



... COMMUNITY FOR ALL AGES ...

OUR ACTION PLAN

presented by

AGE FRIENDLY BIDDEFORD
A Volunteer Community Group

working in cooperation with Heart of Biddeford

February 19, 2019

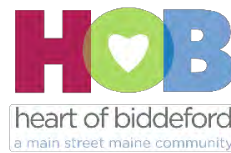




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Community for All Ages

APPRECIATION and RECOGNITION

It goes without saying but needs to be said anyway ... without the help of a great team this Action Plan would not be in your hands today. To Carol Boisjoly, Linda Sprague-Lambert, Loretta Turner, Ron Gobeil, Russ Carlson, and Steve Murphy, all I can say is thank you so much for your dedication to Age Friendly Biddeford.

Special thanks for all the loyal support from AARP during this entire process of producing our Age Friendly Biddeford Action Plan along with the unending encouragement from the very beginning of this project to its presentation now. I would especially like to thank Rich Livingston, past President of AARP Maine, who cheerfully attended all our monthly meetings offering sage advice and the patient guidance we all needed. I also must mention and give thanks to Patricia Oh, who while working for all of Maine's Age Friendly Communities, always managed to inspire us and make us feel special as if she were our very own private consultant. We wouldn't be here today if it weren't for the both of you.

A note of gratitude goes to the City of Biddeford, especially Mayor Alan Casavant. Without your vision to adopt an ad hoc committee and open Biddeford to the wonderful ways of Age Friendly Community living, our work never would have begun. Thanks also to Mat Eddy, Economic Development, and Linda Waters, Community Development, along with Greg Tansley, City Planner, who helped us through our struggles in the very beginning.

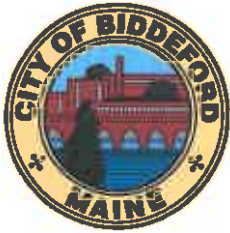
And, without the faith and confidence in our mission shown to us by Heart of Biddeford, we don't know if we would have survived our growing pains. Thank you, Delilah Poupore, for believing in us and taking us under your wings.

Last, but certainly not least, we need to thank Jean Saunders and Lynn Steed at Age Friendly Saco for "showing us the way" and leading by example. It has been truly inspirational watching what you have accomplished in a short period of time. You have been the best of mentors.

Finally, to our families and friends (and those not yet met) we are looking forward to collaborating with you to create a magnificent Age Friendly Biddeford. We have much more to do and look forward to having fun doing it with you,

Peggy Ann Ayers, Chair

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Alan M. Casavant
Mayor

February 9, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

As Mayor of the City of Biddeford, I strongly endorse the mission and work of Age Friendly Biddeford, an all-volunteer group. Biddeford has a significant number of elderly residents, and I feel that it is important to ensure their integration into the community, as too often, as residents' age, they become more isolated. The Age Friendly Biddeford group has identified many of the needs of our seniors and have plans to increase awareness of such needs at the governmental level.

As the city continues in its economic revitalization and its corresponding improvements in infrastructure, such as sidewalks, roads, and parks, it is critical that we consider incorporating designs and amenities that best suit all age demographics. We want to be cognizant of the need for safety and independence for our seniors and plan accordingly in our construction of walkways and other public spaces.

The scope of the plans and goals of Age Friendly Biddeford is significant, and I applaud all that they have done and all that they plan to do. Demographically, today, Biddeford is a very interesting community. The median age is 35! The median age in the downtown is 29! We are the youngest city in Maine, and such the designation means that we must be increasingly aware of the needs and challenges of both ends of the age spectrum. I believe that our Age Friendly Community is up to that task.

Sincerely,

Alan Casavant
Mayor of Biddeford



MISSION STATEMENT

We, the volunteers of Age Friendly Biddeford, envision a livable community connecting those growing up with those growing older through awareness, communications, and advocacy to make our City a lifelong home for all who wish to live here.

OUR VISION

We pledge to serve and enhance the lives of all who live in our City of Biddeford

- *by encouraging the creation of programs and services needed for all residents to age safely and independently and to be as active in the social, economic, and civic life of our community as they want to be;*
- *by partnering with public and private organizations to enhance existing services and to help create new ones; and*
- *by advising the Mayor and City Council of suggested policy and infrastructure changes to make our City more livable and age friendly for all of us.*



HISTORY of the AGE FRIENDLY MOVEMENT

WHO: In 1948 the United Nations authorized an agency, the World Health Organization, to undertake specialized assignments with an emphasis on international public health. **This agency's** goal was to promote the highest level of health for people throughout the world. As part of this work, WHO conducted a **project called the "Study of Global Ageing and Adult Health" (SAGE)** covering over 50,000 adults over the age of 50 in 23 different countries.

One of the outcomes of this study was to establish in 2007 the WHO Global Network for Age Friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC) worldwide. All members of this Network have the desire and commitment to promote healthy and active ageing and a good quality of life for older residents.

AARP: In 2012, AARP joined the WHO Network to help communities in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands become great places for all ages by adopting features such as safe, walkable streets, better housing and modes of transportation, as well as access to key services and opportunities for all residents to participate in community activities.

Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, founder of AARP, once **stated "Old age is not a defeat, but a victory; not a punishment, but a privilege."** Her passion for older citizens was equally matched by her passion for our youth. She saw the importance of connecting the generations in service, work and play.

As of April 4, 2018 **AARP's Network of Age Friendly Communities numbered 231** towns and cities in the United States representing over 67 million people. The goal of the AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities is to support the work of citizen activists, local community-based organizations and non-profits, service providers, and municipal governments to increase livability.

MAINE: It is interesting to note that our state of Maine has more designated Age Friendly Communities (63 to date) than any other state in the USA. Maine also has the oldest population in the country so perhaps this makes sense. AARP defines an Age Friendly Community as a town, city, or county that has committed to providing residents of all ages and abilities with the opportunity to live rewarding, productive, and safe lives.

AARP research also shows that places that provide what older adults need to age well in their community are places that provide what residents of all ages are looking for when they move to, or live in, a community. Changes in livability do not have to be expensive but they do have to be identified and changes need to be made. Livable communities support and encourage full participation in the social,

civic, and economic life of the community by people of all ages and abilities. In a livable community, all policies, services, settings, and structures encourage residents to remain as active as they want to be at any age, to live life to their own satisfaction regardless of individual challenges. Livable communities improve health, well-being and quality of life for all Mainers. Because aging is a life-long process, a livable community is not just a great place to grow old; but, it is a great place to live, work, and play at any age.

AFB: Age Friendly Biddeford was originally formed in the fall of 2016 as an ad hoc committee under the City's guidance. To quote Alan Casavant, our mayor, "An ongoing concern of mine has been how the city can be more inclusive of its senior citizens: what is needed to make them feel safe and vested in our community, as well as what programs, policies, and infrastructure might most improve their quality of life. AARP has long been a leader in the concerns of our seniors, so I look forward to working with them."

Our application to join AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities was submitted and accepted by AARP in late 2016. The Committee began work in earnest during the winter of 2016-2017 to develop a Survey for all residents based on the eight (8) domains of livability developed by AARP to target improvements that influence the health and quality of life of older adults. There will be much more about these domains in the following sections of our Action Plan. Simply put, they address the areas of: (1) outdoor spaces and buildings, (2) transportation, (3) housing, (4) social participation, (5) respect and social inclusion, (6) civic participation and employment, (7) communication and information, and (8) community support and health services. We expect and welcome your continued suggestions on how to best adopt these criteria to suit your needs.

Attached and made part of our Appendix section will be the Survey as presented to our citizens and the reports from Analytic Insight on Biddeford Age-Friendly Community Survey, and Biddeford Age-Friendly Community Research, both of which will summarize our survey responses and what they mean to the community. We will use both of these as we explain the eight domains and how the results may apply to the City of Biddeford. Please keep in mind that our Action Plan is meant to be a dynamic and evolving document that will hopefully change and improve life here in Biddeford throughout time for all ages.

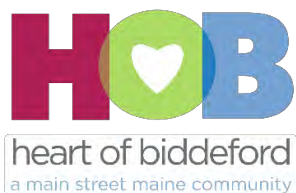
After holding two focus groups at different location and different times of day in an effort to capture as large an audience as we could, the attendance was sparse; however, the feedback from those who attended was lively. We urge you in the future to participate, let your voice be heard, speak up, speak out, and let us know how we can help to make Biddeford an age friendly community that works for you.

Age Friendly Biddeford has continued to grow and has evolved into what we hope will be a very active, all volunteer group that listens to your needs, develops programs and activities that meet your needs and wants, and helps to make Biddeford a more age friendly community for all of us.

As of 2019, we are now an independent group, associated with Heart of Biddeford who will act as our fiscal sponsor so that we can operate successfully, raise needed fund, apply for some of the generous grants that are available to Age Friendly groups, and begin to introduce ourselves to all of you so we can serve you and your needs. We hope to partner with already existing resources in and around the City to offer programs and projects based on the comments from our survey that you said were needed or would be welcome. We look forward to continued dialog with you so that as we grow, we do so because it is something that you want to see happen, and that makes living and growing older in Biddeford as pleasant and healthy as possible.

We will always need volunteers so that we can offer programs and projects for you. **Don't hesitate to contact us if you can help in any way. As you see notices for** different activities, you may see one that not only interests you, but one that you would like to help at, so please let us know. If you think you would like to join our all-volunteer group, we meet monthly at Heart of Biddeford, and sometimes more often if we are involved in an activity. In any event, please let us hear from you with comments and suggestions as it is the only way that we can be sure that we are meeting your needs.

You can reach us by email at agefriendlybiddeford@gmail.com or by leaving a message for us at [207-284-8520](tel:207-284-8520) or by regular mail at 205 Main Street, Suite 103, Biddeford ME 04005 which is the Heart of Biddeford office and they will see that your contact reaches us.



A Brief History of Biddeford

History tells us the Abenaki Indians once hunted and fished in the area that would become known as Biddeford long before anyone else arrived on these shores. The first Europeans settled in Biddeford during the winter of 1616-1617 led by Dr. Richard Vines at Winter Harbor, what we now call Biddeford Pool. This landing and settlement predate the Mayflower landing in Plymouth, Massachusetts (located 100 miles to the south) by approximately four years (a fact that is often overlooked in much of New England lore). In fact, Biddeford's name is engraved near the top level of The Pilgrim Monument in Provincetown, MA, along with the names of some of the oldest cities and towns in New England. See picture below.



Biddeford Marker

Biddeford was first incorporated as the Town of Saco in 1653 and was reorganized in 1716 as Biddeford, named after Bideford, a town in Devon, England from which some of the settlers had emigrated. Lumber and fish became the community's chief exports. There were also granite quarries, brickyards, lumber and grain mills. Factories were established to make boots and shoes. Major textile mills and manufacturing facilities were constructed along the banks of the Saco River. When Biddeford was incorporated as a City in 1855, the mills were attracting waves of immigrants, including the Irish, Albanians and French-Canadians from Quebec. At one time the textile mills employed as many as 12,000 people, but as happened elsewhere, the industry eventually entered a long period of decline.



Main Street Biddeford 1908



City Hall 1855



A View of the Mills 1906

One relic of the past that still stands proudly today is the First Parish Meetinghouse which is located at the intersection of Pool Street and Meetinghouse Road. Built in 1785, it is the oldest public building in the City, and served as a combined church and town hall until about 1840. The historical events that took place here include the then town Committee of Correspondence to goods, the Committee of Public Safety flints for the protection of the town, Independence read to the people of Today, the building is owned by the and is used to hold lectures and Biddeford's history.



Biddeford Historical Society Meeting House

responding to the call of the abstain from importing British forming to obtain powder and and the Declaration of Biddeford on July 17, 1776. Biddeford Historical Society educational events about

During World War 11, the Biddeford Pool Military Reservation was established from 1942 to 1945 on what is now the Abenakee Golf Course. It has four circular concrete platforms called Panama Mounts for 155 mm guns. Three of these remain today. As of 2009 the last remaining textile company, WestPoint Home closed.

Once a textile center of world prominence, Biddeford’s economy today is a diverse mixture of manufacturing, technology, service-based companies and institutions, with a healthy dose of energetic entrepreneurs and innovative makers. All are working hard to create an inspired future by working in the City’s downtown, revitalized mill district, and industrial parks. Also, anchoring the City’s economic base are two of Maine’s dynamic institutions: the award-winning Southern Maine Health Care and the University of New England, both of whom are experiencing impressive growth.

Today, the City of Biddeford, situated beside the Saco Bay on the Gulf of Maine, has a total area of 59.08 miles of which 30.09 square miles is land and 28.99 is water. The City is drained by the Little River and the Saco River. It is bordered by the City of Saco on the north, the Atlantic Ocean to the east, the towns of Dayton and Lyman to the west, and the towns of Kennebunkport and Arundel to the south. Timber Island, the southerly point of Biddeford lies in Goosefare Bay at the mouth of the Little River and is accessible at low tide from Goose Rocks Beach in Kennebunkport. The island and most of Timber Point became part of the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge in December 2011. The City has almost 15 miles of frontage along the Saco River, and an Atlantic coastline which includes the seaside neighborhoods of Hills Beach, Biddeford Pool, Fortune Rocks and Granite Point. Biddeford houses the Wood Island Light, a lighthouse located about a mile offshore from Biddeford Pool that has been restored back to its historical significance by a group of dedicated volunteers from the Friends of Wood Island Light, most of who live in the coastal communities mentioned above.



An Aerial View of the City The expansive coastline Wood Island Lighthouse

Today, with a population of 21,277 people at the 2010 census, Biddeford is Maine’s sixth largest city. Located along the I-95 corridor, Biddeford is a standout community situated some 15 miles south of Portland and 90 miles north of Boston. Biddeford is a principal population center of the Portland-South Portland-Biddeford metropolitan statistical area. At 2010 census, Biddeford consisted of 8,598 households and 4,972 families. The racial makeup of the city was approximately 94.8% white, 1.7% Asian, 1.7% reported Hispanic or Latino, 1% African American, 0.5% Native American. Of the 8,598 households reporting 27.3% had children under age 18, 40.4% were married couples living together, 12.3% had a female householder with no husband, 5.1% had a male householder with no wife present, and 42.2% were non-families. Households made up of just individuals were at 30%, and 11.1% had

someone living alone who was 65 years or older. The average household size was 2.3 and the average family size was 2.84.

The median age in Biddeford was 38.2 years with 18.7% under 18, 15.4% were between 18 and 24, 24.3% were from 25 to 44 years, 26.1% were from 45 to 64, and 15.3% were 65 or older. Biddeford's population is relatively young and aging at a slower rate compared to York County and the State as a whole, but it is getting older. The gender make-up was 47.5% male and 52.3% female.

On the decline for decades with the last textile company closing in 2009, Biddeford faced stagnant population growth and limited job opportunities. The City's image came to be defined by the trash incinerator in downtown, earning it two unsavory nicknames: trash town or stink town. When it became clear that the citizens no longer supported the incinerator (even though it meant the loss of 80 jobs and the loss of revenue from the largest taxpayer), the City Council approved a plan to purchase the plant and tear it down in 2012. This risky move turned out to be a catalyst for major changes. Since that time, Biddeford has experienced a "Biddaissance" as the Mayor likes to call it. The 35-acre mill district is dramatically being redeveloped, vacancies on Main Street have dropped significantly, the business and industrial park is nearly full, and shopping centers and strip malls have developed along the Route 111 corridor. Biddeford is now attracting numerous unique small businesses, excellent international restaurants, a burgeoning arts scene, a revitalized City Theater, along with numerous concerts, films, plays, performing artists, classes, exhibits, festivals and events throughout the year.

The quality of life for Biddeford's citizens is further enhanced by the availability of an abundance of community resources including a modern regional hospital, a municipal airport, schools and colleges, library and cultural facilities, special community annual traditions, parades, and festivals, outstanding recreational areas and facilities, magnificent beaches and river access, extraordinary natural areas, boating and canoeing opportunities, along with an abundance of parks with playgrounds, ball fields, tennis courts, hiking and walking trails, hunting, bird watching, and just a chance to get outside and enjoy nature.

It should come as no surprise that our survey results showed overwhelmingly that citizens who are here expressed a desire to stay and to age gracefully and gratefully in the City that they love. It is our goal to help make that happen!



Views of Biddeford Today

For a short video with a positive outlook and tons of pictures, please go to: <https://youtu.be/Y43XhSl1kU0> or click on the link here: [Vision 2020 video](#)

1. Outdoor Spaces
and Buildings

2. Transportation

3. Housing

4. Social
Participation

The **AARP** Network of Age-Friendly Communities

and work within

The 8 Domains of Livability

help communities become great for people of all ages

5. Respect and
Social Inclusion

6. Civic Participation
and Employment

7. Communication
and Information

8. Community
and Health Services

Learn more at [AARP.org/agefriendly](https://www.aarp.org/agefriendly)



Snapshot of the Eight Domains of Livability



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Outdoor spaces, such as parks, and buildings affect the independence and quality of life of residents of all ages, but especially older adults. Some Maine communities have made parks more accessible by increasing the width of paths and adding benches. Others have increased the number of designated parking spaces near key services and added accessible features to government buildings.



Transportation

Affordable and accessible public and volunteer transportation programs is key to aging in place safely and independently. Some communities have created transportation resource guides that include information about public and private options. Others have created volunteer programs that provide rides to where people need to go and may offer help with, for example, shopping or getting in and out of a building.



Housing

Safe and affordable housing promotes well-being and is key to older residents being able to age comfortably and safely in the house and community of their choice. Communities can make regulatory changes to encourage additional housing options or can create new housing. Some initiatives have started their own "Handy Brigade", others have partnered with existing services to increase awareness of home modification and home maintenance services.



Social Participation

Socializing with friends and neighbors who don't live in the same home with you is connected to physical and cognitive health. Some communities have started a "senior" center or added to the opportunities available. Others have partnered with local organizations such as life-long learning programs, an art center or library to increase programming for adults.



Respect and Social Inclusion

The lack of contact between generations and lack of knowledge about aging are two reasons why stereotypes that exclude older people from full participation in the community continue. Aging adults who feel welcomed and respected for their contribution are more likely to remain actively engaged in economic, social and civic life than those who do not feel included.



Civic Participation and Employment

Older people do not stop contributing to their communities when they turn 65 or 85 or 105. An age-friendly community provides opportunities for residents who want to or need to work past traditional retirement age and encourage people of all ages to volunteer and participate in the political process.



Communication and Information

Staying connected with activities, resources, and people is key to optimal aging. Some communities have created information portals on their town website to increase access to information about local activities and resources making them easy to find. Other communities have created resource manuals.



Community Support and Health Services

Access to health care and services to support aging in place is key for the health and well-being of older residents. Some communities have emphasized food security in this area. Others have looked at elder abuse prevention or added disaster preparedness.



LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Great Places for All AgesSM



OUR COMMENTS ON THE EIGHT DOMAINS OF LIVABILITY

As we mentioned, research conducted with people 50+ living in communities around the world concluded that there are eight aspects of community life that are essential for the health and wellbeing of older residents:

1. **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings.** Availability of safe and accessible recreational facilities, shopping opportunities, municipal services, community-based organizations, and other essential services.
2. **Transportation.** Availability of safe and affordable transportation to needed services and desired activities.
3. **Housing.** Access to a range of housing options, home-modification programs, and affordable home maintenance services.
4. **Social Participation.** Opportunities for social and civic engagement with peers and younger people.
5. **Respect and Social Inclusion.** Access to an environment that encourages civic involvement by residents of all ages and abilities.
6. **Civic Participation and Employment.** Opportunities for paid work and volunteer opportunities for older people and the chance for residents of all ages to engage in the creation of policies relevant to their lives.
7. **Communication and Information.** Access to information about community activities and needed services.
8. **Community Support and Health Services.** Access to homecare services, medical care and programs that promote wellness.

A copy of our Survey is included in the Appendix section of this Action Plan. Those of you who had the opportunity to answer our Survey last year might remember the questions asked based on these 8 Domains. Those of you who didn't answer or who would like to add some feedback now, we welcome your comments, changes, or additions.

We ask you now to consider your own life in Biddeford today. Are the eight domains of livability important to you? Do you prefer to live in a place where civic engagement is encouraged? Where public spaces are safe and attractive? Where recreational opportunities abound? What is important to you and your family as you age here in Biddeford?

Your feedback, comments, and suggestions are important to us so please let us hear from you.
agefriendlybiddeford@gmail.com or 207-284-8520

OUR WISHES for the
AGE FRIENDLY BIDDEFORD COMMUNITY
(to be added to as time goes on)

Age Friendly Biddeford will become a community where all ages will be recognized as valuable, be treated with respect, and find the services they need to make our City their lifelong home.

Age Friendly Biddeford will study, propose, and provide services that our seniors need to remain in the community for as **long as they'd like to be here and to** provide the support they need when they can no longer care for themselves.

Age Friendly Biddeford will encourage and provide ways for all residents to stay involved in healthy activities: exercise, recreation, sports, hobbies, and learning.

Age Friendly Biddeford will advocate for affordable and accessible housing for all so citizens can live where they feel safe and comfortable.

Age Friendly Biddeford will design programs that offer incentives for seniors to remain safely in their own homes with aging in place modifications and assistance with home repairs and maintenance.

Age Friendly Biddeford will encourage development of accessible sidewalks, paths, and crosswalks for safe and pleasant outdoor enjoyment when walking, biking, using a walker, wheelchair, stroller, or other assisted devices.

Age Friendly Biddeford envisions neighborhoods, parks, and downtown areas that invite all ages to gather and socialize.

Age Friendly Biddeford will offer opportunities to all to contribute in meaningful ways through volunteering, working, or simply being part of an active life in the community.

Age Friendly Biddeford will inspire all generations to connect and interact in public settings and to assist extended families in ways to enable generations to live together comfortably.

Age Friendly Biddeford will study, propose, and strive to provide all that is needed so that all ages can live in our community for as long as they wish.

Age Friendly Biddeford will advocate for a livable city that will promote well-being and sustained economic growth so that all residents are happier and healthier together as they age.

Email: agefriendlybiddeford@gmail.com Phone: 207-284-8520



Community for All Ages

Community Survey Responses SUMMARY

OUTDOOR SPACE and BUILDINGS

Residents rated most satisfaction with clear, easy to read signs and civic buildings that are accessible to citizens of all abilities, with elevators and ramps where needed.

TRANSPORTATION

79.2% reported they can easily walk unassisted; 11.9% say they have some difficulties. Over 86% have their own vehicles, less than 24% said they travel by walking, and less than one in a hundred use volunteer driver programs.

41.3% reported weather conditions and 41.2% said darkness can affect their ability to travel. 58.8% stated the expense of transportation is not important in their ability to **travel. Factors such as no longer having a driver's license, or not having anyone to take them, or having a physical limitation with no accessible transportation would be important in the future.**

HOUSING

65.3% residents reported occupying single-family homes and 19.2% reported living in apartments.

Respondents rated being close to medical care and conveniences as most important factor to influence a move at 64.6%; followed by expenses of their current home 62.4%, and then the desire to live near friends or family at 60.7%.

One out of five said they plan to install modifications like grab bars, handrails, or non-slip tiles to their homes. One out of six said they plan to install a ramp or wider doorways. Less than one in ten plans on installing a medical emergency response system.

More than four out of five reported it was very important for Biddeford to offer home repair contractors who are trustworthy, do quality work, and are affordable; a home repair service for low-income and older adults offering help with roof and window repairs, seasonal services like lawn work or snow removal.

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Over 70% of residents said they spend time from once a week to once or twice a day with family, friends, or neighbors. Only 6.1% said they only do that less than once a month.

69.2% reported positively on the availability of senior discounts with 37.4% saying they use them. 33.2% felt accurate and widely publicized information about social and recreational activities was important. More than 27.7% believed that social or hobby clubs are not available, and they wish they were. 24.9% wished that accurate and widely

publicized information about social activities and formal recreational opportunities were available.

Over 27% reported that finding out too late prevents them from socializing more. About 24.5% reported the scheduling of events prevents them from attending. Only 10% said transportation was a problem.

RESPECT and SOCIAL INCLUSION

63.3% said they feel valued as an older resident, most of the time. Residents were 50/50 on if they feel the city wants to encourage older residents to remain as they age. 56.8% said they do not feel there is general awareness of the contributions of older residents.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION and EMPLOYMENT

58.8% reported they were retired and 40.3% said they were full or part timers. 35.5% reported they spend 1-2 hours in volunteering; 21.7% spend 3-4 hours; and 15.8% said they spend more than 8 hours each week volunteering. 13.2% spend no time volunteering. 67% reported transportation to and from volunteering was very important, followed by easy to find information about volunteer opportunities at 66.1%, and a range of volunteer activities at 59%. Half said opportunities to participate in local government was very important, and 15.1% said it was not very important.

COMMUNICATION and INFORMATION

41.9% reported they were unsure if information about services and resources to support aging was easy to find, followed by 37.1% reporting that information is not easy to find. Then 21% said the information is easy to find.

Over 77% said they were unsure or did not think that information about community events and local activities was easy to find. But, 21% reported it was easy to find.

38.1% said they would like to receive the information by newspaper, followed by 22.9% favoring email, and 22% liking Facebook. None reported looking to Twitter or text but 3.8% said they like radio for their information.

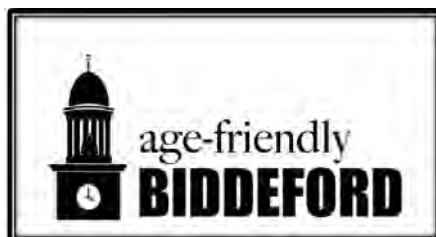
COMMUNITY and HEALTH SERVICES

Residents reported they go out most for errands, with over 56.1% saying they go out 5 or more times, and 30.4% saying they go out 3 to 4 times. Medical appointments take up the least time. More than 66.9% say they would use the internet for information, followed by 62% relying on family and friends, and 60.4% relying on doctor or health care providers. Less than 12.7% reported getting information from local non-profits.

Services desired the most were 29.7% for home maintenance, 23.3% wanting wellness/fitness classes and 20% library services. One in five say they are very likely to use library services; whereas three out of five said they were not likely to use the library. 80.7% said they are not likely to need home delivered meals in the next five years and 77.9% said they were not likely to use safety checks.

Living in Biddeford: 56.5% rated the City as either excellent or a good place to live. Only 7.5% rated Biddeford a poor place to live.

Almost half (47.2%) said remaining as they age was extremely important to them. Another 13.6% said staying in Biddeford was not at all important to them.



IN OUR AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY
RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES CAN:

LIVE SAFELY AND BE COMFORTABLE

Catch the bus Hop a Train Go for a walk

Cross the street

Ride a Bike Get around without a car

ENJOY PUBLIC PLACES

Be Entertained, Go Shopping, Find Healthy Food

KNOW WHERE TO FIND THE SERVICES YOU NEED

WORK or VOLUNTEER FEEL VALUED & APPRECIATED

Play, plan, wish, create, and be happy

**... and make BIDDEFORD their
lifelong HOME.**

Demographic Profile of the City as a Whole

The following demographic profile report was provided to us by Brad Favreau, Biddeford's Economic Development Coordinator, to present facts and figures to you for a better understanding of our City. While economic data is forever changing and always dated, we hope you will find the facts presented here of interest to you. Think of it as a snapshot in time of Biddeford's history in recent times.

The overall population in Biddeford has barely changed in decades. While the United States grew almost 10% from 2000 to 2010 alone, Biddeford's population grew just 1.6% over the same period of time. Over this same decade, Maine grew at a rate of 4.2% and York County grew at 5.6%. However, because of steady redevelopment of Biddeford's Mill District over the past five years, including an expected increase in the number of housing units here, the population may begin to burgeon.

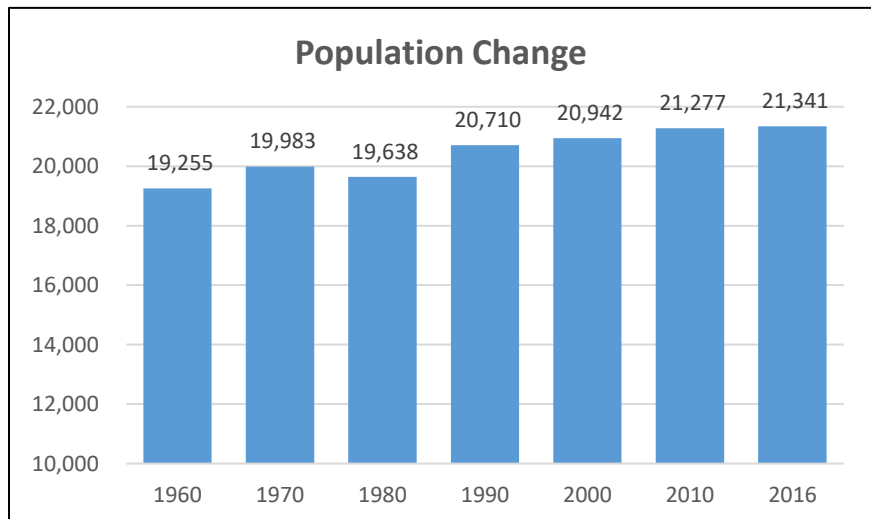
Biddeford is a young community. While Maine is the oldest state in the United States in terms of median age, Biddeford skews young, almost ten years younger than Maine. Millennials, those individuals born between 1982 and 2000 (as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau) make up an important part of Biddeford and so their needs and influence will be increasingly felt throughout the community, especially as this cohort is seen as more civic minded than other age cohorts.

More than nine-tenths of Biddeford residents are white, with African Americans and Asians making up the majority of other races in the city. According to the 2015 American Community Survey, 5.5% of the population is foreign-born.

Biddeford is not a wealthy community, with a median household income that falls behind the national, state, and county medians, and a poverty rate that rises above those same geographies. This, in part, may be due to a comparatively low educational attainment that is a full four percentage points lower than the York County level. But Biddeford residents are willing and able to work. The labor participation rate is more than five percentage points higher here than the national rate.

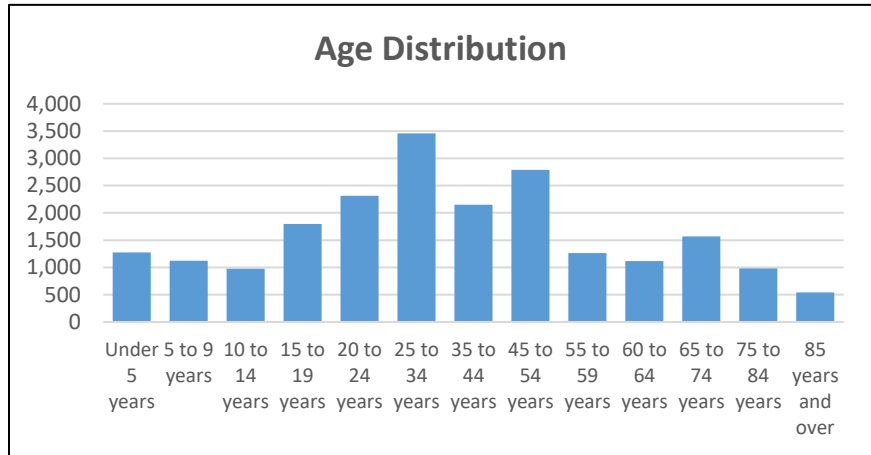
Biddeford has experienced major job losses over a period of decades. The textile mills, the source of employment and wealth in this community for more than a century, began closing in the 1960s, with the last manufacturer closing in 2009. In spite of the strong job growth in sectors like health care, higher education and retail, this legacy of economic uncertainty lingers. However, with reinvigorated population growth, a young populace, and the willingness to work, Biddeford will overcome the lagging demographic measures. Several demographic and economic measures have been examined here:

Total population in Biddeford has remained relatively flat over the past five decades, increasing just 10.8% since 1960. In contrast, the population of York County has increased 103.6% over the same time period.

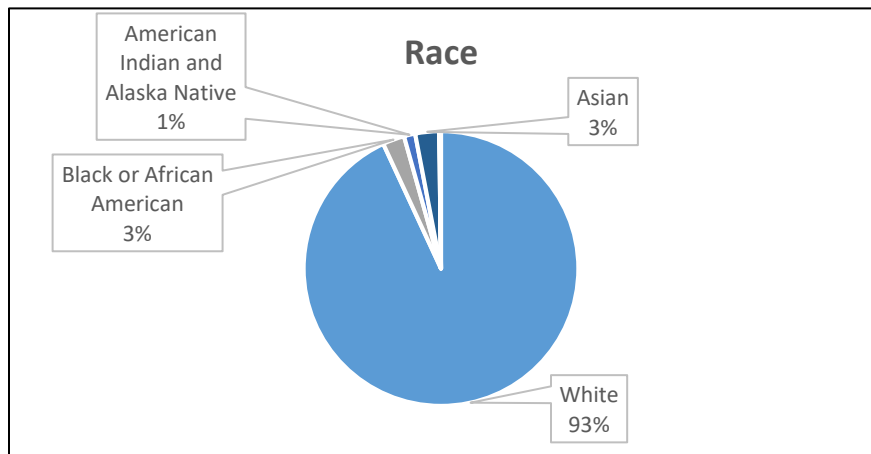


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

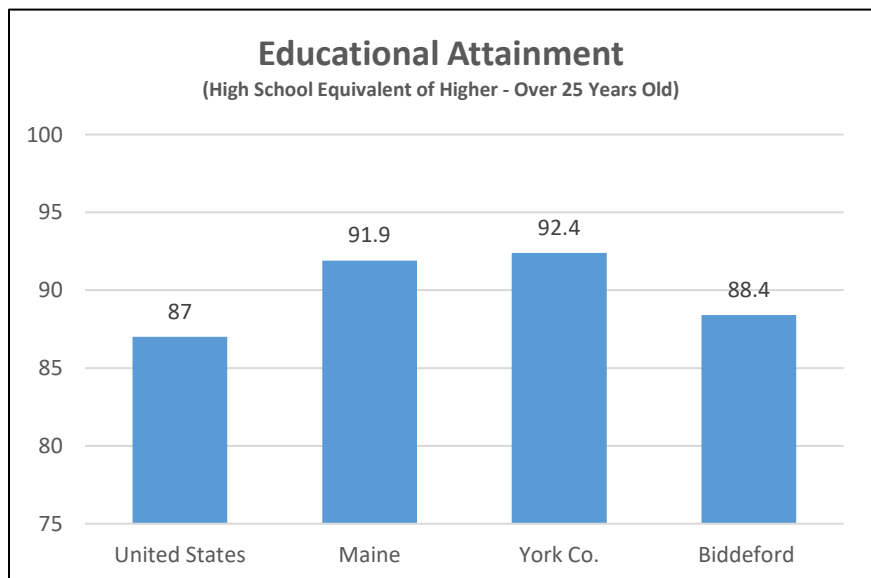
Biddeford is a comparatively young community. The largest age cohort in Biddeford is the 25 to 34 year old age group. **Median age here is 33.8 years.** In York County, median age is 44.4 years.



Like the rest of Maine, Biddeford is overwhelmingly white. **Just 7% of the population is a race other than white.** In York County, 98.1% of the population is white.

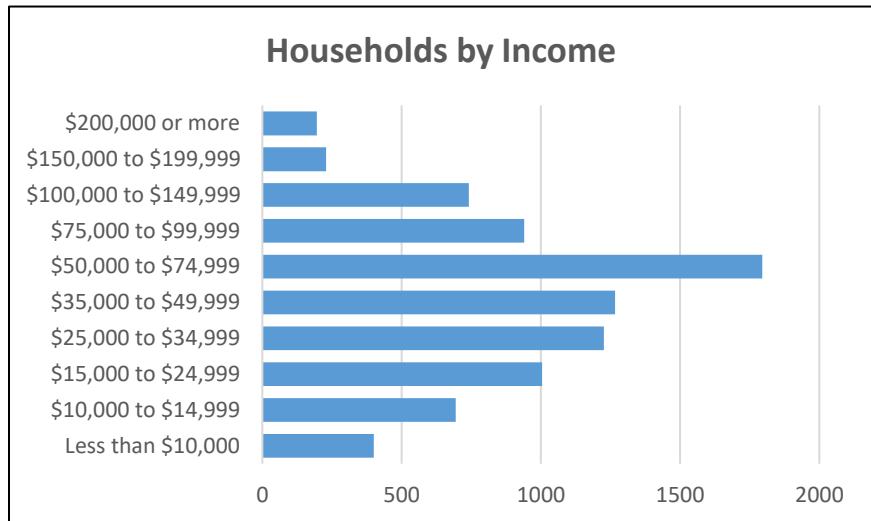


Educational attainment in Biddeford is lower than in both York County and in the rest of Maine, with 88.4% of the population 25 year old and above have at least high school equivalency. This is 4 percentage points lower than in York County. Educational attainment here is 1.4% higher than the overall United States.

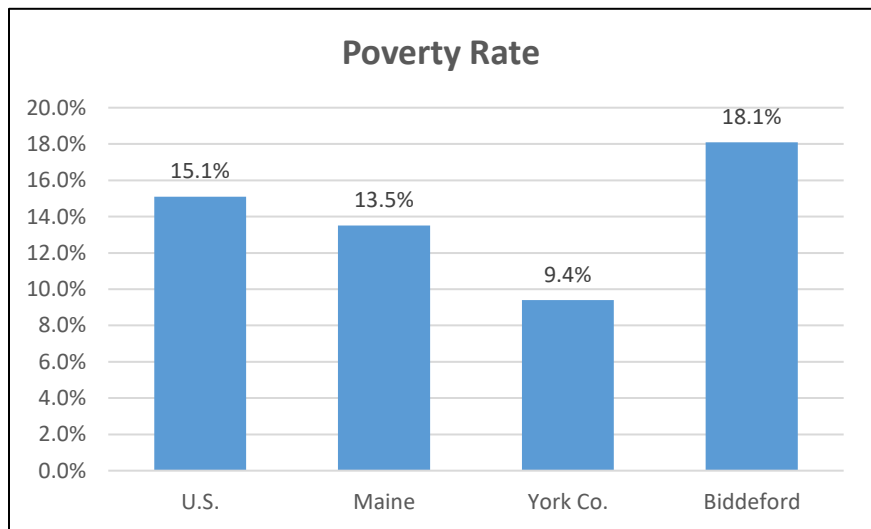


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

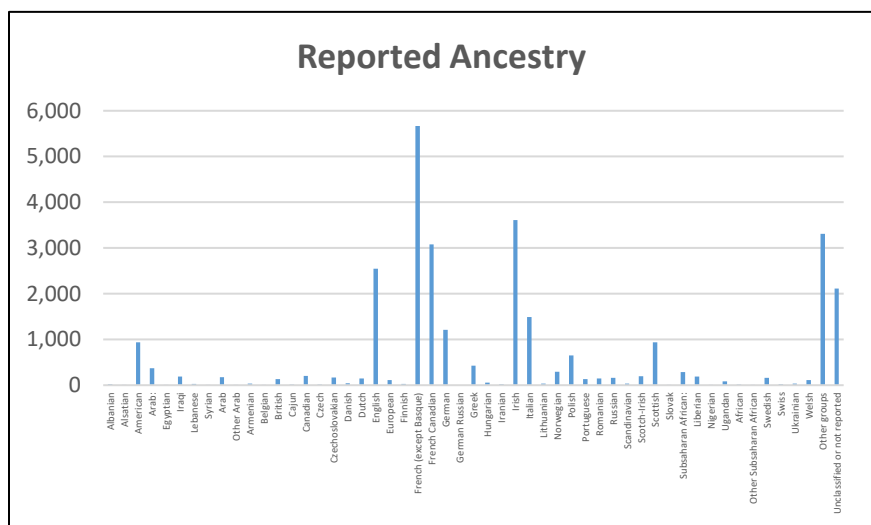
The median household income in Biddeford is \$47,265. This is 25% lower than York County (\$59,132), and 7.5% lower than the State of Maine (\$50,826). Just over one-fifth of households here earn income from \$50,000 to \$74,999. Almost 5% earn less than \$10,000 per year. Just over 2% earn more than \$200,000 per year.



Biddeford has a higher poverty rate than York County, Maine and the U.S. More than 18% of all people are living in poverty. The rate of families living in poverty is noticeably lower, at 10.0%



The vast majority of people in Biddeford reporting ancestry claim European roots. French ancestry, both from France and from Canada, is an especially large component of reported ancestry. The number of people reporting ancestry from Africa, Asia,

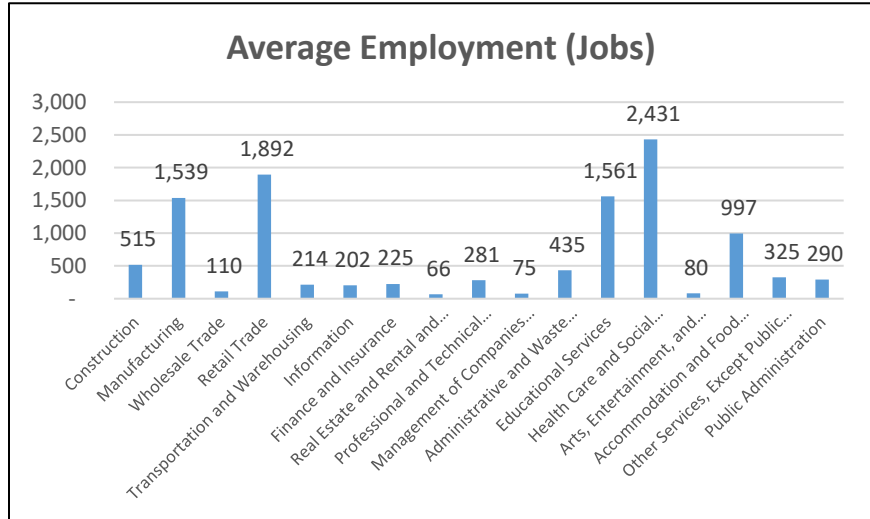


and the Middle East is comparatively small, a fact that is reinforced by reported race.

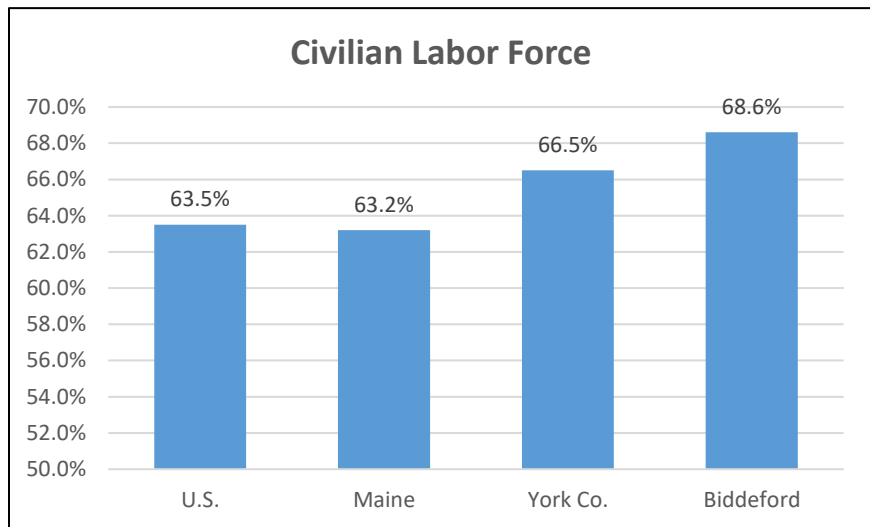
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

Local Economy

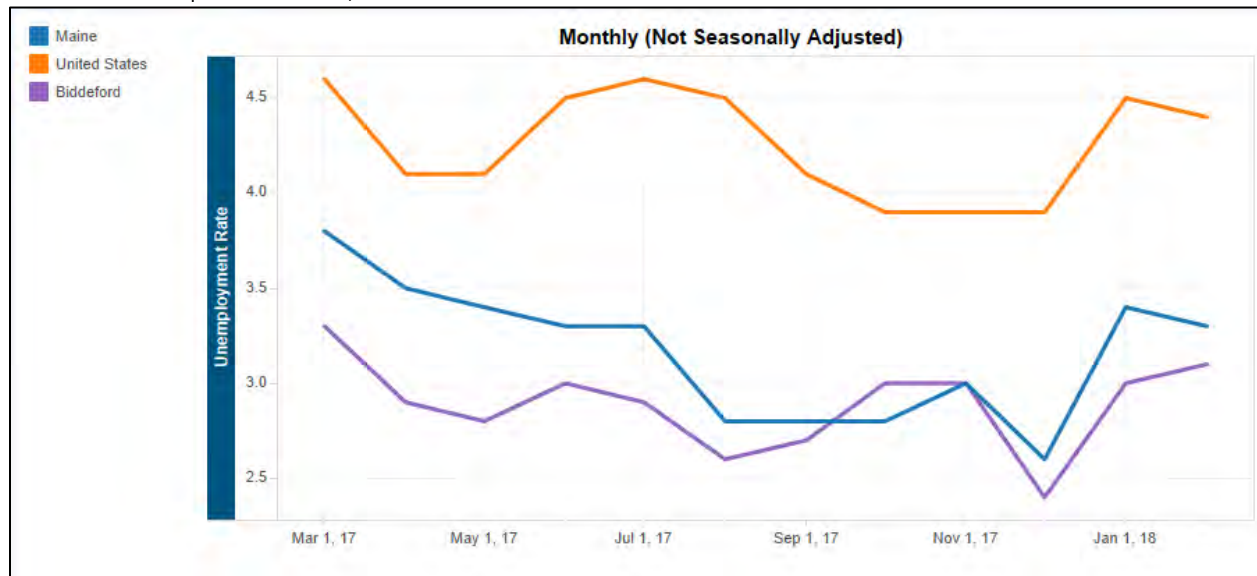
According to the Maine Department of Labor, Health Care provides more jobs in Biddeford than any other industry. Higher Education and Retail Trade are both strong sectors, and manufacturing here in Biddeford is still a large part of the overall jobs in the local economy, providing 13.6% of all jobs as of second quarter of 2017.



A greater portion of the population here is in the labor force as compared to York County, Maine and the U.S., and is **an indication of a strong local workforce**. This is especially true when seen in conjunction with the unemployment rate (just 3.0% as of Jan. 2018 according to the Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information).

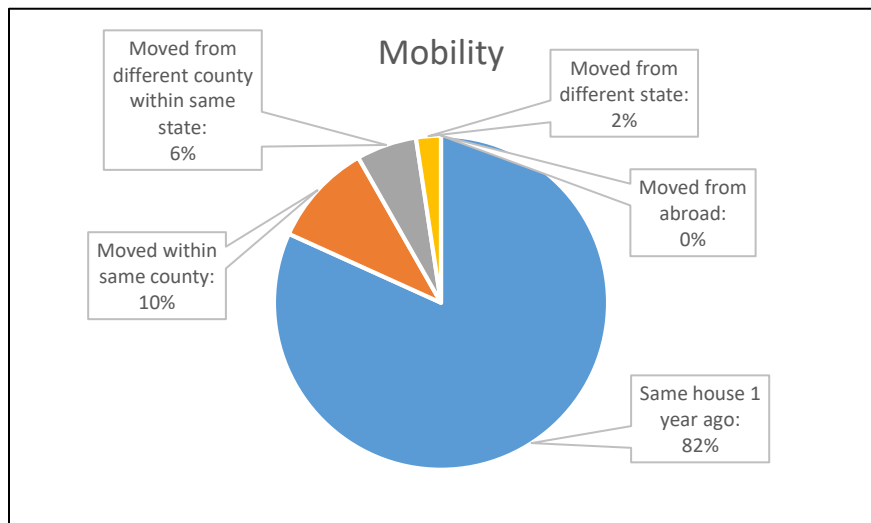


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate
 Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce Research and Information



Biddeford’s unemployment rate is lower than both the State of Maine and the overall United States, at 3.1% as of February, 2018. This data is from the Maine Department of Labor.

Biddeford is slightly more mobile than the U.S. as a whole. Here, 82% of households live in the same house as one year ago. For the U.S., 87% live in the same house. Here, 10% have moved within York County in the past year. For the U.S., only 6.5% have done the same.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate
 Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce Research and Information

Top Employers	<u>2016</u> <u>Employment</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Employment</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Southern Maine Health Care	1,324	1,491	12.6%
University of New England	998	998	0.0%
Market Basket	350	350	0.0%
AVX Tantalum	243	275	13.2%
Walmart	265	215	-18.9%
Hannaford	186	190	2.2%
Southridge Rehabilitation	152	175	15.1%
Fiber Materials Inc.	160	163	1.9%
Home Depot	150	150	0.0%
Target	—	150	—

Please check Biddeford's website for the most current information and up-to-date news
 at www.BiddefordMaine.org

WHAT YOU TOLD US and WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

A special thanks to all of you who took the time to fill out our community survey. **And, for those of you that didn't know about the survey; don't worry, there will be** plenty of opportunities to give us additional feedback and new ideas in the future.

The goals of the Age Friendly movement can be summarized as follows: to bring all citizens of all ages together, to help create programs and projects that do just that, and to make sure that the City is aware of your wants and needs.

The reason for this Action Plan is to let you know what we have learned from you so far and to develop ways to help based on your responses. We also need to continue to hear from you as this Action Plan is meant to be a flexible document that will grow and adjust to your changing needs, wants, and desires. Please let us hear from you so that we help you. Also, please let us hear from you so that you can help us! Volunteers are always needed for special projects and programs.

On the following pages we are going to outline what the survey results told us about your current feelings about living in Biddeford and your current needs. On previous pages of this Action Plan we explained the ideas behind each of the eight domains of livability. Now we are going to try to adapt each domain into positive action for you and the community.

We hired Analytic Insights, a professional research firm based in Lewiston, to compile the results of the community survey and to produce a report that would guide us to understanding what was said by you on our survey. A full copy of their report can be found in the Appendix of this Action Plan. This report was made possible from a grant to us from AARP. The survey was available to all on line and at various locations downtown. Approximately 250 surveys were completed.

The good news from the community survey was most residents rated Biddeford as an excellent or good place to live as they age. Only a small minority, about 7.5%, thought Biddeford was a poor place to live as they age. Almost half of residents said that remaining in Biddeford was extremely important to them. Less than one out of six said that remaining here was not at all important to them.

At present, we are accomplishing all our work on a volunteer basis; through collaboration with existing community resources; with cooperation from the City; by relying on the vast resources and steadfast guidance available to us from AARP; with help from our neighboring Age Friendly communities by sharing experiences and participating in projects and programs together. And, lastly, from you, which is the most valuable link of all to a successful Age Friendly Biddeford. Please join in these efforts and together we can learn from and help one another.

Remember this survey was **just a guide designed to help us begin planning ... what happens from here on in is up to all of us!**

OUTDOOR SPACES and BUILDINGS

DOMAIN 1 encompassed the physical environment of our City – parks, buildings, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and the natural landscape. All of these play a significant role in the health, independence, and well-being of all ages. They hold special significance for residents who have limited mobility or cannot walk long distances.

People need places to gather that are accessible for all ages to feel welcome and included in their community. Small improvements, such as a middle railing on wide stairways, make visits to public buildings easier for older residents. A book return at ground level makes returning library books easier for all residents. Walkway openings without curbs allow parents with carriages and residents with mobility issues to more safely access downtown areas. The opportunity to enjoy outdoor spaces has a positive effect on the physical and mental health of residents of all ages. Wide paths that can accommodate an adult using a wheelchair or walker, or a parent teaching a young child to ride a bike, or couples of all ages that like to walk hand in hand, make outdoor spaces more enjoyable for everyone. Small improvements to outdoor and indoor spaces can make a big difference in residents coming together to enjoy community events. They can make a huge difference in residents feeling isolated or excluded from public participation. Age friendly communities adopt policies about buildings, places, and events that encourage ongoing involvement by all residents.

Accessible businesses, such as restaurants, shops, buildings where services are offered, are crucial to residents with different physical abilities to age safely and independently. Small improvements such as adequate lighting, noise levels, courteous staff, clear signage, and offers to assist people when shopping are age friendly initiatives that are welcomed by everyone. The key is treating all ages and abilities with respect.

FROM THE SURVEY: the items residents rated most satisfactorily were clear and easy to read signs and civic buildings that were accessible to all abilities with elevators or ramps where needed. But improvement was needed in the following areas: public restrooms accessible to all abilities, number of parking spaces available, and well lit, safe streets and intersections for all users.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS: Age Friendly Biddeford immediately began to advocate for better conditions downtown about sidewalks, walkways, street crossings, traffic lights, and parking. We invited Tom Milligan, Biddeford Engineering, to attend a workshop to discuss these topics. The City is aware of many of the issues mentioned and plans to take positive steps to implement changes, upgrades, and improvements. The City is currently conducting a poll online about City parks and outdoor areas. Age Friendly Biddeford will advocate for improvements based on poll results.

See our [Strategy Chart/Action Plans](#) for further information and future plans.

Domain-Specific Strategy Chart/Action Plan

Domain: OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS **Goal:** To improve the physical environment of indoor and outdoor spaces and buildings
To encourage more people to use and enjoy indoor and outdoor spaces

Collaborating Organization(s): Heart of Biddeford, City of Biddeford, McArthur Library, Downtown Businesses and Organizations

Activities	By whom	By when	Resources and support available/needed		Potential barriers or resistance	Partnerships	Metrics	Outcome
McArthur Electronic Sign	AFB Ron Gobeil	TBD	McArthur & City	TBD	None Expected	City Council & Planning	Feedback on-going w/City	Incomplete
Improvements to sidewalks, walkways, curbs	AFB, HoB, City Engineering	On-going	Engineering City	City, State, Engineering	Budget Constraints	Heart of Biddeford, City Depts	Visual Changes and Citizen Feedback	Many improvements made and in progress
Downtown Parks & Spaces	City, HoB, AFB and volunteers	On-going	City and Donations	City, HoB, Downtown Businesses	Finances, City Approvals, Businesses Comments	City, HoB, AFB, other Downtown Affiliates	City online Poll, Citizen Feedback & Visual	In progress
Traffic & Speed Concerns	AFB/Ron Gobeil City Engineering	On-Going	City Finances	City, State	Comments to City Council both for & against changes	AFB, HoB, City, Downtown Organizations, Police	Citizen Comments, Police Records, City Council	Favorable to date, On-going changes continue
Improved Signage	AFB/Ron Gobeil, City Planning and Engineering	On-going	City Finances	City cooperation, Citizen Comments	None Expected, Citizens pros and cons	ABF, City Engineering, Planning, Citizens	Visual and Citizens Comments & Feedback	Some New Signs visible, more needed
More Restrooms Downtown	AFB/Ron Gobeil, City	Early 2019 to begin	City Project	City Budget	None Expected	City	Visual and Citizen Feedback	One Restroom installed in downtown, more needed

Who is responsible for maintaining and updating information: AFB with Ron Gobeil as contact person with updates as necessary

TRANSPORTATION

DOMAIN 2 reminds us that transportation options can improve health and support communities by connecting people to economic and social opportunities. Driving should not be the only way to get around. Public options can be train systems, bus lines, taxi services, or volunteer driver assist programs.

Transportation options are essential for health and well-being of people who can no longer or choose not to drive. People without options may be forced to drive even when they no longer feel safe doing so. The ability to drive a car to local stores, medical appointments, and social events to meet friends is a sign of pride and independence that many older adults do not want to lose. For some, the only alternative is to depend on friends, neighbors, and family for these rides. This lack of transportation often leads to isolation, depression and anxiety due to missing out on community and health services as well as social and recreational opportunities.

Offering a range of affordable and convenient transportation options can maximize independence for older adults who wish to remain engaged in the community and to be socially and physically active.

Transportation alternatives are also important for safety. Nationally on an average day about 15 older people die and close to 600 suffer serious injuries in car crashes. While older adults are in fewer accidents than younger people, they are more likely to die or be seriously injured. The risk increases dramatically for folks 85 and older. All residents benefit when transportation options are available.

Streets that are well designed for automobiles, buses, bikes, pedestrians of all ages and abilities should be the focus of all communities. Properly designed roads help extend older adults driving years and make possible travel by foot, bike, auto, or public transit safer for everyone.

Recognizing that travel is essential for independence, many local public and private agencies and organizations provide specialized transportation services to folks who **need them. The task is finding and matching residents' needs to the proper** program or agency that can provide the transportation they need.

FROM OUR SURVEY: we learned that 86.5% of residents said they travel in their own personal vehicle, and 23.3% said they travel most by walking, with less than 1 in 100 using a volunteer driver program. Factors such as weather conditions, driving after dark, **no longer having a driver's license, or not having anyone to take** them were all factors important in their ability to travel when they wanted.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS: Age Friendly Biddeford joined with Age Friendly Saco and Old Orchard Community Connections in forming a Tri-Community Transportation Committee to address transportation issues for all ages.

See our [Strategy Chart/Action Plans](#) for further information and future plans.

Domain-Specific Strategy Chart/Action Plan

Domain: TRANSPORTATION

Goal: Improve transportation options, increase awareness of what is available
Develop programs as needed to meet the needs of citizens

Collaborating Organization(s): City of Biddeford, Tri-Community Transportation Community, Shuttlebus-Zoom, York County Community Action

Activities	By whom	By when	Resources and support available/needed		Potential barriers or resistance	Partnerships	Metrics	Outcome
Develop Brochure	Tri-Community Committee	Completed	None needed from AFB	None needed from AFB	None	AFB, AFS, OOBFC, Shuttlebus-Zoom	Communities Reaction to new brochure	Very favorably received, update as needed
Volunteer Driver Program	AFB, maybe SAF, OOBFC	As needed	None	Financial, Volunteer, Insurance	Volunteers, Insurance Cost	AFB, SMAA, SMHC, local Churches	Survey does not indicate immediate need	To be Determined
Taxi/Uber/Handicapped Services	AFB, AFS, OOBFC	End of 2019	Research needed	Research needed	None anticipated	AFB, City, current & existing modes	More research needs to be done	To be Determined
Repeat Survey on Transportation Issues and Needs	AFB	Early 2020	Unknown	Unknown	None anticipated	AFB, HoB, City	Responses on 1 st survey showed 86.5% used personal cars	Question whether groups of citizens missed

Who is responsible for maintaining and updating information: AFB, Carol Boisjoly, member

HOUSING

DOMAIN 3 studies show that most older adults wish to age in place. Doing so is possible if homes are appropriately designed or modified. Communities can assist by including affordable housing options for varying life stages. Age-friendly housing options can allow older residents to remain safely and with as much independence as possible in their desired community.

In an age friendly community, residents may need home modifications or help with routine maintenance to stay safely at home. Housing alternatives should be available for those wishing to down size into a smaller home with less maintenance and less cleaning work. Elders should not be forced to move to a different community or to stay living in their own home when it is no longer safe to do so.

Other options communities can offer to support older residents to age in place is through zoning and building code changes, for example allowing in-law apartments. Some municipalities support a property tax rebate program, and everyone should be made aware of the property tax fairness credit program offered by Maine.

The City website reports that Biddeford remains the most affordable coastal community in Southern Maine. The housing stock is approximately 10,000 units. And, Biddeford offers a wide range of housing choices: single family homes, multi-family homes, apartments, condominiums in a variety of settings (in town, suburban, rural, and coastal).

FROM OUR SURVEY: 65.3% of residents reported they lived in their own single-family home. Approximately 19.2% lived in an apartment. Deciding factors as to whether they would stay in Biddeford depended on the closeness and convenience to medical care needed, the expenses of their current home, and whether friends and family were still nearby. About 25.7% stated they would prefer a different climate. Over 39% said they planned on making home modifications to remain in their home. But only 8.2% said they would install a medical emergency response system. More than four out of 5 residents reported they thought it was important for Biddeford to offer: home repair contractors who are trustworthy, do quality work and are affordable, offer home repair services for low-income and elders to help with things like roof or window repair as well as seasonal services like lawn work and snow removal.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS: Shortly after we began our work, Biddeford made code changes that now allow in-law apartments in all areas. We are still advocating for more choices in affordable housing for seniors. Age Friendly Biddeford along with Saco and Old Orchard have been in contact with the local Rotary Clubs to see about creating a handyman service for older citizens. Plans are being made to follow in the footsteps of Saco and Old Orchard to offer a sand bucket program and a weatherization program for older residents.

See our [Strategy Chart/Action Plans](#) for further and future plans.

Domain-Specific Strategy Chart/Action Plan

Domain: HOUSING

Goal: To allow older adults to age in place; encourage diversity in housing to accommodate varying ages and family needs; community assistance with home modifications

Collaborating Organization(s): City of Biddeford, Tri-Community Committee, School of Technology, Habitat for Humanity, Efficiency Maine, Local Rotary Clubs of Biddeford/Saco, Local Contractors and Developers

Activities	By whom	By when	Resources and support available/needed		Potential barriers or resistance	Partnerships	Metrics	Outcome
Develop a resource guide to home repair & modification	AFB under guidance of Steve Murphy & Russ Carlson	Summer 2019	Volunteer research, input data, distribution	Cost of printing, publicity, constant upkeep	None anticipated	Research to see what guide might already exist	Responses from volunteers, contractors, homeowners	To be determined
Develop a Helping Hand Program	AFB under guidance of Steve Murphy	Program to Begin in Fall 2019	Contacts and Collaboration with local Rotary	To be provided by contractors & volunteers	Unknown; insurance issues & cost barriers	Local tech school, UNE, contractors, hardware & building supply	Recruitment, costs, supplies, homeowner feedback	To be determined
Offer Winter Sand Buckets	AFB under guidance of Peggy Ayers	Program to begin early Winter 2020	Example of AFS and OOBFCFC	Donations, Volunteers, Coordination	None anticipated	Homeowners, local schools, sources of donations	Tasks completed; homeowners' responses	To be determined
Weatherization Program	AFB under guidance of Peggy Ayers	Program to begin early Fall 2019	Efficiency Maine, Habitat for Humanity	All volunteer labor & supplies donated	None anticipated	Homeowners, Local schools, EF & H4H	Homeowner sign-ups, volunteer willingness	To be determined
Work with City Code Enforcement	AFB under guidance of Russ Carlson	Continuous as needed	Advocate for affordable housing & other issues	TBD	TBD	AFB, City	Willingness and degree of cooperation & collaboration	To be determined

Who is responsible for maintaining and updating information: AFB with Steve, Russ and Peggy

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION and RESPECT and SOCIAL INCLUSION

Domain 4 reminds us that regardless of age, loneliness can negatively affect our health and sense of wellbeing. Isolation can be battled with the availability of accessible, affordable, and fun social activities.

Domain 5 Intergenerational activities are a great way for young and old to learn from one another, to honor what each has to offer, and for all age groups to feel good about themselves.

Social connections with friends who live in your community and involvement with local organizations is associated with better mental and physical health. Age friendly communities make social opportunities available by organizing, publicizing, and making sure people have full access to the activities that exist. One of the things to keep in mind, however, is not all people want to be involved with formal social activities. Studies show that when older adults are actively engaged with people of all ages the entire community wins. Research suggests that older adults who feel included, who are welcomed, who are recruited to serve on committees, who are valued for their volunteer contributions to the community, are more likely to remain active in the social, economic, and civic life of the community as they age.

An important part of respect and social inclusion from a municipal perspective is consideration of the different needs of older adults who are aging with a disability. The way a city welcomes people of all ages and abilities sends a powerful message to residents. When a community is inclusive, the residents are more likely to respect older residents and welcome their participation in local activities.

FROM OUR SURVEY: almost 40% of respondents said they spend time with family, friends, or neighbors in the Biddeford area once or more a day, and about 34% spend time once a week. But, more than 25% believe that social or hobby clubs are not available but wish they were, and about the same amount reported they wish accurate and well publicized information about social and recreational activities was more available and in a timely fashion. As mentioned before, sometimes factors such as time of day, weather, transportation, etc. keep older residents from participating in activities even when they know about them.

More than 3 out of 5 felt valued as an older resident, but residents were split on whether Biddeford wants to encourage them to remain as they age. More than half were not sure there was any awareness of the contributions of older residents.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS: We have reached out to local community groups, such as McArthur Library, Heart of Biddeford, Biddeford Police and Fire Departments to see what activities are currently inclusive and how we can help before we plan activities of our own.

See our [Strategy Chart/Action Plans](#) for further information and future plans.

Domain-Specific Strategy Chart/Action Plan

Domains: Social Participation w/Respect & Social Inclusion **Goals:** Develop ways to battle isolation in the elder population; create and promote affordable fun social activities, foster intergenerational projects, encourage local and city resources to develop inclusive programs that are welcoming to all age and abilities.

Collaborating Organization(s): City, Heart of Biddeford, Engine, McArthur Library, SMAA, local Community Clubs, Schools and Churches

Activities	By whom	By when	Resources and support available/needed		Potential barriers or resistance	Partnerships	Metrics	Outcome
Better Community Communications for everyone's programs	AFB w/all Collaborating Organizations	On-going to Begin ASAP	To be determined	Everyone to cooperate with a plan	They might want to continue as is	All groups in the City that are interested	Each group will keep stats on success and share results	To Be Determined
Art Program "8 to 80"	AFB with Loretta Turner	2020	To be determined	To be determined	None	Cooperation with local arts groups	Evaluation will be done with each event	Desire to bring the generations together
Information Campaign to let public know who we are & to recruit volunteers	AFB	Spring - Summer 2019	Printed Material for Handouts and Evaluations	Printing Expenses, AFB Volunteers	Hopefully none	Cooperation with local stores to allow us to greet customers	Spot Evaluations done each time	Make the community aware of AFB
Presentation to City Council	AFB with Peggy Ayers	Late Spring 2019	Resource for slide show & handouts of Action Plan	Support from AARP	None, except to get on City Council Schedule	AFB, City, AARP	Feedback from Community watching	Feedback and Support after presentation
Travel Alongs	AFB and Biddeford Fire	TBD	Handout	Support of BFD	None	AFB & BFD	Cooperation with BFD on scheduling	Individual Experience with each visit

Who is responsible for maintaining and updating information: AFB with Lorretta Turner

CIVIC PARTICIPATION and EMPLOYMENT

COMMUNICATION and INFORMATION

Domain 6 suggests that an age friendly community will find ways that older residents can, if they choose to, work for pay, volunteer their skills, and be actively engaged in community life.

Domain 7 suggests that an age friendly community will recognize that not everyone has a smartphone or internet access or computer skills. An age friendly community will recognize that information needs to be disseminated through a variety of means.

It is important to recognize that everyone in the community may not have the needs or desires expressed in each domain, but we try to reach everyone so that they have a choice. Ideas to solve these issues build on the previous Domains 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. It is important for age friendly communities to approach the domains broadly to encourage a wide range of possibilities – from paid work, to running for election to serve the City, to volunteering. It is important to explore if opportunities exist for all residents in the areas of employment, volunteering, and civic participation.

Effective communication may be the key for engaging older residents in any of the above. Residents want the information needed to stay in touch with their City. We need to remember that communication is not just the written word. Residents will need a variety of modes with a clear message that includes enough information to effectively convey the topic. Too much information in one message may cause the message to get lost in the words. Many factors (such as the size of the font used in printed material to the links on a web page to directional signs that make a venue easy to find) can affect the success of information reaching its target.

FROM OUR SURVEY: we learned about 59% of respondents were already retired and 40% were still employed either full or part time. Over 86% reported they spend at least some time each week volunteering. Residents were almost evenly divided on whether they thought information about services and resources to support aging were easy to find. The questions about finding information about community events and activities was answered in the same fashion. Over 38% said they relied on newspapers for information, followed by email and Facebook. No one used Twitter or text messages. About 3.8% reported they get their info from radio.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS: We are in the process of designing a handout with important contacts for residents to hang by magnet in their homes. We have advocated with the City on behalf of the library for a change in ordinance to allow McArthur to have an electronic sign to inform all residents of events and activities. We have contacted the Courier to ask about their delivery practices in senior citizen housing throughout the City

See our [Strategy Chart/Action Plans](#) for further information and future plans.

Domain-Specific Strategy Chart/Action Plan

Domains: Civic Participation and Employment **Goals:** Assist older adults who want to find work or want to volunteer to be active, develop with Communication and Information various modes of communication to reach more citizens, encourage civic activities

Collaborating Organization(s): AFB, City, Heart of Biddeford, McArthur Library, SMAA, AARP, AFS, OOBFCF

Activities	By whom	By when	Resources and support available/needed		Potential barriers or resistance	Partnerships	Metrics	Outcome
Research Delivery of BSOOB Courier	Ron Gobeil, AFB	Research started	The Courier Biddeford Housing	No Financial, Volunteer time	Courier will deliver anywhere upon request	Each Complex may have different rules	Check back at key buildings for comments	None yet, in future this may help with notifications
Community Meet and Greets	AFB with 2 members each time	Spring-Summer 2019	Design Handout & Volunteer Form	Printing funds, cooperation of businesses	May need to choose alternate sites if some resist	We hope to set up at Reilly's, Hannaford, & McArthur	On site feedback & info collected on forms	Potential to become known and gather future volunteers
News Coverage & Releases	AFB with BSOOB Courier	On-going	The Courier and others' websites	No financial, remembering to ask by AFB	None anticipated	Cooperation by Courier, HoB, City, McArthur	Evaluation forms at events & feedback	Unknown yet Should be favorable
Posters and Flyers	AFB based on events	Prior to events	AFB to design and circulate	Printing expense and volunteer time	None expected	Downtown locations & Community Center and Churches	How well attendance is and evaluation forms	Potential to see how well we are reaching the population
Our own website	AFB with Peggy	2019	AFB design with help from teens	Cost of Go Daddy or other	None	Engage high school students	Feedback from public, poll data	Another mode of communication
Voter Assist	AFB with Rotary	Election Day	Rotary to supply	Canes, Walkers, and Wheelchairs	None unless City refuses	Saco Bay Sunset Rotary	Feedback from City and Public	Inclusion & Welcoming All Voters

Who is responsible for maintaining and updating information: AFB with Peggy aided by teen in community

COMMUNITY and HEALTH SERVICES

Domain 8 reminds us that at some time in one's life everyone gets hurt, get sick, or needs help. While it is important that good health care is available nearby, it is essential that residents of all ages can access and afford those services. The ease of knowing where to find services when needed is also addressed in this domain.

Community health and support services are vital for the health and well-being of older citizens and for residents of all ages. High quality and ease to find services and information are key to staying healthy and maximizing independence as we grow older. Everyone should have access to a primary care physician and to medical specialists. Preventative and maintenance programs that aim to give older adults tools to help maintain and improve their quality of life can empower older residents to take charge of their own physical health. Formal and informal recreational opportunities provide ways for all to socialize and stay fit. If you are healthy you are more likely to be active and engaged in civic and political life, to shop downtown, to spend time with friends and neighbors, as well as to volunteer and participate in programs, festivals, and other activities. Family and other care partners are less likely to have to miss work or withdraw from activities they enjoy if their loved ones are in the best health possible and enjoying life.

Older resident also need access to community support services. Programs that provide meals on wheels, access to food pantries, assistance with yard work, house maintenance and other chores, as well as legal, accounting, and hospice services, or where to turn for help during a natural or man-made disaster are important for aging in place as well as peace of mind as we age.

Another important aspect for age friendly communities to consider is to increase awareness of programs and services that exist and only create new ones where needed.

FROM THE SURVEY: it was noted that respondents say they go out most to run errands and that medical appointments take up the least amount of their time. Most residents reported that they get more of their information about services from the internet, followed by family and friends, and then doctors or health care providers. Very few rely on local non-profits for information. The services with the highest need was home maintenance help, followed by wellness and fitness classes, and then library services. Only one out of five said they were very likely to use the library, yet three out of five said they are not likely to use library services. More than 80% said they are not likely to use home delivered meals in the next five years. Almost 80% said they were not likely to use safety checks.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS: We invited McArthur Library to speak at one of our monthly meetings and they produced a flyer for us specifically for the older residents. We helped facilitate a Community Discussion on Health Care event at UNE with AARP.

See our [Strategy Chart/Action Plans](#) for further information and future plans.

Domain-Specific Strategy Chart/Action Plan

Domain: Community and Health Services **Goal:** Ease the knowing of where to obtain services when needed; partner with City services and local organizations on projects, program and activities for all ages.

Collaborating Organization(s): HoB, UNE, SMHC, McArthur, Adult Ed and 50+ Club, BPD, BFD, Churches and Food Banks, AFS, OOBCHC, AARP

Activities	By whom	By when	Resources and support available/needed		Potential barriers or resistance	Partnerships	Metrics	Outcome
Rotary Loan Closet	AFB & Rotary	Immediately	Medical Equipment	Advertising Communication	None except Insurance?	Saco Bay Sunset Rotary	Public Response	Public Response & Feedback
Healthy Conversations Seminar	AFB, AFS, OOBCHC, AARP, UNE	Completed	Provided by AARP	Provided by AARP	None	All Groups mentioned as well as public	Completed	Better communication for public
Personalized Health Insurance Reviews	AFB with Linda Lambert and Steve Murphy	Yearly	Volunteer	Coordinated with SMAA	None	AFB and SMAA	Much in demand, feedback from public positive	Individuals gain knowledge of health insurance best for them.
Health & Wellness Visits	AFB with BPD & BFD	Follow lead of both departments	Volunteers, Handouts, Evaluations	Printing Costs	None except scheduling	Biddeford Police and Fire	Immediate Feedback	Elders feel less isolated
AFB Support Drive	AFB	End of 2019	Development of Funding Approach	Examples of other AFCs	None, if unsuccessful, regroup	Develop relationships with local businesses	Donations received or future promises	Maybe yearly depending on success
Health Care Guide	AFB	2020	May already exist but may need reintroduction	Research needed & resources gathered	Time consuming volunteer time	All local resources mentioned above	Guidance & Feedback from Partners	To be determined
Topical Health Care Seminars	AFB with Linda and Peggy	TBD	Partners to develop topics	Research needed	Scheduling & cooperation	All Groups & Public based on need	Feedback then review	TBD

Who is responsible for maintaining and updating information: AFB with Linda, Steve and Peggy



Community for All Ages

APPENDIX

- a. Our Community Survey
- b. Analytic Insights to Survey Results
- c. Demographics of Aging in Biddeford
- d. Members of the Maine AARP Age Friendly Community

Age Friendly Biddeford at Heart of Biddeford 205 Main Street Suite 103 Biddeford ME 04005

Email: agefriendlybiddeford@gmail.com Office: 207-284-8520



Dear Friends,

Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey. The Biddeford Age Friendly Community Committee is a group of Biddeford residents who are working together to help to make Biddeford a more age friendly/livable place.

This survey focuses on aspects of our community that are important for the health and well-being of older residents. It also explores what might help older residents age in place or age in the community.

With your help and the results of this survey, you will provide us with valuable information about the types of programs needed to support all individuals who wish to remain in their home and the city as they age.

Thank you again for sharing your thoughts on how to help us improve the lives of our friends and neighbors here in Biddeford. If you have questions about the survey or about Biddeford's Age Friendly Community Program please contact Linda Waters at 284-9105 or email Linda at lwaters@biddefordmaine.org.

Sincerely,

Alan Casavant
Mayor, City of Biddeford

Peggy Ann Ayers
Chair, Biddeford's Age Friendly Community Committee

BIDDEFORD AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY SURVEY

Community

1. How would you rate Biddeford as a place for people to live as they age?
 Excellent Good Fair Poor

2. How important is it for you to remain in Biddeford as you age?
 Extremely important somewhat important Not at all important

3. What ward do you live in? Please check one:
Ward 1 ___ Ward 2 ___ Ward 3 ___ Ward 4 ___ Ward 5 ___ Ward 6 ___ Ward 7 ___

Outdoor Space & Buildings

Outdoor spaces and buildings have a significant effect on the ability of older people to age in the community where they want to live. Outdoor spaces, such as parks, and buildings affect the independence and quality of life of older people in Biddeford.

4. Please rate the following when thinking about civic buildings and parks in Biddeford:

	Satisfied	No Opinion	Not Satisfied
a. Civic buildings that are accessible to people of all abilities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Elevators, escalators or ramps where needed.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The number of parking spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. The number of designated parking spaces for people with mobility limitations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Clear, easy to read signs.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Public parks with enough benches.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Paths that are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or other assistive mobility device.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Path and street lighting at night	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Sidewalks that are in good condition, safe for pedestrian use and accessible for wheelchairs.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Well-lit, safe streets and intersections for all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Comments on Outdoor Space and Buildings:

Communication & Information

Staying connected with activities, resources, and people is the key to optimal aging. In similar surveys, the central concern expressed by older people is for information about local activities and resources that are easy to find.

5. Is information about services and resources to support aging in place easy to find?

- Yes No Not Sure

6. Is information about community events and local activities easy to find?

- Yes No Not Sure

7. How do you like to receive information about community services, news and events?

- Newspaper Word of mouth Websites E-mail Newsletters
 Facebook
 Text message Twitter Biddeford Community Television Radio
 Flyers

Additional Comments on Communication & Information:

Social Participation

Connecting with friends and neighbors who don't live in the same home with you is connected to physical and cognitive health. People are more likely to participate in formal social opportunities when activities are well-publicized, events are affordable and offered in an accessible place, and transportation alternatives are available.

8. How frequently do you spend time with family, friends, or neighbors in the Biddeford area?

- once a day or more several times each week once each week
 every 2-3 weeks once each month less than once each month

9. Which of the following are available and/or do you use or attend in Biddeford?

	Available, I use	Available, I don't use	Not available, I wish it was	Not available, not important
a. Activities that offer senior discounts.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Accurate and widely publicized information about social and recreational activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Formal recreational opportunities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Opportunities to volunteer at local schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Social or Hobby Clubs (e.g. book club, gardening, craft).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other Activities:

10. If you would like to socialize more, what prevents you (check all that apply)?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility issues or health | <input type="checkbox"/> Events are scheduled when I'm not available |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No one to go with me | <input type="checkbox"/> Too costly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Find out too late | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not much to do here | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: _____ |

Additional Comments on Social Participation:

Housing

Safe and affordable housing promotes the well-being of residents of all ages. Information about home modification and the availability of housing options for people at all income levels are the key to encouraging older residents to age comfortably and safely in the house and community of their choice.

11. What kind of housing do you currently occupy (check all that applies)?

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single-family dwelling | <input type="checkbox"/> Apartment | <input type="checkbox"/> Condominium | <input type="checkbox"/> Extended Family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement Community | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Assisted Living | <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing Home |

12. If you were to move during the next few years, would the following factors impact your decision to move?

	Yes	No	Not sure
a. Looking for a smaller or more accessible home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. To live near friends or family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Expense of your current home (e.g. property tax, maintenance) is too high ..	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. To be near medical care and conveniences (e.g. shopping, library, church) ...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Need public transportation or other transportation options.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Prefer a different climate.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other, please specify: _____

13. People sometimes make modifications to their home to allow them to stay there as they age. Do you plan to make and of the following improvements to your home to enable you to stay there?

- Easier access into or within your home such as a ramp or wider doorways
- Putting a bedroom, bathroom, or kitchen on the first floor
- Installing modifications such as grab bars, handrails, or non-slip tiles.
- Improving indoor or outdoor lighting.
- Installing a medical emergency response system

Others: _____

14. Please rate how important you think each of the following is to have in Biddeford:

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not Very important
a. Home repair contractors who are trustworthy, do quality work and are affordable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. A home repair service for low-income and older adults that helps with things like roof or window repairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Seasonal services such as lawn work or snow removal for low-income and older adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Housing options (e. g. retirement communities, assisted living, congregate housing) for people at all income levels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Comments on Housing:

Respect & Social Inclusion

The lack of contact between generations and ignorance about aging are two reasons why stereotypes that exclude older people from full participation in the community continue. Aging adults who feel welcomed and respected for their contribution are more likely to remain actively engaged in the economic, social and civic life of the community than those who do not feel included.

15. Do you feel valued as an older resident of Biddeford?
 Yes Most of the time Not usually No
16. Do you feel there is general awareness of the contributions of older residents in Biddeford?
 Yes Most of the time Not usually No
17. Do you feel that the city of Biddeford wants to encourage older residents to remain in Biddeford as they age?
 Yes No

Additional Comments on Respect & Social Inclusion:

Civic Participation and Employment

Older people do not stop contributing to their communities when they turn 65 or 85 or 105. An age-friendly community provides opportunities for residents who want to or need to work past traditional retirement age. Age-friendly communities encourage people of all ages to participate in volunteer work and in the political process.

18. What is your employment status (check all that apply)?
- Employed full or part-time Unemployed, looking for work Retired

Other:

19. On average, how many hours each week do you spend in formal and informal volunteer activities (rounded to the nearest hour)?
- 0 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 more than 8

20. For each of the items below, please indicate how important you think it is to have in Biddeford.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not Very important
a. A range of volunteer activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Opportunities to participate in local government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Opportunities to participate in decision making in community organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Easy to find information about volunteer opportunities...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Comments on Civic Participation & Employment:

Transportation

Transportation, from affordable and accessible public transportation to volunteer door-to-door and door-through-door transportation services, is key to the ability of people to age in place safely and independently. The transportation options available reflect community values—what people want for public transportation—and community capacity.

21. Please describe your level of mobility (your ability to walk and get around):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can easily walk unassisted | <input type="checkbox"/> I use a cane or walker when walking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I walk unassisted but with difficulty | <input type="checkbox"/> I use a wheelchair |

22. Please tell us how you usually travel around Biddeford (check all that apply):

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends/family | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Driver Program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Public transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

23. Please rate how important the following factors are to your ability to travel in Biddeford.

(Only rate those factors that are relevant to your situation)

Question 23 continued ...

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not Very important
a) I no longer have a valid driver's license/ don't drive.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) I don't have anyone to take me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) I can't afford transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Availability of transportation (services/times are inconvenient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) I have physical limitations and there is no accessible means of transportation available in Biddeford.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Weather conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Darkness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Others:

24. How many times per month do you go:

	0	1-2	3-4	5	or more
a) To medical appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) For a walk or to a group exercise program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For errands (e.g. banking or shopping)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) To socialize (e.g. visit relatives or friends, play cards, attend a book club)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Others (please list): _____

Additional Comments on Transportation:

Community Support & Health Services

Access to health care and services to support aging in place is key for the health and well-being of older residents. Knowing how and where to find needed resources before they are needed is an essential part of preparing for the time when you – or a friend – may need those services.

25. Place a check beside the resources you would use if you or a friend or family member needed information about a service?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AARP | <input type="checkbox"/> Southern Maine Area Agency on Aging |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Senior Center | <input type="checkbox"/> Family and Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faith-based organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Local non-profit organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Biddeford City Hall |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctor or Health Care Provider | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Book |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Popular Press (newspaper, radio) |

26. How likely do you think it is that you will need the following services in the next five years?

		Somewhat		
	Very Likely	Likely	Not likely	
a. Personal Care at Home.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. Housecleaning.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. Caregiver Support.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d. Wellness/Fitness Classes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
e. Home maintenance.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
f. Home delivered meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
g. Safety checks.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
h. Library Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Additional Comments on Community & Health Services:

About You

27. Please select your age category:

- Under 50 50-55 56-59 60-65 66-69 70-79 80-89 90 or older

28. Are you: Male Female

29. How many years have you lived in Biddeford?

- Less than one year 1-9 years 10-19 years 20 or more years I grew up here

30. Your nearest family lives:

- With me Within a one hour drive In the same town More than one hour away

31. Describe your household: (check all that apply)

- Live alone with my spouse with a child or children under 18
 with my parent(s) or other older relative
 Others:

32. What is your current living arrangement?

- Rent Own your home Other: _____

Additional Comments About You:

Any Other Comments about the Survey:

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. Your time and effort will help us in our goal to improve the lives of our friends and neighbors.

Biddeford Age-Friendly Community Survey

The Age-Friendly Community Project



 ANALYTIC INSIGHT

March 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of the project is to help the City of Biddeford and its residents better understand the needs of older residents and support healthy aging. This study was developed and administered by a team of volunteers working with the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities Program. Analytic Insight, a professional research firm based in Lewiston, was hired to compile the survey results and develop this report.

This Executive Summary summarizes the findings presented in the full report, and is designed to help guide the strategic planning and program implementation efforts of the City of Biddeford and its neighboring communities.

METHODS

ONLINE AND MAIL SURVEY

Surveys were distributed by the City both online and in paper format. Approximately 250 surveys were completed, although some respondents did not answer every survey question.

FOCUS GROUPS

Analytic Insight was scheduled to moderate two focus groups for the City. The first group was held on February 14, 2018 at Ross Community Center with approximately 15 participants attending. The second focus group scheduled for February 15, 2018 at McArthur Library was cancelled due to no participants attending the group.

The survey and focus groups covered The World Health Organization's 8 Domains of Livability including:

- ◆ Community
- ◆ Outdoor Space & Buildings.
- ◆ Communication & Information
- ◆ Social Participation
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Respect & Social Inclusion
- ◆ Civic Participation and Employment
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Community Support & Health Services
- ◆ Demographic Information

LIVING IN THE BIDDEFORD COMMUNITY

More than half of Biddeford residents rate the city as either an excellent or good place to live as they age (56.5%), with the majority rating it as good (49.4%). Less than one in ten residents rate Biddeford as excellent (7.1%). Similarly, less than one in ten rate Biddeford as a poor place to live as they age (7.5%).

Almost half of residents said remaining in Biddeford as they age is extremely important to them (47.2%). Less than one in six residents said remaining is not at all important (13.6%).

OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

The items residents rated the most satisfaction with are clear, easy to read signs (62.1%), civic buildings that are accessible to people of all abilities (59.1%), and elevators, escalators or ramps where needed (47.0%).

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

The majority of Biddeford residents reported that they are unsure if information about services and resources to support aging is easy to find (41.9%), followed by residents reporting no, information is not easy to find (37.1%). One in five reported yes, information about services and resources to support aging is easy to find (21.0%).

The majority of Biddeford residents said that they are unsure if information about community events and local activities is easy to find (43.3%), followed by residents reporting no (34.6%). One in five reported yes, information about community events and local activities is easy to find (22.1%).

Residents reported that they like to receive information about community services, news, and events from newspapers (38.1%) by a wide margin, followed by email (22.9%), and Facebook (22.0%). Out of 236 respondents to the question, none reported that they like to receive information from Twitter (0.0%) and text messages (0.0%). The lowest item with responses from respondents was radio (3.8%).

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Nearly two out of five residents said they spend time with family, friends, or neighbors in the Biddeford area once or more a day (39.2%) and a little less than that spend time once each week (33.9%). A little more than one in twenty residents spend time with family, friends or neighbors in the Biddeford area less than once each month (6.1%).

AVAILABILITY AND USE

Over half of all residents rated each item listed on the survey as available, whether they used them or not. The item with the highest reported availability include activities that

offer senior discounts (69.2%), which also have the highest use among residents (37.4%). The next most used item is accurate and widely publicized information about social and recreational activities (33.2%).

More than one in four residents believe that social or hobby clubs are not available but wished they were (27.7%). Nearly one in four reported that they wish accurate and widely publicized information about social and recreational activities (24.9%) and formal recreational opportunities were available in the community.

Over one in four residents reported that finding out too late prevents them from socializing more (27.3%). One in four reported events being scheduled when they are not available prevents them from socializing more (24.5%). Only one in ten residents reported that lack of transportation prevents socializing (10.2%).

HOUSING

More than three out of five residents reported occupying single-family dwelling (65.3%). One in five reported occupying an apartment (19.2%).

Respondents rated being closer to medical care and conveniences as the highest factor that would impact their decision to move (64.6%), followed by expense of their current home (62.4%), and to live near friends or family (60.7%). Respondents reported preferring a different climate as the least impactful on their decision (25.7%).

One in five Biddeford residents said they plan to install modifications such as grab bars, handrails, or non-slip tiles to their homes (22.4%). One in six said they plan on easier access into or within their home such as a ramp or wider doorways (16.7%). Less than one in ten said they plan on installing a medical emergency response system (8.2%).

More than four out of five residents reported the following items as very important for Biddeford to offer: home repair contractors who are trustworthy, do quality work and are affordable (87.5%), a home repair service for low-income and older adults that helps with things like roof or window repair (83.8%), seasonal services such as lawn work or snow removal for low-income and older adults (82.2%).

RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

More than three out of five residents said they feel valued as an older resident of Biddeford at least most of the time (63.3%). Residents were split on if they feel the city of Biddeford wants to encourage older residents to remain as they age, with half saying either not usually or no (50.2%) and the other half saying most of the time or yes (49.8%). More than half of residents said they either do not or do not usually feel there is general awareness of the contributions of older residents in Biddeford (56.8%).

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Nearly three out of five respondents reported that they are retired (58.8%) and two out of five reported they are either employed full or part-time (40.3%).

More than one in three respondents reported that on average they spend 1-2 hours in formal and informal volunteer activities (35.5%). One in five spend 3-4 hours each week (21.7%), and one in six spend more than 8 hours (15.8%). Less than one in six respondents spend no hours volunteering (13.2%).

At least half of all respondents reported they feel every item listed was very important, with transportation to and from volunteer activities rated as the highest (67.0%), followed by easy to find information about volunteer opportunities (66.1%), and a range of volunteer activities (59.0%). Half of respondents said opportunities to participate in local government are very important (49.5%), and one in six said that it is not very important (15.1%).

TRANSPORTATION

Four out of five Biddeford residents reported that they can easily walk unassisted (79.2%), and one in ten said they can walk unassisted but with difficulty (11.9%).

More than four out of five residents said they travel in Biddeford in a personal vehicle (86.5%), and less than one in four said they travel by walking (23.3%). Less than one in a hundred said they use Volunteer Driver Programs (0.4%).

Two out of five respondents reported that both weather conditions (41.3%) and darkness (41.2%) are very important factors in their ability to travel.

More than half of respondents said that being unable to afford transportation is not very important in their ability to travel (58.8%), followed by no longer having a valid driver's license/not driving (56.3%), not having anyone to take them (54.3%), and physical limitations with no accessible means of transportation available in Biddeford (53.2%).

COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES

Respondents reported that they go out the most for errands, with over half saying they go out 5 or more times (56.1%) and three out of ten who go 3-4 times (30.4%). Medical appointments take up the least visits, with nearly a third of respondents saying they go zero times (32.9%), and nearly half saying they only go 1 to 2 times (49.5%).

More than three out of five residents reported they would use the internet for information about a service (66.9%), followed by family and friends (62.0%), and

Doctor or Health Care Provider (60.4%). Less than one in six reported getting their information from local non-profit organizations (12.7%).

The services with the highest percentage of respondents saying they are very likely to use include home maintenance (29.7%), wellness/fitness classes (23.3%), and library services (20.0%). It should be noted that while one in five respondents said that they are very likely to use library services, three out of five said they are not likely to use library services (60.4%). Four out of five respondents said they are not likely to use home delivered meals in the next five years (80.7%), and only a little less said they are not likely to use safety checks (77.9%).

OTHER COMMENTS

A word cloud is a graphic that summarizes open-ended, verbatim comments. The larger the number of times a word was mentioned, the larger it appears in print.

The word cloud that follows shows the write-in responses to the “other comments” sections of the survey. “Biddeford” and “downtown” are two themes that emerge from the graphic. Other themes evident in the word cloud include “parking”, “family”, “taxes” and comments about the survey.



1. Strong Desire to Stay

The majority of survey respondents rate Biddeford as an excellent or good place to live, though a little less than half wish to remain in the city as they age. In addition, many are invested in spending time with family and friends in the area. This commitment is a strong asset to the community and is also reflected in the high percentage of respondents reporting that they currently volunteer in some capacity in the community.

2. Improving Communications

More than three out of four survey respondents said that information about services and resources to support aging was not easy to find or they were unsure of where to find such information.

The City may wish to make use of local newspapers, newsletters, email and Facebook to inform residents about services and resources to support aging, as well as other community events. Twitter and text messages were not used by any respondents.

3. Encouraging Civic Participation

While a majority of residents are aware of opportunities for civic participation in Biddeford, a number of residents are not aware of certain activities they would use. For example one in four residents believe that social or hobby clubs are not available but wish they were (27.7%), and nearly one in four residents wish that accurate and widely publicized information about social and recreational activities (24.9%) and formal recreational opportunities (24.3%) were more readily available. One in five residents believe that activities that offer senior discounts are not available, but wish they were (20.6%), as well as opportunities to volunteer at local schools (21.6%).

Providing more information to residents about social and recreational activities may be of benefit. Additionally, encouraging local businesses to offer senior discounts may be a way to mobilize seniors in the community and disseminate information by encouraging their participation in “Senior Days” or other discounted events and activities.

4. Housing Modifications and Home Support Services

Two thirds of respondents live in single-family dwelling (65.3%). More than eight out of ten respondents found each of the in-home support services included in the survey to be very or somewhat important. In particular, home

repair contractors who are trustworthy were very important to the vast majority of respondents (87.5%), followed by home repair services for low-income and older adults that helps with things like roof or window repair (83.8%) and seasonal services such as lawn work or snow removal (82.2%). A little more than one in five respondents is interested in installing modifications such as grab bars or handrails in their home (22.4%).

Providing a list of referenced contractors who offer special rates to seniors or low-income individuals may be of value to the community and help those who are interested in making these modifications do so.

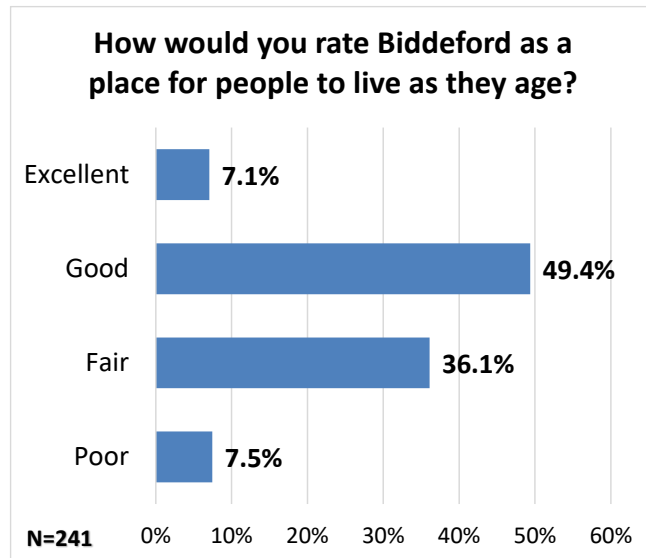
5. Civic Improvements

Almost half of respondents reported that they are dissatisfied that public restrooms are accessible to people of different physical abilities (49.1%) and with the number of parking spaces (45.3%). Additionally, a little more than two out of five residents reported that they are dissatisfied with the lighting on streets and at intersections (43.8%). Finally, two out of five residents report that they are dissatisfied with the condition of the sidewalks in Biddeford (41.2%).

The City of Biddeford may wish to focus on projects that provide greater accessibility in public restrooms, increase the number of parking spaces, improve street and intersection lighting, as well as improve the condition of Biddeford's sidewalks.

LIVING IN THE BIDDEFORD COMMUNITY

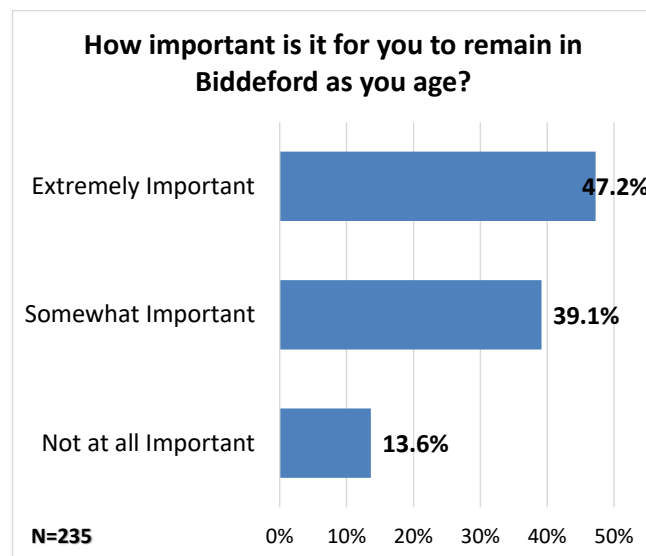
More than half of Biddeford residents rated the city as either an excellent or good place to live as they age (56.5%), with the majority rating it as good (49.4%). Less than one in ten residents rated Biddeford as excellent (7.1%), but less than one in ten also rated Biddeford as poor (7.5%).



HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO REMAIN IN BIDDEFORD

Almost half of residents said remaining in Biddeford as they age is extremely important to them (47.2%). Less than one in six residents said remaining is not at all important (13.6%).

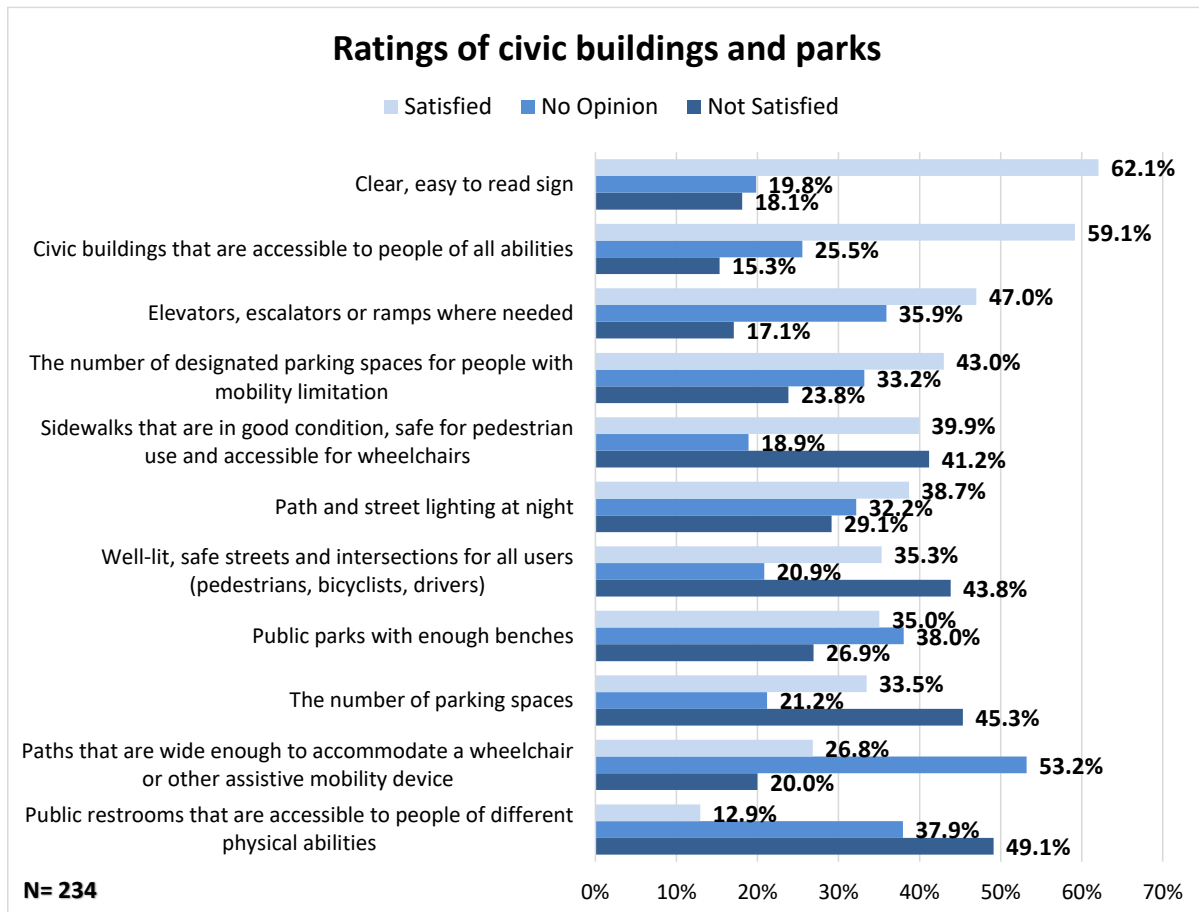
During the focus group, several participants agreed that one of the best assets of living in Biddeford is the convenience and availability of medical care, shopping and other amenities. As one participant said, "Biddeford offers everything for us."



OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

CURRENT SERVICES

The items residents rated the most satisfaction with include clear, easy to read signs (62.1%), civic buildings that are accessible to people of all abilities (59.1%), and elevators, escalators or ramps where needed (47.0%).



GAPS IN SERVICE

The three items rated with the least satisfaction include public restrooms that are accessible to people of different physical abilities (49.1%), the number of parking spaces (45.3%), and well-lit, safe streets and intersections for all users (43.8%).

During the focus group, participants elaborated on their experiences using outdoor spaces and buildings. Several participants discussed street signs that are difficult to read due to overgrowth of bushes and other vegetation. Additionally, pedestrian crossings were seen by many participants as dangerous. The participants discussed one

possible solution the City could do, which includes installing flashing lights at crosswalks when pedestrians press a button.

Downtown parking was also discussed, with many participants noting limited availability of parking spaces. Parking space availability was seen as especially problematic in the morning hours during the work week and in the summer when the City has many visitors from out of town. Several participants discussed that the streets are too narrow for parking, especially in the winter when plowed snow piles cover portions of the roadway.

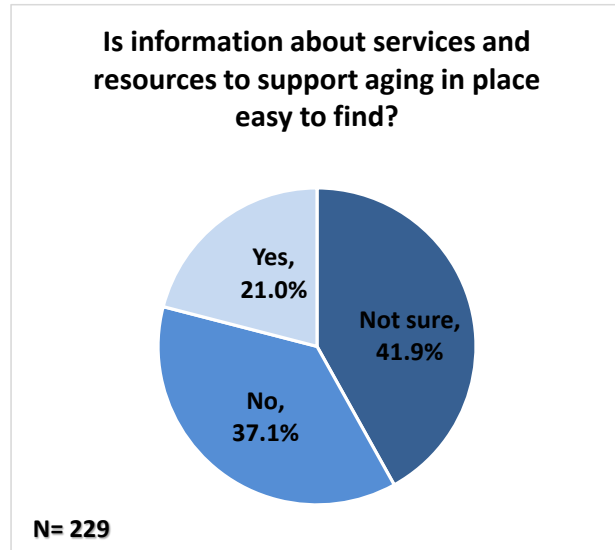
AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

CURRENT SERVICES

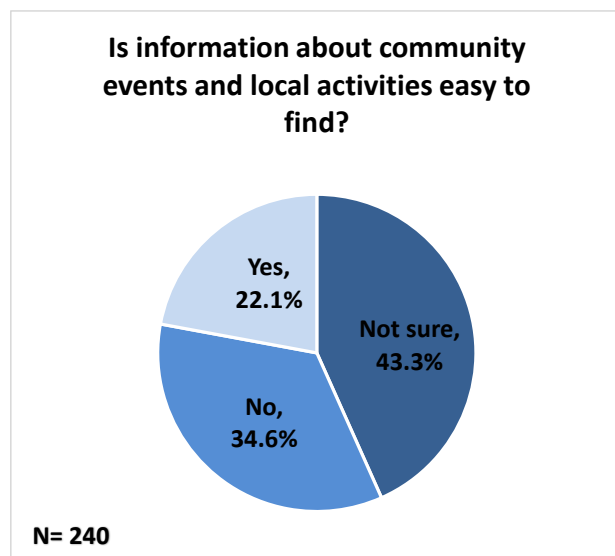
INFORMATION ABOUT SERVICES AND RESOURCES

The majority of Biddeford residents reported that they are unsure if information about services and resources to support aging are easy to find (41.9%), followed by residents reporting no, they are not easy to find (37.1%). One in five reported yes, information about services and resources to support aging are easy to find (21.0%).



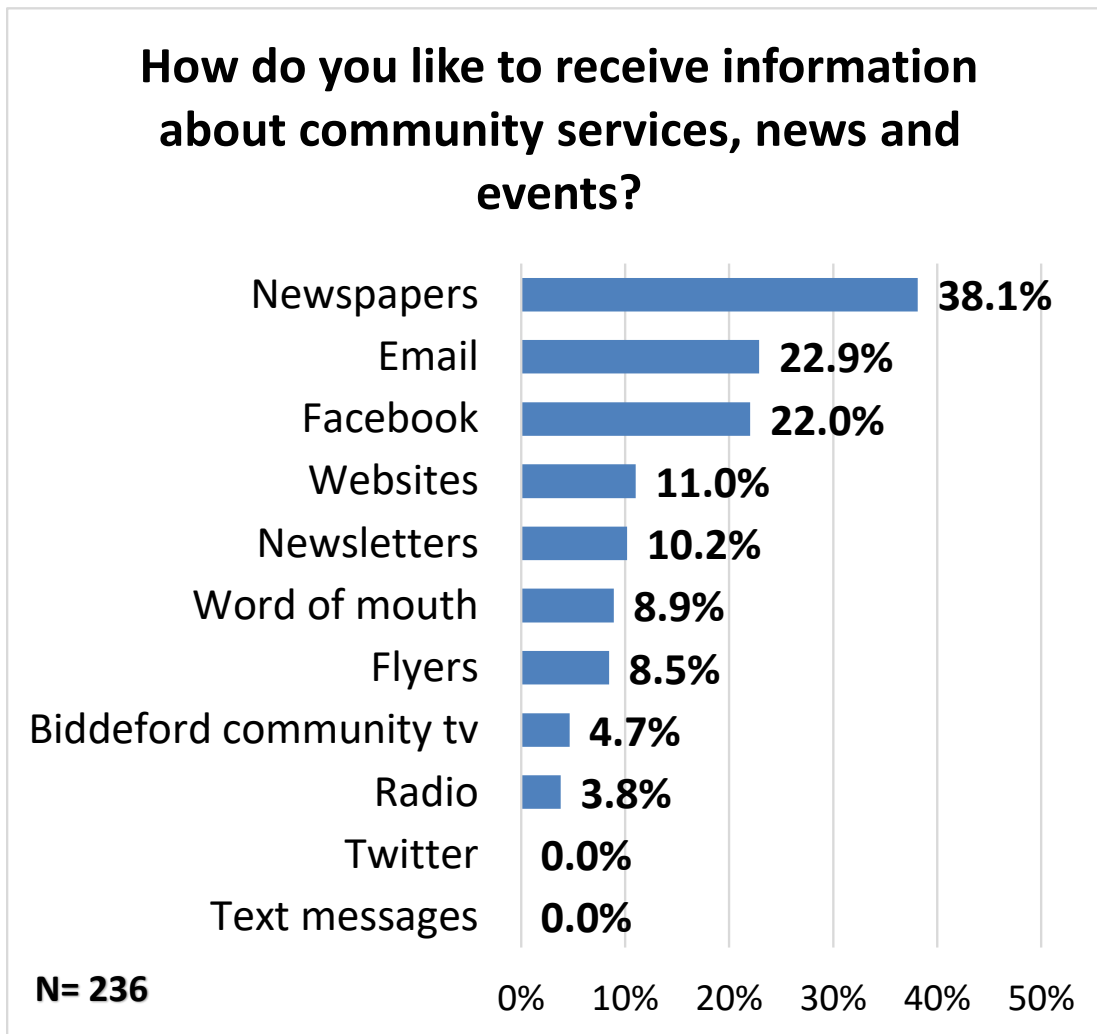
INFORMATION ABOUT COMMUNITY EVENTS

The majority of Biddeford residents said that they are unsure if information about community events and local activities are easy to find (43.3%), followed by residents reporting no (34.6%). One in five reported yes, information about community events and local activities are easy to find (22.1%).



HOW RESIDENTS RECEIVE INFORMATION IN BIDDEFORD

Residents reported that they like to receive information about community services, news, and events from newspapers (38.1%) by a wide margin, followed by email (22.9%), and Facebook (22.0%). Out of 236 respondents to the question, none reported that they like to receive information from Twitter (0.0%) and text messages (0.0%). The lowest item with responses from respondents is radio (3.8%).



GAPS IN SERVICE

A vast majority of survey respondents said information about services and resources to support aging, as well as information about community events and activities, were not easy to find or they were unsure where to find such information.

During the focus group, many participants said they heard about community events and local activities through word of mouth or the Internet. One participant believed that the City should have an “Age Friendly” page in the local newspaper to advise seniors about aging services and resources, as well as community events and activities. Additionally, many of the participants belonged to Biddeford’s 50 Plus Club, which is where they received information about the focus group meeting.

The City may wish to make use of local newspapers, newsletters, email and Facebook to inform residents about services and resources to support aging, as well as other community events. Twitter and text messages were not used by any survey respondents.

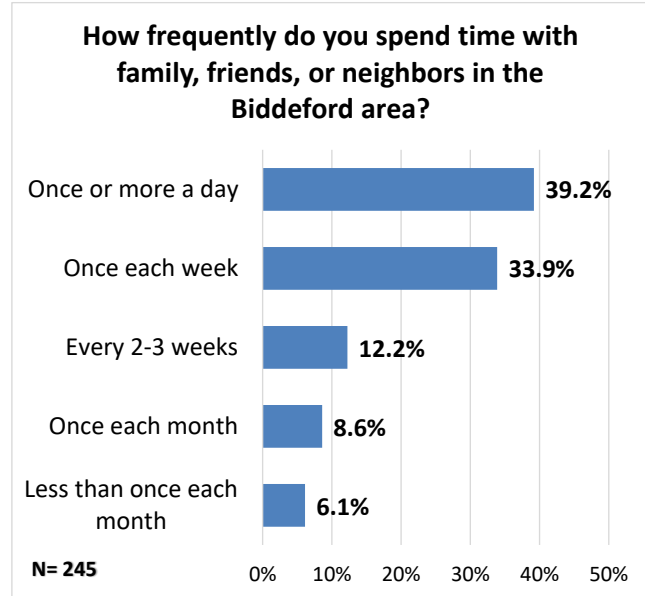
AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

CURRENT SERVICES

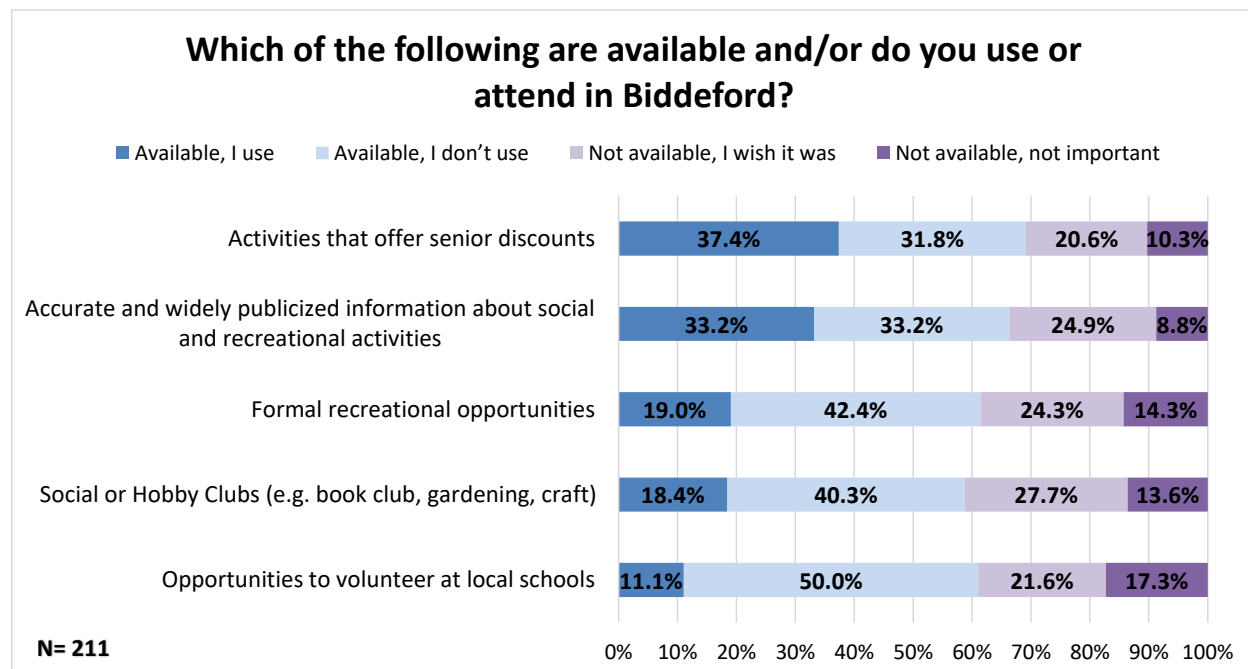
SPENDING TIME WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Nearly two out of five residents said they spend time with family, friends or neighbors in the Biddeford area once or more a day (39.2%) and a little less than that spend time once each week (33.9%). A little more than one in twenty residents spend time with family, friends or neighbors in the Biddeford area less than once each month (6.1%).



AVAILABILITY AND USE

Over half of all residents rated each item as available, whether they use them or not. The item with the highest reported availability include activities that offer senior discounts (69.2%), which also had the highest use among residents (37.4%). The next most used item is accurate and widely publicized information about social and recreational activities (33.2%).

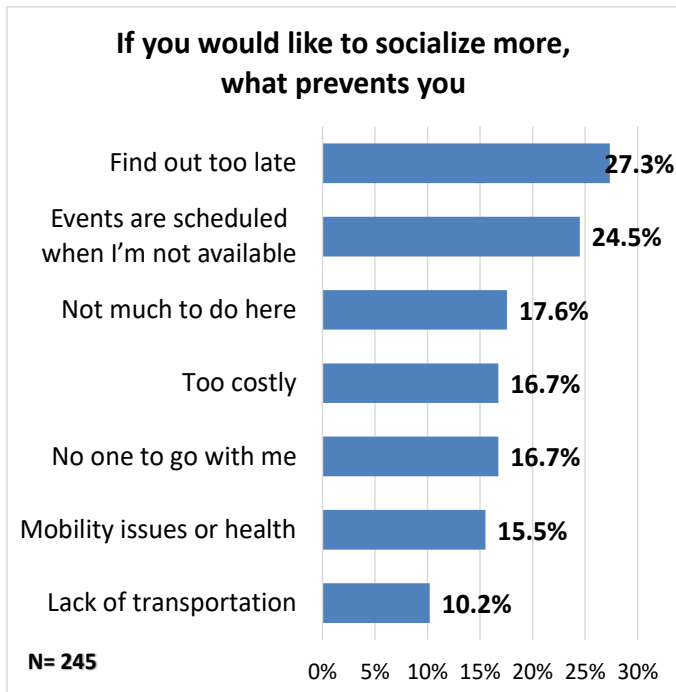


GAPS IN SERVICE

More than one in four residents believe that social or hobby clubs are not available but wish they were (27.7%), and nearly one in four residents wish that accurate and widely publicized information about social and recreational activities (24.9%) and formal recreational opportunities were more readily available (24.3%). One in five residents believe that activities that offer senior discounts are not available, but wish they were (20.6%), as well as opportunities to volunteer at local schools (21.6%).

Over one in four residents reported that finding out too late prevents them from socializing more (27.3%). One in four reported events being scheduled when they are not available prevents them from socializing more (24.5%). Only one in ten residents reported that lack of transportation prevents them from socializing (10.2%).

During the focus group, one participant stated that the City could provide additional funding to the 50 Plus Club activities as a way to better support seniors.



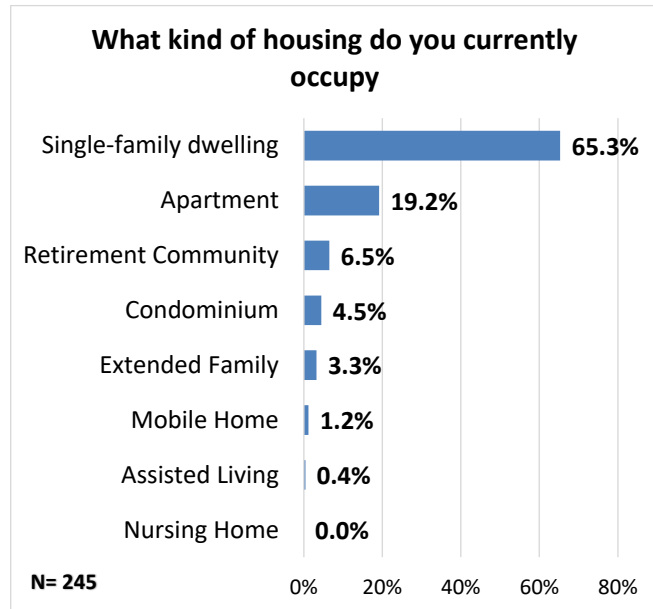
AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

HOUSING AND HOME IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

CURRENT SERVICES

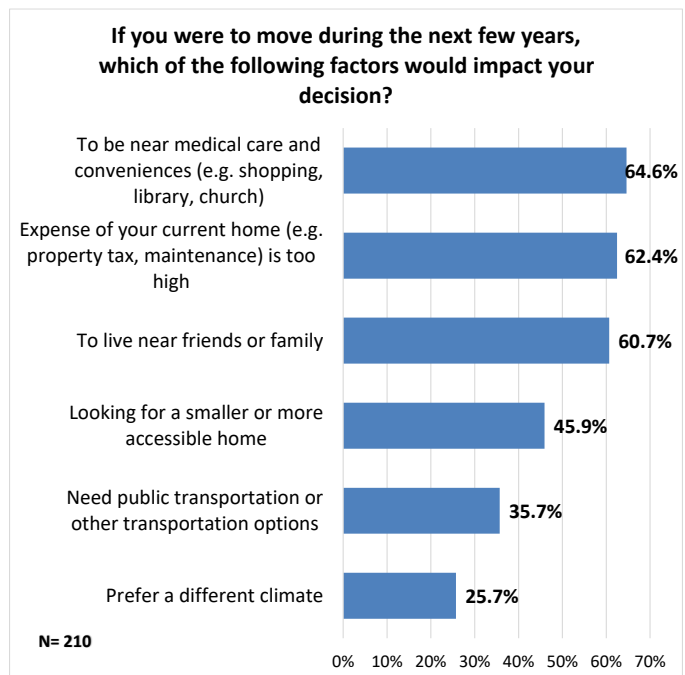
TYPES OF HOUSING

More than three out of five residents reported occupying a single-family dwelling (65.3%). One in five reported occupying an apartment (19.2%).



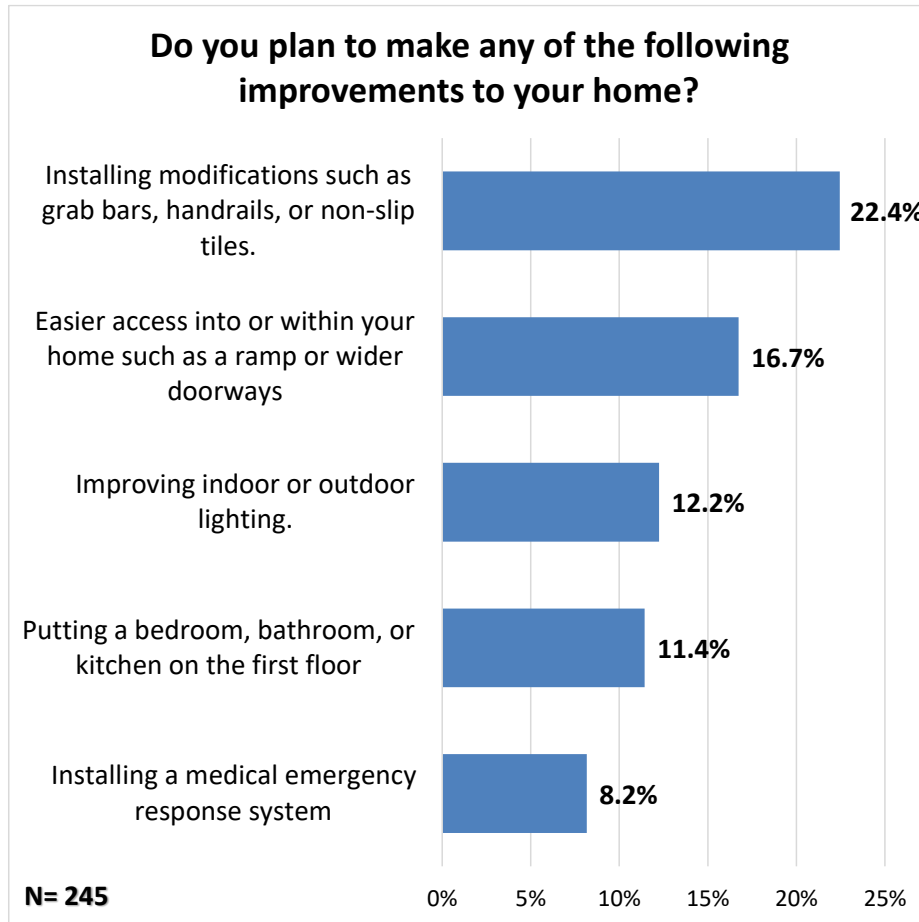
DECISION TO MOVE

Respondents rated their ability to be near medical care and conveniences as the highest factor that would impact their decision to move (64.6%), followed by the expense of their current home (62.4%), and to live near friends or family (60.7%). Respondents reported preferring a different climate as being the least impactful on their decision (25.7%).



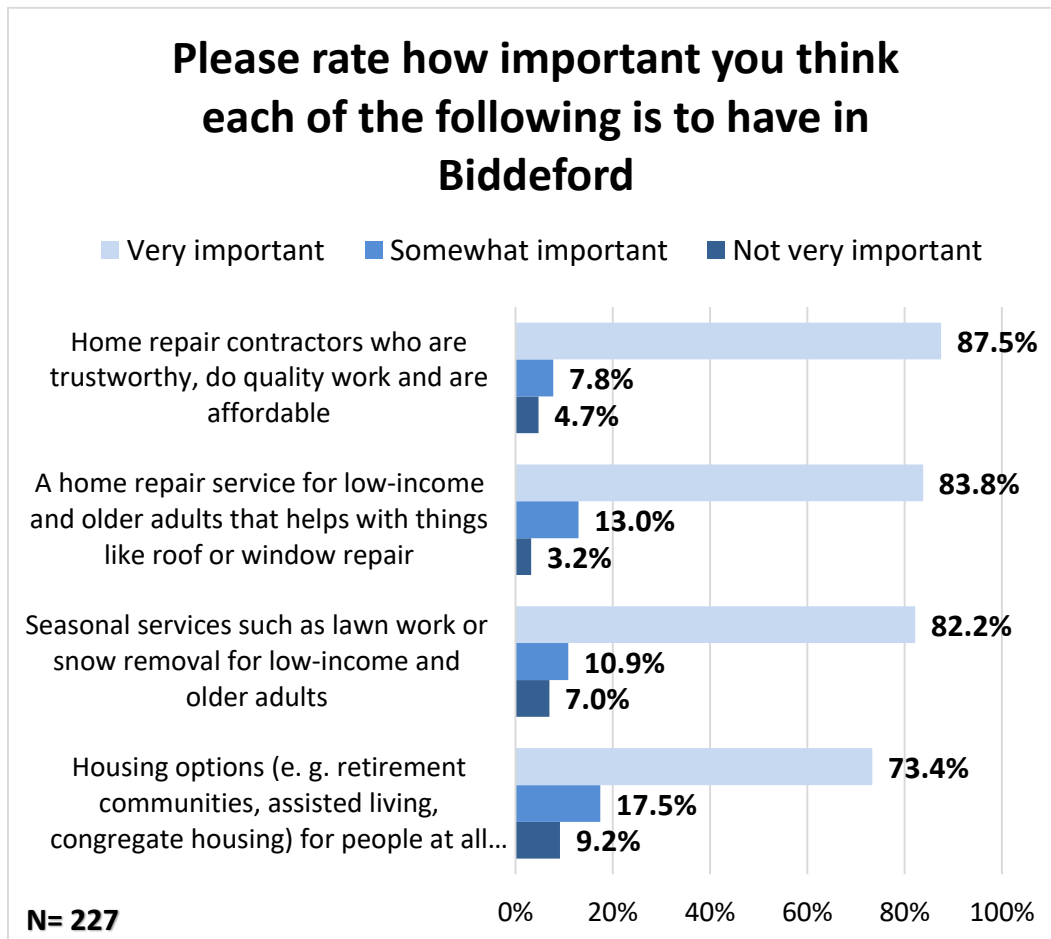
HOME IMPROVEMENT

One in five Biddeford residents said they plan to install modifications such as grab bars, handrails, or non-slip tiles to their homes (22.4%). One in six said they plan on easier access into or within their home such as ramp or wider doorways (16.7%). Less than one in ten said they plan on installing a medical emergency response system (8.2%).



IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES IN BIDDEFORD

More than seven out of ten residents rated each item as very important to have in Biddeford. More than four out of five residents reported the following as very important: home repair contractors who are trustworthy, do quality work and are affordable (87.5%), a home repair service for low-income and older adults that helps with things like roof or window repair (83.8%), and seasonal services such as lawn work or snow removal for low-income and older adults (82.2%).



GAPS IN SERVICE

During the focus group, many participants talked about housing needs in Biddeford. Many agreed that more senior housing options are needed, especially affordable housing that provides a covered area for parking or a garage for a personal vehicle. Several participants described housing communities in the Biddeford area that offer covered parking or a personal garage, but these housing communities were seen as too expensive for many seniors to consider. Participants discussed the need for a senior community that offers smaller homes with a small yard so seniors can enjoy gardening or other outside activities.

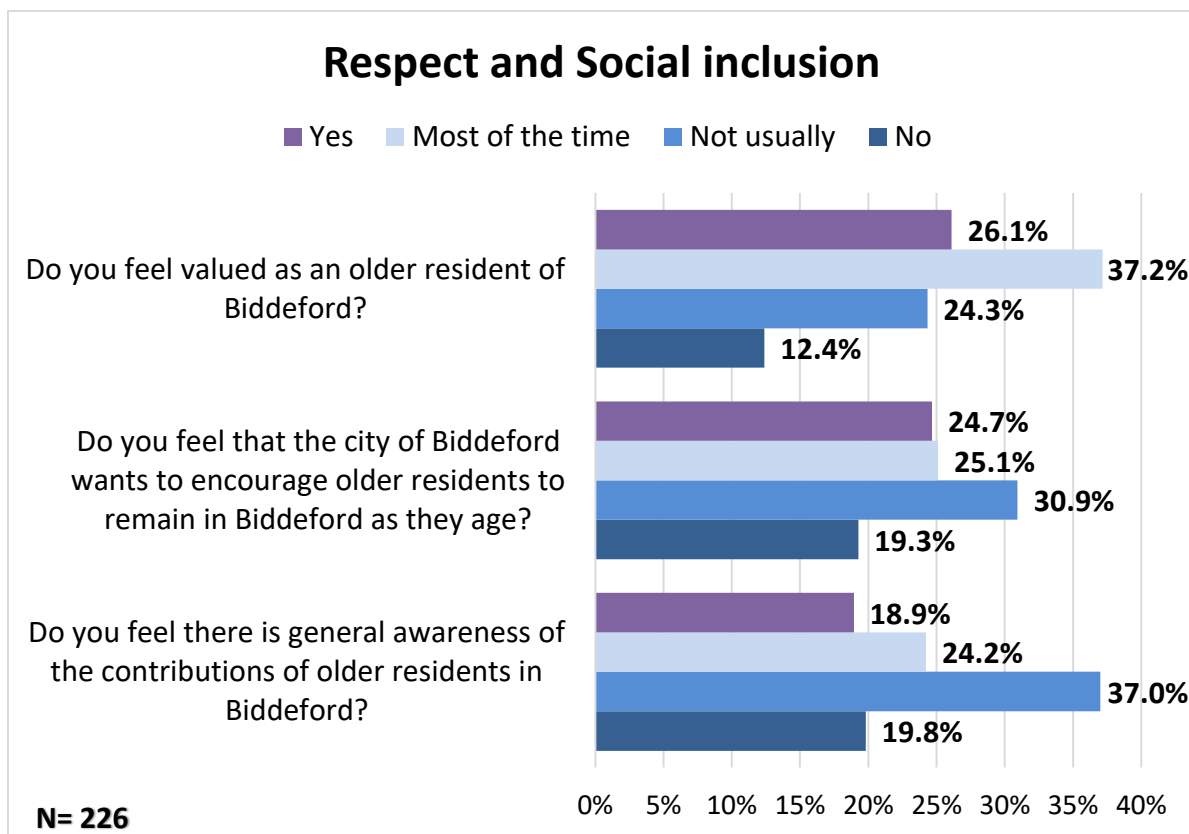
Focus group participants agreed that a list of reputable and trustworthy home repair contractors or service providers, especially those that may offer senior discounts, would be helpful for the City to provide.

AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

CURRENT SERVICES

FEELING VALUED

More than three out of five residents said they feel valued as an older resident of Biddeford at least most of the time (63.3%). Residents were split on whether they feel that the city of Biddeford wants to encourage older residents to remain as they age, with half saying either not usually or no (50.2%) and the other saying most of the time or yes (49.8%). More than half of residents said they either do not or do not usually feel there is general awareness of the contributions of older residents in Biddeford (56.8%).



GAPS IN SERVICE

Residents were split on whether they feel that the city of Biddeford wants to encourage older residents to remain as they age. More than half of residents said they either do not or do not usually feel there is general awareness of the contributions of older residents in Biddeford (56.8%).

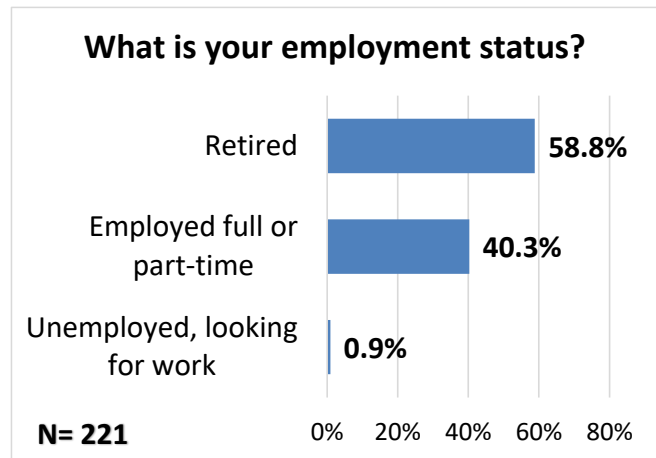
AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

CURRENT SERVICES

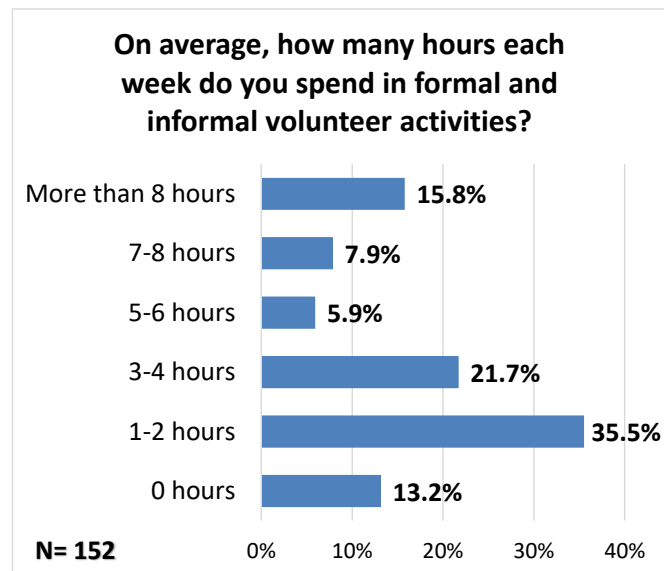
EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Nearly three out of five respondents reported that they are retired (58.8%) and two out of five reported they are either employed full or part-time (40.3%).



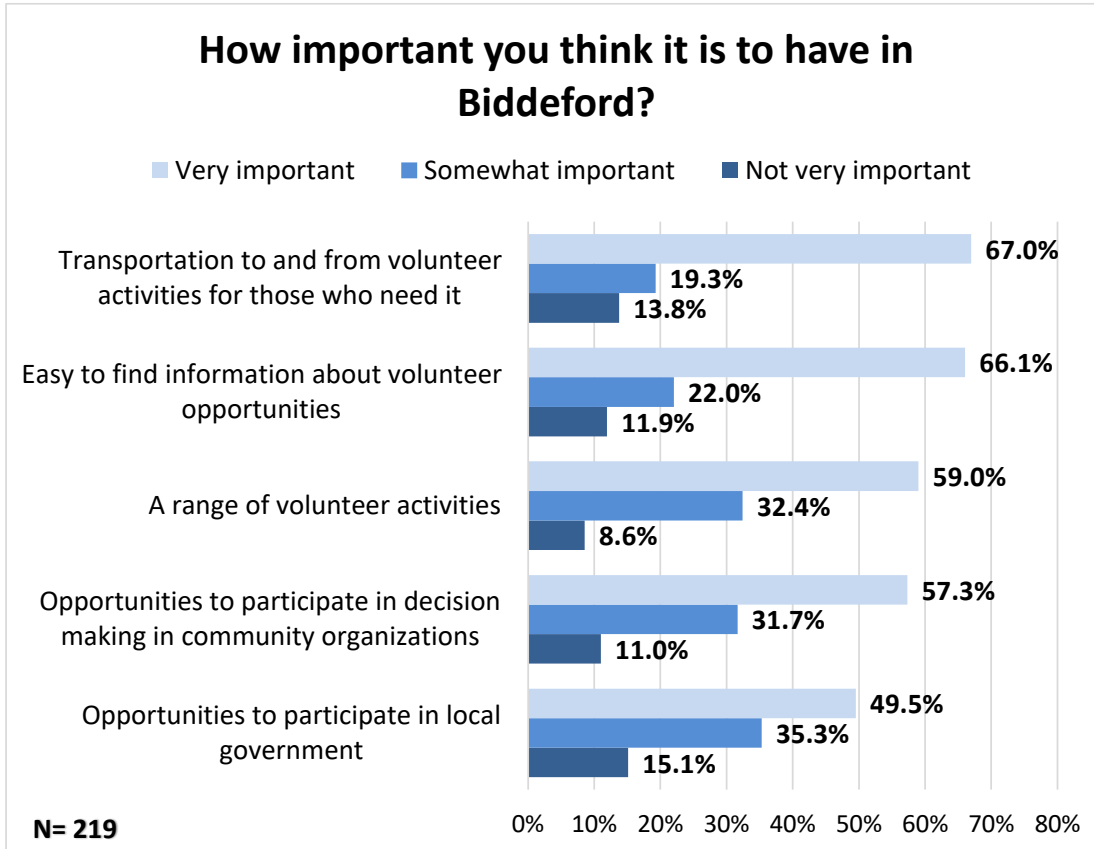
HOURS VOLUNTEERING

More than one in three respondents reported that on average they spend 1-2 hours in formal and informal volunteer activities (35.5%). One in five spend 3-4 hours each week (21.7%), and one in six spend more than 8 hours (15.8%). Less than one in six respondents spend no hours volunteering (13.2%).



VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

At least half of all respondents reported they feel every item listed is very important, with transportation to and from volunteer activities rated the highest (67.0%), followed by easy to find information about volunteer opportunities (66.1%), and a range of volunteer activities (59.0%). Half of respondents said opportunities to participate in local government are very important (49.5%), and one in six said that it is not very important (15.1%).



GAPS IN SERVICE

During the focus group, participants talked about collaborative relationships that the City or even the 50 Plus Club could establish that would link student volunteers with seniors in need of services. For example, the University of New England requires students to volunteer their time for an allotted number of hours prior to graduation. This requirement provides the City with an opportunity to use student volunteers to help seniors in the community with home maintenance or seasonal services such as raking leaves, shoveling snow, weeding or planting flowers.

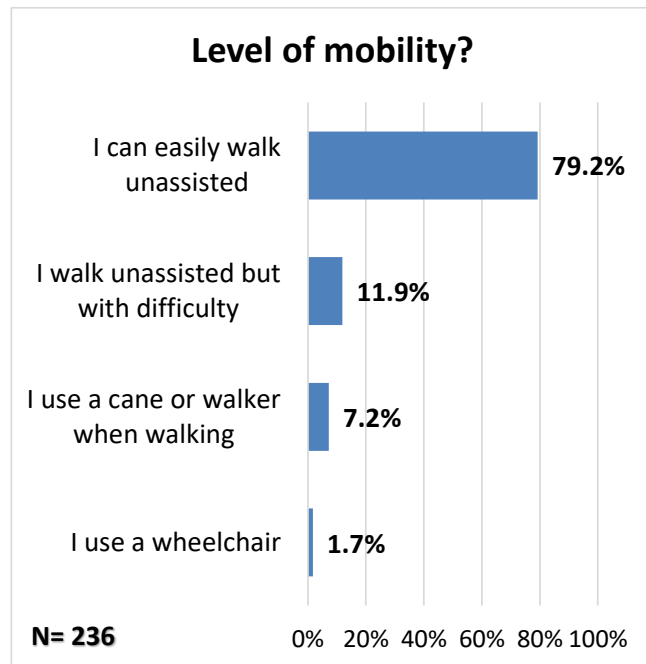
AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

TRANSPORTATION

CURRENT SERVICES

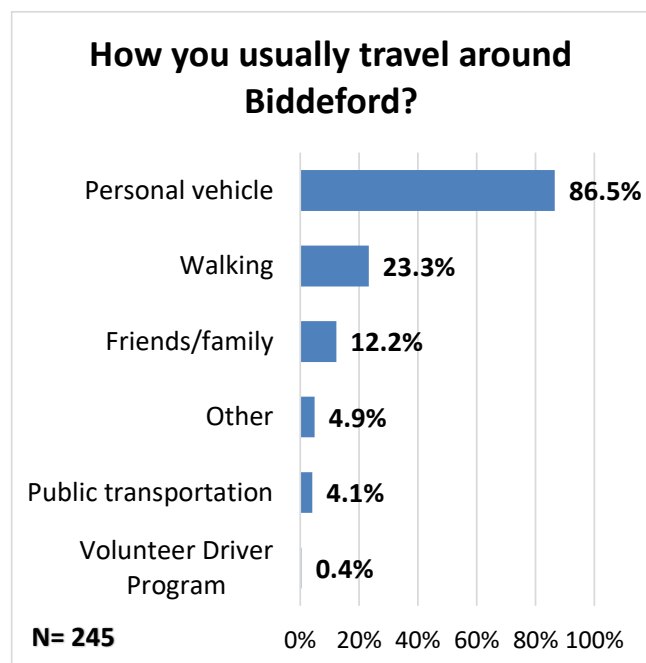
LEVEL OF MOBILITY

Four out of five Biddeford residents reported that they can easily walk unassisted (79.2%), and one in ten said they can walk unassisted but with difficulty (11.9%).



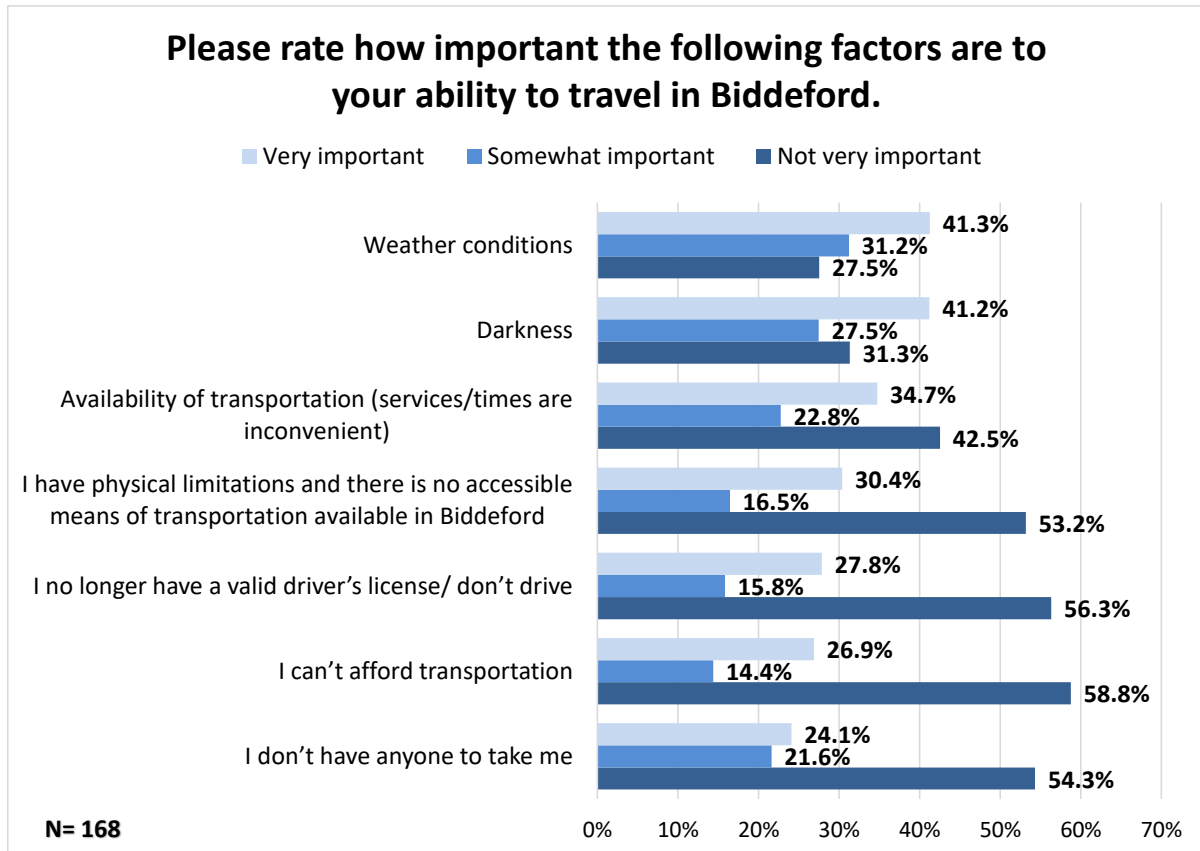
TRAVELING AROUND BIDDEFORD

More than four out of five residents said they travel in Biddeford in a personal vehicle (86.5%), and less than one in four said they travel by walking (23.3%). Less than one in a hundred said they use Volunteer Driver Programs (0.4%).



Two out of five respondents reported that both weather conditions (41.3%) and darkness (41.2%) are very important factors in their ability to travel.

More than half of respondents said that being unable to afford transportation is not very important in their ability to travel (58.8%), followed by no longer having a valid driver’s license/not driving (56.3%), not having anyone to take them (54.3%), and physical limitations with no accessible means of transportation available in Biddeford (53.2%).



GAPS IN SERVICE

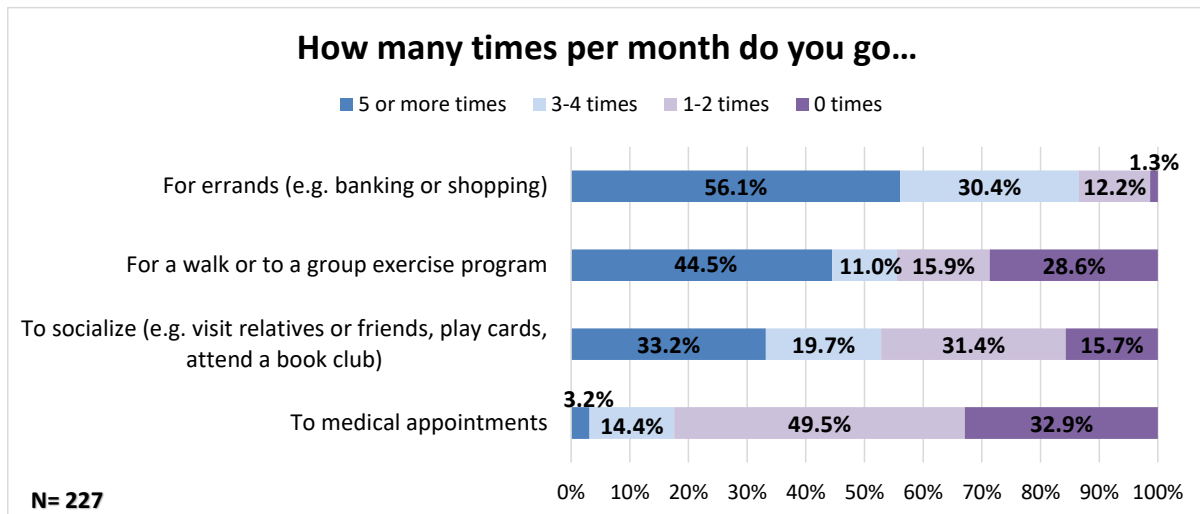
None of the focus group participants used public transportation; however, several participants were aware that the University of New England buses would not pick up and transport non-student riders. One participant stated that she sees the University buses much more than the City buses and believed that more buses were needed due to the length of time between pick-ups. Taxi service had been used, but was seen as very expensive.

AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

CURRENT SERVICES

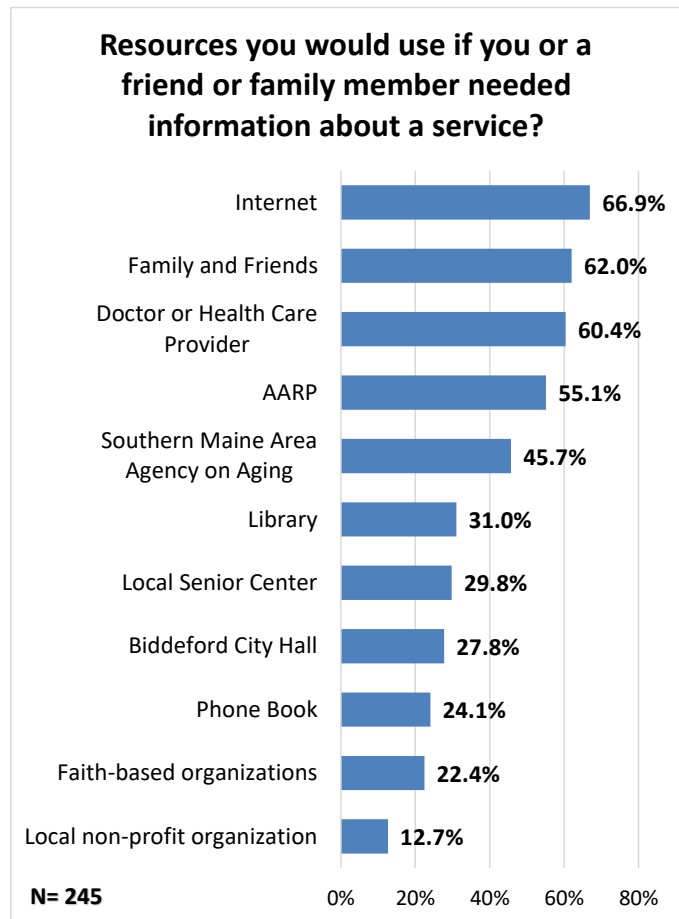
WHERE YOU GO

Respondents reported that they go out the most for errands each month, with over half saying they go out 5 or more times (56.1%) and three in ten going out 3-4 times a month (30.4%). Medical appointments take up the least visits, with nearly a third of respondents saying they never go (32.9%), and nearly half saying they only go 1 to 2 times per month (49.5%).



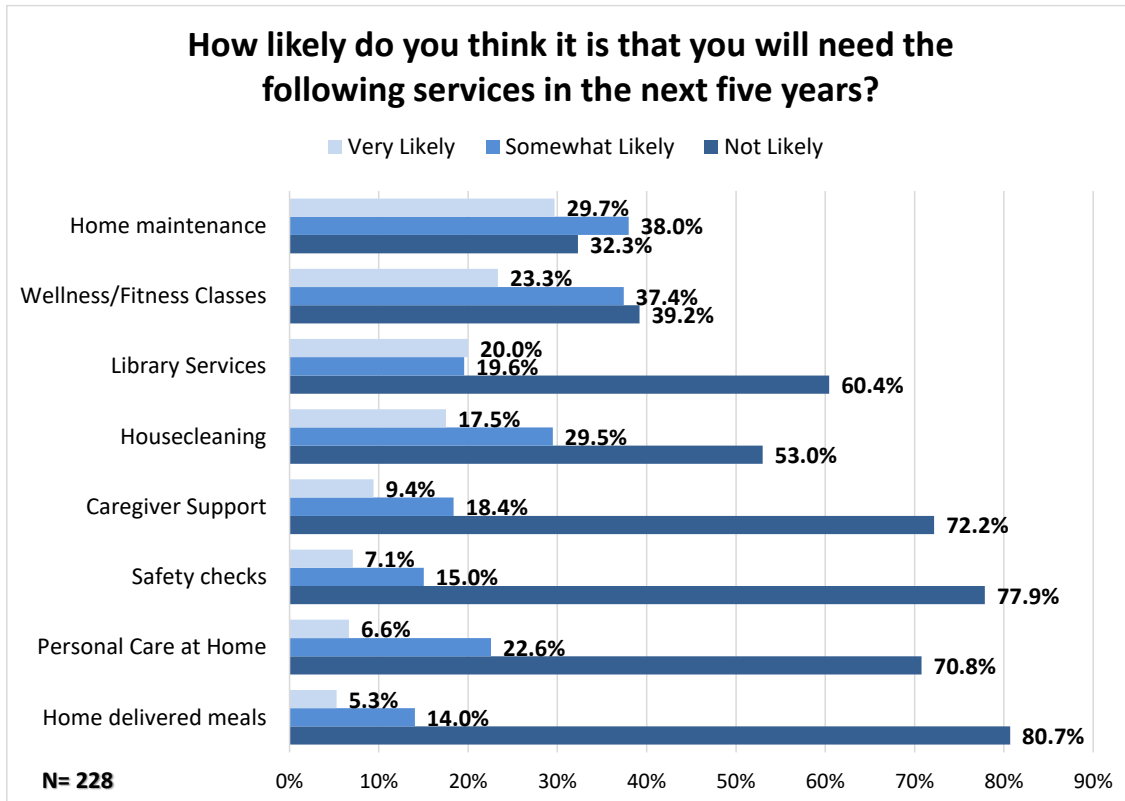
RESOURCES ABOUT SERVICES

More than three out of five residents reported they would use internet for information about a service (66.9%), followed by family and friends (62.0%), and Doctor or Health Care Provider (60.4%). Less than one in six respondents reported getting their information from local non-profit organizations (12.7%).



NEEDED SERVICES

The services with the highest percentages of respondents saying they are very likely to use include home maintenance (29.7%), wellness/fitness classes (23.3%), and library services (20.0%). It should be noted that while one in five respondents did say that they are very likely to use library services, three out of five said they are not likely to use this service (60.4%). Four out of five respondents said they are not likely to use home delivered meals in the next five years (80.7%), and only a little less said they are not likely to use safety checks (77.9%).



GAPS IN SERVICE

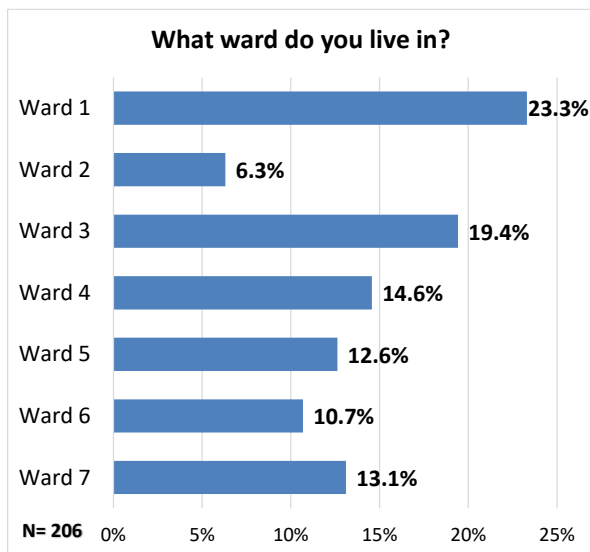
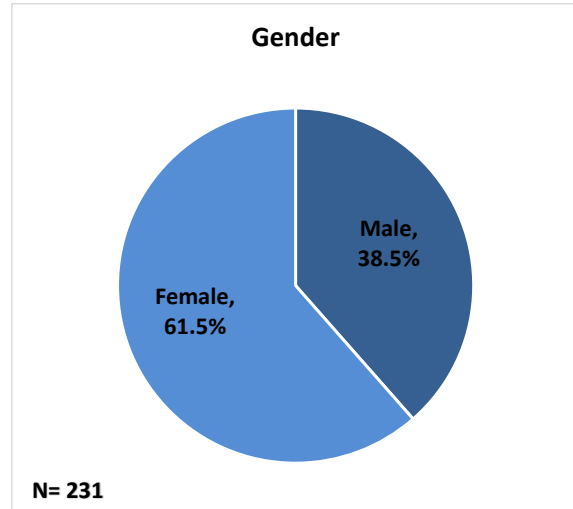
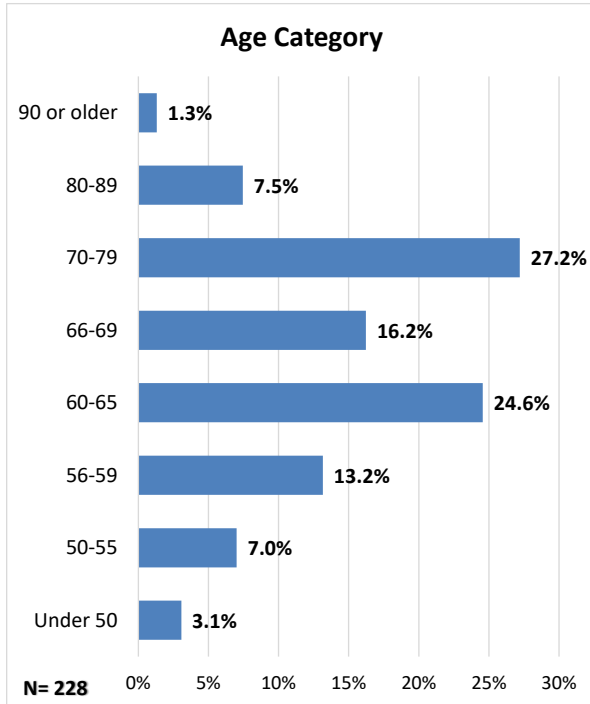
Focus group participants agreed that home maintenance services for seniors with reliable and trustworthy service providers is important for Biddeford.

Focus group participants also discussed the healthcare gap in the community. Many participants noted the closing of the free clinic, which was seen as positively contributing to the healthcare gap. Free or reduced cost dental care is a service that one participant noted for lower-income residents.

AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

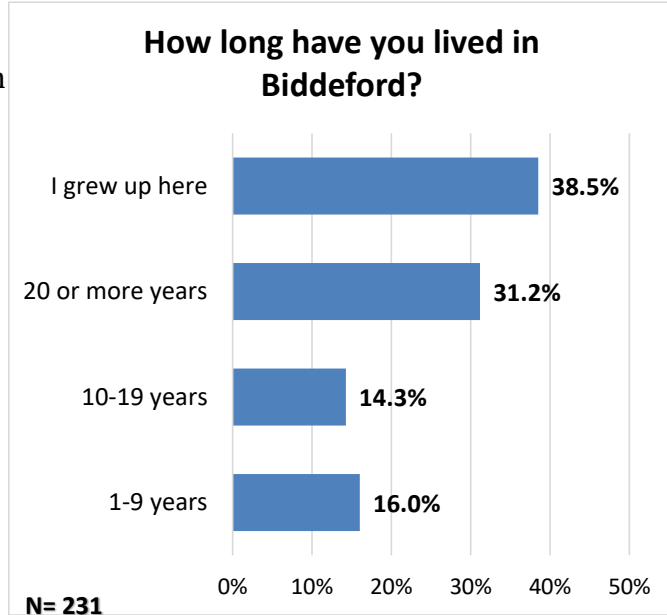
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

The charts in this section show the demographic composition of the respondents to the survey.



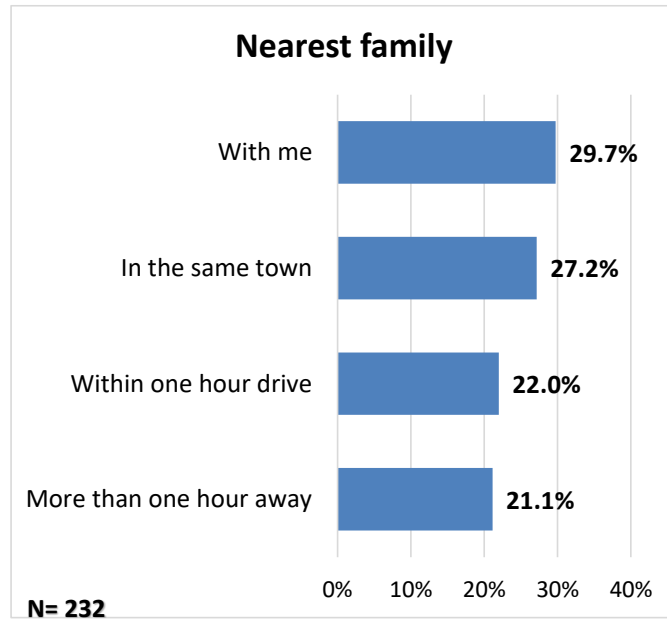
TIME IN BIDDEFORD

Two out of five residents reported they grew up in Biddeford (38.5%) and three in ten said they have lived in Biddeford for 20 or more years (31.2%).



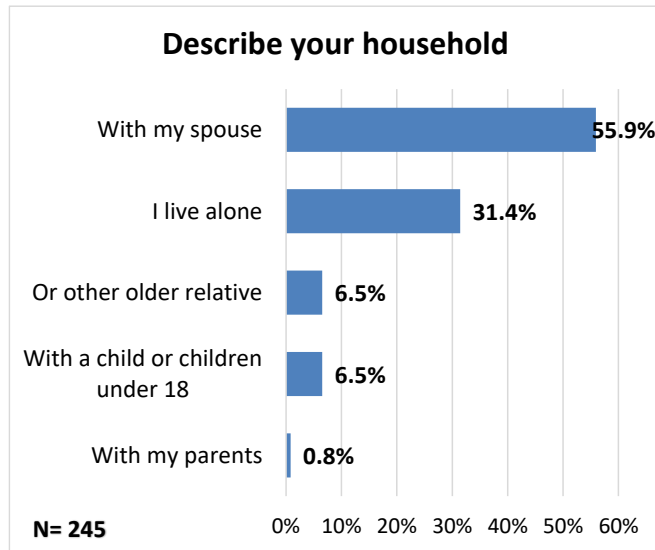
NEAREST FAMILY

Three in ten residents said their nearest family lives with them (29.7%), and a little less than three out of ten said they live in the same town (27.2%).

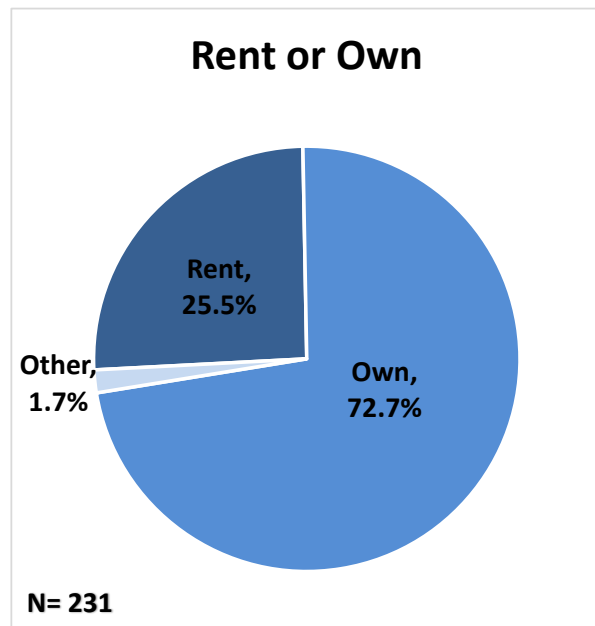


HOUSEHOLD

More than half of respondents said they live with their spouse (55.9%), and one in three said they live alone (31.4%).



More than seven out of ten residents own their homes (72.7%) while one in four rent (25.5%).



The following are the comments, provided verbatim and categorized into the following themes:

- ◆ Biddeford and Downtown
- ◆ Taxes
- ◆ Parking and Services
- ◆ Survey

BIDDEFORD AND DOWNTOWN:

❖ Biddeford police need to displace pimps & homeless from downtown
❖ Don't enjoy driving downtown...layout was difficult to learn, congested and roadwork makes it awful! Often avoid it if I can. Younger people in my family agree. Something to consider as you try to grow the area.
❖ I no longer find the streets of Biddeford safe. I drive through there but I would never walk there or spend time there. The restaurants are too expensive, and there are no stores for people on fixed incomes. It's all too yuppie now for my tastes.
❖ Only go downtown to register car once a year and to Reilly's Bakery two times a year. Nothing I am interested in downtown.
❖ PLEASE LISTEN: It is extremely important that smoking not be permitted on public streets, sidewalks in the downtown area. It is a nuisance and a threat to public health and degrades the quality of life for everyone who would venture downtown.
❖ The downtown area of Biddeford continues to flounder. Tattoo parlors, head shops and empty store fronts aren't going to attract needed investments...
❖ They put too many flower boxes on Maine Street looks, too busy. Less is more beautiful. Don't need that many but the boxes are nice and improves Biddeford but take a few boxes off. Thank you.
❖ The HUD admin has recognized Emotional Support Animals as a right to citizens when will Biddeford landlords learn this?
❖ Too many drugs in the area
❖ Biddeford is well organized and run.....feel safe in this town.
❖ It's a very well placed survey but the reality is Biddeford will never change its ways. At least not in my life time. There comes a time when government must start to look out for its existing residence and those who have contributed all of their lives to this community. We have a government that is so focused on having so many establishments that are none profit and pay zero taxes while we must carry the burden. Along with that they are promoting so much subsidized housing in the mill district and inviting out of town strangers who could care less about this community. We would be far better off to demolish these same buildings. It would make for that much less on a burden on those who get grossly overtaxed only to have our department heads driving around in decked out SUV's and

I must mention a very generous salary to go with it. We are a very sad example of American nohow. And will always be.
❖ the city is becoming less citizen friendly
❖ Mr. Mayor, you are doing a great job and keep it up. Thank you and please fix the city hall clock tower?

TAXES:

❖ Discounts for maintenance to provide seniors on fixed incomes should be a priority as well as substantial tax credits. Seniors my age want to remain in our own homes and be independent as long as possible. Need walking paths etc. To encourage exercising etc. Most of us are still very mobile and active with family and want to remain so!
❖ If you want older people to stay in this town...slow down spending and lower property taxes. It is nice to be charitable but charity thru taxes is forced and not always sustainable.
❖ Lower taxes so I can stay here. Economic downturn affected our family horribly. My husband was unemployed and we were without health insurance off/on since 2007. We REALLY needed the racino as he could have found work there.
❖ Tax stability is important to seniors
❖ Taxes will run us out of Biddeford

PARKING AND SERVICES:

❖ In thinking about parking in the downtown area, I do not believe the old MERC area is close enough to the downtown areas senior citizens could comfortably walk to. A couple of friends that use canes for walking do not believe a parking garage in that area would be helpful, especially during the winter months. It's not close to anything except the mill
❖ My biggest complaint about parking near city hall is that the employees at Biddeford Housing have priority to the parking places there, which forces elderly and people with disabilities to walk. Employees of any city agency should have to park in the municipal lot. THANK YOU
❖ It is imperative that the simple things like house cleaning, laundry, shopping are the things that become most difficult. Assisted living should not mean a residence it should be common sense help. That seems difficult to provide. I can get a therapist to come to my house but not someone take me to the store. My issues creates a liability?
❖ Not sure what the survey proves? Biddeford/Saco have little public transportation? Expect aging population to want to have programs? Most elderly I know are concerned about travel to health care, shopping etc. These are provided by Sr. Communities but not for out of community people.

❖ We mostly need information like fliers or mailings monthly on things coming up
❖ Where I live there are no bus services et
❖ Would like classes IN Biddeford to learn the internet. Hopefully from school newspaper and not online, as I don't know how to go online. That's why someone else is filling this out for me
❖ We should try to get out young people to help with Biddeford's aging (high school, boys and girl scouts).
❖ Snow removal also should have all sidewalks cleared for elderly and children to walk to school. I have noticed a lot of them are not cleaned and have to walk in the street.
❖ A lot of the questions did not apply to me because at this point I get around fine. I am concerned how things will be in 10 years or so and what services I might need at that time.

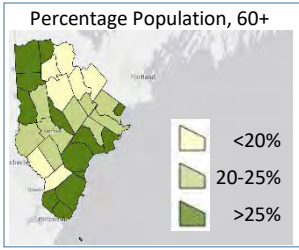
SURVEY:

❖ Excellent idea-would like to see results made public
❖ I was forwarded this survey and completed it because of this request. Unfortunately I don't believe my answers will serve as structure support for your initial comments. The questions seem to be targeted to individuals are in this social group
❖ It's well worth the time & thoughts to complete this.
❖ Not really the right questions, but it's nice to see an awareness
❖ Text could be larger and a more contrasting color. I doubt this would pass ADA requirements for text. Since this survey is for the older generation readability is important.
❖ The font size and color of this survey is not very user friendly for someone who might have vision problems.
❖ The small font and blue lettering make it very difficult to read this.
❖ The survey is too long, too general and needs to be geared specifically to Biddeford.
❖ Too long and cumbersome
❖ Too long and some duplicated questions and most questions were geared towards older and or disabled people
❖ Where can I find the results of the survey?
❖ Too long, too generalized, not especially geared to Biddeford needs.
❖ Very much needed.
❖ Thank you for doing this survey is very encouraging for seniors and those with disabilities.
❖ Type a bit larger, hard to read.
❖ Pale blue color of questions a little difficult to read

MISCELLANEOUS:

❖ These are very important issues to consider as Biddeford progresses to new heights to ensure everyone is included in the growth and change.
❖ Everyone wants to feel important and valued. I hope this survey brings this out.
❖ I do not have any family at all. My close friends do not live near here.
❖ I hope it's taken serious.
❖ I'm 67, still working and raising my grandson. I don't have time for volunteering or many other social activities.
❖ I'm really not old yet.
❖ My husband and I are new to the area - so we are still making discoveries and observations of Biddeford
❖ Not sure which ward I live in would be easier if some help with that is listed. I live off Granite Street extension.
❖ Older folks need to be connected and respected as value. They have the opportunity to teach the younger generation good values and not feel to be put out to pasture or put in a home.
❖ Thank you
❖ You are now caring for older people wow you must have found grant money you can tap into so you have to put on a good show to get the dough.
❖ It sucks to get old!
❖ Had to move in disability. Need to live where I can afford.
❖ Please think up something better than this. I can think and have many important opinions you too young.
❖ To figure it out or to ask... Survey asked.

The Demographics of Aging in Biddeford



Biddeford is home to 21,289 people, with a median age of 34, 10 years younger than the median age of Maine. Unlike York County and Maine, the percentage of the population in Biddeford 60+ has not increased appreciably in the past 15 years.

The area has many age-friendly features that make the area a great place to live for residents of all ages¹. The AARP Livability Index score for the region is 59/100². Strengths of the area include opportunities for civic and social involvement, availability of multi-family housing, quality health care, and economic opportunity. The primary weaknesses are air quality, the lack of exercise

opportunities, internet access, and the need to use cars to get to the places people need to go.

Living Arrangements: 34% of the 8,487 households in Biddeford include at least one person 60+. While most older people (70%) live with a spouse or another person, about one-third live alone. Most (71%) people living alone are women. Residents of Biddeford want to age where they have lived a lifetime; 90% of older homeowners and 88% of their peers in rental housing have lived in their homes more than 15 years. Long-term residents are highly attached to the community and have social ties that sustain them in older years but may need help to age safely in their own home if they develop a disability or no longer drive.

Home ownership is common; 70% of older families in Biddeford live in a home they own or are purchasing. More than one in three (35%) have a loan on their home, compared with 38% of their peers in York County. Twelve percent of homeowners with a mortgage spend 30% or more of their monthly income on housing, compared with 4% of people without a home loan and 68% of renters. Median monthly housing-related expenses of an older couple with a mortgage are \$1,429 (loan, insurance, and property taxes), compared to \$560 for people without a loan and \$779 for older renters.

Age of Housing where Older People Live: Eighty-three percent of older homeowners live in housing 25+ years old. Older homes need more maintenance and modifications for people to age in place. The need to find help with home chores is greatest for the oldest homeowners and those aging with a disability that prevents them from doing simple, routine chores safely.

Income Security: Older households have a lower median income than the overall population. There is significant income disparity among householders 65+ in Biddeford; 22% have a yearly income less than \$15,000 while 15% receive \$75,000+ annually. The Elder Economic Index estimates that older people in Biddeford in good health need about \$31,160/year to meet basic needs³ without getting assistance. Forty-five percent of older families in Biddeford have a yearly income less than economic security.

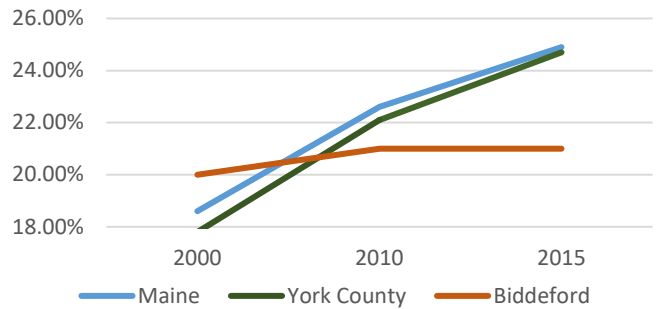
Mean Social Security income is \$15,721 and mean retirement (pension, annuities, etc.) income is \$19,283 for older families in the Biddeford. A household can have more than one source of income; people depending on Social Security alone are more likely to experience poverty than households that depend on other forms of retirement income or a mix of Social Security and other income.

Sixteen percent of 60+ households received Food Stamps in the past year, compared with 25% of younger families in Biddeford.

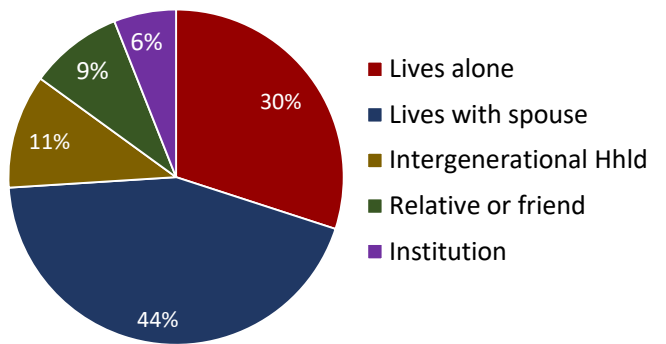
Veterans: Overall, about 8% of residents in Biddeford are veterans but the number jumps to 49% of men age 65+. Veteran status was a protection against poverty; 6% of veterans and 11% of non-veterans age 65+ had income less than 100% of the poverty rate (\$11,700 for a family of one; \$15,930 for a couple). The rate of disability is slightly higher for non-veterans than for veterans; 29% of veterans have a disability, compared with 35% of non-veterans.

Disability: Older residents of Biddeford have a disability rate similar their peers throughout Maine; 34% of people 65+ have at least one disability, compared with 35% of older Mainers. The disability rate increases to 43% for people age 75 and older. More than half (53%) of older residents with a disabling condition live with more than one disability. People who live with multiple physical limitations face an increased risk of social isolation.

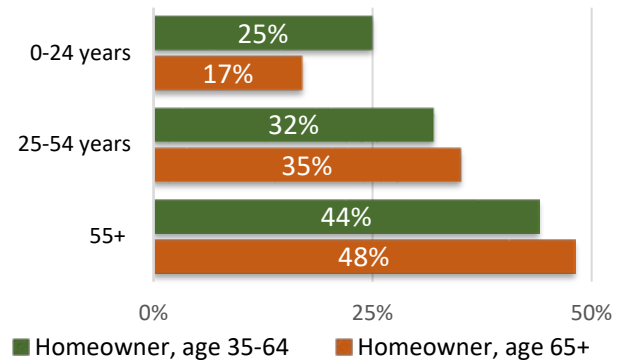
Recent Growth in Residents 60+



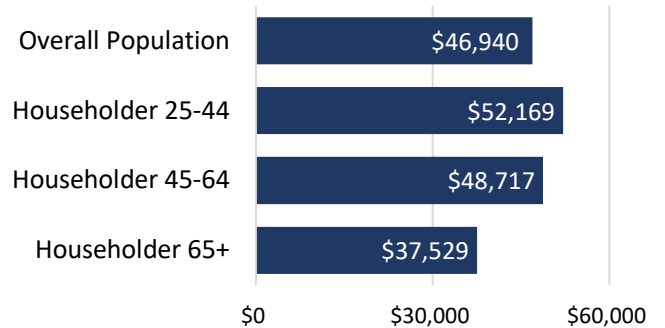
Living Arrangements in Biddeford, Residents 65+



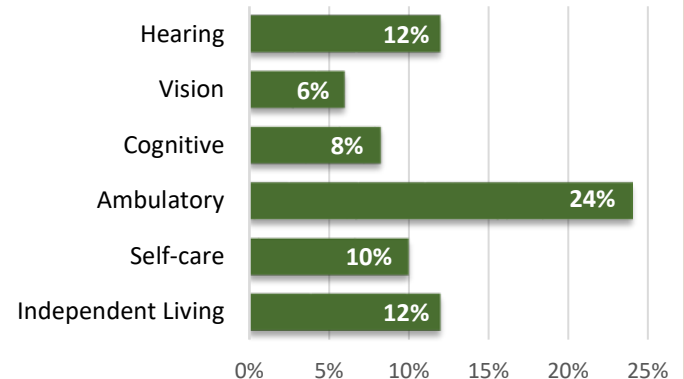
Age of Owner-Occupied Housing by Age of Homeowner



Median Income of Households in Biddeford, by Age



% of Biddeford Residents Age 65+ with a Disability



¹ Except where noted, data is taken from US Census 2000, US Census 2010, or American Community Survey 5-year Estimates for 2011-2015

² AARP Livability Index. FMI: <https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/>

³ For more information about the Elder Economic Index, go to: <http://www.basiceconomicsecurity.org/EI>. The Elder Index measures how much income an older adult living in the community requires to meet his or her basic needs—without public or private aid.

Maine Cities and Towns that are members of the AARP Network of Livable Communities

- **Auburn** (June 2018)
- **Augusta** (May 2016) [Action Plan](#)
- **Bangor** (July 2016) [Action Plan](#)
- **Bar Harbor** (February 2017)
- **Bath** (July 2018)
- **Belfast** (September 2016) [Action Plan](#)
- **Belgrade** (November 2018)
- **Berwick** (May 2016)
- **Bethel** (September 2015) [Action Plan](#)
- **Biddeford** (November 2016) [Article](#)
- **Blue Hill** (September 2016)
- **Bowdoinham** (April 2015*) [Article](#) | [Action Plan](#)
- **Brooklin** (March 2017)
- **Brooksville** (February 2017)
- **Bucksport** (June 2016)
- **Caribou** (February 2018)
- **Castine** (March 2017)
- **Cumberland** (July 2016) [Action Plan](#)
- **Danforth** (April 2018)
- **Deer Isle** (May 2017)
- **Dexter** (March 2017)
- **Dover-Foxcroft** (January 2017)
- **Eastport** (April 2016) [Article](#)
- **Eliot** (February 2018)
- **Ellsworth** (December 2014)
- **Fryeburg** (July 2018)
- **Gardiner** (May 2018)
- **Georgetown** (June 2018)
- **Gilead** (January 2017)
- **Greenville** (January 2018)
- **Greenwood** (March 2016) [Action Plan](#)
- **Hallowell** (September 2016)
- **Hanover** (August 2018)
- **Jackman** (November 2017)
- **Kennebunk** (March 2015) [Action Plan](#)
- **Limestone** (May 2018)
- **Madison** (December 2017)
- **Milo** (January 2017)
- **Mount Vernon** (October 2018)

- **Newry** (April 2016) [Action Plan](#)
- **North Yarmouth** (December 2016) [Survey](#)
- **Ogunquit (March 2018)**
- **Old Orchard Beach** (August 2017) [Article](#)
- **Paris** (March 2015) [Action Plan](#)
- **Penobscot** (March 2017)
- **Portland** (August 2014) [Action Plan](#)
- **Presque Isle** (May 2018)
- **Raymond** (November 2017)
- **Readfield** (May 2016) [Action Plan](#)
- **Saco** (April 2016) [Article](#)
- **Scarborough** (December 2018)
- **Sedgwick** (March 2017)
- **Skowhegan** (December 2017)
- **Stonington** (July 2017)
- **Sullivan** (January 2018)
- **Surry** (April 2017)
- **Waldo County** (March 2018) [Action Plan](#)
- **Waterville** (May 2017)
- **Wayne** (September 2016)
- **Westbrook** (September 2016)
- **Windham** (January 2018)
- **Woodstock** (April 2016) [Action Plan](#)
- **Yarmouth** (May 2017)

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