Aging Well in Simsbury Survey Results

BOS Meeting, May 8, 2023

Presented by Aging and Disability Commission

Jan Beatty

Diana Yeisley, Chair

DATA IN YOUR BACKYARD

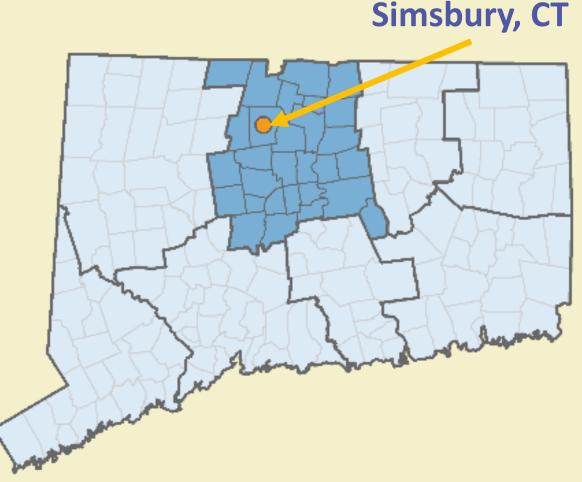
The Aging Population of Simsbury

Total population: 24,519

Population 65+: **5,805**

% of community is 65+: **17.2**%

% of 65+ population live alone: 25.8%



Background: Becoming an AARP Age-Friendly Community

- Simsbury was 4th town in CT to sign on in August 2019
- Multi-year process culminates in membership denoting town leadership's commitment to making town age-friendly in WHO's 8 domains of livability:
- Outdoor spaces and buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social participation
- Respect and social inclusion
- ❖ Work and civic participation
- Communication and information
- Community and health services
- Step 2 in process: conducting baseline assessment of town's age-friendliness

Survey Methodology

- The 36-question survey modeled other AARP age-friendly assessments
- Rolled out July 12, 2022; closed September 15, 2022
- Offered both online and in hard copy through numerous venues
- 674 responses
- Slightly more than 11% of Simsbury's 65+ population
- About 4% of Simsbury's 54-65 year-old population

Survey Response Demographics

- 67% Simsbury; 15% Weatogue; 11% W. Simsbury; 6% Tarriffville
- 68% lived in town more than 20 years
- 72% female
- 71% 65+ years old
- 68% retired
- 31% live alone

Notable Survey Responses

- 61% said extremely or very important to stay in Simsbury
- On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being best, rate town as place for people to live as they age:
 - 5: 26%
 - 4: 37%
 - 3: 27%
 - 2: 6%
 - 1: 4%
- 88% felt respected as older person
- 79% noted ease of learning about community events
- 32% want to be more social; 40% want to be more active in community
- 29% envision future needs for selves as unpaid caregivers

Responses to given options for what is needed

- 22% -- sidewalks and trails that are accessible and in good condition
- 21% -- more affordable housing
- 20% -- separate pathways for bicycles and pedestrians
- 18% -- well-maintained public buildings (library, Senior Center, Town Hall, etc.)
- 16% -- additional transportation options

Open-ended answers to what is working

- Safety
- Community
- Friendly
- Library
- Parks

- Open spaces
- Activities & recreation
- Restaurants
- Town services
- Beauty; location

Open-ended answers to what is NOT working

- Transportation
- Taxes
- Affordability
- Single-level housing
- Development
- Traffic
- Senior center facilities
- Lack of diversity/inclusivity

What is NOT Working It's expensive. Not easy to get together with other senior citizens. Affordability N/A I grew up here and returned after I divorced several years ago. There is absolutely too much build brespectation taxes too high Lack of affordable single floor homes for seniors cost of living Answers to Q 35 Don't like the senior center TAXES Taxes High rent for downsizing High taxes

Too much driving Cost of living/taxes vs. surrounding communities Avon & Farmington.

Lack of diversity Not enough senior living N/A N/A N/A was a Affordable housing and high cost of living.

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High cost of living Need more parking for people with mobility issues who do not have Handscapped Parking stickers. For Real estate taxes Transportation issues.

Electric rates Taxes are high and keep going up.

Was a large to be Itema like a large to the Itema live to be a large to the Itema live to be a large to the Itema live to be a large to the Itema like a large to the Itema large to the Itema like a large to the Itema like a large to the High taxes Limited public transportation for anyone who needs it, high cost of living, difficulty finding help have no complaints. High taxes Nothing yet Taxes are high Affordability N/A As I get older transportation will be a problem Nothing High taxes Nothing yet Wonderful place to tive no complaints. Taxes Nothing Taxes are too high, lack of quality casual restaurants Nothing Expensive housing Taxes nothing, everything okay nothing to do. The size, location and parking situation for the Senior Center. It is not a welcoming set up. High taxes High cost Housing Weather Taxes Public transportation rides to medical appointments American Taxes, and inflated home prices Not those and road works. More events for older people who don't have young children NOTHINGbike trail through Tariffville not completed Politics missing curbs High cost of iving/property taxes NA Taxes NaMore sidewalks to support Seniors like out by Governor's House and McLean. taxes All is good Not enough fishing opcious, ponds at Stratton Byook need to be dredged for year round environment fo Taxes high than the immediate surrounding bowes Property Taxes at financial burden for retirees & drives many out of townill A senior tax credit we will get more expensive to age in place high taxes Have not been let down yet. Housing is not walkable to town center More events at meafows are transportation. "Servible traffic on Hopmeadow and other main roads—many drivers do not poer Taxes, cost of living way the seniors are treated by Police Dept, Housing Authority, Politicians, Like we don't matter and All the housing coming in, rising taxes (which new housing has impacted our school system numbers)," Too many apartments over building destruction of fields and pastures not enough places to let dogs. Speed of traffic. Very difficult to walk or bike on roads, difficult to cross at crosswalks. The cost of living is very high N/A Few services for high taxes Cost of living, ? High property taxes Nothing All is good It is expensive High Taxes Higher costs. Lack of inepensive eateries. Public transportation Cost of living, taxes N/A Not enough free senior activities, need outdoor exercise stations. Alternative transportation, Senior Ctr location Available stores a new, modern senior center taxes overall. Too much traffic. Very pricey high taxes Taxes High taxes increasing traffic We do not have enough ambudances to service our town. This is especially true now that we have Anthon Weather N/A Taxes Na Housing Contents N/A Need public transportation that is regular not just on call Very prices very expensive Tax structure Would like more public activities not just senior center Nothing Poorly Lit areas Not friendly here from another state a few years ago): pine-le Real estate taxes are quite high TAXES Property taxes don't favor those on retirement incomes, VERY EXPENSIVE

Next Steps Re AARP Age-Friendly Status

- Recommitment of town leadership to seeking AARP Age-Friendly Community status
- Conducting several focus group sessions to clarify top issues from survey
- Devising action plan with community partners and town leadership to address top concerns raised in assessment