

Community Engagement Report

Your Organization/Affiliation: NewBridge Madison	Your Name and Email: Jim Krueger, jimk@newbridgemdison.org
Community Engagement Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Community Forum or Listening Session – virtual or in person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus Group Discussions – virtual or in person (Black Diversity & Inclusion) <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Interviews – by phone or in person <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook Live or Social Media Virtual Event <input type="checkbox"/> Paper or Internet Survey <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe): _____	
Date/s of Event or Effort: July 8, 2021	Number of Participants or Respondents: 13
Key Issues Discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From your personal experiences, what the main issues, problems, and challenges adults age 60 and older are facing in Dane County? - How can Dane County Support older adults in remaining independent for as long as possible? - What does Dane County have to change to be closer to your ideal community to age in? / What do you appreciate most about what Dane County already provides? 	
Key Takeaways/Findings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Main issues, problems and challenges older adults are facing in Dane County Several participants discussed the need for accessible transportation, affordable housing and the elimination of health disparities. All commented on how many older adults in their buildings and community are isolated, lonely and experiencing cognitive decline and mental health issues because they lack person-to-person contact during COVID. 2. How can Dane County support older adults remain independent as long as possible? One participant spoke of a program in the South she thought might work in Dane County. It entailed having two or more older adults sharing a space/apartment/home. The rent/utilities would be split, as would the cooking, chores, etc. It would ensure companionship and having a helpmate. It would necessitate that buildings be older adult-friendly with building services, entertainment and shopping on-site. A topic of concern was a need for more help with bill paying and money management. Having access to medical equipment (canes, walkers, wheelchairs, ramps, in-home equipment, etc.) was a lengthy portion of the conversation, as well. Many mentioned they wished their neighborhoods had grocery stores and better access to healthy food options, as well as more exercise programs geared toward the capabilities of an older adult, and pricing that aligned with their lower income. 	

3. What does Dane County have to change to be closer to your ideal community to age in?

Every participant agreed, a few elaborating saying they don't feel respected, listened to and cared about, being older and Black.

Many participants stated there is not enough free and low-cost activities, personal services (hair care, grooming, etc.) and dental care. Participants echoed each other when mentioning the desire to have assistance with cooking, cleaning and home repairs, minor and major.

Every participant felt the County should be more concerned with providing financial help to those caring for ill family members. Focus group participants also had a lengthy discussion about their dissatisfaction with caregivers not getting any type of respite service, emotional support or help with direct care.

4. What do you appreciate most about what Dane County already provides?

One participant was grateful to NewBridge for computer access and socialization through Zoom programs/activities; other participants agreed.

Planned Response:

Share this form with AAA of Dane County to inform the drafting of their 2022-2024 strategic plan.