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# Hallowell Age-Friendly Community Survey

*The Age-Friendly Community Project*



 ANALYTIC INSIGHT

*September 28, 2017*

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Analytic Insight would like to thank the members of the Health and Wellness Committee team who are working to make the Hallowell area more age-friendly and ensure residents can age in place with comfort and dignity.

The survey was funded through the AARP's Age-Friendly Community Initiative. More than three dozen communities representing more than a dozen states are enrolled in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

At Analytic Insight, we congratulate the City of Hallowell on its good work so far, and wish you the best as you continue to make the Hallowell area more age-friendly so that residents of all ages can participate fully in the Maine philosophy of "life the way it should be."

Sincerely,



Amy Flowers  
President, Analytic Insight  
September 2017

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The goal of the project is to help the City of Hallowell and its residents better understand the needs of older residents and support healthy aging. This study was developed and administered by a team of volunteers working with the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities Program. Analytic Insight, a professional research firm based in Lewiston, was hired to compile the survey results and develop this report.

This Executive Summary summarizes the findings presented in the full report, and is designed to help guide the strategic planning and program implementation efforts of the City of Hallowell and its neighboring communities.

### METHODS

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Surveys were distributed using a variety of methods. One thousand surveys were mailed to residents selected at random from a list of property owners in Hallowell. The survey was also available on the Internet and links were emailed to residents with email addresses available to the City. Lastly, paper surveys were distributed at various public locations throughout the community.

The sample is comprised of 181 paper surveys, which includes mailed and distributed surveys, and 73 surveys taken on the Internet or returned directly to the City of Hallowell where they were entered via the Internet survey form.

<b>Method</b>	<b>Surveys Received</b>
Paper	181
Internet	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>254</b>

Survey respondents were approximately two-thirds (64.9%) female. The majority live in Hallowell. The survey reached a variety of ages, with 19.4% under the age of 50 and 24.7% of respondents 70 years of age or older.

Three focus groups were held at locations around the city, including Granite Hill Estates, Hubbard Free Library and the Cohen Center.

The survey and focus groups covered The World Health Organization's 8 Domains of Livability including:

- ◆ Community
- ◆ Outdoor Space & Buildings.
- ◆ Communication & Information
- ◆ Social Participation
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Respect & Social Inclusion
- ◆ Civic Participation and Employment
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Community Support & Health Services
- ◆ Demographic Information

### **LIVING IN THE HALLOWELL COMMUNITY**

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More than three out of four respondents rate Hallowell as either an excellent or good place to live as they age (76.9%).

Most respondent reported living in the Hallowell community for a long time. More than 4 out of five Hallowell residents said they have lived in Hallowell for at least 5 years (81.0%), with one out of three living in Hallowell for 20 or more years (36.9%).

Over half of survey respondents said it is extremely important to them to remain in the city as they age (62.7%). Although it is important to respondents to stay in Hallowell as they age, less than half of Hallowell residents said they feel respected as an older resident in Hallowell (43.4%).

### **AGE-FRIENDLY HALLOWELL**

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Three of ten Hallowell residents reported that they feel activities for all ages (31.5%) and social events and activities (31.5%) make Hallowell an age-friendly community. Accessible outdoor spaces and buildings, volunteer activities, affordable housing and communications were also frequently mentioned as qualities that make Hallowell age-friendly. A smaller percentage said that public transportation (16.4%) and health and social services to address a variety of needs (15.1%) make Hallowell an age-friendly community.

### **HOUSING**

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Four out of ten Hallowell residents reported that their homes are more than 100 years old and three out of four respondents said they want to live in their current homes as they grow older (74.4%). The age of homes in Hallowell, combined with residents' desire to stay in their current homes may indicate a need for home improvement services.

Half of Hallowell residents reported that they think they will need bathroom modifications such as grab bars, higher toilet, or non-slip tile (50.2%). Over three out of ten reported the think they will need easier access to their homes such as a ramp, chairlift, or wider

doorways (35.3%), and putting a bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen on the first floor (32.4%). One out of four reported needing improved lighting (24.4%).

## **REASONS TO MOVE**

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Nearly three out of four Hallowell residents reported that availability of medical care, services or facilities would impact their decision to move (73.1%). Over half said that preference for a smaller or more accessible home (66.2%), need for public transportation or other transportation options (63.3%) or living closer to friends or family (61.2%) would be a factor on their decision to move.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

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Over nine out of ten residents said they drive their own car to get around (94.9%). The majority live close to the downtown area. Two out of three respondents live less than one mile from downtown Hallowell (65.9%).

Hills often or sometimes make it hard for about one in three Hallowell residents to get around (35%). The need for public transportation makes it difficult for a substantial percentage of residents (21%).

## **AT HOME IN THE COMMUNITY OF HALLOWELL**

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One out of two Hallowell residents said the civic buildings and parks in their community have street lighting at night (49.2%), and one out of six said that the sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or walker (35.0%), and that civic buildings and parks have parking (30.3%). Only one out of six said civic buildings and parks have sidewalks that are in good condition (15.4%) and public restrooms (14.6%).

## **SATISFACTION WITH SENIOR HOUSING**

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Seven out of ten residents are either very or somewhat satisfied that housing for seniors is close to amenities (71.6%). Three out of five residents said they are satisfied with accessibility to elders and people with disabilities (60.6%) and availability (60.2%). A little less than half of residents are satisfied that housing for seniors is affordable (49.0%) and close to transportation (47.7%).

## **NEEDED SERVICES**

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Although a small percentage of Hallowell residents said they currently need help with home chores (5.1%), a substantial number will need such help in the next 5 years (32.3%). One out of four residents said they may need modifications to make their home safer such as a ramp, grab bar, or lighting (24.8%) in the next five years.

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

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The vast majority of respondents shop for food at supermarkets (98.0%). Over half also reported that they shop for food at a farmer's market (58.3%).

Close to three out of ten respondents of any age have a concern about falling (28.9%). Among residents age 70 or over, about one in three (34.8%) have a concern about falling. However, less than one in twenty residents said they have looked for information (4.6%) or took a falls prevention class (4.2%).

## **INFORMATION ABOUT COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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The majority of respondents said they are not sure (57.2%) whether or not information about services and resources to support aging in place is easy to find, with an additional one in six saying information about services and resources to support aging in place is not easy to find (16.9%). Just one in four Hallowell residents said information about services and resources to support aging in place is easy to find (25.9%). This presents an opportunity to help residents access this important information.

More than two out of three residents said that when the need information about a service, they use the internet (67.7%) and more than half use family or friends (56.7%).

## **INFORMATION ABOUT COMMUNITY EVENTS**

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Seven of ten Hallowell residents find out what's happening in Hallowell through the newspaper (71.7%) and three of five said they find out through word of mouth (59.8%) and Facebook (59.4%).

## **WORKING AND VOLUNTEERING**

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More than half of Hallowell residents said they are working full or part-time (58.7%) and two out of five said they are retired (41.3%).

More than half of Hallowell residents said they volunteer (53.8%) and one of ten said they don't but would like to (12.4%).

## **CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

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The survey and focus groups revealed several strengths of the City of Hallowell, as well as opportunities for improvement. Some suggestions are currently being addressed by the age-friendly committee and the City of Hallowell.

### **Strong Desire to Stay**

The majority of survey respondents rate Hallowell as an excellent or good place to live and wish to remain in the city as they age. In addition, many are invested in

spending time with family and friends in the area. This commitment is a strong asset to the community and is also reflected in the high percentage of respondents reporting that they currently volunteer in some capacity in the community. At the same time however, a small percentage of respondents say that they feel respected as an older person in the community. Building a strong, age-friendly community with intergenerational interaction opportunities will help to ensure that those who want to age in Hallowell will be able to do so.

### **Improving Communications**

A majority of survey respondents said that information about services and resources to support aging was not easy to find or they were unsure of where to find such information. The City may wish to make use of community events, local newspapers, newsletters and email.

Similarly, information about services and resources related to aging is not easily available and presents an opportunity for improvement.

### **Housing Modifications and Home Support Services**

The aging housing stock in Hallowell, combined with residents' desire to age in their current home, presents a need for home modification services.

Providing a list of referenced contractors who offer special rates to seniors may be of value to the community and help those who are interested in making these modifications do so.

### **Brick Sidewalks**

The brick sidewalks downtown are a safety concern for a number of residents. Smoothing the surface or repaving these sidewalks where possible may prevent falls or accidents and make the downtown more accessible to all residents. The City is currently addressing this need.

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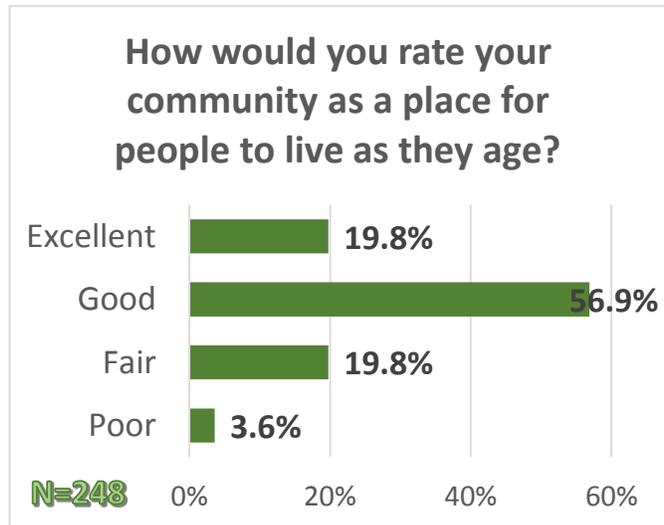
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## LIVING IN THE HALLOWELL COMMUNITY

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More than three out of four respondents rate Hallowell as either an excellent or good place to live as they age (76.9%).



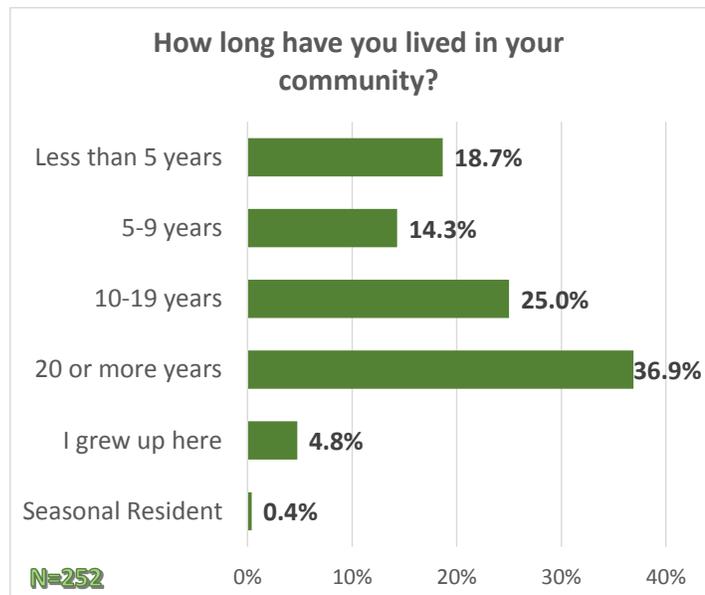
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## LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN HALLOWELL

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More than 4 out of five Hallowell residents said they have lived in Hallowell for at least 5 years (81.0%), with one out of three living in Hallowell for 20 or more years (36.9%).

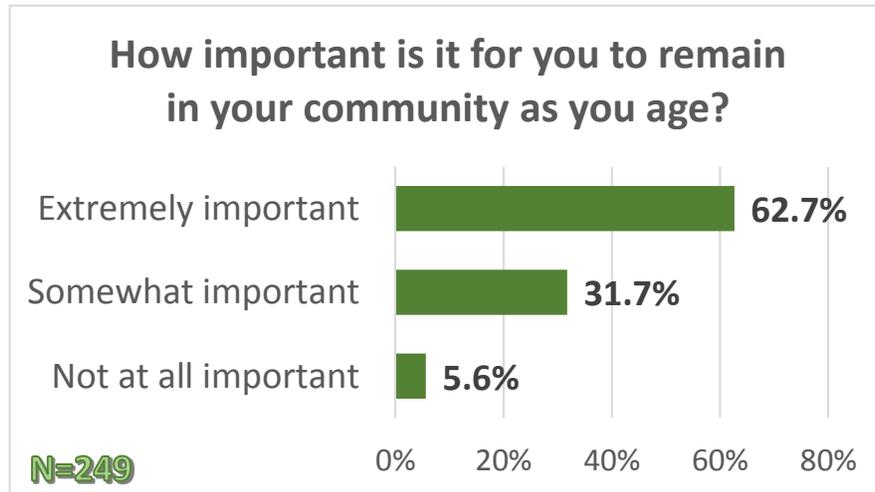
A small percentage of respondents grew up in Hallowell (4.8%) and very few seasonal residents completed the survey.



## IMPORTANCE OF REMAINING IN HALLOWELL

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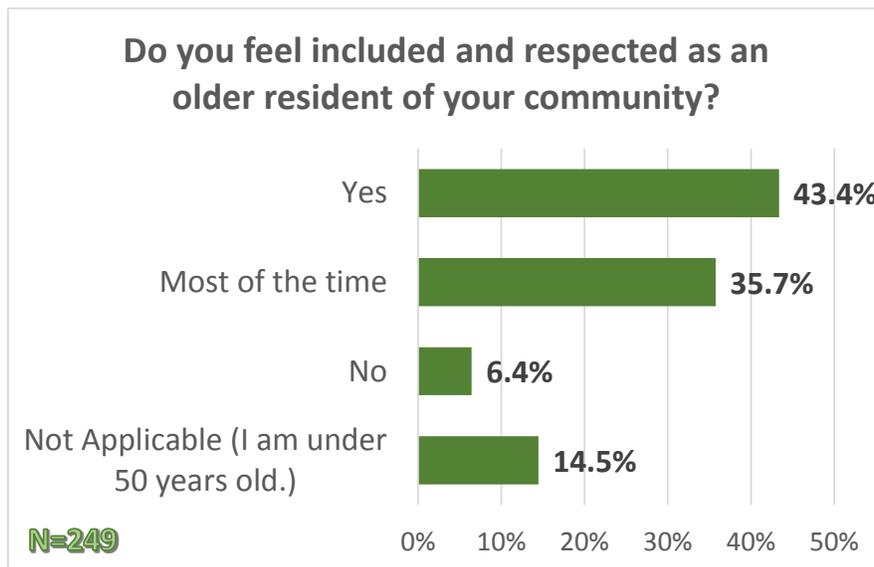
Over half of Hallowell residents said it is extremely important for them to remain in the city as they age (62.7%). Over nine out of ten residents said it is at least somewhat important (94.4%).



## RESPECT FOR OLDER RESIDENTS

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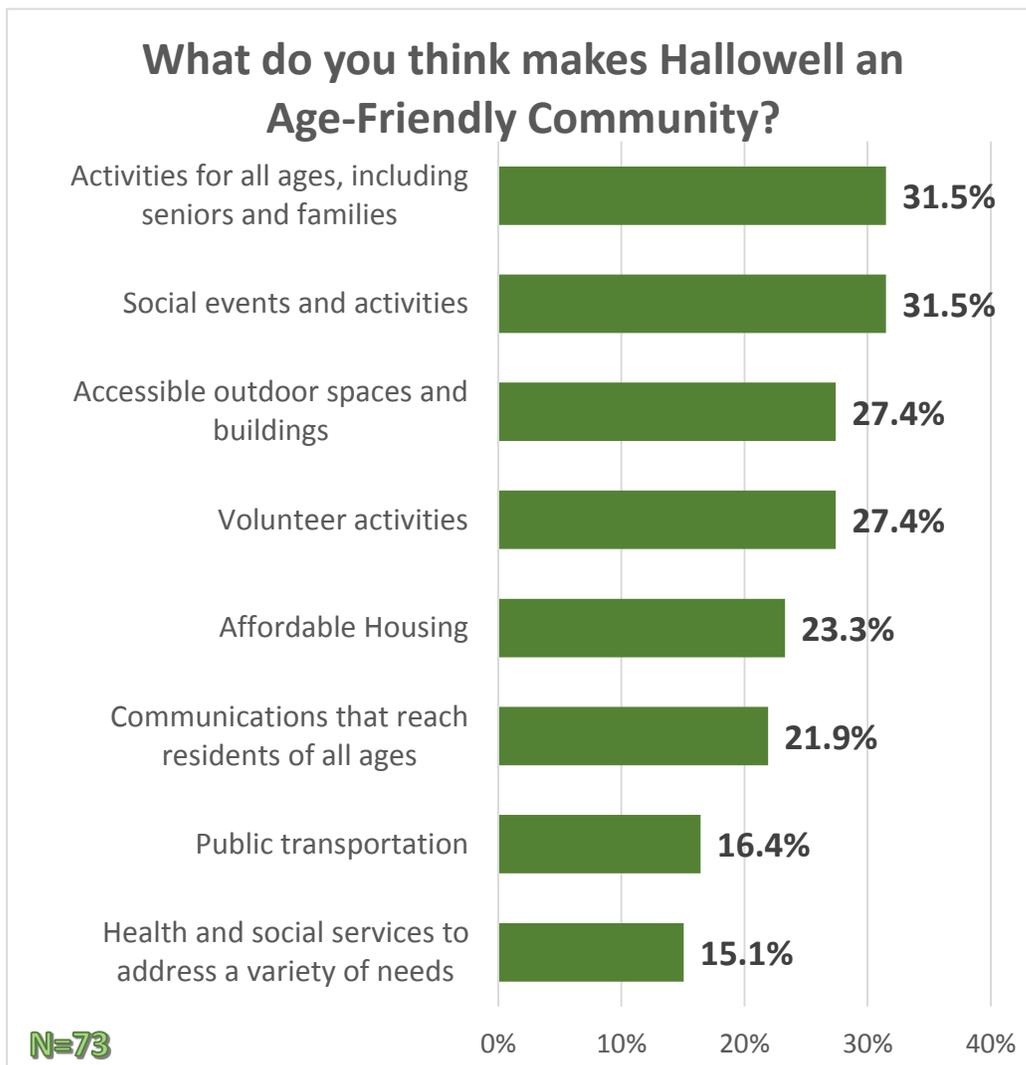
Less than half of Hallowell residents said they feel respected as an older resident in Hallowell (43.4%). One out of three said they feel respected “most of the time” (35.7%).



## AGE-FRIENDLINESS IN HALLOWELL

Three of ten Hallowell residents reported that they feel activities for all ages (31.5%) and social events and activities (31.5%) make Hallowell an age-friendly community.

Accessible outdoor spaces and buildings, volunteer activities, affordable housing and communications were also frequently mentioned as qualities that make Hallowell age-friendly. A smaller percentage said that public transportation (16.4%) and health and social services to address a variety of needs (15.1%) make Hallowell an age-friendly community.



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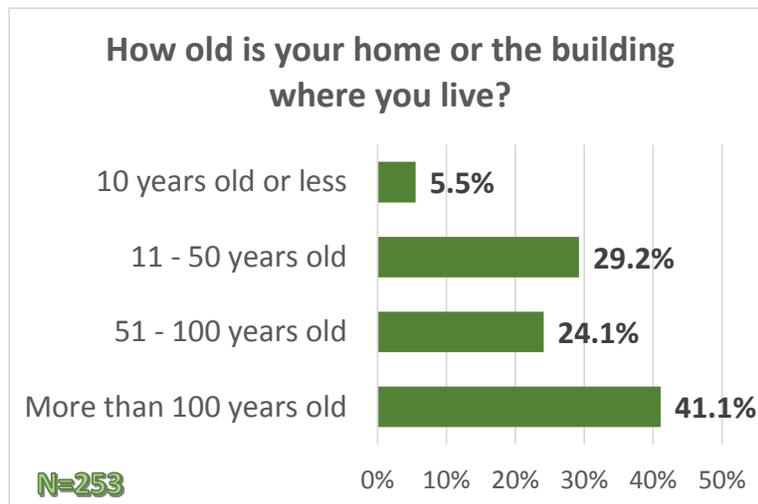
## HOUSING

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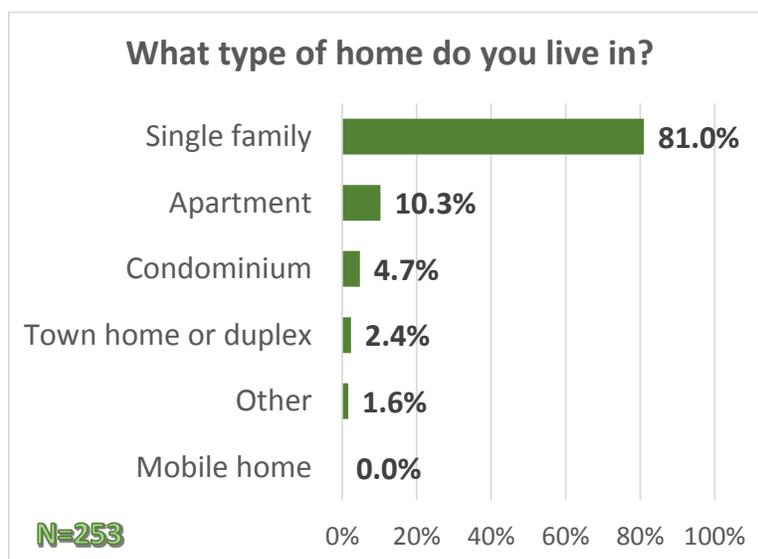
### AGE OF HOUSING STOCK

Four out of ten Hallowell residents reported that their homes are more than 100 years old (41.1%) and almost one out of four said their homes are 51 – 100 years old (24.1%). Only one out of twenty resides have homes 10 years or less (5.5%).



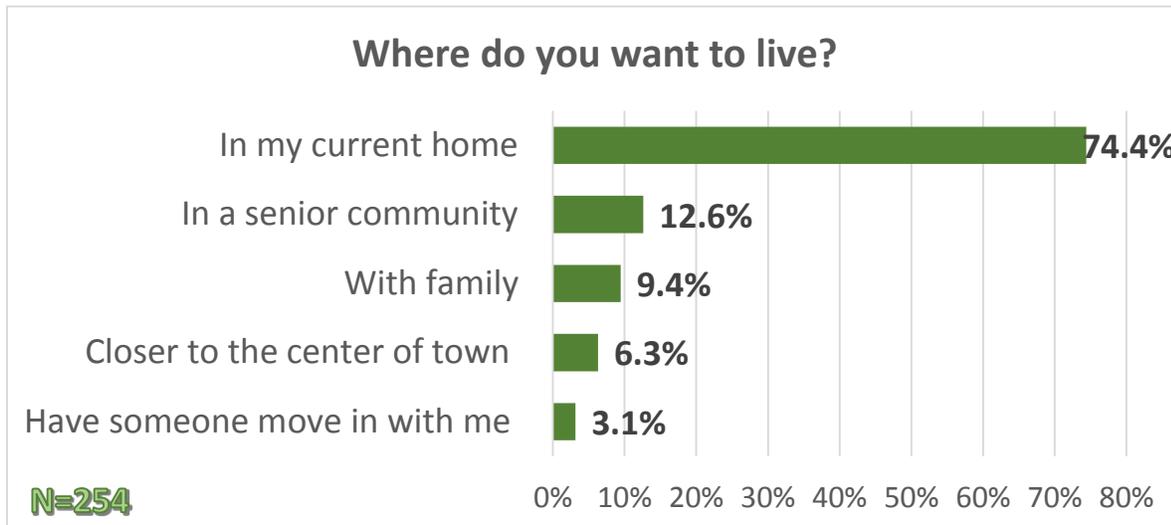
### TYPES OF HOMES IN HALLOWELL

Four out of five residents live in a single family home (81.0%), One out of ten live in apartments (10.3%).



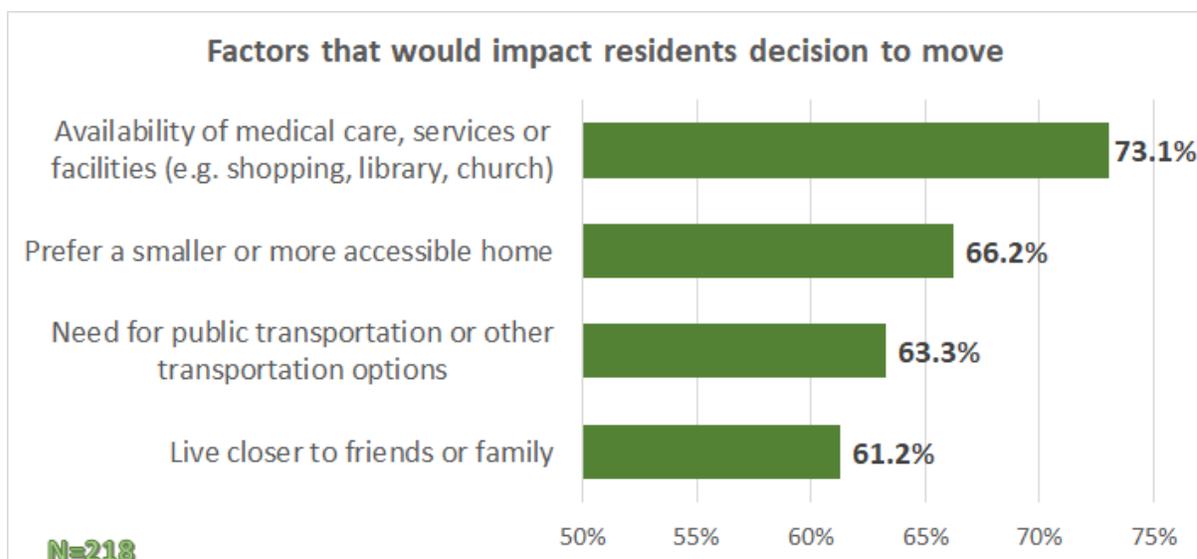
## WHERE RESIDENTS WOULD LIKE TO LIVE

Three out of four respondents said they want to live in their current homes (74.4%). Less than one of six want to live in a senior community (12.6%), and one of ten want to live with family (9.4%).



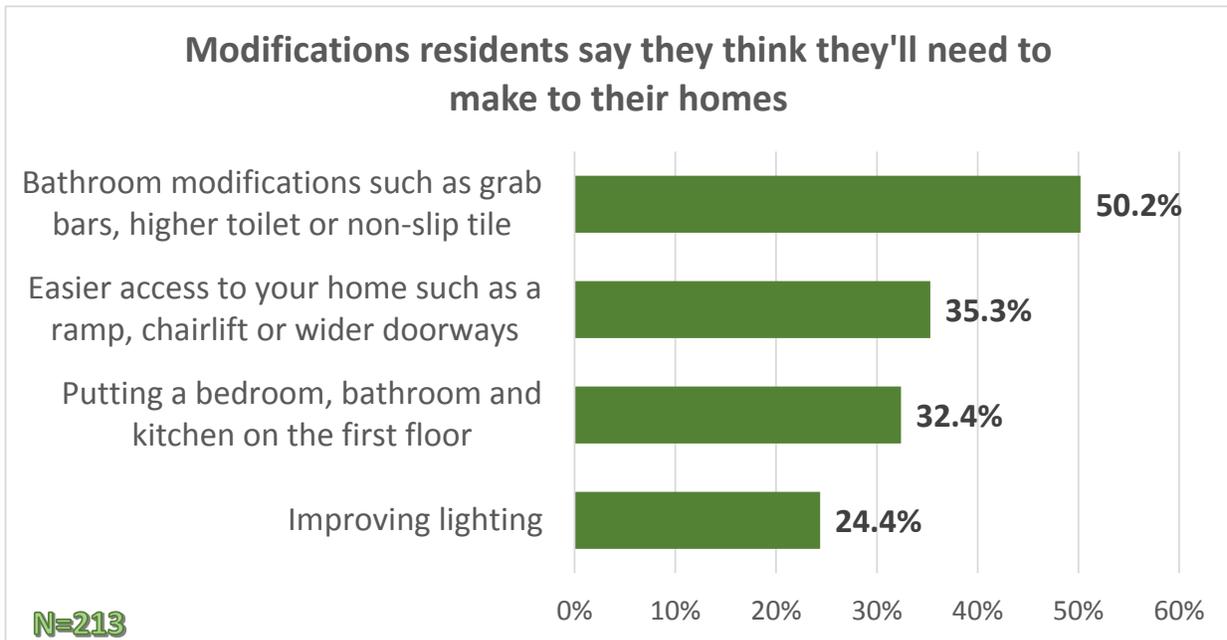
## REASONS TO MOVE

Nearly three out of four Hallowell residents reported that availability of medical care, services or facilities would impact their decision to move (73.1%). Over half said that preference for a smaller or more accessible home (66.2%), need for public transportation or other transportation options (63.3%) or living closer to friends or family (61.2%) would be a factor on their decision to move.



## DESIRED MODIFICATIONS

Half of Hallowell residents reported that they think they will need bathroom modifications such as grab bars, higher toilet, or non-slip tile (50.2%). Over three out of ten reported the think they will need easier access to their homes such as a ramp, chairlift, or wider doorways (35.3%), and putting a bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen on the first floor (32.4%). A substantial percentage, one out of four respondents, reported needing improved lighting (24.4%).



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## TRANSPORTATION

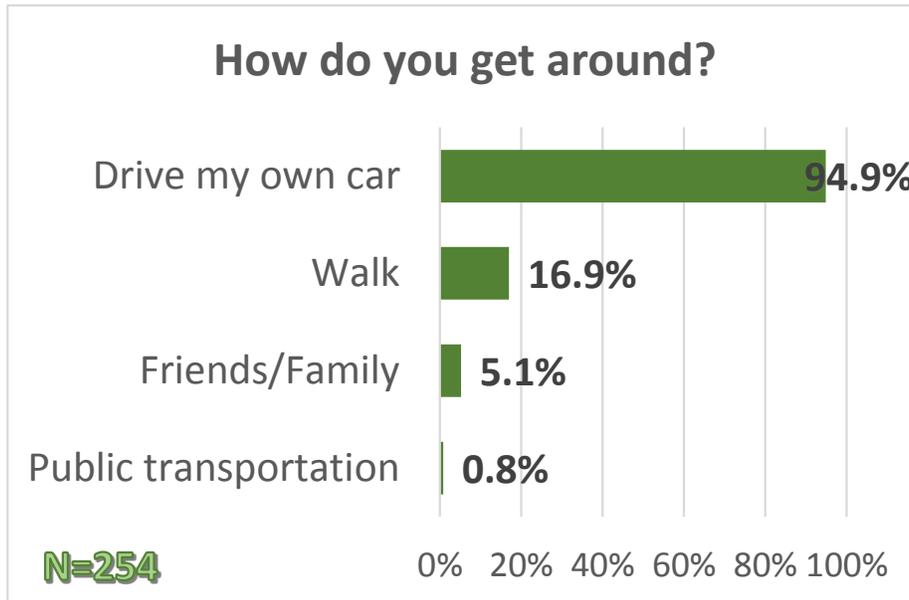
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### MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

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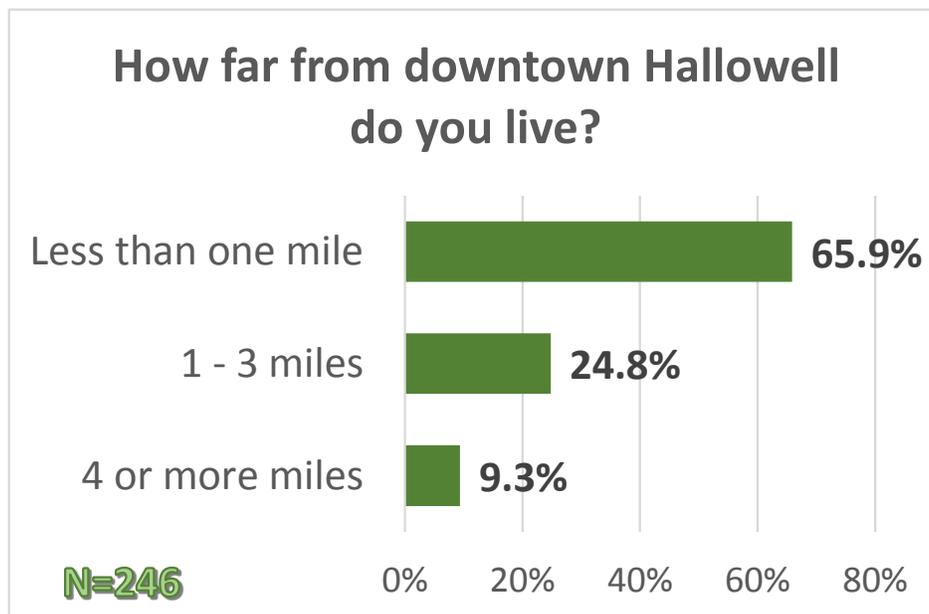
Over nine out of ten residents said they drive their own car to get around (94.9%).



### DISTANCE TO DOWNTOWN HALLOWELL

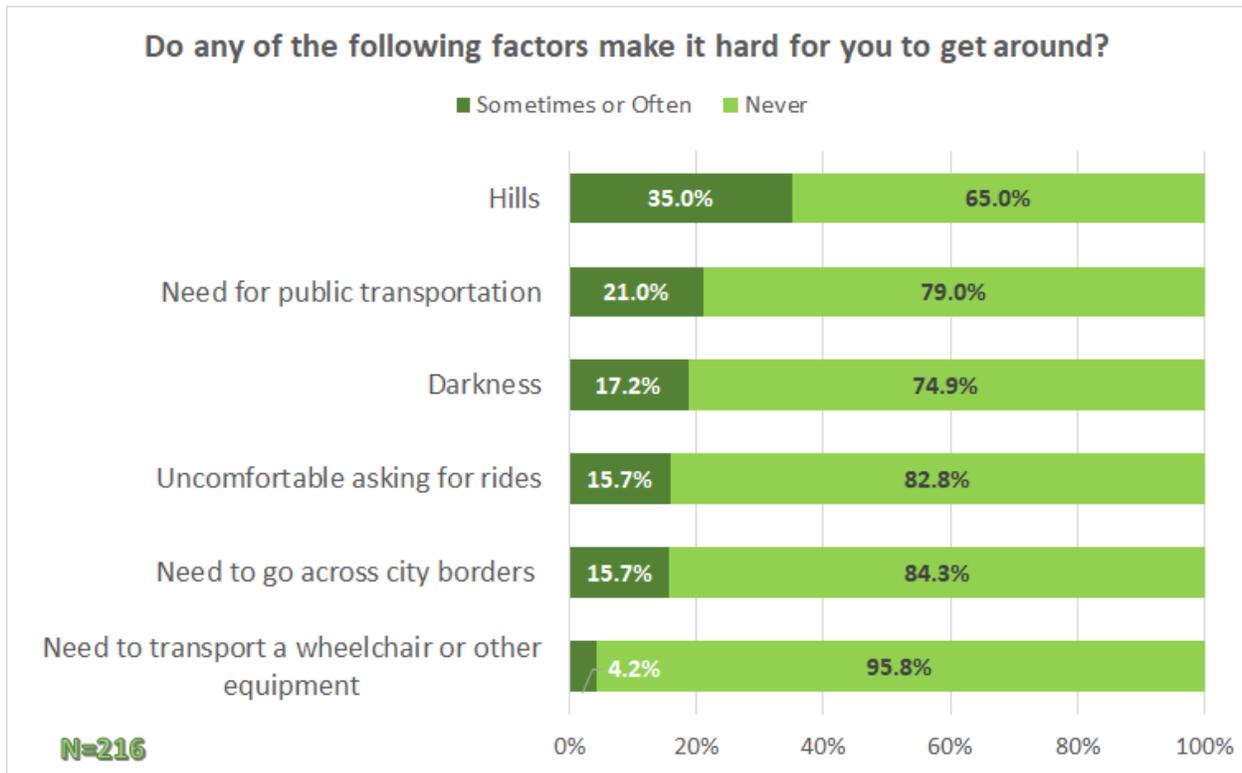
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Two out of three respondents live less than one mile from downtown Hallowell (65.9%). One out of ten reported they are four or more miles from downtown (9.3%).



## BARRIERS TO GETTING AROUND

Hills often or sometimes make it hard for about one in three Hallowell residents to get around (35%). The need for public transportation makes it difficult for a substantial percentage of residents (21%). A very small percentage of respondents answered “often”, therefore these responses were combined with “sometimes.”



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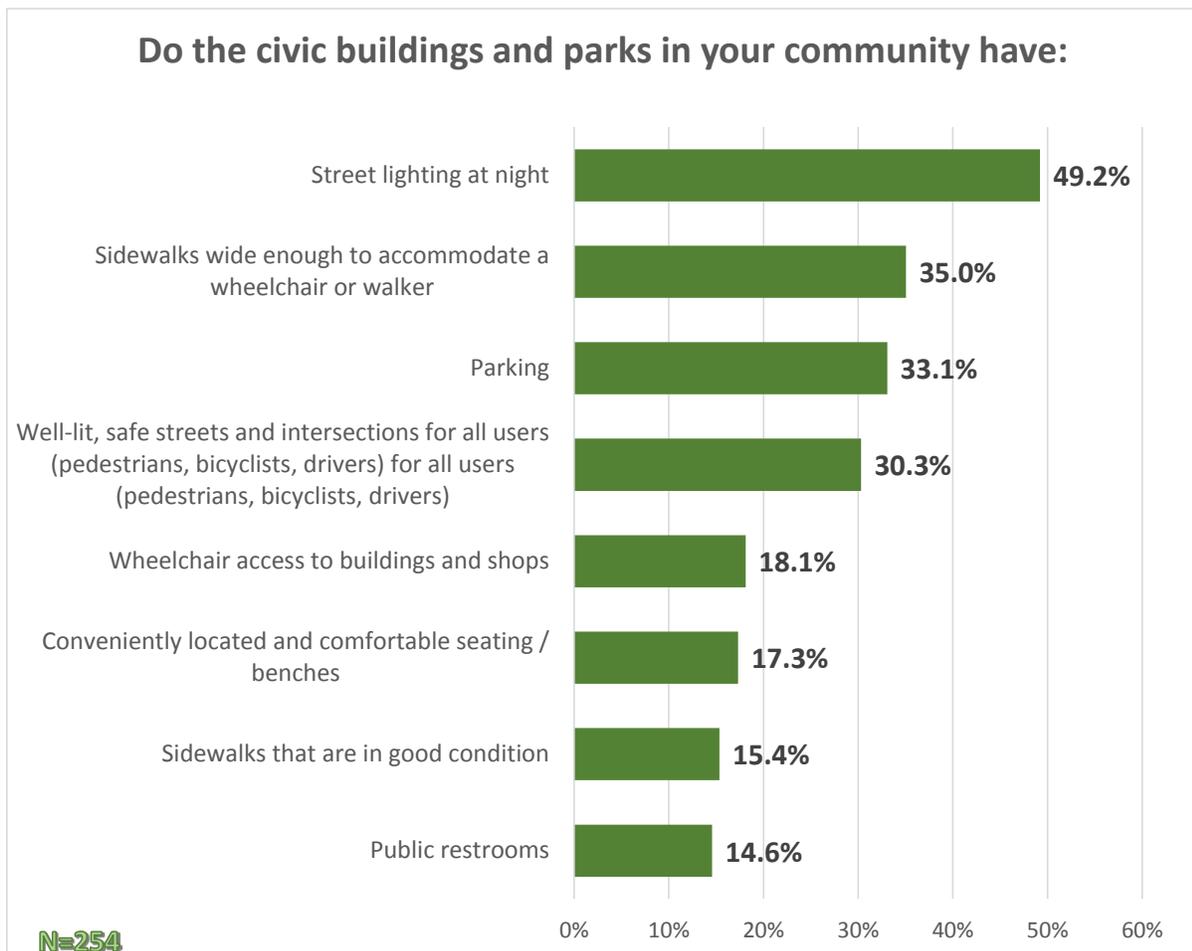
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## AT HOME IN THE COMMUNITY OF HALLOWELL

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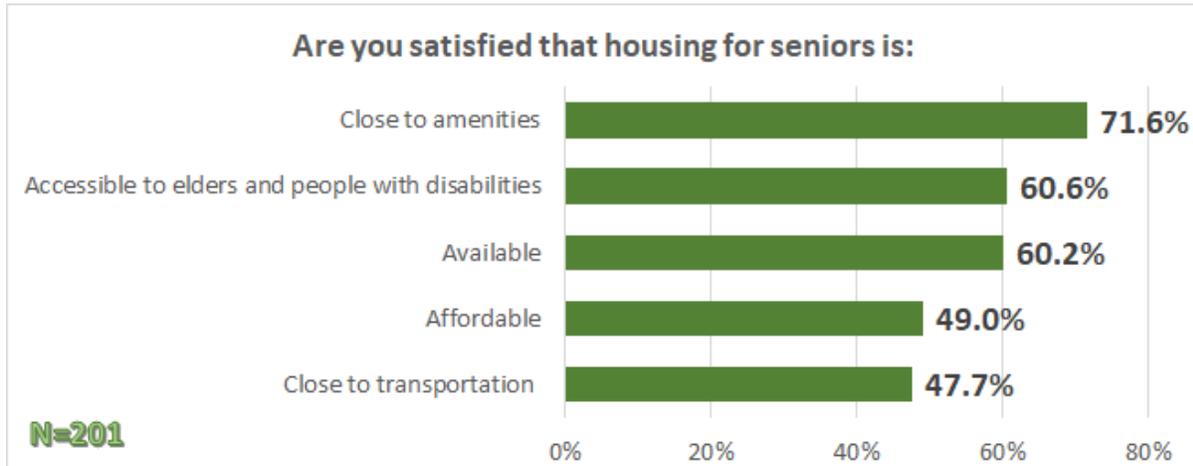
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One out of two Hallowell residents said the civic buildings and parks in their community have street lighting at night (49.2%), and one out of six said that the sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or walker (35.0%), and that civic buildings and parks have parking (30.3%). Only one out of six said civic buildings and parks have sidewalks that are in good condition (15.4%) and public restrooms (14.6%).



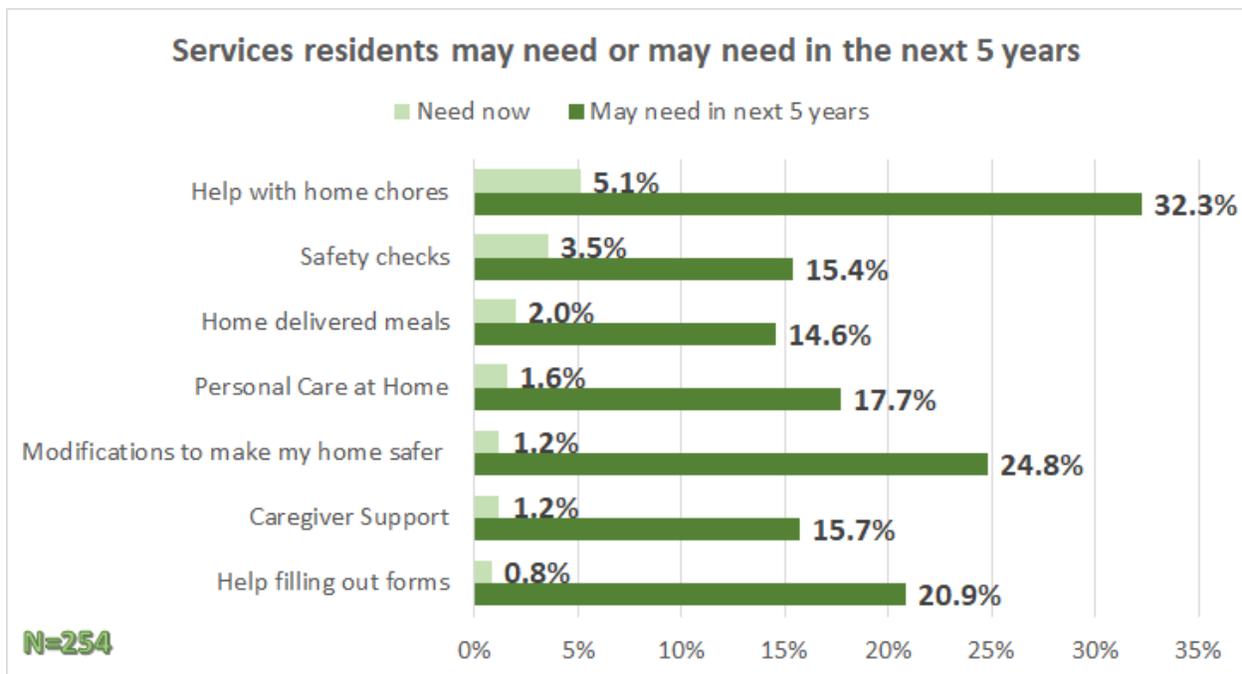
## SATISFACTION WITH SENIOR HOUSING

Seven out of ten residents are either very or somewhat satisfied that housing for seniors is close to amenities (71.6%). Three out of five residents said they are satisfied with accessibility to elders and people with disabilities (60.6%) and availability (60.2%). A little less than half of residents are satisfied that housing for seniors is affordable (49.0%) and close to transportation (47.7%).



## NEEDED SERVICES

Although a small percentage of Hallowell residents said they currently need help with home chores (5.1%), a substantial number will need such help in the next 5 years (32.3%). One out of four residents said they may need modifications to make their home safer such as a ramp, grab bar, or lighting (24.8%) in the next five years.



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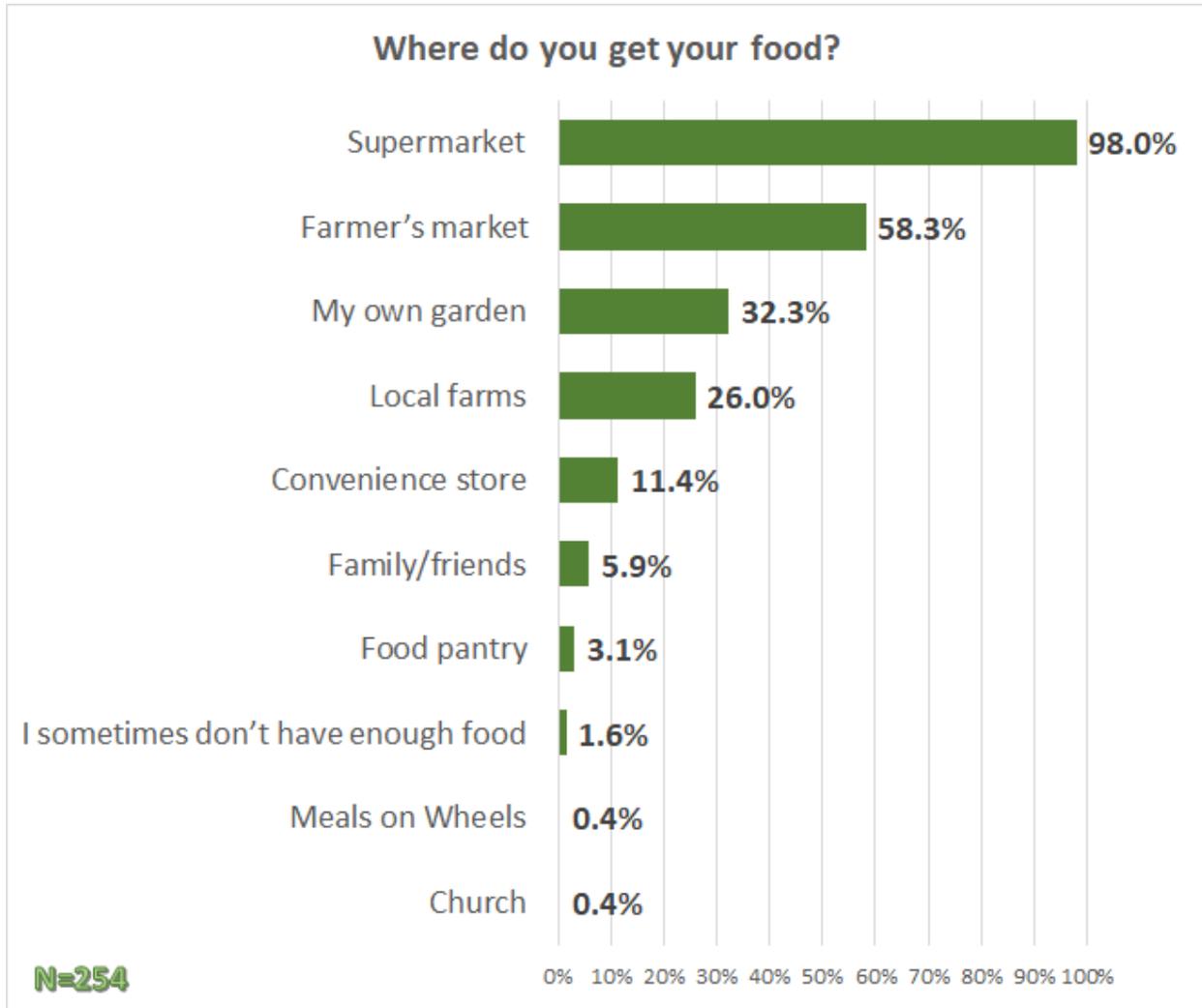
## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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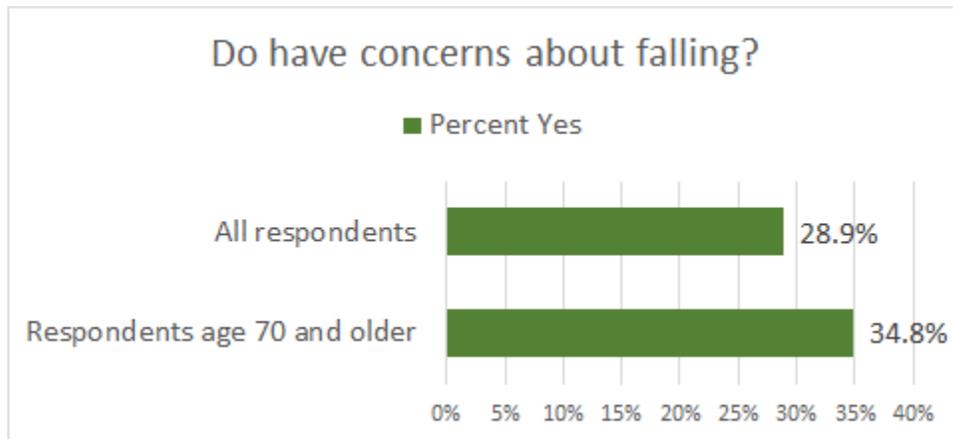
### NUTRITION

The vast majority of respondents shop for food at supermarkets (98.0%). Respondents were able to offer multiple answers to this question, therefore responses do not add to 100 percent. Over half also reported that they shop for food at a farmer's market (58.3%).

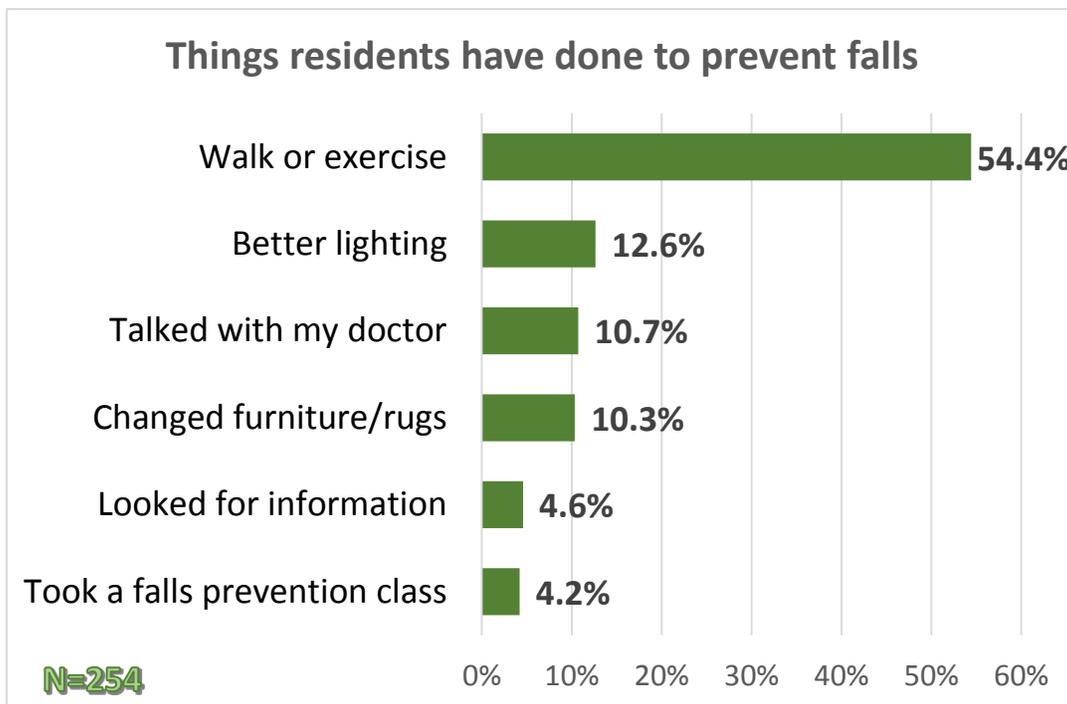


## FALLS AND FALL PREVENTION

Close to three out of ten respondents of any age have a concern about falling (28.9%). Among residents age 70 or over, about one in three (34.8%) have a concern about falling.



Over half of Hallowell residents said they walk or exercise to prevent falls (54.4%). One out of ten residents have gotten better lighting (12.6%), talked to their doctor (10.7%) and changed furniture or rugs (10.3%). Less than one of twenty residents said they have looked for information (4.6%) or took a falls prevention class (4.2%).



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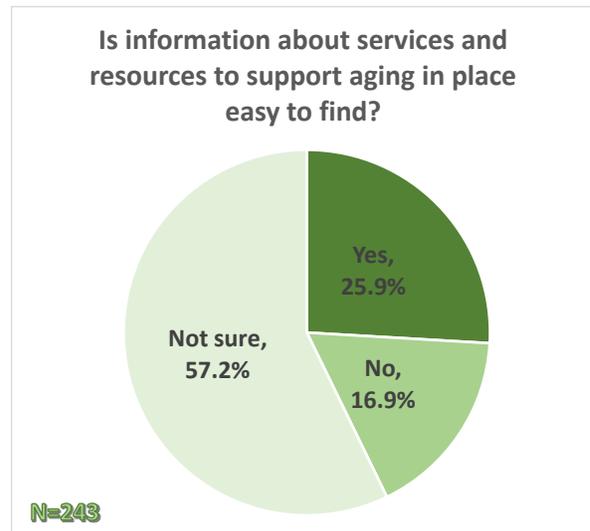
## INFORMATION ABOUT COMMUNITY SERVICES

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The majority of respondents said they are not sure (57.2%) whether or not information about services and resources to support aging in place is easy to find, with an additional one in six saying information about services and resources to support aging in place is not easy to find (16.9%).

Just one in four Hallowell residents said information about services and resources to support aging in place is easy to find (25.9%).

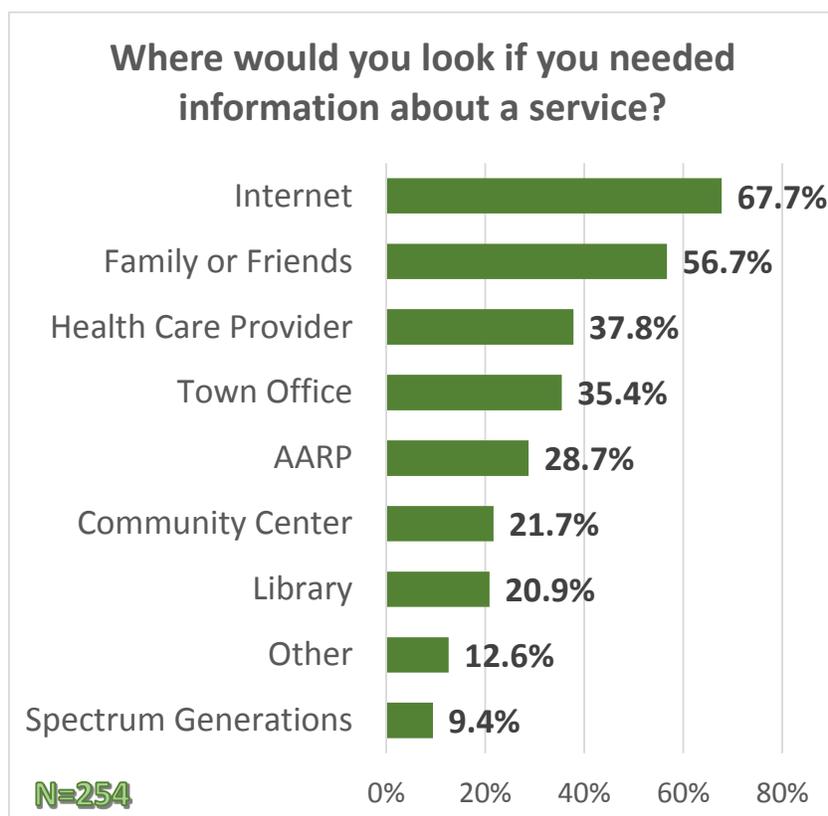


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## INFORMATION ABOUT SERVICES

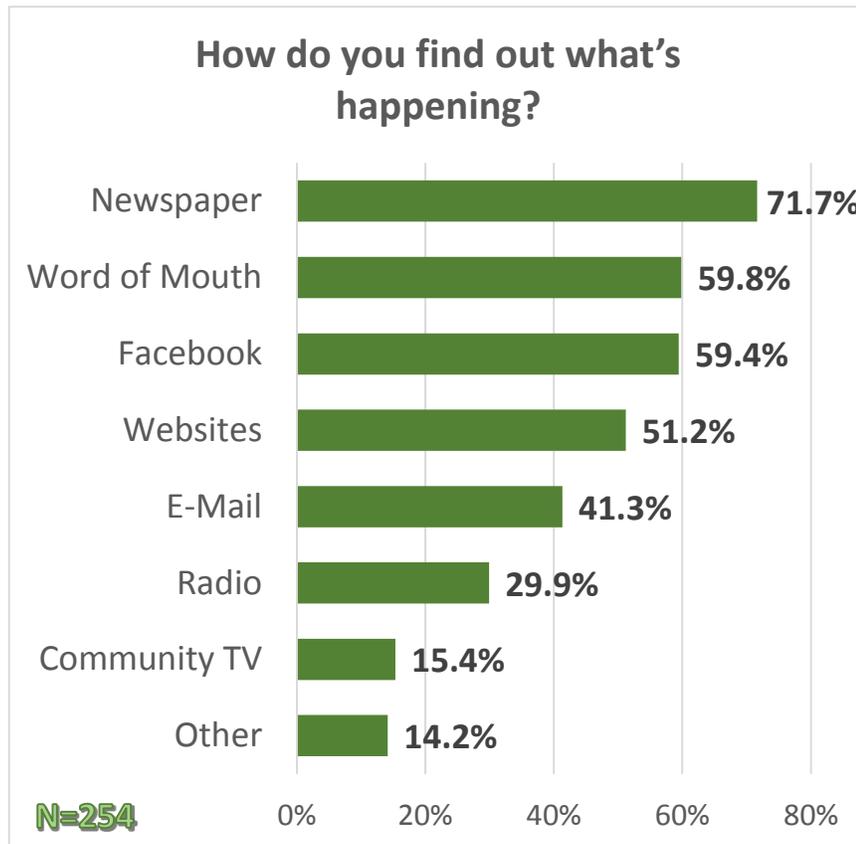
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More than two out of three residents said that when the need information about a service, they use the internet (67.7%) and more than half use family or friends (56.7%).



## SOURCES FOR INFORMATION ABOUT COMMUNITY EVENTS

Most Hallowell residents find out what's happening in Hallowell through the newspaper (71.7%) and three of five said they find out through word of mouth (59.8%) and Facebook (59.4%).



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## PLANNING DECISIONS

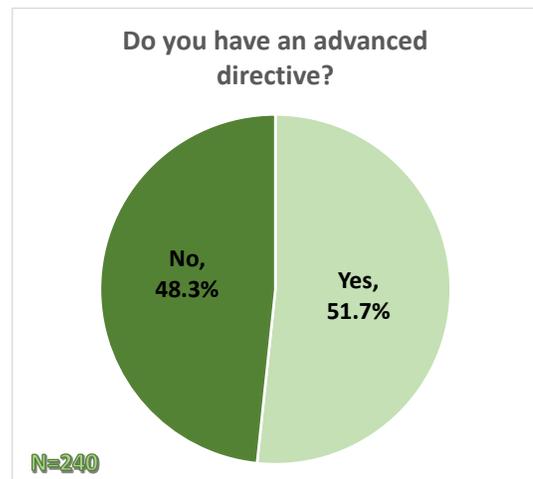
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### ADVANCED DIRECTIVE

A little over half of Hallowell residents said they have an advanced directive (51.7%).

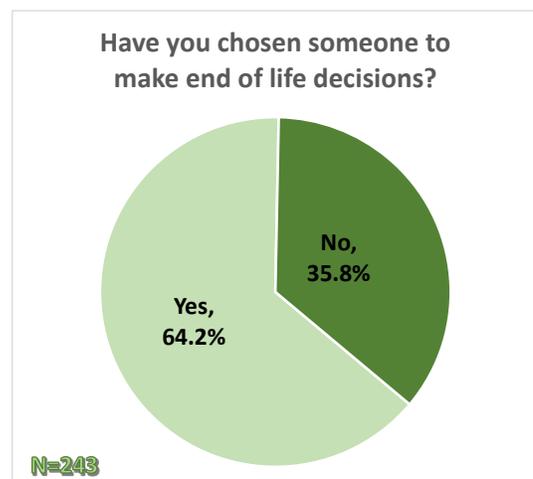
A significantly higher percentage of residents age 70 or over said they have an advanced directive (78.6%).



### END OF LIFE DECISIONS

More than three out of five Hallowell residents said they have chosen someone to make end of life decision (64.1%).

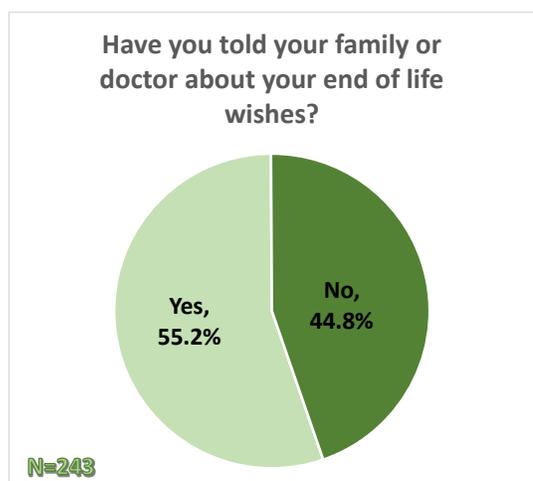
More than four out of five older residents said they have chosen someone to make end of life decisions (84.1%).



### END OF LIFE WITH FAMILY OR DOCTOR

More than half of Hallowell residents said they have told their family or a doctor about their end of life wishes (55.2%).

More than three out of four residents 70 years of age or older said they have told their family or doctor about their end of life wishes (78.6%).



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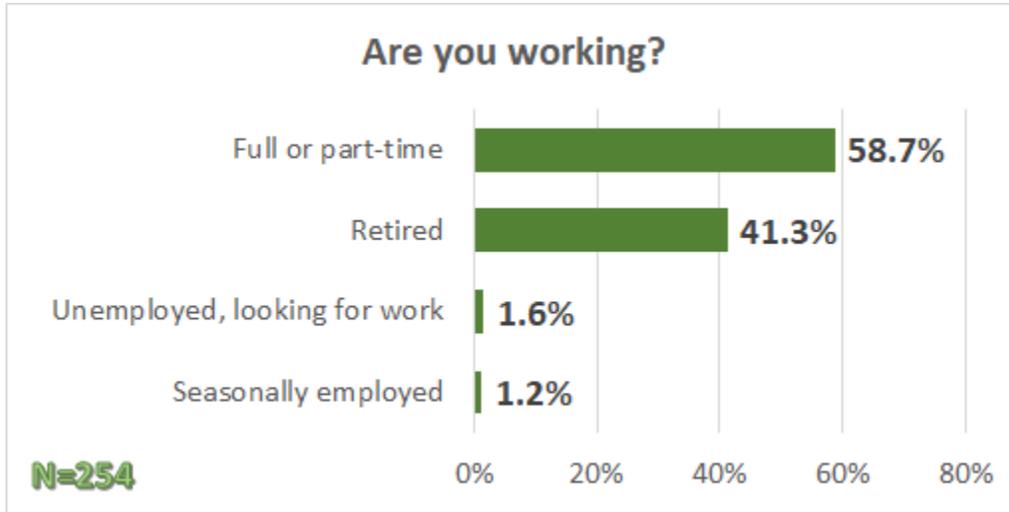
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## WORKING AND VOLUNTEERING

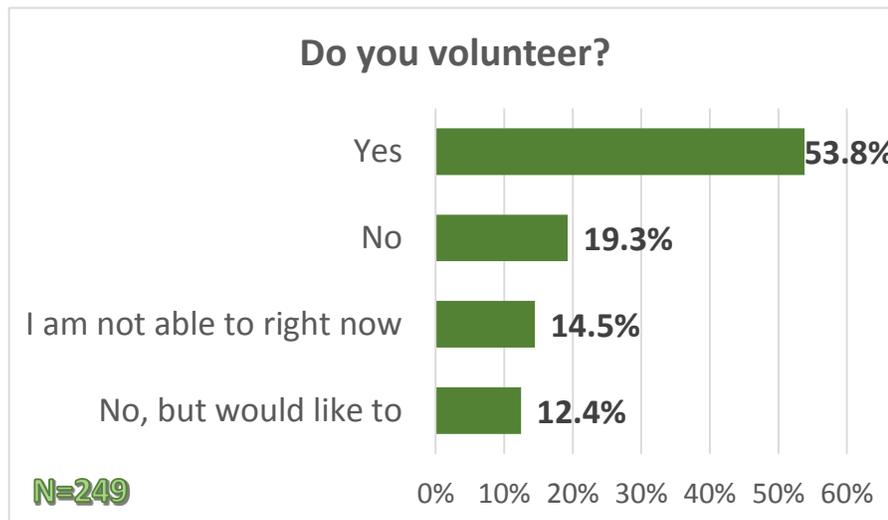
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More than half of Hallowell residents said they are working full or part-time (58.7%) and two out of five said they are retired (41.3%).



More than half of Hallowell residents said they volunteer (53.8%) and one of ten said they don't but would like to (12.4%).



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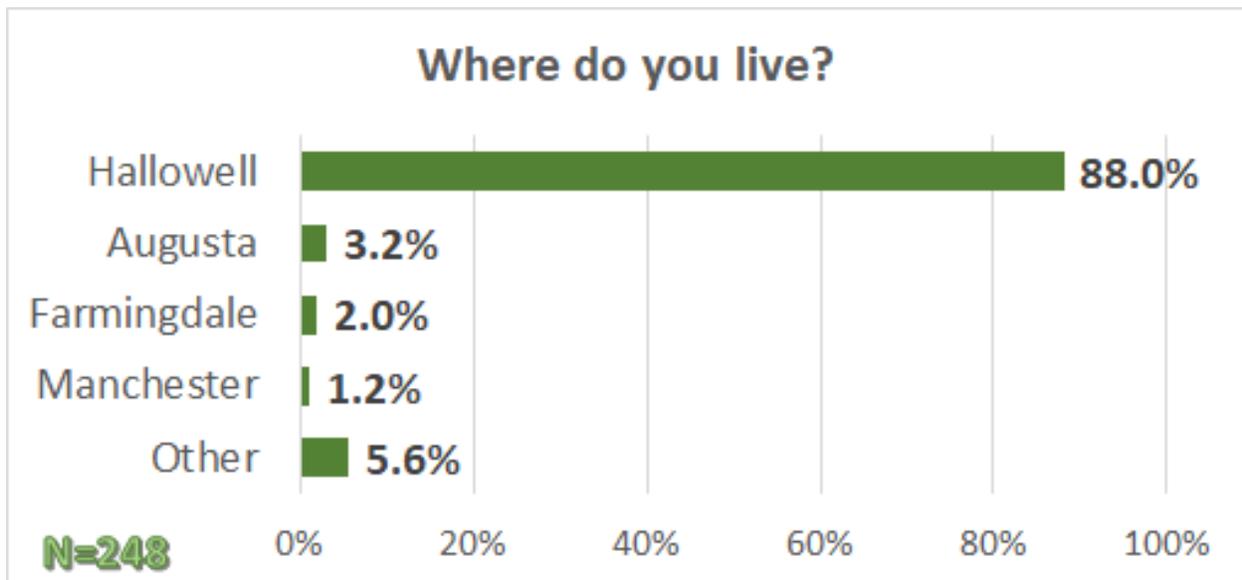
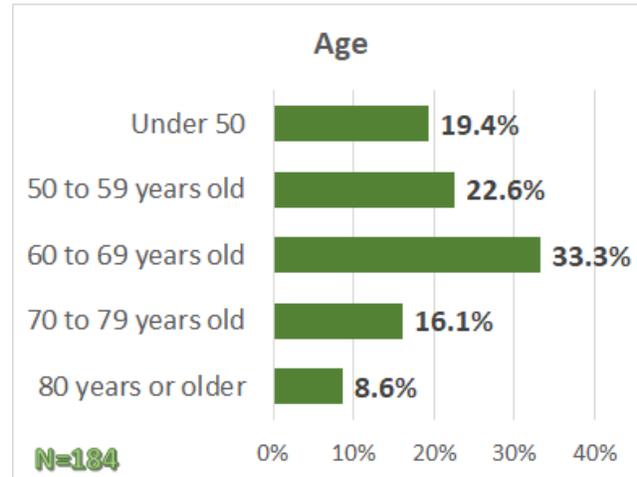
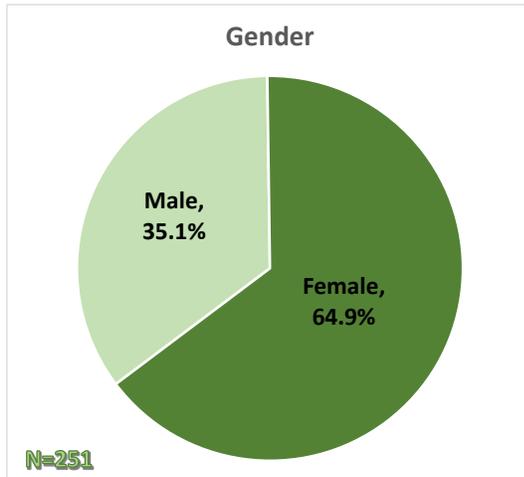
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## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

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The charts in this section show the demographic composition of the respondents to the survey.



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## APPENDIX: GENERAL COMMENTS

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The following are the comments, provided verbatim and categorized into three themes: Affordability, Public Spaces and Individual Needs.

### AFFORDABILITY:

❖ No idea what's available, costs, etc.
❖ Not that you asked, but I would like to live in a community that has TRULY AFFORDABLE housing for seniors AND families even though I do not need it for myself.
❖ No retirement home for middle income seniors. Only low income or high income available.
❖ Only thing available is the Cotton Mill and she is just slightly over income. You have to be really poor or really wealthy to get any help or accessible housing. If you are little over, you get nothing.
❖ I have not looked at senior housing. Cotton Mills is great, but we don't qualify.
❖ I'd like to see more choices at a Hallowell location: I'd like to see Stevens Complex could become part of step up plans for developing choices. I have friends in Augusta and West Gardner who'd like to move to Hallowell. They want garden space.

### PUBLIC SPACES:

❖ There are NO! public restrooms.
❖ There is virtually NO public transportation here.
❖ Better sidewalks, slower traffic, safe complete streets, better bike infrastructure.

### INDIVIDUAL NEEDS:

❖ Think about the many elders who are going blind and need some help.
❖ More fuel efficient, smaller and cheaper.
❖ I don't think I'd want to live here if I couldn't drive.
❖ My house is too old, needs too much. Will sell.
❖ Have concerns falling down my basement stairs.
❖ Would rather move to smaller more manageable home.