Evaluation of the Lifelong Montclair Aging in Place Initiative:

Report of Community Findings

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Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services

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The **mission** of CREEHS is *to empower and enable professionals to plan and evaluate programs that best serve the broader community and improve people's lives. CREEHS fulfills this mission by conducting high quality program evaluations, applying innovative and collaborative techniques to bridge the gap between research and practice. This includes building capacity and providing hands-on learning to individuals who serve or will serve the community.*

EVALUATION OF THE LIFELONG MONTCLAIR AGING IN PLACE INITIATIVE: REPORT OF COMMUNITY FINDINGS

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INTRODUCTION

Aging in place is the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income or ability level. As the population in the United States ages, it has become a focus in many communities throughout the nation.[1] Aging in place initiatives are programs created specifically to address obstacles that may impede an older person from being a vital productive member of their community.[2] The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities, the United States affiliate of the World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Program, provides tools and guidance for participating communities to improve the quality of life for older adults.[3]

Lifelong Montclair is an aging in place initiative of the Partners for Health Foundation in collaboration with the Township of Montclair. It was established in 2014 to address the barriers that prevent older Montclair residents (aged 55 years and older) from being able or wanting to age in place. It aims to address several themes that emerged from a 2012 assessment, such as transportation, health care access, housing, activities, food, finances and employment, outreach and education, safety, and community.[4]

Under the Lifelong Montclair umbrella, partner organizations work collaboratively in concert with the Project Director to implement senior-focused strategies, program and policies that complement Montclair's existing resources. The initiative coordinates and develops the strategies by optimizing existing programs and resources, re-directing efforts to reduce duplicative services and collaborating with key partners to plan and implement strategies.

To address the needs and assets of older adults in Montclair, the township has joined the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. As part of this venture, Lifelong Montclair organizes its efforts using the World Health Organization's eight domains of livability that impact the overall quality of life of older adults.[3] These domains include:

- Domain 1: Open Spaces and buildings
- Domain 2: Transportation
- Domain 3: Respect and inclusion
- Domain 4: Housing
- Domain 5: Communications and information
- Domain 6: Civic participation and employment
- Domain 7: Health and community
- Domain 8: Social participation

EVALUATION METHODS AND DESIGN

With funding from the Partners for Health Foundation, project staff contracted with the Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS) at Montclair State University to evaluate Lifelong Montclair.

The purpose of this formative evaluation was to learn about how the Lifelong Montclair initiative is functioning, what its strengths and accomplishments are, and what improvements can be made in order to ensure greater success. The evaluation included two components: 1) a process evaluation of Lifelong Montclair's partnership and 2) an outcome evaluation of the short-term changes related to Lifelong Montclair's efforts. This report describes the data and key findings from the evaluation of short-term outcomes (component 2). The methods and key findings from the partnership evaluation (component 1) are described in a companion report entitled *Evaluation of the Lifelong Montclair Aging in Place Initiative: Partnership Highlights.*

As part of the evaluation, CREEHS staff collected data from a variety of sources. (See Appendix A for a full explanation of the evaluation design and methods.)

- Montclair Resident Survey
  The 40-question survey assessed Montclair residents' aged 55 years and older perceptions of affordable and suitable housing, access to transportation, access to health services as it relates to mental and physical health, community engagement, knowledge and awareness about services and resources for older adults in Montclair.

- Montclair Resident Focus Groups
  Two focus groups provided information to clarify and expand upon data collected through the resident survey. This included perceptions of affordable and suitable housing, access to transportation, community engagement and factors influencing the reach, use and effectiveness of communication strategies.

CREEHS staff analyzed and triangulated the data from surveys, focus groups and project documentation to identify and validate findings of this evaluation. These are organized in the sections below by the World Health Organization's domains of livability. It is important to note that although the Lifelong Montclair initiative works in all eight domains, this evaluation focused on seven of the domains.[1]

[1] The evaluation did not explicitly assess changes related to Domain 1: Open spaces and buildings. At the time the evaluation was designed and implemented (2014-2015), efforts such as Senior Activities at Edgemont Park House were not yet in place. Information about walkability and the Senior Walkability Conference is integrated in Domain 2: Transportation.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

Although the evaluation design limits the ability to directly attribute findings to Lifelong Montclair efforts, data are presented in the context of the initiative's work. It is important to reiterate that the Lifelong Montclair initiative is a collaboration among partner organizations and the Project Director to implement senior-focused strategies. The strategies described below may include those of the Lifelong Montclair initiative as well as those of partner organizations.

On average, survey respondents have lived in Montclair for 34 years (range 0-90 years). Findings from the resident survey and focus groups suggest that older adults want to age in Montclair (89.5%) (Figure 1). Less than two-thirds (61.5%) of respondents are not confident or unsure that they will be able to continue living in Montclair in 10 years (Figure 2). The sections below provide information about factors contributing to the desire to age in place and limitations perceived by respondents.

Figure 1. Percentage who plan to continue living in Montclair (N=86)*

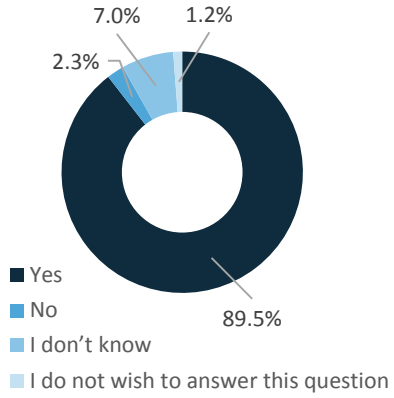
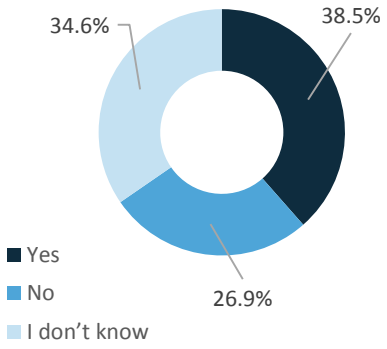


Figure 2. Percentage who are confident they will be able live in Montclair (N=78)*



**No significant difference noted for age, income or race (p-values: .09-.76)*

Who Participated in this Evaluation?

Demographic information was collected from survey participants only. Of 9,700 Montclair residents aged 55 years and older, 93 completed surveys (1.0% response rate). Of these respondents:

- 49.4% were aged between 65 and 74 years
- 71.3% were female
- 45.0% were married
- 3.9% identified as Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish origin
- 73.1% identified as White
- 12.8% reported an annual household income of less than $25,000.

TRANSPORTATION

What Lifelong Montclair and its Partners Did

One of Lifelong Montclair's key program areas includes access to public and active transportation. In concert with partner organizations, Lifelong Montclair and its partners have worked to implement several transportation-related strategies (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Selection of transportation strategies

Transportation

- Lifelong Montclair Guide to Public Transportation
  Informs seniors in Montclair about public transportation options.
- Ride Training
  Teaches aging Montclair residents how to use the public transportation system, including the bus and the train.
- Connect to Transit Transportation Seminar
  Teaches professionals and community members who work with older adults and people with disabilities to be advocates for public transportation and assist others with navigating the public transportation network.
- Township of Montclair Senior Citizen Bus
  Offers a free bus service that is catered to the specialized needs of seniors in Montclair.
- Taxi Voucher Program
  Provides coupons to Montclair seniors to subsidize the cost of using taxis for travel.

What the Evaluation Found

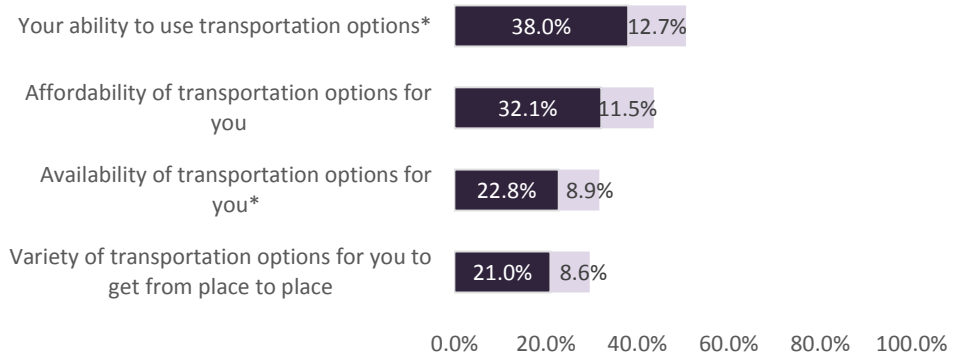
Montclair residents who responded to the survey or participated in focus groups described their perceptions about the transportation options available to them in Montclair, the types of transportation options they use as well as their experiences using these modes of transportation.

RESPONDENTS' RATINGS OF MONTCLAIR TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS VARY BY AGE AND INCOME AND SUGGEST THAT OLDER ADULTS IN MONTCLAIR HAVE INDIVIDUALLY UNIQUE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS.

Survey respondents were asked to rate (on a scale of not applicable, very poor, poor, average, good and excellent) aspects of the transportation options in Montclair (Figure 4; not all data shown). Overall, respondents favorably rated their ability to use transportation options, with 50.7% rating it as "excellent" or "good". Senior citizens in middle income groups, however, were more likely than lower and higher income groups to unfavorably rate their ability to use transportation options.

- Overall, 31.7% of respondents rated the **availability of transportation options** in Montclair as "excellent" or "good".
    - A greater proportion of respondents reporting an annual income of $25,000-$74,999 rated availability as "very poor" or "poor" than did those in lower and higher income groups ($p < .05$).
- Ratings of the **affordability** and **variety of transportation options** in Montclair varied, suggesting that older adults in Montclair may not have uniform needs around transportation and that there is room for improvement in understanding and meeting these needs.
    - 43.6% rated the *affordability of transportation options* as "excellent" or "good", 25.6% as "average", and 10.3% as "poor" or "very poor".
    - 29.6% rated the *variety of transportation options* as "excellent" or "good", 29.6% as "average", and 27.2% as "poor" or "very poor".

Figure 4. Favorable ratings of transportation options (N=78)*



**A statistically significant relationship was found between respondents' reported level of income and their ratings of the availability of transportation (F=3.230, p=.008) and ability to use transportation options (F=2.490, p=.031)*

OVERALL, RESPONDENTS' ACCESS TO AND USE OF A VARIETY OF PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION MODES ENABLE THEM TO TRAVEL INDEPENDENTLY.

Lifelong Montclair's transportation seminars, trainings and guides may enhance residents' awareness of and ability to use the various forms of transportation in Montclair.

- Most frequently, survey respondents drive their cars (81.8%) or walk (64.8%) to and from their desired location (Figure 5).
- Forms of public transportation, including the public bus (21.9%) and train (14.8%), were also frequently reported as modes of transportation used. These were often used when individuals needed to go to other towns.
- Of note, less than five percent of survey respondents reported using a taxi (4.5%) or the Montclair Senior Citizen Bus (3.4%) during the last seven days.
    - Focus group participants described that they use local taxis occasionally and typically when they need point to point service, such as from their home to a medical appointment.

"The new van the town hired goes from Montclair to Shoprite which is in Bloomfield. First time having a bus that goes out of town."

– Focus Group Participant

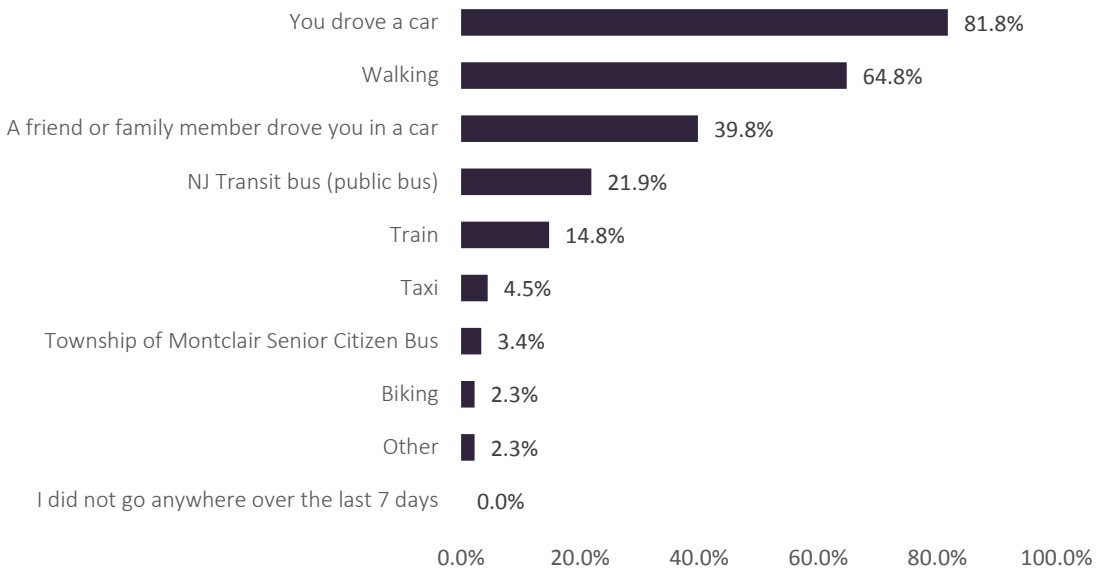
According to residents, the type of transportation used is dependent on the destination, (e.g., in town or another town), weather, affordability, availability and ability of the individual. For example, focus group participants:

- use public buses and public transportation when they need to go out of town because they are perceived to be reliable, easy to obtain information about the services, affordable due to senior discounts and travel to the places they wish to go;
- walk whenever possible but avoid walking in poor weather conditions, if sidewalks are cracked or raised or feel uncertain about their own balance and abilities; and
- drive or use taxi services when they need to travel from one point to another (e.g., from home to a medical appointment).

"Public transportation… prefer to walk to Bloomfield Ave. to catch the bus instead of using other transportation services."

– Focus Group Participant

Figure 5. Modes of travel during the last 7 days (N=88)



ALTHOUGH MOST RESPONDENTS ARE AWARE OF THE MONTCLAIR SENIOR BUS, UNRELIABLE SERVICE AS WELL AS LIMITED OR INCONVENIENT ACCESS INHIBITS RESPONDENTS FROM USING IT.

While the majority of survey respondents (86.0%) reported awareness of the Montclair Senior Citizen Bus, only a small proportion indicated using it during the preceding seven days (3.4%). Among these respondents, their main reasons for not using the Senior Bus were (Figure 6):

- other forms of transportation are more convenient (65.7%),
- other transportation is faster (50.0%),
- the Senior Bus does not go to the places the respondent would like to go (31.4%) and
- the Senior Bus does not run during the times the respondent needs it (30.0%).

Of note:

- Nearly one-fifth (18.6%) of respondents noted that they do not use the Senior Bus because they drive and/or do not need the bus (included in the "Other" response category).
- Not only does the Senior Bus not go to places respondents desired, but for some focus group participants, it is not available in their neighborhood (limited service).

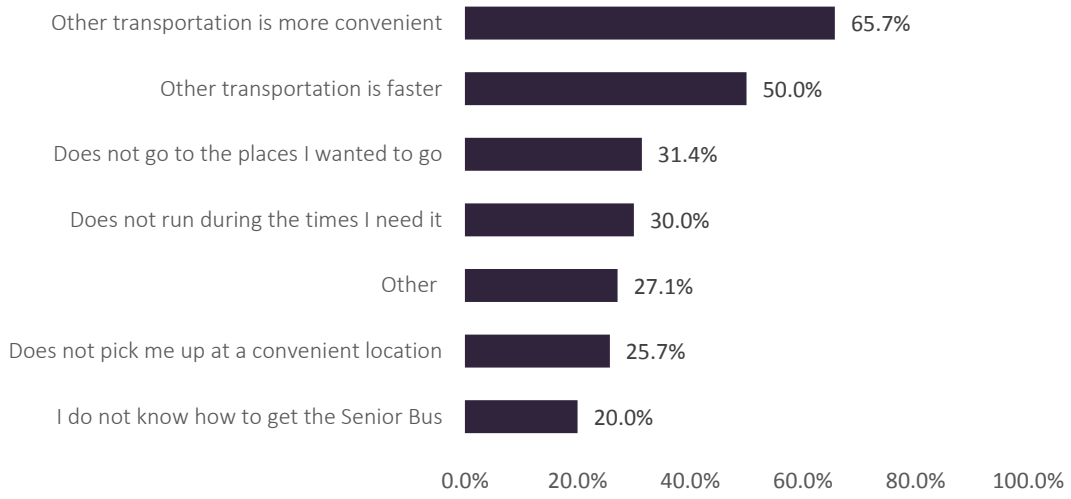
"The senior bus is somewhat accessible, it goes to Montclair Public Library, South End Gardens, Pine Ridge, Walnut Street, Upper Montclair, and Kings, but it does not go out of town."

– Focus Group Participant

"Negative experiences with the Montclair Senior Bus, have never seen it, heard about it or prefer not to use it because it's unreliable."

– Focus Group Participant

Figure 6. Reasons for not using Montclair Senior Bus (N=70)



RESPONDENTS USE TAXIS SPARINGLY, AND THOUGH AWARE OF THE TAXI VOUCHER PROGRAM, PERCEIVE THE REDUCED COST OF TAXIS AND THE EFFORT TO OBTAIN A VOUCHER PROHIBITIVE.

Just fewer than five percent (4.5%) of survey respondents reported using taxis during the last seven days (Figure 5). Focus group participants who used taxis typically used them when they needed point to point service. Participants explained that taxis were seen by some as a luxurious service and notably more expensive than public transportation options, which give senior discounts. Moreover, taxis were sometimes difficult to find when they needed one due to a lack of central dispatch services and too few taxis in service.

Most focus group participants were aware of the Taxi Voucher Program. The program, however, was not viewed favorably. After purchasing the vouchers, participants felt that single rides in taxis were very expensive, with the cost still exceeding their budget. Moreover, the vouchers were perceived to be limited in their usefulness because they were difficult to obtain and taxi drivers still expect a tip in addition to the voucher.

RESPECT AND INCLUSION

What Lifelong Montclair and its Partners Did

Lifelong Montclair and its partner organizations have also implemented strategies to ensure that older adults in Montclair feel respected and included in the daily activities and culture of the township (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Selection of respect and inclusion strategies

Respect and Inclusion

- Community Calendar
  Provides a one-stop shop about all of Montclair's offerings for older residents.
- Montclair Institute for Lifelong Learning
  Offers free classes for adults, aged 55 years and older, to foster opportunities for in-depth high-level learning and socialization.
- Life Transitions for Seniors
  Provides guidance and support to Montclair residents aged 60 years and older to navigate and remedy concerns around finances, relationships, housing, medical care and transportation.

What the Evaluation Found

Montclair residents who responded to the survey or participated in focus groups described their perceptions about the degree to which they feel respected and included in Montclair.

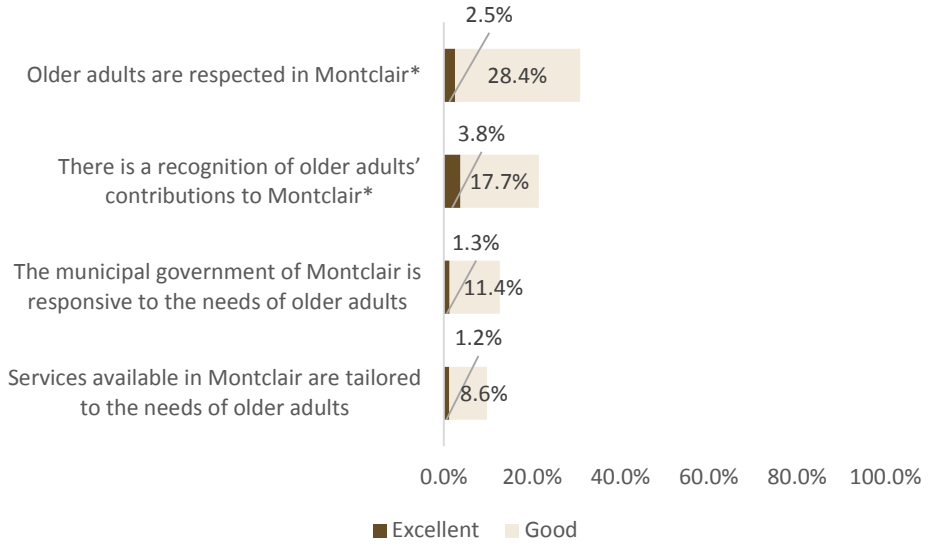
RESPONDENTS DO NOT FEEL THAT THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTCLAIR IS RESPONSIVE OR PROVIDES TAILORED SERVICES TO OLDER ADULTS.

Survey respondents were asked to rate (on a six-point scale of not applicable, very poor, poor, average, good and excellent) their experiences as it relates to respect, recognition, accommodations and responsiveness to the needs of older adults in Montclair. Nearly a third of residents (30.9%) rated as “excellent” or “good” that older adults were respected in Montclair.

- A minority rated as “excellent” or “good” the extent to which they felt the township’s services and programs were tailored towards older adults (9.8%) (Figure 8).

- Ratings of respect for older adults and recognition of older adults' contributions varied by income such that those making $100,000 per year or more were more likely to rate these items favorably than those making less than $50,000 per year.

Figure 8. Favorable ratings of aspects about respect and inclusion (N=79)*



** A statistically significant relationship was found between respondents' reported level of income and ratings of respect for older adults in Montclair (F=3.078, p=.010) and recognition of older adults' contribution to Montclair (F=3.661, p=.003).*

"[L]ower Montclair" does not receive the same services as upper Montclair."

– Focus Group Participant

"It's hard for younger people or people who are in charge of your town to know what is like to be a senior. It's hard to know how vulnerable we are physically and economically."

– Focus Group Participant

THE DEGREE TO WHICH RESPONDENTS FEEL LIKE THEY "BELONG" IN MONTCLAIR MAY VARY BASED ON WHERE IN MONTCLAIR THEY LIVE AND THEIR INCOME LEVEL.

Statistically significant differences were found between respondent experiences as they relate to respect and recognition of older adults in Montclair and their reported level of income. Focus group participants explained that they feel that they belong to a different town or "Lower Montclair". They suggested that there is a biased system that divides Montclair residents between "Upper" and "Lower" Montclair, a division grounded in income differences. This division restricts them from accessing the same services that residents in other areas of Montclair access.

HOUSING

What Lifelong Montclair and its Partners Did

A key theme from the initial assessment identified the need for affordable and suitable housing for older adults in Montclair. Lifelong Montclair and its partners have worked to address this need (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Selection of housing strategies

Housing	• Home sharing program Strive to keep older residents in their homes by providing an opportunity for tenants to move in, who either contribute financially or provide services in the home.

What the Evaluation Found

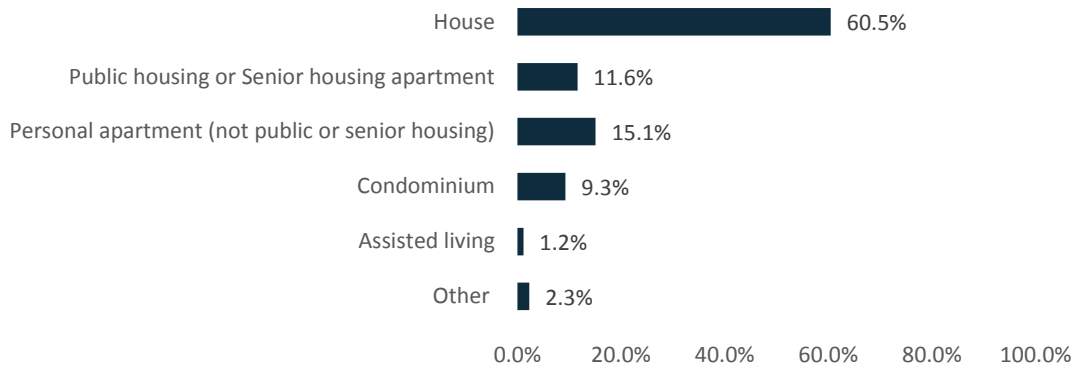
Older adults in Montclair were asked an array of questions pertaining to housing. These questions focused on current living arrangements, home ownership, and affordability and availability of housing in Montclair.

RESPONDENTS ARE CURRENTLY LIVING IN A VARIETY OF HOUSING SITUATIONS.

The current living situation varied among the residents. Nearly three-quarters (70.9%) of survey respondents reported owning their home and 24.4% reported renting their residence. The majority of respondents reported living in a house (60.5%), and more than one-third live in an apartment or condominium (36.0%) (Figure 10).

- Living situation varied by income such that respondents reporting an annual income of less than $50,000 were more likely to live in public housing or senior housing apartments than in other types of housing situations ($p < .05$).
- 11.6% of respondents live in public housing or a senior housing apartment.
    - Focus group participants that live in public senior housing expressed dissatisfaction and safety concerns. They felt vulnerable and cited personal examples of administrators violating their right to privacy.

Figure 10. Respondent current living situations (N=86)*



** A significant relationship was found between where the respondent lives and income (Fisher Exact Test = 35.50, p = .031)*

In addition to the types of residences that older adults report living in, respondents also report living in a variety of arrangements. Of survey respondents, 39.8% indicated they lived alone and 44.6% lived with a spouse/significant other. Of note, 10.8% reported living in their home with a family member (other than a spouse/significant other).

CONCERNS ABOUT HOUSING IN MONTCLAIR SUGGEST THE NEED FOR A GREATER VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL MONTCLAIR RESIDENTS AT LOWER PRICE POINTS.

Survey respondents rated (on a scale of not applicable, very poor, poor, average, good and excellent) the availability and affordability of services and housing in Montclair (Figure 11; not all data shown). Overall, respondents perceive their neighborhood as safe. They unfavorably rate the availability of housing options and the affordability of services and housing options. Of note, no focus group participants were aware of the home sharing program.

- Respondents varied in their ratings of the availability and affordability of services to maintain one's home, enabling one to remain in the home.
    - Respondents in lower income groups were more likely to rate the affordability of these services as "poor" or "very poor" than other income groups ($p < .05$).

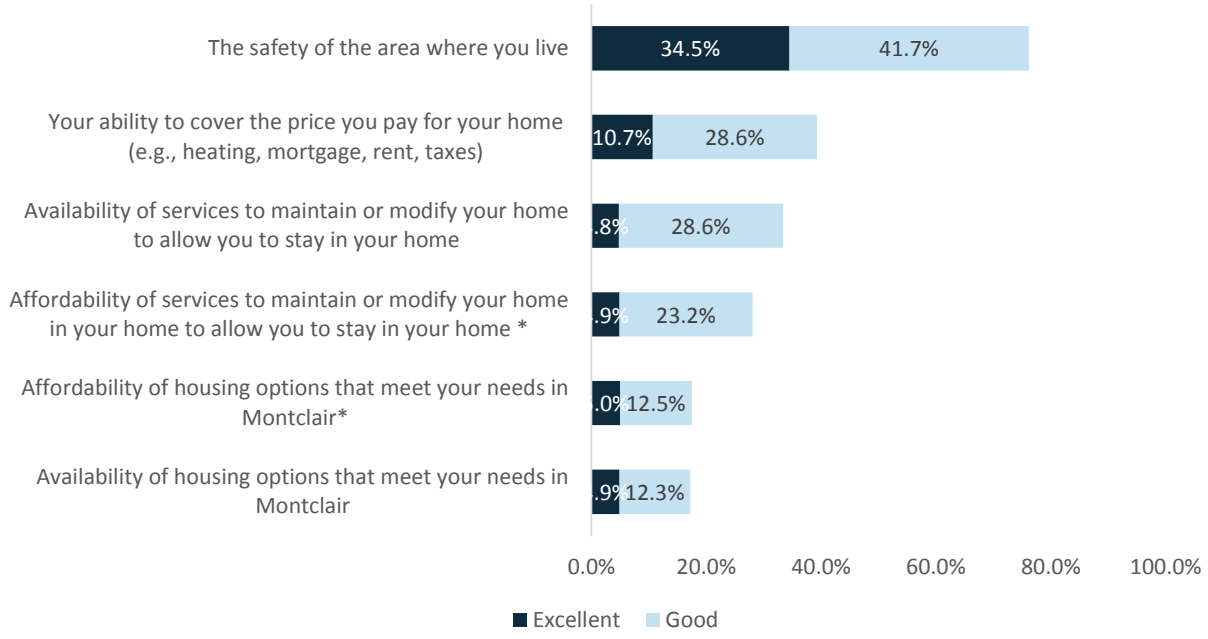
- Focus group participants expressed that public programs or municipal services are limited in Montclair. They often reach out to United Way for assistance with paying gas and electric bills, filing their annual taxes and finding resources to assist with property taxes. Participants reported that the United Way's staff understands them and they feel connected to the United Way community.

- 17.5% of respondents rated the affordability of housing options that met their needs as "excellent" or "good".
    - Respondents making less than $74,999 were more likely to rate the affordability of housing options as "poor" or "very poor" than those making more than $100,000 per year ($p < .05$).
- 17.2% of survey respondents rated the availability of housing options that meet their needs as "excellent" or "good".
    - Focus group participants expressed that housing options were limited and not always available to Montclair residents. They perceived public housing as an unsafe place to live, but were unable to relocate because of the expense.
    - Participants also described that they are frustrated with the municipal government for not doing more to assist senior residents. They explained that they are being wait listed for Montclair housing and experiencing prejudice in accessing services and options.

"Housing services are not helpful in Montclair, there a lot of issues with the system."

– Focus Group Participant

Figure 11. Favorable ratings about affordability and availability of housing (N=80)*,**



**A significant relationship was found between respondents' reported income level and the affordability of services to maintain or modify your home to allow you to stay in your home (F=2.159, p = .057), as well as with the affordability of housing options to meet your needs in Montclair (F=3.073, p = .010)*
***No significant relationship was found between any of these ratings and age or race.*

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

What Lifelong Montclair and its Partners Did

Underlying many of its strategies, Lifelong Montclair and its partners have developed several information sharing and communication tools to raise awareness about Montclair's services and resources for seniors (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Selection of communication and information strategies

Communication and Information

- Directory of Senior Services
  Organizes and compiles Montclair's senior-based services in one, easy to read and access listing.
- Community Calendar
  Provides a one-stop shop about all of Montclair's offerings for older residents.

What the Evaluation Found

Older adults in Montclair who completed the survey and participated in the focus groups provided information about their awareness of Montclair services and resources, how they obtain information and the level of usefulness of the Lifelong Montclair communication tools.

RESPONDENTS LEARN ABOUT THE SERVICES AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THEM IN MONTCLAIR THROUGH NEWSPAPERS AND WORD OF MOUTH COMMUNICATION METHODS.

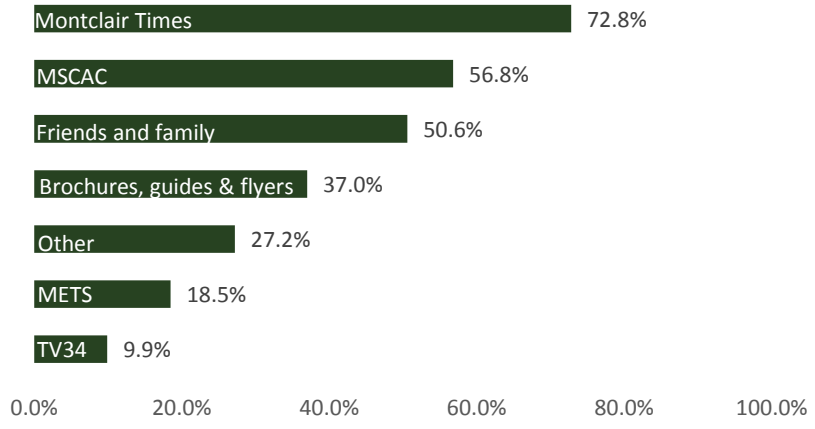
Survey respondents were asked to rate (on a five-point scale of very poor, poor, average, good and excellent) their knowledge regarding services and resources that exist for older adults in Montclair.

- 30.5% of survey respondents rated their knowledge around services and resources as "excellent" or "good".
- A similar proportion, 31.7% of respondents rated their knowledge about services and resources as "poor" or "very poor".
- Younger seniors were more likely to rate their knowledge as "good" or "average" than older respondents ($p < .05$).

Residents also were asked about how they receive information about resources that exist for older adults in the township. The Montclair Times (72.8%), Montclair Senior Citizen Advisory Committee (MSCAC; 56.8%), and friends and family (50.6%) were the main sources of communication and information for many of the residents (Figure 13). Focus group participants expounded on this.

- Participants learned about services and resources in Montclair through events, social gatherings (e.g., communal meals), houses of worship, community-based organizations (e.g., Toni's Kitchen, United Way) and the public library.
- Focus group participants preferred to receive information through word of mouth especially during social gatherings. This allows for older adults to be guided and shown where to go.
- Others preferred the newspaper and mail because they like to read and learn more about the services that are available in town.

Figure 13. Source of information about resources that exist for older adults respondents use (N=81)**



***No significant differences were found between information source and age, income or race (p-values >.05).*

Most of the respondents who are aware of the Lifelong Montclair communication and information tools find them useful and have learned something new from them.

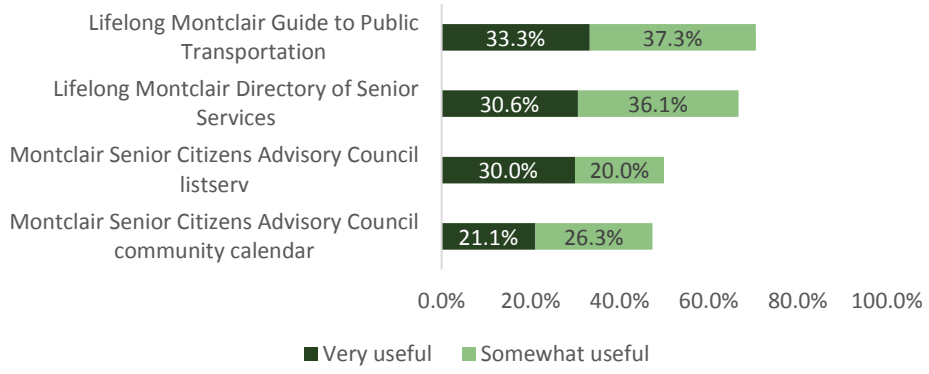
Survey respondents were asked if they heard about or used resources made available by Lifelong Montclair and the Montclair Senior Citizens Advisory Council (MSCAC).

- 60.8% of respondents heard about the Lifelong Montclair Guide to Public Transportation.
- 43.6% heard about the Montclair Senior Citizens Advisory Council community calendar.
- 42.5% heard about the Lifelong Montclair Directory of Senior Services.
- Of note, respondents in lower socio-economic groups were more likely to have heard about this directory than those in other groups ($p < .05$).

Those survey respondents who were aware of the resources made available by Lifelong Montclair and MSCAC were also asked to rate the usefulness of these offerings (Figure 14; not all data shown).

- 70.6% of these respondents rated the Guide to Public Transportation as "very useful" or "somewhat useful". Nearly two-thirds (64.7%) indicated they learned new from it (data not shown in Figure 14).
- 66.7% rated the Directory of Senior Services as "very useful" or "somewhat useful". More than half (55.9%) reported that they learned something new from it (data not shown in Figure 14).
- 50.0% rated the MSCAC listserv as "very useful" or "somewhat useful". 57.9% learned something new from it (data not shown in Figure 14).

Figure 14. Favorable ratings about the usefulness of resources made available by Lifelong Montclair and MSCAC (N=51)



CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

What Lifelong Montclair and its Partners Did

Lifelong Montclair works collaboratively with partner organizations to implement strategies around civic participation and employment for older adults in Montclair (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Selection of civic participation and employment strategies

Civic Participation and Employment	• Montclair Institute for Lifelong Learning Offers free classes for adults, aged 55 years and older to foster opportunities for in-depth high-level learning and socialization.

What the Evaluation Found

Older adults in Montclair were asked about their civic participant and employment status. More than half of survey respondents indicated they were retired (57.0%) and about one-third (32.5%) indicated they were currently employed full-time or worked part-time.

MOST RESPONDENTS ARE UNINTERESTED IN ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AS THEY ARE ALREADY ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTING THEIR TIME AND EXPERTISE TO VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY ISSUES.

When asked about employment opportunities in Montclair, training and retaining opportunities in the work force, flexibility of working arrangements, opportunities for paid employment, and opportunities for further education and training were rated as “not applicable/interested” by survey respondents (73.7%, 71.1%, 67.5%, and 50.0%, respectively).

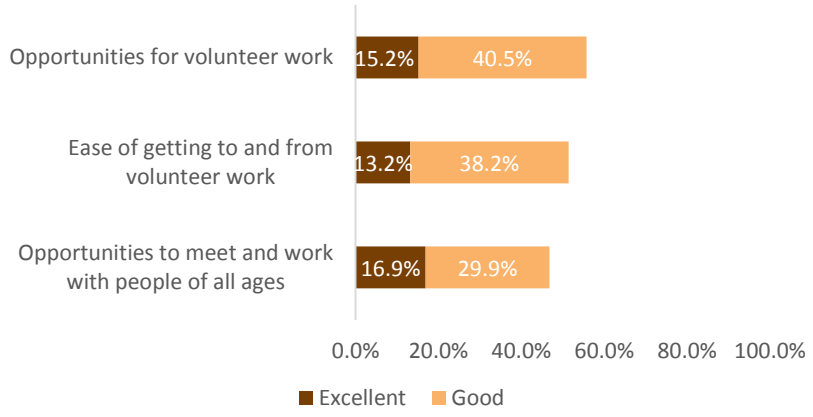
- 40.3% of respondents, however, rated opportunities to contribute to community issues through consultation in Montclair as “excellent” or “good”.
- 50.0% of respondents were not interested in opportunities for further education and training, however, focus group participants emphasized their desire for more continuing education classes and the opportunity to learn new things.

- 63.4% of survey respondents reported that they participate in volunteer work.

Overall, respondents favorably rate (on a scale of not applicable, very poor, poor, average, good and excellent) volunteer opportunities in Montclair (Figure 16).

- 55.7% of respondents rated opportunities for volunteer work as "excellent" or "good".
- 51.4% rated the ease of getting to and from volunteer work as "excellent" or "good".

Figure 16. Favorable ratings about the ease and opportunities of volunteering (N=76)



RESPONDENTS THAT VOLUNTEER MOST OFTEN SERVE SENIOR SERVICE, RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PERFORM A VARIETY OF ADMINISTRATIVE, ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP TASKS.

More than half of survey respondents (53.7%) are active volunteers in 92 organizations throughout Montclair and neighboring towns. These organizations included senior service, religious, recreational, educational, and cultural organizations.

Almost all of those that volunteer (96.0%) specified the types of tasks they were assigned. Tasks included:

- administrative,
- advocacy,
- educational,
- recreational, and
- leadership work.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY

What Lifelong Montclair and its Partners Did

Lifelong Montclair and its partner organizations are working to put strategies into place around providing resources and supports for Montclair residents' health-related needs (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Selection of health and community strategies

Health and Community	• Life Transitions for Seniors Provides guidance and support to Montclair residents aged 60 years and older to navigate and remedy concerns around finances, relationships, housing, medical care and transportation.

What the Evaluation Found

Older adults in Montclair who participated in the survey provided information about their mental and physical well-being as well as the variety, affordability and availability of health programs, services and payment.

MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF RESPONDENTS WERE *NOT* PROHIBITED BY PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS IN PARTICIPATING IN THEIR NORMAL ACTIVITIES.

A minority of respondents reported that physical and mental health concerns prevent them from participating in their regular activities.

- 29.8% of respondents indicated that during the past month, their physical well-being prevented them from participating in their day-to-day activities (average of 5 days, range 1 to 30 days).
- 23.2% stated they were unable to participate in their normal activities due to their mental health (average of 3 days, range 1 to 10 days).
- 6.4% of respondents stated they could not see a healthcare provider due to the cost (88.5% reported that there was not a time during the past year when cost prevented them from seeing a doctor when they needed one).

RESPONDENTS GENERALLY PERCEIVE THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN MONTCLAIR TO BE AVERAGE.

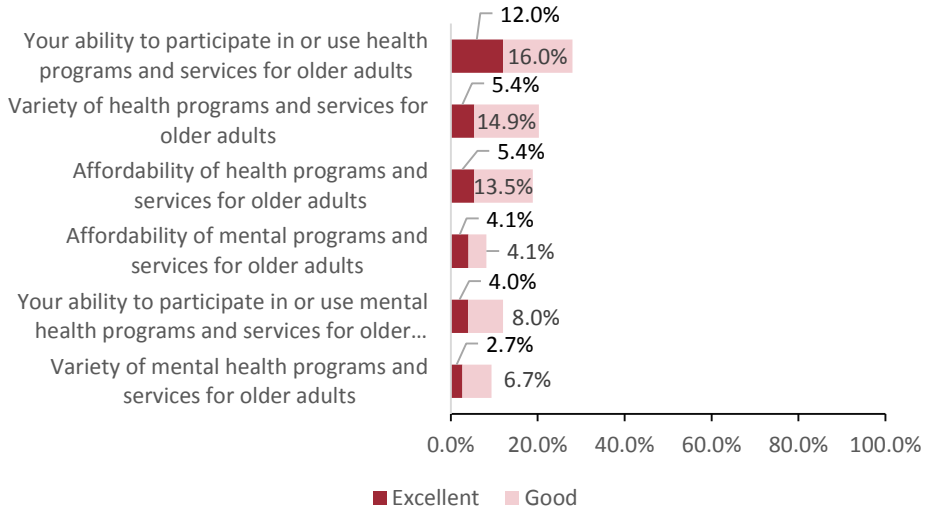
In regard to physical health programs and services, respondents rated on a scale of "very poor", "poor", "average", "good", and "excellent" their perceptions about the variety, affordability and their ability to participate in health programs for older adults in Montclair (Figure 18).

- 34.0% rated as "good" or "excellent" the ability to participate in or use local health programs.
- 18.9% rated the affordability of health programs and services as "good" or "excellent".
- Of note, 25.7%-26.7% of respondents indicated each that the variety, affordability and ability to participate in Montclair health programs did not apply to them or that they were not interested (data not shown in Figure 18). This suggests that these residents are obtaining services elsewhere or have needs that are unmet by Montclair programs.

Nearly half of respondents indicated each that the variety, affordability and ability to participate in Montclair mental health programs did not apply to them or that they were not interested (41.3%, 49.3% and 53.3%, respectively). Moreover:

- 12.0% rated the ability to participate in or use local mental health programs as "good" or "excellent") and
- 8.2% of respondents rated the affordability of mental health programs and services as "good" or "excellent" (Figure 19).

Figure 18. Favorable ratings about the variety of health programs and services for older adults (N=40)



SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

What Lifelong Montclair and its Partners Did

In concert with partner organizations, Lifelong Montclair has developed strategies to encourage older adults in Montclair to socialize with one another and participate in community events (Figure 19).

Figure 19. Selection of social participation strategies

Social Participation

- Community Calendar
  Provides a one-stop shop about all of Montclair's offerings for older residents.
- Montclair Institute for Lifelong Learning
  Offers free classes for adults, aged 55 years and older to foster opportunities for in-depth high-level learning and socialization.

What the Evaluation Found

Respondents answered questions about social, cultural, religious and other types of events that they participate in as well as their perceptions of these events.

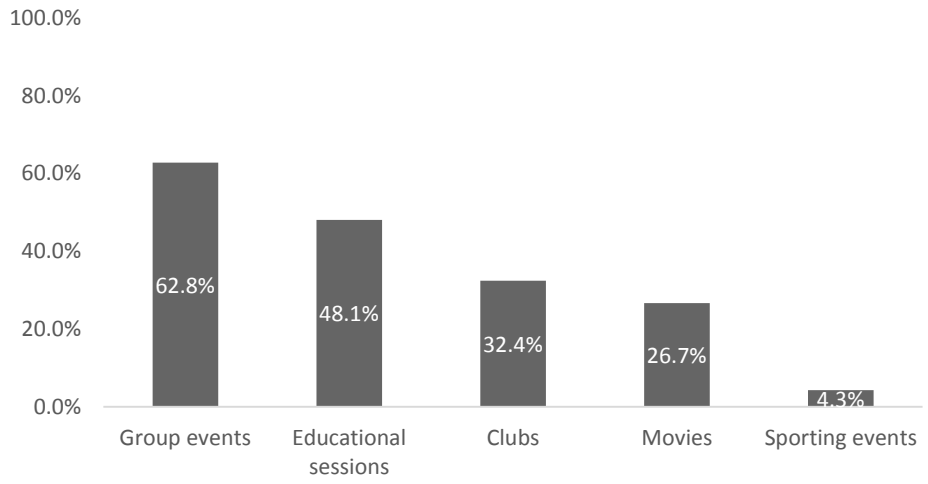
A MAJORITY OF RESPONDENTS REPORT CONNECTING WITH FRIENDS AND PARTICIPATING IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EVENTS.

Respondents most frequently indicated that they socialized with friends and/or neighbors during the past week (95.4%), followed by participating in social and cultural activities in Montclair (65.5%). Fewer than half of all respondents (44.7%) reported attending a religious service in the past week.

Of the services offered to residents in Montclair, attending group events (62.8%) and educational sessions (48.1%) were the most frequently reported activities by respondents (Figure 20).

Focus group participants reported that they preferred activities that foster social interaction such as spending time with individuals in public spaces. These social interactions include communal meals, community center activities, library classes and other group-based events.

Figure 20. Respondents who attended township events and activities during the past week (N=68)

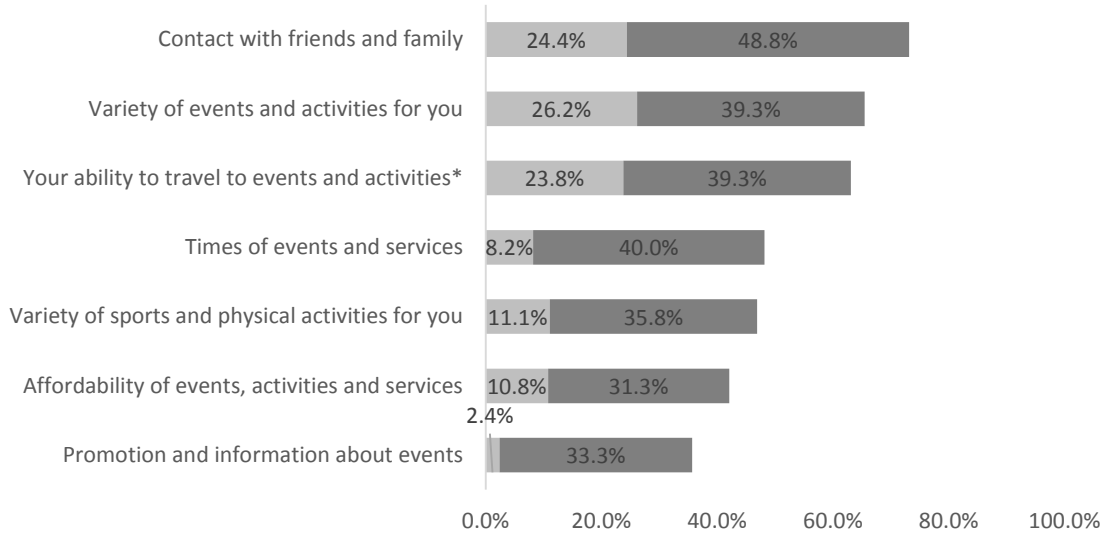


RESPONDENTS POSITIVELY PERCEIVE THE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES IN MONTCLAIR, THOUGH THERE IS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT IN ENSURING THAT THEY ARE ACCESSIBLE REGARDLESS OF INCOME.

Survey respondents rated on a scale of "not applicable", "very poor", "poor", "average", "good" and "excellent" the variety, affordability and availability of events and activities in Montclair (Figure 22).

- 65.5% of respondents rated the variety of events and activities in Montclair as "excellent" or "good".
    - While some focus group participants reported being active in the community, others requested additional activities and events that are inherently social, such as a senior center, continuing education and/or physical activity classes.
- 63.1% rated the ability to travel to events and activities as "excellent" or "good", though respondents indicating incomes less than $25,000 per year were more likely to rate this as "poor" or "very poor" than those with annual incomes between $25,000 and $49,999 *($p < .05$)*.
- 42.1% rated the affordability of events, activities and services as "excellent" or "good".
    - Focus group participants expressed a desire to participate in the classes offered at the local YMCA, but felt it was unaffordable for seniors. They pointed to an example at the Newark YMCA, which offers discounted rates for seniors.

Figure 22. Percentage of favorable respondent ratings of the variety, affordability and availability of events and activities *,**



**A statistically significant relationship was found between the ability to travel to events and reported income level (F=3.557, p=.004).*
***No statistical significant relationship was found between ratings on any of these items and age or race (p-value> .05).*

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The sections above describe the key findings from this outcomes component of the evaluation. These findings suggest key strengths and areas for improvement in the Lifelong Montclair initiative.

Strengths

The findings highlight several key assets and strengths of the Lifelong Montclair Initiative and its programs. These include, but are not limited to, the following.

1. Respondents are able to travel independently by driving, using public transportation and walking.
2. Respondents report walking to get from place to place and it is generally perceived to be a favorable way of getting around town.
3. The majority of respondents are aware of the Montclair Senior Bus.
4. For those who do use public transportation, it is perceived as a reliable and affordable way to travel.
5. The majority of respondents own their homes in Montclair and desire to stay in their home and in Montclair in the future.
6. Montclair is perceived to be a safe place to live.
7. Respondents are engaged in the community through socializing with friends and neighbors, volunteering with a variety of agencies to contribute their expertise, participating in cultural and continuing educational activities.
8. The Lifelong Montclair Guide to Public Transportation and the Lifelong Montclair Directory of Senior Services are perceived to be useful and provide individuals with new information.

Areas for Improvement

Data collected as part of this component of the evaluation revealed potential areas for improvement.

1. Respondents, particularly for those in lower to middle income groups (i.e., making less than $75,000 per year), would like to see more point to point transportation and Montclair-sponsored options that travel to surrounding towns.
2. While respondents were aware of the senior bus, few use it because it is perceived as unreliable, having limited service for pick-up and limited service for drop off.
3. Respondents were aware of the taxi voucher program but noted that it is limited in its usefulness because of the extra step needed to obtain the voucher and the taxi driver expectation of a tip in addition to the voucher.
4. Safe, equitable and affordable options only for Montclair residents are needed. In addition, housing options that help to lower the tax burden were also noted as needed.
5. Additional information sharing and marketing may be useful to disseminate the details of the home sharing program.
6. Additional opportunities, such as communal meals, a senior center, senior discounts for YMCA memberships, to network and spend time with other older adults are needed.
7. A township contact person that can help direct older adults to resources as well as to help understand the information they receive in the mail may be useful to residents.
8. Additional dissemination efforts of Lifelong Montclair and MSCAC communication tools may help to increase the reach and ensure that all residents have access to them.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The information included in this report is based on the data collected by and made available to CREEHS during the period of September 2015 through March 2016. The findings describe the short-term outcomes of the Lifelong Montclair Initiative and the current context of aging in Montclair as reported during this period. The data inform the strengths and areas for improvement to Lifelong Montclair so that it may continue to serve the needs of older adults aging in Montclair.

Although the evaluation design limits the ability to directly attribute the findings to Lifelong Montclair efforts, the findings of this evaluation suggest the following.

- Older adults in Montclair are using public and active forms of transportation to travel.
- Additional efforts are needed to advertise the home sharing programs as well as to ensure that equitable and affordable housing is available for all older adults in Montclair.
- More information is needed to better address the varying perceptions about the physical and mental health services offered by the town.
- Older adults in Montclair are engaged in volunteer work, socializing with others and participating in events and activities; however, they do not feel included and valued in the township.
- Communication strategies, such as the Lifelong Montclair Guide to Public Transportation and the Lifelong Montclair Directory of Senior Services, are effective at increasing awareness and knowledge about Montclair-based older adult services.

As Lifelong Montclair continues to evolve and expand its work, future efforts should continue to assess the impact of these strategies on the key areas of housing, transportation, social engagement and communication.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODS

APPENDIX B – ANNOTATED MONTCLAIR RESIDENT SURVEY

APPENDIX C – MONTCLAIR RESIDENT FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

APPENDIX A – EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODS

With funding from Partners for Health, Lifelong Montclair project staff contracted with the Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS) at Montclair State University to evaluate its aging in place initiative.

The purpose of this evaluation was to learn about whether the Lifelong Montclair initiative is functioning at an optimal level, whether the initiative's goals are being met, and what improvements can be made in order to ensure greater success.

Five questions guided this evaluation:

1. To what extent are partner organizations engaged in the Lifelong Montclair-Aging in Place initiative?

2. To what extent are partners in the Lifelong Montclair-Aging in Place initiative collaborating with one another (e.g., sharing of resources and information, working together on projects) in projects related to improving the lives of older adults in Montclair?

3. To what extent did Lifelong Montclair-Aging in Place project activities address the following needs for individuals age 55 years and older in Montclair:

    - Affordable and suitable housing?
    - Access to public and active transportation?
    - Access to health services that aim to improve mental and physical health?
    - Community engagement?
    - Community knowledge and awareness about services for older adults in Montclair?

4. How were communication strategies used to impact Montclair residents' awareness and knowledge about Montclair-based older adult services and resources?

5. What are the strengths and areas for improvement, both internal and external to, the Lifelong Montclair-Aging in Place initiative?

A companion report, *Evaluation of the Lifelong Montclair Aging in Place Initiative: Partnership Highlights* addresses questions 1 and 2. This report addresses evaluation questions 3, 4 and 5.

The evaluation used a mixed-method design that used data collected from multiple sources. These included one online survey of partner organization representatives; an online and paper copy survey with a sample of Montclair residents aged 55 years and older; and two focus groups with Montclair residents aged 55 years and older. Data collection occurred between September 2015 and February 2016.

CREEHS staff developed all instruments in collaboration with program staff. CREEHS obtained approval from the Montclair State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for all study procedures and instruments. All instruments, annotated survey summaries, and findings are provided in Appendices B and C.

Resident Survey

An online and paper copy survey was conducted with Montclair adult residents in November, 2015–December, 2015. The online and paper-based survey collected information about the level of engagement, level of collaboration and the types of collaboration among partners, benefits of collaboration, and areas of strength and improvement.

The CREEHS evaluation team worked closely with Lifelong Montclair staff to identify listservs and existing rosters of Montclair residents, aged 55 years and older, who participate in services associated with Lifelong Montclair initiative. The CREEHS team emailed the listserv hosts, who then sent a recruitment email, including a link to the survey, the residents email addresses.

For the paper survey, the CREEHS team worked with the Lifelong Montclair project coordinator to administer the survey to Montclair residents, aged 55 years and older, in six public locations. These locations were Montclair public spaces where older adults congregate (e.g. Montclair Institute for Lifelong Learning classes) in Montclair and were associated with Lifelong Montclair services and programs. They included, the Montclair High School Annex, Montclair Public Library, Glenfield Park House, First Montclair House, South End Gardens and Chrill Care. The CREEHS team worked with the key contacts at the six locations to collaboratively recruit participants. The key contacts distributed flyers and announced the survey to recruit older adults in their locations.

Overall, 93 surveys were completed (63 online and 30 paper). Descriptive statistics (e.g., frequency analysis, cross-tabulation) were used to analyze the survey responses. Open-ended responses were content analyzed for common themes and key contextual information.

Resident Focus Group

Three focus groups were planned and two were conducted with Montclair older adult residents on February 3rd and 4th, 2016. Montclair residents, age 55 years and older, were eligible to participate. The focus groups collected information about residents' perceptions of and experiences with affordable and suitable housing, access to transportation, community engagement and factors influencing the reach, use and effectiveness of communication strategies (e.g., Senior Services Directory, Transportation Booklets).

The focus groups occurred at the Montclair Public Library and Glenfield Park Community Center. The CREEHS research team relied on the expertise of the Lifelong Montclair initiative staff and stakeholders to determine the final locations for these focus groups. Once the locations were identified, Lifelong Montclair staff and the CREEHS team collaboratively recruited participants. An email was sent to key contacts at the two locations asking for volunteers to participate in a focus group about their perceptions of the services available to older adults in Montclair. Key contacts were also asked to distribute flyers to

recruit older adults in their locations. The recruitment email was followed up with a series of phone calls to the key contact to assist in scheduling the focus groups.

Two focus groups were completed with a total of eight participants. It is important to note that Toni's Kitchen was also identified as focus group location, but after two visits to recruit participants, there were no participants that both met the eligibility criteria for the focus group and were willing to participate. In addition, two other locations were also identified as potential focus group locations. The contact people for these locations were unresponsive and no focus groups could be scheduled there.

Focus group data were summarized as appropriate. The summaries were combined with the focus group facilitators' notes. These summaries were then content analyzed for common themes and key contextual information.

Strengths and Limitations of this Study

The data collected provided an opportunity for participants to express their thoughts about the current programs available in Montclair for senior residents. This data includes a diverse population of Montclair senior residents who are active in the community. The participants demonstrated interest in being part of a project that could lead to an improvement of the services and resources available to senior residents in Montclair.

With the collaboration of Lifelong Montclair partners, the CREEHS team was able to conduct surveys and focus groups at various locations, which enabled an extensive data analysis.

One of the main limitations of this evaluation was the response rate among residents. The CREEHS team was unable to collect the targeted 200 surveys. The limited survey response rate may be partially explained by the exceeding amount of surveys that senior residents have been asked to fill out in recent months. As a result of this potential over-surveying, the CREEHS team collaborated with partner organizations to identify untapped groups of older residents in Montclair. These particular groups were targeted through public places, such as the library, a local emergency food provider and others. Not all adults in these locations were Montclair residents or were aged 55 years and older.

Lifelong Montclair
Montclair Resident Survey *(Fall 2015)*

Transportation

1. During the last 7 days, what modes of travel did you use to get from place to place?

N = 88	N	%
You drove a car	72	81.8%
A friend or family member drove you in a car	35	39.8%
NJ Transit bus (public bus)	19	21.9%
Township of Montclair Senior Citizen Bus	3	3.4%
Train	13	14.8%
Taxi	4	4.5%
Walking	57	64.8%
Biking	2	2.3%
I did not go anywhere over the last 7 days	0	0.0%
Other	2	2.3%
plane = business trip to san diego	*1*	*1.1%*
Access Link	*1*	*1.1%*

2. Have you heard about the Township of Montclair Senior Citizen Bus?

N = 86	N	%
Yes	74	86.0%
Maybe	4	4.7%
No	8	9.3%

3. What are the reasons you did not use the Township of Montclair Senior Citizen Bus in the last 7 days?

N = 70	N	%
Other transportation is faster	35	50.0%
Other transportation is more convenient	45	65.7%
Does not go to the places I wanted to go	22	31.4%
Does not pick me up at a convenient location	17	25.7%
Does not run during the times I need it	21	30.0%
I do not know how to get the Senior Bus	14	20.0%
Other	19	27.1%
I drive and/or do not need it	*13*	*18.6%*
It takes you but doesn't bring you back	*2*	*2.9%*
Driver is hostile	*1*	*1.4%*
I have seen the bus but have never seen a schedule or its route.	*1*	*1.4%*
Using it to go to destination & return after 4 to 6 hours.	*1*	*1.4%*
I'm at work during the hours of operation.	*1*	*1.4%*

4. Please rate the following items about transportation options in Montclair:

	Total	Not applicable		Very Poor		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Variety of transportation options for you to get from place to place	81	11	13.6%	11	13.6%	11	13.6%	24	29.6%	17	21.0%	7	8.6%
Availability of transportation options for you	79	13	16.5%	9	11.4%	13	16.5%	19	24.1%	18	22.8%	7	8.9%
Affordability of transportation options for you	78	16	20.5%	2	2.6%	6	7.7%	20	25.6%	25	32.1%	9	11.5%
Your ability to use transportation options	79	11	13.9%	6	7.6%	9	11.4%	13	16.5%	30	38.0%	10	12.7%

Housing

5. For how many years have you been living in Montclair?

Average Number of Years	Range
34.2 years	0 – 90 years

Average Number of Years	N	%
0-9 Years	8	10.7%
10-19 Years	8	10.7%
20-29 Years	12	16.0%
30-39 Years	20	26.7%
40-49 Years	14	18.7%
50-59 Years	6	8.0%
60-69 Years	5	6.7%
70-79 Years	0	0%
80-89 Years	1	1.3%
90-99 Years	1	1.3%

6. Where do you currently live?

N = 86	**N**	**%**
House	52	60.5%
Public housing or Senior housing apartment	10	11.6%
Personal apartment (not public or senior housing)	13	15.1%
Condominium	8	9.3%
Assisted living	1	1.2%
Other	2	2.3%
Two family house	*1*	*1.1%*
cooperative apt.	*1*	*1.1%*

7. Do you rent or own your residence?

Do you rent or own your residence? N = 86	**N**	**%**
Own	61	70.9%
Rent	21	24.4%
Not applicable	1	1.2%
Other	2	2.3%
Family owns apt.	*1*	*1.2%*
temporary residency	*1*	*1.2%*

8. Are you living…

N = 83	N	%
In your home, alone	33	39.8%
In your home, with a spouse/significant other	37	44.6%
In your home, with a family member	9	10.8%
In your home, with someone other than a family member, spouse/significant other	1	1.2%
In the home of a family member	0	0.0%
In the home of someone other than a family member	0	0.0%
Other	2	3.6%
Senior housing	*1*	*1.2%*
My spouse and I live in a two family with tenants	*1*	*1.2%*
We decided to remain in Montclair. Our need for transportation is very important.	*1*	*1.2%*

9. Do you want to continue to live in Montclair?

N = 86	N	%
Yes	77	89.5%
No	2	2.3%
I don't know	6	7.0%
I do not wish to answer this question	1	1.2%

10. Do you feel confident that you will be able to stay living in Montclair over the next 10 years?

N = 78	N	%
Yes	30	38.5%
No	21	26.9%
I don't know	27	34.6%
I do not wish to answer this question	0	0.0%

11. Do you want to continue to live in your current place of residence?

N = 82	N	%
Yes	58	70.7%
No	8	9.8%
I don't know	15	18.3%
I do not wish to answer this question	1	1.2%

12. Please rate the following items as they relate to housing in Montclair:

	Total	Not applicable		Very Poor		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Your ability to cover the price you pay for your home (e.g., heating, mortgage, rent, taxes)	84	1	1.2%	4	4.8%	17	20.2%	29	34.5%	24	28.6%	9	10.7%
Availability of services to maintain or modify your home to allow you to stay in your home	84	10	11.9%	5	6.0%	11	13.1%	30	35.7%	24	28.6%	4	4.8%
Affordability of services to maintain or modify your home in your home to allow you to stay in your home	82	11	13.4%	8	9.8%	16	19.5%	24	29.3%	19	23.2%	4	4.9%
Availability of housing options that meet your needs in Montclair	81	8	9.9%	9	11.1%	24	29.6%	26	32.1%	10	12.3%	4	4.9%
Affordability of housing options that meet your needs in Montclair	80	6	7.5%	12	15.0%	30	37.5%	18	22.5%	10	12.5%	4	5.0%
The safety of the area where you live	84	0	0.0%	1	1.2%	2	2.4%	17	20.2%	35	41.7%	29	34.5%

Social Participation

13. In the past week, have you taken part in any social or cultural activities in Montclair (e.g., visit the Art Museum, attended a concert, participated in recreational leagues)?

N = 87	N	%
Yes	57	65.5%
No	30	34.5%
I don't know	0	0.0%
I do not wish to answer this question	0	0.0%

14. During the past week, have you socialized with friends and/or neighbors?

N = 87	N	%
Yes	83	95.4%
No	4	4.6%
I don't know	0	0.0%
I do not wish to answer this question	0	0.0%

15. Over the past week, have you attended any religious services? (e.g., church, temple, mosque, etc.)

N = 85	N	%
Yes	38	44.7%
No	47	55.3%
I don't know	0	0.0%
I do not wish to answer this question	0	0.0%

16. In the past week, have you attended any of the following in Montclair?

	Total	**Yes**		**No**		**I don't know**	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%
Movies	75	20	26.7%	55	73.3%	0	0.0%
Sporting events	70	3	4.3%	67	95.7%	0	0.0%
Educational sessions	77	37	48.1%	40	51.9%	0	0.0%
Clubs	68	22	32.4%	46	67.6%	0	0.0%
Group events	78	49	62.8%	29	37.2%	0	0.0%

17. Please rate the following items related to events and activities in Montclair:

	Total	Not applicable		Very Poor		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Variety of events and activities for you	84	5	6.0%	1	1.2%	5	6.0%	18	21.4%	33	39.3%	22	26.2%
Variety of sports and physical activities for you	81	14	17.3%	1	1.2%	13	16.0%	15	18.5%	29	35.8%	9	11.1%
Affordability of events, activities and services	83	7	8.4%	3	3.6%	8	9.6%	30	36.1%	26	31.3%	9	10.8%
Your ability to travel to events and activities	84	4	4.8%	5	6.0%	9	10.7%	13	15.5%	33	39.3%	20	23.8%
Times of events and services	85	5	5.9%	1	1.2%	9	10.6%	29	34.1%	34	40.0%	7	8.2%
Promotion and information about events	84	6	7.1%	3	3.6%	13	15.5%	32	38.1%	28	33.3%	2	2.4%
Contact with friends and family	82	2	2.4%	1	1.2%	2	2.4%	17	20.7%	40	48.8%	20	24.4%

Respect and Social Inclusion

18. Please rate the following items:

	Total	Not applicable		Very Poor		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Older adults are respected in Montclair	81	1	1.2%	5	6.2%	13	16.0%	37	45.7%	23	28.4%	2	2.5%
There is a recognition of older adults' contributions to Montclair	79	4	5.1%	9	11.4%	13	16.5%	36	45.6%	14	17.7%	3	3.8%
Services available in Montclair are tailored to the needs of older adults	81	2	2.5%	13	16.0%	30	37.0%	28	34.6%	7	8.6%	1	1.2%
The municipal government of Montclair is responsive to the needs of older adults	79	6	7.6%	13	16.5%	24	30.4%	26	32.9%	9	11.4%	1	1.3%

Civic Participation and Employment

19. What is your current employment status?

N = 86	N	%
Currently employed full-time	13	15.1%
Work part-time	15	17.4%
Retired	49	57.0%
Not currently working but looking for work	2	2.3%
Not currently working and NOT looking for work	2	2.3%
Unable to work	3	3.5%
Other	2	2.3%
semi retired	*1*	*1.1%*
I do some legal consulting and a substantial amount of volunteer work	*1*	*1.1%*

20. Please rate the following items related to employment opportunities for you in Montclair.

	Total	Not applicable/ interested		Very Poor		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Opportunities for paid employment	77	52	67.5%	3	3.9%	10	13.0%	8	10.4%	3	3.9%	1	1.3%
Flexibility of working arrangements	76	54	71.1%	1	1.3%	8	10.5%	6	7.9%	6	7.9%	1	1.3%
Training and retaining opportunities in the work force	76	56	73.7%	4	5.3%	8	10.5%	6	7.9%	2	2.6%	0	0.0%
Opportunities for further education and training	78	39	50.0%	2	2.6%	9	11.5%	13	16.7%	12	15.4%	3	3.8%
Opportunities to contribute to community issues through consultation	77	17	22.1%	1	1.3%	11	14.3%	17	22.1%	23	29.9%	8	10.4%
Availability of information about decision making and decisions made	73	20	27.4%	6	8.2%	20	27.4%	20	27.4%	6	8.2%	1	1.4%

21. Do you participate in volunteer work in the community?

N = 82	**N**	**%**
Yes	52	63.4%
No	30	36.6%

22. Where do you currently volunteer? *(Please list up to five)*

Number of Respondents = 50	
Number of Organizations Identified = 92	**N**
Advocacy	2
Animals	1
Board/Committee	6
Cultural	9
Educational	15
Food Services	4
Health Care	2
Housing	3
Multiple	1
Outdoors/Environmental	5
Political	5
Recreational	18
Religious	18
Senior Care	30
Service	5

23. What do you typically do when you volunteer? (Summarize Chart)

N = 47	
Administrative	11
Administrative, Advocacy	2
Administrative, Advocacy, Planning	1
Administrative, Recreational	1
Administrative, Service, Fundraising	1
Anything	4
Anything, Educational, Cultural	1
Crafts	1
Educational	4
Educational, Administrative	1
Educational, Senior Care	1
Educational Service	1
Food Service	1
Leadership	3
Leadership, Administrative	1
Leadership, Advocacy	1
Leadership, Educational, Promotion	1
Leadership, Fundraising	1
Outdoors/Environmental	1
Planning	2
Recreational	2
Service	2
Service, Food Service, Advocacy	1
Transportation	2

24. Please rate the following items related to volunteer opportunities for you in Montclair:

	Total	Not applicable/ interested		Very Poor		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Opportunities for volunteer work	79	9	11.4%	0	0.0%	3	3.8%	23	29.1%	32	40.5%	12	15.2%
Ease of getting to and from volunteer work	76	9	11.8%	3	3.9%	7	9.2%	18	23.7%	29	38.2%	10	13.2%
Opportunities to meet and work with people of all ages	77	8	10.4%	2	2.6%	5	6.5%	26	33.8%	23	29.9%	13	16.9%

Communication and Information

25. How would you rate your knowledge regarding the services and resources that exist for older adults in Montclair? (e.g., housing options, transportation options, healthcare programs, etc.)

N= 82	**N**	**%**
Excellent	6	7.3%
Good	19	23.2%
Average	31	37.8%
Poor	23	28.0%
Very poor	3	3.7%

26. Where do you get information about resources that exist for older adults in Montclair? *(Check all that apply)*

N= 81	N	%
Lifelong Montclair brochures, guides, and flyers	30	37.0%
Township of Montclair Senior Citizens' Advisory Committee (MSCAC)	46	56.8%
Montclair Events and Township Notification System (METS)	15	18.5%
Montclair Times	59	72.8%
TV34	8	9.9%
Friends and family	41	50.6%
Other	29	27.2%
Montclair Public Library	6	7.4%
Internet and email	5	6.2%
Montclair Watercooler	3	3.7%
Montclair Patch	3	3.7%
Baristanet	2	2.5%
AIM	2	2.5%
Church or religious org.	2	2.5%
First Montclair social services	1	1.2%
Word of mouth	1	1.2%
AARP	1	1.2%
United way manual	1	1.2%
Facebook	1	1.2%
Town websites	1	1.2%

27. Please rate the following items related to information sharing in Montclair:

	Total	Not applicable		Very Poor		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Regular and reliable information about resources available to older adults in Montclair	80	2	2.5%	9	11.3%	20	25.0%	43	53.8%	5	6.3%	1	1.3%
Print information is available to you in a format that is easy for you to read	79	8	10.1%	5	6.3%	10	12.7%	38	48.1%	16	20.3%	2	2.5%
Information is available to you in multiple ways (e.g., print, spoken)	79	6	7.6%	3	3.8%	13	16.5%	42	53.2%	12	15.2%	3	3.8%

28. Have you heard about or use any of the following resources?

	Total	Yes		Maybe		No		Not applicable	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lifelong Montclair Guide to Public Transportation	79	48	60.8%	4	5.1%	27	34.2%	0	0.0%
Lifelong Montclair Directory of Senior Services	80	34	42.5%	7	8.8%	39	48.8%	0	0.0%
Montclair Senior Citizens Advisory Council community calendar	78	34	43.6%	9	11.5%	34	43.6%	1	1.3%
Montclair Senior Citizens Advisory Council listserv	74	14	18.9%	11	14.9%	47	63.5%	2	2.7%

29. How would you rate the usefulness of the resources you just mentioned? (e.g. Transportation guide, directory of senior services, community calendar, listserv)?

	Total	Not at all useful		A little useful		Somewhat useful		Very useful		I don't know	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lifelong Montclair Guide to Public Transportation	51	0	0.0%	8	15.7%	19	37.3%	17	33.3%	7	13.7%
Lifelong Montclair Directory of Senior Services	36	0	0.0%	9	25.0%	13	36.1%	11	30.6%	3	8.3%
Montclair Senior Citizens Advisory Council community calendar	38	4	10.5%	4	10.5%	10	26.3%	8	21.1%	12	31.6%
Montclair Senior Citizens Advisory Council listserv	20	0	0.0%	2	10.0%	4	20.0%	6	30.0%	8	40.0%

30. Did you learn about any services or events for older adults in Montclair that you did not already know about from the Lifelong Montclair resources you mentioned?

	Total	Yes		Maybe		No		Not Applicable	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Did you learn about any services or events for older adults in Montclair that you did not already know about from the Lifelong Montclair Guide to Public Transportation?	51	33	64.7%	2	3.9%	9	17.6%	7	13.7%
Did you learn about any services or events for older adults in Montclair that you did not already know about from the Lifelong Montclair Directory of Senior Services?	34	19	55.9%	5	14.7%	6	17.6%	4	11.8%
Did you learn about any services or events for older adults in Montclair that you did not already know about from the Montclair Senior Citizen Advisory Council community calendar?	37	19	51.4%	3	8.1%	9	24.3%	6	16.2%
Did you learn about any services or events for older adults in Montclair that you did not already know about from the Montclair Senior Citizen Advisory Council listserv?	19	11	57.9%	2	10.5%	1	5.3%	5	26.3%

Community Support and Physical and Mental Health Services

31. During the past month, on how many days has your physical wellbeing prevented you from participating in your usual activities, such as self-care, work, or recreation?

N = 57	N	%	Average	Range
Number of Days	43	75.4%	3 days	0 – 30 days
I don't know	9	15.8%	N/A	N/A
I do not wish to answer this question	5	8.8%	N/A	N/A

32. During the past month, on how many days has your mental health (e.g. stress, depression, problems with emotions, etc.) interfered with your ability to participate in your normal activities, such as self-care, work, or recreation?

N = 56	N	%	Average	Range
Number of Days	46	82.1%	1 day	0 – 10 days
I don't know	6	10.7%	N/A	N/A
I do not wish to answer this question	4	7.1%	N/A	N/A

33. Do you experience difficulty paying for any of the following? *(Check all that apply)*

N = 26	N	%
Doctor Copays	3	11.5%
Hospital bills	5	19.2%
Prescription medication	2	7.7%
Other	5	19.2%
property taxes, home repairs	1	3.8%
Cable	1	3.8%
Taxes!!! our taxes have gone from about $5,000 to over $26,000! retirement does not support such a large amount.	1	3.8%
shelters	1	3.8%
Smoke cessation	1	3.8%

34. During the past year, was there a time when you needed a doctor, but could not see one due to the cost?

N = 78	N	%
Yes	5	6.4%
No	69	88.5%
I don't know	2	2.6%
I do not wish to answer this question	2	2.6%

35. Please rate the following items about health programs in Montclair:

	Total	Not applicable/ interested		Very Poor		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Variety of health programs and services for older adults	74	19	25.7%	2	2.7%	10	13.5%	28	37.8%	11	14.9%	4	5.4%
Affordability of health programs and services for older adults	74	19	25.7%	1	1.4%	9	12.2%	31	41.9%	10	13.5%	4	5.4%
Your ability to participate in or use health programs and services for older adults	75	20	26.7%	3	4.0%	6	8.0%	25	33.3%	12	16.0%	9	12.0%
Variety of mental health programs and services for older adults	75	31	41.3%	2	2.7%	16	21.3%	19	25.3%	5	6.7%	2	2.7%
Affordability of mental programs and services for older adults	73	36	49.3%	1	1.4%	9	12.3%	21	28.8%	3	4.1%	3	4.1%
Your ability to participate in or use mental health programs and services for older adults	75	40	53.3%	1	1.3%	9	12.0%	16	21.3%	6	8.0%	3	4.0%

Demographics

36. Please select your gender.

N = 80	N	%
Male	23	28.8%
Female	57	71.3%

37. What is your marital status?

N = 80	N	%
Single	9	11.3%
Married or domestic partnership	36	45.0%
Widowed	14	17.5%
Divorced	21	26.3%
Separated	0	0.0%

38. Are you of Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish origin (e.g., Mexican/Mexican-American/ Chicano, Puerto Rican/Puerto-Rican American, Cuban/Cuban-American)?

N = 77	N	%
Yes	3	3.9%
No	71	92.2%
I don't know	0	0.0%
I do not wish to answer this question	3	3.9%

39. Which of the following racial/ethnic group(s) do you most identify with? *(Check all that apply)*

N = 78	N	%
White	57	73.1%
Black or African American	12	15.4%
Asian	0	0.0%
Native American or American Indian	1	1.3%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
I don't know	0	0.0%
I do not wish to answer this question	8	10.3%
Other	1	1.3%
None	*1*	*1.3%*

40. Which of the following ranges would you say best reflects your total annual household income?

N = 78	N	%
Less than $25,000	10	12.8%
$25,000 to $49,999	7	9.0%
$50,000 to $74,999	9	11.5%
$75,000 to $99,999	10	12.8%
$100,000 to $149,999	15	19.2%
$150,000 or more	9	11.5%
I don't know	0	0.0%
I do not wish to answer this question	18	23.1%

41. What is the highest grade or year of school that you completed?

N = 79	N	%
Kindergarten through grade 8 (Elementary)	0	0.0%
Grades 9 through 11 (Some high school)	0	0.0%
Grade 12 or GED (High school graduate)	1	1.3%
College 1 year through 3 years (Some college or technical school)	4	5.1%
College 4 years (College graduate)	20	25.3%
Graduate school (Masters, PhD or other advanced degree)	53	67.1%
I don't know	0	0.0%
I do not wish to answer this question	1	1.3%

42. What is your age?

N = 89	N	%
55-64 years old	20	22.5%
65-74 years old	44	49.4%
75-84 years old	16	18.0%
85-94 years old	9	10.1%
95+ years old	0	0.0%

Lifelong Montclair Focus Group
Summary per Focus Group Question
As of March 1, 2016

Question 1: What community activities in Montclair do you participate in (e.g. educational activities, faith-based activities, recreation, volunteering, etc.)?

Focus group participants reported engaging in activities that foster social interaction. They preferred to spend time being with other individuals of all ages in public spaces. These included participating in communal meals, community center activities, and other group-based events. For some groups, regular activities also included volunteering and taking advantage of municipal services (e.g., library classes and events).

Question 2: What other activities or events would you like to take part in?

Participants expressed interest in participating in activities or events that promote physical activity and continuing education. For example, participants noted they would like to take continuing education classes, walk in the community and attend classes at the YMCA.

There is variability in the availability and affordability of such services in Montclair. Some participants already participate in these activities. Other reported that the services or programs are not available to them in Montclair, but are in neighboring towns. Some participants noted that the YMCA is "not affordable for seniors" and compared Montclair's YMCA to the Newark YMCA, which offers reduced rates for seniors.

Participants also requested additional activities and events that are inherently social. A senior center, continuing education classes, shopping and other activities are group activities that seniors would like more of in Montclair.

Question 3: How do you usually get to locations that are important to you?

Participants reported using a variety of transportation forms. The type of transportation used depends on the destination, weather, affordability, availability and ability of the individual.

Participants reported that they walk whenever possible, but are limited by weather, condition of sidewalks and ability to walk (balance).

Some participants rely on driving. For these individuals, driving fostered independence and their ability to help others and volunteer.

Focus group participants noted that they use local taxis occasionally, typically when they need point to point service, such as to a medical appointment. They also reported that they have trouble finding a taxi when they need it, which was attributed to a lack of a central dispatch service and too few taxis available.

Participants were aware of the taxi voucher program but did not view it favorably. They noted that the vouchers are limited in their usefulness because taxi drivers expect a tip on top of the voucher. In addition, obtaining the voucher introduced an added layer of effort that outweighed the perceived benefit of the program.

Participants preferred public transportation and public buses because they are reliable, information to use them is easy to locate (e.g., the schedule), they are affordable due to senior discounts and they connect them to the places they wish to go for shopping and other daily activities.

A major deterrent, however, is that they are not always point to point service and bus stops are not always located close to the desired destination. When point to point service is necessary, driving and taxis are preferred.

Although aware of the senior bus, participants did not use it because it was not available in their neighborhood (limited service) and not reliable. Participants also noted that they desired the senior bus to provide point to point service, similar to the senior bus in Glen Ridge.

Question 4: What are some of the experiences you have had using these forms of transportation?

Participants described both positive and negative experiences in Montclair when using different forms of transportation.

The senior bus, public van, and taxis are not always available when needed. For example, one participant relayed a story that she walked home at 2am in the morning after traveling because she was unable to find a taxi at that time of night to bring her home.

Participants preferred to walk to or use public transportation as way to independently travel and reduce concerns around about transportation.

Participants were generally satisfied with the senior discounts offered by public transportation, but were not with those for taxis. They described that single rides in taxis were very expensive and even after purchasing taxi vouchers, the cost exceeds their budget. For some, taxis were seen as a luxurious service which they are unable to afford.

Participants described that they were limited in their options to travel out of the town on a regular basis. They typically use public buses and public transportation when they need to go out of town. They would like to have more accessible, reliable and affordable transportation provided by Montclair that goes out of town on a regular basis. For instance, participants were happy that the town rented a van to take them to Shoprite, but wanted more point to point access so they did not have to carry their groceries. This van, they reported, was the first time the town offered them access to transportation that goes out of town.

Question 5: If you could choose any form of transportation to get to locations that are important to you, what would it be?

Participants identified public transportation as their preferred method of traveling to any desired destination. It provides them with senior discounts, reliability, and accessibility. They feel that public transportation fosters safety and security when they need to go out of town.

Question 6: How do you feel about the housing options that are available to you in Montclair?

Participants feel that housing options are limited and not always available to Montclair residents. They feel that public housing lacks structure, does not have established policies, applicants are wait-listed, and neglects Montclair residents. Public housing is perceived as an unsafe place to live, but participants were unable to move out because rent is very expensive and/or they did not want to leave the town they have lived in their whole life.

Participants who live in public housing described instances of being threatened and having their privacy violated. Participants explained that the building manager runs inspections at any time during the day and residents are threatened if they complain to anyone. People who complain or do not follow the rules are put on the "bad list". Residents are allowed to have personal care items only, any other items are thrown away or confiscated by the building manager.

Other participants have continued to live in their homes or live with other individuals from different ethnical and racial backgrounds. They are afraid to depend on public housing because of the stories other individuals share with them. However, taxes are the main concern for house owners; sometimes they have to seek public assistance to pay their taxes.

Participants feel that Montclair has major problems with housing. They expressed anger with the people who run the town because it is perceived that they are not doing anything to help senior residents. The prejudice that involves housing in Montclair is frustrating because Upper Montclair residents do not have to beg for housing or be wait listed.

Question 7: What programs or services do you know about or use that impact housing options for older adults in Montclair?

Focus group participants varied in the type of housing they resided in as well as the services they used related to housing.

Some lived in public senior housing and expressed dissatisfaction and safety concerns with it. They felt vulnerable and cited personal examples of administrators violating their right to privacy. They explained that their apartments are continuously inspections without their permission and at times, have been threatened by the building manager and other staff. Some participants reported feeling unsafe living at a public building, but feel trapped because they do not have anywhere else to go. They felt that obtaining a place public housing was an unfair process because it did not seem to follow any policies. For example, non-Montclair residents were admitted in the building while Montclair residents were struggling to find a place to live.

Some participants lived in homes they owned. These participants obtained assistance from the United Way that helped them with their property taxes and identifying additional resources.

Other participants lived in rental apartments, but cited that space was restrictive.

Participants who did not live in a home that they owned noted that they needed more space in their living areas for storage. Some explained that they paid for a storage unit because they did not want to give up their possessions but could not find the space to store them in their residence.

Of note, participants were not aware of the Homesharing program.

Question 8: To what extent do you find these programs or services useful?

Participants stated that public programs or municipal services are limited in Montclair. One useful service is the United Way's support, as the agency has provided assistance with paying PSE&G bills, filling out their annual taxes and with finding resources when they are unable to pay property taxes. Participants reported that the United Way's staff understands them and they feel connected to the United Way community. Some participants expressed that are afraid to lose the United Way and its support as they did when they lost CHRILL.

Question 9: How do you find out information about the services and resources that exist in Montclair for older adults?

Focus group participants find information about services and resources in Montclair through events, social gatherings, public organizations and the public library. The library is a main resource for participants to obtain information about services in Montclair. Others attend religious and social events such as Toni's Kitchen, MESH, local churches, and the United Way, where staff help them find assistance. Participants find these places comfortable and helpful when they need emotional or financial support. They also noted that some senior events are not attuned to all Montclair residents because they feel as if "they don't fit in" and limits their accessibility.

Question 10: How do you like to receive information about community services in Montclair?

Participants expressed specific, though varied, preferences when receiving information about the community services in Montclair. Some prefer to receive information by word of mouth during social events because there is someone to guide them and show them where to go. Others prefer the newspaper and mail because they like read and learn more about the services that available in town. Few mentioned that they would like to receive emails; however, not all residents have access to a computer or have computer skills.

Question 11: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Focus group participants would like to see improvements in the transportation services available to them. Having reliable (for both departures and arrivals) and affordable transportation are critical. Other towns provide transportation that picks them up at their home, brings them where they want and brings them back home. This is a particular issue when going grocery shopping because they must find a way to carry their groceries for several blocks back to their homes.

Participants are aware of the services offered in neighboring towns and are looking for similar services in Montclair. For example, they would like to have access to a senior center, senior discounts for YMCA memberships, food pantries, and other social events that promote physical activities and social interactions.

Grocery shopping in Montclair is perceived as out of participants' budget. They expressed discontent that they were promised a new affordable supermarket and nothing has been done. They need a new supermarket that is close to them and that has a variety of healthy products.

Some participants feel as if they belong to a different town or "Lower Montclair". They feel that there is a biased system that divides Montclair residents and that this division restricts them from accessing the same services that residents in other areas of Montclair have.

Some participants expressed that they would like to have someone in the municipal offices or some other place to serve as a primary contact when they have problems with their Medicare or when they receive information in the mail. They do not know who to contact for more information and to better understand the information they receive.