

Vital Communities Assessment

How do you rate your community on these assets for vital aging?

Please respond to each item.

Meeting Basic Needs

1. Housing

Check the response that characterizes the availability of each type of housing in your community:

Type	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Don't Know
a. Affordable rental apartments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Affordable houses and condos for homeowners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Assisted living units	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Long-term-care units with skilled nursing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other alternatives, such as home-sharing or adult foster care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Services to help older adults live at home

Check the services that are available in your community:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home health care | <input type="checkbox"/> Housekeeping | <input type="checkbox"/> Yard work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snow shoveling | <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy cleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> Home repairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer visitor program | <input type="checkbox"/> Home grocery | <input type="checkbox"/> Home pharmacy delivery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal care service | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone-buddy program to check up on people | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious group support, like parish nursing | | |

3. Nutrition

Check the services that are available in your community:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home-delivered meals on wheels | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Nutrition Program or group meals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home grocery delivery | |

4. Safety

Check the response that fits how secure older adults feel in your community:

Type	Very Secure	Adequately Secure	Insecure	Don't Know
a. Older adults feel secure in their homes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Older adults feel secure in their neighborhoods.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Health Care

Check the services that are available in your community:

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical clinic | <input type="checkbox"/> Dentist | <input type="checkbox"/> Chiropractor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eye exams | <input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urgent care clinic | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Services | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ambulance service | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative medicine | |

6. Financial Security

Check the services that are available in your community:

- Employment opportunities for older workers
- Social services, food shelf available for low-income seniors
- Trustworthy help available for banking, taxes, insurance, and legal aid

7. Support for caregiving

Check the response that fits each type of support in your community:

Type	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Don't Know
a. Respite care (a volunteer comes in and gives the caregiver a break)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Senior day care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Hospice program for the terminally ill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Caregiver support groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Information about basic services

Check how you find out about services in your community:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> TV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet (computer) postings | <input type="checkbox"/> Agency referrals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Churches and faith-based institutions | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior center, library, or other public agencies | |

Encouraging Community Involvement

1. Navigating the community

Check a response for each category that affects navigation in your community:

Type	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Don't Know
a. Labeling on streets, businesses, houses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Availability of parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Handicap accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Availability of sidewalks, especially in busy areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Maintenance of sidewalks and paths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Availability of benches in public areas, along walks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Timing of traffic lights and marked crosswalks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Affordable, accessible transportation

Check a response for each category of transportation in your community:

Type	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Don't Know
a. Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Dial-a-ride van or circulator van	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Volunteer driver program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

d. Transportation is available for the following needs:

Check as many as apply:

Medical appointments Shopping and haircuts Social and religious events

e. Transportation is available at the following times:

Check as many as apply:

1 to 2 days per week Most weekdays Evenings and weekends

3. Support for community participation

Check the response that characterizes support for each type of participation in your community:

Type	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Don't Know
a. The community recognizes the contributions of older adults.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The community promotes intergenerational activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The community provides a range of opportunities for volunteering.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Older adults participate as civic leaders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. The community offers a welcoming environment for diverse groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Meeting places

Check the places that are available:

Senior center Park center Library Other community center

Promoting a High Quality of Life

1. Opportunities for exercise

Check the opportunities that are available:

- Walking and biking paths
- Fitness centers and gyms
- Swimming pools with adult swim times or aquatic exercise
- Other indoor recreation, such as bowling, handball, or tennis
- Other outdoor recreation, such as golf, tennis, horseshoes, or skiing

2. Educational and outreach programs for health and wellness

Check the opportunities that are available:

- Classes
- Health fairs
- Free preventive health checkups

3. Creative arts activities

Check the opportunities that are available:

- Crafts clubs
- Drama groups
- Music making
- Storytelling
- Dance groups
- Visual arts groups
- Fun!

4. Education

Check the opportunities that are available:

- Classes
- Discussion groups
- Trips
- Speaker forums
- Mental exercises
- Programs to encourage spiritual growth
- Intergenerational learning activities; that is youth and older adults together

5. Social and economic vitality

Check the response that characterizes each type of social or economic opportunity in your community:

Type	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Don't Know
a. Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Encouragement for entrepreneurial start-ups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Opportunities for employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Opportunities to share knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall Community Perspective

1. Is your community good for vital aging?

Check the response that characterizes your community:

Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What would make your community better?

Write your suggestion(s):

Prepared by Jan Hively, VAN's Senior Advisor with Amy Wilde and the Southwest MN Foundation "Senior Friendly Communities" project and with the 2004 VAN Summit Program Committee.

Please try it out and then send your suggestions for change to info@vital-aging-network.org