Preliminary analysis of the Milwaukee County Area Agency on Aging Plan Response

This is intended as a sneak peek of community response to the Area Agency on Aging plan outreach, to inform discussions on goals. Survey responsese are not fully tallied.

Older Adult Survey

The survey was first published in the over 50 Plus News Magazine, then avaliable online and linked through the MCDA web page on the County site, and distributed on paper to current clients, through vendors, through community outreach sites, and shared by Commissioners, and offered to religious and housing sites for distribution.

Responses to selected survey questions:

Do you have difficulty preparing or cooking your main meals?

21% of respondents said yes, 79% said no.

Prior to the pandemic, would you eat at a community meal site?

A third of respondents had eaten at community meal sites, either County-affiliated (27%) or another site (5%). The remainder were split with 30.0% being interested in doing so in the future, and 38% not interested.

How important is it for you to be able to live independently in your own home as you age? Respondents very strongly think it's important to live independently, as 89% answered "Extremely" or "Very".

How often do you feel the following?

"I lack companionship" Most older adults (67%) responded "Rarely", but 27% said "Often", and 6% said "Always". "I feel left out".

Who responded?

Race ¹	Survey respondents (55+)*	Milwaukee County older adults (60+)
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.1%	0.4%
Asian	0.8%	2.1%
Black or African American	23.8%	19.0%
Native Hawaiian and	0.3%	0.0%
Other Pacific Islander		
White	69.9%	75.5%
Other	-	2.9%

At this point, the racial distribution of respondents is similar to the the racial distribution of older adults who live in Milwaukee County.

¹ The racial diversity of the paper survey responses which are still being tallied are the surveys with the most diverse respondents racially. It is fair to assume that the shares of some races will change as these surveys continue to be tallied.

Ethnicity: 7% of respondents responded that they were of Latino or Hispanic descent, compared to 6% of older adults in Milwaukee County.

Gender: Women were more likely to respond to the survey and made up 74.5% of respondents, males were 26.1%, and the remaining 1.4% were either non-bianary or preferred to self describe.

Household: Just over half live alove (51.1%), nearly a third live with another older adult (31.6%). The remainder live with adult children (7.6%), another adult (6.1%), or children (3.6%).

The listening sessions were held on April 30 and May 11 Questions were develoed by the Aging Advisory Council and Division on Aging staff. Jan Wilberg, Gene Guzkowski and Pat Dunn ably facilitated these discussions.

Major topics that arose in the sessions included:

- Aging can look very different from person to person. Needs and interests vary widely across populations and individuals.
- Communication about the breadth and availability of services to connect folk in need of support is a priority.
- Vendors to the County which continued to operate during the COVID pandemic were positively perceived, including caterers, meal site managers and ERAS.
- Concerns from listening session participants included: lack of accessible, affordable housing, support for people with mental illnesses, transportation, the shortage of care attendants.

