

## Senior Center Survey, deadline February 9, 2018 – 671 respondents

Summary Prepared by: Caroline Gregerson and Erica Borde, City Planning

### Who took the survey?

- 671 people. Of those that took the survey, 451 identified as being from the City of La Crosse, 38 Onalaska, 6 Holmen, 3 La Crescent, 2 Sparta, 4 Stoddard/Shelby (rest did not identify)
- 53% retired, 47% working, unemployed, disabled.
- 50% of respondents were 65 and older, 50% under 65

### Likelihood of Participating in a Senior Center

- 40% already participate in a Senior Center or Senior Activities, 60% are not
- 50% see themselves participating in a Senior Center in the future, 36% maybe, 12% no/didn't know

### Senior Center Locations

- 81% Agree that we should have two senior centers (north and southside), 6% disagree, 11% neutral
- 22% Agree that we should have one Senior Center, 53% disagree, 23% neutral
- 24% Agree we should have no physical Senior Centers but offer programming at a variety of locations, 54% disagree, 19% neutral

### Top 5 Activities People would like to see at a senior center

1. Indoor Walking Track (most popular)
2. Fitness Equipment or fitness classes (second most)
3. Field Trips and Excursions
4. Legal Services
5. Educational Courses

**Least popular:** Using Social Services (housing assistance, benefits, etc)

**Cost:** \$10 per month (33%), \$20 per month (23%), \$5 per month (17%)

### Themes on the facility:

- Thank you for being thoughtful and considering our views
- Divided views on a new facility:
  - the Harry J Olson center is well-loved by its members and there is a strong sense of “we don't need a new, fancy building. The basics are just fine.”
  - Others want a new building and see it was a worthy investment into our Seniors, who have contributed to this community for many years
  - Many suggested combining Senior Centers with existing Neighborhood Centers (this comment appeared 16 times), Combine with other city-owned facilities or with facilities like YMCA
  - Doesn't need to be “only a senior center” shared space is possible (YMCA, police, library, Boys and Girls Club)
- They want programming opportunities that are intergenerational, but also desire a space to call their own/to meet and socialize peers
- PARKING, handicapped accessible
- Location should be in an area without too much traffic, a couple comments discussed

### Facility Ideas:

- Location connected to public transit/on the city bus routes or provide transportation to site
- Coffee shop
- Exercise equipment/storage area for things like yoga mats
- Kitchenette/snack area
- Music rehearsal rooms
- Roof top patio
- Rec room – pool tables, ping pong, kid-free arcade
- Garden
- Large calendar to view events happening in the area
- Computer lab/Wi-Fi access
- Large meeting room + smaller rooms for classes
- “Resource” info board with phone numbers/locations of Senior-related resources
- Library and book exchange area
- Bird watching area, either feeders outside windows or designated outdoor space
- Increased hours – availability during the day and night
- Avoid term senior centers

Rentable chairs, tables, kitchen space for family events/organization use

### Offerings/Activities:

- Seniors want intellectually challenging activities
- Seniors clearly want to be active participants in their communities, especially after leaving the workforce. Volunteer opportunities and a clear way to learn of them are needed
- Support groups were mentioned numerous times – counseling, peers, specific health needs
- Entertainment Options: movie nights, comedy shows, student music/choirs,
- Crafting, knitting, crocheting, stain glass
- Puzzles, memory games, mindfulness
- Game nights, competitions, card tournaments
- Support groups – different abilities, Senior veterans, chronic health concerns, Alzheimer’s, caretakers,
- Computer/technology trainings
- Health events/screenings: blood pressure checks, therapeutic massage, flu shot clinic, recovery meetings, dementia screenings
- Educational opportunities, classes, discussion groups, cultural learning
- Meditation/Yoga/guided sessions
- Advance care planning/power of attorney
- County representative to advise regarding late life decisions such as moving to independent living, assisted living facilities
- Info sessions on changing policies that affect Seniors (Medicare, social security, etc. – local experts
- Counseling, resource info if they feel unsafe
- Buddy system for accountability/check on safety/improve membership numbers
- Civic engagement/voter registration/candidate meet & greets
- Property upkeep education (help keep Seniors in their homes)
- Advanced skill classes in cooking
- “Adopt a Senior” program for folks without family nearby or who never married

**Event Ideas:**

- Craft shows
- Freecycle
- Guided walking tours, in town or on nature trails
- Family participation days to encourage relationships

**Volunteer Opportunities:**

- reading to children
- tutoring for young adults
- animal shelter socializing/pet therapy
- shut-in visits
- Warming center
- Hospitality center
- Anything with youth
- Foster Grandparent

**Community Resource Partnership Ideas:**

- College student Physical/Recreation/Occupational Therapy intern cooperative programming
- College student volunteers for various programs
- Gundersen's Advance Care Planning/power of attorney services