

# Community Age-Friendly Priorities

## Stonewall, Manitoba

### Age-Friendly Stonewall Community Consultation Summary

September 9, 2009

Community consultations are being held with seniors and community members in a number of communities in Manitoba as part of a larger Age-Friendly Initiative. The goal of these community consultations is to assist communities to prioritize issues that will help them form action plans to make their community as age-friendly as possible. On September, 2009, 40 individuals from the Town of Stonewall, Manitoba came together to talk about age-friendly priorities and issues within their community. Individuals also had the opportunity to complete a survey of the age-friendliness of their community. The following is a summary of the age-friendly priorities identified at the meeting and survey results.



# Summary of Group Discussion

## Priority: Improve Access to Businesses and Public Buildings

### Potential Actions:

- Increase parking near Main Street businesses
- Increase sloped access curbs (curb cuts)
- Encourage people who need handicap parking spots to obtain and use permits
- Increase accessibility to public washrooms, e.g., for wheelchairs and walkers
- Add railings to entrances and stairs where needed
- Install automatic doors to increase accessibility
- Encourage businesses to clear snow away from entrances
- Clear all handicap entrances of obstacles, ice and snow

Note: Snow removal is usually good in Stonewall



## Priority: Increase Affordable Assisted Living Options

### Potential Actions:

- Increase the number of home care workers who live in and around Stonewall to ensure client needs are met on a timely basis
- Assess the need for assisted living residences for seniors living in and around Stonewall
- Find ways to provide home maintenance to those living on their own

Note: Lions members are available to build and move ramps for people who need them

## Priority: Improve Safety of Walking and Driving Around Stonewall

### Potential Actions:

- Straighten interlocking sidewalks and reduce tripping hazards
- Add sidewalks on Keith Cosens and near schools
- Add crosswalks on busy streets and intersections, e.g. in front of the library and on the corner of the Town Hall



- Increase visibility of street signs and stop signs
- Remove tree branches and trim hedges so signs can be read from a distance
- Place street signs in locations where they can be easily seen, e.g. closer to the road
- Clear ploughed snow from driveways to allow safe access, e.g. for emergency vehicles
- Salt or clear icy public sidewalks



## Priority: Increase Transportation Options in Stonewall

### Potential Action:

- Use small buses or vans so people, including those who use wheelchairs and walkers, can get from their homes to businesses and appointments



## Priority: Build an Indoor Swimming Pool and Indoor Track for Use as a Wellness Centre

### Potential Action:

- Shared use with schools and seniors

## Priority: Find Ways to Increase Information of Planned Activities In and Around Stonewall

### Potential Actions:

- Widen the promotion and publicity of activities
- Provide more information about activities in and around Stonewall
- Use personal contact (direct mail outs or phone calls) to inform people of activities

Note: South Interlake 55 Plus Centre has activities every day

## Priority: Free up Hospital Beds by Increasing Personal Care Home Beds

## Summary of Survey Responses

As part of a community consultation held in Stonewall on September 9, 2009, individuals were asked to complete a brief questionnaire designed to collect information on the age-friendliness of their community. A total of 32 questionnaires were completed with the majority (n=29) from Stonewall; three individuals named other communities (Balmoral and Woodlands). This report summarizes the findings from the 32 individuals who completed the Age-Friendly Communities Survey; 75% identified themselves as a senior.

### Most Age-Friendly Areas

Overall the majority of Stonewall residents and those from surrounding areas, who completed the survey, feel safe walking around their community during the day. Many residents indicated there are drivers available for seniors who need transportation and feel that seniors are treated with respect. Residents also feel that the programs available for seniors such as recreational and lifelong learning programs, are sufficient. Also noted was the information about services and programs offered by organizations are readily available to seniors.

### Least Age-Friendly Areas

Residents identified the need for readily available and affordable housing as an important need. Many residents feel that more socialization is needed to promote intergenerational programs and involve isolated seniors in the community. They also note that public washrooms are lacking and need to be improved to be more accommodating to people with wheelchairs. Senior advocacy services and involving seniors on committees was also identified as an important area in the survey.

### Priority Areas

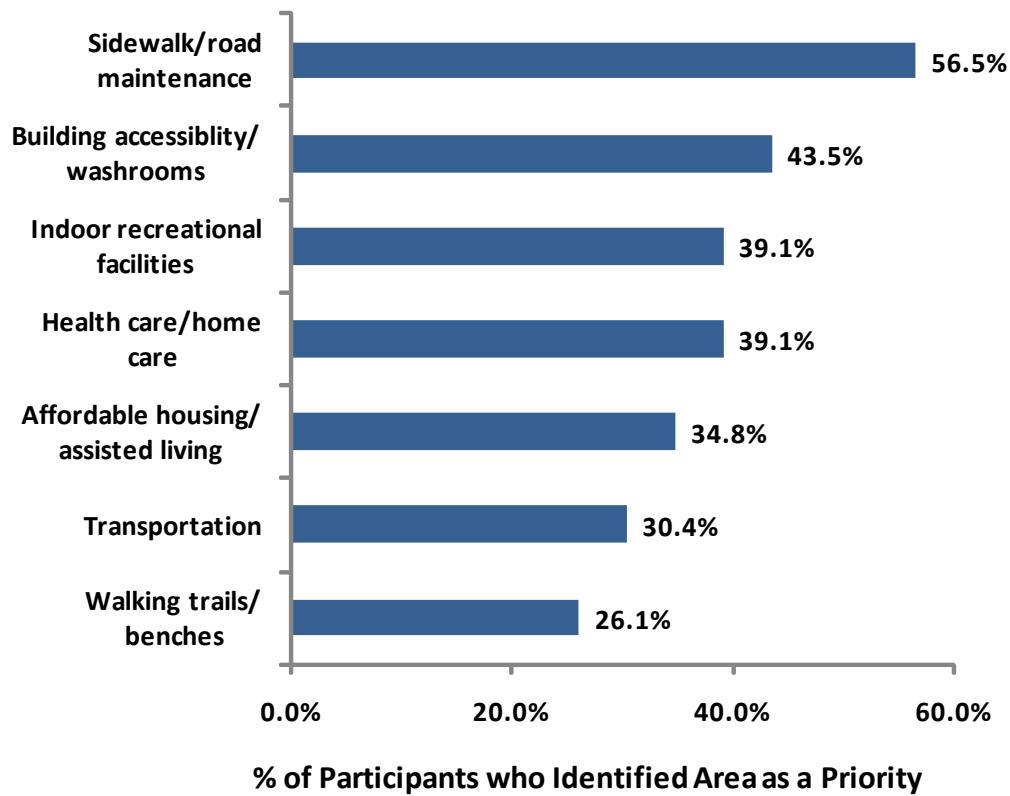
Individuals were also asked to write down the top five issues they felt needed to be most urgently addressed in their community. Twenty-three of the 32 individuals (71.9%) identified at least one priority area.

These written comments were grouped into the priority areas as shown in Figure 1:

- Sidewalk/road maintenance (e.g., sidewalks need repairs, need to get rid of icy roads and sidewalks in winter, more sidewalks);
- Indoor recreational facilities (e.g., indoor swimming pool, indoor walking track, exercise room, wellness type centre);
- Health care/home care (e.g., more home care, more health care facilities so we don't have to go to Selkirk, more care homes);
- Building accessibility/washrooms (e.g., better entrances to businesses, more room for wheelchairs to move in stores, public washrooms);
- Transportation (e.g., affordable handi-van service, local public bus service, cheaper transportation to doctors and hospital, more drivers);
- Affordable housing/assisted living (e.g., affordable housing, more assisted living, more subsidized housing for seniors; maintain/repair existing assisted living); and

- Walking trails/benches (e.g., make old railway tracks into walking trail, smooth walking trails, more benches to walk and rest, more benches for seniors downtown)

**Figure 1: Priority Areas Identified by Participants**



## Age-Friendly Survey Responses

| Housing   | Percent Responding |      |            |
|---|--------------------|------|------------|
|   | Yes                | No   | Don't Know |
| There is enough housing that meets the needs of seniors.  | 10.0               | 83.3 | 6.7        |
| Housing for seniors is affordable.  | 36.7               | 40.0 | 23.3       |
| There is enough subsidized housing for low-income seniors.  | 20.7               | 62.1 | 17.2       |
| The waiting times are reasonable to get into senior housing that provides supports to seniors (e.g., assisted living, nursing homes). | 6.5                | 83.9 | 9.7        |
| There is enough housing for younger people.   | 28.1               | 40.6 | 31.3       |

| Safety   | Percent Responding |      |            |
|--|--------------------|------|------------|
|  | Yes                | No   | Don't Know |
| Crime and vandalism are a problem.                             | 60.0               | 20.0 | 20.0       |
| Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the <i>day</i> .   | 100.0              | 0.0  | 0.0        |
| Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the <i>night</i> . | 25.8               | 54.8 | 19.4       |

| Transportation  | Percent Responding |      |            |
|---|--------------------|------|------------|
|   | Yes                | No   | Don't Know |
| The public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to shopping, senior centres, religious events, cultural events, and so forth is sufficient. | 13.8               | 69.0 | 17.2       |
| The public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to and from medical appointments is sufficient.   | 20.7               | 79.3 | 0.0        |
| The transportation that is available for individuals with disabilities (e.g., Handi-Van) is sufficient.   | 31.0               | 44.8 | 24.1       |
| The public transportation (not provided by family or friends), including Handi-Van that is available in my community is affordable for seniors.           | 46.4               | 17.9 | 35.7       |
| There are volunteer drivers or an informal network of drivers available for seniors who need transportation.  | 83.3               | 3.3  | 13.3       |
| There are enough parking spaces close to services and stores.   | 40.0               | 46.7 | 13.3       |
| There are enough "handicap" parking spaces close to services and stores.  | 38.7               | 41.9 | 19.4       |

| Respect and Social Inclusion  | Percent Responding |      |            |
|---|--------------------|------|------------|
|   | Yes                | No   | Don't Know |
| Seniors are generally treated with respect.   | 89.3               | 3.6  | 7.1        |
| Seniors serve in an advisory role to municipal government (e.g., there is a seniors' council).                | 20.0               | 12.0 | 68.0       |
| Community consultations specifically include seniors.   | 20.0               | 20.0 | 60.0       |
| Planning processes specifically consider the needs of seniors (e.g., planning for housing or transportation). | 20.0               | 20.0 | 60.0       |

| Outdoor Spaces and Buildings   | Percent Responding |      |            |
|--|--------------------|------|------------|
|  | Yes                | No   | Don't Know |
| The road signs are easy to read and large enough for older drivers.  | 55.6               | 25.9 | 18.5       |
| There are sidewalks linking residences and essential services in most or all areas of my community.                            | 37.9               | 48.3 | 13.8       |
| Sidewalks in most or all areas of my community are well maintained (even surfaces or paved, not a lot of cracks).              | 37.0               | 55.6 | 7.4        |
| Snow clearing is done in a timely manner so walking and driving is safe.   | 53.6               | 35.7 | 10.7       |
| There are enough street crosswalks in busy <i>business</i> areas.  | 50.0               | 50.0 | 0.0        |
| There are enough street crosswalks in busy <i>residential</i> and/or <i>recreation</i> areas.                                  | 47.8               | 43.5 | 8.7        |
| There are enough public washrooms in key areas of my community (e.g., business and recreation areas).                          | 10.3               | 72.4 | 17.2       |
| Public washrooms accommodate people with wheelchairs.  | 3.6                | 67.9 | 28.6       |
| Most or all businesses and public buildings are easily accessible to everybody (e.g., have wheelchair ramps, automatic doors). | 26.7               | 60.0 | 13.3       |



| <b>Social Participation/Recreation</b>   | <b>Percent Responding</b> |           |                   |
|--|---------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
|  | <b>Yes</b>                | <b>No</b> | <b>Don't Know</b> |
| My community has enough pleasant places for walking (e.g., walking trails, parks, well-treed streets).   | 56.0                      | 20.0      | 24.0              |
| Local parks or walking trails are accessible and easy to use for seniors (e.g., paths with even surfaces).   | 22.2                      | 48.1      | 29.6              |
| There are enough resting areas with benches along paths or trails.   | 16.7                      | 66.7      | 16.7              |
| There are enough exercise classes specifically for seniors.  | 60.0                      | 24.0      | 16.0              |
| There are enough recreation programs specifically for seniors (e.g., card games, arts, crafts).  | 75.0                      | 17.9      | 7.1               |
| There are enough lifelong learning programs specifically for seniors (e.g., learning new things such as the use of computers).                           | 74.1                      | 11.1      | 14.8              |
| There are enough programs in my community that bring seniors and children together (e.g., school reading programs, children spending time with seniors). | 7.4                       | 40.7      | 51.9              |
| Recreational activities, such as exercise and other recreational programs, are generally affordable for seniors.   | 68.0                      | 12.0      | 20.0              |
| Isolated seniors (e.g., those who don't have anybody) are contacted, visited or taken to activities.   | 17.2                      | 20.7      | 62.1              |

| <b>Information/Advocacy</b>  | <b>Percent Responding</b> |           |                   |
|--|---------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
|  | <b>Yes</b>                | <b>No</b> | <b>Don't Know</b> |
| Information about community events is readily available to seniors.  | 68.0                      | 12.0      | 20.0              |
| Information about the services and programs provided by various organizations is readily available to seniors .                  | 77.8                      | 11.1      | 11.1              |
| Official, written information, such as forms or brochures is easy to read and understand (e.g., large print, clear language).    | 58.3                      | 16.7      | 25.0              |
| Public telephone answering services are adapted to the needs of seniors (e.g., instructions are given clearly and slowly).       | 32.0                      | 20.0      | 48.0              |
| There is enough assistance available for completing official forms (e.g., help with filling out government or income tax forms). | 50.0                      | 21.4      | 28.6              |
| There are enough seniors' advocacy services available (e.g., an ombudsman to inform others of seniors' needs).                   | 19.2                      | 34.6      | 46.2              |

| Health and Community Services   | Percent Responding |      |            |
|---|--------------------|------|------------|
|   | Yes                | No   | Don't Know |
| The home care services that support seniors in their own home (e.g., meal preparation, nursing care) are sufficient.  | 25.0               | 46.4 | 28.6       |
| The services that help seniors around the home (e.g., snow removal, lawn care, garbage brought to the street) are sufficient.                                   | 30.8               | 23.1 | 46.2       |
| The congregate meal programs available (e.g., lunch at a recreation or senior centre) are sufficient.   | 44.0               | 28.0 | 28.0       |
| The meal delivery services that bring meals to seniors' homes are sufficient.   | 29.6               | 40.7 | 29.6       |
| The health care services that are provided in my community meet the needs of seniors (e.g., hospital, physicians, eye care).                                    | 50.0               | 25.0 | 25.0       |
| Public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to health care services that are <i>not</i> provided in my community is sufficient.                   | 29.6               | 37.0 | 33.3       |
| Access to health care that are <i>not</i> provided in my community is generally convenient (e.g., services not too far away, appointment times are convenient). | 42.3               | 26.9 | 30.8       |

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Special thank you to the Stonewall Advisory Committee for organizing the community consultation and their work on reviewing and facilitating action of the priorities.

The views expressed herein reflect the opinions of the participants and do not necessarily represent the views of the Age-Friendly Communities Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) or the Centre on Aging.

This summary was prepared by the Age-Friendly Communities CURA. CURA is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

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Published: October 6, 2009