Aging in Hopkinton:
A Community Needs Assessment

August 2024

Commissioned by the Town of Hopkinton

Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging
Gerontology Institute
Donna M. and Robert J. Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences
University of Massachusetts Boston

UMass Boston

Dear Hopkinton Community Members,

I am very excited to share with you the report *Aging in Hopkinton: A Community Needs Assessment*, researched and written by the expert team at the University of Massachusetts Boston Gerontology Institute.

This report is the result of many months and years of coordination and planning within the community as well as with outside partnerships. While some of you may have just heard about this initiative, many of Hopkinton's residents and seniors have participated in a number of programs, discussions, and surveys over the last year.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and are moved to engage in the community around seniors' needs. I learned a great deal from it myself, and it has already provided us with ideas of how to improve and expand the lives of seniors in town. We intend to distribute this report to all the stakeholders and use the information to advance relevant projects that will have demonstrable impacts on how seniors live in Hopkinton. Senior Services is very grateful to all those who took the time and effort to participate in the focus groups and who contributed so thoughtfully. We are also grateful to Susan E. Berger and her team for their time and expertise in creating such a polished and readable document.

I am so proud that Hopkinton is leading the way with age and dementia friendly initiatives. These efforts require deliberate and intentional steps to design a community that supports people of all ages and abilities and ensure that the community meets the needs of all residents. This assessment and report is one piece of our efforts that will help outline a number of key goals in the process.

We look forward to integrating the findings from this needs assessment into a Five-Year Strategic Plan in the coming months.

Thank you for your support, vision, and engagement as we truly make Hopkinton a community where all seniors are able to thrive not just survive!

Sincerely,

Amy Beck
Director of Senior Services

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Contributors and Acknowledgements

This report was produced by the Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging (CSDRA), a research unit within the Gerontology Institute at UMass Boston's McCormack School. The CSDRA provides resources and research expertise to communities, non-governmental organizations, and other agencies throughout the Commonwealth.

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Recommended Citation

Berger, S. & Coyle, C. "Aging in Hopkinton: A Community Needs Assessment" (June 2024). *Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging Publications*

Executive Summary

This report describes research undertaken by the Center for Social & Demographic Research on Aging (CSDRA) within the Gerontology Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston, on behalf of the Town of Hopkinton. The goals of this project were to investigate the needs, interests, preferences, and opinions of Hopkinton residents age 55 or older by engaging the community regarding their experiences and needs relevant to Senior Services objective to identify and serve the needs of Hopkinton's older residents. The contents of this report are meant to inform the Town of Hopkinton, Hopkinton Senior Services, and organizations that work with and on behalf of older residents of Hopkinton for the purposes of the Senior Services strategic planning and mission fulfillment, including planning and coordination of services and programs for current and future needs of residents. The report will also help to build awareness about issues facing Hopkinton older residents among community members at large.

This needs assessment provides a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and opportunities presented by Hopkinton's aging population. The study employed a robust mixed-methods approach, incorporating demographic data analysis, key informant interviews, focus groups with town staff and older residents, and a community survey with a strong 27% response rate. The findings paint a nuanced picture of aging in Hopkinton, highlighting both the strengths of existing services and areas requiring immediate attention. While many of the findings, and the recommendations that follow, intersect with the scope of responsibility of Hopkinton Senior Services, it is understood that responding to many needs and concerns expressed in the community will require the involvement of other municipal offices or community stakeholders, and some will require substantial collaborative effort. Below, we summarize <u>key findings</u> and make the following <u>recommendations</u> to the Town of Hopkinton.

Aging in Hopkinton: Strengths

➢ **Residents appreciate and value many aspects of living in Hopkinton.** This needs assessment paints a picture of a town cherished for its sense of community, desirable location, and abundant natural beauty. The most frequently cited reasons for loving Hopkinton center around the theme of community, with residents praising the "friendly people," "small town feel," and "knowing your neighbors." Beyond the strong social fabric, residents appreciate the town's strategic location. Proximity to Boston, easy access to major highways, and closeness to family were frequently mentioned as key advantages. As well, the open space and access to outdoor recreation are valued attributes by many residents.

Aging in Hopkinton: Challenges and Recommendations

Communication within departments and among residents in Hopkinton could be improved. The majority of older Hopkinton survey respondents ages 70 and older access information from paper sources (i.e., *The Hilltopper, Hopkinton Independent*), while those ages 55 to 59 are more likely to use online resources such as Facebook. Despite many people accessing these resources, about half of survey respondents noted that they would NOT know who to contact in Hopkinton if someone in their family needed help accessing social services, health services or other municipal services. Stakeholders shared that it can be difficult to stay connected and aware of happenings within Town, due to both limited time and lack of a streamlined process for communication. As well, residents shared that it can be difficult to find out about programs and services offered and expressed a desire for better dissemination. It is also possible that the Hopkinton Senior Center is not meeting the needs of certain segments of the Hopkinton older population, despite efforts to reach underrepresented groups. Throughout interviews, focus groups, and survey responses, residents and stakeholders suggested programs and services they wish were available, yet many of these are already in place. While it is evident that there are many excellent programs and services offered through Senior Services, it appears that the main challenge is getting the word out to those who need to know about them.

Recommendations to improve communication:

- Continue to publicize programs and services through both electronic (email, social media) and paper (*The Hilltopper, Hopkinton Independent*) communication to reach the broad range of potential users of Senior Services.
- Strengthen linkages and communication pathways between Town offices and community organizations around issues relating to the senior population.
  - Enhance existing, and encourage the creation of more, collaborations especially relating to supporting vulnerable residents of the community.
  - Facilitate a quarterly meeting for representatives from town departments to come together. These meetings would focus on sharing resources and information about programs and services available through various organizations but also provide a mechanism by which communication about issues of isolation among providers can be streamlined and relationships established.
- Embed Senior Center staff or volunteers in community organizations, cultural groups, and special interest groups that serve older adults of varied ethnicities—rotate this person regularly to ensure that exchange in information is ongoing.
- Explore the creation of "neighborhood networks" that can provide channels for word-of-mouth communication at a micro-local level. Establish neighborhood liaisons as volunteers to serve as the conduit between Senior Services and their neighbors.
- Generate an email listserv to facilitate sending weekly or monthly email "blasts" to generate reminders for key events.

$ Financial insecurity – driven largely by taxes, cost of living, and housing - is a concern for many Hopkinton older residents. Recent data from the American Community Survey show that 18% or residents age 65 and older report annual incomes under $25,000. Therefore, it is not surprising that many Hopkinton residents experience housing burden, spending more than 30% of their income on rent or mortgage, including 34% of those age 65 and older. For all ages, about three out of four residents who earn less than $79,999/year spend more than 30% of their earnings on rent or mortgage. Ten percent of survey respondents responded that they disagree with the statement, "I have adequate resources to meet my financial needs, including home maintenance, personal healthcare, and other expenses." and this percentage was larger for those age 80 and older (15%). Similarly, about 10% of survey respondents noted that while their current residence needs home repairs, they cannot afford to make these repairs.

Recommendations to support those who might be struggling financially

$ Continue to promote and expand tax relief programs (e.g., tax-work off program, tax freezes) to reach more seniors. For example:
- o Increase eligibility and ease in accessing these programs, including the ability of family members or friends to work on behalf of an older resident who is seeking property tax relief.
- o Broaden awareness of tax relief programs through an informational insert in a utility bill and highlighted section in *The Hilltopper* and on the Senior Services website.

$ Strengthen efforts to make residents aware of resources that are available to them, such as programs supporting food security (e.g., SNAP), fuel assistance, and the like.

$ Consider expanding educational workshops on topics related to economic security, such as planning for retirement, finding new employment, creating ways to use home equity to age in place, or seeking alternative housing models like home-sharing or renting out rooms.

$ Engage with local businesses and organizations to create "senior discount" programs for a range of programs and services that can offset costs and improve quality of life for older residents.

$ Consider hosting a program like "How to Cut the Cord" to educate residents on how they can access streaming or other online media to eliminate or reduce the cable bill.

$ Promote and engage with local organizations (e.g., fraternal organizations, faith communitities, Friends of Hopkinton Seniors) to assist residents with home repair projects, snow removal, and lawn care for older adults who are unable to perform these activities or who cannot afford it.

Limited transportation options in Hopkinton are a challenge to aging in place. There are limited transportation options in Hopkinton for those who do not drive. Fortunately, the majority of survey respondents drive themselves, yet 21% of those 80 and older do not drive. An additional 25% of those age 80 and older drive with some limitations (e.g., avoid driving at night, on the highway, in inclement weather, etc.), while 17% of those age 70 to 79 do not drive or drive with some limitations. As well, many respondents who are currently driving are concerned that they will need to move from Hopkinton once they can no longer drive. Other aspects of a community also impact one's ability to get around. While participants are satisfied with the accessibility of parks, trails, and recreation, the availability of parking and conveniently located public restrooms are a concern for many survey respondents.

Recommendations to support transportation needs

- Promote awareness of transportation options already available and expand transport available through the Hopkinton Senior Center, including medical trips but also "amenity trips" for social participation. Advocate for extending routes, hours, and on-demand services.
- Promote existing opportunities for "refresher" driving courses and car safety programs as ways to support safe driving for as long as possible.
    - AARP offers a Smart Driver course. This is an educational program that offers older adults the opportunity to check how well their personal vehicles "fit" them. The program also provides information and materials on community-specific resources that could enhance their safety as drivers, and/or increase their mobility in the community.
    - Consider hosting a "car fit" program[1], an educational program to support comfort, safety, and fit within a vehicle to support safe driving.
- Host training sessions on the use of available transportation options through the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA), including their Dial-a-Ride program.
- Consider the establishment of "age friendly parking spots" or give older residents priority during particular hours at various locations in Town to encourage older adults to get out in the community.
- Engage with local businesses, organizations, and municipal entities to document where accessible bathrooms exist and make a map of these restrooms available to older residents via paper copies at the Senior Center and posted on the Town website.

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[1] https://car-fit.org/

Opportunities to adapt current housing, downsize, or obtain accessible housing are perceived as challenging in Hopkinton. Many Hopkinton homes need repairs or modifications for older residents to remain there safely. Approximately one third of survey respondents noted their home needs repairs or modifications and about 10% of these residents are unable to afford these repairs and/or modifications. Entry-level living makes it easier and safer for many older adults, yet 60% of survey respondents noted they do not have a bedroom or bathroom on the first floor, including 37% of those age 80 and older who are more likely to have mobility restrictions. Regarding housing preferences, those age 55 to 79 prefer single family homes or condominiums or townhomes, while those age 80 and older prefer assisted living or senior/disabled or subsidized housing options.

Recommendations to support housing needs

- ⌂ Promote awareness of various housing options across the lifespan. Consider hosting a "housing choice" planning seminar to encourage pro-active thinking about aging in place. Invite local experts (e.g., real estate agents, contractors, disability commission members, lawyers, financial professionals) who can share their perspective about future housing options based on a wide range of individual scenarios.
- ⌂ Continue to educate residents about aging-in-place resources such as tax deferrals and reverse mortgages.
- ⌂ Distribute educational materials, hold workshops, or offer other opportunities for Hopkinton residents to learn about home modifications that can promote safety in the home.
- ⌂ Consider possible community partners who can support the creation of a list of trusted plumbers, carpenters, electricians, and landscapers that can be made available to older residents.
- ⌂ Expand access and remove barriers to building accessory dwelling units in the town.

Many Hopkinton residents need support due to physical, emotional, and/or cognitive conditions. Some Hopkinton residents struggle with community participation and/or require help with daily activities and not surprisingly, this is most prevalent for those age 80 and older. Hopkinton older adults are dealing with social and behavioral health challenges commonly associated with younger adults, although nationally there has been an increase in substance use and suicide in the older population. Twenty five percent of survey respondents, or their family or friends, have been affected by substance abuse, 3% of those who responded to the survey acknowledged that they have considered or attempted suicide, and 13% noted that they are close to someone who has considered or attempted suicide. Caregiving can lead to physical, emotional, and financial strain for many individuals. More than one in three survey respondents are, or have in the past 12 months, provided care or assistance to someone in need and more than half of these caregivers noted that it is challenging to provide the needed care.

Recommendations to support Hopkinton residents with physical, emotional, and/or cognitive challenges

- Continue to implement and expand community-wide dementia friendly training.
    - Advocate for local restaurant staff to gain training to provide age and dementia friendly dining.
    - Engage faith communities. During Alzheimer's and brain health awareness months, decorate the pews in purple to raise awareness about dementia and to demonstrate that persons of all cognitive abilities are welcome.
- Continue to offer opportunities to establish Mental Health First Aid training[2] – similar to dementia friendly training - an initiative to expand capacity to support residents.
- Expand and utilize the opt-in electronic system for systematically identifying and communicating with at-risk and vulnerable adults and families during emergencies.
- Create a "see someone, tell someone" campaign to encourage those who interact with residents directly to notify Senior Services staff of someone who is isolated or in need of support. This could include town employees, local social workers or case managers, utility workers, postal workers, faith community leaders, and the general public.
- Consider hosting a "Caregiver's Night Out" to provide residents who might be caring for a spouse, parent, or grandparent an opportunity to enjoy a night of entertainment. Explore partnerships with volunteer groups and other aging service providers to provide respite care during the event.
- Continue to provide information and referrals to supplemental care support, such as adult day care and respite care.

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[2] https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/

Hopkinton Senior Services: Challenges and Recommendations

The image of the Hopkinton Senior Center could be improved to reach a larger segment of Hopkinton residents 60 and older. The majority (55%) of survey respondents who use the Senior Center attend only a few times a year. These individuals provided a variety of reasons why they don't use the Senior Center, with almost 40% noting that they don't need the services offered, possibly indicating that they see the Senior Center as a place to access services rather than a place for active and healthy living. Key informant interviewees emphasized the need to break the stigma of the Senior Center as a place to go if you are in a wheelchair or need help and rebrand it as a place for healthy living where one can exercise, learn, and socialize while also accessing services and support, as needed.   Some survey respondents commented that they wish the Senior Center offered late afternoon, evening and/or weekend programming.

Recommendations to improve the image of the Hopkinton Senior Center

- Correct misperceptions about who is "eligible" to participate in Senior Services activities.
    - Feature current participant profiles in the *Hopkinton Independent* or other publications. Invite participants to share their experiences with Senior Services staff and highlight their stories in *The Hilltopper*.
    - Target engagement efforts at potential new users. For example, send a birthday greeting to residents when they turn 60, inviting them to the Senior Center.
- Consider a rebranding effort to raise awareness about what is offered by Hopkinton Senior Services. Consider changing the name to be more inclusive and create an image that reframes aging as a positive and active experience.
- Expand outdoor and indoor fitness offerings. These were the most highly rated type of programming identified by both Hopkinton Senior Services users and non-users. More active programming will also attract residents who may not yet "need" services.
- Consider expanding hours that the Senior Center is open to include late afternoon, evening, and weekend hours, as a way to reach those who are still working or have other daytime commitments. Begin by just adding one evening a week or one evening a month to explore if these changed hours reach a broader group of residents.
- Consider using different messages for different audiences when marketing services and programs. For example, encourage adult children to access Senior Services Facebook page by including specific sections for them (e.g., sections about caregiving, support for "taking away the keys", etc.).
- Continue to use the Senior Center as a meeting place a few times a year for evening or weekend educational or social events that would bring residents of all ages to the building.

Programs and services offered by Senior Services are valued; additional programs and services are suggested to increase participation and reach a broader segment of Hopkinton residents (e.g., those who are in their 60's, those who are still working, residents of minority groups). Fourteen percent of all ages noted that they are not interested in the programs offered. While many survey respondents expressed a desire to expand fitness programs, many other programs and services including performances and presentations, lectures, speakers, and cultural events, wellness programs, and socializing were also highly rated as areas to develop and expand. It is worth noting that survey respondents ages 55 to 69 reported that they don't use the Senior Center because they are "not old enough", "don't have time", and "don't know what is offered".

Recommendations to expand programs and services offered by Senior Services to reach a broader segment of Hopkinton residents.

- Consider ways to encourage residents who are reluctant to participate on their own (e.g., a 'new member day' or 'bring a buddy' program). Consider establishing a 'welcome committee' to ensure that new participants have a positive first experience.
- Consider implementing a "surrogate grandparent" program that matches older adults with local families for mentorship and socialization to those whose families live out-of-town or are otherwise absent.
- Consider offering culturally themed meals periodically as a way of bridging and celebrating cultures.
- Expand and promote programs for newly retired residents or those considering retirement. Topics might include, for example, financial planning, health insurance coverage, or volunteer opportunities.
- Expand and promote inter-generational programming, in partnership with other town resources (e.g., Hopkinton Public Library, Hopkinton School Department).
- Advocate for the Hopkinton school student councils to offer discounted, free tickets to performances and concerts.
- Increase social programming, outreach, and education to promote intergenerational social engagement, respect, and inclusion among residents of diverse backgrounds, generations, and abilities.

The demand for Senior Services programs and services is expected to escalate in the coming years and additional staff is needed to meet the current and future needs and preferences of older adults in Hopkinton. According to projections created by the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts, a trend toward an older population is expected in future decades. While currently 19% of Hopkinton population is age 60 and older, projections suggest that by 2030 more than one quarter of Hopkinton residents will be age 60 or older—23% of the Town's population will be between the ages of 60 and 79, with an additional 4% age 80 and older.

Recommendations to address the many suggestions in this report and to meet the needs of the increasing and changing Hopkinton demographics.

- Plan for escalating demand for Senior Center programs and services by increasing staffing. An additional full time staff person is needed to expand current programming and implement new programming. While there is only one recommendation in this section, it is key to supporting the recommendations throughout this report.

Introduction

The Town of Hopkinton is located about 26 miles west of Boston and is well-known as the starting point for the Boston Marathon. The Town's open space and natural resources, with many walking, hiking, and biking trails, are valued features of the community. Like many towns and cities across Massachusetts, the population of Hopkinton is aging. Currently, about one out of every five residents is age 60 and older and this share is projected to grow larger over the coming years. As the older adult population[3] continues to grow, planning is necessary to ensure that the Town is adequately prepared to meet the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities that an aging population offers. Hopkinton Senior Services, an important and valued resource, operates as the Town's central point of contact for older residents who seek services to promote healthy and fulfilling lives.

This report presents the results of a comprehensive examination of issues relating to aging in Hopkinton. A needs assessment was undertaken in order to support planning on the part of the Town of Hopkinton, Senior Services, and the community as a whole. Results presented here focus on the characteristics and needs of Hopkinton residents who are age 55 and older. While the primary goal of this report is to support Senior Services planning, a secondary goal is to present information that will be useful to other Hopkinton offices and organizations interacting with older residents.

Hopkinton Senior Services

Hopkinton Senior Services, sometimes referred to as Hopkinton Council on Aging (COA), is a municipal department including a municipally appointed board and a senior center. It is meant to link older residents to needed resources and desired activities. Virtually every city and town in Massachusetts has a COA, and in most communities, they serve as the only public social service agency. Each COA is expected to establish its own priorities based on local needs and resources.

The mission of Hopkinton Senior Services[4] is "to enhance and enrich the quality of life for adults aged 60 and older in the Town of Hopkinton, by providing activities and services that encourage independence, healthy living, and continued participation in the community." This work is done in concert with other local town departments and various area private and public providers and organizations, including Springwell, Inc. - the regional Area Agency on Aging serving Hopkinton - the Massachusetts Council on Aging (MCOA) and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA). The goal is to provide a welcoming environment that services the diversity of the Town's older adult residents.

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[3] For the purposes of this report, "older adults" and "seniors" are defined as individuals age 60 and older. This is consistent with the Older Americans Act, the legislation authoring many services meant for older adults, which also uses age 60 and over to define the population covered by its provisions.

[4] This mission statement was retrieved in January 2024 from https://www.hopkintonma.gov/departments/senior_services_(coa_senior_center)/index.php

In general, when considering the mission of COAs, observers commonly think of two sets of responsibilities. First, COAs promote well-being among older residents by offering activities that appeal specifically to older adults and that promote personal growth and social engagement. Exercise classes, late-life learning programs, and informational programs are good examples. Second, COAs provide services to older residents and their families that promote physical and emotional wellness. Blood pressure clinics and transportation services are common examples of such services.

Many observers are not aware of two additional important responsibilities of COAs. COA staff members link older residents in the community to existing programs for which they may be eligible by providing needed information and referring residents to appropriate programs and services. For example, staff may help residents apply for income support programs or health insurance made available through the state or federal government. Finally, COAs provide leadership within the community around issues faced by older adults, by serving on municipal boards, interacting with other municipal offices, and serving as resources to residents and organizations.

Hopkinton Senior Services takes on these many responsibilities. Hopkinton Senior Services offers a large variety of programs and services to primarily Hopkinton older residents, although some of the programs are open to residents of all ages. They continually develop new programming to meet the needs of their residents. For example, Senior Services initiated a "Repair Fair", with seniors volunteering to be "fixers" while many residents brought in items to be repaired. Additionally, Hopkinton Senior Services has been actively engaged in becoming age and dementia friendly and provides support and resources for those living with dementia and their families along with education to the Hopkinton public, at large. The Outreach Coordinators provide referrals and connect residents with many other needed services, such as fuel or nutrition assistance. Hopkinton Senior Services also plays an important leadership role in the community, serving as a resource to other Town offices and organizations working in the community, and collaborating on initiatives broadly beneficial to residents.
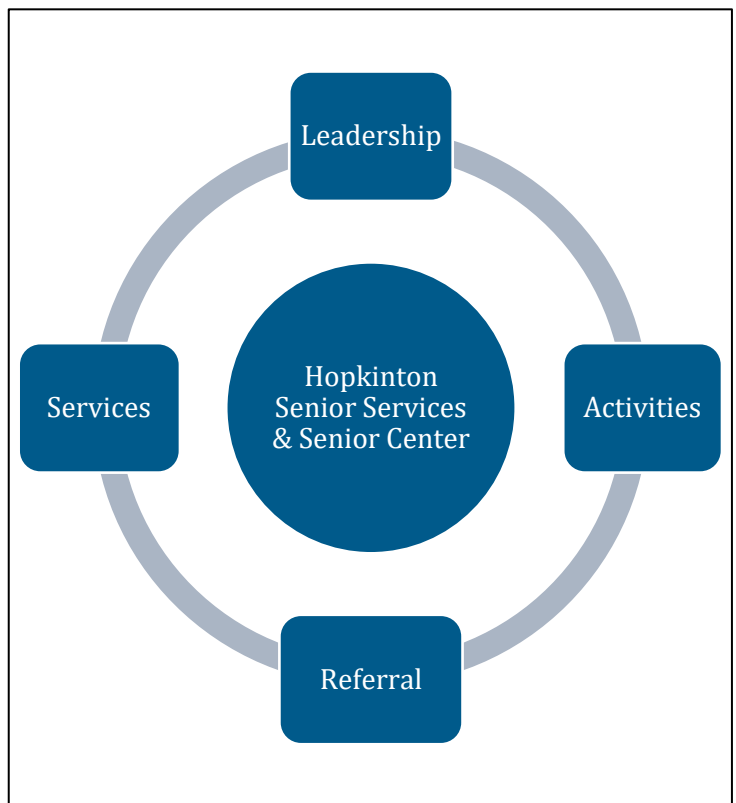
Senior Center Operations Overview

The Senior Center is located at 28 Mayhew Street and is open Monday to Thursday from 8:30am to 4pm and Friday from 8:30am to 2pm. The Hopkinton COA consists of a nine-member board of town-appointed residents. They advise Senior Services staff about programs and services to support the Town's older residents. Senior Services paid staff include a Director, an Assistant Director, an Administrative Assistant, two Outreach Coordinators, one Volunteer Coordinator, a Receptionist, two Bus Drivers, and five Kitchen Staff. Hopkinton Senior Services is funded through municipal appropriation, grant support from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA), Friends of the Hopkinton Senior, and resident donations, along with fees charged for some activities. Paid staff are supplemented by volunteers who contribute many hours annually in support of numerous activities including providing technology support, sharing health insurance information, manning the front desk and many other essential services.

Initiatives offered through the Hopkinton Senior Center include:

- Outreach services that connect residents to services and benefits for which they are already eligible (e.g., fuel assistance; SHINE; property tax work-off program)

- Programs that help residents stay in their homes (e.g., transportation services; wellness checks; Sand for Seniors)

- Programs that help residents stay healthy (e.g., exercise classes; yoga; walks)

- Programs that provide learning opportunities (e.g., TED talks; book groups; technology training)

- Programs that provide the opportunity for residents to socialize with others (e.g., coffee chat; day trips; Veteran's breakfast)

- Programs that provide residents with creative opportunities (e.g., pottery; loom weaving; variety show)

- Programs that support residents dealing with challenging circumstances (e.g., widow's group; durable medical equipment loan; caregiver support group)

- Programs that connect residents to professional services (e.g., podiatry; hearing aid cleaning; mental health counseling referrals)

- Programs that support people with dementia (e.g., monthly memory café; dementia friends education sessions)

- Programs that provide nutritional support (e.g., daily continental breakfast; daily lunch)

A complete calendar of programs and events is available at the Hopkinton Senior Center and is available online[5]. All households with residents 60 and older receive a paper copy of the newsletter, *The Hilltopper*, unless they request it via email. Currently 2523 households in Hopkinton receive a hardcopy and 415 people receive the newsletter via email. Hopkinton Senior Services also uses social media (i.e., Facebook) to promote activities and events. As well, programs and events are highlighted in a section of the *Hopkinton Independent*, called "Senior Snippets".

Data from Senior Services annual report to the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) indicate that during FY2023, a total of approximately 450 unique ("unduplicated") individuals were served through Hopkinton Senior Services. While Hopkinton Senior Services primarily serves residents 60 and older, about 35 residents under age 60 benefited from the services offered.

During FY2023, outreach and advocacy efforts impacted many individuals, including 177 unique outreach contacts, 88 individuals receiving SHINE counseling, and 31 residents receiving mental health referrals. During this period, 290 residents benefitted from nutritional programs including congregate and "grab and go" meals. Other high involvement services and programs included transportation services, fitness and exercise classes, recreational and socialization programs, cultural events, lifelong learning activities, and arts and crafts programs.

As the number of older residents increases, the need for resources dedicated to this segment of the population will also continue to grow and to change. Thus, it is crucial that Hopkinton Senior Services plan in earnest to assure that resources are used efficiently and effectively to meet the current and future needs of older people in the Town. The purpose of this report is to describe the research process and key findings of the needs assessment study just completed. The report concludes with a set of recommendations for Hopkinton moving forward.

Methods

This assessment utilized both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods alongside rigorous analyses in order to capture a broad and deep understanding of Hopkinton and its older residents. Demographic material used in this report was drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau (the decennial censuses and the American Community Survey) and from projections generated by the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts. Primary data was collected through qualitative methods, including key informant interviews and focus groups, and through a community survey. Additional information about Hopkinton Senior Services was retrieved from material drawn from Senior Services 2023 Annual Report, the Senior

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[5] https://www.hopkintonma.gov/departments/senior_services_(coa_senior_center)/program_calendar.php

Services Website, and Hopkinton's dementia friendly documents, as well as through communication with the Director and Assistant Director of Hopkinton Senior Services.

Demographic Profile

As an initial step toward understanding characteristics of the Town of Hopkinton's older population through quantitative data, we generated a demographic profile of Hopkinton using data from the decennial U.S. Census and the American Community Survey (ACS)—a large, annual survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. For purposes of this assessment, we primarily used information drawn from the most current 5-year ACS files (2018-2022), along with U.S. Census data for Hopkinton to summarize demographic characteristics including growth of the older population, shifts in the age distribution, gender, race and education distributions, householder status, living arrangements, household income, and disability status. Projections were made using data generated by the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts.

Key Informant Interviews

In the fall of 2023, we conducted interviews with four individuals who currently hold leadership positions in Hopkinton. We spoke with the Director of the Health Department, a member of the Fire Department, and two COA board members, one who has been very involved with age and dementia friendly town projects and the other who has been involved with accessibility in the Town. Interviews focused on the key informants' perceptions relating to unmet, as well as foreseeable, community needs; and potential solutions that promote aging in place and wellness among residents. All interviews were conducted remotely via video conference. Interviews ranged from 45 to 75 minutes.

Focus Groups

We conducted two focus groups with participants recruited by the Director and Assistant Director of Senior Services. Each focus group was conducted in person at the Hopkinton Senior Center. One focus group, held in December 2023, consisted of ten municipal staff, all town employees who work with Hopkinton older residents. These employees represented the following town programs and departments: Library; Fire department; Police department; Health department; Public Works department; Youth and Family services; Sustainability, Economic Development and Equity project; and the Assessor's department. The second focus group, held in April 2024, consisted of four residents over the age of 70, some who use the Senior Center frequently and others who have attended only a few events. Participants in the focus groups and those who were interviewed were encouraged to share their thoughts regarding features that support successful aging and barriers that make it challenging to age in Hopkinton along with strategies regarding ways Hopkinton can be a strong and vibrant community for residents of all ages. It is worth noting that a third focus group was scheduled to get insights from residents not typically represented or heard from in Hopkinton. Senior Services staff emailed the South Asian Circle of Hopkinton, the Hopkinton Chinese American Association, and the Islamic Masumeen Center of New England

in Hopkinton, asking them to share the information with their constituents. Unfortunately, no one attended this focus group.

Community Survey

In collaboration with Hopkinton Senior Services and representatives from Hopkinton departments that interact with older adults, a community survey was developed for this study and mailed to all residents age 55 and over (N=5185). A mailing list was obtained from the Hopkinton Town Clerk, based on the most current municipal census. Postcards were mailed to participants alerting them that they would be receiving a survey in the coming weeks. Subsequently, printed surveys were mailed to Hopkinton residents meeting the age requirement, along with a postage-paid return envelope. As well, the survey was made available via the Town's website and hard copies were available at the Senior Center. A total of 1413 responses to the survey were obtained, representing a strong return rate of 27%. Sixteen percent of the surveys (n=224) were returned online, and the rest of the responses were returned by mail.

Data Analysis

Data collected for the resident survey were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics, including frequencies and cross-tabulations, and are reported in full in the **Appendix** and throughout the results section of this report. Some responses elicited through open-ended questions were extracted and cited verbatim within this report (e.g., "What are your greatest concerns about your ability to continue living in Hopkinton as you get older?"). Detailed notes taken during the study's qualitative components (i.e., interviews, focus groups) were reviewed and used to characterize and categorize the ways in which aging issues are impacting older adults and individuals who work with older adults in Hopkinton. We used information from all sources of data to develop recommendations reported in the final section of this report.

Results

Demographic Profile

Age Structure and Population Growth

According to the American Community Survey (ACS), there were about 18,748 residents living in the Town of Hopkinton in 2022. Approximately 36% of the population (6,867ndividuals) were age 50 and older (See **Table 1**). Residents who were age 50 to 59 (3,225 individuals) made up 17% of the population; residents age 60 to 79 (3,262 individuals) comprised around 17%, and another 380 residents (2%) were age 80 and older.

Table 1. Number and percentage distribution of Hopkinton's population by age category, 2022

Age Category	Number	Percentage
Under age 18	5,214	28%
Age 18 to 49	6,667	36%
Age 50 to 59	3,225	17%
Age 60 to 79	3,262	17%
Age 80 and older	380	2%
Total	18,748	100%

Source: American Community Survey, 2018-2022, Table B01001. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.

The share of the Hopkinton population age 50 and older is slightly smaller than the overall state of Massachusetts (**Figure 1**). About 38% of the Massachusetts population was in the 50+ age group in 2022, compared to 36% of the Hopkinton population. Compared to the Commonwealth, Hopkinton also had a smaller portion of residents age 60 and older. In 2022, Massachusetts residents age 60 and over comprised about 24% of the population, including 4% age 80 while Hopkinton residents age 60 and over made up about 19% of the population. However, the share of Hopkinton residents age 50 to 59 (upcoming seniors) is larger than the state as a whole (17% vs. 14%).

Figure 1. Age distribution in Hopkinton and Massachusetts
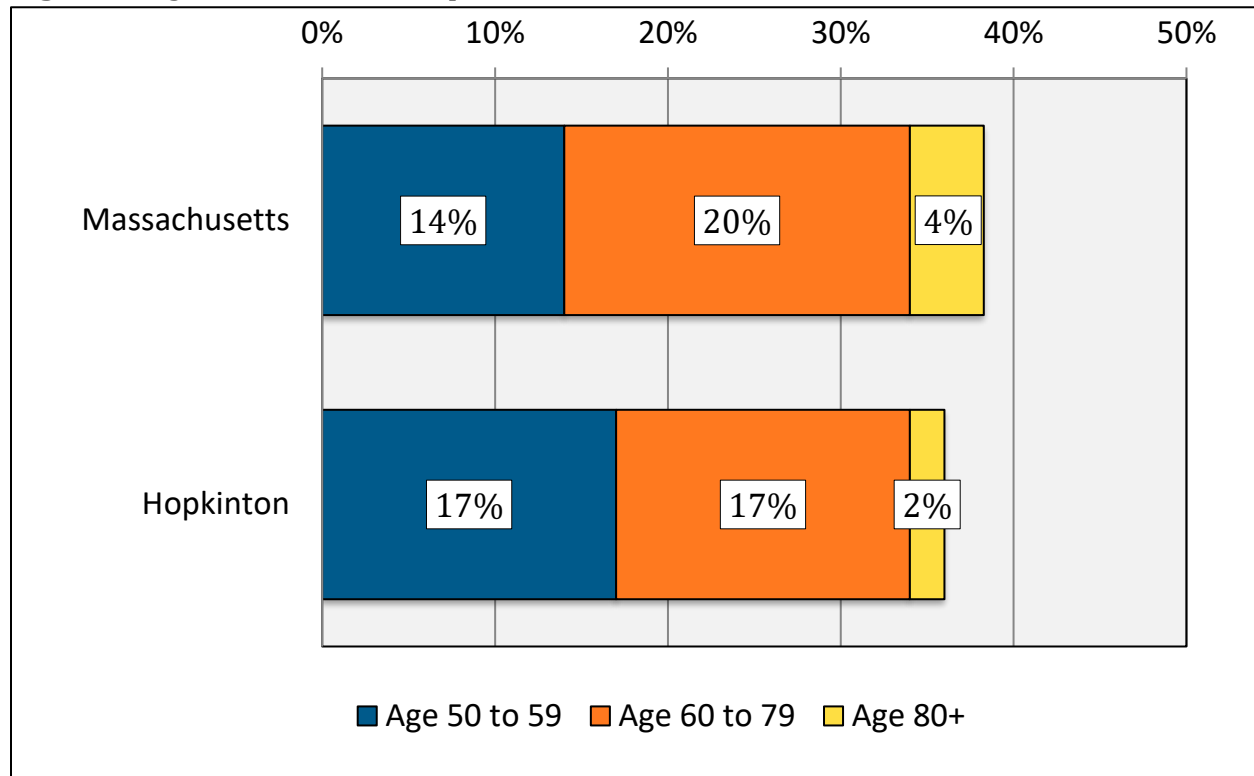
Source: American Community Survey, 2018–2022, Table B01001. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates

Population growth in both Massachusetts and the Town of Hopkinton has been concentrated in older age groups. Between 2010 and 2020, the population of all ages increased by 26% in Hopkinton and 7% in the state as a whole. In both Hopkinton and Massachusetts, the absolute numbers of residents age 50 and over also grew substantially during this time period (*US Census*, *Table P12*). The segment of Hopkinton's population age 50 to 59 increased in size by 22%, a rate of growth much higher than in Massachusetts overall (4%). The population of residents who are age 60 and older increased by 80% in Hopkinton, compared to a 34% increase for the state.

The increments in the share of the older population are projected to continue in the following decades. **Figure 2** shows the age distribution of Hopkinton's population in 2010 and 2020, and population projections for 2030 and 2035[6]. In 2010, about 13% of the Town's population was age 60 and older; this percentage increased to 19% in 2020. According to projections created by the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts, a trend toward an older population is expected in future decades. Donahue Institute projections suggest that by 2030, more than one quarter of Hopkinton residents will be age 60 or older—23% of the

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[6] Population projections are shaped by assumptions about birth rates and death rates, as well as domestic and international in-migration and out-migration. The Donahue Institute projections used here also account for population change associated with aging of the population, which is a strong predictor of future growth and decline of population levels. For more information on the methods used to create Donahue Institute projections, see Renski, Koshgarian, & Strate (March 2015).

Town's population will be between the ages of 60 and 79, with an additional 4% age 80 and older. In 2035, these projections are similar with 26% of the population age 60 or older.

Figure 2. Population trends; age distribution of Hopkinton residents under age 60, age 60-79, and age 80 and older, 2010 to 2020 with projections to 2030 and 2035*
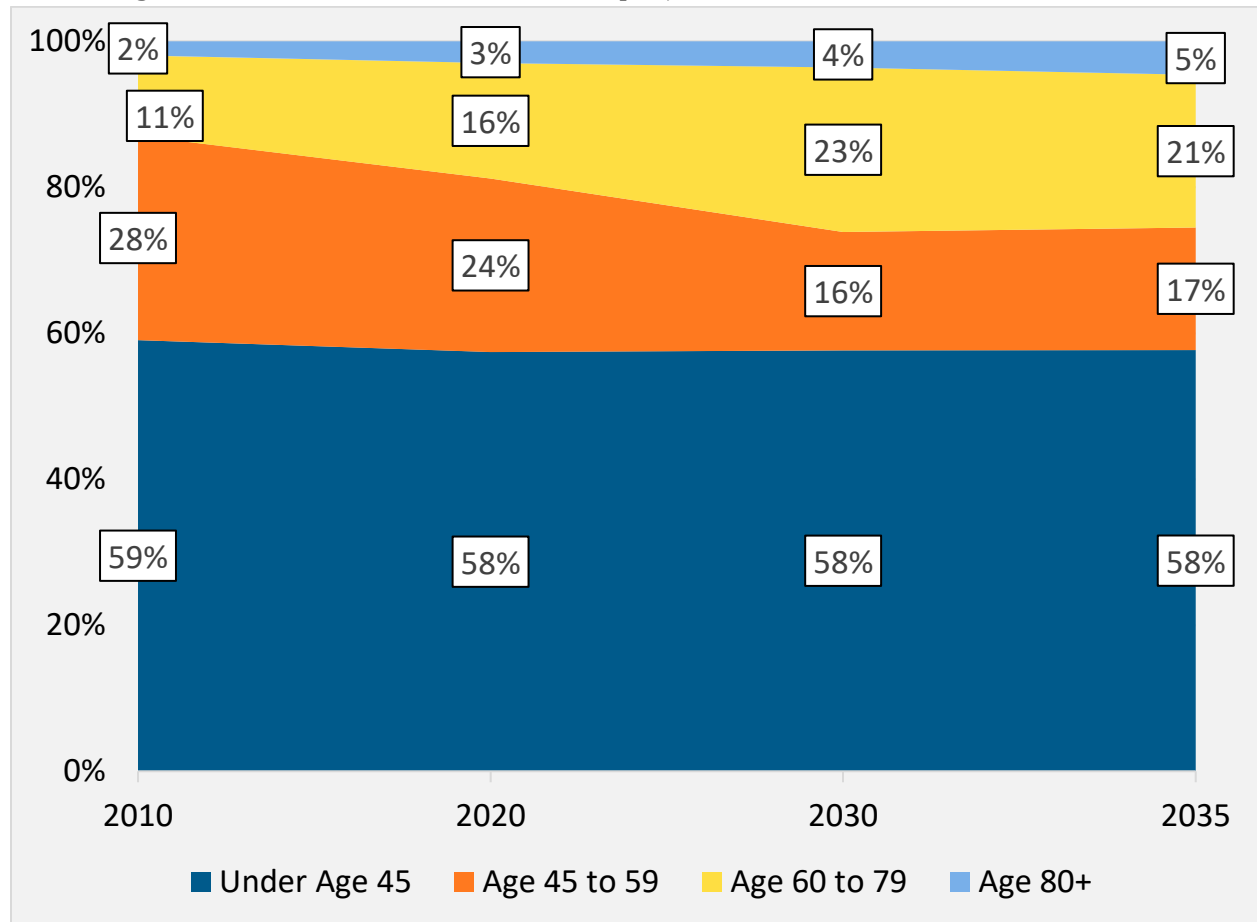
*Source: Population figures for 2010 and 2020 are from the U.S. Census. *The projection data for 2030 and 2035 are from the Donahue Institute, University of Massachusetts.*

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Hopkinton's Older Population

Hopkinton is less diverse than the state with respect to race. For all ages combined, about 76% of Hopkinton residents report their race as White non-Hispanic, compared to 69% in Massachusetts (*ACS, 2018–2022, Table B01001*). Among older adults, Hopkinton is less diverse as well. **Table 2** displays the race of Hopkinton residents age 65 and older. The large majority of older residents report White race (90%). The remaining percentage of the population 65 and older reported race as Other (5%), Asian (4%), and Black (1%). One percent of those 65 and older identify as Hispanic.

Table 2. Race distribution of residents who are age 65 and older in Hopkinton

Race	Number	Percent
White	2,212	90%
Other	116	5%
Asian	93	4%
Black	40	1%
Total	**2,461**	**100%**

Source: American Community Survey, 2018–2022, Tables B01001A-I. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.

Additionally, almost 9% of older Hopkinton residents speak a language other than English at home (*ACS, 2018–2022, Table B16004*). Those who speak a language other than English at home most commonly speak an Indo-European language other than Spanish (5%), followed by Asian and Pacific Island language (3%). The remaining 1% of the population who speak a language other than English speak Spanish.

American Community Survey estimates on education suggest that Hopkinton residents are well educated on average. More than 50% of people 65 and older have either a bachelor's degree (26%) or a graduate/professional degree (27%; *ACS, 2018–2022, Table B15001*). This educational profile contributes to the vitality and character of the community, which depends on older adults who value opportunities to be involved through volunteer and civic engagement activities, as well as late-life learning opportunities— activities that are often present in highly educated communities (Fitzgerald & Caro, 2014).

Similar to older adults living in communities throughout the U.S., a large proportion of Hopkinton residents age 65 and over remain in the workforce. Almost 50% of adults age 64 to 74 are participating in the labor force. Of those age 75 and older, nearly 11% remain in the workforce (*ACS, 2018–2022, Table S2301).*

Nearly 25% of men and 4% of women age 65 and older report veteran status (*ACS, 2018–2022, Table B21001*). As a result, many of the Town's older residents may be eligible to receive some benefits and program services based on their military service or that of their spouses.

Living Arrangements and Housing Costs of Hopkinton's Older Population

A majority of Hopkinton's 6,674 households have householders who are middle-aged or older. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a "householder" is the person reported as the head of household, typically the person in whose name the home is owned or rented.

Residents age 45 and older are householders of 69% of all households in Hopkinton[7] including 22% of those who are age 65 and over (**Figure 3**).

Figure 3. Age structure of Hopkinton householders
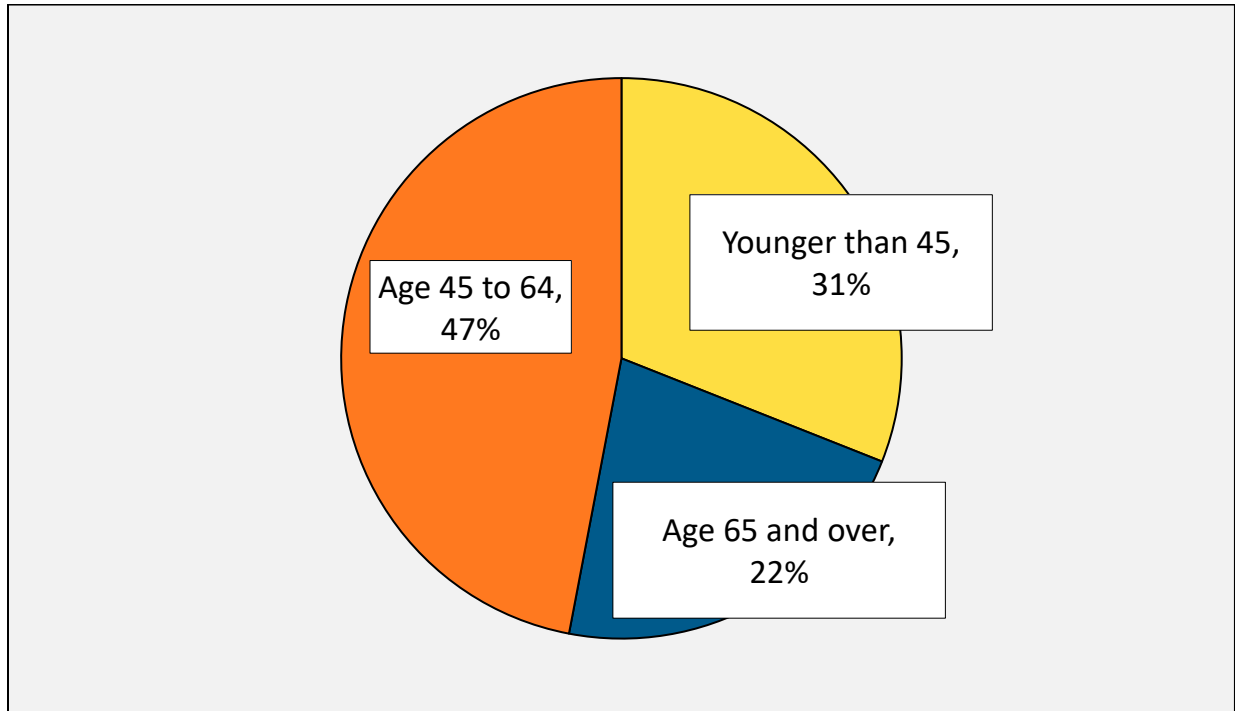
Source: American Community Survey, 2018–2022, Table B25007. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.

Most of all Hopkinton residents live in homes that they own or are purchasing (87%; **Figure 4**). Nearly 93% of residents age 45 to 64 own their homes, and 81% of householders 65 and older own their homes. A sizeable share of Hopkinton residents who are 65 and older and live alone, also own their home (55%). The high number of older homeowners has implications for what amenities and services are likely to be needed and valued by members of the community. Home maintenance and supports are often necessary for older homeowners—especially those who live alone—in order to maintain comfort and safety in their homes.

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[7] Many available Census data on the older population of Hopkinton are based on ages 45 and 65 as reference points rather than ages 50 and 60, as are used elsewhere in this report.

Figure 4. Percent of Hopkinton householders who are homeowners by age category
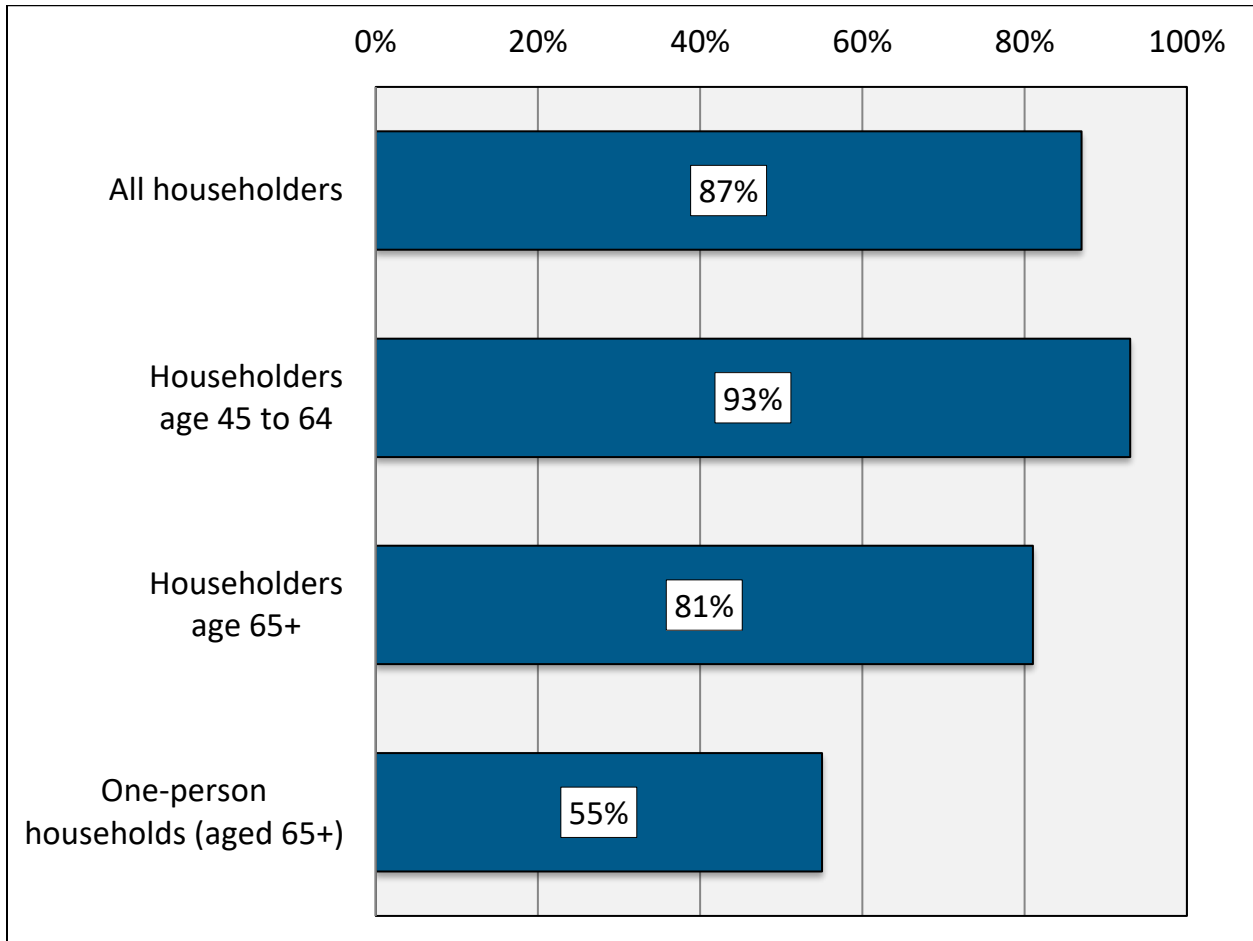
Source: American Community Survey, 2018–2022, Tables B25007 and B25011. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.

Additionally, 36% of Hopkinton's 6,674 households have at least one individual who is age 60 or older (*ACS 2018–2022, Table B11006)*. This proportion— which is likely to increase in the future— generally reflects the widespread demand for programs, services, and other considerations that address aging-related concerns, including health and caregiving needs, transportation options, and safe home environments.

Among the 7,008 housing structures in Hopkinton (**Figure 5**), 84% are single unit structures and the remaining 16% are housing structures that contain two or more housing units, which include apartment complexes.

Figure 5. Number of units in Hopkinton housing structures
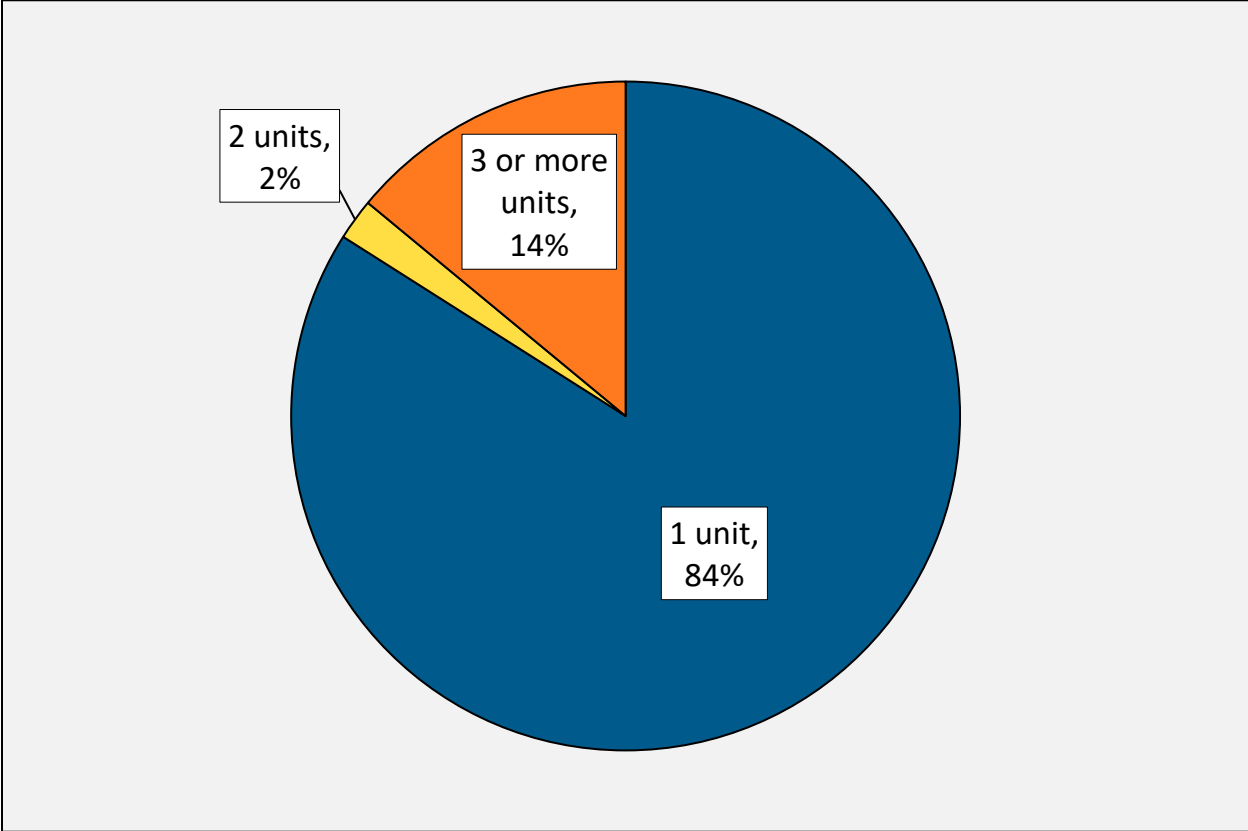
Source: American Community Survey, 2018–2022, Table B25024. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.

More than one out of five Hopkinton residents who are age 65 and older live alone in their household (22%) whereas 77% live in households that include other people, such as a spouse, parents, children, or grandchildren (**Figure 6**). Additionally, around 1% of older Hopkinton residents live within group quarters.

Figure 6. Living arrangements of Hopkinton residents, age 65 and older

Pie chart showing living arrangements:
- Lives in group quarters, 1%
- Lives alone, 22%
- Lives with others, 77%
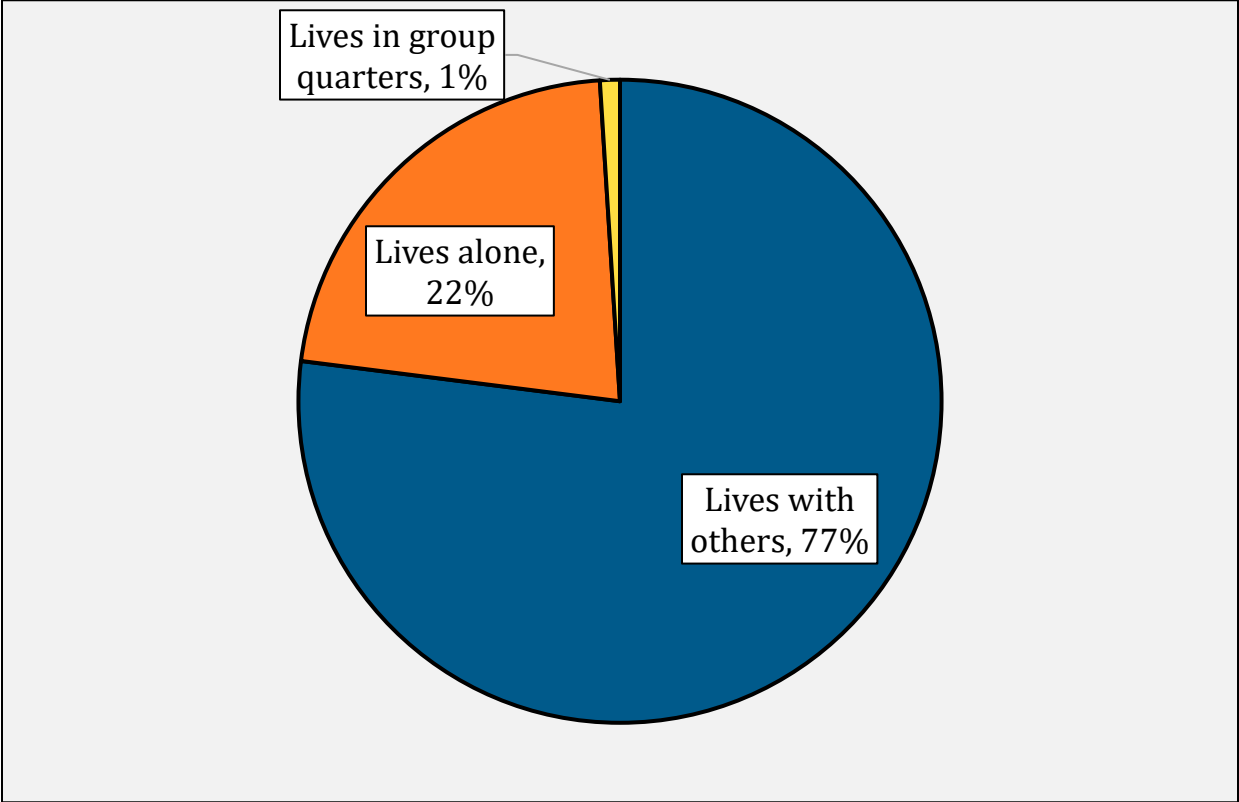
Source: American Community Survey, 2018–2022, Table B09020. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.

Regarding housing costs, **Figure 7** shows the proportion of households spending more than 30% of their income for housing. For both owners and renters, the high share of housing costs decrease as the household income increases. About 95% of renter-occupied households with incomes below $20,000 spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs while 100% of owner-occupied households in the same income threshold spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. In households with incomes between $20,000 and $74,999, the proportion of households spending more than 30% in housing costs is the same (74%) for renter-occupied and owner-occupied households. In the higher income bracket, there is a higher share of renters spending more than 30% of their income in housing costs compared to owners. For households with incomes of $75,000 or more, 53% of renters spend more than 30% on housing costs, compared to 12% of owners who spend more than 30% on housing costs.

Figure 7. Proportion of households spending more than 30% or more of income in housing costs by income and tenure

Renter-occupied:
- Less than $20,000: 95%
- $20,000 to $74,999: 74%
- $75,000 or more: 53%

Owner-occupied:
- Less than $20,000: 100%
- $20,000 to $74,999: 74%
- $75,000 or more: 12%

Legend: ■ Less than $20,000 ■ $20,000 to $74,999 ■ $75,000 or more
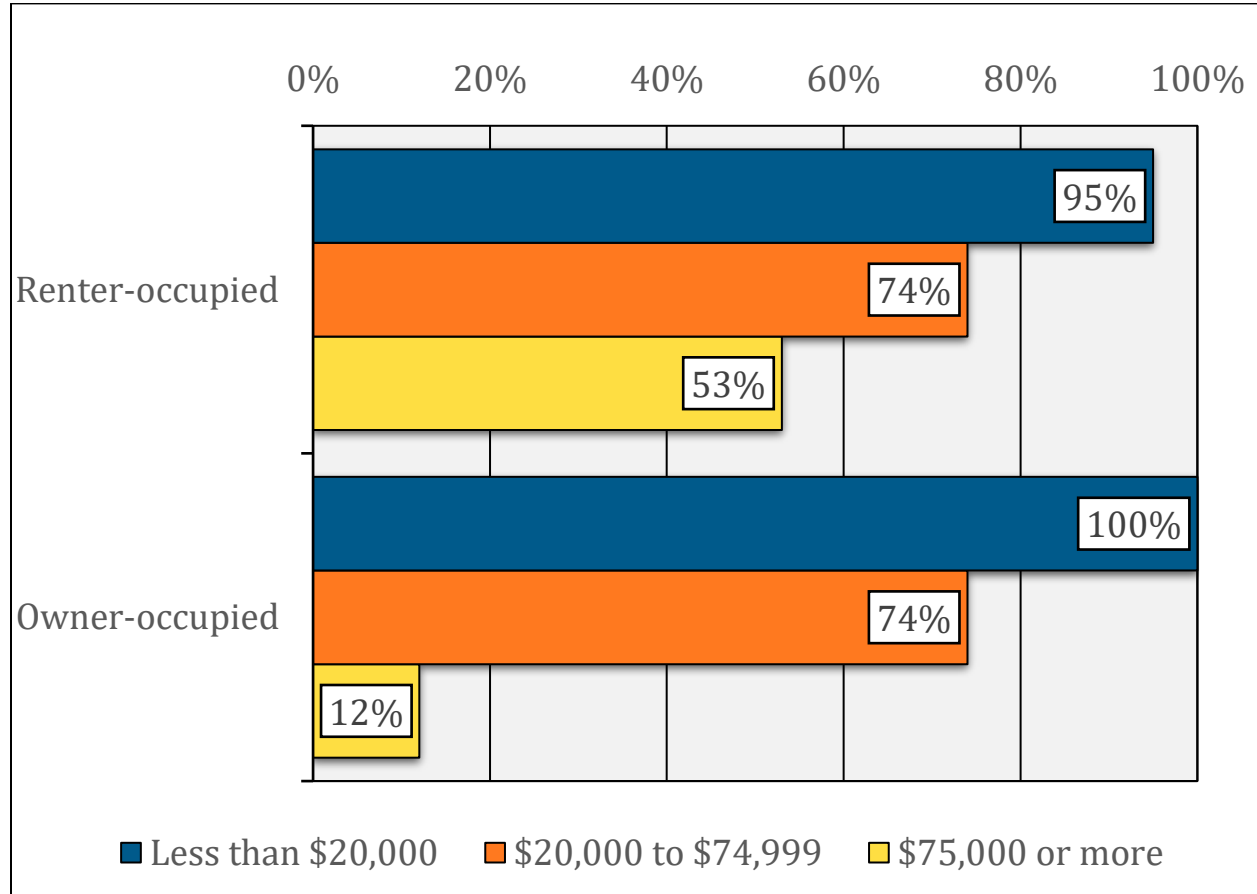
Source: American Community Survey, 2018–2022, Table B25106. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.
Note: Includes only community households, not group quarters such as nursing homes.

Also, housing costs make up a significant share of monthly costs for older householders. Estimates indicate that 34% of householders age 65 and over spend 35% or more of their monthly household income on housing costs (ACS 2017-2021, Table B25093).

With respect to household income, there is some comparative disadvantage of some older residents in Hopkinton. Hopkinton residents' median household income is considerably higher than the one estimated for Massachusetts as a whole, $191,439 compared to $96,505 (*ACS 2018–2022, Table B19049)*. Among Hopkinton's householders, those age 45 to 64 have the highest median income at $250,000+ - which is also greater than the statewide median for this age group ($119,054). Among householders 65 and older, the median income is $89,464, which is also higher than the statewide median for this age group ($61,624) but much lower than the median income of younger Hopkinton householders.

The economic profile of older Hopkinton residents relative to younger residents is further illustrated in **Figure 8** which shows that the older adult population lives on a modest income. Almost half of Hopkinton residents age 65 and older report incomes of $100,000 or more. By comparison, 87% of households headed by residents age 45-64 report this level of income. Nevertheless, a large share of households headed by someone age 65 and older (18%) report

annual incomes under $25,000. This compares with just 2% of households headed by individuals age 45 to 64 having incomes under $25,000. Thus, there is a sizeable segment of Hopkinton's older population that is at risk of financial insecurity or economic disadvantage.

**Figure 8.** Household income distribution in Hopkinton by age of householder (in 2022 inflation-adjusted dollars)
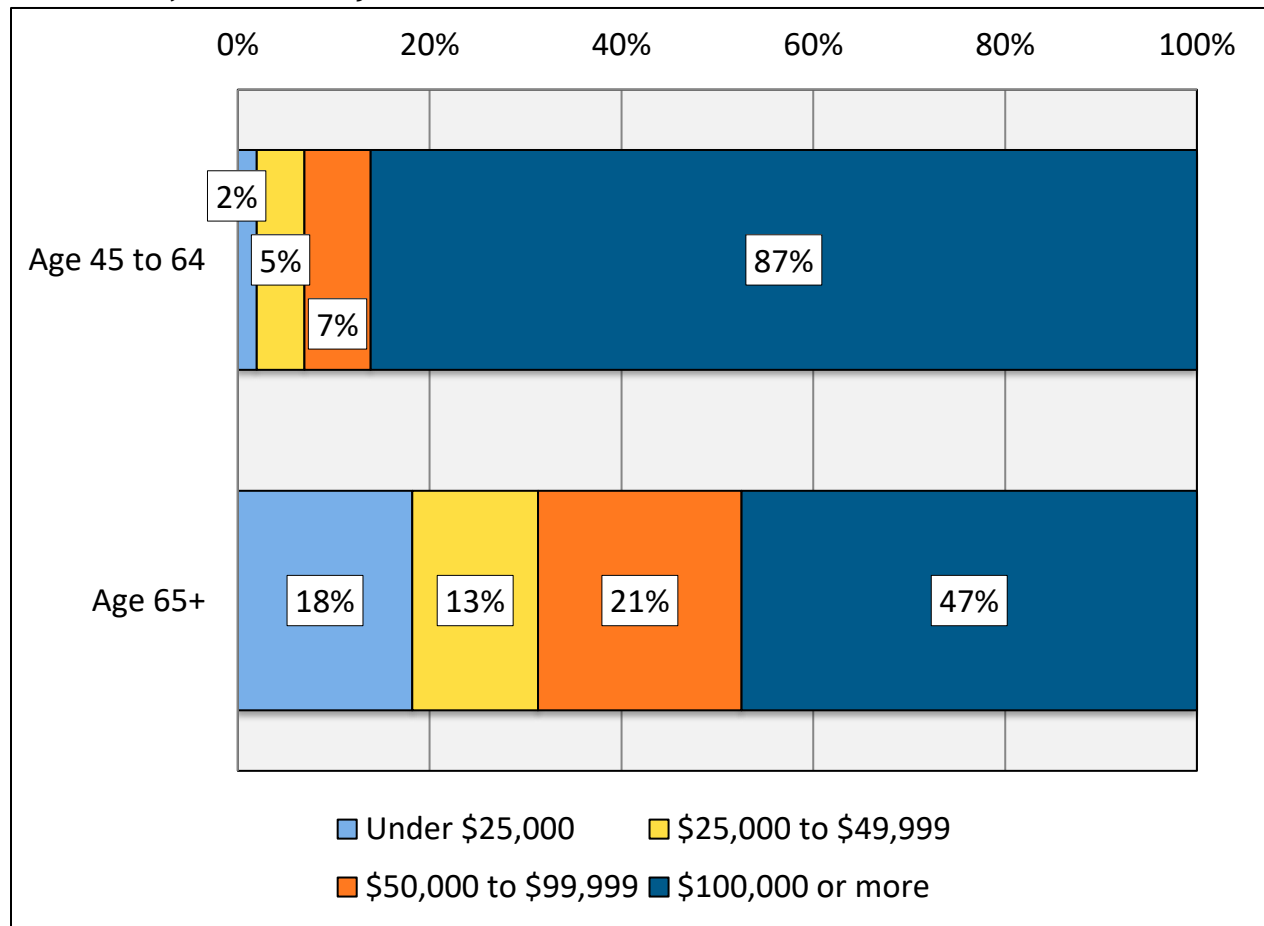
Source: Source: American Community Survey, 2018–2022, Table B19037. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.
Note: Includes only community households, not group quarters such as nursing homes.

The increased likelihood of acquiring disability with age is evident in data from the ACS. Many Hopkinton's residents age 65 and older experience some level of disability that could impact their ability to function independently in the community. About 23% of Hopkinton's residents age 65 and older report at least one disability (**Figure 9**). Among the different types of disabilities that are assessed in the ACS, the most commonly cited by older Hopkinton residents 65 and older were ambulatory difficulties (14%) - difficulty walking or climbing stairs, independent living limitations (12%) - difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping, and hearing problems (9%; *ACS 2018–2022, Table S1810)*. Other disabilities experienced by older Hopkinton residents include cognitive difficulty (7%), self-care difficulties (5%), and vision difficulties (1%).

Figure 9. Percentage of Hopkinton residents age 65+ reporting disability

No disability, 77%

Two or more disabilities, 13%

One disability, 10%
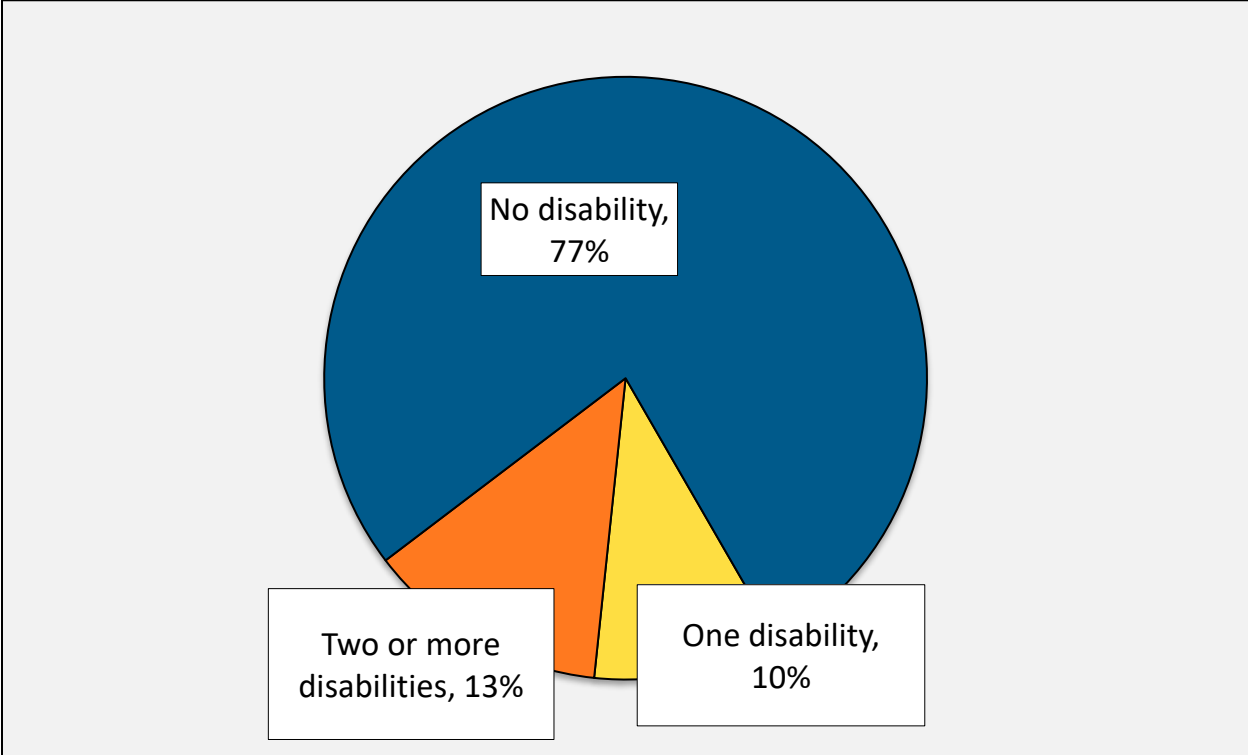
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2018–2022, Table C18108. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.

Insights from Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Participants

Key informants and focus group participants described a variety of challenges that Hopkinton older residents experience. Many themes that emerged from one group (e.g., stakeholder focus group) were reinforced by another group or key informants. While there was much overlap in the insights and concerns shared, certain groups or individuals emphasized some challenges more than others. In this section of the report, we present salient points that emerged based on these four interviews and two focus groups and highlight the specific participant group, when relevant.

Strengths of Hopkinton as a community

Participants from the focus groups valued Hopkinton's many outdoor spaces, including walking and biking trails, lakes, and parks. Residents in the focus group shared that they appreciate their community and neighbors where they feel people watch out for them. One resident shared how happy she is to now be living in a condominium where the residents are a diverse group of ages and backgrounds. Residents also valued some of the town services (e.g., sidewalk shoveling in winter) and resources (e.g., Town Library with expanded hours; Senior Center). People interviewed and focus group participants spoke highly about several of the Town programs, especially the tax work-off program and the Repair Fair.

Communication and Collaboration

All four key informants and participants in both focus groups spoke about the challenge of communication, including communication among Town departments and communication with residents. Several of those interviewed spoke about the strong collaborative approach they have with Senior Center staff but acknowledged that not all departments work well together. Several participants noted that the Police department had a senior liaison but when she left, the department never filled the position, and they feel the loss of that position. One person wished there was a senior liaison from each department and town organization with weekly communication. Participants expressed the belief that the more that staff from other departments know about programming at the Senior Center, the more likely they will encourage residents they interact with to participate.

Stakeholder focus group participants shared that it can be difficult to find out about programs and services offered. They noted that it can be difficult to even know there is a senior center in town as its location, behind the main street, is not readily visible. One resident shared that they don't know what resources are available for aging-in-place and, more specifically, aging in Hopkinton. This person acknowledged that the resources are likely available but need to be coordinated and disseminated better.

Participants expressed a desire to be able to communicate with others in town (both employee to employee and resident to resident) but there doesn't appear to be mechanisms to do that. Getting the word out appears to be a challenge for the town, in general, as participants shared that parents also often report that they don't know what is going on in the Town or in the schools. Residents shared an example of communication challenges stating that when the new high school was built, they were told they could use the gym and

track at certain times. They are unclear if that is still the case and if so, what hours the gym or track is accessible to them.

Interview and focus group participants shared some of the positive things happening that support communication.   For example, Senior Services has partnered with several departments to develop programming, and this has been a great way to facilitate communication among departments while supporting Hopkinton's older residents. Several of the key informants emphasized that finding time to be out in the community, participating in events, and interacting with older residents is another important way to facilitate communication among Hopkinton staff and its seniors. These individuals shared that they try to go to the Senior Center weekly to be visible, provide programming or services, and connect with the older residents but making the time to do this is often challenging.

Many interview and focus group participants acknowledged *The Hilltopper* and the *Hopkinton Independent* newspaper as great resources that are used well to promote the Senior Center but they had additional suggestions for ways to improve communication with residents. Several emphasized that older adults don't always use technology, so continuing to provide announcements and information via print material is important. That said, everyone also suggested using social media to spread the word, as well. Word of mouth is an effective strategy and encouraging staff from departments throughout town to talk about the Senior Center programs and services along with posting flyers in their departments might be effective. One person suggested sandwich boards in the Town center to highlight specific events and another suggested implementing a call bank to both check on seniors and to spread the word about certain events. It appears that multiple strategies might be helpful to reach the Hopkinton older adult population.

There were also suggestions for ways to improve communication between Senior Services and other Town Departments. One person suggested a formal platform where all departments upload information by a certain time each day that is accessible to all departments. Others suggested a unified place to be able to find information for both residents and staff. Although the town has a website, some focus group participants wished it were easier to use and included more information.

The High Cost of Living, High Taxes, and Limited Affordable, Subsidized, and Accessible Housing

Cost of living, including taxes, was a theme that emerged from all interviews and both focus groups as a major challenge for older Hopkinton residents. One key informant spoke about the challenge of taxes for older adults and the town in general, as Hopkinton has a very small industrial/commercial base. One resident stated that she participates in the 'tax work-off' program and appreciates that opportunity, but for many, it is not enough. This participant suggested more flexible income guidelines for participation in this program. One Town leader shared that more Hopkinton residents are needing food and coming to the Senior Center for lunches than ever before and the Town has been helping some residents with

basic needs, such as clothing and food. One key informant suggested a fund to subsidize home repairs for residents in need.

Participants in both focus groups and several key informants spoke extensively about the lack of affordable, subsidized and accessible housing. Participants shared that there are few options for downsizing, and the smaller houses and condominiums that are available are very expensive and still have high taxes and high heating bills. Several people mentioned that affordable housing is no longer truly affordable; rather, subsidized housing is needed. Besides subsidized housing, participants expressed concern about people remaining in their large, multi-level homes as they age and encounter mobility challenges. Several participants in both focus groups expressed a need for accessible housing with one floor living.

Stakeholder focus group participants stated that the middle class in Hopkinton is struggling and that people who work in town cannot afford to live in town, as even rents for rental properties are inaccessible to many. The message from both focus groups was that Hopkinton has changed and has become too expensive to live in for many people. Accessory dwelling units (ADU) came up as a topic in both groups with some sharing that there is too much red tape and too many restrictions that deter residents from considering ADUs as an option. Several suggestions emerged to make Hopkinton more affordable for many older adults including revising zoning laws to decrease barriers to ADUs, changing systems and policies for subsidized housing so people in Hopkinton get priority for Hopkinton housing, and supporting co-housing options. Finally, one person mentioned the town well system and PFAS as a concern. Some residents are afraid to test for this due to the potential of it making it more challenging to sell their home if PFAS is found in their water.

Limited Transportation Options in Hopkinton Make Accessing Services Difficult

Three of the four people interviewed and members of both focus groups spoke about the challenge of transportation for older adults living in Hopkinton, especially for those who don't drive. They noted that Hopkinton is not a walkable town for most people as there are limited sidewalks. There is a ride service that services Hopkinton, but it only provides door to door service. Many older adults need help getting out of their doors and getting to the office or place they need to be. Several people shared that Hopkinton used to be a small rural town that has grown tremendously but the infrastructure hasn't kept up. One stakeholder provided an example, noting that local businesses have left town so there are few places one can walk to and emphasized that youth, as well as older adults, struggle to participate in some activities as they can't access places safely. One resident is considering changing her doctors, who are located in Boston, since there are no public options to get to out-of-town appointments. Several participants acknowledged and appreciated the Senior Center van for getting to the Senior Center and going grocery shopping, emphasizing that this is an important service for Hopkinton older residents. One resident noted that the Senior Center provides taxi vouchers for medical appointments, yet the other focus group participants weren't aware of this program. Stakeholder focus group members emphasized the goal of providing reliable and low cost (equitable) transportation. Some suggestions

included contracting with agencies to provide support, engaging volunteer drivers, and developing a neighborhood brigade of caring neighbors.

The Senior Center's Image is as a Place for Residents Who Need Help

Key informant interviewees emphasized the need to break the stigma of the Senior Center as a place to go if you are in a wheelchair or need help and rebrand it as a place for healthy living where one can exercise, learn, and socialize while also accessing services and support, as needed. Several suggestions were made of ways to change the image of the Senior Center, including building a campaign to rename the building. Others suggested developing more intergenerational programs, as one way to reach more people from the Hopkinton community and educate them about the Senior Center, decreasing stigma and altering the image. The residents also spoke about the need to promote the Senior Center more and discussed ways to reach more people, such as providing more home visits. One participant in the resident focus group commented on the confusing structure and language of the Senior Center. This person was confused about the difference between the COA, Senior Services, Senior Center and Friends of Hopkinton Seniors.

Many Older Residents are Struggling with Physical, Mental, and/or Cognitive Health Challenges

All four key informants spoke about the health challenges of Hopkinton older residents and that more people are struggling with health since COVID. People noted that many older adults are isolated and fearful of leaving their home. One key informant spoke about hoarding as a major concern for some residents. Another participant noted that while the Senior Center provides some health services such as nutritional counseling and a blood pressure clinic, there was also a need for mental health screening. Several participants spoke about the incidence of dementia, unsure if the numbers of people have truly increased or just that there is an increased awareness and visibility of dementia as the Town has led many programs to support residents in becoming "dementia friends." Some of the participants have attended the age and dementia friendly training and thought the program was very well done but they would like to see discussion groups to talk about strategies and techniques to better manage all levels and types of memory problems. One person interviewed spoke about additional health challenges for Hopkinton residents including finding timely primary care, the lack of insurance, and the increased number of falls.

Focus group participants noted that the fire and police department in town work closely with the Senior Center to prevent falls and learn about residents who are at risk for health and safety challenges. The Senior Center, in collaboration with other departments, hosts many programs focusing on health and safety (e.g., falls prevention, home safety programs). One suggestion that emerged was for the Town to subsidize a paid contractor to do minor home modifications (e.g., install grab bars) and home maintenance (e.g., shovel). It was also suggested to partner with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to support the health and safety of Hopkinton older residents.

Hopkinton Older Residents are Viewed as an Undervalued Asset to the Community

Equity and inclusion of older adults was a theme that emerged from both focus groups and many interviews. Participants from both focus groups felt that older adults are not always valued, and therefore, not considered or included in town decisions. Some of the residents felt valued at the Senior Center but invisible to other Town leaders and departments. People commented that the Select Board was more approachable and heard concerns in the past but felt that this has changed. Stakeholders commented that residents of assisted living facilities feel isolated from the Town and not valued. One resident commented that older residents know what it is like to have a young family as they have lived it, but young families don't know what it is like for older residents, as they haven't aged yet. This resident suggested implementing more intergenerational activities and other activities to engage younger people with the Senior Center and older residents. Participants in both focus groups suggested a desire for intergenerational activities and shared experiences, for example having older adults volunteer at a high school party while also having high school students volunteer at a Senior Services party.

Due to the many barriers to participation, older adults often don't feel included in Town activities. One example related to participation and voting at Town meetings. Residents have to attend town meetings in person to be able to vote. Many can't attend due to mobility challenges or the evening hours of the meeting. Several participants suggested that the Town could and should do more to be inclusive of older adults at Town meeting. Providing opportunities for proxy votes, online voting, or weekend day town meetings are some potential ways to support a more inclusive environment.

Stakeholder focus group participants spoke about the barriers to volunteering, as one often needs a CORI, needs to get fingerprinted, and needs to pay a fee. One person suggested a "fair" sign up event where people can get assistance completing these tasks. Another spoke about the challenge for some older adults to complete forms needed for the tax work-off program and other programs. And one person mentioned that schools don't feel inclusive as tickets for shows cost money. One way that was suggested to address this was asking the schools to provide the library with a certain number of tickets that the library could distribute free of charge. The tickets would look the same as the other tickets, to respect dignity and support inclusiveness. Finding ways to eliminate these barriers might support participation for some older residents.

It can be Difficult to get to Know Neighbors and Feel Part of a Community in Hopkinton

The importance of neighborhoods and community was highlighted in both focus groups. Stakeholders noted that knowing ones' neighbors can make a difference in someone's ability to help (e.g., take in mail) or ask for help (e.g., help mowing the lawn). These individuals emphasized that people, and especially older adults, may be concerned about liability if they

provide help, and about being taken advantage of, if they accept help. Knowing one's neighbors can decrease this fear. The residents in the focus group acknowledged that as one ages, people need to support each other. They suggested the notion of expanding the idea of neighborhood and discussed community that can be formed with people who might frequent the Senior Center but don't live next door. One stakeholder noted that while it is challenging for people new to town to meet people, it is also hard for residents who have lived here for a while to meet people. Hopkinton has many homes with large lots and long driveways and stakeholders noted that it is easier to get to know neighbors in denser populations. Suggestions from participants to support neighborliness included forming discussion groups of communities of people and exchanging contact information, developing a surrogate grandparenting program, hosting good neighbor events, developing a welcome wagon program, developing "neighborhood bridges", and considering a training program of strategies to support neighbors with dignity.

Additional Staff is Needed to Meet the Needs of Current and Future Seniors

The people interviewed and focus group participants spoke very highly about the Senior Services directors, outreach coordinators, and the COA board members working on the dementia friendly initiatives. However, three of the key informants spoke about the need for more staff. These individuals shared that great ideas emerge during meetings, yet there is rarely enough staff to take the lead on these initiatives and while volunteers provide much needed assistance, programs run by volunteers require staff to coordinate them. Other departments need additional staff as well to meet the demands of the growing older adult population. For example, someone from the fire department led a weekly risk reduction program at the Senior Center in the past, but this program has been cut due to staff funding. One participant shared that more seniors are participating in clinics (e.g., flu, COVID), so more staff are needed to work at these clinics and meet the demands. Prior to COVID, the Town was working on developing memory trails, a senior playground, and other projects that are no longer happening due to finances, change of staff, and priorities. Focus group participants and key informant interviewees shared many suggestions for ways to make Hopkinton a safe and healthy community for all its residents, yet most of these suggestions involve staff, time, and effort. Participants noted that the schools often have resources and wished that more resources were given to Senior Services to support programs for older adults.

Results from the Community Survey

In this section, we report key findings from each section of the survey. Tables illustrating results in detail are included in the **Appendix**.

Respondent Characteristics

Respondents to the community survey included 1,413 Hopkinton residents, representing a 27% response rate (see **Table 3**). This is a strong return rate and reflects interest among community residents. Compared to the age distribution of Hopkinton older adults, we heard from a larger share of residents age 70 to 79 and age 80 to 89 than those younger than 70 and those age 90 and older. Given the small number of respondents reporting age 90 and older, results for age 80 to 89 and 90+ are combined and presented as one age group. Only 12 residents under age 55 responded, so results for age group 55 to 59 include responses from these 12 participants. Therefore, throughout this report, results will be reported for age groups 55 to 59, 60 to 69, 70 to 79, and 80+. Response distributions by these age groups are shown for all survey questions in the **Appendix**.

Table 3. Community Survey Respondents

	Hopkinton mailing list, residents age 55+	Number of responses	Age distribution (%), survey responses
<55	0	12	----
55 to 59	1,134	225	20%
60 to 69	2,257	525	23%
70 to 79	1,255	433	35%
80 to 89	424	148	35%
90+	115	28	24%
*Total	**5,185**	**1,413**	**27%**

*Includes 42 surveys where people declined to provide their age

Community and Neighborhood

> A commonly expressed goal of older adults is to remain living in their own homes for as long as possible. Aging in place implies remaining in familiar home and community settings, with supports as needed, as opposed to moving to institutional settings, such as nursing homes. By aging in place, older adults can retain their independence, as well as maintain valued social relationships and engagement with the community.

Survey respondents included residents who have lived in Hopkinton for many years as well as relative newcomers. Sixty percent of respondents have lived in Hopkinton for more than 25 years (see **Figure 10**). These individuals offer insight based on their years of experience as Hopkinton residents. It is also helpful, however, to hear from those who are new to

Hopkinton and 24% of respondents have been residents less than 15 years, including 10% who have lived in Hopkinton less than five years. Not surprisingly, 52% of those 80 and older have lived in Hopkinton 35 years or more (see **Appendix**).

Figure 10: "How long have you lived in the town of Hopkingon"?

■	Fewer than 5 years
■	5-14 years
■	15-24 years
■	25-34 years
■	35 or more
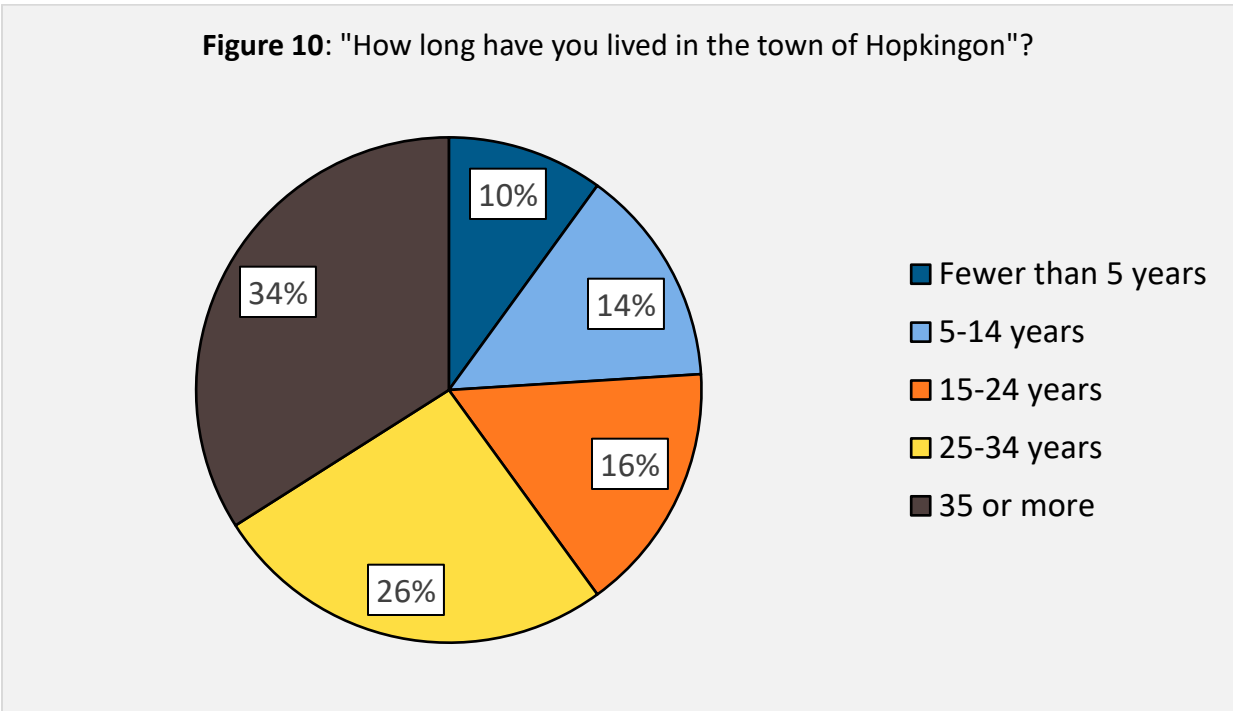
More than half of the respondents have lived in Hopkinton for 25 years or more, so it is not surprising that a large number of residents want to remain living in Hopkinton as they get older. When asked how important it is for them to remain living in Hopkinton as they get older, the large majority responded that it is very or somewhat important for them to remain in Hopkinton and this percentage was higher for older residents (see **Figure 11**). Almost 90% of survey respondents 70 and older rated this as very or somewhat important while 71% of those age 60 to 69 and 62% of those under age 60 rating remaining in Hopkinton as they get older as very or somewhat important to them. Not surprisingly, a majority of those who have lived in Hopkinton 45 years or more (66%) rated it as very important to remain living in Town as they age while about 30% of those who have lived in Hopkinton between 5 and 35 years felt it was very important. Interestingly, almost half (49%) of those who have lived in Hopkinton less than five years also rated this as very important (tabulations not shown).

Figure 11. "How important is it to you to remain in Hopkinton as you get older?"

Age Group	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Slightly/not at all important
Age 80+	62%	27%	11%
Age 70-79	55%	33%	12%
Age 60-69	39%	32%	29%
Age 55-59	25%	37%	38%

■ Very Important   ■ Somewhat Important   ■ Slightly/not at all important
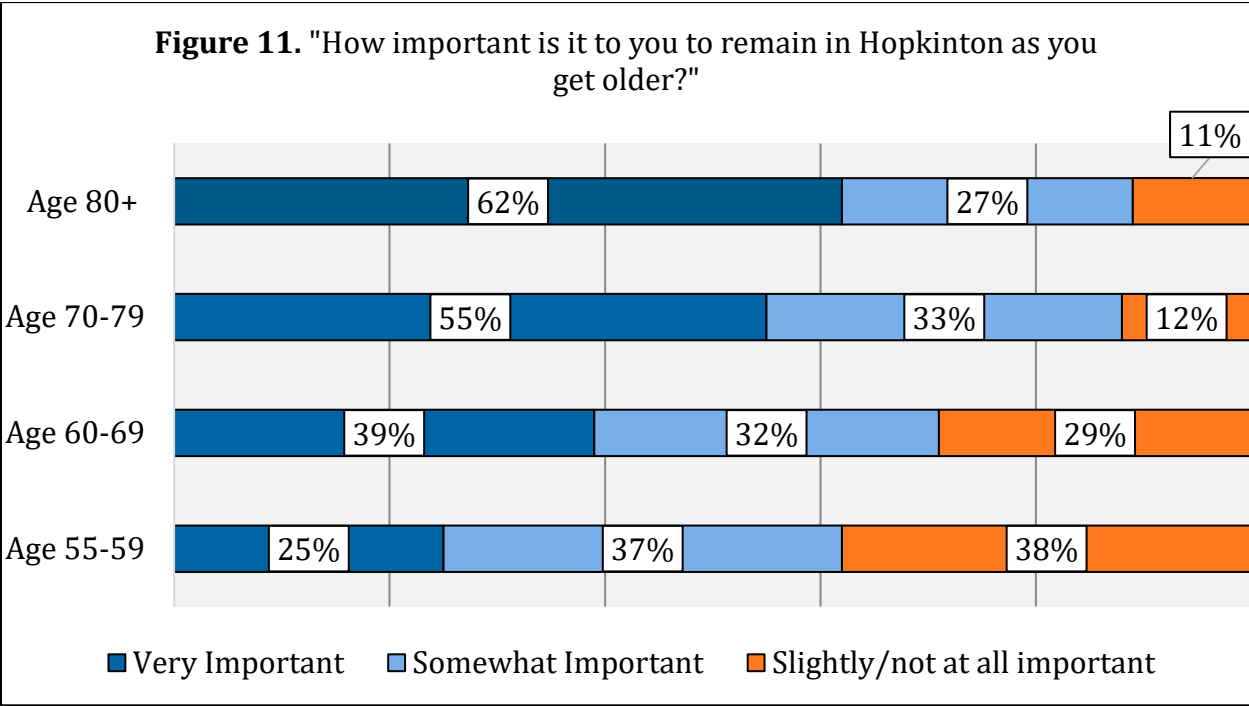
Almost all the survey participants took the time to respond to the open-ended questions about what they value about living in Hopkinton and their greatest concerns about their ability to remain living in Hopkinton. Some of the reasons, noted repeatedly, about why respondents choose to live and remain in Hopkinton include the outdoor space and access to nature, the small, quaint town feel, and the people and sense of community.

[I value] the open space, having nature accessible, the friendliness of people.

Interestingly, there were also many comments throughout the survey regarding the lack of community and less of a small town feel than in the past, as the town has seen significant growth and development. The location of Hopkinton, close to family, friends, and Boston, and the schools were also noted as features of Hopkinton that people value.

The responses to the open-ended question, "What are your greatest concerns about your ability to continue living in Hopkinton?" could readily be categorized into four key areas of concern: 1) cost of living/taxes; 2) transportation/access to services; 3) housing – maintenance, downsizing options, and accessible living; and 4) infrastructure and town management.   There were also several comments regarding concerns about the environment, specifically Hopkinton's water quality. **Table 4** summarizes these concerns, drawing on verbatim responses from the survey.

Table 4. Sample responses to the question, "What are your greatest concerns about your ability to continue living in Hopkinton as you get older?"

Cost of Living / Taxes
Uncontrolled capital spending causing taxes to go up every year.
The towns' taxes are going up, along with the cost of everyday living, and it's very hard to be so frugal on a very fixed income.
The prices of rentals going up. I use all my Social Security and more to pay for rent.
Focus on schools and immense funding of the school system squeezes out funds for the rest of us. A fraction of those funds could make a huge difference in lives of Hopkinton's seniors.

Transportation and Access to Services
No way to live here unless you drive all the time. No safe way to leave the neighborhood. No sidewalks, no ability to walk to the store.
Ease of access to nearby medical services, as we had much more of in the previous town we lived in. Having to drive 20-30 minutes to favorite grocery stores, car services, etc.
Needing to rely on a car to leave town for restaurants, fresh produce as well as a variety of shops will not be sustainable as an older person.

Housing – Maintenance, Downsizing Options, and Accessible Living
Would like one-level accommodations.
The costs are rising and new construction is not senior friendly. The ability to downsize to a senior friendly home or condo barely exists.
Being able to take care of my home, not being near help, and financial difficulty in moving to smaller place.

Infrastructure and Town Management
The traffic and poor management of construction decisions has made the center of town lose its sense of community.
Hopkinton needs better leadership. Uncontrolled growth has made Hopkinton less desirable and too expensive for seniors.
Continuing pressure on infrastructure, particularly water, caused by boom in home building.

Housing and Living Situation

The availability and affordability of housing that is suitable to meet the changing capacity of older people are key factors that influence the ability of residents to age in place, and to lead fulfilling and healthy lives into old age. Many people are attached to their current home, even if the "fit" between individual capacity and the home environment decreases. Homes may become too large for current needs or may become too expensive to maintain on a fixed income. Design features of homes, such as the number of stories and manageability of stairs, may challenge older residents' ability to remain living safely in their home. Home modifications, including installation of bathroom grab bars, railings on stairs, adequate lighting throughout the home, ramps, and/or first floor bathrooms, may support residents' safety and facilitate aging in place. Programs that connect older homeowners with affordable assistance for maintaining and modifying their homes and their yards can help protect the value of investments, improve the neighborhoods in which older people live, and support safe living. The availability of affordable housing options, especially those with accommodating features, including assisted living, may allow residents who are no longer able to stay in their existing homes to remain in their community.

The large majority of survey respondents under age 80 currently live in a home that they or someone they live with own (>90%), while 75% of those 80 and older live in a residence owned by them or someone they live with (see **Appendix**). The majority of survey respondents live with at least one other person (82%), but this number is smaller for the older cohorts. While only 10% of those age 55 to 59 live alone, 36% of people age 80 and older do (see **Figure 12**). About 16% of survey respondents live with their adult child or children, and not surprisingly this is highest for those age 55 to 59 (30%; see **Appendix**). Living alone has the potential to lead to social isolation and has implications for services that may be needed by the older segment of the Hopkinton population.

Figure 12: Respondents living alone, by age
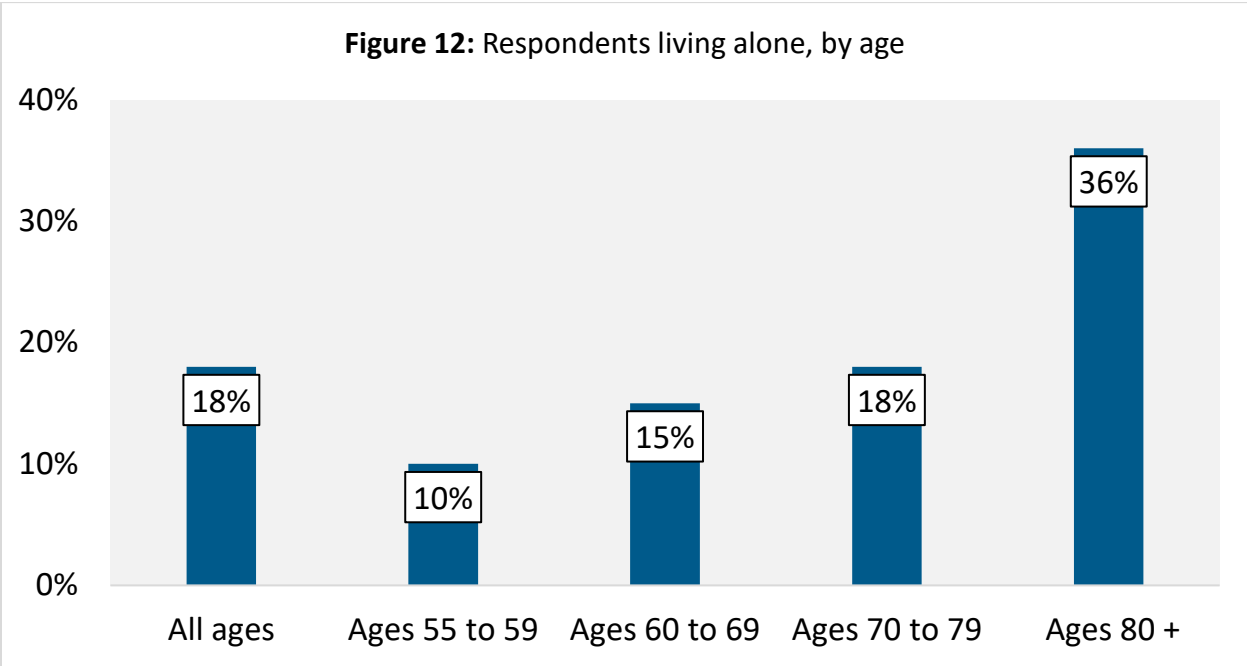
Maintaining a home requires resources, including people who can make modifications and repairs and the finances to pay for these repairs. In response to the question, "Does your current residence need home repairs (e.g., a new roof or heating system) to improve your ability to live in it safely?" 36% of respondents stated that their home needs repairs (see **Appendix**). Of those whose current residence needs repairs, 29% stated that they could not afford to make these changes (see **Figure 13**). Similarly, in response to the question, ""Does your current residence need home modifications (e.g., grab bars in showers or railings on stairs) to improve your ability to live in it safely?" 31% of respondents stated that their home would need modifications (see **Appendix**). Of those whose current residence needs modifications, 22% stated that they could not afford these modifications (see **Figure 14**). Clearly, there is a segment of Hopkinton's older population who are struggling to meet basic housing needs.

Figure 13. "Does your current residence need <u>home repairs</u> (e.g., a new roof or heating system) to improve your ability to live in it safely?" (considering only those who responded their home needs repairs)

- Yes, and I can afford to make these repairs
- Yes, but I cannot afford to make these repairs
- Yes, but I am not responsible for making these repairs
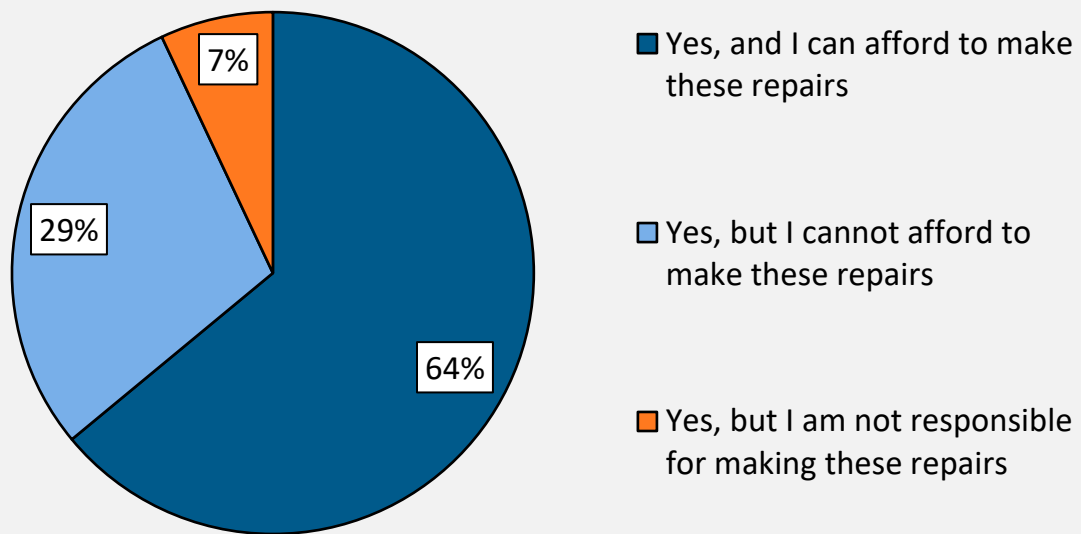
Figure 14. Does your current residence need some **home modifications** (e.g., grab bars in showers or railings on stairs) to improve your ability to live in it safely? (considering only those who responded their home needs modifications)

- Yes, and I can afford to make these modifications
- Yes, but I cannot afford to make these modifications
- Yes, but I am not responsible for making these modifications
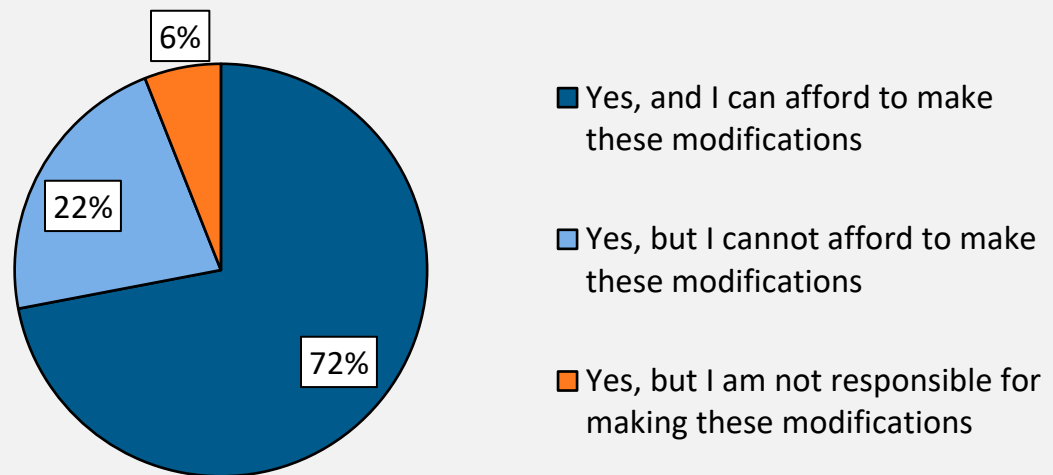
In order to assess the "age-friendliness" of the housing stock in Hopkinton, respondents were asked if they currently had a bedroom and bathroom on the entry-level of their home—an important feature for occupants as they age and mobility (up and down stairs) becomes more challenging. **Figure 15** shows that 40% of respondents have this feature in their home, while the majority (60%) do not. While the percentage of people who have a bedroom and

bathroom on the entry-level increases for the older group, many of those 80 and older (37%) do not have this feature (see **Figure 16**). This has implications for resident's ability to stay in their home as they age and signals potential demand for downsizing options or home modifications (e.g., stair lift).

Figure 15. "Does your current residence have "one-floor living" with a bedroom and bathroom on the entry level?"

Yes, 40%

No, 60%
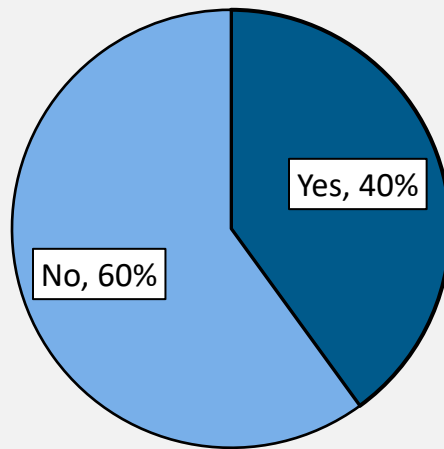
Figure 16. Percentage of people who responded '**no**' to the question by age, "Does your current residence have "one-floor living" with a bedroom and bathroom on the entry level?"

Category	Percentage
All ages	60%
Ages 55 to 59	75%
Ages 60 to 69	66%
Ages 70 to 79	54%
Ages 80 +	37%
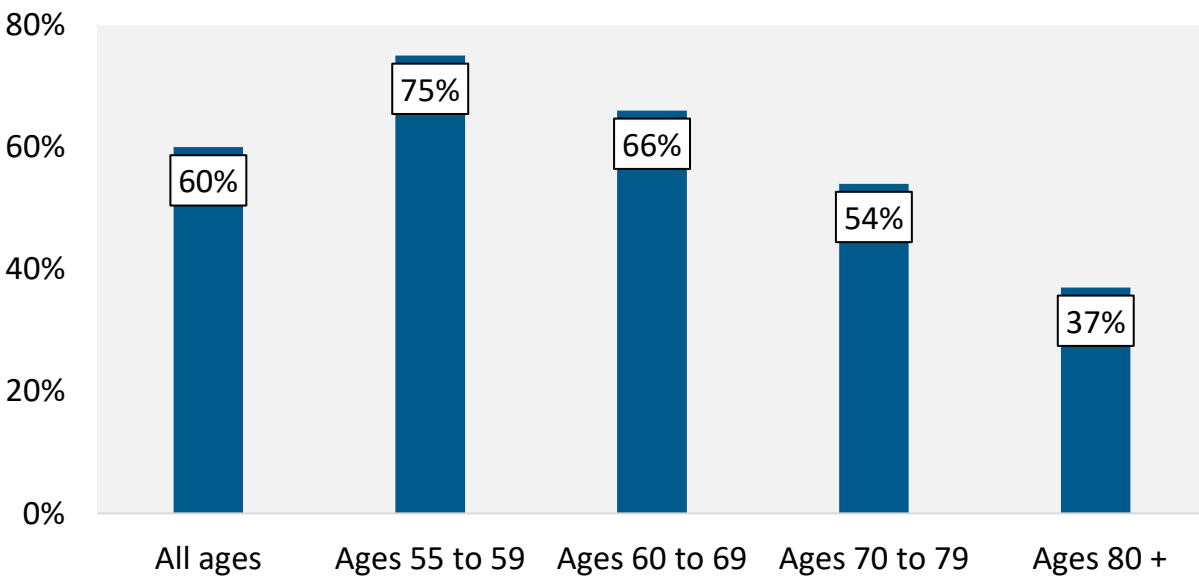
Survey participants were asked the type of housing they would prefer if they wanted to move from their current residence. Responses varied greatly by age group. One third or more of those in both the 55 to 59 and 60 to 69 age groups preferred a single-family home, while 27% of those age 70 to 79 also preferred a single-family home (see **Figure 17**). Similarly, approximately 30% of those age 55 to 79 expressed interest in a condominium or townhome. Preferences were different for those 80 and older where more than one quarter of this age group preferred an assisted living community. Those 80 and older also expressed an interest in senior/disabled or subsidized housing (19%). When asked "In the next 5 years, if you wanted to move from your current residence, what kind of housing would you prefer in Hopkinton", half of residents age 55 to 60 and 42% of those age 60 to 69 responded that they would leave Hopkinton. Eleven percent of survey participants responded 'other' with most other options including that they would not move or would move to single level living, a small single-family home, or affordable housing. This interest by current and future seniors in both single family homes and condominiums or townhomes has implications for housing stock needs in Hopkinton.

Figure 17. In the next 5 years, if you wanted to move from your current residence, what kind of housing would you prefer in Hopkinton?

Single-family home
- Age 80+: 13%
- Age 70-79: 27%
- Age 60-69: 33%
- Age 55-59: 43%

Multi-family home (2+ units)
- Age 80+: 0%
- Age 70-79: 3%
- Age 60-69: 3%
- Age 55-59: 5%

Assisted living community
- Age 80+: 27%
- Age 70-79: 15%
- Age 60-69: 5%
- Age 55-59: 7%

Apartment building
- Age 80+: 4%
- Age 70-79: 5%
- Age 60-69: 2%
- Age 55-59: 2%

Condominium or townhome
- Age 80+: 11%
- Age 70-79: 30%
- Age 60-69: 29%
- Age 55-59: 34%

Move in with family or friends (e.g., co-housing)
- Age 80+: 7%
- Age 70-79: 5%
- Age 60-69: 5%
- Age 55-59: 2%

Senior/disabled or subsidized housing
- Age 80+: 19%
- Age 70-79: 11%
- Age 60-69: 6%
- Age 55-59: 3%

I would leave Hopkinton
- Age 80+: 11%
- Age 70-79: 29%
- Age 60-69: 42%
- Age 55-59: 50%

Other
- Age 80+: 14%
- Age 70-79: 15%
- Age 60-69: 9%
- Age 55-59: 7%

Survey respondents were asked to write in their response to the question, "What do you see as challenges to staying in your current home as you get older?" and almost all of the participants took the time to respond. Similar themes emerged in response to this open-ended question as they did in response to the earlier question, "What are your greatest concerns about your ability to continue living in Hopkinton as you get older?" Of the almost 1300 survey respondents who answered this question, more than half commented about their housing. Specifically, many noted their home does not have, and few homes in Hopkinton have, one floor living while others commented about the challenge of maintaining their home. A large share of respondents wrote in something related to their concern regarding increased taxes and cost of living more generally. Additional themes that emerged in response to the question regarding challenges to staying in one's current home related to transportation and health and other age-related concerns. **Table 5** summarizes these concerns and others, drawing on verbatim responses from the survey.

Table 5. Sample responses to the question "What do you see as challenges to staying in your current home as you get older?"

Housing – Maintenance, Downsizing Options, and Accessible Living
Size of home (larger than needed, no 1st floor bedroom); updates and repairs needed (inconvenience and cost associated).
Too large (house + surrounding yard/property) to maintain.
I plan to renovate my home and add a master bedroom on the ground floor. I suggest builders plan housing designs with master bedrooms on the ground floor so that elderly can age in place at their original family home.
Taxes / Cost of Living
When we moved here in 1989 we paid $3,200/year in property tax. Now we pay $14,500. These massive increases are unsustainable in retirement. Remove the school portion from our property tax + we can afford to stay here.
The financial burden of town property taxes and fixing the water quality costs will most likely force me to leave Hopkinton. The eligibility levels of tax relief for seniors should be raised significantly. Based on projects from the town's financial committee, in the next 3 to 5 years, my property taxes will be more than 50% of my fixed income. Most of the property taxes go to the schools. I support good education but seniors don't benefit from good schools, unless they sell their homes. For seniors, like myself, who want to stay in their homes, the property taxes are driving us out. I know some of the property tax money supports the Hopkinton police, fire, and senior center services for which I am grateful, but unfortunately, I will probably have to leave Hopkinton in the next 3 to 5 years.
The cost of living and paying taxes in the town of Hopkinton. Also, the increased cost of medical care even though we have insurance. Everything just costs too much without income growing.

Transportation
My home is fine but a car is needed to go anywhere. If I should lose my ability to drive, I would need some sort of reliable transportation.
Some of the areas of town are not fully accessible for people with mobility challenges which makes it hard for my spouse and I to attend events. Need more accessible parking, better curb cuts, better pathways, doors with electric push button to allow those in a wheel chair to get it safely, etc.
Need to drive to get anywhere, so if unable to drive will lose access to services.

Health / Age-Related Concerns
I'm currently mobile and have no vision problems or dementia, but I expect that will change as I age. My spouse is aging, too, so I may at some point need to care for him or he may not be able to drive or do housework.
The ability to take care of myself by myself. Laundry is difficult to do on my own. Getting to a grocery store will be hard by myself.
Dealing with the uncertainties of aging. Finding reliable assistance for various routine chores if/when needed.

Transportation

> Transportation is a basic need for people of all ages who desire to lead independent, meaningful, and socially engaged lives. For older adults specifically, limited transportation options can lead to challenges in socializing, attending appointments, and fully participating in their community. The vast majority of Americans rely primarily on private transportation to meet these needs, and most individuals drive their own automobiles well into old age. Due to difficulties with transportation, individuals with health conditions and disabilities that adversely affect their ability to drive safely may be unable to participate in activities they previously enjoyed and valued. Indeed, compared to older drivers, non-drivers report lower quality of life and less community involvement (Unsworth et al., 2022).

Hopkinton is a town with limited public transportation options. Hopkinton residents do have access to paratransit service operated by the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA). Hopkinton Senior Services provides transportation to local grocery stores and Senior Services programs. They also coordinate a volunteer driver program to help residents get to medical appointments in the MetroWest area. There were several questions on the survey related to transportation. Survey results suggest that most respondents drive themselves (93%). Getting rides from their spouse or children (26%) and walking or biking (13%) were among the other primary ways that respondents meet their transportation

needs (see **Appendix**). Survey results show that only 4% of respondents of all ages do not drive, although this number is larger when looking at just those age 80 and older, as 21% of this older segment of the population do not drive (see **Appendix**). Some respondents (10%) drive but modify their driving to make it easier or safer, and again, this number is substantially higher for those age 80 and older (25%). Modifications include, for example, avoiding driving at night, during bad weather, on highways, or in unfamiliar areas. While 97% of survey respondents age 55 to 59 and 93% of respondents age 60 to 69 drive without modification, only 83% of those age 70 to 79 and 54% of those 80 and older drive without making modifications (see **Figure 18**). Modifying driving habits promotes safety, but may limit independence and participation, especially if other transportation options are inaccessible, costly, or inconvenient. For example, older adults who avoid driving at night will struggle to participate in evening community meetings and programs. Those who avoid driving in bad weather may become isolated during winter months.

Figure 18. Current driving status by age

Ages 55 to 59 — Ages 60 to 69 — Ages 70 to 79 — Ages 80+

0% / 3% / 97%
1% / 6% / 93%
3% / 14% / 83%
21% / 25% / 54%

- I do not drive
- I drive with some limitations (e.g., avoid driving at night or on highways)
- I drive with no limitations
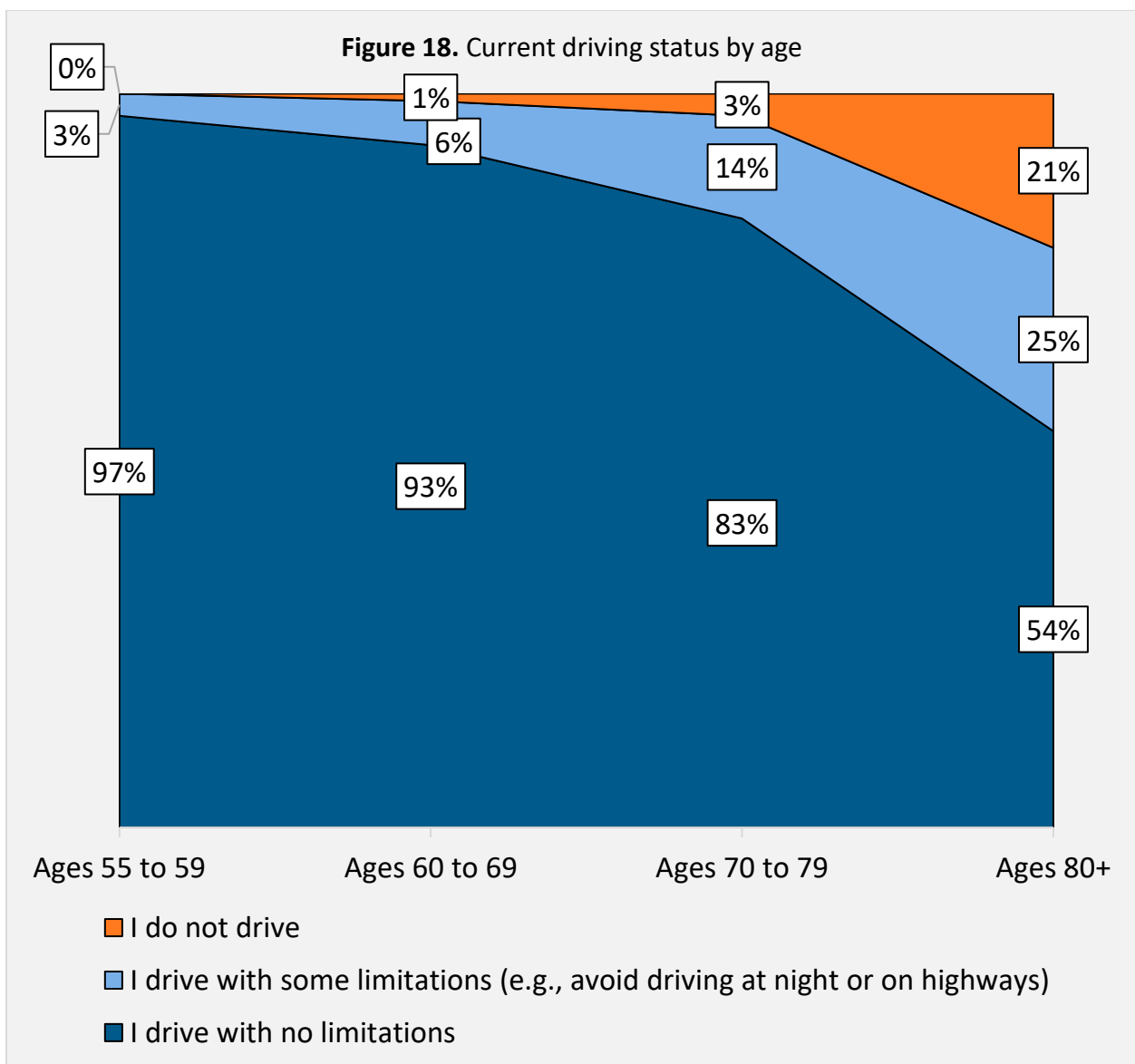
In response to the question, "What kind of difficulties do you have in getting the transportation that you need?", 16% of all survey participants reported at least one challenge (see **Appendix**). Those who do not drive and those who drive with modifications had more challenges meeting their transportation needs that those who drive without modifications (see **Figure 19**). Across all ages, the most common obstacles to transportation needs reported by survey respondents were lack of awareness of available transportation options and inaccessible or inconvenient public transportation (see **Appendix**).

Figure 19. Percentage of respondents reporting at least one challenge meeting their transporation needs, by driving status.

Driving status	Percentage
I do not drive	37%
I drive with some limitations	28%
I drive with no limitations	7%
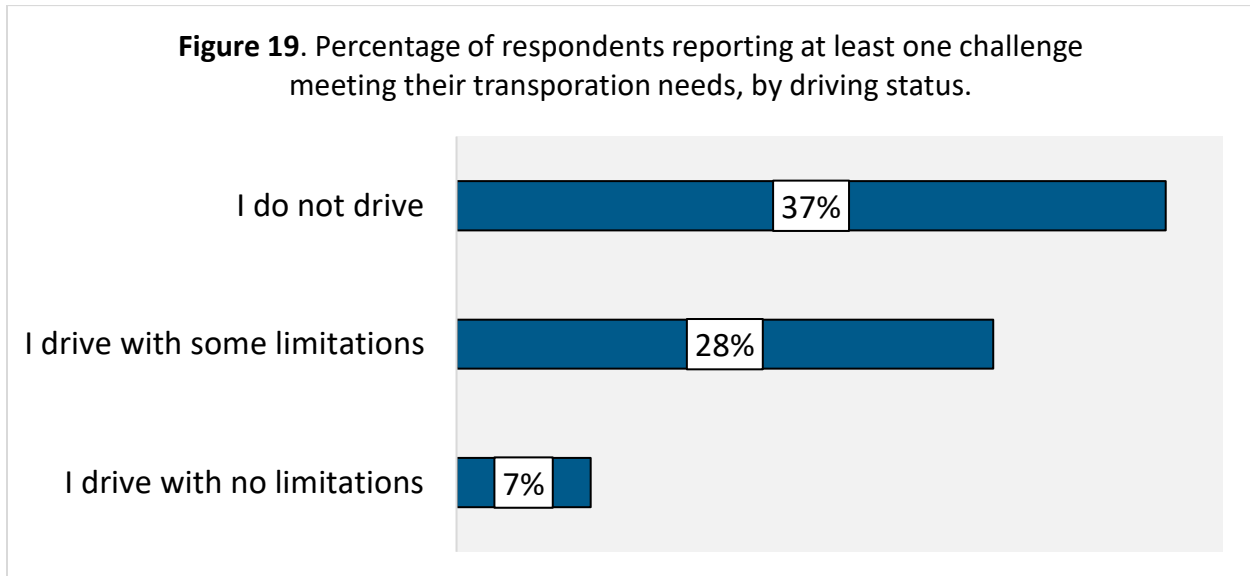
Transportation barriers can limit a person's access to obtaining necessary services such as medical care. Respondents were asked if within the previous 12 months, they had missed, cancelled, or rescheduled a medical appointment because of lack of transportation. Among all respondents, only 4% reported this experience, yet 12% of those who drive with modification and about 27% of those who do not drive, indicated that they had missed, cancelled, or rescheduled a medical appointment (see **Figure 20**). These findings suggest that limited transportation options appear to negatively impact accessing medical care for the most vulnerable segments of Hopkinton's older community. This is particularly salient in Hopkinton as residents often have to travel to other communities to access healthcare.

I still work and capable of driving myself. The issue is obtaining a ride for my 86 year old mother who is partially blind, hard of hearing and can no longer drive. I have not been able to get help for her medical appointments when I need to work. [Survey response to final open-ended question regarding additional thoughts or comments]

Figure 20. Percentage or respondents who missed, canceled, or rescheduled a medical appointment in the past 12 months due to lack of transportation, by driving status
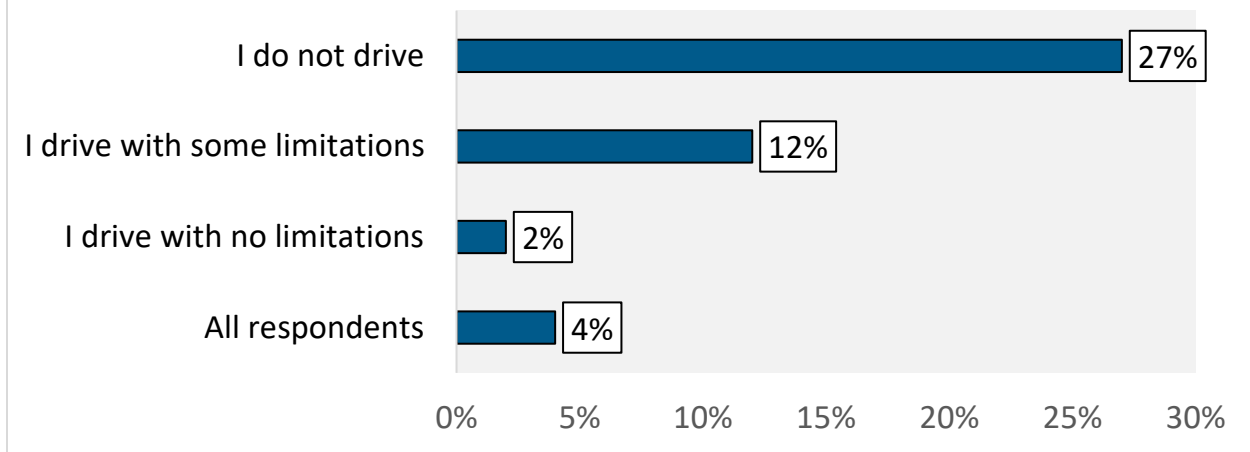
Overall, when asked to rate their satisfaction with transportation options, 34% of survey respondents reported that they are very satisfied or satisfied, while 25% of people are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with transportation options (see **Figure 21**). However, 41% of all respondents say they do not know if they are satisfied, possibly indicating that they currently drive and do not need to use Town or public transportation currently. Furthermore, when looking at those who likely need a variety of transportation options (i.e., those who modify their driving or don't drive at all), the satisfaction with transportation options is less. Nearly 84% of those who drive responded that they are very satisfied or satisfied with transportation options while only 11% of those who modify their driving and 5% of those who do not drive are very satisfied or satisfied with the transportation options in Hopkinton (tabulations not shown).

Figure 21. Level of satisfaction with transporation options

- Very satisfied/satisfied
- Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied
- Don't know
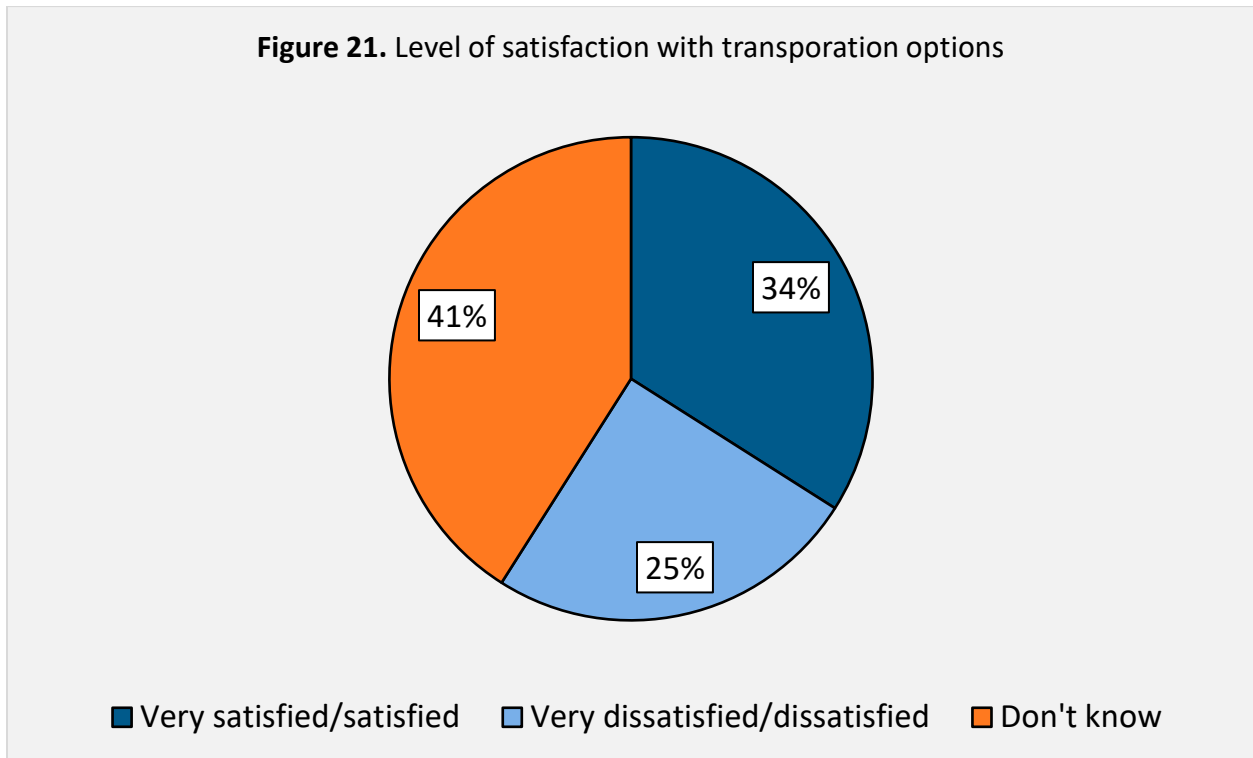
Other aspects of a community, besides transportation, also impact one's ability to get around and access public buildings, businesses, and public spaces. Survey respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the following features of Hopkinton: availability of parking; handicap accessibility of walkways, public buildings, and businesses; availability of maintained sidewalks; lighting along sidewalks and trails; availability of benches in public areas and along walkways; marked crosswalks and/or timing of walk signals; clear and consistent signage around Hopkinton; conveniently located public restrooms; and accessibility of parks, trails, and recreational opportunities. Overall, survey respondents are satisfied with accessibility of parks, trails, and recreational opportunities (81%). Many survey participants, however, are dissatisfied with access to conveniently located public restrooms (45%) and the availability of parking (42%; see **Figure 22**). This suggests that additional parking in Town and increased access to public restrooms could widen community engagement among some older residents.

Figure 22. Level of satisfaction with different features of Hopkinton

Feature	Very satisfied/satisfied	Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	Don't know
Accessibility of parks, trails, recreation	81%	9%	10%
Clear and consistent signage	70%	16%	14%
Marked crosswalks/timing of walk signals	69%	16%	15%
Availability of maintained sidewalks	58%	30%	12%
Availability of parking	53%	42%	5%
Handicap accessibility of buildings	50%	13%	37%
Availability of benches in public areas	43%	25%	32%
Lighting along sidewalks and trails	41%	31%	28%
Conveniently located public restrooms	11%	45%	44%

■ Very satisfied/satisfied ■ Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied ■ Don't know

Health and Caregiving

Accessible and affordable community and health services are crucial in keeping seniors healthy, independent and active. This involves an appropriate supply of aged care services conveniently located close to where older people live. This includes the spectrum of health care services and in home supports and services provided by professionals but also families. Nationally, most of the care and support received by older adults due to health difficulties or disability is provided informally by family members or friends. Informal caregivers throughout the country contribute millions of hours of care without financial compensation (see statistics through the Family Caregiver Alliance).

Health status can influence one's ability to perform household tasks or participate in community activities and this is the case for some Hopkinton older adults. Thirty percent of those age 80 and older responded that they require help with household activities (such as routine chores like cleaning or yard work; see **Figure 23**). Although the percentage of those who require help with activities around the house is less for those age 55 to 79, there is a

proportion of each age group that requires help. Similarly, the majority of Hopkinton residents are healthy and participate in the community but some individuals in each age group struggle with community participation including 30% of those 80 and older. Overall, a number of respondents are dealing with health challenges which lead to difficulty in taking care of household tasks or participating in community activities.

Figure 23. Percentage of respondents who have challenges with community participation due to a health condition or require help with activities around the house
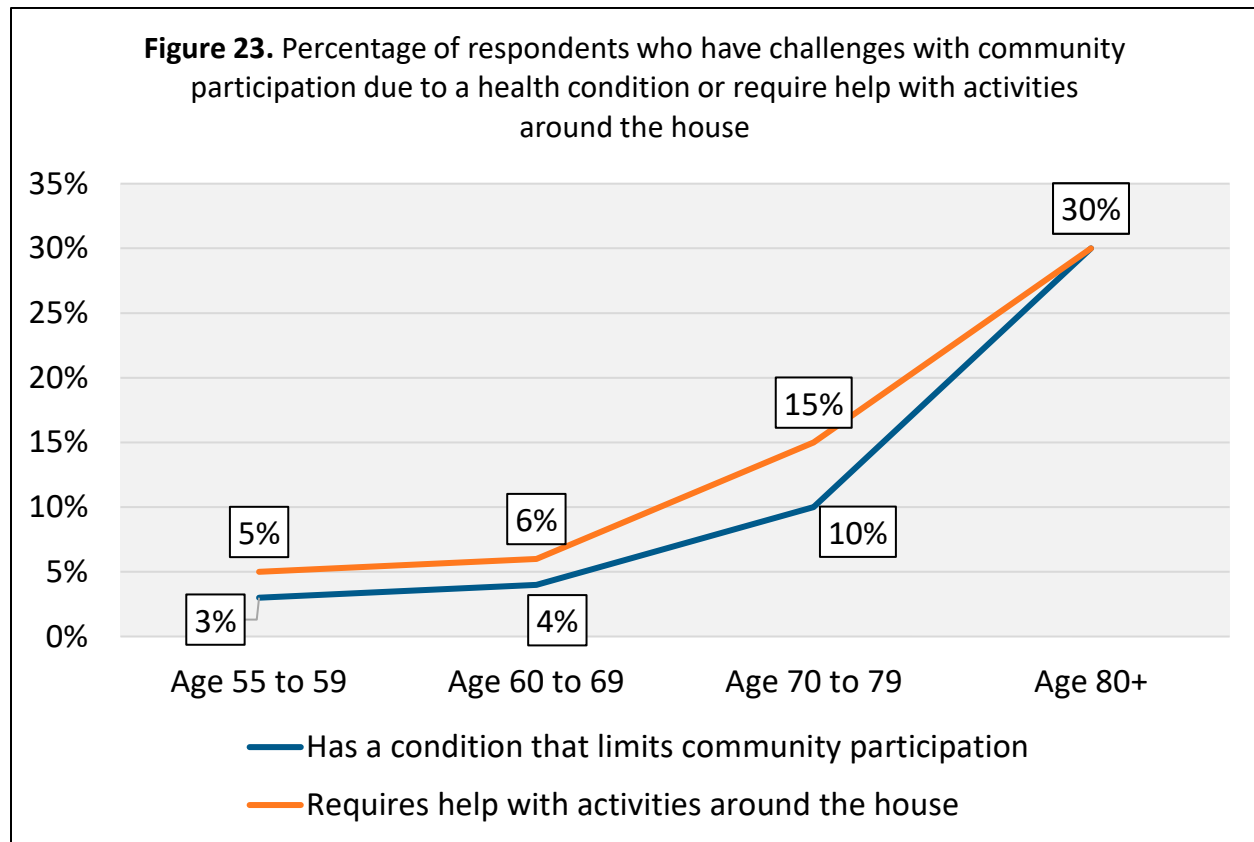
Recent evidence shows an increase in substance use disorders in the older adult population[8]. Results from the community survey indicate that many respondents, or their family or friends, have been affected by substance abuse (such as misuse of alcohol, prescription medication or illegal drugs; see **Figure 24**). While those ages 50 to 79 have been most affected (24% to 29%), 15% of those age 80 and older also responded yes to the question, "I have been, or I have friends or family members who have been affected by substance misuse".

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[8] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10241125/

Figure 24. Percentage of those who have been, or have friends or family members who have been, affected by substance misuse (such as misuse of alcohol, prescription medication or illegal drugs).

Ages 55 to 59	Ages 60 to 69	Ages 70 to 79	Ages 80+
28%	29%	24%	15%
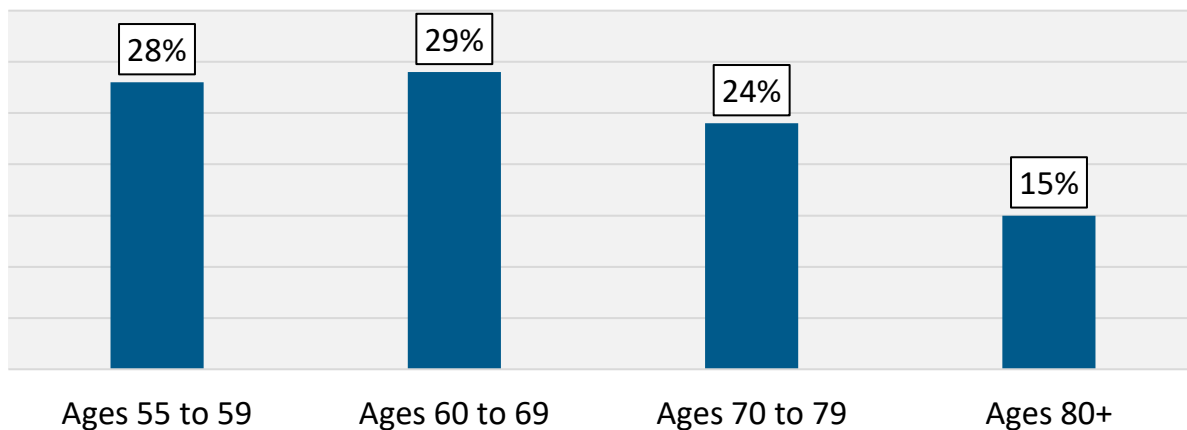
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have reported an increase in suicide rates of older adults, notably related to both isolation and mental health[9]. Therefore, the survey also asked participants to respond to questions about suicide. About 3% of survey participants responded that they have considered or attempted suicide while 13% of respondents stated that they are close to someone who has considered or attempted suicide (see **Figures 25 and 26**). All age groups have been affected to some degree, and while we cannot know if all of these affected individuals reside in Hopkinton-some of the people the respondents are close to many live elsewhere-we can discern that older adults in Hopkinton are dealing with the impact of these social and behavioral health challenges in their daily lives.

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[9] https://www.healthaffairs.org/content/forefront/suicide-rates-high-and-rising-among-older-adults-us

Figure 25. Have you ever considered or attempted suicide?

3%

97%

- Yes
- No

Figure 26. Are you close to someone who has considered or attempted suicide?

13%

87%

- Yes
- No
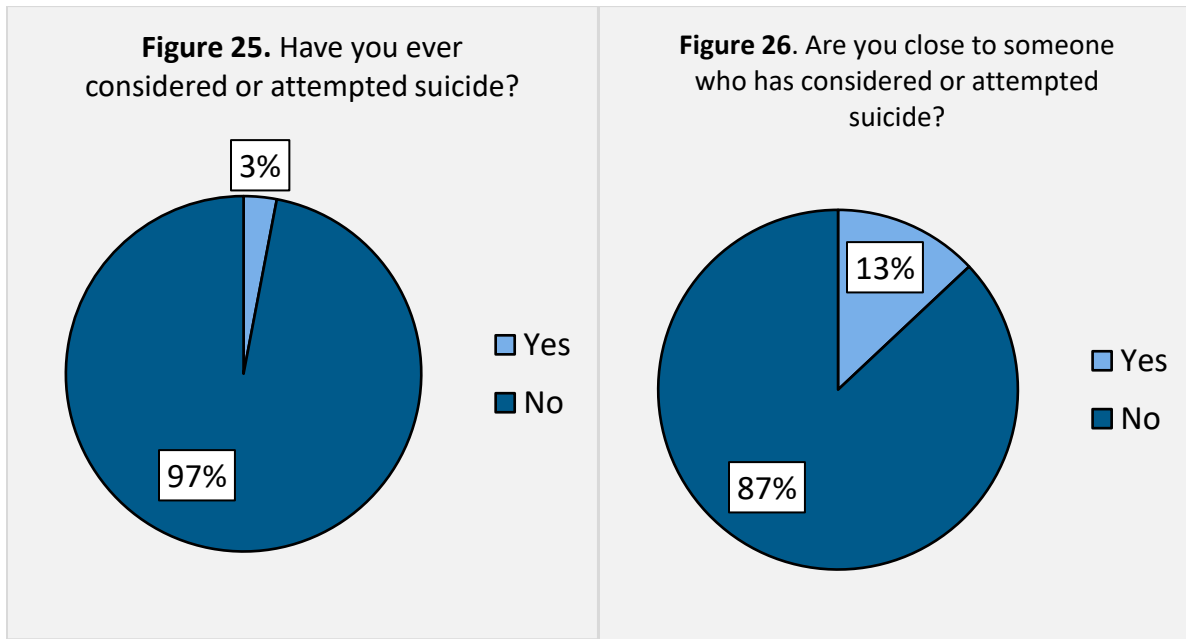
According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the number of caregivers increased from 43.5 million in 2015 to 53 million in 2020. By 2030, an estimated 73 million people will be 65 or older, and many will require daily assistance from at least one caregiver. Studies show that caregiving can lead to physical, emotional, and financial strain for many individuals.[10]

More than one in three (35%) survey respondents are, or have in the past 12 months, provided care or assistance to a person who is disabled, frail, or struggling with a physical, cognitive, or mental health condition. The share of respondents who are caregivers varies by age with those age 55 to 59 most often providing care (see **Figure 27**).

Figure 27. Do you now or have you in the past 12 months provided care or assistance to a person who is disabled, frail, or struggling with a physical, cognitive, or mental health condition (% yes)?

Age 55 to 59	Age 60 to 69	Age 70 to 79	Age 80+
44%	38%	33%	24%
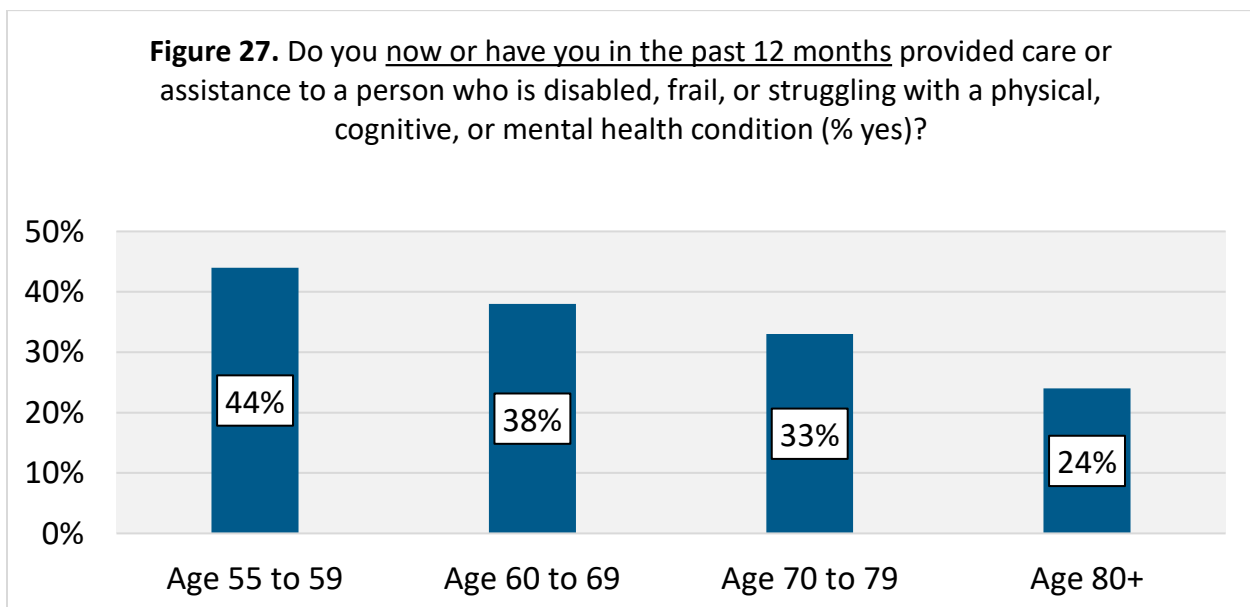
Many of those who have provided care or assistance to someone within the past 12 months stated that it was very or somewhat challenging to provide this care and meet other family and/or work responsibilities. This was especially true for those age 55 to 59, where 72% of those providing care reported this was very or somewhat challenging (see **Figure 28**). Many in this age group are likely still working and therefore may be struggling to meet the demands of both caregiving and work. Even for the other age groups, more than half of those who provide care find it very or somewhat challenging. Services (e.g., transportation to adult day programs) and programming (e.g., support groups) might be needed to support caregivers.

Figure 28. "How challenging is/was it for you to care for this person(s) and meet your other responsibilities with family and/or work?"
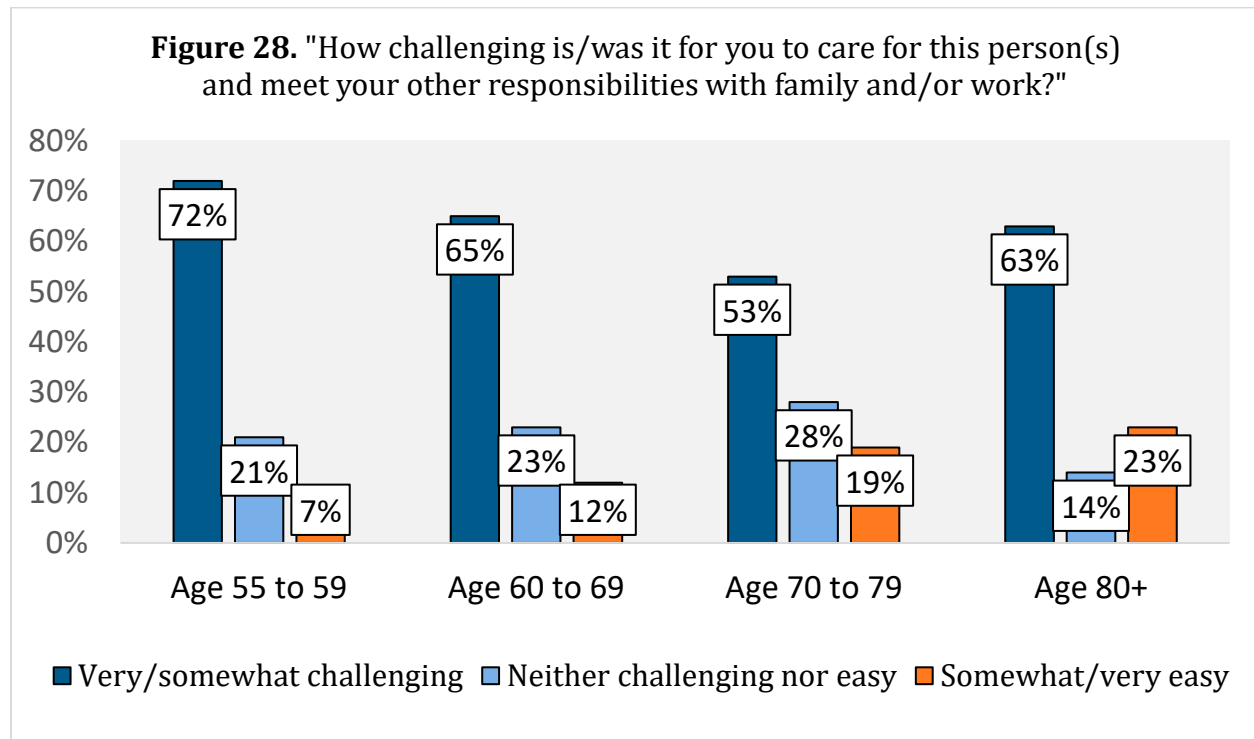
Caregivers were asked to indicate which conditions were experienced by their care recipient; the most frequently marked condition was mobility impairment (such as difficulty walking or climbing stairs; 61%), while 28% of the people the survey respondents cared for were living with a chronic disease such as cancer, diabetes, or asthma (see **Figure 29**). More than one quarter of the caregivers reported caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias (29%). Many respondents checked multiple responses to this question, indicating that their care recipient had more than one disability. Ten percent of caregivers noted other conditions including Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), mental illness, heart condition, and stroke.

Figure 29. "Did this person (care recipient) have any of the following conditions?"

Condition	Percentage
Mobility impairment	61%
Alzheimer's or other dementias	29%
Chronic disease	28%
Forgetfulness or confusion	24%
Psychological condition	24%
Sensory impairment	18%
Recent surgery	17%
Other	10%
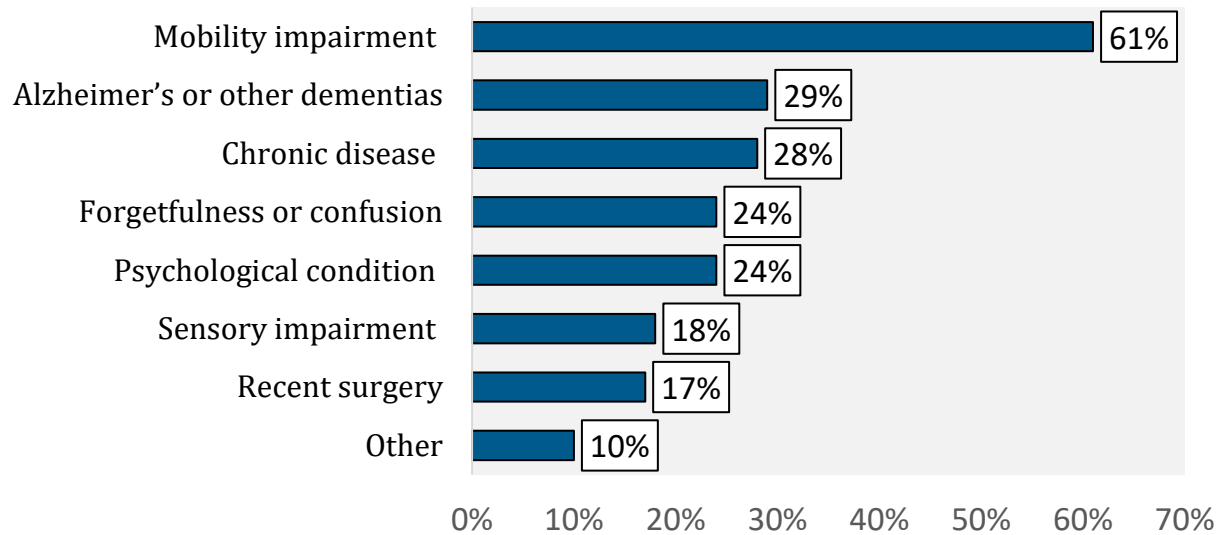
We asked survey respondents what supports were, or would have been, most valuable to them during the time they provided care or assistance. Almost half of all survey participants responded that informal support from family and friends was, or would have, been helpful (46%), while 28% felt that on-call support from medical professionals was or would have been most valuable (see **Figure 30**). Fifteen percent of these caregivers noted other supports that were, or would have been, valuable, including physical support, in-home aids, and referrals and social service.

I look after several seniors in Hopkinton and Ashland who live by themselves and need help with shopping, transport to doctor's appointments, home cooked meals, filling in forms, technology - the biggest thing lacking is in-home assistance so they can continue to live independently. [Survey response to final open-ended question regarding additional thoughts or comments]

Figure 30. "What supports were, or would have been, most valuable to you during your time providing care or assistance?"

Support	Percentage
Informal support from family and friends	46%
On-call support from medical professionals	28%
Durable medical equipment loan	17%
Other	15%
Adult Day Program	12%
Support groups	11%
Respite Care	11%
Memory café or social activities	6%
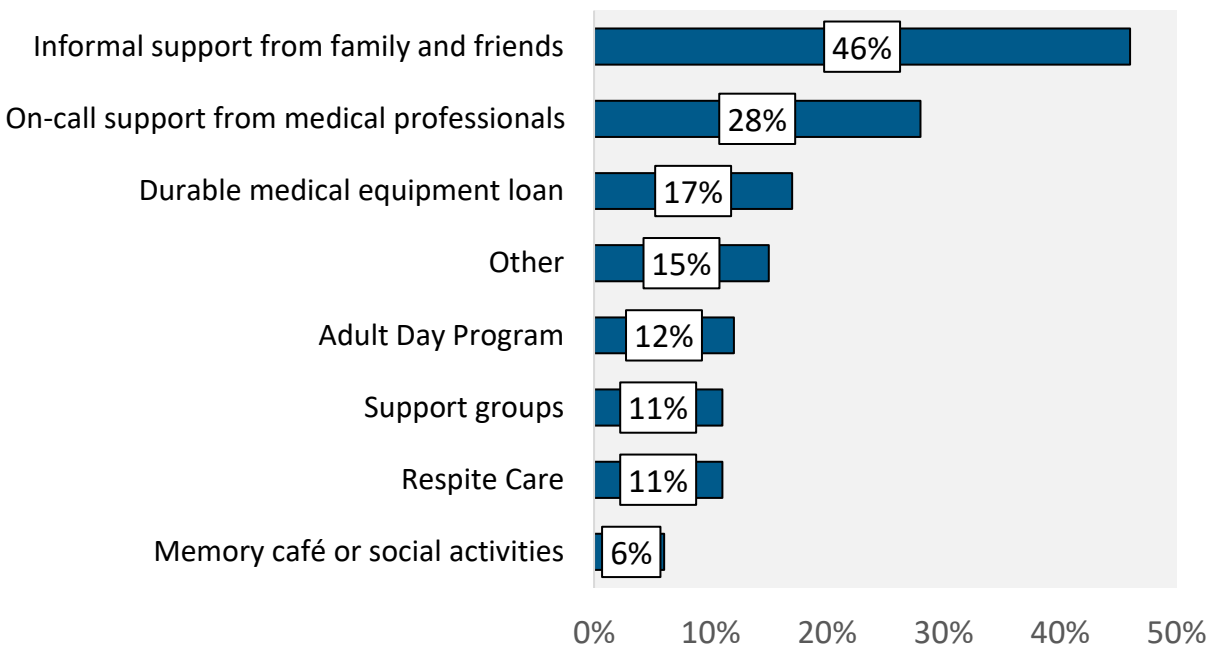
Social Activities and Relationships

Social activities and relationships shape wellbeing for individuals of all ages. Indeed, the absence of social relationships may have as substantial a negative impact on health as behaviors such as smoking or overeating. Many older adults are at high risk for social isolation, especially if their health and social networks break down. These risks are exacerbated if accessible services and transportation are not readily available to them as a means for maintaining contact with the world outside their homes. Providing opportunities for social engagement and participation in community events—through volunteer programs, learning opportunities and exercise programs, as well as social activities—can help community members maintain social support, remain active, prolong independence, and improve quality of life.

While the majority of survey respondents speak with someone, use email, social media, or text, or get together in person on at least a weekly basis to connect with family, friends, relatives, or neighbors, 32% of all respondents get together in person with someone monthly or less frequently (see **Figure 31). Figure 32** shows that while this percentage is higher for those age 55 to 59 and age 60 to 69, all age groups have a number of people who visit in person with family, friends, relatives or neighbors infrequently. Therefore, some Hopkinton residents may be at risk of social isolation. Individuals who rarely see friends, relatives, or neighbors represent important groups to target for efforts aimed at reducing isolation and, more generally, improving emotional wellbeing.

Figure 31. "How often do you talk on the phone or video call, send email, use social media, or text, or get together to visit with family, friends, relatives, or neighbors?"

Get together in person: 68% Daily or weekly, 26% Monthly, 6% Yearly or never

Email or use social media: 91% Daily or weekly, 4% Yearly or never

Talk on phone or video call: 88% Daily or weekly, 9% Monthly, 5%, 3%

Legend: ■ Daily or weekly ■ Monthly ■ Yearly or never
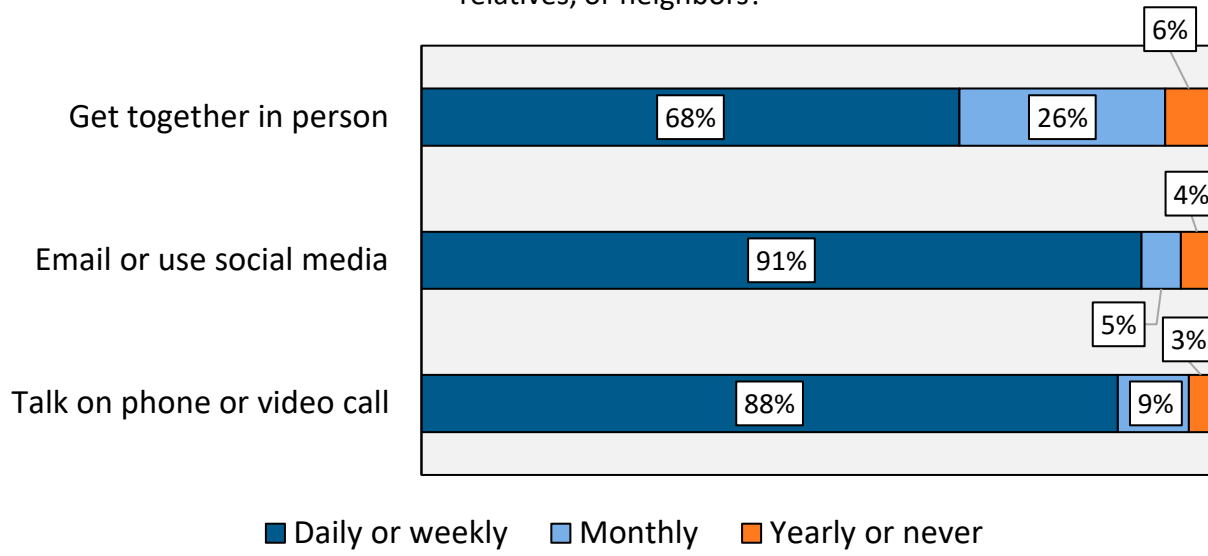
Figure 32. Those who talk on phone, send email/text/use social media, or get together in person with family friends or neighbors **monthly or less frequently**

Get together in person: 38%, 35%, 27%, 26%

Email, use social media, or text: 5%, 5%, 11%, 23%

Talk on the phone: 11%, 10%, 12%, 14%

Legend: ■ Ages 55 to 59 ■ Ages 60 to 69 ■ Ages 70 to 79 ■ Ages 80+
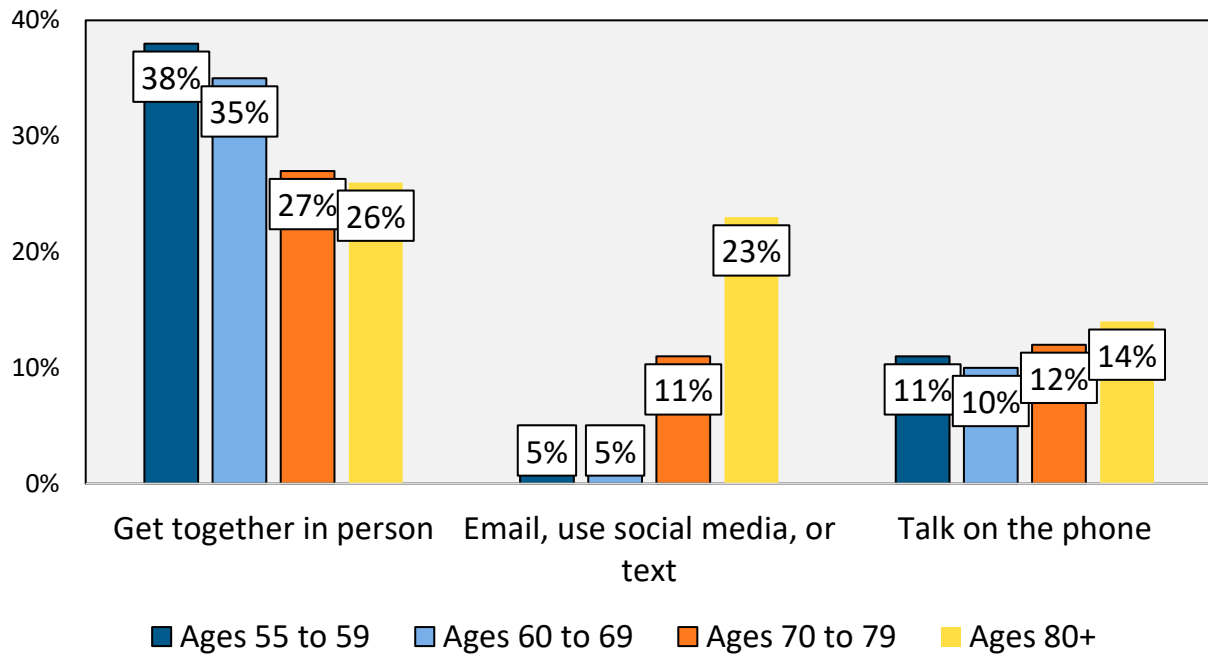
Openness to helping others, watching out for neighbors, and being embedded in a strong system of mutual support are hallmarks of a strong community. Yet when survey respondents were asked if they know someone living within 30 minutes of their home on whom they can rely for help when needed, 10% of all respondents said they did not (see **Appendix**).

When survey participants were asked if they would ask a neighbor for help if they needed assistance with a minor task or errand, one third of the respondents of all ages responded "no" (see **Figure 33**). In response to the survey question, "Do you provide any help to neighbors with minor tasks or errands?", about half of those age 55 to 79 responded yes, while only 31% of those age 80 and older provide help (see **Appendix**). While many respondents do not currently provide help, 46% responded that they would help if asked (see **Figure 34).** These findings, that many respondents are hesitant to ask neighbors for help while many neighbors would help if asked, illustrate a possible opportunity to strengthen neighbor-to-neighbor relations in Hopkinton as a way of supporting older residents wishing to age in place.

The Town needs to support and think of more ways to foster community. At the moment, the town seems resistant (e.g., no longer can have a senior high school class parade, resident complaints because no police detail to facilitate traffic flow of trick or treaters at HCA). We host the Marathon and should be able to host events like these on a much smaller scale with ease. We should have other events that focus on/celebrate the beauty of our town's diversity (e.g., an international food festival). [Survey response to final open-ended question regarding additional thoughts or comments]

Figure 33. "Would you ask a neighbor for help if you needed assistance with a minor task or errand (e.g., changing a light bulb, shopping, shoveling snow)?"

No, 33%

Yes, 67%
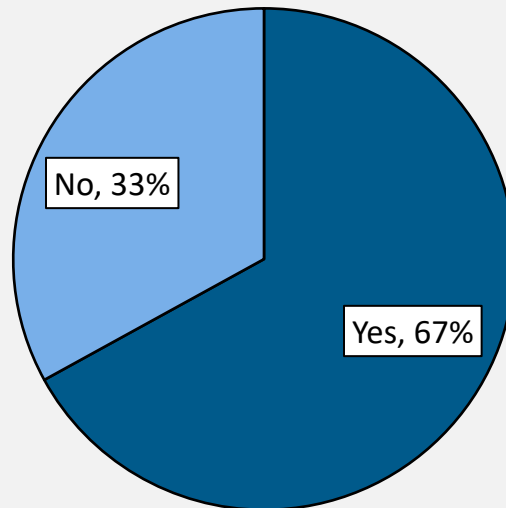
Figure 34. Do you provide any help to neighbors with minor tasks or errands?

- 46%
- 47%
- 7%
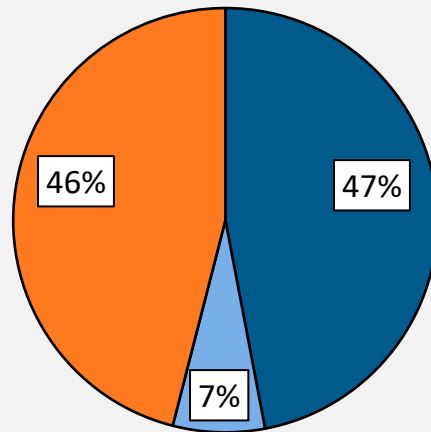
■ Yes   ■ No   ■ No, but I would be willing if asked

Survey respondents answered the question, "In the past 5 years, have you ever felt excluded in Hopkinton because of your..." with options of age, income, gender, language, religion or cultural background, skin color, race or ethnicity, disability, cognitive impairment, sexual orientation, or other. Respondents could also mark, "No, I have never felt excluded." While the majority of people who responded to the survey have never felt excluded, 22% have felt excluded based on at least one dimension (see **Appendix**). Among those reporting having felt excluded, the most common reasons noted were income (6%), age (6%) and other (5%). The respondents who marked "other" noted a variety of other reasons for exclusion including their political views and being new to Town and not feeling welcomed.

Another way in which inclusion can be assessed is through people's reported sense of belonging within their community. Survey respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement, "I feel a sense of belonging in the community where I live." As shown in **Figure 35**, 82% of respondents of all ages strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, signaling a strong sense of belonging in Hopkinton, yet there is a small but important share of respondents (12%) who disagree or strongly disagree with this statement.

Figure 35. Level of agreement with the following statement: "I feel a sense of belonging in the community where I live."

- Strongly agree/agree
- Strongly disagree/Disagree
- I don't know

6%

12%

82%
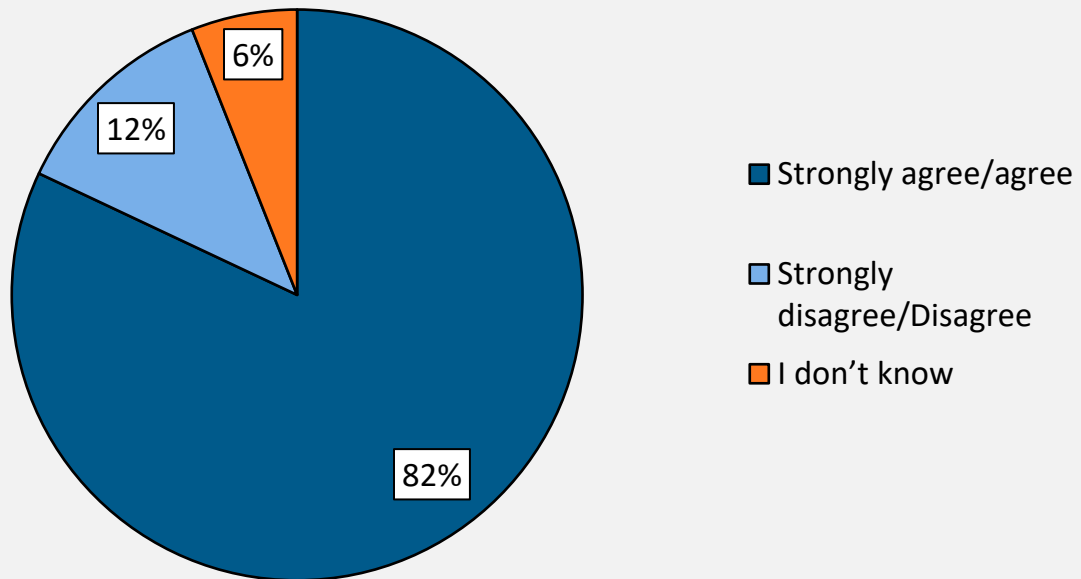
Feeling ignored or neglected by community leaders can be viewed as a form of exclusion with negative consequences for residents. Survey respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement, "Hopkinton town government considers the interests and concerns of older residents". About 39% of respondents

I think it would be helpful to allow seniors to vote online - I can't drive at night so my voice is not heard at town meeting. This is a huge disservice to older residents who have lived and paid taxes here for many years. [Survey response to final open-ended question regarding additional thoughts or comments]

strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, while 36% disagreed or strongly disagreed (see **Figure 36**). Almost one in four respondents checked "I don't know" in response to this question. The pattern of results is similar across age groups (see **Appendix**). These results suggest that there is room for improvement in action taken by local policy makers, or perceptions of those actions on the part of residents.

Figure 36. Level of agreement with the following statement: "Hopkinton town government considers the interests and concerns of older residents."

- Strongly agree/agree
- Strongly disagree/disagree
- I don't know
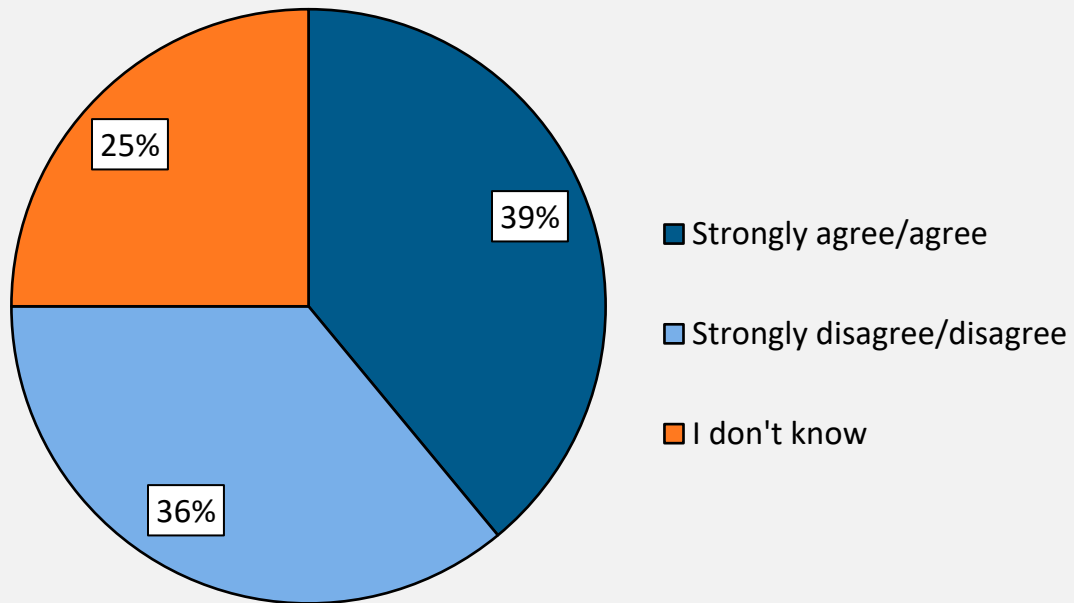
Current & Future Programs & Services at the Hopkinton Senior Center

Local senior centers play a part in helping older adults age in place and in community. Residents may obtain transportation, health screening, or social services through their local COA. Older adults may seek opportunities for engagement and socialization through volunteer programs, learning opportunities and exercise programs, as well as social activities. These involvements can help community members maintain social support, remain active, prolong independence and improve quality of life. Some research suggests that participating in a senior center may reduce one's sense of isolation, a highly significant outcome given the negative consequences of being disconnected socially.

Survey results suggest that participation in programs and use of services offered by Hopkinton Senior Services is more common among older residents. As shown in **Figure 37**, just 10% of those age 55 to 59 and 25% of those age 60 to 60 have ever used programs or services offered by Hopkinton Senior Services, while 49% of those age 70 to 79 and 68% of those 80 and older indicated they have participated in programs or used services provided by Hopkinton Senior Services. This age-graded pattern of usage is not unusual in

Councils on Aging and may reflect the increasing value of Hopkinton Senior Services as one ages.

Figure 37. Participation at Hopkinton senior center, by age
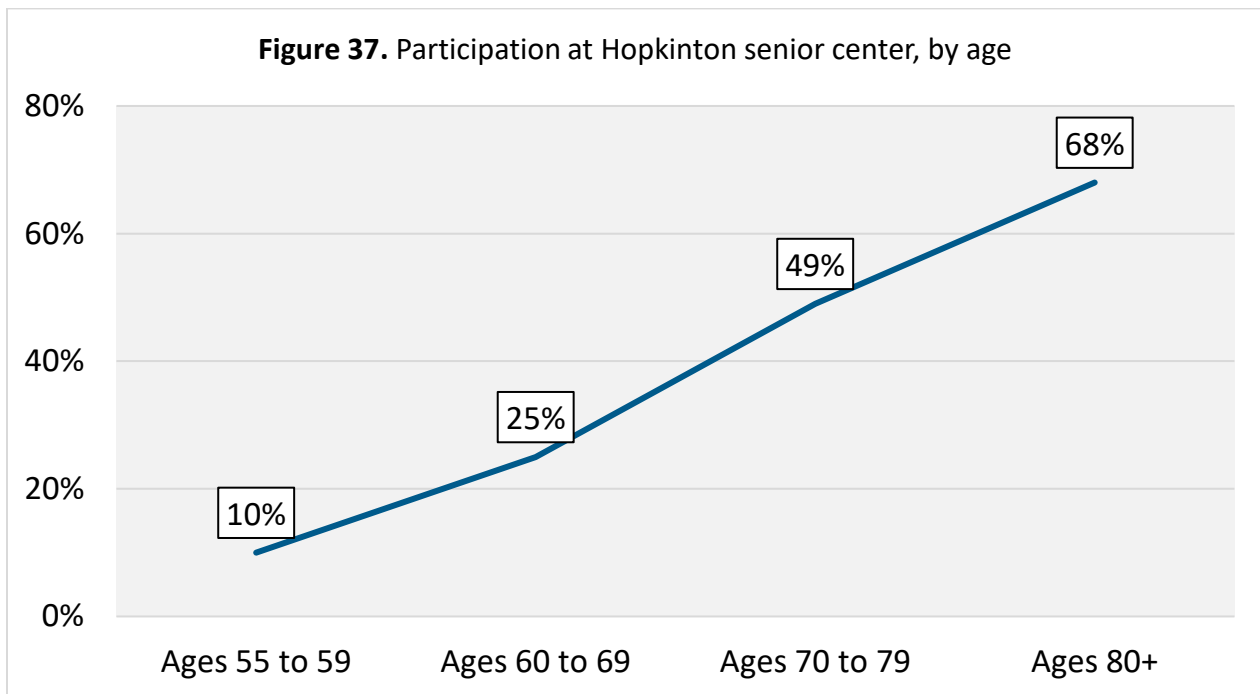
Note that participation on a weekly or more frequent basis was reported by just 4% of participants who were age 60 to 69, 13% of those age 70 to 79, and 18% of those age 80 and older, suggesting that older participants attend more frequently during the course of a month or a year (see **Appendix**). As well, more survey respondents of all ages who live alone attend the Senior Center a few times a year or more frequently (53%) compared to those who live with others (30%; tabulations not shown). Of those who do use the Hopkinton Senior Center, 55% only visit the Center a few times a year, while 12% of Senior Center users participate at least weekly (see **Figure 38**). This range of participation level highlights the broad continuum of affiliation with the Hopkinton Senior Center, with many residents participating just periodically, while others include participation with Hopkinton Senior Services as part of their regular weekly schedule. Considering ways to increase reach of Hopkinton Senior Services to those who never attend the Senior Center and exploring ways to increase participation of those who attend programs only a few times a year might be a worthwhile goal.

Figure 38. Frequency of participation at Hopkinton Senior Center, among attendees

Legend:
- ■ Two or more times a week
- ■ About once a week
- ■ A few times a month
- ■ About once a month
- ■ A few times a year (e.g., special events only)

Pie chart values: 12%, 11%, 12%, 11%, 55%
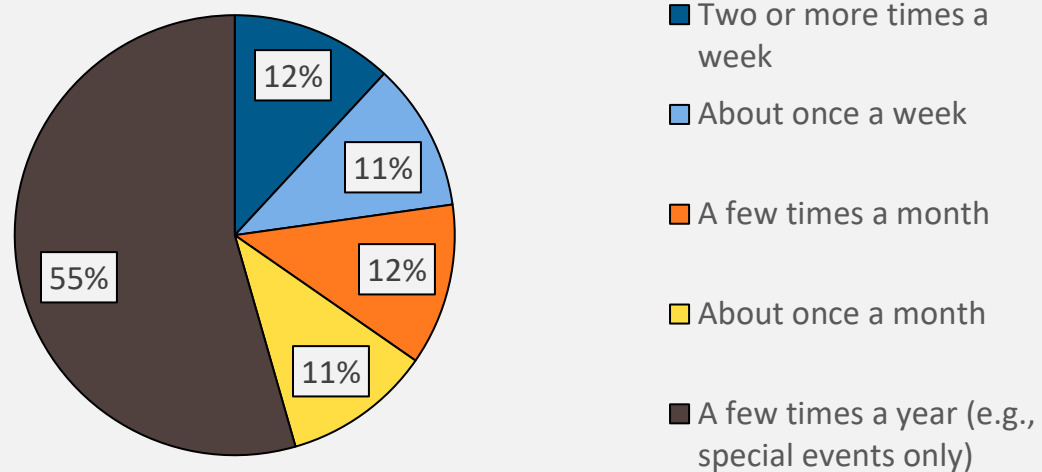
We asked survey respondents to select the reasons that limit their use of the programs and services offered by Hopkinton Senior Services. The most common response selected by all age groups was, "I do not need the services offered" (39%). The younger age groups (both age 55 to 59 and age 60 to 69) also often reported that they are "not old enough", "do not have time", and "don't know what is offered". As well, 14% of all age groups, including 20% of those age 70 to 79 and 18% of those 80 and older, responded that they are not interested in the programs offered (see **Appendix**). The reasons that limit senior center participation for users and non-users differ somewhat. Non-users most frequently reported that they don't need the services (47%), aren't old enough (32%) and don't know what is offered (17%), whereas only 9% of users believe they are not old enough and 7% of users reported they don't know what is offered (see **Figure 39**). Revamping the image of the Senior Center and diversifying offerings might be strategies to increase reach and participation by Hopkinton older residents.

Figure 39. Reason that respondents limit their use of programs or services offered by Hopkinton Senior Services, by user status

Reason	Users	Non-users
I do not need the services offered	30%	47%
I am not old enough	9%	32%
I don't have time	18%	17%
I do not know what is offered	7%	17%
Other	25%	15%
I am not interested in programs offered	15%	15%
I don't think I would fit in there	5%	10%
Hours of the Senior Center are inconvenient	3%	2%
Lack of transportation	2%	1%
Cost for programs	2%	1%
Limited class size for events/activities	3%	1%
Location of the Senior Center is inconvenient	1%	1%
Lack of sufficient parking	1%	0%

■ Users ■ Non-users

For the 19% of those who noted a reason not listed as an option, including 28% of those age 80 and older, the most common responses centered around not having time/still working, the perspective of "not needing" the Senior Center, lack of knowledge about the programs or services offered and timing of activities. A sampling of these responses is included in **Table 6**. Understanding reasons for lack of participation provides direction and opportunities for change. Offering late afternoon and weekend or evening programming, exploring ways to disseminate information about the varied programs and services offered, and exploring ways to change the image of the Center from a place where one "needs" the programs and services to an environment where one "wants" to participate in the activities are possible future steps that would allow a wider range of residents to be engaged with the Hopkinton Senior Services.

Table 6. Sample responses related to "other' reasons respondents limit their use of programs and services offered by Hopkinton Senior Services

Still Working/No Time
Work and other activities occupy my time, but I could see using the center when fully retired with more time on my hands.
Personal life still very full; this may change in the future.
I'm still working part-time and am not yet debilitated.
Not Needed
Not ready for senior services.
I have no issues.
I do not need services or programs at this time but do believe I would use them in the future.
Unaware of Programs or Services
I just don't know much about it and what it offers. Maybe Hometown Hospitality should offer tours or info.
I thought it was a private center, no idea it was for the public.
No detailed descriptions of offerings.
Inconvenient Times
Programs end too early in day; wish some programs could be offered in early evening.
The programs that interest me are too early in the day.
Lunch is too early.

There are two ways that respondents were asked to identify their preference for programs and services. First, respondents were asked to rate the importance of existing programs and services offered by Hopkinton Senior Services. Thirty percent or more of survey participants rated many of the programs and services as very important or important, including fitness activities (e.g., tap dance, stretch class, Zumba), community support programs (e.g., Durable

medical equipment, Repair Fair, Sand for Seniors), professional services (e.g., health insurance counseling, legal advice, tax assistance), physical health, wellness checks, and nursing services (e.g., blood pressure, podiatry, vaccine clinics), outreach services (e.g., financial, fuel, housing, nutrition assistance), social or recreational activities (e.g., movies, pottery, quilting, mahjongg), and transportation (e.g., Senior Center van, medical rides; see **Figure 40**).

Figure 40. Percentage of respondents who rated current programs and services offered through Hopkinton Senior Services as very important or important

Program/Service	Percentage
Fitness activities	32%
Community support programs	31%
Professional services	31%
Physical health, wellness, and nursing	31%
Outreach services	31%
Social or recreational activities	30%
Transportation	30%
Educational opportunities	29%
Volunteer opportunities	28%
Trips/local shopping	28%
Dementia-friendly programs	24%
Support groups	23%
Daily lunch program	21%
Virtual/hybrid programming	18%

When comparing the importance of Senior Services' programs by user status, outreach services and community support programs along with fitness activities, professional services, physical health, wellness checks and nursing services, and social or recreational activities were rated by users of Hopkinton Senior Services as very important or important (40% or more). One in four or more non-users rated fitness activities, physical health, wellness checks and nursing services, professional services, social or recreational services, and transportation as very important or important (see **Figure 41**). These results point to a need for Hopkinton Senior Services to consider its space and staffing capacity, along with programs and services offered, to best meet both the current demands of users and also the potential added demand of new users of the Hopkinton Senior Center.

Figure 41. Percentage of respondents who rate current services and programs as very important or impornt, by user status

Legend: ■ User ■ Non-user

Service/Program	User	Non-user
Virtual/hybrid programming	24%	15%
Support groups	29%	21%
Dementia-friendly programs	30%	23%
Daily lunch program	32%	15%
Trips/local shopping	37%	22%
Volunteer opportunities	38%	23%
Educational opportunities	39%	24%
Transportation	39%	25%
Social or recreational activities	40%	25%
Professional services	41%	25%
Physical health, wellness, and nursing	41%	26%
Fitness activities	42%	26%
Community support programs	43%	24%
Outreach services	43%	24%

Another way that the survey assessed the preferences for programming was by asking participants to think about their own future needs and interests and which areas they would like to see Hopkinton Senior Services develop or expand. Approximately 50% of all ages prioritized expanding both indoor and outdoor fitness programs (see **Figure 42**). This varied greatly by age, however, as those age 80 and older expressed a strong interest in prioritizing indoor fitness (78%) while those age 55 to 69 expressed a strong desire for prioritizing outdoor exercise (60%; **see Appendix**).

Figure 42. Thinking about your own future needs and interests, which of the following areas would you prioritize in developing or expanding in Hopkinton?

Area	Percentage
Indoor fitness	51%
Outdoor exercise	49%
Performances and presentations	35%
Wellness programs	35%
Lectures, speakers, cultural events	34%
Informal socializing	34%
Day trips	32%
Volunteer opportunities	31%
Technology assistance	29%
Evening or weekend activities	27%
Educational programs/skill development	26%
Transportation	24%
In-home programs	24%
Arts programming	24%
Nutrition programming	22%
Age and dementia friendly programs	18%
Support groups	16%
Caregiver programs	15%
Mental health counseling or referrals	15%
Men's activities/men's group	13%
Intergenerational programs	12%
Virtual programming	10%
Overnight trips	9%
Singles group	6%
Other	6%

Figure 43 illustrates how responses vary across those who currently participate at the Hopkinton Senior Center compared to those who have not yet visited the Senior Center. Among users, the highest priority for future programming was given to indoor fitness (53%), outdoor exercise (44%), and day trips (41%). Comparatively, among those who have not been to the Hopkinton Senior Center, priority was also given to indoor fitness (56%) and outdoor exercise (52%). These results indicate an overall preference for active programming that promotes physical health. It is worth noting, however, that both users and non-users of the Senior Center expressed interest in development or expansion of many other programs and services, as well.

Participants were given the option to write in other ideas and suggestions of things to prioritize and/or develop. Many suggestions focused on new programming and social events including activities for people age 50 to 70, gardening groups, environmental programs, substance abuse programming, and women's groups.

Figure 43. "Thinking about your own future needs and interests, which of the following areas would you prioritize in developing or expanding in Hopkinton?" by user status

Category	Non-user	Users
Indoor fitness	56%	53%
Outdoor exercise	52%	44%
Day trips	28%	41%
Performances and presentations	34%	39%
Lectures, speakers, cultural events	32%	39%
Wellness programs	34%	38%
Informal socializing	33%	36%
Technology assistance	26%	36%
Volunteer opportunities	32%	30%
Arts programming	22%	28%
In-home programs	23%	27%
Educational programs/skill development	26%	26%
Transportation	24%	26%
Nutrition programming	23%	23%
Evening or weekend activities	20%	22%
Age and dementia friendly programs	17%	20%
Support groups	15%	19%
Caregiver programs	14%	17%
Mental health counseling or referrals	14%	16%
Men's activities/men's group	12%	14%
Intergenerational programs	12%	13%
Virtual programming	9%	12%
Overnight trips	7%	12%
Singles group	6%	7%
Other	6%	6%

A majority (66%) of survey respondents report that the Hopkinton Senior Center plays a role in their lives or the lives of their loved ones, friends, or neighbors—making it clear that the Hopkinton Senior Center is a revered community asset for many (see **Appendix**). Not surprisingly, this is highest for those age 80 and older, as 85% in this age group see the Senior Center playing a role in their lives for the lives of their people they know. **Figure 44** shows that among those respondents who participate at the Hopkinton Senior Center, 93% report perceiving the Senior Center as playing a role in their lives or the lives of someone they know.

Figure 44. Percentage of people who responded "yes" to the question, "Do you see the Hopkinton Senior Center as playing a role in the lives of yourself, loves ones, friends, or neighbors?" by user status
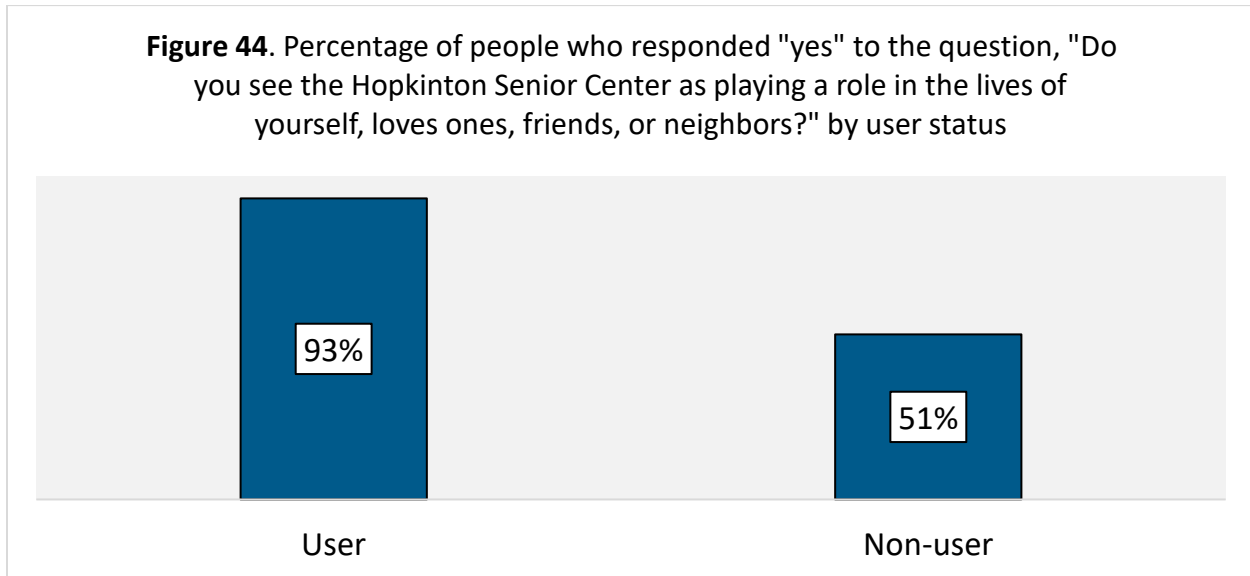
Promoting widespread awareness of local services, programs and resources maximizes the impact of community assets. There was one question included in the survey related to preferred method of getting information. Preference for method of communication varied by age (see **Figure 45**). The most consistently reported source of information, across age groups, was the Senior Center newspaper (i.e., *The Hilltopper*) with 69% of all age groups naming it as a preferred source of information. More than four out of five respondents age 80 and older (88%) and age 70 to 79 (83%) prefer to find information about activities and services through the newsletter as compared to 32% of those age 55 to 59. Conversely, one half of respondents age 55-59 prefer to find information about activities and services on the Town website compared to 23% of those age 70-79 and 11% of those 80 and older. Email notifications and social media postings are also ways that those age 55 to 69 prefer to find information. Given that current Hopkinton Senior Center participants are somewhat older, we conclude that continuing to make information about the program and services available through print media remains important. Considering ways to also expand existing digital presence might aid in effectively reaching younger residents.

Figure 45. Where do you prefer to find information about the activities and services offered by the Senior Center?

	Age 80+	Age 70-79	Age 60-69	Age 55-59
Senior Center newsletter (e.g., The Hilltopper)	88%			32%
The local newspaper	36%			35%
Visit to the Senior Center	26%			9%
Email notifications from the town	24%			42%
Word of mouth	23%			9%
Town website	11%			50%
Social media postings (e.g., Facebook)	10%			33%
Television (HCAM)	7%			5%
Other	2%			7%
Radio	1%			1%
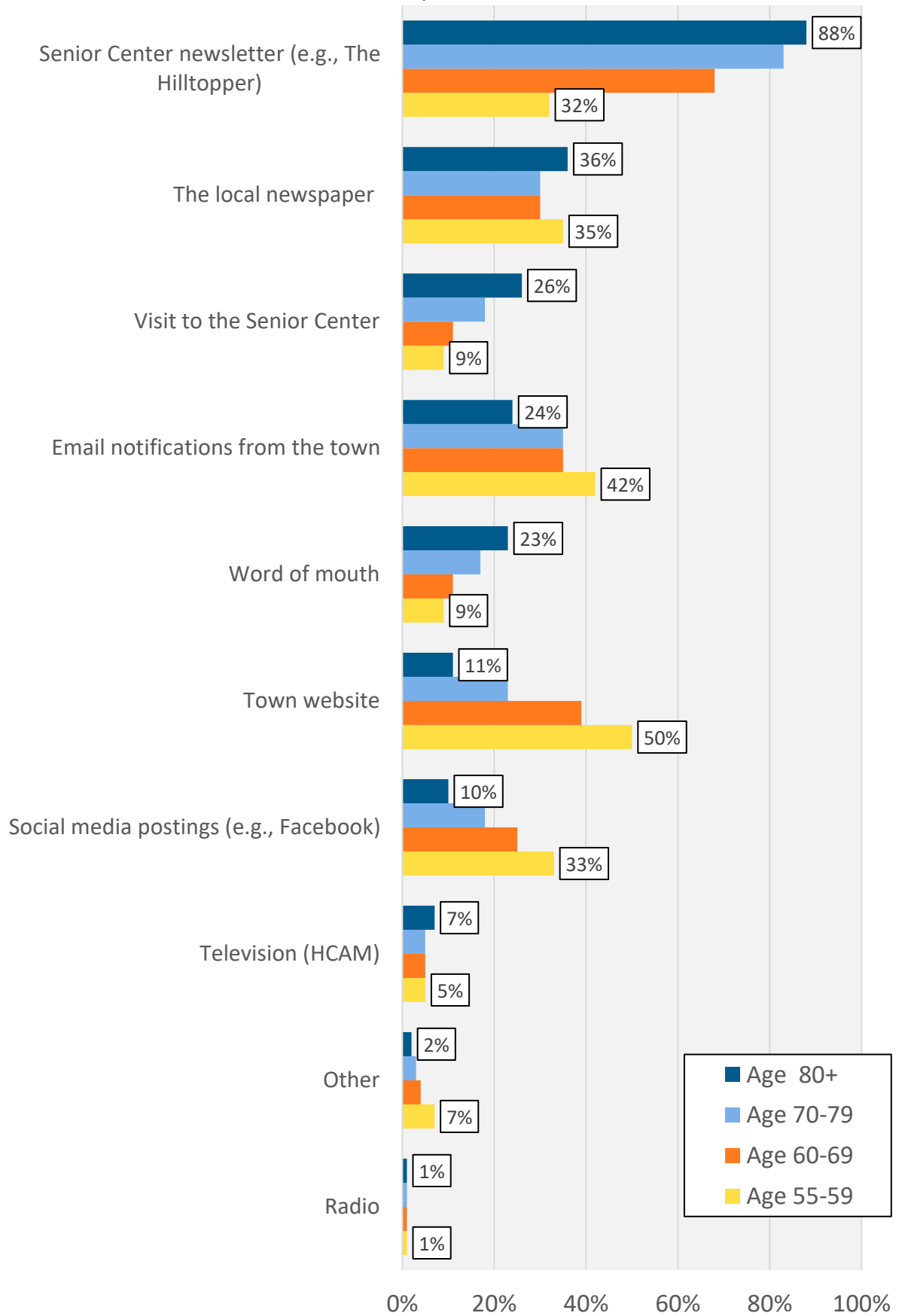
When it comes to accessing information, knowing where to start can be an important step. Among survey respondents, approximately one-half do NOT know who to contact in Hopkinton if someone in their family needs help accessing social services, health services or other municipal services (**see Appendix**). Slightly stronger awareness is evident among respondents age 70 and older, whereas 62% of those age 55 to 59 and 55% of those age 60 to 69 responded that they don't know who to contact (see **Figure 46**). It is possible that many in the older cohort have already needed services, and therefore figured out how to access them. Still, many respondents in all age groups lack this knowledge. Programming to inform residents about the many programs and services available for future needs is worth considering.

Figure 46. Percentage who do NOT know whom to contact in Hopkinton should they or someone in their family need help accessing social services, health services or other municipal services.
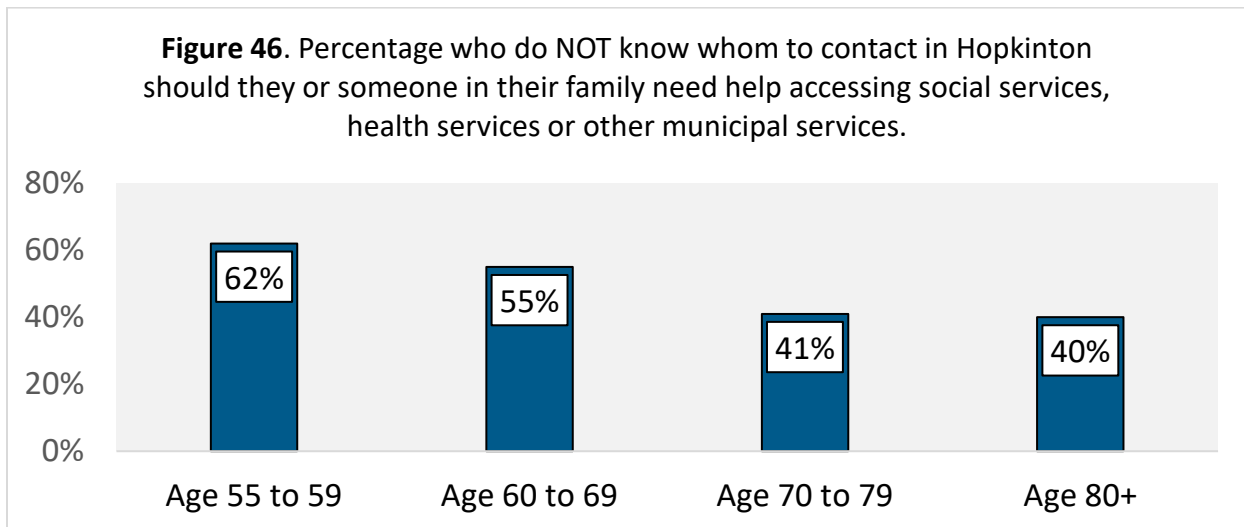
While most community survey respondents have access to the Internet from their home (96%), it is important to note that some respondents age 80 and older do not (15%; **see Appendix**). This is important information both for outreach mechanisms but also to highlight the need for public access to Internet services for those who do not have connectivity in their homes.

Employment and Retirement

Remaining in or reentering the workforce due to financial necessity or personal preference is a decision that shapes later life for many older people. For those still working, their experiences can mean less hours, different schedules, and an interest in maintaining professional relationships. For those who have chosen retirement, maintaining active lifestyles and contributing to the world around them can be important factors when considering how to spend their time. Regardless of employment status, the ability to pay for necessary expenses and maintain quality of life can be challenging due to age-related shifts in health, ability, costs, and streams of income.

Many people across the country continue to work beyond the traditional retirement age of 65 and this is evident in Hopkinton survey results. **Figure 47** shows that a majority of respondents in their 50s (82%) and their 60s (57%) are still working and one out of every five respondents age 70 to 79 continue to work. These results are similar to results from the American Community Survey (presented on page 12 of this report) indicating that many of Hopkinton's older residents remain in the workforce. Of those who reported "other", most noted that they have a disability or volunteer.

Figure 47. Current employment status, by age
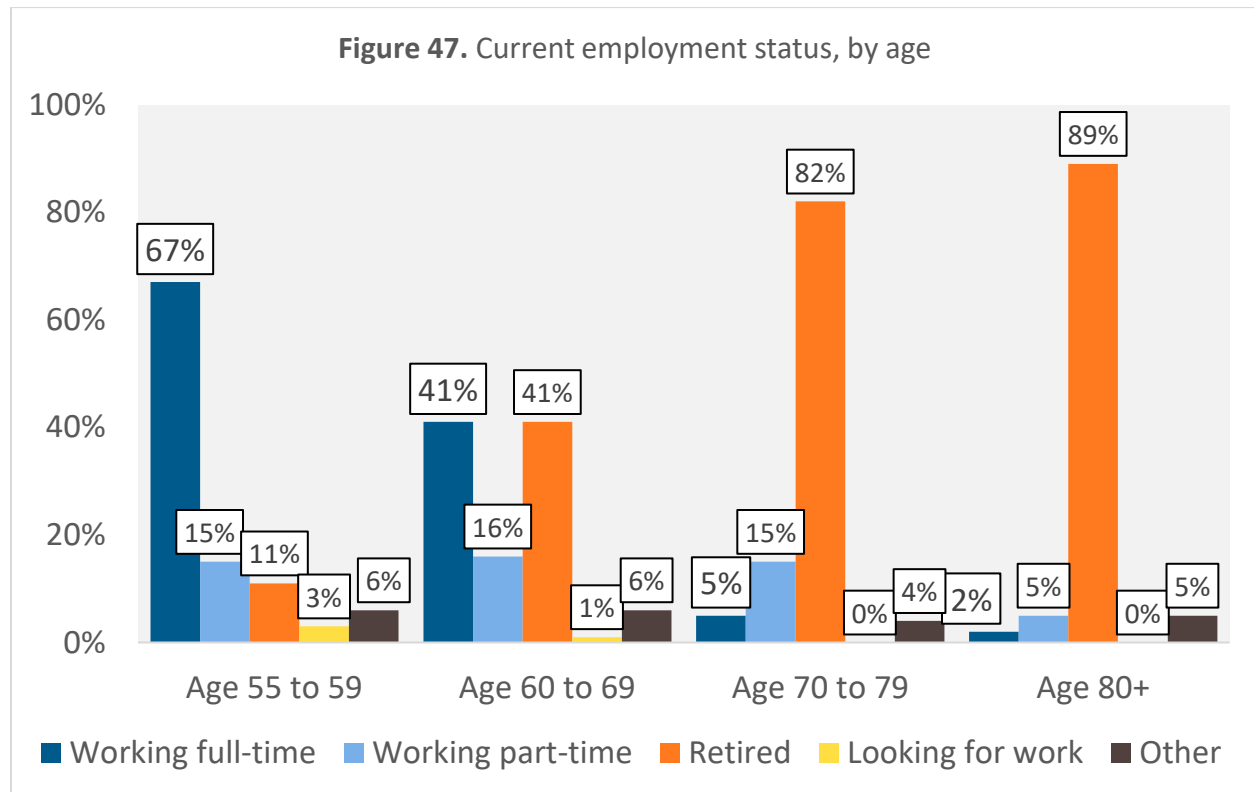
For those who responded they are still working, 64% of those age 60-69 and 48% of those age 70-79 are considering retiring within the next 5 years (see **Figure 48**). This has implications for Hopkinton Senior Services, as many of these future retirees will have more time, and possibly more interest and need, in accessing the programs and services at the Senior Center. Interestingly, of the survey respondents who are still working, 15% do not know when they expect to retire or don't anticipate ever fully retiring (tabulations not shown). Implementing evening and weekend programming might be one way to engage these older workers with Hopkinton Senior Services. Additionally, developing new programs that would particularly attract older workers might be useful.

Figure 48. Anticipated retirement timing, among those currently working
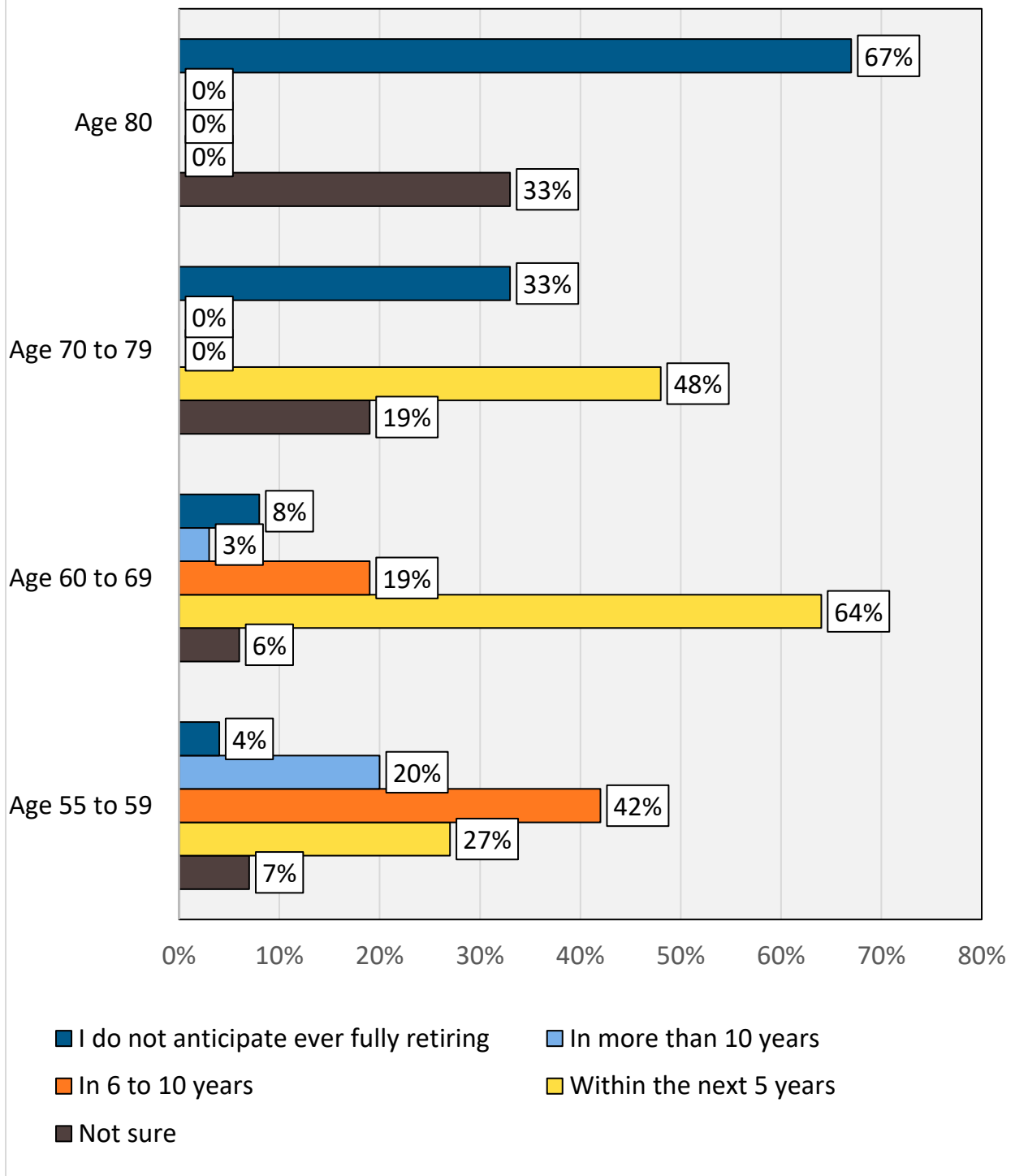
There were several questions on the survey that explored financial security. While the majority of survey respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement, "I have adequate resources to meet my financial needs, including home maintenance, personal healthcare, and other expenses", 10% disagree or strongly disagree and this varies some by age with 15% of those 80 and older disagreeing with this statement (see **Appendix**). Similarly, about 10% of

survey respondents noted that while their current residence needs home repairs, they cannot afford to make these repairs. Moving forward, the community may wish to explore strategies to address the needs of those who are struggling financially through expanded opportunities for tax relief, additional meal programs, and development of other programs and supports.

At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were invited to write in any additional thoughts or comments about Hopkinton Senior Services and almost 500 participants took the time to provide additional feedback. Many comments highlighted the positive impact or potential impact of Hopkinton Senior Services. It is evident from the comments that while some of those who complimented Senior Services take advantage of the programs and services, others do not at this time, but are comforted to know that Hopkinton Senior Services is available for their future needs.

Even though my participation in programs is only occasional, I am glad that resources are there when I will need [them].

Not surprisingly, similar to the open-ended questions earlier in the survey, many respondents wrote in comments related to the high cost of living, high taxes, and limited affordable and accessible housing options. In addition, there were many suggestions regarding new programs and services. Some respondents provided specific ideas. For example, respondents suggested more intergenerational programming, more active programming, a volunteer phone bank to contact isolated seniors, a leaf vacuum program where residents rake leaves to sidewalk and town vacuums the leaves, and groups for the LGBTQ+ community. Sample responses to "If you have any other thoughts or comments about the Town of Hopkinton and /or Senior Services, please include them here" are listed below, in **Table 7,** focusing on programming and services, communication, Hopkinton Senior Center image, and Hopkinton Senior Center hours.

Table 7. Sample responses to "If you have any other thoughts or comments about the Town of Hopkinton and/or Senior Services, please include them here."

Programming and Services
For "young" seniors, it might be interesting to see programming for us. Ideas: lecture series (evening), organized hikes, planning for retirement - aging in place, etc.
Center should offer activities that are not just services: trivia night, bridge tournaments, karaoke, puzzle contest. Get people used to coming to senior center before they use services.
"Senior discount days" from local businesses. Basic coffee shop (pay for food) at senior center to meet friends.
A continued focus on nutrition, exercise + meditation type skills to enhance the "health span" + quality of life as we age should be the guiding core values of senior center mission - especially in a town that hosts the Boston marathon. A more visible connection between the two, such as senior Olympics, etc. or other ideas (books + speaker series) could be a nice next generation idea for the senior center to evolve into.
Communication
Have an open house/reception for lunch program at Senior Center. I'd like to try it but don't know what it's like.
I have lived here for 15 years and live in an over 55 community. I have NEVER gotten any info on the senior services in this town.
The town needs to provide more information on what's available to Seniors and how people can/should help.
Senior Center Image
I don't consider myself old enough to need "senior services" - I think of those for folks in their 70's to 90's.
I don't need the Senior Center services, but from what I know of it, it has a great reputation and offers a lot. If I am in Hopkinton when I get to the point of needing services, I look forward to having this resource.
Feel the center only caters to the elderly and not older seniors who think young!
The Senior Center focuses on people who want to be old; little of interest for active seniors
Senior Center Hours
I wish Hopkinton Senior Center had more visibility and support! It's a Great Place but limited hours etc. make it difficult. Also, going in the first time can be confusing….
I am currently working full time but look forward to engaging with senior center activities when I retire. Currently if there was anything available on the weekends I would contemplate getting involved in some programs. Thank you!
Longer hours, M-F maybe Sat and evenings. Higher level of programming. The town has added several staff positions at library. Why not at the center? Director needs to push town for more money.
Excellent Senior Center / caring staff / would use if programs were offered on the weekends when I'm not working

Conclusions and Recommendations

Sustained growth in the percentage of older Hopkinton residents, compared to the full Hopkinton population, is expected within the next decade. Currently, about 20% of Hopkinton residents are age 60 and older. With the changing demographics, the share of residents age 60 and older is expected to increase to 27% by 2030. This central, overarching observation – that the share of older residents of Hopkinton is already large and will continue to expand – makes clear the importance of considering how well features of the Town, the services and amenities available, and virtually every aspect of the community align with the age demographic moving forward. Planning is especially warranted with respect to Hopkinton Senior Services, which may be heavily impacted by aging of Hopkinton residents.

In preparing for this demographic shift, Hopkinton Senior Services and the Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging within the Gerontology Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston partnered to conduct a study to investigate the needs, interests, preferences, and opinions of the Town's residents age 55 and older by engaging the community regarding their experiences and needs relevant to Hopkinton Senior Services. The contents of this report are meant to inform the Town of Hopkinton, Hopkinton Senior Services, the Senior Center, and organizations that work with and on behalf of older residents of Hopkinton for the purposes of planning and coordination of services for current and future needs of residents.

A broad range of findings are reported in this document, highlighting positive features of Hopkinton as well as concerns expressed by older residents. While many of our findings, and the recommendations that follow, intersect with the scope of responsibility of Hopkinton Senior Services, it is understood that responding to many needs and concerns expressed in the community will require the involvement of other municipal offices or community stakeholders, and some will require substantial collaborative effort.

We summarize **key findings** and make the following **recommendations** to the Town of Hopkinton:

Aging in Hopkinton: Challenges and Recommendations

- ➢ Communication within departments and among residents in Hopkinton could be improved.
    - o Continue to publicize Senior Center programs and services through both electronic (email, social media) and paper (*The Hilltopper, Hopkinton Independent*) communication to reach the broad range of potential users of Senior Services.
    - o Strengthen linkages and communication pathways between Town offices and community organizations around issues relating to the senior population.

- Enhance existing, and encourage the creation of more, collaborations especially relating to supporting vulnerable residents of the community.
- Facilitate a quarterly meeting for representatives from town departments to come together. These meetings would focus on sharing resources and information about programs and services available through various organizations but also provide a mechanism by which communication about issues of isolation among providers can be streamlined and relationships established.
    - Embed Senior Center staff or volunteers in community organizations, cultural groups, and special interest groups that serve older adults of varied ethnicities—rotate this person regularly to ensure that exchange in information is ongoing.
    - Explore the creation of "neighborhood networks" that can provide channels for word-of-mouth communication at a micro-local level. Establish neighborhood liaisons as volunteers to serve as the conduit between Senior Services and their neighbors.
    - Generate an email listserv to facilitate sending weekly or monthly email "blasts" to generate reminders for key events.

- Financial insecurity – driven largely by taxes, cost of living, and housing - is a concern for many Hopkinton older residents.
    - Continue to promote and expand tax relief programs (e.g., tax-work off program, tax freezes) to reach more seniors. For example:
        - Increase eligibility and ease in accessing these programs, including the ability of family members or friends to work on behalf of an older resident who is seeking property tax relief.
        - Broaden awareness of tax relief programs through an informational insert in a utility bill and highlighted section in *The Hilltopper* and on the Senior Services website.
    - Strengthen efforts to make residents aware of resources that are available to them, such as programs supporting food security (e.g., SNAP), fuel assistance, and the like.
    - Consider expanding educational workshops on topics related to economic security, such as planning for retirement, finding new employment, creating ways to use home equity to age in place, or seeking alternative housing models like home-sharing or renting out rooms.
    - Engage with local businesses and organizations to create "senior discount" programs for a range of programs and services that can offset costs and improve quality of life for older residents.

- Consider hosting a program like "How to Cut the Cord" to educate residents on how they can access streaming or other online media to eliminate or reduce their cable bill.
- Coordinate and engage with local organizations (e.g., fraternal organizations, faith communitities, Friends of Hopkinton Seniors) to assist residents with home repair projects, snow removal, and lawn care for older adults who are unable to perform these activities or who cannot afford it.

➢ Limited transportation options in Hopkinton are a challenge to aging in place.
- Promote awareness of transportation options already available and expand transport available through the Hopkinton Senior Center, including medical trips but also "amenity trips" for social participation. Advocate for extended routes, hours, and on-demand services.
- Promote existing opportunities for "refresher" driving courses and car safety programs as ways to support safe driving for as long as possible.
  - AARP offers a Smart Driver course. This is an educational program that offers older adults the opportunity to check how well their personal vehicles "fit" them. The program also provides information and materials on community-specific resources that could enhance their safety as drivers, and/or increase their mobility in the community.
  - Consider hosting a "car fit" program[11], an educational program to support comfort, safety, and fit within a vehicle to support safe driving.
- Host training sessions on the use of available transportation options through the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA), including their Dial-a-Ride program.
- Consider the establishment of "age friendly parking spots" or give older residents priority during particular hours at various locations in Town to encourage older adults to get out in the community.
- Engage with local businesses, organizations, and municipal entities to document where accessible bathrooms exist and make a map of these restrooms available to older residents via paper copies at the Senior Center and posted on the Town website.

➢ Opportunities to adapt current housing, downsize, or obtain accessible housing are perceived as challenging in Hopkinton.
- Promote awareness of various housing options across the lifespan. Consider hosting a "housing choice" planning seminar to encourage pro-active thinking about aging in place. Invite local experts (e.g., real estate agents, contractors, disability commission members, lawyers, financial professionals) who can

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[11] https://car-fit.org/

share their perspective about future housing options based on a wide range of individual scenarios.
- o Continue to educate residents about aging-in-place resources such as tax deferrals and reverse mortgages.
- o Distribute educational materials, hold workshops, or offer other opportunities for Hopkinton residents to learn about home modifications that can promote safety in the home.
- o Consider possible community partners who can support the creation of a list of trusted plumbers, carpenters, electricians, and landscapers that can be made available to older residents.
- o Expand access and remove barriers to building accessory dwelling units in the town.

- ➢ Many Hopkinton residents need support due to physical, emotional, and/or cognitive conditions.
  - o Continue to implement and expand community-wide dementia friendly training.
    - ▪ Advocate for local restaurant staff to gain training to provide age and dementia friendly dining.
    - ▪ Engage faith communities. During Alzheimer's and brain health awareness months, decorate the pews in purple to raise awareness about dementia in the community and to demonstrate that persons of all cognitive abilities are welcome.
  - o Continue to offer opportunities for Mental Health First Aid training[12] – similar to dementia friendly training - an initiative to expand capacity to support residents.
  - o Expand and utilize the opt-in electronic system for systematically identifying and communicating with at-risk and vulnerable adults and families during emergencies.
  - o Create a "see someone, tell someone" campaign to encourage those who interact with residents directly to notify Senior Services staff of someone who is isolated or in need of support. This could include town employees, local social workers or case managers, utility workers, postal workers, faith community leaders, and the general public.
  - o Consider hosting a "Caregiver's Night Out" to provide residents who might be caring for a spouse, parent, or grandparent an opportunity to enjoy a night of entertainment. Explore partnerships with volunteer groups and other aging service providers to provide respite care during the event.

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[12] https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/

o   Continue to provide information and referrals to supplemental care support, such as adult day care and respite care.

Hopkinton Senior Services: Challenges & Recommendations

➢ The image of the Hopkinton Senior Center could be improved to reach a larger segment of Hopkinton residents 60 and older.
   o   Correct misperceptions about who is "eligible" to participate in Senior Services activities.
      ▪   Feature current participant profiles in the *Hopkinton Independent* or other publications. Invite participants to share their experiences with Senior Services staff and highlight their stories in *The Hilltopper*.
      ▪   Target engagement efforts at potential new users. For example, send a birthday greeting to residents when they turn 60, inviting them to the Senior Center.
   o   Consider a rebranding effort to raise awareness about what is offered by Hopkinton Senior Services. Consider changing the name to be more inclusive and create an image that reframes aging as a positive and active experience.
   o   Expand outdoor and indoor fitness offerings. This was the most highly rated type of programming identified by both Hopkinton Senior Services users and non-users. More active programming will also attract residents who may not yet "need" services.
   o   Consider expanding hours that the Senior Center is open to include late afternoon, evening, and weekend hours, as a way to reach those who are still working or have other daytime commitments. Begin by just adding one evening a week or one evening a month to explore if these changed hours reach a broader group of residents.
   o   Consider using different messages for different audiences when marketing services and programs. For example, encourage adult children to access Senior Services Facebook page by including specific sections for them (e.g., sections about caregiving, support for "taking away the keys", etc.).
   o   Continue to use the Senior Center as a meeting place a few times a year for an evening or weekend educational or social event that would bring residents of all ages to the building.

➢ Programs and services offered by Senior Services are valued; additional programs and services are suggested to increase participation and reach a broader segment of Hopkinton residents (e.g., those who are in their 60's, those who are still working, residents of minority groups).
   o   Consider ways to encourage residents who are reluctant to participate on their own (e.g., a 'new member day' or 'bring a buddy' program). Consider

establishing a 'welcome committee' to ensure that new participants have a positive first experience.

- o Consider implementing a "surrogate grandparent" program that matches older adults with local families for mentorship and socialization to those whose families live out-of-town or are otherwise absent.
- o Consider offering culturally themed meals periodically as a way of bridging and celebrating cultures.
- o Expand and promote programs for newly retired residents or those considering retirement. Topics could include, for example, financial planning, health insurance coverage, or volunteer opportunities.
- o Expand and promote inter-generational programming, in partnership with other town resources (e.g., Hopkinton Public Library, Hopkinton School Department).
- o Advocate for Hopkinton school student councils to offer discounted, free tickets to performances and concerts.
- o Increase social programming, outreach, and education to promote intergenerational social engagement, respect, and inclusion among residents of diverse backgrounds, generations, and abilities.

➢ The demand for Senior Services' programs and services is expected to escalate in the coming years and additional staff is needed to meet the current and future needs and preferences of older adults in Hopkinton.

- o Plan for escalating demand for Senior Center programs and services by increasing staffing. An additional full time staff person is needed to expand current programming and implement new programming. While there is only one recommendation in this section, it is key to supporting the recommendations throughout this report.

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Appendix: Community Survey Results

Note: Appendix tables are based on 5,185 responses to the Hopkinton survey of residents age 55 and older, conducted in fall 2023. Sixteen percent of responses were received online with the rest of the responses received by mail. Total response rate was 27%. See text for additional details. Twelve people completed the survey who noted their age as <55. These responses are included in the Age 55 to 59 age group.

<u>Section I: Community & neighborhood</u>
Q1: How long have you lived in the town of Hopkinton?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
I do not live in Hopkinton	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Fewer than 5 years	10%	8%	10%	10%	11%
5-14 years	14%	21%	13%	9%	18%
15-24 years	16%	34%	17%	7%	12%
25-34 years	26%	31%	36%	19%	7%
35-44 years	15%	1%	15%	25%	10%
45 years or longer	19%	5%	9%	30%	42%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q2: How important is it to you to remain living in Hopkinton as you get older?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very Important	44%	25%	39%	55%	62%
Somewhat Important	33%	37%	32%	33%	27%
Slightly Important	14%	25%	17%	7%	7%
Not at All Important	9%	13%	12%	5%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q5: Please select your level of agreement with each statement below:

I feel a sense of belonging in the community where I live.

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Strongly agree	26%	24%	24%	25%	40%
Agree	56%	65%	54%	58%	45%
Disagree	9%	6%	11%	10%	7%
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	4%	2%	2%
I don't know	6%	2%	7%	5%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Hopkinton town government considers the interests and concerns of older residents.

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Strongly agree	5%	4%	5%	4%	10%
Agree	34%	31%	33%	34%	39%
Disagree	24%	23%	24%	26%	22%
Strongly disagree	12%	12%	13%	12%	5%
I don't know	25%	30%	25%	24%	24%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Section II: Housing & Living Situation

Q6: Do you rent or own your current place of residence?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
The residence is owned by me or someone who I live with	91%	96%	93%	92%	75%
The residence is rented by me or someone who I live with	5%	3%	5%	5%	12%
Other	4%	1%	2%	3%	13%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q7: Who do you live with? *(Check all that apply)*

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
I live alone	18%	10%	15%	18%	36%
A spouse/partner	74%	83%	80%	74%	42%
My adult child(ren) (age 18 or older)	16%	30%	17%	9%	14%
My child(ren) (under age 18)	4%	20%	2%	0%	0%
My grandchildren	2%	0%	4%	2%	2%
My parent(s)	2%	6%	1%	0%	0%
Another relative	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Pets	19%	33%	19%	14%	9%
Someone else	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%

*Figures do not sum to 100%

Q8: Does your current residence need **home repairs** (e.g., a new roof or heating system) to improve your ability to live in it safely?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes, and I can afford to make these repairs	23%	23%	27	22%	13%
Yes, but I cannot afford to make these repairs	10%	12%	10%	9%	12%
Yes, but I am not responsible for making these repairs	3%	2%	2%	2%	8%
No, my current residence does not need repairs	64%	63%	61%	67%	68%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q9: Does your current residence need some **home modifications** (e.g., grab bars in showers or railings on stairs) to improve your ability to live in it safely?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes, and I can afford to make these modifications	22%	19%	21%	26%	18%
Yes, but I cannot afford to make these modifications	7%	5%	6%	8%	8%
Yes, but I am not responsible for making these modifications	2%	1%	2%	1%	5%
No, my current residence does not need modifications	69%	75%	71%	65%	69%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q10. Does your current residence have "one-floor living" with a bedroom and bathroom on the entry level?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	40%	25%	34%	46%	63%
No	60%	75%	66%	54%	37%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q11: <u>In the next 5 years</u>, if you wanted to move from your current residence, what kind of housing would you prefer in Hopkinton? *(Check all that apply)*

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Single-family home	30%	43%	33%	27%	13%
Multi-family home (2, 3, or more units	3%	5%	3%	3%	0%
Assisted living community	11%	7%	5%	15%	27%
Apartment building	3%	2%	2%	5%	4%
Condominium or townhome	28%	34%	29%	30%	11%
Move in with family or friends (e.g., co-housing)	5%	2%	5%	5%	7%
Senior/disabled or subsidized housing	9%	3%	6%	11%	19%
I would leave Hopkinton	35%	50%	42%	29%	11%
Other	11%	7%	9%	15%	14%

*Figures do not sum to 100%

<u>Section III: Transportation and Public Spaces</u>
Q13: Please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following features of Hopkinton.

Transportation options

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very satisfied	5%	2%	4%	6%	9%
Satisfied	29%	27%	25%	31%	38%
Dissatisfied	16%	19%	15%	17%	11%
Very dissatisfied	9%	14%	9%	8%	6%
I don't know	41%	38%	47%	38%	36%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Availability of parking

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very satisfied	7%	7%	7%	6%	10%
Satisfied	46%	44%	48%	43%	46%
Dissatisfied	30%	33%	28%	33%	28%
Very dissatisfied	12%	13%	13%	12%	8%
I don't know	5%	3%	4%	6%	8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Handicap accessibility of walkways, public buildings, and businesses

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very satisfied	5%	4%	5%	5%	10%
Satisfied	45%	37%	43%	48%	54%
Dissatisfied	9%	8%	8%	11%	9%
Very dissatisfied	4%	6%	3%	3%	4%
I don't know	37%	45%	41%	33%	23%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Availability of maintained sidewalks

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very satisfied	7%	6%	7%	6%	9%
Satisfied	51%	49%	50%	51%	58%
Dissatisfied	22%	28%	21%	22%	13%
Very dissatisfied	8%	11%	9%	7%	6%
I don't know	12%	6%	13%	14%	14%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Lighting along sidewalks and trails

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very satisfied	3%	2%	3%	5%	5%
Satisfied	38%	38%	38%	37%	37%
Dissatisfied	24%	28%	27%	21%	18%
Very dissatisfied	7%	10%	6%	7%	4%
I don't know	28%	22%	26%	30%	36%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Availability of benches in public areas and along walkways

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very satisfied	4%	4%	4%	3%	5%
Satisfied	39%	39%	42%	34%	38%
Dissatisfied	22%	20%	21%	24%	22%
Very dissatisfied	3%	3%	3%	5%	2%
I don't know	32%	34%	30%	34%	33%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Marked crosswalks and/or timing of walk signals

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very satisfied	8%	7%	8%	7%	10%
Satisfied	61%	61%	62%	61%	60%
Dissatisfied	13%	13%	12%	14%	11%
Very dissatisfied	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
I don't know	15%	16%	15%	15%	17%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Clear and consistent signage around Hopkinton

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very satisfied	6%	7%	5%	5%	10%
Satisfied	64%	65%	67%	62%	63%
Dissatisfied	13%	11%	13%	14%	9%
Very dissatisfied	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
I don't know	14%	14%	12%	16%	16%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Conveniently located public restrooms

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very satisfied	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%
Satisfied	10%	11%	10%	7%	14%
Dissatisfied	32%	30%	32%	35%	27%
Very dissatisfied	13%	15%	13%	14%	9%
I don't know	44%	44%	44%	42%	49%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Accessibility of parks, trails, and recreational opportunities

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very satisfied	23%	30%	24%	21%	15%
Satisfied	58%	56%	59%	59%	54%
Dissatisfied	7%	6%	7%	8%	4%
Very dissatisfied	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%
I don't know	10%	4%	8%	10%	25%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q14. Which of the following best describes your driving status?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
I do not drive	4%	0%	1%	3%	21%
I drive with some limitations (e.g., avoid driving at night or on highways)	10%	3%	6%	14%	25%
I drive with no limitations	86%	97%	93%	83%	54%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q15: What are the primary ways in which you meet your transportation needs?
I drive myself

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	93%	96%	97%	93%	73%
No	7%	4%	3%	7%	27%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

My spouse or child(ren) drive(s) me

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	26%	20%	20%	30%	42%
No	74%	80%	80%	70%	58%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Friends or neighbors drive me

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	7%	3%	6%	7%	12%
No	93%	97%	94%	93%	88%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Public transportation (e.g., MWRTA, Dial-a-Ride)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
No	98%	98%	99%	98%	98%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Taxi or Ride Sharing options (e.g., Uber, Lyft)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	5%	6%	7%	2%	2%
No	95%	94%	93%	98%	98%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Volunteer medical transportation

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	1%	0%	1%	1%	4%
No	99%	100%	99%	99%	96%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Hopkinton Senior Center Bus/Van

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	2%	0%	1%	2%	10%
No	98%	100%	99%	98%	90%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Walk or bike

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	13%	17%	16%	10%	5%
No	87%	83%	84%	90%	95%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Other

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	2%	2%	1%	1%	5%
No	98%	98%	99%	99%	95%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q16:   What kind of difficulties do you have in getting the transportation that you need? (*Check all that apply*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
I have no difficulties	84%	88%	87%	82%	73%
Senior center transportation is inaccessible or inconvenient	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Public transportation is inaccessible or inconvenient	7%	5%	5%	9%	9%
No door-to-door assistance	2%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Distance to my destination is too far	3%	2%	1%	4%	5%
Transportation options cost too much	3%	3%	1%	4%	4%
Physical limitations or other impairments limit my ability to access transportation options	1%	0%	0%	1%	6%
I am not aware of transportation options in town	9%	8%	8%	11%	10%
No one I can depend on for a ride	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Other	2%	1%	2%	3%	4%

*Figures do not sum to 100%

Q17: Within the past 12 months, did you have to miss, cancel or reschedule a medical appointment because of a lack of transportation?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	4%	2%	3%	4%	11%
No	96%	98%	97%	96%	89%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Section IV: Social Activities & Civic Engagement

Q18: How often do you talk on the phone or video call, send email, use social media, or text, or get together to visit with family, friends, relatives, or neighbors?

Talk on the phone or video call

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Every day	56%	63%	58%	54%	49%
One or more times a week	32%	28%	32%	34%	37%
More than once a month	7%	5%	6%	7%	8%
Once a month	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
2-3 times a year (e.g., holidays)	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Never	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Send email, use social media or text

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Every day	71%	81%	75%	68%	54%
One or more times a week	20%	14%	20%	21%	23%
More than once a month	4%	3%	3%	5%	6%
Once a month	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
2-3 times a year (e.g., holidays)	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Never	3%	1%	1%	4%	14%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Get together in person

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Every day	20%	20%	20%	18%	22%
One or more times a week	48%	42%	45%	55%	52%
More than once a month	18%	21%	21%	14%	17%
Once a month	8%	10%	8%	8%	3%
2-3 times a year (e.g., holidays)	5%	7%	5%	4%	5%
Never	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q19: Do you know someone living within 30 minutes on whom you can rely for help when you need it?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	90%	89%	91%	89%	94%
No	10%	11%	9%	11%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q20: Would you ask a neighbor for help if you needed assistance with a minor task or errand (e.g., changing a light bulb, shopping, shoveling snow)?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	67%	75%	67%	65%	61%
No	33%	25%	33%	35%	39%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q21: Do you provide any help to neighbors with minor tasks or errands?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	47%	54%	47%	47%	31%
No	7%	3%	5%	8%	20%
No, but I would be willing if asked	46%	43%	48%	45%	49%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q22: <u>In the past 5 years</u>, have you ever felt excluded in Hopkinton because of your: (*Check all that apply*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Age	6%	4%	6%	8%	5%
Income	6%	12%	6%	4%	3%
Gender	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Language	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Religion or cultural background	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%
Skin color, race or ethnicity	1%	3%	1%	1%	0%
Disability	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%
Cognitive impairment	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Sexual orientation	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
No, I have never felt excluded	78%	72%	79%	80%	81%
Other	5%	7%	5%	5%	4%

*Figures do not sum to 100%

Section V: Programs and Services at the Hopkinton Senior Center

Q23. Do you see the Hopkinton Senior Center as playing a role in the lives of yourself, loved ones, friends, or neighbors?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	66%	54%	63%	69%	85%
No	34%	46%	37%	31%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q24: In the past 12 months, how frequently have you used programs or services offered by the Hopkinton Senior Center?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Two or more times a week	4%	1%	2%	6%	11%
About once a week	4%	1%	2%	7%	7%
A few times a month	4%	1%	2%	6%	10%
About once a month	4%	1%	2%	5%	10%
A few times a year (e.g., special events only)	19%	7%	17%	25%	31%
Never, I do not use programs or services offered by Senior Center	65%	91%	75%	51%	32%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q25: The following items refer to programs and services that are currently offered through the Hopkinton Senior Center. <u>Please rate the importance of each program/service to you or a member of your family.</u>

Outreach services (*e.g., financial, fuel, housing, nutrition assistance*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	25%	20%	25%	26%	30%
(2)	6%	7%	5%	5%	7%
Moderately important (3)	10%	12%	10%	10%	7%
(4)	4%	5%	4%	5%	6%
Not at all important (5)	34%	28%	33%	39%	35%
I don't know (6)	21%	28%	23%	15%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Transportation (*e.g., senior center van, medical rides*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	24%	20%	22%	27%	28%
(2)	6%	9%	7%	4%	3%
Moderately important (3)	11%	12%	10%	10%	17%
(4)	5%	5%	3%	5%	7%
Not at all important (5)	35%	27%	38%	38%	32%
I don't know (6)	19%	27%	20%	16%	13%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Physical health, wellness checks, and nursing services (e.g., Blood pressure, podiatry, vaccine clinics)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	23%	19%	19%	26%	34%
(2)	8%	14%	8%	6%	6%
Moderately important (3)	16%	13%	18%	16%	16%
(4)	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%
Not at all important (5)	30%	24%	31%	32%	28%
I don't know (6)	19%	25%	20%	16%	12%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Daily lunch program

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	15%	9%	12%	18%	15%
(2)	6%	7%	5%	7%	6%
Moderately important (3)	14%	16%	15%	13%	14%
(4)	5%	7%	6%	3%	5%
Not at all important (5)	41%	33%	42%	43%	41%
I don't know (6)	19%	28%	20%	16%	19%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Professional services (*e.g., health insurance counseling, legal advice, tax assistance*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	23%	16%	22%	24%	31%
(2)	8%	11%	9%	6%	7%
Moderately important (3)	17%	18%	19%	17%	10%
(4)	5%	4%	5%	5%	7%
Not at all important (5)	29%	24%	26%	34%	33%
I don't know (6)	18%	27%	19%	14%	12%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Support groups (e.g., caregiver support group, widows group)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	16%	14%	17%	16%	20%
(2)	7%	11%	6%	7%	5%
Moderately important (3)	14%	16%	14%	14%	13%
(4)	6%	6%	7%	4%	7%
Not at all important (5)	35%	25%	34%	39%	40%
I don't know (6)	22%	28%	22%	20%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Community support programs (e.g., Durable medical equipment, Repair Fair, Sand for Seniors)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	21%	13%	20%	23%	29%
(2)	10%	16%	8%	10%	7%
Moderately important (3)	17%	14%	16%	17%	20%
(4)	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%
Not at all important (5)	28%	24%	29%	29%	27%
I don't know (6)	20%	29%	22%	17%	12%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Dementia-friendly programs (e.g., Memory Café)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	18%	14%	18%	20%	19%
(2)	8%	15%	6%	7%	4%
Moderately important (3)	13%	11%	13%	12%	13%
(4)	4%	4%	6%	3%	5%
Not at all important (5)	35%	28%	34%	39%	38%
I don't know (6)	22%	28%	23%	19%	21%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Fitness activities (e.g., Tap dance, Stretch class, Zumba)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	23%	20%	22%	27%	22%
(2)	9%	10%	9%	8%	5%
Moderately important (3)	16%	14%	17%	15%	19%
(4)	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Not at all important (5)	27%	24%	26%	28%	33%
I don't know (6)	20%	27%	21%	17%	16%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Social or recreational activities (e.g., movies, pottery, quilting, mah jongg)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	22%	23%	21%	23%	23%
(2)	8%	9%	9%	8%	4%
Moderately important (3)	20%	15%	20%	21%	22%
(4)	4%	3%	4%	3%	6%
Not at all important (5)	27%	23%	27%	29%	30%
I don't know (6)	19%	27%	19%	16%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Educational opportunities (e.g., book group, technology assistance, TED Talks, discussion group)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	21%	20%	19%	23%	22%
(2)	8%	10%	9%	7%	3%
Moderately important (3)	21%	15%	21%	22%	28%
(4)	5%	6%	5%	5%	5%
Not at all important (5)	26%	22%	26%	27%	27%
I don't know (6)	19%	27%	20%	16%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Trips/Local shopping

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	19%	14%	16%	23%	26%
(2)	9%	13%	9%	7%	4%
Moderately important (3)	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%
(4)	5%	4%	6%	6%	4%
Not at all important (5)	33%	27%	34%	34%	37%
I don't know (6)	20%	28%	21%	16%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Virtual/hybrid programming

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	11%	6%	12%	13%	12%
(2)	7%	11%	7%	5%	2%
Moderately important (3)	14%	16%	13%	14%	10%
(4)	6%	7%	5%	8%	6%
Not at all important (5)	35%	28%	37%	37%	38%
I don't know (6)	27%	32%	26%	23%	32%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Volunteer opportunities

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very important (1)	19%	14%	17%	22%	23%
(2)	9%	15%	10%	6%	4%
Moderately important (3)	22%	22%	23%	22%	13%
(4)	4%	5%	4%	3%	6%
Not at all important (5)	24%	17%	24%	25%	35%
I don't know (6)	22%	27%	22%	22%	19%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q26: Which of the following limits your use of the Hopkinton Senior Center or its programs?
(*Check all that apply*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Lack of transportation	2%	1%	1%	2%	3%
Lack of sufficient parking	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%
I do not know what is offered	14%	21%	14%	11%	10%
I am not interested in programs offered	14%	9%	12%	20%	18%
I do not need the services offered	39%	43%	40%	40%	31%
I don't have time	17%	18%	20%	15%	12%
Location of the senior center is inconvenient	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Hours of the senior center are inconvenient	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%
Limited class size for events/activities	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
I don't think I would fit in there	8%	8%	9%	9%	2%
I am not old enough	24%	56%	31%	6%	1%
Cost for programs	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Other	19%	10%	17%	23%	28%

*Figures do not sum to 100%

Q27. <u>Thinking about your own future needs and interests</u>, which of the following areas would you prioritize in developing or expanding in Hopkinton? (*Check all that apply*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Indoor fitness (e.g., strength training)	51%	41%	40%	59%	78%
Outdoor exercise (e.g., hiking/walking, pickleball)	49%	60%	60%	41%	22%
Nutrition programming	22%	27%	24%	21%	15%
Wellness programs (e.g., massage therapy, Reiki)	35%	39%	40%	30%	27%
Informal socializing (e.g., coffee hour, drop-in space)	34%	37%	38%	28%	30%
Performances and presentations (e.g., theatre, comedy, music)	35%	38%	39%	33%	28%
Arts programming (e.g., crafts)	24%	23%	29%	23%	16%
Technology assistance	29%	26%	27%	35%	25%
Volunteer opportunities	31%	42%	34%	26%	18%
Intergenerational programs	12%	17%	13%	12%	3%
Singles group	6%	7%	7%	6%	3%
Men's activities/men's group	13%	11%	14%	14%	9%
Age and dementia friendly programs	18%	20%	19%	16%	14%
Mental health counseling or referrals	15%	19%	16%	12%	10%
Caregiver programs (e.g., respite, groups)	15%	21%	13%	15%	11%
Support groups (e.g., low vision, aging on one's own)	16%	18%	17%	16%	12%
In-home programs (e.g., friendly visiting, help with minor chores)	24%	28%	23%	25%	22%
Educational programs/skill development (e.g., language classes, kayaking)	26%	26%	30%	24%	15%
Lectures, guest speakers, or cultural events	34%	29%	39%	34%	31%
Virtual programming	10%	7%	12%	10%	6%
Evening or weekend activities	27%	25%	15%	10%	20%
Day trips	32%	30%	32%	35%	29%
Overnight trips	9%	8%	10%	8%	6%
Transportation	24%	28%	23%	25%	21%
Other	6%	4%	6%	6%	7%

*Figures do not sum to 100%

Section VI: Caregiving & Health

Q28: Do you have an impairment or condition that limits your ability to participate in your community?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	9%	3%	4%	10%	30%
No	91%	97%	96%	90%	70%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q29: Do you require help with activities around the house (e.g., doing routine chores like cleaning or yard work)?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	12%	5%	6%	15%	30%
No	88%	95%	94%	85%	70%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q30: I have been, or I have friends or family members who have been, affected by substance misuse (such as misuse of alcohol, prescription medication or illegal drugs).

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	25%	28%	29%	24%	15%
No	75%	72%	71%	76%	85%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q31: Have you ever considered or attempted suicide?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%
No	97%	98%	97%	98%	98%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q32: Are you close to someone who has considered or attempted suicide?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	13%	17%	15%	9%	10%
No	87%	83%	85%	91%	90%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q33: Do you <u>now or have you in the past 12 months</u> provided care or assistance to a person who is disabled, frail, or struggling with a physical, cognitive, or mental health condition (e.g., a spouse, parent, relative, or friend)?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	36%	44%	38%	33%	24%
No	64%	56%	62%	67%	76%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q34: If yes on Q33: How challenging is/was it for you to care for this person(s) and meet your other responsibilities with family and/or work?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very challenging	24%	29%	27%	18%	17%
Somewhat Challenging	39%	43%	38%	35%	46%
Neither Challenging Nor Easy	23%	21%	23%	28%	14%
Somewhat Easy	9%	6%	6%	12%	17%
Very Easy	5%	1%	6%	7%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

This table only includes respondents who reported providing care to someone now or in the past 12 months.

Q35: If yes on Q33: Did this person have any of the following conditions? (*Check all that apply*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Alzheimer's or other dementias	29%	38%	29%	22%	35%
Psychological condition (e.g., anxiety, depression)	24%	29%	27%	20%	32%
Intellectual or developmental disability	4%	6%	3%	2%	8%
Sensory impairment (e.g., vision, hearing)	18%	19%	19%	15%	16%
Chronic disease (e.g., cancer, diabetes, asthma)	28%	30%	25%	29%	30%
Mobility impairment (e.g., difficulty walking, climbing stairs)	61%	58%	63%	63%	57%
Recent surgery	17%	15%	17%	21%	14%
Forgetfulness or confusion (undiagnosed)	24%	20%	27%	20%	27%
Other	10%	7%	10%	12%	8%

*Figures do not sum to 100%
*This table only includes respondents who reported providing care to someone now or in the past 12 months.

Q36: If yes on question 33: What supports were, or would have been, most valuable to you during your time providing care or assistance? (*Check all that apply*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Informal support from family and friends	46%	48%	44%	44%	68%
Adult Day Program	12%	14%	13%	11%	5%
Respite Care	11%	11%	12%	9%	11%
Durable medical equipment loan	17%	15%	17%	18%	24%
Memory café or social activities	6%	6%	6%	4%	5%
Support groups	11%	19%	11%	7%	8%
On-call support from medical professionals	28%	35%	27%	23%	32%
Other	15%	9%	20%	16%	8%

*Figures do not sum to 100%
*This table only includes respondents who reported providing care to someone now or in the past 12 months.

Section VII: Communication and Information

Q37: Where do you prefer to find information about the activities and services offered by the Senior Center? (*Check all that apply*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Senior Center newsletter (e.g., *The Hilltopper*)	69%	32%	68%	83%	88%
Television (HCAM)	5%	5%	5%	5%	7%
The local newspaper	31%	35%	30%	30%	36%
Radio	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Word of mouth	14%	9%	11%	17%	23%
Social media postings (e.g., Facebook)	22%	33%	25%	18%	10%
Email notifications from the town	35%	42%	35%	35%	24%
Town website	32%	50%	39%	23%	11%
Visit to the Senior Center	15%	9%	11%	18%	26%
Other	4%	7%	4%	3%	2%

*Figures do not sum to 100%

Q38: Are you able to access the internet from your home?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes, I have access to the internet at home	96%	98%	98%	98%	85%
No, I cannot afford to have access to the internet at home	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%
No, I choose not to have access to the internet at home	3%	1%	1%	1%	12%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q39: Would you know whom to contact in Hopkinton should you or someone in your family need help accessing social services, health services or other municipal services?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	50%	38%	45%	59%	60%
No	50%	62%	55%	41%	40%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Section VIII: Demographic Information

Q38: Please write in your gender.

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Female	56%	58%	55%	55%	62%
Male	43%	41%	45%	45%	37%
Other	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q42: What is your employment status? (*Check all that apply*)

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Working full-time	30%	67%	41%	5%	2%
Working part-time	14%	15%	16%	15%	5%
Retired	55%	11%	41%	82%	89%
Looking for work	1%	3%	1%	0%	0%
Other	5%	6%	6%	4%	5%

*Figures do not sum to 100%

Q43: When do you plan to fully retire?

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
N/A, I am already fully retired	52%	12%	39%	77%	90%
Within the next 3 years	11%	8%	18%	7%	3%
In 3 to 5 years	12%	15%	20%	3%	0%
In 6 to 10 years	11%	36%	9%	1%	1%
In more than 10 years	4%	15%	2%	1%	0%
Not sure	5%	8%	6%	5%	2%
I do not anticipate ever fully retiring	5%	6%	6%	6%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q44: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: "I have adequate resources to meet my financial needs, including home maintenance, personal healthcare, and other expenses."

	All ages	Age 55-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Strongly agree	42%	44%	44%	42%	29%
Agree	48%	48%	45%	49%	56%
Disagree	8%	7%	8%	8%	12%
Strongly disagree	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%