



**A Great City for Older  
Adults:  
*An AARP Survey on the  
Strengths and Challenges  
of Growing Old in  
Burlington***

***Report Excerpts***

January 2007



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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. We produce *AARP The Magazine*, published bimonthly; *AARP Bulletin*, our monthly newspaper; *AARP Segunda Juventud*, our bimonthly magazine in Spanish and English; *NRTA Live & Learn*, our quarterly newsletter for 50+ educators; and our website, [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org). AARP Foundation is our affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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## **SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS**

This community survey, part of The Burlington Livable Communities Project, was conducted on behalf of AARP by Woelfel Research, Inc. Eight hundred Burlington residents age 45 and older participated in 20-minute telephone interviews between November 1 and November 14, 2006, on a number of issues regarding housing, mobility, and community engagement. Some of the top findings from the survey include:

### **Housing & Neighborhoods**

- Eight out of ten respondents rate their neighborhood as an excellent or good place for older people to live, and a similar number say they would like to stay in their current home and neighborhood as long as they can.
- Financial concerns, such as affording property taxes, rent, and utilities, topped the list of items that residents feel threaten their ability to stay where they are, but a significant number are also concerned about factors that could limit their independence, such as no longer being able to drive, and getting help with chores and personal care.
- If they could no longer stay in their current homes or wanted to move, a location that enabled the greatest amount of independence, such as being able to schedule their own daily activities and having access to transportation, shopping, and services, would be most desirable for a new setting.

### **Mobility & Transportation**

- The majority of Burlington residents age 45+ are quite mobile, getting out of their homes and going somewhere, such as shopping, visiting, or exercising at least five times a week. However, residents age 75+ get out much less frequently, as do those with lower incomes and education.
- Three-quarters of Burlington residents 45+ use a personal vehicle as their primary mode of transportation when going somewhere, although considerable numbers also walk, bike, and get a ride from someone else on occasion. Only 30 percent of residents 45+ have used the bus, and most of these do not use it regularly, even though few have any complaints about using it.
- Despite the high reliance on personal vehicles to get around in the City, most Burlington residents age 45+ do not think it would be difficult to remain in their current neighborhood if they were no longer able to drive. However, most agree that more help from family and friends; more driving alternatives, such as community vans and volunteer drivers; and more delivery services for groceries and prescriptions would make it easier for them to remain in their current locations.

- Most residents who sometimes walk around the City think sidewalks are for the most part quite accessible. However, the results show there are opportunities for improvements, such as improved lighting and maintenance, better clearing of snow, ice, and debris, better policing to ensure drivers stop at crosswalks, and restricting the sidewalks for pedestrian use only.

### **Community Engagement**

- Most Burlington residents age 45+ are well-connected to others in their community. In addition to their regular contact with family, friends, and neighbors, about sixty percent of residents age 45+ are volunteers and/or belong to a social, religious, recreational, or special interest group. Wealthier and college-educated residents are more likely to be connected to the community in each of these ways.
- The majority of residents age 45+ feel Burlington has convenient places for them to participate in public meetings and events, and that it has well-run community centers, recreation centers, parks and other places where older people can socialize. In addition, most respondents, particularly older residents, agree they are very well-aware of activities for older adults that are available in Burlington. However, a substantial number of residents report having barriers to attending events in the City, such as cost and transportation.
- Residents age 45+ believe it is important for the City to offer community engagement opportunities such as educational offerings, waterfront activities, volunteer opportunities, and recreational activities for older adults. However, each of these activities is more appealing to those who are younger, wealthier and college-educated.

Overall, the survey shows Burlington has an appealing environment for most of its 45-plus residents, and they seem inclined to stay because of it. However, there are opportunities for making it better, particularly in anticipation of a growing older population. In addition, below the top-line findings, there are many socio-economic and neighborhood differences that should be considered to ensure the City is a livable one for all of its residents today and as they grow older.

## BACKGROUND

As most people know, the United States is an aging society. The percentage of older adults in the country is expected to rise rapidly over the next 30 years. Vermont—and Burlington specifically—are no exceptions. In 2003, Vermont’s population was about 619,000, with about 13 percent of residents being age 65 and older. In 2015, the 65-plus population will make up 15 percent of the state’s population, and by 2025, it will be 20 percent.<sup>1,2</sup> In Burlington, the 65-plus population makes up about 11 percent of the total population, and this percentage is likely to grow as it will across the State and U.S. as residents live longer, healthier lives.

In 2005, AARP published a report on creating livable communities, such that enable individuals to age successfully.<sup>3</sup> *The AARP Report: Beyond 50.05* clearly identifies a livable community as one “that has affordable and appropriate housing, supportive community features and services, and adequate mobility options, which together facilitate personal independence and the engagement of residents in civic and social life.”

The Burlington Livable Community Project is a collaborative approach to planning for the demands an aging population will place on Burlington as a city, its residents and its resources. The project is led by AARP Vermont in cooperation with the city and a group of some 30 community stakeholder organizations. The multi-year effort aims to provide direction, assess needs and resources and develop recommendations in the areas of housing, transportation and mobility and community engagement.

In support of this Project, two major data collection activities have taken place, which collectively have included nearly 1000 of the City’s middle-aged and older adults. First, a series of focus groups, facilitated by The Snelling Center for Government, were held in September 2006 at various locations in Burlington. Residents age 50 and older were invited to attend these groups and participate in discussions around questions such as: *What are your current experiences in Burlington in meeting your changing needs as you grow older? What is needed to be in place to make Burlington your city of choice for living as an older adult?*

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<sup>1</sup> *Projections of the Population, By Age and Sex, of States: 1995 to 2025*. United States Census Bureau. <http://www.census.gov/population/projections/state/stpjage.txt>

<sup>2</sup> *Projections of the Total Population of States: 1995 to 2025*. United States Census Bureau. <http://www.census.gov/population/projections/state/stpjpop.txt>

<sup>3</sup> Kochera, A., Straight, A., & Guterbock, T. (2005). *Beyond 50.05: A report to the nation on livable communities: Creating environments for successful aging*. Washington, DC: AARP.

A community survey was the second data collection activity conducted to support The Burlington Livable Community Project. This telephone survey of 800 Burlington residents age 45 and older was conducted by Woelfel Research, Inc. of Dunn Loring, VA, between November 1 and November 14, 2006.<sup>4</sup> The survey collected information from respondents on their opinions and experiences in Burlington on transportation and mobility options, housing and neighborhoods, and community engagement opportunities, as well as tested some of the themes that emerged from the focus groups in each of these areas. These resident interviews provide insights into the needs, preferences, and expectations of Burlington residents as they continue to make their home in the City as they grow older.

The findings from both the focus groups and the community survey will be shared with Burlington's City Council and Mayor's Office and will form the basis of the recommendations that project stakeholders will make to ensure that Burlington remains a great city for older adults.

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<sup>4</sup> See Methodology section for full details on survey execution. The annotated questionnaire appended to this report contains responses to all survey questions.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results of the survey seem to indicate that Burlington residents age 45 and older are getting along well in the City, and that the City by many measures is considered a livable one for its current older residents. However, as the population ages, there undoubtedly will need to be changes made to accommodate the growing older population and to enable residents to continue to characterize Burlington as a great city for older adults. In addition to the many positives identified by the residents surveyed, a number of challenges and areas for improvement have been revealed, which if addressed can assure the City continues to be recognized as one of the nation's most desirable small cities for all its citizens. Below is a summary of research finding highlights as well as questions the findings raise that can be considered for future planning.

### **Housing & Neighborhoods**

In terms of housing, most residents age 45 and older are homeowners, living in single family homes. Moreover, the vast majority want to stay in their current homes and neighborhoods for as long as possible. Convenient locations and appreciation of their surroundings and neighbors are all appealing aspects that contribute to their desire to remaining where they are. In addition, most feel safe in their neighborhoods and believe they are good places for older adults to live.

On a more challenging side, many residents, particularly middle-aged and middle- to low-income ones, cite financial concerns that threaten their ability to stay in their current home and communities. These financial concerns raise a question to be addressed: ***What can Burlington do to ensure that its residents can afford to grow old in the City?***

In terms of future housing needs, it is clear from the results that future housing developments and policies for older adults should be made with a central focus on independent living. More than physical features alone, services and locations that will enable residents to continue to live independently are extremely important to older residents today, and may be even more so important to older residents in the future. While most have a desire to remain where they currently are, for those that need or want to move, there should be a wide range of options available since, beyond living independently, there is a wide range of opinions on what would suit them best. In considering these findings: ***How can Burlington ensure that older residents have access to services that will enable them to remain independent and stay integrated in the community? For those that need or want to move, do they have a wide variety of affordable housing options that enable them to remain as independent as possible?***

A number of differences among neighborhoods emerged in the survey results in terms of housing. While a desire to remain where they currently are is consistently high across the City, for those living in the Old North End, continuing to remain in their current location seems less appealing than it does to residents living in other areas of the City.

This difference seems largely due to security concerns, but is also likely due to financial concerns and having lower levels of engagement with the community. Residents in the Downtown area are also less apt to be motivated to stay because of their surroundings, however, this seems to be balanced out by the ease in which they can get around. Another factor possibly contributing to these differences is the housing composition of these two areas: both the Old North End and Downtown have higher rates of renters which may be causing the residents to feel the effects of a more transient community, and the lessened community engagement that often results from such an arrangement.

On the converse, residents living in the New North End seem to be most content with their current living arrangements and most often rate their neighborhood as a good one for older adults. Here again, the housing composition may be a contributing factor. With more small, single family homes, this region may in fact be the most appealing for those contemplating where they will live as independently as possible as they get older.

The many neighborhood differences suggest another question to be answered: ***What can Burlington do to build on the strengths of neighborhoods, while addressing the challenges in each, to ensure all residents feel secure and are afforded the independence they desire in later life?***

### **Mobility & Transportation**

Burlingtonians are very mobile, and they are heavily reliant on the private automobile to maintain this level of mobility. Even though most residents age 45 and older live within one-quarter mile of the nearest bus stop and there are few complaints among users about the City's bus service, utilization of public transportation is relatively low. In fact, the primary reason residents are not using the bus is because they have their own car and they do not see a need to use it. Yet with age, we know from this data as well as elsewhere, that as the likelihood of driving declines. A question for Burlington in planning for the future is: ***How can Burlington develop and market its public transportation system so that more residents see the benefits of using public transportation, and it will become more common among the transportation choices for older adults?***

The results of this survey indicate that the City is largely considered to be pedestrian friendly, with most residents age 45 and older reporting sidewalks and crosswalks as highly usable and accessible. However, as also noted by focus group participants, there are some areas for improvement. For instance, many respondents would like more places to sit along sidewalks, more islands for street crossings, increased time for crosswalks, better lighting, better maintenance of sidewalks, and better policing of drivers to ensure they stop for pedestrians in crosswalks. As the population ages in Burlington, these issues may become more pronounced for the older population. So the question becomes: ***How can Burlington make improvements to their sidewalks and roadways to ensure the City is accessible to all residents?***

## **Community Engagement**

Burlington residents age 45 and older are very well-connected. The majority of these residents have frequent contact with family and friends and over half are involved with organized groups, volunteering, and neighborhood events. In fact, overall, very few residents report barriers to getting involved with community activities. However there are demographic differences to be considered: residents age 75 and older, as well as those with low-incomes and those without college educations are the least likely to be engaged in community events, volunteering, and they more often report being socially isolated. These residents are also the most likely to report having barriers to community events, such as cost and transportation. Since community engagement is a key to having a livable community for older adults, the question is: ***How can Burlington adapt so that all Burlington residents are afforded the same opportunities for community engagement, regardless of age, income, and education?***

Burlington is a city rich with educational opportunities for residents of all ages. This alone is a factor that draws many of the City's older residents to the area and encourages others to stay. In fact, more respondents to this survey rated educational activities as an important community engagement opportunity than they did for the other activities tested. It is important to ensure that these and other activities are made available to the residents of Burlington, especially those with higher incomes and educations. But, it is also important to learn what other activities would be appealing to those who have lower incomes and those who are not college educated, since educational opportunities, opportunities for volunteering, and recreational activities were rated lower by these residents. The challenge for Burlington is: ***What opportunities for community engagement can be offered in Burlington that will be appealing to the lower-income residents and those without college educations?***

Ensuring residents are aware of community events and activities is obviously important to increasing participation, and for the most part, residents age 45 and older feel they are well-aware of the activities that are happening in the City. Residents most often refer to newspapers to get information about community events, so newspapers, particularly the *Burlington Free Press*, are the best ways to get information out to the most people. However, with so many Burlington residents reporting they are regularly online, yet so few indicating they get community information there, the Internet presents a good opportunity for getting more people connected to community events and information. To keep more residents informed of community events an issue to address is: ***How can Burlington leverage Internet usage among residents to improve awareness of community activities and engagement?***

## METHODOLOGY

The Burlington Livable Community Survey, sponsored by AARP, interviewed a representative sample of 800 adults aged 45 and older living in Burlington, Vermont. The interviews were conducted in English by Woelfel Research, Inc. (WRI) from November 1 to November 14, 2006. Details on the design, execution and analysis of the survey are discussed below.

### SAMPLE DESIGN

The sample was designed to represent the Burlington adult 45 and older population in telephone households. The 2000 Census lists the total population of Burlington aged 45 and older at 10,610. The challenge for this sample was obtaining a sufficient number of telephone numbers to be able to achieve 800 completed interviews.

A hybrid approach was employed combining an RDD sample with a listed household sample. The RDD telephone sample was provided by Scientific Telephone Surveys (STS) according to WRI specifications. Sample was drawn using standard *list-assisted random digit dialing* (RDD) methodology. *Active blocks* of telephone numbers (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings were selected with probabilities in proportion to their share of listed telephone households; after selection, two more digits were added randomly to complete the number. Sampled phone numbers were compared against business directories and matching numbers purged. STS provided us with all possible RDD numbers for the one Burlington zip code.

Once these numbers had been exhausted, STS then provided WRI with all the listed telephone numbers from the Burlington, VT area. These listed numbers were de-duped with the RDD sample. The de-duped listed numbers were used to complete the interviewing.

### QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING

The questionnaire was developed by AARP staff in consultation with The Snelling Center for Government. In order to improve the quality of the data, the questionnaire was pre-tested with a small number of respondents. The pretest interviews were monitored by the AARP staff and conducted using experienced interviewers who could best judge the quality of the answers given and the degree to which respondents understood the questions. Some final changes were made to the questionnaire based on the monitored pretest interviews.

**CONTACT PROCEDURES**

Interviews were conducted from November 1 to November 14, 2006. As many as 10 attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. Sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative sub-samples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. It also ensures that the geographic distribution of numbers called is appropriate. Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of making contact with potential respondents. Each household received at least one daytime call in an attempt to find someone at home.

**WEIGHTING AND ANALYSIS**

The data were not weighted due to the lack of reliable data available on the demographic make-up of the surveyed region. The confidence intervals around a sample of 800 are +/- 3.5%.

**RESPONSE RATE**

The response rate using an older version of AAPOR's RR3 formula was 12 percent. The cooperation rate was 97 percent.

## ANNOTATED QUESTIONNAIRE

# Burlington Livable Community Survey

Total completes 800 45+ Burlington residents

## Introduction

Hello, my name is [FIRST AND LAST NAME]. I am calling from Woelfel Research, an independent research firm. We are calling (today/tonight) to ask people like yourself what you'll need and want as you get older to make Burlington a great place to grow old. This is not a sales call. The survey is for research purposes only and will help inform decisions about the future of Burlington. All of your responses will be completely confidential.

**IF NECESSARY:** This survey has been sponsored by AARP Vermont working in conjunction with the City of Burlington and many local organizations that work with older residents.

**IF NECESSARY:** The length of the survey varies depending on your responses to questions. We generally find that this survey takes about 20 minutes.]

## Screening

S1-My questions today/tonight are for a head of household who is aged 45 or older. Would that be you? Yes, it's me 1

- (REPEAT INTRODUCTION & SKIP TO Q.0) ◀-- No, but let me get him/her ..... 2
- (SCHEDULE CALLBACK) ◀-- No, not here ..... 3
- (THANK & TERMINATE) ◀-- No one in household qualifies..... 4
- (CALLBACK LATER) ◀-- [VOL] Don't know ..... 5
- (CALLBACK LATER) ◀-- [VOL] Refused ..... 6

S2-In order to ensure we talk to a broad cross-section of people, please tell me in what year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_ [IF 1961 OR LATER OR DON'T KNOW/REFUSED, THANK & TERMINATE.]

	<u>Age</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Age</u>			
26%	45-54	30%	55-64	24%	65-74	20%	75+

S3-Because this survey is of people who reside in Burlington, would you confirm for me that you live in Burlington? Yes 1

- (REPEAT INTRODUCTION & SKIP TO Q.3) ◀-- No, but let me get him/her ..... 2
- (SCHEDULE CALLBACK) ◀-- No, not here ..... 3
- (THANK & TERMINATE) ◀-- No one in household qualifies..... 4
- (CALLBACK LATER) ◀-- [VOL] Don't know ..... 5
- (CALLBACK LATER) ◀-- [VOL] Refused ..... 6

S4-How long have you lived in Burlington? RECORD \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months

S5-And which of the following Burlington neighborhoods do you live in? Do you live in the....

- 18% Old North End
- 36% New North End
- 24% South End
- 9% Downtown or
- 14% Hill Section (THIS COULD BE EITHER THE NORTH OR SOUTH SIDE OF MAIN STREET)

[RECORD GENDER]

37% Male

63% Female

## Mobility and Transportation Questions

*Burlington has repeatedly been cited as one of America's most livable communities for children and families. Yet little attention has been placed on what kind of city Burlington is, or can be, for residents as they age.*

First, I'd like to ask you some questions about getting around in Burlington.

**1. In a typical week, how often do you say you get out of your home and go somewhere, for example, shopping, visiting, or exercising? Would you say...**

<u>%</u>	
13	Once or twice a week
16	Three to five times a week
68	Five or more times a week
2	Or, not at all
*	[VOL] Don't know

**2. When you go places like the grocery store, the doctor, to work or to social events, how do you usually get there? (DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE ONLY.)**

<u>%</u>	
9	Walk
76	Drive myself
6	Get a ride
2	Take a taxi
4	Take a bus
1	SSTA or transportation provided to people with disabilities who cannot get to or use public transportation
1	Bike
*	I do not get out of the house
*	[VOL] Don't know

**3. What other ways do you get to places you need to go? Do you ever...(ASK EACH)**

<u>%</u>	
61	Walk
8	Drive yourself
50	Get a ride with someone else
20	Take a taxi
24	Take a bus
6	Use SSTA, or the transportation service provided to people with disabilities who cannot get to or use the bus
19	Bike
*	Train
*	Walk
1	Other

4. In general, how often do you miss out on doing something away from your home because you do not have transportation? Would you say you... [READ LIST]

<u>%</u>	
5	Frequently miss out
8	Occasionally miss out
16	Rarely miss out, or
72	Never miss out on doing something because you do not have transportation

5. IF Q2 DOES NOT =5 or 6 OR Q3 DOES NOT = e. or f.: To the best of your knowledge, and not including taxi cabs, is there public transportation available in your community such as buses and community vans for seniors or people with disabilities? N=545

<u>%</u>	
93	Yes
2	No ► GO TO QUESTION 13
4	[VOL] Not sure ► GO TO QUESTION 13

6. How close is the nearest bus stop from your home? Would you say it is.... N=764

<u>%</u>	
75	Less than ¼ mile
14	At least ¼ mile but less than ½ mile
5	At least ½ mile but less than ¾ mile
3	At least ¾ mile but less than 1 mile
2	One mile or more
1	[VOL] Not sure

7. IF Q2=5 OR Q3=e: About how often you have used the bus in the last two months? Have you used it.... N=227

<u>%</u>	
6	Every day ► ASK Q8 & THEN GO TO QUESTION 9
20	Several times a week ► ASK Q8 & THEN GO TO QUESTION 9
14	About once a week ► ASK Q8 & THEN GO TO QUESTION 9
19	Once or twice a month ► ASK Q8 & THEN GO TO QUESTION 9
12	Less than once a month ► ASK Q8 & THEN GO TO QUESTION 9
30	Not at all ► ASK Q8 & THEN GO TO QUESTION 12

8. IF Q2=6 OR Q3=f: **About how often you have used SSTA in the last two months? Have you used it.... N=53**

<u>%</u>	
6	Every day
11	Several times a week
4	About once a week
30	Once or twice a month
6	Less than once a month
43	Not at all ► <b>GO TO QUESTION 12 IF HAVEN'T USED BUS</b>

9. **What do you like most about using public transportation, such as the bus or SSTA? (DO NOT READ LIST; ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS.) N=176**

<u>%</u>	
26	It is affordable
27	It gets me where I want to go
7	I enjoy seeing other people
43	It is convenient
6	I do not have to pay for gas
14	I do not have to drive
9	I do not have a car so it provides me with a way go places
5	Don't like it (negative)
6	Environmental reasons
5	Drivers are friendly and helpful
4	No parking/Don't have to pay to park
3	Dependable / on time
2	Other
2	[VOL] Not sure
2	[VOL] Refused

10. IF Q2=5 or Q3=e.: Thinking about your experiences with using the bus, I'd like you to tell me whether each of the following are a major problem for you, a minor problem, or not a problem at all for you. (READ EACH ITEM; RANDOMIZE LIST. "Is this a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem at all for you?")  
**N=160**

	Major Problem	Minor Problem	Not a problem at all	DK
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
a. Difficulty boarding buses .....	4	15	81	0
b. Being able to get a seat.....	4	13	82	1
c. Being concerned about personal safety.....	4	18	77	2
d. Cost of the bus fare .....	4	12	83	1
e. Having a place to sit while waiting.....	14	33	53	0
f. Having it go where you need to go .....	14	21	65	0
g. Having adequate shelter from the weather while waiting	23	35	41	1
h. Getting information about fares, routes, and schedules	3	14	83	1
i. Inconvenient schedules .....	19	25	54	2
j. Inconvenient routes .....	13	22	64	1
k. No weekend or evening services.....	29	24	46	1
l. The condition of the buses .....	0	9	91	0
m. The time it takes to use the bus, due to it making numerous stops, transferring, or its speed.....	11	28	62	0
n. Distance from your usual destinations from their nearest bus stops .....	8	18	74	1
o. Distance from your home to the nearest bus stop .....	1	11	88	0
p. Sidewalks or crosswalks providing safe access to the bus stops.....	14	17	68	1
q. When using the SSTA do you have any difficulties .....	13	17	70	0

11. IF Q2=6 or Q3=f: **Thinking about your experience with SSTA, I'd like you to tell me whether each of the following is a major problem for you, a minor problem, or not a problem for you at all.** (READ EACH ITEM; RANDOMIZE LIST. "Is this a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem at all for you?) **N=30**

	Major Problem	Minor Problem	Not a Problem at all	Not Sure
	%	%	%	%
a. Difficulty boarding buses or vans .....	13	17	70	0
b. Being concerned about personal safety .....	10	7	80	3
c. The cost of using SSTA .....	7	10	80	3
d. The condition of the vehicles .....	3	3	90	3
e. The time it takes to use public transportation, for example, numerous stops, transferring, and speed.	7	10	80	3
f. Having to call ahead for reservations .....	7	13	77	3
g. Vehicles not showing up on time .....	10	27	63	0
h. Getting where you need to go on time .....	17	17	63	3
i. Having to wait to be picked up after appointments	7	20	70	3

12. IF Q7=6: **What are some of the reasons you have not used the bus in the past few months?** (DO NOT READ LIST; ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS) **N=602**

%	
7	Difficulty boarding buses or vans
1	Not being able to get a seat
2	concern about personal safety
1	The cost of public transportation/ too expensive
1	No place to sit while waiting
10	Doesn't go where I need to go/ inconvenient routes
1	Having adequate shelter from the weather while waiting
1	Getting information about fares, routes, and schedules
11	Inconvenient schedules, such as, no weekend or evening services
2	Poor conditions of public transportation stations and vehicles
8	It takes too long to use public transportation, for example, numerous stops, transferring, and vehicle speed
2	Difficulty getting to the stop (no sidewalks to use, busy roads to cross, no cross walks)
5	Stop is too far from my home/ no stop near my home
52	Drives a car- has own transportation
2	Carpools/gets a ride
5	Walk
10	Doesn't need to (unspecified)
4	Other
2	[VOL] Not sure
2	[VOL] refused

13. IF Q2=2 or Q3=b: **If you were no longer able to drive, how difficult would it be for you to continue living in your current neighborhood. Would it be...** N=674

<u>%</u>	
11	Very difficult
28	Somewhat difficult
25	Not very difficult, or
35	Not difficult at all
1	[VOL] Don't know
*	[VOL] Refused

14. **Which of the following would make it easier to stay in your neighborhood if you could no longer get around as you currently do? (READ EACH ITEM)**

<u>%</u>	
59	Improved access to public transportation
47	Improved road and sidewalk conditions for pedestrians
65	More delivery services for groceries, prescriptions, and other daily necessities
72	More driving alternatives, such as community vans, volunteer drivers, carpooling, or service shuttles like the Price Chopper bus
83	Help from family or friends
1	Better bike routes
*	Better bus schedule
*	Cheaper cab fairs
1	Increased police/security
2	Lower taxes
2	Other

15. IF Q2=1 or Q3=a: **I'm going to read some statement about crosswalks and sidewalks in Burlington. Thinking about walking in your community, I'd like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with each statement by telling me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. (READ EACH ITEM)  
N=560**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	DK	Ref
	%	%	%	%	%	%
a. Crosswalk signals are bright and clear. ....	55	31	7	6	2	1
b. Crosswalks are available where needed. ....	55	31	8	5	1	*
c. Crosswalk signals allow enough time to cross the street. ....	31	30	15	22	3	*
d. Crosswalks are clearly marked and easy to see. ....	58	30	6	3	2	*
e. There are enough pedestrian crosswalks in highly congested traffic areas. ....	47	31	13	7	3	0
f. Sidewalks are well lit. ....	23	34	21	15	7	*
g. Sidewalks are maintained in good condition. ....	31	38	16	15	1	0
h. Sidewalks are kept clear of snow, ice, leaves and trash. ....	36	34	15	13	2	0
i. Drivers stop for pedestrians in crosswalks. ....	24	38	15	22	1	0
j. Sidewalks are available where needed. ....	54	34	6	4	1	*
k. Ramps from the sidewalk to the street are present. ....	49	29	7	7	8	*
l. Islands that allow pedestrians to stop partially through crossing a street are available where needed. ....	23	24	20	20	13	1
m. There are adequate places to sit and rest along the sidewalks. ....	9	14	28	43	6	*
n. Bicyclists and skateboarders using sidewalks make walking more difficult. ....	39	23	19	17	2	0

16. **Now I have some questions about how safe you feel in your neighborhood. I would like you to rate your neighborhood on your feeling of safety and security when walking in your neighborhood in the evening. Would you rate your neighborhood's security as ... [READ LIST]**

%	
35	Excellent
39	Good
16	Fair
7	Poor
4	[VOL] Don't know
*	[VOL] Refused

17. **Over the past 12 months, would you say the amount of crime in your neighborhood has increased, stayed the same, or decreased?**

<u>%</u>	
20	Increased
66	Stayed the same
6	Decreased
8	[VOL] Don't know
*	[VOL] Refused

### **STRATEGIC TOPIC QUESTIONS: HOUSING**

The next few questions I'd like to ask you to refer to your neighborhood, meaning the area of Burlington in which you live.

18. **How strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: “What I’d really like to do is remain in my neighborhood for as long as possible”. Do you...**

<u>%</u>	
79	Strongly Agree (GO TO Q 19)
11	Somewhat Agree (GO TO Q19)
5	Somewhat Disagree (SKIP TO Q20)
5	Strongly Disagree (SKIP TO Q20)
1	[VOL] Don't Know (SKIP TO Q 21)
0	[VOL] Refused (SKIP TO Q 21)

19. IF Q18=1OR 2: **What are some of the reasons you would want to remain in the same neighborhood?** N=716

<u>%</u>	<i>[DO NOT READ LIST. CHECK CLOSEST CATEGORY, ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS]</i>
15	Family (positive)
28	Friends (positive)
5	Like the weather/climate
29	Good shopping/ close to shopping
19	Safety from crime/security
6	Place of worship (positive)
10	Recreation (positive)
5	Cost of living (positive)
5	Cost of housing (positive)
11	Good transportation options
2	Employment/job (positive)
1	Taxes (positive)
4	Good medical care/health services
1	Good opportunities for volunteering
3	Good government services
5	Cultural activities (positive)
1	Good opportunities for political engagement/activism in area
28	Enjoy the people living in the area
2	University offerings
12	Views of Lake Champlain/close to lake
8	Close to bike path/access to bike path
16	Always lived here/ Lived here for long time/ Home
14	Close to downtown
4	Comfortable/ cozy
8	Convenience
1	Good for seniors
8	Quiet/peaceful
1	Sense of belonging
*	Safety
*	Privacy
*	Same reason as before
2	Other, not categorized above (RECORD) _____
2	[VOL] Don't Know

20. IF Q18=4OR 5: **What are some of the reasons you would NOT want to remain in the same neighborhood?**

(N = 65) [DO NOT READ, CHECK CLOSEST CATEGORY, ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS]

<u>%</u>	
2	Family (negative)
5	Friends (negative)
3	Bad weather/climate
3	Shopping (negative)
29	Crime/security (negative)
0	Place of worship (negative)
3	Recreation (negative)
6	Cost of living (negative)
11	Cost of housing (negative)
5	Transportation options (negative)
2	Employment/job (negative)
8	Taxes (negative)
8	Medical care/health services (negative)
3	Opportunities for volunteering (negative)
6	Government services (negative)
5	College kids
3	Noise
3	Not good for minorities
5	Want to live in country
6	Want to move (unspecified)
2	Neighbors (negative)
5	Safety/Crime
14	Property tax
6	Other, not categorized above _____(fill in)
2	[VOL] Don't Know
3	[VOL] Refused

21. **Thinking about your future needs, how would you rate your neighborhood as a place for older people to live?** [READ LIST]

<u>%</u>	
34	Excellent
47	Good
13	Fair
5	Poor
1	[VOL] Don't Know
*	[VOL] Refused

22. **How strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: “What I’d really like to do is remain in my home for as long as possible”. Do you...**

<u>%</u>	
79	Strongly Agree (SKIP TO Q23)
11	Somewhat Agree (SKIP TO Q23)
5	Somewhat Disagree (SKIP TO Q24)
4	Strongly Disagree (SKIP TO Q24)
1	[VOL] Don't Know (Skip to Q25)
1	[VOL] Refused (Skip to Q 25)

23. IF Q22=1 OR 2: **What are some of the reasons you would want to remain in the same home?** [Ask open ended; interviewer to check closest category] [If response “I like this house”, ask “Why do you like this house”] **N=713**

<u>%</u>	<i>[RECORD ALL THAT APPLY]</i>
16	Home is affordable
20	Right size/number of rooms
2	Durable/high quality construction
20	Like the yard/lot/trees/view/surroundings
16	Easy to get around in/do activities
7	Low maintenance
30	Neighbors (positive)
45	Convenient location
5	Paid off mortgage
9	Too difficult to move/hassle of moving
13	I can live independently
12	Always lived here/ Lived here for long time/ Home
*	Close to downtown
8	Comfortable/ cozy
1	Convenience
1	Good for seniors
2	Quiet/peaceful
*	Sense of belonging
4	Safety
1	Privacy
2	Same reason as before
1	Other
1	[VOL] Don't Know
1	[VOL] Refused

24. If Q22=4 or 5: **What are some of the reasons you would NOT want to remain in the same home?** [Ask open ended, interviewer to check closest category] [If response “I don’t like this house”, ask “Why do you not like this house”] **N=69**

<u>%</u>	<i>[RECORD ALL THAT APPLY]</i>
15	Home is not affordable
23	Not the right size/number of rooms
3	Not durable/low quality construction
13	Don’t like the yard/lot/trees/view/surroundings
12	Difficult to get around in/do activities
15	High maintenance
10	Neighbors (negative)
9	Location not convenient
6	Mortgage (negative)
0	Easy to move/like moving
4	Can’t live independently
7	Traffic congestion in area
3	Don’t want to live alone
4	College kids
3	Noise
3	Not good for minorities
4	Want to live in the country
6	Want to move (unspecified)
1	Neighbors (negative)
4	Safety/crime
13	Property tax
7	Other, not categorized above _____ (fill in)
0	[VOL] Don’t Know
4	[VOL] Refused

25. **Do you own or rent your home?** (IF RESPONDENT SAYS THEY HAVE A MORTGAGE ON THEIR HOME, CODE AS OWN)

<u>%</u>	
77	Own
23	Rent
*	Don't know

**26. IF 25=1: Do you own a .... N=615**

<u>%</u>	
16	condo
77	single family home
1	co-op unit
2	Apartment
4	Duplex
1	Mobile home
*	Other
*	[VOL] Refused

**27. IF 25=2: Do you rent a... N=184**

<u>%</u>	
10	house
13	full-market rent apartment for seniors
29	full market rent apartment for any age,
20	affordable or subsidized housing apartment for seniors
21	affordable or subsidized housing apartment for people of any age
1	assisted living unit
2	Apartment
1	Duplex
3	Condo
1	[VOL] Refused

**28. What is your current living arrangement? Do you live.... (ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**

<u>%</u>	
38	alone
52	with spouse or partner
2	with a parent
12	with an adult child
12	with a minor child
3	with a friend
3	with any other family members

**29. Would you consider homesharing, or bringing someone of your choosing into your home to provide you with services, if that meant you could continue to live in your current home? N=304**

<u>%</u>	
36	Yes
44	No
13	Maybe
7	[VOL] Don't know

Question for homeowners only: H = 615  
 Question for renters only: R = 184  
 Question for both: B

30. Next, I am going to read you some items that some people have said make it difficult for them to remain in their home or community as they get older. I read each of the following statements; I'd like you to tell me if it is something you are very concerned about, somewhat concerned about, not very concerned about, or not at all concerned about.

READ EACH ITEM AND ROTATE STATEMENTS; AFTER FIRST TWO OR THREE ITEMS:

**Is this something you are very concerned about, somewhat concerned about, not very concerned about, or not at all concerned about.**

	LEVELS OF CONCERN						Ref.
	Very	Some	Not	Not at	N/A	Not	
	%	what	Very	all	%	sure	
Being able to pay my rent in coming years (R) .....	28	30	12	29	1	1	0
Being able to pay the mortgage in coming years (H)	12	17	16	35	19	0	0
Being able to pay my property taxes in coming years (H) .....	43	29	11	17	0	*	*
Being able to pay my homeowners association or condo fees and assessments (H) .....	7	10	12	35	37	1	0
Being able to pay my utility bills in coming years (B) .....	18	32	21	28	2	*	0
Being able to pay for home repair or maintenance (B) .....	16	30	19	27	7	1	*
Being able to pay for home improvement/home modification (B) .....	14	31	18	30	7	1	0
Being able to get where I want to go (B) .....	16	31	23	30	*	1	*
Being able to continue to drive (B) .....	23	32	17	18	11	*	0
Being safe from crime in this home or community (B) .....	17	27	25	31	1	0	0
Being safe from injury because of the way this home is designed (B) .....	7	23	26	43	*	*	0
My family or friends moving away (B) .....	10	26	26	36	2	*	0
Having conflicts/issues with neighbors such as noise, parking, etc) (B) .....	9	17	26	47	1	*	*
My neighborhood changing in ways that I won't like (B) .....	16	26	24	33	1	1	0
My home meeting my physical needs as I grow older (B) .....	13	35	21	30	*	1	0
Being able to get help in the home with chores and personal care as I get older (B) .....	14	36	21	27	1	1	0
Having to live alone (B) .....	11	24	23	40	2	1	*

31. **As people age, they sometimes find their current living arrangement does not meet their needs. If you could no longer stay in your home or wanted to move, how important would each of the following attributes be for you to have in a place that you might move?** [READ EACH ITEM; RANDOMIZE. AFTER FIRST TWO ITEMS AND AS NEEDED READ:

**Would this be very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important in a place that you might move.**

		Level of Importance					Ref
		Very	Somew hat	Not Very	Not at all	Don't know	
		%	%	%	%	%	%
a.	Single-floor living .....	51	28	11	9	1	*
b.	Age –restricted to older adults, say 50 and older .....	17	18	26	38	2	*
c.	Availability of group meals .....	16	34	23	25	3	*
d.	Health care services on-site.....	33	32	19	13	2	*
e.	A single-family home .....	26	24	23	23	3	*
f.	A condominium.....	12	27	21	35	4	1
g.	With family, either in their house or in an attached apartment .....	15	27	24	30	4	*
h.	Financially subsidized rent .....	29	23	19	25	4	*
i.	Multi-generational, meaning all ages are living in the building or neighborhood .....	30	30	19	19	2	*
j.	Being able to live with a spouse or partner .....	52	13	10	24	2	1
k.	Having the ability to make decisions about and schedule your daily activities .....	73	14	5	7	1	*
l.	Being able to have pets .....	35	17	14	32	1	*
m.	Availability of group activities .....	24	36	20	19	1	*
n.	Availability of transportation .....	64	24	5	6	1	*
o.	Access to shopping .....	56	29	7	7	1	*
p.	A smaller space .....	16	28	22	33	2	*
q.	Availability of help with errand or chores ..	35	40	12	11	2	*
r.	Availability of help with home maintenance .....	41	37	10	11	2	*

## STRATEGIC TOPIC QUESTIONS: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

32. Do you have family members living nearby?

%	
66	Yes
34	No

33. How often do you have contact with family who do not live with you? [READ LIST]

%	
32	Daily
46	At least once a week
14	A few times per month
5	A few times per year
3	Once a year or less
*	[VOL] Don't know
1	[VOL] Refused

34. How often do you have contact with friends and neighbors? [READ LIST]

%	
59	Daily
30	At least once a week
7	A few times per month
2	A few times per year
2	Once a year or less
*	[VOL] Don't know
*	[VOL] Refused

35. And how satisfied are you with the amount of this contact with family, friends, and neighbors? (IF NEEDED REPEAT: THE CONTACT IS WITH family who do not live with you, or friends and neighbors?) Are you . . . [READ LIST]

%	
71	Very satisfied
23	Somewhat satisfied
4	Somewhat dissatisfied
1	Very dissatisfied
1	[VOL] Don't know
*	[VOL] Refused

36. Do you belong to any social, religious, recreational, or special interest groups?

%	
58	Yes
42	No

37. **Have you volunteered any of your time in the last 12 months to any organizations such as charities, schools, hospitals, religious organizations, associations, and civic or other groups?**

<u>%</u>	
59	Yes
41	No
*	[VOL] Don't know

38. **IF Q37=2: What are some of the reasons you haven't been a volunteer in the last 12 months? (DO NOT READ LIST: ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**  
N=324

<u>%</u>	
34	Personal schedule too full
17	No interest
13	Work commitments
31	Health or disability
2	My skills don't match organizations' needs
1	No one I know personally asked me
3	Lack of transportation
6	Family obligations
1	No organization contacted me and asked to volunteer
1	People should be paid for their work
1	Distance—takes too long to get there and back
1	Expense—travel costs too much
3	Age
1	Other
2	[VOL] Don't know
3	[VOL] Refused

39. **In the last 12 months, have you helped out someone in your neighborhood with chores or some other type of assistance?**

<u>%</u>	
62	Yes
38	No
*	[VOL] Don't know

40. **In the last 12 months, have you participated in any neighborhood events?**

<u>%</u>	
50	Yes
50	No
*	[VOL] Don't know

41. **Next I'd like to ask you about activities in Burlington. For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. (READ EACH ITEM; RANDOMIZE LIST)**

Would you say....	Strongly Agree %	Somewhat Agree %	Somewhat Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	D/K %	Ref %
a. Burlington has well-run community centers, recreation centers, parks and other places where older people can socialize.....	39	34	7	6	15	*
b. Burlington has convenient places for me to participate in public meetings and events.....	54	33	4	5	4	*
c. I would like to participate in more cultural activities in Burlington but find most of them are unaffordable to me .....	17	21	23	36	4	*
d. I would like to participate in more community or cultural events but getting transportation to events is difficult for me.....	8	8	20	61	2	1
e. I would like to volunteer at cultural events in Burlington in exchange for free admission.....	20	26	20	30	3	*
f. I am very well aware of the activities for older adults that are available in Burlington .....	38	31	15	13	4	*

42. **And for the next few items, please tell me how important it is to have these opportunities available to you in Burlington by stating whether it is very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important. How important is it to you to have.....(READ EACH ITEM; RANDOMIZE LIST)**

	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE				DK %	Ref %
	Very	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all		
	%	%	%	%		
a. Opportunities to participate in sports and recreational events with other residents age 50 and older .....	27	30	19	23	1	*
b. Opportunities to become a volunteer.....	35	36	12	17	1	*
c. Educational opportunities for older adults .....	50	30	9	10	1	*
d. Waterfront activities for older adults.....	41	31	13	13	2	*

**43. How do you currently find out about community or neighborhood activities?**  
(DO NOT READ LIST-ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS)

<u>%</u>	
8	Parks and recreation publications
57	Burlington Free Press
16	North Avenue News
21	Seven Days
3	Front Porch Forum, or an on-line list serve for neighborhoods
23	Television
15	Radio
3	Senior Centers
29	Friends, family, neighbors (word of mouth)
9	Internet
2	AARP magazines
4	Bulletin boards
*	Calls
2	Church /church bulletins
2	Community papers
1	Emails
4	Flyers/notices
1	Library
13	Newspapers (unspecified)
1	Posters
1	Schools
2	Work of mouth
2	Mailing
2	other
1	[VOL] Don't know
1	[VOL] Refused

## DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

**D1. These last few questions are for statistical purposes. First, what was the highest grade of school or year of college that you completed?** [DO NOT READ LIST]

<u>%</u>	
6	Some high school or less
20	High school graduate
21	Some college/trade or business school
22	College graduate
6	Some Post graduate work
24	Graduate or professional degree
*	[VOL] Refused

D2. Which of the following best describes your current employment status? Are you . . . [READ LIST]? [ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.]

<u>%</u>	
31	Employed full-time (SKIP TO Q. D2a)
12	Employed part-time (SKIP TO Q. D2a)
41	Retired
4	A homemaker
*	A full-time student
6	Disabled
2	Unemployed or temporarily laid off
1	Self
1	Retired but working
*	Other
*	[VOL] Don't know
*	[VOL] Refused

D2.a. Are you self-employed? N=350

<u>%</u>	
29	Yes
69	No
2	[VOL] Not Asked

D3. Are you currently . . . [READ LIST]? [ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE. IF LIVING WITH PARTNER, DIVORCED, SEPARATED, WIDOWED OR SINGLE, CODE AS 2.]

<u>%</u>	
50	Married or in a Civil Union
4	Not married, living with a partner
16	Divorced or separated
18	Widowed, or
12	Single, never married
*	[VOL] Don't know
1	[VOL] Refused

D4. In the last 12 months, have you accessed the Internet from your home, work, or from some other source such as your local library?

<u>%</u>	
70	Yes
30	No
*	[VOL] Refused

D5. IF D4=1: **Which would you say comes closest to how often you access the Internet....**

<u>%</u>	( N=562)
72	Daily
19	Several times a week
7	Several times a month
3	Several times a year
*	[VOL] Don't know

D6. **What race do you consider yourself?** [READ LIST]

<u>%</u>	
1	African-American or Black
93	White or Caucasian
*	Asian
1	American Indian
1	Mix
2	Other [ <b>SPECIFY:</b> ] _____
0	[VOL] Hispanic/Latino
*	[VOL] Don't know
2	[VOL] Refused

D7. **In general, would you say your health is . . .** [READ LIST]?

<u>%</u>	
30	Excellent
34	Very good
21	Good
12	Fair, or
4	Poor
*	[VOL] Don't know
*	[VOL] Refused

D8. **Does any disability, handicap, or chronic disease keep you (or your spouse) from participating fully in work, school, housework, or other activities?**

<u>%</u>	
24	Yes, myself
5	Yes, my spouse
69	No
2	Yes, both self and spouse
*	[VOL] Don't know
*	[VOL] Refused

D9. **Are you (or your spouse) a member of AARP?**

<u>%</u>	
60	Yes
40	No
*	[VOL] Don't know
*	[VOL] Refused

D10. In 2005, was your total household income, before taxes, [READ LIST]?

<u>%</u>	
13	Less than \$15,000
12	\$15,000 up to \$25,000
9	\$25,000 up to \$35,000
14	\$35,000 up to \$50,000
9	\$50,000 up to \$60,000
8	\$60,000 up to \$75,000
9	\$75,000 up to \$100,000, or
11	\$100,000 or more
5	<b>[VOL]</b> Don't know
13	<b>[VOL]</b> Refused

D11. **[RECORD TELEPHONE NUMBER]** \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

We appreciate giving your time to this important survey. If you would like to continue being involved in activities to make Burlington a great place to grow old, AARP Vermont and their partners would welcome your participation. Would you like to learn more about upcoming events related to this initiative?

% If yes: Would you like to take down a phone number so that you can find out about upcoming opportunities or would you like to have AARP send you information?

**AARP**

Knowledge Management

For more information contact Kate Bridges at:  
207.899.2094 or by [email at: kbridges@aarp.org](mailto:kbridges@aarp.org)