

Project Title:
AGING IN PLACE COMMUNITY SURVEY
Park City Kansas USA

Summary Findings and Feasible Goals Attained

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Outcome Summary:

Our survey findings were somewhat predictable, yet many areas of concern surfaced when it came to the respondents' knowledge of available recreation and senior citizen topics. We also assumed a lower rate of response given our chosen distribution method.

What was obtained from the project is the appearance of a clear need to educate residents on aging topics; a need to educate our city leaders that their job is not being met satisfactorily in the eyes of the public; and a need to help our working families find suitable local recreation and jobs.

Narrative

A city survey was distributed as an insert in the February 2010 local paper going to about 2100 Park City homes. Distribution through the postal system was more than the grant money would allow, even if it had gone to only homes with registered voters. The cost to print and distribute was \$1035 through the chosen method.

The response ratio was approximately 7% of those homes returning the surveys to City Hall throughout March 2010. Although the response was meager, they came from a wide spectrum of neighborhoods, ages, income levels, etc.

The purpose of this project was to generate conversations that would lead toward possible solutions for the focus of the topic; *Aging In Place*. Our community struggles with this and other geographic and budgetary issues. One reason: the city is relatively young (incorporated in 1980), and close to Wichita. The town is north on the I-135 highway corridor, making its accessibility attractive to young families and businesses alike. This also brings a diverse range of incomes into play, as business and new housing continually increase in the area, adding to the towns older sections that were earlier incorporated from the metro improvement district.

Improvements in the community which might make it more viable as an aging in place area are typically hindered by cost, and especially by close proximity to services available in Wichita. Adding to the dilemma is a community with two school districts, because it does not have its own; three postal zip codes with no post office of its own; and no recreation center of its own. The city does boast many fine parks that include various ball fields, 2 pools, an inline skate rink, a skate/bmx park, a stocked fishing lake, and playgrounds galore, plus much more. Also a factor: large Sedgwick County and Indian owned facilities, within and adjacent to city borders that are now lying empty. Every election season is marked by confusion due to some or all of these issues. But things are slowly improving with time, such as the locally formed utility company, that has taken over services for water and sanitation. Progress is slow, so this survey will be used to generate subjects highlighting the need for avenues for our town's citizens to not only play here, but stay here, not to be forced into moving into Wichita away from family, should the need for special living arrangements become a reality when elderly residents can no longer stay and be safe in their home.

The results from the survey information will be used by city officials and others to help assist them in finding solutions to meet the needs and desires of its citizens of any age, and for the prosperity of all who live in Park City.

Survey Findings

The average income of Park City residents according to the 2000 census is about \$47,000. 80% of the survey responses were from people ages 41 to 79, 6% were over age 80, and the rest were age 26 through 40, with no one under age 25 responding. Only 10% worked in the city and 50% of those owned businesses. 35% had children, 1.75 on average. 3% had parents living with them and two thirds of those had children in the homes, 3% also represents the segment of people who depend on family for transportation. 47% felt they could find adequate medical care locally but only 33% could find adequate recreation and 22% declared that was at a facility. Park City has no indoor facilities, so those responders are assumed to be using the city's parks. 15% do not have a computer and 25% do not have Internet service. 76% have a land line telephone, and 60% of those also have cell phones. 24% polled use only a cell phone.

An amazing 56% think their home would be adequate should they become frail or disabled. And 48% think they could find in home care services if needed. But the results drop to 10% for those who think they could find adequate senior housing in the area should the need arise. While 9% responded that their homes were ADA compliant, another 91% said they could not find adequate homes designed for the disabled or elderly in the community. 6% of respondents thought they could find a care facility of some type in Park City, and to date, there are none in business here. 30% think they could live with family. Respondents are willing to pay from \$500 to \$2500 for managed senior living facilities and from \$400 to \$4000 for assisted living quarters.

These startling facts in the previous paragraph tell us that many have little knowledge of what they might face should such a need arise, and that more education to that effect is needed on the local level.

An astounding 60% would move from Park City to find a home that meets their special needs and another 60% says Park City could use a managed care facility. Higher still, 75%, think that the city should have a skilled care facility to meet its citizens' needs. 67% say it would be advantageous to have a facility close by for loved ones to reside.

While the majority of the respondents feel the roadways are satisfactory and that there are adequate houses of worship available, only about half of them feel the local senior center is meeting the needs of the elderly in the community.

Many Similar notations in the comment section were also discovered, many fear that city leaders lack the vision to move the city forward in a positive, cost effective fashion. Many also fear continued unfounded local police harassment, and that not enough is being done to combat high utility and tax rates.

And finally, two thirds of the survey respondents think the Park City community as a whole, is focused on community growth overall, and is looking to finding ways of providing avenues for helping its current residents remain residents.