacy policies, services, and cultural norms around *where* and *how* they want to live their later years.

In 2006, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched the Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities to help communities around the world prepare for dramatic increases in older adult populations.⁷ Six years later, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) partnered with the WHO to advance age-friendly communities advocacy in the United States, through AARP Livable Communities. There are currently over 400 WHO/AARP designated age-friendly/livable communities in the US.⁸ In Marin County in 2014, Sausalito became the first city or town to be accepted into the WHO/AARP network.

Age-friendly initiatives are catalyzed and fostered by many different types of groups, in some places the organizers are community members, in others they are public or private organizations. While the makeup and chemistry of age-friendly community organizers differ, there is typically a common guiding philosophy: to make neighborhoods, towns, cities, and rural areas great places for people of all ages, through safe, walkable streets; age-friendly housing and transportation options; access to needed services; and opportunities for every resident to participate in community life.⁹

This combination of demographic and age-friendly community advocacy trends led the Marin County Board of Supervisors to proclaim 2018 the Year of the Older Adult, recognizing a series of initiatives and groups that were already working to provide a strong foundation for greater age friendliness and encouraging more be done to support older adults in our community. Building on the Year of the Older Adult proclamation, the Board of Supervisors also approved the County's application to join the WHO/AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. The Board thus established the Age-Friendly County of Marin Initiative, launching a five-year commitment to identify needs and explore changes to help make the County of Marin more age friendly, with a particular focus on assessing the age friendliness of County departments and unincorporated areas and creating this plan to encourage a more livable county for people of all ages and abilities.

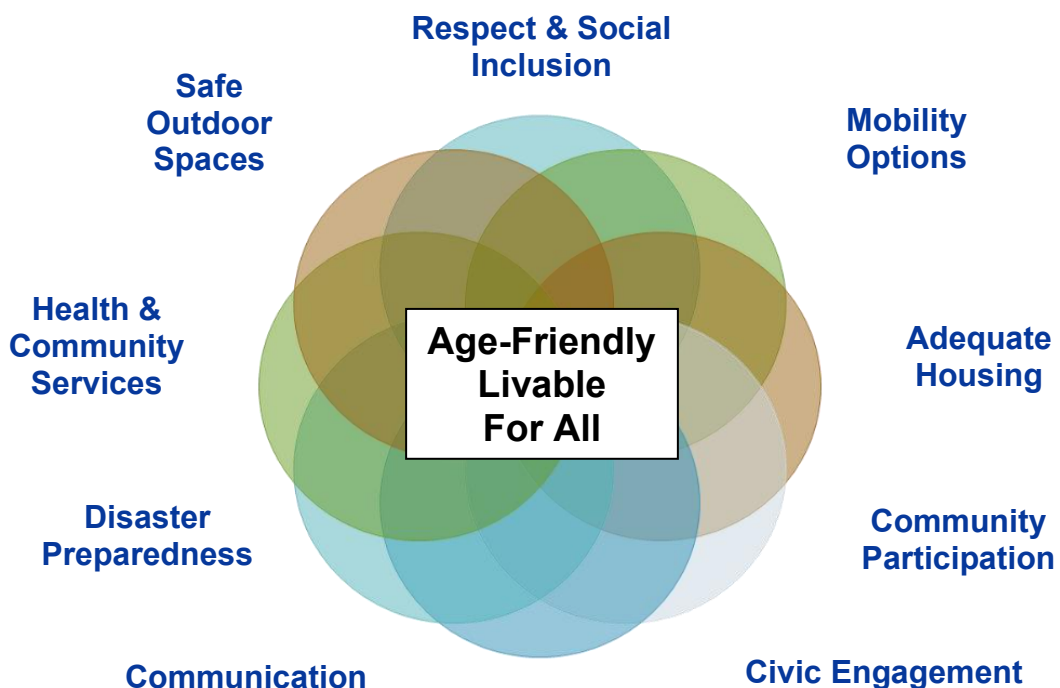
The Age-Friendly movement is creating opportunities for shared dialogues and local systems change, for creating opportunities to reframe how we think about and perceive aging and older adults, and for imagining and realizing tangible improvements to how we design our communities.

What Does Age-Friendly Mean?

In order to provide a guiding framework for the age-friendly community development process, the WHO created eight domains:

- Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect & Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation & Employment
- Communication & Information
- Community & Health Services

The Age-Friendly County of Marin initiative has adapted these domains to fit the areas of this action plan, and added a ninth domain, Disaster Preparedness, due to recent events and ongoing threats of wildfire, earthquakes and other natural disasters in Marin County. These nine domains drive the entire Age-Friendly County of Marin initiative in its efforts to create a more age-friendly place to live:



Complementary Efforts and Plans Across Marin County

This Age-Friendly County of Marin Action Plan is intended to align with, complement, and evolve to incorporate existing and future assessments, plans, research, and initiatives across the county, while at the same time offering greater focus on the needs of unincorporated areas. This is the first time an aging-related County-level plan has been developed in Marin County that incorporates multiple County departments alongside local organizations, groups, and residents in its scope. This plan also helps fill gaps and strengthens the foundation of and advocacy for age-friendly efforts in specific parts of Marin County. Several key complementary aging initiatives, organizations and community groups are briefly described below.

The Age-Friendly Marin Network is an alliance of local professionals, residents, and community groups who support the development and advancement of age-friendly communities across Marin County by promoting active aging, good health, and quality of life with inclusion and respect for all. As of October 2019, nine of the 11 incorporated cities and towns in Marin County have joined the WHO/AARP Age-Friendly Network and are part of the Age-Friendly Marin Network, demonstrating overwhelming public and private advocacy and support for making all of our communities more responsive to and inclusive of older adults. See Appendix A for a listing of all the communities in Marin County that have achieved Age-Friendly status.

The Aging Action Initiative (AAI) is a cross-sector collaborative of more than 65 community agencies, service providers, and grassroots organizations. The Marin County Board of Supervisors launched the AAI in 2014 with the goal of helping better understand and address the evolving needs of the county's older residents. Since 2017, the focus and strategy of AAI has been to address community issues through a lens of aging; focus collective effort on deeper, strategic, systemic impact; and leverage existing efforts to coordinate, co-sponsor and convene. AAI's three driving focus areas involve network education and support, policy and advocacy, and program and service incubation.

The Marin County Commission on Aging is a 23-member federally mandated advisory council to the Marin County Board of Supervisors. The Commission works closely with Marin County's Aging and Adult Services as representatives of Marin's older adult residents. Commissioners are appointed to three-year terms by either the Board of Supervisors or the 11 incorporated cities and towns in Marin. In addition, Marin County's Senior Assembly Member and Senior Senator, representatives of the California Senior Legislature (CSL), also serve as ex-officio members of the Commission for a four-year term. The Commission leads committees on housing and transportation, health and nutrition, legislation and policy, and planning.

Marin County's Aging and Adult Services office acts as the Area Agency on Aging for Marin County, and publishes an Area Plan every four years. The Area Plan involves qualitative and quantitative research on the demographics, experiences and perspectives of older adults in their service area of Marin County. The research informs many of the agency's focus areas, programs, and direct services some of which relate closely to several of the focus areas in this age-friendly plan. In its most recent Area Plan, the **Live Long, Live**

Well: Marin County Area Plan for Aging 2016–2020, the County’s Aging and Adult Services identified four overarching goals:

- Enhance the quality of life, safety, and security for older adults
- Support and promote local efforts to create livable communities for all
- Improve visibility and usability of information, services, and resources
- Encourage innovative approaches to policy and services through community collaboration and advocacy.

The **County of Marin Age-Friendly Action Plan** and its supporting data and research are intended to complement current and future iterations of the County’s Area Agency on Aging plan, currently entitled the **Live Long, Live Well Plan**. Some of the **Age-Friendly Action Plan** focus and action areas herein share the strategic goals of the **Live Long, Live Well Plan**, which will be updated for 2020-2024 and will include information learned from the August 2019 **Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey**.¹⁰ The **Age-Friendly Action Plan** can be thought of as supporting the environment in which older persons live, whereas the Area Plan is more focused on the individual and families living within that environment.

The **County of Marin’s 2015-2020 Five-Year Business Plan**, which sets out a plan for County of Marin services to become more responsive and effective in the delivery of community services, identifies several social and civic themes that are parallel to the age-friendly movement:¹¹

- Housing costs are increasing faster than wages, and Marin households living below the self-sufficiency standard has increased
- The County’s demographics are changing, with greater cultural and ethnic diversity as well as an increasing share of population who are older
- The workforce is changing, with greater shares of residents entering retirement
- Residents are expecting more online access and capabilities from local governments

In 2018, the County of Marin Department of Health and Human Services (H&HS) published the **Strategic Plan to Achieve Health and Wellness Equity**, a roadmap for the department to become more action-oriented, inclusive, and accountable. The overarching goal of the plan, to achieve greater health and wellness equity, is the intended result of the following key objectives:

- Clients: embrace a culture where client perspectives and needs through the life span come first
- Community: ensure change is co-created and driven by community members
- Conditions: transform inequitable conditions

- Quality: Strengthen effectiveness of H&HS’ work with data and innovation

In June 2019, Governor Newsom signed an executive order calling for the creation of a Master Plan for Aging for the state of California to be developed by October 2020. The Master Plan will serve as a blueprint for state and local governments, organizations, and community groups to build, structure, and align efforts to foster more age-responsive solutions for the future. Like the philosophies of many age-friendly champions like those behind this plan, Governor Newsom prefers to use language that frames this societal shift not as a crisis but as an opportunity for solutions.¹² On October 12, 2019, Governor Newsom also signed into law a bill requiring the Secretary of California Health and Human Services, in developing the Master Plan on Aging, to consider applying, on behalf of the state of California, to join the WHO/AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities.”¹³

Age-friendly community advocacy is also making its way into Federal policy. In the latest proposed Older Americans Act reauthorization, which as of early November 2019 passed the US House with bipartisan support and is expected to pass the Senate, changes have been made to expand the “Interagency Coordinating Committee on Aging” to the “Interagency Coordinating Committee on Age-Friendly Communities.” New language in the act also reflects a more direct approach for this committee, as it is now instructed to “support the ability of older individuals to age in place, including through the provision of homelessness prevention services, support the ability of older individuals to access preventive health care, promote age-friendly communities, and address the ability of older individuals to access long-term care supports, including access to caregivers and home- and community-based services.”¹⁴



COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

Once the County of Marin was accepted into the WHO/AARP global network, the first step of the initiative involved an Assessment Phase to collect information on the experiences and perspectives of older adults, aging services professionals, and other key stakeholders in Marin County. Broader secondary qualitative and quantitative data was also collected to provide context. As part of the assessment phase, the **Age-Friendly County of Marin Assessment Survey** was administered in early 2019 to older adults residing in Marin County. Nearly 1,900 of these surveys were collected, representing roughly 2.7% of the 60+ year-old population residing in Marin County.

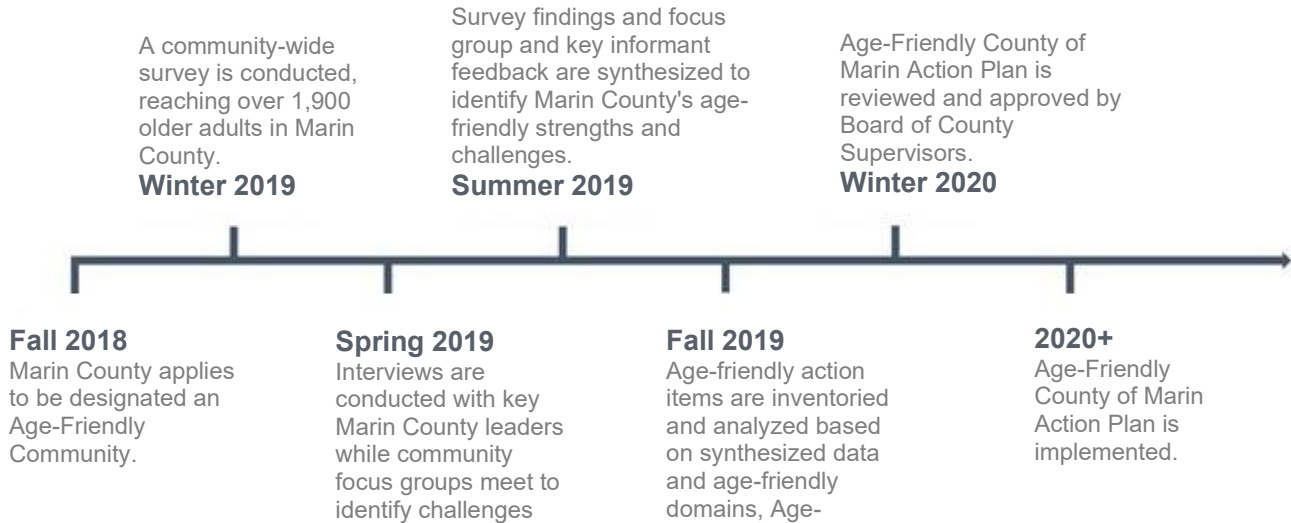
Following the collection and analysis of the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey**, focus groups and guided discussions with older adults, local aging services organizations and community leaders and groups were conducted to identify community needs, strengths, and opportunities. Focus groups and discussions occurred with the following groups in the spring and summer of 2019:

- Age-Friendly Network meeting
- Aging Action Initiative steering committee planning meeting
- Grupo de enfoque (Latinx focus group), West Marin
- Marin City focus group
- Tam Valley focus groups (two held)
- West Marin community member focus group
- West Marin Senior Services staff and board member focus group

Key informant interviews were conducted with County leadership and personnel in order to better understand the perspectives, efforts, and assets the County of Marin possesses that can drive greater age friendliness. Over 2,000 individual voices from nearly every corner of the County have given shape to this plan and resemble similar identified priorities that emerged from a survey the County conducted in 2018 of residents of all adult ages, which included cost of living and housing, transportation improvements, and disaster preparedness.



Development and deployment timeline of Age-Friendly County of Marin Action Plan



Many common themes emerged as we surveyed older adults and gathered perspectives and ideas on age friendliness from the community. Through ongoing dialogue and synthesis of feedback, shared community strengths emerged:

- **Community Respect** | Older adults largely feel valued and respected and perceive that people in their communities are polite and helpful. Many age-friendly initiatives are underway in the county, with a fair amount of resources and institutional support devoted their success.
- **Population Health** | An overwhelming majority of older adults in Marin County report being in good or excellent health, and Marin County is ranked as the healthiest county in the U.S. by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and has one of the longest average resident lifespans in the country.¹⁵
- **Well-Maintained Communities and Access to Outdoors** | Most older adults agree that their communities have well-maintained homes and properties, safe parks within walking distance, easily accessible public buildings and libraries, and safe and well-maintained streets. Residents also recognize the proximity of paths and trails to and through parks and open spaces as key strengths of the community.
- **Connection** | Many older adults stress the importance of and participation in social clubs, continuing education, community centers and social activities. There is also a strong reliance on networks of friends and family for information sharing.

- **Solutions and Collaboration** | Residents share a sense of concern for those who are in difficult positions, along with a willingness to contribute to solutions, demonstrating a willingness to offer ideas as well as time and energy to encourage community-driven solutions to community-level challenges. County personnel recognize growing efforts to build partnerships across County teams and departments as well as with outside groups and organizations. Community resource navigation services available through Health and Human Services, Marin Access, and other local agencies are valued by those who use them.

Commonly shared challenges also emerged through the community assessment process, presenting opportunities to utilize our strengths and resources to address barriers, gaps, and concerns:

- **Housing** | Cost of living and housing is a critical direct and indirect concern in Marin County. Lack of affordable housing impacts older adults and their families as well as the local workforce. Limited accessible housing stock means older adults must invest more into home modifications and take greater risks in order to age in place. Older renters have a greater challenge in homes and units that need age-friendly modifications.
- **Mobility Options** | Limited transit routes between key community nodes (housing - health services - shopping), as well as flexible and on-demand transportation options, particularly in rural areas, make traveling within the county difficult for many older adults. Many older adults feel there is a need to improve sidewalk infrastructure, particularly in unincorporated areas of the county.
- **Community Services** | Older adults and professionals express concern about limited affordable and accessible health, mental health, and community-based services. About a quarter of the older adult population who want to remain in their homes through old age don't think there are enough affordable or accessible services and supports to help them do so. There is also desire for greater information sharing and promotion of available resources for older adults.
- **Emergency Preparedness** | This was a prominent concern for Marin residents that completed the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)**. Considering recent wildfires in California, this is fresh on older adults' minds. A higher percentage of those who are isolated were more concerned about emergency preparedness. Focus groups identify this as a strength – local services are responsive, knowledgeable, and prepared with an established network of volunteers

- **Social Connection** | While there are many opportunities for social engagement in the county and many older adults report being connected to others, there is a growing concern about loneliness and social isolation among older adults, particularly those who have limited mobility and/or limited formal and informal support systems.
- **Unincorporated Areas** | There are considerable differences in lived experiences between incorporated and unincorporated areas of Marin County. Through survey data and focus group conversations, residents in rural and unincorporated areas express concern over limited community and health services available, higher costs for care and services, limited transportation options, higher risk of natural disasters, a more challenging topography with less age-friendly housing, and limited pedestrian infrastructure. A higher share of the resident population in unincorporated areas are also older.¹⁶

Equity Challenges and Opportunities

According to the County’s **Strategic Plan to Achieve Health and Wellness Equity (2018)**, Marin is the most inequitable county in the state.¹⁷ County leadership and personnel, from the Board of Supervisors to front-line staff, have taken a proactive approach to better understand and respond to the diverse needs and preferences of all residents, with particular focus on residents who have the greatest socioeconomic need, persons of color, and/or residents who are geographically isolated. The Marin County Board of Supervisors define equity as:

Just and fair inclusion in the County where all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Equity efforts seek to rectify historic patterns of exclusion.¹⁸

Underlying many of the challenges shared and identified through recent older adult community needs assessment surveys and demographic research are dramatic differences in lived experiences along income, racial, and/or geographic identifiers. Differences in experiences and abilities to access services and supports exist across other identifiers, such as living status (e.g. alone or with others), gender, health and functional status, and available social and support networks. For older adults, and in many cases for their families as well, these differences directly influence wellbeing, social connections, and longevity.

According to US Census Bureau estimates, just under 92% of the County’s older adult population is white. Survey and assessment findings point to considerable differences in lived experiences, support systems, and access to services between racial and ethnic residents. In Marin County, the threshold for economic self-sufficiency among older adults is 300% of the Federal Poverty Level, or at least about \$36,000 in annual income. Applying

this “low-income” measure to the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** responses on income, just over 18% of older adults responding to the survey would be considered low-income. This rate increases in unincorporated areas of the County, to just over 22%. Key findings on health and social equity challenges, derived from the recent H&HS **Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (2019)** in Marin County include:

- Minority older adults are more than twice as likely as non-minority older adults to report that they sometimes worry about not having enough food to last, or that the food they had didn’t last before they had enough money to buy more (23% vs 6%).
- Minority older adults who are unpaid friend or family caregivers are about twice as likely as non-minority older adults to provide daily care.
- About half of minority older adults are still employed for pay, which is about 12% higher than their white counterparts.
- Women are three times as likely to eat alone versus men (21% vs. 7%), and more than a third of low-income adults report eating alone all the time.
- Lower income older adults tend to live a more isolated life; 57% report living alone, about twice the rate as non-low-income older adults.
- Lower income older adults are more likely than non-low-income older adults to report that they don’t feel respected as a member of the community (12% vs. 3%); nearly one in five (18%) of minority older adults feel that they are not valued and respected as a member of the community, about 4 times higher than older white (non-Hispanic) adults.
- One in five low-income adults and one in 10 older women do not drive.
- About a quarter of low-income adults do not have a neighbor they would contact in case of an emergency.
- Older adults with fewer financial resources have, on average, fewer face-to-face interactions than non-low-income older adults in Marin County.

Applying an equity lens to age-friendly advocacy means recognizing that inequities compound with age. Viable solutions are those that improve the lives of residents who are most vulnerable, who experience the greatest barriers, and who are hardest to reach. In a truly age-friendly Marin County, all residents can access the resources they need to age the way they choose.



FOCUS AREAS AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

This action plan is comprised of six focus areas determined through the synthesis of input and perspectives from residents and key stakeholders in Marin County. Each focus area objective falls within the guiding domains of our age-friendly framework and identifies the roles that key stakeholders can play in fostering and furthering an age-friendly community. The types of key stakeholders who will help further this plan include:

- **Community** stakeholders, such as the members of the public, community-based organizations, healthcare providers, etc.
- **County Leadership** stakeholders involve the County’s Board of Supervisors (BOS)
- **County Department** stakeholders, such as Community Development Agency, Marin County Free Library, Department of Public Works, Marin County Parks, etc.

FOCUS AREA 1: HOUSING

Goal: Affordable and accessible housing options are available to all residents

Affordable and appropriate housing is a critical concern for Marin County residents of all ages. An older housing stock, irregular topographies, and an expensive housing market like Marin County’s create even greater stresses on people who have functional limitations or minimal financial resources. Limited affordable housing options also negatively impact the local aging services workforce, many of whom earn salaries far less than what is needed to afford market rate housing in Marin County. Older renters have a far greater challenge modifying homes and units to enable them to remain in their homes.

Aging in Home and Community

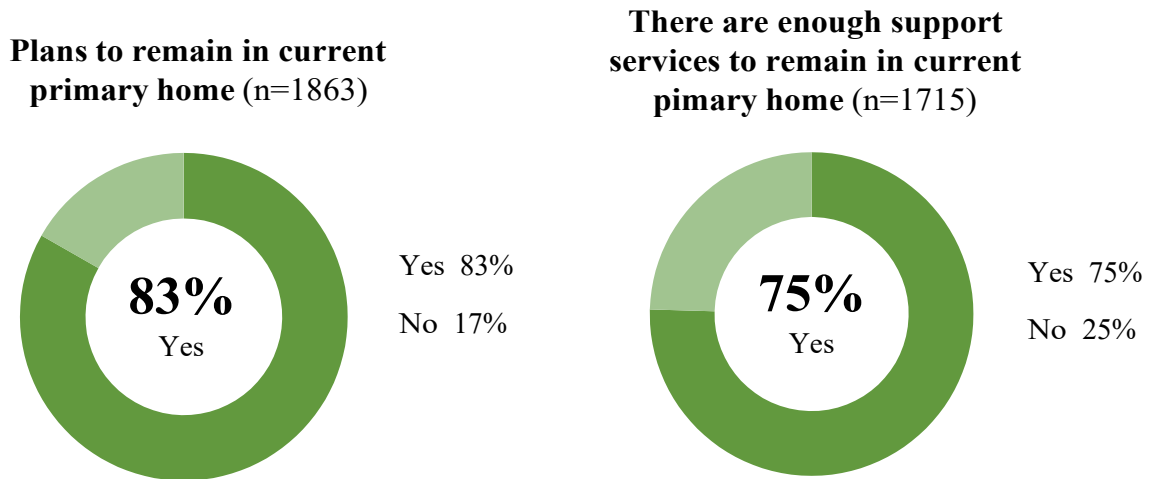
Ensuring that older adults can age in their desired setting, within their means and with necessary accommodations should be a priority for any age-friendly community. Marin County suffers from a severe limited supply of affordable and accessible “age-friendly” housing. While the overall population of Marin County is projected to increase by about 4% between 2015 and 2040, the number of residents age 60 years and older is projected to increase by 42% in this same period.¹⁹ The most significant and potentially alarming population increase is among the 80 years and



older cohort, who will increase just over 200% during this time.²⁰ This profound population trend is a critical indicator for the future we should be planning for – one with a much higher concentration of significantly older adults who will demand housing suitable for their financial means as well as their evolving physical abilities.

Based on findings from the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** conducted for this plan, 83% of Marin County older adults plan to remain in their homes as they age.²¹ In order to do so successfully, older adults rely on formal and informal supports, which vary in availability and quality based on a person’s resources (family, social network, income, self-care, etc.) as well as the location of their home (rural, suburban, urban, etc.). Of the survey respondents who do not expect to remain in their current homes through old age, the most common reasons included:

- Affordability
- Home maintenance
- Desire to downsize
- Limited accessibility (too many stairs, steep hills in neighborhood, location of bathrooms, etc.)
- Limited availability of support services (transportation, in-home services, meals, etc.)
- Unreliability of housing leases
- Feeling alone and isolated

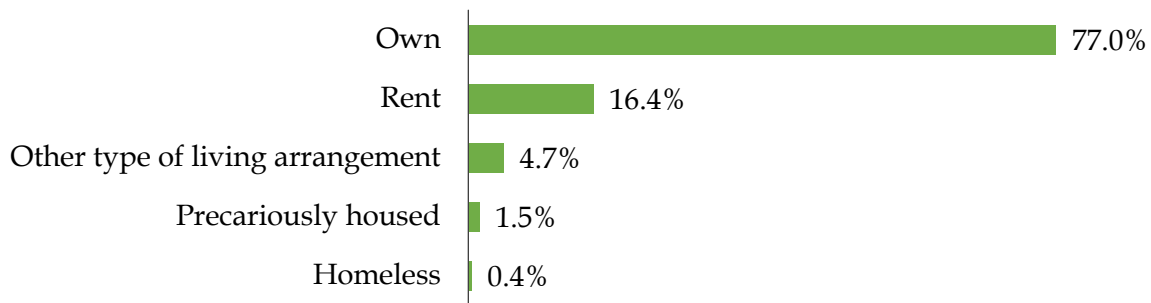


Differences in preference and experience between homeowners and renters are noteworthy. About 75% of older adults in Marin County own their homes while about 25% are renters.²² A higher proportion of renters do not plan to remain in the homes they currently live in. This seems to be due to several factors, including the unreliability of year-to-year leases in an already expensive and strained housing market, limited permission from landlords for older renters to make home modifications that promote safe and accessible living

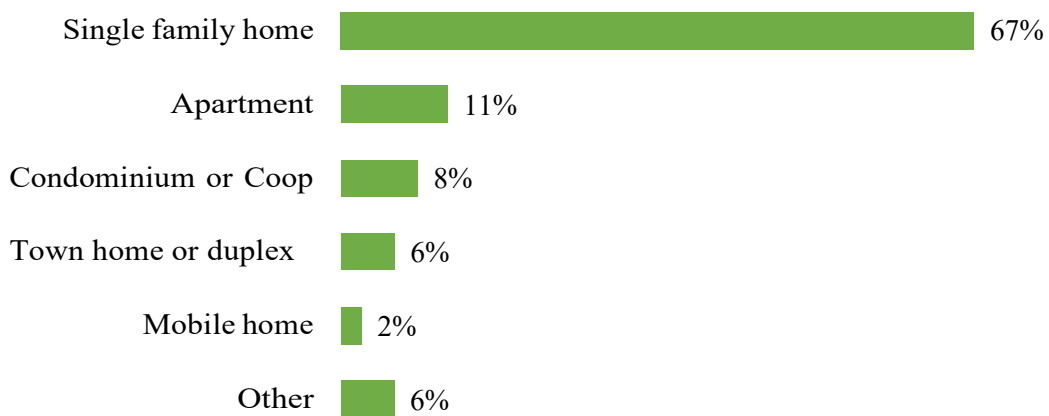
environments, and that older renters tend to have fewer financial resources and assets than their home-owning counterparts.²³

About 15% of homes in unincorporated Marin County areas are in multi-unit buildings, and about 25% of homes in incorporated Marin County communities are in multi-unit buildings.²⁴ While 75% of older adults own their homes, many homeowners experience some financial stress due to limited incomes, high home maintenance costs, and other housing-related costs. Many homeowners also live in multiple-bedroom single-family homes with more than two bedrooms, making the homes “under-occupied.”²⁵

Housing Status of Surveyed Older Adults (n=1803)



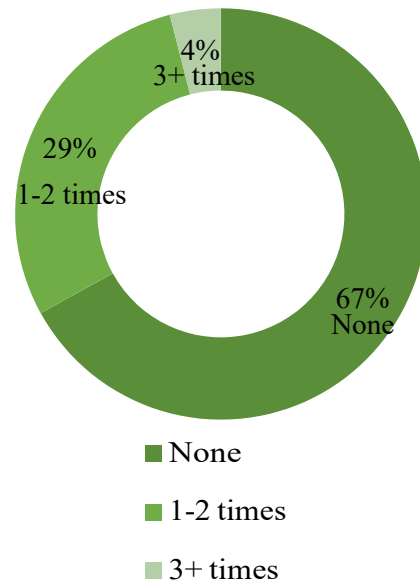
Primary Home Type of Surveyed Older Adults (n=1781)



Accessibility, Home Modifications, and Home Maintenance

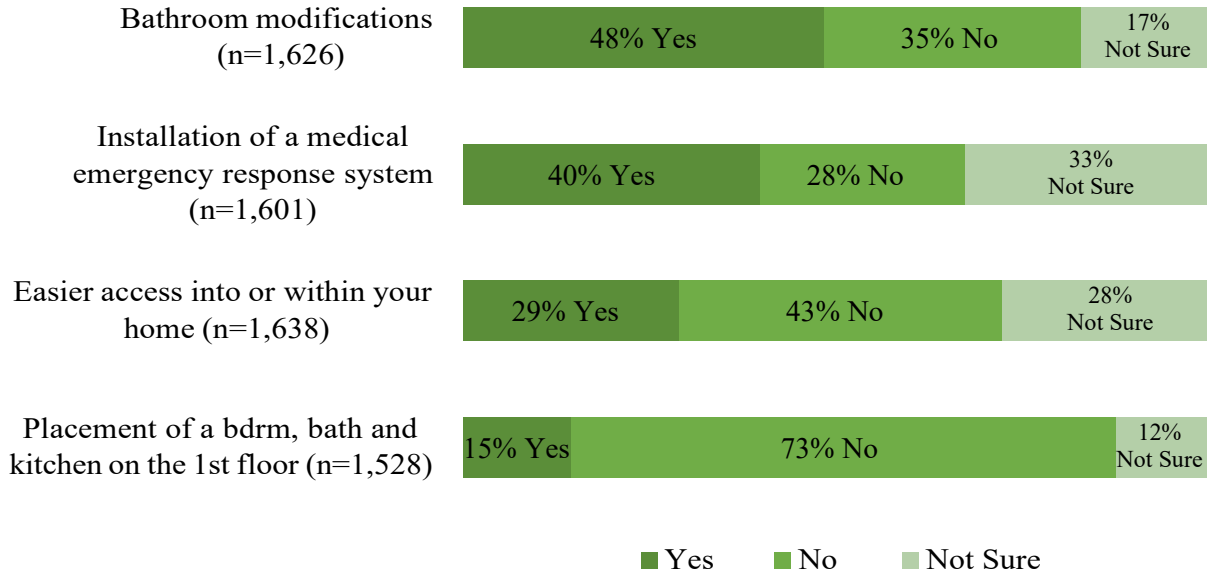
Making safety and accessibility modifications to homes is a common and essential activity for many people as they grow older. Home modifications are more than just convenient enhancements to homes, they significantly improve personal safety and reduce the risk of falls and injury. In fact, falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for older adults.²⁶ Earlier surveys that Marin County Aging and Adult Services conducted with older residents in 2015 concluded that having an accident inside or outside of the home is a very common concern.²⁷ The H&HS **Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (2019)** found that the share of older adults in Marin County who experience at least one fall per year is on par with the national average, at about 33%. In the same survey, only 9% of older adults say they are concerned about falling. This demonstrates a real fear and awareness among local older adults that accidents can be truly life changing – and worth trying to prevent.

In the past year, how many times did you fall?
(n=400)



Some of the most common in-home modifications that older adults make are in the bathroom, where the likelihood of becoming injured in a fall is the highest among all rooms in the home.²⁸ Nearly half of **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** respondents in Marin County say that they plan on adding bathroom modifications (e.g. grab bars, handrails, non-slip tiles, etc.) as they age. While not every older adult may need or desire such modifications, the opportunities to encourage greater in-home safety in the homes of Marin County older adults are tremendous. Contemporary home construction, particularly multi-unit construction typically includes greater accessible design standards when compared with older buildings. Marin County is also challenged with its older and less accessible housing stock, where about 85% of single family and multi-unit homes were built before the year 1990.²⁹ Maintaining the home also presents challenges through old age and is a top reason why older adults choose to leave their detached single-family homes.

Expected Home Modifications of Surveyed Older Adults



Affordability

Affordable housing and cost of living are widely shared concerns among older adults in Marin County. Less than 25% of **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** respondents report that their community has adequate low-income housing options available for older adults, and the most common reason given for residents not planning to age in place is because of the cost of housing. As personal income typically declines into older age, many older adults in Marin County face financial and housing-related challenges they may have never experienced before.

For a deeper dive into current and future housing challenges and opportunities in Marin County, **Older Adult Housing in Marin: Planning for 2030** is a helpful resource.³⁰ The report concludes with four key findings: Marin older adults need to retrofit their homes, accessory dwelling units prove to be key solutions, the supply of long term care communities seems to be meeting demand but may rise by up to 35% in the next decade, and Marin has a significant shortage of affordable



housing units appropriate for older adults.

Action Item 1: Enhance promotion and encourage expansion of Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) and Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU) programs

- Community: Explore opportunities to build ADUs/JADUs on properties; advocate for measures to expand JADU/ADU programs throughout the county.
- County Leadership: Foster increase of ADUs/JADUs, encourage greater awareness of and research for ADU programs and opportunities for residents, explore permit fee waivers and fee reductions, including fee adjustments to incentivize affordable rental units
- County Departments: Promote JADU/ADU programs and facilitate advocacy for greater flexibility, work together to advocate for solutions (Aging & Adult Services, Community Development Agency)

Action Item 2: Encourage more affordable older adult housing and increase direct/indirect rent assistance for older renters

- Community: Advocate for stronger affordable housing policies for older adults
- County Leadership: Encourage cities and towns across Marin County to adopt inclusionary housing policies; use tax revenue from Measure W to subsidize rental costs for older adult and other low-income residents.
- County Departments: Strengthen/refine programs and services that directly and indirectly help older renters stabilize their housing (Aging & Adult Services, Community Development Agency, Marin Housing Authority)

Action Item 3: Support home-sharing opportunities (pairing empty-nesters with rental seekers)

- Community: Empty-nester homeowners and people seeking rooms for rent; CBOs that offer home-sharing platforms in the area or can navigate residents to home-sharing solutions
- County Leadership: Support policies that encourage non-related occupants to live in the same house/unit
- County Departments: Explore home-sharing platforms or models as a housing resource navigation option to the public; explore partnerships with platforms (Marin Housing Authority)

Action Item 4: Expand home modification services and accessible living environments

- Community: Handyman volunteers and CBOs that offer home modifications services or financing (Marin County Volunteers, Main Villages, Sausalito Villages, Center for Volunteer and Nonprofit Leadership's Volunteer Services)

- County Leadership: Waive fees for permits for home modifications and accessibility enhancements
- County Departments: Develop or expand services and programs supporting home modifications (Community Development Agency)

Equity Opportunities: Barriers to affordable long-term housing can be reduced by encouraging a greater supply of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), which tend to be more affordable due to their size and orientation. Reducing barriers to developing more ADUs creates opportunities for homeowners to generate additional income if they choose to rent out their units. In some cases, what separates a renter from being able to sign a lease, remain in a unit, or avoid eviction is basic financial assistance to help pay a deposit, fee, or housing-related service. Similarly, sometimes the only thing a person needs to remain in their home is a simple modification to make it accessible. Each of these action items contributes toward a more equitable community for renters and homeowners. These measures can benefit all residents and offer much-needed access to affordable and appropriate housing for people with disabilities, lower income, and minority older adults.

Housing Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Enhance promotion and encourage expansion of JADU/ADU programs	Adequate Housing Communication Civic Engagement	Community: Homeowners Leadership: BOS Departments: AAS, CDA	2020	2021	
2. Encourage affordable housing and increase direct/indirect rent assistance for older adult renters	Adequate Housing Community & Health Services	Community: Homeowners, renters Leadership: BOS Departments: AAS, CDA, MHA	2020	2021	2022
3. Support/encourage home-sharing opportunities	Adequate Housing Community & Health Services Communication	Community: Homeowners, renters, CBOs Leadership: BOS Department: AAS		2021	2022
4. Expand home modification services and accessible living environments	Adequate Housing Community & Health Services Communication	Community: Volunteers, Villages groups, CBOs Leadership: BOS Department: CDA		2021	2022

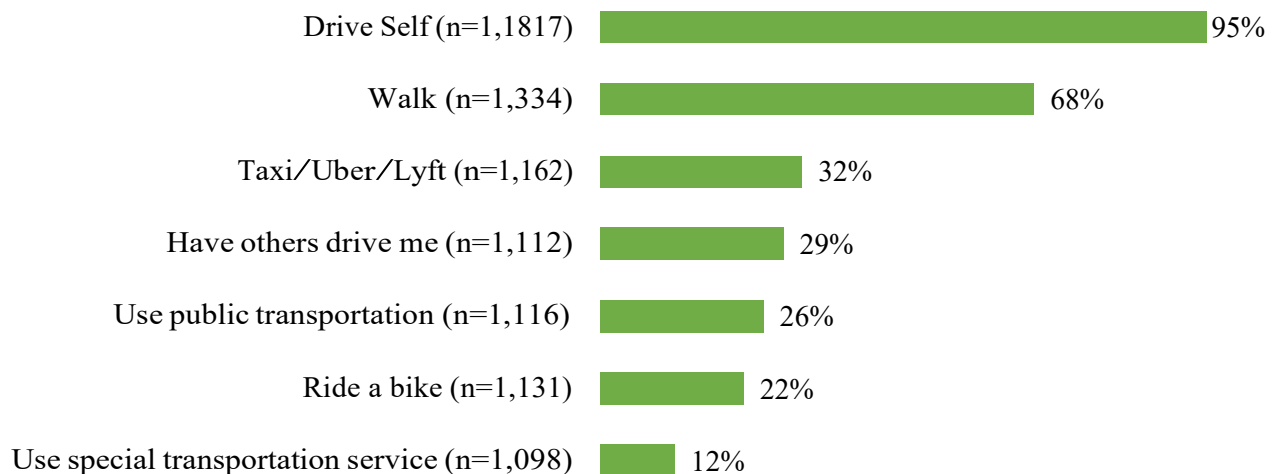
FOCUS AREA 2: MOBILITY OPTIONS

Goal: Mobility needs are met by a more flexible and responsive public and private system

Affordable and accessible mobility services and infrastructure are critical components of an equitable, age-friendly community. In recent years, the term “transportation” has given way to “mobility” as many companies and communities have developed innovative and integrated multi-modal solutions to help people move within and between places. Marin County has strengths and weaknesses when it comes to mobility. The County’s eastern communities benefit from being near road, rail, and bus infrastructure, as well as pedestrian and bike paths that connect communities. In our rural areas, we face challenges due to much lower population density and relatively lower demand for services, limited mobility infrastructure, and natural barriers.

Driving and walking are the primary modes of transit for most older adults in Marin County. Ninety-one percent of the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** respondents drive themselves to shop, go to appointments and do errands, while 68% report that they walk to get around to some places. Between 26% to 32% of respondents use taxi/Uber/Lyft, public transportation, or have others drive them; and twelve percent of the respondents report using a special transportation service for residents who need additional assistance. While these statistics paint a general picture of mobility trends in our community, when looking at certain segments of our population, they begin to shift; according to H&HS’ **Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (2019)**, 20% of low-income adults, and 10% of women, do not drive, and having adequate transportation is a much more significant challenge for lower income older adults compared with the overall population (16% vs. 2%).

How Adults Travel in Marin County



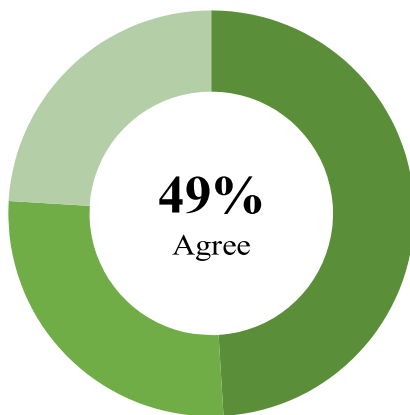
Driving

Most older adults agree that their communities have easy to read traffic signs (86%); acceptable public parking lots, spaces, and areas to park (76%); affordable public parking (68%); well-maintained streets (67%); and properly enforced speed limits (64%). This finding differs for unincorporated areas, where notably fewer respondents report that their communities have well-maintained streets and affordable and available public parking. While the county receives positive ratings on car and driving-related elements, a broader issue involves how a significantly higher share of older drivers in our community will soon retire from driving. The loss of one's license is a major contributor to isolation and loss of independence. How will we prepare for a growing share of older non-drivers, many of whom live quite far from transportation routes and community centers?

Public and Private Transportation Services

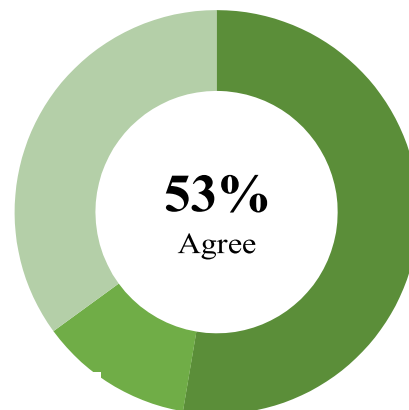
About half of older adults surveyed in Marin County agree that the public transportation in their community is affordable, and less than half agree this it is accessible and convenient; this figure is slightly lower for unincorporated areas of the county. Awareness and usage of public transportation is generally low, however – about 9% of public transit riders are 65 years or older according to a recent survey conducted by Marin Transit.³¹ While this number is quite low, it is worth noting that it has doubled since 2005.³² Residents in rural areas express a need for greater mobility options and are seeking ways that gaps can be filled, and barriers can be reduced in the current system.

Our Public Transit is Accessible and Convenient (n=1827)



- Yes 49%
- No 27%
- Not Sure 24%

Our Public Transit is Affordable (n=1821)

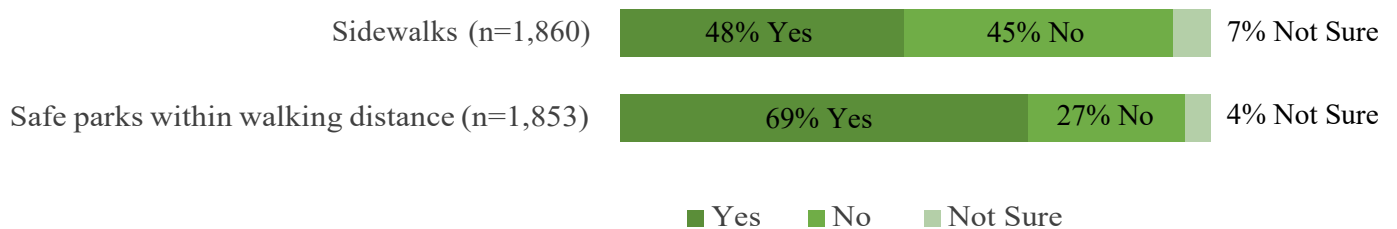


- Yes 53%
- No 12%
- Not Sure 35%

Biking and Walking

Biking and walking infrastructure in eastern parts of the county benefit from higher population densities, even landscapes, municipal resources, and higher connectivity, while infrastructure in the west is limited by lower population density, uneven and large natural landscapes, fewer resources per square mile, and much less connectivity. For these reasons, slightly less than half of **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** respondents report that sidewalks across Marin County are well-maintained. Residents are fond of the abundance of walking and hiking options available throughout the county and encourage greater opportunities to access natural spaces. While some residents express a need for better pedestrian lighting in some areas, others prefer to preserve their community's rural character.

My Community Has Well Maintained...



Action Item 1: Encourage greater on-demand transportation options, particularly those that serve unincorporated areas

- Community: Expand volunteer driver programs in rural areas (Volunteers, CBOs, private companies, other age-friendly cities and towns)
- County Leadership: Explore policies that integrate ride hailing and taxis for rural residents into the transit system
- County Departments: Expand volunteer driver programs; fund ride hailing services in rural areas, with an effort to promote accessible on-demand rides; continue to train older adults on how to navigate transportation options and utilize Travel Navigators (Marin Access); encourage formalization of current informal volunteer driver programs (Aging & Adult Services, Marin Transit)

Action Item 2: Offer balance-training and falls prevention opportunities in outdoor spaces

- Community: Organize volunteer-led walking groups, walk-with-a-doc programs, nature hikes (Volunteers, healthcare providers, CBOs)
- County Leadership: Support funding for such activities

- County Departments: Program walks and classes in parks and open spaces (Marin County Parks, Public Health)

Action Item 3: Connect all county services, programs, and events to transportation options

- Community: When seeking services or programs, residents can/should also ask about transportation options available on how to get there
- County Leadership: Develop county policy, similar to ADA rules for public buildings and meeting/event spaces, that will help visitors/clients’ access and utilize transportation to get to their appointment, service/program, event, etc.
- County Departments: All public-facing departments can integrate transportation needs questions and options counseling assistance in any interaction with older adults that requires their needing to travel somewhere

Action Item 4: Devote attention to alternative mobility options such as walking and bikes.

- Community: Residents can identify areas in need of improvement and submit a remediation or modification request to the proper entity
- County Leadership: Explore ways to increase funding and oversight for improvements to pedestrian infrastructure in areas with higher density of older adults and near where older adults gather
- County Departments:
 - Communicate to the public how residents can submit pedestrian infrastructure remediation and modification requests
 - Expand Public Works program that installs or improves curb ramps
 - Strengthen pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in and between communities
 - Improve lighting where there is evidence of high demand or danger
 - Create more accessible paths for people with limited functional abilities

Equity Opportunities: Expanding flexible and responsive transportation options, especially in rural and unincorporated area, closes equity gaps for residents who are geographically isolated and/or have limited transportation options. Expanding falls prevention education and training helps prevent falls, a common health issue among older adults one often dramatically alters lives. Falls prevention opportunities that effectively target higher risk individuals such as older adults who live in at-risk homes, are frail, lower income or who live alone can help prolong independence and wellbeing.

Connecting all county services, programs, and events to transportation options counseling creates a more equitable environment for people who have limited means of travel. It also presents an opportunity to educate all residents about available public and private transportation options they may not otherwise be aware of. By designing systems and spaces for individuals who experience greater access and safety barriers, systems and spaces become more accommodating to all.



Mobility Options

Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Encourage greater on-demand transportation options, particularly those that serve unincorporated areas	Mobility Options Health & Community Services Civic Participation Social Engagement	Community: Volunteers, CBOs, companies, cities/towns, mobility companies Leadership: BOS Departments: Marin Access, Marin Transit, H&HS	2020	2021	2022
2. Offer more balance-training and falls prevention opportunities in outdoor spaces	Mobility Options Health & Community Services Community Participation Safe Outdoor Spaces	Community: Volunteers, healthcare providers, CBOs Leadership: BOS Departments: Parks, Public Health	2020	2021	2022
3. Connect and promote all services, programs, and events with transportation options	Mobility Options Health & Community Services Community Participation Communication	Community: General public Leadership: BOS Departments: All consumer-facing depts		2021	2022
4. Devote more attention to alternative mobility options such as walking and bikes.	Mobility Options Health & Community Services Civic Participation Safe Outdoor Spaces	Community: General public Leadership: BOS Departments: DPW		2021	2022

FOCUS AREA 3: COMMUNITY SERVICES

Goal: Design, target, and deliver community-based services to maximize efficacy and impact

An age-friendly community fosters a rich mix of affordable and quality health and community-based services that are easy for people to locate and access. While Marin County older adults rate themselves as having good or excellent health, and as Marin County ranks as one of the healthiest counties in the U.S.,³³ residents are often challenged in knowing what programs and services are available to them, and in finding where and how to navigate and access those services.

Older adults’ service needs are significant in all parts of the county but differ slightly between incorporated and unincorporated areas. In unincorporated areas, older adults are more aware

of available services than their incorporated area counterparts and rate the availability of local services lower than their incorporated area counterparts. This points to a relatively limited

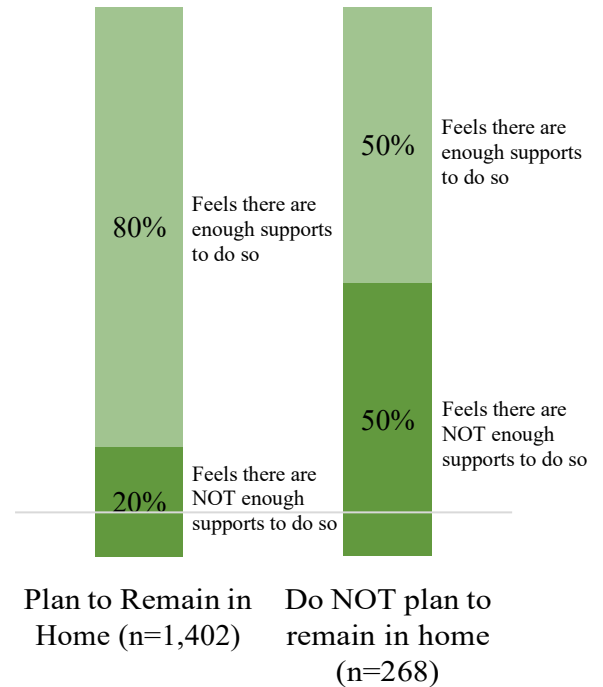
supply of available resources and services in unincorporated areas, and a relatively heightened demand for mobile services and mobility options in order for unincorporated area residents to better access services located farther away.

Services for Aging in Home and the Community

In order for residents to age well in their homes, the necessary services and supports must be available and affordable. About a quarter of the older adult population who want to remain in their homes through old age don’t think there are enough affordable or accessible services and supports to help them do so. This may be attributed to a common lack of awareness of available resources in the community, creating an imperative for local providers to better promote their services.

Roughly 45% of older adults in Marin County are single, divorced, widowed, or separated,³⁴ which indicates that nearly half of older residents may be at risk of having

Perspectives on Remaining in Home and Available Supports (n=1670)



- Feel there are enough supports to do so
- Feel there are NOT enough supports to do so

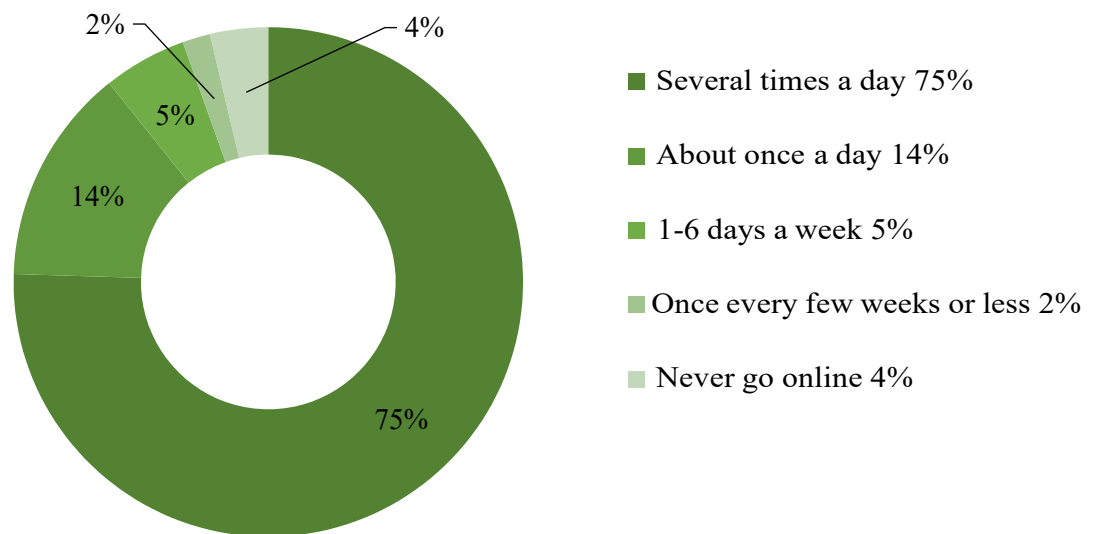
limited social supports through their lifespan. This is part of a broader downward trend that places additional strain on older single-person households: the ratio of available family caregivers to older adults needing care peaked in 2010 and is now declining. By 2050, the number of available family caregivers in the U.S. will increase by 13%, while the number of potential care recipients will increase by 84%. This is dwarfed by the increase in potential care recipients with Alzheimer’s disease, which is projected to increase by 160%.³⁵

Information and Navigation

Creating broad awareness of available resources and services is a great challenge for many communities. With aging and aging services, oftentimes people aren’t seeking information about resources (or paying much attention) until they are in direct need. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity for service providers and community resources to be in the right place at the right time in order to be “found” when being sought out. The greater challenge exists when services are geared toward prevention.

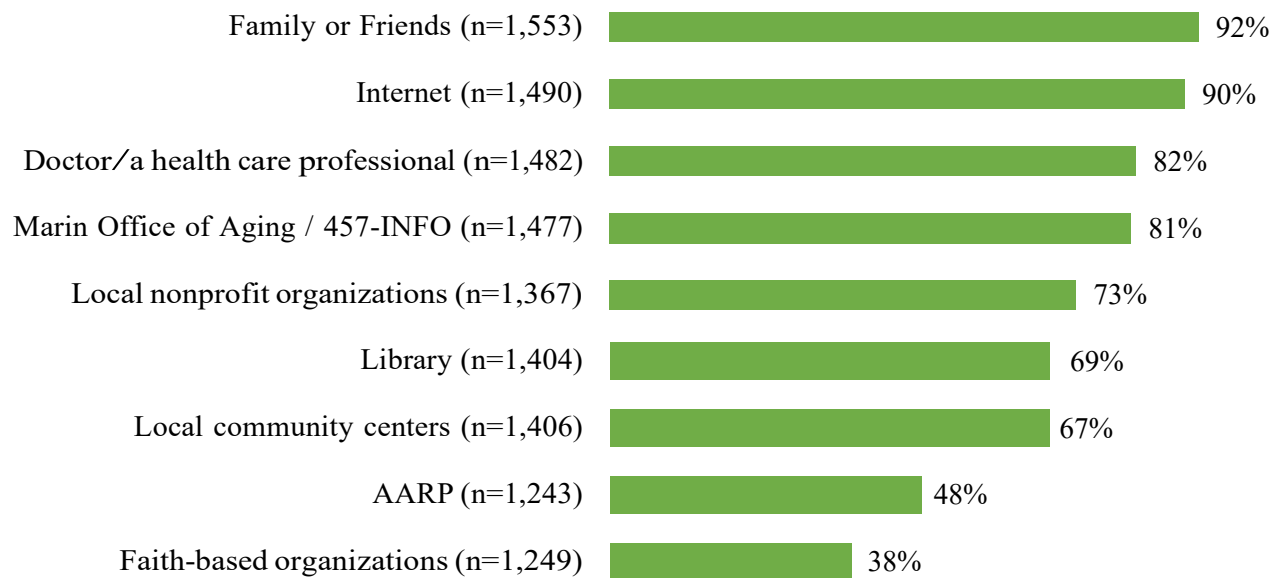
In Marin County, older adults tend to rely on their families and friends the most for guidance on information and resources pertaining to aging, followed by internet searches, healthcare professionals, and the Marin Office of Aging and Adult Services. Local nonprofits, libraries, and local community centers are used less, followed by AARP and faith-based organizations which are used the least. As family and friends are the most common source for information and resources, this indicates a community of older adults who trust experienced advice and rely heavily on person-to-person contact and their social networks.

How often do you access the internet? (n=1759)



Older adults in Marin County are digitally plugged in, with about 75% accessing the internet more than once per day. This paired with the significant number of older adults who rely on the internet for locating information and resources should indicate to service providers that their online presence is much more critically important than they might think. However, it is important to remember that there exists a digital divide, and resources and services that exist online ought to have analog and non-digital components for residents who do not own or access digital technologies due to costs, preferences, or other reasons.

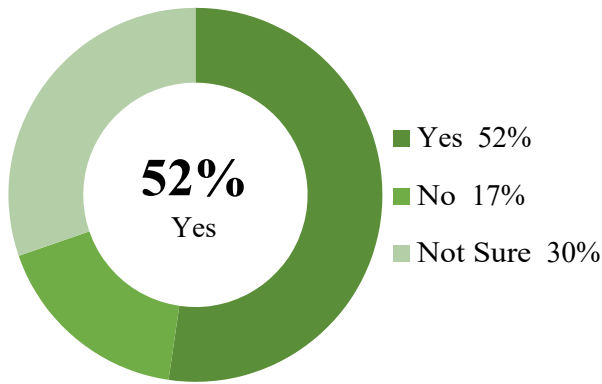
Where Do You Seek Information or Resources?



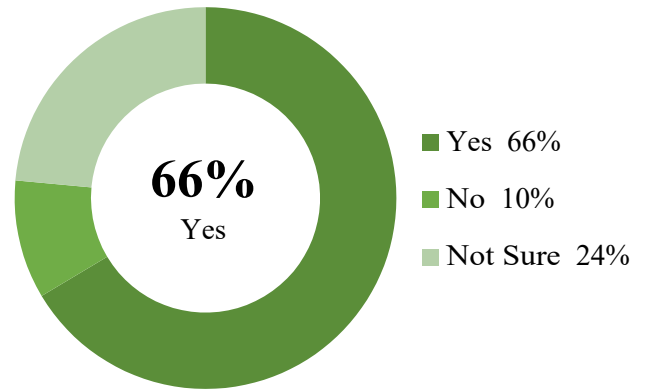
Healthcare, Wellness and Caregiving

Surveying residents on the availability and accessibility of health-related resources elicits mixed reactions from respondents. Many are unsure whether their community has “affordable health care service options” and a “service that helps seniors find and access health and supportive services.” Less than half of respondents agree that these are available in their community. Nearly half of the respondents report that their community has conveniently located health and social services. Sixty-four percent of individuals completing the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** report that their community has fitness activities specifically geared toward older adults, and 53% report that there are health and wellness programs and classes available. These are rated as the most available services among all listed in the age-friendly survey.

Conveniently Located Health & Social Services (n=1832)

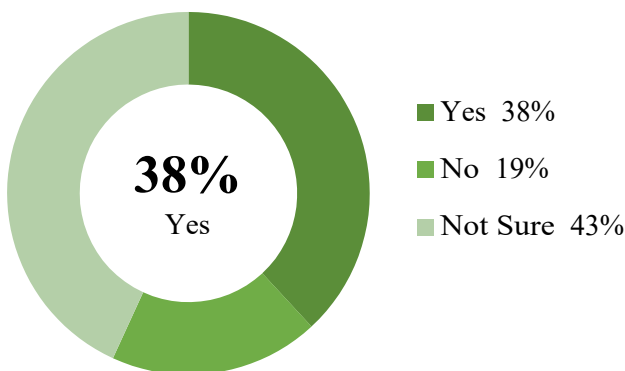


Fitness Activities Geared to Older Adults (n=1832)

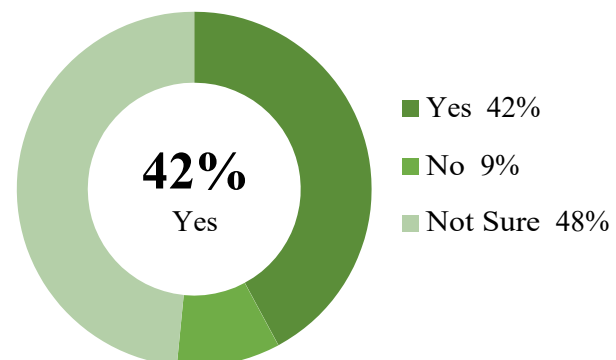


Many older adults experience or are at high risk of developing mental or neurological disorders or substance use issues. The likelihood of having multiple chronic physical and mental health conditions increases with age. According to the National Council on Aging, 25% of older adults experience “mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, and dementia.”³⁶ In Marin County, older adults are concerned about losing their memory – among white older adults the rate is 13% yet among non-white older adults it is more than double at 28%.³⁷ While there is scientific agreement that physical and cognitive functioning progressively decline through the aging process, it has been observed that self-reported measures of mental health such as life satisfaction, well-being, and anxiety do not necessarily follow the same trajectory. Many studies point to a “progressive improvement” in mental health through the aging process.³⁸

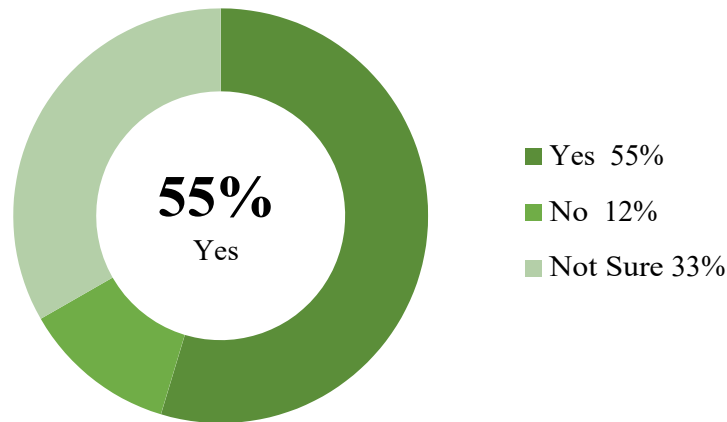
Affordable Health Care Service Options (n=1828)



A Health & Supportive Services Locating Service (n=1823)



Health and Wellness Programs and Classes (n=1839)



Despite these findings, suicide rates are higher among older Americans, and highest among older white males.³⁹ According to the County of Marin’s Behavioral Health and Recovery Services’ (BHRS) suicide prevention needs assessment findings, Marin County has the highest suicide rate in the Bay Area. Adults age 40-69 constitute 57% of the deaths by suicide in the county between 2013-2018 yet make up 45% of the total population according to 2017 US Census data.⁴⁰ Some reasons for this trend involve life stressors like the loss of a loved one, loss of independence, or the development of challenging health conditions. Other reasons include societal stigma around behavioral health and lack of coordination across systems to identify and address behavioral health challenges in populations.

In H&HS’ **Older Adult Needs Assessment Survey (2019)**, about one in five Marin County older adults stated that they are informal (friend or family) caregivers of at least one other older adult or adult with disabilities, and about half of these caregivers provide daily care. The survey found that older adults who are not of a lower income are significantly more likely to be caregivers (26% compared with 9%). Minority caregivers are almost twice as likely to provide daily care than white non-Hispanic caregivers.

Action Item 1: Ensure that the emerging Marin County Community Paramedicine program links patients in rural communities to social services and resources

- Community: Volunteer options counselors or community health workers can receive referrals for nonmedical calls
- County Leadership: Funding assistance for feasibility study and implementation of program
- County Departments: Partner to connect social services with health services and partner to develop sustainable funding models (Marin County Fire Dept, Health and Human Services)

Action Item 2: Create greater access to and awareness of available community resources

- Community: Residents can promote resources by word of mouth, help identify people in need, and engage with their faith communities and social groups
- County Leadership: Encourage the formation and/or expansion of partnerships across departments as well as with community organizations to promote and provide access to available resources
- County Departments: Develop new communications mechanisms to get the word out about community resources; emphasize priority service areas for key target older adults (Consumer-facing departments)

Action Item 3: Explore payment rate increases for services in rural areas as well as programs that encourage greater professional caregiver coverage in rural areas

- Community: Local home care agencies (identify which agencies prior to implementation phase) are invited to work with county to develop solutions to gaps in services
- County Leadership: Explore strategic partnerships with home care and similar service agencies that traditionally employ low-wage workers; encourage living wages and better coverage in rural areas by aging services providers
- County Departments: Add more requirements to service contracts and agreements w/ home care agencies in exchange for higher rates and broader coverage; explore cost-sharing with target clients

Action Item 4: Improve online presence and promotion of services; explore tech-based services

- Community: Establish partnerships with local CBOs and other groups for tech-related trainings
- County Leadership: Ensure that all county websites are updated regularly and accessible to people with disabilities
- County Departments: Explore programs that help older adults learn about using hardware and software that help them navigate resources, access services, and connect with friends and family (Marin Transit, Free Library)

Action Item 5: Enhance trainings for older adults and professionals to understand, identify, and address the behavioral health needs of older adults as part of the County's Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan

- Community: Provide community-wide trainings for older adults and other populations at disproportionate risk for suicide

- County Leadership: Support and encourage initiatives that promote greater awareness of behavioral health challenges and delivery and expansion of community-wide solutions
- County Departments: Expand trainings with primary care physicians around mental health needs of older adults; provide LGBTQ+ older adult responsiveness trainings to care givers

Equity Opportunities: Challenges and opportunities for designing equitable services and service delivery strategies are perhaps most pronounced in the Community Services focus area. Basic needs challenges infrequently experienced by a majority of older adults in Marin County are dramatically pronounced and much more common for low income, ethnic minority, and geographically isolated older adults. Equitably designed services are informed by the experiences of people facing the greatest access barriers around language, cost, navigation, coordination, and physical design elements such as ramps, lighting, and zero thresholds.

A major challenge across social and health services systems is the linkage between a person’s health and non-health care needs. A well-integrated community paramedicine program that links higher risk individuals with health and social care services closes major systems gaps. Targeting services and resources to those most in need and monitoring the sociodemographic profiles of service users to confirm proper targeting is a basic yet powerful way to promote and strengthen equitable access to services and programs.



Increasing payment rates to promote greater supply of in-demand services in rural areas increases the availability of much-needed services for higher risk residents while encouraging fairer compensation for service workers and organizations serving hard-to-serve areas. Improving online activities while promoting technology trainings creates greater opportunities for residents to access services themselves and also helps to close the “digital divide” between the tech-savvy older adults and those desiring to be. Finally, a community that is more knowledgeable of behavioral health challenges can identify and address signs of anxiety, depression, and distress among their friends, family members, and neighbors sooner and with more precision.

Community Services Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Ensure that the emerging Marin County Community Paramedicine program links patients in rural communities to social services and resources	Health & Community Services Community Participation	Community: Volunteers, CBOs, Healthcare providers, EMS Leadership: BOS Departments: Marin County Fire Dept, H&HS		2021	2022
2. Create greater access to and awareness of community resources	Health & Community Services Communication	Community: General public, faith communities Leadership: BOS Departments: All consumer-facing departments	2020	2021	2022
3. Explore service payment rate increases in rural areas as well as programs that encourage greater professional caregiver coverage in rural areas	Health & Community Services Respect & Social Inclusion	Community: CBOs, Businesses Leadership: BOS Department: H&HS		2021	2022
4. Improve online presence, explore tech-based trainings and services	Health & Community Services Respect & Social Inclusion Communication	Community: CBOs Leadership: BOS Departments: Marin Transit, Free Library	2020	2021	2022
5. Enhance trainings for older adults and professionals to understand, identify, and address the behavioral health needs of older adults	Health & Community Services Respect & Social Inclusion	Community: CBOs, healthcare providers, residents Leadership: BOS Department: H&HS, BHRS	2020	2021	2022

FOCUS AREA 4: DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Goal: Older adults are prepared for and safe during natural disasters and emergencies

Considering recent and looming natural disasters like earthquakes and wildfires in Marin County, disaster preparedness is a prominent concern and presents many challenges for residents. As emergencies tend to force people to evacuate without much warning, this presents challenges for people with limited mobility as well as those who rely on durable medical equipment or have limited support networks. Hearing and vision limitations, as well as cognitive impairments, may also hinder one's ability to quickly respond to an emergency.

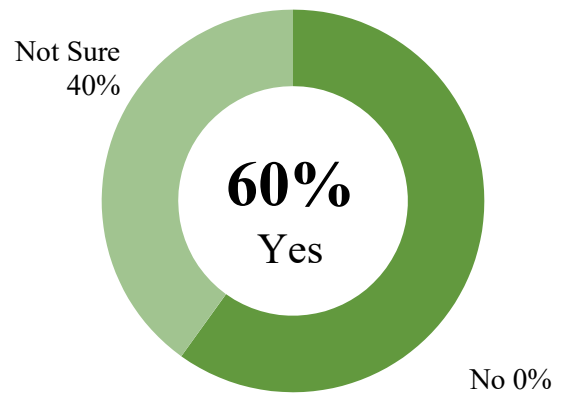
Based on the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** responses (received prior to the October and November 2019 PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs), 60% of older adults feel prepared for a community-wide emergency such as an earthquake or a wildfire. This finding is consistent in Marin's unincorporated areas as well as in incorporated cities and towns. Focus groups identified many elements of Marin County's emergency preparedness as positive and proactive, stating that local emergency response services are responsive, knowledgeable, and prepared with an established network of volunteers.

Still, there are barriers, challenges, and concerns many older adults have regarding emergency preparedness, with lower income, minority, and geographically isolated older adults experiencing greater barriers and challenges. Some of the emergency preparedness barriers older adults have articulated include:

- A lack of familiarity with a safe evacuation plan and route, including where to go for shelter in case of an evacuation.
- Concern about roads either being crowded with traffic or obstructed.
- The need to assemble an emergency kit or "go-bag," and stock Shelter-in-Place supplies, including food and water.
- Feeling isolated, and hence vulnerable in the event of an emergency. Specifically, a lack of family emergency communications plans and/or neighborhood emergency response plans, including assistance in preparing for an emergency and/or assistance with evacuating homes and entire areas.
- Transportation for those with special needs or who can't drive in the event of evacuation.
- Not having a generator or batteries stored up and/or not knowing how to shut off the water and gas in their homes.

Responses from the H&HS’ **Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (2019)** and community assessments conducted for H&HS’ Equity Plan indicate significant resident concern for natural disasters and emergency preparedness. According to the H&HS **Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (2019)**, disasters was the second most frequently cited concern among older adults in Marin County. About half of older adults surveyed in the H&HS survey say they have prepared a disaster supply kit for their home; however, nearly 60% say they don’t have a specific family or caregiver emergency communication plan in place.

Preparedness in a Community-Wide Emergency (n=1844)



Concern about natural disasters is shared by about a quarter of surveyed Marin County older adults in the August 2019 Area Agency on Aging **Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (2019)**, and within that cohort, women are twice as likely as men to say they are concerned about disasters, yet less likely to have a prepared disaster supply kit. While half of surveyed older adults say they have prepared a disaster supply kit for their home, men are more likely than women to report this (56% vs 45%). Answers to disaster response questions were consistent across race, yet there were significant differences between income groups, where 25% of low-income residents stated they don’t have a neighbor that could contact in case of an emergency, compared to 13% of non-low-income respondents.

Some older adults feel there is a lack of specific preventive measures being taken around disaster preparedness. For example, many older adults mention vegetation near to their homes that has not been cleared in a long time and could pose a fire hazard. Similarly, some are concerned about defensible space within their neighborhoods. Over 75 **Age-Friendly Needs Assessment Survey (2019)** respondents left comments regarding concerns about communication and connection, feeling that they are often alone and feel uncertain about how to let people know if they need help, or wanting to know that someone would check in on them in the event of an emergency to make sure they were safe – it seems



those who are isolated or who live alone tend to be more concerned about emergency preparedness.

Action Item 1: Increase promotion and distribution of Ready Marin resources and target Ready Marin outreach and education (including CERT trainings and Get Ready Classes) to older adults

- Community: Volunteers, Neighborhood Response Groups, CERT groups, and local CBOs can coordinate outreach and engagement
- County Leadership: Advocacy, promotion and funding for targeted marketing and outreach
- County Departments: Develop and distribute emergency planning guides and kits (H&HS, Fire Dept., Free Library)

Action Item 2: Conduct periodic emergency drills for sheltering-in-place and to shelter destinations for older adults

- Community: Volunteers, Neighborhood Response Groups, CERT Groups, and Whistlestop to help plan and implement drills
- County Leadership: Encourage and authorize drills and resources to conduct them
- County Departments: Fire Dept., Sheriff's Office, Office of Emergency Services, H&HS, and Marin Transit to coordinate the drills to shelter destinations

Action Item 3: Increase promotion of FIRESafe Marin resources and target FIRESafe Marin's home hardening outreach, education, and services (including Home Hardening Education Program and Wildfire Preparedness Seminars) to households with older and more frail occupants

- Community: Residents and volunteers can work with and through FIRESafe Marin to promote and implement home hardening techniques
- County Leadership: Set goals for number of homes hardened and continue to support cooperative efforts between FIRESafe Marin, the County of Marin, and local jurisdictions
- County Departments: Fire Dept. can oversee, Parks can be involved in cleanup

Action Item 4: Expand In-Home Support Services (IHSS) pilot of emergency preparedness home visits by Marin Medical Reserve Corps for older adults and residents with access and functional needs (AFN)

- Community: Volunteers, Neighborhood Response Groups, CERT Groups, CBOs, healthcare providers, local jurisdictions
- County Leadership: Support expansion of IHSS pilot program
- County Departments: H&HS will work with Neighborhood Response Groups, CERT Groups, CBOs, healthcare partners, local jurisdictions, and Fire (CERT) to develop plan for pilot expansion

Equity opportunities: Emergency preparedness resources can be targeted to segments of the older adult and higher risk populations who experience the greatest challenges preparing for and during emergencies. Emergency drills that are well communicated to higher risk residents can bolster preparedness and response efforts. Home hardening services and resources, as well as in-home emergency preparedness services can also be targeted to specific households that are at higher risk. Making funding available to help lower income older adults purchase go kits and shelf-stable meals is one way to help address the inequities in the ability to afford such preparations.

Disaster Preparedness Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Develop and distribute emergency preparation checklists, guides and kits	Disaster Preparedness Communication Community & Health Services	Community: Volunteers, neighborhood groups, CERT groups, CBOs Leadership: BOS Departments: H&HS, Fire Dept., Free Library	2020	2021	2022
2. Conduct periodic emergency drills for sheltering-in-place and to shelter destinations	Disaster Preparedness Mobility Options	Community: Volunteers, neighborhood groups, CERT groups, Whistlestop Leadership: BOS Departments: Fire Dept., Sheriff, H&HS, Marin Transit	2020	2021	2022
3. Provide fire mitigation home preparation education and services, particularly for older and more frail households	Disaster Preparedness Community & Health Services Safe Outdoor Spaces	Community: Residents, volunteers, FIRESafe Marin Leadership: BOS Departments: Fire Dept., Parks	2020	2021	2022
4. Utilize emergency response volunteers to identify and help older adults who live alone become more prepared for emergencies	Disaster Preparedness Respect & Social Inclusion	Community: Volunteers, Neighborhood Response Groups, CERT Groups, CBOs, healthcare providers, local jurisdictions Leadership: BOS Department: Fire, H&HS	2020	2021	2022

FOCUS AREA 5: SOCIAL CONNECTION

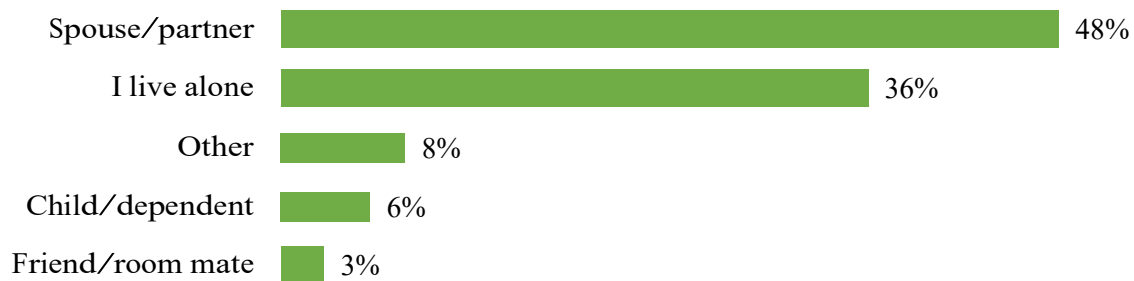
Goal: Older adults are actively and passively connected to the people, places, and services around them

There are many opportunities for older adults to connect with people and their communities throughout Marin County, and most older adults consider the quality and quantity of social connections and activities available in our communities as key strengths. There is a growing concern, however, about increasing risk and cases of loneliness and social isolation of older adults, and minimal ways to identify and address social isolation. Older adults also desire more cultural activities and affordable events and activities to participate in.

Living Alone

According to the Administration for Community Living, about 28% of noninstitutionalized older adults in the U.S. live alone. The number of women living alone in the US is more than twice the amount of men, and nearly 50% of women age 75 and older in the U.S. live alone. A higher percentage of older Americans living alone are poor (17.3%) compared to those living with others (5.3%), and older Hispanic women who live alone have some of the highest poverty rates in the country at 39.5%.⁴¹ In Marin County, nearly 50% of **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** respondents indicate that they live with a spouse or partner while 38% indicate that they live alone.

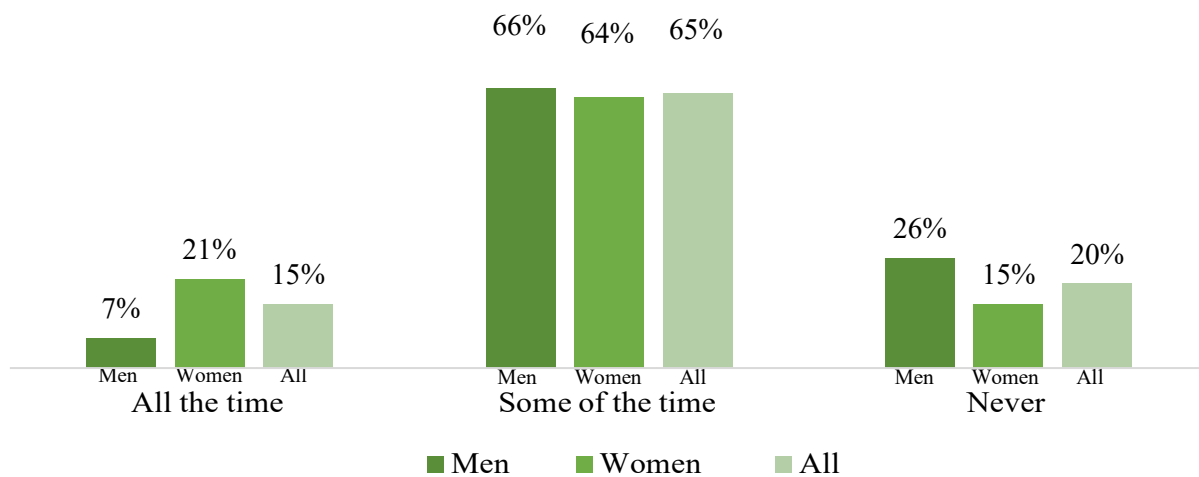
Coinhabitancy Status of Surveyed Older Adults (n=1992)



Living alone does not automatically indicate or lead to loneliness or social isolation, but they are related. While the two are often used interchangeably, social isolation and loneliness have distinct meanings. Social isolation is typically understood as an objective physical separation from other people and can range in intensity given an individual's social network and connections. Loneliness is a subjective sad or unhappy feeling someone has of being disconnected or separated from others.

Chronic loneliness and chronic isolation are both dangerous. Mounting research in the medical and social sciences point to the serious negative health effects of social isolation and loneliness, including cognitive decline, depression, and heart disease.⁴² Older adults are at significantly higher risk of loneliness and social isolation, which can be triggered or amplified by certain life events involving loss, like the death or departure of friends and family members, the loss of hearing or sight, loss of mobility, etc. About two-thirds of older adults report eating alone at least some of the time, and women are three times as likely to eat alone all the time versus men (21% vs 7%).⁴³ According to the H&HS **Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (2019)**, instances of older adults living alone and/or without in-home support are much higher in low-income households - over half of low-income older adults live alone (57%), which is twice the rate of non-low-income older adults. More than a third of low-income older adults report eating alone all of the time, more than four times the rate of non-low-income older adults.

How Often Do You Eat Alone? (n=400)



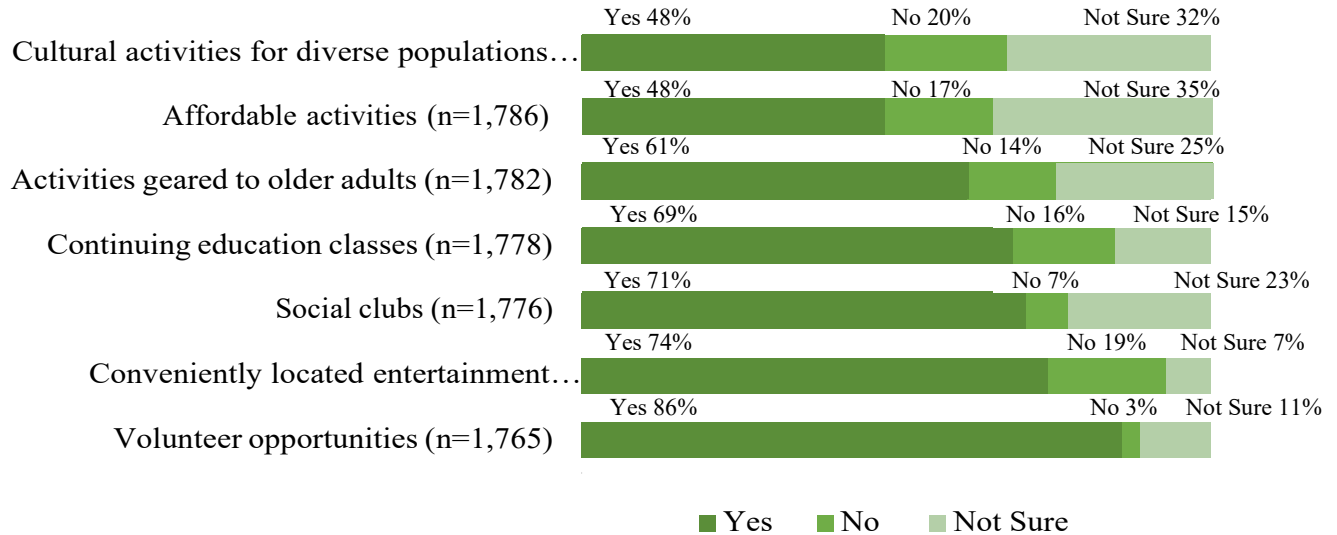
In surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews, there are growing concerns about how to identify and address social isolation and loneliness among older adults. Older adults have indicated a desire to interact more with other generations, they want greater opportunities to participate in a plethora of affordable social activities, and they want to figure out ways to identify and address people who are isolated and lonely, while respecting those who wish to be “loners.”

Community Activities and Connection

Older adults in Marin County place a high importance on social, cultural, and educational activities. Their ratings of the importance and availability of certain types of activities do not evenly equate, however. For example, 68% of respondents say that activities that are

affordable to all residents are very Important, yet only 45% report having access to affordable activities in their community.

Activities: My Community has...



There is a high level of participation in continuing education/self-improvement classes. Only 18% of respondents reported that they do not participate in continuing education or self-improvement classes workshops. The college and community centers were the most frequently used sources of these classes and workshops, but other sources include the Parks and Recreation Department, online programs, local organizations or businesses, faith communities, and other options.

Non-white older adults report much higher instances of feeling they are not valued and respected as members of their community. 18% of non-white respondents to the H&HS **Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (2019)** report feeling this way, the highest measure in this area among any demographic group (and four times higher than older white adults).

Action Item 1: Develop cross-departmental initiative to identify chronically isolated and lonely older adults

- Community: Residents can learn how to detect and respond to cases of isolation and loneliness; local organizations can join a campaign to help educate people on these issues
- County Leadership: Develop policies in public-facing departments to detect chronic isolation and loneliness

- County Departments: Public Health and community health organizations can lead a campaign to teach the public how identify isolation and loneliness and can also include related questions in screenings and assessments for services and programs.

Action Item 2: Encourage expansion of Village movement activities across Marin County

- Community: Involve Marin Villages in visioning, expansion, and advising on future villages in the county.
- County Leadership: Support expansion of Villages movement with targeted funding
- County Departments: Aging and Adult Services can explore ways to encourage and support Villages groups, through facilitation, technical assistance, and other resources

Action Item 3: Expand current intergenerational programs and activities while encouraging new ones

- Community: Volunteers, Schools, and CBOs can participate in volunteer companion programs, music performances, or other activities that promote intergenerational exchange
- County Leadership: Create a “Wisdom Worker” program for retirees to work with any county teams on a project basis
- County Departments: Parks and Libraries can develop and/or expand promotion of intergenerational services, programs, and events

Action Item 4: Promote subsidized, discounted or free events in the community

- Community: Activity and event venues like libraries, entertainment locations, and certain CBOs (identify which CBOs prior to implementation phase) can promote activities through county channels, specifically targeted to higher risk and vulnerable individuals
- County Leadership: Offer county-level communications resources (Public Information Office) to promote social activities to older adults
- County Departments: Create a way to leverage communications resources to promote social activities, educational events, and cultural experiences across departments; explore ways to reduce barriers to these opportunities through subsidies, discounts, free transportation, etc.

Equity Opportunities: Improving ways to identify and connect chronically isolated and lonely older adults to services, resources, and community events in Marin County will offer greater opportunities for a growing marginalized resident population, many of whom are lower income, to connect to their communities. For instance, the Village movement offers other opportunities for older adult access to services and group outings to events.

Expanding intergenerational programs create opportunities across age groups for valuable social exchange. Intergenerational programs that are equitably designed could include Spanish speaking programs, programs that involve a transportation or service element for older adults with limited mobility, and programs targeted to residents in geographically isolated areas of the county. Sliding scale, discounted, and free events create greater inclusivity for residents unable to afford costs of entry.



Social Connection Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Develop cross-departmental initiative to identify chronically isolated and lonely older adults	Respect & Social Inclusion Communication Community & Health Services	Community: Residents Leadership: BOS Departments: Public Health, community health organizations	2020	2021	2022
2. Encourage expansion of village movement activities across Marin County	Respect & Social Inclusion Communication Community Participation Civic Engagement	Community: Neighborhood groups, Villages groups Leadership: BOS Departments: AAS		2021	2022
3. Expand current intergenerational services and programs while encouraging new ones	Respect & Social Inclusion Community & Health Services Community Participation Civic Engagement	Community: Volunteers, Schools, CBOs Leadership: BOS Departments: Parks, Free Library		2021	2022
4. Promote subsidized, discounted or free events in the community	Respect & Social Inclusion Communication Community Participation Civic Engagement	Community: Libraries, Venues, CBOs Leadership: BOS, PIO Department: Public-facing departments	2020	2021	2022

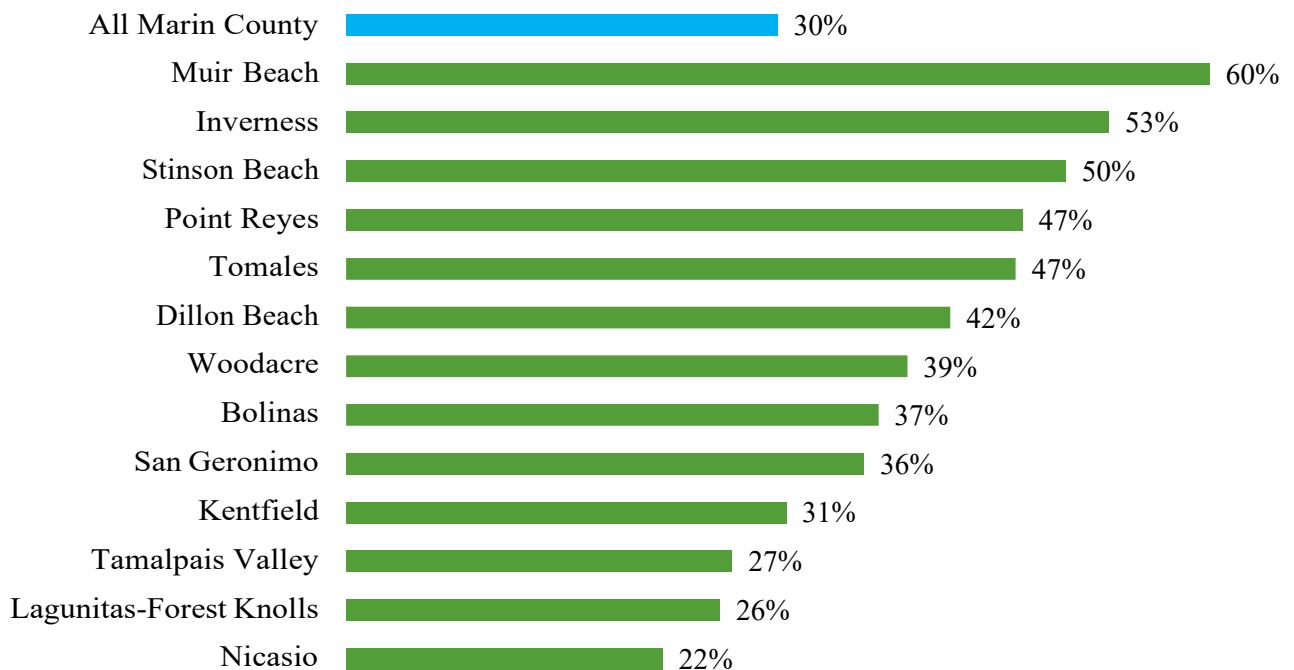
FOCUS AREA 6: UNINCORPORATED AREAS

Goal: Older adults in unincorporated areas have the services and supports necessary to safely and contentedly age in place; West Marin is an incubator for age-friendly activities in unincorporated areas

There are considerable differences in the lived experiences of older adults in incorporated and unincorporated areas of Marin County. While much of the County’s unincorporated areas fall with West Marin, there are several areas closer to and on the fringes of incorporated cities and towns, such as Tamalpais Valley, Strawberry, Marin City, Lucas Valley-Marino, Santa Venetia, Ignacio, Blackpoint-Greenpoint and parts of Tiburon. While every unincorporated community is different many residents in rural and unincorporated areas express concern over limited community and health services available when compared to incorporated and more populated areas. Residents also express concern with higher costs of care and services in rural settings, limited transportation options, higher risk of natural disasters, and limited pedestrian infrastructure.

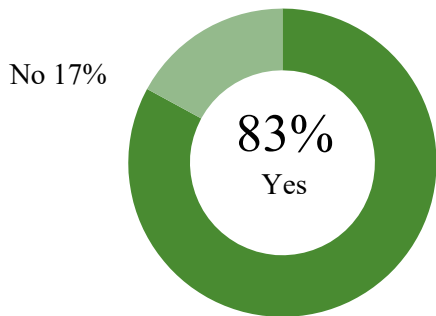
Based on available US Census Bureau data, it is estimated that between 12-15% of all the older adults who reside in Marin County live in its unincorporated areas and that the share of the population who are 60 years or older in unincorporated Marin County accounts for 32% of the unincorporated population.⁴⁴ These averages don’t fairly reflect some unincorporated communities in the County for which census data isn’t available, and others where, while total population may be low, the share of older adults is considerably higher:

Percent of Population 60+ in Unincorporated Marin County Communities

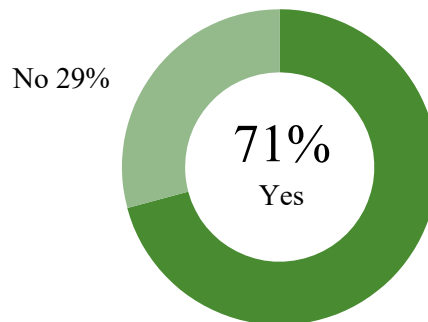


The challenges around remaining in one’s home or community in Marin County’s unincorporated areas are numerous. There is a higher share of older adults living on limited incomes in the area, with 22% reporting that they rely on less than \$30,000 per year, which is 5% higher than the reported rate across the county.⁴⁵ The landscape, housing market, zoning, and community amenities available in unincorporated areas also discourage higher density buildings, resulting in a housing stock that has many more single-family homes per capita, many of which were built many years ago. While 83% of older adults surveyed in unincorporated Marin County say that they plan to remain in their current home as they age, only 71% say there are enough support services available for them to do so. These factors and trends translate to a greater need for home repair, maintenance and modification in order to accommodate older occupants as they age, as well as potential under-utilization of space within these homes, as older households tend to have fewer occupants and a lower ratio of occupants-to-bedrooms.

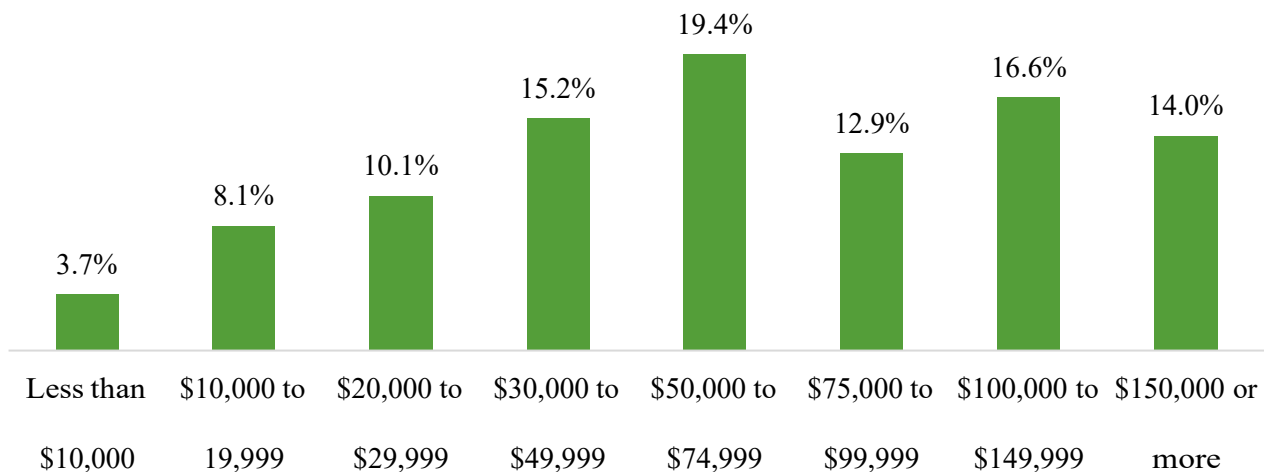
Planning to Remain in Current Home, Unincorporated Marin County (n=428)



Feel There Are Enough Support Services Available to Remain in Current Home, Unincorporated Marin County (n=394)

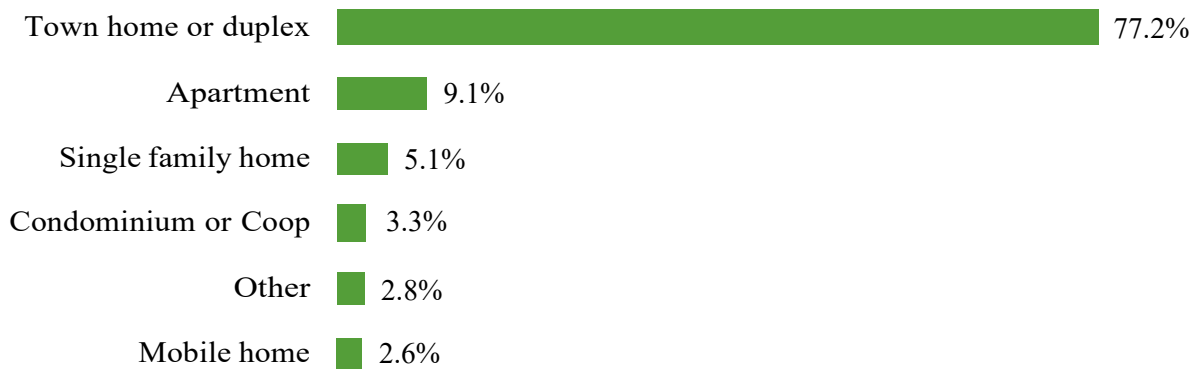


Reported Annual Older Adult Household Income in Unincorporated Marin County (n=356)



Residents’ perceived availability of activities in unincorporated areas were similar to those of residents in incorporated areas, with some differences. Only 53% of those taking the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** in unincorporated areas report access to continuing education activities, whereas 68% of older adults living in cities and towns reported the same. About 54% of those surveyed in unincorporated areas report that their communities have a variety of cultural activities for diverse populations, over ten percentage points higher than the County overall. According to the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)**, the least available kinds of activities in unincorporated Marin County are activities that are affordable, and continuing education classes; whereas in all of Marin County, the least available kinds of activities are cultural activities for diverse populations and affordable activities.

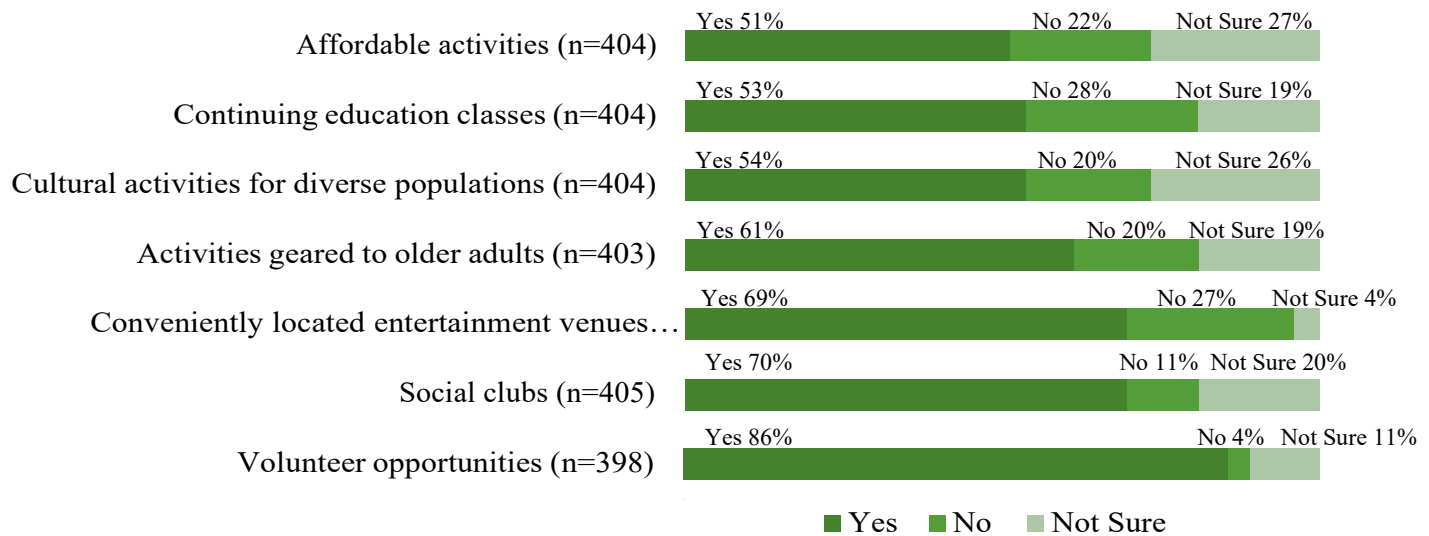
Reported Home Type for Older Adults in Unincorporated Marin County (n=430)



In incorporated cities and towns, volunteer opportunities and conveniently located entertainment venues are reportedly the most available of the activity options provided in the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)**, whereas in unincorporated areas the most available activities are volunteer opportunities and social clubs.



Activities: My Community (in Unincorporated Marin County) Has...



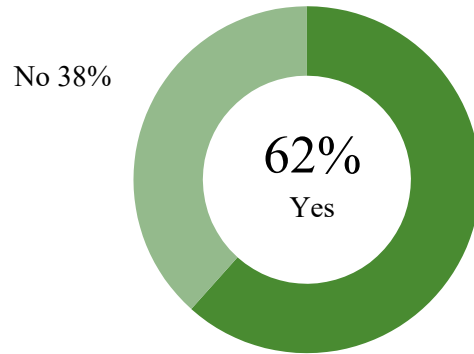
While there were differences in availability of activities in unincorporated areas versus incorporated cities and towns, importance ratings were virtually the same in both areas. Over 90% of respondents in unincorporated areas agreed that every option on the list was either very important or somewhat important, indicating that social and community engagement and participation is a high priority in these communities. The category of “Activities that are affordable to all residents” is reported as one of the least available, and yet 68% of unincorporated residents surveyed in the **Age-Friendly Assessment Survey (2019)** say it is “Very Important” for their community have such activities. Similarly, 45% of respondents reported that cultural activities for diverse populations are available in their communities, and 60% of respondents said it was “very Important” for their communities to have them.

In our age-friendly focus groups in unincorporated areas of the County, many older adults indicated that they would like to see more accessible paths and trails in unincorporated areas to better accommodate people with limited physical abilities. Residents also expressed interest in the County expanding programs and strengthening partnerships that encourage older adults to visit parks, such as membership and prescription programs.

A slightly higher share of older adults in unincorporated areas feel prepared for an emergency than the overall county population of older adults, indicating a higher level of awareness and concern driven by a more urgent and proximal threat due to the area’s natural surroundings. Many survey respondents and focus group attendees voiced approval and acceptance of many of the emergency response planning efforts and volunteer networks in place to that can spring to action in the case of a critical natural event. Many of these people also suggested these assets and strengths could be utilized outside of emergencies to benefit higher risk older adults in need of resources and support.

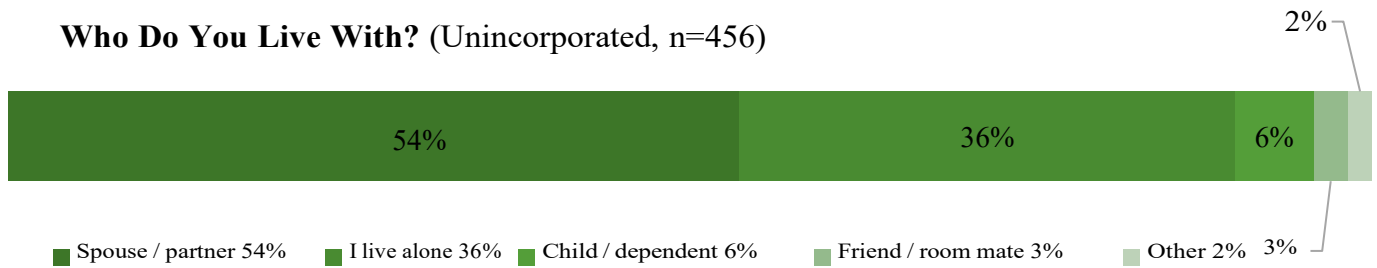
Finally, there was consensus among older residents and key stakeholders that funding and support for groups and organizations serving the older adults in unincorporated areas can be expanded and strengthened. As there is a higher rate of older adults in unincorporated areas who face numerous challenges and barriers, there is an overall greater need for enhancing resources and solutions for those living in these areas.

Preparedness for a Community-Wide Emergency, Unincorporated Marin County (n=422)



Given these challenges and the opportunities to address them, the action items in this focus area center on opportunities improve the experiences of and supports for older adults in unincorporated areas of West Marin. While each community is unique in certain age-friendly challenges and opportunities, rural and unincorporated communities share many similarities as well. Efforts to reduce barriers and enhance services, supports, and spaces in West Marin communities can serve as incubators of ideas and solutions for people living in and organizations and agencies serving unincorporated areas beyond West Marin.

Who Do You Live With? (Unincorporated, n=456)



Action Item 1: Utilize the robust volunteer culture in West Marin to provide home repairs, social visits and wellness checks, rides, and trained home hardening services

- Community: Create more opportunities for older residents and retirees to volunteer; partner with volunteer-based organizations to expand volunteer programs in West Marin
- County Leadership: Encourage stronger volunteer recruitment efforts, volunteer management infrastructure, and volunteer-related partnerships to address needs in unincorporated areas

- County Departments: Civic Center Volunteers and the Fire Department can work together and with West Marin community groups and local organizations to train and incentivize volunteer programs to help West Marin older adults

Action Item 2: Enhance access to parks and open spaces for people with limited mobility and income

- Community: Demonstrate demand for accessible spaces and affordable access to parks and open spaces, report instances where installations and improvements are needed
- County Leadership: Provide budget and resources to better target messaging and promotions to key audiences
- County Departments: Better target promotion of parks and open spaces and the programs and events taking place there (Parks, Public Information Office); improve pedestrian infrastructure to better accommodate people with limited mobility and disabilities (Parks, Dept. of Public Works)

Action Item 3: Explore utilization of disaster preparedness communications networks for communications on resources for high risk older adults

- Community: Volunteers can help design the process to ensure it does not disrupt, interfere, or compete with emergency response priorities; explore sub-committee to focus on connecting high risk older adults with volunteer communications network
- County Leadership: Provide communications support through Public Information Office
- County Departments: Fire Dept. can work with others to develop a communications strategy to promote resources, services, and events for higher risk older adults living in West Marin

Action Item 4: Expand funding and support for groups and organizations serving West Marin and other unincorporated areas

- Community: Convene CBOs that currently and can potentially serve West Marin to understand supply and demand of key services now and into the future
- County Leadership: Consider additional funding sources to promote stronger supports for organizations serving West Marin
- County Departments: Health & Human Services, Fire Dept., Libraries, Parks, and others can explore strengthening partnerships with CBOs using currenting funding and writing collaborative grants to fund and expand critical services for older adults living in unincorporated areas of the county

Equity Opportunities: By encouraging a greater amount of services and resources for residents in unincorporated areas – many of which are rural – will help to narrow the equity gap for people who are geographically isolated. Recognizing, strengthening, and better utilizing social and institutional assets such as Marin’s volunteer culture, natural spaces, planning networks, and community-based organizations can help better serve residents in unincorporated areas who have the greatest socioeconomic need. By helping residents of unincorporated areas to further identify and develop what is important to them, more localized age-friendly outcomes can occur to meet needs of diverse populations who live in these areas. Such action would particularly help those populations that are already marginalized due to historic and systemic racism and now must contend with the added layer of ageism.

Unincorporated Areas Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Utilize the robust volunteer culture in West Marin to provide home repairs, social visits and wellness checks, rides, and trained home hardening services	Disaster Preparedness Community Participation Civic Participation Mobility	Community: Residents, Retirees, CBOs County Leadership: BOS Departments: Civic Center Volunteers, Fire Dept.	2021	2022	
2. Enhance access to parks and open spaces for people with limited mobility and income	Respect & Social Inclusion Safe Outdoor Spaces Mobility	Community: Residents County Leadership: BOS Departments: Parks, PIO, DPW	2021	2022	
3. Explore utilization of disaster preparedness communications networks for communications on resources for high risk older adults	Communication Respect & Social Inclusion	Community: Emergency response volunteers County Leadership: BOS Departments: Fire Dept.	2020	2021	2022
4. Expand funding and support for groups and organizations serving West Marin	Health & Community Services	Community: CBOs County Leadership: BOS Department: H&HS, Fire Dept., Parks, Free Library, others	2021	2022	

ACTION PLAN LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

This age-friendly action plan, informed by residents, stakeholders, and qualitative and quantitative data, is the first of its kind for Marin County. To be successful, each of the goals set out in this plan will require leadership endorsement, collaboration, and a shared willingness for community members, community-oriented groups, community organizations, local governments, and future stakeholders to act. It presents opportunities for multiple County of Marin departments to work together.

The Age-Friendly County of Marin Advisory Committee has advised that this plan demonstrate to residents the County's political will to concertedly understand and address some of the growing challenges experienced by older adults today and into the future. Due to the adaptive capacities and multi-stakeholder elements of this plan's goals and objectives, the Advisory Committee recommends an appropriate governance structure to guide and ensure implementation of this plan. An appropriate governance structure for this initiative would provide the oversight and resources necessary to encourage, implement, and monitor ongoing collaboration and coordination among plan stakeholders, as well as coordination with peripheral age-friendly community initiatives at the state and local levels to ensure goals and objectives are realized.

The Advisory Committee, County Administrators Office and Office of Aging and Adult Services recommendations are as follows:

- **Establish a Board Committee** to serve as an age-friendly oversight committee. This Board Committee will meet two to three times per year to review progress of age-friendly action items, approve new action items, and identify development and action areas within the County that may require Board attention. This committee will be comprised of County Supervisors as well as leaders representing County departments and community members who have a role to play in the implementation of this plan. A new Age-Friendly Coordinator would report to this committee/per year.
- **The County's Commission on Aging will create a new committee** to function as a regular advisory oversight and monitoring body. This committee will work directly with the Coordinator to monitor progress and challenges and inform the Board committee.
- **Establish a new Age-Friendly Coordinator position**, to be housed within Aging & Adult Services and functioning across County departments, community partners, community groups, and community initiatives. This position will carry age-friendly

action items forward, monitor progress, including progress in the areas of equity opportunities, modify the plan as action items are implemented and new action items and focus areas emerge, and serve as a liaison with complimentary age-friendly initiatives. An appropriate position would be a mid-level professional with the skillset to manage small and large projects; gather, analyze, and interpret qualitative and quantitative data; foster interdepartmental, interagency, and public dialogues; and drive collaboration and coordination in order to see that age-friendly goals and objectives move forward and are met.

Upon the Board of Supervisors' approval of this plan, it will be submitted to WHO/AARP for review and approval as the official age-friendly strategic plan for Marin County. Once submitted, this initiative will follow WHO/AARP's guidelines for implementation and updates. Years two through four of the plan's implementation (2020-2022) will involve carrying out action items within the focus areas and adding new action items as some are completed and others emerge. Year five (2023) will involve conducting and submitting a comprehensive evaluation of all action items and focus areas to WHO/AARP, with the intention of updating the plan as needed and applying for Marin County's continuation as a designated age-friendly community by the WHO/AARP.



CLOSING

This plan represents a significant undertaking and will serve as a framework and starting point for the work ahead. It presents challenges, and projections and opportunities to help the Board of Supervisors and County Departments serve the largest growing segment of Marin's population. Equally important is the opportunity this plan represents to change the narrative around aging which will prepare the County to not only serve the current generations of older adults but to make the community more livable for all generations now and in the future. At this plan's core is the opportunity to adopt a universal practice of fostering County services, programs, policies, places, and spaces to become more person-centered and welcoming for people of all ages, means, and abilities.

This is a call to action for everyone, as aging affects us all. The County of Marin has joined a global community of age-friendly cities and communities, conveying to its residents a vision that Marin County truly be an age-friendly, age-forward livable community for all.

ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Housing Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Enhance promotion and encourage expansion of JADU/ADU programs	Adequate Housing Communication Civic Engagement	Community: Homeowners Leadership: BOS Departments: AAS, CDA	2020	2021	
2. Encourage affordable housing and increase direct/indirect rent assistance for older adult renters	Adequate Housing Community & Health Services	Community: Homeowners, renters Leadership: BOS Departments: AAS, CDA, MHA	2020	2021	2022
3. Support/encourage home-sharing opportunities	Adequate Housing Community & Health Services Communication	Community: Homeowners, renters, CBOs Leadership: BOS Department: AAS		2021	2022
4. Expand home modification services and accessible living environments	Adequate Housing Community & Health Services Communication	Community: Volunteers, Villages groups, CBOs Leadership: BOS Department: CDA		2021	2022
Mobility Options Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Encourage greater on-demand transportation options, particularly those that serve unincorporated areas	Mobility Options Health & Community Services Civic Participation Social Engagement	Community: Volunteers, CBOs, companies, cities/towns, mobility companies Leadership: BOS Departments: Marin Access, Marin Transit, H&HS	2020	2021	2022
2. Offer more balance-training and falls prevention opportunities in outdoor spaces	Mobility Options Health & Community Services Community Participation Safe Outdoor Spaces	Community: Volunteers, healthcare providers, CBOs Leadership: BOS Departments: Parks, Public Health	2020	2021	2022
3. Connect and promote all services, programs, and events with transportation options	Mobility Options Health & Community Services Community Participation Communication	Community: General public Leadership: BOS Departments: All consumer-facing depts		2021	2022

4. Devote more attention to alternative mobility options such as walking and bikes.	Mobility Options Health & Community Services Civic Participation Safe Outdoor Spaces	Community: General public Leadership: BOS Departments: DPW	2021	2022	
Community Services Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Ensure that the emerging Marin County Community Paramedicine program links patients in rural communities to social services and resources	Health & Community Services Community Participation	Community: Volunteers, CBOs, Healthcare providers, EMS Leadership: BOS Departments: Marin County Fire Dept, H&HS	2021	2022	
2. Create greater access to and awareness of community resources	Health & Community Services Communication	Community: General public, faith communities Leadership: BOS Departments: All consumer-facing departments	2020	2021	2022
3. Explore service payment rate increases in rural areas as well as programs that encourage greater professional caregiver coverage in rural areas	Health & Community Services Respect & Social Inclusion	Community: CBOs, Businesses Leadership: BOS Department: H&HS	2021	2022	
4. Improve online presence, explore tech-based trainings and services	Health & Community Services Respect & Social Inclusion Communication	Community: CBOs Leadership: BOS Departments: Marin Transit, Free Library	2020	2021	2022
5. Enhance trainings for older adults and professionals to understand, identify, and address the behavioral health needs of older adults	Health & Community Services Respect & Social Inclusion	Community: CBOs, healthcare providers, residents Leadership: BOS Department: H&HS, BHRS	2020	2021	2022

Disaster Preparedness Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Develop and distribute emergency preparation checklists, guides and kits	Disaster Preparedness Communication Community & Health Services	Community: Volunteers, neighborhood groups, CERT groups, CBOs Leadership: BOS Departments: H&HS, Fire Dept., Free Library	2020	2021	2022
2. Conduct periodic emergency drills for sheltering-in-place and to shelter destinations	Disaster Preparedness Mobility Options	Community: Volunteers, neighborhood groups, CERT groups, Whistlestop Leadership: BOS Departments: Fire Dept., Sheriff, H&HS, Marin Transit	2020	2021	2022
3. Provide fire mitigation home preparation education and services, particularly for older and more frail households	Disaster Preparedness Community & Health Services Safe Outdoor Spaces	Community: Residents, volunteers, FIRESafe Marin Leadership: BOS Departments: Fire Dept., Parks	2020	2021	2022
4. Utilize emergency response volunteers to identify and help older adults who live alone become more prepared for emergencies	Disaster Preparedness Respect & Social Inclusion	Community: Volunteers, Neighborhood Response Groups, CERT Groups, CBOs, healthcare providers, local jurisdictions Leadership: BOS Department: Fire, H&HS	2020	2021	2022
Social Connection Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Develop cross-departmental initiative to identify chronically isolated and lonely older adults	Respect & Social Inclusion Communication Community & Health Services	Community: Residents Leadership: BOS Departments: Public Health, community health organizations	2020	2021	2022
2. Encourage expansion of village movement activities across Marin County	Respect & Social Inclusion Communication Community Participation Civic Engagement	Community: Neighborhood groups, Villages groups Leadership: BOS Departments: AAS		2021	2022
3. Expand current intergenerational services and programs while encouraging new ones	Respect & Social Inclusion Community & Health Services Community Participation Civic Engagement	Community: Volunteers, Schools, CBOs Leadership: BOS Departments: Parks, Free Library		2021	2022

4. Promote subsidized, discounted or free events in the community	Respect & Social Inclusion Communication Community Participation Civic Engagement	Community: Libraries, Venues, CBOs Leadership: BOS, PIO Department: Public-facing departments	2020	2021	2022
Unincorporated Areas Action Items	Age-Friendly Domains	Key Stakeholders	Years		
1. Utilize the robust volunteer culture in West Marin to provide home repairs, social visits and wellness checks, rides, and trained home hardening services	Disaster Preparedness Community Participation Civic Participation Mobility	Community: Residents, Retirees, CBOs County Leadership: BOS Departments: Civic Center Volunteers, Fire Dept.	2021	2022	
2. Enhance access to parks and open spaces for people with limited mobility and income	Respect & Social Inclusion Safe Outdoor Spaces Mobility	Community: Residents County Leadership: BOS Departments: Parks, PIO, DPW	2021	2022	
3. Explore utilization of disaster preparedness communications networks for communications on resources for high risk older adults	Communication Respect & Social Inclusion	Community: Emergency response volunteers County Leadership: BOS Departments: Fire Dept.	2020	2021	2022
4. Expand funding and support for groups and organizations serving West Marin	Health & Community Services	Community: CBOs County Leadership: BOS Department: H&HS, Fire Dept., Parks, Free Library, others	2021	2022	

APPENDIX A

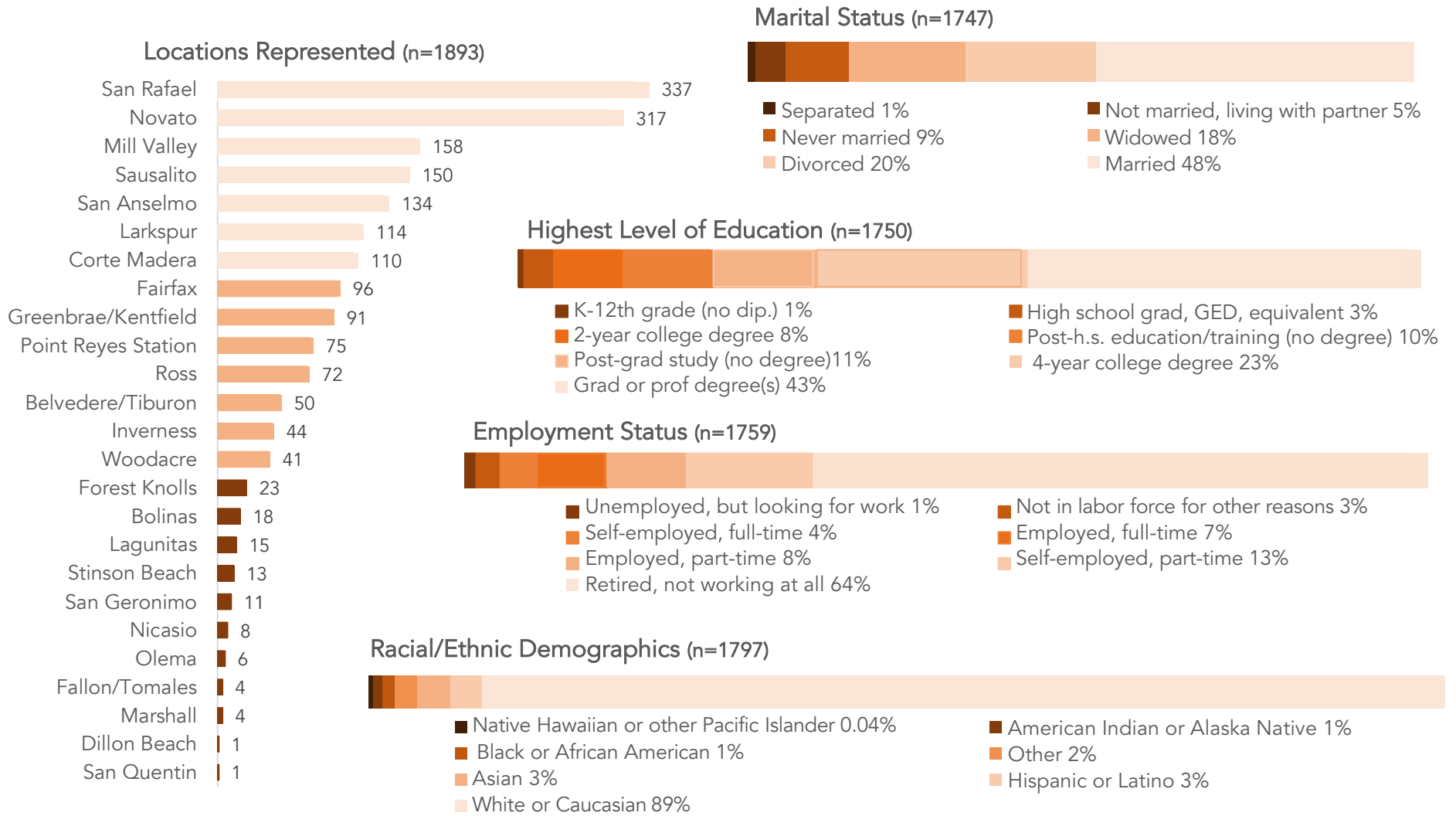
AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES AND ACTIVITIES IN MARIN COUNTY

- **Age-Friendly Belvedere** is becoming an age-friendly community after the City Council recently gave its support.
- **Age-Friendly Corte Madera (AFCM)** is working to create physical and social environments that support healthy and active aging.
- **Age-Friendly County of Marin** is publishing its action plan and beginning to implement plan action items in 2020.
- **Age-Friendly Fairfax** is building a healthy and liveable community for all, because when it comes to aging everybody's doing it!
- **Age-Friendly Larkspur** is looking for residents who would like to work with a small and committed group to create a community that is age friendly.
- **Age-Friendly Mill Valley** is working on identifying resources needed to reach its age-friendly goals.
- **Age-Friendly Novato** is focused on ensuring that Novato residents experience inclusion, connection and participation by engaging in a multi-generational and diverse community. They are building their task force and gathering feedback.
- **Age-Friendly Ross** is excited to be forming a work group and gathering information on the needs of the community.
- **Age-Friendly San Anselmo** was welcomed into the WHO/AARP Age-Friendly network in July 2019. Their task force is sending out a fall community survey to gather input for their Age-Friendly strategic planning.
- **Age-Friendly San Rafael** Task Force is beginning its assessment using a community survey, holding focus groups and interviewing key stake holders.
- **Age-Friendly Sausalito** believes a community that is better for older adults is better for everyone. Sausalito has a CARSS (Call-A-Ride-Sausalito-Seniors) program and other initiatives to ensure residents can actively age in place.
- **Age-Friendly Tam Valley** is looking for residents who would like to work with a small and committed group to create a community that is age friendly.
- **Age-Friendly Tiburon** is working with the Town Council and staff to apply for its official designation. The workgroup is hoping to talk to residents interested in helping make our town age friendly.
- **Age-Friendly West Marin** is conducting focus groups to help develop age-friendly priorities and action plans with the County, 15 West Marin villages, and other farms, ranches and parks.

APPENDIX B

AGE-FRIENDLY COUNTY OF MARIN: 2019 SURVEY RESULTS

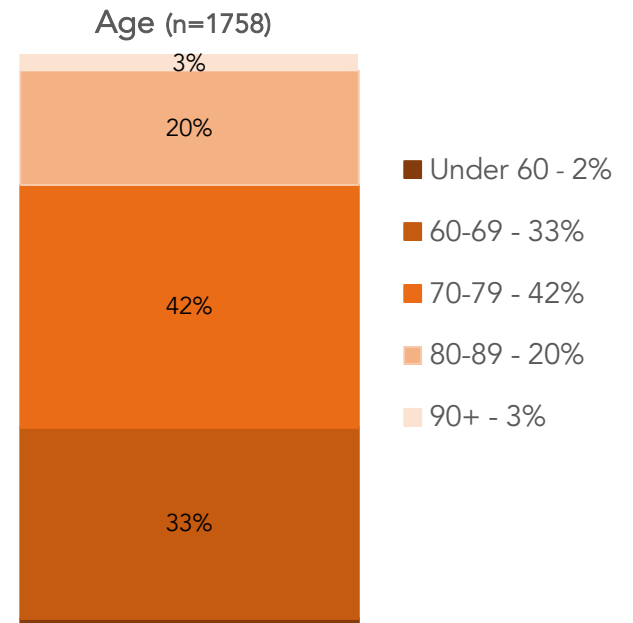
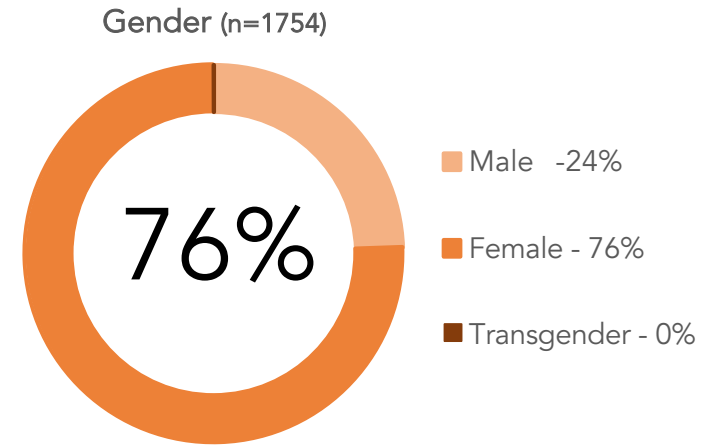
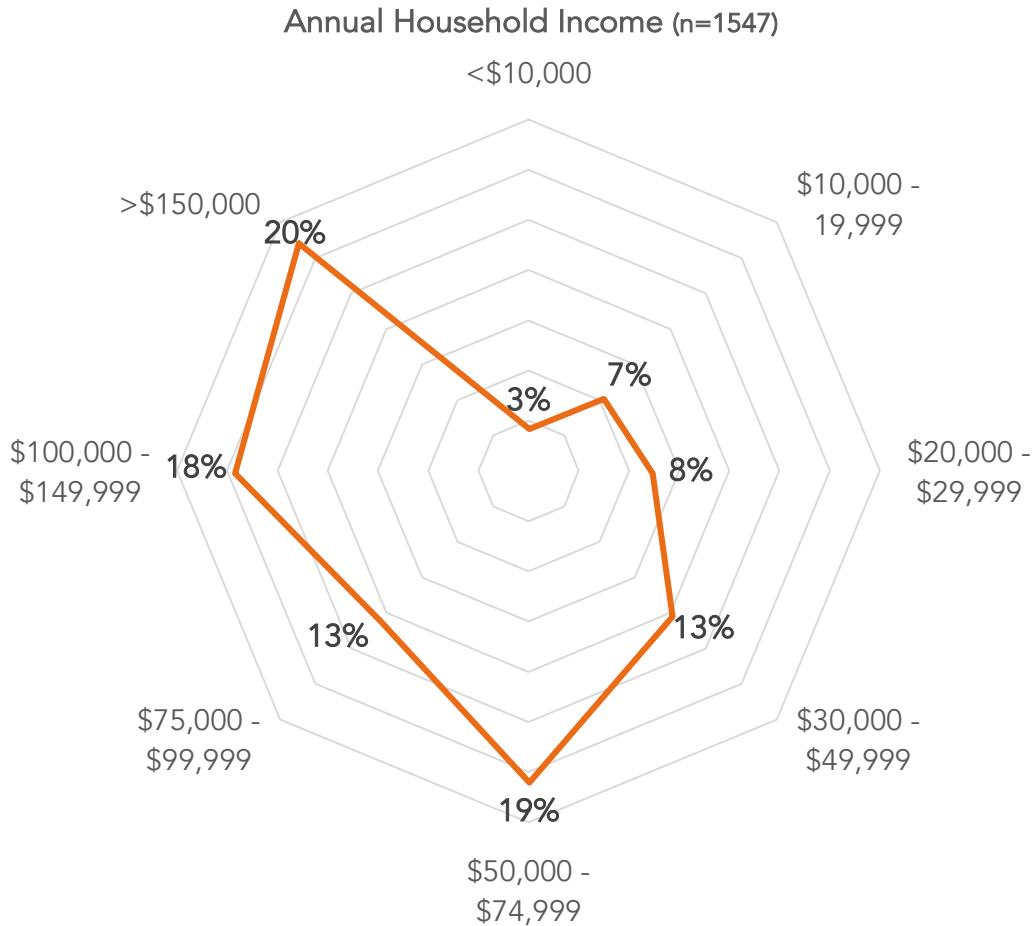
Section 1: About You



APPENDIX B

AGE-FRIENDLY COUNTY OF MARIN: 2019 SURVEY RESULTS

Section 1: About You (continued)

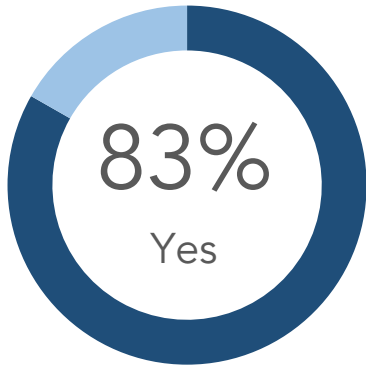


APPENDIX B

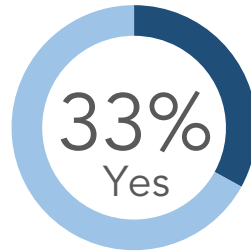
AGE-FRIENDLY COUNTY OF MARIN: 2019 SURVEY RESULTS

Section 2: Community & Home

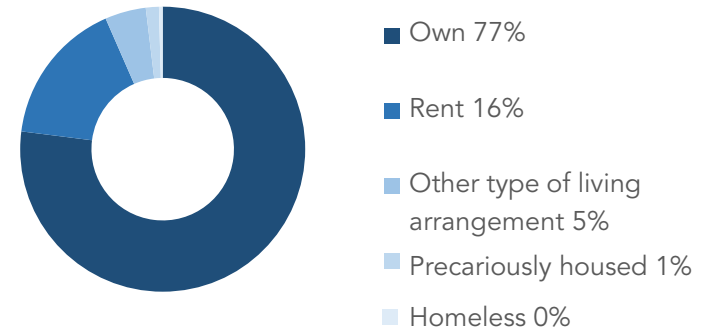
Plans to remain in current primary home (n=1863)



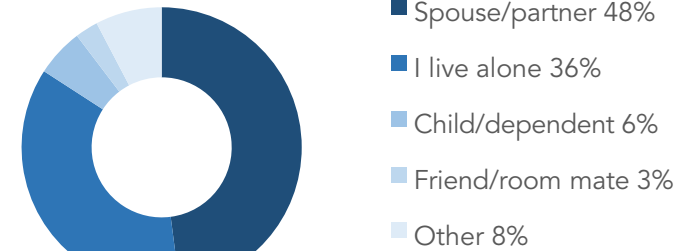
Share of people not planning to remain in current home who cite personal finances and/or cost of living as contributing factors (n=312)



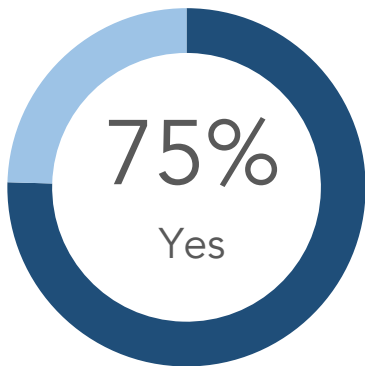
Housing Status (n=1803)



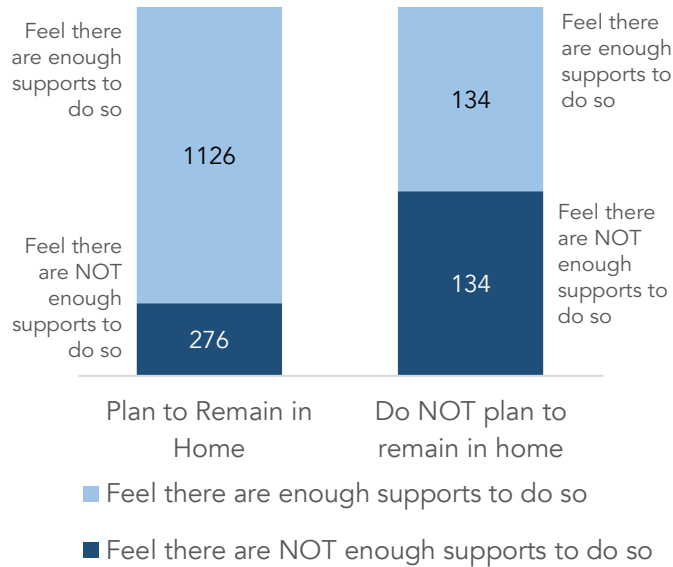
Coinhabitancy Status (n=1992)



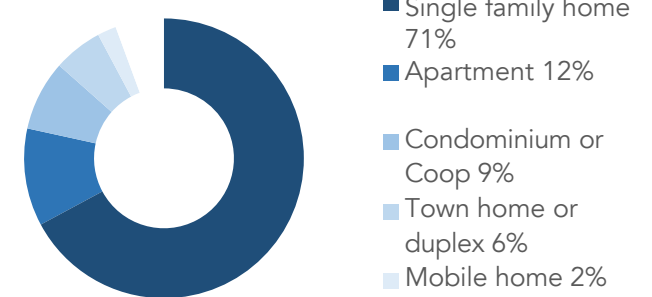
There are enough support services to remain in current primary home (n=1715)



Plans to Remain in Home vs Support Availability (n= 1670)



Primary Home Type (n=1781)

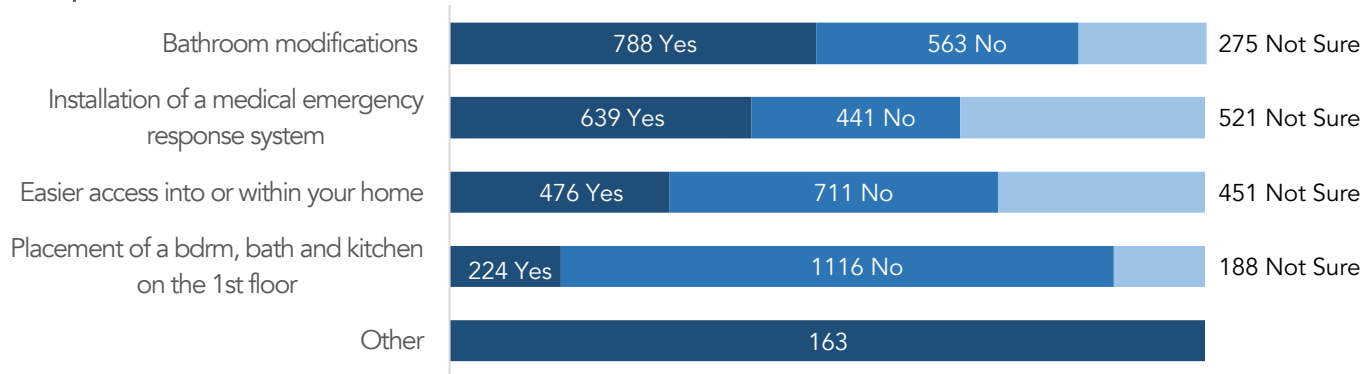


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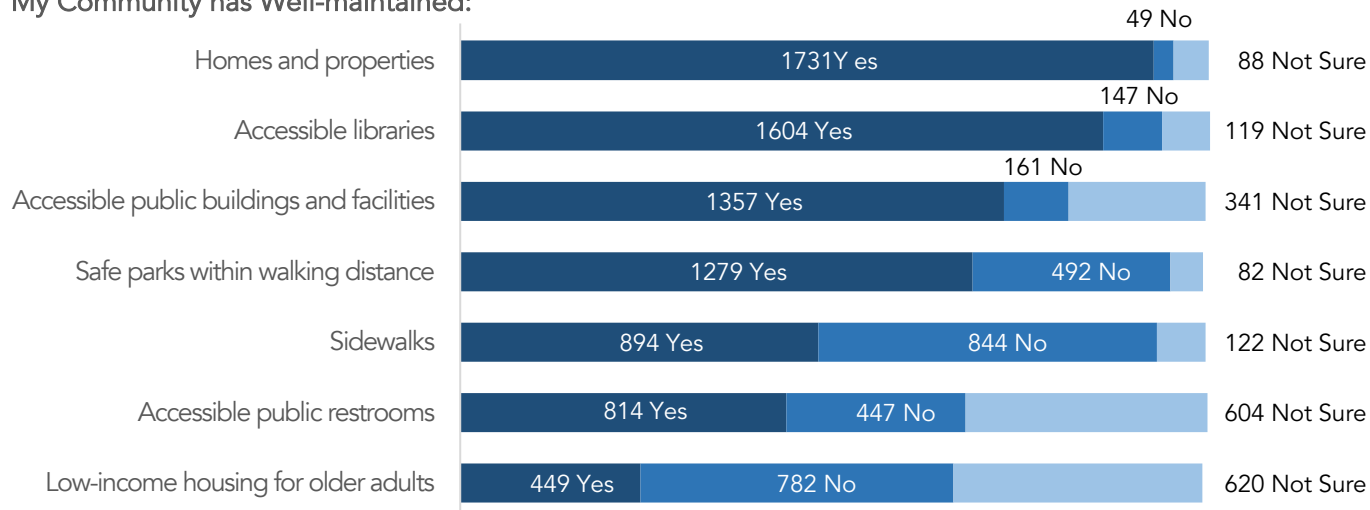
AGE-FRIENDLY COUNTY OF MARIN: 2019 SURVEY RESULTS

Section 2: Community & Home (continued)

Expected Home Modifications

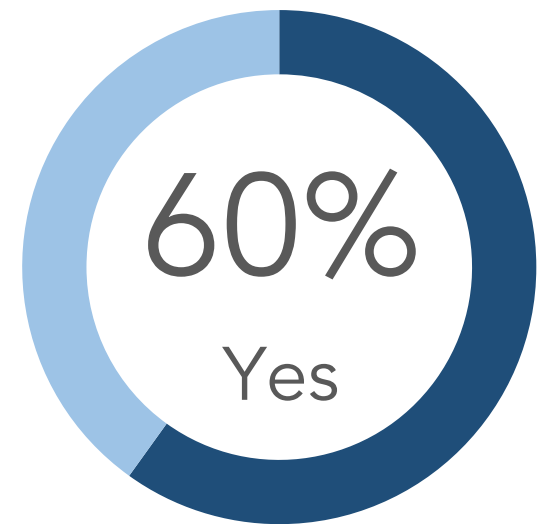


My Community has Well-maintained:



■ Yes ■ No ■ Not Sure

Preparedness in a Community-Wide Emergency (n=1844)

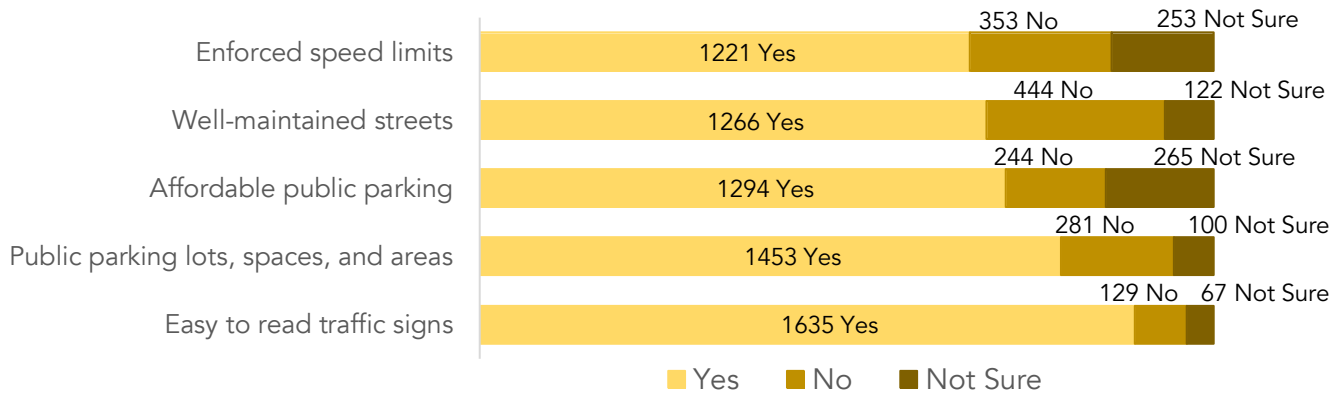


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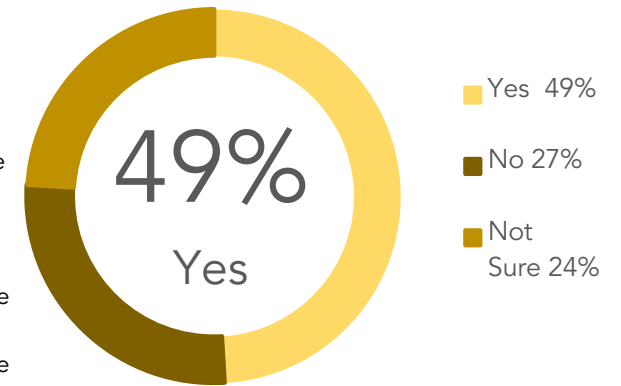
AGE-FRIENDLY COUNTY OF MARIN: 2019 SURVEY RESULTS

Section 3: Transportation & Streets

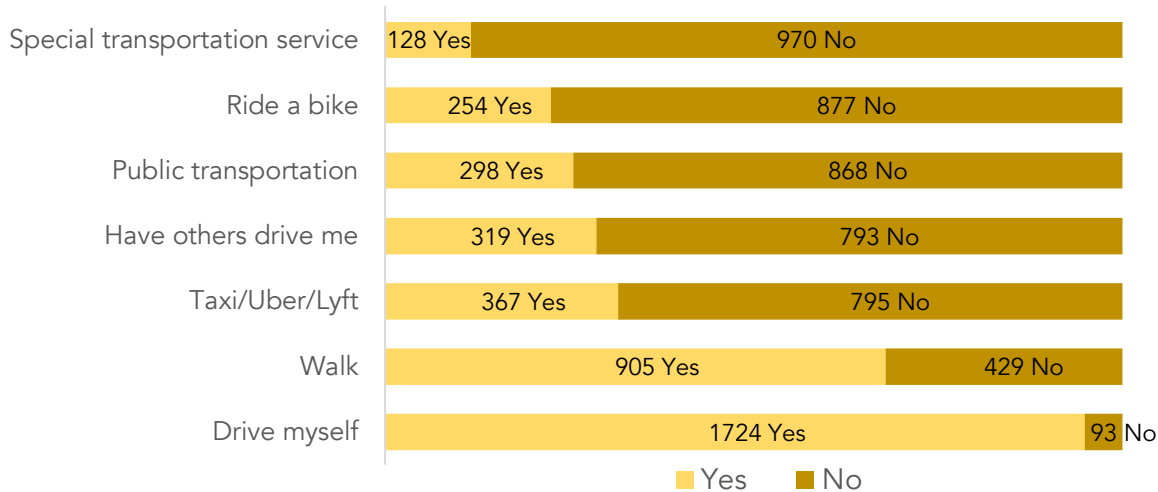
Overall, My Community has:



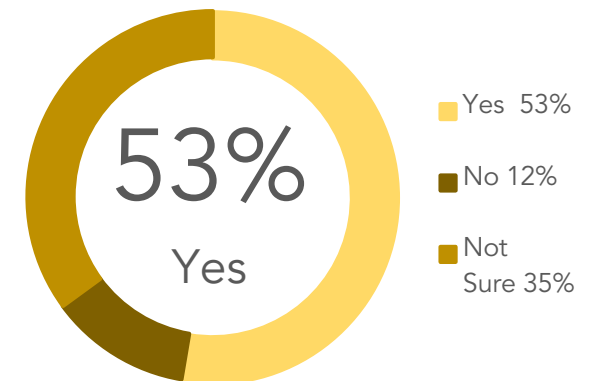
Our Public Transit is Accessible and Convenient (n=1827)



How I Get Around:



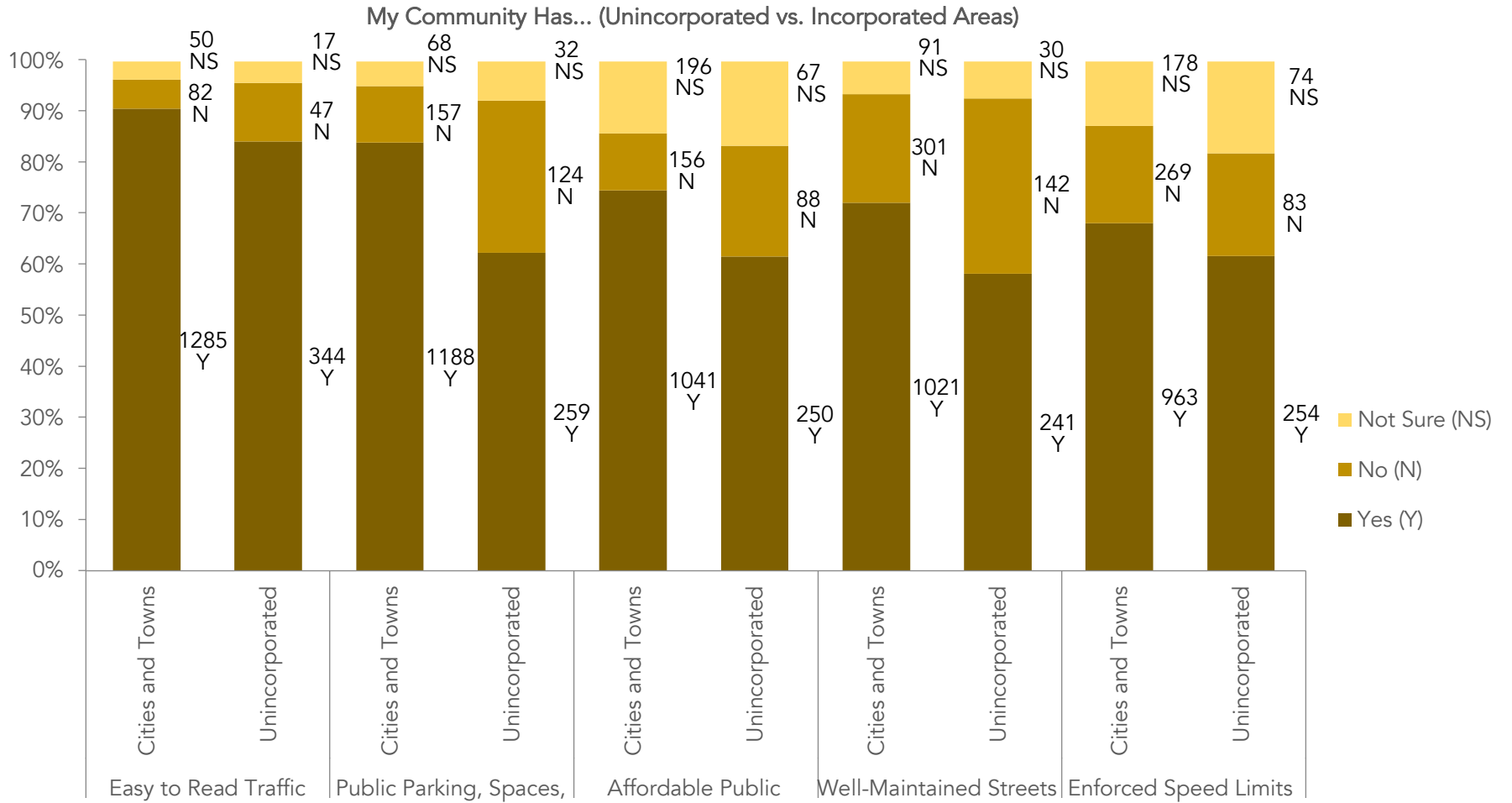
Our Public Transit is Affordable (n=1821)



APPENDIX B

AGE-FRIENDLY COUNTY OF MARIN: 2019 SURVEY RESULTS

Section 3: Transportation & Streets (continued)



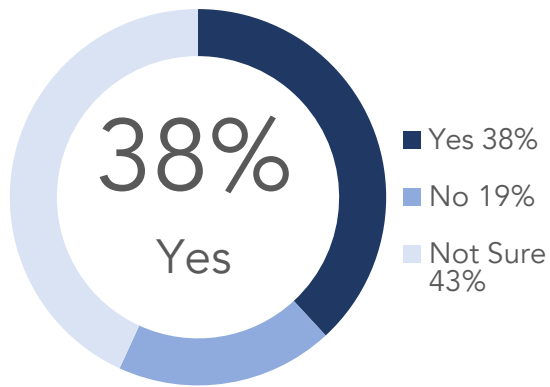
APPENDIX B

AGE-FRIENDLY COUNTY OF MARIN: 2019 SURVEY RESULTS

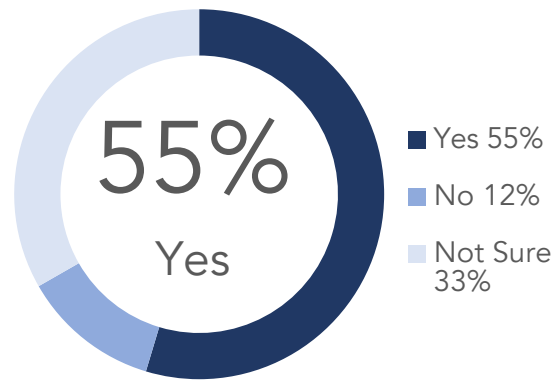
Section 4: Health & Wellness

Does the community where you live have the following...

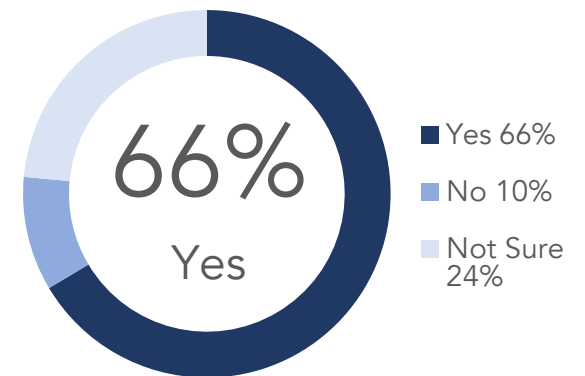
Affordable Health Care Service Options (n=1828)



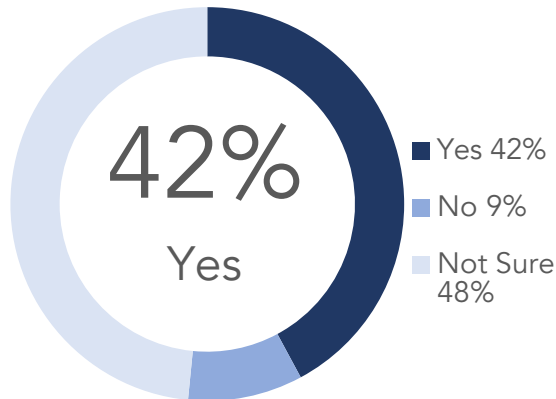
Health and Wellness Programs and Classes (n=1839)



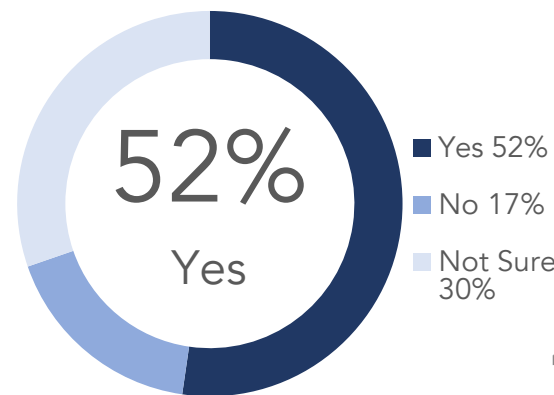
Fitness Activities Geared to Older Adults (n=1832)



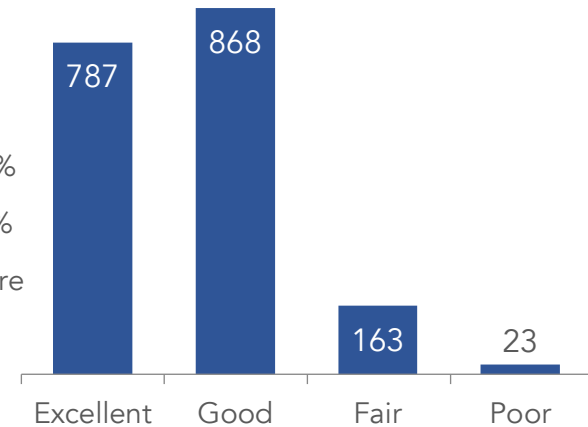
A Health & Supportive Services Locating Service (n=1823)



Conveniently Located Health & Social Services (n=1832)



Self-Rated Health (n=1841)

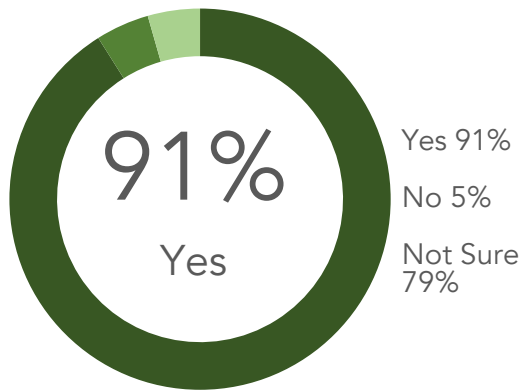


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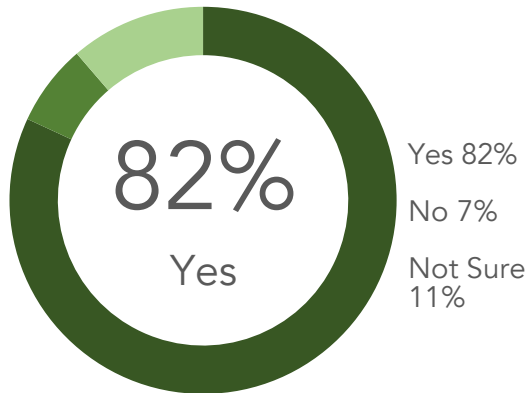
AGE-FRIENDLY COUNTY OF MARIN: 2019 SURVEY RESULTS

Section 5: Community Engagement & Information

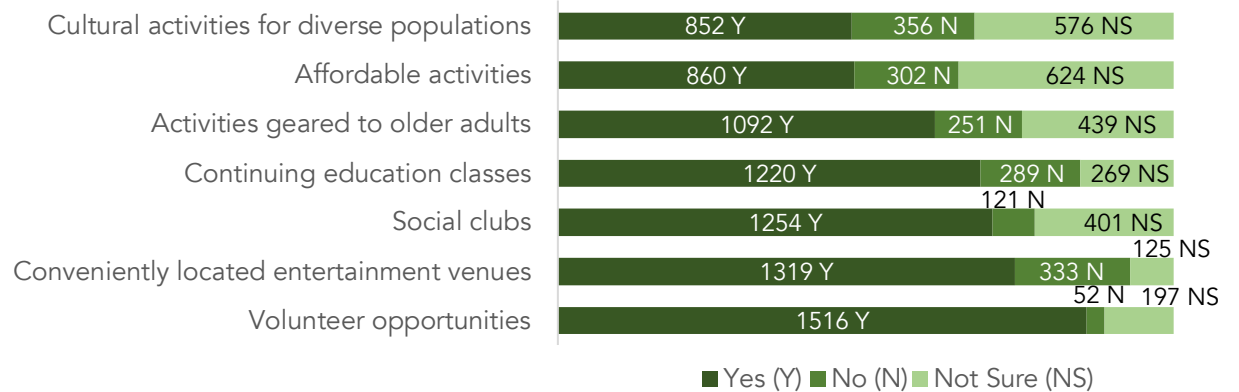
Are People Polite and Respectful?
(n=1785)



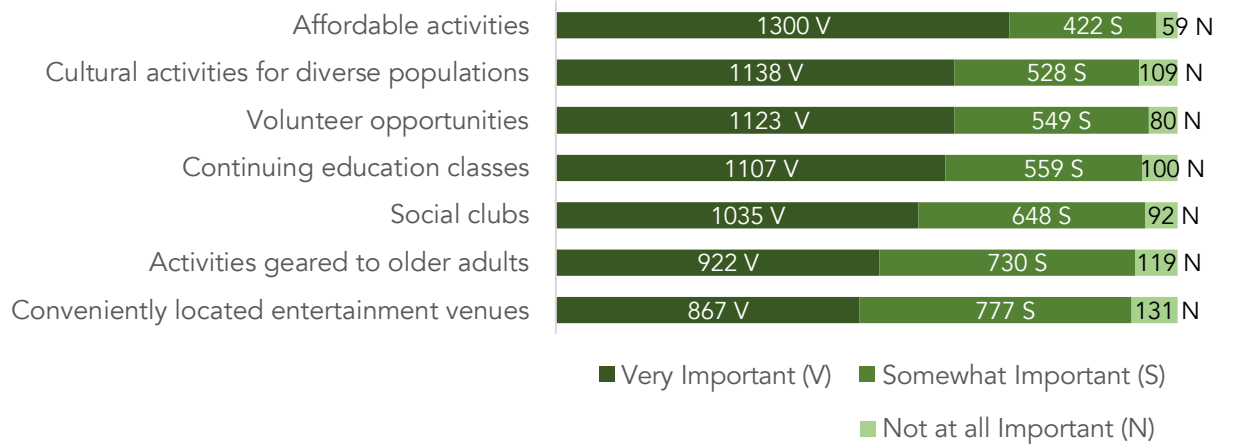
Do You Feel Valued and Respected?
(n=1768)



Activities: My Community has...



Activities: How Important it is for My Community to Have...

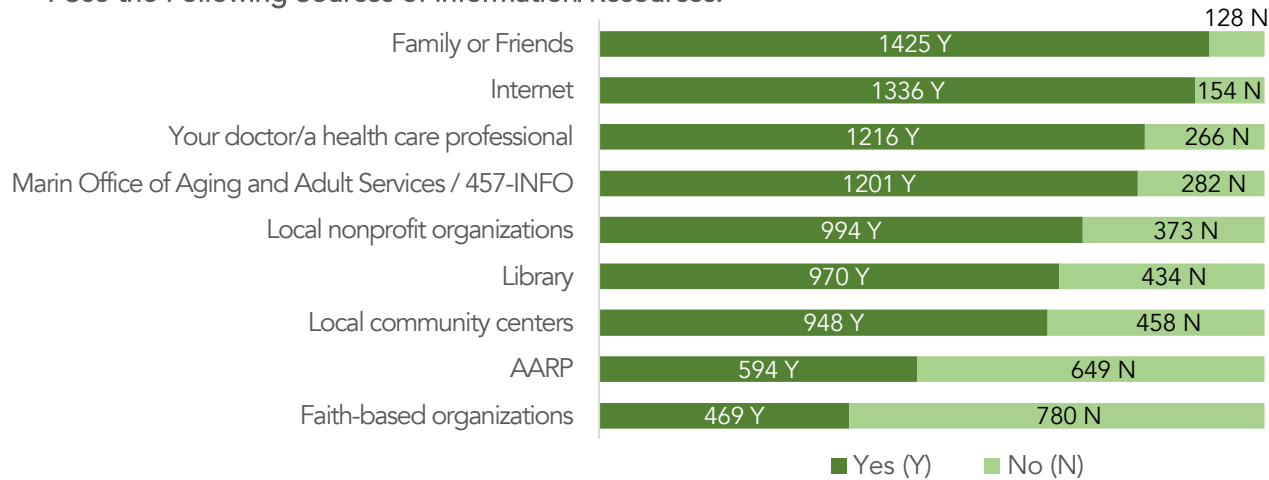


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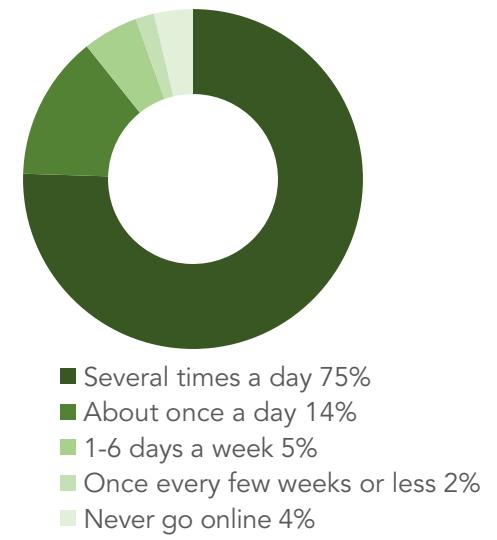
AGE-FRIENDLY COUNTY OF MARIN: 2019 SURVEY RESULTS

Section 5: Community Engagement & Information (continued)

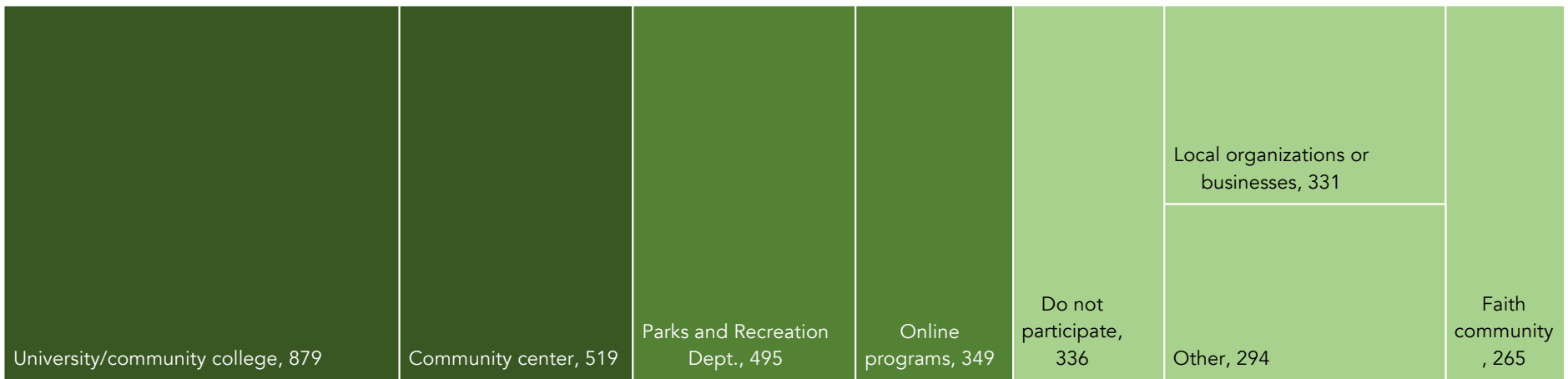
I Use the Following Sources of Information/Resources:



How often do you access the internet? (n=1759)



Where do you typically go for continuing education classes and workshops in your community?



END NOTES / REFERENCES

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